



Women & Manual Trades

www.wamt.org
email: info@wamt.org

Summer 2003

Email

Are You Getting Enough?

If you are

- a WAMT member
- Interested in hearing about jobs on offer
- wanting to make easy contact with other women working in your trade
- keen to hear about events and seminars

but

- haven't been receiving emails from WAMT

then

we don't have your email address on record

Email us

info@wamt.org

Free email access is available on the Internet.

Free internet access is available at your local library.

Contact us if you need advice on setting up an email address.



Tasting New Trades

Tradeswomen's Consortium pioneering project

When a self-employed person gives up two days work there has to be a good reason. One reason for some members of the Building Work for Women's Tradeswomen's Consortium has been the commencement of the multi-trade taster course.

The first of these courses ran on the 29th and 30th May and covered basic carpentry skills. This has proved to be a successful initiative delivered under the BWW partnership. Here are what some of the participants had to say:

'Very good course – John was an excellent and lively tutor...he was able to make sure we all went away having learnt something directly relevant'.

'It's really good to be taught by someone who really knows their trade and has lots of on-site experience...I only regret that the course was not longer'.

'Very useful as it related to many problems I come across myself' and 'the teacher showed approaches which would definitely help with private work'.

For these tradeswomen, a 2-day course in carpentry, though limited in scope, had proven extremely useful and worthwhile. No doubt the remaining courses to be run in electrics, plastering, wall and floor tiling and plumbing, will prove equally as helpful.

Each module lasts for one to two days and is spread over 4 months – May until August. The course content for each

module has been drawn up from ideas provided by tradeswomen following consultation. Content was determined by what would be realistic and safe to learn in a short time.

The idea behind setting up the course was to give tradeswomen the opportunity to find out a little more about trades other than their own.

Research has shown that whilst tradeswomen tend to have more qualifications in their own trade than tradesmen, their knowledge of other trades is very limited or non-existent. Men have greater opportunities to participate in informal training and tend to learn from each other on site. Other trade skills are learnt through these networks.

Tradeswomen, particularly those in self-employment, have been asking for a course like this for sometime to help them in their day-to-day work.

The workshops at Lambeth College were a safe environment to learn these skills and working through the college also ensured health and safety and insurance issues were covered. Experienced tutors passed on their skills and knowledge.

The next courses to be run will be electrics and tiling – needless to say both courses are now full.

Contact Andrea Cowling, Consortium Coordinator, on 020 7251 9192 for more details about the BWW Tradeswomen's Consortium.

Expanding Our Networks

On Monday 16th June the Consortium hosted a Network training event at Featherstone Street. Our trainer was Gwen Rhys – something of a Network Guru who, despite the heat, held us enthralled for nearly 4 hours.

A number of Consortium members attended and we also invited others who had expressed an interest in meeting the Consortium and learning about networking. These included architects, designers, and other businesswomen.

Gwen led us through 'the key characteristics of an effective networker' and explained it wasn't all about collecting business cards. She finished the session by asking people to think of 3 goals for their business that could be accomplished in the next 3 months.

Networking among Consortium members has always been an integral part of the project and it's importance for the group is without question. However, Gwen has shown us how other networks can work for us and exactly who those networks might be, from relations and friends to customers. It opened up for us so many more possibilities and everyone got a great deal out of the event. - **Andrea Cowling**



Looking for Work?

"**A Woman's Touch**" is a limited company run by Kerrie Hanafin - a former investment banker - offering painting, decorating and design services all over London and South East England.

Demand has been phenomenal since it's establishment just two months ago, and in addition to looking to hiring more female painters and decorators (*please get in touch*) Kerrie also gets a lot of enquiries regarding plastering work, electrical work and laminate flooring laying - none of which are services offered by "A Woman's Touch". Therefore if either or both of these are your trade, and you'd like some extra work, please get in touch with Kerrie either by phone on 077 969 383 10 or 020 7515 9604 or alternatively by emailing info@awomanstouch.org.uk.

