



theWI  
INSPIRING WOMEN

# WEST KENT WI NEWS

Welcome, to the first edition of the West Kent News, totally produced by the members for the members.

January 2021

## CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

Dear Ladies,

A New Year. A New Beginning.

Here is the New Look WKN all prepared in house by our three Editors, Linda, Janet and Rita. Congratulations and thank you to them and the Office for doing such a good job. Please let us know what you think of the new look, no adverts for a start so more news from you.

What a year 2020 has turned out to be and what new challenges we have all faced.

Did you keep in touch with your friends? We would like to know how you did it. I had never heard of Zoom or Team or Virtual Meetings at the beginning of the year, but there you go you can teach an old dog new tricks!

Keep sending in your DOINGS each month and maybe by the time you read this in the WKN in January life may be a little like normal.

As I write this at the end of November I am still hoping we can have some sort of face to face meeting in March at Tunbridge Wells. There is still no news about the National AGM in April at the Royal Albert Hall so we must just keep our fingers crossed!

Keep safe,

*Jane Backshall*





### END OF AN ERA

Linda Styles, Federation Secretary, who retired at the end of December.



### WI CENTENARY ROSE

I am very conscious of climate change issues and do my best to save energy and use less plastic but global warming has bought me some joy in that the garden is still producing flowers in November. My WI Centenary rose is still producing blooms and they are as beautiful as ever.



*Caroline Davis*

WI Trustee



## Green Team

Annette Smith

For anyone who doesn't know who we are, Green Team is made up of West Kent Members who have signed up to be NFWI Climate Change Ambassadors. As well as offering free talks to WIs and having a Climate Change Day later in the year we also plan to have a column in the West Kent News each month.

### Start the year greener!

### 3 simple ways to reduce your carbon footprint

Recycle or reuse Christmas wrapping

Buy seasonal British grown veg

Use peat free compost

## Treasurer's Corner



Here we are in 2021. I hope you had as good a Christmas as you could and hoping this year is a lot better than 2020.

Firstly, I want to mention that I hope to hold some Zoom meetings towards the end of this month/beginning of February for Treasurers. They will not be taking the place of the normal Treasurer's Training days (which unfortunately were cancelled last year), but will be an opportunity to raise any issues you might have. In particular in completing the financial statements, since we are not far from the end of March.

Talking of financial statements I realise that many of you have faced difficulties in completing and obtaining sign off, but I did want to point out that from the ones received in the office there seem to be a number of common errors and I thought I might mention some of them here.

- Some statements not signed by the IFE\*.
- Some statements not signed by the President/Treasurer\*.
- Section 1B – Bank reconciliation not completed.
- Total cash funds in section B should be the same as A6.
- Section C3 should be filled in, it provides a very useful breakdown of activities in relation to expenditure/income, thereby allowing the worth of carrying out an activity to be determined.

Back to the Zoom meetings; please keep a lookout in the WI mailboxes for dates.

\* The copies received in the office were not signed. However, could I ask you to check your copy to ensure that everything is signed.

*Gillian Neville*



Following eight months of uncertainty and having to find new ways of keeping our WIs going it has certainly been a challenging time.

We find ourselves in lockdown once again, unable to have friends and family in our houses, but I am not downhearted as I have had conversations with many of you via phone, text and that thing called Zoom. I am encouraged by the many ways that you have come together to support your members.

Zoom has become an all-consuming part of my life – in one day I can attend four meetings and not leave the house. It is not as good as a proper meeting but it's the best we can do at the moment. Many members are learning to "Zoom" by a buddy system and experiencing new ways to communicate and keep in touch.

The Board of Trustees has organised "Drop in sessions", and I know that Advisers will soon be holding their own Coffee and Chat meetings. We know that not all members can take part in these sessions but if members who attend cascade the information to other members they can all be kept in the loop.

"Meetings in a Bag" (NOT goody bags please) have proved to be very popular and much appreciated by all. Just pop something educational or informative in with the biscuits and teabag,

Till we meet again in person thank you for all that you have done and continue to do.

