



Isle of Ely News

August 2020

theWI
INSPIRING WOMEN

Chairman's Column

As you know, we don't usually have a Newsletter in August, but it is, at least, one way of keeping in touch with members in these strange times.

Your Secretaries will have received guidance about the resumption of WI meetings last week. The documents are based on the current Government guidance with the gradual easing of the lockdown situation. I know some of you are planning outdoor meetings in August with perhaps a return to more 'normal' meetings in September. Some of you will face difficulties in returning to your usual venue, either because it has not reopened or due to the fact that it is not large enough to enable members to sit far enough apart. The situation for each WI is different. Board members and Advisers will be happy to provide a listening ear if you would like to discuss any issues you have.

As you will see from Su's note elsewhere in this Newsletter, we hope that March Community Centre will reopen on 1st September, but nothing is set in stone.

Like many of you, the Federation has been using Zoom for some meetings and embraced modern technology in a way we would not have thought of just a few months ago. Judith and I have attended zoom meetings with NFWI and were asked to sign up for one concerning finance. Neither of us had any idea of the devastating news we would hear regarding the proposal to close Denman with immediate effect. Your Secretaries will hopefully have already passed on to you the letter from National Chairman, Lynne Stubbings, with the reasons for this action. Very sadly, Denman is yet another casualty of the Covid 19 pandemic. Without course bookings, Denman could not hope to survive.

Many of our Federation members have, over the years, worked hard to fund raise for Denman, as well as enjoying visits themselves. Two current Board members, initially Denise Hall and then Patricia Ashmore, have given up many hours as our representatives, arranging visits, overseeing developments with our own bedroom and promoting Denman to our members. We are extremely grateful to them for all that they have done.

For 70 years, Denman has been a wonderful asset to the WI, providing educational opportunities for members in an idyllic environment. Those of us who have spent time there will have many happy memories as well as having increased our knowledge and skills.

It is intended that the proceeds from the sale will be restricted to use in providing educational opportunities across the organisation. Hopefully more members will be able to benefit as a result. The Denman at Home courses, which have proved popular with members, will continue. At £5, they are extremely good value for money.

Although few of us like change, perhaps this is an opportunity for high quality tuition to be made available to a much larger percentage of our membership in the future.

At this time of year I would usually be wishing you a happy holiday season. For most of us, holidays have been cancelled this year but at least we are now able to get out and about more whilst maintaining social distancing.

With the prospect of seeing our WI meetings starting up again in the not too distant future, we all have something to look forward to on the horizon.



Val Ware
Federation Chairman

WI Memories – Shoofly Pie

Recently we had the pleasure of a weekend edition of a newspaper with its supplements, very much a treat during this lockdown as we do not have a delivery, and for many years fetched our paper from Upwell. We now subscribe and receive it online, but no supplements.

On opening the supplement, the first thing I saw was a recipe for Shoofly Pie. Memories went into overdrive. In the late 70's/80's our Federation held International Evenings, which some of our members will well remember. They were always well attended. I was a member of the sub committee that organized these evenings once a year. The Chairman was Marie Porter, a member of March Stone Cross WI, I think. We would meet at her home to arrange the evening, choose the country, speaker and food, no different from today. Once the country had been selected then research into the food would begin. It had to be prepared and baked at home, be presented in a selection of taster pieces, to give Members a flavour of the country. Travel agencies were also very helpful with posters and brochures. On this occasion the evening chosen was America, what a scope, Shoofly Pie was the sweet part of the refreshments, very sweet. It is very similar to Treacle Tart using Molasses. We all had several attempts at making this as it very quickly boiled over when baking and looked an utter mess.

I am sure many households will remember sampling Shoofly Pie until we got it right, including my own family. Right we did get it in the end. The name is said to have come from the pie being so sweet, therefore attracting the flies, hence SHOO FLY.

Marie would bulk buy all the baking ingredients, weigh them out and distribute at a committee meeting according to how much baking members were able to do. Members were encouraged to wear appropriate clothing and bring along flags to enhance the event.

I hope this will bring back memories to those who remember and be of interest or inspiration to our new members who may think it could be something different in their own WIs.

We must move forward, technology is now very much part of all our lives and has become more so during lockdown, but we must never forget the friendship, knowledge, skills and social contact our membership of the WI offers.