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Management Committee News

This is a critical time for the WAMT Management Committee as we address the challenges of securing sustainable future funding for the organisation. We are concentrating on developing new projects and partnerships for 2004-2006. We will be presenting these to you in the next newsletter, and in advance of the AGM which will be held on December 4th. Please mark this date in your diary.

There has been change within the MC. Rachel Epton, who has been such a strong and steady force as WAMT's Chair for the last two and a half years, has left to spend more time with her beautiful daughter Naomi. Thank you Rachel, your contribution has been enormous.

We would also like to thank Shenaaz Kazi and Polly Sprenger for all the time and care that they put into the MC. We wish them the best in the future with their new jobs and projects. We value and appreciate the expertise they brought to the group.

WAMT would like to formally welcome Chris Wall to the MC. Fiona Duckworth and Michelle McLean are in the process of joining us, having attended recent meetings. Welcome to our great new staff team who have been in post since April 2003.

I am thoroughly enjoying my time on the MC, particularly the support of the intelligent, independent and strong minded women that are the MC. We are continuing to recruit new members to the MC, so if you are interested in shaping the future of Women and Manual Trades please contact us for more information, including the opportunity to observe a Committee meeting.

Best wishes to all our members, and to all those working to support women within the manual trades.

- **Annabel Hands (Acting Chair)**

Congratulations to Karen Proctor and her partner Rossi, on the birth of their new baby son Oliver Proctor.

Management Committee Members

Annabel Hands	Plumblin (Acting Chair)
Helen Welch	Carpenter (Treasurer)
Alison Medley	Painting & Decorating Lecturer at Lambeth College
Chris Wall	Academic Researcher
Fiona Duckworth	Duckworth & Shackelford Carpentry
Michelle McLean	Painter & Decorator

Current Staff

Hilary Flinders	Interim Director
Caroline Armstrong	Information/Resource Worker
Andrea Cowling	Consortium Coordinator
Louise Palmer	Project Manager
Jenny Jones	Outreach Worker
Kerry Mason	Finance/Administration Worker
Debbie Mace	Financial Management Accountant

Women Building Links Into Employment

Following on from the success of WAMT's previous employment projects, Women Building Links into Employment got off the ground in March and in only three months has given advice and guidance to over 60 unemployed women. It is funded by ESF and ALG until September 2004 to work with a total of 200 women.



Kerry Mason, Jenny Jones and Louise Palmer.(l-r)

Our new Outreach Worker, Jenny Jones (pictured with the team), was employed in April and has been on a whirlwind tour of our main partners and colleges. She's been contacting students in WEB and Lambeth Women's Workshop amongst others and visiting organisations which also support future tradeswomen like Building etc and Building Work for Women. Each woman on the project will be registered during a one to one advice and guidance session with Jenny where they can go through their options and plan how they want to move forward. We've seen carpenters, plumbers, electricians and painters and decorators so far – any manual trades are welcome. The project aims to deliver a lot of the things women need to move forward into working in the trades. Need a CSCS card? We've got Health and Safety training which can lead to an assessment. Need to know how to set up as a self-employed tradeswoman? We've got Self Employment Courses which cover business plans, self assessment and pricing and estimating. Need the confidence to make your move? Confidence and Assertiveness courses are available whether you're worried about coming back to work after a long

break, or you want to learn how to be assertive with customers who won't pay up! We have lots of other courses available, from IT to customer care – ask us for what you want and we'll see if we can arrange it. Sometimes a course isn't enough. Sometimes you just need to know that there's someone there who will support you and push you forward. Jenny and the project team are here to chat to new or training tradeswomen and help with ideas. We can also arrange for an experienced tradeswoman to pop in and have a chat with you – to give you that all-important view from the other side. Call us on 020 7251 9192 for more information.

We're developing the library at Women and Manual Trades with a communal area for tradeswomen to do research and chat to us and each other about their options. We also have computers with some great software, which can be used by women to develop websites, print business cards or type up CVs and invoices. Doing things by hand can look unprofessional, and you'll make a great first impression by

producing your paperwork on a computer. Make an appointment and come in – we'll show you how to use the software and develop a professional look. We're also looking for experienced tradeswomen to get involved in the project. We need people to run training courses from a tradeswoman's point of view. We also need people to offer some time to spend with trainee tradeswomen, answering questions and offering ideas and solutions for those difficult first years.

