



WEST KENT WI NEWS

November 2023



RHS Wisley Draw

As a Federation we are Associate Members of the RHS which entitles us to 50 tickets for a visit to RHS Wisley.

If your WI would like to enter into the draw for these tickets, which will be held at the AGM on Monday 25 March 2024, please complete the entry form.

Remember, this is for a ONE group visit of up to 50 people and you are welcome to include members from other WIs to use all the tickets. The tickets will show the 'shelf life of the offer' usually the current year and you will have to arrange your own transport. This would be deemed an educational item and your WI could pay transport costs.

Applications can be submitted either by using this form or by letter or email.

Please make sure that all the information requested on the application box is included: WI, Contact Name, Address and Postcode.

WEST KENT FEDERATION OF WIs WISLEY TICKETS

Please submit only one WI application – thank you

WI

would like to be included in the annual draw
for tickets to visit RHS Wisley
No transport is included in this offer

Contact Name

Address

..... Postcode

Tel No

Email

Apply to: FedSec@wkwfi.org.uk

or to the Federation Office at Ethel Hunt Lodge clearly
marked 'Wisley'

Closing Date: Wednesday 31 January 2024

WEST KENT FEDERATION OF WIs

2024 Annual Bursary for Education in any subject

Please submit only one personal application – thank you—either on this form, email or letter

WI

Contact Name

Address

..... Postcode

Tel No Email

Apply to: FedSec@wkwfi.org.uk

or to the Federation Office at Ethel Hunt Lodge clearly marked 'Bursary'

Closing Date: Wednesday 31 January 2024

VIEW FROM THE CHAIR



Well, here we are in November, and I bet a lot of you have already started Christmas shopping and the planning that comes with it. I was amazed when a friend told me that she couldn't get a Christmas delivery slot when she tried to book it in October! I always vow to start early with the presents but find no one will give me ideas as they 'can't think about Christmas now'! So, it will be the usual rush with a few weeks to go and hope I get the right thing.

I have been out and about recently, and it has reminded me of what it is to belong to the WI. Membership gives us great opportunities within our own WIs- interesting speakers, variety of clubs, trips to unusual places and of course meals out! On a wider scale we have Federation events like Annual Days, craft workshops, choir, sports, and Science Days- to name but a few. Along with all of this comes the friends we all make along the way and ensure a welcome wherever you are. I think the WI is unique in what it gives its members, and I would urge you all to take advantage of it. Sign up for your WI and Federation events and don't forget there are NFWI and Denman opportunities too.

Enjoy your November West Kent News, there are lots of interesting items and you will also find out who is on the bill for at our next AGM in March!! I'm very excited by the programme we have put together for you all. After the success of the Archivists talk, I have renamed the morning speakers session 'the WI Legends slot'! We will be offering WI members who have given great talks to WIs a bigger stage and I hope you are pleased with next years choice.

Amanda

Treasurer's Corner



I recently held an evening Zoom meeting for a general chat to hear about what is going on, problems and views of other Treasurer's.

We covered quite a few subjects including the reported problems of Metro Bank, Gift Aid, Card Readers, the continued use of cheques and on-line banking.

Whilst I am an enthusiastic user of on-line banking, it is not for everyone and that is fine. If you are nervous of using on-line banking, there are some banks that offer help and tuition. Banking has changed drastically over the last couple of years which causes many charities/clubs a lot of problems, not the least paying in of cash. Do ask at your local Post Office if they accept cash deposits for your bank and importantly that they accept part filled bags of coins. In my village they accept part filled coin bags but it seems it is at the discretion of the Post Master!

There are plans for the banks to open "hubs" where one branch covers different banks. How this will work is still not clear but hopefully it will help the smaller users.

One of the ladies on the Zoom meeting is a new Treasurer and currently on maternity leave. New Treasurers should not be afraid to ask questions and check to make sure they are doing things correctly. We are extremely grateful that they take on the job and keep their WIs ticking over! Well done.

Rita King

Alan officially retired at the end of October and we all wished him a long and happy retirement. Working with Alan during October learning the ropes, was Andrew Shopland who is the new bookkeeper.

At the Board of Trustees meeting in October, Alan was presented with a gift from his colleagues and Trustees, past and present. Alan's wife Naomi was presented with some flowers.

They look forward to holidays and outings together especially on their motor bike.



60 SECONDS WITH:-

Keeley Smart

SYSTEMS ADMINISTRATOR



WI and WI credentials I have worked in the Federation office two and a half years as the Systems Administrator.

Hobbies/Interests I love spending time with my family and going for little walks with our one year old. I also like watching football.

Last book read Dunne it the Hard Way, a biography by Alan Dunne.

Favourite film Either Mamma Mia or About Time.

Music choices I have quite a range of likes for music, Country, especially Lynn Anderson's Rose Garden, James Blunt, 1970's and 1980's music.

Most memorable holiday This is quite hard to choose from, Tenerife with my family, we went on a boat trip to see the dolphins and turtles, Malta was a lovely holiday to visit and explore. Or last month where we had our first family holiday with our one year old.

What do you love about the WI I love the different jobs that we can do, not one day is the same. Speaking to some of the WIs that call and try and help where possible.

