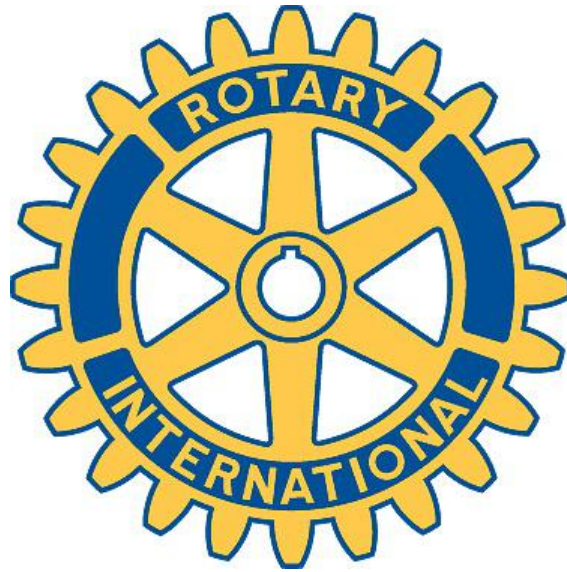


**September 2020**



**Bramhall & Woodford Rotary Club**

**1<sup>st</sup> July to 30<sup>th</sup> September**

## Harry's Homily Mk II

Well, here we are again!

I'm back at the helm of our outstanding club and despite the background of Covid 19 and its many inconveniences I'm really enjoying it. There is an irrepressible spirit among our members who while being entirely law-abiding are finding ways to be active Rotarians and to help those less fortunate than ourselves.

We have at last been able to go out into the community and collect funds for charities. Spearheaded by Ian and Maggie and with a great deal of practical help from Pete, Santa's Float was transformed into a pirate galleon crewed by our scarecrows Billy Bow and Bella Bramhall and accompanied by a variety of scurvy crew members. We toured the areas covered by Santa's own rounds to the huge delight of loads of children, many of whom were keen to engage our pirate helpers in swordplay! Best of all we collected very nearly £3,000 over the seven days of activity. Away from fundraising, the fun side of Rotary has flourished thanks to Zoom and the members' imaginations. We have had a string of good speakers, the banter has flowed, and we have even had a virtual wine and cheese evening, to be followed by a virtual guide to Thai food.

To my mind the most important benefit of the Covid 19 restrictions has been the flowering of a multitude of local self-help groups. Bramhall has benefited enormously from the group of people who formed Helping Hands Bramhall at the beginning of lockdown. We have supported them throughout and now they are returning the compliment. The Pirate event would have been very much less successful without their help. People have discovered what we already knew, that helping others is very rewarding and I believe that it is in Rotary's interest to foster links between us and these organisations, as we have in Bramhall.

We have gained a new member as a direct result of this co-operation. Mark Ewing and I met while we were bashing balsam in Bramhall Park in a joint venture with Helping Hands. He had already considered doing more for charity and our conversation in the rain provided the opening he needed. Welcome aboard, Mark! Finally, a big thumbs up to Ian for his tireless work in publicising the club. Those who receive Inside Bramhall will have seen the scarecrow on the cover and an article about our piracy inside. Thousands of others will also see what we can do even during the plague.

Harry

## July 1<sup>st</sup> – Handover

The 30 minute chat time which precedes all our Zoom meetings got off to a rocky start as new President Harry struggled to open the meeting for Bramhall and Woodford Rotary Club. Old hand Michael eventually opened the meeting as he has done since lockdown began and problems were ironed out later.

Twenty two people attended the meeting including guests, Paul Scullion, Assistant District Governor, Jennifer Dowson, a past member and Sheila Hardman, wife of a past member of Stockport Lamplighters.

The meeting proper began with Michael wearing his President's chain of office and Harry wearing his Vice President's chain, the first time they've been seen together for a very long time. We began on a very sad note with Michael asking for a few minutes' quiet contemplation after the very recent death of Janet, Satish's lovely wife. We will all miss her and hope that we can support Satish at such sad time.

Michael then summed up his year, recalling all the brilliant Rotary events which had taken place both money raising and Social until Covid lockdown and how we barely missed a beat in setting up Zoom meetings and keeping contact as always once we all began to isolate ourselves. He also reminded us of the very welcome addition to our club of 9 new members from the Hazel Grove club. We are all enjoying getting to know them all despite the limitations of the pandemic.

Harry then gave us his report as new President, stressing how proud he was of how our club had coped with such challenging times. He set out three tasks for us for the coming year;

To find a way of reaching the public and raising funds in a way safe for all.

To find ways in which we could meet face to face, safely and legally.

To recruit new, keen members in the light of the greater charitable spirit aroused in the area during the pandemic.

He looks forward to a successful year with an excellent team of chairmen and members.

Reports from all the new committee chairmen then followed with just a slight interruption as the President's chain miraculously arrived and replaced the one around Harry's neck together with a very liberal spraying of Dettol, much to his dismay. Our mascot, Quackers, received the same treatment.

Bob Preece will continue to lead Club Services after a highly successful year, finding us interesting speakers and filling every week last year. He hopes that we can return to our former meeting pattern of one committee week, one speaker week, one social week and one covered by club members as it becomes expensive and difficult to find speakers willing to meet with us on Zoom.

Sarah suggested we adopt breakout rooms on Zoom during committee nights and come together for a final summing up. This will be investigated.

Ashok asked how secure Zoom was and Michael said that he felt there had been problems initially but that now it was really secure.

Steve Littlewood then spoke to us as the new leader of Community Services. He hoped that we could soon return to fund raising and our links with Bramhall High School and Walthew House, as well as helping other charitable groups such as The Methodist Church at their Thursday Club. He hoped to work closely with the Ways and Means team.

Dev expressed a wish that we should work more closely with the food banks. There was a feeling that they were receiving lots of help locally but Sarah pointed out that with demands up 80% more help was probably needed. Michael suggested that we tried to invent other ways of supporting the food banks rather than joining Helping Hands who already have huge numbers of helpers.

Maggie Hill spoke as chairman of the Ways and Means Committee. She hoped that as well as keeping in mind all our usual money raising community events for when it was safe to resume them, she would try, with her team, to invent some new events where safe distancing could be observed. She also pointed out that this year we could not rely on help from struggling shops and businesses and support would have to come from the public.

