



Hello Everyone,

Welcome to the newsletter for MARCH! As I write this it is almost March and I can see the day on the horizon. The nights are shortening, from both ends, and the winter is beginning to shift over, well slightly.

Thank you to everyone who has already renewed their membership and, I have high hopes that we can keep going. Membership forms will be available again at the next meeting if you are not able to print at home. This is probably a good time to remind everyone that, apart from the book groups, every activity we have is open to every member. The book groups are a bit different because of the places they meet and the need to provide the books. However, if any of you want to be in a book group we can always create another one. It's not rocket science, as they say. Come and join in with something different and if you don't know how to play then we will teach.

You will see later in the newsletter that we are going to the West Herts College Training Restaurant for our lunch this month. I was able to book 20 places this time, which is great. It is a lovely place for lunch and it gives the students very valuable experience for the world of work. The details are further inside and you will be able to make your choices at the meeting on the 6<sup>th</sup> March.

March is the month and the 8<sup>th</sup> the day when women of the world mark International Women's Day. This is the description of IWD on the Official Website: **International Women's Day** (March 8) is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women. This year nations are being prompted into action to accelerate women's equality. It is interesting to note women can vote in most, but not all countries and there are still places where women driving a car is frowned upon (and not in a jokey way).

This is what I found on line: 'International Women's Day has occurred for well over a century, with the first IWD gathering in 1911 supported by over a million people. Today, IWD belongs to all groups collectively everywhere. IWD is not country, group or organization specific.' Locally Watford Women's Centre is holding an event on Zoom on 6<sup>th</sup> March. Details to be found on <https://wwcplus.org.uk/> if you are interested and have Zoom. There are many other events around the area which you will find if you search the Internet.

I'll look forward to seeing many of you on 6<sup>th</sup> March.

