



# Cog in the Tree

West Midlands Federation of Women's Institutes

June 2021

## NFWI Annual Meeting

**Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> June was our National Meeting day.** Many members were disappointed not to be attending the Royal Albert Hall, especially as it is their 150<sup>th</sup> birthday this year. A rousing chorus of Jerusalem sung by thousands of members would have been a special treat after all these months of isolation. It was however not to be and instead, for the first time ever, the meeting was broadcast digitally to us all, in our own homes from the Royal Society of Arts. I have to say that I thoroughly enjoyed the experience and would love to see more broadcasts in the future, a hybrid version with attendees, and a live stream for those unable to travel.

The outgoing Chair Lynn Stubbings gave her thanks to all members and committees who had kept things going throughout the last 14 months of restrictions. UWI (Unofficial Women's Institute Facebook Group) received particular praise for all of their online endeavours, including the WI Wanderers group with their 8000 members, sharing and attending zoom meetings around the country.

It was at this point that the WI broke the internet. The service provider host Fastly, crashed, causing worldwide chaos, closing down all online feeds for not only us but also Amazon, Reddit, The New York Times, and many, many more. We were not off air for long, and things continued quickly.

Denman at Home has become a huge success, 70,000 people have joined over 800 courses taking our education in a new direction, and perhaps proving that going digital really is the way forward.



**Lynn Stubbings**  
NFWI Chair



**HRH Sophie**  
Countess of  
Wessex



**Cressida Dick**  
Metropolitan Police  
Commissioner



**Baroness Brenda Hale**  
Supreme Court Judge

We were treated to a host of inspiring female speakers, our Chair Lynn Stubbings. HRH Sophie Countess of Wessex who shared memories of her late mother and talked about her own charity work. Police Commissioner Cressida Dick talked about women in policing and her vision for the future of the Met. Retired Supreme Court Judge Baroness Brenda Hale of Richmond talked about her own career and choices she had to make as a mother. All were so inspiring. The meeting can be viewed on You Tube until 5<sup>th</sup> July 2021.



**200 Club Winner £10**

**15 – M. Edwards, Silhill WI**



**Ann Jones,**  
New NFWI Chair

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

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



## Chairman's Address



According to Rogers and Hammerstein in their musical "Carousel", "June is bustin' out all over" and it certainly seems like that at the moment with glorious sunshine and everything in the garden making up for the time lost in the cold month of May. The bedding plants have got their feet in and are happily growing, the potatoes, carrots,

beetroot, herbs and salad plants are all looking healthy and the redcurrant, blackcurrant and gooseberries are all fruiting nicely. Today I pulled the first of the rhubarb, the bedding is on the line and I feel that summer is here. Hooray!

In half-term all 5 of my grandchildren were able to meet (not on a computer screen) for the first time since Christmas 2018 when we took them all for a day out at Conkers outdoor activity centre. We had a wonderful time but by golly were we grandparents tired by 6.00pm.



Over the past two months I have been invited to attend several Annual Meetings and I have thoroughly enjoyed seeing our members even though it has mostly been on my computer screen via Zoom; however, this week I have visited two WIs for face-to-face meetings and that was an absolute joy since it seems to signify that we are finally getting back to normal.

I know that quite a number of our members have decided not to rejoin this year for various reasons, not necessarily Covid related and this is a sadness, but we are planning to have a recruitment drive in the Autumn to try to regain full membership as we get back to holding proper meetings once again.

I attended the virtual NFWI Annual Meeting and was delighted that all 3 Speakers, The Countess of Wessex, Dame Cressida Dick and Baroness Hale all praised the WI for the ways in which we kept going with the many varied ways we kept in touch with each other, and the extra-ordinary amount of help given to front-line services by providing scrubs, masks and countless other useful items. They were truly inspirational in their different addresses and if you would like to hear them the whole event is available on YouTube for the rest of this month. Well worth a listen.

As you know, for the last several years the Federation has been homeless, and we have been operating out of our spare bedrooms and turning our living rooms into offices. This is a situation which is becoming unsupportable, so we are looking to

find somewhere to have as our registered office and if you know of any suitable address preferably in a central location that is accessible by public transport where we could set up home and be able to hold meetings, we would be delighted to hear from you. You all know my email address so I would love to be inundated with ideas.

I do hope that every WI will be back to holding meetings soon and that we can enjoy for real the friendship that so exemplifies our wonderful organisation.

Lynn

## WMFWI News

### MCS (membership communications system)

If you haven't already done so, it's now time to check that our membership records are up to date to reconcile with subscriptions received.

WI MCS Reps are asked to check that their records are up to date to ensure that only eligible members receive their WI Life magazine distributed eight times a year.

