



Middlesex News

May 2015

theWI
INSPIRING WOMEN

FOR 100 YEARS 1915

Centenary Baton coming to Middlesex Tuesday 12th May – Monday 18th May 2015

Starting the journey in December 2013 NFWI Board of Trustees took the Baton to Anglesey and on New Year Day 2014 it started a 2500 mile journey from Federation to Federation. Sixty nine Federation WIs have had such fun planning its travel through each Federation, meeting the challenges of snow, hail, rain, mist, fog and sun it crossed rivers, mountains, travelled down zip wires and glided from one Federation to the next and it's not over yet as the journey will not end until June 4 at the Annual General Meeting at the Royal Albert Hall. This is your chance to get involved.

On Tuesday 12th May at 14:00 the Centenary Baton will be handed over from Hertfordshire Federation to Middlesex Federation during an afternoon tea being held at Hadley Court Golf Club. Liz Morrell, Lorraine Reed and Brenda Granshaw will accept the Baton on behalf of Middlesex. The Baton will then be taken to HA: WI meeting in the Pinner Arms. The speaker is Jane Robinson, author of the book about the WI "A Force to be reckoned with".

Wednesday 13th May – A walk is being planned around Alexandra Palace (open to all) and, the Baton will also be at Finchley WI Annual meeting in the evening

Thursday 14th May – Baton will be at Hayes and Uxbridge Group meeting, being held at Hayes Community Centre from 14:00 – 16:00 Ticket available from West Drayton WI

Friday 15th May – Coffee morning at County office with the Board of Trustees and the Membership Committee from 10:30 – 12:30. In the afternoon Sunbury on Thames and Halliford WI are hosting an afternoon tea at the Orangery, Squires Garden Centre, Upper Halliford from 14:00 – 16:00.

Saturday 16th May – Come and join us at Westminster Bridge 11am for a walk to include Middlesex Guildhall, Downing Street, Horse Guards Parade, Trafalgar Square, Pall Mall and Buckingham Palace and St James's Park.

Monday 18th May – N1 WI members are walking the Thames path and will be at Staines Bridge 9am and walk the tow path to Walton Bridge to include Laleham and Shepperton members are welcome to walk alongside Louise and Anna to Walton Bridge (or part of the way).

The handover from Middlesex Federation to Surrey Federation will take place on a River Cruise from Walton Bridge to Teddington Lock on a Mississippi steamer style boat. Every WI in Middlesex will have already received the invitation for one of their members to attend. For those not lucky enough to receive a ticket you can cheer to boat along from the Middlesex side of the Thames from Walton Bridge to Molesey lock.



We have numerous events planned for the week; however there is still an opportunity for your WI to get involved with this historic event. Can you host an event on, Thursday 14th May in the morning, or Sunday 17th May? Please contact County Office on 01895 440161 or email office@mfwi.co.uk.

You may remember some girls from Waldegrave School visiting Sunbury-on-Thames WI during their February Meeting to do a news report. This was the result (Click on the link to view). <http://www.waldegrave.richmond.sch.uk/75/bbc-news-report>

Craft Booking Details: To save space on the events list, I have noted booking details for Dabble Days and Workshops below all of which are held at County Office:
Dabble Days are 10.30-4.00pm and the fee is payable on the day - **booking essential**.
Workshops are as priced and payable in advance by cheque to secure your place (Cheques will be cashed when confirmation of event is taking place). Bank transfer can be arranged, please ask Lorraine for details. All bookings to go to mfwicountycraft@gmail.com or lorraineareed@gmail.com or 01895 676105 or call/text 07976 398533

UPCOMING EVENTS

(See separate note on Dabble Day info)

May 12 2015

The Centenary Baton Handover from Hertfordshire Federation

May 13 2015

The Centenary Baton walk around Alexandra Palace

May 14 2015

Hayes & Uxbridge Group Meeting
14:00 Hayes & Harlington Community Hall. Tickets available via your Secretary

May 14 2015

Craft Dabble Day – Braiding & tba
Cost £5.00

May 15 2015

MFWI Coffee morning at County Office

May 16 2015

The Centenary Baton walk from Westminster Bridge to St James Park

May 18 2015

Walking the Thames Path and the Centenary Baton Handover to Surrey Federation

May 28 2015

West Middlesex Group Meeting
19:30 Ickenham Village Hall. Tickets available via your Secretary

