



Smarden WI

Newsletter for March 2021

Who would have believed when we started the Newsletter twelve months ago that it would still be in production now? In many ways, although we have all done nothing very much at all in the last year, the time has flown by.

Let us all pray that the gradual opening which has now begun will continue without too many hiccups and that we can all meet again very soon.

Zoom calls, quizzes, lectures, concerts, whatever; these are all great for having enabled us all to keep in touch with our families and friends. But they are just not the same as the real thing. So, let us hope that by the time another twelve months have passed, lockdowns and all that goes with them will be a distant memory!

Carol Chandler



Wishing a very happy birthday to the following ladies whose special days are on the horizon or were celebrated earlier this month:

5 March - Gill Bromley

7th March - Terry Sherman

9 March - Joan Tumbridge

22 March - Jean Ridley

4 April - Elizabeth McLeish

15 April - Kathy Reynolds

*Many happy returns,
Ladies*

The President's table

May these flowers help to put a spring in the step of our members as we slowly begin to emerge into the sunshine of life beyond Covid.

Centenary Daffodils – Still going strong!

Members may remember battling with almost rock-hard ground round the Charter Hall in November 2018, as they tried to plant daffodil bulbs! The first photo, taken 17 March 2019, shows members enjoying the initial results of their efforts, with the daffodils flowering for the first time.

To celebrate our forthcoming centenary (January 2019), planting daffodils was one of the ways of marking the occasion. Donated by De Jagers of Ulcombe, bulbs were planted: along the window-side of the hall, on the grass area at the beginning of Chessenden Lane; and around the sign for the hall.

This was in pre-Community Shop times, and we were warned that the ground would be dug up to lay services for the shop. Whilst admittedly some



bulbs have been lost between the sign and the car park entrance, almost the same number that were initially planted are blooming on the Chessenden Lane grass, and along the window side of the hall. Those that were surrounding the hall sign

are becoming a lovely display – the second photo was taken at the relatively early date of 27 February 2021, with many daffodils still in bud. A permanent gift to the village from the WI - long may they continue to bloom!



Stephanie Atkins
February 2021

Easter Week by Charles Kingsley

*See the land, her Easter keeping,
Rises as her Maker rose.
Seeds, so long in darkness sleeping,
Burst at last from winter snows.
Earth with heaven above rejoices;
Fields and gardens hail the spring;
Sheughs* and woodlands ring with
voices,
While the wild birds build and sing.*

*You, to whom your Maker granted
Powers to those sweet birds unknown,
Use the craft by God implanted;
Use the reason not your own.
Here, while heaven and earth rejoices,
Each his Easter tribute bring-
Work of fingers, chant of voices,
Like the birds who build and sing.*



*Sheugh is a Gaelic word for ditch

S marden WI News

On 11 February, some of our members got together via Zoom to enjoy a talk on The Dog's Trust arranged by Lynn Carmichael. The speaker was Lara Murphy, Supporter Relations Officer for the Trust, and she treated us to a thirty minute or so chat on their works, their premises and the dogs themselves. It was very informative, enjoyable and accompanied by a good presentation.



The Trust was founded in 1891 by Lady Gertrude Stock and was formerly known as the National Canine Defence League, with the aim to protect dogs from "torture and ill-usage of every kind".



It has probably changed beyond recognition from those early days, and now even includes a scheme where people, but especially perhaps the elderly or those who may be terminally ill, can register their dogs with the sure knowledge that they will be collected, looked after and very likely re-homed, in the event of the owner's death. This is found to be a great comfort to many people.

On 18 March 2021, John & Judith Hardy celebrated their Diamond Wedding Anniversary. Many congratulations to you both!



Have you remembered the seed bag? If you haven't done so Perhaps we just need to soil to warm



packet that was in the Christmas goody already, it will soon be time to plant them! up a little more!

Subscriptions for the WI year from 1 April 2021 are now due. If you would like to renew your membership (and who wouldn't?), please pay a minimum of £34 up to a maximum of £44 to Honor by bank transfer or cheque if preferred. Please refer back to our Treasurer's recent letter for all the details.

