

NEWS & VIEWS SPECIAL EDITION

theWI
INSPIRING WOMEN

Issue 5
July 2020



OXFORDSHIRE WI





Dear members,

I hope by now you will have heard about the three - month extension to your subscription this year and the subsequent move of the subscription month from January to April from 2021. This extension period is very much in line with other major charities and the additional benefit is that we have long been aware that many of our members have found January a difficult month to pay their subscription so this is very good news for them. The cost involved in this extension is not inconsiderable to the NFWI and to Oxfordshire WI and we really appreciate your support to 'Stay Safe & Carry On' and maintain some sort of normal service, either electronically, by contacting members with telephone calls, delivering small gifts of cake or even an old fashioned letter sent to a shielding member within your own WIs during this unprecedented time.

We are continuing to offer a programme of activities for members to enjoy online but have had to introduce a small charge now. I hope you agree the programme has been outstanding and the speakers excellent. We are delighted that members appear to be happy to help towards the cost of providing this programme by purchasing tickets and we feel confident this online offer will form part of the package of activities in the future too, although like everyone else we can't wait until we really can all meet again in person in the traditional way.

You will see the lovely tribute to the late Barbara Gray MBE from her friend and Trustee Trine Lucy, so all I will say here is that Barbara was one of the most inspiring women I have ever had the privilege to know. It was with huge gratitude to Barbara's lovely family that I, alongside two previous Oxfordshire WI Chairmen, Pauline Goddard and Valerie Cantrell, was able to attend her graveside funeral. As 'Jerusalem' was played in the graveyard (no singing allowed) I hope she could sense our hearts bursting with pride as we said our goodbyes.

I am very sorry to have to report that Rebekah Pugh has stepped down from the Oxfordshire WI Board of Trustees. She has been hugely influential and creative in making so many of the wonderful things happen this year that we have been able to offer members and we are extremely grateful to her. We wish her all the very best for the future in her next venture and I am certain that whatever it is it will be a great success. Thank you Becka.

The digital version of *News & Views* has been so popular during the past three months that we are considering making it a permanent feature alongside providing printed and audio versions. We have been extremely lucky to have had a fantastic volunteer, Rebekah Pugh who has created the excellent 'special editions', but we now need to make use of a professional designer again and let Becka take a well-earned break. Do please let us know what you think about this latest version.

As lockdown eases, many of us are feeling more confident about going out and about again and I sincerely hope that it won't be too long before I can visit you in your WIs and meet you all personally. Thank you to all of you who have contacted me with your good wishes. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all my fellow Trustees very much for their hard work and commitment on behalf of Oxfordshire WI and all our valued members.

With very best wishes to each and every one of you.

Catherine Blaxhall
01367 241500
07736 698738
catherine.blaxhall@oxfordshirewi.co.uk

Catherine Blaxhall

BARBARA GRAY MBE



Following the sad loss of Barbara, a good friend writes:

I first met Barbara in the early 1980s, not long after I myself had joined the WI. The county offices were then in Middle Way, North Oxford. By then Barbara already had a long WI life behind her, with a wealth of experience, having steered Oxfordshire WI with her excellent leadership.

As I got to know Barbara, I realised that this person had a unique talent with people. Somehow, she managed to spot where the individual talents lay and managed to gently suggest and point them in the right direction.

Very many of us would not be where we are today were it not for Barbara. She had strong opinions, but never wavered in her loyalty to friends. A stickler for protocol and correctness.

When the Foreign Affairs Committee was formed, she insisted I join. My goodness, she knew how to run a Committee. Food, raffles, speakers, and venues, she taught us all how to organise an event. I was honoured to take over that committee as Chairman when she finally decided to step down. Her final Oxfordshire WI committee, having chaired all of them through time.

I could go to her with anything, we sorted the world out many times over. She became the dearest of friends. Our shared interest of literature caused many heated discussions about certain books we had both read. We talked on the phone for hours.

She had a passion for cooking, always willing to share her expertise. I can now make a perfect Victoria sponge thanks to Barbara. She had the biggest collection of cookery books I have ever seen.

The most extraordinary thing about Barbara was her vision to modernise the WI. It was a vision she retained to the end of her life. Women's needs today are not the same as when we were fighting for the vote. She valued our heritage but could always see the importance of positive change and the needs of today's women; although she did not want to own or learn how to use a computer, she could see we needed to change. She reflected on the dreaded Covid-19 and felt strongly that we need to go BACK to BASICS.

