



Rotary Club of Romsey Test Newsletter 25 May 2020



It is some while since our last Newsletter in November 2019 and suddenly all our worlds have been turned upside down and we have had to adapt to changed circumstances. Rotary has adapted too. We have had our first Zoom meetings with over 40 of us connected.

Each year the Club holds an AGM at which we look backwards over the past year, so, this Newsletter is primarily a review of the highlights since the start of the Rotary year on the first of July 2019. We have held an online quiz and have had a talk about George Mallory who may have reached the summit of Everest in 1924. Club Council has been meeting “virtually” to make decisions about cancelling events and about managing our finances.

Most importantly, Council and our Fundraising Team have worked together on a new approach to our annual Walk the Test Way (WTTW) event. WTTW has been an important source of funding for hundreds of charities and is the main source of funding for our Club. This year we are holding Walk the Test **another** Way – a way that is fully COVID-19 compliant and yet enables our walkers to support both THEIR favourite charity and our Club’s charitable work in the local community and overseas.

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Over the past 16 years WTTW has raised a staggering £950,000. Passing the £1million target is in sight. We have seen what Captain Moore can do with his walker and staying within the confines of his garden, surely we can all take the steps needed to raise some cash.

First : Choose your charity. **Then:** Choose your distance

- 1 mile or 2,000 steps
- 2.5 miles or 5,000 steps
- 5 miles or 10,000 steps
- 10 miles or 20,000 steps
- 25 miles or 50,000 steps

Next: Register **Most importantly:** Raise your sponsorship

Finally: Collect your walkers medal

We have often been asked if WTTW is suitable for people with limited mobility or other disabilities: well this year it is. Not only that, you don’t have to be in Hampshire – anyone can WTTaW wherever they are. So please spread the word to your friends and relatives throughout the world and encourage them to take part.

All the information is available at <https://www.walkthetestway.org.uk/> and regular updates will be posted there.

Latest WTTaW News.

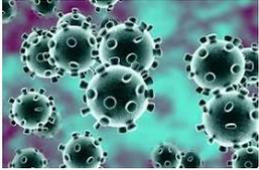
Rick Stein has encouraged his staff to use the walk to raise funds for [St Petroc’s Homeless Charity](#). They have already raised over £4000 and are still going.

Looking back

We are sad that three of our annual events have had to be cancelled -Reminiscences of Romsey - Know Your Blood Pressure Day - The Rotary Mayor's Picnic and we are especially sad to have had to cancel the planned street collection in Romsey in aid of Parkinsons. We look forward to resuming "business as usual".

However, we have achieved a great deal in the past year. In addition to the £70,000 raised for charities by last year's Walk the Test Way, the Club has given over £16,000 to a wide range of charities. The following are some of the highlights of these donations.

Community and humanitarian

 <p>COVID-19 response</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In response to the Corona virus pandemic we have provided £250 to Unity to fund extra phonedlines for their coronavirus helpline. • A further £250 was given to the Scrubs sewing group. In each case an identical amount was given by Romsey's lunchtime Rotary Club. Our members have been delivering scrubs and fabric. • Since the Club has not been meeting, members have each month since lockdown given what they would have spent on their meal to the Romsey Food Bank.
	<p>We have provided assistance to three local people with disabilities. One was to help purchase a special bed and two were for people who needed specialised wheelchairs. Since lockdown we have also responded to a request from Rose Road to fund a Romsey family with disabled child to provide 2 nights respite care funded by a donation of £750.</p>
	<p>Last summer we supported local charity Youth in Romsey to enable them to give summer holiday activities for two dozen local children from "Just About Managing" families. With Coronavirus, unfortunately that will not happen this year but it was being planned. We support YIR in other ways and had also just started to hold our monthly breakfast meetings at their premises next to Romsey Rapids.</p>
	<p>These events aim to engage children in learning about world citizenship and each year are supported by Nobel Peace Laureates. An event is held locally in March hosted by the University of Winchester. Sadly in 2019 it was hit by snow and this year by COVID-19. However, we remain committed to supporting this initiative and have obtained a Rotary grant to support the effort. We are paying particular attention to engaging with local primary schools.</p>
	<p>In October 2019 £500 was donated to the Rotary District 6990 Relief Fund in the Bahamas in the aftermath of Hurricane Dorian. At the same time £500 was donated to Shelterbox.</p>
	<p>Mary's Meals is a charity that aims to provide chronically hungry children throughout the world with one meal every school day. This encourages them to attend school and so gain an education that may lift them out of poverty in their later life. We donated £250, a sum that will feed 18 children for a school year.</p>