Members who hold office within their WIs are also listed against their WI Position such as President, Secretary and Treasurer and these will also need to be updated where WIs have a change of Officer.

For those WIs who do not have their own MCS Representative, any additions, omissions and / or amendments should be sent to the Federation MCS Rep, Kim Slivinski @ [kimslivinski60@gmail.com](mailto:kimslivinski60@gmail.com).

WIs have the opportunity of running their own database specifically for their own members. If you wish to do this, please contact the Federation Office who will be pleased to set up your unique username and password.

**Kim Slivinski, Federation Secretary**

## Sign in to My WI

The dedicated website for all WI members. Here you will find everything you need from essential information and advice for running your WI, to campaign action packs and special interest projects for you to try.

If you have **not registered for My WI yet**, please click the "**Register**" button and follow the instructions at [mywi.thewi.org.uk/](http://mywi.thewi.org.uk/)



The 2022 WI Diary is now available to order via your WI cost £5.50

The diary will have a green cover and be entirely recyclable except for the ribbon

Closing date is Tuesday 22nd September 2021

Order now to avoid disappointment!



## Over to you



On Tuesday 8th June Harborne Village WI enjoyed a talk via Zoom from the organisers of the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games.

We heard all about how the region is preparing to host the Games for 11 days in July 2022.

The website below provides details of all the volunteering opportunities and the e-portal is now open for volunteers to apply for many roles. The Games will be relying on 13,000 volunteers in a wide range of roles to make it a success and leave a legacy across the region.

[birmingham2022.com/get-involved/volunteering/](https://birmingham2022.com/get-involved/volunteering/)

Our two speakers were friendly and enthusiastic and highlighted the complexity of arranging a world-class sporting event. They certainly inspired us all to consider volunteering.

We concluded our meeting with a 'Women in Sport' quiz!

If you'd like to know more about our Birmingham 2022 meeting please get in touch

[harbornevillagewi@gmail.com](mailto:harbornevillagewi@gmail.com)

**Lynda Gibbon, Harborne Village WI**

Along every High St now the barber shops abound  
You'll find a new one's opened, each time you turn around  
Another thing I've noticed that I think is really weird  
I no longer have a pesky moustache I've also got a beard!  
I used to pluck my eyebrows and they nicely framed my face  
Now I look more like a werewolf, there's hair all over the place.  
I'm busy with the Face Mask, plucking, and exfoliating  
It takes ages to look presentable  
Its time consuming and irritating  
So Ladies – Next time you look in the barber shop window  
To see if your husband's still there  
Don't faint with shock when you may see  
A fellow WI member sitting there

**Jeannette (Ginny) Summlar, Boldmere WI**

A small group of us from Boldmere W.I. went for a walk in Sutton Park. Plus of course a coffee at the Bistro.



We also had a small group meet for a knitting circle.



**Judy Holmes, Boldmere W.I.**

### Lynn's Quiz - HOW MUCH OF A MIDLANDER ARE YOU?

The following clues refer to districts in and around Birmingham

- 1 - Monarch not sitting
- 2 - Girl's name
- 3 - On the roof and angry
- 4 - A number of trees
- 5 - Untamed and colourful
- 6 - All the food was left
- 7 - A Little Prime Minister
- 8 - Colourful land drain
- 9 - Picnic place for teddies
- 10 - Colourful stately home
- 11 - Brick fences for everyone
- 12 - Open and clearly spoken
- 13 - Cost of 5 fingers and a palm
- 14 - Fiery particle for Jack & Jill
- 15 - Compass point by a pasture

**Answers on puzzle page 12 – Lynn Smith, Bournville WI**

## Public Affairs



A new report has been launched as part of the Get on Board campaign and one of its findings is that 46% of women said that their access to basic services had been negatively impacted by a reduction in bus services.

Members are being invited to use a template letter to email Local Transport Authorities asking them to support the recommendations of the NFWI report to influence the Bus Services Improvement Plans which are due to be published by October 2021. Find out more on the [wi.org.uk](http://wi.org.uk)



#ShowTheLove

Climate Change: COP26. NFWI's COP26 resources are now available on My WI and support women in mitigating the effects of climate change. Further briefings will follow.



The Great Big Green Week 18 -26 September: don't forget to prepare for activities in your own WI. There's plenty of advice on the Climate Coalition's website, including resources pack.



Women in Leadership: a Zoom webinar ran on 21 May on the topic of women in leadership. A recording of the event and contributions by four eminent speakers can be viewed on the WI website.



Women's Environmental Network (WEN) "The workshops are designed for women to share their thoughts, ideas and concerns about climate change, and learn more about what a feminist green new deal could do to make sure that the experiences of women are incorporated into climate action. Although aimed primarily at Wales, the south-east and south-west, find out more by emailing [pa@nfwl.org.uk](mailto:pa@nfwl.org.uk) if you're interested in attending any of the free two hour workshops.