June 4 2015

National AGM at Albert Hall
10:30 – 17:00 (see your Secretary for details)
Also a live showing at Cineworld, Feltham

Saturday June 13 2015

Craft Dabble Day – Silk Painting for Beginners - cost £7.00

June 21 2015 - pm

Mikron Theatre - performing
Raising Agents (play about a WI) in Perivale Woods – details via your Secretary

July 2 2015

Craft Dabble Day – Cathedral Window Patchwork - Cost £5.00

August 6 2015

Craft Dabble Day – Traditional Japanese Sashiko Sewing - Cost £7.00

September 13 2015

A week of Craft Exhibition & Demos
Cow Byre, Manor Farm, Ruislip

September 16 2015

WI Birthday Day - 1915

Contact details

COUNTY OFFICE:

Unit 3 - No 7, The Green,
West Drayton, Middlesex UB7 7PL

Tel: 01895 440161 **Email:** office@mfwi.co.uk

OFFICE OPENING HOURS:

Monday 9:00 am to 1:00 pm

Wednesday 9:00 am to 4:00 pm

(Answer phone is in operation outside office hours)

FEDERATION CHAIRMAN: Vivien Beckett

FEDERATION SECRETARY: Sarah Wilson

office@mfwi.co.uk

PUBLICATIONS - OFFICE HOURS:

Tuesday 10:00 am to 12:00 noon

FEDERATION NEWSLETTER: Lorraine Reed

editor.middlesexnews@hotmail.co.uk or

lorraineareed@gmail.com

HANDWRITTEN AND EMAILED AROUND THE WIs REPORTS (50-80 words) TO:

Mrs L Reed, 126 Dartmouth Road, Ruislip,
Middlesex HA4 0DG

You can also find us on

www.twitter.com/mfwi

www.facebook.com/pages/Middlesex-Federation-WI/573087366051331

www.facebook.com/groups/388213284632558/

Please keep your articles and photos coming in and if you have any ideas of what you would like to see in your newsletter, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Magazine Deadlines

To get into the next issue in June, please make sure your copy gets to the Editor Email address or in any format to Lorraine Reed before the deadline date of

Friday 24th April 2015.

Please note that articles received after this date will unlikely be included due to production time and printing deadlines.

The cost of the newsletter for 2015 is 75p per printed copy, please speak to your Secretary for details. Every WI is sent an email version to pass onto their members at no charge.

Emailed copies are free of charge and available through your Secretary.

WOMEN'S WORLD MAGAZINE – Available via your Secretary or County Office at only £1.00 each.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY FOR MAY

Stanwell WI - 1919



AN IMAGE OF THE QUEEN COMPETITION REMINDER

Create an image of the Queen in any medium you like!

Entries to County Office by close of business on Friday 31st
July 2015.

DIGITAL STORYTELLING By Lorraine Reed

MFwi will be running a couple of days at County Office to teach people a little about digital storytelling. It will help those that have no idea how to go about such things and go on to record events during the centenary year within their WI. It will help record your members' memories of WI from years gone by.

There will be further details to come but it might be worth starting to think about someone attending a workshop or if you have people already competent, to start recording your stories – many of which will be put into the National Archives.

The Centenary year starts in September 2015 but as you know there are many events taking place already. With this in mind, you need to have cameras at the ready ladies and start recording events with pictures that you can put some narrative to at a later date.

YOUR DENMAN AMBASSADOR - Lesley Yendall.

Early in March my husband Bill and I went to Denman. He to do the Decorative Paper Cutting course and me to participate in 'The Home Deli' adventure.

Home Deli: There were seven of us, the youngest being I think about 30, and a member of 90!! We started with demonstrations of all the dishes and afterwards, we 'had a go ourselves. All the ingredients arrive at your 'station' on a white tray, all weighed etc., in all we made: Toulouse Sausages, Spam, Corned Beef, Cream Cheese, Cooked Chorizo Sausage and a Terrine of Chicken Pork and Sun Dried Tomatoes. We were all totally exhausted after all this, and it included the 'youngsters' as well, which made us 'older' cooks feel a bit better!! It was absolutely superb tutoring by husband and wife team Paul & Diane Peacock. We learned about starters and rennet in cheese and why the curd in cheese separates from the whey, and how delicious are the Toulouse Sausages are in a cassoulet (Casserole - in English) I cooked them for dinner on Saturday night.

