

Secretary's Report

2016: An extremely busy year for UK WILPF

2016 was again an extremely busy year for UK WILPF as can be seen by the reports from our branches, the Voices of African Women campaign and from the women who attended international events on behalf of UK WILPF.

The year started with preparation by branches and the Executive for the Anti-Trident



Demonstration in London on February 27th. WILPF members travelled from all over the country to attend. As UK WILPF was one of the sponsors of the demonstration, our members also ran a stall in Trafalgar Square. Thank you to those who stood in the cold at the stall. It generated much interest, welcome income, and some new members. Cornwall Branch held their own action in Penzance in support of the national demonstration.

In March Lydia Meryll and Pam Flynn travelled to Brussels to

represent the Section at WILPF Europe meeting. Please see the report on page 5

In April we held our AGM with the afternoon Seminar on 'Peace and Security: Where are Women on the Agenda'. The presentation was made by Laila Alodaat, International WILPF Crisis Response Manager. Laila proved a fascinating and informative speaker who generated so much interest that she was asked to speak in Edinburgh in October and at the Autumn Seminar held in November.

The Brexit vote for the United Kingdom to leave the European Union was a surprise to many members. Regrettably this vote has resulted in some parts of the country in an increase in racism and extreme right-wing activity. Some members are having to deal with this within their communities. The Executive wrote a Brexit statement for UKWILPF – please see page 11. To produce this was a long and carefully thought out process. Thank you to all members of the Executive who worked on this.

Late spring and early summer saw members writing letters to our MPs asking them not to vote to replace Trident. Unfortunately this campaign was not successful. However, there is an international move to bring about a global ban on nuclear weapons with WILPF Reaching Critical Will playing a very active role – see Janet Fenton's report on page 10. In response to the UK Government not attending the Global Nuclear Ban Treaty talks the Executive wrote a letter to Boris Johnson. This has been widely shared with the public at events.

The Autumn saw our General Secretary Madeleine Rees speaking at the London School of Economics. Her talk generated a lot of interest and brought us some new members. Madeleine also attended and spoke at the re-launch of the London Branch.

Martha Jean Baker and Janet Fenton attended the WILPF Europe Autumn meeting and Lydia Meryll attended the Climate Change Summit COP22. See the International section of this report.

To mark the anniversary of Security Council Resolution 1325: Women Peace and Security, Marie-Claire Faray organised a high-profile series of seminars for WILPF at London University: SOAS and LSE and in Parliament (All Party Parliamentary Group on Africa) to highlight the dangerous political situation for women in the D.R. Congo.

The Autumn Seminar with its wide range of expert speakers was a great success, attracting an audience of many non-WILPF members – several of whom subsequently joined WILPF. See page 12.

In December Elidih Whiteford, MP, Banff and Buchan, introduced a bill to Parliament to get the UK Government to ratify the Istanbul Convention on violence against women. 100 MPs were needed to be present to get the bill to proceed through the parliamentary process. WILPF members lobbied their MPs to ensure their attendance, and see the bill pass its second reading.

Members continued to lobby their MPs about the sale of arms to Saudi Arabia and the bombing of Syria and Yemen.

Sadly the year saw the deaths of many longstanding members (see the obituaries in this report). But 2016 also saw the celebration of Rosalie Huzzard's 90th Birthday.

Members, particularly those who are not in branches, ask what they can do. You can write to Boris Johnston (Foreign Secretary) – see letter on UKWILPF website about UK participation at the Global Ban Nuclear Treaty.

Write also to your MPs and ask them to sign the following Early Day Motions: Nuclear warhead convoys EDM 577 and Global Abolition of Nuclear Weapons EDM 145. Very few English MPs are currently signing Early Day Motions, so please lobby your MPs.

This is my last UKWILPF Section Report as I stand down as UKWILPF Secretary at the AGM on April 8th 2017, having served a three-year term and a co-opted year. I have been very happy to have over-seen a period of increased membership and activism in the Section.



Rosalie Huzzard's 90th Birthday

Anne Scott, UK WILPF Secretary

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Report from UK WILPF's 'job-share' International Board reps

In 2015 Keely Khoury and I were elected for three years as joint representatives, to WILPF's International Board (IB). Each national section is entitled to a member and we are the first joint representatives. The IB's constitutional function is akin to other organisations' executive boards – though in practice, WILPF is run by an 'Excom' consisting of its elected



From left to right Ros and Leila at Autumn

international officers and general secretary, who meet by Skype or face-to-face every two months.

Given the size of the IB neither of these contact methods would be feasible. Instead, four IB online audio sessions were trialled for the first time in June this year. A vast amount of preparation went into these from the administrative end at Geneva – which also required much work from national sections. We had to fill out a very detailed report on our past and present. Thanks to all the Executive members who contributed to that report.

We were also invited to send resolutions, but these could only be about 'campaigning' and the criteria were so prescriptive and off-putting that our Executive decided not to bother! Unsurprisingly, only three sections submitted 'resolutions' – and they were more generalised statements than actual motions.

The online IB sessions themselves provided the excitement of feeling 'hooked up to the world' and a strong sense of sisterhood and common purpose. However, we also felt the actual *content* of the sessions emphasised the administrative aspect of WILPF to the detriment of urgent concrete issues of policy. When, in the final session, 'Political Discussion' came on the agenda, time factors meant there was no room for any *actual* discussion following the excellent presentation by Vice-President Margrethe Tinstad.

We responded to Geneva's request for feedback by suggesting how guidelines for resolutions could be worded to encourage more contributions. We expressed disappointment that the sessions had worked like an inverted pyramid whereby issues of an organisational and constitutional nature, important as these are, had predominated over issues both of theory (developing gender analyses of current situations) and practice (such as local campaigning and forming alliances).

We were also concerned that, despite these limitations, no further



IB reps, Ros Brunt, Keely Khoury

IB meeting was being planned until the end of 2017 when, inevitably, the main agenda item would be the forthcoming Congress, which is to be held in Ghana in 2018. Was there not some 'democratic deficit' here? Especially given the urgency of discussing the implications for WILPF of such a turbulent year.

A year in which, sadly, we were sending out condolences and expressions of solidarity to our sisters in Sections across the world who were confronting terrorist atrocities in their countries. It was heartening then to receive back powerful messages about how WILPF work on the ground was continuing to combat the violence-engendering attitudes that both preceded and followed these attacks.

At the European level, we were in active contact with WILPF-Europe, both in response to acts of terrorism but also in support of plans for a WILPF meeting alongside the Berlin International Peace and Disarmament event at the end of September. Janet Fenton represented the Scottish branch at this event. Unfortunately, the original UK WILPF delegate was unable to go and it was only thanks to the generosity of Executive member Lydia Meryll that we were enabled to fund a last-minute replacement, former IB representative, Martha Baker (see her contribution to this Report).

Lydia was also responsible for drafting a discussion paper on UK responses to Brexit – subsequently edited by us after discussion in the Executive and sent to all UK branches, regional and international levels of WILPF. We also received a number of Brexit comments from continental sections. These will form the basis of some of the discussion at the next WILPF-Europe meeting on the 60th anniversary of the Rome Treaty that established the EU. This will take place in Rome itself on 24-26 March and any WILPF member may attend. The meeting also aims to discuss migration, nuclear disarmament and climate change.

Finally, at the UK level, we took responsibility for organising this year's Autumn Seminar on an international theme (see report page 12) and will be discussing follow-ups in 2017.

Rosalind Brunt, joint UK representative,
WILPF International Board.

WILPF European sections challenge world-wide climate of fear

Pam Flynn and I attended an informal meeting of WILPF European Sections from 3rd to 5th March in Brussels. Heidi Meinzolt WILPF Europe Co-ordinator, had called the meeting to consider women's response to current and urgent European humanitarian issues, including the refugee situation and the re-introduction of national borders. We also considered climate change, TTIP and increasing militarisation. This informal meeting of European Sections took place a week before the bombings in Brussels.