Proportion of female leaders on cop26 panel is only 4 out of 17

**Crack the Crises coalition** Ahead of the G7, the WI has become a member of this coalition which calls for the UK government to demonstrate leadership on the global stage to tackle the problems posed by COVID-19; worsening climate change; gender inequalities and declining biodiversity. A recording of a briefing to find out more about both **Crack the crises** and the **Wave of Hope** is available on the website [crackthecrises.org/](http://crackthecrises.org/) add your postcode to join the #waveofhope. NFWI staff delivered a public letter to Downing Street on 09 June.



**SOS for Honeybees:** let's not forget the honeybees now we're well into the summer season – I hope we're all leaving 'no mow' strips around the edges of our lawns and leaving plenty of wildflowers to produce pollen. They love the single flowers best, whether wild or cultivated.

## Using Peat-free Compost

After 2024, garden centres won't be allowed to sell peat compost, so it'll be important to consider the pros and cons of the alternatives. If, like me, you've had some bad experiences with early peat free composts, I'm sure you'll be pleased to hear that the outlook is much brighter now.

Apart from their value as varied and specialised habitats, the urgency to protect natural peatlands has taken on a new importance with the advent of climate change. Incidentally, they also provide a flood defence 'sponge', mopping up heavy rainfall and releasing it slowly into our river systems. Peatlands are capable of locking up huge amounts of carbon ... they're 'carbon sinks'.



When dug up and sold for us to grow our seedlings and fill our hanging baskets, massive amounts of carbon are released into the atmosphere.

The amount of peat in composts has reduced by half over recent years but the good news is that there are also perfectly viable alternatives.

For me, the main problem was always watering, and it has been recognised that coir, for example may look damp on the surface after watering but be dry underneath. I'm still experimenting but am considering using a water retaining agent to offset this.



There are several alternative materials being used to replace peat, such as sheep's wool, coir (coconut fibre), wood fibre or composted bark or 'green compost' made from green waste. In all cases, it's important that these materials are free from harmful additives or toxins.

Of course, the best possible solution is to make your own compost, and this can be done with planning, either in an enclosed unit such as a wormery or compost bin or an open compost container where compost accelerators can be a help in speeding the process up.



I'm told that the addition of leaf mould helps retain the moisture content and in the case of greenhouse plants such as tomatoes grown in pots, I've been using at least 50/50% of good garden soil in the mix. This has proved surprisingly successful (photo: last year's crop supported by net) and reduced the need for so much compost as well as helping to retain moisture. I daresay many of you have excellent ideas on how to handle the transition and look forward to hearing your tips which could be included in future issues.

**Liz Galloway, Climate Ambassador**

## A Chance Encounter

Back in February, we booked a week's caravanning holiday in North Wales and were amazed to find that come the due date in early May, we were actually allowed to go there!

Although rather cold, we had an excellent week with bright blue skies, bright green grass and little white bouncing lambs everywhere.



On one of our meanderings in the foothills of Snowdon, we traversed this long valley between low hills and at the point the photo's taken, stopped. On looking quietly around before moving in any direction (always a good idea!), I spotted a bright little bird standing on top of a fence post (to the right hand side of the photo). There was something cheeky ... jaunty about his stance that caught my attention. I sidled a bit closer and managed one shot, but that was all he would allow me – he flew off to a big tussock of grass – another vantage point and I followed, ever so slowly, still with no cover and got another photo!!

When I later looked at the two rather distant photos together, I could see enough of his characteristics to be able identify him from the RSPB website. What turned out to be even more interesting was that he was passing through from Africa or thereabouts and was way off course because his usual route would have been around the south coast en route for Europe and Western Asia.



He was a red-backed shrike – and very handsome with it. About the size of a sparrow, he had amazing eye makeup and his colours were soft blueish grey on the head, strong chestnut back, slightly pinky beige chest and with strong black eye-liner. He's called the 'butcher bird'. (*The excellent photo I've used was taken by Babil Kulesi*) What I then discovered shocked me; he watches from vantage points to spot his prey – maybe insects or small birds or mammals and then he binds them up in brambles or the clefts in branches and stores them until he's ready for a meal. Rather macabre but I guess survival demands. I was thrilled that I'd met him, however briefly and very impressed to discover that I, with no birding experience at all had just spotted a red list species, i.e. highly threatened as they're virtually extinct in the UK. Well, that's certainly a first!

