



Middlesex News

November 2023

theWI
INSPIRING WOMEN

Chair's Chat

Angela Chessman

Hello everyone

I hope this finds you well.

Now is the time when the mornings start to have their crisp, Autumnal feel, the leaves are falling, the scent of

bonfires is in the air and Summer is just a memory.

However, the recent storms remind us just how fragile our weather system is, and our thoughts are with those whose lives have been devastated by the recent floods.

I know that several WIs will be holding their Annual Meeting around this time, and I know that our Advisers are looking forward to visiting you.

Do have a chat with them if there is anything that you feel we could be doing for you at Federation - or of course you can always contact us direct.

In the last issue I mentioned what fun was had at a recent Group Meeting and I expressed the hope that more WIs would consider holding these events.

They really are a great way to get together with your fellow WIs.

I am pleased to hear that a couple of groups are considering this and I look forward to sharing any news with you.



*Emma Watson created this Newsletter for 50 issues and now you can get to know her a bit better in our new section "10 Questions with..."
Read more on page 9*



As the saying goes, the WI is what you make of it, and I have been interested to hear of the different groups within our WIs.

My own WI has recently started a new Book Club and Walking Group.

What does your WI do? Do you have any different or interesting groups?

It would be good if you could share your ideas with us – and some photos of course!

Our plans for an inter-WI quiz are going ahead, so maybe it's time to start brushing up on your general knowledge – more information to follow.

We are also busy planning for our Council Meeting in March.

We will be returning to Questors Theatre in Ealing and will hopefully again have some excellent speakers for you; we look forward to seeing you there.

Finally, October is the start of the new 200+ Club year and I am pleased to let you know that we will be continuing to offer the same four prizes and a Bursary, whose winner will be announced at the Council Meeting.

Have a good month.

Angela

Newsletter deadlines >>> see page 2

WI BIRTHDAYS



*Happy birthday to our WIs
celebrating in November*

North West London 13 November 2007
Stroud Green 15 November 2011

Chairs Challenge

We are reviving the Chair's Challenge, with the winning entry to be announced at next year's Middlesex Federation Annual Council Meeting on 25th March 2024.

We would like to ask members to design a logo to be embroidered on a new Federation Tablecloth. (We will purchase a reasonably heavyweight cotton/linen tablecloth to fit a 6' table).

The design should be the central focus on the front of a 6' tablecloth.. It should incorporate the MFWI logo and anything else is up to the individual designer. A possible border/edging design should be included.

Member entries are to be submitted to their WIs by 31st December 2023. Please contact secretary@mfwl.org.uk for a copy of the logo.

200+ CLUB

The October draw, the first of the new competitive year, will be drawn at the end of the month with winners announced in next month's issue.

The club is now closed for 2023-24, but keep an eye out for the winners in every newsletter and do consider joining in 2024-25.

Best of luck to all who have joined this year!

GET IN TOUCH

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Newsletter Info

Please send articles (maximum 150 words please) and photos (largest size possible, as separate attachments, please) to 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

- * Dec 2023 issue: 17 Nov
- * Feb 2024 issue: 19 Jan
- * Mar 2024 issue: 23 Feb

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, selected stories are occasionally featured on the [news page](#) of our website.



Bedfont Belles

Jenny Hanrahan

Sometimes an AGM can be a bit tedious and boring but necessary. Well, ours wasn't. Thank you to Sarah Endersby who came to officiate. Our existing committee were willing to continue, and Chris was once again chosen to be our president. What a great team they are!

We had great fun later as we made Halloween decorations. It was like being at school again getting sticky fingers and putting

pieces of paper in places to try and resemble what we were supposed to be making. However, a member who had worked in a school for many years and was helping us, commented that it was worse than trying to teach nursery children! We had fun.

Hampton Hub invited us to their ABBA event. A buffet (of course), a quiz (very tricky), entertainment by Fernando (no comment) and a boogie (necessary after the buffet). Surprisingly our Bedfont Belles team won the quiz and each of us received a prize - chocolates, biscuits, or tea. A really enjoyable time.



