



***BEDFORDSHIRE WI NEWS
DECEMBER 2024 &
JANUARY 2025***



STOP PRESS!!

As 2024 draws to a close, whilst thanking you for all your support and wishing you a wonderful Christmas, and other festivities, at the time of going to press, we are looking for more members to book for the 2025 Federation Holiday to Yorkshire. It offers a lot for the money, good hotel with breakfast & dinner; Blue Badge guides in Yorkshire & several trips included, but with plenty of resting/coffee opportunities for those wanting a slower pace. Friends & Family very welcome. Last opportunity! Please do support us and get your applications in as soon as you can. Full details via the office FedSec@Bedfordshirewis.org.uk or via TicketSource.

theWI
INSPIRING WOMEN



Bedfordshire Federation of
Women's Institutes

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Opening Hours: Members are welcome to visit
the office between 10.00 to 12.30 and 1.30 to
3pm Monday & Wednesday. Office is closed
Tuesday, Thursday & Friday.

**Parking is available at Queen Street Car Park
first 2 hours free.**

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS: Knit, Sew & Craft, WI House,
10.30 to 2..30pm, no booking needed £3. Ring office for dates

Wed 04 to Sunday 08 December Christmas Tree
Festival, St. Paul's Church Bedford

Thurs 05 December John Rutter (Matinee) RAH

Mon 09 Dec Christmas Singalong, Gt.Barford VH

Mon 16 Dec Christmas Singalong, Stanbridge &
Tilsworth Community Hall, LU7 9PN

2025

Mon 13 Jan Meet The Team at Frosts GC, Willington

Sat 25 Jan Burns Night, Wilstead Bowls Club

Thurs 13 Feb (Adult) Panto with lunch, Brick Lane

Mon 24 Feb County Quiz, Addison Centre Kempston

Friday 07 March Guildhall & Livery Hall London

Sat 12 April Annual Meeting, Kings House, Bedford

Wednesday 04 June NFWI Annual Meeting

Monday 19 June, 3 Counties Quiz Final, Flitwick

23rd June 5 days BCFWI Holiday to Yorkshire

FEDERATION FLUTTER

November 2024 No. 92 Aspley Guise WI £50

Draw for Meets & Entertains (drawn after event)

No. 71 Saira Shukoor, Clapham Belles WI £25

No. 88 Carol Jones, Caddington WI £20

WI Duty Adviser for December 2024
SUE PESTELL

susan@purpleocean.co.uk

WI Duty Adviser for January 2025

DOT WIGG

MACchair@bedfordshirewis.org.uk

Please contact the duty adviser with WI related questions.
For anything urgent, please ring
WI House on 01234 359538

Bedfordshire County Federation of WIs

Office Christmas Closure

***The office will be closed for Christmas from
Friday 20th December.***

***The office will be operating again from
Monday 6th January, however, WI House will not
reopen until Wednesday 8th January.***

***Here's wishing all our members a very happy
festive season. We look forward to meeting as
many of you as possible at as many events as we
can during the year to come!***

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

We have now been advised
that the full subscription for
2025-6 will be £51 per year.
This still equates to only £1
per week!

Why not put £1 a week on
one side from now and you
will have a good start to the
subscription when it
becomes payable in April.



Hello everyone, the trustees have had a busy time over the last few weeks, with Speakers Day; Meets and Entertains; Jigsaw evening and Crazy bag whist. All the events were a success although the Trustees were running out of steam on a couple of occasions. We did try to keep up with the members who were enjoying dancing with their Tea at Houghton Conquest! It was so good to see most members who were able, on their feet and singing along with Steve Forward. A rousing chorus of Sweet Caroline was the icing on the cake!!!

There were the usual hiccups as often happens at our events but we can always rely on the local members to help us out or indeed any members once we explain what is happening. I would like to say a BIG THANK YOU to the members at all the above events who stepped up to help out, we are very grateful for the help you gave.

