

# LOOKS EAST

The Newsletter of The Rotary Club of Ipswich East  
Edition 20-2020 : 1<sup>st</sup> September 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



September

John Button  
Geoff Watson  
Roger Gilles  
Russell Wiles  
Richard Porter  
Mark Harrison  
Chris Banham  
Clifford Smith

**Club Zoom Meeting**  
**Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> September starting at 6.30pm**

**Alan Green, Principal, Copleston High School**  
**'Running a school during the pandemic'**

**Duty Rotarians:**  
**Vote of Thanks, Graham Bickers &**  
**Note Taker, Michelle Bevan-Margetts**

## A Double for John

President David Chittick was delighted to present Member John Riches with his second Paul Harris Fellowship this week. In making the presentation, David said...

The Club Member that I wish to honour today has been a club member for 34 years. He has been a main-stay at the Orwell Walk providing the use of caravans. He was the check point leader at Shore Lane for many years when it was long days at a double checkpoint for those going out and those coming back.

John Riches supported the Golf Day at Felixstowe with the provision of a caravan for use as an office and regularly sponsored one of the holes.

He also provided a base at his home in Kesgrave for storing food and packing of Christmas food parcels by Rotarians before FIND came into existence. Now he regularly helps with the distribution of FIND Christmas parcels, Kids Out and the Senior Citizen's Concert.

Some of the older club members will remember the Snooker nights that he organised at his home.

John Riches has been the club almoner for many years and has quietly maintained contact with club members who have had bouts of poor health or illness. John always works quietly and discretely in the background maintaining contact with those club members who are not able to attend meetings. He ensured that those who needed to know, or those who could help, were kept fully informed. He has ensured that all club members continued to feel that they are an integral and valued part of our club.

All that changed in in March with the advent of Covid 19. John stepped up a gear, correction; half a dozen gears. He has maintained contact with 24 club members to ensure that the concept that Rotary cares and is supportive of its members, and carried on during the Coronavirus crisis. Some contacts were weekly, some were daily, depending on the degree of support that was necessary. John was the main-stay of support for one of our club members who suffered a bereavement during the crisis. The manner in which John discharged his duties has kept our club together during the crisis and has meant that we will come out on the other side as strong, if not stronger, than before.

John is a very worthy recipient of a second Paul Harris Award, this time with the addition a blue sapphire.



## Future Meetings:

Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> 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.

*Duty Rotarians: John Button (VoT), John Clements (notes)*

Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> Sept      Guest Speaker: TBA

*Duty Rotarians: Stuart Cooper (VoT), Des Cunningham (notes)*

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

## Juliette Shares her Childhood Memories

At our virtual Rotary meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> August the voice on Zoom was our very own Juliette Adams who recalled some childhood memories of her parents friendship with a Chinese family who had fled the People's Republic of China in 1950.

Professor Sia and his wife along with their son and two daughters had left Shanghai ostensibly to go on holiday in Hong Kong but eventually made their way to the USA where they first settled in Greensboro, N. Carolina. At that time Juliette's father was a Presbyterian minister in Greensboro\* and it was through his church that she first met the Sia family who had been brought up as Methodists ; in fact the children had all been given English Christian names - Robert, Ida Jane and Alecia. In the early 1950s Greensboro was a thriving city with a population of c120,000 - currently nearly 300,000.



Professor Sia taught physics at Bennett College which had 600 students - all African-American women. According to Wikipedia the college had been founded in 1873 to educate "freedmen" and train both men and women as teachers; originally co-ed it became a women-only college in 1926.

Juliette then expanded on some of her reminiscences one of which was the confusion created in the Sia family by her mother's comment that Juliette "could play the piano by ear". That statement required lengthy explanation to the Sias whose knowledge of English was okay but not comprehensive enough to cope with an aside which must have been quite baffling to them. Juliette confessed that when she first came to live in England she failed to understand the implication of the phrase "to spend a penny". One aspect of the family's life-style which interested and puzzled Juliette was their habit of keeping their clothes and other belongings still in their boxes or scattering them around on the furniture rather than putting them away in drawers or cupboards; they appeared to be reluctant to unpack anything and gave the impression of being prepared to move at short notice.