Hoping you are all keep safe and well

Margaret Sparrow

RUN TO REFUGE

ACROSS A CONTINENT | AGAINST SLAVERY

May 1, 2021 – August, 2021

Dr Tom Crossland, an NHS clinical psychologist living and working in Berkshire, will be spending his summer holidays next year running from Athens, Greece to London, England. As if the distance wasn't enough (around 3000 kilometres), Tom also suffers from cerebral palsy, (a type of motor impairment of the limbs or organs, which imposes restrictions to the activities an affected person may perform fluently). He is attempting this journey to raise awareness of the needs of the most vulnerable people in society particularly refugees and survivors of exploitation and modern slavery.

Tom was never an 'athlete' during his school years; his only achievements in the sporting arena was to race a good friend to not be last! However, he was always an active child. His parents, with hearts in mouths, always stood back and let him take risks. Simply watching him climb to the top of a slide on a playground was a frightening experience and allowing him to build a tree house 15 feet off the ground almost led to heart attacks. He would fall down often and still has scars on his left hip which always seemed to hit the floor first, but over time he compensated and learnt not only to fall less often, but also to accept the pain when he did fall.

At university he met his future wife who introduced him to horse-riding. At last here was something he could do and he became quite a confident horseman. He then discovered rowing and again became a competent and confident oarsman; he raced in the Boston rowing marathon event discovering that, whilst not the fastest, his ability and bloody mindedness to keep going meant he could be a mid-field finisher. He had found physical activities he could compete in; discovering in the process that his talent was not in speed but endurance.

Looking for challenges that would play into his newfound strengths he 'discovered' endurance running events. Over the next few years he progressed from 12 hour/24 hour events, to self-supported ultra-running events lasting over a six or seven day period and covering distances of 250 to 320 kilometres. His resume of events entered and completed make for interesting reading and research: Grand 2 Grand Ultra – 6 day 273km race from the rim of the Grand Canyon to the summit of the Grand Staircase in America; the Thames Path 100 - from Richmond in South West London to the centre of Oxford -...the list goes on.

Following each event Tom's attitude is 'OK that's that done, what's the next challenge?' Then he heard about the plight of people fleeing their homes because of famine, civil war or political upheaval, and the dangers inherent in leaving behind all you know and hold dear; the people traffickers and their conditions when selling their services. It crossed his mind 'That could be me!' and so the next challenge was born. To follow their path towards freedom and a better life.

His aim is to raise as much money as possible by highlighting the plight of men, women and children being sold into prostitution, indentured servitude in hand car washing, farm labour gangs and domestic service and the like. More than 40 million people remain trapped in modern slavery – either forced into labour or marriage. Women and girls account for 71% of these victims. Meanwhile, an additional 152 million children (64 million girls and 88 million boys) are subject to child labour – almost one in ten children around the world! This may not sound like the world we think we live in, but it is. Board member, Jane Crossland is the proud mum of this young man. As you know, WIs, as charities, are not allowed to donate to other charities but you may well be interested in inviting Tom to speak at a meeting, either before or after his run.

email: t_crossland@icloud.com

Membership



In the July Newsletter I spoke about having badges from the various Federations to which I had belonged.

I also came across the badges that I have as a WI Adviser. They have changed over the years not least from Voluntary County Organiser (VCO) to WI Adviser.

I wonder how you are all getting on with your technical challenges. Have you had a go at something new that will benefit your WI when we all get up and running again? Maybe you will have mastered email which will be useful for WI Committees. Set up a group email, which will be useful if a decision needs to be made quickly and there isn't a Committee meeting scheduled. The key thing is to have a special email address for your Committee if possible. There are instructions for doing this on My WI. This ensures that only Committee members receive the emails and when there are Committee changes, the group email can easily be adjusted.

My technical challenge was to download and use Zoom, which I am pleased to say was really straight forward. Since doing this I have enjoyed some 'Denman at Home' courses which Patricia mentioned in last month's Newsletter. They are great value for money at only £5. A really interesting course was by John Vigor, 'Murder, Sex and Mayhem' in English Churches. I shall certainly take a closer look when visiting our older churches.

I also made Fruit Frangipan tarts with Kelly Mauger. These are delicious and they were perfect for a distanced picnic with friends. Recipe on request.



Although I do not post very often on Facebook or Instagram, I do look at what other people are doing. I have seen that many WIs are having Zoom meetings – not always practical – and that some members are beginning to meet up with one another at a distance. WIs are organising distanced picnics and also distanced walks in the countryside. If you have a spot where you could get together at a distance, we should love to hear whether you have tried a distanced catch up.

