

Inner Wheel

ASSOCIATION OF INNER WHEEL CLUBS
IN GREAT BRITAIN & IRELAND

Summer 2026



www.innerwheel.co.uk





Ladies,

It doesn't seem any time at all since I was writing a letter to you at the start of my year as your President. Now I am looking back on what has been a most fulfilling year.

I have travelled to nearly all the District Rallies. They are all unique, but I have received a similar warm welcome at each one. It is a wonderful way to meet members from different Clubs and listen to their views, some of which have been shared with the Executive Committee and acted upon. I have also been privileged to attend and take greetings to three 100th Charter anniversary celebrations during my year.

The enthusiasm and commitment across the whole of GB&I to raise the profile of the UN campaign "Prevent violence to women and girls" was overwhelming. I thank you all for the activities you undertook in your local communities which were all received so positively.

Our Conference in Llandudno was certainly a highlight of my year. The three Speakers, Frankie Hobro from Anglesey Sea Life Zoo; Eleanor Thatcher from Thatcher's cider; and Patrick Grant, all spoke passionately about conservation and sustainability across their differing contexts. The charity speakers from Tourettes Action and Ronald McDonald House were both inspirational. All five of our speakers addressed our IIW 3-year Social Project "Reach and Inspire for a better World".

My final challenge to all Clubs is that each Club sets up at least one Community Collection Point for an item that you already collect. This means that you already know where to take the items and how they are used to benefit specific charities. This is a straightforward way to encourage recycling and to promote Inner Wheel in all our communities.

Thank you all for your warmth, enthusiasm, and support given to me as I have engaged with so many of you over this year

Onwards and Upwards

Pam

President of The Association of Inner Wheel Clubs in Great Britain & Ireland 2025-2026

Conference - The Publications Committee, collated by Lyn Copper

It makes no difference how many times one attends Conference, you feel that the atmosphere can't get any better and yet, year on year, it does!

You cannot fail to be impressed and drawn into the thrill, the buzz, the friendship and the laughter when you are first faced with around 820 ladies, with some men, when you walk into, not just the Conference Centre but into each hotel, rekindling the friendships of past years. This year was no different when our ladies met up at The National Conference in Llandudno, Wales, in March, under the esteemed leadership of Pam Boyes our Association President with her Executive Team and Conference Committee. It was evident to see the amount of preparation that had been put into the event from behind the scenes.

Each of the 820 ladies, some with their husbands, set off from their respective homes across GB&I on either Sunday 22nd or Monday 23rd to enjoy four days of Conference. Travelling along the beautiful promenade, where, looking westward, the scenery across the bay was spectacular and it was easy to recognise the National Flower of Wales bobbing about in the breeze. The weather was calmer than usual for Wales and much appreciated, but the Bay can experience the swirling wind working up its force and which we certainly participated in and were exposed to, during the week.

Monday 23rd March (Day 1)

After breakfast, the instruction was for ladies to meet up opposite the Queen's Hotel where like-minded walkers joined in a guided tour of the "Alice in Wonderland Trail", ably lead and briefly introduced by Muriel McGrath, MOC, District 18.

Charles Lutwidge Dodgson or going by his pen name, Lewis Carroll, the author of the *Alice in Wonderland* books, was an Anglican Deacon in Oxford and created his pen name by translating Charles Lutwidge into Latin (*Carolus Ludovicus*), reversing it and translating it back again into English and thereby getting his author's pen name. In good advertising fashion, the ladies wearing high-vis Inner Wheel jackets, started their tour from the St. George Hotel where the story began, following on to the White Rabbit Floral Pocket Watch, with sadly no flowers, but many plants that will hopefully bloom when the better weather comes. Opposite here is The Wildings Hotel, at the time known as "Tudno Villa", where it is said Lewis Carroll, in 1860, visited the Liddell family, including their daughter 8 year old Alice, who was the inspiration for the story which we are all very familiar with to this day. Moving on, the walkers reached Happy Valley, the location of the Wonderland Bandstand, The Mad Hatter's Tea Party, including the sleepy Dormouse, the teapot and the small door into Wonderland, The King

and Queen Chairs, where an opportunistic photograph was taken of our International Inner Wheel President Kay and her husband, comfortably sat to enjoy a 2 minutes rest before setting off again, down past the Rabbit Hole Sculpture, not mentioning the beautiful Croquet Lawn, overlooking the ocean, which was absolutely stunning, realising how lucky we all were, with the weather being so kind to us all at the start of our wonderful few days together.

The group finally moved on, to No 5 Church Walk, where again, the Liddell family stayed during one of their summer visits where Lewis Carroll would call on them. Further along, the walkers came across the statue of the Queen of Hearts, not a very nice statue I have to say, rather gross really, then walked on past an original Gas Lamp, which is protected to keep the town's Victorian charm, then further to the statue of Alice. Once again, although beautifully sculptured, she was not portrayed as a young innocent child, which one feels she was in this classic story. Finally we met the White Rabbit in his brown jacket, standing tall in the centre of the Western Gardens, looking very much like he was running late!

