

# News Bulletin

Hello Everyone,

I hope you had a pleasant Easter even if it was not how you would have normally marked the event. Sadly, over the past week we lost two more members, Audrey Brunton and Shirley Smith, both of Gilpin WI, where they were active members until recently. Our thoughts and prayers are with their families at this strange and difficult time.

In attempt to contact even more of our members Joanne spent a long-time last week compiling a longer list of WI member's email addresses in order to stay in touch, happily we are now reaching about 2/3rds of our members with this newsletter.

I know WI's are working hard to stay in touch with members and are achieving this in a variety of ways. Last week Rowlands Gill WI produced their own newsletter and distributed it to members. The President of Washington Station sends out an email each week to members and their buddy system ensures everyone is kept in the loop. Washington Concord's president is also posting a weekly chat on facebook to check in with their members.

Bowes Belles held their regular monthly meeting using Zoom, it was great fun. I was invited and about 50 women were online at the same time. They held an Easter egg competition and a quiz. Respect goes to Katherine, their President, who chaired the whole thing very well. Luckily, she was able to mute the members at times in order for the quiz to go ahead. It was lovely to see everyone on screen. I did think it would be useful to have a mute button when chairing normal meetings.

Dilly Dollies have been reaching out to women in their community by inviting them to participate in chats on their general facebook page.

Keep an eye on the My WI website which will keep you updated on what National Federation has been doing along with lots of ideas to keep you busy.

National office is very busy at the moment dealing with legal obligations for Federations, especially in terms of employment. As a small Federation we have only one employee – Joanne, who is part time and is continuing to work. Other Federations have had to furlough workers and National office is helping deal with that.



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## Volunteering, Helping and Being Kind.

It is in our nature as WI members to do what we can help to others, as I said last week that as a Federation we are not able to co-ordinate collections of things but it is great to see how well our WI's are doing this and getting help to those who need it. I do get to see some of these things on Facebook so well done to everyone. Please share with us whatever you have been doing during the crisis.

Debbie Lowe and some of the members of Fells Angels have been making memorial hearts and drawstring bags to donate to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, to date they have made a grand total of 200. A big thank you to Debbie Lowe, Anne Bainbridge, Anne Cryer, Rose Bainbridge, Helen Talbot and Viv Wallace for your bags, along with Anne Shiell and Jane Nunn for the ribbons and fabric donation.

If anyone has any pillow cases, table cloths, sheets or duvet covers or similar fabric they can donate please get in touch with 'Gateshead Scrubs and More' through their facebook page. More ribbon and cord would be useful along with volunteers. If you have a sewing machine and can sew a straight line you could make a bag. If anyone has made them but doesn't know where to send them contact us and we will put them in touch with someone working with the local Health Trusts.



*If you can sew and want to help get in touch with Gateshead Scrubs and*



Last week many of you tried the shortbread recipe, as we received lots of lovely pictures, you may have noticed there was a slight error in the recipe so here it is again if anyone would like to try it.

3 parts plain flour	3 kilos	300gms	30z
2 parts butter	2 kilos	200gms	20z
1-part sugar	1 kilo	100gms	10z

## This week's recipe - Fudge

I am sharing with you a recipe for the easiest fudge in the world, anyone can make it, go on and have a go and share your attempts with us.

1 tin condensed milk and 400 gms chocolate

Melt the chocolate on a low setting in the microwave (or in a bowl over warm water)

Stir in the condensed milk.

**Now the fun can begin. - You can add to this mixture whatever takes your fancy.**

Nuts, dried fruit, chopped crystallised ginger or glacé ginger, smashed up Maltesers, crushed amaretti biscuits, small marshmallows, coconut, split almonds, roast almonds, crushed candy canes at Christmas. Any combination of these, sometimes I add a little booze (rum, brandy, baileys) not too much to make it too wet.

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Pack the mixture into a baking tin lined with foil and leave overnight to set. When set, turn out and cut into squares.

Keeps well if you can resist it. Never been known to go wrong. Works well even with basic range chocolate. The original chocolate and condensed mix can be cooled and then rolled into balls to make truffles. If you want a softer fudge just use a little less chocolate.

## Please be aware of Covid 19 Scams which are on the rise

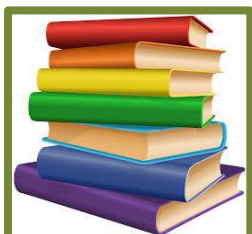
We have received some information, from Northumbria Police Force Specialist Cyber Investigation Team, on the latest cyber-scams, frauds and data breaches, including those which have arisen or increased as a result of the COVID 19 pandemic. Its sad to say there a quite a few going about so please be careful.

