



# Cog in the Tree



## West Midlands Federation of Women's Institutes.

May 2023



### Chairperson's Address

Hello Everyone,

I'm writing this in early April on a miserably rainy day which has followed two gloriously sunny days when I was able to spend time in the garden. Much to its surprise the lawn has received its first haircut of the season and everything looks neat and tidy. It was a pleasure to be able to sit out and enjoy a cup of well-earned tea. I hope that the weather forecasters have got it right with their predictions of fine weather for at least part of the Easter extended weekend. By the time you are reading this we will know whether or not they were correct. For the first time in many years (Covid year excepted) there will not be a Smith family gathering over Easter this April as all three sons and families are engaged elsewhere on Good Friday, Easter Saturday and Sunday, and I am going away on a short break to Harrogate on Bank Holiday Monday. So there will no occasion for Grandma's roast potatoes to make their appearance! I don't know whether you have any ingrained compulsions but I'm sure I won't be the only WI member to admit that she doesn't feel able to go away on holiday without doing certain things. I always have to ensure that the bed linen and all the towels are changed, that the dusting and hoovering are done and that the washing and ironing are up to date. None of the male members of my family have ever been able to understand why I feel I need to complete these chores before leaving the house but, however illogical it is, I like to feel that I won't have to do them as soon as I return.



Now that my husband is considerably better we are treating ourselves to a "Yorkshire by Steam" break where we can relax and I won't have to do any cooking or housework for five whole days.

I hope you all will have had a lovely Easter break before you read this and I expect you will be turning your attention to the forthcoming Coronation celebrations next. Please remember to share whatever your WI gets up to and send your contributions ready to go into the next edition of the Cog. I shall be meeting many of you at your Annual Meetings and as always I look forward to seeing you and finding out what you have been doing over the past year.

Lynn

### IN THIS COG ISSUE

- Chairperson's address
- Your WI News
- Crafts & Recipes - p 7
- Arts & Activities - p12
- Calendar of Events - p14
- Public Affairs - p15
- Event flyers - p18



## Your WI News

### Great Barr WI



Great Barr craft group spent a pleasant and productive couple of hours making these lovely cards. The group was led by Elaine, one of our members. **Jan Parkes, Great Barr Craft Group**



### Silhill WI

Silhill WI Darts Team recently won their match against Hobs Moat, and hope they have a chance at the semi-finals. Pictured are left to right, Heather, Christine, Lynn and Hala.

**Heather Lewis, Silhill WI**



### Bournville WI



Bournville WI spent an enjoyable afternoon with Debbie Arkinstall from Erdington Carnegie WI, demonstrating her art of flower arranging. Tips included to remember “something for the vicar” to ensure the display is attractive from all sides, growing Arum Italicum, to frame hand held displays, and adding value with greenery from the garden to shop bought bouquets. Displays were imaginatively created with woven birch sticks, pussywillow buds, daffodils and freesias. Pictured is Debbie, centre, with the winners of the raffled display.

**Lisa Blackburn, Bournville WI**



### 200 Club Winner

**Molly Ellis, of Park Hall WI**



## Walsall Wood WI



Walsall Wood WI visited Aldridge Transport Museum on 11 April 2023. The Museum transported us back in time with a range of vintage vehicles on show, especially as we were driven there in a bus with original signage and plush seats. A talk and tour of the Museum followed.

**Sue Laws, President, Walsall Wood WI**

## Streety Evening WI



Streety Evening WI visited the Walsall Arboretum for a second time having planned to see it in each season. This was their winter/spring visit. The walk was refreshing, the coffee stop even better!!

**Nola Boulger, Streety Evening WI**

## Hobs Moat WI – 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary



In February 2023, Hobs Moat WI celebrated their 50th anniversary with two founding members; Carol Hewitt who is the President of Hobs Moat WI and Margaret Berry. Lynn Smith the Chairman of the WI West Midlands also joined us in our celebrations. An amazing evening of entertainment and celebrations was held at the Olton golf club where a superb meal was enjoyed by all. A duo called Wings entertained us, with songs that took everyone down memory lane. We also had raffles, gifts and presentations, it truly was a night to remember. **Pamela Stewart, Hobs Moat WI**

Would you like to see your WI featured here?

Send your contributions to [COGMEDIAWMFWI@gmail.com](mailto:COGMEDIAWMFWI@gmail.com).

Please send submissions by the tenth of each month to guarantee inclusion. It may not be possible to include all submissions. Texts may be altered to fit available space.

Your next deadline is Wednesday May 10<sup>th</sup> 2023. Use of font Arial Narrow size 14 is recommended. Many thanks.



Carole Hewitt, President and Iris Montgomery, Treasurer, with Lynn Smith, WMFWI President.



