

## Leicestershire & Rutland Federation of Women's Institutes

### Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting Saturday, 9 March 2019 Leicester Grammar School, Great Glen, Leicester

1	Following Health & Safety notices, the Meeting opened with Jerusalem. Present: Members and guests of the Federation.
2	The Chairman, Janet Kirk (JK) welcomed members and introduced herself, Linda Martin (LM) Federation Treasurer and Susan Miller (SM) Federation Secretary.
3	JK welcomed our guests including eight neighbouring federations, four former Chairmen and our guest WI, Witherley. Apologies were received from four former Chairmen and Huntingdon & Peterborough Federation. JK thanked Polly Morgans, Ashby Spa WI for the floral arrangements and Sibley (SWISH) WI for arranging the raffle. WIs were asked to contact WI House to volunteer for next year's raffle and flowers. JK introduced the Board of Trustees and Committee Chairmen sitting to the left of the stage.
4	JK asked the delegates to vote using their pink Agenda forms for the Standing Orders of the Federation, proposed by Groby WI, seconded by Kirkby Mallory WI; agreed and signed by JK. The minutes of the Centenary ACM 2018 were agreed with no amendments, proposed by Nailstone WI, seconded by Swannington WI, signed by JK as a true record, no matters arising from the minutes.
5	JK gave her Chairman's address. She thanked members who attended the many centenary events last year but to look forward to another 100 years, we have a need to 'Consolidate and Change'. Consolidate to build on what we have achieved so far; and Change to move with the times. We need to adapt in line with changing life styles for women; sharing WI officer roles to lighten the load, start meetings later or change to weekends to accommodate working women. The Federation have already implemented evening meetings for the Trustees. With the closure of six WIs last year, we need to be more accessible and look for opportunities to open new WIs. JK clarified that Trustees and Committee Members are not paid by the WI but only receive travel expenses for the many hours of volunteer work they do. Memos and emails are sent by the Federation to help run your WI efficiently and by Charity Commissioners rules, and we try to spread all our events around both counties.
6	JK proposed the adoption of the Annual Report for 2018 enclosed with the January County News, seconded by Sapcote WI. Agreed and carried.
7	LM gave the Treasurer's Report referring to the Federation Accounts to 31 August 2018, copies of which are available from WI House and to download from our website. The Federation made a profit of £4,347 for the year achieved through the continued support of the Federation Committees and members, increased subscriptions and a full calendar of centenary events. LM thanked the Committee members who contributed 4,000 volunteer hours to make these events happen. Members were encouraged to support the Monthly Draw and the NFWI Raffle for further income to the Federation. No questions on the accounts were raised by the delegates. LM asked the delegates to vote for the appointment of Johnson, Murkett & Hurst as independent examiners for the year 2019-2020, proposed by LM, seconded by Rearsby WI, agreed and carried. LM proposed the appointment of suitable independent persons approved by the Board as tellers for the year 2019-2020, seconded by Kibworth & Smeeton WI, agreed and carried.
8	JK introduced our first speaker, Capt. Michael Vlasto from Trinity House. He began by explaining about this little known organisation which started by Royal Charter in 1514 to regulate pilots of vessels on the River Thames. With his Powerpoint presentation and video, he spoke to us about the first lighthouse in Lowestoft in 1609; the heroism of Grace Darling, daughter of the keeper at Longstone Lighthouse in 1838, how lighthouses are no longer manned but maintained through technology and purpose built vessels by the General Lighthouse Authority, wreck removal, waterways traffic around the British Isles and that lighthouses are now holiday cottages. Gail Wooliscroft thanked Michael.
9	JK welcomed our next speaker, Laura Bingham. From aged 15, Laura has wanted to travel and find adventure, from visiting family in South Africa, to exploring Greece and Mexico. Now aged 26, after the birth of her son and wanting to keep her identity, she decided to raise the money and plan an expedition to Guyana, South America and the untouched rainforest to find the source of the Essequibo River. With pictures from her Powerpoint, she showed us the highs and lows she experienced with her all female team over the three months and the amazing people she met. Clare Robertson Smith gave the thank you to Laura. JK reminded members to take part in the various raffles, the quiz and to visit the trade stalls and

