



Art and Photography Exhibition



Christ in Glory: a sculpture by Peter Ball above the pulpit in Ely Cathedral. Photo by Henry Brzeski, displayed by the Photography Group

The first exhibition showing the work of our Arts Groups combined with that of the Photography Group was held in September 2012. It became an annual feature of our Autumn programme until 2019 – when Covid prohibited it; there was no exhibition in the last two years. Now, ninety-one members attended this eighth exhibition, held at Ludwick Hall on 16 February. Covid restrictions still meant that members had to bring their own mugs in which to enjoy the coffee once more provided by our invaluable volunteers.

As in former times, it proved a happy social occasion, with small groups sitting together drinking coffee in the centre of the hall, having admired the displays along all the walls.

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The **Oil Painting** and **Watercolours** Groups provided displays of their pictures in their chosen type of paint; the **Painting** Group exhibited work in various media [*photos on pages 4 and 5*]. **Craftea's** stall was loaded with a variety of products: embroidery stretched on its canvas frame; framed samplers; a thick, colourful camping blanket, labelled "How to use up all those left-over balls of wool"; knitted baby hats for the neo-natal Hospital unit; a rug-making kit; and Easter chicks for sale in aid of Garden House Hospice who provided the knitting pattern on display – they raised £55.

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The **Photography Group** had set up sixteen display boards showing 70 photographs taken by twelve members, using phones as well as cameras. Bearing in mind that members' photography has been severely curtailed over the last year, this was an impressive response. Three of the boards showed examples of what members



The Painting Group's display

may learn by attending this Group: things to look out for when taking photos, and improvements that can be made using free software. They offered tips for editing and improving photographs with converging verticals, concentrating on the most important feature, levelling, or having a line such as a path or river leading into the picture. These were illustrated by examples, including mistakes with alternative images showing how the photographs might have been improved. Others showed how to make corrections post-processing. One obvious potential error

was taking a photograph of a person without noticing that they are standing before a tree, that appears to be growing out of their head!

All the groups represented at the exhibition have space for new members, as they are now meeting in larger halls than pre-Covid. Contact details can be found on our website.

Text by Hazel Bell; photos by Peter Fox



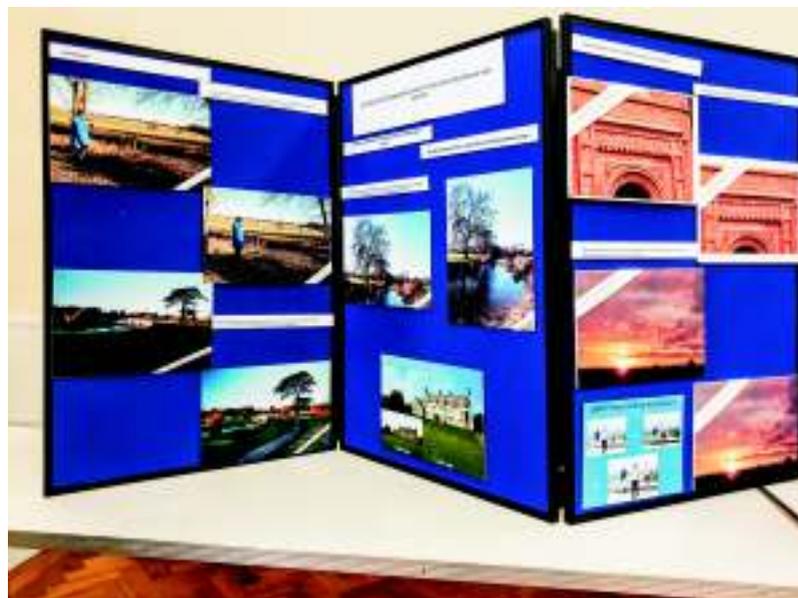
Maureen Stevens and Maz Cason of the Oil Painting Group beside Maz's portraits of her grandchildren



