



# ASSOCIATION OF INNER WHEEL CLUBS IN GB&I



FEBRUARY 2021



## PERIOD POVERTY – AN UPDATE

As some of you may remember, the International Social Project launched some three years ago was Caring for Women and Girls. In GB&I, we focussed our attention on Period Poverty. Things have come a long way since then! Members will be delighted at the abolition of the "Tampon Tax" as of 1st January 2021 – some good news in these strange times.

The Chancellor announced that the tampon tax was to be abolished from 1 January 2021 in the March 2020 Budget. As the transition period ended on December 31st, the UK is no longer bound by the EU VAT Directive which mandates a minimum 5% tax on all sanitary products. It has actually happened but been lost in all the press coverage of Covid 19 and Brexit matters.

As free sanitary products are now available in all parts of the United Kingdom to those who need them, it is excellent that the Inner Wheel project played a part in the campaign.

However in the present strange circumstances, our task may not be over quite yet! While celebrating the abolition of the VAT, we need to remember that although this is very welcome, in this dreadful Covid 19 pandemic, many are struggling financially with furlough, the loss of livelihoods and jobs and reduced hours. In the past, food banks have said that they do not have room to store sanitary goods - perhaps we can persuade them that this is important?

Sadly, there has been an increase in domestic violence during this time so Women's Refuges still need our support. Also, with schools and colleges closed during the lockdowns, free sanitary products can no longer be accessed by students who need them. Unfortunately, some schools have not yet registered to have access to free sanitary products. There are still areas where our help may be needed!

## A MILE OF SCARVES

As always the ladies of the Inverness Club (D1) have been very busy during lockdown – knitting, quilting and sewing. Scarves were a big item this year – so much so that they set themselves a target of knitting a mile of scarves!!!! This they achieved and more – adding hats and mittens to the scarves – as well as teddies, blankets, quilts, jumpers and even knitted handbags! In total the club produced in excess of 1,000 items. All of these have now been donated to Blythswood, a charity organisation in Scotland.

The club was able to visit Blythswood's new distribution centre, which has been opened recently in Inverness, to hand over their amazing donation. This centre allows Blythswood to sort out the 250,000 boxes for distribution to Bulgaria and Romania. This is a huge effort this year by the club and they were thanked by fundraising manager, Danny Muschate who said that these items to fill "shoe boxes" were even more necessary this year owing to the pandemic. The club also received some very welcome publicity at the handover with an article appearing the following day in the Press and Journal, the local paper.



Picture courtesy of Press and Journal newspaper

**WELL DONE INVERNESS!**

# Zoom



# Soup



In place of a Zoom picture, Alloway Inner Wheel (D23) decided to make it pretty clear that they enjoyed a soup lunch for World Inner Wheel Day. Minestrone was the most popular by a long way! Recipes were exchanged, chat was lively and interesting and each member gave a donation for the local food bank.

## Planted in Hope

One of the newer members of Denby Dale (D4), Jill, planted these hyacinths in the vain hope that we would be celebrating World Inner Wheel Day in our usual tradition with a faith lunch at a member's house (usually noon start and finish with a cup of tea around four!).

Naturally this year, we have been unable to do this but we are determined that we will have that faith lunch this year and we will be putting this photograph in a frame in pride of place as centrepiece on the table. True Inner Wheel colours including yellow for friendship!



## Colours of the Day

District 13 held its celebration of World Inner Wheel Day on 11<sup>th</sup> of January on Zoom.

We had a good attendance and everyone dressed up in Inner Wheel colours, blue or yellow or blue and yellow. PDC Margaret won the prize for the best dressed member. We would have been proud to have her represent us anywhere in the world in her blue top and yellow/gold scarf.

DC Nirmala really appreciated every member present sharing their experience and memories of Inner Wheel and explaining what being a member has meant to them over the years. Amongst many other things, I think without exception, we all agreed it was about friendship.

Such interesting stories were told at this meeting.



Members spoke fondly about their contacts with other clubs from other Districts and other countries all over the world. It was amazing to hear about the various Conferences and Conventions that

all the members had attended. It was a very good meeting and everyone was nostalgic.

