

## **Annual report for the Launton WI 20220-2023**

This was the first full year of being able to meet face-to-face every month and to get together for the regular social events, walks and lunches in between the regular monthly meetings and we were determined to enjoy it.

Sadly, we lost some members who either felt unable to come out yet or who retired from the WI so one of our aims this year is to recruit more members and our interesting and varied programme reflects this.

As noted in the report from last year, our long-serving President, Helen Aris, and our long-standing Secretary, Celia Manderson, who had both helped steer us through the rigours of the COVID pandemic, both stood down though Helen remains on the committee.

At the Annual meeting, Gaye Cornford was elected President and subsequently, I became Secretary. Eleanor Shakespeare was elected to the committee.

We were able to celebrate our birthday month, April, together in traditional fashion once again – fish and chips were enjoyed by all. The May resolution (diagnosing ADHD in girls and women) meeting was presented very ably by Sherie with support from Mareta.

An evening at Preston Bissett nursery was another first with plenty of useful information and plants to buy, then we were in Launton for a talk on the women of Oxford, giving us insights into women's influence in the city and university.

A talk by Homeless Oxfordshire made us realise we could support this charity a little by regular donations throughout the year, which we are continuing to do.

We enjoyed some art and drama in the following meetings – Songs of Cole Porter which many of us could join in with, an amazing evening learning origami – some better than others, but a great evening, and poems from a taxi driver along with his 'life-and-loves'.

As we were advised we could not provide a Christmas 'do' for our members, the committee decided on a 'Bring and Share' Christmas, complete with Father Christmas and carols, setting us up for the real event!

Yet another first in January – an Italian speaker showing us the art of making pasta, which many of us are now keen to try at home as it looks so much easier than we thought, while the final meeting was a fascinating talk on the Flying Sikh of the first World War.

Meanwhile, we have been given £1,000 to pay for a coach trip for the members of Launton WI. We are still considering our destinations but are aiming to use the gift as soon as possible.

We have also further embraced technology by joining the WI Internet. Having had a lesson from IT at OFWI we are now able to contact members by email and receive messages from OFWI and NFWI, the treasurer can keep information and pay invoices online and generally save paper and time.

Finally, our aim has been met and we have increased our membership this year, welcoming several new members to our interesting and vibrant Launton WI.

Hilary Bradshaw  
Secretary, Launton WI