



Hello Everyone,

Well here we are galloping through May and it's another Bank Holiday weekend coming up. Thank you for the lovely positive feedback we are getting about these news bulletins, it's great to get your comments and see your photographs.

Follow ups from last week's bulletin –

The Sunderland Echo featured Washington Concord's commemorative wreath laying service and the contribution that WI members are making to the current health crisis.

Thank you to those of you who responded so quickly to the request for craft stash for Durham prison – Especially Ann Bainbridge of Fells Angels and Chris Harkness of Whickham Fellside. However, we were misinformed about where we had to send it. I am awaiting a message to tell me who exactly to deal with so keep sorting your stash! more details to follow!!



I did a lot of 'Zooming' last week. Bowes Belles held their monthly WI meeting by Zoom, they had a speaker in the shape of Henry VIII who entertained us with the stories of his life and wives. Over 50 women took part and it was carefully chaired by their President, Katherine Watson. The committee of my own WI, Washington Station, zoomed for coffee too, it was lovely to have a chat and share what we had all been doing.



The Board of Trustees met by Zoom for the first time and for me it was lovely to see everyone again. After the business of the meeting it was good to have a catch up to find out how everyone was getting on. We have four members who work fulltime, all in places that mean they are key workers in different arenas and it was interesting to hear what was happening in their different work sectors. Thank you to Maureen Johnstone, Clare Espie, Katherine

Watson and Debra Phippen for being part of the teams that are keeping the rest of us safe.

It is Mental Health Awareness Week 18<sup>th</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> May. In the past couple of years, it has become easier for people to talk about mental health issues. For a long time, it was a topic not generally discussed. Mental Health issues can affect us all and they may well be manifesting themselves more noticeably during this difficult time we find ourselves in. Our responses to lockdown will have been many and varied, some of us will have been constantly in motion, cleaning, gardening, decorating etc. some of us will read our way through, some of us not being able to settle to any activity, others comfort eating or binge watching television.



# theWI Tyne & Wear South

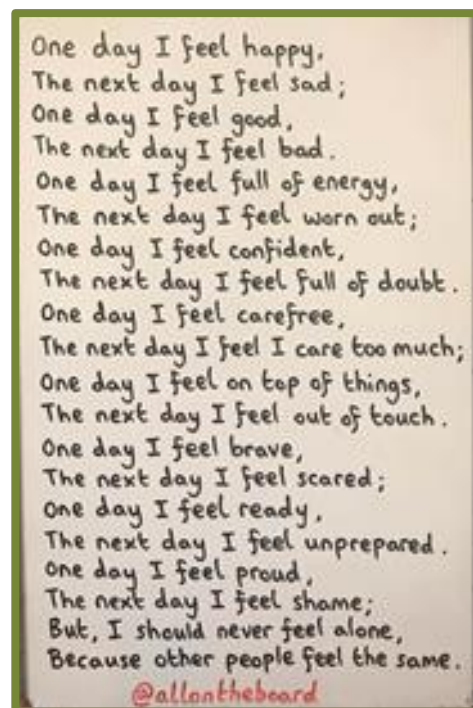
Have a look at the great link below, it ties in nicely with mental health week and part of that is focusing on how kindness and our mental health are connected.

<https://www.sjcr.net/content/uploads/2020/05/Kindness-Diary-Answer-Booklet.pdf>

Whatever you do there is no right or wrong way to deal with it, do what is right for you. What we can do is look out for each other and if you know of someone who might be feeling low give them a call, send an email or drop them a note. When I was at college, I used to have a poster on my wall which said **'When in doubt do the friendliest thing'** and I've always found this a useful piece of advice. I am sure the poem opposite sums up feelings we have all experienced lately.



11 – 17<sup>th</sup> May was also Vegetarian Week and this is a recipe I was given by a vegetarian friend. It makes a lovely starter or a lunch dish with lots of crusty French bread. For a less strong taste reduce the amount of cheese.



