

WELWYN & HATFIELD  
**U3A**

**UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE**  
[www.u3awelhat.org.uk](http://www.u3awelhat.org.uk)  
Registered Charity Number 1019563

**NEWSLETTER May 2015 Issue 49**

The full colour version of the newsletter is on our website at  
<http://www.u3awelhat.org.uk/newsletters.html>

## Meet the Groups 2015



This year's event was held on Wednesday, 25 March at Ludwick Hall, WGC. The weather was good, and the occasion was well attended and enjoyed. Twenty-five of our 78 Groups set up displays round the hall. Particularly eye-catching were, as usual, the Architecture Group's display, with photographs of places they had



visited on a board and in an album; Family History, with mounted historic cuttings and family trees; Multimedia 2, with an array of paintings as well as woollen products; Photography, with many really excellent photos mounted on screens set up in the foyer; and





Watercolours, with John Page creating a painting before our very eyes. The Poetry Group showed a succession of poets and lines from their works appearing on a large projector screen; Mah Jong and Whist showed their cards and tiles out ready for play, while three members of the Scrabble Group were engaged in a lively game. The Tai Chi Group showed on its stall a video of Don Busolini, its leader, in Tai Chi action, as well as providing a four-minute live demonstration by seven of its members. Don gave an enthusiastic introduction to this, extolling the benefits of Tai Chi as “a form of de-stress as well as a gentle exercise”. Line Dancing too gave a live demonstration, led by Bill Sloan, who afterwards challenged the audience to join them in a Charleston; several able-bodied members rose to meet the challenge.

*Photographs of Bill Sloan leading the Line Dancing Group in a demonstration of “Red Hot Salsa”; Jean Copeland and Kate Owen with Multimedia 2's woollen products; Jan Porter, Janet Corlett and Hetty Martin engaged in a game of Scrabble; Jon Westoby showing images for the Poetry Group; Christine Hester with paintings by Multimedia 2; and one of the Photography Group's displays in the foyer – all by Tony Lammiman.*

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## From the Chairman

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**Jack Wood**

This year's AGM was held on 4<sup>th</sup> March and marked the end of my first year as your Chairman. After the usual formalities of Opening the Meeting, Apologies for Absence, Approval of the Minutes and Matters Arising from those Minutes (there were none) it was time for my Chairman's Report.

I warned everyone that I was about to run the meeting in a slightly different way from that which the Agenda indicated, and pointed out that although it was done exactly as I had asked our charming and super-efficient Secretary, Carol Mills, I had changed my mind! So I by-passed my Report, promising to make some comments later (through which they could doze off if they wished), and went straight to our

dedicated and hard-working Treasurer, Arseven Gumush for his report. After he had finished telling us that we are in a sound position financially, and saw no reason for any rise in membership subscriptions for the foreseeable future (although increased rent for Ludwick Hall may still hang over us) I reminded our audience of the enormous dedication Arseven gives to this important task, and cited, as an example, the appalling period he and Suzanne Brown (our Membership Secretary) and I shared, trying to get the Bank to verify her and my signatures. This was promised to come through in 8-10 working days, but took two-and-a-half months! Arseven had to chase after and trouble our previous Chair, Judy Grant and Membership Secretary, Tony Lammiman, to get cheques for every creditor we had, and apologise for the repeated delays. How many calls, visits, emails Arseven did at that time we'll never know. But he got there at the end, and was thanked for his dogged persistence.

Suzanne (as cheerful as ever – I don't know how she manages that!) was next to speak. She told us that over a hundred new members joined us during the last year, bringing the total (as I write) to 818, and

there was no worry about new membership – they are still pouring in. Indeed, one of the innovations that has happened since the last AGM has been a very successful slicing-off of part of the Membership Secretary's job – that is the dealing with New Members. If you're a newcomer making enquiries about joining, you will be passed on to another charming lady (I'm surrounded by them – it's a great job!), for we now have a New Members' Secretary, Jill McKinnon, and she will send you a New Member's Starter Pack. This consists of the current Programme with maps for the locations of group halls, maps of our two Wednesday venues, the current



**Arseven Gumush**

Newsletter, forms for joining, gift aiding, and voluntary skills, and, in case all that proves overwhelming – a Next of Kin card! In her first year in the job, Jill has sent out 133 Starter Packs. She also works closely with Marion Sklar, who once a term organises the New Members' Coffee Morning, and the important system of Greeters, who seek out and welcome new members at the Wednesday Meetings.