Barbara was a champion for the importance of the WI's college, Denman, which became another passion for her as education was her priority, having read geography at Liverpool. She was eager to show me around the city when we attended a National Conference there several years ago.

She was thrilled to bits to be awarded the MBE in New Year's Honours list for 2016 for her service to the WI. The obligatory photo had to be taken days later as it tipped down with rain the day it was awarded.

I was lucky enough to spend an hour with her recently and as sick as she was, her mind was razor sharp. 6 frozen oranges and a bag of preserving sugar needed to be made into Marmalade. Oh! and there is a New Home present for you in the cupboard.

Her contribution to OFWI is extraordinary. I will miss her so much.



Trine Lucy

To book your space please click here or visit:
www.oxfordshirewi.co.uk/events

MELANIE GIBSON-BARTON EVA BRAUN - VICTIM OR CONTRIVER? MONDAY 13 JULY 7PM

Hear the story of the woman who devoted her life to Hitler. The material of the talk is sensitively presented in order to appeal to a wide audience.



Tickets:
Members only £5

SARAH SLATER - WORKING WITH THE GHOSTS OF HAMPTON COURT PALACE MONDAY 20 JULY 2020 2pm

“Working with the ghosts of Hampton Court Palace’ is my most popular talk, I talk about my experiences working with the ghosts at Hampton Court Palace, the history, stories and sightings. When you walk around the palace at night on your own the whole building takes on a very different atmosphere. Hampton Court Palace is said to be one of England’s most haunted locations and there have certainly been many ghost sightings recorded, including two of Henry VIII’s wives!”



Sarah Slater is a founding member of Ottershaw Night Owls WI in Surrey. She has worked at Hampton Court Palace in Surrey for twelve years as a State Apartment Warder, Tour Guide and Guide Lecturer. Sarah loves working at the palace and gets to meet lots of interesting people from all over the world every day and pass on her love for the palace.

Tickets: Members only £5

JANINE KILROE - A PHOTOGRAPHER'S TALE, 30 YEARS IN THE BUSINESS MONDAY 27 JULY 2020 7pm



The adventures of a female photographer / videographer. World travel, famous people, flying a drone, then all the way to the Royal Academy and Saatchi Gallery. Photography and videography throughout talk.

Tickets: Members only £5

JEFF ROZELAAR - EVA PERON: SAINT OR SINNER - PART ONE THURSDAY 23 JULY 2020 2pm

This presentation is split into two talks about this controversial female historical figure. Part One tells her story from the humblest beginnings to her meeting with Colonel Peron.

Part two deals with her meteoric rise to power and her iconic position with huge numbers of Argentines. Part two takes place on Thursday 30 July at 2pm.



Tickets: Members only £5

JEFF ROZELAAR - EVA PERON: SAINT OR SINNER - PART TWO THURSDAY 30 JULY 2020 2pm

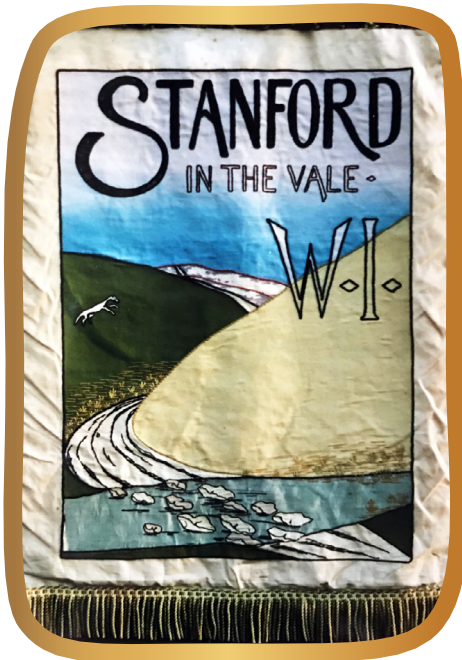
This presentation is split into two talks about this controversial female historical figure. This afternoon’s talk deals with her meteoric rise to power and her iconic position with huge numbers of Argentines.

