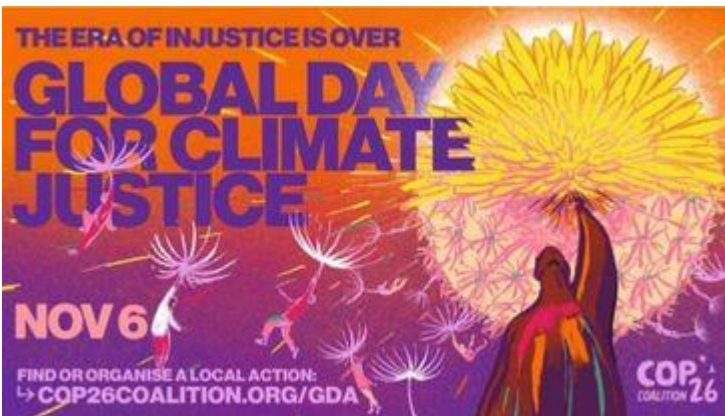




West Midlands Federation of Women's Institutes Cog in the Tree

December 2021

COP26



Unless you have been sleeping under a log you can't fail to have noticed all the talk of COP26 in the news. COP stands for Conference of the Parties, where all the world's leaders gather together to discuss the crises in climate change now and in the future. NFWI called for us all to take

part in marches either in London, Glasgow or local to you. All WIs received information from the Public Affairs Committee, but with a very short lead time it may have proved difficult for most to join in. Alongside the marches we were requested to make loophole bracelets to send to our MPs or to National to be handed out at the conference in Glasgow.

Balsall Heath & Moseley WI were on the ball and managed to send loophole bracelets to NFWI and also to organise their own rally at Millennium Point in Curzon Street Birmingham.



[#NoMoreLoopholes](#) [#COP26Brum](#) [#COP26](#)

Claire Woodland Editor

Lynn and the Board of Trustees send all members best wishes for a safe, healthy and peaceful Christmas.

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Don't forget to follow us on Facebook for regular posts and updates.

<https://www.facebook.com/WMFWI/>



Chairman's Address



Hello Everyone,

Where does the time go? It seems to be only a few days ago that I was writing last month's address and here I am already writing the December chat. It is quite hard to be thinking about the Christmas letter when it is less than halfway through

November as I write this in order to meet the publication deadline. I very much enjoyed the Annual Meeting last month and it was a treat to see members from all over the Federation greeting old friends and chatting animatedly as catch-up news was exchanged. I hope everyone enjoyed the meeting as much as I did.

I seem to have been exceptionally busy recently and so I still haven't managed to complete the winterising of my garden and the bulbs are still unplanted. I must make a concerted effort to get out there despite the rather cold and damp weather. At the moment, my roof is being replaced with new laths and felting but I have been assured that the existing tiles are in good enough condition to go back. However, the scaffolding makes it difficult to access the back garden in order to do the necessary work; at least that's my excuse!

I received an unexpected invitation to join my eldest son and family for Bonfire Night celebrations and it was lovely to watch the grandchildren's faces light up with excitement as the fireworks were set off.

Now of course, we have to make the decision as to when and where the extended family Christmas get together will take place. My middle son and his family have just moved into a new larger house and he has offered to host the event as long as Mum still does the cooking!

He wants to combine Christmas with a family house-warming party which will mean that eight of us will have to make the journey north to just south of Nottingham, taking food and presents with us. I don't mind the journey (I don't know how you feel about this) but I do not particularly fancy the idea of providing Christmas dinner for 13 people in a strange kitchen with an unfamiliar cooker. Maybe I will suggest taking a pre-cooked turkey and just do the prepared vegetables there. I'll let you know in January how I get on!

This year we should all be able to get together with family

and friends which will help to mitigate the memories of the awful Christmas we experienced last year. I hope you all have a lovely Christmas season and I wish you a healthy and happy New Year.

Lynn

WMFWI News

200 Club raffle tickets for 2021/22 can now be purchased.

Tickets cost £5 each for the whole year.

