



Cog in the Tree

West Midlands Federation of Women's Institutes

Jun 2022 Jubilee Edition

Celebrating 70 Years

Her Majesty The Queen has become the first British Monarch to celebrate a Platinum Jubilee after 70 years of service.

2022 marks 70 years of accession to the throne, after the death of her beloved father King George VI on 6th February 1952.

How will you be celebrating this moment in history?

There are lots of ways you can take part in the celebrations, many events and activities will be happening throughout the UK and beyond. Maybe you are organising your own event, making something special, or attending activities in your area. Is your WI planning anything special?

We would love to see your celebrations, makes, bakes, or thoughts here at WMFWI.

NFWI have some ideas and recipes available at thewi.org.uk/home/celebrating-the-queens-platinum-jubilee

Maybe you will be making the Queen's Platinum Pudding by Jemma Melvin winner of the Fortnum & Mason competition, see page 4.

For last minute ideas and resources checkout the official royal website www.royal.uk/platinumjubilee or the government website <https://platinumjubilee.gov.uk/>

Enjoy your bank holiday from all at WMFWI and 'Long Live The Queen'!

Claire Woodland, Editor



200 Club Winner £10

104 - Pauline Green, Green Lane WI



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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

Well third time was lucky and I finally got to see the Keukenhof gardens and they certainly lived up to expectations. The tulips were magnificent and the daffodils, narcissi and hyacinths were still in full bloom so altogether it was a magnificent spectacle. I would most certainly go again if the opportunity arises.



As this is the Jubilee edition I thought I would share a couple of my memories from 70 years ago with you. In 1952 I was four and had just returned to England from Australia with my mother to stay with my maternal grandparents. I had been put to bed and was in a deep sleep when my mother came in and woke me up. She carried me downstairs and I can distinctly remember my grandfather muttering that it was stupid to get the child up at this time of night. My mother replied that I would remember this night all my life.

They were reasonably well off for the time and they had a television. As they all were back then, it was small and only showed the BBC programme in black and white. As we watched the TV was showing the footage of the new Queen walking down the steps from the plane bringing her back from Kenya to be greeted by Sir Winston Churchill and other dignitaries. My mother was absolutely correct because it is one of my earliest memories and is deeply embedded in my mind's eye.

The following year I can remember walking home from school carefully carrying the commemorative Coronation cup and saucer that all the girls were given as a memento. As I remember it the boys were given a Coronation mug but that could be my memory playing me false.

Coronation Day itself was fairly dreary weather-wise on the Wirral but that didn't stop the celebrations. My grandparents lived in a small road with about 40 houses altogether and it seemed as though every adult was crammed into their living room to watch the ceremony on their TV. We children were all outside occupying ourselves playing various games in the light drizzle. I remember we had a long skipping rope which stretched right across the road and we took it in turns to skip through "keeping the kettle boiling".

Then there was the celebration tea under the bunting (and the umbrellas!) but all I can remember of that was eating a bowl full of lime green jelly which had bananas sliced into it.

I am sure that many of you will also have fond memories of that momentous occasion; perhaps you will write them down and share them with your families as the Jubilee weekend draws near. I know that many WIs have planned celebrations and I hope you will all take photos to send to show in the Cog or even better rolling video which will be shown at the Annual meeting. I just hope the weather is kinder to us than it was 70 years ago.

Whatever you are doing, I hope you enjoy the long Jubilee weekend.

Lynn

Over to you

Walmley Evening WI joined with Walmley Infant School to plant a magnolia tree in honour of the Queens Platinum Jubilee.



Andrew Mitchel MP for Sutton Coldfield joined the WI members, staff and children on the front lawn of the school for the tree planting ceremony. A plaque to commemorate the occasion was put by the tree.

Planting the tree at the school was very significant as several members children had attended the school and now their grandchildren, one of whom was at the planting.



Cathryn Marsh, Walmley Evening WI

Bournville WI members went on an excursion to Chillington Hall near Wolverhampton.



We had a guided tour of the downstairs rooms led by Claire who was most informative about the history of the Giffard family who came to England with William the Conqueror and who have lived on the site since the 11th century.



We had lunch seated at the dining room table making us feel like Downton Abbey guests and then we enjoyed a ride around

the grounds on a tractor drawn covered trailer before exploring the gardens which were a blaze of colour from the azaleas and rhododendrons.

A thoroughly good day enjoyed by everyone.

Lynn Smith, Bournville WI

Returning to the original flyer for Mamma Mia, I was amused to see that it read, Please note! Very short lead time for a performance on 27th May 2020.

Despite the apparent popularity of the production, the entertainments committee ended up with only 2 takers, who are delighted to report that they finally attended the performance, post covid on 12th May 2022!

