

NEWS & VIEWS SPECIAL EDITION

theWI
INSPIRING WOMEN

Issue 6

August 2020



OXFORDSHIRE WI





Dear members,

It was with great sadness that we learnt the news last week that NFWI is proposing to close Denman permanently. I hope by the time you read this you will have received all the information from NFWI through your own WIs and had a chance to read through the documents explaining the rationale behind the decision. I can assure you it was not a decision made lightly but in the best interests of the organisation. Nevertheless, those of us in Oxfordshire will feel its loss even more perhaps than other federations as it was on our doorstep and was 'our own local' college. For others though, it was very remote and a long way from home and with only 3% of members attending, it became unsustainable to retain it.

Our hearts go out to the dedicated staff of Denman, many of whom we have come to know well and think of as our friends, who now face an uncertain future and the National Board of Trustees who have had to make this very difficult decision on behalf of the charity.

We look forward to hearing plans for the future from NFWI regarding a programme of education delivered nationally which will be more inclusive and accessible to all. In the 70 years the WI has owned Denman, times have changed immeasurably and women's lives and expectations have changed too. Members of the WI have always embraced these changes and no organisation survives for over 100 years without accepting that some things come to an end and new opportunities arise.

Many of us have precious memories of happy times at Denman and I will certainly cherish my own as I am sure you will too.

Our online presentation programme continues to bring pleasure to many of you and we really appreciate your support for the programme. Do keep coming along to the talks and presentations and let us know if there is anything you would like us to include please.

We are close to reinstating the hard copies of *News & Views* but are just finalising the logistics – printing, distribution etc. and the many challenges which go with the times we find ourselves currently in, while keeping costs to a minimum. As well as the digital version, we will also be continuing to offer the audio version, so a range of ways for you to enjoy Oxfordshire's newsletter.

I recently met with the family of Barbara Gray MBE who sadly died in June. You will be aware we are planning an annual Barbara Gray Memorial Lecture in her memory and her family are very keen to hold a Memorial Service for her in 2021. It is anticipated this will be in the autumn. I know so many of you wanted to be able to attend her funeral so this will be a wonderful opportunity to celebrate her life together. We will keep you posted as soon as things are more definite.

Life is beginning to creep back to the 'new normal' and I hope some of you are managing to meet up in your WIs, obviously observing the social distancing rules and when necessary wearing a face covering. Sometimes it feels as though I have entered a parallel universe! Oh for 'normality' to return.

Stay safe everyone and I hope to see many of you in the very near future.

With very best wishes,

Catherine Blaxhall

Catherine Blaxhall
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07736 698738
catherine.blaxhall@oxfordshirewi.co.uk

OXFORDSHIRE WI NEEDS YOU!

Oxfordshire WI is run by a Board of Trustees consisting of up to 15 members, of whom 12 are elected and up to three can be co-opted. They are responsible for Oxfordshire WI's overall control, management and leadership. Certain responsibilities can be delegated to volunteers or the employed office team.

The trustees are a link between the NFWI and individual WIs in Oxfordshire, who must ensure that they follow charity law and Charity Commission guidelines.

Their other responsibilities include:

- passing on information from the NFWI to members;
- setting OWI's budget and overseeing its finances;
- attending board and sub-committee meetings;
- issuing an annual report and accounts;
- organising events and activities for members;

Every two years the Chairman invites the trustees and each WI in Oxfordshire to nominate members to become trustees. We will be inviting nominations next month and we would love to hear from you if you would be interested in finding out more about what is involved in the role. If you are interested or would like to attend a Board meeting as an observer, please contact Linda Mustill fedsec@Oxfordshirewi.co.uk for more information.

You can be sure of a very warm and friendly welcome.

Oxfordshire WI Needs YOU!