The problem of safely handling cash collected was raised. Dev pointed out that we should leave it for 4 hours before counting when any virus should be dead, and wear gloves. Money could be thrown into buckets.

Ari as new chairman of International told us that international work would be more important than ever this year with the whole world fighting the same problem. He would like to continue to support polio eradication, support water aid and COVID related problems as well as continue our links with Kasese and Lend with Care.

Sadly, there were no volunteers to head our Social Committee initially but Sue and Michael agreed to share the task at very short notice. They hoped that we could think of some more events as successful as Sue's socially distanced cheese and wine evening.

Ian Dobson saw his task for this year as keeping the public engaged with Rotary at a time when our coverage of events on Facebook and other social media had been increasingly successful year on year. He felt that as lockdown eased we would have to regain the public's confidence in attending our events.

Sue Preece remains as treasurer with Michael's assistance and she gave us her report of how our finances stand.

John Sykes continues as our very able Secretary.

Sue and Harry both thanked club members for their huge generosity in personally boosting club funds in these unique times.

It was decided that it was time to investigate further the possibility of meeting again at Ladybrook Residents Club.

Paul Scullion congratulated Harry on being made President and thanked Michael for his excellent year. He promised to circulate information as to how other clubs were coping with the COVID situation in terms of money raising and social gatherings. He suggested that a treasure hunt ending with a Zoom meeting was an excellent solution.

AOB:

We agreed that we should support St Anne's hospice again as a thank you for the care given to Janet.

Ian told us that Sid and Sally May be putting their Bramhall house up for sale as Sid was not too well now, particularly suffering with his memory.

Harry finally welcomed Sheila and hoped that one day he might persuade her to join us.

Jennifer agreed that the continuation of Zoom meeting would suit her very well. She had been forced to leave us due to hearing problems and the acoustics of the Ladybridge club. She agreed to re-join and to be a member of the Ways and Means committee, much to the author's delight.

With the final toast Harry looked forward to an excellent year and Rotary and Peace the World Over.

Maggie.



## July 8th – History of The Christie

Another Wednesday, another Zoom meeting, this time on 8th July 2020. As usual, bar chatter from 7.30 to 8pm, with updates about the funeral of Janet Mehta, and a viewing of the Preece's dog, which seems to be getting larger as pups do, but not yet learning much about obedience! Dev confirmed that the cases he saw recently of Covid 19 suggested that the impact of the disease was getting less severe. President Harry announced that the assigned Bulletin writer was unable to attend, at which point an immediate hush ensued. I must have been the first to flinch, so off I went to get paper and pen. Perhaps this will give me some immunity over the next months, but somehow I doubt it.

Our speaker for the evening was David Poppitt. David acknowledged that he had a most unusual surname, which had originated in Wales. David himself was born in Cardiff, and the family later moved to Salford. David is a keen rugby fan and past player. He went to medical school in Manchester, and through this came into contact with the Christie. He was very impressed with the work that went on there, and found it a very desirable place of employment, not least because it had 5:1 female to male staff! He worked at the Christie for 32 years before retiring.

The Christie came into being following the death of Sir Joseph Whitworth in 1887, who left a large sum of money to be disbursed through 3 legatees, one of whom was Richard Christie, a medical doctor. Christie had noticed the prevalence of some workplace cancers, including mule spinners' cancer and chimney sweeps' cancer. He believed that exposure to workplace contaminants, oils and soot in these cases, were responsible. Christie chaired a committee to look into these issues in 1890, and with an additional legacy from Daniel Proctor, set up the Christie Pavilion in 1892, which was "a home for incurables". This centre was initially at the site of the now MRI, which itself was then in the Piccadilly area of Manchester.

David has always seen The Christie as an amazing hospital, full of friendly staff doing wonderful things. Christie himself died in 1901 and the Christie Pavilion became a hospital, privately funded. The Holt Radium Centre was part of the hospital, and radiotherapy is still an important part of the clinical tools at The Christie. The Christie is now part of the NHS and has its own 'government'.

Cancer is mainly a disease associated with aging. Its incidence in Africa is low, because the average age is only 42, whereas malaria is a tremendous problem. Surgery is the primary treatment for cancer, with radiation therapy next in significance. With cancer it is a patient's own cells that go wrong, and there is no outside agent as in bacterial infections for doctors to target. It is known that the oxygen levels in cancer cells are lower than in healthy cells and measures to increase the oxygen level in a patient makes radiation more effective. This oxygen effect is not applicable in neutron therapy. Treatment by neutrons, with an enormously expensive machine, may take up to 4 hours per session, whereas an X-Ray treatment session is typically 10 minutes.

David became very interested in chemotherapy, and it quickly became apparent that there was no single chemical agent that successfully treated all cancers. There is no 'magic bullet', and each therapy has to be chosen for a particular cancer, even for a particular patient. Natural sources such as plants are still prime sources of anti-cancer drugs.

In his later career David became responsible for improving the public image and awareness of The Christie, and this developed into a fund-raising charity to advance new treatments. Legacies are a big source of income, and in 2019 contributed £15million to the £37 million raised.

David sees gene therapy and immunotherapy as two really important ways forward in future to treat cancers.

There followed several questions emphasising the critical nature of early and accurate diagnosis. Harry emphasised the importance of PSA testing of men for early signs of prostate cancer. Helping families as well as patients was an important part of cancer treatment.

David was thanked for a most interesting and enthusiastic talk, in which he not only told us much about the medical work at The Christie, but also about the happy and at times playful environment (never, of course, to the detriment of a patient!).

Maggie reminded us that some more volunteers would be helpful for next week's "Would I Lie To You?" session.

The final toast ended the evening at 9.10pm.

Dennis

## July 15th – Would I lie to You?

Harry opened the meeting with a few apologies and birthday greetings for Steve, David Rose and Denise last week.

We had a visitor in Walter Thomas (ex Poynton Rotary, now Disaster Aid).

Harry sought expert brainpower to help in a water desalination project - but not surprisingly failed to find any.

