



# NEWSLETTER

No 61 Autumn 2004

**Letter from the Chairman**  
82 Bootham York YO30 7DF

Dear Member

By the time you read this autumn will be with us but, where did summer go? Our 2004 Reunion and AGM in Northampton will be over and winter will be on its way.

I am sorry to tell you that Dame Barbara Shenfield former Chairman of WRVS and later Vice President of the Association died on the 17th June after a short illness. She will be sadly missed by all who had the privilege of knowing her. The Association was represented at her funeral and a letter of condolence was sent to her family.

In August we lost a founder member of WRVS Marjorie Stevenson MBE who joined WVS in 1938. Although Marjorie lived in the Lake District she was known to many WRVS and Association members throughout the country, and attended all AGM's and Reunions wherever they were held. Up to the end Marjorie was very interested in the administration of the Association giving help when she could by giving talks about WRVS and the Association to groups. Three months ago realising there had been no Divisional Representative in her area for a long while she offered to take on that responsibility. Marjorie will be greatly missed by all those members who knew her. A letter of condolence was sent to Marjorie's sister.

My three years as your Chairman will be over at the end of September, it was a pleasure meeting so many of you and I would like to thank you for your warm welcome. My thanks also go to the Divisional Representatives for their support and to the office staff in York for all their help and support making my job much easier. Your new Chairman from 1st October will be Mrs. Sheila Scholey and I know you will give her the same support that you have given me.

My very best wishes,  
Yours sincerely,

*Pat Copping*

---

## Random jottings from the Editor

Dear Members

It is hard to believe that I am now preparing my fourth newsletter for you all. What has happened to the two years since I told Pat Copping that I would help Ness Venables by being the assistant editor? Well we start with the change from W.R.V.S. to WRVS, from green and burgundy to orange and green and from a royal badge to a row of balloons for a logo. What was wrong with the old one I hear you shouting (on a fairly regular basis actually)? Well, hopefully page 23 will answer some of your queries, and I draw your particular attention to the first sentence of paragraph two.



We seem to be mentioning even more of our friends that have died. Whilst I am anxious to always try to give a name to new members, to mention those who have had celebrations, or who offer their homes as meeting venues, I do realise that for many of you it may be the first time that you have heard of the death of someone you may have worked with in the past. So in trying to remain positive perhaps we can remember or imagine each of these ladies in their prime and give thanks that there are volunteers like them (and you) who are prepared to give so freely of their time

Finally, I finish writing these notes on return from the AGM that was held this year in Northampton. It was a very relaxing weekend, with about 40 members in attendance. There was a talk from the Chairman of the WRVS, Tina Tietjen and from Evelyn Boot, Chairman of the WRVS Benevolent Trust. During the afternoon we all went on a coach trip to visit the town museum, where there was a wonderful display of boots and shoes and then onto to Abington Park, a beautiful Grade I listed building where, as well as a 19th century fashion gallery, there was the history of the Northamptonshire Regiment

Over the weekend, we all had the opportunity to say farewell and thank you to Pat Copping, our retiring chairman and welcome to Sheila Scholey, who will be Chairman from the beginning of October for three years. I am sure that along with all of us at the meeting you wish them both well for the future.

Best wishes to you all.

*Paulene*

Paulene Lambert

## **SOUTH WEST DIVISION**

**HEREFORDSHIRE, WORCESTERSHIRE, GLOUCESTERSHIRE - Div. Rep. Mrs Jean Connop**

A member of the Gloucestershire Badger Group, Mr. Tony Dene gave a very interesting talk at the June Luncheon held in the Church Centre, Up Hatherley, Cheltenham. He told us we should never attempt to catch a Badger as they have a very powerful bite. Although badger baiting is now illegal, a strong spotlight and nets are still used to capture them and sell them for baiting at up to £500 each. As they have been protected since 1974, you must apply to the local Council for a licence to re-locate a Badger from private property or face prosecution. Mr. Dene views Badgers on his land and he is able to call them from their sett by whistling.

It is with great regret that we announce the death of Mrs. Stenning who worked in the Clothing Store for many years and Mrs. B. Abbatt in the Hospital Canteen also for many years. They will be sadly missed by their friends.

**DEVON AND CORNWALL - Div Rep Vacant**

**SOMERSET AND AVON - Div. Rep. Mrs Sheila Scholey**

The Bristol Kingsway Branch is continuing to hold monthly meetings, under the guidance of Mrs. Margaret Dawson, and I have been invited to join them at their November meeting; which I shall be delighted to attend.

It is with regret that we have to announce the deaths of two of our members. In July Mrs Dorothy West died. Dorothy had been a member for around 40 years and had taken part in a great number of WRVS activities including Meals on Wheels, Crisis Support etc, but her main interest was in prison transport and the canteen in Horfield Prison, Bristol. In August we lost another long serving member. Mrs Ivy Hawkins was also involved in Meals on Wheels, Luncheon Clubs and Crisis Support. Ivy was a friend to all and despite long-term illness, was always full of fun and ready to help anyone. Both these ladies will be sadly missed by their friends in the Kingswood Branch of the Association

I am still hopeful that sufficient interest may be generated amongst other Members here in Somerset to organise similar occasional get-togethers or lunches. Wishing you all every happiness and good health this Autumn.

