

NEWSLETTER

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& SOUTH
RIBBLE
BUSINESS
CLUB

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May 2007

THE NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 1st May

7.45pm for 8pm @ Lancashire College, Southport Road, Chorley

The next meeting will greet Eaminn Watson, Managing Director of The Best of Lancashire.

His company acts on behalf of 350 small and medium sized businesses in the Preston and Lancaster areas, ensuring local people using the internet find them and not their competitors.

The Best of networks on behalf of it's members to make more revenue, help save money or resolve business problems.

We are now offering The Catering Standard Chocolate Fountains as Dry Hire for Trade Customers at £125 inclusive of Belfium Chocolate. Great for Open Days etc. Once set up the fountain can run for hours without problems and feed over 100 guests from the chocolate supplied. You simply supply the space and the dips. Our chocolate fountains have been used by the following companies as part of their open days/evening and staff events: Boodles & Dunthorpe Liverpool, Imperial Hotel Blackpool and Winter Gardens, Blackpool to name a few. for more information contact maria_coordinate@hotmail.com

Mary's Prayer

As any of you who read the Chorley or Leyland Guardian will know Mary's Prayer, the campaign Chris Maguire informed us about at our March meeting, has got off to a flying start, having already raised around £2,000.

The campaign aims to raise vital funds for local cancer charities and I know that some of our members have already either donated money or offered to help in various other ways. The Chorley & South Business Club itself is also discussing the possibility of holding a fund raising event.

If you feel that you would like to help in some way please contact Chris Maguire at

christopher.maguire@lep.co.uk or on 01257 264911.

Wine Tasting Event
- with Chordale Wines

Business Club member Brian Wilding, of Chordale Wine Merchants, is holding a wine-tasting at Brook House Hotel, on Preston Road, Clayton Brook, this Friday 27th April between 7.30 and 9.30pm.

Tickets cost £10 and are available from Brian in advance. Please call him as soon as possible if you want to go, on 01257 273033 or 07977 625 991 or email: mywineman@blueyonder.co.uk.

All profits from the event are going to Chorley PALS Memorial Fund, the local charity campaigning for a permanent memorial in the town to Chorley servicemen of Y Company who lost their lives in the First World War. Brian is keen to support the cause; his wife's great-grandfather was one of the lucky Chorley soldiers who returned. So as well as a wonderful evening sampling a host of wines from at least seven different Chordale suppliers, those attending will know they're supporting a good cause. We'll raise a glass to that.

Noticeboard...

Members news, special offers and members discounts, items for sale and items wanted. Just email through your details, & a logo.

Meeting Secretary Vacancy

Your club is in need of a Meetings Secretary, can you help please? We are looking for an organised individual who can undertake the following tasks:-

- Maintain a diary of speakers.
- Contact speakers prior to meetings to issue gentle reminders and ascertain their requirements.
- Book meeting rooms with Lancashire College and other venues if and when appropriate.
- Maintain the meeting box to ensure that adequate stocks of visitor forms, new members application forms etc., are always available.
- Prepare the meeting room on club nights. This will involve being present a short time in advance of meeting start times. A substitute should be arranged if this is not possible on any occasion.

These tasks should only involve a small amount of time but we feel that a Meeting Secretary would greatly improve the running of our meeting nights and the club in general. We operate an open and informal committee and any new members are always made most welcome. Please let myself (david@kevell.co.uk) or any committee member know if you are able to help us.

The chairman writes *Pure Magic*



What a magical evening we had at the last April meeting, excuse the pun. We were entertained by Alan Coventry of AC Entertainments who gave us a feast of magic, balloon modelling and bunco booth trickery. If only it were as easy to conjure business for our organisations!

To conjure business we all need publicity and time and again I hear people ask how do they get themselves into the paper and onto the radio. In fact it was an item included in the feedback to the member's survey conducted at the agm. I am afraid that there is only one way to guarantee getting into the paper, and that is to commit a crime, and I'm sure none of us want to do that.

