

WHITLEY W.I. News



FUTURE WI MEETINGS

February 4th WI meeting

Caroline Eames is joining us for our February meeting. Caroline has been working as a forensic scientist for over 30 years and will explain how traces that criminals leave behind can be detected and used to solve a crime.

If you would like to join us please email Melanie for a Zoom link on

melanie.barber@btinternet.com

March 4th WI meeting

We can confirm that Fenella Lipkin from The Bridge Podiatry will be joining us for our March meeting to discuss the importance of looking after our feet

If you have any foot related questions you would like to put to Fenella then please contact Chris Jones on chris79.jones@icloud.com or Melanie Barber on the address above and they will be passed on to Fenella to discuss at the meeting.

Happy Birthday Whitley WI

This month Whitley WI celebrates its 83rd birthday. If you are joining us for our February meeting then why not bring along a piece of cake. Below are a few of the stunning birthday cakes we have had at our meetings over the years. How many do you remember?



Resolutions

Mary Highmore (our Public Affairs Liaison) and Chris Jones attended a CFWI briefing on this year's shortlist and led our own Resolutions Zoom meeting. 12 members had a lively discussion and cast their vote and we had a few extra sent in their choice. These votes have all been sent in to CFWI and will be collated nationally. We will be advised later in the year which resolution will be taken forward to the Annual General Meeting.

January Meeting

29 members and 3 guests joined us in January to hear about Jen Quayle's exploits in Mongolia carrying out research on the wild bactrian camels for the Wild Camel Protection Foundation. There are less than 1000 of these highly endangered animals in the wild and Jen visited a reserve in the Gobi desert where a breeding centre has been set up.



Following a lively question session members were split into groups in break-out rooms for a catch up in smaller groups which was enjoyed by all.

Walking Group

Thanks to Ann who arranged a Walking Group Zoom meeting in January. It was lovely to catch up with friends - even though some of us couldn't linger too long as it was such a lovely day for a 'real walk!' We did all manage a virtual walk - Jean used 'Openstreetmap' to take us on a tour around the footpaths of Appleton and Whitley. It was interesting to hear members recollections of 'who lived where' and find out more about the area we thought we knew well, though most of us found some new paths to explore.



The next walking group Zoom will be on Tuesday 9th March at 10.30am. Contact Ann O' Brien or Melanie Barber for a link to join.

Coffee & Chat

14 members joined in the first Coffee and Chat Zoom session in January and chatted away for over an hour! We used the break-out rooms to mix people up and make the groups smaller and it was enjoyed by all.

Our next session will be
Monday 15th February at
10.30am



Please email Melanie for a link
and be sure to include 'coffee' in your request!

Craft Club

12 members met up on Zoom and looked at the memory book Annette had compiled with Jean Waite's help to show some of the fantastic craft items made by members during last year. Everything from painting to cross stitch, patchwork and tapestry was included. The memory book will be available on the Whitley WI website for members to peruse at leisure and take inspiration from.

The next meeting will be Wednesday 17th February at 1.30pm. Contact Annette Minor or Melanie Barber for details

Book Club

10 members met up on Zoom in January and a varied selection of over 16 books and authors were discussed briefly, including Alan Titchmarsh, Elif Shafak, Richard Osman, Annalena McAfee and Sally Magnusson.

If any non-member of Book Club would like a copy of the list, with brief descriptions, Please email Helen on carey.helen@yahoo.co.uk The next meeting will be on TUESDAY 16th February at 7.30pm



Joan Blackshaw sent in this beautiful painting of daffodils, her favourite flower with a reminder of the Wordsworth poem.

*I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host of golden daffodils.*

William Wordsworth

Some signs of Spring emerging - lets hope the floods and snow haven't put them off!



Walking around the lanes of Whitley became quite a challenge at times for residents in January. Waders rather than wellies were needed to negotiate the worst of the floods.



Annette Minor has sent in this delightful pedlar woman as inspiration to use up any little bits of wool hanging around your knitting bag. "Just a little bit each night and she will soon be dressed up and ready for a new home!"

Easy for you to say Annette!



Ann Tolson has got the whole family involved in painting by numbers - adult style. Very enjoyable and apparently can help to de-stress! Certainly passes the time and the finished effect is stunning!

With the Great Garden Birdwatch taking place on the 30th and 31st January let's hope there aren't too many of these around! Sheila Cox snapped this buzzard in her garden in the Autumn - he seems quite at home!



Please send us any photos and news/ tips for next months newsletter to whitleywi20@gmail.com

Zoom meeting Diary Dates

Thursday 4th 7.30-9pm - Main meeting with speaker Caroline Eames, a forensic scientist

Monday 8th 7.30pm- 8.30pm - 'Talking about Art' Karen Smith is leading a discussion about "art" in all its forms

Tuesday 9th 10.30-11.30am - Walking group led by Ann O'Brien

Wednesday 10th 7.30-8.30pm - CFWI meeting with Dr Jackie Bell whose ultimate dream is to become Britain's next astronaut.

Monday 15th 10.30-11.30am Coffee and chat

Tuesday 16th 7.30-8.30pm Book club led by Helen Carey

Wednesday 17th 1.30-2.30pm Craft group led by Annette Minor

Monday 22nd 7.30-9pm Committee meeting

Tuesday 23rd 1.30-2.30pm Baking beauties led by Jontyn Jones

Thursday 25th 7.30-8.30pm CFWI meeting with Katie Awdas talking about 'Living with Endometriosis'

Please contact Melanie Barber if you would like additional information on any of these meetings on

melanie.barber@btinternet.com

If you have not 'zoomed' before and would like some help/practice before the meeting then please contact Melanie on the above email and she will arrange a session for you.

With an increase in the number of zoom meetings taking place each month we will try and send out the link a couple of days before the meeting so it doesn't get 'lost' down the email list!

