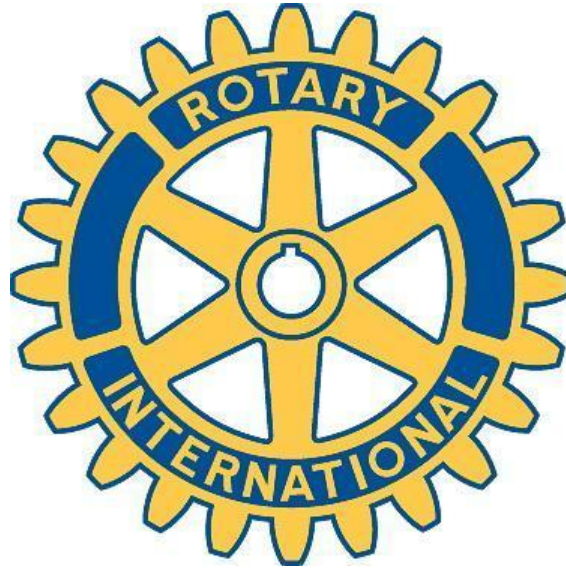


June 2026



Bramhall & Woodford Rotary Club

**1st April to
30th June**

Lyrical Lesley

Hello Rotarians,

April started with our committee meeting where we were preparing for the Duck Race and of course it was a mammoth task. We made two charity donations: one to the Valley school of £500 and one to Stepping Hill Hospital of £1000. Thank you Community, great work this year and some happy charities out there. Richard is working on a project to supply much needed toilets for school children in Dokolo Uganda. International have produced some amazing projects this Rotary year, for example the collaboration of Rotary clubs for St Frances De Sales Special Needs School Uganda where a total of £11,318 was raised to help improve the lives of 100 special needs children. Rotary international at its best. The report was also accompanied by some great photos of the work in progress. Richard also gave us a Life Talk and I am so mad I missed it. We had a fabulous Irish Night brought together by Maggie and team - what a great night of celebration. Everyone who attended loved it. The lovely Kate Leadbetter from Air traffic control gave us a very in-depth talk on her career and life behind the scenes of Air Traffic Control - the room was mesmerized. To lighten the mood the lovely Sarah Ball, a former Member very much missed, took over Michael's house for the Wine Tasting - always a winner with club members.

May Committees was lightened by the presence of DG Elect Ian Chochrane, a power house of Ideas and Enthusiasm. And there was a visitor from Sri Lanka Rotarian Karthkeyan who gave me a wonderful gift which I have proudly in my Garden, a Buddha lit by Solar lights. It's lovely. He was fascinated to hear of our Duck Race and I have been communicating with him on how he could produce a small version of this at his club. MND was chosen for our Duck Race Recipient and we are ploughing ahead Maggie and Team have worked tirelessly to bring this together and club have taken on tasks to lighten the load something I feel should be the normal for large projects. The Duck Race was only slightly blighted by two showers but the forecast was not great which made footfall lower than previous years but to achieve £10,000 to M N D was fabulous. To finish off May as Michael was away Richard organized a great social on the Lowry River cruise and the Imperial War Museum. It was a great turn out and we had to navigate the North Marathon people traffic! Manchester had a great buzz about it that day.

June committees, Maggie gave us a full run down of progress on the Santa Sleigh which was to be discussed at council. We are preparing for the New Rotary year so all Chairs are preparing either to stay or hand over. Philp is taking over as President and Dev will be Vice President - how lovely, great support, thank you both. The lovely Kate Leadbeater from Stepping Hill Charities came to talk to us about what the club have helped to support this rotary year and previous, making a difference in the well being of the children and their parents in times of struggle. The social event was my leaving Garden Party at Maggie and Harry's house. I was overwhelmed, the food and company was top notch, and I was humbled, grateful for the love and support shown to me throughout my presidency. I thank you all but that does not quite feel enough. To finish June we had a talk from Jon Watt about Antarctica and climbing Mount Vinson and the partner of Denise. Well the club was silent during his talk,

photos and videos of his numerous challenges. A modern day adventurer and hero it was an honour to have listened to his talk.

Well what a three months! All of the Committee Chairs worked so hard to bring all this variety to our club. We must thank them for making this a great club. Good Luck for the New Rotary Year - it will not be boring I can promise you that. For all those changing teams or stepping down from Chairs, thank you for all your hard work and commitment. You are appreciated.

