

November 2023

Rotary
Congleton



NEWS *Letter*



IN THIS ISSUE

President's Patter...

**Bonfire and Fireworks -
What a Night!**

Guy Fawkes Greats...

**News: Birds, Hearing and
Community Stall...**

Tree of Light Shapes up...

What's On and more...

A NIGHT TO REMEMBER

PRESIDENT'S PATTTER

Bonfire

As we know the Bonfire and Fireworks Display went well this year. The weather was relatively kind to us and encouraged people to come out and attend the display.

My current guestimate is that we had about 4,400 spectators present, 2,122 of whom pre bought tickets through TIC.

The ground as we know was sodden and some of the vehicles operating in the far side of the field by the Bonfire and fairground rides, did quite badly cut up the ground there. But, having spoken to Ruth at Streetscape, she didn't see it as a major problem and she stated that her team will sort it out.

Setting up and dismantling after the event is very tiring and despite the assistance from "Wendy's helpers" we need to find a different answer to how we undertake this set of tasks in the future.

The display itself was spectacular as usual and seems to have been well received, but didn't take place without the odd problem. A lady collapsed with anaphylactic shock due to a wasp bite which we believe probably happened at home. After some treatment she was transferred to hospital by our on-site St John Ambulance.

Environment

The Environment Team is still relatively new, but is making a big impact in the Town with its various projects, including the Community Garden Stall in the Park, which is a joint venture between the Town Council and Rotary. This and other initiatives have led to Congleton in Bloom awarding Rotary an award in recognition of the environmental work undertaken by the team in the Town including the support they have given to other groups.

Tree of Light

Arrangements are well under way for the programme supporting the ToL project. But support is still required to man stalls on the 24th and 25th November and on the 2nd December. Please contact Jo if you can help.



Forthcoming Events

As we approach Xmas the number of events increases significantly, starting with Charter Evening on the 20th November followed by the Xmas Concert and Xmas Party, and of course the visits to the War Memorial Hospital and care homes to distribute some Xmas gifts from Rotary.

Apprenticeship

At the Huddle meeting which took place on 6th November, Rod mentioned that a young Ukrainian lady was seeking the possibility of securing an apprenticeship. It was suggested that it might be worth contacting the chamber of Commerce, which Rod duly did.

Having contacted the Chamber, Rod picked up a LinkedIn message from Ben Hyslop, who runs a local company called H21 Safety. The company is very big into Health & Safety training and is looking for an apprentice to join them, initially on the admin & marketing side. Rod spoke to Ben who told him that it is a two-year apprenticeship with excellent prospects for advancement and if this is of interest to Rehina, then it was suggested that she contact Ben directly.

Could possibly be an excellent result in a very short period of time.

Brian

Another fantastic night of Firework Fun in Congleton Park.

Almost a fifth of the town's population turned out to see the annual Bonfire and Fireworks in the park on Saturday, 4th November. And they told us 'What a fantastic display' and how much they loved it. The rain held off all evening and although the Park was muddy underfoot, that did nothing to dampen the spirits of the folk that turned out to enjoy the show.

On top of the fire, seven Guys made by Congleton's primary schools and nurseries waited their turn to go up in flames.

A night of traditional firework fun and entertainment for the whole family started with a procession to light the fire led by president, Brian Hogan with Mayor of Congleton Cllr. Robert Moreton and his wife, the Mayoress Helen, together with the Mayor's Cadet Amelia Downing. The ATC, led by Flt. Lt. Kate Clarke and a team from Buglawton scouts carried flares to light the fire, which was slow to take hold due to the rain earlier in the day – meaning the the fire remained alight throughout the entire evening.

Families with young children loved the family display at 6.30. Plenty of fireworks had the audience enthralled, while this show featured smaller, less noisy fireworks. John Knight, standing in for Eddie Roberts, said that people had particularly mentioned to him the suitability of this part of the evening for children with special needs.

Between the two firework displays all the stallholders and the fairground rides did a brisk trade with queues building up all round. Pizzas, hot dogs, soft drinks and ice cream were all in demand. Our own Tombola stall completely cleared out. The stall selling a variety of light sabres and coloured wands and stars did brisk trade. The Rotary refreshment tent sold hot and cold drinks and snacks, most of which could be had for just £1.

The main display at 7.30 was around 25 minutes of non-stop and often noisy aerial firework magic by a professional display team from Star Fireworks. A laser display accompanied the DJ Chris Booth whose music provided entertainment throughout.

It's now time to reflect on the numbers that are needed to organise the show and ensure every aspect of management and safety on the night. 'None of us is getting any younger,' said past president Kev. 'We need more volunteers and some new blood to step in and help us if we are to continue to work hard to make evenings such as this, enjoyed by so many, a continuing success.' The Mayor posted on FaceBook 'Let's not forget that everyone involved ... are [sic] volunteers!'

A NIGHT TO REMEMBER



Hi GUYS!

