

INNER WHEEL CLUB OF BARNSTAPLE NEWSLETTER MAY 2025

Greetings again, and welcome to the May edition of my newsletter. I quite frequently drive past the Barnstaple Hotel and I'm watching with interest the progress of the new pitched roof. I'm not sure if they will have finished in time for us to go back in July!

Last month I see I was commenting on the sunny weather that seemed to be coming to an end but after a few unsettled days it has just continued. Much as I'm enjoying it, the garden really needs some rain as do the farmers' fields, but I really don't think this can go on much longer. I was very glad to have the sun for the plant sale and coffee morning though!

Club News

Some of us had been due to go to Okehampton Club's 60th Birthday tea, but sadly this had to be postponed and possibly cancelled due to the sudden illness of Sheila Box who has had what I understand to be a bad stroke. At the moment I do not know how she is doing but our thoughts are with her and the club.



The club meeting was on May 6th, again at the Park Hotel, and we welcomed another new member as Cheryl Gill was inducted into the club.

During Club business it was noted that Liz Harris' coffee morning had raised £242, putting the amount in the charity account up to £557.73. Sue T announced a visit to the Children's Hospice had been arranged for 8th May, but this was subsequently cancelled as there was very little response because many members had previously visited.

After lunch our speaker was Garry Reed who gave a highly entertaining talk about bizarre and amusing place names. This was his second visit to us having previously spoken of his experiences as a primary school headmaster which goes to show how much we enjoy listening to him.

He started by saying that many names date back more

than 1000 years and he cited Penhill as a local oddity, where Pen means hill in Celtic and Hill is Saxon so the name literally means 'Hillhill'. You all know of Kings Nympton locally, with Nympton meaning river valley. The River Mole was originally the River Nym and this probably explains the name.

Most place names are Saxon and they include Ham and Sandwich in Kent which are close to each other giving rise to this wonderful signpost which I actually also pictured in my August 2023 newsletter!

For these alcoholic sounding names the original meaning was often different, with Beer and Sherrycombe in Devon, Rum in the Hebrides, Booze in the Yorkshire Dales, and Once and Twice Brewed both in Northumberland.

In Dorset there is a series of Piddles and Puddles. They were all originally Piddle but Queen Victoria was due to visit and as it was thought she might take offence some were changed to 'Puddle', hence Puddletown for example.

Then there are the Bottoms. Bottom just means valley and gives rise to Scratchy Bottom which is a valley in Dorset.



I also like Idle which is near Bradford and where can be found the 'Idle Working Men's Club'
There were many other amusing examples but perhaps I'll finish with World's End which can be found in many places!

Sue gave the vote of thanks after the talk.

Coffee Morning and Plant Sale

This was held at my home on May 13th and like last year we were blessed with lovely weather. We had a very good selection of plants together with a bring and buy sale and raffle. Hopefully everyone enjoyed themselves and afterwards Maureen told me we had taken £360.80 – a brilliant result! I also nos have £30 extra for plants bought afterwards and a donation.. A huge thank you to everyone who contributed and helped.



Future Club events

Our next club meeting is on Tuesday 3rd June and this will be our AGM when the various club officers give their reports. We will also have our final cheque presentations of the year to I think the Children's Hospice and Families in Grief, and I'm sure both the representatives from these charities will give a short update on their work.

Then on Tuesday 24th June there is the District Summer Meeting and AGM at the Waie Inn, Zeal Monachorum, at 11am, followed by lunch – a good time to hear news of the other clubs in the District, and there will be a board to sign up at the club meeting.

Other Club Activities

A few of us went on a horse drawn trip on the Tiverton Canal arranged by Barnstaple Rotary on 8th May which was a good time to go with all the spring foliage, May blossom, and young wildlife. If you have never been, this is quite a unique and enjoyable experience.

The horse, by the way, was called Brindley after James Brindley who was one of the early canal builders in the eighteenth century.



International Service Officer – Pam H continues to collect any left over foreign currency and out of date UK currency for Mary's Meals, this year's District International charity, used stamps for Oxfam, ring pulls from tin cans, and used tablet sheets.

She has also arranged a short sponsored walk of about 3 miles on Friday 27th June around Barnstaple, ending at the Queen Ann Café for refreshments – further details to come in due course.

