



Women in Russia - Past and Present

BFWG members met at the University Women's Club to listen to three speakers talk about the experiences of women in Russia in the past and today.

Our first speaker was Annie Feltham, who studied Russian at University, was a student in the USSR in 1969, worked for Moscow publishers, and taught Russian at University before joining the UK Department for International Development, focusing on Eastern Europe. More recently, requested by the Russians, she became technical expert for an EU project on social care for children and elderly at risk.

Annie compared how things had changed over time, saying how she had felt very safe in the early years but was much less so now. She suggested in the USSR the State had met everyone's needs, and even though there were constraints on one's private life, the economy was not money-based. Wages were low but you got a flat, subsidised holidays, cheap fuel, and travel. There was no inflation and a barter system operated for a lot of things. What mattered most was who you knew. There was access to higher education for all, most women worked until they married and all children aged 6 plus went to kindergarten. Abortion had been illegal under Stalin but due to high death rates from illegal abortions the birth rate dropped so it was legalised.

Under the current system money is all that counts. Life is good for those who have it and this has produced great inequality. After the collapse of Communism, there was a failure to establish the rule of law with state-owned assets sold off cheaply

to anyone who could afford them, giving rise to the wealthy oligarchs. Informal rationing occurs due to pricing and unavailability of many items. Items such as medicines are in short supply and the Health Service has become a money-making bureaucracy. The whole system is riddled with corruption and needs to change. In the Regions, where some Governors are very powerful, President Yeltsin allowed more self-government, but Putin is attempting to pull back power centrally.



L to R: Annie Feltham, Elena Denezhkina Campbell, Sheila Youngs, Maria Butler

Maria Butler, originally from Kiev, has lived and worked in the UK for 10 years. Her description of Russian life was presented through telephone interviews she had conducted with 10 women friends living across Russia.

She explained the complex structure of the Russian Federation and then reported that in modern-day Russia there are rich and poor but no middle class, with great inequality depending on where one lives and works and due to poor communications between the different regions.

She summarised that there is a loss of the past stability and sense of order and discipline. Nowadays, those living in Moscow or St. Petersburg earn good salaries and enjoy a high standard of living, but those in poorer regions suffer. There are no real Trade Unions and those which do exist are very weak. Except for a few, medical services are not free, nor is education and one has to pay extra for some lessons. Maternity benefits must be spent in specific ways and there is no social security or no sick pay if you are unwell for over 6 months. One has to work overtime or have more than one job to obtain a decent salary. Women

can become successful in business if they obtain a good education and if they have the right ethnicity. Not many women want to participate in politics, with a few exceptions, and generally, their votes, rights and opinions are ignored. Her overall consensus, given the wide difference in age, background and location, is the importance of gaining a good education which allows entry into the upper levels of society and the resulting higher level of earning power.

Dr Elena Denezhkina Campbell, Centre for Russian and European Studies, Birmingham University and President of the British-Russian Society spoke on Social Status, Opportunities and Challenges, which covered three periods, Soviet, Post-Soviet and Modern.

She used strong women in Russian history, from 10th Century Princess Olga to Catherine the Great, to illustrate the past importance of women's roles: this changed, as in the 19th Century, the few Russian women who graduated were not allowed to teach. After the Revolution far more women studied and achieved professional status.

The 1930s saw women employed in heavy industry, a trend that continued into the Second World War, with women working on the front line as pilots or tank drivers. However, women in Soviet leadership were scarce with, typically, only the Ministry of Culture headed by a woman. Although many councillors were women there was never a female Politburo member. Women's role models included astronauts, gymnasts and ballerinas, but the Soviet era also saw medicine, teaching, journalism and accounting become predominantly female.

After 1991, quite different opportunities appeared with the development of the market economy. In many of the larger commercial businesses women make up the vast majority of chief financial officers and heads of human resources and there is a growing trend for women-led businesses. In Government, women are well represented at all levels except the top. This may change as President Putin's has been widely quoted commenting on how Russia needs to catch up with the Finnish gender proportions.

Sheila Youngs, CER

INSIDE

- HIGHER EDUCATION Page 2
- PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO EXECUTIVE Page 5
- REGIONAL MEETINGS Page 7

INSERT

- PROPOSED NEW BY-LAWS i
- AGM AGENDA iii
- BOOKING FORMS iv

British Federation of Women Graduates
THE VOICE OF WOMEN GRADUATES
Founded 1907

Patron: The Baroness Greenfield, CBE

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.



