

COMBERBACH WI RAMBLINGS. December 2020. Edition 9

JANINE'S JOTTINGS.

I think we can all be agreed on the fact that this has been a year like no other. When I raised a glass to 2020, hoping for a better year, I never dreamed it would be our own annus horribilis. Those of us who have remained fit and well are indeed fortunate, and I hope that continues to be the case. At least there is hope on the horizon with the vaccine having been approved and is now ready to be rolled out. I wonder which WI member will be the first to get the jab. We might just be able to meet up again in the Spring, all waving our vaccination certificates to a sanitized Hall.

We had another Zoomed Committee meeting, where we decided that our first meeting back, whenever that might be, would be a general chat and catch up, maybe, with cake and a cuppa, if that is permitted by then. We could then have a games night, Beetle Drive, quiz or whatever...by that time, we should know how things will pan out, and make further plans. Lesley is hoping to re-book the outing to the Buddhist Temple, but we decided to wait until the autumn for that, in case we might have to cancel again. I scarcely dare make any arrangements for Birthday Party and replacement Christmas meal just yet, but I am on the case....we all need something nice to look forward to.

On the business side of things, in the December edition of WI Life the Resolutions for next year were outlined and a voting form was included. There is a resume of the resolutions at the end of this Ramblings edition. Please give these your consideration – and thank you in advance for voting! I shall have to set Margery on your case if our WI doesn't vote!!

At least you don't need to worry about subs in January, as this has been moved back to April, but the membership booklets arrived by courier this morning! These will be passed to Rosie.

On a personal note, I have been keeping a low profile, as I don't fancy a second round of Covid-19, and I have heard of at least 2 people who have had it twice. We are delighted that Margery has been making huge improvements and is getting back to the Margery we all know and love, and I am very confident that she will be running the Cheshire Show for our WI again next year. We are very sorry to hear of Monica's loss – some of our WI members have not had an easy year. We hope for better in 2021.

In the week when you are reading this, someone from the Committee will deliver "A little Something" to all our members. You may remember that we had raised some money towards subsidising the Birthday Party, and that had to be cancelled along with everything else...so we decided to use these funds to treat everyone instead. We can always raise more funds.....so we hope that you enjoy your small gift and accept it in the spirit in which it is intended. A big thank-you to all my Committee members who have kept us going, and to the WI members who have kept in touch and given their support.



Enjoy the Festive season with your families and close ones. Have a good one...

Janine.

2. December 15th 2020

A BIG THANK YOU

At the start of the New Year 2020, none of us could predict what would follow. The committee had sketched plans for meetings, outings and celebrations of Comberbach WI's 70th anniversary.

Then Covid 19 cast its ugly shadow and everything changed.

The committee have been amazing, supporting members throughout. The monthly issue of WI Ramblings has kept us in touch. We have looked forward to every issue.

May I offer a huge thank you to each and every member of committee for all their hard work and encouragement of us all.

Margaret Jefferson

WI talk with Norley WI. Thursday, 12th November 2020.



I was encouraged to join one of the Zoom talks having had positive feedback from some of our own WI members who have been involved. I wasn't disappointed! Norley WI organised the Speaker, taking advantage of their Secretary, Pat Rugg's link to the Isle of Lewis as her son lives there. We had 2 speakers as it happened, both working together to promote the unique product of Harris Tweed. Norman MacDonald gave us a brief introduction and assured us that the weather was indeed dreadful in the Outer Hebrides right now and Lorna MacCaulay gave the main talk. 75 WI ladies had Zoomed in to hear it which was an excellent audience.

Tricia Jones and I represented Comberbach WI and there were representatives from Norley, Great Budworth, Davenham, Hartford, Moulton, Round Tower, Whitegate, Winsford, The "Wiches" and Vale Royal Group.

We heard how Lady Dunmore in the 19th century got the islanders weaving and started the sale of tweed. Crofters were sent over to the mainland to learn the art of weaving, and this continued through to the 20th century. The cloth was woven in the weaver's own home, collected approximately a week later and sent to be factory finished. There are currently 3 mills on the island. Nowadays weavers take a course leading to an official qualification. The average age of weavers has fallen from 61 in 2008, to 51 in 2018. All the wool is dyed before it is woven. As with most produced goods, demand has fluctuated, and demand rose again after World War II.

