



Meriden Rotary Club

Newsletter

January 2012



Club news and events

Santa Sleigh

A report by Bob Hawkes on the results of the Santa Sleigh collections.

Santa at Blooms and Santa Sleigh Collections

Both parts of our Santa programme were successful this year in spite of the continuing difficult climate.

Santa @ Blooms

Collections were held on the three December weekends preceding the Christmas weekend resulting in the total collected to be £1,245.10. The garden centre management team have been advised of the sum collected.

Breakfast and Tea with Santa @ Blooms

Following a last minute request the Club agreed to make the commitment to provide Santa for these sessions and also for the initial arrival of Santa at Blooms. The agreed fees have been paid, thereby adding £455 to the sum raised by collection. The garden centre management were very appreciative of our co-operation; very pleased with the outcome which elevated the centre from near the bottom of the group Santa league table to near the top of that table. All things being the same, our participation would be welcomed next year.

Santa Sleigh Tour and Collections

In the main, the weather was better than in 2010, residents continued to be generous and the children were delighted and in certain cases overawed. The outcome of the collections on each of the nights brought in a grand total of £1,731.55.

After deducting the cost of additional decorative seasonal lights for the sleigh £97.75 from these collections totalling £3,431.65, the very commendable sum of £3,333.90 has been raised for Emmaus, the President's chosen charity. An initial cheque for £1,500 (representing the then cleared funds) was presented to a representative of Emmaus at the Club Christmas Party on 20 December 2010.

Many grateful thanks to everyone who participated in anyway, be they Rotarians, members of the Rotary family or willing friends of the Rotary Club of Meriden. To illustrate how much the Santa Sleigh is appreciated by the residents, here is a copy of one of the emails we received as a thank-you:

Hello

Just wanted to say a huge thank you to Meriden Rotary Club for the Santa visit tonight. Our Triplets were spellbound...speechless for once..and in their 3 whole years nothing has been quite as amazing as seeing their little faces light up when Santa appeared tonight. The Elves we're lovely and Santa was outstanding, we owe him a few Sherries if he's ever passing this way again! He made three little girls very happy tonight.

John Wilson took some pictures of the Santa @ Blooms and our Webmaster has put these into a slide show on our website. Anyone wanting to receive a copy of one of these pictures, please follow the instructions on the website.

Club Diary

JANUARY

3rd – **No meeting**

10th – Council and Committees
(C. Swindells & G. Arthur)

17th – Steve Smith Job Talk
(R. Ball & G. Bakker)

24th – Sue Robertson : Animal
Rescue
(P Warra & J. Baker)

31st - Munchi Choksey:
Neurosurgery
(D. Kulkarni & B Ellender)

FEBRUARY

7th - Council & Committees
(S Allcock & G Faulkner)

14th - Jim Sleight Rotary
Membership
(A Hill & B. Windridge)

**18th - Senior Citizens' Party at
Fentham Hall**

21st - Dr. Kumar Eye Surgery
(R Swindells and R Hawkes)

28th - John Wilson Christmas Panto
and Old Folk's Party
(P Pardoe & J Bennett)

(Stewards in blue)

*Please mail or email items for the next
newsletter as soon as possible!*

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Foundation committee

Warwick Kendrick

Reminders about the Foundation Committee's plans for 2012.

Notes for your new 2012 diary:

April (date to be confirmed) - Quiz evening or Horse Race night

May 8 Curry evening

Update on Santa Fun Run

The International and Foundation Committee's are working together on the idea of a Meriden Santa Fun Run in late November/early December 2012. Tony Hill has identified several routes in Meriden, which could be used for a Fun Run.

Sue and I attended the Lutterworth Rotary Club Santa Fun Run on Sunday 27 November, which had just under 1000 Santa runners, walkers, babies in push chairs and dogs (Yes, even the dogs were dressed in Santa coats and hats!). I was able to talk to their Club Secretary about some of the costs involved and the support both locally and from around the County. 40% of Santa's were from Lutterworth while

60% were from around Leicestershire. In 2010 Lutterworth Club raised £17,000.

