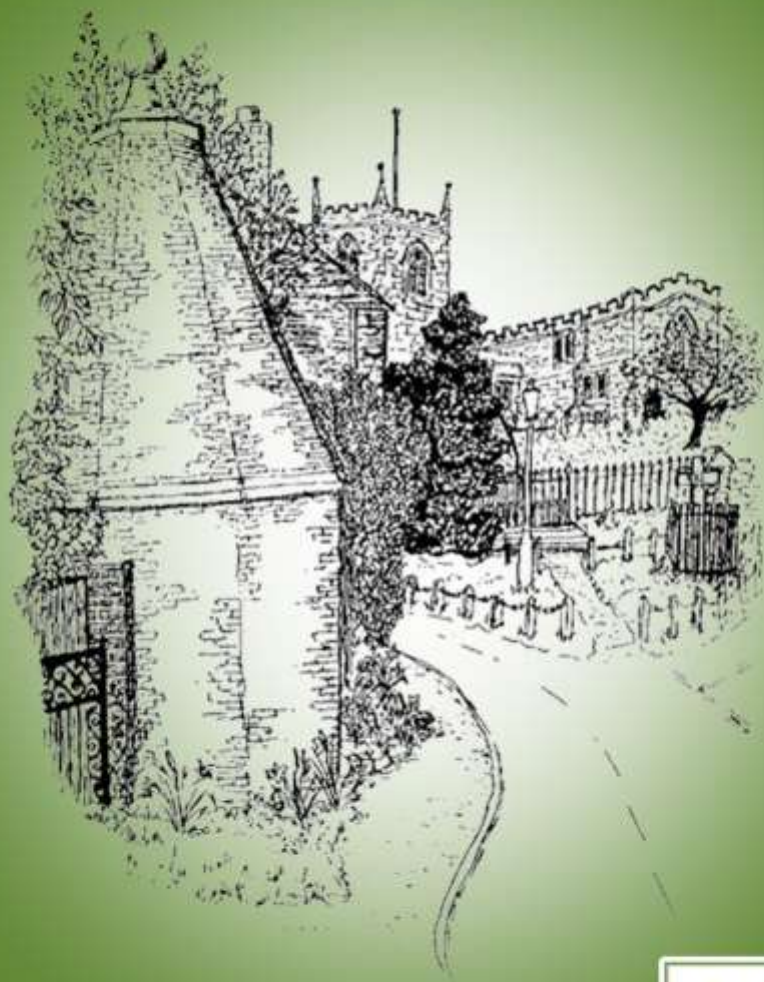


# Smisby WI

## 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary





# SMISBY WI 80<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

A brief look at some of the events occurring within the lifetime of Smisby Women's Institute, in celebration of its 80th anniversary.

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Information for booklet compiled mainly from Institute records and Jean Statt's village history and photo albums.

Front cover drawing by Pat Barnes

# **SMISBY WI 80<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY**

## **1915 - The First WI in Britain**

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The first Women's Institute was formed in Stoney Creek, Ontario, Canada in 1899, with support from the Ontario government. It aimed to train women from isolated communities, in home economics, child care and animal husbandry. During the First World War, the Women's Institute was introduced to Britain in 1915 by the Agricultural Organisation Society. This was to encourage countrywomen to grow and preserve food to help feed people during the war. Llanfair PG on Anglesey, North Wales was the first WI formed on September 16th 1915 and the National Federation of Women's Institutes (NFWI) was the governing body.

Smisby WI held its inaugural meeting in November 1934 and its first general meeting in January 1935. (19 years after first WI in Britain).

## **1934 Formation of Smisby Women's Institute**

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A formation meeting of the Smisby Women's Institute was held in the Church Room at 6.30 pm on 17th December 1934 where it was proposed and seconded "that a Women's Institute should be formed in the village of Smisby, to be known as the "Smisby Women's Institute"; this was unanimously agreed.

It was further agreed that only 10 members should be elected on to the Committee and that the Institute meetings should be held on the third Thursday of each month at 6.30 pm. The Officers elected were Miss Hewitt as President, Mrs Hackett as Vice President, Miss I C Hewitt as Treasurer and Mrs Hodson as Secretary.

## 1934 Smisby Events

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- In Smisby, Mr Insley opened a post office counter and a telephone was installed in his grocers shop at the Gables, Chapel Street.

## 1934 Nationally

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In 1934 King George V reigned and Ramsay Mac Donald was Prime Minister (National Coalition).

Some 1934 events were

- Establishment of the National Council for Civil Liberties.
- 10,000 people attended a British Union of Fascists rally in Birmingham, organised by Oswald Mosley.
- The Cat's Eyes road safety device was patented.
- Dinky toys were produced by Meccano Ltd.
- The Daily Mail published a picture of the Loch Ness monster, identified later as a hoax.
- A 54 year old grandmother was the first woman in Britain to complete a parachute jump.
- The Queensway tunnel under the Mersey was opened by King George V.
- The British Empire Games were held in London.
- An explosion at the Gresford colliery, near Wrexham, killed 266 miners and rescuers.
- The royal yacht Queen Mary was launched at Clydebank.
- Stanley Matthews first played football for England, the start of his 23 year international career.
- Nancy Tennant was sent, as the NFWI delegate, to the International Peace Conference in Geneva urging the Government to continue to press for world peace.
- Prince George, the Duke of Kent married Princess Marina of Greece and Denmark. This royal wedding was the first to be broadcast live on the radio.



## Smisby Village

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Smisby was settled in Saxon times, and the village was referred to as Smidesbi in the Domesday Book. The name is derived from the Old Norse for Smith's Farm. The parish includes the hamlets of Annswell and Boundary.

The village sits on a band of Bromsgrove Sandstone, (a reddish colour and fine-grained stone seen in small outcrops in Forties Lane) producing good, productive land. Most of the village was owned by the Harpur Estate from 1660 and much was sold off in the 1980s to pay death duties, so now there are few buildings in estate ownership.

The village is dominated by its sandstone parish church (grade 1) overlooking the cross roads. It is said to have been built in 1068 as a Chapel of Ease, by the Repton monks. This now forms the South aisle. The nave and chancel were added by Joanne Comyn who married William Shepey in 1300. She died in 1350 and her



memorial is next to the font. The tower was added in the 15th century, and contains two bells, which are inscribed "God save the King 1617" (Charles I) and "God save King Charles the Second 1662". These bells were recast in 2007. The linenfold panelling, behind the main altar, originates from Ashby Castle and installed in the 1850's.

The church, and adjacent manor house, sit on the high ground at the west end of the village. The

main street is characterised by some late 17th century farmhouses, and groups of terraced cottages. At the east end of the village was the main water supply, known as the Town well. There is also a village lock-up (early 18th century) as shown on the front cover. The village has a densely developed centre, with the buildings built in rows running parallel with the contours taking advantage of a south-facing aspect. It gives a strong sense of enclosure due to plain brick elevations of buildings and tall, simple boundary walls lining the pavements. The village shop is now a private dwelling and the former school is now a Day Nursery. There is a disused Methodist Chapel in Chapel Street. The village also has a village hall, which has been extensively restored with funds from the Parochial Charity. There are two pubs, one in the centre of the village, the other at Annwell Place. The village including the outlying farms and houses has a population just over 200 adults, occupying 110 properties. Although originally a farming settlement today the village is quiet and peaceful with a few small businesses and many residents are commuters of the larger towns and cities.

## The Harpur Crewe Group

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The National Federation of Women's Institutes (NFWI) is split into county federations. Each county forms its own regional association and Smisby WI is part of the Derbyshire Federation. The Derbyshire federation was formed in 1918.

Smisby WI originally became part of the Mercia Group. Then in 1962, Smisby WI became part of the Harpur Crewe group. Past Harpur Crewe Group members have been Hartshorne, Staunton Harold and Woodville WIs. Current members are Melbourne, Ticknall, and Staunton Harold WIs, together with Smisby.



