



Club of Swindon



Club Bulletin August/ September 2023

The Editor's musings

As you will see from the reports that follow, the Rotary year is well and truly underway. Not only have we had some interesting lunch time meetings but there have been some good fundraising events as well. Judging from reports from our energetic committees - not to mention our enthusiastic president,- there is plenty more in the offing.

We are aware that for some of our club 'Friends', age/ infirmity make it difficult to join in some of our activities but if you'd like to come along and need a lift don't hesitate to get in touch with us - we'd love to see you!

A few dates for your diary

September 15th : Wine tasting at Magnums (proceeds to Harbour Project)

September 21st: Past Presidents' Lunch Tawny Owl

September 21st : Area Meeting in the evening at the Tawny owl

November 15th Sale of Art and Auction at Double Tree Hilton Hotel (proceeds to Harbour Project and Swindon Carers - see below)

December 7th: Christmas Dinner at the North Star Training Restaurant

Charity Art Auction – Wed 15

November 7pm

Come and have some fun at the Swindon Charity Art Auction! It is on Wednesday 15 November from 7pm (pre auction viewing from 6pm) at Double Tree by Hilton, Lydiard Fields, Great Western Way, Swindon SN5 8UZ.

Entry is free and no need to prebook. Free refreshments and free parking. All money raised will be divided equally between the Harbour Project and Swindon Carers.

30 works of art will be auctioned, all kindly donated by prominent local artists. Other artworks will be on sale at fixed prices.

For further information please contact Jeremy Holt me@jeremyholt.co.uk 07968 777114

Recent meetings....is this what you missed.....?

August 24th

Introduced last year by Rob Gillespie, from time to time one of the club is asked to be a castaway (as per "Desert Island Discs" and select 4 pieces of music. The "Club Castaway" at today's meeting was the club secretary , Steve, who ran through some of the 'highlights of his career' as an amateur musician, explaining his eclectic choice of music as he went along

Aged 8 and singing treble in a performance of Bach's "St Matthew Passion" gave him a very premature love of Bach - hence the extract of Bach's Double Violin Concerto in D minor

Having sung bass in his church choir for more than 60 years (as well as other choral societies and ensembles) he has a deep love of all sorts of church music and treated us to a rendition of Stainer's

"Nunc Dmittis" performed by his own church choir.

In a surprise to many he admitted to having played the cello for many years and selected a movement of the Elgar Cello Concerto (Jacqueline Du Pré of course) and recounted an amusing tale that involved him holding up the start of a concert at the Sydney Opera House earlier this year as he made something of an entrance!

Having been a founding member of the group and after 25 years of singing with them, his final piece was a track from a "Ten in a Bar" disc, "Sunny" that included some glorious jazz piano.

As Bill pointed out in his vote of thanks, it is sometimes surprising what these castaway sessions reveal about our fellow rotarians!

August 31st

An evening meeting at the Fox and Hounds in Wroughton when unfortunately the speaker planned for the meeting was unable to join us because of family problems but President Jeremy stepped into the breach and gave a thought-provoking talk on the subject of Heroism. This is a difficult topic to research as 'heroes' tend to be self-effacing and reticent about discussing their deeds, and as a result are the real heroes ever known? In conversations with various individuals it had become clear to Jeremy that true valour is often recognised only posthumously, when others talk about the courage and bravery of the deceased. He cited various examples he had discovered and in particular felt that high on his list were those S.O.E. agents of WW11 who without necessarily performing any single act of valour, had knowingly and willingly put themselves into a situation of peril, the ongoing threat of discovery torture and death being constantly with them.

Jeremy covered the impact of emotional damage on heroes who did not seek recognition or even thought that they deserved that epithet.

In summing up, he felt that several words might be used to identify 'a hero': courage, selflessness, and self-sacrifice, coupled with a degree of persistence, and

he left us with an interesting thought that "we are all far more capable than we think we are!"



September 7th

This was a straightforward 'Camaraderie' meeting but with President Jeremy on holiday Past President Debbie took the chair and 18 of us sat down to dinner including visitor Dennis Puffett, (guest of Cliff) who is becoming a regular visitor.

September 14th

This was the monthly Business meeting where we heard the usual reports from Treasurer and committees of the club. Of interest perhaps were a couple of invitations a) to join the Old Town Club for an Italian fundraising meal at Fabio's on October 4th when the beneficiary will be Shelterbox and b) to make up a Rotary table at a Charity Ball being organized by "Tiny but Mighty" (one of our own Charity Ball beneficiaries! If you are interested in joining either of these events do let the club secretary know.

We were also introduced to a large number of cuddly penguins - the product of "Dressability". These

lovable little fellows will make great holders for pyjamas / hot water bottles and if filled with assorted goodies will make ideal gifts at Christmas for youngsters or mums in the SDASS shelter, or even adults at the Harbour Project. If you would care to take one and fill it up with suitable little presents, have a word with Debbie.

Recent Events

Italian Meal at Fabio's:

Over the past few years, the venue in Bath Road, has become a regular spot for the club, and Gianni and his staff are becoming well-known to many rotarians and in turn they are getting to know us well!

September 11th was chosen by our Community Engagement Committee for an evening meal to raise funds for the Swindon Domestic Abuse Support Service. And what an evening it was! Seventy-eight members and friends gathered there for what turned out to be a great evening of good food and an amazing atmosphere prevailed. Debbie and Lesley worked hard prior to the meal in cajoling us all to part with cash in return for raffle tickets and the result was simply staggering.



Debbie and Lesley hard at work

At the close of the evening We learned that £1479 had been raised for SDASS.

Almost half the total came from the generosity of the restaurant management who gave £10 per head towards to the charity and the remainder from the proceeds of the raffle...there were lots a smiling faces!



A packed Fabio's on Monday night

Wine tasting at Magnum's:

Old Town and Wood Street was the venue for another fundraising event only a few days after the night at Fabio's. This time we were raising funds for The President's charity this year - The Harbour Project.



Twenty-six staff and friends of this amazing charity gathered for a fun evening of tasting some interesting wines, and although the financial outcome is not yet known, the coffers of the Harbour Project will have swollen by a tidy little sum as a result. Congratulations go to club member Liz Holloway who won the star prize in the raffle of a Tour of the House of Commons and afternoon tea with Justin Tomlinson M.P.