

From the Board of Trustees...



I'm a Leicester girl, born and bred. When I met and married my dear Lobby, we first lived in Thurnby then Cropston, finally moving to Wigston Magna in 1986, into a brand new bungalow. Once we had settled and sorted front and rear gardens, I decided it was time to join the local WI, in November 1989. I joined the committee in the mid-90s, becoming President in 1998 to 2000. In 1999, I joined the old House and Finance Committee which really opened my eyes to the workings of the Federation; it was during my time on this committee I was invited to be co-opted on to the Executive Committee (now called the Board of Trustees) then was fully elected on to the Board for the first time in 2001. I stood for election every other year right up to 2017, finally resigning in March 2019. I also served on the Home Economics Committee from 2005 right up to 2016, where my role was the welcome desk, selling raffle tickets and giving short wine talks! I'm no cook, but my dear Lobby was an 'honorary' member of HE since he always helped out at the HE events, especially with his Parmesan Biscuits at the frequent Taste and Try events which were always so popular.

When I lost Lobby in 2021, I was heartbroken and it wasn't until I came along to the ACM in 2022 that it suddenly became clear what I needed to do to get my life back on track: I took advice from some old friends and WI colleagues and applied to rejoin the Board of Trustees. I was accepted after 3 months of observing, and am now co-opted until March 2023 when I have everything crossed that I shall be fully elected back on for a further two years.

Quite simply, WI is a wonderful organisation and has been a life-saver for me.

Seasons greetings to everyone, and here's hoping for better things in 2023!

Sue Lobb



<p>Federation Chairman Glenice Wignall glenicewignall@lrfwi.org</p>	<p>Federation Treasurer Linda Martin lindamartin@lrfwi.org</p>	<p>Federation Secretary Sandra Woodward fedsec@lrfwi.org</p>	<p>Accounts Assistant Anila Patel finance@lrfwi.org</p>
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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



Membership

The WI Advisers and our helpers are ready to help any WI with questions or problems that arise.

We want all WIs to be as happy, busy and entertaining for their members as they can be. We have started visiting WIs again so expect a phone call to say we will be coming to see you. It may wait until spring with the lighter nights, but we have missed visiting you. Please contact any of us if you need any help or advice. We are all listed in the handbook. You don't have to be an Officer in your WI. Just give us a call or email and we will see if we can help.

It's the time of year when Annual Meetings are taking place and new Officers are being appointed. We can also help with training and pointing you in the right direction to get the information about what your new role may require. It is also very important that Annual returns and Financial statements are returned to WI House as soon as possible after your meeting. This keeps everything up to date and in order.

It is sad that some of our Groups have decided to disband but that doesn't mean that you can't still arrange social events, joint meetings and outings to include your neighbouring WIs. It's good to keep the contact going informally.

The Federation Quiz is to be held next year on Friday 7th July. Would your WI like to host a venue? If so, contact any member of the committee and we can talk to you about what it involves. We like to spread about the Counties so, if we get lots of offers to host, we will save a place the following year for you.

Cost of living hub



Sadly, the cost of living in the UK is rising at its fastest levels for 40 years.

In these difficult times the NFWI wanted to set out what the WI will be doing to campaign for emergency and longer-term action on the cost-of-living crisis, and signpost sources of help and support.

You can find information on the current package of government support available and sources of support to include, for example, Money Saving Expert, the Trussell Trust and Cooking on a Bootstrap recipes by going to My WI, selecting Public affairs and campaigns > News and actions > Cost of living hub.

Or simply click on the following link: <https://mywi.thewi.org.uk/public-affairs-and-campaigns/news-and-actions/cost-of-living-hub>

Updated fundraising guidelines



The NFWI have reviewed their fundraising policy to give WIs and federations more freedom in the selection of charities they choose to support. The Ukrainian crisis has highlighted the need for more flexibility to support International fundraising.

So, the revised policy enables members to make their own decisions about the charities they support, in line with the WI's charitable objects, including support for national and international charities. There is no longer the requirement of local ringfencing of the monies that are raised.