As advertised it was an amazing show, different from the film, but a first class afternoon of ABBA music. Finally, the audience were invited to join in with the cast, now in full colourful Abba costume and were singing and dancing in the aisles!

Well worth attending, and reluctantly even worth waiting for!!

Liz Galloway, Kings Norton Afternoon WI

Allesley Afternoon WI enjoyed an insight into the charitable and dedicated work of the Warwickshire and Solihull blood bikes. We even got to sit on a motorbike and for some it was the first time !!



Some members also went on an organised walk in a Bluebell Wood.



Iwona Glowacz, Allesley Afternoon WI

Great Barr WI after a one-year delay, were able to celebrate their 100th birthday, with food, drink and party games, the funniest being pass the glove a version of musical chairs which had everyone in stitches.



There was also a competition for best 1920's head dress but it was decided that we were all winners! I think it's safe to say that we all had a very enjoyable afternoon.

Elaine Williams, Great Barr WI

Newton WI have knitted and donated teddies wearing glasses to the Children's Orthoptics Dept at Walsall Manor Hospital. They have been much appreciated.



The teddies have been given to children who have been brave having eye examinations and blood tests. They keep the bear to share a hug with and take home.



Melanie Wisner, Newton WI

Great Barr WI members baked fruit slices at their craft morning. They looked so delicious that certain people couldn't resist trying one or two!



Elaine Williams, Great Barr WI

Dickens and Forshaw Heath WI have started their celebrations of the Queen's Jubilee with an afternoon tea and a hat competition.



After our AGM the group together with invited guests and past presidents had a lovely afternoon tea with lots of fun and friendship. It was great to see former members come to visit us and enjoy reminiscing about all our past escapades.



We also had the privilege of having a bridal dress made from parachutes and beautifully embroidered to see prior to it's final home on show at a Birmingham museum. This all added to the celebrations and gave us some insight into the spirit of ladies during the war years.

At a future meeting we intend to plant a British native tree in the church grounds where we meet. This is just the start of a very special year in honour of our most famous WI member Queen Elizabeth so fittingly we finished our meeting with a good rendition of the National Anthem.

Lynn Bowater, Dickens & Forshaw Heath WI

After one of our members, Margaret Williams, died in 2007 we discovered that she had left a cup to be awarded each year to a member who has done exceptional service for Silhill WI.



This year it has been awarded to Lynn Boothman (on the right of the photos). Since she joined in 1999 she has spent most of her time on Committee. She has been in charge of Refreshments and Outings, been Secretary to two Presidents, been President herself and was a member of Silhill's Federation Competition winning teams in Darts, Kurling, Rummikub and the Quiz. This year she is taking on the role of President again. A very worthy winner. Here she is seen being awarded the cup and the President's badge by the outgoing President, Heather Lewis.

Heather Lewis, Silhill WI

News

Due to a higher global demand for paper, and rise in price, there will be a delay in the distribution of the WI diaries.

WI Enterprises managed to secure the WI diary order and hold the price earlier in the year. However, getting hold of paper materials has proven complicated, which delayed the production of the diaries.

We are expecting that the diaries will be delivered from the end of August, which means that regrettably we will not be able to sell WI diaries at the Annual Meeting in June.

Despite this delay, we continue to take orders for the 2023 diary. There isn't a deadline for orders, and we will accept your diary requests throughout the year.

However, please do bare in mind that we operate on a "first come first served" basis and last year the diaries were sold out by Autumn. We increased our order this year, yet our advice is to place an order with your WI secretary as soon as possible to avoid disappointment.

Finally, this year we will have an A5 diary that will be sold exclusively on the web shop. The A5 diary's RRP will be £10, and it will be a larger version of the pocket diary.

Carlos Fialho, NFWI

Special Celebration

Our very own Judy Massam, Trustee and Fountain of all Knowledge, has celebrated a very special milestone this month.



Judy has celebrated her 90th Birthday with family and friends at several parties and gatherings. Pictured above with most of the other WMFWI Trustees.

As if the non-stop partying was not enough for this 90 year-old, Judy took her celebrations to a whole other level.

Judy's greatest wish for a number of years has been to leap from an aircraft and parachute to the ground. Unfortunately due to circumstances beyond her control, parachuting was not possible. Never one to be put off, Judy moved on to plan B, Microlighting!



The Eagle eyed amongst you will have spotted a pair of legs in the foreground. Judy lost both of her legs as a child of 12 after a long and sustained battle to repair damage to her feet. She received terrible life changing burns to her feet and legs as a baby of just 9 months when her blanket caught fire whilst in the care of her Aunt.

