

February 2024

Rotary
Congleton



NEWS *Letter*

PRESIDENTS PATTTER



On the 27th January, Ian, Rod, Stew and myself attended a seminar hosted by District 1285 at the Novotel in Worsley presented by Nigel Danby. Essentially it was a new members forum, however most of the presentation concentrated on an explanation of how the Rotary Foundation functions. An explanation which I will share with members at the next Business Meeting

On the 12th February we held a new members meeting at the Horse Shoe Pub in Astbury. The meeting was informal, but well attended and proved to be a very successful event which generated a lot of interesting views.

Cath and Eric have been busy visiting a number of schools in Congleton to present prizes to the winners of the Young Photographer competition. The theme was "Buildings in Harmony with Nature" and was designed to appeal to all ages from 7 to 17. All the entries in the competition were on show in the Town Library over the Christmas holidays and proved a popular attraction in what has now become an annual event.

Eric and myself went to Eaton Bank Academy on 29th January to present the Eric Capper Trophy to Alfie, a pupil at Eaton Bank Academy who joins a select few local young chefs with their names engraved on the Eric Capper trophy, which he will keep for a year.

The Annual Swimathon event is almost upon us which will take place on the 15th and 16th March, returning to Congleton Leisure Centre. The various groups and charities who support the event are booking up the lanes and most are now taken. Returning to the Leisure Centre though does not come without some challenges, the most significant of which is having to purchase refreshments from the Leisure Centre itself, as we are unable to bring in food from outside. Nonetheless, it will be great to be back at this local venue which assists competitors and Rotarians alike.

On the 26th and 27th April is the District Conference, which is being held in Llandudno. For those of you are attending for the first time you will find this event very informative as there are always some fantastic speakers on the agenda. Whilst it is also a great opportunity to meet many other Rotarians from across the District.

IN THIS ISSUE

President's Patter

**The Bigger Picture-
Rotary's World...**

Local News...

**Young Photographer
update...**

**The Environment gets a
big boost...**

Diary Update...

Brian

A look at what Rotary does outside of Congleton

Reprinted from Congleton Chronicle
January 2024

(Local people see Rotary-Congleton running events, raising money and assisting with voluntary work in the community. But there's a much bigger role being performed by Rotary members as part of a major international force and one of the world's leading charities).

Next year's president of Rotary-Congleton will be retired Congleton vet, Ian Robinson.

He takes over a club, well-known in Congleton for its energetic programme of events organised throughout the year and the subsequent benefits that the money raised brings to charities and good causes and the environment. Rotarians can be seen supporting many civic events and reaching out to every school in Congleton with a programme of educational events, including Youth Speaks, Young Artist, Young Chef and Young Photographer.

Returning in July for his second term as president, Rtn. Robinson has also been a Rotary Foundation and International officer for several years. In July that role will pass to another recent ex-president of the club, Kevin Thompson

Best known for the work that it performs in the community, where it has been active for 77 years, the international role of Rotary is perhaps the 'Cinderella' in local awareness. Kevin aims to change that.

"Perhaps, Rotary's problem is that its activities cover such a diverse spread that its brand is not as well-known as a global force as that of many other organisations. Think of Rotary alongside such well-known global names as Nike or Adidas, Ford, or McDonalds".

Originally formed as an exclusive club for white American business people, Rotary has long since shaken off its old-fashioned image and now welcomes all races and all religions, more recently with many women joining what was once the all-male organisation. In fact, Rotary's central, non-political, non-religious 'creed' is based simply on telling the truth, being fair, building goodwill to all and sharing and networking its contacts. This famous 'Four Way Test' has been adopted by many businesses over the years to demonstrate their own ethical standards.

In Congleton, most new members join the club because they see the range of its work locally, only later coming to recognise that they have joined a club that is part of a bigger organisation with 1.4 million members in over 200 countries and is a world-leading force for peace,



education and health with active campaigns in all of these areas. Indeed, some members progress to exploit Rotary's social contacts and join working parties in third-world countries.

Whilst members of the club volunteer primarily for the benefit of the community, a proportion of the small membership subscription that they pay supports the worldwide work of the organisation. At the heart of this is the Rotary Foundation – Rotary's global charity which receives and dispenses funds from Rotary clubs, and individual Rotarians as well as receiving support from non-Rotary sources including friends, the public and corporate supporters. Over its 100-year history Rotary Foundation has spent more than \$4bn on life-changing, sustainable projects. A pioneering programme to eliminate polio, a global campaign to provide clean drinking water, a health programme that funds cataract operations and prosthetic limbs in third world countries and a multi-faceted educational programme are all part of its umbrella activities.

