


## Annual Council Meeting 2023





**THANK YOU FOR A GREAT ACM!**  
‘such a great atmosphere’  
‘the business clear, speakers were well chosen-informative and entertaining, stalls were super’

‘our group had a wonderful time, for most of us it was our first time attending—such a fab day’  
‘thankyou very much everyone for working so hard to make a memorable day’

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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](http://www.leicestershire-and-rutland.thewi.org.uk) or scan QR code  
 Find us on Facebook: Leicestershire & Rutland Federation of WIs



A picture tells a thousands words as they say... Check our website [Irfwi.org](http://Irfwi.org) Federation Downloads for the minutes from the ACM. Do let WI House know if you'd like to have your photo or any others we may have!

### Competitions



Apologies to not include every entry or winner—do check social media or our website later this month for more photos



# Competitions

## A New Dawn—winner of The Edith Buckley Trophy, Lesley Sheehan, Wymondham

Spreading our wings, we unfold and breathe.  
Homes, isolated islands no more.  
Across the world, shafts of light shimmer.  
Family, friends, colleagues reunite.  
Two years, too long, we're moving on.  
Socialising, shopping, long-awaited haircuts in the salon.

Over the worst, we stride ahead.  
Freedom to holiday, on foreign soils we may tread.

Loved ones laugh and mingle.  
In celebrating life's milestones we're up-beat.  
Generations gather, newborns to greet.  
His Royal Highness, a Coronation, a Monarch new.  
Two years, too long... a new dawn awaits me and you.

Sharing lives again.  
Healing through happiness.  
A pandemic shared; unique stories told.  
Forging ahead, that we are.  
Tales of resilience spread.  
Strength in ourselves, that we find.

Optimism, hope.  
Feeling good about the future.

Learning what's important to us.  
In isolation we have reflected.  
Grabbing life with both hands,  
Hold on tight...  
Two years, too long... our adventure's *just begun!*

## Photography winner Patricia Baker, Quorn WI— now gracing the front of the 2023 Yearbook!



## Committee Boards about Membership & Public Affairs



## Poetry Competitions

### The Platinum Jubilee Party—winner of The Margaret Johnston Trophy

Beverly Ashby, Lboro Ladies

*“Giant picture of corgi, tick; list of names for “Guess the name of the Corgi”, tick; milk bottles and Union Jack flags for the tables, tick; Right Royal Quiz sheets, tick; tombola prizes, tick; 50’s music CD, tick; table cover roll, tick and platters of sandwiches from Morrisons, tick”.*

I was finally ready to set off for the Church Hall where our Platinum Jubilee indoor street party would be held. I had donned a swing skirt, blouse with buttoned peter pan collar and bobby socks in an approximation of 50s style. On the way, I picked up one of my ladies who had really gone to town and was resplendent in a beautiful, floral 50’s dress, elegant lace gloves and a little pillbox hat with black netting. Margaret brought with her, the stars of the party, three fabulous almost life-size knitted corgis to be awarded as prizes.

We arrived at the hall to find it a bustle of activity. Tables had been joined to form two long tables down each side of the room. Union Jack bunting was being hung from the rafters and platters of food were being assembled in the kitchen. After unloading the car, I set about covering the tables with white table roll. Ladies placed red and blue paper table cloths in a diamond formation over the top. The bottles with flags were placed along the tables and quiz sheets distributed. The giant corgi was attached to the wall ready for a game of “pin the nose on the corgi”. I was quite pleased the way the corgi had turned out. It was a passable representation of one of the Queens favourite pets. One of the knitted corgis had been placed on a small table with a list of names. Only myself and Margaret knew the chosen monicker.

As our ladies began arriving, the atmosphere started to build. Many of the ladies had worn red, white and blue colours in true patriotic style. Our guest of honour was Gwen, the Auntie of our member, Jackie, who had been one of the embroiderers of the Queen’s glorious velvet Train of State. Gwen had brought with her a fascinating archive of original materials and magazines from the period which was set out for the ladies to browse.