	competition tables. The new Yearbooks and bulb leaflets were available to pick up. The meeting broke for lunch at 12.35pm.
10	The meeting reconvened at 1.50pm. JK welcomed back the members and guests. Sheila Sterynowicz presented the ACWW Pennies for Friendship collection of £3,000, projects to be supported will be advised in County News.
11	JK asked our afternoon speaker, Gyles Brandreth to present the trophies to the following winners: Theddingworth WI received the Membership Bell; the June Taylor Art Trophy was awarded to Sue Shelton-Smith, Sheepy WI and the Margaret Johnston Trophy was won by Dorothy Wells, Countesthorpe WI. The Edith Buckley Poetry Cup was presented to Dorothy Tomlinson, Peatling Magna WI and the Munro Cup went to Bosworth Field Group. The Long Alley Skittles winners were Kirby Muxloe WI and runners up were Loddington WI. The Sheila Marsh Darts Trophy was won by Appleby Magna WI for the second time and runners up were Cossington WI. The Federation Quiz Trophy was awarded to Coleorton WI. The Individual Craft Competition was won by Hazel Cave, Illston on the Hill WI and Lorna Williams, Q.E. WI was presented with the José Smart Flower Award. Food & Flowers Committee awards were handed to Aileen Ward, Caldecott WI for her decorated cake 'A Day by the Seaside' and Pat Oakley, Caldecott WI for her smoked haddock quiche. First prize was awarded in the Children's competition for 3 decorated biscuits to Henry Pollard, Little Bowden WI for the under 8's and Max Smith, Little Bowden WI for 8- 15 years. Mandy Cutler received her WI Adviser certificate. Gyles drew for the Barbara Gill Memorial Bursary, won by Sibley (SWISH) WI and Springbrook & Scraftoft WI were the winners of the County Bursary. The Denman Dip was won by Sue Buswell, Hinckley Canalside WI and Wendy Taylor, Queniborough WI.
12	JK introduced Sqn Leader Hannah Welch, CPO Ann Miller-McCaffrey and Corp Hazel Colville for their talk on the Armed Forces. They showed a Powerpoint presentation and short films to explain the Armed Forces were the largest employer with 10,000 apprenticeships at any one time, offering 500 different roles available to men and women from all backgrounds. They stated that the 'only thing uniform about the people in the forces were the uniforms'. They offer equal opportunities, job share schemes and no age limits on roles if you have the skills required for the job. There was a short time for questions and answers. Rita Caves thanked Hannah, Ann and Hazel.
13	JK introduced our final speaker, Gyles Brandreth. He began his talk by explaining his colourful trademark jumpers he wore on TV were made by George Hostler from Leicester Polytechnic using Newarke Wools but he gave up wearing them when he became a Member of Parliament as John Prescott made reference to them. He was also in the wings of the Wembley Arena when Tony Blair made his infamous speech to the WI as he was the next speaker. Gyles has a passion for the English language and grammar, 'words are everything', and is the subject of his most recent book, 'Have you Eaten Grandma'. He had us all reciting Donald Sinden's mantra for clarity, and encouraged us to speak clearly and articulate. He told many funny stories and included lots of references to celebrities he had met. He answered a few questions afterwards regarding his Spitting Image character for sale and his Teddy Bear museum in Yorkshire, he knew the real Christopher Robin. Gyles received a standing ovation from the members. Sue Lobb gave the thank you to Gyles.
14	Vice Chairman, Glenice Wignall thanked JK for chairing the meeting. JK read out the winning tickets for the raffle and advised the members of the resolutions chosen for this year; the Decline in local buses and Don't fear the Smear. JK thanked the Board of Trustees and all the Federation Committee members for their hard work and support over the year. Thanks were also given to Leicester Grammar School staff, stallholders, all the stewards and judges, AV support, WI House staff and everyone who contributed into making the day a success.
15	Meeting closed with the National Anthem.