

## WI News 2010

December: ~ December's walk: On a foggy December morning 13 members and friends set off from the old Saxon town of Cricklade, going along the Thames path, through an ancient Lammas meadow and then joining up with the disused section of two canals, Wilts & Berks and Thames & Severn. At Latton Junction a little festive refreshment was enjoyed. After arriving at Cerney Wick, field paths took us to the edge of one of the lakes in the eastern part of the Water Park. We then joined the railway path, previously The Midland and South Western Junction Railway, eventually reaching Cricklade and a delicious lunch at The White Hart.



*Cricklade WI walk, taken at Latton Junction, the meeting of two canals - Wilts & Berks and Thames & Severn.  
(December 2010 - photo courtesy of Jenny Hayne)*

~ A happy buzz of chatter could be heard in Kington St Michael Village Hall when the WI was host to about 75 retired villagers on Sunday. As a gesture of friendship and community spirit each year their guests are invited to a festive Christmas gathering when mouth-watering home-made canapés are served and drinks flow freely. It is a lovely opportunity for villagers to get to know one another better, particularly if they are new to the area. President Viv Penney wished everyone a very happy Christmas on behalf of the WI.



November: ~ On a beautiful autumn morning 15 walkers left the War Memorial at Rode, an old woollen mill village. After passing Rode Hill House, which was the scene of one of the most infamous murders of the 19-century, we followed the River Frome to Farleigh Hungerford, where lunch was enjoyed at the Hungerford Arms, with beautiful views of the valley and castle ruins. The journey back along the other side of the valley brought us to the pretty hamlet of Tellisford, then along the top of the valley to Rode.

~ Sue King, a familiar face to many as she used to live in the village, brought along a fascinating set of boxes from her collection and to each one was attached an interesting tale. One contained tiny worry dolls from Africa, the idea being that you tell the doll all your worries when you go to bed and then tuck it under your pillow hoping your worries have gone by the morning. Another beautifully perforated metal container from China was intended to be hung on a farmer's belt. He would catch and put in it crickets with which to feed his caged songbirds. A family sewing box and button box awoke memories for many. The evening's competition was won by Catherine Dean with her beautiful handmade box.

October: October walk ~ A very depleted but enthusiastic band fortified themselves with a nice cup of coffee and a judicious glance at the new Young Farmers' calendar at Allington Farm Shop before heading out to Castle Combe for their monthly walk. A chill in the air encouraged them to set off briskly past the former school and on to the edge of the golf course. Fortunately there were few golfers about despite the fine weather. After an easy stretch to Nettleton Mill the path became somewhat muddy and at the clapper bridge the brook was in full spate. Stopping to catch their breath at the top of the old coaching road, the group enjoyed the open views of the countryside now beginning to show its autumn colours. After a steep descent down a muddy slope a field of horses and foals had to be crossed before the final stretch to lunch at The White Hart in Ford. Returning across the fields via Long Dean several stiles were encountered and, as you can see from the photos, some coped with them more elegantly than others! Underfoot the beech mast was thick on the ground and squirrels were busy stocking their larders for winter. The final stage of the walk through Castle Combe village and up the hill to the car park completed a pleasant leisurely day out.





*WI walk at Castle Combe, October 2010*

September: September WI walk ~ On a mild Monday in September, 14 members and husbands enjoyed an autumn walk in the Cotswolds. After a brief coffee stop we parked in the beautiful village of Lower Slaughter. Our route took us along the banks of the River Eye and on to Upper Slaughter. It was a perfect day for walking as we made our way up the hill and across the fields for a lunch break at Bourton-on-the-Water. The village was alive with tourists and we enjoyed meandering through it, before gradually wending our way back to Lower Slaughter to complete our five mile walk.

August ~ Members have been taking part in the WI's triathlon.



*Members taking part in the cycling and swimming stages of the WI triathlon.*

~ The day the rains came down! That's how 23 WI members and friends will remember the Arlingham walk. The parish is surrounded by the River Severn on three sides and we chose the Salmon Walk, part of the Horseshoe Project. The Red Lion was our starting point; following a lane past the 14th century Church, a track eventually brought us to a flood bank, a small rise known as Glass Cliff. This is part of the Severn Way, with magnificent views over the estuary to The Forest of Dean and the rain clouds. Passing through kissing gates we trudged on and passed The Old Passage Inn with Newnham on Severn on a cliff opposite. The ferry was used by people and animals as a link via Newnham Railway Station and Gloucester. Heading back inland we eventually arrived at Arlingham and a delicious lunch at The Red Lion, with a chance to dry out.