The level of babble and chatter rose as ladies greeted one another and took their seats at the tables. Drinks were dispensed, a glass of prosecco each for the toast, and platters of sandwiches and other tasty morsels provided by the ladies were placed at regular intervals. I checked my watch, 7:30, time for festivities to start. I hit my call bell several times to gain attention above the hubbub.

*“Ladies, welcome to our indoor street party to celebrate Her Majesty the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee”*

*“If you are able, please rise to your feet, raise your glasses and join me in a toast. The Queen!”*

*“The Queen!”* The ladies roared in unison.

*“Let the party begin!”*



## Which Craft?

Which Craft? had their second meeting at WI house on the 3rd Thursday in March. Nine ladies arrived with their different projects.

Everyone had a good chat sharing ideas. Again we were well supplied with tea and biscuits and more importantly did the washing up.

Meetings will be on the 3rd Thursday of the month at WI House 10am—12 noon. The next one is 20th April and then 18th May. If you enjoy crafting and would like a morning crafting and sharing ideas and advice come and join us.



## Green theme—Did you know?

A representative from the Woodland Trust came to speak at our last meeting. It was a super, wide ranging talk. Sadly it highlighted, for the third time recently, the terrible 60% decline in the insect population. David Attenborough in his latest tv series, Wild Isles, talked about this decline as did the speaker from the Canal Trust at the ACM. In the UK, we have an amazing garden coverage of approximately 4330 sq km. In England, the garden area is more than 4 1/2 times larger than that of our National Nature Reserves. What a massive potential for helping to reverse that decline in insects. Hedges instead of fencing, (especially the privet) attract insects and allow small mammals to move freely between gardens, a diversity of pollen rich plants flowering at different times, a shallow water container, a wildflower area.....

The Kew Garden website has a list of top garden tips to improve the insect population which are quite easy to adopt. Having a log pile in a shady spot is one of the suggestions. My job for this week. *Jenny Berry, Climate Change Ambassador*

## Christine Richards by Winifred Bradbury



Christine Richards passed away on Sunday 29 January 2023 and will be sadly missed by WI members. Many ladies on our Board of Trustees, Advisers and also ordinary members took the Speaking with Confidence course, as part of their training and/or to help in their own WI or place of work. Christine visited Leicestershire and Rutland Federation many years running to give this course. She also was one of the main tutors at Denman College.

Christine was an excellent teacher who always managed to bring out the best in the students. She had a quiet and fun way of approaching each part of the course. Her encouragement was such that even the most timid of ladies finished having

made a successful talk. Several candidates gained the confidence to take committee positions and later become officers in their own WI. Other ladies used it to gain confidence to be more assertive at work or give a speech on an important occasion.

There will be many ladies with fond memories of Christine.

I have fond memories of Christine when I organised these courses for the county. She had a lovely way of encouraging even the most timid of ladies.

Christine was very thoughtful; she always stayed with me to tidy up at the end of the day.

Winifred Bradbury, Sapcote WI

## What's Coming Up?

3rd Thursday	Which Craft? at WI House 10–12
Thu 27 <sup>th</sup> April	Speakers Showcase
Sat 13 <sup>th</sup> May	RHS Malvern
Sat 20 <sup>th</sup> May	Spring Lunch
Thur 1st June	Treasurer Training
Tue 4 <sup>th</sup> July	Croquet Taster
Fri 7th July	Quiz Night—4 venues!
Sat 9 <sup>th</sup> Sept	Beading workshop
Sat 23 <sup>rd</sup> Sept	Big Green Week—bulb planting
Sat 7 <sup>th</sup> Oct	Developing Embroidery
Tue 7th Nov	Billa Barra Anniversary Walk
Sat 25 <sup>th</sup> Nov	Xmas Dabble Day

\*apologies the printed version of CN says surname Williams on title in error

## Board of Trustees—Rosemary Heyes, Ashby Castle WI



Hello Everyone! I thought you might like to hear about my WI journey. I was born in Lancashire, then when I was 27 my Husband's job meant a move to Scotland. Whilst there, I discovered the SWRI (Scottish Women's Rural Institute) where I made lots of good friends who I am still in touch with. On our return to England, we only had 2 stipulations of where we would live 1. A local WI and 2. a nearby Tennis/Squash club. Finding both of these in Ravenstone we moved in. So including my time in Scotland I have been a Member of WI for 43 years during which time I have served as a WI President, WI Secretary and Group Secretary, making more friends with each position I held.

