

Ashendon WI Parish Council Report April 2016- 2017

Currently we have 21 members, not all from Ashendon, but we welcome anybody who might like to join us. We said 'Goodbye' to Val Smith who moved away to be nearer her family and sadly placed two entries in the BFWI Memorial book, one for Muriel Fountaine and one for Margaret Curtis both of whom had been staunch WI members over the years.

At our Annual Meeting in November Susan Rand was elected as President. All Officers of our WI remain the same with Ruth Pimm (Secretary), Vanessa Bates (Vice President), Shirley Rand (Treasurer).

Our WI is grateful for the support on Committee of Jan Pike and Yve Robinson.

Our speakers this year have included:

Richard Furnival Jones and 'The Palace of Knightsbridge', with stories from his 40 years working for Harrods.

Dr Tony Maisey spoke to us about 'The Seven Ages of Man following Shakespeare's timeline and showing us that there were similar social problems in the 16th century as there are in the 21st.

The Chilton Estate where we visited Chilton House followed by a ride around the estate on a tractor and trailer and then supper in the barn.

Priscilla Slusar showed us some of her beautiful embroidery followed by our each attempting to make a Christmas Decoration.

Fiona Jacob – 'My Life in Music'. A fun evening culminating in a joint session on various percussion instruments.

Chris Lowe from the RNLI. We had no idea we were so close to an RNLI station not realising that they are needed on the Thames.

Jenny Edmonds - 'Travels in Ethiopia'

Ourselves – We have had two meetings where we have found out more about each other via items of memorabilia and a 'Guess Who' session,

Other activities included:

Ashendon WI archives dating back to when we were first formed in March 1939 are now held in the church vestry by kind permission of the church wardens. They are available for any interested village member to examine.

County Show Co-operative – This competition highlights the many talents of members within the County WI. The entry in August 2016 was to depict an afternoon tea to which we had invited the Queen. Unfortunately we were not as successful as we have been in previous years.

The WI runs Denman educational college where members and non-members can attend courses on practically anything from crochet to antiquities. To create a building maintenance fund all WIs nationally have been asked to raise funds. We held a coffee morning with a raffle at Hill Farm and as a result were delighted to be able to contribute £410.

We set up a cake stall at the village ride to provide much needed sustenance to the riders at the end of the course, and this also helped our funds.

We continued with our bulb planting scheme around the village and this year it was snowdrops outside the church gates.

We hosted a visit from Areley Kings WI in Worcestershire and provided high tea for them after their visit to Waddesdon Manor. Two of our members hold the basic hygiene certificate which enables us to provide outside catering services.

Film Nights – In May 2016 we renewed our public licence so that we could continue to show films in the village hall. The 3 films shown have been well supported:

- Florence Foster Jenkins
- Suite Francaise
- My Old Lady

Craft Group – The centenary commemorative tablecloth is now complete and in use. It fits on the village hall rectangular tables and has the names of all the members hand embroidered upon it together with a group photograph and views of Ashendon village. We also made Christmas bunting to string in the hall and have repaired the banner so that we can hang it during meetings.

We have made visits to:

- Blewbury Gardens where our speaker with his photographs of amazing trees is head gardener.
- The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra at the Waterside
- Lunch at the George and Dragon in Quainton (Arranged by Julie)
- Lunch at the Green Dragon Eco Farm
- MOOG at Westcott where they are developing and testing rocket engines
- New Year meal at the Long Dog in Waddesdon

"Local WI's get together twice a year at what is known as a Group Meeting. Sue Rand liaises between 6 local WI's as their Group Convenor. Last April we hosted the spring meeting in St Mary's church with supper afterwards in the village hall. This year's spring meeting is at Oakley, later this month, where we will listen to the singing group 'Cantlos'.

There are many other enjoyable activities we take part in within the County and at National level including both the BFWI and the NFWI annual meetings. 2016 provided stimulus at the Waterside in Aylesbury and in Brighton where Ashendon WI members were present. One of the other highlights is a scientific 'Investigation and Discovery Day' held at the Gatehouse in Aylesbury which never fails to raise a huge amount of interest.

We suggest anyone that wants to know more, comes to a meeting, enjoys a glass of wine with us and realises what they are missing.

RUTH PIMM April 2017