	<p>The charity Plan International UK provides access to essential services, including education, healthcare, clean water and toilets for children in more than 45 countries. We have paid £16 a month to sponsor the educational and vocational needs of Tafara Rugwevera (see left with his grandmother) who is 8 years old and comes from Chiredzi in Zimbabwe.</p>
	<p>The Rotary Wessex Christmas Shoebox scheme this past year sent more than 26000 shoeboxes to disadvantaged children in Albania, Montenegro, Moldova, Romania and the Philippines. We were one of the contributing Clubs filling, collecting and delivering shoeboxes to the District collection warehouse.</p>
	<p>We have been pleased to be able to recognise the contribution made to the musical life of Romsey by Marion Maxey. Marion runs no less than five choirs in Romsey covering all ages. At a concert she organised in Romsey Abbey in early February she was given a certificate of appreciation and a cash award to further the work of Romsey Youth Choir.</p>

Health and wellbeing

	<p>We had a major effort in partnership with Sir Harold Hillier Garden and the Rotary Club of Romsey to support End Polio Now. £1250 was collected from visitors to the garden who saw the “Purple for Polio” crocuses. With matching funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation the total increased to £3750. This buys about 12,500 doses of vaccine.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In August 2019 £750 was provided to Dentaid to support their Bright Smiles outreach project in the Bamboutus area of Cameroon where there are over 8000 people with no access to health or dental care. • In December 2019, £100 was donated to the Dentaid Christmas Toothbrush Campaign that allowed 16,000 children living in Cambodia and refugee camps in Greece to be given a toothbrush and access to oral health education. • We also provided the shipping costs to send a Rotary Dentaid Box for the Pebbles Project in South Africa. The box was funded (£1500) by Eastleigh company EMCOR by their not sending Christmas cards.
	<p>£250 has been sent to Vision Aid Overseas to help them deliver sustainable eye care services in four countries across Africa, where there are 73% more blind and visually impaired people than in any other region in the world. Unwanted glasses have also been collected and forwarded to Vision Aid, through White’s Opticians in Romsey. The glasses are recycled for their precious metal content or by selling retro/vintage glasses on eBay.</p>



Christmas puddings were sold again to members and friends, on behalf of the Rotary Club of Cwmbran Vale, with the funds raised being used to support Prostate Cancer Charities in Wales, Scotland and the UK.

Youth and education

	<p>For Kids Out last year we took around 60 children from Great Oaks special school in Southampton for a day out at Marwell Zoo.</p>
	<p>We have funded the establishment of The Ark at Romsey Abbey Primary School. This new well-equipped room allows distressed and disadvantaged children to have a safe space as a buffer between school and the outside world. It has been very well used and is greatly appreciated.</p>
	<p>We are helping a group in Nepal, the Rainbow Volunteer Club, who are building a school for underprivileged and disadvantaged children in Mulpani, Nepal. A donation of over £400 has been made. We are now working to forge a link with the Rotary Club of North East Kathmandu (RCoNEK) who identified that funds were still required for the materials and construction of a ceiling. The link with RCoNEK allowed a donation of £1100, to be made to pay the contractor.</p>
	<p>Dictionary for Life were given to 300 year 4 children in 8 Romsey area primary schools in October. The book donations are now a key point in the school year as this is the 7th year we have run the project. <i>The picture shows one of our dictionaries in use during lockdown home schooling.</i></p>
	<p>The Rotary Youth Speaks public speaking competition started with local heats in January. The winners from Romsey School went on to compete in Salisbury and the Intermediate team went on to win the Wessex District final in Southampton. Sadly the regional finals in Exmouth were cancelled due to the coronavirus and so Romsey were denied the chance to try to compete at national level.</p>
	<p>The popular Rotary Technology Tournament in March had 23 teams (14 in the Foundation years and 9 in the Intermediates) from Romsey and Mountbatten, Bitterne Park, Harrow Way, Hamble, Test Valley and Woodlands schools. The event was well supported by Rotarians and teachers and demonstrated the children's scientific, creative, logical and engineering skills.</p>

Food, fun, games and outings

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The handover dinner from Stuart Wineberg to new President, Bill Gidley, was at Kimbridge Barn (formerly Annie’s Tea Rooms) with a speaker from the Hampshire Gardens Trust.• There was a partners evening at the Cromwell Arms with Louise Govier entertaining us well with details of the Past, Present and Future of the National Trust and Mottisfont Abbey.• There was an “Evening with a Difference” at the Jubilee Hall, Timsbury where the Taste Dining Company produced a superb meal and we were then educated in the art of bagpiping. Our “Black Tie” Christmas dinner was at Ampfield Golf Club with entertainment by Ron and Kim.
	<p>David Pantling took several members to visit and see the work of Honeypot House in the New Forest.</p>
	<p>There has been friendly and competitive golf but the advance of our ever-successful skittles team as well as that of boules and snooker competitors is still “locked down.”</p>