



Friday 14th March 2025

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Lola - our local MP SPEAKS

We had a fine turnout of forty members that included the welcome appearance of Derek Alderson and Roy Fenner to hear a few words from our recently elected Member of Parliament, Lola McEvoy.

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President Jeff welcomed Lola and the two members of her entourage - Asha and Mark, to the lunch, before asking Rotarian Kevin Robinson for his thought for the day.

Kevin recounted a recent visit by himself and Nigel Little to Darlington College where they were given a tour by newly joined, corporate member David Gartland. Here they were inspired by seeing all the young fresh faces, setting out on their first steps to success. His thought for the day was to youth and the future and to remember three things - 1 - Be kind, 2 - Be kind and 3 - Be kind.

Sports officer, Ian Lyle followed Kevin, who pointed out that on every table, were entry forms for our **Charity AM - AM Golf Day**, which will be held on **Thursday 24th July** at Blackwell Grange Golf Club. This year we have a new sponsor in our new corporate member - Darlington Building Society, thanks to Andrew Craddock. Other sponsors are SG Petch and Kingfisher Finance Ltd.

When Ian finished, Nigel Little reported that Mowden School were looking for Rotarians to marshal their sponsored 'walk to school days'. Later they will also be having a 'cycle to school day.' The last time they did it over 400 pupils rode to school - possibly the promise of a free breakfast might have had something to do with it.

President Jeff commented on his attendance at the Youth Committee meeting, before asking Walid about member's health. Walid reported that Richard Western was back home and recovering from his recent setback. Secretary Andy Teague was still receiving treatment and that Gabriel Lowes was settling in nicely at Abbeyfield under the watchful eye of fellow resident, John Turner. To this John commented that things had improved a great deal since Gabriel had acquired his new hearing aids.

Jeff then announced the Bonus Ball winners Gail Wiper and Barry Chapman. He went on to draw the winning ticket in the wine draw which went to Angela Stevenson.

The business completed he asked Lola to give us her views on life as the new member of Parliament for Darlington.

Lola opened by thanking Rotary for the invitation to speak and complemented the Dolphin Centre and the staff for an excellent meal. *Over*

March

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Friday 21st 07:15 Club Breakfast meeting Club Recruitment Workshop

Friday 28th 12:15 Club Lunchtime meeting Club Recruitment Workshop

April

Friday 4th 07:15 Club Breakfast meeting

Friday 11th 12.15 Club Lunchtime Meeting

Friday 18th GOOD FRIDAY - NO MEETING

Friday 25th 12:15 Club Lunchtime meeting ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Five Dates to Note

Thursday 8th May: International Dinner, Darlington College

Thursday 15th May: Quoits Night, Quoit Club

Thursday 22nd May: Chris Lloyd - 200th Anniversary of S&DR, Bannatyne Hotel

Tuesday 10th June: Choirs Against Cancer, Central Hall, Dolphin Centre

Friday 27th June: Handover Dinner, Headlam Hall (No Lunchtime meeting)

Boards and Email notification coming soon

Lunchtime News >>> >>> >>> >>> >>> >>> >>>



This was followed by an account of a busy morning with Sky News at St. Aiden's School, where details of the much praised school's Online Safety Forum were being launched in our area.

Lola went on to describe her origins in North Road, education at George Dent, St Augustine's, Carmel and then QE. Early career in the Union sector before finally arriving in Westminster and being appointed to the prestigious Treasury Select Committee.

Here she arranged for the committee to visit the Darlington Economic Campus and while in the town took them to the covered market where a discussion with stallholders and public took place regarding the possibility of a cashless society. Whilst there, they indulged in bargaining session with the legend that is Robin Blair.

A personal highlight of her new job was meeting the Governor of the Bank of England and coming face to face with, and holding an actual gold bar. Extremely heavy and at £895,000, the most amount of money she would hold in her hand - ever.

Another was meeting the His Majesty the King and playing on his love of trains, inviting him up to join in the S&DR 200th Celebrations later in the year - watch this space.

Lola went on to talk about skill training and meeting two young engineers in the town and making a success of this type of training for young people. Helpful comments from the floor about how this worked well in the past, saw her scribbling down notes for possible later use.

A quick mention was made of a possible Rotary visit to the House of Commons sometime later in the year, and support for her Golden Ticket scheme, which allows access for local primary school children to the play area at the new Hopetown site. Future plans, with the help of Chris Lloyd, for more blue plaque recognition for prominent Darlingtonians of the past were also touched on before Jeff asked host Jane Bradshaw to give the vote of thanks.

Jane thanked Lola for her energy and commitment on behalf of the town and her grandchildren for all her efforts on regarding online safety and wished her well as another woman taking her place in Parliament. Rotary the world over.

Westminster Ties

In a bid to make our speaker feel more at home, Rotarian Nigel Little dug out this tie that featured 'Big Ben.'

Rotary Trophy contest **Darlington Quoits** Club

We now have 31 people signed up to try and wrest the Rotary Cup from out the hands of Andrew Griffiths of Marford Litho on Thursday May 15th.

This is always a fun night and we are made most welcome by their members instruction is given and all are abilities are welcome. If for



some reason you think you won't be able to attend, please let me (Tony Marshall) know in good time as I have to give them final numbers. I will put the board round again closer to the date.

Club branded Polo shirts

I still have five Polo shirts for sale. Sizes are two Medium, one Large and two XL (2). These are £15 each if any members are interested. Dark blue in colour with the Rotary logo in deep

yellow with the Rotary lettering and Darlington in white.

Photo's for your Lanyards

Mine and Andy's request for a more up to date photograph to go on the new lanyard badges, resulted in the usual lack lustre response. So I have extended the deadline to April 1st. If you haven't supplied a new pic by then I will go with the one that is in the Members Directory.

Please send pics to the pivot email address not to our Secretary Andy Teague, he has enough to do already.

My thanks to Chris, Jane, Heather, the two Nigel's, Lindesay, Eric, David R, Robin and Ged who kindly supplied new images without any prompting.