Each month your ticket number is entered into a prize draw and you could win £10.

At the end of the year at our Annual Meeting the grand prize draw could win you £100 or more.

You have to be in it to win it!

Remember the more tickets sold the larger the payouts!

Yellow Slips are available from your mailing secretary.

Iris Montgomery Federation Treasurer

End of Year Accounts

A reminder that all end of year accounts are due by 31st December 2021.

Our Independent Financial Examiner Juliette Kelly IFE has moved. If you require her services, you can request her new address from Iris Montgomery.

Annual Meeting Review

The 2021 Annual Meeting was combined with a belated celebration of our 45th Anniversary and was held at the Hyatt Hotel on 12th October. The morning was filled with business matters and the giving out of certificates to those WIs celebrating significant anniversaries and to the winners of the various competitions that we did manage to run during the past two years.

Following lunch our Speaker was Julie Summers (author of "Jam and Jerusalem" which was the basis for the TV show "Home Fires") who gave an interesting, inspiring and at times humorous look at how the WI helped with the war effort in both the First and Second World Wars. She was followed by Mitchell and Williams a duo who entertained us with selections of Flanders and Swann classics and songs from the shows.

It was good to see members from almost all of our WIs face to face again and it was a most enjoyable day.

Walsall Wood WI

As a WI we have knitted and crocheted poppies and made a wreath.



We decorated sculptures opposite the church.



The sculptures are based on local people and one of those sculptures is one of our members. Here are some of our members standing with the sculptures.



Sue Laws Vice President, Walsall Wood WI

Harborne Village WI

Members enjoyed their October evening meeting creating autumn candles.



Starting with a clean, dry jam jar we used the printed designs from autumnal napkins and a simple decoupage technique, going on to embellish our creations with natural twine, raffia and ribbon, and finally a tealight. The candles looked fabulous and we're ready for those darker evenings!



Lynda Gibbons. Harborne Village WI

Great Barr WI

Celebrated their 100th birthday at the September meeting. It was attended by 31 members and 6 potential new members which is encouraging for our future.

We as an institute are lucky enough to have the minute books for all meetings held since 1926 so we were able to reflect on the changes that have happened over time.

The books themselves are so interesting- the first ones were beautifully written in ink, then in biro or were typed but now they are computer generated making them easier to read.

A Rose tree was planted to commemorate the occasion in the border around the hall.



The idea to plant a rose was suggested by Shirley Rickets and members decided on a white rose (Lichfield Angel). The buying and planting of the rose was a joint effort but included Barbara Anderson who amazingly has been a member for over 50 years and our President a few times.

We enjoyed an afternoon tea together and look forward to many more meetings such as those recorded in our minute books.

Margaret John President Great Barr WI

Harborne Village WI



Presented MP Preet Kaur Gill with a No More Loopholes bracelet and then had a one hour chat about the impact of climate change for women and girls.

Lynda Gibbon Harborne Village WI

Walsall Wood WI

Visited Walsall Arboretum Wildlife Garden in September which is run by volunteers. There are all sorts of plants and some wonderful carvings created by a man with a chainsaw.



The Oak tree which the Green man is carved from is estimated to have been planted around 230 years ago. We plan to return in the Spring to see the garden in full bloom from the amount of Spring bulbs that have been planted.



Sue Laws Vice President Walsall Wood WI

Crafts

Welcome to this month's craft page. This month we introduce the Trustees Challenge for 2022 and report back on our recent visit to the NEC.



real people making
a real difference

Trustees Challenge 2022

The charity we are supporting next year is **teams4u**. The charity was set up 30 years ago by Dave Cooke who was moved by the plight of orphan children in Romania. The charity now operates in Eastern Europe and in other countries around the world. These shoe boxes go to Children whose families are forced to leave their homes through decades of conflict, to those without homes, to children who have lost parents or who have been abandoned.

What do you need to do

We are asking you to fill a decorated shoebox with a range of small items all of which must fit into the shoebox. Items that the charity could use, which can be made at home ... gloves (boys 12 years and upwards) are needed, mittens, hats, hand puppets, bags, purses and soft toys.

