Oakham WI Newsletter July 2025

Next Monthly Meeting - 22nd July 7.15pm for 7.30pm start

Tracey Akehurst - The drunken botanist

Every great drink starts with a plant. And, coupled with our obsession for alcohol, and its influence on our lives, it's a marriage made in a garden.

Discover the benefits of fermented fruits to prehistoric man, the advantage of beer over water, that civilised conversation requires wine, and why gin and rum were so important to the Royal Navy. And in the process discover the botanical origins of our favourite drinks – beer, wine, spirits and even a mixer of two...



From our President

I hope those of you who joined in with our summer outing on Tuesday enjoyed our trip to Lowick and Drayton House.

Our guide at St Peters Church gave us lots of information about the grand and very beautiful building, which sadly is threatened with closure, due to the mounting costs of maintaining and running a historic building. Oakham WI has made a donation from funds as a token of our thanks for the tour.

Lunch was first-rate and I, for one, will be returning to The Snooty Fox in the future. Oakham WI covered the tip for the excellent service we received. Then, our two-hour long tour of Drayton House – accompanied by Debbie and Stephanie – was superb.

I have asked Nesbit Bros to pass on our thanks to John, our coach driver, who was both friendly and courteous throughout the day.

Who knows where we will be going next year? Your suggestions are most welcome.

I look forward to seeing you on Tuesday for our July members' meeting.

Jackie

Raffle prizes: Our monthly raffle is one of our important fund-raisers. Do you have any unwanted gifts or items (not toiletries) that could be a raffle prize? All donations of items that you think another member would like to win are welcome. Please give to Julie at the meeting.

Remember for the meeting:

- Please remember to have the correct money (£1) for the door fee together with £1 for the raffle if you want to take part.
- Wear your lanyard so that everybody knows who everybody is.
- Any small change for Peppers a safe place.
- Bring your cheque book to pay for events if you do not use internet banking.

Please also ensure that you carry a note of who we can contact in the case of an emergency and details of any medication that a first responder might need to know about. This should be carried in an easily accessible place when attending meetings and events.

You do not need to send apologies if you cannot attend the monthly meeting but we would appreciate it if you let us know if you cannot attend a booked event.

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Payment for events/activities

When paying for events/activities in which you are taking part, could we please ask that you pay either directly online by bank transfer (the preferred option) to:

Oakham Women's Institute

Sort code: 08-92-99 A/c no: 67228391

or by cheque, handed directly to our Treasurer - Linda B - or another member of the committee acting on her behalf.

We would prefer if you **DID NOT** pay cheques into the WI account, because although these show on our bank records, we have no reference with which to reconcile the payment; we can not see who has made the payment, or what it is for.

Your cooperation in this matter would be very much appreciated.

Oakham WI WhatsApp group

If you would like to join the Oakham WI WhatsApp group- a fun and informal way of keeping in touch with other members, sharing local information, etc - please email Jackie on oakhamwi@gmail.com, giving her your mobile number and she will send a link for you to join.



Please remember WhatsApp is an open forum, visible to many of our members, and sensitive, confidential or private information should not be shared.

Member's travels:





Liz He enjoyed a cruise to Norway(left) whilst Diane B enjoyed the view from Tate St Ives.(below)



Nearer to home, Exton Hall and North Luffenham Hall both opened their gardens under the NGS scheme.





Please send me photographs of your August travels for the next newsletter.

Oakham WI Newsletter July 2025 Recent Events

July Ramble

It was an overcast morning but perfect walking weather for our four mile July ramble from Market Overton. Five of us set off from the village and enjoyed beautiful views across the fields towards Wymondham.

We reached Edmondthorpe and posed for a photo outside the old school which is now a social club. Outside is an obelisk shaped cast and wrought iron water pump, marked WAP 1856. It has a spout in the shape of a dragon and the school children used to put their heads under it when it was hot.

We then returned to Market Overton via a rather muddy wood, emerging to more beautiful views. We then enjoyed refreshments at the Lodge Trust cafe, a charity that supports adults with learning disabilities.

A lovely morning enjoying the fresh air and quiet of the countryside.





Val, Jackie, Phil and Maureen



History group

The history group met on Wednesday 9 July and heard fascinating talks from Sue Meadows and Liz Hemming.

Sue told us about the Batlle of Naseby, which took place in 1645, and the effects it had on the country (England and Wales) and the ordinary people.

Liz told us about the highly influential Gertrude Bell (born in July 1868), an English writer, traveller, political officer, administrator, and archaeologist, whose travels and work took her throughout the Middle East.

