



Volume 13, Issue 11 : November 2024

www.u3asites.org.uk/watford-

Hello everyone,

I hope you are managing to enjoy some of the last fine days. I would like to hibernate just now and greet you again in the Spring but life isn't like that and we all have to go through the winter.

As I have often said, the u3a is more than just our little portion, it is a huge organisation of some 1000 plus branches with 430,000 members. The Third Age Trust or TAT is the umbrella organisation and amongst other things it negotiates the boring stuff like insurance and keeps us on the right path for the legal things we have to know about. For a couple of years, it has been working on reorganising the websites that we all use to help people find us. The support organisation that was behind the web sites is changing, the personnel of one is retiring, and another company is coming in its place. Change is always tricky and this has been a major operation for TAT and in a more minor way our branch.

The website we have had for a good number of years has really never been used to the best advantage. The software was very difficult to change which meant that we did very little with it. The new website company is helping to change that and we hope to make the website a much more interesting prospect.

First comes the learning, which is what I have been doing in my spare time over the past weeks. The software we have been given is up to date and very clever but it has taken a good deal of understanding. I thank friends around me for their understanding when I have been tearing my hair out with frustration. However, we are inching towards going live and I will let you know when the great time comes. It will be a few weeks yet because there are still some steps to go.

If there is anything you might like to see on a website, please let me know, because I will be glad to have ideas. One of the things we've talked about is plenty of photographs. I have been asking around the committee and some others if they have any photographs, they might have of past events that we could use. Further into the newsletter there is a piece about photographs and how we have to be careful about their use. We have had discussions in Committee about it because they come under the Data Protection Act of 2018.

If you have photographs, would you be kind enough to send them to me please. If there are people in them, we have to know that they are happy to go on the website that will be world-wide. That may be difficult for you to know and if they are past members who we have lost touch with we might have to edit the photo before using it. The piece later will describe how we have to approach things and how everyone has the right to withhold or withdraw permissions.

I shall look forward to seeing you at the next meeting. I doubt there'll be photos taken at that one but there might be at the Christmas events one which isn't far off.

(Please turn to Page 2 of this Newsletter to see the next section of our Chair's opening letter.)

**The next monthly meeting of Watford Central u3a will be on
Thursday, 7th November 2024 at 2.00pm
at the Ex-Services Club, 12-14 St Albans Road, Watford WD17 1BN**

THE SPEAKER AT OUR NOVEMBER MEETING WILL BE

David Burnell talking on Fantastic Olympia Spectacular at Earls Court

Data Protection and Photographs

As a u3a we keep certain data about our members. These are: names and addresses, email addresses, telephone numbers and telephone numbers of an emergency contact. The details are kept on computer, are password protected and held by a limited number of people.

Photographs are also considered personal data. As such, permission has to be sought before taking and displaying them.

The Third Age Trust policies indicate that it sufficient to say to members that photographs will be taken at an event and explain that you should move away if you prefer not to be included. If a photograph is taken it might be given to the newsletter editor and it could also be used for the website. If you are warned that there is photography happening, but stay in shot, it is considered that you have given permission for the photograph to be taken and used. However, everyone has the right to withdraw permission at a later time.

For Watford Central u3a the Chair or the Web Manager (The chair is doing both at the moment) or the newsletter editor (currently Sue Ettridge) can be asked to remove a picture from the newsletter and/or the website and it will be done as quickly as possible.

With best wishes,

Sally

BONFIRE NIGHT AND OTHER CELEBRATIONS WHEN FIREWORKS ARE USED

THE SUDDEN BANG OF FIREWORKS CAN BE MASKED BY KEEPING A RADIO OR TV ON, WHICH CAN REDUCE THE IMPACT NOISES MAY HAVE ON YOUR PET.

We should all be careful when it comes to fireworks or any other hazards that could lead to injury. Bonfires and indoor open fires are comforting, but beware of the dangers. Now that nights are longer and days are shorter, ensure you have adequate lighting to avoid falls.