We are now moving in to the Festive Season and preparations are in hand for the Tree Festival at St. Paul's Church in Bedford. Santas of all shapes and sizes are starting to arrive at the House and this year we intend to donate the Santas to the Children's ward at the hospital and to Keech Cottage hospital, when we take down the decorations. There is still time at that point for them to have a second chance at making more children and adults smile!!

The Trustees are hoping to make those members that attend our Sing a Longs at Gt. Barford and Tilsworth & Stanbridge smile with our antics proving that we are human!!! Do come along and join us in some festive merriment with a Panto, Christmas poems, and of course the Biggleswade WI Choir to lead us all in Carol singing. There will also be the necessary sustenance of Mince Pies and cups of Tea!! This newsletter will be with your WIs the first week in December so if you have forgotten to book do not worry you can pay on the door - at either of the events!!!

We have one apology to make, in the last issue the price for the City of London Guildhall day out was incorrect and should have read £45; we feel this still represents good value for money!

I look forward to seeing many of you at these events and send you all my very best wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

"Happy Christmas Everyone"

Elizabeth



DECEMBER & JANUARY QUIZ

1	If you are born December 22-January 19, you are considered to be which zodiac sign?
2	True or False: December comes from the Latin word "decem" meaning ten as it was originally the tenth month in the ancient Roman calendar.
3	What is the full moon that falls in December called?
4	How many days did the month of December have in the ancient Roman calendar?
5	When does the winter solstice occur in the Northern Hemisphere?
6	Although counterintuitive, in what month is Earth closest to the Sun?
7	What gemstone is associated with those born in January?
8	What is the name of the day that's recognised as the most depressing day of the year and usually falls on the third Monday in January?
9	On the 15th of January 1559 who was crowned monarch of England?
10	Which British musician, born in 1947, shares his January the 8th birthday with Elvis, Stephen Hawking and dictator Kim Jong-Un?



The next **Meet the Team** will be after Christmas at **Frosts Garden Centre Willington, MK44 3QP on January 13th 2025 From 10.00am.** The event at Seasons in October was a little disappointing so do please come along to Frosts! Buy yourselves that New Years coffee/or other hot beverage. Have a chat and a laugh with the Trustees and Members from other WIs. For these events to be a success and enable the Board of Trustees to sit and chat, which we do not have time to do at any of the more formal events organised by Federation, we need you there.

December 4th to 8th is the Christmas Tree Festival at St Pauls in Bedford. Will any of you lovely members who have Festivals in your own Churches please send us a photo of your Tree and we will feature them in a future issue of the Newsletter!!



Now, what has become a **Big Date** in the Calendar for Trustees is the "Sing Alongs" **December 9th** we are at **Great Barford Village Hall 1.30pm to 3.30pm.** Join us for a mince pie, a cup of tea and maybe even a slice of cake! All that AND carol singing! Biggleswade WI Choir will be there along with your Trustees who will work hard to keep you entertained with a Panto and some Christmas Poetry. These are the last events before Christmas where we can get together and enjoy some Christmas Cheer. **The address is 6 Fishers Close Gt Barford Mk44 3JL Parking available**

December 16th We are at **Stanbridge and Tilsworth Village Hall 1.30 pm to 3.30pm Stanbridge Road Tilsworth, LU7 0PN Parking available**

The programme here will be a repeat of the above at Gt. Barford . Nothing to stop you attending both events...we Trustees will be at both and look forward to seeing you !!

Thursday February 13th Brick Lane Music Hall A Unique experience in a fabulous setting

This event includes - Three Course Lunch, an Adult Panto, and a Coach to get us there & back!! With plenty of fun laughter and innuendo!! Cost is £88 pp and is well worth it. Pick - ups to be made in Bedford, Flitwick, and the Leighton Buzzard or Sundon as needed. We have passed our closing date but do ring the Office to check if any tickets have become available.

Cost is £88 per person.



Resolution Shortlist 2024-25

Full details are available in your My WI Life magazine.