WIs and federations need to ensure any charities they support financially have compatible charitable objects with those of the WI. The objects can be found in the WI constitution on pages 1 and 2 and in the new guidelines document on pages 1 and 2.

The new guidelines will be cascaded to WI Secretaries and are currently available on My WI on the Home page or click this link: <https://mywi.thewi.org.uk/nfwi-news/articles/update-to-the-fundraising-guidelines>

Public Affairs

Resolution 2023

The final short list of resolutions will be published in the Nov/Dec issue of WI Life. Please find time to go through them at one of your meetings and ask your members to vote on their preferred resolution.

We need to receive your WI's voting results by 14th February 2023. Please **do not** send the individual voting papers from WI Life, all we need is the collated result from your members! Your results can be sent by email, by phone or by post.

Thank you.

Sue Mottram Federation Resolution Adviser

Federation Events

Annual Council Meeting 2023

Leicester Grammar School, Great Glen, Leicester
LE8 9FL

Saturday, 18 March 2023

10.30 am – 3.30pm

Tickets: £15 each (£7.50 for stewards)

Doors open at 9.30am to shop at the stalls, view competitions and Committee displays. Please bring a packed lunch. Drinks are available for sale and you may wish to bring your own reusable cup.

Parking is limited, so please car share, use public transport or be dropped off. See flyer for details.

Our speakers for the Annual Council Meeting 2023 are:



Ruth Goodman

Social & domestic historian & TV presenter

Eric Knowles

Antiques expert, writer & TV presenter



Federation Competitions

Leisure Activities Committee

Margaret Johnston Trophy Competition 2023



The theme of this year's writing challenge is ...

'My Platinum Jubilee Celebrations'

in no more than 500 words. Your entry should be typed, if possible, on A4 paper. Please complete the slip on the flyer, do not write your name on your entry.

Entry fee: £4 Closing date: 9 January 2023



Brenda Barnett Trophy 2023

Theme: A Family Celebration

Three different craft items to be displayed on a board 22" x 22" (56cm x 56cm), with an optional back board but no side boards are permitted. Accessories are allowed. A card of intent must be provided explaining the interpretation of the theme and choice of items displayed.

Exhibits will be displayed at the Annual Council Meeting 2023 and will be featured in County News.

Entry fee £6.00 (non-refundable).

Closing date for entry forms: 26 January 2023

All events may be photographed, we will presume permission unless we are otherwise informed. **Speakers subject to change at short notice.** See our website for latest event availability [https://leicestershire-and-rutland.thewi.org.uk/event-calendars/federation-events#Federation Events](https://leicestershire-and-rutland.thewi.org.uk/event-calendars/federation-events#Federation%20Events)

Federation Competitions

The Edith Buckley Poetry Competition 2023

In memory of Edith Buckley, Blackfordby WI

“A New Dawn”



The last 2 years have been dark and challenging for individuals and families across Britain and the World. Lockdowns have restricted our lives and changed the way we work and play. The Royal Family, country and Commonwealth have lost a well loved Queen.

Yet shafts of light are appearing now!

We will have a new King. Families are looking forward to meeting with friends, holidays, parties, and other enjoyments.

The theme this year is to look forward with optimism. What shafts of light are you planning for yourself, your family and friends. (New Year resolutions to have a good time.)

Our competition this year is to use any poetic form to capture the new dawn for yourself, your family or the wider world in no more than 150 words.

Entrants can use any poetic form to capture the essence of the theme. See flyer for details and entry form.

WI House News

Federation Secretary

We were sad to see Sarah Freeman, our Federation Secretary for almost 3 years, move on to pastures new on 10 November. Sarah has moved to a full time position with Leicestershire Police and we wish her all the best in her new role. Since becoming Federation Secretary, Sarah has joined the WI so you may still see her at Federation events. Our new Federation Secretary, Sandra Woodward, started on Monday 7 November which has allowed for a very brief handover. We are sure you will give Sandra a warm welcome and offer patience and support as she gets to grips with the role.

WI House - A Warm Welcome

WI House is open to members 9.30am-1.30pm Monday to Thursday.

Members are welcome to visit for as long as they choose. Tea and coffee are available. If you need a warm space this winter we are here to welcome you!