The overall impression was that there were stunning statues and wonderful carvings, but how much of this story is true? There was certainly a lot of discussion around it. Whilst these ladies widened their knowledge and history of the book, others ambled to the Conference Centre to pick up their registration documents and head into the grand hall, filled with many stalls to tempt and to spend, as well as the charity stalls, many of us taking away business cards planning our next years' Club speaker-nights and, whilst it had a light foot-fall, I was able to spend at my leisure.

Back to our respective hotels where we smartened ourselves for the evening. Several Districts met for an evening meal, while others met together for a drink and a chat. I just love sitting back, listening and hearing the laughter, the chat and the sound of everyone so alive and loving their life in Inner Wheel – it is a heart warming feeling and none of which I had experienced before becoming a member.

Tuesday 24th March (Day 2)

Up with the lark and down to breakfast before heading to the Conference Centre for a 9:30am start, for the Service of Reflection and Renewal, led by Association President Pam Boyes and supported, in part, by the 2024 GB&I Convention Choir, conducted by Liz Norris. This is a part of the week which I personally enjoy. It is often during the first hymn that I choose not to sing, but stand and listen to the beautiful sound of 800 ladies' and a few men's bass voices singing in unison. It is a wonderful sound.

This time we joined as one, to the hymn of "Morning has Broken" and it certainly did, not only for the official opening of our Conference but the weather had certainly changed its tune and started with the roar of the wind and rain, so that we were not able to hear the poor little "Blackbird speaking!"

Helen Lamerton, MOC District 5, followed with a beautiful rendition of William Wordsworth's "I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud", that took my mind back to our drive in on the first day, when we saw the "Host of Golden Daffodils" dancing together on the promenade, and I thought that William Wordsworth had had the foresight of knowing how our Conference was going to proceed.

Inner Wheel Choirs always do us proud and this time was no different with two beautiful Welsh Songs, sung in English, so ably led by Liz Norris and performed by the Convention Choir. Our Patron Diane Hawkins read, and this was followed by Kiri Te Kanawa – "World in Unison" when a lump in my throat and the tears in my eyes promptly appeared.

Association President Pam gave an inspirational address with many analogies, that if we all took her comments on board, we would be raring to go to preserve the future of Inner Wheel.

On behalf of Jenny Burgess of the IWC of Sale, District 5, Sheila Salden read a poem "Abou Ben Adhem" which lead us in to another hymn, "Brother, Sister let me serve you", The collection was taken during the hymn in favour of Tourettes Action, raising £4,052.00, which was a phenomenal amount for a wonderful charity which will provide essential support to the young people.

First Conference session

After a short break, leading us in to the First Conference session was the Mayor of Llandudno, Councillor Antony Bertola who brought his greetings, giving us a warm welcome to the town which he was obviously, and quite rightly, very passionate about.

International Inner Wheel President Kay Morland then delivered an interesting and thought provoking address, it was wonderful to meet her and hear about her return to the Llandudno area, rekindling her memories of Wales. She went on to say that Friendship binds us together in Service and Responsibility, bringing out the best in all of us and develops us into a leader, saying leadership is a skill that can be developed with empathy and listening skills, as well as guiding and mentoring others.

She ended by asking us all to "Step up and Lead by Example" and to my mind this does not mean that everyone has to climb huge, steep steps, but little steps will also get us working and growing into this next century.

Frankie Hobro was our first guest speaker. Frankie is the Director and Owner of the Anglesey Sea Zoo when four of them started the business on 1st March 2007 with a £1m bank loan, which she is still paying!

Alongside Frankie and her children there is a team of volunteers who partake in beach cleans, rescuing, rehabilitating and housing many stranded and endangered species, including seahorses and lobsters, rescuing injured marine animals, such as sea turtles, sea birds, seals and dolphins, all of which have been found on the shores of Wales, and caring for them before enabling them to return to their natural habitat.

Second Conference Session

Emma McNally started the afternoon off, speaking via video link, about Tourettes Action. Emma, who has a son living with Tourette's, gave her first hand knowledge of how this illness affects children, sometimes as young as 3 years, who often think that they are on their own and different from everyone else. Tourette's syndrome is often misunderstood and can go undiagnosed; some patients can wait for years before being helped. Tourettes Action is a UK charity supporting people with Tourette's Syndrome, who provide essential support, guidance, community and hope, especially when no one else will. It was inspiring and humbling to hear from Emma's son, when he knew he wasn't 'unique', when he got together with other children dealing with the same illness.

