



VOLUNTARY  
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# WRVS ASSOCIATION



Newsletter No 50  
Spring 1999

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## Letter from the Chairman.



Dear Friends,

Firstly a very happy New Year to you all.

Unfortunately, this year has started with the sad news of the death of the founder of the Association, Miss Kathleen Halpin. (There is an appreciation of her life on page 2). Her cheerful presence and wise counsel will be missed by all of us.

The Annual General Meeting this year will be held in Durham. I do hope many of you will be able to come. Durham is a fine city with an interesting history and it promises to be a good meeting.

The London Headquarters staff have been working hard for the Association, travelling to Clapham Road in the winter weather on crowded transport. I am immensely grateful for all the help they give me. I am looking for a possible change of location for this office and will add a note with this letter if I have any definite news by the time it is posted to you.

I was away from the office in the autumn and so was unable to go to the WRVS Annual General Meeting at Milton Hill, but will make every effort to attend this important meeting on your behalf next time.

You will already know that there have been recent changes in the WRVS. Here are some of the facts to keep us all up to date. The needs of local people grow every year and partnership with other local community services is what the WRVS excels at. Examples are our Social Transportation projects, Good Neighbour schemes and our partnership with the Princess Royal's Trust for Carers. In the past year the 95th WRVS Contact Centre has been opened. In addition the WRVS have been working with the Homeless Hostels for Women, and Aid Hostels, piloting new clothing stores. Such well-known projects as Meals on Wheels continue from Dundee to Somerset and from Swansea to Yorkshire, with 7-day services. Last year, around 12 million meals were delivered to more than 199,000 recipients and more than 1.5 million meals were served in luncheon clubs. These are just a few numbers to dwell upon.

I shall look forward to seeing you at Durham,

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "David A. Pugh". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath.

## Miss Kathleen Halpin CBE



All who knew Kathleen Halpin will have been sad to learn of her death in November. Yet at the same time, all who knew her and all who admired the work of the WRVS during the war years and after will have been thankful for her life and example. As one of Lady Reading's staff in the early years, as a Regional Administrator and later as Chief Regional Administrator she well deserved the CBE conferred on her in the Coronation Honour's List of 1952. She described her dedication to the ideal of voluntary service as "an attitude towards life" and she lived her life with this attitude. The list of just some of her voluntary work both inside and outside WRVS covers many interests. As a humble student at a secretarial college in the 1920's she dreamed of becoming secretary to someone in a high position, and she worked for people in a fascinating mix of interesting jobs and influential people. "The Encyclopaedia Britannica", "The Architect's Journal" the "Sorooptimists Housing Trust" all employed her and from 1932- 35 she became secretary to the Foreign Secretary of the day, Sir John Simon. In 1935 she founded the Women's Gas Federation and in 1938 joined the newly founded WVS, helping with the evacuation. In the wartime WVS she was in charge of all its services in London and as war ended she was seconded to the Ministry of Health as an advisor to the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Association, travelling to America in that capacity "On His Majesty's Service". In America she had lunch with the President. After the war she served as a governor of St Bartholemew's Hospital and became vice president of the Fawcett Society, vigorously campaigning for equal opportunities for women.

Kathleen Halpin was a founder member of the WRVS Association and its Chairman for the first 10 years, until 1983. She then became its Vice-President and assisted the Treasurer in the London office until 1997. She only missed one Association committee meeting in the whole 25 years. She was also a member of the WRVS Benevolent Trust until 1996. Her wide experience, her sense of humour and her encouragement in the face of new situations was invaluable. Above all the deep affection in which she was held by all those with whom she worked was one of the lasting memories of Kathleen. On the WRVS Long Service Medal are inscribed the words "Service Beyond Self". These words are surely a very fitting tribute to a very special lady whom we shall all miss.

## News from the Divisions

### **NORTH EAST DIVISION** Headquarters Newcastle



#### *Northumberland, Tyne & Wear.*

Div. Rep. Mrs S. McCormack

Mrs McCormack is most grateful to Mrs Doyle for "holding the fort" while she was busy with her Chairman's duties. Members from all branches enjoyed the Annual Carol Service held in Newcastle, followed by a buffet lunch. (The caterers were the Northumberland WRVS members).

Newcastle Mrs Doyle reports that two new members have joined them. All enjoyed a talk about St Bede in September and in October their speaker read from her mother's journal, written at the turn of the century. Her mother had just reached India with her new husband when it was time for the speaker to stop. They have asked her back to continue the story, they were enjoying it so much. (When I read this I thought how good it would be if all our elderly members wrote their life stories for their grandchildren to read in years to come. Although we have not all had lives as exciting as this one sounds, the ordinary daily life we led as children and through the war years was so different to a child's life today I am sure it would be of interest to those who come after us. I have just written mine and enjoyed doing it very much. Can I persuade any others to do the same ? Ed)

(At another meeting Mrs Doyle showed the group how to make small boxes for Christmas gifts by folding stiff paper. - amid great hilarity, some boxes were produced !. They also held a small party at Christmas. They look forward very much to their 1999 programme of meetings and outings)

Twenty-one members of the North Shields/Whitley Bay group attended the Newcastle Carol Service and Mrs Lewis, Mrs Charles and Mrs Scott formed the colour party. They are sorry that they have had to close the coffee mornings at Norfolk Court due to lack of support from residents and from their own members. Mr and Mrs Frew have kindly agreed to present a gift, to show their appreciation of the hospitality they received at Norfolk Court over the years. Unfortunately some members, Mrs Davison, Mrs Jones and Mrs Roberts have recently moved out of the area and three of their most ardent helpers have died. They have held a meeting to decide on their future programme and have decided to hold monthly coffee mornings in various members' homes, to keep in touch with everyone. £100 has been sent to St Oswald's Hospice.