Two films have been made about her:

- A documentary, Letters from Baghdad narrated by Tilda Swinson and
- A biographical drama entitled Queen of the Desert, starring Nicole Kidman.

Our next meeting will be on 13th August at 14.15. If you haven't been before and would like to join in, email oakhamwi@gmail.com for details.

Oakham WI Newsletter July 2025 Recent Events

Our summer outing to Lowick and Drayton House

Twenty-two members together with two guests from Wymondham travelled by coach to the pretty village of Lowick, over the border in Northamptonshire. On arrival we were greeted and given a tour of the 14th century parish church of St Peter. It is a attractive and interesting church with stained glass windows dating back to the 14th century, alabaster chest tombs, a stunning south chapel and beautiful carved pews including one with a dragon.







After our tour of the church we walked down to the Snooty Fox where we enjoyed a delicious lunch.











After our lunch we again boarded the coach for the one mile drive through the village into the estate where we caught our first glimpse of the impressive house.

Oakham WI Newsletter July 2025 Recent Events

We were welcomed to Drayton House and whilst standing in the forecourt were given an introduction to the house. As it is a private home, this was the only place we could take photographs so most of the photographs below are from the guide book but show the opulence of the interiors.

The house was started in 1361 and has never been sold, passing down through the family by inheritance. The present owner is Charles Stopford Sackville who lives in the house with his second wife and 15 year old daughter.







We were taken from the forecourt through into the courtyard (left) and nothing had prepared us for the Baroque splendour made even more attractive by the beautiful hydrangeas.

We then entered the house and viewed the undercroft which dated from between 1280 and 1300 before moving into the medieval hall which is used today and is surprisingly homely.

We were shown the stone staircase (right) with the walls painted in 1712 showing good and evil.



The walnut stairs (left) were also impressive being a cantilever or hanging staircase. It is the only timber staircase of this kind and period to survive in England.



We were also shown the state bed that was commissioned in 1700 with beautiful embroidery.

All in all we felt very privileged to be shown around such a beautiful and interesting home that is seldom open to visitors. Thanks to the members of the committee who organised the enjoyable day.

Oakham WI Newsletter July 2025 Upcoming Events

Rambles and Ambles

Most months we offer a walk or two in order that we can get out in the fresh air and improve both our physical and mental health. Our walks are described as rambles or ambles. A ramble is normally between 3.5 and 4.5 miles and will involve some gentle climbs with the benefit of lovely views of the beautiful Rutland countryside. Ambles tend to be under three miles and are often on flatter terrain. Both ambles and rambles end with a social coffee or light lunch.

Ridlington Ramble - 4.2 miles -Wednesday 6th August 10.15

For our August ramble we will repeat our enjoyable walk from June 2024 starting at Ridlington.

We will walk along the ridge with views across beautiful countryside before descending to walk along the river Chater back to Ridlington, walking round the pretty village.

After the walk there will be the option of joining us for refreshments.



Please register your interest by emailing <u>oakhamwievents@gmail.com</u> with Ramble in the subject bar to add your name to the list, stating whether you want to walk or just join us for refreshments. Car shares will be organised once we know participants.

Petanque - Tuesday 9 September The Wheatsheaf, Oakham

We will again be holding our annual petanque Challenge.

We will meet at the Wheatsheaf at noon for a light lunch and will be allocated to teams for the tournament.

After our lunch we will start to play, it doesn't matter whether or not you have played before, in



fact lack of experience can be a benefit! If you do not want to play but just come for the lunch, you are also welcome.

Why not come along for what is normally a fun afternoon amongst friends?

Email <u>oakhamwievents@gmail.com</u> with Petanque in the heading if you want to join us, stating lunch and petanque, or lunch only. You will then receive a menu to make your lunch choice from. We will be taking a £5 deposit which will be deducted from your meal bill on the day.

Please book your place asap with the final deadline for bookings being Friday 29 August.

The lunch will go ahead regardless of the weather.

