

Rotary



Rotary Opens Opportunities

LOOKS EAST

The Newsletter of The Rotary Club of Ipswich East

Edition 18-2020 : 4th August 2020

CLUB OFFICERS—2020/21

President: David Chittick

Sen V. President: Jo Banthorpe

Jun V. President: Steve Runnacles

Secretary: Tony Baker

Asst Secretary: Martin Westlake

Treasurer: Neil Hewitt



August

Karen Finch

Colin Davies

Alan Forsdike

Neil Hewitt

Toby Pound

George Woodward

Business Meeting - Tuesday 4th August 6.30pm by zoom - details on next page

Duty Rotarians, John Barbour & Eric Barnett



Chains Handed On...

Immediate Past President Liz ‘chained’ President David who in turn encircled Jo’s neck with the badge of Senior Vice-President and Jo hung Steve’s neck with the badge of the Junior Vice-President at The Woolpack PH in a ‘socially-distanced’ private ceremony mid-July.

Future Meetings:

- | | |
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| Tuesday 18 th August | Guest Speaker: Juliette Adams will share her childhood memory about our friendship with a Chinese family who fled the People's Republic of China.. |
| Tuesday 1 st Sept | Guest Speaker: Alan Green Principal Copleston school talking about “Copleston school during the Pandemic.” |
| Tuesday 15 th Sept | Guest Speaker: Suffolk Wildlife Trust's Michael Strand, Community Fundraising Manager. He will tell us what we can do in our gardens and community to make them more wildlife friendly. |

Speaker Finder Steve Jones would love to hear from you with ideas for future speakers.

Living with Motor Neurone Disease

For the benefit of those who were unable to 'zoom in' to hear Lewis Tyler talk on 21st July, here is the full text.

It was a very good and interesting talk; not morbid or mawkish in any way at all.

Fifteen months ago, Motor Neurone Disease (or MND as I will call it from now on) connected me with three people - Dr Stephen Hawkins, the well-known scientist, who contracted the disease at 21, was given two years to live and died at 76, and was surrounded by a wealth of technical equipment, nearer home, Gordon Paton, well known in and around the Stowmarket area,, was Mayor of Stowmarket three times, could well have taught some of you with us this evening when he was a Master at Ipswich School, was the second Chairman of the RGT and chaired our meetings with great difficulty and, even nearer home, my brother-in-law, Michael Weiner who although diagnosed with MND did not actually die of the disease



What is MND? We all have nerves in our brain and spinal cord that control how our muscles work. These are called motor neurone and MND is a disease that affects the motor neurons. With MND, motor neurone gradually stop telling your muscles how to move. When muscles no longer move, they become weak, which can also lead to stiffness and muscle wasting. MND is a life-shortening illness that can affect how you walk, talk, eat, drink and breathe. The disease will progress and means the symptoms will get worse over time - for some people this can be rapid, for others it is slower

There is currently no cure for MND But it was MND which claimed Mitzi on the first of March - unbelievably nearly five months ago - we were approaching our 63rd Wedding Anniversary and had known each other for some 86 years - we apparently met in our prams!

Mitzi was the daughter of a popular Ipswich GP Phineas Weiner (known as Phillip)- she enjoyed good health, very rarely caught a cold and steadfastly refused to have a flu jab. Until about ten years ago she was a fairly smoker. If there was a weakness, it was a slightly dodgy back. While, like me, she was not athletic but walked a lot and became adept at jumping on and off boats of various shapes and sizes

The first of her health problems occurred in 2014 when a routine visit to Dick Jeffery alerted us to Macular Degeneration in both eyes - the dry type of which there is as yet no known cure - this resulted in one eye being rendered useless and the other very restricted. There then followed almost a hundred visits to the Eye Clinic at Bury St Edmunds including thirty injections to retard the deterioration. Mitzi had been an avid reader and a salvation came in talking books from Audible, a subsidiary of Amazon, and the charity Calibre, not to mention the Ipswich Talking Newspaper, where our Norman Haines is a regular reader. She was registered as Partially Sighted and we became the proud possessors of a Blue Badge which certainly made car parking a little easier!