Tickets: Members only £5



CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

STANFORD IN THE VALE WI



Stanford in the Vale WI was formed in 1920. Early record books were lost in a house fire during the Second World War, and the month has been consequently unknown. Recent research, however, suggests the most likely date of our founding to be 7th July 1920. Several precious articles have survived from those early years. The banner, designed in the early 1920s by Mrs Kate Hunter, the first secretary, depicts the origins of the name of the village. The STONY or STANE FORD is where the main road crosses the River Ock and the VALE beyond is overlooked by White Horse Hill. A second article of historic interest is a tablecloth embroidered with the names of all 84 members in 1932. An early photograph dated 1927 has also survived. It shows WI members dressed in outfits which resemble countries of the world. The occasion is unknown but could be part of a village pageant. Recently, many of the people pictured have been named.

For just over 50 years, Stanford WI was a member of the Berkshire Federation of Women's Institutes. Then, in 1974, due to county boundary changes, we became an Oxfordshire village and transferred to the Oxfordshire Federation. Membership numbers have fluctuated over the years. At present, it stands at 43. When the 50th anniversary was celebrated in 1970, it was recorded that, sadly, no founder members remained. In contrast, two of today's members have already reached 50 years as members and some others will be doing so soon.

Records and Scrapbooks reveal that Institute members have taken part in various forms of community service over the years. These include tree planting, providing a seat by the bus stop, organizing outings for elderly residents, campaigning to improve local bus and library services and the provision of a stamp machine outside the Post Office (in the 1970s).

Due to the uncertainty of the exact date of our formation, we have always celebrated our anniversary in March, at the AGM. However, this year to celebrate the centenary, plans are being made to have a special function each month in addition to the monthly meetings. These will include outings to gardens, visits to the theatre, walks, footpath clearance and socialising at various venues for lunches and teas. A major 100th Birthday Party will be held towards the end of the year. Plans for that are still under wraps!

Stanford in the Vale WI is considered to be the oldest continuously functioning organization or club in the village. Congratulations to all past and present members and surely, we will continue for *another* century!

Margaret Grant

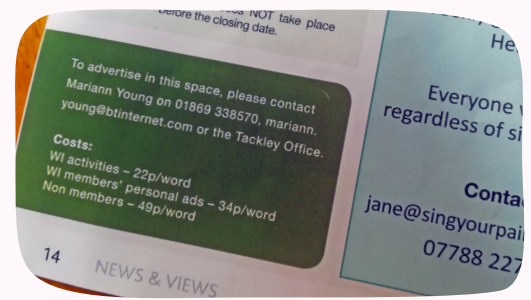


THANK YOU

Our *News & Views* magazine is put together by a whole team of people; staff, outside companies and of course volunteers.

As you are aware, the format has changed recently and so we'd like to take this opportunity to thank Mariann Young as she has now retired from the team.

Mariann has managed the "small" ads section on the back pages for many years, collecting up the copy, proofreading it and of course, counting up the number of words to create the invoices!



FROM YOUR TREASURER

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

REFUNDS

We have discussed several times in our Board Zoom meetings whether events were cancelled or just postponed. Sadly, we feel, even if the Government were to lift all restrictions on groups being in close contact, many of our members would not feel comfortable attending such an event. Two of the planned meetings which we had thought would only be postponed but are now cancelled are Speakers Selection and of course, Oxfordshire's Annual Meeting. You will appreciate our staff have been furloughed or are working from home, so we need to ensure all members due a refund have been caught in the net and not forgotten.

Refunds will definitely be sent out and hopefully this will be as soon as I can pop into the empty offices and sign cheques and stick stamps. Probably, this will be by the 2nd week of July.

Apologies for holding on to your money for all this time, but no one anticipated this lockdown would have lasted so long. Meanwhile, don't forget to look on our website for updates on the varied talks we are offering you. Something for everyone we hope.

<https://www.oxfordshirewi.co.uk/>

TRAINING

During June, Louise Kelly and I hosted a series of Q&A sessions for Treasurers which we hope were informative and useful. Watch this space as Louise may be persuaded to do some more!

BARBARA GRAY MEMORIAL LECTURE

With the recent loss of Barbara Gray, we know many of you will be thinking about a memorial donation. If you do wish to contribute, would you please make out cheques to the OFWI as usual but write on the back **Barbara Gray**. Any donations will be recorded in the Memorial Book.