**Liz Galloway**



## Public Affairs

The Public Affairs Committee has recently had several members step down. If you have an interest in any of our current or past campaigns, or if you are interested in climate change, maybe you would like to join the team and have your say. Contact Liz Galloway for further details and a warm welcome. [liz.galloway@hotmail.com](mailto:liz.galloway@hotmail.com)

## Water Aid Zoom Speaker

Our volunteer Speakers have delivered over 10,000 sessions and can inspire your group as they speak passionately about the water, hygiene & sanitation crisis and Water Aid's work. Contact me now for a free WaterAid talk or workshop using our award-winning films and photos to engage your group. Stories about the water, hygiene and sanitation crisis, using WaterAid's nearly 40 years' experience. Updates on our work to tackle COVID-19 around the world. Inspirational and fun ways for groups to get involved with WaterAid, with our campaigns, fundraising, volunteering and so much more... activities to suit everyone!

[Speakers@Wateraid.org](mailto:Speakers@Wateraid.org) Marie-Claire Jalaguier,

Speaker Network and Education Team Office Volunteer

## ACWW: Pennies for Friendship Donations

Hello ladies!

Thank you for your donations for this cause during this difficult time.

To confirm, the donations have been split to different projects in the Women Empowered [WE] fund which supports women through small-scale, women-led projects in their communities worldwide.

Several years ago, concerns were raised by some WI members that WI donations were being used for the day-to-day running of ACWW. An investigation of the legal position showed that WI's in England and Wales are not allowed within the Charity Commission rules to donate funds to another charity, a ruling which we apply in our day-to-day activities. The ACWW website doesn't make this distinction clear.

**All donations going to ACWW (cheques marked with PIF on reverse) support WE projects under the following headings:**

Nutrition, Good Health and Wellbeing which covers projects which aim to promote family welfare, primary health and first aid training, health education and awareness of widespread communicable and non-communicable diseases and education in nutrition and food safety awareness.

Sustainable Water, Sanitation and Energy covers projects which aim to improve access to water, water conservation and security, and access to sanitation facilities.

The Associated Country Women of the World magazine shows pictures of the ladies from remote villages with smiling faces at what they have achieved. Wonderful!

**Pamela Griffiths, ACWW Representative**

## Competitions

For Gardeners there is **The Huxley Cup** WIs are invited to design a planted area that could be recreated within their local Community. The planted area can be designed for any season, themed to reflect the spirit of the WI, local community, or which tells a special story.

Members are encouraged to work together and submit a design (or mood board), no larger than A3, containing a sketched 2D design (birds eye view), a clear explanation behind the design theory, research undertaken during the creation, colour schemes, examples and reasoning behind plants and materials used plus a clear, drawn image of the finished planted area. It is up to the WI to interpret the theme as they wish and decide whether to base their design on a season or theme.

Deadline for entries is FRIDAY 27 AUGUST 2021.

Secretaries have received application details

If you are crafty you can enter the **Montgomerie Shield** outgoing Chairman Iris Montgomery has kindly donated a shield to the federation trophy cabinet. An annual competition will be held for Best in Craft to be awarded at the Federation Annual Meeting each year.

2021 members are invited to design and make A Thistle

Using any media: knitted, quilted, embroidered, painted, beaded, sculpted etc (excluding photographic) A4 size.

Closing date is Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2021

Prizes will be awarded on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2021

## 200 Club

200 Club raffle tickets for 2021 can still 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 £150 or more.

You have to be in it to win it! Remember the more tickets sold the larger the payouts!

Please write your name, address, and WI branch on a slip of paper stating how many tickets you would like. Send to Iris Montgomery 38 Wensley Road, Birmingham B26 1LT together with a cheque made payable to WMFWI and remember to include a stamped addressed envelope.

**Iris Montgomery, Federation Treasurer**



## Crafts

### PROJECT LINUS UK



There are 3 sizes of blankets/quilts that the project need, they are: - baby, approx. 36" square, child: - approx. 45" x 60", and teen: - 50" x 72". You need to use 100% acrylic yarn, please no wool because some children are allergic to wool and acrylic is easily washable. If you wish to create patchwork blankets, 100% cotton is to be used, they must be lined and all bindings to have no raw edges. This information is taken from - [projectlinusuk.org.uk](http://projectlinusuk.org.uk)

### Knitted Block of the Month



### Basketweave

In its simplest form it is a simple moss or seed stitch, but when you scale it up it becomes a decorative rib, or you can use it as an alternative to garter stitch. The instructions are for a 4 x 4 knit and purl and uses a multiple of 8 stitches.

Rows 1 to 5: - \*K4, P4\* rep from \* to \*

Rows 6 to 10: - \*P4, K4\*. Repeat these 10 rows for pattern.

A really simple and effective pattern!

As I sit and write this the sun has started to shine and it looks as if we are heading for warmer weather!

The craft make this month has a summer vibe to it – a felt windmill brooch or hanger. Please don't forget our ongoing competition and challenge.



**Project Linus** we will need your completed blankets ready for the Annual Meeting in October. It would be great if there are some blankets on display.