Control then passed to Maggie to run the evening's main event. We started with Maggie's claim "When I was little I almost caused my mum and dad to look for me as a lost person". After probing questions I thought it was true and it was! Next came Chris with "When the A55 first opened how fast could you go? Late at night I got to 178mph" Another lie detected - this is easy methinks. Sue came up with "I once took the family white water rafting in Uganda". Graphic description of this mad adventure convinced us it was true - and it was. 100% so far.

Peter's face appeared for a moment but disappeared and was not seen again.

Maggie then introduced the Person round using a photograph



Ian claimed that the person, John, was a fellow roadie to Slade.

Harry claimed John came on his honeymoon.

Maggie said John was a teacher in the next classroom when she started teaching.

Much questioning followed and a vote taken with Maggie and Ian clearly in the top two. Unfortunately it was Harry telling the truth - John did indeed go on their honeymoon! A wrong one for me!

Bob Preece was next with his assertion that "50 years ago, almost to the day, I climbed Kilimanjaro with a friend". There was much technical questioning including asking for details about the sign at the summit and I thought Bob was pretty credible. But Bob did not climb Kilimanjaro. Got this one wrong!



Steve then claimed "I once played snooker against Steve Davies when he was world champion and I beat him". Well, Steve was very convincing especially in that it was a doubles match and he only got the winning pot. But another lie! Not such an easy game after all! Down to 50% now!

As time was moving on and we can only take so long for a Zoom session (it is surprisingly wearing) we stopped there.

Next week the speaker is supposed to be Ari - but he is off to Wales! Watch you emails for news. Next week's bulletin writer is Bob Lewis.

The final toast concluded a splendid session attended by 22 people at peak.

Michael

## July 22<sup>nd</sup> - Changes in our lifetime

Following half an hour of chat the meeting commenced at 20.01 hours. There were 18 members present. Details of the funeral of our good friend Janet Mehta were noted and we sent Satish our very best wishes at this sad time. We continue to rely on Dennis to keep us in touch.

Apologies were received from Ari and Tony J. Two birthdays were mentioned – Denise and Peter R's.

R members briefly talked about the changes we have seen in our lifetimes. Ron M started us off talking about cars of yesterday, and in particular the iconic Mini. He reminded us of the need to have starting handles and 'eing' mirrors. I also had a mini – my pride and joy and I thought it was quite sophisticated! Ron, on the other hand had a rather bleaker picture of his mini provided by his employer. The heater in the mini was a 'extra'. Ron complained that there was no cooling system – I just slide the door window open! Next was Maggie. After a bit of domestic confusion we saw pictures of her taking a class for her final teaching assessment. She noted that all the children were sitting at individual desks. Later in her teaching life children sat in groups whereas today children again tend to sit at individual desks. Black boards have gone and instead teachers have white boards. Bob S used his voice synthesizer but sadly it was difficult at times to hear. Years ago this type of aid would not have been available. Bob spent 47 years in the insurance business. Bob went on to explain briefly his own experiences and in particular when he was diagnosed with M.N. He knows his life has a limited future. It was a very moving story and there was silence at the end of his presentation. We all admire the way he still participates fully in the Club activities. Dev commented on his determination and his use of technology to communicate with us.

Sue talked about how our language has, and continues to change. In a very well prepared presentation commented that years ago meals were largely taken at set times, our meals were smaller and generally we had smaller waistlines. Of course what we ate was different too and the language we use today had different meanings. For example: A takeaway was a mathematical term, a pizza was to do with a leaning tower, curry was a surname and a Chinese chippy was a foreign carpenter. Crisps can with or without salt, often with a little twist of salt in the bag. Oil was for lubricating and fat was for cooking. Fish didn't have fingers and water came out of a tap and not a bottle. Chris was next to speak and he reminded us of the changes in the ways we communicate. Remember the pencil and paper (and inkwells at school). The early 'golf ball' typewriters and the huge changes in the types and power of the technology we use to today.

This presentation then turned to how we keep our photographs and whether we look at them more in digital or printed form Michael L explained the many ways you can store your photos digitally.

And so an enjoyable evening came to an end at 21.23 hours.

Robert Lewis

## July 29th - Alan Turing

After the usual and enjoyable 30 minute preamble prior to the official start of the meeting, we were joined by Neil Sheldon for his talk on Alan Turing. This was in-depth, detailed and fascinating and so quite difficult to precis. I later find that Neil holds some impressive academic and professional qualifications and taught mathematics at Manchester Grammar School for 43 years.

Neil has been giving this talk for many years and commented that at first, he introduced the talk “as being about someone you have probably never heard of”, unlike today where he is a much better-known person. Turing was a genius and the talk has grown as more has been learnt about him. Neil first came across him when studying philosophy and logic at university as being the originator of both the ‘Turing Test’ and the ‘Turing Machine’. In Turing’s Royal Society obituary in 1955 it just stated that “his sudden death had deprived science and mathematics of a great original mind at the height of its power”. This was followed by - “in 1939 and for the following six years he was fully occupied with his duties for the Foreign Office”. At the time of his death, his work over that period was still top secret.

Neil then told us about Turing’s early life, his father was in the Indian Civil Service and so he went to boarding school in England. We were told of his arrival at Sherbourne School from the family home in France. This coincided with the General Strike and so he had to hire a bicycle, buy a map and cycle there from Southampton, a two-day journey. This feat was celebrated in his centenary year with a cycle ride by the students along the route. Turing was not academically good at Sherbourne, bottom of the class in some subjects but good at maths. It was found that he could solve mathematical problems without being taught how to do so, he just created the method, as he went along.

A close friend Christopher Morcom did make it to Cambridge but died of TB in 1930. Turing had to retake examinations but made it to King’s College in 1931. He blossomed there, to the extent that he was invited to present a paper to the Moral Sciences Club, a philosophical society. This was doubly rare as he was an undergraduate, and not studying philosophy. An overview of the ‘Turing Machine’ (1936) was given, the theory of a machine, (never built) which was to form the basis of all computers today, to show that ‘what a human could do, a machine could do’. (writer’s comment – not possible to adequately summarise here). In 1938, after a spell at Princeton, where he actually built a computer, he was recruited to Bletchley Park. The Germans were using the Enigma machine, which whilst being on open sale, and so not ‘secret’ had the ability to have billions of settings and so the resultant encryption was considered unbreakable.