Having two false legs might hold some people back, but not this special lady. Judy has lived her life as any able-bodied person would, she married and had two children, looked after her home and family as all housewives did back then. Judy needed something extra to fill her time as married women generally didn't go out to work in those days. After viewing her options, she decided to volunteer for the WRVS.

Women's Royal Voluntary Service presented the opportunity to work at Chelmsley Wood Hospital, running the tea-bar and shop. As the years passed Judy took on more responsibility and became the area manager. Many thousands of pounds was raised by Judy and her team, money which provided mini-buses, benches, and services for patients.

At the age of 65, just when most people are slowing down, Judy received a very special honour from The Queen, a BEM (British Empire Medal) for her charitable work with the WRVS.



She also received a commendation from the Hospital Health Authority itself for her outstanding personal service.

Judy joined WI at the age of 42 and soon became a Trustee to the newly formed West Midlands Federation. She became Chair of the brand new committee Sport & leisure which she formed, and where she served for 27 years, organising fun activities and events for all WMFWI members, and again raising money to keep the federation running, only stepping down as chair pre-lockdown due to failing eyesight.

Judy continues to serve as a Trustee to the Board. Who knows what this unstoppable lady will accomplish next!



Happy Birthday Judy from us all at WMFWI

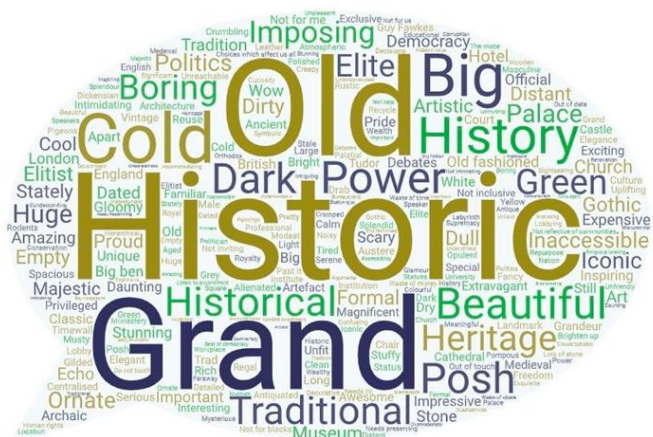
Public Affairs

The Public Affairs Team has welcomed two new members just recently, namely, **Cathryn Marsh**, Federation Vice-Chair who is responsible for the resolutions process and **Dawn Statham**, Trustee and member of Victory Belles WI. We're delighted to have strengthened the Public Affairs team and extended its remit to include Resolutions. ACWW continues to be part of Public Affairs and is led by Pamela Griffiths who is the Federation Representative. Other members are **Nancy Colwell** (Knowle WI) and **Lynda Gibbon** (Harborne Village WI).

Restoration of the Houses of Parliament: A few months ago, I was invited to join a national WI focus group to consider the restoration and renewal programme for the Houses of Parliament. The report of the proceedings has now been made available and is a thirty-page document, reporting in detail, the questions asked.

The mind map below represents a collection of the three most important words put forward by the group to the R&R Programme when asked for just one thing they should make a priority.

Participants were asked "If you could tell the R&R Programme just one thing they should make a priority, what would it be?"



It raised a wide range of points including accessibility, environmental sustainability preserving the building history/character together with challenges to modernise and enabling better communication and connection with the public/people.

If you're interested in reading the whole document, please email me for the link. liz.galloway@hotmail.com

Call to ALL Climate Ambassadors out there!

(...and a request to WI Officers to pass this invitation to appropriate members)

I recently completed a questionnaire representing the views and activities of Climate Ambassadors in our Federation and was dismayed to find that, although I know some of you individually, I don't have a record of names, contact details and WIs for all of you. This information is personal to you and although I imagine a record is kept nationally, I don't have access to the national record.

I'm being asked whether I pass on information and resources which are cascaded to me, giving you the opportunity to be involved in activities and enabling me to support you where you request it. I'm told that national funding is available in some cases. Clearly, I'm not able to pass any of this on as I don't know who you are, although I know that you are involved in some wonderful initiatives in your WIs and communities.

I've tried in the past to put together a group of Climate Ambassadors so that they can communicate with each other, bounce ideas off each other. I'd love to talk to groups, share current national initiatives and involve you in activities, if only I knew who you were! Of course, it's up to you to decide how far you are able to be involved and you all have busy lives and many commitments beyond the WI, but I would just love to know how many Climate Ambassadors we have and who you are. Do most WIs have one, or only a small handful? Whichever way you look at it, the availability of a few more options and the ability to network more widely must be a bonus to you, mustn't it?

If you've never known or thought about the Climate Ambassador scheme, do please contact me on liz.galloway@hotmail.com

If you already are a Climate Ambassador, please do let me have the following information:

- Your name:
- Your email address (or contact details)
- Your WI

I'm looking forward to hearing from you!

