

WATTON ROTARY REPORT

1. ROTARY HISTORY

Started in Chicago USA in 1904 when a group of local business men led by Paul Harris arranged to meet regularly in each others houses on rotation, hence Rotary Club, to discuss what they could do to provide assistance where required in their local community.

The idea spread through the USA and then worldwide, Watton Rotary was formed in October 1954 by local business men, and this is commemorated in October each year with our Charter Dinner., so we are 70 years old this year. We meet every Thursday evening at Broom Hall Hotel, Saham Toney, at 7.30 for 8.00. Please come along and join us.

MISSION STATEMENT - Is 'Service Above Self'

2. LOCAL SERVICES TO THE COMMUNITY

BUSINESS OF THE MONTH – Held monthly through 2023 to award a shield to local businesses who had been nominated by the public for giving good service in the town.

CHRISTMAS LUNCHESES – Co-ordinated by St Mary's Church, 30-40 meals are delivered by the club each Christmas to deserving people in Watton. Meals are donated by Florentina Catering, Watton, and mince pie desert donated by Watton Bakery.

LITTER PICKS – Held annually, next one is on Saturday 27 April, when a team of Rotarians and friends, assisted by local Army and RAF Cadets, starting in St Mary's Car Park and then around the town.

WAYLAND ACADEMY – Annual competitions for Young Chef, Young Photographer, Young Environmentalist, Young Writer.

JUNIOR/PRIMARY SCHOOLS – Annual presentation of Usbourne Dictionary4Life to all school leavers, plus bean bags to some school reading areas.

PARKER SCHOOL, SAHAM TONEY – Donation to their plans to create an outdoor 'Forest School'.

CRUCIAL CREW – Organised by Norfolk Fire & Rescue Service several times each year to give safety advice to Junior/Primary School leavers, with workshops where professionals from Norfolk Fire & Rescue Service, Norfolk Police, Anglia Air Ambulance, UK Coastguard, St Johns Ambulance, and local Gas and Electricity suppliers, give safety advice on their particular disciplines. The next Crucial Crew is on 07 July at City College, Norwich.

VOCATIONAL AWARDS

Each year we make an award from the nominations received to the Individual and Group who it is felt have made a major contribution to the community during that year.

3. TOWN PROJECTS

SENSORY GARDEN – Pagoda donated to the Sensory garden at the Dragonfly Gallery, plus a Rotary Rose Sunrise rose garden, in memory of our late Past President Martin Anscombe, who was also a past Mayor of Watton.

TOWN SIGN – This was donated by Watton Rotary in 1958, and has a Rotary plaque to confirm this, the Rotary plaque and roundel have recently been removed as the town sign is now scheduled to be refurbished over the next few weeks, and they will be refitted when to refurbishment is completed.

SHIPDHAM GARDENS PROJECT - Donation to local residents who had formed Shipdham Residents Group to convert a plot of land purchased by Shipdham Council to prevent it being misused, into gardens and recreation areas. The residents planted 18 flowering trees around the plot and dug areas for flowers, and also bought a grass mower.

4.LOCAL FUND RAISING EVENTS

JAZZ NIGHT – Held annually in March at the Queens Hall with DixieMix East Anglia's Premier Jazz Band, the recent event on 22 March raised almost £800.00 which will be distributed to our selected charities as required in the near future.

SUMMER BBQ & AUCTION - Held in September at Broom Hall Hotel, BBQ food prepared by Broom Hall, auction by local Auctioneer Fabian Eagles. The next event will be on Sunday 01 September. Money raised will be distributed to our selected charities as required in the future. Our Young Citizen Awards are also made from the nominations received.

5.INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

END POLIO NOW – For some years Rotary International have had a major campaign funded by Rotary Clubs around the world, who rose to a challenge from the Bill Gates Foundation that if Rotary raised \$250 million then they would match it with another \$250 million. This was achieved and gradually over the last few years polio has been eliminated from the 30 some counties in which it was endemic to now only endemic in 2 countries, Pakistan and Afghanistan. The campaign continues daily to finally eliminate this awful disease.

SHELTERBOX & SHELTERBOAT

SHELTERBOX is an organisation within Rotary, and a box contains survival equipment for a large family, including a family tent, waterproof sheets, blankets, a wood burning stove, cooking & eating utensils, water purification set, and some basic tools, to assist a family who have experienced war or some natural tragedy such as an earthquake or tsunami. Stocks of boxes are held in the UK, Dubai and Singapore. We continue to support this cause.

SHELTERBOAT

Rotarian Paul Weatherill and friend Nigel Tubby have designed and constructed a micro dingy around a ShelterBox, powered by sail and/or an electric motor supplied by onboard solar panels.

ShelterBoat 1 – was the initial journey on the river from Acle to Yarmouth to Norwich in August 2021, which raised approx. £3,000 for ShelterBox.

ShelterBoat2 – was on the River Avon from Stratford to Tewkesbury in May 2023, which also raised approx. £3,000 for ShelterBox.

ShelterBoat3 – will be on the River Thames from Henley via Marlow via Windsor to Shepperton from Saturday 20 July – Monday 22 July 2024, and the target to be raised is £5,000.

See wattonrotary.org