



# Cog in the Tree

## West Midlands Federation of Women's Institutes.



### Words from the Chair

Welcome to the April edition of the CoG.

April 2025

Its been a busy month for the Trustees as we organise the new office premises. Lots of boxes to unpack and tidying up to do in preparation to host some small craft events, training sessions and other activities.

It's a busy time for your WIs as you prepare for your Annual Meeting in April and May. Please let me know if there are any changes to your Committee so I can keep the contact lists up to date. On the subject of Annual Meetings there are still places available for NFWI Annual Meeting on Wednesday 4th June - your secretaries have all the information . Advance notice that WMF AM will be on Saturday 4th October at the Hyatt Hotel in Birmingham. Preparations are well on the way and further details will be circulated soon.

Another WMF event approaching is the County Show on Saturday 10th May at Aldridge Church Centre, The Green, Aldridge, Walsall, West Midlands, WS9 8NH. 10am - 4pm. The theme of this year's crafting competitions is Alice in Wonderland, the schedule for this is with your secretary. There will be stalls featuring handmade and vintage items, plant sales, craft demonstrations, WI displays, refreshments and entertainment. Please come along, bring a friend and enjoy a great day out.

*Jackie Poyner*, Federation Chair.



### Editor's Pick – Webinars

NFWI have organised a webinar to mark **Autism Acceptance and Awareness Month**, inviting three speakers who understand the impact of neurodiversity combined with menopause. The date has not yet been revealed, but if this interests or affects you, sign up to receive details at [My WI | Autism awareness](#).

If the **Resolution** process is of interest to you, learn more about this year's resolution at a Webinar on the 22<sup>nd</sup> April. The Resolution to be voted upon is **Bystanders can be Lifesavers**. Register here to find out more: [My WI | Join our Resolution Webinar in April](#)

Eid and Mother's Day are almost here, along with the clocks moving forward, all on 30<sup>th</sup> March! We'd love to know how you celebrate these events? What is your WI doing to celebrate Easter? Perhaps you're about to have your AGM? Have you been involved in the Great British Spring Clean? Don't forget to send in your wonderful pictures to the COG, (details on P4).

Happy Eid, Mother's Day, 30<sup>th</sup> March and Easter to all! *Lisa*.



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### March 2025

**200 Club £10 Winner**

**Number 80  
Rosamund Lucock  
Newton WI**



## Hobbs Moat WI



Above: The members of Hobbs Moat committee enjoyed a luncheon at Newlands Bishop Farm. The members of Hobs Moat WI have for the past year been putting their loose change in a collection bucket to support Newlands Bishop Farm, which supports people with learning disabilities and mental health conditions with the opportunity to learn work-based skills. Below: Joan Everill (seated) Evey Hutty, (left) and President Linda Dance presented a £150 to the farm's Manager, Danny Adams. **Pamela Blattner**



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

## Bournville WI

Birmingham born Quaker, and cousin of George Cadbury, Anthony Barlow, gave a talk entitled 'Conscientious Objector'. He shared the experience of his parents, Ralph and Joan Barlow, of their involvement as Quakers with the Friends Ambulance Unit, which treated wounded civilians and soldiers on both sides of the conflict during the Second World War. Their story was revealed by means of their letters. Antony is pictured below with member Lesley Killingsworth, and a copy of his book, "An Exacting Mistress" his nickname for the Friend's Ambulance Unit.

**Lisa Blackburn**



## Forthcoming Events

- 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<sup>th</sup> Anniversary
- 10/05/25 - County Show, Aldridge Church Hall
- 20/05/25 - World Bee Day.
- 04/06/25 - National Federation Annual Meeting
- 04/10/25 - West Midlands Federation Annual Meeting

WMFVI, 95 Spencer Street, Jewellery Quarter  
B18 6DA, Telephone: 07503 085852  
CHARITY NUMBER 1012552, REG.COMPANY 2723008



## Balsall Heath & Moseley WI

BH&M WI have not been phased by rubbish in the Birmingham Bin Strike - the Re-use your Refuse session had members crafting from items that would perhaps have made it into the dustbin. **Pictured right**, we're making new greetings cards from ribbons saved from wrapping and old cards.

**Below:** BH&M President Karen Benjamin is modelling her no-sew bag, made from an old t-shirt, by cutting off the sleeves, cutting a scoop for the neck then fringing and knotting the bottom.



**Right:** holey socks and odd ones disappeared into these woven



coasters/pan holders. Using looms home made from art canvas available at craft/bookshops, the socks were cut into loops to create a weft through which loops from a different sock were woven. When the weaving was completed, the ends were crocheted off to form attractive mats. We are now guaranteed to find their missing partners when next we do laundry!



**Right:** who knew that the inside of tomato puree tubes could produce such beautifully embossed leaves and acorns ready to ornament cards or other crafts?



There was also the option to make jugs and scoops from plastic milk bottles, and lanterns from drinks cartons.

**Left:** some members were further inspired to make more cards to raise funds for the charity Headway, organised by Janet Collins, whose neighbour has suffered a devastating head injury.

This month, bookclub members have been reading **The Fell**, by Sarah Moss, a fiction based in a time of covid isolation. Most enjoyed the book, scoring it 8/10, with a mean average of 6.5.

**Lisa Blackburn**



## Berkswell WI



Berkswell WI held an excellent Antiques Valuation Evening with Will Farmer valuing items of glass and china brought by visitors followed by a Ploughman's Supper. Enjoyed by all. Pictured are left to right, Innes Brett, Will Farmer and **Pamela Griffiths, President Berkswell WI.**

### 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](mailto:COGMEDIAWMFWI@gmail.com)  
Next deadline: 10/04/25

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.**

Congratulations to West Midland's ambassadors **Dickens & Forshaw Heath** for their contribution in WI Life (March, P19) supporting the 'Not in my Name' campaign as part of 16 days of Activism.

## The County Show



Hello all,

The County Show is getting ever nearer, have you prepared your entry yet?

Competitions are open to all members as individuals whether you are an expert crafter or Baker, or just starting out and wanting to try something new. Why not throw caution to the wind and have a go!

The group entry requires several members to work together to create a 3D showcase, this takes a little planning but can be so much fun. Check out the Show Schedule and let your creativity flow.

All WIs are invited to take a table/space for fundraising/recruitment purposes. If you don't want to take part but would like to visit you can do that too. You can expect to find a wide variety of stallholders selling all kinds of goods. Craft demonstrations will be on view from some stallholders.

The show is dependent on members participation, so please join in the fun. We look forward to seeing you all there.

To register your entries or book a table space please email [wmfwi.craft@gmail.com](mailto:wmfwi.craft@gmail.com)

TTFN, **Claire**

**Chair of Craft**



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