Rotary Darlington

Friday 19th December 2025

Christmas Cheer and Three Messages

President Jane welcomed 43 members, 3 honorary members and 30 guests to our annual Christmas Message meal. She welcomed Darlington MP Lola McEvoy as well as the many other guests who were family and friends of members. 5 apologies were received.

Jane gave a special welcome to honorary member Gabriel Lowes who was a guest of Lola having met him recently in Sainsbury's and persuaded him to join her at our lunch. Gabriel was presented with a certificate recognising that he has passed his 50th anniversary as a member of the club. He gave his thanks whist reminiscing about friends and past glories.

After eating our Christmas meal, the President asked the Dolphin Centre staff to come to receive our thanks for another year of friendly and efficient service. Senior managers Michelle and Kelly accepted a token of thanks from Jane.

Jane's announcements included confirming that Walid had no health issues to report. Also, that the Bonus Ball was won by Val Park and Jane sent the club's best wishes to her. Finally, she congratulated Kevin Hudson on becoming a grandfather.

The President's week included taking part in the Christmas Magic concert the previous evening (report and pics to follow). She thanked Ged and Lucy Wiper and everyone else involved with organising the evening. She also reflected that her TLC Choir had done their Annual Soiree which had raised £1,000 for the hospice on Monday.

Jane had been to a meeting at QE6 prior to the lunch in order to discuss their special concert to take place on Tuesday 17th February. There will be four ensembles from QE: Function Band (specialising in film scores); Orchestra; Pop Choir and their Big Band. Full details will soon be announced and we hope the evening will prove popular with members.

Jane also congratulated Darlington College, one of our corporate members, for being chosen to be a part of a national environmental project focusing on Environmental Change and Drought Awareness.

A festive table quiz was won by Jane Cook for Table 8 after a tie with Jeff Mann's Table 2. The prize was a BIG tube of Jaffa Cakes from The President.

Continued overleaf....

Coming Soon

December

Friday 26th

Boxing Day
No meeting
Merry Christmas Everybody

January

Friday 2nd (Bistro)
07:15 Breakfast Meeting
Entrance through main reception

Friday 9th (Studio)
12:15 Lunchtime Meeting
Entrance through Bull Wynd

Saturday 10th & Sunday 11th
Christmas Tree Collection
From 08:30 at Taylor's Café, Lingfield Way, Darlington DL1 4PZ

Friday 16th (Bistro)
07:15 Breakfast Meeting
Entrance through main reception

Friday 23rd (Central Hall)
12:00 Austin Brooks Youth Day
Entrance through Bull Wynd

Thursday 29th January
Meal in aid of our Food Banks at Darlington College – see overleaf

Friday 30th January
"Fifth Friday" – No meeting

February

Friday 6th (Venue TBC)
07:15 Breakfast Meeting

Friday 13th (Venue TBC)
12:15 Lunchtime Meeting

Tuesday 17th
Special Concert at Queen Elizabeth 6th Form College
Time & Cost: TBC

Friday 20th (Venue TBC)
07:15 Breakfast Meeting

Possibly - Monday 23rd
10:30: Backstage Tour of The Hippodrome Theatre

Christmas Cheer and Three Messages continued

In introducing the Christmas Message, President Jane reflected on the previous year when Roger James had given an excellent description of his memories of festivities through his many years. In order to provide something to compare with this, Jane had asked three people to give some Christmas memories of their own. “That’s alright,” Roger said, “When I retired as a GP, they replaced me with two people so now it takes three for a Christmas message!”

First up was Steve Rose who gave memories of working with young people in difficult circumstances in Kings Cross, London. He shared experiences of opening on Christmas Day and of some of the young people. Princess Diana even popped up in the memory. More information about New Horizon Youth Centre today can be found here: **NEW HORIZON**.

After Steve came Keith Gunning who started by apologising to Roger for missing his address in 2024. He explained that he had been in the Caribbean watching sperm whales and went on to show dramatic footage of these incredible creatures. Some of the talk included details which can be found in full here: **SPERM WHALES**.

Finally, Sue Campbell gave a personal account of how the magic of Christmas was reborn in her daughter when she was very young. Her belief that Father Christmas would not visit her was resolved by an incredibly generous local publican who got dressed up and came down the street specially for Sarah. The magic returned and Christmas was full of smiles.

President Jane gave some of her personal memories in giving the vote of thanks. The meeting ended with her wishing everyone, “A very Merry Christmas, Peace and Love.”

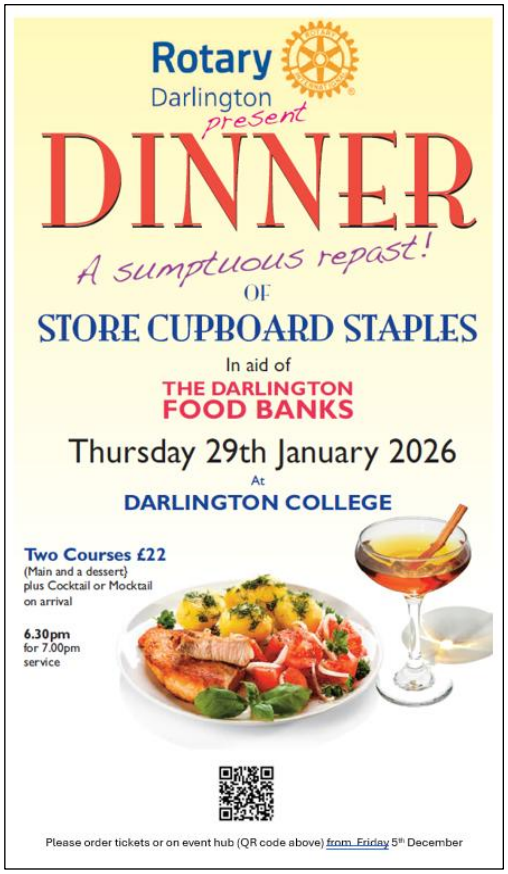
We ended 2025 by toasting “Rotary the World Over.”

DARLINGTON ROTARY EVENT HUB

Club events are booked by clicking **EVENT HUB** or using this QR code. Events are either “Members Only” or “Public” and can easily be found by scrolling through.

Dolphin Centre

Breakfasts on 2nd and 16th January will be in The Bistro as usual.
Lunch on 9th January in The Studio as usual too



Committee Meetings

All 6pm at the Dolphin Centre unless stated

January 6th: International Service
1st Tuesday bimonthly

January 8th: Community Service
1st Thursday monthly (not August)
Darlington Rugby Club, Blackwell Meadows

January 13th: Youth Service
2nd Tuesday bimonthly
Darlington Rugby Club, Blackwell Meadows

January 15th: Club Service
3rd Thursday bimonthly – venue TBA

January 28th: PR Group
4:30pm – schedule circulated to members of the group. Venue TBC

January 28th: Club Council
4th Wednesday monthly

Club Information

Website: click here
Weekly Reports: click here
Club Diary: click here
Facebook: click here
X: @darlrotary
LinkedIn: #darlingtonrotary