## Darlington Deliveries

During December, President Karen Campbell set up a scheme with Darlington Mayor, Chris McEwan, to provide a plant and a card to the Carers and home supporters of vulnerable people in our town. This was a thank you for all their ongoing front line work during the pandemic. Our club members took on the task with military precision and delivered around 700 plants and cards. This generated a considerable amount of local publicity. It was a lovely feeling to see the joy it brought.



## Who Do You Think You Are?

**F**ans of the popular TV programme were in luck at the Zoom meeting of Abbeydale Club (D127) as Alison Edlington treated us to a potted history of her American ancestors.

Alison writes: *“In the year 1893 my grandfather, William Murdoch, emigrated from Liverpool to Savannah, Georgia, with my grandmother Mary and their children Isobel and Bryce. William forged a successful career and became editor of the Savannah Morning News. My father was born in Savannah and completed the family.*

*Aunt Isobel married Edmund Rhett, a member of an influential local family. Edmund’s father, Colonel Alfred Rhett, commanded Fort Sumter during the American Civil War. Edmund died of Spanish Flu in 1919. Isobel and Edmund had a daughter Alicia who brought further fame to the family by starring as India Wilkes (sister to Ashley) in the film “Gone with the Wind.” She went on to become a star of radio and theatre and was also a successful portrait painter. Amongst her subjects were Clarke Gable, Vivien Leigh and notable senators. Alicia died in 2014 at the age of 99 years.*



*When my grandfather, William, died in 1912 his widow, Mary, wanted to return home to England, so my father came with his mother back to Liverpool. It was here that my parents met and married. The American saga did not stop there as a family connection to the Dupont dynasty resulted in very well received food and clothing parcels during the Second World War.*

*John and I married in 1974 and moved to Sheffield. As the saying goes ‘the rest is history.’”*

## Food Bags from Forfar and Banff

As a Christmas project, members of the Forfar Club (D1) supplied food to fill over 100 recipe food bags for our local food banks. Each bag contains the long-life ingredients for a simple hot meal for a family of 4 along with the recipe on the front. Having heard about this novel idea, the Banff Club also donated these food bags to their food banks.

The Forfar members plan to continue with the food bags into the new year as our President Lynda Stobbs said – “Food Banks – like puppies, are not just for Christmas”.



## Donations from Durham

As you know, World Inner Wheel Day on 10<sup>th</sup> January is celebrated by Clubs worldwide with an act of service in the community to commemorate the very first meeting of Inner Wheel held in 1924 in Manchester – in the local Turkish baths, the only room available for free!

This year, owing to current restrictions, instead of making a collection of goods to a local foodbank as in previous years, members of the Inner Wheel Club of Durham agreed, as they have been unable to meet up each month, to donate the cost of a lunch to our charity fund. As President Beryl Freeman’s charity for her year has been the Salvation Army, it was decided to make a donation to the local branch to be used to buy items desperately needed by struggling local families.

A letter of thanks has been received from Major Eric Pearce for the monetary gifts and food donations over the past year and for the Club’s continued support for the Salvation Army’s community work.



Members were pleased to hear a total of 812 toys together with stocking fillers and selection boxes and 96 food parcels had been distributed to a number of local areas.

Major Pearce said the kindness of donors has brought some cheer to recipients at a time of even greater need, together with help needed by those less fortunate who are struggling in these unprecedented times. On behalf of all the recipients he passed on their thanks to everyone who had helped make these donations possible.

**(Major Pearce has given his permission for the photograph and information to be published)**

## Face Mask News

A lovely piece of news from D9! Erica Stockwell of Thame Inner Wheel Club winning the Festive Mask competition with the £100 prize, has enabled a Hearing Dog to go to a new home for a deaf lad.



This is a very happy ending to my Mask Competition in which we have all been involved.

**Elaine Morris DC**

## The Zikomo Trust

**This is about a charity which has been set up by Past District Chairman of District 4  
Suzanne Brindley and her husband Barry.**

Our work began in 1987 when we returned from working for 14 years in Zambia and Malawi. The Zikomo Trust was formed in 2012 as a family-run charity to continue the work on a more permanent basis. Every two years since 1991 Barry has taken a large group of staff and students on a 3 week fact-finding tour of Malawi.

The Grammar School at Leeds (GSAL) is a partner school with the institution where we worked in Malawi. GSAL has embraced the Malawi project wholeheartedly involving pupils from 3 to 18 years old in an understanding of the problems, people and culture of a developing country. Support comes not only from pupils and parents at GSAL but many service organisations such as Inner Wheel, Rotary, W.I., churches and schools.