Lydia Meryll WILPF Europe Meeting March

The following national issues were discussed:

- **The position of women in the Lebanon**, where ¼ of the total population is now refugees (2 million refugees, 1.5 m from Syria + 500,000 from Palestine and a host population of 4m). There is no established government or president. Civil society has collapsed and children can buy weapons. Arms traders are moving in and want to “Test” weapons. It is not clear who is funding the supply of arms.
- **The position of women in Bosnia**: Women remain vulnerable with potential for fascist resurgence, and society still very divided by ethnicity and religion after the Balkan war. Women from different ethnic communities divided by war are beginning to come together to share stories. A sister from Sarajevo described the Bosnian situation as a “frozen war” and the state as fragmented and inefficient. Reparation continues to be contested with “different harms” being identified. She sees forced militarisation as a “harm” and an inappropriate response to the 70 per cent youth unemployment. Factions and “war lords” are in control.
- **Italy is seen as a bridge to/from Syria and Libya**: Islamophobia is growing as is a fear of leaving the EU. Italy is recovering from an era of corruption and unemployment, with many young men under or unemployed. The role of the Pope is seen as very encouraging as a peacemaker.
- **Netherlands, currently holding presidency of EU**: Strong negative feelings about taking refugees. Much misinformation induces fear and lack of adequate preparation by positive communities.
- **Germany holds OECD Presidency**: Sexualised violence and theft creates a real problem for pro-refugee activists. The extreme right are forming armed vigilante groups and a new party – the IFD, with a pit bull as its mascot, say they have a right to shoot refugees. The initial culture of welcome is being undermined. Angela Merkel is supported by the Greens but now “secure countries” (to which refugees are to be returned) are being redefined by European state governments and now include Afghanistan.
- **Sweden**: Woman Minister was upset to have to close the border with Denmark. Growing fascist movement. Confusion over what is a foreign policy and what is a security policy.
- **France**: Socialist policy is to distribute refugees across Europe. Extreme right growing with labelling the Calais ‘Jungle’, but the Paris bombing does not seem to have engendered more Islamophobia and Marine Le Penn has lost votes.
- **Denmark**: delegates embarrassed by government placing public ads in papers in countries of origin of refugees telling them that Denmark does not want them. Policy adopted to stop any claims to join family for at least one to three years – despite evidence of what has happened to women left behind in Syria.
- **Switzerland**: held a Popular Vote where right wing has put through a Push Through Policy, where minor offences, eg traffic can mean deportation.
- **Spain**: 84 per cent of population will welcome refugees, but they are not coming through. No government at the moment as hung for next two months. Socialists voted with the right – a confused situation.

After much discussion we made a request to WILPF women worldwide.

Request

We ask that you:

1. Discuss the implications of the situation in Europe within your sections and groups.
2. Promote global solidarity with Global Refugee Pledges.

3. Collaborate on demanding a strong legal framework on extraterritorial responsibility- corporate and inter-state social responsibilities – a Treaty of Transnational Corporations.
4. Promote the idea of Women Without Borders as part of gender mainstreaming of all policies.
5. Challenge the Climate of fear and move towards a Culture of Hope.

Lydia Meryll, for the working group of European Women
WILPF Brussels March 2016

European Sections debate Brexit and NATO

The European Sections of WILPF met in Berlin in September. UK WILPF felt it important to have one of our members at the meeting so at the last minute I was happy to attend the meeting.

Brexit was the first agenda item. Before leaving for Berlin I received a number of emails on the subject. UK WILPF had not had a comprehensive discussion on this, but the Executive Committee later produced a statement which is now printed here (see page11).

At the meeting I quoted Lorraine Mirham’s statement that she was “deeply concerned ... about racism and xenophobia and the existence of the far right and racist organising in this country”. She also said: “...we must be aware that there are WILPF Sections in geographic Europe who do not hold the view that the EU is a good thing. The political, economic and military power of the EU is condemned by many long standing Sections.”

I asked members to share their views about how the Sections might engage the public and organise around these vital issues of peace and social justice.



Martha Jean Baker(on right) at WILPF Europe Meeting
September 2016

Former WILPF Secretary General and now German Green MEP, Babsi Lochbihler talked about EU parliament perspective relating to Brexit.

Norway pointed out that the “EU does not cooperate”. They see a need for formal structures for cooperation. No one stepped up to condemn discriminatory behaviour post Brexit

The proposed regional organisation within international WILPF was discussed. Lorraine reported: “The proposals enable better cooperation

on a regional basis so that coming together internationally becomes something slightly more democratic than we have now where discussions take place often without the collective voice of a region of the world, just one or two longstanding section presidents.” It was suggested that another word be found for regionalisation. “The discussion is about growing and enabling WILPF sections not vice versa.”

Heidi Meinzolt-Depner brought up the issue of the resurgence of anti-Semitism against those supporting BDS (boycott, divestment, sanctions) against Israel. She said that anti-Israeli action in Germany is accused of being anti-Semitic and this becomes a way to

silence discussion. "We are anti militarist and pro peace" and called communist for standing against Israeli actions. I added it is also an issue in Jewish community.

We discussed access to abortion in Poland. A statement of solidarity with our Polish sisters was distributed for discussion. It was proposed to invite Polish women to Sweden and Denmark for abortion as it is increasingly illegal in Poland.

Tool kits were distributed for the international 'Move the Money' campaign. This is an interactive campaign as a continuation of 'you get what you pay for'. It is a political platform for change. <http://www.womenpeacesecurity.org/member-resource/wilpf-move-the-money>

There was a lengthy discussion on NATO. The question raised was whether WILPF accept an invitation to work with them. Madeleine Rees had worked with them, trying to stop them taking over some Peacewomen positions. Does it make a difference to be in the room? Is NATO militarising SCR 1325?

There was an appeal for someone to take on the European Sections' bank account and the question of its use was raised. Also raised briefly was whether WILPF has a European strategy and the campaigns upon which we can concentrate.

It was decided to plan to meet again in Rome in March.

Martha Jean Baker

WILPF at Berlin International Peace Bureau Conference

The International Peace Bureau conference took place in Berlin in September-October 2016. WILPF's work in demilitarisation was widely represented, including on issues of NATO opposition, promoting a culture and a politics of peace, women's resistance in the face of physical and structural violence, the refugee crisis, food security, and the gendered impacts of the arms trade.

WILPF sections from Norway, Finland, Germany, Scotland, Denmark, and Spain were involved in creating and leading these discussions. In addition, WILPF Secretary General, Madeleine Rees, addressed the conference on the urgent need for feminist responses to patriarchy and armed violence. Prior to the conference some WILPF Scottish branch women had discussed the Scottish 'NO 2 NATO' campaign with Margrethe Tingstad during her visit to Scotland.



WILPF Europe meeting October 2016 with Janet Fenton (on right hand side)

I went to the Berlin meeting as a member of WILPF Scottish Branch and took part in the discussion on NATO. Our workshop took the form of offering a little background (from

perspectives on feminist anti-NATO campaigning) from Finland, Norway and Scotland, leading into a general and informal exchange of ideas. Technical difficulties and distance from the main conference of the allocated room meant that there was neither time nor equipment to show the presentations we had made and only a small number of conference delegates were in attendance. We held a less formal discussion, and took advantage of the opportunity to get to know each other.

I explained that Scotland has succeeded in electing to the Westminster Parliament representatives who 58/59 are opposed to nuclear weapons despite the UK nuclear arsenal all being sited in Scotland. The majority of the Scottish Parliament support nuclear disarmament unilaterally and multilaterally. This has been the focus of disarmament campaigning in Scotland although the leading political party – the SNP – made a very controversial and hotly disputed commitment (as a non nuclear partner) to NATO in its party policy which we need to challenge more effectively in the coming months.

Last summer's NATO summit in Warsaw was notable as a new stage in the post-Cold War era for the future of international Arctic security. At this summit, the alliance officially acknowledged the distance that now exists between itself and Russia. As a direct result, it is highly likely that the cooperation of the last decade and a half between Russia and the Arctic NATO countries – Canada, United States, Denmark, Norway and Iceland – will be reduced. The situation in the Ukraine has led to NATO's concentration on its northernmost border with Russia, and Norwegian troops are finding that activities have changed focus in particular from what was going on in Afghanistan to what is perceived as collective national defence.

For countries with WILPF members, Norway is in NATO and not the EU, but Sweden is in the EU and not NATO. The question was asked: "Why would Finland want to become a NATO dependency?" Might that provoke a Russian response, including moving Russian



WILPF Europe Meeting -delegates

forces closer to the Nordic countries' borders? We heard about the complex and difficult history between Moscow and Helsinki, from broad Finnish autonomy in the Russian Empire to the wars, which followed the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution and the run-up to the Second World War. In 1948, with the signing of the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance, the two countries entered a long period of peace and cooperation, but

the collapse of the USSR has terminated that treaty.