Decorative Paper Cutting: Bill's course was just as rewarding, decorative paper cutting creating patterns of leaves, and cats and birds that look just like lace fabrics. He was full of admiration of the efforts made by the WI ladies, none of whom had any previous experience but produced fantastic things to be proud of. The tutor Christine Green, was superlative with her help and guidance to everyone. We chose these courses because they meant we could both go at the same time, albeit different 'ways', meeting up at mealtimes and evenings. The food, as usual at Denman is excellent, and the rooms are spotless and very comfortable. We were in a twin bedded room which had a walk in shower etc, suitable for disabled people, very convenient. Do go, these courses at Denman are good value for money and totally enjoyable.



MFWI

YOUR MUSIC SPEECH & DRAMA SUB COMMITTEE
OFFER A MIDWEEK AFTERNOON PRESENTATION

by

GORDON BENNETT, COCKNEY ENTERTAINER,

A fun afternoon with laughs, well known sing-a-long songs
with audience participation.

THURSDAY 23rd JULY 2015

at

Hayes & Harlington Community Centre, Albert Road, Hayes, UB3 4HR

£11.00 INCLUDES A FISH /CHICKEN & CHIPS LUNCH @ 1.15pm

AFTERNOON 'CUPPA' AND BISCUITS @3PM

(BRING YOUR OWN COLD DRINK AND GLASS)

Competition: Homemade Cockney Hat

Book early to avoid disappointment, tickets are not available at the door.

Tickets from: Mrs V Beckett, 27 Charnwood Road, Uxbridge, Middlesex UB10 0HF

Tel: 01895 463654

Reg. Charity No 228307

Deadline for ticket applications 17th June 2015

.....WI Please send me Tickets for the Cockney Afternoon with
Lunch and Tea Cost £11.00, at Hayes & Harlington Community Centre, Albert Road, Hayes
UB3 4HR. Cheques made out to MFWI

EGGcellent morning by Sarah Endersby, Sunbury on Thames

Saturday 21st March saw 38 members of Middlesex Federation attending a workshop at Stanwell Village Hall, to learn how to make chocolate Easter eggs and to create their own stunning egg to take home. It was another fun event with excellent guidance from Trish Hawkins, CloudCocoLand. Trish showed us how to temper the chocolate, and then how to decorate and fill the mould for our eggs. A great deal of chocolate tasting was done, but luckily there was still enough to make our eggs and by the end of the morning we had beautifully designed eggs already to take home. This was a real fun morning, with many WIs participating, and a great opportunity to meet and make friends. We look forward to the next event.



A Quilling masterpiece which is quite apt in our Centenary Year.

MFWI FACEBOOK GROUP –have you joined?
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/388213284632558/>

HAYES TOWN WI by Gill Wildman

At our March meeting Sara Coker who is a WI member of Thorney Starlets gave us a lesson on flower arranging. I'm sure most of us struggle with this, and just put them in a vase the best we can, so she held everybody's attention to gain some tips!! For a pedestal arrangement, she started with the foliage, using eucalyptus leaves making a triangle shape, then adding sunflowers in an S shape, to heighten your eye to the colour. Beautiful coral colour roses were put slightly behind the sunflowers, Sara then continued to add Delphiniums, Tulips, Lisianthus, Cow parsley, Broom and Agapanthus to fill, making a beautiful arrangement. All the while she was snipping at stems, she was chatting to us about her family life and how she worked in an office and flower shops before creating her own personal service which obviously is more satisfying, especially weddings. Sara has provided flowers for many companies, Pinewood Studios being one of them, worked on sets for TV series and prepared a posy for the Queen when she visited there. Sara kindly left us with the arrangement and Ginella was the lucky lady to take it home! If you have need for flowers for a special occasion you can obtain Sara's details from your Secretary. On her website there are some beautiful photos for you to browse, showing what a very talented and artistic "Thorney Starlet" can do for you.



HALLIFORD WI VISIT TO BROADCASTING HOUSE

by Julie Bloomfield

A very interesting trip was enjoyed by members of Halliford WI when they visited the BBC at Broadcasting House in London in March.

