

# LOOKS EAST

The Newsletter of The Rotary Club of Ipswich East  
Edition 25-2020 : 10<sup>th</sup> November 2020

**Club Zoom Meeting**  
**Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> November starting at 6.30pm**

**Business Meeting plus Special General Meeting  
and presentation of recommendations  
of Grants Committee.**

*Our District Governor, Jonathon King will attend.*

*Duty Rotarians: none required*

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



*November*

Geoff Ramsdale

Steve Flory

Bill Robinson

Liz Harsant

Alison Baldry

George McLellan

Eric Barnett

We were visited by RYLA royalty at our last Zoom meeting when Mr RYLA himself “attended”- Robin Wraight accompanied by Liam Gallacher-Borley, participant and tutor (even tho’ he was on-call for the Fire Service and may have dashed off at any minute) and as far as the writer knows Abigail, a volunteer tutor who may have logged on but remained in the shadows. We also had the pleasure to welcome Lanai Collis-Philips. Lanai had completed the course last year and commented on how life-changing her experience had been.



However, the star of the show was undoubtedly Estela Faria, RYLA graduate of 2019 - presenting both her reminisces of the 2019 course and very interestingly how she was using her learning one year on as a student of Modern Languages and Economics at Warwick - currently locked down. She told us that her degree was being delivered through a blended learning approach - which means both in person lectures and online input. Estela, from the Gt Yarmouth area, had admirably raised 50% of the cost of RYLA herself and our club had contributed the rest.

Estela outlined the shape of the course (50% lecture room; 50% outdoor activities - her favourite she said) and reminded us of the night hike - always a surprise, never dull and a great ice-breaker.

She told us she’d had an opportunity to try new things and had learned to overcome her reluctance to take a lead. Estela had practised public speaking, gained confidence and whereas she wouldn’t have volunteered previously - happily does so now - isn’t as nervous - and finds it’s so useful in her degree course.

Estela commented on the way RYLA had taught her about problem solving, working under pressure to time limits, and also about hosting guests at the formal dinner; new experiences for her. Her new-found leadership confidence had led her to volunteer and take responsibility to lead teams. She’d increased her understanding about how teams work; that leaders don’t bear sole responsibility for success or failure.

She told the club she had become a university course representative. Not only that, her new-found RYLA network of friends provided good ongoing support. (Contd.)

In short, Estela told us about her personal growth and self development which had happened on the RYLA course and just how much she was drawing on her learning one year on. It was a real pleasure for the club to hear such an uplifting presentation from Estela and we wish her every success in the future.

In giving the vote of thanks Robin Wraight commented (and the club agreed wholeheartedly) on how lovely Estela is and how pleased he was to hear of her experiences and learning on the course.

Robin went on to say that in his time 500 young people had completed the course, that across the District clubs had raised a £1M towards costs and since 2007, the Rotary Club of Ipswich East had put 38 candidates forward - making us the leaders.

This is a tribute to all of us and testament to the importance we give to young people having the chance to benefit from RYLA.

*Janet Dillaway*

*(I was unable to collect any screen-shots on the day but found this lovely photo of Robin on his rather splendid motorbike! - Editor)*



## Your Opinion Matters!

You will remember from President David's letter in the last 'Looks East' he said that Club Council are seeking your views on how we continue to act and work as a club during the pandemic.

Shortly you'll receive an emailed invitation to take part in a simple on-line survey.

It is very straightforward and should take about 3-5 minutes to complete.

There are just 10 questions and each has options to select to give answers. Some questions also have the chance to add your own thoughts.

The survey has been 'road-tested' by Club Council members and will be refined before going out to members.

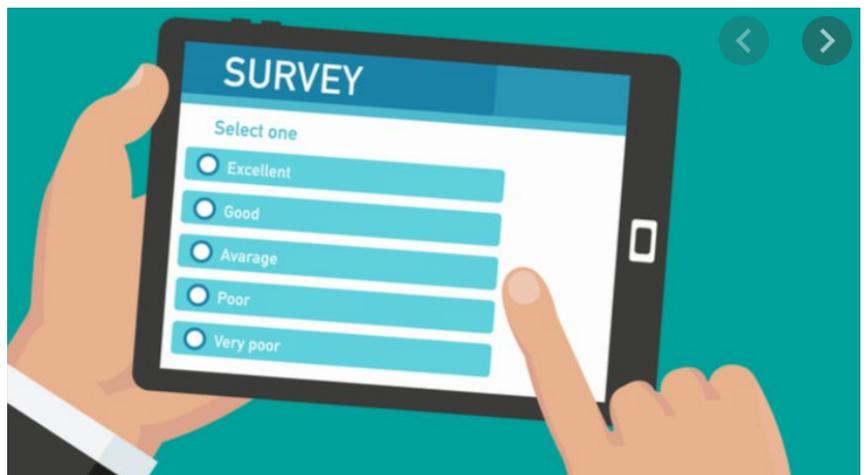
We are using 'SurveyMonkey' for this purpose.

