

# NEWSLETTER

## *The End of An Era!* Margaret Thompson Editor.

I AM finding it very difficult to write this editorial this month, as I keep thinking how strange it will be to not have the tall, reassuring figure of our President Reg Cooke sitting in the front row at the monthly meetings which he so enjoyed. Reg died on October 13th and as an indication of the wide affection and esteem in which he was held I have received many emails, too many to mention individually, from both our members and members of other U3As expressing their sadness and sympathy for Reg's family. The best way we can celebrate his life is by following his example. He would not be pleased to see us sitting here with glum faces.

Sadly Reg was not well enough to attend our last monthly meeting when Pat Purcell [R], a retired Opera Singer who sang with the Sadlers Wells Opera Company, English National Opera and at The Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, entertained us right royally with anecdotes, and snatches of her favourite arias. A really lovely morning.

Next month, as befits the season, our very own thespians will once again tread the boards in our 'Christmas Variety Show 2008' which promises laughter, magic and song, the latter enhanced by 'yourselves' so keep sucking the throat pastels.

Come early to ensure a seat and a place in the car park. Car share if possible. Tea and coffee will be available from 9.15am. This will also give you plenty of time to buy lots of raffle tickets to boost the coffers of The Peace Hospice. The show will start promptly at 10.00am and the raffle will be drawn at approximately 11.45am, providing you don't laugh too much or we could still be here at tea time! Every time we 'time' the show it comes out differently; but it is going to be good. Like a recipe, start with good ingredients and you should produce a good feast.

Already it is ploughing season. Have you turned over your plot so the frost can break up the soil? Very therapeutic. Nothing like a job well done to make one feel better and the exercise keeps us fit. I have tried planting bulbs again this year but they are all dug up by Cyril the Squirrel!! I have had some success by burying holly leaves just below the soil, above the newly planted bulbs. Anybody got any other suggestions??



Pat Purcell as Princess Eboli in Verdi's: Don Carlos for the ENO

### COMMITTEE NOTES From The Chairman John Carleton

AT the October meeting of the committee the treasurer's half year financial report showed a healthy situation. Forward planning recommendations for the next financial year were presented in a spirit of optimism. The Secretary had refined the draft paperwork to be circulated for the next AGM, it is intended that, after an initial mailing by post in February, remaining papers will be distributed via the Newsletter. The Mantle of our membership secretary has descended upon John Friend earlier than expected as a result of an accident sustained by Tom O'Callaghan - harvesting apples! Membership numbers are gently increasing.

Letters received by the committee included a request to welcome new members to meetings in an informal way - this already should be taking place with the help of the almoners and study group leaders. A suggestion that U3A should be mindful of carbon emissions in planning modes of transport for U3A outings was not supported by the committee.

### Study Group Topics By Dennis Fitton

Study Group Coordinator  
[Studygroups@watfordu3a.org.uk](mailto:Studygroups@watfordu3a.org.uk)

WE are all saddened this month by the loss of our respected President Reg Cooke and we offer our condolences to Peggy and her family.

The talks on London Underground will start on Monday 10th November at 2.00pm in the meeting room at Garston Fire Station. There will be a total charge of £2 for this course.

There may be spaces available on the Computer courses for Beginners starting on November 12th and the Introduction to Excel starting on 7th January.

There are some errors and omissions in the Study Group Synopsis. I apologise for those attributable to me. Please let me know of any errors you have spotted. I propose to have a list of corrections at the end of next month's newsletter.

#### Note from your editor:

I received a number of phone calls about what were perceived as my errors! NB neither I nor Dennis are clairvoyant so if the details of your group have not been updated please ask your SGL to send Dennis the latest information'

### Peace Hospice Christmas Raffle

another big one - thanks to all your generous donations.  
**Please buy "loads of tickets"**

at the beginning of the meeting. The raffle will be drawn at approximately 11.45am. Ensure that our cheque, which we will hand over in January, will be even larger than last year!

### JUNE AND JOHN BAUGHEN

Bring prizes to any meeting but we can collect.  
Any surplus funds from any Study Groups would be gratefully received to add to the cheque.  
We thank Knit Wits for their donation.

## Obituary

**REGINALD BERNARD COOKE, 1919-2008**

**President of Watford and District U3A, died 13<sup>th</sup> October 2008.**

In the mid 1970s, Reg. Cooke, retired from his managerial position at Kodak in Wealdstone after forty years with the company, an indication of the service and loyalty which he would later bring to the U3A movement. Retirement did not mean inactivity. He became fully involved with Harrow U3A and, in 1997, as its membership outgrew its facilities, Reg. chaired a working party to investigate founding a new branch. This was no passive role, he stomped South West Herts., knocking on doors, handing out publicity material, drumming up interest and looking for a venue. Thus Watford and District U3A came into existence with Reg. our first Chairman. In May 1999, having witnessed the rapid growth of his new concern, he handed over chairmanship to Tony Platts and promptly was invited to become our President, a position which was renewed annually by the membership without reservation.