Although it took a while for us to go through the rigorous security checks before our 1 p.m. tour it was well worth it. The first part of our tour was to show us the large studio that is used when the news and weather is broadcast. We were obviously not allowed into the studio but were able to look down onto it through a glass screen which surrounds it, one floor above. We visited the One Show studio and were very surprised how small it was compared to when we see it on our televisions. Next we were taken to a room where two members were asked to do a news read where they read off of an autocue and another member did the weather forecast, all of which was hilarious. We saw the studio/theatre where various radio shows are broadcast and learnt that people can apply for free tickets to many of the shows. Finally we had five volunteers who took part in a play with all the sounds that could be expected in a very creepy house. I would thoroughly recommend this tour to any WIs looking for an outing.



HARLINGTON WI by Sarah Wilson

March: After the Committee and Harlington members had dealt with the WIs business Mr Philip Nelkon introduced us to the history of scrabble. In 1938 an American architect, Alfred Butts created the game as a variation on an earlier game he invented called Lexiko. The game rights are now owned by Hasbro and today the Scrabble game is found in many homes, ranging from a junior edition to an electronic scoring edition with many versions in between including standard, deluxe and travel – sized games.

Josie Bowen celebrated her 90th birthday and Jenny Jefferies made and iced a very pretty birthday cake. Harlington members had donated spring flowering bulbs of snowdrops in the green and daffodils for planting around the newly built remembrance room. Hazel distributed kits for members to take part in the little yellow duck project.

On Monday 23rd March evening members were invited to visit the Mayor's Parlour in the Civic Centre Uxbridge. Members learnt about Hillingdon's coat of arms, Mayors robes, chain of office, ceremonial mace and silver with a potted history of the office of the Mayor.

April: Tonight's speaker Mel Rees was born in 1947 and lived in Battersea until he was 21, he married and moved to Surrey, he kept our members entertained with his light-hearted look at life, snobbery, children who won't leave home and mothers who live long beyond your own life-expectancy. We heard Mel's observations of life, linked with the absurd, the over-stated and the self-delusion of those who control our everyday lives.

Rene celebrates her 90th Birthday this month and a special cake and flowers were presented to her. Members brought in their ducks, knitted, crochet or fabric for their contribution to the little yellow duck project. MFWI Annual Meeting was reported to the members and a daffodil walk was planned. Hayes and Harlington Group meeting tickets were available and members were informed of the many centenary events being planned by MFWI.



TWICKENHAM WI by Eleanor Thomas

Ann Beauchamp transported us down the river Seine on a gloomy evening in March. We had a brief tour of Paris and then sailed downstream to Honfleur stopping off at interesting towns en route and visiting Monet's garden. Ann's lovely photos brought the whole area to life and gave us a taste of summer. It was good to welcome a couple of visitors that evening.

Some members have enjoyed a visit to the Steam Museum in Kew. As well as seeing the amazing collection of great machines brought here from all over the country, the history of London's water supply is well illustrated and there is much to interest people of all ages. This museum is popular with school parties...but the machines only work at weekends.

SOUTHBOURNE WI by Brenda Francis

The hall filled once again with cheery Southbourne members, everyone jostling to get to the 'big ' table at the top of the hall. This is where the Easter Craft was situated. It was a riot of colour with hand knitted jumpers, cardigans, tea cosies, little Easter chic's that came with an egg. Beautiful embroidered pictures, aprons, cards and so much more. Also home-made cakes that disappeared as soon as they were placed on the table. Members had to be ushered away to their seats, but had their purses to the ready for more buying later.

Our speaker tonight was Peter Jones who spoke on Confessions of a Toastmaster. He told us of the many functions he had addressed and all the famous people he had met, which included Margaret Thatcher, Bob Monkhouse, Tommy Steele and many more, he also had lovely photographs of himself in his fine outfit, red jacket etc with all these people. He over-ran his time so our cup of tea was most welcome.

SUNBURY ON THAMES visits Theatre Land by Sarah Wilson

Family and friends along with Sunbury on Thames members went to the King Edward theatre, Old Compton Street to see the musical Miss Saigon a tragic tale of a doomed romance involving an Asian woman abandoned by her American lover. This iconic re-imagining of Puccini's Madame Butterfly depicts the relationship between orphaned prostitute Kim and American marine Chris. Set in Vietnam in the 1970's, the two lovers are torn from one another by the fall of Saigon and of enforced American evacuation of the city.

