



Art & Photography Exhibition – 2024

This year's Art & Photography Exhibition took place on 21 February – a grey, wet morning that did nothing to entice us



all out. However, our intrepid artists, photographers and crafters were undaunted and we are grateful to them for venturing forth with their impressive and inspiring creations.

Teas and coffees were served, as at every Wednesday morning meeting, and members chatted cheerfully in between browsing the displays.

And what displays they were: wonderful paintings and drawings from our three art groups: Oil Painting [photo

CONTENTS

Art & Photography exhibition	1
Notes from the Chair	5
What u3a has done for me: <i>Ann Davies</i>	6
GROUP NEWS	
Arts Appreciation	8
Board Games	11
Exploring London (3): <i>Drury Lane</i>	12
Play Reading	15
History of the Welwyn Hatfield u3a Garden Parties	16
Profile: <i>Tony Tutton</i>	21
Wednesday Meeting Prospects	25

below], led by Muriel Montgomery, meets in Digswell on alternate Tuesday afternoons; Painting, led by Raul Curiel, meets in Hatfield on Monday afternoons; Watercolours, led by Richard Griffiths, meets in Welwyn Garden City on Friday afternoons. Each year, I think there must be some particularly talented members at present – but then each year the standard is just as high!

The Craftea Group, led by Nicola Beynon, meets in Digswell on alternate Tuesday afternoons. Their colourful and varied



display proved how many different skills they have between them, and also showed them to be a friendly, chatty group!

The Photography Group, led by Henry Brzeski, meets in Hatfield on the 4th Monday morning of each month. Their splendid display showed that members are busy using their skills on all sorts of occasions: there were photos recording activities and trips around the country and abroad; pictures inspired by the beauty of nature, landscapes and environments; thoughtful studies of people, places and events.

As well as the impressive displays from our creative groups, Joan Scales (Groups Coordinator) found room to set up a table advertising some other groups who are on the look out for new members, and also to offer copies of the splendid booklet produced by the Wartime Memories group, *World War II: Childhood Memories – Adult Reflections* which was eagerly taken up by browsing members.

An enjoyable and entertaining morning was had by all, thanks to the efforts of all those sharing their work with us, and to Joan Scales for organizing the morning.





Blackpool Town Centre by Richard Seddon
from the Photography Group's display



Bluebells at Ashridge by Celia Boccacci
from the Photography Group's display

Text by Jill Longman; photos on pages 1 and 2 by Peter Fox

Notes from the Chair



Greetings from the Chair, where I took up post for a second term on 13 March at the AGM. I hope I may do justice to the post entrusted to me. I know I have the support of a strong committee to aid me in the task. I am proud of the achievements of our local organisation and full of admiration for the way the committee and group leaders fulfil their roles. I am grateful to Steve Hall for steering us through the last couple of years and departing committee members. We are still seeking a new newsletter editor and a groups' coordinator – I hope we can fill these positions from the membership soon. Thanks are also due to all the members for your support for all our activities. Without you our groups, visits and talks would not be so successful and varied.

The last term seems to have gone very quickly with plenty of activities and interesting talks to entertain us from January to the end of March. Our venues continue to provide support and a welcoming atmosphere. I am always impressed by the range of talks and how they afford us insights into various subjects and enlighten us with their perspectives on a range of topics. Many thanks to Jill and the speakers team for their efforts in organisation.

I have enjoyed organising the theatre trips to *The Time Traveller's Wife* and *Witness for the Prosecution*, and am looking forward to *Operation Mincemeat* in April. Many thanks to Linda Kent-Taylor for the work she does in managing the finances for the visits, and general support. I enjoyed the Exploring London visit to Tate Modern organised by Roger Swaine. Another recent success has been the Italian Lunch Club at The Terranova Restaurant at Stanborough Lakes, organised by the indefatigable Tony

Tutton! I am looking forward to the Spring Dance with Tony's band in April and the Travel Group's cruise to Amsterdam in May. So, plenty to keep us entertained. I should mention too the very active Ukelele Group, who performed at the AGM meeting and are enjoying several gigs in the area. I am sure you all agree there is plenty for everyone and often new surprises. So, I wish you all a good summer term whatever activities you choose, and a hope for fine weather.