WAMT is running a Trade Fair on the 24th July, aimed at women who are looking for work, training or self employment in the trades.

Stands will be held by employers, Colleges and organisations providing information and support for self-employment, finding work and getting training.

If you would like to come along, have a stand or even help out on the day, we'd love to see you. Call Louise Palmer, the Project Manager, on 020 7251 9192 to chat about the day and how you can be involved.

TRADEWOMEN'S FAIR

Information and opportunities for women who are training, working or wanting to work in the trades

THURSDAY 24TH JULY

12 - 5pm

52-54 Featherstone Street
LONDON
EC1Y 8RT

**For details of the event and how to get to there
please call 020 7251 9192
or visit our website
www.wamt.org**

Invitation to Colleges in London Free Training Event on 16 October 2003

JIVE can help all construction and trade trainers, FE lecturers, department managers and college support staff to increase the number of women in their departments.

JIVE will develop action plans with your department, help you set up women-only classes and review your lesson and promotional material.

JIVE will train anyone who is directly dealing with the recruitment and training of students about giving that extra support to female candidates in non-traditional areas.

So if you know of a tutor who would like to improve their skills around issues concerning women in construction, engineering and technology or

If your department wants to improve its inspection performance in relation to diversity and equal opportunity **CALL JIVE!!**

Reserve yourself a place now!!

JIVE also provide in-house training for colleges and training centres staff development days, and other events.

Calling all Careers Advisors!!

From September 2003 **JIVE** will be able to offer training to careers advice services.

This training is designed for everyone who advises women and girls about their careers. It aims to increase the overall awareness about avenues for women in the non-traditional areas of construction, engineering, science and technology; covering the barriers women face when entering training in male dominated areas and ways of supporting women to overcome these.

You can help change the under-representation of women in these industries.

LET'S TWIST TRAINERS WANTED

Could you deliver top class staff development training to lecturers and trainers from the Construction, Engineering and Technology Sectors?

Could you inspire them to create learning environments that positively encourage and support women?

As part of the **JIVE** Partners Project, Regional Co-ordinators in England and Wales are delivering training events for learning providers and careers advice and guidance workers.

The project is looking for trainers with a good understanding of the barriers faced by women in these non-traditional areas and how to overcome them.

Training will be given.
For more information, contact Ros
Wall on 0114 225 2878 or email
r.wall@shu.ac.uk

**For JIVE events and training
contact Anna 020 7637 8265
anna@bww.org.uk**

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Building Work for Women delivers first JIVE Training for London colleges

A training programme is well under way to help London colleges and work-based learning providers increase the recruitment and retention of girls and women on construction and technology courses. Ten college lecturers and four heads of department attended a one-day course in February organised by Building Work for Women (BWW), the London partner of the national Jive project, to find practical ways of creating gender inclusive learning environments.

The training was the first external event to take place in the latest centre to be opened by Women's Education in Building (WEB) in Stratford, East London. Pat Turrell and Ros Wall, experienced 'Let's Twist' trainers, delivered and facilitated the day, introducing the Jive programme of training, support and best practice for career professionals, employers, women and girls.

The lively debate helped to identify concerns and stimulate ideas, underpinned by a powerful video demonstrating some of the challenging situations in which women can find themselves in college. Reflecting the tangible determination of the group to bring about change, strategies to deal with these issues were discussed and action plans developed.

Work is now progressing on helping colleges to set up women-only plumbing courses, the production of appropriate promotional material and the development of networks with organisations in London such as WEB, BWW and WAMT (Women and Manual Trades). Encouraged by such a positive start to the London Jive programme, the Building Work for Women team is planning a series of training events, not only for learning providers but also for careers advisers, with the next taking place from September onwards.

