

INNER WHEEL CLUB OF BARNSTAPLE NEWSLETTER MAY 2024

Hello, once again! This last month seems to have flown by and there is a lot to report but since I last wrote I've also had a lovely relaxing holiday on a river barge cruising up the Severn – there are some really lovely great holidays available within the UK without having all the fuss and bother of airports, and it must have been terrifying being on that plane that got caught in severe turbulence! Meanwhile, at home, spring seems at last to be transitioning into early summer, and probably like many of you I'm spending quite a bit of time in the garden planting out the summer annuals, and then the huge surprise that we're now having the General Election on July 4th!

Club News

Our Club meeting was on May 7th and during the business part of the meeting President Sue reported on the Association AGM held on Zoom on 17th April which 280 people signed in for and at which voting for the Association proposals took place. June T also mentioned it had been agreed she would vote on behalf of the club at the International Convention.

June also reported there had been some damage to the post box topper but she had repaired and slightly modified it to stop it getting caught in the doors used for collecting the post – it is now back in position.



After lunch we had a very interesting and well-illustrated talk by Joan Stribling who spent many years working for the BBC as a make-up and hair designer and she also mentioned that for some time was a colleague of Dave Myers of Hairy Bikers fame. She has worked on many well-known shows and talked about the great amount of preparation needed for some productions, such as for the animals in Alice in Wonderland. She has won several awards for her work which she brought to show us, including a Bafta for 'Van Gogh', and a Design and Art Directors award for 'The Hitch-hikers Guide to the Galaxy'.

Joan with her awards and an album of her work.

International Convention at Manchester

On the same day as our club meeting Louise, Gay, Pat B and June T travelled to Manchester for the International Convention.

Pat reported 'We had a wonderful time in Manchester with Inner Wheel members from all over the world. It made us realise what we can all achieve together.'

Gay has sent a detailed account of the meeting which I think conveys the atmosphere really well – I've shortened it a bit as it is quite long:



All dressed up for the Gala Dinner

five or six Devon flags on a stick as we were accosted at every turn. This continued over the following days and I received many gifts with nothing to exchange except a photo with them presenting me with their banner. I have a bag from India, a fridge magnet from Italy and a pin badge from Denmark as well as other gifts. We were in the room that must have held 300 tables for ten which all looked alike, and it was easy to get lost and separated from your group.

The following day was a business meeting held in the auditorium. There was an inspirational speaker who lost her hands and feet to meningitis and realised how lucky she was to get prosthetics courtesy of the NHS. She has set up a charity to help others in the same situation abroad who aren't so fortunate. That evening we were all bussed to eight different venues to have supper and conversations. We were well mixed up and taken to our destinations across the city which included the Cathedral, the Monastery and various Museums.

The next morning my companion and I visited the House of Culture and the sales tables for a while, and later on



Some of the national costumes

A party of eight from Devon set off on Tuesday 7th May and arrived in Manchester about 4 p.m. After a quick change of clothes we were at the 'Meet and Greet' and we were off. It was amazing!!! There were over 3,000 Inner Wheel ladies from all over the world and those with national costumes were wearing them. Other countries had decided to all wear Red and White like Denmark or Royal Blue Berets with their badges and regalia pinned to them like France and associated countries.

At the 'Meet and Greet' everyone mixed and mingled to exchange banners or other items they had brought. Jeannette was well prepared and handed out to us



The Devon group

joined the business when the voting was taking place. That evening was the Gala Dinner held in the large eating area which was transformed into an elegant and stylish Roaring Twenties Themed look. Again you were given your table number (finding it was no mean feat!) and made friends with whoever was there! We all enjoyed a fabulous meal and table settings, with dancers to entertain us and loud music throughout. By the end everyone was dancing where they stood!

The final day was Friday and business was concluded followed by lunch and a closing ceremony that included dancers and singers from all corners of GB&I. It was all very emotional and a real honour to have been part of it. In three years time it will be in Manila in the Philippines so start saving now if you want to be there!