We are currently looking for new Trustees to join the team. To find out more about what being a Trustee involves and how you can help please contact fedsec@oxfordshirewi.co.uk



#MYVIRTUALWI OXFORDSHIRE

To book your space please click [here](http://www.oxfordshirewi.co.uk/events) or visit: www.oxfordshirewi.co.uk/events

GILLIAN HAINES PERRY THE LIFE AND SURPRISING LEGACY OF ANNE FRANK MONDAY 10 AUGUST 2PM



As we are experiencing isolation from our friends and family, we can perhaps draw solace from thinking about the war time teenage diarist and Holocaust victim Anne Frank. How Anne Frank coped with her two-year isolation whilst in hiding from the Nazis, facing the possibility of arrest and certain death every minute of the day. How Nelson Mandela and Audrey Hepburn's lives were greatly influenced by Anne Frank's diary. The astonishing effect that learning about Anne Frank has had on people in some of the world's most turbulent and violent regions, breaking down long-held prejudicial views. The dramatic impact on British prisoners who have gained a greater perspective on their grievances against society thanks to Anne's story. The significant change Anne's diary has made to millions of teenagers who have faced adolescent social problems and have succeeded in raising their ambition and aspirations thanks to learning her story.

Since her retirement as Executive Director, as well as Co-founder of the Anne Frank Trust UK, Gillian Perry has been lecturing and speaking in the UK and the USA, as well as on international cruise ships.

Price: £5

THE GREAT OXFORDSHIRE QUIZ NIGHT - WEDNESDAY 19 AUGUST 2020

Another chance to show your knowledge in our monthly quiz night, expertly managed by our Quiz Masters Extraordinaire Pauline Goddard and Hilary Dix!

Lots of trust – you will be marking your own answers – and even a small prize for the overall winner and runners up!

So, come and join us on the third Wednesday of every month – what's not to like?

Price: free event



ELAINE BYWATERS CHAIR DANCE WORKOUT WEDNESDAY 12 AUGUST 2PM

You don't always have to "dance on the table" to have fun... you can have fun whilst sitting down!!! CHAIR DANCE WORKOUT is a relaxed, exercise dance session, which works the mind and the body. Great tunes, great fun. All abilities catered for.



Price: £3

MURRAY JACOBS MUST SEES OF CAMBRIDGE MONDAY 17 AUGUST 2020 7PM

Murray Jacobs, a Cambridge Green Badge Guide running "Hiddencambridge.co.uk", will introduce you to the "Must-Sees" of Cambridge, including stories of a rather eventful visit by a monarch, student antics that hit the front pages, and intriguing details of King's College Chapel, to name just a few.



Price: £5

GILL THOMAS - GIVING YOUR WI A FRESH LOOK WEDNESDAY 26 AUGUST 2.00PM

After a while, we get so used to the familiar things around us that we stop noticing them. We forget how some things look to other people and the impression they give of us, occasionally continuing to do something "because we've always done it like that." As a result, perhaps we don't always show ourselves off in the best light. Sometimes, we need to stop and take a closer look – perhaps there's information we need to share or maybe we'd like to draw attention to ourselves and what we are doing. *"I'm a visual sort of person; I do notice what things look like and during the last few months I've been applying my visual presentation skills to WI meetings. I've got a few ideas to share with you for a fresh start when we are finally able to get together again (and some of them will work at home too, if you can't wait that long!)"*



Price: free event. To book please email admin@oxfordshirewi.co.uk

GRAEME GETTINGS - TANGLE DOODLES - TUESDAY 25 AUGUST 2.00PM

More doodling! Graeme is going to get you all producing simple 'Tangle doodles'. She will go on to explore the arts of Zentangle and Mandalas. Some of you will have enjoyed Graeme's 'Doodle Art painting' Zoom class. The results were fantastic and can be seen on our web site <https://www.oxfordshirewi.co.uk/post/doodle-art-showcase>

Price: free event. To book please email admin@oxfordshirewi.co.uk



FROM YOUR TREASURER

Pauline Goddard | 01869 240663 | treasurer@oxfordshirewi.co.uk

REFUNDS - Oxfordshire WI's Annual Meeting

We are working as quickly as possible to get the refunds back to you but our staff are still partially furloughed with significantly reduced office hours or are working from home. So I'd ask for your patience just a bit longer.

