



Welcome to our third newsletter. We hope that each edition brings us a little closer to everyone being able to meet up again properly; certainly the beginning of June sees us once again being able to see friends and family from a closer distance, even if it remains in limited numbers. We should perhaps all take some comfort that “normality” will return eventually – even if it takes a very different form for some time to come!

We had our first committee meeting online in May, using Zoom, with another scheduled for this week coming. So, business as usual, as far as the committee is concerned.

As we’ve said before, in the meantime, if you do feel in need of a chat at any time, please do not hesitate to contact anyone on the WI committee – all our contact details are given later in the newsletter.

In the meantime, as they say, enjoy the newsletter!

Carol Chandler



Wishing a very happy birthday to the following ladies who have birthdays on the horizon:

Barbara Spear	4 June
Jan Barnes	9 June
Deidre Harrop	10 June
Judith Hardy	12 June
Lynn Carmichael	2 July
Marina Hope	18 July
Eleanor Bliss	20 July

*Many happy returns,
Ladies*

The President’s table

Gill’s contribution for the June flowers is a beautiful vase of roses. These seem very appropriate for this time of year and, as you may know, roses symbolise love. So – from Gill especially – love to all our WI friends.



Margaret’s

You will recall that it was decided to have a “Margaret’s meal” with a difference last month, and a get-together was arranged online using Zoom for the first time. WI members were invited to join in online for a drink before (or after) their chosen meal that evening. This turned out to be quite

successful and was thoroughly enjoyed by those who took part. Some joined at the beginning for a short while and left as their dinner started to burn (!), others joined later and some were there for the duration. It was lovely to see so many faces.

The photo below shows a brief snapshot taken during the session. For those of you who have never used Zoom, the yellow box around Eleanor's picture means that she was holding court at the time! We may well repeat this exercise in future so if you don't know how to use Zoom, please just ask how.



Lynn Carmichael amused us all with the tale of her husband, Colin, ordering beer online – 48 bottles in total – and using Margaret's meal as his reason for purchase. Perhaps he may have joined in with us if he hadn't had to drink so many bottles first!

*Smiling is infectious,
you catch it like the flu,
When someone smiled at me today,
I started smiling too.
I passed around the corner
and someone saw my grin.
When he smiled I realized
I'd passed it on to him.
I thought about that smile,
then I realized its worth.
A single smile, just like mine
could travel round the earth.
So, if you feel a smile begin,
don't leave it undetected.
Let's start an epidemic quick,
and get the world infected!*

- Spike Milligan

Any old bras!

Many thanks to anyone who contributed their old bras to the box in Eleanor's garden. These have now been collected and passed on in "support" of the charity, Against Breast Cancer, as requested by Catherine Hazelden, secretary at Westwell WI.



CHRISTMAS FAIR OCTOBER 2020



Will this event, which began in 1985, go ahead this year? At present there is no way of knowing but I've been giving it some thought given it is the WI's most vital fundraiser. It raised £323 through sale of jams, jellies and chutneys in 2019 plus £442 though sale of teas ie £765 to help us to pay for speakers, hall hire etc.

Good news is that we don't start promoting the Christmas Fair until mid-August so plenty of time and hopefully things will change.....for the better to enable the event to go ahead. The Hall is booked.

Bad news is that we may have to consider cancelling it if restrictions are still in place in August and expected to continue beyond that. **No decision will be taken until August or, if Government extends lockdown, to end October or beyond, whichever comes first.**

So please assume it will continue as normal for time being and don't let any rumours that it might be cancelled get out, or people may not turn up if we go ahead! Stay positive.

Good News: I don't think that the WI need lose out financially even if the event is cancelled! For example, the WI could sell jam, jelly and chutney via adverts in the parish mag, on Facebook, Nextdoor etc. It may be possible to open a 'pop up shop' in the Hop Pocket and use social distancing to allow up to 2 people in at a time to buy produce. We might be able to operate an 'order and collect' service. Indeed we don't even have to sell on a single day but could offer produce throughout October until supplies run out. If so we may be able to expand the range of items for sale to include arts and crafts or even home-made cakes. These are all things we can decide in August so let's stick to jams, jellies and chutneys for now.