Marmite Not a fan.

The **WI Advisers** will be holding a 'Meet the Advisers' Zoom session at 7pm on Thursday December 7. We would be pleased if you would like to join us to discuss any queries that you may have. Contact Bev Wild to reserve your place by emailing wildy3@icloud.com or leave a message on 0208 289 3533.



Display cabinet in Ethel Hunt Lodge Meeting Room

The current contents of the display cabinet at Ethel Hunt Lodge will shortly be returned to **Walderslade WI** who have been proudly showing off some of their craft handiwork over the last few months. The Board of Trustees and the Art and Craft sub-committee are now seeking another WI to submit some craft items made by their Members for wider enjoyment by the WK Federation. Please contact Sue Boner (Art and Craft sub-committee) via sh.boner@hotmail.co.uk to discuss submitting your wonderful creations.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY 2023

NOVEMBER

| | | |
|---------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Wed 15 | English Paper Piecing | EHL |
| Thur 16 | English Paper Piecing | Frittenden |
| Fri 17 | Science Day | Ryarsh |
| Fri 24 | English Paper Piecing | Snodland |
| Sat 25 | English Paper Piecing | Orpington |
| Sat 25 | Entertainment Day | St. Mary Platt |

DECEMBER

| | | |
|--------|-------------------|------|
| Thur 7 | Meet the Advisers | Zoom |
|--------|-------------------|------|

2024

MARCH

| | | |
|--------|-----------|-----------------|
| Mon 25 | WKFWI AGM | Tunbridge Wells |
|--------|-----------|-----------------|

Federation Notice Board

List of Speakers

Please note that Mrs Ann Chance OBE has now retired and no longer wishes to be included as a Speaker.

Please note the following updates to our existing speakers.

Ms Margot Clarkson-Bennett 3 Gloucester Cottages, Sparrows Green, Wadhurst, East Sussex TN5 6TG
Tel No: 07821 457651 Email: margot123@hotmail.co.uk
Fee: £85 plus travel expenses Available at all times and at short notice

• **Make Up for Mature Women – 'Look Good – Feel Good'** • (a fun, interactive presentation with live make up demonstration, time for Q&As and the opportunity to try products.

Mrs Sarah Slater
2 Hare Hill, Addlestone, Surrey KT15 1DT
Tel No: 07899 794308
Email: sarah.m.slater@btinternet.com
Website: www.thehistoryguides.com
Fee: £100 plus 45p per mile travel expenses
Available at all times and at short notice

• **Working with the Ghosts of Hampton Court Palace** • **Secrets, Scandal and Salacious Gossip of the Royal Court** • **Kirtles, Corsets and Curtains** • **Royal Jubilees** (all talks with PowerPoint presentation or either slides or film) Please see Speaker's website for full range of talks

Mr Richard Winston CPAGB AFIAP
311 Halfway Street, Sidcup, Kent DA15 8DP
Tel No: 07963 869204
Email: richardpwinston@gmail.com
Website: richardpwinstonphotography.com
Photographic talks
Fee: £60 inclusive of travel within 10 mile radius, otherwise 25p per mile travel expenses

Available at all times and at short notice

• **From One to a Thousand – My Journey into Wildlife Photography** • **My Big Garden Safari** • **Magic Moments** • **So What do you do with your Photographs?** • **Creative Photography** • (all talks with PowerPoint presentation).

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

THE ASSEMBLY HALL, TUNBRIDGE WELLS

Monday 25 March 2024

11.00am to 4.00pm (doors open at 10.00am)

SPEAKERS

Dr Annie Gray

Dr Annie Gray is one of Britain's leading food historians, specialising in the history of food and dining from c.1600 to the present day. She is an author, broadcaster and consultant.

She has published numerous books, including: *Call the Midwife – The Official Cookbook*, *The Greedy Queen*, *The Official Downton Abbey Cookbook* and *Victory in the Kitchen – The Life of Churchill's Cook*. Annie contributes to many publications such as *Delicious Magazine*, *The Telegraph*, *The Guardian* online and *BBC Good Food*.

She has been the resident food historian on BBC Radio 4's culinary panel show, *The Kitchen Cabinet*, since its inception in 2012 and published the show's companion book. Annie has also been a consultant and presenter on many BBC Two shows such as *Victorian Bakers* (BBC Two) and has appeared and consulted on *A Merry Tudor Christmas with Lucy Worsley* (BBC Two) and *Victoria and Albert: The Royal Wedding* (BBC Two), as well as appearing on *James Martin's Saturday Morning* (BBC One), *James Martin: Home Comforts* (BBC One) and *The Great British Bake Off* (BBC) among others.

Lindsey Barrell (aka Ms Cherry Bombe)

'Burlesque, Me and the WI!'

WI President Lindsey's fabulously funny and heart-warming talk covers how she first discovered burlesque, closely followed by the WI, and then brought the two worlds together.

From empty nest to huge success, and via dance classes and craft sessions, Lindsey will take you on a journey that a lot of you will be able to relate to.

Recently described as 'The best speaker I have ever heard in 38 years of being in the WI', this is a humorous talk that illustrates how even the most diverse of topics can epitomise the Fun, Friendship and Education ethos of the Women's Institute.

