

# Autumn Council Meeting 2021

## Sub-Committee Reports

### Arts Sub-Committee

The Autumn programme of the Arts Sub-Committee events began with the first of eight, grant funded, One Day Calligraphy Schools running each Monday and Wednesday throughout October. Following government guidelines all classes were limited to eight with Jacquie Brachi, the Calligraphy tutor, arranging follow on sessions a fortnight after the beginners class, allowing time for practice and learning advanced techniques in Celtic Lettering using gold leaf and vellum. New classes on producing Sculptured Letters, White on White have been introduced. Helen Galway began the first of two Acrylic Painting classes on Saturday 16th October with a second to run on the 8th November. The classes are fully booked and all materials for each class supplied from the grant allocation received in March from The Arts, Culture and Heritage Fund. The members pay £10 each per class and this income will help to cover the future cost of venues and adjudicators. We will have enough art materials to run classes again in the Spring. The grant has enabled us to pay for the tutors and Mr Graham Booth as the adjudicator for February's Painting Competition. **'The Beauty of Nature'** theme has been carried over from last year's cancelled Art Festival as many members have been working on their entries during lockdown – the closing date for entries is **28th January 2022**. The closing date for the **Scarf Competition** entries is **17th December** and they will be judged along with the painting and calligraphy in time for **The Art Festival and Coffee Morning** planned for **Friday 11th February 2022**. With advice from the Donegal company Pixilili, production should go ahead with scarves ready in time for sale at The Balmoral Show. **The Music Festival** will take place on **Saturday 9th April 2022** in **Templepatrick Church Hall** with **Mr Sam Murray as adjudicator**. The programme has been revised and updated by the Institute choir conductors. The date and venue will be in the Autumn magazine with the music choices in the following one. They will be online (or can be emailed) to the conductors as soon as possible beforehand, in time for rehearsals. As suggested by Portaferry member Betty Lytle, the Committee are hoping produce sets of six notelets as fundraisers, designed by artistic members, with pencil or pen and ink illustrations of landmarks from each county. The suggestions were: Derry – Mussenden Temple, Antrim – Slemish Mountain, Down – Scrabo Tower, Fermanagh – Enniskillen Castle, Armagh – Cathedral and Apple Blossom. It was agreed that next year's Drama Festival (TBA) will include a novice class. The Committee look forward to continuing their promotion of the arts next Spring. The dates for your diary with further details will be in the magazine, website and on Facebook.

**Lesley Dowds**  
**Arts Sub-Committee Chairman**

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### Balmoral Sub-Committee

As the 2019 Balmoral Show drew to a close and the Committee packed up all their equipment, little did they know that it would be a full 3 years before they returned! This year the R.U.A.S. decided to hold the show in September, with Covid checks and wider walkways to allow for social distancing. Indoor catering would have involved greater restrictions with limited numbers and, with concern for the safety of both our members and visitors, we decided that the WI marquee would not be feasible. *Ladies, we were missed!* As life slowly returns to 'normal' we look forward to welcoming visitors back to our marquee next year. In 2022, our wonderful WI will celebrate 90 glorious years! What better place to start our celebrations than at Balmoral, where the marquee provides a great 'showcase' for our talents and a warm welcome for the many friends and visitors who return to support us each year. We plan to have all the usual attractions - teas, market stall, lucky dip, ballot, quiz, sales of paintings, soft toys, demonstrations and displays of homecrafts, competitions for floral art, baking, etc. Many of you have been busy knitting and crocheting more small animals – these proved very popular in 2019 and I'm sure they will again, so please continue! (remember to keep them 'child/baby friendly', with no buttons or eyes than might be pulled off!) On behalf of the

Balmoral Sub-Committee, a sincere thank you for all the produce you provide for the show. The hours spent making jams, chutneys, baking cakes, traybakes, etc. are greatly appreciated. It is your contributions that make the show a success. Please help us to make 2022 our best year yet!

**Heather Adamson**  
**Balmoral Sub-Committee Chairman**

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## Homecraft

Ladies, over the past year we have become familiar with the words 'pandemic', 'Covid-19', 'disruption', 'social distancing' and 'face masks', to name but a few! While there is still a threat from Covid-19, things are beginning to get back to normal. The new Homecraft Sub-Committee have got off to a great start. A One Day School has been arranged for 14th November at WI Headquarters, and also a Homecraft Weekend from 1st – 3rd April 2022 in The Lodge Hotel, Coleraine. Watch the magazine for details. The Isobel Lusk Trophy pattern has been chosen for 2022 - a pair of stripy socks. The pattern is available from Headquarters or can be downloaded from the website.