*WI walk at Arlingham*

~ Flower & Produce Show:

The annual village Flower & Produce Show which started in 1974 once again drew a fine range of entries to the village hall. There were beautiful handicrafts, photographs, mouthwatering items of homebaking and preserves, fruit and vegetables as well as magnificent flower arrangements and garden flowers. A delight too were the children's entries of collages, clown faces, volcanoes and weird and wonderful fruit and vegetable animals.

The overall champion was Pat Woodward. Elfryn Humphreys and Stewart Shape were joint winners of the WI Trophy for men and Janet Elms was awarded the Vaughan Lady's Cup. Other trophies were won as follows: IKA Alderman shield for homebaking and preserves - Pat Woodward, WI Vase for floral arrangements - Sheila Sealy, Hughes Cup for top WI member - Janet Elms, Woodward Cup for photography - Barry Hayne, Novice Cup - Janet Charge, Singer Cup for 5-10 yr. olds - Abbie Elms, Kirby Cup for under 5s - jointly won by Pia Andrew and Charlotte Clark. The afternoon ended with an auction of produce and flowers skillfully conducted by Mary Humphreys.



*Runner beans and floral arrangements at the Flower & Produce show, 7th August 2010*



*Cakes at the Flower & Produce show, 7th August 2010*

July ~ As part of The Big Lunch, an idea to encourage communities to get together, the village hall was buzzing when WI held a very successful and delicious buffet lunch. As a result a donation of over £500 will be donated to Village Link. This is a service provided by volunteers to offer help where needed, such as transport for medical appointments, shopping and visiting, even small tasks at home or just for a chat. It is available to anyone who needs help and it is always looking for more volunteers; contact 07590 720836.





*(WI Big Lunch buffet, 18th July 2010. Photos courtesy of Janet Elms)*

~ July's walk started above Westbury white horse (said to be the oldest of Wiltshire's white horses) offering widespread views, wild flowers, butterflies and birds. It followed the Mid-Wiltshire Way, the Wessex Ridgeway and the Imber Range Path before a drop downhill to a pretty church at Bratton. A cobbled and flagged path brought us into Bratton village and a welcome lunch at The Duke. Quaint thatched cottages and beautiful gardens were admired before we started our climb back up to the white horse.



*WI walk at Westbury white horse, July 2010*

~ Four members recently went to BBC Radio Wiltshire on the Mark O'Donnell Show, to explain what life is like in the countries partaking in the World Cup. Viv Penney and Jenny Hayne [pictured] spoke about Nigeria and Mexico, with Jacky Lacey and Jane Burns on Switzerland and North Korea later in the week. Mark was particularly interested in the Nigerian author Chinua Achebe, who was nominated for the Booker Prize for Literature - his most popular book being "Things Fall Apart", which Mark recommended the listeners read. Other topics discussed were that Mexico is the worlds largest source of silver and it produces Panama hats, the Omega Speedmaster watch, worn by the first man on the moon, was made in Switzerland. North Korea was allocated 1,000 tickets for the World Cup for their supporters, but because it's such a closed community these were distributed to The Chinese Football Fan Volunteer Army.

Kay Sambell had also been on Mark's show a few weeks previously, talking about the activities of Kington St. Michael WI.



*Viv Penney and Jenny Hayne visit BBC Radio Wiltshire*

June: ~

100th Birthday Celebrations



*Peggy Tayler (left, with Sheila Sealy) celebrates her 100th birthday on 29th June, 2010*

Farmer's wife Peggy Tayler, who joined Kington St Michael WI in 1938, celebrated her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday on June 29<sup>th</sup>. Peggy, a keen gardener, enjoyed many WI activities, including whist, flower arranging and theatre trips and cooked the turkey for the senior citizens Christmas meal each year. Peggy has a mention in the WI Reminiscences Book; apparently a mystery outing had been arranged, but the coach went without Peggy and all the refreshments. A hasty 'phone call from Badminton brought her and the supper to the rendezvous - good job they didn't go far! A tea party marked her special day with family and friends at Bluebell Lodge Care Home. A birthday card, made by a WI member, was signed by all the members, which amazed Peggy, and a flower arrangement, including honeysuckle from her garden was admired. The Queen's card was proudly shown; she said "It was lovely to have a card from the Queen, but I do not feel old, you have to keep moving and you are lucky if you have good health". Peggy's son Brian still farms in the village; she has five grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

~ 29.06.10: On yet another lovely sunny day 41 members and friends enjoyed a leisurely cruise along the Kennet & Avon canal on The Rose of Hungerford. The boat headed east from Hungerford Wharf on a two and a half hour trip which passed through two locks and several bridges before turning to retrace its route. Like the hungry ducks on the water who were snapping up offerings of bread at the canal side, everybody on board devoured delicious home made cakes with their cups of tea as they lazily watched the countryside slip past. They celebrated their return with a resounding rendition of Jerusalem accompanied by much laughter. Altogether a very happy outing.



