



Rotary club of Farnham

Newsheet November 2023

Events through November

Farnham Remembrance Parade Sunday 12th November



The Presidents of both Rotary Clubs – John Lewis and Ann Foster – took part in the Remembrance Parade. As Councillor Alan Earwaker, Mayor of Farnham said: “The ... parade provides an opportunity for the community to come together and remember those who lost their lives while serving in the armed forces.”

There was a two-minute silence followed by the Last Post, readings and the laying of wreaths. And after the service at the war memorial, representatives from the uniformed and armed services and youth organisations took part in a march past, and a salute was taken outside Farnham Town Hall in South Street by the Mayor of Farnham and visiting dignitaries.

Litter Pick

On the wet, windy and cold Saturday morning of November 4th a group of volunteers were to be seen on Gostrey Meadow litter picking along with MP Jeremy Hunt. All were helping to clear part of our town of not just plastic, but all rubbish that is left behind. And sadly there was quite a lot of it, amongst which there were many sweet wrappers.

Amongst the group were members of both Rotary clubs – Ann Foster and John Catell, along with Friends of Rotary.



Visit to Surrey County Council's Grundon Recycling Plant at Leatherhead

On Wednesday 22nd November, five (members and friends of Rotary) were welcomed at the Grundon Recycling Plant in Leatherhead. Below is a description by some of those visitors:

The poetic by Michael Atkinson: “The plant, with its rather Dickensian name, is situated down a narrow road through underbrush in the hinterland between Leatherhead and Oxshott, only about half a mile from some of the latter’s up-scale houses and gated communities. It stands on a bleak, rubbish-strewn clearing and is right next to what is euphemistically called a water treatment operation. That is inhabited by a large flock of apparently well-fed seagulls who rest contentedly most of the time on the dark surfaces of the settling pools.

After we had registered to enter the enormous hangar of the recycling plant and been issued with hard hats and hi-vis jackets I was made doubly deaf by the obligatory substitution of my hearing aids by ear plugs. Then, and throughout the visit, the plant’s manager briefed those who could hear him fluently and well. Guided by him we then went inside, round a circuit of iron walkways and ladders.

What we saw was like a dream by Kafka illustrated by M.C.Escher. Conveyor belts were hurrying in different directions on different levels from the ground floor almost to the roof. Their contents gave off a faint but unmistakable whiff of the dustbins from which these materials had come but the belts contrived to get them mostly sorted by a

combination of gravity, air blasts and magnetism. The final sorting was being done by some surprisingly healthy looking workers. They were attentively making a silent and judicious selection of items to be reprieved from the headlong rush into oblivion and compression. For the main product of the process was to have the sorted materials made into large wire-bound bales to be taken away for final disposal elsewhere. We stumbled out into the fading grey light of the November day, relieved ourselves to have been judged not yet ready for recycling. In sum, it was a very interesting visit of an unusual nature to see a most essential industry in the community, which is little known to most residents and tourists. The memory of it will haunt me every time I attend to our blue bin and am henceforth doubly careful about what I put into it!”

The prosaic by Alex Lentz: “The production line at Grundon is retrieving and selling materials to companies that are creating goods using recycled materials. They retrieve aluminium, steel, three types of plastics (HDPE used in plastic milk bottles, PET which is used to make plastic drinks bottles and food packaging trays), cardboard and paper, all individually bailed up and sold to other businesses:

- Plastics, aluminium, steel and glass (which unfortunately is more expensive to recycle than to produce from scratch) stay in country;
- Newspapers and cardboard (which should be clean) are shipped to India.

The items that they can't recover are either shipped to be used in cement-making furnaces in this country or to Europe where they are used to generate electricity.

On arrival, large pieces of cardboard are removed and sent on their way, then materials go up a steep incline where the glass bottles fall to shatter into little pieces which then fall through to a glass bin. Electromagnets are used to retrieve steel and aluminium - one to attract steel and another to repel aluminium.

The remaining materials go through a light source to remove, it is thought, paper.

The next stage is the handpicking of materials. First cardboard and then plastic items are pulled off the conveyor belt and placed in the appropriate bin. One picker per bin.

The price Grundon receives for plastic depends on value of oil - if the oil price is high products sell for a higher price but when the price of oil drops it becomes cheaper for manufacturers to use oil.

