

Club Officers 2020/21

President : Alan Mepstead

Immediate Past President : Neil Fraser

President Elect : Stephen Thompson

Vice President : Tony Loughran

Secretary : Lewis Norris

Treasurer : Richard Kemball-Cook

Chairman Community Service Cttee : David Barton

Chairman International Service Cttee : Viv Pritchard

Chairman Vocational Cttee : Mary McGeary

Chairman Membership Cttee : Martin Ward

Chairman Awards Cttee : Tim Brett

Chairman Centenary Cttee : Stephen Thompson

Chairman Foundation Cttee : Alistair Scott

Chairman Fundraising Cttee : Tony Loughran

Elected Members of Club Council

Peter Hermitage

Martin ward

Bob Anderson

Co-opted Members of Club Council

Viv Pritchard

David Barton

Mary McGeary

Minute Secretary ex officio - Caroline Lees

Presidents report 2019-2020

At the time of writing, this Rotary year feels incomplete as a result of the outbreak of Covid 19.

I feel that it has been a successful and enjoyable year for Members, although we were saddened by the death of Marjorie Lyle, a long serving member, and her husband Lawrence.

At the start of the new Rotary year, having received feedback from many Members, I sought to increase the diversity of events to freshen up the normal Club meetings and to encourage new members to join. These events included:

- Art and Craft Day with the assistance of Inner Wheel.
- A Club meeting in Barham Village Hall after a trip to Barham Vineyard.
- A local amateur singing group (Lemon Zingers) at the start of a Rotary meeting.
- A 1.5 hour talk by a local historian (John Buss) on Lawrence of Arabia
- An evening playing Bat and Trap in the garden of a Canterbury pub

These 'President's Events' required the help of David Barton and his team to organise and the Club is appreciative of their efforts.

The Rotary year started well with another successful Duck Race in Canterbury. This is great publicity for the Club, as well as a major fundraising activity, and it was great to see many Members involved with the planning of the event as well as being present on the day.

It was great to see all the great work that Members do behind the scenes, many of which are too numerous to mention. This included the Innovation Competition organised by Brian Dobinson and his team; there were over 100 mock interviews held at the Abbey Faversham and Spires Academy, with 12 Members taking part at each school.

Throughout the year I have tried ensured that the incoming President is fully aware of all activities I have been involved with in my year, and we have also produced a President's handbook for future years. In addition, there is now a full explanation of our monthly accounts available for all Members.

The outbreak of Covid 19 throughout the world required action to safeguard the membership. From seeing the spread of the virus initially in Italy and then throughout the rest of Europe, it became clear that we needed to end the normal Rotary meetings. Working with Club Council, the Club meetings were ended as from 13 March 2020. I believe that we were the first Club to close in District 1120. UK lockdown measures were then brought in as from 23 March 2020.

The Lockdown also necessitated the cancellation of the annual Pentangular event which had been planned to be in Leuven in May 2020. This is a great shame, as many Members like attending the Pentangular events.

With the Covid 19 lockdown measures being implement, and the associated hardship this caused to the local population, many Members of the Club donated to Canterbury Foodbank and also the Club voted for the release of various funds to support the Prince of Wales Youth Club in their efforts to feed healthy packed lunches to disadvantaged local children.

The Club has adapted to this new environment, with the normal Tuesday meetings replaced by meetings by an IT solution (Zoom) on smart phones and computers. The Club is grateful to Richard Kemball – Cook for arranging these meetings and Members are rapidly getting up to speed with the new technology. We await to see when normal meetings can be resumed, but it is anticipated that this will not be for many months to come.

Looking back on the year, I hope that when the lockdown measures are relaxed, the great work done by Members can be picked up again. In particular the continuation of the fund raising by Bob Anderson and Deborah Connelly for the Honey Bears Nursery.

The Club is grateful to Peter Hermitage for leading a brain storming discussion on the future of the Club. We will need to look into this further when normal meetings are resumed, in order to encourage more members and continue to make meetings more diverse.

The fundraising and the variety of events that are arranged by Club Members has again been excellent and these are summarised in the following Club Committee reports.

It has been a pleasure to serve as President for 2019/2020 and I wish my successor, Alan Mepstead all the best wishes when he takes up the role in July 2020.