No more paper tickets!

From January 2023 we will only be issuing paper tickets for exceptional events such as the Annual Council Meeting. All other events will have places and details confirmed to WI Secretaries with a list of attendees on the door to ensure those attending have booked.

- Please ensure all bookings are made through your Secretary or Treasurer, not directly with WI House.
- Bookings will only be accepted if a booking form is completed (available on the website).
- You must be booked in order to attend an event unless the flyer states otherwise.
- Please state the name of your WI on all correspondence with WI House.

Art & Crafts Committee

Dorset Buttons Workshop

It was busy Saturday in October at WI House with a Dorset Buttons workshop upstairs and cream teas downstairs.

Clair Andrews from Barrow on Soar WI had an enjoyable day and has sent us a photo of her completed Dorset button. Clair said the WI is a very special part of her life and every time she meets fellow WI ladies she learns so much and not just the sewing, it truly is inspiring.



Who Put the Cank in Cank Street



The Cank Street walk was excellent, Steve our guide did it in memory of Ruth Mays, a member of our Leisure Activities Committee who sadly passed away earlier this year. Ladies were guided around Leicester City centre and told about street names and the connections with history behind them. We learnt the difference between gate and gates, one coming from Norwegian origins, royalty, lost public inns and churches. Our walk finished in Every Street which was named because in the past you could get a cab there to everywhere and of course we had learnt about 'every street' in Leicester.



"I've just returned home from the Federation organised guided walk around Leicester, talking about the street names with their history and reasons. It was very interesting, 10 attended from our WI. As you can see, we were fortunate with the weather." Ailsa Jelly, Groby WI.



Federation Darts Competition

The final was played at The Plough Inn Ratby between a lovely group of ladies. It was a very close match with 2 of the games going down to the 5 minute rule. The final result was a 4:2 win to Appleby.

When the match was over the ladies sat down together in the restaurant and enjoyed a good meal washed down with a glass or two of wine.



The winners of the Federation Darts Tournament are Appleby Magna A Team players: Ann Baker, Kathy Ratchford, Pam Allen and Harriet Allen.

The runners up are Great Glen, players were: Rachael Snashell, Captain, Barbara Charlesworth, Fernley Hopkins and Jackie Arrowsmith.



Leisure Activities Event

Abbey Park Guided Walk Wednesday

8 March 2023 11am & 2pm

£6

Opened 140 years ago, Abbey Park lies alongside the River Soar. The park proudly displays much of its original Victorian charm and decorative design. In 1932 it was extended to include both the site of Leicester's mediaeval abbey and the ruins of the 16th century Cavendish House. Far more than just a walk in the park, this is a stroll through time which touches on much of Leicester's less well-known but nevertheless fascinating history. Length – approx. 90 minutes with benches along the route if needed. No unavoidable steps. Meet in main car park on Abbey Park Road.

If you would like tickets for this event, please contact your WI secretary.
Completed booking form is essential to secure tickets.

Belgrave Community Culture Event



On Saturday 22 October 38 ladies visited the Shree Swaminarayan Temple near WI House. Members of the temple were very welcoming and told us about their culture and history. We heard the music they play, had some photos taken and ended with a lot of questions.

Returning to WI House ladies had a cream tea, followed by vegetable samosas - 'yum yum!'

Hopefully we will arrange another visit in February for our members on the waiting list and anyone else that is interested.



The Big Textiles Show

At the end of October, LRFWI were invited to have a stand at the Big Textile Show held at Leicester Racecourse.



Beverly & Maxilyn were there on Saturday and Janet & Margaret on Sunday. Both days we spoke to a lot of existing WI ladies telling them of our future plans and encouraged new ladies to join WIs in their local area. We also met ladies from other neighbouring counties Warwickshire, Derbyshire and Northamptonshire to name a few. It was very enjoyable, thanks for the invite.



Peatling Parva—In Memory

It is with great sadness that we inform you of the deaths of two stalwarts of our Institute. Jane Kind (right) and Brenda Hickley (left) former Secretary and President kept us going when times were difficult and they were always the first to welcome newcomers to the village, promoting the WI and urging us to join.