“Those that teach will learn; those that learn will teach” – that is the Mantra of the U3A, and it fulfils itself in our Study Groups. When I took office, a year ago, there were, I believe, 55 Study Groups on our list; on our latest programme leaflet, we list 64 – at least nine more in just one year. These groups, as you know, are autonomous: there are no written rules, they just get on with it. Really? Of course not: that huge number of separate activities has to be managed. And Jean Mackie and Ann Davies are the Managers. Ann couldn't be with us on the day, but Jean heroically dragged herself out of bed, where she had been nursing a dreadful cold, and managed to tell us just how the Delightful Duo had worked this past year. As soon as Jean was finished, I exercised my Chairman's authority and sent her straight back home to bed. I'm glad to say that, when last seen, she had completely recovered. I pointed out to everyone that I truly could not manage without her; not only does that lady help to co-ordinate the Groups, but she looks after and prepares the magic lantern thing



**Jean Mackie**

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(that's how much I know about it) that gives us all our pictures on Wednesdays, *as well as* being my Vice-Chairperson, and I thank her for the times she has stood in for me, both on Wednesdays and at outside events.

My report cut in again here, and I reminded everyone that there are two major attractions the U3A has to offer, of equal importance, both in their function and their management. Having heard Jean's report on the Study Groups, I then introduced the lady (another lady!) who manages a team which provides us, among other things, with the central focus of our Wednesday mornings – the Speaker: Sandy Pizzey, of

course. She gave us a short but to-the-point report and I thanked her for all the excellent work she and her team do for us.

To finish my report, such as it was, I sketched out what I'd done during the past year – not a lot really. I've given my opinion on a few tricky problems that have come up, and I've written a couple of pieces for the Newsletter, which Hazel Bell edits for us. She does a great job on this publication: there are three editions every year, and over the last year the smallest was in September, with 12 pages, and the largest in January, at a bumper 24 pages. Remember, everyone can contribute, with words and photographs, so please do help Hazel in the grand job she's doing by giving her that item of interest every so often.

But most of the time I do nothing. Why? Because we have the most wonderful collection of teams in this U3A, and it is they who really run the place. Have you ever thought, as you walk in to whichever building the Wednesday Meeting is being held, how those traffic cones got there, and the notice about the Speaker's parking place? And once you're in – and you've been ticked off the Register – you get yourself a cup of Coffee or Tea and start looking at the Advertising Boards. If you go into the main room, you're careful not to trip over the Cables, or look into the bright light of the Projector, and you sit down and look at the roll of Information Pages on the screen. And if you're a new member, with a red spot on your name-badge, you'll have been met by a Welcomer.

All of this happens so smoothly because of the dedication of between twenty and twenty-five people, unknown by many. I'm not going to name the members of the Front of House Team, the Signing-in Team, the Advertising Boards Team, the Register Signers-in, the Coffee and Tea Team, the Sound and Projection Teams, the Speaker Selection Team, and the Welcomers. I didn't name them all because the personnel change from time to time, and I'd probably have forgotten one, but we all owe to those men and women, and the leaders of their Teams, a huge debt. Without them, the Wednesday mornings could not be the pleasurable and enriching experiences that they usually are.

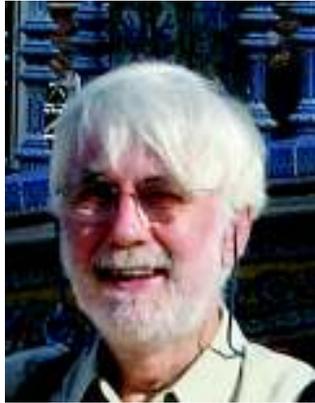


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**Tony Lammiman**

However, I did name two of our members who beaver away very hard and very successfully on our behalf. In alphabetical order, the first is **Tony Lammiman**, who designs and produces all the advertising pages that continuously inform us on the screen in that open time on a Wednesday between arrival and the beginning of business. You ask him to do a new one and you walk away, knowing that it'll be on the reel at the next meeting. It was also Tony who suggested and then project-managed (some of it at the top of a very long ladder) the purchase and installation of the new big screen at Ludwick, thereby saving the Sound and Lighting Team a lot of work putting up and taking down the old one, and providing a much better image for the people at the back of the hall. The second unsung beaver is **Roger Swaine**, who has designed and maintains undoubtedly the best U3A website of any that I have logged on to. It's attractive, informative, and accurate, and Roger himself is always ready to help; like Tony, you ask him to put something on the site and you stop thinking about it – because the following morning, there it is. These two deserve our special thanks.