- (1) Let's talk about incontinence
- (2) Bystanders can be lifesavers
- (3) Join the repair revolution
- (4) Eliminate landfill of medication packaging

Next steps

Every member now has the opportunity to cast their individual selection on the resolution they support the most. WIs are encouraged to hold meetings to provide members with the opportunity to discuss and learn more about each resolution. However, if this is not possible members can research the issues themselves and make their selection.

More details in the Federation email to WIs and in WI Life. The selection slip can be found in the November/December issue of *WI Life*. A copy of the selection slip can also be downloaded on My WI. Selections must be shared with your federation, and the deadline for this is 9 February 2025.

BEDFORDSHIRE COUNTY FEDERATION OF WOMEN'S INSTITUTES

Celebrate Burns Night with Us!

Join us for a delightful Burns Night Supper on Thursday,
January 25th 2025 at Wilstead Bowls Club. 7.00pm for 7.30pm

Enjoy a three-course meal that will warm your heart and tantalize your taste buds, all while enjoying singing during the evening from Steve Forward.

We're pleased to welcome the talented Robbie Barratt and her enchanting bagpipes, bringing a touch of Scottish tradition to our festivities! Don't miss this unique opportunity to gather with friends, celebrate culture, and create wonderful memories.

Reserve your spot now by application form or via TicketSource
£25 per person. Family & friends welcome.



**THE GUILD HALL A STUNNING MEDIEVAL BUILDING IN THE
 HEART OF THE CITY OF LONDON
 Friday March 7th 2025**

***Note Cost per person £45 ***

We apologise for the last issue going to press with the wrong price

Home to the City of London Corporation and still the centre of government in the City of London, the impressive interiors of this Grade I-listed landmark provide the perfect setting for any occasion.

Do come and join us as **Murray Craig, Clerk to the Chamberlains Court at the City of London** guides us on this visit to the Guildhall in the morning and a Livery Hall in the afternoon.

There will be over an hour for lunch and we have checked out the area for "eateries" of which there are many!! Or members could also bring their own and find a bench in the area!!

There are three planned pick-ups: at **Three Star Coaches Sundon car park LU3 3BP at 7.40am, Bedford Park & Ride MK42 9XF at 8.15am and Flitwick MK45 1HP at 8.35am.**

Application forms with your Secretaries. Booking also available with TicketSource.

Cost £45 per person. Friends & Family very welcome



Christmas Quiz

BCFWI – Public Affairs Team

Cost £3 per numbered booklet A fun way to raise funds for your Federation !

Available from the office, with an application form (don't forget to put on name of your WI)
 FedSec@Bedfordshirewis.org.uk

Completed quizzes must be returned to WI House by 29th January 2025

BCFWI 2025 FEDERATION FLUTTER

Do please support your Federation by buying Flutter tickets — they are only £10 per share.

We hold a monthly draw with £50 cash prize.

Extra draws throughout the year. Shares must be paid for in advance as they must not be invoiced.

Application forms have gone out to Secretaries.

TEA LOAF

This Tea Loaf has a few more ingredients than usual but I think once you have tried it, you will really enjoy. It freezes well and will also keep in an air tight container for some time

Ingredients

1 Earl Grey tea bag
 225g each raisins and sultanas
 125g dried figs chopped
 125g glacé cherries halved
 110g chopped dried apricots
 110g light muscovado sugar
 110g dark muscovado sugar
 110g ground almonds
 1 tablespoon of golden syrup
 2 eggs beaten
 450g self-raising flour
 1 teaspoon ground mix spice
 100ml milk



Method

Pour 300 ml of boiling water onto the tea bag and, leave to brew for a few minutes. Remove tea bag then in a bowl, pour the tea over the raisins, sultanas and sugars. Cover and leave overnight.

In the morning set the oven 150C / 300F and line a 2lb loaf tin. Stir in the ground almonds, golden syrup and eggs into the soaked fruit & sugar, then add the flour and spice. Combine, then add the milk. Spoon into the loaf tin and bake for about 2 hours. Insert a skewer and make sure it comes out clean.