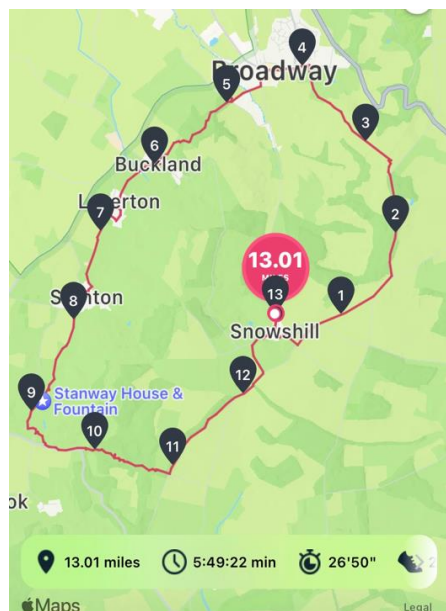
Founder members Margaret Berry and Carol Hewitt receive a celebratory cake from their hosts at the golf club.

# ‘Walk in her Name’

In memory of  
Elizabeth Coleman.

March 2023 was Ovarian Cancer Month.

*The NATIONAL WI is running a campaign this year ‘SEE THE SIGNS’ to raise awareness of the subtle signs and symptoms of Ovarian Cancer to help ensure that more women are diagnosed sooner.*



Elizabeth Coleman, a **Kings Norton WI** member died very recently from Ovarian Cancer.

To commemorate her life, and to support the Ovarian Cancer Charity, I took a 13-mile sponsored walk as an opportunity to mark the life of a fellow WI member. As we go month by month to our local WI's we get alongside others with whom we might not otherwise cross paths. Perhaps with some it may go no deeper than a brief passing chat, but with others deeper friendships are forged. Walking through the gorgeous Cotswold countryside I was thankful to be physically fit to be able enjoy this.

I am grateful to Members of the KNAWI who donated so generously to this charity. This contribution to the charity, is a fitting tribute to Elizabeth Coleman.

The photos hopefully will whet your appetite to visit these beautiful Cotswold villages. If you like walking I highly recommend the whole circuit. Nevertheless, there are some lovely subsections to suit all tastes.

A flat walk through woods and meadows from Broadway towards Stanton [4-9 on the map]. You can also visit these villages by car.

- A bracing walk on the flat starting at Broadway Tower. [3]
- A beautiful walk, through meadows from the Tower down to Broadway. [But remember what you walk down you need to walk back up!]
- If you have transport but aren't a walker Broadway [4] is great for a potter and tea stop.
- Lavender Fields, with I [1] are open in season from 14<sup>th</sup> June – August. [highly recommended.]



Suffice to say I enjoyed the walk, in aid of this worthwhile cause and hopefully you too will enjoy an outing in this area.

*The collection, made at the last meeting produced £100 to donate to the Walk in Her Name charity [www.ovarian.org](http://www.ovarian.org)*

**Liz Perham- member of KNAWI**



We had great fun making our own toilet bombs, carpet freshener and fabric conditioner this afternoon. It was lovely that the event attracted some new faces! And the hall smelt very fragrant when we left (unlike the time we made sauerkraut!

**Jen Barrow, BH&M WI**

## Fabric Conditioner

### Ingredients

- 400ml white vinegar
- 30ml (2 tbsp) glycerin
- 40 drops essential oils of your choice

### Method

Add the ingredients to a jug, mix and it's ready to go. Store in a bottle or jar

Use 2-3 tbsp in the fabric conditioner compartment of your washing machine

## Here's the **Toilet Cleaner Bomb** recipe:

### Ingredients

- 1 cup Bicarbonate of Soda (250g)
- 1/4 cup Citric Acid (63g)
- Spray bottle filled with tap water
- 40 drops essential oils of your choice

### Method

Put the Bicarbonate of Soda and Citric Acid in a bowl, and mix.

Add 30 - 40 drops of essential oil, and mix.

Spray the mixture with water – 2 sprays then mix, Keep spraying (2 sprays at a time) and mixing until the mixture starts to clump together like damp sand, (don't over water the mixture because it will start to fizz!)

Spoon the mixture into silicone moulds/paper cases and firmly press down so it's compact and all the edges are filled. Leave for up to 24 hours in a dry place and out of direct sunlight

Remove from moulds and store in an airtight jar. Use to keep your loo fresh between cleans.

Drop one into the toilet bowl (never the cistern!) and leave to fizz and do its work until the next time you need to flush.

Please read the contraindications when using essential oils. There are some that may irritate your skin, some are phototoxic, meaning they could cause skin burns on exposure to the sun, and some are extremely toxic to pets.