So please:

- **make jams, jellies and chutneys if you can.** The more we sell the more we raise
- **let me know if you have excess fruit or veg and would like to donate some to WI jam/jelly/chutney makers**
- **let me know if you have spare jam jars with clean lids**

Finally it occurs to me that some WI members might like to help pick fruit on local farms (we might get given some for jam etc?). I'm quite interested in doing this so please let me know if you'd like to do it too.

Please get back to me if you have any queries, comments or suggestions

Thank you

Gill (gillbrom57@btinternet.com 07543644911 or 01622 890214)



Recent press reports state that alcohol sales have increased by at least a third in the current lockdown. So, with apologies to the Scots, Stephanie has submitted the following:

There was once a Scots lass in Smarden
Who drank too much ale in the garden.
Threw up in The Street,
At a place we all meet.
But she did have the grace to say "Pardon"!

**“KEEP GOING. YOUR
HARDEST TIMES OFTEN
LEAD TO THE
GREATEST MOMENTS
OF YOUR LIFE.**

Smarden WI Members develop **GREEN FINGERS!**

Members of our organisation show their community spirit by supporting local activities, shops and other clubs. Those that readily spring to mind are: History Society; Afternoon Club; Indoors bowls and any number of random physical movement classes ranging from Keep Fit, through Yoga and Pilates to Line Dancing! Worthy of current praise, and reporting positive news about members, which we are missing due to the absence of monthly meetings, is the success of those WI members who took part in the recent Smarden Gardeners “Not the Spring Show” competition, organised by Chairman, Jean Boorman.

Disappointed by the necessary cancellation of the planned Spring Show (4 April), Jean emailed members inviting them to submit a

digital photo of their daffodils and tulips.

She has reported she had responses from 18 members. The photos were judged “blind” to avoid any possible bias. Results are listed below; and those in red are WI members.

Daffodil class

- 1st Smarden Primary School Gardening Club
- 2nd **Stephanie Atkins**
- 3rd **Jan & Bob Barnes**

Tulip class

- 1st **Jan & Bob Barnes**
- 2nd **Jenny Mowatt**
- 3rd **Jane Fleet**

Hearty congratulations to all members listed!

Stephanie Atkins



Some of Betty Bromley's beautiful flowers

**COMPETITION FOR JULY
A PHOTOGRAPH OF A SINGLE ROSE
(OR BLOOM)**

If we had been having our normal WI meetings, the competitions for May and July would have been to submit a posy and a single bloom for the respective months. We have therefore decided that we will arrange a competition for this month along similar lines and ask you to submit a photograph of a single room or bloom. Jean Borman, Chairperson of the Smarden Gardeners, has agreed to judge the photographs (along the lines of the competition mentioned in Stephanie's article above). If you don't have roses in your garden, please send a photograph of an alternative bloom – these will be judged separately.



Please send your photographs to:

lynncarmichael25@yahoo.co.uk.

The closing date is Monday 22 June.

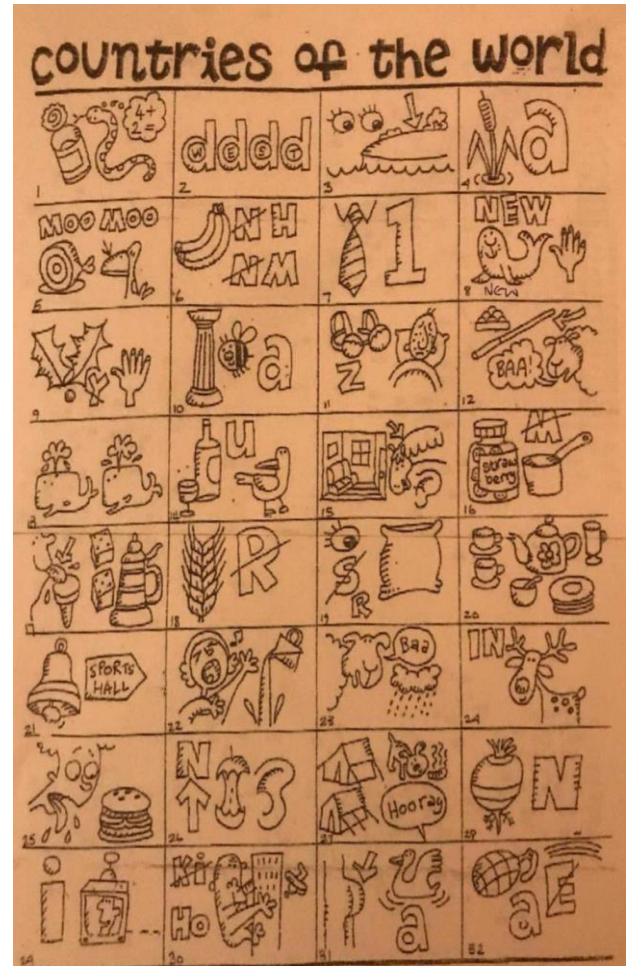
The results of the competition will be shown in the July Newsletter.



