



Rotary Opens Opportunities

LOOKS EAST

The Newsletter of The Rotary Club of Ipswich East

Edition 01-2021 : 5th January 2021

CLUB OFFICERS—2020/21
President: David Chittick
Sen V. President: Jo Banthorpe
Jun V. President: Steve Runnacles
Secretary: Tony Baker
Asst Secretary: Bill Robinson
Treasurer: Neil Hewitt



January
John Goodship
Bill Pipe
Ray Walters
Andy Lewis
Dick Jeffery
Eva Alcerreca
Ian Lord

Club Zoom Business Meeting Tuesday 5th January starting at 7.30pm

Duty Rotarians: none required

Our very own Jack Earwaker took centre spot at our final Zoom meeting of the year regaling his memories of a once in a life time trip to the Middle East.

Jack joined the Air Training Corps in 1944. His squadron (188) was based at Copleston School. There were three others in Ipswich. 262 at Tower Ramparts, 768 at Northgate School and 1916 at Westbourne Schools.

Approximately 100 young recruits were put through their paces at Copleston in preparation for supporting our country. The ATC was strong in Ipswich with 250 on parade on Sundays plus a band.

Jack shared memories of his childhood love of planes. The war started when he was 9 and his passion of aircraft accelerated. Jack said that seeing the countryside from 2,000ft up in the air was amazing. He joked by saying there was no Sat-Nav in those days!

At RAF Chedburgh where Sitrling Bombers were based, just 2 weeks after recruiting, Jack had his first experience of flying.

In the ATC he had classes in map reading and aircraft recognition. The lads were encouraged to make models to get to know the planes better. Jack showed an example he made at the age of 16 (pictured right) of a Boeing Super Fortress and won him an award.

At a local American Airbase Jack had the thrill of going up in a B17 Flying Fortress for a couple of hours. His excitement was heightened when the pilot stood up and said, 'Take over buddy!' It was quite a thrill.

[In the second picture on the right, Corporal Jack is on the left being inspected by an Air Marshall. His brother Peter (2 years older) is holding the rifle. (Peter went on to be junior heavy-weight champion for the ATC for the whole of England).]



At the age of 18 Jack had to leave the ATC but before that he was offered a 'jolly'; a trip to the Middle East began at the meeting place of RAF Lyneham and he soon learnt his role was to be compared to the modern day air hostess! He looked after the passengers on board, ensuring their safety and comfort as best as he could, serving food and drink along the way.

The majority of the flight was cruising at 8,000ft but at times especially when travelling over the Alps they flew at 16,000ft which was incredibly cold with them all wearing gloves and wrapped in blankets. At 10,000ft they had to use oxygen masks which hung from the ceiling of the aircraft. His own role meant Jack had his own mobile oxygen unit attached to his body- a cumbersome metal tank!

The views were amazing, white snow on the landscape with a bright full sun. Then suddenly thud noises were heard and alarm bells came into Jack's head! But it wasn't anything more exciting than the accumulated ice breaking free from the propellers and hitting the fuselage!

They landed at RAF Luqa in Malta some 6.25 hours of flying later and some free time was to be had.

Whilst enjoying some hospitality Jack was chatting to a sailor who invited their party to inspect their submarine! Jack decided he preferred being above the water!

The next leg was a night flight to Cairo some 4.5 hours and onto RAF Habbaniya, with views of the desert and amazing terrain and rock formations forming an array of colours in the sunlight. Then all of a sudden it became misty and it emerged they were in a full sandstorm and had to be diverted to safety. A days delay and they finished their flight arriving in 40c heat in the shade.



Jack describes the flight as the opportunity of a lifetime and the icing on the cake or perhaps I should call it the chocolate, was having enough spare cash (£2.12s) to go to Valetta and purchase 48 bars of export only *Dairy Milk* chocolate, which made him incredibly popular with the family upon his return home!

The flight as amazing as it was, didn't tempt Jack to have a career in the Air Force although he always wonders what it would have been like in comparison to an architectural career!

