

NEWSLETTER

Dance the Maori Rain Dance

by Margaret Thompson EDITOR

WAS that summer then? How I enjoyed that glorious weather, as did my tomatoes in the greenhouse, now with the first fruit set, a promise of rich harvest to come. I love that pungent aroma of tomato plants in hot weather, though not the violent, iridescent green stains one acquires on any garment which they touch. Now that the grey skies are returned, will everyone stomp round their kitchens doing the 'Maori Rain Dance'! I was reminded of this when I attended one of my grandson's school open days and his year 1 class performed this hypnotic, rhythmic dance as practised in New Zealand for thousands of years. They obviously thought it worked, so let's have a go as we really do need rain!

With the web site almost ready we intend to do a pilot run in the next few weeks and hope that all who can access it, will do so, and will give us some feedback. It will be good to be able to locate all the information about our U3A so easily and not to have to find that illusive bit of paper on which something vital was written. I have been browsing the other local U3A sites and it is very interesting to see how other U3As do it. The Newsletter will be on the website so can I once again request that personal details are not included in the Groups' News or articles. Adverts, Almoners phone numbers and the Bi-Annual Synopsis will not be included in the web version. The contact list will be aliases which will link to the chairman, SG Coordinator etc but will not disclose their personal email addresses.

COMMITTEE NOTES By Terry Godfrey

1. A REMINDER to members that if they have any questions ie: AOB, for consideration at the next AGM could they submit these to the committee throughout the year to enable adequate discussion.
2. There will be provision on the Notice Board at each monthly meeting for members to ask questions or make suggestions to which the committee will respond.
3. The Data Protection Document will be posted on the notice board at each monthly meeting.
4. We now have two new Almoners. Janet Carleton and Kathleen McMahon [See contact details below].
5. Please remember to sign the fire register, if you arrive at the monthly meeting late or leave early, so that in an emergency we know exactly who is present.



Sarah Priestly photo Reg

At our last monthly meeting we had a very interesting and informative talk about the history of Cassiobury from the Curator of the Watford Museum, Sarah Priestly. I am afraid it only confirmed many people's opinion that past planning decisions by Watford Borough Council were bordering on vandalism. So much rich heritage was lost. To some extent honour was restored with the acquisition of some of the estate land for our leisure activities today, in the shape of Cassiobury Park enabling the development of numerous and varied wildlife habitats.

This is a very busy and happy month for lucky me with the arrival of my eighth grandchild; a gorgeous dolly girl called Isabelle who I am dashing off to help look after as soon as I can get this Newsletter to the printers.

This links me neatly to my next point which is to thank all the study group leaders for getting their news and articles to me as early as possible in the month. May I remind you that the copy date is the 20th of each month but tell you that, by then, the NL is almost complete and usually full. I start work on the next edition immediately after the monthly meeting thus I have the last week of the month as a well earned break for ME.

Finally a warm welcome to the 20 Associate Members who have now received their full membership. We look forward to seeing you at the monthly meetings. Welcome also to Mildred Rodrigue who joins us as an Associate Member.

Study Group Topics

By Dennis Fitton

Study Group Coordinator

MEMBERS will be able to sign up for the 2006/2007 computer courses at the July meeting or by contacting me by letter or email. Please think carefully before selecting a course. It is very frustrating for the tutor and organisers when people allocated to the courses do not turn up. **If during the year you are unable to attend the course, please let me know** so someone else can have a chance.

As you will have realised by now, I am very keen to cater for absolute beginners and given sufficient demand, this course will definitely run. If you start the absolute beginners' course I urge you to persevere and give it a fair trial. If you then decide it is not for you, at least you will have made the attempt. I am sure that many of you will join those of us who are glad that we made the effort. Both Yvonne and I have found that joining the committee was the principal motive for improving our computer skills. There's an incentive for you!

The **Study Group Fair** will run from **10.00am to 12.00** in place of the speaker at the **August** monthly meeting. On this occasion **Associate Members** will be welcome to attend to discover what we have to offer.

Will **SGLs** consider their displays? The format will be as usual. John Grainger has most of the existing displays. If you wish to change your display or if you run a new group, he will supply the backing sheet (3ft x 2ft portrait) and you will produce an appropriate display. If you have any special requirements for your display please let me know.

All Sound and Fury Signifying a Great Deal!

