

DISTRICT 1120



Rotary
Southeast and Gibraltar

Magazine

january 2024

**Tunbridge Wells
Rotary "Raids"
Gibraltar**

**Rotary Young Chef
competition**

**A Quintessential
British Weekend**

**Message from the
District Governor**

**Hailsham Rotary host
African Adventures!**

**£91,000 collected
for the Royal
British Legion**

Issue Twenty Nine

Cover image: 'Turner Contemporary' Art Gallery, Margate

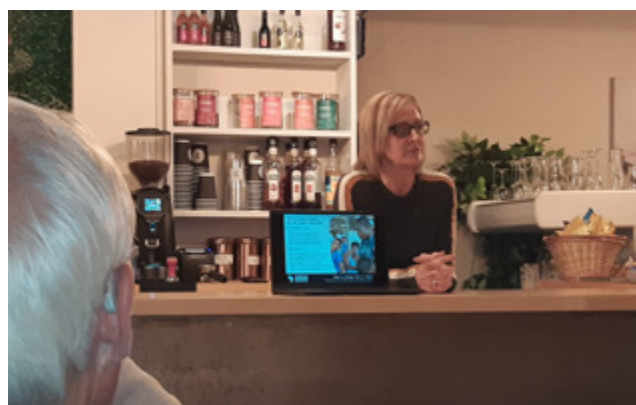
Hailsham Rotary host African Adventures!



At the end of November RC Hailsham welcomed Rachel Northover from the 'African Adventures Foundation' to give the club details of the charity's work. Founded only ten years ago African Adventures is focused on several different African countries – principally, Kenya, Zanzibar and Ghana.

It has several connections with schools in the above countries who are pleased to welcome British schoolchildren as paying guests to benefit contact, language practice in English, and assist in some light construction work and decorating duties. In these schools using both local employed and volunteer labour the Foundation has both built and improved classrooms, toilets and installed clean, piped water where required. AAF will organise the flights and accommodation for the visits.

Most recently A.A.F. has been working at a school in Kinuni in Zanzibar where previously there was only one toilet for every 500 schoolchildren. As part of this WASH hygiene program, they have installed male and female toilets with locking doors, and washbasins adequate for all the children. (see picture). School hygiene is so important as it can mean the difference between consistent schooling and intermittent attendance. Latest project is an MHM (menstrual health management) initiative for teenage girls; they have been engaging in sanitary towel classes to make re-usable towels for their own needs and the use of other young women.



Further to this initiative has been a school meals "Christmas Meal Appeal" for giving children in the partner-schools a proper meal at Christmas-time. Child hunger because of family poverty is still a major issue in many African countries. AAF are working with "Mary's Meals" on a joint project to combat this need.

Rachel Northover is the fundraising Lead for the charity and can be contacted on: rachel@african-adventures.co.uk - or log onto the web site www.african-adventures.co.uk where there is a donation button for the Christmas meal appeal. Hailsham club with members from RC Seaford were very interested to hear of this wide-ranging project and will be supporting the work of African Adventures.

Message from the District Governor

This issue of the district magazine welcomes not only a new year but is also midway through this Rotary year, six months into my term as District Governor.

I recall about 2 weeks after the handover I was asked how it was going. At the time I replied "It's been a quiet start"! Little did I know.

We were in the throes of finalising our Tri-District conference, planning my diary, and making club visits. Many administrative tasks took much of my time.

However, once Caroline and I started our club visits life as a DG took on a whole new meaning. Every club we visited highlighted how different each club is, the one constant was the fellowship and commitment to making a difference in each club's community and globally. To say we have thoroughly enjoyed our visits is an understatement.

The run-up to Christmas has shown how we all pull together and support where we can. Sleigh collections and Christmas-themed events for young and old looked amazing.

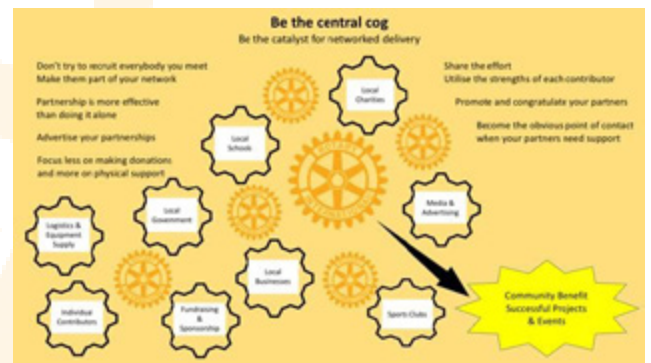
As I've said on my club visits, clubs are the bedrock of our organisation, without our clubs there would be a void in our local communities which would be difficult to fill.

Plans are in place, of which we will learn more in the coming months, so the future looks bright and sustainable.

We have a dedicated District team that has stepped up to the plate and support and assist wherever they can. If you need any assistance or guidance then ask, if there is a member of the team who can help, I know they will.

Here's to a successful future working together and supporting when we can.

Ray Seager - District Governor



Double Presentation



THERE was a unique double presentation for Gravesham with Ebbsfleet Rotary when DG Ray Seager visited to present the special banner for being a 100% Paul Harris Fellow Club.

President Arlene Orr said this reflected the

club's commitment to Rotary Foundation and international service.

DG Ray also presented the Club's Rotary Citation for 2022-23 with Past President Brian Portway accepting on behalf 'the GwE team'.

Bexhill Rotary learns about Renewable Energy

With concerns about using up natural resources and climate changes Bexhill Rotary Club was pleased to welcome Richard Pilbeam of Complete Solar and Renewables to tell them a bit about how to achieve net zero by 2050 – the government target.

Richard started by outlining the current situation where the country is largely reliant on energy from abroad, most of which add to greenhouse gases. He went on to tell us about solar panels, battery storage and air to air heat pumps.

He said that solar panels allow houses to become partially energy independent, save money and increase the property's value. They are a fairly common sight now and their effectiveness is developing all the time. With added batteries to store electricity during peak production times (i.e. sunny days) they become even more effective.

