



Volume 15, Issue 3 - March 2026

<https://watfordcentral.u3asite.uk>

Hello Everyone,

Hello and welcome to our newsletter for March. I love March because it marks the end of the long winter sojourn. Goodness knows this winter has seemed particularly dark and forbidding. The coming months may still be cold and wet and windy but the light changes and that always lifts me.

It was a very busy afternoon for our last monthly meeting and we were taking in money left right and centre. One of the things was that we were beginning to take in membership renewal forms. I couldn't take too much notice of what was happening to the collection but, the next day, when I began to process them, I was very pleased to see how many there were. I have had several more since and given out forms too. Membership renewal doesn't need to be completed until the end of March so there is another chance this month. There's always a bit of a hangover into April but, if your May newsletter doesn't turn up then we haven't had your form and you are no longer a member. That means you won't be able to come to meetings etc because you won't be insured. So, the moral of this comment is If you have any problems let us know, life happens.

Alongside membership renewal comes the dreaded AGM! AGMs are generally loathed but they are a legal requirement. However, as long as everything is declared there is nothing in the law to say how long they have to last. We at Watford Central take the line that they don't have to be epic and they're not. We do have to elect or re-elect the officers of the branch and we also need to elect or re-elect members to the committee. If you are someone who has some organising skill, or who just wants to help out, your aid will be gratefully received. Speak to one of the existing committee members so we know who is interested. We have committee meetings once a month, currently on the 4th Tuesday at 2 p.m. We meet at the Alms Houses in George Street and chip in £1 each for the Alms Houses' kitty.

Last month's speaker about GI marriages in Watford was very interesting and very relevant to Watford. I don't know all the speakers for the coming year but I know that the March speaker is talking about the London Underground. I think we have heard him speaker before – all good if we have asked him back.

I look forward to meeting with you all on the 5th March,

With best wishes,

Sally

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

Thursday, 5th MARCH, 2026 at 2.00pm

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

Our Speaker at this meeting will be David Burnell who will be telling us how the London Underground developed into a major transport link!

200 Years of the railways !!

This project will come to an end in June and at our March meeting, we have David Burnell talking to us about trains, services and the many journeys that have been experienced on the London Underground.

Yellow Envelopes

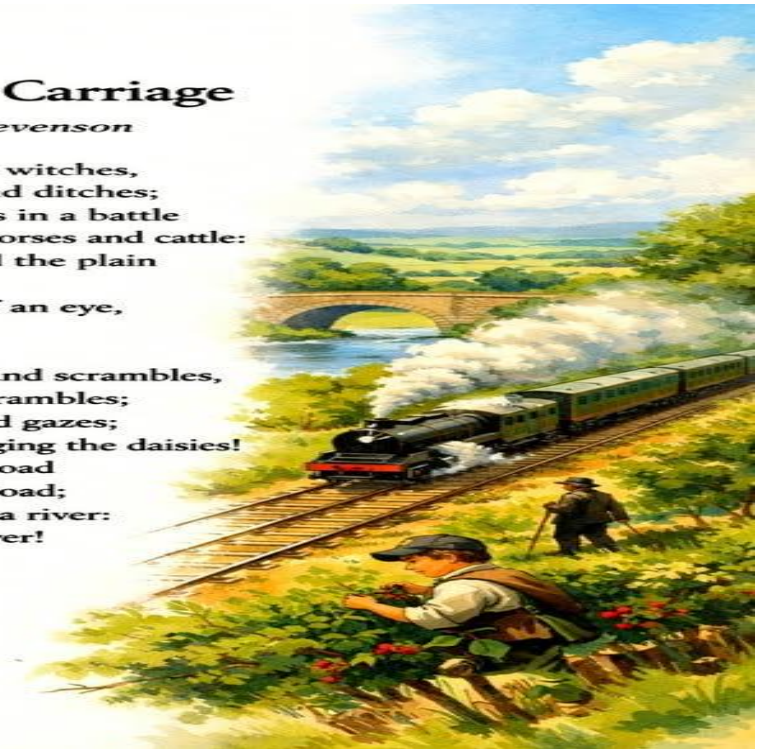
Please remember to carry your up-to-date medical details with you if you're out and about with u3a. It's not compulsory, but a good idea to have. If you need a new form or envelope we have plenty of both.

