

What a change a month makes. The weather has improved (sort of) and we did not need the heaters on in the hall for our monthly meeting which is a good sign. Most of our members have also renewed with us again this year and we are still attracting new members to our WI. Our New President Irene has settled into the role without too many issues. It has also been a busy month with several events.

The begin of April saw some of our members taking advantage of the special Norfolk Federation of WIs discount, to go and see the recent Calendar Girls the musical at the Theatre Royal. As a group we like to offer our membership all sorts of opportunities to enjoy what Norfolk has to offer and this was a chance we couldn't turn down. The attendees were taken from Stalham to Norwich by a local taxi firm, thus meaning they didn't have to worry about car parking, something which can be difficult to find at times. They took their seats in the auditorium which seemed to be almost as full of just as many WI members as the FAM (or at least that is what the photos conveyed). The show itself was apparently amazing and well received. The members returned home full of enthusiasm so clearly it was a very enjoyable evening.

At the monthly meeting we were able to welcome three visitors, two from other local WIs, both of whom have advised us that they enjoyed the meeting immensely and the welcome they received from our members (we take great pride in making everyone welcome no matter who they are). This meeting was a talk and demonstration on wood carving with Fay Jones (aka The Woodland Haberdasher). Fay provided us with an excellent talk on how she got into wood carving and why certain woods are better than others to carve. It proved to be very informative especially when she explained how certain features beyond the wood grain itself can be used to improve the look of a carved piece. The talk was fairly short, but provided an interesting introduction to the actual demonstration itself and in just over 20 minutes a block of wood turned into a spoon. Admittedly Fay made it look easy but then she has been making wooden utensils for a while. She proved to be not just an enthusiastic speaker, but also an excellent carver of wood utensils. All the members seemed to be totally engrossed with the process and looked to have enjoyed what they heard.

On the 17th April the committee members treated our former President, Rosemarie Murphy, to afternoon tea at Fizz & Fromage in Hoveton, by way of a thank-you for her efforts over the last two years. It's not often the committee have the chance to really relax as a group so naturally there was a lot of chat, laughter and a bit of mickey taking (not from the usual source either). The afternoon tea was not only plentiful (everyone took home a box of uneaten cakes as there was that much) but also delicious too (diets seemed to go out of the window for some for the afternoon).

Finally, the 24th April saw the launch of our new walking sub-group, something that the committee were keen to add to the activities we already offer (there are more sub-groups being considered for the future but it does take a bit of planning to get things up and running). The first meeting admittedly was small (several members were unable to attend due to prior engagements) and the planned route got changed at the last minute, but it bodes well that there is enthusiasm within the membership for a more fitness based sub-group.

Shortly after our April meeting the Committee were informed that the long-awaited work to improve the town hall where we meet was taking place. Unfortunately, the work will not be finished in time for our May meeting so we will be moving to a temporary venue in the nearby Baptist Church School Room. The work should not only improve the soundproofing of the hall but will also mean new heating is in place.