Air to air heating systems, closely related to air conditioning units, improve heating but need to be used with good home insulation. For every 1Kw used in running them they should generate 5Kw of heat.

Home electric charging points for electric vehicles enhance the viability and cost of using electric cars.



Richard finished by saying that each home is individual and systems need to be tailored to everyone's circumstances. There followed a lively question and answer session when such topics as the longevity of the solar panels and the warmth generated by the air to air systems were explored and debated. The club agreed that this was a very thought provoking and useful evening and joined in thanking Richard for giving such an insightful talk.

Senlac and St Leonards Rotary Clubs got together and raised £2.000



In a joint effort, Senlac and St Leonards Rotary Clubs got together and raised £2.000 for St Michaels Hospice at St Leonards.

This money was collected at ASDA and Morisons Supermarket during December, and the presentation was made in the grounds of the Hospice.

A Quintessential British Weekend the UK Section meeting at Rochester

The Last full weekend of September saw another great weekend of fellowship and project planning through 'International Fellowship of Flying Rotarians' (IFFR).

This time we gathered at the IFFR UK section weekend meeting which brought European Rotarians season of weekend fly ins to its end.

Over 30 of us, including members from Andorra, Belgium, Netherlands, France and Norway, came together in Rochester, Kent, for a Quintessentially British weekend.

Organising committee led by Thanet Rotarian Kevin Doyle, were blessed with fine weather, so those flying into Rochester had great views over London en-route before landing.

Suitably refreshed after our flights, we took the short coach ride to visit Leeds Castle. Including the all-important tour of the house, and grounds, followed by an ice-cream, and for the foolhardier to explore (better described as "get lost in") the maze.



Aerial view of Rochester Airport

& chips, with Kent brewed ales or the option of English wines! Discussion points included following projects: Flying of medical aid equipment by private pilots into Poland for Ukraine and 'Flying around the world' fund raiser in support of End Polio.

Saturday morning, we made the short journey by coach up beside the river Thames to Greenwich. With tours of The Royal Observatory, Cutty Sark and National Maritime Museum.



World President George Ritchie posing onboard Cutty Sark

Returning late afternoon for our Gala Dinner at Bridgewood Manor Hotel. This was a great way to end our weekend – complete with a surprise twist to the evening: a magic show by local magician Ashley Green. Thank you to our organising committee and we look forward to a full programme of Fellowship and fundraising in 2024 throughout Europe.

If you are interested in aviation, why not join us? You don't have to be pilot to be a member. Have a look at our website: <https://iffr.uk>

(Note : I'm happy to be a POC for prospective members if acceptable: kevin@kd-insurance.co.uk)



Courtyard at Leeds Castle)

Then off to a typical English Pub at Lenham, where we enjoyed that most British of Friday night meals – fish

ROTARY BECKENHAM COLLECTS £91,000 FOR THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

The Rotary Club of Beckenham has raised £91,000 in its Poppy Appeal 2023.

Our club has been involved with Poppy Collections since 2004 and in 2014 took over the organisation of it for the Beckenham area under the aegis of Rotarian Peter Duncan. Five years later Peter relinquished his rôle and the baton passed to Rotarian Bill Fairhall.

Bill estimates that in the past 20 years or so Rotary Beckenham has collected about ½ £million for the Royal British Legion (RBL). What had begun as £3,700 in the Elmers End district in 2004 grew in area and amount almost every year (except during Covid) until 2022 when the total was £69,000 This year's collection is over 30% more. We now encompass Beckenham, Bromley and Chislehurst.

Whilst the Appeal itself each year is over a two-week period up to the 11th of November, the organisation behind it takes three months.

It begins with the ordering of merchandise from RBL which, when delivered, needs to be packed into collecting trays ready for distribution.

Approximately 100 volunteers are recruited (most do it every year), of whom half are Rotarians. The age range is from teenagers to nonagenarians. The majority of our volunteers are in their 70s, and we are constantly seeking to attract fresh recruits.

Next, donation cans and poppy trays are delivered to 470 collecting points, everything being meticulously recorded. There are 160 "static" collection points such as churches, schools, newsagents and other shops and 310 "in person" collection points where volunteers stand in supermarkets or brave the weather in the streets and railway stations.

Poppy stocks need replenishing daily in the high turnover locations such as supermarkets. Recently there has been a growing use of card reader machines and the batteries have to be recharged frequently.

Once Remembrance Day has been observed all cans and poppy trays are retrieved and the long process of counting the money begins. Notes and coins probably make up 2/3 of the collection, the other third being card reader donations. Frequent trips to the bank are made, with someone "riding shotgun."

Over the years a number of innovations have been introduced. RBL itself is constantly experimenting with new products; this year it was fully bio-degradable poppies and, a few years ago, the popular enamel badges. This year Rotary Beckenham kicked off the Appeal with a circular treasure hunt walk around the historic centre of London



using maps provided by RBL, raising a modest sum, and collected at Bromley Town Football Club's FA Cup fixture against Blackpool. We also collected at the firework display organised by the Rotary Club of Chislehurst.

Rotary Beckenham is grateful for the support of the Rotary clubs of Bromley, Langley Park and Chislehurst whose participation is an important factor in the success of our campaign.

Thanks also to the Mayor of Bromley and our local MP who are both ardent supporters of the Poppy Appeal.

At a recent Club lunch, Bill Fairhall announced this record collection to the members and invited guests, one of whom was Janes Ayres, RBL's London co-ordinator.

After thanking us for our efforts she ended by challenging "Next year, £100,000?", so no pressure!

Eight lucky charities are recognised by local rotarians

Eight local charities were the worthy recipients of funds presented by the Rotary Club of Eastbourne.

Representatives of the eight lucky groups each received a cheque for £500, after speaking at the club's weekly lunchtime gatherings and telling about their voluntary work. The photograph shows rotary president Alan Langley (right) and past president Graham Marsden (left) with representatives of Amaze, Beachy Head Chaplaincy, Blue Van Armed Forces and Veterans Drop In, Community Wise, Compass Community Arts, the Children's Respite Trust, Eastbourne Sea Cadets, and Holy Trinity Church Advocacy Team.

