

BEACON GROUP



Picture shows Beacon Hill, Dorset

The Beacon Group consists of five rural WIs in North Dorset :

Child Okeford WI,
East Orchard and Margaret Marsh WI,
Sixpenny Handley WI,
SWIM (Sutton Waldron and Iwerne Minster) WI, and
Tarrant Gunville WI.

The Beacon Group holds two Group meetings a year and various annual events : a skittles match; Carol Service and an outing.

A committee organises events and has representatives from all the WIs. The WIs take turns to host events.

The Beacon Group events are open to all WI Members and the entry is £3 per person.

Some events are open to non-members and these will be advertised.

Future Events & Dates :

Thursday, 7 May 2020 -7.15pm, Spring Group Meeting,

Tarrant Gunville Village Hall.

A talk – The Wonderful World of Glass by Dr. Francis Burroughs



Dr Frances Burroughs, will trace the origins of glass-making from pre-Christian times up to the present day and support with some glass exhibits from his amazing private collection. This is a unique opportunity to be able to view exquisite examples of glasswork, some of which are thousands of years old.

Dr Burroughs has a very extensive knowledge of his subject, gained through long involvement with the manufacture of glass at, Bristol Blue Glass and a consuming passion for the craft. We look forward to welcoming him.

Entry Fee £3.00

Past Events:

Members of the Beacon group have had a busy start to the December.

Bells and voices rang out over Child Okeford at the Beacon Group Carol Service on Friday 6th December at St Nicholas Church. Members were greeted by the wonderful sound of the church bells rung by Bell ringers, 4 of whom are Child Okeford's WI members. The service was started with a welcome from Reverend Lydia Cook, each WI read a reading and there were six joyous carols with a special carol, The Okeford Carol, which is sung to the tune of Mary's Boy Child and was written for Child Okeford WI Golden Jubilee in 1988 by WI member Miss Betty Weston and first performed in December of that year. The service was followed by refreshments including mince pies and a catch up with WI Beacon Group friends.



Beacon group members have then enjoyed their own WI celebrations.



On Thursday, 24 October over 30 members of the Beacon group attended the Autumn Group Meeting at Manston Village Hall. Andy Williams, Historian and Kingston Lacy National Trust guide gave another perspective of “The Story of the Bankes Family at Kingston Lacy”.

In just over an hour, Andy gave us (with wonderful style and humour) not only a quick run-down of the family history of one of the most powerful families of Dorset who owned vast swathes of Dorset for over 400 years, but also added unusual facts and details. From fighting the forces of Oliver Cromwell & Brave Mary (was she Brave?) to gathering one of the world’s largest collections of ancient Egyptian artefacts and graphite mines (no not for pencils) - the Bankes have a colourful past. The one message that Andy demonstrated was that the members of the family, from “Brave” Mary through to Henry John Ralph Bankes (1902 to 1981) ensured the estate remained as one and was not split.

A number of members are now going to revisit to see if they can find those cannons!

A big thanks to East Orchard & Margaret Marsh WI for their arrangements and the sumptuous afternoon tea (pictures attached); to the Presidents for their annual reports and to SWIM WI for the wonderful “Memories of Home” table, it really was very nostalgic.



On Thursday, 9 May at our Spring Group Meeting, Mike Deeming

transported us and walked us around “Salisbury Cathedral”, with superb photographs – we definitely had a birds eye view-, history and anecdotes, I could have listened all evening.

A big thanks to SWIM WI for the superb supper.