Turing designed ‘The Bombe’ an electromechanical machine based upon Polish work on code breaking, using a ‘crib’. Basically, this was using a known phrase in a message, to find what Enigma setting would produce it. An example given, was that German messages would often start with ‘Fort’ – German abbreviation of fortsetzung, meaning ‘continuation’. Libraries were built up of these ‘cribs’ along with the fact that Enigma could never encrypt a letter as itself. From 1940 until the end of the war, huge volumes of messages were decrypted without the Germans ever being

aware. This was of great significance with regard to allied convoys, and the sinking of enemy submarines.

The film 'The Imitation Game', and its numerous inaccuracies, was discussed by Neil. Turing was engaged to Joan Clark, who knew of his homosexuality, but no one else knew. If they had, he would have been dismissed, 'and Britain may have lost the war' !! The engagement was broken off however, as Turing thought it would be unfair to both of them. Turing also developed secure voice communication, 'scrambling', to allow safe communication between UK and USA. At the end of the war, an OBE followed and a move to the National Physical Laboratory and there his ability in running was noted. Turing was good enough to have made the Olympic Team for the marathon, had an injury not stopped him. More work on computers followed, general purpose machines that were programmable. He also insisted in binary notation, not decimal that the Americans used.

A move then to Manchester in 1948, Deputy Director of the Computing Lab at Manchester University. Turing became chief programmer on their MOSI machine. 'The Turing Test' was published in the magazine 'Mind' and posed the question 'Can machines think'.

## Alan Turing

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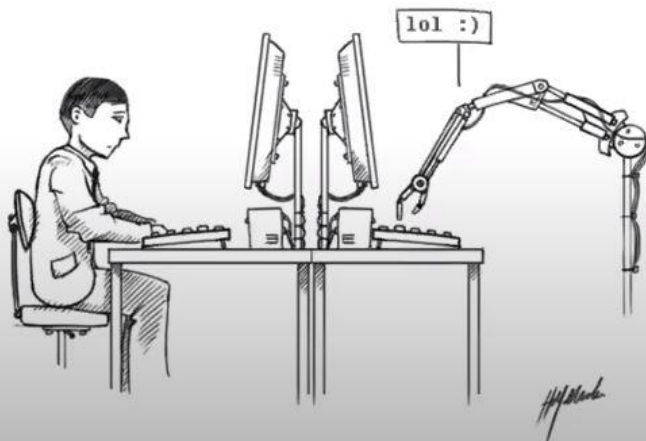
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# The Turing Test

MIND  
A QUARTERLY REVIEW  
OF  
PSYCHOLOGY AND PHILOSOPHY

I.—COMPUTING MACHINERY AND  
INTELLIGENCE

By A. M. TURING



I propose to consider  
the question "can  
machines think?"

The darkest period in the Turing story started in January 1952 on Oxford Street, Manchester when Turing met and started a conversation with Arnold Murray, an unemployed petty criminal. They met several times subsequently in Turing's Wilmslow home. Murray asked Turing for money and the house was burgled shortly after. Turing reported this and openly told of his relationship with Murray, whom he thought responsible. Murray and Turing were subsequently tried in Wilmslow

Magistrates Court for gross indecency and then subsequently at Knutsford. He was given a choice between prison or probation and treatment with oestrogen injections and took the latter. This had a profound effect on Turing both physically and mentally and he lost his security clearance too. He was also denied entry into the US.

More important work followed at Manchester University on non-linear systems requiring powerful computers and Manchester was by then one of the leading centres for computing. Turing developed an explanation of the mathematics underlying the biochemical mechanisms leading to patterns in nature - zebra stripes etc., 'how does the animals body know how to pigment cells'. More recent work in 2012 proved Turing correct.

Two years after his conviction he was found dead in bed, at Hollymead, Adlington Road, Wilmslow of cyanide poisoning, with a half-eaten apple next to him. The official verdict was suicide, but various theories range from suicide, to murder or accident. We were shown a report of his death in the Manchester Guardian. He was 41 years old.

In 2013 Turing was given a Royal Pardon. Turing's Law 2017 pardoned all 60,000 gay men convicted under same law. Voted greatest person of the 20st Century and in 2021 he will be featured on the new £50 note. There followed a summation of, and comments on, all his many achievements.

This was, in my opinion, one of the best talks that we have had.

Chris Monkhouse

## August 3<sup>rd</sup> - Committees

President Harry opened the meeting at 8.00pm, welcomed everyone and requested we raise our glasses to wish Happy Birthday to Tony Johnson on 7th, and Sarah Ball on 8th August.

Apologies were received from Bob Stevenson who is in France packing up before putting his property on the market. John Meeus who was preparing for Mary returning home tomorrow. Bruce Bissell who is in Switzerland and Sarah Ball, who had attended the earlier Community Services Meeting but was unable to stay for this one.

### Community Services

Steve had chaired an earlier meeting with his group to discuss funding requests and to put forward suggestions of charities and beneficiaries for money raised from the proposed Pirates week.

Dennis suggested helping food banks as he thought a lot of people in the Stockport area are currently struggling and many more would in the future as furlough payments ceased. It was felt that lots of local churches and Helping Hands were already doing a lot in this area

Dennis also thought that mental health charities may need additional support as a result of the current situation. It was acknowledged that we had previously helped Beacon and Satish said that he would get information about the Charity Mind.

When you Wish upon a Star was considered but it was felt that a only a limited number of children would benefit, that funds were low at the moment and that there are a lot of travel restrictions because of Covid.

Sue suggested Pure insight and Maggie suggested women's Refuge.

Bob Lewis suggested Stockport Without Abuse,( they may have received funds from a previous Duck Race?)

A question was posed - how do we know how the money we donate is spent?

Perhaps we should be asking people to come back and tell us how they have spent it. Sue said that she had had a message from Farouk who would like to inform us via Zoom how they had spent the money we gave.