I was invited to join the Federation Leisure Activities Committee and so realised just how much work our Federation Committees put in to arranging events and helping Institutes to make their WI a success.

I joined the Board of Trustees in 2000 and served on that Committee for 14 years, 5 of which I was the WI County Chairman. I have also been involved with 2 other Committees and enjoyed my time with them.

For me the friendship and support from WI has been special, especially during the traumatic time of losing my Son and then some years later my Husband. After 5 years of living on my own, I met Ian and we married in 2016. I left the BOT to have more time with Ian. After a break of 8 years (from the BOT not Ian) I have now re-joined the Committee.

Through WI I have been given the chance to try new ventures that before WI I would not have thought possible. Our Federation Committees are varied and there is something for everyone.

*Rosemary Heyes, Ashby Castle WI*

## Message from the Chairman, Glenice Wignall

While we continue to glow in the good feelings of the recent ACM and all of the amazing WIs in Around the Counties and beyond we must always remain grounded in the challenges of the coming year. I feel it was important to make our Federation aims clear. And, while we may not get this right every time, we strive to listen to all views about the Federation and how it should serve WIs across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.

As a Federation we

- will listen to individual WI or group needs
- feedback to NFWI any concerns and provide challenge
- advise on recruitment, offer publicity information and ideas
- advise on finance, membership, retention and any legal queries
- support group meetings
- review all expenditure and plans regarding cost efficiency and continue to keep costs low
- communicate via the County News and by launching a summer survey
- welcome any member to observe committee meetings, be part of committees or subgroups



'This is your WI' and 'WI is what you make of it' are the two taglines we use and we strive to make the federation a supportive and safe space to share all ideas and worries. I acknowledge the pandemic changed the use of WI house however there is growing attendance with events held most weeks and in addition monthly committee meetings, adviser appointments and providing a staff base. We will continue to review how we can maximise WI activity at WI House and work in partnership in the for the mutual benefit of WIs and community.

As a final note, we are volunteers and as Rosemary's column notes, we have often been members for many years and held officers posts for most of those. I would like to extend my sincere offer for collaboration with all WIs across the county—do get in touch 0116 2661342 fedsec@lrfwi.org

## Notices

### JERUSALEM JAMMERS

We are still looking for a lead musician to support Peter (our superb musician of 40 years' service) to play for us at practices and dance-outs. Initially someone with a portable instrument able to attend practices on the last Saturday of the month at Kirby Muxloe church hall. Please spread abroad our plea to anyone you feel may be interested. As always we welcome anyone to come along to see what we do at our practices. Contact Sue 01455 458107 or find our details on page 74 of the new Yearbook.



**Stoke Golding WI** has quite a lot of WI cups and saucers, free to a good home if any other clubs would like them.

### NHS Retirement Fund Sponsored Walk

Marion Heywood from Humberstone Heights & Belgrave WI is walking between LRI, Glenfield and General Hospital to raise money to celebrate NHS' 75th Birthday. If you'd like to join or sponsor please contact 0116 2665805

### Congratulations to our Monthly Draw winners for March!

**1st Prize £25— Margaret Baxendale, Ashby Spa**  
**2nd Prize £15— Margaret Osborne, Hinckley Hollycroft**  
**3rd Prize £10— Doreen Haynes Ullesthorpe**

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



Plus we have 3 unclaimed ACM raffle prizes—call WI House to collect  
Orange 220 bee blanket  
Orange 60 seed ball  
Orange 215 bee tray

## Around the Counties

### Anstey



Sadly, it snowed on the evening of Anstey WI's March meeting, so it was a select few members who gathered for "Patchwork for Pleasure" with Carolyn Boulter. This did not diminish the fun we had, though. Carolyn showed us how to make a patchwork owl, from kits she had meticulously prepared, down to pre-threading the needle for the first stage. She had also brought examples of other projects she can teach, and small things she had made to sell.