For more information on membership or the work of the Rotary Club of Eastbourne visit www.eastbournerotary.org.uk or telephone the club's honorary secretary, Graham Parrish, on 01323 651166,



Rotary Club of Senlac - HomeCall

At the club's meeting on 29th November, members enjoyed a talk about Homecall, a home visiting scheme for the visually impaired in Bexhill.

Originally there were several branches throughout Sussex but Bexhill is the only one remaining. Senlac Rotarian, Peter Stiles, who is the chairman of the charity, introduced Homecall Scheme Manager Claire Prime who gave a presentation which detailed how the charity started and has been able to remain running in Bexhill. We learnt about some of the ways Homecall is a huge support to those living with sight loss in the area. Claire told us about the incredible volunteers and remarkable clients that she meets and finished by explaining all the different ways that people can get involved, the website address is www.myhomecall.org or you can follow Homecall on facebook <http://www.facebook.com/homecallbexhill>.

After the talk Claire demonstrated some of the aids that are available to help the visually impaired.



WELCOME TO OUR FIRST FUNDRAISING PAGE

Central to my strategy is fostering cohesion among the 72 clubs within our district. Through collaboration and unity, I envision elevating the Rotary brand and significantly enhancing our fundraising capabilities.

Our journey of transformation and collaboration is incredibly exciting. Let's rally together, innovate, and create a lasting impact hand in hand!

Monthly, I'll propose fundraising event ideas for your club. These suggestions are entirely voluntary, aiming to offer support. However, every quarter, it would be fantastic if we could all converge for a district-wide fundraiser, pooling resources for substantial projects benefitting ALL our clubs and charities. It's disheartening to receive responses from some clubs that lack enthusiasm; let's remind ourselves that we exist for the greater good, transcending individual preferences.

Before volunteering, let's ensure we possess the fortitude and commitment to adhere to the rules and fulfil the roles we've embraced. My sincere hope is to aid you in crafting even more exceptional events and fundraisers. We'll highlight a few on our page each month, so please share your results!

Warmest regards
Roger Hickman - District Fundraiser Support.

January Idea

Curry up a delightful evening and engaging talk! After the festive season, why not spice things up with a delicious meal and a presentation by a local speaker?

By utilising the funds typically allocated for your weekly meetings book a small hall and get some members to prepare a curry sensation Maximise revenue by selling raffle



Roger Hickman - District Fundraiser Support.

tickets for additional funds. No speakers? Use the district website to choose one of the many free speakers on offer.

Money Raised

This section in future will serve to spotlight successful club fundraising events each month.

We will detail the amount raised and share valuable tips that can benefit other clubs aiming for successful fundraising initiatives.

Send your stories now to fundraising1120@yahoo.com

THOUGHT OF THE MONTH
**"Alone, we can do so little;
together, we can do so much."**



Golfers get in full swing in memory of Chris



Left to right, Ian Huke of the rotary club, Mark Lambird of Eastbourne Motoring Centre and Harry Walmsley, chair of the hospital friends.

Golfers were in full swing for a fund-raising tournament that raised a stunning £9,000 for two of Eastbourne's best-known charitable organisations.

More than a hundred players and guests supported the annual Sugar Ray Golf competition, staged by Eastbourne Motoring Centre and held at the Royal Eastbourne Golf Club, raising a stunning £9,332.

Cheques were presented this week and, played under beautiful autumn sunshine, the popular tournament was in memory of Chris Lambird, who tragically died of cancer at the age of 39.

The event comprised an 18-hole competition followed by dinner, entertainment, a raffle and auction.

Master of ceremonies and guest entertainer and auctioneer, Ager Brown, lit up the evening with his amusing stories, helping raise £2,220 from the auction and a further £890 from the raffle. Mark Lambird, Chris's brother and now CEO and chairman of Eastbourne Motoring Centre, thanked players and supporters for their generous support.

Monies raised have been divided equally between the

Friends of Eastbourne Hospital and the Rotary Club of Eastbourne's benevolent fund.

Harry Walmsley, the hospital friends' chair, said: "We are extremely grateful for the efforts of all associated with the event and for the handsome donation which will be used towards our major project this coming year which is to raise £500k towards a gamma camera for the hospital, for better cancer diagnosis and treatment."

The Rotary Club of Eastbourne distributes monies raised every year to local charities through its benevolent fund. During the past six years it has donated £55,000 to some 45 local charities, benefitting a wide range of community needs, from supporting children and young adults through to treating pensioners at the club's Alone at Christmas lunch on Christmas Day.

Most recent distribution of funds were to Amaze, the Beachy Head Chaplaincy, Eastbourne Sea Cadets, Eastbourne Street Pastors, Matthew 25 Mission, Children's Respite Trust, Care for Carers, Community Wise, Compass Community Arts and the Eastbourne Youth Arts Foundation, the Blue Van Drop In, Sanctuary Café, Kids Out UK and the Holy Trinity Church Advocacy service.

Musical Triumph at Rotary Young Musicians Competition



Immediate Past President Allan Russell presents the contestants at the Henry Ward Hall, Hastings

Six talented singers and five instrumentalists put on great performances at Henry Ward Hall in His Place, Cambridge Road Hastings on Sunday 19 November 2023.

The adjudicators had a challenge identifying one vocalist and one instrumentalist who would go forward into the Rotary District heats that would ultimately lead to National finals at Chethams School of Music next year.

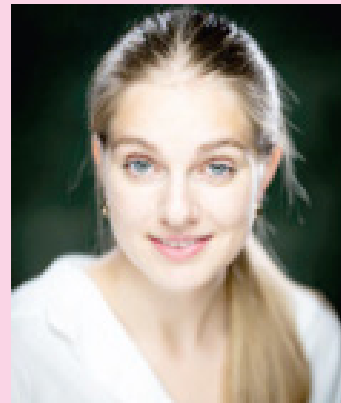
However, they were pleased to announce that Alfie Ward James (Vocalist) and Galina Baxter (instrumentalist) would go through to the next round of the competition.