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Notes from the Editor

As I write this editorial, under Bucharest's grey skies, it seems hard to imagine that it's almost a year since our last AGM. We look forward to our upcoming AGM at Wymondham College. To give you a taste, page 3 has the potted bios of the excellent speakers who will enlighten us. If you are unable to attend, summaries of their talks will be in future *News*.

Another stage of the tireless work of our constitutional advisors, their working group, and input from the Executive has produced the first of our rewritten By-laws; these are in the AGM supplement. Comments can be sent via your AGM delegate, regional

rep or to Nest. Many thanks to our guest designer and publisher for this edition, Lucy Heale. After email discussion we braved skype to discuss this exciting edition. Finally, after an enjoyable two years as Editor, I have indicated to the Management team that I would like to stand down as editor. Thank you all for your support and for sending in the numerous articles, without which there would be no *News*.

Su Allen, Editor



Join the BFWG Higher Education Working Group

The successful BFWG Colloquium on Female Leadership in Higher Education held in London last May took place during a time when 'Higher Education in the UK is undergoing significant change, driven by political, cultural, economic and technological factors. The trends are global in their scope and far-reaching in their impact. They affect every aspect of university provision, the environment in which they operate, what they will be required to deliver in future and how they will be structured and funded' (Universities UK). It is against this backdrop that the BFWG Executive recommended to the 2011 AGM that a Higher Education Working Group be set up to carry forward the work initiated at the Colloquium.

What role can BFWG play in the Higher Education (HE) sector? Which education issues should be addressed by our Federation? How can BFWG promote the advancement of women in academia? Of course, we cannot take on the whole HE agenda but BFWG, which advocates women's equality of opportunity in leadership roles and seeks to improve education for women at all levels particularly HE, should be prepared to comment on Government White Papers e.g. 'Putting Students at the Heart of Higher Education' (June 2011), documents produced by bodies such as

the HE Funding Councils of England and Wales and issues including university research funding, the impact of new immigration policy on UK universities and the lamentable number of female vice-chancellors in the UK (only 17 out of 115 UK universities in January 2012). In this way, BFWG would have valuable input into future policies while at the same time promoting some of our aims and raising our profile.

We should be in a position to take our place alongside high profile organisations such as Universities UK and GuildHE and make our opinions heard. So, if you are interested in joining this important Working Group, please contact Gill Clerici by the end of June 2012 so that an informal discussion can take place at the AGM. If you do not have an email address, you can write to Gill c/o BFWG Office. We would also like to hear from Local Associations who are in the process of forging links with their local universities and colleges so that the Federation has more connections as well as potential future members among students, academics, administrators and others who are involved in the life of our academic institutions.

*Gill Clerici and Anna Frost,
Worcestershire*

President's Letter

Dear Federation Members,

It is difficult to believe that this is my fourth President's Letter and we are again busy preparing for the Annual General Meeting, this year run by Norfolk and Norwich Local Association. Our thanks and admiration go to them as, after bearing much of the load for the 2011 AGM, I now realise the measure of the task. The Management Team would like to hear from LAs or Regions which would be prepared to organise, or help with, the 2013 or 2014 AGMs. The alternative may be a day meeting in or around London, which I know is not a popular solution.

As I wrote the report on behalf of Executive I realised what a busy year we have again had: from overcoming the challenge of flooded premises to preparing for our Centennial celebration by collecting for the special Centennial Scholarship fund, whilst also enjoying the usual rich and varied local, regional and national programme. After a full afternoon of deleting and pursuing sent e-mails I am reminded how much the Management Team and Executive Committee members do on your behalf 'behind the scenes'. This really is an ice berg effect: you only notice the one tenth above the surface!

My report refers to the three major innovations since last summer: the new database run as a sub-domain of the BFWG website, BFWG News now in colour printed digitally on FSC certified paper and the use of the new database

to facilitate direct dispatch of News by the printer straight to you. All these have meant an improved carbon footprint, increased efficiency and a higher profile for BFWG.

Internationally we have had a call for papers and workshops for the 2013 International Meeting in Turkey, and a reminder to celebrate the combined success of the NFAs of IFUW on 1 June (now named IFUW Day) in awarding over two million US\$ equivalent in grants and scholarships. BFWG has been asked to endorse the shadow CEDAW report and this is an additional item to be put to the AGM: copies have been sent to LAs and Regions for consideration.

