



Middlesex News

June 2022

theWI
INSPIRING WOMEN

Chair's Chat

Angela Chessman

Hello all,

I hope you are well – and doesn't a bit of sunshine just make you feel better?

Let's hope we have a proper summer this year.

In May, the Board of Trustees held its Committee meeting in the Office for the first time since lockdown began. However, in the spirit of the times, it was a hybrid meeting, with a Zoom connection available for those who couldn't get there in person. We had a few teething problems with this set-up but hope to improve next month!

I am so pleased that we are able to do this; it's great to see the office open again, for business as well as craft sessions and so on, and we hope to be doing more there in the future.

As I mentioned in my last mailing, we are hoping to set up some training sessions soon, so please have a think if it is something you could help us with. Members can be wary of taking on a role on their WI Committee, not knowing what it might entail, so some information and guidance would be a great help. The office is available for face to face meetings, or Zoom if it is easier. Please get in touch if you would like more information.

By the time this reaches you it will nearly be time for our National Federation Annual Meeting in Liverpool. I am really looking forward to seeing some of you there—please come and have a chat if you can, as it would be good to put some names to faces.

It seems like such a long time since we gathered in Bournemouth in 2019 and I am sure we will have a great time—I just can't wait to hear several hundred members singing Jerusalem; it always sends a shiver down my spine! It promises to be a successful day: the speakers look very interesting, and of course we will be discussing and voting on this year's Resolution.

This is a very timely selection, there have been several mentions in the press recently about ASD/ADHD and it seems that they are only just beginning to realise how the condition is going undiagnosed in girls. It promises to be a thought-provoking debate.

So, what have I been doing this month?

I was pleased to recently attend the Spelthorne Group Meeting. It was good to be with so many fellow members and it really brought home how much we have missed these events over the past two



years. We had an excellent evening. After the business was dealt with, our refreshments were provided by [Surplus to Supper](#).

We had all been asked to take our own mug/cup/glass; it was good to feel we were doing our small bit for the environment! Our entertainment was provided by a very funny magician, who had us all joining in. I hope to be able to attend more of these events in the future. A full report and photos are on page 10

My own WI, Stanwell, celebrated its 103rd Birthday in May, with a birthday party at our Village Hall. As usual, a good time was had by all! Earlier in the month, several of us attended a VE Day celebration dinner at a local college.

The food was prepared and served by students of the catering department and we were pleased to meet a group from a WI in Surrey—it seems we all know where to find a good meal—and it was good to support the next generation of chefs and restaurateurs!

I have just realised how many social events involve food...

Have a great month

Angela

Newsletter deadlines >>> see page 2

WI BIRTHDAYS



Happy Birthday to WIs celebrating this month!

Southbourne
03 June 1953

Greenford
11 June 1985

Hayes Town
17 June 1993

Stanmore
18 June 2018

Birthday cake time for Hillingdon, one of Middlesex Federation's founding WIs, which celebrated its 103rd birthday in February 2022.



200+ CLUB

Congratulations to the winners of our recent **200+ Club** draws

April 2022

1st prize - £35

Elizabeth Owen, West Drayton

2nd prize - £20

Margaret Smith, Iver

3rd prize - £15

E Hutton, Manor Farm

May 2022

1st prize - £35

Linda Frise, Hampton Tudor Rose

2nd prize - £20

Lorraine Reed, Ruislip Evening

3rd prize - £15

Mary Jeffery, Stanwell

GET IN TOUCH

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

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WE NEED YOU!

Please send articles (maximum 150 words please) and photos (largest size possible, as separate attachments, please) to Emma at newsletter@mfwl.org.uk. Articles received after the deadline are unlikely to be included due to production deadlines. Sometimes space limitations mean we may hold articles over to the following issue.

Deadlines

* July/August issue: 17 June

* September issue: 19 August

* October issue: 23 September

The cost of printed copies is £1.00 per copy, and for the 2022-23 subscription year there will be ten issues. A PDF copy is sent to all officers and members with an email address at no charge.

