

Community

Club Reports

Beeston Probus Club

A POLICEMAN'S lot can be a happy one if he is engaged in making life better for poor and destitute people in other parts of the world not so fortunate as ourselves. David Scott revealed this as he spoke to the club on the subject of the Police Aid Convoy, a charity set up in 1993 by officers of the Nottinghamshire Constabulary.

Since 1993, serving and retired officers of the constabulary, together with a lot of volunteers, have been successful in getting aid to refugees and desperate communities across Europe and Russia. The organisation's current projects include help for hospitals in Albania, Bulgaria and Zambia. Local people help to gather the many tons of aid that is delivered, and hundreds of companies help with redundant stock, ends of lines and seconds.

Donated clothes are packed locally and sent by lorry or container to needy groups in Europe and Africa. The local depot is in Traffic Street, Nottingham, and the main warehouse is at Meden Vale near Warsop.

Containers hold 3200 cubic feet of goods and it costs in the region of £2800 to send a single lorry to Albania or £5800 to send the equivalent to Zambia.

Mr Scott said: "In addition to life's basic materials, the NPAC also has a magical project to bring a little glamour and fun into the lives of young women in Russia by sending wedding dresses and other wedding accessories. Bridal wear and all kinds of dresses and shoes are collected and sent.

"Last year alone, more than 4000 dresses and pairs of shoes were sent out."

David is now a retired police inspector and has been a member of the group for a number of years. He has visited many countries with his work, and likes to take a policeman's helmet with him as he finds that offering the helmet as a gift to influential people in the country he is visiting (he has a picture of ex-president of Zambia, Kenneth Kuanda, wearing one) will break down many barriers. He has given dozens away – all old ones, of course.

It was not all serious talk: he showed the club members slides of the people and the wildlife of Zambia taken during his recent visit with an aid convoy.

As with all such organisations, volunteers are always needed. If you would be interested in helping, telephone 01623 470471 or go to www.NPAC.co.uk for more details.

Long Eaton Probus Club

PRESIDENT Bob Thurlow welcomed everyone to the June meeting of Long Eaton Probus Club, held at the Bridge Inn, Sandiacre.

Brief committee reports were submitted and, after a review of the last month's Annual Luncheon, the president thanked all concerned for organising an excellent reception and meal, which had been followed by a special raffle organised by member David Howley. Thanks were also offered to the

'Welcoming Team' for providing refreshments, car parking facilities and registration for the June meeting.

The speaker for the meeting, Trevor Vennett-Smith, gave a light-hearted account of his early days as an auctioneer and an introduction to 'Under the Hammer', detailing his experiences at Melton Cattle Market – getting into a pen for the first time and handling sheep, cattle and, of course, the farmers!

Mr Vennett-Smith moved on

to qualify as an Agricultural Valuer, working for several years as a land agent before becoming involved in Fine Art auctioneering. He eventually formed his own business to specialise in sports memorabilia and coins, stamps and medals.

Mr Max Butcher proposed a vote of thanks to Mr Vennett-Smith after a lengthy question and answer session with the club members.

Next meeting July 2 at Risley Hall.

Two O'clock Club

WHEN Christopher Hughes gave his talk entitled 'Why Do We Ring Birds' to members of the Two O'clock Club recently, it quickly became clear that he is devoted to his hobby of ringing, which he first took up in 1990.

In this 100th year of the British Ringing Scheme, he explained how ringing enables the population size and migration pattern of birds to be measured. His trapping site is in Cambridgeshire and, as he lives in Melton Mowbray, he sets out at 1am when he goes trapping. He demonstrated how the nets are set up, usually against a background of bushes. When the birds hit the net, they fall, unharmed, into a pocket at the bottom.

Mr Hughes's bird-ringing life

began as a helper. Now licensed to ring and to train others, he has a special licence for barn owls, a protected species.

He said: "Each ring has a unique number. Details of the breed, sex, size, weight, etc. of the bird fitted with it are noted and forwarded by computer to the Natural History Museum, which collates the records.