Signing off Lesley

31st March 2026 - Irish evening

First the Caribbean, then India and then this year we travelled to Ireland for our charity Social Evening. Unfortunately Notcutts Garden Centre Restaurant was unavailable so we were set the challenge of finding a venue which had space for a good number of guests and an area which could act as a stage for our entertainers. We decided on our own club venue, The Pointing Dog. Although they could only accommodate around 85 guests rather than our usual 100, the staff went out of their way to make everything work for us, moving heavy furniture and creating Irish dishes not normally on their menu. Guests were greeted with a welcome glass of Prosecco, a lucky shamrock pin badge and a snack of Irish Tayto crisps to get them in the right mood for the evening.

Thanks for our efforts to raise funds for Signpost for Carers , Stockport were given before the fun began.

First to entertain everyone were 5 young Irish dancers from The Keegan school of Dance in their magnificent competition costumes. We were all worn out just watching their high kicks and speedy steps.

Next came Katie Fiddlestix with some very accomplished violin playing, performed as she walked around the room between the tables.

To let her get her breath back Peter Crossen gave us a taste of an authentic Northern Irish accent by delivering a quick Irish quizz. Shouting out the answers was allowed and correct ones were rewarded by a chocolate bar.

After the meal of Guinness Irish Stew, red cabbage and potatoes followed by Bailey's cheesecake we were treated to a number of dances performed by the ladies of The Claddagh School of Dancing. Once again, the energy level needed to perform these dances was phenomenal. We were all stunned by their final dance.

Finally Ian, our Compere for the evening, distributed the raffle prizes, lots of raffle prizes, maybe the most we've ever had donated for an event.

The evening was well received with some guests asking when and where the next one would be.

Thinking caps on everyone!

Maggie

1 April 2026 - Committees

President Lesley announced a dinner in support of End Polio Now on April 11. It was suggested that the club increases its annual donation to this campaign. Council will consider. RC Congleton was to hold a Race Night on April 24.

We welcomed Cassandra to the club. She wanted to learn more about the club, and she kindly volunteered to help at the Duck Race, as well as talking to us one evening about her life in Korea and elsewhere. She is a very well-travelled lady!

Secretary Harry announced that Ian Cochrane, DG Elect was to visit us on May 6.

Treasurer Sinead summarised our accounts: General account, £1404, Float account £20, 627, Charity account £3001, before any profits from the Irish Evening on March 31.

Club Services Bob summarised our forthcoming meetings. Details are on our website. Bob raised the need to check our stored items for the Duck Race.

Volunteers would meet on April 11.

Maggie for Ways and Means commented how helpful the staff at the Pointing Dog had been at the Irish Night, which was a big success. There was an urgent need to find an organiser for the car park at the Duck Race.

Michael, Social, announced that all the places for the wine tasting were now taken! Sarah Ball would be presenting English wines and Bruce would be introducing some Swiss wines.

Sue, for Steve, updated the community Services activities. Donations had been made of £500 to Valley School for equipment and £1000 to Stepping Hill Neonatal Unit towards a specialised incubator unit. Exploratory meetings had been held about possible choir and musical events with local schools.

Richard, International, updated us about efforts to fund a dental and optical centre in Masaka, Uganda, and toilets for a girls dormitory in Dokolo, Uganda. Lend With Care was progressing well, and a club trip to India organised by Archana would hopefully be possible later in the year.

Ian updated us about recent PR activities.

Finally, members who wished to be included in the clubs What's App group were asked to contact Harry. This was established for urgent messages, not for general information, which should be sent by email as usual.

Dennis

8 April 2026 - Nicky Patterson – Air Traffic Control

Hello Rotarians, Rotary Meeting meal was attended by 16 Rotarians and John, Gary and Sharon attended after.

Bob is going to the store at Hillbrook grange at 1 o'clock next Thursday 1 more person to help would be good, please put yourself forward.

A talk was given by Nicky Patterson an Air Traffic Controller and Trainer at Manchester Airport. It was something she had always wanted to do since a visit to a cockpit as a child sparked her imagination, and as an adult she followed her dream. She was a southerner but migrated to the north and has been here ever since. Her passion is Girl Guiding and has put her knowledge as an Air traffic controller to good use and the money she earns helps her guiding group. She was an astonishing Lady and we were lucky to have enjoyed her talk. There are two main hubs at Manchester the Radar area, and the famous Tower, Nicky said the view from the tower on a clear day is spectacular. It takes 4 operatives to individually do their part to bring aircraft in and out, talk to the pilot, bring the aircraft in, and sending them out. There are two main Hubs that control all over the UK Swanick and Prestwick and they are manned 24 Hours a day. There are 7000 flights a day and 3500 out of London making Heathrow the busiest UK airport. Manchester has to liaise with the M O D for military aircraft going about their maneuvers.