I wondered lonely as a cloud
Two metres from the madding crowd
When all at once my name was called
To enter Waitrose hallowed hall.
This was the pensioners' special hour.
My wife said 'Buy a bag of flour'
But I forgot when through the door
What I had gone to Waitrose for.
The Waitrose staff are very kind.
I told them it had slipped my mind.
They asked what else I had forgot.
They clearly thought I'd lost the plot.
I phoned my wife again to ask.
She reminded me of this special task.
'I need some flour to bake a cake
With all that cream you made me take'.
'Ah yes, of course', I had to lie
I dared not ask what flower to buy.
But then I saw them next to the tills
A bunch of golden daffodils!

(with thanks to Eric and Barbara Spear)

Quiz Corner



Treasure Chest

All of us have something - a toy, a book, an everyday item - in our home which evokes special memories from recently or from days gone by. Here are some of ours below. However, we would love to hear about yours, so please send us a short note and a photo if possible for inclusion in next month's newsletter.....

Lynn:



Whenever I see this book on the shelf with all my cookbooks it brings back childhood memories which make me smile. Published in 1953, it has been in my family for as long as I can remember.

As a child I used to drool over pictures of iced biscuits, pink blancmange and fancy cakes for every occasion. The adverts conjure up the perfect 1950s housewife and family.



The most important cake gave up waiting for it age



for me was the clock cake. I 13!!

Margaret:

Gerald was sent to me by a friend who I have known since I was 12. He was to help cheer me up in lockdown.



Geraldine:



I would put my purse in the treasure chest. It was given to me by my daughter as I could never find my debit card when out shopping, or my National Trust card when out visiting for the day. In my purse, the cards (up to 12) are in one section out so you can find the one straight away. I've never I always think of her when I



which opens you want seen one like it. open it.

Eleanor:



This is Topsy - my doll from 65 years ago. The dress was made by my mum, and I think she may have made the whole body - stuffed with something. The China heads of these dolls were fairly fragile and I remember having to take her to the Doll's Hospital in town to get a replacement. Much loved. And also much used at school in history lessons!

Carol:



Say hello to Diana. Given to me by my Mum on my 7th birthday, she has been much treasured for many years. I learnt to knit and sew at a very young age so she has a full wardrobe of different clothes including this Apres Ski outfit, made when I was around 11. When new, she had a full head of long, blonde hair but by the time I was 13, she had "feathered" hair (the "in" hairstyle of the time), blue eyeshadow (courtesy of nail varnish) and pierced ears (Mum wouldn't let me have them until later!). She still sits on the book shelf on our landing and every now and then - and sad I know! - I still change her clothes.

Kathy:



This is "Teddy" who belongs to my husband Stephen. He is a 1950's bear made of sheepskin and has been very well loved as you can see from his little paws! He is gradually losing his music box but still manages a short, slow version of Rock-a-Bye Baby. He is much treasured in our household!

DOMESTIC ABUSE – WHAT CAN WE DO?