By Francis Goode

EIGHT of the Shakespeare Group drove to Stratford-upon-Avon to see Julius Caesar at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre. We enjoyed a dramatic performance enlivened by colourful togas and enveloping sound. The travelling was in two cars via the M40; straightforward enough except for the unsolved mystery of the entrance to the car park! However, all were in time for a bite before taking our well-placed seats for the 1.30 performance.

The photo shows the party by the Theatre restaurant with the Avon bridge as background. Our normal meetings are on the last Wednesday of the month at 2 pm and these continue regardless of visits. More theatre visits will be planned; the day and time for these is dependent on theatre bookings.



Science Interest: Enigma and the Bombe

by Brian Mee

ALAN WRAY gave us a concise history of signals and ciphers and then developed for us the complex ideas behind Alan Turing's British Bombe.

Alan Turing was a brilliant mathematician and sometimes dubbed 'the father of the computer' and he developed the Bombe; a machine which tested out many millions of number sequences. It looked for a match with a possible solution to a coded message received, by intercepting enemy radio communications.



An Enigma Machine
photo Alan Wray

The work was carried out at Bletchley Park, where thousands of people were employed to crack the Enigma code during World War Two. Alan W most successfully described the highly complex working of Enigma machines and explained how they were manufactured. The Poles had intercepted a German Enigma machine between the Wars and discovered the intricacies of them. Once a knowledge of the machine is understood, it is possible to crack the codes, but there are so many combinations that a manual decryption would take months. Since the code settings on the Enigma machines were changed every day, it was vital to crack each day's code within hours. The Bombes enabled this to be done and we owe our freedom today to people like Alan Turing and others who beavered away so diligently at Bletchley Park.

John Harper, one of the planned speakers, was caught up in traffic congestion on the 19th of June and never arrived at our meeting.

Tales from the History Group -EJ & BA Long

AT OUR June meeting Gwyneth Bellis gave us an informative talk on the history of Chester, owing much of its success to its geographical position on the River Dee, as a port below a readily defensible sandstone promontory. Early occupation is likely but with little evidence remaining, beyond a few Neolithic shards.

At the time of the Roman invasion, the local Celtic tribe were the Comovii. The Romans, under the Governorship of Agricola, built the first wooden defences in 76AD, but before they left Britain in the early 5th Century, it was a city built of stone, had an amphitheatre which could accommodate 7000, and walls which still stand today. Named Deva (Goddess of the River Dee) by the Romans, it was a legionary fortress until 383AD

Unoccupied, after the Romans left, Viking occupation in the 10th century was ended by Aethelflaeda, daughter of Alfred the Great, who strengthened the old Roman walls. In Saxon times, it became known as Legecaester (Camp of the legions) and had a population of 3000. The first part of the name was subsequently dropped. By the time of Henry I (1100) it was recognised on the coinage as Chester.

Chester was of military importance, being the lowest bridging point on the Dee, controlling the route into North Wales and the western route to Northern England and Scotland, with its port a major link with Europe until its silting up in the 18th Century. In 1070 the Normans built the castle. In the 14th Century, the Rows were built; double level walkways with a continuous line of balconies. In 1645, Charles I watched the defeat of his army on Rowton Moor from a tower on the NE corner of the city walls. The town endured a siege for two years until finally submitting to the Parliamentarians.

The Industrial Revolution brought railways and canals to make

Chester a wealthy trading centre.

In our second session Eric traced the history of government in Britain back to the Anglo-Saxon "moots", or meetings of freemen, which established the practice of "Rule by Custom and Right", administered by the "Witan", or Council of wise men. The Normans held "Great Councils", three times a year, comprising the King in council with his barons and bishops, to which the term "parliament" was originally applied. In the interim the King had a small group of ministers, the "King's Council". However the royal presumption of prerogative in acting without consultation, caused the Barons to revolt in 1214, forcing King John to sign "Magna Carta" which committed him to rule according to custom. When John reneged on his obligations, the Barons called upon Louis, son of the French King Philip, to come to England where he was proclaimed King, but he was sent packing when the retreating John died of dysentery after losing his baggage in the Wash. His nine year old son was proclaimed King Henry III. In 1232, Henry declared himself "of age", dismissed his Council and proceeded to conduct affairs without consultation, which led to another revolt, led by Simon de Montfort. He was defeated by Henry's son, who, when he became Edward I, summoned the first general or 'Model' Parliament. This included Knights, Citizens and Burgesses, "to discuss with the Magnates, the affairs of our Kingdom." This established Parliament as a body distinct from the King's Council, to consider matters presented to it by the King which, if approved, became "Statutes". The King could, however, make laws without Parliament, called "Ordinances", and retained the right to summon and dismiss Parliament. Thus the conflict between Crown and Parliament remained unresolved for more than another four centuries until a King finally lost his head, although this was only the beginning of another chapter to