Finally, from Sandie Hughes: "Happy Easter to all my WI friends, look forward to seeing you all soon!"





BONJOUR BOULOGNE!

Looking through old newspaper cuttings relating to Smarden I came across this, published in the Kentish Express in **August 1929** (10 years after Smarden WI was founded):

OUTING.- On Tuesday a party of about forty members of the Women's Institute and their friends went by char-a-banc to Folkestone, whence most proceeded across the Channel to Boulogne for the day. The weather was perfect and the sea calm, and the party enjoyed an ample dejeuner at the Hotel du Louvre. A visit was paid to the ramparts and the great Cathedral of Notre Dame, and all returned by the five o'clock boat.

As you know I've been trawling through my old diaries and found this dated **October 1992**:

The WI trip to France was a memorable day, paid for from Mrs Furse's bequest to the WI. Eighteen of us went to Boulogne. It was lovely – a beautiful day and the Channel was so calm. Mum came and thoroughly enjoyed it. Boulogne is a lovely place. I'd been there before but couldn't remember much about it. We strolled up into the old walled city where we had coffee and a croissant before looking around the Cathedral with its beautiful mosaic altar. We met up with John and Jeanne Phillips and some of the others and joined them for an excellent meal in a restaurant called [La Houblonnière](#) (Hop Garden) which had been recommended by Barbara Howes. I had mussels followed by beef bourguignonne. It was wonderful accompanied by a bottle of wine. We then shopped for a while. Mum and I bought some irresistible glace fruits, cheeses and bread. We then strolled around the fish stalls on the front before catching the boat back to Dover. A lovely day with a good crowd.

So how about we make it a hat trick and take a char-a-banc to France for the day when we can once again venture beyond these shores? Evening meal before we head home?

Sadly I have no photos of either trip unless there are some in the WI Archive but here are a few photos (copyright free) to whet our appetites



under

Gill Bromley
March 2021

What is a Grandparent?

The following quotes have been taken from papers written by a class of 8-year-olds. Do you recognise yourself amongst them?

"Grandparents are a lady and a man who have no little children of their own. They like other peoples."

"A grandfather is a man and a grandmother is a lady."



"Grandparents don't have to do anything except be there when we come to see them."

"They are so old they shouldn't play hard or run. It is good if they drive us to the shops and give us money."

"When they take us for walks, they slow down past things like pretty leaves and caterpillars."



"They show us and talk to us about the colours of the flowers and also why we shouldn't step on cracks."

"They don't say Hurry up."

"Usually grandmothers are fat but not too fat to tie your shoes."



"They wear glasses and funny underwear."

"They can take their teeth and gums out."

"Grandparents don't have to be smart."



"They have to answer questions like why isn't God married, and how come dogs chase cats".

"When they read to us they don't skip."

"They don't mind if we ask for the same story over again."

"Everybody should try to have a grandmother especially if you don't have television because they are the only grown-ups who like to spend time with us."

"They know we should have snack time before bed time and they say prayers with us and kiss us even when we've acted bad."



A 6-year-old was asked where his grandma lived: "Oh," he said, "she lives at the airport and when we want her we just go get her. Then when we're done having her visit we take her back to the airport."



"Grandpa is the smartest man on earth. He teaches me good things but I don't get to see him enough to get as smart as him."

"It's funny when they bend over; you hear gas leaks, and they blame their dog."

Easter bonnets



For many people, getting a new outfit for Easter has been a longstanding tradition. Their new outfit is not complete without a dress or suit and tie, shoes, and an Easter bonnet. The Easter bonnet has been a timeless part of this holiday for the past decades. It was even popularized in the Irving Berlin song "Easter Parade." But, do you know the history behind this Easter headpiece?

