



UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

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NEWSLETTER May 2017 Issue 55

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

Meet the Groups 2017

This year's meeting, held on Wednesday 29 March, at Ludwick Hall in WGC as usual, was extremely well attended: 165 people came, including 17 visitors – so we hope they were sufficiently impressed to join us next term. Altogether 21 groups mounted displays.

The event opened with the cutting by Vice-Chair Ann Davies and David Banks of a splendid 30th-anniversary cake, baked and iced by David. He had iced one with our logo and did another without icing. They were both much appreciated! We hope to have another cake at our main anniversary celebration at the Garden Party in July.

As usual, the eye was first caught on entering the foyer by the sixteen large panels displaying nearly ninety of the impressive productions of our *Photography Group*.



Contents

Meet the Groups	1, 3
Notes from the Chair	6
GROUP NEWS	
Book Group 1	8
Creative Writing	9
Exploring London 3	9
Latin	11
Photography	13
Recorders	14
Walkers	17
<i>Profile:</i> Elaine Evans	19
<i>Publications:</i> WGC – <i>A Dramatic Town</i>	20
<i>Obituary:</i> Ed Pizsey	21
Wednesday Meetings	22

U3A Welwyn-Hatfield NEWSLETTER

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Some of the groups that make trips showed albums full of large, colourful photographs of the places they'd visited, as well as promoting their future planned excursions: *Architecture* (which also displayed specialist books on its subject), *Arts Appreciation*, *Travel* (supplemented by a slideshow), and *Walking*. *Family History* showed large volumes on genealogy and on tracing family history, with a slideshow of old documents and records and the topics they cover.

Most impressive was the *Science and Technology* group's display, mounted by Dick Grainge. He had designed a device to prevent birds roosting on his sailing lake's course-marking buoys and fouling them, and the software to produce it from a 3-D printer. He had a computer display showing the stages of production, and the object itself emerging from a 3-D printer, before our very – amazed – eyes.

The *Bridge* table had playing cards set out; *British History* showed a selection of DVDs; the *Consciousness Studies* table bore several pages of quotes from Max Planck, philosophers' views of consciousness, and press cuttings; *Exploring London (3)* outlined its plans for future trips; *Greetings Cards* displayed their attractive products and materials; the *Inner Peace* table bore inspiring little booklets; *Playreading 1* showed play scripts; *Recorders* showed instruments and scores; *World Affairs* a list of topics they had discussed.

Some groups demonstrated their activity. Games of *Scrabble* and *Mah Jong* were played; *Watercolours* were painted. Bill Sloan led three members of his group in a display of *Line Dancing*, after which a crowd of enthusiastic members accepted his challenge to join them for another dance – showing that U3A members may be physically active, as well as the keen mental activity evinced by all the stalls round the hall. This was followed by a calming display of *Tai Chi*. Don Busolini, leader of the group, described Tai Chi as an ancient practice derived from martial arts: medication or meditation – slow, painless exercise. Don and six members demonstrated the Yang Style Short Horn moves, then Don and Keith Tuttlebury performed the Broad Sword moves, with fearsome-looking swords, broad-bladed indeed.



Left to right – John Page, Vicky Rich and Jean Jack painting watercolours



Many thanks must go to the Group Leaders, who came early to set up their displays and spent the morning chatting to members. Ann Davies, Groups' Coordinator, would also like to express her appreciation to John Middleton for the magnificent room plan he always produces on his computer for the event.



Photographs by Peter Fox

Notes from the Chair

I can't believe how quickly this year has gone as Chair. Once again, it's been a busy time for Welwyn Hatfield U3A. Our weekly meetings, a key feature of our organisation, have been well supported with well over a hundred members attending each of the talks. The increasing number of study groups continues to thrive and grow, with some now having a waiting list. *Exploring London* now has four groups – clearly a very popular activity!



Other successful events included the 'Royalty' themed summer party, which included a quiz and a photo competition; a lively Christmas quiz; and a thoroughly enjoyable Christmas lunch. A new event for this summer is to be the '60s supper dance in May, organised by Tony Tutton. Tickets are selling well and it promises to be a good night out – I'm hoping you're already looking

out those short shift dresses, purple shirts and head bands!