Yellow Envelopes

Please remember to carry your up-to-date medical details with you if you're out and about with u3a. It's not compulsory but a good idea to have. If you need a new form or envelope we have plenty of both.

Theatre visits

Leader: Sally Macaulay (07582 480053)

Watford Palace Theatre Presents Aladdin

Saturday 28th December at 1.00pm

Join us for a magic carpet ride like no other, as Aladdin takes to the skies of Watford.

- Evil baddie Abanazar – check!
- Glamorous Princess – check!
- Magical and funky genie – check!
- And, of course, all the classics you expect from one of the longest running pantos on the planet – big songs, great gags, and Widow Twanky herself, played by Watford's favourite Dame, Terence Frisch.

Ticket Price £30

A signing-up sheet will be available at our meeting on 7th November.



On Page 3 you will be able to see how well Central Watford u3a members behaved in the school rooms at the Hitchin British School Museum.

Out and About Visits with Watford Central u3a

Leader: Sally Macaulay

The trip to Hitchin arranged by Sally was an education in itself. We set out from outside the library and drove through dense mist to Hitchin arriving in good time. There were a few problems trying to find the correct entrance, but soon we were standing in an upper playground used by boys in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

Our hosts were keen volunteers, very thorough in their explaining of how the school started and the methods of teaching that used the monitorial system, where senior pupils, probably of some merit, each handled a dozen or so younger pupils and their written work. We also had a lesson from an elderly "mistress", who surely must have had some teaching experience, as we sat still without sniggering or passing comment whilst she drilled us on arithmetic, spelling and handwriting.

We were given a tour of the original headmaster's house, which contained some excellent examples of early Victorian items, including some beautiful bed quilts. When we arrived back in Watford, tired but happy with our experience, the heavy mist had cleared completely.

Lunches and hot drinks were available in the original building where these days small children and parents can enjoy play sessions.

Thanks go to Sally for arranging such an interesting and worthwhile trip.



Interest Days Out

Leader: Sandra Kay (07710 868665)

Our visit to the William Morris Gallery in September was very interesting and we learned how William Morris began his work designing wallpapers, textiles and carpets, still used in textiles, homeware and wallpapers today

The photo shows the house where William Morris lived.



November Day Out to the V&A

For November we will be visiting the Victoria and Albert Museum in South Kensington on Tuesday 19th November and a sign up will be available at the November monthly meeting.

For travelling, we will meet at Watford Junction Station at 9:45am to get the 10:15am train. From Euston we get the Victoria Line to Victoria and then the Circle Line to South Kensington. It's then a short walk to the museum. (There is no step-free access at South Kensington underground station).



Lunch Group

Leader: Sally Macaulay (07582 480053)

Wednesday 13th November at 12 noon in the Training Restaurant of West Herts College.

Cost £12

There will be a sign-up sheet along with the menu at the next meeting on 7th November. We have to choose in advance so the students know much of each dish to cook.

Parking: There is some limited parking in the Avenue Car Park opposite the college but it does get very busy with students. The next nearest is the Gade Car Park. Parking along the Avenue only allows for 2 hours which may not be quite enough. The Gade has a new payment system and you can pay on an App or on their new machines. No ticket or barriers but number plate recognition as you go in. Type in your registration number to know how much to pay at the end.

Walking Group

Leader: Jenny Graham (07957 155625)

The next walk on Friday 29 November will be in St Albans.

Catch the 321 bus at 10.17 am at bus stop J in Market Street or at 10.24 am at Watford Junction or a bit later at the railway bridge in St Alban's Road. We shall get off the bus at Westminster Lodge and walk round Verulamium Park stopping for a drink and a snack at the cafe before getting the bus back to Watford.

The usual signing up sheet will be available at the main meeting otherwise phone or text me on 07957155625 if you would like to join us.

New walkers are very welcome to join our friendly group.