From a Railway Carriage

by Robert Louis Stevenson

Faster than fairies, faster than witches,
Bridges and houses, hedges and ditches;
And charging along like troops in a battle
All through the meadows the horses and cattle:
All of the sights of the hill and the plain
Fly as thick as driving rain;
And ever again, in the wink of an eye,
Painted stations whistle by.

Here is a child who clambers and scrambles,
All by himself and gathering brambles;
Here is a tramp who stands and gazes;
And there is the green for stringing the daisies!
Here is a cart run away in the road
Lumping along with man and load;
And here is a mill and there is a river:
Each a glimpse and gone for ever!



Lunch Group

Leader: *Sally Macaulay*

19th March 2026 to eat at 1 p.m.

We're having another trip to Bushey, this time and visiting a new venue **Barracuda**. It is opposite the Red Lion and the 124 and 258 pass there too. There are traffic lights to cross with and it looks just like a shop front, but it goes back a long way. Some of us have tried it out and think it worth a try.

There is a set menu for lunch which offers two courses, starter and main and the price is **£19** including a service charge. Anything in addition to that are extras and paid for separately. We choose what to eat on the day and there will be a booking sheet at the March meeting.

Theatre Visits

Leader: Sally Macaulay

Ticket prices shown are the maximum asked by the theatre but cheaper seats are sometimes available at the time of booking. Refunds are given if this occurs.

Palace Theatre Watford, Saturday 11th April 2026 at 1.30 p.m.

Brainiac Live!

Strap on your safety goggles – BRAINIAC LIVE IS BACK FOR 2026!!! Due to popular demand and following its 2025 Olivier Award for BEST FAMILY SHOW, Science's greatest and most volatile live show is back with a vengeance and coming to Watford in 2026.

More mischievous than ever before *Brainiac Live!* the UK's Original and Favourite family science show explodes on stage and will take you on a breathless ride through the wild world of the weird and wonderful.

Watch from the safety of your seat as the Brainiacs delve fearlessly into the mysteries of science and do all those things on stage that you're too scared to do at home!

With a great range of explosive experiments join the Brainiacs in this all-action live show that's set to blow your minds!

Important information: *Run-time: 1 hour (no interval) Age suitability: 5+*

Please note contains loud bangs, flashing lights, smoke and haze effects.

This is one of those 'we'll give it a try productions', suitable for children of all ages. If it's a good as Horrid Histories it will be a very entertaining hour.

Ticket price: £20

Also - booking early because the tickets are selling fast, we've seen it before but worth seeing again:

Palace Theatre Watford, Saturday 16th May 2026 at 2.30 p.m.

Cassio Productions presents: Priscilla Queen of the Desert

Based on the smash-hit movie, PRISCILLA QUEEN OF THE DESERT is the heartwarming, uplifting adventure of three friends, Tick, Bernadette and Adam, a glamorous Sydney-based performing trio who agree to take their show to the middle of the Australian outback.

They hop aboard a battered old bus (nicknamed Priscilla) searching for love and friendship and end up finding more than they ever imagined.

Ticket Price £25

Walking Group Leader: Jenny

The next walk on Friday 27 March will be in Aldenham. Meet at bus stop F in the High Street near NatWest bank in time to catch the 10.35 am 602 bus. We shall walk for about an hour and have refreshments in Aldenham Golf Club afterwards before getting the bus back to Watford. If you prefer to drive you can park in the golf club or the road opposite and meet us off the bus just before 11 am.

New members will be very welcome.

