

## INNER WHEEL CLUB OF BARNSTAPLE NEWSLETTER MAY 2026

Welcome to the May Newsletter. As I start to write this letter it is really cold and not very spring like, but according to the weather forecast, we may be having a heatwave before I finish it! We live in rather turbulent times at the moment, but thankfully our club is a place where we can forget about the world around us for a little while and enjoy real friendship and fellowship together, whilst also trying to do a little good along the way.

### Club Events

#### District International Rally:

We hosted this meeting which was in aid of Mary's Meals at the Barnstaple Hotel on 5<sup>th</sup> May in place of our Club Meeting, and welcomed members from the other District Clubs. Unfortunately, Jeannette Dommett, the District International Officer who was due to chair the meeting had had a fall and was unable to come, and we wish her a speedy recovery. Her place was taken by the District Chairman, Deidre Stewart. Sue Smith welcomed everyone and followed with a short session of club news including letting us know that with additional donations Pam's walk for Mary's Meals raised over £400 – a wonderful result.



After lunch the International Meeting commenced with the lighting of the Friendship candle and Deidre read a message from Julie Ramsay, the Association International Chairman.

Following this Deidre introduced our speaker, Roger Ireland, who placed himself in the shoes of Magnus McFarlane Farrow, the founder of Mary's Meals and spoke of the development of the charity from the very beginning to the present day. Driven by a strong Catholic faith, he'd visited a pilgrimage site in the then Yugoslavia as a teenager, and when he heard this area was badly affected in the civil war he felt compelled to arrange a number of trips delivering aid there, now in Bosnia. Later he was invited to Malawi where he was profoundly moved by a 12 year old boy who told him 'I'd like to have a meal and go to school'. Thus, the idea was born to provide the ingredients for a meal at school which would then be cooked by local women. This would then encourage the children to come to school and give them the energy to learn, and help to break the cycle of poverty. Well, the idea took off and the charity now feeds 3million children in 216 countries.

After the talk Pam H gave the vote of thanks and we had an excellent raffle with several hampers and various other prizes, some donated by the other clubs, making £267.



### Coffee Morning and Plant Sale

This was held on 12<sup>th</sup> May at Court Farm, Jill Waldron's beautiful home in Bishops Tawton and 29 of us attended. Although not very warm it was a pleasant sunny day and we were able to appreciate the lovely garden and views. We also saw the train going back and forth several times. There wasn't a huge number of plants but those which were there sold well, there was a bring and buy sale and the inevitable raffle, not to mention a delicious selection of cakes. Then it was time to say a final goodbye to Audrey Dever who is leaving the area at the end of the month, and she was presented with a special card with a selection of photos of her time in the club put together by June, together with some flowers and chocolates. This was accompanied by a round of applause from all those present.



Very many thanks to Jill for hosting the event, and I later heard from Maureen J that we raided £369.50 which was added to the North Devon Hospice fund.





## Future Club Activities

### Next Club Meeting

This will be on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> June, and will be our AGM when all the Club Officers give their reports and we also welcome back Gary Read as our speaker. His talk this time is entitled 'School Reports of the Rich and Famous' which promises to be very entertaining!

### District Summer Meeting and AGM

This will be held at the Waie Inn, Zeal Monachorum on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> June 10.30 for 11am and will be followed by a buffet lunch for £19.50. Due to fairly short notice, numbers and payment will be needed at the forthcoming Club Meeting. This meeting is always an opportunity to meet members of the other clubs in the District, and to learn a bit more about how the Inner Wheel works. Please have a look at Jane's email of 19<sup>th</sup> May which gives plenty of reasons for going. Don't worry about how to get there – car shares and lifts are always available.

### Club Meeting and Handover

This is on 7<sup>th</sup> July when Sue Smith hands over the presidency to Julie Hunt, but I do not have any further details at the moment.

A reminder, however that subscriptions for next year need to be paid on July 1st, either by BACS on that day or by post dated cheque given to Maureen at the June meeting, the amount being £60.

## Other Club Activities

### Rotary Auction

Please have a look at Jane's email about this event which is on June 11<sup>th</sup> at the Wimpey Restaurant in town – 6.30 if eating and 7.30 for the auction. If you are not able to come you can still bid in advance if you wish by emailing [rsmithcherapika@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:rsmithcherapika@yahoo.co.uk). There are lots of vouchers for various activities and events, plus a number of items to bid for. Well worth a look at the list!

**International Service Officer** – Pam continues to collect ring pulls from tin cans, and used tablet sheets, as well as any more out of date and left over foreign currency you might have. Sue Thomas is collecting the used stamps now for the North Devon Hospice.

**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.



## May Traditions

May 1<sup>st</sup> has been and still is celebrated in many ways. The ancient Celts celebrated Beltane or the 'Fire of Bel' by lighting bonfires to recognise the start of summer, and crowning the May Queen with May pole dancing still takes place in many places. Such frivolous activities were frowned upon by church and state and predictably

were banned by the Puritans, only to be restored by Charles II. Then of course there are the 'obby 'oss celebrations in Padstow and Dunster, and the many Geen Man traditions are also related to the start of summer. Speaking of Charles II Oak Apple Day commemorates his escape from his enemies by hiding in an oak tree and is celebrated on 29<sup>th</sup> May at Aston on Clun, Shropshire.

Thanks to Sue Smith for this one:



With all the wild flowers blossoming in the country at the moment, it seemed a good time for this short poem, but whether these traditional names are still being passed on so much now, I'm not sure!

## Nicknames

Who gave wild flowers their nicknames, London Pride and Bird's-eye Blue,  
The Pennywort and Tonguebleed, Thrift and Tansy, Lady's shoe?  
The little laughing nicknames handed down from tongue to tongue,

Known by the oldest cottager and to the very young.

Why there is one wild meadow flower called 'Break your Mother's Heart'!

Such fragrant bits of nonsense, where did all these nicknames start?

## Some Jokes and Quotes

'A celebrity is a person who works hard all his life to become known, then wears dark glasses to avoid being recognised' – Fred Allen

'To sit with a dog on a hillside on a glorious afternoon is to be back in Eden, where doing nothing was not boring – it was peace' – Milan Kundera

Kundera

'Fifteen years ago, the internet was an escape from the real world. Now, the real world is an escape from the Internet.' – Noah Smith

'Being offended is the natural consequence of leaving the house' – Fran Lebowitz

'Colour is the place where our brain meets the universe' – Paul Cezanne

The picture is of Marwood Hill Gardens looking down the valley and the bog garden in all its wonderful lushness at this time of year. I apologise in advance that I'm going to combine the June and July Newsletters – other commitments and holiday will make it difficult to produce a separate June edition. With best wishes to you all from Bridget

