



district 1150

Bruin



The Brecon Rotary Club Newsletter

March 2008

President – John Hopkins
Vice President – Maurice Parry

Special Meeting – Monday 10th March at 6pm.

You should by now all have received a letter from our Secretary advising you of a Special Meeting to discuss various aspects of the way Brecon Rotary Club is run. The meeting will take place on Monday 10th March at the George starting at **6 pm.** (Please note the earlier start time). The 10 pin bowling match that was originally scheduled for that evening has been postponed (again!) at the request of Crickhowell Rotary Club as they have a number of other functions during that week and the opportunity has therefore been taken to substitute this special meeting. The

meeting has come about as a result of disquiet recently expressed by some members about possible changes to the way we operate such as changing the frequency of meetings and concerns about communications within the club and the recruitment and retention of new members. All of these issues, and more, have been included on the agenda so please make a point of attending as this is your opportunity to make your views known to the Club Council members. There will be no dinner that evening but sandwiches will be available.

Club Visitors

Our dinner meeting on 25th February was attended by two ladies. Kathryn Roberts is the owner of the Gate Gallery in Brecon and, besides being a fluent Welsh speaker, is also a glass blower. She came as a guest of Andrew Wakley and she has volunteered to come along to a future meeting of the Club as a guest speaker and tell us all about glass blowing. Our other female guest was

Ingrid Gallagher who has already addressed the Club in her capacity as head teacher of Brecon High School and was attending as a prospective member of Brecon Rotary Club.

Young Musician 2008

The first (club based) round of this year's competition took place at Gwernyfed High School on Thursday 28th February. There were 13 entrants in two categories. Winner of the juniors section was 14 year old Christopher Langworthy from Brecon High School who played two pieces on the piano including one which he had composed himself. The seniors group competition was won by Steffan Raw-Rees of Christ College who played three pieces on the alto saxophone including one piece by Handel (No not that one!). A detailed and well considered appraisal of each performance was given by adjudicator Tim Cronin. The event was organised with full attention to detail by Youth Activities Chairman, Clive Lillywhite. Steffan Raw-Rees will now go on to represent our club at the Zone finals on 14th March.



**Bear Facts
No 9**

Did you know that the RIBI magazine *Rotary Today* has a circulation of over 62,000?



Today's Army

Our guest speaker on 25th February was Brigadier Libbey who is the senior army officer in Wales in charge of HQ 160 Wales Brigade based at Brecon Barracks. This is his second tour of duty in Brecon. He had formerly served as Deputy Chief of Staff at the Barracks in the 1990s. Brigadier Libbey told us that his was not a typical career pattern for an army officer. He had been brought up on a council estate and had been educated at a comprehensive school. He had even worked for a year as a builder's labourer during what would now be called his 'gap year'. When he joined the army in 1980 there were 160,000 troops in uniform, half of them stationed

in Germany, and the main objective was very clear - to deter the forces of the Warsaw Pact. Today the objectives are more diffuse and there are only about 100,000 soldiers available to meet them. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the rise of international terrorism have changed everything and the army has struggled to adapt. There are still 15,000 troops in Germany, for instance, for whom there is as yet no accommodation back home. The change of direction and the need to re-equip with more appropriate weaponry and kit has put huge strains on the system. As Britain's most senior army officer put it recently - 'we are coping, but only just'. Radical

new ways of doing things are being tried out, more private land is being used for training, procurement procedures have changed, and there is greater use of contractors. Brigadier Libbey was refreshingly honest about the myriad problems the army is facing and willingly answered questions on such controversial issues as class distinction in the army, the demise of dedicated military hospitals and the situation in Iraq, amongst others. He was thanked for his address by our newest club member, and fellow army officer, Derek Adams.

Clive in India

Clive Lillywhite has recently completed the second half of a Rotary Friendship Exchange between our Rotary District and District 3060 in North India. Clive's wife Lesley had spent several years in Bombay as a child and they both felt the exchange programme presented a great opportunity to host Indian families here in Wales and return to their country the following year, and enjoy authentic Indian food! The first part of the exchange took place last June when Clive and Lesley had a great time hosting two charming Indian couples and showing them the local attractions such as Big Pit and St Fagans (mostly in the rain!). The return trip was due to commence in January of this

year but shortly before departing the group leader's wife was taken ill and the delegation had to leave without them. Lesley's necessarily somewhat abbreviated account (due to space considerations) of the eventful trip taken by a leaderless group of seven Rotarians and spouses to the Sub Continent will feature in the next few issues of Bruin. Thank you, Lesley, in advance for your articles which we look forward to reading.



Bottle Rota

3rd March – Terry Dewan
10th March – Richard Doylend
17th March – Anthony Edwards
24th March – No Rotary
31st March – Gareth Griffiths
7th April – Howard Hoare
14th April – John Hopkins
21st April – Peter Jenkins
28th April – Cliff Jones
5th May – Gerald Jones

Bruin Editor – Richard Doylend

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