

December 2021



Bramhall & Woodford Rotary Club

**1st October to
31st December**

Sue says - Jan 2022

Happy New Year to everyone and wow, what a year 2021 turned out to be! COVID 19 upended everything so that in 2021 the global pandemic dominated all our lives from the start. We have all had to adapt to a 'new normal'. The year 2021 was full of monumental events with global repercussions, including extreme weather events, the ongoing effects of the pandemic, refugees fleeing for their lives and the West's withdrawal from Afghanistan. Every time you looked at the news, you were reminded of just how significantly something happening on the other side of the world could affect you at home. Remember how one container ship stuck in the Suez Canal for a week caused shipping delays around the world. One of the biggest developments for most of us has been the opportunity to get Covid vaccinations which has enabled us to mix more freely with loved ones. However, although more than three-quarters of the world's population believe that immunizations are safe and effective, sadly vaccine hesitancy is still leaving too many people behind. It has never been clearer that tackling big problems requires people working together across borders and sectors and communities. Collaboration is a feature of our work and, although Covid has been a huge set-back, our club has been able to contribute to so many charities and events and we can all be very proud of our achievements. Our Christmas Santa Float, a local institution for nearly 50 years, raised a record amount of money for local charities despite several hiccups along the way. You can read all about our events and successes in the following bulletins.

So, what can we expect for 2022? It is the year of the Yang-Water Tiger and, I have read on good authority, that wearing yellow clothes or decorating your office/table with yellow will bring good luck. In addition, I am sure that in 2022 many members will continue to give generously of their time to support Handy Ladies with the distribution of meals around the Stockport area, to help with envelope stuffing at Walthew House and to contribute to the development of the gardens at Bramhall Hall as well as our usual fund raising events. Hopefully we will be able to hold our Scarecrow Festival, Duck Race and Circus again this year. Our club is also involved in supporting Care4Calais, we organised two 'Fun Days' for over 200 refugee children at hotels in Manchester just before Christmas and another is planned for early this year. The costs of these parties came from contributions from more than nine local Rotary Clubs. So, as you can see, B&W will continue to ensure that we

collaborate and support local charities and events whilst having lots of fun in doing so. Please feel free to join us in any of our activities.

Take care and I hope that 2022 will bring you and your family good health, happiness and joy,

President Sue

Wed 6th October – Committees

October's committees meeting on Zoom was pretty well attended with around 20 participants including those who came and went according to their internet connection or similar gremlins.

Secretary John S reiterated his plea for trusted tradesmen to put on our website. I reminded him that our own Pete Daniel is a very careful builder who can turn his hand to many tasks both great and small.

Treasurer Steve: Club account £2.2k; Charity account £426 net of payments to MNDA among others. Ian chimed in with the news that he needs the deposit for next year's circus shortly. Possible sources of money: raid the reserves which contain money for Dragon's Den and Santa's Float maintenance, and consider a transfer of funds from the Club account on a short-term or permanent basis. Something for Council to chew over next Monday.

W+M Maggie: the Winter Fashion Show is progressing well with the menu, publicity and online payment all sorted. Maggie needs Raffle Prizes please. It is likely we will have an event in the village centre soon to raise money for the Afghans who have been rescued. It will almost certainly involve dressing up as this produces much better results than just rattling tins. Two brief points: Beacon may be able to provide us with a Santa on several evenings, and we will have a Spring Scarecrow Festival which will incorporate an international concert organised by David.

Community Service Satish (for David): David has persuaded Sainsburys in the village to have a box to collect unwanted coats to give to Wrap up Britain.

International (Chris for Ari): The International cttees from us and Lamplighters had a Zoom meeting recently to explore a collaboration to fund a local student involved in a project abroad. Details are not yet clear but we expect to provide £500 from each club. The idea is appealing as it covers several targets – youth, education, local support, international and close co-operation between clubs.

