



Redlynch and District WI

Charity Registration No.292382

September 2018 Report

Our President, Rosemary Pugh, welcomed everyone and we sang "Jerusalem" in honour of our 102nd Birthday anniversary.

One new member was welcomed and other returning members, there were apologies from 6 absent members, birthday posies were presented and Rosemary pointed out various items from the Newsletter. We were invited to join the Royal British Legion on their march from the War Memorial to St. Mary's Church on Remembrance Sunday.

Rosemary then introduced Mrs Frances Benton, who entertained and enthralled us with her talk "The Wisdom of Pearls". She first became interested in pearls at the age of seven, when her grandmother introduced her to them and now she covers 1000 miles a week showing and talking about them. When she retires she plans to live in Beaune, Burgundy and run "Pearls before Wine".

The first pearls were from China, but now come from all over the world, she described the different types of pearl, real pearls will last a lifetime and come from natural formation in a bi-valve mollusc, found in the U.K. in Scotland, Wales and in England in certain protected places, as they filter the impurities from the water. They can live for 150 years. Tahitian and Japanese oysters produce the best pearls, but only 1 in 10,000 oysters will produce a pearl. The Crown Jewels include many fine pearls.

A cultured pearl comes from treated oysters, whose secret was discovered by Mr Mikimoto in Japan in 1895, but only recent research has found out exactly how oysters make pearls, which have been prized for thousands of years, Cleopatra wore them, from Nile River animals. Arabs defined them as dew drops filled with moonlight dropped by angels. We also looked at large oyster shells which had been cleaned and then showed the colour of the pearl within them.

Never spray perfume or hairspray on them or immerse them in water to clean them as this will rot the silk on which they are strung. Do wear as often as possible even at night.

Members were able to inspect the many varieties and colours of pearls which Mrs Benton had brought for sale, any profits she makes are used to support a school for autistic and Asperger syndrome children. She was warmly thanked and applauded and then everyone enjoyed tea served by the committee members.

Next month's Meeting will be on October 8th, when Mr Marchbank will tell us about English Wine. No trading table, but don't forget Flower of the Month. New members always welcome, enquiries to Val, 01725 510850.

COMMITTEE

Patricia Cousins (President), Rosemary Pugh, (Vice-President), Valerie Reynolds (Secretary),
Sandra Pearce (Treasurer), June Dabell, (Joint Secretary),
Marion Lewins, Gloria Henderson