

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Upcoming events

Find out about trips to RHS Wisley, Mudlarking on the Thames, art group, book group and other summer social opportunities

News and campaigns

An update from the National WI meeting and sharing our Essex Life tribute with Christine's brother and partner

Recent events

Update from the AGM in May



Please remember to bring:

- A mug and glass
- Money for the home stall and NFWI raffle
- Pennies for friendship
- Donations for the food bank

MEETING ON 15 JUNE

At our next meeting on Thursday 15 June we will be joined by Patricia Gregory will to talk about "Women's Football – 50 Years Gone in a Flash". This talk will be an insight from a women's football player in the 70's. Patricia is an author as well as an advisor to the FA and the Olympics.

Volunteers are needed to deliver the foodbank items and a sign-up sheet will be available at the meeting to please help out, if you can.

We look forward to seeing you!

Upcoming events

JULY AND AUGUST MEETINGS

On 20 July, our speaker is Emma Whiting, the Visitor Engagement Officer for Walthamstow Wetlands. A fully operational reservoir providing water for 3.5 million people and an internationally important nature reserve for waterfowl and birds of play. **There will be a follow up walk for members in July.**

On 17 August we will be holding our summer social. We will be enjoying ice cream and an outside picnic (weather permitting) with an earlier evening start time. Please bring along your own picnic.

REGULAR AFTERNOON TEAS

Meeting for a chat over a tea and coffee at The Bull and Cafe Belgique are well attended. It's a chance for new members to meet and get to know others from Wanstead WI. No need to tell us in advance, just turn up. Look forward to seeing you soon.

Maud and Angela K

The Bull: 11.00 am Thursday 22 June, Thursday 27 July, Thursday 24 August

Cafe Belgique: 2.30 Thursday 6 July, Thursday 3 August, Thursday 7 September





AFTERNOON TEA IN A GARDEN

Please support our afternoon teas being held in members gardens with proceeds going to Amyloidosis research which is our chosen charity this year. What is not to like about spending a sunny afternoon relaxing in a garden with tea, cake and friendly chat. Gardens will be open between 2pm and 4pm.

Do please support them.

- Friday 16th June. Annie. Chigwell Road. Annie is expecting her roses to be at their best.
- Wednesday 12th July. Teresa. Greenstone Mews.
- Tuesday 8th August. Maggie. Rodney Road.
- TBA September. Deidre.

Please remember to sign up to visit Teresa's garden as space is limited. A sign-up sheet will be available at the next meeting or you can contact Wanstead WI to let her know you would like a place.



VISIT TO RHS WISLEY – TUESDAY 25 JULY

We are in the process of booking a coach trip to RHS Wisley for Wanstead WI members for Tuesday 25 July. The coach will meet us outside our Church in Wanstead at 9am and drop us back there in the evening at approx 6pm. There will be a signup sheet at the June members meeting but equally feel free to email Denise directly on denisehitchens@hotmail.com if you are interested.

Our coach will accommodate 49 people and our outing will include a 90 minute guided tour in groups of just 15 which will include the history and highlights of the garden. Thereafter we will be free to explore, shop and dine at our leisure. There are choices of places for lunch and refreshments on site but of course picnics are an

option too. The exact cost will be determined when we know the numbers attending and how many are RHS members, but as a guide:

- The cost of the return coach journey will be approx £13 per person
- Admission is £13.95 (although free to RHS members - plus one other)
- Our guided tours will be £5 a head.

So it will possibly be approx £32 per person but less if you are an RHS member and are prepared to share your 'plus 1 free guest' facility amongst the other attendees.

This should be another enjoyable coach outing for Wanstead WI members!

When replying or signing up please let us know if you are an RHS member. (Wheelchairs and mobility scooters are apparently available if prebooked.)

Thank you.

Denise



ALL DOWN TO THE THAMES FORESHORE!

Following the very enjoyable Mudlarking talk in February, we have now successfully managed to book a private mudlarking tour exclusively for our Wanstead WI members. This will be on Monday 21st August 10.30am to 12.30pm at Bankside. We will have two hours down on the Thames foreshore searching for interesting finds with our expert guide Vanessa whom many of you met in February.