Our second guest speaker was Eleanor Thatcher from Thatcher's Cider Company in Somerset. A young inspirational speaker, Eleanor is the fifth generation of the English Cider making business and at the moment is working alongside her father Martin.

Thatcher's Cider Company has been based on Myrtle Farm since 1904 and all the generations have had a vision for the future, making it the success that it is today. Despite her seemingly young age, Eleanor was well versed in all areas of her family business, which is not surprising when she has covered many jobs, starting her working life serving in their onsite café for the family and passing her tractor driving test at the age of 16.

Over 200 employees look after over five hundred acres of the finest apple growing soil around and their orchards, with the trees taking 7 years to fully mature, but are not just the source of the ingredients but a haven for wildlife of insects, birds of prey, bats, pheasants, rabbits and hares, who all make their homes on the farm. Now, in her mid 20s, Eleanor's passion is protecting the environment and ensuring sustainability of the business for the future and, given what we heard, I think she is destined for a brilliant future, as long as we carry on drinking cider!

Our final speaker of the day was Stella Boulougari from our Association President Pam's charity, Ronald McDonald House Charities UK. The charity was founded in 1974 in Philadelphia, born from the need for families to be close to their children receiving cancer treatment.

Founder, Dr. Audrey Evans, was a British-born American paediatric oncologist and was one of the co-founders of the original Ronald McDonald House in Philadelphia. She spent most of her career working at 'The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia' and was the only female student in the medical school. Working on the fact that, when a child is sick, the entire family needs comfort and support and sometimes the specialist hospital is far away from their home. There may be a need for the family and child to be together for weeks, months or even years, in an unfamiliar city, finding a place to sleep, eat and wash just becomes another source of anxiety for the family.

Today there are over 390 Ronald McDonald Houses operating across more than 60 countries, with 14 of them being in the U.K, providing free 'Home from home' accommodation near the specialist NHS Hospitals, supporting not only the child and the parents but siblings too, keeping them all together. Also provided are Family Rooms which are spaces inside the hospitals away from the medical areas, where families can shower, cook, rest, recharge and relax, getting some sleep when needed. So far these houses meet only 35% of the global demand for essential services.

Evening Entertainment

Our ladies don't need telling twice to put on their 'glad rags' and party. No sooner said than done. Off they went to their rooms for a wash and brush up before evening dinner coming down in sparkles galore and then off to "A Night at the Musicals" to the tunes from Welsh of the West End, back at Venue Cymru. All were in good voice and led all the popular tunes to sing along to. The evening was a roaring success, coming back to the hotels in good voice with the music ear-worming away for the rest of the night.

Wednesday 25th (Day 3)

Our business day and AGM. Apart from a hiccup with on-line voting, the Proposals and Motions went through smoothly with all of them being carried.

It was interesting to hear from Association Editor Di who announced that GB&I had raised a grand total of £580,189.47 for charities, with 69.4% of the total being donated locally. Plus the report from Association International Service Committee Chairman Julie, she announced that £171,008.08 had been raised for International Charities. An impressive amount given that we lost a few Clubs last year. After lunch, the formalities were done by Barbara Lord, Constitution Chairman, introducing President Pam and likewise, President Pam passed on her chain of office to our next year's Association President, Pat Russell. Like myself, Pat is a northern girl and it is evident that fun is going to be on the agenda again next year.

Our third guest speaker was Patrick Grant from the TV programme, the Sewing Bee. Patrick spoke very little, if at all, about his beginnings to get to Saville Row and the Sewing Bee, but spoke of the longevity of goods that we buy, as well as promoting his book and his Community garments. His task at the end of the session was to judge outfits made by the ladies, from the minimum of two Inner Wheel Centenary scarves. 17 ladies took on the challenge and showed that they each had a lot of talent. The outfits were outstanding, from casual to elegant with rock and roll in the middle. Inner Wheel Ladies always rise to a challenge.

To finish a wonderful Conference, 55 children took to the stage from Ysgol Pen Barras Junior School Choir. Their singing was superb, their facial expressions wonderful and, although I didn't understand the eight or so songs, they were delightful to listen to and left us on a high at the close of Conference.

The President's Evening

President Pam was certain she was ending her conference in style. From the 50s to the 90s era, dressed in the appropriate decade, our ladies took to the dance floor to the tunes from The Zoot's Band. The dance floor was packed, with smiles on many, many faces, doing the dances from the period, our ladies brought the house down. It's always sad to say *Au Revoir* to friends from around GB&I. Little did I know that when I became my District's Editor, the doors of friendship would open for me from Scotland down to Eastbourne and I am loving every minute of my membership.

Ladies, promote Inner Wheel and let others experience what friendship is all about.

