NW London WI

President’s Annual Report

November 2021

Welcome to everyone to our Annual Meeting and thank you to Yvette from Middlesex Federation for joining us as our Adviser.

I believe we are celebrating our 14th anniversary this month.

I should, first of all, like to welcome our new members since our last AM at the Mason’s Arms. They are Annie, Orleen, Lindsay, Linde, Emmanuelle, Desi and Liz. This brings us to 29 members in all.

I should also like to thank all members of the committee who have stepped up, changed their roles to what was needed by us during the pandemic and most importantly given more of their time than they might have anticipated. I, for one, sense that all of the activities and events in the last 20 months have allowed us to better know one another and to create deeper friendships.

I should just like to outline the work of the Committee. We meet on the first Wednesday of every month via zoom. As well as oversight of financial and other formal aspects, the committee’s role is to create the programme.

Sadly Ilona has decided to step down from the committee as she needs to focus on her new millinery career. We are very grateful to Ilona for her time on the committee and for the wonderful website that she created for us.

I am delighted to say that Catherine has agreed to maintain our website going forward and has already started doing so.

Many thanks to Penny who represented us at a project with Chelsea College of Art - her report is on our website - to her and Ilona for their talks and to those both on and off the committee who arranged speakers for us.

And also to Alison and Penny who designed and created and co-ordinated our panel for the Middlesex Centenary banner. I think we’ve all seen pictures and can be very proud of it.

Over the past year we have had four outside speakers with talks on subjects as varied as an All Women Expedition to the North Pole and Life as a Prison Governor and from a member of each of the Houses of Parliament - Tulip Siddiq and Lord Hain. We had a very interesting walk around Mayfair that was enjoyed by all. As well as this we have had home-grown talks on Marriage and Divorce in England by Penny and Iconic Dance Moves from Ilona. We have also debated the WI Resolutions for the year.

As you will all remember, we were very dependent on zoom this time last year to meet, but we turned this to our advantage with the innovative and popular cuppa and chat sessions on Mondays and the Culture Club nights. Craft and Book Clubs continued to meet via zoom. I am delighted that Dining Club has started up again with our first visit to a restaurant in September and another planned for next week.

We also had lots of walks. There can hardly be a green space in north London that we haven’t explored at some point in the last year. And we had a particularly enjoyable day out to Margate and several members attended our picnic in Queen’s Park in July. Jigsaws became an unexpectedly popular activity last winter with many being shared around the group. And tennis continues to surprise those of us who have tried it that muscle memory does work and we can still get the ball over the net.