

The Orwell Newsletter

The Rotary Club Of Ipswich Orwell, RIBI 1339

September 2007

From The President's Desk

Like the lazy summer days of June, July and August (what days were those then?), Handover is no more than a (very pleasant) distant memory and now it's down to serious Rotary business!

The weather may not have "done" all that was expected (or hoped for) but I think our Club is pulling together very well at the moment. I must say that this is largely (if not entirely) due to the efforts made by my excellent team and their respective committee members. Grateful thanks to all those concerned.

I was very pleased that Sue Allison of Suffolk Family Carers (the Club's adopted Charity for this year) was able to join us early in my year to speak about the Charity. I hope it gave our members a general feel and understanding of the important work they are involved with and why I am keen for our Club to offer support.

Although my "Year" is still relatively young, we have already been treated to a range of interesting speakers and I know there is much more of this to come. Keep the pressure up on our Chairpersons Tony! It is also worth mentioning that if any of you have ideas for speakers or

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Janet Explains The Growth of Suffolk's Infolink

Words By Malcolm Reece

People in the community, particularly the more senior members such as me, often wonder once they crash through the barrier and enter the wonderful world of the internet, why they didn't take the plunge much sooner. But local government might not be the first place you "hit" – unless you know where to go.

Janet Bayliss, a Suffolk County Council expert from its e-government library, gave us a brief glimpse at our lunch meeting on 12th September of what's going on in many parts of our community and the advances currently being made via the net.

She told us in some detail of the growing success of the community information directory, Suffolk InfoLink, which is undergoing a massive expansion. The service, connected through www.suffolk.gov.uk/infolink, is enabling them to approach many new providers and to expand the range of organisations listed to include more voluntary, statutory and commercial services.

How does it work? Janet explained: "Suffolk infoLink is accessed by the public through the libraries website (quoted above), with 44,000 visits to actual record details being recorded during 2005-6. We are aiming to increase this number by enhancing content on the directory and making it easier to use.

"We feel that the improvements will make Suffolk infoLink into a one-stop searching and signposting tool, for people in Suffolk. Additionally it will enable organisers of local activities a platform of promotion."

Janet adds that organisations are responsible for updating their own records, giving greater flexibility for content and the opportunity to upload documents and pictures for potential users of the service to view. Entries have a link to a map showing the exact location of activity venues, along with details of website and email addresses. All this information is shown on one page.

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fifth Wednesday events please step forward and make your views known to Tony Hill, he would be pleased to hear from you.

On the horizon we have two important events coming up, The Alton Water Challenge on 7th October and Charter Night on 12th October. The Charter Night preparations are now well established thanks to Alan Swann and his merry persons (note the PC language). I understand we are fully booked and I have no doubt we will enjoy an excellent evening to celebrate our Club's birthday.

The Alton Water Challenge on Sunday 7th October (strangely to be held at Alton Water, Stutton) really needs your support this year. It's not just about our members walking and making a personal donation. We need our members to use their (considerable) skills to persuade others to walk, run, cycle etc and for those persons to find sponsors.

This year it is OUR CHALLENGE to get this event back on the map. I don't think it is unrealistic for us to aim to return this event to former glory but it needs all of us to put in a bit of effort and not just the few of recent years. So what do we need? WALKERS, RUNNERS & CYCLISTS WITH THEIR REGISTRATION CARDS FILLED WITH LOTS & LOTS OF SPONSORS!!!!

Have fun.

Yours in Rotary,

Alan ❖

*Janet Explains The Growth of Suffolk's Infolink,
continued from page 1*

Janet's information "blurb" also says that Suffolk infoLink is offering more information on activities, goods and services for adults, children and young people. "It is not a finite resource and we are aiming to create a comprehensive community service directory for Suffolk in an ambitious project – so watch this space".

The advice is that to put your organisation onto Suffolk infoLink, use the internet address already quoted; email on infolink@libher.suffolkcc.gov.uk or call: 01473 265265. ■

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

www.ispwichorwellrotary.fsnet.co.uk/diary

SEPTEMBER 2007

TUESDAY 18TH

Club Council

WEDNESDAY 19TH

12.55 pm. Lunch, Bistro On The Quay + Speaker: Mandy Cunningham, "St Elizabeth Hospice"

District Council

WEDNESDAY 26TH

12.55 pm. Lunch, Bistro On The Quay + Business Meeting/Fellowship

OCTOBER 2007 VOCATIONAL SERVICE MONTH

WEDNESDAY 3RD

12.55 pm. Lunch, Bistro On The Quay + Vocational Speaker: Bob Keeble, "How biomedical science supports medicine"

SUNDAY 7TH

Alton Water Challenge. For further details, please see flyer on page 3.

