

BFWG news

British Federation of Women Graduates

Summer 2009

FREE TO MEMBERS

No 0809-4

For Esme With Love – A Degree of Success

AFTER NEARLY ELEVEN YEARS of financial and much-appreciated moral support from Sutton Coldfield Association of Women Graduates, Esme Chipala, a former student at St Michael's School in Malawi, has achieved the honour of being the first individual from her village to graduate, after receiving an honours degree in economics from Chancellor's College, University of Malawi.

Esme, now 22, received the best academic performance award in economics, is currently working for the Ministry of Tourism and is now hoping to complete a PhD.

'Esme has had to overcome the challenge of inadequate learning materials such as books and computers' said Gloria Banner, President of SCAWG. 'If anyone is willing to offer any used economics books then the association can arrange for them to be shipped out to Malawi later this year'.

If you are able to contribute economics books, tel: 0121 353 5846.

Gloria Banner, BFWG Sutton Coldfield

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Not France, but Quebec City, Canada. See article on Page 5
Photograph courtesy of Elizabeth Poskitt

European Day, 25 April

The theme for the morning meeting was the coming European elections when the subject was ably explained and represented by two aspiring MEPs – Anne Fairweather for Labour in London, and Theresa Coffey for Conservatives in South East. Anne has a background in financial services and has worked in Brussels. This will be her first candidacy and the nature of the contest means that all the London candidates have a vast area to canvass. Anne feels that things have changed very much since the last elections, in that young people are taking more interest. In Europe, business, financial and commercial matters are clearly uppermost at present in many minds, together with international development. However it is still important for Europe to remember that **all human rights are equal throughout the community** though this is not always obvious in the attitude to minorities shown by some members. MEPs must work hard to support these aims. **European policy is not just the Euro!**

Theresa Coffey became involved initially in local politics as a volunteer in Liverpool.

She explained that the Conservative party is aiming to get more women into both Westminster and European parliaments, and, to achieve this, potential women candidates for Europe are likely to receive a certain amount of favourable treatment. Theresa felt that the sexual agenda, supported by the EU and by UN resolutions was successful and mentioned particularly the 'zero tolerance' attitude adopted by the EU to sexual violence by troops under the EU banner. The EU has a comprehensive approach to improving the status of women, but women MEPs would appreciate the appointment of more of their number to chair committees and more training for women to improve their economic status and security. She also supported the need for International development, especially towards **conflict prevention** (rather than conflict resolution). Conservatives will be coming out of the Centre Right group in Europe as they think it is too "federalist".

Both speakers urged us to vote in the coming election.

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British Federation of Women Graduates
THE VOICE OF WOMEN GRADUATES

Patron: The Baroness Greenfield, CBE

Founded 1907

BFWG promotes women's opportunities in education and public life; works as part of an international organisation to improve the lives of women and girls; fosters local, national and international friendship.



BFWG is affiliated to the International Federation of University Women (IFUW) and University Women of Europe (UWE)

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Editorial

AS I WRITE THIS, my last Editorial for BFWG News, I have just posted off my registration form to Margaret Smeaton for the AGM in July. **It will be momentous, although only one day**, because of the many changes we need to make to our Constitution, in order that it accurately reflects our new 21st century structure. **It will be entertaining, too**, if you have booked in (like me) for the Supper and Panel Programme the previous evening. Do decide to come and join in.

At our International Conference at Manchester, two years ago, we were urged to '**Go Glocal**', ie implement our aims and ideals at a local level and co-operate with others in our community. To this end, at Reading, we are exploring ways of supporting the local Well Woman Group, on a regular basis but, especially, to be part of a day's activities next 8 March, to celebrate International Women's Day. In Spring News last time we learned how BFWG Winchester work with the Emmaus Group there, to good effect. It would be

Continued from page 1

In the afternoon Griselda Kenyon led a discussion on the role of the EWL (European Women's Lobby) and also the situation in UWE. **Is the EWL effective?** UWE has a place in this organisation but the 50/50 campaign needs more forceful representation in Europe. The CEDAW initiative was accepted into our legislation in July. A questionnaire on this from EWL is expected. As to UWE, a new constitution and bye-laws are needed and a committee for this was formed in Cyprus last year.