The Harpur Crewe Group holds regular joint meetings, normally twice a year, with each WI in the group taking their turn to organise the meeting. Also socials, craft courses, and visits are arranged.



## **Smisby WI - The First Meeting in January 1935**

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The first meeting was held in the Church Room on 17th January 1935 and 24 members were present. The County Secretary gave an interesting, instructive address and suggested competitions she thought might prove very useful, including gardening and poultry keeping. She also displayed the County Handicraft Collection including rugs, basketry, embroidery, and leather work.

The Church Council charges for the room were felt to be expensive, being 4/- per meeting and 1/- for use of crockery and 2d each card table. Orders were given for 12 Home & Country magazines and a decision was made to have a lecture on milk cookery. Refreshments were handed round and a very enjoyable time was spent during the social half-hour playing the game "Do you like your neighbour?"!

### **1935 Smisby WI Events**

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- In February 3 dozen cups, saucers and plates were given by the Committee for use at Institute meetings. Each member of the Committee promised to raise 6/- either by tea chain, or some special effort.
- In March, Miss Hewitt went as delegate to the County Annual Meeting held in Derby.
- A rummage sale held in March raised £7/11/4½ for Smisby WI funds.
- The Mercia Group Meeting was held at Ticknall on 2<sup>nd</sup> April.
- In April a banking account was opened with £8 deposited
- In April, the County Secretary asked for exhibits of bottle fruit, jams, pickles etc be sent to the Royal and Bakewell Shows. A prize draw for a tray cloth donated by Miss Hewitt raised funds for Smisby WI and Mrs Taylor donated a jug and tray for use at Institute meetings
- A trading stall held in November realised 3/10½d profit.
- Members were invited to a tea and apron sale on behalf of St James' Church, Smisby.
- In May Miss Bailey noted a message from the Countess Ferrers, who was delighted Smisby had started a WI and would invite the members over there.

- In June the Midland Agricultural College was visited, with tea provided by the College at 1/- each.
- During October Smisby WI entered exhibits in the DFWI Handicrafts Exhibition held at Queen's Hall, Derby. Certificates were awarded to Miss Hewitt (2<sup>nd</sup> with an Afternoon Cloth); Miss Ison (2<sup>nd</sup> with a pair of cushion covers; and Mrs Hackett was commended for her tea cosy.
- A lecture on the care of the teeth was heard during Health Week.
- Four members joined the County Excursion to London on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> November to visit the NFWI Handicrafts Exhibition.

### 1935 Smisby Village Events

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- In Smisby, Mrs Hilda Moseley (Harpur Crewe estate) wrote to Smisby Parish Council to complain about villages having "town fittings", following the proposal to introduce electricity to the village.
- In 1936, 4 street lamps were erected in the village for £7 each. Eventually electricity came to Smisby in 1937, after Mrs Mosely said she would allow it, provided it came to the village underground
- Smisby Parish Council owned 1.25 acres on Ticknall Road, which they rented to Mrs Moseley for £4/0/0 pa.

### 1935 Nationally

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- King George V celebrated his Silver Jubilee (25th year of his reign).
- The government planned to triple the size of the air force in response to German rearmament.
- Radar was first demonstrated in Daventry.
- Maiden flight of the RAF Hawker Hurricane single seater fighter aircraft.



This plane accounted for 60% of the RAF's air victories in the Battle of Britain in 1940, which prevented the invasion of Britain.

- A 30 mph speed limit was introduced in built up areas.
- Driving tests became compulsory.
- The Ramblers Association was founded.
- Penguin introduced the first paperback books.
- Rioting breaks out in Belfast following the Orange Parades.
- TE Lawrence's seven Pillars of Wisdom is published following his death in a motorcycle accident.
- The Conservative party won the General Election and Stanley Baldwin became Prime Minister.
- James Chadwick wins the Nobel prize for his discovery of the neutron, a subatomic particle, indicating that an atomic nucleus is composed of protons and neutrons. Ernest Rutherford had hypothesized the existence of neutrons in 1920.

## **1937 Coronation Year: Smisby Village**

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Col. and Mrs Moseley from Calke Abbey and Miss Hewitt, the WI President, planted a conifer tree next to the village war memorial (which was erected in 1920) to commemorate the Coronation of George VI.

After a morning church service, sports were held in the afternoon followed by a Children's Tea, when children were given Coronation souvenirs, followed by a celebration tea for adult parishioners.

A reservoir was built during 1937, near the top of Forties Lane. However, there was no piped water in the village. Villagers drew their water from wells.

## **1938 Smisby WI Events**

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- A letter was received from the Derby Education Committee giving permission for Smisby WI to use the Council School Room for their monthly meetings
- Following a discussion amongst members about their personal preferences regarding improvements to Smisby Village, it was resolved that a letter be sent to the Parish Council supporting a proposed water scheme, to pipe water to each house.
- A letter was received regarding the planned evacuation of children in the time of war. Children were to come to Smisby

from Manchester and Salford. People who had the room were asked to take in two or more children. Mr Lawrence was appointed as a billeting officer. When asked for his support; he readily gave his consent to help with any evacuation.

## 1938 Smisby Village Events

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- In 1938 the village had 395 residents living in 29 private houses, 6 small holdings and 2 farms including the Manor. It had a Mill and bake house, a Wesleyan chapel, the Nelson Inn, a parish room and a mixed school.
- The villagers worked at the clay pits at Swadlincote, Burton on Trent and Woodville and at the local collieries. Many of the women work in the factories in Ashby de la Zouch (Castle Soaps, Ferguson Biscuit factory and the shoe factory).
- The main water supply was the village Town well. However, a scheme was under consideration to bring water to the village from the Burton reservoir.

## Smisby during the War

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The Second World War ran from 1939 to 1945. From 1941 to 1945 Smisby WI record books are missing and pages are missing from the Committee books. No WI committee meetings were recorded.

- During the war, the Institute made 228cwt of jam, as well as producing hundreds of cans of fruit and vegetables on an American canning machine; the items were sold in aid of the war effort under a Government rationing scheme.
- Pennies were collected by the WI Members for the Red Cross, of which the President was a Leader.
- Miss Hewitt told the Parish Council that she was unable to collect scrap iron since she did not have enough petrol allowance to go round the outlying farms.
- There were over 70 evacuated children living in the village.
- Mr Blake, who was senior warden responsible for Air Raid precautions, requested stirrup pumps in case of attacks. Repton District Council allocated a stirrup pump and two galvanised buckets for firefighting in Smisby parish.

- The parish council held a special meeting to try to get an improved bus service to Derby. The bus fare from Nelson Square to Market Street , Ashby was 2½d.
- The Parish Council received a request for formation of a Pig Club, to obtain extra meat.

## **1940 Nationally**

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- Britain called up two million 19 to 27-year-olds men for military service in World War 2.
- Food rationing was introduced.
- Driving tests were suspended during the war, so any person over 16 years old could drive.
- Freezing weather affected Europe and the Thames froze for the first time since 1888 and there was freezing rain and severe ice from 26 to 30 Jan.
- The Royal Navy destroyer HMS Cossack pursued the German tanker Altmark into the neutral waters of Norway and rescued 290 British seamen, the last major boarding incident by the Royal Navy.
- Oswald Mosely and other fascist sympathisers were interned.
- Metal threads were added to £1 notes to prevent forgeries.
- Neville Chamberlin resigned as Prime Minister and was replaced by a coalition war ministry. Winston Churchill persuaded the War Cabinet that there should be no negotiations with Hitler.
- The Dunkirk evacuation of 300,000 troops from France to England took place.
- The Battle of Britain began and German towns were bombed
- All major English cities are bombed, including Birmingham, Liverpool, Manchester, Sheffield, Plymouth and London. The centre of Coventry was destroyed by bombs from 500 Luftwaffe planes.