Communication Ian: the deadline for material for the local free magazines is 13th October. Facebook response to the next fashion show is good. He is quietly building up support for next year's Duck Race including a promise of £1k from Leighton Snow. Lamplighter's ducks are already booked.

Club services Bob: next week we have Dev talking about Rotary's Covid Task Force, of which he is a member. We need more attendees at face-to-face meetings at the club. The last one attracted just a dozen or so, which means we lose a chunk of money each time. Twenty is the break-even number.

Social Michael: numbers for Charter Night are not encouraging at the moment. [They have improved in the past two days.] The Christmas Dinner is arranged for Dec 17th.
AOB: Sue has been working hard to involve us in helping some of our local Afghan invitees. They are living in hotels, often with little outside space and the children particularly are getting restless. Several ideas, from football games on nearby pitches to a mini-funfair at a hotel have already been investigated and there is likely to be an update or two over the next few days. At the same time we are exploring ways of helping the Afghans to be more independent.

Harry Hill

Wed 13th October– Covid task Force

This evening started with a bit of a surprise for your reporter, as he was asked at the last minute to report on the meeting just after the meeting had really started! The assigned reporter, Bob Preece, had a very bad cold and sensibly was still at home. I tried the usual excuses....no pen, no paper, but these limitations were quickly rectified!

We welcomed Dev's wife Mitali and her son, and we were delighted to see John Meeus and Steve Littlewood with us after their recent health problems.

President Sue reminded us of the Foundation Dinner in Altrincham on November 15th. Several members intended to be present. John Meeus received support from the members to seek a suitable date for the next CHADS evening, at which we would watch the dress rehearsal of their latest production. Michael Lacey arranged for those not attending in person for tonight's meeting to watch by Zoom. This experiment was quite successful, though positioning the camera to capture the slide display and our speaker Dev proved demanding.

Dev told us of the Rotary Foundation Trust International Covid 19 Task Force, on which he represented Great Britain and Ireland. This task force was founded in July 2021 and had representatives from most areas of the world. The group met virtually for 2 hours weekly. Five areas where Rotarians could help were

- 1.Community education
- 2.Equitable distribution of vaccine
- 3.Stopping the spread of the virus
- 4.Combatting misinformation
- 5.Encouraging vaccination

Dev reviewed the progress made in England and the rest of the UK and several themes emerged. Vaccination greatly helped recipients avoid hospitalisation and death from the virus, though vaccination did not protect completely. Antibody levels started high after vaccination but slowly declined to about 50% over several months. Booster shots lifted antibody levels once again, and were strongly recommended, especially for the elderly. Covid variants emerged from time to time that meant that full protection was not achievable, and it was possible that repeated booster shots may be sensible in future. Until all countries had Covid under control, nowhere was immune from a resurgence of the virus. Hence international efforts to vaccinate populations in other countries was essential.

Rotarians could help by setting examples of good practice (mask wearing etc), encouraging preparedness and stopping misinformation.

Dev was thanked for an excellent presentation with a lot of useful and interesting detail.

The meeting closed at 9.45 after a reminder that the next meeting would be our Charter Dinner on October 20th at the Crown and Conspirator in Bramhall.

Details of all future meetings, the next Fashion Show etc, were available on our web site.

