

SWI Dumfriesshire Federation Meeting March 6th 2021

Federation president Helen Braid welcomed 42 members and delegates to the March Federation meeting. A warm welcome was also extended to Anne Kerr, SWI National President who along with SWI trustee, Mary Burney, Kirsty Forsyth and Aileen Cavers joined the meeting.

After roll call, with 25 institutes represented, and apologies the minutes of the previous meeting were approved. Members were reminded about Garden Scotland's 21st birthday card competition. The second matter arising from the minutes was Andrea Houston had been appointed as Short Mat Bowling convenor.

The correspondence had been previously emailed out to institutes but Helen highlighted several important matters from these. The first was the sad passing of 5 SWI members who will be much missed in their institutes and condolences were extended to their families.

Members were reminded of the Design a Scarf competition for Head Quarters and the virtual AGM being held on 27th May 2021. There is a team from Dumfriesshire Federation entered in the Variations on a Theme contest which has the title Journeys.

The Federation Centenary celebrations will take place on the 22nd Mat 2022 at the Easterbrook Hall. Designs are being sought for a Centenary logo which will be used on the front of the cookbook and in any publicity for this event. Details of the Centenary Map later in the report.

The Federation Show has been postponed again and will now be held from 20th – 22nd October 2022 and will be our Centenary Show.

The levy of £12.50 is now due and should be sent to the treasures along with a list of current members.

The recent virtual Burns night had been greatly enjoyed and has produced a new You Tube star in Mima Telfer with her rendition of Rural Banter which is loosely based on Tam O'Shanter. There is a HQ Scottish Night on Saturday 20th March 2021. Poetry, baking tips, talks on gardening and get active sessions being hosted by Womankind. Details have been posted on Facebook and in the Womankind magazine or see www.theswi.org.uk for further information.

The Federation Treasurer, Liz Walters gave her update and reported a healthy balance. There are still some outgoings and income is much reduced due to fewer fund raising activities.

In the Education Convenor's report Nora Muirhead thanked all the participants on the successful Burns supper and wished the team in the Variations on a Theme well in the competition on the 10th April 2021. Nora reminded delegates about the Centenary Map Drawings and the small paragraph about each Institute. Card for the final drawings will be sent out in due course.

There was no report for Handcrafts and nothing to report from the Housewives Convenor.

Cairn Valley group report intimated the postponement of the mini show to 14th May 2022 and had discussed suggestions for the HQ Handcraft class. Eskdale have two Institutes meeting on Zoom but had not met as a group since December. Lower Annandale had nothing to report while Mid Annandale mentioned that St Mungo's institute will celebrate their centenary at some point however the cake has been cut and had been distributed to members at Christmas.

Mid Nithsdale discussed their mini show which will be put back to 2023 and topics for group demonstrations. Lower Nithsdale reported 5 institutes meeting regularly on zoom. There have been two interesting group demonstrations, on Iris paper folding with Joan Murfit and photography with Maybeth Jamieson.

There was nothing to report for the sports groups except the golf group who aim to hold a qualifying event at some point in the hope the National competition will get the go ahead later in the year.

There was no other business except a reminder that nominations are required for a new Federation Press Secretary.

Anne Kerr National President then gave more information about the Variations on a Theme competition which is being pre-recorded in case of internet problems on the day. Anne also mentioned the Scottish Night and Quiz which is being held in place of the annual Country dancing weekend. Anne also mentioned some of the Womankind classes and meetings which are being held. The talk by Bonhams about the attic sale at Dunrobin Castle had been particularly interesting one.

Helen Braid then introduced our March Federation guest speaker, Pamela McLelland whose talk and slide show was entitled "Backpacking in New Zealand on a Pension Book". After becoming a divorcee at the age of 60 Pamela set off on a tour of Australia and New Zealand. We joined Pamela at the start of her New Zealand trip. On arrival Pamela found her credit card was not working so after spending one night in a hotel, she contacted Wwoof- worldwide opportunities on organic farms who offer bed and food in return for work. Pamela found herself on a garlic farm, restoring raised vegetable beds and helping at a Farmers Market. She joined her aunt for Xmas and experienced a traditional Maori Hangi meal. The meat was wrapped in cloth and left in an ash pit to cook. After Xmas Pamela bought a ticket for the Magic Bus which tours round both the North and South Islands. You can leave and re-join the bus at anytime which enabled Pamela to experience all New Zealand has to offer. Pamela mainly used backpacker hostels as she was on a budget but this didnt restrict her activities. She abseiled in Waitoma, visited the Tewakare geyser, went cave tubing, went on walking trails, panned for gold, walked up the Franz Joseph Glacier, visited Mirror Lake and went white water rafting in Rotarua as well as hang gliding and going on a cable car, sand surfing and trying her hand at bone carving to mention but a few of Pamela's many activities. Each stage of the journey was illustrated with beautiful photographs of the sights and experiences that Pamela had enjoyed.

After being away for five months Pamela returned home but did not settle for a quiet life, she has since started a small holding here in the South West of Scotland selling produce at the Farmer's Market.

Mima Telfer thanked Pamela for a most enjoyable talk and a super slide show. Mima wished Pamela success in future ventures. Mima also thanked Helen for presiding over the meeting and Secretary Val for all the work she does behind the scenes.

The next Federation meeting will be held on Saturday 1st May 2021 at 10 am, again using the Zoom platform.