



Cog in the Tree

West Midlands Federation of Women's Institutes.



February 2024

Words from the Chair



As we embark on 2024, let me wish you all a Happy New Year and hope that everyone enjoyed the Festive Season.



Thank you for all the lovely Christmas Cards that were received.

In 1974 The West Midlands Federation was formed and 2024 is our 50th Anniversary Year. We are in the process of planning our Annual Meeting and other events to mark the occasion.

It was in 1974 that NFWI announced its decision to realign Federations with Local Authority Boundaries. The subscription was increased to £1:00, supported strongly by a person who said that having recently paid just over 27p for a small pork chop that the WI provided much more value than four pork chops!!!

One event that also took place that year shocked the City of Birmingham to its core; the Pub Bombings will forever be remembered.

Bagpuss, the children's television series aired for the first time.

The kidnap attempt on Princess Anne failed.

ABBA won the Eurovision Contest with the song "Waterloo".

Five previous all male Colleges at Oxford admitted women undergraduates for the first time.

Lord Lucan disappeared and the 9th James Bond film, The Man with the Golden Gun was released.

We now live in a very different world from 1974 and we have witnessed so many events and changes over the last 50 years but the one thing that has remained constant is the WI inspiring women countrywide

Best wishes, Cathryn

Forthcoming Events 2024

- 29/01 - The Colour Purple, Cinema Screening, Odeon New St
- 14/02 - Show the Love
- 08/03 - International Women's Day
- 09/03 - Million Women Rise March, Central London
- 27/04 - The WMFWI County Show – Bromwich Hall
- 31/05 - Friday Quiz, Aldridge Church Centre, 7pm.
- 10/06 - WMFWI member workshop with Friends of the Earth.

In this Cog Issue

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December 200 Club Winner

Chris Sears
Green Lane WI
 With no. 21



Your Festive WI

Great Barr WI



Great Barr W.I took part in a wreath making 3 hour wreath making class, 18 ladies attended, every wreath was different, & we all had a great time even when it came to tidying up!
Elaine Williams
Media Officer

Moseley & Balsall Heath WI



At BH&M Christmas meeting, we made wreaths, baubles and gift boxes; guessed the brands of chocolate log, and ate them with mince pies with mulled wine. Later in the month, some members went to see Peter Pan, at Hall Green Little Theatre.
Lisa Blackburn, BH&M



Newton WI



The ladies of Newton WI were asked by the staff of local hairdresser Root 46, if they could make a Christmas topper to display in their window. They created this wonderful topper, whilst also making the lovely Father Christmases they're holding above, into which can be put a Terry's chocolate orange.
Melanie Wisler, Newton