Production was not without its problems as the cloth was copied and makers tried to pass their inferior goods off as the genuine Harris Tweed. This wasn't a recent problem either. Cases were brought against those who aimed to deceive, but the officers of the lawyers who were dealing with the litigation were blown up in the Blitz in 1939. In 1964 progress was made in that it was decided that Harris Tweed could only be woven in the Outer Hebrides – population 26,500 – and only the genuine article could bear the Harris Tweed "orb" mark. Production really boomed after that but



then the coming of fleece jackets affected sales. Tweed was seen to be less fashionable and fleece was warm without the weight, cheap to buy and easy to launder too. The whole trend of moving towards more casual dress was a contributory

3. December 15th 2020

factor in decline in demand for the tweed. In 1993 an Act was passed to protect the tweed and where it could be woven.

In 2008, demand rose again and it was deemed necessary to diversify to maintain the brand. Lighter cloth was produced for women's fashion and the cloth was also used more extensively in the production of accessories and is now even used in upholstery. Diversification has helped the brand appeal to the younger market. Exports are important, especially to Germany and Japan. The most bizarre use of the tweed was seen in Japan as a sleeve for a take-away coffee cup! Chanel became involved with the brand, using the tweed in their collections. Celebrity endorsement gives the Harris Tweed brand a huge boost. Prince Charles, Camilla Parker-Bowles and Kate Middleton have been seen sporting the tweed as well as Ivanka Trump and Vivienne Westwood, who caused a stir by using a very similar trademark to that of the tweed ; a problem which had to be settled by mutual agreement. Even luxury cars have been "pimped" with the tweed but the Range Rover manufactures were in trouble for putting a Harris Tweed plaque on the back of an expensive model which had merely had 2 thin strips of the fabric inserted into the upholstery.

As well as the core designs and colours new lines and colours are added each season, whilst older ones are discontinued. This helps to keep the brand fresh. The occasional commission is also undertaken. Some of the old looms are still in operation- 38 of them, which produce single width cloth, and there are 190 of the newer looms operating, producing double width cloth, these coming into service in 1990. A new loom costs £20,000, so looms are handed down through families, and are even shared. We had a slideshow presentation of the tweed making process as well as being able to see some of the views across the island, and some of the new colours and designs.

The whole talk was very interesting and it is good to hear that the brand is very much alive and flourishing. There were many questions afterwards. The talk lasted much longer than had been originally planned - a testament to the level of interest and enjoyment.



Janine Hampton

Amaretti Biscuits, by Elaine Perry –

Here's a recipe to use up a little of the Amaretto that maybe sitting in the drinks cupboard from one Christmas to the next! Very easy to make, soft centre little bites. The recipe says it makes 30 biscuits; I only ever manage to make 25. I am obviously wanting bigger biscuits! Enjoy....

Makes about 30 biscuits: (or 25 large ones!)

Preheat oven to 170 deg C, (150 fan) mark 3.

Line 2 large baking sheets with baking parchment.

Whisk 2 egg whites until stiff, then fold through 175g each of caster sugar and ground almonds. Add 1 tablespoon of amaretto and mix.

Roll teaspoon sized portions into balls using damp hands.

Toss in icing sugar to coat. Arrange on the baking sheets, spacing apart.

Bake for 20 minutes, until lightly golden and slightly puffed.

Cool on a wire rack.



4. December 15th 2020

Garland Craft by Alison Horton



I hope you are getting into the Christmas excitement even though it will be different for many of us. Here are some idea for Christmas decorations.

I have started with a swag for the door which not too complicated.

Start with your background foliage and lie it down, trying to make a regular shape. Then layer the next foliage on top. I have chosen a lighter colour so it stands out. Once you are happy with the shape, wire it all together at the top moving the foliage around until you are happy.

Tie a bow in you chosen ribbon making sure one tail is longer than the other and wire it to the top.

Then add some wired fir cones keeping them in a three for more impact.

I have used small gold baubles keeping to the gold theme. Whichever ribbon you choose try to pick that colour out with whatever you attach to your swag, so it will look less fussy.

Here is a simple, but eye catching little tree.



I carefully picked some dogwood choosing branches that had more stems coming from them and popped them a in bottle with a strand of Christmas beads in the bottom.

Then I hung small baubles in one tone to again have more impact.



The last one is a hall table decoration I did last year.

The greenery etc is all pushed into a small block of oasis. This could be a table decoration if you made the foliage go all the way round and added more berries or cones. I added lights to give it some sparkle which looked pretty in our dark hallway. I love the glow when the candle is lit.