*Durham, Cleveland, N. Yorks, East Yorks & Hull.*

Div. Rep. Mrs R. Thompson OBE

The 13th Annual Lunch for the group coincided this year with the Silver Anniversary of the Association and was held in early September at Bootham School, York. Unfortunately, because of family commitments in Australia at which her presence was essential, Mrs Thompson missed this event, but Miss Hyatt, who kindly chaired the lunch for her, sent her an excellent report by air mail and assured her that everyone had enjoyed the lunch and the talk, by Mr Peter Brown, Administrator of the York Civic Trust. He gave an interesting talk on the transformation of Fairfax House. At the business meeting which followed the lunch an innovation proved popular. A representative from each group gave a brief resume of their activities.

Mrs Thompson is delighted to welcome East Yorks and Hull into her Division and hopes to visit them as soon as the better weather comes and regrets that she has not yet done so. They were also delighted to welcome Mrs Price as the new National Chairman

Middlesborough group had a talk on the work of the Samaritans and another on the Salvation Army. They also had a visit from Mr Michael Bregazzi who talked about his life in Canada and many of them felt that had they been younger they would have liked to emigrate! They enjoyed the Area lunch in York and also a meal at the Middlesborough College. Often members bring poems to read. At one of these occasions one member Mrs Brettle, who has always brought a selection of humorous poems, attended the November meeting and then sadly died in December. She will be very much missed.

Darlington group were lucky to be able to hold their Christmas Tea Party in the N.E. Divisional Office in the town. As usual Mrs

Evans made one of her lovely cakes (and left some to be enjoyed by Divisional staff!). She is asked to make and decorate cakes for many occasions and generously gives any surplus remuneration to Association funds. A lunch was held in January at the Darlington College of Technology.

Miss Stamp, who runs the Hartlepool group says their numbers are going up and the attendance at meetings shows how much they are appreciated. They had a talk by a member of the team that had delivered their knitted Teddies. They had another interesting talk about "fostering" by someone who had fostered many children over many years. Mrs Coard also gave a nostalgic talk about the early days of WVS, in which many of the group had themselves been involved and it brought back many memories. The "Trincomalee" is being restored in Hartlepool's Historic Quay and the group visited it and asked many questions. The group was exceedingly generous in a collection they made after a Minister spoke about the Caribbean and the great needs of the people there. They have also held several quizzes and had two outings. One was to the Filey Flower Festival, only to find on display a photograph of their Div. Rep. Mrs Thompson, taken during her earlier visit there!

The Harrogate members attended the York "lunch" travelling by train or car. Monthly meetings average 20 and they thank Ada Douglas for providing the coffee at her church. At their Christmas lunch they welcomed Mrs Bailey, a newcomer to the area from Norfolk. Fifteen Members enjoyed a combined concert by the Brighouse and Rastrick Band and the Gilbert and Sullivan Society at the Royal Hall.

After a busy time hosting the 25th Anniversary Luncheon the York group were happy to welcome Mr Carl Fisher to their October meeting. He is a specialist in Lapidary and brought some interesting examples of his work to illustrate his talk. Mrs Wilks has succeeded Mrs Longley as Chairman for the next two years and the group were delighted to welcome three members from the Selby group to this meeting. The Christmas lunch was a very happy occasion at the York College of Technology with 25 members attending and with Miss Hyatt as their guest. This group have been very pleased to welcome three new members since their October meeting.

Scarborough group had a sandwich lunch at Mrs Winter's home in October and continue to support their coffee mornings. On December 1st, 46 members held a lunch together, celebrating both Mrs Morrison's 93rd birthday, and Christmas.

Selby members enjoyed the Area lunch in York in September and in October 3 members attended the York meeting as guests and were most welcome, as were 4 York members who were guests at Selby at their November lunch. The Selby group continues to hold their monthly lunches on alternate Thursdays and Fridays. In addition they have a Fish and Chip lunch occasionally. In January they celebrated Christmas/New Year and enjoyed many reminiscences when Mr Hague gave a talk on "old Selby". A group went to the Filey Flower Festival and a few more to the Driffield Flower Festival.

They were happy to welcome one new member but very sad to lose one of their older members recently.

### ***South and West Yorks***

Div. Rep. Mrs J. Pitts BEM

Mrs Zeigler retired as Div. Rep, for this Division in June, after so many years of excellent service. We wish her a happy retirement and are glad that she will continue to run the Wakefield group. In the best traditions of WRVS she has found her own replacement and we are delighted to welcome Mrs June Pitts, one time Met. Organiser at Leeds, who has agreed to take over the job.

Mrs Pitts reports that 50 members attended a luncheon, (arranged by Mrs Zeigler), at Wakefield College where lots of budding Delia's and Gary's cooked and served them an excellent meal. In October a Service was held in Pinderfield's Hospital Chapel, where WRVS have worked for many years, with the lessons read by members. They were so pleased that Mrs Helena Foster was able to be with them on that occasion. The usual regular meetings have been held.

