



Cog in the Tree

West Midlands Federation of Women's Institutes.



Words from the Trustees

As you may be aware , Cathryn Marsh stepped down as WMF Chair at the beginning of February. The Trustees want to thank her for all her hard work as Federation Chair,

March 2025

Trustee and WI Member and we all wish her well for the future. As a result the current line -up of the Board of Trustees is;



- Jackie Poyner (Bournville WI) - Chair, WI Adviser, jackiewmfwi@gmail.com
- Liz Galloway (Kings Norton WI) - Treasurer, wmtreasurer@icloud.com
- Claire Woodland (Victory Belles WI) - Chair of Craft, wmfwi.craft@gmail.com
- Dawn Statham (Victory Belles WI) - Safeguarding Officer dawnststham@talktalk.net
- Fiona Northey Quinton WI) - Trustee - quintonwi86@yahoo.com
- Lynda Gibbon (Harborne Village WI) - Chair of Public Affairs (Campaigns) and Resolutions, wmfwi.pa@gmail.com

Several of the above Trustees are also supporting other sub-committees, highlighting the need for members, according to their interests, to join some of these.

The West Midlands Federation now has a fabulous office space in the Jewellery Quarter, Birmingham. The office is a 3-minute walk from the Jewellery Quarter Station and has excellent public transport links for bus, tram, local and national trains. Follow this link to find out how easy it is to get to from your home or WI group address to the new WMFHQ. <https://journeyplanner.networkwestmidlands.com/>

We'll soon have the office ready to welcome WI members for a visit, have a look around and enjoy complementary refreshments and cake! Coming soon will be the opportunity to pre-book to enjoy small craft groups, and a host of inspiring activities and events.

Why not get in touch with one of the Trustees listed above to find out more about our plans and how you and your WI group can enjoy this space? For February 2025, all WI members have the opportunity to be a voting delegate with a free ticket to the NFWI Annual Meeting on 4 June 2025. You'll represent up to 4 WIs with support from the WM PA Committee with any 'techy' bits and pre-event information. Details of how to apply is available from your WI Secretary. Please get in touch if you would like more information. We love to hear from members and don't forget to showcase your WI in COG and inspire WI members across the region.

In this COG Issue

200 Club	P1
Your WI	P2
Rummikub	P3
Resolution Shortlist	P4
Forthcoming Events	P5
Herefordshire Federation	
Craft Groups	P5
International Women's Day	P5
Montgomery Shield	P6

February 2025 200 CLUB £10 WINNER

No.41 - Cathryn Marsh
Walmley WI



Four Oaks WI



The new year began with Max Keen entertaining us with his talk 'Pirates, the fact or the fiction'. Max made his entrance dressed as an 18th Century pirate. Pirates were of several nationalities, but most were French. Amongst British pirates was Midlander Captain Charles Johnson,

believed to be the author Daniel Defoe. Max dispelled myths, such as walking the plank, burying treasure and peg legs. They did fly the 'Jolly Roger flag' which originated from France. Eye patches preserved night vision and parrots were deemed suitable for sea. They had a pirate code of no gambling, all had a vote, lights out early, weapons kept in order. Desertion was punishable by death. With projected images, Max advised us that 8 reels made 1 Spanish dollar, hence pieces of eight. A pirate could receive up to 400 pieces of eight for his injuries. Pirates held to the superstition that wearing earrings warded off sickness. Each had a pistol in case they were marooned. Anybody captured by the pirates was branded with a 'P'. Pirates brought to justice were publicly executed in Wapping and their last written testimonies have become collectors items. 1650 was the era of powerful pirates throughout the Caribbean and West Africa. Port Royal in Kingston was their HQ. They drank rum laced with gunpowder and spent money on drink and women. Some famous pirates included Captain William Kidd who was executed in 1701, Black Beard who was decapitated in 1718 and a lady pirate called Anne Bonney who died in 1782 aged 80. Max concluded by telling us that Black Bart was the most successful pirate, however even he was defeated and this marked the ending of the golden age of piracy. An entertaining and informative talk as ever by Max.