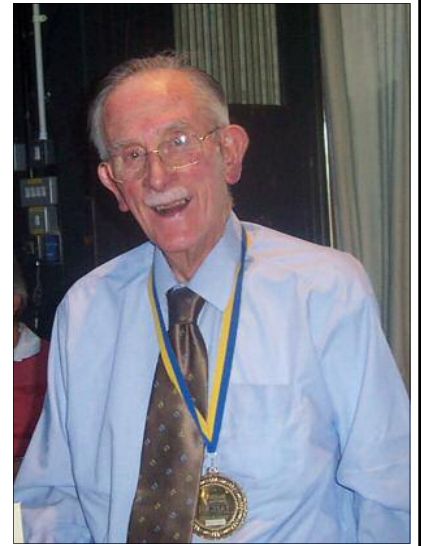
Reg. and his wife, Peggy have been loyal supporters of U3A activities and attended monthly meetings without fail, as well as other functions. He kept an archive for our U3A which was liberally adorned with appropriate photographs, mostly taken by him; this has been a valuable resource already.

A quiet family man, never one for self publicity, he gave freely of his time and energy to those around him. For many years he collected empty printer cartridges from members to be recycled for charity at a local hospital. Our President never interfered in the workings of the Committee, but his wisdom and support have been willingly made available when requested, for which I and previous Chairmen have been most grateful.

Sadly, ill health took its toll in recent months, though he did his best to continue to live life to the full and many were unaware of his difficulties. Reg was a kind and caring man, a gentleman through and through, he will be sadly missed.

Our thoughts go out to Peggy and her family.

**John Carleton Chairman**



## German Conversation Group By Dick Chapman Exporting U3A to Germany?

WATFORD'S Twin Town in Germany, Mainz, has a Watford Friendship Circle consisting of around seventy members. The aim of the Friendship Circle is to encourage contact between the two towns so that friendships can be fostered and a better understanding of each other's culture and way of life can be achieved. One of the members knows Dick Chapman from walking on the Continent together and she asked if half a dozen of the U3A German Conversation Group would like to go for a few days and be shown around Mainz. So it was that we; i.e. Dick and Emi Chapman, Denis and Pat Lucas, Michael Clarke and Monica Creegan set off on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> October not knowing quite what was in store for us.

We were surprised! We'd understood we'd be met at the airport, but not by a brand new nine-seater Mercedes people carrier sponsored by Mercedes for our four day visit, including petrol! The



hotel they'd chosen for us was right in the heart of the beautiful Mainz Altstadt ( Old Town) and was clean, comfortable and yet reasonably priced.

We had a packed programme, starting with a meal at a wine bar with the Friendship Circle on the evening of arrival, where friendships were quickly fostered over a number of glasses of Mainzer wine; we had a guided tour of the Town including a very interesting demonstration of the original moving letter press in the Gutenberg Museum; lunch at the Landtag ( Parliament of Rhineland-Palatinate); a reception at the Town Hall given by the Head of Department of Cultural Affairs; a four-course dinner interspersed with wine-tasting; a Rhine cruise between Mainz and St Goar ( past the legendary Loreley); coffee and cakes on the terrace of the Burghotel Rheinfalls, overlooking the Rhine and a farewell evening in the winebar of our hotel.

Our hands were held, so to speak, on all occasions ensuring a relaxed and enjoyable holiday that will never be forgotten. Putting their hands in their pockets was not confined to Mercedes, with the Town Hall and the Friendship Circle also chipping in. We were all 'gob-smacked'!

Watford's Town Hall has no longer a Twinning Officer, and so communication between the Towns is no longer easy. Perhaps we should set up a Mainz Friendship Circle, but what sponsorship could we hope for? Any ideas welcomed!!!

One thing we may have passed on to them is the contagious idea of U3A. There is formal access to University Courses and evening classes for their more mature citizens, but nothing along the lines of our wonderful U3A. Over many glasses of wine we think we have them hooked, and the first German U3A may be about to start in Mainz. Watch this space!

## A Message from Our Almoners

As almoners we like to be aware of anyone experiencing difficulties such as illness, bereavement or having problems getting to meetings. We can only be of help if we know. We would therefore be grateful if you could let one of us know of anyone in need. SGLs often know when there is a problem so would they also let us know.

**Irene Lowe**

**Peggy Element**

**Janet Carleton**

**Kathleen McMahon**

## Science Interest October 2008 In Search of Oil By Brian Mee

MICHAEL GOLDING, a Seismological expert who has worked in the industry for 45 years, gave us a remarkable presentation describing the technology of seismic surveying for oil and gas. He first explained how the Earth's rock formations can trap oil and gas; fossil fuels are about 250 million years old. Seismology involves many techniques but Michael concentrated on the Acoustic methods: explosions or noise generation, which then travels through the rocks and is reflected back to sensors and processed by very complex computer programs to make maps of the underlying rock formations, which may or may not be oil or gas bearing.

