



Cog in the Tree

West Midlands Federation of Women's Institutes.



Words from the Chair



October 24



I hope that everyone enjoyed the summer break and that most people were able to enjoy a holiday despite the unsettled weather. Now here we are heading towards Autumn. It is amazing how quickly it has crept upon us. The leaves are changing colour and beginning to fall, the nights are drawing in and there is definitely chill in the air.

We are almost at the end of another Federation year and as I am typing this, I am thinking of all the preparations that are going on for our 50th Annual Meeting on Monday 7th October. Everyone on the Board of Trustees has been working very hard to make it a memorable event worthy of the West Midlands Federation and we hope that many of you will be there to join us on this special occasion.

October also brings with it the Resolution Selection process; soon we will be selecting the Resolutions from the many that are submitted every year.

The one that is finally decided upon will form the next Campaign to be adopted for 2025/2026. Over the years the WI has been at the forefront of calling on the government to support a variety of Resolutions that have been adopted by the WI in the hope of making a change to the world in which we live. During the 20th and 21st century the WI has consistently urged the Government to act on numerous issues and those campaigns are still being supported today.

In this month's edition of WI Life, we are celebrating "70 Years of Keep Britain Tidy". The slogan in 1954 was "Please Take Your Litter Home". At the 1954 Annual Meeting, WI Delegates passed a Resolution "to inaugurate a campaign to preserve the countryside against desecration by litter". The Campaign was led for 19 years by Lady Brunner and now in its 70th year, "Keep Britain Tidy" is one of the WIs most enduring successes. The "Keep Britain Tidy" campaign grows ever more crucial as we face new environmental challenges and WIs are continuing to face those challenges with our Campaign "Clean Rivers for People and Wildlife".

As Autumn moves us towards the Winter months and towards Christmas, we have one more celebration to end this, our 50th Anniversary year. We have our Christmas Celebration at St Martins in the Bull Ring on Saturday 7th December. The theme is "Inspiration" which has been our theme for the year and what better way to end the year than moving forward into 2025 following in the footsteps of many inspirational women who have gone before and paved the way for the WI we have today.

Cathryn



In this COG Issue

Your WI News	P2
200 Club	P6
Campaign Corner	P7
Clean Rivers	P7
Forthcoming Events	P7
Christmas Carols	P8



Your WI News

Bournville WI



Bournville WI returned from the summer break with plans for their Autumn Fair, and a quiz! The winning team members, pictured from left, Ann Mort, Barbara Green, Ellen Hayes, Vanda Kelly and Pat Finney. **Lisa Blackburn**



Hobbs Moat WI



In July Hobs Moat WI enjoyed an evening of line dancing, Pat was our superb instructor who inspired all members to join in. It was an amazing evening's entertainment of fun, laughter and exercise. It truly was a night to remember. **Pamela Blattner**

Quinton WI



Quinton members went to a cocktail master class in Birmingham, at All Bar One. We were guided through by an expert bartender, who took us through the concept of mixology and key techniques of cocktail making.

It was soon our turn at mixing, shaking and stirring to create our very own tasty cocktails; a Long Island Tea and a Porn-Star Martini. Afterwards we sat back to savour our products and a meal together. A grand social occasion with fun, laughter and was enjoyed by all!

Nicola Lambert, Quinton WI

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CHARITY NUMBER 1012552, REG.COMPANY NO. 2723008



Packwood & Bentley Heath WI



Members of Packwood and Bentley Heath WI spent a lovely August afternoon visiting the Sunflower Fields at Becketts Farm, Wythall. A wander among the glorious flowers was followed by a delicious cream tea. Members also took the opportunity to visit the well-stocked farm shop with all its various gifts and food goodies on offer. A very pleasant afternoon which was enjoyed by all.



This year we have also celebrated our 25th birthday with refreshments and a birthday cake, expertly cut by our President Judith Holmes!

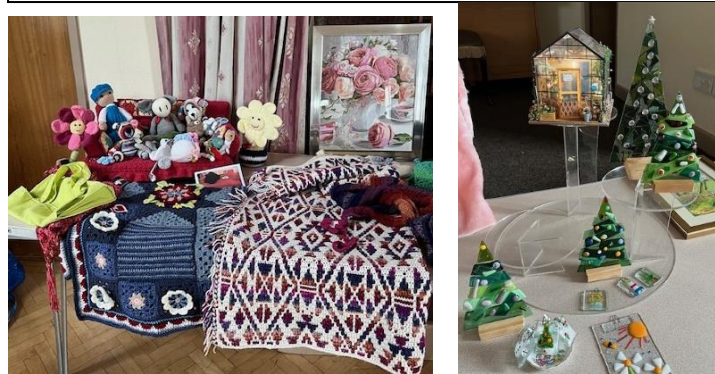
**Ginny
Lassam-Jones,
Treasurer**

Great Barr WI



Over 2 craft sessions, the ladies from Great Barr WI produced some stunning art work using ink pads and acrylic stamps, they should be really proud of themselves for their handiwork.

Elaine Williams, Media Officer



There was a profusion of crafts on display for the Great Barr W.I. members day too! Paintings, diamond dots, cross-stitch knitting and sewing, even glass Christmas trees! First place was awarded to Louise Parkes in the category of Olympic Themed Flower designs. A successful day ended with a fun quiz.