In 2015, on a cruise, we called into Sark - no doubt, a number of you have visited this rock, one of the Channel Islands - after landing, there are two options - either an exhausting walk up a steep track or taking the tractor and trailer- a veritable bone-shaker. We chose the latter which was a mistake and resulted various scans, treatments and temporary use of a wheelchair

A year later in 2016, we were on an away weekend in Stoke-on-Trent, when Mitzi fell down a badly lit step in the hotel and fractured a femur - all of which did not help her mobility

We did not realise at the time, but Mitzi was imperceptibly slowing up and we were enlisting various medical services

Christmas 2018 came and went with her operating very well until soon after she was struck with a mysterious virus which nobody could pin down. Various tests were made - all of which proved inconclusive. We had arranged a cruise to Norway for the first fortnight of March and we were advised that it would be OK to proceed. Whilst we were away, we had arranged for our downstairs cloakroom to be converted into a disabled wet room - the first of three fairly extensive, and expensive projects we were to undertake that year.

The cruise went well. We were provided with an accessible-cabin mid-ships. Mitzi moved about the ship in a wheelchair and we did not venture ashore at any of the ports of call; probably very wise in view of the quantity of snow and ice about in March!

On our return home, it soon became obvious that getting up and down our stairs was going to become difficult and the decision, prompted by a visit from our friend Robin Wraight, was made to convert my office in the hall to Mitzi's bedroom and move my office upstairs. 24 hours later this had been completed including sawing my oak-desk in half

More tests ensued, with no progress, until we consulted Dr Charlotte Brierley, the Consultant Neurologist at the Nuffield hospital. No mention of the possibility of MND at this stage. But subsequent visits to Dr Brierley, now at Bury St Edmunds Hospital and more tests, we were informed that MND was the diagnosis .

The Occupational Therapy team from Suffolk Social Services sprang into action combining with the ingenuity of our son, Simon. A 'Sara Stedy' arrived (about a £1,000 worth of equipment) to assist in transporting Mitzi from A to B. Those of you who know Church Cottage will appreciate that it is not the most disabled-friendly building - grab rails appeared everywhere (nearly 30) and folding ramps to assist in navigating the various levels.

June saw the annual family week at Iken Cliffs during which Project Two at Church Cottage was carried out- the replacement of our somewhat ancient central heating boiler. Soon after returning home, Project Three got underway- the idea had been brewing for several years to convert what, before our time, were stables (but which we used as Mitzi's garage and my workshed) into living accommodation. Events dictated that a start was made a couple of months ahead of schedule - a number of you have seen the finished product and like us think a first class result - all ready for a live-in career if required - now known at The Stables!

Mitzi continued to slowly deteriorate over the autumn - help came from an increasingly number of sources - starting with morning day care three times a week, regular visits from the Suffolk team of district nurses, speech therapists, dieticians, visits from the MNDA advisors not to mention a weekly regular day care at the Elizabeth Hospice and attending a regular MND Clinic at Ipswich Hospital. More equipment arrived over this period - a hospital bed, a second Sara Stedy (an electric hoist) plus a specially built wheelchair and various bits and pieces. I estimate that we probably had well in excess of £10,000 of NHS equipment on loan! Also I took part in a new project at the Hospice for carers.

During this time, we were still managing to get out for a pub lunch at least once a week - our knowledge of suitable venues with level access and accessible loos increased vastly. However, access to our cars was becoming increasingly more difficult - strangely the little Fiat 500 was easier than my larger Volvo So in October, the Fiat was disposed of and replace by a little rather ancient but low mileage disabled-converted Citroen Berlino which had an electric winch and proved ideal for the purpose

Christmas arrived and with considerable family assistance, the festive season proved possible and enjoyable but the New Year saw a marked deterioration. Day care increased to every morning together with most evenings and the occasional overnight attendance from React and Marie Currie.