Thanks Jack for sharing this memory with us. *Karen Finch*

The vote of thanks was given by President David. Editor Alan commented that his own late father William, although five years older, had known Jack in the ATC and added that they had a mutual friend in Derek Jarman. All three had been recruits at the Copleston School based squadron. Alan's father was called up into the RAF in 1944 and like Jack was a Flight Sergeant. Forsdike senior's work included flying over Germany and later disposing of unused bombs. He had a narrow escape that led to a successful crash landing and, along with the rest of the crew, was immediately sent back up again into the skies.

Jack didn't go into the RAF preferring to continue his articles in architecture but he did take the opportunities to fly in Concorde and Spitfire simulators.

Jack, in answering David's comment about bravery of people who joined the RAF, spoke about the casualty rate during the war. At the time of the Battle of Britain new aircrew arriving at a squadron were lucky to last a week. He told of a lad of 18 years old who was the oldest serving member of his squadron after just two weeks of flying. One of two were posted out but many never survived. A sobering thought.



Ipswich East Christmas Quiz

Quiz Master David Atkins confidently said, 'I think it's quite easy but when I tried this on members of the family yesterday one person did incredibly well, most didn't do very well. I expect you each to get the full 20 points.'

It was a stinker! The best score was 10 from John Button and Ray Walters who both had their best scores by educated guesses on the final round. (The President achieved 5, one better than your Editor!)



• Dates

1. Rocking around the Christmas tree (recorded by Brenda Lee when she was 13) was hit in the 60's, it was re rerecorded by Kim Wilde and Mel Smith and was a hit again in which year?1987
2. In which year was the only English coronation to have occurred on Christmas day?1066
3. What was banned from Christmas in 1647 by the English parliament?Singing of carols / festive services etc
4. Jinglebells (originally a thanksgiving song called one horse sleigh) became the first song sung in space and broadcast to earth in which year?1965 from Gemini 6
5. The Stone of Scone was stolen from Westminster Abbey on Christmas day in which year?1950 by 4 Scottish students who broke it when removing it, its now repaired and in Edinburgh castle.

• Food, drink and gifts

1. Marzipan (a Christmas favorite) is made from suger and the flour/ meal of which nut?Almond
2. If you were to have to supply all the gifts in the song "12 days of Christmas", how many would you need to supply?364
3. In Hungary, traditionally no turkey for Christmas dinner, what is preferred?Carp as a soup or fried
4. What is the name of the skin that hangs from a turkey's neck?The Wattle
5. Which country invented eggnog?Britain, it was created when eggs were added to Posset (a remedial spiced,wine, milk drink)

• Literary- film - music

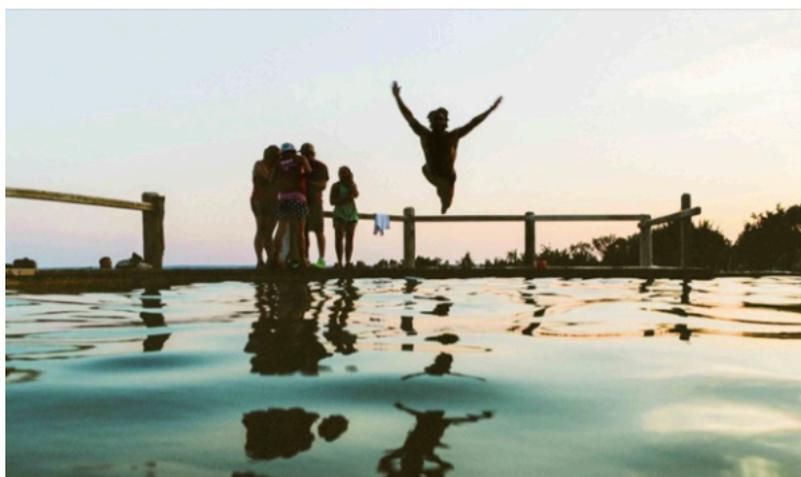
1. In the novel "A Christmas Carol" does Scrooge ultimately have Christmas dinner was it a) With the Cratchits or b) With his nephews family or c) With children at the orphanage? ...**B**
2. Which is the first animal to be mentioned in the poem "T'was the Night Before Christmas"?
....**A Mouse**
3. Who is put on trial in the film "Miracle on 34th Street"? ...**Santa Claus**
4. In the film "Elf", what is considered the first rule of The Code of Elves? ...**To treat every day like its Christmas**
5. In what movie did Bing Crosby's best-selling single "White Christmas" first appear? ...**Holiday Inn**