Pamela Williams

What u3a has done for me

I joined WelwynHatfield u3a in 2012. My partner had died in late 2011 and I needed something to fill that gap in my life so decided, first, to find a book group. I remembered during my teaching days an A level French lesson about the 'third age' in France and how older people were learning new skills! I wondered if there was anything like that in the UK . . . I searched on the internet and found my answer—WelHat u3a.

I plucked up courage to walk into a meeting at the Ludwick Family Centre. My Welcomer told me the Book Group leader was there so I met her and joined. Twelve years later I still belong to the group and love it. I've made so many friends and enjoy the books.

Our last read was *The House of Doors* by Tan Twan Eng, set in Penang. It's about a visit by Somerset Maugham to stay with an expat couple, covering themes of race, gender, sexuality, power, empire, and love. It made us realise how little we knew about that part of the Eastern world.

I joined several other groups and started a French Beginners and a Spanish Beginners group. My life changed totally thanks to the u3a.

I eventually found a French-language book group, led by a French lady who also belongs to our u3a. We meet monthly in Humphrey's coffee bar. There are French, English and Polish people in the group, giving a fascinating mixture of views.

We've just read a really thought-provoking autobiography of the years 1941–2006, *Les Années (The Years)* by Annie Ernaux. It is written in the third person – *she* –unusual for an autobiography. Her life covers roughly the same era as mine, and the social/political/ technological changes we've lived through. It's been described as a collective memoir.

People of my generation – the baby boomers – have lived through so many major changes not least for women! In Catholic France the pill and abortion law changes were almost like another revolution. Education has seen so many changes too: university for all, women allowed to have a degree and to teach even if married! I was not allowed to wear trousers when I first started teaching in 1967. What???

Les Années reminded me that our age group has witnessed the Berlin Wall coming down, various assassinations, wars in Iran, Vietnam, Algeria's war for independence, Russia, China, the Baltic, the Middle East. Also Space travel and moon landing etc etc. – not to mention TV, computers and the dreaded mobile phone....and the Internet.....with all its possibilities and dangers.

This unique take on Annie Ernaux' life was partly based on family photos, conveying her relationship with her parents, student life, husband, children, job, divorce, toy boys! She highlighted major world events alongside her personal ones. One photo she recalls is the 1972 one of the little girl on fire running away from the napalm strike. I think we can all probably remember that one. If you want to have a roller-coaster ride over her years 1941–2006 I do recommend it—the English translation, *The Years*, came out in 2019. It concerns changes specifically in France and French society but they're similar to our changes. I may suggest it to the u3a book group!

I really appreciate what these twelve years in WelHat u3a have brought into my life. They have been great fun and long may they continue!

Ann Davies

Group News

Arts Appreciation Group

Reflections on last year

The group had another busy and varied programme last year, visiting local venues and further afield.

We started 2023 on a sad note with the untimely passing of Pat Pearce, a long-standing and much-loved member of the group. However, a number of enthusiastic colleagues got together to produce a range of visits to suit all tastes.

We started off with a visit to the British Schools Museum in Hitchin. We learned about the history of school there and took part in a Victorian lesson based on the monitorial approach (photo opposite top).



Pat Pearce

It's too complicated to explain here so you will have to visit yourselves to find out more! The classroom was laid out with Victorian artefacts and our teacher was very strict! Not quite a rap over the knuckles when someone spoke out of turn but almost! The museum is an excellent local facility, great for adults and grandchildren alike.

We had a number of visits to London venues – the V and A for the Donatello with some stunning sculptures, the Wallace Museum where we had an excellent guide around the major features of the collection, and, a particular favourite of mine, Leighton House (photo opposite bottom). The latter was the former home of leading Victorian artist, Fredric Lord Leighton, and it has an exceptional collection of Victorian art displayed in a unique suite of interiors, including the magnificent Arab Hall and a massive purpose-built studio. Once again, our guide was extremely knowledgeable and friendly, giving us a real insight into the building and the life and work of the artist. We had a train and tube journey there



on a wet day, but somehow we all managed to find our way battling in the rain along Kensington High Street between all of the umbrellas. You may be interested to know that one of Leighton's famous paintings – Flaming June – is currently on display at the Royal Academy.