When it is launched later this week, you'll get an email that will show as coming from

**"alan.forsdike@gmail.com via SurveyMonkey"** (if you hover over or click that, it will reveal "member@surveymonkeyuser.com")

**This is genuine and not a scam!**

**Please take part because YOUR OPINION MATTERS!**



# Two years in the Territorial Army (TA)

*Member Des Cunningham tells us about a surprising side of his life...*

I started my engineering apprenticeship in 1979 with Crane Fluid Systems on Nacton Road as a Machine Tool Fitter. I was trained to manufacture parts on the lathe or mill and then repair broken-down machine.

The first year was off-the-job training at the Ipswich and Colchester Training Centre on Hadleigh Road Industrial Estate. At that time over 100 apprentices were training along-side me: the largest number ever at the training centre.

This was at the time when Ipswich and Colchester had a vast array of manufacturing companies of global standing, employing thousands of people.

As part of the training, we also had to attend Suffolk College one day a week. The Engineering Department was a big recruiting ground for the TA, several of the lectures and technical staff were members of the TA. I enrolled.

Part of your training for the TA would be a 2 week training at Bassingbourn Barracks in Cambridge, but that year, NATO were holding a major exercise in Germany, so my training was cancelled and we were off to Germany for 2 weeks, Exercise Crusader September 1980.

Some things you always remember... We were taken by coach to Chelsea Barracks and when the army say eat, you eat, so at 3am we had breakfast and at 6am we were at Heathrow airport waiting to load onto a military plane. As we were waiting, Concorde took off just in front of us, quite a sight! We took off facing backwards which is safer and standard on military planes, we landed at RAF Gutersloh in the British Sector of West Germany.

Just as in the photograph here, our initial objective was to hold a bridge and you can see me in a trench holding the 84mm anti-tank weapon. We guarded the Koldingen Bridge for a couple of days until what seemed like hundreds of tanks thundered over the bridge, evading the enemy. We then moved back to woods several miles back, the next morning we could see hundreds of British Paras and US forces parachute from Chinook helicopters to capture the bridges we had left the night before, the tanks fort a big battle a couple of days later close by.

Part of our training took place with helicopters; we flew in Puma and Sea-King Helicopters, flying day and night exercises, great fun but not all soldiers like to fly, and some turned an odd shade of green!

With all major exercises, limits are placed on the loss of life and cost of damage to the German countryside. We were among thousands of troops and vehicles. Travelling down a German Road early one morning, just as we came out of the fog a vehicle just in front of us left the road with several soldiers injured; an awfully close call. Three soldiers were killed, and several were injured over the course of the exercise.

Over the next 2 years I had many weekends on the Stamford Battle area Thetford, the Ranges at Lowestoft and Colchester, with 2 extremely exciting weekends attacking our good friends at USAF Bentwaters, Woodbridge.



## EXERCISE CRUSADER - SPEARPOINT 80

1. Exercise Spearpoint 80 is a 1st British Corps field training exercise, part of the major United Kingdom Exercise Crusader 80, which is designed to demonstrate our national ability to reinforce NATO's Central region, and to fight in conjunction with our Allies on the ground and in the air to defeat any aggression against the Alliance.

2. Exercise Spearpoint 80 is the largest exercise that the 1st British Corps has carried out for many years. Lieutenant General Sir Peter Leng KCB MBE MC Commander 1st British Corps, will be the overall Commander of a force of 94,000 troops with 880 main battle tanks and over 350 helicopters.

3. This force will include three full British Armoured Divisions with supporting troops, reinforced with Territorial Army

soldiers, the United Kingdom based 7th Field Force and 30 Engineer Group (Volunteers); the American Texas based 2nd "Hell on Wheels" Armoured Division (the 1980 Exercise Reforger Division) and the 3rd German Panzer Brigade. To complete the picture there will be four companies of German reserve soldiers. In the air there will be Belgian, British, German, Netherlands and United States air forces taking part.