# Crafts

## Claire Woodland, Chair of Crafts

**Hello all**, what a busy year we are having, barely time to recover from The Queen's Jubilee and we are already making plans for our new King's Coronation. You may have been busy recycling old jubilee projects, or have new craft ideas. We have included a couple of easy projects this month from us. Please send us photos of your own Coronation Crafts when complete.

Our Federation stand at the NEC was a great success, see below for more information.

The craft committee continues to make plans for future events and projects. If you have any requests or suggestions for us to work on, please get in touch.

**Claire Woodland, Chair of Craft**

### Workshops

The very popular glass fusion workshop was fully booked, everyone who attended had a wonderful day. The panels that were made have yet to be fired but here are some pictures.



### Outings



WMFWI and the Craft Committees had a stand at Sewing for Pleasure at the NEC during March. We displayed easter crafts in keeping with the theme of the event, also alongside that we displayed a Craftivism wall to show our current campaigns.

Not only did we increase our membership by signing up new members, we also came away with a prize for Best Dressed Stand in the Section.

A second date has been set for those who wanted to attend but missed out. Please send your applications in as soon as possible to avoid further disappointment. Flyers have been sent to your secretary.

**Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2023 at 10.30am**

**£45 per person.**

## Competitions

### Montgomery Shield 2023

#### An Embroidered Sampler

You are asked to produce a traditional embroidered sampler. This can be a traditional cross-stich design, freestyle embroidery using various stitches, or Sashiko embroidery. You can even use a kit, though you must state this on your entry. The important thing is it must be decorative! Extra consideration will be given for originality. The finished piece of work must be mounted and framed, no larger than A3.

OR

you can create a decorative sampler in the form of a fabric book. Do ensure the back of your work is neat and tidy. Finished size no larger than A4.

Judging will take place at the Annual Meeting in September 2023. Entries will be accepted up to and including this day. Notice of your intent to enter must be registered by the end of August 2023.

Please contact [wmfwi.craft@gmail.com](mailto:wmfwi.craft@gmail.com)

### Trustees Trophy 2023

#### Green and Pleasant Land

Members are asked to create a painting either in oils, acrylic, inks or watercolour depicting a 'Green and Pleasant Land'.

The completed artwork must be no larger than A3. It can be framed or mounted if desired.

Judging will take place at the Annual Meeting in September 2023. Entries will be accepted up to and including this day. Notice of your intent to enter must be received by the end of August 2023.

Please contact [wmfwi.craft@gmail.com](mailto:wmfwi.craft@gmail.com)

## Coronation Crafts

I'm sure you have all been busy planning and making for the upcoming Coronation of King Charles III. Here are just a couple of ideas from us. Please send us your photographs of the occasion and the things you have made.

### Kim's Knitted Chocolate Orange Crown



Materials required; oddments of double-knitting yarn in purple, gold, white and black. 4mm or size 8 knitting needles. Jewels optional.

Using white cast on 50 stitches and knit 10 rows in garter stitch. Change to gold and continue to knit 3 rows. Change to purple and knit a further 19 rows in stocking stitch. Do not cast off. Thread yarn through all 50 stitches on needle and gather tightly, secure end, then use this thread to stitch the two sides together to form the body of the crown.

Next using gold cast on 50 stitches and knit 3 rows, cast off. Repeat this to produce gold strips of knitting. Attach the gold strips with a few stitches so that they cross over the top of the crown. Stitch at the top to secure. Using gold cast on 10 stitches and stocking stitch 5 rows, gather up both edges to form a ball. Stuff and stitch closed. Attach to top of crown. Add a few stitches of black yarn to the white rim, to make it look like ermine fur. Decorate the crown with jewels or sequins if desired.

Add a chocolate orange if you can resist the temptation to eat it first.



## Coronation Crochet Bunting

### TRIANGLE INSTRUCTIONS

Using a 4mm hook and your choice of yarn shade either make a magic ring or ch4 and join with a ss to form a ring.

Round 1: Ch6 (counts as 1 tr + 3 ch), [3tr, ch3] twice in ring, 2tr in ring, join with ss to 3rd of beg 6 ch, fasten off. [3 x 3tr-grps]

Round 2: Join next shade of yarn in any ch3-sp, ch6 (counts as 1 tr + 3 ch), 3tr in same ch3-sp, ch1, \*(3tr, ch3, 3tr) in next ch3-sp, ch1; rep from \* once more, 2tr in first ch3-sp, join with ss to 3rd of beg 6 ch, fasten off. [6 x 3tr-grps]