My thanks go to all of the committee for their sterling support throughout the year, without whom we couldn't sustain our breadth of activities [*seen here enjoying a festive lunch*]. In particular I must mention Ann Davies, Vice Chairman and Groups' Co-ordinator, who has always been ready to step in to the chair's role



when necessary. Carol Mills, secretary, and Sandy Pizzey, programme secretary, have sadly stepped down from the committee after providing invaluable support to ensure our organisation runs so efficiently. Special thanks to them, and a warm welcome to Marie Scales and Peter Fox, our new committee members. Thanks also go to all of those who help to ensure the smooth running of the Wednesday meetings – Front of House, the speakers' booking team, refreshments, reception team, welcomers and sound team. Thanks also to those who support our other social activities throughout the year. I would also like to mention Group Leaders who willingly give of their time to run their groups which I know that so many of you enjoy.

Of course, one of the major issues for us this year has been the matter of fees. It has been a very difficult and frustrating time for us all. The latest news is that the fees will be introduced in the coming months once health and safety checks are completed. Fees will vary according to the size of the venue. Despite this delay, as our subscriptions are paid in January, a decision had to be made by the committee, based on your responses. Many thanks to those of you who have updated your standing orders – and a gentle reminder to those who still have to do this to do so as soon as possible, please. The membership secretary and treasurer, Suzanne and Judy, are working extremely hard to ensure that the finances are in order and that your bank has also processed the change correctly!

While welcoming a good number of new members to our U3A this year we must also remember those who have sadly passed away. In particular Diana Reddaway who ran the recorder group so enthusiastically, Jan Porter who ran the popular luncheon club, and most recently Ed Pizzey, whom many of you will know through the groups that he belonged to, and not least the stirring work he did for front of house and sound.

Some of you may not have heard that Jack Wood has recently moved up to Redcar in Yorkshire. He is hoping to join us for our summer garden party, though.

I hope you all enjoy the forthcoming spring, with the lighter nights and beautiful blossom.

Jean Mackie



Farewell, Jack Wood!

Group News

Book Group 1

Our group has recently enjoyed two novels each based on a lifetime of diary entries (spanning the twentieth century), both of which set out to deceive ... the protagonists being wholly fictional, yet with differing authorial devices used to persuade the reader that the works are in fact biographical.

All credit to the authors for inventing such well-rounded and believable characters: Margaret Forster for *Diary of an Ordinary Woman*, and William Boyd for *Any Human Heart*. Margaret Forster leads the reader to believe that she is editing the diaries of Millicent King, and provides the commentary between diary entries to fill in any gaps or to remark on Millicent's words or perceived emotions.

William Boyd uses historical events (including footnotes with specific dates and further information) and introduces the likes of the Duke and Duchess of Windsor, Picasso, Ian Fleming ... the list is endless ... they all feature somewhere in the life of protagonist Logan Mountstuart. Not such an "ordinary life" for him! Some of us felt that there was an excess of background historical information that detracted from the story.

Both novels prompted us to discuss the effect that early life experiences had in shaping the personality of the characters. Both authors chose to leave some events unresolved, and we discussed what their intentions might have been in leaving ambiguities.

Another book we have enjoyed discussing was *H is for Hawk* by Helen Macdonald. In this instance the story was biographical, recounting the author's experiences in the year following the sudden death of her father. Largely rejecting human contact, and with a lifelong enthusiasm for falconry, she directed all her energies into training a Goshawk. Intertwined with Helen's story is another: that of author T. H. White and the trials he encountered in goshawk training (his book on the subject, *The Goshawk*, was published in 1951). We learnt a lot about the history of, and skill involved in, falconry, while sympathising with Helen's difficult grieving process. We also discussed the element of cruelty involved in the training of a wild creature and whether it could ever be justified. *Janet Nicolas*

Creative writing

As usual, members of this group read examples of their work after the AGM on 8 March. Val Fieth and Jenny Roden read poems, and Roy Madell and Ann Higgs read humorous pieces.

This is one of the works produced when the group was set the topic, 'It was in found in the attic'.

