

COMBERBACH WI RAMBLINGS October 2020. 7th Edition

Janine’s Jottings

Hi everyone

Sadly, there is not a lot to report, in the absence of WI activities. The Committee and I have been busy ringing round our members to have a chat and ask them if there is anything which they want us to do. We had a very positive feedback on “Ramblings”, and we hope that everyone is either receiving a hard copy or can access the email attachment. The latest copy was very well received and thank you to those who contributed We do need more of you to contribute to the newsletter, if it is to continue….it doesn’t have to be much; a paragraph about what you have been doing, an amusing anecdote, a recipe, something you have made, an interesting trip out, a poem or short story….Some of our members are quite proficient in their use of the computer, and have indicated that they would be happy to take part in a Zoom meeting, which would take the form of a light-hearted quiz?? And a virtual cuppa- or something stronger!! Please let Sian know if you would like to take part – she is putting a list together of members’ names who have already indicated their readiness to Zoom. This is seen as being an introduction to a Zoom meeting….

There was a suggestion that next month’s AGM could be held on Zoom, but I have vetoed this, as it would exclude too many of our members and I feel that the AGM is for all. Jean Harding has indicated that WIs do not need to hold an AGM in these extraordinary times, provided that all our Officers are going to continue. Given that announcement, I can say that we will all be continuing in our roles, such as they are! Rosie, Sara and I will still have to produce our reports, and everything will be recorded in our minutes which we still have to do, even in the absence of the formal meeting. These reports will all be published in the November “Ramblings” for all our members to see.

Is there anything which you would have raised at the AGM? Please let us know.

We are now heading for a stage 3 lockdown, according to the Government, so we will not be able to visit each other or meet up anywhere. The weather has also turned autumnal, so we won’t even be able to chat over a gate or hedge! We will do our very best to keep in touch with you all. I am afraid that the Christmas Meal has had to be cancelled, but Louise was very understanding and will happily cook for us again in the Spring, all being well.

Finally, stay well, stay warm, stay safe…. if we are going to be stuck at home, please let someone know if you need anything, shopping, for instance. I haven’t heard of any of our members catching Covid – I must be the only one to have had it! These are indeed testing times………

Janine

**Caption Competition**

June Searle is the winner of the caption competition with ‘*What would our grandmother’s say!’.* Well done June. Prize on its way… We will run this competition again, perhaps you have a photo which is screaming out for a humorous caption………………Do send them in.

Denman

Following on from all the articles about Denman, I was invited, as Trustee, to formulate a response to the proposed closure of Denman, which I have done on my own account, and also on behalf of Comberbach WI. The letter is shown below:

*To NFWI.*

*29th September 2020.*

*Response to the proposed closure of Denman – made by Janine Hampton, Trustee, and as President of Comberbach W.I. on behalf of its members.*

*To the NFWI Board of Trustees.*

*The proposed closure of Denman has been discussed by the Committee at our W.I. This has enabled me to formulate our response from myself as Trustee and as President of Comberbach W.I. on behalf of all our members.*

*We are deeply saddened by the proposed closure and sale of Denman. It holds many memories for our members both past and present and its loss will be felt by all of us who have in the recent past been very active and supportive in raising funds to save Denman. Several of our members both past and present have attended courses at Denman and have very happy memories of their time spent there. It is a plus that the courses will continue, albeit online, but this very move excludes so many who either do not possess a computer or have no interest in pursuing things online. It is a minority at our W.I. who are willing to take part in Zoom activities and there is a small minority who are not online at all. Older members are not going to be well served by online courses.*

*We wonder if the end justifies the means in having a H.Q. in London which must be very expensive. Could this be relocated to Denman? Retaining Denman would be more financially advantageous as the buildings lend themselves to corporate use for conferences, team building days, themed holidays – and here the W.I. could play its part – and even using the facility for Weddings and gatherings. We suspect that Denman has not made itself relevant to modern times and with the current outbreak of Covid, the writing may well be on the wall and change may come too late.*

*Denman is part of W.I. history as well as being its greatest asset. Do we really want to get the developers in? A lot of imagination and hard work would be needed to change things, but we fear the decision has already been rubber-stamped and it will go. What a shame. Concerning the charitable trust, we would hope that Regional Centres would be given more funds with its satellite W.I.s responding to their Local Centres for courses and so on. If this is the path we will go down then regional centres must be suitably enhanced to replace Denman but the chance for members of W.I.s all around the country to meet and make new friends will be lost for good. When it’s gone, it’s gone.*