Round 3: Join next shade of yarn in any ch3-sp, ch6 (counts as 1 tr + 3 ch), 3tr in same ch3-sp, ch1, 3tr in next ch1-sp, ch1, \*(3tr, ch3, 3tr) in next ch3-sp, ch1, 3tr in next ch1-sp, ch1; rep from \* once more, 2tr in first ch3-sp, join with ss to 3rd of beg 6 ch, fasten off. [9 x 3tr-grps]

Round 4: Join next shade of yarn in any ch3-sp, ch6 (counts as 1 tr + 3 ch), 3tr in same ch3-sp, ch1, [3tr in next ch1-sp, ch1] twice, \*(3tr, ch3, 3tr) in next ch3-sp, ch1, [3tr in next ch1-sp, ch1] twice; rep from \* once more, 2tr in first ch3-sp, join with ss to 3rd of beg 6 ch, fasten off. [12 x 3tr-grps]

Round 5: Join next shade of yarn in any ch3-sp, ch6 (counts as 1 tr + 3 ch), 3tr in same ch3-sp, ch1, [3tr in next ch1-sp, ch1] 3 times, \*(3tr, ch3, 3tr) in next ch3-sp, ch1, [3tr in next ch1-sp, ch1] 3 times; rep from \* once more, 2tr in first ch3-sp, join with ss to 3rd of beg 6 ch, fasten off. [15 x 3tr-grps]

Round 6: Join next shade of yarn in any ch3-sp, ch6 (counts as 1 tr + 3 ch), 3tr in same ch3-sp, ch1, [3tr in next ch1-sp, ch1] 4 times, \*(3tr, ch3, 3tr) in next ch3-sp, ch1, [3tr in next ch1-sp, ch1] 4 times; rep from \* once more, 2tr in first ch3-sp, join with ss to 3rd of beg 6 ch, fasten off. [18 x 3tr-grps]

Round 7: Join next shade of yarn in any ch3-sp, ch6 (counts as 1 tr + 3 ch), 3tr in same ch3-sp, ch1, [3tr in next ch1-sp, ch1] 5 times, \*(3tr, ch3, 3tr) in next ch3-sp, ch1, [3tr in next ch1-sp, ch1] 5 times; rep from \* once more, 2tr in first ch3-sp, join with ss to 3rd of beg 6 ch, fasten off. [21 x 3tr-grps]

Round 8: Join white (or preferred shade) in any tr through BLO, [work a ss BLO in each tr and ch along this side to the corner sp, ss BLO in first ch, 2ss BLO in second ch, ss BLO in third ch of corner] 3 times, work a ss BLO in each tr and ch to end of round, ch 1, cont with Round 9. [31 ss on each side of triangle]

Round 9: Work a ss BLO in each ss around to end of round, ss in beg ss to close, fasten off.

### CARRYING THE SAME COLOUR TO NEXT ROUND

Work as per Round 1 of the Triangle Instructions but do not fasten off.

(See next page)



## Coronation Crochet Bunting - continued

Round 2: Ss into the next ch3-sp, (ch3, 2tr, ch3, 3tr) in same ch-3sp, ch1, \*(3tr, ch3, 3tr) in next ch3-sp, ch1; rep from \* once more, join with ss to 3rd of beg 3 Ch. [6 x 3tr-grps].

To continue working more rounds in the same shade of yarn, ss into the next 2 tr and into the corner ch-3sp and work as for Round 2 but with the extra single 3tr-grps on each side as per the original Triangle Instructions.

Finish with Rounds 8 and 9 as above

## The Original Coronation Chicken



The recipe "Poulet Reine Elizabeth" now widely known as Coronation Chicken was created by Rosemary Hume and the students of Le Cordon Bleu cookery school in London including, writer Constance Spry to be served at the Coronation Luncheon in 1953. The recipe is thought to have been based on a dish created for George V's Silver Jubilee in 1935. This was called Jubilee Chicken. The ingredients used were remarkable for their time, with many of them only

just becoming available, whilst the majority of the country was still under the restrictions of post-war rationing. The original recipe consisted of young roasting chickens, water and a little wine to cover, carrot, a bouquet garni, salt, peppercorns and a cream of curry sauce.

Many versions of this dish exist today, a more modern version is still served at 'Le Cordon Bleu'.

Although King Charles menu will not include this dish, we thought it a shame to banish it to the past.