Seismic surveys may be land or sea based. Terrain is often hostile; deserts of Arabia and Africa; jungles of South America, swamps of Niger and Orinoco deltas or Arctic wastes of



Rubber Tracked Vehicles at work in the Empty Quarter, Saudi Arabia courtesy WesternGeCo

Alaska. Some are environmentally challenging as in Dorset where sand lizards' habitats must be protected.

Sea going surveys are carried out by over 100 vessels, each of which trails behind it up to 60 x 8 km lengths of floating tubes containing many detecting devices. GPS is used to pinpoint positions for the survey as precision is essential. Much 'noise' is picked up by the sensors due to wave and wind effects, fish, shipping, or the engines on the survey vessel, or on land by the surface strata and human activities and machinery. All of this has to be filtered out by 'stacking' traces on graphs to improve clarity of the geological maps made. It is a very expensive industry where a vehicle carrying electronic equipment and computers costs between £0.5M and £0.75M!



The Desert Explorer DX80 Actuator produces a force of 80,000 lbs.

Alaska. Some are environmentally challenging as in Dorset where sand lizards' habitats must be protected.

## Dear Letters to The Editor Editor

From Donald Reid

Thank you for the October U3A newsletter, which is always a pleasure to receive and which must take a great deal of work to produce.

I am afraid, however, that I am writing to complain about the fact that the Watford U3A appears to have organised a holiday in Austria which involved flying. I belong to the Science Group where we have had several talks on Climate Change, from which I have learnt that the worst thing any of us can do is to fly.

Each passenger's share of the emissions from a typical return flight such as this amounts to one metric tonne of CO<sub>2</sub> (multiplying by 2.7 to allow for the effects of emissions at altitude). This adds considerably to the average of 6 tonnes per person which we produce from our other day to day activities such as heating our homes or driving our cars, etc.

For this reason, many people, including myself, have given up flying especially for holidays.

So I am disappointed that the U3A has sponsored such a potentially damaging activity as this. If individual members continue to fly that is up to them, but it is very disappointing that the U3A should be officially involved in this way. I do hope this won't happen again.

From Brian Mee (Watford Fairtrade Town Steering Committee) 'Fairtrade' explained 7<sup>th</sup> October 2008.

May I clarify some points about the Fairtrade Movement?

1. Buying Fairtrade products is entirely voluntary and there is no pressure or obligation on anyone to buy anything they do not like.

2. Advertising about Fairtrade is mainly done by volunteer campaigners for free, often in Fairtrade Fortnight each year, supermarkets of course will probably want to use some of their regular advertising resources but it is by no means 'a fortune'.

3. The Fairtrade Mark – now recognised by over 70% of the UK population (thanks to campaigners over the past 7 years) – on a product guarantees a fair and sustainable price is paid to farmers in developing countries for their produce. The system is strictly monitored and audited by inspectors from the

international Fairtrade Labelling Organisation, of which UK's charity the Fairtrade Foundation is a member. On top of the fair price is a small amount called the Social Premium, which is paid to the co-operative and not to individual farmers. The co-op has a committee, again audited by the FLO, which must decide democratically how the Premium is to be spent by the community. Primary schools, water supplies, storage facilities for produce, health clinics and sports centres are often funded in this way, as the communities would otherwise not be able to afford these basic amenities.

4. Tate and Lyle has recently announced that all of their sugar is to become Fairtrade within the next year and this means that every one of their sugar producers will benefit and their communities be lifted out of poverty by receiving a fair wage for their work and their communities guaranteed better amenities.

5. Fairtrade is part of the Trade Justice Movement which was set up by campaigners across the world to try to achieve the G8's Millennium Development goals of governments halving world poverty by 2015. The goal is far from being achieved.

6. More info can be found on [www.fairtrade.org.uk](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk) [www.cafedirect.co.uk](http://www.cafedirect.co.uk) [www.divinechocolate.com](http://www.divinechocolate.com) [www.traidcraft.co.uk](http://www.traidcraft.co.uk) [www.maketradefair.com](http://www.maketradefair.com) [www.tjm.org.uk](http://www.tjm.org.uk)

7. There are now 350 Fairtrade Towns and Cities in UK and another 240 working towards the five goals set by the Fairtrade Foundation for a town to be granted the status of 'Fairtrade Town'. All of this has been achieved by volunteer campaigners who believe that they have a moral duty to allow fellow human beings to make a fair and sustainable living by preventing exploitation by rich nations and big companies. Seven million farmers' families are now benefiting from the Fairtrade purchasing power of consumers in UK, this number is steadily increasing due to consumer demand.

*I have had a lot of response about 'Fairtrade' and have published both sides of the discussion. I now feel it is time to put this issue 'to bed'. Ed.*

From John Cuthbert.

I just want to say how much I enjoyed Pat Purcell's talk, nay, I should say, performance, at this morning's meeting, it was informative, entertaining, & very enjoyable, one of the best we have had, so all due credit is due to David Helliwell for his excellent choice; not that we ever have any 'bad' talkers, but some are more interesting than others, and Pat was excellent.