To view all the photographs of conference, taken by Chris Boyes, please visit the Inner Wheel website, www.innerwheel.co.uk/llandudno-conference-2026-photo-gallery/

This is a very brief outline of how we came to be at Warwick Square, taken from Kathleen Hovey's book *Friendship through Service, The Story of Inner Wheel*

The Inner Wheel office began in a member's home, then a husband's business premises. It moved in 1962 to rented accommodation in Marylebone Road and then to Cadogan Square as part of the WVS Club. After the Club's closure it moved to Grosvenor Place then Portman Square. Not lasting long, it again moved to Newman Street, and after six years moved again to The Berners Hotel. Being asked to leave there in 1972 it became apparent Inner Wheel needed a firm base.

As you can imagine much discussion took place and three members were tasked with finding suitable premises. After visiting several an associate of a member suggested Suite G/H at 51 Warwick Square.

The Association were offered a ninety-seven-year lease at a cost of £70,000 being granted the option of one calendar month to decide.

Council was given all the details and although two Districts objected to the proposal with an overall majority the offer was accepted. £15,000 was available from Association funds and the rest could either be by Bank Loan or asking the membership for a £2.00 levy. Council voted to do the latter.

Nothing changes as they had the same problems then as we have today.

There followed a period in which many Clubs and individual members raised queries about the legality of the levy, a considerable number of members refused to pay. Several District Historians note from past minutes the phrase "we nearly lost a club" – **does it sound familiar?**

The AGM in Blackpool 1973 was by all accounts a very lively affair when the topic was debated, the decision by Council was challenged severely. However by a vast majority it was passed, and 51 Warwick Square became the home for the next 97 years for The Association of Inner Wheel Clubs in Great Britain & Ireland.

At last Inner Wheel had a home.

Lets show we have moved on from the views of the 1970's -

LET US KEEP INNER WHEEL ALIVE AND THRIVING.

Little known facts:

D17 - District Chairman Deirdre

I travelled from the UK to India and explored that country by train, in 1972, in a little VW van, with five friends. Having met inspiring teachers along the way, on my return I retrained as a Primary School teacher in 1973, a job I loved.

How do we go about starting up a new club?

With many of our Clubs having closed in recent years, it is vital that Districts work towards opening new Clubs across GB&I, in addition to continuing with the drive to increase membership in our existing Clubs.

We are thrilled to see that there are some exciting new Clubs on the horizon in D22 and in D13 and are pleased to share with you what has been learnt during the process of establishing these.

Linda Clarke

Association Membership & Development Committee Chairman

D13: Inner Wheel London UK E-Clubs

Women today are balancing careers, caring responsibilities, travel, relocation and increasingly global lives. Many may want to belong, but they struggle to commit to regular in-person meetings. An e-Club is not about replacing Inner Wheel as we know it, it is about expanding it.

The idea for an e-Club in London did not begin in a committee meeting, but socially, among members reflecting on how much Inner Wheel means to them and wondering how they could ensure it thrives for the next generation. They began speaking with potential members at different events and realised that the desire for friendship and service has not diminished. What has changed is how people connect.

The concept of an e-Club offers an exciting opportunity for growth, inclusion and future sustainability. Instead of traditional in-person meetings, members gather online and can join from different locations, different schedules and despite a variety of limitations. Some current members who struggled to attend physical meetings but still wanted to remain part of Inner Wheel, expressed an interest, which gave the group a background of IW experience.

A WhatsApp group was set up to help the team stay connected with prospective members, and interest grew. People began inviting friends, some living in the UK and others from around the world. They held several informal meetings to discuss membership, logistics and how the Clubs would operate. Officers were nominated, with information about the roles shared digitally by District Exec Officers, and they also explored how they would continue to include some Inner Wheel traditions.

The group is now working towards formal registration with their first official meeting, Clubs' Officers in place and twelve enthusiastic members, and they hope to celebrate receiving their Charter in May – this will be a first e-Club for GB&I, so very well done to the team in D13!!

D22 New Clubs for Modern Women

Having already established two new Clubs in the last two years, District 22 are now working on a further two Clubs, as well as exploring the possibility of starting an e-Club. Their experience has taught them that full commitment is key to successful recruitment. They have used a strong project team, led by the District Membership & Development Officer, and have included members from different Clubs and areas within their District, with meetings to plan and share ideas.

They began by identifying where the proposed area for the new Club might be, considering the distance from other existing Clubs, the local population and placement of housing etc. The team then planned their advertising, targeting the area with well-designed leaflets and posters, giving a contact address, and advertising the time of a meeting for interested parties. Flyers were found to be particularly effective when distributed from a foyer stall at local supermarkets, allowing the team to approach ladies directly and engage in conversation.