**The Montgomery Shield** don't forget the closing date for entries is 31st August. The entries need to be with me by that date ready for judging by a NFWI judge!

### News from the Craft Committee: -

We are currently investigating a co-operative competition for 2022.

As soon as we have a schedule, we will be letting institutes know.

There will be more Zoom workshops taking place later this year, and some will be in the evening.

We will start our popular craft dabbles in 2022.

**Debbie**

### Windmill Brooch or Hanger



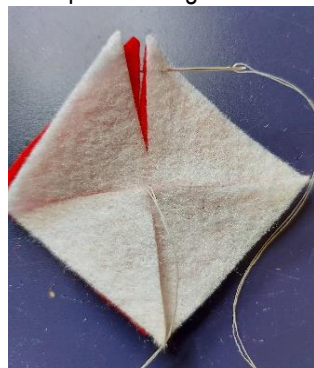
#### Materials and equipment:

felt, a button or decorative bead, scissors, thread, safety pin or brooch pin, needle and scissors.



1 - Cut 2 squares of felt, minimum size 2" or 5cm.

2 – make 2 diagonal cuts in the felt, but DO NOT CUT ACROSS! Or else you will end up with triangles!



3 – place the 2 pieces of felt on top of one another. With needle and thread make 2 small backstitches through both layers in the centre of the windmill. Bring the needle to the front and sew through a point from front to back, see photo.

4 – pull thread tight and stitch into the centre catching the point down, repeat for the other 3 points.



5 - now, you are ready to attach a button or decorative bead to the centre.



6 – you can either add a safety pin or brooch back to the back of the windmill to make it into a fun brooch to wear, or as shown in the photo, attach some cotton or embroidery thread and make a hanger of your windmill.

Make one or make lots for friends and family. Get the children involved too!

## Creative Crafts Online.

Some of you may be familiar with The Creative Craft Shows that have been held at the NEC in the past. Unfortunately, these had to be postponed during the pandemic. The clever people who organise these shows came up with the idea of giving people access to video tutorials with expert tutors, online.

A small fee gives you access to several 'Dens', a separate one for each category with at least two or three tutors for each one. The crafts covered range from Needle Felting, Papercraft and Mixed Media, Yarn, Sewing, Stitching and Quilting, to Colour Craft, Jewellery and Creative. The choices may differ for each of the 'Shows'. Most videos last about an hour.

The tutorials are all available on the first day and will overlap. Don't worry, you won't miss out on any lessons, they are available for a month or more and can be watched over again as often as you wish during that time. May of the tutors will try to answer questions via the Facebook page, if you find difficulty with a particular aspect of the lesson. You do need a Facebook account to obtain access to the tutorials. Kits for the tutorials may be purchased ahead of time but often you may use materials from your own 'stash'.

I am looking forward to my third online Creative Craft show, coming in July.

The "Summertime" Crafting tickets are now available for £7.99. <https://ticketsales.ichf.co.uk/products/creative-craft-show-access-all-areas-summertime-crafting-july-2021>

The Creative Craft Show is planned to return to the NEC for 4th - 7th November 2021.

Barbara Evans, Member of West Midland Federation of WI's Craft Committee.

## What's on

### Visit to John's Garden

#### A relaxing day out in wonderful natural surroundings!

**BOOK NOW** (by 30 July) for a visit on 19th August, 2021.  
Cost £7.50 per head.

We assemble in the car park for a guided visit around John's Garden starting at 10.30am for 11am start. We're then free to enjoy the vast range of species in the impressive plant centre, or the wildlife site, if conditions allow, and to fortify ourselves with a cuppa or a light lunch in the very popular café/tea room.



John's Garden is at Ashwood Nurseries in Kinver, near Kingswinford. There's ample parking onsite and a location map can be found on the website.

[ashwoodnurseries.com/visit-us/johns-garden/](http://ashwoodnurseries.com/visit-us/johns-garden/)

Your WI Secretary has a flyer with booking and payment details.

## Dates for your Diary 2021

08.07.2021	NHS Front Line Workers Day Afternoon Tea
08.07.2021	Zoom Talk – Poisons in Literature
19.08.2021	Garden Visit – Ashwood Nurseries
08.09.2021	Zoom Talk – Author in our Midst
09.09.2021	ACWW Walk – Barston Lake
16.09.2021	Black Country Night Out – The Core
23.09.2021	Zoom Talk – Author in our Midst
25.09.2021	Skittles – King George Memorial Hall
08.10.2021	Everybody's Talking about Jamie – The Grand
12.10.2021	WMFWI Annual Meeting – Hyatt Hotel
02.12.2021	Worcester Christmas Fayre
04.12.2021	Carol Service – St Martin's in the Bullring

### Poisons in Literature



#### WMFWI Summer Zoom Talk

At 7.30 pm on 08 July, 2021

Dr. Kathryn Harkup is a chemist with extensive knowledge of poisons and a passion for Agatha Christie's mysteries. If you've signed up already, this is a reminder and if you'd like to attend but haven't signed up, please email me for details which will be sent out a couple of days before the event.