They will both be missed very much by our members, throughout the Cromwell Group and around the County.

Eileen Williams President



Forest Group

Kirby Muxloe WI hosted a group meeting in St. Bartholomew's church hall. As well as Kirby Muxloe there were ladies from Ratby, Botcheston, Glenfield, Glenfield Park and Newbold Verdon, totally just over 50.

Our warm up act was our Federation Representative for the evening Rita Caves who gave a very motivational address followed by the guest speaker Caroline Roberts. Caroline is a Leicestershire Blue Badge guide and her talk was entitled "The Weaker Sex". This gave us an insight into some Leicester ladies who didn't stay at home including Lord Mayors and suffragettes who contributed to make Leicester what it is today. She also explained what she'd had to do to become a Blue Badge guide. She has an amazing knowledge of Leicester and Leicestershire and her talk was enthralling and very entertaining. I'm sure we all went away with some new fascinating facts about Leicester that we could impress family with.

After the talk we were treated to a delicious spread of fruit kebabs and a variety of cakes and biscuits.

A very enjoyable evening was had by all.

Sheepy

Our October meeting was our AGM and also our 11th birthday! The business required at the AGM was attended to and we welcomed Sue Tiernman to the committee.

Georgina told us briefly about the successes of members at the recent group show. We were reminded that our Christmas party this year will be in the hall and that members should book asap.

The committee had provided members with a selection of sweet treats to accompany the teas and coffees. This went down very well with much discussion about likes and dislikes.

Our evenings entertainment, chocolate bingo, was courtesy of Georgina and Val. Val is a very speedy caller and we quickly had winners popping up around the room.

It was a very relaxed, sociable evening with lots of opportunity to chat.

Huncote

Our programme planning team continues to impress us with a varied entertainment programme. They have also succeeded in finding very last-minute speakers to replace scheduled ones who had been taken ill.

One such replacement was Eileen Smith who raised our awareness of the charity "Traveleyes". They arrange amazing activity holidays for the visually impaired in the UK and abroad.

Scheduled speaker, Clive Matthews, spoke to us on an unusual topic "My life and times in farming and hedge laying". His hilarious talk described his farming experiences from his youth onwards.

In September, John Parnell aka "Hoop Guy", gave us the history and practical tuition on mastering the hula hoop technique. Several members were brave enough to have a go, even the most sceptic were able to succeed under John's expert guidance.



We were doubly grateful to John as he stepped in at the eleventh hour to deliver an excellent session.



The following month saw us on our feet again when Gill Mouncer, with her Scottish Dancers, took us through some intriguing routines. The group of ten were very

patient and encouraging with those who took part. It was a fabulous evening, enjoyed by spectators and participants alike.

For some time, we have been aware that several of our members often struggle to hear the business and speakers clearly. We borrowed the Federation portable sound system for several months and found it to be very effective. Having tried and tested their device, we have decided to purchase our own. Our President applied to WI House for a bursary to help with the cost and we are delighted that our request has been successful. We are now looking forward to the arrival of our new device.

Hollycroft

Hollycroft had a game of 'People Bingo' after their AGM.

This was an excellent opportunity to get to know fellow members better and welcome our new members. Everyone is given a sheet of blank squares with various statements, i.e. wears more than 3 rings, has a toy from their childhood, rides a bicycle etc. After being asked, the member signs the relevant square and you can only have one signature from that person on your sheet, even if they ride a bike and still have their beloved teddy!

You need to go round everyone asking questions to fill your sheet. We learnt a lot about each other in the process!

Broughton Astley



Our guest speaker, Tim Coltman, spoke of his great grandfather, William Harold Coltman, in "The Story of the Two Crosses". The first was the cross of William's strong Christian faith and the second the Victoria Cross he was awarded for "most conspicuous bravery" in the battle at Mannequin Hill in October 1918, when he tended wounded comrades over a period of 48 hours. William had enlisted in the 6th

North Staffs battalion in January 1915 to do his duty, but through his strong faith would not bear arms or fight. Instead he became a stretcher bearer, but went on to battlefields alone and carried wounded soldiers on his back to safety. He refused to use a stretcher as he said this would put another man in danger. He had only received very basic medical training and his first aid kit was very basic indeed. For other feats of bravery William was awarded the Military medal and bar and the Distinguished Conduct medal and bar. He was a very humble man, avoiding the War Heroes reception at Burton on Trent on his return and never spoke of his actions or medals. He is described as the highest decorated non-commissioned officer of the British army.

