

DIARY DATES - SPEAKERS

Given that we are meeting online, the speakers are being decided at short notice so we are unable to give details for the coming months.

On the 4th of May Arif Voraji of Help the Homeless Leicester will be speaking.

ITEMS FOR THE NEXT ISSUE

Please submit to Bulletin Editor, David Brunton, by 23rd May 2020

ZOOMING!



Council were first to test their IT skills and held a successful meeting via Zoom in April. This of course has been followed by Monday lunchtime Zoom meetings for the Club.

SPEAKER & VISITOR WELCOME

MAY		JUNE	

ROTARY CLUB OF LEICESTER

Meetings currently held on Mondays, 1.00pm via Zoom
Apologies: Telephone 0116 2233950 or e-mail :
johannedraycott@pickeverard.co.uk

Immediate Past President: Colin Derrick
President Elect: Parmdeep Vadesha
Junior Vice-President: Scott Gallacher
Honorary Treasurer: David Brunton
Honorary Secretary: Barry Davies
Honorary Assistant Secretary: Vacant

Elected Council Members

Diana Esho, David Howard, Tim Lee, Mark Simpson,
David Brunton, Babs Marson

Other Contacts:

District Council Representatives: Moira Bartlett, Rodney Spokes,
John Saunders and Paul Bonnett
Bulletin Editor: David Brunton
Club Protection Officer: Mick Marvell

LEAD COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

Club Service Mark Sandall
Membership Nick Thomson
Service Projects Moira Bartlett
Rotary Foundation/Benevolent David Howard
Communications Diana Esho

PRESIDENT - CHRIS SAUL

BULLETIN - MAY 2020

GONDAR UPDATE



Anticipating a global travel shutdown (!) I travelled to Gondar in early March with Tim Beacon to unpack and commission the equipment for the new Trauma Operating Theatre. We were accompanied by Sarah Shawkat, a very experienced Theatre Sister and Jeremy (RP's stepson) as general gopher!

For various reasons we were limited to four days in Gondar but with immense hard work by the Team we managed to unpack everything from the store area and get it all set up and running. This also gave us the opportunity to carry out some training on not only the Orthopaedic instrumentation but also the anaesthesia machine, sterilising unit and portable X-ray machine.

Cont/d

As there were still some outstanding final building works to be completed we were unable to carry out any operations on live patients as it would have been too much of an infection risk. However Laurence Wicks has recently been appointed as an Orthopaedic Consultant at the CURE Hospital in Addis and will supervise the first operations as and when this becomes possible.

Covid 19 permitting there will be a further training visit in July with the official opening currently scheduled for the week beginning November 9th to which all Club Members are warmly invited.

Richard Power

YOUNG WRITER SUCCESSES AT DISTRICT

The theme for this year's Young Writer Competition was 'Connections'. We received hundreds of entries across all ages and I am grateful to the Rotarians who helped me read and mark the entries.

We had two outstanding entries. Mimi Hudson won the District intermediate age group (11 to 14) and is going forward to national finals. In the junior age group (6 to 10) Roma Basra came joint second.

Mimi and Roma's entries are below.

Moira Bartlett

MIMI HUDSON

The candles seem to dance in the moonlight, illuminating the sugar skulls that we had so delicately designed just the day before, the souls really do seem to have come back, if only for one night, glinting inside the dark, cavernous eye-sockets of our skulls. Shivering in delight and unease, a chill runs up my spine as I place the last candle on the *Ofrenda*, where my grandpa Alberto lies peacefully under the dirt.

It's a nice thought: that the dead's souls return to Earth, for one day, each year. To me, I feel that I'm re-connecting with my grandpa, and it gives me a chance to remember him in a joyful surrounding with the people I love—my family and

friends. On every *dia de los Muertos*, I can feel Alberto's presence and feel happy, not sad, that he has moved on to a new beginning.

I walk into my house as the comforting smell of baking bread hits me. It was grandpa's favourite food, and on this day, we bake and eat it in honour of him and the person he was. At the moment, my mother is shaping more dough to create bones, and although some might say its gruesome, we feel that the bones commemorate Alberto's death.

We've plastered the bouse with pictures of Alberto and hung up vibrant and colourful banners to celebrate his passing to a new life. Looking at the pictures, I smile as memories come flooding back. Us strolling through the park, hand in hand, his deep, rumbling laughter echoing in my ears. I can almost hear him again, joyful and loud. I can also remember Alberto's smile—it lit up the room and had so much warmth that you couldn't help but feel special; like him and I shared a certain connection that no-one else understood.

Stepping outside and returning to his *ofrenda*, I stop and listen to the wind whistling through the trees, their branches creaking in the breeze. Suddenly, I'm overcome with emotion. Tears glisten in my eyes as sadness wells up inside me. I miss him. I miss my grandpa. If only I could talk to him, one last time. I'd tell him my feelings, my thoughts, share how my brothers are constantly fighting over video games, how my mother still loves baking and does it as often as she can, and how my grandmother loves and misses him with all her heart. As the breeze rushes in my ears, I swear I can hear Alberto whispering to me. 'I'm here'.

ROMA BASRA

Ben and I had been very close for years. It was love at first sight and our connection was out of this world. We even went to the same university. I couldn't imagine life without him. He was the light of my life.

Unfortunately, everything changed when I moved in with him. He became distant and hardly noticed me. Even when I was with him, he would spend all his time on his laptop chatting to others. His emerald green eyes used to sparkle impishly, but they were now ice like. I felt dejected and despondent.

The apartment was in total chaos—curtains were always closed; dirty dishes piled high in the sink; rubbish spilling out of the bin; books, papers and clothes scattered and crumpled. A stench of rotteness and decay enveloped me. Looking upwards, I could see the lights shimmering with cobwebs, and a cloud of dust hung over everything. This was not my Ben. Why was he behaving like this? Was he not well?

Shockingly he began to be quite rude and stern to me when I was with him. He often shouted "a snail can go faster than you", if he wanted me to do something. Or if I made any sound he would shout "for the millionth time be quiet"! He just didn't like the sight or sound of my anymore. This would often result in me getting into a jam. He was drifting away from me and there was nothing I could do. He would often leave me alone in the apartment. I would sit in the dreary, dismal darkness wondering what I had done wrong.

He would come home and go to bed totally ignoring me, even though I tried to get his attention by winking and blinking at him. Click click, I would make a sound, be he wouldn't look my way. His voice was high and harsh, like the shriek of a seagull towards me. I had nowhere else to go and he knew this. Maybe he wanted me to leave?

Over time, I felt the colour drain from my body, I was starting to feel exhausted but I was still able to do my job, not that Ben appreciated it. I began to feel depressed and worried that he was going to trade me in for a new model. I had to do something. Ben was really changing. He had many new friends. They were a lot more stylish and modern compared to me.

Sadly, I had to accept that we had lost that special connection. Tears were like a flowing river down my cheeks. Then that dreaded night. Ben arrived home late and his smile was as empty as a carcass. He flexed his fingers. Formed them into fist and advanced menacingly towards me. He grabbed me harshly. Frogmarched me up the wooden stairs and forced me into the attic. Chilly black waves of darkness drowned me forever.

After all, I was only a printer.