

Merry Christmas to all WI Members



Merry Christmas to All!

I'd like to thank all WI Members for all their hard work through the year and wish them a happy and peaceful Christmas. Hoping to see you all in the New Year.

From Glenice Wignall, Chairman of Leicestershire & Rutland Federation and the Board of Trustees.

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Leicestershire & Rutland Federation of Women's Institutes

incorporated in England and Wales as a Company limited by Guarantee No. 02769771 Charity Reg No. 1016 766

WI House, 135 Loughborough Road, Leicester, LE4 5LQ

Tel: 0116 2661342 Email: wihouse@lrfwi.org

Opening hours: Mon-Thurs 9.30am—1.30pm

www.leicestershire-and-rutland.thewi.org.uk or scan QR code

Find us on Facebook: Leicestershire & Rutland Federation of WIs



From the Board

Annual Council Meeting

Leicester Grammar School, Great Glen, Leicester LE8 9FL

Saturday 16th March 2024

10.30 am – 3.30pm

Tickets: £15 each (£7.50 for stewards)

Our speakers for the Annual Council Meeting 2024 are:

Mrs Henrietta Chubb JP

High Sheriff of Leicestershire for
2023 – 2024



Polly Toynee
Columnist and Writer



Each WI will be allocated tickets pro-rata to their membership numbers plus one free delegate ticket. These must be applied for before **22 January 2024** using your WI's dedicated ACM booking form.

Glenice Wignall, Chairman had the pleasure of attending Northern Lights Group meeting where there was a murder mystery. .. Glenice was happy she wasn't the victim.

It was great fun and was lovely to see all of the Group coming together for such good fun.



From the House

Sue Lobb, our MCS Support and I have had lots of fun collecting and correcting email addresses for our direct mailing trial. We are almost there and now have probably the best kept MCS in the UK! We hope that being able to contact directly will keep everyone that wants to be in the loop in receiving up to date information.

There has been the lovely Esham testing your electrical equipment—if you missed the slot to get your equipment PAT tested we can organise a follow up session to test so do contact me.

We are now contacting all Speakers old and new to go into the 2024 Yearbook—this year there is just 1 fee to be added into the printed and electronic Yearbook with up to 5 titles. We had 3 speakers test the Google form which means that information is automatically collected ready for the printers.

We are waiting on the Annual Report Forms to come in so we can get the correct information for all WIs into the Yearbook too.

Information on the Annual Meeting in London will be sent with the County News. June at the Albert Hall sounds good!

As we look toward the end of the year I feel so appreciative of all the support you have offered in my first year as Federation Secretary—there is so much to learn and I'm still learning!

Very best wishes for the Season , Sandra, Federation Secretary

Season's Greetings Season's Greetings

Membership Committee

"Merry Christmas everyone. An important reminder to all secretaries and treasurers to VERY PROMPTLY send in their Annual Reports and signed financial statements to WI House ASAP, as these reports are used to ensure each WIs' officers and contact details are up to date for the 2024-25 Year Book, which is being compiled as you read.

A Very warm WELCOME to newly re-formed LONG WHATTON WI, so pleased to see you back!

Fundraising Committee

Three of us travelled by train to Leicester to attend the Autumn lunch with the guest speaker The Cake Lady.

We arrived early so headed straight to the venue for a coffee. The room was set up lovely and there was no need to worry about seats, the seating plan had sorted that out. We were placed on a table with lovely ladies from Witherley and Markfield, we were soon chatting and swapping ideas for guest speakers for future meetings.

Then the lunch arrived and we were all very pleased with our choices, the food was lovely. Every detail had been thought of, our menu choices were on our place names, so no panic remembering what you had ordered.

It was then time for the guest speaker Kath Ryan, aka The Cake Lady. Wow what an incredible lady, her story had you gripped from the opening sentence. Her story of how she started baking cakes for the troops and her journey since. The amount of cakes she has baked and the joy she has brought to the soldiers at one of their toughest times, however it didn't just stop there in the hospital since she has continued to support these brave men and ladies. She is and will continue to be a huge part of their lives. Inspiring.