The event was jointly organised by the Hastings Musical Festival and the Rotary Club of Hastings at the Henry Ward Hall, His Place Cambridge Road. Hastings.



Alfie Ward James was very excited to be taking part in this year's Young Musician of the Year Award. He regularly performs in local shows and recently played the Artful Dodger in the recent Hastings production of Oliver.

In this competition he sang a mixture of musical theatre and pop music with "I'm not the only one" by Sam Smith, "Proud of your boy" from Aladdin and "I can't stand still" from Footloose.



Galina Baxter is currently the principal clarinetist and leader of the National Youth Concert Band and a musician with the National Youth Music Theatre, playing clarinets, saxophones, and flute for productions in a variety of venues. She played the clarinet in this event with compositions by Burgmuller and Dunhill. Locally, Galina has performed in the Hastings Music Festival and has been awarded numerous prizes for both woodwind and piano, including the woodwind gold medal and the junior concerto competition on multiple occasions.

HEATHFIELD & WALDRON ROTARY CLUB PRELOVED LADIES WEAR SALE



November is Pancreatic Cancer awareness month and 16th November is World Pancreatic Cancer day. Therefore on Saturday 18th November 2023, the partners of the Rotarians of the Heathfield and Waldron Rotary Club organised a Pre-loved sale of ladies wear and accessories.

The event on the day was supported by the Rotarians, who helped with setting up, car parking, organising rails and just generally being a great help.

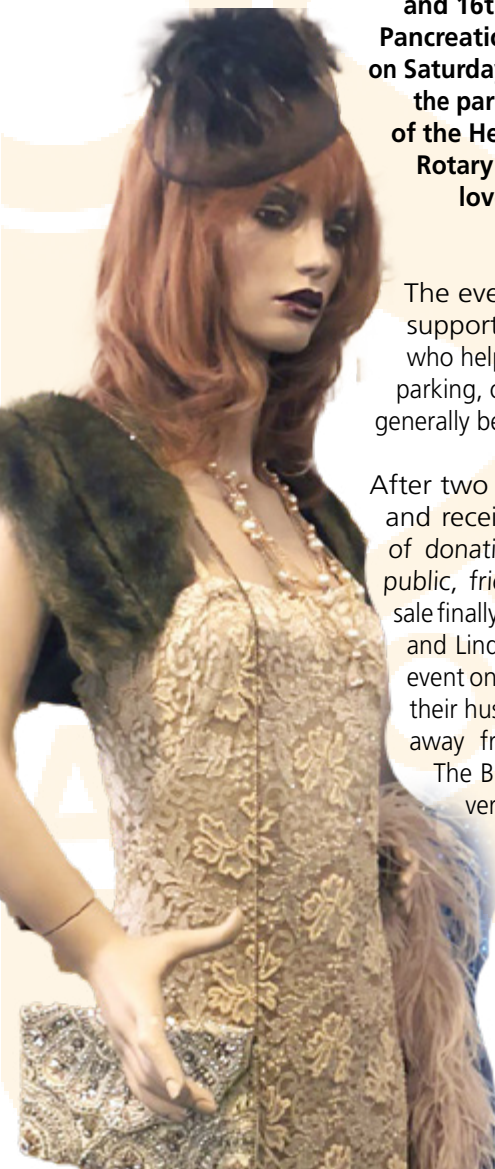
After two months of planning, and receiving a huge amount of donations from the general public, friends and relatives the sale finally took place. Irene Osprey and Linda Mason promoted the event on Ashdown Radio as both their husbands had sadly passed away from this cruel disease.

The Buxted Park Cricket Club very kindly allowed us free use of the hall. The event was opened by Jayne Torvill, the Olympic Ice Skating Champion, who also stayed, chatted and had her photograph

taken with some of those who attended. Everyone wore purple, which is the Pancreatic Cancer colour; every year buildings throughout England are beamed with a purple light in November.

The Rotary ladies provided all the refreshments, consisting of a delicious afternoon tea with a variety of home baked cakes and a glass of prosecco if desired! There was a raffle and tombola, plus various stalls all of which helped the day go with a swing. This was a huge event to organise and arrange, but it was really worth it. Everyone who attended said how much they had enjoyed themselves and found lots of bargains too. The ladies are hoping to organise another similar sale in the spring, so watch this space!

The event raised £5422, which was far beyond the expected target of £1K, so a very big thank you to all those who supported and helped make it such a success. These funds will be passed on to Pancreatic Cancer UK, which will go towards helping to support research into early detection and better treatments, and provide health professionals with the tools they need to spot patients' symptoms earlier.



Santa is around town

The Rotary Club of Folkestone continues to make Christmas extra special with Santa visiting many places within the Folkestone area.

The club organises this annual event where members and local volunteers collect money from the public by going around residential areas with Father Christmas on a float.

All monies collected are then used to purchase large quantities of food that is separated into bags and delivered to the needy within the local area. The parcels are received very well by the recipients and we have had numerous letters of thanks in the past for support and consideration. As in previous years the Folkestone Rotary Club will also be supporting a number of charities within the area for Christmas events, particularly for the elderly, disabled or disadvantaged. What fabulous support we have received this year from local businesses and organisations.

Big shout out to Asda, The Electric Centre, Folkestone Yacht Club and Tag Trees. Mandy Baker, Community Champion

at Asda, Bouverie Place, Folkestone has been great with her colleagues who have for the 2nd year collected all the food stuff for our Christmas Parcels, stored it and assisted in loading onto the van for delivery to the Yacht Club.

Then Andrew Gale, Manager of the Electric Centre, Park Farm Road, Folkestone kindly offered the use of his van and driver Ian to meet us at Asda at 07:00 on Saturday to load the food and deliver to the Yacht Club.

Ron Shucksmith, Commodore at Folkestone Yacht and Motorboat Club, generously let us use the club house for the weekend to collect, sort and pack, ready for distributing our 130 food parcels.

Mark from Tag Trees have helped up tremendously by offering his vehicles and drivers during our collections.

Thanks to all and those who have and continue to assist us enabling the club to support those in need over the festive period.



