



NHS Retirement Fellowship

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Reg. Charity No 287936

Patron:



Chairman

I hope that you all had a happy Easter meeting with family and friends. At least the weather has been drier giving us time to get a bit of sunshine. For those who have had a holiday I hope that it was rewarding.

Editor.

Lucy Lewis, our speaker last month was the author of 'Lighting the Fuse', her claim to fame...or 15 minutes of celebrity, was that she was the first female bomb disposal officer, which meant the media followed her career.

Lucy entered the Royal Academy, Sandhurst in January 1989, she arrived with a hangover and an ironing board... the first of seven used during her career. She left 10 years later having served in England, Germany, Northern Ireland and the Gulf War along with a dog, dodgy knees, a toy boy husband and an ironing board! When off duty she visited Ecuador, Cyprus, Oman and celebrated her 28th birthday as a guest of the Jordanian Royal family.

How to behave as an Officer at formal dinners was important so Lucy and her 48 female colleagues were given instruction on when to leave a dinner, how to avoid too much alcohol and what to wear especially since she would be the only female officer and would be sitting at the top table. She was also warned about mess dinner games, especially the one where two most junior officers sitting one at each end of the left and right tables had to change places by crawling under the tables,

Peterborough & District

Branch

NEWSLETTER

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collecting a pair of her knickers from her to be worn when officers sat back down again. It was recommended that she wear 6 pairs of different knickers and never tights or holdups!

She learnt that the protective suits were not fitted for the female body and that diffusing a bomb was nothing like in the movies, its not as simple as cutting the blue or red wire! In fact, try to avoid this. At one point each bomb disposal officer had to enter a house that had been rigged with bombs and other explosive devices by a colleague and diffuse them...when it was Lucy's turn she packed in as many types of bombs as possible and ensured that all wires were red to prove t

Lucy also learnt to shoot, the rules say if you're right-handed and right eyed then hold the gun in your right hand and aim with your right eye and if you are left-handed it's the opposite. Unfortunately, Lucy was right-handed but left eyed which made matters difficult and the advice the instructor could give was to throw the gum at the enemy as it was the only way she would hit them. As if to prove the point on the shooting range Lucy scored 8 out of 10 whilst her neighbour scored 12 out of 10. In preparation for working in Northern Ireland she had to learn how to shoot an IED off the door handle, this involved hitting the handle with a large rubber bullet from a tripod mounted gun located 15 feet away. Unfortunately, Lucy missed the lock, missed the door and hit the door frame, the bullet bounced back and hit the edge of her ear under her helmet giving her a large cauliflower ear and earning her the Marksmanship Prize for 'a self-inflicted headshot from 30 feet', an unprecedented feat which meant she was an extremely talented sharpshooter.

Just prior to finishing the Bomb Disposal Course it was realised that Lucy had not

completed the Demolition Safety Officer course so on the QT she was sent on the next course. This course was with the TA and Lucy learnt to identify bridge types and how to blow them up (something she still does to this day), another exercise it to crawl through a muddy minefield in darkness identifying mines. Looking for one upmanship against the TA Lucy crawls through and identifies and defuses her mines, except for a particularly difficult anti-tank mine, which turns out to be a hard cowpat, thus earning her the title of Captain Cowpat!

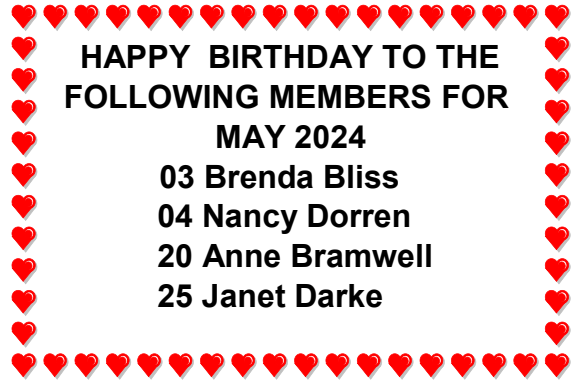
In 1992 the WRAC disbanded and being unable to transfer to the Royal Engineers and continue in bomb disposal, Lucy transferred to the Royal Military Police and was posted to Germany. Lucy learnt to speak military German and whilst serving in Germany noticed the headlight bulb on her car had blown. She took it to the local garage and in her best German asked the mechanic to replace it, unfortunately what she said was "the leading searchlight on her left flank has been wiped out and she needed reinforcements before the next raid"

After 10 years, the last two of which she had been married, unable to live with her husband properly and wanting a family Lucy left the Army and was appointed University Marshall at Cambridge University, the first woman to hold the post since 1620. She wears a top hat and carries a 400-year-old mace. A part of her role and the 26 constables under her is ceremonial and she, along with other dignitaries, take part in the formal procession to the Senate house where degrees are conferred. They also attend the more public venues such as debates, which may or may not involve student protest, to promote safety and to try and prevent members of the public getting unwittingly involved.

Our members gave Lucy the usual round of applause for the very interesting talk.



