

December 2020

Lancashire Hotpot



*With Best Wishes
for Christmas and
the New Year.*

Lancashire Federation of Women's Institutes

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Federation News

From the Chairman

Hello everybody.
Well, who would have thought another lockdown! Survived the panic buying on loo rolls and pasta and much more. I hope everyone has managed to stay safe and Covid free. I share all your frustrations about not meeting, can we have a refund on subscriptions and will we survive? In short, the answer is - we will meet again face to face, refunds unfortunately are not on the cards as Lancashire and National still have had to pay overheads. Yes, we will survive, we are the WI!! If your WI is Zooming and you cannot zoom, if you have an email address or a mobile phone you could still join in Zoom – if you have a problem give me a ring, I am not a technology expert, but I will try. (01772 721648).

At Lancashire we are thrilled that so many members are joining our “Lancashire At Home” events, these are proving very popular and we have had so many interesting sessions. A big thankyou to Liz and Diane in the Office for exploring

this idea and putting it into practice.

Finally, I hope you all manage to have Christmas, it will be different. I am hoping my “bubble” will be able to get back from Chester, fingers crossed. Am I going to do Christmas if he cannot come? Of course!

Tree too big for the room, all the trimmings, I am not going to be beaten, but can I get a real tree? I might have to fly under the radar to get one.

Stay safe everyone, enjoy Christmas. If you know someone who is alone just give them a ring it will make all the difference.

Christmas Wishes.



Jackie

Towneley

Hall, Park & Gardens

Three new exhibitions to see

Watercolours from the Towneley Collection

Impressions a printmaking response

Maxine Bristow Textile Barriers

Book a COVID secure visit (groups up to 6 people): [Towneley.org.uk/book-your-visit](https://www.towneley.org.uk/book-your-visit)

Hall open 12 - 4.45pm
Saturday to Tuesday (last admission 4pm)

Adults: £5.00 for a 12 month pass
Children and students: FREE

/Towneley
[towneley.org.uk](https://www.towneley.org.uk)
01282 477130

BROWSHOLME

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welcomes WI groups throughout the year

- ✓ Wonderful historic Hall
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- ✓ Unique Christmas theme

Hall, tearoom & gardens open entry for visitors every Wednesday 15th April - 15th August.

Private group tours followed by light lunch or refreshments in our tea room

Visit our website or call Catherine for more details.

01254 827 160 | www.browsholme.com



Recollections of a Denman Ambassador.

Kay Hopkinson

When I look back over my 12 years as Denman Ambassador for Lancashire the most prominent memory was of fun and laughter on our frequent visits to Denman. I organised six Federation Trips and five Designer Taster Weekends. Our own bedroom at Denman was also refurbished twice during my time as Ambassador. Apart from going to Denman on Ambassador Conferences I also went on a few courses myself. I visited a lot of WIs to promote the College being made very welcome and meeting some lovely WI ladies. Many of these WIs were in areas that I had never visited before, so I learnt a lot about Lancashire's geography helped by my trusty Lancashire A-Z and latterly by my Sat Nav. I was devastated when I heard the news of the closure and sad that I won't be able to encourage our Lancashire members to go to Denman anymore. It was such a special place, and I was so fortunate to be asked to be Ambassador doing a job that I enjoyed so much. I worked alongside five different Federation Chairman when we went on Federation Trips and they were all lovely to be with. The closure of Denman will leave a huge hole in my WI life and I would like to thank everyone who came on the trips making my job such an easy and enjoyable one, also my thanks to all those WIs I have visited and friends I have made through my role.

Science Notes.

Pam Coates, LFWI Science Rep

Dried Fruit.

Your recipe says sultanas, currants or raisins, but what is the difference?

They are all types of dried grapes: raisins and sultanas are soft, sweet and juicy whilst currants have a tangy taste.

Raisins are a type of grape dried for three weeks. The grapes darken as they dry which gives them their dark colour. As a range of grape varieties is used the size, shape and colour may vary, you will notice a difference in size and colour if the raisins are from Australia or California.

Sultanas are made from green seedless grapes. They are coated in an oil-based solution prior to drying to speed up the process: This is why they are lighter in colour than raisins or currants. You can obtain Australian sultanas which are dried without the solution, which are darker in colour and quite often referred to as 'natural'. In America the grapes are treated with sulphur dioxide to retain a lighter colour.

Currants are tiny, dried grapes, dried for up to three weeks.

During the drying process the grapes shrink, leaving a small nutrient-dense dried fruit, which contain four times the

fibre, vitamins and minerals of fresh grapes. The variations between the three are slight. All are high in natural sugar and contain antioxidants. The downside is that the Vitamin C content is reduced from the fresh grapes.

Studies suggest that a diet high in fibre-rich fruits and vegetables may help reduce the risk of high blood pressure, heart disease and diabetes.

Remember that dried fruit as a healthy option is high in calories and sugar. In the kitchen dried fruit is very versatile :-

- add to salads, rice dishes, stews etc
- add to a cheese platter
- mix into yoghurt
- add to your porridge or breakfast cereal
- mix into muffins and cakes
- add to savoury dishes - curries, meat balls, chutneys etc

I hope you had fun making your Christmas cakes, puddings and Mincemeat.

Store the dried fruit in a dry cool place in a sealed bag or lidded container.