Hope you enjoy
 Liz

As the gardener's still on leave and there is not a lot of crafting this month, we have decided to treat you all with a second recipe. Happy cooking!

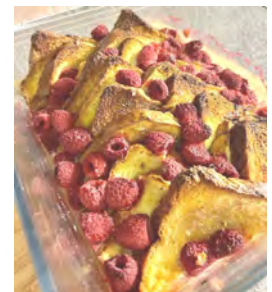
POSH BREAD AND BUTTER PUDDING

Ingredients

300 g sliced brioche loaf
 Small amount of butter and lemon curd
 Two medium eggs
 50 g castor sugar
 100 ml double cream
 400 ml of milk
 300 g of raspberries

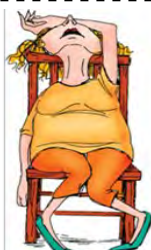
Method

Heat the oven to 180°C lightly grease a 23 x 15 cm baking dish
 Lightly toast brioche slices and cut into triangles and spread with the butter and lemon curd.
 In a bowl, whisk the eggs, cream, sugar and milk together and leave to stand for a few minutes.
 Layer the triangles into the baking dish overlapping; scatter with the raspberries and a little sugar if you wish.
 Pour over the cream mixture and bake in oven for 40 minutes until golden brown.
 Serve with cream and enjoy!



The Creative Activities Team would like to wish all
 Members a Very Happy Christmas and our Best
 Wishes for 2025





HOW YOUR BOARD OF TRUSTEES ARE FEELING! - WE NEED YOU!

Hopefully our title has made you smile, but there is a really serious reason for this article. Many of you will be aware that your current Board of Trustees includes several members who have served for a considerable number of years. Whilst we enjoy our roles, there is no getting away from the fact that we are all ageing and therefore less agile and strong than we once were; something that will have become obvious when you have seen us at various Federation events. In addition, those husbands and partners who are still with us, and once stepped up to move tables and chairs for us, have also become increasingly unable to undertake the heavy lifting they used to do.

If we are to continue to organise events for you to enjoy, and raise funds for Federation running costs, we are going to need your help. It would be fantastic if we could create a Team of helpers, that we could call upon to help set up and take down chairs/tables and other equipment for events – perhaps by area, so we spread the load around the County. If this is something you feel you can help with, please let us know, preferably via email so we have a record of your contact details, and we will get in touch with you to organise area groups if possible, and advise what help we need and when.

Please give this matter some serious consideration. Thank you!

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR ORDERING TICKETS FOR EVENTS FROM JANUARY 2025

In addition to the information set out in previous issues, we would like to remind members that if you don't want to book online, one of the options is to ring the TicketSource Telephone Booking Box Office on the number shown below; as with cinema or other purchases, just ring up and get your bookings done! You'll still find a Test Event for you to try out the system halfway down the TicketSource events page available until the end of February.

So, the options for booking tickets from January 2025 are:-

- Book online via the link from our website
- Book online directly with TicketSource (type **ticketsource bedfordshire federation** in search bar)
- Telephone TicketSource box office to make a booking on **0333 666 3366**
- Get help with an online booking from another WI member or friend or relative
- If you still need help, contact the Office for advice

LIFESTYLE AND LEISURE TEAM

ls.ball@btinternet.com

As the Lifestyle and Leisure Team are now winding down after a wonderfully busy year, we would like to thank members for the fantastic support received for all the events we have put on during 2024.

We will be starting up again refreshed after the festive break and look forward to your continued support in the year ahead


Best Wishes from us all !



We have signed up for the WI Lottery! Players have the opportunity to win a jackpot of £25,000 by matching all six numbers, and other prizes for fewer matches. Match two numbers and you get 3 extra tickets! Each ticket bought also goes into the Super Draw for free. The prize is changed monthly so have a look on the web site for the latest information. Previous prizes include a Cruise to Norway see the Northern lights and a PS5 Pro PlayStation bundle.

Help support your Federation and buy tickets now!