## Stilton Mushrooms

### Ingredients

1 lb button mushrooms  
4fl oz of white wine  
4fl oz of Natural Yoghurt  
4oz of Stilton Cheese  
Ground black pepper

### Method

1. Wash and wipe the mushrooms. Slice into the pan.
2. Add white wine to the mushrooms, cover with lid and heat over a medium flame.
3. Simmer the mushrooms until cooked.
4. Add the natural yoghurt and stir over heat, do not allow to boil.
5. Add the crumbled stilton cheese and stir well until cheese has melted into the cooking liquid.
6. Add black pepper to taste.

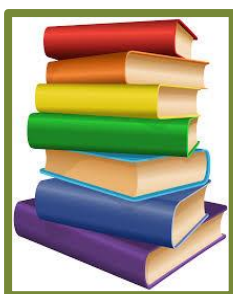


On a completely different tack when I was researching dates for special weeks and awareness days, I discovered that 15<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> May is British Sandwich week, 19<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> May is Be nice to Nettles' week (who knew?) and best of all the 23<sup>rd</sup> May is the beginning of English Wine Week – you have my permission to celebrate !!!



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Whilst England produces excellent fizz, which now makes up 71% of English wine sales, Joanne drinks this wine in her caravan, at the Yorkshire Dales, and highly recommends this lovely all round dry white, excellent aperitif or light food wine. A very clean off-dry wine with wonderful aromas of apple, crisp but well-balanced acidity on the palate with good fruit flavours. 12%. Available from <https://www.ryedalevineyards.co.uk/> Yorkshire's Lad – perhaps we could have Federation trip there next year !!!!



## Read and Rhyme

This week I read Erica James – 'Letters from the past' a lovely read, alternating between 1942 and 1962 about a group of people with loose family connections but strong friendship bonds and how past experience can shape our present and determine our future. I really enjoyed it; a satisfying read.

It seems some of you are getting creative and starting to write poems. This one is by Teresa Rowell, of Herrington WI inspired by a recent event

## **Isolation – Visitation**

Whilst in isolation I had cause for celebration  
A visitor arrived at my door, in fact nearly upon the mat  
Oh no it was a great BIG Rat.

I phoned my Insurance company to see if they could possibly help me  
Oh no, they would not cough up and so I took a great big gulp  
I phoned my Council office to see if they could send someone out to visit me

The Pest Man (PM) arrived and through the window we spoke  
And underneath my sheds and bushes he did poke.  
He left some bait for my visitor as through the window I saw

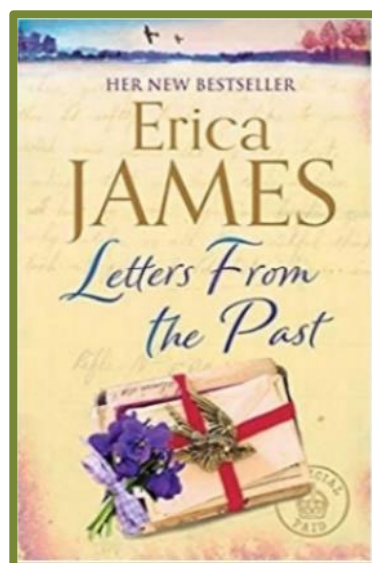
Through **open** window the invoice he slipped  
How much? I cried, I nearly flipped, £51.25 I uttered, I felt oh so gutted.

8 days I would have to wait, to see if Ratty would take the bait

The PM came back for 2<sup>nd</sup> visit and sheds and bushes again he checked  
Hoorah for me the bait had all gone but then, aha I spied a little wee one.  
Another box was duly baited, another 8 days I fittingly waited.

Next morn my neighbour rapped upon my door  
and said poor Ratty was no more,  
His body was found upon his lawn, thank goodness the pest has gone.

