

Warwickshire WI News



Inside this issue:

Member News

Thursford Christmas Spectacular!

WFWI Sub Committees News

And so much more....



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Cover Picture:
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Chair's Message

As I write this, I am just getting ready for our dress rehearsal for the village pantomime. All in all, it has been a very busy start to the New Year for me. I have been lucky enough to join Alcester WI at the start of their centenary celebrations. We were treated to a lovely meal at the Arrow Mill, with cake, flowers and a gift from the WI. They have lots more planned for the year ahead.



I also joined Bulkington WI for their celebrations for 90 years and Budbrooke WI celebrations for 70 years. These are marvellous milestones and show how the WI is continually evolving and adapting but maintaining the friendships and fellowship at the heart of each WI. My own WI hosted our neighbouring WIs to an evening of curling - which got much better as the evening went on! Lots of laughter and sharing of stories and ideas - just what we all needed in a gloomy January.

Plans are coming together for, not only the AFM in October, but also a great variety of events that the Trustees and sub committees have planned for the coming year. We look forward to you joining us, having lots of laughs and learning something along the way!

See you soon

Sue

Editors' Column

Welcome to our first digital edition of 2025!

There are four digital and four printed hard copies per year, all of which contain different content.

Don't forget to order your **printed hard copies** to share - at only £2.50 for the year for four copies (WIs can order more!) it really is great value. Your WI Secretary/Treasurer has the 'order form' so please ask them to order your copies.

We cannot wait to see what you have been up to with your 'Chair's Challenge - best of your area' this year! Do include us on your planning 'to do' list - we really do look forward to receiving your articles and photos. (Please remember to obtain permission for images).

The days are getting longer, and brighter evenings are just around the corner! A perfect time to look forward to spring events, outdoor activities, and plenty of WI gatherings.

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Treasurer's Corner

Attention All Treasurers: Is Your Gift Aid Up to Date?

Now is the perfect time to ensure your Gift Aid records are accurate and complete. As members renew their subscriptions, we encourage you to:

- **Remind members to check and update their Gift Aid declarations.**
 - Has their address changed?
 - Are they still eligible for Gift Aid?
- **Encourage those who haven't signed a Gift Aid form to do so.**

Even if your WI doesn't claim Gift Aid, WFWI and NFWI can still benefit from members' declarations and claim their share of the subscription-providing a vital extra income stream.

Let's make the most of this valuable opportunity!

For assistance or additional forms, please contact Anne Bloxham
E: annebloxham@btinternet.com

giftaid

IFE Column

Book an Independent Financial Examiner (IFE)

Don't forget to book an IFE especially if your financial year ends in March, April or May, to ensure your accounts are ready for your Annual Meeting later in spring/ summer. Complete the IFE request form that was attached to the January secretary's newsletter email or contact the office on E: admin@wfw.co.uk

Get your accounts in order

Ahead of your WI year end you may have questions or need help to balance your accounts. That's where your IFE contact comes in. The IFE role is to help and support WIs in all aspects of finance by offering advice about the WI finances to all members of WI committees, especially the Treasurer and President. Ensuring all WIs across the Federation comply with the financial guidelines of the Federation, NFWI and the Charity Commission is an important part of their work. They are very happy to give advice or meet up with Treasurers throughout the year to guide and help them in their role.

You can find contact details for your allocated IFE contact on pages 17 and 18 of the *Warwickshire Federation Directory 2024/25*.

Thank you to those with Autumn Annual Meetings who have already submitted a copy of their Financial Statement for last year. If you have forgotten, please send in a copy to the Federation Office as soon as possible.



REMINDER



Warwickshire Federation 'What's on and events calendar' is updated regularly and has a host of events available for Members (and guests if stipulated) to book and take part in throughout the year. Covering all sorts of topics including Serious Science, Craft, Poetry, Days Out, Shopping Trips, Training, Quizzes and Competitions - to name but a few! All events are listed and available to book (via Ticketsource) on the Warwickshire Federation website [here](#).

Why not check it out?

Also, please don't forget afterwards to send in your photos and a few words on an event you have attended!



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Warwickshire WI News

Call Michelle on:
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Public Affairs Sub-Committee News

Campaign Update: No more violence against women and girls

Notes from a meeting held between members of WFWI's public affairs committee, the office of the police and crime commissioner (OPCC) and Warwickshire Police...