Please note numbers will be very limited to a max 25 /30, so booking will be on a first-come, first-served basis. The WI have decided to subsidise this event and have therefore agreed that members wishing to attend instead give a £5 donation to our charity which this year is The Amyloidosis Foundation. Please bring £5 (cash or cheque) to our meeting next week on 15 June 2023 if you want to secure and book your place. Meeting Point Outside the Globe Theatre

Claire T who is organising this event will provide more information next week and have the sign-up sheets ready for all our eager mudlarkers! For any of you wanting to come but who are unable to attend next week's meeting please let Claire know by emailing postboxclaire@gmail.com



WI BOOK GROUPS

The WI has two book clubs. The first was set up over 10 years ago and is well attended. We've read and discussed over 120 books - the latest being Ben Aaronovitch's *Rivers of London*. We have become firm friends and occasionally meet up for lunch in Wanstead.

The second book club was set up 2 years ago. We meet once a month in Wanstead and have read some really engaging books. Our current title is Patricia Highsmith's *Strangers on a Train*. We only have a few regular attendees so are looking for new members to join us. At present we meet in the evening on the last Wednesday of the month, but we're happy to renegotiate the date.

Both book clubs are free as we meet in members' homes and get books from Wanstead Library. We take whatever books the Library has. This means we read books we wouldn't usually choose ourselves, which is interesting as it broadens our horizons. There have been a few books we didn't like, but that means there's plenty to talk about! Largely it has introduced us to authors we weren't aware of, and we've read some lovely books like Tan Twan Eng's *Garden of Evening Mists*.

Interested? The only obligation is to read a book a month and turn up for a lively discussion. For more information contact Carole Blundred at: caroleblundred@hotmail.co.uk





Most of our outings are joined by between 4 and 10 members so it makes it an enjoyable opportunity to get to know people in small groups and share ideas. Do let me know if you want to add your name to the group list or if you'd prefer not to receive emails in future.

Earlier in the year we saw work by Kaffe Fassett, Lynette Yiadom-Boakye, Magdalena Abakanowicz, Cecelia Vicuna and Maria Bartuszo.

Our most recent outing was to see a small exhibition of paintings of 20th century gardens at the Garden Museum at Lambeth. We visited on the same day as their plant fair and I was pleased to bring some lovely plants home with me. The planned visit to the Royal Academy for 'Souls Run Deep Like the Rivers' didn't quite work for everyone after all. Maybe a few of us will have made it by the time you read this? The next visit is to the Dulwich Picture Gallery on Friday 14th July to see an exhibition of French Impressionist Berthe Morisot. Please let me know if you want to come along.

Ideas for later in the year are trips to Kensington Palace for 'Court to Couture' and a return to the Fashion and Textiles Museum for the upcoming exhibition on Propaganda Textiles.

Members may also be interested to know that the Fan Museum in Greenwich is free for over 60s on Wednesdays. I'd be happy to organise a group visit if this is a popular idea.

Cathy Unwin

News and campaigns

NATIONAL WI ANNUAL MEETING IN CARDIFF

St David's Hall, Cardiff. 1500 women (and half a dozen men) on a Grand Day Out. An expectant buzz in the air. And, after a quick welcome in English and Welsh, a piano hammers out the opening chords of Jerusalem, and 1500 female voices rise in song (and with their own views on timing, very different from the pianist's). It's the 2023 Annual Meeting of the National Federation of Women's Institutes, to which I am invited as a guest (because of my work with the Finance Committee of NFWI).

The meeting includes routine business - report-backs and videos on what the NFWI has been doing over the last year (a lot), awards for the various competitions that have run over the year – as well as guest speakers, the debate on the annual resolution, and the launch of new initiatives.

There were two guest speakers this year. Laura McAllister is an academic, but also an ex-footballer (Millwall Lionesses, Cardiff City, Wales) who is currently vice-President of UEFA, has served or serves on a string of other committees, commissions and organisations, and is the only Welsh woman on the latest BBC 100 women list. As you can imagine, she had some interesting (and scathing) things to say about the world of football.



