



# Annual General Meeting 2021

## Reports from Council and Committees

### President – Malcolm Britton

The severity and unpredictability of the pandemic is illustrated by the fact that much of this year's report is similar to President Adrienne's last year and even though tremendous strides have been made in vaccinating the UK population, the future is still very uncertain.

On the positive side, we have been very fortunate to meet almost every Monday during the pandemic through the medium of Zoom. One advantage has been that we have been able to cast the net much wider for speakers, unlimited by distance from Melton Mowbray. We have also tried to keep in touch with those members who have been unable to share the Zoom meetings.

Despite the fact that several of our members have had to shield through age or underlying health issues, there were a number of bright spots during the year. Apart from a few committee meetings, the presidential handover was the only significant gathering between lockdowns with a picnic lunch at Tresillian House in July. A new venture has been the very enjoyable monthly quizzes for Club members and their families.

Other activities during the year are contained in other sections of this report.

After a targeted recruitment drive, our Satellite Enterprise Group has almost completed its preparations towards becoming a Rotary Club in its own right. We wish all those members well and look forward to continuing to work with them in the future.

A priority in recent years has been to work more closely with the other Rotary Clubs in the Melton Town. Two examples of this bearing fruit are all clubs being involved in crocus planting again and a pilot "Run Rabbit Run" event at St Mary's School with the aim of rolling it out next year in the town.

It would not put the past year in perspective without acknowledging that whatever we have done it has been against a background of tremendous personal loss through the effects of Covid-19. All of us are likely to have been affected in some way or other: loss of family members and friends; issues of health both physical and mental; missing hugs, holidays and socialising; loss of employment, business, education and so many freedoms. The superhuman efforts of health and care workers, other key workers and medical researchers to keep us safe have been exemplary. The increase in the number of volunteers and the spirit of good neighbourliness has been humbling. This Club has been imbued with this spirit of service for 93 years and I have every confidence that it will overcome any present challenges and thrive as it has done in the past.

Finally, I am extremely grateful to all of our members who have done their utmost in the service of the Club during the past year. A special word of thanks to Graham Bett, our retiring secretary, whose diligence behind the scenes enabled us to remain active during a challenging time.

### Community and Environment - Adrienne Holland and Janet Shortland

It has been a source of considerable frustration that, because of the COVID pandemic, we have had little opportunity to fulfil most of our plans from this last year. Nevertheless it has been extremely gratifying that we have been able to provide "afternoon tea boxes" on three occasions to

the Re-Engage Group; who have been thrilled and grateful for them. We shall, of course, continue to provide these, either as boxes or in Burton Lazars village hall.

We are hoping and planning for a much more “normal” situation this coming year. We plan to continue with those activities that are successful; although the delivery may be modified to meet changed circumstances.

### **Youth Service – Eric Hall**

The Youth Committee operates jointly with the Rotary Club of Melton Mowbray Belvoir.

At the meeting held on 8th September 2020, it was agreed that in view of the restrictions associated with Covid-19, particularly in schools, further meetings would be suspended until these were eased and more normal circumstances existed. Sadly, the ongoing situation has not permitted the committee to resume its activities and meetings remain suspended.

Notwithstanding these difficult circumstances we were able to hold a Young Writers Competition. Thirteen entries were received in the Junior Section, of which ten were prose and three were poetry. An application was received from America but was unplaced.

We are hopeful of running a Young Artist Competition and are currently liaising with Catmose College.

### **International Service – John Redwood**

We as a group have contributed to the current project in the Philippines to expand the education facilities. This work has now been completed. Also, educational books have been collected and sent to the Philippines.

We have provided help for organisations generally abroad through the collection of spectacles and cartridges.

Individual members of the club have donated towards Shelter Box in preparation for forthcoming natural disasters at some time in the future.

### **The Rotary Foundation – Alison Blythe**

In this extraordinary year we have concentrated on maintaining contributions to our main charity – The Rotary Foundation. However, with little fund raising in the true sense of the word - the Foundation Dinner having been postponed to late October - the only event fund-raising contribution came from the Santa Fun Run. This means we will not be able to meet the full club donation hoped for but anticipate contributing 60% of our share.

Thanks to the ingenuity of some members, a child’s iron lung formed the centre piece of a display in the Melton Town Market Place for Polio Day. Over £700 was raised (including the contribution from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation) to support Rotary’s promise to rid the world of Polio.

Several members have donated directly to the Foundation, one of whom is eligible for the Paul Harris Society award, and some others have contributed via the club.

### **Membership – Ian Neale**

With the pandemic and no face-to-face meetings in 2020/21 it has been exceedingly difficult to introduce new members to our club. Part of our ethos is the fellowship and support for each other that we get from our actual weekly meetings, and although we have maintained contact through Zoom, it is not a medium that encourages new members to join us.

We are in the fortunate position of having a list of people who would be interested in joining and one person who is waiting in the wings to be inducted.