We are planning to hold an annual "Barbara Gray Memorial Lecture" and any funds will be channelled into this event. We expect the subject matters to be diverse but will always embrace education of women as this was her passion. We sincerely hope this is an event for which we can plan in 2021 and for many years to come.

400+ CLUB

Hello to all the lucky winners in the first draw managed since lockdown.

Conducted by Trustees, socially distancing in a member's garden, we had dug out the time-honoured heirloom holding the numbers of all participants. I have listed names and amounts below, but please be patient waiting for the postman bearing gifts (well, cheques anyway) as I now have to get someone to countersign the cheques with me before we can send them on to you.

MARCH DRAW

£50 Yvonne Jones
£50 Shirley Marsh
£50 Suzanne Broughton
£100 Christine Ashmore
£100 Jill Ochiltree

APRIL DRAW

£50 Anne George
£40 Morwenna Mercer
£30 Lynne Enston
£20 Jane Ahern
£20 Beryl Lascelles

MAY DRAW

£50 Robbie Foster
£40 Lesley Thompson
£30 Joyce Skipp
£20 Mary Green
£20 Vibeke Jackson

JUNE DRAW

£50 Eileen Johnson
£40 Graeme Gettings
£30 Sue Myburgh
£20 Wendy Thompson
£20 Anne Croxson

FROM THE OXFORDSHIRE WI OFFICE

Linda Mustill | fedsec@oxfordshirewi.co.uk



theWI Raffle 2020

WI _____ BLOCK CAPITALS
FEDERATION _____
NAME (Mr / Mrs / Ms) _____
ADDRESS _____
POSTCODE _____
TEL. NO. (INCL STD) _____

Support the largest women's voluntary organisation in the UK

1st PRIZE £10,000 cash

2nd Prize Holiday for 2 to Croatia on *The Coast of Explorers & Emperors* cruise - donated by Jules Verne (approx. value £3,900)

3rd Prize Magimix 3200XL Food Processor - donated by Magimix (approx. value £250)

4th Prize 2 top price tickets to a Show in an ATG theatre, with hospitality in the Ambassador Lounge - donated by Ambassador Theatre Group (Mon-Fri. Subject to availability. Exclusion dates apply)

Plus 3 runners-up prizes
Book Value £10

60% of proceeds go to Federations

theWI INSPIRING WOMEN

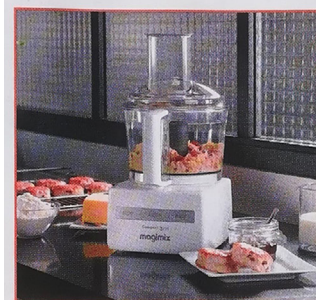
CLOSING DATE 25 SEPTEMBER 2020



1st PRIZE
£10,000



2nd PRIZE
Cruise Holiday for Two to Croatia*
Donated by Jules Verne



3rd PRIZE
3200 XL Food Processor**
donated by Magimix



4th PRIZE
Two Top Price Theatre Tickets***
donated by Ambassador Theatre Group

NFWI RAFFLE

A reminder that the NFWI Raffle is going ahead as planned and any sales you make at your WI are also beneficial for Oxfordshire WI as we receive a share of the proceeds. Contact your WI Secretary to find out how you can buy your tickets.

The closing date is Friday 25 September 2020.

OFFICE HOURS

Please note that the office continues to be closed until further notice. Post is however being collected on a regular basis and do please continue to email me with any queries.



MEMBERSHIP SUPPORT

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

I am honoured to take on the role of Chairman of the Membership Support Committee supported by Veronica Wilson as Vice Chairman and the rest of the WI Adviser team. By the time you read this we will be in our sixteenth week of COVID 19 and all that it brings with it. We have learnt a new vocabulary this year; lockdown, quarantine, shielding, self-isolating, daily briefing, track and trace, social distancing, the R, home schooling, bubbling and of course Zoom. All these words and phrases will have different realities to each and every one of us in how they impact on us.

The WI movement is built on communication, support, education, fun and laughter. From what I hear from WI Advisers many of you have ticked these boxes. You have communicated with newsletters by email or by printing them off and posting them through members' doors. I'm sure you've had conversations from the bottom of the drive too. I hope many of you have signed up for the online newsletter and booked into the speakers that OFWI have worked hard to provide. You have been helping in your communities with prescription deliveries and sewing of masks. I've seen some very pretty ones around. I hope you have had some fun and laughter too.