I am sure you are aware that a new Syllabus has been introduced this year. Copies are available from Headquarters priced £2.50. Please read it carefully. It explains fully everything you need to know about what is required for each ribbon and how to submit your articles for judging. The number of proficiency ribbons required for each award has changed as follows: Silver Spinning Wheel 6 ribbons, Gold Spinning Wheel 12 ribbons and Full Circle 25 ribbons. Articles already started will be accepted until March judging 2022, after that all articles must be from the new 2021 Syllabus. There is also a change to the pink sheet that is submitted with articles for judging. The new sheet can be obtained from Headquarters or can be downloaded from the website. Downloading and printing the form on white sheets will be accepted. The Sub-Committee continue to look at ways for you to learn new crafts. We are happy to organise One Day Schools for areas or groups of members and those who would like a craft day and we are happy to find tutors for you. Just get in touch with Headquarters and they will put you in contact with me. Ladies I hope that things will continue to improve in the coming year and your enthusiasm for craft will continue.

**Brenda Richardson**  
**Homecraft Sub-Committee Chairman**

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## Home and Garden

The last two years have brought many changes owing to Covid-19 and its effects. Our annual Christmas event took place in the Armagh City Hotel in November 2019, in which 487 members attended. The day consisted of floral art demonstrations, a fashion show by Gasp Boutique and a cookery demonstration from Ian Hunter of Belfast Cookery School. Balmoral Show, City of Belfast Autumn Flower Show and Festival of Food and Flowers were all cancelled due to the pandemic. In November 2020, the Sub-Committee started a project to lead the WI in a fight against Climate Change. We are encouraging members to reduce their carbon emissions and we launched a Plant a Tree scheme in conjunction with The Woodland Trust NI. Our target is 10,000 trees. So far, 8282 saplings have been ordered. Our Christmas Event is planned for 27th November 2021 in The Crowne Plaza, Belfast. The Competition will be A Homemade Christmas Decoration. I hope many of our members will be able to attend this event. I would like to thank our outgoing Chairperson, Margaret Kelso, for the last three years and for the folder of events she has given me. I look forward to my next three years as Chairperson and working with a great Committee. Thanks also, to the office staff for all their hard work and support in what has been a difficult period.

**Teresa Feeney**  
**Home and Garden Sub-Committee Chairman**

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## International

Following a very surreal and challenging number of months, June 2021 brought in a change of both Executive and Sub-Committee members and I was very surprised, but honoured, to be the new Chairman for the International Sub-Committee. Indeed, this is my first time to be a member of the Executive as well as Chairman of a Sub-Committee. Thankfully, we are finally back holding our International meetings again face to face. We are fortunate to have the return of previous Committee members but also are delighted to welcome new ladies to the team including our Federation Chairman and ACWW UN Committee Member, Margaret Broome.

The Sub-Committee decided to defer the World Rural Women's Day event which is usually held prior to the Autumn Council Meeting, due to restricted numbers and the constraints in place around Covid-19, which would have meant a much lesser event and the greater likelihood of it not being viable. However, we're looking forward to making the event bigger and better in 2022. It was acknowledged that this would impact on the generation of funds for ACWW but it was decided that the main focus should be on Women Walk the World this year as it is the ideal way for members to meet together safely within each Area, spending time together for friendship, enjoyment of the great outdoors and at the same time raising much needed funds. Thanks so much to all those Institutes that have been doing walks throughout the year for Women Walk the World. It's wonderful to see all the groups popping up on Facebook!

Each year the Evelyn Lord award is presented to a WI member, Institute or Area that has shown a great contribution to an international cause or carried out impressive work at an International level. It was unanimously decided that the Evelyn Lord Trophy for 2021 should be awarded to Ann Eccleston of Jerretspass WI for her amazing banner creation depicting a visual representation of 'Women and Armed Conflict' marking International Women's Day and the 25th Anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the ground-breaking treaty on women's rights signed in 1995.

Most definitely, 2020 was an extraordinarily difficult year for everyone globally, and ACWW members around the world tried their best to keep moving forward and overcome the challenges they faced. Following postponement, the ACWW European Conference will now take place on 19th-23rd September 2022 in Glasgow.