There is no guaranteed way to achieve editorial publicity but, and here is the good starting point, the newspapers are very keen indeed to feature interesting news about local businesses. There are many organisations who will say that they can get you in the media, for a fee, but they can not guarantee to achieve editorial any more than you can yourself. They may be able to write your press release in a way that is more likely to attract the editor's attention, but that is all. I have luckily had a fair success rate at achieving editorial and indeed appearing on radio and for what it's worth here are my tips. They may work for you, they may not. Other people may give different advice, there is no set process. First of all I will briefly explain why I started to undertake my own publicity. At the commencement of Kevill & Co I met someone at a business lunch who told me what wonderful things that they could do to get me publicity. They could guarantee to get Kevill & Co featured in a number of publications. Naively I believed them and signed up. I wrote, at their request, several articles along different themes. The result – absolutely nothing! I soon realised that I was doing all the work and they were simply forwarding the articles on to various publications in the hope that they might be published. Now it's not often that I have a brainwave but – I thought – I can do that myself!!! Yes I know, sheer genius!!!! I started to send off a few articles and began to get some published in the Chorley Guardian and, to a lesser extent, in the Lancashire Evening Post. On two occasions they have also sent along photographers. You will never get every press release you send out published.

The only advice I can give is as follows:-

- Make sure your item is newsworthy. You need something 'special', not an everyday occurrence. This 'special' thing could be trading overseas, a move of premises, a new product offering, doing work for someone noteworthy and so on, and so on.
- The article needs to have a local angle. This is easy for all of you as you are all local businesses.
- Write no more than one side of A4 giving the key points.

No one will read page upon page of waffle.

- Give contact details at the bottom of your article in case the publication requires more information from you or to arrange to send a photographer.
- Include a relevant photograph. Articles with photographs do stand a much better chance of being published.
- Send your article to a named individual if possible.

The media also pick up articles from other sources. Recently I had an article in the Chorley Guardian about work I had done for an American company. Chris Maguire, editor of the Chorley Guardian, rang me after he saw an article in our own business club newsletter. You see it really can be worthwhile writing articles for our newsletter. Don't forget that you have an excellent route into the Chorley Guardian through our publicity guru John Thompson who has built up a good rapport with their business reporter. Do send your articles to John for forwarding on as articles coming from a known and trusted source can sometimes gain an advantage.

I have also appeared a number of times on 'Later with Carole' on Radio Lancashire. How did I do that? Well I simply wrote a letter to Radio Lancashire saying that I had heard phone in programs on gardening, medical issues etc., but never on business. I assumed the letter would be destined for the bin but at worst I had wasted the cost of a stamp. Several weeks later I got a phone call inviting me onto the program and I have since appeared a further three times. When you have sent in your article / letter all you can do is wait. It may be published, it may not. It may be published next week or several weeks later. It depends on several factors, is it of interest, is there spare space on the business page and so on.

Also, in my opinion, the main point of this publicity is to get you and your business known. Often no business will be received directly as a result of the article but you are building up a network of people who know you. Much like being a member of our business club. You may not get direct business from your membership, and particularly not in the early stages, but you are building up a network of other members who are likely to recommend you if the opportunity arises. Publicity – art or science? Probably more art but a huge portion of good luck.

If anyone wishes to have copies of some of the press releases I have sent out please send me your email address I will be delighted to send you some copies back.



Proposed Club Name Change

At the committee meeting held on 17th April we again discussed the possibility of changing to name of the Chorley & South Ribble Business Club to appeal to a wider geographical area. The unanimous decision of the committee was to propose that the name of the club changes to Central Lancashire Business Club. This proposal will be presented to the membership at an e.g.m., (extraordinary general meeting) to be held during the club meeting to be held on Tuesday June 5th 2007.

The committee's reasons for making this proposal are:-

- 1). A number of our existing members currently operate their businesses outside the geographical area of Chorley & South Ribble.
- 2). We have now received the funds held by the Preston Business Club at the time of their closure as part of a long standing agreement that we will invite their members to join our club. This will obviously increase the number of members that are outside the geographical area suggested by the name Chorley & South Ribble.
- 3). We must be aware of the possibility that a new Preston Business Club may emerge which could result in members outside Chorley & South Ribble leaving our club. The committee believe that changing our name to Central Lancashire Business Club will minimise this risk.
- 4). The change of name will hopefully lead to an increase in our membership levels and a larger networking group can only benefit our members.
- 5). We must ensure that our business club remains a strong organisation. More and more networking functions / groups are appearing at a fast pace. Our organisation must remain a leading organisation.

The committee intend to couple the name change with a publicity drive in the Central Lancashire area, utilising our local media contacts. A feature of this publicity will be a competition for colleges to design a new logo for our club, again strengthening the awareness of our organisation. The committee decided to arrange the e.g.m., for the second part of the club meeting to be held on Tuesday June 5th June rather than the May meeting to enable sufficient time for any member to inform us of their views, and we do encourage you to do so. Thank you to those members who have already done so. The committee continue to work very hard to ensure that we are one of the leading and most successful business organisations in Central Lancashire. The members of the committee therefore encourage you to support this proposal. We also ask that you please make every effort to attend the e.g.m., to ensure that your views are heard.

bighorse

All change at
Impression!

