



# Middlesex News

April 2023

theWI  
INSPIRING WOMEN

## Chair's Chat

Angela Chessman

*Hello everyone*

I hope you are all well.

Well, where do I start this month's Chair's Chat? Ah I know, the Middlesex Federation Annual Council Meeting!

What an excellent day we had! I do hope that those of you who attended enjoyed it. For those who didn't attend—where were you??

As I have mentioned, we changed our venue this year to Ealing to hopefully make it more accessible to more WIs and several have said it worked well for them.

The location was very good, with plenty of space to eat your lunch or cafes and coffee shops a few minutes walk away.

We had two excellent speakers, Bonita Norris and Eliza McClelland; totally different, but they really complemented each other.

I would like to thank Gill Wildman from Hayes Town WI and her team of Stewards who helped to organise our visitors, Mary Jeffery and Maureen Stone from Stanwell WI who provided an excellent raffle and our super Secretary Georgina who was sorting everything out behind the scenes.

Of course, special thanks go to the Board of Trustees, who worked so hard to organise this event—it wasn't easy!

Many thanks as well to all members who attended. I have had some lovely feedback from those who did attend, I am really pleased that you enjoyed it.



However, on a less positive note, we were very disappointed in the number of members who actually came. We have over 1500 members from 44 WIs in Middlesex and only a fraction of that number attended.

Why is this?

I know some of you are still a bit apprehensive about attending large gatherings and I understand this, but we really hoped that more members would come along, especially as it was the first major meeting for us since lockdown.

We changed the venue, to make it more accessible to more WIs and we had inspiring and amusing speakers. I am not sure what else we could have done.

I would be really grateful if you would give us some feedback of why you didn't attend.

Is there something else you would like from these meetings? We have to do 'the business', but after that we are always open to your thoughts and ideas.

As mentioned, the Federation is hoping to put on more events in the coming year. We are starting with a Theatre outing to *Frozen* on 12 May, which Julia Lewis is organising for us. More information was sent to WI Officers on 27 March.

Finally, it's renewal time for those of you who have a paper version of the Newsletter, Information on how to order has been sent to your Secretaries.

Have a good month

*Angela*

Congratulations to the winners of the bursaries drawn at our ACM:

**MFWI Bursaries (£150 each)**

Frances Williamson, Sunbury Village

Claude Asgill, London West End

**200+ Club Bursary (£200)**

Anna Kidd, N1

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

## WI BIRTHDAYS



### A very Happy Birthday to our WIs celebrating in April

De Beauvoir	3 April 2015
Sunbury on Thames	15 April 1980
East End	16 April 2007

## 200+ CLUB

Congratulations to the winners of our recent 200+ Club draw, drawn at our ACM:

### March 2023 - enhanced draw

- 1st prize - £80  
Theresa Hamilton, Greenford
- 2nd prize - £60  
Joyce Gander, Southbourne
- 3rd prize - £40  
Buffy Hall, West Drayton
- 4th prize - £20  
Angela Catchpole, West Drayton

## FROM YOUR BOT

### Have you considered...

**...becoming a Federation Trustee?**

We need and welcome more Trustees, and would always be happy to have a chat with any member who is interested in joining us. We will invite you to observe on of our monthly Board of Trustee meetings (either in person or on Zoom), so you can get a feel for who were are what we do.

Interested? Please call the office or drop an email to Angela at [chair@mfw.org.uk](mailto:chair@mfw.org.uk)

## GET IN TOUCH

### COUNTY OFFICE

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### The MFWI office is open 9am-1pm Mondays and Wednesdays

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ACWW .....	<a href="mailto:acwwrep@mfw.org.uk">acwwrep@mfw.org.uk</a>
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CRAFT Lorraine Reed .....	<a href="mailto:craft@mfw.org.uk">craft@mfw.org.uk</a>
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MEMBERSHIP Liz Morrell .....	<a href="mailto:membershipenquiries@mfw.org.uk">membershipenquiries@mfw.org.uk</a>
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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@mfw.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@mfw.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

- \* May 2023 issue: 21 April
- \* June 2023 issue: 19 May
- \* July 2023 issue: 23 June

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 soon.

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.

What a fabulous day we had at The Questors Theatre in Ealing for our 2023 Annual Council Meeting on Monday 20 March.

It was amazing to get back together in person for the first time since 2019 in a lovely venue, only made even better by two truly fabulous speakers. Presenters stood at the front of a thrust stage with the set of *Death on the Nile* behind, adding an exotic atmosphere to the proceedings!