At first the hall fell silent, as everyone concentrated on their task, when suddenly we heard, "Oh, you have got a big bottom, haven't you?" The member thus addressed pretended to take umbrage, but the reference was to her owl, of course. There followed much

merriment at the ensuing conversation. We all had great fun. Carolyn's excellent preparation was matched by her patience in helping those who were struggling. Remarkably, each owl had its own character.



Afterwards, we sang "Happy Birthday," to Elizabeth Robinson, a popular member, whose 80<sup>th</sup> was the following day. She supplied cake and prosecco for the refreshments, and was presented with a plant.

The competition, for a piece of patchwork, attracted a variety of examples. Joint winners were Ann Coney and Jan Darby, with Marian Driver and Sue Crook tied in second place, and Sheryl Bramley third.

### Glenfield Park



We were treated to a very interesting talk given by Mr Ken Kelly.

His subject was all about women who wouldn't say no and their efforts to be allowed to compete in the Olympics. A hard fought battle over many years for inclusion. Although there are still some inequalities to be overcome.

In 1896 the inaugural Modern Olympic Games featured no women at all. The next games coincided with the Paris Great Exhibition, women were allowed in a few sports, croquet, golf, tennis, sailing and equestrianism. Of just over 1,000 competitors only 22 were women. In the early 1920s women arranged their own Olympics with their own sporting federation but were persuaded to re-join the men. From 1928 the female contingent was around only 10% compared to that of the men, by 1988 this had increased to about 1/3 but these days the ratio is nearer 50:50.

Women's Olympic sport has had so many challenges to contend with. In the early years it was inappropriate for women to be seen to sweat so many sports were excluded for them. Gradually through the 1920s and 1930s more events were included. In 1928

the 800 metres had resulted in 7 runners collapsing with fatigue at the finish so this event was not permitted again until 1960. It was 1984 before the marathon was included for women. Strangely boxing was contested in 1904 but excluded 8 years later. It never reappeared for a century.

During the Cold War the Russians and Iron Curtain countries used drugs to enhance women's performances to such an extent that in the 1970s sex tests were introduced whereby women had to prove they were not men. This involved appearing before a medical board and undergoing intrusive examinations. The use of these drugs often resulted in sterility and other conditions in later years. All for the kudos of the Eastern Bloc beating the other nations of the World especially the USA and Great Britain. Women were being used as political pawns.

Whilst the actual sportswomen competing has reached a kind of parity the various committees running the sports federations are very male dominated so there is still much to be achieved. Over the years there have been many remarkable women who have achieved great results and proved they deserved to be included in the Olympic Games.

### Hinckley Canalside



Geoffrey Harris gave us a lively, energetic talk on the history and role of the Toastmaster. He became a Toastmaster later in life and had been a schoolteacher and then a professional clown for 30 years prior to this. He wore the famous red coat uniform and explained the origin of this. He explained the level of training and

how long it takes to become a Fellow of the British Toastmasters: it took him seven years. He told us some amazing stories of the various events he had attended from weddings, funerals and corporate events. He was very entertaining, stating not only the formal role of the Toastmaster, but also how organised they have to be, ensuring the day runs smoothly.

### Hinckley Hollycroft



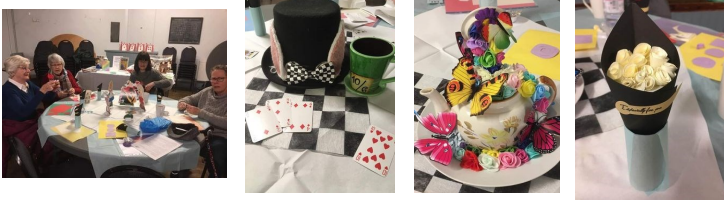
Ladies who braved the dreadful weather for our March meeting were all rewarded by going home with a fish each. Not for their supper though as they were made from willow. Our speaker, Chaz Friend, explained how the materials he uses – mostly willow and hazel – are prepared and brought along examples of his work. His numerous samples included baskets, bird feeders and Christmas

decorations to mention just a few. Members were particularly impressed with his hat made from rushes. Chaz then demonstrated how to make a fish and, under his expert guidance, everyone made their own tiddler – an extremely therapeutic experience. He has a stall at Saints café in Nuneaton and also runs courses via his website [waysidewillow.co.uk](http://waysidewillow.co.uk).