The lottery has been set up by NFWI to allow all WIs the opportunity to raise funds by setting up their own lottery. There has been lots of information in the last two WI Life magazines. It is really simple to do and there is lots of help available.



THE COUNTY QUIZ

Kempston Addison Centre, MK42 8PN
Monday 24th February 2025, at 7.30pm

Teams must consist of no more than three members and entry is £13.00 per team. WIs may enter more than one team, however, booking priority will be given to one team from each WI.

The eight winning teams from the County Quiz will go forward to represent Bedfordshire Federation at the Three County Quiz final, taking place in June, which Bedfordshire will be hosting.

See Application form for further details.
Closing date for applications: 31st December 2024.

Bedfordshire County Federation of WIs
 Your Board of Trustees has chosen the Sue Ryder St John's Hospice, Moggerhanger as the charity we will support during 2025. There will be opportunities throughout the year for your WI to help raise funds for their work providing palliative care and bereavement support amongst other services. We will outline more details in the next issue, but in the meantime, please do look at their web-site to see where you can help www.sueryder.org.

- ANSWERS TO QUIZ on P2**
- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Capricorn | 6. January |
| 2. True | 7. Blue Monday |
| 3. 29 Days | 8. Garnet |
| 4. The Cold Moon | 9. Elizabeth I |
| 5. December 21st, 22nd or 23rd | 10. David Bowie |

News of a WI Group Meeting

In October, **Sutton WI** hosted their Group meeting, attended by over 50 members from Sutton, Wrestlingworth and 2 groups from both Sandy and Biggleswade. Diane Sanbrook attended as an observer from Bedford. Sarah Harrison, a local author was the speaker and she immediately engaged with her audience in describing how she became an author. Her first thought, as a child was to be a show jumper, her next was to follow in her actor mother's footsteps, but at boarding school she developed the taste and skill for writing stories. She wrote exercise books full of them. They were passed around at school and enjoyed by her friends and so her career was set.

After leaving university she got a job on an IPC training scheme at Nova magazine where she learnt how to be a writer. As her career progressed she went on to become a freelance writer, initially writing short stories and then novels. She has written a many books in a wide variety of genres for both children and adults. After the talk there was a break for refreshments provided by Sutton WI, They were magnificent and much enjoyed! The meeting concluded with a resume of what is going on in the county given by Diane Sandbrook, a financial report and reports from all the presidents of the WI groups represented who appear to have a had a very busy year. The next group meeting will take place in June next year and will be hosted by Sandy Evening WI.

MEET THE TEAM



Following the gratifyingly high number of members who joined us for our inaugural 'Meet the Team' get together at Poplars Garden Centre at Toddington, we had high hopes for our second one, held at Seasons Garden Centre, Wixams near Bedford. We had listened to our members, and changed the day of the week on which it was held to accommodate a craft group at one of our WIs, so were looking forward to meeting up with lots of you, for whom this would be a convenient venue. It was, therefore, disappointing when only a handful of members did come and join us, although of course it was lovely to see them as always.

When we first came up with the idea of travelling around the County to meet up with members, we had high hopes of getting to see as many of you as possible and the feedback from our first get-together was very positive. Please let us know why you might not come to see us – wrong day, wrong time, wrong venue, or just not interested. Trustees and WI Advisers are pretty thin on the ground, so we need to spend our time productively. We look forward to your feedback.

And in the hope that we might see a few more of you, we are having another Meet the Team on **Monday 13 January at Frosts Garden Centre Willington, from 10 am.**

Dot

DELEGATES CALLED FOR NFWI ANNUAL MEETING 4th JUNE 2025

A reminder . . . we are looking for delegates to represent the WIs of Bedfordshire next June. No need to travel to far flung venues!

Each delegate will have the chance to participate with us at our "Watch Party" at Gravenhurst Village Hall, High Street, Gravenhurst, MK45 4HY which we are sure will be very sociable affair.

Delegates will use election buddy to place votes on behalf of their WIs for the resolution and the changes to the constitution. They will need their own digital device to do this.