I'm writing this on Thursday 30th April. The previous two days of lockdown have been considerably cheered by the arrival on Tuesday of an ELEVEN page Smarden W.I. Newsletter, and – on Wednesday – the May/June edition of "W.I. Life". This latter journal has in previous years been negatively criticised for the plethora of stair lift and incontinence pads adverts, but no longer! My eye was caught this time by a small photo on page 27 of a banner being held aloft by a W.I. member "One in four women will experience domestic abuse at some point in her life". This percentage was increased when I read the text. The NFWI Chair, Lynne Stubbings, stated "Almost one in three women.....will experience violence". Whichever figure is believed, the proportion is worryingly, and unacceptably, high.

At one time, not very long ago, the stereotypical image of domestic violence was of a woman, probably of low income, with several neglected children to care for, alongside many bruises and probably broken limbs i.e. physical abuse. Nowadays, the term has been expanded, and most would define domestic abuse as being both physical *and mental*, across all social classes. It is also accepted that it's not an issue for women only. There is an, admittedly much smaller, percentage of men abused by women. In today's Daily Telegraph an article outlines the increase in CVA (Child to Parent Violence), due to the tensions linked with the current lockdown.

What's all this to do with Smarden W.I.? Well, clearly Smarden isn't an island. All these problems will exist here, behind closed doors. Coercive control was demonstrated by the distressing storyline several months ago in The Archers of Helen Archer's control by partner Rob. Domestic abuse stories feature currently in two popular TV soaps. In "Corrie" Yasmeen fears for her safety from hateful husband Geoff Metcalfe; and in "EastEnders" Chantelle keeps her physical and emotional abuse from Gray Atkins secret. People who use domestic abuse are usually polite and plausible, particularly outside the home. I have been part of conversations with local women (not necessarily in the W.I.) who describe aspects of their partner's behaviour towards them as "romantic" or "loving", but I would interpret it as controlling. I have queried why such pleasant, interesting and friendly ladies are not in the W.I., but receive the response "Their husbands won't let them". What do they imagine happened in W.I. meetings? I remember, fondly, an innocent demonstration of belly dancing several years ago, but that was the closest we ever came to an orgy!

As members we can offer a listening ear, and emphasise our availability. Maybe it's a topic we could explore further at a meeting, when/if this current lockdown ever draws to a close. Positive action and practical solutions are called for.

Stephanie Atkins



Alison Stimpson was the committee member who came up with the lovely idea of donating a sunflower to every WI member. It was she who planted the seeds and nurtured the seedlings until they were deemed big enough to pot on and give out to



all, an exercise, it seems, very worthwhile, judging by some lovely comments which have been passed back to the committee. To be fair to Honor, she too, grew a number of sunflower plants which were included in the distribution. Not only that, but Honor walked some 13,000 steps (just over five miles) in order to deliver three seedlings!

Please let us know how your seedlings are doing. And, any photos would be great.

Cathy Poile... Just a brief note to thank the Committee for the sunflower. A lovely thought from Smarden WI. It's already potted up and I hope it will shine as much as the sun has been these last weeks....

Deborah Wells
What a great idea to give us all a sunflower and such a healthy specimen too. Please convey

Jenny Gore
Thanks also for the sunflower plant. I will be potting it on now the wind has dropped and it's not quite so cold.

Patricia Hawkins please pass on my thanks for such a wonderful act of kindness that I found on my doorstep this morning...it meant such a lot to be remembered and thought off, I've been decidedly home alone for 7 weeks and of course missing everyone and conversation. I will nurture this plant and watch it grow...

Angela Wilson.. I would like to thank the WI committee for the sunflower which Eleanor delivered at the weekend. What a lovely thought...

Veronica Johnson
..Thank you so much for the sunflower plant, what a lovely surprise.
I normally grow a few sunflowers, but this year I had not got around to buying the seeds before the lock down, so I am really grateful

Hilary Sutton
..Just a little thank you for bringing the sunflower seedling to me today. Although I am quite happy with the current situation I must admit

Monica Harding
..What a lovely surprise when I opened the front door last night to find the sunflower plant on the doorstep. Thank you very much. I am sorry I didn't see who delivered it, I must have been out in the back garden.....



