

GROUCHY GIRLS 2019

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JANUARY 2019

40 Grouchy girls met after the Christmas Break ready to put the world to rights.

Should we rebel against everything American e.g. Halloween, Black Friday, junk food. Greed and commercialism at its worst was the general consensus but there were some things we did like such as Multi-plex Cinemas, Music that has come from the States and of course Key Lime Pie! Junk food has become a worldwide problem and we cannot blame the USA entirely, responsibility has to come from the consumer.

Is tradition always a good thing? And should children be taught traditional nursery rhymes, country dancing and Morris dancing? Traditions should be encouraged and must not be lost, it is part of our heritage and nursery rhymes are part of learning language, development and history. New traditions evolve but the old should be nurtured and applauded. Country Dancing is good for coordination and should be encouraged in schools, it is a lovely British tradition.

Self-service check outs are they useful? We acknowledged they are useful when working correctly, however we didn't like the fact that they were putting people out of jobs. We like to be served by a person rather than a machine.

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MAY 2019

Despite having to move to a smaller room at the Willowbrook, we still managed to have healthy discussions on a range of topics.

Is it ever right to put an animal in a cage?

General consensus was that if you must have a pet in a cage it should be let out to enjoy space on a daily basis. Some GGs didn't think you could ever justify birds, rabbits etc. in cages as it is unnatural and cruel. Others felt breeding programmes in Zoos were justified if animals were to be reintroduced to the wild.



What do Easter Eggs have to do with Easter? Although packaging and marketing excessive, many GG choc-o-holics still enjoy biting in to that egg!

An I.T. savvy GG used her phone to find the origin of the decorated egg; Christians who observed Lent by fasting, didn't want to throw away the hens' eggs that they wouldn't be able to eat. They hard boiled them in plant dyes to save them for after Lent i.e. **Easter**.



Sexual harassment in the workplace - what was it like when we were young women? Sadly many of us had experienced the groping boss and two GGs had bosses who made them sit on their knee when taking dictation. YUK! They both left their jobs as the boss had all the power. Different attitudes back then as even parents didn't really want to know. Some GGs felt that young women today are far more likely to stand up for their rights. **Confession time** - most GGs enjoyed 'wolf whistles' and would be so happy to have one now!



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JUNE 2019



Grouchy Girls are **FASHION ICONS** in Carlton and Gedling, but this is a difficult role as we get SO grouchy when sizes vary so much between shops. We think cheaper clothes are usually smaller and that M&S sizes are larger. Good news is that Netherfield M&S will take returned items.

Another grouch is the people who return items when they've been worn, meaning they have to be reduced in price or even dumped. We the customers, pay for the loss of profit on our purchases. GGs are aware that even if still the same size as in our youth, our body shapes have changed so we need to try on clothes and maybe take a friend along for advice.

ACRONYMS can make us feel stupid when we don't know what they stand for, and are often unnecessary, unless repeated on a written form. Confessions that some oldies thought **LOL** meant Lots Of Love. Sending condolences with LOL was a big mistake when we realised it stood for **Laugh Out Loud!**



We seem to remember acronyms as part of the 11+.exam. Do you know what Line of Duty **AC2** stands for? Or why workers say Friday is **POETS** day?

PIGEON POO - what can we do? So many grouches on this one - Ruining soft fruit, eating food put out for little birds, mess on patios (so large!) and cars. Wipe bird mess off your car immediately as it will damage paint. As ever some creative solutions- we should be in government, BUT... pet peregrines or sparrow hawks will eat all the other birds too, and the spermicidal grain used in town has cut the numbers, but we don't want to sterilise all our feathered friends. We are out to get the dafty who feeds all the pigeons on Carlton Square, thereby keeping the numbers high.

I interviewed a local Pigeon who said he didn't ask to be born a pigeon and have we forgotten Pigeon Post? He also said it could be envy as the amount of billing and cooing pigeons do is impressive! Hmmm!



All welcome to the next Grouchy Girls at The Willowbrook on Tuesday 9th July at 10.30a.m.. The heat will rise on one of our topics- **universal benefits for state pension holders**. The millionaire on his yacht and a prisoner both get their £10 gift in December:- should it all go to the NHS? Lots more on that subject.

BFN & CUL8R

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JULY 2019

EXTENSION LEADS FOR DOGS
are they useful or a menace?



