



Cog in the Tree

West Midlands Federation of Women's Institutes

May 2022

Time to Celebrate



Boldmere WI members with friends of Wylde Green Station

Friends of **Wylde Green Station** have teamed up with **Boldmere WI** to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. The result is a 1.6m long glorious woolly frieze, abundant with flowers and wildlife and of course the Queen's crown at the centre. All items have been knitted or crocheted by the craft group, run by Brenda Whitfield. The frieze will be on display in the **Boldmere Community Cafe** until the end of May. In June and July, it will be on the platform at **Wylde Green Station** for passengers and visitors to enjoy.

WMFWI would like to see all of your Jubilee makes and celebrations. Let other WIs know what you will be doing to celebrate. We will be publishing a bumper Jubilee edition of Cog next month, please send photographs to the media team at wmfwi.media@gmail.com



200 Club Winner £10

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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,

I have been enjoying visits to those WIs which have invited me to attend their Annual Meetings. It is always a pleasure to meet members and to see how different each individual WI is and just to chat about life in general.

Talking of meetings, I do hope that many of you will come and join the Board of Trustees at our Federation Annual Meeting at the Hyatt on July 7th. Once again, we are providing the refreshments including a buffet lunch and two interesting speakers to entertain you. Ian Jelf who is a blue badge guide and who will broaden our knowledge of Birmingham and talk about some of the wonderful buildings that grace our city centre. We will also have a presentation from Ginny Davis who will talk about her multi-faceted life ranging from barrister to full time mother to writer and then performer at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. It should be a splendid occasion and I hope to see you there.

I'm pleased to say that I am making a good recovery from my recent operation and I am actually going to go on a week's holiday to see the Dutch bulb fields at the end of April. This holiday was originally booked for April 2020 and then lockdown happened, so I re-booked for April 2021 and we were locked down again! I am hoping that the third time lucky rule applies. I am particularly looking forward to the tulip displays as they are one of my favourite spring flowers and to see them en masse will be a joy. If like me, you enjoy spring flowers don't forget that your Secretary has next year's bulb catalogues for you to order from. I bought some hyacinths last year and they have produced a wonderful show with a scent to knock you out at 100 yards. A perfect tonic for the colder and less sunny days.

If all goes to plan I will post some photos in next month's Cog of the Keukenhof Garden bulbs.

At the time of writing this I am looking forward to Easter and an alcoholic drink to celebrate the end of Lent. I hope you have a lovely time celebrating the May Day festivities and the warmer weather that is forecast.

Lynn

News

ACWW DONATIONS

With the Annual Meeting in July, I would like to inform you of changes in ACWW.

ACWW is currently in a transition period and from June 2022 the Pennies for Friendship and Women Empowered Fund will be replaced by 'Rural Women in Action' Fund. ACWW will be changing the way its International Projects work from 2023.

This single fundraising scheme will support all the work ACWW does and allow clearer communication of how money is spent.

These changes will not change the way WIs can donate to support the vital work of ACWW. You are no longer required to reference WI Pennies for Friendship.

Donation cheques will be payable to 'ACWW'.

In addition to the changes, ACWW is establishing a global network of ACWW Co-ordinators with each member society invited to nominate someone for this role.

ACWW remains committed to carrying out effective women led projects.

Your donations are crucial to the success of so many ACWW projects making a difference to the lives of rural women all over the world.

Looking forward to seeing you at the Annual Meeting,

Pamela Griffiths ACWW representative, WMFWI.

NFWI Bulb Scheme



Now is the time to think about next years garden bulbs. Please have a look through the bulb catalogue, your secretary will have a copy. A digital copy is also available.

Members who have ordered bulbs in the past have been very pleased with them.

Send orders to Mrs Chris Sears (address is with the catalogue), to arrive no later than 1st June 2022.

Over to you

Harborne Village WI invited members from Link Group 3 and the Public Affairs Committee to join a gallery tour in March to celebrate International Women's Day.

The free exhibition was called 'Zaibunnisa' and was at The MAC (Midlands Art Centre) in Edgbaston during April.

The tour of the exhibition was very interesting and thought provoking, after the tour there was plenty to discuss over a coffee in the cafe!