## The Explorers October 2008 Cheese or Freeze by John Grainger



FOR a lot of this year we have been spoiled with the warm weather. However on the 3rd October 15 members of the Explorers Walking group met at Leyhill for our monthly walk, which was ably led by Brian. This was the first time for very many months we needed fleecy warm jackets and gloves. When taking the group photo on

top of the hill I didn't know whether to say cheese or freeze as the wind was so cold, but when we got down the hill among the trees it was much warmer. Bucks County Council are beginning to put in more kissing gates. We saw one with a plaque on it in memory of a walker; a nice thought. Brian's walks tend to have lots of stiles. I am glad to report we all managed to get over them with very little trouble, although some of them were very high.

Ley Hill is an interesting village. Under their name is the sign of a Wise Old Owl sitting on a branch. The village harks back to the days of Napoleon. They still have a large well maintained Fire Basket mounted on a large pole on the village green. Could this be in case there is another invasion ?



## MoneyMatters by Philip Wolff

WRITING reports for MoneyMatters is getting SO repetitive! 'Once again a most successful meeting'. Like everyone we discussed the why's and wherefore of the Credit Crunch. Where to put all our vast amounts of cash, which banks offer compensation under their licences and those co-joined with other banks who share a licence. It's amazing who is linked with whom. In spite of it all we had a good few laughs. Then someone said that they had to spend quite a lot of money and that they were thinking of selling shares which are showing a substantial loss. In discussion it transpired that they had ISA's. It was pointed out that ISA's are ideal if you need money in a hurry, for they are easy to cash in, and any profit that they have made is free of tax whereas if you sell shares at a loss you can never benefit from any recovery. Always remember you only make a loss or a gain when you SELL EM.



## October Visit to Wimbledon Lawn Tennis Club

by Pat Harding

OUR visit to Wimbledon was a very informative day. We arrived a little early, so coffee beckoned in the excellent restaurant. Our blue-badge guide, Paul arrived ready to take us on the tour and we set off at a great pace towards the No.1 court where he gave us a potted history of the club from its days as a croquet club to the present roof now being erected on the centre court.

We went first to view "Henman Hill" and the water gardens. There were magnificent views of Canary Wharf, the City of London and the London Eye from the top. The gardens were immaculate, with lots of gardeners and groundsman hard at work. After walking along the picnic terrace we went to the BBC Studios and saw the interview rooms for "Match of the Day" overlooking several courts. Then we walked across to the Millennium Building where unfortunately we had to wait because of a fire alarm. Paul managed to tell us some antidotes before we were allowed in to descend to the bowels of the building to the Press Interview Room. Then we went via the players route to No.1



Court where we could sit and Paul pointed out various points of interest. By now there was a sharp shower which soon passed. At the edge of Centre Court we could see the rollers that were being put on the roof. They were so long that it would take 2 cranes to lift them. There were also great views across of the new No.2 court now awaiting seats and the indoor practice courts.

At the end of the tour, our lunch was ready at the restaurant, and then we visited the museum. There we saw memorabilia from the earliest times of Wimbledon to clothes and racquets of the stars to the trophies and shields awarded to the winners. There was even a "Ghost" of John McEnroe speaking about the game and his opponents. After a visit to the shop we boarded the bus and made excellent time to the Essex Arms. I would imagine that several of our members will be inspired to take part in the draw for tickets for next year.

## Health and Nutrition Group visit to Laverstoke Park Farm text & photos by Audrey & Ray Gynne

**Their philosophy is: 'Healthy Soil; Healthy Grass; Healthy Animals; Healthy Meat and Milk; Healthy People'.**

WEARING our old clothes, and clutching wellie boots and sandwiches we were picked up by Reynolds coaches at our various pick-up points and left the Essex Arms at 9.15am. After a "comfort stop" at the Fleet Services we then arrived at the farm about 11.30 and were greeted by Clare Scheckter, wife of Jody Scheckter the ex racing driver, and her student helper. She explained that as the farm was so vast (2,500 acres) we would be taken round in the coach and get out at various places. She told us they also had 130 acres in Lymington and also glasshouses where most of their tomatoes etc were grown. Our first visit was to the chickens. The chickens were housed in low-density houses, open to the ground. These houses are dragged by tractor onto a new site every week. They spend all daylight hours out in the fields, free to roam as they please picking up grass, worms, insects etc as they please, getting 30% of their food in this way. They are ready for the table in 100 days unlike commercial chickens that are forced to mature by various means in 39 days. The chickens were completely unfazed by our visit and pecked around our feet as we talked. In spite of much care the fox was a menace, more so since hunting was banned. Clare said they had shot 42 foxes this year alone.



