



A Very Happy Christmas to Us All

Margaret Thompson Editor.

Study Group Topics
By Margaret Foster
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PANTO SEASON is upon us and the U3A Panto Group and the Performing Arts Group are over their heads in rehearsals so as not to disappoint. It will be OK on the night; really!!! **Not actually a pantomime**, that's just the rehearsals, but a lively Christmas Variety Show for which I hope you have all pencilled in the date. December 1st; birthday of my firstborn, so happy birthday Andy. Gosh what a long time ago. Another world, another life. Was I really there? At this time of year memories come flooding back. Homes we made, friends we knew and loved ones now gone. Yes it is OK to cry. Wonderful memories, no one can take from us; but onwards and upwards, the future is still ours to grab while we can. Plan something new for 2010! Visit someone you haven't seen for ages; master that computer and surf the world, its amazing what you can learn. Talk to the trees. Join another U3A group or start one if your interest is not represented; there is plenty of help available from our fantastic Study Group Coordinator.

When asked if 'the coffee' was better at our last Monthly Meeting the general consensus was "Yes!" "Like a super market queuing" said one. Well their formula has taken highly qualified brains, millions of pounds and years of research to discover how to get as many people through the checkout as quickly (parting with their money) as possible. So perhaps forming a queue at each coffee 'Station' ie pot, is the way to go. Well done everybody.

Were you thinking of buying someone a Ticket Master Voucher for a present? DON'T! What a rip off! I was given one for £50 for my birthday last year. Wow I thought. Realising I had not cashed it in I put it towards 3 theatre seats. You have to ring them up on an expensive phone line and I soon discovered that I could not have the seats I wanted, clearly available on the website, as they were not in Ticket Master's allocation. Having decided on 3 different seats I was told the booking fee PER SEAT was £10! Plus £2.25 handling fee!!! So my friends have in fact paid £32.25 back to Ticket Master and me £17.75. Not I suspect what they intended.

THE Vice Chairman reported that at the AGM of Third Age Trust a motion to change the number of votes per region in line with the size of membership was defeated, which was in line with our view.

Although it is not yet Christmas we are starting to plan for next year thinking about the AGM and the changes to the committee in June and arrangements for the August 2010 monthly meeting. Our Study Group Coordinator is anxiously waiting for replies to the survey, about that meeting, which she sent to Study Group Leaders in September, only half have replied so far and a final deadline has now been set for January 5th.

ITS here at last "THE PANTO". It is said that "all good things are worth waiting for" and I believe that applies to our U3A Panto, so sit back and enjoy. Good Luck to everyone involved.

A big thank you to all the members who have contacted me with details of venues which our Study Groups could possibly use. I now have quite a long list.

There are still a few places left on the very interesting, not to be missed, 3rd London Architecture Course. If you would like to join this course which starts on the 6th January 2010 please see me, either at the monthly meeting, or contact me by telephone. My number is on the back of the N/L, or email me at the address at the top of this column.

To all the SGLs who have not returned the survey which resulted from the SGLs meeting last September, PLEASE, PLEASE DO IT NOW, it only takes a couple of minutes and I would be ever so grateful. I must at this point set a cut off date of 5th January 2010 as the last day for receiving surveys. I will be happy to receive them at the monthly meeting if that helps.

As from now would you please make all enquiries regarding the "Cryptic Crosswords" group to Jan Prest.

It just remains for me to wish you and your loved ones a very HAPPY, SAFE & HEALTHY CHRISTMAS and remember ENJOY.

Committee
Notes
From our
Chairman
John Carleton



I note that only 50% of SGLs have completed the SGCoordinator's survey! Well if you don't 'vote' don't be surprised if your wishes and ideas are NOT represented.

Eat a Squirrel for Christmas? [see p3]. Well the Romans did! I have tall fir trees in my garden where they make Squirrel City and I put out bird food so I have dozens of the little pesky, furry things. I am sorry if you think they are cute and I must not let my grandsons see this article, but wait 'til they are serious gardeners! Now have you raked up all those leaves or is your lawn suffocating under them like mine? Well it's been so wet hasn't it! Walking on the lawn would ruin it, wouldn't it! We must keep smiling and look out for each other.