Community Service – We keep on with our monthly donation of food and other items to the Freedom Centre, and the reading scheme at Pilton Bluecoat School continues. If anyone is interested in joining this scheme please contact Mike Warner of Rotary Link.

Zoom keep fit – Pat continues with her Zoom keep fit sessions on Monday mornings so please contact her if you'd like to join in.

Inner Wheel Garden – We continue to look after the plot near Queen Ann's Café and Liz Harris would appreciate help.

May

May weather

As I'm writing this the weather is beginning to change just in time for the half term holiday week, but it looks likely that this spring will have broken records.

The Met Office on 14th May stated that this spring had so far been the eighth warmest on record, and that the eight warmest springs have all been since the year 2000. At that time the sunshine hours were the fifth highest and we looked set for a record low for rainfall unless something very dramatic happens in the next week! This is all because of persistent highs over the Azores and Europe because the jet stream is lying further north than usual.

Some Quotes

'You can't have everything – where would you put it?' – *Steven Wright*

'When women gossip we get called bitchy, but when men do, it's called a podcast.' – *Comedian Sikisa*

'The stock market is a device for transferring money from the impatient to the patient.' – *Warren Buffett*



The poem below was sent to me by Suzanne Lyons who reminded me it has just been Dementia Awareness week and this will strike a chord for any of us who've had a relative or known someone with dementia. Thank you, Suzanne.

The Long Goodbye

It's often called "the long goodbye"
so many will agree
An illness which is all around
but sometimes hard to see

Dementia can be heart-breaking
for those who know too well
The sadness and the helplessness
their stories hard to tell

To see someone you've loved for years
just slowly fade away
The person who was full of life
not knowing what to say

A loved ones eyes, once full of joy
now empty and bemused
They once could look and recognise
but now look so confused

A relative or family friend
with whom you've shared so much
But now they don't know who you are
or recognise your touch

You see their pain when trying to do
the simple things in life
Like make a cup of tea, perhaps
or even use a knife

A simple trip to local shops
can be traumatic too
Confused with all the different coins
not knowing what to do

They once just took for granted
all the people in their life
Where now they fail to recognise
their husband or their wife

Of course, if you've not been around
someone with this disease
How are you meant to understand
just what that person sees?

Some people just don't understand
or recognise the signs
It's not their fault, they just don't know
so fail to lend a hand

Perhaps more understanding
may be one thing we could do
To recognise some symptoms
and perhaps know what to do

So if someone displays the signs
then why not take the lead
Your patience and your tolerance
may well be all they need

by Richard Tanfield

Here's a sobering statistic:
In 1961 there were
roughly four working age
people in Britain to every
older one; now there are
3.6, and in 50 there will
be 2.5

Some Seniors Jokes:

'The years between fifty
and seventy are the
hardest. You are always
being asked to do more,
and you are not yet
decrepit enough to turn
them down' – *T.S. Eliot*

'Everything slows with
age, except the time it
takes cake and ice-cream
to reach your hips' – *John
Wagner*

I'm sure the new pope wouldn't act in this manner!

The police officer and the priest:

Police officer, Danny Malone, pulls over a catholic priest for driving erratically and swerving all over the road. Officer Malone gets out of his police car and, as he approaches the window of the priest's car, he notices what looks like a bottle of wine in a brown bag on the passenger seat next to the priest.

Suspicious that he may have a DUI violation on his hands, Officer Malone says, "Father, I pulled you over for driving erratically and swerving back there. You haven't been drinking have you?"

"No, my son, I haven't," the priest responds. "Why would you ask me that?"

"Well you were swerving all over the road and struggling to control your vehicle," says Officer Malone. "And now I can see you have a bottle on the seat next to you."

"Oh my son," the priest responds. "That's just holy water."

"So why is it in a brown bag, Father?" Officer Malone inquires.

"To protect it from the sun's rays, my son," the priest responds

"Really?" says Officer Malone. "Would you mind if I take a sip then, Father?"

"Not at all, my son," the priest responds. "Go ahead."

Officer Malone takes the bottle from the priest and puts it to his lips. He takes a little sip and immediately spits it out on the ground.

"Father, this is wine!" exclaims Officer Malone.

"Praise the Lord!" the priest responds. "He's done it again!"

One last quote:

'The universe is full of magic things, patiently waiting for our senses to grow sharper' – *attributed to Eden Phillpotts*

That's all for this month – Best wishes from Bridget