

**RECORD OF THE MEETING OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF WANTAGE WOMEN'S
INSTITUTE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 13 MARCH 2019 AT THE MASONIC HALL WANTAGE**

1. Introduction:

Rita Hetherington (President) invited Diane Monnery to present the annual report for the year 2018/2019:

2. The annual report for 2018/2019 presented by the secretary Diane Monnery:

Wantage Women's Institute Annual Report for 2018/2019

I am pleased to present our ninth Annual Report and I am happy to be able to feedback on a very successful, enjoyable and interesting year for Wantage Women's Institute. I am pleased to report that our WI has run at full capacity with 82 full members including 6 dual members.

Our committee said goodbye to Sandra Mitchell as treasurer and welcomed Jennifer Cowling in to that role.

Rita Hetherington has continued as president supported by me as Vice President.

Lesley Royan has continued in the role of coordinating our WI with Denman College, a big job in itself, but she also does the job of minutes secretary working in tandem with myself (Diane Monnery).

Eileen Webster has remained a committee member keeping everyone in the WI up to date with the welfare needs of our members, making sure those who are unwell are contacted on a regular basis. This is a really valuable service and Eileen has again been kept very busy this year. Eileen also collects and processes your suggestions for an improved WI experience.

Lynn Smith has been responsible for News and Views and bringing to our attention any relevant information or interesting trips that it might hold.

Dee Hurley has continued with the role of organising our refreshment and setting up rotas as well as the coffee morning rotas.

Sue Duff has continued with the task of programme planner along with her role as meet and greet for speakers and visitors.

In April Kamran Irani gave a most interesting and entertaining talk titled "Blood, Bikers and Babies" This talk was about the service provided by emergency bike rider volunteers in Oxon, Bucks, Berks and Northants. A most enlightening talk. Who knew?

In May, Kevin Little told us some "fishy tales:" Kevin regaled us with tales of the origins of words and his encounters with the dreaded health inspectors.

June speaker was Michael Palmer who gave a talk titled "Met Man in the Falklands."

July saw Robin Stafford-Allen giving a very informative and interesting talk on "Nuclear Fusion". A topic with a local interest and some of our ladies followed this up with a visit to the Culham Science Centre in February.

In September Melanie King enthused us with her talk "Tea, Coffee and Chocolate".

In October Colin Cox revealed the dark secrets of the Mary Rose.

Of course November is always given over to the Wantage WI birthday party when again the committee did us proud and supper was accompanied by the two Kevins.

At the Christmas meeting we were entertained by Sheila Lloyd Graham, AKA Lady She, who took us back in time looking at her collection of vintage clothes.

In January Rachel Shackleton asked us "what colour is our stress?" and gave us some useful tips on managing it, when it starts to feel a little out of control in our modern world.

And Finally in February Stewart Lindfords talk on The Windsor Chair was positively Churchillian!
Wantage WI's unique selling point is our events, outings and clubs and The Events Committee led by Liz Dickins along with Lynda Rees, Sue Cave and I (Diane Monnery) arranged some very varied and great events.

In April we had our sixth St. George's Day lunch which was held at the Chequers in Charney Basset and attended by 26 ladies. The Harvest lunch was held at the Fox at Denchworth in October and not quite so well attended.

Angela Bailey-Myers and I (Diane Monnery) and have organised a regular "ladies what lunch" group which happens once a month. Ladies have enjoyed eating out at many of our local restaurants and pubs.

As well as the monthly coffee mornings and the Charity Knitting group other regular events which have been set up include a Mahjong club and a cards club hosted by Liz Dickins and a jigsaw club run by Jane Braithwaite.

This year Wantage WI started a monthly Walking Group, under the direction of Sandra Mitchell. The walks are usually between 2 and 5 miles long, take around 2hrs, and of course there is always a coffee or lunch break. The walks usually start in Wantage and the group has headed out to Childrey, Ardington and the Ridgeway and Hendred village. On one occasion the group bussed to Oxford and walked along the Oxford Canal.

There has also been a Walking Netball group running this year, a WI/Netball England joint initiative. Really good fun. Who knew you ladies were so competitive.

In April, 20 of us went on a guided tour around Wimbledon. A really interesting day and what was to be the start of a long hot summer. Also in April 7 ladies went to Arundel to see the beautiful spring flowers.

Rita Hetherington organised what has now become a traditional Bluebell walk through Badbury Woods in May.

In June we visited the Royal Mint in Cardiff and had a trip into the town, and the following day 13 of us did a floral Workshop with our own Carol Doughy.

In July Sandra Mitchell hosted a tea Party in her garden, that was hot hot hot. No need to take shelter in the Masonic hall this year. The weather held out for our day trip to Bournemouth later that month, a complimentary trip from Wantage WI. So keeping our fingers crossed that this year's luck with the weather wasn't going to run out on us, Angie Bailey-Myers hosted a fabulous summer party in her garden and guess what the weather was stunning! So we are now really going to push our luck when later in August, 31 of us including 8 Men headed up to Glasgow and Edinburgh on a wee mini break and guess what despite the forecast the weather was fabulous!

This year it was 100 years since women got the vote and to commemorate that, and to honour, those women who fought for this right we took to the Wildwood Cinema to see the film Suffragettes. Very emotional and a stark remind of what these women gave up for the cause.

