

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Upcoming events

Find out about our summer meetings and outings, including the AGM, ABBA Voyage and garden teas

News and campaigns

Help out at Wanstead Festival, latest on the Margaret Centre campaign and WI national campaigns

Recent events

A round up of recent meetings, the bluebell walk in memory of Christine, as well as trips to Oklahoma!, Pretty Woman, and Chiswick House



MEETING ON 18 MAY

At our next meeting on Thursday 18th May we will be holding our annual meeting. Minutes and reports will be emailed out to members prior to the meeting and we would ask members to read these before attending the meeting. We will be choosing a new President as well as voting for the committee. Wine, soft drinks and nibbles will be available.

After the formal business there will be a quiz.

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!

Please remember to bring:

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

Upcoming events



JUNE AND JULY MEETINGS

Lace your boots up! On 15 June, Patricia Gregory will be joining us, 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.

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.**



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 25 May, Thursday 22 June, Thursday 27 July

Cafe Belgique: 2.30 Thursday 1 June, Thursday 6 July, Thursday 3 August



AFTERNOON TEA IN A GARDEN

Four members have offered to open their gardens to help raise funds for 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.
- Wednesday 12th July. Teresa. Greenstone Mews.
- Tuesday 8th August. Maggie. Rodney Road.
- TBA September. Deidre.

Please note that Teresa has a very small garden so you will need to book a place. A sign-up sheet will be available at the next two meetings or you can contact Wanstead WI to let her know you would like a place.



VOULEZ VOUS ABBA VOYAGE AVEC NOUS?

We have at least one ticket (and possibly a further 2 tickets) available for ABBA Voyage on 18th September Monday at 7.45pm. Price £50

We're going with Stone Rangers and it should be a great night out (must find my silver wig and hot flares....)

Also if you've confirmed already and had a request for payment please pay now! Tickets have to be paid for by the end of the month.

Enquiries: please contact Frances S on frances.simmons@ntlworld.com 07910 318474



UPCOMING VISITS – WATCH THIS SPACE!

We are in the process of arranging a summer visit to RHS Wisley in Surrey, exact date to be advised. It will hopefully be another jolly WI Coach Trip from Wanstead so do look out for further details which will be available shortly. We will also be organising a walk at Walthamstow Wetlands.





WANSTEAD FESTIVAL

News and campaigns

This year our very local festival is taking place on Church Green Wanstead on Sunday 17 September. We've used our stall in the past to highlight our current and ongoing campaigns, e.g. sustainability with the 'random bag of stuff' lucky dip, damaging micro plastics - that the was the vat of fleecy soup. And always some things from our craft table to raise funds for our charity of the year.

If you would like to organise our entry this year, get in touch with me, Frances S on 07910 318474 or at frances.simmons@ntlworld.com

It's easy enough to do - there is a crib sheet detailing what to do and when - and it's fun to be a part of the community.

We need a trio of volunteers on this (plus lots of us to help on the day for an hour or so). So unleash your creativity on Wanstead!



NATIONAL WI CAMPAIGNS AND RESOLUTIONS

Ideas for the Wanstead Festival stall: Our current campaign is about increasing awareness and better, earlier diagnosis of ADHD and autism in women and girls. The resolution for 2023 is for cleaner rivers, free of sewage. And our own resolution on funding palliative care nationally will be put before you to vote on in the next month or so. So lots to think about, lots to act upon. See the National Federation of WI website for details of all current and past campaigns.



PETITION TO SAVE THE MARGARET CENTRE AT WHIPPS CROSS HOSPITAL

Working with Action for Whipps Cross, The Margaret Centre Working Group is organising stalls in Wanstead, Leytonstone and South Woodford over the summer. This is to circulate the petition for the retention of the Margaret Centre, our award winning hospital unit for Palliative Care and End of Life support. We need to keep up the pressure on Barts and the N E London Integrated Care Board or risk the closure of the unit.

The dates agreed so far are:

- Saturday 20 May at 11am Wanstead High Street outside the Co-op
- Saturday 10 June at 11am Leytonstone, Church Lane outside the Library
- Saturday 24 June at 11am South Woodford George Lane outside M&S
- Saturday 1 July and Saturday 15 July venue tbc

We'd be very grateful for your support - everyone is welcome to join us even if it's only for a short while. Please let us know if you are planning to come in case we need to cancel because of the weather.

The petition is online at <http://bit.ly/margaretcentrepetition> PLEASE SIGN!

There will also be paper petition sheets at the AGM and subsequent meetings.

Frances S, Ann B and Hazel W contact: frances.simmons@ntlworld.com or on 07910318474 or annfgross@googlemail.com

Text of the petition

We the undersigned value the high-quality specialist end of life and palliative care services provided by the Margaret Centre.

