

Great Asby WI Secretary's Annual Report 2013

Susan Renshaw remained President for a second year whilst Gwen Hadrill and Anne Hulse continued to serve as Secretary and Treasurer respectively. Other committee members were Pat Bevan, Pam Cowey, Rachel Forrest, Dorothy Hayton, Helen Horn and Carol Smith but unfortunately Ada Atkinson had to resign from the committee & Asby WI due to ill health. Total membership is 18. Average attendance over the year was 13, with 15 the highest and 9 the lowest. Our oldest villager Janey Taylor, at 101, remains a member but has unfortunately not been able to attend any of our events this year. We have been concerned this year about the rising cost of hiring the Village Hall & have actively sought other venues, but this remains a problem, as does our dwindling membership.

After the 2012 AGM, members exercised their brains with a quiz about 'Royalty and the Olympics', along with an enjoyable sociable evening.

It was another busy year with a full and varied programme which started with an excellent Christmas lunch at Millyard Café in Morland at the end of November, then, continuing on a festive theme, Edward Lawton entertained us with stories & music played on the oboe, entitled 'A Christmas Cracker'.

In March, we were transported through wonderful photographs around the Holy Land by Mike Angelo, who was 'official photographer' on a pilgrimage undertaken by 80 people from Cumbrian Churches in 2012 then in May, at a meeting held in Susan Renshaw's home, we gave serious thought to this year's resolution for the NFWI AGM. Linda Ronan from Colby WI represented us in Cardiff & voted on our behalf. Business was followed by two fun garden quizzes devised by Susan. In September, Juliet Kaye fellow WI member from Appleby, gave a fascinating account of her experiences nursing in Manitoba in the early 1960s while, in contrast, at our Open meeting in April, Ron Ablewhite sang & played songs from 'The Great American Songbook' & we all sang along. In January Carole Marsden, the Rural Dean, had us laughing at her stories of life as a lady vicar in Oldham, whilst at our July meeting, Martin Ogle, Gardner in Charge at Lowther Castle, enthralled us with a history of the castle & gardens & their current restoration. February saw Elizabeth Parkin, a resident of Asby, present a spellbinding talk & photo show about a trip she undertook to the Himalayas in 1993, whilst in June, Donald & Christine Marston gave a fascinating account of their experiences filming the 'BBC Lambing Live' series in 2011. Finally, at another Open meeting in October we were joined once again by John Crouch who cooked various very tasty dishes while he entertained us with stories about the Christmas spices he used.

In March, members enjoyed an interesting & informative afternoon at the 'PotFest' exhibition in Reghed and in August several members partook of an energetic afternoon wandering around Lowther Castle & Gardens followed by refreshments at the cafe. Early in November 2013 we went to Bowes Museum to see the very interesting Laura Ashley/Saville Row exhibition. We raised money for funds on a stall at Asby May Fair, however, our major outing and fund raiser for the year was a very successful trip to Liverpool in May, organised by Carol Smith. An almost full coach of members, villagers and friends enjoyed a beautiful sunny day out and raised £235 for our funds. We again manned a collection point & sold refreshments on October 2nd to raise funds for the Air Ambulance service in Cumbria, which saw many people within the village and beyond donate old clothes, bedding & rags, as well as join us for lunch or a cuppa during the day which raised £650 for this worthy local cause.

The Crossfell Group Autumn meeting which was postponed from last year was eventually held on 24th September when Brenda Austen told 42 members about a visit to Zambia to help the 'Learning for Life' charity to support children there. A spontaneous collection was made to help Brenda continue with this work.

Many members have enjoyed Federation events, Council and local institute meetings on a wide variety of topics. We continued to support ACWW, the Federation Bulb Scheme and the NFWI Raffle.