



### CHAIR'S CHAT

with Lorraine  
Reed-Wenman

Happy New Year to you all. I hope that despite the challenges many of you have and are facing, you managed to get some time with your families and loved ones over the Christmas break.

Reviewing the past year, I was mulling over different

types of events which all seem to revolve around many Zoom meetings and Skype calls. So many that I do not know where to start. At Federation level, we have had a lot of highs and lows, just as I am sure you have in your own lives. The Trustees have been keeping the home fires burning during this time, for which I am very grateful.

We have learnt to hold virtual meetings, to craft online, listen to talks remotely, watch demonstrations and enjoy the company of fellow members including some from other Federations within the member and craft chats. Some of you have even broadened your knowledge of the WI during these sessions, and hopefully the knowledge and understanding gained can be shared and enrich your own WIs when you get back to meeting up again.

Well done to all who have kept everything going. I have set up more member chats for the coming months: see page 7 for details. Please join us if you can: nothing formal, just a chat—as the saying goes, 'it's good to talk'.

It seems that we may have a long year ahead of us as we start to manage living with coronavirus in its various forms, which in turn, will have an effect on the coming year of our Centenary plans. Sadly, we are not able to firm up anything until the rules are relaxed enough to be able to put activities into the diary (see page 7 and meet my little helpers).

I am keeping fingers and toes crossed that we are able to celebrate around the county and of course we will be needing your participation and support to do so. There was a list of ideas circulated to everyone earlier this year but if anyone has any other ideas that can be shared, please do let us know—the more the merrier.

Can I remind you all that we need the very important resolution votes, as listed below, into MFWI by 18<sup>th</sup> January via either [secretary@mfwl.org.uk](mailto:secretary@mfwl.org.uk) or [chair@mfwl.org.uk](mailto:chair@mfwl.org.uk) emails. If anyone wishes to vote and has not had the opportunity to do it via their own WI, please email us directly with your personal choice and we will collate the results and inform your WIs for you.

Lastly, I hope that 2021 brings you all some semblance of normality with meetings to attend, events to organise and enjoy, and most of all as much good health as is possible.

Stay safe, keep well and I look forward to seeing you all at some point during the next 12-15 months.

*Lorraine x*

### CENTENARY COMPETITION

*Calling all budding  
artists and designers.*

As you know, we are fast approaching our **Federation Centenary In 2021**, we have decided to produce a personalised item to celebrate. For this we need a little help with the design of our very own tote bags!

The design needs to have a WI theme, contain the Federation badge (PNG file is attached) and be as fabulous as the Middlesex Federation is.

Closing date for Submissions is **Sunday 31 January 2021**. Please send entries to: [michellegordon@mfwl.org.uk](mailto:michellegordon@mfwl.org.uk).

### SHOW THE LOVE FEBRUARY 2021

Climate Coalition Show the Love 2021 resources are now available on MyWI. To remind you all, it runs from 1-21 February 2021, there are many resources to be found on MyWI or AT

<https://www.theclimatecoalition.org/resource>



### 2021 RESOLUTIONS

A reminder that votes for the shortlisted 2021 resolutions are due to be submitted to Middlesex Federation by **18 January**. Visit *MyWI* for briefing notes and quizzes on all the shortlisted resolutions:

1. A call to increase awareness of the subtle signs of ovarian cancer
2. Now's the time to Act! Protect your nature space to create wildlife-friendly communities
3. Racism and Discrimination
4. Stop women dying prematurely from coronary heart disease (CHD)!
5. Stop the destruction of peat bogs to tackle climate change

# IN BRIEF

## WI BIRTHDAYS



**No WIs celebrate their birthdays in January.**

*Fair enough, we think...  
we're all recovering from the festive period!*



## HUXLEY CUP

The NFWI's annual horticultural competition is back with a twist in 2021. WIs are invited to design a planting plan for a raised 3m x 3m bed that will be displayed within the Community Allotment area at the RHS Hampton Court Palace Garden Festival, 5–11 July 2021.

Entries must reflect both the Festival themes and the vision statements of the WI: Bold and Inspiring, Growing and Relevant Inclusive, Flexible.

The deadline for entries is **30 April 2021**.

For more information, contact your Secretary.

**RHS  
HAMPTON  
COURT PALACE  
GARDEN FESTIVAL**

## 200+ CLUB

### NOVEMBER 2020 WINNERS

Congratulations to the winners of our November 2020 **200+ Club** draw!