Sewn items are ... small bags, purses, pencil cases and soft toys, please either use safety eyes or embroider features onto the toy.

There are other items that can go into the shoebox, please have a look at the Charity's website for further details.

www.teams4u.com

We are not providing patterns for this challenge because there are plenty of patterns 'out there'.

Thankyou on behalf of the Board of Trustees

Craft and Create at the NEC

We're back! Along with our friends from Warwickshire Federation, we were back at the NEC showcasing some of the wide range of craft skills that are in the Federation, and talking to interested people about the WI.

On Saturday, the team was Lynn Smith Federation Chair and Bournville WI, Barbara Evans, Kings Norton WI and Debbie Arkinstall Chair Crafts and Erdington Carnegie WI.

On Sunday, the team was Sue Bubb, Newton WI, Iris Montgomery, Yardley WI and Debbie Arkinstall.



The skills demonstrated were, sputnik decorations, iris folding, Dorset buttons, fabric pine cones and parchment work.

A special thanks must go to Carol Morden from Four Oaks WI who stepped in at the last minute and loaned us 2 patchwork quilts.

Next spring, we shall be at Sewing for Pleasure, again with Warwickshire Federation. We will be demonstrating various craft skills and if you think that you have a craft skill such as lacemaking, embroidery, quilting etc then please contact me and have a chat.

Debbie Arkinstall Chair Crafts

Jackie Gregory has very kindly offered to host a **lariat necklace workshop** in her home on Tuesday March 29, 2022. Jackie can host a maximum of 10 people at a time but is more than happy to repeat the workshop. Start at 10:30am and finish at 3:00pm.

The cost of the workshop is £10, this includes all materials and equipment and tea/coffee etc.

Your mailing secretary has booking details should you require them. Please book quickly and send payment promptly as places are limited.



COP 26 is over, having filled our newscasts and newspapers for the first fortnight of the month. There have been some achievements and some disappointments, right up to the closing minutes. It seems that the news is good on deforestation, nature conservation, and the oceans, although I wonder exactly what the commitment to “replacement” of forested areas will achieve. It’s unlikely that trees planted now will achieve any impact on global warming for between one and two hundred years, this is well beyond the critical path to 1.5 degrees but if deforestation can be halted that will indeed be an achievement, 95% of countries signed up to this. One is obliged to wonder where we’d be by now if the world had taken Al Gore seriously back in 2006 when he produced “An Inconvenient Truth”.

However, we mustn’t decry the agreements reached, one of the most positive being that between the USA and China, who are described as the world’s two carbon superpowers. It serves to show that we can’t predict what’s going to happen in world politics and it’s not always bad news. We can produce projections of where climate change will be in the future and often with rather gloomy results, but we must remember there’s a great deal of human energy in the world and it will need to be applied if we’re to address the situation effectively. Sadly, a less positive last-minute change at COP26 was the decision by India and China to soften their pledge on the use of coal, this was disappointing since it was the first agreement to be made about fossil fuels.

The decisions reached at COP26 are high level and their achievement relies on all countries honouring them. Do we think they will? We must believe they will but also maintain the pressure on our own government to share the solutions to this climate crisis.

It’s sometimes difficult to see the connection between the high-level decisions we hear and what we can contribute day to day on a much more local scale. We may wonder whether crocheting ‘no more loopholes’ bracelets or making green hearts will have any effect in the face of such massive issues and perhaps we wonder what we

can achieve with them. To my mind, it’s all about opening up lines of communication with others, discussing the issues and spreading the word, raising the profile, make those who don’t seem to be switched on examine what they’re doing and why, in a friendly and supportive way, of course.

Some members will have approached their MP or joined the Global Day for Climate Justice marches and others may have gone even further with peaceful civil protest. I’ve even met a member who has written to Prince Charles, and received a very thoughtful answer.

There are also the larger scale personal targets like changing our petrol/diesel powered car for an electric model or changing our gas fired boiler for a heat pump system. On a smaller but daily basis, we can do our best to avoid single use plastic, use less energy, grow our own food, eat less meat, and avoid food waste, to name but a few principles of sustainable living.

