



Sudbury Gainsborough WI

We held a **fashion show** with a difference in April. Instead of using new clothes, all of the outfits were sourced from British Heart Foundation



(BHF) and Mind charity shops. We wanted to highlight the environmental impact of producing new clothes, and show that you don't need to buy new to look great.

Our ten models were all a little nervous, but they rose to the occasion and proudly sashayed down the catwalk to powerful female pop anthems and to the support of over 75 women. We invited beauticians to offer mini treatments such as head massages, threading and henna tattoos, and the BHF and Mind both had a stall selling their new and pre-loved items. It was a huge task and lots of work for the committee, but it was well worth it, as we raised money for the two charities. Our goal was to create a warm, women-friendly, fun evening and we certainly succeeded!

Honington & Sapiston WI

Obituary: Jo Lynch

Jo and her husband Denis spotted a cottage for sale in Sapiston around 1978



and fell in love with it. The day they moved in a WI member called and invited them to a WI supper and as they say the rest is history.

Jo soon signed up and her secretarial and catering skills were a great asset to our WI. SWFWI also benefitted from these skills, when their HQ was in Whiting Street Jo was at the forefront of the Catering Committee, providing food for federation events including the Wednesday lunches for WI members who travelled from the villages to Bury St Edmunds Market.

Jo was our WI President from 1981 - 1989 and secretary from 1991- 1997 and also in 2006. She was an inspiration behind many plays and entertainment at WI events, which all seemed great fun at the time.

As well as WI, Jo celebrated her Golden Wedding with her husband Denis, was a parish councillor, secretary for the local over 60s club and treasurer to the village hall committee. She was a mother, grandmother, great grandmother and a good friend and neighbour. Later in life she welcomed our WI Knit and Natter group to her home. We all enjoyed the afternoons and a cup of tea with her.

When Jo became frail she moved to Northcourt nursing home. We kept in touch with visits, keeping her up to date with WI events and sending her postcards. She will be greatly missed.

Shimpling & Alpheton WI

Marion Argent, our President, arranged for us a guided tour of **Bury St Edmunds Guildhall**, with one of guides being her cousin



who talked to us all about the Royal Observation Corps' Operations Room from World War II. A story often told to visitors from all around the world, is that one of the women volunteers on observation duties during the war cycled in the dark (remember there were no lights then due to the blackout) from Lawshall to her ten hour night shift at the Guildhall and then cycled back again in time to milk the cows on her family farm in the morning. Less well known is the fact that it was our guide's Mum and Marion's Auntie!

We were also regaled by another guide about the general history of the unique building from medieval times through to the English



Civil War and Oliver Cromwell going there. Like Marion's cousin, he knew his stuff!

As if all of this was not enough, we were given enormous scones, clotted cream, jam and butter with hot drinks in the very courtroom where all manner of criminals were tried for driving too fast to streaking through Bury St Edmunds! It is well worth a visit with your WI!

Norton WI

It was great to see so many at our May meeting and we were thoroughly entertained listening to



Helen Taylor talk about her experiences as a **student nurse** in the 1950's. Times have definitely changed!

Our June meeting was very well attended too and the speaker, **Jonathan Houseago**, gave a very entertaining and informative talk about hedgehog behaviour and what we can all do to play our part in ensuring the continued survival of our hedgehog population. We all know about checking before lighting a bonfire, but we also need to check before strimming!

The next meeting will take place Monday 13th July, 6.30pm to 8.30pm and will be a Garden Party. Jeanette Burt has kindly volunteered to host and members are to bring a plate of food to share. Drinks will be provided but please also bring your own plate and glass. Previous members of Norton WI are welcome to come along, and as always, new members are welcome too. For further information please contact nortonwisuff@gmail.com

Wickhambrook WI

Our **Books & Shenanigans** had a great evening at Wyken with wild swimming, saunas and cold plunge pools followed by supper at a local pub. Friday nights done right!



Rickinghall WI

Our May meeting was our annual meeting combined with a bring a plate buffet.

Eight committee members stood for re-election with two new members also re-elected. We were able to report a successful year with a variety of events, some new members and a healthy financial position.

At our June meeting we welcomed non-members to join us to listen to **Christine Adams** talking about **How Ware Hall Moved 100 Miles** from Ware in Hertfordshire to Wells-next-to-Sea in Norfolk. Christine told us the story of her incredible aunt by marriage, May Savidge, who when faced with the compulsory purchase of her listed house in Ware for a roundabout to be built, set about the daunting task of disassembling her house, brick by brick, beam by beam and tile by tile and moving it 100 miles. Then, over twenty years, whilst living in a caravan with her dogs, she painstakingly set about re-building the house by herself, with occasional help from local people she recruited to assist. Sadly, May passed away before the house was completed and it fell to Christine to take over completing the re-build, and also sorting through incredible amounts of paperwork and artefacts which May had collected over many years.

Christine was an excellent speaker, with members and visitors alike impressed with both her aunt and her dedication to the incredible re-building of Ware Hall.



Stour Group Meeting

In May, Haverhill Owls invited the Stour Group to Haverhill Arts Centre for the annual group meeting.