Bournville WI



A change to the programme was swiftly covered by speaker Rob Booth, with postcards from Bournville. The monthly competition was for a plant success or disaster. Pat Finney, pictured, won with her Carob plant, certainly a plant that has risen from the seeds of adversity. **Photos; Pam Harthill.**

Balsall Heath & Moseley WI



BH&M welcomed Gill Binnie, of Moseley Society Local History Group, pictured with Secretary Pauline O'Rourke and President Karen Benjamin. Gill gave an informative talk regarding remarkable Moseley Women, such as Edith Blackwell Holden, author of "The Country Diary of an Edwardian Lady", photographer Lisel Hass, the Cadburys, and other residents such as Alice and Agnes Blackwell of Chantry Road. For more info see: [Local History – Moseley Society](#)
Lisa Blackburn



Great Barr WI



The ladies at Great Barr W.I. were slicing and dicing a topical fruit salad for their

monthly craft morning and even had a sneaky taste while people weren't looking! **Elaine Williams.**

Silhill WI

RUMMIKUB

Silhill WI meets at **The John Palmer Hall**, Union Road, Solihull, B91 3DG on the **Last Wednesday of every month at 10.00 a.m.** to play Rummikub.

Come and join us for a fun two hours, tea, coffee and biscuits included. £4 per session.

Rummikub is based on the game of Rummy but tiles are used instead of cards. There are four colours of tiles and each player picks 14 tiles from the bag. The aim is to get rid of all your tiles by laying them down in sets made up of at least three tiles, which can be either tiles of the same number in different colours or tiles of the same colour in a run of numbers. If you cannot lay down a set when it is your turn you have to pick another tile from the bag. The fun part is being able to add to or move sets which have been laid down to form new ones. It is quite addictive. **Heather Lewis**

Quinton WI



SHOW THE LOVE - As February is the month of The Climate Coalition and Show the Love campaigns, Quinton WI's committee presented members with a green heart envelope containing a heart shaped plantable paper with embedded seeds. The eco plantable paper is biodegradable made from paper waste- so NO trees are harmed, which couples well with the Climate Coalition theme. Combined with the green heart symbol; which is to inspire conversation and build relationships, members can look forward to sharing the growth of their seeds together, as well as supporting this important issue. **Quinton WI**



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

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

Hobbs Moat WI



Hobs Moat WI celebrated their 52nd anniversary in February with a cream tea at the ArdenHotel.



A very enjoyable afternoon was spent with good friends, laughter and a delicious array of cakes and sandwiches.

Linda Dance our president and Sue Whitlock our secretary presented raffle prizes to a few lucky members.

Pamela Stewart



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

Send your contributions, with your name, and WI name as title to:

COGMEDIAWMFWI@gmail.com

Next deadline: 17/03/25

Please send submissions by the above date 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.**

Resolution Shortlist

Every WI has now submitted their votes for the Resolution to be taken to the annual meeting in June. Results are below, in vote percentage order.

2024/25 Resolutions	Selections Received to Date	Percentage s
1 Bystanders can be lifesavers.	32667	36.2%
2 Let's talk about incontinence.	26168	29%
3 Eliminate landfill of medication packaging.	20844	23.1%
4 Join the repair revolution.	10633	11.8%
Total Selections Received	90312	

NFWI have arranged a resolution webinar, on the 22 April at noon to help members learn more about Bystanders can be Lifesavers. It is now to members to explore the successfully proposed resolution, and determine whether they support it, or not. Each WI has one vote, which their link delegate use at the annual meeting. More info. can be found on at [My WI | Resolution selection](#)



Herefordshire Federation Online Craft Groups

Herefordshire Federation have invited us to join their online craft sessions, held on Monday mornings, 10am – noon. The next one is 'Pysanka Easter' on 10th March, see below.

There is a nominal fee of £5.

10/03/2025 - Caroline	Pysanka Easter
17/03/2025 - Liz	Zentangle Samples
24/03/2025 - Jane	Easter Fun Flourishes
31/03/2025 - Felicity	Paper Roses

Find out more:

[Online Craft and Chat - Series Spring 2025 Tickets | TryBooking United Kingdom](#)

International Women's Day #1

Kings Heath BID and Queensbridge School are hosting an International Women's Day event, "Stronger Together" on Saturday 8th March, noon till 5pm.