Helicopters soar and army drills shake the stage, striking sets, extraordinary voices and a heartfelt performance of a musical storytelling of a classic love story impressed us all.

A big thank you goes to Sarah Endersby, Secretary for organising this splendid trip.

PINNER WI OUTING by Toni Lewis

On Thursday 19th March a group from Pinner WI embarked on a tour of Brunel's London starting off from the Embankment station meeting with a tour guide from 'London Walks'. From the Embankment we had a pleasant boat trip alighting at Masthouse Terrace stop. A talk and walk along the Thames – a train ride – a DLR ride all covering three generations of Brunel's, Father, Son and Grandson. Marc Brunel, Isambard Kingdom Brunel and Henry Brunel and their wonderful London projects, too many to name here. Sometime later we ended up at The Brunel Museum in Rotherhithe and there descended (as best we could) into a tunnel for an interesting talk. By then we needed refreshments and that came in the form of a very nice lunch at a pub called 'The Mayflower' which is right by the Museum and close by Rotherhithe station.

PINNER WI by Mary Peach

Talented members demonstrated their skills at the Members Craft Evening in March. These were Crochet, Quilling, Knitting (for charity), Cross-stitch and a newcomer – Embroidery with Buttons. It was a lively evening with plenty of opportunity to join in and 'have a go'. Walks have just restarted, likewise gardening now that spring is here.

SHOREDITCH SISTERS WI by Martha Wass

Just to say a MASSIVE THANK YOU! to everyone who joined at WOW in March. You all did a stellar job which resulted in so many cards being signed to Theresa May that there had to be more printed on the Sunday morning AND even that second batch was not enough and we had to result to hand written letters on blank bits of paper. Also special shout out to give Amy and Sophie a huge hug next time you see them as they did a huge amount beforehand and on the weekend itself to make this campaigning action powerful.

As part of our supporting Women for Refugee Women, we got people to complete postcards to Theresa May action demanding her to be ambitious in her review of immigrant detention. We achieved this by asking visitors to stand with our giant quilt holding a sign with their own solidarity message written on it, next to us dressed as Theresa May! For this we had the black jacket, the bob wig and ask members to wear their most eccentric shoes (as we all know Theresa May loves these). We then asked visitors to tweet the picture or put it on their Facebook with the link to the petition.

Of course we also took a whole load of photos and got passers-by to stand with their messages of support (with their permission of course). The decision of how we wanted to deliver these cards and letters to Theresa May or what we want to send to women in detention as our symbol of solidarity was to be taken at our next campaigns meeting on the 8th of April Leon's Spitalfields. To keep up to date with our campaigns make sure you are part of the Campaigns Facebook group!



theWI
INSPIRING WOMEN

1815 FOR 100 YEARS 2015

LALEHAM EVENING WI by Judith McFarlane

March 2015

Our first meet up this year was for lunch at the Toby Meson which we always enjoy. Since then we have had two very interesting speakers, the first of whom was Jacqui Dimmer, a lively and entertaining speaker who told us of her experiences on her pilgrimage to Egypt and Jordan.

Her first impression of Cairo was of crowds, traffic and noise. The smell was from petrol fumes and lotus blossom. This was the time of the Spring Uprising and, as the rest of the group had backed out, Jacqui found herself the only person with the guide. She was thrilled to be shown St Sergius church which is built over the spot where the Holy Family hid when fleeing from Bethlehem. In Cairo she also visited the Museum of Egyptian Antiquities where she saw the mask of Tutankhamen made from solid gold. Jacqui then went on to Jordan where she climbed Mt Nebo which is where Moses viewed the Promised Land and is thought to be buried here. Jacqui then visited Petra, an ancient desert town, mentioned several times in the Bible. It is known for its architecture cut from the pink sandstone and its cleverly controlled water system that has enabled the area to prosper as Petra has flash floods. It is entered through a dark, narrow gorge opposite a well preserved and beautifully carved large building called the Treasury. Built in the classic style with exquisite carvings, columns and porticos, it is most dramatic with a stately feel and was built for tombs of wealthy families. There are also small dwellings in the area carved from the sandstone. Petra is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and definitely one for your bucket list!