• Christmas Trivia and Numbers

1. What was the UK Christmas 2019 No1 single (BBC)? **"I love sausage rolls", a followup to the 2018 Christmas hit "We built this city on sausage rolls"**.
2. "Die Hard" a film released in 1988 is set on Christmas Eve and grossed worldwide \$141m, the follow up "Die Hard 2" (also set on Christmas eve) grossed how much more or less 2 years later? ... **\$240m, plus \$100m**
3. All I want for Christmas is you - Maria Carey was first released in the UK in which year? ...**1994**
4. Between 1981 and 2010 what was the December average lowest daily temperature in Ipswich, UK in centigrade?**2c, High being 7c**
5. What was Amazons world wide turnover in USD for its FY 2019?, **\$281bn, with Google \$161bn, Boeing \$86bn**



Apologies to Inner Wheel - in the final edition of this newsletter for 2020 I omitted to publish this photograph of the gifts made or donated by members of Ipswich East Inner Wheel which were given to the Salvation Army Hostel.



Catherine Forsdike is swimming the channel 'virtually'.

Fortunately, she has a pool at home and is clocking up the kilometres. At the time of writing she is 9km away from her target of 36km and 'still no jellyfish!'

Catherine is raising money for "4YP"

(The exact sum raise so far is around £250

Sponsorship is coming in through 'Just Giving' and in cash donations direct to Catherine (thank you those who have) and to IW Ipswich East Treasurer Jenny Clements.



Catherine Forsdike

Catherine's Swimming the channel

Swimming back from France but this time sponsored for 4YP because It is our Inner Wheel clubs chosen charity



4YP

We raise funds for suffolk young people to provide well being services for 12 - 15y

Charity Registration No. 1084286

Donate with **JustGiving**

If you would like to support 4YP by sponsoring Catherine, you can do so by going to the Just Giving website (justgiving.com) and search for "Catherine's Swimming the Channel"

In this which is the final in his series of reminiscences, Tony Baker relates as difficult story - a tragedy that had a long-term impact on his own well-being.

The Mortuary

The challenge of working in an emergency service is that planned events and actions can change instantly according to the next piece of information that becomes available.

I walked into to my office in Aylesbury on the stroke of 2pm on Friday 24 August 1990. Normality was returning to the Brigade after the petrol tanker crash that had occurred in Aylesbury on Tuesday of that week. *(Related in edition 28 of 'Looks East')*.

I had intended to write a report for the Fire Authority. The phone rang. A fire engine had crashed into a heavy goods vehicle and firemen were seriously injured. I walked across the station yard to Fire Control. As I entered the room a secure message was coming in from the Police. The crash was serious. One fireman was dead and another looked close to death. The rest of the crew were badly injured. The Chief was still away. The chief was always away when a major incident occurred.

The fire station, in the south of the county, was day-manned. Instead of having 28 firemen working on a 24 hour shift system, the station was crewed by 12 firemen who worked on the station during the day then responded back to the station at night from their homes. They lived in fire brigade houses located at the back of the station. My immediate and instinctive thought was that I had to get to the station to speak to wives and families before the press arrived on doorsteps or the local radio reported the crash.

I arranged to be driven by a colleague who knew the patch, some twenty miles from Aylesbury, like the back of his hand. We were accompanied by our occupational health nurse who was employed by the Brigade. I told my colleague that I wanted to be driven to the scene of the crash. I planned what to do as we drove southwards. By car telephone, I gave instructions that I was to be met at the fire station by an officer who was to have precise details of the crew members on the fire engine, together with their addresses and full details of their families. We travelled on lights and bells and made good progress to the crash site.