# Around the Counties

## Barrow on Soar

Absolutely lovely evening by our Vice President, Clair . With an Alice in Wonderland theme we made little posies of roses . Clair had decorated all the tables too - wonderful , well done Clair for all your hard work



Our Competition was to celebrate International Womens Day and we had some fabulous entries, especially the two below made by Claire Forrest and Alison Bowley



## Waltham on the Wolds

March meeting had an extra visitor of the furry kind, he was a yellow Labrador by the name of Watson. He had been trained by the charity Dogs for Good, to help people with various disabilities.

The family who came with Watson had a daughter, Michelle, who has cerebral palsy. Watson has made her life so much easier, she now is able to live independently in an annexe attached to her parents house. Her mother, Fiona, gave most of the talk, helped by Michelle who corrected her Mum which was most endearing. These dogs can help in various ways by fetching and carrying, opening doors etc.

We were all delighted to be made aware of this charity.



## Birstall and Wanlip

At our March meeting Laraine Tucker demonstrated Tai Chi and got our Ladies moving. She told us about the history and how it is a martial art form showing how the moves translate defensively. It felt very tranquil in the room as the music played and Laraine demonstrated.



At the second outing this year of our walking group we joined Robin Perry who led a nature walk around Birstall cemetery where they spotted some



nuthatches. They then walked to Bennion Pool to meet Sebastian the swan and his friends.



## Quorn



Ian Retson from the charity The Woodland Trust came to share his passion for creating and caring for the woodlands we so often enjoy. Following on from The Queen Elizabeth's Green Canopy initiative we are encouraged to plant more trees for the health of the

natural world. They are an important source of oxygen, habitat for wildlife and medicines are often derived from trees and plant sources.

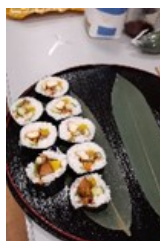
They also have a special Dedication Tree service in woodlands which can mark special occasions such as Birthdays, Anniversaries or In Memory of a loved one in many woodlands around the country.

## Leire



We welcomed Yuko Dixon from Theddingworth who creates delicious menus and meals for dinner parties as well as running courses on

Japanese cuisine. Yuko began with a talk on Japan and Japanese food culture with many interesting facts about the Japanese landscape and vast variation in climate, vegetation and fish across the North and South of the country. Eating seasonal and healthy foods is an important part of Japan's culture and we were shown the different



ingredients used in Japanese cuisine with information on how we can source them locally.



This was followed with a demonstration of sushi making using delicately spiced tofu. Margaret and Barbara also had a go under Yuko's expert instruction and we were given lots of useful tips to enhance flavours as well as enjoying the taste testing at the end.

Our monthly competition was "an interesting kitchen item", which was won by Margaret with her pestle and mortar.



## Shearsby and Arnesby



We celebrated our 90th birthday with a celebration lunch at the Crown Inn Tur Langton. We invited the presidents of the other Institutes in the Cromwell Group and our President Ann Mawby gave us all a very warm welcome. No founder members were still in

evidence but we do have a couple of ladies who have been members for many years. There was a small gift for all of a gladioli bulb to plant in the garden later in the year. It was a lovely occasion.



## Ivanhoe Group—Hosted by Nailstone

We welcomed ladies from Blackfordby, Appleby Magna, Swepstone, Newton Burgoland & Snarestone, and Ravenstone for the Ivanhoe Group Spring Meeting. We were delighted to welcome also Glenice Wignall, Chair of the Leicestershire and Rutland Federation.