The Attic

Cases and rucksacks piled in a heap
Books and torn comics six foot deep
Tiny Tears who no longer cries
A Teddy Bear bereft of sighs
A chair with the arm broken at an angle
Next to the rollers of an ancient mangle
Tat framed photograph long forgotten
Two pairs of curtains made out of cotton
Ludo, Cluedo, Frustration and more
Lie abandoned next to an old wooden door
A fan, a kettle, left forlorn
A pile of clothes ragged and torn
A radio next to an old computer
A telephone besides the router
A rocking horse, Christmas tree and decorations
Pieces of old carpet and party preparations
An empty box chewed by mice
An old mattress – hopefully no lice
These are a few things I found today
Full of old memories that will always stay

Jacky Morrison

Exploring London Group 3

Our group's first trip last term was to Covent Garden on February 2nd. We began at St Paul's church which is known as the actors' church because many members of that profession worship there. We were treated to a fascinating talk by the Rector, who gave us the history of the building, pointed out the many commemorative plaques, and is on first name terms with many famous people.

There was also an opportunity to admire the architecture and see

around the peaceful garden in the heart of Covent Garden.

Following this we enjoyed lunch in a small French café in the square.

Then came the jewel of this trip – a visit to the Royal Opera House, including an extremely comprehensive behind-the-scenes tour, with a dedicated and knowledgeable guide who was as passionate about the premises as about Opera and Ballet.

This is an amazing building with almost as much space below ground as above. We were treated to a tour of the auditorium where several large items of scenery were being made ready for the evening performance, a look at several rehearsal studios where students and performers were busy preparing, several floors of extremely busy staff and a tour of the fine dining corporate entertaining section. We came away vowing to return for a performance as soon as possible.

Our second trip was a sponsored visit to the House of Commons on Tuesday 4 April. Mindful of the increased security in the area, we arrived early, cleared efficiently through security and found our guide in the Westminster Hall. He took us on a brisk walk through the magnificent varied halls and a slow walk back whilst outlining the history, stories, pictures, sculptures and decorations of this truly wondrous building. The procedures and rituals of the daily sessions were very well described, and as the Commons are at Easter recess and the Lords meet in the afternoon we were allowed into both the surprisingly small Commons and Lords chambers and division lobbies. Our guide described the debates and procedures and answered our many questions. Back via the central lobby and the many statues of former prime ministers, we were filled with a sense of awe and wonder of the history and splendour of this palace.

Lunch at the café, a visit to the gift shop, and then along to the park next door on the bank of the Thames, which has a large statue of Emmeline Pankhurst.

We then had a visit booked at the Jewel Tower opposite, which are the remains of a 14th century Palace of Westminster building, and originally contained the personal treasures of Edward III. The House of Lords used it from the 16th century to store all their records; then in 1869 the Weights and Measures Department took it over. Today it is a museum, run by English Heritage. The curator gave a fascinating description of its history to the group and then left us to climb the steep stairs and view the varied and interesting exhibits.



Exploring London group 3 in front of the House of Commons
photo taken by a passing tourist

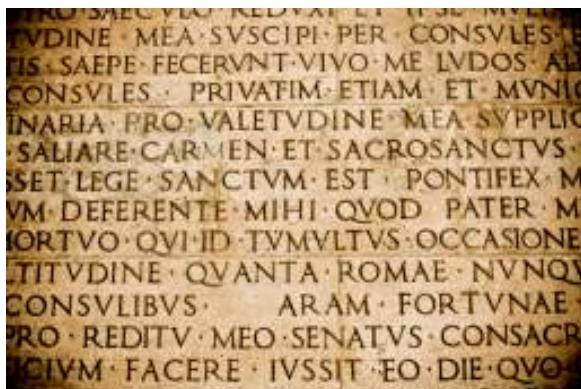
Thanks to our local MP Grant Shapps for sponsoring our visit.

Sue Mclellen & Tony Dodd

Latin

Veni, Vidi, Vici – a Beginner’s Guide to the Latin Group

What is the Latin Group and what do you do? It’s a frequently asked question. Some people have even thought it was Latin-American dancing when I have said I go to a Latin group! But, to be brief, it’s a group of some eight to ten women (but I did see a man there once) who have mainly done Latin A or O Level in the past and use the group to sharpen their memories and refresh their interest in the language and culture of ancient Rome. I am not one of those, having never done Latin in the past, so it has been quite a steep learning curve for me. I



utmost respect for their contributions and inspiration.