*Janine Hampton.*

I'm not expecting miracles but we have at least had a say.....    Janine

**Sex, Secrets, Scandal and Salacious Gossip of the Royal Court, a very intriguing Zoom Meeting.**

On a rather miserable Tuesday evening with nothing to look forward to until the next episode of the rather delightful series “Of all creatures great and small”, I decided to join one of CFWI’s Zoom Meeting Talks. This talk was given by the larger than life and very engaging Susan Slater who is a Leading Guide and Lecturer at Hampton Court Palace. She burst on to my screen dressed in a beautiful Renaissance Gown which she had made herself, another of her many talents, then proceeded to keep me enthralled for the whole lecture without appearing to look at a single note.

She took me on a journey from the Court of Charles II in 1660 to that of William IV, just before the reign of Queen Victoria. She laid bare the intrigues, gossip and scandals swirling around the Royal Court and how the offspring of dangerous liaisons fared. Two moments which struck a chord with me were from right at the beginning and near the end of the lecture. The first was her description of life in Charles II’s Court which was full of joyful entertainment and very promiscuous behaviour. What Susan revealed was that the country had just been released from the Puritanism of Oliver Cromwell’s Governance when, for over 10 years, any form of play or performance other than religious was banned, Christmas celebrations were banned and the making of mince pies was illegal! Making mince pies to this day is, in the strict letter of the law, illegal as the act was never rescinded. Against that backdrop it is not surprising that Charles II’s court was somewhat liberal, lockdown for 10 years puts 2020 into a different focus. The other thing that struck me was the primitive methods (and no doubt deeply uncomfortable) for preventing pregnancy. Again, it made me appreciate our advances in technology and science that we all take for granted.

The whole event, which was attended by 294 members was well organised, entertaining, educational, and fun. I am looking forward to joining some of the other events being organised by CFWI.

Rosie

See a list and links to more upcoming CFWI events on page the last page……

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Catch up from Sara

It is pouring down outside and cold. We had our September reading group meeting in my garden a week ago and although it was blowing a gale it was dry and not too cold. I do not anticipate anyone wanting to sit in my garden late October.

My art group meetings of 6 in a garden also look unlikely. It is difficult to draw with gloves on. Most of us are trying to meet our friends in our gardens or some other outside space and so far Cheshire residents have not been banned from doing that. (They may well have by the time this goes to print.)

In this vein I would like to recommend the CFWI zoom talks as one can often see members from other WIs and wave at them as well as the talks being quite interesting. We as a WI would like to set up some zoom meetings and activities. A zoom quiz for instance has been tried and tested by others. I myself am more than a little reluctant and nervous about joining a zoom meeting and

often make a mess getting on to them but once I have succeeded, I enjoy being able to chat and laugh with others in the warmth of my study. I think I am going to have to learn to set one up for the book group.

Give it a go if you get a chance. Just because we are not part of the technology generation doesn’t mean we cannot take advantage of it otherwise we could be in for a long and boring winter. I haven’t attempted singing in a virtual choir yet but I think I soon will.

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Scottish Ramblings by Diana Jones

Hello to all my very good friends in Comberbach WI. I always used to hopefully amuse you with my annual holiday escapades. This year would obviously have to be very different so we chose Scotland, unknown to me or my better half. On the 18th September we left home and my special friend Saffron (cat), Andrew was in charge! We drove up the M6 to my daughter Gemma, in Greystoke, Near Penrith. We hadn’t seen her and husband since February/March. She gave us a lovely lunch on the back lawn in the sunshine. We stayed the night in Penrith at a lovely old hotel – The George. Next morning, I rushed across the square to one of my favourite shops a delicatessen called Grahams, which has been there for many years. I bought some delicious sausage rolls, pork pies and most of all glorious scones. We then set off for Royal Deeside.

Vic had booked a weeks stay at the East Lodge of Crathes Castle near the town of Banchory, about 15 miles east of Aberdeen. This was a beautiful property owned by the National Trust for Scotland. We used this as a base for exploring the area…

Notable visits included Braemar, Balmoral, Granton on Spey and a lovely fishing village on the Moray Forth called Gardenstown where we had lunch at Eli’s, great cheese on toast, Eli was an artist, needlewoman and crocheter. I bought a lovely crocheted flannel.