---

**WEST MIDLANDS** - Div. Rep. Mrs J.M. Smith BEM - No report

Group Organiser: *Endington | Sutton Coldfield Group, West Midlands*  
Joan Wortley,

We have had six meetings in the last year, including our usual January luncheon, this year at Park House in Sutton Coldfield Park. Our first outing was to Chatsworth, always worth a return visit for its beautiful setting and for those who find the house has too many stairs they can still enjoy the gardens and admire the view. On leaving we called at the farm shop to buy some of the delicacies made on the estate as well as meet the animals reared there. Our second outing was less successful, a visit to Webb's Garden Centre at Wychbold calling on the way for coffee at Jinney Ring, a craft centre. Unfortunately the heavens opened and it poured with rain most of the day, so, after lunch and shopping in the indoor area we had an early return home

**DORSET** - Div Rep Vacant

**WILTSHIRE** - County Rep - No report

---

## **OBITUARY**

### **DAME BARBARA SHENFIELD**

It is with much sadness we report the death of Dame Barbara Shenfield who died on 17th June 2004 aged 85 years. Dame Barbara was an academic whose work as a social scientist over 60 years focused on the role of the voluntary sector. She was also personally involved in the work of many voluntary organisations, notably as chairman of the Women's Royal Voluntary Service (WRVS) from 1981 to 1988.

She was born in Smethwick, where her family had always played an active role in local affairs. She was educated at Langley and Birmingham University, graduating in social and political science. In 1941, she married an RAF pilot, Gwilym Lewis, who was killed in action only three months later. Despite this loss - and the birth of her son in 1942 - it was typical of her sense of public duty and commitment that she became the Staffordshire organiser for the Women's Land Army. In a similar spirit, at the end of the Second World War she joined the Foreign Office Control Commission in Germany, helping women refugees. In 1951, she married Arthur Shenfield, a distinguished barrister, economist and political scientist, and with whom she enjoyed an exceptionally happy marriage. She was appointed DBE in 1986.

## WALES

Div. Rep. Mrs Mary Gibbons. OBE

Many apologies to Welsh Members of the Association who were disappointed to find there was no report from the Principality last time. I do hope this will help them to realise that there is still life here.

Over the past 2 years we have lost quite a few members of the association. Mrs. M. M. Pickford (Shenston), was for many years Emergency Services Organiser for Wales. Members will also be saddened to know that last year both Ann Nicholas and Marjorie London (Llanelli) died. Ann had been County Organiser and Senior Instructor for the Emergency Services in her time and Marjorie was an excellent District Secretary.

The members from the old county of Dyfed have had two re-unions since we last reported. There was the usual Christmas lunch in Carmarthen, organised by Elizabeth John (Rowland-James) and a great success as usual, and a day out in Haverfordwest. The latter, organised by Anthea Evans and Mary Morris, started with lunch at a local hotel and then a visit to Picton Castle and gardens followed by tea. This gave the Pembrokeshire members the opportunity to attend something nearer home. Thank you for my invitation - I'm sorry I couldn't join you.

The few remaining members in and around Newport (Gwent) continue to meet for lunch each month despite failing health and eyesight. Doris Travis, who was co-ordinator for the Association for South Wales at one time, keeps me posted.

Those members living in Monmouthshire meet quarterly for lunch and they have found some very nice eating-places. I was sorry, again, not to have been able to join them this summer but I hope they will not cross me off their invitation list. Marjorie Stinchcombe, who for many years was Local Organiser for Abergavenny, keeps the group together.

There are still quite a few members living in Ruthin, North Wales, but unfortunately they have not had a get-together for some time. I believe Marjorie Shephard hopes they can do something about this later in the year.

Miss Boden tells me the Colwyn Bay members continue to meet regularly at their favourite coffee shop and that they are hoping to organise a lunch meeting during the summer. Their numbers remain around the ten mark despite the loss of some members.

## CHANNEL ISLANDS

### JERSEY

Ass. Rep. Mrs Doreen Jennings

Our little branch has not had much to report since the last newsletter. I was in hospital in May for an operation but I am back on my feet now. Another member was in England to be with their daughter who had an operation, however we did manage to meet at member Jean Petres house for an afternoon tea in June. A most interesting house with views right across St Aubins Bay. There was a lot of talk about the new logo and badge, especially as not all members had received one. Those who had did not like the colour and where was the crown for being Royal? What do other members think?

Jersey has been 'en fete' this year in medieval mood to celebrate 800 years of allegiance to the English Crown. The Channel Islands were part of the Duchy of Normandy and became a possession of the English Crown when William, Duke of Normandy conquered England in 1066. In 1204 King John lost the continental part of the Duchy and the islands had to decide whether to go back to France or remain loyal to King John. For a variety of reasons they chose the latter and have been loyal to the crown ever since

The Battle of the Flowers was in August. One of our members has been a regular helper with costumes for one of the floats

### GUERNSEY

Ass. Rep. Mrs Margaret Brockway

Members met up in April for the first of our twice-yearly lunches. The day started off with rain but fortunately by the time we arrived at the chosen hotel the rain had stopped and by the time we left the sun was shining! The room prepared for us was very welcoming with two lovely flower arrangements and members commented on how nice it was. We were please to have with us Janet Sherwell our Bailiwick organiser for the WRVS in Guernsey. Some of our members are quite elderly, one in her 90's, and I very much admire them for making the effort to be with us

Although supposedly retired, some of us still do our bit with meals on wheels, trolley shops, helping at Jubilee Day Centre, the WRVS Day Centre for the elderly. One member in her 80's collects some of the 'elderly' and drives them to the centre in her car. We look forward to our next lunch and get together in November



## SCOTLAND

**Chairman** - Hilda Clow

This years AGM was held in Lochardil House Hotel in Inverness on a beautiful spring day. The 88 members present included Mrs Alice Cleland, vice chairman WRVS. This being the 25th Anniversary of the Association in Scotland, the occasion was marked by a cake, which was cut by Mrs Ailsa Blair, a former Chairman.

