



# Middlesex News

December 2022 /  
January 2023

theWI  
INSPIRING WOMEN

## Chair's Chat

Angela Chessman

*Hello all*

Well, where has this year gone? This is our last Newsletter of the year and by the time it reaches you I

am sure a lot of us will be making our Christmas plans.

I am aware that this year the holidays will be challenging for many of us, the cost of energy and food is rising rapidly and at the moment there seems to be no end in sight.

I hope things aren't too difficult and you can all enjoy yourselves in whatever way you choose.

I have been pleased to be able to meet some of you over the last few months—many thanks for the birthday invitations—and hopefully I will get to join in some of your meetings next year.

It has been great to see how different WIs work, but they all have one thing in common—they know how to enjoy themselves!

It was also good to meet up at the Annual Meeting in Liverpool. Fewer members attended the meeting this year hence next year in Cardiff will be a smaller affair, but hopefully a few of us will still be able to attend. The Annual Meeting gives us all a chance to meet other members and I truly feel that meeting face to face is a major benefit of the WI.

As you know, our last few Annual Council meetings for Middlesex have had to be via Zoom—including, unfortunately, for our Centenary. However, we are planning to get back to a 'live' meeting next year—hopefully in March. As soon as the date is confirmed we will let you know and I really hope you will be able to attend.

Leading on from this, I would like to ask you all to think about joining your Board of Trustees. Although there will be no elections next year, we would love to hear from anyone who is



interested in becoming more involved in the running of the Federation. Do please get in touch with any Board Member if you would like more information. The main commitment would be attending our monthly Board meetings; this can be in person or via Zoom, so it doesn't matter where in the Federation you are based. We really would welcome your ideas, so please give it some thought.

We are conscious of the fact that the restrictions of the last few years has meant that we were unable to provide many events for our members and that is something that we are hoping to change very soon. Watch this space—and if there is anything you think we could be doing, or if you'd like to be involved in hosting an event, please let us know.

Unfortunately, there were no Middlesex winners from the National Raffle, but did you know that a small portion of the proceeds is shared with the Federations? I would like to thank everyone who bought a ticket, as it all helps.

From the Trustees, WI Advisers and Representatives at Middlesex I would like to wish all of our members a Happy Christmas and a wonderful New Year.

*Angela*

**Newsletter deadlines >>> see page 2**

## WI BIRTHDAYS



*Congratulations to WIs  
celebrating in December and January*

We want to know how your WI  
is celebrating:  
*Please share with us!*

Clay Hill  
7 December 1938

## CAMPAIGNS

### 16 days of Activism to End Gender-based Violence

25 November marked the beginning of this annual campaign. Thank you to all WIs and Federations who take part each year by generously donating goods to their local women's refuges, holding candlelight vigils, raising money for their local women's refuges and holding virtual discussions to learn more about the issue.

See [MyWI](#) for more information and resources.



**IN THE UK 1 IN 4 WOMEN WILL  
EXPERIENCE DOMESTIC ABUSE**

## 200+ CLUB

Congratulations to the winners of  
our recent 200+ Club draw.

**November 2022**

1st prize - £40

**Teresa Hamilton, Greenford**

2nd prize - £30

**Wendy Capehorn, Hayes Town**

3rd prize - £20

**Ashford WI**

4th prize - £10

**Lorraine Reed, Ruislip**

## GET IN TOUCH

### COUNTY OFFICE

Unit 3 - No 7 The Green, West Drayton, Middlesex UB7 7PL  
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**The MFWI office is open 9am-1pm Mondays and Wednesdays**

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### Newsletter Info

Please send articles (maximum 150 words please) and photos (largest size possible, as separate attachments, please) to Emma at [newsletter@mfwl.org.uk](mailto: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

- \* Feb 2023 issue: 20 Jan
- \* Mar 2023 issue: 17 Feb
- \* April 2023 issue: 17 Mar

A PDF copy is sent to all officers and members with an email address at no charge. Information on the newsletter for the 2023-24 year will be provided in the early Spring,

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.



## West Drayton

Kay Crone

In an attempt to keep active and improve fitness, West Drayton WI has recently formed a walking group. We are meeting monthly, although we hope to increase this to fortnightly, and under the expert guidance of Ann, who is a qualified fitness and Zumba teacher, we are stepping our way around the lesser known paths of the West Drayton area.

The first walk was around West Drayton Green area, with lots of interesting facts about the area included. Last week the weather was glorious and we walked along a stretch of the Grand Union Canal, although we decided we're not quite ready for wild swimming yet, despite the photo looking as though we're lining up ready to take the plunge!! Maybe our next venture??



## Greenford

Trish Quinlan

At our 15 November meeting we had the pleasure of being entertained by opera singer Helen Astrid who, along with the assistance of some slides and videos, gave us a short history of Christmas carols and events over the centuries.

The first nativity play was instigated by Francis of Assisi in the 12th century, and is now a firm part of the Christmas festivities. Most European countries having their own versions of carols we know and love, with the exception of France, where there is less enthusiasm for them.