Message from
WU3A Almoners

Irene Lowe
Peggy Element
Janet Carleton
Kathleen McMahon

Let us know of any member who is sick or bereaved and in need of the support of our U3A so that we can contact them to reassure them that they are not forgotten.

CROATIA – by Jan Palmer.

DURING October, twenty nine of us visited the Istrian peninsular of Croatia, an area of delightful old towns, around which we were ably guided by Daniella, before exploring on our own. Its history has been influenced by the Illyrians, as far back as the eleventh century BC, followed by the Romans, Croats, Slavs, Venetians, Austrians, Hungarians and Napoleon's armies. It was still part of Austria at the beginning of the First World War but by 1918 was officially part of Italy. There is still a strong Italian presence, but we noticed that it is the Italians who are the butt of the Istrians' jokes. This area was not affected by the war which broke up Yugoslavia in the 1990s.

Our first visit was to the old part of Rovinj, where we were staying. It was full of picturesque, narrow streets; a very steep one, paved with stones made very slippery from many years of use, led up to the cathedral of St Euphemia. A large statue of her, on a movable stand on the top of the very tall bell tower, acts as a weather vane.

Our day in Opatija was rather spoiled by heavy rain. The town takes its name from the Croatian for abbey, where the church of St Jacob now stands. Another important building was the Villa Angiolina, built by a rich merchant, and a favourite place for the Austrian Emperor and nobility to stay. I'm sure we

will remember the statue of the Maiden with the Seagull, facing out to sea, as the waves lashed round her. Several of us spent our enforced stay in a restaurant sampling a local dish of mixed minced meats wrapped in cabbage leaves called Sarma – very tasty.

Porec also was a really enjoyable town – even better now in the sun – with the various historical influences. It is a protected World Heritage Site. Everywhere we went this week had many beautiful buildings.

One of our optional trips was into Slovenia to the Postojna Caves, which were enormous. We travelled for over ten minutes in a train, feeling that we had to dodge all the stalactites as it sped along, to the start of our walk, which lasted over an hour, and which to start with was very steep. There were magnificent stalagmite and stalactite formations at every turn. A bridge had been made by Russian prisoners of war. Afterwards we continued to the Lipizzaner horse stud where we saw grey foals – they only turn white several years later – and their mothers, before seeing a demonstration of the older stallions' precise skills.

Our second optional trip, on the last day, was to the main island of the Brionia group, which was President Tito's state summer residence, where he was visited by many heads of state, many of whom gave him exotic animals. We visited the lovely little church and admired the sixteen hundred year old olive tree.

A great bonus of this trip was our excellent Hotel Eden, with its staff who were so friendly and helpful. Very tasty food too, with lots of choice! Our holiday was just outside the tourist season, so we had the advantage of lack of crowds. and a pleasant temperature most of the time.

Many thanks again to Jackie for coordinating the trip. A really enjoyable week.



Pula, the next day, had obvious Roman influence, with its amphitheatre, once the scene of gladiatorial combat and still used for concerts, notably Pavarotti's final one. Roman temples were adapted in mediaeval times, and still form the town's municipal buildings. A well known meeting place is the statue of James Joyce, who once lived here.



A Glimpse of The Toffee Group by Margaret Foster

WE had a change of venue this month, when 16 of us met at "Ayletts Nurseries" for our refreshments and a chat. The staff were very good and reserved a corner for us, which we kept expanding as more members arrived. After the initial comings and goings collecting "Toffee" and the odd treat, (well we all deserve a treat now and then), we settled to the important part of the morning, chatting. As usual we had a variety of topics and exchanges of news and views; surprisingly the topic of Christmas was not at the forefront. We are all saving ourselves for the final rush. We thoroughly enjoyed our morning and would recommend the venue. Half of us even stayed for lunch. Alas time goes all too quickly when in good company and it was time to say goodbye until the next time.



Unfortunately because of the numbers I will have to say we cannot take any more members.

Peace Hospice Raffle

We look forward to the Christmas raffle in December which will be bigger than ever. Thank you for your donations which we can collect or you can bring them along to any Meeting.