ENTERTAINMENT

Women in Harmony are a mainly a Cappella choir and have just celebrated 25 years of singing together. They have performed at the Tram Shed, in Tetbury, the Menin Gate and also won the first Hospice in the Weald choir of the year award. They are looking forward to performing for the West Kent Federation AGM and are putting together an uplifting programme.

DELEGATES TICKETS ARE FREE however you will need to complete and return the Ticket Application form and provide a name. The Delegate WI will be printed on the front of your ticket, **but Delegates are free to sit anywhere in the hall.**

NON-VOTING MEMBERS TICKETS including Group Co-ordinators and Federation Sub-Committee Members – Admission will be by ticket only at a cost of **£15.00 per ticket** and WI Reps should apply to the Federation Office for these by **Thursday 29 February**.

However, we are offering an 'Early Bird' booking price of **£13.50 per ticket** if received in the office by **Wednesday 31 January**. There may be a second release after the closing date. **There is no restriction on ticket numbers.**

**ADMISSION TO THE MEETING WILL ONLY BE ALLOWED ON PRODUCTION OF A TICKET
TICKETS ARE SOLD ON A NON-RETURNABLE, NON-REFUNDABLE BASIS**

NFWI ASSOCIATES are entitled to apply for one ticket at a cost of either **£13.50 or £15.00**. If you would like to attend, please contact the Federation Office.

COLLECTION

We will be collecting for St Mark's Community Larder in Tunbridge Wells and would be grateful for any non perishable donations. If your WI would like to make up **one** bag of items – a strong bag for life could be used, maximum size 18 x 15 x 8 inches. This is a voluntary collection and WIs can participate if they wish.

CLOSING DATES

Wednesday 31 January 2024

Wednesday 31 January 2024

Wednesday 31 January 2024

Thursday 29 February 2024

Thursday 29 February 2024

'Early Bird' closing date for ticket applications

RHS Wisley Draw applications

Bursary applications

First release closing date for ticket applications

Receipt of stationery orders in the office orders to be collected at the AGM

Full details are available via your WI Secretary.

Liz Murphy of **Lee Green WI** was notified that her entry for the Lady Denman Cup Competition 2023 was highly commended. The results have been formally announced in WI Life, Below is an extract from the letter that Liz received:

“Dear Elizabeth,

I am delighted to extend my heartfelt congratulations to you as you have been awarded highly commended of the Lady Denman Cup Competition 2023.

A copy of this letter will be forwarded to your federation to officially notify them of your remarkable achievement in this competition.

Out of a total of 77 entries from 38 federations, your entry emerged as highly commended. The complete results are as follows:

| | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| First Prize | Susan Keefe | Wiltshire |
| Second Prize | Jen Hill | Cheshire |
| Third Prize | Janet Bann | Ceredigion |
| Highly Commended | Elizabeth Murphy | Kent - West Kent |
| Highly Commended | Lisa Carter | Lancashire |
| Highly Commended | Georgina Moon | Isle of Wight |

The judge's report, as well as your winning entry, will be available for download from the My WI website in the coming weeks.

We are genuinely appreciative of your participation in the competition, and once again, please accept our warmest congratulations.”

Well done Liz!

Below is a copy of Liz's entry.

Dear President,

Thank you so much for inviting me to represent our branch at the WI's 100th anniversary garden party at Buckingham Palace. It was such an honour - a once in a lifetime opportunity, and one that changed my view of the WI.

I must confess to having to pinch myself as I walked through those familiar gates onto the forecourt of the palace. When we went under the stone archway where on TV we have seen so many dazzling horse-drawn coaches enter, into the very courtyard where kings and queens in sumptuous velvet and ermine cloaks and glittering gowns have alighted from their golden carriages, I felt as though I was in a dream.

Then there was the wonderful sight of the hundreds of fellow WI members gathered on the vast lawns at the back of the palace where the garden party was held. I stood on the terrace for a few moments and just took it all in. I've never seen so many fascinators gathered in one place! To add to my day I was delighted to be presented to Princess Alexandra, and relieved that I managed a reasonable curtsy without much wobble.

But exciting as all of that was, it's not the prime reason I will be forever grateful I was chosen to attend that day. I will remember it more because of the wonderful women I met and the stories they told me. There was Mary who is president of her tiny WI in Wales, a group that was started by her great aunt, of which her mother was also president, but which is now in danger of closing because of its declining numbers. I was in awe of Mary's determination to keep her WI going both in honour of her relatives but also because she knows that without their regular meetings her elderly members will have very little social contact.

Then there was Gillian, who told me about her terrible first marriage, where she suffered emotional bullying at the hands of her husband, lost self-esteem and the ability to imagine how she could go on. She received enormous support from her WI friends, and because of that support she realised that she deserved better, that she could have a happier life, and that gave her the courage to leave the relationship, and rebuild her life. Her eyes sparkled as she showed me her new wedding band and told me she was now married to a kind man and was very happy.

It was hearing those stories, and many more besides, that changed my view of what the WI is. Not only cakes and Jerusalem, resolutions and campaigns, but women being great friends to other women; women feeling and showing loyalty to others; women using their strength to help and inspire courage in other women. I now see that is the importance of the WI, and the memories of those women will stay with me always.

