

Watford Central

U3A

Learn Laugh Live

Volume 14, Issue 7 - July

www.u3asites.org.uk/watford-central

Hello Everyone,

Welcome to the newsletter for July. After all the months of complaining about the cold, along comes the summer and gives us a huge jolt. We're going out without coats, imagine! By the time this newsletter is read we will have passed Midsummer and over the hump towards the second half of the year.

For Watford Central, July is when some of us are travelling to the Chiltern Open Air Museum at Chalfont St Peter. There are still 5 places left in the mini-bus so if you want to change your mind and come with us, we'd love to have you along. The practical details were in last month's newsletter but the date is Friday 11th July, leaving the layby by the Central Library at 10 a.m. if you already wish you'd booked a place you could email or text me on my mobile number even before the next monthly meeting. It is first come etc for these last few seats.

What else is going on in the UK in July? The Hampton Court Palace Flower Show from 1st – 6th. If you have never been to this show it is fabulous! The grounds are extensive and there is so much to see. A much better place to see things than Chelsea as the exhibitors can spread out. Travel by boat from the station side down to the show gates makes for a comfortable beginning. Other suggestions are Wimbledon for the Tennis; LLangollen in North Wales for the International Musical Eisteddfod; An arts festival in Manchester; an air show in Swansea and Alice's Day in Oxford, where you can dress up as Alice or other characters and explore the city. Looks like it going to be a busy month for some. Let's hope the rain stays away.

For us, we will be continuing with our meeting and the other groups, remember that everyone is welcome to everything except the book groups which are limited in numbers. If you want to begin a new book group, we can help you to start one. See you at the next meeting on 3rd July.



With best wishes, Sally

The next monthly meeting of Watford Central u3a will be on

Thursday, 3rd July 2025 at 2.00pm

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

The Speaker at this meeting will be Rob Brewer (Ex Police Officer) who will cover the roles of a Supporting Artiste aka Film and TV Extras.

Scaffolding has been erected against the Ex-Services Club building. Unfortunately, there is no parking outside the building for the time being. You may find a place in The Avenue car park or behind The Quarters building. Both are Pay & Display, the Quarters via an app.



The work on the Town Hall is still in progress, but the Colosseum has now been uncovered and we await its re-opening in a few months' time.

Photo: Stephen Danzig

This horse trough has been dressed in its pretty summer colours.

Photo: Stephen Danzig



Little Cassiobury has been in the news for the past few years.

Who thinks it should be turned into residential accommodation?

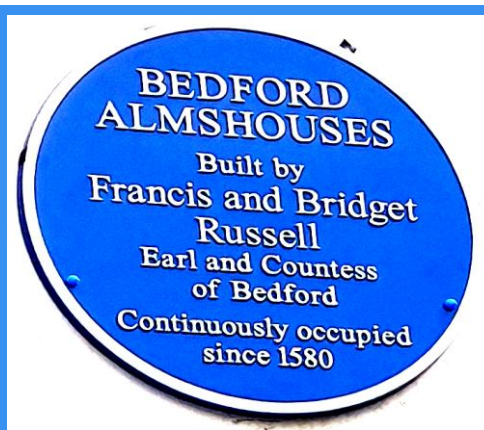
Photo: Stephen Danzig



One of Watford's most historic building set to be turned into five flats

See Page 4 for photos of the celebration at the Almshouses in Church Street, where a Blue Plaque has been installed.

Photo: Lynda Bullock



Lunch Group

Leader: Sally Macaulay

Thursday, 17th July at 1 p.m. at The Blue Check in Bushey.

They offer a two-course meal for **£18.70** which includes the service charge. The 142 and 258 buses both pass the door and go from Watford Junction, through the town and on to Bushey every 10 minutes.

The menu is quite extensive, well-cooked and good value. Lunch Group lunches are always enjoyable and, of course, they are open to everyone, come and try it.

A sign-up sheet will be available at the next meeting and the menu items are chosen on the day.

Theatre Visits

There isn't any theatre news this time as the theatres don't seem to have much of interest at this time of the year.

Walking Group

Leader: Jenny

The next walk on Friday 25 July will be a circular walk from Holywell past Brightwell Farm and Oxhey Hall finishing at the Cycle Hub for refreshments.