Email Liz Galloway for booking [liz.galloway@hotmail.com](mailto:liz.galloway@hotmail.com)



### ENTERTAINMENT COMMITTEE Proposed theatre visit



Friday 08 October at 7.30pm, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre  
Tickets are priced at £48 each. Payment due by: 30th July

Everybody's Talking About Jamie is the award-winning hit musical about a boy who wants to be a drag queen.

**If you are interested in coming with us, you will need to book and reserve your tickets. Either via your secretary or using the details below**

Phone 0121 743 4176 or E mail [judyamassam@btinternet.com](mailto:judyamassam@btinternet.com)

Here, in a slight diversion from our normal book recommendations, a brief introduction from Geraldine, a member of King's Norton WI who has taken up writing. We are planning a zoom session with her soon. A flyer is going out to WIs this month with details of how to book your place on the session.

#### The Healing Power of Story-making

In the long winter days after Geoff, my partner of seventeen years, died in 2012 I tried to direct my thoughts forward. The shock was still numbing me because it had been only six weeks from his being diagnosed with an aggressive brain tumour. He had been vibrantly, eccentrically (infuriatingly sometimes) alive and then such a short time later, was gone.

There have been plenty of times in my life that I wished I had more leisure to spend as I pleased and then, retired and bereaved, I had far more hours than I knew what to do with. I remembered that I'd always wanted to write a novel. (In fact, I had completed a couple but knew they weren't much good and there were too many other things going on to develop them.) Suddenly there was nothing to distract me and yet I desperately needed distraction. If not now, when?

A year later the first of what would become a series of five novels was complete and titled File Under Family – a mystery thriller with a genealogical twist. I published it on the new Amazon Direct Publishing platform and sat back to see if anyone would buy it. It almost didn't matter - I was already writing the second because those hours spent at my

computer had become a lifeline to me. Creating a cast of characters and helping them career off into assorted dramas and epiphanies was as exciting as driving a team of six unbroken horses. (Not that I have ever done that, thank goodness.) Instead of wondering how I would get through each day, I couldn't wait to get the routine business of life out of the way so I could have the rest of the time to write. I knew Geoff would understand, he was a writer himself – a poet. Writing became and is now, an essential part of my life.

I am honoured to be invited to talk about writing and publishing to the West Midlands Federation and am very happy to do so, especially since I believe that the joy and catharsis of writing is not just for a few but is available to all. Some, perhaps many of you, will already know that.

I look forward to meeting you!

Geraldine Wall

**Join us on Wednesday 8th  
September at 2.00pm or  
Thursday 23rd September at 7pm**

Free WMFWI Zoom talk An Author in our Midst

In July, Geraldine will have published *Behind the Rainbows*, a set of short stories and she will enlighten us about the ins and outs of publishing a novel!

For joining instructions apply to:  
[judyamassam@btinternet.com](mailto:judyamassam@btinternet.com) Tel: 0121 743 4176

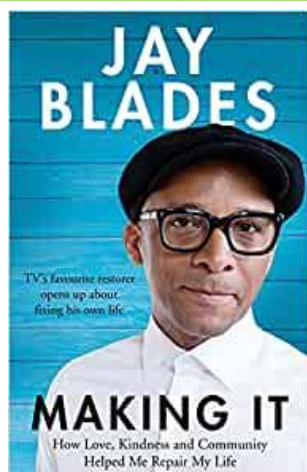


**Thursday 2nd December 2021 Join  
us for a visit to the Victorian  
Christmas Fayre at Worcester**

The price of approximately £15 will cover your return coach fare and you'll be free to visit the 200 stalls across the city between about 11am and 4pm to enjoy the many delights of this very well-known Victorian Christmas Fayre.

**To book your place contact [judyamassam@btinternet.com](mailto:judyamassam@btinternet.com)  
Tel: 0121 743 4176 or complete the form on the flyer sent to  
your Secretary – no payment required yet this is  
an advance notice for a proposed visit although  
a prompt response would be helpful**

## Locked into Reading



### Jay Blades -Making It: How Love, Kindness and Community Helped Me Repair My Life

Published May 2021 – Autobiography

Making It is an inspirational memoir about beating the odds and turning things around even when it all seems hopeless. In this book, Jay Blades shares the details of

his life, from his childhood growing up sheltered and innocent on a council estate in Hackney, to his adolescence when he was introduced to violent racism at secondary school, to being brutalized by police as a teen, to finally becoming a beloved star of the hit primetime show The Repair Shop.