Facebook is evidently a platform for tracking what local charities are doing. You can 'like or follow' a page and it will automatically pop up next time you log in. As Sarah was the only person who was on Facebook on the committee she 'Volunteered' to flag up local issues. Harry stated that he could provide us with several pages and mentioned Angela Birch who runs a page for small charity events in Stockport. Harry said that he would pass on relevant pages to everybody and added that things were pretty quiet at the moment.

A council meeting on Monday would decide.

### Ways and Means Committee

Unless we are in strict lockdown we are planning to have a Pirate event using a float 14th -19th September where we can collect money. We are not planning to knock on doors, but request the public to throw money into the treasure chest on the float or into buckets held by pirates. This event will possibly be between 4.00 pm - 5.00 pm for 6 days. A lot of advertising would be required.

Many shopkeepers want to do a scarecrow festival again following the Pirate theme. Maggie said that she was able to get the scarecrow kits, that people could buy, or they could just make their own and give a donation.

At least eight people (dressed as pirates) would be required to walk with the float. Possibly four Rotarians and four Helping Hands volunteers would be needed each day as well as a driver.

Maggie has had five Rotary volunteers so far.

The float can be dressed in the big garage, props to be considered, eg Cannons, Ropes, a plank, Jolly Roger Flags, treasure chests, treasure! Anything piratey especially a parrot.

At the moment there are no sweets to give out and a big van is required to tow the float. No events are planned for the village square that might interfere with social distancing if queues are forming outside shops.

It is not known yet whether we can park the van outside the Methodist Church as the new vicar is not in post until September and the office is closed until then.

The comedian Jason Mansfield has an office in Bramhall and it may be possible to get some support from him.

#### Club Services

Bob Preece stated that David Aldrich would speak next week 'Hope for Justice' he works for a Charity concerned with Slavery.

Jennifer will give her job talk the week after and the 19th is a Social night.

#### International Committee

Ari said that The Lend With Care Scheme appeared to be working well. It had to be decided when money was invested whether to donate 10% on top, to assist with running costs. By and large the same money keeps going round and round doing good things. Twinning might be considered as and when travel is allowed.

Sue had received an e mail from Albert in Kasese wishing us all well during Covid. She also stated that Farouk was now back home and would like to speak to us on zoom to tell us how he had spent the money we gave.

#### Communications

Ian Dobson is still posting on Facebook and intends publicising the Pirate Festival in the SK Magazine. He needs to know the named Charity so that he can insert this in the publicity.

#### Treasurers Report

Sue has sent out a separate e mail to all Rotarians detailing her report. Basically the general account is healthy at £2,336

Thank you to the generous Rotarians who have donated their meal money to the Charity account. Thank you also to Rotarians who donated old coins etc and Ian who has raised £405 from the sale of these.

Six people are still to pay their subs which will add another £600 to the coffers.

#### AOB

Question;- Why do we have to register for zoom again?

Ans;- in order to break into individual rooms for Committees You are required to put in a password of your own - make it up, but remember it!

Next week Ari will 'reveal all' Ron to write the Bulletin.

Council Meeting Monday 10th Aug at 8.00 pm.

Meeting ended with toast to Rotary and Peace the World Over.

Neil Loveland

## **August 12th - Ari "This is me"**

I think there were 23 members for our zoom meeting including Bob Stevenson all the way from Bordeaux.

The first talk was a "this is part of me" by Ari Tsalikis who was previously a member of the Rotary club of Hazel Grove. Ari is short for Aristides not Aristotle. As this is not a saint's name he can only celebrate his actual birth day whereas those Greeks who were named after a saint can also celebrate that day as well. Born in Greece near the town of Kavala he could look out across the Thessalonica peninsula. The military junta in 1967 changed everything and by 1973 the Monarchy was abolished. It was very difficult to lead a normal life and he was expelled from school because he did not want a military style haircut. He studied economics at Athens University where he played guitar and clarinet and sang revolutionary songs because he deeply distrusted the Army, Church and politicians. He gave blood for money so that he could enjoy a burger. He met Joan in 1974 when she was travelling through Europe with her mother. They stayed at the Tsalikis home and over several weeks the differences in cultures were ironed out. He travelled to the UK by coach in December 1974 and they were married at Woodford church in 1975. Working at a factory in Stockport created some language problems as he tried to understand broad Glaswegian and Caribbean accents. He qualified as an accountant and he has two sons and four grandchildren so far. Two sisters still live in Greece and an extended family in Germany.

We then had two for the price of one. Mark Ewing had met Harry in Bramhall Park helping to clear weeds and had expressed an interest in Rotary. Born in Belfast in 1970, at the age of 18 he moved to London to study as a chemical engineer and worked for a number of years in the petrol chemical industry. Married with a 17 year old daughter and 14 year old son they live in Woodford. He worked for Zeneca for a couple of years in Philadelphia but moved back to the UK in 2009 and now works mainly on Brexit issues and Covid vaccines. Bruce Bissel found a kindred spirit as he is a chemical engineer who had worked for Zeneca and run the supply chain for several years.

The final toast was taken at 9.05 pm.

Ron Malabon



## August 19th - When you wish upon a star

Harry, our President welcomed 24 members to our zoom meeting from 7.30pm onwards following their respective meals. Bob & Sue Preece from wet Wales and Bob & Oriane from Bordeaux, France until 8pm. We were delighted to raise a glass to Bob & Sue's latest addition of another grandson to Preece's middle son Mike & his wife Sam in Melbourne. After the toast Harry extended his welcome to Heather Kelly, our speaker tonight

Heather informed us of her answering an advert to likeminded people 30 years ago who wanted to help families & children with life threatening illnesses. "When You Wish Upon A Star" was established to grant wishes of children who are between 4 & 16 years. The first wish to Disney Land was not undertaken because the child had passed away. 18,000 wishes have since been fulfilled in last 30 years. The organisation is entirely funded by Voluntary Donations. It is not only the "Wish" child but entire family subscribes to the ethos of this journey. Heather is still there but groups are continuing to be set up in other parts of country. Parents, families and friends are engaged in keeping to multiple hospital appointments and investigation procedures. In all this the children are deteriorating and families are tearing apart, but allowing children from aged 4 to 16 years who are living with life threatening illnesses to fulfil their wishes.

