



Isle of Ely News

theWI
INSPIRING WOMEN

July 2020

Chairman's Column

My clearing of cupboards (long overdue) has continued when the weather has not been quite right for gardening. Slides, photographs and even cine films have been viewed and some have gone back in the cupboards, although far fewer than there were originally.

Judith has also been clearing out cupboards and found this photo of speaker Anne Widdicombe, taken at our Annual Meeting in 2008. This brought back memories of the difficulties related to Anne's travel. There were delays with trains on the main line from London to Peterborough and further north so she missed her connection to March. Thanks to mobile phones, arrangements were rapidly made for Anne to take a taxi to Whittlesey and for me to drive to collect her there and get her to the meeting in time for her talk. All went well until, accompanied by Judith, I took our speaker back to Peterborough Station, only to find that all trains were cancelled until the next morning. With an engagement in Wales the next day, Anne had to get back to London that night so we set off in the direction of Westminster and on to her home in South London. Our guest said she would get some sleep on the way and asked to be woken when we were in the capital. I woke her at Baker Street Station to get directions for the rest of the journey, at which point she phoned her nephew to ask him to get the kettle on. Little did we think we would ever be having tea and biscuits in Anne's home in the early hours of the morning!

Driving in central London has never bothered me, having had my second driving lesson around Marble Arch and along Park Lane, and knowledge of the area helped that night when we encountered closed roads due to overnight roadworks. We arrived back in March as the milkman was doing his rounds. Neither of us had much sleep before setting off for work that morning but we had certainly had an interesting experience, thanks to the WI.

We still do not know when our WIs will be able to meet back in Community Centres and Village Halls. In the meantime, many of you are finding different ways of keeping in touch with your members. Thank you for sharing this information with us.

Thank you to Kate Phillips for providing the interesting article about Lady Denman. I have certainly learned something from that.

With all good wishes

Val Ware
Federation Chairman

Membership

One of the bonuses of Lockdown for me has been time to think back over the years of my WI membership – all forty-eight of them in four different Federations and I have the badges to prove it! I was first a member of Silverstone WI in Northamptonshire taken there by a lady who used to teach me. At that time I really had no idea of what the WI was all about. I found out, bit by bit, and over the years I have achieved a great deal, from being an Officer in my own WI to sitting on the Isle of Ely Federation BOT and being an NFWI Board member. I also honed my skills in Bakery and Preserve making gaining my Judges' and Demonstrators' Qualifications.

I wonder what interesting memories you have from your membership of our great organisation? Take a few moments to write them down. What have been the highlights of your WI membership? These memories could form the basis of a very interesting WI meeting. They will be something to have to hand if a speaker lets you down at the last moment or why not make your WI memories your whole meeting, perhaps the refreshments could be items that have been favourites at WI meetings. This could be a good way of getting everyone chatting when you all meet up again and letting new members know a little more about the Organisation they have joined.

This has also been a time to sort out my paperwork. If you are an Officer or Committee member I hope you have been doing the same. How easy it is to put things into a folder 'for later'. Now is the time to get everything up to date, recycle any non relevant papers and be ready with a tidy folder for your next meeting. Keep up with your advertising even though you are not meeting at the moment. It is important to show that the WI still has a presence so updates in Village Magazines are a must. Maybe a local paper would write a column about how your WI is rising to the challenge of Lockdown. Women still want to join the WI. I had an enquiry only last week from a potential member.

Keep safe and well and keep the wider public informed about your WI.

Rosemary Green
Membership Chairman



NFWI Board of Trustees Officers and Committee Chairmen 2020 – 2021

Following the special board meeting which took place on Friday 5 June 2020 I am writing to confirm the NFWI Officers and Committee Chairmen for 2020 – 21 as follows:

Officers

NFWI Chair Lynne Stubbings

Hon Treasurer Julia Roberts

Vice Chair Ann Jones

Vice Chair Jeryl Stone

Please note that the Officers, unless elected as Chair of the individual committee shall be ex-officio on all committees.

Committee Chairmen

Committee	Chair	Committee Members
Activities	Sally Kingman	Maureen Hancox, Chrissie Booth, Mary Clarke
Denman	Jeryl Stone	Yvonne Price, Toto James, Mair Stephens, Catriona Adams (Chair of WIE Ltd. ex-officio)
Finance	Julia Roberts	Chrissie Booth, Helen Carter, Catriona Adams (Chair of WIE Ltd. ex-officio), Jeryl Stone (Chair of Denman ex-officio)
Membership	Hilary Haworth	Yvonne Price (Chair of Training & Development ex-officio), Toto James, Nicky Amos, Sally Kingman
Public Affairs	Ann Jones	Mary Clarke, Nicky Amos, Catriona Adams, Maureen Hancox
Training & Development	Yvonne Price	Hilary Haworth (Chair of Membership ex-officio), Sally Kingman, Mary Clarke, Helen Carter

We will confirm Member Representatives on NFWI committees shortly.

