



Cog in the Tree

West Midlands Federation of Women's Institutes.



June 2024

Words from the Chair



June 6th 2024 marks the 80th Anniversary of the D-Day Landings in Normandy and I am sure that many of us have members of our family who were involved in that amazing operation either at home or in France.



My father-in-law was one of those who landed on the beaches of Normandy. He never talked about that time apart from occasionally mentioning "going over the top" saying how so many did not make it and we never knew the name of the beach on which he landed. He was one of the fortunate ones who returned home. The home they returned to was very different from the one that many of them left in 1939.

In 1939 UK Farmers urged us to "Dig for Victory". Lady Denman was concerned that in their anxiety to help in a time of national crisis that WIs should not lose sight of their peacetime function; their efforts to improve country life should not cease. WIs were urged to continue

with their activities. It was noted that all groups of markets with the exception of WI market stalls showed a reduction in turnover. However, some WI meetings were stopped but started up again. In the book "Bows of Burning Gold", it refers to that in 1939 Solihull WI commented, "We all felt so much happier for being together and talking with friends once more".

Here we are 80 years on from D-Day and the WI is still doing what it has always done. As one member said "The WI gives the warmth of friendship, the sharing of laughter, the opportunity of widening horizons, together with strength and unity gained by being part of a group of women at local and national level".

This was true of our first "County Show" which was a huge success and epitomised what the WI is all about. It was a very cold and blustery day but a wonderful time was had by all.

We hope that those of you attending the 50th Anniversary Afternoon Tea at the Hyatt Hotel on Thursday 27th June will have an equally wonderful time being together, talking and laughing with friends but without the cold and blustery wind!!!!

Best wishes, Cathryn".

200 Club £10 April Winner
Veronica Bentley,
President of Monkspath



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CHARITY NUMBER 1012552, REG.COMPANY NO. 2723008



Your WI

Berkswell WI



Berkswell WI held a celebration tea to celebrate **Innes Brett**, pictured left, being a member of the Women's Institute for eighty years. It was enjoyed by all members and Innes! The special cake was made by Berkswell WI member, **June Smitten**.

Pamela Griffiths,
President
Berkswell WI

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



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

Great Barr WI

The ladies from Great Barr W.I. were busy making pots of colour for their monthly craft morning. We also decided to be creative in placing the pots, but unfortunately, we didn't have enough pots to finish the initial so one of our ladies became the I (in W.I.) thank you Lesley.

Elaine Williams, Media officer



Balsall Heath & Moseley WI



BH&M WI had fun ballroom dancing with dance teacher Joan Jones. Pictured are **Patricia Kilday** and **Pauline O'Rourke** learning to waltz. Joan runs dance classes on Sundays & Tuesdays at E57 club on the Alcester Road. **Lisa Blackburn, BH&M WI**

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Newton WI



Newton WI were winners at the Bromwich Hall County Show. 1st in the "3D Group Showcase, Nursery Rhyme"; members of Newton Craft club created the Lion and the Unicorn tableau, pictured right. Prize-winners below were left to right, **Wendy Brown**, 1st prize for her Homemade 50th Federation Anniversary Card; 1st also to **Hazel Bridgewood** for a Traditional Victoria Sponge and 2nd prizes were awarded to **Sue Bubb** for Chutney and **Linda Marsh** for six Cup Cakes. Linda Marsh is missing from the photo as she took her



Cupcakes to be sold and enjoyed by WI members at the show.



Despite it being very cold and windy, we were able to enjoy an interesting day of meeting and chatting to other WIs.

Melanie Wisher, Newton WI



Walsall Woods WI



Walsall Woods WI (pictured above) had an afternoon of fun with glue, aprons and a hairdryer! Accompanied by much laughter, members created a wall plaque using decoupage as a decoration method. Everyone was really proud of their creations. **Sue Laws, President, Walsall Woods WI**

Boldmere WI



Boldmere WI had a good day at the County Show, enjoying the experience of organising setting up the marquee and stall. On display were items members have made, including crafts produced at workshops and examples of their charity work, such as items for premature babies. **Judy Holmes, Boldmere W.I.**

Editor's pick #1: This month our footer celebrates the Summer Solstice, the longest day, on Thursday June 20th. Free access to Stonehenge is available, built to align to the sun on the solstices. [Summer Solstice 2024 | English Heritage \(english-heritage.org.uk\)](#)

