

I really think that spring is in the air! My garden is resplendent with the last of the snowdrops, crocus and masses of daffodils. Time to ignore the sewing machine and start clearing the garden – I'm sure Pat will have plenty of advice down on her allotment. The posse of octopuses seems to be growing so please keep crocheting and knitting as these will be collected at our April meeting. Spring seems to have rejuvenated the committee who have come up with lots of new ideas for the pleasanter weather; first they are starting an 'Art Group' commencing Monday 20th March 10am – 12pm at Aspull library. This is aimed at total novice and more experienced members and will initially be run by Hester Smithies. We are also hoping to run a series of 'History Walks' where we have a walk to examine the history of individual towns or areas, obviously with a break to eat, either café or picnic. These will commence in early summer and Wigan is the obvious first venue. The committee will be liaising with Lesley Price so watch out for further information. Yet another idea (you can't fault our committee for enthusiasm) is dog walks in the country. Many of us do this on a daily basis and thought it would be good to meet and walk together, dogs aren't obligatory! These would take place in our local area, Haigh, Borsdane, and all those areas I walk regularly but can't name.

Birthday wishes go to Doreen Kay, Betty Miller and Betty Walls – Betty is also celebrating her Diamond wedding anniversary (60th) what an amazing achievement, have a wonderful day our love and best wishes to you both. It is with regret that we say farewell to Audrey Leyland who finally lost her battle with cancer. Her funeral is at Holy Family Church, Cale Lane, New Springs 11.15am on Thursday, 16th March. Hopefully many of you will be there to pay our last respects to this brave and much respected member.

I have to congratulate Ann Couchman on her wonderful art exhibition – she failed to tell us that this was the prize for winning the biennial Chorley Art competition! (See front cover)

Gill
Photo of committee lunch, perhaps the cause of an increased influx of ideas!



February Meeting

Well we were deprived of our chocolate fix as the speaker was unable to attend and didn't let us know till the last moment. The indomitable Mary was not fazed and managed to produce a new speaker for the evening. Jacki Mafi gave a very interesting and memory provoking talk on sweets; when and how they developed from physics and cures with the introduction of sugar to extravagant declarations of wealth. It was surprising just how old many of our favourite treats are and how many of the adverts we could remember – a real wander down memory lane.

Gill

Competition Results – Valentine themed.

- 1st Margaret Halliwell
- 2nd Glenda Fletcher
- 3rd Jean Ingham

Next Meeting

Monday 10th April, 'Toy Town to Buckingham Palace' a talk by John Stirling. If you remember Muffin the Mule, he was created by John's aunt. You will be fascinated and star struck by this talk.
Competition; A favourite toy.

Annual Council Meeting Southport

WEDNESDAY 8TH MARCH'17. Members from Aspull & Haigh WI attended the Annual Meeting which opened in the usual way by over 1500 WI members joining together in singing Jerusalem! The first half of the business completed, we were introduced to the first speaker of the day – Mandy Hickson – time to 'fasten our seatbelt's for what turned out to be an inspiring and humorous presentation of her life as a fighter pilot! Mandy was the only female pilot on her Front Line Tornado Squadron, flying fast jets for the RAF. She told her experiences of operating in hostile environments, including patrolling the 'No fly' zone over Iraq. Mandy was awarded a flying scholarship at 17 then went on to win aerobatic competitions. Despite her prowess in the skies she failed many computer-based tests – undeterred her self-belief and dogged determination she was given another chance, overcoming insurmountable hurdles in order to get to the top. After 17 years' service in the RAF she retired to spend more time with her husband and children. Now a civilian Mandy draws on her experiences and charisma, training and inspiring others. She continues to support services in the Volunteer Reserves through flying on the Air Experience Flight passing on her enjoyment of flying to Air Cadets. Mandy was given a deserved standing ovation! Lunch was served and we returned to the auditorium.

The speaker in the afternoon was Lesley Smith alias Nell Gwynne. Lesley is curator of Tutbury Castle in Staffordshire - an English Reformationist Medical Historian who entered the stage looking very much the part of King Charles 2nd favourite mistress with cockney accent and bawdy comments! She narrated the story of Nell born 2 Feb 1650. She and her younger sister Rosie were brought up in Coal Yard Alley, The family lived downstairs in squalor. A brothel situated on the first floor. We journeyed thro' the time of the plague and the great fire. Nell worked in theatre first as an 'orange' girl then actress, meeting King Charles when he visited her dressing room. They had 2 sons, Charles who became Duke of St. Albans – and James who died aged 6 years and the rest is history. Throughout the performance I felt that in our time these two unlikely characters could have been happily 'together' as we know that on his deathbed Charles' concern for Nell and her son was paramount.