400+ CLUB

More lucky winners for the August draw. Cheques will be winging their way towards you today.

£50	Linda Allan	£30	Anne Purnell	£20	Jean Saunders
£40	Ruth Webb	£20	Ellen Lasbury		



FROM THE OXFORDSHIRE WI OFFICE

Linda Mustill | fedsec@oxfordshirewi.co.uk



IFEs 2020 ATTENTION ALL TREASURERS

Due some difficulties last year, August is now the time to apply for an Independent Financial Examiner for year ending 31 December 2020.

All our IFEs are fully trained and have extensive knowledge on all financial matters dealt with by individual WIs.

Once an IFE has been allocated in October 2020, treasurers will then be able to contact them prior to the end of the year with any queries they may have. Your new IFE will also be available throughout the remainder of 2021 to answer any questions that may arise.

The cost for this service is £25 for the examination and signing of the Financial Statement and a further £25 if the IFE also completes your Financial Statement. Payment is made directly to your IFE in 2021.

Forms have been emailed to all WIs and all applications must be received in the office by **Thursday 1 October 2020**.

Please note there will be some scheduled maintenance taking place of the website from 20-22 August. Some events will also need to be booked via the office in order to accommodate this maintenance.

OFFICE HOURS

Please note that the office continues to be closed until further notice. Post is now being collected on a weekly basis, as we are still partially furloughed with significantly reduced office hours or are working from home. Do please continue to email me with any queries.





MEMBERSHIP SUPPORT

Chairman - Hilary Dix | 01608 646228 / 07866193772 | hilary.dix@oxfordshirewi.co.uk

We are now in August and the month when many of us are going on holiday or days out with the family. Things are getting better in that respect and travel is a little less restricted. I hope you can all enjoy the good weather if we have some.

I am increasingly in awe of some of the ways you are continuing to meet and support your fellow WI members. It is also lovely to hear of some of the ways you are going to document your lockdown memories for your archive. Photographs made into calendars or photo books; squares being made into wall hangings. These will all be unique items as I hope WI never has to go through anything like this again.

Your Committees will have received the 'NFWI guidance for resuming meetings and a risk assessment form'. They will be looking at it and working with your venues but at the end of the day it comes down to what each of you is comfortable doing.

Many of you have tuned into the training workshops. In July we ran MCS workshops and now look out for a programme planning one. Can I draw your attention to a Zoom event on **Wednesday 26 August at 2pm** given by Gill Thomas, a NFWI Judge and Denman Tutor? She will give us tips on how to revitalise and give our WIs a new look. This will be so useful on our return to meetings. Try to send at least one person from your WI. For more details see "Giving your WI a fresh look" above on the #MY VIRTUAL WI OXFORDSHIRE pages.

Remember, your Adviser is on the end of a phone or email. Contact her with any queries.

Best wishes from the Membership Support Team.

Footnote from Catherine Blaxhall:

Congratulations to Hilary Dix on her appointment as a WI Adviser having successfully completed her training. Well done! If anyone is interested in finding out about the role of a WI Adviser, please contact Hilary as Chairman of Membership Support for more information.





HOME & GARDEN

Chairman - Tracy Strain | 01235 765285 | tracy.strain@oxfordshirewi.co.uk

HOME & GARDEN ON-LINE PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBITION

The Home & Garden Committee are sure you remember the Art & Craft event held last year at Didcot Civic Hall. Oxfordshire members came up trumps and produced a range of exhibits showcasing their talents.

Well, we would like you to have the opportunity to showcase more of your talents in the form of a photographic exhibition. We know you've been busy baking, making and growing while the WI's usual programme of activities has been suspended. Now is the time to show us the fruits of your labour! Your photographs will then be displayed over the next few months in future editions of *News & Views* as a virtual exhibition.

There are five categories to choose from:

1. A cake or other baked item – saying what it is.
2. A planted container with brief plant list.
3. A best kept vegetable plot or container – identify the plants!
4. A craft item you have completed (this year) – give a brief description.
5. A flower arrangement using items from the garden.