I need to finish with thanks to all of you who have helped make these past months not only tolerable but a success. Thanks to persistent efforts by Barbara Jackson and Rory Haigh in tackling insurers et al we now have a newly decorated and carpeted office and meeting room. We also thank Sheila Stevens, our web administrator, who has enabled the new database and we are delighted she is standing as Vice President. On a personal level thank you to all who sent good wishes and kept the show on the road whilst I underwent shoulder surgery in late March.

Jenny Morley, President



Prominent Women Speak at the BFWG AGM

Catherine Reynolds, our after-dinner Speaker on Friday night, became Head of Communications for the Norwich BioScience Institute in 2006.

Born and brought up in Oxford, Catherine studied Biological Sciences at the University of East Anglia, specialising in microbiology. She then worked at the Food Research Institute in Norwich for 12 years and some of her research is still cited 25 years later.

In 1984 she changed career path and helped pioneer the concept of multi-science conferences, which later underpinned the effective delivery of the EU's food research. Now partially retired, she is heard regularly on local radio and, along with new pursuits, still mentors scientists in how to engage with the public.



Anna Pant-Robinson, Professor of Education, UEA, is our keynote speaker. Her early career focused on educational

research, planning and training for various international and local development agencies in South Asia, particularly Nepal. She joined UEA in 2000, and has continued to work in the fields of adult literacy and development, children's participation and intercultural learning ensuring that practitioners and policy makers are an integral part of the research process.

Baroness Gillian Shephard of Northwold, JP, DL, is our after-dinner speaker. She was born in Cromer and still lives in Norfolk. She read Modern Languages at Oxford, taught in education and held various posts in education and administration, finally becoming a Schools' Inspector.

Her political career began in 1987 on being elected MP for South West Norfolk. She held several Ministerial posts: Secretary of State for Education and Employment, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, Minister with Responsibilities for Women.

She was made a peer in 2005 since when she continues in public service. She chairs various societies including the Institute of Education and, she is patron of many others, mainly in Norfolk. Gillian became a Privy Counsellor in 1992 and was created Chevalier dans l'Ordre National de la Legion d'Honneur in 2009. She is currently Deputy Lieutenant for the County of Norfolk.

Joan Wheatley, Norfolk and Norwich



International and European NEWS

News on the Draft By-Laws 1-8

The Articles of Association, which form BFWG's primary constitutional documents, were presented at the 2011 AGM and tabled until 2013 when Council's approval will be sought.

The Working Group has spent the last year drafting By-laws which form the secondary constitutional documents. By-laws 1-8 have already been completed and have received final Executive approval.

These By-laws are now published on the website for the general membership to consider and comment on where appropriate.

Any comments to Nest Overend by post or email. Local Association AGMs provide an ideal opportunity to discuss these matters. It is intended that this stage will be completed by the 2012 Federation AGM when a verbal update will be given in the form of a report.

The remainder of the By-laws will then be completed in like manner and the full set of documents presented at the 2013 AGM.

NM Overend

Sharing Programmes

Please bring your LA or Regional calendars for 2012-2013 to the AGM so that information can be shared with other members and on our website events' calendar.

Hand the information to any member of the Management Team or send an e-copy to msmeaton@bfgw.org.uk

A Woman's Place is in Europe

Heather Hawkes and I attended a debate held at Europe House, Smith Square, London in the run up to the 101st anniversary of International Women's Day. Shirin Wheeler, of the Record Europe and BBC, moderated speakers from the political and business worlds as they debated:

- What has the EU done so far to advance the cause of gender equality in Europe?
- What further measures are in the pipeline?
- Should Europe do more or does it need to interfere less when it comes to improving women's lot, particularly in the workplace?

Mary Honeyball, MEP London (Labour), referred to the Treaty of Rome which first addressed the problem of discrimination, especially the pay gap between the sexes which, despite the regulations, still exists. Across Europe this equates to around a 20% difference between men and women's pay, and in the UK a 22% difference. Mary is in favour of quotas to achieve equal representation of women, with equal access to training and a need for fairness.

Marina Yannakoudakis, MEP London (Conservative), with her business background, disagreed about more legislation or female quotas. This was tried in Norway without success, as women have a different approach. Looking at the bigger picture, our main focus should be the empowerment of women, not just equal pay. Many women want to go into business with a level playing field.