'Chile, Land of Extremes' was the title of a talk given by Tony Lippard who also showed some really beautiful slides of this country.

Chile is a narrow strip of land about 2,000 miles long on the west coast of South America. Since the end of the military regime in 1980 it has grown and prospered. There is now mineral mining and people are more relaxed with their freer life and students have been rebelling against university fees! The country is prone to volcanoes and earthquakes. The Atacama Desert is the driest place on the planet with many volcanoes and salt flats as the desert used to be under the sea. The salt has been blown by wind into different shapes and with the volcanoes this is spectacular scenery creating a moonlike surface, a photographer's dream. It has even been used to practise real moon landings! Some wildlife still manages to live here such as rabbits, flamingos, sea gulls and small wading birds. Volcanoes force up water supplying just enough moisture to support these creatures. Punta Arenas is the capital city of south Chile and has a varied history with sheep farming and a gold rush. Its position made it strategically important for steamships stopping for coal as they passed from the Atlantic the Pacific oceans and is popular today for tourists and cruises. Altogether a most fascinating and varied country to visit.

NORTHWEST LONDON WI by Pat West

Behind the Scenes at Wolf Hall. We were thrilled to welcome Bafta award winning cinematographer, Gavin Finney to our February meeting of the Northwest London WI at the Queen's

Park Alice House. Gavin has worked as the director of photography on numerous feature films and television projects and he spoke about his job in general and about his work on the recent television adaptation of Hilary Mantel's Wolf Hall for BBC2. We learned about how it is the director of photography's responsibility to interpret the director's aesthetic vision and

Gavin explained how on Wolf Hall, the director Peter Kosminsky looked to paintings from the time of Henry VIII for inspiration. He wanted to bring the art of Hans Holbein and his contemporaries to life and did this by filming exclusively on location and by authentically recreating the costumes and lighting of the Tudor period. To help recreate period paintings, the director insisted that candles only were used for lighting interior scenes at night and Gavin talked about the challenges of working in historic houses, some still private homes in the same family ownership as in the time of Henry VIII. He spoke about working in the dark, about the risks of open flame and about the added challenges the actors faced wearing bulky period costumes. Gavin also explained about the various roles of his crew and about the process of making a film. We saw many behind the scenes photos of Gavin working and he explained about the various equipment he used to achieve specific shots.

He also showed us a selection of clips from Wolf Hall and explained the director's objectives and about how these objectives were technically realised. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed Gavin's talk, and lively question and answer session following, and the insight it gave us on the making of Wolf Hall. We were fortunate to have a great speaker treat us to a talk on such a fascinating and timely subject.



RUISLIP EVENING WI

In March we had a brilliant speaker in the guise of Philip Ian Wright, the Mad Hatter. Part of a family business since 1889, Ian is keeping the tradition of hat manufacturing going. Armed with many hats he demonstrated how they get created and how the different styles can be worn in many different ways to achieve the desired look. Members got to try on most of the hats Ian brought with him. A fascinating talk with not a single fascinator in sight!



This was our Birthday meeting and a gorgeous cake was made and decorated by Linda Shinton in the theme of our evening – A Mad Hatters Tea Party. I think everyone will agree that the cake was amazing. Some of the members made hats which was judged and complimented by Ian and a some of the committee dressed for the occasion in full outfits, a couple of them being Alice in wonderland and a wonderful white bunny!

The Poppy Factory: We can highly recommend a visit to the Poppy Factory near Richmond Bridge! After WW1, Major General Howson MC, was so appalled at the plight of disabled servicemen that he decided to try and give them employment. He wrote in 1921 'I have been given a cheque for £2000 to make poppies with. It is a large responsibility and will be very difficult. If the experiment is successful, it will be the start of an industry to employ 150 men. I do not think it can be a great success, but it is worth trying. I consider the attempt ought to be made if only to give the disabled their chance'. Machines were invented that can be operated by a man using one arm only, and we saw the whole process from cutting out the shapes in paper and silk to the assembly of poppies and wreaths. Both men and women are now employed there. We each made a poppy, which we could keep, using one hand only and the other being held behind our backs. There was no charge for the hour and a half talk and tour but we all made a donation.