FEBRUARY 1477

**VALENTINE'S DAY LOVE LETTER**

This is probably the oldest surviving Valentine's letter in the English language. It was written by Margery Brews to her fiancé John Paston

In February 1477 describing John as her 'right well loved Valentine' she tells him she is "not in good health of body or of heart nor shall I be till I hear from you". She explains that her mother has tried to persuade her father to increase her dowry- so far unsuccessfully, However, she says if John loves her he will marry her anyway. "But if you love me, as I trust you do, you will not leave me therefore,"

There was a happy ending to the story as the couple would eventually marry. John and Margery's son William, would become a prominent figure. at the court of HENRY VIII

HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY EVERYONE!
(Joan Blackshaw)

Additional meetings

Following the success of the sub-group meetings, the coffee morning and resolutions Zoom meetings we are trialling two additional meeting this month.

On Monday 8th February Karen Smith is leading a general discussion on 'ART'. Whether it is watercolour or acrylic painting, collage, photography, or mixed media, Karen would like people to be able to share their passion and experiences and find out what inspires others.

On Tuesday 23rd February at 1.30-2.30pm Jontyn is leading a 'Baking Beauties' meeting. The topic of the first get together is "All things Lemon Drizzle" so bring along one you made earlier to discuss and compare!

If you are interested in joining these trials or have any other suggestions then please contact Chris Jones or Melanie Barber

Green Hearts

Since 2015 the WI has supported the Climate Coalition 'Show the Love' Campaign by wearing green hearts.

The idea is that the hearts symbolise all that we care for about our environment and how we want to protect it from the effects of climate change. WI member Gill

Alcock has taken part in a series of virtual meetings and her report and proposals are below. If you are interested in getting involved then you can either contact Gill directly or Melanie Barber.



BUILDING A GREEN RECOVERY

'The WI has a proud history of taking action to protect the environment. As a founding member of The Climate Coalition, we work to protect what we love from climate change, and lobby politicians to prioritise tackling the issue.'

The NFWI is proud to join with The Climate Coalition and other environmental organisations & campaigners to support the call for a 'green' economic recovery. This is one that will invest in climate and nature-friendly infrastructure; put nature on the path to recovery at home and abroad; and climate policies that support the most vulnerable communities overseas.

To support this discussion, over 100 WI members joined with more than 13,000 people on the 30th June 2020 taking part in the first virtual mass lobby for climate, nature and green recovery. Members asked over 280 MPs to support policies that would invest in a green recovery.' (NFWI website)

I was one of the WI members taking part in this virtual Climate Lobby. 12 Tatton constituents, WI members and others, women, men and young people, met jointly with Tatton MP Esther McVey for a long and lively meeting discussing local concerns. One of the Cheshire WI Climate Ambassadors, Pauline Handley, from Fulshaw WI, in Wilmslow, helped us arrange and structure the meeting, and it was impressive hearing the range of interests and experiences we brought – from an architect experienced in super low carbon homes to a former Cheshire railway station manager, from a teenager concerned about safe and sustainable local transport to concerns about peat bog depletion at Lindow Moss and elsewhere; we were a mixture of residents, some with special knowledge, others just ordinary concerned citizens, from across the constituency. Working together as a group made it a much less scary experience, and I think we had a better and more productive meeting with our MP.

What was clear from the meeting was that, whilst there were some issues on which our MP Esther McVey did not agree, there were an encouraging number of issues on which she is prepared to press for action at parliamentary level and support local action. We agreed to meet again in a few months' time. We then followed up the meeting with a letter summarising main points and asking for her support on issues relating to peat moss, better local sustainable transport, supporting carbon reduction in housing by insulation and retro-fitting etc, and developing local green training and job opportunities, asking her to take action in this intervening period.

Our follow-up meeting, by Zoom, this month, has also been a very productive working meeting. Esther had asked some parliamentary questions and obtained ministerial statements. During this second meeting, Esther offered practical assessments of what there may be some political momentum for at present, of where she needs more detailed arguments to make progress, and where greater public support and awareness raising may be helpful.



What we can do in Whitley WI

It is in greater public support and awareness raising that we in Whitley WI can play our part, both as individuals and also using our voice as a WI branch. We identified some fruitful areas for local action, publicising issues to raise public awareness and also asking for changes, as follows:

- Contacting local garden centres asking for them to stop selling peat, and offer other replacements instead

- Pressing for better local sustainable transport options for our area including safe cycling routes and adequate, sustainably powered local bus and train services, and superfast IT infrastructure.

- Pressing for a detailed action plan and adequate support for the retro-fitting of 27 million homes, including those in our area, which will be needed to meet the government's own carbon reduction commitments

- Raising public awareness and contacting Alok Sharma (UK cabinet member and President of the COP26 Climate Change Conference) to point out that there are currently no very senior women at all in the UK's delegation organising the COP 26 Climate Summit hosted by the UK in Glasgow in November 2021 and asking for suitable women to be appointed.

Working on these issues will be more fun and more supportive if we do this together.

In Whitley WI we are good at working together. Some years ago we ran very successful Ecoteams looking at our own carbon footprints. We know that our Whitley WI has creative and passionate members, with a wide range of talents and experiences. It does not matter that we live in more than one parliamentary constituency, and more than one local authority area – in fact that is a strength. And not everyone has to work on everything.

So it would be good to network between us on what we might be able to do. Please contact Gill Alcock, on gialcock@phoncoop.coop or 01925 730153 so we can explore together how we may go forward.

Gill Alcock



And then the snow came!



Information update

Annette is updating our membership data base in preparation for the new subscription year in April so if any members have changes to their email, home address or contact number could you please get in touch with Annette on

annetteminor@btinternet.com

Thank you