We all had a great time and thoroughly enjoyed ourselves. From Wymondham WI



Public Affairs Committee

2024 RESOLUTIONS THAT HAVE BEEN PUT FORWARD FOR YOUR VOTE

1. Dental Health Matters
2. Impacts of poor housing conditions
3. Say 'no' to gambling advertising
4. Improving Outcomes for Women in the Criminal Justice System

WHAT HAPPENS NOW.....

21 November 2023 <i>WI Life</i>	Shortlisted resolutions, brief background information, and selection slip appear in the November issue of <i>WI Life</i>
Late November 2023 – early February 2024	Members consider shortlist and meet to discuss and learn more about the issues. Members individually select the resolution they support the most
11 February 2024	Deadline for members' individual choices as a total to arrive by email with federations
18 February 2024	Deadline for federations to return tallied selection results to the NFWI

Each of us will be voting **not for or against** the resolutions on the shortlist, but rather **on which is your favourite** for discussions in your WI next spring, and then voted on by your delegate at the Albert Hall. You will have until January to make your individual choice.

Arts and Crafts Committee

Which Craft? had their meeting at WI house on the 3rd Thursday in July. Ladies arrived with their different projects.

Meetings will be on the 3rd Thursday of the month at WI House 10am—12 noon. If you enjoy crafting and would like a morning crafting and sharing ideas and advice come and join us.



Developing Embroidery Skills Workshop

12 ladies spent a Saturday in September developing their embroidery skills to produce a beautifully embroidered initial.

They began by tracing the initial using windows or light boxes. Then they went on to use a variety of stitches to outline and embellish the design.



Leisure Committee



Twenty three ladies from various WIs across the Federation met at Billa Barra Hill 25 years on from when the WI planted trees in the National Forest. Five of the ladies had been at the original tree planting in November 1998.

After the walk we all made our way to Markfield for a delicious lunch.

Thank you Markfield WI



Event Flyers

Organised by Leisure Committee

A Christmas Cracker of a Walk

Tuesday 5th, 6th &
Thursday 7th December 2023



SOLD OUT

Organised by Arts & Crafts Committee

Which Craft?

Craft Social Mornings



3rd Thursday of the Month

10am till 12noon

WI House

Free

How do I get tickets?

No paper tickets will be sent, an email is your confirmation. Please forward the email to anyone else named on your booking form.

Please ensure all contact details are supplied on the booking form for all attending in case of any emergencies.

Need to pay?

Wait for your booking confirmation then either

- Pay by BACS with event name as reference
- Payments by Cheque (Secretaries/Treasurers only) can be sent to WI House made payable to LRFWI with event name on the back.
- Wait for invoice to your WI

Need to cancel?

- Contact wihouse@lrfwi.org or call 0116 2661342 before your invoice for payment arrives

Events are an excellent way to meet other WIs, go as a group or as an individual and you'll always be welcome. There is likely to quite a lot of fun and laughter too.



Monthly Draw

Congratulations to our Monthly Draw winners!

1st Prize £25— Pat Wood, Burbage

2nd Prize £15— Carol Dorman, Ullesthorpe

3rd Prize £10— Pat Monk, Great Bowden

Thank you to all of the members who have supported the Federation by buying a Monthly Draw ticket!



Around the Counties

Hinckley Canalside

Karen Gimson Landscaper Garden Designer

A very enjoyable evening. Karen gave us an insight on the gardens she has had the pleasure to design ... always trying to use the more sustainable plants and flowers beneficial to birds, bees and insects.



Her talk was very informative on the type of perennials and annuals to use for different times of the year... giving us lots of tips on the best place to position them ...as well as showing us great slides of the various gardens she has designed and the shrubs and flowers she used. Her talk

was accompanied by a list of plants that she used.