June & John Baughen

MoneyMatters by Philip Wolff

WOW! What a meeting!!! It was the second time our friendly solicitor regaled with the sort of problems that families face if a will is not made fully clear. The sort of problem that can arise in the event certain family members feel at their having been 'left out' of the will. From there we went on to the two parts of the new Power of Attorney. Part one: financial. Part two: health. It would seem that fewer people pay attention to part two whereas this part is more likely to apply to the majority of people. Without favouring any particular solicitor, my advice is to seriously consider taking professional advice. Amateurs cause problems. I thought dying was expensive but living in old age under adverse personal conditions can be even more expensive. The making of a watertight will and the setting up of a Power of Attorney is even more necessary than it was ten years ago due to the great increase of litigation in this sphere.

AND --Another New Group! Anyone For Table Tennis?

From Gordon Hitchman

AS you can see there is plenty of life left in these old legs. Currently there are seven members and we play at St. Marks Church in Leggatts Way opposite the old Bill Everett centre. We share the venue with the LMR Audit Table Tennis Club who have two teams playing in the Watford & District TT league. There is room for three tables so depending on the number of League games taking place we have either one or two tables available for social play. This is an evening leisure pursuit which starts at 7.30 on approx two Mondays a month. New members are welcome. An active body bodes well for an active brain which in turn helps participation in other mind stimulating groups.



Exploring London IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM

OUR November trip was a visit to the Imperial War Museum which included a visit to the Terrible Trenches Exhibition. The staff at the museum went to great lengths to explain that it was a children's exhibition and could be very noisy. However when we went in, we had it to ourselves and it was very interesting from a child's point of view. Based on the horrible history series and with interactive galleries, those of us with nine year old grandsons could imagine how it would be for them. As we left, a class of children entered and it was very noisy!



We also looked round the Holocaust Exhibition which was very moving, and a lot of us went into an air raid shelter, and through the World War 1 trenches.

As it was Remembrance Day a week later, it was a good time to visit and understand.



A New Group is Chiselled!!

DIY DISCUSSION GROUP from Terry Godfrey

AN inaugural meeting was held on the 9th of November at Tree Bridge House, Garston Lane.

Out of the thirty five who signed up, twenty four attended and enjoyed the good company and learned how to correctly and successfully, wire a three pinned plug and learn the rudiments of repairing a leaking tap.

The next meeting will be on the 14th of December, when we will discuss and resolve various DIY items in which members are interested and have the tools and materials available for members to replace a washer in a leaking tap and to put an inline switch into a cable that feeds into a lamp.

Many thanks to Arthur, Francis, John and Alan for their interest and instructions during the meeting and to Marion for handling the money and Naomi for her expertise with the coffee and tea.

Sounds a fab new group, open and of value to us all, not just the lads, girls. Ed.

Why Not Trap and Roast Them?

By David Wynne-Jones

GREY squirrels are, on the surface, pleasant little creatures to look at when they are occasionally seen in a garden: the problem arises, as with so many creatures, when there are dozens of them everywhere and they become destructive.

In America there is a hunting season for squirrels and Elvis Presley wrote in his book that his 'dirt poor' family in Tennessee survived by shooting and eating squirrels when he was growing up.

Ann and I find squirrel meat delicious, rather like rabbit, with a nutty flavour and we had roast squirrel for our Christmas dinner last year. First you have to catch these little furry fiends.

Luckily there is a new cage trap on the market that costs £30 and this catches the squirrel harmlessly after it has entered to eat the nuts. It is available at 'Country Pursuits' in Rickmansworth. It is very robust and lasts for years.

We are all old enough to remember how to skin a rabbit and a squirrel is similar: ask your butcher to do it if necessary. You can store your meat in the freezer and use as required. Recipes, for roast, casserole and stewed squirrel are readily available on the internet under '101 ways to cook a squirrel'.

Possibly for those gardeners and birdwatchers who are pondering on an original Christmas present, the inexpensive cage trap is the perfect answer, Bon Appétit!