Jonathan Fryer kept us entertained at our March meeting where we welcomed another new member. It was also Win Coveney's 90th Birthday and we celebrated by presenting her with cards, a gift and a beautiful cake. Win treated the committee to lunch at the Plough, Norwood Green, which coincided with their fundraising event for Comic Relief. It was a cold day and the roaring log fire was most welcome.

We enjoyed afternoon tea at the Pillars Restaurant in Ealing run by the students of the catering college at Thames Valley University. The sandwiches and homemade scones with jam and clotted cream were delicious, but there were so many cakes that half of us could not eat them all! Fortunately doggy bags were provided so everyone was happy.
Please don't ask which of us managed to eat four extra cakes!



STOW ROSES - INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Well done Stow Roses for taking part in such a great community event. This was part of the Waltham Forest IWD event at the Walthamstow Assembly Hall. If anyone is interested in helping out at future event (and volunteers are needed!) please contact your committee.



What my WI Means to Me
by Lynette Salmon, Sunbury on Thames WI

Near thirty-four years since we first met together
The ladies of Sunbury making a start
On every fourth Thursday, whatever the weather
To make lots of friends in a group with a heart.

Our WI has been steadily growing
With care for each other, and laughter to share
We learn from each other, our expertise showing
In newly learned knowledge and skills that weren't there.

A wide range of ages expands our horizon
A visit to Denman is something to prize
With wonderful teachers to open our eyes on
The skills we can learn, for the rest of our lives.

So do come and join us, your life will expand
With interesting speakers on subjects so wide
An outings, and lunches and being together
You'll never regret it, with friends by your side.

What's a Girl Like You Doing in a Place Like That?
by Jodie Major, Shoreditch Sisters WI

Jam, Jerusalem, he said,
The arbiter of Women
Dismissed in clean, white sugar
Silence.

And my own lips reply
With a voice two-hundred thousand deep
In laughter.

A sound that speaks
We are not that sweet.
Battle cries from marches
Through and for the darkness.
Sparring: exchanging words as covered blades
Clear, sharp, bright
Glasses raised.
The hand outstretched
And taken.
And it speaks of itself:
Laughter, unrestrained.

What my WI Means to Me
by Jean Lintott, Stanwell WI

As I walked past the Village Hall the doors were open wide.
'Twas a warm summer evening and the ladies were inside.

I climbed the steps to have a peep to see that I could spy,
And there they sat all having fun, the 'girls' from the WI.

That was when it dawned on me what I was missing too.
I needed to belong to this so that was what I'd do.

I joined as soon as I was able. They made me feel at home.
Everyone was so kind – I never felt alone.

We do so many things together, with speakers, trips and crafts.
We have a busy programme but there's always time for laughs.

In times of need we're always there to help in any way.
To cook, to clean, to shop, to sew or even just to pray.

It's not a group of ladies who gather just for fun.
It's a 'family' of friends who almost think as one.

My WI is my best friend, my 'island' in the sea,
So please don't part the two of us – my WI and me.

KNITTING & STITCHING SHOW – OLYMPIA

This was four days of meeting amazing people from all over the south of England, both WI members popping over to say hello and others just wanting to know more about what we do and how to join.

It was a pleasure chatting and telling people about our WIs in Middlesex, WIs in general and promoting Denman all the time whilst doing something to keep the hands occupied and instigating conversation from those that were maybe a little shy.

I had some members give me items to display which always creates conversation and stories to be told and listened to, especially with the old patterns used for some of the items – it is good to share our experience and knowledge at events like this.

In the event of us being asked to attend the Autumn Show, I shall be asking again for items to be used for display on the stand – more on that later in the year.

BATON CUSHION COMPETITION – by Lorraine Reed



Many congratulations to Thorney Starlets WI who won this MFWI competition followed closely by Harlington WI. This was such a close run affair as all entrants were within 3 points of each other!! The cushions were all of different styles utilising many techniques, impressing the judges very much, as a lot of thought had gone into each cushion. Well done everyone!

To be honest, I am so pleased we got as many entries as we did as craft at County level has been non-existent for far too long and was worried that people would not enter. I need not have worried and am happy that the response means that County Craft has returned and I hear that members are looking forward to more competitions in the future. Long may it continue. Lx