



Cog in the Tree

West Midlands Federation of Women's Institutes

November 2020

A Year for Change

October is the month for change in WMFWI. Our Annual meeting at Carr's Lane may have been cancelled but federation business continues. We now have a new Chairman, Treasurer, and Vice Chairmen. We also have five new trustees on the board.

With Covid causing issues for all WI's countrywide, physical meetings are not possible presently and so new ways of connecting with members are needed. WMFWI are exploring new digital formats to get news, events, and activities to all members.

Many Thanks to Kim Slivinski who has produced the Cog newsletter for many years and has now handed the baton to Claire Woodland.

One of the first changes you will notice is our vibrant new Cog in the Tree Newsletter. The cog will be available via email, social media and website, and as always printed versions are available via personal post.

The next change you will see is that all sub-groups have been re-named to reflect the remit of each committee:

- Sport & Leisure – Leisure & Wellbeing,
- Science & Public Affairs – Public Affairs,
- Music & Drama – Entertainment,
- Digital Group – Media,
- Specialised Crafts - Crafts



A painting sent from Silhill WI along with other lockdown projects their members have completed. See page 2.

Fungus by Julie Thomas

Hawne Knit and Natter Group have been busy knitting poppies for Remembrance Sunday. Niki Jones used them to create the beautiful wreaths in the photographs. These were laid at the weekend outside St Johns Church in Halesowen, and made up part of a stunning display of poppy wreaths.



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Valerie Daggart Competition 2020 Winners

1st Place

Dorothy Shaw,
Knowle

2nd Place

Elizabeth Knight,
Erdington Carnegie

3rd Place

Carole Handley,
Erdington Carnegie



Over To you

Silhill ladies have kept up their spirits during the pandemic by keeping busy. Doing quizzes, still knitting, jumpers for the family and squares for blankets which are made up for the Linus Project, doing jigsaws, making cards, tapestries, paintings, and drawings, writing stories and poems. Photos of the work and the texts are sent out by email for the other members to enjoy.

I am also attaching two drawings from Lyn Ford showing life as it has been lately, two drawings from Anne Glover, a painting by Julie Thomas (front cover ed.), Lynn Boothman's jigsaw and the start of her cross-stitch, Cathy Marshall's tapestry (she is also a prolific jigsawer) and Fern Whitehead's jumper, beautifully modelled by her grandson.

I also have to mention Hala Cubbon who provides us with a quiz every week to keep our brains working.

Heather Lewis, Silhill WI



Chairman's Address

Hello all WI members,

Just when we were thinking that there was light at the end of the tunnel, it really did turn out to be the proverbial oncoming train and here we are, back in lockdown, with no chance of meeting and Christmas looking rather grim!



Still, we are WI and we will no doubt cope.

On a more cheerful note, I have been greatly heartened by the lovely cards, letters and e-mails I have received wishing me success as your Chairman and I would like to say a big thank you to everyone who has been so kind.

November is not my favourite month and I used to hate having to do both of my journeys to and from school in the dark. Now that I am retired, I love the luxury of not having to get up until it is light and, particularly, not having to de-ice the car before venturing out unless I am called upon to take my two nearest grandchildren to school, a task that I cannot of course do at the moment. My eldest grandson Sam, who is 10 and who lives near Nottingham has begun facetimeing me regularly to supervise his piano practice as, apparently, I am more patient than his father! We are beginning to play duets together via our laptops though I must say that my rhythmic timekeeping is rather better rather better than his at the moment!

It is a joy to be able to share these moments although nothing makes up for not being able to see our families for real and give them hugs.

The recent fine weather has been a bonus and I have been busy in my garden planting bulbs, pruning back the perennials, raking leaves (my neighbours have ash trees which shed copiously onto my lawn) and giving the lawn its final mowing of the year I even managed to put the washing on the line and was pleased to find it dry enough to iron without having to use the tumble drier or drape it over the radiators.