Eastbourne's Tree of Light



THE annual Tree of Light took place on Sunday December 10 at the Congress Theatre in Eastbourne.

It was the 25th anniversary of the moving event, organised by the Rotary Clubs of Eastbourne.

It is an uplifting service with an opportunity to tie a ribbon to the tree in memory of a loved one.

Rotarian Melanie Adams, one of the organisers, said: "It was a moving service, surrounded by so many lovely people. Thank you for your support Eastbourne.

"There was singing from staff at the Royal Hippodrome Theatre, music from The Salvation Army and readings from Rotarians and Caroline Ansell MP."

Caroline said: "A huge Thank You to The Rotary Clubs of Eastbourne who each year fundraise to provide this beautiful tree and a service which means so much for people right across the town." "For many years now I've tied a ribbon for my Dad and for the little baby girl I lost. The heartache and sense of loss never quite goes, why would it? But, taking a moment, tying my ribbon, means I take the memory of them into Christmas in a lighter way, quite literally. And my Dad always so loved Christmas."

The tree is covered in a host of white lights and dressed with white ribbons in memory of loved ones.

Rotary would like to say a special thank you to all sponsors past and present. Their generosity in 2022 enabled Rotarians to donate a total of £5,400 to Matthew 25

Mission, Children with Cancer Fund and Holding Space.

There is still time to make a dedication online. Go to Eastbourne Tree of Light - Remember a Loved One this Christmas

And of course you can pay your own visit to this very special tree at any time over the festive period.





Rotary Club of Gibraltar raises over £12,000 for local charities



On Tuesday 21st November 2023 the Rotary Club of Gibraltar held their annual auction organized by the events committee of the Club, in aid of local charities.

The event took place in the International Police Association (IPA) Club in Gibraltar's South District. Huge paellas were prepared by the kitchen staff at the IPA and enjoyed by everyone. In excess of £12,000 was raised as a result of the very generous bidding as well as the sale of raffle tickets.

Over 120 people attended the evening which included a silent auction as well as the live auction where bidding was fierce for a number of lots generously donated by various companies and individuals in Gibraltar. Amongst the various lots were flying experiences, an afternoon sailing with champagne out of Queensway Quay, private viewing of the Eisenhower and OPS rooms in the admiralty tunnels inside The Rock a viewing which is not normally available to the general public, a bottle of Governor's Gin signed by H.E. The Governor of Gibraltar Vice Admiral Sir David

Steel KBE, various hampers, Le Petit Chef on the Sunborn, bottles of wine, golf experiences and an Apple airpod from Newton stores.



The auctioneer, Etain Boyd Gonzalez kept the audience under control and encouraged some aggressive at times bidding. She was assisted by Miss Supranational Europe 2023, Gibraltar's Michelle Lopez Desoisa and the former Miss Gibraltar Tatiana Desoisa. The prizes were also drawn for the raffle and those winners who were also present were able to collect their winnings on the day.

In addition to many members of the Gibraltar Rotary Club being present, they were joined by visiting members of the Rotary Club of Royal Tunbridge Wells, and their President John Baker took part in the traditional exchange of banners with Rotary President Lyana Armstrong-Emery. Members and their wives of the Rotary Club of Royal Tunbridge Wells had arrived in Gibraltar for a RAID on the preceding Sunday and were joined by members of the Gibraltar Club for an informal supper that evening which gave members of the two clubs an opportunity to meet and socialise together.



Bumper Contribution to the Foodbank from Bexhill College

Bexhill Rotarians including Hon Member Lynn Langlands recently received a mammoth contribution to their Foodbank Collections from the students and staff at Bexhill College.

This swells the 9 tonnes of donations which Bexhill Rotary Club has collected for the Foodbank since Hon Member Lynn and Rotarian Graham Forster collaborated in arranging weekly collections from houses during Covid Lockdowns.

Lynn enthused that this magnificent sum shows not only the commitment of the Rotarians but also the generosity of Bexhill Residents.

If you would like to be involved in the activities of Bexhill Rotary Club please see the club website at www.bexhill.rotaryweb.org or telephone Hon Sec Stephen on 01424 732100.



The President's Charity 2023-24 The Oliver Curd Trust



The Oliver Curd Trust is the chosen charity for this year's President of Senlac Rotary Club, Andy Cruttenden.

The club's guest speakers on Wednesday 6 December 2023 were the founder of the Trust, Sarah Curd, and Chairman, Karen Weatherley-Moody who spoke about the work they do with families affected by childhood cancer and other life threatening and life-limiting conditions. The Trust was started in 2008 by Oliver's parents, Richard and Sarah, in memory of him. Oliver who was diagnosed with Ewings Sarcoma in April 2006, sadly died in November 2007. The Trust owns two caravans, one in Crowhurst Park, just outside Hastings, and another at Coombe Haven Caravan

Park in St Leonards on Sea; the first sleeps six people and the second eight. Families from across the country with a child who have such illnesses may use the caravans as a respite from their normal lives, lets are normally of one of two weeks. The Trust includes those experiencing bereavement and seeks to provide memories, happiness and periods of escape for children and their families during difficult times. The Trust has just five trustees who manage the workload between them and who also organise fund raising events to keep the caravans running throughout the year.

More information about the Trust may be found at <http://www.theolivercurdtrust.org/>

HYTHE ROTARY CLUB BRINGS **CHRISTMAS TO TOWN**

CHRISTMAS TREE ARRIVES

Hythe Rotary once again provided Hythe with its Christmas Tree. In preparations for Christmas in the town, the first and possibly most important part of the festivities were undertaken.

With a heavy frost on the ground, the scene as the tree was collected really could not have felt more like Christmas, with help from Jason and our friends at Hythe Garden Landscapes, the High Street Christmas tree was collected and put in place, ready for dressing. Again, this year it was very kindly donated by the wonderful Christmas tree farm, Garden House Orchards, at Saltwood. A big thank you to Rotarians Roy Lawler, Collen Hill and John Wren and the guys on the ground, for collecting and installing, for without you, this would not have been possible. This little but important piece of the Christmas jigsaw, brings so much joy and atmosphere to our High Street.