A BFWG group has also met and made some recommendations which have been sent to the UWE secretary. More on this in Vienna in September. A new president and a new secretary will need to be elected in Vienna. Check the UWE website (address in News). Information on the conference in Vienna, 3rd to 6th September, is now available on the UWE website and on www.vaoc.at/uwe/index.asp.

There is a simple form to fill in, pay when you arrive, a list of hotels, and a programme.

Doreen Newham, BFWG Nottingham

Register for the UWE event 2009 before 15 June for early bird registration fee of €32

www.ifuw.org/uwe

For programme see: www.vaoc.at header: UWETAGUNG



good to hear of other initiatives, elsewhere, on these lines or for them to be set on foot.

There is much discussion going on, at present, about the current economic situation and this is reflected, in its outcomes, in several reports in this issue. We are not the only ones striving to adapt to new circumstances. Perhaps, this should encourage us. Certainly, I would echo Elizabeth Poskitt's sentiments (page 5) that we can both serve others and enjoy ourselves. Long may it continue to be so!

Finally, a big thank you to the Editorial Team, past and present, and the many willing BFWG members who have helped make my two terms as Editor such a worthwhile and enjoyable experience. I leave you, as usual, with 'Onward and upward' for us all!

Jean Cockling, Editor

Discussion Forum at Reading

IN OUR READING ASSOCIATION, we do not hold Discussion coffee mornings but we **do** have a very lively Book Group, well attended, on a regular basis. At the beginning of each session we exchange news/ views about members and our local/national programmes. When our views on specific topics are sought from our national leaders, this is where we initially discuss them. If we feel that we need to discuss or follow them up in greater depth, then we arrange 'ad hoc' extra meetings or use e-mail to feed our views in to our President, Ann Acres.

Recently, our local Further Education classes at Reading have faced closure from the end of this academic year, due to costs. There is a campaign to see what can be done about continuing classes in some way and Ann has written a letter, on our behalf, to a local MP, asking him to make representations in the House of Commons on this issue.

We are to discuss 'Women in the Crunch' at our AGM shortly. How can we find out what is happening? Obviously, we use members' skills and contacts but in addition, we can ASK:

- Our Local Authority
- Local Members of Parliament
- Members of European Parliament
- Local HE and FE institutions
- Local Job Centres, Citizen's Advice Bureaux and so on.

Our discussion needs to be **informed** to be taken seriously.

Jean Cockling, Editor

News in Brief

2009 Winner

AFTER SEVERAL HOURS OF deliberating, the North West Travel Bursary committee chose **Nina Athi**. She is a postgraduate student at Liverpool John Moores University researching Development of Online, Real Time, Ultrasonic, Non-Destructive Evaluation Method of Spot Welding for the Automotive Industry who attended a conference in San Diego, USA in March 2009 (see page 7).

She has agreed to speak to us on Saturday 24 October 2009 at the Hollins Hey Hotel, New Brighton.

It is always a revelation to meet the winner in person. We are usually amazed at how well students present their topics. **Being able to meet and question the student is a most vital part of the North West Travel Bursary and members appreciate it.**

We hope to continue the Travel Bursary for some years to come and wish to thank all who contribute towards it. We are frequently overwhelmed at the generosity of BFWG members.

Carmena Newey, Independent

Parking at Conference

INFORMATION ON TRAVELLING TO London from airports and public transport in London can be found on <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/about/structure/admin/facser/conbro/travinfo/>

If you have any questions or wish to discuss any part of your booking, please **do not hesitate to contact the Stopover Team** on 02078481700 or email stopover@kcl.ac.uk, fax 020 7848 1717. Additional information can be found at www.kcl.ac.uk/kcvb

The nearest NCP carpark is located at Waterloo Station.

Gillian Clerici, Vice President

Abergavenny Jesse Tree

THE JESSE TREE given high praise in the report of the Mercia and Wales Regional meeting – and which it certainly merits – lay neglected in the church yard of St. Mary's, Abergavenny, for many years until it was happily recognised in wartime for what it is by a young serviceman who in civilian life, was a curator at the Victoria and Albert Museum. Some years ago there was an excellent series on TV on 'Medieval Art' and the Tree was presented as one of the country's most important art treasures of the medieval period.