Across our cultural and historic differences, WILPF continues to oppose NATO, and underline the importance of the United Nations as the main international security

organization. It is important to understand a little of the history of these countries that sit at the top of the world between Russia and the USA, their cultural commitment to neutrality during the big European Wars, and their own emergence as states within the Scandinavian landmass.

We all agreed with the idea of working together in Baltification (our new word!) and Scotland was welcomed to be part of this concept.

I also attended part of the WILPF Europe meeting at which Martha Baker represented the UK WILPF.

Janet Fenton

Ban the Bomb! It's time

I participated as UK WILPF president in the meeting of the Non Proliferation Treaty preparatory committee in 2011. At this those countries attending agreed to hold the first conference on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. After three similar conferences, ICAN (International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons) campaigned for the UN to set up a working group. As a WILPF member I was accredited by Reaching Critical Will and was able to attend two of the three meeting of the group in Geneva in May

and August 2016. The Working Group recommended to the UN the negotiation of a nuclear ban treaty.



Janet Fenton at UN October 2016

In October 2016 I went to the First Committee of the UN in New York to work with ICAN to secure the historic vote that has set the ban treaty in motion. The vote at the First Committee of the UN General Assembly, which deals with disarmament and international security matters, was decisive, with 123 nations in favour with 38 against and 16 abstaining. This vote enabled the United Nations to launch negotiations in 2017 on a nuclear weapons ban treaty.

The end of stalled multilateral nuclear disarmament efforts is at last in sight. This is despite undermining efforts from the US, the UK and their nuclear-armed colleagues. As part of its efforts to derail the process the US had written to all its NATO allies to point out how difficult the ban treaty would make nuclear

business as usual, while simultaneously putting out press comments saying that that the treaty would be unenforceable and without meaning.

The vote on funding the conference also went ahead on Christmas Eve 2016. 57 nations were co-sponsors with Austria, Brazil, Ireland, Mexico, Nigeria and South Africa who took the lead in drafting the proposal.

The UN conference, which is open to all member states, will start in March 2017 and then continue in June and July.

ICAN, a civil society coalition active in 100 countries, has hailed the adoption of the resolution as a major step forward.

Biological weapons, chemical weapons, anti-personnel land-mines and cluster munitions have already been prohibited under international law. But despite nuclear disarmament having been high on the UN agenda since the organisation's formation in 1945 an effective and specific prohibition has been lacking.

The three inter-governmental conferences examining the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, held in Norway, Mexico and Austria have enabled non nuclear-armed nations to play a more assertive role in the disarmament arena. The International Red Cross and Red Crescent declaration that they would be unable to respond to even a small nuclear exchange because the humanitarian consequences would be so catastrophic provided a significant catalyst for this new initiative.

The importance of civil society's participation and the evidence that it laid before the Open Ended Working Group established by the UN to consider how to break the decades of stagnation and stalemate cannot be underestimated, nor can the part played in this by WILPF's Reaching Critical Will programme.

The work done by WILPF to highlight the gendered discourse and the unbalanced impact on women and girls with regard to nuclear weapons has changed the nature of much of the discussion in ways that cannot be reversed.

The WILPF process of linking grass roots activism, painstaking academic research, and access to diplomatic process at the highest level, is at the heart of the success that has been achieved so far. I am happy to share with WILPF branches and other groups what I have learned through participating from Scotland, a state not in UN membership that is forced against the expressed needs and wishes of its electorate to host nuclear weapons.

My attendance at Geneva and New York was accredited by Reaching Critical Will and jointly funded by UK WILPF, SCND, CCND, ICANUK, the Scottish Scrap Trident Coalition and generous individuals, to whom I am very grateful. I received hospitality in Geneva from Geneva Quaker Meeting. In addition to this report, I would be very happy to discuss the practical next steps in ICAN campaigning, or provide briefings for use by groups. Please contact me at janet@wordsandactions.scot

Janet Fenton

Climate change is a women's issue

Lydia Meryll, a member of UK WILPF's Executive committee, attended the Conference of the Parties (COP22) on Climate Change from 14th – 18th November. She travelled to Marrakech by train and boat.

WILPF sisters from other parts of Europe were there too, but we never managed to meet up! Women's meetings were held early in the mornings. However, UK WILPF literature was distributed widely to participants, especially to NGOs in the Public (Green) Zone.

Lydia met amazing women in an organisation, WOCAN (Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture and Natural Resource Management), which promises to be a very useful lobby group. Gender justice and climate justice are clearly linked. You can see what happened as they **insisted** that women should be heard at all levels of climate negotiations within the United Nations. Here is how the official documents have been edited to include in women's perspectives and negotiating voices:

http://unfccc.int/files/meetings/marrakech_nov_2016/application/pdf/auv_cop22_i15_gender_and_climate_change_rev.pdf

It was clear from the 2,000 participants that the Paris Talks (COP21) of 2015 had to be followed up by practical action, designed by those who would **use** the technology and not be forced on indigenous people and women who actually **know** their own landscape and weather. So although there was a great deal of trade going on in hi-tech (High-cost) solutions, it was simple, locally sourced, and relevant actions and technology which would be sustainable.

There were a large number of very vocal young women at the Conference in Marrakech. They made common cause and we shall expect to hear from them again!



UK SECTION

UK WILPF discussion paper: Responses to Brexit

UK WILPF deeply regrets the apparent loss of trust and collaboration with European nations as indicated by the 52:48 per cent result of the UK Referendum on exiting from the European Union. We wish to confirm that we are proud of our record of peacebuilding and comradeship since the end of World War II. We've had great gulfs of fear and anger to cross and feel the urgent need to retain trust and openness between women across Europe.

We recognise the impact climate change, conflict, oppression and war has had upon the mass movement of peoples as refugees. We also recognise the adverse effect the unrestricted movement of global capital and investment will have on our lives outside the European trading partnership. We are ashamed that both our island geography and the recent orchestrated surge of xenophobia and racism have made us look so inhospitable to refugees. We clearly need and value the skills and knowledge that people from different parts of the world are already contributing to our country.

We recognise how Brexit will damage the work of so many organisations. For instance, the UK Women's Trades Union Council (TUC) fought for the inclusion of women's workplace rights through The Working Time Directive and the UK Equality Act – strengthened only with the support of other European women's organisations – and campaigned for the safeguarding of self-employed and part-time women workers with The Part-time Worker Directive. Women have benefited from EU regulations as parents, carers, social security recipients. And as citizens we are enabled to live without sexual harassment, slavery and trafficking through the EU's Charter of Fundamental Rights. Women across Europe fought

for the Treaty of Amsterdam in 1999 to promote gender equality as a fundamental aim of the EU. We thank them for this progressive legislation – now so severely under threat through Brexit.

We remain committed to the process of democracy in the UK (and in Scotland if it votes for independence). So we press now for:

- Women's voices to be heard very clearly in any negotiations towards Brexit.
- Retaining hard-won rights now enshrined in European legislation and, in particular, through safeguarding the role of the European Court of Justice.
- Retaining the UK Human Rights Act.
- Mainstreaming gender in all policy discussions in a post-Brexit Britain.
- Maintaining and strengthening all constructive contacts with women's organisations across Europe and internationally.
- Sustaining our valued friendship with, and support from, WILPF-Europe.
- Continuing and developing our campaign work with WILPF women across Europe.
- Renewing our commitment to peace and social justice.

*Lydia Meryll, for UK WILPF Executive,
November 2016*

Autumn Seminar: Gender matters in international peacemaking

This year's Seminar was the brainchild of Keely Khoury, joint UK representative to WILPF's international Board. Making excellent use of her publishing and public relations skills, enabled this annual event to reach a new level, aided by the £1,000 grant from LUSH Cosmetics Charity Pot, achieved by membership secretary Sheila Triggs with support from former Executive member, Chantelle Cummings.

The theme of the seminar was: 'Gender Matters in International Peacemaking'. It was held in a London venue new to WILPF, St Margaret's House, Bethnal Green. Its aim was to broaden our understanding and analysis and, in the process, think concretely and practically about action and campaigning.