She is also a wonderful flower arranger and showed us some of the beautiful door wreaths she has created from silver birch stems. More ideas for arranging flowers without causing any damage to the environment using harmful products. One nice idea was to float the heads of hellebore, snowdrops, violas and bellis daisy in water to make very pretty table decorations.

Karen does lots of talks and if you listen to Radio Leicester, you will hear her on a Wednesday at 3:00pm, or sometimes on a Saturday afternoon.

Barkby and Beeby

We had a games evening with a difference. Well the long & the short of it was we played The Giraffe Game a version of beetle. Amid intense concentration the dice flew from hand to hand and excited voices got ever louder as each game neared its conclusion. Julie Judd was the winner, Annie Taylor got the booby prize & Jenny Nurse won the raffle all with pumpkin themed prizes.

Left to right on the photograph are: Jenny Nurse, Dorothy Carnall, Annie Taylor, Valerie Cobb & Julie Judd.



Whissendine

At our meeting in October we finally met the River Ranger from Severn Trent, Luke. He started by telling us that the team was set up in 2021 to monitor river health. They do all sorts of things including meeting with community groups, working with the Wildlife Trust, river sampling and responding to reports of pollution or spillage. They also do green recovery schemes such as replacing old lead pipes, installing water gardens and putting in permeable paving slabs to prevent flooding.

They have recently installed these slabs in Mansfield, what a good idea! One thing I found quite amusing is when he talked about RNAGS, this stands for Reasons for Not Achieving Good Status and they try to keep this figure as low as possible. We talked about our concerns regarding new housing and the flooding in Whissendine, he didn't avoid any questions and if he didn't have an immediate answer he promised to look into it and reply. It was an interesting evening talking to a thoroughly decent chap.

Broughton Astley



Paul and Sue Gardner and Simon Grant were our guest speakers to talk about their "Experiences in Pantomime" at the Concordia Theatre, Hinckley. Paul told us some history of pantomimes which date back to mediaeval times and are uniquely English. Jack Marvin started pantomimes in Barwell in the

1950s, which then moved to Earl Shilton Working Men's Club and then to the Concordia Theatre in 1971, when the first pantomime was "Humpty Dumpty". Paul, who always liked to play the baddy, joined in 1976 and performed there for 20 years. The Concordia's pantomimes are always in the traditional style with the principal boy played by a girl and the Dame by a man, and this was Simon's role. He explained that the Dame has to wear a different costume every time she goes on stage in a new scene, maybe the whole costume or just wig, hat or shoes. That makes for some very quick changes, which could be very challenging for the Dame and the dresser! Timing is critical with lines being addressed to the audience but intended for the character on stage. Audiences love it when actors forget their lines and have to ad lib – Oh yes they do! It was a very entertaining evening which everyone enjoyed.

A group met for coffee and cake at the Garden Barn in Cotesbach, some saw a production of "The Book Thief" at The Curve and other theatre trips are booked, as well, of course, "Puss in Boots" at the Concordia in January!

Elmesthorpe

We welcomed Gurtej Matharu from Leicester, a self taught designer and maker of bespoke bridal and evening wear gowns. After watching his grandmother sewing, he overcame obstacles to lose himself in a world of creativity. To conclude the evening, Gurtej gave members a long length of exquisite material, pins and a pair of scissors, then asked them to dress 4 mannequins with a sari.



A successful fund raiser beetle drive, with tea/coffee and home made cakes, was well supported by friends and members from the High Cross group.



Photograph shows winner Val Marvin, from Earl Shilton Afternoon W. I. , President of Elmesthorpe Karen Alsop, and Janet Storer from the host institute with the booby prize.

Around the Counties

Leire



Alison Briggs gave a talk on a Leicester based Charity "Inter Care Africa". The charity, set up by a GP in 1974 focused on tackling medical waste to save lives by channelling surplus

equipment and medicines to health units in Africa. The processes and scale of their work has evolved over time and currently covers a catchment area of 11 million people. Last year 464 boxes and a shipping container of medical aid valued at £684,500 was transported. Alison provided leaflets about the Charity and items that can be recycled such as bandages, scissors, stethoscopes and plasters. Regulations now require all medicines to be provided by dispensaries or manufacturers. The charity also recycles jewellery, watches, printer cartridges, stamps, laptops and foreign currency to boost funds and our members have collected items to donate. Alison brought in a collection of jewellery and handmade cards which members could purchase.