When it came to finding a suitable initial meeting place, D22 were keen to consider cost, looking at Community Rooms, Fire Stations, etc. There have been regular meetings, with an emphasis on ladies getting to know one another through social activities and gradually developing an understanding of Inner Wheel. It is vital that any new Club runs in a way that suits its members, rather than mirroring others. A new Club needs to be established to serve a new generation of ladies, and not to reflect the Clubs of the past.

This is a long-term project and requires regular input from the team, as it can take several months before you have the minimum ten prospective members and three officers ready to start the new Club. Even once the Charter has been granted, it is advisable to continue support for the new Club, just to answer questions and check that activities remain focused on Inner Wheel objectives.

A new Club for 2026 will hopefully be chartered very soon, with another a few months later - many congratulations to D22 on their achievements so far!

“The way to get started is to quit talking and begin doing”

(Walt Disney Co-founder, The Walt Disney Company)

Vision only matters when it turns into motion.

D21 - Teresa Fisher - an inspiration to us all

I'm Teresa, and I'm a First Responder with Stone Community First Responders. It is very different from my day job – I work for an Educational charity called Young Enterprise. My husband joined the local team in 2020 when he retired from the NHS, and I began to help with some fundraising and marketing as that is something I really enjoy! As with many charities reliant on volunteers, Covid hit hard and they needed to get back on track to up their profile and raise some funds to enable the trained First Responders to be able to do their duties with the right equipment, uniform and vehicle.

I quickly discovered that fundraising for a uniformed organisation is easier when you are in uniform yourself – so I applied to become a fully qualified Responder. I have no medical background (lots of the Responders don't) and training was intense, but 18 months ago I became an active First Responder – one of my proudest achievements!

Training is ongoing with annual mandatory courses both online and in person as we have to be prepared for attending a wide variety of incidents.

We are all volunteers, and when on duty assist the Ambulance Service by responding to emergency incidents in our area. We are completely reliant on donations and after a lot of hard work (I don't dare count the hours!) we have recently purchased a new emergency vehicle – supermarket bucket collections, raffles, a duck race, a sponsored dog walk - all sorts of events helped us get to the goal! It doesn't stop – with the new car barely on the road, we are planning to keep the fundraising going strong and constant so we can be ready for replacing it again when needed!

continued ...



We also teach CPR, how to use a Defib and how to call 999 to community groups. We visit schools, youth groups, coffee mornings, community groups, parish councils, sports teams etc. to demonstrate CPR with our light up mannequins, we have a 'dummy' defib so can show how to get it and use it. We can really engage with people of all ages – giving confidence for them to cope in an emergency situation.

We are recognised and respected in our community – people are grateful for the service we provide and that's very rewarding. For me personally I am making a difference – when on shift it could be saving a life, but when we are out fundraising and I'm chatting to people – that can make a positive impact to some one's day too. We hope to never see you professionally, but if we do you are in safe hands!

Little known facts:

Karen Krestin - incoming Association Editor

In my early 20s I helped run a traditional "Tip the Lady out of Bed" side show to raise funds for charity, and took my turn being 'the skimpily dressed lady' (black lacey underwear with stockings and suspenders, maybe even garters!). I was interviewed by *The Guardian* which was reporting on traditional side shows, and my photo appeared both on the cover and inside, which I really hadn't anticipated!

Oh the things we did when we were young.

A brief history of our Historian Katharine Dobson D18

My husband, John, worked for the British Council. We had been in Islamabad for nearly 4 years when we heard we were being posted to Kota Kinabalu in Borneo. One of the senior officials in the Asia Department took us both out to lunch and gave us a very serious talking to.

We were told that for the first year we had to accept every single invitation that came our way, with the single exception of Koran Reading competitions! It was made quite clear that I was also expected to play my part, even though I was a mere trailing spouse.

The invitation to join first Rotary and then Inner Wheel came during that first year, so we had no option but to join! It was a fantastic introduction to IW at its best, in spite of then being a non-Districted Club. It was both very active and very well respected in its community.

There was one project that I couldn't join, members went out to the rain forest with the flying doctor to help at clinics with childhood vaccinations. I had very striking fair hair then, the children would never have seen anyone who looked like me, and it was feared that they might think I was a ghost, and they might be turned into one too!

I would have loved to have gone out on the helicopter just once!

I almost certainly met Ruth (D1- article in previous magazine) in Tawau in 1980, on my only visit there. I went with two others from Kota Kinabalu when the International President, Joan Pyke, visited and was very enthusiastic about forming a District.

I had no idea when I went to Tawau that more than 20 years later I'd be Chairman of Joan's District, D18! Sadly, she died just before John retired, and I joined Porthmadog Club, but when I visited her old Club, some remembered her.

After more than 4 years there, John had a London posting and I joined New Malden in D14, what a difference! Instead of being average age, I was the youngest by 15 years, and no trips out to the rain forest!

