

Happy 2nd Birthday Stitchlinks!

We've been celebrating our 2nd birthday by having a major revamp of how Stitchlinks works and we're very excited by it. As a result we've got lots of important news to tell you, so turn to page 6 where you'll find all the details. Changes come into place on the 31st March, so you've got plenty of time to tell us your opinion!

As part of the build-up to these changes, we've pulled together all our thinking on what makes knitting and stitching so special. You can read the first of our three part article on the *Medical update* pages on page 8. As you'll see it's a bit more complicated than simply occupying people with something they enjoy doing!

Lena tells her tale of immense courage and strength on page 2. We hear from some of our other members in the *News from friends* section on page 4, where you can find out how Missability plans on celebrating Valentine's Day and how Allie found friends in Australia. Plus discover more penpals to get to know on page 5. Also on page 5 we've got news of our Stitchlinks bunting project. We've extended the deadline to 1st May so those of you who wanted to take part, but were unable to over the Christmas period, can do so. It's a good project to get stuck into for February and a great way to get your message about friendship and stitching across to others. When finished it will accompany us to any shows, exhibitions and presentations we attend.

We held our first evening online coffee session in January and it was very enjoyable, so we're going to do it again, every month! Find out details on page 11. We hope our members in the Americas will be able to join in, so I look forward to chatting to you there.

Betsan xxx

4 step action plan for next month

- Plant a pot of cheerful flowers to welcome visitors to your front door. Smiling pansies or primroses will brighten up the darkest day!
- Write to a new Stitchlinks friend living on a different continent. Find out about their culture and way of life.
- Join in our Stitchlinks bunting challenge. It's a great project to fill those February nights!
- Chat to us at our online coffee on Saturday 2nd February at 10am UK time, PLUS Wednesday 20th February at 8pm UK time.

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