



UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE
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NEWSLETTER Autumn 2019 Issue 62

A most entertaining Garden Party



Thankfully the weather was kind to us again this year for our garden party at Breaks Manor on 17 July, and around a hundred of us were able to sit outside on our garden chairs to enjoy chatting, drinking and eating just a little bit! As usual people were very generous with their food donations so the tables were groaning with tasty titbits.

To start the proceedings off with a flourish at 2 o/c, Tony Tutton did another of his famous light-hearted quizzes. There were three rounds of ten questions – two teams scored the grand total of 25 points – well done! It was all for the glory of winning this time, as there were no prizes!!!

After eating our fill we had some live musical entertainment. Our newly formed ukulele group joined up with sixteen members of the UkeRhythmics – an established group from Dacorum U3A. They were all dressed in brightly coloured summer clothes (yes, the

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U3A Welwyn-Hatfield NEWSLETTER

Published three times yearly, in Spring, Summer and Autumn.

Edited by Hazel K. Bell

Back issues from No. 37 to date
plus cumulative index from issue No. 1 to date
are available on the Website at

<http://www.u3awelhat.org.uk/newsletters.html>

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Printed by Triographics Printers Ltd
121 London Road, Knebworth, SG3 6EX

Copydate for the Spring 2020 issue is 8 December 2019.
Send copy and photographs (as jpgs) to hkb@aidanbell.com



men too) and all looked as if they thoroughly enjoyed performing for us. They played a variety of well known songs which made our feet tap, our heads nod in time to the music and we also tried to join in with the singing – when we remembered the lyrics! We went from "Bring me Sunshine" through to "Dedicated Follower of Fashion" via "We'll Meet Again", and lots more good songs. It was fun and very enjoyable indeed. I saw very many smiley happy faces.

Thanks go to Tony for organising the quiz and for inviting the Ukulele band. It was a great addition to our party. Thanks to everyone who helped set up and clear up. What an uplifting end to another superb year for our U3A!

Ann Davies
Photos by Peter Fox

Summer Dance

It's said (or rather sung) that "There ain't no cure for the Summertime Blues", but about 120 of us would beg to differ after enjoying another hugely successful dance courtesy of our own Tony Tutton and his band, The Beaucrees, at Ludwick Hall on Saturday 22 June.

Most of us managed to "Move It" and some of us were "Shakin' All Over". When we needed refuelling it was not with "American Pie" but with excellent fish and chips. Then we were back on the floor again,



giving it “All or Nothing” – all, mostly. And when Tony led us in “You’ll Never Walk Alone” I, for one, can say “I’m a Believer”.

At the end of the evening there may not have been “Dancing in the Streets” but there was much cheerful chatter as we made our way home, all in need of rest and recuperation. The next morning, I doubt many of us felt “Glad All Over”! Even so, we’re all looking forward to the next time (the Christmas Dance, on 23 November – if you haven’t booked your tickets already, talk to Tony about getting on the reserve list).

Thanks are due to The Beaucrees for such excellent entertainment, and to all those whose hard work made the event so enjoyable. “Oh What a Night!”

Jill Longman

Herts Network of U3As

The Herts Network is a group of 40+ U3As from across Hertfordshire and into Beds and Bucks. It is an independent body that is separate from our U3A and those other U3As it serves. It is also a separate body from the Third Age Trust, which is a National Body overseeing the legal running of all U3As.

Herts Network operates through a voluntary Executive Committee. We have one representative on that committee from our U3A: Penny Barratt. The new Chair of Herts Network is Barbara Cordina.

The Committee meets several times a year and discusses legal and strategic matters raised by U3As as well as arranging social events and learning activities for members. They also organize and run three meetings a year for representatives from all U3As in Hertfordshire to attend. This gives U3As the opportunity to communicate widely with fellow members, discuss policy and practice and share ideas. There is also an update from our trustee on the Third Age Trust who will share information on legal matters from the Charity Commission. There is a plan to introduce a Newsletter in the near future.