4. The enemy on Exercise Spearpoint 80 at its greatest strength numbers two full armoured divisions, a German Panzer Brigade, a disruption Brigade consisting of the Headquarters 2nd (United States) Airborne Brigade with, under command, a British and an American Parachute Battalion, and two British and one American air mobile infantry battalions, and finally a diversionary Brigade consisting of British and American Special Forces and "locally raised partisans".

On the first exercise we took off from Ipswich School's playing field on Colchester Road. We were picked up by Jolly Green Giant Helicopters MH53, used by the USAF air sea rescue helicopters. We were given loading and exiting instructions. If you leave the wrong way you don't get a second chance - the tail rotors take your head off.

Helicopters pilots are a special breed, we flew down the coast at a very strange angle forcing you to look out of the window. We landed near the base and slept in the woods waiting to attack at dawn. We attacked at a specific place near the ammo dump and were met by machine-gun fire from the American Forces. As with all things American, we ended the weekend with a BBQ and a Budweiser.

Eight months to a year later we attacked again, this time an amphibious landing. We used the Suffolk Police Launch, the 'Sir Ian Jacob' with other boats and beached near the Base. Again, a great weekend ended with a BBQ and Budweiser. It was not all just for fun, both exercises were used to test the Base defences and the results were used by the Pentagon to help bolster defences for all USAF Bases around the world.

Another odd and somewhat dangerous weekend took place in Lydd Kent, an Army Range for anti-tank 120mm weapons.

You home into the target using tracer bullets, then switch to the main weapon 120mm cannon. As it fires, flame and spent explosive is exhausted out of the back of the barrel. Fortunately, one failed to explode just as someone walked behind the barrel, an incredibly lucky soldier.

What was also very odd was that we travelled to Kent via the Dartford Tunnel with around 100 anti-tank missiles, but were banned by the tunnel authorities to travel back via the tunnel, so we took an unexploded missile though the streets of London in the back of our lorry.

Things always change with the Army. I was offered the chance to learn to drive, and drove to Colchester in an Austin Allegro for several months learning the streets of Colchester ready for the test with the Army tester based in Colchester. When it came to the test he had moved to Peterborough. He asked me to take the road to the Hospital, I had to ask the tester "where's the hospital?" I also had to perform an emergency stop for real, which all helped me pass.

The other guys in my platoon are pictured below. I hope this is of interest and helps fill these long days.

*Des.*



*Continuing his series of reminiscences, Tony Baker reflects on challenging authority.*

## Why?!

The school master who made the greatest impression on me was my physics teacher.

He was a wily old Irish man who I later found out had been a Bomb Disposal Officer during the war. He taught his subject well. His mantra, which he emphasised constantly, was to always ask why and to try to understand why.

He was adamant that you should never ever accept that any matter should be organised in a certain way because it always had been done that way. "Question everything!" Perhaps his philosophy explained why he had survived the war. He made a great impression on me and I was determined that I would always follow his mantra.

Asking why got me into all sorts of problems. As a fire cadet I had the temerity to ask my instructor "Why?" The blasting was always the same. "Because I told you!" perhaps not as politely as that. I was in a uniformed, disciplined service and I soon learnt to bite my tongue but the question was always there.

In 1974 I was appointed as a Station Officer at Maidstone Fire Station in charge of a watch of 21. It was an interesting time as the watch was composed mostly of old sweats who were older than me and had served in the fire service for longer than I had. Many of them had known me as a cadet aged 16. I undertook an examination as they tried and tested me. They were constantly probing to see where the line was.

Everything in the fire service was governed by Brigade Orders. There were volumes of them. There was a Brigade Order for everything from booking a day's leave to standard messages on the fireground. Fortunately I could absorb that sort of information and I was always one step ahead of anything the watch could invent or imagine as they probed. I found disfavour with the Divisional Commander as I had started to ask why again and soon achieved a reputation as an unconventional upstart and a bender of rules. I learnt to watch my back carefully. Those first few months kept me on my toes.