Birthday Corner



**HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO THE
FOLLOWING MEMBERS FOR
MAY 2024**

03 Brenda Bliss

04 Nancy Dorren

20 Anne Bramwell

25 Janet Darke

In a Restaurant Window -
Don't stand there and be
hungry:
come in and get fed up

MONTHLY LUNCHES

The Cuckoo Pub

Oundle Road

Alwalton.

12 noon

If you are interest please
contact Barbara to book a
place.

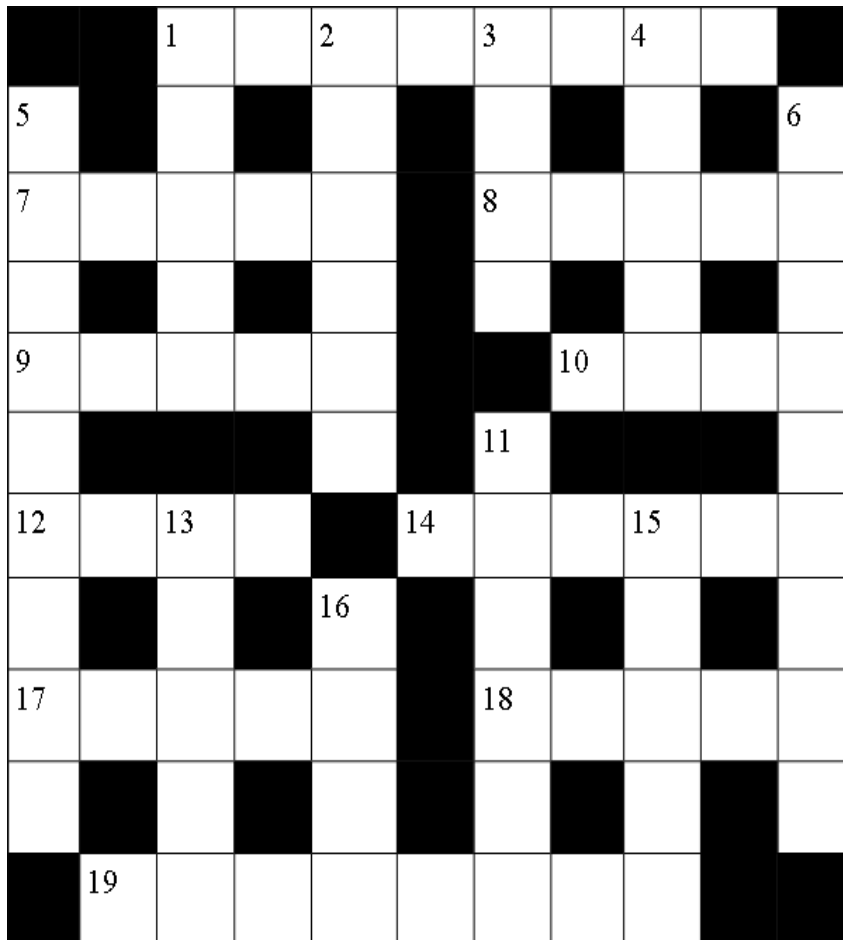
Date of Next Meeting -

2.15pm May 29th 2024

in St Andrew's Church Hall

Branch AGM

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



APRIL CLUES

Clues across

- | | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Large, bright meteor | 7. Like the earth | 8. Connected to sailing |
| 9. Needs cutting regularly | 10. Part of window frame | |
| 12. Goes on a foot | 14. Fly in an aircraft | |
| 17. We all have one | 18. German river | 19. Moon shape |

Clues Down

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Liquid | 2. Sort out errors | 3. Several instruments |
| 4. Australian tennis player | 5. Containing all instruments | |
| 6. Mulled wine (German) | 11. Having strong dislike | |
| 13. A group of singers | 15. Skilled or proficient | |
| 16. Goddess of fertility | | |

March Answers

Clues across

- | | | | |
|-------------|-----------|-----------|--------------|
| 1. Maintain | 7. Rural | 8. Never | 9. Ashen |
| 10. Brig | 12. Lucy | | |
| 14. Moffat | 17. April | 18. Woman | 19. December |

Clues Down

- | | | | |
|--------------|----------------|------------|-----------|
| 1. March | 2. Not working | 3. Tony | 4. Invar |
| 5. Broadleaf | 6. Brightens | 11. Cobweb | 13. Carve |
| 15. Femur | 16. Clue | | |

Branch Officers and Committee 2023-2024

President	Pearl Morton	263252
Chairman	Trevor Caunt	705681
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Raffle Organiser	Josie Waghorn	01778 346196
Membership Secretary	Mick Collins	559095
Assist Membership Secretary	Sandy Collins	559095
Welfare Officer	Sandra Parker	232344
Outings Secretary	Barbara Davies	348421
Speaker Host	Barbara Davies	348421
Assist Outings Secretary		
Birthday Club	Rosemary Fisher	01778 342722
Sales Organiser	Nancy Dorren	708724
New Member Hostess	Susan Pilarski	
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Earlier this year Jean and Sandra had a holiday in Essex staying at the Pontins In door Bowling centre. This centre includes many places to wander and see how the games were played. The games and craft covered a wide range of interest that has been put together so that those staying could play or just sit and watch. You can see that Jean won one of the games that she was presented with a medal.. Well done Jean.