This years Christmas trip was to Longleats festival of light attended by 37 ladies and 16 men. There were some absolutely magical displays of light and music.

We had our Christmas party at the Comrades Club for the 3rd year and 56 ladies attended. A very enjoyable Christmas dinner.

We were not about to take time to recover in January which had a small group of us heading to London to see Kinky boots. A great story and a great show. Of course being January Rita organised her legendary Beetle Drive in the Masonic hall with of course Tea and Cake.

Liz Dickins is now our Charn Group Convener and as usual the group met twice this year. On the 25th April 2018 Gabriela, The Musical Entertained, really entertained us, with her singing, great sense of fun and brilliant playing on her many and varied ukuleles. She had been described to us as 'Happiness in a Hat' which suited her admirably. After the meeting we donated £100 to The Blood Bikers. On the 24th October 2018 Ali McLeod hosted a wine tasting and gave us a talk on Wines & Wine Making. Ali and Andy live in Wantage and have their own vineyard on the outskirts of the town which they have had for 15 years. They sell their wines into restaurants in the area. They also have a vineyard in Catalan, Spain and are producing award winning wines at great prices. After the meeting we donated £100 to the Como Breast Cancer Support Group.

The Coffee mornings have been well attended and a continued vehicle for existing and new members to get to know each other. The Charity Knitting continues to be led by Angie Bailey-Myers and Jill Vale, remaining popular with some terrific results. Since the start of the WI knitting group in October 2012 it has gone from strength to strength, providing many knitted and crafted items for charities all over the world.

The membership along with friends of the group has made 2253 items for Charity in 2018. This is over a thousand more items than last year and this is because we have teamed up with Grove knitting group who also knit for the JR premature baby unit and SSNAP.

I would like to thank Jean Stirrup for managing the website and for her role as Public Affairs Representative. Jean has been our Web Master for 9 years and has done a fabulous job and I think in no small part the Website has contributed to our hugely successful recruitment, as it beautifully showcases our busy, friendly WI. However Jean has decided to have a break from web wizardry and has handed the web over to myself. Let's hope she has handed over her mystical computing powers too. I am now managing the web and the photo album but it's your job to remind me to take photos.

I would like to thank all members who have contributed to the successful running of Wantage WI and also those who gave their time to Denman College. I would like to thank those of you who have set up the room and taken it down again. Those of you who have made the refreshments for the meeting and done the washing up. Those of you who have hosted coffee mornings and charity knitting. Those of you who have manned the door OR made up the raffle prizes and to everyone for taking part and making us a very popular and friendly WI.

3. Vote of thanks to the President:

Diane Monnery gave a vote of thanks to Rita Hetherington who has been the President of Wantage Women's Institute for the past year.

4. Adoption of the Annual Report:

Rita Hetherington proposed adopting the Annual Report it was agreed unanimously by a show of hands of the meeting.

5. Presentation of the Annual Accounts presented by Jennifer Cowling Treasurer. (Please see attached audited accounts.)

Copies of the annual accounts were available at the meeting for consideration by the meeting. Jennifer Cowling gave her personal thanks to Sandra Mitchell our previous treasurer for handing over such an excellent set of accounts from the previous year. Jennifer Cowling explained the way in which the accounts have been prepared and presented as there is a slightly different system this year for preparing and presenting these accounts. The meeting was advised that the accounts have been audited and the figures contained within the accounts are correct

following a verbal explanation regarding the accounts the floor was open to questions on the accounts.

Q: under Charity Commission rules is there an upper limit permitted in a WI's bank account.

A: This question was answered by the advisor to the meeting, Jean Geary. There are no fixed rules in this regard. It is generally considered reasonable to hold 1 year of expenses in the bank account. There is no requirement for there to be a publicised reserves policy.

Jennifer Cowling proposed the adoption of the Annual Accounts seconded by Lesley Royan and agreed unanimously by the meeting.

6. President's address:

When I first became president two years ago someone in the know said "there will be challenges" and she was right. A few months ago I faced some of these and was encouraged by the many messages and words of support that I was given. Since then we have also received several really nice comments both from our speakers and visitors who are impressed by the friendliness of our WI.

In November Diane and I attended an IT training course at Tackley to get to grips with the new Office 365. This ensures full GDPR safety across documents as well as simplified communication with Oxfordshire WI's.

You have heard about our numerous and varied activities throughout the year and I would like to add my sincere thanks to all involved in helping to make these so successful, particularly the events committee.

The charity knitting group has continued with their great work with projects for charities both locally and abroad. Well done and thank you to all the ladies involved.

The Wantage Museum garden is maintained throughout the year by 10 of our members and much appreciated by the local community.

Finally, I would like to say a special thank you to the committee for their great support and hard work.

The strength of the team is each individual member. The strength of each member is the team."

7. Election of President:

The meeting was handed over to Jean Geary to oversee the election of the President for 2019/2020.

The President is elected from the committee which consists of-

Rita Hetherington
Jennifer Cowling
Eileen Webster
Sue Duff
Dee Hurley
Lyn Smith

Barbara Harker
Jenny De La Coz
Madeline Steele

On the first count 5 members of the committee were nominated for President. Rita Hetherington, Dee Hurley, Jennifer Cowling, Madeline Steele and Jenny De La Coz.

On the second count Rita Hetherington was elected as the President for the year 2019/2020.

Meeting closed at 11.10am.