Maryam Wahid is an award-winning artist from Birmingham. Through the medium of photography, she explores her identity as a British Pakistani Muslim woman.

Zaibunnisa, commissioned by MAC, is Wahid's first major solo exhibition.

This exhibition examines her mother's story, as a young woman who grew up in Lahore and later revisited her motherland for the first time in 24 years with a new series of photographs taken in Pakistan and the UK.



Lynda Gibbon, Harborne Village WI

Great Barr WI members Shirley and Jan had a great day at Jackie Gregory's learning how to make Lariat necklaces. An interesting craft to learn.



Many thanks Jackie

Jan Parkes, Secretary, Great Barr WI

Kings Norton Afternoon WI members enjoyed a craft afternoon making crowns, at their April meeting, to wear when they celebrate Her Majesty's 70th Jubilee.

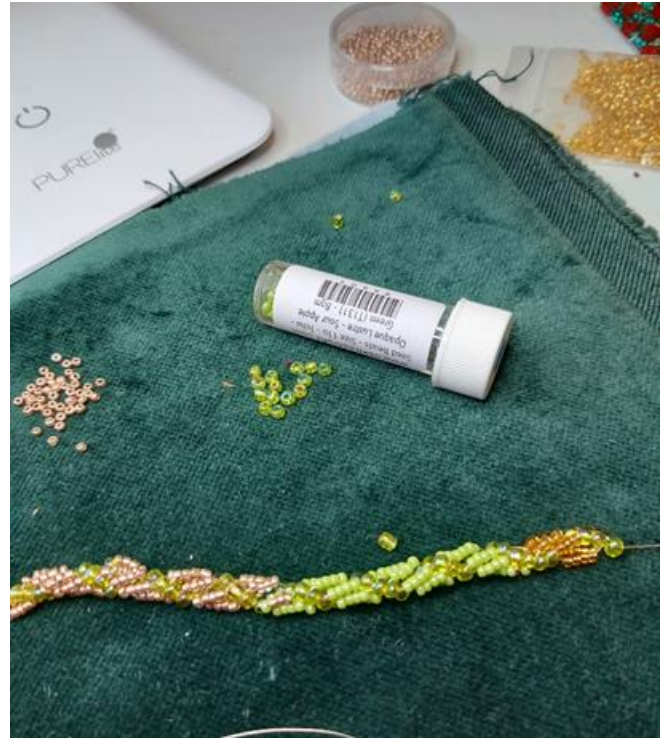


Barbara Evans, Craft Leader Kings Norton Afternoon WI

Crafts

Lariat Workshop

In a sure sign that things are slowly getting back to some sort of normality, the Craft Team recently held a lariat necklace workshop at the home of Jackie Gregory (Federation Archivist). Six members signed up for what was a very enjoyable time learning how to create a spiral effect in beads. After a few hiccups, we quickly progressed onto creating the spiral, which turned out to be a very relaxing exercise, one could say 'mindful'. The morning was spent in creating the spiral and the afternoon was spent in creating a decorative tassel. Many thanks must go to Jackie for her patience and expertise.



Just some examples of the spiral design plus the materials and equipment needed.

Craft Dabbles

Before Covid, the Craft Dabbles were proving to be very popular within the federation.

Due to popular demand, the craft team are in the process of organising a craft dabble to be hosted by Newton WI and held at St Bernard's Church, Great Barr on Thursday 15th September 2022. Further details will be sent out at a later date.

Also, Great Barr WI have offered to host a craft dabble and this is provisionally set for March/April 2023.

As always, our highly talented craft team will be sharing a range of crafts with members!

Debbie Arkinstall, Craft Committee



Competitions

VALERIE DAGGATT COMPETITION FOR CREATIVE WRITING

To celebrate Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee, for this year's competition members are asked to write a story (maximum 1,000 words) based around their idea of the most important contribution to women's education, health and happiness that has happened during the 70 years of the Queen's reign. For example, the story could be based on the introduction of the contraceptive pill, the relaxation of the divorce laws, equal pay or one of the many other improvements that have made life better for women.

Please send two copies of your entries, accompanied by a cheque for £5.00 (payable to WMFWI) and a stamped addressed A4 envelope to Lynn Smith, 50, Station Road, Kings Norton Birmingham B30 1DA to arrive by 27th May 2022.

