

## **Linda Mottram of the Rotary Club of Etruria**

My husband had been a member of the Rotary Club of Eccleshall for many years and I had assisted in many programmes and activities including RYLA, ITHF and Youth Exchanges. His club did not have any female members and constantly voted against admitting any. In 1992 Past President John Parry of Eccleshall Club proposed that I should become a founding member of the Rotary Club of Etruria. After a few initial meetings called by Eric Whitmore of Endon & Stockton Brook R.C. and Roy Aslett of Blackfriars (Newcastle- under-Lyme) R.C. the Rotary Club of Newcastle-under-Lyme Etruria was Chartered in March 1993.

It was the first breakfast club and the first in District 1210 to be mixed women and men. I was the founding Treasurer and have wonderful memories of our Charter Event at The Moat House Hotel on Festival Park when our Club was presented with regalia by other Clubs in the District. The Treasurer's medal of office had not arrived on time and I was asked to visit the Rotary Club of Uttoxeter a few weeks later to be presented with it. I was a bit cautious as I was aware of the anti-women in Rotary sentiment of the time! So I asked Rtn. Anne Bradshaw to go with me, and we visited several other clubs together to raise the issue and encourage others. Being presented with the medal was interesting as their President was unsure where to pin it on my top, and it raised a bit of a laugh!

We did fight hard to have the Newcastle-under-Lyme name removed from our title, as we were not in Newcastle but in Etruria which is part of Stoke-on-Trent! In 1998 I became President.

We started out at The Moat House Hotel on Festival Park, moving to the Hayden House Hotel at Basford, then The China Garden at Etruria and eventually to the Dudson Centre in Hanley. Now meeting at the Brindley Farm on Festival Park.

Over the years we have had around 100 members, only 3 founding members remain in 2022. We started the Big Christmas Breakfast which has been our main fundraiser over many years.

An analysis of membership was carried out on our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary and shows a high turnover of members averaging 3 to 5 years of service. Many were moved on with their job, some moved overseas, and we had a huge range of occupations. Throughout this I held every club position and have always enjoyed the community aspects, youth projects and literacy projects.

Etruria R.C. has participated in all aspects of Rotary International, with much effort into Vocational Study Exchange (previously Group Study Exchange), Youth Exchange, Ambassadorial Scholars, International Travel & Hosting Fellowship, Rotary Youth Leadership and Rotary Foundation – especially with Polio Plus.