Business followed, taking the usual form. In addition we had an election of office bearers as Mrs Audrey Wilkinson, Mrs Joan Spalding and Mrs Alison Clark had served their 3 years. The new office bearers are Chairman - Mrs Hilda Clow Perth Branch; Secretary - Miss Val Hutton Dundee Branch; Treasurer - Mrs Isobel Greig Dundee Branch. We were pleased to know of the revival of the Moray Branch and hope it continues to flourish along with the others

Audrey introduced the first speaker of the morning, Mrs Alice Cleland, who gave a brief update on the working & management of WRVS

From looking forward to looking back we were treated to an interesting talk by Mrs. Ann McGregor from Central Branch who joined WRVS in 1965. Her experiences were many and varied and stirred quite a few memories among the members. Memories were even more aroused when 2 members, complete with ladles and a soup urn, dressed appropriately in the uniform of long ago, gave a music-hall turn. So in very happy mood we adjourned to partake of an excellent lunch

The afternoon speaker the Rev. John Chambers of Ness Bank Church, Inverness, gave a very interesting talk entitled "Vive la Difference", based on his work with Relate. Despite the fact that in this day and age we assume there is equality between the sexes, it is still far from true as was pointed out to us.

The meeting drew to a close with votes of thanks and the date of the next AGM on the 14th April 2005 in Hamilton.

---

My face in the mirror is not wrinkled or drawn  
My house is not dirty; the cobwebs are gone  
My garden looks lovely, especially the lawn  
I think I might never put my glasses back on!

Joan Sadler, York

---

## NORTH EAST DIVISION

**NORTHUMBERLAND, TYNE & WEAR**  
Div. Rep. Mrs S. McCormack BEM

Group leaders meet once every six months to exchange news and report on their activities. All the members enjoy the Annual Lunch held in Newcastle in June and we were delighted to welcome Chairman Mrs Pat Copping on this last occasion

North Shields / Whitley Bay - Mrs M.E.Dawson. Our thanks to Mrs Charles for making nine members welcome in her home for coffee in March. These get togethers are always enjoyed and keep members in touch with up to date WRVS news. Eleven members met and enjoyed seeing old friends again for lunch at the Old Assembly Rooms. Long may this event continue as it is greatly looked forward to by us all. In December, we hope to join the Willow Club at their Carol Service at St Johns Church. We are sad to record the death of Mrs. A Baron who gave many years of service to the WRVS

Newcastle - Mrs. M Doyle. Our club is flourishing and lively. We are very pleased to welcome two new members, especially since we have lost so many due to illness recently. Our guest speakers have given us talks on a great variety of subjects ranging from "Midwifery in the Past" to "Canterbury and the Pilgrims"

In April we went to the Theatre Royal to see "Oliver Twist". It transpired that this was a modern interpretation of the classic play. A narrator told the story whilst the cast made use of minimal "Props" and a very small area of the stage. It was a very interesting approach but a little too Avant Gard for some of the members!!

Our July outing took us to Harperly Hall for lunch and then on to the Bowes Museum at Bamard Castle. The weather was kind to us, and our members and their friends had a great day out

Sunderland - Mrs. Sarah Hardy. We began the year with the AGM in January, which was well attended. Mrs. Ann Oliver made her annual visit to us in February to receive a cheque for £400 in aid of St Benedicts Hospice (the charity our group supports).

The next five meetings all had speakers: - Mrs. Hitchin gave us a further insight into Japanese culture; Mr J Saville spoke on Judaism, showing a serious and humorous side to the Jewish religion. Everyone enjoyed an entertaining morning when Mrs. Reeder slowed slides of Roker, a seaside area of Sunderland, from 1890. The final two mornings were by group members.



---

Mrs. Hardy gave an impromptu talk on being presented with the MBE by the Queen and Mrs. M Smith showed slides of a recent visit to India.

Eleven ladies attended the luncheon at Newcastle and enjoyed listening to Mrs. Hitchin for the third time. During the session we have held two special events in aid of St Benedicts Hospice - a concert and an open garden afternoon raising £477. Thank you ladies for your support at these events

**DURHAM, CLEVELAND, NORTH YORKSHIRE**

Div Rep. Mrs Rene Thompson. OBE

We are having our annual 'Area' luncheon at the Spa in Scarborough on 22.09.04 (you may remember we missed out last year because of the AGM in Chester)

I was personally so pleased to be present with Pat Copping at Mervyn Pike's Memorial Service. She was a very special lady, not only to WRVS but as a Government minister, as was evident by the large congregation in the very small village of Hownam

Branch Rep, I.M. Paterson, of Darlington says that before the office in Valley Street closed we used to hold our meetings there, but now with our 19 members feeling their age and on limited income, we have decided only to hire a room at Christmas. We will however have a spring and autumn lunch at a country pub

Joan Altass, Group Organiser, Selby. Our monthly luncheons continue at the Selby Bowling Club with the attendance maintained at 18-20 each time. We look forward to an extra luncheon in August at the fish and chip café. I am always very grateful for the help I get from Mr Kay, Mrs Knowles and Mrs Bell

From Hartlepool Edith Stamp reports. Our members continue to be loyal and attend meetings on the last Tuesday of every month.

On one very snowy morning a man who has a surgery practising Japanese Natural Therapy came along to demonstrate his work. There was a lady who brought along her collection of Russian Dolls, an ex member now moved away, returned to tell us of her 'Flight of Fancy' on Concorde to Vienna. Another morning we had an interesting talk on the Winston Churchill Travelling Fellowship.

We also enjoy outings, including a lunch at the Wainstones Hotel in Broughton then on to Stokesly Market and lunch at The New Inn at Burnt Yates then on to Skipton for the Pennine Boat Trip. All most enjoyable.

York Group report from Millie Wilks. The 24 members at the March meeting enjoyed an interesting talk by Rev Canon Bob Rogers, senior chaplain to the York NHS Trust.

