

WI News 2009

December: ~ Members enjoyed their last meeting of the year. We were entertained with tales of behind stage and screen secrets, as our speaker demonstrated his make-up skills. Janet was decorated with flowers, Carol ended up with a cat's face and Pat sustained a very realistic open cut to her hand. Teas were provided by Kay Sambell, Sally Isom and Carole Armfield, flowers by Margaret Pratley and thanks Barbara Barns. The evening ended with the exchange of Christmas gifts.



*Janet has a flower painted on he arm, whilst Carol is purrfect!*



*A quick change hairstyle!*

~ On Sunday 6th December the WI provided drinks and nibbles for the retired of the village.



*Drinks & nibbles on Sunday 6th December, 2009*

November: ~ WI Walk: On a misty, moist November day sixteen walkers enjoyed a walk from Broughton Gifford to the magnificent Chalfield Manor, through Holt, then on to the Old Bear at Staverton for lunch. A one mile stretch of canal path, where a heron and kingfisher were spotted, brought us to the hamlet of Whaddon. Following the River Avon, crossing fields, an old packhorse bridge and railway line, we finally arrived back at Broughton Gifford.

~ Pat Hunt presided over November 10th's meeting. Our speaker was Mr. Bernard Workman, who gave a very interesting talk about his career as a press photographer. This was accompanied by many varied photos which he had taken throughout his working life, from famous people to unusual situations and sporting events. He was warmly thanked by Janet Elms, after which refreshments were served by Sandra Sigeo, June Farr and Carol Barratt.

October: ~ Four walkers enjoyed a walk from Biddestone to Ford, via Slaughterford, on a beautiful autumnal day, with contrasts of high open land with stunning views, shady woods and a river valley, where cormorants were spotted. After lunch at The White Hart we climbed back up to open land and continued on the lanes that brought us back to Biddestone.

September: ~ Former engineer, broadcaster and journalist, Brian Barber, told members of KSM WI about some amazing experiences in his talk 'Radio Station under Fire'. Brian's career as an engineer has taken him all over the world and in 2003 he was given the task of setting up community radio stations in Liberia. Unfortunately, he found himself trapped in Monrovia as civil war took hold of the country. Brian was eventually helicoptered to safety by the French SAS and had to wait three years before the political situation made it safe for him to return to the country. He then succeeded in setting up a network of 26 radio stations. The talk was supported by maps and graphic and moving photographs. Louise Williams gave the vote of thanks.

August: ~ WI Walk: A stroll along Portishead promenade and an ice cream brought the August walk to an end. We started the walk on the coastal path, to a small metal lighthouse, then inland to the Downs, with good views over Portbury Docks and the coast. After passing through the Victorian area of Portishead, we entered Port Marine, with new housing and a marina built on wasteland; one area resembling a quaint fishing village. At Portishead pier there is an unrivalled view of the estuary, the bridges, Welsh coast and Portbury Docks. The Royal provided a welcome lunch; this Hotel was built in 1830 to cater for passengers alighting from boats and embarking for the Americas. Battery Point was our next stop, where we admired the views and enjoyed the sunshine, before returning along the promenade.



*WI walk at Portishead, 17th August, 2009*

~ Flower & Produce Show Results.

Overall winner: Louise Williams

Vaughan Trophy for lady with next highest points: Pat Woodward

WI Trophy for man with most points: John Woodward

IKA Alderman Shield for home baking & preserves: Sheila Sealy

WI Vase for floral arrangements: Pat Woodward

Hughes Cup for WI member with most points: Louise Williams

Woodward Cup for photography: Andrew Fussell

Singer Cup for 5-10 years old: Abigail Elms

Kirby Cup for under 5 years old: Charlotte Clark

Novice Cup for top scoring individual who has never won a cup before: Pat Squires

Sadly the John Gilbert Cup was not awarded this year as no 11-16 year olds took part.

The show was very well supported and the auction of produce, ably conducted by Mary Humphreys, raised a good sum which will help to finance the Christmas drinks and nibbles event that the WI puts on for retired villagers.

July: ~ WI Walk: July's walk started in the typical Cotswold village of Guiting Power, with russet-coloured houses clustered round a sloping green. After coffee at the village Post Office, we began our walk beside a tributary of the river Windrush, along tracks, through valleys and uphill to the Cotswold Farm Park. A downhill lane took us across the Windrush at the ford, on a raised path. The Halfway House at Kineton provided a welcome meal, then off again, walking on part of the Diamond Way on a pretty lane, fringed with high banks full of wild flowers, through a wooded valley, across tracks and back to Guiting Power for tea.

~ Due to the inclement weather it was decided to take July 14th's expected outdoor garden party indoors. Although it was a slightly damp evening several members ventured up the lane to take a walk around the beautiful gardens at the Old Rectory. After shortened business we were entertained by Speakers Corner, who performed a variety of popular songs from the 50s, 60s and 70s. During the interval strawberries and cream were served along with a wine cup, and a short sketch was performed by three members. The evening ended with thanks to the hostesses and Speakers Corner; the table decoration was presented to Dorothy Wheatley for her kind offer of use of her garden. There is no August meeting, but instead we have a walking Treasure Hunt around Chippenham. Our next meeting is on September 8th.