Disaster aid also figures prominently and most recently the national arm, Rotary Great Britain and Ireland has supported both the Moroccan and Turkish earthquake recovery. Rotary GBI has raised £6m to send to Ukraine as well as supporting refugees locally. Rotary-Congleton has contributed to this as well as winning grants and using its own funds to support local Ukrainian refugees. Evidencing how Rotary clubs work together in times of crisis, Rotary clubs in Poland and Romania worked at the borders providing immediate assistance to refugees as they ran from the Russian invasion offering immediate cash funded by the Rotary Foundation. Meanwhile, Rotary clubs in Kyiv asked for assistance from sister clubs

throughout Europe to build emergency housing for families bombed out of their homes. Congleton sent over £4,000.

Lend with Care is part of the CARE global charity. Rotary-Congleton has set aside a special fund which, over many years has been used to invest in start-up enterprises all over the third world where its money encourages micro businesses to grow - providing employment, supporting families and even local communities. By choosing its investments carefully, Rotary-Congleton's record is impressive and no micro business has ever defaulted on its loan repayments.

WASH - it stands for Water, Sanitation, Hygiene – is a Rotary Action Group. 1,000 children under 5 die every day from preventable diseases due entirely to not having access to clean, safe water and toilets. The United Nations states that 3.5 billion people worldwide do not have access to clean water and toilets. Rotary Foundation is at the forefront of efforts to achieve a UN target of safe water for all by 2030.

Polio, Rotary's Number One humanitarian project, started with a promise made in 1985 to rid the world of polio. Back then, when Rotary launched its campaign there were 350,000 cases a year. Last year there were 12! A couple of 'scare' with the polio virus found during waste treatment in London and New York mean that we cannot drop our guard and vaccination of all under-5's remains essential. Rtn Robinson says that 'Polio is still only a plane journey away'. The campaign driven by Rotary engages support from UNICEF and the Gates Foundation. Immunization programmes even reach the most remote areas of Pakistan and Afghanistan, now the last remaining outposts of the disease.

Shelter Box, a charity formed by Rotary, provides front-line packs of emergency aid; essential food and equipment sent to disaster areas. Congleton Rotarians join with many other local clubs to fund and pack numerous boxes ready for use wherever they are needed.

The educational work of the Foundation provides grants and bursaries to a cohort of talented students to pursue academic courses at top universities which lead them to careers promoting peace throughout the world. These graduates work in diplomacy in governments and internationally in bodies such as the United Na-

Rtn. Kevin Thompson is excited to take on his new role within the Congleton club. Together with the club's current president Brian Hogan,

continued from previous page

both feel the need to widen the perception of what Rotary does locally. Both men feel that local people happily support the club's community work - where it spent £45,000 on local projects last year - with little understanding of how the club uses its own money to support the much bigger picture of Rotary's global role.

If Rotary's work strikes a chord with anyone with a little spare time; a desire to make new friends and the enthusiasm to take part in any aspect of its work, the opportunity of membership of Rotary-Congleton is available. Membership Services lead, Stew Price is always pleased to hear from like-minded people on 07799 747 204

Calling all schools...



Will 'The Year 2050' provide inspiration for Congleton's young artists? The theme is rich with endless opportunities for fertile young imaginations - Science, Transport, Space Travel, IT and AI.

The Rotary Young Artist competition is run through Congleton's junior and senior schools. Rotary-Congleton has written to all local schools inviting all young artists to enter.

The competition is sponsored generously by local company, Senior Aerospace Bird Bellows, who chose the theme for this year's competition. The competition is open to all pupils between the ages of 7 and 17. Entries have to be on A3 paper and the schools need to ensure that the entrants' details are written on the reverse. Every entrant receives a certificate. The winners at each school receive age-related prizes of artists' materials. The overall winner receives the magnificent Bird Bellows trophy to keep for a year.

The competition is organised by Rod Goodier. It runs from now until the end of June.

A passion for swimming?



Congleton estate agents Timothy a Brown claim to be 'passionate about property'. Which puts them in the swim in the fast lane of Congleton's hectic housing market. It also makes them natural participants in the Rotary Swimathon on March 15th.