The National Anthem was sung and the meeting came to a close.



Helen Pic Nell Gwynne or calendar girl Aspull and Haigh style!

Lunch Club

Shrove Tuesday saw about a dozen of our members visiting Parbold W I to enjoy pancakes with a variety of toppings on offer. We went in smaller groups to ease congestion. Coffee or tea and the option to purchase second and even third



helpings, which I couldn't resist. Whilst it seems a bonus to have your own hall for WI it can be a mixed blessing as obviously they are responsible for all its running costs, which is why they appreciate our support at their fund raising events. This made for an unusual but very enjoyable lunch.
Marilyn

For March we decided to link lunch with a visit to Ann's exhibition.



Our lunch venue this month was Café Amb'io in Astley Park, Chorley. A bit out of our usual area but there was a very important reason for going there! Anne Couchman one of our WI ladies has an exhibition of Paintings, including 'Summer Meadow' the winner of the Biennial Chorley Open Arts Competition.

Needless to say we weren't disappointed, Wonderful pictures!!

We all had our favourites but needless to say, I kept changing my mind. Then on to the cafe. The food was delicious, a very good selection especially the cakes. The conversation and laughter flowed to such an extent that we only had time for a short walk through a walled garden then home.
Mary Hart

Art Group

We are going to have the inaugural meeting of Aspull and Haigh WI Art Group on Monday, 20th March, 10am in Aspull Library.

For those who want to join us, if you are a complete novice bring along a picture you like, a pencil (any will do as we will discuss what different pencils do), a ruler if you have one (12 inch ideal), a board/tray to rest your paper on and paper (though there will be some paper available). If you already paint, draw, doodle bring along either a new piece to work on or a work in progress with your materials.

Experienced artists - this will be a group where you can get encouragement, support or just a natter with other artists. For beginners and novices there will be encouragement, however much instruction/information you want and cups of tea, coffee and cake.

Please don't say I can't because no matter how un-art you think you are you will be able to create something.

The cost of the sessions will be £2.00 including a cup of tea.
Hester

Theatre Group

Wigan Little Theatre 1st March Strictly Murder

Although slow to start, this was a well-acted murder mystery drama with a plot full of twists and turns it kept us on the edge of our seats. Based in Provence, France, in 1939 where an English couple, Peter and Suzy, are living in idyllic isolation, far, from the rumblings of the coming war. Their peace is shattered from within when Suzy discovers she has been betrayed: Peter is not the man he claims to be and Suzy's life is thrown into turmoil. When a Scotland Yard detective arrives, events become even more complicated and frightening. Lies, subterfuge and murder made this thriller a dark roller coaster of bluff and double bluff.

All who attended appeared to enjoy this play and of course the drinks in the theatre's new bar both before and during the performance.

Gill Davies

Quilting

Our quilters are becoming ever more adventurous and it's great to have new people attending plus a couple of granddaughters during half term as well. Let's hope they've caught the sewing bug! As you're all achieving so much I've high hopes for County Show Entries I've photocopied schedule to give my quilters so no excuse that you don't know what's required.

Pat Henderson

Craft Group

Mixed media collage is probably a good euphemism for cutting up bits of fabric, making a mess and having a good



natter. It is 'works in progress! Being so unstructured is actually quite challenging and it takes time to develop. We got a basic design this week, using the fabric itself as the inspiration for colour and shape. This will be developed with the aid of stitch, braid, and various embellishments. I think the results will justify the time spent. The cake, coffee and walnut, this week, justifies the efforts made.
Gill

Singing Group

This is living up to its title! It is a fun evening from start to finish and we remain undaunted as we work our way through a great many songs from Country and Western, Rock, ballads a little bit of Latin tempo and we enjoy trying to outdo some that the "greats" have sung such as Frank Sinatra, Cliff Richard, John Denver, Edith Piaf and even Leonard Cohen!. We now have over 30 sets of words and music and this will probably double before as our enthusiastic singers collect more. Tea biscuits and chat finish off our happy evenings. All are welcome to give it a try. We meet twice a month on the second and fourth Wednesdays at my house, 32 Ashfield Drive Aspull.
Marie

Garden Gang

Garden Gang ready to recommence, plan to meet Mondays which should be easy to remember.
Meet 10.00am at my house with a visit to allotment weather permitting. Otherwise seed sowing etc planned. It's nearly time to start planting. General rule is first early potatoes to go in around St Patricks Day, although I usually use Mothering Sunday as my guide, despite this varying each year. Phases of the moon determine date of Easter so maybe unknowingly I've been ahead of the trend for lunar planting.
Pat Henderson

Trips and Outings

We have the following trips arranged over the next month:
Forthcoming Events
Standish WI Fashion Show
Thursday 6th April, 7.30pm at St Wilfred's Parish Hall. Tickets £8 including light refreshments are available from Barbara's of Standish.

