

November means two things to The Stalham Broads WI, poppies and parties.

Throughout the year the members have once again been knitting, crocheting and generally creating hundreds of red poppies to add to the poppies from last year in preparation for this year's display in the High Street. On the 5th November a band of volunteers met up in Tesco car park to set up this year's display (or three) of poppies for Remembrance. This year we had permission not only to decorate outside the Baptist Chapel, but also the new town sign, St Mary's Church and the town's T-Rex (yes Stalham has its very own dinosaur). The finished displays were stunning (Ok that was said last year but we dare anyone who saw them to say otherwise). On Remembrance Sunday, our secretary switched to serious mode (one of the few times in the year when she behaves) to lay a poppy wreath on behalf of the WI members, in the town's church, St Mary's.

Unfortunately, or maybe fortunately for The Stalham Broads, the seriousness didn't last too long. The day after Remembrance Sunday was of course our meeting day and not just any meeting day - it was our birthday celebration! We held a party to celebrate the completion of our second year, and we took the chance to invite some of the members of other local WIs as our guests. The theme for the morning was the 70's, and there was plenty of fun and games, including a supply of retro-sweets on the tables.

The Stalham Broads is the latest of the town's WIs, the original folding in 2013, so the chance to read out the annual report from Stalham WI for 1973 some 50 years ago could not be missed. It was interesting to note that the WI of 50 years ago had similar problems, and fundraising efforts as we do today. We all know now that Stalham WIs do like a bingo fundraiser although their caller was probably more restrained than our one now - or maybe she wasn't! It would be great to have a time machine just so that someone could attend the Pebbling talk at their birthday meeting (next time the Secretary goes to the archives in Norwich she has vowed to read and take a copy of the relevant meeting record and report back if possible).

With the Annual Report dealt with, it was on to the professional paid entertainment from Steve Burns and his music selection from the 1970's, which had everyone singing and bouncing along. That is until YMCA, when someone issued a challenge and it was accepted - there is video evidence somewhere on social media, that's all that can be disclosed here. Once the music was over, it was time for refreshments and the raffle. The committee (minus the President who had been advised, ok, ordered to just act as overall host) gave the members a rest for once and provided teas, coffee and cake. The cakes were homemade but just not made by the WI, as we know the owners of one of the local cafes whos cakes are to die for. This was possibly a wise choice as not every WI member is a baker. The cakes did disappear very quickly though, so we hopefully can be forgiven. The raffle co-ordinator excelled herself with the prizes this month, not that we knew exactly what they all were as they were wrapped up. One however, was a signed book obtained at this year's FAM, where Esme Young had been the speaker.

All our visitors expressed thanks to Rosemarie, our president, before leaving saying that they had enjoyed the morning (we take pride in our welcome and it was nice to have our efforts acknowledged). Surprisingly for The Stalham Broads WI the meeting went off with only minor hitches, and the committee and members deemed it a success. In December we won't be having our usual meeting, but instead we will be going to Hickling for a meal, where everyone will find out what the committee's resident naughty elf has planned.