Aberdeen is the busiest Heliport shuttling workers to the off shore rigs. There are 4500 staff that man the UK airports 1700 are air controllers and they are trained at Swanage for a year, they achieve their License and are dispatched to an airport that needs them, that's when the real training begins, they are shadowed by a trainer till they feel they are ready to fly solo. Not all candidates make it, you have to have a gift of decision making on what is a very fast paced environment there's no judgement some peoples thought patterns are quicker than others. The joining qualification is only five GCSE above 5, as this is about brain speed and decision making rather than academic prowess. Operatives only work 2 hours at time because of the intensity but do an 8 hour day Nicky did a great power point to bring her job to life including a small film showing a day in the sky very impressive. There is a super computer in Brussels that delegates the slots to the Airlines, recalculating if a flight is delayed to allocate another slot that's why when you are sat on the runway and don't know why it's because you have missed your slot and have to wait for a new one to be created. The night was concluded with great thanks to Nicky.

Signing off Lesley

15 April 2026 - Duck Race Planning

23 April - Wine tasting

Fittingly on St George's day we had a wine tasting focussing on English wine. For some extra variety we gratefully accepted Bruce's donation of some of his favourite red Swiss wines. Former member Sarah Ball led the tasting (for the 4th time) and it was great to see her and Sally again. We started with an English still white followed by a still rose and then sparkling rosé and white. The sparkling white was 100% Chardonnay (known as blanc de blancs) from Nyetimber and, to me at least, was indistinguishable from a decent Champagne. We moved on to the Swiss reds with Bruce presenting details of the wines and the farms where the cheeses he also brought were made. Sarah led the tasting giving her opinions in real time (essentially they were yummy). After a q&a session we moved into the kitchen area where there was tons of cheese (all English plus Bruce's Swiss) and biscuits. We could retaste, or quaff, the wines that we had especially enjoyed in a very relaxed atmosphere. Gradually people went home - some with lumps of cheese and some with part full bottles of wine. It is safe to say everyone enjoyed a great evening and hopes the event repeats next year

Well done and huge thanks to Sarah and all involved in making it a success.
Michael



29 April - Richard Bircher - About me

Lesley was having a night off so Philip took charge of the meeting, good practice for when he takes over in June. 16 members enjoyed a meal together with four guests from New Mills, details to follow. Three club members joined us after the meal.

In a short business session, John M said he was able to repair the large marquee posts. He will bring books of duck race tickets to the next meeting for us to sell to family friends etc. Harry said he had received an invitation to attend a recording of the Round Britain Quiz. Anyone interested in joining him should contact him.

Philip requested that anyone with a cool box bring it to the next meeting as he requires the loan of some for the duck race.

Our speaker for the evening was Richard who had been requested to talk about his life as a GP. In his excellent, very interactive talk he covered many topics which he asked club members to select at random from a prepared list. Richard described how, after study at Cambridge and Manchester he had the same GP practice for 28 years in Stalybridge. The community there is mixed ranging from some very poor and deprived areas to some well off parts. Richard said he loved his job which was very evident from his enthusiasm talking about it. For each topic he regaled us with stories, some hilarious eg. a holiday sharing false teeth, to tragic, but many with a happy ending which demonstrated the super fulfillment he obtained from his job.

Interspersed with stories were facts about the GP and NHS service. Recurring was the comment that Richard had, as was typical for GPs, never busier with an enormous pressure on the service. This is driven by the fact people are living longer and can be kept alive with treatment all driven by enormous technical advances on all fronts. Many modern medicines require constant monitoring and prescribing conditions often change. Up to 40% of Richard's time is spent administering the repeat prescription process and surprisingly, only 10% seeing patients in the surgery. Richard is making the more home visits he has ever done because of the aging population.

Obesity was discussed versus a healthy lifestyle but Richard noted that diabetes treatment was by far the single biggest cost to the NHS. Richard is not employed by the NHS, rather he has a contract to run his GP practice. One third of the funding comes direct from the government and a further third by meeting targets, all 128 of them! It was noted that no country is reducing the cost of health care.

There was much more in the talk than I have reported but suffice to say we were enthralled by Richard for 75 minutes, then just to show what a talent he is, he finished with a song while accompanying himself on guitar.

