



Cog in the Tree

West Midlands Federation of Women's Institutes.



October 2023

Chairperson's Address

Hello Everyone,



This will be my final chat as, after three years as Federation Chair, I stepped down from the position at the Annual Meeting. So, no more inconsequential ramblings about my family, my gardening problems, complaints about the weather or indeed anything that passes through my mind at the time of writing. Thank you to everyone who has expressed enjoyment at reading my monthly chat.

I have very much enjoyed my time in office, particularly the opportunities I have had to visit WIs and meet as many members as possible. I have always been delighted by the kind reception I have had when I have turned up at the door of your meeting venue and I have been amazed at how similar yet how different each WI is.

I will remain as a Trustee and I am continuing my role as a WI Adviser so I will still be around and hope that I will still be invited to join in your meetings when I can.

In common with many of my predecessors I will continue to promote the interests of the WI to the best of my ability and to as many women as possible. I firmly believe that the WI is a force for good not just for women but for society in general.

Announcing our New Chairperson.

We are delighted to announce the appointment of our new Federation Chairperson, **Mrs Cathryn Marsh** of Walmley Evening WI who was appointed at our Annual Meeting on 25th September 2023.

Cathryn is a WI Adviser and has been both a Vice-Chair and our Resolutions Officer for three years so we will be in very safe hands in the coming year. All emails and general queries should now be directed to her as I have relinquished that responsibility. I'm sure you will all join me in wishing her our sincere Congratulations.

Please do let Cathryn know if there is anything she can do for you, any suggestions, new ideas for events or venues, or just a chat. Cathryn's contact details may be found at the bottom of the page, for WMFWI. Best wishes to you all, Lynn

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NEW BOARD OF TRUSTEES FOR 2023-2024

The Annual Meeting saw several changes to our Board of Trustees. Alongside our new chair, Cathryn, we have:

Iris Montgomery has stepped down as Federation Treasurer after 22 years in charge of our finances but she is remaining on the Board as a Trustee. Iris has been a major contributor to our Board and we are delighted to know that she will still be attending meetings and giving us the benefit of her knowledge and experience.

Liz Galloway has been a Trustee for nine years and has been a Vice-Chairperson, Climate Ambassador and Chair of the Public Affairs Sub-committee but has agreed to accept the challenge of looking after our finances as **Federation Treasurer** along with **Juliette Kelly** who has been appointed to the position of Accounts Clerk and Russell Lowe our Financial Adviser. Liz's contact details are as follows:

Liz.Galloway@hotmail.com, 07929-015-465

Liz will be resigning from her duties as Vice-Chair and as Chair of the Public Affairs subcommittee with the latter being picked up by **Lynda Gibbon**, President of Harborne Village WI.

Jackie Poyner will be Vice-Chairperson. Jackie is also a WI adviser, a member of the Membership sub-committee and will be taking over for a period from **Julie Afridi Martin** as Chair of the Arts and Activities Sub-committee, whilst Julie enjoys some time for other interests.

We will particularly miss **Kim Slivinski** who, after 10 years as our volunteer secretary, is stepping down in order to spend more time doing things unrelated to WI. We are not losing her completely as she is continuing to attend Yardley WI and we will keep in touch with her. It does mean that Kim will no longer be on the end of a phone or email to answer questions about WI matters in general and in particular about MCS problems so please let her enjoy her retirement in peace.

Chris Sears has also retired as a Trustee but will stay on as a member of the Arts & Activities sub-committee and will continue to run the bulb scheme. We thank her for her contribution to the Board.

The other Trustees are:

Claire Woodland: Chair of Crafts sub-committee

Dawn Statham: Safeguarding Officer, member of both Public Affairs and Craft sub-committees.

Lynn Smith: Chair of Membership and member of Arts & Activities sub-committees.