Jess Phillips (MP) will open the event, there will be talks from Emma Round, (Activist and Public Speaker) and Charlie McNeill, (DJ & Public Speaker), the entrepreneurial women from bookshops The Heath Bookshop and How Brave is the Wren, workshops including brooch and perfume making, assertive communication, yoga, and much more.

Join them at Queensbridge School, Kings Heath, as they bring communities together to demand action and accelerate change.

Find out more and purchase tickets (just £4 adults and £2 minors at

[International Women's Day, hosted by Queensbridge and Enjoy Kings Heath Tickets, Sat 8 Mar 2025 at 12:00 | Eventbrite](#)

Forthcoming Events

08/03/25 -	International Women's Day
22/04/25 -	My WI Resolution Webinar at noon
07/05/25 -	NFWI online event, 12-1pm for International Women's Day; exploring the real-life consequences of misogyny.
08/05/25 -	VE Day 80 th Anniversary
10/05/25 -	County Show, Aldridge Church Hall
20/05/25 -	World Bee Day.
04/06/25 -	National Federation Annual Meeting

International Women's Day #2



The NFWI are calling for women to sign the UK Women's Charity Sector Petition,

calling for a National Women's Fund to support women and children.

They report that the UK Women's Charity Sector is experiencing an elevated risk of cuts and closures, across all areas, including rape crisis centres, refuges and trauma informed counselling. 1 in 3 have already been forced to close with many having already lost staff and funding.

Find out more here: [Speaking Up for Women campaign](#)

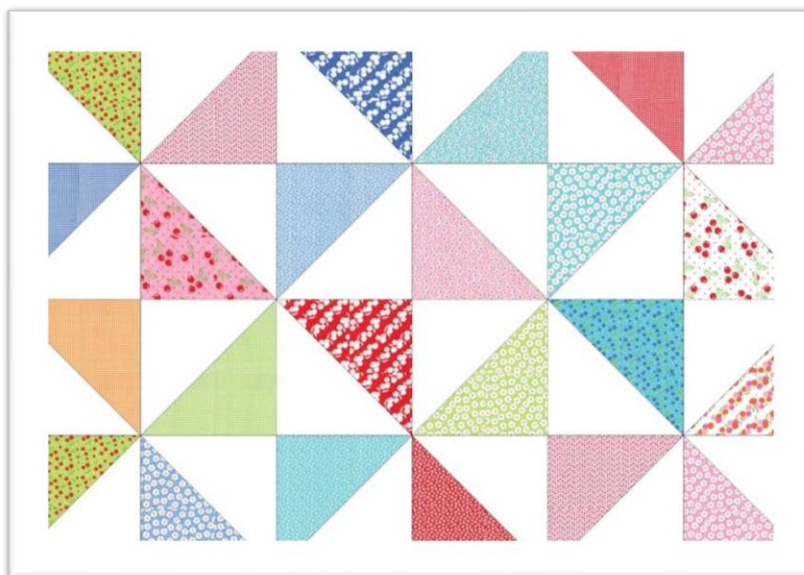
Sign the petition here: [Petition · We are calling for a National Women's Fund to support women and children. - United Kingdom · Change.org](#)



WEST MIDLANDS FEDERATION OF WOMENS' INSTITUTES

MONTGOMERIE SHIELD 2025

A "Twiddle" Patchwork Lap Quilt.



For the 2025 Montgomerie Shield Competition you are invited to make a patchwork lap quilt made of **cotton fabric** and decorate it with items that can be "twiddled" with.

The ideal size is approx. 30"x40" or bigger to sit comfortably on a lap.

The Patchwork design can be of any theme you wish and can be decorated, embroidered and appliqued to add more interest and showcase your skills. The finished item must include batting and backing.

Judging for the Montgomerie Shield will take place at the Annual Meeting in 2025.

Please advise Iris Montgomery of your intention to apply by June 30th 2025. Email irisemont@aol.com
Please note WIs can enter more than one entry if they wish.

GOOD LUCK!

Iris

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WMFWI Montgomerie Shield Competition 2025 – Lap Patchwork blanket

_____ WI

Will be submitting _____ Number of entries to the Competition

Closing date is 30th June 2025 for notifying Iris of your intention to enter the competition. Please bring Patchwork with you for display and judging on the day at the Annual Meeting.