Seven spectacular Guy Fawkes, painstakingly built by nursery and junior school children entered into the annual Rotary-Congleton Guy Fawkes Competition.

Their fate was sealed in the traditional way, atop the bonfire in the park, where they all went up in flames to the delight of the town's young people who came to watch.

The annual competition produces a variety of different 'takes' on the popular theme. This year, the entry from Marton was a 'Mummy Guy', a wittily mummified take on the traditional theme!

Outstanding stand-up Guy came from regular entrants Friendly Faces Nursery, who regularly pull-out all the stops with their entry. Their 7 foot tall and very traditional Guy posed problems for the car sent to collect it! It fitted in, together with its extremely well-written message 'Remember, remember the 5th of November.' Amazing writing for an under-4-year old, perhaps! It made the centre piece standing on top of the fire.

Another strong contender was Mossley Pre-school's entry where the children had decorated Guy's smart blue coat with individual panels.

Daven's entry nearly missed the cut and was only collected after hours, thanks to the caretaker still being at school! Their Guy was strikingly cloaked in black bin bags and sat, clutching a rocket and a bag of gunpowder.

Smallwood's smartly-dressed entry in tweed had a carefully-made papier-mache head. Havannah's Guy was comfortably dressed in blue sweatshirt and jogging pants. Blackfirs red-faced Guy – embarrassed at being caught in the act of lighting the gunpowder, perhaps – was nevertheless smartly dressed with a fresh white shirt.

They all made a massively important contribution to the overall fun of this traditional event, that still gives so much pleasure to so many.

Oh. And after a closely-run contest, the overall winner is Friendly Faces, with Daven a close second and Mossley third.

Well done to you all.



The Winner:
Friendly Faces Nursery



Rotary gets the bird

Rotary-Congleton hopes to address the problem of the declining wild bird population in Congleton. The population of British birds is in real trouble. Nearly 60% of our native woodland bird population has been lost in recent years.

As a result, Rotary-Congleton's environmental team has been working in Congleton Park Woods with the RSPB to address the problem, recently. The RSPB said that a major problem is the lack of food as well as a shortage of breeding sites.

Locally, Rotary has supplied and fitted 8 'squirrel-proof' bird feeders in the trees and these are now regularly topped up with high-energy foods. They are also disinfected to combat disease. The feeders will help to keep small birds healthy throughout the year. As the leaves fall, visitors to the park will be able, hopefully, to see and enjoy the birds, said Simon Fallis, who is running the project.

A further 20 bird boxes suitable for a variety of bird species have been sited deep in the woods to minimise disturbance. Already installed in the trees, the boxes provide shelter in the cold as well as nesting sites in the spring.

Visitors to the park should soon be able to see an increasing number of native birds including blue tits, great tits, coal tits, tree and house sparrows, woodpeckers and starlings as well as robins, wrens, wagtails and flycatchers.



What did you say?

How often do you have an eye test or a trip to the dentist? What about the last time you had a hearing test?

Helen Whipday from Starkey Laboratories told Rotary-Congleton members about advances in hearing aid design – with many surprising new features available in the latest models. With the latest generation of microchips with much longer battery life providing con-

such as mail, telephone calls and even translations are available together with an app that allows the aid to be adjusted! The latest models can even adapt automatically to different surroundings and filter out background noise.

Helen pointed out that whilst people accept that they need regular eye tests and trips to the dentist, they neglect their hearing. Tests are free – and even some simpler hearing aids are available on the NHS.

Helen was representing The Hearing Centre in Congleton

Concert Time is here again...



Recently, Simon installed the final robin box in the woods.

The Community Stall



A stall has been set up in Congleton Park to encourage people not only to take free items that they need, but also to bring any items to swap. Any surplus produce, garden tools, plants or plant pots can be left for the next visitor.

From 30th October the stall is wheeled out on weekday mornings near to the Stock restaurant at the Pavilion. It will be removed at 3.30pm.

The stall is being maintained by Streetscape in conjunction with and promoted by Rotary- as part of the Council's 'Community Re-use Programme'. Streetscape's surplus items from its greenhouses will be placed on the stall, which is also supported by food items from Stock and Blueys' restaurants.

Streetscape's Ruth Burgess said that the stall is part of the council's plan to reduce waste while helping other good causes to help everyone to access additional resources. The project has been enthusiastically welcomed by Rotary-Congleton. The Rotary environmental team, led by Simon Fallis, has the concept of recycling and re-using as a central part of its 'Pledge' campaign to make Congleton the most environmentally aware town in the country. If you have surplus tools, pots, plants or produce, the idea is that you leave them and take anything that you need.

This year Concert tickets can be booked on-line from the Daneside Theatre

(www.danesidetheatre.co.uk) or in person at the Congleton Information Centre at the town hall.

