



Middlesex News

February 2024

theWI
INSPIRING WOMEN

Chair's Chat

Angela Chessman

Hello – and a Happy New Year to you all.

However you celebrate, I hope that you had a wonderful Christmas and are looking forward to what the new year has to bring. Have you made any new year resolutions? Have you broken them??

Like a lot of people, one of mine is to get more exercise, but I just can't seem to find that gym membership application form...Ah well.

By now, most of you will have had discussions with your WIs about this year's Resolutions and perhaps some of you managed to join the online Resolutions presentation.

I hope that you have now made your choice; please ensure your votes are with County Office by 11th February.

You should all by now have received information about this year's Annual Council Meeting on 25th March – we have kept the venue the same as last year, Questors Theatre in Ealing.

I am sure you will agree that we have found two excellent speakers, Danielle Brown and Sally Kettle – I am really looking forward to hearing from both of them – they sound quite inspirational.

Please do try to attend. It would be great to see some new faces – as well as the 'regulars' of course – and I am sure you will enjoy the day.



Tea and coffee will be served on arrival and there are plenty of cafes where you can go for lunch – or you can bring your own picnic. If the weather is fine, there is a lovely park just across the road.

Tickets are £8 and are available now either from your WI or from Georgina at County Office.

We will be announcing the Board of Trustees at the ACM – have you thought about joining us?

It doesn't take up too much of your time and it's a great way of getting more involved.

We have a really good team and you would be warmly welcomed.

Please contact me or any of the Trustees if you are interested.

The new Denman Learning Hub is due to go 'live' on 24th January – International Day of Education – with free courses starting at the end of the month. It promises to have something for everyone, so make sure you sign up for the newsletter so that you know what's available.

Finally, have you had a look at Make, Craft and Do on the My WI website?

There is a section called New Beginnings and it shows us what is going on in January.

Probably lots of you have heard of Veganuary, but did you know that 29th January is Random Acts of Kindness Day?

It's not just about the 'grand gestures'. It's about the little things that can really make someone's day – nothing is too small. Maybe a kind word, a listening ear, or a shared half an hour with a cup of coffee – these could really make a difference to someone. What a lovely thought.

Kind regards

Angela



Newsletter deadlines >>> see page 2

WI BIRTHDAYS



A belated Happy Birthday to...

Harrow on the Hill 7 January 2013
Sunbury Village 23 January 2012

And to those celebrating in February

Iver Evening 8 February 1962
Hillingdon 19 February 1919
London West End 21 February 2006

200+ CLUB

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

December 2023

1st prize - £40
Geraldine Murphy, Southbourne
2nd prize - £30
Rosie Wallace, Halliford
3rd prize - £20
Catherine Jackson, North West London
4th prize - £10
Marion Kavanagh, Bedfont Belles

January 2024

1st prize - £40
Gill Chiapponi, Manor Farm
2nd prize - £30
Chris Hitches, Sunbury on Thames
3rd prize - £20
Gerry Attias, Sunbury on Thames
4th prize - £10
Kathy Allen, Clay Hill



GET IN TOUCH

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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. 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

- * Mar 2024 issue: 23 Feb
- * Apr 2024 issue: 22 Mar
- * May 2024 issue: 19 Apr

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.

Teddington

Shelagh Laing

Chilled glasses of fizz and a grand supper provided by our members, fortified TWI for 'Unwrapping Christmas Carols' at our December Social. Have a look at the photo of tiny Christmas puddings – they're falafels with cream cheese, cranberries, and dill – delicious!! Festive headwear was proudly worn, tinsel twirls and hand stitched hats.

We were entertained by the history of some well-known carols. Most have their roots in Europe of the 18th and 19th century; some derive from summer festival gatherings, many from well-known Hymn composers, and a few have female composers or lyricists.



Translation from Latin and other languages forced creativity in the English lyrics we know now. Carols are often the first songs children learn to sing in a group, and a robust and hearty chorus is appreciated by many attending carol services straight from the pub. Mice featured, inadvertently destroying a church organ which led to the simple and beautiful original guitar music of Silent Night.

We stood to sing Once in Royal David's City and Hark the Herald Angels Sing. By halfway through the first verse, heads were turning, as it became very apparent that we have a few beautifully trained voices in our midst. That was a charming and uplifting surprise.

To your Scottish correspondents dismay however, there was no time for her childhood favourite of 'A Wean in a Manger'. Perhaps next year...



Bedfont Belles

Jenny Hanrahan

Happy 9th birthday to us!!

We celebrated in Fairholme Hall by inviting friends, eating food, and learning how to Line Dance

(courtesy of Robin Springall). Such fun! and a great work out for those of us who don't do much exercise.