We had three very successful coach trips further afield. Our first was to Windsor Castle. It was a beautiful day but a



Royal event had overrun so we were kept queuing outside in temperatures of 27C for over an hour and no shade! However, it was well worth it and there was so much to see. The audio guide was really helpful.

Our second trip, to Copped Hall near Epping Forest, was a real treat. It's that fine Georgian Mansion superbly sited on a ridge overlooking landscaped parkland which can be spotted from the M25 just past the Waltham Abbey junction. The building is currently under restoration by a large group of enthusiastic volunteers. Our guides were so passionate about the project and really brought the building to life for us. We were warned about the dodgy floorboards and open staircases, but thoroughly enjoyed exploring the place which once was a hunting lodge for Henry VIII. There is a magnificent kitchen garden with produce for sale and a wonderful tea room.

Our end-of-year trip took us to the Kew Gardens Lights extravaganza via a lunch stop in Kingston upon Thames. We managed to miss the rain and arrived just after 4pm as it was getting dark. The route around the grounds was well-lit and easy to follow. The light installations were magnificent – some static and some dynamic, such as the one over the large lake in front of the main glasshouse. It was spectacular and so atmospheric.

I must thank Eileen Bannister, Judith Page and Mary O'Donnell for all their efforts in ensuring that the coach trips worked so well and were appreciated by all who took part.

This year has had a slow start with our first trip to the local Focolare Centre in Parkway for an excellent exhibition of work from the Methodist Modern Art Collection. It was truly impressive and the 23 U3A members attending thoroughly enjoyed it. The exhibition, which ran for 5 weeks, has been widely supported. We were very privileged to have it displayed in the town.

More visits are to be planned and they will be advertised in due course.

Jean Mackie

Board Games Group



**Joan Scales and Marie Scales
playing Ticket to Ride (Europe)**
photo by Trish Chambers



**Trish Chambers and James Knight
playing Ticket to Ride (Europe)**
photo by Graham Baker

Hello to all members who enjoy using their brain for fun and social activities!

At home my partner and I play tabletop games together and with friends most days every week of the year. I started this group in order to introduce more people to the hobby.

After joining U3A last year we recognised that the potential to make new friends through playing games with other members was a terrific opportunity. Over the last few months we have built a small but enthusiastic, regular group of people who have come to understand that playing games facilitates the grey cells; finding each other while having lots of laughs.

The maxim 'The object of the game is to win but the reason to play is to have fun' is key to everyone enjoying themselves. As Marcus du Sautoy (a professor of Mathematics at Oxford University) wrote in his recently published book *Around the world in 80 games*:

Good games have endings or moments of resolution of some kind, much like listening to a piece of music. The point isn't to hear the last chord. It's to be taken on a journey that leaves you transformed or content or enlightened by the time you reach the end.

Board games are regarded as intellectual sports by MENSA who include some in their annual Mind Sports Olympiad. There have been many research projects demonstrating the links between regular brain exercise and maintaining cognitive function in older people. As with physical exercise – *If you don't use it you lose it.*

Here's a list of some of the popular games we have enjoyed with the group. You can look online if you are interested in finding out about them.

Ticket to Ride; Cascadia; Just One; Flamme Rouge;

Wingspan; Stoneage;

Trivial Pursuits (original 80s version), played in teams

Looking forward to enticing new members and making new friends!

Graham Baker

Exploring London (3)

On Thursday 21 March our group travelled to Covent Garden for a guided tour of the **Theatre Royal in Drury Lane**. The theatre divided the 30 of us into two groups and we were treated to 90 minutes of theatrical splendour and, for the second tour group, some real life acting! Our guides had a truly comprehensive knowledge of this magnificent building which has been a site for entertainment since 1663 and is the world's oldest theatre in continuous use. The current fourth structure is over 200 years old, is Grade One listed and recently benefited from a £60 million refurbishment mainly financed by Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber.