It was reported in the Daily Express on 12 December 2011 "200 hundred runners of all ages hit the road in Nuneaton in a bid to beat the £4000-plus raised for charity in 2010. Santa would be proud... an army of red suited and bearded runners took to the streets, all in a good cause."

"The crimson masses hit cities including London, New York and San Francisco."

The idea of a Santa Fun Run seems to be catching on both locally and nationally.

The next stage is to prepare a capacity and resource plan, financial plan and of course a suitable route.

A Meriden Santa Fun Run could provide a spectacle which will attract media attention for Meriden Rotary Club, it may encourage new membership and of course raise money for charity.

Youth Opportunities committee

Geoff Arthur

At our December meeting we decided we needed some more information on the best ways to support Solihull and Coventry Young Carers before making a decision.

We received an indirect request from a local member of Afasic England, which is a charity that helps young people with speech and language impairments, to help in selling Mouse Mats decorated with information detailing how to get computers to print accents used in many foreign languages. Samples have been passed on to people who may be interested. We felt this was a very worthy charity that helped some local youngsters and so it was agreed to send the charity a donation of £200. Anyone who might find the Mouse Mat useful can contact Bob Hawkes who will be looking for £3 for each mat.

We also considered a request from Woodlands School in Coleshill, which is a school that caters for children with moderate or severe learning difficulties. Their mini-buses are a vital part of their school equipment and they both need replacing in the near future. We have wanted to help the school previously but we have not been in a position in which we could. It was decided to send £200 to help their mini-bus fund.

Subject to final arrangements we hope to participate in the Rotary Young Musician Competition this year. It will be a social evening, with refreshments on 27th or 28th January 2012. Note the date, more details will follow.

A Christmas reflection

Roger Ball

It's a gift.

The measure of how old we are becoming, is clearly shown by the type of gifts we receive at Christmas. I am unmoved by inappropriate sweaters and ties but when one receives an item which is solely for the geriatric, then the measure of our maturity by others, begins to dawn.

This Christmas I received, gift wrapped, a mechanism for squeezing tea bags, made in Great Britain, for surely no

other race in the world would commit a production line to such an item? There is an instruction leaflet, presumably for those who experience severe challenges when asked to make a cup of tea. Somewhere, a raffle awaits.

ANSWERS: 1. MOSCOW ON THE HUDSON; 2. SOPHIA; 3. BRUSSELS SPROUTS; 4. DION DUBLIN; 5. IRVING BERLIN; 6. PARIS; 7. TREATY OF ROME; 8. NEW AMSTERDAM; 9. ATHENA; 10. CHICKEN KIEV; Connection: European Capitals

R I B I news

RIBI News

2012 International Golf Tournament

Entries are now being accepted for the Rotary Club of St Andrews International Golf Tournament which will run from Sunday 10th to Thursday 14th June 2012.

We can confirm that the Old Course will feature again for all who enter the main competition. The week includes an extensive programme of activities and fellowship both on and off the course for Rotarians and their partners.

For details contact : Web site - Rotary Club of St Andrews, e-mail standrewsrotarygolf@msn.com or Convener, Bill Whyte (+44 1334 476463)

Changes in the management structure of RIBI

Management organisational changes are being proposed for RIBI, as the organisation adapts and prepares itself for the needs, demands and aspirations of the second decade of the 21st century.

These proposals, which have been carefully considered and agreed by your General Council, aim to streamline RIBI so

that it can rise to the challenges ahead. By-law changes will be considered and voted upon at the business meeting at the 2012 Annual Conference in Bournemouth.

Your thoughts and views are requested in order to ensure that the proposed changes really do help to guarantee a bright and prosperous future for RIBI, its clubs and all its members.

Please [click](#) here for much more information and the background to how these proposed changes have come about.