## Constance Spry's Original Coronation Chicken

### Ingredients (Serves 8):

2.3kg (5lb) chicken, 1 tbsp vegetable oil, 1 small, finely chopped onion, 1 tbsp curry paste, 1 tbsp tomato purée, 100ml red wine, 1 bay leaf, 1/2 lemon juice, 4 finely chopped apricot halves, 300ml (1/2 pint) Mayonnaise, 100ml (4 fl.oz) whipping cream, Salt and pepper, Watercress to garnish

### Method

Skin the chicken and cut into small pieces. Grill until cooked. In a small saucepan, heat the oil, add the onion and cook until softened. Add the curry paste, tomato purée, wine, bay leaf and lemon juice. Simmer, uncovered, for about 10 minutes until well reduced. Strain and leave to cool. Purée chopped apricot halves in a blender or food processor or push through a sieve. Beat the cooled sauce into the mayonnaise with the apricot purée. Whip the cream to stiff peaks and fold into the mixture. Season, adding a little extra lemon juice if necessary. Fold in the chicken pieces, garnish with watercress and serve.



## King Charles Favourite Dishes

Charles is a lover of Italian Food; he likes simple pasta dishes such as Spaghetti and meatballs. He loves lamb or mutton, and is particularly fond of mushrooms foraged from the estate. Charles is a supporter of good British ingredients, organic and local where possible. He eats a mainly plant based diet, mindful of his carbon footprint, only eating fish or

meat on two days, he also has a dairy free day once a week. A special coronation menu has been created for him using his favourite ingredients.

We have picked a couple of his favourite dishes from his usual menu.

### Cheesy Baked Eggs



#### Ingredients

100g wilted spinach, 1 cherry tomato or sundried tomatoes, 35g strong soft cheese (e.g. Tunworth, Golden Cenarth or other strong soft cheese), 1 egg, 80ml double cream, 15 g grated hard cheese (e.g. Old Winchester), Fresh torn basil leaves, Charcuterie (optional)

#### Method

Butter a small ovenproof dish and line with wilted spinach, making a small well in the centre. Place the cherry tomato (quartered) or the sundried tomato (chopped) on top of the spinach. Dot the soft cheese around the dish amongst the tomatoes. Add the torn basil leaves and the charcuterie if using. Season with salt and pepper. Crack the egg into the centre of the spinach. Pour the double cream over the egg - avoid breaking the yolk. Sprinkle with grated hard cheese. Place in a hot oven (180C) for 8-10 minutes. Let it stand for a few minutes before eating.

### Cream of Lemon

**For the Cream** - 125g Heavy cream, ½ Lemon, 25g Caster sugar. Lemon curd optional

**For the Biscuits** - 40g Butter, 40g Caster sugar, 40g All-purpose flour, 1 Egg White

#### Method

Mix the ingredients for the biscuits together, adding the egg white last. Leave to rest in the fridge. Mix together the cream, sugar, lemon peel and heat up to 80 °C. Cool to 55 °C and add lemon juice when cooled, then heat everything up to 45 °C and pass through a sieve. Pour into glasses and cool in the fridge. Using silicone paper, roll out the biscuit mixture into a round shape and bake in the oven at 180 °C for 3-4 minutes. Remove from the oven and let cool. Put a drop of lemon curd if liked onto the cream and top with a biscuit.

## Arts and Activities

Julie Afridi Martin - Entertainment Subcommittee Chair



### Arts and Activities

Wow! Spring has literally sprung and here we are, having put the clocks on and having lost an hour of already busy days, enjoying some sunshine. Whatever you're doing, I hope your brains are ready for action for the annual quiz this year. In response to members ideas and comments we are actually having 2 quizzes. We hope that that more members will be able to access the venues, it will give us more space to accommodate groups and there will be less travelling involved.



Quiz 1 Aldridge Church Centre Friday June 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Quiz 2 Shirley Community Centre Friday June 9<sup>th</sup>

Cost – A table of 4 £20

### CROQUET

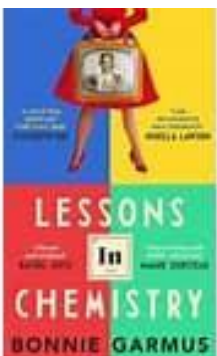
Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> July

At Kenilworth Tennis Club

£10 per head to include equipment, tea, coffee, biscuits and tuition.

Book soon Ladies!

### READING CORNER



*Tess Singleton from Bournville WI* has sent us this book review.

Please keep them coming in ladies.

Lessons in Chemistry by Bonnie Garmus. This was a choice by a book club I'm in. I literally couldn't put it down, funny, tragic and very thought provoking. It's the story of one woman's struggle to be taken seriously by the male dominated Chemistry faculties in the 50s and 60s and the discrimination she suffered. Definitely a woman's book, I couldn't recommend it more highly!