---

---

He spoke about the work of the chaplaincy, which supports patients and their families as well as staff in time of emotional and spiritual need, regardless of religion, denomination or race

Unfortunately the planned outing to Ripley Castle had to be cancelled due to lack of support and at the AGM in October, which will be combined with an afternoon tea, we shall discuss the viability of outings by coach and whether getting together locally for a meal would be better supported

From Irene Winter, Scarborough. We are fortunate indeed to still be welcoming new members, specifically Mrs M Bentley, Mrs Dorothy Graham, Mrs J Liddle and Mrs Betty Squire. Social activities have continued much the same as in previous programmes and have received the same loyal support from branch members.

We have lunched at the Yorkshire Coastal College and at the Wolds Cottage, enjoyed the ever-popular coffee mornings (especially when a speaker is available) ending the half-year with a visit to Barnaby Hall, Pocklington to view the wonderful water lily gardens and to take tea there.

We are looking forward to hosting the regional rally at the Spa in September

#### **EAST YORKSHIRE TO HUMBER**

Div Rep. Mrs Robina Priestley

We are delighted to welcome three new members so far this year. Mrs Monica Turner, Bridlington, Mrs Monica Levitt, Pocklington and Mrs Joan Lord of Wilberforce. Alas, we heard of the deaths of three members Edna Aldred (Hull), Olive Coulton (Beverley) and Mary Norfolk-Brown, B.E.M. She had gone to live near her family in Westbury after many years as WRVS local organiser in Bridlington and will be remembered by many in East Yorkshire

Monthly lunches have continued throughout the summer and have been well attended despite many spending holidays travelling far and near. In August, Millie Grisewood celebrated her 100th Birthday. She still lives in her own home and enjoyed a stream of visitors to mark the occasion as well as receiving the usual card from the Queen. As Millie is almost blind she does not get out much, but enjoys having visitors and takes a great interest in all their news

A near neighbour of Millie is Hilda Baxter who has recently had an operation on her second knee. Again, almost blind Hilda lives on her own and still continues to come to our lunches as well as continuing with her hobby of making rugs from strips of material. Hilda and her late husband made many of these, which they sold for charity. Well done to both these ladies

---

---

**SOUTH AND WEST YORKSHIRE**  
Div. Rep. Mrs June Pitts BEM

I am very pleased to be back in circulation again after 14 months. My reports for the newsletter were covered, very competently, by Mrs Gillian Highley MBE. Thank you Gillian. Four new members have been enrolled this year, so welcome to Mrs May Carter, Mrs Doreen Murgatroyd, Mrs Barbara Frost and Mrs Caroline Naylor. Caroline is a WRVS Trustee, and will be Vice Chairman (North England and Scotland) from 01.12.04

Calderdale. Since the spring report the group have enjoyed three well-attended meetings in Halifax town hall. The May meeting had a very interesting talk by a lady who gave the history of 4711 Eau-de-Cologne. We learnt that it was named after the number of the house and the town in Germany where the chemist who created it lived. It was so interesting to hear about a product that most of us have used at sometime. The Yorkshire Day Tea and entertainment for the elderly held on 31st July at Kings Cross Church, Halifax was a great success. The local Mayor attended and we were entertained by a lady and gentleman who sang songs both old and new. They also told amusing stories that everyone enjoyed. To go with the theme a lady read a poem in Yorkshire dialect. Tea was served consisting of sandwiches, cakes trifle for about 70 by members of the group. Every guest went home with a fresh white rose and a place mat. I would like to say 'well done' to all who helped with the food and table decorations. Four of us will be attending the AGM in Northampton

Wakefield. Mrs Margaret Taylor who runs the group tells me they have met four times this year at the Salvation Army Citadel enjoying tea and chat. Mrs Lil Ziegler who retired last year from running the group had a 90th birthday in June and celebrated it by going to Venice and Vienna on the Orient Express with her immediate family. She also gave an Open Day Party for friends and relations at home and raised £2,913 for Cancer Research. Well Done Lil.

I am sorry to report the deaths of three members from the area. Miss Kathleen Peacock MBE., who was ex HQ service welfare department head and Mrs Joan Talbot of the Royal Infirmary main shop, both of Doncaster and Mrs Delia Glasby MBE local organiser in Pontefract. They will all be well remembered

---

**Murphy's Law in the Garden**

Is it a weed? If it pulls out easily it was a valuable plant, if however, despite digging it up, it grows again next year, it is a weed.

---

LEICESTERSHIRE, LINCOLNSHIRE AND NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

Div. Rep. Mrs Joan Newman

Because of Joan Newman's illness, this report has been sent in by Sheila Court, Secretary of the Rushcliffe Branch

The year started with three coffee mornings at our usual meeting places, the Willow Tree pub and the Community Hall at one of the local Warden Aided Complexes. We had hoped to have a speaker for one of the mornings to brighten up the winter for us, but have had difficulty lately finding people who do not ask for prohibitive fees or are not available on the days we have a hall booked. So we had lots of time to chat and catch up with friends. April was AGM time, as usual it all went very well and our members are quite happy to keep the existing committee, although we did have one change this year. Mrs. Olive Humm, who has been our treasurer since 1988, resigned from this post but has stayed on the committee. Mrs. Wendy Greaves another committee member volunteered to take over this position. In May we had planned a lunch outing, starting with a bus ride into Derbyshire, but unfortunately for various reasons, members in hospital, holidays etc. there were not enough members to make the funding of the bus viable, so this was cancelled. June brought us to another chatty coffee morning and the last event for this half-year in July was a splendid talk and display of "The Crown Jewels" by Peter Ranson. These were all copies of some of the Crowns, Tiaras and the Orb, made from bits of old jewellery. Mr. Ranson told us the historical background of the pieces, it was most interesting, especially as we were allowed to try on the crowns and become like a royal for a minute.