Recycled plastic is darker in colour than virgin plastic and continues to get darker the more times it is recycled which makes it a less attractive packaging material - most people would prefer to buy their milk in translucent bottles.

and Brian and Jacqui Thomas: Both Jacqui and I thought the visit to Grundon was made very interesting by our friendly guide, Peter, the plant manager. It was difficult to hear some of the explanation because of the noise and the necessity to wear ear protection, so a

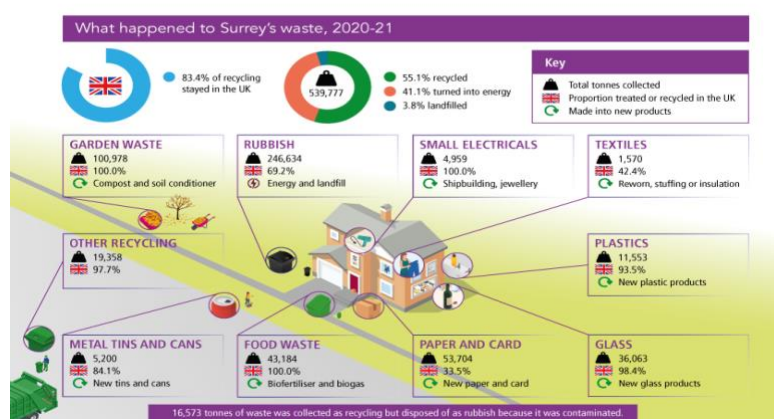
small group of six to eight is ideal, but I think we'll all remember the necessary scale and speed required to process all the material coming in to the plant for recycling. It was a very different type of plant from the ones I used to visit which were amazingly tidy oil refineries and engineering works.

I asked Peter what would be the three things that we, as his suppliers of his raw material, could do to make his job easier. His answer was:

1. Don't put large items such as frying pans and umbrellas in to your recycling bin. They get stuck in the gaps between the belts and require the plant to be shut down to clear them out of the way. A pair of jeans created a longer shutdown.
2. Thin plastic sheet is not recyclable by the plant (as per Waverley's instructions), even if it says recyclable on the plastic. There was a lot of this that had to be manually removed on the picking belts. The only plastics that they can recycle are food/milk containers, yoghurt pots etc. – not hard plastic.
3. Small items, less than 4cm, such as milk container tops need to be left attached to the container, otherwise the plant system will drop them from the belt along with the rejected material.

I asked about the washing of food pots and containers and he said it was only necessary to give them a rinse.

For more information visit: <https://www.grundon.com/facilities/materials-recovery-facilities>



Talks Through November

Tuesday 2nd November

Bank of England - Talk by Rotary Member
George Alford



George as the Banker he was at the Bank of England for over 20 years.

George started by telling us that in 1820 William Cobbett wrote a paper entitled 'Paper against Gold – The History and Mystery of the Bank of England, of the Debt, of the Stocks, of the Sinking Fund, and of all the other Tricks and Contrivances, Carried on by the Means of Paper Money.'

He also told us that the Bank had just confirmed the interest rate would be 5.25% - meaning no change. He said he would talk a little about why that matters and why it might affect the next election. As a holiday job as a teenager, he had to lean out of the window from where he could see the back door of the Bank and say whether people were running out of it – for if they were the rate had changed!

He would be talking a little bit about:

Base Rate – rate at which Bank of England will lend to commercial banks

Bond Rates – set by the markets

Exchange Rate – as we need foreigners to buy our debt and affect ease of which this happens.

The Bank of England was founded in 1694 and was raising money for the Government. We had had a bad war, losing to the French, so government needed money. But it wasn't the only organisation – over the next 10 years there were two major competitors – South Sea Company, who were for a long time expected to get the job, and Hollow Sword Blade Company (1720). They had a good chance and did more banking than the Bank of England.

Initially the Bank met in Livery Company Halls, working for 40 years from Mercers Hall and before that from Grace Hall. Only after 50 years after it was founded did it move to Threadneedle Street. In the Court Room, where interest rate is set, there is a beautiful room with at one end something looking like a clock but which is in fact a wind direction indicator. All directors were merchants and if the wind changed their goods would arrive sooner than expected so meeting would be suspended as trade was more important than setting of interest rates – or anything else they might have been doing!



Bank of England

It took some time for the Bank to get its supremacy. It wasn't until 1844 that it was the only Bank allowed to print notes and not until 1946 that it was nationalised and its position as the central bank secure.

