

INNER WHEEL CLUB OF BARNSTAPLE NEWSLETTER MARCH 2024

Greetings once again! The weather finally seems to be improving a little although I don't think we've seen the last of the rain just yet. However, I've finally managed to start getting out in the garden a bit to do some very necessary weeding and tidying. Haven't the floods and potholes been a problem though? I've not been able to go along the road past our house to Heanton for weeks because of a deep flood due to a blocked drain which unfortunately is not high on the priority list to clear, and I'm sure there are plenty of other similar situations. However, we have all the spring flowers and longer days to lift our moods, and talking of this, the clocks go forward the night before Easter Day, so it will seem very early getting up for Easter day services!



Club News

We met on March 5th for our annual club business meeting to decide our club officers and committee for the 2024-25 year. It was agreed Sue Thomas would be President for a second year, and Sue Smith will be Vice-President. Pam Harman is taking over the International Secretary role from Pat Bunch and we will be welcoming Maggie Sheriff and Jenny Woodley on to the committee. The position of Secretary is still to be resolved, but should be soon.

After lunch we had an excellent presentation by Mick Harrison, a retired policeman, from the South West Cyber Protection Unit about how to protect ourselves against online fraud. He told us that today, 89% of fraud is online, with much of it coming from abroad. When it comes to choosing passwords, it is now recommended they should be 12 characters long, often using a mix of small and capital letters, numbers and other symbols. Three unrelated words are good, and a particularly useful tip is to use the £ symbol which is not available on many overseas keyboards.

95% of successful attacks are caused by human error, remember that if it looks too good to be true it usually is, and never be pressurised into making quick decisions. Look very carefully at website addresses which can be very similar to official ones and never disclose passwords. Also, official symbols of bona fide organisations can be copied on to fake websites.

Be aware of payment diversion fraud, usually by claims that an account has been changed and never disclose pin numbers.

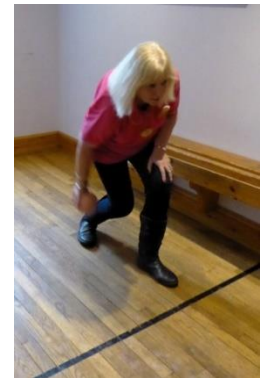
There was a lot more advice in this talk, but the overall message is to always be aware (and this of course also applies to phone calls) and to report suspected fraud and scams to Action Fraud (actionfraud.police.uk).

Sue Thomas gave the vote of thanks.



Spring District Meeting and Skittles Competition

The next event was the District Spring Meeting and annual skittles competition on March 12th which as in previous years was held at the Waie Inn, Zeal Monachorum. On the way there we encountered a series of potholes, some unavoidable, that seemed even worse than the ones in North Devon, but it was worth it for the great facilities and welcome we have at the Waie Inn. Twenty one members had signed up to go, although I think one or two couldn't make it. Despite this, we were able to enter four teams of four for the skittles, more than we ever had before and our team 2 of Gay, Sally, Maureen J and Tina won!



I was in team 4 and we were knocked out in the first round by Dartmouth! As always there was also a simple darts completion won by a member from Torquay, and there were two short quizzes, one general knowledge and one cryptic – Barnstaple members divided into groups for this as there were so many of us and one of our groups won the general knowledge quiz but we were not so good at a cryptic one! Many thanks to Maureen I for compiling the

former. As usual, we had an excellent lunch and we finished with a short business meeting.

Future Events

The next Club meeting is on Tuesday 2nd April, immediately after Easter when we will have a talk about quilting by Adelle Lindsay which should be of great interest to all of us that enjoy needlework hobbies, speaking of which our post box topper to celebrate the IW centenary should soon be completed. I should have



pictures of that next month.

Then on 16th April Liz Harris is having a fund raising coffee morning with bring and buy sale at her home which will be at 10.30. The following month we have our annual plant sale and coffee morning at my home on 21st and I am mentioning this now so the green-fingered among you can consider growing something to bring. I've mentioned it before, but quite soon now is the Centenary Lunch in London on 15th April which Pat, Louise and myself are attending. Now that the rail workers have announced their latest strikes it seems that thankfully the trains look to be OK that day!