The Easter bonnet actually originated as a European tradition. People would wear new clothes and hats to celebrate the coming of spring and meaning of Easter. Spring and Easter signal new life and rebirth. Getting a new outfit and hat was one way to honour that meaning. The first bonnets were circles of leaves and flowers to show the cycle of the seasons. It was also a time when many people attended church a few days in a row for Easter, and a time to see who was wearing the latest fashions.

After the American Civil War the tradition also caught on in the United States. The first Easter after the war ended was known as the "Sunday of Joy." Mothers, wives, and daughters came out of mourning and replaced their dark clothing with outfits full of pastel colours and spring flowers, to signal again a renewal of life. In the 1870s, the first Easter Parade in New York City occurred.

The Easter bonnet was brought into American pop culture by the Berlin song in 1933. However,

the parade and bonnets didn't peak in popularity until the 1940s. Over one million people participated in the tradition in 1947. A year later, the headpiece received more attention from Berlin's film, *Easter Parade*, starring Judy Garland and Fred Astaire.

The film depicted the Easter Parade, a popular walk people would take on Easter morning from St. Patrick's Cathedral and down Fifth Avenue in New York City. Officially known as the Easter Parade and the Easter Bonnet Festival, the parade was an informal, often unorganized event. People were seen leaving church Easter morning in their finest clothes and would stroll down Fifth Avenue. Quickly, more people and churches began to join in. Parade goers would start the route at 10 am and go from 5th Street to 57th Street, ending at 4 pm. During this time in America, the parade was at its peak. In 1947, over one million people participated in the tradition.

One special part of the Easter Parade was that everyone was dressed to impress. Women would try to outdo each other with their best Easter bonnet. The tradition became known for its extravagant bonnets.



During tough times in United States' history, such as the Great Depression, a new hat for Easter was a simple luxury that many people valued.



Easter bonnets come in many different shapes, styles, and sizes. Normally, the hat is adorned with fresh spring flowers. Lilies, Azaleas, and daffodils are popular flowers. Also, the traditional Easter flowers of tulips, pussy willows, and hyacinths are worn.

Now, Easter bonnets have become more fun and outlandish, complete with Easter eggs, chickens, and other springtime characters. However, elegant styles of bonnets are still worn.



Unfortunately, since the 1950s, interest and participation in the Easter Parade and the Easter Bonnet Festival has decreased. Today, the Easter Parade is still held in New York City and attracts visitors to the area every year.

There are still some women who continue wearing elegant bonnets and new clothes on Easter morning. Even the Royal Family participates in the tradition. It is also a popular school activity for children to make their own bonnet during Easter time.

Pictures above are artwork from Kathy Reynolds (top left),Lynn Carmichael (bottom left) and Sandie Hughes(right)



Barbara Spear, Marina Hope, Geraldine Dyer and Gill Bromley's mum, Norah Batt and their entries in the Creative Hat competition from a few years ago!

EASTER BUNNY BISCUITS

(makes 50 biscuits)

Preparation time: 20 minutes

Plus chilling time

Cooking time: 15 minutes

Just throw everything into a bowl and get mixing:

Ingredients

200g Butter cut into small cubes
200g Caster Sugar
1 Medium Egg Beaten
400g Plain Flour, plus extra for dusting
2 teaspoons Vanilla Extract

To Decorate

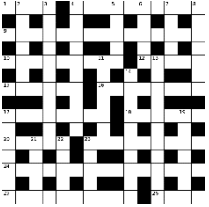
180g Icing Sugar, sifted
2 tablespoons Whole Milk
A few drops of Pink Food Colouring
25 Mini Marsh Mallows Halved



- 1 Using an electric mixer, beat butter and sugar together in a bowl until pale and fluffy. Add the egg and continue to beat. Sift in the flour then add the vanilla extract and fold through to form a dough.
- 2 Turn out the dough onto a lightly floured surface and knead gently until smooth. Chill in the fridge for 30 minutes.
- 3 Remove the dough from the fridge and roll out until it's about 4mm thick.
- 4 Pre-heat the oven to 180 degrees C, Gas 4. Line two baking trays with baking parchment.
- 5 Use a 7cm bunny-shaped cutter to cut biscuits from the dough. Arrange on the baking trays and bake for 12-15 minutes until golden. Remove from oven and leave the biscuits on the trays to cool slightly before transferring to wire racks to cool.
- 6 To make icing, combine the icing sugar, milk and food colouring in a bowl until smooth. Carefully spread over the biscuits and press the marshmallow tail on each.