*Carol Gupwell*

Membership Chair

## LEAMINGTON LADIES WI (ORPINGTON) – ZOOMING

Leamington Ladies WI, which has a membership of 95 with most having access to the internet, has made use of the facility Zoom since the start of Lockdown on 23 March 2020. Initially this was just for Officer and then Committee meetings, to plan the way forward, keeping to the 40-minute limit.

Whenever possible during the summer months, the book club managed to gather in a member's garden for their meetings, (max six). When this was not possible, they resorted to a Zoom meeting, which meant that they could at least comment on the books read and chat to one another. The Friendship Group held weekly quiz sessions via email, organised by a member, and then garden meetings, (max six). Now that this is not possible the group will be Zooming to chat.

In September it was decided to purchase Zoom on a monthly basis, so that we could start having speakers. This has also meant that Committee meetings, group meetings, etc can run more smoothly without watching the clock. This is proving very worthwhile. Communication via Zoom has meant that the running of our WI could continue with a number of important decisions being made along the way, and not being reliant on just a few.

In October, we had our first monthly Zoom WI meeting with about 30 members participating. We listened to an interesting talk about the Shetland Bus by Gilly Halcrow and in November we were entertained by Peta Allingham talking about Travels in a Quirky Car. After the talk, we were split into breakout groups of up to six members for a short chat session. This proved very popular so we will continue with this format.

On Tuesday 17 November, we held our first Quiz afternoon, followed by breakout groups again. This is a new venture, and if this proved successful, we will continue with these on a monthly basis, until we are able to once again meet at our hall.

We hope to continue to make use of Zoom for as many of our members who can join us during this difficult time.

*Ann McCarthy*

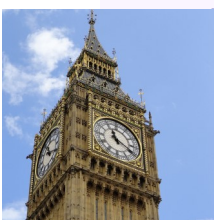
President

## SHROVE TUESDAY 16 FEBRUARY

As this item is being written during the November Covid 19 Lockdown we have no idea what the 'rules' will be by the time we reach PANCAKE DAY. However, hopefully you will be able to meet, with a small group of friends, for some friendly outdoor competition. Go armed, possibly to a local park or outdoor space, with a lightweight frying pan and pancakes (homemade or shop brought) and do a one-minute challenge. Most mobile phones have a timer, set for one minute and see who can toss the pancake the most times in that one minute. If six people are permitted, two toss each time with someone else counting the flipping pancakes. One does the timing and the sixth takes photographs to forward to the West Kent News. You can also do a walking or running race, remembering to toss the pancake the number of times agreed amongst

yourselves. Other countries organise a Mardi Gras for Shrove Tuesday, why not liven things up with a fancy-dress theme. It will probably be too cold here to bare flesh outside in February, but perhaps some sort of hat could be worn.

These traditions are part of our heritage and if they give us an opportunity to have fun with friends then so much the better. Have fun everyone and most of all KEEP SAFE.



## PUBLIC AFFAIRS & INTERNATIONAL

Caroline Davis—01892 725571

PA&I held a Zoom meeting on 1st December to promote the Stem Cell Donations Resolution. Talks were given by Sarah Chapman, who has successfully received Stem Cell treatment and Reshna Radiven from DKMS, one of the organisations who register donors. We are circulating a letter which can be sent on to all family and friends to encourage as many registrations as possible. Apologies to ladies who were prevented from joining the Zoom because of technical errors.

A notice will arrive in your mailboxes to announce a similar Zoom on Modern Slavery in the middle of January.

## HAPPY 100TH BIRTHDAY, FORDCOMBE WI

Fordcombe WI should have been celebrating with a party and the bunting displayed here by our President, Fay Blanchard, would have hung around the hall on 17 November for our 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday.

