

theWI Nottinghamshire

Minutes of the 49th Annual Meeting of the above Federation took place on Saturday 23rd March 2024 at the Minster School, Southwell commencing at 10.30 am

- 1 Present
Federation Chairman Dr Helen Rose

Trustees Jenny Bailey (Treasurer) Helen Ainley & Wendy Richardson (Vice Chairmen)
Bev Stuart, Suzanne Plamping, June Freeman and Beryl Northcote

Past Federation Chairmen Maureen Ashby, Linda Davey, Ann-Marie Morley, Pam Stoddart, Jane Jefferson

Federation Secretary Sue Sanderson

Office Staff Heather Roberts, Val Saunders

Speakers Ann Jones (NFWI Chair), Marie Copland (Operation Orphan)
and Gill Thomas (The One Armed Sewist – Great British Sewing Bee)

WI Delegate Attendance 65 WIs. Total attendance 300.

Flowers Helen Rose, Sylvia Insley
- 2 Welcome and Introduction
The Federation Chairman, Dr. Helen Rose opened this the 49th meeting since incorporation (the 205th meeting since 1917) by welcoming members and Past Federation Chairmen and guests.
- 3 Apologies
Apologies were received from past federation chairman, Vera Carter.
- 4 Adoption of Standing Orders
 - a. The adoption of the Standing orders was proposed by the Chairman and seconded by Sue Sprigings, Coddington WI and carried.
- 5 Minutes of the last Meeting and Matters Arising
 - a. The minutes of the Annual Federation Meeting, held on Saturday 25th March 2023 at the Minster School Southwell, were seconded by Brenda Stewart, Hawton WI and carried. The Minutes were then signed as a true record by the Federation Chairman.
 - b. There were no matters arising.
- 6 Financial Statement 2022-2023 & Appointment of Auditors 2023-2024

Federation Treasurer Jenny Bailey told the members about the accounts with a poem. The Federation had worked hard on providing the a variety of events throughout the past year and she thanked the members for their support. The Federation Treasurer then proposed that the Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statement ending 31 October 2023 be approved. This was seconded by Vicky Etherington, East Markham WI. Motion carried. Also proposed was that the Chartered Accountants, Tom Gerraghty and Associates, be appointed as Auditors for the period 1 November 2023 to 31 October 2024. This was seconded by Sandra Carter, Farndon WI. Motion carried.

7 Federation Chairman's Address

Dr Rose spoke of the difficulties faced by the Federation. Firstly, in finding volunteers to become trustees and steer the Federation and its WIs going forward. She alluded to amalgamation with a neighbouring federation, which could be an outcome if the number of trustees on the Board were to fall below the minimum of 8 and management of the federation were to be passed up to the NFWI in London. Any members wanting to know more about becoming a trustee were asked to contact the office.

Secondly, she drew members' attention to the financial situation of the Federation:

"Since the pandemic Federation finances have taken a big hit. This, in no small way, is due to a reduction in subscriptions, an increase in costs, and receipt of fewer donations and legacies. Another drain on our finances has been the maintenance of County House. The tired building with its leaking flat roof, and crumbling brick work needs a big injection of money to make it the beautiful building that it could be. We do not have this money.

Of the nine rooms, on three floors, only 3 rooms on the ground floor are used for part of the week on a regular basis. The meeting room, which you know has a capacity of 30 is only used once or twice a month if that. We cannot cover the bills nor the maintenance, and our resources will run dry within 5 years.

After long deliberation (at least 5 years of prevarication, determination, hope and despair) like many of you, the Trustees have come to realise that the house is no longer fit for our purpose and as a Grade II listed building it is too expensive to run. We have therefore found a local estate agent to put the house on the market for sale.

What is the plan going forward? This is uncertain as we do not know what will happen, but we have contingencies. We are looking for a new base whilst considering several ways to save money and are evaluating costs for rented office space and storage. The staff are aware of the situation and are working with us. Other Federations are in a similar situation, so we are not alone.

Like us you will have mixed feelings about this, but it is time. We will ride this transition and come out stronger on the other side. Our new base will be smaller, cheaper, and affordable. We are the Nottinghamshire Federation of WIs wherever we are we will continue offering support and opportunities to our members."