It was becoming obvious that some respite would be welcome from all concerned so daughter and myself managed a long weekend at Bournemouth and son Simon booked a week away in the Lake District for late February, Mitzi having been booked into a Care Home for this's period

At about this time, we became aware of the 'continuing care scheme' operated by the NHS - limited financial assistance was available from the Social services, very much means tested. This does not apply to 'continuing care' but you do have to go through a number of hoops to

qualify - in our case, two four hour sessions over three days. It was not at all certain that we ticked enough boxes, but thanks to additional support from the Hospice, the application was successful. This would cover all daily care, respite care homes, live-in career - the lot, but we were in their hands. The first thing we discovered that there were 'issues' with the care home we had selected and it was not acceptable. However, within a quarter of an hour, Mitzi was booked into the Sue Ryder Home in Chantry Park for a fortnight- could not have been more convenient for us

She soon settled in until on the Sunday morning, I received a phone call from the Duty Nurse that she had developed a high temperature and they would like her transferred to Ipswich Hospital- Mitzi had vehemently opposed any idea of ending her days in Hospital. There was no bed available in the Hospice so she stayed put. The following Wednesday, we were informed that we could expect losing her between 48 hours and 3 weeks - a 24 hour vigil started - Simon returned from the Lake District and took the morning slot, I the afternoon and daughter and granddaughters slept in Mitzi' room over night. On the following Sunday night, the duty nurse reported all OK at 3.00am but an hour later, she had passed peacefully away - she had no quality of life remaining and had resigned herself and ourselves that she was ready to leave us

The timing was remarkable - I did not have to undergo the difficulties that Dave Atkins told us about a few weeks back - we were aware that something was afoot but nobody had any idea of the confusion and problems lying ahead. Mitzi had mapped out her wishes for a Celebration Service at St John's Church, Great Wenham to be conducted by our old friend and expert in Church history, Roy Tricker followed by internment at Ipswich Crematorium with a get together at the Wenham 'Queen', on Thursday, 19th March.

St Johns is a small church and not knowing how many were likely to attend, we spent the preceding Sunday afternoon erecting a marquee for any over-spill, not daring to attach the sides because of the likely strong winds. A phone call 24-hours later informed us that the Deanery had decreed that because of the increasing health problems, we could not use the Church. Four different plans were made and consequently abandoned that afternoon!

However, we were able to hold a modified service at the Ipswich Crematorium with all 16 of the immediate family present together with a dozen or so friends from Ipswich East Rotary Club, Inner Wheel of Ipswich East etc., who disregarded advice not to attend. My sincere thanks to all those stoics! The family adjourned back to Capel to open a few bottles and dispose of various titbits left over in the freezer from Christmas

So there I was, towards the end of March, being able to pick up the pieces of all the various activities that I was involved in but had not been able to attend for the last year or so, and there they weren't! Apart from moving the wheelie bins, I did not venture outside the front drive for almost three month

I am fairly happy with my own company and the garden, about a half an acre, always keeps me busy. Various projects are lined up, but so far, none has progressed very far. Son Simon, who suffers from periods of depression has been low for most of this period but has managed to keep me fed and watered regularly. Now it would appear that we are slowly being able to resume a little of our previous lives and I think this presents a further problem - we have got to get used to getting out and about again.

I would like to end by stressing this - it is easy to say - 'I don't think I will go to Rotary, or National Trust, or Arts Society, or whatever this time - will wait until next month.' Next month doesn't come. It will be up to every one of us to chivvy our friends along and encourage participation. So, can we expect a flurry of phone calls, saying, I will pick you up tomorrow?

May I conclude by thanking all of you for your support over this difficult period - we had well over 150 cards, letters, e-mails, phone calls from near and far - too many to thank individually. So a general 'Thank you - most appreciated'.

Details of Club Meeting via Zoom Tuesday 4th August at 6.30pm.

Catherine Forsdike will be the Zoom host and will open the 'room' at 6.15pm so the early-birds can freely chat (and admire members' virtual backgrounds).

Please don't wait until 6.30pm to try to get into the room.

At 6.30pm a bell will ring so that President David can call us to order and give the customary announcements.

It's important that we can still talk in small groups as we would round a table for a meal so we will be divided into 'breakout rooms' for around 10minutes.

During the meeting please use the 'chat' facility to put your questions.

