

## INNER WHEEL CLUB OF BARNSTAPLE NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2026

Welcome to the February Newsletter. I hope you've all got through the winter so far unscathed by the effects of the weather, although on the whole North Devon has got off relatively lightly unless you were reliant on the train!

With all the snowdrops, daffodils and primroses now flowering there is definitely the promise of spring and I hope all the winter colds and coughs have cleared up, with my good wishes for all those still recovering from illnesses or accidents.

### Club News

#### Club Meeting:



Our 81<sup>st</sup> birthday meeting was held on 3<sup>rd</sup> February at the Barnstaple Hotel and as is customary for this month we had our annual visit from the District Chairman who this year is Deidre Stuart from the Torquay club. We welcomed new member Caroline Chugg who was inducted into the club bringing the current membership to 55.

One important point raised was about the timing of our membership subscriptions. To be fully covered by the Association's insurance our subs should be paid by the start of the IW year in July, so it was proposed and agreed that we should pay our subs before 1<sup>st</sup> July for the next year.

After a pleasant lunch we were addressed by Deidre who gave a very interesting talk about her life and varied career eventually becoming an art teacher and settling in Torquay where

she has been a member for 30 years.

She also challenged us to use a set of cutters to produce some classic biscuits and send pictures of the results to District.

At the end of the talk Julie Hunt gave the vote of thanks and Deidre was also presented with a cheque for £100 for Ronald McDonald Homes which like the National President is her charity for the year.



#### Coffee Morning:

On 17<sup>th</sup> February 20 of us negotiated the country lanes and met at Julie's lovely home in Middle Marwood. We had a very pleasant morning with plenty of chat, a generous selection of refreshments and a raffle. Together with donations we raised £178 to which £40 was later added. This will be added to the total we will be donating to the North Devon Hospice this year. Many thanks to Julie for hosting and to all the helpers.



## Future Club Events

Our next club meeting is on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 11.45 for 12.15. This is our Annual Business Meeting when we agree the club officers and committee for the next Inner Wheel year starting in July 2026. This is an important meeting as the committee is essential to the running of the club so I hope as many of you as possible will come. For light relief there will be a game of 'human bingo' after lunch – not sure what this involves!

Then there is the annual District Skittles competition and Spring District meeting at the Waie Inn, Zeal Monachorum on March 17<sup>th</sup> from 10.30 which also features a quiz and darts competition. This is always a fun day and I believe 17 members have already signed up, but more are always welcome. Skittles are optional, but if you can't or don't wish to play, you can cheer on the players as well as contributing to the quiz! A two course lunch is £19.50 although a few members buy their own separately. Anyone else wishing to go please contact Maureen Jeacock. Car shares will be arranged, so don't worry about getting there.

The Association Annual Conference is 23-25 March at Llandudno, with Gay, June and Pat B attending.

Coming back to home, our club is hosting the District International Rally at the time of our club meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> May, and we'll be inviting members of the other District 17 clubs, with the event in aid of Mary's Meals, but I don't have full details yet. However, it would be good to have as much support as possible so put the date in your diaries! I understand the speaker will be Roger Ireland who has close links to the charity.

## Other Club Activities

### Doves for peace

You will remember I showed a couple of pictures of our dove making session last month – here is a picture of the display in Barnstaple Parish Church which was contributed to by many local organisations, and also one of a beautiful patchwork and collage banner on the same theme. The display is up until the end of February.



## Youth Speaks



The first round of the Rotary annual Youth Speaks competition took place at Grosvenor Church on 7<sup>th</sup> February, which several of us attended. President Sue and June T were on the judging panel, and Gay, assisted by others, was in charge of teas and coffees. The rest of us just cheered them on. Not so many Schools as usual entered, for various reasons, but of those who did, the standard was very high and it was an interesting and enjoyable morning. Ilfracombe C.E. Primary School and Bideford College go through to the next round.

## Barnstaple Rotary Quiz

This took place on 19<sup>th</sup> February at the Barnstaple Bowls club and about 15 IW members took part. Stuart Robinson was quizmaster, assisted by his daughter, and our team found out that we were not very good at recognising pictures of British Castles or female politicians in their early days!



## International Service Officer -

Pam continues to collect used stamps for Oxfam, ring pulls from tin cans, and used tablet sheets, as well as any more out of date and left over foreign currency you might find.

**Community Service** – We continue to collect for the Freedom centre at our monthly meetings, tend the Inner Wheel garden, and participate in the reading scheme at Pilton Bluecoat School.

**Zoom keep-fit sessions** – Pat continues her sessions at 11am on Monday mornings for half an hour and if anyone else would like to join in please contact Pat for details.

# February

## Old February Traditions

Candlemas is on 2<sup>nd</sup> February and celebrates the presentation of Christ in the Temple 40 days after Christmas and it marks the end of Epiphany.