No More Violence Against Women: 16 Days of Activism

Tackling domestic violence has been a longstanding concern for the WI. Whilst progress has been made, much more action is needed to achieve a society where women are free from the fear of violence and abuse, and survivors are able to access specialist support services, wherever they live.

Ahead of the 16 days of action, HRH The Duchess of Cornwall will be writing in the Nov/Dec issue of WI Life.

NFWI asks you to work together in your WI to put together care packages for your local women’s refuge centre. Make sure you check in advance what types of donations they can accept. Find local services near to you here :

womensaid.org.uk/domestic-abuse-directory/



2 WOMEN ARE KILLED EACH WEEK BY A CURRENT OR FORMER PARTNER IN ENGLAND AND WALES

What Can You Do in Your WI?

1. Hold a bake sale or fundraising event and give the proceeds to your local refuge centre.
2. Arrange a candlelight vigil or evening walk in your local area to draw attention to the campaign and ask your community to ‘make the streets safe for women’.
3. Hold a photo opportunity wearing orange, the UN colour for the 16 days of action.
4. Volunteer at your local women’s refuge.

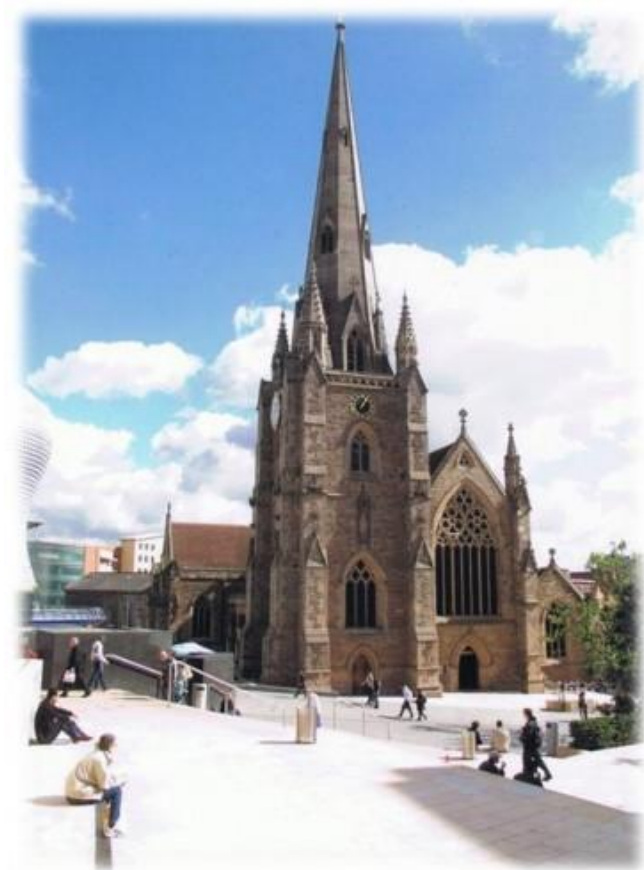
What's On



Coach Trip to Worcester
Christmas Fayre on Thursday
2nd December 2021



Carol Service at St Martin's in the Bullring on
Saturday 4th December 2021



Entry costs £7 and will include a programme, sherry or orange juice and a mince pie. Booking instructions are with your secretary.

Cheshire Coach Trip with two visits

Dagfields
Crafts & Antiques



Bridgemere
GARDEN CENTRE



Situated near Nantwich in Cheshire, Dagfields is the largest Crafts & Antiques Centre in the North West.

7 Giant emporiums contain 50,000sq ft of antiques and collectables, with over 250 dealers on site.

25 Craft Workshops specialise in everything from handmade soap to bespoke garden furniture.

Homemade food is served in two tea rooms.

There is also a Farm Shop & Butchers.

Our first stop for a half day of antiquing is at Dagfields in Walgherton. Our second stop is Bridgemere Garden Centre just down the road in nearby Nantwich.