One photograph per category but all five categories can be entered, or less.

There will be **no charge for entry** – this is an opportunity for you to showcase your skills once again.

How to enter: You can either enter electronically or in hard copy.

Electronic entries:

Entry is by email with the photographs attached as JPEGs. We will need to know:

Your name, your WI, and the number of the categories entered, and the matching number of photographs attached. Email title to read: Home & Garden on-line Exhibition.

Emails to be sent to: ofwiwebeditors@gmail.com

Hard copy entries:

These to be sent to the Tackley office with your name, your WI and number of categories entered. Envelope to be marked "Home & Garden on-line Exhibition". The photographs will then be scanned for inclusion.

Oxfordshire WI
5 Court Farm Barns, Medcroft Road
Tackley, Kidlington OX5 3AL



Come on Oxfordshire members, come and rise to the challenge and share with us what you have been doing over the last few months when we have been confined to home.

There is no entry fee and no closing date as we intend to exhibit your photos in *News & Views* over the next few months as you submit them, and space allows.



Combined Arts Committee



COMBINED ARTS

Chairman - Pauline Goddard | 01869 240663 | pbgwendlebury@gmail.com

WE HAVE A NEW "C" WORD

Yes, forget Covid and think Christmas!
Christmas poems, here we come!



Do you lean towards Wordsworth, more of a Taylor Coleridge or is there a Ms. Ayres out there who did look after her teeth? Be daring, be dashing, be poetical. None of that 3-liner haiku stuff, please think of at least 4 lines, (more very welcome), with the very loose theme of Christmas. We want to publish them in this magazine so keep them coming from now onwards, show us what you're made of girls and get lyrical. Prizes for the best efforts. I'm looking forward to being inundated.

Please forward your verses to treasurer@oxfordshirewi.co.uk.

Christmas is coming, the geese are getting fat... whoops, I think that's been done before!
And... Time is drawing short for your entries for the Lady Denman Cup.



You remember, something overheard on the bus... well, don't worry that you probably haven't been on public transport since the Jurassic age, just let your imagination run riot. 500 words please so you definitely can't let your imagination run amok, somewhere in between the two superlatives will suffice!

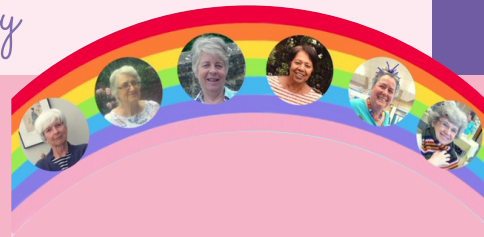
More info in last month's magazine or email the office.



World in Science, Heritage and History

WISHH COMMITTEE

Chairman - Trine Lucy | 01235 535243 | trine.lucy@oxfordshirewi.co.uk



"HOW TO SLEEP WELL" November 24, 2020

We are sorry to cancel yet another talk due to the unusual circumstances we find ourselves in.

2021 - Our New Focus

Hopefully we can reschedule both 'HOW TO SLEEP WELL' and 'WHEN THE DOGS DON'T BARK.'

Dr Christine Whyte and Dr Fiona Story, both scientists working for Oxford University Innovation (a subsidiary of the University of Oxford) have confirmed they are happy to come and explain more about managing the University's technology transfer and consulting activities.

Please watch this space for new ideas we are exploring.

Meanwhile you have to be content with looking at our committee's smiling faces on the rainbow.

Take care and stay safe, *Trine*



DENMAN

Virginia Lawrence | 01865 331521 | sv.lawrence@btopenworld.com

DENMAN COLLEGE

It was with huge sadness that I heard this week that Denman will be closing. My first thoughts were with the Staff there who have been so dedicated to the smooth running of our college, always going the extra mile to ensure that every visitor's stay was as good as they could make it. They now face the possibility of redundancy and unemployment. Whilst it is not unusual in the current circumstances, it is always an enormous upheaval for those going through it.