In 1989, John was posted back to Borneo, this time to Brunei. He was told that on no account should he be seen to be a Rotarian, as the Sultan had been persuaded that it was a Zionist organisation!

continued ...

At that time, had anything happened to him while he was out of Rotary, I wouldn't have been able to rejoin IW, so I became a Member-at-large. There were two very low-key Rotary Clubs but no IW in the country. As a Maths teacher, I knew I'd always be able to get a job and bring up my sons, but I also knew that IW was already important to me.

After three years there, John was transferred to Kuching in Sarawak, so still in Borneo. He was soon back in Rotary, but at that time there was no IW in Kuching, the nearest Club, Sibul, was five hours away by river boat, and their meetings were conducted in Foo Chow, a particularly difficult Chinese dialect. I did contact the District and went to their annual weekend hosted by the DC's Club. I tried very hard to form a Club in Kuching, but by Malaysian law I couldn't have held office. One lady in Manchester referred to the Registrar of Societies in Malaysia, he'd have quickly picked up had I held office. I even hosted an International President in our house when trying to form a Club. I had plenty of ladies ready to join but no Charter President.

John took early retirement in 1996, and we came back to Britain. I couldn't teach here, as I don't have sufficient Welsh, and I knew it would take me too long to learn to be able to explain the Maths two or three times, using different words, which is sometimes necessary. I got a job in finance and threw myself into IW! The rest is history!

When we were in Sarawak, John was also running the Sabah office, so we went there reasonably often, and I contacted my old Club. To my delight at least 6 of them were in Manchester, I expect more to be in Manila for the Convention there!

Little known facts:

Barbara Lord - Association Constitution Committee Chairman

After finishing my O'Levels I went to Skegness to work in a Wimpy Bar for the six-week summer holiday. I became the expert on making Knicker Bocker Glories and Ice Cream Sundaes.



One day, when we finished work, it was a glorious evening so a group of us (all girls) went down to the beach to paddle in the sea. It was so warm (despite being the North Sea) that we decided to go skinny dipping! What a great time we had.

(Those were the days!)



The following is an actual letter that was sent to a bank by a 96-year-old woman. The bank manager thought it amusing enough to have it published in the New York Times. (Taken from D6 Entre Nous, courtesy of Gay Bligh)

This is priceless!

To whom it may concern, I am writing to thank you for bouncing my check with which I endeavoured to pay my plumber last month. By my calculations, three nanoseconds must have elapsed between his depositing the check and the arrival in my account of the funds needed to honour it.

I refer, of course, to the automatic monthly transfer of funds from my modest savings account, an arrangement which, I admit, has been in place for only thirty-one years. You are to be commended for seizing that brief window of opportunity, and also for debiting my account \$30 by way of penalty for the inconvenience caused to your bank.

My thankfulness springs from the manner in which this incident has caused me to rethink my errant financial ways. I noticed that whereas I personally attend to your telephone calls and letters, when I try to contact you, I am confronted by the impersonal, overcharging, pre-recorded, faceless entity which your bank has recently become. From now on.., I, like you, choose only to deal with a flesh-and-blood person.

My mortgage and loan repayments will therefore and hereafter no longer be automatic, but will arrive at your bank, by check, addressed personally and confidentially to an employee at your bank whom you must nominate. Be aware that it is an offense under the Postal Act for any other person to open such an envelope.

Please find attached an Application Contact Status form which I require your chosen employee to complete. I am sorry it runs to eight pages, but in order that I know as much about him or her as your bank knows about me, there is no alternative.

Please note that all copies of his or her medical history must be countersigned by a Notary Public, and the mandatory details of his/her financial situation (income, debts, assets and liabilities) must be accompanied by documented proof.

In due course, I will issue your employee with a PIN number which he/she must quote in dealings with me. I regret that it cannot be shorter than 28 digits but, again, I have modelled it on the number of button presses required of me to access my account balance on your phone bank service. As they say, imitation is the sincerest form of flattery.

Please allow me to level the playing field even further.

When you call me, you will now have a menu of options on my new voice mail system to choose from.

Please press the buttons as follows:

Press 1: To make an appointment to see me.

Press 2: To query a missing payment.

Press 3: To transfer the call to my living room in case I am there.

Press 4: To transfer the call to my bedroom in case I am sleeping.

Press 5: To transfer the call to my toilet in case I am attending to nature.

Press 6: To transfer the call to my mobile phone if I am not at home.

Press 7: To leave a message on my computer, a password to access my computer is required. Password will be communicated to you at a later date to the Authorized Contact.

Press 8: To return to the main menu and to listen to options 1 through 7.

To make a general complaint or inquiry. The contact will then be put on hold, pending the attention of my automated answering service. While this may, on occasion, involve a lengthy wait, uplifting music will play for the duration of the call.