I hope this will inspire you to have a go. Put on your Michael Bubl  and be creative !
Happy Christmas, love from Alison



5. December 15th 2020

JANINE'S EASY CHRISTMAS MAKE-IT TREE

You will need:

Thin card or thick paper to make a template

Suitable cotton fabric (or similar) and thread

Wadding to stuff.

Bell(s) to embellish

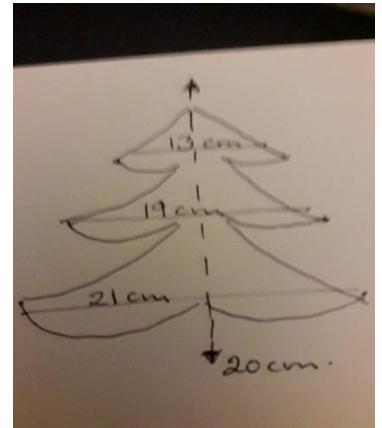
Draw a tree template using the measurements supplied or vary it to suit yourself.

Cut out, place on fabric and cut 6.

Place these, right sides together, to make 3 "pairs"

Stitch around perimeter of each of the 3 but leave enough gap at base for stuffing

Turn right side out



Press and place the 3 trees on top of each other

Stuff and work the filling well into the branches – you need to be able to machine stitch down the centre

Sew the 3 together down the centre, from tip to base

Close base by hand

Embellish with bells to tip and ends

of branches if desired, or anything else which takes your fancy! Please note – you can stuff the trees after you stitch the 3 together, but it is not as easy this way

Happy sewing!



Christmas is approaching. Comberbach is now adorned with lights and snowmen thanks to the efforts of the fete committee. I am afraid 50 Senna Lane has not made a snowman but other committee members have entered the competition. I will be there for the pizza though. We are all unsure as to what we are willing to do this Christmas as we know for certain there will be a surge in infections following Christmas. I am hoping to travel to my son's but not mix on the way down and not mix with anyone but their immediate family once there. I do not want to catch it now vaccines are round the corner. Some of you may have already been invited for yours when this ramblings comes out. Not long now before we can start meetings again.

I think that after Christmas I will adopt the Hugge principals to weather the expected 3rd peak. Warm slippers, fluffy blankets, candles and lots of books and crafts. The weather is so dismal at the moment that I am quite glad I do not have to drag myself out in the evenings to my various activities. I hope to come out in glory in spring with all the bulbs. (a bit plumper mind as my husband's hobby is cooking with lots of butter and cream)

Keep the faith, not long now and please let Sian know if you have anything interesting to put in the newsletter including any Christmas photos. Also, if you have any ideas for activities and outings

6. December 15th 2020

once we are up and running again, please let us know so the committee can see what we can arrange.

HAPPY CHRISTMAS ALL

Sara

Memory gallery from Lynn McCulloch Sometime in the 1980s for the big group
Can you remember the events and name all the ladies???

Christmas Meal at the Moorings, sometime in the 1980s.

See who you can spot!
Here are the names but not necessarily in the right order.

Cynthia Jones, Edith Fuller, Val Ward, Diana Jones, Melba Savin-Jones, Betty Moores, Ida Meakin, Elsie Hardy, Joyce Stock, Lyn McCulloch and Marjorie Tomsett.



CFWI ZOOM

TUESDAY, 22 DECEMBER 2020 AT 19:00 UTC

Virtual Zoom Christmas Celebration with Helen Eadie

Please contact - CFWIwebeditor@outlook.com for a link



Some photos of the amazing Snowmen/Christmas features, on display around Comberbach this Christmas – Great effort once again.

A bit of Christmas laughter!