Emma Reynolds, MP and Shadow Europe Minister, said that despite today being Equal Pay Day women in this country still earn less and own less than men. Women's choice of whether or not to work was often dependent on affordable child care.

Heather McGregor, director of Taylor Bennett and author of the Mrs. Money Penny column in the Financial Times, was also against the idea of imposing quotas. She felt one has to smash the myth once and for all about women being able to 'have it all'. Female appointments to UK Boards of Directors have already gone up from 10 to 20%. Women wishing to succeed should seek advice, and make sure that, once they are at the top they mentor other women who are coming up. Creating more legislation only complicates things for businesses.

The question and answer session extended the discussion. Mary commented on Norway and the fact that some women had broken through. A speaker for the National Alliance of Women's Organisations stated that Norway's quota system had also fundamentally changed the attitude of men. Despite all-women short-lists for parliament in this country having a bad press they had succeeded in allowing more women to become

MPs with over 100 Labour women, but only 17 Conservative. Mary Honeyball was in favour of introducing temporary positive measures.

Evidence was presented proving women on Boards of Directors produce better results as they understand the needs of customers, many of whom are women but most women on UK Boards of Directors are American with Wales singled out as making good progress.

Considering that 60% of graduates are women, there should be a good supply of talent but they should be given higher level of skills training, targets to aim for and mentoring to overcome any lack of confidence. There is still discrimination in the workplace against employing women, especially those of child-bearing age. The choice



of women NOT to work is going down due to financial pressures and, parental leave is also an issue. The UK pensions are bad compared to the rest of Europe, especially for women. However, pensions are not covered by European legislation. Age discrimination was a problem particularly in the media and advertising.

On violence, we learnt the UK has signed new EU legislation to deal with trafficking but the committee on advertising could do more to prevent negative images of women.

Marina stated that the European Parliament works best focusing on the middle ground. She stressed the importance of networking between women and the need to try and change the existing culture by persuading men to relinquish power. One should also raise women's aspirations and encourage more women to study what are considered as male subjects in education.

The debate was expertly handled with two screens, one at either end of the room, displaying live blogging by Women's Views on News, present at the meeting. Furthermore, other delegates' tweets reached a staggering 45,500 Twitter users!

Sheila Youngs, CER

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Report of the President on behalf of the Executive Committee to the 2012 AGM

The enjoyable 2011 AGM was held at historic Dartington Hall, Devon with keynote presentations on 'Social Entrepreneurship and the Role of Women'. Certificates marking 50 years of BFWG membership were presented to twelve recipients. Major constitutional changes were approved.

The BFWG year since the 2011 AGM has seen several successful innovations introduced to enhance both the profile and the administration of the organisation.

The Management Team has reduced in number so a huge effort has been required of the Vice President in charge of Administration, Rosemary (Rory) Haigh, especially as another Vice President, Dr Su Allen was relocated to mainland Europe during the year. In both instances the new technologies have proved invaluable.

There is a new secure membership database up and running as a sub-domain of BFWG web space. Our grateful thanks go to Rory and to our Web Administrator, Dr Sheila Stevens for the untold hours they devoted to this task during autumn 2011. It is now not necessary to be present in the Office to amend the database as it can be accessed by Management Team Members from their home computers using a secure password. Hence Membership data can be up-dated and subscription payments recorded quickly and accurately.

Su Allen has continued to edit BFWG News with member Linda Hadfield as designer for the Autumn and Winter editions. The latter was dispatched direct from the printer, with Member addresses sent from the new database electronically. The third innovation is that News, from the Autumn edition onwards, is now printed digitally on FSC certified paper and in colour, representing a better carbon footprint for BFWG.

In August an outing to the Yorkshire Sculpture Park proved a great attraction to both Independent and Local Association Members, and in future years will be called Members' Open Day. We thank members at Wakefield LA for organising it so efficiently. The sun also shone!

During September the Eastern Region AGM took place at Hatfield and combined a talk on Henry Moore with an opportunity to view some of his sculptures displayed in the grounds of Hatfield Palace.

One other September event was not so welcome, as the BFWG Office and the Meeting Room were both flooded due to inept plumbing activities in the unit above our premises. On the grounds of health and safety I took the

decision to close the office temporarily, as there was no electrical supply and interrupted water supply, not to mention sodden carpets underfoot until the insurance companies gave permission to remove these. In addition there was also the possibility of the ceiling above both the office and the meeting room collapsing onto anyone below.