Given that Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) is endemic across society and remains disturbingly present in the UK, your Public Affairs committee called a meeting to discuss what future plans/strategy are in place across Warwickshire and to ask what progress has been achieved recently. Whilst the government has repeatedly committed to ending VAWG as a priority, it remains the case that every three days, a woman in the UK is killed by a man and one in four women experience domestic abuse in their lifetimes.

We discussed areas of the draft Police and Crime Plan For Warwickshire 2025 - 29 specifically affecting VAWG and worked through a wide agenda, covering topics such as prioritising prevention, supporting victims, pursuing perpetrators, rape and serious sexual offences (RASSO) procedures to name but a few. We learnt about the Warwickshire Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 2023-26 which sets out a three-year approach to ending VAWG in Warwickshire, making the county a safer place for victims and survivors of abuse, how behavioural change programmes are being used to help perpetrators recognise and get help with problems. Telling as well as reporting issues was discussed; if you see or know of something that could be a future problem tell someone, it doesn't always have to be the police. Educate our young people to intervene if they see friends going in the wrong direction i.e. if the lads are out on a night and one of them gets too aggressive towards a woman, tell them to stop and think about what they are doing. The need to focus on preventing abuse by early intervention as well as support for victims. There are plans to involve community groups in many areas and to this end, the OPCC will be inviting us to join support groups, which we look forward to.

There is no doubt that there are a lot of good initiatives and plans in place, that progress has been made with the introduction of new



Left to right: Martin Kendall (Tactical VAWG Lead), Marina Kitchen, Sue Gill, Emma Daniel (Deputy PCC), Richard Long (Head of Policy and Partnerships, OPCC), Anne Bloxham.

protection orders, Claire's law etc all having a positive effect on the reporting of offences and bringing perpetrators to justice. You will no doubt be aware through media reporting about how long it can take for a case to come to trial, often meaning that victims drop their case before it comes to court. There is a serious backlog of cases waiting to be heard in the courts but some of this is because there is a serious shortage of trained judges, solicitors and barristers specialising and qualifying in this area which could be due to the fact that they can earn more elsewhere in the law. Is this something the WI could bring pressure to bear on?

But, sadly so much more to do.

**Sue Gill, Anne Bloxham - Public Affairs committee
Marina Kitchen - WCC and President of Nuneaton Acorns WI**

Dental Health Matters – *Let's get creative!*

At Public Affairs, we're always looking for ways to promote our important campaigns. One brilliant idea we've seen recently is WI members crafting homemade lapel badges for Dental Health Matters.

We'd love to encourage all WI craft groups and members to get involved by creating bunting, badges, or similar items with campaign wording. These can be displayed or handed out at events to help spread our messages far and wide.

Why not make badges that attendees can take away for free? Pair them with any toothbrushes or toothpaste you've collected - everyone loves a freebie, and it's a great way to raise awareness!

Let's get creative and showcase the power of WI campaigns!

Happy campaigning!

Anne Bloxham, Public Affairs Committee



Membership & Promotion

Running your WI

Just as individuals are all different, so each WI can be very different to others in how they are run. As a recently qualified WI Adviser it has been so lovely coming out to WIs and seeing just how varied they all are. I have also picked up some really good ideas to take back to my own WI.

If we look back at the WI's history, this was not quite the case. Back in the early history of the WI movement they were run very formally and for very good reasons. Many of our founder members were suffragettes who were not only campaigning for suffrage, but for women to be educated and valued as citizens of a modern Britain. Whilst women who owned property could vote in local elections, become poor law guardians and sit on school boards with the passing of the Local Government Act of 1894, they were specifically excluded from voting in national elections and had been since The Great Reform Act of 1832. This meant that very few women had the chance to experience being on committees or voting on matters that affected them. This changed for those women who joined the fledging movement. Minutes of those early meetings show votes taking place on whether biscuits should be provided amongst other things. The emphasis was on a real democracy – hence the secret voting for the President so the Lady of the Manor would not be voted in out of deference! Every meeting was minuted in comprehensive detail. Much of this would seem quaint and old-fashioned in today's modern world, but then it served a real purpose.