The cup will be presented at the Annual meeting and the winning entrant will be invited to read her entry to the members

LADY DENMAN CUP COMPETITION

This year the competition is to write a piece either comical, serious, fact or fiction using no more than 500 words which reflects the powerful impact when a community comes together. The entry requirements have changed this year and members are required to enter directly with NFWI and not via their Federations. Further information is available from My WI.

HUXLEY CUP COMPETITION

This year the Huxley Cup Competition, supported by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, invites WIs to design a small community space for wellbeing and wildlife. The wildlife aspect of the entry should focus specifically on the theme of: Our Fabulous Flying Friends—think about birds, bees, butterflies, moths and bats.

The competition is open to all members: entries must be submitted on behalf of the WI and not as an individual. Members are encouraged to work together to compose a design as only one entry per WI will be accepted. Further information is available from My WI.

MONTGOMERIE TROPHY

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

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 November, 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.

Public Affairs

Virtual Campaigns Workshops were held on March 10th & March 23rd 2022 and speakers were, Nancy Coldwell, Knowle WI, Pamela Griffiths, Berkswell WI, Lynda Gibbons, Harborne Village WI, and Dawn Statham Victory Belles WI. Liz Galloway chaired the workshops.

A summary of points raised in discussion follows.

- The WIs campaigning agenda can seem overwhelming with lots of information to disseminate to members. Surveying members to select their top 2-3 campaigns for the year ahead could help make this manageable. Comparing a WI Campaign to a jig-saw puzzle with lots of smaller pieces that build to create the bigger picture is a strategy that some participants have found useful.
- Campaigning can include craftivism and extend to lobbying policymakers and peaceful marches. Every contribution to campaigning is useful, however identifying ways to effect a change in behaviour in others can be challenging particularly if individuals must invest time and money are required e.g. encouraging the installation of microplastic filters for washing machines.
- WI actions packs, My WI website and WI Life magazine provide a rich source of ideas for WI groups to get involved in campaigning but can be difficult to navigate. WI members are embracing various social media outlets (WI & non-WI) for inspiring ideas on campaigning.
- WI members can sometimes feel a 'lone voice' with regards campaigning in their local WI group. Having a method to connect with WI members in neighbouring groups would be helpful. The Climate Change agenda is particularly large and Climate Change ambassadors would like to collaborate more in future.
- Workshop participants seek ways to invigorate their WI group with campaigns and would benefit from a collaborative approach to sharing ideas and useful resources. Methods to do this could be explored further.
- In summary: Take small steps to make a difference. Share ideas and collaborate with other WI members and like-minded community groups. WI members can take messages away from monthly meetings to share with family, friends and their local community. An inspiring quote by Anita Roddick, British Businesswoman;

"If you think you're too small to have an impact, try going to bed with a mosquito."

-- Anita Roddick



Hedgehogs since the year 2000, we've lost half our rural hedgehogs and the Climate Coalition remind us that every action we take to conserve and encourage them is a bonus.

Now they're coming out of hibernation, it's a good time to revisit the homes you made for them last year or perhaps build new ones.

How to build a hedgehog shelter: you can buy them in garden centres, made of wood or basketware or you can construct your own. All you need is a frame about the size of a large mixing bowl with an entrance on one side. Covering it with twigs and small branches will protect it and the grubs and beetles which are attracted to the dead wood will also provide a food source for the hedgehogs.

Plan ahead to get involved in the Big Green Week!



We're so often frustrated by announcements of events this but with little or no lead time to plan how we'll support them, so great news that we can now look forward to another Great Big Green Week in autumn this year.

From litter picks and repair cafes to nature walks and gardening workshops, you can host an event or green week that highlights something special about your local area - whether that's wildlife, a community energy project, or anything in between.

Find out more on the Climate Coalition website

<http://www.theclimatecoalition.org>

To all WMFVI Climate Ambassadors

Have you joined into any of the national Climate Ambassador Coffee mornings?

If you're a Climate Ambassador and would like to make contact with others in our Federation, drop me a line so we can share contact details and perhaps arrange a Zoom, or other get together. liz.galloway@hotmail.com

Reminder!