Greenford

Trish Quinlan

Last week, a few of us visited the Charles Dickens Museum near Russell Square and what a gem it is... The property next door is also included in the tour as it houses a special exhibition on the London fogs of the 1950s and the horrendous effect, they had on Londoners health. There is also an extensive gift shop.

Five floors of Charles Dickens life in one property. Although Dickens was born in Portsmouth, he spent many years of his life in and around London.

The house in Doughty Street was his residence while he and his wife Dora had three children but as he eventually had 10, it became rather cramped.

The house boasts much of his elegant furniture, including his writing desk where many a character was created, some based on his earlier life as his father was in Marshalsea Debtors Prison, necessitating the young Charles to work in a blacking factory aged 12 to help feed the family.



He certainly saw the harsh Victorian conditions at first hand. He was eventually able to attend school and become a solicitor's clerk before publishing serialisation of some of his stories. and as an insomniac, he would



write up to 7000 words a day, from newspaper articles to his famous books.

Aged only 26, the wonderful *Oliver Twist* is published, and many more gems followed which are still around today in films and tv shows. His death in 1870 certainly left a huge whole in literature but what a legacy he left. He was fittingly buried in Westminster Abbey.

Following our tour, we enjoyed a nice lunch in the garden which has many notable sponsors who assist with the upkeep of this gem of a property.

Ashford

Wendy Kislingbury

19 ladies from Ashford WI recently enjoyed a trip to Windsor Theatre to see Calendar Girls. It was a brilliant performance enjoyed by everybody. We are now in the planning stages for another theatre trip.

At our monthly Craft morning, our members made padded coat hangers. A bit fiddly to make but everybody succeeded and went home with a welcome addition to their wardrobe.



Southbourne

Jackie Head

On a dry day in September, a few of us went on our monthly walk.

We strolled around Ruislip Lido, stopping for a chat, coffee, and cake, and in the case of Mary (pictured below), a little exercise.

Our October meeting on 3rd October had a wonderful speaker, Sian Bourn from the Dogs Trust in Harefield. She was very interesting, enthusiastic, and reiterated they welcome visits.

We also had a most successful cake, jam, and chutney sale. I do believe there will be an extra pound or two on some of our hips with the amount sold.

Our theme this month was green which was won by Brenda with a very glittery green Christmas bauble.



Hanwell

Julie Winstock

It has been a busy month for Hanwell WI. We celebrated our 10th birthday in October and to mark the occasion we enjoyed a slice or two of delicious cake and a glass of bubbly. Three of our original WI ladies who were there at the beginning cut the cake for us. A fun evening and many suggested we continue to celebrate like this each month for the foreseeable future!

Also in October, following on from a most informative talk by Eel Pie Museum many of us visited the museum in Twickenham. We had an enjoyable private tour and afterwards had lunch at the nearby Eel Pie pub. Several ladies recounted stories of their own visits to concerts on Eel Pie Island. A real trip down memory lane!



Laleham

Chris Walker

Autumn was welcomed in at our last meeting with a special produce-based raffle organised as usual by Kim Sherwood.

Here are two of the lucky winners Jayne and Val collecting their prizes.

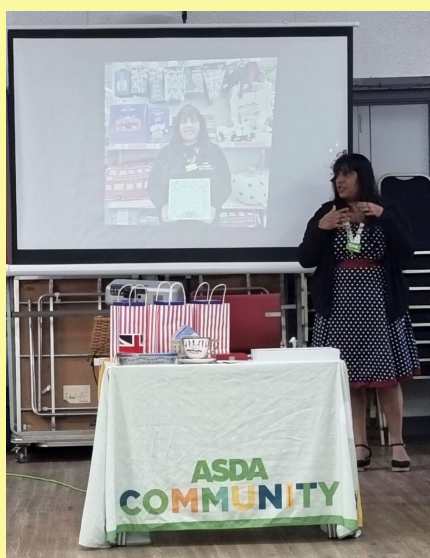


Have you seen...

the National Federation's new promotional video?

