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CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE



We are now up to Lockdown Letter number 4 and although there has been some easing of restrictions the issue of meetings and opening of some venues still seems to be quite distant especially for those WIs with larger membership numbers.

I know that some WIs are holding committee and members' meetings via Zoom and further on in this Newsletter I have written a short article about Zoom and the legality under the WI constitution which should put minds at ease - so please do read this piece.

As you can see this is a full four-page Newsletter and has been distributed in pre lockdown numbers. Each WI will organise the distribution to their own members who normally receive a copy at meetings. It will of course also be on our website. I am hoping with all my heart that when you receive the August Newsletter the future will be certainly brighter for everyone.

I am very appreciative of the work all Presidents and their committees are doing for their own members and communities and I think at the moment every opportunity for interaction in some way or other is to be encouraged. In light of that I wonder how many of you now produce your own Newsletter as Thropton do, and you can see a little of it on the back page of this Newsletter. I did tell Chris Butterworth, secretary of Thropton WI, that I had now resorted to hair rollers and she did ask if I would send her a picture. All I can say is that I have done a before and after shot but still haven't pressed the send button so keep watching! If your WI has started your own newsletter due to Covid 19 please let us know at the Office or better still send a copy to put into our "Archive for 2020, a most unusual year."



In this Newsletter you will see that we are progressing well with next year's Annual Meeting at the Royal Albert Hall. As soon as we have further information, we will pass it on. However, I can say that we have booked our transport and accommodation. Now here is something for you to do during the next few weeks. Remember for our Centenary in 2018 we had a 500-word writing competition which was won by Stevie Glover of Horsley WI? Well Karen Coleman, one of the Vice Chairmen had an idea whilst out walking her beloved dogs. Suffice to say, she is now getting like Sue Malloy who used to have ideas when driving down from Doddington to Board meetings and Karen is having ideas when giving "the boys" long walks. She has suggested a 500-word piece entitled - '*Advice I would have given to my pre lockdown self.*' A list including get more flour, buzz cut for hair, more wine and excessive amounts of loo rolls should not be given priority in your work but acquiring plenty of make-up and nail varnish is fine! Entries to Cresswell House by the end of August please, this should make entertaining reading, I think.

As you know in our Federation we have many members who work on the front line or are key workers in all the other areas

that are so well known to us and I would like to once again say how proud I and all of the Federation are of these people who have kept everything going for the rest of us. Please remember them in your thoughts.

Finally, in the February issue of the Newsletter and before lockdown the photograph of me had been taken at a wedding over twenty years ago and Dave volunteered a bottle of wine (of a colour suitable to the winner) to be given to the first name out of the hat to spot the venue. Now you may blame lockdown but there were no takers, so the venue was Langley Castle and I have drunk the wine... lovely.

Keep safe, keep smiling and keep in touch.

Marj x

★ 100 CLUB DRAW ★

July – drawn on 9 June 2020

1 st	32	Viv Atkinson	Heddon on the Wall WI
2 nd	42	Lesley Hawdon	Heddon on the Wall WI
3 rd	209	Ann Thompson	Bamburgh WI

Secretary's enclosures ~

Applications for: 100 Club Draw, 2021 WI diaries, Board of Trustees nomination form and information on the role. Yearbook 2021 x4

News from the Committees...

Craft - Karen Coleman

Well, how has it been? Lockdown obviously! I have been sent some lovely pictures of things people have created. Special mention to Kathleen Turnbull, South Gosforth WI, who made fabric boxes, see picture. Skilled and beautiful... as every WI lady is!



The Craft Committee is ready and waiting for when we are allowed to get together. In readiness preparation is underway for our first return to a craft session at Cresswell House, which will be *Paper Cutting*. I started yonks ago and loved it, simple using paper but a bit dangerous using a scalpel...! But then government guidance stopped all our plans. However, I have been practicing a 'new way', which involves crafting in plastic gloves and wearing a face mask...

At Cresswell House, if we have to keep socially distanced at 2m we can have a session upstairs; so, I have paced out the space, worked out 6 people maximum. Granted it may have the feel of sitting an exam in the gym at school in rows all spaced apart but needs must in order to keep us all safe. However, I am willing to do as many sessions as needed so those who apply can get a go. Some sessions will be as always on a Saturday. If guidance changes to 1m or 1.5m then I may increase class size slightly.



For the session I would show you the how to, then tips and hints on how to do it better, before letting you loose on two pictures you will finish and take home framed. You would get all the kit you would need to take home afterwards along with a couple of templates to work on. But I will not be providing face masks or gloves, those you will need to bring with you along with a packed lunch, but I will bring cake...

Sport & Leisure - Barbara Kilkenny

Sadly, it has become clear that it is likely the remaining events we had planned for members this year are going to have to be postponed until 2021. Our priority will be to re-schedule a number of events. The *Darts and Domino finals* (Darts will be Hepple v Hedgeley and Dominoes Thropton v Stocksfield) will go ahead as soon as possible and the draw for next year's full competition can be done so that event can run over the summer months.



