



Middlesex News

May 2026

theWI
INSPIRING WOMEN



Chair's Chat

Alison Fremantle

Hello Everyone,



I am writing for the first time as your new Chair of MFWI. I am honoured that the Board of Trustees have voted for me to take on this role and will do my best to serve them and all the members in the Middlesex Federation during my time in this office. I am looking forward to meeting as many members as possible, to help in any way I and the Board can, to facilitate the running of your WIs. The Board is responsible for the running of the Federation, and welcome members' views on how to provide for WI needs. So, craft, public affairs, membership, technical, financial, archivist or any other queries can be addressed through the board members responsible (email addresses overleaf).

We're sad to lose some of our WIs recently because of the new EDI policy. We hope that they will feel welcome to join sisterhood or sub-groups and continue to fight for change, as is the NFWI. We'll ensure that you are kept updated.

Thank you for your very positive feedback on the recent Annual Council meeting. All your comments have been noted, and we will do our best to address them before next year. If you enjoyed the meeting, please pass this on to others, as we would love to see more attendee's next time.

Just a reminder that the Craft Dabble Day on Thursday 30th April, still has spaces if you wish to make 'pin and stitch' designs for greeting cards. Please book your space soon.

This Friday (24th April) I and the public affairs committee will be attending a webinar, for further information about the resolutions, up for debate at the Annual National Meeting. We will pass on the information to you. Please contact us if you would like any further help with your discussions. Sian and I will be attending the Buckinghamshire Annual Council Meeting this Saturday. I am particularly looking forward to meeting their chairperson. I hope to talk to her about her experiences as Chair and glean some ideas on how to do my job! At present, I rely on my very able and experienced team to support me and – tell me what to do!!

I hope that you, like me, have come through the sad months of winter in good health, are enjoying spring, and making the most of the improved weather.

With best wishes,

Alison



Newsletter deadlines >>> see page 2



WI BIRTHDAYS



A very Happy Birthday to the WIs celebrating in May

Finchley	13 May 2009
Stanwell	15 May 1919
Ladies of the Lock	26 May 2016

WI Lottery

You can support Middlesex Federation by buying WI lottery tickets through our WI Lottery page.

Follow the link below to our page:

<https://www.thewilottery.co.uk/support/middlesex-federation-of-womens-institutes>



200+ CLUB

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

1st prize - £40
Joyce Gander, Southbourne

2nd prize - £30
Jan Page, West Drayton

3rd prize - £20
Jan Blake, Clay Hill

4th prize - £10
Ruislip Evening WI



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@mfwi.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

- **Jun 2026 issue: 22 May**
- **Jul 2026 issue: 19 Jun**
- **Sep 2026 issue: 21 Aug**

A PDF copy is sent to all 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.



Ashford Evening

Deborah Martin



The lighter evenings are injecting some added energy into Ashford WIs April meeting. Our speaker, Lucy Allen, was certainly a blur of movement as she told us about her 30 years working as a stuntwoman. Fortunately, she didn't encourage us to try any of her stunts ourselves but did show us her contributions to films ranging from the James Bond to Harry Potter.



For crafts, members embraced the 'shabby chic' look. Armed with glue, paper and lace, they made gorgeous and unique cards.

The book club readers got a taste of the French Riviera with Celia Imrie's book 'Not Quite Nice.' The evaluation by the readers was the book was 'nice' and pleasant but not deserving full marks out of 10. Laughter is an important part of all our activities, and this is very true for our script reading group who enjoy a good farce. Laughter is also key for our board game groups. For those venturing out to our evening sessions, there's the opportunity to stretch the brain while trying new games and rules.

Harrow on the Hill

Helen Clivaz

I imagine most people have heard of wine tastings and many people will have taken part in one. However, a tutored smelling was a revelation to me and others at our meeting in April at the Harrow-on-the-Hill WI. Holly Cranmer gave us a talk about perfume and brought along samples for us to experience. One begins by sampling the lighter scents and then move onto the heavier more powerful and complexed perfumes.