Neil Fraser

11th May 2020

Club Service Committee

This Committee is the backbone of the club and brings together all the unsung members who do so much to oil the wheels.

Raj Dasan performed with unfailing good humour the duties and problems of Dining Club Secretary, balancing the numbers of those who turn up for lunch unannounced with those who forget to turn up at all.

Julie Rezza produced a splendid monthly newsletter, excellent articles on the website and kept the club well informed on everything that happened.

Philip Abbott was Speakers Secretary for the first half of the year and then passed this task over to Maxine Blades and Dee Mepstead. Many thanks to all three for producing an excellent range of speakers.

Mention must also be made of Alan Forrest (Archivist), Ken Beere (Bursar), David Lewis (Almoner) and Robin Vickers (Membership) who all made invaluable contributions, not only in their specific roles but to our general debates.

We were pleased to welcome David Barton to two of our meetings to discuss Assistance to less able Rotarians, which is something we must not lose sight of.

It is the tradition that the President Elect sits as Chair of the committee and it has been my privilege to do so this year. Sincere and grateful thanks to all its members.

Alan Mepstead

COMMUNITY SERVICE COMMITTEE

REPORT TO Club AGM May 2020

The Community Service Committee has established its terms of reference as assisting people with grants of up to £1,000 to individuals, organisations & charities and with a strong local Canterbury connection.

The Covid -19 Pandemic has changed our perspective with the closure of the club and Zoom Meetings starting in March. The decision making process has been effectively simplified during the emergency with control of the much reduced charitable funds carried out by Club Council. This leaves little for the spending committees to do at present. The Community Service Committee funds have been reduced to zero by a donation to the Prince of Wales Youth Club and a sum ring-fenced for the Honey Bears Project when the project reactivates. We await developments.

David Barton

Report of the International Service Committee

The Terms of Reference of the International Service Committee are:

- 1. To respond to international emergencies, especially in the developing world and donate money to the disaster relief organisations such as Shelterbox, Aquabox and WaterAid.*
- 2. To support local charities which have an international perspective and who seek to alleviate water shortage, poverty, homelessness, job creation and inadequate education in Third World Countries.*
- 3. To seek out new appropriate charities that might benefit from our donation scheme. The awarding of grants is based on agreed criteria. These criteria will be reviewed periodically.*
- 4. To support the establishment of new small private enterprises in the developing world through participation in the microcredit scheme, Lend with Care.*
- 5. To participate fully in Rotary Pentangular Projects.*

During the year, donations worth £3,357 were made to Shelterbox (equivalent to six boxes) in response to appeals for disaster relief for Syrian refugees and for victims of the floods following Hurricane Dorian in the Bahamas. A large element of the money for shelterboxes was secured through individual donations.

The committee has been delegated by the club to use the proceeds of the weekly raffle to make donations to specific charities operating in developing countries. In addition to Shelterbox, donations were made to WaterAid and to Aquabox.

A number of other donations were made by the committee to support a variety of smaller charities. Generally donations of £300-£500 each were made to: Open your Heart to Bhutan, WasteAid, Chipembele, Rotary Club of Dhaka, Tools for Self Reliance, Transaid and Team Tanzania. We are developing a longer term relationship with key charities, and I hope that some of these organisations will approach us to support new projects and initiatives in the future.

The committee's total investment in Lend with Care is £2,000. A very large number of small loans have been made to small enterprises around the world and, as loans are repaid, the money is directed to support new enterprises. Our £2,000 investment has been used and reused to make a total of £5,900 worth of loans. The summary on the Lend with Care website shows that, to date, 199 loans have been awarded, 1014 entrepreneurs have been helped, 3124 family members have benefited and 705 jobs have been created.

At present, the priority of the committee is to ensure the successful completion of the Joint Pentangular Project – JPP3 Juba School Bursaries. Funding has now been

secured to honour our commitment to the students to enable them to complete their 4 year courses, scheduled for December 2020. However, not surprisingly, the Juba School has been affected by the Corona virus pandemic and it is not clear yet how the disruption will affect the remainder of the school year. We look forward to supporting the next Pentangular Project, which is being promoted by the Saint Quentin Club, to help the care and teaching of deaf children in Chisinau, Moldova.