Dorothy Banks seated at the Watercolours Group's display



Mary Middleton, Margaret Wallace, Trish Southgate and Nicola Beynon (cross-stitching a birthday card with daffodils) of Craftea at their stall



Notes from the Chair



When I joined the committee two years ago with the intention of just helping out where necessary, little did I know that I would be the next Chair of the committee. It has certainly been an interesting two years. When we went into lockdown almost immediately I thought until the Covid Epidemic was over we would not have much to do; how wrong I was! I soon discovered that this committee was not one to sit still or be inactive. Whilst our Chair Pam Williams was entertaining us with her

blog, behind the scenes other members of the committee were already exploring options to keep activity going within the u3a. I was greatly impressed by the talent and enthusiasm which surrounded me on the committee. Very soon a plan was proposed for presentations via something called 'Zoom'. I must admit until this point I had never heard of it and I was sceptical as to whether it would work. Well, the rest is history as large numbers of us 'Zoomed' in regularly to hear presentations, chat in chat rooms and even enjoy musical evenings and quizzes courtesy of Tony Tutton. A number of the groups were also very active during lockdown using the 'Zoom' facility and I am very grateful to the group leaders for keeping the group activity going until we were able to return to face-to-face meetings once again.

We returned to normality very quickly, as lockdown eased, and I feel very fortunate to be taking over the Chair with everything in such good shape. Even the act of becoming Chair was affected by Covid as I was unable to attend the AGM because I was suffering from it at the time. Although they are obliged to leave the committee this year having completed their six years I am delighted that Hazel Bell and Roger Swaine have kindly agreed to continue in their roles as Newsletter Editor and Webmaster respectively, and Pam Williams, our outgoing Chair, has also agreed to remain on the committee. I was also able to welcome to the committee three new members: Dee Thomas, Doreen Hall and Steve Dringer. With such a strong committee and the support of a great team of group leaders I think we can look forward to a great year ahead which of course includes the 40th Anniversary of the u3a in the UK in September.

Steve Hall

Notes from the Retiring Chair

Pamela Williams' report at the 2021 AGM.

This last year could be regarded as one of transition or maybe evolution for our u3a. After our successful Zoom AGM last year, we continued to hold fortnightly speaker talks via Zoom for those members who were able to tackle them, with alternate coffee mornings for members to keep in touch. These worked very well for us but there was still a sense of eagerness to get back together again. I particularly enjoyed the talk on Clement Attlee – but their variety is what makes them so interesting! Many study groups used inventive ways of being able to carry on – distanced strollers, book groups in outdoor settings, video visits to gardens, live streaming of walks in London and Oxford, Zoom quizzes. And I won't forget Tony Tutton's zoom disco [*photo below*], where I laughed so much I burst a button on my trousers! What a joy it was and what efforts people have made to carry on regardless with ingenuity and good cheer.



But soon the possibility of actually being with other people presented itself. I was delighted when the Isle of Wight trip went ahead and the prospect of leaving Hatfield and going further afield at last took place. This was a most welcome break and it was good to be with familiar faces again. Then at the end of the summer term we were able to hold our summer garden party [*photo below*]. It was not quite the same – we had to bring our own refreshments owing to continuing Covid concerns – but the sun shone so we were able to be outside and we were entertained by our own Ukulele Group, and Tony conducted a quiz. This, we hoped, was a foretaste of what was to come.



Then at the beginning of September we held our first live Wednesday meeting with Tony giving a talk on his life in music. This was hugely successful, partly because Tony was one of our own, but the talk was very entertaining and brought back many memories. On a sunny morning we welcomed 110 members to this talk. Our venue, The Breaks, looked splendid with a fresh refurbishment – and so did we, smiling and being together again [*photo opposite*].

Weekly meetings progressed from there with only the occasional cancellation due to Covid. My personal favourites were the talks on Irving Berlin and the Duke of Windsor and his relationship with the Nazis, but there was plenty to inform and entertain. One legacy of the Zoom meetings has been that a group has formed on Thursday mornings for live chat for those people unable to get to Wednesday



meetings. Many thanks to Ann Davies for organising this. It's open to anyone, whether or not you are able to come along on a Wednesday morning.