Also, in my thoughts, are you, the hundreds of Oxfordshire members who have done so much to support our College since it opened over 70 years ago. I'm sure, like me, you will be feeling a great sadness at losing this oasis of calm and intellect from our WI family and from our own county. So many of you have volunteered, for very many years, as guides, hosts, gardeners, faberdashery shop helpers, flower arrangers, etc., etc. Perhaps like me, you are feeling that you have lost a very dear friend.

Your financial donations too have been vital to the day to day running of the college and I know how very hard you worked to send in those contributions. Every one of those gifts was gratefully received and every one of them thoughtfully used. Thank you.

How wonderful that so many of our WIs have awarded bursaries which enabled members who may not have otherwise been able to experience the special opportunities offered by Denman, to go along and enjoy that unique 'Denman Experience'. Any one of you who has attended the college will have benefited, not only from the new skills or knowledge learnt, but as importantly from the new friends made. It was an enriching experience in so many ways and I hope that your memories of time spent there will always stay with you and continue to enrich your lives.

It has been an absolute joy to be your Denman Ambassador for the last five years and I cannot thank you enough for the support you have shown me, and through me, Denman. I recall our last Oxfordshire WI weekend there in November 2019, the year of OWI's centenary, it was the best weekend ever! We have our memories, no one can take them away – and this photo of Chris Cox of Cleeve by Goring WI is a wonderful image that always springs to mind when I think of that weekend. Such joy and energy!





DENMAN

Virginia Lawrence | 01865 331521 | sv.lawrence@btopenworld.com

DENMAN COLLEGE IN HISTORY

This photo was taken at the opening of the college on 24 September 1948. Lady Brunner on the left was the member who put the Resolution to members asking them to agree the idea of a residential college for the WI; Lady Denman is centre after whom the college is named and Sir Richard Livingstone on the right, a great proponent of women's education, he first muted the idea of a college to members in 1943 and stayed our friend and guide throughout.



A very big thank you for your support, in whatever way this was given. Without that support Denman would not have survived to give so much pleasure to so many.

DENMAN AT HOME



The name lives on and under the heading of 'DENMAN AT HOME' we will continue to have the chance to do some wonderful and varied courses. These are, for the present, being conducted online. However, there is still a wide range of subjects to choose from. They include various crafts, cookery, a lot of history, singing, Qigong and other gentle exercise classes. Some of your favourite tutors are taking part too, think John Vigar, Simon Gregor, Peter Lawrence, Louise Talbot

(the cheese lady) and Elaine Whittaker. At just £5 per session it's an opportunity for you to get to know Denman Tutors and to enjoy some very special time with them. Check out www.denman.org.uk/calendar for more information.



PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Chairman - Veronica Wilson | 07855 414045 | veronica.wilson@oxfordshirewi.co.uk

RESOLUTION TIME 2020/21

The deadline for receipt of Resolution submissions by NFWI Public Affairs is 11 September 2020 – this is an absolute deadline – wild horses will not make them accept anything later!

So have a Zoom meeting, make it into a mind-blowing session, thinking and debating topics. You need to decide on something you are passionate about; research why it is important; draft it by being specific in the actual change you want; ensure it calls on an organisation e.g. ‘the Government’ to bring in the change you want.

A submission form and guidance notes were sent to your secretary in July. Then fill in the NFWI form also available on *MyWI* under Public Affairs and send it to National but please copy me in so that I can verify it. Just as simple and quick as that! Help available from me by phone or email and NFWI Public Affairs will also help if it needs slight alteration. It really is as simple as that – so please don’t hesitate, just act.

CLICK HERE:

https://mywi.thewi.org.uk/public-affairs-and-campaigns/resolution-submissions-2020?SQ_ACTION=login

LINK TOGETHER CAMPAIGN

Currently very appropriate for many people – especially some of our own members and friends and more especially important over the next few months. Whether we have been isolating or shielding we may all now be suffering from some form of nervousness about going out, mixing with people, shopping, or attending our WI meetings. This is only natural so we all must take care of each other.