Letter to our contributors

Dear all, especially Study Group Leaders, who have sent in Articles, News and Photographs this year. Most people are now editing their copy for the Study Group News to fit the NL format so that I can cut and paste your emails straight into the NL. This saves me considerable time. A big Thank you. Ed.



Orchids at RHS Wisley.

Photo PG

Gardening Group

by Pam Grant

AFTER a very enjoyable season of outings to a variety of lovely destinations, the Group members met in November at Hollytree House for the first of our indoor meetings during the winter months.

We started with a planning session to discuss ideas for

places to visit next year, which will hopefully include a few not known by the majority of people, as well as possibly returning to some favourites from a few years ago not known by newer members. The final programme will be issued in the New Year.

David Ridgeway then treated us to a fascinating talk about the history and care of orchids. He showed us some beautiful photographs which explained how all the very different types of orchid are related and we now know that any orchid whatever its different appearance will have three coloured sepals (which thus look like petals!), two proper petals and a third of a very different shape that is called the lip. Most orchids are known only by their Latin names but many include a link to the person who first discovered the specie or created the first hybrid. We learnt how orchids were originally raised over several years from seed, but are generally now raised from micro-cuttings which are grown in huge (and often fully automated) nurseries, still over a considerable length of time. Most of the ones we see in our shops are hybrids and many will have been imported from Holland or Taiwan.

Jeannette won the orchid - a Phaelonopsis or Moth orchid which is the most common one we see for sale; which was raffled at the end of the meeting. David said that it was most likely grown in Hertfordshire at Sandridge (they supply Ayletts!) and should be kept indoors whereas cybidiums could be put outside in the summer months. His emphasis was on learning the right care for the type of orchid and of course we shall be counting sepals on every one we see from now on!

AN ODE TO OUR GARDENERS

sent in by Ian Stageman

All things bright and beautiful, all creatures great and small,
All things wise and wonderful, the Lord God made them all.
But what we never mention, though gardeners know it's true.
Is when He made the goodies, He made the baddies too!

All things 'spray and swatable', disasters great and small,
All things 'paraquatable', The Lord God made them all.
The green fly on the roses, the maggots in the peas.
Manure that fill our noses, He also gave us these.



Photo- Gregory Badon - courtesy of Wikipedia

The fungus on the 'goosegogs',
the club root on the greens,
The slugs that eat the lettuce and
chew the aubergines.
The drought that kills the fushias,
the frost that nips the buds,
The rain that drowns the seedlings,
the blight that hits the spuds.

The midges and mosquitoes, the nettles and the weeds,
The pigeons in the green stuff, the sparrows on the seeds.
The fly that eats the carrots, the wasp that eats the plums,

How black the gardener's outlook,
though green may be his thumbs

But still we gardeners labour, midst
vegetables and flowers,
And pray what hits our
neighbours, will somehow bypass ours.



Salad Days in my garden

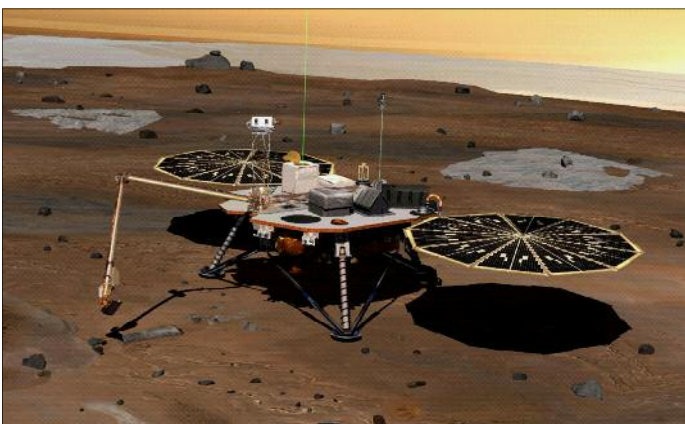
Photo MCT

All things bright and beautiful, all creatures great and small,
All things wise and wonderful. The Lord God made them all.

Thank you Ian. I smiled all the way down my garden. Ed.

