

Friday 25 November 2011 - Wine & Wisdom Charity Quiz. Ripley, Surrey

The relative peace and tranquillity of Ripley Village was yet again slightly disturbed by the presentation of Southern's annual Wine & Wisdom quiz evening which proved to be a challenging, noisy affair with maybe a few objectives - 1. to raise as much money for our chosen charity this year, Chestnut Tree House and 2. for a team to be the winners and holders of the much coveted trophy for the ensuing year.

Chestnut Tree House is the only children's hospice serving the community of West Sussex and in common with any organisation is entirely dependent on donations to maintain a caring service for young people with terminal or life threatening illness' and their parents and carers. Jayne Todd and her Husband travelled from the south coast to provide a 'goodies table' of seasonal cards, decorations and other gifts and were generous enough to provide a teddy bear as one of the raffle prizes. At the close of the evening it was revealed that they had taken nearly £200 revenue - not bad for about three hours of trading.

Questions were set as a team effort by Branch Committee members (who were not in teams) and, despite his disorganisation, the Quiz Master managed to complete the 10 rounds without undue controversy and the eventual winners, *Malcolm's Marauders* were able to claim the first 'prize' which was particularly pleasing as they have been regular supporters and, despite being in the upper scores had never achieved top placing. Pictured right is Chris Stark, Branch Chairman presenting the challenge shield to Malcolm's Marauders team 'captain'.



To ensure that the winners didn't entirely hog the limelight, our Branch Treasurer, Helen Currie's 5 years old son, Sam, created a traditional Wooden Spoon for presentation to the team that came 11th., *Fawly Towers* (without wishing to rub it in, the total number of teams participating this year was - 11) which placed Chris in a difficult position: he had to nominate one of his team to be the recipient! The 'award' was received with extremely good grace and they did not play on the fact that they had travelled over 50 miles to attend.....

After an excellent buffet supper the evening ended with the raffle draw for a spectacular choice of prizes which alone raised about £200. Participants were able to relieve themselves of extra weight on the way out with a closing 'loose change' bucket collection. It is hoped that we will be making the donation to Chestnut Tree House in early 2012 when a further report will be placed on the web site.

The Challenge Shield shown in the winner's picture, though containing blank plates for future winners names to be inscribed, reveals that Wine & Wisdom has been running for at least 18 continuous years during which time thousands of pounds has been raised for worthy causes, primarily for the welfare of children. Originally started by a group of Highway Engineers in Surrey County Council's Materials Laboratory it was 'adopted' by Southern Branch in 1999 by mutual agreement and has now become a regular fixture in the Branch's life. Teams are welcome from any source - not just from the highway industry - all you need is 8 people and a sense of humour. Knowledge helps too but we do reward those without (see above).....

Another successful and enjoyable evening which is only made possible by the regular support of our teams many of whom travel some distance to be there, the generosity of anonymous donors and the Branch Committee who put the whole show together for a good cause. Thank you!

See you next year!! Date to be confirmed but likely to be Friday 23rd November 2012.