There are only two tools for raising money – to borrow or tax the population. Ministers of Finance - Treasury - would prefer to borrow and the Bank of England to tax, leading to tension/'fights' between the government and the Bank. This led to Gordon Brown's decision, strongly influenced by the Treasurer, to give the Bank its so called independence

but which basically emasculated it Prior to this move the Bank had responsible for the supervision of the other banks along with interest rates.

Today, the Bank's job is to maintain the inflation rate at 2% via managing the interest rates. If the inflation rate is either below or above the 2% target, the Governor has to write a letter of apology to the government, so over last 20 years have been a whole lot of letters re both! The Governor should make no decision that can be seen as political which of course is almost impossible with the result that every Governor gets into trouble with one or other political party or both. It is not just the movement of the rate itself that matters – it is that predictions for the future that can come from these movements. So today they announced no change – but what really mattered was that they said 'didn't see interest rates coming down in foreseeable future/any time soon' – therefore maybe not until next year. Potentially clearly will affect an election result. So difficult place for the Governor to be in over next few weeks.

Immediately after the announcement today, stock markets went up by 1%, debt borrowing came down a bit and the exchange rate went up – all messages that predict interest rates are going to come down but not yet.

The Bank only owns two gold bars though

recently the vaults contained 400,000 bars – ie £150 billion of gold. After Fort Knox it is the next place where people leave their gold. When there is an exchange rate crisis, in say an African country and as a result they have to sell, all that happens is that one sticker is moved from one box to another!

A very chilling fact is that there is one bar held that was made up from Jewellery etc previously owned by the Jewish population during the war – it is not displayed. Why do we know – because of immaculate clerical records.

The Bank has one or two lovely treasures; Lovely Meisson Chinese dinner service made for the Bank; wonderful Flemish tapestries gifted after those looked after during the war were returned; a mosaic floor.

George said that when Eddie George was Governor his secretary had a secretary, so making it that much more difficult to get to see him. He used to take full responsibility for decisions – reckoned his job to sort things out – asking banks for sums for the 'lifeboat' – sum used to save others. When an American bank suggested he had to go to his General Council before he could agree to the suggestion, Eddie George left the room for a moment - time for a break. During this time the American was asked 'do you want to do business in London or not'? When Eddie returned he was assured his money.

Whilst George Brown got the Bank on a very strong legal basis, which was good, it also meant that with a decent accountant it was possible to complete the forms and create a bank, whereas previously it had been down to Governor to decide. As a result, a number of banks got in that shouldn't eg Icelandic Bank.

After nationalisation, government had the right to direct the bank, but it has never done so. Independence reinforced the idea that the market should have confidence in the Bank of England being able to manage matters without over influence from politicians.

**Talk Thursday 16th November
Kids for Kids by Patricia Parker, Chair,
introduced by President Ann Foster**



President, Ann Foster and Patricia Parker

Patricia said Darfur is in the middle of Africa and whilst about the size of France it's population is only of 9m compared to France's 68m. Interestingly it has the largest aquifer in African and is rich in gold.

Patricia started by thanking us for our support 4 years ago when we responded to an emergency appeal for soap for the villagers suffering from ignorance, no health care and lack of support in the midst of the pandemic. At the time 10 people were dying every single day during that first year and they had no idea of why and what was happening in the wider world. The donation of soap made them aware of the dangers and therefore made a huge difference. Some of the 110 villages Kids for Kids support never got Covid.

Patricia told us that what the charity is doing fits perfectly into the key rotary priorities.

She then went on to tell us about conditions today - with Darfur in the midst of war. So whilst Covid has gone it has been replaced with something much worse - violence is there that is decimating the country. The Rapid Support Forces (RSF - previously known as the Janjaweed) are running amok and have captured the four major cities and are now attacking the regional capital. In 2019 there were peaceful demonstrations because of the desperate conditions – eg they had no means of feeding the children. These demonstrations led to the overthrow of 30 years of dictatorship

and corruption by President Bashir. The military took over after he went and put in place a civilian government with hope of democracy. There was huge pressure from the population for justice and the civilian government investigated corruption. However, this was rife in the military and the result was a coup last April and the arrest of the civilian government. The sidekick of Bashir (the military general) and Hemeti (in charge of the RSF) together arrested the civilian government. 6 months ago they fell out. There are now about 118,000 in the RSF who are backed by UAE with a similar sized army, backed by Egypt. With the shelling of Khartoum 6m have fled Sudan. The RSF are mostly back into Darfur and there is a possibility that Darfur might be separated from Sudan, which she said would be a disaster.