Now that restrictions are being relaxed, we can see family more and meet in gardens in groups of six. I can see the cake being served! Talking of cake, congratulations to South Oxford WI who delivered a beautifully packaged piece of cake to every member prior to their Zoom Annual Meeting which their Adviser, Jean Geary attended. They even travelled to East Hanney to give her a piece! Nobody knows when we are going to be able to meet again in large numbers.

Please stay safe until that time comes and support each other. Remember your WI Adviser is always there to help in any way. Please get in touch by email or phone if you have any queries or to tell us about lovely things your WI is involved in.



Best wishes from the Membership Support Team

FROM A NEW PRESIDENT TO OUR NEW CHAIRMAN!

Dear Catherine,

As the new President of **WEST OXFORDSHIRE WI (WOWI)** I thought I would write to thank you for your letter in issue 4 of *News & Views*. It was encouraging to read that you too feel yourself to be 'a newbie'. I was elected President on the day the Prime Minister ordered the lockdown, so it has been a very strange situation.

However, I'm proud to say that even in lockdown WOWI is a very energetic WI. You will see from the attached newsletters* that we have been making good use of Zoom for our meetings, and also busy in other ways.

Linda Durrant, WOWI

* thank you Linda - the excellent WOWI newsletters for May and June you sent us are too large to include in our own *News & Views*.



#MYVIRTUALWI

NEWS FROM OUR WIs HOLDING THEIR FIRST ZOOM MEETINGS!



WATERSTOCK & TIDDINGTON WI held their first online meeting via Zoom. It was very successful. Our Secretary, Caroline, provided a fun quiz all about ladies. There was plenty of gin and laughter; it was nice to see our members smiling after all this time.

Louise Simpson, Waterstock & Tiddington WI

ZOOMING FROM NEW ZEALAND



WARBOROUGH AND SHILLINGFORD WI had its first Zoom members meeting in June - a talk on the Bay of Islands, New Zealand by our President, Liz Eaton, who is still stuck in NZ. We had 16 members at the meeting. We had practiced Zoom with a Tea and Chat session the week before.

Pat Norman, Warborough and Shillingford WI



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:

- A cake or other baked item – saying what it is.
- A planted container with brief plant list.
- A best kept vegetable plot or container – identify the plants!
- A craft item you have completed (this year) – give a brief description.
- 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 JPGS. 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.



MEMBERS BEING CREATIVE

I have been asking our **SUTTON COURTENAY WI** members to send me photographs of what we have been doing during self-isolation to give us all a smile and it keeps us all in touch. I've had different photos which include their different style of craft work, their blooming gardens and their baking. My contribution was a photo of a half empty glass. (Well somebody has to do it.)

But I had to admit I was amazed with the beautiful crocheted presentation of the band Queen which Carrie Barnes has just finished. Perhaps you would like to include her photograph in the next *News & Views*?

Val Melville, Sutton Courtenay WI



THE FaB WI CRAFTS

I just wanted to send you a couple of pictures of what the **FaB WI** have been doing the last month.

Each member was given a small square of cross-stitch to complete; we will then sew them together to form a wall hanging. This will be a memento from our lockdown.

Francesca Fowkes, The FaB WI





COMBINED ARTS

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



LADY DENMAN CUP - “What I heard on the Bus”

Thank you to those of you who have already sent in your entries. A reminder that to allow a fair and standardised competition timescale, the closing date has been extended to **Friday 18 September 2020**.

This creative writing competition could be the perfect way for you all to ‘escape’ and let your imagination run wild. Maybe you have never thought of entering before but with more leisure time at the moment this would be a great opportunity.

Using no more than 500 words, the topic is ‘What I heard on the bus’.

Add your name, address, WI and Oxfordshire federation on the first page only, please send 4 copies of your entry which must be accompanied with your entry form, (plus a stamped address envelope if you wish your story to be returned) and a cheque made payable to OFWI for £4 to the office or email for BACS details.

After this date, county federations have until Friday 16 October 2020 to select up to three entries to go forward for national judging. Results will be announced by mid-December 2020.

The schedule, individual entry form and federation are available to download from MyWI: <https://mywi.thewi.org.uk/interests/culture-and-science/lady-denman-cup-competition>

Writer’s block? There is also a link to download a list of creative writing hints and tips from the very best - the NFWI Judges.