---

### THE TATER PEOPLE

Some people never seem motivated to participate, but are just content to watch while others work. They are called 'Spec Taters'. Some never do anything to help, but are gifted at finding fault with the way others do the work. They are called 'Comment Taters'. Some are very bossy and like to tell others what to do, but don't want to soil their own hands. They are called 'Dick Taters'. Some are always looking to cause problems by asking others to agree with them. It is too hot or it too cold, too sour or too sweet. They are called 'Agie Taters'. There are those who say they will help, but somehow just never get around to actually doing the promised help. They are called 'Hezzie Taters'. Some people can put up a front and pretend to be someone they are not. They are called 'Emma Taters'. Then there are those who love others and do what they say they will. They are always prepared to stop whatever they are doing and lend a helping hand. They bring real sunshine into the lives of others. They are called 'Sweet Taters' (or WRVS volunteers)

## NORTH WEST DIVISION

**CUMBRIA AND LANCASHIRE** - Div. Rep. Vacant

**MERSEYSIDE AND CHESHIRE**  
Div. Rep. Mrs Mary Jones

On my rounds visiting groups talking to our members has made me aware of the wealth of experience and wide-ranging activities of WVS/WRVS over the years. So I have asked the groups to get members to write down their memories, or use tapes, photos, and old files to build up a record of local work and stories while we still can. In the course of the next year I hope to visit projects to talk about WRVS Association, and put up posters to make active WRVS members aware of us and what we can offer

I am sorry to report the death of Mrs Nancy Reid of Chester at the age of 103. She joined WVS in 1948 and worked in hospitals organising trolley shops and rotas, baby clinics, and a canteen for young National Servicemen among other activities - what stories she could have told. The Chester group with reducing numbers and mobility difficulties have given up the quarterly meetings and talks, but, those who can meet for a pub lunch, and all try to get to the late summer luncheon. I hope to meet you all in October.

Crosby is an active and steadily growing group (with several male members) who meet bimonthly at present. At least half of the members are still active on projects and help keep retired members in touch with current WRVS work - the discussions at meetings are lively! In February we had a talk on the history of Liverpool waterfront given by the husband of one of our members. Jim is a painter who researches the history so his paintings are accurate. Of course the Liverpool waterfront is changing rapidly as we prepare for the Capital of Culture. The quiz in April was great fun despite a hotly disputed answer - the quizmaster later admitted his error. The winners earned their prize - now we know who watches TV all day. All the rain at the beginning of August had us worried about the party to be held in Linda McEvoy's garden but the sun came out in time. There was a very good turnout and all enjoyed the sunshine, refreshments, gossip, and garden. In October there will be a talk by the 'Lavender man', a local grower and producer of lavender based goods. A Christmas dinner at a local pub will bring the year to a close.

The Wilmslow ladies invited me to their luncheon in June. A pleasant setting, good food and lively conversation made for a great day out. Thank you Joan, and your Committee, I hope to visit you again soon.



---

At St Helens I met Mrs Nan Chisnall who joined WVS in 1939. We had an illustrated talk on the history of St Helens, which brought back lots of memories of childhood and youth. The trip to Chester included a tour of the Cathedral and a trip on the river and was enjoyed by all. In September they will be having the late summer lunch, and preparing for the Christmas lunch at the Golf Club.

Wallasey and Bebington ladies continue to meet each month for lunch and a chat. They keep in close touch with each other, particularly those who are not well.

**MERSEYSIDE** County Rep  
Mrs D. Whittingham,

**NORTH AND SOUTH MANCHESTER** - No report  
Div. Rep. Mrs Jean Matthews BEM

**STAFFORDSHIRE, SHROPSHIRE, DERBYSHIRE** - Div. Rep. Vacant

**DERBYSHIRE** - County Rep  
Doreen Martin,

---

**BEAUTY TIPS** from the late Audrey Hepburn, film actress, and read at her funeral many years later:

- For attractive lips, speak words of kindness.
- For lovely eyes, seek out the good in people.
- For a slim figure, share your food with the hungry.
- For beautiful hair, let a child run his/her fingers through it once a day.
- For poise, walk with the knowledge that you never walk alone.
- People, even more than things, have to be restored, renewed, revived, reclaimed and redeemed; never throw out anyone.
- Remember, if you ever need a helping hand, you will find one at the end of each of your arms.
- As you grow older, you will discover that you have two hands; one for helping yourself, and the other for helping others.

---

### **Murphy's Law in the Home**

If you know that you have something, but just cannot put your hands on it, go out and buy a new one

---



## SOUTH EAST DIVISION

### CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

Div. Rep. Mrs Barbara Titcomb

Cambridge - Fifteen members enjoyed a visit to Huntingdon Garden Centre plus a meal at the end of April and a committee meeting has been held to discuss future plans. One member attended the WRVS special meeting in Ipswich

Peterborough - The bi-monthly meetings have continued and members enjoyed an outing to Sheringham and Cromer in July

Two members attended the WRVS special meeting held in Peterborough

Northamptonshire - No information received from Rushden

### OXFORDSHIRE, BEDFORDSHIRE AND BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

Div. Rep. Mrs Jean Callaway

Bedfordshire Welcome to Mrs. J Brown (Wooton) and Mrs. J M Buckle (Biggleswade). The summer activities were well supported. On April 26 a casual offer to Bedford WRVS to host a small tea party for medal presentations came to fruition at a meeting for 83 people with Mark Lever along to present the medals. Barbara Statham (Deputy Div Rep) did a splendid job organising invitations, citations etc and the Div Rep organised the tea in the Hall of her parish church. This led to the shocking sight one Sunday morning of the Vicar being heartily embraced by a septuagenarian lady - he had just told me that the hall could easily hold 90 people and he said I could kiss him. With Dorothy Ward (ex-Area Organiser) chairing the meeting and WRVS staff being very helpful it was a time to relax and enjoy Mark Lever's talk to members about WRVS today was helpful and disarmed many critics. He had already set the tone by saying he would leave his designated parking space for those who had more trouble with walking to the Hall. Altogether a happy afternoon and an experience to be recommended.