Our next visit was to the pigs. We tramped across the fields to see them and give them the windfall apples etc we had brought with us. We were particularly interested in one particular breed – Kune Kune which means 'round and fat in Maori' comes from New Zealand and is white with black spots. We also saw some huge sows with their little piglets. The fields are rotated each year. Apparently pigs like to be together and sleep and even sunbathe in a great heap. No crates were used for farrowing and no piglets were rolled on! Our coach then took us to a private area adjoining their own 17<sup>th</sup> century house. We sat under a cedar tree on bails of straw to eat our sandwiches and one by one crept off to use the porta-loo Valerie had thoughtfully hired for us. Following this we went to the "walled garden" where runner beans and other vegetables were grown. Clare said she brings school children here and it is amazing how ignorant of growing things some of them are, having been

brought up in the "ping" microwave age.

We passed very contented cows in the fields and in the distance we could see the sheep grazing. Trees had been planted in all the fields in a T pattern. This was to provide shade for the animals whichever way the sun was shining. There is also a vast area of grapes. They hope to produce wine to beat the French! We also stopped to see the compost making. They are licensed to take 40,000 tons of green waste a year. All this lovely compost is put back onto their farm.

Next the buffalo sheds. We were told the buffalos took longer to milk than the cows and produced less milk. Their milk is very rich and in the near future they are hoping to make buffalo ice cream and Mozzarella cheese which they are hoping to sell to the Italians! The meat from these buffalo is very lean. They are beautiful beasts and their calves are delightful but are only left with their mother for three days in order for them to get the colostrum.

After a healthy and happy life the cattle and sheep are taken to their own abattoir. The machinery was most impressive and spotlessly clean. I was pleased they were not slaughtering whilst we were there, but happy that so much thought had been put into keeping the animals stress free until the end. After a visit to the farm shop we made our way home arriving back at the Essex Arms at 6pm. A long happy and interesting day. Thank you Valerie for arranging it for us.



### Glorious Autumn Colour for the Gardening Group at Sheffield Park

What a beautiful day we had for our last outing of 2008! A full coach load set off for Sussex and although the journey was longer than expected we had plenty of time to explore the lovely gardens. Predictably the first destination for most was the excellent teasop and then armed with maps everyone went off in different directions in the sunshine. Sheffield Park Gardens were originally landscaped by 'Capability' Brown, an arboretum was established in 1885 and then the gardens were later developed in the early 20th Century with a massive planting programme much of which still remains today, the original four lakes still being the centerpiece. There were many paths to follow, one of which led to the cricket field where W G Grace had played in Lord Sheffield's team against the Australians when they opened their tours there between 1884 and 1896. The weather was lovely despite a cool breeze and the timing perfect for spectacular Autumn colour, the views across water



being the best at every turn. There were lots of places to stop, picnic, take photos or simply enjoy the peaceful surroundings. For many people the day was rounded off with tea and cake before having a reasonable journey home. A very enjoyable way to finish off the season. **Text & Photos By Pam Grant**

## Tales from the History Group by E & B Long

AT OUR October meeting, Betty Long concluded her account of the tragic life of Mary, Queen of Scots. Having, for a brief time, reigned as Queen of France, on the death of her young husband, King Francis, she returned to Scotland, as its Queen, at the age of 19, having been crowned when she was only a few months old.

Mary was a devout Catholic in what had become a Protestant land, but she agreed to keep her religious observances private. She governed with the apparent support of her illegitimate half-brother, the Earl of Moray. In her early twenties, she married the Earl of Darnley. He tried, in vain, to wrest the power of government from her. Mary was to bear him a son and heir, later to become James VI of Scotland, and James I of England. She began to lose popularity with the people when her husband, Darnley, was murdered. This appears to have been a "contract" killing organised by noblemen including Moray, all of whom had much to gain by his death. Rumours spread that the Queen had been made aware of the plan, which increased her unpopularity. Subsequently, while on her way back to Edinburgh from a visit to her son at Stirling Castle, where he was being brought up, she was met by the opportunist, the Earl of Bothwell, who presumed to take her under his protection. Mary, probably under duress, married him in a Protestant ceremony, despite her strongly held Catholic beliefs. Moray, with his army, took them both prisoner. Mary was held in Lochinver Castle and Bothwell elsewhere. Both escaped, he to Denmark, she to England. They never saw each other again.

Mary begged the help of Elizabeth, putting her in a difficult position; if she helped Mary regain the Scottish throne, she would provoke war with the Scots, but giving Mary free passage in England would risk an English Catholic uprising. Thus began an 18 year confinement of Mary.

Several attempts to help her escape were thwarted by Elizabeth's counsellor Walsingham, aided by his own agents. When Mary was found to apparently agree to a plot by Babington, to take the English crown after the assassination of Elizabeth, she was tried and condemned to death to which

Elizabeth had reluctantly to agree. Moray who had assumed the Regency until the majority of Mary's son, was later assassinated, perhaps a fitting end.



