

JEAN'S JOURNEYS

Conference Edition
March 2025



Forfar Loch



Inner Wheel at the Heart of the Community for over 100 years



Inner Wheel
District 1 Chairman
2024-25

. and so **March** continued with our usual **Forfar Inner Wheel** business meeting at the Royal on **18th**. Delighted to say that all positions on the committee are filled with some of our newest members being encouraged to join. Then we had 3 work parties out at President Susans - prep for the Rally - so top secret!

Wednesday 27th March - invitation to all Forfar IW to join the members of Forfar Tangent for a joint meeting. lovely evening spent with friends - and the speaker was Christine Donaldson - the owner of Strathmore Woollens - where we have had our neckers & brooches made. A great speaker - would highly recommend.

Sunday 30th March - off on our journey to Conference. Left Forfar at 7.30am to drive to Kinross - car was already pretty full of stuff - crafts, tablet, banner as well as case & bag - so was glad when Tim decanted all that and it fitted into Fiona Mapp's Mazda - as she had offered me a lift to Harrogate. Well done Fiona for doing all the driving. Brunch stop at Berwick Garden Centre then onwards - only to be held twice on the A1 near Newcastle - once for an accident then road works. Lots of chatting & catching up whiled away the journey.



Smooth check in at the Old Swan (above) - beautiful weather - sunny with a stiff breeze and after sorting out luggage we decided on a stroll around Harrogate to get our bearings and see where we needed to go. All within very close proximity thank goodness - though the whole of Harrogate is hilly! Went to deliver "good luck" cards to Heather etc from us all - then caught up with Lesley Niven & Nanette Thomson - the Deputy Hostess & her deputy! They were on duty and setting things up for the first dinner in the Headquarters hotel - the Majestic - see below . District 1 mirrors & blue bottles coming in handy for table centres together with yellow roses & thistles. !



Dinner back at the Old Swan as we awaited some of the others who had been very delayed on the train from Arbroath.

Monday 31st March - preparation day & registration day at Conference.

Many of us were down at the Royal Hall before 9am with our yellow jackets on to help unload the van from Inverness with the craft goods as well as the things we had transported. Members from Inverness (including Heather) were there in force to get organised and we all just rolled up our sleeves and got on with it. The 2 quilts were displayed behind the stall and even this early the tables are filled with a wonderful display of goods. Rostas made & remade to cover all the days. Duties for stewarding given out, other stalls getting ready including the lovely silver jewellery lady many of us have purchased from before trying to resist this early in the week!!!!





At the craft stall with Maureen Thomson, Mairi Cuthbert & Heather - all from Inverness!!!!



IIW President Mampta Gupta escorted by Conference Chairman Jeanette at the stall

M&D stall had an interesting take on a raffle - some great big prizes. Beside each prize there was a jam jar & you put the tickets you had bought into the jar which you wanted to be in the draw for. Never seen this done before. Riviera Travel had a £500 voucher up for grabs - and there is a special deal coming out for bookings in May which will feature in the new magazine. Stocked up on stuff from Association stall then then suddenly it was 1pm and members started filling the hall - registering, picking up their booklets & lanyards - and bringing copious amounts of crafted goods - soon we were quite overwhelmed! But it was all worth it as stall & quilts raised £4000 for Arthritis Action.



DC Jean with Association President Heather - her hostesses Lesley Niven & Nanette Thomson



Monday was also the evening for our District get together and dinner. I was delighted to host a drinks reception prior to the dinner before we moved through to the Library at the Old Swan to enjoy a convivial evening. Everyone had scrubbed up for the occasion and was looking relaxed and happy. There was a real buzz around the tables and it was so fantastic that we were visited during the evening by our wonderful Association President Heather accompanied by her family and Deputy hostesses Lesley & Nanette.



with travel companion Fiona Mapp, Kinross



welcoming Margaret & Irina, Pitlochry



Jean & Heather from Ellon at their 1st Conference



with Dist. Sec Gladys, Laurencekirk



Past DC's, Doris Aberdeen & Marjorie, Stirling



Pat from Stirling & Mairi from Inverness



Marion, Laurencekirk PDC Susan, Forfar & Sheila, Inverness



4 Past DC's, Diana, Aberfeldy, Jen, Inverness, Annetta, Forfar & Trish, Montrose



Nanette, Lesley & Teresa, Stirling



DC Jean welcomes Inverness



Inverness ladies



Stirling members



Inverness ladies who were very busy at the stall today



Eileen, Montrose with PDC Agnes, Forfar



PDC Ann from Auchterarder, Gladys, Doris, 1st Vice Chairman Lynda & Eileen, Montrose