- We call on the North East London Integrated Care Board and Barts Health NHS Trust to commit to re-provide the Centre on the site of the new Whipps Cross Hospital.
- We call on the Board to give our community a real say in planning for the provision of NHS end of life and palliative care. The proposed public consultation must include a plan to keep the Margaret Centre on the hospital site, and to enhance the services that it provides.



MESSAGE FROM ANGELA

Angela writes "Among Christine's wool stash I found a couple of blankets and a baby cardigan that had been started. They are now finished and ready to go along with a couple of other crocheted blankets she had. They will be taken to the charity Knit for Peace who are currently sending items to Ukraine. Several years ago Christine visited Ukraine with her Rockchoir group and was very moved by the welcome they received so I think she would have approved."

Recent events

BLUEBELL WALK IN MEMORY OF CHRISTINE

A small group of us walked through the bluebell woods in Wanstead Park in memory of our late President Christine. This was a place we knew she had known, loved and visited with WI friends. The flowers were beautiful to look at and the scented air as well.



JANUARY-MARCH MEETINGS

In January, we were joined by Dr Leo Cheng from Mercy Ships to talk about the lifesaving and transformative surgery he performs on board its ships in West Africa.

In February, archaeologist Vanessa Bunton from the Thames Explorer Trust gave a fascinating talk about mudlarking and her work finding and looking at historical evidence of London's past courtesy of the River Thames. This was a chance to view recent finds from the Thames shoreline.

In March, retired barrister Jane Nairn from the charity Fine Cell Work gave an insight into people detained in HM Prisons and how they learn a skill that helps them to rehabilitate and rebuild a new life for themselves to give them a better, more fulfilling future. Jane wrote to Angela: *"Just to say a big thank you for inviting me to talk to you all about FCW - I so enjoyed meeting you all in the WI and what*

a lively programme you have - thank you for your donation and to your members who bought some of the items I bought (delighted to say £145 worth)- also many thanks for the donated fabrics and threads which we will use on our wing. I so enjoyed meeting you Angela and also Gillian and wish Wanstead WI all the very best."



APRIL SOCIAL

Our April meeting saw the return of our annual spring social, the first time we've been able to share food in this way since the pandemic. Members put on a fantastic spread – thanks to everyone who brought along a dish. It was a very enjoyable evening for all.



OH PRETTY WOMAN!

On 24 January, 30 Wanstead WI members enjoyed a New Year visit to the Savoy Theatre in London to see *Pretty Woman: The Musical*. A large group of us met on Leytonstone station and travelled into town together meeting others at the venue, giving plenty of time for chatting with other members and catching up with friends. The show was faithful to the storyline of the film but peppered with lively music and songs written for the stage show. It was a jolly outing and brightened up perhaps an otherwise quiet and dull January evening.



OKLAHOMA!

OOOOOOOKLAHOMA, where the wind comes sweeping down the plain....

Chicks an' ducks an' geese better scurry.....

I'm just a gal who can't say no.....

People will say we're in love.

How many of us can read these words and not hear the songs in our heads? My parents were great fans of musical theatre and when they loved a show, they bought the records, 78 rpm to begin with and, later, LPs. And played them. A lot. Songs from South Pacific, Seven Brides, My Fair Lady were the soundtrack of my childhood.

So when a group of WWI members travelled to Wyndham's Theatre on a rainy Thursday evening in April to see the latest production of Oklahoma! I knew what to expect.

I was in for a big surprise.

Gone were the lush, sweeping sounds of a full orchestra in the pit, led by the violins. In their place a band majored by a keyboard, and Curly on stage accompanying himself on the guitar. And it worked!

Gone the 20-strong, powerfully voiced chorus of farmers and cowhands. Gone the dimity and candy stripe dresses on uniformly slim young women, the rustic homestead furniture. Instead, a mixed (in all senses) cast with attitude, pared down set, costumes from the burlesque, amazing voices – and cowboy boots. It was great!

Gone the romantic, balletic representation of Laurie's troubled dream about Curly and Judd Fry. Replaced by an edgy modern solo dance – it couldn't be called a ballet – accompanied by electronic music. Didn't work for me but judging by the audience's reaction, for some it was the highlight of the evening. It is the only still from the show on the posters outside the theatre.

And the songs. Well, thankfully they can't be changed much without losing their identity and they were sung with great attack by some incredible voices. After all, it's the songs that make musical theatre.

Which one will be going around in your head all day?



VISIT TO CHISWICK HOUSE

On 29 March, Wanstead WI members and a few friends enjoyed a coach trip and visit to Chiswick House in West London. There were 44 of us in total and we were met by a very welcoming and organised team at Chiswick and split into two groups for morning and afternoon tours of the house and garden. Our friendly guides were very knowledgeable and we learned a great deal about the ancestry of the residents, the paintings and contents of the house and the development of the gardens and grounds. Of course, there was also plenty of time for the almost obligatory lunch, tea and cake! A fun and interesting day was had by all and we were able to relax on our coach for our journey home to Wanstead by 6pm.