A Martello tower at Clacton-on-Sea on the east coast of England Wikipedia

By way of introduction to a new series of talks 'Attack & Defence in Southern England', Eric Long presented a film outlining the subject from pre-Roman to modern times; from hill forts, through Saxon-shore forts and Martello towers, to early

warning sound mirrors and radar. Since Henry VIII, in 1525, founded the Navy, it has been a bulwark of defence. Based at Portsmouth, with its safe harbour behind a narrow entrance, it is still used for this purpose today.

Following this the first part of the talk went back to the time when the rising sea levels provided a defensive channel between Britain and the rest of Europe against waves of immigrants from the east. Nevertheless, the population increased, building up tribal groups between which warfare broke out in the protection of their particular territories against expansion by others. They built hill forts comprising enclosed areas built on high ground with surrounding multiple mounds and deep ditches. The bulk of the tribe worked the farmland below the forts into which they could retreat in times of danger.

The last wave were the Celts fleeing ahead of Roman subjugation by Julius Caesar who reached the Channel in 55 BC, crossing which, he easily defeated the disorganised army assembled in defence. He destroyed hill forts at Bigbury (near Canterbury) and at Wheathampstead before having to hurry back to the Kent coast where gales had damaged his fleet drawn up on the beaches.

## Art Appreciation

2<sup>nd</sup> Mon 10.00 for 10.30am at Hollytree House.

In October, Heather Pound shared with us her deep appreciation of the varied and beautiful works that Barbara Hepworth had produced, from gifted teenager to redoubtable and respected member of the artistic community. She was committed throughout her long life to exploring the ways in which materials could be shaped to reveal the interaction of space within the solid. The impact, within their settings, of her larger outdoor works was carefully planned, especially in Tewyn Garden which she created. Margaret Thompson outlined the possible areas of study as the new group leaders take over in January. Comments

# STUDY GROUP NEWS

Please keep 'The Study Group Diary' for Group Leaders contact numbers and times and venues of Study Group Meetings.

will be welcome.

10 Nov Postponed from last month, Carol Henry will give a presentation on Ben Nicholson. Jean Dolamore will be asking for promises of food for our Xmas buffet lunch, so be ready with your offers.

Please also choose an illustration from a presentation you have given or bring a book with a picture (to be scanned) that you would like us to show in December. All members of the group are encouraged to participate! Colin Richards has taken on the mammoth task of combining these into the programme.

## Antiques

2<sup>nd</sup> Tues of the month  
2.30pm-4.30pm my home.

Our meeting on clocks started off in fine fashion as one of our members brought her miniature Longcase (not 'grandfather', please!) clock for us to try and identify. Was it an apprentice piece, a traveller's sample, or just an interesting piece, probably of late Victorian or Edwardian period. Gave us food for thought and discussion which led on to further talk about clocks, the origins of the mechanics, reason for pendulums, change from Roman to Arabic numbers,

etc. Future meetings will be on antique playing cards, maps, porcelain, etc.

12 Nov Next meeting.

10 Dec Xmas Decorations.

## Book Discussion Grp

4<sup>th</sup> Mon 2.00pm-4.00pm  
9 Parkside Drive, Watford  
New members very welcome.

## Beginners Bridge

Alternate Tuesdays  
10.00am

## Computers

3<sup>rd</sup> Thurs 4.00pm Beechfield School, Gammons Lane.  
20 Nov Speeding up your computer or Spring cleaning  
Dec No meeting.

15 Jan Questions and (we hope!) answers.  
There is a charge of £2 per person to cover costs.

## Cryptic Crosswords

1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Fri of the month.  
7 & 21 Nov next meetings.

## Current Affairs

**3<sup>rd</sup> Tues 10.00am Hollytree House.**

After paying tribute to Reg Cooke we discussed the 'Credit Crunch' at length and then the controversial matter of 'assisted suicide'.

**18 Nov.** Next meeting.

## Cycling

**10.00am 1st Mon & 3rd Wed from Watford Met Station. The Monday ride is run jointly with WPU3A.**

NB that the Monday rides are similar to those on Weds.

They are no further or faster.

**3 Nov** Mon Denham.

**19 Nov** Wed Apsley via Felden. Each month I get splinters in my fingers, scratching my head trying to think of new rides to go on. As you can see I usually fail. Any ideas, bright or otherwise would be gratefully received.

## European Studies

**26 Nov** Cook the Explorer.  
**Dec** No meeting.

## Exploring London

**5 Nov** St.Pauls Cathedral and Bank of England W. List.

## Film Group

**2. 00pm 3rd Mon**  
DVDs/videos of classic and other films will be brought by members of the group. After the film there will be tea and discussion of the film. Please let Barbara know if you cannot come on

**Nov** No Meeting.

**Dec** No Meeting.

**Jan** 'The Whistle Blower'. Michael Caine. Jan venue TBA due to house move.

## Food & Nutrition

Combewood House, 2.00pm.