The bunting was started prior to lockdown and was to be an ongoing project throughout the year. It has our name and 1920-2020 to commemorate the longevity of WI in Fordcombe. Fay has completed a labour of love and finished it for us. The photo has also been displayed as the rear cover of the November Parish magazine. A huge thank you to our President for her dedication.

*June Roff*





## WHAT DID YOU FIND IN THE WOODS TODAY?

Gillian Neville, whilst walking her dog, photographed this bright crop of Honey Fungus. As those who were watching Autumn Watch on the 5 November would have seen, the team used lights to show how far underground the mycelium network travels. However, there is a Honey Fungus in Oregon that is proved to be the world's largest living organism. How incredible is that?



Photograph Gillian Neville, Federation Treasurer

## BREDHURST WI WALK THE WORLD

October 15 saw five ladies from Bredhurst WI Committee fetchingly attired in waterproofs and trainers ready to walk around Capstone Park, Chatham in aid of ACWW Walk the World. First stop the coffee shop, where one lady sat outside as first aid support and the other four set off into the unknown, and didn't even stop for coffee first. As you can see, we even managed a selfie (after a number of false starts, my arms weren't long enough, Maureen's were too wobbly)! The four ladies valiantly walked two and a half miles, according to Wendy's Fitbit! They haven't a clue where they went, because they got lost but found their way back for a well-earned cup of tea after a couple of hours. Which just proves that a good WI member can always find their way to a cup of tea! The weather held off and there was even a little sunshine. One of the pictures actually shows three



of the four ladies in the distance walking around the lake as they left, all socially distanced. Because of current restrictions it was very difficult to arrange sponsorship, so our plans are that when we can eventually return to Institute Meetings, we will ask our members to show their support with a collection then. We all felt that It was very good to be able to support our Sisters all over the world and that we all joined together that day to support each other and Walk the World.



## POETS CORNER

### WINTER

In the bleak mid-winter, doors and windows closed  
Nestling close to fireside lazily disposed.  
Double-glazing silence, television reigns,  
Evenings long and lonely, human voice abstains.  
Make a cup of coffee, sugar sweet and strong,  
Liven up your feeling, burst out into song.  
Plenty of sounds around you, laughter, shouts and fun,  
Can I hear the doorbell? Hasten out to see,  
No-one would be calling, can't be meant for me.  
Musing over coffee, glad I am on my own,  
Make my own decisions, whilst I am alone.  
Johnny in Australia and Danny in Peru.  
Both of them a life away, from all they meant to you.  
One day there'll be a bell and I'll go out to see,  
Then lift my arms to greet them, embracing joyfully.

*Rosina Watson*

Kemsing Evening WI

Taken from West Kent A Miscellany of Poems 1999



## ***Ravenswood (West Wickham) WI still Bringing Sunshine to those living with dementia***

MEMORY BOX CAFÉ was the result of Ravenswood (West Wickham) WI's centenary project – to make West Wickham a Dementia Friendly Community. The first step in this plan was the opening of Memory Box Café in April



2016. It is run by a subcommittee of the WI and it is funded solely by donations and fundraising; we have no access to WI funds.



Memory Box Cafe is a twice monthly drop-in for people living with memory loss and dementia and their carers. We provide free activities, games, conversation, music, singing and dancing, information, and friendship. Covid19 has of course put a stop to all this.

Since the beginning of lockdown in March we have sent out a newsletter at least once a month sometimes more. The enthusiasm of our editor is outstanding!

In July we held our first meeting by Zoom. Unfortunately, mainly due to no access to the technology, relatively few people can engage. However, those that do love it. For those who cannot join in we share the quizzes and craft items from our meeting in our newsletter.

Last month we delivered a goody box to all our regular attendees. The subcommittee had fun planning and acquiring the contents and then three of us met suitably socially distanced and appropriately attired to put the boxes together and organise delivery. All boxes were hand delivered by a member of the subcommittee.

Some of the items in the box were an invitation to join us for a virtual cup of tea, (tea bags and biscuits provided), on a certain date and time. A stress ball, a packet of colouring pencils and colouring sheets, the all-important pencil sharpener, hand gel, a lavender bag and a die and beetle drive cards.