In October, we were very grateful to John Goodacre for stepping in to talk to us following the cancellation of our scheduled speaker. John's PowerPoint presentation was titled "Carrifran Wildwood and Beyond: Rewilding in the heart of Southern Scotland". This is a project that he

and his wife Stephanie have been involved in and is now the Wildwood Group of Borders Forest Trust.

The project of planting trees commenced in January 2000 and the species of trees were based on the history of the landscape. The organisation has grown and taken on other sites and there has been much interest from other key organisations as well as books published. There was an interesting discussion with members afterwards.

Thurnby and Bushby

Baby Basics

We have been collecting for Baby Basics.



This is an organisation which collects and distributes items for babies and preschool children.

All donations go to families who have very very little. The photo is of Johanna, a volunteer, at the centre.

You can learn more of their work on line or on Leicester baby basics Facebook page.

Groby

Our October speaker was Susie Lickman, who gave us tips and hints for keeping houseplants healthy (or alive in some cases!). In a complete change of career, Susie opened her own shop in the old fire station, Market Harborough in November 2022.

One of Susie's favourite plants is an African Violet as her Mum used to love them, and she donated a fine specimen as a raffle prize at the meeting.

Susie had two top tips to keep healthy houseplants: Natural light and watering.

Natural light is essential and it is important that consideration is given to the position of the plant within the home. We will now all be rushing round our houses to move our plants to their optimal site!

The biggest cause of house plant deaths is either over-watering or under-watering. Susie will water her many house plants, using tepid water, about once a month, and always from the bottom. It is preferable to use rainwater. Although she did not necessarily advocate feeding houseplants, she said that Baby Bio during the growing season can be used.

She answered our many questions about ailing house plants, and the talk was extremely interesting and helpful. The plants she had brought with her were all offered for sale.

Sheepy

Our October meeting was also our AGM.

The business side of things was dealt with first with reports from Treasurer, Secretary and Madam chair. These were proposed, and seconded. The new committee was voted in. We have slightly more members this year than last year. 30 members attended this evening, which is brilliant as AGM often puts people off.

We then had taste testing for the second part of the evening.

Mince pies, prosecco and cheese straws from three different supermarkets. We all voted on the taste of each before being told where they were from and how much they cost. This promoted lots of discussion about the various merits or otherwise of each product.

Results as follows:

Mince pies

B 1st M&S £3:50 for 9

C 2nd Morrisons £2:50

A 3rd Asda £2:75

Cheese straws

A 2nd Aldi 75p

B 1st M&S £1:75

C 3rd Morrisons £1:85

Prosecco

A 3rd Aldi £2:99

B 2nd M&S £6

C 1st Morrisons £3:25



Around the Counties

Glenfield

This month was our Annual Meeting and both the President and Secretary gave their respective reports to members. It was remarked on how circumstances have caused us to move venues during this last year. However, we have finally ended up back where we began in the Church Rooms, a venue that suits us perfectly.

The speaker this month was Caroline Roberts who began her talk by telling us how she trained to be a Blue Badge Guide in Leicester with a small baby in tow. Said baby is now all grown up and Caroline has guided many people around the historic sites of Leicester. She continued her talk about Leicestershire's connections with Royalty by mentioning familiar names like Richard III and Lady Jane Grey. She also included a lesser-known tale of how the future King Edward VIII had met Mrs Simpson at Borough Court near Melton Mowbray. Wallace being a close friend of the Furness family. It was an interesting talk and members were encouraged to share their personal experiences of meeting, even at a distance, with the late Queen and other members of the present Royal Family.