**25 Nov.** Talk, demonstration and goodie bags for all, from Billingtons Sugar and Allinsons flour. A very interesting talk and we must have at least 50 people so please make sure you add this date to your diary and bring a visitor or other U3A member if possible. As this is our last meeting before Christmas we will be having an afternoon tea 'a la Ritz' and if you would like to produce

something for the table please let me know. There will also be a Bring and Buy stall so please bring along something suitable for this.

## Gardening

**20 Nov 10.00am** at Hollytree House.

Planning meeting followed by a talk by Colin Oakes about John Evelyn's Diary. John Evelyn was a contemporary of Samuel Pepys. He recorded both his love of gardening and his involvement in garden design. Mr. Oakes is an historian and a leader of London walks so his talk will link up lots of bits of history with his knowledge of John Evelyn's enthusiasm for gardens in and around our capital. It should be a fascinating insight.

**18 Dec 10.00am** at Hollytree House. Christmas social.

Please let us know if you are able to come.

## Greetings Cards

**Hollytree House**

**13 Nov** Christmas designs.

**11 Dec** using acetate and our usual joint lunch.

## History

**2<sup>nd</sup> Mon 2.00pm** Westfield School.

Members should note that the gates at Westfield School are now kept closed, requiring visitors to identify themselves by answer-phone at the entrance, on which the gates will open by remote control.

## Italian

**10.00am alternate Thurs**

A self help group, using audio/visual material, written exercises and original Italian texts. We are guided by a fluent Italian speaker.

## Italiano Intermedio

"Renato Di Paolo aveva 23 anni e recitava la parte dell'apostolo traditore - È scivolato con il cappio attorno al collo - C'erano 200 persone, ma tutte guardavano le croci". Se voi avete capito questo estratto, vorremmo dire che, ogni due settimane, abbiamo un riunione dove parliamo e leggiamo insieme la bella lingua italiana. Ciao!

## Jazz

**3<sup>rd</sup> Wed 2.00pm**

## London Theatre Grp

**11 Nov (Tues)** We will be going to see the matinee performance of 'Jersey Boys'. Tickets £40 to include the coach. If you can't make the meeting but wish to go, please let Eileen Cox or Marie McMorrin know.

Coach times:-

**12.00pm** Bushey Synagogue.

**12.05pm** Bushey MedCentre.

**12.30pm** The Essex Arms.

## MoneyMatters

**1<sup>st</sup> Thurs Hollytree House.10.00am - Noon.**

**6. Nov** Next meeting

## Music Appreciation

**3<sup>rd</sup> Wed: 10.00am** Coffee and chat. **10.30am** meeting.

## Needlecraft

**2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Mon** Combewood House. Group full. Could you start another group?

## Opera

**10 Nov 2. 00pm**, Christine's. This month we shall be seeing 'Cavalleria Rusticana' and 'I Pagliacci',

**21 Nov** Some of us will be taking the coach to Milton Keynes to see 'The Magic Flute' by the Glyndbourne Touring Company.

**9 Nov** Also, don't forget to go to the Vue cinema at North Watford to see the next live performance, which will be relayed from the Albert Hall, of Benjamin Britten's 'War Requiem'. Please ask me for the programme if you do not already have one.

There is much exciting music to come in the months ahead.

## Pathfinders Group

The Essex Arms **9.25am**

**25 Nov** Aldenham and Christmas Lunch. Please let Jan know if you will be at the Christmas Lunch.

I regret this group is full.

## Performing Arts

**Johanna's Mon 7.30pm**

We had a very interesting discussion about the recent production of 'The Dresser' by Ronald Harwood at Watford Palace. All agreed that Graham Turner in the title role was excellent but the main feeling among the group

was of some disappointment; characters not convincing and writing poor for peripheral characters who did not relate at all, to the main players or each other.

## Poetry Read & Study

Monday evening, monthly by arrangement. New members welcome.

## Return to Cycling

**2.00pm 1st Thursday** This group is run jointly with Watford Park U3A based on the Watford B C map of local cycle routes.

**6 Nov** The Pump House, Local Board Rd.

## Science Interest

**3<sup>rd</sup> Monday 10.00am; all meetings to be held at Hollytree House.**

**17 Nov** The element Chlorine: Brian Mee.

**15 Dec** The Large Hadron Collider at CERN: Colin Richards.

**19 Jan 09** How much Energy do you use? - Bernard Steele  
New members welcome!

## Scrabble 1

**2nd and 4th Thursdays.**

As the above group appears to have been lost in the ether I would like to assure all members we are alive and kicking and still meeting twice a month. Our group is still full but I am sure Alan and Carol will make you very welcome at Scrabble 2.

## Scrabble 2

**2<sup>nd</sup> Thurs 10.00am.**

Carol and I have room for a few more players. Please come and join us at our new home. Just phone Carol or Alan Rose .

**13 Nov 10.00am** is our next get together. If you are rusty don't worry we have plenty of WD Faulty (40)! Look forward to seeing you.