Newton WI - Bowling Day



Diane Crook from Newton WI organised a bowling day at Streetly Methodist Bowling Club on Thursday 22nd August 2024. Women's Institutes in attendance were Newton, Walsall Wood, Boldmere, Streetly, Four Oaks, Mere Green. The winners were: - 1st Gill Steward, Streetly WI (top right), 2nd Lesley Fox, of Four Oaks WI (middle right) 3rd Anita Egginton, Four Oaks WI, (bottom right above). A big thank you to Diane for a very enjoyable day. **Melanie Wisner, Newton WI**

Croquet at Kenilworth

The sun shone for this year's Croquet Event at Kenilworth in July. Congratulations to the winners: Valerie Duggan, Temple Balsall WI and Carol Colclough, Heart of England WI (Jackie Poyner presenting the trophy in the middle). Thank you to all that took part in this year's event. **Jackie Poyner**



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

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



Balsall Heath & Moseley WI



It has been a busy late summer for BH&M WI, we had a delicious spread for our picnic in the Shire Park, near Sarehole Mill. It was well deserved after some took a Mill tour or completed a community litter pick.

In our September meeting we learned how to make Kombucha and Kefir. Pictured right are Helen Coulthard and Jen Berrow, demonstrating the Kombucha (which was hilariously explosive) and made for a delicious raspberry fizzy drink. The Kombucha is made with a SCOBY, (Symbiotic Culture Of Bacteria and Yeast) a gelatinous rind pictured in the jars, far right, that encourages the fermentation process. We also made Kefir, and sampled a delicious soft cheese that Jen had prepared from the curds. Pictures show



the grains (left), the cheese and Jen (right) straining the Kefir grains to share with WI members to make a new ferment. Almost everyone was able to leave with either part of a SCOBY or some Kefir grains.



As part of the Clean Rivers Campaign, BH&M organised a litter pick alongside a small stretch of the River Rea in Balsall Heath, near to where the city of Birmingham was founded by the Beorma Tribe. The Rea flows into the Tame, the Trent, and the Ouse before reaching the sea at the Humber Estuary. It is sad to think that Birmingham litter could travel so far. Mel and Karen (bottom left), Jen, Lisa, and Susan (bottom right) prevented nine bags from heading that way, and safely disposed of several hypodermic needles. Centre pictures show before and after. Keep Britain Tidy! **Lisa Blackburn, BH&M, & B'ville WI**



Boldmere WI



Boldmere met at the Deli in Boldmere for Coffee.



We dined with Walmley WI at Grounds Farm, Wishaw.



Five Boldmere Bowlers visited Streetly to play bowls with other W.I. Groups, and finally book club met for lunch! **Judy Holmes, Boldmere WI**



Streetly Evening WI



Streetly Evening W.I. held their own Olympic Curling Championship at their August meeting. It was a totally inclusive evening. A relaxed and fun time culminating in an American Supper.

Nola Boulger



August 200 Club Winner

Margaret Stephens

Green Lane WI

with no. 20.

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

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

Next deadline: 10/10/24

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*

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Campaigns Corner – Lynda Gibbon



West Midlands Police & Crime Plan 2025- 2029 Public Consultation

WI members from across the region met with our Police & Crime Commissioner, Simon Foster in January 2023. Our feedback is important to shape policing priorities to improve safety and security for women and girls.

We call on WI members to fill out the WM Police & Crime Plan 2025- 2029 public consultation survey via this link,

[West Midlands Police & Crime Plan 2025-2029 Public Consultation - West Midlands Police & Crime Commissioner \(westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk\)](https://www.westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk)

16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM

Show there's #NoExcuse for gender-based violence this November

16 Days of Activism is UN Women's annual global campaign against gender-based violence

Start planning for the 16 days of activism against gender-based violence.

25 November - 10 December

This is a chance to show your support to survivors and help end the epidemic of abuse.

Have a listen to the NFWI Podcast, recorded at the NFWI conference, regarding gender-based violence.

<https://shows.acast.com/660fec81da0a0800160b9d2e/667d4738fad4724cde3fce9e>

More resources are available at [My WI | No More Violence Against Women \(thewi.org.uk\)](https://thewi.org.uk)

Clean Rivers Campaign



Forthcoming Events

- 05/10 - Skittles at Aldridge
- 07/10 - Annual Meeting, Austin Court
- 02/11 - Bournville WI Autumn Fair
- 21/11 - Christmas at Waddesdon
- 07/12 - Christmas Carols at St Martins

Pictured left: WMFWI members joined forces with Warwickshire Federation in silent protest for clean rivers. They were accompanied by NFWI Chair, Jeryl Stone, to lie on a river of blue fabric outside Coventry Station and give out leaflets.

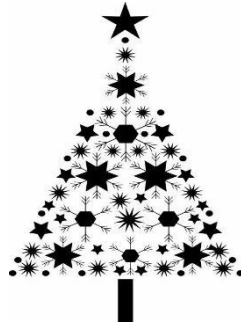


WMFWI ANNUAL FAMILY CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

ST. MARTINS IN THE BULL RING

SATURDAY 7TH DECEMBER 2024

AT 11.00 AM



This years' celebration will include both traditional and non-traditional festive carols and music.



Please come with your families to celebrate the joys of Christmas.

The theme of this year's' service will be

INSPIRATION

There will be an opportunity to write a message or prayer to hang on the Christmas tree.

Buy your Tickets on the door

Adults - £7

Children - £1

Refreshments after the service



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