In addition, in May 2023, the ACWW's 30th Triennial World Conference is due to take place at the Queen's Palace in Malaysia. This is a year later than initially planned. This has led to an extension to the term of services of the current Board of Trustees until the 30th Triennial World Conference, whereupon the usual 42-month interval will apply.

Details and theme for the Mary Boyd Competition will be released within the next few weeks. The Committee would like to encourage as many ladies as possible to take part. The finished items will be taken to the European conference to be judged and sold for ACWW funds.

I would like to acknowledge the sterling work done by the outgoing Committee members. In particular, my thanks to Agnes Black, Chairman and Sarah Carroll, Secretary. I've been in touch with Agnes on a number of occasions and she always gives her help and advice so willingly. I really appreciate this guidance in this new position for me. My best wishes also to all the fantastic ladies that made up the previous International Sub-Committee. It was a privilege working with you all. I'm also very grateful to have a brilliant team of ladies currently on the Committee. I'm looking forward to exchanging ideas about the direction the International Sub-Committee should take in the future months. I appreciate your support in this new journey.

My thanks to each and every member that has contributed in any way to ACWW/International funds. Your continued support and generosity to the International part of our organisation is received with deep gratitude. It means that so many around the world can be supported through your giving. All amounts regardless of how little, add up to make a difference in others lives.

Finally, I wish to thank our fabulous office staff - Kathleen and Caroline. These ladies are totally dedicated and work tirelessly for our WINI. My thanks to both of them for their invaluable help and support. The new 2021-2024 International Sub-Committee comprises of:

Margaret Broome (Seaforde); Ruth Carroll (Ranfurly); Rhoda Farrelly (Erne); Betty Hazlett (Lower Bann); Davida Irvine (Iveagh); Sandra Marshall (Ards); Noreen Martin (Rowallane); Linda Moates (Quoile); Margaret Stokes (Knockagh) and Ina Watson (Lisnagarvey).

***Rhoda Farrelly***  
**International Sub-Committee Chairman**

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## Magazine and Leisure

Since lockdown in March 2020, 6 issues of the Ulster Countrywoman have been produced. Sincere thanks must be extended to Caroline, our Editor for doing such a wonderful job in producing informative and interesting magazines in a different format and continuing to do so during this crisis, justifies the numerous complimentary remarks reflecting her expertise.

For this WI season we have released the September issue, and the Autumn edition will be available next Thursday. A Christmas edition will available at the end of November, a New Year 2022 edition is planned for the end of January 2022.

Two business meetings of this new Sub-Committee have been held (September and October).

Members are encouraged to submit interesting and unique articles along with their photographs including those for the front cover.

### ***Please note:***

1. Members are reminded that handwritten notes or 'blurry' photographs are no longer accepted. Please be aware of backgrounds in photographs – many nice images are received but because of the background unfortunately cannot be used! All articles and photographs must be emailed to the Editor.

2. Institute News which greatly exceeds the maximum word count, give or take a few, from now on will be returned to the sender for re-editing. A note re same has been included in the Autumn edition of the Ulster Countrywoman informing the membership.

Uncertainties are all too common these days surrounding the organising of events, it is with this in mind that we have had to unfortunately postpone the Bowling competition until further notice and the Quiz Final awaits a decision in the present climate. However, the good news is, outdoor activities are less restricted which allows The Golfer of the Year tournament to be held in June next year (regulations permitting) date and venue to be confirmed. The title for the Phyllis Gailey Literary Competition is *'It Never Rains but It Pours'* a phrase which has often been heard, so here is an opportunity to write a story coining the phrase – the closing date for this Competition and the Scrapbook Competition is 31st January 2022. Despite lockdown we managed to hold some of our Competitions. We extend our congratulations to all the worthy winners, the runners up and to those who entered. Details of all the Competitions, closing dates and winners are published in the magazine, WI Facebook page and on the website.

It's been a while since we have had the opportunity to complete a Fireside Quiz. The Magazine and Leisure Fireside Quiz will be delivered with the magazine at the end of October and will be available from WI Treasurers at £1 each – a fun way to pass an Autumn evening and please send your completed entries before the closing date on the competition form.

The Ulster Countrywoman is the magazine of the Federation of the WI of Northern Ireland and as such is the showcase of what we do. Not only is it read by its members but is sent to numerous family and friends all over the world where it is patiently awaited with enthusiasm and enjoyed as an excellent read.

***Christine Rankin***

**Magazine and Leisure Sub-Committee Chairman**

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