Mrs Sia also found housework very tiring and Juliette thought that they might have been wealthy enough to have had servants in their previous life in China. Juliette's mother advocated the purchase of a washing machine would relieve some of the drudgery which may have elicited one of Mrs. Sia's usual comments that "when these hands stop everything stops! " Another revelation was that the whole family suffered from travel sickness when travelling by car which cannot have made sight-seeing trips or holidays a pleasant experience.

Juliette concluded her talk by telling us that Professor Sia was appointed to another teaching post in Pennsylvania and her parents kept in contact with the family for a while but she had no idea as to how the move from Greensboro worked out other than she understood that the Professor had some mental health problems which compelled him to retire. These problems were attributed to the brainwashing he had been subjected to in China.

*Eric Barnett*

*\*Footnote : for those who may be interested Greensboro was originally named Greensborough but for whatever reason the city changed its name in 1895 and removed the "ugh" element.*

*Another exciting episode in the story of a young firefighter...*

*Tony Baker continues to amuse us with tales from his early days in the job.*

## The Mighty Quinn

There was a shout at Chatham Fire Station in the early hours of 19th October 1970. We were still working a 56 hour week with 15 hour night shifts. There was a rest period between midnight and 6.30am.

Firemen react in different ways when fire bells go down in the middle of the night. A new recruit had joined the watch. He was six feet tall and seemed to be six feet wide, Manfred Mann had released their record, 'The Mighty Quinn'. It was therefore inevitable that the recruit should be christened Quinn.

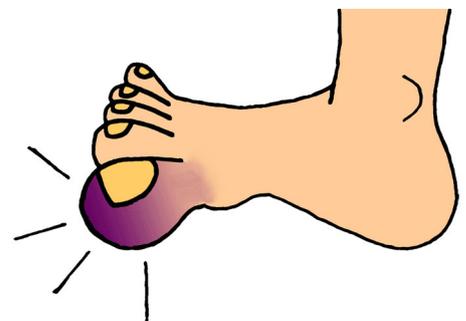
At night Quinn rested on the camp bed on the opposite side of the dormitory to me. We were required to rest fully clothed as only sixty seconds were allowed to turn out and be on the road after the bells had started to ring. Quinn had an aversion to wearing trousers while he rested, so he would hide them under his camp bed so that they could not be seen when the Sub officer did his rounds.

When the fire bells suddenly belted out in the middle of the night, Quinn would rise vertically from the camp bed like a whirling dervish with arms and legs thrashing. He seemed to be able to rotate in mid-air and then hit the ground running. At the far end of the dormitory was the pole shaft. Quinn yanked the handle, the trap doors flew up, and he dived onto the pole shaft and disappeared down the pole drop.

There was a full length mirror at the bottom which was used to inspect fire gear before going on parade. Quinn caught sight of himself and realised that he had left his trousers behind. He leapt back up the stairs, three at a time, threw open the door and came charging towards the rest of the watch as we progressed towards the pole shaft. We were knocked asunder like ten-pins as he came barging through, then again as he charged back through on his headlong rush.

On a subsequent night when the bells went down, Quinn rose like the whirling dervish, remembered his trousers, and disappeared down the pole shaft but managed to get a twist on as he slid down the pole. When he hit the mat at the bottom he was facing the wrong way. He was facing the mirror. Seeing the reflection of the door to the engine room, he charged straight into the mirror and knocked himself out.

On a third occasion, he really did well. He remembered his trousers and hit the mat facing the right way, then ran towards the engine room but unfortunately managed to slide his foot under the heavy swing door. The door was wedged and would not move until fifteen firemen thundered through. Quinn was left behind in a heap holding his throbbing toes, much to the amusement of the watch.



*Next episode... 'Flashover!'*

# Photographic Memories of a Club visit to Cambridge

Club Photographer Richard Porter has been dipping into the archives again and shares these lovely photographs of the 2006 visit to Cambridge with our American cousins.





## This space is for YOU!

### What could you submit for the newsletter?

If you have not been at work during this last 5 months,  
what have you been doing?

Have you begun a new skill or revisited an old one?

Catherine and I spent 3 months reorganising and replanning/redecorating  
our bedroom and dressing room - shown above.

I could bore you with more photographs  
but I'd rather receive some illustrated stories from YOU.