## **1944 Fauld Explosion and 1945 Smisby Events**

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An underground RAF munitions storage depot at Fauld, near Tutbury, near Burton on Trent exploded in November 1944.

About 4,000 tons of ordnance and bombs filled with high explosive exploded together with 500 million rounds of ammunition. This was

the largest non-nuclear explosion to occur in the UK. The official report said 90 people were killed, missing or injured as well as 200 cattle killed.

The explosion breached the dam of a nearby reservoir and so flooding was added to the damage directly caused by the explosion. The flood destroyed cottages and farm houses, obliterated a complete farm and destroyed a gypsum works. Mrs Jean Statt (aged 15 years) was on her family's farm when the explosion occurred. It was 2 miles away, as the crow flies. She remembered that malt shovels rather than metal shovels had to be used during the rescue and salvage operation because of the danger of a spark triggering another explosion.

This explosion left a crater  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile across and 400 feet deep (120m), which can still be seen today, although it is now overgrown. Access is still restricted because a significant amount of explosives are still buried deep in the site.

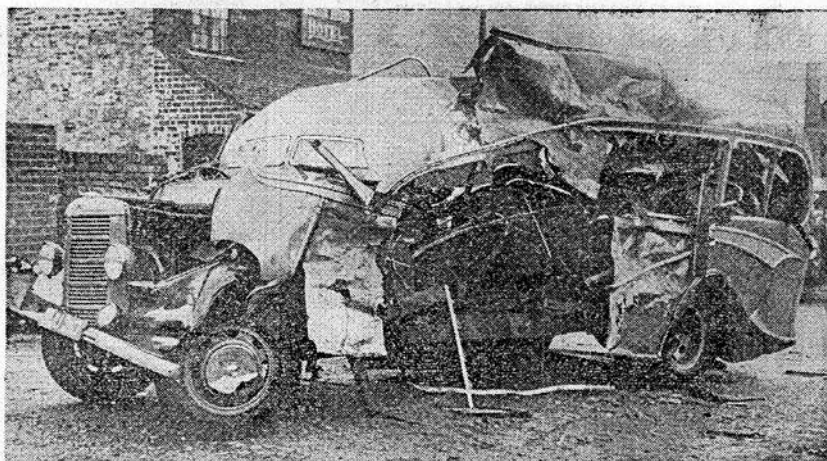
Events taken from the WI Committee Minute Book for 1945 include:

- It was decided to commence a Saving Scheme under the National Saving Company.
- The WI outing to Bourneville was not possible before October so another place was to be chosen.
- Records of Old Smisby were to be collected by Miss Kirby.
- It was decided to have classes in leather work. Miss Bailey was to write to Derbyshire Educational Authorities re grant. This was successful, and making sheepskin gloves was popular.
- Miss Hewitt asked Mrs H Insley to arrange for a bus to take members to a Group Meeting at Newton Solney in October. Any vacant seats were to be at the disposal of Hartshorne members. It was decided that Miss Hewitt & Mrs Lloyd should arrange a play for our Group Meeting.
- It was arranged with Mrs Silverwood of Chellaston to can fruit at Mrs Lloyd's on Aug 29th from 9 am to 4 pm. 190 cans for the use of members only. It was decided to pay Mrs Lloyd 10/- for the use of her pump & wash house. Mrs H Insley and Mrs Taylor promised to provide the necessary fuel. Members had to provide their own knives. A second day of canning was arranged for 25 September when 170 cans were used.

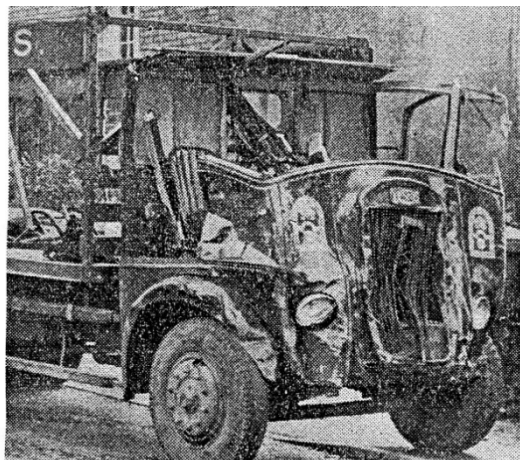
- At our WI Victory Party, it was proposed by Miss Hewitt that the WI booked seats for the C.E.M.A. plays to be held in Ashby.

## 1949 Smisby WI Members in Fatal Accident

On Tuesday, 18<sup>th</sup> October 1949 a bus carrying Smisby WI members to a WI Group Meeting at Netherseal was in collision with a brewery lorry at Overseal crossroads. Sadly, two people were fatally injured and 20 were hurt, some seriously, in this horrendous accident. Offers of help and hundreds of letters from all over the country poured in. It was six months before the Institute held another meeting.



THE EXTENSIVELY DAMAGED COACH, in which members of the Smisby Women's Institute were trapped.





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# SHATTERED COACH PILED AGAINST INN WALL AFTER COLLISION WITH LORRY

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## Householders Dash from Homes to Rescue Victims

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### *GIRL CYCLIST TRAPPED UNDER 'BUS FOR AN HOUR*

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**T**WO WOMEN WERE KILLED, AND 21—ALL BUT THREE OF THEM WOMEN—WERE INJURED, WHEN A MOTOR-COACH CARRYING MEMBERS OF THE SMISBY WOMEN'S INSTITUTE TO A WOMEN'S INSTITUTE RALLY AT NETHERSEAL, CAME INTO COLLISION WITH A HEAVY BREWERY LORRY AT OVERSEAL LAST NIGHT.

Nine of the injured women, including a girl cyclist who lay trapped by the coach for an hour, before she was extricated, are detained in Burton Infirmary.

Nine other members of the coach party, the driver of the coach, and the lorry driver and his mate, were treated at the Infirmary, but were not detained.

Mrs. W. Bates, a widow, of White Houses, Overseal, was killed outright as she stood on the corner where the accident happened.

Her husband, Mr. George William Bates, was killed in a pit accident several years ago.

The death roll was increased to two when one of the ten victims admitted to Burton Infirmary—Mrs. Helen Dickinson (62), of Prestop Farm, Ashby—died at 12.15 this afternoon. She had earlier been stated to be suffering from severe head injuries.

Two other victims were this afternoon on the "seriously ill" list.

Immediately on receipt of news of the crash, emergency measures were put into operation at Burton Infirmary, and doctors, nursing staff and kitchen staff were engaged throughout the night, tending to the injured, and providing refreshments for anxious relatives awaiting news.

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It was shortly after 6.30 last night, when the tragedy, which reduced the Toll Gate, Overseal, to a shambles, occurred.

The coach, owned by Messrs. Machin's of Ashby, and driven by Mr. George Yates, of Fish Pond House, Coleorton, was proceeding along the Woodville to Netherseal Road, and had almost reached the end of its journey, with its cheerful load of Women's Institute members, bound for the Netherseal rally of local branches of the Institute.

The motor-lorry, a six-wheeled vehicle owned by the transport - contracting firm of Messrs. Shephard and Hough, of Wetmore Road, Burton, and under contract to Messrs. Worthington and Co., the Burton brewers, was carrying a load of empty beer casks and barrels, and was travelling from Acresford, in the direction of Burton. The driver and his mate were Mr. Frank Brealey (41), of 129 Wetmore Road, Burton, and Mr. G. Warren (48), of 18, Bearwood Hill Road, Winhill.

At the junction of the two roads, on one corner of which is Overseal Parish Church, and on another the Robin Hood Inn, the vehicles came into violent collision.

The front of the lorry crashed through the front, nearside panelling of the coach which was piled against the wall of the Robin Hood Inn.

