

District 1150



June 2019

BRUIN

Brecon Rotary Update, Information & News



Club Assembly 10 June 2019



Wayne Morgan of the Bridgend Rotary Club, Assistant Governor for Area 7, praised our Club as “a force and a tour de force in your beautiful town” at the annual Club Assembly. He took the opportunity to induct the Club’s newest member, **Rob** Lancaster.



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Community

Looking back through my diary I am reminded that about a year ago I had a baptism of fire as Community Team Chair, with the Nicky Grist Rally upon me straight away. However, with the support of willing volunteers and excellent weather, we raised useful funds selling programmes to spectators.

Close on the heels of the Rally came a series of agricultural shows (Brecon, Llyswen & Boughrood and Sennybridge) where we erected our marquee to display the range of activities undertaken and good causes supported. In addition to sharing our marquee with a display on Y Gaer, arranged by **Roger**, whose badge making proved a big success, our new Wishing Well also drew much attention.

The annual institution of the Caledonian Market followed in November, ably organised by Anne and once again raising a highly commendable figure for future distribution. Later in November, we dusted off the marquee for another outing—Brecon With Bells On, where we repeated the winning formula used at the summer shows, but with some added fairy lights and Christmas decorations.

In December, Peter and Clive did an excellent job preparing a decorated tree for the Cathedral Christmas Tree Festival, which was closely followed by the Carol Concert also arranged by Peter.

Things have been quieter in 2019, but we will be finishing the year with the Know Your Blood Pressure day, in association with The Stroke Association and medical staff from Powys.

We have not received many requests for donations this year, but have paid out to two young dancers, Isobel Ross and Seren McAllister, to Alina O'Connor to arrange a community Christmas Day lunch at the Castle Hotel and to Brecon Athletics Club for their 3,4,5-mile road races. Some other requests have been redirected to apply to our Community Chest, as it was thought more appropriate.

Thank you very much to all members of the Community Team for your assistance and support throughout the year and also to all other Club members who have volunteered to help at the various events.

- Carol

Youth

A successful and entertaining Youth Celebration Event took place in September at the Castle Hotel. Representatives from a number of groups and organisations were in attendance including Red Kites, RYLA attendees, Credu (Powys Carers), Powys County Councils Youth Service, JKS Wales and Brecon Scouts, as well as a number of individuals who have been supported by our Club.

Over 100 people attended the Area Final of the Young Musician Competition held at Gwernyfed High School in January. Eight very talented competitors from across the area took part and two went on to compete at the District Final. Our Club has been praised at District level for the success of this event!!

This year we have three potential candidates for the RYLA scheme representing Credu (Powys Young Carers) and Huntingdon House.

A number of young individuals have been supported by our Club in 2018/2019: Isobel Ross for further ballet training, Seren McAllister for ballet training and Nathan Preece for participation in a karate championship.

Finally a big Thank You to the Youth Team and the wider members of the Club for their support during 2018/2019!

- Cath

Community Chest

During 2018/2019 two rounds of the Community Chest Scheme took place. These were held in the Autumn of 2018 and Spring 2019. Six applications have been supported so far and a further five will be reviewed on 5 June 2019. The review panels were made up of a number of willing volunteers, including Hayley, Owen, Neil, Cath, Nick, Pat, Roger, Carol, Mike Evans and Anne.

A budget of £2,500 was allocated per scheme and so far £2,650 has been allocated and applications to the sum of £2,415 are awaiting review. Over the two rounds a number of the organisations and projects were visited by Rotarians; some individuals attended our Club as

guest speakers. Grants were awarded to Llanfaes CP School, Brecon Jazz Music Trust, Watton Allotment Association, Brecon Phoenix Boxing Club, Llyswen & Boughrood Show, and The Brecon Hive CIC.

As Coordinator of the small grants scheme since its inception in the Spring of 2017, I would like to thank everyone for their support and hope that its success continues.

- Cath

Foundation and International

We supported Under The Mango Tree by paying for two teachers, one with the aid of a matching grant from District, and provided mosquito nets.

Shelter boxes were sent for victims of the tsunami in Indonesia and the cyclone in Mozambique, with a top up from the wishing well.

The Club supported Purple for Polio through the sale of crocus badges and the planting of crocus bulbs. The Castle Hotel was lit in purple light for one night.

Twinning with the Dundee Rotary Club in South Africa is still ongoing.

- Brian Ellams

Membership

Two new members joined, Beryl and Rob, who will bring youth to the Club. We have 31 active and six honorary members; two active members will become honorary members from July. A recruitment flyer was finally published; I would like to thank Lesley for her valuable professional assistance. Welfare matters have been quiet, with two visits made to Anthony Edwards and Anne Ingham. New members are the future of the Club, but we must exercise due diligence in recruitment.

