



# Middlesex News

## December 2023

theWI  
INSPIRING WOMEN

### Chair's Chat

Angela Chessman

Hello everyone

Welcome to our last newsletter of the year!

By the time this reaches you I am sure a lot of us will be making our Christmas plans.

I remember that this time last year we were all worrying about the increases in energy and food prices; unfortunately, those worries haven't gone away, and I hope that you will be able to celebrate in a way that is meaningful for you.

It has been a pleasure to attend a few WI Birthday parties this year—it has been great to meet you all and see just what the WI means to you and your fellow members.

Every WI is different but one thing you all have in common – you all know how to have a good time!

Looking back, a highlight for me was our Annual Council Meeting in Ealing. It was the first 'live' meeting since Covid, and we were a bit worried whether members would be happy to meet in large numbers again.

However, it was a great success, and we received some excellent feedback about the venue and our fabulous speakers.



*The brilliant Betsie Bellington of Stanwell WI looking splendid while celebrating her 99th Birthday!*  
*Read more on page 3.*



I'm happy to say that we will be returning to Questors Theatre on 25th March next year and I really hope that we will see even more of you there.

Leading on from this, I would again like to ask you all to think about joining your Board of Trustees. We would love to hear from anyone who is interested in becoming more involved in the running of the Federation.

A Federation is just like an individual WI; we need new members and new ideas to keep things fresh and forward-looking and ensure we are representing all parts of our communities.

The main commitment would be attending our monthly Board meetings; this can be in person or via Teams, so it doesn't matter where in the area you live. We really would welcome your ideas, so please give it some thought and get in touch with any Board Member if you would like more information.

Congratulations to everyone who won a prize from our 200+ Club. I am pleased to say that we have been able to keep to four prizes per month and offer an educational Bursary, the winner of which will be announced at the Council meeting in March.

Unfortunately, once again 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 Board of Trustees, WI Advisers and Representatives at Middlesex Federation 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

## 200+ CLUB



Happy birthday to our WI  
celebrating in November

Clay Hill 7 December 1938

Let us know how you will be celebrating!

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

### October 2023

1st prize - £80  
Lorraine Reed, Ruislip Evening

2nd prize - £60  
Mary Jeffery, Stanwell

3rd prize - £40  
Fiona MacSherry, Finchley

4th prize - £20  
Marie Moore, West Drayton

### November 2023

1st prize - £40  
Diane Williams, HA

2nd prize - £30  
Betsie Bellington, Stanwell

3rd prize - £20  
West Drayton WI

4th prize - £10  
Margaret Wootten, Bedfont Belles



## GET IN TOUCH

### COUNTY OFFICE

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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 [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 2024 issue: 19 Jan
- \* Mar 2024 issue: 23 Feb
- \* Apr 2024 issue: 22 Mar

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.



## Stanwell

Marilyn Rix

The croquet group held its last afternoon tea of the season at the Weybridge Garden centre in their Blue Diamond patisserie, wonderful afternoon tea enjoyed by 20 members. Betsie Bellington had her 99th birthday, a truly remarkable lady who invited all WI members to her house for drinks nibbles and birthday cake. Happy birthday Betsie.

Stanwell WI have worked tirelessly to raise money for a new bench on the village green to commemorate the coronation of King Charles III.

The new bench and our beautifully kept war memorial makes the village green look amazing, big thank you to Mary Jeffery who



takes great pride in keeping the memorial to a high standard that residents appreciate.

We were delighted that Spelthorne in Bloom 2023 awarded Stanwell WI winner for the best kept war memorial and 3rd place for Stanwell Village Hall for best kept public building.

The speaker at the November meeting was Nick Pollard who gave a very interesting talk on the Gunpowder plot and Lord Knyvett of Stanwell, with local fireworks going off in the background seemed appropriate during Nick's talk. This was also our AGM; Gillian Woodward was voted once again as our president and all committee members agreed

to stay except Brenda Mason who decide after 13 years she would like to step down. Brenda was given a Christmas cactus for all her hard work organizing speakers for our entertainment. Well done Brenda and a huge thank you.

9th Nov the walking group enjoyed a short walk in Shepperton, we walked a couple of miles around the Studio walk, River Ash. Weather was very pleasant, a bit muddy in places but very enjoyable.



