

W D R T

The aim of Woodrot is to be a medium of information and more importantly, a record of the activities of the Rotary Club of South Woodham Ferrers and its members.

40th



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OUR PRESIDENTS THOUGHTS

It is with heavy heart that I write this following the passing of our friend and fellow Rotarian Tony Graham. Tony leaves behind a huge legacy through his role in Rotary from the time he joined, to when he became President in 1989/90 right up to our council meeting this month. His dedication and service above self never wavered. Our thoughts are with Maureen and Tony's family at this sad time. Life invariably goes on, but I will sure miss his greeting and wit every Tuesday evening.

Thanks to Terry for organising the Race Night on the 4th March and what a response, with over one hundred now attending. It shows what can be done when we put our minds to it and particular thanks to those members who are bringing guests. I have both Mark Polley and Steve Amos and his wife Anne-Marie attending so please try to make a point of welcoming them as they are potential new members. It is also good to see members taking more interest in the Gala Night on the 1st July when the Presidency hands over to Kush.

All for now folks and hopefully I will be back to Rotary after another bout of Covid before you read this.

A TRUE ROTARIAN



Tony Graham's passing is a sad loss to our club. He will be remembered for the humour and spontaneous wit which he brought to our meetings; but more importantly he will be remembered for the time and energy he dedicated to the club's service for which he was deservedly awarded his Paul Harris Fellowship.

Tony became a member soon after the club's foundation and served as president in 1989-1990. Through more than 30 years of membership he was always an active participant in the club's community service activities, willing to step forward when volunteers were called for. His work as publicity officer has made a significant contribution to raising and maintaining public awareness of Rotary in South Woodham Ferrers.

Such was his commitment to the club Tony attended Tuesday meetings and meetings of the Community Service Committee and Club Council until the very end. He was a true Rotarian who will be sorely missed.

Officers & Committee Members

Membership Services

Kush Dave

Mick Fry	Derek Hutchinson
Don Wragg	Dave Osborne
Ken Walker	Cec Norton
Eric Johnson	Roger Restell
Steve Evans	

Youth and Vocation

Geoff Thompson

Paul Duffy	Roger Restell
Roger Gatford	Dino Kahn
Derek Hutchinson	Ces Norton

President

John Robinson

Vice President

Kush Dave

Junior Vice

Steve Evans

Secretary

Derek Hutchinson

Treasurer

Don Wragg

P R O

Almoner

Mick Fry

Speaker sec

Eric Johnson

Safeguard & Compliance

Dave Osborne

Community Services

David Pepper

David Shea	Roger Restell
John Acklaw	Peter Ferry
Kush Dave	Tony Graham
Terry Tilbrook	Ken Walker
Don Wragg	Tory Melhuish
Steve Evans	Lisa Kelly

International / Foundation

Terry Tilbrook

John Robinson	John Acklaw
Eric Johnson	Raj Vora
Malcolm Sismey	Lisa Kelly
Mick Fry	



Vice President Kush says.....

This year has started sadly with the news that Tony Graham has passed away. My association with Tony is not as long as most members within the club but having only known him for some 4-5 years, he immediately became a friend, an advisory source and his quick wit was infectious. I deemed him to be a truly dedicated Rotarian. RIP "Mr Rotary".

I am sure that Tony would want SWF Rotary to progress and this year, we have an opportunity to flourish not only in our fund raising activities, but also to continue to develop our fellowship activities as well as finding ways to attract new members. Swimathon is on our doorstep as our next fundraiser and hopefully, we can get the whole club engaged in participating and contributing to this event.

Recently, the club was involved in a "brainstorming" session with the idea of gathering thoughts of what the members want from SWF Rotary going forwards and what changes, if any are required to make potential improvements. It was a useful session but we must not lose the sight that the club has been successful recently and that "what has not been broken" does not need fixing!

Well done again to John A & Roger R for the input and production of this Woodrot edition.

Christmas 2022



The Town Christmas Show



2022 Sleigh Static



Santa in disguise



Off we go !



Santa needs a haircut



Ah !



Sorting out problems

2022 Sleigh Ride



It takes a lot of effort on the part of members to bring Father Christmas and his sleigh to South Woodham each year. But it is worth it to see the joy he brings to the children and parents who meet him. That after all is the point! Although Father Christmas is unable to visit every road in town these days those who were lucky to catch him certainly made him welcome. The snow machine was a great hit with the children again this year. He was also a big attraction to young and old at the Town Christmas Show. A long queue of parents and children lasted for the whole three hours that Santa was in his Grotto. Snowman David Pepper did an excellent job as doorman and Santa's helper, even refusing coffee in case it caused him want the "little boy's room"!

Even if they missed him on his tour around the Town Santa's presence outside ASDA and Sainsburys still brought Christmas cheer to many children and adults. Feelings that were reflected in the generosity of their donations. While the Sleigh makes a useful contribution to the Club's Charity Account, Club members who braved the winter weather as snowmen or Santa, towed the sleigh, or worked on it, all have the satisfaction of knowing that they have truly put "Seasonal Service Above Self!"

