

WOMEN'S LUNCHTIME DISCUSSION GROUP

All good things come to an end: seven years of a successful Study Group

A Woman's Place changed its name twice during its 7-year existence, but the aims remained the same throughout – to explore and discuss a wide range of issues relating to women, both contemporary and from the past. Sometimes we chose 'stand-alone' topics, and sometimes we decided to have a theme running for a few months.



In addition to a presentation by a member, we always left time for people to introduce topics relating to women which they had spotted in the media or elsewhere. Discussion (and even argument!) always formed an important part of each meeting. Occasionally, in place of a presentation by one member, we held a current affairs activity in which everyone brought relevant news cuttings to the session. Space here does not permit me to include the impressive list of the 70+ presentations we have had, but just a few examples were: Women in Medicine, Women's role in WWII, the Status of Women in Islam, or sometimes a focus on individual brilliant women, such as Fanny Burney and Elizabeth Garrett Anderson. We arranged three outings, and organised a Study Afternoon in order to bring our activities to the wider membership. With the same aim in mind, in 2012 we produced a booklet, *Achieving Women*, containing shortened versions of some of our presentations.

Of course, we have made new friendships over the years, enjoyed fun and laughter as well as the more serious side of our sessions. It is sad to see the end of the Group, but it has been a very good seven years, and it is probably time for a rest. We congratulate ourselves on keeping the Group interesting and vibrant for so long – I hope it won't be too long before some enterprising member decides to start up something similar.

Group Organisers during the seven years were Celia Smith, Susan Henson and Barbara Eastwood.

To see the full article, go to the website: <http://www.sevenoaksu3a.org.uk/WomenIW-Topics-over-7-years.pdf>

Celia Smith