But for me, the highlight speaker was Ebony Rainford-Brent, brought up by a single mother in Streatham, with three older brothers one of whom was lost to knife-crime when she was still a child, and football-crazy until she was coerced by a teacher into bowling a ball for a visiting cricket luminary at her primary school. Ebony became an England cricketer, captain of the Surrey women's team, and is now a cricket commentator, motivational speaker, coach and involved in much else. She was very funny on the contrast between her childhood life in the street-markets of South London, and the traditional white-jerseyed tea-drinking-village-green image of cricketing gentlemen; and very moving on the variety of challenges she and others like her faced. One thing she said particularly struck me: that people often talk about how important it is to have confidence and feel confident; but actually, there will be lots of situations where you don't feel confident and you shouldn't just try to magic it up – what you really need is courage.

The debate on the annual resolution was fascinating. The process at the AM is that someone from the WI proposing the motion speaks on it for a couple of minutes; then someone from another WI seconds it; then there is an invited expert to speak for 10 minutes in favour, and another invited expert to speak for 10 minutes against, before the motion is opened to the floor, and audience members can make short comments. Then the voting takes place, with cards submitted that are then counted over lunch. The only people who can vote are the official WI representatives (that doesn't include me!) and many of them are mandated in advance, so they can't change their minds. Importantly, there can be no changes in the wording of the resolution – there are opportunities to amend it earlier in the year, as it goes through the local WI and member voting – and by the time it gets to Annual Meeting, it is all or nothing.

“People often talk about how important it is to have confidence and feel confident; but actually, there will be lots of situations where you don't feel confident and you shouldn't just try to magic it up – what you really need is courage”

We in Wanstead WI are probably all familiar with the arguments in favour of the motion, having voted for it ourselves: that if we get bits of river designated as official bathing areas, they will be subject to official protection. But the person invited to speak against the motion, an expert from the Institute of Water, was thought-provoking. By all means, if you want a bathing area, go for it, he said – but don't kid yourselves that this will help wildlife. The water quality required for wildlife to flourish is less expensive to achieve, but is needed over a greater area than could possibly be covered by campaigning for bathing areas. Focusing resources on bathing risks diverting funding, policy and attention from the real issues that are damaging our ecology. And many of the contributions from the floor echoed this point of view. There was a very clear feeling in the hall that this resolution had the right objective but the wrong means to achieve that objective.

Two things came out of this. The first is that, after a slightly tense lunchbreak wondering how it would work out, the resolution was passed (I suspect, greatly to the relief of the expert speaker against). So – bathing in the Roding, anyone? The second is that the NFWI will review the entire resolutions process – although this has been reviewed many times over the years, it is clearly not working as intended.

Finally, a mention of a couple of the initiatives 'launched' at the AM: the new model for Denman, which means that all courses will be free to WI members, and the song for #Thankyou Day on 2 July. If you ever get a chance to go to the Annual Meeting, as a representative, I strongly recommend it – it is moving and enthusing to be surrounded by so many other members, and to hear so many stories, and feel part of such a movement.

Ruth Kaufman



NEXT STEPS ON CLEAN RIVERS FOR PEOPLE AND WILDLIFE CAMPAIGN

As Ruth reports above, with a majority of 84%, the Clean Rivers for People and Wildlife resolution passed at the 2023 NFWI Annual Meeting.

Now we are urging all members to get involved in the campaign to clean up our rivers. Our new campaign will be encouraging members to make and support applications to create bathing waters in rivers across England and Wales as a way to drive the cleanup of our precious waters.

Bathing water designation can play a key role in tackling pollution as it means that water must be tested for the bacteria that causes illness during the bathing season, and because water companies have an obligation to tackle pollution in these locations.

Can't see us bathing in the Thames or Roding anytime soon but if you've any ideas on how we might campaign locally, speak out!