On remembrance Sunday we joined our community in a service at Bedfont War Memorial. Gloria laid the wreath on behalf of Bedfont Belles.

Plans for next month: a visit to Borough Market and the Christmas stalls along the



South Bank to gain some Christmas spirit and we will contribute to our local Age UK in their Christmas fair with our tombola stall..

Southbourne

Jackie Head

This year's December meeting found us all, once again, enjoying a meal and a 'tippie' in our local restaurant, Remo's.

We all had a wonderful time.





Stanwell

Marilyn Rix

A group of Stanwell WI joined Patchwork Tours for a day shopping at Ashford Kent outlet centre, enjoying lunch after completing their tiring Christmas shopping.

Another group joined Patchwork Tours for a beautiful walk around Kew gardens lights display. It was a very cold evening, but it had plenty of stops for mulled wine, hot chocolate, and various hot food.



Our croquet group held their Christmas lunch at the Bells Pub in Staines where we exchanged gifts from the secret Santa sack.

The book club held a festive afternoon tea at Notcutts whilst discussing the Family upstairs by Lisa Jewel.

We held a Christmas coffee morning at the Village Hall.

Mulled wine, mince pies, homemade cakes, tea, and coffee all went down a treat. A fun bottle tombola, raffle and a brilliant wood stall selling excellent homemade items. Great support from our members and local community. Which resulted in raising an amazing £535.



We enjoyed a party night for our last meeting of the year. Offering a buffet which had a variety of treats including sandwiches, sausage rolls, cheese rolls, crisps, mince pies, and mulled wine.

We asked members if they would like to donate to our chosen charity Cruse rather than send Christmas cards this year, resulting in raising £100 for Cruse, huge thank you to all our members.



Sunbury Village

Debbie Levy

Christmas 2023 started with a Christmas craft-themed WI evening facilitated by Alice from Rosie's Corner. We dabbled with decoupage creating elegant tins. We beaded and painted to make beautiful things.

In the lead up to Christmas we were joined by Jo from the Cake Box in Hampton for a yule log cake topper decorating workshop. We are all a step closer to completing our festive bakes.

So proud of our generous members who donated a total of £275 for the St Saviours Food Bank gift aid collection supporting local families at Christmas time.

We had an exciting evening with mulled wine and mince pies and the present game created a lot of drama with gifts being stolen!

Sunbury On Thames

Barbara Draper

The Armistice Parade was well attended by Sunbury on Thames WI members.

The memorial was looking good as the WI had previously cleaned it to make everything ok for the big day.

It's pleasing to report at the time of writing that the group's membership is increasing monthly.

The speaker for the November meeting was Sarah Slater who gave a very interesting talk on some of the achievements of British Monarchs over the past 350 years.

The Christmas lunch was very well attended and good value for money - my cheeseboard was only £2.

The meeting in December had no organised speaker or entertainment as such, but the mince pies & cakes were a treat ensuring the Christmas spirit started early.



Ruislip

Sandy Channon

It has been such a busy few months and a few days respite in January is really appreciated.

Our November meeting focused on resuscitation and defibrillation where Abie our speaker gave us an interesting informative talk on how to save a life, she showed how to use a defibrillator if one was available and demonstrated how to do CPR. Some of our members attempted CPR on a manikin and were surprised how much pressure was needed to be applied to the chest.

Our pennies competition in aid of our charity was RAF blue, which was won by Wendy's lavender filled Rabbit, we supplied wreath rings in our October meeting and poppy wreaths were

displayed, which could also be adapted to Christmas wreaths. Suggestions for the charity to be supported next year were also requested. Lorraine laid a poppy wreath on our behalf at the Ruislip Memorial on Remembrance Day.

Most of our members came to an excellent early Christmas meal arranged by Lorna at the Coach and Horses in Ickenham. Our December meeting was a fun filled relaxing evening. Lesley provided a Christmas cracker joke quiz – some surprising answers to “what is the difference between a snowman and snow woman!” Our ladies brought a lovely selection of food for a savoury buffet to share. Our Chinese raffle

where we buy a strip of five tickets and every ticket was pulled from the pot was great fun. There were some lovely prizes donated (some wrapped) where the poinsettia and prosecco must have changed hands at least dozen times.



Hayes Town

Wendy Capehorn and Joan Leonard

From the end of November until Christmas day various events have been enjoyed. Including afternoon tea at Harlington Hospice; a performance of 'Sleeping Beauty' at the Beck Theatre; our festive lunch (well attended by 25) at the local Beefeater; Neil Sands "Christmas Memories" at the Beck, an enjoyable afternoon of festive nostalgia; the unveiling of our Xmas topper inside the local Asda store and singing carols to unsuspecting shoppers. Great fun was had by all.