**THE VAL DAGGATT CUP** – Award for writing

**Closing date for entries Monday 26th June**



## Here's a taste of what's on in and around our area:

You can find further details about these events at:

[What's On in Birmingham | Official Events Guide | Visit Birmingham](#)

### **The Stratford Literary Festival - STRATFORD-UPON-AVON**

The Stratford Literary Festival has announced its Winter Weekend line-up with events

**2 May – 7 May Loads of writers and speakers to choose from. Booking required 0333 666 3366**

### **UKTTA Tattoo Convention**

**Exhibition** A convention for the UK's top tattoo artists located in the second city of Birmingham! This social media platform has existed to support and showcase the work of the best Tattoo artists the UK has to offer to which we now look forward to bringing...

**Venue** National Exhibition Centre Birmingham 22<sup>nd</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> April

Cost £20 - £50

### **One Of Them Ones - A new play by Charlie Josephine**

**Theatre** Wolverhampton

Pentabus are delighted to present an inspiring and joyful new play by rising star Charlie Josephine, writer of the critically acclaimed I, Joan – \*\*\*\*\* The Times, \*\*\*\* The Guardian, \*\*\*\*.

A dazzling new play about two siblings living in a rural community trying to get their heads around gender identity. Frankie is desperate to be understood, accepted, loved. But LGBTQ alphabet soup has got Michael's head spinning. Why's it gotta be so complicated? Why can't they understand? Why can't things go back to the way they always were? Unpicking the complexities of identity and the fierce family love that hopefully holds us together.

**Venue** Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton 26th April

Cost £8 /£9

### **What's holding you back?**

I'm here with ears wide open, a pen, a phone and a computer to check out things you recommend. Please let me know what you'd like to do. If we can get 15 people interested then I'm happy to research it further and book.



### **Darts**

Congratulations to Knowle A, Berkswell, Meriden, Silhill, Halesowen A and B, who all won their relevant first round matches and will move to the semi-finals.



Congratulations too, to all the teams that took part.  
Good luck in the next rounds ladies!!

## National Committee Roll - Public Affairs

Over the past year, Lynda Gibbon, President of Harborne Village WI has served as a member representative on the NFWI Public Affairs Committee. She's enjoyed the opportunity and has been able to form a positive link between the national organisation and our West Midlands Federation's Public Affairs team. Lynda's feedback has informed our campaigning and events during the year and we'd like to thank her for her enthusiasm to translate national policy into Federation actions. If any members with relevant experience would like to be nominated to join NFWI Education committee, Membership Committee or Public Affairs Committee, we would be happy to support them. (Please contact Lynn Smith) Lynda's explanation of the role in her own words is as follows:

*In May 2021 I was invited to join the NFWI PA Committee as a Member Representative. I had expressed an interest in getting more involved with national campaigns after attending the Million Women Rise event in London in March 2020. Due to C-19 restrictions the Committee met three times a year in a virtual meeting space. All Committee members were given every opportunity to contribute suggestions and views before voting and decision making. Member representatives of the NFWI PA Committee provide 'voice' to campaign development and from lessons learned after campaigns are launched as they continue to evolve to get the best results for WI members and our communities. It was a very enjoyable, worthwhile experience and gave me an insight into how the resolutions process drives the development and delivery of national campaigns in partnership with NFWI, regional Federations and local groups. The tenure concluded in May 2023 and I would encourage WI members to volunteer and get involved to help shape the future of WI campaigning.*  
**Lynda Gibbon, President of Harborne Village WI [harbornevillagewi@gmail.co](mailto:harbornevillagewi@gmail.co)**

### Diary of Events 2023

21 <sup>st</sup> April	Spring Outing (Stamford)
21 <sup>st</sup> April	Menopause the Musical 2, Alex theatre
26 <sup>th</sup> April	ACWW Walk
25 <sup>th</sup> May	NFWI Annual Meeting, Cardiff
2 <sup>nd</sup> June	Quiz, Aldridge Church Centre
9 <sup>th</sup> June	Quiz, Shirley Community Hall
21 <sup>st</sup> June	Summer Outing (Skegness) – cancelled*
13 <sup>th</sup> July	Croquet (Kenilworth)
19 <sup>th</sup> September	Autumn Outing to Windsor
23 <sup>rd</sup> September	Skittles, Hockley Heath
25 <sup>th</sup> September	Annual Meeting
November 2023	Christmas Outing (Hyde Park)
9 <sup>th</sup> December	Christmas family celebration

\*See notice on page 16

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

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



## Public Affairs

### Liz Galloway, Vice Chair & Public Affairs

#### The Great Big Green Week 10 – 18 June 2023.

This will be the UK's biggest ever celebration of action to tackle climate change and protect nature!  
**Get involved to keep up the pressure on decision makers.**

There will be all kinds of events from litter picking, climate coffee mornings, film screenings crafting, sports relays, crafting and such events to support the protection of nature.