With best wishes, Sally

**The next monthly meeting of Watford Central u3a will be on**

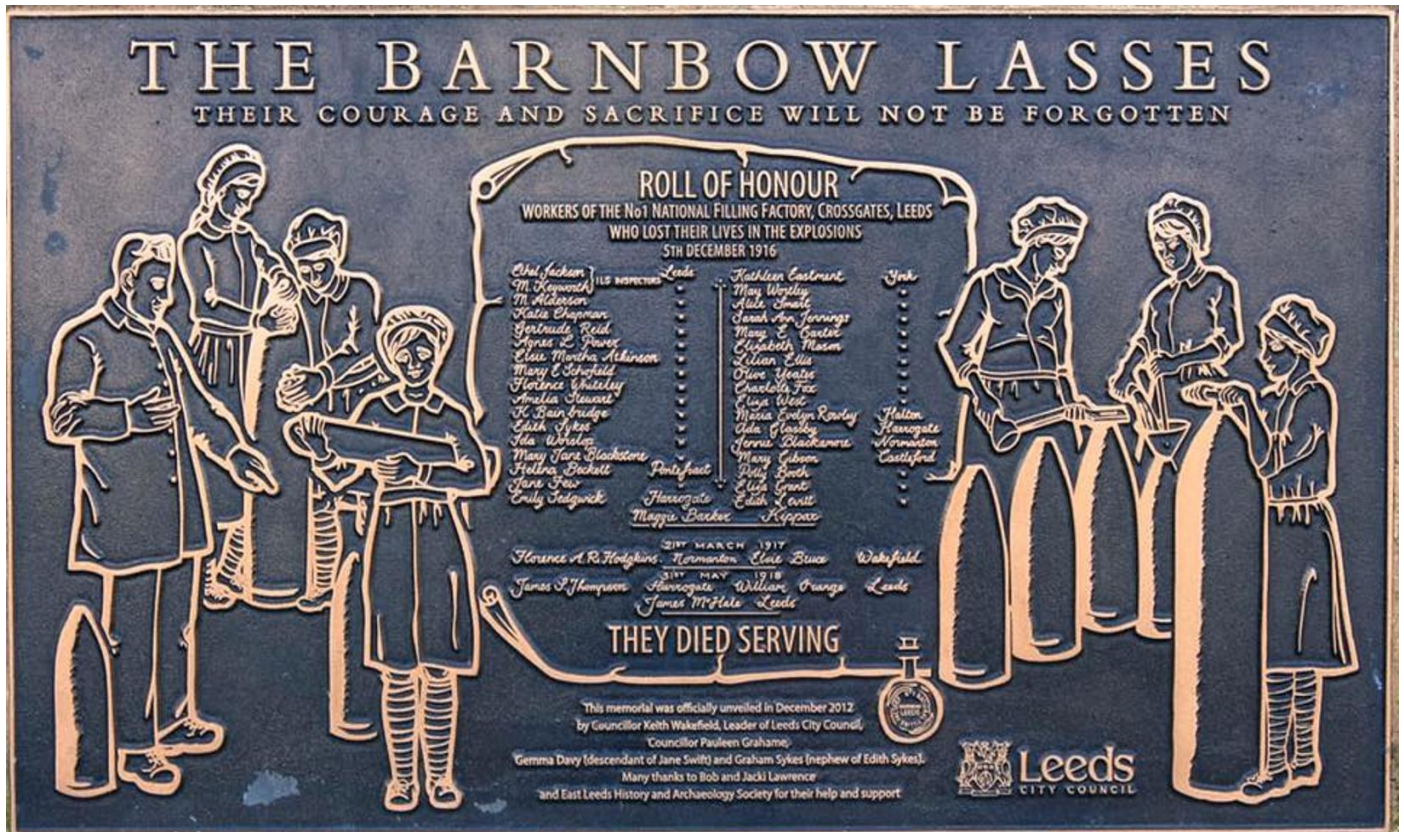
**Thursday, 6th March 2025 at 2.00pm**

**at the Ex-Services Club, 12-14 St Albans Road, Watford WD17 1BN**

**The Speaker will be Liz Ariendt from Hearing Dogs for the Deaf.**

**Liz will be accompanied by Hearing Dog Rufus.**

We are delighted to welcome Liz Ariendt and Hearing Dog Rufus. We will hear about some of the fascinating and interesting roles Hearing Dogs for the Deaf undertake in the home and in the community. I have heard of the wonderful work this organisation does over the years and am looking forward to learning more about them.



The raw materials used in the making of munitions in this factory were toxic, turning workers' skin and hair yellow in a short time, and earning them the name 'The Barnbow Canaries'.

On 5 December 1916, an explosion at Barnbow Shell Factory in Leeds killed 35 female workers and injured many more. Today, the site of the factory is protected as a scheduled monument by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. but at the time the accident was hushed up.



The photo is an exact moment in the news vendor's day and is labelled "Tuesday 16th March 1954, 11.45am". It was taken outside the Rose and Crown Hotel which was on the corner of Market Street. (Watford Observer)

It was only a sunny smile,  
 and little it cost in the giving,  
 but like morning light  
 it scattered the night  
 and made the day  
 worth living.  
*F Scott Fitzgerald*



5th March 1911. (Picture: Bryen Wood collection)  
 They came from miles around to see Mr Willow's balloon, "The City of Cardiff", the first airship seen in Watford, as it prepared for take-off after emerging from its hangar in Bushey Hall Road, Bushey.

## Shrove Tuesday 4th March 2025

**Shrove Tuesday** (also known as **Mardi Gras**, **Pancake Tuesday** or **Pancake Day**) is the final day of Carnival or Shrovetide, marking the end of pre-Lent.

The popular theory goes that in the past people would make pancakes on Shrove Tuesday as a good way to use up all the remaining eggs, milk and butter (all the animal products) that were forbidden throughout lent.

It was the practice in Rome for penitents and grievous sinners to begin their period of public penance on the first day of Lent (**Ash Wednesday**) in preparation for their restoration to the sacrament of the Eucharist. They were sprinkled with ashes, dressed in sackcloth, and had to remain apart until they were reconciled with the Christian community on Maundy Thursday, the Thursday before Easter.



This year, Ramadan will be from **Friday 28 February to Sunday 30 March 2025** (subject to confirmation, depending on the sighting of the moon).