Science Interest November 2009

The Mars Phoenix Project By Brian Mee



Simulation of the Phoenix Lander that landed on Mars on May 25th 2008. photo courtesy of www.spaceflightnow.com

quantities being swept away over the millennia by solar winds and volcanic eruptions of Olympus Mons – the biggest volcano known anywhere. An ice core collected from Mars in the future will be a mine of information to scientists although the monetary costs are considerable.

Hebes Chasma, an enclosed trough, almost five miles deep, in the Grand Canyon on Mars taken by a high resolution stereo camera from the European Space Agency's Mars Express orbiter and beamed 43million miles to Earth. Mail on line 2008

PAT WALKER had gathered all the available information about the Mars Phoenix Project and gave a comprehensive presentation despite his computer burning out a few weeks ago.

Mars appears to be very like Earth in many ways and the presence of water and carbon dioxide are very clear. The probes had collected masses of data, which is still being analysed. Pat explained that samples of Mars dust were collected by the probes, put into an oven, heated to drive off any volatile material and this was analysed with sophisticated equipment before the data was transmitted back to Earth via the orbiting space craft a hundred miles above the surface. The quantity of water is thought to be very large, despite vast



STUDY GROUP NEWS

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

Anglo-German Walks

4th Friday 10.00am
Interested ?

Antiques

2nd Tues of the month
2.00pm-4.00pm at my home. 2.00-4.00 at my home.

As usual our members scoured their treasures for books, as the subject this month was Books and Printing. There were some fine specimens, including what seemed to be an old bible printed in German, plus an earlier copy of Alice in Wonderland, but not illustrated by Tenniel. Interesting! We learned about the first printing press, and the famous Gutenberg Bible which was one of the earliest by the German printer of that name and how William Caxton brought the printing press to England. This didn't please a lot of people, as anyone could have access to books, even though most people couldn't read and most printing was in Latin in the early days. Reading thus allowed the common man to form his own opinions, which didn't go down well with their 'superiors'.

8 Dec Video on the Life and work of Chippendale.

Art Appreciation

2nd Mon 10.00 for 10.30am at Hollytree House.

In November Pat Woollard brought our study of Portraiture Through the Ages, up to the 21st C discussing the great diversity of styles from Picasso to Hockney. After Christmas we will see some short presentations on the great portrait painters we have missed. A number of our members have chosen to show us one or two of their favourites.

14 Dec Bring a dish (sign up) Christmas Party, preceded by 'Yes but is it Art?' by Phil McMahon.

Bridge Improvers

2nd & 4th Tuesday 2.30pm-4.30pm or by arrangement.

We now have a jolly little band of improving enthusiasts, We play the Acol Weak No Trump system. contact Sue Winterbotham. New members welcome.

Beginners Bridge

This group on Wednesday mornings is CANCELLED due to lack of support.

Book Discussion Gr

4th Mon 2.00pm-4.00pm
28 Devereux Drive.

New members welcome.

Chess

2nd & 4th Tues 9.30am

Computers 3rd Thurs

2.00pm Thorpe Community Room, Garston Fire Station, St Albans Road, (Next Asda)
Dec NO MEETING

21 Jan Next meeting.

Cryptic Crosswords

1st & 3rd Fri of the month.

4 Dec Last meeting before Christmas.

18 Dec No meeting.

15 Jan Next meeting.

Current Affairs

3rd Tues 10.00am

Hollytree House.

We'd the usual interesting range of topics to discuss in November. We couldn't all agree on the legalisation of cannabis but we had sympathy for Gordon Brown writing to a mother who'd lost her son, despite his handwriting. We tended to the view that training of Afghans might be rather futile and we're not sure of the justification for the English coastal path, which even the walkers among us thought is a political gimmick. Somehow we got round to discussing the death penalty and there was some support for bringing it back for the most heinous crimes; which led to fairly heated discussion!

15 Dec meeting followed by coffee and mince pies, and by a topical quiz.

Cycling

10.00am 1st Mon & 3rd

Wednesday starting at Watford Met Station.

7 Dec Chiswell Green, St Albans.

16 Dec Denham.

17 Dec Thur 7.00pm

American supper chez Y & D.

4 Jan Heronsgate.

20 Jan Whelpley Hill.

DIY Discussion

2nd Mon 10.00am-12 noon

Tree Bridge House,

Garston Lane, WD25 9QR

New members welcome, come and discuss DIY topics that interest you.