Bridgemere is Britain's largest Garden Centre.

Selling a huge range of top-quality plants and gardening products.

Six acres of award-winning show gardens. Great shopping facilities, and wildlife trails.

There is a restaurant and separate café.

The site also boasts a retail village with Hobbycraft, Lakeland, Cotton Traders, and Walter Smiths Butchers

Saturday 19th February 2022

Seats cost £17.50

Book by Post

Please send your name, your WI,
cheque for £17.50 payable to
WMFWI, and SAE to

Claire Woodland 21 Prospect Street,
Tipton DY4 0EE
Tel 0121 556 2998

Book Online

Find event details on our Facebook
page @WMFWI, Website
<https://west-midlands.thewi.org.uk/>
and in your monthly emails from
your secretary

£1.96 Booking fee applies

Your secretary has all booking details or click on the above link to book online with Eventbrite.

Darts Tournament

Due to the events of 2020 it has been decided to abandon the darts fixtures of 2019/ 2020. Teams are asked to reregister their application for the darts tournament 2021/2022

New teams are encouraged to join in this enjoyable activity when you get to visit other venues and spend a pleasant lunch/evening with other institutes teams.

If you do not have a darts team think about getting together with members of your institute at a local pub/club/Hall and join us next year for this fun social activity. High scores and doubles are generally down to luck rather than skill.

Please fill in the flyer available from your secretary, and send the relevant fee.

I look forward to seeing teams old and new this season.

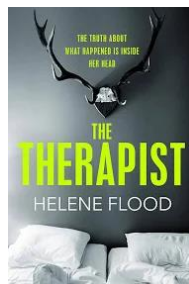
Best wishes for darts 2021/2022

Christine Dainty Chair Leisure and Wellbeing

Dates for your Diary

| | |
|------------|--|
| 02.12.2021 | Worcester Christmas Fayre |
| 04.12.2021 | Carol service at St Martin's in the Bullring |
| 19.02.2022 | Cheshire Coach Trip |
| 29.03.2022 | Lariat Making Workshop |

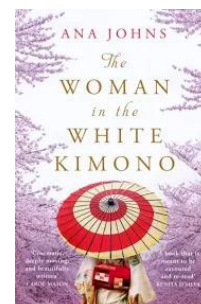
Locked into Reading



The Therapist – Helene Flood

A voicemail from her husband tells Sara he's arrived at the holiday cabin. Then a call from his friend confirms he never did. She tries to carry on as normal, teasing out her clients' deepest fears, but as the hours stretch out, her own begin to surface. When the police finally take an interest, they want to know why Sara deleted that voicemail. To get to the root of Sigurd's disappearance, Sara must question everything she knows about her relationship. Could the truth about what happened be inside her head?

The Woman in the White Kimono – Ana Johns



Japan 1957 Seventeen-year-old Naoko Nakamura's prearranged marriage to the son of her father's business associate would secure her family's status in their traditional Japanese community, but Naoko has fallen for another man, an American sailor, a gaijin, and to marry him would bring great shame upon her entire family. When it's learned Naoko carries the sailor's child, she is cast out in disgrace and forced to make unimaginable choices with consequences that will ripple across generations. In breath taking prose and inspired by true stories from a devastating and little-known era in Japanese and American history. A searing portrait of one woman torn between her culture and her heart, and another woman on a journey to discover the true meaning of home.

WMFWI Craft Workshop Lariat Necklaces



Jackie Gregory will be hosting a lariat necklace workshop at her home in Redditch on Tuesday 29th March 2022. 10.30am – 3.00pm.

Only 10 places are available so please book quickly

Places cost £10, to include all materials and equipment, plus tea/coffee.

Booking details available from your secretary.

WMFWI, 50 Station Road, Kings Norton, B30 1DA

0121 694 4201 Lynnsmith@blueyonder.co.uk

CHARITY NUMBER 1012552

REG.COMPANY NO. 2723008

We want to hear from you. Send us your WI news, photographs, stories, events, and activities. Contact the Media Team at : WMFWI.media@gmail.com