

W.I Report for the Thornborough Parish Meeting:

One of the great highlights of the last year was winning first prize in the Bucks County Show's W.I. competition for an exhibit which illustrated the idea of SOS for honeybees. This annual event is always hotly contested because the brief for the competition demands a wide range of skills and ingenuity, artistry and vision, just the kind of challenge which W.I. women relish and savour. We now have a website – courtesy of our computer wizz kid Teresa Connelly – where you are able to view the winning entry and indeed a range of other reports and photos of the last year. Witness the screen before you....

In fact, there have been several extraordinary happenings in the W.I. calendar, many of them in our own village hall and quite a few further afield. For example, last October there was a procession to celebrate the W.I centenary in Aylesbury and an exhibition of our history at Milton Keynes museum. At Christmas there was a trip to Covent Garden for a special production of the Nutcracker ballet and some of our members attended the Queen's garden party at Buckingham palace. Outside of these walls, we have helped community activities like the Thornborough school fete, church and chapel fundraising efforts and both harvest and summer celebrations.

Yes, it's time to confess for those of you who didn't know – it was indeed our organization responsible for those strange 'time traveller' women parked up in various places round the village. Our last incarnation, Hattie Tude representing the 1990's, was unfortunately stolen but the yarn bombing of various trees on the green provided yet more evidence of our determination to bring to everyone's attention the 100 year history of the W.I.

Most of our monthly meetings have taken place within these walls and there has been an impressive array of information and entertainment to delight our members. We enjoyed a talk about bats (with live examples!) and also a presentation from SERV, otherwise known as the Blood Bikers, volunteers who ensure that human blood is transported round the country to where there's a medical need. We learned of the geography, culture and history of Ethiopia from a couple who are committed to helping two charities out there and we loved the chilling stories, facts and details about Victorian medicines and poisons. A favourite demonstration was from Marique, a belly dancing teacher and more recently Christine Farmer shared with us her 60year collection of masks from all over the world. Last month, our very own Jill Goodger demonstrated her amazing cake decorating skills, perhaps the kind of activity many of you associate with the W.I, but hopefully, you can see from this report that our interests and concerns reach way beyond the village, even though there is no doubt that if you need a decent cake or sandwich, look no further than the many killer cooks in our ranks.