Mary Duly, BFWG Winchester

President's Notes

As I sit down to write the final 'President's Notes' before the AGM, I cannot but think of the changes and problems with which we have been faced, as individuals and as an organisation, during the past academic year. Yet, at the same time, **the Federation appears to be stronger and more forward-looking than it has been for some years.** This has, I believe, been due to our efforts to 'put our house in order' and most recently to make the transition from being inward- to outward-looking.

A couple of weeks ago I was privileged to be able to attend yet another centenary birthday celebration – that of the Leeds Association. The fascinating account of the challenges facing educated women 100 years ago (the sources for which included the records of the Leeds Association) by the speaker, Professor Katrina Honeyman, are unfortunately not far removed from those with which we are still grappling today.

According to Professor Honeyman, despite the fact that by 2006, 57 percent

of first degree graduates were women, the starting salaries for women graduates have lagged behind those of men and that over a working life a woman graduate can expect to earn 12 percent less than a male graduate. This seems hardly credible, some 34 years after the International Women's Year Conference and 14 years after Beijing Conference. When the UK reported on its implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women last July, CEDAW members in their Concluding Observations recommended that the UK Government continue to take 'proactive and concrete measures to eliminate occupational segregation and to close the pay gap between women and men, including through the introduction of mandatory pay audits'. Clearly there is still much work to be done.

Marianne Haslegrave, BFWG President



Leeds celebrates its centenary

IN FEBRUARY 1909 Dr Ida Smedley was invited to address a 'general meeting of graduates from Leeds and outlying places', at which a unanimous decision was taken to form a Leeds branch of the Federation of University Women. And so the Leeds Association was born. **One hundred years later it celebrated its centenary in grand style with a dinner on 18 April.** Fifty people graced the occasion, including friends from the Northern Region and representatives of our sister organisations, the Bishop Monkton Women's Institute, Soroptimist International and BPW. We were pleased to welcome **Jasmit Khaur Phull**, Additional Vice-President, and **President Marianne Haslegrave**, who proposed the toast to the Association and cut the centenary cake.

Our speaker was **Professor Katrina Honeyman of the School of History of the University of Leeds**, who has been undertaking a review of our early minute books as a record of the social history of the period. In her talk Professor Honeyman



L-R Marianne Haslegrave cutting the cake, with Mary O'Regan, Secretary, looking on and Mary Hughes in the background

Photograph courtesy of Peter Hughes

reflected, in a humorous and telling way, on the change in the role and status of women over the past 100 years, not least through the efforts of the early pioneers in advocating enhanced educational and employment opportunities for women. The President and I are in discussion with her to offer an edited version of the talk to BFWG members.

Gillian M Roche, BFWG Leeds

Please bring Spring 'News' Exec & AGM Supplement to the AGM



BFWG is affiliated to the International Federation of University Women (IFUW) and University Women of Europe (UWE)

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CIR/IFUW Council Member 2008-2011
Margaret Middlemass BSc FCA (BFWG Leeds)

UWE: www.ifuw.org/uwe

CER/UWE Representative 2007-2010
Griselda Kenyon MA (BFWG Canterbury)

UWE Meeting

THE UWE MEETING WILL take place at the Juridicum, Universität Wien, Schottenbastei 10-16 in the Old City of Vienna.

Programme:

- 3 September 10.00 am – 8.00 pm
Registration and Welcome drinks (Club Rooms VAO)
- 4 September 9.00 am – 5.00 pm
Conference on 'EMPOWERING WOMEN FOR LEADERSHIP AND DECISIONMAKING: The Consequences of Project- and Flex-jobs on the Lives and Careers of Women'
- 5 September 9.00 am – 4.00 pm
General Assembly
Evening:
Get together at the 'Heuriger'
- 6 September 8.00 am – 9.00 pm
Day trip to Linz – European Capital of Culture 2009
Or 9.00 am – 12.00 am
Sightseeing in Vienna

Hotel recommendations: (see website www.vaoe.at for email addresses etc.)