Ann Jones is the NFWI ACWW Representative and Catriona Adams is the Assistant ACWW Representative.

Please also note that Mair Stephens, Chair of the Federations of Wales Committee continues as an ex-officio member of the NFWI board.

If you have any questions relating to NFWI committees, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Melissa Green
General Secretary

NFWI Board of Trustees has decided that in these exceptional circumstances, the results of the shortlist selection process will be used as a proxy for the Annual Meeting vote.

The shortlisting selection results were:

2020 resolutions		Selections
1	A Call to increase potential stem cell donor registration	38,280
2	Female crash test dummies	9,124
3	End modern slavery	35,395
4	Time to talk about death and dying	9,820
5	Protect our precious helium	11,705
Total selections received		104,262

In the shortlisting selection stage, the two resolutions (stem cells and modern slavery) attracted a clear majority of selections from members (over 70%).

The Board felt that this was the most democratic means available to determine the outcome of this year's resolution process taking into account time and resource constraints and the challenges of the current lockdown period. The Board also wanted to recognise the huge amounts of time and effort that members, WIs and federations put into the resolutions process this year.

This means that the two resolutions have now been adopted by the WI, and members are free to campaign on these issues.

The resolutions are as follows:

A call to increase potential stem cell donor registration

End Modern Slavery

Given the ongoing restrictions on meetings and campaigning activity, the NFWI will not be producing campaigns materials to our usual timetable, but will instead first focus ways that members can learn more about the issues raised by the resolutions, with full campaign packs to follow later.

Public Affairs

After having a Zoom meeting with NFWI Public Affairs committee, I am now able to let you all know what has happened with the Resolutions that were due to be voted on at the Annual Meeting in London.

It has been decided that both the Stem Cell and Modern Day Slavery resolutions should go through, so campaigning on these will go ahead as soon as we are able to have meetings and when we have further information from National.

We are fortunate to have speakers available, that are expert in both subjects, who were previously booked for our planned resolution meeting. They will come and give us the information that we need to proceed with these as soon as it is safe to do so.

In the mean time please keep safe and well and hopefully it won't be too long before some sort of normality starts to return.

Beryl Brooks
Public Affairs Chairman

NFWI Annual Meeting 2021

I am delighted to be able to share with you, on behalf of the NFWI Trustee Board, that following the cancellation of our 2020 Annual Meeting we have been fortunate enough to re-book with the Royal Albert Hall for 2021. The event will take place on **Monday 19th April 2021**. I also wanted to take this opportunity to acknowledge that we are conscious that this date is slightly earlier than usual for our Annual Meeting and that this may pose challenges for some of you in terms of other scheduled events. Like you however we have experienced the challenges of moving and re-booking events during this uncertain period and so have experienced the same constraints in terms of scheduling. We were very fortunate to be able to secure a new booking at the Royal Albert Hall in what is their 150th anniversary year, but obviously they could not offer us complete flexibility on our date.

Melissa Green
General Secretary

If you were due to go as a delegate or as an Observer for the cancelled meeting this year, please let the Federation Secretary know if you are willing and or able to attend on this date.

The Lady Denman Ferry

On one of my trips to Australia I visited the Jervis Maritime Museum and discovered the Lady Denman Ferry. This is the story with two Photos I took, which as you will see one of them has a Denman Bear sitting on the ship's wheel. MV Lady Denman (formerly SS Lady Denman) is a heritage-listed ship formally operated as a ferry on Sydney Harbour from 1912 until 1979. It was named after Gertrude Denman, wife of the Governor-General at that time and was built in Huskisson, Australia, in 1911.

It operated on the Lane Cove River from 1912 to 1936, on the Cockatoo Island run during World War 11 and runs in the inner Harbour from the end of the war to 1979. The ship is a rare surviving example of the characteristic type of ferryboat which served Sydney Harbour, also the design work by Walter Reeks, an innovative and pioneering Australian naval architect.

MV Lady Denman is currently preserved at The Jervis Bay Maritime Museum, Shoalhaven, New South Wales.

Lady Denman was born Gertrude Mary Pearson in 1884 as the only daughter of Sir Weetman Pearson, an engineer, oil industrialist and newspaper baron who was the Liberal Member of Parliament for Colchester between 1895 and 1910; was created a baronet in 1894 and later became 1st Viscount Cowdray. Miss Gertrude Pearson was called Trudie by her family and learnt much from their lead. She became a sound businesswoman in the mould of her father, and a keen philanthropist and political worker in the tradition of her mother (both mother and daughter served on the executive committee of the Women's Liberal Federation). Her mother, Lady Cowdray, an ardent supporter of the suffragette cause, was as proficient in the world of politics as she was in the ways of a society hostess.