Anne Turnbull has not joined the Board as a Trustee but has agreed to act as our MCS representative and is keen to promote the WMFWI Facebook group. Anne can be contacted on mcswmfwi@gmail.com

We would be delighted to have more Trustees and would welcome members to join us at one of our monthly meetings as an observer to understand what it is that we do and to see if they would like to become Trustees.



Your WI News

Bournville WI



Bournville WI enjoyed a return to meetings after the summer break with a fun but challenging quiz, with Tess Singleton, entertainments lead, as a tolerant and fun compere. Pictured are the winning team.

Knowle WI



We made an early start for our Annual Shoebox Appeal by wrapping the shoeboxes in festive Christmas paper. We will be handing these and items to fill them to our Teams4U Representative at our September Meeting
Last month we had a celebratory royal cream tea.
Stephanie Withers, Knowle WI

Don't forget to follow us on Facebook for regular posts and updates.

<https://www.facebook.com/WMFWI>



Balsall Heath and Moseley

Local author and stand-up comedian Rachel Sambrooks came to give some readings of her poetry, and ran a poetry for wellbeing workshop. BH&M discovered their hidden talents for prose, a new aid to mindfulness, and enjoyed mirth from menopausal musings, all alongside good cake! You can find out more about Rachel and her work, by following the link: [Blog | Rachel Sambrooks](#)



Forthcoming Events

17 th October	National WI Climate Conference
4 th November	Christmas Glass Mosaic
21 st November	Christmas Outing (Hyde Park)
4 th December	Dickens & Forshaw Heath Winter Warmer
9 th December	Christmas family celebration



Hawne WI



Hawne WI have been imaginative with a Pom-Pom challenge.

The winning creation was a dragonfly!

Anne, Hawne WI

Hobs Moat WI

We are very proud that the generous donations made by Hobs Moat WI members enabled the making of eighty trauma (buddy) bags. Joy Stevenson (pictured) used the donations to fill them for this worthy cause.

We were approached to make hearts (right) by the bereavement office at Heartlands Hospital. They are made in pairs. One is given to the patient and one to a relative, a comfort to them after a loved one has died. Here are a few that members have made.



Some of HMWI members recently formed a Craft Group. We have great fun making things, organised by **Eve Hutty**, pictured right, top left. It is not always the result that matters but the taking part and developing new skills.

Linda Dance,
President Hobs Moat WI.



Boldmere WI



Five ladies from Boldmere WI: Brenda Whitfield, Sue Green, Mags Rea, Geraldine Foster and Judy Holmes had a really enjoyable day at Curborough Hall Farm, Watery Lane, at an Acrylic Painting Lesson taught by Kara Strachan. It was a new experience that we were keen to try, we followed Kara's example step by step.

We also met for an informal coffee at the Deli in Boldmere, joined with other WIs for a Midsomer Meal and Bowling, and visited Selly Manor in Bournville.

Judy Holmes, Boldmere WI



Great Barr WI



This month Great Barr W.I. tried their hand at making an assortment of items from scraps of felt. These included (bottom pic) corner bookmarks, standard bookmarks and a troop of elephants (which were so cute). Last month we created items from modelling clay (below) and painted them using acrylic paints. We think our members made a really good job. Next month we're cooking!

Elaine Williams, Media Officer, Great Barr WI



Streetly WI



Streetly Evening W.I. made their final visit to Walsall Arboretum this summer to complete the aim of seeing the park in all its glory each season of the year.

Our group of walkers increased on every visit and we had a pleasant, relaxed stroll around the grounds and thoroughly enjoyed the coffee stop to end the morning. An excellent social occasion.

Nola Boulger, Streetly Evening WI President



200 Club

Grand Prize Draw

1st Prize of £200

Jean Jones, Solihull WI

2nd Prize of £100

Val Williams, Streetly WI

Dickens & Forshaw Heath WI



On Monday 21st August, Dickens & Forshaw Heath members and guests went on their Annual Summer Outing. This year's visit was to The National Arboretum followed by some time in Lichfield. The weather was kind and of course we spent some time at the WI bench (see picture above). We were pleased to welcome members from both Arden and Green Lane WI's, it was lovely to spend an enjoyable day of shared friendship.

