

E-Brief - December 2018

Introduction

When many people appear to wind down towards the holiday season, the WEA appears to have been accelerating full steam ahead. There have been a number of major events in the past two months and most of us will probably need the holiday period to recover from all this frenetic activity.

I would like to say a special thank you to all the staff and WEA Scotland Board members who have done so much in the past twelve months to deliver quality services to learners and also embraced the changes necessary for us to create the basis of a sustainable WEA Scotland for the future. I know it's been hard work and everyone has certainly earned their holiday!!

As we approach the Christmas and New Year break, I would like to wish all WEA Scotland staff, learners, partners and stakeholders my very best wishes and hope that you have a healthy and happy 2019.

WEA Events and News in November and December

WEA Awards

As has been mentioned in previous e-briefs, Ross Weatherby won the joint UK Award for Staff member of the year. Glasgow Clyde Foundation also won the WEA Scotland Regional Award for Science for a Successful Scotland which was collected by Kathleen Richardson at the WEA Awards Ceremony in London during November.



WEA Impact Report

The WEA Impact Report for 2018 was launched in November too. This covers the whole of the UK: including Scotland, and provides an excellent overview of the impact the WEA makes to individuals and communities. It provides clear and compelling evidence that we deliver life changing education, that what we do matters to people and probably accounts for the reason why so many of us are proud to work and be associated with the WEA. For those of you who have yet to see a copy of the Impact Report, a link to it is attached below

<https://www.weascotland.org.uk/our-impact>

WEA Strategy 2025

At four Strategy Launch Days in London, Birmingham, Edinburgh and Leeds, the WEA Strategy 2025 was launched discussed and debated. Staff, members and volunteers from every part of the UK participated in a series of workshops designed to start the discussions on how the targets and opportunities within the strategy might be delivered and how some of the challenges may be overcome.

At the event in Edinburgh, WEA Scotland colleagues were joined by a number of delegates from the North East of England, members of the WEA Scotland Board and UK Trustees. This combination of skills, experience and different geographical and educational contexts created stimulating and productive discussions throughout the day and some practical recommendations for joint working between Scotland and the North East of England that could be taken forward relatively easily and quickly. For those of you who have yet to see the Strategy, a link to the document is attached below

https://www.wea.org.uk/sites/default/files/WEA_Strategy_2025.pdf

WEA Scotland Staff and Board Event

At the conclusion of the Strategy Launch Day in Edinburgh, members of the WEA Scotland Board joined staff for a celebration evening. This was to acknowledge the efforts of staff across Scotland who have done so much to contribute to the success of WEA Scotland in the past two years. WEA President: Lynne Smith attended and thanked the staff for all their hard work and commitment to the WEA in very challenging circumstances. While the future still contained some challenges, WEA Scotland was now much better placed to meet these and could look forward with some degree of confidence.

WEA Scotland AGM

The WEA Scotland AGM took place in early December with over 60 delegates in attendance. For the first time in a while, the AGM was delighted to welcome a keynote speaker. Morven May McCallum inspired delegates with her story of managing and recovering from Lyme Disease, completing her formal education as an adult learner and going on to write and publish her first novel: Finding Joy.



Another very welcome addition and new initiative at this year's AGM was the contribution of WEA learners. WEA learners joined staff from each of the local areas in describing the learning that is taking place across Scotland. It was illuminating for delegates to hear this learner perspective and the difference that learning has made to each individual learner. Beyond the impact for each individual learner it also enabled delegates to hear this learner perspective, to re-enforce the importance of taking learner views into account and changing provision as required to meet different learner needs.

WEA Scotland Education Updates

Women in the Highlands

The Women in the Highlands Project have been receiving a significant amount of media attention recently for their work on the suffrage activity of women and men in the Highlands. Specifically this focussed on their campaigning activity for the right to vote from around 1870 to the period leading up to world war one. The project created a library display that has been well attended and was featured in a number of the local and regional media outlets. The work was also the feature of a Choir performance in the Strathpeffer Pavilion. The Education Coordinator, Andrea Johnson was interviewed about the project on BBC Scotland's Richard Holloway Programme and the Choir performance has also featured on You Tube. Links to the media articles, BBC programme and You Tube Video are posted below.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m0000zpx>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZMFhslu3UO4>

Lothian Local Association: Stitching Times Group



For three years, the Stitching Times Group in Edinburgh has been working on an embroidery/tapestry to reflect and celebrate 125 years since the Edinburgh Central Library opened. This work was rightly recognised at a hanging/unveiling event in the Edinburgh City Library attended by a number of the group members and staff at the library. This tapestry will be seen by the many people who visit the library each year and will remain on display for years to come. Photos of the tapestry and from the hanging event are attached via the links below.



The display also featured in a number of papers and on line news media and links to the relevant articles are attached below.

<https://www.edinburghlive.co.uk/news/edinburgh-news/tapestry-years-making-goes-display-15541328>

<https://talesofonecity.wordpress.com/2018/12/12/a-stitch-in-time-wea-tapestry-commemorates-central-librarys-history/>

WEA Films

At the Strategy Launch days one or two films were shown that illustrated the impact the WEA has on individuals and communities. Most delegates were of the view that these should be better shared and more visible that they are currently. As part of an agreed action to raise our profile, a link to one of these films is below. A new film will be attached to each month's brief going forward until we have illustrated all ten films currently available.

<https://www.wea.org.uk/inspiring-stories/love-story-its-never-too-late>