

THE HARBOUR W.I.

The January meeting was surprisingly busy with eight guests, who were mostly potential new members, attending. It was the Resolutions meeting, when a vote is taken to decide which resolution should go forward to the Annual Meeting of the National Federation of WIs. It was unanimously voted to promote the increase of Stem Cell donor registration.

The afternoon continued on a lighter note with a Musical Quiz arranged by Irene Scoble who couldn't be there due to ill health. Very sadly Irene passed away later that week.

At the next meeting in February, President Sandie Goman spoke with great fondness about Irene and her substantial contribution to the Harbour WI. She had become Secretary very quickly after joining and had served for three years before becoming Programme Secretary in recent years. Former President Hiliary Hooper also said a few words about Irene. She called her 'My Rock' and praised her for all her help and support during her time as President. The members then had a minute's silence to remember Irene.

After secretary Daphne Chamberlain had read out the correspondence, Jackie Stevens introduced the speaker for the afternoon, Paul Green – and his dog Charlie! Paul introduced himself as a Dog Handler and Trainer. He has been doing the job for 12 years. He explained that Charlie was a Lowland Search Dog specialising in explosives detection. Whereas a human nose has 3 million sensors, a dog's nose has 100 million! – and they can detect smells as they breath out as well as in!! He has different dogs for different purposes. Dogs for detecting decomposing human remains, dogs for detecting bed bugs in hotels, guard dogs, drug detection and search and rescue dogs. He is training a dog at the moment for the illegal pet trade. [to sniff out rare species at Heathrow Airport.] Dogs are also being used for early detection of medical conditions such as cancer. They take about a year to eighteen months to train with tennis balls, never food, and are best started from the age of 12 months. Paul then fetched his drug detection dog, Wallace and sent him to find a package he had hidden in a handbag earlier. He soon found it!

The Lunch Club are going to the Ocean View in Pevensey on the 26th February. The Craft Club are meeting at St.Barnabas Church Hall on the 24th February at 2pm to do some needle felting and the 4th Monday Club meets in Simply Italian for coffee and a chat.

The Harbour WI meets every 2nd Monday in the month at the Sovereign Harbour Yacht Club at 2pm in the Sovereign Suite. The Speaker at the March meeting is Peter Griffiths giving a talk about Champagne! The membership at the Harbour has reached a maximum for where it is held but visitors are welcome by prior arrangement with Frances Harrap on 01323 472649. Further information is available on the S.H.R.A. website. www.shra.co.uk/wi

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Little did the members know that the March meeting of the Harbour WI would be their last for a very long time! There was a good turn out for a very busy meeting.

Committee member Jane Bradley told the members about proposed outings to Herstmonceux Castle, Amberley Museum and a possible back stage tour of the Royal Hippodrome Theatre; all to compliment future talks.

An Easter Egg and Teddy were raffled to raise funds for the RNLI in the name of Programme Secretary Irene Scoble who sadly died in February. Cards made by Irene and President Sandie Goman were also sold with proceeds going to the same charity. Letters were read out from The Beachy Head Chaplaincy and St Wilfred's Hospice thanking members for donations following the Carol Service and bags of toiletries continue to be made for the Eastbourne Women's Refuge.

Jackie Stevens then introduced the speaker Peter Griffiths who gave an illustrated talk on 'The History of Champagne' Peter had talked to the members before about his life as a commercial airline pilot. This time he revealed to them his passion for fine wines – especially Champagne! He showed slides of a fossil of a grape 66 million years old, and the oldest bottle of wine; thought to date from 325-350AD! Champagne started being made and drunk much later. It was possibly started by accident when wine was left to ferment too long and began a second fermentation which formed bubbles. The English liked the bubbles so monks started putting sugar in to form bubbles. This was 100 years before Dom Perignon who was supposed to have invented Champagne! Dom Perignon was a Cellar Master for the house of Moet et Chandon in 1668 and he was a wine blender who tried to stop the bubbles forming. Nearly a century after his death Moet started making Champagne. Various French wine houses started making it as well and the government protected it by passing laws that only allowed certain areas to call it Champagne. This increased the popularity – and the price! According to Peter the bubbles aid absorption and make it a drink that can be drunk at any time! Cheers!



The Lunch Club were going to The Pilot in Meads and the Craft Club intended making cards using Iris Folding; both had to be cancelled.

The Harbour WI normally meets every 2nd Monday in the month at the Sovereign Harbour Yacht Club at 2pm in the Sovereign Suite. At the moment everything is on hold until further notice. The membership at the Harbour has reached a maximum for where it is held but visitors are welcome when they start meeting again, by prior arrangement with Frances Harrap on 01323 472649. Further information is available on the S.H.R.A. website.

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The Harbour WI Committee have been meeting via Zoom every month since May. They decided to cancel all the proposed speakers for 2020 and if it is possible to meet before the end of the year to just have an afternoon of chatting to each other! Committee member Liz Newman is making enquiries about holding a Christmas Lunch in the Hydro Hotel in December if they are able to meet up by then.

The Committee have been phoning members to check on their welfare and give them any information that might be of interest. It was decided to continue their fundraising for their 2020 charities into 2021; for Memory Lane – an Eastbourne charity set up for dementia sufferers and their carers to attend social events together - and the Eastbourne Women's Refuge; although Sandie Goman has been making dozens of bags and filling them with toiletries for the Women's Refuge even during lockdown. Also a total of £150 has been collected for the RNLI in memory of Committee member Irene Scoble who sadly passed away in February.

Several members have entered Hampden Park WI's 'Virtual Craft Show' and have sent photos of their entries! and member Jacquie Frost has sent a monthly Newsletter to all members on e-mail with a letter from the President attached. So all still keeping busy!

The Harbour WI normally meets in the Sovereign Harbour Yacht Club at 2pm in the Sovereign Suite on the second Monday of the month. At the moment everything is on hold until further notice. The membership at the Harbour has reached a maximum for where it is held. Further information is available from our web pages on the SHRA website.

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