From the magnificent entrance hall onwards, we marvelled at the wonderful staircases, hung with chandeliers and decorated with amazing murals telling the stories of various musicals, pantomimes and plays held since the 17th century. We were allowed into the Grand Saloon, a wonderful place to have an afternoon tea (*photo opposite*), and also saw the King's and Prince's private rooms, royal boxes and separate entrances, (King George III was not on good terms with his



son!). We were allowed to walk (but not sit) through the upper circle, which was being prepared for the matinee performance of *Frozen*. Our guides showed great delight in regaling tales of ghosts, particularly the Man in Grey who appears in a long grey coat and tricorn hat, plus several more friendly ones who are still active. The appearance of any ghost is said to signal good luck for an actor or production. There were detailed descriptions of

the various patrons over the years, whose pictures were hung along the corridors. We were then treated to a short video of the workings of the theatre's fascinating stage machinery which allowed up-and-down and even sideways movement of each independent half. This theatre was the first in the world to have a safety curtain, installed in 1794 following a stage fire which destroyed the original building.

Our tour finished after a trip through the tunnels under the stage, which were at one time the only way for an actor to get from one side of the stage to the other; then out through the stage door, (where unfortunately nobody wanted our signatures!).

After time to sample the culinary delights and street entertainment of Covent Garden, 14 of us regrouped for a stroll through the Seven Dials district, Denmark Street and up to the Now Building by the entrance to Tottenham Court Road Station. This is a new exhibition, known as the Butterfly Trail (*photo overleaf*), showing a large, colourful projection of



butterflies on the walls and ceiling. An app is available which lets a butterfly land on your hand – some of us managed to catch butterflies!

We then went next door to a pop-up exhibition of photography and videos organised by the Centre for Ageing Better, celebrating the first Age Without Limits Action Day and the huge diversity that exists across older age groups. Some of us had our photographs taken and displayed on screen; others were interviewed by the staff asking for our opinion on Ageism. We of course said we were far too young!

*Sue McLellen and
Tony Dodd*



Play Reading Group

New Members, Please!

When I joined the Play Reading Group, in 2017, it was running happily under the leadership of Hazel Bell, who had started the group some six years before. At the monthly meetings we all enjoyed reading whatever play had been chosen by that month's "Producer," taking on whichever part we were allocated. If there weren't enough parts to go round, we would swap in and out, to give everyone a turn. It proved interesting to hear sometimes quite different interpretations of a character and to keep track of the changing voices!

Nowadays, the group runs in much the same way, although Hazel has recently stepped back as leader and I have taken on that role. The biggest change, though, has been the loss in the last year of two long-standing and very accomplished members: Maryam Rodway, who died in February 2023, and David Steed, who died at the end of the year. Both were real assets to the group and could turn their voices to a huge variety of characters.

Maryam had been very active with the Barn Theatre and her experience shone through when performing, whether the part was a pompous dowager Duchess, a bright, flirty young thing, or anything in between. David was a warm, charismatic gentleman with an interesting life-story (profiled in the Summer 2021 issue of this newsletter) and an aptitude for performing. He, too, had been much involved with the Barn



Maryam Rodway



David Steed

Theatre and Shaw's Corner locally, and the Globe Theatre in London, as well as giving musical performances.

We miss Maryam's and David's mellifluous tones and also those of several other group members who have, for one reason or another, ceased to attend regularly. It is now more frequently the case that those of us at the monthly readings are allotted more than one part in the play, and have to try to keep track of two or even three characters and, ideally, give them different voices!

Some new members would be very welcome, whether or not they have any experience of performing. There is no danger of forgetting lines or bumping into the furniture as we simply sit comfortably and read. The plays chosen are very varied – we steer clear of Shakespeare, as there is the Shakespeare Group for that, but we have enjoyed everything from Oliver Goldsmith to Mike Leigh and from Harold Pinter to Alan Ayckbourn. And it really is not necessary to be a theatrical type – just be willing to give it a go!

Jill Longman

History of the WH U3A Garden Parties

Following the foundation of Welwyn Hatfield u3a in 1987, the first summer Garden Party was held at the Jim McDonald Centre in 1991, starting at 10am. Chairman Derek Greener wrote in his third Newsletter: "All agreed that it was a suitable venue for the 93 people who attended. The only comments which have reached me were that we had too many cakes, and not enough savouries, and that there was not enough time to chat".

