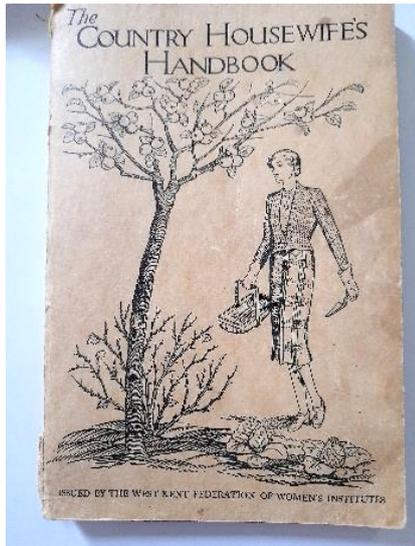


VILLAGE ECHOES

WOMEN'S INSTITUTE in KILNDOWN

The Kilndown branch of the WI was formed in 1919, a year before Goudhurst, and was one of the earliest village WIs in the country. For many years the group had over 40 members and were very active in the wider world of the WI, attending events around the County. It seems they were well known for putting on shows and musical entertainments. They carried on meeting during the years of WWII, with the emphasis on 'make do and mend' and performances to jolly everyone up!



Published in 1939 by the West Kent Federation of WIs



Teaspoon with WI Badge, date unknown

Mrs Britons Dream presented by Kilndown WI. 1953



Kent & Sussex Courier -

As Kilndown WI members prepare Celebrations for Coronation Day a Granny, Mrs Briton, is left alone in her chair. She falls asleep and is charmed by a sprite. She sees in her dream a Pageant of British History from the days of Elizabeth I to modern times.

THE CAST – in photograph, (identified as best of memory!)

Top Row - Queen Elizabeth – Mrs S Whitewood, Courtiers -Mrs Evans, Miss Adams, Mrs Corbett, Mrs Waghorn, Mrs Davies.

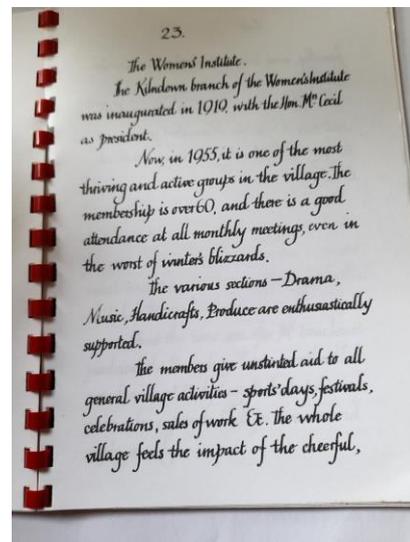
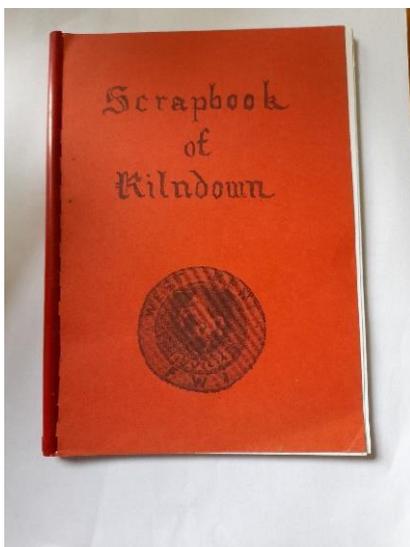
Middle row: L-R: Mrs Crowther, Mrs Hodgkin, Carole Whitewood, Mrs Barrell, (Queen Victoria) – Mrs Ballard, Mrs Martin, Stella Barrell, ?, Mrs Fishenden.

Seated L-R: ?, Mrs A W Osborne (Tide) Mrs J Blunt (Jester), ?, Mrs A Furnell, Mrs G Batchelor, Mrs A Golding (Clown), Mrs E Foster (Father Time), Mrs E Pattenden.

L-R Children: Barbara Whitewood ?, ?, ?, Joan Horton (Sprite) Senga Furnell, Robin Batchelor, (?), ?

Also, in the cast were, Mrs H Dengate, Mrs G Shepherd, and Mrs C Underhill. Mrs Briton was played by Mrs A Blinks – she is not in the photo.

In 1955, there was a County Competition for a Village Scrapbook. Kilndown entered this, with Miss Mary Adams, Headmistress of Kilndown Primary School, handwriting the pages and describing the various places in and around the Village and the activities villagers could enjoy.(see below)



In 1969 the group celebrated its Golden Jubilee, with over 100 people attending the party. President, Mrs Margaret Hodgkin welcomed the guests before wine and refreshments were served. Mrs Wadie cut the cake made by Mrs Gertie Stevens and iced by Mrs Francis Waghorn. The Village hall was decorated with the ladies' arts, crafts and photography and the Institute's records displayed. Songs from the past 50 years were sung and a comedy play 'Unhand Me Squire', organised by Mrs Edna Carwithen and produced by Mrs C Angus, was performed. Headline in the Kentish Advertiser – A Grand Little Institute Goes Gay.

After holding the Annual Meeting in December 1981, the group suspended itself for three years. If by the end of that time it could not be restarted with a minimum of 30 members it would close for ever. It did.

Many members were able to join the Goudhurst group and this they did until the Goudhurst Institute also folded.

Lynda Shepherd

www.goudhurstlocalhistorysociety.org