- Hotel France; price indication €139 for a single or double room (Breakfast €26)
- Hotel Regina; price indication €118 single or €198 double room (Breakfast incl.)
- Hotel Rathauspark; price indication €128 single or €170 double room (Breakfast incl.)
- Pension Lehrerhausverein; email hotel@ahv.at
- Benediktushaus; price €70 single and €107 for double room (Breakfast incl.)
- Kolpinghaus; price €57 for a single and €81 for double room (Breakfast incl.)

The first five are in close proximity to the Conference Location. The Kolpinghaus is in another part of Vienna City centre.

CIR - What Did We Do? Consultation, Alternative Reporting and Practical Projects

Once again may I advocate use of our own website and the IFUW website, both of which provide a great deal of information and reporting directly to members and give you an immediate access and input which can't be matched by the newsletters. If you have access to a computer keep checking the sites regularly and please keep other members in your local association up to date with what is available if they are not online themselves.

The IFUW programme survey over the winter has led directly to a new consultation process for determining the next Programme for Action for the triennium starting in 2010. The process began with a questionnaire in April & May 2009, and the next step will be an email discussion in October. Further email consultation will take place next spring and then some of the sessions at Conference will directly feed into the decision. Do take part in this process, even if you can't participate in all the stages. **Your view counts!**

There is information about **the 2010 conference** emerging on the IFUW website; if you are interested in going but don't have access to a computer please let me know so I can arrange for you to have copies. **Registration is scheduled to open in October.**

The Armenian Association of Women with University Education (AAUWE) co-authored an alternative report to the 43rd Session of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in New York in March, **assessing the discrimination Armenian women and girls face in areas such as education, employment and health.** For example, the report highlighted the continuing under-representation of women in political decision making. There is only one woman minister; only two women deputy ministers out of 65; only one woman regional governor out of 10, only one deputy governor out of 17 and women hold only 8.3% of the top-level positions in local and regional administrations. The report provides a critical analysis and recommendations for action needed to remedy the current problems. These alternative reports are accepted from a few countries at a time as

a counterbalance to official (government) reports, and IFUW members regularly feed into reports from their countries.

Members from the Australian Federation of University Women (AFUW) including two graduate researchers from Murdoch University in Australia recently visited members of the Rwanda Association of University Women (RAUW), to discuss ways of assisting genocide survivors overcome trauma. **The Irish Federation also has a joint initiative with RAUW - Project 100** – which was started in celebration of the centenary of Queens University Belfast and **provides practical assistance for disadvantaged or orphaned children in Rwanda to complete their secondary education.**

Please keep the two dates marked in your diaries for our own CIR days – 17th October 2009 and 26th June 2010 (the pre-conference meeting) even if you are not planning on attending conference, as your opinions will be fed into the BFWG responses.

Margaret Middlemass, CIR

The Polish women's Lobby ask Commissioner Špidla to monitor the protection and advancement of women's rights in Poland – On 7 April 2009, one year will have passed since representatives of Polish women's groups met with Commissioner Vladimir Špidla; a meeting where women's groups outlined the failure of the Polish government to implement EU directives and policy on gender equality. As there is still no significant progress in this area, the Polish Women's Lobby invites the Commissioner to participate in the launch of a set of roundtables to advance women's rights.

EWL open letter - In light of the Spring Council held on 19 and 20 March, the EWL sent an open letter to Heads of Governments calling for measures to meet women's needs in time of crisis. The EWL believes that the EU must pay special attention to women who in many ways will be the first targeted by the current financial and economic crisis. The EWL also called on Member States to adopt a gender perspective in designing recovery packages. Moreover, EWL stressed the importance of taking effective measures to conciliate private and professional life.

Happy Outcomes to IFUW Contacts

A TRIP TO CANADA led to some happy IFUW contacts. Linda Souther is a friend as well as ex-IFUW colleague, but it was exceptionally kind of her to show us round Ottawa in a blizzard, accommodate us and give us contacts for Québec.

Québec City AFDU had just returned from the annual American cultural trip, this year to Virginia. Funds for these visits are raised through small overhead charges and widening the trip to non Québec members. This year a local journalist accompanied them and his very positive report was published the day we were in Québec!