After that, as Pat Pike, our Catering Manager, later reminisced, the Garden Parties were held at Isabel Hospice Day Centre, "where our Garden Group had tended the Hospice garden from the site development. Proceeds of Raffles were donated to the Day Centre and Members



Garden Party at Isobel Hospice, 1966

brought items of finger food for the communal Buffet. One year a member brought a delicious looking TRIFLE – sadly difficult to eat with fingers!!”

The same venue and programme continued annually until 2012. A report in Newsletter 35 in 2010 notes an addition: “For the first time we had a “Hat” competition”. Then the announcement of the party for 2011 states, “The theme this year is HATS, both ladies’ and gents’. Remember the adage – ‘If you want to get ahead, get a hat’. Go on, go for it!”

The next few parties were themed. The theme for the 2012 party was “Dress to Impress” – eight photos appeared on the front page of the newsletter illustrating how splendidly this was carried out. The venue was a new one: Roe Hill Hall.

In 2013 the party was held for the first time at Breaks Manor “in splendid sunny weather – indeed, a heat wave ... but the unexpectedly extensive grounds behind the manor provided ample shade. The theme this year was topical – red, white and blue. The Tombola made £80; £40 to go to The Isobel Hospice and £40 to the Breaks Manor Youth fund.”



Chairman Sue Kershaw (on right) belittled at the 2011 Garden Party
photo by Tony Lammiman

Breaks Manor has remained the venue for our Garden Parties ever since.

In 2016 the party was Royalty-themed. Members were



The 2012 Garden Party at Roe Hill Hall. Photo by Tony Lammiman

challenged by a themed quiz, the first part asking WHO? of various Royal personages photographed, the second, WHERE? some Royalty-connected events occurred. Provision was made for Boules and tennis to be played , and again there was a Tombola.

The Garden party of 2017 was a celebration of the 30th anniversary of our U3A. David Banks provided a splendid anniversary celebration cake with the U3A logo in icing sugar. Val Fieth, founder of our U3A, explained why and how she had done it. Judy Grant provided a photo-quiz showing public events of the last 30 years; and quiz-master Tony Tutton posed 30 questions featuring 1987, the year of our foundation. The tombola raised £112: £56 each was sent to Breaks Manor and to Mercy Ships.

At the 2018 party Eileen Bannister did a 'name the Doll' competition. All proceeds went to Isobel Hospice. Tony set the questions for another quiz – and continued to present a quiz at each subsequent garden party.

In 2019 The newly formed Wel-Hat Ukulele Group joined



The 2014 Garden Party at Breaks Manor. Photo by John Brown



The Ukes playing at the 2019 Garden Party; *photo by Peter Fox*

up with sixteen members of an established group from Dacorum U3A to play a variety of well known songs. Our Ukes have performed again at each garden party since.

Alas, there could be no Garden Party in 2020, the year of lockdown. 21 July 2021 was a momentous date for us as it was the first time members were able to meet face to face since March 2020. Covid concerns remained: the communal buffet table offering finger foods brought by members was replaced by a notice, "Please bring your own picnic and drink". The Ukulele Group played again.

At the garden parties of 2022 and 2023, again, the traditional buffet table was lacking; instead, members brought their own picnic and drink. Again, the Ukes played and sang, encouraging dancing in the central space – becoming as traditional a feature of the garden parties as Tony's quizzes.

Hazel Bell

The thirty-third in our series of profiles of distinguished Welwyn Hatfield U3A members features ...

Tony Tutton



Tony was born in Walthamstow in 1947, the son of a dancing teacher, and grew up there. He showed his musical proclivities early, making his debut on stage in 1953 at the age of six, singing in a concert celebrating the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. In 1958 he joined the Boys Brigade, playing the side drum in the brigade band. In his final year at school, 1963, with four friends, he formed

The Beaucrees band, himself as bandleader and drummer. They started playing pop music at local youth clubs, dances and universities. Jackie Simmonds of Walthamstow came to one of their first gigs, in 1964; she and Tony married six years later.