Regrettably, but again following your example, I must also levy an establishment fee of \$50 to cover the setting up of this new arrangement. Please credit my account after each occasion.

Your Humble Client...

(Remember: This was written by a 96-year-old woman!)

CONGRATULATIONS

JOAN GREEN

on your
Margarette Golding Award

**Warsop Inner Wheel Club
District 22**



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International Service by Julie Ramsay

Another year has gone by, and the amazing work carried out by Clubs and Districts for International Charities continues.

World Porridge Day will soon be here again on the 10th of October, and I would still like to see 10p for every school child in GB & I collected for Mary's Meals. Let's come up with some ingenious ways to do this and engage our schools. I am sure throughout the coming year there will be many ingenious ways of collecting 10ps and I look forward to hearing about them.

Mary's Meals are now feeding over 3 million children every school day and are working hard in very difficult areas. Haiti is dealing with a lack of leadership and warring gangs trying to rule. Lebanon has had to suspend feeding children as schools have been closed due the war there and are trying to keep their volunteers safe.

Travelling around the Districts to your International Rallies has been a great way to hear speakers from different charities. I have heard quite a few talks now from Mary's Meals volunteers and supporters but have learnt something new every time.

While in District 14 a slide appeared on the screen of a young man's graduation. He had a pipe band behind him. I recognised this young man and it was confirmed when his name was given. The reason I knew him was from another charity called STEKA. STEKA (Step Kids Awareness) is a grassroots family home and NGO in Blantyre, Malawi, founded by Godknows and Helen Maseko, providing care and vocational training to over 90 vulnerable, formerly homeless, children and young people. It acts as a family unit rather than an institution, focusing on education and independence. Gift (the young man) had been sponsored to come from Malawi to the Queen Margaret University in my home town of Musselburgh where he earned his Degree and then Masters. I knew he had been taken into the home in Malawi but what I didn't know was that he had been fed by Mary's Meals. I met Gift when he came to speak to our local Rotary Club about his time here and his hopes for the future. This shows what feeding a child in school can do.

The recycling of out-of-date currency and foreign currency will carry on as old money can raise many 10ps.

The third strand of the strategic plan covers sustainability, and recycling is still very much on our minds. Let us set up collection points in Community Centres and encourage our local communities to donate ring pulls, gently worn bras, old and out of date foreign currency, spectacles etc. The more Inner Wheel gets out into the community, the sooner it will be recognised. Members are still knitting blankets for Hamlin Fistula and other charities as well as baby, children's and adults clothes.

Thank you for all that you have done and do for International Charities, fostering international understanding and stepping up and leading by example.



What joy Mary's Meals brings to these children - how 10p can transform a life.

How little we know about our fellow members – D24

Meghan Lamb, an historian from the Imperial War Museum (IWM), went to the Inner Wheel Club of Clacton-on-Sea to interview member Bobbie Anselmi (nee Whale) concerning her role in the Berlin Blockade, which started in June 1948 and was one of the first major crises of the Cold War.

In her research and interviews about this historic event, Meghan wondered why she had come across so few women. Bobbie, who was 19 at the time, was alone on duty as a wireless and teleprinter operator at Bushey Hall near Watford. Without knowing all the details, she received the alarming message that the Soviet Union had blocked the Allies' railway, road and canal access to the sectors of Berlin under Western control. The message was Top Secret, Eyes Only for the Air Commodore. Bobbie immediately delivered the message and was asked who else was on duty. "Only me" she replied. Bobbie ended up remaining on duty for 36 straight hours as the crisis unfolded. For her service, Bobbie received the Cold War Medal, with the bar "Berlin Airlift" across the ribbon.



**ANN WOOD - Inspirational Baker of Perfect Puddings
By Sheila Salden - Hazel Grove D5**

There is a member of our Inner Wheel Club, a former medical secretary, who has a finger in a lot of pies but especially Christmas Puddings! She has been making and marketing these for about 5 years, with great success. She does it in memory of her parents who both died of Pancreatic Cancer for which she has raised an enormous amount of money to research into this dreadful disease. A few years ago, she did the Inner Wheel "100 for a 100" Centenary challenge, and regularly tops that number of puddings each year, spending the best part of a week in November mixing, stirring, and cooking these very special items.

As a person she is dynamic and a great follower of the adage "What's done is done." She places the puddings in shops around the area and as they come in bright red pudding basins, small, medium, and large, decorated with tinsel, the butcher, baker, and Manchester Bridge Club quickly sell out. Inner Wheel members must place an order speedily during the run up to Christmas to avoid disappointment.