Frances



UPDATE ON ENGAGEMENT – END OF LIFE CARE TRANSFORMATION

The baton has passed at North East London Integrated Care Board (NEL ICB) from Siobhan Harper (whom some of us met in January) to Tracy Rubery who is director of Partnership, Impact and Delivery: Redbridge. Ann Brown has written to arrange a meeting with Tracy as NE London ICB enters the second phase of their engagement with the public on palliative care and end of life care. A community working group has been set up - [more info here](#) - to discuss proposals in detail alongside clinicians (it feels as if we were here two years ago... but campaign on). However, the deadline was 8 June - so we're a little late (sorry - manic busy this last fortnight).

Also they are doing more one-to-one interviews; we've already done this in phase 1 but if anyone has life-limiting conditions and are using services across the Whipps Cross hospital area (Waltham Forest, Redbridge, West Essex) and wants to share their experience get in touch with amber.harris7@nhs.net. This time they're offering a £50 voucher for doing it.



North East London



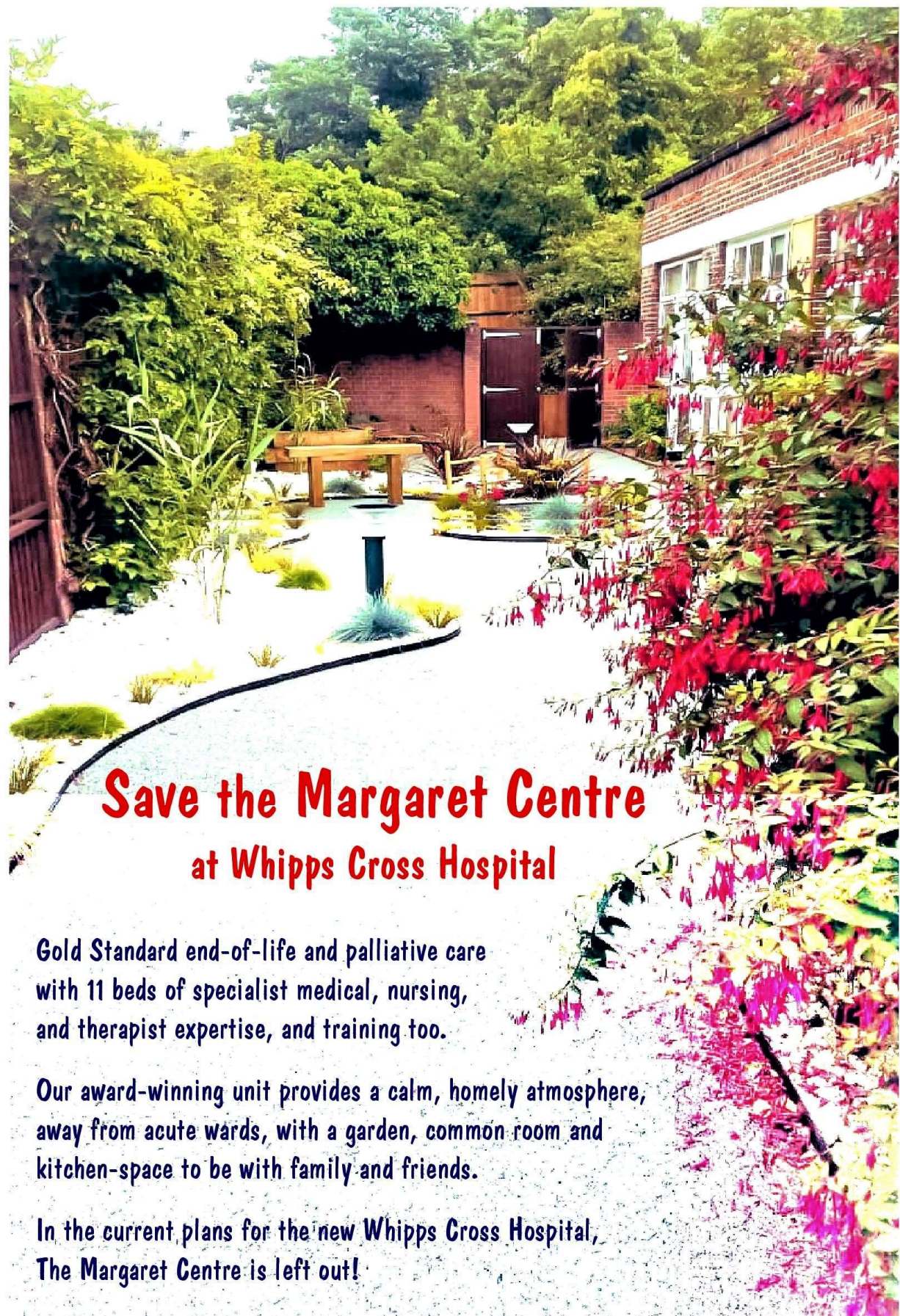
UPDATE ON WHIPPS CROSS DEVELOPMENT

Well, according to what you read and where we're going to get a fully funded hospital - just not yet! 2030? (rainbow emoji). Still no sign of the money for the enabling works. So campaigning continues so that government doesn't forget.

In the last month members of Wanstead WI have joined Action4Whipps and our sisters, Stone Rangers WI to gather signatures for the petition to keep the Margaret Centre at Whipps Cross hospital. We were out in Wanstead High Street on 20 May and today, Saturday 10 June outside Leytonstone Library. Each time we gathered about 200 signatures, gave out loads of leaflets and had many good and informative chats with passersby. From when we started 18 months ago we've certainly raised the profile of our Palliative care and End of Life unit, and the need for it to be reprovided on the Whipps Cross site. Many thanks to all who helped, including Ann B, Kay, Sylvia, Annie and everyone!



Charlotte from A4W, Linda and Elaine from Stone Rangers with Kay and Frances S busy with the Margaret Centre petition in Leytonstone, 10 June.



Save the Margaret Centre at Whipps Cross Hospital

Gold Standard end-of-life and palliative care with 11 beds of specialist medical, nursing, and therapist expertise, and training too.

Our award-winning unit provides a calm, homely atmosphere, away from acute wards, with a garden, common room and kitchen-space to be with family and friends.