We have been fundraising, collecting and distributing relief goods and building classrooms and libraries for the past 33 years. To date we have built 45 classrooms, 5 libraries and two science labs in the Kasungu region. Each classroom has been equipped with desks through our "Donate a Desk" scheme organised with The Grammar School at Leeds. The libraries have shelving made by a local carpenter who also makes all of the desks, tables and chairs. To date we have sent over 500 tons of relief items including clothing, knitted items, spectacles, books, educational material, medical equipment and medicines. We support two nurseries, a feeding centre and educational bursaries for deprived children.

823 boxes were sent by container at the beginning of September. The contents were gathered, sorted and packed over the previous 6 months, many of them containing items donated by members of Inner Wheel throughout West Yorkshire - in particular, all of the knitted jumpers, hats, and blankets.



**The Inner Wheel Club of Caversham (D9) brought out their treasures to show and tell as part of their World Inner Wheel Day celebration. Objects from Italy, Portugal, Bethlehem, France, China, Jordan and Japan featured in the display.**

**ALMOST AS GOOD AS A HOLIDAY!**

### BANBURY (D9)

To celebrate Inner Wheel Day we had a Zoom meeting at 11am on 11 January 2021. Witney Inner Wheel Club had been invited to join us. There were some poetry readings and one of our members read the Inner Wheel prayer. Our President lit a Candle of Friendship. As we reminded ourselves that this meeting is about friendship, we asked members to join us with coffee and cake at the ready, though of course not to share!

### BOURNE END AND COOKHAM (D9)

For Inner Wheel day our efficient secretary set up a phone link so that at 11am, we all made a cup of tea or coffee, then half of us rang the other half of our membership for a chat.



## A "Normal" Inner Wheel Day

### The Inner Wheel Club of Guernsey – District 11 Celebrating World Inner Wheel Day – 2021

In Guernsey we are very fortunate not to have any restrictions imposed on us owing to the Covid-19 Pandemic and we have been living “a normal life” since July 2020.

As a Club this enables us to fulfil the many service aspects of Club life that we so enjoy. On Monday 11th January, 15 Club members visited a Senior Citizens’ Day Centre to entertain the clients with a repertoire of Old Time Music Hall songs and entertainment.

We were ably led by our Musical Director, Susan Crossley and Pauline Telford was the compere. She also gave an excellent performance of “No-one Loves a Fairy When She is 40” to rapturous applause!

Members baked some delicious cakes which would be enjoyed by the Day Centre clients in the days to come. It was wonderful to see how the clients joined in with the songs, many of which were old favourites and they said this was such a great boost to them in these hard and worrying times. Everybody had a really wonderful morning.

We in Guernsey would like to send our good wishes to Inner Wheel members everywhere and we hope that it will not be too long before we can all meet up again.



Jocelyn Dorey- Guernsey



## 50 Years of Inner Wheel!

A former President of the Inner Wheel Club of Alfreton, Ruth Hunt, celebrated her 80th birthday with a surprise visit from District



Chairman Margaret Day who presented her with a certificate in recognition of her 50 years of service to Inner Wheel. The framed certificate was given following social distance rules. She was accompanied by Club President Kay who handed the birthday girl a bouquet of flowers on behalf of members.

## Sterling Work from Stirling

The Inner Wheel Club of Stirling (D1) is always very active and involved in innovative projects.

### COMFORT STONES

Throughout the summer members began to collect and paint comfort stones. Originally set up as a response to Covid 19, the demand for these stones spread. Hospital patients received a painted pebble which could fit snugly into their hand. These had a message on one side. This amazing display of stones was donated to patients at the Forth Valley Royal and the community hospitals in Falkirk, Stirling and Bo'ness.



### THE BIG WALK

Just before Christmas, Past District Chairman, Marjorie Duncan undertook a 10k walk in aid of Shelter.



Marjorie is now a member of the Stirling club having moved from Ellon (also in D1). She was inspired to take part in the fundraising walk after a talk given to members by Emma Jackson of Shelter. The walk was part of The Big Walk and Marjorie was encouraged along the way by other members of her club. Here we see the walkers (with Marjorie on the left) at the half way point. Well done, Marjorie.