Holly explained that about three thousand fragrances are launched each year, whilst other fall out of favour. Gourmand perfumes are the modern trend, these are designed to feel indulgent, warm and cosy.

Within the industry 'dupes' are common, these are copies of well know perfume that can be purchased at a fraction of the cost of the original perfumes. We sampled an original and its dupe and they were similar.

It was a fascinating and educational evening. Our meeting room smelt amazing!



Sunbury on Thames

Jackie Elliott

Sunbury-on-Thames held an Easter-themed session, which started with an Easter bonnet parade, heartily accompanied by a rousing chorus of the Easter bonnet song. That put a smile on our faces! We then had a more serious quiz to find out what we knew about Easter and ended with a fun game to test our knowledge about the current prices of Easter goodies in the shops. This was accompanied by plenty of chatter and laughter. A fun session!



Manor Farm

Tracy Fern



March was a relatively quiet month for Manor Farm WI as we approached Easter, even so we were delighted to welcome three new members to our jolly group.

Our monthly meeting incorporated an entertaining talk on all things March, "More than just March Hares", where speaker Colin Oakes informed on many things relating to March.

A group of us all met up at the Granero Lounge in Ruislip High Street for a talkative lunch that was full of food and laughter. It's amazing how quickly a couple of hours can pass when in such good company.

The committee attended the very entertaining MFWI Annual Council Meeting. Many thanks for arranging such interesting talks.



Hillingdon

Diane Street



At our latest meeting, our speaker was Eleanor Bloom talking about gin and vice in London during 18th century. It was a very interesting talk with lots of historical costume stuff and how the different classes lived. Also, how some of the populations were living with dreadful conditions and sometimes fatal water qualities, hence the gin.

Afterwards Eleanor joined us for tea and cake. It was Judy's birthday, so it was a posh cake made by another member, Jonquil.





Ruislip Evening Sandy Channon

With Good Friday falling on the first Friday of the month, we changed our meeting to the following week - although we still had Easter Eggs to share! Easter is the time for our annual challenge the "Egbert Cup" which we have held for the past two years.



The evening started with decorating boiled eggs with a wide selection of various coloured sharpies and our members created an excellent display of artistic ideas. Dot had provided the various pipes and gutters to run the eggs down, different heights and gradients. Once the eggs were rolled down the pipes - they had a mind of their own and roamed under chairs and tables. We were allowed two attempts at rolling our egg and as Julia's egg went the furthest, she was presented with the 2026 "Egbert Cup" by Trish, together with an egg painted with the flag of Great Britain and a golden rabbit Easter Egg. Helen provided two quizzes one with cryptic clues which related to tv programmes and the other movie quotes. The questions were interesting brain teasers.



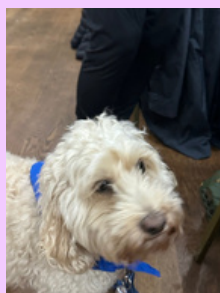
Our pennies competition this month was something fluorescent yellow and our members brought in a variety of items from golf balls to peppers, Rosemary's cute yellow duck won the prize! Books were swapped, raffle drawn and an evening filled with fun and laughter. At our May meeting Graeme Jenner is speaking to us about the "Great Escape" - we all know the film but how factual was it?



Laleham Chris Walker

Everyone fell in love with Archie the cockerpoo at our last meeting. Mandy Rowlands who is a volunteer with the charity "Pets as Assistance" brought Archie to meet us and told us how volunteers visit hospitals, care homes and day care centres and how their pets interact with patients and residents.

Mandy and Archie regularly visit Saxon school and spend time with pupils who respond positively to the contact.



Also, this month we enjoyed an evening social at the Three Horseshoes where we held our spring meal - a lovely meal in good company.





Hayes Town Wendy Capehorn



I hope you are well and enjoying the start of spring. I wanted to share a few highlights from the wonderful activities we kicked off for Women's Month in March. Wendy opened the month with a lively presentation at Yeading Library's coffee morning, where she spoke about the history of the WI and the many benefits of being a member of Hayes Town WI. The session was a tremendous success, brimming with enthusiasm and camaraderie.