To echo Angela's comments, members who were not there really did miss out on a lovely time. We've had much lovely feedback from so many of our members, which is very reassuring.

Enjoy these photos of the day; more are available on our website!

Emma Watson, Trustee



*Sarah Endersby & Angela Chessman ready to greet members*



*Julia Lewis, Sarah Endersby, Emma Watson, Angela Chessman, Shelagh Simpson, Alison Fremantle, Joan Leonard, Georgina Glynn & Heather McIntyre.*



## ACM Reflections

Liz Alcock  
Trustee and Archivist

*Boss: So, the ACM... Would you introduce and thank the morning Speaker?*

*Me: No probs... after all I was President of Finchley WI for a few years AND faced classes of boys for 19+ years!*

*Boss: Oh! And can you give a report on archiving?*

*Me: Sure thing!*

The ACM day arrived, and me—with a spare folding table and folder of Introduction & Report. But (you knew there'd be one, didn't you?), after a brief chat with the awesome and very friendly Bonita Norris I took the spotlight at the podium... and started shaking! I really had no idea how I was progressing with my short contribution, but I assumed the delightfully kind audience laughed with me rather than at me, but laugh they did. To be honest, it was a relief after all the serious facts and figures of business! Bonita was fabulous, as were her magical slides.

Lunch break gave time to wander, reconnect with old friends and make new ones then it was onto the afternoon session. Shorter (no business except me again; I do hope everyone got the message to contact me with any queries) and extremely well entertained by the versatile actor, Eliza McClelland. Such professional skill, relaxed and fun. Could have listened (and laughed) with her for hours!

Then—all too soon—we were folding away tables, loading cars and wandering off with silly grins stuck to our faces.

If you attended, thank you for generous tolerance of a newbie. If you thought it wasn't worth coming—you were wrong! You missed a treat, but don't beat yourselves up—we'll do it all over again next year and will welcome you with the open arms of WI sisterhood!



*Treasurer Sarah Endersby; speakers Bonita Norris and Eliza McClelland*



*Angela presents new WI Adviser Fiona Doyle with her certificate; Trustee Julia Lewis, the audience ready and waiting*



*Volunteers Maureen Stone and Mary Jeffery at the raffle stand; steward Gill Wildman & Federation Secretary Georgina Glynn*



## Ruislip Evening

Sandy Channon

Our March meeting was our birthday. We had a lovely evening celebrating with our members and visitors from other WIs. The evening started with our AGM where our current committee were all happy to continue. Having done such an excellent job last year we were all pleased when Lorraine was also willing to stand and was voted in as President

Plates of food was brought in by most of our members to share and Lesley made a delicious birthday cake, sliced by Kim who originally helped to set up the Ruislip Evening WI.

Next on our agenda, Lorna had arranged for Sean from the Ealing Wildlife Group, based at Greenford, to give us a presentation on the work

their volunteers do to help protect local wildlife through conservation and education. Sean spoke about the reintroduction of beavers at Paradise Fields, why they are so important to the ecology of our waterways and how they were hunted almost to extinction. He also spoke about insects, bees, tiny harvest mice, Great Crested Newts and all

manner of fauna, flora, barn owls and birds. The group has also set up a nest for Peregrine falcons on the roof of a Ealing Hospital with live feed of 'Dusty' and 'Freddie' using the box. All this on our doorstep! Have a look at their website.

Yellow was the theme for our pennies charity and a basket of goodies and other prizes were donated by our members for our raffle. Daffodils on the tables brought the hope of Spring and our book swop continues to be popular. Once again we had a busy but excellent evening.

During the month our book club read the interesting life of *Becoming—Michelle Obama* and a visit to the Dogs Trust was made. Future visits to the Poppy Factory and Church Gardens in Harefield are planned.



# Digital Team

## Secure digital storage for your WI

Emma Watson

We're pleased to remind WIs that we have finally set up a place for **digital storage for your WI committee** on our MFWI SharePoint site.

This is long overdue and will allow your WI to store all its info in a shared space accessible by your officers (current and future), and which is backed up securely.

Access to this folder will be granted to the three officer accounts for your WI (President, Secretary, Treasurer) and the Programme Secretary account. (If you would like access to be available to all

committee members, we are suggesting that the 'non officers' share the Programme account.)

Your folder is private, too: only your officers and members of the Digital Team have access.

We're not dictating how the storage is used in terms of a file structure, however any WI which would like a suggested file structure (and I suspect many would like this), I'm happy to provide one.