William's was a fascinating story, which we all found very interesting and inspirational.

Cossington

In October Cossington members met at Stonehurst Farm in Mountsorrel to celebrate the formation of their WI 102 years ago. A social evening in the company of friends, enjoying good food and lively chatter, the evening was enjoyed by all who attended.



Bitteswell

On 12th December 1922 a group of ladies from Bitteswell village met to discuss whether there was a need for a Women's Institute group to be formed. One hundred years later the group still meet in the village hall on the second Tuesday of the month. The topics may have changed over this time, but members still enjoy each other's company, a variety of speakers, theatre trips, garden parties, craft and book groups and supporting national and regional campaigns. Our celebrations will include a Christmas party followed by a meal out in the new year. Happy Christmas to all WI members.



New Barkby

President, Shirley Franklin, welcomed members and visitors to the institute's October meeting.

A one minute silence was held in memory of H M Queen Elizabeth II, herself a WI member, and president of Sandringham WI.

Speaker for the evening was Kerry Evans, a flower demonstrator, from Syston.

She created three arrangements and these were raffled off to three 'Js' – Jean Brutnall, Julie Malam and Jan Oliver. Vote of thanks – Valerie Cobb.

Illston on the Hill

At our last meeting we were entertained by one of our very own members, Rhena Sturgess. Rhena has always had a great interest in antiques (perhaps that is why we get on so well!!!!) and has lots of genuine clothes and strange items in her mammoth collection. We were just listening to her introduction when Kathy stood at the door dressed in a First World War nurse's uniform.

This originally belonged to Mary Pane who is a distant relative by marriage.

We started with undergarments and Rhena had brought some of the most beautiful cotton lace knickers, but apparently undergarments – for both men and women were not introduced until the 1700s and then only worn by



the very rich. We did learn a great deal about the clothes and this created great hilarity! We owe nice underwear to Queen Victoria – thank goodness.

Three separate quizzes had been organised by Rhena, (1) guess what it is; (2) guess who would use it; (3) in which year was it used. There were a few normal things, but some very obscure items and some of the suggestions for use don't bear thinking about. Some looked like dental equipment, burglars "key" and lots more.

This was a really great evening with lots of fun had by all, ending in the usual way with delicious refreshments.

Don't forget our Christmas Fayre/coffee morning on Saturday 26th November in Illston Village Hall, 1000 – 1330. Lots of stalls and all proceeds to Rainbows. Please come and give generously whilst selecting Christmas gifts for those close to you.

Anstey

In October, we held a "Thank You" day. It was planned as a sort of post-pandemic well-being day. About 20 ladies participated during the course of the day, with some joining part way through. It began with a Zumba session led by Tracey. Knowing many of us were novices, she led us gently through a series of exercises. Half were performed seated so that everybody was included. It was quite a workout for those unaccustomed to strenuous activity, and great fun.

After coffee came a sing-song, including lots of old favourites. A couple of participants enjoyed it so much they carried on well past the end of the session. Shortly after that came a delicious buffet lunch. The sandwiches were bought in, but special thanks are due to Gill Bryce, who had baked sausage rolls and prepared other items to give more variety.

The afternoon saw member Sheryl Bramley leading a craft session, making decoupage birthday cards. Another very enjoyable activity, which had involved a lot of work to prepare. Many thanks to Sheryl. The day ended with afternoon tea. Gill had contributed lots of cakes, and Liz Heggs had made scones. Grateful thanks to Liz too.