At our March WI members meeting, we were treated to a fascinating account of the Brinks robbery, told by a member of the very team who investigated it. The stories really brought history to life and kept everyone thoroughly engaged.



We rounded off the month by unveiling our Easter topper at Asda, which added a splash of seasonal joy to the community. Alongside this, we handed out chocolates to help raise awareness of the WI and remind everyone of our presence in Hayes Town. It was a delightful way to connect with local residents and spread a bit of cheer.



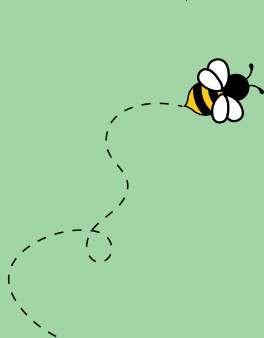
Public Affairs Juliet Humphreys

Did you know honeybees can dance? To be fair, their waggle dance (cute as it is) will never score highly on Strictly Come Dancing but it is just one of their amazing talents.

There are over 20,000 species of bee across the world and between them they pollinate one third of the food we eat, including cocoa. For an insect with a brain the size of a pinhead they are remarkably clever: bumblebees can perform a two-step task to access food. And in Japan, Asian honeybees collect fragrant leaves to mask the scent laid by a predator. That waggle dance by the way is how they communicate where the best nectar is, how to get there and even any necessary detours.



Bees date from the time of the dinosaurs but one quarter of wild bee species are now in decline (imagine life without chocolate!) and they need our help. Not money but flowers. It's that easy. Planting wildflowers, even in a window box, helps immensely. So does giving mowing and weeding a break, at least until the flowers have gone. Think of it as our way of saying thank you for all they do.





Teddington Fiona Twitcher



“Colour not only transforms how you physically look but can also affect how you and others feel.” Emma Shoe, lecturer and stylist, spoke to Teddington WI about “The Joy of Colours” and how the right colours can make us feel more confident. Emma spent time with Julie, a member of our committee, in her garden studio, looking at colour palettes, and finding out which colours suit her best. I think we will all be looking at our wardrobes in a new light!



Another member, Cathy, told us about her forthcoming trip to Malawi, where she will be embarking on a 500km bike ride to raise funds for African Vision Malawi. The project focuses on training people to support themselves and their communities. Good luck Cathy!

Stanwell

Louise Stuart

This month has been another busy one with Easter activities, coffee mornings, book clubs, art and crafts, indoor bowls, a lovely walk and social get togethers.



The speaker arrived without ceremony; a softly spoken man whose manner carried the quiet authority of long experience. Introduced simply as Mike Barly a retired Scotland Yard detective, he wasted little time before drawing the room into one of Britain’s most haunting unsolved disappearances: the case of Suzy Lamplugh. The talk was not sensationalist. There was no attempt to dramatize, only to understand. He spoke about the toll such investigations take on families, and the importance of keeping cases alive in public memory. Advances in forensic science, he noted, continue to offer hope, even in the oldest cases.

By the end, the room was silent in a way that felt reflective rather than sombre. The audience hadn’t just heard about a crime; they had been given a glimpse into the human side of policing—the persistence, the uncertainty, and the enduring need for answers. As the meeting drew to a close, there was a shared sense that, while the mystery remains unresolved, the story of Suzy Lamplugh is not forgotten.

Such an interesting talk from a detective who was able to keep us hooked and silent for an hour!

Bedfont Belles Jenny Hanrahan



A very enjoyable meet-up at a local pub with historical interest. The Green Man boasts links to highwaymen and even Dick Turpin, with a hiding place behind the fireplace. A few menu choices had to be changed due to problems with a food delivery, but everyone was satisfied in the end.



Our April meeting gave us a bit of a workout. Keep fit to music (a singalong for some of us) had us stretching and moving with a promise of a bit of stiffness the next morning. Good fun though.



