

Christmas with all its bustle and excitement can turn into the roller coaster of emotion that leaves some exhausted and drained; trying to please everyone. However, it is a time for celebrations and reflections of the past year. A time of Christmas Spirit where everyone should be giving back a little more kindness and sincerity than we receive. *"It's not how much we give but how much love we put into giving."* Mother Theresa. Receiving a pair of hand knitted socks from the gnarled hands of a favourite Aunt is priceless, when you think of the thousands of tiny stitches have been painstakingly worked. No quick fix of cheap socks from China for you. Just the same can be said to the hundreds of beanies, TV slippers and mittens that are knitted with the identical amount of kindness and donated to those who are in need by you, the members. No expectation of acknowledgement or thanks. Just freely given with love and care. We have had a year of great excitement and some sadness. Covid is still amongst our communities. Mother Nature has thrown weather situations that has brought angst and suffering to areas both urban and rural. The NEC have met huge challenges head on with quiet fortitude and determination. Those WIs who have endeavoured to find solutions to continue their presence in their districts are to be commended, whilst those who have hung up the 'closed' sign, we all hope that those recessed WI members have found a new WI to attend.

Consequently, it is quite obvious to us and it should be to you all as members, we have to have a huge membership drive in 2024 to encourage and retain new WI members. **Without members there is no NZFWI.** It is that simple. So I urge you to put into action a membership recruitment

drive in your area. Promote at every opportunity and occasion. During your WI meetings, spend 15 minutes talking together to find a way of increasing your membership. Do it every month and take it seriously. How can you encourage other like-minded women to find a place to enjoy friendship, upskilling their arts and crafts, educate themselves on social issues at local or nationwide level; share a sense of belonging with women who live in your area. There is a need to have a place such as this for every woman. Too many women are struggling to make ends meet; juggling health, family and work commitments. Many are lonely and just want to have a friend to talk to and share some laughter. Some are looking to spend time volunteering their skills to their communities and the WI is just the place.



To close this short comment it is my wish for everyone to be well and healthy, enjoy the festivities with friends and family who are visiting at some point over the holiday season. Take time to revitalise and reflect for the future. I look forward to meeting up with some of you in 2024. It will be an exciting year for us all as the organisation moves towards the future.

Aroha nui Jude



(photo Ashburton Guardian. Farm north of Ashburton)

"What is Christmas? It is tenderness for the past, courage for the present, hope for the future. It is a fervent wish that every cup may overflow with blessings rich and eternal, and that every path may lead to peace"
 Agnes M. Pahro



“Joyous festive greetings to you all and may there be peace on earth soon.”

Colleen NZFWI Executive Officer



Judy Cathcart Vice President Membership NZFWI.(hard working farmer and extraordinary WI member)

‘Let beauty surround you. Happiness, stay with you, and love, carry you through the holidays and beyond. Wishing you and your families a Very Happy Christmas. Cheers to the New Year and New Opportunities.’

Love Judy

Jokes about Christmas trees.....

What month does a Christmas tree hate the most? Sep -Timber!

What is a Christmas tree's favourite sweet? Orna-mints

How do Christmas trees get their email? They log on!

Why are Christmas trees so fond of the past? Because the present's beneath them!

Why are Christmas trees so bad at knitting? They have too many needles



Toni Brumby Marketing and Promotion Vice President NZFWI. (Ideas girl)

“I'm sitting at my desk negotiating discounts for bits and pieces that mean nothing in the wide view of our world. It is wonderfully refreshing to read about the generous donations of time and items given freely from our WI members to our communities. It makes me proud to call myself a member of the NZFWI. I wish you all a wonderful, safe and happy Christmas and a Healthy and Happy New Year.” **Love Toni**

Mary Reet Hon Finance Officer (In charge of the money & great personality)

‘Wishing all of our members a wonderful happy Christmas and a happy new year May you know the peace, joy, hope and love of this season.

Thank you for all your support this year and for all you do for each other and your communities.’