In today's world we are all experienced in voting and many WI Members have had committee-type experience in the workplace, so this early

emphasis has changed. Indeed, to be relevant to women today such old-fashioned ways may well exclude women from considering the WI is for them. The WI movement has adapted to try and stay relevant to the world we now live in. Many WIs no longer sing Jerusalem, and some are very alternative in their program. There is no right or wrong way for your committee to run your WI. You may well find that things change slightly when you elect a new President and committee. This is normal and healthy for your WI. Provided you abide by the constitution of the WI, and your accounting is done in accordance with the WI financial requirements, then each WI is free to organise themselves as they wish.

There are some things you must comply with – having an Annual Meeting where your Officers report back on the year's events and your Treasurer presents the accounts to be accepted. A secret ballot should be held for the election of your President if more than one person from your committee is wanting to take on the role. Committee members should sign the Trustee Eligibility and Responsibility Form each year and the Annual Report should be completed and returned to Federation Office with a copy of next year's programme.

Your advisers are there to help with issues around the WI Constitution and they are happy to help discuss ideas on running your WI. Please contact your WI Adviser if you wish to discuss any issues you may have. We are here to help.

Emma Sharp
WI Adviser

Important announcement

Our Adviser fees are changing from January 2025.



Due to the rising cost of living and increasing prices, we regret to inform you that we must adjust our charges for Adviser services, as follows:

- > Attendance at an Annual Meeting - £15.00
- > Attendance at a WI Committee to give advice – the cost will be based on mileage.

We sincerely appreciate your understanding and continued support as we navigate these changes together.

Membership & Promotion Sub-Committee

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Creative Activities Sub-Committee

'Making the most of your sewing machine' workshop - January

It may have been cold and dreary outside, but it was warm and cosy in Federation House when 22 WI members came together on a January Saturday for a three-hour session learning how to 'make the most of their sewing machines.'

This workshop was delivered by members of the Creative Activities (CA) Committee in response to requests from members who had either been gifted or inherited a machine or found one in the attic and had no idea how it worked.

It was obvious that New Year resolutions were being acted upon as both the morning and afternoon sessions were booked up in record time. Attendees had the opportunity to take on three projects (increasing levels of difficulty): a Morsbag (straight sewing and French seams), a cosmetic purse (interfacing and inserting a zip), and a project bag (inserting a zip and binding).

Once everyone was plugged in and threaded up, fabric chosen and level of competence established, they were off on their respective projects under the guidance of CA committee members. Issues with loopy stitches, broken thread or needles coming unthreaded were almost all resolved by reference to instruction manuals and taking things in small steps.

Jean, from The Revel WI brought along a beautiful old Bernini machine that she'd had for her 21st birthday in the 1970s and not had out of the loft for years. It was two shades of green, recently serviced, purred like a Rolls Royce and stitched beautifully. With guidance from CA members, Jean was able to identify her zipper foot (from a huge tin of original accessories), how to install it and together we located a secret dial that swung her needle to one



Pictured left: Clare and Karen (Old Milverton WI) with cosmetic bag and Morsbag



Pictured left: Mandy and Bron (Kenilworth WI) with cosmetic bag and project bag



side to enable her to put a zip into her cosmetic bag. She was thrilled to bits and was looking forward to setting up her new sewing space at home for the first time in many, many years.

By the end of each session confidence was soaring and members were delighted with what they had produced. One member said before we started "I have all the gear and no idea" but afterwards "I've learnt so much this morning and made things! I've loved the session."

Suzanne of Cawston WI made a project bag with CA member Angela and said "I thoroughly enjoyed Saturday's workshop and would be interested if it is run again making something different. I have since made a second money bag for my banking for Guide Dogs"

A day of WI skill-sharing over tea and biscuits - a great way to spend a Saturday!

Look out for more workshops [here](#).



Jean (The Revel WI) with her 1970s Bernina

Trish Handsley - CA Committee

Leisure Activities Sub-Committee

WFWI Christmas Tree at St. Mary's Church Festival 2024

The WFWI Christmas tree proudly took its place among 70 beautifully decorated trees at the St. Mary's Church Christmas Tree Festival in Warwick.

Our tree highlighted the NFWI resolution 'Dental Health Matters', with mostly biodegradable decorations. The stunning display featured tooth fairies crafted from wooden toothbrushes, complete with cardboard fairy wings and biodegradable glitter.