**Miss Peggy Wood (17), of Lullington Road, Overseal, who is employed at Moira Post Office, and who is believed to have been waiting near the "Halt"**

**sign on the Robin Hood corner, was trapped by the legs beneath her own machine, on which the coach came to rest, and was pinned in the doorway of the Robin Hood.**

**Mrs. Bates, who is understood to have been standing at the same corner, when the vehicles met, was killed almost instantly.**

The sound of the impact which almost completely wrecked the coach, stoving in one side, and badly damaging the other, was heard at Spring Cottage, a mile away from the scene of the catastrophe.

## The Casualty List

The following is the full casualty list:—

### DEAD

Mrs. W. Bates, widow, White Houses, Overseal.

Mrs. Helen Dickinson (62), Prestop Farm, Ashby.

### DETAINED IN BURTON INFIRMARY

Mrs. Winifred Hewson, (51), Boundary, Woodville — fractured femur and lacerations.

Mrs. Henrietta Edwards, Pitts Farm, Smisby—leg injury.

Mrs. Nancy Sutton, School House, Smisby—head injuries.

Mrs. Doris Bailey (47), New Reservoir, Hartshorne—head injuries.

Miss Peggy Wood (17), Lullington Road Overseal—injury of left leg.

Mrs. Eva Pepper, Chapel Street, Smisby—head injuries and injury to pelvis.

Mrs. Joy Hewitt, Old Park Farm, Ashby—injuries to chest.

Miss Nellie Insley, Post Office, Smisby —fractured femur and injuries to right hand.

Mrs. Nellie Robinson, 30, Belvedere Road, Woodville—fractured left arm and head injuries.

### TREATED BUT NOT DETAINED

Mr. George Yates, Fish Pond House, Coleorton.

Mr. Frank Brealey (41), 129, Wetmore Road, Burton.

Mr. G. Warren (48), 18, Bearwood Hill Road, Winhill.

Ethel Archer, School Road, Smisby.

Mrs. Myra Silverwood (30) The Lodge, Old Park, Ashby.

Frances Smith, Smisby.

Marjorie Freestone (24), Main Street, Smisby.

Gertrude Lloyd (60), Rose Mount, Smisby.

Gertrude Ball, Main Street, Smisby.

Marion Bailey (30), The Poplars, Smisby.

Miss Rosamund Taylor (22), and Mrs. Eunice Taylor (45), both of Southwood Farm, Ashby.

All through the night a steady stream of taxis and cars brought relatives to the bedsides of the injured.

## 1950 Smisby Events

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- A telephone kiosk was installed in the village in 1949 (and recently the Parish Council has prevented its removal and ensured it remains in service).
- The Parish Council noted that the request for a 30mph speed limit in the village was turned down by Derbyshire County Council.
- 1950 WI Committee members were: Miss Hewitt (President), Miss Insley, Mrs Taylor, Mrs Insley, Mrs Lloyd, Mrs Robinson, Mrs H Insley, Mrs Jenkinson, Mrs Silverwood , Miss Dumelow, Miss Bailey, Miss Insley, Mrs Bailey, Mrs Armstead.
- The WI committee decided to send magazines to Australia in partial return for food parcels received.
- The first meeting was held in March in the County School. This was a social and not a formal meeting.
- Rationing was still in operation. It was decided that the fat and sugar obtained on permit should be given to the different members each month, who act as tea hostesses.
- A film Show was arranged for 26 October and a dance in November, which raised £11 for the Red Cross.
- A pressure cooker exploded during a demonstration at Cliftonthorpe, coating the paraffin stove and floor with rice pudding.

## 1950 Nationally

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- King George V reigned.
- Clement Atlee (Labour) was Prime Minister, having won the general election by 5 seats.
- Motor fuel rationing ended after 11 years.
- The BBC Light programme first broadcasts "Listen with Mother", "Andy Pandy" and "The Archers" on the wireless.
- India became a republic.
- The film, "The Blue Lamp" introduced the character of Dixon of Dock Green, played by Jack Warner.
- Corby was designated as the first "New Town" and planned to provide homes for 40,000 people.
- Sainsbury's opened the first supermarket in Croyden.
- National Service conscription was extended by 2 years.

## 1955 Smisby WI 21<sup>st</sup> Anniversary Year

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- It was decided that the January meeting should be counted as the annual general meeting because that had been cancelled owing to very bad weather.
- Mrs Taylor wished to resign as Treasurer as she had agreed to represent the WI on the Village Hall Committee. Miss Dumelow was unanimously elected to the post. There was to be no ballot for committee as there were only sufficient members nominated.
- A date for the WI Dance was fixed for Friday 27 April 1956. It was decided to book The Melba Band from 8 pm – 1.30 am. This dance made a profit of over £9.
- The 21st Anniversary Party was held during February 1956. Mrs Tilley arranged the catering and Mrs Bailey produced the table decorations. The cost to each member was 4/6d with additional cost met by the raffle fund. A card was received from the NFWI. Mrs Mason from Duffield was one of the invited guests. She had attended the inaugural Smisby WI meeting in her role as DFWI Voluntary County organiser.

## 1955 Nationally

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- Prime Minister Winston Churchill resigned due to ill health, Anthony Eden took over (Conservative).
- February saw a big freeze across Britain.
- The U.K's first atomic bomber unit, No. 138 Squadron RAF, was formed, flying Vickers Valiants.
- The Dam Busters film was released.
- Unemployment was just over 215,000, so 1% of the workforce was jobless.
- The Archers radio programme killed off the character Grace Archer.

## 1960 Smisby Events

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In 1960, 14 members were recorded in the Minutes book. These were Miss Hewitt (President); Miss Bailey; Mrs Henson; Mrs Jones; Mrs Taylor; Mrs Smith; Mrs Armstead; Mrs Webster; Mrs B Hewitt; Mrs Brearley; Mrs Chadfield; Mrs Tilley; Mrs Slater and Miss Dumelow

- Miss Hewitt agreed to represent the WI on Ivanhoe Community Council.
- Mrs Jones and Mrs Taylor to continue as representatives on the Village Hall committee.
- Mrs Webster was co-opted onto the committee.
- The sub committees for the Trading Stall, Social Half Hour, and Press Correspondent continued
- The party date was set as Friday 4 March. In addition, the 1961 Annual Party was fixed for 19 January 1961, when Melbourne WI would be asked as guests.
- The Ashby Show exhibits were discussed. Smisby was to provide two stewards: one for produce, and one for handicrafts. It was decided to give a donation of 1 guinea instead of gifts to the Gift Stall. Smisby WI was asked to provide the tea for the judges and also to help with the Gift Stall.
- Members reported on the Show meeting held at Ivanhoe and the Committee decided to vote for the “Four Homemade Gifts from Country Friend to a Town Friend” as the theme for the produce and the two floral arrangements. Also a display in a wine glass was the topic selected for miniature floral displays and “Shades of same colour” the topic for large arrangements.
- Staunton and Blackfordby WIs were invited as guests to the September meeting.
- It was decided to ask Singer Sewing Machines Company to bring their film for Oct 1961 and to ask Miss Hall to bring another mannequin parade for the September meeting.

## 1960 Nationally

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- The Queen gave birth to Prince Andrew.
- Princess Margaret's wedding to photographer Anthony Armstrong Jones was the first televised royal wedding.
- The Mau Mau uprising in Kenya ended.
- Cyprus and Nigeria became independent of the UK.
- The Prime Minister was Harold Macmillan (Conservative).
- Last year in which a farthing was legal tender.
- The Beatles performed their first concert.
- The Grand National was televised for the first time. The winning horse was Merryman II.
- The first episode of Coronation Street was shown on TV.

- The Shadows released an instrumental record, Apache.
- Francis Chichester made a solo crossing of the Atlantic in Gypsy Moth II in a record 40 days.
- "Lady Chatterley's Lover" sold 200,000 copies in one day, when published after the 1928 ban was lifted.
- The first successful kidney transplant was performed in Edinburgh.

