



## **ACTIVITIES OF ASHTON UNDER HILL WI – APRIL 2013**

Marjory, the President, welcomed 31 members to the April meeting. We were also pleased to announce two new members – June Cooke and Ruth Clarkson who joined at this meeting.

The annual general meeting and resolutions evening for next month was discussed and requests for two new Committee members were made. The two retiring members are Sylvia Kennedy and Nadine Simpkin.

Marion Nelson and Jen Creese are looking for at least 8 members to take part in a comedy sketch, to entertain members next January. A visit to Oxford by train, which will include a guided tour, is to be made on 21<sup>st</sup> June and a theatre trip to London in the Autumn is also planned.

The speaker this month was Jo Shadbolt a recent new addition to the WI Handbook of speakers. Her subject was “Unusual Vegetables and How to use them” Jo has previously worked at Hillers Farm Shop and has had much experience with unusual vegetables. She showed us how to prepare and cook many vegetables including the globe artichoke (which many people shy away from), celeriac, fennel and the versatile butternut squash. Many delicious ideas for salads and dishes were included in the recipe sheets she gave out to us. We sampled samphire and some very small Chinese mushrooms. A very accomplished and knowledgeable speaker. She was thanked by Marion Nelson. After the raffle the Kathleen Milne cup was presented to Margaret Corfield for the 4 best Easter themed cup cakes.

April was a very busy month with first the Group Quiz hosted by Ashton and held on the 16<sup>th</sup>. Eight other entries from the Vale WI Group competed. Sylvia Kennedy had compiled the questions and the contest was won by the Littletons, Pinvin coming second after a tie-breaker. Ashton came a respectable fourth scoring 64 points out of 100. A very well organised and successful evening



*Frances Stretton of Littletons WI receiving the trophy*

The walk this month was around Snowhill in brilliant sunshine, although a little chilly in the shade; afterwards a delicious meal at the Snowhill Arms.



*The Walk on Snowhill*

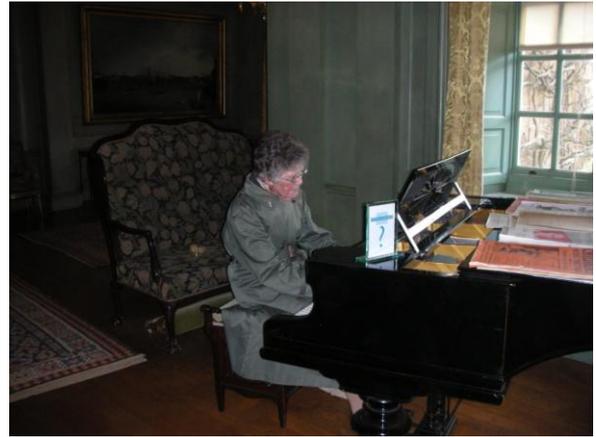
Members who attended the Spring Group meeting at Childswickham on the 24<sup>th</sup> April enjoyed a very entertaining talk by Jane Arnold dressed in the fashion of the 1940s with her “help mate”. They had brought with them memorabilia of the era, which included clothing, kitchen utensils, food stuffs (dried egg powder). She then proceeded to prepare the various war time recipes. We sampled afterwards mock duck, a sausage meat loaf which (was often substituted for a Sunday roast), carrot cookies, potato pastry and many more. Root vegetables such as carrot and swede were often used to add

sweetness and texture, so eking out the meagre rations allowed to each family.

On 25<sup>th</sup> April four attended the WFWI Spring Council Meeting held at Sixways, Worcester. The guest speaker was Mary Rhodes a presenter of many BBC television programmes including Midlands Today.

The visit to Upton House, arranged by Nadine was much enjoyed. This is a beautiful house which had been owned by Walter Samuel, 2<sup>nd</sup> Viscount Bearsted, now owned by National Trust. Walter had accumulated his wealth through the family business, the Shell Transport and Trading Company, today known as Royal Dutch Shell and one of the rooms had a wonderful display of the original posters and painting advertising Shell and the transport. Other rooms displayed his wonderful art and porcelain collection. The house had been remodelled in the style of the 1930s and was very opulent with many guest rooms, swimming pool and squash court. The gardens also had been designed by Kitty Lloyd-Jones and included bog gardens, rock gardens and herbaceous borders. Lucky for us there was a wonderful display of daffodils and the tulips were just out.





*Visit to Upton House and Molly trying out the grand piano!*



Our skittle team girls are doing very well so far in the County competition, and so far won 5 out of six matches. Who knows – they may be in the final!

Jen Creese