The festival showcased an incredible variety of creativity from charities, local businesses, schools, Warwick Court Leet, bellringers, and retail businesses- each contributing a unique and original tree.

A wonderful way to spread awareness and festive cheer!



Exciting Events Ahead – Kicking off with the Annual Darts Tournament!

The **LA Committee** has been working hard to organise a variety of events for everyone to enjoy, and we're kicking things off with our much-anticipated **Annual Darts Tournament!**

Good luck to all the teams - we can't wait to see some fantastic matches!

Our ever-popular **Jam, Chutney, and Marmalade Competition** took place in February. It was wonderful to see so many talented ladies taking part and showcasing their skills - what a fantastic start to the year!

We're delighted to welcome **Nancy Hawksworth** to **Federation House** this May! Well known in WI circles for her expert skills and show judging, Nancy will be demonstrating the art of **Crystallisation**. Last year, she shared her invaluable jam and chutney-making tips, helping us make the most of our autumn bounty- and we're excited to learn from her once again. We'll also be joined by Carol, who will be offering advice on any preserve items that members bring along. Don't miss this fantastic opportunity to learn from the best!

We have two fantastic events lined up for June:

- **Guided Walk of Stoneleigh Village** – Led by local historian and author **Sheila Woolf**, this is a wonderful opportunity to explore the rich history of the village.
- **Annual Treasure Hunt in Kenilworth** – Think you know Kenilworth? Our treasure hunts always uncover something new!

More details will be shared soon, so keep an eye out.

Looking ahead, we're also planning a coach trip to visit some beautiful gardens at the end of summer- a perfect way to round off the season! We hope you'll join us for these exciting outings.

We're excited to be organising **Archery** and **Walking Rugby**, and final details are currently being arranged.

As soon as everything is confirmed, we'll share all the information with you - so watch this space!

We look forward to bringing you more opportunities to get active and have fun.

The WI Lottery

Our Warwickshire Federation WI Lottery is now live!

£1.00 per ticket - that's right, unlike many other lotteries, our lottery tickets are only £1 per week.

With a £25,000 jackpot prize!

If you are feeling lucky and would like to support us, please find out more [here](#).



**We are looking for
new members to join
our friendly team...**



The Leisure Activities Committee is made up of Federation Trustees and WI members. We meet alternate months to discuss and plan trips and workshops and sporting activities. We are looking for new members to join our friendly team.

Anyone interested would be most welcome to observe at one of our meetings. For further information contact Glynis Forknall: forkins01@yahoo.co.uk

Please let us know what you enjoy so that we can help you to achieve it. Even better, why not join our committee to make your own input?

Speakers' Spotlight

Get Cooking – Ullenhall WI

End of 2024 brought a talk on one-pot cooking by Anne-Marie Lambert.

Originally from York, she was raised in a household where her mum used to conjure meals out of thin air! She had a knack for stretching a roast and turning leftovers into new meals by adding store cupboard staples. After completing a BSC (Hons) Environmental Management & Technology degree in 1995, Anne-Marie worked as an Environmental Officer at Gleneagles Hotel.



For the last 14 years she has run her company 'Get Cooking!' and is well known as a budget cooking expert in Warwickshire, having appeared on various local BBC radio stations and BBC 5Live over the years. Anne-Marie gives many talks on how to reduce food waste, budget cooking, and how to be more sustainable in the kitchen, along with delivering cookery demonstrations at WIs and local food festivals. She teaches various cooking styles, emphasising affordable seasonal plant-based recipes and more traditional cooking and baking.



Over the last forty years, food education has changed, leading to two generations leaving school without skills to produce cheap, quick, healthy meals and repurpose leftovers, leading to increased sales of ready-made meals and possible ill health as a result.

'Get cooking' offer a range of award-winning cooking experiences and parties for individuals or groups, both on-line on Zoom and in person in Warwick, Leamington Spa and throughout Warwickshire.



For us Anne-Marie produced a biryani and chapatis, all made from scratch and very tasty. Even though we have been cooking meals for our families for years, many of us were surprised to pick up some tips during the evening. Previous WI talks have apparently led to husbands being gifted a place on one of her group courses!