By now, at the AGM, it was all over bar the shouting: we agreed on our Examiner of the Accounts for the year, and the Committee was re-elected, *en masse*, for a further year. Except two of them. These, as you know by now, are Phyl Grainge and Arseven Gumush (who wishes to pass part of his responsibilities to someone else, to free him



Roger Swaine

up on Wednesday mornings). Mike Dorrington is prepared to help Arseven, but I am determined to respect his wish that it be “just until you find someone permanent”. Phyl Grainge has also told me that she “will not let us down” and will help out until we find someone to take over. But if we do not find another permanent – and you know that I don’t mean forever – a permanent Catering Manager, we will simply have no catering – and that means no Christmas Lunch, no Garden Party, no Buffet lunch at the Christmas Quiz, and any other activity where refreshments have been supplied will be foodless and

drinkless. And if we cannot find a permanent Assistant Treasurer the Treasurer himself will have to withdraw entirely, and that means ... I’m not sure I can put this into words. I suppose the easiest thing to say is that we stop trading. What *that* means I hardly dare think ...

Yes, Mike and Phyl will be helping us out for a while, but we *must* find two people to take on the tasks of Assistant to the Treasurer and Catering Manager soon. Neither job is too onerous or difficult; both Arseven and Phyl will be happy to sit with you and tell you exactly what the job entails. Their phone numbers and email addresses are on the website: just google **welhat u3a**, or if you want to strike while the iron’s hot, ring Arseven, or Phyl, or me, now! [The numbers are below]. So far, we have had one offer from one member, who has been told the full extent of the job, and is, as I write, thinking about it. Just one person out of 818 (at the last count).

I was sorry then, and am now, to end on such a disappointingly low note, but the reality must be faced. I stressed our need for two people to take over these two jobs. I asked for volunteers from the floor, and got just one tentative hand raised. And now I ask you, reading about this, please think about it and get in touch, with **Arseven Gumush (01707 695464)**, **Phyl Grainge (01707 880443)** or me (**01707 377900**). Thank you.

*Jack Wood*

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## Group News

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### Book Group 2

Our Book Group have been on a couple of “literary” outings together this year – not as far afield as Venice which we did in 2013, but enjoyable nevertheless. After reading *The Great Lover*, a fictionalised account of five years in the life of the poet Rupert Brooke, we went to The Orchard which is a tea room just outside Cambridge where Brooke lodged for a while. A pleasant lunch under the trees and then a walk along the river made us imagine we were retracing his footsteps!

Our November book was Vera Brittain's *Testament of Youth*, so when the film was released in January we went together to the preview and enjoyed the after-film discussion with Shirley Williams. I don't, however, think we're contemplating following January's *Unlikely Pilgrimage* of Harold Fry by walking the 600 miles from Kingsbridge to Berwick! I will let you know.

*Ann Davies*



**Book Group 2 enjoying a 'post-Christmas' lunch in February  
at The Waggoners**

## Creative Writing Group

Again, following the AGM, members of the **Creative Writing Group** read samples of their work. Harry Smith, Ann Higgs and Jean Vine read stories, the last two deeply moving about aspects of ageing, interspersed for comic relief by Harry's limericks. Jenny Roden read a poem in four parts, "If Only ...". We print one part.

Creaking joints – knees bending, the music of popcorn cracking!  
Mobility restricted as the years advance.  
Pace slows, an arm, a stick, a frame  
All these aids to support independence  
Stamina hampered as energy declines.  
Wrinkled skin like elephant hide  
    – or the shallow furrows of laughter lines?  
Every crease defined.  
Life and weathering have taken their toll and fought against the  
    creams applied.  
Ageing gracefully – an attribute to heredity, lifestyle or self-care?  
*If only* our outer shell and skeleton reflected the youth within!

## Exploring London Groups

The original group of Exploring London has been running for five years (now known as Group 1, with 60 members) and continues its programme of trips to interesting parts of the capital. In the autumn term we visited The Royal Hospital Chelsea for a guided tour led by a very informative and humorous Chelsea Pensioner, and in the spring term we had tours of Dr Johnson's House and the impressive Mansion House in the city. The group is now looking forward, in what hopefully will be better weather this summer term, to some outdoor guided walks around the nooks and crannies of London.

Due to the great popularity of Exploring London 1, Group 2 has now been formed, with 67 members. Our first outing was to Spitalfields and Whitechapel on 13 March, with a very informative and entertaining blue badge guide. With so much to see in London we hope to have up to six outings a year, perhaps to include some of those previously organised by Dennis and Bridget.