## Ashford

Wendy Kislingbury

Members of Ashford WI have been busy all year knitting poppies for our Remembrance Day display in Ashford Town. We have sewn approximately 500 poppies onto plastic mesh ready to cover an arch around the Tommy Soldier memorial. The handmade poppy wreath will be laid on the war memorial on Remembrance Sunday.



## Greenford

Trish Quinlan

Our Treasurer Jackie Johnston laid our WI wreath at the Greenford Memorial on Sunday for Armistice Day. She was joined by many other contributors along with a crowd showing their usual respect for this special day.







## Sunbury on Thames

Barbara Draper

Sunbury on Thames WI has had a busy autumn, with successful theatre trips and two thriving reading groups. There were also eating events with coffee morning, afternoon tea and the most successful ploughman's lunch provided by our Chair Jackie Mayall. Bob Brewer was our guest speaker with "Life as a film and TV extra". That seemed a great way to enjoy yourself and get paid for doing so.

The October meeting started off on a more serious note as it was our AGM, Committee members elected and to see all's fair Carol Sullivan attended. A raffle with monies going to The Greeno Centre towards the Christmas Lunch was well supported.

After a welcome tea break, two delightful Ladies, Jean Perry and Debra Lee showed us the art of making a Christmas table decoration but also supplied the materials.



## Stroud Green

Christine Gregory

We ended October's meeting with a Blind Taste Test. Too salty? Not crisp enough? Cloying? Moreish? "Fairly disgusting!" "I really like these." "No idea, I'll have to try some more!" - these were just some of the comments!

Much deliberation and pondering accompanied the careful tasting of four foods—salted crisps, oat cakes, Cheddar cheese and 70-75% dark chocolate—and one drink—apple juice—as members ranked their favourites and tried to guess the make of each from a list of makers / supermarket brands. There were some surprises and some good guesses.



## Southbourne

Jackie Head

This month we had our AGM. We also had a couple of stalls selling items that our craft group had made. This included Christmas decorations and handmade Christmas cards. Photos are of Elaine Wigington and Patricia Coney, a couple of the members who helped sell the crafts.

We also had great fun playing the Chinese raffle which we all liked.

This month our theme was 'wood' and Joan Poulton won this with an exquisite wooden Russian Doll.





## Laleham

Chris Walker



Happy 88th Birthday to Laleham WI!

At our October meeting members celebrated the 88th birthday of our WI branch. As usual, we met at The Village Hall in Laleham which has been the venue for meetings since the beginning—1935.

Members enjoyed a fish and chip supper and birthday cake and a local Ukulele band “The



Ukulaleham” provided great entertainment for the evening.

Longest serving members Val Griffiths (92) and Betty Davey (90) are shown here with our president Helen Hurst.



## Sunbury Village

Debbie Levy

On a slight damp autumnal morning a group of our WI members took to the streets and riverbank in Sunbury Village for a litter pick.

The location was chosen to support the clean rivers campaign. Pickers, bags, and tabards were provided via Spelthorne Borough Council.



We even had Spelthorne Litter Pickers hi viz jackets, thank you Pam Ibrahim for organising the kit and Claire Corrigan for the promotion, great moving poster.

Some interesting items were picked. Lysa White won best pick for the designer pants.

We finished the pick with a coffee and breakfast at Surplus to Supper in support of one of our local chosen charities.

For every breakfast bought another is donated. It was a great morning; well done everyone.





## The Alexandra

Christine Randall

The Alexandra WI had a particularly enjoyable October meeting, when local Muswell Hill resident Charlotte from Astrid Bakery came to tell us about starting her own bakery business, operating from her home.



She explained how much she enjoyed learning to bake, and how she started off by delivering breakfast boxes filled with treats, at first around Muswell Hill and then more widely. Her experience so far has encouraged her to open a bakery and shop in Muswell Hill, we are sure it will be a great success. We are all looking forward to visiting her there.

Charlotte very generously brought delicious doughnuts for us to sample, and sticky toffee pudding to take away. You can see from the photo that we thoroughly enjoyed tasting them.