The Christmas party finished our month together. Great entertainment provided by

The Pearlie King, Queen and Prince of Finsbury with Lesley Daley and her angels providing an excellent buffet, followed by tea and Christmas cake and dancing enjoyed by many. A wonderful finish to our WI year.

Ashford Evening

Wendy Kislingbury

December was a busy month for Ashford WI, starting with its main fundraiser, the Christmas fayre. Lots of cakes, preserves and Christmas handicrafts on sale.

Ashford WI got into the panto spirit with the script reading group upskilling their talents into a unique performance of Hansel and Gretel at the December meeting. Using an original script, the cast pulled together to create costumes and paint set pieces.

The team was rewarded with much laughter from the audience at the jokes and the inevitable mishaps of a lost moustache or lost line. The interactive play brought in audience participation who fortunately, in the end, voted that the witch standing trial for the abduction of the children was not guilty. The overall verdict was a good night out.



Stroud Green

Christine Gregory

We practiced our green credentials creating a colourful range of Christmas decorations from a mix of recycled and already purchased materials.

President Anna provided full instructions for everyone to turn stockpiled toilet rolls, old Christmas wrapping paper and ribbon into Christmas crackers. Crafting paper was turned into spectacular stars and attractive origami boxes. wo-sided red and white paper was swiftly turned into cute and cheeky origami Father Christmases.

Members and visitors happily chatted over mulled wine and apple juice, kindly supplied by Michelle and Alison, while munching on mince pies, donated by members, as we pooled ideas to work out how to make the stars and slightly tricky boxes. The consensus was that the crackers were the fiddliest items to make, but the finished crackers looked professionally made.

We also collected our Christmas decorations that had been fired by Virle Archer who led our November fused glass session. What beautiful results!



Teddington

Shelagh Laing

What would you do with eight crates of Brussel sprouts?

That was one of the conundrums raised to the Teddington WI at our January meeting with The Real Junk Food Project, a locally based community charity dedicated to reducing food waste. They feed bellies not bins. There are over 100 RJFPs throughout England.

RJFP run a 'pay as you feel' café and food surplus hubs, along with home delivery food packs throughout our Borough five days a week, powered by volunteers, including some of our members. Supermarkets, the public and local food businesses donate surplus food. On a daily basis café menus are created to use that day's donations in hot nutritious meals. The very efficient part of their work is the that the RJFP receive food from, and donate food to, other food distribution charities, at a very local level, to use all food donations well. It is a daily dynamic food chain – literally. This demands a huge amount of dedication, long hours, and detailed management, which is greatly supported and appreciated by all of our local community.

TWI has started a Walking Group, and last week we ended our walk at The Real Junk Food Project Café, and enjoyed a lovely lunch, in their very friendly company.



Join the Craft Committee

Are you a keen crafter and want to ensure that craft continues in Middlesex Federation?

Then come and join the Craft Committee, we need new people to keep it going.

If you're interested contact:
craft@mfwi.org.uk

Southbourne

Jackie Head

On a very cold January evening, we all gathered to hear some wonderful bell ringers, the 'Ruislip Belles and Beaux'. We all had a singalong whilst they enchanted us with their bell ringing. This month we have started a new theme to bring in objects following the alphabet, being January, it was A. Glynis won the prize for bringing in some beautiful amethysts.



Laleham

Chris Walker

Our AGM in November saw our longest serving member and valued Secretary, Val Griffith, step down from her post which she has held for many years. Many thanks to Val for her efforts over the years and for staying on as deputy secretary.

The committee celebrated Val's 92nd birthday and the 90th birthday of another committee member, Betty Davey, by taking them out for a lovely meal.

Finally, for our December meeting we invited one of our popular speakers, Pete Allen, who gave a very entertaining presentation on the history of pantomime.



Bedfont Belles

Jenny Hanrahan

Our stall at the Age UK Christmas fair proved very popular.

Five of us went to the Southbank to see the Christmas stalls, walk through Borough Market, and have a bite to eat. We were so lucky with the weather!

In the words of Craig Revel Horwood our Christmas party in December was "Fab...u...lous" with much laughter and a visit from Santa.

Our festive meal held at our meeting in January was a brilliant evening with a lovely bunch of people. Sandra once again cooked us a fabulous meal. Her husband and Margaret's husband helped in the kitchen and did the washing up! Wendy and Marion, as usual, organised the raffle. Only people involved know the hard work that goes into such an event so thank you!