The Beaucrees in Walthamstow 1963

Tony's career was to be in Fire Engineering. He first went to work for Associated Fire Alarms, whilst also studying at day release electrical engineering and specialising in computing techniques. He further enhanced his computer skills in his day job by designing fire detection systems. At one period he worked in the sales department – his sales territory included Hertfordshire. There he saw and ultimately purchased a lovely, detached house in Bragbury End, Stevenage. He and Jackie lived there for five years; then moved to Lemsford village in 1985.

In leisure time Tony continued to play with The Beaucrees. The band developed a large following of loyal fans, playing at USAF bases and cabaret shows throughout the south of England – 15-20 gigs a month in their heyday! They were booked by major London entertainment agencies to support headlining acts, then into top London venues. The band split up in 1979. In 1983 Tony joined another band, Tapestry, as Frontman (singer).



Tony started his own fire detection company in 1982; and following the Kings Cross disaster of 1987, he also worked as fire consultant for London Underground.



In December 2011, thirty-two years after their parting, the Beaucrees boys held a reunion dinner and had the idea of "getting the old band back together" [à la Blues Brothers!] for a reunion. As Tony wrote, "After a few glasses of Merlot, everyone was well up for it". So in November 2012 The Beaucrees played their first live show

again! They went from strength to strength, playing their favourite songs from the 50s, 60s, and 70s at clubs dances and parties – not least among them u3as. They did their final show in March 2020.

After he retired, in 2012, Tony wanted to take up photography. He saw a local course on line so came to it, thinking it was public – and was told (in no uncertain terms), “This is a Welwyn Hatfield u3a course and you must join and become a member to continue!” So he did !



As a member of our u3a, Tony first joined the Computer Discussion Group run by Ted Webb; then in 2014 succeeded him as Group Leader, and also started the Microsoft & Apple Users Discussion Groups. In 2022 he started the Curry Club, and in 2024 the Italian Lunch Club – both devoted to the enjoyment of meals in congenial company. He runs all four groups to this day, and also belongs to one Exploring London group.

As well as giving u3a the benefit of his computer expertise, Tony lets us enjoy the use of his musical talents. The Beaucrees, with Tony as bandleader and singer, played at a Welwyn Hatfield u3a dance for the first



The five guys of Simply 60s - Tony as Frontman



time in 2017, then on four further occasions before they were succeeded by Tony's next band, Simply 60s, in 2021. This second band has to date played for us at five dances, and more are planned.

A born M.C., Tony has regularly acted in this capacity at our Garden parties, Christmas parties and Open Days since 2019 – and as Quizmaster besides since 2017, providing and presenting quizzes at all our parties.

Covid and the lockdown did not deter Tony from providing entertainment for us. He conducted, over Zoom, a record request evening, a disco, and regular "Tuesday Quizzes" while lockdown lasted – and also provided the newsletter of Summer 2020 with most helpful, timely advice about getting in touch online.



He has, too, given talks to us twice: an autobiographical “My Life in Music” in 2022 as the first live Wednesday meeting after lockdown, and one in 2023 on “The life and music of Buddy Holly”; each drew a packed audience.



Tony joined our U3A committee in 2016 and remains a member. With that added to his multiple personae as computer expert, singer, bandleader, quizmaster and speaker – well has he been designated by successive Chairmen our “Minister of Fun”.

Hazel Bell

Summer Term 2024 – Wednesday Meetings

Doors open at 9.45am. Tea and coffee are served from 10.00am to 10.30am. The meetings start at 10.30am with notices, followed by the talks. Bring your own cup or mug for free tea or coffee.

We make recordings of talks delivered at our Wednesday morning meetings, when speakers are willing for us to do this. We make these recordings without investing in new equipment or requiring a lot of technical knowledge, so the results are not perfect, but improving, and a number of members now benefit from the opportunity of watching talks that they were unable to attend in person.

If you would like to receive recordings whenever they are available, please email video@u3awelhat.org.uk

APRIL

17, Ludwick Family Centre, Welwyn Garden City

Fran Sandham – “Solo Walk Across Africa”

Fran describes how he left the daily grind of London for an epic adventure, walking from the Skeleton Coast to the Indian Ocean, through Namibia, Zambia, Malawi and Tanzania.

