

REPORT FROM SPARSHOLT WI FOR ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 26 APRIL 2017

Sparsholt WI was founded in 1917 and celebrates its centenary this year. At present there are 30 members but sadly only three who actually live in the village.

The making and journeys of Alresford's Binky Bear(charming), How men's mistresses have influenced history(informative and fascinating) marvellous hats by a local milliner(great fun) and Mormons in Hampshire are just some of the subjects that the speakers at the monthly meetings talked about in 2016

Apart from the meetings Quizes with other WI's take place as well as a monthly led walk and further exercise is gained by short tennis weekly in the village hall. Outings are organised and the members enjoyed a garden party at the Royal hotel as well as a visit to Hinton Ampner. Darts and skittles are also played against other WI's.

It's not all fun with the WI!

The WI is a great campaign machine and with 220,000 members is a force to be reckoned with as Tony Blair found out to his cost in 2000 when speaking at the AGM. 6000 members started a slow handclap as the speech became a party political broadcast.

Each year members vote for a resolution to support and in the past this has included:

More Midwives resulted in a major government review of Midwives Services in Feb 2016.

Research into honeybees decline resulted in an action plan by the government in 2013.

More funding for mental health issues in 'care not custody' campaign saw £5 million pilot funding with £50million added in 2015 and in 2016 a further £12million was added to work towards eliminating the inappropriate detention of people with mental health issues.

Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month and lady non members are welcome to come and listen to a speaker and share chat and refreshments afterwards. 'Open meetings' are held when all are welcome. All meetings are advertised on village noticeboards.

Sparsholt WI may be 100 years old but most of the members are a long way from that but it does need some new blood with fresh ideas and enthusiasm. Three new members joined recently and hopefully more women will realise the value and strength of women together and come and give us a try!