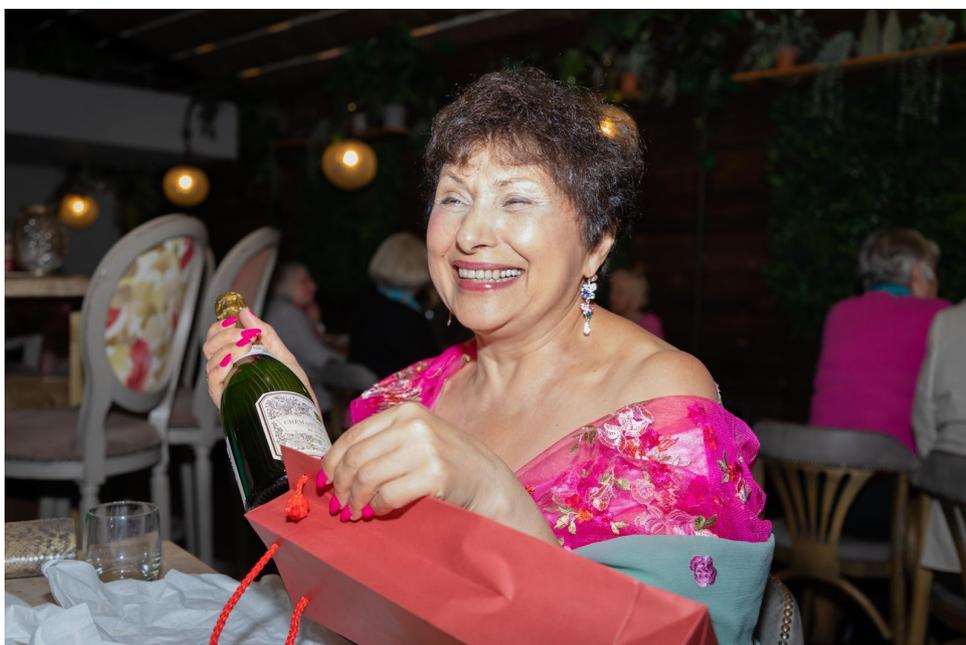
Dennis

Wed 20th October– Charter Night at the Crown & Conspirator

44 people enjoyed a fun evening celebrating our 35th birthday. Dress code was “pink and/or green” (because 35th anniversary is Coral, which is pink, or Jade, which is green) and a bottle of fizz was won by Ladan, guest of Pat Holmes, judged by Maryam, guest of Maggie Hill.

Lynn Bean read an abridged version of the charter.

Six members of table 2 (the Bissells, Littlewoods and Preeces) won the table quiz with 49 points.



Wed 27th October– November’s committee evening

Treasurer – Steve reported that there was £2358 in the general account and, after the various provisions, £1433 in the Charity Account. There is also £650 for the Afghan Fun Day and £480 from ticket sales for the fashion show.

Club Services – Programme to the end of 2021 has been sent out and provisional date made for Chads in January. Sue suggested that we try and accommodate a meeting with two of the ladies from Afghanistan addressing the club.

Social – Only a small number of members have put their name down for the meal at Noks so far.

Ways & Means – On Saturday there is a collection in the square for the Afghan refugees starting at 10 am. Maggie asked if people would come in fancy dress. Tickets for the fashion show are sold out. Future events - Saturday 6th Nov. card sale. 27th Nov. quizzes in the village start. 28th Nov. is Light Up Bramhall. We have been offered the chance to provide a Santa for the grotto and presents for the children. 3 offers from members so far to be Santa. The Sabre Scouts will distribute the leaflets advertising the Santa Float nights. 24th March will be the Scarecrow Festival.

Community Service – David reported that the Wrap Up coat collection supported by Rotary will start next week. There will be a collecting point in Nottcutts and Sainsbury’s in the square. A concert is being organized.

International – Ari is pursuing the joint project with Lamp Lighters to fund a student to work overseas in a humanitarian capacity.

Communications – Ian has got publicity in SK magazine for the Fashion Show and the Santa Float.

Michael reported that the Audit was complete and everything was in order.

Bob

Wed 3rd November - FashionShow

Another hugely successful fashion show, with almost 100 attendees At Crown & Conspirator

Wed 10th November - Volcanoes

There were in total 19 members plus 2 non members including the speaker. Apologies were received from Maggie and Harry Hill, Astok Poat, John Meeus, John Thewlis.

Our newest member, Lynn, was inducted.

A view had been expressed to our President that committee meeting held on Zoom were not popular. Following brief discussion it was agreed that committee meetings would take place face to face and would there would be 3 meetings a month with a meal prior to the meeting as usual.