After protracted negotiations, and a long drying-out period, we finally opened for business, freshly decorated and with new carpets, in mid February 2012 just before March Executive Committee. We are again indebted to Rory and Barbara Jackson, Chair of Finance, who wrote reports, took photos and persistently put our case to both the Mandeville Courtyard Managing Agents and their insurance agents for the building, and to our own contents and operational insurers, with loss adjusters also involved. BFWG were eventually reimbursed for the loss of rental income and the extra cost of holding our own meetings elsewhere.

Fortunately our annual October event, the Westminster Seminar was not adversely affected although the administration was difficult, with mail being re-directed.

Based on resolutions passed at the IFUW Meeting in 2010, and on the BFWG Theme for 2011-2013 the title 'Financial Literacy in Education' was the theme for the Westminster Seminar. Sixty members heard from Wendy van den Hende, Chief Executive of the Personal Financial Education Group (pfeg) on helping to develop financial capability in young people in the wider context of adult financial capability. Marilyn Holness OBE, Chair of the Dept. Of Education, University of Roehampton, told us about teacher training and helping students to manage their personal finance. Baroness Margaret Sharp, Lib-Dem Peer responded to the issues raised, especially around student fees. We were graciously sponsored by Baroness Vivien Stern, CBE.

In November the first of the re-located meetings took place when the International Meeting was held at the University Women's Club. Members heard from Patrice Wellesley-Cole, Senior Immigration Judge on Judgement Reserved. She gave a fascinating history of immigration and asylum law, with the 1993 introduction of the right of appeal leading to a huge increase in the work of the courts. She mentioned the current great concern about the number of unaccompanied minors, many from Afghanistan. Patrice was afterwards made our first Affiliate Member, a category created at the 2011 AGM for International Members present in England and Wales.

Also at that AGM, the Council unanimously adopted the Revised Articles of Association which will be enacted once the By-laws are revised. The Constitutional Advisors, on behalf of the working group, presented the first part of the revised By-laws for discussion at the March 2012 Executive Committee meeting, and Local Associations and Independent Members are now examining them further. Thanks go to those concerned with these revisions.

Amendments to the existing Articles adopted unanimously at the 2011 AGM create both the Chair of the Finance Committee and the Co-ordinator of European Relations (CER) as full members of the Voting Executive Committee, and hence as Directors of BFWG.

This spring the inspiring annual Research Presentations Day was again successfully managed by Elizabeth Poskitt and also an interesting European Relations event was held on The Situation of Women in Russia Today. Several BFWG members attend the University Women of Europe (UWE) AGM in Helsinki in early June.

The Finance Committee have continued to steer the Federation successfully through the daunting waters of the current financial situation, with the able help of our financial advisors, so that BFWG is again in a secure and solvent state.

However, it is thought advisable to ask the 2012 AGM to approve an increase in membership capitation of £2, in view of the impending increase in dues paid on behalf of every member to the International Federation of University Women (IFUW) based in Geneva, and because of the adverse exchange in the value of the Swiss Franc with respect to the UK Pound.

The new recruitment leaflet has been published and the Local Associations are requested to use these, with their own information on small fliers inside, to promote the Federation in 2012 as BFWG celebrates a century of awarding scholarships to women. Membership numbers show a healthy increase, and there seems to be a pleasing upward trend developing, in spite of natural wastage.

The Executive Committee were pleased to accept the Management Team recommendation that Beryl Roper, a revered former President of BFWG, be made an Honorary Life Member. In addition to supervising the sale of our former premises, Crosby Hall, and the relocation to our current address, Beryl also had a distinguished career in the Ministry of Defence, 'making it' in a man's world.

Jenny Morley, on behalf of the Executive Committee: May 2012

Another helping on Financial Literacy

The earlier reports on the 2011 Westminster seminar gave members a flavour of what our guest speakers said. I have been asked to report my comments in responding and summarising for BFWG. I did relish the opportunity to air some opinions in such illustrious company! So here is a summary of my summary....

At IFUW's 2010 conference I proposed a resolution on behalf of BFWG calling for the importance of numeracy to be recognized - especially for girls and women - alongside more conventional literacy. We also strongly supported the Canadian resolution on improving financial literacy among all people but especially women and girls who have traditionally tended to fall behind. Both federations agreed that our resolutions were not to be amalgamated because they addressed different problems, with numeracy skills the first basic step before getting to grips with more complex financial matters and with our own financial futures. Both resolutions were passed unanimously.