Heavily armed vehicles are attacking the villages – with genocide being committed – arabs against the Africans.

So what to do? Kids for Kids was initially helping the children. Then violence started and has continued ever since. Only through the wonderful volunteers who are wanting to help is it possible to continue. They are supporting 110 villages (about 2,000 in each) in the middle of nowhere. The war has devastated normal life - the price of flour increased by 500%. All are very poor. She showed us a photograph of a group of children and pointed out one who had a pouch hanging around his neck. She told us this included a prayer from the Koran – the best the mother could do in the face of no healthcare for him. She also pointed out in another photograph of a group of children that the hair was no longer dark but fair because of a shortage of protein.



The charity provides goats as they will not be stolen as would be the case with cows, horses or sheep. And the milk can be used to feed the children. Access to water is key – and by

February there is no surface water. The aquifer means that they can get water by going to the



dry river bed and digging a hole from which they can extract water. But eventually this dries up in the middle of the summer, after which they have to use hand pumps – a priority for Kids for Kids. They can't dig new ones as they would be stolen, so instead they are collecting money to repair the existing ones, which they will do once it is safe to do so. There are about 375 hand pumps supported by There is no Aid Agency digging hand pumps for any of the villages. them.

The organisation started as a result of her seeing a young child having to walk 7 hours to get water. Their way of life is very simple – their huts are made of straw – with a fence around it if there are enough resources - a hoe will be a stick with a stone tied to it and the meeting place is the shade under a tree. All villages have leaders who are chosen on the basis of whether they are considered 'wise' and philanthropic.

She wants the organisation to be doing more than giving charity - she wants to empower the local people and lift them out of abject poverty by providing a whole package of help, which they do through the employment of just 3 employees in-country – a programme manager, project officer and a cook/cleaner. The support they provide includes:

- The poorest families are elected by the village and the women are loaned 5 nanny goats. Children have milk immediately. After 2 years they pass on 5 goats to another family. When the herd is big enough (20 after 2 years), goats can be sold enabling other items, such as a

donkey cart, can be bought. And so the villages have a way of thriving;

- They have trained village midwives leading to an increase in healthy births. Sees this as a vitally important aspect of their work. £2,000/midwife and try to train 40 or so at a time – trying to build a fund for this;
- Provide farm tools;
- mosquito nets help to reduce the deaths from malaria and the provision of 2 big blankets/child – makes a huge difference to their health;
- They train the children to look after the animals – children shepherds' committees in each village;

They have a stock of veterinary drugs, mosquito nets, sorghum (flour) and spare parts for the hand pumps ready to be delivered to the villages. They have asked for soap but will not deliver just now.

They have raised £32,000 for kindergartens – and now have 14 with 1,000 children attending.

They always plant trees (have planted 35,000) by the buildings in order to provide shade and also to mitigate against the effects of climate change eg more sand storms and more.

If villages run projects well they can choose between a veterinary unit, a kindergarten or a health unit – some villages have all three.

Recently 1,000 people were queuing up to say 'thank you' to Kids for Kids – their impact is dramatic and it all began because of one child. This child is now a man with his own child attending the kindergarten.

They adopt 5 villages/year which costs between £22-33,000 to introduce all aspects.

They are looking for emergency help for 16 villages. If this is successful they will look to expand the operation. But their primary objective is to plan for more sustainable projects through the adoption of more villages. Now looking to raise £38,000 which includes no admin costs.

<https://www.kidsforkids.org.uk>

Talk Thursday 23rd November
Farnham Chapels by Iain Lynch, Farnham
Town Clerk and Honorary Rotary Member

A description of the transformation of the 3 Farnham chapels, which has taken 13-14 years and more to complete. Whilst we have four cemeteries, Badshot Lea is without a chapel.

In the 1870's the chapels were owned by the predecessor of the District Council, then by Waverley Borough Council. When they were inherited by Farnham Town Council there had been no investment in them for a considerable period of time with the result they were all in need of attention. One was being used as a store, Hale was dilapidated and the other had gone through a number of iterations and was basically empty. So the Council worked with the Farnham Buildings Preservation Trust, working with the architect who restored Farnham Castle. It was important they got it right as all are unique and are constructed in materials reflecting the different parts of Farnham. The report from the Trust suggested that Hale was really too far gone to do anything with, but FTC said they wanted to know the options. What they have done there has already won international awards.

