

Mayor's Report 2015-16

After being safely re-elected onto the council (!) I was also very pleased, honoured and humbled to be re-elected as Mayor for a second term in office.

I soon got back into the swing of things – as part of a group of Chatteris RBL members, Amy and I were very privileged to attend full prayers followed by a wonderful meal hosted by the Hindu Temple in Peterborough. Equally unique for our generous hosts was that it was the first time they had two mayors attend a single service as my Peterborian counterpart was also there.

Amy and I also helped out and took part in the Festival weekend with myself cheerfully dressed up as a New Orleans undertaker!

As part of nationwide commemorations, I prepared and lit the town's beacon to mark VE Day – complete with unplanned almost pyrotechnic effects which I am led to believe have since entered the town's folklore. All I can say in my defence is that you cannot control the wind direction!

During the summer months I helped Chatteris in Bloom with their watering schedule and I saw first-hand how much work goes on to maintain our beautiful displays. I can also safely say I managed to get most of the water into the planters and hanging baskets as opposed to onto myself or whichever hapless colleague I was with that evening!

In July I hosted a charity cheque presentation evening – I was very pleased to be able to give away £820 between six local good causes.

As part of the RBL trip to the Flanders battlefields, a small delegation from Chatteris met the Deputy Mayor and Tourism Manager for the City of Ypres in Belgium. This included myself, Amy, Major Norman and Yvonne Larke (of the RBL) and Cllr Leah Templeman representing the tour organiser. We presented the people leper with a commemorative plaque of Chatteris and they gave us in return a stone plaque, which can be seen in the foyer of the Chatteris Museum. During our conversation it was rather encouraging to learn the level of powers and responsibilities held by Belgian town councils – watch out Fenland!

In late summer we attended the civic church service hosted by Ramsey Town Council. This was interesting as it was there I spoke to other Cambridgeshire mayors regarding the contentious subject of street lighting, and those I spoke to also shared the same view as Chatteris i.e. keep the lights on!

I was rather humbled to be asked to give a talk to the Chatteris Come and Be Heard Group in September. I think it went down quite well and they also very kindly made a donation to the Mayor's Charity Fund.

During October I was very proud to see Stainless Metalcraft being awarded not one but THREE main awards at the Fenland Business Awards. They themselves have ensured Chatteris' name is seen in many places far and wide – an accomplishment set in motion by other Chatteris engineering firms in years gone by.

Also in October you may recall me having my legs waxed in aid of the Mayor's Charity Fund – yes I have not quite given blood but certainly sweat and (nearly) tears for our town but it was all worth it - £350 was the final figure raised.

During November my wife and I took part in the Remembrance Sunday parade and laid a wreath on behalf of the people of Chatteris. We were also once again joined by a group of our Sikh and Hindu friends from Peterborough which was very prominent given the large numbers of soldiers from the former British colonies who fought alongside us during the first and second world wars. On Remembrance Day itself I attended the Cromwell Community College Remembrance Service and yet again the students who helped organise and run the service did themselves proud as young ambassadors for the Chatteris area. On a lighter note we were invited to attend the USAF Thanksgiving Service and Pie Night Social event at RAF Alconbury. Let's just say the calorie counter went through the roof that night!

The saga of the Tesco building rumbles on - I personally wrote to ASDA following a report in the Times newspaper that they were allegedly in discussions with Tesco regarding the Chatteris site. Alas all I received was a round-robin reply touting their community help schemes.

December saw many invitations to carol services near and far; in the event we attended those of March, St Ives and the FDC service hosted at Wisbech.

Just before Christmas I attended the public meeting held by the CTFC with regards to their future plans. I reiterated the Town Council's support and gave suggestions to other funding sources.

The new year saw Chatteris being represented at civic events in St Ives, Whittlesey and Wisbech, and I attended the PCC Youth Awards evening whereby community youth projects were awarded funding. Interestingly I was the only Fenland mayor in attendance despite YPM and two Wisbech organisations being present on the night!

We're nearly there! April saw Amy and I being invited as guests to the Chatteris Rotary Club's 40th Anniversary Charter Night, and on a personal note it was good to see the occasion being marked as my grandfather was a founder member in 1976.

My final fundraiser was a Charity Curry Night held last month – this was a hugely successful event with the thick end of £500 being raised and a most enjoyable evening.

Finally, Amy and I have been hugely honoured to have had the opportunity to represent Chatteris in a variety of different places, sometimes internationally, and to support the town wherever or whenever we could. We'd do it all again – but only after a rest for a few years!