**What's your WI going to organise?** *Do let us know and let us share your efforts in COG.*

The Climate Coalition runs free online training sessions and has plenty of expert advice to offer. Keep an eye on the website for further information and ideas. [www.theclimatecoalition.org.uk](http://www.theclimatecoalition.org.uk)

#### International Women's Day

A survey by NFWI found that women are still penalised in the workplace for caring responsibilities and are under too much pressure to balance their career with these responsibilities.

90 per cent of respondents believe that more needs to be done for men and women to be equal in society.

87 per cent of respondents believe a more equal society between men and women would be better for the economy. Read more on the WI website.



#### Million Women Rise

If your eyesight's very good, you may be able to see Nancy Coleman (Knowle WI) and Lynda Gibbon (President of Harborne Village WI) who joined this 'Million Women Rise' march in London. Both are members of our Public Affairs Committee.

#### WI new Supporter Options

It will soon be possible to read more in April on the website and also in WI Life.

#### NFWI PR Guide

**Use the NFWI PR Guide as your go-to tool when promoting your WI in the media.** The guide provides instructions on how to work with local journalists, promote meetings and events and how to prepare for interviews.

## Publicising your WI

Make your voice heard and attract more members to your meetings with advice and guidelines for publicising your WI.

When planning to promote your WI, meeting or event, it's important to consider the full range of opportunities available to you. For more information, look on the Communications and PR section of MyWI where there's a Recruitment Guide.

There are many leaflets and posters which you can use, as well as personal invitations to individuals and flyers showing how to create craft and cookery items.

## Planned Summer Outing to Skegness

It is with great regret to inform you all that our planned summer outing to Skegness scheduled for the 21<sup>st</sup> June 2023 has had to be cancelled.

Unfortunately, we have been unable to secure coach transport as the date coincides with Glastonbury.

Our next outing will be to Windsor on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2023. A flyer will be sent out later in the year. Refunds for Skegness will be returned shortly.

## Editor's Choice

## National Emergency Alert Test

On Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> April at 3pm there will be a national test of the UK emergency alert service, via a text to all UK mobile phones. Your phone will receive a text advising of appropriate action to take to stay safe. This may happen in the instance of flooding, fire or severe weather warnings, or other threat to life. For more information, see [About Emergency Alerts - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/about-emergency-alerts)

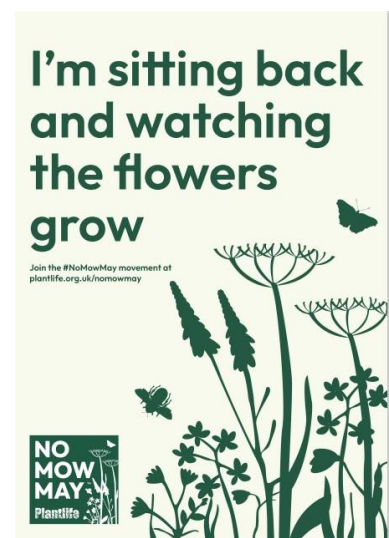
## No Mow May

Mowing the Lawn, not my favourite task, and now here's the most wonderful, and sensible, excuse not to do it! No Mow May means exactly that, leave your lawn alone to allow wildlife, wildflowers and fungi to flourish, giving a boost to the bees at the start of summer.

Anything we can do to support our bees, and our backs, has to be welcome. Find out more here

[Take part in No Mow May - Plantlife](#)

*Lisa Blackburn, BH&M & B'ville WIs, Editor.*





## Let's Hear it for the Hungry Caterpillar!

By **Liz Galloway**

Keen gardeners will tell you that caterpillars are the scourge of the growing season, eating their way through leaves before you've even realised they're there and leaving lacework behind. So, what does a hungry caterpillar eat? They seem particularly attracted to the brassica family, presumably because the strong, often fleshy, leaves of the cabbage family provide them with ample food for minimum effort.



If we take a more holistic view and consider caterpillars as part of the overall ecosystem, what do they contribute? They've emerged from eggs laid by butterflies or moths, which they'll eventually evolve back into through the pupal stage. In the meantime, they provide a significant food source for garden birds such as blackbirds, robins or bluetits but also hedgehogs, shrews, bats and spiders. In turn, these are eaten by predators such as owls, sparrowhawks and weasels.

Returning to the butterfly and moth stage, of course we all know that they are valuable pollinators. Many species are in decline due to changes and loss of habitat and food sources which were exacerbated by last year's spells of hot and dry weather. So, if we can bear to grow just a few plants for caterpillars, even a few sacrificial brassicas, we're helping to reverse this trend. Plants which are also very acceptable to them are nettles, while nasturtiums, foxgloves, hops, ivy, docks, dandelions, willow herb, brambles and native grasses and may also lure the cabbage eaters away from food crops. One easy organic deterrent I'm told, is to spray your crops with a solution of 3 cloves of garlic, 1 tbsp of vegetable oil, 1 tsp of soap and a 1litre of water, but not immediately before harvesting, of course!