Several social and learning events are planned. All events are held in Woolmer Green Village Hall, SG3 6XA. Dates and details are regularly updated on the Herts Network website –

<https://u3asites.org.uk/hertsnetworkofu3as/home>

Forthcoming events are –

Study Day – Wednesday 25 September: Our Environment: Take Care of the Earth and she will Take Care of You. Charge £12 includes buffet lunch and tea/coffee. Booking form can be accessed on our website.

Bridge Competition – Friday 11 October

Quiz – Friday 25 October

Notes from the Chair

By the time you read this Newsletter, I will have been in the role for six months. The principle attribute that I have learnt about Welwyn Hatfield U3A is the efficiency in the manner it is organised.

Systems have been built up from many years ago such as the selection of speakers to visit us and the coordination that takes place between the groups.

Our Committee Meetings include robust discussion on a wide range of issues, but suggestions from members for us to discuss, examine, promote and implement are always welcome.

It is no easy task to arrange speakers, and credit is due to our team for preparing a programme that now sees us booked up fully for the next two terms.

Unfortunately, at Ludwick Hall recently a speaker did not arrive until about an hour after he was expected, by which time nearly all of those attending had left. He got lost somewhere between the motorway system and Ludwick Hall. We have now booked him for the Summer Term in 2020, and will make sure he knows the way to the venue. We tried to play a DVD to cover the unexpected void which, regrettably, was not successful because there was a fault on our sound cable. We have now purchased more DVDs, so we will be able to overcome such a difficulty in future. Our membership numbers continue to grow, together with suggestions for groups. One potential group still in its embryo stage is Welsh. Before a group can become under the auspices of the U3A it has to have at least six potential members.



One of our newest groups is the Ukulele Group. Those members played very well for us during the garden party at The Breaks. A massive thank you to Tony Tutton who organised the quiz and the entertainment that day, particularly for his invitation to members of the Dacorum U3A Ukulele Group who played some wonderful music. Their experience of playing together showed; until then I was unaware that there were instruments such as bass and lead ukuleles. I'm sure our beginners' Uke group will strive to emulate Dacorum U3A – my best wishes to them to achieve it.

My thanks to Penny Barratt who has slotted into the role of our representative on Herts Network which includes U3As stretching from Bedford to Lea Valley and from Bishops Stortford to Tring. They all have their own various characteristics, which leads me to wonder what would be the principle characteristic that we could identify with our U3A? Anyway, watch out for Notices from Penny when opportunities arise for us to participate in social events with other U3As in the Herts Network area.

As usual, finance is never far from discussions at Committee, and I will be attending (along with another member of our Committee) a Finance Workshop to be held in Colchester in September, the significant parts of which will be reported to you in due course.

Our subscriptions for next year will also be considered in September; we do not know yet how this will be impacted by any rent increases that we may have to pay, and any potential implications that may come out of the Finance Workshop in September.

Enjoy the Autumn Term!

Richard Griffiths

Group News

Architecture

Our meetings this year have ranged from the 1920s High and Over house near Amersham to bridge-building in northern Norway before the winter storms set in, constructing a skyscraper on a tiny footprint in New York, and suitable accommodation for living on Mars.

But on 17 July the group went back in time, to Ely, where in 673 a monastery was founded by St Etheldreda, the wife of a Northumbrian king. Muddy Eel Island's remoteness, a mere 20 metres above the marshes of the surrounding fens, made it a very suitable site for a monastery; it flourished for 200 years before being destroyed by the Danes. Then in 970 it was refounded under the Benedictines before becoming a focus in 1071 under Hereward the Wake of English resistance to the Norman Conquest.





Visible for miles around, the cathedral is known locally as ‘The Ship of the Fens’. It is highly regarded by historians and architects all over the world, and is the only UK building to be listed as one of the ‘Seven Wonders of the Middle Ages’.

The present structure dates from 1081 and incorporates both Romanesque and Norman features. Most of the stone used in its construction comes from Northamptonshire (bought from Peterborough Abbey for 8000 eels a year), with some decoration of Purbeck marble.