It has also been a pleasure to go for walks in the sunshine even though I am following well-beaten routes that I have now been doing regularly for the past 9 months. I try to fool myself into believing that the exercise will burn off the cake or biscuits that accompany elevenses but the scales tell me otherwise.

I am sure that you are all keeping busy in the time honoured WI ways of jam making, knitting, sewing and singing Jerusalem as you wash your hands yet again.

I wish you all well and trust that you are keeping safe from this wretched virus.

Lynn

NO MORE

violence against women

This autumn members are being encouraged to take action to end the scourge of violence against women by pledging to take part in

16 days of action from 25 November to 10 December 2020. To find out more, visit thewi.org.uk The ACWW also has a comprehensive action plan, 'Orange the World' acww.org.uk

For the year ending March 2019, an estimated 1.6 million women across the UK experienced violence, including domestic violence, rape, forced marriage, sexual exploitation and other forms of abuse and harassment.

Violence against women in the UK is still widespread and further action on the part of Government is needed, which is why the WI is continuing to call for action to ensure the UK ratifies the Istanbul Convention.

How you can get involved. There is plenty of information to help on the wi.org.uk under Campaigns.

1. You can read more about how to get involved using our **campaign action pack**.
2. Take part in the 16 days of Action. You can find lots of guidance and resources to help you plan your events.
3. You could show the presentations if you are holding a Zoom meeting.
4. You can use our letter template to write to your MP and ask them to urge the UK government to ratify the Istanbul Convention. Email pa@nfwf.org.uk to obtain your copy.

theWI
INSPIRING WOMEN

NO MORE
violence against women

16 DAYS OF ACTION TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN:
25 November - 10 December

Attend the Supporting Survivors Webinar on 1st December
Register your interest here: thewi.org.uk/16dayswebinar

- 1 Set up a donation drive & produce care packages for your local women's refuge
- 2 Take part in a fundraising event to raise money for your local women's refuge
- 3 Arrange a socially distanced candlelight vigil in your community, or take part at home
- 4 Take part in White Ribbon Day with your local community



#ShowTheLove

It is time to start planning how your WI will mark **Show the Love 2021** on 14 February. We so often find that after all the excitement of Christmas, February is upon us before we know it, but this time we will have time to plan ahead if we get started now. 2021 will be a positive year for Climate Change with the rescheduled COP26 in Glasgow and the Post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework and good news to hear that the USA will be supporting these initiatives.

How you can get involved

1. Sign up for a **Community Climate Action resource pack**. This pack has everything you need to get ready for COP26, including information about The Climate Coalition's 'community declaration.'
2. Members who would like to be more formally involved in the WI's environmental campaigns may wish to consider getting involved with the **WI's Climate Ambassador scheme**.
3. Keep up to date on our climate campaigns by subscribing to the **PA Digest online**.

Resolutions

This years long list of Resolutions was discussed via a Zoom Meeting attended by representatives of all Federations within the NFWI After a lengthy informative discussion, followed by voting, a short list of five Resolutions were chosen. Now it is your turn to have your say. The Resolutions can be found on My WI website, and will also appear in this months edition of WI Life, along with voting slips. It is important that you read all about the Resolutions that have been selected and vote for just ONE of them. When you have chosen the Resolution you wish to support please ensure that you send your voting slip to your Secretary before January 18th 2021, alternatively you can contact your Secretary to register your vote either by telephone or Email, she will then send the results to Federation. They will then be collated, and the results must be received by NFWI by January 25th 2021. Any votes received after this date will be invalid. This has been a difficult year for everyone but NFWI, WM Federation Board of Trustees and your own WI Committees have been working hard to keep going under what have been unprecedented circumstances. Your vote is important and every vote counts, it will enable the WI to select another worthwhile Campaign to adopt and support.