IDEA: what about a book of Richard's stories as a fundraiser??

AOB: John M. said he had arranged 12 parking spaces duck race at the Brookdale for those with things to carry into the park. The car park will be open from 9.00 till 9.30am then open for departures from around 2.00pm. Those wishing a space should contact John and place a duck race flyer visibly in the car.

The meeting closed at 9.50pm.

Bruce

6 May 2026 - Committees and AGM

17 Rotarians sat down to dinner with Ian Cochran DGElect and a surprise guest Rtn Karthikeyan, who is visiting family in Sale and is visiting clubs in our area for inspiration to take home.

At 8.18 Lesley declared the AGM open and handed over to Harry as Secretary to run our meeting. Harry welcomed Ian Cochran DGElect who declined to speak at that point.

Reports from the Treasurer and all our committees were read and approved and have been circulated already by our Secretary. We were reminded in these reports of the many and varied activities and events that had taken place through the year, the charities we had worked with and donated to.

Lesley concluded these reports by reflecting how much of her charitable actions had included meeting Firemen and reminded us that to give back is a good thing. She described our Rotary as a Unique Team Working together and assured us that even though she was stepping back she would be always here to support those stepping up.

She was delighted to accept a picture & a banner from our surprise guest Rtn Karthikeyan.

Our evening was closed by the DGElect speaking of some of his life experiences, his law degree and his early retirement 10 years ago. He told us he has a vision for the future of Rotary. How if you want to make changes you have to be on the bus & how he is now driving it.

Sally A Corbett Rtn

13 May 2026 - Duck Race Briefing

8 attended for the meal. David, Kate, Sadnha, Denise, Gary and Sharon came after. Maps, Job Sheets were handed out and discussed where needed. Please make yourself aware of the exits for emergency purposes. Hi Viz if required and walkie talkies. Black sacks are available at the tickets sales. If you see rubbish please pick up. There is a rubbish pick up at 1.30 near the white gates to the large Car park if you have time please takes bags there. Good Luck

17 May 2026 - Duck Race and Family Fun Day



20 May 2026 - Duck Race Debriefing

Hello Rotarians Duck Race briefing 8 attended for the meal. David, Kate, Sadnha, Denise, Gary and Sharon came after. Maps, Job Sheets were handed out and discussed where needed. Please make your self aware of the exits for emergency purposes. Hi Viz if required and walky talkies. Black sacks are available at the tickets sales if you see rubbish please pick up. There is a rubbish pick up at 1.30 near the white gates to the large Car park if you have time please take bags there. Good Luck

31 May - Social trip to Salford Quays. A cruise, meal and visit to Imperial War Museum

What a splendid day out we enjoyed today on our visit to Salford Quays. Although 19 members had originally signed up for the trip, a few last-minute illnesses reduced our number to 16 hardy travellers, but that certainly did not dampen anyone's enthusiasm.

With Manchester buzzing because of the AJ Bell Great Manchester Run, we wisely chose to travel by tram into Salford Quays. The city centre was packed with runners, supporters and spectators as thousands took part in the Half Marathon and 10km events. The Great Manchester Run is one of the largest running events in the UK, attracting over 40,000 participants this year, many of whom were running to raise money for charities and good causes. The atmosphere throughout the city was great, with cheering crowds lining the streets.

Our first destination was the Salford Quays boat cruise. This gave us a completely different perspective on the city and an opportunity to learn about the fascinating history of the area. The Quays were originally part of the Manchester Docks, built alongside the Manchester Ship Canal, one of the greatest engineering projects of the Victorian age. Opened by Queen Victoria in 1894, the canal allowed ocean-going ships to travel all the way from the Irish Sea directly into Manchester, turning the city into one of Britain's busiest ports.

As trade patterns changed and larger container ships became common, the docks gradually declined and finally closed in 1982. What followed was one of the most successful regeneration projects in Europe. The former docklands were transformed into the modern Salford Quays that we see today, with its striking waterfront, cultural attractions and home to MediaCity and The Lowry Theatre.

During the cruise we passed the delightfully quirky Gnome Island, where dozens of colourful painted garden gnomes have mysteriously gathered. One of the Quays' more unusual landmarks. After our cruise, we headed to the Banana Tree Restaurant and Noodle Bar for lunch. The food was good and represented very good value for money. A special thank you goes to Michael, who very generously paid for a round of drinks for the group. Michael was unable to be with us as he was celebrating his 80th birthday on a cruise in Norway, but he was very much remembered and appreciated by everyone.