With all best wishes

Liz Murphy

REPORT ON THE LIFE STYLE ANNUAL DAY

TUESDAY 17 OCTOBER

Sarah Slater, a guide and lecturer for Hampton Court told us interesting stories about her job. There were two rooms in the Palace with a terrifying atmosphere, which she would not enter. In the Long Gallery, visitors had fainted at a certain spot and even some dogs were loath to enter. There was poltergeist activity elsewhere in the palace. Doors had been locked which should have been open and one that they had never had a key for. We also saw costumes which Sarah had made herself for work.

Jacqueline Aviolet, followed giving an hilarious talk explaining which plants, shrubs or trees had our Forenames and the characteristics of those plants, shrubs and trees.

Emma Cox, a genealogist explained how we would have had surnames from about 1066. These names came from places we had lived in or work that we were doing. Some surnames would fade out in time. She then answered many of our questions.

Altogether a very enjoyable day.

Margaret Marshall
Ryarsh WI



WEST KENT ART & CRAFT ANNUAL DAYS WAS ANOTHER BIG SUCCESS

The West Kent Art & Craft Annual Days were held on 20 and 21 September this year and once again proved a big hit with more than 250 West Kent Federation WI members who couldn't wait to come along to the hall at Ditton Community Centre, which was packed with people and stalls.

The days started with a welcome speech by Paula Bates, Chair of the West Kent Art & Craft Committee, and of course the biggest attractions, as always, were the speakers!

They were headed by Stephanie Smart of The House of Embroidered Paper on the amazing art of paper quilling and her Regency Wardrobe. Having had a display of her wonderfully detailed costumes – all made out of paper! – at the Royal Pavilion in Brighton this year, Stephanie elaborated on the techniques she uses to produce gorgeous period gowns, uniforms and hats with little curiosities woven into many of them to tell their stories.

For those wanting to know more, Stephanie is hosting a WI workshop on paper quilling on 23 March at St Nicholas Church Hall, Orpington, where members can learn how to make the stunning silver star she included in the long train of one of her Royal Pavilion gowns, as shown on her website.

Also speaking were: Paul Avis, Chairman of both The Decimus Burton Society and the Royal Tunbridge Wells Civic Society, who talked of the exciting plans to create a Decimus Burton Museum and Study Centre in the town in one of the buildings the famous architect designed as part of the extensive Calverley estate. The Museum vision includes creating rooms of the period complete with authentic decorations, furniture and accessories, as well as housing a Decimus Burton archive and, hopefully, a sensory garden.

Neal Scrase, a local artist, printer and framer who talked about the business of art and being an artist against being a business – in his case being a fine art printer, including providing modern Giclée art printing and framing to the art community. He showed some of his superb paintings and also talked about being the Director of the Fine Art Trade Guild and how that works within the art business.

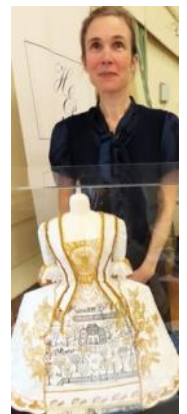
And this year members were treated to a fascinating extra speaker squeezed in – Barbara Wilson of Love That Stuff, who captivated the audience with the story of how she came to be a Fairtrade champion and the charming goods made by Fairtrade communities in Nepal, India and Kenya she brought to display! Members will also be able to see Barbara and her goods at next year's West Kent Federation AGM on Monday 25th March at the Assembly Hall, Tunbridge Wells.

The Annual Days also hosted a raffle that included original paintings by West Kent WI favourite watercolour artist Matthew Palmer and acrylic paintings by Charles Evans, plus there were stalls galore, including the ever popular Bring & Buy, Rainham Sewing, Wood Turning, Silversmith Alison Le Fevre, Sue Roberts' Flowers, Nancy Adamek, Lina Patchwork and Love That Stuff.



The West Kent Federation Art & Craft Committee give their thanks to all who contributed and attended to make this yet another successful and enjoyable educational event.

Sarah Bond Nevill WI. Photos also by Sarah





I was really chuffed at winning the WKFWI bursary in 2022, and patiently waited for a woodwork course. I really wanted to learn a new practical skill that didn't need the use of expensive power tools. I managed to learn 5 joints and can tell you the difference between a Housing Joint, Lap Joint,

Finger Joint, Dovetail Joint and Mortice and Tenon Joint. Time to equip a woman cave and start working on some projects!

Thushara Kasturiratne
South Tonbridge WI



Honey Judges!



Two of your Trustees were very privileged to join forces with representatives from Dartford Girl Guiding to judge honey and other bee-related produce at the Dartford Beekeepers Annual Social get-together in September. We had fun with the various categories and enjoyed hearing about the bees and seeing some of the hives in the apiary in Dartford.



In October **Horsmonden Morning WI** celebrated their 15th birthday. Frances Farley, our WI Advisor joined them for the meeting.