The bells went down at Maidstone Fire Station in the early hours of the night. Now it was my job to run to the watch room to take the incident details from Fire Control. Oakwood Park Mental Hospital, fire in two wards, persons reported. Two pumps, turntable ladder and emergency tender to attend. I ran to the engine house and mounted my appliance. "Oakwood, persons reported." The bay doors flew open and there in front was a dull red blaze on the horizon. It was across on the other side of the River Medway. We had to drive down into Maidstone town to cross the river bridge, then travel up the Tonbridge Road to reach the hospital, a distance of some three miles.

I had a dilemma. Kent Fire Brigade Orders were absolutely precise. You could not request additional resources for fire-fighting until you had assessed the incident and had sent an Informative Message. It was an absolute. You had to assess the situation before ordering additional resources. Informative Messages had to follow an exact format according to the precise mnemonic HAUL, height, area, use and location.



An Informative Message for a place we all know such as 'Greshams', would be: 'a single storey building, 100 metres by 50 metres, used as a social club, kitchen well alight, premises smoke logged.' The message provides an accurate picture of a fire situation for everyone assessing or proceeding to the incident.

A voice in my head said WHY? I was losing time. I was going to need more resources than had already been dispatched. I used the brigade radio to contact Fire Control. "Confirm that the incident at Oakwood Park Hospital involves occupied wards and that persons are reported." A positive response was received. I transmitted, "En-route to incident, major fire sighted, make pumps 6." All went very quiet. Fire Control instructed me to confirm my location and the assistance required. I replied that I was on route and travelling down Loose Road, Maidstone and that six pumps were required. All went quiet again. Then I heard a questioning "Roger". The driver looked half sideways. "Deep do-do!" I can remember saying that I would do my job and he should do his. The old sweat mumbled, "Deep do-do."

Seven minutes later we arrived at the hospital. There was a raging fire but fortunately at that time it involved the kitchen and laundry. However, it was progressing towards a corridor that connected to the wards. I had managed to gain seven minutes but it would still be some time before appliances from outside of Maidstone would arrive on the fireground. I needed to get a heavy jet to work on either side of the connecting corridor in a pincer action. If I could get the jets into position quickly, I could create a fire stop, stop the fire from spreading towards the wards and keep the fire in the kitchen and laundry areas. The use of heavy jets in any other direction would drive the fire towards the wards.

A senior nurse found me to ask whether the patients should be evacuated from the wards. I was not sure whether we could halt the fire and therefore I advised her to start the evacuation. I thought that patients in a mental hospital might be quite difficult to waken in the middle of the night. I gave orders for the jets to be set up. On one side it was an easy task. The other side was much more difficult with a much longer run from the fire pumps, plus uneven ground as well as a bank and a wall to be climbed. I was running from side to side to promote "impetus".

The first jet was set up and got to work quite quickly. I ran to the far side and found a small group of old sweats puffing and panting with hands on knees. They had been running backwards and forwards with equipment but they were still a long way from setting up the jet. Without thought, to put it mildly, I vented my disdain in an abrupt manner. I immediately regretted my words. Just as quickly, didn't. If looks could have killed, I would have been a dead man. I gave them a direct order to get moving. The three old sweats plodded back to the pump and I ran with them. Equipment was grabbed and we all set off again. The hose line was completed and I positioned them where I wanted them to direct the jet. I then ran back to the pump to order the water to be turned on.

The second jet was got to work in good time. The fire stop was completed. The progress of the fire was halted and then as the reinforcements arrived, more jets were got to work and the fire in the hospital laundry and kitchen was eventually knocked down. I was getting looks like daggers from my watch. Then the Divisional Commander arrived. It had been a good stop but I had broken the rules yet again. He hardly looked at me yet alone spoke to me. Eventually he sent a Divisional Officer over to say that in time honoured fashion the Maidstone crews, as the initial attendance, could return to station and leave the other crews to turn over and dampen down. I asked if there were any other messages from the boss and was told curtly not to push my luck.

The return to station in the fire engine was icy cold. No one spoke. Back at the station I went into the watch room to start writing fire reports while the crews cleaned and tested equipment before it was re-stowed on the appliances. The Sub Officer wandered in. He was twice my age and a wily old veteran. "You were hard on them." "I had to be, didn't I!" I retorted.

He wandered out. It was quiet on the watch for some time after. The testing and probing stopped and the Divisional Commander ignored me. It was deemed that I had again got away with bending the rules. No bollocking and no praise for a good stop.

The escape hatch opened and I was sent on a command course to the Fire Service College in Morton in Marsh for three months. Immediately after the course I moved on promotion to the West Midlands where asking why was actually encouraged.