Two of our own WILPF speakers topped and tailed the seminar. Laila Alodaat, experienced Syrian lawyer and manager of WILPF's international Crisis Response Programme – back by popular request, after her talk at our AGM – set the scene by outlining how WILPF supports women's groups in conflict situations. And Marie Lyse Numuhoza from UK WILPF's new Norfolk branch and Voices of African Women campaign (VoAW), summed up the issues of the day, giving her own experience of the Rwandan diaspora. In that final session, Marie-Claire Faray-Kele, former co-ordinator of VoAW, also spoke powerfully of conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo and her imminent return to the DRC.

The other three speakers all combined academic research with longstanding activism. Sarah Ogbay, Network of Eritraen Women and Manchester University, gave a detailed account of her research into the differences between how men and women manage communication and led a discussion on the wider implications for peacemaking. In the afternoon session Kirsten Campbell, Goldsmiths College, gave a rigorous presentation on the role that international criminal prosecutions play in peace agreements. Finally, Lisa Gormley from the London School of Economics provided a clear 'practitioner's guide' on how women could access justice for gender-based violence.

The whole day will have given participants both old and new a strong sense of just how 'international' WILPF actually is. About 50 women and one man – a freelance journalist

who wrote a very positive report for international agencies – attended. A pleasing proportion of new faces were London students and six WILPF recruits were made directly as a result of the event. Sterling support on the day was provided by Executive members, and thanks are also due to Treasurer Paula Shaw and the revived London branch for their assistance.

One immediate outcome of the Seminar is the forthcoming Connect Day, the introductory workshop for new members, being organised with an international perspective by Sheila Triggs. Other follow-up approaches will be discussed at the first 2017 Executive meeting, including making the actual content of the Seminar available as a branch resource.

Rosalind Brunt, joint UK representative,
WILPF International Board.

Voices of African Women expand WILPF's reach

The Voices of African Women (VoAW) campaign of UK WILPF is made up of women from a dozen African countries who make up more than eight per cent of UK WILPF members. They are very active in their diaspora women's communities but come together as VoAW to meet regularly and organise events as WILPF.

2016 has been busy both within the VoAW and at public activities.

Violence Against Women Training

Apart from meeting regularly to share information and help plan campaigns, two 'Violence Against Women' training days were offered to the group and our contacts. These were led by Marie-Claire Faray and funded by the Maypole Fund for Women. Eighteen women, including a high proportion of young women, representing eight different African countries attended the first training day in April.

The training was participatory, very interactive and lively. A second session was held on 3rd September. The participants were introduced to the appropriate legal frameworks and the role of the state

Speaking for WILPF

Zaynab ELSawi spoke about Sudan as part of a panel of speakers at a big meeting organised by the Cornwall branch. Khadijah Fadoul spoke about Chad at a branch meeting in Orpington.

Khedidjah Ali was elected to the WILPF Executive in April

Sarah Ogbay, a member of the Network of Eritrean Women (NEW), was one of the four speakers at UK WILPF's Autumn Seminar: 'Gender Matters in International Peace Making', and Marie Lyse Numuhoza chaired part of the seminar.

Major public events

For the anniversary of SCR 1325, at the end of October, Marie-Claire Faray organised a series of three seminars hosted by London University SOAS and LSE, and the APPG on Africa in Parliament. These high-profile public events highlighted the dangerous political situation for women in the D.R. Congo. All three were well attended and resulted in Marie-Claire being invited to be a witness at a subsequent parliamentary select committee hearing.

Keyet Makonnen has been working in recent months to bring together the disparate Ethiopian factions in the UK diaspora. She achieved a great success by organising a major Ethiopian Diaspora meeting hosted by WILPF and attended by around 250 people in London. Catherine Pluygers introduced it on behalf of WILPF.

Other activities

VoAW actively supporting the re-launched London WILPF Branch including attending meetings and taking part in campaigning and fundraising at the Winter Fayre at the Feminist Library

Marie-Claire is currently working in the DRC and Mama Khadija is in Sudan. The VoAW has a new Coordinating team.

7 % increase in members

The Membership Team has worked hard to retain some of the influx of members who joined UK WILPF in our centenary year. Active branches and national events, including our successful Autumn Seminar, enabled us to continue to build the section. Sixty-eight new members joined in 2016, and we ended the year with 305 members a seven per-cent increase on last year's membership. Twenty-eight new members used the opportunity to join WILPF through the website and PayPal, and 122 pay their subscriptions by standing order.

Branches and Groups

Following a very successful 'Connect Day' early in the year, the Norwich group became UK WILPF's eighth branch at the 2016 AGM. Student activists led by Isabel Bull, using her experience volunteering for WILPF in Geneva, have developed a WILPF group at Bristol University during the autumn term and they are already planning campaigns for 2017.

The London Branch experienced a difficult patch when Alex Murrell, who had been the very good coordinator for several years, was obliged to stand down. However, the branch was able to re-launch in September, when Madeleine Rees our international Secretary General visited London. In November the Leicester branch decided to suspend their activities, so we returned to seven active branches.

Outreach Work

Through the office UK WILPF receives requests from outside groups for WILPF speakers. The Membership Secretary spoke about the 'Conscientious Objectors of the First World War and the women who supported them' to the Faringdon Peace Group in Oxfordshire in March and the Norwich UNA in November. In April she showed our 'These Dangerous Women' film to the North London Humanists and talked about WILPF's work.

A 'Connect Day' to involve new members and non-members will be held in London early in 2017.

Membership Team
January 2017

Our campaigns rely on grants and branch donations

UK WILPF receives annual subscriptions from our members, and most of this money then goes to Geneva to support WILPF's international work. All our UK work is undertaken freely by volunteers, although we are able to maintain a small office in central London.

Our branches are well aware that to mount campaigns and events we need to raise money. Some of this comes from generous donations by members, particularly those paying subscriptions monthly by standing order. Supporters may also give us donations when they see us at events. We raise money on the sales of merchandise – which is also a way of attracting the public to our stalls at events. Some branches are able to raise enough money to make small regular donations to support UK WILPF.

If we want to be active in campaigning and in bringing our feminist analysis to the public with events, meetings and seminars, we need to seek outside funding. There is only a small number of funders to whom we can apply for limited grants for peace and human rights activities, and we need to present them with viable projects to have a chance of getting a grant. It is currently almost impossible to get core funding for our day to day work.

In 2016 UK WILPF raised a grant of £1,000 from the LUSH Charity Pot towards our successful Autumn Seminar: 'Gender Matters in International Peace Making'. We also received £1,000 from the United Nations Association Trust to help with the cost of bringing a speaker from the D.R. Congo to address the All Party Parliamentary Group at an open meeting in the House of Commons. The WILPF Trust also gave us £250 towards the costs of this project, and earlier in the year Musicians for Peace and Disarmament gave £300 towards WILPF work.

The Voices of African Women Campaign used a grant of £750 from The Maypole Fund for Women awarded in 2015, to hold two successful training sessions on Violence Against Women.

UK WILPF re-established a Fundraising Committee this year. The Committee is looking for new members who could help attract funding to WILPF, or organise fund-raising events.

Sheila Triggs
Fundraising Committee

Online shopping benefits WILPF campaigns

Trustees would like to thank UK WILPF for ongoing efforts to 'make the most of us'. WILPF members who shop online using Give As You Live provide the Trust with most of its income. Donations made through the Trust benefit from Gift Aid, fundraising using Just Giving is quick, reliable and accessible to anybody who uses the internet.

Our income remains low. What funds we have are used to support both WILPF-related activities, such as the Voices of African Women project, and other small organisations focussing on the promotion of human rights, particularly women's human rights, such as Starfish Malawi – women's sanitary wear project, and the Haldane Society conference on migrant and refugee women.

Don't forget to sign up to Give As You Live (many ethical organisations donate a percentage of your purchase money – it isn't just Amazon and other big players trying to salve their consciences!!) to boost Trust funds and help us give more to your projects!

Don't forget to channel donations through the Trust, to benefit from 25 per cent Gift Aid – or more, if you are a higher rate tax payer. Your donations can always be ring-fenced for your fundraising purposes.

Please consider using Just Giving for any fundraising activity, large or small.

The Trust was founded to support WILPF primarily, although not exclusively. We want you to give us the chance to do this.

