



INNER WHEEL CLUB OF BARNSTAPLE NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2023



Christmas Greetings! Another quite eventful year both Internationally and for this country, what with wars, disasters and on a happier note the Coronation. I expect, like me, you are all very busy with your Christmas preparations at the moment but I hope you all have time to enjoy yourselves as well.



I know you should have seen this already but I would also like to include Sue's Christmas letter to us (edited a little to save space):



Christmas Message



Hello Everyone

It was a good turnout for the Christmas Lunch recently held at the Barnstaple Hotel and nice to see many guests joining us. The entertainment provided by the Appledore Singers was an excellent way to finish an enjoyable day.

We had a successful day at the Waie Inn helping to raise funds for District Chairman Louise's charity which happens to be South West Blood Bikes.

Thank you to those who attended our Christmas Coffee Morning kindly hosted by Lorna Boaden. As always, Lorna made us all very welcome and it was lovely to meet up and chat over a cup of coffee, mince pie and cake.

I mentioned at the coffee morning that I have decided to participate in the 100 for 100 Challenge set by Association by using up odd balls of wool and knitting squares which I will then pass on to the Cats Protection Society. They are always pleased to accept "kitten blankets" which are used in looking after kittens and cats in their care. I am knitting squares 50 stitches wide and intend to sew four squares to make a larger one. I will be delighted if any of you would like to help in this challenge. Something to do whilst watching Christmas films on the television!

Further details regarding the Friendship Lunch on Saturday 13th January at Goodleigh Village Hall will be sent in due course and I look forward to seeing you and your friends on the day. This event is to raise money for the South West Blood Bikes, a very worthwhile charity. Raffle prizes are always welcome and please bring along any knitted squares you have completed.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my first six months as your President and would like to sincerely thank you all for your help and support. I wish you have a lovely Christmas and New Year.

See you in 2024!

With best wishes

Sue Thomas

President, Inner Wheel Club of Barnstaple



Club News

As always the meeting this month was our Christmas lunch on 5th December which as Sue says was a lovely festive occasion, and it was with pleasure we welcomed husbands, friends, and members of the local Rotary and Inner Wheel clubs as our guests, and we were particularly pleased to see friends from the disbanded Braunton club. The Arlington Suite at the Barnstaple Hotel was beautifully decorated, District Chairman Louise read a poem, and after lunch the Appledore Singers kept the festive mood going with an entertainment of Christmas songs and carols, some of which we could join in with. Especial thanks go to Pam Harman who is a member of the choir and arranged for them to come. We also gave some nice festive contributions for the Freedom Centre.



The following week on the 13th, 14 of us travelled to the Waie Inn at Zeal Monachorum for the District Table top sale and Christmas lunch – this year without any traffic difficulties. Much like last year our sale table had various hand crafted items, a guess the weight cake, guess the number of chocolates and a lucky dip. This resulted in takings of over £170 for our club funds – an excellent result. The other clubs had gift items, a tombola, and there were several hampers being raffled.



Following this we had a really good lunch, and then Louise announced the winners. Suzanne Lyons did really well, winning the guess the weight cake and a hamper! Also nice the Inn staff won another of the hampers.



Cake, chocolates and hampers awaiting announcement of the winners



The next day we had our annual fundraising Christmas coffee morning which again was very kindly hosted by Lorna, and we were all treated to a delicious selection of mince pies, Devon baps and cakes. As usual, we had a raffle with a lot of Christmasy prizes, and it was another opportunity for a good

chat. Continuing in the festive mood, some of us then went on to the Rotary Christmas lunch at the Park Hotel with our husbands – no need for cooking that day! Apologies for no pictures of our sale table that looked very festive, or for the coffee morning as I forgot to get my camera out!

Future Events

Following the Christmas break we next meet for our annual Friendship Lunch on Saturday 13th January, 12 for 12.30, at Goodleigh Village Hall, to celebrate Inner Wheel Day (actually on 10th Jan.) This will follow the normal pattern of home made soup, with bread, cheese and pate, with a short quiz and a raffle, with the proceeds going to 'Smle Train'. Partners and friends will be most welcome.

Other Club Activities

You will have seen from Sue's letter that she is starting a 100 for 100 challenge knitting squares for kitten blankets and I know I have a lot of wool oddments, so I think this is a really good idea – perhaps some of us could even get together in groups and have a cup of tea or coffee as we knit.



Pat Bunch also continues her weekly keep fit Zoom sessions so please contact her if you'd like to join in.

Community Service: The Pilton School reading scheme continues, albeit with a break over Christmas and the Freedom Centre continues to welcome our monthly contributions.



Why do we celebrate Christmas on December 25th? There have long been mid-winter festivities, well before the birth of Christ, but Sextus Julius Africanus, a Christian historian who wrote a chronology identified this date in 221AD, possibly because it is a Christianization of 'the day of birth of the unconquered sun', a popular Roman festival celebrating the winter solstice and connecting the birth of Jesus with the birth of the sun. An alternative suggestion is because it is nine months after the spring equinox which was regarded as day 4 of creation and the birth of light, being the date of Jesus' conception.

Some Christmas Jokes

What is every parent's favourite Christmas song? Silent Night!
How did Joseph and Mary weigh baby Jesus at birth? They had a weigh in the manger.

What does Santa suffer from if he gets stuck in a chimney?
Claustrophobia!

What's the absolute best Christmas present? A broken drum – you can't beat it!

A Christmas Poem

Christmas is for giving
And for showing that we care,
For honoring the Christ Child
With the loving gifts we share.
The wise men gave of riches;
The shepherds, faith and love.
Each gift, in its own measure,
Was smiled on from above.
Let every gift be treasured;
Not always size or price
Determines the extent of love

And willing sacrifice
Handsome gifts with festive trim
Bring smiles of sweet content,
But modest gifts of humble means
are oft times heaven sent.
Whether it be large or small,
Each gift will share in part
The message of true Christmas joy
If given from the heart!

– Iris W. Bray

A few Christmas Questions

1. What are the chances of a white Christmas in the UK?
2. How many mince pies are eaten in the UK in a year?
3. What is the coldest temperature ever recorded in the UK?

(answers at bottom of page)

This just leaves me to wish you all a very happy and peaceful Christmas and New Year - Bridget



Barnstaple Christmas lights switch-on this year