



Cog in the Tree

West Midlands Federation of Women's Institutes.



Words from the Chair

Christmas and New Year celebrations now seem a distant memory. The decorations have come down and been packed away but before we know where we are we will be getting them all out again!

February 2025



The last WI event of 2024 was the Christmas Celebration held at St Martins in the Bull Ring. Despite the appalling weather several WI members braved the elements and attended the event which was a joyous occasion. There were Carols, Readings and Christmas songs followed by Sherry and Mince Pies.

On Tuesday 7th January the Board of Trustees and several WI members attended the Funeral of Judy Massam. The service was a celebration of Judy's amazing life. Judy joined the WI over 40 years ago and singing Jerusalem at her funeral epitomised Judy's dedication to the WI.

As we move forward into 2025 the WMFWI starts a new chapter in its 50-year history with the acquisition of an Office in the Jewellery Quarter. Since the closure of the Church Road Office all Trustee meetings and Sub-committee meetings have been held in the homes of the Board of Trustees. Now that we have the premises in the Jewellery Quarter which is easily accessible by public transport links, we hope that this will open up an opportunity for members to consider joining the Board of Trustees or one of the Sub-committees.

Best wishes

Cathryn



Has your WI received their **£250 50th Anniversary Gift** from the West Midlands Federation? If not, please contact Treasurer Liz Galloway at wmtreasurer@icloud.com asap.

200 CLUB £10 WINNER

January 2025

Val Williams of Streetly Evening WI with No. 24.

December 2024

Janet Sharp of Olton WI with No.98

There are still numbers available (from wmtreasurer@icloud.com) you have to be in it to win it!

In this COG Issue

200 Club	P1
Your 2024 Round-up	P2
Your 2025 WI	P5
EP1* - Film	P4
Events	P6
EP2 - Online Craft Groups	P7
EP3 - HPV Focus Group	P8

*EP = Editor's Pick



Your WI 2024 Christmas Round-up

Balsall Heath & Moseley WI



BH&M's December meeting involved mince pie & cream liqueur taste testing! We liked the Lidl variant liqueur, over M&S, the main brand Baileys, & Aldi variants. We had mulled wine too, whilst making wreaths and various Christmas

ornaments. We had great fun and a decorative Christmassy craft completed. Our Bookclub also had a small party with a charity shop secret santa gift of £5. A fun win for all as well as the charity. **Lisa Blackburn**



Green Lane WI



45th Birthday Celebrations

Green Lane WI celebrated their 45th birthday in early November with a lovely

meal at a local pub attended by almost everyone. At our November meeting we enjoyed a needle felting workshop and made some lovely Robin Christmas Tree decorations. We had a slice of lovely cake made by one of our committee members and drank a glass of bubbles! Everyone had a great time enjoying the fellowship and fun.

Belinda Piasecki – Secretary GLWI



Bournville WI

Bournville WI paid their beans and brought a giant of a panto into their December meeting! Auntie Jen Productions gave an entertaining rendition of Jack and the Beanstalk. Enjoyed by all, oh yes it was! Check out their other productions at [- Auntie Jen Productions](https://www.auntiejenproductions.co.uk)



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

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



Berkswell WI



Berkswell WI held a very successful and



enjoyable Christmas Wreath Workshop in December with members taking home their beautiful Wreaths. Thank you to the Educational Trust!
Pamela Griffiths, President.

Great Barr WI

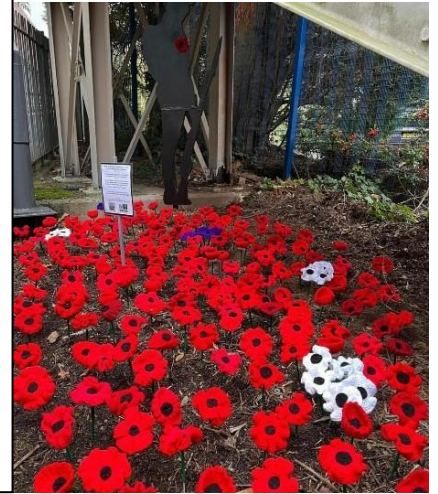


At the craft morning Great Barr W.I. had a choice of making a candle Christmas cake or a flower arrangement. With their usual flair, and lots of chat and laughter, the crafters produced some wonderful results. **Elaine Williams**



Boldmere WI

Our Craft Group made two hundred poppies for display at Wylde Green Station for Remembrance Day. Knitted and attached to sticks they look wonderful.



Above: Thirty Boldmere members went to the College of Food in Birmingham for a Christmas Lunch. Below: Members enjoyed a Christmas Wreath Workshop. Bottom: Book Group met for our Christmas meeting and one member gave us all a Santa Bottle with a gift inside.
Patricia Platt & Judy Holmes



Four Oaks WI



Christmas came early to Four Oaks W.I when we were entertained by vocalist Becky Gosling. Becky began by singing 'Let it Snow', sharing how much she loves musicals, songs from the 1950's, 60's and 70's. She was looking forward to starring in a Carpenters musical at Sutton Coldfield Town Hall in 2025 and gave us a taste of the show with their hits, 'Mr Postman' and 'Close to you'.

Then a change of tempo with 'Mamma Mia', 'Crocodile Rock' and 'Pretty Woman'. The songs were all interspersed with humorous anecdotes, observations and audience participation. Songs from the 50's were 'Lipstick on your collar', 'Jail house Rock' and 'My boy lollipop'. Moving onto the next decade, Becky began with 'Walking back to happiness', 'When I saw her standing there' and 'You can't

hurry love'. She prompted us to join in with hearty laughs from 'Delilah' at the right moments. Becky chatted about her theatre work at The Acoustic Lounge in Lichfield. After singing 'Kissing in the back row' from 1974, we were all encouraged to get up and dance, to special requests which Becky duly sang.