**1st prize - £35**

Stanwell WI

**2nd prize - £20**

Jules Hall, Sunbury on Thames

**3rd prize - £15**

Michelle Gordon,  
N1 & Shoreditch Sisters

### MIDDLESEX NEWS NEEDS YOU!

Please send articles (maximum 150 words please) and photos to [newsletter@mfwi.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@mfwi.org.uk) in a Word-compatible format before the end of the month prior. Please note that articles received after this date will unlikely be included due to production deadlines.

### Printed copies?

The cost of the printed newsletter for 2021 will be £12.00 for 12 copies starting in April 2021. January, February and March 2021 copies will be free of charge to those currently receiving paid copies. An order form for 2021 will be coming your way nearer the time.

WIs will no longer be sent a free printed copy in 2021 in order to be a little more eco-friendly and to reduce costs.

As always, a soft copy (PDF) will be sent to all officers and members with an email address, to pass on, at no charge.

*The newsletter is also available, as always, on the MFWI website. You are free to print and distribute copies to your members/community as you wish.*

**Need to send us a cheque while the office is closed?**

*Please email Sarah Endersby for an alternative postal address.*

## GET IN TOUCH

### COUNTY OFFICE

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**Email:** [secretary@mfwi.org.uk](mailto:secretary@mfwi.org.uk)

**Due to the coronavirus situation, the MFWI office is currently closed.  
The best way to get in touch with us is email.**

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# AROUND THE WIS

## BEDFONT BELLES

Jenny Hanrahan

Who would have thought at our quiz in March that things would change so much?

Thanks to the easing of restrictions we managed a socially distanced garden party in Jennie Lowe's garden in August. Delicious cake made by Sandra, cups of tea, a raffle



and lots of catching up made for a lovely afternoon.

We managed one meeting in the British Legion hall in September, with tables and chairs distanced, hand sanitiser provided and drinks from the bar which helped our brains with a very tricky quiz once again organised by Margaret and Chris.

November 13th should have been our 6th birthday party. Instead, we celebrated in our homes thanks to our committee organising and delivering party bags with cake, candle, balloon and party poppers, all delivered with social distancing and friendship and a request to celebrate together at 7:30 pm.



## STANWELL

Marilyn Rix

During November lockdown, Stanwell WI President Mary Jeffery thought of an idea to create Christmas goody bags for the members.

Christmas cards for every member were made by Vice president Tracey Mercer, along with either a word search, small quiz, or mind teasers. Chocolates, small bottle of wine, biscuits, soap and shower gel were all included in the festive bag.

Every member received a newsletter asking them to post their Christmas



cards they would like to give to other members through the letter box of the Village hall. Those who could not get out for various reasons were collected by one of the committee.

A few of the committee (Mary Jeffery and Tracy Mercer are pictured) packed the goody bags along with the Christmas cards provided by members and hand delivered to every member first week of December.

It was great to see how well those festive bags were received and the smile on members faces, after a month of lockdown.

# AROUND THE WIS

## SUNBURY ON THAMES

Gerry Attias

In September at our Zoom meeting we were very lucky to have speaker Erin Pizzey, founder of the Woman's Refuge, then known as Chiswick Woman's Aid, in 1971. She gave an extremely interesting talk on starting the first and currently the largest domestic violence shelter for women in the world. She explained how she battled with local and national officials to get a property for the refuge.

She also mentioned when a hotel in Richmond closed and the security guard left for the evening, Erin a number of women and children moved in and squatted there. The locals helped them, supplying numerous essential items.

She discussed the myth that only women are the victims of domestic violence, and explained that men also experience domestic abuse.

Lorraine Reed-Wenman, MFWI Chair, also joined us at our September meeting. She mentioned her trip to Denman College with Angela Chessman to collect



the items from the Middlesex Room. It was an extremely emotional trip for both of them, especially saying goodbye to the staff. The furniture from the room is been given to a local charity.

At our October Zoom meeting we had speaker Rupert Matthews who spoke to us about 'Jane Austen and the Military'. Jane Austen was writing during the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. He spoke in depth on her books including *Pride and Prejudice*, Colonel Fitzwilliam and the cad Mr. Wickham

becoming a lieutenant. In *Mansfield Park*, young William Price became a lieutenant in the Royal Navy. In *Persuasion*, Captain Frederick Wentworth became wealthy after his ship captured enemy ships. Also Admiral Croft is said to have fought in the Battle of Trafalgar. He told us how much it cost them to purchase their rank and the exam they had to take. All very interesting!



## LALEHAM

Chris Walker

Following on from the success of their 85th birthday treats, Laleham WI brought a bit of Christmas cheer to members by distributing festive goody bags to all. They were much appreciated and hopefully provided a bit of cheer in the run up to a very different Christmas for all of us.