Six of them, Tom, Sion, Joe, Nigel, Alex and David have formed a team 'The Stupendous Six' and are jumping in to swim for charity. All are highly motivated to do their very best and each boasting varying degrees of fitness, they have set a target to get sponsorship to raise a minimum of £200 in their hour in the pool.

'The aim is to swim as many lengths as possible in the given time,' they say. They will be raising as much as they can for the Swimathon's chosen charities - The Old Sawmill and the Listen Out Loud Foundation.

They've also nominated their own charity: the Motor Neurone Disease Association, hoping to raise both its awareness locally and some cash to aid research and to investigate potential cures, giving hope and courage to those individuals living with MND. Fifty percent of the money they raise will go to MND while the remaining 50% will be shared between Rotary's nominated charities.

Organisers say that there is still time to register a team and take part on Friday afternoon, 15th March. On Saturday all lanes are fully booked already. Full details including how to enter for free and register a team with sponsorship forms are online at <http://www.congleton-swimathon.com>

Swimathon -The Challenge

With generous support from Congleton Town Council, the Rotary Swimathon gets underway at Congleton Leisure Centre for the first time since it underwent a full rebuilding programme. There's still time to raise a team and book one of the remaining lanes on Friday, 15th March. Organisers, Sandra Conway and Rachel Brown had to battle numerous problems with the venue - which turned out to be challenging for what is its first major Gala since it re-opened. However, problems with the venue didn't stop the teams of swimmers from joining in and collecting money from their sponsors for charities of their choice. For over two decades, the swimmers have raised countless tens of thousands - every penny of which go to good causes.



OSM OK?

Rotary-Congleton held a social meeting at The Old Saw Mill on January 22nd and learned about the work of the OSM in its role as a community hub, providing a range of services around Congleton.

Peter Aston told the club that the venture had its beginnings in 2009 with just two kilos of surplus apples prompting his wish to make some apple juice with the fruit. By his best year in 2013 this had grown to local people bringing sufficient unwanted apples to make 7,500 bottles of juice and cider. In 2016 he acquired his own press to make the juice for the growing enterprise and he also found the premises.. Six months later, fully refurbished, The Old Saw Mill opened and marked the start of the venue as a cafe and meeting rooms providing a social hub for the town. A high spot was when the then Prince of Wales and his consort, Camilla, paid an extended visit in 2019.

Eight staff and around 40 volunteers now look after the not-for-profit organisation that regularly delivers around 100 meals a week and provides a vital social link to people unable to get out of their homes.

The Old Saw Mill will benefit from Rotary's Swimathon fund-raising event on March 15th and 16th. Swimmers keep half the money they raise for a charity of their own choice and Rotary will divide the rest between The Old Saw Mill and the LOL Foundation (*featured elsewhere in this issue*).

ROUND-UP

Rotary YOUNG PHOTOGRAPHER COMPETITION



Astbury



Eaton Bank

The story so far!

Most of the prize presentations for the Young Photographer competition have been made with every entrant receiving a certificate and a copy of their photo.

In addition, the winners from each school received their print in a frame and Amazon vouchers as prizes.

As the newsletter went to press, only Quinta was awaiting their prize presentations with the date that they could give us - March 8th - so that they could undertake the prize presentations in front of a full school assembly!

Unfortunately, we are still awaiting photos from Marfields. If possible, they will be included in the next Newsletter.



Buglawton



Mossley

The Eric Capper trophy



Castle



Eric Capper Trophy

Smallwood



Alfie received the trophy - engraved with his name at Eaton Bank Academy, recently



CHS

Alfie, a pupil at Eaton Bank Academy, joins a select few local young chefs with their names engraved on the Eric Capper Trophy, which he will keep for a year.

The trophy commemorates the founder of Rotary-Congleton's Young Chef local heat and is competed for, annually, by the town's two high schools. This year it is the turn of Eaton Bank Academy. Alfie won the first round of the competition held in November with his menu of food.

He will now go on to compete in the next round of the competition among other schools in Rotary's northwest district – and if he wins there, the next step will be the national final!

The late Eric Capper ran the Rotary Young Chef Competition for many years.

The environment is a busy place, right now.