The newsletter is also available on the **MFWI website** as a PDF file. You are free to print and distribute copies to your members/community as you wish. In addition, most of our stories may also be found on the [news page](#) of our website.



SOUTHBOURNE

Jackie Head

On Wednesday 23 March a group of us met up at Ruislip Lido for a walk and a chat. We couldn't have chosen a better day with glorious sunshine.. The photo is of us standing on the small beach area in front of the pirate ship.

The April meeting combined a cake and craft stall with various rabbits knitted by some of the crafters on a Friday morning.

Our guest speaker was Pauline, who owns Bonita Candles in Wolverhampton. She was a very jolly, happy person with loads of enthusiasm, getting us up to stand in a circle to do a type of pass the parcel whilst telling us about her business. We were all then invited to pour our own soy wax candle into a small glass holder with the scent of lemon everywhere. Once set, these were very kindly given to us by Pauline, and her colleague Gabrielle, to take home. We learnt many interesting facts about candles including the need for the correct size wick. It was a very enjoyable and fun evening.

May is the perfect time for new plants and, as a result, we had a successful plant sale. There were a few tables groaning under the lovingly grown (from seed or cuttings) of house and garden plants.

Various matters were discussed followed by a special raffle, which proved to be fun and a new experience for some of us. We all had a free strip of raffle tickets, sat in a large circle, and as a number was called out whoever had that ticket took a wrapped gift (about half a dozen). When all the items had been taken the person with the next ticket 'stole' one of them until there were no more tickets left and those holding a gift was able to keep it.



PLATINUM the WI JUBILEE CAKE COMPETITION



Sunbury Village WI are launching a local competition to find a cake to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee event Cakes will then be sold for charitable donations

Saturday 4th June

1.00pm drop off with ingredients list (recipe, optional)
1.30 pm judging as part of the Sunbury Village Jubilee event on Orchard Meadow (TW16 6AF) opposite the Maggie Pub

The competition is open to local people as well as WI members
Tell us you are entering at: sunburyvillage@gmail.com or at www.sunbury-village-wi.com/jubilee-cake-competition



ASHFORD

Betty Barr

In April, we watched our president choking. Happily, she was expertly 'rescued' by our speaker, Darren Best, of South Central Ambulance Service. This, and other demonstrations, taught us about general first aid, including the use of a defibrillator. His brisk and light-hearted talk was serious in intent, conveying the urgency and skill of his job and imparted much vital information.

One of our members updated us on her efforts to support the Ukraine appeal with items purchased from donations given by our members at the last meeting.

On a chilly April Saturday morning, the committee set up a stall in Ashford High Street, selling Easter cards and other crafted items, fetching a satisfying total for our fund raising.

The May speaker will be talking about baking in the 1940s and we will hold a cake baking competition with all entries using a recipe from that time. That should challenge us all!



LALEHAM

Chris Walker

We had a really good turnout for our April meeting. Membership is growing and several new members have joined over the last couple of months. Some new ladies joined us for a first time visit this meeting and enjoyed their evening.

Despite a last minute hitch with our arranged speaker, Committee members Kim and Karen filled the gap very successfully with an impromptu quiz which created quite a lot of competitive spirit and lots of laughs.

President Helen Hurst outlined our plans for celebrating the Royal Jubilee at our next meeting—expect some good photos of that!

And here's Judy McFarlane and some lucky raffle winners.



GREENEFIELDE

Christine Chambers

At our April meeting we had a 'Decorating an Easter Bonnet' event. We had an afternoon of decorating Easter bonnets together with tea and cakes. What a lovely afternoon we had: in all six Easter bonnets were decorated. Members helped by contributing to the decoration pool for the bonnets.

Some members brought in hats they had decorated at home. The rest of us started to create our bonnets and the results were really good in the short time we had available. It was very a successful afternoon with everyone helping out with ideas and advice.

Our members then voted on which bonnet they liked the best using "Pennies for ACWW". The bonnets with the largest amount of pennies were made by Sylvia Aylward and Phyllis Fowler. This was definitely an event where everyone really enjoyed themselves. The afternoon was rounded off with tea and cakes.