We were entertained by **Musicology**, a nine piece group led by Lisa Cheadle. The group sang songs from the 50's to the 90's, and began by singing Close to You by The Carpenters, taking us through a whole range of popular songs, ending with the comedy song Mud, Mud Glorious Mud. Ridgewell WI's President thanked them for a most enjoyable interlude.

After tea and delicious cake, SWFWI Chair, Maggie Glavin, announced the Buds in May competition results and presented the winners, Sturmer WI, with the trophy. Kedington WI's President thanked Haverhill Owls for a lovely evening and invited members to join them in 2027.

Drinkstone WI

Denise Shaw started off by telling us how she became interested in flowers and went on to qualify with a City and Guilds Certificate in **Flower Arranging**. She explained how to prepare flowers, choose containers and construct an eye catching arrangement. Denise gave a demonstration and then we all enjoyed having a go. These days using foam or plastic is frowned upon so we used good old fashioned chicken wire to secure the flowers in place. The results were amazing and we achieved a very impressive and colourful display.



Chevington WI

In June, our Speaker was Andrew Moncrieff on his time working in Antarctica.



Andrew, a Geologist, had already been on a trip to Greenland and then decided to go on a British Antarctic Survey. Antarctica is a frozen continent with no indigenous population. It is completely barren with no flora, no land animals just penguins, Orca and leopard seals. His trip started at the main base of Rothera to meet his assistant whose job it was to keep Andrew safe. They waited for good weather to fly to their research base, with everything needed for their trip including two skidoos and two sledges plus boxes loaded with enough food for two people for ten days. Food was interesting; dried mutton, chicken and beef, rice, spaghetti, Ovaltine, porridge and tinned butter (which was one of Andrew's favourites) and flour to make bread. Clothing was all about layers with underpants made of hessian. Needless to say most people took their own!

Communication was quite limited, and at the time of the expedition Andrew was planning his wedding with his fiancée Nicky. His aide took photos of Andrew so she could see him and Nicky was allowed 200 words to be telexed. Andrew said he felt a little odd having his messages from Nicky read out by a large Irish chap!! While listening to the radio he heard about the Berlin wall coming down and the release of Nelson Mandela.

Extra supplies (including extra food, fuel and triangular anti freeze - whisky to you and I) were dropped by plane. Then came the subject of personal hygiene; most people had one change of clothes so after three months they were rather yuk and ready to be burnt! The toilet was a hole in the snow; Andrew designed his own toilet with a square frame and dug a hole for his feet so he could sit rather than squat. After time there were competitions to design toilet roll holders etc.

Each trip is approx. seven months, and by the end of the season it was getting challenging but on his return Andrew's work was published. An absolutely brilliant talk!

Pakenham WI

Mike Wabe

was our speaker this month. He told us about witches and witch hunting in East Anglia



and how Matthew Hawkins terrorised the population causing many witches (women and men) to go to their death. Printing started it off with Bibles, alchemy and astrology. There are eighteen mentions of witches in the Bible alone!

Witches were hung in England and burnt in Scotland. In 1736, there was a Witchcraft Act which remained until 1951. Even now, witch hunting continues in the 21st Century!!

Sudbury Sunflowers WI

Sudbury Sunflowers WI had a very busy annual meeting in May. Jean Peacock our President hung up her President hat after four years of loyal and dedicated service. Following an election, Carol Morris agreed to stand as our new 2026/27 President. We are sure Carol will make a great President.



Maureen Jefferies was surprised with a bottle of her favourite red tippie for the fantastic work she does in preparation for our meetings every month. Never asked she just does it! We also thanked Sue O'Rourke for delivering goods every month to the Storehouse Food bank in Sudbury. Last but not least, Jennie Hembery won this year's Darts Trophy!

The committee were the entertainment with a How well do you know your committee on the Call my Bluff theme which was great fun! Who said WI annual meetings have to be boring?!

Sturmer WI

Andrew Moncrieff gave a fascinating talk on how forensics helped to convict Ian Huntley for the Soham Murders in 2002. Andrew is a forensic scientist whose expertise is in geology. Huntley's car was seen in the wooded area near Lakenheath where their bodies were found. Andrew found specific chalk on the suspension arch which matched the woodland. It was compelling evidence and helped convict Huntley.

Bury Afternoon WI

In May, we welcomed Nicky Thomas from **the Moses Project**, a charity which helps new Mums and their babies providing a Moses basket filled with essentials. Clients include young mothers with no support, migrants, low income families and women who have left abusive relationships. In 2025 the charity provided baskets for 250 babies including one set of triplets and five sets of twins! Donated items come from individuals and groups like the WI. This is a very deserving local charity which our WI will be supporting this year.



Risby WI

Risby WI visited **Porters Lodge** for a private viewing of the gardens followed by tea and cake. The gardens are set out in a series each with interesting sculptures, fountains and ponds. There are three acres of gardens and a further 17 acres of woodland, designed by owner Craig Wyncoll and the late Lionel Stirgess, they feature beautiful sculptures of fish, a life size pig and we were also enchanted by architecture such as the Japanese Pagoda. Then it was back to the tea room for some of the best cake you'll find, and that is the word of WI members!



Everyone had a great time with one lucky member winning an annual pass!