Basically the class has been following the Cambridge Latin Course, which is widely used in schools. Each book is set in a different location of the Roman Empire, including Britain, and has a narrative thread running through all five books. We read and translate the narrative extracts; do some of the grammar exercises (until our brains hurt!) and discuss some of the historical events and issues arising from the text. Through this we are ably led and humorously guided by our leader and mentor in all things classical, Rosalie Lomas. Rosalie is a lady of prodigious intellect, who always seeks to bring something fresh to the class, usually some example of modern scholarship relevant to our studies of the classical world. And I have to mention the digressions! They are always fascinating, often humorous, never dull and always relevant and wide-ranging in their scope and ability to engage us in lively debate.

We have now covered all five books in the series and are about to embark on an anthology of extracts from Roman authors. I have been attending the class for about four years. In no way do I feel on top of the grammar and I am always promising myself the time to go over tenses, cases, declensions but the demands of understanding such things as “ablative absolutes”; the difference between gerunds and gerundives and much more still elude me. Even the experience of being an English teacher myself has not prepared me for all this but has given me the capacity for and interest in language and its rules.

My personal reasons for wanting to join the class were, that having

am not the only one in this position and, along with the other two, we have to prep quite assiduously in order to make headway and hold our own corner. The others in the group are incredibly encouraging and supportive of our efforts and I have developed the

been a teacher almost all of my working life, I wanted to be a learner. I had studied advanced French at Herts University on short courses for three years and I wanted to build on my language interests. I had also had a great interest in classics, particularly Greek Drama, and wanted to broaden my classical interests. The class has more than fulfilled my wishes and, sometimes, when I find myself overburdened with my carer's responsibilities, the class is an intellectual lifeline. I even managed to answer a couple of Latin questions on University Challenge on one occasion!

Have there been disappointments? Well, only in one of the first sessions when I discovered that the "v" sound in English is pronounced as a "w" in Latin. Thus the title of this article is pronounced "weenie, weedie, weechi". It didn't seem to me to have quite the same power. But there is always something new to learn.

Pamela Williams

Photography



The Leaning Tower
of Pisa
in Italy.

*Photograph by
Celia Boccacci,
displayed at
Meet the Groups.*

Recorders

Under new management – the Recorder Group one year on

This time two years ago, just prior to retirement, I was looking ahead from the last few months at work, to what was beyond. My husband had been retired for thirteen years: I had seen how he occupied himself, and how his interests changed over the years. What would it be for me? Would interests grow and develop? Or was life closing down around me as I was no longer an employee? At that time, I sang in a choir, I had played the guitar since 1960s folk music captured my interest, I attend monthly book group meetings, and we go to see the grandchildren. Would there be more?

Start locally, I thought. I joined the Keep Fit class at the top of my road, with two neighbours. I must commit, I thought, and joined the National Keep Fit Association.

Someone mentioned Welwyn Hatfield U3A. I loved the prospect of the weekly meetings and the many study groups. It was a relief to know that life could be interesting in my retirement, with new activities and new people to meet.

In retirement something new – a Recorder Group.

And I saw that there is a Recorder Group at Welwyn Hatfield U3A. I played recorder in primary school (who didn't? Many children thus gained a good experience of instrumental playing at a young age). We had a couple of recorders in a drawer somewhere, and I found I could still play when my daughter learned and I played with her.

Something new for retirement – a happy thought.

The U3A Recorder Group met on the same day as the local Keep Fit class. I chose recorders, as there were fitness activities available every day, but recorders on only one day. That way I could do both, though I was sad to lose the local connection.

I liked the first Recorder Group meeting. There were twenty players sitting in a horseshoe; Diana Reddaway conducted; we played between four and six pieces in the hour-and-a-half; there were lots of very skilled players, and also a place for a beginner. There was a neat method of handing out the music and taking it back in. The



experienced players carried a smart case, which contained their recorders in parts of all sizes. When assembled, there was descant, treble, tenor, and bass and the Grand Bass which is nearly 4ft high. There was also the tiny sopranino, smaller than the descant. These players were clearly experts, some travelled quite a distance to attend, and they made me welcome.

The recorder has a distinguished history: we are the parent instrument of the flute and clarinet, the oboe and the other orchestral woodwind instruments. We play music written for the recorder from the sixteenth century, up to and including the present. And many of the pieces we play are adaptations of well known music. I wanted to pinch myself: was this a dream? I had always wanted to play in an orchestra – this felt like one.