There is no photo as last month's walk was cancelled due to the pouring rain.

A new Interest Group for Watford Central u3a !

These are exciting times for all of us in this u3a branch, because we have been planning and now are ready to launch a new Interest Group, to take the place of Blasts from the Past, inaugurated by Anne Rattue.

Attached to this Newsletter is a note from Sue Ettridge (editor) giving details of what we have planned for the group and where and when we will be meeting.

Blasts from the Past was a very well attended Group and we are confident that our members will ensure the success of this new one, looking back at our own experiences and those of the famous and possibly notorious!



The late and great Ann Rattue at our Teddy Bears Picnic party celebrating our first anniversary with members of Blasts from the Past.

Ann achieved so much throughout her time as "Blasts from the Past" group leader and has inspired many of us to go forward and continue to develop her excellent ideas and to create new ones.

Thanks to Ann.



Remembrance Sunday, 10th November 2024

The National Service of Remembrance
will be held at the Cenotaph
on Whitehall, London.

There will be a service and two minutes silence,
at 10.30am at St Mary's Church, Watford

A parade, led by the Lord Lieutenant
of Hertfordshire, will commence at
**2.15pm from St Mary's Church
up to the Peace Memorial**

A service at the Peace Memorial,
(outside the Town Hall, opposite the library)
will commence at 3.00pm

There will also be services in other churches
in and around Watford.



Located 15 minutes to the north of Arras, in France, the Ring of Remembrance has become a key monument on the Great War Remembrance Trails. Inaugurated on 11 November 2014 on the site of the Necropolis of Notre-Dame-de-Lorette, this contemporary memorial forms an enormous ellipsis engraved with the names of the 580,000 soldiers who fell in the area, commonly named Bloody Hill, during the Great War.

On the source of his inspiration, Philippe Prost (the designer) explains, "I was thinking about the rings you make when you're a child, or a human ring when everyone holds each others' hands in a sign of fellowship, and that seemed to me like the image, the form best suited to speaking about the soldiers killed in the Nord-Pas-de-Calais region."

One of the names on a panel, belongs to Geert Hindricks from the 3rd Hanover Infantry Regiment. He described in a last letter to his wife how the German soldiers on the Western Front became friendly with their enemies in the British trench just 20m (65 ft) away, warning each other when officers were passing by and sharing meat and cigarettes.

"When you think about it," he wrote, "it's a sad affair when there's no animosity between the locals and the soldiers and only those at the top can't agree on anything."

(Reference: *Wikipedia*)

Interest Groups...

SCRABBLE - 1st and 3rd Wednesday monthly at 2pm
Tesco's, Lower High Street, Watford.
Leader: Sally Macaulay, watfordcentralU3A@outlook.com

RUMMIKUB - 2nd and 4th Thursday monthly at 1-2.45pm
The bar, Ex-Services Club
Next meeting: 14th November 2024
Ex-Services Club, St Albans Road, Watford
Leader: Florence Ang,
Emails to watford central u3a@outlook.com

CHAPTER 1 - Last Thursday monthly at 10.30am
Group leader's home
Leader: Carol Firman, carolfirman@hotmail.com

CHAPTER TWO - 2nd Tuesday monthly at 10am
The Almshouses, Church Street, Watford
Leader: Pam Grant, pmgrant@ntlworld.com

WHAT'S IN THE NEWS - 2nd Wednesday monthly at 2pm
The Almshouses, Church Street, Watford
Leader: Chris Raby, craby31254@aol.com

KNIT 'N' NATTER - 3rd Thursday monthly at 10am
The Almshouses, Church Street, Watford
Leader: Joan Morse, joan.morse@rocketmail.com

INTEREST DAYS OUT - Date and venue will be
as advised in the Newsletter
Leader: Sandra Kay, watfordcentralu3sk@aol.com

LUNCH CLUB - 3rd Thursday of the month at 12.30pm
Venue will be advised in the Newsletter.
Leader: Sally Macaulay, watfordcentralu3a@outlook.com