Campaigns

Two Campaigns that you may like to start forward planning ahead for this month are:



THE GREAT BIG GREEN WEEK IS THE UK'S BIGGEST EVER CELEBRATION OF COMMUNITY ACTION TO TACKLE CLIMATE CHANGE AND PROTECT NATURE.

Help to make the 24 September - 2 October 2022 the greatest, biggest, greenest week the UK has ever seen by organising an event in your community.

Find ideas of how to get involved and useful resources for your event at: <https://greatbiggreenweek.com/resources/>

Including the A-Z of ideas:

From Allotment Open Days,



Beach Clean, Craftivism, Car Free Day... Lobby a Politician ... Nature Trail...Repair Café ...Upcycling ...X, Y, Z.

Don't forget to let us know your plans, and share any photos or updates you have with us here at WMFWI

The second Campaign this month is:

NO MORE violence against women

No More Violence Against Women, Sixteen Days of Activism to be planned and publicised for November. Individual WIs can make their own response – vigils, approaching local refuges, contacting MPs etc.

In the month of June, the following dates link with our campaigns.

07 -12 June: Carers Week – Carers Welcome (past campaign)

08 June: World Oceans Day – End Plastic Soup (current campaign)

14 – 20 June: Loneliness Awareness Week - Link Together (current campaign)

Ongoing throughout growing season:

SOS for Honeybees: its not too late to sow your annuals to entice pollinators ... single flowering varieties are better than doubles, wildflowers (even weeds!) welcome! If you're choosing container plants, try to include some bee friendly species ... lavender's an all-time favourite, and smells wonderful as well. Bare in mind that most bedding species like geraniums and petunias aren't on the bee preferred menu!

Most other current campaigns are directly relevant on an ongoing basis.

Get on Board for a better Bus Service:

In the West Midlands, I've heard that some members are alarmed at the number of local bus services which have been cut in recent years. Is this your experience? If so, do access My WI and look at the campaigning guide and also the template letter to your local authority. We're being urged to use this where appropriate.

Many of us are relying far more on public transport now we're using cars less, or maybe have only ever used buses. Please stay alert to changes and speak up where you spot services being withdrawn. Why not use the template to write to your local authority?

What's On

Leisure & Wellbeing

invite you to play

Croquet

1pm Thursday 14th July 2022 at Kenilworth Lawn Tennis Club, Crackley Lane, Kenilworth CV8 2JS

Tickets cost £8.50 and are available via your secretary

BARMOUTH



Over 100 members, friends and family will be joining us for our

Federation Trip to the Seaside

There are plenty of seats available should anyone wish to join us. Just contact Kim on 07843 123748 or email her at kimslivinski60@gmail.com

Coach pick up locations and times are as follows:

Coach 1

Solihull, Bus Stop outside John Lewis B91 3RA

Allesley Village Hall, Birmingham Road, CV5 9GX

Coach 2

St Michaels Church Hall, 192 Boldmere Road B73 5UE

Holy Name Church Scott Arms, 9 Cross Lane B43 6LN

St. Johns Church, Walsall Wood, WS9 9LP

Coach 3

Yew Tree Yardley O/S Lloyds bank B25 8UZ

Kings Norton Station, Cotteridge B30 3EG

Layby Queensway by Police Station (at Halesowen Leisure Centre, Cornbow, Halesowen B63 3AF)

Dates for your Diary

10.06.2022	Quiz Shirley Community Centre
11.06.2022	NFWI Annual Meeting Liverpool
21.06.2022	Barmouth Summer Outing
07.07.2022	WMFWI Annual Meeting The Hyatt
14.07.2022	Croquet Kenilworth Lawn Tennis Club
15.09.2022	Craft Dabble Newton WI
02.11.2022	Craft Showcase The BMI
03.12.2022	Carol Service St Martins in the Bullring

ACWW

Women Walk the World

Ten WI members, and Lottie the dog, enjoyed a three kilometre walk at Cannon Hill Park.



Great catch up with all, followed by a lovely lunch.

Thank you to those who contributed for your Sponsorship money. I will let you know the total when it has all been received.

Thank you for a great friendship morning

Pamela Griffiths, ACWW

Craft Dabble

will be held on 15th September at Newton WI, at St Bernard's Church Hall, Broome Avenue, Hampstead, Birmingham B43.

The crafts on offer are: **Dorset Button Making, Binca Embroidery (Cross Stitch), and Decorative Christmas Baubles.**

Costs are £10:00 for the whole day 10:00am to 3:00pm and £5:00 for half a day. Your Institute will have received a flyer.