European Studies

4th Wed 10.00am

Dec No meeting.

27 Jan Discussion of variety of articles from History Today magazine.

24 Feb

Religion in the 18th Century.

24 Mar

Discussion on a chapter from our book "The Pursuit of Glory" by Tim Blanning.

28 Apr George III.

Exploring London

2 Dec Christmas Meal at Waddesdon Manor. Leaving

Bushey at 10.00am;

Essex Arms at 10-30am.

Please park away from the roundabout at the Essex Arms.

Film Group

1st Thurs 2.15pm

3 Dec 'A River Runs Through It' (Director Robert Redford) (1993) Craig Sheffer Brad Pitt Brenda Blethyn. Two fly-fishing sons of a Presbyterian Minister-one reserved, one rebellious-grow up in Rural Montana.

7 Jan 'Last Orders' Director Fred Schepisi. (2002) Michael Caine Tom Courtney Bob Hoskins Helen Mirren.

Jack Dodd was a London butcher who enjoyed a pint with his mates for over 50 years. When he died, he died as he lived.

Food & Nutrition

Combewood House. 2.00pm

Dec No Meeting

I would like to say 'Have a

Great Christmas and New Year with great dining!

26 Jan Post Christmas meal venue TBA. I hope you will be able to come along.

Gardening

3rd Thurs 10.00am

17 Dec 10 00am at Hollytree House. Christmas Social. Please let us know by the December main meeting whether you are able to come and what nibbles you could bring.

21 Jan 2010 Anniversary Lunch at the Blue Check Restaurant in Bushey. Details TBA. If you have not already done so, please complete an information sheet for us to make sure that we have your details up to date, which is particularly important when we go out on trips.

Greetings Cards

Hollytree House

10 Dec 12.00-2.00pm We will make boxes and small bags. We will also have our usual joint lunch, Each group can have a session before or after the lunch. Please bring your requests for next year's programme (this will include making cards for men/boys).

History

2nd Mon 2.00pm Fire Station

Garston (Asda CP off A41)

14 Dec: Looking at Georges III and IV and a quiz for this Christmas meeting.

Italian 10.00am alt Thurs

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

Jazz 3rd Wed 2.30pm

See Peter Andrews.

London Theatre Group

Future Theatre trips TBA.

Luncheon Club

4th Wed in month

We are still up and running and would be pleased to see any members who would like to join us for lunch. Please phone Fay for further details.

MoneyMatters

1st Thurs Hollytree House; corner of Gammons Lane & Courtlands Drive, Watford 10.00am to Noon.



Janet Carleton

Music Appreciation
3rd Wed: 10.00am Coffee and chat. 10.30am meeting.

Needlecraft

1st & 4th Mon Combewood House. Group full.

Opera

2nd Monday in month
2.00pm at Christine's house.
8 Dec Our Christmas celebration (with mulled wine). Members are invited to bring along their favourite aria or scene from opera on CD, DVD or video to share with the rest of the group.
11 Jan 2010 'The Magic Flute' by Mozart.
8 Feb The Damnation of Faust.

Panto Group

30 Nov 8.30am Police Club
All cast & choir Tech & dress Rehearsal

1 Dec 8.30am performance

Pathfinders Group

The Essex Arms 9.25am
Dec No walk.

26 Jan Local walk and planning meeting.

Performing Arts

Johanna's Mon 7.30pm
Autumn Programme
Dec Blag Theatre at The Pump House.

11 Jan Play Reading at 9 Nancy Downs. Meanwhile some members of the group are rehearsing two sketches for the Christmas show. Look forward to seeing you soon.

Photo Manipulation

Falconer School, Bushey
2nd Tuesday of the month
4.00pm-5.30pm

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.
Short rides in the Watford area based on the Watford Council map, starting at the Pump House at 2.00pm.
3 Dec, 7 Jan.

Science Interest

3rd Monday 10.00am
21 Dec Criminology – Colin Richards.
18 Jan visit to Natural History Museum – fully booked.