CHRISTMAS COFFEE BREAK QUIZ

Answers on page 15

1. London's Trafalgar Square Christmas tree is traditionally given by which country?
2. The song White Christmas was first performed in which 1942 film?
3. In which modern country is St Nicholas's birthplace and home town?
4. Who is officially credited as the author of Auld Lang Syne?
5. Who was the first British Monarch to broadcast a Christmas message to the Nation?
6. How many ghosts are there in A Christmas Carol?
7. Which gift did Melchior bring for the baby Jesus?
8. How many gifts were given in total in The Twelve Days of Christmas?
9. From which continent does the turkey originate?
10. A spray of Glastonbury... is sent to the Queen for the royal table on Christmas Day?
11. In which year did the Post Office first issue Christmas Stamps?
12. From earliest to latest date which order were cards, trees and crackers introduced to the British Christmas?
13. Which famous scientist was born on Christmas Day in 1642?
14. Which song topped the UK charts at Christmas 1957 and in a medley version in 1978?
15. 'Christmas Crackers' was the first Christmas edition of which popular UK comedy series?
16. What was the first artificial Christmas tree made from? a) goose feathers, b) cardboard, c) stiffened silk
17. Who was George's guardian angel in the film 'It's a Wonderful Life'?
18. Which Christmas plant originally came from Mexico?
19. How many of Santa's reindeer have names beginning with D?
20. How did Good King Wenceslas like his pizzas?

Sub Committees

Culture & The Arts

Here are some Winter reading recommendations from friends and fellow members.

A member who has roots in the North East was drawn to an author who lives in Ponteland and writes about the local area. The author, called J L Ross, writes gripping thrillers and I'm told they are hard to put down. The first book in the series is called 'Holy Island' and is available in supermarkets so keep a look out for her books.

'Because of You' is a real tear jerker written by Dawn French about two women who gave birth in the same

hospital ward on New Year's Day. This is French's first book for five years and could be her best yet.

If you like short, sharp thought provoking stories then try "Help Yourself" Curtis Sittenfeld. The author has a wry humour and insight into modern times.

Just a few ideas for the Winter days.

Happy Christmas to all Lancashire members

*Mary Gibson and
The C & A committee*

Climate Change

During the past few months, many of us have realised the importance of the physical and mental health benefits to be found in the natural environment. This may have been through our daily walks, finding new areas nearby, visiting parks or enjoying time in our own gardens. We need to protect this for future generations and the term 'Green Recovery' is being discussed more. It is important that, as the economy is rebuilt, we invest in industries and infrastructures that turn the tide on Climate Change by embedding the core principles of a clean and sustainable energy future. This is Green Recovery and not just returning to the old normality.

In June the Climate Coalition group, of which the Women's Institute is a founding member, sent the Prime Minister a letter containing a seven point action plan urging him to ensure that investment in Covid-19 recovery is in line with the UK's climate goal of net zero greenhouse gases by 2050. Christmas will soon be with us but were you aware that during the Christmas period, 750,000 tons of waste (1.4M tons of CO2) and equivalent to three weeks of normal waste, are produced?

Keep enjoying the wonderful countryside around you, be mindful of our carbon footprint and help protect our world for generations to come!

Leisure Activities

The Leisure Activities Sub-Committee hope that YOU ALL have been keeping well during the enforced restrictions we have had imposed on us since March.

Despite these restrictions, because of the Covid virus, we have still been working, on your behalf, from the comfort of our homes using our computers with software that enables us to see and hear each other.

We hope that our event planning for 2021 will take place and that we will have the pleasure of your company at our events. We have missed you all.

Just like the other Committees we are always looking for new members to join us. If you are interested please contact the office for further details.

*Joan Randall,
Chairman*

ACWW



As we could not have our planned Afternoon Tea and Fashion Show in the Midland Hotel in April, it has been re-arranged for April 29th 2021. Let's hope that by then life will be back to normal. This date is actually ACWW day so is really appropriate. As it is also the day when "Women Walk the World" perhaps we could even plan a group walk down the promenade in Morecambe! In the meantime, do keep up whatever support you can eg. collecting stamps or other items for recycling, and spare a thought for women all over the world, many of whom live in poverty in multigenerational households or single room households and don't enjoy the freedoms that most of us have.- especially if they do not have gardens or countryside to work in and enjoy.

*Ruth Gibbons
ACWW Rep*

Shows

The 2021 schedule 'Lancashire Love it!' will be carried over to the 2021 Show. The only changes to the 2020 schedule are the dates,

**The next Show will be held on
Wednesday 22nd & Thursday 23rd
September 2021.**

The Show Sub-committee missed greeting you all at the show this year. We missed seeing everything you have baked, grown, created, painted or sketched. On a positive note, we have an additional 12 months to finish our entries. Maybe enter a few more classes too!

As craft clubs, monthly meetings and courses have been cancelled, a big void opened up only to be filled by the internet and social media. They have exploded with video demonstrations of just about everything. If you have any queries please contact me or any member of the show committee.

'Stay calm and Craft'.

*Dawn Threlfall
dctcrafts@gmail.com*



At Home with LFWI

Due to the situation which has evolved, all our planned events this year had to be postponed. The advent of Zoom, and the Denman At Home programme, led us to look at other ways of offering services to our members. The Board of Trustees, at their September meeting, agreed for the office team to investigate the possibility of setting up a digital product, enabling us to display courses in a similar way to Denman at Home, which members could purchase on-line, through our existing website. Through a variety of contacts, and a not inconsiderable amount of hard work, a programme was set up for October, and it's fair to say that things took off very quickly. So many members were eager to try and bring a little WI normality back into their lives.

Each course is about an hour, on Zoom, and some of the subjects on offer are quite different to those physical events we would normally have put on for members. The interest shown was such that a programme was then put together for November and December, moving forward into 2021. The varied programme includes historical talks, cooking demonstrations, introduction to guided meditation, crafting demonstrations such as journal decorating, and flower arranging with a twist. There was even a virtual Lancashire Day when we learnt about the Pendle Witches. There is something for everyone and as we move forward into early 2021 more courses/talks will be added. We've had a lot of positive feedback so far, including: *"Thanks also for organising such a variety of topics. Something for everyone."* *"Hampton Court Ghosts was fascinating and certainly sold the Ghost Tours."*

"Vegetarian Cookery was an excellent demo. Easy to follow and all the ingredients within everyone's reach."

