

Rotary Club of Romsey Test
Notes of the Meeting held on 24 October
At the Cromwell Arms at 7.45am

- Presiding: Stuart Wineberg. 20 members present.
- Guests: Nigel Barnsfield, Bryan and Jackie Taphouse from the Lunchtime Club and Bob Gibbery (Bishop's Waltham).
- Speaker Today being World Polio Day we were privileged to have Nigel come and talk to our Club when there were many other Clubs he could have chosen, said Stuart. Nigel gave a presentation about polio starting with a picture of a hospital back in the fifties with a ward full of polio sufferers lying in iron lung machines. Some of our younger members had never seen a sight like this before and it was a forceful way of showing the nature of the disease. Nigel went on to explain that polio had been eliminated from Britain many years ago, although all children were still given the polio vaccine before they reached the age of 5. Rotary started their campaign to rid the world of this disease over 30 years ago when it was still prevalent in 125 countries. Over that time Rotary had raised \$40 million to this programme, and polio was now reduced to only 3 countries, Nigeria, Pakistan and Afghanistan. Last year saw only 22 new cases worldwide. Nigeria has had no new case since 2012 and hopefully next year may be declared a polio free country, leaving just two outstanding. Nigel stressed the importance of the Rotary connection with Bill Gates in this programme. For every one pound that Rotary raises, Bill Gates contributes two pounds. Each polio vaccine costs just 20p, so every pound from Rotary vaccinates 5 children. However, with Bill Gates additional funding, every pound we raise vaccinates 15 children. All the money raised is not just spent on vaccine; it also buys vehicles, boats, motorcycles and carts so that the vaccine can get to the more remote parts of the world where it is needed. It also supports the many volunteers who go out to these countries to administer the vaccines and provide the education needed to explain the programme.
- Vote of Thanks In thanking Nigel, Stuart emphasised the need to continue with this programme at this time. The world was experiencing immigration in many places on a large scale and people who might be exposed to polio in less developed countries were migrating to western developed countries and could bring the disease back with them. Continuing to vaccinate in this country remained an important duty.
- Next Week Next week is a visit to Salisbury Playhouse to see Abigail's Party, organised by Norman Oldmeadow. The following meeting on 7 November is a business meeting at the Town Hall.