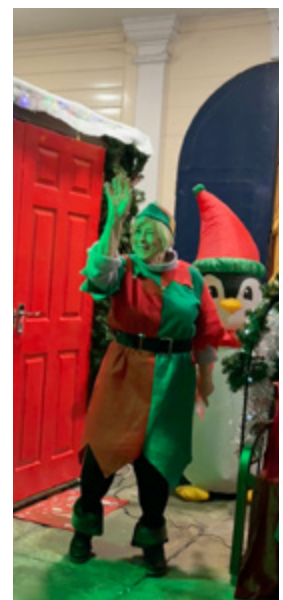
SANTA ARRIVES

Following the arrival of the tree, members and friends of The Rotary Club of Hythe donned their Santa and Elf costumes to welcome the children of Hythe and the surrounding area to see Santa in his Grotto, situated in the Undercroft at Hythe Town Hall.

This was the third year running that the big man in red had appeared at Hythe Town Hall, at the invitation of The Rotary Club of Hythe, and he saw happy, smiling, starstruck faces of some five hundred young people during his visit. This year Santa gave presents, including CBeebies children's early learning clock puzzles for 3-5 year old, to science kits for the older children. The children brought letters to Santa and small gifts. Previously we had a 7 year old little girl sing Santa a Christmas carol. One of our Santa's, who had been reluctant to play the role, was so emotionally moved that when he went home, he had a little tear.

ITS ALL ABOUT THE CHILDREN

The Grotto was donated by Mr Derek Ward, the owner of Envirograf, a local company who specialise in the production of fire-resistant paint. Derek's staff build and take down the Grotto after the festive period and the Grotto is then stored by a friend of Hythe Rotary, Mr John Langman, at his nursery in Wye. Without the generosity of these wonderful people the event would not take place. Thank you everyone.



EDENBRIDGE & WESTERHAM ROTARY

Edenbridge and Westerham Rotary was pleased to induct another new member in December. The Reverend Stephen Mitchell was for many years the much-loved incumbent of Ss. Peter and Paul Edenbridge, retiring at the end of October.

Stephen has now moved from The Vicarage into a new home in the town and intends to stay in Edenbridge and be very much part of the local community.



Photo shows Rotary President Brenda Risdon with new member The Reverend Dr. Stephen Mitchell

Having decided not to hold a fund-raising Dinner in honour of Sir Winston Churchill this year did not mean that his birthday, which would have been on the 30th November, went unmarked. At the Club meeting on Tuesday 28th Rotarian Terry Cartwright gave a well-researched presentation on the young Winston's Army career. It was a pleasure to be joined by visiting Rotarians from the Rotary Clubs of Sevenoaks, Maidstone East and The Chilterns. After the talk members and guests passed the port and raised a glass as Terry proposed a toast to the great man's immortal memory.

The Festival of Christmas Trees is an annual event at St. Mary The Virgin's Church on Westerham Green, and Rotary are always pleased to help. The Rotary tree, organised by Rotarian Peter Stapleton and wife Sheila assisted by Rotarians David Grayston and Colin Ullmann-Jones was the first to be put in place. It was followed by around seventy (yes - seventy!) other trees donated and installed by local clubs, societies and businesses. The event ran until the 12th of December during which time the spectacle was admired by hundreds of visitors raising money for charity by their generous donations.



**Come to our 60's & 70's Dance with
Legendary 70's Group Chicory Tip
Saturday, 24th February 2024
at The WI Hall Edenbridge
Tickets only £10 – call 07593 887588**



CHANNEL ROTARY HELPS FOODBANK COLLECTION

Channel Rotary have supported the Shepway Foodbank run by the Rainbow centre for many years.

This Christmas Channel Members have been at Tesco for three days encouraging customers to give to the Foodbank. Each year the amount given is a wonderful sign of people's generosity, this year a total of 2757kg was donated, one of the highest yet.

The aim of the Trussel Trust Shepway operation is to make sure that no one in the local community has to go hungry, and it's the help from people like Channel Rotary that makes this happen.

Wendy Lehnert from the Rainbow Centre was delighted with the result. "The call on the foodbank is always higher at his time of the year and we were getting quite low, this fantastic result has meant an enormous difference. Thanks to all the volunteers and the generosity of the public. Absolutely amazing, thank you all."



Bill Flavell from Channel Rotary with Sandra who had just given a big bag of groceries.

CHANNEL ROTARY HELPS THE YOUNG IN NEED

Channel Rotary are giving children in need in Folkestone and District some cheer this Christmas.

President Derek Harris made two presentations each of £1000 of vouchers to two groups who are supporting children in need this Christmas

Channel have supported the Young Carers in the area for many years and the vouchers were received by Tina Culver. Tina is a member of Imago, the organisation engaged by KCC to provide support for local children and young people who have special responsibility for family members. She was most appreciative of Channel club's donation and personally distributed the vouchers to very grateful recipients as you can see from their comments.

"This is a real God send for me, I am so grateful." "Ohhh Wow, can I hug you this will allow us to have a proper Christmas Dinner." "Tina you have reduced me to tears. That is just the kindest gesture. I really didn't expect, truly I didn't." The FHDC council have also identified children in the area who will have very little cheer this Christmas. Michelle Ede and Tracey Glasscoe were delighted to receive their £1000 pounds worth of vouchers

"This will enable us to give presents to children who have very little and in some instances may be the only gift they will receive. They are all so grateful and often just ask for simple everyday items as their gift. It's a pleasure to see the delight on their faces when we give them out"



Derek Harris President of Channel Rotary presenting the supermarket vouchers to Tina Culver, local Young Carer Support Coordinator.



Also to Michelle Ede and Tracey Glasscoe from Folkestone & Hythe District Council

Tunbridge Wells Rotary

“Raids” Gibraltar



During the difficult times of the Covid lockdowns, the Rotary Club of Tunbridge Wells held a very successful Zoom call with the most far flung Club in District 1120, the Rotary Club of Gibraltar (“RCG”).