Our speaker was Stephanie Stanley, (of Flowers by Stephanie) a very talented florist, whose wreath has adorned the front door of No. 10 Downing Street not once, but twice. Stephanie demonstrated making a beautiful hand tied bouquet, which one lucky lady won as first prize in the raffle. She also showed us how to make a buttonhole and several

ladies made their own .

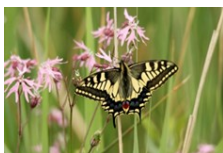
Refreshments of sandwiches and cakes were supplied by the Nailstone ladies.

We all left inspired to create our own floral masterpieces.



## Cossington

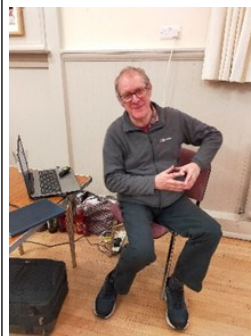
Our members welcomed Dr Ian Bedford to their March meeting, In his talk titled 'Britain's Butterflies in a Changing Environment' we learnt how to identify a butterfly from a moth, what species can be found in Britain and how they are coping with the changing climate. Unfortunately many species of Britain's Butterflies are in serious decline and have halved over the past 40 years due to pesticides and loss of natural habitats. Thankfully Ian went on to say ways we are able to stop the decline. He suggested we plant butterfly friendly gardens with a large variety of flowers and to avoid cutting back gardens until the spring. He recommended not using chemicals but to use environmentally safe products that exist. The Swallowtail Butterfly is a declining species, their only breeding ground in the world being the Norfolk Broads.



## Newbold Verdon

It was Newbold Verdon WI's 88th birthday this March. We were entertained by Bishop Peter Fox with a Magical History Tour. Peter told us the first stage magic could be found in cave paintings and the first written record found in ancient Egypt. He explained that the oldest trick was the Cup and Balls trick. Having taken us through ancient Anthems, through the Middle Ages, when conjurors were no longer thought respectable, we arrived at the 1700's. Peter showed us the trick, first with small balls, then miraculously they changed to large balls, and eventually he produced an apple, a pear and a lemon in their place. We learned about Reginald Scott who wrote in 1584 on "The Discovery of Witchcraft" which defended those accused. We moved on to the 18th and 19th centuries with the music halls and variety theatres when magicians were now once again respectable. We heard about a "Chinese" magician Chung Ling Soo, who took London by storm, but was in fact an Englishman dressed up. Peter performed a trick with a piece of rope, which he asked Mary to cut in half, but then made it whole once again. Finally, he showed us a trick with 8 steel rings which he joined together and finally after asking some of the ladies to try to pull them apart, we discovered that there were still 8 individual rings. It was a very enjoyable and entertaining talk. We followed this with a bring and share supper.

## Great Bowden



The old windmills of Leicestershire and Rutland was the theme of the talk for our March Meeting, when members learned from speaker, Mark Temple, that in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries most villages had a windmill and towns had several. Although the history of them goes back to the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Windmills were usually wooden consisting of four support legs on which stood a turntable this could be moved by a tail pole, also made of wood, which enabled the mill to be turned to catch the correct wind direction.

On top of the turntable sat the mill itself of two or more storeys with a roof cap in varying styles. There were usually four sails of about 30 feet in length to catch the wind and turn the grinding stones. Villagers bought their grain to the mill which was placed in a hopper on the top storey and moved through grinding stones until flour was produced at the bottom. Later steam power was sometimes used and some of the mills were constructed of brick or more substantial building materials. Most people at the time made their own Bread.

The use of windmills declined in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century when Bakery's made bread which was readily available, and of the 190 mills in the two counties most are gone. Some were struck by lightning and burnt down others were just demolished. A few were used as private dwellings and others as tourist attractions. There is one working mill in Rutland which is still supplying flour to Bakery's.



## Botcheston

March seems to be the start of the season of meetings and get togethers. Following our February meeting where we had some visitors, I am pleased that 1 has now joined and that 2 more may also join – lovely to see our numbers increasing and a warm welcome to Barbara, we hope you enjoy our meetings and we look forward to you joining in over the coming months.