## Shakespeare

**Last Wed 2.00pm**

**26 Nov** Thanks to Colin Richards, we will be enjoying a showing of the BBC DVD of 'Henry the Fourth Part One'. As it runs for two and a half hours, we shall need to start promptly.

**Dec.** No meeting.

**28 Jan 09** Next meeting.

## Snooker

**Every Monday** ( except Bank Holidays) **11.00am-1.00pm.** Joint Group with WPU3A.

## Sporting Forum

**18 Nov** Morley Myers. Our programme policy of having a broad range of topics will be illustrated to its fullest when our November guest will be Morley Myers.

Morley is a local journalist, with an international pedigree, who has attended and reported on the last 11 Olympic Games.

**16 Dec** Christmas Social/ Quiz.

**20 Jan** Members meeting.

## Strollers

**Meeting time 11.00am** New members will be welcome Distances are not shown but

are usually 2.5 to 3 miles.

**11 Nov** Peggy; Valley Walk at Boxmoor. CP & lunch 'The Fisheries'.

**25 Nov** Cindy: Chorleywood Common. CP and eat at The Black Horse.

**Dec -NO WALKS**

**13 Jan** Planning meeting at Peggy's home followed by New Year's Lunch at the Southern Cross.

## The Explorers

**7 Nov 09.30am** Essex Arms to car share or 10.00am the White Hart Bedmond. (Near the Tin Church) Bedmond walk led by Jean Groves & Allan Rose.

**5 Dec 10.00am** Planning meeting, 143 Oaklands Avenue, Oxhey. Please bring your ideas for walks for 2009.

**The Rock 'n' Roll Yrs**  
**4<sup>th</sup> Thursday each month**  
**2.30 pm Hollytree House.**

**27 Nov** Contact: Andrew C.  
**Dec: No meeting.**

## Thirsty Walkers

**9.30am The Essex Arms!**

**27 Nov 9.30am** Last walk of the year will be Bentley Priory from The Case is

Altered (PH), Mike Thomas. Remember to meet at The Essex Arms.

**22 Jan 2009** Time to start thinking about next year! The Planning Meeting and New Year Lunch will be at The Southern Cross and menus are available at the next two walks. We hope the food and atmosphere will be as enjoyable as last year.

## Tuesday Trekkers

**9.45am start at 10.00am.**

New members welcome. Walks of about 5mls ending at a very worthwhile pub.

**11 Nov** The Groves leading but no magical mystery tour this time. Walk starts Boot Pub Sarratt. Jean offers everyone a lift in her car from Essex Arms **09.30am.** Start slimming now!

## U3A Singers

**1st & 3rd Monday 2.30pm**

## Walking

**Most walks start at JS A41 9.30am except London ones. Eight miles**

**12 Nov** Ashey Green.

**Dec** NO WALK.

**Six miles All 10.00am start**

**26 Nov** Chorleywood.

**Dec** no walk.

## Wine Appreciation

**Last Friday in the month.**

**28 Nov** This meeting will be a special one to taste higher quality wines. Cost £10 each, numbers will be limited so payment in advance to secure your place is required.

## Writers Workshop

Come and develop your writing skills. New members welcome.



**Any News from your Study Group?  
COULD YOU HELP?**

by writing an article about your group or one that you attend?  
If you have a computer send it to:  
editor @watfordu3a.org.uk but if not type it out and post it.  
Thanks to you who have answered the call! **Ed.**

## WANTED!

### FLAT or HOUSE

If anyone knows of a furnished house or flat TO LET for one month from mid December, preferably not too far from Bushey Heath please contact:

Eileen Burnett:

I have family visiting from abroad and your help would be greatly appreciated.

Watford U3A's

## Projector & Laptop

To check availability and make a booking for the digital projector & laptop computer:

**Colin Richards**

Email

digitalequipment@watfordu3a.org.uk

## MICROSOFT OFFICE PROFESSIONAL WORD, EXCEL, ACCESS, OUTLOOK, POWERPOINT, PUBLISHER.

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## Christmas Variety Show

**Calling ALL cast & Choir members Full Run Through/ Technical Rehearsal**

Met Police Club

**9.30am-12.00am**

on Monday December 1st.

Any problems please contact

Dick Chapman

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Advertisements may be edited or omitted depending on space available.

## TALKS PROGRAMME 2008

**Nov Vic Botterill 'Buttons for Persuasion'** which deals with how we can be persuaded and also how to persuade others, which I hope will be both entertaining and edifying.

**Dec WU3A 'Christmas Variety Show'.**

**Jan:-**

**Feb:-**

**For More detail contact Speaker Secretary:-**

**David Helliwell**

speakers@watfordu3a.org.uk

## Material for the December Newsletter

**MUST be received  
by: 20 November**

For Written contributions see Study Group Diary or the website contact details.

**E-mail copy to:**

editor@watfordu3a.org.uk

Watford & District U3a

## CHRISTMAS LUNCH

12.30pm for 1.00pm Wednesday December 10th 2008

This event is proving to be popular as ever, only a few places remain, details from John Carleton.