The nave is the fourth longest in Britain. Above it is an almost unique 14th-century octagonal lantern tower (the only other one in the country is on Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral, built in the 1960s) with coloured panels designed by George Gilbert Scott as his first cathedral commission. However, the octagon came about only because the ground beneath the cathedral was found to be too soft to support the original tower. Further back is the Lady Chapel, completed in 1349 and the largest of its kind in the UK.

At the entrance of the cathedral is what looks like a tiled floor but is in fact a labyrinth that was installed in the 19th century and is the same distance as the height of the ceiling above. Walking a labyrinth is an ancient spiritual exercise, whose twists and turns mirror the journey of life, with God at its centre.

A striking modern addition on the left of the main entrance is a sculpture called 'The Way of Life' made by Jonathan Clarke in 2001 and specially commissioned for the millennium. It is formed of sand-cast aluminium and has nine sections, each differently jointed. To reflect the journey of faith, its path is irregular and unpredictable; the surface texture and colour vary too, while on the top arm is a minute human figure, perhaps a person who is also on the journey.

Dee Thomas
Photos by Michael Nicolas

Book Group (2)

Recommends – *The Essex Serpent* by Sarah Perry

The Essex Serpent was our last book of term, and I'm inclined to say that we saved the best till last – though not everybody would agree. Sarah Perry's second novel, it was published in 2016 and named Waterstone's Book of the Year.

Its 440 pages are dense with character, plot and ideas, making it difficult to review in 350 words – but here goes! It's about medical advance, love and friendship, science and faith, pain and pleasure.

In 1893 London paleontology is the talk of the town, and in Aldwinter, a village between the Essex marshes and the Blackwater estuary, the reappearance of the mythical Essex Serpent is terrorising the community. When Cora, relieved to be widowed, leaves London, with her son and companion, for the wilds of Essex, she's intrigued by rumours of the monster. She's a fan of Mary Anning and, 'never sure of the difference between thinking and believing', she wants to believe in the possibility of a living Ichthyosaurus.

Soon after her arrival, she's introduced to William Ransome, Aldwinter's rector. For her the Serpent represents the opening up of her world, and for him it's a nuisance. She's excited by science. He believes science has failed his parishioners – 'when people lose the security of religion they begin to invent demons.'

They're not alone: this novel is peopled with children, friends, unrequited love. There's the London problem of slum renting and living, and the challenge of persuading privilege to act outside of its own interests. But it's the central relationship that argues the existential questions. And we wonder, as we read, 'who will blow out the other's candle first?'

Unusually, most of us liked everybody in this book, although one or two weren't so sure about Cora – and I won't say what their reservations were. A few in the group felt that this is a book about the end of hope. Discuss!

That's the thing – whether you love it (and I do) or don't, this novel gives you plenty to talk about, so – highly recommended.

Carol Bush

Exploring London Group 3

The first of our two trips this term was in early June to **Tower Bridge**, where we were treated to a comprehensive tour by a very knowledgeable guide. We saw a short film about the history of the bridge and then visited the upper walkway which has a glass see-through floor (not for the faint-hearted!). Though the area was thronged with tourists, we were able to see the internal workings of how the bridge is operated, which happens on most days. Surprisingly enough there is no charge to the boat owner for raising the bridge.



Tower Bridge *photo by Tony Dodd*



The Group on Temple Place staircase *photo by Alan Green*

We then crossed the river and walked down to the Engine Room, resplendent with very large boilers, which used to be fired by coal and have since been lovingly restored.

We repaired for lunch to a Turkish restaurant in St Katharine's Docks, which was very good and also had a great view of the area and the comings and goings. Afterwards, we watched the lock gates opening, and some very expensive yachts being "re-positioned". Then, as we knew the bridge was being raised that afternoon, we wandered back to take pictures and admire the scenery.

Our second trip in Mid-July was in two parts. First, we had a guided tour of the **Temple Church** in Middle Temple, near the Law Courts, between the Strand and Embankment. This is a fascinating building first built in the 12th century. It contains many artefacts and statues and a story board giving the full history. We were treated to a 30-minute talk about the church, and the guide then answered our questions, with infinite patience.