Proceeds from the USA trips go towards the education of girls in Rwanda. Connections again: the group were able to visit the Norfolk Naval Base because a Québec member's husband, a General who had worked in Rwanda, had also worked with the commander of the Norfolk Base.

Québec AFDU hold annual debating competitions for girls. The winning team joins Québec AFDU's visit to the Montpellier Association, with whom Québec AFDU is linked.

Talking to two Québec members over lunch in the huge Chateau Frontenac which, atop the Heights of Abraham, dominates the Québec City skyline was delightful. Hearing the experiences of Suzanne Lemire, a gynaecologist establishing her career in the 1960s when women surgeons and contraception were not acceptable in Quebec, was impressive. **Québec AFDU focus their activities on education - and do this very well. They also look at what they can do for others - and in the process enjoy themselves. Ideas for us all.**

Elizabeth Poskitt, BFWG Independent



April: Winter in Canada, Spring in UK
Photograph courtesy of Elizabeth Poskitt

Distinguished Setting for Winchester AGM



Winchester members on the main staircase of Serle's House, Winchester

Photograph Courtesy of Rory Haigh

Winchester Association was privileged to be allowed to hold its AGM at **Serle's House** by kind permission of the Chairman of Hampshire County Council. This is a distinguished Georgian house, built as a private dwelling circa 1732, set back behind its own garden on one of Winchester's main thoroughfares, only a short distance from the High Street. **The building has a Grade II listing, being of special architectural and historic interest.**

The house has an interesting history. At one time it served as married quarters for Field Officers of the garrison and later as the official residence of the judges to the Quarter Sessions. In 1881, on the amalgamation of the Hampshire Regiments, it became their official headquarters. Eventually, in 2001, the house was bought from the MOD by Hampshire County Council, since when repairs to the historic fabric and the structure of the building and refurbishment of the rooms have been carried out. **The ground floor still houses the museum of the Royal Hampshire Regiment.** The first floor rooms are used by the Council for entertaining, and on the second floor are the offices of the Council Chairman and the Lord Lieutenant.

The main reception room is hung with eighteenth century portraits in gilt frames, a magnificent glass chandelier and a gilt-framed mirror over the marble fireplace. The conference/banqueting room, where we held our meeting, has a prominent painting of the battle of Minden and landscapes from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. **As you can see from the photograph, there is a beautiful double staircase leading up to the first floor.**

Ursula Soedring, BFWG Winchester

BFWG Discussion-First Topic

SOME OF YOU MAY ALREADY know that **the BFWG website** was off line for a few months while it was being redesigned. It is now up and running, of course, and has been for several months.

There is a new service which some of us felt should have been offered long ago and that is a chat room so that members can initiate debate and perhaps solve a problem or topic which has been 'put on the table'.

Any BFWG member can register to take part and will then receive an email from webadmin@bfgw.org.uk with instructions for activating an account. I tested it and found that I could get my username and password acknowledged but the discussion part of the BFWG website has not yet been activated. Presumably it will be in place by the time that various associations have had the chance to do the research on Women in the Crunch.

In the meantime, we ought to start jotting down some of the many topics raised at association meetings in preparation for a jolly good discussion online.

There is still a gender disparity in the work force and women, particularly those appointed to professional posts, have difficulty in achieving promotion and establishing a work/life balance.

- What changes must ensue if future employment structures are to value competence over hierarchy and how will women benefit from a new situation?
- What action will be necessary to allow women to achieve work/life balance?

These questions could throw up some interesting comments.

Margaret Smeaton, BFWG Worcester
By courtesy of North West Magazine

'Women's Rights' Come to Newcastle

WE USED TO HEAR a lot about the WNC, set up in 1969 as an independent advisory body giving the views of women in the UK to Government. Now there is a Government Equalities Office established in 2007. **The GEO commissioned the WNC to organise a series of meetings focusing on the UK's commitment to, and action on, women's rights.**

There were about 60 women present at Newcastle, including 3 from BFWG. The sessions provided information, with group activity to collect experience and opinion.