In a world currently rocked by financial crises, debt worries on national and international scales as well as for individuals, threatened currencies, falling employment, reduced public funding and in which we need to work longer for less reward and to put more aside for an extended old age, it is particularly important for us all to understand the problems and processes as much as possible.

Our young people - and indeed many not so young - have become disengaged from politics and often display a rather touching faith that someone will know

what to do and will do something. Perhaps if they have more idea of what our money is spent on they might feel more connected to the arguments. "No such thing as society" Margaret Thatcher said, society is us.

It's good to know our youngsters in primary school are being given an option (at least in the best schemes) to get a solid grounding. It needs to be universally available. Our older pupils also need to continue to study finance as an essential part of preparation for adult life. No young person should leave education without understanding how their pay and taxes work, why they need to make provision for the future, how to save and how to assess the true cost of borrowing.

Indeed, the decision about whether to go to university is one which must now include a financial element. Student loans have worried me from their introduction and with fees set to rise they represent a huge investment to be carefully weighed up. It's not so much the loan itself but the attitude it engenders in young adults who have become inured to the concept of debt. Once the first step is taken it's always easier to add a little more and at the start of their working lives they are already carrying a large burden. If you owe £15k on a student loan, why not make it £25k? In the last couple of years this has started to hit home as the same young people find it harder to get jobs and much harder to obtain finance for the rest of life's necessities.

Those already working face tough times and difficult decisions, and retirement plans are being

severely disrupted with ever changing retirement ages. As well as being very confusing, it is a measure of the rapidly changing financial reality that the actual age is now probably irrelevant since the money purchase pension scheme into which most adults have paid offer ever-diminishing returns meaning it is unlikely to enable many to afford to retire until much later. I don't think many of those who retired at 60 or earlier on publicly funded final salary pensions appreciate quite how lucky they are!

For those who retired but whose pensions are not inflation-linked there are increasing worries about how to cope, with investment income negligible and prices rising rapidly for essentials such as food and fuel. And the final terror for many, especially women who tend to live longer and are often left alone at the end of their lives, is how to pay for full time care if that becomes necessary.

Financial education will not solve all these problems but it is vital to understand how we can make the best use of what we have, and to be confident when facing hard choices that we are equipped to choose wisely on rational grounds.

Charles Dickens knew all about the importance of understanding money - as he had Micawber say "Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure nineteen pounds nineteen and six, result happiness. Annual income twenty pounds, annual expenditure twenty pounds ought and six, result misery." Not that hard really!

Margaret Middlemass, Leeds

Mercia and Wales meet in Historic Monmouth

Forty-two members attended the Mercia and Wales regional meeting hosted by the Swansea LA. Our venue was the Grade II listed Shire Hall in the historical border town of Monmouth, South Wales; the town being famous as the birthplace of Henry V who was commemorated in a tapestry hanging in the Hall. After welcoming members, Swansea president, Johanna Procter introduced the speaker, local historian David Harrison. He enlightened us with an illustrated talk on Monmouth and the Chartists, focusing on the violent Chartist uprising in 1838, their demands for a People's Charter to enable voting by the common people, and for better living conditions. Their cause took over 80 years before 78% of the population, including every man aged 21, and women aged 30 with a proper qualification, could vote.



Lunch was eaten in the Agincourt Room, formerly Court No.2. Afterwards, members toured the famous No.1 Court where the Chartists were tried before transportation to Tasmania. Some members ventured down the steep steps to the gaol cells where many were Chartists were imprisoned. The grandfather of Charles Rolls, joint founder of Rolls Royce, was a participant in the Chartist movement. He is commemorated with statue in the front of Shire Hall.

In the business meeting, Rory Haigh, BFWG Vice President, informed of an increase in membership numbers, reminded us of this year's theme on the importance of financial literacy in education, and that the yellow pages are available electronically on the members-only section of the website. A password can be obtained from Sheila Stevens at webadmin@bfgw.org.uk.

Nest Overend, Constitutional Adviser, up-dated members on the revision of the By-laws. The first eight By-laws were written and a draft had been presented to the Executive, with completion hoped for by the 2013 AGM. Nest stressed that due concern had been made to voting strength to ensure that the balance remained with the members.

Gail Sagar, Worcestershire LA, was welcomed as the new Regional Representative with Delyth Rees, Swansea LA, as her alternate. Thanks were given to the outgoing regional rep, Nesta Farrow, and alternate, Vivien Greenow, and the hosts, Swansea LA. Sutton Coldfield Association will host next year's regional meeting; details to be confirmed.