Peace Hospice Garden Party

by Margaret Thompson Photos John Grainger

DIDN'T we do well and what a lot of fun we had. The annual Peace Hospice Garden Party at Hunton Lodge raised in excess

of £9000. This is a record and is not least due to the magnificent efforts of so many of our members.

John's lovely



The grounds of Hunton Lodge looked superb, making a magnificent setting for what is becoming an annual event.



photos help re-conjure memories of a very happy if busy day. Wrestling with a tangle on the Bric-a-brac stall, sorting the books and selling hundreds of tickets for the Tombola These are but a small sample of the stalls for which we were responsible. The crowds came and the sun shone making it all worth while.



Many of our members can be seen giving of time, energy and also hard earned cash. When not selling they were buying.

Congratulations to everyone who helped to make the day so successful especially Valerie Webster who coordinated our contribution.

The Peace Hospice Gardens need YOU
2 to 3 hours to spare? contact
Maggie

News from the study groups

Please save the Study Group Synopsis, (published bi-annually). for details of each group.

Antiques

After much discussion about the way we want to carry on with these sessions, it was agreed that most would be of a general theme, which leads to other subjects as we go along.

Jul we hope to discuss cameo broaches, which will bring us on to cameo glass and we will touch on the work of the famous glassmaker, Galle, and so we will broaden our horizons, from recognising periods of furniture from shape, etc., to such varied subjects as fairings, silver, pot lids (yes, those our grandmothers threw away and are now worth, if they are 'special' ones, a hundred or so pounds). We can discuss ivory carvings, painted miniatures, on such surfaces as copper, porcelain, and coming down a bit, wood and cardboard and who knows what other subjects this will lead to at future meetings! If anyone has any ideas, as to what form future meetings could take, or any ideas for study please let me know.

Art Appreciation

In June we enjoyed Pat Woollards informative talk on Modigliani and then watched a superb Video with Tim Marlow about the Henri

Reg Cooke collects:

empty ink cartridges and discarded mobile phones for the Gray Cancer Institute.

Rousseau Exhibition.

10 Jul NO MEETING.

Visit to Kandinsky at Tate Modern for those who have booked.

16 Jul The Henry Moore Foundation grounds at Perry Green are open to the public as part of the **National Gardens Scheme** from **12noon-5.00pm.**

15 Aug (Tues) Dorothy has booked for those who signed up to go to the Henry Moore Foundation on this date. This outing is now full.

Book Discussion Group

The library supports us by supplying books. This is a small friendly group and new members would be very welcome.

Chess

New members welcome.

Computers

6 Jul Combined session with Photographic Group.

18 Jul Microsoft "Money" .

There is a charge of £1 per person to cover the hire costs of the facilities.

Cryptic Crosswords

7 Jul next meetings. Please telephone if you are thinking of joining.

Current Affairs

We've always plenty of interesting topics to discuss and our June meeting was no exception. The plight of British farmers; developments in genetic screening

techniques and what controls should be exercised; the possibility of having a Scottish-elected Prime Minister determining policies that affect only English citizens: these and other topics sustained our discussion.

18 Jul Yesterday's Papers and other current interests.

Cycling

3 Jul 10.00am Watford Met.

Bricket Wood, Potters Crouch and Bedmond.

19 Jul 10.00am Watford Met.

Ley Hill, Bovingdon and return to summer picnic chez Ken.

7 Aug 10.00am Watford Met. If anyone turns up we'll decide on the day.

16 Aug I am trying to organise a ride to stay in Welwyn Garden City overnight and continue to Ware and down the Lea Valley on Thursday to return home on the train. If you are interested in joining us please contact me.

Family History

13 Jul Kew Records Office.

Please phone if you wish to join.