TUESDAY 9TH

Club Service Committee

WEDNESDAY 10TH

NO LUNCH

FRIDAY 12TH

Charter Night at Belstead Brook Hotel

TUESDAY 16TH

Club Council

WEDNESDAY 17TH

12.55 pm. Lunch, Bistro On The Quay + Vocational Speaker: Sarah Higson, "User involvement at Ipswich Hospital"

WEDNESDAY 24TH

12.55 pm. Lunch, Bistro On The Quay + Business Meeting/Fellowship

WEDNESDAY 31ST

No Lunch. 5th Weds Event. Foundation/Vocational Fundraising. Quiz & Supper - 6.30 for 7.00pm at Ipswich Golf Club Purdis Heath - £9.00 pp

NOVEMBER 2007 ROTARY FOUNDATION MONTH

THURSDAY 1ST

Provisional - Kingpin Challenge

Club Interview – With Alan Swann

By Peter Hopper

In cricket parlance, when Tony Hill bowls a series of questions at you, you can expect one of two googlies. However, club founder president Alan Swann was well able to take care of his wicket, in the first of a new series of 15-minute interviews of club members.

Alan, in his typical laid back style, confessed that he had only volunteered to do the interview "because I thought August was the dog days of summer and there wouldn't be anybody here!" Instead, he was faced with a nearly full pavilion, the best turnout since early June, said the man who keeps a weekly check on attendance. There was an introduction from Tony to make him blush: "Business tycoon, property magnate, master mariner and a general *tour de force*."

For the rest of us, sitting in our comfortable seats and pleased not to be facing fast bowler Tony, Alan at the crease turned out to be a hugely enjoyable insight into his life and thoughts.

Asked what he would be doing if he hadn't been at Rotary, Alan replied: "Probably ploughing up and down the short pool at Seckford Hall Hotel, which I try to do at least four days a week." If not swimming, he would most likely to have been sailing, he said.

A favourite expression (particularly to staff: "We never have problems, we merely have challenges."

A wish: That people would take more notice of what goes on around them - When someone drops something...or someone needs a bit of help, almost everyone walks by as if they had got blinkers on. That is something that has made a direct impact on me as I have got a bit older; I feel things have changed. That is the reason why I love going to New Zealand, because the people in New Zealand have time for others."

What was the most surprising thing that had happened to him? "You will all be very intrigued to know that I have shaken hands with the Queen and Prince Philip at different times." Alan explained that when the Queen visited Ipswich in 1977, her silver jubilee year, he introduced to her the daughter of a part-time lecturer at Suffolk College, uttering the classic line: "Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, meet Elizabeth." Subsequently, when he was in the services, he was guard commander of a guard of honour for the Duke of Edinburgh, who afterwards complimented him on "a fine body of men."

What law would you change if you were Prime Minister? "I have given a bit of thought to that," said Alan. "What I would repeal, Tony, is the European Bill of Human Rights, because I believe in British law, history and our sense of fair play. When I hear, as we all do, of people who believe that their human rights have been infringed, in one way or another, for trivial matters...I just can't cut it."

What are you good at? "I am good at seeing opportunities and bringing together those who can make those opportunities work...I have always seen the chance of something succeeding...I reckon I am good at getting hold of the right people and making them work together to achieve something."

What are you bad at? "I am absolutely b----- useless at paperwork; I can't do it."

Space prohibits mention of every delightful question and answer, but I particularly liked Alan's final comment: "I would like to think my skills are with people. So anything to do with people, I'll get by."

A century not out, I would say... zzzzz. ■

A FINE SUMMER'S EVENING WALK

BY PETER HOPPER

The weather was perfect, the tide was low,
A Rotary walk to set the mind aglow.
Along the Deben, a Tide Mill on view,
A glorious sunset giving an orange hue.

JVP Carol arranged a seven o'clock start,
To be back in an hour for supper a la carte.
Our scheduled meet at the Cherry Tree pub,
A pleasant stroll first...and then the grub.

But there's always one idiot who gets it wrong,
Didn't listen properly, not on song.
Opposite Notcutts someone had said,
The essential detail went over his head.

Arriving at the Cherry Tree right on time,
Few vehicles in the car park, not so fine.
'You want to be in Woodbridge,' landlord said.
Bromeswell is not where Rotarians are fed.

Our thanks to Carol for a fifth Wednesday airing,
On Woodbridge waterfront, opinions sharing.
Just a pity there was another Cherry Tree,
Yes, you've guessed it, the idiot was me!