Catch the 20 bus at 10.25 am at Watford Junction or 10.36 am at Market Street. I shall get on the bus near my home. The walk is about 2 miles.

There will be the usual signing up sheet at the next main meeting, otherwise phone or text me if you would like to join our friendly group.

New walkers will be very welcome.



Our walk around Stockers Lake in Rickmansworth

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.

What's Your Story?

Leader: Sue Ettridge

Our meeting for July will be on Wednesday, 23rd at 2.00 pm at the Almshouses. Come and join us next month.

At our meeting on 25th June, we heard from Lynda about her tour of the Red Sands Fort and the shipwrecked SS Richard Montgomery, both WW2 historical features that can be viewed by boat boarded at Southend pier. We also mulled over the history of Watford Union Workhouse and its memorial bricks, both historical features illustrated by Sue at a recent event.

Interest Days Out

Leader: Sandra Kay

Regarding the National Archives trip, the MI5 section was interesting- mostly about spies during the wars, and about how the MI5 came to being, well as much as they are going to tell us anyway, trouble is, far too much info to take it all in, really need another visit.

There is nothing booked for July for our Group, but the sign-up sheet for the **Capel Manor Trip on Tuesday 19th August** will be available (as a sort of reminder) and that for the trip on **Tuesday 21st October to Trinity Bouy Wharf** will be available to sign up for in August.

Watford's Almshouses Listed Building Grade: II

On 21st June 2025 the Bedford, Morrison & Cordery Almshouses Garden Party was held, to celebrate the unveiling of a Blue Plaque and the recent transformation of the Almshouses Garden.



The Almshouse guest flat is used frequently by some of our Interest Groups and it is where our committee meets each month.



A New Bird Bath for the Almshouses Garden

In addition to the Blue Plaque, the residents of the Almshouses were presented with a new bird bath, which will no doubt be a positive enhancement to their beautiful garden, full of the loveliest roses and other plants and shrubs.



The above photos were taken by Stephen Danzig.

The bird bath was photographed by Lynda Bullock following our What's Your Story? meeting at the Almshouses on 25th June.

OUT & ABOUT VISITS

Leader: Sally McCaulay

See June's newsletter and the front page of this edition if you are interested in joining the visit to the **Chiltern Open Air Museum**.

Friday 11th July, Chiltern Open Air Museum, Chalfont St Peter

Pick up at 10 a.m. from the layby near Watford Central Library, drop off at the same place.

Museum website: <https://www.coam.org.uk/>

A Day out in Birmingham

I am floating an idea for a visit to Birmingham to visit the National Trust Back-to-Back Houses in Birmingham. They are the city's last surviving court of back-to-back houses. They are preserved as examples of the thousands of similar houses that were built around shared courtyards, for the rapidly increasing population of Britain's expanding industrial towns. There are three houses to visit on a guided tour and they are set out as examples of life at different stages of history. They give great insights into life in the past.



As you can imagine, the houses are very small and the stairs very steep. The National Trust offers two types of tour: the full tour which takes you all over the house and up into the attics or one that is entitled 'Accessible'. I am proposing that we go for the Accessible variety. My understanding is that they show you around the Ground Floor areas but explain about the upstairs and it is especially for those of us not quite so good on our feet. There is still a lot to see. The photograph above shows the courtyard around which the houses are built. If you once lived in a house with an outside loo, you will find some of it familiar.

The day is still in the planning stage but my suggestion is that we take a train to Birmingham for which you would buy your own ticket (I can tell you how and where). The slower train is the cheapest, it takes about 2 hours. The houses are a matter of a few hundred yards from New Street Station. Afterwards, have a bite to eat at the Station (it has a Wetherspoons) and come home. The cost of entry is £10 for the Ground Floor Tour but it is free if you are a National Trust Member. The date is likely to be in September, but this will have to be confirmed with the booking office.

I will have a sign-up sheet at the meeting so I can gauge interest. I don't want money at this stage.

We look forward to welcoming new and existing members and anyone wishing to join may obtain a membership form from our Chair, Sally Macaulay, Interested parties may attend two of our general meetings prior to taking up membership.

We are keen to start new interest groups and would welcome ideas and offers of leadership from our current members. Many thanks go to those who have offered to assist our executive committee.