WEST EALING

Sally Greenbrook

West Ealing WI had an amazing outing to Questors Theatre for our April meeting. Questors is located in Ealing and is one of Europe's largest community theatres.

We were very lucky to have a backstage tour, including the extensive wardrobe and set building workshop, and to sit in on rehearsals for their upcoming production of India Gate.

After the tour, we had a talk from the theatre's Artistic Director Alex about the colourful history of Questors and some of the productions that have been put on. Alex also very kindly offered us complimentary tickets to India Gate so some of us are looking forward to returning very soon.

Questors is volunteer run and relies on donations to thrive – in fact, one of our members, Julia, spotted a dress that she donated 20 years ago in the wardrobe!

After the tour and talk, we headed to the attached Grapevine Bar to chat and enjoy some very reasonably priced drinks—I'm pretty sure it's the only place in London where you can still get a pint for under £3!



SUNBURY ON THAMES

Barbara Draper

This month's meeting of Sunbury on Thames WI was quite exceptional as it was our 42nd anniversary. We started off with the usual meeting followed by an excellent array of raffle prizes. Then scones, cream and jam and (for members on diets!) plain cheese ones.

Instead of a speaker as is the normal, it was decided something unusual was to take place: BINGO! Not sounding very exciting but with the caller explaining all the rhyming slang and lots of the members not having played before it just became a most enjoyable afternoon.



RUISLIP EVENING

Sandy Channon

Our April meeting theme was 'Spring flowers' and our members had an enjoyable evening making daffodils, tulips and exotic flowers—amazing what can be achieved with guidance from Dot and Lorraine, a few materials and a little imagination.



In contrast, our May meeting focused on gentle, fun exercise to music. Alice runs group sessions three times a week in Ickenham for over 60s and concentrates on mobility for health, motor skills, independence, improved strength and balance for able and disabled people.

Most of her exercises can be done sitting down if necessary and with pom poms, hats and great music, our ladies had a fun filled evening.

Patterns for poppies and materials for rag wreaths were provided in preparation for the Queen's Jubilee in June. 'Something fluffy' was our pennies competition and a raffle completed an excellent evening.

Our WI also offers a monthly Book club run by Mary, our current book is *The Power* by Naomi Alderman, set in a future where women are given the power to protect themselves: an interesting thought provoking read.



HALLIFORD

Elizabeth Davies

Halliford WI Centenary Celebrations began style with two outings in a week.

The first was a trip to Savill Gardens where the grounds were looking their best with all the beautiful spring blossoms. A quiet stroll and a coffee and lunch break all made for a pleasant trip.

Five days later we all put on our best outfits for a traditional afternoon tea at the Stanwell Hotel.

It was a jolly afternoon where people chatted and exchanged their memories of their journey being a member of Halliford WI.

Sandwiches, delicious scones with clotted cream and dainty cakes all went down very well.

We are all now looking forward to our next outing to the museum of Brands in June.

Halliford celebrates its 100th birthday in October 2022.



BEDFONT BELLES

Jenny Hanrahan

Our April meeting consisted of a triple quiz put together by our amazing quizzers, Margaret and Chris. We were asked to bring a handbag containing twenty items. If an item matched a description we held it aloft and won points. Part two was 'missing letters' of the titles of Agatha Christie novels. And part three was general knowledge (very hard!).

Friends from Ashford and Stanwell joined us for the quiz, ploughman's, raffle and chat. A great evening was had by all—particularly the winners of the Easter eggs! Jean from Ashford W.I. came first, Mary from Stanwell W.I. came second, and Janice from Bedfont Belles W.I. came third.

At our March meeting we had met Sue Green who is the founder of The Inspired Hub in Hampton where our member Sandra uses her culinary skills to cook fabulous meals using the produce from

the



surplus food which is collected by, and donated to, the hub. We had been invited by Sue to visit and some of our members went along on the 10th April. They had tea and cakes and were entertained with a sing-a-long with Richard, followed by a quiz. They are now VIPs for a year. Thank you Sandra Long for the photos.



