

## **Annual Report for The Shelfords W.I. A.G.M. – Also Annual Parish Meeting**

It is with pleasure that I am able to report that, during these very difficult times of the past twelve months, that the Shelfords W.I. has remained a constant, welcoming and friendly organization during these months of lockdown. We kept going, mastering Zoom, and enjoying eleven speakers with our usual happy Christmas party with hand bell ringing, origami craft and seasonal refreshments. We recently returned to face to face meetings in our warm community hall adjoining St. Mary's Church, and at present have 33 members, eighty per cent of whom attend eleven months of the year. We do not meet in August. Despite the need to still use masks and have good ventilation in the room, it is wonderful that we have recently been able to hear the chatter and laughter in the room once again. Stapleford W.I. has changed their meeting night so we have had occasional visits from some of their members, and some of our members also have attended their meetings. We meet on the first Thursday of the month and our visiting speakers and friends always comment on the friendliness and warmth of our meetings. Our hard-working committee has worked continuously to produce speakers eleven months of the year, and during this time, Zoom enabled members to keep in touch with one another. Good communication is the key to any organization and we believe our monthly newsletter has also contributed to this success. Recently our subjects have ranged from Past and Present residents of Clarence House, The Chesterton Workhouse, the Museum of Cambridge, the demise and plight of the hedgehogs, The Rise and fall of the English sea-side holiday resorts, and Ian Cummings excellent talk entitled From Tibet to the Tent, his story from travel photographer to the Great British Bake Off.

At the beginning of this year we are hoping to arrange a River Boat trip with cream tea, on the River Cam, and possibly a trip to the Botanic Gardens. A friendship group has formed a craft group as well as a Tai Chi exercise class led by one of our own Chinese members.

We recently were delighted to contribute to the finance of the planting of fruit trees and bushes at the Shelford Community Garden, and several members hope to become more involved with this project in the warmer months ahead. This project has been supported by the school, The local care Home, many local residents and the CO-OP. The two acre field has already been planted with plum, apple and pear trees, and is situated behind the Hectare along the Cambridge Road.

We are fortunate to have good communication with our Headquarters in Girton who keep us updated with many courses, cookery classes, social events and walks that have taken place, many on line. We were sorry to hear that National Federation had reluctantly closed our lovely Denman College in Oxfordshire, but we could see the dilemma of keeping that wonderful house and its four acres of garden going in these times of financial hardship.

Recently when Simon Talbott and Mary left our village to take up appointments with the Ely Diocese, we were able to convey our thanks and support that they had both given during the past nine years.

There is surely a sign for the need in this rapidly changing world for friendship and communication to continue, and I am proud to be involved, with the help of my hard working committee to enable this. The organization will inevitably change and evolve if it is to continue in the future.

Rosemary Livings, President