Kim Meadows, Dickens & Forshaw Heath WI.



Dickens & Forshaw Heath WI

would like to invite you to their

WINTER WARMER

On Monday 4th December at 12.30pm
In Earlswood Methodist Church, B94 5JR

Tickets price £20.

Available from Jane Henton

Telephone 0121 733 1618



Would you like to see your WI featured here? We would!

Send your contributions to COGMEDIAWMFWI@gmail.com Next deadline: 10/10/23.

Please send submissions by the tenth of the month to ensure inclusion. It may not be possible to include all submissions. Texts may be altered to fit available space. Please send original images as individual jpeg files, documents as word documents, and include your WI's name in the email title. Many thanks.

Lisa Blackburn, Editor



Herefordshire Federation Craft and Chat Sessions

These are on-line sessions held from 10.00am-12.30pm on Monday mornings. Members from WMFWI are cordially invited to join in any session all costing £5.00 each. To book please contact Admin@herefordshirewi.org.uk

October 2 nd :	Fun Flourishes with Jane Lappage
October 9 th :	The Wool Patch with Stuart Race
October 16 th :	Christmas Gift Bag & Card with Deborah Pickett
October 23 rd :	Dotting with Felicity Jennings
October 30 th :	Christmas Jumper Angels with Claire Salmon
November 6 th :	Mini Pocket Tag Book with Paula Pierce
November 13 th :	How to Draw a Giraffe with Alice May
November 20 th :	Simple Sewing Project with Andrea
November 27 th :	Crochet Baubles with Felicity Jennings
December 4 th :	Christmas Themed Tea-Cosy & Breakfast Set with Claire Salmon

The WMFWI Annual Meeting



Members attended the 49th WMFWI Annual Meeting at Austin Court, Cambridge Street, Birmingham, on 25th September 2023, where current Chairperson Lynn Smith, formally relinquished the role to new Chairperson Cathryn Marsh. Lynn urged members to continue to get involved, to encourage new members and to continue as the WI has for a hundred years, campaigning for and influencing change in local, national and global environments. Lynn was presented with a gift of ornamental garden water holders to help bees and birds to thrive. Tokens of appreciation were also given to other retiring trustees. The Trustee Trophy & Montgomery Shields entries were on display for judging, work too beautiful to feature in such a small article in the Cog, winners and entries to feature in November.

The buddy bag foundation demonstrated their buddy bags, for children suddenly taken into care. Find out more at [The Buddy Bag Foundation](https://www.buddybagfoundation.org/).

Guest Speaker, Corrine Brazier, Heritage Manager, from West Midlands Police, gave a very interesting talk about the history and progress of women in Policing. Corrine is available as a WI speaker, and her book "A Fair Cop -celebrating 100 years of Women in Policing" is available at outlets.



Halesowen WI

Halesowen HawNets walking netball team's dedication, hard work and side-splitting laughter at their selves has finally paid off. They successfully won their latest tournament entry. They entered the Nuneaton tournament on Thursday 13th July and succeeded in winning all 5 of their matches to earn their medals and wear with pride and joy. It was a wonderful day and enjoyed by everyone taking part.



HalesOwen WI's last meeting before the summer break was a night of line dancing, which was enjoyed by all members including those who unfortunately couldn't participate but still came to watch. HalesOwen's president led the teaching and demoing of the dances with assistance from her husband David who both used to teach line dancing many years ago. Members pictured dancing the Electric Slide age from 20 to nearly 82. This is the third time we have had this at our meetings, and it is still enjoyed by all our members with requests already coming in to do it again.