- Mike Mellors

Speaker Secretary

This year the Club hosted nine after-dinner talks. For the latter half of 2018 we maintained the previous year's policy of inviting speakers who represented charities, reported on grants made by the Club and offered talks of general interest. Misha Pedersen of the Wye and Usk Foundation explained how a grant from the Club had been put to good use; John Gibbs, Chairman of the Brecknock Society and Museum Friends, reported on progress (or the lack of it) with Y Gaer; Louis Mahendra told us about the Lotus Fund; and Mary Adams of Rotary Southern Wales offered us advice on enhancing our public image. In 2019 we changed tack and were treated to scintillating talks by four of our members: Owen gave an account of his two-month visit to Lesotho; Brian Newman described his Himalayan trek illustrated by graphic slides; Jeff spoke on living with apartheid; and John Hopkins talked about the United Arab Emirates and his educational work there. In addition, we hosted an exposition by Alan Pitt of the work of Rotary Foundation.

- Jeff

BRUIN

Eleven monthly issues of BRUIN were circulated by email to Club members; Clive posted copies on the Club's website. BRUIN is produced for the members by the members, and aims to reflect the Club's striking spirit of congenial fellowship as well as its outstanding achievements in fund-raising and the distribution of funds to local and international communities. It featured autobiographical profiles of new members, narratives of overseas travel, reviews of presentations by guest speakers and notices of Club activities. I am grateful

to those who so willingly allowed me to lean on them for contributions, and in particular to **Andrew, Anne, Carol, Cath, Gareth, Glyn, Hayley, Peter, Roger** and the two **Brians**, Birtles and Newman, in other words, happily, about a third of the Club membership.

- Jeff



Community Chest

Applications to the second round of the scheme this year closed on 11 May 2019. In total 5 applications were received and reviewed at a meeting held at the Castle Hotel on Wednesday 5 June. The panel consisted of Cath, Owen and Anne.

There was an initial budget allocated to the scheme of £2,500. As an outcome of the review panel, it was agreed to support the following 2 applications:

Brecon Festival Ballet Ltd: The £500 awarded will contribute to the overall costs of five performances of *The Nutcracker*, 20–22 December 2019. This will involve paying for professional ballet dancers (lead roles) and professional musicians (Welsh Chamber Orchestra), the costs of materials to make costumes, backcloths, props and scenery. Where possible these materials are being sourced locally. One of the five performances will be a designated “relaxed performance” to cater for those with special needs.

Brecon Integrated Sports Association has been running since 2002 and provides all-year-round sports training for people with disabilities. The £435 awarded will be used to purchase sports kit and equipment.

- Cath



3-4-5 mile race

I attended the Llanfrynach 3-4-5 Mile road race on behalf of the Club on 4 June 2019. The series is an annual road race held over a rural undulating course around Llanfrynach.

As of 2019, it is in its fifteenth year, and has been a successful and popular event for the Brecon Athletics Club, and has been supported by Brecon Rotary Club for over five years.

The race had its best year so far in terms of entrants, with over 150 people taking part in all three





racers; 180 people participated in the 3-mile race. The race attracts people of all ages: the eldest was a gentleman who had just turned 75 and the youngest was just four years old.

The children's fun run was also very well supported, with all the children proudly crossing the finish line to receive their medals.

- Cath



Blood Pressure Day

In total 147 people had their blood pressure checked in the Guild Hall on 15 June. The majority were within normal parameters; 16 were advised to have a routine check-up with their doctor within a month and one was urged to get a check-up the following week. So that's 11% of the participants discovering they need to have further checks, which makes holding the day worthwhile.

This year due to changes imposed by GDPR, there were two forms to complete, one a consent form to be signed by each participant and the other a record of their blood pressure. Rather surprisingly, we had more record forms than consent forms—so I don't know how the extra people managed to slip in without being collared by the welcoming team!!

The spread of where the participants live was interesting. As expected, the majority are within the LD3 postcode, but others were LD2 (Llandrindod/North Powys), CF (Cardiff & Valleys), GL (Gloucestershire), HF (Herefordshire), NP (Newport/Monmouthshire), SA (Swansea/West Wales) and SY (Shropshire/North Wales). There were a handful of others from further afield—EH (Edinburgh) and WA (Western Australia)!! This just goes to show what a draw Brecon is for visitors, and now Brecon Rotary has spread its influence beyond the town!

I am grateful to the Club volunteers for their time and effort: it all seemed to go smoothly due to their contributions. Thanks also to Margaret Blake and Cathy Morrell—I don't know if they volunteered, or were press ganged by their husbands! Whether putting up signs advertising the event, encouraging people in to the Guild Hall, providing a warm welcome and getting their consent forms signed, stewarding the queue, or providing refreshments, everyone played their part and I am sure chaos could easily have ensued if any part of the chain was missing! Equally, thanks to Hayley and Cath for putting the announcement on to social media, because once again the B&R didn't publish our article.

Many thanks to Julia Bignall and her team of blood pressure takers, without whom we would be unable to hold this event. They did a great job of not only providing the required

equipment and taking blood pressure, but also discussing associated health matters with participants and hopefully providing guidance towards a healthier lifestyle.