In September another travel group visit took place, to Northern Ireland, which again was very successful with its contrast between the reminders of "The Troubles" and the stunning scenery.

On 10 November we held our regular Meet the Groups session, which is always a pleasure as it enables us all to see the outcomes of some of the artistic and other endeavours of our valuable groups [*photo below*]. This session showed us the progress of the Ukulele Group and the development of the Wartime Memories group.

It was followed by a meeting with group leaders where we had to announce the findings of the committee over the issue of funding for hall rentals for groups who require them. This was a shadow which had been hanging over us for several months. During this time the committee, but most especially our Treasurer, Sue, and our Groups Co-ordinator, Joan, had been much exercised by the challenge of resolving this issue. Much research and consultation was undertaken into the practices of other u3a's and the national organisation. However, because we all care deeply about our u3a and wish to see it continue as far as possible in the same format as has been so successful, we had to make some unpalatable choices. The only course open to us, in view of rental charges,



was for study and/or interest groups to be self-funding where room hire is necessary, which is in line with almost all other u3a's. Obviously, this was not welcomed wholeheartedly but it is to be hoped that, when the figures are examined, members will accept that we had no alternative. At a subsequent Group Leaders' Meeting and lunch at the end of January Sue explained the implications for groups and leaders and methods of collecting contributions, which are quite complex but not beyond the capabilities of our members, especially with the support of Group Leaders and the Spring Term "grace" period.

Meanwhile, fun was still taking place! At the end of November we were able to hold one of our famous dances, led by Tony Tutton and his new band, with fish and chips to boot! I was heartily sorry to miss this event; family commitments intervened – but I am reliably informed that a good time was had by all. Then, at the end of December, we were able to hold a somewhat modified Christmas party and quiz [*photo below*]. It was a case of Bring your own drinks and nibbles. But it worked; and thus on to the main event – well, for Christmas at least. Despite our doubts, we were able to hold our Christmas Lunch at Mill Green Golf Club. This proved to be a very pleasant location; almost a hundred people attended to partake of the usual Christmas fare, with some other options [*photo opposite*]. So we could feel that life was, at last, beginning to return to normal.





With the new year came another New Members' Coffee Morning, organised by Dianne Coxon [photo below]. It's good to report that membership remains healthy and we are still attracting new members. Membership is very ably managed by Peter Fox and assisted by Dianne who is responsible for New Members. Steve Hall's sterling efforts on publicity have certainly helped to boost our profile; many thanks to Steve for that. At that meeting I spoke of the three pillars of our u3a, when once I referred to two. Now I consider that, after the Wednesday Meetings, which are our forum for meeting and dissemination of information, the study or interest groups which promote members' interests, the third pillar is Communication, which has become so much more vital over the last two years. This is



comprised of the Website, our Newsletter, the email Mailchimps and the national *Third Age Matters* magazine; and, during lockdown, members of the committee attempted to communicate by telephone those members who do not use the Internet. All of these contributed to our efforts to stay in touch which was so vital during this pandemic.

So, now it's time to say goodbye, as Chairperson at least. I have to say that it has been an honour and a privilege to serve as Chairperson and it would have not worked without the tremendous support of the rest of the committee. My two-year tenure has been a strange one, having been elected two years ago, only to be faced with an almost immediate lockdown. I felt like a rug had been whipped from under me and wasn't quite sure what I could do nor how to fulfil my role. Initially I came up with the idea of writing a blog for the website as something that might be useful in terms of communication. So I began writing about what I was doing under the circumstances and including a few recollections and remembrances. But there wasn't a lot happening so I ventured further into some autobiographical events. These grew and I was writing about one a fortnight. I continued with these until, thanks to the enterprising Ann Davies and Jill Longman, we began our Zoom meetings, which became so successful.