15 Feb GE Healthcare – Mandeep Kehla.
New members welcome!

Scrabble 1

2nd and 4th Thursdays.
Our group is still full.

Scrabble 2

2nd Thurs 10.00am.
Our group is now full. Maybe someone would wish to start Scrabble 3?

Shakespeare

Last Wed 2.00pm
Dec No meeting.
27 Jan 2010 Reading: 'The Merry Wives of Windsor'.

Snooker

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

Sporting Forum

International sporting journalist, Morley Myers made a welcome return as guest at our November meeting. Morley gave a clinical (sometimes cynical) appraisal of how the International Olympic Committee goes about the selection procedure to determine the host city for the Olympic Games.

15 Dec A seasonal theme with a social afternoon and quiz.

19 Jan Anthony Matthews – Sports Editor, Watford Observer.

16 Feb 'Pick a winner?'

Strollers

2nd & 4th Tues 11.00am
New members welcome.
Distances are not shown but are usually 2.5 to 3 miles.

8 Dec Margaret and Wendy-Rickmansworth Aquadrome CP & Eat (bring Binoculars).

12 Jan New Year celebration Planning Meeting at Peggy's, followed by lunch at the Southern Cross.

26 Jan Jane and Myra -Walk around Chorleywood Park and eat at the Black Horse

Table Tennis

Mondays TBA at 7.30pm
St. Marks Church Leggatt's Way [see p 3]
30 Nov 14 Dec & Jan 18 2010. On each occasion only one table will be available.

The Explorers

4 Dec is a planning meeting at 143 Oaklands Ave. Bring along ideas for walks in 2010.

The Rock 'n' Roll Yrs

4th Thursday each month
2.30pm Hollytree House.

Contact: Andrew Cannon

Dec NB : No meeting!

Thirsty Walkers

Every 4th Thurs.
The Essex Arms at 9.30am to share cars.

28 Jan Planning Meeting at 10.00am at my house (phone W 223883 for directions if needed). It will be helpful if you have your diary and some ideas for walks but books of walks are available. The Lunch at The Southern Cross will follow on at about noon and will be pre-booked.

Toffee

3rd Thursday 10.00am-12.00

Tuesday

Trekkers
Meet 9.45am
start at 10.00am.

8 Dec Brian.
Big choice of walks from Chipperfield, Which will he do? Probably get lost as usual. CP by



Brian Ashford

Church Chipperfield.

12 Jan Another Blockbuster from Dennis by special request to include Galleria and bus passes. Numbers will be restricted and no bicycles allowed. Watch this space!

U3A Singers

1st & 3rd Monday 2.30pm
7 Dec Meeting as usual, to go over Christmas carols and songs.

21 Dec No meeting.

4 Jan First meeting of the New Year for those who can make it.

18 Jan No meeting. (Celia on holiday). New members are always welcome.

Walking

Most walks start at JS A41
Eight Miles 9.30am
9 Dec Sarratt.
Six miles 10.00am
Dec No Walk.

Wine Appreciation

Last Friday in the month.

Writers Workshop

Come and develop your writing skills. New members welcome.

WATFORD BOYS SCHOOL COMPUTER COURSES

in conjunction with Watford Park U3A,
Housekeeping – (1 wk 2nd December)
Cards/Posters/Flyers – (2wks 9th and 16th December)
Helpers: Are you able to volunteer to help during these courses? If yes please give me a ring or email with availability. Without a team of helpers the attendees will not gain the full benefit of these short courses.
These courses are held at Watford Boys' Grammar School, Rickmansworth Road on Wednesday 4 – 5.30pm – term time
If you are interested in attending any of the above courses please contact Danny Desmond 225648 or Jean Fuller 238858 email daniel_g_desmond@tiscali.co.uk

Watford U3A's

Projector & Laptop computers

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

Colin Richards

digitalequipment@watfordu3a.org.uk

'Find Out How to Use Our New Digital Equipment.'

This course was a great success. Colin has trained 30 WU3A members and he is prepared to repeat the same course in the New Year if the demand is there.

The old digital projector has died and the new one is DIFFERENT! Could you successfully operate it?