I learned that there are three groups of recorder players in Welwyn. As well as the U3A group, there are two groups that are under the auspices of the Society for Recorder Players, one meeting on a weeknight evening during term time in St John's Lemsford, and one meeting monthly at the Friends Meeting House. This is unusual (in



The Recorder Group playing, with Diana Reddaway conducting
Photo by Jane Lewis

fact it is Amazing) – in Derbyshire where I have family, you have to travel over thirty miles to Southwell in the next county to find a recorder group.

How the group runs without Diana

Diana Reddaway had run this group for over thirty years: it is said that it existed before our local U3A came into being. I knew her for three months. I liked her enormously, and had some super conversations with her in that short time. As well as great music, Diana made every effort to make this a good group and would ring up people who were absent, to check that they were well, that everything was all right. I could see that she was frail with little energy, and I could imagine how impressive and encouraging she clearly had been previously. Of course this was a big group! Diana had engendered a number of loyal recorder-playing friends.

Diana stopped attending the group at Easter 2016 due to ill health, and sadly died later that summer. I have been asked to write this, the story of how the group is continuing without her, and how her loyal friends continue to enjoy their music. After one year, with four members of the group alternating as conductors, we regularly have high numbers of players attending to play a varied range of music. This is truly in the U3A tradition of participative groups and shared learning. Diana kindly made her vast library of music available to us: some of it had been purchased with the small sum we contributed at the start of each term.

Diana's legacy

And what is Diana's legacy, for it includes the U3A and goes beyond? Diana told me that she had taught recorder to pupils at Templewood school for over a decade. In the 1980s she was involved in organizing recorder tuition and a regular recorder group for teachers to brush up their skills; they met in people's homes, and the result was great for their primary pupils who gained in musical ability as a result. Diana also was the Area Administrator for the Society for Recorder Players, the national body; ran the group that meets monthly in the Friends Meeting House, and also served on the National Committee and organized and participated in Summer Schools,



taking friends from Welwyn along with her. Now I understand why recorder playing is so popular in this part of Hertfordshire. This is the heritage of our Welwyn Hatfield U3A Recorder Group, one person's very strong contribution, through middle age and into her long retirement.

What is retirement – life closing down without the stimulus of work, or life opening up to new experiences?

Jane Lewis

Walkers

The Walking Group goes on!

When I started our walking group eight years ago, I was not quite sure what to expect, so I organised an easy short walk from the Campus West car park in WGC, along the footpath to the Red Lion pub on the Great North Road for coffee and return through Sherrards Park Wood. All very civilized, except that I left a lady behind in the pub toilets, and half the group went straight back to the car park! However, nineteen members turned out for this walk which was very encouraging and I was then able to issue the following advertisement:

We are sorry to say that we only accept walkers who enjoy social company, convivial chat, fresh air and healthy, if not overstraining, exercise. We meet once a month in colder months and twice in warmer months, for standard circular walks of about 4 ½ miles, starting mid-morning and finishing close to places of light refreshment!



Mike Dorrington

The group decided that they did not want to drive for more than twenty minutes to a start point from WGC. However, this gave us the opportunity to travel as far afield as Kings Walden in the west to Stapleford in the east, becoming more familiar with most of the country pubs in the surrounding area! We have experienced warm sunshine and pouring rain — and on one occasion we walked through snow in Brocket Hall park.

Over the eight years I have collected many guide books and maps, and from these I now have a stock of about thirty walks for the local area. I have also organised walks in London. One walk we have always enjoyed is our blackberry-picking ramble in Kings Walden: some seasons there is quite a high yield. I think we have explored almost all the local footpaths in our part of Hertfordshire and we are very grateful to be able to walk in such a lovely county.

I like to research each walk to note any unusual natural areas or places of



**The engraved walking stick,
books and vouchers
presented to Mike by the group.**



**The Walkers say farewell to Mike on the bridge in Brocket Hall Park.
Photo by Sue Dorrington**

possible historic interest. However, I am often beaten by the continuous “convivial chat” rather than marvel at my local knowledge!

I have decided that, after eight years as Walking Group Leader, it is time to hand over the leadership to others, and so the Walking Group goes on. I shall carry on walking with the Group — why not join us?

Mike Dorrington

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

Elaine Evans

Elaine Boyle was born in India at the outset of World War II, the daughter of a British Army Major, and nearly died there at the age of one. Her father was sent to Burma, where he was taken prisoner and died at the hands of the Japanese. Elaine, aged two, her three siblings and her mother then returned to England (the ship on which they should have travelled, but missed because Elaine had whooping cough, being sunk by German bombing) and lived with her grandparents in a vicarage in Hereford until the grandparents bought them a house.