This means no more worries about info saved on anyone's personal computer, tablet or phone. All officers will be able to access all Committee information at any time.

We are encouraging all WIs to use this, so please let me know if you'd like this set up for your WI, and any help in using it, please email me at [digitalteam@mfwj.org.uk](mailto:digitalteam@mfwj.org.uk).



## Hampton Tudor Rose

Linda Frise

After collecting and donating new and unused toiletries last summer, we invited Sarah Allen from The Hygiene Bank, Hampton to come along to our February meeting.



She gave a very interesting and informative talk on the charity and what happens to our donations.

The Hygiene Bank is a national charity and like many is run by volunteers in local communities.

The Hampton branch was set up in 2019 and in conjunction with charities and community partners, these include schools and foodbanks, they get hygiene products (soap, shampoo, toothpaste/brushes etc) to those who need them. It is a known fact that people in difficulty give up personal hygiene first.

Hygiene poverty affects 6% of adults in the UK, including low income households, the disabled, the bereaved, young adults, as well as the obvious, the homeless.

Check out the website [www.thehygienebank.com](http://www.thehygienebank.com) and find your nearest branch and drop off points for donations



## Finchley

Fiona MacSherry

It was a bonus to be together for International Woman's Day.

We tried our hand at needle felting spring chicks, led by in-house expert, Lorraine. It was certainly more difficult than it looked and proved an engaging task. The resulting birds were as diverse as us.



## Manor Farm

Patricia Harpur

The January Speaker, Colin Oakes, elaborated on the Chinese, Jewish and Hindu New Year celebrations. In England, a tall, dark stranger bearing gifts of coal, salt and cake should perform First Footing to ensure prosperity and convivial Wassailing is required for fruitful tree harvest.

Judy Karbritz was the very informative February Speaker on the origin of brand names of products still in production from Victorian times and the fact that there are 475 beans in a tin of Heinz!

March's speaker was Matron Jackie Scott on the history of the prestigious former St Vincent's Orthopaedic Hospital and the expansion of successful treatment for mobility, initially for crippled south London boys living on the streets, to girls and war wounded soldiers to ensure future employment. It even received royal recognition receiving an annual gift of daffodils from the monarch.

Our Pennies Competition for our Charity produced objects starting with X Y and Z!

## Sunbury Village

Debbie Levy

A huge thank you to Tanya Stafford from The Brigitte Trust who visited our WI to talk to us about the range of unique services that the Dorking-based charity offers people at their darkest times.

The Brigitte Trust is an independent registered charity offering a free service of emotional support and practical help from trained and supported volunteers. The service is for adults and their carers living in Surrey and facing the challenges of life-limiting conditions including cancer, Motor Neurone Disease and Multiple sclerosis and its services include Bereavement Support, Death Café, Neurological Support Group, Pets are Therapy and Coffin Club.

Tanya approached such a difficult subject in a very sympathetic way and give us all some suggestions on how we can help plan for our future in a sensitive manner. Members were extremely generous and we managed to raise £78.76 for a truly worthy cause.

Here is the link for further details:

[www.brigitte-trust.org](http://www.brigitte-trust.org)



## Harlington

Sarah Wilson

Members visited Reading using the new Elizabeth Line on a cold and windy Tuesday 28 March 2023.

We started out with a visit to Reading Museum ) to discover more about Reading's local history. The museum houses Britain's Bayeux Tapestry, and has a gallery dedicated to the 200-year history of Huntley and Palmer's biscuits.

After lunch in a local hostelry, a visit to The Oracle shopping centre meant a lot of happy ladies and if the shoe fits... buy it in every colour!





## Hayes Town & Harlington

Gill Wildman

17 ladies from both WIs visited Bletchley Park in Buckinghamshire, the Home of codebreaking, the World War II 'best kept

secret' where the codebreakers changed the course of history and shortened the war by about four years!

(a volunteer guide even wearing a 'coded' tie) telling us so much info. It is a shame that an icy wind got up, but good news that entry tickets lasts a year as there is so much to see.

Alan Turing, an exceptional mathematician, was the heart of Bletchley Park & head of the Naval Enigma Team. Leader of the codebreakers, he is considered to be the 'father of modern computing'. There was a multi-skilled workforce of 8000-9000 employed there, working three-shift pattern every day during the war, all under the Official Secrets Act and how lucky for us that the Germans never found the place.



The last hour of our visit, before we got the HCT bus back down the M1, we had Michael



## Laleham

Chris Walker

For our February meeting we invited a local speaker, Nick Pollard, who gave a very engaging talk on the history of Laleham village and how it has developed over the years.