Chairman asked for any questions from the floor. Dorothy Downie, who had found her WI in a similarly difficult position in deciding to sell property owned by her WI at East Bridgford, reiterated that such a decision weighed heavy but was necessary and she gave her full support to the trustees.

8 Federation Team Reports

Reports from were given by:

- a. Creative Arts – June Freeman
- b. Campaign & Communications Team – Suzanne Plamping
- c. Sports & Leisure – Wendy Richardson
- d. WI Support Team – Helen Ainley

The Federation Chairman expressed her thanks to everyone who served on of the Federation Teams and who worked hard on behalf of the Federation and members.

9 Morning Guest Speaker 1: Marie Copland gave a well-prepared presentation on the work of "Operation Orphan" and thanked members for bringing knitted and crocheted squares to be made up into blankets for the "Forget Me Notts" project donating blankets to people in deprived areas.

Morning Guest Speaker 2: NFWI Chair, Ann Jones spoke about her background, how she became involved in the WI and how attending meetings allowed her to just be herself.

June Freeman thanked the speakers.

(Lunch Break)

10 Presentation of Anniversary Certificates

<i>WI Name</i>	<i>Anniversary</i>
Winthorpe	70 years
East Markham	75 years
Oxton	75 years
Coddington	90 years
Ruddington	100 years

Certificates sent by post:

Celebrating 75 years: Everton WI, Upton WI Celebrating 100 years: Grove (Retford) WI

11 Presentation of Awards

Lesley Booth from Laxton WI enthusiastically read her amusing poem: the winning entry to the Canada Cup competition. Members were asked to write an acrostic poem based on the resolution CLEAN RIVERS, with the first letter of each line corresponding to these letters.

“Cobblers!”, cried the damsel flies,
 “Likewise!” roared the pike.
 “Excuses – we have had enough,
 All those flaming lies”.
 “No more filth!” the salmon scream,
 “Revolution!” railed the snail,
 “Insurrection!” howled the bream,
 “Victory should prevail.”
 Everyone, support our cause, because
 Rivers should be clean.
 Save our planet, keep it green.

12 Afternoon Guest Speaker: Gill Thomas, the “One Armed Sewist” spoke about her experience on The BBC TV programme, “The Great British Sewing Bee”. Her interest in sewing was born out of desperation at not being able to find clothes to fit, so she decided to make her own. Having grown up without a role model of someone with the same disability she decided to apply to be a contestant because if she could make a difference to just one person’s life, it was worth it. She received a standing ovation from the audience. Helen Ainley thanked the speaker.

13 Geraldine Reeks, the “Hat’s off” competition judge, presented the prize to Anna Hill of Laxton WI for her beautifully crocheted grey hat.

14 Prize Draw

The winners were announced:

	Prize	Number	Name	WI Name
1	£100 cash	0846	Hather Brummitt	Dorewood
2	Easter egg basket	1153	L Brown	Dorewood
3	Gin and chocolate basket	1154	Ellie Briggs	Southwell
4	Prosecco basket	0488	Viv Dudley	Kirkby
5	Tea and Biscuits	0620	Jean Godber	Plumtree
6	Throw	2473	Not given	Not given
7	Port	0647	Karen Turner	Ranskill & Torworth
8	Easter egg	1636	Denise B	Thurgarton

- 15 Thanks
Dr Rose thanked all those involved with Federation roles - the Hornblower Editor Jenny Bailey and the Hornblower Packing Team; the IFE team; Banker, Coral Fairbrother; Bulb co-ordinator Margaret Berryman and frequent volunteer, Gill Pennicott, for their services to the Federation. She thanked the Minster School for their support plus Vice Chairman, Wendy Richardson for preparing the Powerpoint presentation and also the office staff, Trustees and the members for their continued support.
- 16 Any Other Business None
- 17 Date of next Annual Meeting
To be decided once a suitable venue has been determined.
- 18 Close of Meeting
Dr Helen Rose, Nottinghamshire Federation of WIs Chairman, reminded members of forthcoming events and asked everyone to stand to sing "God Save the King" before wishing everyone a safe journey home.
- Meeting closed 3.00pm.