Here's where you can get the latest information on how to protect yourself:  
<https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/covid19>

## Take Five to Stop Fraud

Take Five is a national campaign offering straight-forward, impartial advice that helps prevent email, phone-based and online fraud – particularly where criminals impersonate trusted organisations.

<https://takefive-stopfraud.org.uk/>



*Take your mind  
to another place  
with a good  
book.*

## Read and Rhyme

What have you read during lockdown? I have to admit I've not read very much as I normally read a great deal. I have read the latest in the Shipyard Girls series and Bill Bryson's book about Shakespeare but what I really need is a series that I can get my teeth into which is the sort of thing I really love, examples are :

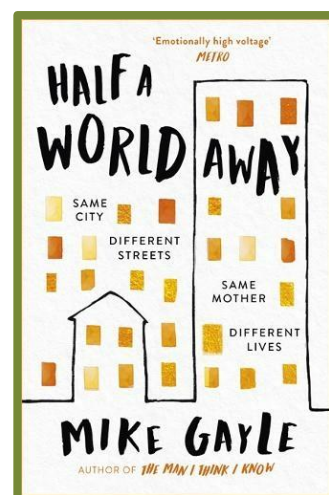
C.J. Sansome's                      Shardlake Series

Ken Follet's                              Pillars of the Earth Series and World without End Series

Geoffrey Archers                      Clifden Chronicles

I love books where you really get to know the characters and if there is a bit of history in there so much the better. I have to confess if I find an author, I like I will read continuously until I have read everything they have written. Some of my favourites over the years have Robert Goddard, Lee Child, Edward Rutherford, Marian Keyes, Lesley Pearce, Elly Griffiths, Ellie Dean and Amanda Prowse – I could go on. What about you? what have you read, any recommendations for our members, please let Joanne know and she can share on the next bulletin?

Joanne recently read 'Half a World Away' by Mike Gayle – she said it was easy reading, emotional and moving novel, she finished it in 2 days and thoroughly enjoyed it.





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Jane Ralphs from Jarrow WI sent this Pam Ayres Poem in which is very appropriate for these times

**Time for the Girls.**

I'm normally a social girl  
I love to meet my mates  
But lately with the virus here  
We can't go out the gates.

You see, we are the 'oldies' now  
We need to stay inside  
If they haven't seen us for a while  
They'll think we've upped and died.

They'll never know the things we did  
Before we got this old  
There wasn't any Facebook  
So not everything was told.

We may seem sweet old ladies  
Who would never be uncouth  
But we grew up in the 60s -  
If you only knew the truth!

There was sex and drugs and rock 'n roll  
The pill and miniskirts  
We smoked, we drank, we partied  
And were quite outrageous flirts.

Then we settled down, got married  
And turned into someone's mum,  
Somebody's wife, then nana,  
Who on earth did we become?

We didn't mind the change of pace  
Because our lives were full  
But to bury us before we're dead  
Is like a red rag to a bull!

So here you find me stuck inside  
For 4 weeks, maybe more  
I finally found myself again  
Then I had to close the door!

It didn't really bother me  
I'd while away the hour  
I'd bake for all the family  
But I've got no flaming flour!

Now Netflix is just wonderful  
I like a gutsy thriller  
I'm swooning over Idris  
Or some random sexy killer.





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At least I've got a stash of booze  
For when I'm being idle  
There's wine and whiskey, even gin  
If I'm feeling suicidal!

So, let's all drink to lockdown  
To recovery and health  
And hope this awful virus  
Doesn't decimate our wealth.

We'll all get through the crisis  
And be back to join our mates  
Just hoping I'm not far too wide  
To fit through the flaming gates!

What a great way to finish this news bulletin – I am sure you had a little giggle to yourself. Remember to send any requests for music to be played on the Julie Pendleton's show between 2-4pm on Radio Nova NE to Joanne. Along with recipes, books you have read, photographs of helping in the crisis or anything you would like to share with the Federation.

On a personal note I would like to say thank you to all of you who have sent kind words, prayers and wishes for my recent bereavement. It has been much appreciated. Once again take care and stay safe.

Very best wishes

**Margaret Carter**

**Chairman  
Tyne and Wear South Federation of WI's**

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**For information and support on  
domestic abuse, contact:**

- **Police:** 999 press 55 when prompted if you can't speak
- **Refuge UK wide 24-hour helpline:**  
0808 2000 247

***Remember these numbers are  
available 24 hours a day 7 days a  
week if you need them.***