I was appointed as the Equipment Officer with a remit to test and purchase new operational

equipment. However, on my first day the Chief said that he had changed his mind and that I was to be the Recruitment Officer. He wanted fifteen recruits every 6 weeks so that the two training schools could respond to a change of duty pattern. He wanted a review of both written and practical entrance examinations and a recruitment shop opened in central Birmingham. He was adamant, get on and get it done as a matter of urgency.

I soon found that I needed to process ten candidates to identify each suitable recruit. Therefore every Saturday morning twenty five candidates came through the doors to start the process of written examination, practical examination and formal interview. I found myself a suitable course at Birmingham University for employment interviewing and another course at Huddersfield Polytechnic and gained a qualification to use and interpret the results of psychometric tests. The recruitment shop was opened in Aston Street and I introduced the new entrance examinations.

The Communications Officer decided to retire just as planning commenced for a new control room. Birmingham had been a combined Fire and Ambulance Service. In 1974 the West Midlands Fire Service was formed, the second largest fire brigade in the country, and the new control was to be an update and a separation with the Ambulance Control moving to new premises. With one day's notice, I became the Communications Officer. It was a completely different experience of working in a close knit team planning and introducing a new control room. I had to learn quickly and contribute to the overall project. The control opened on time and to specification. A sudden vacancy then occurred on the A Division of the brigade and I found myself as a supervisory fire officer covering Birmingham city centre and areas such as Aston and Handsworth and out to Spaghetti Junction on the M6.

## Remembrance Day

*John Button forwarded these photographs of the Cameron Highlanders which give a chilling message.*

The first was taken on the esplanade of Edinburgh Castle in 1914, before they went to France.

In the second photograph we see the same Cameron Highlanders, back at Edinburgh Castle, on their return from France in 1918.

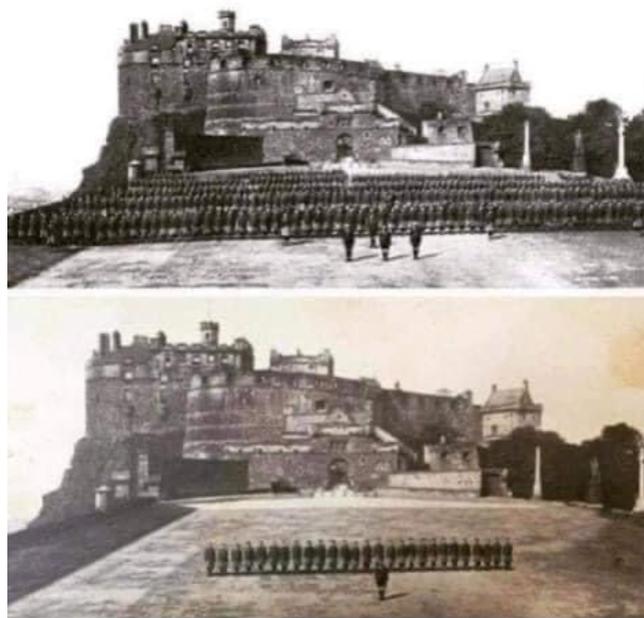
They were sent to John by Barry Wolstenholme, a former military man and currently Managing Director of Caston's H&S Company 'CCAS Ltd.'

Barry wrote, "I'm conscious of the fact that Remembrance Day is being allowed to slowly fade into insignificance, particularly from younger people who, through no fault of their own, have never quite been informed of the true horrors and loss of life during WW1 or WW2. Let it sink in... Educate your children... Never EVER forget."

*Note from the Editor: I'm sending out this newsletter on Remembrance Sunday 2020. I was at school from 1960-1972 we had no education on either WW1 or WW2 - it could be because all that was all too close to memory. Both my grandfathers survived to tell their own heavily redacted tales. My father served towards the end of WW2 and never talked about it: I found out about his RAF service whilst turning out his papers after he died in 2013.*

*I'm not sure I entirely agree with Barry's assertion that 'Remembrance Day is being allowed to fade into insignificance.' My experience as a parish priest from 2005-2019 is the opposite. Each year I would arrange three church Remembrance Day services plus an outdoor commemoration at Witnesham War Memorial in the village. The numbers attending all of these events increased year on year and it was a particular joy to have the youngsters of the large Beaver, Cub and Scout Troop at Westerfield.*

*It is a sadness to me that people have been asked not to attend in person this year. I am allowed to go to Witnesham today (as chaplain to the local RBL Branch) to continue the tradition - I also know people will be watching from a distance. We must never forget the result of conflicts past AND present.*



# Photographic Memories of a 'Strawberry Supper'

This fortnight's archive photographs are from a Strawberry Supper evening at Station Farm Copdock in 2010. The 'traditional' supper was held in a former stock house on Zena and Mike Steward's farm.

