

Mayor's Report to Council March 2022

The highlight of events since our last meeting was the planting of the memorial tree with the Association of Jewish Refugees on St Christopher's Green on 27th January.

It was in commemoration of the role played by Stroatley Rough School on Farnham Lane in sheltering Jewish children in this country from 1934 onwards. The attendance of Rabbi Goldberg and Rev Justin Manley-Cooper added a spiritual dimension to a very moving occasion.

I've said a few words at the raising of flags on The Queen's Accession Day, on Commonwealth Day and most satisfyingly the Ukrainian flag on 2nd March in solidarity with the people subject to the unwarranted and unjustifiable invasion of their country by Putin. The little video clip shot with Jo's help has now had about 2,800 views, reflecting I think the strength of support shown by the people of Haslemere and surrounding area for their plight.

I went along to support a PSA (prostate specific antigen) cancer screening programme at The Comrades Club on 5th February and was so impressed, I've included Cancer Testing South, the organiser, in my chosen charities for the year. About 150 men were screened with two 'amber' readings and one 'red'. PSA testing is not generally available on the NHS and this service is saving lives.

On 14th February I had the pleasure of attending the opening of the exhibition of treasures from Troy at Haslemere Museum with Prof Mary Beard no less, and the Mayor of Waverley as well as Cllr Odell and others. If you haven't seen it, do go along, the urn is about 2,500 years old and looks like it was made yesterday.

Arranging this involved a huge amount of work with the lender, the British Museum, and our Museum was one of only three in the whole country to receive such artifacts. That seems to me a measure of the respect in which our Museum is held.

A big thank you to those who turned out for my Quiz evening on 4th March which raised £1,060, a new record, for charity and another thank you to Lisa, Pippa, Jo and Martin who all turned out, unpaid, on the night to make sure all went well.

It would not have been possible without all of them.

The Town Clerk and I were invited to The Chamber of Commerce's drinks evening on 9th March in the Business Centre. It was well attended and we spoke to a lot of local traders as part of the Town Team project initiated last year to cement collaboration with other town leaders.

I opened the new Age UK Surrey Vintage Charity shop on 10th March in the old William Hill premises on Junction Place. It's a terrific shop, selling good quality items and very reasonable prices to help those over 50(!) with things like Health and Wellbeing, Care & Support, Legal and Money and Work and Learning. It's independent of Age UK itself and needs to raise and spend all funds locally. Haslemere is the first shop of its kind.

11th March saw me at the Haslemere Youth Hub for a visit with Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP, the Hub being one of my charities; the evening of 12th to Haslewey to hear about events that are planned for the Platinum Jubilee of HMQ, and 15th in attendance at a splendid service at St Bride's Church, Fleet Street in celebration of the founding of King Edward's School, Witley, with also the Mayor of Godalming, Cllr Michael Steel.

We've got the opening of Coppa Club at The Georgian on 24th April, and a brilliant event called Haslemere Showcase on the weekend of 29/30 April at The Swan in the High Street, featuring the fabulous exotic cabaret that is Kara Van Park. Kara was there last September to much adulation.

Kara will be on Friday 29th, and Saturday 30th will be given over to community bands/groups/quartets/entertainers who want to showcase their talents to potential customers or clients.

It'll all be free to attend, but donations will be invited on the Friday night, all of which will go straight to my charities. The costs are being covered by generous local sponsors.

See you there!

Simon