*(Photos of the canal trip courtesy of Gerry & Janet Elms)*

~ The Cotswold Farm Shop at Chedworth was the starting point for the June walk. We left the village by dropping down into a beautiful valley, the first of many. Rose-covered cottages, meadows and a variety of stiles brought us to

the Monarchs Way with the high open land of the Cotswolds. We passed through the ancient Chedworth Woods with splendid trees and ferns, then, following the stream, we reached the Romana British villa. Continuing uphill, under the tunnel of the disused railway line, through woodland with swifts soaring above, we reached Chedworth and The Seven Tuns for lunch. Another beautiful valley to our left and honey coloured cottages right, we continued along the lane that brought us back to the farm shop and a welcome cuppa and homemade ice cream.

~ At their June meeting members heard how the Waitrose Foundation supports fruit farmers in South Africa and helps them to improve their living conditions. It pays for social, health and educational projects, chosen by the workers themselves, and is entirely funded by Waitrose, its importers, exporters, and the growers. They are the only food retailer to have such a scheme which can help producers in poorer countries invest for the future, as well as being sure they operate to high ethical standards. Various food tastings and recipes were available for members to try.

A local voice may have been heard on BBC Wiltshire radio recently when Kay Sambell took part in a monthly programme which features the WI. She outlined the Institute's local activities and spoke about the recent AGM in Cardiff where guest speakers included Tim Smit, of Eden Project and Lost Gardens of Heligan fame, who has instituted the Big Lunch as a way of encouraging social interaction in communities.

May: ~ Delcia Fussell led the WI walk on May 14th to the Luckington/Sherston area. The photo below was taken outside Sopworth Church.



*WI walkers at Sopworth Church, 14th May 2010*

~ On a bright sunny morning in the lovely garden of Pat & Rick Squires the WI's plant sale was a great success raising over £180. Coffee and delicious home made cakes were an added temptation to linger and enjoy the delightful setting. Proceeds will be used partly for WI funds and partly to purchase more spring bulbs for planting round the village. Thank you to all who supported the event.

~ A good turnout of members at the May meeting took part in an interesting discussion of the resolution to make it compulsory to identify the country of origin of meat products sold in this country. We want to support British farmers but it is not always easy to be sure that products have not been imported. After the discussion a lighter note prevailed during a social time and tasty supper. The committee hope that some ideas for the future programme will emerge from the accompanying chatter!

April: ~ On a beautiful spring morning 12 walkers left The Post Office and Cafe at Guiting Power. We crossed stiles and fields that brought us to the hamlet of Barton. After crossing the River Windrush and following a track uphill then down into a beautiful valley with cowslips and gorse, we arrived at the Cotswold Farm Park. Through the farmyard, so often seen on Countryfile, we dropped into the Windrush valley, over a ford, where orangetip butterflies were spotted, and arrived at the Halfway House at Kineton. Continuing along lanes and valleys we eventually arrived back to the russet coloured houses around the sloping green at Guiting Power.



*WI walk at Guiting Power, 20th April 2010*

~ Members turned out in force at the April meeting to hear Olivia Cliff talking about first aid in the home and the use of herbal remedies such as aloe vera and lavender oil. Those who had given up a Saturday morning to pick up litter throughout the village were warmly thanked. Many sacks of rubbish were removed. The Institute's programme has been placed second in Wiltshire's round of the McWilliam Cup competition and will now go on to be judged at the national level. More information from Jenny Hayne on (01249) 750443.

~ WI LITTER COLLECTION. It may be a minority of people who discard their litter through the village and on the approaching roads, but they certainly are effective at spoiling our lovely environment. In an attempt to counteract this a stalwart band of WI members, friends and children, armed with thick gloves

and black bags, took to the streets on a lovely sunny Saturday morning to collect whatever rubbish they could find and dispose of it. The bags were bulging by the time they had finished and the tired workers had the satisfaction of seeing a litter-free village. It would be nice to think that the rubbish will not return but sadly that is probably just a dream. What a comment on today's society!