We like this photo so much that we are submitting it as our entry to the 150th year celebration of Alexandra Palace. The Palace has invited everyone to submit a photo of their Ally Pally story, for inclusion in a permanent artwork *By the People: 150 Lifetimes*. We meet in the old railway station building in the Palace

grounds so as the local WI we want our story included.

If you haven't visited, it is well worth coming to see the Palace and Park.

There are great views over London, the BBC started television broadcasting from here, a recently discovered Victorian theatre runs a variety of performances, and there are a variety of large-scale events held in the main hall all year.



And you are welcome to join one of our meetings!



## RESOLUTIONS

You're invited to an open meeting to discuss the 2024 shortlisted resolutions.

The meeting will take place on Teams on Wednesday 10 January at 7:30pm and all members are welcome.

Pros and cons of the four shortlisted resolutions, Dental Health Matters, Impact of poor housing conditions, Say no to online gambling and Improving outcomes for women in the Criminal Justice System will be discussed so you will then be on your way to making an informed decision for voting.



## Are you using your MFWI Microsoft 365 account?

Each WI is allocated four accounts: President, Treasurer, Secretary and Programme Secretary, giving access to a MFWI email address and a safe, secure location for of files (accounts, photos, programme info). Why use this rather than a personal email address?

- When an officer steps aside, handover to the incoming officer is seamless. *There is no risk of lost information.*
- Should a committee member not be able to access emails (due to illness, holidays, technical reasons or otherwise) other committee members can be given access. This can be a great relief and save much time and potentially awkward situations.
- Forgotten your password or having problems accessing info? *We can help.* If you are using a personal email address, and especially a shared one, we are unlikely to be able to assist.

- Your emails and files are stored securely on the Microsoft server in the 'cloud' and can be accessed from any device.
- Finally, our regular mailings are only sent to MFWI email addresses, so your WI will be missing out on vital WI information.

*Questions?*

Need a refresher? Contact [secretary@mfwi.org.uk](mailto:secretary@mfwi.org.uk) or call the office.



## NFWI ACM 2024 Royal Albert Hall Tickets

*Are you interested in going to the 2024 NFWI Annual Meeting at the Royal Albert Hall?*

If you are, you need to get your name into the ballot so you are in for a chance of getting one of the tickets to attend this incredible event at an iconic venue.

Send an email to [secretary@mfwi.org.uk](mailto:secretary@mfwi.org.uk)



## Greenford

Trish Quinlan

The History of Photography and 40 years of Kodak—the name taken by a random Scrabble word by George Eastman, its founder...

Tony began by showing us the very first photo ever made by Niepce in 1827, a grainy street scene. This was followed by another Frenchman Daguerre in 1839 who developed further photos using mercury, not a healthy environment to work in.

The wet plate process followed by Scott Archer then our own Fox Talbot, a scientist and inventor produced photos with negatives, a truly pioneering move. Tony had some wonderful old photos of Fleet Street, Holborn, and Westminster Abbey around 1879 when Ilford was the biggest company in the world making photography equipment.

Soon, due to public demand, Kodak brought out basic cameras making photography available to the masses, one of which was a camera that could take 100 photos which were sent to the company for developing and were returned without the camera, making the purchase of another camera necessary. The first Kodak office was in Clerkenwell but as the company grew, moves to larger premises in Kingsway, Hemel Hempstead and Harrow Weald were necessary.

We also learnt of the old techniques in the production of film and the hundreds of employees involved until gradually new methods were employed and eventually, due to the digital age, the old Kodak factory was demolished, the area now a huge housing estate.

Tony brought along many old cameras and gave our group lots of technical information so provided a good insight to the early world of photography.



## Teddington

Shelagh Laing

The numbers 1, 3, 5, 8 were the key Teddington WI Members Evening in November. What were we up to? Community sudoku? Single figure bingo? No, it was floristry—Autumn Arrangements in a tin can.

It turns out using the Fibonacci sequence of numbers gives proportional balance to a display, purposefully moving the eye around the foliage to the flowers.

Sam, our Florist, talked us through the principles of line, flow and focus of small arrangements and showed us how to create a big impact in a small can with colour, texture and only one or two blooms.

Buckets of gold, green and bronze foliage of every shape and size filled the floor.