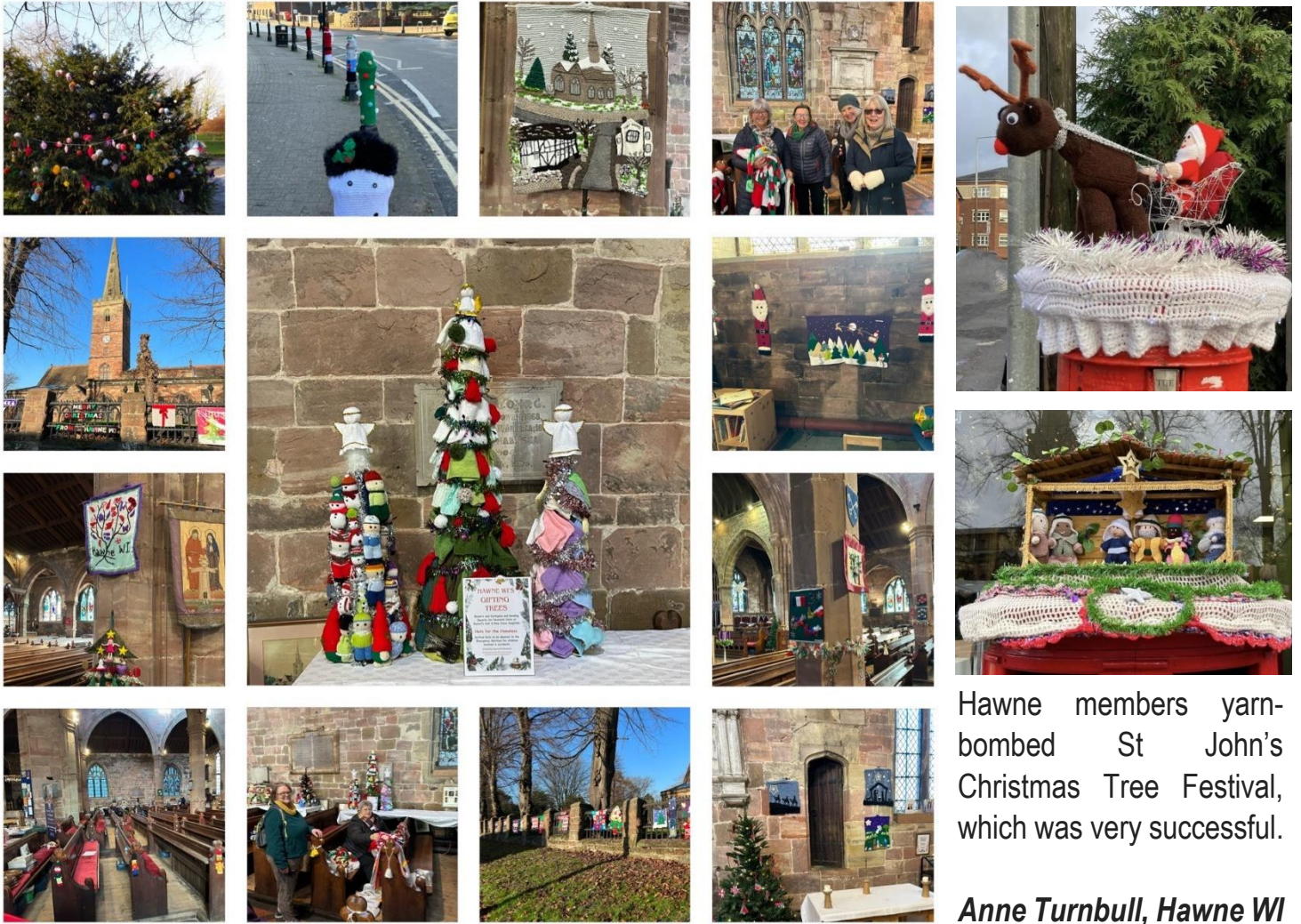
Boldmere WI



The ladies of Boldmere had a Christmas wreath making session.
Judy Holmes, Boldmere WI



Hawne WI



Hawne members yarn-bombed St John's Christmas Tree Festival, which was very successful.

Anne Turnbull, Hawne WI

Bournville WI



Bournville WI had a Christmas Party and singalong, led by Ian Casey. There was a competition for the best table decoration, won by the above table with their handmade baubles.



Your WI

Kings Norton WI



On Tuesday 16 January, Kings Norton Afternoon spent their first meeting of 2024 having a First Aid session led by Alan Lewis of the Red Cross, assisted by **Ann Adams**. This was a very informative and enjoyable afternoon, members were instructed in resuscitation techniques using the model 'Little Annie', how to put a person in the recovery position, use of a defibrillator; how to assist if someone is choking and what to look out for if you suspect someone of having a heart attack or stroke. I think everyone went home with a lot to think about!!

Liz Galloway, Kings Norton WI

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



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



Moseley & Balsall Heath WI



Balsall Heath and Moseley took part in a disco session led by Maria, Miss Physique, complete with flashing lights and funky moves to work off the cake. **Miss Physique** (pictured below with BH&M President **Helen Coulthard**) has been teaching dance for over forty years, and has worked with the stars. Fun was had by all trying different styles of dance, including Charleston

Lisa Blackburn, BH&M WI, above photo courtesy of Lynda Gibbon





“CONGRATULATIONS”

Berkswell WI member Innes Brett is celebrating 80 years as a WI member. In 1944 Innes joined her mother's WI in Hampshire during the war at the age of 15. A time of 'Make do and Mend.'

When Innes came to Berkswell to teach, the WI held afternoon meetings and she was able to join the meeting when school finished. When they were changed to afternoon and evenings Innes was able to become a full-time member in 1966.

Innes has served on the WI County Executive Committee, National Public Affairs Sub-Committee and held the position of West Midlands County Chairman 1995-1998. She is also a trustee of the WMFWI Educational Trust, a charity created after the closure of Knowle's WI, and the sale of its hut. It raised over £200000, which was ethically invested and is now available to offer cash grants for members of two years or more, to attend educational courses. She wrote a poem to raise awareness, and read it at the WMFWI conference.

She is delighted to be a member of a great organisation which benefits women of all ages and backgrounds.

Congratulations! What an achievement!

Innes' Trust Fund Poem

Madam Chairman and Members all
What a happy task to me befall
To explain to you as I must
The history and workings of the Trust
There once was a hut
Its troubles were not far to seek
With asbestos walls and gas that leaked
The poor old hut was up the creek
But its value lay, as it should
In the land on which it stood
The buyer chose a high price to pay
We could form the trust, it made our day
The money is here for you to use
Either in groups or in ones or twos
So, apply at once, give it a go
Where it might lead you never know
Maybe poetry isn't your thing
To read or say or even sing
Remember it's never too late
You could be the next poet laureate
Cooking, gardening, painting or sewing
Choose a course and just get going
Music, art, literature, history too
There must be a course just for you
Sally and Barbara and I too
Have all got forms just for you
So, apply at once, give it a go
Here's your chance, don't say no
Christmas time is nearly here
The joyful festival we hold so dear
Make decorations, join the race,
To make the world a more colourful place
And so dear friends, I end my song,
Please apply before too long.