In other areas Ann is competitive, she swims most days, plays bridge, bakes cakes, knits in our IW knit 'natter group, selling Easter chickens etc. on the wall outside her home, holds regular film nights and hosts a garden plant sale in the summer each year, sometimes linking it to the Wimbledon Finals Day. She has also climbed the Yorkshire three peaks for a local children's hospice and done a New Year's Day swim for Lifeboats. I am exhausted telling you all about her - I think the next challenge should be her entry into the television programme "The Great British Bake Off."



Little known facts:

Hilary Tindall – D9 Editor

My father gave me his dinghy; I learned to sail and joined the Sonning Sailing Club during the 1980/90s. I sailed by myself or with my husband and small children on local lakes. The boat's name was SHOCK. Named after his four grandchildren. Scott, Helen O Christopher and Kerry. I had the oldest and youngest.

**Annual donation by D12 to
The Kent & Medway Medical School
by Sheila Cragg**



The Kent and Medway Medical School, came into being 6 years ago as a collaboration between the two universities based in our County, The five-year medical degree is awarded jointly by Canterbury Christ Church University and the University of Kent. Thinking back to that time, you will recall that this was in the early stages of Covid and so the first 100 students who enrolled (as well as the staff) faced really challenging times, as we were all experiencing social distancing and very restricted lifestyles.

The tuition was nevertheless patient led, with students learning how to develop inter-personal skills and build relationships. During their studies they had hands-on experience within placements in primary, community, mental health and secondary care settings across the County, so many of our members will have met them in a nearby medical setting.

In 2020 our District Executive took the decision to help support the students by donating 2 cash prizes of £250 each year to the School over 5 years. It has been an absolute pleasure for us to award these prizes, and our District Chairman has attended each of the five Award Ceremonies and met and chatted with our grateful winning students. Not only is it a very happy occasion and we have got to know 10 remarkable young people, but it has afforded us an opportunity to explain something about Inner Wheel and our aims to support the local community.

As we all know, many students are struggling to fund themselves through their studies and we are thrilled to be able to offer them assistance. The Inner Wheel District 12 prizes are awarded annually in respect of courses relevant to Women's Health.

Continued overleaf ...

In September 2025, the first cohort of medical students from KMMS graduated in an impressive ceremony held in Canterbury Cathedral and we are delighted to confirm that we have now committed to funding £500 p.a. for a further 5 years. This prize will keep the name of Inner Wheel very much to the fore within District 12 and help to encourage would-be doctors across the 5-year course of study to make their own money stretch a bit further and give a boost to their future careers.

(Mary & Gabriella, the first recipients)



The Three Bears

It was a sunny morning in the big forest and the Bear family was just waking up.

Baby Bear went downstairs and sat in the small chair at the table. He looked into his small bowl. It was empty! "Who's been eating my porridge?" he wailed.

Daddy Bear arrived at the table and sat in his big chair. He looked into his big bowl. It was also empty! "Who's been eating my porridge?" he roared.

Mummy Bear put her head through the serving hatch from the kitchen and yelled, "For Pete's sake, how many times do we have to go through this?"

"It was Mummy Bear who got up first. It was Mummy Bear who woke everyone else in the house. It was Mummy Bear who unloaded the dishwasher from last night and put everything away. It was Mummy Bear who went out into the cold morning air to fetch the newspaper. It was Mummy Bear who put the cat out, cleaned the litter box and filled the cat's water and food dish.

"And now that you've decided to come downstairs and grace me with your presence listen up, because I'm only going to say this one more time

"I haven't made the porridge yet!"

Editor - Thank you Daphne Fowler, Edgbaston Convention Club D6, for this delightful little tale about women multitasking – oh how it sounds so familiar!

A) Members - Association of Inner Wheel Clubs in Great Britain & Ireland

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/901164416664498>



B) Public - Inner Wheel in GB&I

<https://www.facebook.com/innerwheelgbi>

PLEASE VIEW THE PUBLIC ONE AND SHARE THE INFORMATION AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE.

My dear friends and fellow members

This hardly seems possible that I am closing down having completed my 6th magazine over the last three years, along with everything else!

The website has developed, reminding me of skills I had long since forgotten. Facebook, a very big learning curve but now showing the brilliant work we do.

What a fantastic time I have enjoyed, I have been honoured to be your Editor and share all the wonderful stories sent to me. We have great women in our organisation, we need to tell the world just how great. We all share the same belief, helping others is something to enjoy with friends,

WE STRIVE, WE ACHIEVE.

I want to thank my yearly teams of Publication Committee members who have been invaluable during my tenure of office, to the Executive members I have had the privilege of serving alongside, your warmth and friendship have been wonderful.

I would like to acknowledge Melanie and Alicia, who have quietly and efficiently been in the background assisting me whenever asked, nothing too much trouble.

I have had a ball, absolutely loved every minute and treasure all the new friends I have made along the way. You have all shone a light, become my heartbeat and stepped up for every request. A VERY BIG THANK YOU TO ALL.

Di
xx





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