## 1965 Smisby Events

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The annual party was arranged to take place in the village hall on Feb 26<sup>th</sup> at a price of 3/- per member and 5/- per guest. Members were invited to attend a candle ceremony at Ivanhoe School.

Dressmaking and lampshade classes were held and competitions organised; members knitted and crocheted and tried their hand at wickerwork; they made stools, cushion covers, hats and toys. Their excellent skills were exhibited at the Ashby Show and in 1966 Smisby WI became the proud winner of the Shield for the first time. They went on to triumphantly win the Shield eight times in twelve years before they celebrated their half century!

The Spring Harpur Crewe group meeting was at Kings Newton Hall, by invitation of Lady Paget. This was the 6<sup>th</sup> meeting since the formation of the group. The roll call showed that there were 89 participants but just 3 from Smisby. Each institute displayed 2 floral arrangements and 6 items of handicrafts Also members could view the gardens and then watch the Morris dancers of Derby.

The October group meeting was held in the Church Room, Woodville with 89 members attending, including 3 Smisby members. The County representative, Mrs Silverwood provided news and information about the last event in this jubilee year, a concert in Chesterfield. The speaker Mrs Blair-Raines explained the problems of agriculture and food production in Nigeria and also the work among the lepers, with colour slide illustrations. Woodville provided the refreshments followed by a performance by their choir and a most amusing play.

## W.I.s IN COMPETITION AT ASHBY SHOW

There were entries from 12 Derbyshire Institutes and seven Leicestershire Women's Institutes at the Ashby Show, the overall winners of the major co-operative competition for the Lake and Wood Shield being SMISBY.

Runners-up for the Falder Cup were Melbourne and the third prize of the Arnson Cup

went to Ticknall.

The Else Trophy for the outstanding produce entry was won

by Mrs. Woodward, of Ticknall, for a bottle of raspberries and redcurrants (a redcurrant had been inserted into every single raspberry!) and the Gibbs Trophy for the best floral exhibit in the show will be shared jointly by Mrs. Blacklock, of Smisby, and Mrs. Williams, of Staunton Harold.

The Lake Trophy for the outstanding exhibit of handicrafts was won by Mrs. Richards, of Bretby, for a knitted shawl and the individual competition winners for the best apron and chutney respectively were Mrs. Richards of Bretby, and Mrs. Bosworth, of Spondon Afternoon.

Tutbury won the Else Cup for the best presentation of produce, Smisby the prize for the best presentation of handicrafts, and Etwell the novices' prize for an Institute entering for the first time.

The prizes were presented by Mrs. F. T. Hewitt, wife of the show president,



## 1965 Nationally

- The Kray brothers were arrested on suspicion of running a protection racket in London.
- Thousands attended Winston Churchill's state funeral.
- Sir Stanley Matthews played his last 1st division football game.
- The Pennine Way officially opened in April.
- Gambia became independent.
- Great train robber Ronald Biggs escaped from Wandsworth prison.
- Sir Alex Douglas-Home resigned as leader of the Conservative party, succeeded by Edward Heath.
- Thunderbirds was shown on TV.
- Ian Brady and his girlfriend Myra Hindley were charged with murder of 10 year old Lesley Ann Downey. Eleven other



murder victims were suspected of being buried in the Lancashire moors.

- Life imprisonment replaced the death penalty for murder, in a 5 year suspension.
- Mary Whitehouse founds the National Viewers and Listeners' Association.

## 1967 and 1968 Smisby Events

Members successfully competed at local shows in produce, handicrafts and flower arranging.



MRS. S. G. JOYCE (second from the right) presenting the Joyce Cup for the best flower arrangement to Mrs. P. J. Kerby, of Smisby, at the first ever Spring show of Ashby-de-la-Zouch Horticultural Society on Saturday. Mrs. Kerby is a member of Smisby Women's Institute, and other members of the Institute who exhibited successfully are also seen in the picture. They are (left to right) Mrs. H. Ottewell, Mrs. C. Hatton, Mrs. J. Bailey and Mrs. R. Blacklock.

Pictures of the Smisby WI 33<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary party, which was held in the village hall, made the news.



Members of the Women's Institute at Smisby, near Ashby-de-la-Zouch, photographed at their 33rd anniversary party, which took place in the Village Hall, Smisby.

## 1970 Smisby Events

At the February committee meeting the programme for the year was decided and the party arranged. Members would be charged 5/- each and guests 7/- (shillings).

Preparations for the produce and handicrafts competitions at Ashby Show were discussed by the committee in July including entries from Mrs Hatton (an embroidered picture), Mrs Jardine (feathered hat) and Mrs Henson (a child's knitted garment).

The annual outing was arranged to the Webb Corbett works in September.

The Harpur Crewe Spring meeting had a speaker from Kingsway hospital talking to the 108 attendees (12 from Smisby) about the differences between old and modern medical treatments. Ticknall WI provided the refreshments and an amusing play as the entertainment. The 18<sup>th</sup> meeting was held at Smisby in the autumn and attended by 104 members (24 from Smisby). Mr WC Pratt from Ashby talked about glassmaking and stained glass windows.



Smisby provided refreshments, followed by a Victorian evening around the piano given by members and children.



## A Victorian tea party

DEMONSTRATIONS in painting, creative embroidery and Ikebana, attracted a continuous flow of people into the W.I. tent at the Ashby Show.

It proved an enormously successful venture as an additional attraction to the co-operative staging by 12 Leicestershire and Derbyshire Institutes of entries interpreting the theme of "A Victorian Tea Party." The judges comment: "A very high standard."

For the second year running Smisby was the overall winner of the major co-operative competition for the Lake and Wood shield. Melbourne was the runner-up for the Falder Cup and Packington was placed third to receive the Arnson Cup.

The Else Trophy for the outstanding item of produce in the show went to Mrs. Woodward of

Ticknall for a Topsy cake; the Lake Trophy for the outstanding handicraft entry to Mrs. Hill of Newton Solney for a piece of pottery and the Gibbs trophy for the best floral exhibit in the show was awarded to Mrs. Howard of Packington.

\* \* \*

Photograph (above) shows the winning interpretation of a Victorian Tea Party which won Smisby the premier award at the show.

Lined up as champions (right) for the second year running, we introduce (left to right, front row): Miss M. Hewitt, president; Mrs. E. Armstead and Miss C. Ellis. Back row, left to right: Mrs. R. Blacklock, Miss M. Bailey and Miss B. Bott.

## 1970 Nationally

- HRH the Prince of Wales joined the Royal Navy.
- A Dockers strike caused disruption.
- 18 year olds were able to vote in the General Election, when Edward Heath's Conservatives had a surprise win by 30 seats.

- Some of the thalidomide victims obtained compensation after a long legal battle.
- Paul McCartney left the Beatles.
- The first Glastonbury festival was held.
- The Methodist Church allowed women to become full ministers.
- British Leyland launched the Range Rover vehicle.

## 1975 Smisby Events

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Smisby were taking part in a group games challenge and decided their challenge to the other WIs would be a game of Beetles.

The 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary (Ruby) party was planned for March and it was decided to invite founder officers and representatives from the group and county, at a charge of £1 per head. Members were asked to bring a gift to the party to the value of 15p, which could be used for bingo and game prizes.

The Spring Group Meeting was held in Stanton by Bridge village hall with 5 Smisby members amongst the 73 attendees. The amusing speaker from Yorkshire, spoke on “50 and like it”. She told members to remember that “40 is the old age of youth” and that “50 years is the youth of old age”. All members wore Easter bonnets and the Easter bonnet parade was won by Staunton Harold.

The Autumn Group Meeting was held in Melbourne with 6 Smisby members amongst the 88 participants. The speaker was Mr Booth, the PR officer to the National Gallery. The host WI Staunton Harold presented an amusing play as the entertainment. Mrs Hatton provided a dried flower arrangement as Smisby WI's competition entry.