Link Together

to alleviate loneliness

But did you know that people who suffer from loneliness include; 28% of new mums; 1.2 million people aged 65 and over; 32% of people with long term health problems; and of these people 75% do not know where to go for help. So as part of our Link Together Campaign we should look out for people who fall into these categories in our communities – perhaps they live on their own, have new babies or are members of our WI – please consider the possibility they need help – try to befriend them and even encourage them to join your WI. Display the Link Together Campaign Information booklet in your meeting on the Information table.

CLICK HERE:

<https://mywi.thewi.org.uk/public-affairs-and-campaigns/current-campaigns/link-together>

#OVERTOYOU

Thank you to all of you who are submitting articles for 'Over to You' pages. Remember that we can only reproduce decent quality photographs, so please send them in as JPEGs in as high a resolution as possible (300 dpi) or large from a phone and send as individual attachments – no collages and not embedded in Word documents or in emails. Good quality prints by post are also ok. If intended as a front cover contender, please remember they should be in portrait orientation, to fit the cover. By receiving photos for *News & Views*, Oxfordshire WI assumes that permission has been given by the people featured for their photo to appear in *News & Views* and any other Oxfordshire WI media.

STAY IN TOUCH



WEST WITNEY WI sewing group, Ilona Povey, Margaret Lund, Val Burton, Allyson Walley and Diane Clapton, have been busy making items for the NHS and local care homes. They have made 450 masks, 500 scrub bags and 40 hearts (keepsakes for Mums and Babies born during the pandemic) as well as many other items. Now Witney Library has reopened, a selection of these items is on display in the showcase as you enter.

We have continued weekly quiz evenings and coffee mornings on Zoom and have also held two monthly meetings. The first was a catch-up to say hello to everyone. The second we had a speaker, Laura Stone, who recounted her volunteer work teaching school children how to cook and then with the charity Roots in London. She was teaching cookery to disadvantaged people in the area. When the centre had to close due to the lockdown, a local pub continued providing meals, sleeping bags and clothes to those in need. It's a great way to stay in touch.

Val Lester, West Witney WI

BUMBLE BEES

"I wondered if you would be interested in these images that I have taken during lockdown of the very busy bees in my garden. I have taken them with my iphone and am really pleased with the results!"

Julie Giles,
Wendlebury WI



WALKING



A few **BOTLEY WI** members went for a walk in the rain and I took this photo and called it

'A Walk in the Rain.'

Jenny Holloway,
Botley WI



WARBOROUGH AND SHILLINGFORD WI have held their inaugural Walking Group meeting - 10 walkers and 2 joined afterwards (waiting for hip replacements). All socially distanced. Now we are going to meet fortnightly.

Pat Norman, Warborough and Shillingford WI

CRAFT TOGETHER, APART

STOKE ROW WI have of course not met as a WI, but we have kept in touch via WhatsApp, sending messages and photos of our gardens, jigsaws and anything else we have been up to. Zoom meetings have been a boon to some and one member particularly enjoyed the OWI one on book folding. Penny made four items as a result of Graeme's demonstration, as shown in the photo,



which have now been despatched to her two grandchildren who conveniently had birthdays in July. Small groups of members have also met for craft and book club, keeping at a safe distance in the open air. Most members are however staying in or seeing just family in small bubbles, having shopping delivered and perhaps seeing just one member at a time for a walk until the worst is over.

Penny Noble, Stoke Row WI

Oxfordshire WI Chairman: Catherine Blaxhall

Oxfordshire WI Treasurer: Pauline Goddard

The opinions expressed in *News & Views* are not necessarily those of the Oxfordshire WI.

Oxfordshire WI Secretary: Linda Mustill

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Office Opening Times: Currently closed

Company Reg. No 2775236.
VAT No. 1953428 40.
Charity Number 1019967

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Closing date for September issue:

FRIDAY 21 AUGUST

Designed By:

Holly Daniels

Cover picture with thanks to:

Celia Crook,
Bloxham WI

Stay safe,



OXFORDSHIRE

Stay connected