I have been so fortunate in this role in having the support and expertise of the rest of the committee. What a team! They have all worked so hard on your behalf and I would like to give thanks to them all for all they have accomplished during the last two years in a spirit of co-operation and companionship. You know who they are! Marie Scales – Secretary; Sue Talbot – Treasurer; Joan Scales – Groups Co-ordinator; Peter Fox – Membership Secretary; Dianne Coxon – New Members Secretary; Jill Longman – Speakers Programme and Zoom admin; Ann Davies – Zoom admin; Steve Hall – Public Relations; Colin Slade – Health & Safety; Roger Swaine – Web Master; Hazel Bell – Editor, Newsletter; and other Committee Members – Ann Madell; Roy Madell; and Dave Charlwood and, of course, Tony Tutton. I would also like to thank Penny Barratt – Deputy Chair, who had to relinquish her role owing to conflicting work pressures.

And thank you to you all for your support and friendship.

Pamela Williams
Photos by Peter Fox

Group News

The arrival of Spring means that there are lots of outings to choose from.

The *Garden Group* have several visits planned throughout the summer, the *Arts Appreciation Group* have outings every month, the *Architecture Group* has a tour of the Olympic Park in June, and most of the *Exploring London Groups* are meeting regularly again. Details can be found on the website, and there may be vacancies for non-Group members to take part. Thanks to the Group Leaders and all involved in organizing these trips.

The Strollers and *Walking Groups* regularly head out into the local countryside, and foodies are well catered for with two regular mid-week Lunch Clubs, a Sunday Solo Lunch Group, and the new Curry Club and Tearoom Groups.

If you are not yet a member of any Study Groups, why not think about joining one or two? Most of the Study Groups running before the pandemic are now back in action, and some now have vacancies due to meeting in larger venues. There are over fifty to choose from, listed on the Wednesday Programme sheet, with more information available on the website.

Learn, Laugh, Live!

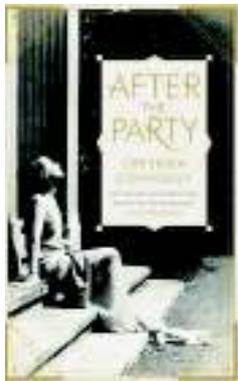
Joan Scales

Book Group (2)

Our group of twelve members reads books covering a wide range of topics and genres. Every year we try to include a classic, which maybe we've not read for years; a biography or autobiography; a modern tome; and recommendations from friends, the library, newspapers or other book groups. We are always on the lookout for new titles. Reading life in our group is never boring and we read books that we ourselves might not choose to read. Sometimes we find them really challenging, either from the subject matter or the writing style. I've (mostly) loved our selection this year. Even if we find the book choice difficult to process, the presenter (we take it in turns) can usually gently change our opinion – albeit maybe only slightly!

We didn't miss any of our meetings during Lockdown because we used Zoom. Fortunately we were able to meet again in person after a year or so of continuing our meetings online. It kept us in contact but also had its frustrations. We recently found it useful again though as in February I had Covid but was able to set up the Zoom link and join in the discussion (but miss out on the cake!), and last month our book presenter was in quarantine but she could present via Zoom too – and it was her turn to miss out on the cake!

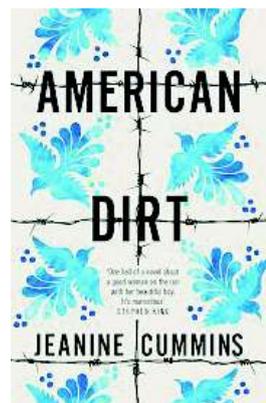
From a fairly recent historical perspective *After the Party* by Cressida Connolly was a fascinating read.



