

STORT VALLEY ROTARY

NEWSLETTER

June 2022



Summer Picnic BBQ

at Gordon & Mary Morrison's

Saturday 16th July

2pm to 5pm

PRESIDENT'S PREAMBLE



Fellow Rotarians and Friends,
As you all are aware I spent two weeks this month walking 180 miles around the Hertfordshire Way with Jim Tatchell. This was an amazing experience.

The County of Hertfordshire has so much to offer. Notable memories were the amazing forests, vast well managed farms and the animal and bird life but probably the best were the large areas of bluebells which were at their best. What you realise when you walk the County's footpaths is that there is so much countryside to enjoy. The walk was challenging, 13 miles every day for 14 days but knowing that we were doing so to help 12 fantastic children's charities kept us motivated. On the way we were supported by so many of the County's VIPs such as The Lord Lieutenant, High Sherriff, Lord Salisbury and our MP, Julie Marson. Sustenance was always a challenge for Jim so, apart from eating Tunnocks caramel wafers, we were able to negotiate invites for tea, sausage rolls and most importantly, cake.

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- Robert Cannon – Covid - back to success

As I have said it was the children's charities that motivated us every step of the way so we were delighted to have been able to raise around £50,000 which will make a real difference.

The walk was not the only success this month. We had a very successful fundraiser for Essex & Herts Air Ambulance, and probably the greatest accolade has been that our Young Environmentalist submission to the Rotary Great Britain & Ireland competition won first prize in the senior category. Further details in a story below.

Stort Valley Rotary now regularly appears in the local press, and has an incredible Social Media presence, so we are ready to do a lot more.

Kind regards,

Gordon Morrison, President

Find us at:
stortvalleyrotary.com



Stort Valley

PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT & DELIVER ZERO CARBON EMISSIONS



In his talk, Will Gemmill stated that, driven by Government policy initiatives and strategic reports, farming will face significant change in the next seven years. Through DEFRA, the Government is focusing on three key areas:

1 Improving the Environment

The 25-Year Environment Plan which was the basis of the Environment Act 2021 and the Clean Air Act of 2019, has the objective of improving the environment for the next generation. They set out that farmers should be paid public money for public goods on the 'polluter pays' principle. The underlying premise is that 30% of all land and water should be protected by 2030. 20% of the least productive land could go to environment with only a loss of 3% productivity. The cornerstone of the Agriculture Act is based around Environmental and Animal Welfare payments.

2. Achieving Net Zero Carbon Emissions

The Committee on Climate Change report sets out that there has to be fundamental reform to ensure that land becomes a more effective carbon store. This promotes radical land use change. This includes planting 1.5 million hectares of trees, 1.2 million hectares of biomass energy crops and restoring 1.1 million hectares of peatland. It also, along with the National Food Strategy, advocates a 30% reduction in the consumption of red meat and dairy, as well as a 20% reduction in food waste. For arable farming business, achieving net zero relies heavily on reducing cultivated nitrogen to establish crops and reducing bagged nitrogen and using more organic nitrogen to fertilise. This follows the principle of regenerative agriculture.

3. Improving Productivity

This is effectively producing more from less land. Currently, the UK has a self-sufficiency in indigenous food of around 60%. Going back to the mid-1980's, self-sufficiency was 78% but had been below 40% before both

World Wars. The war in Ukraine highlights the need to keep a sensible level of self-sufficiency with many countries now showing protection policies and not allowing any food exports. In the UK, 8% of farmers produce 57% of the food from 33% of the land. The key is getting the better land more productive. Grants are being made available to help farmers become more efficient in their farming methods going forwards.

More recently, farmers have seen a dramatic rise in both commodity price and input costs, particularly fertiliser and fuel. This has changed the dynamics of farming and created a certain amount of cashflow crisis. However, it is good news for arable farmers but not so for many livestock farmers.

