

The Orwell Newsletter

The Rotary Club Of Ipswich Orwell, RIBI 1339

November 2005

From The President's Desk

Charter Night, another milestone in the Rotary calendar, has come and gone and what a successful night it was thanks to the efforts of Phil, Sue and a number of other volunteers

Naturally, after such a big event I was keen to get all the feedback possible to ensure others had enjoyed the evening, and to see what improvements could possibly be made on future occasions.

When asked, most people responded that they had had a super night, good food, nice venue, but, and it was those who had a 'but' that I was really interested in.

After listening and analysing all 'buts' it seemed to boil down to those people who prefer formality and tradition and those who would rather have more informal and relaxed approach to an evening out.

When I set the target of 120 dinners we were obviously going to have a lot more younger non-Rotarians than in the past and we would be putting the club in the shop window, so to speak.

The conscious decision was therefore made to reduce a degree of the formality (dropping the Objects of Rotary) and trying to ensure a more light-hearted atmosphere (asking the speakers to keep the speeches relatively short and humorous). You will be the judges of how well we succeeded in the latter.

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The Secret's Out – It's a Paul Harris!

By Malcolm Reece



When you have spent three years travelling through the presidential route of Ipswich Orwell Rotary Club, you might be forgiven for thinking that at the end of it you probably know more about Rotary and the club than anyone else. Well, let me tell you...you don't.

One of the better-kept secrets of our very special club was revealed at the 27th Charter Dinner at The Galleria restaurant on 28th October, when President Eddie Marsh, obviously bursting to share his secret, revealed that Past President Brian Beason, was to receive Rotary's highest accolade – a Paul Harris Award.

I don't think anyone in the room was quick enough to point a camera in Brian's direction as the announcement was made, but Brian's dumb-struck expression will certainly live in my memory! This was probably the first – and last - occasion that we will see Brian searching for a word after the award was presented to him by President Eddie.

Brian, who joined the club in 1988 and was President in 2001-02, is one of Orwell's best examples of a person working tirelessly along Rotary's Service Above Self route for the benefit of those less fortunate than ourselves. This has particularly applied in recent years to Brian's work for Kids Out and the Children's Hospice. And, of course, the work continues.

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The above got me thinking; does the formality of our weekly meetings have an adverse effect on recruiting younger people to Rotary?

Would a group of 25/35-year-old 'mover and shakers' with no Rotary background, if asked to run a networking lunch on a weekly basis, do it in the way we do now?

Would they have grace, the loyal toast, and attendance records?

More informally in business and society generally is an ongoing process particularly noticeable in the younger generation.

For myself I like the way we operate at present, but as some would say I am of a particular age with a mindset to match.

Yours in Rotary,

Eddie ❖

Brian is an Ipswich boy who has lived and worked in the town all his life. I know that he was particularly pleased that his wife, June, and daughter and son-in-law Deborah and Stephen, were with him at the dinner. And, as for the rest of us, we are proud to have him in the club. Congratulations Brian.... ■

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

www.ipswichorwellrotary.fsnet.co.uk/diary

NOVEMBER 2005 ROTARY FOUNDATION MONTH

TUESDAY 15TH

Club Council

WEDNESDAY 16TH

12.55 pm. Lunch, Bistro On The Quay + Foundation Speaker: Rohan Havelock –“Ambassadorial Scholar”

WEDNESDAY 23RD

12.55 pm. Lunch, Bistro On The Quay + Business meeting & SGM

WEDNESDAY 30TH

No lunch. Evening Fifth Weds Event at Felixstowe Ferry SC, 7:00 for 7:30pm, “ Jordan & India”. See flyer opposite.

DECEMBER 2005

FRIDAY 2ND

Arthritis Care Christmas Party

WEDNESDAY 7TH

12.55 pm. Lunch, Bistro On The Quay + Speaker: Dr Mike Cook – “Monitoring Planning Applications”

TUESDAY 13TH

Club Service

WEDNESDAY 14TH

12.55 pm. Lunch, Bistro On The Quay + Speaker: tbc

FRIDAY 16TH

“A Celebration of Christmas” at Whitton Church

SATURDAY 17TH

Evening Christmas Dinner at Ipswich Golf Club, Purdis Heath.

TUESDAY 20TH

Club Council

WEDNESDAY 21ST

12.55 pm. Christmas lunch, Bistro On The Quay + Fellowship

WEDNESDAY 28TH

NO MEETING

The Rotary Club Of Ipswich Orwell
Offers A New 'Fifth Wednesday' Event

At Felixstowe Ferry Sailing Club

7.00 For 7.30 pm Wednesday 30th November 2005

**Three Course Indian Meal
(Fish Alternative)**

Followed By An Illustrated Talk
From Rotarian Sue Goddard Entitled

**“ Jordan & India”
Brief Visit –
Lasting Memories**



There Will Be A Raffle In Aid Of The Cooper Atkinson
Trust

Tickets, priced at £6 for Orwell Rotarians and
£15 for guests, are available from Rtn Sue on
01473 381987 or Rtn Tony on 01473 420385

Indian dress is Optional!!