If you have several members wishing to be delegate, please forward all their names to the office. Members are welcome to join us at Gravenhurst as observers.

Delegates joining this event in person will be advised to bring a packed lunch.

If you prefer, you can always carry out your Delegate duty by logging on to join the meeting from your own home. The choice is yours.

Full details are on our website; from FedSec@Bedfordshirewis.org.uk and you can also register your request to be a Delegate via TicketSource

Carlton & Chellington had a busy Autumn, starting in September with River Water Quality; a Harvest Supper in October and a Fashion Show with members on the Cat Walk in November.

Jim Coley, a Volunteer with Upper & Bedford Ouse Catchment Partnership, gave us a really interesting talk on his responsibility for the stretch of the River Great Ouse between Bromham Bridge and Kempston. This sparked friendly debate about the effect practices & climate are having on our rivers compared to the past. Several members then sampled water from our part of the river as part of a national survey; results were recorded on the central database. This complimented our participation in the Great UK WaterBlitz Water Testing.



We celebrated our Harvest Festival evening with a Ploughman's Supper; the tables were beautifully decorated. Following the meal two teams were created and a frenetic game of charades was played with the winners rewarded with chocolates! There was also a bring and buy table and craft painting of suncatchers for those who wished. We also held a "Good Old Fashioned Jumble Sale" as a fundraiser which was hard work, but a resounding success and involved nearly all our members in some way!



Houghton Conquest held a Members' Evening in October. The three stand-in officers organised a crazy bag whist night. It was a good evening despite some people not knowing how to play, but instructions were given and the game was enjoyed by all. Then in November we were treated to a lovely floral art display by Jayne Walker. She did four arrangements with a Christmas theme, so the flowers were mainly red roses and carnations and also white chrysanthemums. She made it look so easy and the beautiful results were put in a raffle, along with a bouquet of the flowers she did not use. Five people were very happy taking their arrangement home.



Biggleswade Evening also enjoyed a demonstration of flower arranging when their Vice President Julie Price led members in creating a floral arrangement in a teacup. Ecological oasis was provided, with additional flowers and greenery. The room had a quiet, calm atmosphere as members created their arrangements showing individual

personalities & creativity. And in October they welcomed local award winning podcaster Natalie Doig who researches and presents the podcast 'weird in the wade'. The evening brought in many visitors to hear Natalie's talk on the location and history of Biggleswade's tunnels. Members and visitors were left wanting to hear more of other stories of Biggleswade and surrounding towns and villages that Natalie made reference to. A highly recommended speaker if your WI is interested in local history with a pinch of paranormal.

Wharley End had a busy September & October. We held a very successful musical evening with a fish & chips supper. Five members of the wonderful Turf Tappers Group entertained us with a lively selection of songs. The following weekend was another musical one when seven members attended the BCFWI Proms. An excellent performance! Unfortunately, our speaker for October was taken ill, as soon as he arrived, with a mini stroke. Thankfully, we were told later that he is likely to make a good recovery. We had several visitors, so we had a fun quiz instead, which everyone seemed to enjoy.



Last, but not least, as a change to our regular monthly lunches, we had an Afternoon Tea at the "Just Baked" Tea Rooms, near Lidlington. They opened up just for us and the food was not only delicious, but very attractively presented.



At **Northill & Ickwell** the speaker, Robert Brewer talked about his roles as a TV and Film extra. He was great fun and very amusing when telling us about his various roles in television and films. He had a slide show which showed some of the films and TV programmes he had been in and the various costumes he had worn. He explained how the extras were directed by the third assistant director, and that he had to pretend to be talking in the background on some of the sets, mouthing 'rhubarb and custard'! The evening was thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended.