The West Street Chapel was originally two – one for non-conformists, the other for conformists, with a path in the middle for the hearse to go through. Later they were joined up. They are made of crunch stone – basically rubbish stone not like bargate – very powdery and needs to be faced.

The avenue of trees at the side of the path are probably the original ones – they are now rather large/tall and probably will have to be cut back. One grave on the right hand side is that of Charles Trimmer (philanthropist) who built some of our almshouses, the hospital and united breweries.

As a result of the report, it was decided to sell Green Lane Chapel. From the money raised they turned West Street Chapel into an attractive sculpture's studio - a relatively inexpensive restoration. They put in water, electricity and toilets and now have an internationally renowned sculpture (Ian Bishop) using the space. He lives just opposite and had designs on it for years. He

has done some amazing commissioning all over the world. (look at video on FTC website).



West Street Chapel

Green Lane cemetery probably offers one of the best views of Farnham. It was built by Steadman of Steadman & Blower and the original drawings are with them. It has within it the grave of the Sturt family who are very well known in Farnham. Also very close by is the first Sherlock Holmes actor's grave. It was sold at auction for £3,000 and bought by a local family who wanted to convert it into a house. However, they decided against this and instead sold it to the Plymouth Brethren who converted it into a simple chapel – just a box inside the original building with plain walls. They wanted to buy it as they had sold their gospel hall in west street to their own care home.



Green Lane Chapel

So to Hale, where the chapels were built by Sydney Stapley in local stone – flint and brick. He grew up in Kent and came to Farnham through marriage and became the Borough Surveyor. As in West Street they were a pair of chapels. When Iain joined the Council the

cemetery was closed, but it is now open at the wish of the local community. Iain said Sydney Stapley was better known for the first church that was built in Aldershot, at the time when Sandhurst was there and similarities can be seen with the Hale Chapels eg the roundels. They were opened in 1872 by Samuel Wilberforce, then Bishop of Winchester.

The Hale chapels today no longer exist - instead there is a community garden. They spent 10 years trying to find a solution - considered conversion into a home(s), but not allowed because of need to protect the Dartford Warbler close by on the heath, a new community facility, but the cost benefit ratio didn't work out and the school didn't want them. So a garden was seen as the solution that

would retain the heritage elements of chapels as wished for by the local community. They were opened and reconsecrated by the Bishop of Winchester. Transform, an award winning firm of landscape gardens were chosen to do the work. Friday next week they will receive a national award and may become the overall winner - one of 3.

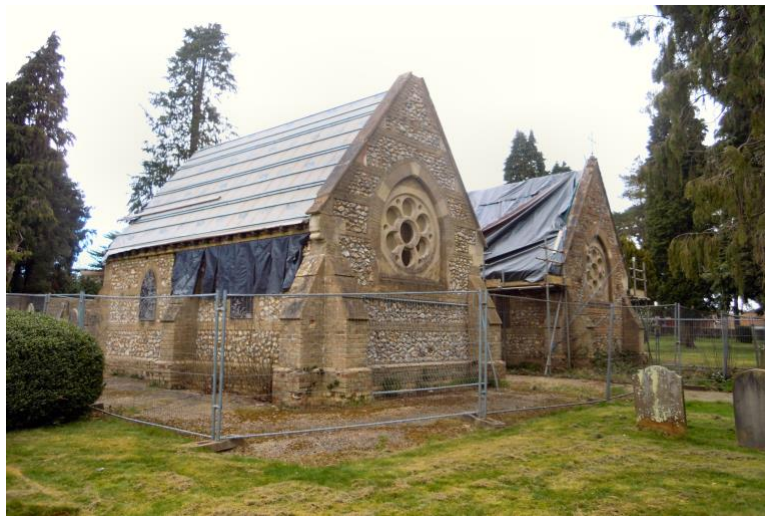
They will also enter the garden into the Civic Trust Awards.

The breakdown of costs is:

£300,000 - proceeds from sale of Green Lane Chapel

£100,000 - renovation of West street Chapel

£186,000 - building of Hale Community Garden.



Derelect Hale Chapels



The new Hale Community Garden

Talk Thursday 30th November
ZooParc de Beauval, Saint-Aignan, France
by Rotary Member Michael Nicholls

Mike gave us a tour of this wonderful ZooParc via photos, videos and verbal description. It is about 194 km SW of Paris and 300km south of Calais and he came to know it after buying a house close by in 1992.

