

STONHAM ASPAL WI

REPORT TO THE STONHAM ASPAL ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 15th APRIL 2019

I am pleased to report that the WI continues to grow – we now have 13 members, all of whom regularly attend our monthly meetings, which are held on the 3rd Monday of each month at the village hall. We would be delighted to welcome any other women from the local area who would like to join us, either on an occasional basis as a guest to hear a speaker that is of particular interest of them, or as a full member. Our attendees this year have ranged in age from early 20s up to 80+ and we aim to have a programme that includes something of interest for every woman.

We have had a full calendar of events over the last year. Since April 2018, we have had speakers who have talked to us about modern life in Japan, herbal medicine, the Crystal Palace and the Great Exhibition of 1851, the art of millinery, the work of the Suffolk Prickles Hedgehog Rescue and how to make our gardens more wildlife friendly, and the life of a Suffolk Bevin Boy which was a topic which few of us had ever heard of before, about the scheme to conscript young men to the coal mines during and after WW2.

We have watched the film Moulin Rouge which is a modern take on the opera La Boheme, and had a trip to the Regal, Stowmarket to see Mamma Mia Here We Go Again followed by a meal out. We held a garden party at a member's home with a pot luck supper and all enjoyed a Christmas meal at The Highwayman.

For those who enjoy crafts we have made floral brooches and had a wonderful time making jewellery from silver clay, with many compliments having been received from those who have seen our finished pieces. We entered 4 out of 5 WI classes at the Suffolk Show and were delighted to come second in both the class for designing and making of a pram quilt and the group class to create a doll's house bedroom which was a real team effort, including mosaics, quilting, woodwork, painting a mural and lots of fun.

Nationally, the WI prides itself on being a campaigning organisation and this year we debated the importance of parity between mental health and physical health, and taking action to make talking about mental health issues as acceptable as discussing physical ailments. Our national AGM in Cardiff last June passed this motion by 98%. Locally, we have updated our information policy to be compliant with GDPR, as well as ensuring we have permission to use members' images in any photographs we publish or use on our website.

We held a coffee morning last April and did a car boot sale at Needham Market to raise funds to allow us to have more expensive speakers.

We have carried out two litter picks and cleaned some of the road signs in the village, the most recent being last weekend. In the wider community, we have attended 2 area quizzes, coming 3rd out of 44 in one, much to our surprise, and in the top third in the second, as well as having a quiz following our own AGM in November. Members have had a go at traditional clog dancing with the Haughley Hoofers and we hosted a meeting for a number of other local WIs where there were explosions and flames as we learned about the chemicals in our kitchens.

The tag line of the WI is Inspiring Women and we aim to continue with that goal through the next 12 months. PS we didn't make any jam and we don't sing Jerusalem at our meetings – so don't let that put anyone off coming and seeing what we get up to in the next year.

Ruth Wailes
President Stonham Aspal WI
16th April 2019