June Fleury, Secretary, Caroline Davis, President

In September **Frittenden WI** held our annual Produce Show, and as always there were many interesting and varied exhibits in the different categories. Because the show does not take up the whole meeting, we invited Nick Bull and Lyn Foster to come along to give us a beautifully illustrated talk on "Living the Narrow Boat Life", documenting their canal boat adventure that took place last year. They started off at Crick, near Rugby, in the Midlands and altogether travelled 779 miles, reaching as far as Gorst Lane, near Burscough in West Lancashire, the most northerly point of their journey, before returning to Crick via Wales. Their journey took seven months, travelling along 44 canals and rivers, through 491 locks, 33 tunnels, 35 swing bridges and 42 lift bridges! Nick told us a little of the history of the canals, along with several interesting facts about some of the places they visited. Valerie Reeves



Organised by a Planning Team of members of **Maidstone Chocolate WI**, and WI friends from around the country, **Tents in Kent 2023** took place over the weekend of 18 to 21 of August, at Adamswell Scout Campsite. After a damp start on Friday morning, the weather was great! We welcomed women from across



Kent, and the rest of the country, for a varied programme of workshops, activities and time to catch up with friends. People had the opportunity to make Magical Mushrooms or Needle-felted bowls, Bookmarks and Bracelets and Keyrings, and do some Indian Block printing, as well as some impromptu sessions!

For the more active, there were 'Adamswell Activities' run for us by volunteer Instructors: Archery, Axe-throwing and, new this year, Tackling the Climbing Wall.

Our Badger Watch was a great success – after a few close encounters in 2022, we got permission to set up some motion activated night vision cameras, and put out peanuts to attract them. We were thrilled to get some great clips of Badgers eating the peanuts. We also had a fantastic talk on 'Everything Badger' from Kathie Foster of the West Kent Badger Group, who were extremely supportive of our activity! Some members of camp even dressed the part!



We had our traditional Campfire session on the Saturday evening, complete with Smores and Singing! We always have the whole campsite, so there is plenty of room, and we allow time in the programme for catching up with friends and making new ones!



The success of this year's camp has persuaded the Planning Team to do it all again next year!

Tents in Kent 2024 will be 16 to 19 August 2024, at Adamswell Scout Campsite. The cost of a weekend ticket is £65, and booking is open now! You can find our online Registration Form on our Tents in Kent Facebook page, where you will also find more information about what we are planning. If you have any questions you can message us through the Facebook Page, or email us at tentsinkent@gmail.com. We hope some of you will join us for Tents in Kent 2024!

Alison Fielding
President, Maidstone Chocolate WI
Tents in Kent Planning Team



Report of Handbell Ringing Workshop on 28 September.

Thirty WI members were kept enthralled by Sandra and her husband Martin who took us through the basics of handbell ringing. We learnt about the different types of bells and had a go at ringing them while being taught the fundamentals. Even those who could not read music were able to follow the scores provided with ease. Within a few hours we were able to perform various traditional songs and Christmas Carols to a pleasing standard.



On Thursday 28 September three members of **Ham Hill** and **Snodland WI** set off to Meopham to have a try at the Hand Bell ringing workshop. The tutor was so enthusiastic. She had made it easier for us by colour coding the music so we knew when to ring our bells. After instruction on how to ring and 'damp' the bells, we had a try at playing the music. We weren't always ringing at the correct speed but could recognise the tunes! It was a fun and enjoyable day. We came away very pleased that we had tried something different.

Helen Orme

To commemorate the Coronation of His Majesty King Charles III, **Highgate Hawkhurst WI** planted a cobnut tree on the King George V field in the village. Nicknamed 'Nutty', the tree was acquired from Potash Farm in July. We have managed to keep him going until a suitable plot was found and hope that he will flourish, along with our King!



Donated by Highgate Hawkhurst WI to commemorate the Coronation of King Charles III on 6 May 2023

Rachel Fagg

Nevill WI's outing, in September this year, took us on a London trip with an official guide. Our tour was of Westminster and surrounding area and was full of interesting facts and figures. If the husbands had behaved, we allowed them to accompany us on this trip and this is us outside the House of Lords. Following our trip, we went for lunch at The Sanctuary, which comes highly recommended. We were extremely lucky with the weather as it had rained all of the previous week!



A sumptuous Harvest Supper was enjoyed by the members of **Boughton Monchelsea WI** for their October meeting. We had a produce table and a collection which raised over £61 for ACWW. We also had a garden themed quiz. Marilyn and Barbara won our competitions for a decorated vegetable and a flower arrangement. A great autumnal get together for us all.



ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEW WEST KENT FEDERATION OF WIs **POETRY COMPETITION**



Over the years Members have enjoyed both entering and reading the entries of the Emmie Shipman Award, especially when the subject was an item of poetry. Unfortunately the endowment behind the Award has been exhausted and this particular competition has to cease. However, in recognition of the enthusiasm that WK Members have for poetry the Board of Trustees and the PALS sub-committee are pleased to announce a replacement Competition.

The West Kent Federation of WIs Poetry Competition is now launched following the same approach as the Emmie Shipman Award, other than it is exclusively a poetry competition.

The theme for 2024 is **Transport—how was your journey?**

So whether you want to hop on a midnight train to Georgia, take a fast car, plan to leave on a jet plane or have some other thoughts about modes of transport; please tell us about a memorable transport experience in 12-24 lines.

Please supply two copies - one with just your poem, the other with your poem and also your name, WI and contact details.