A Totally Humbling Experience

By Malcolm Reece

Our own Peter Townley recently exchanged his duties at Tower Church for the exotic climes of Asia, spending three weeks in Sri Lanka at the invitation of the Bishop of Colombo. This was Peter's first visit to Asia and, as he related to the club on 2nd November, he found it "a very moving experience", particularly the poverty of most of the people and their continuing struggle following the devastating Tsunami last Boxing day.

He suggested that each time we had a cup of tea we should remember the hard work and poor rewards of the tea leaf pluckers, who worked an average 13-hour day for less than £1 a day. "I have never seen such poverty", he said. "Added to this is the conflict with the Tamal people (and the Tigers). While I was there someone was being shot every day."

But it was obvious from Peter's recollections that the most moving moments of his stay were his visits to the post-Tsunami areas. His guides, pointing out devastated areas where communities had thrived, pinpointed the shell of a school which was turned into a mortuary for 400 people. "Today", he was told, "the sea is behaving like a good boy."

Perhaps Peter's main message was that, like many of the world's tragedies, the Tsunami devastation was no longer in the headlines – but the devastation and the suffering of the people was continuing. Transition homes, he found, were mostly tin huts, and the people using them had to move out after 11 am each day because of the heat. If there was a monsoon it became a floodwater problem.

The major source of income for these people is fishing and the church, he pointed out, is heavily involved, helping with boatbuilding to recreate a livelihood. There were queues of people every day outside the Vicarage, many of them to get bicycles (made in India) to give them a means of transport and a sense of freedom.

Peter recalled driving along one day through the Tsunami devastation. "It was the day after the Pakistan earthquake, and all the people could talk about was how they could best help people in Pakistan. It was a totally humbling experience. I later preached at the Cathedral and I told them: 'You have a church to be proud of.' "

Peter admitted to us that he hung on to the Church of England by his fingertips because of the way many

people in this country seemed to be obsessed with trivia. "In that part of the world they have a church that is getting to grips with important things of life. They have a tremendous amount to teach us and what they do is genuine. They are not Christians, but they seem to have a real sense of 'we are all in this together.'" ■

FANCY A BLOG?

BY STEVE CANHAM

Anyone interested in joining the blog community? Do you know what a blog is?

A web log, or blog, is a web-based publication consisting of periodic articles. Although most early blogs were manually updated onto the internet, tools now enable the easy creation and update of blogs. In fact, it will soon be possible to update blogs via SMS text messaging. This is currently being trialled in the USA.

Blogs range in scope from the diaries of individuals to webpages run by all sorts of organisations. They also range in scale from the writings of an occasional author (known as a blogger), to the collaboration of a large community of writers. Many blogs enable visitors to leave public or private comments.

There's already some rotary blogs in use, such as:

www.rotaryconventionblog.com

www.relieforsrilanka.blogspot.com

Do you think that there may be a use for an Ipswich Orwell blog? Such a blog would enable registered members to post articles that will appear immediately on the blog web pages. These articles are then available to be publicly viewed, or for comments to be posted against them, by registered members.

The blog could be used for all sorts of things, such as:

- Notes and reports from recent events;
- Notices for forthcoming events;
- Ideas for general circulation and discussion;

Please let me know if you think that there may be a use for an Ipswich Orwell blog. I've created a trial blog, which is available at the following address:

www.ipswichorwellrotary.blogspot.com

If you'd like to give blogging a try, then please let me know and I'll add your name to the list of registered users of the Ipswich Orwell trial blog.

A Special Night at the Galleria for Orwell's 27th Charter

By Malcolm Reece

Twenty-seven years of Service Above Self is worth celebrating at any time; on this occasion it was not only worth it but also memorable for several special reasons.

- It was the first time we had held our Charter dinner at a soccer ground.
- The first time in the club's history that a "Mistress" was in charge.
- The first time in his long life that Rtn Brian Beason was speechless.

More than 100 Rotarians, partners and guests were seated in The Galleria restaurant at Ipswich Town FC's ground for Orwell's annual event. It was a resounding success and appears to have set a pattern for the club's Charter Night dinners in future years.

Our Mistress of Ceremonies for the evening was Junior Vice President Sue Goddard, who, equipped with a mobile mike and a few carefully-chosen words, guided both officers, speakers and guests through a memorable evening of entertainment and fun.

The evening was very special for Past President Brian, who for once in his life found it difficult to find a word when President Eddie Marsh announced he was to be the recipient of a Paul Harris Award. (More about this in a separate article on page...).

Suffice to say here that it was a just reward for several years of hard work in the true Rotary sense of service above self.