Metros around the world

Which cities are these Metros in



Non Euros

6 EU countries don't use the Euro, can you name them?



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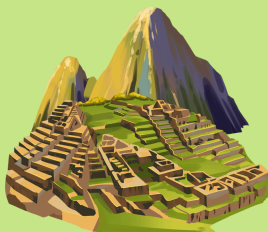


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7 New Wonders of the World

Name the 7 new wonders of the world and tell me which country they are in.



- 1. Czech Republic
- 2. Denmark
- 3. Hungary
- 4. Poland
- 5. Romania
- 6. Sweden

- 5. Machu Picchu - Peru
- 6. Christ the Redeemer - Brazil
- 7. Taj Mahal - India

- 1. Colosseum - Italy
- 2. Great Wall of China - China
- 3. Petra - Jordan
- 4. Chichen Itza - Mexico

- 7. Mexico
- 8. Seoul
- 9. Madrid
- 10. Paris
- 11. Tokyo
- 12. Athens

- 1. New York
- 2. Singapore
- 3. Bangkok
- 4. Prague
- 5. Toronto
- 6. Kuala Lumpur

Non Euros

7 Wonders

Metro

10 facts about...

1921-2021

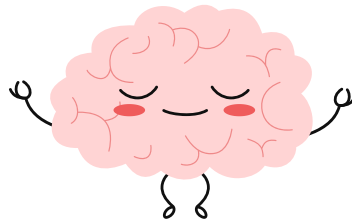


Marmite



Here are 10 (probably) true facts that you (potentially) didn't know about Marmite.

1. It can calm the brain -
According to some research, eating a teaspoon of Marmite daily can reduce stress levels



8. Extremely Nutritious -
It is one of the richest sources of vitamin B12, making it popular for vegetarians and vegans

2. It hasn't changed -
The recipe has remained virtually unchanged for over 100 years

5. Production Scarcity - Marmite is produced in Burton - on - Trent, Staffordshire, using waste yeast from local breweries, making production directly linked to beer consumption



3. Different international versions -
Marmite sold by Sanitarium in Australia and New Zealand is different to the UK version, it often contains added sugar and caramel



9. "Marmite" is French -
The name comes from a French term for a metal or earthenware cooking pot, which is featured on the jar's label

6. "Love it or hate it" -
The iconic slogan highlights how divisive its pungent taste is



4. Banned in Denmark
- Due to law restricting products fortified with added vitamins, Marmite was banned in Denmark in 2011

7. Used in World War I -
British troops in WWI had marmite included in their rations



10. Invented by accident -
German scientist Justus von Liebig discovered in the late 19th century that brewer's yeast could be concentrated, bottled, and eaten, leading to the brand founding in 1902

LORRAINE'S CRAFTS

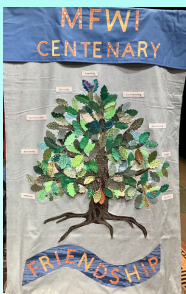
A weekly craft get-together, hosted by Lorraine.

19:30, every Monday

Zoom link

Meeting ID: 8528335 4467

Passcode: 358099



CRAFTY CORNER

My sincere apologies for not mentioning all the members, who knitted or crocheted poppies for the Standing with Giants project, at the Council meeting last month. In my defence, I wasn't informed of your efforts and knew nothing of them. I had hoped/expected that you would send them to the office for me to send off on your behalf.

Thank you very much for producing and sending them on to the organisers. Let's hope that they are acknowledged soon. I particularly want to visit the British Memorial in Normandy this year, not just to see the poppies, but it will be lovely to see all that the members have contributed.



Dabble Day

You're invited to a

Dabble Day

Join us for a "Pin and Stitch" event.
We will be making greeting cards.

30th April at 10:00 - 3:00pm

Cost will be between £5 - £10

Location: MFWI County Office

FUTURE DABBLE DAY DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Thursday 11th June – Sashiko stitching blocks.

Tuesday 18th August – Crochet corner to corner squares

October (date to be confirmed) – fabric collage book covers.

Tuesday 1st December – Hand sewn Christmas decorations.

All sessions last from 10 am till 3 pm

Please contact craft@mfw.org.uk to book your place.