## 1975 Nationally

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- Margaret Thatcher defeated Edward Heath in the Conservative Party leadership election.
- The Moorgate tube train crash killed 43 people.
- Parliament was broadcast on radio for the first time.
- Lord Lucan was found guilty of murder of his family's nanny.

- An IRA bomb exploded at Green Park station.
- The Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and the Equal Pay Act 1970 both came into force, aiming to end unequal pay of men and women in the workplace.
- Colin Dexter's first Inspector Morse novel was published.

## 1980 Smisby Events

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- The Smisby Conservation Area had been designated by South Derbyshire District Council on 13th July 1978 and various village buildings listed over the next few years.
- In 1979, the current village hall was formed from part of Sir John Crewe's school, which once housed 60 children in a converted former farmhouse around 1845. This village school was replaced by the County Council with a new building for 120 pupils, built on the opposite (south) side of Main Street.
- Only 7 WI members attended the February meeting, although the average attendance was around 16 members during 1980.
- Smisby WI held their annual party in April.
- Entries for the Ashby Show were a focus of interest and planning. Mrs and Miss Hatton were to do two flower arrangements. Produce was to be made by Miss Dumelow (a trifle); Miss Hewitt (cheese biscuits); Mrs Henson (cake and mince pies); Miss Sankey to ice the cake; Miss Bailey (shortbread); Mrs Hatton (brandy snaps); Mrs Armstead (a glazed ham); Miss Sankey (sausage rolls) and in addition an oil painting, plate, and matinee jacket were available for selection.
- The 37<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Harpur Crewe group was held at Woodville with 4 members from Smisby out of the 99 attendees. The speaker was a theatre lighting designer, whose sets included Agatha Christie's Mousetrap (which was then in its 28<sup>th</sup> year). Woodville provided the refreshments followed by a play. Miss Hewitt from Smisby gave the vote of thanks.
- The Autumn Group Meeting, at Melbourne was attended by 103 members, with 2 from Smisby. The speaker's topic was "Making the Most of Ourselves" and was followed by entertainment from an octet from the Melbourne Male Voice Choir. Stanton by Bridge won the competition for a knitted toilet roll cover.

## 1980 Nationally

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- Steel workers went on strike over pay.
- Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher announced that state benefits to all strikers would be halved.
- Inflation rose to 18% during the year.
- Radio Caroline, the pirate radio station, stopped transmitting when its hosting ship sank.
- The SAS stormed the Iranian Embassy building, killing 5 of the 6 terrorists and freeing all the hostages.
- The Government announced that US nuclear cruise missiles would be located at Greenham Common. This resulted in protests by the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament.
- The pre decimal sixpence coin was withdrawn from circulation.
- The Yorkshire ripper was being hunted by police.
- John Lennon (ex Beatles) was murdered and Hattie Jacques (star of Carry On films) died of a heart attack.

## 1985 Smisby WI Golden Jubilee (50 years)

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The 1985 AGM resulted in the following officers elected; President, Mrs Massey; Vice presidents, Mrs Henson and Mrs Allsop; Secretary, Mrs Barnes; Treasurer, Mrs South and Press Officer, Mrs Allsop.

In addition to the Smisby monthly meetings, Smisby were more active in the Harpur Crewe group, organising a group bowls match. The 45th group meeting was held in Ticknall village hall and 8 Smisby members were present amongst the 139 attendees. The County representative spoke about the national WI Olympia 1984 event and also about a county event to be held at Chatsworth in July. The speaker, Mrs Sheila Stewart, discussed her book on dialects. This was followed by an exhibition of member's articles made for national Olympia 1984 promotion display and a short play by Ticknall WI.

22 members from Smisby hosted the Autumn Group Meeting, which had 95 participants. The County representative reported that over £6,000 had been raised by the Chatsworth event. Mrs Massey congratulated Mrs Hewitt for winning the County Scrabble

championship. Woodville won the competition for the best Golden Jubilee card. Two speakers entertained the group with their tales of Derbyshire Dialect and the entertainment was provided by the Melbourne Singers.

1985 was the Smisby Women's Institute Golden Jubilee year. However, the cold buffet and sherry reception celebration was held during the formation month of December 1984. Past President, Miss Madge Hewitt, was invited. She had held the position for 48 years. Miss Marian Bailey (former Secretary) and President Mrs Cynthia Massey (centre) are shown in the photograph with Miss Hewitt cutting the cake.



Each member was presented with a Bretby pottery memento (see picture). The cost was £5 per member, with guests free of charge. Press reports are shown on page 28.

Marian Bailey wrote a poem to be read as part of the welcome to guests. Mrs Hatton provided the floral table arrangements. Melbourne singers provided the entertainment.



## 50 Years at Smisby WI by E. M. Bailey

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It seems to be WI fashion  
To tell all your history in rhyme.  
We've never been known for  
conforming  
But we'll do our best this time.

Our saga began in December  
A full fifty years ago,  
When the group who became  
founder members  
Decided to give it a go.

They started with twenty four  
members  
A nice little group was it not?  
And strangely enough, despite  
changes,  
That number is what we've still  
got.

The war was our first real  
challenge  
When meetings were spent  
making jam  
The minutes give prices for  
piglets!  
So together with jam went ham!

Our sessions of jamming and  
canning  
Bring memories back by the score  
Such as rhubarb sticks put in  
whole as they were  
The army still came back for  
more.

The sessions we had with the  
canner  
Needed gallons of water to cool

So, because of a drain that didn't  
connect  
A cellar became - well - a pool!

We spent many hours in repairing  
The havoc that flooding did  
cause,  
So the next lot of cans were  
sealed at the home  
of one with her own watercourse

Now that shops were getting quite  
empty  
We made almost everything  
We upholstered our chairs, we  
made our own shoes,  
We even made mats with farm  
string.

As our President was Red X  
Leader  
That let us in for the lot.  
We went 'Penny a week'  
collecting  
First Aid Certificates we've got.

The most serious part of our saga  
Happened in the year'49  
We were on our way to a meeting  
And travelling along very fine

The weather it was quite  
atrocious.  
A lorry was lumbering along  
When suddenly our bus was  
crashed into bits  
And most of our senses had  
gone.

Tis better if we can forget pain  
and fear  
And of that night sufficient to say.,  
That of all thirty two involved in  
that crash  
Not one of us could walk away.



To say that W.I. members are friends

Was certainly true that day  
For eighty groups all over the land  
Offered help in many a way.

The locals took washing, did cooking at home,  
Took gifts to the hospital wards,  
And those far afield offered homes for a rest  
And cash if we should be in need.

Twas six months before we returned to the fold  
And some of our number had gone.  
The rest of the group put a show on one night  
To convince us we did still belong.

The years that followed were gentler by far  
As we slowly got back into gear,  
And we set about learning many new skills  
At classes we held each year.

We knitted and crocheted, did wickerwork too,  
Made stools, cushion covers, and hats;  
Made toys for the children, and lampshades galore,  
And arrangements of flowers to attract.

The benefits of all this striving and strain  
Were seen when we entered the show

We didn't do much in the first few years  
But soon we were raring to go.

The year '66 was the first time we won;  
We'd proved that our tactics were sound  
We took the shield eight times in twelve years,  
A triumph of which we are proud.

The rest of the prizes fell into our grasp  
As our cooks and craftswomen too  
Brought out the best from their repertoire  
And showed what we could do.

And now we have reached our fiftieth year  
Our story is right up to date,  
Although we've travelled through so many years  
It didn't take long to relate.

We've made lots of friends who've lasted the course  
And many more new ones too.  
But there's just one person who's carried us on  
The whole of the fifty years through.

We had one leader the whole of the time,  
The Institute really is hers.  
If Miss Hewitt had never started us off  
There wouldn't have been any verse.

The early days of Smisby WI were recalled by Founder President Miss Madge Hewitt at the Institute's golden jubilee dinner. Miss Hewitt was President continuously until retiring two years ago.