"What a truly wonderful flower arranging demonstration I have enjoyed this afternoon. Congratulations to everyone who enables these events to happen. Well done the WI, please pass on my thanks to all concerned."

"I enjoyed the talk/demo and afterwards my brain was buzzing with ideas. Some projects have to be finished and a book bought before I can start on my own journal!"

Thanks to everyone who signed up for At Home with LFWI courses since they came into being and particular thanks must go to Liz Kerr and Diane Jenkins, who have put in so much time and effort into setting everything up on our behalf.

Zoom Monthly Meetings

RIBBY WITH WREA WI uses Zoom as a substitute for their usual meetings and events. Following a career in fashion, local resident, Susie Carey set up her own business which is called "Sorted etc." Susie provides a service to help people to declutter their wardrobes, she will come to your home with a rail and two bags. The end result is a closet of clothes that fit you and that you want to keep, a bag of clothes to donate to a charity shop and a bag of clothes that she will sell for you. Susie told us that this process often has a therapeutic effect, the decluttering of the wardrobe seems to promote a better frame of mind. In place of the summer outing the ladies had a Zoom talk on Bees and Beekeeping from John Kelso, all the way from County Tyrone where he was visiting family. During lockdown WARTON CRAG WI kept in touch with other members by having a twice weekly online quiz. There were also a couple of competitions (gardens and recipes) and an effort to record for THEIR archives 'How the lockdown affected you and yours'. One member has kept them amused with her stories as she is on lockdown in Tasmania and can't get home.

Many members have kept busy with their crafting and another has made 5 quilts. Some have made items for the NHS. Skype and Zoom have been used by many members to keep in touch with their families. Generally, spirits are very high. BELMONT WI members have been keeping in touch since lockdown, using WhatsApp with many photos and articles sharing what members have been up to during this period. Most of the pictures will then be put into our WI photo Album for posterity. It was realised that many members were not being reached, so in June the first of their Lockdown Newsletters was introduced and sent to each member together with Hotpot. Members are being asked to contribute photos, articles and quizzes for the magazine. 28 members of BRETHERTON WI managed to get on to a Zoom meeting for an excellent talk on 'The History of Gin' by Dr Kate Vigurs. They held a raffle for a lovely bunch of flowers to be delivered later. Their Annual Meeting and fifth birthday celebration attended by 31 members and Ruth Grimley their Adviser. SADDLEWORTH WI was delighted to welcome Alison Marsden of "Gardening by Design" in Kent, Alison an approved RHS speaker guided them through the aspects to consider to give a new plant the best situation in which to

flourish. In July, Sally Mabey gave a very entertaining talk entitled "From Eggheads to Mastermind" about the Glamorgan Poppies WI team's winning appearance on Eggheads and her own appearances on Mastermind. Another speaker to entertain the members was Misba Khan, talking about the "All Female Expedition to the North Pole" that she undertook two years ago. The Book Group Zoom meetings continue to be popular and well attended. BUCKSHAW VILLAGE WI hosted the WI Wanderers website to enjoy a talk by Susan Douglass from the Friends of Winkley Square, Preston. The various past residents of the Square have been researched by Susan, her talk focussed on Henrietta Mary Miller (1852 – 1926) her early life, marriage and love in the Victorian era. This was a period during which women became their husband's property once married and females had no recourse in law to their own finances. Henrietta married young, giving birth to her first child just seven months after the wedding. Her husband, Sutherland Dumbreck was physically and emotionally abusive. They eventually divorced and she remarried Guthrie Hylton Jessop. Susan gave an interesting and engaging talk which was well received.

Around the WIs

Community Champions

COTTONOPOLIS WI hosted a joint meeting with Helen Pankhurst of Coalition for Greater Manchester Women 2028. The initiative is committed to seeing a better future for the women of Manchester. Its' areas of focus will be education, safety, health and culture, participation and employment. Helen spoke about the work of the Coalition and the fight for gender equality locally by 2028.

Cottonopolis WI look forward to working alongside GM4women2028 as it moves forward.

Through their crafting skills, FAB WI have supported their local hospital by making knitted mask extenders, blankets for the bereavement suite and "traffic light" beanie hats and buddy squares for the neonatal ICU. In addition, an online auction fundraiser meant that staff at Royal Oldham Hospital were gifted supplies of chocolates, biscuits, crisps and coffee for their 'wobble room' plus hand creams and lip balms to help deal with the toll taken by the constant wearing of PPE. Oldham Foodbank and Pennine Animal Sanctuary were also able to add to their funds at this critical time thanks to members' generosity.

BRETHERTON WI Reached out to village residents with offers of help with shopping and other various necessities for those who were sick or quarantined. With the assistance of the headteacher of the local school, vulnerable families were identified and supplied with supermarket vouchers to ensure that nobody went hungry during the pandemic. When money for this wonderful initiative started to run low, Bretherton submitted a successful bid to the Lancashire Community Fund, which enabled them to continue their work right through to the end of September. To further keep spirits high, members organised a village Scarecrow Festival (including a mapped trail!), which proved hugely popular and, undeterred by the weather, 42 wonderful, book-themed scarecrows stood resplendently on show over an entire week – and let's not forget 'The Phantom Knitter' (aka a Bretherton WI crafter) who secreted knitted rainbows around the village that proved so popular they became another fundraising initiative for the local foodbank. On top of all that, scrubs have been sewn for Royal Preston Hospital; microwave pouches knitted and sewn for Blackpool Hospital's Oncology Unit; household items gathered together for the local women's refuge and, not forgetting our spikey friends, a donation collection point for Chorley Hedgehog Rescue.



There has been needle and thread a-plenty at GREAT HARWOOD WI as members have made facemasks, aprons and re-useable bags to raise money for East Lancs Hospice and, latterly, poppy facemasks in aid of the British Legion Poppy Appeal. Their masks have been sold through local retail outlets and have been winging their way as far afield as Wales and Canada.