*Lincs, Notts and Leics.*

*Div. Rep Mrs J Newman*

N/NE Lincolnshire are now with the rest of the County in Mrs Newman's Division and she writes that she is pleased to welcome them back. At Mrs Thompson's invitation, Mrs Newman attended the Area lunch in York in September and she appreciated meeting members from her adjoining area. All groups have held regular meetings and towards the end of the year these took the form of sherry/coffee/mince pie events or lunches and Mrs Newman was delighted to be able to attend most and meet members, although it was detrimental to her waistline ! In November, Mrs Newman met the WRVS Area Director to discuss how the Association could be more promoted. (We look forward to hearing if this meeting bore any fruit in the form of new members for 1999. Ed)

Leicester group events continue to be well supported. They have had regular coffee mornings and two outings, to Woburn Abbey in September and a shopping trip to Cheltenham in November, both in good weather. Sixty guests attended the Christmas lunch in December, a popular event. Also in December they had their coffee and mince pie meeting,

(which again helped to swell Mrs Newman's waistline!!). In one way, the Association meetings have benefited from the closing down of the Leicester office, as their meetings now give members their only opportunity of meeting. They are sad to report the death of a long serving member, Mrs Kellet, who joined WVS in 1938 and became famous for her one-in-five talks. Her other work included cadet camps, all emergency work and training trainers, for all of which she received the BEM.

The small group of Lincoln members, led by Mrs Birkhead, hold monthly lunches. Mrs Zeigler's part of NE and N Lincoln has been taken over by Mrs Blanchard whom Mrs Newman welcomes. They held a lunch at Grimsby when 45 members attended, Mrs Newman and Mrs Birkhead were invited. Mrs Grice received a presentation at this lunch to mark her retirement and to thank her for her dedicated work.

Ashfield branch in Notts. find it difficult to fix a date for meetings as so many of their members are still active WRVS workers. Fourteen members, however, met and discussed the Association after taking part in a quiz. Then a Faith Tea was held and the Bring and Buy raised funds to provide a gift and flowers for Mrs Simpson, retiring through ill-health after 28 year's service. They also enjoyed a lunch in January at Huthwaite.

During the past six months Bassetlaw members have enjoyed afternoon tea at Mrs Clough's home and had another tea at Rufforth Park. A sherry/mince pie morning was hosted by Mrs Moore their former Chairman, and this was well attended in spite of the bad weather. They report from Workshop that lunches are preferred and are planning their new programme with this in mind.

After a successful lunch in September at their usual venue, disaster struck for the Broxtowe branch when this location came under new ownership and

their bookings for an October coffee morning and a Christmas lunch could not be honoured. Fortunately another venue was found, transport arranged and they sat down to a leisurely and substantial Christmas lunch. Mrs Small received their good wishes for a speedy recovery after her accident. In January they held a shortbread and sherry/coffee morning and raffle.

At Gedling Miss Cramp reports that their annual coffee morning and Bring and Buy raised £75 and they have sent £50 to the Breast Cancer Appeal at their local hospital. Their October meeting seems to have been concerned with finance, as at this meeting they take the money for the Christmas lunch, the coffee morning at a Social Club and "any other money necessary at that time"! Quizzes on "Flowers", "Trees", "Shrubs", "Local Street Knowledge", "Countries" etc., are much enjoyed and they have one member always ready to round off a meeting with a laugh by reading some funny poems. Thirty-two members enjoyed a Christmas lunch at the Gateway Hotel and they had coffee and mince pies at the Social Club. One member, involved in Victim Support gave a talk about this in January.

Although the Mansfield group have not been very active over the past six months they did hold a Christmas lunch which was so oversubscribed that Mrs Newman was unable to join them, but she says she looks forward to hearing of more activities in 1999.

Unfortunately Newark's September lunch had to be cancelled due to lack of support but Father Christmas again visited them after their Christmas lunch and members enjoyed this event.

At Rushcliffe, very successful and well attended coffee mornings have been held at the Willow Tree Pub each month and 41 members enjoyed a Christmas lunch together. Their 1999 programme promises some interesting items.

## **NORTH WEST DIVISION**

*Headquarters Manchester*

### **Cumbria, Lancashire.**

Div. Rep. Mrs M. McCambridge BEM

In November, 11 members met for lunch in Penrith. Miss Stevenson and Mrs Whitson are keen to keep in touch with members in this rural county. They are hoping to get a meeting organised in Caldbeck. Isolated members should ring Miss Stevenson to get details.

Mr Colwell of Liverpool has written to the editor, telling us the sad news of his wife's death. We send him our deep sympathy.

### **Greater Manchester**

Div. Rep. Mrs J. Matthews BEM

Mrs Collier presides over a very active Division. Romiley branch members have met monthly and have speakers at their meetings.

Several members attended a concert at the Bridgewater Hall, Manchester, in April to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee. In May they enjoyed an outing through



the Ribble Valley with tea at Waddington's Moorcock Inn and in June they had a cream tea and cake stall. Also in June, all Stockport area WRVS were invited by the mayor to a reception at the Town Hall, to mark 60 years Service to the community and it was an opportunity for many old friends to meet once more. Six Association members attended the service in Manchester Cathedral in July.

Twenty members of the Rochdale group also attended the Bridgewater Hall concert and met old friends there. In July the Mayor and Mayoress The group at Sale had a theatre visit in September to the newly rebuilt Exchange Theatre in Manchester. There they had a talk by Ms Lacey who covered the history of this "theatre in the round" from its start to its re-opening. They are hoping to arrange a visit to a play there. In October they held a Bring and Buy sale to help pay the rent of the meeting room ! They are sad to report the deaths of three valued members, Ivy Platts, aged 97, Alice Adams and Anne Edwards, and Mrs Grimshaw says they miss them all. In October Mrs Grimshaw told the group of a visit she had just made to an old school friend in Delaware, USA whom she has kept in touch with for over 70 years and where she visited a Day Centre, had a trip to a Casino in a Yellow School Bus and to shopping Malls and the beach. This group had a very enjoyable Christmas Meal in a restaurant with the WRVS Organiser Mrs Cooper and a member's granddaughter from Canada as their guests. In January they had a slide show. Mrs Grimshaw praises Mrs Collier's leadership for the past six years and says she has done an excellent job for them. Sadly they have lost Mrs Flint, one time Metropolitan Organiser, Tea Bar Organiser, Meals on Wheels and Prison visitor who was very well known for her work in Manchester.