Cathryn Marsh, Resolutions Officer & Vice Chair

Contact Liz Galloway Vice Chair of WMFWI & Chair of Public Affairs at liz.galloway@hotmail.com

Crafts

About a year ago we launched the Trustees Challenge to make Beads of Courage Bags for children suffering with cancer, then Covid struck, and I must admit that the challenge got somehow pushed to the background as the committee struggled to make sense of the craft workshops that we had organised, if they were going to happen. Members have got on with the challenge making bags, traffic light baby hats and twiddle muffs. I haven't counted everything up yet. I am still getting requests from WI's for collection to date I must thank Meriden, Solihull, Great Barr, Aldridge, Four Oaks and Mere Green for their donations.

Debbie Arkinstall

Denman

West Midlands bedroom has been cleared. Furniture has been donated to Abingdon Women's Refuge. Federation belongings and crafted items are safely in our storage facility.



Christmas Tree Bunting



Materials – Oddments of Double Knitting yarn in various colours, pair of 3.5mm (size10) needles, beads etc to decorate

Method – garter stich. Cast on 21 sts, knit 1 row.

Dec Row – knit 1, knit 2 tog, knit to last 3 sts, knit 2 tog, knit 1.

Knit 5 rows. Repeat these 6 rows 5 times more, then work dec row again, 7 sts left. Knit 1 row.

Next row Knit 1, knit 2 tog, knit 1, knit 2 tog, knit 1 – 5sts. Knit 1 row.

Next row Knit 1, slip 2 tog, knit 1, pssso, knit 1 – 3sts. Knit 1 row.

Next row slip 2 tog, knit 1, pssso, fasten off.

Trunk

With right side facing, pick up and knit 5 sts across centre of the cast on edge. Knit 6 rows, then cast off. Stitch in ends. Decorate.

If you have craft items for collection contact Debbie Arkinstall 0121 382 7401 email arkinstall.mama@outlook.com alternatively drop offs can be made to Country markets by prior arrangement.

Montgomery Shield

The outgoing Chairman Iris Montgomery has kindly donated a shield to the federation trophy cabinet. An annual competition will be held for Best in Craft to be awarded at the Federation Annual Meeting each year.



2021 members are invited to design and make A Thistle

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

Writing Competitions

Lady Denman entries for 2020 have been forwarded to the judges, we are waiting for the results

See Valerie Daggart Winners on the front page.

Denman at Home

With Denman's doors closed currently due to covid it would be easy to think there is nothing going on. If you have access to the internet you can participate in dozens of courses, demos, craft-alongs, and talks via zoom.

Visit Denman website for details. Denman.org.uk



Perfect for Autumn lockdown walks, gather various shapes and sizes of pinecones.

You will need: pinecones, decorative tray, candles, spray paint to match your décor.



Spray lightly, outdoors in a box, let some of the natural colour show through. Let dry then arrange on tray.

Trustees Trophy 2020 – Table Runner

Closing date has been extended until 31st January. Judging will take place during February

Winners will be informed by post and receive postal certificates as we cannot meet to pass out awards.

Entertainment

Music & Drama has become Entertainment. Julie Afridi Martin is the new Committee Chair. Julie is unwell so please join us in wishing her a very speedy recovery.

Before her illness Julie had organized a proposed visit to Buxton Opera House in Derbyshire to see H.M.S. Pinafore as part of the Gilbert and Sullivan Festival.



Tickets will cost approximately £35-40 including return coach fare. Easy access seating in the stalls for a matinee performance on Wednesday 4th August 2021.