The final meeting of the year was the Christmas Party and after an excellent lunch members took part in Bingo, a beetle drive and photos show us all enjoying 'Pass the Parcel' with forfeits and doing all the actions to the 'Twelve days of Christmas'. Ho Ho Ho! **Sue Richards**

Editor's Pick #1 -Film

Those of you who visited Waddesdon Manor last year may enjoy the opening sequences of the film "Back in Action" starring Cameron Diaz, Jamie Foxx and Glenn Close. A fun family action spy thriller. Just released (January 2025) on Netflix.



Hockley Heath WI



Hockley Heath WI enjoyed a lovely Christmas meal at The Wilson Arms, Knowle. President Louise *front right*.



Above left: Hockley Heath WI Christmas Post-box topper and Right: WI stall at the Village Christmas Fair. Below: Our Bench Christmas decorations, knitted by members, with Ann Bolton & Sue Palfreyman showing there is still enough room for two small bottoms to sit on the bench 😊! Photo taken by Jackie Mellows.

Pat Rhodes



Above: Christmas Party in the Baptist Church Hall.

Knowle WI



Knowle WI enjoyed Christmas lunch at the Drum & Monkey, Dorridge. **Stephanie Withers**

Kings Norton Afternoon WI



In the photo from left to right:
Irene Ingram,
Elizabeth Trout,
Susan West,
and Sally Saunders.

Kings Norton PM WI had fun playing lawn games at their Christmas Party.

Geraldine Wall



Bournville WI



Bournville had a visit from Marie from the Scrapstore, pictured left, with Margaret, our President. She brought lots of crafting items for our crafting session (bottom picture) that would otherwise have been discarded.

The Scrapstore Birmingham collects and sorts materials, or scrap, donated by individuals and businesses for redistribution to individuals and organisations supporting play and

creativity. Prices in the shop are based on suggested donation.

Marie demonstrated some of the amazing things they had made, such as this life-size turtle (right) from discarded packaging wool, and talked of the community groups they run to support local children and adults. Now you know where to take the surplus wool from that UFO (Un-Finished Object) cluttering your space. Or where to find some more for your next project!

Find out more, help communities, and reduce, reuse, recycle at: [Birmingham Playcare Network](#)

Lisa Blackburn



The Scrapstore opening hours:

Tues - Fri (10am - 4pm) &
1st and 3rd Saturdays of the month (10am - 2pm).

Birmingham Playcare Network,
Hollymoor Centre,
8 Manor Park Grove, Birmingham B31 5ER

Forthcoming Events

11/02/25 - HPV online focus group 7-8pm
(see p8)

02/03/25 - Let's Dance launch. 

10/05/25 - County Show, Aldridge Church Hall

04/06/25 - National Federation Annual Meeting



Balsall Heath and Moseley WI



BH&M member Janet Collins, (*second left*), also a member of the local Weavers, Spinners and Dyers guild, led the January meeting. She encouraged members to try weaving with three different looms, two of her own and one from the guild, which seemed to require great skill. Janet is also sporting a beautiful scarf, woven by herself using these looms.

All group members were able to create a woven picture of their own, using a piece of card, a wrap-around warp and a pictured card cut into weft pieces. The results were very effective. *See below right.*

If you're interested in more information about joining the Weavers, Spinners and Dyers Guild, please do explore the website: [AGWSD: Association of Guilds of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers](http://AGWSD.org.uk) . **Lisa Blackburn**



Editor's Pick #2 - 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 'Zen Spring' on 3rd February, see right. There is a nominal fee of £5, or all ten for £25 (though the first was the 27th Jan).

Find out more:

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

27/01/2025	Felicity	Snowdrop Cards
03/02/2025	- Liz	Zen Spring
10/02/2025	- Alice	Watercolour Llamas
17/02/2025	- Felicity	Paper Hearts
24/02/2025	- Caroline	St David's Day Button
03/03/2025	- Andrea	Spring Sewing
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



Monkspath WI

Sixteen members of Monkspath WI went to the Emma Bridgewater pottery factory in Stoke-on-Trent for a "Factory Experience" on 14 January. We had a private guided tour of the factory, going through the labyrinth of departments where skilled craftsmen/women create each piece of pottery by hand. On average, 30 pairs of hands touch each piece during the process. (Picture to the right demonstrates sponge painting technique.)



We then had a training session in the Decorating Studio where we learned sponge-painting techniques as we decorated our own piece of pottery. Pictured left: Learning to apply paint to the sponges; Jan Ball, Sylvia McGregor, Dot Emm and Pam Pooley (clockwise, from lower left).

The day ended with an Afternoon Tea, served on pottery by Emma Bridgewater, of course!

This experience would not have been possible without

a generous grant from the WMFWI Educational Foundation. As Emma Bridgewater (CBE) has been selected as a speaker at the June National AGM, National AGM, we hope more WI's will apply to the Foundation for funding for this very interesting, fun and educational adventure.

Pictured right are Star Quick, Val Perks, Eileen Banks. **Marylou Jeffs**



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: 10/02/25

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.**

Editor's Pick #3 -HPV

HPV Self-Sampling Online Focus Group

HPV = Human Papillomavirus. HPV is a major factor in the cause of cervical cancer, for which we have the dreaded smear test.

The WI are hosting an online focus group on at-home smear tests on Tuesday 11th February 19:00 – 20:00h. Join in to voice your thoughts on how the WI should respond to the government's consultation on HPV screening via self-sampling. Register your interest here: [My WI | Online Event: Share your views on HPV Self-Testing](#)