We can offer help or advice with any of the fundraising tools mentioned above and trustees are always happy to discuss ideas with you. Just contact us at wilpftrust@gmail.com

Deirdre Leask, Trust Secretary

Annual Accounts

		UK SECTION		
		WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM		
		INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FOR THE		
		YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2016		
MAIN ACCOUNT				
£				£
2015		INCOME		2016
4732.00		Membership subscriptions		5394.00
2428.08		Donations - general		2136.81
3100.00		Grants		3450.00
1205.32		Funds raised for Congress/Conference 2015		
246.00		Meetings and seminars		572.07
827.10		Sales T-shirts		1366.00
752.63		Sales other items (bags cards diaries poppies leaflets badges etc.)		941.53
2.72		Current Account Interest: Main Account		
32.50		Deposit Account Interest: Triodos		23.66
13326.35		TOTALS		13884.07
		EXPENDITURE		
410.00		Donations and Affiliations		290.00
324.70		UK Travel		1061.60
3705.60		International Travel - (in 1915 includes Conference & Congress)		677.65
2015.02		UK Meetings and Seminars		674.50
1905.19		Postage, Stationery and Printing		1272.88
1202.49		Campaigns		2956.03
65.00		Stalls at events (campaigns)		80.00
329.20		Website, internet and phone		414.83
3720.94		Geneva Payments - Section fees		5302.49
595.20		Purchase of T-shirts		1190.40
183.28		Purchase of other items for sale		313.73
		Branch start up in Cornwall		100.00
50.00		Sundry expenses		17.00
310.00		Members' donations to WILPF Trust (2015)		
100.00		CND reception sponsorship (2015)		
178.02		Transporting exhibition banners (2015)		
160.00		Banner insurance from Maypole grant transfer to Office Ac (2015)		
18.48		Paypal fees		23.35
15273.12		TOTALS		14374.46
		EXCESS OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE/ (EXPENDITURE OVER INCOME)		
-1946.77				-490.39

OFFICE ACCOUNT			
£			£
2015			2016
		INCOME	
176.00		Individual donations	410.00
1809.00		Standing Orders/Regular donations	2205.00
2220.00		Clapham Film Unit contribution to office running costs (2015)	
100.00		Autumn seminar office expenditure (from grant) (2015)	
213.00		Insurance refund & transfer from Maypole grant (2015)	
		Maternity Action - contribution for use of office	360.00
		Lush grant - contribution to office costs	90.00
1.31		Interest	
4519.31		TOTALS	3065.00
		EXPENDITURE	
2514.00		Licence fee (i.e. "rent")	4190.00
		Computer, repairs and supplies	429.96
194.49		Phone	158.18
729.00		Insurance (including exhibition banners in 1915)	462.11
11.70		Volunteer Expenses	60.00
3449.19		TOTALS	5300.25
1070.12		EXCESS OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE/ (EXPENDITURE OVER INCOME)	-2235.25

		UK SECTION	
		WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM	
		BALANCE SHEET	
		AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2016	
£			£
2015			2016
		ASSETS	
		CURRENT ACCOUNTS	
3191.64		Co-operative Bank Main Account	2662.59
30.00		Less uncleared cheques	15.00
	3161.64		2647.59
	3315.48	Co-operative Bank Office Account	1080.23
		RESERVE ACCOUNT	
	5405.89	Triodos Bank	5429.55
	11883.01	TOTALS	9157.37

		REPRESENTED BY:		
	12759.66	Surplus b/fwd 1 January		11883.01
	-1946.77	Main Account Excess of Income/(excess of expenditure)		-490.39
	1070.12	Office Account Excess of Income/(excess of expenditure)		-2235.25
	11883.01			9157.37

NOTES:

GRANTS:

We gratefully acknowledge grants received from:

Lush Charity Pot (£1000) for our autumn seminar in 2016

(including £90 for our office costs relating to the seminar)

UNA (£1000) and WILPF Trust (£250) for bringing speakers to DRC events

Musicians for Peace & Disarmament (£300) for our work in general

W.F. Southall Trust, via WILPF Trust (£990) for our autumn seminar 2015,

(which is shown in the 2016 accounts).

Also our thanks for the many individual generous donations from members.

INCREASE IN SECTION FEES PAID TO WILPF INTERNATIONAL

The increase in the payment was due to the fall in the value of the £ sterling following the Brexit vote.

WILPF OFFICE

Our neighbours in the Tindlemanor Building, Maternity Action, are

contributing to our office costs, for the use of our office half a day a week

Only 3 quarters' rent was paid in 2015, as one invoice was received in 2016,

so 5 quarters have been paid in 2016.

BRANCH REPORTS

Busy year for Brighton, Hove and District

The Brighton, Hove and District Branch started the year in January with a fundraising lunch where guest speaker Maude Casey, talked about the situation in in the Calais refugee camps.



Maude has worked with detained refugees at Gatwick helping them with asylum applications and increasing awareness of their legal rights. She also tries to improve the conditions there. With the growth of the Calais camps Maude has been fundraising for the asylum-seekers who are living in a pitiful state. The branch made a donation to local projects that take food, clothing and bedding to Calais.

For three days in February the branch ran a stall at the Unison Women's Annual Conference held in

Brighton. This was a great success. Many women asked us about WILPF's work, took away our materials to read and bought t-shirts. We found the union debates very progressive, which was enlightening and made us feel optimistic. Also in February some branch members went to the CND anti-trident demonstration in London to walk with the march and help out in Trafalgar Square at the WILPF stall. Some of our banners attracted attention, leading to questions about WILPF and we gained some new members.

In March we attended a big International Women's Day event in Brighton and our stall was busy all day. We had lots of enquiries and conversations and signed up a new member. At our branch AGM our guest speaker, Katrina Miller, talked about the impact of the cuts in the NHS and how they particularly affect women and their families which we found very disturbing.

Susan Southward, author of a book about the survivors of the Nagasaki bombing come to our May meeting. Her talk was very interesting and we found her book surprisingly optimistic. A second speaker that



evening was Henrietta Cullinan, from the Voices for Creative Non-Violence group. Henrietta updated us on her group's very challenging work in Afghanistan and our branch made a donation to support their work.

We ran a stall on the International Day for Child Victims of War in June and once again found that women stopped to talk about the sorry state of the world, the tragedy of children caught up in war and to ask us questions about WILPF.

Our summer fundraising party was held in July. Jo Magpie came to speak about living within the Kurdish community in their homeland. She told us how Kurdish society was at a point of great change with women taking a strong position in every aspect of life. Sadly, however, the situation has recently deteriorated for the Kurdish people.

In August the branch held a ceremony in a local park to mark the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and Rebecca Johnson spoke, fresh from a conference on nuclear weapons. The local mayor also spoke as well as Jean Farebrother, the wife of deceased WILPF supporter and activist George Farebrother.

We had over 50 people at the Peace Poppy Wreath laying in November. Joining us were the Quakers and the Secular Humanists. This is the second time we have organised this event, and we felt pleased to have been the hosts.

On a very cold International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women the branch organised a stall in central Brighton and spoke to women, and some men, about violence in all its forms and about WILPF's work.

Jenny Engledow Branch secretary

Successful second year for Cornwall branch

This is only the second full year of Cornwall Branch – and it was another active one. The year started when Kenneth Reynolds who lives in France contacted us, to find out more about his grandmother, Flora Jane Reynolds, who was secretary of the WILPF Marazion Branch in 1930. This has been a journey of discovery for us because it was not known to anybody within WILPF that there ever had been a Cornwall Branch before our current one!

Kenneth Reynolds had already done some extensive research, which he gave to us and we are now working to get Flora Jane Reynolds and her colleagues included in the archive of the Hypatia Trust to save her a place in history. The trust is a Penzance charity currently running a project about the forgotten women of Cornwall.

We were lucky to get some financial support from Anne, one of our members (and husband David), who sold mulled wine at the Mousehole Christmas Lights, as well as from the annual International Women's Day Cabaret held in March. In addition, Brigitte and Keri successfully organised and raised money from two car boot sales.

In February our public actions began in Penzance with a STOP TRIDENT demo in support of the National Rally in London.

At the end of March, we organised a table at the annual Green Fair in Penzance, unfortunately we did not sell any merchandise, but it gave us the opportunity to announce the main event we organised in 2016 which was the Five Women Peace Activists Conference (see below). We were also able to generally advertise WILPF's presence in the area. At the Green Fair we ran the short film 'Trials of Spring' on a continuous loop throughout the event to draw the attention of visitors. Unfortunately the fair was not well attended due to extremely miserable weather.

