

100 years of Billingshurst WI: 1919 - 2019

theWI
INSPIRING WOMEN

1919 FOR 100 YEARS 2019

On Thursday 14th February, Billingshurst WI celebrated its centenary in the Community Centre, with members and invited guests enjoying a special afternoon tea prepared by WI members.

The WI archives were on display, with photos and literature dating back to the inaugural meeting held in February 1919. This was complemented by a display of costumes over the decades, some of which were modelled by WI members, loaned from the West Sussex Federation office.

An array of crafts made by members over the years demonstrated a great range of skills with some items previously shown very successfully at the Village Flower Show and the South of England Show.

The raffle prizes had all been donated by local businesses and the WI is very grateful for their support.

During the afternoon, **Alison Merriman**, the Federation Archivist gave a brief history of the WI and **Shirley Flint**, the current WI President, along with three former Presidents cut the celebration birthday cake.

Wendy Cross, the longest serving member of

Billingshurst was presented with a bouquet of flowers.

To celebrate its centenary, Billingshurst WI has written a history book which was presented to all the members and guests. In addition a village tea towel designed by the WI is available to buy for £5 from the Community Centre.

The WI in Billingshurst over the past 100 years, has provided an opportunity to make friends, listen to good speakers, learn new skills and participate in the local community. It continues to campaign for positive change on a wide range of current issues such as mental health stigma, food waste, microplastic pollution and climate change.

As part of its centenary year, Billingshurst WI would like to encourage more younger women in the village to get involved and will be present at future village events when there will be an opportunity to find out more about the WI and to express interest in an evening WI meeting. More information can be found on the WI website www.thewi.org.uk.

Mary Devenport
Vice-President, Billingshurst WI

Photo: Wendy Cross, Billingshurst WI's longest serving member