Everyone enjoyed the boxes, those who received them and those who planned them. So much so we are now in the throes of our next goody bag for Christmas.

We are hoping that we are going to be able to meet again in person in the Spring but in the meantime Memory Box Café is thriving and our visitors know we haven't forgotten them and we still Bring Them Sunshine (our adopted anthem).

*Lyn Eustace*



## HAPPY BIRTHDAY MATFIELD WI

To celebrate Matfield WI 100 years in 2021 a new bench has been sited on Matfield Green

for everyone in the village to enjoy. On the most glorious Saturday morning Kathy Godber, our President and I were the first ones to try it out.

*Chris Klempau*



## BOROUGH BELLES WI AT THE BERMONDSEY STREET FESTIVAL

Below is a photo taken at the Bermondsey Street Festival in September of the Borough Belles WI stall. We were lucky that the festival went ahead albeit with more PPE and social distancing than in previous years. The Belles sold handmade plastic reduction items, plant cuttings and, of course, lots of cakes. It was a great day and lovely to reconnect with the local community, we even managed to sign up three new members.

*Lisa Ancliffe*

Secretary, Borough Belles WI



## PETTS WOOD EVENING WI - OPEN GARDEN DAYS

Petts Wood Evening WI have held Open Garden Days since the start of the pandemic. All the Open Days have been held in the beautiful garden of our President, Pam Abdee (all in accordance with the Government Guidelines). Overall, 64% of our total membership of 82 attended one or more of the Garden Days. Members arrived and stayed for an hour in groups of six socially distanced. The tables and chairs were sanitised before the next group of six arrived.

This is a photograph of the 5<sup>th</sup> Open Garden Day held on 26 October and the participants were, from left to right: Elizabeth Taylor, Rhona Coventry, Sue Martin, Norma Hale, Iris Reynoldson and Barbara Way.



*Jackie Hodgkinson* Petts Wood Evening WI

## WEST KENT FEDERATION BURSARIES

Following the closure of Denman, the Board of Trustees have reassessed the bursaries provided by the Federation. As I am sure you are aware the Federation currently provides eleven bursaries, which are specifically for use at Denman. The current bursaries are split between those for use by individual WIs and members. All bursaries are chosen by means of a draw. Some are subject specific.

At its Board meeting on 16 September, the Trustees decided that, from 2021, the following bursaries would be awarded.

(1) Two bursaries for WIs to be called as follows:

**NFWI raffle**- one bursary to be funded from the proceeds of the NFWI raffle.

**Memorial Bursary** (formerly the Denman Memorial Bursary). This bursary is funded by donations from WIs who wish to remember deceased members by paying for a page in the Memorial book. The funding of this bursary does and always has relied on enough donations being received to fully fund it.

The winning WI can decide whether to use these bursaries to book a specialised tutor/workshop that would be open to all its members to attend, or hold a draw for an individual to have a chance of winning the bursary.

(2) **Four bursaries for individual members.** Unlike many of the current bursaries they will not be subject specific and can be

used for any course chosen by the member, so long as it meets the WI charitable objectives. The course can be residential, non-residential, even on-line.

Winners of both the WI and individual bursaries will be chosen by a draw. All WIs will be entered automatically into the draws for the two WI bursaries.

Members will have to apply for entry into the individual bursaries, please use the application box on page 10, or write the request, giving your details as required. Please note – Members can only apply once.

In addition, the Trustees made the following decisions:

(a) Each bursary will be for a set figure of £200. If the course costs more than that then the member should pay the balance.

(b) The winner will have two years to take up the bursary.

(c) The winners will need to check with our Federation that the course meets WI objects.

(d) If possible, the Federation should pay the provider direct. If not, we will refund the member on production of confirmation paperwork.