*Dennis Edwards, Bridget Durham, John and Suzanne Brown*



**Exploring London Group 1 at Mansion House. *Photograph by Tony Lammiman***

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**Group 2 at Christ Church Spitalfields Primary School in Brick Lane  
*Photograph by John Brown***

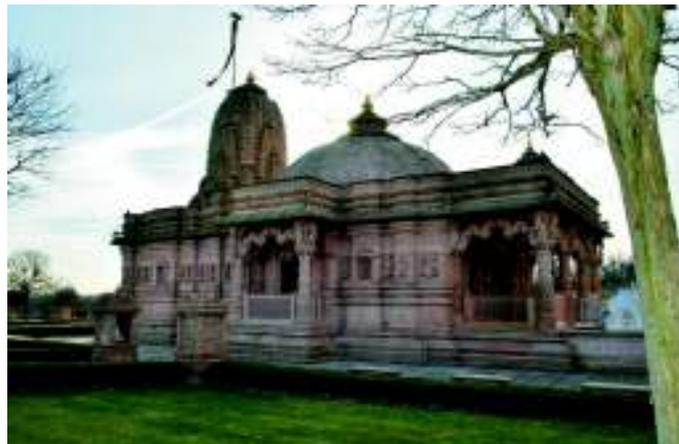
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## Photography Group

Among their Out and About trips last term, in January members of the Photography Group went to Tring Natural History Museum to see the exhibition of the winners of the 2014 Wildlife Photographer of the Year competition. Afterwards they had lunch in the Grand Junction public house overlooking the Grand Union Canal and Marsworth canal workshop, then walked along the towpath to get shots of a narrowboat coming under the bridge. *Photograph by Anita Hoyle.*



In February they visited the beautiful Temple at The Oshwal Centre at Northaw. The outside is covered with 5,759 carvings which were carved in India by over 450 craftsmen and then shipped to England,





where they were assembled within fifteen months. There are many statues and carvings around the temple and there is a booklet which gives their meaning. Everything is clean, peaceful and serene.

*Photographs by Jane Westoby*

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### **Open Garden Squares Weekend (OGSW)**

OGSW is an initiative of the London Parks & Gardens Trust (LPGT), which aims to raise awareness of the beauty and diversity of London's historic and other garden spaces and draw attention to the great contribution that they make to the life and work of the capital and the importance of their conservation.

The event allows access on one weekend each year to private green spaces and public gardens in London that are not generally known. The aim is to create a celebratory atmosphere, encouraging people to think positively about the areas in which they live, work and visit. The event is mainly organised by volunteers, who are knowledgeable and full of enthusiasm.

Now in its 16<sup>th</sup> year it has annually attracted an average 7000 ticket buyers who, in 2014, had the opportunity of choosing from over two hundred gardens, including a Skip Garden, Eaton Square and the garden of No.10 Downing Street.



Did you know there is a garden tucked in between the Globe and Tate Modern which has fruit-laden gooseberry and currant bushes and a pond teeming with wildlife, or one in the Barbican with a flower meadow; or that there are wonderful vegetable beds growing 25 different varieties of vegetables and edible flowers on the sixth floor roof terrace in the City of London ?

John and I went last year for the first time and found it fascinating. This year the event will take place on 13 & 14 June. LPT send a booklet before the weekend so you can plan where you wish to visit. We visited so many interesting and delightful gardens, it was a real eye-opener to the secret gardens London has. We will probably make a full weekend of it this year, it was so enjoyable!

Tickets give access for both days and include the guide book. They cost £10.00 or £12.00 on the day, with concession for NT members.

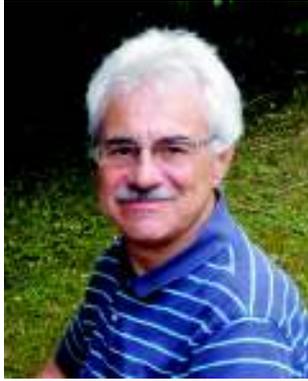
Interested ? Apply online for tickets on [www.opensquares.org](http://www.opensquares.org).

*Suzanne Brown*

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### **Adult Entertainment in Uruguay ...**

... but not of the kind you may imagine ... the headline, in fact, refers to the highly successful activities of the U3A in Uruguay, the smallest South American country (pop: 3.5M), since 1983. It is a fact that educational activities for adults can often be so entertaining that, for some, they become addictive. This is the story of how such



**Raúl Curiel**

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stimulating undertakings take root in a small and distant nation.