Rochdale ladies meet for their pub lunch each month and they say the friendship is wonderful. They really enjoy talking about "the good days". They did not celebrate 1998 until 1999 ! a little late ! by holding a special lunch in January at Hopwood Hall College at which Mrs Ackerly presented long-service medals and gifts of flowers to two members, an event reported in the local Press.

Romiley members have also met monthly and have had an afternoon of music and a Bring and Buy. Their year ended with 14 members enjoying a Christmas lunch at the George hotel, Compstall.

Bury group went to their local college in October and enjoyed the pleasant small restaurant. What they would really like, however, is somewhere where they could linger to chat after the meal and they are looking for a possible venue to do this. (So many Association groups it seems go for a good cut-price lunch at their local colleges and every group throughout the country seem to enjoy these meals, Ed ) Some Bury members could not get to the college and in December they took these members to another, favourite restaurant where they enjoyed meeting together as much as they enjoyed the meal. This group sends each member, 40 of them, a Christmas Card. Sadly Mrs Connell and Mrs Graham died, the latter being a founder Chairman of the Bury Association who used to

hold the most wonderful garden parties. Both were hard workers for the WRVS and will be sadly missed.

**Merseyside, Cheshire**

*(Appointment Pending)*

No report

**Staffs. Derbyshire.**

*(Appointment Pending)*

No report

**Shropshire.**

Div Rep Mrs A.Moseley

No report

**SOUTH EAST DIVISION**

*Headquarters*

**Cambridgeshire, Northants.**

Div.Rep. Mrs B. Titcomb.

Cambridge group joined the Area Diamond Jubilee celebrations at Duxford and held their own Jubilee luncheon. This was coupled with a celebration of the life of a WRVS founder-member Mrs Cowell, who died in March in her 98th year. Friends who were present represented many from the clubs she set up in and around Cambridge and her daughter Christine Starling, also a long-serving WRVS member was able to come. But they are very sad to have to report that Christine also died in the New Year after more than 29 years of ill health. Mrs Charnely says that these two ladies represented the true spirit of WRVS and they will miss them. Mrs Cowell's WRVS archives have been deposited at Milton Hill.

Peterborough members have enjoyed their meetings and the speakers and also their Christmas lunch. At the November meeting everyone took contributions for the tea and Mrs Adam spoke about "Diamond 25's". Mrs Bright does not say what that was! Several members attended the Duxford celebrations by mini-bus where a massive iced cake was cut by a VIP chef and enjoyed by all. BBC and Anglia TV were there too and they all enjoyed the Duxford Display. In January they accepted the opportunity to meet at the WRVS "Senior Stop" which was a very comfortable venue. (Is this a new club for the elderly? Perhaps Mrs Titcomb will explain for the autumn issue? Ed)

Daventry and S. Northants meet regularly for pub lunches and have been happy to welcome as a new member Mrs F. Davison, who previously lived in Yorkshire.

Mr Hufford gave the Huntingdon branch a slide talk on "Old Godmanchester" which brought back many memories to people who had lived in the town for many years and showed how it had grown and changed. The W.I. catered for their Christmas lunch giving them a traditional turkey dinner and an excellent meal. Ms Dykes the WRVS Area Manager gave a short talk on the present day WRVS.

**Norfolk, Suffolk.**

Div. Rep. Mrs S. Scholey.

Mrs Scholey, who still works at Norfolk Area Office, in July received her Long Service Medal from Mrs Callister, Norfolk Area Manager.

Sadly, Mrs Scholey has to report another Suffolk branch closed. Mrs Mytton-Mills has retired after giving great support as Branch Rep. and Mrs Scholey appeals to any Suffolk member who would be willing to take her place, to come forward and carry on the worthwhile job of keeping in contact with Suffolk Mrs Scholey writes that many of her members have wonderful memories of "Diamond Jubilee Year". At the annual County lunch the manager of the City Training Restaurant made them so welcome with such wonderful "eats", that they all enjoyed the occasion. Christmas lunches were held at many branches. Great Yarmouth held a successful one and North Norfolk held one at the Manor Hotel in Mundersley and these lunches got them all in the mood for Christmas. They have sadly lost a few members whom they remember with warm affection.

**Essex and Herts**

Div. Rep. Mrs P Copping

In Essex, Southend branch organiser Mrs Tytherleigh arranged a Service of Thanksgiving and Dedication for WRVS and Association members at Leigh-on-sea in November to celebrate WRVS Diamond Jubilee. The Rev., Nicholson gave a memorable address to members, the Deputy Mayor, Councillors and representatives of local Services. At the November meeting a collection of Christmas groceries and goodies was made and sent to the Queen Elizabeth Foundation for the Disabled Home at Lulworth. This is a charity which the branch supports.

We are very pleased to welcome the new branch at Hertford which has been well received. One member invited others to a cream tea garden party and they have had lunch at a well-known garden centre. In December they had a wine and mince pie meeting with a Bring and Buy. Mrs Rowley is anxious that members will also meet together perhaps for coffee in their own areas.