If you are interested in a course yourself or gifting one, check her website [here](#).

Wellesbourne Group of WIs – Cat Weatherill

In October, 60 members from the Wellesbourne Group of WIs were joined by NFWI Chair Jeryl Stone, Federation Chair Sue Postlethwaite and Trustee Glynn Forknall for a speaker and supper evening in Wellesbourne Village Hall.

Our speaker was Cat Weatherill, professional storyteller and best-selling author, appearing internationally at literature festivals, in theatres and on BBC radio. Listed on our Federation Speaker List as 'Cat has always been a late starter. Now, at the age of 60, she has started riding a motorcycle. How? Why?'

Cat gave a fantastic inspiring and empowering talk about 'A New Life in Leathers' and encouraged everyone to 'face the fear and do it anyway!'

The evening was a real team effort: Newbold Pacey & Ashorne WI provided a tasty ploughman's supper; Wellesbourne WI looked after the housekeeping, Hampton Lucy & Charlecote WI organised the raffle and Bridgetown WI sold the tickets.



Raffle prizes were provided by WI members and local businesses. Attendees were generous in their support which enabled us to donate £200 each to our chosen charities: Shipston Home Nursing and Myton Hospice.

The Group Committee met in February to share ideas and start planning the autumn 2025 Group event.

**Trish Handsley
Wellesbourne Group of WIs**

Ploughman's Lunch



Cat Weatherill and her bike!

Thursford CHRISTMAS SPECTACULAR



We're thrilled to offer you a festive overnight 4* trip to **THURSFORD CHRISTMAS SPECTACULAR**, Norfolk, in conjunction with Harry Shaw Group Travel.

- **Departure:** Thursday 20th November 2025 (approx. 8:30 am, choice of pick-up points)
- **Return:** Friday 21st November 2025 (early evening)
- **Price:** From £275 per person (members, guests & partners welcome) 2 DAYS, 1 NIGHT
- **Accommodation:** 4* **Knights Hill Hotel, Kings Lynn** (DINNER included, evening at your leisure)

Trip Highlights:

- **Thursford Christmas Spectacular** – Hugely popular Matinee show at 2pm (ticket included, face value £52.00)
 - **Cambridge Stopover** – Morning shopping & sightseeing before heading home
- ✓ Full ABTA Protection



Important Information:

- **Single rooms are limited** and allocated on a first-come, first-served basis (£25 single supplement)
- **Minimum of 30 required** for the trip to proceed (cheques/card details will not be processed until confirmed)
- **Booking deadline:** 17th April 2025



How to Book:

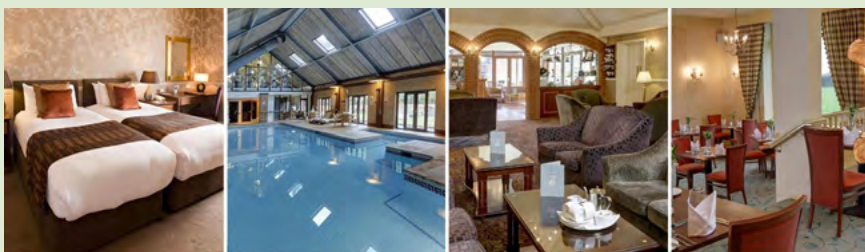
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- Request a form via email: admin@wfw.co.uk
- Call: 01926 419998
- Scanned forms can be emailed back if preferred
- Download a brochure and booking form [HERE](#)



Pick-Up Points:

- **Stratford-upon-Avon** – Bus Stop, Mulberry Tree, Bridge Street
- **Warwick** – Tesco, Bus Stop off Emscote Road
- **Coventry** – White Street Coach/Car Park
- **Nuneaton** – Bus Station

Don't miss out on this **magical festive getaway** - secure your place today!



Members News

Bidford-on-Avon WI

Prior to the craft presentation, there was a buzz in the room as the members of Bidford on Avon WI were looking forward to something different, a craft demonstration in needle felting. Members were looking forward to creating something themselves.