Sweet Packing: 26th September – 5 volunteers so far.

Wrap up Stockport: Members of the public seem supportive of the idea but there has been a lack of publicity has resulted in limited success. Ends at the end of this week.

Youth Speaks: David and Satish reported that Bramhall High School plan to offer to provide 2 teams for the Youth Speaks Competition next year. They are also interested in the Science project at the Manchester University also next year.

Other secondary schools in the area seemed disinterested.

Bob Preece introduced Peter Webb who spoke with what was clearly a considerable knowledge of volcanoes.

With the earth moving all the time earthquakes are taking place all the time and according to the movement of the land masses are more common in certain parts of the world. There are 5 different types of volcanoes and different types of lava emerging from the volcanoes. Close to home there is a single volcano anticipated off the coast of Anglesey but for any member with a caravan or holiday home there they are safe for millions of years yet!

Peter's slides were excellent with lots of views of active volcanoes of different types and the unpredictable nature of many of them.

The meeting ended at the usual time with Sue thanking Peter for a very interesting presentation.

The next meeting of the club is a social night at Noks Thai Restaurant on 17th November. Bob L



Wed 17th November - Thai tasting at Noks

Surprisingly only 19 of us met for a social evening at Nok's Thai Restaurant on Wednesday 17th November and around half those present were friends and ex Rotarians. We almost had the restaurant to ourselves but we were joined by two mysterious gentlemen in black, secreted in one corner who seemed to be enjoying the same menu as us. Being too polite to ask them why they were eating our food (not really like me at all) we didn't get to chatting until the end of the meal when we discovered that they were Nok's publicity agents, two very amiable gentlemen, who were keen to hear about our club.

One of the nicest parts of the evening was that we were joined by old friends and new. It was so nice to see Gordon Jackson and Trevor and Joan Saville amongst us again, past Rotarians who are always working in the background, helping us when needed but rarely seen at meetings. Equally lovely was the presence of Nick Raban Williams who also joined us for Charter Night and is beginning to help with our events when he can.

On offer was a tasting menu of 10 delicious sounding dishes plus rice prepared in two different ways, sticky and jasmine scented. For those who decided that Thai food was not for them please let me urge you to think again. On entering the restaurant this Rotarian was saying she didn't think she really liked Thai food, on leaving she was saying, "When can we come again?" We were served exquisite dishes of chicken, duck, squid, pork, steak and lamb with deliciously fresh and crunchy salads, all bathed in the most wonderful flavoursome sauces and served in beautiful tiny hand made boats crafted from banana leaves. Particularly delicious was the final dish of the most tender lamb chops imaginable swathed in a delightful peanut sauce which had all of us scraping out the dish. We each paid £20 for this fantastic spread, £10.00 for the meal and £10.00 for a charity of our choice. Recommendations for suitable charities were submitted and it was decided that the donation should be split between HUGS (Helping Uganda Schools) and Care4Calais.



Thank you Michael for organising the evening.

I look forward to the next time and strongly recommend that everyone joins us then.

Maggie

Wed 24th November - Committees - Held on Zoom

Treasurer

General account -

There has not been a great deal of movement during the last month and the balance stands at £2,184.

Charity account –

The fashion show at the Crown & Conspirator produced a net profit of £1,114 – a sterling and brilliant effort. All reported back saying that it was a thoroughly good night.

The sale of Christmas stocking fillers at the Methodist Church generated £53.20. Peter Richardson was also there selling his Christmas cards and raised £46.

As a club we contributed £250 to the “fun day” as a straight donation and a further £388 which came from the “tin rattling event” held on the 30th October in Bramhall Square. Other Rotary Clubs contributed £900 to the event plus a couple of private donations totally £135. So the total going into “the pot” was £1,673. £1,075 was spent on the event, leaving a profit of £598.