Community Champions



A team of neonatal knitters from SADDLEWORTH WI produced 18 baby blankets and nearly 200 bonding squares for Royal Oldham Hospital. Ladies very generously donated not only their time but also all the materials and a warm thank-you was received from the Ward Manager of the hospital's Maternity Department. With the knitters knitting, the bakers baked and 550 "cakes of kindness" were made for those who had significantly helped their communities during lockdown, including pharmacies, refuse collectors, Oldham Mountain Rescue, to name just a few of the local heroes.

GRINDLETON WI has some truly breath-taking statistics from their 70 strong group of sewing, delivery and logistical volunteers... 1800m of fabric sewn and over 1.6 miles of elastic deployed meaning that 4500 masks, over 450 headbands, 850 washbags and 316 sets of scrubs were made in the Ribble Valley and distributed entirely free of charge.

Finishing on a festive note, DOVESTONE WI bring us "Secret Santa on Steroids"! In a bid to ensure families using the local foodbank also get a gift at Christmas – no matter how small – Dovestone WI members, led by Chief Elf Jess Moreland, have launched a Give A Gift donation station. Members of the community will be anonymously donating gifts which will then be sent to the Dovestone WI elves to be sorted, wrapped, labelled and then magically transported to families that really need them. Hundreds of gifts – don't know who's giving them, don't know who's receiving them!

How I Spent My Time in Lockdown

Normally a very busy person, Liz Farr, from ATHERTON WI, struggled having time on her hands in lockdown so, as well as finishing off knitting, cross stitch and rug making projects, she and her daughter, Victoria, joined Gareth Malone's Great British Home Chorus.

It was fantastic to be coached by Gareth Malone. Starting with half-hour sessions every weekday, they moved to a longer, weekly session. Gareth worked from his 'shed' in his garden, where he has his piano, keyboards and computer. They started with 'You are my Sunshine' and, after that, learned many songs, including 'I'm Still Standing' by Elton John. They also sang songs for pleasure and held a virtual concert for VE day, singing 'We'll Meet Again' and other songs with the theme of hope. Gareth announced that a TV programme would be made about the choir, inviting all members to apply, but Liz couldn't take this up because filming was done in peoples' homes and her husband was shielding. The programme was shown in June (The Choir – Singing for Britain). Decca also released all the choir's songs, accompanied by the London Symphony Orchestra.

The choir consists of more 25,000 people, from the UK and across the world. It was a fantastic experience - happy, sad, funny and emotional at times. Gareth promised to continue with weekly rehearsals and, when the pandemic is over, to arrange for the choir to meet for a concert – probably in 2021 in a very large venue!

SALFORD ANGELS WI salute their member, Margaret O'Hare, as a community champion. As one of their older members, Margaret started to shield even before the lockdown was imposed and has remained at home alone since then. She decided to write a daily blog about being alone under lockdown which is forwarded weekly to the whole WI. The blogs have been hilarious, with anecdotes about eating scones and chocolates for breakfast, not fitting into her clothes anymore and giving strong views on the handling of the pandemic. She has also shared her feelings of fear, isolation and loneliness, with which all could identify. Margaret has helped WI members stay in touch and receives lots of responses to her weekly email. She has really made everyone laugh and kept spirits up during a difficult time.



Around the WIs

Our First

Thanks to the good weather through the summer months many WIs were able to hold some socially distanced al fresco activities!



For **HUTTON & HOWICK WI** their first walk of 2020 was the challenge of Longton Marsh with the occasional stile, the reward was lunch at the Dolphin!



Congratulations to **CABUS WI** member, Clara Thompson, who recently celebrated her 100th birthday. Clara joined the WI in October 1947 when the institute was formed. A very different first!



'We met again! The cry from **TATHAM FELLS** members who met in a beautiful local garden. Time spent exploring winding paths, hidden grottos and the lake, was followed by a chat over their own afternoon tea. They were joined by two prospective new members. What a wonderful introduction to the WI.



Bowling was the only **LADYBRIDGE WI** activity to take place during Bolton's brief relaxation from the full lockdown in August. By early September, all group sports activities ceased again!



Lunchtime picnic at Lytham Green provided the backdrop for **WARTON WI** members first face to face meeting since March. It was a great success!



Members of **SOUTHPORT SCARLETS WI** were out and about with a visit to Levens Hall to admire the topiary and the Walking Group went on an adventurous ramble through Cuerden Park.

THORNTON WI Walking Group were just getting back into step when the new local restrictions put a stop to their walks. A few days previously, five members had enjoyed a walk along the banks of the River Wyre and a chat over a brew outside the café. For a change, the sun was shining, this was a first as most of their walks were in the rain. Although they don't know when they can walk together again their boots and waterproofs are ready and waiting!



Craft Gallery



CROSTON WI members' fingers have been busy crafting and one member, has been making bunnies & selling them for charity, while others have found a use for empty tins!



Members from **WARTON CRAG WI** have also been very busy during the lockdown and have sent photos of a variety of crafts!



Around the WIs

Denman College – Happy Memories

Since the closure and sale of Denman College was announced we have received many reports of happy days spent at Denman. Because of a shortage of space it is not possible to reproduce them in their entirety.

Gill Stamp ST.ANNES ON SEA WI has been many times working her way through the Denman Brochures... When she won the LFWI bursary she kindly shared it with me so that we could learn about Murder, Mayhem and Sex in Medieval churches – absolutely hilarious.

Liz Williams, LADYBRIDGE WI asks “where do I begin”. Every visit, and there have been many, has its highlights. Liz’s last one being the Federation visit in 2019. The magic was still there and will continue in the friendships that were forged. A heartfelt thank you Denman, from Liz.