WALKING - Last Friday monthly. Time and venue will be
as advised in the Newsletter.
Leader: Jenny Graham, jgraham41a@gmail.com

THEATRE VISITS - Date and venue will be as advised in
the Newsletter
Leader: Sally Macaulay, watfordcentralU3A@outlook.com

CANASTA - First Friday of each month , 1.00-2.45 pm
Ex-Services Club, St Albans Road
Leader: Sandra Kay, watfordcentralu3sk@aol.com

Canasta at The Ex-Services Club

The new Canasta Group will meet at the Ex-Services Club on Friday, **1st November** from 1.00pm to 2.45pm. PLEASE ACCEPT THE SINCERE APOLOGIES OF SUE ETTRIDGE (EDITOR) FOR THE ERROR IN THE OCTOBER NEWSLETTER THAT GAVE THE START TIME HALF AN HOUR LATER THAN IT SHOULD BE!

Learn
Laugh
Live u3a

Watford
Central

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Pam Grant
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Committee Members

Nell Attwood, Shenaz Ghani, Mair Haynes and Wendy Norwood

Sally (our Chair) has just received sad news about the passing of Anne Birch.

Anne Birch was a former member and a good friend. I am sure that those of us who knew Anne will be very sorry to hear that she passed away on Sunday, 27th October.

As this is being written we don't know any more details, but we know she has been ill for a long time. Quite a lot of it was during the pandemic so we couldn't see much of her after that, but she did come to the Christmas lunch last time. Some of us were able to join her at her 80th birthday party which was just before we were all locked away so we know that she was a few months shy of her 85th birthday.

Anne was a lovely, gentle lady. She loved to play Scrabble and taught us to play canasta. She always had the patience to be understanding when we weren't so clever at it as she. At her party we met many of her family and she was a kind and loving grandma to them all.

RIP dear Anne.



30th October 2024

To: All our readers

From: Sue Ettridge - Newsletter Editor & Secretary

WHAT'S YOUR STORY? A new Interest Group of Watford Central u3a

You may remember that our Interest Group named "Blasts from the Past", set up by the late Ann Rattue, provided some very interesting and often amusing sessions at the Almshouses and later in Wellspring Church. Ann would find some intriguing subjects to present, which more often than not would lead to in-depth discussions on quite bizarre subjects. At one meeting, we heard about ghosts haunting the South Oxhey housing estate wearing pinnies and tidying the gardens. That subject was brought to us by another dearly departed friend of Watford Central u3a, Janet Golding.

Whilst we are unable to call on either of these ladies for inspiration, their past contributions could certainly give us a kick-start into 2025. Tucked away in the archives of another group that Ann and Janet were valued by and for which I keep records, are so many stories, some short and others a little longer. We could give some of these a try, together with some of your own material and during the next few weeks, we will be preparing a rough agenda to cover the first few months of our new Interest Group which, incidentally, will be called "What's your Story?"

Not everyone has spent time researching local history in our library and museum or has a fantastic story to relay about courageous or daring episodes in their lives. So, although we would like to hear from those who could tell such tales, what we all can do is tell a story. It doesn't matter if it's about ourselves or anyone else. It could be false or true. If we think it is worth telling, our new group wants to hear about it.

Our first meeting has been booked for Wednesday, 22nd January 2025 at the Almshouses by St Mary's Church in Central Watford at 2.00 pm until 4.00 pm and thereafter we intend to meet every month on the fourth Wednesday afternoon. There will be a small charge to cover venue hire expenses. We will need a "who is who" chat at this first meeting, followed by a brainstorming session. So, please bring your ideas along.

Your committee are keen to give encouragement to members of Watford Central u3a to *Live, Laugh and Learn* and we are sure this will be yet another opportunity for us to do this by getting together and enjoying life.

We are looking forward to welcoming some new faces and many of our Blasts from the Past Group previous members at our What's Your Story? meetings.