

ROTARY CLUB OF CANTERBURY

Minutes of a meeting of the Vocational Service Committee held on 14th May 2013

1. **Present:** Nan Miller, Alan Mepstead, John Beckett, Leslie Stephenson, Roddy Tyndale Biscoe, Brian Dobinson
2. **Apologies:** Tim Brett, Ian Wright, Mike Talbot
3. **Minutes** of the last previous meeting on 12th March 2013: approved subject to excluding reference to Viv Pritchard who had not been present and changing “unable” to “able “ in line 3 of para 10
4. **Matters arising:** Roddy had spoken to Peter Hermitage who had confirmed that a lecture room would be available at Christchurch if required for the children’s public speaking competition, but Ann Peerless of ESU prefers the Guildhall. Noel Ensoll had been informed that the lecture room would be available.
5. **Possible second visit to LME:** 3 dates in September had been put forward by Patrick, but none would involve a visit to Lloyds as well since the contact there would be away that month. Enquiries were ongoing with the 13 people who had expressed interest.
6. **ICC visit update:** 38 people were due to attend this precursor to the Pentangular weekend, but that morning BD had received notification from the Court that the visit had been cancelled. On enquiry, it turned out that the officials who run the visits were required to assist judges, but it was agreed that the Rotary party would visit the Court, going to the visitor centre for a video presentation, and then into the Court itself for a hearing.
7. **Young photographer competition:** RTB and AM reported that in all, 75 junior and secondary schools in the district had been visited by them and the representatives of the other 2 local clubs running the competition. Posters and other materials seemed to have been well received (and JB reported that he had seen a poster in a shop in Herne Bay). Each school was to be contacted again in June and October to chase up entries, which would be open until 30th October. Posters were available for members. Judging was to be in November, and would be on the interest and technical merit of the photos, there being no set theme.
8. **Childrens’ creative writing competition:** AM said that the competition should have been advertised in the Council’s “What’s on “ magazine, but due to budgetary restraints had been edited out. However, Daren Kearl of the Beaney had produced a poster which would be sent to all primary and junior schools and thereafter it was the intention that the schools would be contacted. Posters also to be exhibited by members where possible and chase up calls or visits made to the schools before the end of the current term.
9. **Visit to Sikh temple, Gravesend:** took place on 5th April when over 30 attended. There was an excellent outline of Sikhism given by our guide, Sukh Maghail, who then conducted us over this amazing £15m building which, we were told, is the largest such temple by area outside India - though admittedly that is if you count its 2 football pitches, giving a new meaning to football as a religion! All felt they had really learned something of another culture from this trip.

10. **Possible visit to CERN:** There is interest in this project from around 15 people and eventually a date was agreed in late October, but by the time we were able to apply to book a place, all slots had been taken, and it was felt that the alternative offered in November would be in weather that was too dull and cold. It was proposed to try again in March.
11. **Possible trip to Whitechapel bell foundry:** NM had looked into this and found that all slots were booked for 2013. Visits take place only on Saturday mornings, when no work is going on. It was felt that we should aim for a visit next February or March with a visit to some other attraction in London in the afternoon. NM is to check the cost of the bellfoundry trip and report again at the September meeting.
12. **Trip to Sandwich Guildhall:** 13 were due to attend on Monday 24th June at 3.0pm but there was plenty of space for others. Due to IW's pending surgery, AM was to lead. It was suggested some might like to see the Jeckyll gardens at Salutation House at the same time.
13. **Possible summer walk:** A 2/3 mile walk was suggested, centred on the Black Robin at Kingston on a summer Thursday morning, with lunch at the pub afterwards. Board to be circulated at the next meeting. LS would not be able to lead and BD to do so instead.
14. **Possible trip to fire rescue service:** LS to report about this at the next but one Voc Serv meeting.
15. **Possible trip to private railway site at Shepherdswell:** the idea would be to have a pub or café lunch, followed by a short talk about the history of the colliery network created by Col Stephens and the ambitious proposals to create a major community facility, with an inspection and ride on the train. September was suggested and BD was liaising with Georges Dussart. Report at the next meeting.
16. **Possible visit to Cutty Sark:** the newly restored ship is spectacular, and its exhibitions and inter-active displays very interesting, as a result of which the possibility of a visit had been considered. However, hiring the venue for up to 100 people for 2 hours costs £3000 plus vat and without catering, and it was felt too expensive and that other trips would offer better value for money and that in any case this kind of thing might be better considered by the Entertainments committee.
17. **Membership of the committee** going forward: all those present wished to remain members. As to chairmanship, BD had served 2 years and felt a change would be best. He had discussed with AM taking over, but AM felt his hearing impediment would give him difficulties in conducting meetings and BD agreed to carry on. RTB raised the issue of the dividing line between the committee's scope and that of Entertainments. It was acknowledged this was a problem, although in the context of the Club's predominantly retired membership, the object of helping people improve their "vocations" had to be construed as improving their retirement, which visits that were both informative and enjoyable (hopefully) did. The point remained one of concern, however, and RTB suggested the 2 committees might merge. That would be a matter for the Club to decide, but it was agreed agendas and minutes should be exchanged as a first step.
18. **AOB:** NM - an interesting concert is to be given by ECO on 6th November at Cadogan Hall, works to include some by Schoenberg, Brahms, Mozart. Further details later.
19. **DONM:** Tues 18th June at 12.0 noon at Cricket Ground - NOT 11th June