



The February meeting of Soulbury WI was held at the parish hall on Tuesday 11 February. After welcoming members the minutes of the previous meeting were read and signed.

Our most sincere thanks were given to Tony Crack for his excellent talk in January which was enjoyed by all of us and our visitors so much – in particular we think the gentlemen visitors enjoyed the delicious refreshments! Jean told us that unfortunately Jean Haines is now back in hospital and we will keep in touch and let everyone know how she is doing. Please remember that subs are due if you haven't already paid, please. A warm welcome was given to Val Blackshaw who has now joined us as a new member – Val previously belonged to Stoke Hammond W I – and also we are very pleased that Jackie Crack has rejoined this year.

Four members who went along to the 'Whattalife' lunch and concert in Newton Longueville in January agreed it was a really superb day. The concert was performed by a fantastic singer who talked and sang through the life of Kathleen Ferrier, accompanied by a really excellent pianist. Kathleen Ferrier died at the very young age of 42 but managed to fit in a lot of wonderful performances in her lifetime and travelled the world. There was a lovely lunch served before the concert and it was a very enjoyable day. This was the first event of the Centenary Year for Bucks Federation and was a great start to this very busy year.

Two members attended a sewing and painting of collages course at Denman college recently and told us how fantastic it had been and showed us the results of their efforts. They impressed on us what excellent courses were available at Denman and although they do seem expensive, there is so much offered and, of course, we do have a Bursary available so think seriously about a visit.

Members were reminded of the various upcoming events in the county. There will, of course, be a lot of events coming up in 2020 as this is the Bucks Federation Centenary year.

Happy Birthday wishes were given to Sheila Day. 40 Year Certificates were presented to Margaret Rowe and Andrea Hamilton.

Jean then introduced our speaker, the Poet Laureate of Milton Keynes, Mr Mark Niel. Mark was a truly entertaining, funny and impressive speaker who kept us all totally entertained with his clever and heartwarming poems. He told us of his very low key start at gigs from which he has managed to move up the ladder. Mark also has put some of his poems to music and when he had finished his talk, opened the floor for questions. Following this really enjoyable talk refreshments were served.

As we had not been able to discuss the Resolutions at our open January meeting we then discussed this year's proposed Resolutions which were as follows:

1. Stem cell donation
2. Female crash dummies
3. Ending slavery
4. Talking about death
5. Protection of the world's helium supply

Each resolution was gone through and a final vote was taken which resulted in 16 votes for Stem cell donation; 4 for female crash dummy use and none for any of the remaining 3. The result of the vote will be sent to County and we will be advised of the final decision in the near future.

The raffle was drawn and the meeting closed at 10.00 p.m. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 10 March.