



Redlynch and District WI

Charity Registration No.292382

May 2019 Report

At our May meeting our President, Rosemary Pugh welcomed everyone, including 2 new members and 1 visitor. There were 11 apologies for absence and 2 birthday posies of Lily of the Valley were presented.

Reminders of the trip to Portsmouth and the Salisbury Cathedral centenary Service were given and also news of the Wiltshire Centenary Council Meeting in October. Details of our October Lunch came from Gloria, this will be in MVVWH on October 20th and will cost £20 each, including drinks. June Dabell reminded everyone of the trip to Rockbourne Roman Villa and the visit to the Community Farm in May and June.

New programmes for the coming year were now available.

Rosemary introduced Analiza Jones, our Speaker, from the Philippines, who had brought a large number of hand-made bags in all shapes and sizes and explained how they were made and passed them round as she talked. There are 7,600 islands making up the Philippines (depending on low or high tides) with beautiful sandy beaches and good agricultural land where they grow rice, sugar cane, pineapples, bananas, abaca and coconuts. The pineapple tops are replanted and the fibres from the leaves are used to make fabric, mixed with cotton for softness, or silk for luxurious clothes.

Banana and abaca fibres are both used for weaving and rope making. North America had been their main market for rope, but after they began to buy from another source to save on transport costs the Philippines had to look for an alternative source of income from the abaca. They chose to make woven material for bags. This entails much hard work, cutting, extracting the pulp, pulling it out, washing it, all by hand with fearsome knives and no protection for the workers, then drying in hanks on anything they can find - a tree branch, a washing line, a fence, and then taken off to market.

Here they are bought by women who blend them with other fibres, join them into long lengths and comb them to be ready for weaving on wide looms. It is dyed in any container they can find and dried again, then used to make the beautiful bags in all shapes and sizes, some very bright colours as they now have access to commercial dyes. Other materials are introduced for handles and fastenings but all with an appropriate appearance. Use is also made of the coconut shells, cut into small discs these are made into ornamental pots and containers, some highly polished for bowls, and at home the whole outer shell, which is very fibrous inside, is used to polish floors. (Imagine the time and energy this would take.) There is now a training scheme for young people in order to keep the skills in the islands and support the old people, but many young ones leave to earn more and have a better life.

COMMITTEE

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Sandra Pearce (Treasurer), June Dabell, (Joint Secretary),
Marion Lewins, Gloria Henderson

There is so much hard, hand work involved , but the end product is beautiful and Analiza's lovely display was much depleted by the end of the Meeting. A wonderful example of using what you are given and wasting nothing. Analiza was warmly thanked and applauded.

Tea was enjoyed and we looked forward to our next activities.

Our next Meeting will be on June 12th, at 2.15 pm, in the MVVWH , when our Speaker will be Jill Daniels, her talk is entitled "Romanov to Revolution ".

Visitors and new members are always welcome. Please remember Flower of the Month, it makes a vibrant display.

Queries to Val on 01725 510850.

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