In particular members were interested to hear about some of the old buildings which still survive today.

One of those buildings was the local hostelry where some of our members gathered recently for our WI spring meal.

This was kindly arranged by committee member Val Grove; we all enjoyed a lovely meal and a good night out!

## Southbourne

Jackie Head

This month we all had our brains teased with sudoku and crossword puzzles.

Neither were easy; there were moments of great silence whilst we concentrated on some very interesting and what seemed obscure questions.

We all enjoyed ourselves and it made a lovely change.

Mary Eastwell and Sandie Nunn (pictured), aka M&S, are our programme organisers and they do a wonderful job, so a big thank you to them.

'Silky' was our theme this month. There were some very pretty silk objects but the winner was a silk square and a blue elephant all the way from Thailand.



The Great War, showing us several interesting documents.

Lunch Club is going well, with more members attending each month.

Valerie Clarke was the next guest her subject The joy of English Paper Piecing and Liberty, Liberty being the fabric. With plenty of time and great devotion this must be the most relaxing activity ever, as the end result is quite remarkable.

We finished on a little sadder note: Susan Whitworth, our President for many a long year, is relocating, but not before first giving us all a tea and cake to celebrate the move. Good luck Sue, we'll miss you, from all at Sunbury on Thames WI.



## Sunbury on Thames

Barbara Draper

The meetings of Sunbury on Thames WI held in the Orange Room at Squires are always interesting, with our members tales and lots of general natter.

We had a really lively visit from three most charming police officers explaining how we could keep ourselves safer and providing us with some 'easy to use' personal alarms.

Quickly following on after tea and biscuits, the speaker, Richard Green told us about 1917/1918 happenings before the armistice of





## Stanwell

Marilyn Rix

Our meeting in March was a craft theme, and Fiona Bird took the meeting sharing her craft skills.

She provided equipment to make Easter cards, decorate bags for Easter to enable our members to fill with chocolate and return for our Tombola at the Easter coffee morning.

Jill Treeves crafted and treated all members with a very cute rabbit with a chocolate in his tummy. Mary Jeffery won the best decorated bag and card. Well done Mary and thank you to Fiona for a very relaxed evening of crafting.

Great night out for a well-earned break for the Stanwell WI committee team, and helpers.

We all enjoyed a very tasty Turkish meal at Flamm in Staines.

A few of our members enjoyed an afternoon at Abba Voyage held in the Olympic Park, London.

What a great show; we all loved it. Thank you to Patchwork tours for organising.



## West Drayton

Kay Crone

Welcome to the new year, 2023.

We have had a busy few months. At our January meeting we discussed the various resolutions and voted our preferences. We had an auction of unwanted Christmas gifts. Our auctioneer Liz Morrell did a very good job!



A new walking group had been set up which is very well attended, and our craft meetings which are held every month are thriving. We have had several new members join our group which is very encouraging.

In February the topic was caring and we welcomed the London Air Ambulance and their speakers Simon Pitts and Pippa Arnold. They explained the role of the air ambulance, how many staff are involved, the cost and the history. The air ambulance aims to be at the incident within 10 minutes. This is a charity organisation which runs alongside the NHS. New helicopters are needed and fundraising is ongoing. Question and answer session followed which was well received. This was a very interesting subject.

We are also arranging a litter pick, supporting the Great British Spring Clean organised by Keep Britain Tidy, later in March.



## Bedfont Belles

Jenny Hanrahan

We were very crafty at our meeting in March. Our committee provided all the materials to make a felt Easter chick, a woolly Easter chick and a bookmark, and if we chose to make a bookmark we could also choose a book to take home.



## 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



## 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.

We ask you to book to help us plan.

Queries and bookings

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

## Dabble Days

**MFWI Office, West Drayton**

Thursdays 10.30-15.30

*Members only*

*Fee payable in advance or on the day*

13 April

**Needle Felt Animal**

£10



17 August

**Paper Craft**

£6

19 October

**Silk Painting**

£10



18 May

**Glass Painting**

£6

15 June

**Encaustic Art**

£8

20 July

**Dream Catcher**

£6



16 November

**Suffolk Puffs**

£6

### Pat's Patchwork Retreat

Join former Denman tutor Pat Lumsdale at Denham Grove hotel, Uxbridge, 12-15 May 2023. Single en-suite occupancy, full board plus tea and coffee all day. Use of sewing room till late.

Limited places. £420.

For more information contact [patlumsdale@virginmedia.com](mailto:patlumsdale@virginmedia.com)