WISHH COMMITTEE

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

“HOW TO SLEEP WELL”

November 24, 2020

Northcourt Centre Abingdon,
Morning only.

Dr Neil Stanley, a Director of Sleep Research has agreed to give a lecture on various aspects on how to sleep well.

Whatever sleep problem you might have there are expert tricks and tips that will help you get the sleep you need. Hopefully we will be able to run this event.



“WHEN THE DOGS DON'T BARK” with forensic pathologist, Angela Gallop.

This event had to be cancelled but we are hoping to reschedule this **MAYBE** late February 2021.

Hopefully all the members who wanted to come will not be disappointed.

For both events, look out for further details in future issues of *News & Views*.





NFWI PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

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

NFWI have just published the list of committee members and I'm very pleased to announce Oxfordshire Chairman, Catherine Blaxhall will now be a member representative on the NFWI committee for Public Affairs. Congratulations Catherine.

RESOLUTIONS

I hope you are all well and managing to keep safe and busy in our forced restrictions on movement, distancing and washing hands. Still no signs of permitted campaigning and meetings. So, what can we do in Public Affairs? First, I really recommend logging in to MyWI where there is a comprehensive update on Virtual meetings – fully printable, simple instructions on how to run ZOOM meeting. So, have your own WI meeting to debate resolutions for next year – just time to do so for 1 September. Please contact me for help.

CURRENT CAMPAIGNING

NFWI are focusing on; **End Violence against Women & Girls, Sustainable Development, and Climate Change** – the latter two are particularly relevant in the gradual opening of our economy and the need to include and implement change in line with these principals.

END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN & GIRLS

Did you know that 1 in 4 women experience domestic abuse, women and girls are 27% more likely to be harassed online and in England and Wales, two women are killed each week by a current or former partner? Consequences suffered from abuse are serious, including mental health, substance abuse, homelessness, offending, gang involvement and prostitution. So, continue to raise awareness by writing to our MPs and asking if they support the current Bill going through Parliament, lobby local authority Councillors to provide more Women's Refuges, support your local refuge and raise the importance of vigilance and early intervention to prevent violence.



SUPPORT OUR COMMUNITY

Many of our WIs are making scrubs, bags, and masks for the NHS though UK Crafters Oxfordshire. They are now asking if any of

our WIs would be interested in providing masks for your local community by dressing a prominent tree with them to be given away to our local community – if you are interested in taking part in this please contact me ASAP.

Keep well and safe,
I look forward to hearing from you.





DENMAN AT HOME

At present Denman are offering a series of on-line talks and cookery demonstrations.

For more information go to their website or Facebook page <https://www.denman.org.uk/>



DAY VISIT WITH FLORAL ART DEMONSTRATION Monday 21 September 11am-3.45pm

We're looking forward to welcoming you back to Denman, this time for a Day Visit with a Floral Art Demonstration. For those who have never been to Denman, this is a super opportunity to visit and see what wonderful facilities our College has to offer. The day includes tea & coffee with biscuits on arrival, a tour of Denman, its grounds, rooms and history.

Also, lunch with dessert and a look at the Denman shops, the floral art demonstration

by a Denman tutor and finally a Cream Tea to finish the day. A wonderful day out, do join us.

Tickets - £40.00 payable to **OFWI** and sent with SAE to OFWI, 5 Court Farm Barns, Tackley, Kidlington OX5 3AL. Queries to Virginia Lawrence.

FABERDASHERY SALE Saturday 12 September 10am-3pm

We can't wait to open the doors again on this popular event. We have so many bargains lined up for you. So many items to replenish your stash, whether that be as a sewing queen, a paper crafter, knitter or any other crafter, we have replacements in plenty! So much fabric of all colours, textures and size. Lots of wool and needles, reams of paper and masses of craft accessories. Let's hope for a sunny day so that you can enjoy the grounds of Denman too, perhaps bring a picnic and then you can browse our tables at leisure. We can't wait to see you.

Car parking and admission are free. Tea & coffee will be available.

Make sure this date is on your calendar – it's too good to miss!



#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.