Please submit only one personal **application** – thank you  
Either on the form, letter or email. Details on page 10



# LOCKDOWN KNITTING

**Staplehurst WI** member Hilary Chubb sitting amongst all her knitting and sewing during lockdown.

The hats are for the Sailors' Society and the small ones for the Premature Baby unit. There are Juggi Jumpers for Africa and so much more. She really has been busy and enjoys every moment of it.

*Pam Payne*

Secretary, Staplehurst WI



Dawn Barrett, a member of **Ravenswood (West Wickham) WI**, has kept busy knitting teddy bears which she donated to the local Shirley Neighbourhood Care who were making up baskets for elderly local residents.



Members of **Lenham WI** knitting jumpers for ACWW appeal



Over the past few months, some members of Bearsted and Thurnham Craft Group have been involved in knitting mittens for the Heart of Kent Hospice 'Unity Mittens' Christmas fund raising initiative. The Hospice, in keeping with many other charities, has seen its revenue drop drastically during the pandemic and the mittens are part of their ongoing drive to fund their specialist care provision. The photograph shows many of the beautiful mittens knitted by the group. One member of the group, Daphne Leech, needs special recognition for knitting 53 pairs. Amazing! If you would like to purchase some, they are available from [www.hokh.org](http://www.hokh.org)

Thanks for all the hard work!

Gilly Tully

Bearsted and Thurnham WI





## WEST PECKHAM WI – PHOTO OF THE MONTH

West Peckham WI have been enjoying meetings via Zoom and we have done 'flower of the month' photo and 'themed' photo competitions each month. The September themed photo of the month competition subject was 'Animals' and this photo, taken by Cecilia Stevenson in the West Peckham area whilst walking her cat and dog, was the winner.

*Bridget Cockburn* Secretary, West Peckham WI



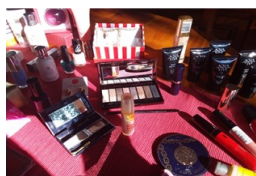
## Bearsted WI Craft Group



Cheri Yeates, Sylvia Halls and  
Carol Campbell  
packing items ready for collection.



Children's Bags and Shoeboxes



Marvellous Make Up

## RECENT EVENTS AT HADLOW WI

Since celebrating our 10th birthday in October, we have been busy doing all things Zoom. On the 5 November nine ladies got together for Bonfire Bakes, namely a gingerbread traybake and ginger biscuits. One of our members joined in making a Christmas cake with Alison from Denman. November has been our crafting month, when we've made Christmas Tree decorations, Christmas Rag Wreath and HapaZoming, very appropriately named! We have also managed some non virtual activities! 'Walk and Talk', a short walk around Hadlow continues every Friday and Saturday morning, albeit we can only do that in twos currently and finally one of our members has been busy knitting Unity Mittens for Heart of Kent Hospice charity. These mittens were sold on line at <http://www.hokh.org/support-us/events/unity-mittens-purchase>. Last years 'must have' Christmas Tree decoration!



*Shirley Ellis*

Committee member

## CROCKENHILL WI SUPPORTING THEIR LOCAL WOMEN'S REFUGE

### (HANDBAG AND SHOEBOX CAMPAIGN AND WHITE RIBBON DAY)

Members of Crockenhill WI (near Swanley) have been supporting the local Women's Aid Centre for over 28 years. On top of the usual donations over the year I thought we could do something extra, especially in this year of Covid that has increased the number of women seeking help to nearly 50% more than normal. It was our way of contributing to White Ribbon Day and helping to stop Violence to Women.

We contacted the Women's Aid Centre to inform them of our idea to donate essential items for both women and children and to compile the items into handbags and shoeboxes. They were delighted and gave us a list of what is needed when women come to them, as sometimes all they have is what they are wearing! So, we had our essential list of toiletries, underwear, person hygiene items and dental products etc. However I wanted to add a little magic fairy dust to that list too. For example samples of perfume, skin care or make up, jewellery, a scarf, a book, a magazine or anything that says luxury and 'ME TIME' for the women. Our members didn't disappoint. Even with a restricted lockdown they collected fabulous luxury items for the women and items for the children from major stores and on-line.