24, Breaks Manor, Hatfield

Pauline Martindale – “Volunteering Adventures”

Pauline has visited us before, talking about her career as a prison officer. This time, we will hear about her volunteering adventures following the 2012 Olympics.

MAY

1, WGC

Nikki Edwards – “Chalk, Clay & Climate Change Under Sherrardspark Wood”

Hertfordshire geology has much to tell us about the past. There is volcanic ash laid down in a clear warm sea, Hertfordshire Puddingstone with evidence of a major global warming event, and the most complete record of the last Ice Age in Britain. The pebbles in your flower beds tell a story!

8, Hatfield

Neil Hanson – “In and Out at the Top”

This is a tour of the quirks and foibles, highs and lows of his time running Britain’s highest inn in the 1970s and 1980s. Neil’s account of grappling with tight-fisted farmers, eccentric characters, bizarre local customs, naturist weekends, “lates and lock-ins”, police raids, rats in the attic, close encounters with magistrates and planners, and the shooting of a famous double-glazing commercial.

15, WGC

Jim Stebbings – “D’Oyly Carte: A Very English Dynasty”

The initial role of Richard D’Oyly Carte in Gilbert & Sullivan’s comic Operas is only part of the story of this remarkable family. From the origins of the D’Oyly Carte name and four generations Jim tells of the Highs/Lows/Successes & Failures during the 19th & 20th Centuries.

22, Hatfield

Graham Laurie – “The Royal Flying Doctor Service and the \$20 note”.

The first slide is of an Australian \$20 – why? All will be revealed as the history of this famous organisation is explained.

29, WGC

Roger Mason – “Al Capone”

We probably all know the name of Al Capone and may even recall the odd fact about the notorious gangster, such as his eventual imprisonment for tax evasion. Roger will let us in on the full story.

JUNE

5, Hatfield

Roger Wotton – “The Ten Plagues of Egypt”

Each of the ten plagues, except the last, have natural explanations. In this talk we will examine them in sequence and suggest there were unusual meteorological conditions present at the time.

12, WGC

Adam Smith – “Olaudah Equiano and the Interesting Narrative”

Olaudah Equiano was born around 1745 in West Africa but was kidnapped into slavery as a boy and transported across the Atlantic. In 1766 he purchased his freedom and in 1789 he wrote *The Interesting Narrative*, one of the key books used by anti-slavery campaigners.

19, Hatfield

Jill Campbell – “Lady Constance Lytton”

Learn about the life of suffragette, Lady Constance Lytton of Knebworth, the part she played in the struggle for women’s suffrage and the life-changing effect it had on her, illustrated with photos, letters and family documents from the Knebworth House Archive.

26, WGC

Dave Felton – “40 Farms – the Changing Landscapes of Cumbria”

In March 2021, Photographer Amy Bateman and author David Felton embarked on a journey to record the stories of forty farms in Cumbria. In this talk – accompanied by Amy’s beautiful

photographs – David will talk about the financial challenge of farming in post-Brexit Britain; the tightrope balance of producing quality food in nature-rich landscapes; and the highs and lows of working in an area internationally famed for its beauty.

JULY

3, Hatfield

David Callaghan – “For Valour – the history of the Victoria Cross”

The only firm to supply the VC is Hancocks of London. David Callaghan began his career with the firm as an apprentice, eventually becoming the senior Director. With this unique insight, he will trace the medal's history and highlight some of the stories of the heroism for which it has been awarded.

10, WGC

Sheila Grimmant – “The Anthony Nolan Charity”

Since 1974 this organisation has helped families affected by blood cancer and other blood disorders. Sheila has worked with them for over 12 years. She will outline for us what the organisation does and explain her role as a courier.

Summer term starts on 11 September at Welwyn Garden City.

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

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>

© U3A Welwyn-Hatfield 2024

Printed by Triographics Printers Ltd

121 London Road, Knebworth, SG3 6EX

Copydate for the Autumn 2024 issue is 6 August 2024.