During the war, the Institute made more than 28 cwt of jam, as well as producing hundreds of cans of fruit and vegetables on an American canning machine. The items were sold under the Government rationing scheme, and members collected pennies for the Red Cross.

Last year's President, Miss Marian Bailey, read out a poem she had written about the Institute's 50 years. And on show was the golden jubilee tablecloth which she had embroidered and which all the members had signed.

## Smisby looks back . . .

Also on display were photographs of some of the Institute's activities.

It has held craft classes, and won a trophy at Ashby Show eight times since 1966. Mrs. Kath Hewitt — one of several members living in Ashby-de-la-Zouch — has twice won the Derbyshire WI Scrabble Shield for the Institute.

Mrs. Cynthia Massey, the current President, had made a pressed flower greetings card marking the jubilee, and Mrs. Faith Lawrence baked the anniversary cake.



When Smisby Women's Institute celebrated its half century with a Golden Jubilee dinner they invited all their past and present presidents. Not a difficult task as it turned out — for Miss Marjorie Hewitt, the founder president, held the position for no less than 48 years. She is pictured (centre) with the present holder of the position, Mrs. Cynthia Massey (right) and immediate past-president Miss Marian Bailey.



## 1985 Nationally

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- The first British mobile phone call was made.
- The first televised debate in the House of Lords was shown.
- The soap opera East Enders was shown on television.
- The miners' strike ended after 1 year.
- Riots in Handsworth and Brixton occurred.
- The charity Comic Relief was launched.
- British Telecom announced it was going to phase out its famous red telephone boxes.
- The first heart and lung transplant was carried out
- The Queen Mother commissioned the aircraft carrier the HMS Arc Royal.

## Miss Hewitt

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Miss Hewitt was a founder member and played an active role in both Smisby and the group. She was president of Smisby WI for 48 years. She was born in 1902 and died in 1987.

Her presence was greatly missed in Smisby WI. To commemorate her life and role in the WI, Smisby WI members planted two holly bushes in St James's church yard. Her family donated a silver trophy to be presented to the winner of an annual Home Economics competition.



● Irene Wilson and Frank Hewitt, who planted two holly trees in memory of their sister Maj Hewitt, the founder member of Smisby WI, in the grounds of the village church. Pictured also are (from left) Marian Bailey, ex-WI President, Norman Lifton, Valerie Wilkinson, Church warden and Cynthia Massey, WI President. 11/12/148.

## 1990 Smisby Events

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- The Annual Dinner was held at Melbourne Tea Rooms in April.
- The WI noted that there was to be a national survey of village greens.
- Mrs Pat Barnes was selected to represent Derbyshire at the WI Counties Sports Day. She won the tennis singles and doubles, partnered with Mrs Sheila Heap. She also won the badminton competition.
- Mrs Bailey (see photograph) celebrated her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday on 6<sup>th</sup> May and flowers were sent together with a beautiful greetings card embroidered by Mrs Archer and signed by all WI members.
- Mrs Peggy Smith organised a beetle drive for the July meeting and Mrs Barnes offered to provide refreshments at the Garden party to be held in her garden.
- Mrs Barnes arranged a visit to Bretby Art pottery in September.
- Mrs Val Wilkinson, WI president, announced at the October committee meeting that the village hall was to be closed in 1991 due to “insufficient organisers”.
- 20 members attended the AGM in November held at Mrs Massey’s house and Pat Barnes organised a quiz as entertainment. The year began with £86 in the bank and ended with £358. Raffles were successful fund raisers contributing £96. A motion that just biscuits should be provided for refreshments was narrowly defeated.
- At the December meeting, the president reported on her attendance at a meeting held by Derbyshire Rural Advisor about the demise of the village hall. He recommended that



closure was not necessary and recommended requesting that the church and WI provide two members each to act on the village hall committee. Members were asked to consider volunteering as representatives.

- Mrs Jean Statt successfully submitted several photographs which were selected to appear in the 1991 DFWI calendar. The April picture selected is shown in photograph.



*Smisby Church*

*April 1991*

*Photograph by Mrs. J. Stott, Smisby W.I.*

- Smisby village won the prize for the **Best Kept Village** in 1991 and WI members were asked to cater for the prize giving in September.

## 1990 Nationally

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- John Major replaced Margaret Thatcher as Prime Minister.
- Hurricane force winds killed 39 people in England and Wales.
- Lord Taylor published his report on the Hillsborough football ground disaster.
- UK and Argentina restored diplomatic relations, eight years after the Falklands War which occurred in 1982.
- The Official Secrets Act came into force.
- Public concern was still rife about Mad Cow disease, despite the controls on high risk offal, introduced in the previous year.
- An IRA bomb exploded at the Stock Exchange.
- The two ends of the Channel Tunnel connected.

## 1995 Diamond Jubilee Year (60 years on)

Mrs Marilyn Winfield was WI president. As usual, 11 meetings were held for the 23 members. However, speakers were unable to attend 2 meetings, resulting in one cancellation. Member Hilary Bloor stepped in at short notice, to give an amusing and interesting talk about her involvement with Guide Dogs for the Blind. Member Betty Morrison left the institute to retire to Scotland. Mrs Jean Statt and Mrs Clare Hatton won first prize at Ashby Show in the WI competition, for a Father's Day tray. Jean also won a first prize for her draft excluder, with Clare coming second. Clare also came first with her treacle tart.

The refurbishment of the village hall was completed, so the majority of meetings were planned to be held there, rather than in member's homes. To commemorate the Diamond Jubilee each WI member was presented with a glass icicle.



ONE OF the longest running women's institutes in the country has celebrated its Diamond Jubilee.

Smisby WI marked reaching 60 not out with a special party with guests from the past and present.

The group meets periodically in the

### Jubilee celebration for women's institute

village for members to get together and have a chat.

Over the years, the group has also played host to a number of lecturers and specialists and takes part in a number of activities.

Marilyn Winfield from the WI said: "We had a great time. We are one of the oldest groups in the country and are still very active. This gave a chance for former members to come back and see

the newer ones."

Pictured celebrating at their strawberry tea are (from the left, back row) Clare Hatton, Ann Sansom, Ethel Hood, Connie Jones, Margery Wilson; (front row) Natalie Jardine, Joan Blacklock and Betty Armstead. JB12108/7/7/39C/1/2.



A trip was made to the Stardust Club, Bardon Hall to see Danny La Rue in "Hello Dolly", see photograph.



The main anniversary celebration was a Strawberry Tea, held in



Mrs Cynthia Massey's garden, see photograph. Mrs Sheila Heap made and decorated the diamond shaped cake. 40 current and

former members attended. However, Mrs Bailey, a founder member aged 105, was unfortunately unable attend. (She died in 1997, aged 107).

## 1995 Nationally

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- Barings Bank collapsed, following the activities of rogue trader, Nick Leeson.
- The 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of VE day.
- British forces were sent to relieve Sarajevo, a besieged city in the Bosnia and Herzegovina war.
- At 95 years, the Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother had a hip replacement.
- A new James Bond film was screened, Golden Eye with Pierce Brosnan as Bond.
- Diana, Princess of Wales, gave a revealing television interview on BBC1 Panorama.

## 2000 Smisby Events

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The 2010 programme included belly dancing, a walk, and a croquet taster session. A visit was also made to the NFWI Craft Spectacular held at Tatton Park, Cheshire.



Smisby WI celebrated the Millennium with a most enjoyable dinner and evening at a member's home.

A fabric brick was designed and sewn, representing Smisby village and the WI as part of the Harpur-Crewe Group Wall of Friendship Panel.

Pat Barnes and Sybil Wallis were Derbyshire Federation tennis champions. They had been successful at DFWI and national tennis and badminton competitions on a number of occasions.