In 1903 Trudie married Thomas, the third Baron Denman. In 1911 Lord Denman was appointed Governor-General of Australia and thus Trudie became first lady. As a young woman with two small children, Lady Denman embarked on a challenging posting in a distant country.

Trudie proved to be exceedingly adept in all spheres of public life during her time in Australia, and to commemorate her name, the ferry boat was launched at Jervis Bay on 5 December 1911.

On her return to Britain, Lady Denman became a Director of Westminster Press Limited, and was invited to become the Chairwoman of the Women's Institute Subcommittee which had recently been established by the Agricultural Organisations Society. When the National Federation of Women's Institutes was formed in 1917, Lady Denman became the first National Chairwoman. Believing strongly in the right and ability of women to conduct their own affairs, Lady Denman was a remarkable leader, setting an exhausting example.

Kate Phillips
Marshland St James



Denman

When we went into lockdown, Denman had to close its doors and the staff worked from home. When lockdown was extended they were placed on furlough. I just cannot image Denman without that buzz when WI members join together meeting old friends and making new ones.

During this time trials have taken place to offer members the opportunity to enjoy their very first Denman courses in the comfort and safety of their own home!

The online courses use the platform Zoom to allow you to watch and engage with Denman tutors and learn new skills. (The wonders of technology)

While Denman is closed these courses will be running from the homes of their tutors, and in the near future will move to Denman to run alongside day and residential courses. For Details Contact: Denman.org.uk

The latest news I have received from Denman is that they hope to open again on the 1st July. For the time being there will be some changes. No host will be on duty, the 'welcome' and college tours will be cancelled, along with day visits. Anyone attending a Residential Course will receive full information of the changes before arrival.

Our next Federation Visit is planned for September 2021, as part of our Centenary Celebrations.

Hoping you are all keeping well and safe.

Patricia Ashmore
Denman Ambassador

Minor Injuries Units

The MIUs at Wisbech and Doddington have been closed temporarily for staff to be deployed elsewhere. The MIU at Ely remains open.

Happy 100th Anne Wall

Anne, a stalwart member of our Federation for many years, celebrated her 100th birthday recently. We sent a card to Anne on behalf of all members. Anne served on the Board of Trustees for many years and was Federation Treasurer before Judith.

Notes from the Federation Secretary

Treasurers

Please arrange for invoices to be paid and sent to Judith Cornwell, the Federation Treasurer.

This is important as many WIs will be closing their books at the end of September,

If you have any issues paying your invoice please do not hesitate to contact me, either by email, or by calling the Federation Office (I pick up any answerphone messages)

Su Rowbotham
Federation Secretary



ENCLOSURES

IFE letters

Having made jam and marmalade and crocheted two blankets for Norfolk Knitters I was all crafted out, so I decided it was time to strain my brain. I looked into the world of online learning and found that there are some wonderful free courses out there. I spent three weeks with Lancaster University learning about the origins of the Quakers. I'm now doing a six week course with Newcastle University on the story of Hadrian's Wall. For anyone looking for a change and a challenge, I thoroughly recommend it.

Anne Barnes
Wisbech Centre

Whittlesey Ladysmith had a great idea of a 'Meeting in a Bag' - a paper bag was delivered to each member. Within it was a tea bag, a choccy cake, a quiz with answers in a sealed envelope, and a colouring picture complete with coloured pencils, and a recipe for an easy cake without flour, along with their newsletter, the Federation Newsletter and any information from NFWI news. Lots of members have said how they appreciated it.

Virtual Meetings

If your WI is having meetings over the internet, we have had a few speakers contact us to say they are prepared to give talks. Please contact the Federation Secretary for details.

In Memorium

Connie Peachey

Connie a long-time member of Wisbech Centre, has died, aged 98. Connie was our Treasurer for many years. She was also a stalwart of the Country Market with her baked goods, and where she regularly served the refreshments. Her cheese scones were famous!

Anne Barnes

Memories

Last month we printed some photographs of a federation meeting, which Judith found whilst clearing cupboards. This prompted a response from Tydd St Giles member, Ann Balls, who was a Trustee at the time. She remembered giving the Vote of Thanks to the speaker.

FEDERATION SECRETARY

Su Rowbotham

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Tuesday and Wednesday 9.30am-1.30pm

NEWSLETTER

Next Mailing will be posted on 28th July
Closing date for submissions to the September Newsletter is 10th August