Woodhouse Eaves

A young boy, a rickety table, and The Repair Shop

This was how we were introduced to grandmother, Heather McPherson. Heather has given this talk many times to groups around the Charnwood and Leicestershire area as she raises funds for the Laura Centre. The centre supports bereaved young people and their families.

Heather told us about an old kitchen table that had been handed down through family generations but needed repairing. Her grandson lives with her and has many happy memories of his dad, who had died because of a serious accident five years earlier. Jacob was 6 at the time and the connection between those good times, his dad and the table were strong. But the table was dilapidated and needed mending. Heather and Jacob appeared on The Repair Shop programme in June 2022, when Jacob was able to explain how much the table meant to him. The team renovated the table beautifully, and both Heather and Jacob were thrilled to see it in perfect working order once more and members could agree as Heather brought the table to our meeting to show the table fully restored and assured us that it is being used daily once again. As Jay Blades agreed, there will be plenty of opportunity for Jacob and his grandmother to form many more happy memories around the now no-longer rickety table.

In the photo are Heather McPherson, The Repair Shop programme participant on the right with our member Jane Faulks plus the table that was the item featured.



Countesthorpe

Wow what a busy few months we have had, we have had some amazing speakers which have been both informative and fun.

Back in May we welcomed Jo Carter with the Laura Ashley Story. What an inspirational lady she was, born in Wales in 1925 she defied the male orientated business world to become a successful entrepreneur.

Bob Neill came to visit us in June and we had a fabulous night guessing the purpose of some antique bits and pieces. There were definitely some weird objects created by our ancestors, they seem to have created something for every purpose. Certainly wouldn't be used today. Some were very obvious but others very bizarre. Lots of giggles while our ladies tried to guess the purpose.

In July we didn't have a normal meeting so we got together for a fun night of playing skittles and a good old fashioned pub supper.

August saw David Bell present an insight to the Ladies of Leicestershire, who knew we had so many famous ladies, apart from the obvious ones Lady Jane Grey and Alice Hawkins we got to know about several other amazing ladies and their story.

In September we welcomed Annette Woods and her presentation on colour. She demonstrated how different shades of red can change the way you look and feel. A couple of our ladies joined in with the demonstration and it was surprising to see how many different shades of red there are, and how some suited your skin and hair colour making you look younger, happier and more alive and others just made you feel dull and lifeless. Who knew the colour you wear would make such a difference to your appearance and mood?



And finally in October we had the pleasure of inviting Marie Hill to our meeting. Marie carried out a full facial on one of our lucky ladies and gave advice on skin care.

Swepestone, Newton and Snarestone

This month saw our ladies taking part in seated yoga. Karine the yoga instructor had us all relaxing before she had put us into different yoga positions. The evening saw us in the warrior 1 positions leg raising and neck stretching as well as many more different poses. She ended the session with a cool down of quiet reflection and relaxation this left us all ready for our beds.



Around the Counties

Ashby Spa

We have had a really fun time over the last month. Our monthly meeting was a talk by Canine Partners during which Glynis brought along a very special 18 month old Reuban who was in training. His training for the evening was to receive many cuddles and strokes from our enthusiastic members.



A few of us braved the rain to enjoy another brilliant woodwork workshop at Heartwoods - making snowmen, reindeers, stars and brooms. A fab evening was had by all at craft making wired flowers. Thank you Linda Rowell Mott for the brilliant tutorial. Julia Fraser led the strollers walk at

Swadlincote Woodland Reserve.



But perhaps the highlight of the month was the fact that it was Ashby Spa's turn to host the Northern Lights event. It was a Murder Mystery evening set in the 1920s and we were delighted to be joined by members from Ashby Castle

WI and Breedon on the Hill WI. It was amazing fun and everyone had a wonderful time.

Three glamorous ladies at The Northern Lights group meeting. Mandy, Sue and Cynthia from Ashby Castle WI really dressed up for the occasion and solved the murder.