Gardening

Our outing on 15th June to the BBC Gardeners' World Live exhibition and show at the Birmingham NEC was thoroughly enjoyed by all of us who went. Cilla and myself were going for the first time and we hoped to see the TV celebrities

such as Alan Titchmarsh, Carol Klein, Monty Don and all the others. I went to the plant swap hoping to exchange a plant carried all the way from Bushey and to be able to chat to one of the "personalities" Such is the luck of the Armstrongs; they were never there when I got there! However the weather stayed fine and warm, there was lots to see, including the show gardens, filmed and shown on television the night after our visit, plus lots of gardening hints, tips and equipment. The journey home was a breeze, thanks to the World Cup football fixtures. Someone left 2 lavender plants on the coach, they are now at Mullany's awaiting collection by their owner (unless someone from another coach put them there by mistake!)

20 Jul Hitchin Lavender was already booked up when we got in touch earlier, also Snowhill Lavender in the Cotswolds, so our thinking caps went on and we came up with Waterperry Gardens, near Oxford. The Royal Horticultural Society's handbook describes Waterperry as "This 8-acre garden has one of the best purely herbaceous borders in the country, which flowers from May until the first frosts. There is a great deal more to interest the keen gardener, with rose and alpine gardens, a formal knot garden, rained fruit and nursery

beds as well as a pleasant riverside walk." The gardens are part of the horticultural centre which used to be the Waterperry Ladies Horticultural School and includes nurseries, orchards, plant centre and teashop as well as a museum and an Art in Action Exhibition. Tickets on sale at the break at £11.75 which includes admission to the gardens.

17 Aug plans to be advised at the meeting.

Remember our last plant stall will be in July, so take this opportunity to get shrubs and herbaceous perennials at bargain prices!

We welcome your suggestions for outings, discussions and speakers.

German

Jul No meetings.

3 Aug Next meeting.

Greetings Cards

14 Jul I would like to have a display board showing some of our cards at the August Study Group Fair. Will members please bring a sample (or two!) of their work to this meeting. Many thanks. These will be returned to you after 1st Aug.

11 Aug and 8 Sep with 18 Aug (extra) for a local outing to Iver. There is a charge of £1 each per session to cover drinks/biscuits and consumable materials.

Italian

10.00am alternate Thurs

3 Italian study groups operate in Watford/Rickmansworth/SW Herts & Bushey.

1. Beginners SWHU3A.

2. Intermediate WU3A.

3. More Advanced RU3A.

London Theatre Group

30 Aug Next theatre outing is a matinee performance of 'Guys and Dolls' price £28. Bring your cheque books to the monthly meeting.

MoneyMatters

Well! June 'snook up' on me, The only one of the loyal MoneyMatters Group that didn't remember that sometimes the first Thursday of the month comes BEFORE the Watford U3A monthly meeting was me! There I was having a leisurely breakfast and trying to sort out what Sheila and I would do on such a lovely day, when the phone goes and a member asked "Is Philip OK? Everybody is waiting for him". I have never moved so fast. There they all were standing around drinking tea/coffee and devouring piles of biscuits. I expected to be the recipient of boos, insults not to mention ridicule, but no everyone wanted to know if I was alright.

They thought (I think) that I had died and here I was risen from the dead. I can't claim to be the deity although there is a member of my family who whenever I do something says " Oh G-d, what have you done this time" Is there someone out there with a better memory who would enjoy running MoneyMatters as much as I have? Don't be shy! lets hear from you. NB: The *first Thursday* of the month may be *before* the U3A monthly meeting!

Music Appreciation

This year's subject: *Composers*

19 Jul Vivaldi, Joan Manhire.

Opera

10 Jul Devereux Drive with Ray Gwynne. Ray will be showing us a video of the wonderful production of 'La Traviata' with Angela Georghiu and Sir Georg Solti conducting at Covent Garden. New members welcome.

Pantomime

Rehearsals at Yeatman House Foxhill N.Watford tba The script has been written (well done the Creative Writer's Group!) and tickled (well done the Director, Jackie Godfrey!) The cast has been chosen! (well done those volunteers!) Let rehearsals begin! It's going to be a Christmas cracker!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Pathfinders Group

All Walks meet at **9.25am** at the Essex Arms.

25 Jul Chipperfield

22 Aug Pitstone

I regret this group is full.

Personal Development

18 Jul 1pm.NB changed date from Mon 17th to Tues 18th for shared lunch at Catherine's. Bring partners/friend + games & quizzes.

Aug Afternoon tea parties to be arranged in members' homes.

