



CHANGE ... AS GOOD AS A REST?

Yes, it's that time of year again!

David Ryder is now a 'past president' and Brian Acty steps up to steer a route through the coming year.

Brian is a scouser at heart – no bones about that. He was born at Holyhead in North Wales, grew up in Bootle and, when he left the local grammar school, he trained as a quantity surveyor for a building and civil engineering construction company. Until, that is, he decided to change track and train as a minister. Several United Reformed ministries later – in Yorkshire, Newcastle upon Tyne, Southport, Wallasey and Mold in North Wales – he arrived in Sale, Manchester, where he retired in 2019. He moved to Whitchurch with his wife, Sue, to whom he was married for more than 50 years until her death last year.

Along the way Brian had joined Rotary, on the Wirral, and Whitchurch is his fourth club as well as his second term as a president.

His other interests include coarse fishing. And having just demoted a West Ham soccer fan we have now inherited an Everton supporter !!

During the next year Brian will be supported by Andy Danton as 1st Vice President and Peggy Mullock as 2nd Vice President.

After handing over the president's chain David Ryder will take on duties as Press and Public Image Officer. And four relatively new hands, will be taking on special responsibilities – Mike Wildi is the new chair of Environment while Victoria Sugden, John Nunnerley and Andy Hall will be guided by Chris Smith to take over the annual canal boat trips.



A NEW KIND OF MEET-INN

One of Brian's new plans will be to move all Whitchurch Rotary gatherings into a set Tuesday timetable. That includes monthly Council meetings which can then seamlessly blend into evening socials at the Wheatsheaf Hotel.

At that stage there would be a variable format with no meeting structure, no agenda, no time limit, no dress code. Have a meal if you wish - or not - your choice. Conversation can be about anything. And non-Rotary folk would be welcome too – including friends, family and supporters. "All purely social and purely friendship," says Brian.

A PROPER MINI BUS

It was the sheer novelty that caught imagination – and support – throughout the land when three Nantwich brothers travelled from Lands End to John-o-Groats, in a little bus. And we **mean** 'little'.

The three-feet high, eight-feet long 1948 Johnstones Midget Bus was once a Brighton fairground ride. But Will, Andrew, and James Emerton were using it to raise funds for three charities – Hope House, The Children's Society and The MPS Society.

We were more than happy to chip in with a contribution.



ROTARY GAINS EXTRA WEEKS

Brian Acty's first action of his year was one of the best things a president can do ... and one of the most enjoyable.

He inducted a new member.

Sharon Weeks is a newcomer to Whitchurch. She was born in London, lived most of her life there and in the south east, before moving here two years ago. For the past 30 years she has worked for the NHS in a Mental Health and Learning Disability Trust where she looks after records, information governance, data and oversees the Trust's electronic health records.

Sharon has two sons – one a plumber in Epsom and the other in Ripon with the army – and four grandchildren. She's a keen walker and crown green bowler.



HELPING HANDS HAVE STARTED RUNNING

The new 'Helping Hands' fund is up, running and now offering financial help to local people and projects in need of urgent funds.

It could be for a personal need, to help someone else or even to kickstart a small initiative that could make a real community difference in the town.

Typical uses could be to help cover the cost of a new school uniform ... to overcome a health problem ... to meet the cost of visiting someone in hospital if there is no access to a car ... or launching a small-scale local community project that promises lasting benefits.

"There obviously has to be conditions," says Community chair Andy Danton. "For instance, we can't give money to a profit-making venture or a large-scale project that requires long-term funding. We couldn't support something that might endanger health and wellbeing. And because Rotary is not a political or religious organisation, we couldn't support either of those areas. We're looking more at charitable or community projects or for personal need.

"Our aim is to move quickly, make fast decisions and then give the grant within three days while the need is at its greatest. There might be other ways of getting money but it often takes too long and damage is already done before it arrives. In that time a health emergency, a struggling project, or a personal crisis has taken its toll. We want 'Helping Hands' to be there, with rapid financial assistance, when it's most needed – not weeks later."

Application details, offering choices of online, email or paper forms, are now on the Whitchurch Rotary website - <https://whitchurchrotary.org.uk>



ROTARY HELPS TO MANGLE A YARN

Whitchurch Rotary is currently working with a community theatre group that has recently moved into town with plans for its first Christmas production.

