

Lend a Hand

By George

The Newsletter of Perth St Johns Rotary Club

MAY 2004 ISSUE

CLUB NEWS

Council Matters

The following is a summary of the May Council meeting prepared by President David.

Presidents' Items: District Conference registration forms are available from the President. It is hoped members will support district as it has made a great attempt to reduce the cost of this event and provide an interesting programme. Weekend of 17th

-19th September in Apex hotel Dundee. See President for details.

Cheques for £3,000 will be handed over to **CATH** and **Perth Link of Chernobyl Children's Lifeline** in the near future.

The **June council meeting** will be a joint one with the incoming and outgoing convenors all present. The list of committees for next year is now on the board for everyone's information.

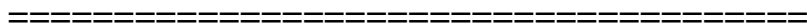
Treasurer: Charity account balance is at present £18,142 with still £6,000 committed for our major beneficiaries and includes Maureen's visit to the Mercy Ships postponed from last year (c£1500).

International: Council will recommend a donation of £250 to Edinburgh Global Partnership, an Edinburgh University based charity which is headed up by a former RYLA student of the club, Caroline Proctor. They are to build a school in Mizanda, Malawi and need to raise £5,000. They have achieved half of this total

already. Tom Howie has done a background check and they have a very good track record and thus we are confident they will deliver. Caroline will also come and talk to the club on completion.

Ways and Means: The Police Club has done an enormous amount of work on our behalf in preplanning the **Donkey Derby** on the 20th of May. We must now ensure a good turnout of friends, guests and members on the night. Venue is the Royal George, 7.00 for 7.30 and 100-150 people will ensure a huge success. **Every member plus 2 friends will do it.**

Attendance and House: as discussed at length at the AGM, Brian has sourced new club banners and we propose to buy 100 at a cost of £3.60 each.



Door Duty

26 May Tom Howie and Ian Mutch
2 June John Lewington
9 June Bert Macdonald
16 June John McIntyre
23 June Ian Marr and
30 June Alan Mathieson



and George Pollock
and Euna Scott
and Robert Scott
Sandy Scrimgeour
and Sandy Taylor

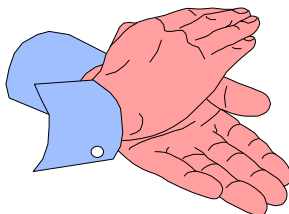
Speakers



26 May Charles Lidstone: Positive Parenting
2 June Bill Grigg: Muirton Master Plan
9 June International Meeting
16 June Club Meeting
23 June Ian Wightman: Business Support Group

Vote of Thanks

26 May Sandy Taylor:
9 June Neil Townend:
30 June Maureen Young



2 June Bruce Thomson
23 June Roger Ward

Bottle Duty



26 May Michael Archibald: **2 June** Elaine Cant
9 June David Cuthbert: **16 June** Albert Donaldson
23 June TBA: **30 June** Michael Jamieson

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

When I went to lunch today, I noticed an old lady near a park bench sobbing her eyes out. I stopped and asked her what was wrong.

She said, "I have a 22 year old husband at home. He makes love to me every morning and then gets up and makes me pancakes, sausage, fresh fruit and freshly ground coffee."

I said, "Well, then why are you crying?"

She said, "He makes me homemade soup for lunch and my favourite cakes and then makes love to me for half the afternoon".

I said, "Well, why are you crying?"

She said, "For dinner he makes me a gourmet meal with wine and my favourite dessert and then makes love to me until 2:00 a.m.

I said, "Well, why in the world would you be crying?"

She said, "I can't remember where I live!!!!"

LIFE IN THE 1500'S

(For those that can remember that far back!)

The next time you are washing your hands and complain because the water temperature isn't just how you like it, think about how things used to be. Here are some facts about the 1500s:

Most people got married in June because they took their yearly bath in May, and still smelled pretty good by June. However, they were starting to smell, so brides carried a bouquet of flowers to hide the body odor. Hence the custom today of carrying a bouquet when getting married.

Baths consisted of a big tub filled with hot water. The man of the house had the privilege of the nice clean water, then all the other sons and men, then the women and finally the children Last of all the babies. By then the water was so dirty you could actually lose someone in it. Hence the saying, "Don't throw the baby out with the bath water."

Houses had thatched roofs-thick straw-piled high, with no wood underneath. It was the only place for animals to get warm, so all the cats and other small animals (mice, bugs) lived in the roof.

When it rained it became slippery and sometimes the animals would slip and off the roof. Hence the saying "It's raining cats and dogs."

There was nothing to stop things from falling into the house. This posed a real problem in the bedroom where bugs and other droppings could mess up your nice clean bed. Hence, a bed with big posts and a sheet hung over the top afforded some protection. That's how canopy beds came into existence.

The floor was dirt. Only the wealthy had something other than dirt. Hence the saying "dirt poor." The wealthy had slate floors that would get slippery in the winter when wet, so they spread thresh (straw) on floor to help keep their footing. As the winter wore on, they adding more thresh until when you opened the door it would all start slipping outside. A piece of wood was placed in the entranceway. Hence the saying a "thresh hold."

(Getting quite an education, aren't you?)

In those old days, they cooked in the kitchen with a big kettle that always hung over the fire. Every day they lit the fire and added things to the pot. They ate mostly vegetables and did not get much meat. They would eat the stew for dinner, leaving leftovers in the pot to get cold overnight and then start over the next day. Sometimes stew had food in it that had been there for quite a while. Hence the rhyme, "Peas porridge hot, peas porridge cold, peas porridge in the pot nine days old."

Sometimes they could obtain pork, which made them feel quite special. When visitors came over, they would hang up their bacon to show off. It was a sign of wealth that a man could "bring home the bacon." They would cut off a little to share with guests and would all sit around and "chew the fat."

Those with money had plates made of pewter. Food with high acid content caused some of the lead to leach onto the food, causing lead poisoning death. This happened most often with tomatoes, so for the next 400 years, tomatoes were considered poisonous.

Bread was divided according to status. Workers got the burnt bottom of the loaf, the family got the middle, and guests got the top, or "upper crust."

Lead cups were used to drink ale or whisky. The combination would sometimes knock the imbibers out for a couple of days. Someone walking along the road would take them for dead and prepare them for burial. They were laid out on the kitchen table for a couple of days and the family would gather around and eat and drink and wait and see if they would wake up. Hence the custom of holding a "wake."

England is old and small and the local folks started running out of places to bury people. So they would dig up coffins and would take the bones to a "bone-house" and reuse the grave. When reopening these coffins, 1 out of 25 coffins were found to have scratch marks on the inside and they realized they had been burying people alive. So they would tie a string on the wrist of the corpse, lead it through the coffin and up through the ground and tie it to a bell. Someone would have to sit out in the graveyard all night (the "graveyard shift") to listen for the bell; thus, someone could be "saved by the bell" or was considered a "dead ringer."

And that's the truth. Now, whoever said that History was boring!

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The magazine is also available on our website

WWW.perthsjrotary.org.uk

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