The weekend before our March meeting 17 members attended the Annual Council Meeting at Leicester Grammar School. The business side of the meeting was carried out with efficiency and then the interesting programme of speakers commenced.

The Forest Group Entry into the Brenda Barnett Trophy – the subject matter was a family celebration (a Christening) made up of various different handicrafts. Our entry came a very credible 3<sup>rd</sup> – thank you to all the ladies who put in so much hard work and time into the entry.



Our speaker in March was Elizabeth Scott who is a Pharmacist by profession. Elizabeth spoke on Health and Wellbeing and how Natural Oils can play a complementary role in some of our common ailments – stress, anxiety, snoring and many others. There were many sceptics in the audience (myself included) but I think we all came away from the meeting with our minds opened (if only just a little) to some of the benefits natural oils can play in today's busy lifestyle.

## Swepestone, Newton and Snarestone

In February we welcomed Carla Harris who spoke to us on fused glass and how she became interested in the process and how she started up her business. She also explained about the different types of glass that there are. Carla brought along some of her work: this gave us a clear view of the handcrafted items which she had made: a very interesting evening.

For the March meeting, Jayne Parsons from Fishers solicitors spoke to us about the benefits of making a will and having a power of attorney in place. This was both very enlightening and delivered important legal and personal protection information for us all to consider.

## Barkby and Beeby

Bill Haley BEM gave us a fascinating insight into life serving on the Royal Yacht Britannia. He told us how the Royal Yacht became the face of British industry doing World Tours & hosting State Banquets. He regaled us with tales of the Royal Family and the protocols expected aboard ship. He finished by telling us he had been invited to the Coronation of King Charles III to represent the Falklands Veterans.

## Glenfield



We enjoyed a lovely home-cooked meal at Little Markfield Farm to celebrate our 101st birthday. We were greeted by Brenda Featherstone, whom we had met some years ago when she came to one of our monthly meetings to cook (and share) some of her delicious recipes. We were also greeted by an Alpaca, sheep and three very noisy geese. It certainly was a novel way to start our celebrations.

We spent the evening in a large converted barn and it was warm and inviting as were Brenda's family and staff.

The food was lovely and in the company of so many WI friends, how could we not have had a thoroughly enjoyable evening.

## Billesdon



We had great fun in March making fabric Easter wreaths, led by one of our Members, Margaret Cathie. She had got the idea from one of her friends, and so we were all asked to look out some fabric scraps and cut them into strips. We only needed about 100! So it became the talk of the village – how many have you cut?

Has your husband got any old shirts? My scissors are blunt! I had to get my husband to cut mine! We bought the metal rings from that famous on-line shop, and we were ready to go.

On the afternoon of our Meeting the table was loaded with fabric and ribbons, and we were shown how to knot them onto the frames. And we were off – and an hour later, after much chat, and tea and cake, we were proudly showing our wreaths off.



What a fun afternoon.

## Breedon on the Hill



Breedon had the pleasure of a belly dancing evening in February, combined with Moroccan food to celebrate our 19th Birthday. We were treated to spectacular dancing, as well as discovering many interesting facts, and some myth busting! Our own ladies had been hard at work and had made a spread fit for royalty. Happy Birthday Breedon!!!

We had our very own local florist Lynn of Thistle and Rose join us in March to deliver an easy to follow demonstration to make wonderful Easter baskets, which we were able to take home and enjoy - or give as presents! We were able to buy additional props and Easter bunnies and eggs to further our display - Happy Easter All!



# Around the Counties

## Loughborough Ladies



We indulged in an evening of creativity, painting stones. All the ladies enjoyed decorating rocks for their gardens or turning stones into beautiful paperweights whilst chatting, drinking tea and of course, eating cake.



## Ilston on the Hill

Sometime ago, before Covid, we invited our Group WI (High Leicestershire) to a "taste and try" evening. The first time we did this, we made or bought starters for everyone to try. The second time we selected "sweets/puddings". These were both a real success, but our Group Secretary, Glenice, then asked when we were having the "main course". Some people are ever hopeful!!