He likened it to a much larger version of Bird World with many more animals and space. Bird World was started in 1968 by Roy Harvey and his wife, with the Jenny Wren Farm added in 1990. It gradually grew but they are confined by lack of space. In 2020 it was taken over by the Haskins group. Some years later, Zooparc began its life with no problems re space which can be solved by just buying the next field. It was created by Françoise Delord, who was running a prestigious music hall in Paris. She had a great love of birds and had won two African Silverbills which soon increased to 300 and to 2,000 by 1980. To house them she bought a house in the Loire Valley and set up this space on same principles, as Mike sees it, as Bird World. It has grown in size over the years and now is run by her children following her recent death.

In 1991 they acquired 2 white tigers which because they are unusual as well as beautiful, attract a great deal of interest. However, they are only white because of a DNA fault and can't survive in the wild as they would be killed. A mating male and female with the same fault will produce white offspring and this is what they were able to do at Zooparc. However, they no longer breed them as the now see it as the wrong thing to do.

In 1992 they built a chimpanzee and monkey house, followed by a vivarium for snakes, crocodiles and lizards, and then a tropical bird greenhouse and in 1995 a sea lion pool with 2 demonstrations/day - not Mike's cup of tea.

In 2011, a Chinese area opened with red pandas and then later they introduced an area for giant pandas (so called because of their relatively large size compared to the former). They are all on lease from china with any babies (of which they have 3 which includes

twins) going to China when they reach 2 years of age. In 1998, they set aside an area for hyaenas and wild dogs and a family of English elephants (so called because they came from Longleat in England!).

There is a field with 3 white rhinos, giraffes, wildebeest at top of a slope. Mike had wondered why they did not attack until he discovered there is a big ditch with an electric fence at the bottom. There is much more - an Australian section with kangaroos and koalas and in 2010 they created 2.5 hectares of Asiatic plains with Indian rhinos. This year, birds of various kinds totalled 650.



flamingos

They have two bird shows/day through the summer with 600 birds taking part - big and small, including parrots - with additional ones in spring and autumn. It left Mike wondering how they train small birds and train them all to return to their cages? They have a hippopotamus reserve - one level under water, then ground level and then looking down on them. They are always looking to improve conditions - the lions have been moved from old fashioned cages into a much bigger savannah. And there is more - with a north American territory opened in 2018, a massive greenhouse with bats, miniature hippos, loads of birds and manatees and a cable car taking visitors from one side to the other. And they have just opened a South American area with a walkway 20ft off the ground from where you see monkeys at your level and birds above.

They belong to a few conservation organisations and are doing what they can to help, with a greenhouse for gorillas and manatees, support for the Brazilian ant eater

(which is under threat from traffic), help with eradicating bullfrogs, which are invading France, protection of the endangered Tasmanian Devil and last year they had their first birth from two parents born in captivity and returned to the wild.



The walkway



Anteaters

They provide:

- Short talks and guided tours each day
- School visit and activity booklets for children
- Information on the animals - what they eat, where they come from, whether they are threatened or not
- Behind the scenes tours – at an extra cost

Mike gave us a few more facts:

- The site is spread over 25 hectares – nearly 62 acres
- They have 600 staff and in summer 1300 – with many students
- They use 5 tons food/day
- 21,000 people use the cable car/day



cable car in the distance

- They had 2m visitors last year
- 39 euros to get in/day; 55 Euros for a 2-day pass and a year's pass for 99 Euros

It is rated the 9th best place in France to visit but do have a popularity problem – Mothers Day so many they couldn't move!

Website: <https://www.zoobeaupal.com/en/>

Events in November

Goodwill Lunch Thursday 14th December

No Lunchtime Talks in December

Events in January

January 17th Youth Speaks at the University for the Creative Arts

Lunchtime Talks in January

Thursday 4th January – please look at the website

Thursday 11th January – Maureen Swage, Rotary Member – Brightwells Gostrey

Thursday 18th January – please look at website

Thursday 25th January – Roy Waight, Rotary Member - "What the Tithe Maps show us about land ownership in the Farnham area"

If, as a Friend, you are interested in coming along to any of the talks and for lunch (£20) please email lunches@rotaryfarnham.co.uk on the Monday before, saying whether you'd like, fish, meat or vegetarian, pudding or fresh fruit. We start gathering at The Bush, Farnham from 12.30 for lunch at 1.00 and the talk at 2.00, finishing at 2.30 pm