We enjoyed a picnic lunch, discovering many public gardens and flower beds amongst the lawyers' chambers and offices before a private tour of Two Temple Place, near the Embankment, which was

the office of Lord Astor. This building was built as offices in 1895 and never used as a private residence, but the best materials were used for everything and it is still in very good condition, with lots of amazing wood panelling and decorations. Several historical and other dramas have been filmed in the various rooms.

Our guide gave us a comprehensive tour of both floors, including a magnificent staircase, and explained the history of the various owners after the Astors. It is now owned by a charitable trust and is open only for two days of the year for private tours. We felt privileged.

Tony Dodd

Photography

The photographic group continues to attract new members, meeting twice monthly to discuss techniques on taking images, help with using members' cameras, and critique images taken by members of the group. Similarly we look at examples of images on the web that support a topic we are discussing. Sometimes we pick up issues with online images and consider how we would have improved them – or just deleted them as rubbish !!

This term a number of members gave presentations that covered:



**"Leading lines"
by Peter Fox.
The path leads
your eyes into the
image, then
around the
garden.**

Composition, such as how images could have been improved by moving to a different spot to take the image, giving it a different perspective or cropping images differently from how it was taken in the camera;

Conversion on the computer / tablet to Monochrome, showing how this can be enhanced by changing the way individual colours (red, blue, etc.) get converted to shades of black. This was using a free application available on the web;

Leading lines and the way your eye is taken into and around an image;

Video creation and editing using the standard Microsoft included application that comes with Windows 10 etc., using both stills and video clips;



**"Boat reflections
at sunrise"
by Henry Brzeski
Original colour
image**

**Post-processed black
and white version**



**Elm Farm Hotel
lake, Horsham St.
Faith, Norfolk:
Heron by Alan
Green
an example of
panning**



Selection, Renaming and Renumbering images so that they appear in a given order when showing friends and family;

The technique of *Panning* – sweeping the camera in a horizontal arc while keeping the subject in the viewfinder *and* in focus. This conveys the impression of movement while blurring the background.

In addition, after a coffee break we always politely (!) critique each other's images to help us improve the final picture.

Over the summer break members have a list of topics to try and photograph as their interpretation – i.e. Curves, Door knobs, After the rain.

Peter Fox

Travel/Holidays

*Return to Cantabria – The delights of Cantabria and Green Spain
11-16 May 2019*

For some of us this was a welcome return to a region we had visited in 2015: for others it was an introduction to this part of Spain. We were to stay at the same hotel in the same town and even to have the same tour guide we had before. But the itinerary was to be different, with so much to be discovered. On arrival at the Hotel Olimpo in the little town of Playa de Isla we had a short time to explore or relax before dinner. Food at the hotel was good, with four-course dinners with plenty of wine, and a range of choices at breakfast.

Day 1 Our first full day was to be at leisure, which afforded us time for relaxation and to explore the town. The hotel is situated on a rocky promontory surrounded by sandy beaches and the town itself is surrounded by green hills and countryside (see photo on right). Our guide, Paul, led us on a walk to the end of the town, where some of us headed for the beach where paddling was undertaken. (Had to be done!) There was a cool, stiff breeze so we needed to seek some shelter. Some people headed up the hill in the direction of the church and the old village centre, which made a pleasant walk. About mid-afternoon I made my way back to the hotel and there



joined the group of “readers” sitting on the sun terrace. By now it was warm and the temptation to just sit in the sun was irresistible; gradually the group grew. There were a few red faces by evening.

Day 2 Our first excursion was to the **Cabárceno Natural Park**, where we spent all day. The park has over a hundred species of animals and covers an area of more than 750 hectares. It is set in a landscape which was a former mineral mining area and this karst landscape made a perfect natural-looking setting for the animals. They were in huge enclosures which we visited by coach. None of us was quite prepared for the experience; the landscape and panoramic views were literally awesome. After stopping briefly at the entrance to see some rhinos, we went on to see the gorillas, lazily swinging in their hammocks in their indoor area. This did give us a really good close-up of these creatures. On the other side of the road were the tigers in a deeply sunken area. Next stop was for the Brown Bears – all sixty of them! When we arrived they were looking quite active. We soon discovered that it was nearly feeding time. A white van with covered



trailer came in and started to drive in ever-decreasing circles while dropping the food to the animals. First they had meat, then fruit and then bread. We watched anxiously while some of the little ones climbed down from the rocks to get their share. But the keepers seemed to be vigilant in ensuring they were all fed.