Rotary International and the Olympic games

Rotarians in Great Britain and Ireland welcome Rotarians from around the world to the London 2012 Games! The Home Hosting programme gives Rotarians visiting the UK for the London 2012 Games the opportunity to stay with Rotarians throughout Great Britain enabling them to be at Games venues in approximately one and a half hours. If you are interested in hosting or being hosted, visit the website "[Rotary UK Host 2012](http://www.rotaryukhost2012.co.uk/)" at the address <http://www.rotaryukhost2012.co.uk/>

Christmas Party and Pantomime

Gert Bakker

On 20th December we held our Christmas party at the Manor Hotel. In attendance were about 90+ Rotarians, partners and family members. As is a tradition since Queen Victoria apparently, the meal was turkey with seasonal vegetables, followed by Christmas pudding.

To further the suffering, a group of Meriden Rotarians pretended to have become thespians for the night in order to perform this year's panto based very loosely on the award winning film "The King's Speech". Whilst changing into their "costumes", Phil Pardoe entertained the crowd with one of his monologues. It must have pacified the crowd because nobody walked out when the panto started. Or were they asleep?

Then it was time to perform the Panto. It is perhaps too much to explain what happened, sufficient to say that it was written by Roger Ball, featured the cottage still in dire need of council repairs, a rubber chicken, John Wilson as the Dame and Neville in his nightdress on a tiny motorbike. The rest of the cast was filled in by a fairy, Ebay.com salesman, policeman, medic, Willy the son and a good looking and scantily dressed model played by Charles Perry. *(No, he/she is not handing out signed photographs, but for a small bribe I can provide the evidence.)* Charlotte Perry brought some light relief in between the acts (yes, there were acts) by playing Christmas music on the clarinet.

It has to be said that the whole performance was entirely as expected and was much appreciated by the gathering. The applause was overwhelming and the entire cast is now threatening to do another one next year. Oh dear!

Here are a few pictures to show you how (un)lucky you are that you missed it.



Santa Sleigh pictures

Gert Bakker

The street collections with the Santa Sleigh were a great success this year. You will have seen the report on the front page of this newsletter.

Here are some pictures showing the Santa Sleigh and some of the many helpers that made it such a success this year.



Thanks to all who helped with preparing the Sleigh, collecting at Blooms, the street collectors and of course the people who so generously donated their money.



And finally - some fun

Burning questions:

- Why do banks charge a fee on insufficient funds when they know there is not enough?
- Why did Kamikaze pilots wear helmets?
- Why does someone believe you when you say there are four billion stars, but check when you say the paint is wet?
- Whose idea was it to put an "S" in the word "lisp"?
- What is the speed of darkness?
- Why is it that people say they "slept like a baby" when babies wake up every two hours?
- How is it that we put man on the moon before we worked out it would be a good idea to put wheels on luggage?

Connections Quiz.

The answers to these questions have a connection. What is it?

1. Which 1984 film starred Robin Williams as an Eastern Bloc concert musician who defects in Bloomingdales department store in New York City?
2. What is the Christian name of the Queen Consort of Spain?
3. How is the vegetable Brassica Oleracea (Gemifera Group) better known?
4. Which alliteratively-named footballer won the 1997-98 Premier League Golden Boot? He won 4 England caps and played for Norwich City (twice), Cambridge United, Manchester United, Coventry City, Millwall, Aston Villa, Leicester City and Celtic.
5. Which composer, born, with the given name of Israel, in Russia 1888, wrote 'God Bless America' and 'There's no business like Showbusiness'?
6. Which character was expected to marry Juliet in Shakespeare's Romeo & Juliet?
7. Which agreement, signed in March 1957, established the European Economic Community?
8. A small island in North Eastern America, whose name means 'land of many hills' in Senape language, was sold by the Senape indians to Dutch fur traders for 60 guilders in 1626. What name did the Dutch give to their surrounding settlement?
9. Who was the Greek goddess of war, justice, wisdom and many other areas?
10. Which popular poultry dish was believed to have been created at the Russian Merchants Club in the early 20th Century?

Answers on page 2