The impact of the Corona virus pandemic has been very severe on the club and its ability to raise funds to support charities. I anticipate that the impact on developing countries, with poor health infrastructure, may well be catastrophic. Many charitable organisations will struggle to maintain their past level of service and I anticipate that international charities will be particularly badly hit. It is imperative that we do what we can to continue to follow the Rotary tradition and do what we can to support the poor and needy worldwide.

I should like to thank all the members of the committee who have contributed to a successful year, by participating in stimulating discussions and exploring new ideas.

Viv Pritchard
Chairman
May 2020

Vocational Committee Annual Report 2019-2020

Vocational Services have continued with the work of reaching out to schools and young people in the Canterbury area.

COMPETITIONS

ESU- Churchill National Public Speaking Competition -East Kent Finals

In February 2020 the Rotary Club of Canterbury, assisted by the ladies of Inner Wheel, hosted this competition run by the English Speaking Union at the Guildhall Canterbury. The competition aims to encourage young people to engage with topical issues and gain confidence in public speaking. Overall winners were Folkestone School for Girls. The winning Speaker was from Roger Manwood School Sandwich, the winning Chairperson was from Folkestone School for Girls and the winning Questioner was from St Edmund's School Canterbury,

PRIMARY SCHOOLS CHRISTMAS/WINTER THEMED WRITING COMPETITION

In January/February book tokens were awarded to the prize winners from four Canterbury schools.

Pilgrims Way Primary Canterbury

Blean Primary School

St John's CofE Primary Canterbury

Kent College Junior School

F1 in SCHOOLS

Team Evolve UK from Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School Faversham came first in the World Finals of the F1 in Schools Competition held in Abu Dhabi. Besides providing financial support for Team Evolve we provided encouragement and support in the presentation of their work. In December 2019 members of Canterbury Rotary were invited to a Thank You evening at the school where they had the chance to meet the new team TEAM ECLIPSE which we will be sponsoring. Team ECLIPSE have already won a 1st prize in the regional finals. The National Finals due to be held in April in Bristol have under the present circumstances had to be postponed. In February the Club was delighted to be awarded the status of Gold Sponsor for its support of the team.

UPSKILLING -MOCK INTERVIEWS

At the invitation of schools we have continued the work of upskilling students by conducting practice interview sessions. Earlier in the Rotary year interviews were conducted at Spires Academy Canterbury and The Abbey School Faversham. Owing to the unprecedented circumstances at present we have had to put on hold our visit to Simon Langton's Girls School (24th March) and Canterbury College.

STEM(Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics)

Several fellow Rotarians have become Stem Ambassadors this year working mainly with CCU on Stem Work Projects as group facilitators . Next year we would like to increase our commitment to working with the University in this area.

Inspiring Minds (Working with Kent & Medway Collaborative Outreach Programme)

Inspiring Minds is a research project coming out of Christchurch University designed to develop confident scholars who can produce and present science and engineering projects while building their understanding of how to address questions at the frontiers of current knowledge. In December a representative of The Rotary Club of Canterbury joined students from 12 Kent Schools at CCU Enterprise Centre for various science related workshops .

INNOVATION

Due to present circumstances we have put on hold the Innovation Competition 2020 and will revisit this in the autumn however at the time of writing Brian and Julie are exploring the idea of an online competition for our time open to all Secondary School Students in Kent . A virtual meeting with Christchurch University Representatives will be held on Monday 11th May with a view to moving forward on this.

VISITS

Owing to 'lockdown' it hasn't been possible to undertake all the outings we were planning for Spring and Summer . As someone who was very much looking forward to spending summer afternoons and evenings with fellow Rotarians exploring new places in Kent and indeed Essex I am a little bit disappointed but I am hopeful that when all this is but a distant memory we will be once again be able to be together and enjoy both companionship and visits.

Earlier in the Rotary year thanks to Mike we had a lovely afternoon travelling on the Tendterden Steam Train - fish & chips drinks and entertainment on board.

In October thanks to Alan we had a guided visit to the Kent Masonic Museum in Canterbury .

THANKS

I would like to thank all members of our team for their advice, support and invaluable input to Vocational Services this year.