After a brief stop to look at sleepy lions we made our way to the elephant area and the nearby cable car. We took the first cable car and had an aerial view of the elephants, looking like something out of a Noah's Ark as we were soon quite high above them (see photo on left). There was a cable-car system with stops on the way. At one

stop we had a 360 degree view of the countryside all round with the sea in the background. It was quite spectacular. We then travelled overhead and saw hippos and many of the park's other attractions. After this tour it was time for lunch near the venue for the demonstration of the birds of prey. We had a brief lunch stop and wandered up to see the graceful giraffes nearby before taking our places for the demonstration. This took place in a tiered seating area and, by this time, it was becoming very warm in the sun. The show was all in Spanish but the birds spoke for themselves. There were many kites, eagles, vultures, buzzards and a falcon who all flew low over our heads thrilling us with their flying techniques. This rounded off our afternoon and sent us off feeling very impressed by the sights we had witnessed and the beauty of the surroundings for the animals.

Day 3 This was to be a day when we ventured further afield into the La Rioja region. We made our way to Logroño, the capital of the area, where we had lunch and time to explore this town. Several of us made our way to the nearest Tapas bar, where we could sample some of the local delicacies. After lunch many of wandered to the river at the heart

of the town and a pleasant walk. Later in the afternoon we made our way to the Marqués de Riscal winery in Elciego and founded in 1858. This was one of the oldest Rioja wineries and therefore an interesting place for a guided tour. The newer part of the establishment was a spectacular building, now a luxury hotel, designed by Frank Gehry, who designed the Guggenheim museum in Bilbao. It was a stunning building and I particularly liked the colours used in the roof – definitely pink! (See photo below.) A visit of this sort wouldn't be complete without a wine-tasting and this was duly accomplished. So a slightly sleepy return journey to the hotel!

Day 4 On this day we went to nearby L'Escala to visit the Mingo Anchovy Factory. This was quite a surprise to us all as it was a small enterprise with much of the work done by some twelve women who skilfully and cheerfully de-boned and de-scaled the tiny anchovies. It was painstaking work and they worked at some speed. Of course we had to sample the produce. I am very fond of anchovies and these were for quite a specialist market. We were surprised to learn that none of their produce was exported, but most of us came away with little jars to take home. Next came a coffee stop on a sunny esplanade in Santona enjoying the view and the weather before heading off to lunch, included in the trip, at the La Lonja Restaurant. We weren't sure what to expect – but this was a feast! There was fish paté followed



by tuna and potato soup (delicious). I thought that was the meal; but it was followed by a plate of sardines and salad. Most of us were prepared to forgo dessert but next appeared delicious-looking mille-feuille pastries filled with cream. Just as well the afternoon was “at leisure”! So we watched the fishing boats unload in the harbour for a while and headed back to base. A swimming venture was proposed and a few brave souls did participate, impressing us with their fortitude (or was it foolhardiness?) in the cold sea. We were a little fazed by the prospect of the Gala dinner on this evening after the lunch we had but, brave souls, we rose to the challenge! The hotel really did provide an excellent dinner and, this being our last evening, we did justice to it.