**The meeting will end with the final toast
'Rotary and Peace the World Over" at 7.30pm**

We have arranged for the 'room' to remain open for more informal talking until 7.45pm just as we would after a physical meeting.

The link to access the meeting was sent in an email from Tony Baker on Sunday evening and the covering email to this newsletter.

If you can't find it, it's the same as the one for the previous meeting.

Eating in the UK in the 1950s.

Pasta had not been invented.

Curry was a surname.

A takeaway was a mathematical problem.

A pizza was something to do with a leaning tower.

Bananas and oranges only appeared at Christmas.

Crisps were plain - the only choice was whether or not to add the salt.

A Chinese chippy was a foreign carpenter.

A Big Mac was something you wore when it was raining.

Brown bread was something only poor people ate.

Oil was for lubricating; fat was for cooking.

Tea was made in a teapot (and was never green).

Coffee was Camp and came in a bottle.

Cubed sugar was regarded as posh.

Only Heinz made beans.

Fish didn't have fingers*.

Eating raw fish was called poverty not sushi.

No-one had ever heard of yoghurt.

Heathy food was anything edible.

People who didn't peel potatoes were considered lazy.

Indian restaurants were only found in India

Cooking outside was called camping.

Seaweed was not considered a food.

Kebab wasn't a word never mind something to eat.

Sugar enjoyed a good press; it was regarded as white gold.

Prunes were medicinal.

Muesli was widely available but called cattle-feed.

Pineapples came as chunks in a tin - we'd only ever seen picture of fresh ones.

Water came out of a tap.

[If someone has suggested bottling it and charging more than petrol for it, they would have become a laughing stock.]

One thing the never had on our table in the 50s was our elbows!

Photographic Memories of a Club BBQ

Club Photographer Richard Porter has been dipping into the archives again and shares these lovely photographs of the 2007 President's BBQ at Waldringfield.





Tony Baker continues his fascinating series of fire fighter memories...

Retire to the Rear

(Part 2 continuing the story of a major fire)

The Sub Officer was doing his rounds at the major petrol fire. He came close and shouted "If it blows, get down low". "What?" I did not understand. "What does that mean?" I asked the nearest fireman. "Do as you're told!" I had been told.

That night, I read the Manuals of Firemanship and researched tank fires. Two possibilities were evident. A slop-Over caused by burning product coming over the top of the tank wall permitting a greater surface area to be exposed to oxygen thus generating a fireball with

some burning product falling to the ground around the tank. The more serious situation was a Boil-Over. Over a period of time a thin layer of water builds up at the bottom of a petrol storage tank. In a severe fire, heat generated at the surface is transmitted throughout the tank by convection currents. As the temperature of the water increases it will start to boil and when water boils it turns to steam. The expansion ratio of water to steam is 1 to 1700. A small amount of water turns into a massive amount of steam and it becomes a piston driving up through the tank and ejecting the contents of the tank. A massive fireball results as the contents of the tank rise up, mushroom out, and then fall around the tank engulfing anything and everything beneath it. I held on to the cooling jet in cold and wet ignorant bliss.

I became aware that an officer was approaching. I looked and saw my father. He was one of the divisional officers based in Chatham. There was a fireman with him. There no pleasantries no discussions. He said just four words. "Retire to the rear" The fireman took my place holding the jet and I trudged off to the rear. I was fuming. An order on the fireground had to be complied with without discussion even though it had come from my father. I should never have been there in the first place and I never told him that I had been inside the bund wall.

I was still fuming as I was being given a safe mundane job at the rear of the fireground. In reality it was the best thing that could have happened to me. I could now see the whole of the fireground and the whole picture was right in front of me. The fire boat was tied up at the quayside and long lines of hose snaked towards the fire engines located all around the tank farm. A dozen more cooling jets and spray jets were positioned on the far side of where I had been working. There were four crews of firemen on top of the first tank upwind of the fire. They were forming their four foam jets into one solid mass and directing it towards the fire. They were not putting the fire out. The intensity of the fire had somewhat decreased, but they were not putting the fire out.