- **Menace** said the cycle riders who guaranteed, that if you were on a bridle path, the owner would go to one side and pooch on extension lead to the other. Result? A trip wire!
- **Menace** said more than one GG dog owner tripped up by a dog on an extension lead charging towards their own dog.
- **Useful** said the dog owners who use them in open spaces when they can't let the dog off the lead, but must be able to reel it in.
- **Menace** in busy places and when children are not able to manage them.
- **Suggestion** that webbing and fluorescent leads would be preferable.

UNIVERSAL PRIVILEGES for state pension holders; is it time to revise them?

We had divided opinions on the removal of **free TV licences** for over 75yr olds. All agreed that TV could be invaluable to folks who are socially isolated and some felt that at 75 you deserve a freebie.

Many thought that unless you are on pension credit the only perk should be the bus pass. As well as fewer cars on the road, it makes it possible for people to get and enjoy themselves. If somebody is so unwell they cannot use the bus, they could have a free TV licence instead of a bus pass.

Only people residing in UK should have the **heating allowance** - not the pensioners soaking up the sun in Spain.

£10 in December? Most GGs would be happy to donate it to the NHS **if** it was guaranteed to go there. But Boris, you just try and take away our bus passes!



CRAZY BARGAINS AND PROFIT MARGINS



For instance Bounty bars at our local Coop:- 1 for 75p, 2 for £1 or 4 for £1 Look out for sizes as bargain bars may be smaller. Once again single people disadvantaged when multi-packs a bargain but we appreciate that smaller bars are better for our waistline - unless we eat all 4! Packs of veg e.g. peppers also annoying, as 3 at same price as 1 large one encourage waste.

Same with M&S BOGOF meal deals as they can't always be frozen. Boots at Christmas with their 'buy one and get second half price' are ridiculous and have wasteful excessive packaging. This year they sold the gift boxes off in February at a discount of 70%! Profit margins must be huge. We long for the day when simple pricing on individual items didn't tempt us to over spend.

Quote from the Grumpy Old Men "**MEN ARE BETTER THAN WOMEN AT READING MAPS!**"

Note: they didn't even have the grace to say "as a generalisation, most men are better than most women at reading maps". Do we let that go GGs, or shall we fire off some generalisations on the shortcomings of SOME men? Guess we don't have enough time for that topic! Grrrrr!



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SEPTEMBER 2019

As well as enjoying a very pleasant morning, the group always has a serious discussion and often we learn something new. So if you thought it was group of old moaners, think again and join us.

Double yellow lines on Westdale Lane West and adjacent roads, on both sides, are planned

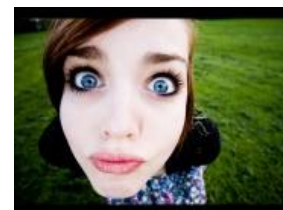
Also a new law forbidding parking on pavements is under discussion. We acknowledge that there are pros and cons, but concerns were expressed about non-residents who need to park to access their doctors and dentists etc. If you park on the pavement to avoid the yellow lines, you are still breaking the law. We felt that double yellow lines around corners were good to give drivers visibility, but they should only be down one side of the road. Also permit parking for residents could help where houses have no off-road parking. Lines on pavements on narrow roads could show how far people are allowed to park to ensure emergency vehicles and bin lorries could get through. We have our precious bus passes, *so well done to those who use public transport!*

Too much plastic packaging and much confusion over what can be re-cycled! A triangle with a 1 can be re-cycled and after that confusion reigns between different local authority's capabilities. One

GG said Huddersfield recycles over 90% of its plastic- so catch up everyone else! We don't need so much plastic packaging. You could play bowls with a swede and it would still be OK for your stew, so why is it wrapped IN PLASTIC? We're baffled as to why people buy water in bottles and many of us have gone back to bars of soap, and even bars of shampoo and conditioner (Lush-bit pricey) to cut down on plastic bottles.

Another way of cutting back on plastic? The milkman is still out there. Pears soap doesn't leave a mess – other soaps are available. Let's buy our detergents in cardboard boxes instead of liquid and put plates on bowls in fridges and microwaves instead of cling film. Christmas cards and paper with foil or glitter are NOT recyclable. If you scrunch any paper and it springs back it is also not recyclable.