Nina Hamilton, Sutton Coldfield

The Northern Regional Meeting

The talk on Saturday afternoon was thought provoking. Post graduate degrees in Maths and Engineering and Fine Arts as well as a strong Christian faith have set Dr Joanna Brown on The Journey of an Accidental Activist. She defined an activist as an individual who promotes change, doing peaceful and positive work. Over the last 15 years, together with small groups of like-minded enthusiasts, she has been instrumental in carrying out not only non-violent protests but contributing to economic education overseas.

A red London bus, converted to a mobile home and bedecked with slogans proclaiming Drop the Debt, was present at the G8 Conference, Genoa. A positive result was that, in Uganda, after debt cancellation, the number of children in primary school education rose from 2.5 to 7.0 million. The Fairtrade Fiesta movement led to a better deal for the Third World producers who reinvested the profits to improve cultivation or, as exemplified by coffee producers and traders, provided money for hospital equipment. In Sri Lanka, after sales

of the tea crop, a tent was bought for use as a venue in the customary wedding celebrations. A library was built in Ethiopia and new groves of olive trees and scholarships have resulted from working with Israelis and Palestinians as well as helping refugees. At the Copenhagen conference on Climate Change a group argued for sustainability whilst the movement has been present, promoting their ideas, at the Glastonbury and Edinburgh festivals.

"Small is Beautiful" (Schumacher) is the philosophy that underlies all that Dr Brown undertakes. A new website (www.e.org) illustrates the work of the World Wide We movement and from mid-summer those who wish to be involved can sign up to volunteer, to donate funds or to share dreams. She sees the world as an integrated whole rather than a collection of disconnected parts. Her talk demonstrated what one individual's energy and inspiration can achieve.

Margaret Smeaton, Worcestershire

++BFWG Bulletin Board++BFWG Bulletin Board++

Bring & Buy and Raffle at BFWG AGM & Conference 13-15 July 2012

Hosted by Norfolk & Norwich LA
Don't forget to bring your gifts and raffle prizes
to the AGM in support of the Bring & Buy.
Profits will be split between the
BFWG Scholarship Fund and Norfolk
& Norwich Education Fund

Scholarship Centennial Celebration Saturday 3 November 2012

University Women's Club,
2 Audley Square,
London W1Y 6DB

Details and booking information in
Autumn 2012 News

Members' Open Day in York Monday 6 August 2012

This year's Open Day (previously Independents' Day) is
an Exhibition of Views of York: Portrait of a City 1610
to the present day, at Fairfax House, Castlegate, York.

We will gather for a private curator's tour
of the exhibition, starting at 3pm which will last about
2 hours. The cost is £10 which includes a glass of wine.

Fairfax House is situated in the heart of York, opposite Clifford's Tower
and close to the Jorvik Centre. Further information from

www.fairfaxhouse.co.uk.

There is an overall limit on numbers so please do not delay in completing
the booking form on the INSERT.

Bio-ethics Study Day Saturday 29 September 2012

Centre for Life, Newcastle-upon-Tyne
Speakers to include:

Prof Mary Herbert, Prof of Reproductive
Biology, Institute for Ageing & Health,
Newcastle University

Prof Julian Hughes, Hon Prof of the
Philosophy of Ageing, Northumbria
Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

Chaired by Marianne Haslegrave,
IFUW President

Cost £35

Booking form on INSERT.

Sybil Campbell Collection

Thursday 18 October 2012

Visit to British Library,

Guided Tour at 14.30 Cost £10

Cheques payable to BFWG Sybil Campbell Collection
Trust to: Dr Sheila Stevens, 12 Westley Close,
Winchester, SO22 5LA by 24 September

Annual Lecture

18.00 for 18.30 lecture,

University Women's Club,
2 Audley Square, London, W1Y 6DB

Jane Hill The Work of Gertrude Hermes

For further details and booking information
please see Autumn News or the website.

Eastern Region AGM

Saturday 20 October 2012

10.30 for 11.00am

The Letchworth Centre for Healthy Living
Rosehill Hospital, Hitchin Road A505
Letchworth, Herts. SG6 3NA

Cost £23.00

AGM and private visit to the unique
British Schools Museum, Hitchin
(includes a typical Victorian lesson)

Enquiries to Hilde Betts, President,
North Hertfordshire Association.