Helen Cooper from the Butterfly Effect Studio initially spoke to the members about her career and the path that led her to having a wonderful art and craft studio. This allows her to carry out many different craft workshops. At the centre of the room, there was an amazingly colourful and varied display of examples of Helen's many different creative techniques including needle felting, glass fusion, paper craft and journal making. Helen gave the WI members a very clear, step by step tutorial on how to use the needle to manipulate the wool in order to model the features of our different designs. She made it very accessible for all the members whether a complete novice or a more experienced member. The WI members were given an array of different coloured wools, needles and bases to create their own needle felted piece. Helen gave lots of advice, both as a group and one on one, to guide the WI members on how to build up colour, shape and create texture on our pieces.

With her history of being a secondary school Art teacher, it meant that Helen created a wonderfully supportive environment for the members to create beautiful brooches, Christmas decorations and card inserts. Her enthusiasm for crafting when sharing her knowledge and skills really shone through. By the end of the session, the members left with a unique creation, knowledge of the felting technique and the confidence to develop this skill further. Letting ourselves relax into a creative project had a really positive effect allowing the WI members to switch off. What a true inspiration and talented teacher Helen Cooper is, enabling the members of Bidford on Avon WI to get into their creative zone.

Jodie Kirby
Bidford-on-Avon WI



Members News

Burton Green WI

Some things change while other things are just made to last!!!

Many of you will know that Hodgetts Lane WI changed its name to Burton Green WI in 2023. The reason for this was that HS2 handed over a new village hall to the Community and WI Members voted to change the name to Burton Green WI to reflect the move away from Hodgetts Lane.

HS2 contractors demolished the old village hall in Hodgetts Lane and were asked to locate a 'time capsule' that had been buried under the hall when the old hall was built.

At our annual meeting in October 2024, Secretary Eileen Nisbet informed members of the first item in her report 'Last year was all change in Burton Green, new venue and new name, however, we had a blast from the past when HS2 unearthed a 'time capsule' buried when our old Village Hall was built in Hodgetts Lane in 1982. One of the objects in the capsule was a WI badge (pictured) which had survived better than all the other items. Eileen went on to say that she thought it very symbolic of the WI, remaining strong throughout!

Readers will note that it is a West Midlands Federation badge since Hodgetts Lane WI was in West Midlands Federation for a time (one of the WI's affected by the then Government's boundary changes).



**Jane Davies-Sayer,
Burton Green WI**

Shipston on Stour WI at Art in the Cotswolds Exhibition

Over the weekend of 30th November – 1st December, Shipston on Stour WI provided teas, coffees, and homemade cakes for the Art in the Cotswolds Exhibition at Townsend Hall.

It was a fantastic event, and we were delighted to support the artists and visitors with our refreshments. Here's a picture of the artists and Shipston on Stour WI members at the end of a very successful weekend.

We're thrilled to share that the artists have already booked us again for next year—what a wonderful testament to our WI spirit!

**Bridget Smith, President
Shipston on Stour WI**



A Special Postbox Topper for Remembrance Sunday

One of our very talented Deering Regent Daytime WI members created a stunning postbox topper for Remembrance Sunday, beautifully representing each branch of the armed forces.

Alongside the display, we included an information sheet about the WI and all it has to offer- helping to spread awareness of our work within the community.

Naturally, the topper has received many positive comments, and we are so proud of this thoughtful and creative tribute.

Thank you to everyone who admired and supported it!

**Jose Royal,
Deering Regent Daytime WI**

Members News

Nuneaton Acorns WI

To start our new year, we had the pleasure of the company of members of Warwickshire & Solihull Blood Bikes, a dedicated group of volunteers who provide an essential and life-saving service to our local hospitals in Coventry, Warwickshire, Birmingham and beyond!

We were delighted to see such a great turnout for a truly informative and engaging presentation on the highly trained riders and support staff who generously give their time and skills to help others.

As a registered charity, they rely solely on the support of the local community and generous donors. They do not receive any monetary funds from the NHS. All our ladies who came out on a cold night to learn and be inspired by these selfless volunteers gave generously in donations, and we thank them so very much for doing so.

Every pound donated goes directly towards maintaining their fleet of motorcycles, ensuring they are in tip top condition to carry out their life-saving missions. They provide an invaluable service to hospitals, clinics and response teams throughout our local area, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week all year round!

Their dedication and insight made for a fascinating talk, and they come highly recommended as speakers. Please see their [website](#) for further details.