In October **Great Barford WI** had their birthday meeting so we wanted to do something special. We sang Jerusalem, were visited by Elizabeth Cochrane and ate birthday cake. The speaker was Mary Vincent from The Willow Tree Distillery. She told us about how she started distilling gin on her parents' farm in Stanbridge in 2016. She spent a year trying out different botanicals to perfect the Signature Willow Tree Gin which is 45.5% proof. The special factors which give her gin its unique flavour and richness are selectively smoked ingredients. The gin was launched at Woburn Farmers Market and by 2020 the still was moved to its present location at Franklins Farm, Thorncote Green. After samples of the gin to taste, Mary's assistant Rory then told us about the history of gin. This was a very interesting and enjoyable evening made interactive by a quiz and the gin tasting.

Cranfield's October meeting was a Harvest Supper when members enjoyed fish & chips followed by trifle. After the meal our speaker/entertainer was Lisa Garrity, whose title was 'My Musical Travels'. Lisa explained that she had taken 6 months off from work in the pharmaceutical industry to go and teach music in an orphanage in Guatemala. She entertained us with humorous tales about busking in Guatemala, Bolivia and Zambia and played a wide selection of music on various instruments which included 'Come fly with me' on the saxophone, 'Amazing Grace' on a tenor recorder and the theme tune from Titanic' on the Irish low whistle. Our November speaker was unfortunately unable to attend but a couple of the committee came to the rescue with some quiz sheets for our members to do on Dingbats; Guess the Age of the Celebrity and General Knowledge questions. The members thoroughly enjoyed the quiz. working in small groups gave us a chance to chat as we puzzled over the answers.

Clifton recently held a coffee morning to raise funds for our local hospice. We had an excellent turnout of members and village residents and are delighted to say we raised over £500 for a very worthwhile cause. Our November meeting celebrated our 102nd birthday! 47 members enjoyed a delicious cake and a glass of prosecco followed by a mince pie and chocolate log tasting session. As the organisers gave us a questionnaire to make comments, much discussion ensued! We have been asked to help provide knitted or crochet poppies for an ambitious display planned for our local church to commemorate VE day next May.



That seems such a long way off but we shall need hundreds to fulfil the brief, so wish us luck!

Bedford WI had an interesting speaker in September. John McCombe, a volunteer with Service by Emergency Response Volunteers (SERV). This Charity transports vital blood supplies from Colindale Blood Bank to NHS Hospitals and Hospices throughout Beds, Herts & beyond. Another important role is to deliver breast milk for HEARTS Milk Bank. The volunteers are highly trained motorcyclists who can be on call 24 hours a day. John explained their workload is increasing & one of their long serving Yamaha Blood Bikes is near the end of its service life. We learnt so much about this amazing Charity.

October saw **Wilstead's** 94th birthday celebration, so the evening meeting started an hour earlier than usual. Caterers prepared a delicious two course meal for us. This allowed committee members to have an evening with fewer duties. Vicky Blakemore of 'Pavenham Kitchens' served plates of chicken, with fresh vegetables and new potatoes, followed by French apple tart or fresh fruit salad. Members brought their own choice of drinks. The committee had a very pleasant surprise when they went to do the washing up. It had all been done and cleared away by the caterers! And in November this month's business Included information to members of how to book via TicketSource for County events. Members were also made aware of how the money donated by Riviera Travel is being spent for our Institute's benefit. Collections were made of items for the WI stall at the Parish Christmas Fayre and also toys for charity.

In October, **Caldecote** warmly welcomed a special guest, Elizabeth, Federation Chair. The evening was filled with the spirit of community and the season's harvest, as everyone gathered for a delightful harvest supper. What made the evening even more special was that all the delicious food was lovingly prepared by our very own

committee members, showcasing their culinary talents and dedication to making the evening a success. After supper we held an auction of produce generously donated by our members. From freshly made cakes to homegrown vegetables, there was a wonderful array of items to bid on, with all proceeds going towards supporting the WI. There was plenty of time for everyone to catch up, share stories, and enjoy each other's company. It was a memorable night that celebrated both the harvest and the WI friendships.