HAYES TOWN

Gill Wildman

What a sparkling way to start a 'Behind the Seams' talk and tour, with a prosecco in hand at DSI London, the costume company which has created the glittering creations for *Strictly Come Dancing* since 2007, with costume designer Vicky Gill.

Every dress has a custom leotard inside, maintaining a smooth outline. Each Nearly all the materials come from Italy; the stock room is awash with rolls of glorious technicolour fabrics. Hayes Town ladies loved getting the dresses off the rails, pretending that we were wearing them and floating round the dance floor. We came away vowing to go on diets to achieve it!

On April 21st, in our newly decorated hall, we celebrated the Queen's 96th Birthday. On her way to Sandringham (a member of that WI since 1943) she made us a fleeting visit...!



The lovely Carole took us on a tour of stock, showroom and production rooms, where we saw how all the sparkly sequins and feathers are all put on by hand by Ash, who has been doing it for 20 years.

It's a mammoth operation creating as many as 500 dresses, using three million rhinestones. After use, each dress is put in a bag and washed in a washing machine—no ironing required!

We have planted a Royal Purple Smokebush and a purple Platinum Jubilee plaque has been fixed to the outside wall of community centre to commemorate this special year.

We had speaker Hamish Brown on *Stalking the Stalker* and finished the afternoon with a cuppa and 'royal cake', and each member as given a HTWI commemorative badge!





Social Media Workshop

Debbie Levy,
Co-President,
Sunbury Village

The Workshop was introduced by WI Advisor Yvette Rathbone, who outlined the agenda and introduced Fiona Doyle. Fiona ran the workshop as part of her WI Advisor training. She is a social media pro, utilising her skills as part of her President role for the Stow Roses WI.

Fiona explained there are 3 main social media platforms, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram (available via a website address, see below links or via an app on a smartphone or tablet) our WIs should consider using to share and promote meetings and events, increase our reach to promote new membership and act as a forum for members to interact.

She also encouraged us to consider having a website. Via our newly revamped www.sunbury-village-wi.com/ website we have had a lot more interest from new members. Stow Roses website <https://stowroseswi.org.uk/> is managed by Fiona and is another great example of electronic communication.

Fiona taught the attendees tricks and tips to get us started and make the role fun and easy. I've been busy using the recommended Canva and Later websites for creating and scheduling posts.

The NFWI and MFWI have accounts across the social media platforms: why not start your journey by following them and find out if your WI has any accounts.

Facebook www.facebook.com is popular with a lot of our members. A group and or page can be created. A group is restricted to members and used to share information and for members to connect with one another.

A page is public facing. Using the search function is an easy way to find pages or groups to like or join. For the NFWI search "The WI" for MFWI search "Middlesex Federation WI Group"

Twitter

www.twitter.com can be used to share images and text.

Create an account and start following @womensinstitute, @MFWI, @WILifemagazine by putting the account handle (yes that is what they are called) into the search bar. Handles can also be added if you send a post so the owner will see it in their notifications. I add @MFWI to lots of the @SunburyVill-WI posts and they get re-tweeted, shared to everyone!

Instagram www.instagram.com is an image-based platform. All posts must have an image, though many these days are text presented as an image. With so many of us creating beautiful crafts and bakes what better way to show them off this way? Find the NFWI by searching womensinstitute and MFWI with MFWI. Again, add the @ for the NFWI or MFWI to share.

Ever heard of a hashtag #? that's another way to search and share on social media for example #showthelove is the hashtag of the WI climate change campaign.

I challenge you all to try out social media. Show some support to the workshop attendees who are busy creating posts for you to view; it would be a shame not to see them.

The MFWI Membership Committee thanks all attendees for their participation and feedback. This was our first social media training session, and we are now aware that it wasn't pitched at the right level for everyone. We are discussing how best to offer training for both novice and more experienced users, and will keep members updated as we develop our courses.

Yvette Rathbone, WI Advisor

Protecting our Rivers

Clare Taylor, Public Affairs

We know our rivers are polluted—the WI has been running the *End Plastic Soup* campaign to protect them from microplastic fibres and many groups have been campaigning about agricultural pollution and untreated sewage. But surface water run-off from roads, towns and cities contributes nearly a fifth of pollutants.