I'm still hoping to receive your photos to show at the Annual Meeting. Wouldn't it be great if every WI was represented?

TRUSTEES CHALLENGE 2022

I know that many of you are already beavering away and creating wonderful, knitted, sewn and crocheted articles for the shoebox appeal for TEAMS 4U.

Thanks to everyone that has contacted me with ideas, queries and questions, since we issued the trustees challenge for this year. Please see the answers below.

- QUESTION – Can I fill a shoebox? – Answer. If you want to

However, whilst part of the Teams 4Us appeal is for full show boxes. We at WMFVI, are happy to receive single or multiple handmade articles, hats, gloves, needle cases, pencil cases, soft toys etc, as these are useful for so called” fillers” when the shoe boxes are finally checked before sending off to the project.

- QUESTION – Can members contribute, if they are not crafters? Answer a definite yes!

The project is a charity and would be happy to receive anything that could go into a shoe box that would make a child or younger person happy.

- QUESTION – Do I have to pay the cost of sending the shoebox? Answer. No

WMFVI or local WI groups are bound by charity laws. This means WMFVI and its groups cannot contribute toward any costs from WI funds.

The decision by an individual to donate to this charity either by donating the cost of sending the shoebox or any other donation should be made to the charity directly@ Team4U.com

- As stated above. WMFVI would welcome any items towards the trustee’s challenge at the AGM. If you would like to donate a full shoebox, please follow the instructions for wrapping and packing below before bringing them to the Showcase in **October**

Step 1. Find an old shoebox

Step 2. Wrap it with Christmas paper

Step 3. Fill it with useful gifts

Step 4. If you choose to do so, print off and fill in a donation slip and label from - teams4U.com

Here are some more ideas

Toothbrush and tooth paste

pencils and crayon

Hairbrush, comb, scrunchies, hairclips

small games

Facecloth and soap

skipping ropes

Stationery set

sharpeners and erasers

Sewing kit for older children

counters and dice

Musical instruments

Colouring books

Kaleidoscope

Jack fives or marbles

Craft pack- make your own with a glue stick, coloured paper, collage etc. An old video case is perfect for this.

Full or part used rolls of Christmas wrapping paper for wrapping boxes would also be welcomed.



PLEASE REMEMBER THE FOLLOWING CANNOT BE ACCEPTED

What's On

Summer Outing to Barmouth

Tuesday 21 June 2022



Join us on our Summer Outing to Barmouth.

We will aim to arrive by 11am to enjoy a day at the Seaside and depart at 4.00- 4.30pm.

Seats cost £20

Closing date is Friday 29 April 2022

Pick Up points;

Allesley Village, Solihull, Cotteridge, Halesowen, Boldmere, Walsall Wood, Baggott Arms / Scott Arms

Please contact Kim Slivinski 07843 123748 if you would like to discuss other pick- up points

Booking available via your secretary

Leisure & Wellbeing

are hosting a

Quiz

7pm Friday 10th June 2022

at Shirley Community Centre

Stratford Road Shirley B90 3AD

Teams consist of up to four members

£17 per table to include Tea/Coffee and cake

Booking via your secretary

Dates for your Diary

| | |
|------------|--|
| 04.05.2022 | ACWW Walk Cannon Hill Park |
| 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 |
| 02.11.2022 | Craft Showcase The BMI |
| 03.12.2022 | Carol Service St Martins in the Bullring |

ACWW

Pamela Griffiths is planning a walk around Cannon Hill Park on **04 May 2022 - Meet at 11am**

Cannon Hill Park is the most popular park in the city, covering 250 acres consisting of formal, conservation, woodland. and sports areas. It also contains Birmingham Nature Centre and the MAC theatre and gives access to the River Rea Walkway. Café and toilets are onsite.

The nominal time for the full walk (5 kms) is approximately one hour but many shorter options to return to the centre are available.

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

CALLING ALL PIANISTS

A TV company called Love Productions is looking for amateur pianists to take part in a documentary series about the joy and emotion that piano playing can bring. The filming will not begin until later in the summer but the producers would be interested in talking to people with a love of piano playing.

If you would be interested in taking part please contact Hannah.Kinsella@loveproductions.co.uk

Please mention your connection to the WI