These biscuits make a lovely Easter gift for friends.

Online at Denman



Since the Denman College closed, there have been some excellent on-line courses and I have been doing two of them since January. The first is (or now, was) A Beginner's Guide to Cryptic Crosswords.

Now I'm sure that there will be groans and cries of "Oh, really?" but then maybe I'm the only one married to a crossword fanatic who, every morning, reads out a clue, saying, "You'll get this one." Readers, I never did. And worse, I did not understand any of the gibberish, even when it was explained to me, so I approached the course with determination but a great deal of trepidation.

The tutor was Brian Jacques, someone with endless patience who, in the past, has been a crossword compiler. For two hours every Friday afternoon he took us through the archaic world of crosswordise until at last some of the gibberish began to make sense.

After six weeks I began to see the light at the end of a long, long tunnel, so I signed on for another four weeks and now.....I still can't get most of the answers but I'm beginning to find the clues to the solutions. It'll be a long path, but I'll keep trying and if you are tempted I can thoroughly recommend it – and him.



So that was stretching for the mind. My other course is stretching for the body. Since my Tai Chi class was stopped last year, I have really missed the accompanying exercises, but a lovely lady called Elaine takes a Qigong (pronounced Chigung) class every Monday, which features controlled breathing and stretching and ends with a meditation, and nothing involves getting up and down from the floor. As anyone with a knee replacement will tell you, this is an absolute godsend! So if this article sends you browsing through the long list of courses, look out for these two as they are personally recommended!

Jenny Mowatt
March 2021



Gill Bromley has been knitting beaded necklaces over the last few weeks. They are easy to get on and off as they just fit over the head with no fiddly hooks. The buttons are purely for decoration.

The necklaces are made up of three plaited strands so you can choose to have all the same colour or up to three different colours.

If any WI members would like to buy one, Gill is selling them at £5 each with £1 going to WI funds and the rest to the Pancreatic Cancer Research Fund. Please contact Gill via gillbrom57@btinternet.com, phone 01622 890214 or text 07543644911.

Gill Bromley

Quiz Corner

Easter Quiz



- 1 Who plays Hannah Brown in the 1948 American musical film *Easter Parade*?
- 2 Where is the venue of the most famous Easter egg roll in the world?
- 3 Easter Island belongs to which country?
- 4 What is the Sunday before Easter called?
- 5 In 1873 which company introduced the first chocolate Easter egg in Britain?
- 6 Which governor of the Roman province of Judaea presided over the trial of Jesus?
- 7 Which poet wrote the poem *Easter, 1916*? (It describes the poet's emotions regarding the events of the 1916 Easter Rising.)
- 8 Which light fruit cake, with two layers of almond paste or marzipan, is traditionally eaten during the Easter period?
- 9 What was the name of the hill where Jesus was crucified?
- 10 The Saturday before Palm Sunday is named after which biblical character?
- 11 At the Last Supper, which food did Jesus liken to his body?
- 12 Which Russian jewellery firm is famed for designing elaborate jewel-encrusted eggs?
- 13 On what Christian holy day are hot cross buns traditionally eaten?
- 14 How many pieces of silver did Judas trade the life of Jesus for?
- 15 What was Simon of Cyrene made to do by the Romans?
- 16 Who directed the 2004 American biblical drama *The Passion of the Christ*?
- 17 Nick Easter is a former professional sportsman in which sport?
- 18 Which Christian holy day of prayer and fasting falls on the first day of Lent?
- 19 At Easter, the British monarch distributes small silver coins known as what?
- 20 A sign was affixed to the top of the cross stating "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews" which according to the Gospel of John was written in which three different languages?