Forthcoming Events 2024

- 10/06 - Friends of the Earth workshop - cancelled
- 21/06 - Quiz – Shirley Community Centre, 7pm
- 27/06 - WMFWI 50th Anniversary Afternoon Tea
- 28/06 - Deadline for Valerie Daggatt competition
- 18/07 - Croquet at Kenilworth
- 28/09 - Skittles at Hockley Heath
- 05/10 - Skittles at Aldridge
- 21/11 - Christmas at Waddesdon

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

Send your contributions, with your name, to COGMEDIAWMFWI@gmail.com

Next deadline: 10/06/24

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*

Editors pick #2 – Our 2023 campaign for clean rivers is ongoing with the recently held webinar now available to watch at [My WI | Clean Rivers webinar: Recording available \(thewi.org.uk\)](#)

EP#3 World Refugee Day, June 20th. Let us consider how we may help those fleeing conflict.

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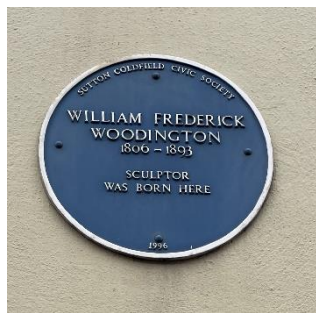


Great Barr WI



Ladies from Great Barr decided to take a trip from Scott Arms to Sutton Coldfield on a number 5 bus stopping at some places of interest. The bus enabled us to make the trip a social occasion. The first stop was at Kingstanding to look at the Mecca bingo hall. It was originally an Odeon cinema built in 1935 to serve the new housing estate, comprising 6,700 council houses. It was built by Harry Weedon and Cecil Clavering to a symmetrical, modernist, art deco design inspired by the Lichtburg cinema in Berlin. The first film shown was 'The Lives of a Bengal Lancer' starring Gary Cooper. The cinema closed in 1962 with 'To Hell and Back'

starring Audie Murphy. The building was refurbished and opened as a Top Rank Bingo Club.



It was given Grade-II listed building status by English Heritage in 1980 and is described as "one of the best surviving examples of Odeon cinemas in Britain". The second stop was the Beggars Bush pub where a beggar breathed his last



breath under a hawthorn bush.

*In Sutton, as we walked to the Town Hall, we saw a blue plaque to William Frederick Woodington 1800 - 1893, sculptor, on the side of the Three Tuns pub where he was born.



The Sutton Coldfield War memorial was erected in 1922, and commemorates the 510 young men of Sutton Coldfield lost to the 1st and 2nd World Wars.

Sutton Town Hall's initial structure goes back to 1865 as the Royal Hotel because it was a short distance from the railway station but after 30 years it closed because of financial difficulties. In 1896 Lieutenant Colonel Wilkinson purchased the hall and 10 years later it re-opened as Sutton Coldfield's Town Hall. After 68 years Sutton was absorbed into Birmingham and once again the Hall closed. Part of it was sold off for flats and the remainder was taken on by a committee formed of local Suttonians and transformed it into a theatre. Over its years the Hall has



been a hotel, hospital, theatre, meeting place for councillors and even a fire station.

After this it was a visit to pub for lunch. **Janet Parkes, Great Barr WI**

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Upcoming Events from The Arts & Activities Group

Please note - CANCELLED

The Public Affairs Friends of the Earth Workshop – 10/6/24– has been cancelled.



Valerie Daggatt Cup For Creative Writing 2024

Members are invited to submit a piece of writing
(no more than 1,000 words), in any style including a story or poem.

The subject for this year is "Inspiration"

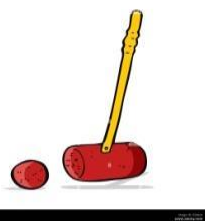
Closing Date for Entries Friday 28th June

Thursday 18th July 2024.

Cost £12/person

Croquet at Kenilworth Lawn Tennis Club

Crackley Lane, CV8 2JS



Skittles at Hockley Heath Saturday 28th September, with fish and chip supper. Cost £12.00

Skittles at Aldridge Church Centre Saturday 5th October with fish and chip supper. Cost £12.00

Thursday 21st November 2024.

Opportunity to explore the house and visit the Christmas Market. Please see flyer for more details.

For more information on any of these events please contact:

Jackie Poyner 07503095852.

jackie.poyner@btopenworld.com