During that call, RCG extended an invitation for us to visit them when circumstances allowed and in November we finally got round to it when an intrepid band of sixteen members and Inner Wheel members set off to southern climes.

Unfortunately, the visit involved a 7.40am flight from Gatwick to Gibraltar which meant a very early start. However, spirits were restored with coffee and breakfast in Departures followed by an uneventful flight to Gibraltar (the best kind!). Spirits were further lifted by the warm weather and sunshine when we landed.

We began the visit with a relaxing lunch sitting outside in Casemates Square, one of the principal squares in Gibraltar, enjoying the sunshine and warmth as well as the food. In the evening we invited RCG members to come and join us for dinner and drinks at our hotel the E1 Suites and about eight of their members managed to join us including their President Lyana Armstrong-Emery and a very pleasant evening was had.

The next couple of days involved some serious sightseeing as most of the group had never been to Gibraltar before so we hired a guide and set off. The name Gibraltar is a derivation of Jebel Tarik which is Arabic for Tarik’s Mountain as the Moors ruled Gibraltar for over 750 years until they were displaced in 1462 by the forces of the Catholic Spanish monarchs Ferdinand and Isabella. It has been British since 1704 when British and Dutch forces captured it from the

Spanish which was confirmed in the Treaty of Utrecht 1713. Unfortunately, the Spanish destroyed much of the Moorish architecture although there are some examples still standing. A lot of the rest of the architecture has been as a result of fortifying the city to ward off attacks from Spain who subsequently decided they actually wanted the place back and laid siege to the Rock on a number of occasions. This “building” included the Great Siege Tunnels built during the Great Siege of 1779 - 1783, which were quite a feat of engineering back in the 18th Century and which are well worth a visit. Also, inside the rock are St Michael’s Caves which contain some spectacular rock formations. When visiting them you also get to meet some of the Rock’s most famous inhabitants, the Barbary Apes; just don’t have any food on you as you are likely to be dispossessed of it quite swiftly.

We all found the views from up the Rock to be quite spectacular both looking back at Spain and the cities of Algeciras and La linea and also across to Africa where on a clear day you can see both the Spanish enclave of Ceuta and also the Atlas Mountains. We also had a tour around the town which was equally interesting including seeing the Parliament, two cathedrals (one Catholic and one Protestant), the Governor’s residence and No. 6 the local equivalent to No. 10 in London. Trips were also made up the Cable Car to the top of the Rock where you could do the Sky Walk along a glass walkway above a sheer drop (not for the faint hearted) and visiting the Gibraltar Museum. We ate at some lovely restaurants where the food was a mixture of Spanish and British (full English and Sunday roasts both available in many places as well as paella and gambas pil pil!)

We were also lucky in that our visit coincided with RCG’s

annual charity auction at the International Police Association Club which we attended. It was a very successful event and raised a significant amount of money for local and international causes. We were looked after very well and had a great time. We won't go into much more detail as RCG is submitting its own report of the event!

The final day had an aquatic theme to it. In the morning a group went to Sandy Bay which is on the much less populated East side of Gibraltar and went swimming in the sea. Whilst the air temperature was very pleasant, the water temperature was more bracing, to say the least. In the afternoon we went out on a Dolphin viewing trip in the Bay

of Gibraltar (or Bay of Algeiras depending on which side of the frontier you are standing on) and must have seen at least twenty dolphins who seemed to consider our boat as some form of entertainment for them!

The following day we returned to the UK having had a very enjoyable and memorable trip. It is impressive that somewhere with about a third of the population of Tunbridge Wells has its own Parliament and laws, two Cathedrals, an army regiment (the Gibraltar Regiment), airport and port and many historic sites. Somewhere well worth visiting and we are hoping that members of RCG will come and visit us in Tunbridge Wells before too long so that we can establish a longer term relationship.

ROTARY YOUNG CHEF COMPETITION



Young people never cease to amaze us all with their ingenuity, talent and skills. This year's Young Chef Contestants are no exception.

Folkestone Hotel and Catering Association and the four Rotary Clubs of Folkestone, Hythe, Channel and Romney Marsh co-sponsored the event and invited young people from their areas to compete in the Catering Department of Folkestone College.

The three local hotel chefs, and the Chair of the Folkestone and Hythe Hotel Association judged the youngsters on the taste and presentation of their dishes as well as the costs, planning, healthy choices and range of skills used.

The competitors had an hour to show correct use of knives and equipment, neatness of their work area and hygiene, as

well as producing two plates of food on time and at a good temperature.

The winner this year was Stanley Stafford from The Harvey Grammar School, who prepared 'Gnocchi Cacio e Pepe' from scratch and wowed the judges for a second year running. Runner-up was Ameila Reuther from Brockhill Academy, who served 'Fish cake served on bed of spinach topped with poached egg'. The winner received £50 from the Hotels and Catering Association and the runner up received £25.

All contestants were given a cookery book and a certificate, presented by the President Elect of the Rotary Club of Folkestone, Kate McNeice on behalf of the respective Rotary Clubs. Stanley will go forward to the District Competition in February held in Canterbury and we wish him the very best of luck.

Hailsham's Santa Sleigh

Ho! Ho! Ho! The Rotary Club of Hailsham Santa Sleigh was out and about again this year. In December the Santa Sleigh went out on 15 evenings from Monday 4th until Monday 18th December touring the housing estates in the Hailsham area.

Each evening four Rotarians go with the Sleigh to provide safety along the routes. On six of the evenings more Rotarians and friends accompany the Sleigh and 'bucket collect' around the streets. On the remaining 9 evenings other local organisations such as School PTA's, the Round Table and the Under 11's football club carry out the bucket collections.

The Santa Sleigh also visits a local supermarket on four afternoons..The Sleigh is out in all weathers as you can see from the photo of Santa and three of his Rotary Club helpers.

Last year the Santa Sleigh raised over £7,500 for various local charities and organisations and also brought joy and



Bob Macey, David Ashdown and Sam Jaquet from Hailsham Rotary Club. Photo by Sam Jaquet.

happiness to many children and families. Hailsham Rotarian David Sanders said, "I still smile when I remember two young children running out of their house and down the road in the rain to see Santa – being chased after by their mother shouting "Hey, come back and put your shoes and socks on"!