Then, after the various provisions, which are set aside for various future things, the balance on the charity account balance stands at £2,098.

Following the conclusion of the treasurer’s report there was an unstructured discussion, with many people talking at once, regarding funding a further “fun day” event. There was clearly a “warm feeling” from the club to support a further event. The matter will be discussed further at Council.

Club Services

The programme for December has been issued – more entertainment than meetings with the Christmas Party. The meeting at Ladybridge Club on the 1st December being subject to Jackie (at Ladybridge Club) having recovered from Covid.

A couple of speakers are planned for January along with the float teams quiz (which will have to be on a Wednesday due to Jackie, at Ladybridge Club, having other things booked every week on a Friday).

The date for Chads is as in the programme. Confirmation and details should be distributed shortly.

Michael explained for the benefit of several new members the nature of the Chads evening, i.e. every January (when there is no Covid) around, we booked the theatre for their final rehearsal night. It's only a hundred seats and we sell all 100 seats quite easily. And we go to watch the final dress rehearsal, which is like a full performance. And then afterwards, we have a few drinks with a few bits to eat and we meet the cast.

Social

The Christmas party is going better than I expected, but not as good as in previous years. We usually get 40 or 50'ish and we are at about 35 or 36 right now, with not too many more to come. Friends and family are welcome to attend. Menu choices are required – lost have people have said the are coming but have not said what they want to eat!

Ways & Means

Sweets are being packed on Friday 26th November for the Santa rounds.

Volunteers are required to pack 6000 chocolate bars into 2000 bags - 16 currently 'signed up', but we usually have more than 20.

Then, on Sunday 28th November we are taking part in Light up Bramhall in Bramhall Village Square. Santa's grotto, or shed, arrived in the square today and Ally from the Dog Groomers has kindly said that she will decorate it for us. We have 3 Santas to cover the event.

At the same time, we've got adult quiz sheets based on the 12 days of Christmas song, and we've got children's 12 days of Christmas jigsaw trail. We need some extra people down in the village apart from the Santas to show the children into the grotto, to keep the queue in order and to help Santa find the appropriate present for each child, and also to take donations for the quizzes. Only one volunteer at present – more are needed.

Santa float rounds –

Different scout group distributing the fliers this year – they have started.

We cannot have the usual van for towing the float. Have bene offered a mini-bus by 1st Bramhall Scouts but a mini-bus is not as practical as a van for Santa to change in, not for carrying the float side panels.

1st Bramhall Scouts were offered 'our' round in exchange for the load of the mini-bus and, even though the offer of the mini-bus will not be taken up, 1st Bramhall Scouts will still be doing the collecting on the round on the 14th December. Various van rental companies have been approached regarding a van with a tow bar. County are going to try and get a van fitted with a tow bar for us. We also don't have anywhere to park the float – Moorend is now a building site and there may not be room to park the van. There are a number of options to explore. Children will not be allowed on the float again this year and last year we put extra decorations on the float (which were borrowed from Lynn Arrowsmith). Lynn is unable to lend the decorations this year since she is in the process of moving to Wales. Members were asked if anyone has spare Christmas decorations which could be used to decorate the float, or should decorations be purchased?

Community Service

Satish delivered the report as David was unable to attend the meeting. David has been very busy collecting the wrap-up Britain coats but the totals fell short of last year. Email from Linda Mullins -

Thank you all for your hard work on the wrapup this year. Sadly we didn't get anywhere near last times numbers of just over 2000 coats and 980 items like hats, gloves and socks (which we were told not to collect this year). I am sure numbers were down due to the recent Refugee crisis that so many people responded to. This years total comes to 659 coats and a large bag of oddments which we gave to Loaves and Fishes. The service hours between us come to 161 hours.

The Charities who benefited are, Loaves and Fishes, MASH, Olive Branch, Stockport Refugees, Brinnington Community Church, , Safe Spots, Copperdale Trust and Tree of Life in Withenshaw.

