



DAN IS OUR FIRST 'COMMUNITY CHAMPION'



Whitchurch Rotary has introduced a brand new community service award – and presented the first one to Dan Bailey for his work with the town's Fort Boxing Club.

The 'San Telmo Plate' has a special history for us. The decade following the Falklands War in 1982 strained many relationships between the UK and Argentina. But a group of visiting Rotarians from Buenos Aires were welcomed to the club by the then president Ken Taylor who forged a strong bond between Whitchurch and their club in the San Telmo district of Buenos Aires.

Rotarians in the two clubs exchanged many letters, for some time, and later we received a commemorative plate from them to mark Whitchurch Rotary's 50th anniversary in 1988. This is the plate that will now be awarded annually to the town's outstanding 'community champion'.

Dan Bailey is the first recipient ... and he was an easy choice.

Dan set up the Fort Boxing Club in Bronington in 2019. It quickly outgrew its premises and moved to a new home on the industrial estate in Waymills aiming to identify individual qualities, explore potential and enhance mental and physical qualities for young people in and around Whitchurch. The use to which he has put his own military background, knowledge, enthusiasm, discipline - and boxing training - goes far beyond health, fitness, sport and social benefits. It now helps build confidence, self esteem, purpose, focus and teamwork inside and outside the boxing ring.

"I am truly honoured - it's a great privilege," said Dan (pictured with president Brian Acty) after receiving the certificate and silver plate at our Christmas lunch.

JINGLE ALL THE WAY

Having broken the half century barrier last year, we went into the 51st year of our annual 'Santa Float Tour' with two major priorities. The biggest was for the 'Red Man' himself to meet and chat with as many Whitchurch children as he could. Rumour has it, they're his favourites!

And fortunately – thanks to everyone who acted as elf collectors, not to mention the generous people who answered the doorbell – the collection was another record breaking fundraiser.

The amount raised totalled around £9,400 – which will go into our charity account to help fund the contributions we make to community charities, causes and 'Helping Hands' donations in the coming year.



LET IT SNOW ... LET IT SNOW ... LET IT GROW



We were so pleased to have played a wee small part in Phil Tranter's storming bid for a place in the Guinness Book of Records.

Phil has worked hard this year to produce the world's largest decorative snowflake as part of his annual Christmas light display at Higher Heath to raise funds for the Midlands Air Ambulance service. The giant structure impressively measured around five metres across, using 34 metres of wood, 1,600 nails and featuring more than 6,500 lights.

Whitchurch Rotary president Brian Acty was on hand as an independent observer at the official measuring. And we arranged for local surveyor Melissa Hastie, of Validus Property Consultants in the Park View Business Centre at Combermere, to independently validate the size for the record book. If the new bid is accepted it will beat the existing record which is currently held in Japan.

THE MEDICAL MIND BEHIND OUR PROSTATE PROJECT



A 'thank you' charity gift, to the medical mind behind the team success of the prostate cancer screenings, has been forwarded to help a children's education project in Pakistan.

A few weeks after a record number of more than 1,000 men were tested, Dr Jamie Muir - already an honorary member of Whitchurch Rotary - was recognised for his support with a £500 donation to his nominated charity.

Dr. Muir, a trustee for BREAD Trust which offers practical support for the poorest of communities in emerging countries, passed on the money to be used towards the cost of building a school to help educate a young generation of children in Rawalpindi.

"Seeing over a thousand men come forward for PSA testing this November was a testament to what this community can achieve when we look out for one another," says Jamie who is preparing for a trip to Rawalpindi next month.

"While we celebrate here today, millions of children face a very different reality. In Pakistan, over 25 million children are out of school and girls are often the first to be left behind. This donation will go toward building a school in one of the poorest areas and provide a safe place to learn for children who currently have no hope of an education.

"In Whitchurch, we are working to give men a future through health screening; in Pakistan, BREAD Trust is working to give children a future through education."

- Jamie (centre) is pictured with Dave Simcock (right), who originated and organises the prostate screenings, and Rotary president Brian Acty.

YOUNGSTERS SHOW THE WAY



Young people never cease to amaze. And that's one of the reasons why we're always pleased when Whitchurch Junior and Infant schools invite us to join one of their litterpicking sessions.

The enthusiasm and social skills of these polite youngsters are a great testament to their teachers and parents. It's not always easy for children to engage with older people but they are quick to welcome us into their day with easy and friendly chat.

Their concentration on picking up even the smallest, most stubborn pieces of damp, trodden paper was often a model of determination. To their credit, the bags at the end showed a surprisingly large amount

of litter had been collected. And they were the first to agree that the satisfaction of helping to keep the streets clean would only be bettered by people learning not to drop litter in the first place.

SEEING OURSELVES AS OTHERS SEE US

Public image is a critical issue in Rotary. It influences our image in the community, how people see and relate to us and their readiness to become members and work with us. They will be the future generation of Rotarians to carry on our local and international programme of 'being there' for

people who need help. That's why three Whitchurch Rotarians attended a Public Image workshop, conducted by our District Governor, Cressida Dickens, which trained Rotarians in the skills of presenting the right impression, publicising what we do and raising our profile.

We are lucky to have a very supportive community which, as a result, has lifted us up to become one of the largest Rotary groups in the whole of our 'District' of 51 clubs. Others haven't been so lucky and many, throughout the country, have got smaller ... and eventually disappeared. So we can't sit back on our laurels. We rely on a few more 'new year resolutions' to join Rotary.



HAPPY
New
Rotary Year

Thank you for your support and interest in our work,
this year, and we hope to take that with us into 2026.

Rotary
Whitchurch