*WI litter pickers, 10th April 2010*

March: ~ The local walk across fields to Down Farm and then on to Allington, with beautiful daffodils brightening up the lane under leaden skies, was enjoyed by 14 walkers. Three deer were spotted on our journey home over fields, eventually entering the village via Stubbs Lane.

~ Viv Penney's report from the Ladies Driving Challenge at Colerne:

"The day dawned damp underfoot but at least it wasn't raining. 5 intrepid members of KSM WI met at Colerne Airfield to take part in the Ladies Driving Challenge to raise much needed funds for Marie Curie Cancer Care. After a short briefing we were let loose with 70+ other ladies to try our hands at driving a variety of vehicles. My first stop was the off-road vehicles where I got to try out a much loved Landrover. Then on to the service vehicles; firstly a large 'quarry lorry' which was automatic so very easy to drive but then I tried my hand at a road sweeper. HGVs were next for me where I was told I'd have turned it over if we'd have been going round a roundabout on a real road. Perhaps I won't retrain to be a HGV driver! The queue to drive the Police Cars was very long so I opted for a road digger and tractor instead. They wouldn't let me dig up the concrete though – no fun! I managed to stall the learner driver car when they blindfolded me. I then tried to go too fast, blind around the obstacles! I was so busy listening to what he was telling me to do that I forgot I'd got feet as well as hands to worry about! Still everyone lived to tell the tale. Honest! Finally back to the Police cars where I was the last to ride in



them during the morning session. Think I'd like to have a go in the reasonably priced car on Top Gear now. The morning was great fun & we raised over £700 between us. Thank you to all that sponsored us. Other donations welcome at [www.justgiving.co.uk/vivpenney](http://www.justgiving.co.uk/vivpenney)."



*The Ladies' Driving Challenge, Colerne. Viv in a roadsweeper.*

~ The group's Annual Meeting was held on Tuesday 9th March. After the usual business, the annual draw for the Denman Bursary was held and this was won by one of our newest members. The treasurer's report was presented by Jane Lewis and was read, approved and signed. Jacky Lacey then presented the Secretary's report which was also read and approved by the members. Viv Penny then gave her President's report for the past year; she was warmly thanked by Margaret Pratley on behalf of all the members. As there were enough members standing for committee there was no need for a vote. Members then voted for a president and this was accepted by Viv, who will stand for her second term. Refreshments were then gratefully received, were served by Hazell Sandwell, Pauline Low and J Burns.

February: ~ A record 25 walkers enjoyed the winter sunshine on their February walk from Brookend to Purton and then along the towpath to Sharpness Docks. The Purton Hulks and the remains of the first Severn Crossing were discussed, whilst enjoying the beautiful views across the River Severn. A delicious lunch was served at The Lammastide Inn at Brookend.

~ Members met on 9th February; the usual business was read out and members were told of forthcoming events. Viv and her entertainment committee were warmly thanked by those who attended the Murder Mystery evening on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup>; it was deemed a great success. Malcolm Smith then took the floor to tell us of his work dealing with drugs, alcohol, homelessness and social housing. He had worked within several associations to help people who had these problems, both in Bristol and local areas. Barbara Fenner thanked Malcolm for his very informative talk. The hostesses were Barbara Barnes, Kay Messenger and Hazel Sandwell.



*Two of the crew*



*Captain & Chelsea Stubling*



*The deceased*



*Group 4 & Group 8*

January: ~ January WI walk: Following an enjoyable coffee stop at Allington Farm Shop, 21 of us set off to walk the cycle route to Calne. The weather was mainly cloudy but the sun did make an occasional appearance. The going under foot was good and we were delighted to spot some snowdrops on the way; the first sign of spring. Having completed the five miles to Calne we

enjoyed lunch at the Lansdown Strand and then caught the bus back to Chippenham. We completed our walk through St Andrew's churchyard, along St Mary Street and across the water meadow to our cars.



*Lunch at the Lansdown Strand, January 2010*

~ Members met on January 12th; despite the snow the meeting went ahead. Our speaker, Mrs Booth, kept us entertained with her history of Punch and Judy; her theatre and puppets were enchanting and, after several questions, members were invited to handle the puppets themselves. Mrs Booth was thanked and refreshments were served by Norma Hughes, Joan Gilbert and Pam Russell. A shortened meeting then followed before members left early to get home before the snow started to lie.