It was back in 1982 that recently retired teacher and Educational Inspector Mrs. Alondra Bayley de Algazi, a family friend, inspired by the ideas coming out of France about the potential for adult (“third age”) education, set about establishing a branch of the University of the Third Age in Montevideo. Such a concept was then very novel, and the idea of adult education was one generally thought to be suitable only for countries in the – so-called – “First World”; but with one of the largest proportions of retired and well-educated adults in South America, Uruguay proved to be a very fertile ground for the implantation of this idea. It was also timely, for life expectancy was on the rise and mature adults were more than ready for the kind of educational stimulus that such an institution would provide.

So in 1983 steps were taken to start some courses. Initially, students were few and uncertain about what would be offered and would be expected of them. The Uruguayan U3A (in Spanish: “UNI 3”) chose the Geneva model, where the institution is linked to a University and the tutors are professional instructors. Given the generally communitarian nature of Uruguayan society, tutors have from the outset given their services on a voluntary (unpaid) basis, and the Montevideo City Council made available to the nascent institution a redundant building, rent-free, in which to hold its meetings. Membership fees cover running and administration expenses, but the emphasis has been from the outset on making the institution available to the broadest number of willing adults, so this fee has been kept very low.

Students need only to show willingness to attend and commitment to study; no prior university education is required, and no degrees or certificates are issued. The UNI 3 has been a stunning success. In Uruguay, it has now grown to have 8500 students in 22 towns and cities across the country, and has the support of a team of over 500 professional tutors. From Uruguay, the UNI 3 has expanded

throughout South America, and in 1995, the RUA (Open Universities Network) was formed with branches in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, México, Perú, Paraguay and Venezuela.

I speak of this wonderful institution with a degree of personal appreciation, because my mother was a founder member of the Montevideo chapter, and throughout the years it has become an increasingly important part of her life. UNI 3 has stimulated her mind, taught her new skills and given her a new set of friends and a new social environment. It is wonderful to witness the mutual solidarity, even the affection that these older students have for each other, and the respect and consideration that the – usually much younger – tutors display towards them.

The UNI 3 has become an acknowledged institution in Uruguay embodying the increasing expectations of the mature adult for the full realisation of his or her potential.

*Raúl Curiel*

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*The eleventh in our series of profiles of distinguished Welwyn Hatfield U3A members features ...*

## **Tony Lammiman**



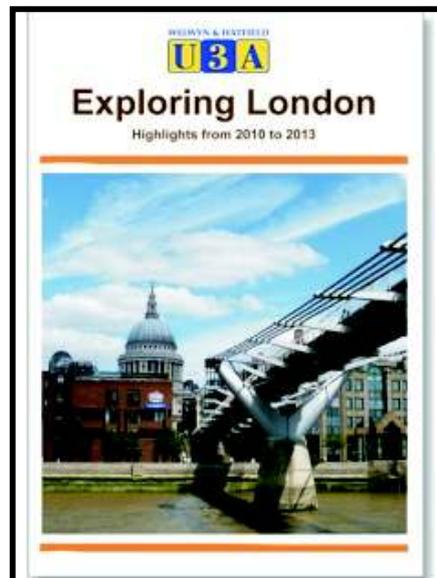
Tony was born in Hull, moved to Luton at the age of four, ten years later moved to Welwyn Garden City and has lived here ever since. He attended Howard School, then became an apprentice letterpress blockmaker of Kestrons Ltd when it was a subsidiary of Broadwater Press. Kestrons left Broadwater Press and moved to Mill Green Camp. In 1960 he joined his father's company in Hertford. He met and married Joan, a WGC girl; they settled in WGC, and had two sons.

Tony's career followed the path of printing development in the 20th century, from letterpress to lithographic platemaking; then he retired in 2008 when computerisation was taking over the print industry.

In 2009 he joined U3A – or, one might say, plunged in. His first participation was taking over responsibility for the notice boards displayed at the Wednesday meetings. They were then in a somewhat scruffy state, carried between the venues in bags. Tony used his printing expertise to produce smarter, visually more appealing notices, some laminated, and took charge of bringing them to each meeting and setting them up. He was given the title, “Front of House Manager”, and co-opted onto the committee. Later his front-of-house activities extended to providing the slides shown on screen before the Wednesday meetings. Most recently he has procured and set up a new drop screen at Ludwick Hall.