Bags included lovely Christmas plants (either cactus or poinsettia), a crafting item to make Christmas cards, pastry cutters, cakes and quizzes. Bags were made up by Helen Hurst (President) and Anne Furst (Treasurer) and then distributed to the members houses by several other members of the committee.



Featured in the Rudolph head gear is me on the distribution run, while on her doorstep is member Elaine Windmill receiving her goody bag.



# AROUND THE WIS

## NORTH-WEST LONDON

Louise Dryden

In November 2020 we celebrated our group's 13<sup>th</sup> anniversary, this year in very different circumstances.

We established *Wednesday night is WI night* for our members, with three or four Zoom meetings each month.

We have organised a number of outdoor events, including socially distanced picnics and walks, enjoying the freedom to chat face-to-face away from home.

Our WhatsApp groups have also encouraged lively dialogue sharing thoughts, ideas and photos. In this way, we have managed to keep all our members engaged in a manner that suits them individually.

We have listened to speakers on 'Ditching Plastic' and Jewish food and cooked along during a virtual choux pastry demonstration by one of our members. We read books as diverse as non-fiction *Wilding* and a detective novel, both provoking lively discussions. Our craft group has designed a new logo for the Middlesex banner, currently being embroidered by one of our talented members.

### Where have you been?

We'd love to see photos of how creative you've been with socially distanced meet-ups (when they've been allowed).

Love this great use of public art in a beautiful autumnal setting!



Buying a Denman At Home Gift Experience e-voucher is the gift that gives access to Denman's new online adventures from the comfort of your home. From cookery courses and craft demos to history lessons and fun activities for all the family, a new online adventure awaits.

To purchase, go to the Denman website.

## OFFICERS TRAINING

We will be holding two sessions for new officers, and those existing officers who would like a refresher.

They are also open to any member considering standing for office, and who would like to get a feel for the role, its responsibilities and some of the resources and tools available to assist.

Each sessions will be held via Zoom and will be around two hours long.

To book a place, please email [sarahendersby@mfwi.org.uk](mailto:sarahendersby@mfwi.org.uk)

## Presidents & Secretaries

**10.30, Saturday 20 February**  
[Zoom link](#)

Meeting ID: 878 9892 8919

Passcode: 181973

## Treasurers

**10.00, Saturday 23 January**  
[Zoom link](#)

Meeting ID: 871 7104 7805

Passcode: 395457

# PUBLIC AFFAIRS

## BEE FRIENDLY GARDENS

Sarah Wilson

January is often the quietest month in the garden, so what better time to curl up in a nice warm comfy chair to browse through and plan your new garden or window box. Spare a thought for the plight of our bees: in Britain alone, one third of bee species have disappeared since 1980.

'If bees became extinct tomorrow, we wouldn't be far behind,' said Einstein. One-third of all food is down to



Photo: Sarah Wilson, Harlington

pollinating insects, so it's about our own survival. Bees are crucial for pollinating our crops to make them grow, but habitat loss, climate change, pesticides and disease are causing a worrying decline in their numbers.

The more bee-friendly flowers you can grow in your garden or window-box, the better. A bee will probably fly for 40 minutes non-stop, then it needs to stock up with energy and get back to its nest. Planting bee-friendly plants will be a step towards a positive change in improving the bee population.



Photo: Anna East, Harlington

Choose single, open flowers where you can see the central part of the flower – where the bees can access the nectar and pollen. Different bees are active at different times of the year. Some emerge from hibernation as early as February, while others are still flying in November.

To give bees the best possible chance to thrive, it's therefore important to grow flowers from late winter to autumn – all year round if possible.

In 2009, the WI launched a campaign calling for research on honeybee decline, and since then, WI members have campaigned about bees locally and nationally. Bee-friendly resources are available from the WI website and MyWI.

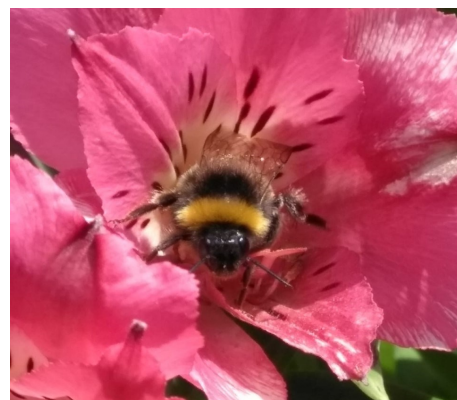


Photo: Yve McBride, Hayes Town

### Best spring flowers

Bluebell  
Bugle  
Crab apple  
Crocus  
Flowering cherry  
Flowering currant  
Forget-me-not  
Hawthorn  
Primrose  
Pulmonaria  
Rosemary