As previously communicated by email, Satish then notified the meeting that Bramhall High School has withdrawn from the "Youth Speaks 2022" Competition because they cannot cope with the pressures as well as some of the teachers having suffered from the Covid and have been off sick.

The Excitement of Science 2022, which is to be held on Wednesday 2nd March 2022 at 1:45. The subject is graphene. 60 students from Bramhall High School from year 10 have enrolled to watch this event.

International

Ari is pursuing the joint project with Lamp Lighters to fund a student to work overseas in a humanitarian capacity and provided a summary for the benefit of new members.

It was an award of £1,000 to support a student on a workplacement in a development country and particularly looking for students that who will be working with disadvantage communities. And so far, with Najib's help, we managed to give our brochures to the University of Manchester, Manchester Metropolitan University, the Royal Northern College of Music and also the university libraries and student unions.

Some of the supermarkets have also accepted the brochure and we are still to distribute copies to Salford University and Bolton. The next thing for us to do is for both our clubs to use social media posts to further advertise the award.

One of Najib's colleagues has pointed out that it is difficult for students to go on placement in disadvantaged countries because of the risk of going. But we have nothing to lose by trying and the costs to-date are just £19 for printing. If we have not got any response by the end of February then we will look to do something else elsewhere.

Communications

Press release has been sent to the SK magazine and they've accepted and they said it will definitely go in advertising in Santa's Village tour.

Stage 2 of the Duck Race has commenced with 48 emails having been sent out to the participants who had been contacted for the 2020 event. 19 replies have been received – all positive. This in addition to the 8 participants who have been talked to face-to-face. So preparation is bubbling along quite nicely.

Other Business

Harry pointed out that anything shared on Facebook to friends cannot then be shared by those friends, but if it shared to 'public' then it can be shared again.

The Afghan fun day was discussed again. 10 Rotary Clubs worked together to make it a great success. Feedback has been very positive.

Harry & Sue were at the Inner Wheel 'do' on Sunday. Harry was impressed that a guy from the Wheelchair Foundation can process secondhand crutches and that sort of stuff. B&W Rotary has struggled to get such items 'recycled' and we should keep this contact in mind for the future. John Meeus said he has given such stuff to Mobility Stockport, but they have limited storage so there is a local outlet, subject to storage being available.

The meeting closed at approximately 20:30.

Jennifer

Wed 1st December - Afghanistan

We were pleased to welcome three Afghan refugees Ali, Laiq and Rafiulla who were currently living with their families in Manchester hotels awaiting relocation. They mentioned that Afghan cooks were not allowed to assist with cooking in the hotel for health and social care reasons. All three were relieved to have been evacuated and appreciative of the support given including that by our own Rotary club. They all spoke of their backgrounds and families back in Afghanistan.

Laiq and Rafiulla both worked as interpreters for the British Army and spoke about a mutual 'friend' who worked for the Americans who they recognised as a Taliban commander at Kabul Airport. Ali said he came to London 2004. He had been visiting his family in Afghanistan when the Taliban suddenly took over.

They did not envisage how sudden the change in power would be and were dismayed that Taliban promises were not being honoured. They were concerned about those left behind, who they hoped would find a way out of the country. Afghans were being singled out and shot on their way home. The three hoped that the new regime would come to recognise the improvements achieved in education and rights particularly for women and freedom of speech.

They hoped that they would all settle well in the UK and take advantage of training opportunities.

They expressed concern at the way Afghans were treated in both Pakistan and Iran, which was deporting Afghans back to Afghanistan.

Tony Johnson

4th December - 22nd December Santa's float rounds

We had a lot of difficulty with insuring the float and several rounds had to be missed. However we caught up by doing two rounds per day 18th - 21st and an extra day on 22nd with the final two rounds. No one was missed out!

Fri 17th December - Xmas party at Bramall Park Golf Club

A good time was had by all.







