

MEMORIES OF WELWYN/HATFIELD U3A (J une 2007, Joan Bensley)

I am writing these for the benefit of future members of our group, and adding a few pictorial memories.

Val Fieth speaking at Our 14th Birthday celebrations



IN 1995 Val Fieth was employed by Welwyn/Hatfield Council to be in charge of a "Fun for the Over 50's" department, funded by them. She did this energetically, forming groups which people could attend at a very low charge, and arranging many outings for retired people. There was a lot for the body, but very little for the mind. So in 1995, when Val arranged a Seminar of all the activities available, she included a talk from some members of the Stevenage group of the University of the Third Age, which I attended. Shortly after, Ann Sargent (now, alas, disabled by M.S.) and myself were summoned to a meeting at the Campus with the idea of forming a U3A group. Neither of us had any knowledge of the Association, so Val contacted the National Office (which at the time was organized by Dianne Norton, literally from her front bedroom) and was sent some information, and we visited Stevenage and Harpenden groups. Having been promised total backing from the Council, we advertised and about 15 people met each week in some very odd places, like the bar of Campus West.

A Committee was formed, and we decided to meet alternately in Hatfield, in Minster House, and Campus West, in what was then a very small room. All expenses were paid by the Council, including printing.



Our 10th Birthday Celebration
Back- Doris Bullen Ann Sargent Margaret Turner Joan Bensley
Front- Mary Ruffett Philip Turner Doris Poth Olive & Peter Burrindge
Jim Millichamp