

# The Youngster

The Bulletin of the Y's Men's Club of Kingswood, UK  
"To acknowledge the duty that accompanies every right"



*October 2023*

## *Annual General Meeting – held at Lincombe Barn, 16<sup>th</sup> October 2023*

It was a very disappointing turn-out for this meeting with only nine members attending and just two apologies received. Whether we were quorate or not remains open to question and in view of the low numbers the AGM was rolled into the preceding Board of Governors meeting.

In brief, Past President Wally commented on a quite successful year, making mention of his visits to the Area Convention in Skjern, Denmark and our Regional Convention in Norheim (next year in Zwolle, The Netherlands) and thanking all the members who have helped the year run smoothly.

The Treasurer, although absent through illness reported a good state of health with the Club's finances, there being a balance of £2,500 available for distribution to charitable causes. He also gave the welcome news that the current annual subscription should remain at the very reasonable £50.

The following members have agreed to take on these responsibilities:

**President**, Bob Gray; **V.P.** Required; **Secretary**, Alan Wallington; **Treasurer**, Chris. Holmes, **Youngster Editor**, Roger Cromwell; **Project Leader**, Jerry Mundy; **Programme Leader**, Mike Bendrey; **Auditor**, Eric Arnold and additional **Board Members**, Ann Burgess, Leon Found and Roger Clutsom.

## *Diary Dates*

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|------------------------|---|
| 19 <sup>th</sup> Oct.  | Dinner Night – Speaker: David Cheesley – Return to Banjo Island |
| 28 <sup>th</sup> Oct.  | Games Night @ Bob & Sherry's – 1900hrs. - £10 each              |
| 16 <sup>th</sup> Nov.  | Dinner Night Speaker: Rachel Monger – Bees Abroad               |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> Nov.   | Coffee Morning 1000hrs – Staple Hill Methodist Church           |
| 18 <sup>th</sup> Nov.  | Quiz Night at Tynings School, 1900hrs.                          |
| 25 <sup>th</sup> Nov.  | Coffee morning 1000hrs – Staple Hill Methodist Church           |
| 21 <sup>st</sup> Dec.  | Christmas Dinner – Entertainment from Graham Walker             |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> Feb.   | President's Lunch at Radisson Blu. Bristol - More details later |
| 24 <sup>th</sup> Feb.  | Race Night at Tynings School, 1900hrs.                          |
| 13 <sup>th</sup> April | Jazz Night with Stuart Potter and The Strollers                 |

## *Visit to McBraida plc – Rolls Royce Global Supplier of the Year 2022*

What a revelation this was! A company owned by one of our Club members and his family and unknown to many members. Some of us knew it was an engineering company involved with aerospace – it said on the factory wall outside – but precisely what they made was a mystery. That said, fifteen of us were determined to find out and descended on the McBraidas and their team last Friday morning. We were greeted by Adam, Mike's grandson and Ian, Mike's son who gave us an introduction to our visit and handed out a printed potted history of the company which had been prepared by Mike.



The company was started by Felix McBraida, Mike's father, after the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War. He was a Jig & Tool draughtsman and this background led him to his dream of having his own engineering business. Starting up by renting an old boot factory in Kingswood with a staff of three – including himself – and two machines, work consisted of such things as building car trailers and repairing lawn-mowers. In 1954 the business was incorporated as F. McBraida Limited and in 1959 moved to another old boot factory a few miles from the original premises. The building was of three brick walls

and a sheet galvanised iron end panel. After a year or so at the new Bridgegate premises, Felix had health problems and the threat of the company closing down persuaded Mike to leave his existing employment elsewhere and join the family firm. After a few more years, Father said 'enough is enough' and moved to Ireland leaving Mike to run the show. Having managed to secure the necessary approval for aircraft flight work Mike set about purchasing the modern machinery to manufacture the precision aerospace components, although their first acquisitions were used for the overhaul of machines from the tobacco industry. More advanced machines were purchased and the company was able to pursue the early dream of making precision parts for the aero industry. The facility at Bridgegate has been extended a couple of times and plans have recently been approved for further expansion. The growth of the company was such that customers were keen for McBraida to have a production facility abroad and premises have been acquired in Poland.



Our actual tour around the factory was led by Grandson Adam, with Son Ian riding shotgun to ensure no-one got left behind. We were introduced to the machinery which, all being enclosed in cabinets, looked very similar with type descriptions of Numerical Control, Computer Numerical Control and Electric Dielectric Machining no doubt with other types lurking in other booths. Although unable to see all the machining processes we were able to see the finished articles in trays awaiting transfer to Quality Control. Every bought-in ingot of metal, large and small, has a label which shows its source and progress through its production before being received by McBraida. QC is the watchword throughout the company, from the purchase of raw materials,

precision manufacturing with measurement checks to the micron before final checks and despatch to the customer.

Grandpa Felix must be looking down with great pride at what Mike has managed to create of his company with the help of the family and successful employment decisions.

Our thanks to the McBraida family for a very interesting and informative visit after which our party decamped to The Hollybush pub, just along the road, for an enjoyable lunch arranged by the other Mike – Bendrey!





*Below:*

*Mike McB. Front right, with  
Grandson Adam and Son Ian behind Olya*



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*Photos below of our time selling coffee and hotdogs to holiday travellers on the A38 at  
Rowberrow Dump Garage in the late 1960s*



*Top right: Don Blackmore & Eric Jamieson chewing the  
fat with Nick, the garage proprietor*

*Below right: Tony Jones adding value, with Nick keeping an eye on him!*

# *Urgent !!!*

*We need more teams to make  
this event viable.  
Get your team's names in  
soon to Chris H. please!*



*18<sup>th</sup> November  
@  
The Tynings*

## ***October Dinner Night – a Talk on The Avon Wildlife Trust***



(AWT) is the largest local charity working to protect wildlife and inspire people in the West of England and we were pleased to welcome Gill Sayzeland to our dinner to tell us about it. Gill is one of many volunteers who help AWT, in her case with practical field work at sites near Weston as well as giving talks. AWT works across the old county of Avon and

cover the four local authority areas of Bristol, Bath and North East Somerset, South Gloucestershire, and North Somerset. They care for 31 nature reserves - from ancient bluebell woods to Iron Age forts and nationally important wetlands, which are a haven for rare wading birds and wildflower meadows. Educational and community programmes help people of all ages connect with, and benefit from, the natural world around them, taking action themselves to help nature's recovery. They work with landowners across our region to reverse the decline in wildlife by creating connected living landscapes. Gill's talk was illustrated by many super pictures of the sites and work carried out there.

***Wally***

## ***Fiji vs England – 50 years on.....***

In 1973, I was fortunate to be a BF delegate at The International Convention held in Kingston Jamaica. As often happen at these events, if travelling alone one tends to latch on to small group of new friends for the few days you are together. It so happens that I hung out with other singletons from different parts of the world consisting of Clarke Sarchez from Escondido, California, U.S.A.; John Moody from Mount Gambier, Australia; Dick Blackwood from one of the Whittier Clubs, Los Angeles, U.S.A. and Jonetani Kaukimoce from Suva, Fiji. Jonetani was 26 years old and a bundle of fun all the time we were at the convention and there was no sign as to what he might have gone on to achieve in later life. By the time of his death in 2010, he was Lieutenant Colonel Kaukimoce and had been a prominent member of Fijian Politics, holding many ministerial posts and in his last year in politics was Leader of The House. I remembered Joni whilst watching the recent rugby match between Fiji and England and although England won the game that day, as far as the careers of Jonetani and the editor of this newsletter are concerned, Fiji won hands down!



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