Mary MCGEARY

Membership Committee Report: 2019-2020

As the new chair of the Membership Committee I would love to be writing in my first annual report that the President's ambition for five new members during the year had been met and that we had more in the pipeline. But, this Rotary Year, like life elsewhere, has been blown off course by the COVID-19 crisis. It is an inevitable consequence that the club's membership drive has suffered, too.

Whilst three potential new members were identified early in the year, none has progressed due to the current lockdown restrictions. I am pleased to say, however, two are still interested in joining.

The Duck Race in September was used as a showcase for Rotary in Canterbury. We utilised the Sunrise Club's Rotary branded gazebo, got bespoke printed leaflets and used the District 1120 membership banners.

But let us go back to the start of President Neil's year at the helm of our club. The newly constituted Membership Committee met to agree a framework to take us forward over the next few years, including the club's centenary. The committee agreed three guiding principles concerning membership:

- Recruitment
- Retention
- Motivation

At the heart of the discussions was how the club should evolve to attract new members, how it retains existing members and how it motivates members to achieve the club's goals. All these, though, are set against the reality of declining membership due to death, infirmity, and caring responsibilities.

We are part of our local community and part of the reason we exist is to support that community, but how does the community view us? What would make someone want to join? How do we sell the: "What do I get out of it?"

Peter Hermitage offered to facilitate a club-wide brainstorming session on the future of the club, and this was delivered in early March, shortly before the lockdown. The intention to follow-up and advance the process, like so much else in life, is now on hold.

But what will the new 'normal' be? If social distancing is to continue into next year, what will this mean for our traditional meetings? Indeed, when will we next be able to hold what we know as a 'traditional meeting'?

Rotary is an organisation based on Fellowship. What then will membership mean if we cannot meet face to face? What do we do to attract new members without the essential element of Fellowship? All questions that require answers that, twelve months ago, we would never consider having to ask.

How, in the post coronavirus world, will our club sell the: "What do I get out of it?"

Martin Ward, Chair of Membership Committee

The Rotary Club of Canterbury Millennium Scholarship Trust Fund

Members may know that the original Trustees of this small charity were the Club President, Secretary and Treasurer supported by an Administrator. During 2018 the team was widened to include the President Elect, Immediate Past President with the addition of 3 Club members who were voted on to the Board of Trustees for a term of 3 years, all in line with the Charity Commission Scheme.

The new team project objectives were to explore a fresh approach and to encourage grant applications for those meeting the requirement from within the local community. Trustees were encouraged with 10 grants made to young people during the last financial year undertaking charitable work abroad with recognised organisations. An additional small grant was also made for educational purposes.

Last autumn members were treated to a very polished PowerPoint presentation given by 4 students from Kent College who talked about their environmental experiences and research that they undertook in support of the community during their expedition to a coastal area of Honduras. Members were certainly impressed and there is no doubt that these students gained so much from their experiences.

During this financial year 7 grants covering the main charity objective have been approved and 2 of these relate to young people who were already abroad on their charitable work before the pandemic struck. I am now receiving news that some and possibly all of the remaining 5 hoping to travel during this summer have been advised that their visits have been cancelled.

This is disappointing for these young people who have been fund raising and organising for many months in anticipation of their expeditions. We have found that the visits are often more focussed on worldwide environmental issues and concerns and several were hoping that their experiences would benefit their future studies and careers and even for one help with material for her dissertation at Canterbury Christchurch University.

It is always inspiring when we Trustees interview applicants. We learn so much from the activities they hope to be involved with and the expectations of the young people. We knew for example nothing about coral repair before meeting Lucy. The Trustees are often able to share something of their own experiences with applicants and that is the strength of the current Board of Trustees.

Last summer Club Members approved a grant to the Prince of Wales Youth Club to assist in the costs of their members travel to Snowdonia in line with the Scheme objectives. Members have recently again agreed a grant to the Youth Club from the Charity funds in support of packed lunches and extras for in need local children and families in the community.

The journey with this small charity is always interesting and varied and I appreciate the kind help and support that the Trustee team have given in making a success of this Charity.

Trustees: Neil Fraser; Lewis Norris; Stephen Thompson; Alan Mepstead; Margaret Griffin; Graham Bough; Peer Le Fleming; Roger Power.

Roger Power
Chairman

7th May 2020