Oakham WI Newsletter July 2025 Dates for your diary

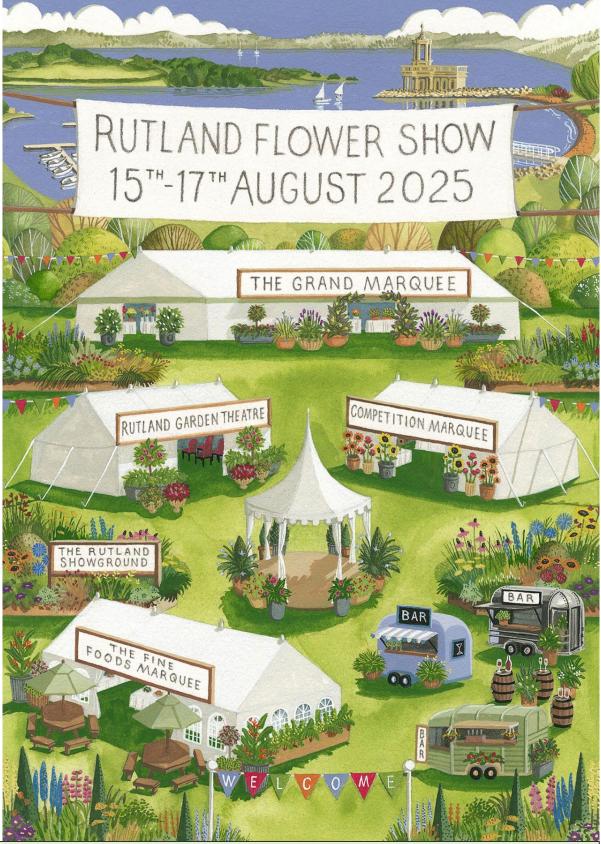
Date and time	Event
Wednesday 6 August 10.15am	August Ramble: Ridlington
Wednesday 20 August All day	Visit to the Stained Glass Museum, Ely
Tuesday 9 September 12 noon	Petanque
Thursday 18 September 10.30am	Canal walk and coffee
Monday 13 October	Craft session
Wednesday 15 October 10.30am	Edith Weston walk and lunch
Wednesday 19 November pm	Craft session
Monday 15 December am	Christmas Table decoration

Remember you can also look at our website for details of future meetings and events and also photographs from previous events:

https://wioakham.wixsite.com/mysite

Have you seen an event advertised that you think would be of interest to members? Let a member of the committee know and maybe we can advertise to get a group together to go.

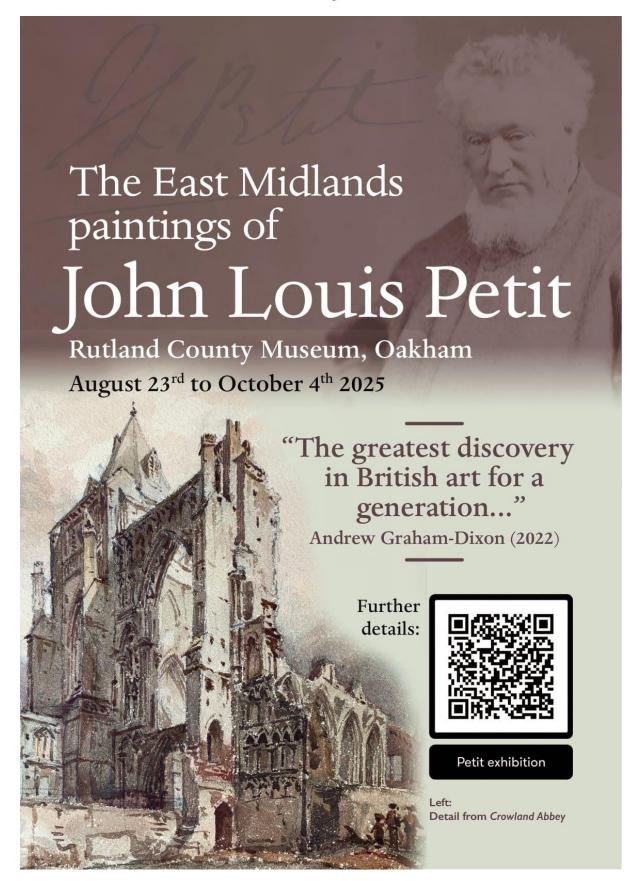
Oakham WI Newsletter July 2025 Community News



For more information see https://www.rutlandflowershow.co.uk/ Advance tickets are £15pp.

Interested? Why not ask around at our next meeting to see if others want to join you.

Oakham WI Newsletter July 2025 Community News



Oakham WI Newsletter July 2025 Community News



Join our guided walking tour of historic Oakham, starting from Oakham Castle, and then enjoy a cup of tea/filtered coffee and a small brownie or a slice of lemon drizzle cake at the delightful Castle Cottage Café



SATURDAY 9TH AUG 2025 TOUR 2PM - 3PM TEA 3PM - 3.30PM £14



www.oakhamcastle.org/events

www.oakhamcastle.org email: castle@rutland.gov.uk