Following lunch, a hardy party continued on to the Imperial War Museum North, where we explored the exhibition on espionage and spying. The displays offered a glimpse into the secret world of intelligence gathering, codebreaking, undercover operations and wartime deception.

The weather was kind to us throughout the day, and it was wonderful to see so many runners taking part in the Manchester events, many proudly wearing charity vests and raising significant sums for worthwhile causes. Combined with our boat trip, good food, interesting museums and excellent company, it all added up to a thoroughly enjoyable day out.

A big thank you to everyone who attended and helped make the trip such a success.

Richard Bircher



3 June 2026 - Committees

Date 03/06/2026		ACTION
Date / Venue	PD	
Present		
Apologies	Michael, Denise, Richard, Ian (until the very end of the meeting)	
Previous Minutes		
Actions Arising		
President Lesley	Recent members Lynn and Dale married last week. Congratulations! Everyone had a good day in Salford on Sunday.	
Membership Philip	N/A	
Secretary Harry	We have collected loads of bulbs from Notcutts. Members may buy them at much reduced prices with proceeds going to the Charity Account	
Treasurer Sinead	Charity acc £15,656 (available £5,427) General account £1,386 Proceeds from Duck Race £10,500 approx. This figure will change a little as a handful of late payers are nudged again.	

Club Services Bob	This month we have Pres Lesley's final presidential bash, and Denise's friend John talking about climbing mountains. MNDA will visit us too. In August we may learn a bit more about Chat GPT.	
Social Michael	No report (though see Bob's report above).	
Ways & Means Maggie	Still chasing late payers. May have been some lack of clarity about what they were paying Stuart Gerrard for (either the advertising space or his design of the ad). Maggie requested special letters of thanks from Madam President for five of the volunteers who went above and beyond. Woodford Summer Fair on June 26th – we will have a spot to sell pocket money toys. Maggie and Lesley to (wo)man it. Circus in Bramhall Park's Walled Garden on Aug 16th. "Frurt" will sponsor but amount not yet clear. Main recipient will be Mode rehab (see below). Much discussion about replacing the Float with wide divisions between renting and purchasing. Pros and cons aired vigorously. Upshot: more consideration at Monday's Council meeting, with fresh costings of both options. A business plan will evolve before then.	
Community Service Steve	Mode Rehabilitation: support for ex-military and some others, including counselling will be main recipients of Circus surplus. Youth Speaks: after the problems Hazel Grove High's team had in last year's contest that are not entering this year. However, Bramhall High School is very interested.	
International & Foundation Richard	Richard was unable to attend but sent a report via email as follows: <u>Lend with care</u> We have to date made made: ● 121 loans ● Helped 379 entrepreneurs ● Created 310 jobs ● Last month. Three loans completed This month we invested in two entrepreneurs who own shops.	

	Saleema in Lahore Pakistan, to help her Clothing business. And Emmanuel, from Rwanda who is running a small Grocery business in a small town outside Kigali. <u>Dokolo girls latrine.</u> This project is starting to gather momentum. Richard met with Keith Conley who is our District WASH Ambassador. He and Richard Cooper encouraged us to make a bid for District Funds (We are just over the deadline but there is slippage). I have made this bid for £1000. The Contribution from BW Rotary can come from HUGS funds. Richard also completed ALL the International grants training courses. I have a question? Does this mean I can be our Club Rotary Foundation Rep? <u>South Sudan</u> This is a large project, with months to come to fruition. Keith Conley, Wash Ambassador, would like to put together a multi club application for an International Grant. The water/Sanitation project in Sudan is still to be defined, but working with a Club there. <u>St Francis de Sales Special needs school</u> All funds raised through Rotary clubs have now been spent Facilities much improved 81 children in the school now. <u>India trip</u> Only three people interested in going. So Archana is putting this on hold for now. Richard	
PRO & Comms Ian		
Float committee Harry	See above in Maggie's comments.	

AOB	Lesley is looking for chairs – committee chairs that is. Please do step up to the mark for this.	
Next meeting	Council meeting Mon 8 th June 19.30 via Zoom	
+++	For programme click http://www.bwrotary.org then “Events Programme”	

10 June 2026 - Kate Leadbetter - Stepping Hill Charity

Thirteen Rotarians joined Kate Leadbeater, our speaker for the evening, at our pre meeting meal. A further 8 members filtered in during and after the food. In order of appearance John Meeus, David Rose, Gary and Sharon Lawrence, Sadhna Sanghvi, Pat Holmes, Denise Geary and Kate Nicholson, making a lovely full room to hear Kate's talk.