Firefighting foam is a glorified version of Fairy Liquid forming soapy bubbles of air. In 1965 foam compound was made from animal blood and pulverised animal bone stabilised by a vile liquid called Turkey Red Oil. Foam compound mixed with water and then aerated in a foam generator forms a solid jet to be projected onto a wall. In sufficient quantity, it will flow back over the surface of the burning liquid to form a blanket, thereby smothering the fire and preventing oxygen from feeding the flames. It was impossible. The fire was raging and the foam, even as a single solid mass, had to pass through the flames and the rising smoke and hot gases before it could reach the far wall. That far wall of the tank was hot, the fire was still raging and areas of the tank wall had folded inwards. Insufficient foam was reaching the far wall to form a blanket



SHELL MEX STORAGE DEPOT, NORTHPLEET. — MARCH 1ST, 1963.

of foam. Foam does not cool a fire, it blankets and smothers. An insufficient application of foam will simply dissipate by being burnt or blown away.

A small convey had arrived from the Isle of Grain Refinery Fire Brigade consisting of major pump, foam bowser and Superjet. The Superjet looked like a military howitzer mounted on a road chassis. The Superjet was set in place and hose and foam lines were connected. The outlet at the top of the Superjet was four inches in diameter. Even when supplying four tons of water per minute, the water was just flopping out of the nozzle. The foam valves were opened and instantly a solid foam jet formed and reached up to a height of some sixty feet. The Superjet was trained round so that the foam fell into the burning petrol tank. The additional foam was more than sufficient to complete the necessary smothering blanket. The flames were extinguished, but the foam continued to be applied for a further fifteen minutes to compensate for the destruction of foam bubbles on the hot petrol surface and to allow natural cooling of the petrol to below its spontaneous ignition point. At the end of the fifteen minutes, the foam was ceased but the foam equipment was left in place in case there was a re-ignition. All of the cooling and spray jets remained in place. After another fifteen minutes, my father went to the top of the adjacent tank and assessed the situation and being satisfied that the fire was extinguished, he signalled the end of the fire-fighting operation some three hours after the explosion had occurred.

The fireground was a mess. Everything was covered in a thick layer of foam and stank of the combination of foam compound and Thames river water. A small convoy of low loaders came on site and the filthy equipment was gathered up and thrown onto the lorries. My Sub Officer came up and shouted "Home". The three crews who attended first were relieved first. We hosed the worst of the muck off ourselves before we drove back to Dartford in utter silence.

Back at Dartford it was long past lunch time but there was no rest until the appliance had been made available for the next fire call. The stores were thrown open and our missing equipment was replaced, petrol tanks were refilled and the appliance water tank topped up. Then and only then could we go inside to wash and change and to eat and drink. No time to rest, a low loader had arrived from the fireground so back outside we went. Every piece of equipment was scrubbed clean, washed and flushed through and then tested to ensure that it would again work first time every time. Hose was hauled up the tower to dry and other equipment was stowed away in the store in readiness for the next incident.

The following day we returned to Northfleet. Much equipment was still missing. We scoured the site and found some items. On Thursday afternoon we returned again. There was a crew from Gravesend at the base of the burnt tank. Engineers from the depot were unbolting the cover of a man-hole at the base of the tank. Two firemen wearing breathing apparatus crawled in through the round hole. My Sub Officer pushed me forward and said "Land a hand." I moved close to the man-hole. The tank had been pumped out, but there was still an awful smell of petrol fumes and foam compound. A fireman joined me. A short extension ladder was passed in through the man-hole. Shortly afterwards the ladder reappeared with a body lying on the top.

The body of Mr Taylor looked quite serene, a little pickled, but apart from scorch marks on the inside of the wrists, quite unmarked. To be respectful we wrapped the body in a salvage sheet then passed the ladder and body over the bund wall to where the undertaker, police and coroner's officer were waiting.