I was met by the Operations Commander. He gave me a full briefing. I told him that I wanted to see the crew. I recognised the dead fireman. I had interviewed him twice for jobs at the beginning of the year. I had appointed him and brought him into the Brigade on transfer from another brigade. I knew his wife. I had had a long conversation with her and her husband when he had been unsuccessful in his first application for a similar position. On that first occasion I had told him that I would be pleased to receive a further application from him should any subsequent position occur. The driver was being treated by paramedics before being transported by ambulance to hospital. He looked to be in a really bad way. The other two crew members were both badly injured. We set off to the fire station.

On arrival at the station I was met by an officer who briefed me. No unusual faces had been seen on the station. I knocked on the door of the home of the dead fireman. His wife knew instantly that something untoward had happened. The Deputy Chief Fire Officer was standing on her doorstep in full uniform with an unknown woman. Her husband had been at home during his lunch break when the fire bell had rung in her home. She knew that her husband had turned out on lights and bells on the fire engine. I requested to enter the house. We went into the lounge and I asked her to sit down and I explained as gently as I could that the fire engine had been involved in a serious crash and that her husband had been killed. Her immediate response was that there was a mistake and that her husband was not dead. Her husband was injured and another fireman had been killed. Again I explained gently that I had been to the crash scene and that I was certain of my facts.

Without that attendance at the crash scene, there would have been no certainty and no authority to my statements. We exchanged some more words and then I asked to be excused as I needed to contact other wives on the station. She understood immediately and I suggested that the brigade nurse should stop with her until other people could join her.



Outside my officer was waiting for me. We went to the driver's home and I spoke with his wife and made arrangements for her to be taken to the hospital. The other two wives were both at work. My driver knew exactly where to go. We sped off to a local florist's shop where I spoke with the fireman's wife. She had her own transport and said that she would go straight to the hospital. The fourth wife was a dental nurse and we pulled up at the surgery just as she was coming out of the front door. She had heard the news by telephone and she said that she too would make her own way to the hospital. My first objective had been achieved and I decided to make my way to the hospital.

On arrival at the hospital I was told that the dead fireman had been taken to the mortuary, the driver was in intensive care and the other two firemen were being treated for serious injuries. I spoke with the wives of the injured firemen and then set off back to the fire station and to the home of the dead fireman.

The man's wife was very composed. We spoke for some time and then she asked me to return to the hospital to pay respects to her husband on behalf of the Brigade. We spoke for some more and then I returned to the hospital. It was an unusual request but it was understood and was acceded to. I was taken to the mortuary and the fireman's body was pulled out from a cabinet. The sheet was pulled back, I stood to attention and saluted my colleague. He looked quite serene. He had been washed and his hair had been combed. There was a nasty injury to his head. I felt a sense of underlying responsibility and deep sorrow. I travelled home very sombrely to start the succession of phone calls and report writing.

Some days later I went with another fire officer to visit the driver in the intensive care unit of the hospital. He was in an induced deep coma. Although he had not been expected to live, he was a really tough old boy and he was holding his own. We were advised by the nurses to sit by him and to have a natural conversation and that some ideas might register in the patient's brain. We chatted about anything and everything for about an hour.

I received a request to read the eulogy at the dead fireman's funeral which was to be held near his family's home far from Buckinghamshire. I read the eulogy before attending another church for the burial. I remember saying that I had seen for myself that he was the archetypal fireman who did his job well, then always looked around to see where else he could assist, help and make a contribution.

A few days later I received a phone call. The fire engine driver had recovered consciousness. He was intensely proud and strong and was still unaware that his colleague had been killed in the crash. Nobody at his station, nor his officers, felt able to tell him that a fireman had died. Would I do it? The driver had been moved from intensive care to his next stage of care in his recovery. I went on my own and we talked about what he remembered of the crash and of some memories during the period in a coma. He told me that he had a memory of playing golf in China. I had spoken about both golf and China during my previous visit. We talked for about an hour and then he said that he was relieved that all the other members of the fire engine's crew had all made recoveries. I reached over and held his hand and explained about the fireman's death. He grasped my hand in a vice like grip. He went white and tears welled up in his eyes, he gripped harder, held on, then cried and relaxed backwards.