We held a Peace Vigil in Morrab Gardens, Penzance on May 15th to commemorate CO Day. We had with us our 'Peace Tree' in a pot. We had hoped to plant 'Olivia Pax', as we

named our tree, in Penlee Park that day but were not granted permission. At the time we did not know that Penlee Park is a war memorial garden. The correspondence in *The Cornishman* about our proposal makes for some interesting reading!

On 9th of July, WILPF members supported the March for the Next Generation attended by a large number of different people/organisations all concerned about the outcome of Brexit. We used that opportunity to distribute flyers for our next event.

We organised the **Five Women Peace Activists from the MENA (Middle East and North Africa) Conference** on July 17th. We are proud of how well we organized the event and what a huge success it was. We had hired St John's Hall/Town Hall, the biggest hall available in Penzance and we invited different organisations like Amnesty, CND, Oxfam, and Truro Peace Centre to represent themselves with stalls.

On the day there were four speakers; from Egypt, Libya, Sudan and Syria – each of them making a 10 min speech. After their speeches the audience could attend one of four different one hour workshops – the speakers having announced their subjects during their speech. Following the workshops we gathered again in the hall to report back on what had been learned during each workshop.

It was a memorable and well-attended event and we received very favourable feedback. It was supported by the local Amnesty group – printing cheap flyers, and by our local Oxfam Shop – they sold tickets and advertised the event in the shop window. Refreshments were included in the ticket price we had a bucket for donations by the exit.

We would recommend this event as a road show, or for another branch – as we would love to supply all the knowledge we gained.



Cornwall march of hope Chris

On September 2nd we finally planted 'Olivia Pax' in her permanent new home in Morrab Gardens – a beautiful sub-tropical public space. Later, on September 21st International Peace Day, we held a Peace Tree Planting Ceremony – and invited the public to join in, singing peace songs. It was a perfect ending to a busy day, having just returned from Truro after attending the global One Day One Choir Peace event where we had a table, distributing WILPF info material.

We organised a Walk in Solidarity with the MARCH OF HOPE on October 6th. Organised by Israeli women together with Palestinian women, and globally supported by different women's groups, our walk started at Marazion Quaker meeting house following the reading a message from the organisers. It ended in Penzance Morrab Garden at our Peace Tree.

On Friday 25th November we held our second Reclaim the Night Walk in Penzance – somewhat against the odds. We had to 'officially' cancel the Walk at the eleventh hour, as the council insisted we should have public liability insurance that was

too expensive for a small group like ours. So instead we held a candlelit demo outside the

Town Hall, with a speech by Keri and a song led by Pip. Then someone suggested we do the Walk anyway so we did. The walk was led by our band for the evening Samba di Diablo. It was a most joyous demonstration of spontaneous peaceful public disobedience! When we arrived at our destination – the pre-booked Admiral Benbow pub, many of us stayed on for the celebrations and entertainment provided by singers Val and Clare and poetry from Fi and Keri.

On Wednesday 30th November some of us supported the march in Hayle for Peace in Colombia organised by Colombian woman Olga Lucia Gomez Ferero and her friends.

It was pouring with rain on 10th December – Human Rights Day so only a brief demo was held in Penzance – just to mark the day. Afterwards we had coffee together in the warm at Redwing Gallery where we hold our monthly WILPF meetings.

Also in December Amnesty International Penzance offered WILPF space for a table during their week in the Pop up Shop in Penzance. We advertised and distributed WILPF information material, sold some T-shirts and assisted Amnesty at the same time as some of our members belong to both organisations.

We must give, special thanks to Roseni for setting up and now running our Cornwall WILPF facebook page!

For awareness and fundraising reasons we decided to show the film 'Women – War and Peace' again, in February 2017 and leave the film about Colombia to screen a bit later in the year. By then we will have organised a Colombian speaker.

Another joint event for 2017 and planned with Amnesty will be the screening of the film 'The Trials of Spring', with three speakers and a live interview with Hend Nafea, the Egyptian protagonist of the film.

We will continue with our fundraising, car boot sales etc, search for a solution to the wretched public liability insurance problem, and continue with our networking.

Brigitte and Keri, Cornwall Branch

Madeleine Rees speaks to resurgent London branch

In July 2016, we held a planning meeting for the resurgence of a London WILPF Branch – this involved Harini Iyengar, Orla Sheridan, Paula Shaw and Sheila Triggs.

This was followed on September 21st, when we held our first meeting and 16 women were present. We were very fortunate to have Madeleine Rees (WILPF International Secretary General) able to attend as she was in London to deliver a lecture at the LSE. Also attending was Laila Alodaat (WILPF International Crisis Response Manager). Isabel Bull, a student from the University of Bristol who had completed voluntary work at the WILPF office in Geneva, outlined the four programmes of WILPF International's work. Lively discussions involving the 'Move the Money' campaign and campaigns in DR Congo and other countries followed the reports.

At our second meeting on October 18th only eight women attended but we were able to develop a campaign strategy and agreed to start with the gendered impact of explosive weapons. We also received updates on the situation in Columbia, Ethiopia, Eritrea and the Sudan. We planned for the Autumn Seminar and the upcoming Voices of African Women/DR Congo events in LSE, SOAS and Parliament.

London Branch members excelled themselves in their contribution to the very successful WILPF Autumn Seminar held in Bethnal Green on the 19th November. Tea making (an essential) by Renee Willgress, delicious banana cake made by Khedijah Ali and registration organised by Paula.

The November meeting held on 29th was not well attended – maybe the new enthusiasm within London Branch was affected by autumn’s chill? Nevertheless Keyet Makonnen reported on an excellent meeting she had arranged which brought together people from different religious and ethnic groups from the Ethiopian diaspora. Catherine Pluygers had spoken about WILPF. Zaynab Elswawi reminded us about the Skype meeting with Sudanese women organised for January. She also hoped to attend the African Union

meeting in Addis Ababa at the end of January 2017.



Khadijah Ali and Paula Shaw

Evelina Svensson has now moved to London and we welcomed her – she gave a presentation on ‘Women and Explosive Weapons’ and we agreed to promote the excellent leaflet. We discussed our plans for the branch and agreed to focus on certain campaigns and to fundraise. We know we need to cover the cost of the meeting room hire.

On December 7th Keyet Makonnen and Paula Shaw and Sheila Triggs attended the LSE Archives exhibition marking the UN’s 16 Days of Action Against Violence Against Women. Professor Christine Chinkin gave an excellent speech to support the ratification of the Istanbul Convention. The archives were wonderful and we were able to see the second

edition of Mary Wollstonecraft’s book ‘A Vindication of the Rights of Woman’. There is a campaign: ‘Mary on the Green’ to install a statue of her on Newington Green. The cream tea was also delicious.

Many London Branch members helped to make a success of our stall at the Feminist Library Xmas event. We had wonderful pasta sauce made by Keyet and the best jam from Sheila and we all enjoyed meeting some very enthusiastic women. We raised over £200 with £89 for the London Branch, which is a good start for our fundraising.

We know we need to hold a London branch AGM in 2017 but in the meantime Evelina Svensson is secretary, Paula Shaw is chair, Catherine Pluygers is treasurer and Zaynab Elswawi is our UK WILPF Exec Committee representative. Sheila Triggs has attended all three London branch meetings but in 2017 will concentrate on her own branch of Orpington – we thank her for the help she has given.

Our next meeting will be on February 21st in the Basement room at Tindlemannor between 6 -8pm

Paula Shaw, London Branch

Norwich and Norfolk build links with UAE students

A year from the inaugural meeting of the reformed Norwich and Norfolk Branch of WILPF in December 2015 there is much to celebrate. Our first year has been a very active one. Starting with nine attendees at the meeting last December, Clair Collen the new branch secretary organised a very successful introduction activity at the beginning of **April** 2016, inviting Sheila Triggs to run a 'Connect with WILPF' session. This was well attended by 16 participants, eight of which became members on the day and several others joined shortly afterward. There are now 17 members and 77 associates on the mailing list.

We hold regular bi-monthly branch meetings, which are generally planned to coincide with peace vigils so branch members are able to attend those after the meetings. We have also developed a local planning group that meets on alternate months to branch meetings in order to further the work of the branch. We have promoted ourselves, and our activities, through a number of press releases and have now set up our own Facebook page at www.facebook.com/WILPF-Norwich-Norfolk-194138691046378/.