Our first video was of the wonderful choir of Kings College, Cambridge, with their rendition of *Silent Night*, which was composed in 1893 in a small Austrian chapel.

Also, the words of *In the Bleak Midwinter* were written by Christina Rossetti, wife of the

famous painter. Many famous people were inspired to write lyrics to their favourite melodies.

Unfortunately, all forms of Christmas enjoyment were cancelled during the Cromwell period but resumed when Charles II returned following the end of the Civil War.

The honour of the first Christmas broadcast by the BBC was awarded to the wonderful Truro Cathedral.

Hearing the many familiar carols, we were then issued with song sheets and enjoyed being an impromptu choir as a prelude to the festive season, the dim lighting adding to the atmosphere...





## Halliford

Liz Davies

### Our 100 year history 1922-2022

Lady Domville was the first president of Halliford WI, in 1922. It was very formal then and members were all addressed by their surnames. 'For Home and Country' was the slogan, with emphasis on the home, craft, 'make do and mend', how to darn stockings, jam making etc.

They befriended a ward of patients at St Bernard's hospital, taking gifts and arranging tea parties for them.

They also organised jumble sales, dances and parties for local people, held Produce and Handicraft shows where the members showed off their various skills and won silver cups.

During the war they knitted socks, balaclavas and scarves for the troops.

Later the WI slogan became 'The WI - inspiring women'.

We had a drama group, keep fit and whist evenings and took part in the Shepperton Fair parade, and pantomimes with other local WIs.

In 2000 we had a bench installed next to the bus stop near to the hall where we meet in Halliford, to celebrate the new Millennium.

We've had stalls at the May Fair on Halliford Green and Shepperton Fair, and raised money towards the defibrillator at St Andrew's Church.



In 2018 we were part of the Hundred Banners Project, celebrating the centenary of the suffragette movement. We made our banner, with the slogan 'Supporting the Community since 1922' and marched through London to the rally in Trafalgar Square.

During the Covid lockdowns we were unable



to meet in our hall so we started a weekly 'picnic in the park' and a local walk, all suitably spaced and masked.

Nowadays we have lunches, walks, cinema visits, whist drives, craft sessions and 'picnics in the park', as well as our monthly meetings.

We are celebrating our centenary year with special outings, afternoon tea at a hotel and recently a party and tree planting on Halliford Green.

The most important part of Halliford WI is the friendship between our members and always looking out for each.

*Pictured: Our president tree planting, the current committee and our longest serving member of 51 years cutting the cake.*

## Sunbury Village

Debbie Levy

We had the pleasure of joining in the celebrations for Bedfont Belles' WI's 8th birthday. We had a lovely time; here's our message to them:

*Congratulation on a fantastic birthday do. Your ladies put on a really special evening; you should be so proud.*

*It all ran so smoothly but behind the scenes so much planning, preparation and hard work has gone on and I know this extends throughout the party night, with raffle tickets, food organising and above all making everyone feel so welcome, which Bedfont Belles members did splendidly.*

*A huge thank you from Sunbury Village for the invite, we had a great time, as the photo proves 😊*





## Southbourne

Brenda Francis

At our October meeting we welcomed speaker Andrew Waite, jeweller, who was to explain the next step of recognising good and authentic jewellery. There are different grades of silver and should have the assay office's stamp. We have four in Great Britain: London, Birmingham, Sheffield and Edinburgh. He also did diamond and gold tests on members' jewellery which in some cases was very rewarding. There was an array of items for sale: beautiful bracelets, rings, necklaces and earrings. A very hard decision to choose from the lovely display!

Members had brought home-made cakes, cookies and scones for sale: a nice treat to have with our tea.

## A crafty November

Jackie Head

We had a very successful craft sale at our November meeting. Everything was made by a number of our members which illustrates the variety of skills we are able to share.

We would also like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



## Sunbury on Thames

Barbara Draper

The last couple of months have been busy at Sunbury on Thames WI. In September we had a welcome visit from Gillian Cousins and her guide dog Smartee. The talk and explanation of how dogs for the blind and partly sighted persons were trained and paid for was an interesting subject. I don't think any of the members realised how involved and expensive



the whole process was, nor that the dog was looked after for life. A most interesting talk!

October was very entertaining and humorous; we hosted Russell Bowls 'Dig for victory' with lots of slides. His story starting in 1939 when it was realised food from abroad would be in short supply. In those early days all gardens, parks and every other green area was made into vegetable growing places.

It not generally known that the WI had a big influence in recruiting girls for the Land Army who keep producing an enormous amount of

our food all through the war and until well into the '50s.

The October meeting was also the AGM when we were told our President Susan Whitworth who had held the position for 8 years plus was leaving to relocate in Northumbria. Susan has been a very popular president and will be greatly missed. On a more cheery note, Jackie Mayall was voted in overwhelmingly as our new President.

Our last piece of news is that Kate Elliott who was a valued member for many years has died at 107 at home very peacefully. RIP Kate from us all.