Farmers will also have to get to grips with new market opportunities such as biodiversity net gain. This is where any future housing development will have to offset biodiversity loss on land near to or in the same district. It does create opportunities for those farmers that want to improve their biodiversity. There is also a market developing in trading carbon, particularly for those farmers who can achieve net zero emissions. There are Government schemes for both woodland and peatland carbon trading.

In summary, for most farmers, it is a case of farming their better land as efficiently as possible and using the more marginal land for environmental schemes.

They will also have to look at ways to diversify and collaborate in different ways to achieve good economies of scale. Farmers will lose their traditional subsidy payments, which may have an impact for many. However it will create opportunities from the significant change that is arising.



**STORT VALLEY ROTARY KEEPS INFORMED OF CHANGES
THAT AFFECT THE ENVIRONMENT**

HELPING HERTS FOUNDERS RAISE £50,000 FOR 12 CHILD WELFARE CHARITIES IN THE COUNTY BY WALKING 180 MILES IN A FORTNIGHT



Two long-distance walkers arrived back in Bishop's Stortford after racking up 180 miles around Hertfordshire and raising £50,000 for Helping Herts.

Organisation founder Gordon Morrison and Jim Tatchell, both members of Stort Valley Rotary Club, set off from the town's railway station on Saturday April 23.

They trekked through Royston, Wallington, Little Wymondley, Codicote, St Albans, Markyate, Tring, Kings Langley, Shenley, Cuffley, Hertford and Widford to complete their round trip in 14 days.

The pair were joined on their walk at various stages by a succession of VIPs including Lord-Lieutenant of Hertfordshire Robert Voss and deputy lieutenants Suzy Harvey, Lady Verulam and Fergus McMullen; Herts County Council leader Richard Roberts; University of Hertfordshire vice-chancellor Quintin McKellar and its student union president Rhiannon Ellis; Hertford and Stortford MP Julie Marson; Bishop's Stortford's outgoing mayor Cllr Keith Warnell and his successor Cllr Dave Anderson; and Lord Salisbury.

Stort Valley Rotary president Gordon Morrison, chairman of the Chaldean Group of Companies which manages the Chaldean estate in Much Hadham, said: "I'd like to say a big thank you to everyone who has donated. This is a fantastic amount of money which will

be shared equally between the 12 charities involved and will make a real difference to them.

We were delighted to be supported by some very busy people from across the county who encouraged us every step of the way.

Gordon, 71, and Jim came up with the idea for their walk while putting together a

challenge for their 12 chosen child welfare charities this coming September.

Representatives of Coram Life Education, Carers in Herts, Herts Young Homeless, For Baby's Sake, Herts Mind Network, Grove Cottage, Riding for the Disabled, Home-Start Herts, Phoenix Group for Deaf Children & Adults, PlaySkill, The Ollie Foundation and the NSPCC will take part in a sponsored walk, with each cause taking one section so the whole county is covered in 24 hours.

The pair decided to check out the route first and that reconnaissance developed into their own epic trek.



It is one of several Helping Herts events planned for this year that they are publicising through social media, using lessons learned during the Covid pandemic and their business skills to change the face of fundraising.



Gordon, who set up World Child Cancer from scratch in 2007 to create a global concern, said that all charities now faced a tough challenge, with increasing competition and a squeeze on donors' budgets. The key, he said, was to match the passion for the cause with an entrepreneurial spirit.

He said: "People still want to give but want to have confidence that The money they're giving is put to a good cause."

Jim, a trustee of Bishop's Stortford Food Bank and founder of the Exidex ideas exchange, said: "It's been fantastic to experience parts of Hertfordshire I'd never visited before. It's been a revelation to discover how much unspoilt countryside we have right on our doorstep – you really don't need to travel far to find it.

"I've had the pleasure to meet some wonderful people, including an unforgettable ride on an RDA (Riding for the Disabled Association) horse and cart around Patmore Heath as well as an entertaining encounter with Stevie the Stevenage RDA scarecrow.

"We were also joined one morning by a group of Grove Cottage staff and the lovely Aimee, who enjoyed showing us all the right way to go. You all do amazing work and I'd like to thank you for your support."