Leighton Buzzard Riverside's October meeting had a definite Halloween feel. We were entertained by Colin Oakes. His subject was the appropriate 'Ghosts, Ghouls and Graveyards'. A very entertaining, if spooky, talk about the visitations from beyond. The wife of Edward II who killed her husband using a red hot poker! (How is a well known historical fact). When she died she was buried with her murdered husband's heart laid on her chest, to be with him for eternity! And to haunt us also.) We heard poltergeists, heard but never seen - clanking, moaning,. moving things. Generally terrifying us. A ghost dog even made an appearance. Listen out for his growl. Haunted pubs and houses galore. Not to mention how many ghosts prowl the graveyards at night. I don't think any of us will go wandering around All Saints Church at midnight on Samain.....31st October! On another note, our market stall in August raised £315.25. Most of this was due to the hard, work of Janene Archer who single-handedly made 203 lucky bags, making £203! For her excellent work she was presented with a certificate to show our thanks. Our Xtra Meeting this month will be a pizza evening. So all goes from strength to strength at LBRWI.



Members from **Maulden WI** travelled down to London for a marvellous guided tour of the Palace of Westminster in October, following which they were able to spend time in the Commons public gallery and the Jubilee Cafe. Two members even found time to recreate the "Grille Incident" of 1908 where a suffragette chained herself to the railings. No chains required on this occasion! A thoroughly enjoyable and enlightening day out.

At **Sutton WI** Ian Deavin told us something of the history of Tai chi in China where it has been practised for many hundreds of years. He explained that it was a better way of understanding the dynamics of conflict. It was initially developed for combat and self-defence and then evolved into a sport and form of exercise. It is a gentle, low impact form of exercise where a series of deliberate, flowing motions are done while focussing on deep, slow breaths. Besides being good exercise, it is said to improve balance and posture; it also focuses in on meditation and relaxation. Initially the movements are slow, they need to be repeated daily for them to become automatic and then they can become faster. There is an emphasis too on caring for your body

Studham WI enjoyed an interesting talk on 'All about the Poppies' delivered by local Royal British Legion Chairman, Shaun McCarthy, at their November meeting. Rather than tracing the history of the British Legion, which many members had expected, he started by telling the WI about some of the recipients of the PDSA's Dickin Medal, instituted in 1943. A bronze medallion, it bears the words "For Gallantry" and "We Also Serve" and is the animal equivalent of the Victoria Cross. Recipients currently include 38 dogs, 32 pigeons, 4 horses and just 1 cat! Simon, the ship cat on HMS Amethyst during the Yangtze incident in 1949, despite being seriously injured, won his award for killing all of the rodents on his ship, so preserving the supplies for the men serving on his ship. A discussion followed about whether today's young people could be enthused about matters relating to the Royal British Legion, poppies and Remembrance Sunday, given so few now had personal relationships with those who had served in either of the World Wars or more recent conflicts around the world.

Wootton WI had Kaliko K in October. Such an interesting talk on The Patterned Path to Freedom and how the different patterns in quilting led to slaves following routes to Canada, using the patterns like a map and then becoming free people. Absolutely fascinating and Kay spoke for an hour with no notes at all, with a fascinating slideshow to enhance her talk. At the end she showed us a quilt she had made with all the patterns, originally started as samples to teach her sewing class students, and all beautifully hand stitched in shades of blue and yellow. Thoroughly recommend Kay as a speaker.

MAULDEN WI - GREAT SWISHING EVENT - MAULDEN VILLAGE HALL

SATURDAY 1st FEBRUARY 2025

9.00 am - 12.30 pm: YOU donate clean, good quality/nearly new clothing & WE give you a ticket for each item

10.30 am - 11.00 am WE sort and display the items, you can enjoy a cup of tea/coffee

11.00 am - 12.00 pm YOU exchange your tickets for items of your choice

The Small Print

- * Good quality items only please. * Most items will be 1 ticket. * Maximum of 10 items per person.
- * We will NOT accept underwear, swimwear, nightwear or socks/tights. * You can purchase up to 5 tickets on the day for £1 each.



Contact us at MauldenWI@gmail.com or See us on Facebook (Maulden WI)