Pauline Bearcock, HOGHTON WI writes of the lovely memories she has and of meeting up with complete strangers with whom, it turned out she had links. What a small Denman world.

Patricia Forder HUTTON & HOWICK WI extolled the virtues of the cookery school, better equipped than many a domestic kitchen, and used most successfully when she went on a jam making course back in 2009, returning home with 18 jars of jam. Pam was not resident in the College and was delighted and amazed to find that when they arrived at 9.30 am there was a mouth-watering array of pastries, biscuits and small cakes. So very Denman!

Pam Aspden CROSTON WI was a lucky Bursary winner using it on a literature course, including three novels, Northanger Abbey, The Uncommon Reader, and Cold Comfort Farm. Thus illustrating not only the excellence, but the diversity of the Denman courses.

Sheila Ellis LITTLE THORNTON WI likened it to staying in someone’s Country House, like many members she has done a variety of interesting and informative courses... The added bonus was meeting WI members from all over England and Wales who immediately become your friends.

Janet Curran ST.ANNES ON SEA WI heard so much about Denman when she joined the WI that she determined to go. She enjoyed it so much that she has been back a number of times, in spite of one horrendous trip when she spent the return journey sitting on her sewing machine. She refers to herself as a ‘Denman addict’. Janet is now an enthusiastic member of the Denman at Home set.

Susan Grant BOOTHSTOWN & WORSLEY WI was devastated, as were so many, when she heard that Denman was to close. She had been on a number of courses and met many wonderful people. On a visit last year Susan picked a seed from a Passionflower in the garden... and it grew. Now she has a living reminder of her happy times at Denman.

Tracey Garvey ELSWICK WI whilst enjoying the Denman experience commented on the inconvenience of the journey for members of the LFWI. That of course is the beauty of the LFWI trips they were practically door to door service.

Shirley Thornton LYTHAM GREEN WI has a great fondness for Denman and was looking forward to enjoying many more courses. Alas it is not to be. She shared the role of College Chairman on several occasions and lists a number of things which left a permanent memory. Helpful and friendly staff.

Straight from the oven biscuits at morning break, the splendid work of other students. Evenings spent in the bar and lounges, where laughter prevailed and last but not least, the concert on the final night.

Val Andrews ST.ANNES ON SEA WI. I have been fortunate in having enjoyed the excellent hospitality and tutelage offered by Denman on several occasions. I have looked with awe and admiration at the wonderful things produced by other very talented people... Shirley Thornton touched on the revue held on the last night of the LFWI courses, I am sure modesty prevents her from mentioning her “Oscar” winning performance of “Petey the Snake”. I have enjoyed the Musical course strutting their stuff and the vicissitudes of buying a swim suit, and making a Christmas pudding testing the alcohol the while. All free – what more can you ask.

There is an atmosphere of tranquillity about the place. On my last visit I was sitting on the lawn and the bell ringers were practicing. It was a beautiful evening and I know that had I been a poet I could not have done that moment justice, but as the street vendors tell us – once it’s gone it’s gone.





Lockdown Activities

During lockdown, PARBOLD WI, assisted by volunteers from the village, delivered essentials, mainly medical supplies, to members of the community who needed it. Local businesses also arranged free delivery services, which were much appreciated. During this period, Lyn Field, from the craft group, handcrafted a personal card for each WI member, which was a real morale booster. Once

lockdown was eased, the Committee organised outdoor get-togethers on the local playing fields, which were well attended.

The Committee kept in touch throughout the lockdown via Zoom, and, looking ahead, conducted a survey of members' views on holding meetings in the WI Hall. Since then, additional restrictions have been placed on social gatherings in West Lancashire, meaning full meetings were not easy because of social distancing rules.

About 65% of members use Zoom, so a series of online meetings with speakers were planned, which the Committee hopes will provide a varied, interesting programme. When smaller groups could meet, the hall manager did a sterling job ensuring it was Covid-safe, allowing Knit and Natter and the Book Club to return. In September the Friends of Parbold WI held an outdoor, socially distanced, takeaway coffee and cake morning. This was a great success, raising funds for Macmillan.

On-Line Addict

Hayley Dell, SWINTON WI President, attended a Denman At Home workshop entitled 'Make Do and Mend - Make Your Own Land Girl Doll', as she had seen the dolls on Facebook and enjoys sewing.



Online booking was simple, the confirmation email contained the pattern and instructions, and all she had to do was print them off – all for a fiver! In a light-hearted session with lots of laughter, tutor Claire gave clear and

concise instructions and plenty of good tips, from stuffing the doll, to what type of fabric worked best for the T-shirt, and how to fold the headscarf. There were plenty of opportunities to ask questions and using the Zoom 'speaker view' option made it an almost 'one to one' experience. Hayley is very pleased with her first attempt, and thinks her doll is 'a bit like me – imperfect - and I like that!' She would encourage anyone to try a Denman At Home course. Many LFWI members have now heard of the WI Wanderers. Hayley Dell loves it, and is often spoilt for choice, sometimes zooming two or three events a day. Her favourites are always the craft ones and she recently attended Spikey Jean's Kusudama Flower session.

However, what Spikey Jean didn't say was that, once you know how to make them, it can become a little bit addictive! So, the following morning sitting with coffee in hand, she decided to recycle her WI Life and Hotpot Magazines. She is now planning to do the same with the next few issues until she's made a vase full - next project sorted!



Our Lockdown Recipes

In spite of lockdown flour shortages, many BUCKSHAW VILLAGE WI members continued the WI tradition of baking, and shared photos of their creations. They therefore decided to create a collection of members' lockdown recipes. As well as being fun, it formed part of their archive of members' activities and challenges during historic times and members were asked say why they had chosen their recipe(s). (See Christine's Grandma's recipe below)

The recipes were overwhelmingly a reminder of pre-lockdown happy memories. Where known, the original source was included, but, as some are from old handwritten collections, this wasn't always possible. For authenticity, the recipes are included as submitted by members, so

contain a mixture of metric/imperial measurements and Gas/Electric oven settings. (A handy conversion guide is included.)