Please contact Colin Richards.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor

THE FUTURE OF THE COLOSSEUM

There are grave concerns about the council's future plans for Watford's Colosseum and it is important that certain issues are addressed before the council becomes irrevocably committed to the refurbishment of the hall - an all important part of Watford's heritage.

Since its inaugural season in 1996/7, Classic Concerts Trust has generated a huge revival of interest. Being involved in such an immensely rewarding process of development has enabled the Trust, in conjunction with Watford Musical Heritage, to fulfil its mission to share great music more widely and to do so to maximum effect through working in one of the finest concert halls in Europe, a building of truly exceptional musical quality as well as an interior of great architectural merit.

However, the council has chosen options concerning the renovation and future management which it is believe will generate results of a far lower order in terms of artistic and community development than are acceptable or appropriate, especially concerning a building of unique importance. If this proves to be the case the council will also have failed to provide local taxpayers with the value for money they deserve.

There is first of all a clear need for the council and the new operators to convince all those with doubts of the sustainability of the plans, as well as their community and artistic merit, that an optimum result is entirely achievable.

In view of the extent of concern, the Council is urged most strongly to delay signing the contracts and change the launch event to an open meeting at which the proposals are presented and the opportunity provided for all concerns to be openly aired and clearly addressed.

All U3A members who attend the concerts, as well as others with an interest in the future of the Colosseum, are invited to send their views to me or to Jonathan Brett, the Artistic Director of Classics Concert Trust, who has sent an open letter to the Mayor of Watford which includes a contact e-mail address. Go to -

<http://www.watfordconcerts.com/mayor>

Tony Platts, Director of Watford Musical Heritage

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MRP Cost: £400+ special offer to bona fide members of the U3A ≈ £97

Contact: THE THIRD AGE TRUST 19 East St. Bromley Kent BRI 1QH

tel 02084666139 email: national.office@u3a.org.uk

ENGLISH CLASSICAL PLAYERS

The Watford Colosseum will close for refurbishment in 2010 so another season of five great concerts will run from **24th September to 30 December 2009**, all preceded by a Pre-Concert talk with musicians at 6.30 pm, concert at 7.30 pm. www.watfordconcerts.com or telephone 01923 888320

WANTED

CAROL SINGERS

You are warmly invited to join with the U3A Singers when they will be singing traditional Christmas Carols and Songs in aid of charity on two occasions.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 10TH, 7.00pm-8.00pm in the Harlequin,

on the bridge, outside the John Lewis store, in aid of Oxfam.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12TH, 2.00pm-3.00pm at Asda,

inside the store near the cafeteria, in aid of Action for Children. Both of these venues are rather large spaces to fill, so the more voices we have, the more sound we can make, the greater the effect will be. If you are interested, just turn up - the more, the merrier!!

**CONTACT
CECILIA JACKSON**



A BIG THANKS TO ALL THOSE WHO DONATED USED SPECTACLES FOR THE CHARITY "VISION AID", WE COLLECTED 220 WHICH WERE VERY WELL RECIEVED.

Jacqueline Godfrey

Committee members

Chairman

John Carleton

Secretary

Yvonne Fitton

Study Group

Coordinator

Margaret Foster

JB Computer Services
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Vue Cinema senior screening

Films are shown each Monday at 12.00 for Senior Citizens and include tea and biscuits for £3.50. (*can't be bad*). titles can be obtained on line or by telephone 08712 240240

Monthly Meeting's Talks 1st Tuesday 10.00am - 12.00noon.

1 Dec 'The Christmas Variety Show' with The Panto Group and The Performing Arts Group.

5 Jan David Ball: Magic and the Magic Circle inc Tommy Cooper stories.

2 Feb Brendan Larvor: [Univ. Herts] Philosophy.

2 Mar The Lord [Ian] McColl: Mercy Ships.

6 Apr Performing Arts Poetry Reading

4 May Chris Pound International Architecture

1 Jun A G M

For More detail contact Speaker Secretary:-

David Helliwell
speakers@watfordu3a.org.uk

Material for the January Newsletter

**MUST be received
by: 20 December**

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

**E-mail copy to:
editor@watfordu3a.org.uk**