They created it to celebrate WI Day, you can share it with your friends and family to share the love of the WI.

[WI Promotional Video - YouTube](#)



Hayes Town

Gill Wildman

Our Oct meeting brought Samantha de Souza BEM, the Asda community champion!

Sam and Geoff, an Asda driver, were awarded an invite to the King's Coronation in recognition of their work in the community.

Our crafters made her fascinator also a post box topper inside the store.

Sam's day started at 4am, she stayed overnight at the Mayfair hotel. That day there were no free taxis and no buses, so they had to make their way by underground and then on foot. Just before the press tent there was a mad rush for the portaloos to tidy hair and reapply lipstick (not Geoff).

Apart from the Royals all guests sat in mixed seats and levels, no reservations. They were given a large order of service booklet detailing when and what to respond and who the dignitaries were. As Sam told her story we were in Westminster Abbey with her; it was a very exciting and emotional day for them.

Hayes town craft members unveiled a 'Tickled Pink' post box topper and spent an hour in Asda encouraging shoppers to donate to the Cancer charity which totalled £66. Well done ladies & Sam de Souza, Asda community champion.



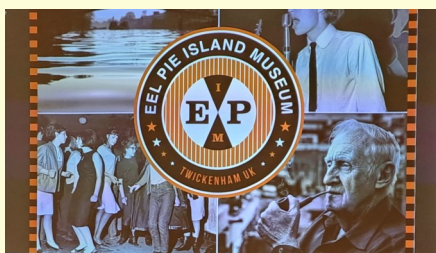
Teddington

Shelagh Laing

Teddington WI enjoyed an educational, entertaining and very engaging evening of the Island's complex stories with Celia Holman of the Eel Pie Island Museum at our September Meeting

Tethered to the Thames at Twickenham Embankment by a slim arched footbridge, Eel Pie Island has a long and surprising history.

It is home to four of the 16 working boatyards of the tidal Thames, a thriving community of resident artists who regularly open their studios to the public, and one of the oldest Rowing Clubs in the UK. Charles Dickens was a regular visitor to the area and sent a number of his fictional characters to the Island where some danced to a 'locomotive band'.

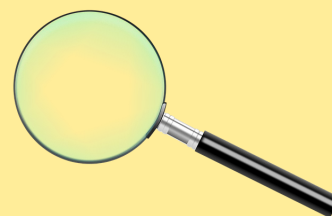


In the Sixties, many thousands danced in the ballroom of the Eel Pie Hotel. In the 1950's the Hotel was a jazz venue, and 'new' music promoters used the location for their up-and-coming acts.

The Rolling Stones were the resident band on Wednesday evenings in 1963, David Bowie and Eric Clapton debuted there, and Reg Dwight was in the audience. Rod Stewart was discovered busking at Twickenham Station – where all the musicians would hear him as they travelled to and from London.

Ingenuity and creativity have been the lifeblood of the Island. Trevor Bayliss who invented the clockwork radio and torch lived on the island.

The first Daimler engines were used in boatbuilding on the Island in the late 1800s, which gave birth to refined engine and car manufacturing in the UK.



Greenford

Trish Quinlan

Chris Truran, a retired Scenes of Crime Officer of 40 years standing in the police, gave a very interesting talk. He began by tracing the history of fingerprinting which had been touched upon since the 16th century and then William Herschel, a scientist and magistrate in India whose illiterate staff, would sign their pay receipts with a thumb print.

He soon realised that everyone was different, so this warranted investigation. In 1901, Sir Edward Henry then perfected the use of fingerprints in crime detection as it was then confirmed, amazingly that no two people in the world have the same fingerprints.

Chris gave us examples of past crimes where the perpetrators thought they had escaped justice, only to be captured later when fingerprints were found at the crime scene.