Tickets and seat reservations can also be made online by copying the theatre's QR code. Tickets cost just £12.50 plus a small booking fee and the concert starts at 7.30pm. Full details online from the theatre and also on our website:

www.congletonrotary.co.uk

Tree of Light shapes up for another year...



The Tree of Light - a very meaningful symbol of Christmas for so many people - gets a fresh new look and emphasis this year.

An Angel, a Snowflake, a Christmas Tree, a Bauble or a Heart are the five shapes that can be chosen and inscribed with a personal message.

Organiser, Jo Lancaster said we are making an extra effort this Christmas to make the Tree of Life in the Community Gardens even more special this Christmas. Since it was planted, the tree has grown and strengthened and as a result, seasonal shapes can be festooned around the tree, for the first time.

The new shapes are wooden – an important environmental point, eliminating the use of the plastic stars that adorned the barriers around the tree in previous years. Hopefully, this will improve the look and ambience.

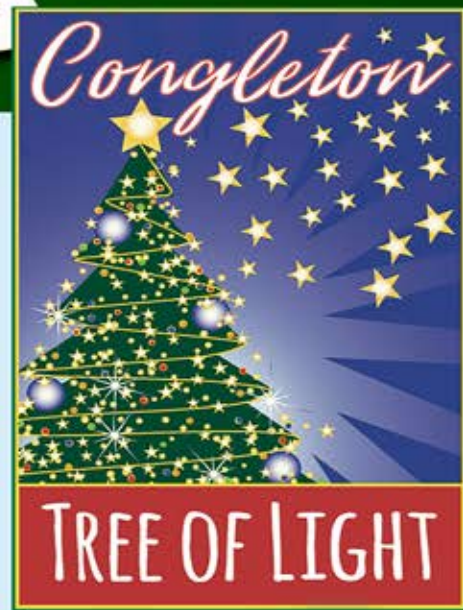
On Saturday, November 25th – the day after Christmas Lights are switched on throughout the town, we are having our own event in the Community Garden.

At 3pm on Saturday afternoon, members of the Beartown Choir will gather by the Tree of Light in the Community Garden and perform a programme of Christmas songs. At around 3.45, a short ceremony will take place before the illuminations on the tree are switched on. The tree will remain lit every day throughout Christmas until 12th night.

The Mayor, Cllr. Rob and Mayoress, Helen Moreton, will lead a group of civic personalities. Mrs Tracy Heyes will read a poem and the Beartown Choir will lead singing of a further carol. Doug Parker will act as MC and lead the programme.

The tree decorations are on sale from the Congleton Information centre at the Town Hall. In addition, Rotary will have a gazebo in the town centre on Saturday, November 24th, 25th and 2nd December. Messages can be purchased until December 22nd. When the last ones will be placed around the tree.

The Mayor, Cllr. Rob Moreton and Mayoress, Helen, will lead a group of civic personalities. Mrs Tracy



Heyes will read a poem and the Beartown Choir will lead singing of a further carol. Doug Parker will lead the programme.

This year, price of leaving a message to a loved one has been cut to a minimum donation of just £1. Payment can be made by cash or debit or credit card. Nevertheless, it is hoped that people will increase the amount they give, recognising that whilst the tree is a service to the people of Congleton, any profit that the tree generates is spent on good causes.

Diary Page

It's the Month for Parties!
Rod still had a very few tickets left for our 76th Charter Dinner as we were publishing the Newsletter.

The Christmas Concert is an essential night of Christmas music at the Daneside Theatre. Rod still has availability and tickets are booked online this year, on the website, the Information Centre or using the QR code.

And then we let our hair down with our traditional Christmas Party. Bring your partners and your Christmas party-gear!

Mon 20 Nov '23	19:00 PM to 23:00 PM	Charter Night
Mon 4 Dec '23	19:00 PM to 22:00 PM	Huddle/ Business Meeting
Sat 16 Dec '23	19:00 PM to 21:00 PM	Christmas Concert
Mon 18 Dec '23	19:00 PM to 22:00 PM	Christmas Party

Two more new members...

A further two new members have joined our energetic body of volunteers engaged in supporting the community!

President, Brian, set a target of increasing membership by 10% this year and is well on the way to achieving it.

Penny Mercer and Janet Hollins were inducted to membership recently

Penny worked in sales and then in the NHS and private hospitals as a medical secretary. She was attracted to Congleton by 'the busy high street and friendly people' and moved here from the south of England in 2022. She is a keen photographer and 'loves the Peak District.'

Janet is well-known locally, having lived in Congleton all her life and has worked in the jewellery business for over 5 decades, finally joining the family business, Browns of Congleton. She is looking forward to the various opportunities that membership of Rotary presents.



Brian welcomes Penny and Janet



...And a Certificate for Eddie

At the last huddle meeting, Brian presented a Service Recognition Award to Eddie as one of our own 'unsung heroes' for all the dedication and hard work that he puts in, largely behind the scenes, to make the park safe and ready for the annual bonfire and fireworks event.