Dawn from, Prestbury Travel, Bramhall is also engaged in the organisation last 22 years and gave detailed stories of families she, has been engaged with e.g going to Lapland, husky dogs snow rides, sleigh rides, letter to Santa & photo with Rudolph. Children, she says "appear to have no care in the world, dream fulfilled". It has installed confidence and morale in children. It further more has inspired other disciplines such as footballers, rugby-players or TV stars, to engage in meeting the child. Following Dawn's talk she played a moving video.

B & W Rotary was thanked for allowing members to hear about an excellent Charitable Organisation that existed in our community. We in turn reciprocated for a moving presentation.

Harry closed the meeting around 9:05pm

Satish Mehta



# Wishes

- ★ Our Wishes have the power to transform the lives of the children we work with and their whole families too
- ★ Wishes can provide time away from hospital treatment and give desperately ill children something to look forward to
- ★ For families, Wishes are a chance to create precious memories together, whatever the future may hold
- ★ Wishes have brought families closer together, increased the child's confidence and even reported an improvement in the child's physical health



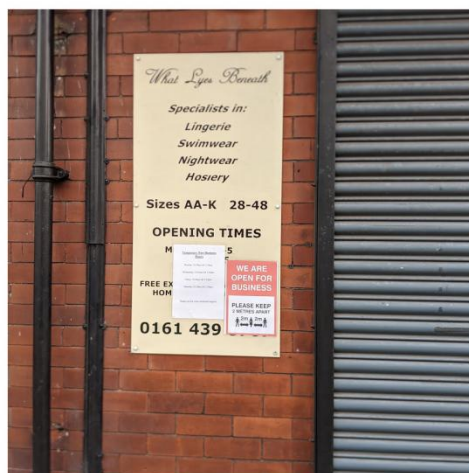
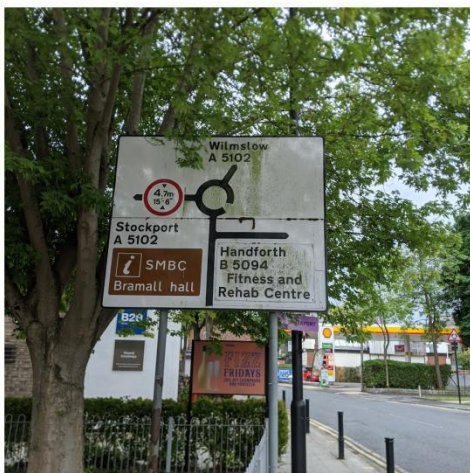
## August 26th - Treasure hunt/Quiz

Following the usual lively pre-meeting session for around half an hour, the meeting commenced with President Harry announcing “no birthday’s” but a number of apologies were given. These included Steve who will be Durham, with Harry wondering if it was to get his eyes tested.....! We were again joined by Ladan Wright, another horticultural volunteer from Bramhall Park.

A sum of £250 had been allocated, perhaps actually given, to ‘Loaves & Fishes’ to help with the purchase of a van. They have now received funding from the National Lottery and so will not need our contribution. £100 has been received from Angela Beer and we have had 2851 views on our ‘Pirate’ Facebook page. Harry introduced a model seagull in keeping with the nautical theme. Ian, of course, suggested that he should ‘tern’ it around.....! I believe there may be an octopus around somewhere too, along with a ships wheel. A van will also be needed, and usual sources have not been forthcoming. County Van Hire was suggested.

On a very encouraging note, it was mentioned that Africa has been officially declared ‘Polio Free’. Harry referred to the 9000 bulbs planted in Bramhall Park, whose purple flowers are an icon of the End Polio campaign.

Time then for the main event of the evening, Michael’s Treasure Hunt Quiz. This consisted of 23 clues, spread over Bramhall with the answer to each, giving rise to a supplementary question.



I think nearly everyone had perfect scores minus one point ! This related to the question of which political party was formed in the year the Peking Garden was established – 1988. Most members referred to Google and Wikipedia and came up with the SDP. Michael assured us the correct answer was LDP -LibDem's (Editor's note – further research shows Wikipedia wrong, Michael right, as the SDP was founded in 1981 and merged with the Liberals to form the Liberal Democratic Party in 1988, so Wiki – 0 Michael – 1) A very pleasurable exercise, as I personally don't get to Bramhall Village very often. Sad though, to see the Shopping Centre totally deserted on Saturday.

Covid-19 became the topic of much discussion, and the ability now to look at cases down to postcode level on the internet. Local cases seem to be very low and so the hope was expressed that Stockport, and hence Bramhall, may have an easing of restrictions very soon.

Appropriate perhaps, as Rotary is an International organisation, that Himalayan Balsam should feature so prominently during tonight's meeting. It is apparently, causing some issues in Bramhall Park and generally in Bramhall and the Ladybrook. The preferred method seems to be to 'rip it out'. A few of us, non-gardeners I suspect, thought Balsam was either for use in model aircraft making, or for inhalation with hot water – a stimulating expectorant. We were obviously old enough to remember 'Friars Balsam' all those years ago! But no, it's just a pretty pink invasive weed. The things you learn as bulletin writer. Could always leave it be, and so let it 'forEverest' (sorry Ian)

The meeting closed, with Harry announcing, "I think we had better call it a day". To which Ian, of course, said "Wednesday".

Chris Monkhouse

## **September 2nd - Committees**

The Zoom meeting kick started at 20.06 pm after 36 minutes of chat time. There were twenty five people who attended the meeting.

Mark, a potential new member was introduced to the club again.

### **Float**

Harry mentioned that the float had now been moved from Chris's garage to a neighbour of Harry's. Unfortunately the generator, the trolley jack and petrol somehow disappeared!

Ian posted on facebook our need for a generator. He got a response from a generous Chris Shaw of TGD Contracts who is willing to give us a new generator.

### **Treasurer's Report:**

Sue said there was not much change

General Account: £2500

Charity Account: £3400

Ian's Coin Sales: £62 plus another £50.00 still to come.

Members Contributions: £385

Business Contributions: £160

Internet Costs: £6.00

Most members have paid their annual subs except a couple.