There are now no paper files as in 1995 the database of 600,000 fingerprints is computerised and once on record, they are there to foil any future misdemeanours.

This breakthrough in crime detection meant that even the tiniest sample of human cells can prove guilt.

Stroud Green

Christine Gregory

We heard from Committee member Michele about the WI's Clean Rivers for People and Wildlife campaign. Falling in the WI Week of River Action, 11-18 September, Michele's talk was topical. We learned about the crisis facing our rivers, the Clean Rivers for People and Wildlife campaign launched by the WI and what we can all do to improve the health of our local rivers.

We watched a passionate appeal by pop star and campaigner against river pollution, Fergal

Sharkey, about improving our river water and campaigning to reduce the pollution entering our rivers. He says, "We have basically been destroying every single river in our country". That "Just 14 per cent of our rivers are in a good ecological condition" and "unless there is a serious intervention by 2027 that number will have dropped to just 6 per cent".

[Fergal Sharkey's appeal for rivers](#)

We heard about the alarming future shortage of drinking water and water in general if the UK fails to clean up its rivers, doesn't stop extracting water from rivers and doesn't build more reservoirs.

Members suggested contacting the New River Action Group and the River Moselle Group to find out how we could support their activities.



Fergal Sharkey On How To Protect The UK's Rivers | Country Living UK



Harlington

Sarah Wilson

Twenty-one Harlington members enjoyed a lively Beetle Drive after their Annual meeting held on 4th October.

Members sat in four and played in pairs with the youngest rolling the dice first. Play continued in a clockwise direction, with players throwing the dice in turn and drawing body parts of the beetle depending on the number they had thrown.



It did get a bit heated as we all raced to get as many body parts drawn as possible. We played in pairs with a tie for first place.

A visitor new to the WI was in attendance, and one birthday girl Vicky celebrates a birthday this month. As always delicious homemade cake was available when we stopped for refreshments.

A recent outing to Whitstable was discussed, along with this month's good read chosen by Kathy. Future outings were discussed and a theatre trip to the Garrick to see Hamlet in the new year.



Halliford

Liz Davies

We started our Tuesday morning walks during 2020 when we were allowed to socialise... three metres apart... in the COVID lockdown.

Since then, we have walked on most Tuesdays. We car share to travel from home and then walk for between 2 and 5 miles, usually ending at a cafe for refreshments. We have walked from Chertsey Meads, Cowey Sale, Bushy Park, Bedfont Lakes, Fordbridge Park, Molesey, Homewood Park, Staines Moor, Esher common and National Trust Claremont, among others.

We have been watching the developments at Shepperton Studios and were recently able to complete the whole new walk which has enhanced the riverside area with seats, new planting, and a replacement bridge.

We hope to continue with our familiar walks, watching the seasons change, and to travel further afield to enjoy more of the area.



Ruislip Evening

Sandy Channon

Our October meeting was busy. Our speaker this month was Richard Kownicki CBE, the Chairman (retired) of the Polish Airforce Memorial Committee, his father a Polish airman came to England, via France, at the beginning of the Second World War after Poland was invaded by the Germans.

Richard spoke to us of the 18,000 (over 2,000 died) Polish men and women who served in the Polish squadrons of the RAF and the invaluable part they played in the Battle of Britain.

The Polish War Memorial, situated beside the A40, was originally unveiled in 1948, in 2002 it became a Grade II listed building, and a garden was opened behind the memorial in 2015. Richard gave us such an interesting, informative history of the Memorial.

With Remembrance Day next month, Lorraine provided ideas and wires for wreaths, we prepared air clay Christmas shaped decorations to be painted next month.

We even managed to fit in a raffle, book swap and a spikey theme pennies collection in aid of our Charity, won by Hazel with holly.

Our book club (currently reading *The Essex Serpent*) arranged a sponsored walk by most of our group around the Lido. The walk was also in aid of our charity and collected more than £400 for them.



