

Community

Club Reports

Rotary Club of Beeston

ON Monday, December 7, the Rotary Club of Beeston appointed the following to serve from July 2010: President, Nick Doughty. Senior Vice President, Simon Holmes and Junior Vice President, Trevor Martin.

Santa Claus paid his annual visit to Beeston Square on Saturday,

December 12 and was kept busy throughout the day. The Mayor of Broxtowe, Cllr John Longdon, and his escort called during the morning whilst College House School choir sang traditional carols. They were also supported by NG9 Churches Together.

Thanks to the generosity of the people of Beeston and

district, the approximate sum of £1275 was raised for Rotary charities.

Brian Westerman was presented with the Keith Johnson Golf Trophy at the Club's Christmas Party.

Beeston Probus Club

A LARGE white vehicle called 'Phyllis' was parked outside the premises used for the club meeting, displaying an impressive array of gadgets and support facilities such as medical and refreshment facilities as well as first aid apparatus.

'Phyllis' had brought Dr John Dorran and his colleague Dawn to the club to explain the current workings of the Red Cross Organisation.

Dr Dorran explained how his father had been a POW, and the receipt of Red Cross parcels whilst in the camp was probably a lifesaver to him and other POWs. On account of this, he became a Red Cross volunteer.

He explained to the Probus members the origins of the organisation, and how it has been built up over the years to be the international force that it is today. The Red Cross

serves every country in the world with the exception of China and North Korea.

Its aims are:

1. To help all in need.
2. To act impartially and be independent of governments.

Its many services locally include first aid training, home from hospital services for old people and those without relatives or support, the provision of medical equipment i.e. wheelchairs, crutches, etc, which are loaned free of charge, a skin camouflage service, a therapeutic care service for people who can't get out, the supply of clothes, toys, transport, washing facilities, food, and finding accommodation.

In addition, the Red Cross can provide home-based crisis management and services

aimed at keeping people as independent as far as possible.

In Nottinghamshire, there also exists the Fire and Emergency Service Support (FESS) which responds to call-outs by the fire brigade. This is where 'Phyllis' comes in, Phyllis being a support vehicle sent out by the organisation to areas which have suffered some disaster or distress, and able to give immediate support such as that needed during recent events in Cumbria.

Dr Dorran concluded his talk by emphasising that the Red Cross still relies heavily upon donations, and has only a small nucleus of paid staff to support the many volunteers.

He was thanked for his talk and afterwards the members had the chance of looking over the support vehicle and seeing the services it is fitted out to provide.

Two o'Clock Club

A GENERAL Knowledge Quiz for club members to pit their wits against, organised and run by committee member Pat Herod, was the order of the afternoon on December 3. The following week, it was time for the Club's annual Christmas lunch, when 79 club members enjoyed traditional Christmas fare at The Village Hotel, Chilwell.

After a short break to digest and refresh, an afternoon of entertainment followed, with dancing for those still feeling energetic enough and readings, both comical and serious. The less energetic worked off the extra calories with card games before tea and mince pies were served and a raffle was drawn. The prize draw raised £119 for the two charities

that the club supports, Rainbows Hospice for Children and The Lines and Notts Air Ambulance.

The completely enjoyable afternoon culminated in a hearty rendition of 'The Twelve Days of Christmas' and, as the party broke up, cheerful cries of 'Merry Christmas!' could be heard chorusing around the hotel lobby.

Toton Women's Meeting

THE Women's Meeting at Toton Methodist Church held their Christmas Service on December 8, led to the birth of Jesus by Rev Melanie Stoodley.

Members of the meeting gave readings, and a collection of £63 was donated to the Rainbows Children's Hospice at Loughborough.

The next meeting of the group will be on Tuesday, January 5, 2010, and a warm welcome is extended to all ladies.

Food in Season

Our food columnist, James Crossman, of Seasons, Chilwell Road, Beeston, has more seasonal delights to tempt our palates...

HELLO,

It's been really busy in the restaurant just recently in the run-up to Christmas, and it's been a great pleasure cooking for so many. I just thought that I'd let you know that the Dickens Christmas evening was a huge success; in fact I was fully booked within a few days of the last issue. I'll certainly be planning more themed nights at Seasons for next year.

I'm having an enjoyable time developing my own mulled wine recipes. My current favourite is to add some Star Anise, orange rind, cinnamon, a good glug of brandy, and some orange juice. Warm it through really slowly until it's just steaming (don't let it boil), and keep it warm for 10 minutes or so. Strain it before serving if you're bothered about the bits in it. An ordinary kitchen sieve will do.

Roast Chestnuts

Chestnuts are a favourite in the restaurant at the moment. They're so easy to do, so if I don't get to see you over Christmas, there are various ways to do them for yourself. However you cook them, start by making a cross on the flat side of the shell with a sharp knife. Otherwise, the pressure will build up inside the nut as it cooks, and they'll burst open, exploding and splattering everywhere. Apart from the mess, it's a waste of some lovely flavours.

You can boil them in water for 20 minutes or

so. I don't recommend this, because they always come out a bit mushy, but it's useful if you want to mash them. You can grill chestnuts in their skins, but they'll taste horrible if you let the skins get caught so that they burn. I think the best way is to roast them in the oven. After you've scored them as above, put them on a baking sheet in a 400°F oven for 15-20 minutes or so. Stir them around a couple of times during cooking and serve them hot. Delicious.



Getting over to Brussels

Some people love Brussels sprouts and others hate them. They originate from Rome, but were grown in what is now Belgium as early as 1200. They were first written about in 1587 and were hugely popular in the Netherlands in the 1600s'. They're ever so good for us, brimful of Vitamin A, Vitamin C and folic acid.

We all have a different way of cooking them. The worst way is to really overcook them, so they're like round balls of mushy cabbage. I think they're best peeled and cooked so that they're left a bit on the crunchy side or *al dente* as chefs say. You can make a cross on the bottom of them before cooking them if you like, but there's really no need, and it does encourage them to go mushy. They're great served with cranberries, or chestnuts, or both.



Sprout and potato cakes

Boil some potatoes for about a quarter of an hour until they're tender. Drain them, and pop them back in the pan for a couple of minutes on a low heat to dry out. Add a good knob of butter and mash well. Meanwhile, boil the sprouts for 3-5 minutes until just tender (or use left-overs from Christmas Day). Shred the sprouts as finely as you can. Then mix the sprouts and potatoes together and shape them into round cakes. Dip the cakes into flour; shake off any excess, then shallow fry them in oil for a couple of minutes on each side. Drain them on kitchen paper, put them on a baking sheet, cover them over and chill them.

At this stage, you can keep them in the fridge for a day or two, or freeze them.

To reheat them, pop them in a 190°F oven for about a quarter of an hour, until they're crisp on the outside.

Enjoy the rest of the festive time, and may I wish you a Happy New Year as well. If you're quick, I've a couple of tables left for New Year's Eve.

I hope to see you at Seasons soon, or if you've any questions about food, cooking, or growing, just give me a call on 925 9994.

*All the best
James*