**Oxen,Beds. Bucks.**

Div. Rep. Mrs J. Callaway

The Jan/August report unfortunately came too late for the autumn Newsletter and the editor apologises for a mix up over the report of Mrs Golding's visit to the House of Commons, which she attributed wrongly to Mrs Callaway. What a shame Mrs Callaway did not go after all!. She reports that less has happened during this six months, although Bedfordshire have enjoyed a Christmas buffet lunch with a large attendance, On this occasion Mrs Ward presented Mrs Brown with her certificate and thanked her for her dedication to both WRVS and the Association. Also, in October Mr and Mrs Paull returned to give another of their excellent slide shows entitled "The Mysterious Island". They are very gener-

ous and Mr Paull likes to give these entertainments which he regards as a "thank you " for the kindness he received from WVS during the war while serving in the British Army in Germany.

**Hampshire, Isle of Wight.**

Div Rep. Mrs B Adams

We are sad to learn of the death of Mrs Fisk of Andover who joined WVS in 1938 and worked on many WVS jobs throughout the war and after. In 1956 she was involved with the Hungarian Refugees at Tidworth Barracks. and in the 1970's with Ugandan refugees. She also worked throughout its lifetime at the Combined Services Club and served as deputy Centre Organiser from '61 to '79. She joined the Association in 1985.

Sixty of the Hampshire group met at Shawford, a small village south of Winchester when Mrs Roberts told them about a family visit to El Salvador. She brought along the most beautiful handworked things made under appalling conditions by the very poor there, and took members on her journey by means of a map. In January, despite wind and rain, large numbers met in Fareham for the annual Christmas lunch. After the lunch they visited China ! with Miss Bowen who had spent part of her retirement teaching English to Chinese doctors and nurses. Her abiding memory was of the hospitality she was shown and the way they cared for their families. They were appalled that she lived alone in England, her Chinese pupils even sitting on her bed at night to talk, in case she was lonely. Members got a glimpse of Chinese life as it really is, and not a "tourists" view and her talk was a very worthwhile occasion.

**London N.E./City.**

Div. Rep. Mrs W Taylor, DL.

No report

**London N.W.**

Div. Rep. Mrs D Stevens

No report

**London S.E.**

Div. Rep. Mrs G. Block M.B.E.

Twelve members visited the Royal Hospital Chelsea. It was founded in 1682 by King Charles II for army veterans and was designed by Sir Christopher Wren. They were escorted by a red-coated pensioner to see the Wellington Hall, the Museum, the Chapel and the Great Hall, where the tables were beautifully laid for the next meal, with gleaming silver and candles. They were then shown the Hospital ward before enjoying a welcome cup of tea in the canteen

In November 8 members visited the Pieter de Hooch Exhibition in the Dulwich Art Gallery. Car parking was difficult as the exhibition had attracted more people than any other at the Gallery and some members, unable to find a parking place, sadly had to return home. After seeing the pictures members walked through the village to the "Greyhound" where they had lunch.

*London S.W.*

*Div. Rep. Mrs A. Christophersen*

No report

*Surrey, E.& W. Kent, E.& W. Sussex. Div. Rep. Mrs G. Bright*

Some members stayed overnight at Milton Hill House for the AGM. They enjoyed the chance to see the new Headquarters and to meet other members from all over the country. They wish to thank Mrs McCormack for her work on their behalf and they welcome Mrs Price as the new Chairmen.

Mrs Bright and Mrs Corke attended the Royal Garden Party to represent their Division, It was, they report, a splendid occasion in spite of the weather. They travelled to the Garden Party in County transport and say it was quite a sight to see sixty five coaches converging on Abingdon that day.

At Hove in East Sussex, Mrs Hooper has retired after running that busy branch for several years but has found two members to continue her work. We all wish them well. The first task, which they had to tackle was to cope with the branch's finances and they did this well, as do all Mrs Bright's groups She thanks the branch treasurers for their successful work with their branch's finances.

All four "areas" of London met for their Annual Association Reunion in April, a very special meeting this year, to celebrate the Silver Jubilee, to which sixty-four members came. Mrs McCormack attended for her third and final time as their Chairman and they were all sad to see her go as she had supported them so well.

On this special occasion they were delighted to welcome also Dame Mary Smieton, who from 1940 to 1942 had been seconded from the Ministry of Labour to WVS as General Secretary. Also, they welcomed Miss Kathleen Halpin, CBE who has been in WVS from the beginning and was the Founder of the Association. Both of these members, now in their '90's, gave very interesting talks.

Some enjoyable "do you remembers" followed and they had a really excellent buffet lunch, prepared once again by Mrs Mycock and her emergency team. A raffle and bring and buy raised enough money to cover the expenses and leave a little over towards postage to keep in touch with housebound members unable to be there.

## **SOUTH WEST DIVISION**

*Headquarters Exeter*

*Hereford, Worcester, Gloucester. Div. Rep. Mrs J. Connop*

Fifty eight members enjoyed luncheon in Hatherley in November, prepared by the local members and at this lunch they were pleased to welcome Mrs Taylor, WRVS Area Manager for Gloucestershire and Miss Mercer, Associa-

tion County Rep. for Hereford and Worcester plus three WRVS members. After the lunch they had a most interesting talk by Mrs Ward on the making of the TV film "The Choir". (Many members will remember this lovely programme. Ed).