There are many more host plants for both butterflies and caterpillars, not to mention most of our common woodland trees. Feeding research has shown that they eat many fruits and seeds as well ... even chocolate cake and ice cream, one survey has it! The thought that we're supporting the life cycle of one of our most beautiful insects must surely spur us on to tolerate the caterpillars for a short spell in spring or summer! Imagine our buddleias (*the butterfly bush*) without their mantle of industrious Peacocks, Red-Admirals, or Small Tortoiseshells collecting nectar in the height of summer!



# WEST MIDLANDS FEDERATION OF WOMEN'S INSTITUTES



## 200 Club 2023



Shares cost £5.00 each and the return will be £10.00 per monthly draw from

**December 2022 – September 2023** .

At the year end the minimum prize will be £100.00, so the more shares bought, the higher the prize.

The 200 Lottery Grand draw will take place at the Annual Meeting, 25<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

Application forms together with stamped addressed envelope and cheque made payable to **WMFWI** and sent to County House

WMFWI Treasurer, Iris Montgomery, 38 Wensley Road, Sheldon, Birmingham B26 1LT.

**GOOD LUCK – BE IN IT TO WIN IT!**

WMFWI, Iris Montgomery, 38 Wensley Road, Sheldon, Birmingham B26 1LT **200 CLUB 2023**

### Application form

I wish to purchase on behalf of

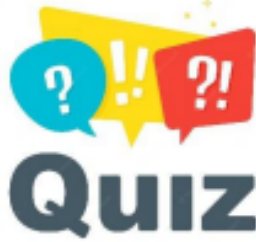
**INDIVIDUAL** \_\_\_\_\_ **INSTITUTE** \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Number of shares \_\_\_\_\_ at £5.00 each (Valid for one year to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023)  
cheque enclosed for £ \_\_\_\_\_ please enclose a **stamped addressed envelope**.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

**West Midlands Federation of Women's Institutes**



**On Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2023 at 7pm**

At

**Aldridge Church Centre**

14 The Green, Aldridge, Walsall WS9 8NH

Each team to consist of up to four members from your WI

Each WI may enter more than one team

Cost £20.00 per table to include coffee/tea and cakes

Supporters welcome at a cost of £3.00 to cover refreshments payable on the door.

Closing date 16<sup>th</sup> May 2023 using the tear off form below with a cheque payable to WMFWI

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**Federation Quiz – 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2023**

Please return to Jackie Poyner, 97 Denis Road, Selly Oak, B29 4JU by no later than 16<sup>th</sup> May 2023

WI \_\_\_\_\_ Requires \_\_\_\_\_ Tables @ £20.00 each

REMITTANCE CHEQUE ENCLOSED PAYABLE TO WMFWI £ \_\_\_\_\_

**West Midlands Federation of Women's Institutes**

**Quiz Evening**

**QUIZ!**

**On Friday 9<sup>th</sup> June 2023 at 7pm**

At

**Shirley Community Centre**

Stratford Road, Shirley B90 3AD

(parking available)

Each team to consist of up to four members from your WI

Each WI may enter more than one team

Cost £20.00 per table to include coffee/tea and cakes

Supporters welcome at a cost of £3.00 to cover refreshments payable on the door.

Closing date 16<sup>th</sup> May 2023 using the tear off form below with a cheque payable to WMFWI

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**Federation Quiz – 9<sup>th</sup> June 2023**

Please return to Jackie Poyner, 97 Denis Road, Selly Oak, B29 4JU by no later than 16<sup>th</sup> May 2023

WI \_\_\_\_\_ Requires \_\_\_\_\_ Tables @ £20.00 each

REMITTANCE CHEQUE ENCLOSED PAYABLE TO WMFWI £ \_\_\_\_\_

## West Midlands Federation of Women's Institutes



### Another Glass Fusion Panel Workshop

Design an art glass panel. Select and cut pieces of stained glass from a huge collection of colours, assemble and heat in the kiln to soften and melt.

£45 per person approx. 2hrs

Limited places available. For those who missed out last time.

**Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2023 at 10.30am**

Curborough Hall Farm Countryside Centre Watery Lane, Lichfield WS13 8ES

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Closing date Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> May 2023

Cheques to be made payable to WMFWI and sent to Claire Woodland 21  
Prospect Street, Ocker Hill, Tipton West Midlands DY4 0EE

Email: WMFWI.craft@gmail.com

No of places required \_\_\_\_ @£45 Total £ \_\_\_\_

Contact email \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ WI