Editor's Choice

A theme of the WMFWI conference was to attract new members. When someone asks you "Is it all Jam and Jerusalem?" What do you say? Here are some achievements that cause us to be proud:

- 1918 The first WI resolution called for 'sufficient supply of convenient and sanitary housing.'
- 1921 Emphasised the importance of women jurors and magistrates.
- 1922 Resolutions calling for an increase in women as police officers. (&1924)
- 1943 Equal pay for Equal Work! Women had taken roles previously held by men before the war, with Bures WI in Suffolk proposing it as a resolution.
- 1954 Keep Britain Tidy!
- 1964 "To restrict the amount of smoking in public places" (included limits to smoking on TV).
- 1964 "The provision of comprehensive facilities for a routine smear test for cervical cancer".
- 1971 "Research into the production of disintegrating plastic packaging materials".
- 1986 HIV & AIDS awareness.
- 1992 One of several organisations that founded the Fairtrade Foundation.
- 2008 Care not Custody – calling for an end to the inappropriate detention of people with mental health problems, or learning disabilities.
- 2012 More Midwives – increased investment in the training and employment of Midwives.

Tell them that!

And then ask what they'd like to achieve next, and invite them to join!

Here's the new promotional video: <https://youtu.be/U30eQKQQUrI>

The WI, 100 years of WI campaigns, accessed 250923, [My WI | 100 years of WI campaigns \(thewi.org.uk\)](http://mywi.org.uk)



Public Affairs

Liz Galloway, Vice Chair & Public Affairs

A warm welcome to Lynda Gibbon, as our new Chair of Public Affairs. Lynda's experience as a member representative on the National Public Affairs committee, as well as her enthusiastic championing of campaign actions at local level, will be invaluable. Lynda takes over from Liz Galloway who is now moving on to her role as Federation Treasurer after seven years looking after Public Affairs. Liz will remain a Climate Ambassador.



Dickens and Forshaw Heath WI made a Splash today (12/9/23) to promote the Week of River Action for the **Clean Water for Rivers Campaign**.

The Splash shows how members would like it to be possible to swim or snorkel in all our rivers, and include an origami paper version of the Making Waves Banner with beaded rather than crocheted Dragonflies. There are also jars of dirty water and plastic contamination on display.

During their September meeting, Hilary Close (Climate Ambassador) did an update on the Clean Water for Rivers campaign and has signed the petition being promoted nationally. Dragonflies (right) are one of the craft items members can make.



To link with this year's Safe Rivers for People & Wildlife, Harborne Village WI's Walking group is walking along the Chad Brook River. They also intend to walk along Rea Valley and possibly even other Birmingham rivers in Spring 2024.



Coronation Gardens for food and nature. Members are urged to go onto the WI website and follow up on the press release of 27th June 23 which announced this initiative together with the Wildlife Trusts. Its about working with nature, for wildlife and insects, soil health and sustainability. You can find out more information, including resources and advice, on the Coronation Gardens for Food and Nature website here: <https://mycoronationgarden.org/>





Talking of Gardens and nature, I wonder if any of you are growing a fig tree. I planted mine, var. Brown Turkey, to remind me of sunnier climes ... not that I needed a reminder just recently! It's cropped really well this year and over a long period but unfortunately, I was away for a fortnight and during this time quite a few figs ripened and split. On my return, I was delighted to find that I was feeding more red admirals than I'd ever seen in the garden before even on buddleias! It was

quite difficult to photograph up into the branches in low light but you can see two butterflies on the right-hand cluster, one on the left and one over in the background. A lesson learnt I'll certainly leave some fruit on to become juicy and sweet (and rotten!) in future years but probably best not to walk under the branches!

Harborne Village WI has put forward a resolution, '**Count on Us**' which has been supported by the Board of Trustees. The resolution aims to encourage all WI members to volunteer and actively contribute effectively to community-based citizen science projects and seek opportunities to partner and collaborate with scientists and other organisations. Citizen science projects cover a wide range of issues including observing, measuring and reporting on environmental issues, the impact of climate change, air quality, food policy and health and well-being. **Liz Galloway, Treasurer.**

Have you booked your ticket?