Christine's Grandma Wild's Scones I chose this recipe as it is one my Grandma made for a celebration and when there was a crisis. I make them every Friday and have continued during lockdown.

Ingredients
2oz butter
2oz caster sugar
8oz self raising flour
1 egg
4 tbsp milk
1½ tsp baking powder
2oz sultanas
Drop of vanilla extract

Method

Preheat oven to Gas Mark 8.

Mix together the flour, sugar and baking powder. Rub the butter in, then add the sultanas. Mix together the egg, vanilla and milk. Add to the dry ingredients forming a loose dough – using an extra dash of milk if needed.

Turn out onto a floured surface. Form into a flat, round shape about 1 inch high, press flat with your hand and cut into approx. 6 rounds – don't handle too much or roll out.

Put the cut-out scones on a greased baking tray and bake for 10 mins until golden and well risen.

Enjoy.

Around the WIs

On the First Day of Lockdown

The usual monthly meeting on the second Tuesday in March saw HOGHTON WI enthusiastically planning a large fund-raising event for 'Nightsafe', a charity for homeless 16-25 year olds in Blackburn. On the third Tuesday it was a very different story!

In 'normal times' Secretary Lorraine compiles a monthly Newsletter for members, listing events and activities, even delights to come! On this memorable third Tuesday an interim

Newsletter advised postponed or cancelled events, and hoped 'normal service' would be resumed by October at the very latest!!! Well?????

Six months down the line and 26 Newsletters later, it's a very different story. However, thanks to her dedication and members' contributions an exciting weekly Newsletter wings its way. At first these were filled with activities to help the cause. Members were making scrubs and other items for the NHS, flags and small hearts for those in hospital and aprons and goodies to sell at a sometime later coffee morning.

For those living alone, shopping trips, Zoom, emails and phone calls spread cheer.

The Newsletter became more adventurous with pictures, jokes, recipes, quizzes, book reviews, Federation news, and plans to get together. However, Boris had a spy in the camp as every plan they had to get together in a socially distanced way was stopped before reaching fruition.

Were they downhearted? oh, no!! They are making it all work well and remain optimistic.

A - Z in Lockdown

AUGHTON WI are supporting the local Food Bank by opening the Hut, (their own meeting hall) as a drop-in centre for bags of required food items. With so many people and their families in need of help at this difficult time, they were hoping for a great response!

As a thank you to local NHS workers, BARLEY WI ladies have created colourful planters to decorate the WI garden in Barley. Also colourful 'yarnbombs' have been crafted to decorate trees and bushes. Many local businesses have been extremely generous with sponsorship.



Ladies of BILLINGTON, LANGO & DISTRICT WI have been busy knitting little hats, cardigans and quilts for Blackburn Birthing Centre, and for the Serenity Suite at Burnley Hospital. Christine Seedall, their own 'sewing bee', made a beautiful heart for every member.



In August members of HEATH CHARNOCK WI received packets containing card and craft materials with a remit to each make a lockdown card or picture this resulted in some lovely pictures

for the archive. For the second year HOOLE WI Knit and Natter ladies have planted ten plant troughs, mainly dressed in red and white in Hoole Village. Members and friends have been busy knitting for Hospital Baby Units and members have been given Chocolate Bunnies and little pots of 'Sunshine Jam'.

MILNROW & DISTRICT WI celebrated their 4th birthday with a Zoom party and each member received a plain calico shopping Gift Bag containing sweets, a Victoria sponge recipe and a letter with decorating details. Inspired by the NFWI 'Summertime tWist Festival' RAINHILL WI hosted their own socially distanced festival which covered all seasons in one afternoon. Committee meetings are held at WITHNELL FOLD WI through Zoom, and monthly drop in quiz and bingo afternoons. Socially distanced walks and afternoon teas at Withnell Fold Cricket Club were enjoyed. For the 2018 Craft and Produce show one member had made a hedgehog and winning a naming competition gave Billy his name. He is now their mascot with a life of his own and a photo album is being formed to record his adventures, namely all their institutes events, on staycations with members, even a trip to Wales.



BLACKPOOL WI members have been keeping themselves busy with a variety of activities:



Lynn Crouchley and her husband found a speedy and eco-friendly way of delivering copies of Hotpot to Blackpool members.



Members and next-door neighbours, Christine Lambe and Barbara Kirkman, held their own sunflower competition which was a close run thing. Christine won by a flowerhead and a half.



At the start of lockdown in early April, when all the garden centres were closed, Rita Mahoney's garden was in her words 'looking very sad.' Rita sent for some seeds which she planted in pots, tended lovingly. They were eventually transplanted into the garden and the photo shows the colourful results. The project helped Rita feel positive at a difficult time, as she said, 'when the world is in turmoil, nature carries on as usual.'



Netta Brodrick – Face to Face

recently spent a lovely couple of hours with

Netta in her beautiful garden in the sunshine, chatting about her time in the WI. I've known Netta for four years and, whilst I knew that she was well known across the WI and was a positive, ideas person, who welcomed new ideas to keep Hotpot magazine current and responsive to members, our chat revealed so much more about this remarkable lady, who has given so much to LFWI and has helped to make it what it is today.



After relocating to the north-west, Netta joined HOOLE WI in 1967. As a young mother, she would have a meal ready for Alan, her husband, on his arrival home from work, then he took over the childcare and off she would go to her meetings. Gradually, she got more involved, joining the Committee and becoming Secretary, Treasurer and President. Netta enjoys drama and was a member of Hoole's active concert party, which produced lots of shows and variety events for over 60s and disabled peoples' clubs. She also performed in 'A History of Women of Lancashire' at the Charter Theatre.