- Carol



Cath in Uganda, 2014—conclusion

I was lucky enough to work with Salem's only social worker, a very pleasant, softly spoken lady called Pamela. As Salem's only social worker, Pamela is responsible for the Children's Home, Nursery School, assessments of patients admitted to the hospital as well as patients in the community that are identified by the Community Health workers. An impossible case load by anyone's standards, but when I asked her about how she manages such a large area of work she just smiled and said "I just do my best".

I also spent some time with the lead for the Community Health Worker Program at Salem, James. James's role involves the coordination of the volunteer community health workers as well as managing a number of other initiatives such as the Pit Latrine Program (I have a funny story about an American Peace Corps volunteer and a pit latrine but I will save that for another time). The Community Health Worker Program has a number of aims including improving general health, sanitation and the environment of local communities. This scheme works in partnership with other schemes, such as the Tree Planting scheme and the Motorbike Ambulance scheme, providing a holistic view of all services.

One of the main areas that fascinated me was that the volunteers are also helping the communities gain trust in the Health Centres and other health facilities. There are still people within the communities who blame the health centre for their illness as they didn't believe they had it before.

The Community Health Workers are representatives of their local communities, they are thought of as the "local doctors" and are well respected. They often have second jobs to provide an income and other than training, t-shirts, bikes etc. They receive no financial incentive for undertaking the role. Much of their role is a type of Health Promotion / Public Health type approach: delivering messages about the importance of sanitation, the removal of areas of stagnant water through drainage in order to reduce the number of mosquitos and reduce the likelihood of cholera, educating the communities about the signs and symptoms of malaria and how to prevent this by using nets and closing doors and windows at dusk.

The use of Birth Attendants and home births are discouraged within Uganda. Not only is there a government policy in place to encourage mothers to have the anti- and post-natal care as well as giving birth in a Health Centre / hospital, women are educated in the reduction of risk of HIV transfer to newborn babies if the correct care is taken.

There has also been an increase in the number of people attending vaccination clinics etc. that are held within the communities as mothers do not have to spend as much time away from their chores, cooking, farming and other children, something I am sure my "working mother" friends will relate to.

There is an active program within Uganda whereby Community Health workers are trying to encourage couples to reduce the number of children they have from around ten to around five. It is a status symbol for men in Uganda to have a large family so much of the work that is undertaken with men in the communities is about reproductive health as well as the benefits of having a smaller family. No wonder they are shocked when they find out I am 37 years old and have no children.

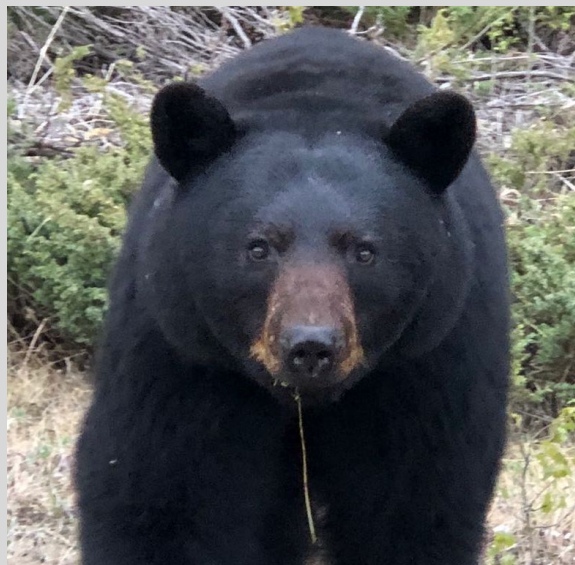
However, all things must come to an end, and before I knew it my Ugandan adventure came to a close. Before I began the 24-hour journey from Mbale to Powys it was time to say goodbye to the people I'd shared the past eight weeks with. The final couple of weeks were a bit of a blur of mixed emotions at leaving such a lovely country (and the sunshine) and heading home to real life. My ILO colleague and I made promises to our driver Rashid that once the roads were finished we would return to Mbale—I'm not sure if the roads will ever be finished in Mbale, but I am convinced I'll return.



I'm not sure if it was what I expected because I'm not sure what I expected. I've learned lots and witnessed things I wish I hadn't, and experienced things I will never forget, met some interesting people and made some friends for life. I was never asked if I was saved, or invited to go to church, but I did receive two proposals of marriage.

I don't think I will ever agree with how some Ugandans feel about homosexuality or accept the terrible way in which many people with any form of disability are treated or agree with the number of Mzungus who are out there to "tell" Uganda how to do things the right way. Being called Mzungu grated on me, as do many stereotypes, and I will struggle to see the benefit in charitable giving unless that money is going direct and not via a government organisation or an NGO that takes 40% of its donations for "admin". So for now, goodbye and thank you, Uganda—perhaps we'll meet again.

- Cath



BRUIN wishes President **Neil** and his team every success in their management of the Club.