I appreciate that it will take a while for us all to feel comfortable leaving our home surroundings, but it is such a good feeling to speak face to face with old friends and new.

Rosemary Green
Membership Chairman

From NFWI

Zoom

Like us at NFWI I know many of you have become intimately acquainted with Zoom during the lockdown period and that you, your federation boards and your WIs are using this online platform to ensure meetings and activities can continue to happen. I wanted to let you know that we are currently in discussion with Zoom to negotiate a national licence with the view to being able to offer a discounted rate to federations and WIs in the future to make this more affordable. The details of this arrangement have not yet been concluded and so I am unable yet to share details, but I wanted to let you know in case you or any of your WIs are currently considering taking out a longer-term licence with Zoom. If that is the case then I would advise you to continue paying for a monthly licence for now. As soon as a national arrangement has been agreed then we will share this with you so that those of you who wish to can transfer across to this.

Mellisa Green
General Secretary

Public Affairs

Hello Ladies, I hope you are all keeping safe and well.

Just an update on the Two Resolutions for this year. The following piece has been put forward by the Public Affairs team at NFWI

“The department is currently developing plans for the campaigns and would love to hear any ideas you have for the campaign names,

If you have any suggestions for this, we would welcome your ideas. Please get in touch by email at pa@nfwl.org.uk

The Resolutions are

1. A call to increase potential stem cell donor registration

2. End modern day slavery.

As soon as it is safe to do so, we will arrange a meeting with the 2 excellent speakers we had already booked prior to lockdown. Both are specialists in their own fields who will come and give us more information and discuss with us how we can help promote and campaign on these to very important issues”

Hopefully we will be able to meet up in the not too distant future for socialising and discussion on these two very important matters

Beryl Brooks
Public Affairs Chairman

Recipe: Norfolk boiled fruit cake

Ingredients

- 250g butter
- 150g light brown sugar
- 1 teacup cold water
- 350g dried fruit (your choice, but cranberries are lovely!)
- 1 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda
- 1 tsp mixed spice
- 300g self raising flour
- 2 eggs

Method

Put all the above ingredients, except the flour and eggs, in a pan and simmer for 10 minutes. Allow to cool and then add the flour and eggs. Mix thoroughly. Line a deep 8 inch cake tin and pour in the mixture. Bake on 160C for between 60 and 90 minutes until a skewer comes out clean. Then simply enjoy!

Notes from the Federation Secretary

I am eagerly awaiting the opportunity to return to ‘normal’ and get back to the Federation Office. I have had notification that I will potentially be able to return to March Community Centre on Tuesday 1st September.

Please continue to send any correspondence to the addresses we have informed you of previously. You will be informed as soon as mail can be sent directly to the Office.

Although I could be in the Federation Office from this date I would suggest that you do not visit the Office in person as those visiting the Centre will be subject to strict rules. I will let you know when things are settled, and I am open to visitors!

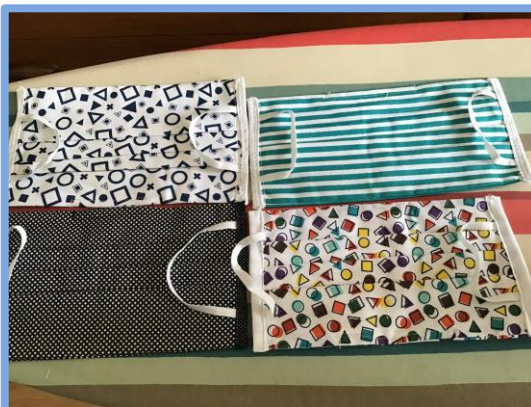
Su Rowbotham
Federation Secretary

Office Closure

15th & 16th September – Su Holiday

Enclosures

Denman
Letter re: WI reopening
Guidance Letter
Risk Assessment Form



Margaret Patterson from **Doddington WI** has been busy making face masks. These are some of her colourful creations

New book available featuring the WI

War, Peace and the Women's Institute

Some of this book covers the first WI in Britain-at Llanfairpwll and some of the amazing founder members - who were literally manning soup kitchens one day and attending balls at Buckingham Palace the next! Written by Barbara Lawson-Reay and available for order at most book shops.

Federation Secretary

Su Rowbotham

Address

Please check flyer for where to send items.

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Email: isleofelywioffice@btconnect.com
or ioefwi@outlook.com

Office opening hours

Tuesday and Wednesday 9.30am-1.30pm

Newsletter

Next Mailing will be posted on 25th August
Closing date for submissions to the October Newsletter is 7th September