■

Inner Wheel Notes

By Ann Orvis, Club Correspondent

Our July meeting began as usual at the Ipswich and Suffolk Club. However, immediately after supper we went on to the home of Moira Podd, our Social/Programme Organiser, for coffee and an evening of games. This was a great idea of Moira's as it proved to be a fun-packed evening. The game which caused the most hilarity was table football.



Pam Hill recently attended a garden party at Buckingham Palace. It was suggested that she might enquire as to whether the Queen would like to become a member of Inner Wheel. We await her reply with anticipation!

Our thoughts and best wishes will be with Anne Smith when she goes into hospital in August. We wish her a speedy recovery.

With regard to future events, just a reminder that on Sunday September 9th President Elizabeth will be holding a social fundraising event in her garden. It will be very informal with drinks and a buffet lunch. The

time is 12.30 for 1.00pm and please let Bobbie know by the end of August if you are able to attend.

As we do not meet during August, our next meeting will be on 19th September. After a short business meeting Penny Holder will demonstrate the wearability of Weekender Clothes. As mentioned previously, if there is a possibility you may wish to make a purchase please remember to bring your cheque book. Please let Bobbie know by the Thursday prior to the meeting if you are unable to attend. ■

ROTARY CLUB OF IPSWICH ORWELL

ALTON WATER CHALLENGE

A PLEASANT RAMBLE OF 8 MILES AROUND
ALTON WATER RESERVOIR
NEAR STUTTON AND HOLBROOK

RAISE MONEY FOR YOUR OWN CHARITY
AND HELP THE ROTARY CLUB OF IPSWICH ORWELL
SUPPORT LOCAL CHARITIES

SUNDAY 7 OCTOBER

STARTING ANY TIME FROM 9:00 AM TO 12 NOON
AT ALTON WATER VISITORS CENTRE

- Easy ramble or challenging run
- Enter as individual, family, club or organisation
- Two thirds to your own charity or organisation
- One third to Rotary Charities
- Help Rotary to help others
- Runners and cyclists welcome

FOR MORE DETAILS AND REGISTRATIONS FORMS
Phone Brian Beason on 01473 742440

ORDINARY ROTARIANS DOING EXTRAORDINARY THINGS

FROM RIBI WEB-SITE

There are many Rotarians who work as groups or individuals on valuable projects that are not widely publicised; "Ordinary Rotarians Doing Extraordinary Things". At the RIBI Conference (Blackpool) in April 2008 there will be presentations of a number of awards for the best projects. The presentations will be accompanied by videos and interviews showcasing the work that too often goes unnoticed within the RIBI family.

Dr John Blatchly

By Peter Hopper

The Doctor transported members back in time 700 years and 500 years - without moving out of Ipswich. This was not the Dr Who of television fame but Ipswich historian Dr John Blatchly, and our collective imagination had to be stretched somewhat for the first floor room at The Bistro to be transformed into his Tardis.



We were seated comfortably for a local history story, as only the venerable doctor could tell it - clearly, concisely and full of interesting detail. As many of us have seen in his weekly articles currently appearing in the East Anglian Daily Times, John has a charming way of bringing local history to life.

His first subject was the royal wedding at St Peter's in December 1296, when Edward 1, known as Longshanks and a warrior king, brought Elizabeth of Rhuddlan, his youngest daughter, to Ipswich to get married. She was born at Rhuddlan Castle, Wales, one of Edward's most famous castles

So why was Ipswich such a good place for this wedding? Answer: "Because of the River Orwell. He (the king) could get rid of the bridegroom pretty smartly, by sea, after the ceremony. The king's problem was that he was war with France and had done something quite foolish, arranging for someone to murder the Count of Holland, and now Edward really needed the Dutch on his side in the war with France.

The 12-years-old son of the Count of Holland had been brought up in the English Court and was a well behaved lad who did as he was told. So he was brought to Colchester Castle until needed as a bridegroom. Edward arrived at St Peter's on the 23rd of December, the betrothal took place on the 7th of January and the marriage went ahead the very next day. "It was quite a long and tremendously convivial time for our borough," John continued.

The generous king brought with him his almoner, who 'sprayed' money around Ipswich, giving it to nearly everybody in sight. "The poor of the town probably ate for the next fortnight," said John.

They had a sort of practice wedding with a favourite of the king who had lands in Suffolk. It was a great event for the little girl, Elizabeth, who was only 14 years old.

First came the betrothal and then the actual nuptials were on 8th January, but the lad was put on a boat and sent off up the Orwell to Harwich, and then away to his native country, where he died two years later. Whether the marriage was ever consummated was not known, but there were no children from it, we were told.