Day 5 As we were flying home in the late afternoon, this afforded us a full day in Bilbao. First we visited the Ria de Bilbao Maritime Museum, which provided insights into the history and tradition of the Bilbao Estuary and charted its development and regeneration in recent years after a devastating flood in 1983. This left us time to explore further, and several of us visited or revisited the Guggenheim Museum. The terrace café was a lovely spot for lunch and many of the party gravitated here. In the afternoon we had a planned river cruise which allowed us to view Bilbao from a different perspective (see

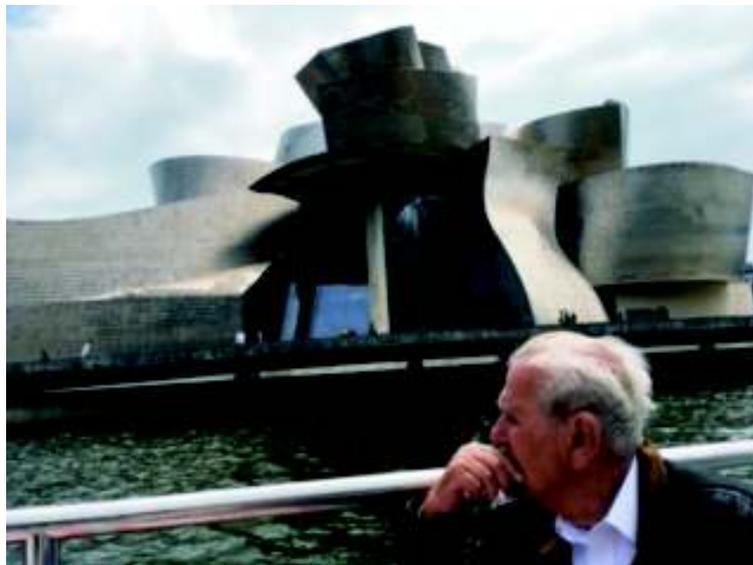


photo below). After another full day it was time to head for the airport and our return home, feeling relaxed and rejuvenated after a most enjoyable tour.

Once again huge thanks are due to our organisers, Jean Davis, Kathy Dugan and Tony Bristow, who organise everything so well. So ... we look forward to the next one!

Text and photos by Pamela Williams

Here are the plans for the Travel Group next year, together with the dates when application forms will be available, and the reference numbers on the Tailored Travel website where you can view the details.

U3A Holiday Dates 2020

Prague 7.5.20 - 11.5.20 available from 18.9.19, ref. welu203

Isle of Wight 6.7.20 - 10.7.20 available from 30.10.19, ref welu201

Northern Ireland 5.10.20-9.10.20 available from 15.1.20, ref welu202



The twenty-first in our series of profiles of distinguished Welwyn Hatfield U3A members features ...

Pamela Williams

Pamela Rodway was a “Brocket Babe”, born at Brocket Hall in the post-war period when it was still used as a maternity hospital. Her education at a North London Grammar School was just the first instalment in a lifelong love of learning. While at school she was much involved with Guiding, gang shows and AmDram. On leaving school she pursued evening classes in secretarial subjects, English A Level and cookery. Then in 1967 she entered Teacher Training College (special subject English) with a view to teaching in primary schools. During the phase of primary teaching she studied as an external student for an LRAM in Speech and Drama. Later, during a career break, Pamela was to take an English/History degree at Hatfield (then) Poly and gained a BA(Hons) in 1983. After retirement, she took a course in Advanced French conversation for three years at evening classes.

Meanwhile her career progressed from secretarial work at the London University Institute of Education to teaching at Welham Green and St Albans (primary), Waltham Cross and Bishop's Hatfield (secondary). There she taught English and Drama for 24 years, directing drama productions and organising theatre and travel trips, finally becoming head of the Creative Arts Faculty. During this time she also worked as an examiner for GCSE Drama, and mentored graduates for the Central School of Drama. In the late '80s she was seconded to County Hall as Advisory Teacher for Drama for Hertfordshire.

Meanwhile, too, her personal life was also dramatic and literary. Her tutor at college in the '60s was Chair of the Poetry Society, and she became involved in the North London Poetry scene. She married her first husband, a former schoolfriend, at that time – too soon, both of them too young, she says. They lived in Cuffley, and split after six years.

Pamela then met Vaughan Williams, a former actor, while teaching in St Albans. Within ten months, in 1977, they married, their daughter was born – and Vaughan was killed in a car accident. Pamela was bringing up the baby, alone, while working for her BA at the Poly.