Tuesday, 17th October

The WI's Climate Conference

in the Abbey Centre, Westminster, London

WI member conference, exploring the climate crisis and its impact on women and girls.

Have you signed up to the PA Digest on MyWI?

Julie Afridi Martin - Entertainment Subcommittee Chair

ARTS AND ACTIVITIES

Hello all. It's great to be back. I hope you all managed to have a good Summer despite the rain.



CROQUET

Lots of our members played croquet this year and a fabulous time was had. Well done everyone who played. I have received a couple of requests for croquet on the other side of the city and not so far out of Birmingham. The committee are looking into this. Well done to everyone who played.





OUR ANNUAL CAROL SERVICE IS BACK!

ST MARTINS IN THE BULLRING

Saturday 9th December

11.00-12.00

This is a wonderful annual event enjoyed by many of you and your friends and family over the years.

- Please come along, enjoy the music, poetry, prayer and readings and the beauty of the church Christmas decorations.
- We are aiming to make this a more of a family friendly event so bring your grandchildren and others to join in the 'wishes for the world' event.
- Join in with singing the carols and listening to the University of the Third Age choir.
- Enjoy a drink, a mince pie or a piece of gingerbread and a chat afterwards



www.u3a.org.uk/

*Tickets available from your secretaries from November
or on the door.*

THE TRUSTEES CHALLENGE 2023

You've done it again! At the last AGM I asked you to make things for the Buddy Bag charity. I've had lots of messages asking for details of where and when to hand in your donations.



As it worked so well in 2022, I am accepting these at my house again this year from September 14th until October 31st. We encourage neighbouring WIs to contact each other and coordinate their efforts to deliver these to me, as this helps the WIs and the environment. My address is:

28 Vicarage Road
Yardley
Bham
B33 8PH

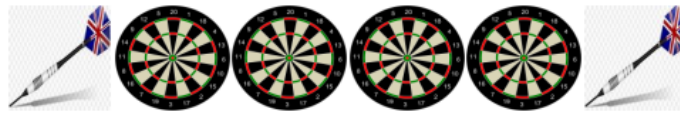


Please phone to arrange a drop off date and time. I'm in most evenings and part of days.
0121 784 7010 or 0794 326 4418

THANK YOU



WEST MIDLANDS FEDERATION OF WOMEN'S INSTITUTES



DARTS COMPETITION 2024

WANT TO HAVE FUN? TEST YOUR SKILL OR LUCK? THEN PLEASE REGISTER YOUR INTEREST IN THIS YEAR'S DARTS TOURNAMENT.

Teams of four are invited to register for this fun event, you can enter more than one team. Depending on the number of entries received the tournament will be based in local areas to reduce travelling cost.

The cost for teams is £8

**THE CLOSING DATE FOR ENTRIES IS FRIDAY 8TH DECEMBER 2023
WHEN THE TEAMS WILL BE DRAWN AND RULES SENT OUT.**

RETURN TO; JACKIE POYNER, 97 ST DENIS ROAD, SELLY OAK BIRMINGHAM B29 4JU BY
FRIDAY 8TH DECEMBER 2023

----- INSTITUTE WOULD LIKE TO ENTER ----- TEAMS
CHEQUE ENCLOSED FOR----- £8/PER TEAM, PAYABLE TO WMFWI.

PLEASE GIVE EMAIL ADDRESS OR ENCLOSE AN A5 SAE FOR RULES & DRAW
DETAILS

PLEASE GIVE NAME, EMAIL AND TELEPHONE NUMBER OF TEAM CAPTAIN,

----- TEL. NO. -----





Christmas Glass Mosaic Workshop

Select from ready cut pieces of stained glass, tile, and 3 embellishments to piece together a mosaic Christmas tree. Grouting and stand included.

Take finished piece home.

£35 per person approx. 2hrs

Limited places available.