Jay reflects on strength, weakness and what it means to be a man. He questions the boundaries society places on male vulnerability and how letting himself be nurtured helped him flourish into the person he is today. An expert at giving a second life to cherished items, Jay's positivity, pragmatism and kindness shine through these pages and show that with care and love, anything can be mended.

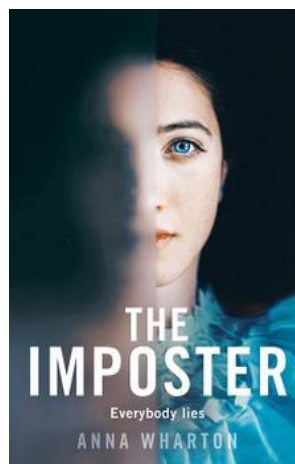
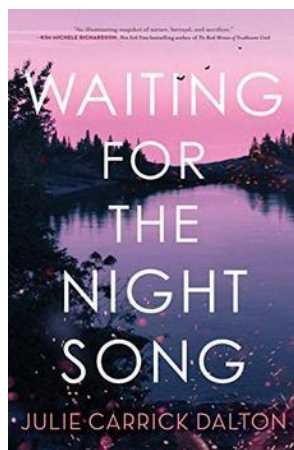
### Julie Carrick Dalton - Waiting for the Night Song

Cadie Kessler has spent decades trying to cover up one truth. One moment. But deep down, didn't she always know her secret would surface?

An urgent message from her long-estranged best friend Daniela Garcia brings Cadie, now a forestry researcher, back to her childhood home. There, Cadie and Daniela are forced to face a dark secret that ended both their idyllic childhood bond and the magical summer that takes up more space in Cadie's memory than all her other years combined.

Now grown up, bound by long-held oaths, and faced with truths she does not wish to see, Cadie must decide what she is willing to sacrifice to protect the people and the forest she loves, as drought, foreclosures, and wildfire spark tensions between displaced migrant farm workers and locals.

Waiting for the Night Song is a love song to the natural beauty around us, a call to fight for what we believe in, and a reminder that the truth will always rise.



### Anna Wharton – The Imposter

The Imposter – Anna Wharton's debut thriller – is a compelling story of obsession, loneliness and lies. Newspaper archivist Chloe lives a quiet life until one day at work she reads about the long-forgotten cold case of Angie Kyle, a girl who went missing as a child. When an unexpected turn of events

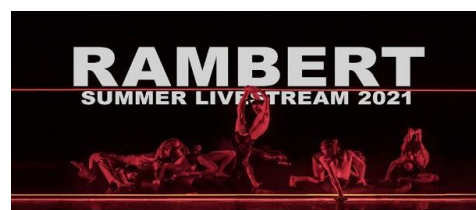
finds her living as a lodger in Angie's parents' house, Chloe soon learns that the case of the missing girl is not as simple as it first seemed and becomes obsessed with finding out the truth.

## Entertainment online

### What is live streaming?

Live streaming technology lets you watch, create and share videos in real time, a bit like live TV. All you need to be able to live stream is an internet enabled device, like a smart phone or tablet, and a platform (such as a website or app) to live stream from.

Then simply contact the provider. Pay your ticket cost and get the performance live streamed to your armchair and enjoy!



Dates 16th/ 17th/18th July Tickets cost – from £10  
[birminghamhippodrome.com/calendar/rambert-summer-live-stream-21/](https://birminghamhippodrome.com/calendar/rambert-summer-live-stream-21/)



### Castle Bromwich Hall Gardens – Open Air Theatre

[Email.cbhallgardens@gmail.com](mailto:Email.cbhallgardens@gmail.com) Phone 0121 749 4100  
 Sat 3rd and Sun 4th July, 3pm. Tickets £12/£8

George Bernard Shaw's comedy is a brilliantly witty reworking of the classical tale of the sculptor who falls in love with his perfect female statue. A funny, and thought-provoking play that revels in the absence of a predictable happy ending.



WI members are being invited to take part in Breast Cancer Awareness Fundraising Tea Parties. Members have in the past been extremely supportive of this very worthy cause. Breast Cancer has affected many women we know, either family members or friends, also don't forget it affects men too. If you would like to register your tea party you can do so here <https://breastcancernow.org/get-involved/do-your-own-fundraising/afternoon-tea>. Please be aware that although we support this, you must not advertise your event as a WI fundraiser to comply with the charities commission. You must register and advertise this event as individuals.



