



Cog in the Tree

West Midlands Federation of Women's Institutes

February 2022

International Women's Day

International Women's Day is coming up on Tuesday 8th March. Every year the WI marks the day by joining women's marches, celebrating inspiring women, and campaigning for equal rights for all women.

Inspiring women are everywhere, who inspires you?

Emmeline Pankhurst, Suffragette. **Helen Keller**, Disability Rights Activist. **Marie Curie**, Nobel Prize winning Scientist. **Amelia Earhart**, Explorer. **Noor Inayat Khan**, SOE War Hero. **Rosa Parkes**, Civil Rights Activist. **Margaret Thatcher**, First Female Prime Minister. **Martina Navratilova**, Tennis Champion and LGBT rights campaigner.

Not all inspiring women are so high profile, look closer to home. Your neighbour who looks out for others. Your mother who works and raises a family. Your daughter who reaches academic heights. Yourself just for getting through life's tribulations. We all have something to offer.

Celebrate our differences, celebrate our similarities. Celebrate and support each other always. **The WI Inspiring Women!**

Events to mark IWD will be taking place the weekend before (5/6 March), so keep your eyes peeled for ways to take part from NFWI.

Please send us photographs and information about your IWD events or the women who inspire you.

Claire Woodland, Editor



200 Club Winner £10

L. Thornton, Hockley Heath WI



Smashing the glass ceiling, Rear Admiral Jude Terry the first female admiral in the centuries long history of the Royal Navy took up her post on 18th January 2022.

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



Chairman's Address



Hello Everyone,

It's February already and the Christmas season is well and truly behind us but for those of you who have been following my tales of Smith family life, I thought I would just let you know that the roast potatoes were a success despite the strange oven and

Grandma's reputation as the best for cooking them just right has been upheld for another year.

I was born in Cheshire and up there February was always referred to as fill-dike month. I presume that this is because traditionally, the ditches were full of melt water from the January snows. Now with the effects of global warming we don't often see that much snow or at least not enough to cause major flooding problems. Although I like to see snow, I am glad when it doesn't last.

I prefer winter to be cold, crisp and sunny not damp and dreary but one thing I really don't miss is having to scrape the car windows free of frost before driving to school in the mornings. Now I just watch my neighbours doing that onerous task before setting off for work and I give thanks for the benefits of retirement.

February is the month when we can really see that the days are lengthening, and that Spring is on its way. I have already seen the first snowdrops and the daffodil, tulip and hyacinth bulbs are appearing in my garden. Unfortunately, so are the weeds so I will have to get out there soon and do some work before things get out of hand. I love that lovely green colour of budding trees and I can't resist stroking pussy willows when I pass them when I'm out walking.

I really hope that we have got to the stage now where we can treat COVID as just another illness that we have to live with as we do with other influenza strains and that we can really get back to living normally again.

I wish you all the pleasure of WI meetings in the coming months.

Lynn

News

ADVANCE NOTICE:

Following our successful Zoom Business Meeting last year, we would like to hold another session this year. This will be in the form of two drop in sessions to be held on Tuesday 15th March from 10.30-11.30am and/or 7.30-8.30pm.

We hope that every WI will be represented by at least one (or more) member at one of the sessions. Any member can attend whether or not she is a member of her WI committee.

If you would like to have a specific topic discussed, please email me directly with your concerns.

Please contact Liz Galloway at liz.galloway@hotmail.com to book your places and to receive joining details.

I look forward to seeing you there.

Lynn

Leisure & Wellbeing

Given the disappointing number of applications for the darts tournament and the continuing concern over the Covid situation I think it best if this does not go ahead at the moment. If teams continue to practise and things improve perhaps friendlies could be arranged between local teams.

Cheques will not be cashed, and I will keep in touch with teams who have sent an email address. I would be pleased to hear from other teams at

c.dainty@virginmedia.com

Here's hoping that more definite plans can be made in the not too distant future

Christine Dainty, Leisure & Wellbeing

Over to you

Great Barr WI made china bird feeders at our Wednesday craft Morning. Most of the cups and saucers were bought from charity shops, so were inexpensive to make. Now we just need to hang them and let the feast begin.



Elaine Williams, Media Officer Great Barr WI

Yardley WI enjoyed a Christmas Party back in December at The Arden hotel. The game was dress a person on your table as a Christmas tree. As you see we had good fun



Julie Afridi-Martin, Yardley WI

St Mary and All Saints Church, Fillongley, Warwickshire CV7 are delighted to announce that we are to host "**The Knitted Bible**" in June this year.