with Past IIW President Trish



More Inverness ladies



Jean with Conference Hostess Lesley



Tuesday 1st April

And so the first day of the actual Conference started bright and early . . . with as always a **Service of Friendship** led this year by Rev'd **Catherine Forsdike**, MOC District 7. **Mairi Cuthbert** the **President of Inverness** led the **Inner Wheel Prayer** - well done Mairi! I was honoured and delighted to be part of the team at the service - alongside 3 other DC's giving readings - mine was last - **Auld Lang Syne** - and very well received. Mairi and I and all the members in the hall were wearing our tartan neckers and brooches which were greatly admired. We were there to support Heather, of course - whose 1st on stage did not disappoint - a tartan jacket - quite a Scottish take over !!!! A collection was taken for the **Smile Train** - £4690 was raised - WOW!



Heather with Angela Rippon



DC Jean reading Auld Lang Syne at the service



IIW President Mampta

We were welcomed to Harrogate by the **Mayor**, Cllr. Chris Aldred and heard from **International Inner Wheel President, Mampta Gupta** then it was time for the keynote speakers including Angela Rippon who gave a very polished performance highlighting many key facets of her long life in broadcasting - including of course *Strictly Come Dancing* and her coverage of the Queen's Funeral & King's Coronation for American television.

The **LINK LUNCH** was held in the **Cairn Hotel** - always a happy occasion - new friendships made and old ones cemented. As always there was a good representation from Forfar's link club - **Dursley** - and we were able to catch up with many others - some of whom didn't know that their original "link club" had closed and so they are now matched with a different club!!! Think we'll have to re-issue the revised list ladies!!



Then back to the conference hall for more speakers - from **Arthritis Action**, **Smile Train**, and a very moving account from **Gill Castle** the first person to swim the Channel with a stoma! The final speaker was **Trish** - who gave an update on the the **Orange the World Campaign to stop violence against women & girls**. A walk is planned for next year & we are asked to try to get public buildings lit up in orange

left - Trish Douglas, International Inner Wheel Past President gives her address to Conference.



The 2 DC's from our linked Districts Pat Rawlings (D10) & Jean (D1)

And still on Tuesday . . . a **Night at the Proms** - totally brilliant - setting, music & audience participation! Music by the **Carlton Main Frickley Colliery Band**. Everyone really enjoyed the whole thing - we were issued with flags as we arrived but some had gone totally for red, white & blue outfits with hats and even large hands (see pics)



Friends from D1, D2 & D7 enjoying the concert!

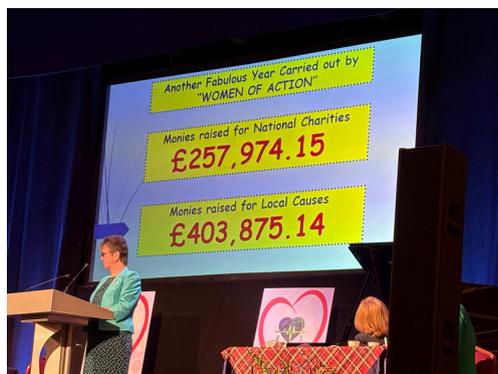
The band played a wide ranging programme to suit all tastes - of course Pomp & Circumstance, Land of Hope and Glory and of course, Jerusalem. We were all on our feet!

Wednesday 2nd April - the day of the **AGM**. Members unable to attend in person were able to live stream the AGM from home & delegates could vote from home. Those in the hall were using their phones to vote - something we have now all got very used to in recent years. My "job" on the day was to propose the adoption of Heather's Report - the Report of the Council. Everything went through without hitch - including the 2 proposals on finances. District 1 already sends out copies of its accounts in plenty of time to allow members to read & raise any queries. It was also carried that the Fares Pool be removed for delegates attending conference. This currently stands at £2 which is paid by every members. This is to be removed - it was argued that delegates attend conference because they wish to do so not because they get part of their fare paid . There was quite a bit of debate on this point.

It was announced that the new **Vice Chairman for 2025-26 is to be Pat Russell**. Very interesting reports with excellent pictures and graphics were given by **Editor Di Hylton** and **ISC Julie Ramsay** - both also highlighted the vast of amount of "in kind" giving - pants, toiletries, clothes, blankets, knitting etc - from members



Total raised for GB&I charities



Amounts for national & local charities



£196,034 to international charities



District Vice Chairman Lynda & Treasurer Susan



The Sheerin family



with District 2 Chairman Susan Ramsden



*President's Evening -
final night party -
dancing the night
away to 1960's, 70's
& 80's music*



**Pictures say it all!!!!
Great fun !!!
Hope you can recognise some
of us?**

**Here's to the next one !
Llandudno doesn't know what is
going to hit it!
Come and join us in 2026!**