Our usual *Domino Drive* at Stannington would be a great way for a lot of us to meet up again. Our volunteers to host *Carpet Bowls* event, Cambo WI, and Bellingham WI to host *Car Treasure Hunt* are both still willing to go ahead. A new venue was already being considered for the *Golf Challenge*. Events such as our popular *Fun Quiz* and *August Stroll* will be in the schedule along with new events. These include Ancestry and Tai Chi.

It goes without saying that this programme depends on whatever guidelines for activities are still in place but let us hope we can meet again soon. As ever, any ideas you have going, again are most welcome. Meanwhile stay safe and well.

Membership Support - Prudence Marks

I am so pleased to tell you that, having joined the Membership Support Committee as an observer in July last year, Karen Rochester of Stannington WI, will begin her WI Adviser training with us. When normality returns and we are able to visit WIs again, Karen will accompany current Advisers and will commence her training with an online course in January. We all wish her well!

Public Affairs - Pat Douglas

Like me, some of you would be looking forward about now to our trip to *Dundee and the V&A's Mary Quant Exhibition*, which I'm sure would have brought back memories of what we did or didn't wear back in the 60's. I hope the exhibition will still be staged and will be contacting the V&A to make plans for a trip. Likewise, the other events in the pipeline currently on hold - *Down Your Way*, an illustrated talk *In Sickness and in Health* and a visit to Trinity House - can be resurrected once we are back to normality, whatever that might be. To date we still have the 5 November for our International Event when we will visit Spain. This may not take the same form as previous events but keep your fingers crossed. Who knows what the future holds? But I'm looking forward to running events again and meeting up with you soon. I only wish that by the time we get to see each other again I will have lost at least a stone and seen the hairdresser.



Keep safe, keep positive and keep smiling. 😊

Denman - Hilary Robson

Denman have announced the very first Denman at Home online courses. These Denman courses are taught from the comfort and safety of your own home! The courses are run from tutor's homes using Zoom. Eight courses are now available with many more planned for the future. Further information is on their website at [Denman at Home](#)



Treasurer - Norma Birch

When lockdown is over the Federation is hoping to put on some events to help re-start social life for members and help funds. So watch this space...

Combined Arts – Moira Bengtson

Hello Ladies. I hope that you're all managing to stay fit, happy and sane whilst we are having this enforced sabbatical!



I've been trying on my "Combined Arts" thinking cap to come up with suggestions for future events...and during our nightly WhatsApp video call was discussing with my daughter the possibility of an outdoor musical concert. My vision was of pretty Otterburn rugs, scattered around on the park outside Bardon Mill Village Hall - suitably distanced at two meters apart and spread with delicious sweet and savoury morsels (together with chilled bottles of wine or fizz, naturally). We could ask that the members brought their own garden chairs if preferred, and a pashmina or cashmere wrap for later in the evening after sundown so that the subdued hum of conversation and laughter could go on when the music was over....

My daughter was, as always, very practical when I mentioned that there may be a problem with toilet facilities as we'd need to ensure that only one lady used the facilities at a time, and that there was thorough cleaning in between each use. Her suggestion was the wearing of long skirts with bustles... and personal buckets, together with hand sanitizer, megaphones, hot toddies, brollies, waterproofs, woollies and wellies!!

Do let me know if you have any socially distanced 'arty' suggestions Ladies...I need inspiration! Stay well, alert and safe.

Members' Information:

National Annual Meeting 2021

What a disappointment it was for everyone concerned when this year's National Annual Meeting had to be cancelled due to the Coronavirus outbreak. To make up for this disappointment, the Board of Trustees has agreed that the 2020 delegates be given the opportunity to enjoy the wonderful atmosphere of the Royal Albert Hall at the meeting to be held on Monday 19 April 2021.

The coach has been booked, hotel arrangements have been made at the Holiday Inn London Forum Kensington and the delegates have been contacted. Although April seems a long way off, it's good to start making plans for the future! Unfortunately, as yet we have not been informed of our WI Adviser and Observer ticket allocation and will not hear from National regarding this until October - the allocation will depend upon the number of seats available in the Royal Albert Hall and Government regulations in place at the time. As soon as this information is to hand, we will contact those members who wished to attend the meeting as WI Advisers and Observers this year.

Charity, Constitution and Covid19

Many WIs have now held committee meetings and even members' meetings via Zoom and I know that this has in fact caused concern amongst some members in regard to the legality of such meetings. You will all be aware that under our Constitution and our charitable status we, the WI, are required to offer our members a minimum of eleven meetings per year and each meeting has to be available to every WI member. This of course explains why an outing held on a meeting night still has to have a business part and any transport has to be provided to the members free of charge if it is one of the eleven meetings to be held.

You are of course free to hold more than eleven meetings in a year if you wish to do so.

Not all individual members will have computers or smartphones or, even if they do, they may not be happy to use Zoom and therefore may feel left out of normal meeting proceedings which no WI would want to happen.

