

## The History of Wellington Rotary Club

The Rotary Club of Wellington, Shropshire was founded in 1929, and is RIBI Club number 310. The early years were spent consolidating membership and debating issues raised by the Second World War. The weekly Friday lunchtime meetings continued, although at this time some members were serving in the forces. Those remaining raised money for Wings for Victory weeks and kept in touch with their fellow members in the other established Shropshire clubs.

The Festival of Britain was supported in 1951 and a Chapel was built and dedicated at the Scout Camp Site on the Wrekin. Members welcomed the famous cricketer Len Hutton as a speaker in the fifties and the Club sponsored the formation of a new Rotary club in Newport.

Throughout the sixties a club choir flourished. One comment was “of doubtful pleasure to listeners, but a real pleasure for the singers”! Many local organisations were supported including the Wrekin Hospital, Helping Hand and the Vineyard Children’s Home.

The first international links were being established with Denmark, Germany and Dublin. During this time a minibus for transporting the needy was bought, which would last through several reincarnations for thirty years.

The Queen’s Silver Jubilee in 1977 was marked by the construction of a toposcope on the top of the Wrekin. Gerry Powell, one of our members was the designer. It was rebuilt by Rotary members in 2005 to mark the 100th anniversary of the founding of Rotary. A Probus club (for those who had retired from business) and a Rotaract club (for the 18 – 30-year-olds) were formed.

The club’s Golden Jubilee came in 1979 and in its continuing community work, the building of the new Abbeyfield home was begun as was the takeover of a bungalow in Fairbourne, on the Welsh coast which could be used by needy families. Legacies from the Fairbourne project continues to this day.

A second new club was sponsored in 1981 which would be known as The Wrekin and a third, Telford Town Centre, came later in 1993.

Sportsmen’s Evenings, an annual Golf Day and a Film Evening have raised many thousands of pounds for good causes in recent years. We are part of a group of four Rotary clubs which runs the annual Tree of Light project which has raised more than £500,000 for local charities. The Queen’s Award for Voluntary Service was presented to the Rotary Telford Tree of Light in 2017 by the Lord Lieutenant of Shropshire, Sir Algenon Heber-Percy.

The Rotary Club of Wellington continues to meet on Friday lunchtimes, presently at the Buckatree Hall Hotel below the Wrekin. We celebrated our 90th anniversary in 2019 and the club members confidently look forward to achieving a century in 2029.