Above & right: Marina (Acorns President) 'sitting tall' and accepting our Certificate of Appreciation.



Members and guests enjoying the 'Blood Bikes' presentation

Tysoe WI Supports Royal British Legion Fundraiser



On 10th November 2024, 100 Tysoe villagers gathered at the Village Hall for an afternoon of "Respectful Entertainment" in support of the Royal British Legion.

Tysoe WI was proud to contribute by providing a delicious afternoon tea of homemade cake, scones, jam, and cream, all generously baked and donated by our members. Our craft group also decorated the hall with poppies and WW1-themed bunting, adding to the atmosphere.

Our committee members volunteered to set up and serve, and we're delighted to share that the event raised just under £1,000! While we didn't do it alone, we were thrilled to play our part in such a worthy cause. The quality of our baking and generous portions were greatly appreciated - thank you to everyone who attended and supported the event!

Eileen Mann
President, Tysoe WI



From left to right: Chris Harrop (Secretary) Liz Percival (Treasurer) Linda Johnson (Committee member) Eileen Mann (President).

WFWI Bookworms

Over Christmas we chose a light-hearted read *'Away with the Penguins'* by Hazel Prior which is described as follows by Amazon: *'Veronica McCreedy is about to have the journey of a lifetime...'*

Veronica McCreedy lives in a mansion by the sea. She loves a nice cup of Darjeeling tea whilst watching a good wildlife documentary. And she's never seen without her ruby-red lipstick.

Although these days Veronica is rarely seen by anyone because, at 85, her days are spent mostly at home, alone.

She can be found either collecting litter from the beach ('people who litter the countryside should be shot'), trying to locate her glasses ('someone must have moved them') or shouting instructions to her assistant, Eileen ('Eileen, door!').

Veronica doesn't have family or friends nearby. Not that she knows about, anyway... And she has no idea where she's going to leave her considerable wealth when she dies.

But today... today Veronica is going to make a decision that will change all of this.'

We had a good turnout for our January online meeting, all cosy at home after reading this story of Antarctic penguin obsession in below zero temperatures!

One of our number read the book, loved it and immediately read the next two - Call of the Penguins and Gone with the Penguins. Although the first book stands alone, there was more padding to the back story and definitely more exploration of the characters which gave the book more depth.

We wondered if the three-book deal was already agreed before the first novel was finished as it really felt like information was being held back to be drip fed in future.

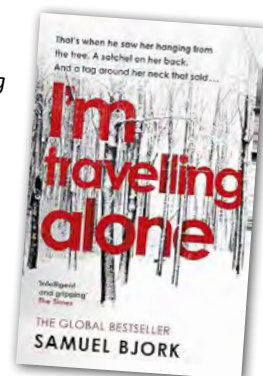
There was general agreement that it was an easy read for the Christmas period and the main character was kind hearted under all her bluster. A fair few of our number did not warm to the characters at all, finding them annoying and unrealistic. The grandson in particular was not universally popular and there was much discussion on which generation the house-keeper came from!

Overall, we scored this book 7.3 out of 10.



Our chosen read for the next couple of months is a Scandi police procedural called *'I'm travelling alone'* by Samuel Bjork which is described thus by Penguin:

'When the body of a young girl is found hanging from a tree, the only clue the police have is an airline tag around her neck. It reads 'I'm travelling alone.' In response, police investigator Holger Munch is immediately charged with re-assembling his special homicide unit to solve the murder.'



Our next online meeting to discuss this book: Tuesday 25 March at 7:30pm

Six members of the online book group met for lunch and a catch up in early February at Astley Book Farm, Bedworth CV12 0NE. This cafe and book shop sits in farm buildings and transport containers up an unassuming lane but is apparently the largest second-hand bookshop in the Midlands. Its an amazing place with thousands of books and a great cafe, the second time our group have met here.



Trudy browsing one of the many shelves of books on offer

All WI members are welcome to join our online book group. We usually meet on Zoom, the last Tuesday of alternate months (March, May, July etc). Just register with Katie in the office on E: admin@wfw.co.uk and you will be sent a reminder and the Zoom log in a few days before the meeting.

Enjoy curling up with some spring reading.

Trish Handsley & Ruth McCartney
WFWI Book Worms co-ordinators
Warwickshire WIs



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