Love from Mary

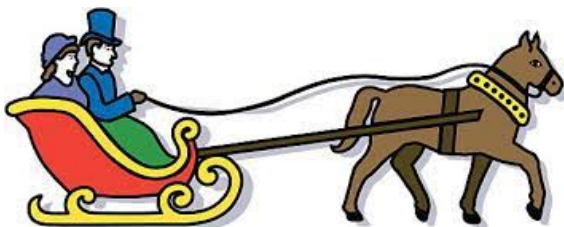
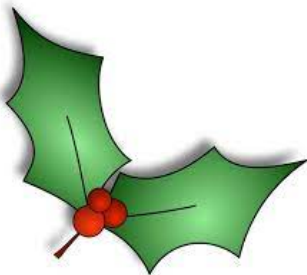
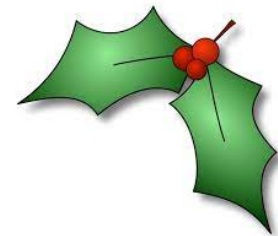


Adrienne Allen Finance & Promotion (Keeps us on our toes)

“Here is wishing members and their families a peaceful Christmas and hope you get to spend time with family. It has been wonderful getting to know a number of you this past year and I hope to get to know more of you as time goes by. Thank you for shining your lights of service and friendship to those around you.”

Yours in W.I. friendship

Adrienne.



Funny Alternative to The Christmas Rhyme

Dashing through the snow
In a one horse open sleigh
O'er the fields we go
Laughing all the way

A risk assessment must be submitted before the open sleigh is deemed safe for members of the public. It must also be considered whether it is appropriate to employ only one horse for this activity, depending on size of sleigh and the persons upon it. Note that permission from landowners must be gained prior to entering fields. Please also consider those who choose not to participate in Christmas festivities, and keep laughter to a moderate level not loud enough to be considered a noise nuisance.

Jessie Hopkinson Social Issues (Campaigner for wāhine, whānau and kararehe)

"Ngā mihi o te kirihmete me te tau hou
Merry Christmas and a happy new year to all our wonderful members I hope you all have a lovely time with your whānau and friends and look forward to what next year brings."

Aroha nui
Jess Hopkinson

(Photo Hahei Beach Jude Vaughan)



Final Thoughts:

Over the last few months, I have been listening to audiobooks and podcasts through the internet. Having someone reading to you whilst you are sewing or knitting (or housework...!) is most pleasant. However, Jo March did not enjoy the part of reader, especially if it was for Aunt Josephine March, *"I was reading that everlasting 'Belsham,' and droning away as I always do, for Aunt soon drops off and then, I take out some nice book and read like fury till she wakes up"* 'Little Women' Louisa May Alcott. Nevertheless I have been listening to "Persuasion" by Jane Austin whilst knitting socks and fingerless gloves for UK grandies. The descriptive words flow through my ear pods as my fingers work the wool yarn. The classic "Pride and Prejudice" is still a

favourite. Of course the rabbit hole of the internet leads one to various other subject matters. One of these paths found me listening to the six-part Herald podcast of the worst rail disaster of New Zealand at Tangiwai of Christmas Eve 1953. This year marks the seventy year anniversary and the podcast re-examines the events of the terrible night and those recollections of surviving emergency personnel and family members. "Tangiwai: A Forgotten History" is available at iHeartRadio or wherever you get your podcasts. So if you are looking to take some time out and still have your hands occupied or listening whilst you work at the ironing (?) or dusting, take a trip into the literary world or listen to the various podcasts that are available.



How do sheep say Merry Christmas to each other? Fleece Navidad
Where do Santa's reindeer stop for coffee? Star-bucks!
What goes "Oh, Oh, Oh"? Santa walking backward

Knock, knock! *Who's there?* Elf. *Elf who?* Elf me wrap this present for Santa!
Knock, knock *Who's there?* Honda. *Honda who?* Honda first day of Christmas my true love sent to me...

The national office will be closed from: Friday 21 December 2023 – until Monday 8 January 2024