The PM visited for the 3<sup>rd</sup> time, all bait was gone,  
There were no signs, fingers crossed it worked this time.





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No more will I have to do the Highland Fling in Rambling Boots  
Whilst in my garden weeding and hoeing,  
I can once more do more toing and froing.

Here's praying we all survive this dreadful Global illness  
Without the threat of catching THE Virus and hopefully for me only a case of Severe **Ratty**

## How have you been keeping busy?

Cheryl Fee from **Sister of Shields WI** shared this with us, it looks they had an excellent time, no doubt there was wine from all over the world!!!!

“Covid19 may have stopped the Eurovision Song Contest 2020 but it couldn't stop some of @SoShieldsWI Wine Club sub group members from holding their Eurovision Wine contest, even if it had to be virtually! Dressing up was encouraged, the wine & costume had to be chosen from the 41 countries that were meant to be participating in this year's contest. Portugal, Spain, Greece, Iceland, France, Italy, Austria, Australia plus the U.K. were the countries we represented. A Eurovision quiz was sent out earlier in the day & we went over the answers on Zoom. A really good couple of hours was had by all. It obviously wasn't the same as when we meet up in one of our homes and taste each other's wine, but it was the best we could do in these strange circumstances and a great way to keep connected with each other. Thank goodness for technology!”



## WI Wanderers

For those of who use Facebook and haven't yet come across the 'WI Wanderers', you must look them up they are a great group to join. It's a page that posts details of Zoom events and other on line experiences that members can join in. They are a sub group of the 'The Unofficial WI FB page'



## 'Thinking of You'

**Well done to the Wickham Fellside W.I. Committee**, who sent every member a handmade beautifully embossed and embellished card along with a personal note

What a lovely way to keep in touch during the Corona Virus pandemic for those without technology 😊



# theWI Tyne & Wear South

It seems the ladies at **Whickham Village Belles** are keeping fit with Lockdown Kettlecisers. Karen Tann has shared her story with us and would like to invite anyone to join them. Please get in touch through their facebook page.

“I’m a member of Whickham Village Belles, a retired Architect and Fitness Professional with 35!!, OMG, years’ experience in the fitness industry teaching classes in local Gyms and schools. As a life long exerciser I was missing the Gym and the social aspect of my classes, the girls are all great friends and have been for many years, in fact this lockdown caused the cancellation of our April Fizz Friday night out!!



At the beginning of the Lockdown I started the Lockdown Kettlecisers to replace the daytime and evening classes that I normally teach **locally. These are free 35-minute workouts at 10.00am on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays** using the Zoom meeting app. I initially invited friends (my class members) and family as a way to keep us all in touch, strong, fit and most importantly sane during these strange times, we then meet again straight after the class for a virtual coffee morning. It’s going really well and our numbers are swelling as people add their own friends into the group.



As you are probably aware exercise is proven to be not only important for physical health but also mental wellbeing, it heightens the mood by releasing endorphins into the bloodstream helping with the symptoms of depression. As many people are struggling not only physically due to this virus but also financially and mentally, I hoped that the free classes would offer an hour of normality and friendship for everyone.

No fancy equipment is required, just a weight of some sort, a kettlebell, plastic milk container full of water or sand or a hand weight and sometimes a pair of wooden spoons or a cushion. Everyone works at their own level and it’s about fun and companionship, staying safe and healthy.

If I have sufficient interest, I may add a seated Zumbacise class into the weeks activity, some of the Whickham Village Belles and Kettlecisers have already experienced my seated Zumbacise, it's great fun, a fab workout for the whole body and the brain and all from the safety of your chair!

## Radio Nova North East 102.5FM



Don’t forget Julie Pendleton’s radio show in Sunday Afternoons – 2 – 4pm on Nova Radio North East 102.5FM, you can find it online and if you have an Alexa type device, they will play it for you. Each week I give a WI Federation report and Julie interviews guests, plays requests and discusses topical issues. A number of our members have been interviewed by Julie and it always makes for good listening as we learn more about our members. So, if you have a story to tell or you know of a member who would make a good interviewee please let us know. All the interviews are done by phone at the moment so you wouldn’t need to leave the house. Don’t forget to also send your requests into the office or direct to Julie.