In the current plans for the new Whipps Cross Hospital, The Margaret Centre is left out!

Recent events

SHARING CHRISTINE'S ESSEX LIFE OBITUARY

Gladys, Maggie and Joy met Christine's brother, Peter and her partner, Lee for coffee and cake in Belgique. We handed over copies of the WI magazine Essex Life that contained a photograph and obituary of our lovely President that we knew they would appreciate.



MESSAGE FROM MAGGIE

Ten blankets, four children's jumpers, one hat and a mittens set have been taken to Knit for Peace who have been supporting those affected by war in Ukraine and earthquakes on the Turkey / Syria border in recent months.





MAY - WI ANNUAL MEETING

It was great to see so many members at this year's Annual meeting. In case you weren't there, a draft note of the meeting is at the back of this newsletter, for information. (The final version will be presented to next year's Annual meeting for approval.)

As part of our business we elected our Committee for this year. Our new President is Denise H; Gladys S-R remains our Secretary; and Maggie W will return to the role of Treasurer for one year only. In addition general Committee members are now Nicola H, Angela K, Pamela M, Frances S, Claire T and Patsy W.



After the formal business of the AGM on 18th May, and having refreshed themselves with a cup of coffee or perhaps a glass of wine, those members present were invited to stretch their brains a little more by taking part in an entertaining and occasionally challenging Quiz.

Kathy Moore had compiled a set of questions that ensured that we had plenty to think about and discuss, and her able assistants Pat and Tina kept us in order, collected the answer papers and made sure that we weren't marking our own homework. Brains were racked and memories searched as we all endeavoured to make our table the winner. The sighs of recognition, or whelps of delight, when the answers were read out were matched only by the loud whisper around the room when a question was asked to which everybody knew the answer.

However enjoyable the process, in the end only one table can win and congratulations go to that table, as well as our thanks to Pat and Tina and especially to Kathy.

Appendix A – draft note of Annual meeting

The 14th Annual Meeting and 175th monthly meeting of Wanstead WI held on 18 May 2023 at the Church Hall, Wanstead Place, Wanstead London E11 2SW

Present Committee members: Gladys S-R (Secretary), Denise H (Treasurer), Maggie W, Nicola H (AGM minute taker), Angela K, Frances S, Gillian B, Patsy W plus 48 members.

