

Letter to the Editor

The most surprising thing that happened to me while my husband, Jim, and I were visiting England occurred at a WI meeting...

With the help of Google, I was able to determine that the London West End WI would be having a meeting while we were in London.

Jim came with me on the tube and made the sacrifice of visiting a pub while I went to this meeting on October 15, 2014. This Branch meets in the Upper Vestry Hall of St. George Church in the Bloomsbury section of London. The doors open at 6pm and the meeting is from 6:30-8:30pm.

I arrived shortly after 6pm and met the President, Jane, and helped her set up tables and chairs. The others soon arrived and refreshments were available – beverages, including wine, and baked goodies. Visitors pay 3 pounds to attend the meeting.

As we had emailed back and forth several times, it was lovely to meet Victoria, the Secretary, in person. She said it was an unusual night – besides me, there were to be several other women also visiting from other countries.

Imagine my surprise when I turned around and saw Margaret Yetman from Newfoundland! She is the past ACWW Canada Area President and we have met at various conferences and conventions. She is now the ACWW Deputy World President. The others with her were also ACWW executive members and were in London for meetings. Ruth Shanks (World President) is from Australia; Henrietta Schoeman (Secretary) is from South Africa; Alison Burnett (Treasurer) is from Wales; and Tish Collins is the ACWW Operations Manager. Tish is a Member of this



Pictured (L-R): Jane, Annemarie, Pam and Victoria.



Pictured (L-R): Alison Burnett, Henrietta Schoeman, Ruth Shanks, Tish Collins, Pam and Margaret Yetman.

Branch and invited the executive to this meeting before they left for home the next day.

The meeting started with a quick update about upcoming events. After I read a letter from Evelyn Peck sending greetings from FWIO and then presented the Branch with our Centennial history book, some *Home & Country ROSE Garden* newsletters and Lee calendars, the guest speaker began his fascinating talk on 'Haunted Bloomsbury.'

No roll call, no minutes, no Treasurer's reports – a bit different from our meetings! The President did mention to me later that not all Branches are this informal.

Attending this meeting was a thoroughly enjoyable experience and it brought home to me that being a WI Member really does mean you have a connection to other women all around the world.

Annemarie McDonald
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