THE TITTERMOST 20

1. What is Dominic Cummings' favourite Christmas song?
Driving Home for Christmas

2. Did you hear that production was down at Santa's workshop? Many of his workers have had to elf isolate!

3. Why didn't Mary and Joseph make it to Bethlehem? All Virgin flights were cancelled



4. Why are Santa's reindeer allowed to travel on Christmas Eve? They have herd immunity

5. Why did the pirates have to go into lockdown?

Because the 'Arrrr!' rate had risen

6. Why is it best to think of 2020 like a panto? Because eventually, it's behind you

7. Why couldn't Mary and Joseph join their work conference call? Because there was no Zoom at the inn

8. Why can't Boris Johnson make his Christmas cake until the last minute? He doesn't know how many tiers it should have

9. What do the Trumps do for Christmas dinner? They put on a super spread

10. Which Christmas film was 30 years ahead of its time?
Home Alone

11. How do you play Dominic Cummings Monopoly?

Ignore the rules, move anywhere on the board you like, and never Go To Jail

12. Why won't Santa lose any presents this year? He's downloaded Sack and Trace

13. How is the pandemic like my stomach after Christmas? It'll take ages to flatten the curve

14. How is Prince Andrew coping with the stresses of Christmas this year? Fine. No sweat

15. Why wasn't Rudolph allowed to take part in vaccine trials? Because they only wanted guinea pigs

16. Which Government scheme supports Christmas dinner? Eat Sprout To Help Out

17. How can you get out of talking to your boss at this year's staff Christmas party? Put him on mute

18. How does Santa keep track of all the fireplaces he's visited? He keeps a logbook

19. Who dresses in red and gives to the children this Christmas? Marcus Rashford

20. Why did Mary and Joseph have to travel to Bethlehem?

Because they couldn't book a home delivery



8. December 15th 2020

Resolutions 2021. Have your say on the next WI campaign.

We are asked to consider five resolutions and to choose the one that you would like to see go forward for further discussion and voting following the AGM in April 2021.

Below are the proposers' position on each of the resolutions. There is much more information in the December edition of WI Life and at My WI [My WI | Resolutions 2020/21 \(thewi.org.uk\)](http://thewi.org.uk).

Please give these your consideration, your vote is important.

Ways to submit your vote this year are –

- return the voting slip to Sara Smith, 50 Senna Lane. Use the form below, or from December WI Life.
- By Telephone to Sara with your choice - 01606 891612
- E mail – saram.smith@yahoo.com

Votes need to be in with Sara by 10th January please.

Resolution 1 A call to increase awareness of the subtle signs of ovarian cancer

The proposer would like the WI to raise awareness of the symptoms of ovarian cancer among women and healthcare professionals, to help ensure that women receive early treatment where necessary.

Resolution 2 Stop women dying prematurely from coronary heart disease (CHD)!

The proposer is concerned about the prevalence of coronary heart disease in women. She would like to see the WI raise awareness of the symptoms to help prevent premature deaths.

Resolution 3 Racism and Discrimination

The proposer would like to see the introduction of a WI campaign that calls on decision makers to take concrete action to stamp out racial inequalities across society. They would also like to see WI members raise awareness and further education of these issues in order to increase recognition of, and help to address, this inequality and injustice.

Resolution 4 Now's the time to Act! Protect your nature space to create wildlife-friendly communities

The proposer would like WI members to participate in national and local wildlife schemes and encourage their WI branches to take action to protect wildlife in their own communities in order to create a network of wildlife-friendly UK communities.

Resolution 5 Stop the destruction of peat bogs to tackle climate change

The proposer would like the WI to raise awareness of the damaging effects of peat-based compost amongst its members and the general public, and to encourage the use of peat-free compost by working with garden centres to ask them to stock alternative peat-free compost products.

How to make YOUR selection
Members need to consider all the resolutions on the shortlist and then choose the **ONE** they would most like to see go forward. Put an X next to the one resolution you would most like to go forward.

REMEMBER, THERE ARE MANY EXTRA RESOURCES FOR YOU TO USE, INCLUDING:

- Detailed briefing notes • PowerPoint presentations
- Quizzes and videos • Much more is available to download on the NFWI website and on My WI.

DEADLINE:
Your selection must be returned to your federation by 18 January 2021. Please check arrangements with your WI secretary. Do not send directly to the NFWI.

AM 2021 RESOLUTION SELECTION FORM

The final resolution/s selected will be voted on by WIs after the Annual Meeting.

STEP 1 - After reading the background notes, make your mark (X) for the one resolution you support the most.

STEP 2 - Cut out the form and follow the instructions from your federation or WI Secretary about how you should submit

As an alternative to completing this form and posting it to your federation, WIs can also:

- allow members to submit their selection direct to the WI secretary via email or telephone
- conduct an anonymous poll at a virtual WI meeting
- collect selections using electronic tools, such as via email or using a survey tool like SurveyMonkey

A representative of your WI can then provide the total selections for each resolution to your federation by phone, post, or email.

TITLE OF RESOLUTION

- 1 A call to increase awareness of the subtle signs of ovarian cancer
- 2 Stop women dying prematurely from coronary heart disease (CHD)!
- 3 Racism and discrimination
- 4 Now's the time to act! Protect your nature space to create wildlife-friendly communities
- 5 Stop the destruction of peat bogs to tackle climate change

Name

WI

Federation

WI LIFE NOVEMBER & DECEMBER 2020 **25**

Images iSTOCK