These are very unprecedented times and the Charities Commission are well aware that individual WIs, Federations and National are all doing their very best and they are taking a pragmatic view on meetings and further information can be found on National's website under FAQ's-Covid19-Impact on WI Activities and members where all your concerns are indeed answered. Please do take the time to look at this document.



Speakers Corner

Sarah Slater is a Guide Lecturer at Hampton Court Palace and is also a registered speaker with Surrey, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Hampshire and West Sussex WI Federations.

With no physical meetings taking place she can offer two talks via Zoom which are:

- '*Working with the ghosts of Hampton Court Palace.*' Hear about her experiences working with the ghosts at Hampton Court Palace, the history, stories and sightings.
- '*Sex, Secrets, Scandal and Salacious Gossip of the Royal Court, 1660 to 1830.*' Talking about all the naughty bits of history you would probably not have learnt about at school! Including sexual diseases of the time and the methods used to prevent them. Warning, this is not for the prudish, it is fun but rude!

Her fee for Zoom as for a visit is £70, however, she is prepared to accept £60. Her contact details are: Email: sarah.m.slater@btinternet.com Telephone: 07899 794 308

102! Happy Birthday to Wall WI

On Thursday 4 June 2020 Wall WI celebrated their 102nd birthday, Elva Mason explains.



As members of Wall WI we were given a lovely surprise when our President, Mrs Jackie Gaughan delivered a 'Party in a Bag' to our doors. Due to the coronavirus we cannot celebrate together normally, so, Jackie, being her usual inventive self decided we would have all the 'ingredients' to celebrate at home: with a cup of tea and a biscuit.

The bag contained teabags, a variety of biscuits and was accompanied by a small plant for every member.

We may be a small WI in South Northumberland, but we know how to enjoy ourselves even in these strange times! Thank you, Jackie, from all of us.

Thropton during Lockdown

Chris Butterworth tells how they keep in touch.

We phone vulnerable members and keep in touch with others, but we have developed a newsletter and the second edition has just gone out: it will be e-mailed to those who have e-mail and posted to those who do not. We are trying to be light-hearted and light touch in these strange times. For July the rogues' gallery will be a real hoot - my hair was last cut on 29 February! Members have been making masks, sharing their lockdown experiences, including gardening and cooking tips (e.g. using forgotten things in the freezer) and what they saw during their walks, like bluebells in the woods.

Sadly, at the end of March, one of our enduring members Mary Bathgate died of Coronavirus. Although in her 70s, she had no known underlying health problems, so it was a great shock to everyone.



Out and about...



Your lockdown pics

Breakfast in the garden - Janice Graham Hexham Town WI

Hartford Bridge WI - staying connected.

Muriel Thompson explains how Hartford Bridge WI are keeping in touch during lockdown.

Hello to all Northumberland Federation Members. We at Hartford Bridge WI would like to share our lockdown news. We hope you are keeping well and safe in all parts of our lovely County. We usually hold our monthly meetings at West Hartford Community Fire Station premises, however from February we were unable to continue to meet. This has been our version of "Lockdown WI".

The WI committee continue to meet via Zoom and have kept in touch with our members via a telephone call to each member and our monthly newsletter where we share information from our group. Our book club continues to meet monthly via WhatsApp. A group of our crafting ladies sewed face masks which were then sent out to each member which were much appreciated. Everyone was sent a 'thinking of you card' made by one of our committee, this was embellished with a seed heart to plant. Three of our members made Scrub Bags for the NHS - one made 120 bags!

We have a Summer 2020 Crafting Challenge. A white fabric pennant was posted to each member together with a request to design and embellish this in any medium. The finished pennants will be made into Bunting to display at future meetings, once we reassemble. A teabag verse went out to everyone, accompanied by a Teabag, a KitKat plus a Word Search Quiz created around the names of our members. The verse read:

I cannot sit and chat with you
the way I'd like to do.

So, brew yourself a cup of tea
I'll think of you - you think of me.



Best wishes from your friends at Hartford Bridge WI.

Lockdown Recipes – Sue Malloy

One of the disappointments of this lockdown is that I can't do any of the eleven cookery demonstrations I have in my diary - either at Cresswell House or by visiting WIs. However, that has given me lots of time to try new recipes and I'm sure I'm not the only one.

I've spoken to Marj and she is happy for me to collect recipes from members and put them together in a "LOCKDOWN RECIPES" cookery book which would then be sent out to all WIs in our Federation later in the year. So, if you have been busy cooking and have a favourite or unusual recipe, I'd love to include it in the book. Please send your recipes directly to me rather than Cresswell House at:

Sue Malloy
Burn House
Doddington. NE71 6AR

Email: suemalloy@btinternet.com

I look forward to getting new, interesting and delicious recipes. Best wishes



Please continue to let us know how you are doing and great to see your pictures. You can also recommend a good book, a new recipe or a new craft you have learned. We would love to hear from you. Email federationoffice@northumberlandwi.co.uk by 17 July. Thank you