Say hello to Bighorse.co.uk!

Impression has a sister, there are now two halves to the company. Bighorse is now the web solutions side with Impression as before, offering design and print. It's still the same high quality of service as before just a different name. www.bighorse.co.uk.

It's time for Chorley business to wake up, so get your company out of its slumber and head along to the business networking event of the year!

ChorleyOnline.com, Chorley's number one community news and information website, is proud to present 'Wake Up Chorley, It's Business Time!' at Next Generation, Moss Lane, Chorley on Friday 11th May 2007 in what promises to be the event that kick starts a whole new wave of trading between the top businesses in our proud town.

Benefits of attending this pioneering venture include:

- Exhibition stands from a wide range of industries within the town
- Keynote speakers
- Networking appointments arranged on your behalf
- Distribution of business promotion packs containing local business contacts and savings
- Complimentary finger buffet
- Complimentary use of Next Generation's swimming and sauna facilities

Places at the event are expected to be extremely popular, with spaces already being taken up at a rapid rate. To ensure that you don't miss out, or if you wish to find out more about becoming an exhibitor at the event, there's still time to sign up for a stall at the fantastic rate of just £50. For more details please contact Emma Howard or Ross Johnson on 01254 832 815 during normal office hours.

With so much on offer, you'd be mad to miss this event. Sign up now, and ensure that your business wakes up to the vast potential that awaits within Chorley.



Richard Davies in a spin at the last meeting!

Thomas Cole hails search success on film! - by Adrian Ward

Search engine specialists Thomas Cole Solutions have come up with a novel way of ensuring everyone gets to hear about their success - film an interview with a satisfied customer and upload it to Youtube and your own website!

Having successfully put the shutters on the opposition and propelled fellow Brinscall firm RB Contacts to number two in the Google rankings for 'curtains', proprietor Robin Bamford was understandably keen to sing Thomas Cole's praises, so a specially convened shoot provided him with the opportunity to tell the world - literally - about the quality of the Business Club members' work. Robin - whose site can be viewed at ChooseCurtains.com - was interviewed at the internet marketing specialists' Lodge Bank HQ for their online community news and information network, The Onlines, for an advertising feature with a difference. As well as providing an ideal PR boost for Thomas Cole's profile, it also offered the extra boost of providing fresh new content to keep the news sites looking fresh and up to date!

One of the key points of note to come out of Robin's interview with The Onlines' editor, Adrian Ward, was that he believes Thomas Cole's search engine optimisation work has increased his company's turnover ten fold, and has led to notable contracts with Debenhams and the Channel 4 prime-time success, 'How Clean Is Your House?'.

To take a look at the video, head along to your local 'Online' at ChorleyOnline.com or LeylandOnline.com and follow the banner link to view the latest Video News Bulletin. If you'd like your company to appear on The Onlines - particularly if you've got nice things to say about Thomas Cole(!) - please get in touch with Adrian Ward on 01254 832 815 or via adrian@thomascole.net.



Dates for your Diary

- May 1st - Search Engine Optimisation.
Eamonn Watson
- June 5th - Disaster Planning,
South Ribble Borough Council
- July 3rd- Joint meeting with BRE. TBC
- TBC - Speedboating
- Sept - Leyland Town Centre Redevelopment plan
South Ribble Partnership

AGM feedback

Feedback from Members 2007.

At the last AGM we asked the membership to give us their views on the club. Here is what we got back.

Preferred topics for Presentations, Workshops and Events:

- what other organisations exist that can help new start-ups?
- Perhaps some members could give details on how & why their business suddenly blossomed - what did they suddenly do or change to achieve such a result.
- Lively, enthusiastic speakers, particularly with a sporting anecdote or two!
- Areas of Concern or Advice Needed to help in running a small business:
 - software / hardware for stock control / invoicing
 - Marketing, internet
 - Advice in using the media - getting your name in the paper or on the radio.
 - Website maintenance, changing info on web-site to advise on new product ranges etc.

Comments or suggestions on any aspect of the Business Club and its activities:

- Can we put on the web-site members recommendations re who members use for plumbers, leaflets etc. I know that a lot of trades are covered by existing members but if you're looking for something new it's always nice to get someone who is recommended.
- Increased PR for the club and it's activities

Future events

Use of digital projection training session
'The secret of my success'. from members
If you have any other feedback or ideas simply contact the committee.

Committee Contacts 2007

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