Netta was invited to join the LFWI Board of Trustees as Denman Rep, and in this role visited many WIs, promoting Denman, encouraging WI members to go, and keeping track of their visits. She was also on the speaker circuit giving talks on her adventures on: a trip to Ireland in a horse drawn caravan; old remedies; and 'where my membership card has taken me'.

As VCO – Voluntary County Organiser (now Adviser), Netta was prepared to travel anywhere helping to set up new WIs, giving the outlying villages as much attention as the larger towns.

She used to say she knew Lancashire better in the dark than in the daylight, and all this travel down country lanes was done without a sat nav or a mobile phone. Visiting Tatham Fells one dark night, she thought it would be beautiful in the day but then couldn't find it in daylight! Netta has always worked to involve younger people in the WI and represented County at Young Farmers' clubs, encouraging them to join the WI as their next step - quite a few are now WI members.

Netta's most memorable moment came when she met the Queen at the opening of the Denman Home Economics Demonstration Kitchen. Unusually, the Queen arrived late, having stopped en route to visit the widow of Airey Neave, a cabinet member who had just been assassinated by the IRA. Netta recalls that the Queen wore a mustard coloured coat and beret. The WI dress code was 'good clothes and a hat', and, ever resourceful, Netta and her travelling companion stopped in a layby to get changed en route!

Talking of dress codes, there was also one for the Annual Meeting at the Albert Hall - hats were obligatory. She had to make her own way there and back and it was quite daunting, but Netta made the most of these experiences.

Netta served on the International Sub committee, which organised study days and overseas holidays linked to the countries being studied. This was the start of the Tours and Excursions Sub-committee and sparked a project on the Solomon Islands, which became part of the International Sub-Committee's remit.

The Shows Sub-committee, which organised the WI Show (now the County Show) also flourished under Netta's leadership. In her true style, she brought creative new ideas and the event was extended from one day to the two-day event we now have. The Shows Sub-committee also organised the LFWI flower arranging competition, exhibits and teas at the Royal Lancs Show when it took place in Chorley. Another highlight was 'Follow the Rainbow', a Flower Festival at Hoghton Tower. Each LFWI area was invited to take part, there were beautiful displays and it was a lovely event.

Netta found the Shows Sub-committee great fun.



Readers will be unsurprised to hear that Netta progressed to become Federation Chairman. Then, as now, the annual meeting moved around the county, and was held at places like Ashton Hall, Lancaster, Whittingham Hospital and Lowton Hall. Netta is also proud to have been the first Chairman to have worn the unique LFWI Chairman's badge.

Netta took over Hotpot Editorship in 1986 and oversaw its development from a newsletter to a magazine. She has thoroughly enjoyed leading the Editorial Sub-committee, which used to write, edit and compile everything, measure column widths and set the print layout. (Today's members of the Editorial Committee don't know they are born!) Editor of Hotpot is still a time-consuming role, but modern technology and a professional print company do help. Netta's mantra is that Hotpot must reflect LFWI and all of its members, be responsive to members' requests and welcome contributions from all WIs about their activities. Sometimes, additional articles are needed at short notice to fill the space, but that doesn't happen often and, if it does, Netta always has an idea up her sleeve.

After 'retiring' from Hotpot, Netta intends to perfect crochet and spend time in her greenhouse and garden, nurturing and propagating new plants. She will also continue singing in her choir (on Zoom for now) and I'm sure she will continue to keep very busy. Netta – the Editorial Sub-committee will miss you so much as our friend and inspirational editor. We will do our best to keep alive your spirit of 'have a go and it will be wonderful' and continue to take Hotpot from strength to strength in your honour.

Summertime Challenges



During the late summer months, THURNHAM WI have been invited to visit gardens belonging to five of their members who opened them for the exclusive WI Open Gardens event at the beginning of September. They also had a Walking Church Yard Quiz, which was held over a week, so that members could go singly or in family groups whenever the weather was good.

The chance to watch the sun go down over the sea from a different vantage point, It was lovely to have the change of scene and to finally see different faces, whilst remaining safe. Various seven day challenges were also held with a theme posted every day for the week, which involved things as varied as a heart made with a dog lead, writing with lentils, chalk, pebbles and flour, and images, in words or pictures, of our heroines. The biggest project, which is now nearing completion, is the lockdown wall-hanging. Everyone was invited to take part by contributing something which spoke of their lockdown: staying safe, birds, VE Day, friends, poems, views and a great deal more. A local gallery, King Street Studios and Gallery in Lancaster has expressed interest in

what we've been doing, so maybe their creativity will reach beyond the WI.

Communication - They have been very conscious that many members don't have access to the internet, so they have tried to keep in touch and have activities which are not internet-based. Members kept in touch monthly, more or less, by paper newsletters, in addition to electronic versions, and yes, this has sometimes meant posting out letters. Newsletters often contain contributions from members, a quiz and a topical wordsearch along with some of the LFWI Blog content (the only way some members could see it) and LFWI news. Zoom committee meetings and WhatsApp to share photos connected with the creative challenges.

From the Archives

Christmas Celebrations in the WI Ruth Grimley, Hon. Archivist.

It's been rather hard delving into the archives to find about Christmas in Lancashire Federation of WIs when the archive is shut, you are wearing a mask and your glasses are steamed up, not to mention the ever present faint whiff of hand gel. Something I think will be familiar to you all, even it's only trying to look at your shopping lists. But LFWI has been through tougher times than this and if one thing was certain from the records I did manage to read, WIs weren't going to let anything get in the way of them having a Christmas celebration at any point during our 100 years history.

Members were recovering from World War I, living through the depression years, helping to feed the nation during World War II, housing evacuated children, coping with rationing, and declining membership - and now a pandemic. Thankfully, numbers increased, urban WIs were formed and a further resurgence of the WI took place in the late 1990s. It's also worth noting that lots of the events mentioned in this article carried on until last Christmas 2019.