The Party in question is a very clever play on words. There was a party, but there was also a Party – yes, the Oswald Mosley-led British Union of Fascists. The book is set mainly in the volatile period just before the war and through the war to the present day, so from 1937/8 onwards. Three upper-class sisters live on the South coast and manage to become embroiled in Fascist politics. We meet Mosley and take a look at the summer camps the BUF held on the Sussex coast for supporters and their families. The book looks at the relationship among the sisters,

their husbands and families. It also enlightens the reader as to how Mosley managed to engage with and enrol these upper-class entitled families. Some of them are held accountable, are jailed and end up on the Isle of Man in detention camps. I didn't know about any of this so I found it really interesting. Some of the group found the main characters annoying because of their snobbery, their sense of entitlement and their decadence at a time when most people were suffering. There isn't an awful lot of challenge to the fascist viewpoint but I don't think this was a book for that. It is highly recommended.

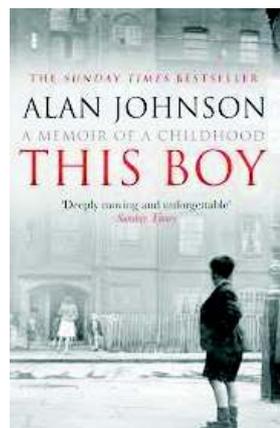
American Dirt by Jeanine Cummins we read earlier this year. It's a moving book with some harrowing passages. It's relevant to what is happening currently with



refugees. A fairly well-off Mexican mother with her young son has to flee her comfortable life in Acapulco, leaving everything behind. The kingpin of a Drugs Cartel has had her whole family massacred (the reasons are explained in the book!). Lydia and Luca are trying to reach safety in America – but are among the countless undocumented immigrants who have to take extreme risks in order to arrive. Their journey is treacherous; she never knows whom to trust because she knows that Javier (said drugs baron) is after her and is willing to pay anyone who finds her. I think we all empathised with the mother's instinct to save her son and rooted for her.

It's an absolutely compelling book – highly recommended. There was some controversy in America about its being written by someone who they thought couldn't possibly understand how those refugees must feel – but what is an author but someone whose imagination and many years of research helped to enter that world?

This Boy by Alan Johnson. We have just finished this first, fascinating part of the Labour politician's autobiography. Each book is named after a Beatles song to reflect his love for them. This was an absolutely enlightening read. Johnson was born in London (ironically in the area which is now called Notting Hill) in 1950 into abject poverty. The family lived in two rooms. They had no inside lavatory, no electricity, the gas often went out because they couldn't feed the meter, and frequently they had no food. His parents, Lily from Liverpool and Steve from London, were not happily married. Steve abandoned his family when Alan was aged eight. Lily died when he was thirteen. Her health had always been poor and was exacerbated by having to work hard to earn a little money. Linda – Alan's sister, who's two years older than him (and his saviour) managed against all odds to persuade the authorities to let them live together in a council flat. The descriptions of Lily's Liverpool family are wonderful. The book is full of evocative memories of life in post-war London. We meet a cross-section of the important people in Alan's life.



It is a beautifully written book that makes you realise why Johnson did what he did and how this childhood informed his career. (I enjoyed it so much that I've bought the second volume *Please Mr Postman* – I noticed it was a 99p deal on Kindle!).

Two contrasting books, enjoyable in very different ways, were *The Salt Path* by Raynor Wynn and *Lady in Waiting* by Anne Glenconner.

The former is the uplifting, true story of an extremely arduous and challenging walk along the 630 miles South West Coast Path – from Somerset to Dorset via Devon and Cornwall.

After having lost their home and then having a devastating health diagnosis a longtime married couple Moth (the husband) and Ray(nor) have to move on with their lives somehow. They quite literally take the next step by deciding to embark on this marathon walk together. They met the utmost hardships along the way, but I found myself being drawn into this journey of discovery with them and loving the descriptions of the coast and landscape of this area.