Build Your Future With Mentoring

JIVE partnership, a national support network for women working and studying in construction, is setting up a national mentoring programme. Mentoring is a powerful tool that can support women facing some of the difficulties and challenges of working in construction. Mentoring enables women, at whatever level they are operating at within the construction industry, to support each other in overcoming these hurdles. Womens Education In Building is the London hub for this project and offers mentoring to organisations and individuals. We hope that some of you would like to become mentors and/or mentees. This is a great opportunity for you to learn with another woman who shares your career ambitions.

As a **mentor**, you will listen, advise and guide using your valuable knowledge and experience to help another woman succeed. As a **mentee**, you are a woman who is interested in entering, is entering, or is working the construction industry and will benefit from learning from the experience of another woman.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:
Stacie Geaney
Womens Education In Building
020 8227 1000 stacieg@buildingetc.org.uk

Insight into Improving

BWW offers work placements to qualified women, assisting them to gain work and site experience. These tradeswomen are known as 'improvers'. This is the story of Noreen King.

'I've spent 18 years looking after three children. I studied for two years to achieve my NVQ Level I & II in Carpentry and Joinery at WEB Ladbroke Grove. My second year was spent on three building sites.'

'This is my first time at a joiners shop that made everything - from walls to furniture, even the floor. Admittedly 90% of it was M.D.F. and the facings was either oak, walnut etc., the work was repetitive and there was a lot of it as we were building for 56 flats.'

'Yes, I felt like a trainee but it gave me the opportunity to prove to them that not only did I understand what was needed of me, I was able to do the job asked of me and if unsure I was not afraid to ask for confirmation. Or to learn new skills. I personally don't like to make mistakes, big or small.

The first two days, 'I felt like a conveyor system and by day four I had assembled 8 double beds. In the 3 months of being there I have worked on all sizes of units including wardrobes, worked on the machines, ironing, lots and lots of sanding, wrapping and storing.' My one complaint was 'time was wasted making items that were not yet needed on site and may not be used again. Jobs were being interrupted because we needed the muscle power for moving and retrieving items for storage or site. Once finished some of these items were so heavy they required 2-4 people to carry it.'

I was 'depended on by the others to be given a job and see the job through till the end, even down to wrapping and placing on delivery truck.'

'I sometimes felt that I wasn't mucking in doing the heavy-duty work. My parenting skills and safety knowledge would overlap with certain jobs that they took for granted and personally I did not wish to end up with some of their injuries...when I contributed I did so my way - *the safe way*.'

Lunch was never long enough (30mins) and how time flies when you're busy or having fun. My muscles could tell you a story or two. The work is physical and is only telling at the end of the day.

The men were just men and no, they

were not vulgar. Being the only woman there had been a good influence on them. The language was not gross; they made an effort to be tidy and included me from day one. Which I thank them for. They were even up to date on the current affairs of the soaps on TV.'

'Even though I did not accept the ongoing position offered to me, I in no way regret the experience. They were prepared to negotiate the hours in my favour but what they



were asking of me on the whole was not beneficial to my spouse or me. A financial nightmare. But I now know I do have something to offer worthwhile, I can do it and I enjoyed it.

In addition to working, the improvers also had sessions at the Building Centre with BWW support staff. The improvers 'had bonded as a group. When we met up for our Friday sessions it was a good time to hear about each others experiences, highs and lows so we could offer support or solutions. We are all from different cultures, different age groups but am proud to see so many women who are able to do things for themselves and even for their families, under a system that is run by men.

I could talk forever about what I learnt from each person/experience. Safety first, be firm, compromise where possible and enjoy the fact that you are part of a team. -

Noreen King

BUILDING WORK FOR WOMEN

Work Placements Available for Qualified Tradeswomen

- Are you a woman painter and decorator, plumber, carpenter, bricklayer, electrician, tiler, plasterer etc.?
- Would you like to work in the construction industry?
- Do you have NVQ Level 2 qualification, ICA or equivalent?
- Would you like three months support on a work placement?

Then Building Work for Women might be your thing!

- We match you with an employer for site experience or with a sole trader for work in people's houses or offices.
- We pay a weekly allowance of £150 (*under review*) or a wage .
- We pay a childcare and travel allowance.
- We pay £500 towards your toolkit and protective clothing.
- We provide regular meetings for career development, first aid training, visit to ecological centres, etc
- We provide supervisory support.