Surface water drains are intended to take clean rainwater, and in many cases end up in water courses with no treatment. But the rainwater picks up contaminants and a whole range of chemicals, damaging biodiversity and river health. During heavy rainfall, drains can be overwhelmed, causing flash flooding; water treatment companies have more water going in than they can treat, as surface water combines with foul water—one of the causes of sewage overflows.

However, there are ways of capturing this water before it reaches the drains: adding sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS) in urban areas and beside roads, to allow water time to soak into the ground, and the right planting cleans it.

This YouTube video explains it all in just over three minutes: <https://bit.ly/3a5e492>. Asking your local councils to support such schemes can make a big difference.

If you have a garden, you can build your own rain garden to catch the excess. Rain gardens can soak up 30% more water than a lawn. These links show you how to make two different kinds: <https://www.rhs.org.uk/garden-features/rain-gardens> and <https://permaculture.co.uk/videos/how-build-rain-garden>.

Green roofs also slow down water flows, while avoiding paving with impermeable surfaces makes a big difference to flood protection. Using areas of low-growing plants or even gravel will slow down rainwater run-off. Some of the surface water contamination comes from misconnections. This happens surprisingly often, so it's also a good idea to check where your pipes go.

A longer version of this article is available on the MFWI website.



We've been making quilts

Diana Cornhill (Norwood Green & West Ealing) along with friends Fiona (West Ealing), Sue (Norwood Green) and Jaclyn (the WI shirt donation expert) along with others have been very busy making quilts for children. Diana told of how much fun they had creating them and are very happy that Lorraine has an outlet for them all.

The quilts have been donated to the child survivors of Domestic Abuse in North West London alongside the Brain

Tumour & Injury Group where quilts are donated for use by children & siblings living with brain tumours.

They are also donated to the children's & maternity units at the local hospital giving such comfort to many along the way.

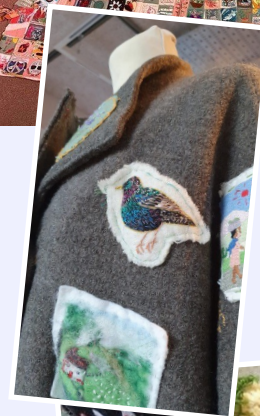
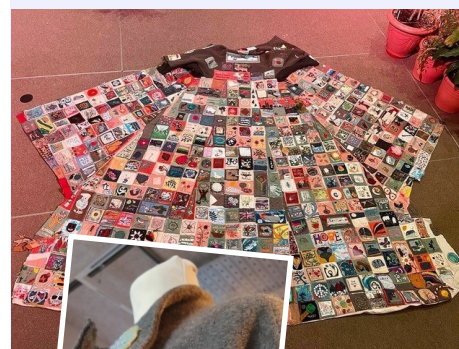
Keep up the good work Diana & co: the quilts are truly loved - the latest batch ready for distribution by Lorraine seen here; they are simply gorgeous!

Coat of Hopes

The Coat of Hopes was a pilgrimage of stitched patches made by many, transformed into a Coat which took the Climate Change message to COP26. Many patches were made for this coat including some made by WI members Stephanie Keen (West Ealing) and Lorraine Reed (Ruislip Evening).

If there are other members out there who contributed to the project, please do let us know. The coat has been exhibited at Morley College near Waterloo since COP26 and will continue to be displayed at various events in the future. A real tribute to the message and the teamwork that went into raising the Climate Change awareness.

Here are pictures of Stephanie's bird patch, Lorraine's HS2 patch and the full coat-back view. It is not a WI initiative so here is the website if you want to know a bit more about it: <https://www.coatofhopes.uk/about>.



Wendy Capehorn and Hayes Town members at a card marking craft class for Hayes Town members at Asda.



Farewell Yve

Sadly, we say goodbye to Yve McBride from the Craft Committee. We would like to say thanks to Yve for all the work achieved during her time on the MFWI Craft Committee and will miss the knowledge and skills she brought to the group. We wish you well, Yve.