It was created by St Georges United Reformed Church and tours the country on display. It is a series of 33 biblical scenes knitted out of wool - from Noah's Ark, to Jonah and the Whale, and the Last Supper. It is a brilliant display of knitting. When we started knitting at the end of February 2008, we were only intending to create the scene of 'The Last Supper', but, enthusiasm and imagination, combined to make us much more ambitious!"

We have the Church open over two weekends (including the Jubilee Bank Holiday weekend) to members of the public and would like to offer the opportunity to local WI Federations and other interested groups to have an exclusive viewing time, complete with either morning coffee and homemade cakes, or an afternoon cream tea.

The dates available are; 30th May, 1st, 2nd and 3rd June and times on offer, either 10 - 12.30 or 2.30 - 5.00 Prices are £7 for the morning and £8 for the afternoon, to include entry and coffee and cake or afternoon tea.

We plan to book the dates on a first come first served basis. We would need to know numbers attending approximately 1 week in advance.

If you would like to book a date or discuss it further please do not hesitate to email or call me initially on 07775 815978.

Heather Badham

Crafts



Welcome to this month's craft page.

Have you decided to try out new crafts or techniques for this year? I am going to attempt (and I do mean attempt!) something called Brioche knitting. This involves two strands of yarn, and

it produces a raised/stripe pattern. It all looks very complicated!

Craftivism has been talked about as a means of raising awareness in a gentle way by using crafts to highlight issues such as Climate Change, the Not in My Name campaign and so on.

Recently Post Box toppers have been appearing all over the country, some celebrating green issues and some celebrating seasonal events. From what I have been able to find out, these are a recent phenomenon and they first appeared in the St Albans area in 2019.

Post box toppers are now appearing in our Federation. If your institute has made one, we would like to see them over the next few months and if there are helpful hints, tips and advice these would be extremely helpful. Who will be creating a topper to celebrate the Commonwealth Games?



Debbie Arkinstall, Crafts

Competitions

Montgomery Trophy 2022

Institutes are asked to produce a tabletop display on a base board no larger than 46cm x 46cm (18" x 18") on the theme of "Beside the Sea".

This can be knitted, crochet, feltwork or a combination of these skills.

Institutes wishing to enter are advised to look at "On with the Show", the NFWI handbook. It gives guidance on exhibiting and judging criteria. It is available online at <https://mywi.thewi.org>

Rules: -

1. All items made are to be of similar proportion and scale and in keeping with the size of the board.
2. The board must be NO larger than 46cm x 46cm (18"x 18")
3. The board must be covered and to form part of the competition theme
4. Appropriate toy filling must be used
5. As the entry will be judged from all sides, no backboard will be allowed, and
6. Judging will be in accordance with "On with the Show" guidelines and the judge's decisions are final.

Please note judging will take place in October 2022 and it is the individual Institutes responsibility to set up and display their entries on the day. Tables will be provided.

Trustees Trophy 2022

This year's competition is on the theme of 'TREES'.

This competition for members is a photograph based on the theme of Trees.

- 1) The finished photograph/print must be no more the 7" x 5"
- 2) Can either be in colour or black/white
- 3) The photograph can be mounted.

The entries will be judged at our Federation event in October, so this will give you all plenty of time to come up with a stunning photograph!

Please note that the judge's decision is final.



It's Green Hearts month again in February and I hope you'll all be wearing your green hearts prominently on the 14th.

You could also arrange to meet your MP and emphasise the importance of our government implementing the agreements made in COP26 and putting pressure on others to do the same.

This campaign is vitally important to our future and that of our children and grandchildren and I'm sure we all want to support and encourage their efforts.



End Plastic Soup: Alberto Costa's Bill (which the WI is supporting) asking for all washing machines to be fitted with a microplastic fibre filter, received its first reading in November 2021 and the second is due in January 2022.

Here are a few tips from our NFWI website:

- Wash less – Items that are not worn close to the skin often do not need washing after just one wear. This will also prolong the life of your clothes.
- Fill up your washing machine to the max: a full load and short cycle results in less friction on clothes
- Wash at a low temperature. This reduces release of microplastic fibres, and of CO2
- Don't flush the lint from the filter down the drain, throw it in the bin.

Good news for veg growers and allotment holders:

Formerly an allotment holder, but now a keen veg grower in my home garden, I was really interested to read an article circulated recently by the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners. (I've been a Life Member for 50 years!)

A citizen science project carried out by researchers at the

University of Sussex has concluded that urban growers cultivating allotments and veg gardens match the productivity from conventional farming. Furthermore, sites such as allotment sites provide havens for wildlife and in particular, bees, butterflies and other pollinators. Growers were found to use fewer pesticides than in conventional farming and some researchers believe that urban produce could provide up to 20% of the world's food.