Ramadan lasts for a month and the first and last dates are determined by the lunar Islamic calendar, where the day begins on the sunset of the previous day.



Each fast is from dawn to sunset. The pre-dawn meal before the fast is called the *Suhur*. The meal at sunset to open the fast is called *Iftar*.

The fast is traditionally opened in the evening by eating dates, drinking water and a meal with family and friends followed by evening prayer.

These two photographs were passed to us by member and Committee member, Mair Haines, The picture on the left shows Mair's collection of Welsh ornaments, with spring daffodils in the vase. In the glass vase on the right the daffodils are made from special Lego pieces, which will, of course last Mair so much longer than the real ones.



**March winds  
and April  
showers  
bring forth  
May flowers.**

This proverb was first recorded in 1886.

## **Lunch Group**

**Leader: Sally Macaulay**

**Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> March at 12 NOON (please note the earlier time this month)**

West Herts College Training Restaurant    **Cost £12.50**

Starters:

- Leek and Potato Soup
- Ceasar Salad

Main:

- Katsu Chicken (served with sticky rice and pickled vegetables)
- Fisherman's Pie with puff pastry top (with minted new potatoes and spring greens)
- Crumbed Aubergine (served on served with sticky rice and pickled vegetables)

Desert:

- Dutch Apple Sponge and Custard
- Lemon Posset

The cost does not include a tip but we usually leave something for the students at your discretion. Drinks are available but must be paid for separately.

## **Theatre Visits**

**Leader: Sally Macaulay**

**Watford Palace Theatre 3 p.m.**

**Watford Palace Young Company present *Bugsy Malone*.**

Prepare yourself for a criminally good time as Bugsy Malone come to Watford! Packed with dazzling performances and unforgettable numbers, this show offers a playful, family-friendly take on classic mobster tales.

This is the theatre's group of young actors who have been working on the presentation for several months.

Ticket price:£15

**Save the dates:** Shows coming to the local theatres:

3<sup>rd</sup> May 2025: **A Chorus Line** St Albans Arena

24<sup>th</sup> May 2025: **Pride and Prejudice – sort of** - a retelling of the Jane Austen book  
Watford Palace

## Walking Group

**Leader: Jenny**

Our next walk on **Friday 28 March** will be from Croxley Green. Meet in time to catch the 0.30am 322 bus towards Rickmansworth. It stops a little later in Market Street. I shall catch it near my home. We shall walk for about an hour before going to the pub for refreshments.

The usual signing up sheet will be available at the next main meeting, otherwise phone or text me on 017957 155625 if you would like to join us.

New walkers are very welcome to join our friendly group.



**Damp Canal walk, January 2025**

## Interest Days Out

**Leader: Sandra Kay**

We all enjoyed our visit to the British Museum although being half term it was rather busy and directions in the museum aren't great, but everyone chose what they wanted to see and found it interesting.

**For our visit to The Museum of the Home in Hoxton on Tuesday March 18th;** please meet at Watford Junction Station about 09:40am in time to catch the 10:02am train to Euston, where we will then take the Victoria Line to Highbury and Islington, then the Overground to Hoxton, the Museum is across the road from the station. You can decide if you want to travel the same journey on return or do the complete trip by London Overground.

**For our April visit on Tuesday 15th,** we will be going to the Royal Hospital Chelsea Museum (Home of the Chelsea Pensioners) which includes the stable yard, shop and cafe. A signing up sheet will be available at the March Monthly Meeting, so see you all then.



Royal Hospital, Chelsea (Mieczyslaw)Nowak

## What's Your Story?

**Leader: Sue Ettridge**

**Our next meeting will be at 2.00 pm on Wednesday, 26th March.**

At our February meeting, we told stories about Watford's industries and will continue further when we meet on 26th March. There are so many tales to tell, that we are unlikely to run out of material! If you wish to find out more about us, just come along on the 26th and listen to our stories over a cup of tea or coffee and a biccyy. £1 per head.

**A reminder about membership of Watford Central u3a**

**Membership for 2025/2026 begins on 1st April 2025**