Apologies for absence: Pamela M

1. **Welcome** to all members attending by Gladys S-R, Secretary, in the chair in the absence of a President. Documents had been issued by email in advance to enable members to read them. Copies attached: see end of note for details.

2. **Record of 19 May 2022 Annual Meeting:** proposed by Carole B, seconded by Suzanne L. Unanimously adopted.

3. **Financial Report 2022 – 2023.** Gladys S-R apologised for the size of the font, on the emailed document', and Denise H (as Treasurer) outlined the main messages. The accounts had been audited in February 2023 by Verity B, a WI recommended auditor. Our bank balances – currently about £4600 – remain healthy. Receipts at meetings (refreshments and raffle) generally cover the costs of the hire of the hall. Recorded separately, we raised more than £1900 for charity (in 2022 this was for two local foodbanks). So a huge thank you to all members who had contributed. The report was proposed by Frances S, seconded by Carole B. Agreed unanimously.

4. **Committee report** presented by Gladys S-R as Secretary (see attachment for further details). In addition to the written report she added that Carole B ran two bookclubs; Gillian T had taken over responsibility for the website; and more information about the Whipps Cross redevelopment campaign would be made available. She would circulate a revised report reflecting these additions. There were no questions. The report was proposed by Patsy W and seconded by Linda A. Unanimously agreed.

5. **President's address** was read out by Angela K on behalf of the Committee. The meeting remembered the late Christine T: an obituary had been included in March edition of Essex Life and some members had visited Wanstead Park recently to see the bluebells in Christine's memory.

6. **Committee members.** As reported in the Secretary's report, apart from Gillian B the existing Committee members had agreed to offer themselves for re-election. She had not received any nominations for President other than Denise H. No nominations were made at the meeting. Maggie W had offered to take back the role of Treasurer for one year only.

Gladys S-R asked those offering for the Committee to stand up.

Proposed by Teresa F and seconded by Joy P:

Denise H was elected President unanimously on a show of hands.

Other Committee members were re-elected unanimously on a show of hands.

Gillian B was standing down after many years, working on the website, risk assessments during and since the Covid19 pandemic, plus other roles. She was presented with a bouquet to say thank you.

Special mention was made of Pamela M who was unable to be present at the AGM. She continued to deal with the emails (increasing in numbers all the time!), sort out the refreshment rota plus lots more. Also Gillian T who had taken over the website in addition to host members' virtual meetings, and Vicki E who had taken over the newsletter. It was suggested that someone might shadow Maggie W as Treasurer. Ruth K proposed a vote of thanks to the Committee for offering to stand again and all their work behind the scenes.

The Committee was pleased to report that over the course of 2022/23 many members had helped with specific activities. New volunteer committee members are always needed to help Wanstead

WI continue: please talk to a member of the committee to find out how you might help on the committee; or at our members meetings/activities.

The official business of the meeting concluded at 8.35pm.

After a break for refreshments, including wine and nibbles, members enjoyed a quiz organised by Kathy, helped by Pat and Tina. There was wine for the winners and lemons for the losers. Gladys S-R thanked the quiz hosts and the refreshment ladies.

In addition the book swap table was open, plus home produce.

Notices

Maggie W reported that she was to meet Christine T's brother and partner the following day to give them each a copy of the Essex Life referred to above.

Maggie W was organising a series of afternoon teas in members' gardens, to raise funds for Amyloidosis Foundation. First date 16 June at Annie's, next at Teresa's on 17 July (please sign up in advance as limit on numbers). MW and Deirdre had also volunteered: more details in due course including in newsletter.

The next members' meeting will be on 15 June, Patricia Gregory will be joining us, to talk about "Women's Football – 50 Years Gone in a Flash".

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The chair thanked everyone for attending, also those who had set up tables and would now store everything away

Attachments:

- Minutes of previous AGM May 2022*
- Financial report*
- Committee report – revised version*
- President's address*