The latter book is in complete contrast! It's a memoir of one of the Maids of Honour at the coronation and Princess Margaret's Lady in Waiting: a remarkable record of life in those hallowed circles in those days, hopefully much of it gone now.... It's breathtaking how much some of them take for granted in their privileged but repressed lives, but you realise that most of them are human like us with real human family problems. The behaviour of the men in particular was infuriating – there was some truly eccentric and unpleasant behaviour. They were indulged and not challenged. You won't necessarily have any more sympathy for them by the end of the book but it's an amusing read and well written.



Other books we've read during the last year are:

Girl, Woman, Other by Bernadine Evaristo: a brilliant, complex story of twelve different women whose lives intertwine. Totally absorbing.

Hamnet by Maggie O'Farrell: very moving historical fiction about the death of Shakespeare's son and how this affects his whole family. In fact Shakespeare is never mentioned by name. Wonderful book – very highly recommended.

Let the Great World Spin by Colum McCann. Set in 1974 against the background of Philippe Petit's famous tightrope walk between the Twin Towers in New York just as they had finished being built. This is another complex but intriguing story about different people in New York who all witness this incredible feat. There's an Irish priest who's involved with saving prostitutes, some bereaved mothers coping with their sons' deaths in war, some young artists and the tightrope-walker himself. A brilliant, thought-provoking book! Some of us found it a hard read but worthwhile persisting.

I hope you might find some of these books worth a read. I enjoyed all of them as you can probably tell!

Ann Davies

Creative Writing Group

Ann Madell provides a short story.

A life not lost

"Don't worry mum, we'll be here when you wake up, it'll be over before you know it."

Susan's face was pale. She was putting on a brave face for me, that I knew, but she was my lovely daughter and I could read her like a book, she was a compulsive worrier, I knew every nuance in her expressive face. All her attempts to hide unshed tears could not deceive me.

I had had operations before but although this one was by comparison minor, somehow this time I was more nervous, maybe because after many empty years I had so much to look forward to.

Susan's swollen figure told of the life soon to come into our lives. She and her husband had longed for this little child and I couldn't wait to meet my grandchild.

She stood now beside my bed, on her shoulder the hand of the man who had come so unexpectedly into my life. His kind eyes told me that he would be her support until I returned from the theatre later in the day.

I knew my darling Paul would be waiting for me but I was afraid to say goodbye in case goodbye was all there was.

"Don't be scared sweetheart, I'll see you soon." He bent and kissed me lightly.

The door opened and the elderly surgeon dressed in green scrubs came in, his clever eyes just visible above his mask.

“We are ready for you, Lucy.” Then, turning to Susan and Paul, “I should go for a coffee while you are waiting; we’ll come and find you later.”

“Hello Lucy, do you remember me, I’m Dr Phillips your anaesthetist, don’t worry, just a little scratch, then I want you to start counting backwards from ten.” I felt the slightest prick.

“Ten, nine, eight, I’m still awake,” I say to myself silently. “Seven, six, five” – I feel myself slipping away.

Dreams, nice euphoric dreams, children running through blue water, white foam touching soft silver sand, laughing, shouting.

Darkness now, blue black, still running though, this time through forests thick with tall trees.

Slower now, then still, silent, listening.

“Who’s there?” I call in the darkness.

I see white figures peering down at me in the gloom. Eyes large in faces covered in white.

“We’ve lost her, no vital signs detectable, are we agreed – time of death 4.33.”

“What are they saying? death? I’m not dead surely – am I?”

I see them moving slowly, removing instruments, I hear metal on metal of the trolley.

I feel sudden intense panic.

“How can they think such a thing, I’m awake, I can see and hear, I’m not dead, just locked somehow inside myself. Look, I can move” – but try as I may I cannot, I’m transfixed, seemingly paralysed.

I must have slept a while because when I wake, if awake is what I am, the figures have changed. My family are in the room. I am relieved.

“Everything will be okay now”, I tell myself.

But then, why is Susan crying? I want to take her hand but I still can’t seem to move.

John my son is berating Paul, saying somehow all this must be his fault because I delayed having the operation until we had had our holiday.

I want to stop him, to tell him that I wouldn’t have missed our time in France for the world.