June: ~ The June walk took place in a quiet valley south of Bath, centred on the village of Wellow. Seven of us enjoyed the beautiful countryside and the picturesque village with its old Manor House and parish church of St Julian. Part of the route followed the course of the former Somerset and Dorset Railway before climbing steeply to Lower Twinhoe Farm, where we saw an abundance of the rare plant, Bath asparagus, and several pyramid orchids. After fighting our way along a particularly overgrown footpath, we made our way to the Fox and Badger pub. After lunch we followed the course of the Wellow Brook, where a barn owl was spotted. Finally, we climbed up to Stony Littleton Long Barrow before making our way back to the village.

~ The meeting this month was held on June 9th at the village hall, after the business was read our speaker Mary Teed spoke about her many years as a professional singer. She relayed tales of her past and some of the many varied venues where she had performed; we also heard snippets on tape of some of her past performances.

May: ~ With threats of heavy rain, it was decided that our May walk should be nearer the village, so six walkers set off over the fields to Down Farm and then on to Bolehyde Manor, where we were delighted to be given a tour of the beautiful gardens. Further on through Allington we climbed over a stone stile, across more fields, where two deer were spotted and finally back to the Allington Lane, grateful the rain had stayed away.

~ At May 12th's meeting the resolution was discussed and voted on. We then moved on to our special entertainment, our entry in the recent Festival 90 celebration. A short sketch depicting our 70 year history, complete with quick change artists wearing a variety of costumes including skimpy nighties, Ascot finery and even a corset. We were then served Pate and Punch; the competition was an item beginning with the letter P, this was won by Jackie Lacey.

April: ~ A glorious spring day enabled ten walkers to enjoy a relaxing exploration of the combes and brooks around one of England's prettiest villages, Castle Combe. Our walk along lanes, tracks and paths revealed meadows of wild flowers, woods with a sea of bluebells, honey-coloured stone cottages and the sparkling Broadmead Brook.

~ Our meeting this month was held on the 14th April, at St. Peters Church Hall, Frogwell, Chippenham. Our speaker, Mrs Norah Kennedy, demonstrated the art of willow basket making, whilst explaining the different types of Somerset willow. She brought with her a selection of baskets from around the world, including a basket specially designed for transporting live chickens. The finished basket was raffled to raise money for ACWW. The competition was a flower arrangement in a basket; this was won by Jenny Hayne.

March: ~ A host of golden daffodils greeted 21 walkers as they entered Betty Dawes Wood near Newent. The walk took us along the towpath beside a beautiful section of the partially restored Hereford and Gloucester Canal, where Canada Geese and Herons were spotted. Passing through orchards and onto a lane, we reached the wood carpeted with violets, wild daffodils and wood anemones and we enjoyed our picnic in a small clearing. After crossing fields and streams, we admired two daffodil meadows, Gwen and Veras' fields, now cared for by Gloucester Wildlife Trust. Pretty cottages and more daffodil woods delighted us as we walked along high banked lanes and fields, reaching Newent Arboretum and the last leg of our seven and three quarter mile walk, back to Newent.

~ A geisha's tool of the trade, namely ornate sticks for cleaning ears, Eddie Stobart vehicles, teapots, stamps, cows, mugs, Kingston

St. Michael plates, Lilliput Lane models – these were some of the items that made up a fascinating collectomania display at the recent annual meeting.

The winner of the Betty Wiggins Rosebowl, awarded to the individual achieving most points in the monthly competitions, was Marjorie Couzens.

Kay Sambell and Louise Williams both won bursaries for courses at Denman College. Viv Penney was elected President, replacing Kay Sambell whose three years in office have been warmly appreciated.

~ February 16th: Twelve walkers enjoyed a glorious circular walk on the south west edge of Bristol, taking in the contrasting beauties of Ashton Court Park with fine views and those of serene Abbots Pool, which dates back to the 12th century. After passing through more woodland we eventually reached Abbots Leigh, with views beyond the River Severn of snow capped mountains in Wales. The George provided a delicious lunch and rest and we then continued on across fields to the beautiful Leigh Woods reserve, following markers back to the cars and a glimpse of Clifton suspension bridge.

February 11th: Members enjoyed a fascinating presentation by Louisa Burden on the subject of the new Wiltshire and Swindon History centre; from the original planning to the build, then moving the archives from a leaky decaying building to their new state of the art home.

~ The January meeting, a “Musical Miscellany” was a lively affair enjoyed by all present. Sylvia Stables played tunes from which teams had to find the missing words of a story read to them. The entries for the song title on a plate were very ingenious.

The Burns Night Supper was also a great success with over 50 people enjoying a delicious supper, the haggis ceremony and entertainment performed by Richmond Cursiter, ably assisted by John McKee. Thanks to Jacky Lacey and Alison Shackell for their organisation.

Nineteen people took part in the walk to Calne after Christmas and mulled wine and mince pies were kindly provided by Mary Humphreys at the end. Friday January 23rd saw 12 members and friends and one dog enjoying an excellent walk between Malmesbury and Lea.