Monthly Peace Vigil in Norwich City centre



Marie Lyse Numuhoza

Activities

At the branch meetings we have shown a number of films from the 'Women, War and Peace series as well as having discussions based on WILPF's thematic work areas. At our last meeting of 2016, in December we watched 'The War We Are Living' a film about the continuing terrorisation and displacement of Afro Columbian communities.

One of the highlights of the year was the talk given by Juliet Colman, Director, Security Women www.security.org (Juliet lives in Norfolk). Security Women advocates for the inclusion of more women in the military and security sector believing that increasing the proportion of women means greater progress towards peace-keeping can be achieved.

The branch has run a stalls at the Peace Forum in Norwich city centre library (The Forum) on July 16th, at Burston Strike School Rally Sept 4th, at a freshers' event at the University of East Anglia (UEA), and at

an event called 'Breaking Away – not Breaking Apart' on September 7th. This was organised by the UEA in the wake of the EU Referendum to look at how we can achieve greater unity and inclusivity. We also had a stall at the local Quakers Fair on 26th November. The Branch took part in the Hiroshima day Vigil and shared a wonderful Peace Picnic in the local city centre park.

Most significantly we have been developing our relationship with the UEA and have been involved in a number of events and extension activities with students on the 'Wars and Humanitarian Crisis' module. Kate Platt, Vice Chair and Branch Communications has taken the lead on this very successful piece of work, running a WILPF introductory session and co-ordinating a series of workshops, again using the films and related discussion questions from the Women, War and Peace' series and first hand experiences of women's struggle in Rwanda from the passionate and eloquent Marie-Lyse Numuhoza.

We are looking forward to the continuing development of the Norwich and Norfolk Branch and in doing so promoting the aims of WILPF throughout 2017.

Anastasia Twigg, Branch Chair .

Orpington's year of lively discussions and campaigns

Orpington Branch normally has regular afternoon meetings on the fourth Tuesday of the month in Orpington Library, and any WILPF member in the area is very welcome to come and join us! Ring Sheila Triggs on 01689 837848 for details.



Orpington Garden Party

In 2016 we invited speakers and held discussions covering a wide range of topics including Jean Kerrigan, who highlighted the injustices contained in the new Housing and Planning Bill (now enacted), and Khadidja Fadoul who told us about women's wives in Chad. Khadidja took the lead in introducing Chad women to WILPF which has resulted in a new WILPF group being founded there.

We heard a report on women's peace activists in Syria, and were kept up to date on all the developments concerning the renewal of Trident and the banning of nuclear weapons. A lively debate about Brexit took place before the referendum.

Sheila Triggs told us about the re-launched INEW (International Network on Explosive Weapons) and explained the long-term effects on survivors. A showing of the film 'I came to testify' telling of the courage of women who gave evidence to the International Criminal Court at The Hague, initially took our breath away, before provoking a serious discussion.

Orpington Branch also seized opportunities to reach out to the public. Our exhibition banners 'These Dangerous Women' were on view at the museum in Croydon. These not only describe the foundation of WILPF but also show that we are still actively campaigning.

Members also set up stalls on two occasions in the High Street at Orpington, and this gave us an opportunity to engage members of the public in discussions, raising awareness of WILPF in the process. We also join in or take stalls at peace activities run by other groups, such as Peace One Day.

At our annual Garden Party, Mia Tamarind, an Israeli conscientious objector, told us about her experiences, and her time in an Israeli prison. This very successful event was well attended and we were delighted to see a number of non-WILPF members.

Campaigning is at the heart of WILPF's activities, and our members are involved at both a national and local level. Our local MPs are regularly contacted and lobbied on those issues which concern us. Several of our members took part in the large anti-Trident demonstration in London in February, and helped on the WILPF stall in Trafalgar Square on that day.

Our WILPF members also have links to other national organisations, such as the Stop the War coalition and CND, and so members are informed about their conferences and other events.



Orpington Garden Party

Orpington Branch continues its work keeping members up to date, as well as campaigning and raising awareness of the issues which concern WILPF.

Pat Pleasance

Packed programme of protest and persuasion in Scotland

Scottish WILPF had a very busy 2016 which started in February on Valentine's Day with a street stall and Princes Street railings decorated with red hearts #LovethePlanet, #ScrapTrident. Photos of Scottish WILPF members holding these hearts were posted on facebook that morning.

We followed this up on February 27th with six members joining the UK CND Scrap Trident demonstration travelling to London by train, coach and plane. International WILPF wrote a piece about us <http://wilpf.org/scottish-wilpf-members-participate-in-anti-trident-rally>

On 5th March Helen and Anne took our exhibition to the Dundee Women for Independence IWD event, 'Can she not speak for herself?' This was a day of workshops focussing on the

'Hidden from History' women's story. We showed 'These Dangerous Women' and spoke about our campaigns. Twenty women came in the morning and 16 in the afternoon. We were pleasantly surprised at the numbers as from the ten workshops on offer we would not have known which to attend. Positive comments were received about our workshop during the plenary session. The exhibition was up all day and generated much interest.

Later in March on the 14th we organised a well-attended ForcesWatch public meeting with many new faces. We discussed the recruitment of young people by the army via school visits particularly to schools in deprived areas. As a result a group to work on the issue has been set up, with Edinburgh Peace and Justice Centre taking the lead.

Members took leaflets to the CAAT organised 'Alternative Arms Fair' on 16th April and stickered ATM machines with Global Day of Action against Military Spending stickers.

At the Edinburgh May Day Rally on May 7th the branch organised a stall. We followed that up on May 26th when Heidi Meinholt, WILPF Europe Co-ordinator, was our speaker at a Radical Independence Campaign debate on EU Foreign Policy.

Over two days in June Helen Kay gave a joint paper at the Newcastle University '200 years of Peacemaking' conference. We had a stall at the Peace Fair and we organised further peace stalls that month with personnel and literature at the Meadows and Leith Festivals.

On July 16th there were Flashmob demonstrations against Trident in 37 Scottish towns and cities. We helped organise the Edinburgh one and members living in other areas attended their local demos. We also joined a vigil during the Westminster debate on Trident on the 18th.

Members attended the Hiroshima day vigil held on August 6th organised by Edinburgh CND.

From September 9th to 30th the joint WILPF and Wool Against Weapon Exhibition 'Women Against Weapons' was on display at the Scottish Story Telling Centre in Edinburgh. This is a prestigious and popular venue with a bookshop and café. On our launch night, people were invited to look at the exhibition, watch 'These



Eileen Cook, Anne Scott
SWILPF 'Trident Out' demo

Dangerous Women', and hear Janet Fenton speak about her trip to the Open Ended Working Group in Geneva. The launch event started and ended with singing by 'Protest in Harmony'.

September 21st was International Peace Day, an event sponsored by Scottish WILPF via a £1,000 grant from 'Gude Cause'. Jo Clifford, Suzanne Dance and Clunie Mackenzie put on a performance of 'Chrystal and the General' which told the story of a suffragist Chrystal MacMillan and a militant suffragette Flora Drummond known as 'The General'. The performance was sold out. Afterwards we sold T-shirts and gave out literature.

On Saturday 24th we joined 'Wool Against Weapons' in an afternoon of singing and knitting. The Exhibition was transferred to Moray House, the Faculty of Education, University of Edinburgh for the month of October.

On October 1st Anne Scott contributed to a workshop 'A better Foreign Policy for Scotland' at the Radical Independence Campaign (RIC) Conference.

Laila Alodaat, WILPF Crisis Response Programme Manager was our keynote speaker at the Edinburgh World Justice Festival event held on October 10th. Laila spoke on 'Migration: Giving Women a Voice' about WILPF's work and the situation for women in Syria. The event attracted a good audience who were mainly new to us.

On 11th October some members joined the vigil outside the Russian Consulate. This was called at very short notice on the day of the Westminster Parliament debate about Syria. sales from the UK.



Helen Kay, Anne Scott, Laila Alodaat Eileen Cook, Edinburgh
October 2016

During September and early October we helped raise funds for Janet Fenton to go to the UN in New York for the Open Ended Working Group on the Global Nuclear Ban negotiations (see Janet's article on p.9). We held an open meeting on November 14th where Janet Fenton reported on her trip to the UN in New York and the Global Nuclear Ban Negotiations.