As they reached the finish line, Richard Smith, treasurer of Grove Cottage, the home of

Mencap in Bishop's Stortford, was waiting to congratulate them.

He said: "This money will help us to continue supporting local people with learning disabilities. We provide a wide range of clubs and services that give support and help from birth to 70-plus years ranging from a highly acclaimed, Ofsted-regulated special needs nursery, weekend and holiday clubs, performing arts club and speech and language therapy.



"These clubs enable members to learn new and vital skills, form real friendships and socialise in fun, caring and supportive environments. This specialist and one-to-one care is very expensive and the money raised from Helping Herts will make such a difference."

To donate to Gordon and Jim's walk visit:

fundraising.helpingherts.com/fundraisers/jimandgordonwalk

**STORT VALLEY ROTARY ENGAGES ENTHUSIASTICALLY
WITH MODERN MEDIA TO SUPPORT OUR COMMUNITY**

A PLEASURABLE WAY TO RAISE FUNDS FOR THE ESSEX & HERTS AIR AMBULANCE



10 hostleries in and around Bishop's Stortford produced a bumper result again this Easter. A cheque for £1114 has been sent to the Essex and Herts Air Ambulance Trust. Our simple concept was borrowed from a Rotary Club in Clevedon in Avon. We buy large Easter Eggs and, before Easter, take one to each of the participating pubs. We also provide a board with a hundred numbered squares plus raffle tickets to aid the selection of the winner. The draw takes place over the Easterholiday at the

landlords' discretion. Most pubs sold out - indeed one requested a further egg to raffle as it had proved so popular with its clientele.

One egg was retained for a raffle on a Club Night with the proceeds covering all our costs. Members also enjoyed the occasional half when visiting the pubs to check on progress! Gift Aid, when processed, will provide a further 25% boost to the sum already provided.



BISHOPS STORTFORD BAND PREPARE THEIR SUMMER PROGRAMME

The Bishop's Stortford Band, which we sponsor, have been busy rehearsing for a trio of upcoming events which you may wish to support.

On the 2nd July they are playing at the newly refurbished Methodist Church Hall, which if you have not yet visited, and is a really attractive and versatile space. The start time is 7.30pm and refreshments will be available. Donations are in aid of the refurbishment and the band.

On the 9th June They will be part of the entertainment at the annual Berden Fete. The event is a perennial favourite where the main street is closed off with food stalls, folk dancers and the like, creating a lively atmosphere. The event takes place between 2.00 pm and 4.30 pm.

On the 16th July they will entertain us at our third Garden Party in Much Hadham at the kind invitation of President Gordon and wife Mary in their lovely garden. Music, from traditional band classic such as marches to modern melodies, will be the order of the day. No doubt the odd glass of vino will add to the party spirit as in previous years.

The band are thriving under the guidance of a professional conductor which has been

possible through our sponsorship. All aspects of the band's music making are improving and several talented young players have joined and will performing at these events

BISHOP'S STORTFORD BAND

Celebration Concert

A programme of light brass band music in the newly refurbished Methodist Church Premises.
In honour of any Ukrainian Guest, the Ukrainian National Anthem will be played.

**Saturday 2 July
at 7:30pm**

Bishop's Stortford Methodist Church

No tickets necessary
Donations accepted for the concert and interval refreshments.

Proceeds shared between Bishop's Stortford Band and
Bishop's Stortford Methodist Church
34B South Street, Bishop's Stortford CM23 3AZ
(accessible to all)
Email bsbbrass@gmail.com or manager.bsme@gmail.com

**STORT VALLEY ROTARY PROMOTES LOCAL GOOD CAUSES
ENCOURAGES TALENT PARTICULARLY IN THE YOUNG**

STORT VALLEY ROTARY CLUB RECOGNISE EFFORTS OF YOUNG ENVIRONMENTALISTS

Stort Valley Rotary were delighted when Rotary Great Britain & Ireland recently announced the winners of the 2021/22 Young Environmentalist Competition. Winning the Senior Category were the following:

Zoe Hart & Yvette Hupje - Hockerill Anglo European College for their project about food waste.

