

Nic's Notes

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President Nic's Noodlings

Trump may have twitter but this president promises a slightly less hysterical look at life from the hot seat! I'll try and keep you up to date with all the comings and goings both in front of and behind the 'camera'. Tune in each week for another confusing episode!

21st October 2017

District Conference

My first District Conference for 12 years and, I have to say, I was saddened that it was only attended by less than a third of the people who turned up in 2005. Thankfully, I am happy to say that the Riverside contingent were out in force and thoroughly enjoyed themselves. One member even got so 'tired and emotional' that she asked Tony Hodges who he was and whether he was a member of our club! The speakers were OK although I had to leave early Sunday morning so couldn't comment on all of them but it did lack the razzamatazz of previous years. Saturday night's banquet was a lot of fun although the food wasn't anything to write home about. We had some fun with the RC of Minster-on-Sea (see below) who are to be congratulated for their sketch, earlier in the day, which very wittily pointed out the pitfalls of many Rotary Clubs in the 21st Century.



17th October 2017

Tasty!

Last Tuesday, thirty-four of us gathered at The Plough in Langley to sample their 'Taster Menu'. The plough is owned by ex-Riversider, Maria Marsdhal and her

husband, David and they put on a fabulous spread for us. Despite the vagaries of the Maidstone traffic which prevented 2 couples from actually getting there, we all had a wonderful time and I would personally like to thank David for providing us with a fine bottle of wine which we raffled for charity and I hope Chas and Jan enjoyed the contents!

10th October 2017

Raided!

Last night we were 'invaded' by 19 members of the Rotary Club of Medway. Sadly, our speaker for the evening, Rebecca Futrall of Alzheimers Research UK was too ill to be with us but Steve Elms stood in at the last minute and told us a bit more of his time working on Das Island in the Persian Gulf. Paul Wray brought with him our crocusses and we sold approximately 40 bags to departing Rotarians (all proceeds to stopping polio). A fun time was had by all and we hope to be able to raise a team of runners to enter Medways Santa Fun Run in November

3rd October 2017

Projects Meeting

Sadly, Helen Grant was unable to join us as she had been stranded in Florida where she had gone to help her hurricane affected father. We went on with our plans to discuss future projects however and club approved a contribution of £500 to the David School in Sierra Leone. This was the brainchild of Pete and Sonia Wright who have visited the school on a number of occasions and they pledged to match our contribution which will go towards a new toilet block at the school.

It was also decided to hold a shoebox packing evening in November where we will help Pete and Sonia to fill the shoeboxes to be sent to Moldova.

We also discussed where we are going to plant 2,500 crocuses as well as possibly doubling up on our Christmas Collections this December.

Following the disappointing news regarding the Gulu Mission's decision not to accept our offer of financial aid, we are currently looking at a school building project in Barbuda which was devastated by recent hurricanes. Ron is looking into it - watch this space!

We were joined by 4 members of our new satellite club, Ebbsfleet Riverside and their president's wife, Penny brought jars of jam and chutney to sell. Our photo shows Tony Hodges with Penny.



27th September 2017

Maidstone United Reborn

Last night we were treated to a talk by Bill Williams, Chief Executive and Director of Football at Maidstone United Football Club. He started by saying how unskilled he was at public speaking but regaled us with days of his earlier life managing teams in South Africa and the USA before moving on to Maidstone and how he helped in getting them a home in the county town once more. Absolutely fascinating stuff and with a fine accompaniment from friend and Maidstone fan, Ron Goodman.

A number of lucky Rotarians managed to get hold of signed copies of Bill's book afterwards.



20th September 2017

Macmillan Nurses

Emma Grant of Macmillan Nurses spoke to us last night and gave an excellent performance. Nothing unusual about that except that this was her first public speaking engagement ever!

Well done, Emma. I only wish I could have been as confident as you when I was your age!



7th September 2017

Wanna Buy A Net?

Once again your president was bemused by the title of one of our member's job talks. It all became clear though when Alan Newman stood up to tell us about his time manufacturing and selling cargo nets and other aeronautical equipment all over the world. A subject one very rarely thinks about but Alan made it an absolutely fascinating talk. Thanks, Alan.



4th September 2017

RIBI Golf Tournament

Having made it to the finals of the competition, myself, Harry and Lloyd failed to come home with any of the prizes unfortunately. Still, we are in a strong position for next year!

Our picture shows the three of us shortly before we teed off.



22nd August 2017

Carr Taylor Vineyard

Sadly, your president was laid low with the dreaded gout, ironically, and had to miss the day trip to the Carr Taylor vineyard on the outskirts of Hastings. Apparently, the food and drink were very pleasant indeed and a fine time was had by all who attended.



10th August 2017

Annual Golf Tournament

Well, what can I say? A great day at Bearsted Golf Club last Tuesday. We all turned up half expecting to see an old guy with a white beard building a boat behind the 12th green (the highest point on the course)! Instead, we were blessed with the most placid of days and not a drop of rain. I'm quite convinced that it was because, only the day before, I'd been out and bought a new set of waterproofs.