John said he liked some of the things that happened on the wedding day. He thought

Edward I had a drop too much to drink, because he threw his daughter's coronet into the fire. "You could imagine that in St Peter's and St Paul's Priory, there would have been a pretty big hall and a pretty big fire, and when the coronet was fished out, there was an opal and a ruby missing. It would have cost an awful lot for the king's goldsmith to replace them"

Our speaker added that Edward did eventually triumph over France.

...We return to earth, briefly, for The Doctor to prepare the Tardis for his next trip - a mere 500 years into the past. In other words, dear readers, you will have to wait for next month's newsletter for the second part of the story. ■

AID FOR 500,000 DISASTER VICTIMS FROM UK CHARITY

FROM RIBI NEWS

A unique UK charity marked a remarkable achievement on 8th August 2007 - the provision of aid for half a million disaster victims worldwide.

Tucked away in a small Cornish town, ShelterBox has grown in just seven years from being a small volunteer-run charity to one of the world's most dynamic and effective aid agencies.

The charity, set up by a local Rotary club in 2000, specialises in providing emergency accommodation and other survival essentials to disaster victims. The aid is delivered in pre-packaged kits each designed to help a family of 10 survive for at least six months.

On Wednesday 8th August the charity packed 200 ShelterBoxes to go to help victims of the monsoon floods in Nepal - and the family receiving one of those boxes will bring the total helped by the charity to 500,000.

ShelterBox founder and chief executive Tom Henderson said: "Since we began operations in January 2001, ShelterBox has worked in 33 countries worldwide and we've responded to more than 50 different emergencies, from floods to earthquakes and wars to hurricanes.

St. Nicholas Centre

By Peter Hopper

Question: What links the early 14th century Ipswich Church of St Nicholas, where Cardinal Wolsey was baptized, with Ipswich life in the 21st century?

Answer (provided by guest speaker Jo Stephens) is The St Nicholas Centre, described in literature Jo handed out to members, as..."The meeting place in the centre of Ipswich for the church, community, businesses and charities." The centre features conference and training facilities, event space and a restaurant offering a wide choice of menu..

It was in 2001, after a 20-year period of redundancy, that the Church of England in Suffolk bought the church from Ipswich Borough Council for £1. The building had been previously let to the Ipswich Historic Churches Trust.

A modern glass-sided building now links the redeveloped St Nicholas Church to the diocesan office in Cutler Street to form the St Nicholas Centre. This new 'link building, ' which is open to everyone, is a meeting place for small groups, is used as a theatre for up to 250 people and has space for wedding receptions for up to 120 people.

Initially, Jo managed the restaurant for a leaseholder, but when the partnership with the church came to an end in December last year, she was taken on by the Church to continue to run the restaurant, as she had been doing, but in addition, to manage the conference centre.

However, it was not what Jo had trained to do. She explained that she had studied to make films, having wanted to go into screen play writing, which still hoped to do, hopefully in her spare time. "When you are trying to pay off student debts and earn money, you get caught in doing things and end up looking after places and rising up the ranks, so to speak, and I went into management of restaurants and worked for very large corporate firms, she said

One of problems taking over the conference centre was that the normal corporate systems were not in place - ie the basic things such as looking after members of staff, health and safety, pay systems, down to the very basic cleaning rotas - things that most corporate businesses would have some sort guidelines. "We have had to go in and overhaul that whole system and try to put those things in place, so it

has been quite a testing year really ," she said.

Explaining events at the centre, Jo said conferencing included anything from organising AGMs to wedding receptions, work training, dance workshops, project launches, etc. There was a full entertainments licence which enabled them to have live music and also facilities for sports events on application. The restaurant could also be used for those purposes.

It had been an uphill struggle to get people to know where the centre is , and some people still do not know, as she was discovering on a daily basis. One of the major things during June was that, because of her personal with various people at the Wolsey Theatre, eleven events as part of the Pulse Fringe Festival were held at the centre. These included classical music concerts, cabaret performances, plays and poetry performances.

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Hanau Meeting May 2008

By Bob Fox

The confirmed dates for the next Hanau Meeting are 8th to 11th May 2008.

We will fly from Stansted to Altenburg (Leipzig) on Thursday 8th.

The visit will be based in a Hotel in Weimar.

On Friday we will go to Erfurt (Capital of Thuringen) for a guided Tour and Lunch, followed by a visit to a hightec company.

President Prof Dr. Wolfgang Diem to arrange through his Engineering contacts.

Return to Weimar.

On Saturday we will have a joint meeting of the Boards, further activities, to be decided, then in the evening the formal dinner.

On Sunday we will return to Stansted.

There are many unknowns at the moment, so at this stage those interested should make a note of the dates.

When more info is available and flights and flight times have been released, I will let you know more.

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