Sophie Broom - Lambrook School for her project about climate change.

Savannah Martin - Tain Royal Academy for her investigation into the impact the North Coast 500 has on local environment and tourism.

The picture includes all speakers who were at a Stort Valley Rotary Speaker event held on Zoom in March and reported in the April edition of our newsletter.

The competition is an opportunity for young people to showcase their unique solutions to environmental problems and change the way we look, treat and interact with our environment.

There were three age group categories, to allow for all participants to have a fair chance at winning and have equal skills as their peers. These consist of Junior (7-10 years), Intermediate (11-13 years) and Seniors (14-17 years).

The theme of the competition this year was 'Climate Change/Carbon Reduction'

The Awards are proudly sponsored by Veolia who also had a representative on the judge's panel. The other judge was Roz Scammell.

As well as doing their bit to support young people and the environment, Stort Valley Rotary Club also run the charity campaign 'Helping Herts' to raise money for children's welfare charities in Hertfordshire. This year already the campaign has raised over £50,000 through a fundraising walk, featuring in this edition of our newsletter, and has lots of exciting activities and events planned for the remainder of 2022. For more information visit www.helpingherts.com

Our Rotary Environmentalist Winners



Sophie Broom
Lambrook



Zoe Hart
Hockerill Anglo European College



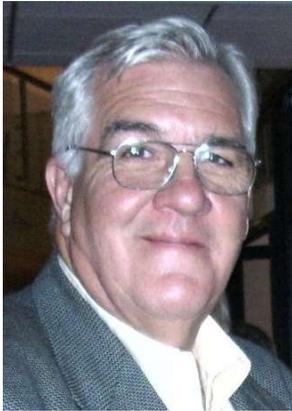
Yvette Hupje



Savannah Martin
Tain Royal Academy

**STORT VALLEY ROTARY PROMOTES THE DEVELOPMENT OF
TALENT IN OUR COMMUNITY - PARTICULARLY IN THE YOUNG**

The following is the preliminary report on the Solar System at Rombo Community Hospital by Robert Muir, founder and Technical Lead BuildAid and a member of our Rotary Club:



BuildAid has been supporting this community medical facility for a number of years having provided both infrastructure and equipment. To date, we have built and equipped a Mother and Baby Unit (pictured) which accommodates community ante and post-natal clinics for over two thousand women and their babies. The unit is also used for the identification and treatment of AIDS and other transmitted diseases.

After supplying incubators for premature babies, we were asked if we could build and equip an Operating Suite within the compound so that both small procedures and emergency operations such as C Sections etc. could be undertaken obviating the need for transportation to the nearest surgery facility over 4 hours away by unmade road.

It was during our survey and feasibility visit for the OR Suite that we became aware of the acute problem at the hospital regarding a reliable electricity supply. It was usual for the National Grid electricity to be off for up to eighteen hours a day necessitating the use of an archaic back-up diesel back-up generator. Unfortunately, the ancient generator which had clearly seen better days was also currently out of service awaiting replacement parts and we were duly asked if we could provide an urgent replacement.

This was an extremely urgent matter requiring immediate attention failure of which would undoubtedly result in patient complications and could result in mother or child fatalities. After consideration we suggested that a suitable and comprehensive solar micro-generation system to power the entire unit would be a much better solution. This would

entirely replace the National Grid connection, provide a free and sustainable power supply with no outages, have minimal maintenance requirements, and obviate the need for a costly, expensive to run polluting back-up generator. This was immediately agreed with the hospital board and approached two providers we had worked with in the past.

The system was designed by BuildAid and comprised of thirty solar photovoltaic panels site on the main roof, six heavy duty batteries to collect the charge, an AC inverter to convert the DC current to 240 AC, a control panel and the connector to the hospital main electrical distribution board. The system was installed and operational by Friday 3rd June so now the hospital enjoys non-interrupted and free electricity throughout. The total costs which included all the parts, transportation, installation, and commissioning of the entire system was £8500 including tax.