An event happened at Braemar which you might find amusing. There is an exclusive hotel in the town – The Fife Arms. Vic thought we might have lunch there but unfortunately it was fully booked, much to my disappointment, feeling sorry for me Vic later in the day rang the hotel and booked high tea at 4.30, he casually asked what the cost would be and was informed that it would be £28 per head, he then scraped himself off the floor and later cancelled the booking. We felt we could spend £56 on something more substantial.

We drove over the Cairngorms to Grantown on Spey and drove down the Whiskey Trail towards Elgin and the Moray Firth. We very much enjoyed a week of glorious weather. On Saturday Sept 26th we left Deeside and travelled via Braemar, Glen Shee, Perth and across central Scotland to the Ayrshire coast, a 6 hour drive arriving at our destination Maidens (a small village) near Turnberry - a very different Scotland. We stayed at a nice small hotel called The Wildings (Room 5). Vic had read about the hotel in a book he was reading, it was a very pleasant small hotel with very good food. The view from the bedroom was over the harbour and the bowling green where they seemed to be having a lovely time, lots of bowlers and wives in the sunshine. We went to see the famous Turnberry Golf Club overlooking Aisla Craig. We tried to go to have a look at the Hotel, but were turned away by a rather large Scotsman in a very nice kilt and sporran.

TrumpTowers also belongs to that man – we can’t seem to get away from Donald Trump.

Vic enjoyed the atmosphere of Maidens and spent a long time chatting to various fishermen, especially some guys who were diving for Scallops, every one of which were sold to Hong Kong. Vic decided he would like to retire there.

We covered 1467 miles in our 22 year old red Volkswagen Golf Cabriolet a lot with the roof down, you can imagine what my hair looked like!

We returned home on Monday 28th September after a very long drive, to be greeted by a very relieved pussycat.

It was a wonderful holiday considering our age. We were very careful and the Scottish people were very helpful.

I nearly forgot to tell you we called to see the Queen at Balmoral but it wasn’t open. Spent a happy hour in her small shop in the woods. Lots of red squirrels running about.

I hope to see you all sooner rather than later. With best wishes from Diana.

**Where Have We Been??**

*Figure 2*

Figure 1



Figure 3

*Figure 4*

**Send your answers to Sian before the 10th November.**

**Cheshire Federation Virtual Events**

These events are becoming quite popular – and well worth joining.

Here are the links for Cheshire Federation Zoom talks for October and a save the date for November.

Continuing our theme of hearing from **Inspirational Women.**

**We have booked Wendy Mitchell, Dr Ann Featherstone and Jen Gale.**

**Wednesday 28th October 2020 at 7.00pm** for 7.30pm start we have the pleasure in welcoming Dr Ann Featherstone who will be talking to us about ‘A Storm in a Teashop the waitresses’ strike of 1908’ Who knew this happened?

Join Cheshire Federation of WIs Zoom Meeting with: Dr Ann Featherstone Time: Oct 28, 2020 07:00 PM for 7:30pm

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82842512515?pwd=MENaUmU3cXhaVWlZdGlvbTlxblNKUT09>

Meeting ID: 828 4251 2515 Passcode: 855271

**Monday 9th November at 7pm** for a 7.30 start we have the pleasure in welcoming our next inspirational women, Jen Gale. An author, public speaker with an online following of 50k and a campaigner with kindness for being Sustainable-ish. This is for absolutely anyone who wants to start doing a little bit and hopefully you’ll find comfort in knowing how much you are already doing. Having heard her speak several times Jen is highly recommended.

See Link below Join Cheshire Federation of WIs Zoom meeting with: Jen Gale Time: Nov 9, 2020 07:00 PM for 7:30pm

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81552142195?pwd=eFlEeVBITFJXay9SS1hZQTJZMFk0QT09>

Meeting ID: 815 5214 2195 Passcode: 180011

If anyone would like to attend and needs help with Zoom then please contact [CFWIwebeditor@outlook.com](mailto:CFWIwebeditor@outlook.com) who we will be pleased to help you.

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The next edition of Ramblings will be mid November – The deadline for submissions is

**10th November please.**

We are always looking for interesting articles, photos, stories and of course we will have to have a few Christmas recipes – so please start sending them to me.

[sianrc@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:sianrc@hotmail.co.uk) or ring me on 07770863170 if you need any assistance with this.