### Best early summer flowers

Campanula  
Comfrey  
Delphinium  
Foxglove  
Hardy geranium  
Honesty  
Hollyhock  
Potentilla  
Snapdragon  
Stachys  
Thyme  
Verbascum

### Best late summer flowers

Aster  
Buddleia  
Cornflower  
Dahlia (single-flowered)  
Eryngium  
Globe thistle  
Heather  
Ivy  
Lavender  
Penstemon  
Scabious  
Sedum  
Verbena bonariensis

# MEWI CENTENARY

We are  
100

## ANNUAL MEETING: SAVE THE DATE

Due to the current situation with the coronavirus pandemic and the uncertainty of restrictions on gatherings, we have only been able to provisionally book a date which we are asking you to save in your diary.

The meeting is planned to take place on **Tuesday 18 May 2021** at the **Royal Geographic Society** in South Kensington, near the Royal Albert Hall.

It will be an all day event and we will confirm the date and details as soon as possible.

## MEET OUR CENTENARY DOLLS!

Lorraine Reed-Wenman

6 April 2021 is the start of the MFWI Centenary year. We may be a small Federation that spans a large area, but we can celebrate with passion and enthusiasm whether you are a relatively young WI or a well-established one, we

all have something to be proud of as an organisation.

Welcome to Lorraine's little helpers (L-R) Millie, Mollie, Mandie. The three will be on tour throughout the Federation during our centenary year. Keep an eye out for them as they may pop in to see you before returning to their home in my house.



# KEEPING IN TOUCH

## MEMBER CHATS

*Join members from across the Federation (and some of our Trustees) for a chat.*

**Sunday 10 January 17:00**

Meeting ID: 832 0112 3918

Passcode: 648822

**Wednesday 27 January 19:30**

Meeting ID: 895 6927 1537

Passcode: 034983

**Sunday 21 February 17:00**

Meeting ID: 843 5730 8545

Passcode: 131656

**Thursday 25 February 19:30**

Meeting ID: 873 8351 4667

Passcode: 960683

**Wednesday 10 March 19:30**

Meeting ID: 874 3875 3809

Passcode: 909592

## CRAFTY POP-INS

*Bring your craft projects and chat, or just come and chat about crafts.*

We'll continue to meet online while we must, however we will continue to review restrictions as they change

**13:00, first Thursday of the month**

**7 January**

**4 February**

**4 March**

[Zoom link](#)

Meeting ID: 811 2236 0354

Passcode: 050524

## CRAFT INN

*A weekly craft get-together on a Monday, hosted by members of the MFWI Craft Committee.*

*Bring along your unfinished objects (UFOs) or your current project to craft and chat, maybe bring along a glass, cup or mug of something...*

**Every Monday**

**19:30**

5 Meeting ID: 816 8394 4835

Passcode: 859741

# CRAFTS

## SUNBURY ON THAMES CRAFTS: MARY DAWKINS

Gerry Attias

The following craft work has been done by Mary Dawkins, a member of Sunbury on Thames WI.

The Painting of the ships and boats is 4 x 3 feet in size and has taken several years to complete, and in this time Mary has had three new knees and a broken leg. Members will recognise some of the craft: top right Royal Yacht *Britannia*, top middle *Southern Comfort* on the Broads, second from right an Isle of Wight Ferry. Third row second from left the boat that goes from Brownsea Island (where the red squirrels live) to Poole Harbour. The



majority of these have been painted from photographs taken by Mary. Mary and her husband Ray have seen all these wonderful vessels and have many happy memories tied up with this wonderful painting.

For the patchwork and applique quilt, much of the fabric was gifts from friends, a bit was a remnant, and the rest were bits and pieces she had around the house. Mary thinks the quilt cost her about £15: a real thrift craft, but very beautiful.

Two cloth piggies look splendid! Finally, Rosie bear Dawkins was made from felt that Mary already had and some dolls house fabric she has had for almost fifteen years.

Mary is a very gifted craft and she has suffered many health problems over the years without complaint.

## FINCHLEY: KEEPING THEIR COMMUNITY WARM

Rita Gupta

Our plan was to knit 50 hats for Homeless Action in Barnet. As always, our wonderful members far exceeded our expectations and produced over 100! Warm hats were provided not only to Homeless Action in Barnet, but also Showerbox and a local women's refuge. We kept people warm and ourselves connected with each other.



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