The researchers concluded that "urban gardening has the potential to improve both nutritional and health outcomes, alleviate poverty and simultaneously provide habitat for wildlife and create sustainable cities".

Follow up the link below to read more:

https://phys.org/news/2021-12-city-allotments-farming-productivity-square.html?fbclid=IwAR0qjouglwuCu2dxgZPm0rbM6eqywbMn0IxN7K3RRseOzfv_GeAasROe4Jw



I have been contacted by Terry Cheung of Home Instead who is asking whether any of our members would be interested in receiving a free booklet, Activities, Quizzes and Community information which they've produced for this year.

It focuses mainly on central and south Birmingham and is supported by a number of carers groups. If you'd like a (free) copy, please contact terry on terry.cheung@homeinstead.co.uk or telephone 0121 456 5559.

Website: www.homeinstead.co.uk Terry is also in our Speakers list.

Resolution Shortlist 2021/22

At the NFWI Resolution Shortlist Selection meeting on 5th October 2021 member and federation delegates shortlisted five resolutions which will now be taken forward for further debate and voting by members.

The shortlisted resolutions are:

1. Fit for Purpose – Fit for Girls
2. Appropriate Sentencing of Non-Violent Women Offenders
3. Equality in Law for the Menopause
4. Women and Girls with ASD and ADHD Under-Identified, Under-Diagnosed and Under-Supported
5. Tackling Digital Exclusion

Next steps

Every member now has the opportunity to cast their individual selection on the resolution they support the most. WIs are encouraged to hold meetings to provide members with the opportunity to discuss and learn more about each resolution. However, if this is not possible members can research the issues themselves and make their selection.

The selection slip can be found in the November/December issue of *WI Life*. To request a copy of the selection slip, please contact the NFWI on pa@nfwl.org.uk

The deadline for members' selections to reach their federations is **14 February 2022**.

If you have any questions about returning your selection slip, please speak to your WI committee or your federation.

In addition to completing the selection slip in *WI Life* and posting it to your federation, WIs can:

- allow members to submit their selections directly to the WI secretary via email or telephone;
- conduct an anonymous poll at a virtual WI meeting; or
- collect selections using electronic tools, such as via email or using a survey tool like SurveyMonkey.

A number of resources are available on My WI for each shortlisted resolution from the NFWI to support members in casting their selections.



Those members with children or grandchildren living away from home may like to follow up on this Student Guide by the Food Standards Agency.

In November 2021, the Food Standards Agency launched a four-week campaign to educate students on the basics of food hygiene and understanding food safety, as well as:

- Understanding use-by and best before dates
- Freezing and defrosting your food
- Food Hygiene in a shared fridge
- Cooking your food properly

This information was provided, and led, by the Food Standards Agency; the NFWI has had no influence nor involvement in the campaign, therefore any queries regarding this email should be directed to Sheila.benjamin@food.gov.uk



#ShowTheLove

There will be a Climate Ambassadors' Coffee Morning on 28 January by Zoom. If you're not already signed up as a Climate Ambassador, how about doing so now? You can find out more on our website or email me at liz.galloway@hotmail.com

What's On

Dates for your Diary 2022

19.02.2022	Dagfields & Bridgemere Coach Trip
15.03.2022	Federation Zoom Drop In 10.30am or 7.30pm
22.03.2022	Lariat Making Workshop with Jackie Gregory
29.03.2022	Lariat Making Workshop with Jackie Gregory
10.03.2022	Campaigning Workshop Zoom Drop in 7.30pm
23.03.2022	Campaigning Workshop Zoom Drop in 7.30pm
11.06.2022	NFWI Annual Meeting Liverpool
07.07.2022	WMFWI Annual Meeting The Hyatt
12.10.2022	Craft Showcase The BMI
03.12.2022	Carol Service St Martins in the Bullring

Answers to last months Wordsearch submitted by Judith Ewings, Knowle



WMFWI Campaigns Champions

Join us for a free 90-minute Zoom

Thursday 10th March at 7.30pm or Wednesday 23rd March at 7.30pm

We want to hear your ideas and know what you'd like to do

Let's get together and find out more about how we can Campaign for Change on our current campaigns

Please see the flyer accompanying the newsletter for more information

To register please contact Liz Galloway

liz.galloway@hotmail.com

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 Northwest.

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

Closing Date Tuesday 1st February 2022

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

Book asap to secure your seat.