Faversham's Festive Fun

Faversham Rotary might not be the largest club in the district, but its members were certainly very busy in the weeks leading up to Christmas.

The town's Umbrella Centre is a designated Warm Hub and Rotary provided mince pies for local residents who drop in. The Club also donated various cakes, sweets and mince pies for parties for senior citizens at the Almshouses and residential homes in the town.

Three local schools were also involved in the Club's Christmas activities. Pupils from St Mary of Charity, Ospringe and

Davington Primary Schools all made Christmas cards for each resident living in care homes in the town.

Pupils from the same schools also designed Christmas posters – almost 200 in total - which went on display in the Town Hall in the weeks before Christmas.

Finally, it just wouldn't be Christmas without the Carol Tour! The Rotary Club has been running the Carol Tour for over 60 years and it has become a much loved event in Faversham. It is the Club's main fund-raiser, with all the money raised being used to support local and international good causes including Age UK, the Umbrella Centre, Food Bank, Lendwithcare and many many more.

Father Christmas and his festive float visited various supermarkets and streets and estates across the town, from Friday 8th to Friday 22nd December. The "Santa tracker" was in use again this year so that people would know when he would appear in their street! Santa's a smart operator though and he just might have given people the slip once or twice!!

For many local people, the appearance of the float signals the start of Christmas. Some of them remember seeing the float as children and now they're sharing it with their grandchildren!

Despite the cost of living crisis affecting many people, the residents of Faversham were exceptionally generous in their support for Rotary and its projects. A particular thank you goes to partners, friends and the Red Panda explorer group for their help with the collections.





A poetic end to 2023 from the Rotary Club of Canterbury

**In January we welcomed the year oh so new
With food for the Food Bank & competitions too!
A team we supported became National Champs,
And we donated to District for Ukranian camps.**

In February through ShelterBox we supported a quake,
And a film about Santa, a student did make!
Fun and games, marked Valentine's Day,
And polio crocuses popped up, yay, hurray!

In March we donated to help novice mums,
Plus, for St Patrick's, we had lots of fun!
We collected for Marie Curie in bright yellow kit,
While woolly hats for newborns, locals did knit.

In April an update on labs that we've backed,
And in May we counted ducks – quack quack quack!

In June a detective, "hang 'em high" he did say;
A trip to the farm with sheep, goats and hay.
We had a safari supper – now what can that be?
And a handover from Tony...to Rosemary!

Awards aplenty in July we had,
Plus a trio of newbies, well that's not too bad.
We launched a way to become our "Friends"
And with a job talk on finance, July did end.

August was hot, we sheltered 'neath trees,
And heard on the topic of archaeology.
A bat & trap challenge – we lost so badly,
But a yummy "supper", we ate so gladly!

September's our duck race – that's so much fun;
All were excited to see who had won!
ShelterBox Partner: now we are bronze,
And a talk from a miner – what an icon!

In October we had an encounter with law,
And aid for Turkey: we gave some more.
A fundraising quiz, with black & white pics...
A Himalayan adventure, with poetry for kicks!
St Dunstan's went purple, for World Polio Day,
Plus a tri-district conf'ence – what can we say?!

November was colder, we gave to "KidsOut",
An exhibition we inspired – of that, there's no doubt!
Forensics raised funds, that gave us good cheer,
And we sold Legion poppies – as we do every year.

December already? Where does time go?
We helped Santa's sleigh – ho ho ho, ho ho ho!
With a new heat, Young Chef commences,
And a talk on Saudi awakened our senses,

It's time to reflect on all that we've done,
Helping others, while having some fun.
January soon: what's our resolution?
To make a better world – that's our contribution!

To read about all of these activities and many, many more please visit <https://www.rotarycanterbury.org.uk/canterbury-rotary-news/>

Christmas activities on the Romney Marsh...

Christmas Sleigh Runs – the Rotary Club sleigh runs were in full swing during December 2023 despite some inclement weather.

Our Club was again amazed and very grateful for all the support and generosity offered by the locals during our tours, especially as at the moment many people may be struggling. The Club really appreciates all and every donation made to us which goes towards our help for people across the Romney Marsh.

However, a special mention has to be made for a very generous donation made by a lady from Lydd who epitomised the generosity of spirit of our local community. She told one of our collecting elves that despite having suffered a very sad family loss she had decided to donate all the money she had been saving for a family trip to our collection.

The picture shows our chief elf (Trevor) with the donation – the bottle contained £112.56 mainly in 1p, 2p and 5p coins (and 2 Euros), all of which will support local causes throughout 2024.



Christmas jumpers

an opportunity to indulge in some festive spirit while supporting Save the Children's Christmas Jumper Day which took place on Thursday 7th December 2023. Thursday is when we hold our usual meetings, so the Club decided to support Jumper Day this year and help



Save the Children in giving kids in the UK and around the world the best future ever. As you can see from the accompanying picture there was an impressive array of jumpers on display.

Giving local children a better Christmas – Home-Start is a local community network of trained volunteers and expert

support that helps families with young children with practical and confidential support. As part of the Club's ongoing support for Home-Start Shepway we were able to collect and donate a range of toys to be distributed to local families.

The pictures show the generous donation of toys made by the Romney Marsh Rotarians. Club President Mark Singfield handing over some of the toys to Billie-Jo Pateman, Rural Support Worker for Home-Start Shepway. It should



be added that the cuddly dinosaur (perched proudly on the top of the box) proved very popular and was reluctantly passed on.

Billie-Jo was delighted to receive the toys on behalf of Home-Start Shepway and assured President Mark that all of the toys would be shared around the local area to what Billie referred to as her 'Marsh family'. Billie-Jo and her colleagues are very grateful to the Club and its Members for our continued support of the work of Home-Start Shepway.

The deadline for articles in the February issue is 18th January as well as advertising.

Disclaimer

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Published by: The Rotary Club District 1120
Printed by: Custard Design & Print. Tel: 01323 430303
www.custard-design.co.uk



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