Paul sat quietly, head in hands allowing the grief John felt to find its own way.

I try to open my eyes wide so they can see that I'm still very much alive but to no avail and soon I'm alone once more.

Next I'm aware of someone else with them in the small room. A large man in clerical garb. They are discussing a funeral and I realise it is my own departing which is planned.

Irrationally I am pleased that they have remembered to include my favourite hymns and that the reading John has chosen is not too sombre.

I feel a little put out though about the decision to invite Aunt Flo and Uncle Arthur. I haven't seen them for years and all I recall from our last meeting was that Uncle Arthur sniffed continuously. Goodness me – I don't want them there!

My cousin Celia and her mealy-mouthed husband – I could just imagine them estimating the value of my treasures at the wake.

"I hope they put me in that nice blue dress, it's always been my favourite and it cost the earth, I've only worn it once."

"I hope too that I get lots of flowers, I do love flowers."

"Hey, wait a minute – what am I thinking? I'm not dead, I'm still alive, please someone listen, don't let them bury me I'M STILL ALIVE!"

I make a supreme effort to move my arms and kick my legs.

"Wake up sleepy head, it's all over, they said you can sit up when you feel like it!"

I look up into Paul's warm brown eyes.

"Am I alive?"

"Alive? You've just tried to wrestle your way out of bed – were you dreaming?"

"Something like that, Where's Susan?" I look around for my missing daughter.

"Oh well, Susan's been very busy while you have slept, she's just given birth to your little granddaughter and if you can stay awake long enough the doctor says I can wheel you round so you can say hello, how does that sound?"

I could not stop the tears from falling.

"A new life" sounds pretty good to me.

The Curry Club

On Wednesday 23rd February sixteen members met up for an inaugural meeting of our newest group, “The Curry Club”, upstairs at the Red Indian Restaurant in Wigmores North (in the John Lewis square).

All the diners were punctual, gathering at 7-30 pm for pre-dinner drinks. The atmosphere was very convivial with some people saying it was their “first time out in the evening” since Covid.

Everyone sat down at 8pm and enjoyed an Indian meal with an extensive choice of food comprising meat or vegetable mixed starters, 16 options of traditional main courses, and 11 options of side dishes, plus choices of different rices and breads – and all this for a fixed price of £15 !

The food was delicious, and service was excellent

The Curry Club will be meeting again in a few weeks’ time, so if anyone would like to join – speak to me: I will be pleased to add you to the list.

Tony Tutton



Tearoom Visit Group

Another new Group has started up this year. We meet once a month, on the fourth Friday afternoon, at a local tearoom for tea, cake, and chat. We already have twenty members, with sixteen attending the first outing to the We-R-Cakes Tearoom at Mardleybury in February (*photo below*). There was a very good selection of cakes, enjoyed in a pleasant, traditional tearoom setting, with mis-matched china. We all agreed we would return here later in the year, but the aim is to try lots of different venues.

In March the choice was the Courtyard Kitchen at Hatfield House, which was chosen as it is a large venue. This would be before the house and grounds opened for the season, so would not be too busy. Unfortunately I was unable to attend, due to Covid; thanks to Marie Scales for hosting on this occasion. Marie reported that conversation was very lively and lots laughter was heard! The group was accommodated at three tables, with several people moving between tables over the course of the afternoon so that everyone felt included.

If anyone else would like to join us please contact me by email: joant962@gmail.com or telephone: 01438 715032, or 07956 518073. We will travel independently by car, but if anyone needs a lift please let me know. We will probably try some Welwyn Garden City town centre locations in the winter (but let's enjoy the summer first!).

Joan Scales



Summer Term 2022 – 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 are now making recordings of talks delivered at our Wednesday morning meetings, whenever speakers are willing for us to do this.

We are making these recordings without investing in expensive new equipment or requiring a lot of technical knowledge, so the results are not perfect, but improving, and a number of members are now benefitting 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

27 Breaks Manor, Hatfield

Gary Fisher – “St. George”

Gary works as a Costumed Interpreter at many Historical sites, including The Royal London Palaces and Dover Castle.