However due to the success of these events, we decided to do the same – savoury only – at our own meeting in February. Everyone brought something, along with the recipe where appropriate. We had a magnificent banquet just as you would expect from the WI. Most of us ate rather too much, but everything was so appetising we couldn't resist. It was a great evening, loved by everyone as we could sit and eat and chat and have a thoroughly entertaining evening. We were also delighted to welcome several new members.

## Narborough and Littlethorpe

We know that our President, Ann, likes to do many crafts so we shouldn't have been surprised when she showed us her temperature blanket. She knitted a row each day from January 1st to 31st December 2022, the bluer the colour of wool she used the colder the weather was and the redder the wool the warmer it was! Ann even knitted in a bit of black wool to mark the passing of our dear Queen.



## Broughton Astley



The trio, Los Amigos, entertained us wonderfully with a selection of South American music, which had our toes tapping and us all swaying in our seats to the rhythms of the lively music. Neville on electric guitar, Harry on percussion and Verity on saxophone and clarinet played

ten different pieces which were instantly recognisable (not necessarily the titles!) demonstrating a range of rhythms and dances – cha cha cha, tango, samba, bossa nova. Neville explained the roots of many of the tunes, which date back to the Conquistadores and local folk songs. Harry gave us a demonstration on the wide range of drums and percussion instruments used in this music and explained their history, and Verity on the saxophone showed how musicians improvise on a basic theme. It was a really fun evening, much enjoyed by all.

One of our members continues to knit warm winter scarves,

## Stoke Golding

Stephanie was the instigator of this family's interest in Game Shows. She initially applied to Bob Monkhouse Show "Bobs Full House" saying that Bob was very kind and generous, he chatted to the contestants to see if there were interesting stories he could tell. Stephanie did really well in the show and won, a Harrod's Hamper, a meal out in an Italian Restaurant and a small colour television. Next she applied for and got onto "The Winner Takes it All" which did not result in winning anything.

In the early 2000s the country was struggling with a slump and Stephanie thought she would try and win some money, she got accepted to go on the weakest link (Ann Robinson's) time. Stephanie now teamed up with her new partner Trevor to go on Pointless. They said that Alexander and Richard were very lovely people. They brought the trophy to show us. It was smaller than most of us thought it would be, but VERY heavy. Stephanie tried "The Chase"

Stephanie and Trevor then made up a team for "Eggheads" Trevor says they assembled a team with really good knowledge and were fairly confident, but were beaten easily by The Eggheads. Stephanie also went onto "Tipping Point" and won £3,300, later Trevor also tried Tipping Point and he won £2,250, which contributed to their wedding costs. She has also been on 15 to One, The Edge and Lingo.

Now to apply you have to fill in forms and a psychiatric report, as there are a lot of problems with social media making negative comments about contestants, a problem that is a new and disturbing.

Stephanie is still applying for shows, and has been asked to go for trials for new show ideas. Altogether a very interesting and entertaining talk from two lovely people.

**Please note that WI now meet at The Baxter Hall on the second Wednesday of the month at 7.30 pm.**

completing over 150 in three years. Previously they have been distributed via Street Pastors and The Salvation Army to the homeless but are currently being sent to support the people in Ukraine.



March has been a busy month with a group of members and friends enjoying an inspiring morning arranging a bowl of spring flowers with Saffron and Nicole at Saffron's Flower Farm. Another group went to see Calendar Girls at the Concordia Theatre, Hinckley, a very entertaining production! Others enjoyed the Federation crafting Dabble Day at our village hall, where we all produced some beautiful items and of course several of us met up with other WI members at the Annual Council meeting, which is always an enjoyable day. Interesting speakers plus displays and stalls to browse.



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News to WI House by email: [fedsec@lrfwi.org](mailto:fedsec@lrfwi.org) or post to arrive by the **FIRST** of the preceding month at the latest.

**DEADLINE for JUNE ISSUE 1st MAY**

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

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