You can mail to
Ethel Hunt Lodge
4, Hawkwell Business Centre
Maidstone Road,
Pembury
TN2 4AG



Or email to FedSec@wkwfi.org.uk

Closing Date End January 2024



Winner to be announced at our WKFWDI AGM Monday 25 March 2024 and will be presented with a trophy (to keep for a year) and a certificate.



Once again this year we were graced with the presence and tuition of Matthew Palmer, water colour Artist as he hosted five days of classes across West Kent.

Members enjoyed painting beach huts by the sea, kite flying on the sea shore, pheasants in the snow, the northern lights and the Rocky Mountains in winter. It was a very enjoyable and relaxing week. Matthew was very helpful showing the class in bite size amounts just how to make each painting the same but very different from its neighbour and at the end of each day our members went home with almost professional looking results.

Matthew gave the ladies lots of useful information on improving their techniques if they had painted before and for those of us who had not was very encouraging and patient ensuring we understood exactly what we needed to do and how to do it. We were all given individual help when required and his jovial banter and upbeat personality ensured we all felt at ease in his company. I really enjoyed it all and was able to show steady progress by the end of the week. I am very much looking forward to Matthew's return next year when he will be joining us from 17 to 21 September inclusive with five more new pictures that will be suitable for both beginners and those with more experience. If you are looking for a stress free, yet productive, painting day then I cannot recommend Matthew's class highly enough and I personally felt the ticket was really good value for money and will definitely be signing up again next year.

Sue Boner
Royal Eltham WI

Bexleyheath & Crayford WI enjoyed a very lively September meeting with the West Hill Morris group, starting with musical accompaniment when we sang Jerusalem on the melodeon and then demonstrations of traditional Morris dancing. In between dances and while they caught their breath, we were told about the history of Morris dancing and it was very interesting to hear about the differences around the country. We were also given a demonstration of how to use the sticks in the dances (as weapons or tools) and hankies (to ward off bad

spirits) and how costumes vary throughout. Just hearing all the bells jingle lifts your mood. At the end of the evening,



we took part in a dance before a well-earned cup of tea.



The West Hill Morris support the New Yorkers Club Dartford which is a charity for adults with special needs.

Susan Harvey



Based in a village situated on River Darent, **Farningham WI** was in an ideal position to mark September's 'WI Week of River Action'. Fortified with tea and muffins, ladies gathered at a Pom Pom Pop-in session, winding the wool to make dozens of pompoms which were then festooned on the railings by the bridge. Meanwhile, the more talented of us, knitted and crocheted a beautiful post-box topper to display alongside.

Marilyn Wells



Crockenhill WI held a successful Recruitment Stall at our Village Harvest Fayre on 9 September. We chose the hottest day of the year! So the weather was good! I posted notices around the village inviting women to come and meet their WI to find out more about us. And they did!



Throughout the day we met 12 very interested

women who took away with them information and an invite to join us at our October meeting.

We had a game that required a steady hand for all to play, children and adults alike, to draw the crowds in. It will not surprise WI members that out of the 6 winners 5 were women. If you need a steady hand, ask a woman! We also sold peg bags made by our members from used kid T-shirts that had been tied dyed.

A big thank you to West Kent WI federation for supplying us with current posters and information materials for our event. Together with our posters of Crockenhill WI activities and events showcased our "Look What We Have Been Doing" diary. Together with our "Covid News Magazines" which totalled 44+ pages every month and received by every member throughout the time we were unable to meet.

Our stall also featured our regular events, for example, our Craft group, the "Crafty Afternooners", our sport teams, recent outings to places of interest, theatre trips and our mystery tours. Plus highlighting our proud 33 years of supporting a local Women's Refuge plus a brief history of the WI and what it means for women today.

Hopefully the interest we had will now materialise into new members.

Thank you to Fran and Janet two members who joined Sylvia, Lynn and me, Cheri, on our stall. Thank you all for your support. Cheri Yeates

Having met each other at the ACWW Afternoon Tea, Rachel Fagg (**Highgate Hawkhurst WI**) and Thushara Kasturiratne (**South Tonbridge WI**) bumped into one another at the Kent Running Festival in Tonbridge. Both were volunteering at the event and definitely deserved (more) cake after their efforts!





Associated Women of the World Afternoon Tea

What a great afternoon, only achieved by loads of help from loads of people, from the PA&I committee, to those making sandwiches and cakes, to the waitresses, those selling raffle tickets and pashminas/scarves and all those who travelled and attended the afternoon. A



special thanks, of course, to Carol Gupwell who gave an enlightening talk about her visit to the ACWW Triennial conference with the King and Queen of Malaysia – what an experience. The next conference in 3 years will be in Canada, it is definitely something to consider going to.