Other Club Activities

Pat continues her weekly keep fit classes and sent this message:

Inner Wheel Keep Fit

As many of you know I started a gentle Keep Fit class on line during covid times, and it has continue most Mondays at 11 on Zoom. If you would like to join us to start the week with some gentle exercise, strengthening your muscles and keeping you moving, we use bands which you can make out old stockings or tights, and tassels made out of used toilet roll centres and tissue paper.

You exercise at your own risk as your body will tell you what you can do and you don't have to do all exercises. Do wear sensible shoes or no shoes (not slippers) and loose clothing. The aim is to increase your fitness, strengthen your core muscles, and improve your balance by stretching and movement. To join us or more information ring or email Pat Bunch 01271 373195 or 07719727962 email: pat.bunch@btinternet.com

IW Garden. Now that the growing season has started the garden will soon need more attention and some extra helpers would be appreciated. Please contact Liz Harris if you are able to help.

Community Service: The Pilton School reading scheme continues, and the Freedom Centre continues to welcome our monthly contributions.

There have also been some Rotary events of interest which some of us attended: on 14th March the Barnstaple club invited Pat Malek to talk about her interest in photography and show some of her favourite pictures. This was very enjoyable and perhaps we should ask her to give the same talk for IW. Below is a picture taken at that meeting - I'm not sure who took it but I think it was with Pat's camera.

Barnstaple Rotary also had a Chinese meal at the Fulham on 21st March which was a lovely relaxed and convivial evening and then several members went to the Rotary Barnstaple Link club's quiz on the 22nd, so quite a social whirl!



Advance Notice!

Our club celebrates its 80th birthday in February next year and the committee is proposing that as well as our regular meeting with Louise giving her talk to us as District Chairman, we have a special afternoon tea to which we'll invite our partners, friends and other clubs. We're thinking of having this at Filleigh Village Hall on Saturday 8th February 2025 (providing we can book the hall that day), so put the date in your diaries!



In like a Leo, out like an Aries

You have heard the weather proverb 'In like a lion, out like a lamb'. There is, however, a different interpretation: The constellation Leo, the lion, rises in the east at the beginning of March. Thus, the month 'comes in like a lion', while Aries, the ram, sets in the west at the end of the month, and hence, 'will go out like a lamb'

Here are too little poems about March, the first because March used to be the first month in the Roman calendar before the months of January and February were introduced:

'I Martius am! Once first, and now third!
To lead the year was my appointed place;
A mortal dispossessed me by a word,
And set Janus with the double face.
Henry Longfellow 1807-82

The brown buds thicken on the trees,
Unbound the free streams sing,
As March leads forth across the leas
The wild and windy spring.
Elizabeth Akers Allen 1832-1911

Some quotes – the first seems to be being borne out by a section of the American public in the run-up to their election!

'The men the American people admire most extravagantly are the most daring liars; the men they detest most violently are those who try to tell them the truth' – *H.L. Mencken*

'Millions long for immortality who don't know what to do with themselves on a rainy Sunday afternoon!' - *Susan Ertz*

'My problem lies in reconciling my gross habits with my net income' - *Errol Flynn*

'For every complex problem there's a solution that is simple, neat and wrong' - *H.L. Mencken*

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

Easter Eggs

As Easter as at the end of this month, I thought I'd say something about Easter eggs.

The custom of decorating eggs goes back to ancient times, with eggs symbolising fertility and rebirth. They were adopted by the early church as symbolising the empty tomb of Jesus when he was resurrected and were often stained red in memory of the blood of Jesus. The Easter egg custom can be traced back to early Christians in Mesopotamia, with a subsequent spread westwards to the European Catholic and Protestant Churches. Another reason for having eggs at Easter was because they were traditionally prohibited in Lent (Pancake day was used to finish up any eggs you had), so there was a very good supply.

Chocolate eggs first appeared at the court of Louis IV in the eighteenth century, and were first manufactured in 1873 and 1875 by Fry's and Cadbury's respectively.



Some Easter jokes:

Why is everyone so tired on Easter Day? – *Because they've just finished a 31 day March!*

How do dinosaurs celebrate Easter? – *They don't. They're eggs-tinct!*

A chicken and an Easter egg walk into a bar. The bartender says 'Which of you is first?'

Well, that's all for this month – wishing you all a blessed and happy Easter. See you again soon.

HAPPY EASTER!