Glenfield Park

Well that was a different sort of evening. No speaker, but another chance to try our hand at curling again. It would be nice to say we had improved although there was some improvement as the stones at least stayed on the floor. We didn't rustle up any ice as the stones are on ball bearings and there was no going along with brushes. In fact a very gentle game, although it can be nasty as players knock the opponents' stone off the target. However we were very polite when we did this and apologised profusely when it happened (although perhaps secretly we didn't mean it). There was a lot of friendly banter and laughter. No one was ultra competitive and by the end of the evening there were some skilful players. I emphasise some as I wasn't one of them. All in all a very sociable and successful evening full of hilarity and chat.



Another successful event was our visit to Donington-le Heath 1620s manor house. It must be one of Leicestershire's hidden gems because although small there is so much to discover. We had an excellent guide and were amazed that she could remember all the facts, which

were given in such an interesting way that you wanted to know more. It is called the 1620s house because although it was built in the 13th century it was renovated around 1620 and became the house we see today. One amusing fact you might like. One of the owners was in dispute with the land owner and to spite him he kept his pigs in the house, both upstairs and downstairs. It's well worth a visit as it differs from other houses in that you can actually touch the items on display. We thoroughly enjoyed a really rewarding tour.

Hathern

Hathern village held their annual Scarecrow Festival and for the first time the WI entered and what a success it was. We had lots of members volunteering by either making or supplying items for the display. We have a very talented craft group within our



members and they excelled themselves. It was so much fun. All the cakes were made out of felt or knitted by our talented team. 'Helen' and 'Julie' were a bit of a challenge to make naked and look good but I think we smashed it. I'd like to say thank you to everyone that helped make our first entry a success.



Quorn Craft Group



I had a lovely afternoon with the ladies of Quorn WI craft group. Some crocheted a Poppy and some made Butterfly shaped gift holders. Everyone was very friendly and although concentrating very hard there was a lot of laughter and chatting. Thank You to Quorn Craft Group for such a warm welcome. Rosemary Heyes

Articles to **WI House** by email: fedsec@lrfwi.org or post to arrive by the **FIRST** of the month

Make sure to include the name of your WI with your article

Please try to keep Around the Counties articles to 120 words and 2 photos so we can include as many as possible and save paper, ink and postage costs.

Articles may be edited.

County News will be emailed/ posted on the Wednesday of the third full week of the month.

Advertisements



Earl Shilton Flower Club

Invite you to join us at
Elmesthorpe Village Hall,
Wilkinsons Lane
Elmesthorpe LE9 7SP

For a floral demonstration
**The Wonderful World of
Pantomime**
by
Andrew Keys
on
Tuesday, 21st November 2023
at
7.00pm

Entrance £12
(includes tea/coffee and biscuits)

Raffle of floral designs.

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RNID Supporting people who are deaf, have hearing loss or tinnitus

RNID, the charity supporting people who are deaf, have hearing loss or tinnitus is looking for volunteers to support our vital work in Leicester. Volunteering could involve providing information to local organisations and community groups, helping people get the most out of their hearing aids, or giving a friendly welcome to everyone who passes through the door at one of our support sessions. Many of our volunteers have hearing loss themselves or in their family, and volunteering with us is a great way to meet new people, gain new skills and experience and make a valuable difference to people who are deaf, have hearing loss or tinnitus. What are you waiting for? For more information, visit www.rnid.org.uk/volunteering or contact 0808 808 0123. You can also text us 07360 268 988



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LLASHES
LO'S LASHES

Eyelash Extensions - Eyelash Lift - Eyelash Tint

- LOYALTY CARDS
- REFER A FRIEND SCHEME
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Location Shelthorpe, Loughborough

Christmas Tree Festival & Christmas Market

St Martin's Church, Desford
1st - 3rd December

Fri & Sat from 10am; Sun from 12.

Market stalls Fri 4 - 8pm, Sat 12 - 7pm, Sun 12 - 6pm

Brass band, refreshments, Santa and more

Contact 01455 823537
patcrane33@gmail.com



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Charity rate £5.00 per column inch
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