The morning session concentrated on CEDAW – the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women – adopted by the UN in 1979. Every 4 years the UK Government has to submit a report on measures taken to comply with the treaty obligations. It is the task of the GEO to implement recommendations that come out from these consultations, such as 'a national strategy to eliminate violence against women', and 'alternative sentencing for women offenders to reduce the number going to prison'. Newer initiatives include 'further extension of women-only short-lists' and 'joined-up policy across government departments to implement equality'. Another Equality Bill is coming soon. **The statistics reported for the North-East showed how inequality is still inherent in terms of health, qualifications, employment and pay.**

The focus for the second session was the Commission on the Status of Women, established in 1946 by the UN to promote implementation of the principle that men and women shall have equal rights. The priority theme was 'The equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including care given in the context of HIV/AIDS'. The secondary theme was 'Equal participation of women and men in the decision-making process at all levels'. **The emerging issue was 'Gender perspectives on the financial crisis'.**

Is equality for women achievable? Perhaps, little-by-little comes to mind.

Ann Oxley, BFWG Teesside

LA SECRETARIES :

Please let HQ have the names of officers and subscriptions for next year.

'Medicine with a Mission' - Eastern Regional Day

On Tuesday 24 March, 30 BFWG members met at the University Women's Club in London's Mayfair for a day of varied activities. This number included nine Independent members. The day began with a short business meeting during which our President, Marianne Haselgrave, summarised the decisions which had been reached at the recent Executive meeting about the best way for the organisation to proceed for the future.

We were then treated to a fascinating presentation by Dr Jennian Geddes of the Medical Women's Federation entitled 'Medicine with a Mission'. This was about the Endell Street Military Hospital in London, run entirely by women during World War One.

Up till this time women doctors could not get clinical experience and the War Office didn't approve of women doctors. This all changed thanks to the efforts of two suffragettes, Louisa Garrett Anderson and her friend Flora Murray. Both had had nursing experience so when war broke out they offered their services to the French. In two to three hectic weeks they raised £3,000 to purchase uniforms and equipment and pay for passports and injections before setting off for France with eighty tons of baggage on 15 September 1914. They set up their hospital in the Hotel Claridge in the Champs-Élysées in Paris, using the Ladies' 'loo' as an operating theatre from 2pm till 9pm every day. Injured soldiers from The Front occupied 100 beds and 2 more doctors and extra nurses and ambulances were added to the team to cope with the work. Eventually the hospital transferred to Wimereux on the coast where help was most needed and as a result of their success **the Government invited the two ladies to run an official military hospital in London. As premises they offered an old workhouse in Endell Street, thought to be the setting for Dickens's 'Oliver Twist'.** It was staffed entirely by women, 180 in total, but with men who had been declared unfit for military service doing the heavy lifting work. It had a total of 573 surgical beds and remained open for four and a half years. Due to its proximity to Charing Cross Station it received more injured soldiers than any other hospital, usually around eighty at a time, out of which about 30 needed surgery. Before antibiotics, wounds could take an hour to be cleaned and dressed. This wonderful example of role reversal was good publicity



for the Suffragettes' cause as well as that of women doctors after the war. Employing a couple of photographers was a clever move in this connection. The soldiers enjoyed being treated by women doctors in wards attractively decorated with coloured blankets and flowers. **In August 1917 both ladies were awarded CBEs as a tribute to their professionalism and a plaque was finally installed last November on the site of the old hospital.**

After a two-course lunch in the University Women's Club's elegant Drawing Room, 25 people (including two husbands) who had booked for the current Darwin Exhibition made their way to **the Natural History Museum in South Kensington** for a talk about the scientific collections of the Museum given in the Darwin Centre. Here we were able to look at some of the specimens on display in the Tank Room before viewing the Exhibition itself. It was altogether an exceedingly educational day, enhanced by lovely Spring weather.

Sheila Youngs, BFWG Eastern Region Rep

Voting at the National AGM

Associations: When returning your delegates form, please remember to appoint a proxy if your full complement of delegates is not taken up. This also applies to Directors/ Voting Executive if you cannot attend.

All delegates should be aware of the voting procedures published on page 4 of the National AGM papers contained in this issue of News.