Chicken wire was carefully crushed into recycled food cans to hold our arrangements firmly in place. Colourful foliage was wrestled in, hauled out and repositioned to hopefully create elegant lines and intriguing spaces to draw the eye to the finely placed blooms.

Dahlias, chrysanthemums, and kangaroo paw sprays were cut to size with snips and secateurs and pushed into pride of place. Well, that was the plan....

Some simple rules; a few leaf stems of various colours, shapes, and textures; an upcycled tin can, perhaps a single bloom; some gentle encouragement between Members; and a little trial and error were our ingredients for a very satisfying and creative evening.

Fair to say the function room floor was quickly covered in offcuts of everything, and as ever, the evening was completed with filling bin bags, rearranging furniture, sweeping the floor, and promising each other we'd be doing this at home very soon indeed.





## Missing Letters—Christmas food and drink

Name these popular Christmas food and drinks by filling in the missing letters.

_U_K_Y	Turkey
_U_B_E _N _Q_E_K	
_O_B_E _R_A_	
_O_S _O_A_O_S	
_H_R_Y	
_I_C_ _I_S	
_U_L_E _I_E	
_U_E _O_	
_I_G_R_R_A_	

## Maths Riddle

Tracey has a box of baubles that she uses to decorate her tree each year.

All of them are blue, except for six.

All of them are green, except for six.

All of them are red, except for six.

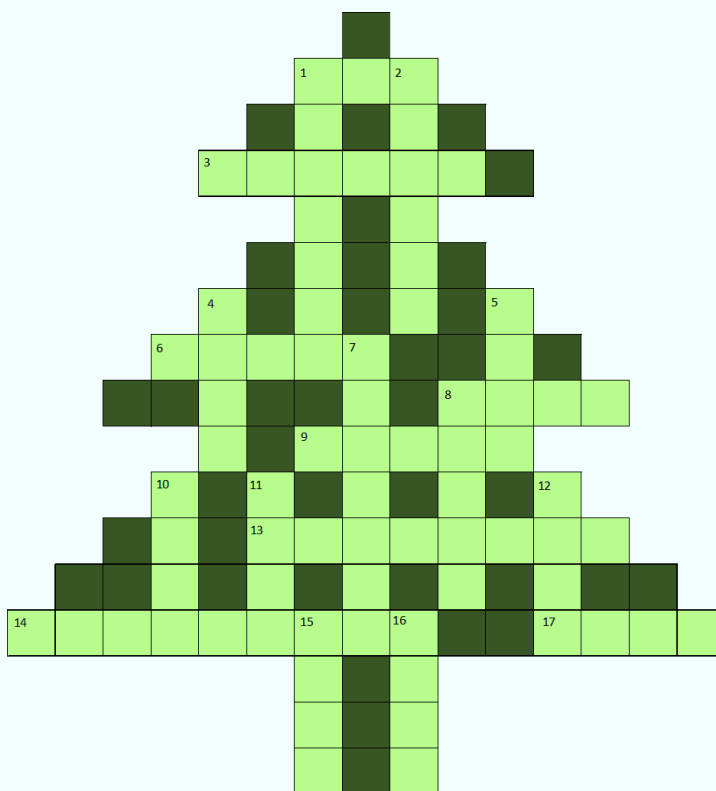
How many of each coloured baubles does Tracey have?



## Christmas Crossword

### Across

1. Mince
3. Father Christmas Transport
6. Celebration
8. Infant
9. Father Christmas' helpers
13. Give Praise
14. Words on 4 down
17. \_\_\_\_\_, Frankincense & Myrrh



### Down

1. Under the tree
2. Milk Punch
4. Folded gift
5. Short Christmas
7. Burnt for 12 days
8. "Jingle \_\_\_\_\_"
10. Dark green needles
11. Wise men
- 12.. What carollers do
15. Christmas Carol
16. Short stockings

## Answers from last issue:

### Ditloids:

1. 52 cards in a pack
2. 7 wonders of the world
3. 6 wives of Henry the Eighth
4. 32 pieces on a chess board
5. 360 degrees in a circle
6. 240 old pennies in a pound
7. 13 in a bakers dozen
8. 26 letters of the alphabet

### Dingbat:

1. Mind over matter
2. Banana split
3. Ice cube

### Landmarks:

1. Petronas Twin Towers—Malaysia
2. Easter Island—Chile
3. Blackpool Tower—England
4. Victoria Falls—Zimbabwe and Zambia
5. Mont Saint Michel—France

Answers to all the puzzles will be in the next issue or email Georgina at [newsletter@mfwi.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@mfwi.org.uk) if you cannot wait that long!