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



To a Snowdrop

Lone Flower, hemmed in with snows and white as they
But hardier far, once more I see thee bend
Thy forehead, as if fearful to offend,
Like an unbidden guest, though day by day,
Storms, sallying from the mountain-tops, waylay

More Extracts from poems by William Wordsworth

*"They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude"*

– *The Daffodils* by W. Wordsworth



FB/EnglishLiterature1
English Literature

A Change in the Year

*It is the first mild day of March:
Each minute sweeter than before
The redbreast sings from the tall larch
That stands beside our door.*

Interest Days Out

Leader: Sandra Kay

For our trip to The National Portrait Gallery on Tuesday 17th March, please meet at Watford Junction Station at 09:45am in time to catch the 10:02am train to Euston. From there we will take the Northern Line to Leicester Square and it's about an 8 minute walk to the Gallery.

For our April trip on Tuesday 21st, we will be going to Queens House in Greenwich. The House is a 16th Century Mansion which now displays historic art and architecture, also some contemporary art and sculptures. For lunch we can go to the National Maritime Museum which is only a few minutes walk away and we can travel on the Thames by the River Bus.

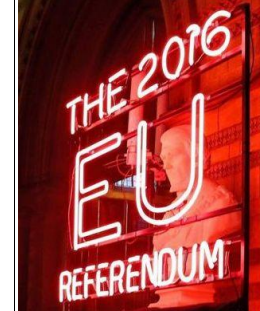
A sign-up sheet will be available at the March monthly meeting.

Best wishes from Sandra

The children's play area and paddling pool in Cassiobury Park underwent a huge refurbishment in 2016. When the old-style pool was there, I took my grandchildren on warm days for a splash around. I remember the hut that sold ice creams and the seats all around the pool. They had the time of their lives! (Sue, Editor)



A decade ago we all got the chance to vote for or against belonging to the European Union.



"1066 and all that"

(The title of WC Sellar's popular history book)

The move to the UK of the Bayeux Tapestry has attracted some criticisms as to its safety on such a journey.

The 70-metre-long 11th-century tapestry will be displayed at The British Museum **in London from September 2026 to July 2027.**

This historic loan, marking its first UK visit in nearly 1,000 years, will be in the Sainsbury Exhibition Gallery while the Bayeux Museum in Normandy undergoes renovations.



Conservators preparing the Bayeux Tapestry for transportation to the UK.

What's Your Story?

Leader: Sue Ettridge

My visit to Paris on the 25th of February was enhanced by such bright and warm weather. We made our trip around the Louvre a short one so as to enjoy the rest of the city in that lovely weather! However, the Mona Lisa was not missed!

I hear that the meeting on that day went well with some information about the Watford Darby & Joan Club from Lynda, topped up with some varied history backed up by her extensive collection of family and scenic photographs. Lynda has offered to bring some more items from her collection to a later meeting.

At our next meeting on Wednesday, 25th March, what about us all bringing along a treasured item we have tucked away (or perhaps have on display) that inspired us in our youth? See what you can find and pop it into your bag before leaving for the Almshouses.

Sue Ettridge - Newsletter Editor

Parking for the Ex-Service Club During Building Work

Blue Badge Holders:

Single and Double Yellow Lines:

Blue Badge holders can park for up to three hours on single or double yellow lines, provided there are no active loading bans.

On-Street Pay and Display Bays:

You can park in these bays without paying for as long as you need, provided your Blue Badge is clearly displayed.

Off-Street Disabled Bays:

If a car park has marked disabled bays, Blue Badge holders can park there, but they may need to pay depending on the car park's rules.

Limited Wait Bays:

You can park in these bays for as long as you need, with no time limit, if you have a Blue Badge.

St John's Road is the nearest to the Ex-Service Club

Public Car Parks:

Gade Car Park, Rosslyn Road

– usually plenty of space but the lifts are not working.

Pay through an app or at the pay station at the entrance.

It's number plate recognition on entry and you enter your registration number into the pay machine.

You can also use the Ringo App.

Spaces on upper levels reserved for a local company, but there is space below.

Avenue Car Park – pay in cash, card, or Ringo App

Just Park, Wellington Road next to the Quarters

– Limited space on two levels, some, but not all, of the upper levels are reserved.

Stairway to street level.

Pay by Phone App