Northern Regional Day - Coastal Heritage Preserved

Forty members of the Northern Region (including one of our Scottish Independents) made their way to Durham on 21 March 2009 for the annual meeting of the Region. The weather was at its Spring best, sunny and warm, and the view of Durham Cathedral was both impressive and awe-inspiring. Sadly, Marianne Haslegrave was unable to come because of illness. **Our venue was St Mary's College**, where Gwyneth Cole (Teesside AWG) had organised our day. Gwyneth is a former member of staff and has known and worked for all its Principals.

The business side of the meeting focused on a report of the national Executive meeting held the previous week. **The Northern Region is very fortunate to have several Federation Officers amongst its members, so we were able to hear the latest news from Headquarters. In addition, Monica Dodds reported on the African Schoolgirl Fund** and the success of both the school and the girls supported in Tanzania. Links with the school are close and we receive letters and reports regularly. What began in the Ridings Region is now being supported by several other Associations in the Northern Region - as well as individuals. We are indebted to Monica for managing the Fund which operates via Wakefield Diocese, ensuring that all monies reach their destination.

After the business meeting, the current Principal came to meet us - to welcome us and talk about the history of the College. After this, **Dr Aisling Lannin gave an illustrated talk on the work of the North-East Coast European Marine Site, where she is the Officer.** This is the first area on our coast to benefit from funding to bring together all interested parties - environmental agencies, local authorities, fishing and related organisations, also tourist agencies and other interested groups - **to ensure that developments do not endanger the wildlife and that the heritage of the region can be protected and preserved.** It is in everyone's interest that the developments are planned jointly. Diplomacy and patience would seem to be key virtues in such work, but the results of such co-ordinated efforts are likely to be enjoyed by generations to come.

Our thanks must go to the Teesside and North-East Associations who organised the day and made us so welcome. Each year, the Northern Region visits a different Association, so sharing the workload and travel costs. Our Region is large - from Chester, Nottingham and Lincoln to the Scottish Borders - and we also welcome our Scottish Independents to meetings.

Catherine Pinion, BFWG Northern Region Rep

2009 Travel Bursary Winner Nina Athi

**General Engineering
Research Institute**

**Liverpool John Moores
University**

with a thesis on

Development of Online, Real Time, Ultrasonic, Non Destructive Evaluation Method of Spot Welding for the Automotive Industry

who attended the

SPIE Smart Structures/NDE 2009

in San Diego, California, USA

on 8-12 March 2009

NINA ATHI HAD A GLOWING letter of recommendation from her Professor. He mentioned that she has made **useful contacts with Jaguar and Corus** who provided specific automotive steel sheets and knowledge of current techniques and practices.

Did you know that a typical passenger car needs approximately 4000 welds of resistance spot welding? To quote Nina: 'Good welds are characterised by the diameter of the solidified weld nugget where the dimension not only depends upon the controlled current and pressure applied but also on the profile of the spot welding electrode cap, which changes as it becomes worn'.

What makes Nina's research so necessary is that these electrode caps therefore must be re-dressed to keep the profile accurate BUT unfortunately hitherto quality control has also meant tearing down a car body once every 10 days!!!!

Trying to find a non destructive way of quality control for these welds could therefore be invaluable.

Carmena Newey, Independent

Oh Yes They Did!



Photograph courtesy of Gloria Banner

SUTTON COLDFIELD LA brought a light hearted note to their association at Christmas 2008. They put on a pantomime for members, 'Dick Whittington'. The two fairies shown are Fairy Liquid and Fair Enough.

Gloria Banner, BFWG Sutton Coldfield

Bath - Down but not Out!

WHEN THE BATH ASSOCIATION was forced to close we felt that **we really wanted to keep in touch with the friendships we had made** and to meet at least, socially. At our first meeting **we decided to set up a Book Group** and see where that led. We still have a nucleus of about 8 Independent members plus some friends and ex-members so the group is flourishing. We have covered a very wide range of literature and we try to concentrate on women writers so our book list has had contributions from modern American writers to medieval thrillers (not Cadfael), real life histories, and our next book will be 'Shirley' which a surprising number of us had never read.

Some of our members are now giving us short talks on subjects that they have been studying, and we shall start having the occasional discussion group as and when subjects arise, Social events will also occur - we have another 80th birthday this year.