## Georgina Glynn

### WI Credentials

I have now been the Federation Secretary for 1 year and 3 months... Wow that's gone quick!

I deal with the day to day running of the Federation. I answer the phone, reply to emails and open the post, with a few things sprinkled in between. I also deal with membership enquiries, the speaker directory and have been editing the newsletter for a couple of months now.

Oh... and most importantly, I am the treat provider at the Board of Trustee meetings!



### 1. What inspired you to join the WI?

*Calendar Girls* the movie... just joking! Although everyone has asked me, since being at the WI, whether all I do is make jam and sing *Jerusalem*, I say of course not, cake is involved too!

On a serious note, I had just graduated university and I was looking for a job but wasn't quite ready to jump into the corporate finance world like everyone expected me to do. An advert for an office administrator at the WI came to my attention and I thought that it would be a great opportunity for me to see what working in an office is like, as all I've ever done is lifeguard. Luckily I got the job and I've loved every minute, I've learnt so much and met some incredible people. I wake up excited to go to work, not many people can say that. I just wish I could come in more days!

### 2. Which woman inspires you the most?

That's easy: my mum, she's incredible! She's super caring, supportive and funny.

If I turn out to be half the person she is, I would consider that a win in life.

### 3. What are your hobbies/interests?

I love sports. I'll watch (commentate) and play most sports but my main love is rugby, especially when the women play! I used to play myself and it is something I'm hoping to get back into.

Also I really love movies. I try to watch 100 movies, that I haven't seen, each year. Suggestions are always welcome.

Can't forget about my passion for food. Cooking it, growing it, and learning about it. I love that every human needs it but we all have different relationships with it. I have a huge passion for sustainability of food, ensuring our future is delicious but affordable.

### 4. What was the last book you read?

Ermm skip. Not a reader.

### 5. What is your favourite film?

That's tough. Can you really ask a film fan for a favourite. (She says after writing the questions...)

### 6. Music choices ?

Music is very big in my life. I don't think a day goes by without it.

I love a song you can sing and dance to. It could be pop, R&B or country doesn't matter as long as I can have a little bop to it.

### 7. What is your most memorable holiday?

Malaysia! It wasn't technically a holiday it was an academic excursion at university but it was the best trip ever! I'd never left Europe before so the culture change was huge but I fell in love with Asia immediately.

I hope to travel all over the world in the future.

### 8. Best biscuit to dunk in tea/coffee?

Not a fan of hot beverages but I do love a Jammie Dodger.

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

Antarctica. They do a cruise there and you get the chance to sleep outside on the ice and kayak in the ocean. Most people's nightmare but my dream.

Pennies are being saved.

### 10. Marmite?

Absolutely!

## 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



**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.

Bank transfers: Please contact Federation Secretary.

We ask you to book to help us plan.

**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.

## Public Affairs

Human Rights Day is an important event in the world calendar, celebrated in December each year, commemorating the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

This was created to protect universal human rights, with dignity and equality in rights for all regardless of race, colour, religion, sex, language, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, or other status.

But, across the world, currently there are a series of challenges to it.

Wars, Covid, famine, climate change, racism and many other challenges undermine basic

### Human Rights Day 2023

Clare Taylor



human rights, forcing people out of their homes and away from their livelihoods with nowhere to go. Unwanted; no basic rights.

Many WI campaigns address human rights issues, some obviously, others less so but still effectively: Climate Change, Stop Modern Slavery, No More Violence, Fair Trade, Care not Custody and many others.

Human Rights Day has its own date in the WI Campaigns Calendar.

See <https://mywi.thewi.org.uk> if you're not familiar with it and check out the section about public affairs and campaigns.

This year is the 75th anniversary of the Declaration, and a good time to celebrate WI campaigns and to think about how we all can make a difference in helping everyone be treated fairly.