GREAT SPEAKER

Members of **WOWI** were very pleased to welcome Lisa Glover as our speaker on Zoom this month with 25 members joining the meeting. Lisa was an officer in the British Army, joining after university in 1988. The Women's Royal Army Corp (WRAC) at that time was not allowed to be armed, apart from a rounders bat! Basic training at Sandhurst involved carrying a stick rather than a rifle or sword at drill. Lisa was the first and only female officer on her first posting to the 2nd Battalion Light Infantry and described how her fellow male officers would not speak to her in the mess initially. With persistence on her part, they came round. She also found that the more junior soldiers came to talk to her about problems they wouldn't normally discuss with colleagues. Her description of female toilet facilities in a male environment caused some amusement for us although more than a few problems for her at that time.

Lisa described many of her varied and fascinating experiences in the British Army, including tours in Northern Ireland (with a visit to the Maze Prison), Arctic training where she learnt to ski, and a difficult time spent in Iraq. She met her husband through the army and continued service until 2017, having 2 daughters along the way. Lisa felt that women could add value in the male environment with 8% of the British army female by the time she left.

Lisa was an excellent speaker and it must have been difficult for her as we were all muted during the talk and so she did not get any feedback such as laughter at her stories, although she could see some of our expressions of horror!

Debbie Johnson, WOWI

SHARING GOOD IDEAS



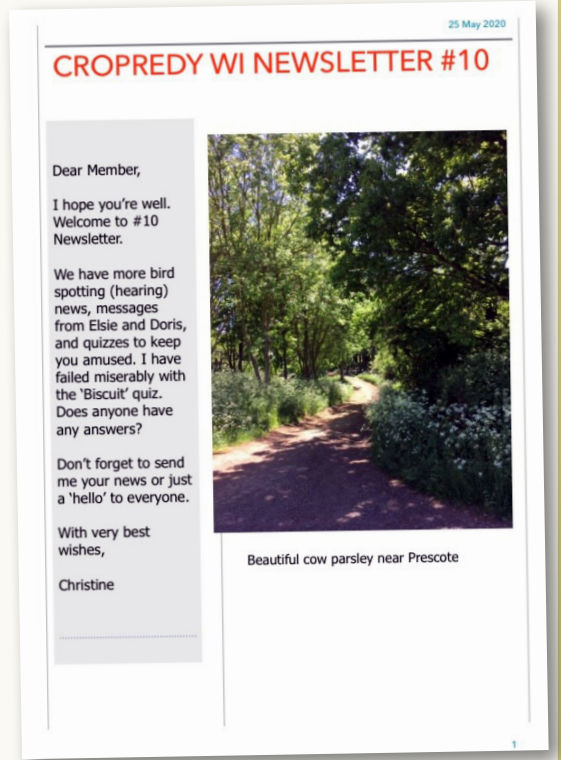
Members of **WATERSTOCK & TIDDINGTON WI** loved the idea from **THE TEA BIRDS WI** who provided Goody Bags for all their members, so with apologies to them we stole their idea! Our President Louise and Treasurer Rebecca worked very hard to source and pack into bags a Mindfulness Puzzle Book, tea bag and biscuits and some hand cream to soothe sore hands. Louise also wrote a card with a message to each member. The Goody Bags were very well received by everyone who really seemed to appreciate their small gift in these difficult times.

Caroline Robinson, Waterstock & Tiddington WI

WEEKLY UPDATES

Members of **CROPREDY WI** have been missing our meetings and also our regular trips out. We managed to visit the Royal Academy to see 'Picasso and Paper' just before lockdown but cancelled our trip to the V&A to see the 'Cars' exhibition, and London Hat Week, where we visit the international exhibition where one of our members exhibits, has been postponed. However, trips for 2021 are already being planned! We are keeping in touch with a weekly newsletter filled with contributions, photographs and messages from members. We have accounts of Oxfordshire WI Zoom talks that members have joined and suggestions of books, radio and TV programmes and websites that members might like. One member is a volunteer lock keeper and writes regularly; this has prompted another member to tell us about her experiences living in a lock keeper's Cottage during the working days of the canal in Cropredy. The week before VE75 we featured members' recipes. The week after we had photographs of members celebrating. We have a regular bird-spotting feature, noting the first swallows and swifts to return to the village. One member weekly bemoans the fact that she has not heard a cuckoo despite spending most of her time outdoors! We all enjoy the newsletter but are looking forward to all being together again.

Christine Garland, Cropredy WI



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Closing date for News & Views:

Last day of each month

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Cover picture with thanks to:

Pauline Buzzard,

Milton-under-Wychwood WI

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