

## INNER WHEEL CLUB OF BARNSTAPLE NEWSLETTER APRIL 2026

Time marches by quickly so it's time for the next Newsletter. I hope you've all had a happy Easter and like us I'm sure many of you have had family to visit and maybe even have had to lay on egg hunts! It's lovely to have the lighter evenings and I'm enjoying all the spring flowers, the new leaves coming on the trees and the return of the swallows.

### Club Events

#### Association National Conference:

Gay, June T and Pat B attended the conference at Llandudno on 23-25 March, and had an excellent time. Speakers included Patrick Grant from the Great British Sewing Bee (we have a bit of a theme here this month!) June will be reporting about the conference in her forthcoming District Newsletter.

#### Club Meeting:

This was on 7<sup>th</sup> April, at the Barnstaple Hotel as usual. Mention was made of several long serving members with Sue S, Tina Williams, and Jennifer Neve who have all been in the club for 30 years this year and Judith Domleo for 35 years. Jill Waldron will celebrate 35 years next year and there is a couple who have been members for even



*Audrey with Judith at her last meeting*

longer. We also said a special goodbye to Audrey Dever who is moving away from the area and therefore leaving the club after 29 years – we shall all very much miss her and she was given a round of applause. During club business members were told the committee had set the subscription for next year at £60 and this was mainly due to a rise in the Association element – if we had kept it at £55 we would not have been able to cover all of our expenses. Fees are payable on 1<sup>st</sup> July, and members were asked to pay by BACS on that date or if paying by cheque beforehand to post-date until then before giving it to Maureen.

After lunch we had a very enjoyable talk given by former member Denise Smith on 'How to plan a murder' or in other words 'How to write a crime novel'. Whilst still a member she talked to us about her first book which she had just published but is now writing her fourth. She started by asking herself why she writes and went on to say she had always enjoyed reading detective novels and that people like the escapism and also trying to understand the psychology behind the crimes. She described the many factors that need to be considered when deciding on the type of novel which in her case is the classic mystery and puzzle style set in the present day and in the Lincoln area where she grew up, and then the whole long and complicated process going from the first draft to actual publication. Denise said it was the first time she had given this talk so in a way we were guinea pigs but I think it was generally agreed she did an excellent job and Jane who gave the vote of thanks that she had added Lincoln to the list of places she would like to visit!

#### Visit to Bude

At the invitation of the Bude IW club, 10 of us went there on April 22<sup>nd</sup> to hear a talk by Tony Rea who was a finalist in The Great British Sewing Bee in 2023. This was a fundraiser for two local charities, ADSURF and Cornwall Mind. We had a lovely sunny drive down there and as we arrived we could see all the garments he made during the series displaced on the stage at one end of the hall.





Tony, who lives in Bude, has had a varied career which at one stage involved travel around the world, and now works as a postman, but at the age of 50 he decided he'd had enough of travel and to have a 'gap year'. During this time he took up firstly crochet and then started sewing bags from which he progressed to making clothes, which included 'scrubs' during Covid. Persuaded by his wife he applied for the Sewing Bee and he described the lengthy application process before being accepted, somewhat to his surprise. Filming took place in Leeds, 2 episodes at a time over 4 days and then there was the long wait when he had to keep quiet about the results until the show was broadcast. He made special mention of a child's party dress made of

Neoprene which won garment of the week and a 'two in one' dress that he made in the final, and he spoke of the great camaraderie and friendships made during the series, not to mention the amount he learnt. The series opened up all sorts of opportunities for him and he is keen to encourage others and does workshops. He was particularly proud of the dress he made for his daughter's school prom.

There was plenty of time to ask questions and chat to Tony afterwards and in good IW tradition we finished the afternoon with refreshments which included a delicious selection of cakes to choose from.



### Charity Walk for Mary's Meals

In her role of International Officer, Pam Harman held her second charity walk on 24<sup>th</sup> April, this time along the Tarka Trail starting and finishing at Fremington Quay. The weather was beautiful with an almost cloudless sky and very warm for April – almost too warm for walking! 15 members and friends (and one dog) arrived, with 13 going on the walk. We all enjoyed the lovely river views and spring flowers along the way and were all ready to enjoy some refreshments from the café





afterwards! It was most gratifying to hear that the event raised £386.40 for Mary's Meals and this amount will be from our club rather than from the District as will be the case with the forthcoming International meeting, The pictures show the group at the start, chatting along the way, the half-way point and enjoying refreshments afterwards. The young man in a couple of the pictures is from Pam's church.



### Future Club Events

#### District International Rally

The next event is the District International Rally, being hosted by Barnstaple at the Barnstaple Hotel on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup>

May, 12 noon for 1pm, and this is in place of our club meeting. As previously mentioned, the event will be in aid of the District International Charity Mary's Meals, and members of the other District clubs have been invited. The guest speaker will be Roger Ireland who has had involvement with the charity for some years and I hear he gives a very good and inspiring presentation.

We are also having a raffle with three hampers and other prizes contributed by the other District clubs.

#### Plant Sale and Coffee Morning

This annual event is being held at the home of Jill Waldron, which is Court Farm, Bishop's Tawton, and is on the main road through the village, just past the church. This is on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> May at 10.30am, cost £5 payable on the door, and there will also be a raffle and bring and buy sale. Then, of course don't forget to bring your plants!

#### Next Club Meeting

This will be on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> June, and will be our AGM when all the Club Officers give their reports and we also welcome back Gary Read as our speaker who is always very entertaining.

### Other Club Activities

**International Service Officer** - Pam continues to collect ring pulls from tin cans, and used tablet sheets, as well as any more out of date and left over foreign currency you might have. Sue Thomas is collecting the used stamps now for the North Devon Hospice.



**Community Service** – We continue to collect for the Freedom centre at our monthly meetings, tend the Inner Wheel garden, and participate in the reading scheme at Pilton Bluecoat School.

**Zoom keep-fit sessions** – Pat continues her sessions at 11am on Monday mornings for half an hour and if anyone else would like to join in please contact Pat for details.



### *April Traditions*

April Fools day – the origin of this tradition is unclear, but I found this example first reported in 1698 when it was reported in Dawke's Newsletter on 2<sup>nd</sup> April that "Yesterday being the first of April, several persons were sent to the Tower Ditch to see the

lions washed". This prank continued for some time in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries with gullible people being invited to view this ceremony at the Tower of London, and tickets were even issued!



The first five of these are classified ads from UK papers:

#### Free Puppies

1/2 Cocker Spaniel, 1/2 sneaky neighbour's dog.

#### Free Puppies

Mother is a Kennel Club registered German Shepherd. Father is a Super Dog, able to leap tall fences in a single bound.

Cows, Calves: Never bred. Also one gay bull for sale

#### Wedding Dress for sale.

Worn once by mistake

#### For Sale

Complete set of Encyclopedia Britannica, 45 volumes. Excellent condition, £200 or best offer. No longer needed as got married and wife knows everything.

'Always be nice to your children because they are the ones who will choose your rest home' – *Phyllis Diller*

'An economist is a man who states the obvious in terms of the incomprehensible' – *Alfred Knopf*

'A man who correctly guesses a woman's age may be smart, but he's not very bright' – *Lucille Ball*

### *What is Friendship*

Friendship's like the sun above  
That's always shining bright  
Friendship's like a golden smile  
That warms the coldest night

Friendship is a priceless gift  
Of faithfulness and grace  
And nothing in the world can ever  
Take true friendship's place.

That's it for this month. With best wishes from Bridget