The Cheltenham group numbers seem to be falling. Only 17 members attended the October meeting but all enjoyed Mrs Connop's report on the Diamond Jubilee celebrations and Mrs Taylor's fascinating handworked display of design and needlecraft, an interest she only started in her retirement. A lesson to us all!

Mrs Connop also gave her report of the various Jubilee Celebrations at the buffet lunch in September when 17 members of the Hereford and Worcester group met. The Worcester Cathedral Service was attended by several members from the Division. Miss Myton, who joined WVS in 1938 carried the WRVS tokens of Rosemary and Ivy. Several members in this Division are suffering from increasing frailty or are in nursing homes and so no longer able to come to meetings. Happily one member, Mrs Harwood, aged 92 is still able to attend.

**West Midlands** Div. Rep. Mrs J. Smith

They are grateful to Mrs Wortley who keeps them up-to-date with the activities in the Birmingham/Sutton Coldfield branch. In September they paid an interesting and successful visit to Coughton Court. They have continued to have monthly coffee mornings in members' houses. Mrs Banks, their oldest serving member, with Mrs Wortley and Mrs Smith attended the wet Royal Garden party where Mrs Banks was presented to the Queen and told members about it at the next coffee morning. This group have two new members.

Mrs Smith says they are sad not to be able to find any replacement for Mrs Oswald, as group leader and consequently there is no report from the Solihull branch. (If any serving WRVS members in Solihull read this and feel they could join the Association and help this group out they would be more than welcome. Ed)

**Warwickshire**

Div. Rep Mrs J. Rose

No Report

**Avon, Wiltshire and Dorset.**

Div. Rep Mrs B. Williams

No Report

**Somerset, Devon, Cornwall.** (Appointment pending)

No Report

**WALES**

Headquarters Cardiff

Div. Rep. Mrs E. Edwards BEM

The Llandudno numbers have again increased and they have held lively meetings on the first Friday afternoon of each month. "Flower Arranging" and "The Care of House Plants" have been the subject of two recent speakers.

(I could have benefited from the latter! Ed.). In November they had a shopping trip to the New Trafford Centre in Manchester and in December enjoyed a Christmas Social afternoon. In January they held a very successful lunch to which they invited all WRVS workers in the Area and 80 members attended and enjoyed the afternoon of companionship together. (I think this is a very good idea. Ed.) They look forward, says Mrs Bocking, to another successful year.

**CHANNEL ISLANDS***Guernsey.*

Assoc. Rep. Miss E. Robilliard

No Report

*Jersey.*

Assoc. Rep. Mrs D. Jennings

The Jersey group joined WRVS in December for "a lunch with good food and good company". They enjoyed meeting the current WRVS team at this lunch and feel that today's WRVS now know who they are. At the end of the year Mrs Deslande sadly died in her 90th year. She had retired to Jersey, where her sister had been Bailiwick Organiser, from Nigeria, when that country became independent. There she had been employed at the Nigerian College of Art. In January a "Vin d'Honneur" was held in her memory.

All were delighted when one member "Kathleen" (they do not give the surname) was awarded the MBE. for her work organising the Jersey Car Service for over 20 years. (With Mrs Jennings' help over places to stay and things to see, your editor and her husband spent a very pleasant after-Christmas break on the island. There we saw the famous and magnificent tapestry depicting the war years on the island and we were pleased to see Mrs Jennings' name on the list of "sewers" !. Doubtless there were many more WRVS members on it too, whose names they did not know !.)

**A Diamond Jubilee Memory.**

On September 9th an evening reception was given by the Corporation of London at Guildhall to mark the Diamond Jubilee of the WRVS. The Lord Mayor, Sir Richard Nichols gave a speech of welcome followed by Mr Gerry Burton, Chief Executive WRVS .It was an evening to remember with the wonderful robes of the Lord Mayor and Sheriff and in the magnificent setting of Guildhall. A valiant quartet from Guildhall School of Music played all evening , drowned by the noise of the talking. The refreshments were "out of this world".

From Mrs Pollard. Surrey.

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**NO MAN IS AN ISLAND**

No man is an island, entire of its self;  
Every man is a piece of the Continent, a part of the main:  
If a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less,  
As well as if a promontory were:  
As well as if a manor of thy friends or thine were:  
Any man's death diminishes me,  
Because i am involved in mankind;  
And therefore never send to know for whom the tolls  
It tolls for Thee.

John Donne

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Letter from the Editor



Dear Member,

As I write, the river Derwent is flooding one hundred homes, twelve feet deep in the villages round us and we are indeed thankful that our village is a little higher than others and therefore in no danger. Our thoughts go out to the poor people who are affected and it is good to catch a glimpse of a WRVS orange tabard or two on the Television News and to know that WRVS and others are there to help. I suppose at my age I am considered too old to be on the call-out list ... no call has yet come ! but I remember the floods in York at New Year 1979/80 when we were in boats, pushed through the deep water by soldiers, giving out hot soup and bread to people through their upstairs windows and taking the elderly to a Day Centre. At such times, as memories come flooding back to all of you, I am sure, I remember one elderly lady who refused to come out in the arms of the soldier who went in to rescue her. He said to me "You have a try". Then she saw me in the boat in my uniform and, at my reassurance she agreed to come. As they lifted her into the boat beside me she said "I wasn't going to come for that soldier, until I saw it was you, dear". Since that day I have been convinced of the need for a uniform. In that situation and to that lady on that day it meant reassurance and trust.

Soon the waters will subside, spring will come and we will all be able to enjoy our meetings, outings and tea and coffee chats together. All the branches who have sent in their reports seem to be planning interesting programmes for 1999 and I hope you all enjoy your activities.

