

LITTLE BUDWORTH W.I. JULY NEWS

Laurie March was the speaker for our July meeting and his talk was entitled "Owning an Olympic horse" a story of how disaster turned into an adventure for him and his wife Pippa.

In 1988 Laurie was managing a 500 acre farm in Hawarden, North Wales when after a day shooting he was a passenger in a Land Rover that was involved in a car accident, resulting in serious and life changing injuries. He spent months recovering in hospital but his injuries meant he was unable to work again.

After five years he was awarded compensation and since his wife had recently sold her horse, they decided to buy another horse. This turned out to be a 16.2 hands horse, nothing but skin and bone called Bugs. Bugs was a fussy eater and after trying various foods which he refused to eat they came across a brand that he liked and of course this was the most expensive! After putting on weight and growing to 17 hands they decided to enter him into events and a rider was found as Pippa felt unable to do this herself. Bugs was not considered a suitable name for an Eventing horse so he renamed Watership Down. He won the first One Day Event he was entered into. This led onto other events and in 2006 he was entered for his first Three Day Event in Poland; unfortunately he was eliminated before the completion of the 3 days and did not reach the World games. In 2007 he entered the European competition in Rome, coming 20th and was selected for the Irish team with his new rider, Louise, for the 2008 Olympics. Although it was the Beijing Olympics the equine events were held in Hong Kong and the Irish Team came in 10th position with the help of Watership Down who was placed 30th individually. Following on from the Olympics he was entered into Burghley four times and in 2015 with another rider the decision was made to scale down his events.

Watership Down or Bugs as he is still fondly called gave Laurie and Pippa some amazing adventures and experiences and they made lifelong friendships during their travels both in Britain and abroad. In his career Bugs has competed in over 100 events and at the grand age of 19 he is still going strong.

Marjorie Sherry from Darnhall and Wettenhall W.I. was our representative at the NFWI Annual meeting in Brighton on the 10th June and she gave a short but interesting account of her experiences at that event.

The Vote of Thanks was given by Katie Pearce and refreshments were served by Anne Hall.

Margaret Thrower (daughter of Percy Thrower) is the speaker at the Forest Group meeting at Tarporley Community Centre on the 10th October.

Our next meeting is on the 10th August at 7.30pm in the Village Hall when the speaker will be Camille Bradford "Childhood travels with the Army". Visitors most welcome.