BWW is currently recruiting for the seventh round of tradeswomen to come onto this project in September 2003.

Please ring us for an application form.

Tell your mates about this option. Join our waiting list for the eighth round from January till April 2004 if you can't make it just now.

If you know of anybody who can offer work placements to qualified women who would like that bit of extra support to get out there and find work or site experience, please contact us on 020 7637 8265

Employers will benefit from

- Supervisory support
- Training for themselves and their staff in mentoring and equal opportunities
- Opportunities to acquire site assessor qualifications
- Project promotion

The project is funded by the London Development Agency and the Learning and Skills Council.



She's in it for the cap.....

SPOTLIGHT

'Well first things first, I'm 37 and have been doing something in construction for 19 years (I know it doesn't seem possible, but I have good genes). I've been a member of the WAMT management committee for a bit more than a year ... I have all my own hair and most of my teeth and do not intend to get pregnant any time soon.'

'I was asked to leave school mid A levels, because I hadn't actually been attending for sometime. At the same time I met Morag Robson and Chris Butler of Splinter Group at a careers fair and they invited me to train

with them for 6 months. I have to say it was a fantastic experience and all these years later I still think of it and them fondly. I then went on to start a course as an optician but quickly realised that woodwork was where my talents lay, and left after 3 weeks.

In 1985 I became an apprentice with Camden Council. It involved day and block release to complete my City and Guilds as well as work placements around the borough. This lasted three years, much of which was stressful because of not being taken seriously, and constant low level harassment, but also rewarding because I met a few special guys who told me not to give up because of the arseholes. (Special thanks to Ian McDeason wherever you are).

I left Camden's building department in 1988 to become a Building Control Officer. This lasted 5 years, but the need to be creative (and be a show off) took hold and I headed off to university to study guitar making. About the same time, I reluctantly started into self employment and teaching beginners woodwork in the evenings. The

Welcome to Spotlight, where a tradeswoman tells us about their experience both in the trade, and in training, how they got started and what they have planned for the future.

majority of the classes have been women only but I cannot honestly say that I have a preference. It's a great way to meet new people and the money isn't bad.

In 1999 I went full-time, teaching NVQ carpentry and joinery but I hated the paperwork involved so I got out after a year. While in recovery from the stress I decided

to get some good country air in my lungs and took myself off to Sussex for 9 months to study forestry. It would have been brilliant if Foot and Mouth/ severe flooding hadn't ruined most of it.'

I'm now wholly self-employed as a chippy, and by and large enjoying it. But it is a hard way to earn a living because I work longer hours than if I were employed. I'd say I work an average of 60hrs/week. The worst aspect of being my own boss is that my home life suffers because I get in late and spend weekends doing paperwork. I am someone who likes to be in charge, but I could do with a business partner or at least a PA.

Until I became a member of the MC, WAMT hadn't been important to me at all! But the Training Consortium has been a great networking forum and its great to get recognition for being a

tradeswoman from like minded souls.

My advice to women entering the trades is to remember that the first few years are very poorly paid but once you become sufficiently experienced the rewards can be quite spectacular. You might even get a free baseball cap! *Written by Helen Welch*



Helen Welch is a sushi-loving, self-employed general and specialist woodworker, and Treasurer on the WAMT Management Committee.

Interested in joining the WAMT Mangement Committee? Contact us: info@wamt.org

Tradeswomen Advertising at www.wamt.org



WAMT is planning on bringing our website into the 21st century. We are eager to hear your suggestions and about any IT skills that you can contribute to its development. It is a very popular destination for women seeking information about the trades. As part of this development we would like to see more members using email for regular communication. In response to the growing opportunities provided by the Internet, we are now hoping to place business details of members on our website. We currently publish a Directory of Tradeswomen that covers the London area. These cost £5.00 and are sent by post. We have sold over a hundred this year alone, and receive many more queries from both in and outside the London area from potential customers who have visited our website.

If you would interested in placing an advertisement for your business online please get in touch with Caroline Armstrong, our Information/Resource Worker.