In May, Elizabeth Landmann kindly entertained members to tea at her home on the edge of a North Beds village. It was an idyllic setting and everyone felt better for being there. £53.80 was raised for Riding for the Disabled - a charity for which Elizabeth works very hard.

In June, John Deamer organised an outing to the RHS Gardens at Wisley for their annual show. This was so popular that he had to hire a larger coach so that no one was turned away.

---

The Bedfordshire branch is very grateful to John and his wife for the time and trouble they took to arrange a really excellent day out

July is Garden Party month and for the twelfth year running the Vesey home was opened to us. Not only had Do laid on music but she had organised a drawing game which uncovered some talent among the members. Meanwhile the husbands made sure that all guests had plenty to eat and drink.

Buckinghamshire Margaret McRoberts still shows the spirit of Lady Reading's 'gels'. When asked to help over a member's change of address she set off to explore the wilder parts of Buckinghamshire, spending a day tramping round 'making enquiries' and drinking coffee in what sounded like very shady bars. I could almost hear the Harry Lime theme playing, but sadly to no avail.

Oxfordshire Ursula Goulding still keeps in touch and has kindly arranged to hand 100 WRVS paper napkins over to Bedfordshire, which will certainly be appreciated at the next meetings. Thank you for this thoughtful co-operation between the counties.

#### **NORFOLK AND SUFFOLK** Div. Rep. Mrs Mary Taylor

North Norfolk. Although a wide spread group enjoy frequent get-togethers. Spring luncheon was held at Wayford Bridge, March, followed in June to Cromer Pavilion for the wonderful rendition of 'Anything Goes'. A member hosted a Ploughman Lunch, June, followed by a quiz organized by members. Idyllic peaceful surroundings only marred by the heavy showers.

Sudbury. Although only a small branch, members do manage to keep contact by having informal get-together luncheons in beautiful Lavenham.

Gt. Yarmouth. A very active group with an excellent number of members. This year they have enjoyed luncheons, which are ideal for the members who are unable to travel, but still wish to stay in contact. A trip to Walsingham, the Shrine of our Lady, and a walk through the old Abbey grounds amongst carpet of Snowdrops was breathtaking. Their annual dinner was held in March, followed by entertainment to which members danced away the evening. An outing to Colchester & Beth Chatto Gardens was wonderful. Anyone visiting the area should make a visit to the gardens where Beth Chatto, aged 92 still lives within the grounds. Further outings were to Wisbech Rose Fair, for a flower festival in all the churches there; Bury St Edmunds / Stonham Barns, and Cromer Pavilion for the famous 'end of Pier' show.

---

## READERS LETTERS

I have been meaning to write for many years to enquire if any of my old WVS friends are around. During the war I helped mother on the WVS station canteen at Cambridge. After the war, when I had left school and moved to Norwich to work, I heard about WVS members working at the NAAFI Club, organising entertainment and welfare, so went along in the evenings after work. I really enjoyed helping, although it was very sad sometimes talking with the FEPOWS. At the end of 1948, the NAAFI closed down and I decided to join WVS (Overseas) and work with the forces where needed. I was posted to Germany and worked with the 11th Hussars, where I met my husband. We married in 1949 and travelled all over the world, including Malaya for three years where the regiment was fighting in the jungle with the Gurkhas.

I would be very pleased to hear from anyone with whom I worked. I was Brenda Medcalf when single, but I am now Brenda Shaw

---

Mrs E Wolseley of Heswall in the Wirral writes: Thank you for sending me the Newsletter on a regular basis, which is very interesting. As I am now in my 84th year I haven't been active for a number of years. I did my voluntary work in the refreshment bar in the Leicester General Hospital for nine years, which I thoroughly enjoyed but retired to move to be near my daughter. My very best wishes go to all who work for the WRVS

---

From Jersey, Marguerite Crill, sent an article that she wrote for the WRVS news in 1985 because she was pained to see capable and willing WRVS organisers demoted, as soon as they were over 65. She thought then that it was a waste of talent and experience in aid of Youth Culture!

Now she writes - It has been a surprise to discover that even at 88 it has been possible to start again, yet again. This was after losing a husband with whom I had lived for 40 years in Cheshire out of the 58 years of marriage. What do you do when you suddenly find yourself alone in a beloved large house and garden in the country you love? A daughter lives in Somerset and a son in Brittany and a small flat as a foothold in Jersey where we came from.

They say it takes two years to adjust to bereavement, and indeed I took nearly that long trying to decide what to do next, overwhelmed with paper work, indecision and the kindness of Cheshire friends. It seemed that adjustment would never come. But Providence intervened at just the right time when a pleasant little house next to our old family home in Jersey became vacant. So I bought it and moved in exactly two years and two days after becoming a widow.

---

At 88, then, a new life began with the huge upheaval of moving overseas, to a neglected smaller house and garden, in a lovely position overlooking St. Aubins Bay. With so much to think about you would never be depressed, especially when looking across the ever changing sea, the shimmering sand at low tide; the moon across the water and a ring of light at night. With little boats and large ships on the horizon, it was all so beautiful and vibrant. I must admit that dear old Cheshire suddenly disappeared into the background from the day I left.

Lots of building work, first by a Yorkshireman with two Portuguese labourers, then by a Scot with a Liverpoolian foreman and Jersey, Irish and Portuguese labour. A helpful and kindly tax official - exotic with a ponytail and beard helped me fill in tax forms. The Jersey Insurance Company sent the local Connetable (kind of mayor and M.P) to assess my house, which meant I made contact with local politics, and the same applied to the visit of two Jersey men to install a fireplace, as one was a churchwarden. The Polish and Portuguese window cleaners were impossible to communicate with but they smiled a lot. My son helped me buy a 'safe' car, and the doctor arranged for me to have an emergency pendant alarm.