We ended our very busy year

with various members representing Scottish WILPF at events organised by 'Gals for Gals' Radical Independence Campaign and the 'Audacious Women Festival'.

We envisage 2017 being equally as busy for Scottish WILPF. We gather for Branch business meetings on the 2nd Monday of the month 6.15 pm at the Engender office, 1A Haddington Place, Edinburgh

Anne Scott, Secretary, Scottish Branch

Sheffield debates impact of fashion on women

In February, we had our annual AGM, which included a wonderful talk about how fashion has impacted women. There was a strong and lively debate afterwards before going over the branch's business. Rosalie Huzzard stepped down as secretary and Rosie Horsley took on the role.

Sheffield WILPF was invited to have a stall and screen the film 'These Dangerous Women' at an event in the Millennium Gallery. It was a real honour and the film fitted exceptionally well with the theme of the event which was 'Well behaved women seldom make history'.

In May we attended two street events with the WILPF banner the first was with CND to raise awareness about the renewal of Trident and the second was to commemorate conscientious objectors day with CND and SCRAP, which is a creative peace group in Sheffield. We held a vigil at the war memorial and read out some testimony. Then to celebrate women's international day of peace and disarmament, we had a stall outside Sheffield town hall and gave out information about UN-SCR 1325.

Summer saw us having our annual garden party in June (though due to the rain it was more of a living room party). We invited Rae Street from CND to come and talk to us about the renewal of Trident, which was incredibly informative. Then in July we held a branch meeting to show a film and listen to some audio



Margaret Lawson, Rosalie Huzzard, and Moira Campbell at the 'Well behaved women seldom make history' event at Millenium Gallery.

recordings about the atomic bomb explosion in Japan. This was commemorating Hiroshima and Nagasaki Day. It was a hard subject to have but felt important to bring up some of these issues, especially with a vote on the UK's nuclear missiles just around the corner.

We had a Sheffield branch meeting with Maureen Storey, director of VIDA in September.

She came and spoke about new lottery funding for abuse services in Sheffield and the way all the violence against women services were merging to provide more support for each other.

Our next meeting was in November and it was about the story of UK WILPF since the 1980s. Rosalie Huzzard, founding member of the Sheffield branch led the discussion. Then there was the annual Peace and Craft fair where we had a stall and got lots of interest – over 50 people signed our letter to Boris Johnson.

The last event of the year was a wonderful group Christmas meal which



Margaret Lawson, Rosie Horsley, Rosalie Huzzard, and Moira Campbell at Anti trident Demo Feb. 2016

was full of joyful cheer.

Rosie Horsley December 2016.

OBITUARIES

Richenda Barbour

Richenda was very much an active and long-standing member of UK WILPF and a regular attender and contributor to London branch. In a celebration of the WILPF 94th Birthday, it was decided to nominate her as a WILPF heroine, because she was one. But also to show that British peace women, in the company of US, Hungarian, German Scottish and WILPF members also have an honoured place in our movement.

One of my last recollections of Richenda was at the annual commemoration of conscientious objectors where she brought a heap of white roses for us to place on the memorial in London.

Because she was essentially a modest woman, our knowledge of her work and achievements does not approach the reality. Her record in the British peace movement goes back to the first Aldermaston March to the Atomic Weapons Research establishment in 1958, where the focus was on banning the H Bomb. She and her husband continued to march with CND in the following years.

In 2008, on the 50th anniversary of the first march, Richenda was at Aldermaston again and is recorded as saying: "It's so sad that we haven't changed an awful lot but I feel we are doing the right thing."

Diane Brace

Tony Beirne

Tony the husband of Molly, who died suddenly in the autumn is sadly missed by many people who knew him in his various roles as he had a very full life. He was involved in many community activities such as chairing the University of the Third Age in the Preston Park area and, working with the Labour Party.

Tony was a great supporter of WILPF and our activities for many years, helping to prepare venues for parties, bringing food and drinks and always willing to collect women who struggled to get to and from meetings. For 30 years Molly has been a long-standing member of WILPF, and throughout that time Tony was quietly in the background backing her and our work.

Jenny Engledow

Elizabeth Bennett

Elizabeth was almost 70 when she heard about WILPF. Living in Ledbury with no nearby branch she did not take part in many WILPF activities but was generous with donations to WILPF. I met her on a visit to Ghana in 1990 with Ghana School Aid and talked about WILPF. Following that she and her husband attended a weekend WILPF meeting in Wales and then she joined WILPF. Elizabeth died on 5th January 2017, shortly before her 95th

birthday.

Like many of WILPF's early members, Elizabeth did not need to earn her own living but lived as the wife of a colonial administrator in the Gold Coast, later Ghana, from 1955 to about 1961 and then as the wife of a local government official in Hereford. She was reticent about her own activities apart from singing in the Three Choirs Festival for many years.

To modern WILPF members it may seem that she was far from being a feminist but was an excellent wife who supported and encouraged her husband in his public duties. They were both interested in the welfare of people: they retained a strong affection for Ghana and kept in contact with people there; they were very charitable but in particular supported a small charity called Ghana School Aid set up in the 1980s.

Elizabeth outlived her husband by several years living on her own supported by daily carers. During World War 2 she had been in the Land Army.

Margaret Turner

Margaret Chamings

Margaret died on 18th March 2016 aged 91. She had moved from Sheffield to York three years earlier to be nearer her family.

Inspired by her Quaker faith, she was a lifelong campaigner for social justice environmental sustainability and peace. Margaret encouraged the formation of the Sheffield WILPF branch. She ensured the inclusion of the branch in the Sheffield city's 'Make Poverty History' campaign in 2005, represented us at the 'Break the Chains of Debt' demo in Birmingham and at 'The Wave' demo for the environment in London. I have memories of being driven with her in a cycle-powered rickshaw in the later stages of that march when my legs gave out. Margaret of course had no such problems – she walked for miles every day.

Margaret designed and made the local WILPF branch banner and made us known in the many other organisations in which she was active – Global Justice Now, the local UNA branch and CND among others.

The many causes she worked for included supporting asylum seekers in Sheffield, running a street stall for Water Aid and WILPF, opening her garden for our garden parties for many years and providing longstanding secretarial support for the Labour Party. She could always be relied on to help at her Quaker Meetings – bringing flowers for the table, serving tea and coffee and as an Elder, until failing health curtailed some of her activities in recent years.

She made her own bread and gave away pots of her home made jam, living as simply as possible and holidaying in her native Scotland, although she, and her husband Harold also visited friends in East Germany a number of times during the Cold War period.

She loved her garden with its vegetable plot, lots of shrubs and cowslips in the spring and I have many of these in my own garden to remind me of her.

She remains an inspiration to all those who knew her.

Rosalie Huzzard

Joan Horrocks July 1921 – April 2016

Joan was best known to WILPF members, and to the peace movement in general, for her work with MANA (Musicians Against Nuclear Arms) now Musicians for Peace and Disarmament. In the role of Administrator for 21 years, she mounted four high quality and well-attended concerts a year, in important venues like St. James's Piccadilly. These events raised vital funds, and raised the profile of diverse peace organisations, including WILPF.

Joan, the daughter of Jewish refugees, was a real lover of music, performing in concerts across Europe, and making recordings as part of the New Philharmonia Chorus. You would be sure to bump into her at the annual Aldeburgh Festival in Suffolk. In the midst of her many peace activities, Joan was a WILPF member for a number of years and made a point of attending annual meetings.

Sheila Triggs

Hazel Rennie

Hazel died in the summer of 2016 after a slow illness over the previous year. She had been a member of WILPF for around 35 years and introduced many women from Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp to our organisation, including myself. She spent much time living there welcoming women from many lands and stayed at Aldermaston at every opportunity.

She was a poet, writing mostly political, sometimes angry poems but often with humour, as well as poems about the natural world in its mystery and beauty, and the sorrows of exploitation of different kinds.

She remained politically active continuing to write letters to Presidents, Prime Ministers and MP's, when she was unable to go to demonstrations or to the camps.

At her funeral many of her WILPF friends, Greenham/Aldermaston friends and local action groups spoke about how she had influenced their lives. Her husband Jock has always been a great supporter of her peace work and of WILPF, and has welcomed the many women who have stayed at their home over the years.

Jenny Engledow