Saturday 4th November 2023 at 10.30am

Curborough Hall Farm Countryside Centre Watery Lane, Lichfield WS13 8ES

Closing date Friday 27th October 2023

Cheques to be made payable to WMFWI and sent to Claire Woodland
21 Prospect Street, Ocker Hill, Tipton West Midlands DY4 0EE

Email: WMFWI.craft@gmail.com

No of places required _____ @£35 Total £_____

Contact email _____ at _____ WI
WEST MIDLANDS FEDERATION OF WOMEN'S INSTITUTES



Christmas Outing London Hyde Park Winter Wonderland Tuesday 21st November 2023



Join us on our Christmas outing to London Hyde Park.

Our Coach will take us directly to London and drop off at Hyde Park Winter Wonderland where you can stroll through the many attractions that includes 100 charming traditional wooden chalets, which will be sure to tempt you with unique gifts, traditional Christmas decorations and culinary delights.

Members can opt to do whatever takes their fancy either at the Christmas market, the fair or further afield such as a visit to Kensington Palace or shopping in Oxford St.

Please note pick up times will be early between 7.00 to 8.00am to ensure sufficient time to enjoy the day – we will depart at 4.00pm.

Members are required to book their own activities direct as entry is not included in the cost. Ticket cost vary from £5.00. Members can pay on the day or book online @ <https://hydeparkwinterwonderland.com/>

We will aim to arrive by 11 – 11.30am to enjoy the day and depart at 4.00pm.

Cost inclusive of coach, is **£23.00** (non-members welcome)

Closing date is 23rd October 2023

Pick Up points;

Allesley, Yardley, Solihull, Cotteridge, Halesowen, Walsall Wood, Mere Green, Boldmere
(Times to be confirmed)

[Please contact Kim Slivinski 07843 123748 if you would like to discuss other pick- up points](#)

WMFWI - Christmas Outing to London 23rd November 2023

Cheques to be made payable to WMFWI to – Jackie Poyner 97 St Denis Road, Selly Oak, B29 4JU by no later than 23rd October 2023

INSTITUTE _____ Require _____ tickets @ £23.00 =Total £_____ Pick up_____

please include a sae with your application and list name of applicants on the reverse of this slip

Refunds will not be issued for this event unless cancelled by the Federation



WMFWI ANNUAL FAMILY CHRISTMAS CAROL SERVICE



ST. MARTINS IN THE BULL RING

SATURDAY 9TH DECEMBER 2023

AT 11.00 AM



This years' service will include both traditional and non-traditional festive carols and music.

Please come with your families to celebrate the joys of Christmas.

Children will be given an opportunity to write a message or prayer to hang on the Christmas tree and take a gift from it.

This year we will be joined by the Kings Heath U3A choir.



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

Buy your Tickets on the door

Adults - £7

Children - £1

Refreshments after the service





200 Club 2024



Shares cost £5.00 each and the return will be £10.00 per monthly draw from **October 2023 – September 2024**. At the year end the minimum prize will be £100.00, so the more shares bought, the higher the prize.

The 200 Lottery Grand draw will take place at the Annual Meeting 2024.

Application forms together with stamped addressed envelope and cheque should be made payable to **WMFVI and** sent to the Federation Treasurer.

WMFVI Treasurer, Liz Galloway, 103 Middleton Hall Road, Kings Norton, Birmingham B30 1AG, to qualify for the first monthly draw in

October 2023.

GOOD LUCK – BE IN IT TO WIN IT!

200 CLUB 2023/4

Application form

I wish to purchase on behalf of

INDIVIDUAL _____

Address _____

Number of shares _____ at £5.00 each (Valid for one year to 31st August 2024)

cheque enclosed for £ _____ please enclose a **stamped addressed envelope.**

Signed _____

Further forms are available from Liz Galloway. (liz.galloway@hotmail.com)

IM/Fin/Oct 2023