Our contacts from the refuge came and collected our donations which filled two cars and they were completely overwhelmed and appreciative by the response of our members.

## OBITUARIES

It is with great sadness that **Lenham WI** has to announce the passing of **MARY DAVIES**. A committed member of Lenham WI for many years, serving as a committee member, Secretary and loyal supporter.

Deepest condolence to Mary's family.

It is with great sadness that **Erith WI** has to announce the sudden passing of **BETTY PRETTY** after a very short illness. She was a loyal committee member, filling the rolls of Joint Programme Secretary and running our popular Theatre Group, booking a new venue at least monthly. Betty was a popular and vital member of our institute and will be greatly missed by all our members who have happy memories of times spent with Betty.

We send our heartfelt condolences to husband Bob and her family on this saddest of occasions.

**Boughton Monchelsea WI** members were saddened to hear of the death of their dear friend and long standing member **MOIRA ROBINSON**. Moira was a very supportive member of our WI for many years and, although unable to attend meetings due to ill health over the last couple of years, it was always lovely to see her at our coffee mornings supported by her husband and friends. We send our deepest condolences to Moira's family.

## CONGRATULATIONS

Members of **Edenbridge Evening WI** send their congratulations and best wishes to **ROSEMARY COOPER** who has celebrated her 65th Wedding Anniversary, **VALERIE BROWN**, her Diamond Wedding Anniversary and **SUE JENNER**, **MARGARET HAMMONDS**, **ROSEMARY HILL**, **DEBBIE HILL** and **MONICA VARNEY** who have all celebrated Golden Weddings. Several members have also celebrated 'big' birthdays so there will be a party and plenty of cake when they finally meet again!

### Answers to the Quiz in the

#### October WKN

A Question of Dottiness – in all its variety

- |                 |                    |                  |
|-----------------|--------------------|------------------|
| 1. Dalmatians   | 15. Boils          | 29. Full stop    |
| 2. Pills        | 16. Beads          | 30. Pearl Barley |
| 3. French Knots | 17. Pixel          | 31. Spray        |
| 4. Morse Code   | 18. Acne           | 32. Rice         |
| 5. Rain         | 19. Pebbles        | 33. Polka        |
| 6. Shingle      | 20. Crumb          | 34. Dotty        |
| 7. Currants     | 21. Marbles        | 35. Dimple       |
| 8. Sequins      | 22. Seeds          | 36. Red Ball     |
| 9. Dotted Line  | 23. Pimple         | 37. Pop Corn     |
| 10. Comma       | 24. Chicken pox    | 38. Dots         |
| 11. Mr. Blobbie | 25. Farthing       | 39. Shower       |
| 12. Spots       | 26. Leopard        | 40. Speech Marks |
| 13. Buttons     | 27. Speckled       |                  |
| 14. Hail Stones | 28. Ping pong ball |                  |

## WHO TO CONTACT

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## ARTICLES—YOUR EVENT

Articles, your events, congratulations and obituaries. If possible email direct to [westkentnews@wkwfi.org.uk](mailto:westkentnews@wkwfi.org.uk). If not, please post to our Ethel Hunt Address, see top of page two. Please no more than 150 words and two photographs. Items will be included as space allows..

### WEST KENT FEDERATION OF WI'S

#### 2021 ANNUAL BURSARY FOR EDUCATION IN ANY SUBJECT

Please submit only one personal **application** – thank you

Either on this form, letter or *email*

WI.....

Name.....

Address.....

..... Post Code.....

Tel No:.....Email.....

APPLY TO: Geraldine Martin.....Email: [ghoganmartin@gmail.com](mailto:ghoganmartin@gmail.com)

Closing date **31 January 2021** (Postal applications to Federation Office at Ethel Hunt Lodge clearly marked '**Bursary**')  
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