Mangled Yarn Theatre, supported by Arts Council England, will be working with lonely and isolated people who can help create a brand-new theatre adaptation of 'A Christmas Carol' in December. What form it takes will be influenced and shaped by community stories and anecdotes.

Relocating into a new town is never an easy task for anyone – so we are helping Mangled Yarn to head in the right directions to achieve their goal.

- Christopher Smart (centre), co-founder of Mangled Yarn Theatre is pictured with Brian Acty and David Ryder.



"INCREDIBLE WORK"

His Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Shropshire Mrs Anna Turner JP called into a meeting the other week and took an opportunity to praise the "incredible work" that Rotary does in and around town. Coming from the King's representative in the county, that's praise indeed ... and gratefully received.

RUNNING A HOOP

Whitchurch Rotary's bowling prowess on the crown greens of Shropshire is well known. Historically we were once pretty high in cricket circles too. So, what next?

Well ... croquet?

Faced with the prospect of District fixture against Stoke we felt it was time to gird our loins, grab our mallets and learn the difference between a duffer tice and an Irish peel.

David Ryder, watched by Victoria Sugden and Brian Acty, seemed to be getting the hang of it ... until he began considering whether he could turn the mallet around for a more productive snooker shot.

Back to the baulk line, David.



QUIZ-MASTERS WANTED

Right ... no reference books, no encyclopaedias, no Internet, smartphones ... just raw, naked brain power.

Do you know ...

- The middle name of Cassius Clay?
- What year was the English Premier League founded?
- The other name for a blackberry?
- What planet was discovered in 1781 by William Herschel?
- What colour was Spock's blood?
- Which film had the largest gross takings in 2024?
- The longest running racecourse still in use in England?

If you know even two or three of those answers you could qualify to be in the winning team of next year's District Rotary Quiz.

Mike Nimmo, Peter Williams, Bob Thompson and David Ryder tried their best in the final, the other week, but after a nail-biting finish against Leek, the coveted title went to Wellington A.

THERE WILL BE NO CAR BOOT SALE IN JULY - BECAUSE OF THE ALDERFEST EVENT - SO THE NEXT ONE IS ON SUNDAY 3rd OF AUGUST

KNOW YOUR ROTARY

As part of a new internal project, we have just produced a handy, 12-page introduction to what Whitchurch Rotary is all about ... who we are ... what we do ... how we do it.

So, if you are among those who know a little about Rotary but would like to know more then drop us a line and we'll send you an online copy.

Find out why one new member recently said: *"The club's warmth, humour and camaraderie are some of its greatest strengths, and it's easy to see why people enjoy being part of it."*

THE RETURN OF THE FRON

Stand by for a treat.

The internationally-award winning Fron Male Voice Choir, from Froncysyllte near Llangollen, are interested in doing another Rotary fundraising concert in Whitchurch next year.

We're pretty sure that those who were in the audience when they last visited our town will be starting the ticket queue tomorrow!

Watch out for further news when we have it.

BONUS PAGE

IN WITH THE NEW

June is the end of the Rotary year. It's the time when the president steps down and the new team comes forward to weave a path through the next 12 months. So David Ryder hands his chain-of-office to Brian Acty ... Andy Danton and Peggy Mullock are inducted as vice presidents ... and some serious, as well as lighter-hearted, awards are handed to members for the voluntary service they give to Rotary's work in the Whitchurch community.



The president's chain now passes to Brian Acty.



Andy Danton is now in the wings to become president in 2026 ... and Peggy Mullock will follow in 2027.



David Ryder presents Steve Chisholm with a sapphire upgrade to his Paul Harris Fellowship - marking his work not only as treasurer but also his special responsibilities which include the 'Lifeline' emergency home alarms, the club website and the 'Tree of Light' Christmas remembrance feature.



Brian Acty presents David Ryder with a coveted Paul Harris Fellowship for an outstanding presidency. David joined Rotary 25 years ago, has previously served as secretary, is the club's 'environmental conscience' and his leadership has introduced new perspectives to many events and initiatives in the past year.



Graham King (left) was awarded the 'Davy Lamp' and David Pritchard Jones took home (again) the 'San Telmo plate' for their services to the club and the president over the past year.



Assistant Governor Jane Chaplin, who is responsible for a cluster of Rotary clubs in District 1210, listens to Brian Acty's first speech as Rotary president in Whitchurch.