We took a massive £300+ on sales of raffle tickets and pashmina/scarf sales, and so many people donated their expenses. We will soon be able to send our donation on to ACWW. Thank you again EVERYBODY

Di Daniels,. Chair PA&I



Here at **Meopham WI** we are busy, busy, busy. In addition to our monthly meetings we hold monthly craft afternoons where we have made cards, Dorset buttons, paper flowers, macrame, knitting, crochet, silk painting and more. We hold a monthly knitting group where currently blankets are being made for our local hospital. We like to eat so each month we visit a different venue to have either brunch, lunch or tea. We get out and about and recently we have been to see a screening of Oklahoma at Bluewater, had a very informative guided tour of Hemsley Conservation Centre Fairseat where their mantra is 'Inspire, Educate, Conserve'. September took us on the 'Call the Midwife Tour' at Chatham Dockyard. Some of us even ventured into a submarine. And yes, we finished the day with a cream tea. What is planned next?. Watch this space!

Jan Fuller

President



Members of **Sennocke WI** and husbands enjoyed their annual Summer Lunch in the garden of past president, Anne Fielder.

The food was organised by Committee members, with the help of our special "Cookie", Jo Bower.



We are a friendly bunch and really enjoyed this opportunity to have a good "catch up".

Perfect weather, glorious garden and delicious food- it was a very happy occasion. The photo shows current president, Valerie, thanking Anne and congratulating her on the weather!

Inspired by the Federation event at Mote Park, eight ladies from **Highgate Hawkhurst WI** had a jolly time messing about on the River Rother and learning to 'SUP'. Under the guidance of our tutor Vanessa at Bodiam Boating Station, we achieved various levels of elevation and although we scared away much of the wildlife, it was a wonderfully calming experience on a beautiful morning! We followed it with a delicious lunch at the Lime Wharf Cafe and will definitely return in the future.

Rachel Fagg



Christina Edge, our treasurer at **Longfield WI** was nominated for a Carers award with Kent Radio. The presentations were held at Gillingham Football Club. and Christina was allowed to take three guests. Myself, Pam Smith, Lynn Cumberland & her partner were invited. We enjoyed a three course meal before the presentations. Alas she didn't win her category but was given a highly commended award. We are so proud of her and all the work she does for the community. Well done Christina from all at Longfield WI & Longfield Lunch Club.





Green Team

greenteam@wkwfi.org.uk

Home Energy Saving

We've all been considering our Energy bills at home recently, with the thought of saving money and the environment, so here are a few ideas to do both.

Small measures you can take **heating only the water needed in kettle or tank **fitting LED lightbulbs (the new ones come in warmer tones!) **Fitting thermostats on individual radiators, and turning them down in little-used rooms **Putting lids on saucepans **Careful use of the washing machine, many items can be successfully washed at 30° **Avoid using the tumble drier, air dry instead (you can buy a very useful heated airer from Lakeland) **Consider different methods of cooking, instead of heating the oven use a microwave, air fryer or slow cooker.

Larger measures **If replacing appliances, aim for A rated for efficiency. **Insulate your loft, windows, doors ,cavity walls **Look at installing solar panels, heat pumps. Combine these with a storage battery.

Where to find advice? It can all seem a difficult task but there are people to help.

The Energy Saving Trust-- lots of practical ideas, advice and a home energy check, also up to date info on energy crisis provision. energysavingtrust.org.uk Tel 0800 444 202 UK Govt Energy advice

Groundwork Green Doctor Team—free impartial advice to help take control of bills, save energy and access advice. groundwork.org.uk/greendoctor Tel 0800 233 5255

KCC --Solar Together Kent – best value solar installation.

LOCAL District Councils may have energy advice for housing.

Clean Rivers for People and Wildlife Campaign. 11 September 2023

The River Medway is our river, it is the river that divides people born in our county into Maids and Men of Kent or Kentish Men and Maids. It is the nearest river to **Burham and Wouldham WI**. We have to take action. We owe it to the wildlife in and alongside the river; we owe it to the swimmers up at East Farleigh and the paddlers at Upnor and Gillingham. We need to activate those large corporations and those who idly throw down litter, we must take action.



Members gathered down by St Mary's Church , the old redundant church of Burham to examine and clean up the riverbank. The reeds formed a barrier between us on the riverbank and the fast-flowing water gushing seaward carrying trunks of trees and planks of timber, The group surged along the path waving their litter picker uppers with their eyes darting left and right for any litter hiding near the path. We heard birds in the sky above, we saw slugs, spiders and insects, we felt gentle breezes from the river.

Happily we found not a crumb of paper, nor a scrap of plastic on the bank. What the dense reeds hid we do not know, what bacteria lurked in the dark water we could not find out, but we strongly believe that on our section of the river and in our way our desire for a clean river was plainly visible for all to see.

Heather Brown

For many years the **Gillingham WI** have laid a wreath in the town's beautiful Regency Park. It has been such an honour, and we feel very humbled in remembering the brave men and women who gave so much, not only on the battlefield but also those working behind enemy lines.



One such woman was Noor Inayat Kane, who worked with the French Resistance and was one of the first female wireless operators, serving in the Special Operations Executive. She aided the Allies by relaying messages back to Britain before being betrayed, captured, and executed in 1944. Queen Camila has recently unveiled a painting at the RAF Club, Piccadilly in Tribute.

This will be a poignant year as we lay the wreath, remembering our beloved late Elizabeth II and celebrating King Charles.

Sennocke WI member, Sandra McKeers-Johnson recently took part in 'Creativity Unwrapped' an art exhibition with six other artists in Westerham. The exhibition was to show case creative people living in Westerham, past and present. From the past, the creators of 'Listen with Mother' and 'Watch with Mother' of BBC and Andy Pandy fame. To painters, a photographer and a printmaker all working today.