## 2000 Nationally

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- The Millennium Dome was opened by the Queen.
- The Queen Mother celebrated her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday.
- Dr Harold Shipman was given a life sentence for murdering 15 patients.
- Mr Tony Martin was sentenced to life imprisonment for the murder of burglar, whom he shot dead at his Norfolk farmhouse.
- There was a May Day riot in London by anti-capitalist protestors.
- 2000 was the wettest year on record in the UK and in December arctic snow weather conditions blighted Britain, with -13C temperatures.

## 2005 Smisby events 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

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The 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Year was celebrated with a Dinner and Pimms Reception at the Bay Tree Restaurant in Melbourne in Sept 2004.

In June, a visit was made to the Sir John Moore School in Appleby Magna, to view the heritage centre.

The annual subscription for 2006 was £22,

Mrs Jean Statt won the annual Madge Hewitt Home Economics trophy with her flapjacks (see picture). She had also been successful again in having a photograph selected for the Derbyshire Federation calendar.



## 2005 Nationally

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- New Year's celebrations fell silent for two minutes, all over the UK, as a mark of respect for those who died in the tsunami.

- Tony Blair became the longest-serving Labour Prime Minister.
- The Prince of Wales married Camilla Parker Bowles.
- The ban of hunting with dogs came into force.
- The New Forest became Britain's 12<sup>th</sup> National Park.
- The Labour Party was returned to power.

## **2010 Smisby events 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

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In 2010, there were 23 members and on average 15 people attended the monthly meetings.

- DFWI sent a congratulations card for the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary and Smisby hosted the Spring Group Meeting at Ticknall Village Hall in April.
- In August, members visited the Ashby Croquet Club for some enjoyable matches between members, with refreshments afterwards at the Miners Welfare.
- Mrs Sheila Heap made and decorated a beautiful 75th birthday cake (see photograph) for the celebration in February, when members enjoyed a fish, chip and pea supper paid for out of Institute funds, followed by puddings donated by members.
- A visit to Tissington Hall was made in September. This was possible due to funding from the Parochial Charity and additional funding following a successful WI bottle stall at Blackfordby village fete.



## **2010 Formation of Smisby Striders**

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Mrs Barbara Ball organised an inaugural walk in March from Hartshorne, returning to the Bulls Head for lunch. Six members attended.

This was followed by a walk from Melbourne in April, then a May walk from Staunton Harold. The popularity of the walks led to decision to set up a WI walking group, the Smisby Striders, organised by Dorothy Ikin and Suzanne Jones. It was decided that the Striders should meet on the second Thursday of the month. The photograph shows the members who attended an early Smisby Striders walk



Currently, a walk of 3 to 5 miles is organised every month by a volunteer and is followed by a lunch at a nearby venue, to which all members are invited.

## 2010 Nationally

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- Heavy snowfall in January led to the worst winter being recorded since 1981-82.
- Cadbury plc was taken over by US Kraft foods.
- A cloud of volcanic ash from an eruption in Iceland closed airspace over the UK for 6 days in April.
- The General Election resulted in a hung parliament, so the Conservatives and Liberals negotiated a coalition government.

## Smisby Craft Group

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Smisby WI formed a craft group in 2012, meeting on the first Thursday of each month and organised by Dorothy Ikin and Suzanne Jones.

A new craft skill is introduced each month, normally in the form of a workshop, challenging members to develop new skills and exercise their creativity!



The inaugural craft activity was black work, led by Suzanne Jones, see photographs.



Recently, Cynthia Massey gave a flower arranging workshop and Sheila Heap demonstrated sugar flowers and cake icing.

As well as Smisby WI members acting as tutors, external tutors also provide the workshops.

Making icing snowmen in a workshop led by Sheila Heap



Knitting Christmas trees in a workshop led by Suzanne Jones



Craft display at 2013 joint coffee morning with Ashby Art Club



## 2014 Smisby Events

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During 2014, Mrs Barbara Ball was President, Mrs Suzanne Jones was Secretary and Mrs Muriel Taylor was the Treasurer. The 6 committee members were Mrs Pat Barnes; Mrs Maureen Crabtree; Mrs Val Hanks; Mrs Dorothy Ikin; Mrs Cynthia Massey and Mrs Joan Wilson.

There were 44 members in total in Smisby WI. There were 12 monthly meetings during 2014, and a walk (followed by lunch) and a craft morning were held every month.

The programme also included an open Murder Mystery evening,



an open walk and meal and two coffee mornings, one of these being a joint initiative with Ashby Art Club and Ashby Camera Club. In addition, many members attended the Harpur Crewe Group activities and Derbyshire Federation events, which are shown in blue in the programme below.

<b>2014</b>	<b>Smisby WI 2014 programme</b>
January	Quiz & social
February	Rag Rugs Jane Wood
March	Derbyshire Federation Spring Council meeting, Chesterfield
March	Girls from the Big House. Ian Hingly
April	Harpur Crewe Group Spring meeting at Ticknall Village Hall. Sir R Fitz Herbert of Tissington Hall
April	Harpur Crewe Group Visit to Derby Cathedral
April	Underage Soldiers & Nurses from W.W.1. Peter Cousins
May	Resolutions. Venue Cedar Lawns
June	Murder Mystery OPEN EVENING
June	Coffee morning. Hostess: Barbara Ball
June	Limekilns Walk Calke and meal at the Wheel in Ticknall OPEN EVENING
July	A Coast to Coast Walk (for Loros) Adrian Walker OPEN EVENING
July	Tea Hostesses at Ashby Show
August	Harpur Crewe Group Pimms & pudding evening
August	Doodle Doo. Dianna Osborne
September	Uganda Women's Collective; Jewellery from Paper Alison Rocket
October	Harpur Crewe Group Autumn Meeting at Ticknall Village Hall. The Laura Ashley story. Jo Carter
October	Ladies in Leicestershire. David Bell
November	A.G.M and Members Display of Handicrafts"
December	Christmas meal at the Annwell Inn, Smisby
December	Joint Coffee morning in the village hall with Ashby Camera Club and Ashby Art Club
December	Circle Dance : Julie Bell
December	Harpur Crewe Group Carol Service Hosted by Smisby WI at St James' Church,



## Grants from Smisby Parochial Charity

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Recently, annual grants from the Parochial Charity have enabled Smisby WI members to visit educational and historical places on trips, which would otherwise have been beyond the WI budget to organise. This assistance from the Parochial Charity, to expand the WI program, has been greatly appreciated by members.

A visit was made to Belvoir castle in 2008



Members visited the 'lost garden' of Elford Hall, near Lichfield in 2013. This garden was saved for the local community, thanks to a Heritage Lottery Fund grant of £248,400 (HLF) and the efforts of dedicated volunteers. During the visit (see photograph) members learnt that the Victorian gardens, herbaceous borders and orchard are being re-created.



In 2013 the WI visited the National Trust property, Charlecote Park, see photograph below.



## Smisby WI Presidents

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From	To	President	Term (years)
1934	1983	Miss Madge Hewitt	48
1983	1986	Mrs Cynthia Massey	3
1986	1987	Mrs Kay Hudson	1
1987	1988	Mrs Cynthia Massey	1
1988	1991	Mrs Val Wilkinson	3
1991	1994	Mrs Pat Barnes	3
1994	1995	Mrs Marilyn Winfield	1
1995	1996	Mrs Marilyn Winfield & Mrs Barbara Ball	1
1996	1999	Mrs Barbara Ball	3
1999	2001	Mrs Pat Barnes	2
2001	2002	Mrs Cynthia Massey & Mrs Marie South	1
2002	2004	Mrs Cynthia Massey	2
2004	2007	Mrs Sybil Wallis	3
2007	2008	Mrs Joan Wilson	1
2008	2011	Mrs Val Hanks	3
2011	2014	Mrs Barbara Ball	3



An aerial photograph of the village of Smisby, showing a dense cluster of houses with red-tiled roofs, a church with a tall spire, and surrounding green fields and a large brown field. A road intersection is visible in the top right corner.

# Smisby