Science Interest

17 Jul Visit to Tringford Canal Pumping Station.

21 Aug (NB new venue from now on: Watford Central Library) Energy from the wind: Leon Freris.

18 Sep Visit to Brickworks at Stewartby, Bedford, £15 by coach.

16 Oct at Library Einstein & Relativity Theory:Graham Marrett.

Shakespeare

Last Wed 2.00pm

Newcomers are welcome.

Sporting Forum

3rd Tues 2.00pm -4.00pm

Anyone for GOLF? The Sporting Forum Group are considering organising a **GOLF DAY** which would be open to

ALL WU3A members (not just the SF group). If you are interested please enter your name on the sheet posted on the notice board or phone the SGL. (See June Synopsis) The response will determine whether we progress. Last month we had an entertaining first get together of this new group.

18 Jul Our guest will be Peter Bennett who will talk, demonstrate and probably involve members with Tia Chi. New members, or potential members, will be welcome. Come along and give it a try!

Strollers

11 Jul Aldbury 4.5mls by the pond. Park where possible. Lunch 'Volunteer', led by Myra & Jane.

25 Jul NB Changed to a walk.

11 00a.m. Hampermill Lane end of Hillcroft Crescent (Oxhey Hall). Lunch at the Load of Hay.

Dorelle to a walk around the Hampermill area and Ebury Way.

8 Aug at Peggy's house; Planning Meeting. Lunch kindly provided by Peggy. Contribution £3.00.

The Explorers

All walks start at **10.00am** except when car sharing.

After our very enjoyable walk in June around Black Park, and the lake at Fulmer we are hoping for some more fine weather for our next two walks.

7 Jul 10.00am Rickmansworth Aquadrome CP led by Jean Groves.

4 Aug 9.45am Chalfont Sports Ground, CP Elizabeth Ave. Chess Valley Walk/ Picnic, with Jean & John. Meet Train to Chesham and walk back to Chalfont with picnic on the way.

The Thirsty Walkers

27 Jul 10.00am Essex Arms, to arrange transport Walk led by Chris and Gill Cooksey through Croxley, lunch at the Harvesters pub.

Tuesday Trekkers

11 Jul 9.45am for 10.00am starting promptly from the 'Swan' at Ley Hill. Jean and Peter G.

Walking

All walks start at JS A4.

9 Jul 11.00am Summer Event Datchworth Open Day. 10 Village Gardens £5.00

12 Jul 9.00am Lee Common.

26 Jul 10.00am Bovingdon.

9 Aug 9.30am Hertford.

23 Aug 10.00am Coy Carp.

13 Sep 9.30am Lea Valley.

27 Sep 10.00am TBA.

Writers Workshop

Come along and develop your skills. New members welcome.

MESSAGE FROM OUR ALMONERS

THE ROLE of Almoner was created a number of years ago by Shirley Ross, when she retired as Study Group Co-ordinator. The committee became aware that some members were not attending our U3A. They were facing life crisis and needed help.

Members must let the Almoners, (we now have four), know of members in this situation. If someone is ill, lonely or bereaved it is good to know others are aware and care.

An almoner cannot undertake physical caring or chauffeuring etc, but they can put a member in touch with the appropriate services.

A card, a phone call or a visit could make all the difference to a person picking up the threads of their life.

You can contact an almoner by phone (see front page) or talk to them at the monthly meeting where Peggy and Irene help to man the front desk. **Editor**

MEMBERS free **ADVERTISEMENTS**

Pianola (player piano), mahogany, beautiful tone, also 120 rolls: mainly classical. £400 ono

Advertisements may be edited or omitted depending on space available.

TALKS PROGRAMME

4 Jul John Britten

On Horseback in the 'Tien Shan Mountains.'

1 Aug Study Group Fair.

5 Sept Colin Richards Aerial Spills & Thrills at Northolt Airport.

3 Oct Ian Brazier

Northwood HQ

Nov Bob Johnson (A U3A members) Rye Meads RSPB & How to help birds 'overwinter'.

Speaker Secretary

David Helliwell

See contacts on Home page for details.

Material for the
August Newsletter
MUST be received by:
20 July

Written contributions to:
The Editor
See contacts on home page

Members may obtain this Newsletter by: 1. e-mail 2. Collecting it at the monthly meeting. 3. Asking your SGL or a friend to collect it for you. 4. Sending a sae to the editor.