SELFIES: Are they narcissistic? We do wonder if some tourists actually look at the sights as they take selfies in front of them, but sometimes we enjoy a selfie moment if we're with a group. Some of us said we'd consider taking a selfie if we knew how to do a soft focus shot! We think the young and beautiful may grow out of taking selfies and doing those contorted poses and pouting lips, but it is harmless.



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OCTOBER 2019

How should we respond to **nuisance 'phone calls'**? As ever some original thoughts e.g. getting rid of your landline will certainly cut down the number of calls! Unless a scam, we decided it was best to be firm but polite as we wouldn't want their job. We realised we were all getting the same scams e.g. threats to cut off broadband when you didn't have it, aggressive 'BT' recorded messages, but some were truly dreadful;- call from 'police' to report an unpaid bill, and if you don't press 1 they will come to arrest you! Ridiculous but terrifying for someone who is nervous or has dementia.

We agreed that if there was silence when you pick up, put the phone down immediately. Also saying your property is rented gets rid of all home improvement calls. Another suggestion was to let all calls go to an answering machine then vet them. Telephone preference and call blockers no longer very effective, but one GG recommended the support given by Talk-talk. Many more good ideas suggested.

Large TV screens showing sporting events in pubs & clubs when often no-one watching This can be very distracting if you have gone out to socialise especially if loud. We felt it would be OK to ask for it to be turned off or at least go to sub-titles. Vote with your feet and choose a pub that has a separate room. TVs left on all the time when not being watched are bad for the environment as in addition to wasting electricity they are sending out positive ions that are bad for us.

We diverted onto discussing constant background music in shops, restaurants when we'd often prefer some peace. Apparently some supermarkets have a quiet hour on Saturday mornings. We asked at the Willowbrook to have the music off but were told it was company policy to have music on. Have to admit, I think we did our best to drown it out!

Do charity shops charge too much? As everything is given freely we felt prices should reflect that. Charity shops do have to pay rent and some big charities pay large salaries. We like to support the local charities like Second Chance & the Hospice shops as they have minimum staff costs and support people in the locality who have hit hard times. Prices between shops vary but so does the quality of the goods.

We all believe in taking our unwanted goods to charity shops as up-cycling such a good thing and the alternative is the landfill site. Bras' are valuable ladies but no pants please! A good price is given for items of clothing not fit for sale as industrial rags. Also, some of us love our charity shop bargains!

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NOVEMBER 2019

Another lively meeting of 31 Grouchy Girls was held at the Willowbrook, airing concerns and sharing some interesting information.

Our first topic was whether we should follow the advice of the emergency services and always have **an emergency bag packed ready for evacuation** due to fire or flood. The honest reply from all was NO but agreement that if you live on a flood plain it would be a good idea.



In the case of fire maybe we should just be getting out rather than getting the emergency bag. We agreed that a bag for anyone who was at risk of an unexpected hospital admission was a good idea. We decided we'd need to make a list for the bag with toiletries, a torch and of course, lots of knickers!



Our next topic was much more serious as it concerned the **8 homeless people who died in our city in 2018 and the fact that Nottingham has 4116 empty homes!**

Although more hostels and provision would help, there was agreement that services for people in need are lacking and that many homeless people have come from social care or have mental health issues and do not have family support.



Also the 5 week gap between the changes of benefits being awarded can sink many people into poverty. We're happy to give to food banks but feel the government should award a grant to bridge the gap. We rely too much on charities like the Salvation Army and Emmanuel House.



Empty houses should have compulsory purchase orders if they have been standing empty for an agreed length of time. Some houses are empty because the occupant has moved to residential care and will be sold when that person dies to pay fees.

More council houses please.

Does a shady private life mean we can't trust our politicians?

Many different opinions were voiced and acknowledgement that 'twas ever so,' but that there are more revelations in the media these days. Some GGs felt that as long as no law is broken, and national security not at risk, we should only be concerned that political leaders do a good job. It was felt by some that men too often 'get away' with affairs and the women lose their reputation and sometimes are left holding the baby!

Nine GGs stopped for lunch after our taxing morning putting the world to rights. **So, a new social event, lunch at the Willowbrook on the second Tuesday of the month at 12noon if you'd like to join us.**

Maggie Martinez