Barbara Spear ..Just to thank the W.I. for my sunflower seedling. Mysteriously some sunflowers have appeared in the garden. (See photo left)

The Committee 2020

In case some of you don't know who is who on this year's committee, here we all are with our email addresses for you to get in touch:



Margarettwort@hotmail.co.uk



elleanorbliss1@gmail.com



katrey15@hotmail.com



honorferris@live.co.uk



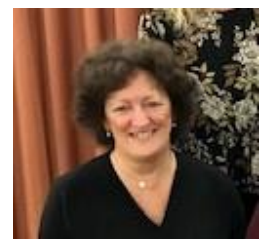
dyertribe@hotmail.co.uk



lynncarmichael25@yahoo.co.uk



alistonstimson64@gmail.com



carolm.chandler@btinternet.com

Lockdown Diary

If you haven't already submitted your thoughts to Eleanor on lockdown, she really would like to hear from you. It will make some great reading for future generations. Follow her headings, or write what you want, we really don't mind. Any contribution will be appreciated.

History repeats itself. Came across this poem written in 1869, reprinted during 1919 Pandemic.

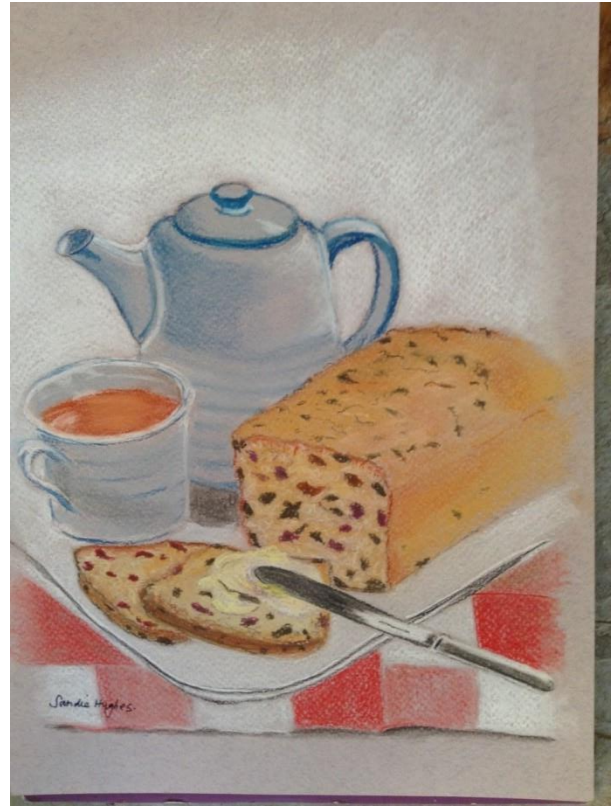
This is Timeless....

And people stayed at home
 And read books
 And listened
 And they rested
 And did exercises
 And made art and played
 And learned new ways of being
 And stopped and listened
 More deeply
 Someone meditated, someone prayed
 Someone met their shadow
 And people began to think differently
 And people healed
 And in the absence of people who
 Lived in ignorant ways
 Dangerous, meaningless and heartless,
 The earth also began to heal
 And when the danger ended and
 People found themselves
 They grieved for the dead
 And made new choices
 And dreamed of new visions
 And created new ways of living
 And completely healed the earth
 Just as they were healed.



Answers to quiz

1. Canada	8. New Zealand	15. Romania	22. Singapore	28. Sweden
2. West Indies	9. Holland	16. Japan	23. Bahrain	29. Italy
3. Iceland	10. Columbia	17. Lichtenstein	24. India	30. Hong Kong
4. Russia	11. Brazil	18. Bali	25. Hungary	31. Botswana
5. Mozambique	12. Cuba	19. Iraq	26. North Korea	32. Grenada
6. Bahamas	13. Wales	20. China	27. Kampuchea (tough one!)	
7. Taiwan	14. Portugal	21. Belgium		



Kathy Reynolds



Sandie Hughes

WI WHIMSICAL TEA PARTIES



Kathy Reynolds





Lynn Carmichael



Geraldine Dyer



Gill Bromley

With thanks to all the wonderful contributors!

For the month of July, I thought it might be nice to have a virtual

HAMPTON COURT FLOWER SHOW
(or Hampton Court Garden Festival as it is now known)

Anything garden-related would be great!

Kathy Reynolds