

Medieval Herbal Remedies

Our craft club is back to the re-opened “Stock Pot” at Ryton Organic Gardens and last month we admired the unusual tea cosies they used and were informed that they were actually for sale and all the proceeds went to charity. We thought it was a project that fitted in with our craft afternoons and so Ruth asked members if they would like to take part and if they had any unusual patterns or spare wool they could donate. We celebrated Queen Elizabeth’s birthday with a lovely cake and sang Happy Birthday.

Our speaker this month was Christina Smee who gave us a talk about medieval herbal remedies. Christina informed us that she was a member of a Living History Group and her title was Wise Woman which was another name for a witch. She said people used witches were when there were no doctors. It was when men went to a university to study medicine that the men felt threatened and branded witches as evil. We were told about the different herbs and what they were used to treat and some of them are used in modern medicines. One of the amusing anecdote Christina told us was it was believed if a lady wanted eternal youth that during the month of May she had to go naked and barefoot to a field and drink the dew from “Ladies Mantle”. I saw quite a few ladies making a note of this so try not to be too shocked if you see a group of naked ladies looking for a “Ladies Mantle” plant! Normally she would bring examples of the herbs used but because of the time of year we were shown pictures with information about their uses.

One of our annual activities is a bluebell walk and the signs are that they are earlier this year so we are hoping the weather is reasonable when the bluebells are at their best. We have also trips to the cinema and theatre planned.

Next month we will be discussing the resolutions which are about Appropriate Care in Hospitals for People with Dementia and the second is about Avoiding Food Waste, Address Food Poverty. After we have heard pros and cons members will be asked to vote and then the outcome will be sent to Federation and ultimately to National.