Throughout the years, WIs tried to stay within the objectives of the WI

- parties were not considered to be one of the objectives, so speakers were booked and advertised in programmes: the last days of Sawley and Whalley Abbey; The Hoghton Rapier Sword Team; German Christmas Customs; Duties of a Small Hostess; In Search of the Golden Eagle; Yesterday's Fashion; and Tow Paths, are just a few subjects that educated and informed members at past December meetings. For many years, my own WI teamed up with a neighbouring WI to produce a pantomime to entertain members at a joint December meeting, fulfilling the drama element of the objectives, followed by a Jacob's Join.

Many WI programmes featured a Jacob's Join supper or a social half hour with a Christmas theme - some even dared go as far as saying Christmas Party. Competitions to be judged included 4 mince pies, Christmas table decorations, decorated candles, cake decorations, the funniest Christmas cracker joke, most attractively wrapped Christmas present, handmade paper doily etc. WIs didn't just keep to their own monthly meeting; they made arrangements with other WIs in their groups or invited other WI members to attend their meetings.

One committee record documented 'The next meeting is the Christmas Do. Invitations to be sent!'

WIs held carol services, WI choirs held memorable concerts, some WIs had parties for evacuated children during the war years, and they donated and decorated Christmas trees for villages, teamed up with other WIs to share the festive season. Refreshments were served, perhaps a glass of mulled wine and or a warmed mince pie, though more often a buffet supper was arranged and served by the host WI.



This 2020 festive season will hold great challenges for all our WIs. For the first time in 100 years, we will not be able to meet up, talk face to face and share things with each other as we have done in the past. Despite any problems there may have been, we have always had each other's company and support.

Whilst doing the searches for this article, what struck me was the hospitality, warmth and kindness shown to other WI members and the ingenuity shown in trying to put together memorable events for fellow members. This year will stretch us - I wonder what we will come up with!



Membership Subscription Extension

The NFWI was obviously very concerned about the disruption the lockdown period had on WI meetings and activities and your membership experience this year. Consultations were held with all federations to discuss ways in which this could be acknowledged in our membership subscription this year. As a result, a three-month extension to this year's membership subscription was offered. The next renewal date for membership subscriptions will be 1 April 2021. In addition, from this point onwards, membership renewals will always be in April. This is to acknowledge the feedback many of you shared with us during the recent Strategic Vision consultation about the challenges of the January payment date and how you wished to see this changed in the future. We hope the additional three months will provide some compensation to acknowledge the disruption you will have experienced this year.

Lancashire Federation comes to Blackpool

The 25th September 2020 was the day all Lancashire members were going to celebrate our Centenary. The switch-on of our Bench was organised. Valerie from Treales WI and our Charman Jackie were ready with posh frocks, even bubbly at the ready. Suddenly only six could attend in the light of new restrictions which would have left some very disappointed members. The decision was taken, and the event was cancelled – another blow for us all. However, on the day, Blackpool Council did us proud, they illuminated an arch across the promenade saying “Celebrating 100 Years of the Lancashire Federation of Women’s Institutes. “A big Thank You to Blackpool. All our Centenary Events had to be postponed so let us think of this September 2020 as the beginning of our Festivities bring on 2020 Plus One!

Jackie

Diary Dates

The following Zoom events are scheduled for December 2020 and January 2021.

At Home with LFWI Programme	Date	Time
Christmas Cook along with Heather Williams	2 December	7.00pm
Gillian Walnes Perry MBE, talk on Anne Frank	3 December	2.00pm
Christine Ramsay, Festive Flower Arrangements	5 December	2.00pm
Peter Lawrence – Around the Cotswolds	7 December	7.00pm
Christmas Cook along with Heather Williams	11 December	10.00am
Siobhan Clarke – A Royal Christmas	16 December	7.00pm

At Home with LFWI Programme	Date	Time
Vegetarian Chef Alex – Comfort Food cooking demo	12 January	2.00pm

Each event costs £5.00 and should be booked via the website <https://lancashirewi.org.uk/>

When you purchase the talk you will receive an order acknowledgement showing a small cloud and a request to download your file. Click download to save the Zoom link, don't forget to check your Spam/Junk Folder. The host will allow entry from 15 minutes before the start time.

Please note that you DO NOT need a PayPal account to purchase our events. You will be given the option to pay by debit/credit card. As a back-up you will be sent the link again when the event closes.

Tributes

BLACKPOOL WI – Gladys Marshall, a dear friend and talented member.

ECCLESTON WI – Miriam Wadge, a loyal long serving committee member.

FENCE & DISTRICT WI – Marianne Lonsdale, a lovely lady. Member for many years.

LADYBRIDGE WI – Norma Little, a popular member remembered for her Scouse humour and delicious scones.

OVER HULTON WI – six members. Beryl Shaw, Milly Healy, Edith Holden, Jean Bonney, Connie Brodrick, a founder member, Olive Walker, former president.

PEARLS OF POULTON WI – Pat Wolsoncroft, a founder member a lovely lady.

WARTON CRAG WI – Gill Easterby, a long standing and well thought of member.

Each of these members will be sadly missed in her WI. We send condolences to all their WI Friends and Families.



Coffee Break Quiz Answers

1. Norway,
2. Holiday Inn,
3. Turkey,
4. Robert Burns,
5. George V,
6. Four,
7. Gold,
8. 364,
9. North America (domesticated in Mexico),
10. Thorn,
11. 1966,
12. Trees 1800, Cards 1843, Crackers 1861,
13. Isaac Newton,
14. Mary's Boy Child,
15. Only Fools and Horses,
16. a) Goose feathers,
17. Clarence Odbody,
18. Poinsettia
19. 3,
20. Crisp & Even.



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