Ditloids

Example: 24 H in a D = 24 Hours in a Day

Can you solve the puzzles below:

52 C in a P	
7 W of the W	
6 W of H the E	
32 P on a CB	
360 D in a C	
240 O P in a P	
13 in a BD	
26 L of the A	

Dingbats

Example: DR. do
(Answer = Doctor Dolittle)

Can you solve these puzzles?

MIND
MATTER

BAN ANA

ICE³

Guess the famous landmark and its country



Answers to all the puzzles will be in the next issue...

or email Georgina at newsletter@mfwl.org.uk if you cannot wait that long!

Emma Watson

WI Credentials

I joined The Alexandra WI in Muswell Hill in 2013, was co-opted into the committee soon after and served four years as President and two as Treasurer, before moving to Stroud Green WI, a little closer to home, in 2021.

My Federation involvement began in 2019 when I took over production of the Middlesex News, and I joined the Board of Trustees in 2020. I've been the Digital Team Lead since 2019, and until 2023 also looked after social media and the MFWI website. I'm now happily sharing much of this work with our Federation Secretary George Glynn.



1. What inspired you to join the WI?

I'd moved into a new area, after meeting a few members at a stall in my local high street, and thought it would be a great way to meet local women. My grandmother (and mother) had been very active in the CWA (Country Women's Association) in Australia, so the concept was not a new one for me.

2. Which woman inspires you the most?

Not one specific woman, but every woman who has gone against the grain, been true to herself and challenged what it really is to be a woman.

Thanks for all the work you did on the newsletter Emma!

3. What are your hobbies/interests?

Just about any aspect of design, cryptic crosswords, language learning (currently Japanese, Italian, Norwegian, Dutch), photography, and I'm hooked on podcasts (recs? 99% *invisible*, *Freakonomics*, *Love Letters* and *Conversations* from ABC Radio).

4. What was the last book you read?

My brain is no longer wired for reading proper books, but I'm working through *Beyond the Story: 10 Year Record of BTS*.

5. What is your favourite film?

I could never pick just one, but a few (very different!) faves from across the decades: *My Beautiful Laundrette*, *Lost in Translation*, *Carol*, *The Favourite*, *Parasite*.

6. Music choices ?

These days it's mostly k-pop: my faves are BTS, Stray Kids and The Rose.

7. What is your most memorable holiday?

My first visit to Central Australia: nothing could have prepared me for the deep spiritual experience of seeing Uluru.

8. Best biscuit to dunk in tea/coffee?

Camp gingersnap 4 ever!

9. Where would you love to visit but haven't yet?

Japan: I can't believe I've not actually been there yet.

10. Marmite?

Yes! But as an Aussie I grew up with Promite, which is a glossier and slightly sweeter version of Marmite. Is Marmite superior to Vegemite? Maybe so (controversial!).



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



Dabble Days

MFWI Office, West Drayton

Thursdays 10.30-15.30

16 November
Suffolk Puffs

£6

14 December
Decoupage
Christmas Bottle

£8



Members only. Fee payable in advance or on the day

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: Please contact Federation Secretary.

We ask you to book to help us plan.

Queries and bookings

To book, mail craft@mfwi.org.uk or call Lorraine on 01895 676 105 or call/text on 07976 398 533.

More...

Resolutions 2023-24

After the recent NFWI Resolutions Shortlist Selection meeting, we can now share the final shortlist, chosen by members and Federation delegates. The shortlist is:

1. Dental Health Matters
2. Impact of poor housing conditions
3. Say 'no' to gambling advertising
4. Improving outcomes for women in the criminal justice system

Start to have a think about which one you might want to vote for. More information will be sent from National office soon.

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Speakers

Have you tried one of the speakers from the new speakers directory?

If you have, how were they? Reviews and feedback of the speakers included are always welcome so we can assure they are the best match for our WIs.

Have you had a speaker that was so good you want everyone to know about them?

Let me know so I can get in contact with them and ask whether they want to be included.