Sadly we never get reports from some groups and I am never sure if this means that they have not met at all, even for a cup of coffee together, or if they simply have no one able or willing to send a report of their activities.

Could I therefore make two appeals. Firstly, if you live in an area from where, regularly, we get no reports, do offer to write

something and send it off to your Div. Rep., if you have one and if not, to me. Secondly, if you have never written to me before, do write, sending me a contribution to the autumn Newsletter. Send a joke, a memory, a favourite poem, even a description of a holiday.

The Newsletter can only be as good as the contributions we get and remember that all those members who cannot get out to enjoy our meetings love to get the Newsletter, hear what others are doing and have a laugh at the jokes.

Do write

*Ness Jewell*

## One Woman's WRVS

Fifty years ago Norwich NAAFI Club closed and with it the WRVS information desk there. Having been introduced to WVS by my mother working on Cambridge Railway Station Canteen during the war, moving to Norwich after the war I worked on that Norwich desk, When the NAAFI closed I gave up my job with the Min. of Agriculture to work with WRVS abroad.

From Mrs Shaw. Norwich.

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## A true and tragic love story and an appeal for our help.

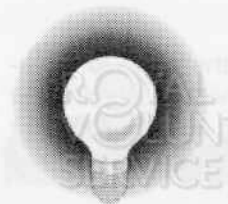
Does anyone know of the whereabouts of a lady whose unmarried name during the war years was Gloria Pritchard, In 1947 she was working for WVS, stationed at Gwakuni in Japan where she met a man in the New Zealand Army who was also stationed there. They fell in love and planned to marry. At that point the man was posted back to New Zealand and it was arranged that Gloria would follow him as soon as possible and they would marry in New Zealand. But on his return to New Zealand all communication between the two ceased. His letters were never answered. Her letters never came.

Years later he found the reason. As his father lay dying he told him what had happened. His parents were hoteliers and they did not wish him to marry. All his mail went through the hotel office and they intercepted all her letters to him and destroyed them. His mother's promised letter of welcome to Gloria was never sent and his own letters were never posted. He says he leaves it to our imagination to consider what Gloria's opinion of him will be, and he says "quite rightly so". He has now been happily married for 40 years and his wife urges him to persevere with his search, as under the same circumstances she would have liked to be told the facts of the matter.



If you can help, or know anyone who could, please contact the editor.

## More light bulb jokes



Q. How many WRVS Managers does it take to change a light bulb ?

A. None. They would find/train/delegate a volunteer to do it

From: Mrs Priestley. Wilberfoss. E. Yorks.  
Mrs Jennings. Jersey  
Mrs Potter Surrey

.....

Q. How many barristers does it take to change a Light Bulb.?

A. When the term "Light bulb" refers to an ordinary appliance used solely and exclusively for the purposes of domestic illumination, notwithstanding that such appliances may be used solely and exclusively for purposes under the Act not wholly and exclusively domestic, and where there is a Prima Facie case for supposing that such a bulb or bulbs are in compliance with an ad hoc definition of

....  
"Oh for Heaven's sake, how many ?

A. One !

.....

Q. What did the Irish photographer do with a burned out light bulb.

A. He saved it to use in his dark room.

.....

Q. How many lawyers does it take to change a light bulb?

A. How many can you afford ?

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### Letter to the Editor. (abridged)

I read Mrs Keenan's letter with interest. How right she is. I have kept a newspaper cutting which echoes her words. It reads..."Don't hoard, don't harbour rubbish. Let's use our beautiful things NOW." I've seen too many wardrobes filled with outdated clothes never to be worn again, too many chests of drawers stuffed to capacity ... it is surely now time to enjoy what we have before "moth and rust do decay "

From Mrs Mooney Merseyside.

A train travelling on a wild and lonely Cumbrian railway line had been trundling along slowly for some considerable time when it suddenly ground to a halt very much in the middle of nowhere. After a moment or two the puzzled passengers began peering out of the windows to try to see what was going on. Then they spotted the guard climbing out of his guards' van at the back of the train and start walking along the trackside by the train. This gave one frustrated and facetious passenger his chance.

"Guard", he called "Can I get out and pick some flowers?"

"What do you mean?" replied the guard. "There aren't any flowers growing round here".

"Oh don't worry about that," came the passenger's caustic response. "I've got a packet of seeds with me"

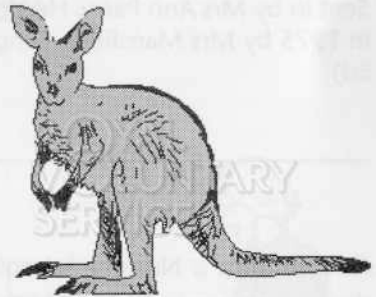
From Mrs Dawson. Tyne and Wear.

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### AUSTRALIA - A view from a temporary resident from Britain.

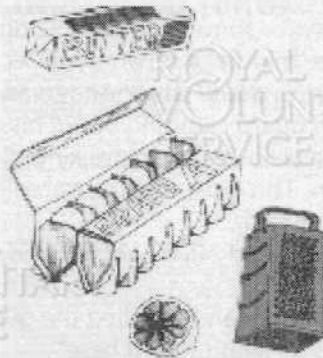
Australians have given us a warm welcome and we have made many friends. I live in Canberra which is loathed by most Australians because it symbolises government and regulation. With a population of 300,000 it is spread over a large area, surrounded by beautiful hills and the city is built round a large lake with a number of nature parks. Space is everywhere. Around Canberra is excellent walking country and we have joined a couple of walking clubs. The country is characterised by extremes, with droughts, floods, forest fires (reaching to our fence) and they have two kinds of deadly snakes (one of which found its way to our garden). When we leave in July 2000 we will miss the openness of the country and the strength and fortitude of the modern Australian character, no doubt bred from the hardships of the early settlers.