A total of 11 other Rotary Clubs were represented at the dinner and the names of Rotarians representing these clubs were dutifully read out by Mistress Sue. In addition, the club was delighted to welcome Assistant District Governor Barry Gibbs and his wife, and Barry sang beautifully for his supper in a toast to Rotary International and Ipswich Orwell Rotary Club.

There was a traditional response and toast to the guests from President Eddie Marsh, and the main speaker this year, responding on behalf of the guests, was Professor Peter Cochrane, who made many of us "oldies" realise just how far behind we are as we try to

keep up with the ever-changing world of Information Technology (IT). Prof. Cochrane, who was accompanied by his new wife of 22 days, Jane, is a former Head of Research at BT and currently carries the heady title of Futurologist.



Guest Speaker - Peter Cochrane

He was thanked by Past President David Berridge, who with Sue and Senior Vice President Philip Morgan, worked tirelessly behind the scenes organising the dinner, Silent Auction and draw. The result of this work means that £665 was raised from the draw, and £844 raised from the auction will go to the Cooper Atkinson Trust to relieve poverty in southern India.

At the end of proceedings we realised that no-one had blown a whistle, no-one had been shown a red card...and we all went home more than happy with the result! See you next year? ■

FUNNY FOOTNOTE

In response to the observation that volunteers are too often seen as amateurs: "Just remember: Noah's Ark was built by amateurs. The Titanic was built by professionals."

Meals on Wheels - A daughter helped her 90-year-old mother through the strain of moving from the family home into a new unit in a senior apartment building. The daughter was trying to tidy up all the arrangements and tactfully said: "Mum, what about Meals on Wheels?" To which her mother replied: "No, dear, I don't think I could volunteer for them anymore."

Inner Wheel Notes

By Pam Hill, Club Correspondent

On October 19th, we had an informal meeting. Our guest, Jenny Gibbs, brought a large selection of pashminas, scarves and throws for us to look at. Jenny lives part of the year in rural Turkey and her business is Pashmina Bazaar. The term "pashmina" comes from a Persian word "pashm" which refers to the underfur of the Kashmir goat. The best quality comes from the Himalayan region. The fashion craze in the mid-1990's resulted in a huge and continuing demand for the shawls which are very soft, lightweight and warm. Cashmere is also from certain goats and pashmina, strictly speaking is from goats living above 15,000 feet -they have finer wool. Pashmina has come to mean that very special shawl and it is more often now a mixture of pashmina/cashmere and silk. We looked at all the beautiful colours and were tempted to buy more than one. Pictured here are Anne and Rita, Cathy and Jacqui trying to decide which to buy!



There was no time left for a games evening, but we enjoyed a social meeting instead. Ticket sales are going well for the flower evening on Tuesday the 22nd

November. You can get more details from me (420385) or any Inner Wheel member.

Our next meeting is on the 16th November when we will have a speaker from Mind, which is one of Anne's charities this year. ■

VIRGIN ATLANTIC TO FUND FLIGHT FOR ROTARY AID FOR PAKISTAN

FROM RIBI NEWS

Rotary Clubs in Great Britain and Ireland have been working around the clock to meet the urgent demands for aid in Pakistan. With the onset of winter the need for shelter for homeless families is acute and Rotary Clubs in Pakistan are desperate for tents, blankets and medical supplies. This operation has been greatly aided by the generous offer of free air transport from Virgin Atlantic Airways who are donating a flight to Rotary. The airline is donating the use of a Boeing 747 aircraft, with a cargo capacity of 55 tonnes, which will fly from London Gatwick to Islamabad. The plane will be filled with 400 Rotary Shelterboxes, tents and medical supplies provided by Rotary Clubs throughout Great Britain and Ireland.

Mike Webb President RIBI said "We are very grateful to everyone at Virgin Atlantic for this generous offer, which will make a difference to thousands of families who will be benefit from this aid as the harsh Himalayan winters take hold. Through our Rotary network in Pakistan we know that the aid will reach those who need it very quickly".

Sir Richard Branson, Chairman of Virgin Atlantic, said "Everybody who works for Virgin Atlantic has been shocked and saddened to see the devastation in Pakistan caused by the recent earthquake. This terrible tragedy has left thousands of families without shelter with a harsh winter approaching. With stocks of tents, blankets and other essential supplies now exhausted in Pakistan, Rotary has no choice but to fly these supplies in. We hope the British public and other British companies will continue to support the relief effort to avert a loss of life greater than the original earthquake."

To date Rotary has shipped 1200 Shelterboxes, thousands of tents, 852 Aquaboxes and 300 Emergency boxes to Pakistan. Rotary is also supporting the International Rescue Corps who have a team of 6 Scotsmen and 8 Englishmen working in the earthquake area.

Rotary Clubs in India and Pakistan are assisting with the relief effort, in particular many medically qualified Rotarians from Chandigarh and the Punjab, are working as volunteers in the affected areas. ■