Before leaving I notified everyone of my new address, including the Association. I was a bit uneasy about future social contacts because despite kindly relatives and very old friends to welcome me back, I knew I must not become a DUTY, which could happen if I did not widen my circle. So, it was a great joy, to receive a call from Doreen Jennings of the Jersey Association welcoming me to the Island and inviting me to their annual lunch. I was really happy to meet the welcoming band of WRVS who not only shared friendship but also information of how to get useful services like half price milk deliveries, cheap telephone calls and free bus passes. It was truly comforting to know that even though I was deeply busy with builders and paper work, they were there.

When my husband was in the navy we moved house often and I learned that the best way to get to know people was to join everything possible. As a long term W.I. member I joined the local branch of course, also the Garden Society, the French Society, the Yacht Club, and went to the local church and attended hustings during the local elections.

Recently I had a 90th birthday. For my party 35 came over from England, babies and oldies alike, and 35 Jersey people joined us for lunch. The house was alive with guests all weekend. On this warm and happy occasion when two sides of the Channel came together I realised that I had made the right decision to come back to my husbands ancestral home, and the Island of my own youth.

I write all this because my adventure might encourage others and let them know that it is indeed possible to adapt if they have the nerve to launch out and take an interest in what goes on in the new place. It does not have to be Jersey, but it is important that it must be a place that your nearest and dearest will enjoy visiting.

---

---

## ESSEX AND HERTFORDSHIRE - Div. Rep Vacant

Peter Welford has written to the office to tell us of the death of his wife Denise. She was 87. She joined the WVS in Suffolk when she moved there after the war, was active in Civil Defence and became one of their trainers. Later she started the Meals on Wheels service in the Samford Rural District. She held the long service medal

Chairman at Southend on Sea Mrs. Bunny Tytherleigh MBE is happy to welcome Mrs. Shirley Massey to their club. She is an active member of the WRVS, working on the trolley service at Southend Hospital.

At the club's March meeting we had Mr I. Machie, the local representative for the National Lifeboat Institution as our speaker. The Southend Station is situated on the Pier, which is the longest leisure pier in the world, and the station is responsible for one of the busiest coastlines in the UK. The main lifeboat is kept at the sea end of the pier where there is always deep water but two smaller craft are kept at the shore, either side of the pier. The lifeboats are manned by volunteers who have to undergo rigorous training because there are many dangerous currents and sandbanks in the Thames.

Mr Machie gave us a most interesting talk and we had a collection for him afterwards. The following week we received a letter from the Honorary Secretary in London thanking us for the £63.72 we had given

In April we had two of our own ladies as speakers, Mrs Rose Prior and Mrs Kath Payze MBE. Rose joined the WVS in 1938 in London and worked with Lady Reading. She told us of the work that was done during the time children were being evacuated from London during the war. There were some very amusing stories but also terribly sad tales as families were split apart. Mrs. Payze talked about her role as a District Organiser for the Southend District and she also spoke of how hard everyone worked in what was a very busy county

The speaker on reflexology for the May meeting unfortunately cancelled due to illness but we nevertheless had a very happy afternoon chatting amongst ourselves.

At our next meeting in July, the speaker was Mr David Blackwood a well-known local Bee Keeper. Mr Blackwood gave us a most informative talk on the strange life of a bee and we learned a great deal about hives and honey. He brought with him jars of pure Essex honey, which the members were very happy to buy.

---

## Murphy's Law for Children

An unbreakable toy is good for breaking other toys

---



**HERTFORDSHIRE - County Rep - No report**

Mrs Gwen Rowley,

Our group in Hertfordshire continues to meet every month mostly for pub lunches; we did have a Christmas dinner and a social get together after Christmas. We will be having a speaker at our next meeting to talk about hedgehogs, which should be interesting.

Everyone enjoys meeting old friends and I am ever hopeful that we will be able to start new groups so that members can keep in contact with one another.

**SURREY, EAST & WEST KENT, EAST & WEST SUSSEX.**

Mrs Joan Rosling,

Following a request from London Weekend Television, who are putting together a programme about women working in London during the war Julia Cooper, West Kent, and I found several people who fitted the bill. Although these people will not now be needed for the initial programme, as they have found enough women who are prepared to take part, it proved a most interesting exercise for us. We were amazed to learn of so many different types of work done by women in London at that time ranging from nursing, teaching, working for the BBC, driving an ambulance and working for the Fire Service to mention just a few.

In Surrey Audrey Broderick of Epsom - reports that her group have taken a break from their lunch meetings this summer but hope to resume meeting again every six weeks in the autumn.

Guildford had their AGM in April, which was well attended by ladies from their group and some from neighbouring Woking. Everyone enjoyed the lunch provided by the Committee.

A lunch was organised in March in the hope of recruiting members for an Association group in Waverley, an area that covers the towns of Farnham, Godalming & Haslemere. It was a delightful event and a delicious lunch, all home cooked, was enjoyed by all. No new members were recruited but it was good to see so many old friends and I am sure other events will be arranged in the future.

Woking - contributed by Shirley Mason. The branch began their year with a coach trip on 27th May to Home Grange Craft Village, near Bracknell, and had an enjoyable time studying the exhibits of over 150 local craft workers. Good weather meant we were able to have our meal outdoors in the sunshine. On 15th July members had a splendid get-together and lunch at Sutton Green Golf Club. This was followed on 4th August by our annual Garden Party at the home of our Chairman, Pat Wheeler. We were again fortunate with the weather and were able to enjoy a delicious strawberries and cream tea.



---

From West Kent, Julia Cooper reports that a few members held a Tea Party at Emmetts Garden, near Sevenoaks, in May. It was a shame so few people could attend but those who did had a very enjoyable time.