## Laleham

Chris Walker

Laleham WI has celebrated its 87th birthday with a party featuring a lovely pasta meal with dessert and cake (of course).

We had some great entertainment from Billy Clayton who got members on their feet with his music from the 60s and 70s.

A lively night and enjoyed by all!



## Stroud Green

Angeline Leung

October was AGM time again. We welcomed a new committee member, Naomi, gave massive thanks to both Kit and Lucy for their time serving our WI, and elected a new president, Anna. The rest of the committee is Michele, Sarah and Angeline. Most importantly of all we ate cake, played games and got to know each other better!

Here's a selection of photos from our review of the past year. A video will be available soon!

## Ruislip Evening

Sandy Channon

We have had a really busy month. At the end of October we visited the Battle of Britain Bunker in Uxbridge, an amazing historic place, many of us going for the first time, despite living in the area for many years.

The underground Operation Room, reached by 76 steps, housed the RAF Fighter Command's No 11 Group where so many decisions and ultimately the defence and fate of Britain in the Second World were made.

Sir Winston Churchill said his famous phrase "Never in the field of human conflict was so



much owed by so many to so few," following a visit to the bunker. The Operations Room was set up as it was on 15 September 1940 and our tour guide Andy gave us an informative talk, a real insight on how the plotting room worked and decisions were made.

The Woman's Auxiliary Air Force (WAAF) (80% were women at the bunker) were trained and played an important role as plotters, keeping track of what was happening in the air as part of the Dowding System. Well worth a visit.

For those unable to climb the 76 stairs there is also disabled access, a virtual tour, and there is a museum and café.

Our November meeting was a relaxed cheese and biscuit, tea and wine evening. A lovely collection of wood items were entered into our pennies theme for charity. We had lots of fun with our Chinese raffle—the bottle of Prosecco must have changed hands about 30 times!

Many of our ladies knitted and crocheted poppies and together with our Memory Tree they were displayed in the window of Lodge Brothers in Ruislip Gardens. Lorraine laid a wreath on behalf of the Ruislip Evening WI at the Ruislip Memorial Service Parade held on Sunday 13 November.

We will always remember those who gave their lives for us.







## Stanwell

Dianne Butler

We enjoyed the last of the sunshine at Laleham Tea Rooms for our end of Croquet Season Afternoon Tea.

We had an excellent time, with the most fantastic cakes, scones and finger sandwiches.

Bedford Belles' birthday party was enjoyed by all, they really know how to throw a party, a fantastic singer and lots of dancing and of course a little wine!

Stanwell Remembrance parade finished at the War Memorial on the Village Green.

## Centenary Recipes

For Middlesex Federation's centenary we asked members to contribute their favourite recipes for compilation and sharing among our members.

We continue this month with a recipe the presentation of which is so evocative we decided to leave it in its original format. Thank you to Ellen Young of Harlington WI for this submission.

### Lemonade Scones

**440g SR flour**

**175ml double cream (full fat)**

**175ml lemonade (not diet)**

Mix all ingredients to make a dough, being careful not to overwork the dough.

Tip out onto a floured surface, and press to a 2cm thickness, and cut into rounds.

Place on a greased and floured baking tray. Heat oven to 220C (200fan; Gas mark 7).

Bake for 12-15 mins until golden.



## 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

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.

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*

24 November

**Candle Decorating**

£8

15 December

**Beaded Star**

£6

19 January

**Paper Quilling**

£6

**Queries and bookings**

To book, mail [craft@mfwl.org.uk](mailto:craft@mfwl.org.uk) or call Lorraine on 01895 676 105 or call/text on 07976 398 533.

## Eastcote Community Centre

Saturdays 14.00-17.00

*All women welcome*

*Fee payable in advance*

17 December

**Candle Decorating**

£12



# Public Affairs

## Day of Action on Fuel Poverty

3 December

The **Warm this Winter** coalition is calling on groups and communities to deliver 'Warm this Winter' events and actions.

The coalition is demanding emergency financial support, help to upgrade homes, cheaper energy and a stop to expansion of oil and gas fields.

This campaign could be mentioned in your next meeting, and maybe invite the community for a coffee morning/afternoon.

If you would like to get involved, there is a more information and campaign resources here:

<https://www.warmthiswinter.org.uk/day-of-action>



## Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill

This bill was introduced in September to make it easier to amend, repeal and replace EU-derived laws that have remained on the UK's statute books following Brexit.

There are concerns that the government will have to actively develop new laws in order to replace the current laws before a tight deadline (31 Dec.2023) if this bill is passed as it stands.

If they don't, protections we've had for many years, and possibly taken for granted, will be lost. Further information on MyWI.

## Public Affairs Meeting

11 January 2023

Advance notice: Public Affairs meeting, open to all members, to discuss the 2023 shortlisted resolutions, on Wednesday 11 January, 19.30, on Zoom.

Contact [publicaffairs@mfwl.org.uk](mailto:publicaffairs@mfwl.org.uk) if you would like to attend.

—Alison Fremantle