"Different sizes of special pliers are used for fitting the ring and the bird is not harmed in the process," he added, showing some examples of the tools to club members.

He continued: "Bearing in mind that some birds are caught more than once, study of the records enables lifespan and migration habits to be established by species.

Most migration takes place at night – birds use wind power for assistance and winds are stronger at night. There is also less chance of predation."

There are 2000 ringers in the country, qualified at various levels. They get their rings, which they pay for, from the British Trust for Ornithology at Thetford. The Trust keeps records of all captures sent by computer on a worldwide basis. Mr Hughes said: "In recent years, global warming has changed the migration patterns, distribution and breeding habits of many birds. This has become apparent from the information supplied by ringers.

His talk ended with a slide show of birds, and his enthusiasm for his subject was clear to see.

ADVERTISING FEATURE

An A – Z of Acupuncture: Z is for Zhi

Z is for zhi, pronounced jhee. It is stored in the kidneys and can be treated by needling points either side of the sternum, or points on the lower back on either side of the spine. Zhi is described as the energy granting will power. When zhi is strong a person can make a plan and stick to it, without getting distracted or put off. People with weak zhi always seem to find excuses for not finishing tasks and failing to achieve goals. They lack the single-mindedness that allows us to apply ourselves to the job in hand.

When I first trained in five-element acupuncture, zhi was strongly associated with the will to live. Some names of the points are 'spirit storehouse', 'spirit burial ground' and so on. These are points that can give a person back the will to live. I once needled 'spirit burial ground' on a 68-year-old man; he was recovering from a major stroke and told me that he had had his life and did not want to live any longer. I knew that if he gave up he would not get better! So I was delighted

when, the very next week, he told me that he hoped he could have at least a couple more years.

The 'burial ground' is a point said to be where the roots of the spirit can be planted back in the person, so that their spirit is buried back in their physical focus. Sometimes people use the phrase, 'beside myself'. I think that refers to zhi being displaced, such as might happen in a car accident. Another phrase frequently heard is, 'to scare the wits out of someone'. Again, zhi is displaced.

I often treat zhi to speed recovery after accidents or traumas.

Zhi is also an important factor in emotional abuse. If a person has strong zhi, they will not tolerate being bullied or coerced. So when I treat people who are being bullied, dominated or abused, strengthening zhi is a good thing that will help them. It is amazing to see the worm turn!

For the record, acupuncture treats more than just back pain!

Dave Yeomans

ADVERTISING FEATURE

An A – Z of Fitness: J is for Joint mobility

JOINT mobility is an important part of overall flexibility.

The ability to move our joints through their various normal ranges also helps to keep them fit and healthy. Mobilising actions promote the flow of synovial fluid in the freely moveable joints. This fluid is the only nourishment for the cartilage, which covers the bone ends. If it degenerates the bone ends may rub together – and they aren't designed to. The fluid lubricates, helps shock absorption and carries away waste products.

Most exercise consists of repetitive movements through a certain, often partial, range – so the exercise may not mobilise fully all the joints of the body. As we age, the joints get used to the shortened ranges through which they move, and the cartilage receives less nourishment. If we are unlucky, disease conditions such as arthritis may strike the joint. This is one name for a range of conditions that start affecting the joints and include:

- Osteoarthritis, where the cartilage and bone degenerate.

Cause - trauma/genetic.

- Rheumatoid, where the synovial membrane becomes inflamed, the cartilage is destroyed and the bones may fuse. Cause - auto immune response.

Exercise will help to keep the weight down, which keeps pressure off the joints.

Some studies have shown reduced joint pain in the mildly arthritic when Glucosamine and Chondroitin are used as a supplement. If you are considering taking these supplements, check with your doctor and use the amounts the researchers use. Ensure that you buy a reputable brand so you know you are getting the stated amount of the active ingredient. A couple of servings of oily fish per week can also be beneficial.

Finally, keep those joints moving as best you can. Take time out to work logically through the body, steadily exploring the way the joints move and then repeatedly move them in all those directions.

Joint Effort Fitness