

Report of April Meeting

We were delighted to welcome several visitors to our April meeting, who came to hear our speaker, Wayne Hurrell, tell us about Hearing Dogs for the Deaf. Many people may be less familiar with the work of this charity than with the Guide Dogs for the Blind, though it is none the less important in releasing deaf people from the bonds of their disability, and giving them independence and confidence to lead full and active lives. Wayne caused much amusement in describing how individual dogs and people are matched, not just in temperament, but strangely by looks as well! We were captivated to meet Donna, Wayne's very sociable hearing dog, who seemed delighted at the opportunity to meet so many new friends. It was extraordinary to hear how large a role Donna plays in Wayne's life, from waking him up in the morning when the alarm rings, to fetching him when work colleagues need to speak to him. The importance of the hearing dog being able to alert its owner when a smoke alarm sounds is evident from the fact that there is an 86% mortality rate of deaf people in fires, compared with 55% of the able bodied. The charity is limited in the number of deaf people who can be helped however. One in seven people has a hearing loss, and 250,000 would benefit from having a hearing dog to help them. Of the 5,000 people who applied for a dog last year, only 183 were able to receive one.

Next week we meet again for our Group Meeting, when Dr Taylor will be speaking to us about the ongoing redevelopment of Axminster Hospital. As always, visitors are very welcome to join us. This month's competition winners are Carole Bolton, for a decorated egg, and Margaret Dare, who won Flower of the Month, with a beautiful camellia.

April 16th Group meeting 7.00pm at the Village Hall. Speaker – Dr Taylor

May 14th 7.00pm at the Village Hall.

Speaker: Felicity Harper "The Courtenay Family of Powderham Castle"

Joan Cudmore