The Cinema trip is on Tuesday 21st March to see Viceroy's House at the Wigan Empire at 2pm.

Saturday April 8th at 2pm at the Octagon. Tenant of Wildfell Hall. Tickets are ordered for the 16 people on the list. Now sold out.

Dutch Bulb Fields trip 25th to 28th April. We are going to the Keukenhof Gardens, Ann Frank's House, a canal cruise and a variety of museums.

26th April Wigan Little Theatre Salt of the Earth 7.30.
BEACON GROUP MEETING - Ladybridge WI to be held @ O'Hulton Conservative Club on Thursday 27th April '17 From 7.30pm - 10.30pm. Tickets £8 incl. refreshments

Saturday 6th May I Capture the Castle at the Octagon at 2pm

Saturday 27th May Winter Hill at the Octagon at 2pm

Wednesday 7th June The Importance of Being Earnest at Wigan Little Theatre at 7.30pm

Saturday 17th June Talking Heads at the Octagon at 3pm.

Thursday 22nd June The Annual Garden Trip this year will be to Sizergh Castle which is a National Trust property in Cumbria. We have booked the Strickland Arms for lunch and the food there is excellent.
Please add your name to the list as we are hoping to get a coach for 33 people at a cost of £10.00 per person. Sizergh Castle is £9.45 but free if you are a member of the National Trust.

Hazel and Pat

NFWI News

ACWW

There will be table-top sale on Saturday 8th April'17. at Barton Village Hall, Garstang Road PR3 5HE Tables £8 each. Proceeds to ACWW. If interested - please contact Elaine Cuzner 01257 452534.

Dates for your diary from LFWI

EXTREME KNITTING

Venue: LFWI Offices, Croston House, Leyland on Friday 7th April or Saturday 8th April 2017.
Time: 10.00 to 3.30. Cost £18. Bring packed lunch.
Important: See flyer for materials needed.
Closing date: Monday 13th March '17.

SHOWTIPS for COUNTY SHOW. See venues & dates:

Saturday 1st April @ WI Offices 10.00 - 12.00
Monday 10th April @ Cloughton Mem. Hall 1.00-3.00
Saturday 22nd April @ WI Offices 10.00 - 12.00
Monday 24th April @ The Barlow, Edgeworth 1.00-3.00
Closing date: Thursday 23rd March 2017.

LADIES IN HARMONY WI CHOIR: Saturday 8th April'17. @ Hornby Village Institute, Lancaster. Time 7.30pm. Cost £7. See flyer for contact information.

AGENDA CONFERENCES: to be held on Tue 25th April'17 @ Brindle Community Hall, Brindle, Chorley. Time: 1.00 for 1.30-3.30. Closing date: Thur. 13th April '17.

CARD MAKING CLASS to be held at LFWI Offices, Leyland on Wednesday 10th or Saturday 13th May'17. Time: 10.00 - 3.30. Cost £18. Tutor: Lynda Drummond. Closing date: Thursday 27th April'17.

WILLOW WEAVING: 'Fat ball feeder and Hearts' will be held at LFWI Offices, Leyland on following days: Tuesday 16th May. Friday 19th May. Saturday 20th May. Monday 22 May. Tuesday 23rd May + Saturday 10th June Cost: £18 plus £20 for equipment needed. See flyer for information. Closing date: Wed 19th April'17.

VINTAGE STYLE NOTEBOOK COVER & PAPER BINDING
A fun and informal workshop: This will be held at LFWI Offices, Leyland Friday 2nd + Saturday 3rd June'17 Time: 10.00 - 3.30. Cost £18. Tutor: Shenna Swan. Closing date: Thursday 18th May'17.

GO ORIENTEERING! @ Williamson Park, Lancaster on Wednesday 14th June'17. 6.30-8.30pm. Cost £5pp. Closing date: Thursday 18th May'17.

CHATSWORTH HOUSE: Thursday 22nd June'17. Cost £30. Coach to pick up members/friends at Leyland at 9.00. Closing date: Thursday 25th May'17.

Ongoing Exhibition of Watercolour + Pastel Paintings by Anne Couchman - Astley Farm House Gallery Chorley Monday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday + Sunday 12.00-3.30 until 28th March'17.

theWI

INSPIRING WOMEN

Aspull & Haigh

NEWS

March

2017



Newsletter content by WI Members,
diary and dates by Helen Sloan
Edited by Gill Brown
All past newsletters are available on our website:
www.aspullandhaighwi.org.uk
In addition there are excerpts and full length videos to watch of some past events.

www.aspullandhaighwi.org.uk