Returning to teaching, she met Rik Wilkinson, an English teacher and a poet. He became Pamela's third husband in 1986. He retired in 1995; Pamela in 2006. In retirement she worked part-time as moderator for A Level Theatre Studies. She and Rik enjoyed holidays together – but then came major troubles: Pamela's daughter, Zoe, suffered a brain haemorrhage, while Rik started to show signs of dementia.

Both Rik and Pamela joined Welwyn Hatfield U3A in 2011. They attended the Wednesday meetings; Rik joined the Poetry group; Pamela – Arts Appreciation, Exploring London, Latin, and Travel. She was a member of the Welwyn Hatfield teams for the last three years of the Herts Network quizzes. She has written many splendid reports for our newsletter. Now she is organiser of our theatre trips – who better? – and our Deputy Chair.

Rik died in 2018. Zoe now has a young family and needs much support from her mother.

Pamela says that through all this, “U3A has been an enormous source of support and encouragement, and I have gained much from all my various activities within it”.

Review

Breaks at 88: 1930 – 2018 The story so far...

DVD, written and presented by Jon Brindle. Playing time 55 minutes. £5.00. Available from Breaks Manor, Link Drive, Hatfield AL10 8TP; tel 01707 263201

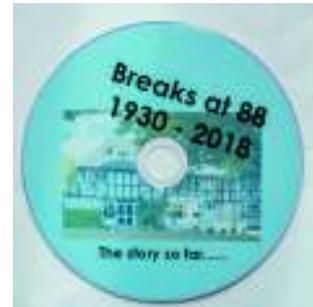
Members of Welwyn Hatfield U3A are familiar with Breaks Manor as a venue for meetings and events. However, not everyone will be aware of its history, so I settled down with interest to watch the film, *Breaks at 88*.

In 1930 a house was built for the Janson family on fields that had been known as “The Breaks” (Braecs being an Old English word for land cleared for cultivation). The house became known as, simply, “Breaks” and the grounds included formal gardens, tennis courts and a croquet lawn. The Janson family lived here for 20 years, during which time two of their daughters became founder members of the 1st Hatfield Girl Guides.

Meanwhile, in the 1940s, Hatfield was developing into the town we know today. It was designated a New Town, and the Development Corporation, appreciating the importance of community facilities, purchased Breaks Manor and its grounds for use as a Youth Centre. Bill and Rose Salmon set up the Youth Club in 1951 and ran it for many years: Bill received a British Empire medal for his services to youth work on his retirement.

Along the way, there was expansion, thanks to de Havilland’s who donated a large building, constructed on site by youth club members (under supervision). This provided a hall with a stage and was used extensively for plays, pantomimes at Christmas, and many musical performances. Skiffle groups were popular during the 1950s and, as pop music followed in the 1960s, many bands played at Breaks, including some that were nationally famous.

Football was a popular outdoor activity and it was a surprise to learn that the pitch was also used, apparently amicably, by the motorcycle display team to practice their routines. Both teams achieved successes over the years and are recalled with pride by their participants. Some of the motorcycle enthusiasts expanded their



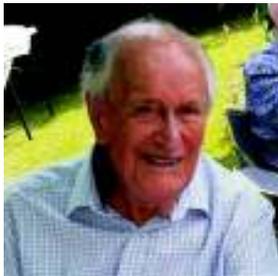
interests and built a stock car at Breaks. This went on to race countrywide, ultimately winning the world championship.

Contemporary users of Breaks Manor include a performing arts group, film makers, upholstery classes and, of course, the U3A, ably represented in this film by our own Judy Grant. It remains an important venue for live music, with bands playing at the Rock Den once a month; there is also a recording studio used for a variety of vocal and instrumental endeavours.

The film features interviews with a number of people, many with fond memories of Breaks Manor as a Youth Centre in the 1950s, providing insight into how important this community resource was in those early pioneering days. However, whether you have a lifelong knowledge of Breaks Manor or are relatively new to the area, this film provides an interesting and informative overview of its first 88 years.