### **Reports from all Committee Members**

#### **Maggie**

The float theme this year has been changed to 'Pirates.' Some businesses have requested to stay with Scarecrows. Therefore it has been suggested that they can do this by buying the kit to make a scarecrow or by making donation. The scarecrows will be an extra to the theme this year.

We still do not have a van to tow the float as yet! Maggie and Harry suggested they contact a few van hire places to see if there are any charitable firms out there, willing to lend. Permission has been granted to park the float outside Bramhall Methodist Church in their parking bay.

Six volunteers are needed every day between 13th-19th September. More volunteers are still needed.

Please email Maggie or Harry.

Money at the event will be collected in a 'treasure chest' or by a contactless payment machine. Volunteers are needed for taking contactless payments. In compliance with corona virus advice, the coins collected will be left untouched for 2-3 days. They will then be collected by Sue.

Ian

Ian has also been in touch with the 'National Festival Circus'. They will set up the circus in the walled garden of Bramhall Park alongside our duck race. We would have to pay a deposit and sell the tickets ourselves. Profits could be in the region of £8000 -10000 depending on available capacity.

### **Community Service**

Sarah represented the Chairman. They have decided not to support 'Wish upon a Star' due to high administrative costs.

The Committee is looking at other organisations to support.

Possible suggestions: Mental health, Covid related issues for Seniors, isolation, foodbanks etc. Sarah also asked if members could suggest where they feel the real need in the community is.

Satish is on the case for making a full appraisal after setting a meeting with Shirley Williams, Chairperson of Stockport MIND.

Committee members put forward for 'Helping Hands' 'Adult Social Care' 'Children's Services' 'Mental Health' 'Council of Voluntary Organisation' etc.

Satish is on the case for Youth Activities.

### **International**

Ari was concerned about the 10 percent administrative costs we pay to 'Lending with care'. Over a long period of time this gets expensive. Sue, who started the scheme said that it was a reasonable amount to pay to a very good scheme.. Michael agreed as well.

A zoom meeting was suggested with our old twin club.

Satish also suggested if we could support a musician who works with the church supporting young musicians in Kenya .

### **Club Services**

Bob mentioned a Zoom meeting with Farouk who will speak about the work carried out after the floods in Kasese, Jeremy Prescott who will talk to us about the Sinking of the Laconia, and Katy Willis on Hope for Justice.

### **Social**

Michael is arranging food tasting event with 'Chilli Banana'. They will create a menu which members will collect on the 30th Sept before the meeting. The Chef will join in the meeting and explain the history of the food.

### **A.O.B.**

Next meeting: Jennifer will be the speaker.

### **Final Toast.**

Meeting Closed with our usual toast, rotary and peace the world over.

## **September 9th - Committees**

There were 21 attendees at tonight's meeting with apologies from Pat and Ashok. President Harry announced that our Facebook pleas for help, after our float generator was stolen, have been highly successful. We have been overwhelmed with kind and generous offers and now have a new generator donated by a lady from Reddich.

After the general chit chat around the virtual bar we were treated to an interesting job talk from Jennifer. She had enjoyed maths at school but became very disillusioned as teachers did not always approve of her alternative methods to reach the right answers. Jennifer passed her 11+ and gained the necessary O and A level exams to secure a place at Nottingham University to study maths in 1973. Whilst there she did an extra curricular course on mathematical chemistry which she thoroughly enjoyed. Jennifer explained that she loved her time as an undergraduate and so on graduation decided to stay on to do a PhD in statistical mechanics. She started work at IOD research then moved to STC in Essex doing work for the military. Whilst there one of the projects investigated by Jennifer and managers was on GPS receivers for satellite navigation but it was dropped as they decided there was little future for that type of technology! In 1987 she moved to Ferranti in Cheadle Heath working on safety projects and developing safety systems for tramways. She then went on to work as a consultant for a variety of companies again working on safety projects. Early 2000 Jennifer was made redundant and went on to work for Thales, becoming safety manager for various rail systems and metro link. In 2016 she left to do freelance work on safety systems.

After some questions Jennifer was thanked for her presentation and discussions reverted back to the float. Harry explained that a towing vehicle had almost been arranged. The float has now been ably converted by Maggie into a pirate ship. As he will be driving the towing vehicle Harry had to get additional insurance as it was not covered by our existing policy. The pirate float will go out onto the streets of Bramhall for a week starting this Sunday. Sweets have been collected by Helping Hands to give out to the children. Everyone was encouraged to pay 12 pounds a head into the B+W general bank account for the forthcoming Thai Tasting social event which will take place on Wednesday Sept 30. Ian explained that a circus had now been booked for 2021 Duck Race which is scheduled for May 16. Agreement was expressed for paying for publicity for the pirate ship through 'I love Bramhall'. Harry said he would further explore a Rotary initiative to collect and re-distribute used footwear.

Bob Preece

## September 16th - Report from Uganda

The Zoom meeting opened as usual in the virtual bar with 18 thirsty Rotarians. Discussions initially revolved around robbing and pillage by our very own pirates. The four trips to date in our Rotary pirate ship (float) had been very successful and were averaging about £225 a round, we had been very lucky with great weather. Sheila was being a trooper and 'Helping Hands' had provided lots of support. Apologies were received from Ari who then promptly arrived. Harry introduced Afan and Farouk who were joining our Zoom meeting from Uganda which is +2 hours, ie: it was 10pm there. They brought greetings from their Ugandan club and the RC of Kasese, with a special mention of Carol, who many of our members have met. Our B&W club had previously sent £2,500 for relief with the dreadful floods in the area of western Uganda.

Both Farouk and Afan are members of 'Great Lakes Peace Centre' (GLPC) with the intention of building peace to bridge nations. The GLPC was set up in 2016 by three ex-Rotaractors when they turned 30. It was established with the blessing of Kasese Rotary Club. GLCP is run on Rotary principles with basically a greater emphasis on Peace, with three programs designed to achieve Peace locally, on the basis you will never have Peace if people are hungry, not educated, unwell etc. They have 3 main programmes:

**Education Programme** - sending young people, who would not otherwise attend, to school and paying the fees. Also Education about female empowerment, as you are aware there is still considerable discrimination against women and less opportunities for them.