### BABY BASICS

This charity was featured on BBC Look North recently and showed volunteers packing Moses baskets and boxes with essential equipment and clothing for families finding it difficult to provide for their ‘new-borns’ and other small children.

Unemployment as a result of COVID 19 has exacerbated an already pressing need for help. With our knitting ‘brigade’ in mind, The Inner Wheel Club of Abbeydale telephoned their local centre to find out what items they needed most. They requested sweaters and cardigans for 1+ years (not new-born) and cot blankets which can be knitted or crocheted.

Baby Basics has a number of centres and works with community groups to give appropriate support where it is needed.

## A Rare Day Out - or A Sense of Normality!

**O**n a beautiful autumn day, a small group of Inner Wheel ladies from Edgbaston Convention met in Bournville to visit Selly Manor museum. Selly Manor is a grand name for a farmhouse built in medieval times in Selly Oak. At the end of the 19th century it was three somewhat dilapidated buildings.. George Cadbury saved it and moved it piece by piece to his new village in Bournville. Alongside this building is Minworth Greaves, a 750-year old cruck hall which was acquired in 1932 by Lawrence Cadbury and transferred to Bournville from Sutton Coldfield. These two buildings comprise the Selly Manor museum.



We were greeted by a very enthusiastic guide and seated in the sunny garden. Socially distanced and masked of course! We heard how George and Richard Cadbury moved their chocolate factory from Birmingham into the country as Bournville was then. It then seemed sensible to move all the workers from the slums of Birmingham into new houses in Bournville. The first houses were

built for the firemen in case the factory burnt down! All houses were different, had a large garden and six fruit trees. The houses were available for anyone not just the workers. They were and still are for sale and rent. There are lots of green spaces and amenities but no pubs! The estate was always separate from the factory and in the early part of the century was named Bournville Village Trust. Today it extends beyond Bournville and even as far as Telford. Our tour of the house was equally fascinating.

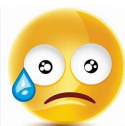
We learnt the practicalities of the medieval furniture within. There were settles, tables, cupboards and a fascinating four poster bed. The bed was very small, and the occupants slept sitting up. When you lay down you were dead! The base of the bed was rope which often needed tightening – hence the saying ‘sleep tight’! The plague doctor was also around – perhaps we should have them now! We were told about medieval cooking and lighting and learned the origin of the saying ‘burning the candle at both ends’. Our guide was a fount of knowledge of old sayings and even produced a booklet on the subject.



After a wonderful tour of the house we emerged into the sunlight to enjoy tea and biscuits in the garden. The visit was a very enjoyable experience giving us some sense of normality in the strange world we live in now.

### **A look back on 2020**

2020 was a disturbing year but good things happened too. New grandchildren were welcomed as well as new in-laws when weddings were allowed . We learned that a life in lockdown had advantages. We embraced Zoom and discovered the joys of “Zoom Wear” otherwise known as only dress from the chest up! That is not to say that we did not pine for a hairdressing appointment. Despite encouragement to bake, we all yearned to eat in a restaurant . The weather was good and we discovered the pleasures of walking or cycling or gardening or even wild swimming.



The world was turned on its head and Christmas did not see the welcome home of family and friends. We found comfort in familiar TV programmes and the Queen’s speech drew the highest viewing figures closely followed by “Call the Midwife” and “Blankety Blank”. Interestingly, the highest Christmas Day viewing figure of all time was 30 million for the 1986 “EastEnders” episode of Den Watts telling Angie of his plans to divorce.

### **A look ahead to 2021**



January 2021 saw Brexit done but we’ll have to wait a while to fully understand its impact.

A new President was sworn in on January 20th and that’s bound to alter American policy.

25th January saw the anniversary of the birthday of Robert Burns. He was born in Ayrshire in 1759 and died on 21st July 1796. The tradition of eating haggis, neeps and tatties originated from a meal held in his memory shortly after his death.

To those ladies whose birthday fell in January, hope you enjoyed a more celebratory meal than that of Burns.

Weather-wise, we’re much better off than we were at Christmas and New Year ten years ago. Temperatures were as low as minus 20C and we were house-bound because of snow and ice.