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## Crafty Creations

This week I have made dozens of cards, when I am doing this, I escape to my craft room, I don't take my phone or I pad and just lose myself in cutting and gluing! For some strange reason I have also had a yearning to see the sea, so on Saturday about 5pm, when we figured that most people would have gone home, we went to Seaburn to walk along the front. By then it was relatively quiet, everyone keeping their distance and we could enjoy the seaside fresh air!

Let's see what you have been doing ????

Sue Palmer, from Fulwell WI, has been trying her hand at Redwork. This is very easy stitching; all you need is some calico or plain fabric and some embroidery thread. Sue has found this very relaxing and has made these 2 great cushions available from free at <https://www.dandeliondesigns.co.uk/>



## A crafting disaster? Debra Phippen, Jarrow WI/Board of Trustees.



'Hi everyone. I thought during 'lockdown' I would have a go at making this Hoodie which was featured in the February edition of WI Life magazine. I've posted a picture of how it was supposed to look alongside my version. Oh dear, I think it is going to be something to wear in the garden or on cold nights to bed! Not one of my better home-made items. At least Aldi wool is cheap. If you have tried this pattern with more success, please send a photo to Joanne for the newsletter as I'd love to see how mine compares to other knits. Stay safe.'

Whilst Debra looks horrified at the results, we think it looks great.



Joanne had a go at making paper flowers, a little gift for her Aunty, first attempt not bad!!

Her craft disaster was a recycled newspaper pot – when she put a pen in some of the coils of newspaper dropped off ...HA HA. She is not planning on repairing it !!!!!





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## Up and Coming Projects

This is a picture of a corner of Joanne's garden, follow the story week when she plans to do something with this little bit of land ..... Answers on a postcard please!



As we said in last weeks news bulletin all refund for cancelled events will be refunded to WI's, that also includes crafts and National Annual meeting. Can I please ask you to be patient as your treasurers may have difficulty in being able to pay cheques into banks and also to get cheques signed by their committee members and subsequently getting money to yourselves.

## Webpage

Our Federation webpage has now been updated. Joanne has done a great job in getting to grips with NFWI's new webpages. We will be adding to it as the weeks go by but at the moment it contains basic information about the Federation. It also has all the issues of these news bulletins on there – so if you've missed or lost your last copy you can check it out on the website <https://tyne-and-wear-south.thewi.org.uk/>

Once again thank you for all the great articles you are sending in – keep them coming. This is your news we are sharing.

Very best wishes














**Margaret Carter**

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

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Here are some ideas to help keep connected online with friends and family

-  Call a friend that you haven't spoken to for a while
-  Tell a family member how much you love and appreciate them
-  Arrange to have a cup of tea and virtual catch up with someone you know
-  Arrange to watch a film at the same time as a friend and video call
-  Tell someone you know that you are proud of them
-  Tell someone you know why you are thankful for them
-  Send a motivational text to a friend who is struggling
-  Send someone you know a joke to cheer them up
-  Send someone you know a picture of a cute animal
-  Send an inspirational quote to a friend
-  Send an interesting article to a friend
-  Send an inspirational story of kindness people around the world are doing for others to someone you know
-  Contact someone you haven't seen in a while and arrange a virtual catch up

For more information information please visit the **Mental Health Foundation** website <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/>

**Any woman who needs to travel to find refuge from domestic violence can do so for free on any uk train as of yesterday. The cost of the ticket will be covered by the relevant rail operator.**  
Email [railtorefuge@womensaid.org.uk](mailto:railtorefuge@womensaid.org.uk).  
**Feel free to spread the word.**

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