From June:

I loved Manchester and the experience of the Convention - a highlight (amongst many!) for me was being part of the GB & I Convention Choir. We went to two rehearsals before the Convention, wedged between beautiful grand pianos, in the basement of Forsyth's Music Shop in the middle of Manchester. Apparently, it is expensive to hire 'proper' spaces there and this very much reminded me of the Turkish Baths venue for the first IW meeting in 1924!

The choir was about 40 in number and Nicola Mills, a young Opera singer and member of Brighthouse Town and District, took a descant solo, while the choir, sang two other parts, below hers. Nicola was also part of the Closing Ceremony.

We sang Love Shine a Light, a Friendship Canon (The word 'Friend' in 17 different languages) and finished with I am a Small Part of the World - all very relevant. I think the whole Opening Ceremony was very well received. Everyone in the Conference Hall had a Tea Light to switch on at the end (see Julie from Bideford!). All so impressive in a huge hall and lovely to link with the International Choir and dancers too! Great.



The choir with June at the back on the right

Coffee Morning and Plant Sale



Our annual plant sale and coffee morning was held at my home in Ashford on May 21st and we were blessed with warm and sunny weather – a perfect day! There were a few cancellations for various reasons but 26 ladies came and brought a wonderful selection of plants. A very big thankyou to Maureen J, Liz and Sue T who all helped with taking money and the raffle, to Maureen, Liz and June T for cakes, to Lil who did most of the washing up, not to mention Brian who directed car parking and various people who lent me items for the occasion. It was a lovely relaxed time and later in the day Maureen was able to let me know that we made £264 for our charity account.

International Rally

Two days later seven of us travelled to Torquay for the rally at the Livermead House Hotel. This was a fundraiser for the Book Bus, an international charity that has a fleet of buses that travel to schools in countries that have limited access to books, and works with the teachers in these schools. We had a cream tea and the funds were raised by a raffle supported by all the District Clubs, but the speaker was a much travelled Canadian lady now living in Torquay who spoke about traditional Indonesian weddings – quite an unusual topic!



Future Events

The next Club meeting is on Tuesday 4th June which will be our AGM and there will also be the presentation of cheques to our charities.

Then there is the Summer District Meeting, AGM and Handover (In fact Louise is continuing as District Chairman for another year) at the Waie Inn on Thursday 25th June at 11am with lunch at 1pm, cost £17.50.

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Our own handover meeting is on 2nd July, but again, Sue continues as President, and the speaker will be Jim Lowe on 'The Long March'.

The District Rally will follow the same pattern as last year, with a pre-rally tea at the Queen Ann's Café on 15th July at 3pm and the Rally itself the following day at the Barnstaple Hotel 12 for 1pm.

Then, a bit further ahead, President Sue's open day will be on Tuesday 13th August with coffee in the morning (10.30) and tea in the afternoon (2.30).

Other Club Activities

Pat continues her weekly keep fit classes, the Pilton reading scheme continues and please keep on with your monthly donations for the Freedom Centre. The Freedom Centre recently had an appeal for funds to buy a new washing machine and tumble drier, but I have subsequently heard they have now nearly reached their target.



The origin of Maypole dancing is not clear but it certainly dates from Mediaeval times. It may just be a celebration that summer is on its way, but there is some suggestion it originates from Germanic pagan customs,



The Helston Flora (or Furry) day takes place every year on or near May 8th. The first mention of it is in the 18th century and is a celebration of the end of winter and the coming spring and summer. A whole series of dances take place during the day including the midday dance where formal evening dress is worn and the children's dance. All are accompanied by the Helston Town Band playing the familiar tune and all participants wear sprigs of lily of the valley. It's an amazing day if you are ever able to go and see it.

Some Quotes and Jokes

I just realised why this month is called May:

It **May** rain, it **May** snow,

It **May** be 20 degrees, it **May** be 5 degrees



'Time is like a river – you cannot touch the same water twice because the flow that has passed will never pass again. Enjoy every moment of your life'

'I sometimes think that God, in creating man, somewhat overestimated his ability' – *Oscar Wilde*

'Lead me not into temptation – I can find the way myself' – *Rita Mae Brown*

'Technology is anything that was invented after you were born, everything else is just stuff' – *Alan Key*

Well, I'm afraid I don't have space for anything else – with best wishes to you all from Bridget