At the October meeting, Susie Lickman spoke to us about houseplants, a real passion of hers, as was clear from the humour and enthusiasm with which she delivered her advice. Apparently houseplants are trendy again, especially among the young who cannot afford houses with gardens, or to start a family. Susie names some of her plants, after Aston Villa players (a ploy to encourage her husband to help tend them). Jack Grealish was looking a little sickly on the night, but Susie was confident of nursing him back to health. She gave tips on choosing the right spot for each plant, based on its natural habitat. The major cause of death, she explained, is overwatering. Plants may enjoy a "spa day" in a shower cubicle that has been made good and steamy. Susie is about to open a plant shop in Market Harborough.



Members then bade farewell to Kaye Hall, who is moving to Northumbria. Kaye had generously provided buffet food, and a range of soft drinks including some surprisingly good non-alcoholic wines. She was presented with a card and plant as farewell gifts, and became quite emotional. Susie kindly took a group photograph so that we were all included, and instead of "cheese", had us saying "overwatering", neatly reinforcing her earlier message. So we had had two immensely enjoyable events in the course of less than a week.

Countesthorpe



At our last meeting we had a very interesting talk from a paramedic Sam Mason. Sam talked about her experiences and gave advice on a few things including how to keep safe and warm this winter.

One action we have decided to adopt for our group is the introduction of an emergency details box containing information about each member in the event we had to call an ambulance. Each member has been given a card to complete with their medical details which will be sealed in an envelope to give to a paramedic in an emergency.



The details will outline any medical condition medication and allergies along with date of birth contact details and registered GP. Hopefully we will never have to use it but it would be very helpful to a paramedic in an emergency.



Bosworth Field Group

On 22nd October our Group Craft & Produce Show took place, hosted by Witherley WI at Witherley Parish Room.

We welcomed members and the public from the area to enjoy tea/coffee and cake after all items had been judged. The autumn sunshine brought in many visitors to see the beautiful array of crafts and produce our members had provided.



Our thanks to the judges who all made positive and helpful remarks of encouragement.

A most enjoyable day, with President Nina Marshall of Witherley shown busy in the kitchen!



Glenfield Park

What an interesting and informative talk given by Helen Gaunt (a member) about heart disease and her involvement in it. She qualified as a nurse in 1985 and worked at the General in heart disease. She was then promoted to ward sister but hated it as there was too much administration, so took a demotion to work at Glenfield in the Cardiology department. After feeling that she had more to offer than taking notes and passing the patient on to the consultant she and a colleague went on courses and eventually set up a nurse led clinic in heart disease in 2005. Each patient is allocated 20 to 25 minutes for the consultation. (Wow, can you believe it). It beats the 5 minutes you get with a doctor. Each patient is given an informed diagnosis and then have the choice of whether or not to follow it. We were given a lot of excellent information so I have chosen just a few points. Helen emphasised several times that if you have chest pain for more than 20 minutes you must call 999. Women are more likely to do this than men but are quite often fobbed off and told it's just anxiety. Most of the research has been based on men but women often present differently. Perhaps there's a campaign here!!! However, she pointed out that not all chest pain means that you are having a heart attack, it could just be muscle pain or indigestion. Some advice she gave was that if you have heart problems the cholesterol drugs are the most productive drug in cardiology. Aspirin can be useful again if you have heart problems but do not take it regularly if not as it can damage the stomach lining. She admitted that her pet hate is Dr. Google when patients come in and say, "I've been on the internet and this is what is wrong with me". After you have been given the correct diagnosis then by all means go onto the internet to look for advice. Finally, if you say I don't want to bother the NHS her message is that's what the NHS is for, to be bothered. A very enlightening talk but very down to earth. Thank you Helen.

Leire

At our recent meeting we were delighted to welcome Margaret Cooper from Castle Donington who gave a talk on willow weaving and basket making, a subject that was inspired by her interest in agriculture and nature. Margaret is a researcher of ancient baskets, their materials and history both at home and abroad and her portfolio also includes making commissioned items and running courses.

Margaret explained the different types of willow such as fast-growing willow, buff and brown willows as well as stripped white willow, which is very sought after and used for food and linen due to its cleanliness. Margaret showed us a range of handcrafted items including a duck's nesting basket which is placed by streams, a basket for gathering sheep wool called a Mudag and an egg basket as well as a lovely horse and sheep. There is much forward planning when crafting items as the willow has to be soaked and dried and maintained at an optimum temperature. We then had a go at making small wreaths with the different willows and entwined with corn heads. There was quite a skill in trying to bend the willow and weave it neatly while trying not to poke each other in the eye. Everyone enjoyed having a go. Our competition was a basket or willow item which Stephanie won with her beautiful handmade basket.