From East Sussex, Norah Alston tells me that Eastbourne members enjoyed an outing through Ashdown Forest earlier in the summer with tea at Duddleswell. Sadly Eastbourne has lost Mrs Edna Martin. Norah has recently had a shoulder operation and I am sure we all wish her a speedy recovery.

**LONDON N.E.**

Div. Rep: Mrs W. Taylor OBE DL

Since receiving the last magazine (which I enjoyed) I have been to so many funerals that I am thinking of signing up as an official 'weeper and wailer' as in Victorian times! One I would like to mention was John Deeks, who being ex-army had a military send off in Lowestoft. He had been a loyal and hardworking hospital trolley organiser with his wife Julia in East London for many years and helped in large scale feeding. A lovely chap.

**LONDON N.W. - No report**

Div. Rep. Mrs Dorothy Stevens

**LONDON S.E. - No reports**

Div. Rep Mrs G Cleverly

**LONDON S.W. - Div Rep Vacant**

**HAMPSHIRE AND ISLE OF WIGHT**

Div Rep Mrs Beryl Adams

As usual we held our annual lunch in Sheet, near Petersfield in February. Everyone enjoys this and it's a lovely get together after Christmas

At the end of June we had a most enjoyable and quite different meeting at Marwell Zoo, arranged by our new secretary Mrs Ann Roberts. This was held as a special thank you to Joan Smee our retiring secretary in appreciation of all the work she has done for us over many years. We all met in a car park when a little train took us all up to the Long Room in Marwell Hall for lunch, before which we presented Joan with a bouquet of flowers and some garden tokens. We had a very nice buffet lunch after which we were left to wander round until 3o'clock.

---

---

There are beautiful grounds at Marwell and all the animals have plenty of room and natural habitats. At 3 o'clock we assembled back in the hall for a talk with slides by Bill Hall the head keeper at the zoo. He was a very interesting and amusing speaker and told us lots of interesting things about the animals and some funny things too. All too soon it was time to go back to the car park in the little Train. This ride was very interesting as it wended its way past lots of animals, a lovely ending to a special day

After this I would like to add something about one of our members who died in March. Iris Gunday MBE, JP, died on March 15th aged 82. She joined the WVS in 1952 in Swindon, Wiltshire and became the County Borough Organiser. In 1972 she moved to Derby where she served as deputy CBO until 1982 when she returned to her home city of Southampton. There she was involved with Emergency Services, Children's Holidays and Books on Wheels with her husband. She was still delivering books until shortly before she died. Iris was a magistrate for 25yrs serving on the bench in Swindon, Derby and Southampton

**BERKSHIRE** - Div. Rep. Vacant

**BERKSHIRE** - County Rep: - No report  
Mrs Morag Gordon,

---

Some people create happiness wherever they go  
Others, whenever they go

submitted by Eve Dawson, Tyne and Wear

---

An aviation instructor, having delivered a lecture on parachute work, concluded; 'and if it does not open, well, that is what is known as jumping to a conclusion!'

---

### Notice seen in a shop window in Portree, Skye



A Meeting of the  
Cats Protection League  
will take place on Wednesday,  
afterwards tea and biscuits will be served.  
Vouchers for castration will be available to OAP's  
and people on low incomes

With thanks to Valerie Falconer, Newcastle upon Tyne

---

## WRVS - MAKE IT COUNT

At their meeting in April, the Div Reps met with Mrs Alice Cleland CBE, Vice Chairman of WRVS. Having been a volunteer for nearly 30 years, a Trustee for eight and an organiser of some sort for 15 years, she had been invited to speak on the changes in WRVS

WRVS in the 21st century is totally different to the W.V.S. that was the vision of Lady Reading, but then everything has moved on over the last 65 years. The need for the change came when the government announced it was taking away the six million pounds a year funding previously granted to the WRVS. It has reduced to three million pounds and will eventually go down to one million.

The WRVS has never been a fund raising organisation and big corporations will not give money to a charity of such a low profile. When MORI did a survey, they found that only 2% of the general public knew of the WRVS.

In the past we have been very diverse, by seeing a need and dealing with it, but now we need to concentrate on fewer, more high profile functions. The gap that was identified was looking after older people, with the emphasis on loneliness, which will give us a suitable image for fundraising. Re-branding is part of this exercise, and the new image is to appeal to younger people (the under 60's).

When asked why the WRVS was not involved with Wimbledon, the Lord Mayor's Show and other big events anymore, Alice pointed out that they no longer fulfilled our mission of helping older people. We are all affected by new regulations, particularly in regard to childcare and Police checks.



Alice spoke about the new badge, which was at present a stud but is going to be turned into a pin. *It is a form of recognition not a membership badge.* The new logo will gradually replace the existing logo over the next 24 months.

---

## WRVS ASSOCIATION

82 Bootham, York,  
YO30 7DF

01 904 634 500

[wrvs.association@care4free.net](mailto:wrvs.association@care4free.net)

### President

Mrs Tina Tietjen  
Chairman. WRVS

### Vice-Presidents

Mrs Ava Christophersen  
Mrs E.D. Claydon

The Hon. Dame Mary Corsar DBE

Mrs P James MBE

Mrs Sheila McCormack BEM

Mrs Diane Price

Dame Barbara Shenfield DBE

Lady Toulson CBE

### Chairman

Mrs Pat Copping

### Hon. Secretary

Mrs Jean Pickard

### Hon. Editor

Paulene Lambert

### Hon. Treasurer

Mrs Maureen Hudson

All contributions for the next Newsletter should be with me by 31st January 2005.  
Please post to \_\_\_\_\_ or I can be  
contacted at \_\_\_\_\_

NB

*I have had several contributions AFTER the closing date, which when the document is already prepared and spaced out is very frustrating. I want to fit everyone in, as I know how important news is to you all.*

*PLEASE use the boring winter evenings in January to get your news off to me.*