Janet Nicolas

Obituary: Peter Lomer 1928-2019



After a career as a research scientist with the Services Electronic Research Laboratories and the Department of Scientific and Technical Intelligence, followed by organising activities in the Civil Service Retirement Fellowship, Peter joined Welwyn Hatfield U3A in 1990. He belonged to several groups, and with his wife, Pat, set up a Beginners Bridge group. He was our Chairman 2002-3, and took on the editing of the newsletter until 2008. He enjoyed gardening and volunteered to help maintain the garden at Isabel Hospice. One year our Garden Party was held in Peter and Pat's splendid garden in Handside Lane, Welwyn Garden City.

Peter often used to host the opera group in his comfortable and welcoming home, with cakes and fine china. At World Affairs he was one of the quieter members of a vociferous group, which meant his contributions were highly valued as thought-provoking and interesting. Sometimes he used to prepare and deliver a talk to the group, including a fascinating one on the nuclear industry.

Dorothy Smith

Autumn Term 2019 – Wednesday Meetings

SEPTEMBER

11, Ludwick Family Centre, Welwyn Garden City

Anne Samson – “Jan Smuts vs Nelson Mandela”

Dr Anne Samson, South African born and raised, is an independent historian specialising in World War 1 in Africa and related topics. Both men featuring in her talk have a link with the Great War.

18, Breaks Manor, Hatfield

Graham Laurie MVO RAF (Ret'd) – “The History of Royal Flying”

Squadron Leader Graham Laurie joined the RAF as a pilot in 1964. He spent 20 years flying members of the Royal Family and Senior Government Ministers, completing in all 2200 Royal flights.

25, WGC

David Fletcher – “Behind the Scenes in The Salesroom”

David has been a Fine Arts valuer and auctioneer for over 30 years. He was an on-screen expert on ‘Flog it’, BBC tv’s popular daytime programme and is currently BBC 3 Counties Radio’s Antiques expert.

OCTOBER

2, Hatfield

Damien O’Dell – “Born in The 1950’s”

Damien is a published author and a professional speaker. He was born in 1950, so he knows first-hand all about being born then.

9, WGC

David Longman – “A Social History of Churches of Bedfordshire”

Executed admirals, immoral vicars, the history of horse racing, national tragedies and an unsolved murder are just a few of the stories told by David Longman.

16, Hatfield

Squadron Leader John Scully MBE -- “The Life & Death of General Gordon”

Also known as Chinese Gordon, Gordon Pasha (more famously known) as Gordon of Khartoum was a larger-than-life Victorian hero.

23, WGC

Ian Keable – “George Cruikshank: The Man who drew Oliver Twist”

Ian Keable got a degree from Oxford University, qualified as a Chartered Accountant and then became a professional magician. Ian focuses on the satirical caricaturist and book illustrator, who is best known today for illustrating *Oliver Twist*, George Cruikshank.

30, Hatfield

Marion Hill – “Remarkable Women of Hertfordshire”

Starting in the 11th century, this talk explores the contributions of some of Hertfordshire’s finest women, from Juliana Berners (bestselling Tudor author) to suffragette, Lady Constance Lytton.

NOVEMBER

6, WGC

Sandra Highsted – “Hatch, Match & Dispatch”

Sandra has been in the registration service for 35 years and has seen many changes. She tells us of incidents that have occurred.

13, Hatfield

Peter Waine - “WGC Centenary Foundation”

Welwyn Garden City will be 100 years old in 2020. Peter is Chairman of The Centenary Foundation, a team of volunteers who are working to bring about a host of events to help celebrate this fact.

20, WGC – *Art & Photo Exhibition*

27, Hatfield

Colin Oakes – “Dickens and Christmas”

Colin is an archaeologist who, as well as giving talks, takes groups on walking and coach tours in London and the South East.

DECEMBER

4, WGC **Christmas Quiz** 10:30 am

11 **Christmas Lunch** at Homestead Court Hotel

Welwyn Hatfield U3A does not endorse any products or services offered by speakers.

Spring term starts on 8 January 2020 at WGC