We were only able to do this with the very prompt and kind funding assistance of the Rotary Club of Stort Valley in Bishops Stortford, Gordon Morrison an established supporter of the charity and a corporate supporter who matched all donations for this project.



On behalf of the patients and staff at RCH Rombo, we thank all our supporters for their generous donations and kind consideration for the urgent needs of this project. It will make an enormous difference.

Photographs of the new installation will be available and published soon.

STORT VALLEY ROTARY IS A SUPPORTER OF THE FAST, COST EFFECTIVE AND PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS OF BuildAid

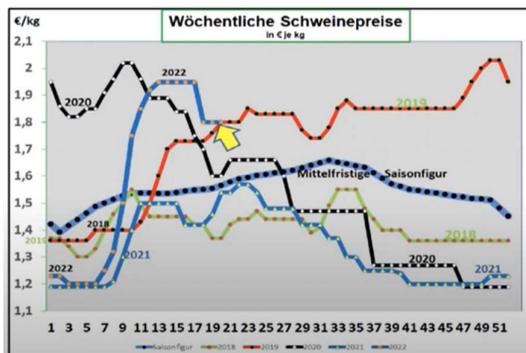
COVID TO OMICRON - BACK TO SUCCESS



Robert Cannon again inspired us with an update on his business. Previously Robert had given us a “no holds barred” stark reality check on the effect Covid-19 was having on his business and himself. Now two years on, he informed us about his expectation of a much brighter future.

His manufacturing company is based in Harlow, an excellent location for distribution to London and the Home Counties. His factory produces bacon products for the food service industry including hotels, pubs, golf clubs and sandwich bars.

During periods of lockdown, his factory was working at only 5% capacity and there were inevitable redundancies. A graph indicated the volatility of the market over the last few years. In June 2021 Robert started to rebuild the business. He invested in machinery, increased salary levels and was rewarded with an excellent contract to supply a large pub chain.



Another graph that Robert showed us indicated vividly the swings in the price of pigs. Pig prices had been at unsustainable levels and are now back to 2019 levels although the future looks uncertain.

Brexit, on the other hand, has not caused major problems yet but there remains cause for concern. We really need to reach some sort of agreement



with Europe over exports and we must modernise the technology for the control of goods passing across country borders.

The Ukraine war is adding new problems. For instance, pig feed which has gone up 800% is having a huge effect and making pig farming look increasingly unviable. Robert astutely observed that, “any data is by its very nature historical”. It does however tell of a rather pessimistic forecast for businesses in general. In May this year a Solar system was installed in his factory. It is proving very successful and a timely investment for the future.



Robert impressed his audience with the determination with which he confronts enormous challenges to his company. His positive view for his company and investment in his staff is an important feature of any successful company. Everyone was inspired by Robert's talk and anyone feeling anxious for the future would be immensely cheered by visiting our website, following links to our YouTube site and watching Robert's video talk.

STORT VALLEY ROTARY ENJOYS A SUCCESS STORY PARTICULARLY WHEN AGAINST CONSIDERABLE ODDS

FORTHCOMING ATTRACTIONS

Tuesday 14 June	AGM
Tuesday 28 June	Charlie Ireland, Ceres Rural - Working at Diddly Squat Farm
Tuesday 12 July	Club Evening
Saturday 16 July	Summer Picnic BBQ at Gordon & Mary Morrison's
Tuesday 13 September	Club Evening
Monday 19 September	President Gordon Morrison's Dinner Hanbury Manor
Tuesday 27 September	Richard Roberts, HCC - What life is like as Leader of Hertfordshire County Council
Tuesday 11 October	Club Evening
Tuesday 25 October	Rowan McKellar - Experience at the Olympics
Tuesday 8 November	Club Evening
Tuesday 22 November	Speaker Evening - TBA

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