Lynn Carmichael's Easter Bunny



And, from Gill Bromley, "By chance this photo popped up on Facebook, taken years ago in Arundel. I think my Easter Bunny might give children nightmares!"

TIPS from the Easter Bunny



1. Don't put all your eggs in one basket
2. There's no such thing as too much candy
3. Some body parts should be floppy
4. An Easter bonnet can tame even the wildest hare
5. The grass is always greener in someone else's basket
6. Let happy thoughts multiply like rabbits

Answers to quiz:

- | | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| 1 Judy Garland | 9 Calvary, or Golgotha | 17 Rugby |
| 2 The White House | 10 Lazarus Saturday | 18 Ash Wednesday |
| 3 Chile | 11 Bread | 19 Maundy money (distributed on Maundy Thursday, the day before Good Friday) |
| 4 Palm Sunday | 12 Faberge | 20 Hebrew, Latin and Greek |
| 5 Fry's (J.S. Fry & Sons) | 13 Good Friday | |
| 6 Pontius Pilate | 14 30 pieces of silver | |
| 7 W B Yeats | 15 Carry the cross for Jesus | |
| 8 Simnel cake | 16 Mel Gibson | |

The Arty Pages - with an Easter flavour ...



Who else remembers Mabel Lucie Attwell from their childhood? Happy Easter!



Our President,
Margaret Twort,
has
crafted and arranged this
bright and
lovely Easter Display

A closer look
so that you can see how
beautifully it has been made.

I'm hoping Margaret will
give us a
tutorial
when we get together
again





Geraldine Dyer's Family of Ducks

Along with newborn lambs ~ the very epitome of Springtime!



Something we're all missing is the
Annual Smarden Duck Race,

pictured here in 2019. A few of our members are gathered on the right-hand bank – hard to pick out in the photo....but you know who you are! Roll on the next race 😊

Gorgeous Bunnies
who are
Residents of Smarden

Meet
Toast
and
Bagel



Proud Momma Ashleigh with her fluffy brood. They live with their friends Sassafra, Marbles and Henny Penny alongside doggies Finley and Fiona. Ashleigh and Sassafra are Silky hens while Marbles and Henny Penny are Red Stars aka ISA Browns, the latter two being rescues. They all live happily at Megan's House!

Decorated
Duck
Eggs
For Easter

Kathy Reynolds





I decided to decorate some eggs for Easter using natural dyes that can be made at home. Things didn't go as planned.

I followed instructions to make a green dye from Nettles and a red dye (which gives you blue eggs!)
From Red Cabbage

So far so good!!

I then set out to buy some white hens eggs – none were available. I found some pale blue eggs for sale but found they were printed on right across the shell. In the end I settled for Duck Eggs.



Now things were on a roll.....

I set up a line in the garden so the dyed eggs could drip dry without making a mess in the house. Then I picked a few celandines, violas and ferny leaves and wrapped them tightly against the eggs in fine cheesecloth. I left my bundles to soak for a while in the dye and then hung them on the line to dry and came inside for a nice cup of tea.

Next thing it poured with rain (no warning in the forecast). Too late to intervene so I left them. Next morning I ventured out in trepidation fearing that our foxy friend may have made a meal of them during the night, but no; there they were hanging in a line looking nicely pastel-coloured.



I brought them into the house feeling quite eggcited (sorry!) and sat down to unwrap them. The cheesecloth squares were beautiful shades of blue, purple and pink, but alas, the eggs were mainly white with just a hint of some outlines of the enfolded flora. Oh well....off I went to find my paints and try to rescue something from the situation, ending up with a motley selection. Maybe next year!!

NEXT TIME ...

Hopefully lockdown rules will have eased and it might be nice to express what we've been missing....meeting family and friends and eating out al-fresco.....or, as always, whatever you subject you choose to send

Photos, collage, crafts, paintings, drawings, pics of sculpted objects.....your choice!

To katrey15@hotmail.com