## POP THE KETTLE ON FOR AN *Afternoon Tea* August 2021



**S**ummer is coming. And after being apart for so long, it's the perfect time to have an Afternoon Tea together.

This is your chance to do something incredible for people affected by breast cancer. Just have your Afternoon Tea in whatever way suits you. You could set a date to share a cuppa in the garden, or deliver delicious treats to friends. The Afternoon Tea Team at Breast Cancer Now will be there to help with recipes, delivery tips or fun games to play.

Breast cancer is a cause close to Anna's heart:

**'My mum was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2016. The experience has changed our family's life. It really made us slow down and realise what is important.'**

'With my love for baking, I decided to host an Afternoon Tea last year to help raise awareness and money for a great cause. My sister and I baked some old favourites and some new things to try. We also decorated the house with items from the Afternoon Tea fundraising kit.'

**Right now, holding an Afternoon Tea has never been so important.** The coronavirus pandemic has

had a devastating impact on Breast Cancer Now and their ability to support people affected by breast cancer. No matter what you raise at your Afternoon Tea, you can help Breast Cancer Now to continue providing world-class breast cancer research and life-changing care.

So pop the kettle on, grab your whisk and get ready. Join Anna and have your very own Afternoon Tea this August.

Order your free fundraising kit today. It includes plenty of goodies to get you started including bunting designed by Cath Kidston, a donation box, coasters, games and tips from other hosts.



Anna and her Mum enjoying an Afternoon Tea

Order your fundraising kit now at [breastcancernow.org/scone](https://breastcancernow.org/scone) or call 0333 20 70 300.



Registered with  
FUNDRAISING  
REGULATOR



**BREAST  
CANCER  
NOW** The research  
& care charity

Breast Cancer Now is a charity registered in England and Wales (1160558), Scotland (SC045584) and the Isle of Man (1200).

## Puzzle Page

### Sudoku

	7			2		9		
	4		8		6			
	1	2				3		
						8	7	
	6		9	7	2		5	
	2	5						
		1				2	9	
			5		4		3	
		7		6			1	

### June

### WORDSEARCH

F	F	R	F	L	I	P	F	L	O	P	S	P	B
O	L	E	Q	C	R	U	I	S	E	W	E	W	D
D	T	V	U	B	E	B	K	T	E	T	S	K	O
K	H	E	P	E	D	A	L	O	S	H	S	E	Z
E	G	F	T	E	N	T	C	G	G	C	A	A	S
Y	I	Y	T	U	U	M	N	N	P	A	L	O	P
G	L	A	Y	T	H	I	A	B	B	Y	G	R	E
N	F	H	E	A	T	W	A	V	E	A	N	E	S
I	F	Y	I	H	H	G	V	X	A	E	U	R	A
F	N	R	G	Y	D	D	I	S	C	S	S	B	C
R	E	I	Y	A	D	I	L	O	H	U	I	M	T
U	L	R	D	O	N	K	E	Y	S	Q	L	O	I
S	L	A	D	N	A	S	E	Y	A	U	L	S	U
C	O	C	K	T	A	I	L	S	F	W	E	A	S
C	P	O	R	T	C	I	C	E	C	R	E	A	M

Beach, Bees, Cocktails, Cruise, Donkeys, Flight, Flipflops, Hat, Hayfever, Heatwave, Holiday, Icecream, Lightning, Pedalos, Pollen, Port, Tent, Thunder, Sandals, Sea, Sombrero, Suitcase, Sunglasses, Surfing, Yacht



Answers in July Newsletter!

### May Puzzle Page Answers

6	8	9	3	2	5	1	4	7
3	5	4	8	1	7	9	2	6
7	1	2	6	9	4	3	8	5
2	4	3	9	7	1	6	5	8
9	7	8	5	6	3	2	1	4
1	6	5	2	4	8	7	3	9
8	9	6	4	3	2	5	7	1
4	3	7	1	5	9	8	6	2
5	2	1	7	8	6	4	9	3

### True or False Answers –

1 False you'd be a Taurus, 2 False Emma Roberts is Julia's niece, 3 True there are 2691, 4 True fruit flies were sent into space in a V-2 rocket in 1947, 5 True, 6 The Gotthard Base Tunnel in Switzerland is 4 miles longer at 35.5 miles long, 7 True, 8 True, 9 True, 10 True, 11 True, 12 True

### Lynn's Midlander Quiz– Page 3 Answers

1 Kingstanding, 2 Shirley, 3 Tile Cross, 4 Four Oaks, 5 Wylde Green, 6 Nuneaton, 7 Small Heath, 8 Redditch, 9 Bearwood, 10 Hall Green, 11 Walsall, 12 Frankley, 13 Handsworth, 14 Sparkhill, 15 Northfield

If you have a puzzle or a quiz you would like to submit for printing, please send to the media team. We are also open to suggestions if there are puzzles you woollike to see here.

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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](mailto:WMFWI.media@gmail.com)