**The Inner Wheel Cub of Londonderry seemed to sum up all our thoughts in a very interesting way!**



## The Children's Hospital Charity Snowflake Appeal

### Appeal Aim -

To help change the lives of poorly children across all of South Yorkshire.

All monies raised will support the development of a new children's cancer and leukaemia ward.



### WE DID IT \*

Our snowflake from the IW Club of Barnsley was prominently displayed on the outside of the Alhambra Shopping Centre in Barnsley over the Christmas period.

Many thanks to all those who donated.



### Teams4U

What lovely pictures we received from T4U charity showing children receiving their shoeboxes in Eastern Europe where they are very much needed. It brings home how vital they are in cold countries as they contain basic essentials such as scarves, gloves, hats and baby items. The Inner Wheel Club of Arbury were asked to "keep knitting, please" as these items are very much in need.

With the help of a number of clubs, including Arbury (D6), the charity Teams4U managed to collect and export 48,756 shoeboxes.

In Romania, all the shoeboxes have been distributed and the partners in the north of the country have worked tirelessly to do so. It was unfortunate that a hold-up at Dover owing to Covid 19 and Brexit restrictions meant that these items were unable to be sent in December.



At the moment boxes are being sent to Belarus as the temperature here can go as low as -20 degrees. Warm scarves will certainly be very welcome.

### Kirriemuir Gifts to Day Care Centre

To celebrate World Inner Wheel Day of Service on 10th January, members of Kirriemuir Club (D1) usually provide entertainment and afternoon teas to residents in one of the sheltered housing complexes.



As this could not be done this year, the club donated a variety of puzzle books and bags of

tablet to Kirriemuir Day Care which will be distributed to their members. The picture shows Aileen Pearson, Deputy Manager receiving the box of goodies from Helen Shearer, Treasurer of Kirriemuir Inner Wheel Club.

### Delicious Dundee Cakes

Meantime, another club in District 1 had a Zoom meeting featuring a cake decorating demonstration. While some ladies just watched, others were brave enough to attempt their own cake decorating in the course of the meeting! Much fun was had and one of the cakes was donated to the local food bank.



Was it one of these lovely cakes I wonder!

## Blankets for Bridgemoor

## From Dotty's Desk

During the long days of lockdown, the knitting needles of the ladies belonging to the Inner Wheel Club of Bath (D20) have been busier than ever!

Many people smile about 'Knitting Ladies' but over many years, hundreds of squares have been knitted and sewn into blankets.



Traditionally, these blankets are sent all over the world, usually to disaster areas, but in these strange times it has proved impossible to send such goods abroad.

Consequently, Inner Wheel Clubs in Great Britain have been asked to find a local outlet for some of these blankets.

Bath Inner Wheel Club has been fortunate! Bridgemoor Care Home has welcomed the gift of blankets for use by the residents when family members are allowed to visit. This is because the area made 'covid safe' is part of the conservatory where the windows have to remain open and, although the resident being visited is behind a perspex screen, the room quickly becomes very cold – hence the need for a warm blanket.

In early December Margaret Berry and Jenny Jones from the Bath Club delivered a suitcase full of blankets which were gratefully received by Head of Care, Pam Burford and her assis-



### Still in lockdown!

On personal note, last March—on the 12th to be exact – some members of the Association Executive sat in the office at Warwick Square listening to the news from Downing Street. The air was sombre and we knew that what was said would have major implications for all our lives. I treasure the memory of the last time we physically chatted together.

Fast forward to the very recent past. Home Service Reports have dropped into my inbox and WOW—Inner Wheel has not let the current restrictions get in the way of a great deal of amazing work.

Most of us are aware of just how much help Inner Wheel members have given NHS and Care Homes in the form of goods made and distributed. Food Banks have received donations both actual and monetary and members have found ways to keep in contact with the vulnerable and self-isolating.

### Make sure everyone knows.

In this newsletter, one article mentioned the poet Robert Burns. Very recently a pair of sculptures appeared on one of the tourist walks—of "The Two Dogs", the subject of one of Burns poems.



Pedigree dog Caesar sits on the bench with working collie, Luath, on the ground! I thought I would share it—the sculptures were put in place during Lockdown and it was lovely to find something to raise a smile!

18<sup>th</sup> INTERNATIONAL INNER WHEEL  
CONVENTION VIRTUAL

17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> April 2021



Friendship  
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