We still have some funds left to continue with the Nancy Catchpole Bursary, and the Valerie Peacock Science Lecture for at least one more year, and then we may have to think about fundraising!!

We still try and send at least one member to Regional and National events, to keep in touch with what is happening, so we are quite hopeful that Bath may be down, but not out yet!

Mary Faulkner, Independent

Your Point of View

Surveillance - Friend or Foe?

WE HOLD REGULAR DISCUSSION Groups as part of our programme and this was our latest topic. Our discussion groups are always popular but this one was extremely so, showing the depth of concern for this subject.

Apparently we are the most surveyed society in Europe and probably the world. Judging by the number of newspaper clippings flourished by members, it is a real concern for us and for our society at large. While there are benefits from surveillance - CCTV cameras in trouble spots, DNA data bases to identify criminals - there were reservations about the storage of so much information on all members of society and exactly what information was being held and by whom.

While one or two members 'felt safer' with surveillance, the general feeling was that there was too much and that it appears to be only the beginning of a process in the loss of liberties and privacy.

Hazel Harrison, BFWG Norfolk and Norwich

Sybil Campbell Collection Annual Lecture

Thursday 29 October 09

18.00 Arrival, sandwiches and drinks

18.30 Lecture

University Women's Club

2 Audley Square, London W1Y 6DB

Professor Roberta Gilchrist

University of Reading

**Medieval Women And The Care Of The
Family**

The Archaeology Of Life, Death And Magic

£19 postgraduate students £10

Please apply by 20th October, giving names of guests and enclosing SAE and cheque payable to 'University of Winchester', write on the back 'Attention Dr S Spencer'.

Post to: Dr S Spencer, Faculty of Education, University of Winchester, West Hill, Winchester, Hants. SO22 4NR

Note: Anyone wishing to have dinner at the club after the lecture should book and pay directly with the club.

HOST UK

Have you ever received home hospitality on visits abroad and wondered about being able to reciprocate? Or thought that, your family having left home, you would enjoy spending time meeting overseas students? Then may I suggest that you consider joining **the HOST UK scheme? HOST (Hosting for Overseas Students)** is a registered charity founded over 20 years ago, the purpose of which is to enable adult international students studying at British institutions to stay for a day or two as guests in private homes.

Signing up as a volunteer HOST means offering one or two invitations a year to single students or families to spend time with you - a day, a weekend or Christmas - **combining participation in normal everyday life with a couple of outings.** I have now hosted for six years and have welcomed students from countries such as China, Japan, the USA, Russia, the Czech Republic and the Netherlands, and have thoroughly enjoyed meeting them all and showing them something of life in Yorkshire.

Students learn about the scheme through their universities' international offices and **voluntary regional organisers arrange the invitations and act as contacts with HOST HQ.** So, if you would like to learn more, either consult HOST's website at www.hostuk.org.uk or telephone 0207 739 6292. **I would be happy to provide further information.**

Gillian Roche, BFWG Leeds

**House of Lords
Seminar and Visits
Thursday 29 October 09
Please note date now**

DATA PROTECTION ACT

All members' data held on computer by BFWG is processed pursuant to the Data Protection Act and is only used for the purpose of BFWG administration and business. All members are obliged to use any information about other members only for BFWG administration and business purposes.

National AGM

Saturday 4 July 09

Kings College

London University

Franklin Wilkins Building

UWE Meeting

3 -6 September 09

Juridicum, Universität Wien

Schottenbastei 10-16

Vienna

For details, see Page 4

International Day

Saturday 17 October 09

10.30 for 11.00 - 15.30

BFWG HQ

Mandeville Courtyard

£5 at the door Bring your own lunch

Who carries the can? (and almost everything else...)

The overall theme for the day will be the effect on women in particular as the world responds to the current financial problems and consequent challenges.

- Are we in danger of losing much of what was gained over the last half century?
- Are we affected differently from women in other countries?
- How do the generations differ?
- Is gender equality a luxury some women can't pursue?

We will also look to develop a resolution and/or workshops for the 2010 IFUW conference - if you have ideas please let me know.

More information will be distributed via the BFWG website and local associations' IR reps over the summer, or contact Margaret Middlemass.