From Mrs Pollard Surrey

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**Recipe****Lemon Delight**

- 2 oz margarine
- 4 oz sugar
- 1 oz plain flour
- 1 lemon
- 1/4 pint milk
- 2 eggs



Cream butter and sugar, stir in flour, add lemon rind and juice and egg yolks beaten with the milk. Then fold in the stiffly beaten egg whites gently and evenly. (This makes a runny mixture). Put into greased dish and stand dish in tin of hot water in moderate oven. Cook for 45 minutes. Turn out and serve. This pudding makes its own sauce.

SERVICE

(We used to call this "Rhapsody Pudding" during the war ! Ed )

VOLUNTARY

Taken from "Rescue a Recipe", a cookery book published by WRVS in 1975. Sent in by Mrs Ann Parry, Hertfordshire. The original recipe was sent in to WRVS in 1975 by Mrs Mansfield. Bengoe, Hertford. (Is Mrs Mansfield still a member ? Ed)

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A Note from a Nursery School Teacher, seen on the kitchen reminder board of a young Mum.

"Isabel is to be an angel, so please may she wear white knickers on Tuesday".

From Mrs Price. Skirpenbeck.

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SERVICEROYAL  
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## Thoughts

A smile is a curve that can set a lot of things straight.



For every backward glance take a long look forward.

Old friends are like diamonds,  
Costly and rare.  
New friends are like autumn leaves  
Found everywhere.

From Mrs Whittingham. Merseyside

## Caution on visiting sickrooms (1860)

Never venture within a sickroom if you are in violent perspiration, for the moment your body becomes cold it is in a state likely to absorb the infection. Nor visit a sickroom (especially if the complaint is of an infectious nature) with an empty stomach, as this disposes the system the more easily to receive the contagion. In attending a sick person place yourself where the air passes from the door or window to the bed and not between the patient and any fire in the room, as the heat of the fire will draw the infectious vapour in that direction and you would be in much danger from breathing it.



From Mrs Beeton's Household Management 1<sup>st</sup> Edition

## More Signs of the Times

Seen ...  
In a Swiss Mountain Inn  
Special Today. - No Ice Cream



In a Rome Laundry.  
Ladies, Leave your clothes here and spend the afternoon having a good time.

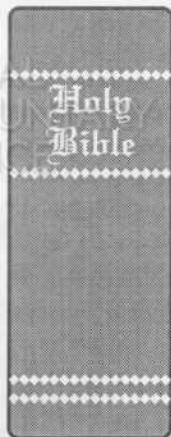
In a tailor's shop on Rhodes.  
Order your summer suit here. Because is big rush we will execute customers in strict rotation.

Sent by Miss Joan Sadler. York

## How well do you know your Bible?.

All answers begin with B. Sender of first correct answer to the editor, will be acknowledged in the autumn issue as "Bible Brain of WRVS"!

1. He was released instead of Jesus.
2. When Jesus fed the 5,000 the loaves were made of this.
3. The youngest son of Jacob.
4. A city where they built a tall tower.
5. How Saul escaped from Damascus.
6. A village near Jerusalem, where Simon lived.
7. David ordered his men to stay away until these had grown again.
8. Joseph and Mary travelled there because of a Census.
9. God created them on the fifth day.
10. Ruth's second husband.



Sent by Mrs Scholey Norfolk

## More desert island discs

- 1 Benny Goodman and His Orchestra
- 2 A book of crossword puzzles.
3. A Crate of Champagne, (the best) and a drinking straw.

From Mrs Martin. Derbyshire.



- 
1. Mozart's Clarinet Concerto.
  - 2 "Window on my Heart" Olave, Lady Baden-Powell.  
Having been in Guiding all my life and having met the late World Chief Guide, my admiration for her knows no bounds. The book would remind me of many happy hours spent in Guiding and all the good friends I have made.
  3. A box of chocolate liqueurs.

From Mrs Jennings. Jersey





## desert island discs cont....

1. The Desert Song by Debroy Summer's Band.
2. "Fanny Burney" by Kate Chisholme
3. A comfortable bed.

From Mrs Block S.E. London



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## Reminder

Have you paid your annual subscription?

If not do send it straight away to the London Office as it was due on Jan 1<sup>st</sup>

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As we go to press we are sad to report the death of Mr Grant, Area Transport Officer for Harrogate and Joan's devoted husband, who until his death was caring for her in her present illness

# WRVS BENEVOLENT TRUST

Registered Charity No. 261931

The Benevolent Trust is here to help people who at any time have been members of the WRVS, either in this country or abroad, and are now in need of financial help. Current members should have given 5 years service.

We have helped with new cookers, personal alarm systems, essential car maintenance, funeral costs, convalescent holidays, electric wheelchairs and house repairs. These are some of the needs that members could not afford.

Some members apply directly, some are recommended by Area Managers, and others by project leaders or by their WRVS Association Representatives. If you, or someone you know, are in financial need, please contact us.

The WRVS Benevolent Trust is here to help you. Every application is confidential.

Please write to:

**The Honorary Secretary**  
**WRVS Benevolent Trust**  
**151 Clapham Road**

**London**

**SW9 0PU**

**WRVS ASSOCIATION**

151 Clapham Road  
Stockwell  
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