Thanks have to go to Geoff Wood for brilliantly organising the whole event as he has done for the last 26 years, Steve Elms for looking after the money and the scores on the doors and Carolyn for doing a great job as our official starter. Also to all those non-golfing Rotarians who turned up for dinner and made it such a memorable evening, thank you.

Oh, you want to know who won? Isn't the taking part more important? (Whoever wrote that clearly never won anything in their lives!).

The winner of the guest's prize was Bryan Douglas with 42 points and second was Rod Hills with 36. The ladies prize was won by Peggy Arnold, Longest Drive went to Nick Manser and Nearest the Pin was Richard Pearce. Anything else? Oh, yes, nearly forgot. The Tony Lush Claret Jug went to someone called Nic Brokenshire on 37 points with Lloyd Rodgers coming second on 33. Apparently this was the third time in a row that Nic has won (not that I'm counting)!

A terrific day that everyone I spoke to thoroughly enjoyed. Early days but we may have a plan to aim much higher next year. Watch this space!



2nd August 2017

A Roadtrip to Remember!

Last night at club, we were entertained by Pete and Sonia Wright who told us about their 8,000 mile roadtrip across America. It sounded like the trip of a lifetime although you do realise just how vast the United States is when you see their route plotted on a map! I'm sure I'm not the only Rotarian to think about possibly adding something similar to their own bucket list.

Well done Pete & Sonia!

31st July 2017

RIBI Golf Championship

Modesty (almost) forbids me from announcing that Riverside are now District 1120 Golf Champions! Lloyd and I defeated Folkestone Channel in a close fought final yesterday to become District champions and qualify for the national finals in September. It was a true team effort with each of us 'coming in' on 9 holes to dovetail perfectly even if some of our golf wasn't of the highest order! There were some brilliant putts sunk and one or two sitters missed but a tricky putt on the 18th sealed the deal and we look forward to our next challenge!

25th July 2017

Projects Night

Tying in very nicely with club's decision to continue with the Project Lead approach to organising events, we held a voting evening to decide on the most popular projects put forward by members earlier this year. We will be giving those members unable to attend on Tuesday, a chance to vote too and results will be published shortly.



The following day (Wednesday) I had the great pleasure of attending the **Young Carers Canoe Day**. It was wonderful to see what a great time they were all having (even the most timid who, once she was on the water, failed miserably in keeping a smile off her face)! My thanks to Lloyd for doing a fantastic job of organising the event and supplying all the food and thanks to Ruth for reminding him that he may not have been at home but he was still with the boss! Finally, Steve Elms presented an award to Young Carers Co-ordinator Jan Hall for all the splendid work she has done over many years. Thank you Steve and, well done, Jan.

My photo (hover over it to enlarge) shows Lloyd, me, Ruth, Colin and Mary setting up the 'field canteen' whilst Steve Hanks, Catherine Pearce and Steve Elms were on camera duty.



18th July 2017

The Life of a Professional Golfer

Last Tuesday we all sat enthralled by Danielle Thwaites. She spoke to us of her life as a professional golfer when, as Danielle Masters, she played at the highest level of women's golf. I'm also delighted to announce that she has agreed to present the prizes at our Annual Golf Day on the 8th August at Bearsted as well as being very keen on supporting us with some of our fund-raising efforts!

11th July 2017

Heathrow Airport and The Man in the Bowler Hat

A fabulous talk by our most recent PHF award recipient, Lloyd on his time overseeing a Heathrow Airport enquiry into, if I have this right, opening up the northern runway so that planes could take off over Cranford (they had, apparently, nearly lynched a man in a bowler hat who, in the 50s, at a public enquiry, had to, eventually, promise that this would never happen).

As I said in my vote of thanks, it was one of the best talks I have ever had the pleasure of listening to and the audience was rapt despite the complexity of the subject and sheer number of acronyms which were being thrown in our direction!

For those of you who missed it, here's the [link](#) to the FlightRadar page showing flight movements across the world and here's that fascinating [video](#) of planes queuing up to land at Heathrow!

Well done Lloyd!

4th July 2017

Petanque Evening

My thanks to Geoff Wood for, once again, organising a great petanque evening at The White House in Hunton. He may have been recently crowned European Veteran's Champion but my son-in-law, Jean-Louis met his match in the first end when he suffered a shock defeat by his father-in-law. He hasn't spoken to me since! A fun night, won by Richard Pearce



was followed by the traditional bangers 'n' mash and Eton Mess and everyone returned home full and happy!

1st July 2017

Club Handover

A big thank you to the Mughal Dynasty for providing us with a great venue and menu for this year's Handover. It was a great honour for me personally to take on the role of president for the second time and it was a very convivial afternoon spent with good friends!

Before bowing out, President Steve had a surprise for two of our members when he honoured Richard Ratcliffe and Lloyd Rodgers with Paul Harris Fellowship Awards in recognition of all the hard work they have carried out on behalf of club over the years. The looks on their faces was priceless so well done to Pam and Ruth for managing not to let the cat out of the bag!

It was also a great pleasure for me to welcome Catherine Pearce as our new President-Elect. She has some great ideas and will make an excellent President. I have my work cut out to make my mark before I handover to her in 2018!

Full story [here](#).