

ACTIVITIES OF ASHTON UNDER HILL WI – FEBRUARY 2013

Vice-President Jen Creese welcomed thirty two members and one new member to the birthday meeting. She announced that the National WI Campaign *Fair Deal for British Dairy Farmers* was being tackled by Ashton WI, and letters have been sent to local supermarket Head offices and multiple coffee chains to encourage them to support British milk and dairy products and be prepared to pay a little more for their products. Dairy farmers, particularly small farms, are struggling at present to survive and some are losing money due to bad weather and high overheads.

A draw was made for a bursary of £250, which will go towards a course at Denman College. A delighted Doreen Cope won this.

Nadine has organised several outings including visits to Upton House and gardens and Packwood House – both owned by National Trust.

Instead of the usual walk Joan Richmond and her sister Gill kindly arranged a tour of Tewkesbury with a local guide, John Dixon. On a lovely sunny morning we were shown many interesting historic features which included the site of the old railway station, tunnel and embankment, the now desolate Healings Mill which was a huge flour mill and a very important part of Tewkesbury industry.



The only other industry was a stocking-making factory, where he pointed out the pretty terraced cottages with tall ornate chimneystacks above where the workers used to weave and live. Many other interesting features were pointed out including

the many alleyways and an amazing medieval barn at the rear of one old pub. After the tour we retreated back to the Tewkesbury Garden Centre where we enjoyed a very nice lunch.



The talk this month was by Mr. Alan Benjamin whose talk was entitled *Tales of a Constable*. This was both interesting and amusing when he recalled his very early days as a police cadet and he described some of the interesting characters during his training at Redditch. In the 60s there were no mobile phones and when on the beat he often had to find the nearest kiosk to telephone for assistance! Times had certainly changed when he finally retired five years ago, with the emergence of quick response vehicles, mobile phones and not many policemen on the streets. He was thanked by Judith Hunter.

To celebrate another birthday of Ashton WI, two cakes had been specially made by Linda Everett and Jen Creese. Barbara Moore was asked to do the honours this year and cut the cake, and was afterwards enjoyed with cups of tea.



Barbara Moore cutting our birthday cake