**Health Programme** - mainly concentrating on Hepatitis B prevention and treatment also looking to promote Good Health throughout the Community.

**Environment Programme** - looking at tree planting and rubbish clearance, which also includes drainage provision in an effort to avoid the devastating effect of these floods.

Great Lakes Peace Centre have built up local connections through these three well established programmes which enabled them to move quickly into the areas affected by the flooding and organise both immediate relief and also long term provision. Kasese Rotary is very aware of what they are doing and support them. They have now formed the Rotary Club of Kasese Snow Peaks which was recently chartered. It comprises a much younger and more active group of members. The programmes of GLPC will be merged with those of that Rotary Club.

There is a website at: <https://winchester-rotary.org/index.php/club-blog/visit-of-farouk-kibaba-great-lakes-peace-centre-uganda> The above describes the focus of GLCP. Farouk then provided some background information about the floods and how our flood relief money was spent.

Three major projects were completed by Rotary Club of Kasese Snow Peaks and funded by Bramhall & Woodford:

- 1. Livelihood Project** – where £100 to £200 was distributed per person to start up new businesses that had previously been destroyed. These included 9 mothers who were able to set up home based projects such as chicken and duck rearing. This project was successful and far reaching as it extended to and benefitted over 61 household members. Over £900 was spent on this project.

**2. Specific Needs** - this focussed upon purchasing tarpaulins for housing and school accommodation as well as washing and sanitary resources for displaced people. Over 366 people benefitted and essential items bought included food, vitamins, mosquito nets etc.. A total of £1,259 was spend on these resources

**3. Psychological Support** – A full day out was organised to provide people with a hot meal and the psychological support they needed to manage the trauma, especially for people in the camps. Screening was provided for women, a post-natal clinic held and clothing distributed to those in need.

They also explained that because of our donation they were also able to attract another £700 in donations from the Rotary Club of Winchester. There were many questions . Afan and Farouk explained the devastation that Lockdown had had upon the peoples of Uganda, it was proving to be even more devastating than the virus itself . Schools are still closed, there is curfew and there have been 56 deaths. The whole area is used to epidemics and in the past has had Ebola and Cholera, Hepatitis B & C is also a problem.

Our guests were thanked for a very interesting talk and the night ended on a high as we heard that Ron Malabon was hopefully coming home from hospital at the weekend. I have also attached Faroque’s powerpoint presentation which includes photos and more details of the projects undertaken with our flood relief funding.

Sue Preece





## September 23rd - Sinking of the Laconia

Meeting opened with Ian (wearing his pirate T-shirt) introducing Peter Rogers who has been a member of New Mills and Marple RC introduced by a friend 6 years ago. He lives in Bramhall. His club manage to collect about £5K with the Xmas float using the nimble feet of local scouts. The famous friend of Rotary, Sheila of no fixed abode, was thanked for her fantastic help with the Pirate event by Pres. Harry. Michael said he would leave the meeting at 8.00pm to see his granddaughter going off to Uni. He promised to watch the recording.

The other guests were Sue and Ian's dogs and our newest recruit Mark appeared quietly later. It was great to see Ron in colour after his treatment in SHH. There were no apologies and Harry wished Ron and Bruce "Happy birthdays"). There were 26/27 attendees.

Bob P introduced our speaker Jeremy Prescott to talk about the Sinking of the Laconia on behalf of his charity Combat Stress, a Veterans Mental Health Charity. He was an Army Officer for 26 years rising to Lt. Colonel and was in active service in N. Ireland, Middle East, E. Africa, Norway and Germany. On retiring in 1997 he became CEO of this charity supporting rural communities in the E. Midlands until 2015. Jeremy won 6 lottery grants approx. £1M for projects. He developed the concept of SACRIFICE and REMBERANCE to raise awareness of those killed in conflict and to commemorate their names in War Memorials, to maintain contact with their relatives and fund raise. He emphasized that it isn't about the rights and wrongs of war.

THE SINKING of the LACONIA was a major turning point in WW11 in the Battle of the Atlantic. The Laconia was a super Cunard liner converted to a troop-ship and because it carried guns it was a target for the German U Boats. On 12 Dec 1942 it was torpedoed by U Boat 156 off the coast W.Africa. It was repatriating 1800 Italian POW's, 428 British and Polish soldiers, 80 civilians and children. Captain Hartenstein on U 156 got permission from his superior Admiral Doenitz to rescue the survivors after recognizing it was a humanitarian disaster he even covered the boat with a RED X flag. Help included the wolfpack of U-boats and later 1 Italian Submarine and 3 Vichy ships from Morocco. The survivors were on the 156, in life boats and given food, 1st aid and clothes. This act of COMPASSION was destroyed by an US plane several days later when it attacked the U boats, killing many people. Admiral Doenitz, Head of U boat command, declared THE LACONIA ORDER which forbid future rescues of Allied survivors.

Jeremy mentioned a pamphlet "Atlantic Torpedo" which described her harrowing experience of Doris Hoskins, a missionary nurse, adrift on a lifeboat for 27 days at sea and came ashore in Liberia. Her baby daughter disappeared earlier. Another survivor Gladys Foster and 14yearold daughter spent 2 months interned in Africa also described their experiences.

Admiral Koenitz and others were tried in Nuremberg and he was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment. He was appointed by Hitler before his death to be his successor. This lasted 3 weeks!

This event raises moral issues for Hartenstein who had compassion and yet punished. Rommel quoted one can “conduct war without hate”.

There were questions about the problem of several charities involved but Combat for stress is helping with ex service people who become insular they have lost the comradeship and can't talk about their experiences. They delay for many years to ask for help. Jeremy has raised £13K from giving one of his 11 presentations. Bob P thanked for an excellent talk and we gave our usual applause and he left the scene. TIKKUN OLAM is a Hebrew phrase for “Repair of the World”

Maggie started with “Am I sad? Am I glad? I can add Am I mad?” NO, NO it was a fantastic project which made about £2,800 + for the charities. A special thanks to Helping Hands for their input and sweets, and Silk Road for the Paella. The meeting closed at 9.10 and the regular plea for help on Sat at 10am in Bramhall Park to plant 8,000 crocuses / crocusae/ crocusi or just bulbs!

David Rose