For those interested in the Monthly 'pop-ins', we will continue them on Zoom for now (email craft@mfwi.org.uk for info).



Craft bookings

Booking is essential for all craft sessions.

Fee includes any materials for the crafts listed, plus tea and coffee.

Cheques payable to Middlesex Federation of Womens Institutes (Craft Committee)

Bank transfers: MFWI Craft Committee.
Sort Code: 20-27-49; Account: 53587703.

Queries and bookings

Email craft@mfwi.org.uk or call Lorraine on 01895 676 105 or call/text on 07976 398 533

Note that planned sessions are subject to change: we ask you to book to help us plan.

MFWI OFFICE WEST DRAYTON

Thursdays 10.30-15.30

Members only

Fee payable in advance or on the day

23 June

Silk Painting

£10

28 July

Needle Felting Animal

£10

25 August

Quilling

£6

29 September

Block Printing

£8

27 October

Stitched Cards

£6



EASTCOTE COMMUNITY CENTRE RUISLIP

Saturdays 14.00-17.00

All women welcome

Fee payable in advance

25 June

Beading Tapestry

£12

30 July

Cathedral Window Patchwork

£8

20 August

Block Printing

£10

29 October

Silk Scarves

£16

26 November

Rag Wreaths

£10

Special Craft Event

Sat 9 July, 10.30

Mors Bag Workshop

£15

MFWI Office.

All materials supplied, however you will need to bring your own sewing machine.

Craft Inn

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

19:30, every Monday

Zoom link

Meeting ID: 852 8335 4467

Passcode: 358099

Special Craft Event

Sat 23 July, 14.00-17.00

Learn to Draw with Lynne Hayes

£15

Eastcote Community Centre

All materials supplied.





Spelthorne Group Meeting

Wendy Kislingbury,
Ashford WI

On Friday 13th May 2022, eight local WIs from the Spelthorne Group were able to meet again for the first time since September 2019. This long-awaited event was hosted by Sunbury on Thames WI.

82 WI members attended and were greeted by the door stewards Bedfont Belles WI and how pleased everybody was to meet up again in St Hilda's Church Hall, Ashford. The stunning floral displays were provided by Twickenham WI.

Susan Whitworth, President of Sunbury on Thames, opened the meeting, welcoming everybody. A rousing rendition of *Jerusalem* was sung. The Minutes of the September 2019 Group Meeting were read by the Sunbury on Thames Secretary. Susan welcomed Trustee Sarah Endersby who chaired

the Meeting and gave an address about Federation News.

Stanwell WI President Tracey Mercer gave Stanwell WI's two minute report, and described how they kept in touch with their WI members during the pandemic lockdown, with frequent newsletters, phone calls, and when the weather allowed socially distanced get-togethers on Stanwell Green.

Eleanor Thomas, Secretary of Twickenham WI gave a sincere and thought provoking report of how they have lost members over the past few years, and how an anticipated fundraising event has just been cancelled. In spite of this, their members remain upbeat and look forward to a better year ahead.

Refreshments were different this year as Sunbury Village WI provided wine or a soft drink and nibbles during the break when members enjoyed catching up with old friends.

Richard Pinner, a member of the Magic Circle, gave a comic and entertaining performance. This included plenty of fun and audience participation in the true WI spirit.

Richard also had the difficult task of judging the craft competition organised by Stanwell WI, which was an arrangement of fruit, vegetables and flowers using any craft medium. Congratulations to the winners:

1st—Joy Hopkins Sunbury-on-Thames

2nd— Lesley Wheeler, Ashford

3rd—Wendy Kislingbury, Ashford

Laleham WI provided lovely raffle prizes.

The vote of thanks was given by Halliford WI and flowers were presented to Sarah.

We sang the national anthem and after a very enjoyable evening, the meeting closed at approximately 9.35pm.

NORWOOD GREEN

Congratulations to Norwood Green WI which celebrated its 37th birthday in March



Members enjoying a social time with coffee and cake.