

THE RADYR AND MORGANSTOWN ASSOCIATION

(A Civic Society affiliated to Civic Trust Cymru)

GENERAL MEETING

Old Church Rooms on Monday 16th November 2015 at 7.30pm

Present: David Silver [Chairman], Tom Evans [Vice Chairman], Nick Hawkins (Secretary), Bob Roberts (Treasurer), Eric Blackwell, David Cargill, Ralph Vaughan, Cllrs Rod McKerlich and Clive Morgan, & 13 members.

Apologies: Raymond Rivron, Julie Davies, Meinir Evans & Judith Marsh.

A Talk by Judith Hall, Professor of Anaesthesia, Intensive Care and Pain Medicine at Cardiff University School of Medicine.

The Chairman introduced Professor Hall. He noted that she had originally read classics at Liverpool University before going on to read Medicine. She established the acclaimed *Mothers of Africa programme*, and other similar programmes. Additionally, she acts as an ambassador for the University of Cardiff to establish educational links with overseas universities. She was made Welsh Woman of the Year in 2008 and was awarded the OBE in 2013.

Professor Hall said she had decided to talk about her work in Africa. It had all started at a conference in Paris in 2004 when she learned about mortality in Africa - one in fifty mothers died in childbirth. UN guidelines on maternal mortality had been set, but were not being met. She thought she should 'do something'. She set up a UK Charity, initial called '*Mothers of Benin*' later broadened to '*Mothers of Africa*'.

Professor Hall explained that women in the developing world die of haemorrhage, sepsis and pre-eclampsia. There are no ethical barriers causing this, just a lack of education and infrastructure; pro-active awareness and treatment are crucial. The Charity studied the situation in Benin, Liberia and Zambia and decided to focus on part of post-war Liberia. They worked there until the onset of Ebola. An invitation then came from Lusaka (capital of Zambia) to work in the relatively local village of Shiyala where the population was largely illiterate. A brand new hospital had been built in Chongwe to serve the area but it had never been opened. The local 'school' had no teacher, no windows, no electricity, and a floor wrecked by termites. So they decided to start by building a solar-powered adult education centre.

The centre was built by local labour, even making their own bricks. Cardiff University students helped. The Charity supplied the roof and the solar panels. Computers were installed. They then built a Women's Cooperative Village Hall, acquired a nurse, and built a house for her as well. Finally, they built a bigger solar plant to power everything. The net result is that education has restarted. There are separate sessions for kiddies, girls and boys. Juvenile delinquency has been reduced. There is a pairing over the Internet with pupils of Rumney Primary School.

The hospital in Chongwe has now been opened (with a 31 year old Director). Operating theatres have been opened. There are no real specialists. Midwives have been trained to do caesareans, nurses to do anaesthetics. Professor Hall described the environment as 'scary' - but effective. Most operations are caesareans and hernia repairs, but orthopaedics is also tackled.

In summary, Professor said that the Charity (which does not actually employ anybody, all money donated goes on projects) had achieved a lot in a short time. In Shiyala electricity had been supplied to a health centre and a house; teaching had started in English and maths; educational materials had been supplied; and the local hospital opened with working operating theatres. The next planned step was to open a new school - a school does exist five miles away but is hopelessly over subscribed 'typical in Zambia', she said.

In response to questions, Professor Hall said she did not work alone. She was good at spotting good people and she had five hard working trustees. However, she did organise most things herself, with the help of her PA - but she admitted she normally survived on just three hours sleep a night. She spent as much time as necessary out in Zambia but it was difficult for anyone to spend more than two weeks away, simply because that took people away from their important jobs in either Cardiff University or the NHS.

The Chairman thanked Professor Hall for giving such a humbling insight to the work she was doing in Africa. She had achieved wonderful results and it was an inspiration to us all. He presented her with a token of appreciation.

Minutes of the previous General Meeting on 14th September 2015

The minutes were approved.

Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer reported that there had not been a lot of activity on the account. There been receipts from the two films shown at the Film Club and payments had been made in association with the films, the purchase of an 'RMA Banner' and a donation to the Royal British Legion of £50 for Remembrance Sunday. Reserves stood at £6805, a satisfactory position.

Local Planning

Cllr Rod McKerlich reported that the Cardiff LDP process was coming to an end. A lot of excellent work had been done by a lot of people across NW Cardiff but he felt, regretfully, it was unlikely to make much change to the outcome of the Inspector's report. He did, however, note that the Welsh Government had been pushing for the 'Green Belt' around Cardiff to be replaced by a lesser 'Green Wedge'. He and a colleague had moved a motion at a recent Cardiff Council meeting supporting the retention of the existing Green Belt which had been accepted by all.

The planning application for 630 houses at the south end of Heol Isaf would be coming to the Planning Committee very soon. This was a huge application containing no less than 248 attachments going into tremendous detail. He noted that both he and the Association (by dint of the submission of an earlier petition) would be able to speak at the planning meeting and it would be necessary to coordinate the content carefully to make best use of the limited time. In his view, the application remained premature (i.e. before the outcome of the LDP is known) and would fundamentally change the look and feel of the entry to Radyr. He was determined to prevent construction traffic for the development being given permission to travel along Heol Isaf. He noted that the housing density was much higher than adjacent sites in Heol Isaf and Parc Radur (although not Lychgate Gardens) and that the declared intention was to cause traffic to be queued at peak times on the Llantrisant Road, to prevent bottlenecks in Llandaff. He considered this would mean residents of Parc Radur having considerable difficulty exiting the estate. He was also sceptical at the solutions being put forward for dealing with water run off during storms (such had just recently hit the area). 'Sustainable drainage systems' (SuDS) were being proposed which he thought would be totally inadequate and would lead to local flooding along Heol Isaf.

Entertainment being organised

The Chairman gave details of the main events being organised by the Association in the near future - a performance by Fluellen of '*The Railway Children*' at MVH on 20th November; the showing of the film '*Mr Holmes*' at the OCR on 26th November; and the ever popular Christmas Tree Lighting event in Morganstown, Lychgate Gardens, Windsor Gardens and Station Road on 4th December.

Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony

The Secretary spoke about the plans for the ceremony. Largely, it would run as in previous years but a lot more stalls would be present in Station Road and the lighting of the Station Road lights would be at 7:00pm, by The Lord Mayor of Cardiff, Cllr David Walker. Santa would appear shortly afterwards. All the schools were involved and there would be the normal range of food and drink available. He just hoped that the weather would be favourable for the event.

Festival 2016

David Cargill reported that the next Festival planning session was scheduled for Wednesday, 18th November. Nearly all events had now been scheduled, although there was still some uncertainty over the final weekend when changes had had to be made because of the visit from St Philbert. He was working closely with Velindre Hospital, the chosen Charity for the year.

General R&M Matters

The Chairman reported that the redevelopment of the OCR was moving on. The main lighting in the Garth Room had (obviously) been installed and the (dimnable) additional lighting was expected soon. The kitchen was now back in service. It was expected that the Weir Room would be returned to use before Christmas. The end date for the work had slipped by about two to three weeks and was now expected to be the end of January 2016.

Any Other Business

None raised, although, on this occasion, tea and coffee were served as a (minor) demonstration of the new kitchen, which people were invited to inspect.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on Monday, 1st February 2016 (note the change of date) when the speaker would be Peter Vaughan, Chief Constable.