The environmentalists amongst the Rotary team have set a strenuous programme for the year



The Community Garden Stall

This is a joint project between CTC/ Streetscape and Rotary- Congleton. It proved very popular with the community from its installation in September 2023. It hibernated in December 2023 over winter. It will return to its prominent location in front of the Stock at the Pavillion in Congleton Park from March and continue until December. The Stall will be available every week day from 0930 to 1500hrs.



The competition is Free to enter and will run from 1st June and be judged on 31st August
Timothy a Brown and Smithy Nursery have sponsored the competition.



The Remembrance Tree project.

This is designed to improve the environment of some of the Congleton Care Homes where residents are unable to leave the Care Home but would like to take part in events like the Remembrance Day. Our plan is to plant Canadian Maple trees in March 2024 so that

autumn in the grounds of the home allowing residents to take part in the event.



The Pledge

This project has been running throughout 2023 and will continue during 2024. The underlying thought is to

show that Congleton is a most environmentally aware town in the country. We have over 500 local residents that have shown their support by signing up to the 10 basic promises. There have been about a dozen 'Hints and Tips' emails sent out hoping to inform supporters of environmental issues. This will continue at regular intervals throughout 2024.



Sign The Pledge to get regular Hints and Tips. Number 13 is next!

The David Worth Environmental Challenge.

This project is being run by Rod Goodier and is a tribute to our own much-loved past president and Treasurer, David Worth, who served the club for many years.

Local schools and all other youth groups can enter the Challenge and take on a project under the title of "Recycling". The project has already started with letters sent out in January and will be judged on completion in December 2024. There is a generous prize which is designed to stimulate interest and capture the imagination of the entrants - creating ideas for long-lasting projects that will capture the imagination of others and sustain a commitment to the challenges of Recycling in future years.



Market Square Wildflower Meadow.

This is a joint project between CTC/ Streetscape and Rotary- Congleton. The aim is to improve the local environment by forming a Heart shaped wildflower meadow in the centre of town. The work is planned to start in March 2024. The wildflower seeds will be sown and will be both a beautiful amenity and useful pollination/ wildlife site throughout the summer until autumn. The project will be repeated hopefully for many years.

Wildlife Friendly Garden Competition

This is another Rotary project designed to promote local residents gardens, courtyards, balconies and window boxes to be more welcoming to wildlife. The marketing materials have been prepared and the competition will be launched during March 2024.

Diary Page

Back 'Home' at the fully refurbished Astbury Golf Club, resplendent with its new bar area and knee-deep in new carpet!

There's one more business meeting before Swimathon. there's going to be a full agenda fofo for the March 4th meeting.

Note the date. We've been shifted to a week later to make room for Biddulph to hold their Charter Night at the Golf Club on Monday 18th. It's possibly a bit worrying that our treasurer is planning a talk on the subject of 'Fraud' on Monday 25th!!!

Everyone's getting excited about a trip to Llandudno for the District Conference. Don't forget to take your bucket and spade if you intend to go...

Another year end. Where did that go? And there's still some dates to add for next year: Classic Car Show, and Jazz Night, both not to be missed.

Mon 4 Mar '24	18:00 PM to 22:00 PM	Business Meeting
Footnote:		Swimathon Briefing
Fri 15 Mar '24	14:00 PM to 20:00 PM	Swimathon
Sat 16 Mar '24	14:00 PM to 21:00 PM	Swimathon
Mon 18 Mar '24	19:00 PM to 22:00 PM	Bidulph Charter Night
Footnote:		Congleton Golf Club
Mon 25 Mar '24	19:00 PM to 22:00 PM	Social / Speaker Night
Footnote:		Bob Mallet - fraud
Mon 8 Apr '24	19:00 PM to 22:00 PM	Business meeting
Mon 22 Apr '24	19:00 PM to 21:00 PM	Speaker Night
Sat 27 Apr '24	09:00 AM to 17:00 PM	District Conference
Sun 28 Apr '24	09:00 AM to 17:00 PM	District Conference
Mon 13 May '24	19:00 PM to 22:00 PM	Business Meeting
Mon 3 Jun '24	16:00 PM to 22:00 PM	AGM & Club Aassembly
Sun 9 Jun '24	10:00 AM to 17:00 PM	Classic Car Show
Footnote:		Egerton Arms,, Astbury
Mon 17 Jun '24	19:00 PM to 22:00 PM	Social/Speaker Night
Sat 29 Jun '24	17:00 PM to 21:00 PM	Jazz Night

