

The Renhold WI speaker for 5th July 2018, was Paula Priestley from the Multiple Sclerosis Centre in Bedford. Paula has worked for the Centre for 2 years, having previously worked for St. Johns at Moggerhanger for 18 years. There are currently just over 2000 people suffering from M.S. in Bedfordshire & Northamptonshire. Northamptonshire has one NHS sponsored M.S. specialist nurse, Bedford has none. The Centre receives no Government funding & its running costs alone are £400,000p.a. It is a self-help organization run mainly by the sufferers themselves, or their family, carers, etc. Those who receive treatment are asked for donations, as little as £30 per month as a nominal amount. Those who can't pay are encouraged to join in fund-raising events, so everyone involved contributes in some way. Current fund raising is being done to replace the 8 year old bus, upon which so many sufferers rely to get them to & from the Centre. As well as treatments, the Centre offers support for sufferers & socialization, which is vital. Paula was an interesting speaker, who opened our eyes to how little support M.S. sufferers receive from the NHS. The charity shop at the Centre is an important part of the fund raising, and members were encouraged to donate items to it .

The following day, which was a lovely summer afternoon, was spent at a members cottage - Little Thatch, in the village. Julie Roberts explained the intricacies of erecting and installing large scale cinema screens to a group of members and visitors. We sat fascinated, as if we were at the movies, and ate Popcorn, hot-dogs and cool drinks followed by a lovely relaxing chat in the garden. We will never look at the cinema screens in the same way again!

The W.I. collect unwanted bras (they don't have to be new) for our Bra Box, for Cancer Research and aiding the Women of the Third World. It is nearly full, but donations are still very welcome. This is an ongoing appeal to all Ladies in the village.

We are having a recruitment drive for new members, and always welcomes visitors who may want to come and see what happens at a W.I. meeting. We are offering our first meeting **free** visitors, who can join us for the rest of the year at a reduced membership rate. Come and have fun, meet new people and inspire other women.