How Did We Do

The sleigh raised over £4,100 this year. Treasurer Don Wragg reported that the sum was better than expected but slightly down on last year. "Perhaps it is to do with how the dates worked out this year, particularly with collection at ASDA". Nevertheless the sleigh continues to make a worthwhile contribution to the Club's charity account as well as promoting Rotary in the Town.



This is why we do it !

Christmas Party at Channels

Congratulations to Vice President Kush for finding an excellent venue at The Channels Essex Barn for our annual Christmas Party. The atmosphere, food and Rotary Festive Fellowship were second to none!



Elmwood school choir Christmas concert



3 members of the Youth and Vocational committee attended the concert at Elmwood School.

Derek Hutchinson, Roger and Christine Restell along with Roger Gatford were treated to Christmas songs from the charts

Elmwood



Trinity St Mary's

Our club now has two Rotakids Clubs under its banner. What a success story for Youth Committee chairman Geoff.



Probably the smallest Rotakid to be enrolled



The thirty two members of Trinity St Marys Rotakids Club with Geoff, Cec, the two Rogers, and Maureen Graham in the background.



Geoff handing out certificates to the new Rotakids.

The Notice Board for Rotakids at Elmwood School.



The Rotakids Club has a notice board in the school which is dedicated to illustrating the work and activity of the Club. Pictures include Rotakids planting crocuses in the South Woodham Ferrers Community Orchard and the presentation of a Certificate of Outstanding Achievement to the Rotakids by our Youth Services Committee; with the certificate also proudly on display for all to see. Our thanks go to the teachers for making sure that the work of the Rotakids is celebrated and that the youngsters can be proud of their achievement on display.



Elmwood **RotaKids**

Geoff receiving a cheque for £472.24 from the President of Elmwood Rotakids Club



TSM **RotaKids**

In their new rotakids T shirts presented by our club

“The times they are a changin’ ”

South Woodham Ferrers Rotary Club is still a strong club whose spirit of friendship, good humour and service have been its strengths for 40 years. It was with a view to maintaining these strengths and securing the Club's future for the next 40 years that Vice President Kush asked members for ideas and suggestions for change or improvement. Kush's report was the subject of a very constructive discussion at the Club's first January meeting. Four broad areas emerged for further discussion and action: the structure and form of Club meetings; opportunities for fellowship and social interaction; community service activities; charity fund raising.

There was consensus that the format of the weekly meeting should be reviewed. Is it necessary always to have a meal? Does the expense deter prospective members; or is it making it difficult to retain new members? Are the Grace and Royal Toast necessary parts of a Rotary meeting? Some clubs meet without sitting down at a set meal; others have reduced cost by meeting only fortnightly. Would a change of format encourage new members and promote social ties and fellowship? Should we maintain the monthly business meeting? Should other ways be found of reporting and agreeing committee reports?

A founding principle of Rotary is “fellowship”. Social events where members meet together with friends and partners other than at the weekly meeting were seen by some as important. Barge trips, games nights, horse racing, BBQs were among suggestions offered. The issue of affordability is a factor and ways of socialising at minimal cost to ensure inclusivity should be considered. It was suggested that social events should be planned and put in in the calendar from the beginning of the Rotary year.

The Vice President's notes list a number of useful ideas for community activities and fundraising. It would seem that there is no shortage of ideas in the club. There is a consensus that at least one major community fundraising event in addition to the Swimathon and Christmas Sleigh could be considered. Proactive communication with local businesses for donations and sponsorships could be a low cost method of fundraising. It was mentioned that the key to success in any community or fundraising activity will be the the level of support and commitment of individual members. Ways need to be found of ensuring that the leadership responsibilities are shared and not left to the same few “willing volunteers”. The proactive Involvement of everybody avoids the development of “cliques”.

The above is only a brief summary for the record. More detail can be found in the Vice President's notes. Vice President Kush has started a discussion on how we can make a successful club even better and make it attractive to potential members. With a positivity and good will Rotary will continue to have a strong presence in South Woodham Ferrers.

Compliance and Safety

Coming in the next edition



OUR TREASURER REPORTS

££

Treasurer Don Wragg reports that **£1114.76** was donated from the Club's Charity Account since the last edition of Woodrot, distributed as follows:

1st Woodham Scout Group **£339.76**

Kids Out UK **£200**

Essex First aid Volunteers **£250**

British Legion **£25**

Active Christian Trust (Ukrainian Families) **£300**

Crocus Planting in the Orchard



A team of 12 Rotakids from Elmwood Primary School were joined by Rotary Club members and their partners to plant over 2000 crocus bulbs in the Community Orchard. Our pictures show Park Ranger, Rob Howarth with two of his team preparing the ground before Rotakids and Rotarians got to work with trowel and dibbers to plant the bulbs.

A primary aim of the Rotakids project is to give young people of Primary School age the chance to develop and take part in activities to improve the quality of life in their communities and globally. Rotary's Purple Crocus Project has shown our Rotakids how enjoyable such activity can be. And when the crocuses flower in the Spring they will have the satisfaction of knowing that their efforts produced the splash of colour enjoyed by visitors to the Orchard.