Some weeks later the Chief called me into his office. He had a task for me. I was to attend the County Court to evict the dead fireman's wife from her home. She was still living in the fire brigade house at the back of the fire station. The house was required for the replacement fireman. The brigade was required to go through the formal process of eviction. In that way, the local authority was legally required to rehouse her. It was a legal nicety but a very uncomfortable afternoon. The parties to the case sat apart and we exchanged empty glances across the courtroom.

I never knowingly suffered from undue stress regarding the things that I did and saw, but for a time I had a reoccurring dream where I would find myself lying on a mortuary slab and I would look up and see the dead fireman lying on the next slab with his head propped up and he would say, "Hello Mr Baker, are you still looking after my wife for me?"

Photographic Memories of a Strawberry Supper at Station Farm with our friends from Bad Salzuflen 2012





The Care Packages



Another episode from Alexander Hoffmann

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

At the most recent Club committee meeting, President Pröpke announced, “Bröckedde’s famous little theatre is almost bankrupt due to the Corona pandemic and we’ve got to do something.” Shortly after and with minimum discussion, the much loved local theatre earned unanimous support with a decision to request a €100 donation from each member.

An email was sent around the Club, making the request and confirming that Treasurer Knödler would debit members’ accounts shortly. “This will show some real solidarity with the theatre’s actors”, said a happy President Pröpke, “I know times are hard but I think we can all afford €100”. The rather more cynical treasurer replied a little more warily, “Let’s just wait and see, I know only too well that we have a few Scrooges amongst us”.

Seventy-seven members raised absolutely no objection, however three others most certainly did. Friend Bleichkraut-Donnerhöhe sent a five page protest over unconstitutional requisitioning and claimed he was also on the edge of bankruptcy. Friend Dübelzahn threatened court action and Friend Saftschnitte, the third skinflint, sent a photo entitled “Our Sunday lunch”, showing his family sharing a single tin of baked beans with four spoons.

Good President Pröpke was most concerned, “Are times really so hard for some of our members?” he asked Treasurer Knödler. “Hardly”, answered the ever sceptical but better informed treasurer, “Bleichkraut-Donnerhöhe has just ordered another Bentley, at the moment Dübelzahn is having his third home in London refurbished and Saftschnitte is sitting on a mighty portfolio of Apple shares. The wolf is at none of their well-padded, designer doors”.

“Well, what do we do?” responded a still worried Pröpke.

“Just leave it to me”, replied Knödler, which didn’t actually make the President feel any less worried.

Treasurer Knödler duly drafted another email, headed “Three Friends fallen on Hard Times” asking other club members to make up care packages for them, “Coffee, flour, sugar, ready-made meals, tins of sardines, perhaps some warm socks”.

An alarmed President Pröpke read the draft a couple of days later and asked, “You haven’t actually sent this out, have you?”

“Only to our three Scrooges”, replied the cunning treasurer.

“And?”

“Dübelzahn and Saftschnitte made immediate bank transfers. Bleichkraut-Donnerhöhe drove over this morning in his new Bentley and paid in cash”.

Forward Programme of Meetings

Tuesday 19th January 6.30pm

Zoom Club Meeting: Deb Johnson (of *Lighthouse Women's Aid*)
"Domestic Abuse - The Hidden Pandemic"

Duty Rotarians: John Goodship (VoT), Allan Gosling (notes)

Tuesday 2nd February 6.30pm Zoom Club Meeting: Norman Lloyd, "A Disc Jockey's Lament"

Norman Lloyd tells the story of becoming a radio presenter, the radio stations he worked on and what the future of local radio will look like in his opinion. Norman shares some of the highs and lows of over 30 years working in commercial radio and the BBC. And the \$64,000 question, how did he end with a multi-coloured suit?

Duty Rotarians: Norman Haines (VoT), Liz Harsant (notes)

Tuesday 16th February

Zoom Club Meeting: Richard Hems "Long in the Tooth"

Duty Rotarians: David Knights (VoT), Andy Lewis (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.

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 and he will decide!)