It was always preceded by a walk, clay-pigeon shoot, tennis or simply fellowship. In 2010, the event co-incided with a visit from our friends from Ipswich Mass as you will see.





## Virtual Visit from Bad Salzuflen

We were delighted to have a 'visit' from Mauritz and Woda representing our link club in Germany at our Rotary Zoom meeting 27<sup>th</sup> October. Mauritz sent three pictures.

At the top we can see a poster about World Polio Day (Weltpoliotag), the second shows a very large tub of crocus corms ready for distribution and in the third, club members are very busy packing up food parcels.



## The Stranger on the Train



Bröckedde is located in the heart of Germany - where the Rhine and Danube flow into the beautiful Bröckeddeese. This is where RC Bröckedde meets in the Bröckedder Hof - every Wednesday at 1 pm in the Salon Hindenburg.

As President Pröpke boarded the Intercity Express for Düsseldorf, he was pleased to find a compartment with a free window seat and a fellow passenger opposite wearing the Rotary pin. The third passenger in the compartment quietly concentrated on his newspaper. Pröpke's fellow Rotarian turned out to be Friend Dottergrün, President of RC Oberholzklaus and inevitably, conversation turned to their shared experiences of being a Rotary President.

Dottergrün sighed, "I run a factory with five thousand members of staff without any problems, but my 70 club members seem to manage me.

"Tell me about it, dear Dottergrün, it's like herding cats," Pröpke replied.

"Mine are sometimes quite difficult", moaned Dottergrün.

"No one reads my mails," groaned Pröpke.

"And they never listen," countered Dottergrün,

"You have to tell them everything three times," said Pröpke.

"And then they still don't do it," replied Dottergrün.

"Some are just never there," Pröpke pointed out.

"And others are really unappreciative," Dottergrün remarked sadly.

"They're always using smartphones during presentations," grumbled Pröpke.

"Presentations, don't start! I once invited a Nobel Prize winner and only eight attended," complained Dottergrün.

"Let me guess, the Champions League was playing that evening?", asked Pröpke.

Dottergrün nodded and silence fell on the compartment. The express thundered on through the forests of Ostwestfalen-Lippe, coming to a stop in Bielefeld, where the stranger politely took his leave.

At home his wife greeted him, "How was the meeting in Hanover?" she asked. "Times are so difficult at the moment", her tired husband replied, "but I'm not the only one. There were two guys on the train with me that seem to have it even worse"

"From which company?"

"Well, I didn't quite gather exactly what they do. Some kind of association I think, but with a very special clientele."

*Alexander Hoffmann - 1<sup>st</sup> November 2020*

## Forward Programme of Meetings

- Tuesday 24th Nov 6.30pm      Zoom Club Meeting - Guest Speaker: Chris Buxton  
*Duty Rotarians: Janet Dillaway (VoT), Ewan Dodds (notes)*
- Tuesday 8th Dec 6.30pm      Zoom Club Meeting - Guest Speakers: Ewan Dodds and Bill  
Izzard (Bill's talk is called "Can you work round the chicken  
please? How I went from dishing the dirt to digging the dirt -  
tabloids to turf")  
*Duty Rotarians: Jack Earwaker (VoT), Nigel Farthing (notes)*
- Tuesday 22 Dec 6.30pm      Zoom Christmas Meeting - Speaker/Quiz TBA  
*Duty Rotarians: Karen Finch (VoT), Steve Flory (notes)*

If you are not able to fulfil the duty allocated as Vote-of-Thanks or Note-taker, please arrange your own swaps and notify the Hon Sec and Newsletter Editor.

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

## This space is for you!

*If you've anything to share let the Editor know.*

*The advantage of a digital newsletter is that it can be infinitely expanded to accommodate anything worthy of publication.*

*(Send to [alan.forsdike@gmail.com](mailto:alan.forsdike@gmail.com) and he will decide!)*