He joined the Photography Group on first joining U3A, and has remained an enthusiastic member ever since: many of his photographs of our social occasions – parties, lunches and travels – have adorned the newsletter. He participates in most of the active, travelling and visiting groups: Arts Appreciation, Travel Group and Exploring London. From his own photographs he produced a splendid, 16-page, full-colour booklet, *Exploring London: Highlights from 2010 to 2013*, as a record of those trips and a tribute to their organisers. In more sedentary mode he also belongs to the Canasta Group and attends most Wednesday morning talks. He served for two years as our membership secretary; at the end of his term of office, it was found necessary to split the job into two, a second officer to deal with New Members, so heavy was the workload.

Tony is generous with his time and energy to other organisations too. He has been



a regular driver for the Isabel Hospice. He and his wife, Joan go on monthly walks with the East & North Herts branch of the NHS Retirement Fellowship.

Certainly the tribute paid to him by the Chairman at the March 2015 AGM, as “an unsung beaver who beavers away very hard and very successfully on our behalf, and deserves our special thanks,” was well merited.

*Hazel Bell*

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## Summer 2015 – Wednesday meetings

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*Doors open at 9.45; tea and coffee are served from 10.00 to 10.30 a.m.; the talks start promptly at 10.45 a.m.*

### APRIL

*22, Breaks Manor, Hatfield*

**Bob Redman: ‘The Golden Years of Elstree Film Studios’**

Bob will describe one hundred years of film-making in Elstree and Boreham Wood, and will bring the story up to date, as the Studios are now busier than they have been for many years. We will hear how ‘Elstree Film Heritage’ was formed and the work it does to protect and promote the home of British film and television.

*29, Ludwick Family Centre, Welwyn Garden City*

**Richard Thomas: ‘A Day in the Life of a Thames Tug Boat’**

### MAY

*6, Hatfield*

**Peter Parry: ‘Remap’**

Remap use their ingenuity and skills to design and make equipment, aids and devices to help people of all ages with disabilities to achieve some independence in their lives – at home, school or in the workplace, or to enjoy leisure opportunities previously closed to them.

*13, WGC*

**Julie Moore: ‘Farmers and Farming in late 19<sup>th</sup> Century Hertfordshire’**

Dr Julie Moore, who has lived in Hertfordshire for most of her life and in WGC for almost forty years, is a Researcher and Deputy Director of the Heritage Hub, a Centre for Regional and Local History, at the University of Hertfordshire. We will look at farming in Hertfordshire at a time of great social change in the county.

*20, Hatfield*

**Steve and Carol Robson: ‘Stories with folk music and songs’**

‘Fool’s Gold’ is a duo of husband and wife musicians from County Durham who are visiting this area and who play a wide variety of instruments. This is a musical presentation of folk songs with the story, history and characters that created the songs.

*27, WGC*

**Brendan Larvor: ‘Pigs on trial’**

Dr Brendan Larvor is Head of Philosophy at the University of Hertfordshire. Not many centuries ago, sane, rational people would put animals on trial as if they were human beings – it must have made sense to the people at the time. This tells us something about the law and also about the notions of rationality and history.

**JUNE**

*3, Hatfield*

**Mike Berwick: ‘SOS Wildlife (Wildlife Aid Foundation)’**

Dr Mike Berwick – as seen on TV – Channel 5.

*10, WGC*

**Bill Davies: ‘On and Off the Footplate’**

Aspects of Bill’s railway career 1964 – 2007.

*17, Hatfield*

**Bob Fenton: ‘Rights of Way and Footpaths in Hertfordshire’**

Bob Fenton is the Countryside Access Team Leader at Herts County Council. He has worked with the Rights of Way Service for over eleven years.

24, WGC

**Louise Reed: ‘Deaf but not daft - lip reading and other facilities’**

We welcome Louise back, this time as herself and not as Mrs Pankhurst. When not giving talks she teaches lip reading in Hertford and Bishop’s Stortford and is interested in social history.

**JULY**

1, Hatfield

**Alistair Hodgson: ‘The de Havilland Aircraft Museum’**

Alistair is a volunteer and Team Leader of the restoration of the Museum’s de Havilland Sea Venom. We will hear about the history and work of the museum and a brief introduction to some of the exhibits.

8, WGC

**Graham Laurie: ‘The Flying Doctor and the \$20 Note’**

Graham is an ex-RAF Pilot and Squadron Leader who, during his service, flew members of the Royal Family and Senior Government Ministers.

**15 July, 2-4 pm Garden Party – Breaks Manor, Hatfield**

**Next term starts 9 September, WGC**

**U3A Welwyn-Hatfield NEWSLETTER**

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