Elaine went as a boarder to a public school for the daughters of Army officers, in Bath, until she was seventeen. Then, after a year helping in an infant school, she trained as a nurse at the John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford, qualifying in 1961. She was by then engaged to an Oxford student, and worked for a year in a private nursing home before they married in 1962, and moved to Oundle in Northamptonshire, where they produced two children; then to Liverpool where their third was born.

In 1968 they came to Hatfield, where Anthony taught at Hatfield School, and Elaine worked in the multiple sclerosis unit at Danesbury Hospital for eight years. The



couple then divorced, and Elaine became a district nurse in Hatfield, and finally community liaison officer at the QE II in Welwyn Garden City. Living alone, in 1992 she bought a cottage in Kimpton, where she has lived ever since (a beautiful place, as visitors can testify!).

She retired in 2001, and straightway joined U3A, where she knew no one. Joining the Architecture group, though, she immediately found friends; later she became their co-ordinator, and has thoroughly enjoyed seeing this friendly group continue to flourish with increasing membership. She also joined the Book Club, British History, Exploring London, Mah Jong and World Affairs. In 2009 Elaine joined the committee as our Membership secretary.

This was the year in which John Middleton became our Chairman, and is recognised as having computerised our U3A. He taught Elaine the use of spreadsheets and helped her to put all the membership (then some six hundred) on computer. During her four years as membership secretary, also, registers for groups were introduced, to prevent non-members of U3A attending group meetings, as were the recording of the names and total number of those attending the Wednesday meetings, as the dangers of over-size became recognised.

Now Elaine drives over to Welwyn-Hatfield some four days a week to attend meetings. She belongs too to NADFAS and the WEA – days at home are rare. She says she would have been lost without U3A, which “opened up her life: was essential to someone living alone”, and enables people to do things that they couldn’t while working and bringing up children. She is very grateful, and considers Wel-Hat “a very good U3A, democratic, extremely well run – terrific!”.

Hazel Bell

Publications

WGC – A Dramatic Town by Robert Gill: Welwyn Garden City Heritage Trust, 2017. ISBN 978-0-9927636-2-6. £5 + postage & packing. To purchase email <info@welwyngarden-heritage.org>.

This thoroughly researched little book is published by Welwyn Garden City Heritage Trust as part of their ‘Where Do You Think We Played?’ Project. Trustee Robert Gill charts the development of amateur drama in Welwyn Garden City, starting in 1920 and ending

with a nod to the approaching 100th anniversary of the town. Almost as old as the town itself, drama grew up alongside it, the first play being produced in 1921, just a year after the first residents moved in.

We're introduced very early on to Ebenezer Howard, founder of the Garden City movement who 'believed in mankind's essential co-operativeness and egalitarianism, given the right environment'. We're reminded, dear reader, of what a really very good idea the Garden City was, and is. In only eighty-three pages Gill has managed to include all the major players and acts in the development of amateur drama in the second Garden City.

There are tales of The Welwyn Garden City Theatre Society taking a play to New York in 1927 and being awarded first prize in a prestigious American Drama Competition. There's mention of a young actress, Flora Robson, who started a drama group called The Barnstormers and took a job at the Shredded Wheat Company while struggling to make her name in theatre.

Active himself in the local drama scene for many years, particularly the Barn Theatre Trust, Gill is well placed to give us a very readable and fascinating history of this 'Dramatic Town.'

Also available by Robert Gill is '*A Dramatic Hollow In Sherrardspark Wood - The Dell*' published by the WGC Centenary Foundation in 2015, £3 + post and packaging.

Email <info@welwyngarden-heritage> to order.

Carol Bush

Obituary

Edward Pizzey 1944-2017

I have been asked to write an Obituary for my friend Ed. We were walking buddies; but more of that later.

Ed and his family moved to Hatfield in 1985, originally from the London area. He joined our U3A in 2005 following his retirement from the computer industry. He enjoyed the Science and Technology, Walkers, French 3, and Exploring London 3 groups. Those of us who went to Wednesday meetings will remember Ed as a "Front of House" man who also helped with the sound systems.

