

## Haddenham WI Report from Shirley Billing

History of WI The office of National Federation of WI is based in London

The WI was formed in 1915 during the first world war.

The aim was for Women during the First World War to get involved with growing and preserving food to increase the supply of food in the war torn nation,

Later, the idea was developed to teach skills and to help educate women in rural areas, who did not have the same advantage as women in cities.

There are 212 526 members nationally in the WI and 6000 branches

New WI are being set up in London, where meetings are being held in Offices and Cafes/Wine bars to encourage younger members.

Federations - The WI is divided up into federations and we are part of the Isle of Ely Federation. The WI's in our federation elects it own board of trustees

Our federation is made up of 35 WI's

The Federation organises Educational days, Craft, and Gardening projects. We have had speakers like Adam Henson, from Country file, and this month PC Stamp from the TV programme 'The Bill. Michael Bond's daughter talked about her father who wrote the 'Paddington Bear. "Story.

Healthcare days where different organisations are available to advise members where to get help etc, Sports and games days, 65 members went to Strikes at Ely for 10pin bowling. There is competitive Carpet bowls teams

Literary lunches with speakers, normally authors.

At the moment the Federation is organising. A Heritage Project, where each WI is researching how life has changed for women over the last 100 years.

We have précised 93 years of our minutes, they have made very interesting reading, we have also interviewed elderly men and women in the village

One comment from the minutes. in 1950's

Supermarket Markets like mini skirts will have their day and disappear.

How wrong can you be !!!

We have locally a group of five WI's who meet twice a year. Sutton, Little Thetford , Wardy Hill, and Stretham, We have been to Bletchley Park, Denman College and we have a range of good speakers.

This evening the speaker is : A woman plumber ,how she has managed to break into a man's world

Haddenham WI We meet on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday in the month at the Arkenstall Centre

We were formed in 1921 and were 93years old in February and we have one member who has been a member for 60years.

We have an elected committee of 8 members chosen by the WI

We have 36 members; we are the 2<sup>nd</sup> biggest WI in the Isle of Ely Federation after Littleport. We have a range of age groups, more younger ladies are joining, they have been surprised at how much they have enjoyed the meetings, I have tried to move the WI forward with new ideas.

