



ACTIVITIES OF ASHTON W.I. DURING APRIL 2015

Marjy Facer welcomed 34 members to the meeting and also our speaker, Doreen Jeeves from Worcester Federation who had been invited to tell us all about the work of the Associated Country Women of the World, or ACWW. There are projects linked to the UN, which support women in the third world. By giving women jobs, skills or education, they are enabled to improve their own standard of living and that of their families. Doreen mentioned recent schemes such as providing funds for farming goats and growing mushrooms in Tamil Nadu, computer skills training in India, provision of birth attendants in Ghana and water and sanitation in Bangladesh. The WI has collected “pennies for friendship” for many years so we were pleased to present to Doreen a collection from the surplus in the tea fund and other donations, which will go to future projects. Henrietta Cooke gave the vote of thanks.

The draw was made for the visit to the Buckingham House Tea Party in June and Linda Richardson was the lucky winner.

Twelve energetic ladies made the journey to Bideford in Devon for the cycling weekend, organised by Ruth Clarkson. Arriving on Friday, 10th April at lunchtime, we left our luggage at The Royal Hotel, and caught a bus to Clovelly Village – just a few miles out of Bideford. A very picturesque fishing village with an ancient cobbled street leading down to the sea. This was excellent exercise to begin the weekend, though the calories stayed on due to the delicious cream teas enjoyed on the way back! The following day, we set off to the nearby bike hiring station and were each handed out a very modern bicycle. We then entered the beautiful Tarka Trail and with the sun shining, managed a 10-mile ride (a few had to get off and push at times), to a well earned refreshment stop for tea and home made cakes. After this, the slightly more down hill trek back to Bideford – a great **20 miles in all**. Wheeee! Hot showers and baths followed and a well-earned supper at the Hotel.

A more relaxing day followed on the Sunday with a quick visit to Instow, and then back to the hotel to collect luggage and the drive home. Ruth was thanked for the entire organisation and for keeping us laughing and our spirits high!



Down into Clovelly



Resting at the bottom



Anyone for a gin and tonic?



Ready for the Tarka Trail



The lovely Trail – highly recommended for walkers and cyclists

The next exciting outing came on the 26th April when members attended a Federation Meeting held at the Five Ways Rugby Centre at Worcester. The guest speaker was Michael Portillo, ex MP and a well known presenter of many TV programmes, most famously “Great Railway Journeys” as documented in Bradshaw’s 1863 Guide. He proved to be one of the most entertaining and eloquent speakers we have heard and a most suitable one to fit in with the centenary year.

The wild flower seeds donated to each Worcestershire WI, as part of the Centenary celebration, have now been planted in a small plot next to the War Memorial. This will take a while to get established, so fingers crossed!

The monthly walk was arranged by Colin and Jen Creese and took us this time to Chipping Campden. After parking our cars we walked upwards to Dovers Hill and along the fields, taking in the views, and back down to the other end of the Village where we explored the areas, not normally seen on a visit – lovely thatched and character cottages and colourful gardens. We then headed back to the Noel Arms for a well earned lunch.

Congratulations due to the quiz team – Gill Humphrey, Judith Hunter, Linda Richardson and Maggie Dunsby – who came third in the area quiz.

April has been a very busy month, and after May’s AGM, an exciting new Programme to look forward to.

JEN CREESE