The exhibition took place at Quebec House, National Trust, in the coach house from Friday 8 September to Sunday 17 September 2023. It had many visitors from the town and National Trust members and was very well thought of. Sandra, a printmaker, uses lino cutting and wood engraving to create her pictures which are a mix of craft and art skills.

Sandra has been a member of the WI for over ten years, firstly of Westerham Darenth WI which sadly has been suspended and now of Sennocke which she finds to be a lively and friendly group. Sandra was delighted when four members came to see the exhibition.

Sandra's knowledge of the WI came early when growing up in Wales. Her mother was president at Machen WI Glamorgan and a product standards controller for the WI Market in Newport, now Country Markets. Sandra says she used to awake to the smells of fresh baking on Thursday mornings as scones, and cakes of variety were made.

As a member of the WI Sandra has had the pleasure of attending the Queens Garden Party and two AGMs. Sandra has been impressed by the collaborative craft efforts which do real good in communities, and looks forward to many more years of WI membership.

Sandra McKeers-Johnson Sennocke WI, Sevenoaks.



Rainham Evening WI has been going for over 25 years and our craft group for approximately 15 years. Now run by Kath Fairhurst and Kate Archer. The picture shows the bracelets made at the last meeting.



They were bought in kit form from an eBay seller used previously. It is possible to make them from beads you already have providing you are careful with the weight of the beads.

Rainham craft group practices many different crafts, sewing, knitting, crochet, silk painting and paper. During next meeting we are attempting knitted Christmas puddings and sewn gonks for our craft fair.

Catford WI Treasure Hunt—Saturday 14 October

13 teams were tasked to find the many clues, crack the many cyphers, which in turn lead them to the various stations on the London Underground and ultimately to the final destination and the treasure (in this case a medal to commemorate taking part and bag of tasty treats).



Besides Catford members, friends and family, our friends from other WIs took part: Petts Wood (with Federation Chair Amanda Breach), Lee Green, Chelsfield and Peckham.



Everyone enjoyed themselves, had fun, saw parts of London they may not have seen before, got their 'step count' up and made it to the final destination.

The members of **St. Michaels WI** pulled out the stoppers on this amazing work of art.

Note, we have collared Liz (on the left) and her two staff, in her last week as Post Mistress of our Village shop.



She expressed how it cheered 'her' post box up, enjoying numerous of comments from customers. Brigitte Watkins St. Michaels WI





OBITUARIES

Very sadly **Welling WI** had to bid farewell to two of our members **MAGGIE ELLIS**, a past President and a committee member in various posts, also **DIANE SANDFORD**. We send our prayers and sympathy to their families.

Members were saddened to learn of the deaths of **PAMELA (PAM) GRAFHAM** and **PRIMROSE SMITH** both of whom had been very long-standing and loyal members of **Ravenswood WI** serving in many different ways. Primrose was President and Secretary and excelled at drama, while Pamela was a proficient needlewoman.

Aperfield WI is very saddened to announce the death of **FRANCES SIMNER** at the age of 78 years. She was a lovely lady and members will remember her kindness and her devotion to WI. She was a very special, energetic President for many years and as Hall Chair she oversaw many changes to improve our Hall. She organised a great many outings, opened her home for garden parties, initiated our book club and supported yoga, line dancing and holidays for members. She entertained members and drew them in with her passion for a topic and humorous delivery. She will be missed so much.

Six of **St Michaels WI Tenterden** set off for a Bus trip to Hastings. Some of us not quite entitled to a bus pass but at £2 a bargain.

With an horrendous forecast, we were delighted with glorious sunshine, shedding our coats.

A walk along old streets and the beach front enjoying fish and



chips, ice creams and even a beer on the veranda of the White Rock Hotel.

What a great day
Bridgette Watkins

Price increase:

Due to the latest increase in the cost of postage from October 2023, we have no option but to increase the cost of posting out the West Kent News for the WIs that have requested printed copies.

We are mindful that costs seem to be rising for everything but we have to cover the costs imposed on us. We hope that wherever possible, our members enjoy the West Kent News on line. Please note that the West Kent News is published on our website usually by the end of the month.

[West Kent News | West Kent \(thewi.org.uk\)](http://thewi.org.uk) is the link to the website where copies can be viewed going back to **January 2021** when we first started publishing our newsletter. Please be mindful of the environment, the use of paper and other resources.

Our Federation Secretary will email the relevant WIs with the new prices.

It has come to our notice that some Federations charge for copies available to members on their website. West Kent Federation continues to offer the on-line newsletter free of charge.

YOUR WEST KENT NEWS

To enable WIs to receive their ordered copies of the WKN by the first of the month and for it to be displayed on the website earlier you may find some of your articles will feature in the following month's edition rather than the next month. All appear in the order that they are received.

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ARTICLES—YOUR EVENT

Articles, your events Please no more than 150 words and two photographs. Congratulations and Obituaries (no more than 40 words). If possible email direct to westkentnews@wkwfi.org.uk If not please post to our Ethel Hunt Lodge address see top of page two.