

What a busy year 2023 has been

January was a busy meeting, with voting on the four resolutions followed by a talk from Fenella Baskerville, a local jewellery designer. She described her high-profile career in London with tales of clients requesting jellybean machines made in gold, designing cufflinks for orchestras and hand delivering a necklace to James Bond. Fenella showed us photos of some of the individual pieces she had worked on and talked about some of the reworkings she had done including the lovely stories that accompanied them. We then had the opportunity to look through her displays at the very delicate wax models of her ring designs, some un-cut gems, and some finished jewellery pieces.



February saw us go in a completely different direction with an exceedingly well received talk by Lisa Collas from Ansa recycling. We learnt that all the waste that cannot be recycled is incinerated, but more importantly we learnt the importance of the 'squeeze test'. How many of us now stand in the kitchen squeezing plastic containers to see if they move. If they do then they can be recycled, if they don't, they must go in the black bin. And if it stretches, that must also go in the black bin.



We were 93 years old in March and so we had a party. We hosted invited guests from the other Dane Valley WIs, eating cheese and crackers whilst the entertainment was set up. Who can forget the Lostock Ukes and their never-ending song book. I do believe that we were all up and singing by the end, and we might have even learnt to tolerate his truly dreadful jokes. It was all good fun, and they donated their fee to St Luke's hospice.



April was the resolutions evening where there was a majority vote for the resolution. We also took the opportunity to commemorate the coronation of King Charles III, decorating the hall in red, white and blue and eating scones, jam and cream. Our Treasurer, Ann, organised a picture-based quiz that got us all chatting away on and between the tables as we had to pass the quiz cards around. April also saw a small group of members go to Chester on a WI boat trip down the River Dee and back to White Friars for soup and a roll.



Sometimes planning something last minute turns out to be so much more than you think it will be. And that is what happened in May when Jane Thomas stood in to give a talk on Pearlies, something that most of us probably thought we knew a bit more about, but how wrong we were! A truly fascinating talk on the history and origins of Pearlies in the London markets, the designs and their meanings and the time it takes to make a whole outfit. Jane still travels down to London at Harvest Festival time, meeting up with old friends and taking any buttons she has been gifted, allowing the tradition to continue.



June was a meeting of mixed emotions. We held a minute's silence to reflect upon the life of one of our long-standing members and bowling team captain, Deirdre, who passed away at the beginning of June. We applauded Françoise for her success in the Cheshire Show and listened to the speaker, Peter Aston from The Old Sawmill in Congleton. Peter described the evolution of the social enterprise, going from a single person tasked with 'finding something to do' with several spare apples in 2009, to becoming a fully blown café, workshop and meeting venue that welcomed Prince Charles and the Duchess of Cornwall in 2019. The competition was an apple bake, so we all got to try a variety of cakes with our teas and coffees.



July was a very busy month indeed - we were back at the summer fair again. This time we had a regular bottle-bola and unveiled our fancy new banner. There was also the summer group demonstration and meeting which was a flower afternoon tea. Thelma won one of the raffle prizes, a most gorgeous pink display that just about fitted into the back of the car. Then there was a trip out to Woodside Golf Club to have a go at Footgolf. The overall winner was Sue Whitaker who received a medal and cup from the club. The monthly meeting was co-ordinated by our members Linda and Janet who taught the rest of us how to Zentangle. We left for home with two handmade bookmarks each.



We had a lot of fun at August's meeting as members had to participate in a little Move it or Lose it action presented by Claire Milnes from Everybody Leisure. Balls and bands were flying everywhere. We also took the opportunity to take a photo for the summer scavenger hunt with everyone in summer hats and sunglasses.



September saw the return of Elenor Bowden who came back to update us on her world scout jamboree trip in Korea. We had all heard about the heat wave, the sickness and the organisational difficulties in the press and Elenor was able to confirm that it was that bad, but she also declared that she had still had the trip of a lifetime, and shared her experiences and memorabilia with the group.

For October's meeting we listened to Cath Couzens, from Woodside Apothecary, and her engaging and enlightening talk on medical herbalism. We learnt about the very ancient history of plants and herbs as medicine, and how they are continued to be used today. Cath then ran a guessing game handing out what can only be described as 'pieces' of plant. We had to try and guess what plant it was and what part it was.



In November members attended both the wreath making workshops in Middlewich and the Craft Workshop in Crowton Village Hall. Later our meeting was our Annual Meeting when we voted in our new Committee with Sue Blantern being returned as President for a second year. We presented our Rose Bowl for our monthly competitions to Janet Jackson and after enjoying cheese and crackers we ended the evening with plenty of laughs with Stand-Up Bingo and our festive raffle.



In December we held our Bottlebola stall at the village Christmas Market, which was our most successful yet. This year's Dane Valley Group Carol Service was held at St Luke's Goostrey with six of our members attended the service with Barbara Foster reading our poem. We followed this with our Christmas meal in the George & Dragon in the village where 21

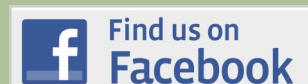
members enjoyed the festivities.



Meetings are held in St Luke's Church Hall on the 4th Tuesday of each month, please ring our President Sue Blantern on 07879 338106 if you'd like to join us.

Have a look at our website for more information

<https://holmeschapelwi.weebly.com>



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