Kate is very well known to many of us having spoken to us before, hosted us in Stepping Hill Hospital and even travelled with us on Santa's float. The last time she addressed us was 4 years ago when she was very new to her role of Charity Manager for Stockport NHS Charity, a sort of amalgamation of our Ways and Means and Community Services committees. It's her job to enhance the care and wellbeing of all patients at Stepping Hill Hospital by raising funds and deciding where they will be best spent along with her committee.

In the past she has worked in banking, worked with children in care and in a hospice.

She raises large sums of money mainly through grants and legacies coming from grateful patients and relatives who have passed through the stroke, cardio, cancer and neo-natal departments primarily.

On this visit she had much more to tell us than on her previous appearance.

She reported on the Tree House Parents' room, the children's garden and the refreshed dementia wards, all of which we have contributed to and the neo natal appeal for funds to purchase a state of the art incubator to enhance the care in that department. So far they have raised £38,000 but there is still some way to go to reach their target.

The move towards more green spaces for all age groups within hospitals is proving to be invaluable to patients, supporting mental health. Scented herbs and music in particular are being used to trigger memories for dementia patients and Rotarians it seems judging by the response to Kate's potted mint.

To our amazement Kate also brought a blue plate with her. She explained to us that changing the old white plates, first on the dementia wards and then throughout the hospital had led to 20% less food waste and is encouraging reluctant patients to eat. Incidentally Stepping Hill's food team have won awards for their meals.

It's Kate's job to go over and above what the hospital can normally provide and find money to make a good hospital great. Another project is to raise enough money to buy a Davinci robot to enhance surgical innovation in the hospital.

I'm confident that Kate will achieve every project she sets her mind to with her sunny enthusiasm and determination.

Sue announced that Lesley's Leaving Lark would be held on Saturday 20th June at Maggie's House, in the garden weather permitting, 23, Bramley Road, SK7 2DW. PLEASE LET US KNOW STRAIGHT AWAY WHETHER YOU ARE COMING OR NOT. IT'S VERY SHORT NOTICE FOR CATERING.

Maggie.

20 June 2026 - Lesley's leaving bash

A good gathering of members, partners and friends assembled at the Hills, where Maggie had prepared a veritable feast. Much laughter in the sunshine and a great way to celebrate Lesley's 2 years as president of the club. Harry said some nice words, all true, as we raised our glasses to our outgoing president. To cap it all Dev volunteered to be Philip's vice president! Well done Dev.

Michael

24 June 2026 - Jon Watt – Antarctica and Climbing Mt. Vinson

Hello Rotarians, What an outstanding talk by John Watt on his adventures in Mountaineering. He gave us an Insight through word and Pictures of his Fantastic achievements. 15 Rotarians came for the Meal followed by 4 after the meal. John was born in Eastbourne where his love for climbing developed at school, and then flourished in his university years 1981 -1986. These were not small climbs but significant heights just to wet his appetite. After becoming a clinical Director and family man, his mental health took a turn for the worse and his saviour was returning to his passion of mountaineering . Along with his Lucky coat he bought in the 80s his duvet coat, he set about his new challenges. 2009 The Dolomites with his daughters. 2012 Three families Dolomites trip 2014 Machu Pitchu 2015 Switzerland 2016 Argentina 2017 Kilimanjaro with family 2018 Chili 2023 The Alps 2024 Aconcagua 2025 Vinson with the adventure company Antarctic Logistics Company. Adventures with a back up of chefs ,tents, aircrafts. John talked about the history of the Antarctic which can be found on Wikipedia from the Race to Antarctica 1911- 1912 and onwards. The pictures John showed us were breathtaking even highlighting two Rotarian clubs Haram bio and Union Glacier . His next challenge is 6 peaks. This Gentleman will not stop till his legs wont let him climb any more. I just wish he had a Documentary crew with him so the world could follow his story. Good luck John a true inspiration . The people he has met through mountaineering and the family who join him has brought him purpose and joy. I am not sure my bulletin can do this man justice. I felt we had met a modern-day Mountaineering Adventurer and Hero who should be named alongside some of the greats. What an honour to have met him and listened to his story.

Signing off as president, thank you all for your support over my two-year term. It's been an honour, let's support our new President Philip and Vice Dev. Good luck and always here to help. Lesley

