



THE PURPLE GANG HITS TOWN

Why should a respected Whitchurch solicitor and a retired furniture store owner choose to dye their hair purple ...?

It's not only because David Ryder is the president of Whitchurch Rotary and Peter Williams is a longtime Rotarian. Neither is it simply because Thursday 24 October is World Polio Day.

But purple has become a symbolic colour for Rotary's worldwide campaign for a polio-free world. It represents the purple dye used to mark the fingers of children who have received the life-saving vaccine. The campaign began 40 years ago after polio had been paralysing or killing over half a million people every year. With match-funding support from the 'Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation' 2.5 billion children have now been immunised and the number of countries in which the condition is endemic has dropped from 125 to just three.

Eradication is closer than ever but the final push is still ahead. We just need to make people aware so they can help us cross the finish line and make polio only the second infectious disease, after smallpox, to be eradicated in humans."

So, David and Peter are attracting attention with purple hair – generously provided by Whitchurch hairdressing business 'HeadQuarters'. "If you see us around town we are happy to receive donations," said Peter. "And, if you don't, donations can be handed in at Hatchers Solicitors in Green End."

David and Peter are pictured with their HeadQuarters stylist Fiona Gordon.

IN THE RUNNING FOR CITIZEN AWARD

The man behind Whitchurch Rotary's prostate testing programme has been nominated for the town's 'Citizen of the Year' honour.

Dave Simcock, a past president of the club, launched the potentially life-saving screening tests a decade ago to give early warnings of prostate cancer. Since then, hundreds of men have been recommended to seek further medical advice which, it is estimated, could have saved dozens of lives. The PSA tests have become one of our most valued projects of the last decade and quite possibly Rotary's largest community health project in the UK.

Online voting is open now at <https://whitchurchtowncouncil.gov.uk/citizen-of-the-year>



BIASED RESULTS

Following hard on the heels of a social crown green bowling evening at Chester Road – when Walter Schafer and David Griggs emerged top from the mixed pairs of Rotary and Inner Wheel players – there was a serious trophy waiting to be won later in the month.

And win it we did! The club bowling team took all three of their games against Wellington in the District 1210 championships at Edgmond – making it our 10th win in 15 years.



50 YEARS OF SANTA VISITS

This year is the 50th anniversary of Santa's annual Christmas tour and Whitchurch Rotary is already planning this year's float journey around the town and surrounding areas.

It's becoming all the more challenging because of the need to cover a growing number of new housing estates at a time when we are already working to capacity – which means that the tour will need to change, this year.

Sadly we cannot call at Bettisfield and Bronnington, this time, but Santa will be appearing at a pre-Christmas event at the Hill Valley Hotel on 17th November and the switch-on of the Whitchurch lights on 30th November as well as being in town on the Saturday mornings of the 7th and 14th of December and at the Alport FC match on 21st December.

Pictured left - alongside a typical modern Santa tour - is a line-up of Rotarians at the very first such event way back in 1975.



UNDERGROUND, OVERGROUND WOMBLING FREE

You can take the president out of environment ... but you can't take environment out of the president.

So there was no way that eco-activist David Ryder was going to let 'World Clean-up Day' pass by, in his presidential year, without doing something along the lines of a Rotary litterpick.

So it was that an environment-friendly band of Rotarians and Inner Wheelers (in teams named after prominent Womble characters) turned out, brandishing pickers and binbags, to scour the kerbs, pavements and hedge bottoms along arterial routes into Whitchurch.

All in search of errant litter, cans, bottles, crisp packets, fast food boxes and whatever their various levels of repetitive strain injury would allow them to haul back to the finishing point where their treasures were stacked into 13 sacks of rubbish.

But is that likely to be the end of it? **Oh, no!** David is already planning at least two more outings before his presidency ends at the end of June. "if you notice a bad area of litter appearing around the town please let me know – perhaps we can do something about it," he says



BUILDING A BRIDGE TO SOUTH AFRICA

Our club's 'International' team – John Holland and David Griggs – are in talks with Atlantis Rotary, in the Western Cape province of South Africa, about joining forces to form a strong collaborative relationship.

There have already been Zoom calls after the Atlantis president Danny Pietersen sent us an e-mail asking about the possibility of teaming up on joint service projects, exchange programs and a twin-club partnership in which we could share best practices, work together and learn from each other's experiences and cultures.



CLEAN WATER IN A CRISIS

Whitchurch Rotarians chat with volunteer workers on the Production line of Aquabox in Matlock, Derbyshire.

Local Rotarians founded the charity in 1992 to produce and distribute emergency humanitarian aid in response to natural and man-made crises around the world.

Their water filtration units, in particular, can convert up to half a million litres of polluted water into safe, clean water for drinking, cooking and washing.

