



Rotary Club of Harrogate Brigantes



Harrogate Brigantes Celebrates 30 years Of Service to the Community

On the 27 April 2010 the Rotary Club of Harrogate Brigantes held a special Charter Dinner to celebrate 30 years of Service to the Community, both local and international. The Charter Dinner was held at The Crown Hotel, Harrogate and the guest speaker was Sir Thomas Ingilby, of Ripley Castle.

The club, which currently has 32 members, was formed on 29 April 1980 and was sponsored by the Rotary Clubs of Harrogate and Knaresborough. At the time, most Rotary Clubs met at lunchtime but Harrogate Brigantes was formed as an evening club, to give people the opportunity to join Rotary and who could not attend a traditional lunchtime meeting.

Harrogate Brigantes meets on a Tuesday evening at 7.30pm at The Crown Hotel, Harrogate, when members enjoy a two course meal, usually followed by a talk by a guest speaker. There are always a number of social events and visits to places of interest, which are held during the course of the year. There is an active walking group, who enjoy walks to various places of interest and also a keen golfing and cycling group.

During the past 30 years the club has raised many thousands of pounds which have been donated to a variety of charities.

Some of the local projects, which the club has been involved in are:

- The formation and management of Shopmobility, which provides scooters and wheelchairs for those with impaired mobility to use while shopping in Harrogate.
- The management and part funding of Essential Needs, the Harrogate Community Warehouse
- The club advised and assisted in the formation of the four Probus Clubs in Harrogate and Knaresborough. Probus is an organisation for retired or semi-retired business and professional people, which can only be formed by Rotary
- St Michael's and Martin House Hospices, together with the Scanner Appeal at Harrogate District Hospital

The club continues to be involved in the following projects:

- The Junction, now known as Skills 4 Living. This is an educational charity for people with special needs
- Horticap, which provides training in horticulture, allied crafts and rural skills for adults with learning disabilities
- Involvement on a weekly rota basis, with Meals on Wheels, when club members volunteer to act as drivers for the delivery service
- The organisation of the local event of the annual National Blood Pressure & Stroke Awareness Day. This is a Rotary International initiative to improve the early indications of the possible onset of a stroke or other related medical conditions
- The club is involved with local schools, including the Rotary Youth Leadership Award, and the annual Technology Tournament. The club initially set up the local annual Technology Tournament, which is now jointly organised by six local Rotary clubs. One of the club members is involved with the national Technology Tournament. In addition, the club has been involved in the organisation of the local Young Chef Competition
- Harrogate & District Young Carers, part of Carers Resource, which gives support to the 750 plus Young Carers, aged 7 – 18. The club has contributed to Carers Resource with the proceeds of various fund raising events

- The organisation of an Annual Golf Day, which raises several thousands of pounds. The proceeds from last year's event and also the proceeds from this year's event will be donated solely to Young Carers
- The building and ongoing management of the Wishing Well in the Valley Gardens. The proceeds during its lifetime of more than £16,000 provide funds for local and international projects
- The organisation of the annual Service of Remembrance at the Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery at Stonefall. This is one of the largest military cemeteries in the UK. The Service is the only one to be held in a military cemetery in the North of England and it is attended by many senior military personnel and local dignitaries together with many members of the public
- The annual Christmas Grotto, which is held in Asda, Harrogate. Each year, this event raises several thousands of pounds, which are donated to selected charities
- The club has recently made a considerable donation to Harrogate & District Talking Newspapers to assist them to change to a new system to supply their customers with the recorded newspapers on a memory stick

Internationally, the club has supported Water Aid, which provides pumping facilities for fresh water in many third world countries. The club has also supplied Shoeboxes, working with local schools to supply items to give comfort to children in many underprivileged locations. More recently the club has provided Aquaboxes and Shelterboxes for Haiti. In addition, the club has supplied musical instruments, which have been donated by local organisations, to Montserrat, an island in the Caribbean that was devastated by a series of volcanic eruptions. The club also raised over £16,000 jointly with the Harrogate Rotary Club, for the Tsunami disaster. In the aftermath of the Tsunami the club helped this District of Rotary to raise the money to build a new school in Sri Lanka. The club continues to be involved in Rotary International's support for the eradication of Polio and is currently organising a Pedal for Polio Bike Ride around the Yorkshire Dales, which will be held in June 2010. The club is also supporting a special project to support schools in Nepal with laptops and other IT equipment and a team was sent in 2011 to train some of the teachers.

The Rotary Club of Harrogate Brigantes is always ready to welcome new members. Rotary International is the largest Service Organisation in the world, with over 1.2 million members worldwide.

Mike Bevington