Ed enjoyed coming on walks with us at the Walking Group,

especially if it involved a pint and a good chat at a pub afterwards. Ed was a tall guy and he would hold up low tree branches so the rest of us could pass safely under. He always had nice clean walking shoes! His big challenge, because he had long legs, was to try not to forge on too far ahead of the rest of us!

Once a year he would arrive at a Walking Group start point with a pile of "Colney Heath" calendars to sell. He had a long association with the village as he used to live there and belonged to the Colney Heath/Boissy Twinning Association, making regular exchange visits to France.

Not many people know this, but Ed was a "Brocket" babe, born at Brocket Hall on 6th March 1944. Whenever our walks took us past Brocket Hall, we would always pull his leg because he was not able to invite us in for coffee!

Ed was a good conversationalist on our walks and we would cover many topics: but not "Politics", as it was a golden rule for us walkers not to get in heated discussions!

Ed was a very likeable fellow, and I miss him.

Mike Dorrington

Summer Term 2017 – Wednesday meetings

Doors open at 9.45; tea and coffee are served from 10.00 to 10.30 a.m. The meeting starts at 10.30 a.m. with notices, followed by the talk. Entry is free: tea or coffee at 20p.



APRIL

26, Ludwick Family Centre, Welwyn Garden City

Maggy Douglas: ‘St Albans in World War I: Doing your bit’

Maggy Douglas from St Albans and Hertfordshire Architectural and Archaeological Society will be speaking about how local men and women, girls and boys “did their bit” on the home front during the First World War.

MAY

3, Breaks Manor, Hatfield

Mr T Perry: ‘History of the Royal National Lifeboats Institution’

The RNLI is the charity that saves lives at sea. Separate from the Coastguard and independent of the Government, its aim is to educate, supervise and rescue those at risk from drowning.

10, WGC

Nik Pringle: ‘Hertfordshire Murders’

We will hear about a selection of the many murders that have taken place in Hertfordshire over the years.

17, Hatfield

Graham Laurie: ‘Roald Dahl’s War’

Graham, a historian and former RAF pilot, will tell us about the writer’s life in the RAF during the Second World War and his subsequent rise to literary stardom.

24, WGC

Julie Lloyd: ‘Cyber Crime’

Hertfordshire Constabulary’s ‘Cyber Protection’ officer will give a presentation about how to stay safe online. This will include tips on how to do safely some common online activities, such as shopping or using your email, together with practical advice about how to protect your computers, mobile phones and other online devices.

31, Hatfield

Vic Botterill: ‘The Nursery Rhyme Detective’

Do you remember those nursery rhymes you used to recite as a child? They seemed quite harmless, often strange and meaningless – but did you know many contained secrets and stories? Who was Georgie Porgie and why were those blackbirds baked in a pie?

JUNE

7, WGC

Jane Palmer: ‘Mercy Ships’

Founded in 1978, Mercy Ships is an international charity operating the largest non-governmental hospital ship in the world, transforming retired ocean liners and ferries into floating hospitals.

14, Hatfield

Martin Holmes: ‘Neville Chamberlain: A Reputation Revisited’

Dr Martin Hughes was a Lecturer in Politics at St Hugh’s College, Oxford University, 1987-2009. Since then he has been an (Hon) Member of the Senior Common Room. He is an expert on British 20th century history and government, and is an author and journalist. He is a regular speaker for the U3A.

21, WGC

Jane King: ‘Coram’s Children: The Story of the Foundling Hospital’

Founded by Thomas Coram in 1739, The Foundling Hospital in London was a children’s home offering ‘hospitality’ to ‘exposed and deserted’ young children.

28, Hatfield

John McCombe: ‘Voluntary Emergency Blood Transport’

The Voluntary Emergency Blood Delivery Team runs services throughout the night, taking much-needed blood donations from London to hospitals in Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire. Since he retired John has been volunteering with this service for many years.

JULY

5, WGC

Jeff Lewis: ‘Bringing the History of Smallford Station to Life’

Smallford is a hamlet in the District of St Albans between Hatfield and St Albans. It was served by Smallford Station on the Hatfield and St Albans Railway, run by GNR, now the Alban Way foot and cycle path. We will hear about the Smallford Station Project which includes workshops and activities.

12, 2 – 4 pm Garden Party at Breaks Manor, Hatfield

Please bring finger food and garden chairs.