The engineer had been on top of the tank undertaking his usual Monday morning job of physically dipping the tank to calculate the volume of the contents. He had lifted a small cover on the top of the tank and then lowered a phosphor bronze tape right to the bottom of the tank. My father investigated the cause of fire and surmised that there had been a very heavy atmosphere and low cloud on the morning of the fire. There had been an electrical discharge, not lightening, from the cloud which had made contact with the phosphor bronze tape. The electrical discharge had scorched the inside of the engineer's wrists as it travelled down and into the top of the tank where it caused an explosion. The top of the tank had been ripped open and then fell into the tank. The engineer's body had fallen into the tank and as petrol has a specific gravity of 0.74, less than that of water, the body would have sunk to the bottom of the tank.

Many lessons learned. Most important, stand back, observe and assess the whole picture.

Tony is on the front left of the photograph on the previous page, having been told to "Retire to the rear"

Hedges at Dawn

Well not quite that early. George McLellan has offered to cut this hedge for an elderly gentleman. He would like some help. If you are willing and able, please contact George direct.

Thank you.



Former Member Fred Leach

Your editor has an email exchange with Fred from time to time. You might like to read this one...

Hi Alan, First I would like to thank you for sending me the Clubs Newsletter which I read with great interest.

This weeks was of particularly interest, it started when I read the birthday card to Jack Earwaker. I had the pleasure of working on several of his projects, particularly Church Restoration, Happy Birthday Jack. I then opened the page with photos of members, this certainly brought back a few memories of some of the ones I had the pleasure of being with in the Club.

Bill Pipe, Tony Dodds, Stuart Cooper, Ian Lord, John Button, Dick Jeffry, Lewis Tyler, Richard Porter, to name a few, my apologies if I missed anyone. It's always nice to have the memory jogged occasionally.

I wish you all well in these trying times, stay safe and keep up your excellent work.

Best Wishes and Many Thanks, Fred Leach

Thank you Fred. Nice to hear from you. I was in architecture for 36 years with Hare, Pert & Partners and then the county council. Hooper, Earwaker and Olley as they were (before becoming Hoopers) was a well known name like JS&H. I am related to both the Sadler family and GW & HC Knights - two local contractors you may well know; building is in my blood! Alan

Hi Alan, My background was starting as an apprentice plumber with Cubitt and Gotts in 1946. In 1951 having finished my apprenticeship, like many others I then served two years National Service in the army, I returned to Cubitts in 1953, and was given the opportunity of working my way through management, finally forming a heating and plumbing division, I was offered a position with a local firm N.B.Aldridge in 1968, as M.D and changed it into a Mechanical Service Company, I then was given the opportunity of joining the William Steward Electrical Group by Michael Steward to form Mechanical Services, first in Ipswich then in Norwich an opportunity to good to miss, and a most satisfying position, but in 1980 decided to form our own company with a colleague, opening a branch in Ipswich and another in Norwich,. [When that came to an end...] I was then given the chance to rejoin Cubitts and form a heating department with their electrical firm A.F Knights in Diss, I finally called it a day in 1996 when I retired, at 65 after a demanding but enjoyable experience, although I am 98% chair bound because of Diabetic Neuropathy affecting my legs and hands, otherwise still smiling and enjoying living in very rural surroundings in Burstall.

So you can see of my connection with the Building Industry and people like Jack.

Hope this will be of interest to you. Take Care Fred

Thank you Fred. That's very interesting. I live in Henley Road as you know and was for 10 years vicar at Westerfield church so regularly travelled past the Cubitt & Gotts site. When I was working for the county council, I had quite a bit of dealings with them and got to know Roger Cubitt well. When his firm carried out the refurbishment of the council chamber using the project that I had designed. He gave me a tour of the wood workshops because I'd designed a carved commemorative table which he donated.

Sorry to hear about the restrictions you have but pleased you are still able to enjoy life. Best wishes, Alan

Hi Alan, Thanks for your reply, it's a great shame places like Cubitts wood working departments have sadly all gone, over the years I had a quite a relationship with the Councils heating department, particularly with Bob Wilton and later the notorious Dixie Dean, say no more !!!

Please pass on my regards to all the members together with some of the items we have talked about, it's been a wonderful trip down memory lane, I am very proud of my time with Cubitts and the chance in life they gave me. Many Thanks, Fred