Confused confectionery

Figure out the well know sweets/chocolates from the clues below:

| | Quality Street |
|-------------------|----------------|
| Top place to live | |
| 9-10-11-12 | |
| Batman's enemy | |
| Don't shout | |
| Toothless drink | |
| Percussion twigs | |
| Big cats pub | |
| Feline equipment | |
| Dairy holder | |

Dingbats

Example: DR. do
(Answer = Doctor Dolittle)
Solve the puzzles below:

_ _ _ agement

^PG ^PG

HOÜR

Brainteaser

What do the numbers 11, 69 and 88 have in common?

Can you guess the next letter in the following sequence?

CYGTNLITF_?

I am tall when I am young and short when I am old. What am I?

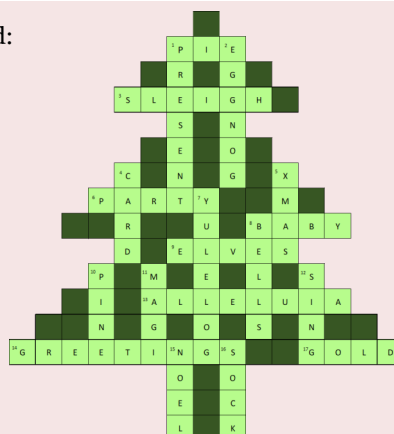
Missing letters:

- Bubble and squeak
- Double cream
- Roast potatoes
- Sherry
- Mince pies
- Mulled wine
- Yule log
- Gingerbread

Maths Riddle:

Tracey has 9 baubles in total: 3 blue, 3 green and 3 red.

Crossword:



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

Angela Chessman

WI Credentials

I first joined the WI over 40 years ago. I took a 'few years off' when I went back to work full time, then re-joined about 20 years ago!

I am a member of Stanwell WI, where I have been Treasurer for several years.

I joined the Middlesex Board of Trustees in April 2017 and my first 'job' was as Denman Ambassador, a role which I loved and miss very much. I have also looked after the 200+ Club. My current role is as Chair, which I have found really interesting. It has allowed me to meet some wonderful people and has been a great way to contribute to the future direction of the WI.



1. What inspired you to join the WI?

I met some new friends when my children started school and was encouraged to join by a few of them! I am happy to say that they have been friends ever since.

2. Which woman inspires you the most?

There have been so many inspiring women over the years, from the 'classics', like Emmeline Pankhurst who showed us the potential power of women and our dear late Queen Elizabeth who was an example to us all, to the heroes of today, like Malala Yousafzai who campaigns for the rights of women and young girls to education, and business woman Karren Brady.

On a personal level, my own mother and grandmother were brilliant examples of inspiring women.

3. What are your hobbies/ interests?

I love reading and enjoy trying my hand at different crafts, crochet, dressmaking etc.

During the summer, I play croquet with my WI.

4. What was the last book you read?

Great Expectations, by Charles Dickens! It was our book-club choice and a book I hadn't read since school! How language changes over the years!

5. What is your favourite film?

Don't Look Now has to be up there with my favourites, along with The Shining. I also love The Wicker Man – original 1973 version of course!

6. Music choices ?

Queen, Bowie, the sixties.....and maybe a bit of classical if the mood is right. I also enjoy folk rock.

7. What is your most memorable holiday?

I was recently lucky enough to go on a Mediterranean cruise. It was something that I had always wanted to do and I finally went with a friend last October. It was the most wonderful experience – I can see why people get hooked.

8. Best biscuit to dunk in tea/ coffee?

You can't beat a good ginger nut – or a fig roll!

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

Mexico is on my bucket list; also South America, particularly Peru.

10. Marmite?

Oh yes! On toast, roast potatoes, in veggie casseroles.....

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

29th February

Dream Catchers

£8

28th March

Decopatch Bottle

£8

25th April

Encaustic Art

£10



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

Public Affairs

The Public Affairs committee held an open meeting on 10th January, to which all members of the federation were invited to hear the resolutions and participate in following discussion. Thank you to those who attended and contributed to the discussions. Points were raised for, and against the resolutions and the presenters encouraged members to look at the further information at the end of the briefing notes – the December edition of WI Life. The committee (all four of us) agreed to be available to attend WI meetings to present and/or lead discussions on the resolutions if this would help. Please get in touch with publicaffairs@mfwi.org.uk. You may already have voted for your preferred resolution.

However, we could still discuss the one which is voted for by the majority of members, and there may be more information to share by then.

NB All votes from all WI's must be with the Federation by 11th February 2024.



Million Women Rise March

This event will take place on 9th March 2024. However, the WI will not be organising a presence at the march. This is due to lack of information about the focus and messaging of this year's march. They have insufficient information to ensure that the event will be in line with our campaign and charitable objectives. Instead, the WI Public Affairs team will host a panel discussion, for us to hear from expert speakers who have dedicated their lives to this cause. There will be a following Q&A session. All information about this event is in the December edition of WI Life (Unite for Change).