For information contact Lynn Smith who is stepping in for Julie until her return. Lynsmith@blueyonder.co.uk

A Lockdown Poem – Author Unknown

I won't arise and go now, and go to Innisfree
I'll sanitise the doorknob and make a cup of tea.
I won't go down to the sea again; I won't go out at all,
I'll wander lonely as a cloud from the kitchen to the hall.
There's a green-eyed yellow monster to the north of Kathmandu
But I shan't be seeing him just yet and nor, I think will you.
While the dawn comes up like thunder on the road to Mandalay
I'll make my bit of supper and eat it off a tray.
I shall not speed my bonnie boat across the sea to Skye,
Or take the rolling English road from Birmingham to Rye.
About the woodland, just right now, I am not free to go
To see the Keep Out posters or the cherry hung with snow.
And no, I won't be travelling much, within the realms of gold,
Or get me to Milford Haven. All that's been put on hold.
Give me your hands, I shan't request, albeit we are friends
Nor come within a mile of you, until this virus ends.

Dates for your Diary 2021

09.03.2021	WMFWI Annual Business Meeting
19.04.2021	NFWI Annual Meeting - Royal Albert Hall
04.06.2021	Federation Quiz – Shirley Community Centre
29.06.2021	Birthday Tea – Birmingham Botanical Gardens
08.07.2021	Poisons in Literature – BMI
04.08.2021	HMS Pinafore – Buxton Opera House
19.08.2021	John's Garden Visit – Ashwood Nurseries
09.09.2021	ACWW Walk – Barston Lake
21.09.2021	Let's Get Digital Workshop - BMI
12.10.2021	WMFWI Annual Meeting – Carr's Lane
04.12.2021	Carol Service – St Martin's in the Bullring

Leisure & Wellbeing



Autumn

The nights are drawing in and the air is getting cold,
The sunsets are changing from yellow to gold.
The hedgehogs are preparing for their long winter's sleep,
Whilst squirrels are busy searching for acorns to keep.
The leaves are tumbling to the ground,
With a riot of colour red, gold, and brown!
It's time to think about jumpers and keeping warm toes,
Scarf and gloves at the ready for when the wind blows.
Light a log fire so it's flames burn bright,
While you sip a hot chocolate on a cold autumn night.
The seasons maybe changing but WI is always here,
To provide a warm welcome whatever the time of year.



Puzzle Page

Say what you see

<u>STAND</u> I	R R O A D A D	CYCLE CYCLE CYCLE	ALL 
C L A S S	THORN ROSE THORN	Peace EARTH	RIGHT RIGHT WRONG
1 AGE 2 BEAUTY	MILL 1 ON	POLE 	D O D O U B L E B L E
MR MR 	DOG  DOG	M E A L E A A E L A E M	<u>ARREST</u> <u>YOU'RE</u>

AUTUMN WORDSEARCH

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

Acorn, Autumn, Chill,
Cobwebs, Conker,
Dewdrop, Field, Fireside,
Foraging, Frost, Gloves,
Golden, Leaves, Mittens,
Puddles, Rainy, Scarf,
Snow, Splash, Sunshine,
Tree, Warmth, Weather,
Wellingtons, Wet



Answers in December Newsletter!

Riddle me this

There is a word in the English language in which the first two letters signify a male, the first three letters signify a female, the first four letters signify a great man, and the whole word is a great woman. What is the word?

Which three letters can frighten a thief away?

What starts with a T, ends with a T, and has T in it?

Until I am measured, I am not known. Yet how you miss me when I have flown. What am I?

Take one out and scratch my head, I am black but once was red. What am I?

Often held but never touched, always wet but never rusts, often bites but seldom bit, to use me well you must have wit. What am I?

Personal Post

To receive all federation mailings including the Newsletter printed and posted directly through your letterbox. Please send your name and address along with a cheque made payable to WMFWI £11 for the year. No later than 11th December.

Judy Massam 38, Ebrington Avenue, Solihull B92 8HX

We want to hear from you. Send us your WI news, photographs, stories, events, and activities. Contact the Media Team at WMFWI.media@gmail.com

WMFWI, 50 Station Road, Kings Norton, B30 1DA

0121 694 4201 Lynnsmith@blueyonder.co.uk

CHARITY NUMBER 1012552

REG.COMPANY NO. 2723008