*"If Candlemas Day be fair and bright,  
Winter will have another flight  
But if it be dark with clouds and rain,  
Winter is gone, and will not come again."*

I can't remember what the weather was on 2<sup>nd</sup> February but I suspect the latter!

In Blidworth, Nottinghamshire, a Cradle Rocking ceremony is held on the Sunday closest to 2<sup>nd</sup> February, also to commemorate the presentation in the temple.

Then, did you know that 'Candlemas Lily' is another name for the snowdrop?

Shrove Tuesday – traditionally pancakes were made to use up ingredients before the fasting of Lent. Pancake Races are run in many places and the earliest record of this is 1445. Legend recounts a housewife who was cooking when she heard the church bells calling the faithful to prayer. Afraid of being late, she ran to the church still clutching the frying pan in which the pancake was still cooking.



Here is a poem Cheryl Gill sent me some months ago, but as it's quite long this is the first time I've been able to fit it in. Makes you think how this applies to life in general!

Our England is a garden that is full of stately views,  
Of borders, beds and shrubberies and lawns and avenues,  
With statures on the terraces and peacocks strutting by,  
But the Glory of the Garden lies in more that meets the eye.

For where the old thick laurels grow, along the thin red wall,  
You'll find the tool and potting-sheds which are the heart of all.  
The cold frames and the hot-houses, the dung-pits and the tanks,  
The rollers, carts and drain-pipes, with the barrows and the plants

And there you'll see the gardeners, the men and 'prentice boys  
Told off to do as they are bid and do it without noise;  
For, except when seeds are planted and we shout to scare the birds,  
The Glory of the Garden it abideth not in words

And some can pot begonias and some can bud a rose,  
And some are hardly fit to trust with anything that grows.  
But they can roll and trim the lawns and sift the sand and loam  
For the Glory of the Garden occupieth all who come.

Our England is a garden, and such gardens are not made  
By singing 'Oh how beautiful!' and sitting in the shade  
While better men than we go out and start their working lives  
At grubbing weeds from gravel paths with broken dinner knives

There's not a pair of legs so thick there's not a head so thick,  
There's not a hand so weak and white, nor yet a heart so sick,  
But it can find some needful job that's crying to be done,  
For the Glory of the Garden glorifieth every one.

Then seek your job with thankfulness and work till further orders,  
If it's only netting strawberries or killing slugs on borders,  
And when your back stops aching and your hands begin to harden,  
You will find yourself a partner in the Glory of the Garden.

Oh, Adam was a gardener, and God who made him sees  
That half a proper gardener's work is done upon his knees,  
So when your work is finished you can wash your hands and pray  
For the Glory of the Garden that it may not pass away!

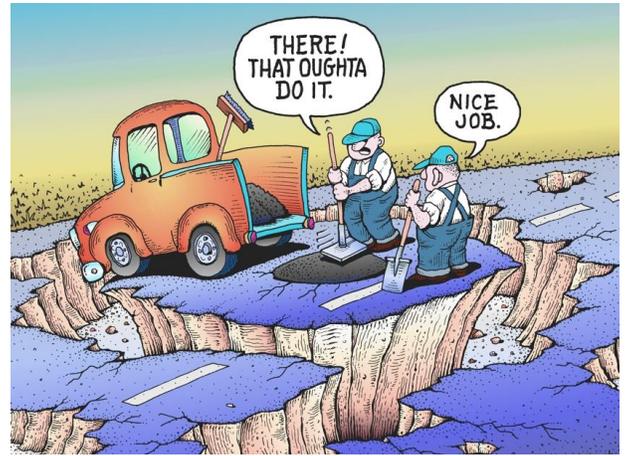


I'm guilty of at least some of the opposite!

Well, that's it for this month. See you all soon!  
With best wishes from Bridget

### Going Straight? A letter to 'The Times' reproduced in 'The Week'

In Devon we have our fair share of potholes.  
Rumour has it that this is helping the local police  
tackle drink-driving. If any vehicle is seen driving in  
a straight line, the driver is considered to be drunk.  
*David Lavender, Kingsbridge, Devon.*



### A Valentine's story

"The lingerie store where my aunt works was crowded with shoppers selecting Valentine's Day gifts for their wives. A young businessman came to the register with a lacy black negligee. My aunt noticed that the next customer, an elderly farmer, was holding a long flannel nightgown and kept glancing at the younger man's sexier choice. When it was his turn, the farmer placed the nightgown on the counter. 'Would you have anything in black flannel?' he asked."

### This has just appeared in the 'I' Newspaper – You know when you're getting old when you:

Talk about aches and pains with friends  
Groan when bending down  
Prefer a quiet drink over a night out  
Enjoy an early night  
Don't care about the latest fashion trends  
Use phrases such as 'back in my day' or 'remember when'  
Sit down to put on socks