Berkswell WI



Here's Innes again, along with her Berkswell WI peers, wearing orange to support 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence.

P Griffiths, Berkswell WI

Would you like to see your WI featured here?

Send your contributions to
COGMEDIAWMFWI@gmail.com

Next deadline: 10/02/23.

Please send submissions by the tenth of each month to guarantee 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, and documents as word documents. Please assist by using fonts Arial Narrow 14 for text, and Georgia 16 for headings.

Thank you all.

Lisa Blackburn, Editor.

ACWW – Associated Country Women of the World

We would like to thank all those who have contributed to and organised collections for ACWW. Empowerment of rural women in all of their diverse situations around the world is the focus of ACWW work. Donations to this fund will support projects and assist with advocacy, education and awareness-raising.

Many of you donate your odd few pennies at your meetings; just look at how they add up. In 2023 we announced at the WMFWI AGM a total collected of £1075.55. Your group secretary has a flyer detailing contributions. **Pamela Griffiths, ACWW Co-ordinator gives thanks on behalf of ACWW to you all.**

Editor's Pick – Show the Love



Valentine's day is fast approaching, and what better way to celebrate than avoiding commercialism and showing our love for the environment. These adorable patchwork & felt hearts are easy to make and have patterns available on the MYWI website, link below. I like that even without a special someone, we can still celebrate February 14th!

[My WI | Patchwork Hearts \(thewi.org.uk\)](http://thewi.org.uk)



West Midlands Campaign Corner

WI members can contact the Public Affairs Committee by emailing wmfwi.pa@gmail.com


The Public Affairs Committee is a small, enthusiastic group of WI members representing the region who are seeking out opportunities to engage in WI national campaigns and share these with members across the region.

We meet once every two months (six meetings a year) for 90 minutes, on Zoom. If you'd like to get more involved, please email us. We'd love to hear from you.


Here's our starter list for 2024:




Take a trip on a local scheduled bus route. March / April 2024

	<p>The West Midlands Mayoral election takes place in May 2024. In some areas bus services are limited or have ceased. Take a trip on a local bus, take photos and capture stories from your bus journey. Send in your photos with a short narrative and we'll collate these to share with mayoral candidates ahead of the election, to lobby for better bus services for women across the region.</p> <p>Is there an iconic bus route to try near you?</p>
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Million Women Rise, Central London. Saturday 9th March 2024

	<p>Part of a global event, Million Women Rise (MWR) is a women-only march and rally against violence against women. NFWI hosts a WI members pre-meet with panel discussion from 10.00hrs. For more information email wmfwi.pa@gmail.com</p>
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WI member workshop with Friends of the Earth. Monday 10th June 2024. 10.30hrs- 12.30hrs

	<p>FIRST ANNOUNCEMENT: We have 45 places for WI members from across the region to join us for this FREE workshop in Birmingham City Centre at Friends of the Earth HQ in Digbeth.</p> <p>Led by Friends of the Earth campaigners we'll hear about their successes with climate and environmental campaigns and actions. WI members can share their local initiatives and we can be inspired with relevant craftivism projects. Please email wmfwi.pa@gmail.com to express interest in attending. Please include the name of the member who would like to attend and the name of the WI group.</p>
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Resolution Reminder

Members have **until 11 February 2024** to decide which resolution they support the most and return their selection slip to their federation. Find out more [here](#). (MYWI online)

The Resolutions are: 1) Dental Health Matters; 2) Impacts of poor housing conditions; 3) Say no to gambling advertising; 4) Improving outcomes for Women in the Criminal Justice System.



West Midlands Federation of Women's Institutes



On Friday 31st May 2024 at 7pm

At

Aldridge Church Centre

14 The Green, Aldridge, Walsall WS9 8NH

Each team to consist of up to four members from your WI

Each WI may enter more than one team

Cost £24.00 per table to include coffee/tea and cakes

Supporters welcome at a cost of £4.00 to cover refreshments payable on the door.

Closing date 10th May 2024 using the tear off form below with a cheque payable to WMFWI

Federation Quiz – Friday 31st May 2024

Please return to Jackie Poyner, 97 Denis Road, Selly Oak, B29 4JU by no later than 10th May 2024

WI _____ Requires _____ Tables @ £24.00 each

REMITTANCE CHEQUE ENCLOSED PAYABLE TO WMFWI £ _____

