**Membership Support Committee.**

The saddest part of a WI Adviser’s job is suspending a WI but sorting through their archives can throw up some interesting items. When Ann McPhie and I closed Stanton in the Peak last year we found, amongst their archives, letters from a branch of the Australian Country Women’s Association so I wrote to them to let them know~~s~~ that Stanton had closed. We thought their reply would interest Derbyshire members and wondered if any other WIs had such long-standing ‘twins’.

*Dear Barbara*

*Thank you for your letter regarding our link with Stanton and we are sorry to note that they have closed.  I am afraid it’s a sad fact of many branches of C.W.A. here too.*

*I have been researching through our archives and have found that our connection with Stanton began about June 1949. During the war years food parcels were sent from Lamaroo branch to England via a scheme run by a bank. There were also socks, scarves, fruitcakes and 4 gallon drums of rendered fat sent as part of the war effort. From 1949 four parcels of food were sent to Stanton every month and a member also wrote a letter each month. Later parcels were sent through Myers. This practice continued until 1952. The last known parcel sent was dried fruit in 1953. The last contact we had with them was Christmas 2012 when calendars were exchanged and a letter was sent to Mrs Barbara Plant.*

*Our branch at the time of the war years had 129 members, now we have only 16, with only 8 fit enough to run stalls etc. This Friday we are going to have a chrysanthemum fair with arrangements and flowers to sell for Mother’s Day. We also serve a three-course meal to the general public so we will be very busy. We are a small rural community situated 200kms. east of Adelaide in South Australia. Our town consists of 800 people with farms surrounding us growing grain crops and keeping sheep and cattle. Some members have travelled to Stanton and met the members.*

*We thank you for your offer from Hayfield WI to carry on with this twinning and would be pleased to carry on with this.*

*Jean Young, Lamaroo WI*

A copy of this letter was sent to Ann Stamper, NFWI Archivist who published it in The Archivists Newsletter before placing in the National Archives.

Barbara Barlow