MAY

4 Ludwick Family Centre, Welwyn Garden City

Jill Campbell –

“Knebworth House and the Challenges of the 20th Century”

The 20th century was a difficult time for most country houses and estates. Following the deaths of many heirs were in two world wars, high taxation and the costs of keeping ageing historic buildings standing, many houses were sold, fell into ruin or were demolished. This talk considers how the Lytton family adapted to the challenges faced and turned Knebworth House into a successful business and popular leisure attraction, whilst retaining it as a loved family home.

11, Hatfield

Geoffrey Bowden –

“Reviewing His Situation – the Life and Music of Lionel Bart”

Lionel Bart’s roller-coaster life includes a poor East End childhood; fame with pop song hits; huge success with the show *Oliver!* and then disaster and bankruptcy with his Robin Hood stage fiasco, *Twang!*

May 18, WGC

Chris Bennett –

“Apsley Cherry-Garrard – Hertfordshire’s Arctic Explorer”

Chris Bennett, Hertfordshire’s County Archivist, takes us through a look at the writings of Apsley Cherry-Garrard of Lamer, Wheathampstead, who accompanied Captain Scott on his ill-fated expedition to the South Pole, 1910 – 1913.

25, Hatfield

Rupert Dickens –

“Madame de Pompadour at The Court of Louis XV”

As mistress to the King of France, Madame de Pompadour used her power, wealth and influence to promote the arts at the court of Louis XV. She sat for portraits by the leading artists of the day, using these commissions to craft her image and ensure her survival in the precarious world of the 18th century.

JUNE

1, WGC

Murray Craig – “Sheep Over London Bridge”

In March 2022, Murray retires as Clerk of the Chamberlain’s Court at Guildhall in the City of London, being only the 37th Clerk since 1294. He will explain the privileges appertaining to freemen (including taking sheep over London Bridge) and speak about various celebrities who have received the freedom during his tenure as Clerk.

8, Hatfield

Julia Ladds – “Tall Ships and the Jubilee Sailing Trust”

This international charity has a mission to give people of mixed abilities the freedom to explore their ability, potential and place in the world through adventures at sea. Established for more than 40 years, over 50,000 people have sailed with the JST on their purpose-built and unique tall ships, Lord Nelson and Tenacious.

15, WGC

Linda Clark – “Hearing Dogs for Deaf People”

This UK charity trains dogs to help deaf people by alerting them to important sounds they would otherwise miss such as the doorbell, alarm clock or fire alarm. We will hear about how the dogs are trained and matched to their deaf partners, and the difference they make.

22, Hatfield

Paul Evans – “Dunkirk – Defeat, Debacle, Decision or Defiance?”

There's more to the Dunkirk evacuation than the films portray. Paul Evans of the Army Museums Ogilby Trust will talk through this extraordinary event: the planning, the last stands, the urban legends and the lessons learned. With 25 years' experience in military museums he's happy to talk about service papers, record keeping and how the systems worked then and work today.

29, WGC

Philippa Bernard – “Story of a Garden”

Sixty years ago, Philippa and her husband, newly married, had no money, no time, no experience and nowhere to live, but they did have plenty of energy. They found a small newly-built house with a building site for a garden and gradually created the garden they wanted. This is an account of how they set about it, learning as they went. Philippa still lives there and loves the garden as much as ever.

JULY

6, Hatfield

Simon Whitehouse – “Inside Covent Garden”

Simon is an award-winning London Blue Badge Guide, lecturer, presenter and recovering actor.

13, WGC

Adam Smith –

“Country Houses and the Great War – Duty and Sacrifice”

Adam is a lecturer in the architectural history of the English Country House and Estate.

20 Breaks Manor, Hatfield GARDEN PARTY

The Autumn term starts on 14 September, in Hatfield.

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