Great Bowden

It's October and time for Great Bowden's Harvest Supper. A fun evening was planned by the Committee for members to enjoy. This took the form of a fish and chip supper, and forty portions were delivered and served. These were followed by lovely cake and hot drinks. There was a raffle with many special prizes. The entertainment for the evening was provided by our own WI choir led by Pam Abbot and accompanied wonderfully by Gordon Birch. The choir sang a medley of Beatles songs and members were able to join in and sing along as everyone is familiar with the tunes. A good time was had by all and we went off with full stomachs and humming Beatles melodies.



Hinckley Canalside

Lynne Sharpe NAFAS Flower Arranger.

We were lucky enough to have the pleasure of meeting Lynne Sharpe, who is a talented NAFAS Flower Arranger. She did several floral demonstrations with a Christmas/pantomime theme. She was very entertaining telling us about all the treasures she collects from various car boot sales which she adds to her floral displays. Lynne admits she often collects the foliage for her displays from various sources. Whilst demonstrating some beautiful flower arrangements, she was able to take us on a trip down memory lane to her own childhood Christmases and how magical they were for her. Something we could all relate to. She told us some useful tips when preparing and looking after flowers. She then raffled off all the floral displays and made several of our members very happy to win them. A most enjoyable evening was had by all.



Leicester Ladies

We recently enjoyed a very interesting talk from two locally based authors, Lizzie Lamb and Adrienne Vaughan.

The ladies are independently published authors who write romantic novels, one with an historical bias and the other with crime involved.

They delighted and entertained us with stories of how the process of writing develops, from choosing the plots and titles, to proof reading and designing the covers (One of our members, Gail, designed one of Lizzie's recent book covers!).

Not being contracted to one publisher leaves authors with creative independence, allowing them to be involved in their own marketing and promotion.

They emphasised how the writing industry contributes to the economy figures, with the UK publishing industry having a turnover over £10 billion in 2018, which is increasing year on year.

Both authors were so enthusiastic about their work, even if we couldn't write our own novels, it certainly made us want to read more.



Newbold Verdon

At our October meeting, Tim Coltman told us about his grandfather, William Harold Coltman, a WW1 hero. He was a committed Christian and because of his faith refused to fight and went as a stretcher bearer. However, he did not use a stretcher, but carried the wounded off the battlefield on his back. He also retrieved the dog tags of the dead so that families could claim the money they were entitled to. As a result of his bravery and courage he was awarded the Victoria cross, Military medal twice and Distinguished Conduct medal twice. He is now described as the highest decorated non-commissioned officer of the British Army.

Blackfordby

Blackfordby WI are celebrating their 85th birthday this month.

On Tuesday October 25th 1937, twenty-five ladies met at Blackfordby school and Blackfordby WI was formed.

At our AGM, we had a wonderful cake to eat and took a photograph of our present members. The cake was made by Josie and decorated by Lorna, two of our very talented members. I'm sure you will all agree it was absolutely beautiful.



Our cake was cut by our longest serving members Jean and Ann 58 years and Helen 53 years. How amazing is that!

We carried on our 85th birthday celebrations with Afternoon Tea at Lakeside Bistro, Moira. Our speaker was Mildred Freeman, a lady Historian and her talk was 'one lump or two - the history of afternoon tea'.

The history of afternoon tea encompasses dangers and scandals unknown to the average tea slugger of the British Isles. An innocent afternoon spread of tea, sandwiches, cakes and sweet treats for many in history bought war, addiction, poison, slavery, death, female liberation and fashionable rivalry. The humble afternoon tea will never seem the same again!



Sweptstone, Newton and Snareston

We had a very enjoyable WI meeting led by Karine in September where we experienced a relaxing evening with aromatherapy. We made gifts, had a quiz, and the hall was filled with amazing smells. A wonderful evening.





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