

# Watford Central

## U3A

*Learn Laugh Live*

Volume 15, Issue 9 - September 2026

<https://watfordcentral.u3asite.uk>

Hello Everyone,

Welcome to the newsletter for September. The last third of the year, the beginning of autumn and to the winter, the part of the year I like least. As I'm writing we have left the very hot weather behind, will it come again this year? I'm not sure the weather forecasters know yet? I hope it has gone for another year. Having had such a hot summer, the lawns are parched and bare and many of the trees have already turned brown. It's too early to be autumn yet, my brain isn't ready for it to be autumn.

Last month I asked you to keep the date of 7<sup>th</sup> December and as if by magic Sara at the Oddfellows Hall sent me the menu for this year's Christmas lunch. You will find the details towards the back of the newsletter. I will begin the process of booking at the September meeting but will carry on into the October and November meetings. I have to confirm numbers by 8<sup>th</sup> November. However, we have a good while to go till Christmas and there are still some summer days before the autumn sets in.



Do you find that there are often explanations of weather events that make you wish Meteorology had been one of the things we learned at school. I often feel that I am missing a chunk of learning but thank goodness for the Internet I can fill in the gaps. Trawling the internet for some explanations, I came across this picture of the world and the sun at the time of the Autumn Equinox. It wasn't what I was looking for but it was still interesting. It shows when the days and nights are of equal length, specifically for the autumn. I thought it was a clever illustration of something that I am aware of, live it every year, but hadn't given much thought to.



The Dates are:

Northern Hemisphere:  
September 23, 00:06 GMT  
(September 22, 8:06 p.m. ET)

Southern Hemisphere:  
March 20, 14:46 GMT  
(10:46 a.m. ET)

With best wishes,

Sally

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

**Thursday, 3rd September, 2026 at 2.00pm**

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

**We will be meeting Harriet Fink, Curator of Museum on Tour and will learn how Harriet is helping to keep our Museum up and running whilst a new home is being made for it in Watford Town Hall.**

## **Lunch Group** Leader: Sally Macaulay

Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> September to eat at 1 p.m.

**Oddfellows Hall, 22 The Avenue, Watford WD17 4NU**

Sara and her staff are providing lunch for us this time. There will be a two-course meal for **£17 (which includes a tip)** with coffee or tea afterwards. The menu this time is:

*Roast Beef, Yorkshire Pudding, roast potatoes and vegetable or,  
Salmon with new potatoes and vegetables*

*Rhubarb Crumble or,  
Mint and Chocolate Viennetta Ice Cream*

There are soft drinks available, if you would like to buy them from the staff. The hall is not licensed but you could bring a small bottle in your bag. There will be a booking sheet at the meeting for you to make your choices in advance.

## **Theatre Visits** Leader: Sally Macaulay

***I have been puzzling over this play. Will anyone find it of interest! Only one way to find out – to ask?***

**Watford Palace 3<sup>rd</sup> October at 2.30 p.m. The Picture of Dorian Gray**

A PORTRAIT TO DIE FOR: In a society obsessed with youth and beauty, Dorian Gray is offered the ultimate prize: eternal perfection. But perfection comes at a price, one that must be paid in blood.

"What does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his soul?"

This bold new adaptation of the classic novel celebrates Oscar Wilde's dazzling wit and dark imagination. Stylish and unsettlingly thrilling, The Picture of Dorian Gray plunges you into a world where charm is currency and the truth always exacts its price.

**Ticket Price £28.50**

**Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> October at 2.30 p.m. Abbey Theatre St Albans.**

**The Company of Ten present: The 39 Steps by John Buchan**

This fast-paced, wildly funny and physical comedy is adapted from the John Buchan novel and the Alfred Hitchcock film. The thrilling story follows man-about-town, Richard Hannay, who is drawn into a conspiracy when a mysterious woman turns up dead soon after telling him about a dangerous plot.

Wrongly accused of her murder, Hannay embarks on an epic journey across England and Scotland to hunt down the spies and clear his name. The award-winning play, with its train chases, romance, betrayals and cliff-hanger moments, will have you laughing out loud.

*LondonTheatre.co.uk says:*

*"It's no mystery why this affectionate parody is still delighting audiences. Balancing suspense with slapstick, and a cracking yarn with theatrical in-jokes, it's a welcome piece of thoroughly escapist entertainment."*

**Ticket price: £13 (concessions)**

***Walking Group*** *Leader: Jenny Graham*

Sandra KAY will be taking the next walk which will be on **Friday 25th September**.

We will be walking around Verulamium Park in St Albans and can stop for our break at the cafe in the park or walk up to The Cathedral to their cafe. Anyone wishing to walk into the town may do so. However, we will be taking the Abbey Line to St. Albans, but if you want to return on the 321 bus, it's up to you whether you get a return train ticket or a single. We are catching the 10:45am Train from Watford Junction, so please meet in time to catch the train. We get to St Albans Abbey at 11:02am and can just walk across the road to the Park. If you prefer to travel by 321 you will need to be at the Park entrance by 11:05am and **please note that the 321 bus timetable is changing from the end of August**.

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

***INTEREST DAYS OUT*** *Leader: Sandra Kay*

For our trip to **Kensington Palace on Wednesday 30th September** please meet at Watford Junction Station at 09:40am in time to catch the 10:02 to Euston. From there we will take the Victoria Line to Oxford Circus and then the Central Line to Queensway: it's about a 17 minute walk to Kensington Palace.

A sign-up sheet for our October trip on Tuesday 20th will be available at the monthly meeting for a visit to St Barts North Wing to see the remarkable Paintings, Historic Monumental Interiors of the Great Hall and Hogarth Stairs. This is nothing to do with St Barts Hospital Museum or anything medical, unless you wish to visit that separately. The visit needs to be booked in advance, therefore if you sign up then cancel please advise as soon as possible, as it affects the numbers that are allowed in to visit, but it is free. Thank you.

Best wishes

Sandra

***What's Your Story?*** *Leader: Sue Ettridge***Meryl's Country Dancing - August meeting.**

From Budapest up to Stockholm and back home we came, with a hop, skip and jump. What an interesting afternoon Meryl treated us to. There were books, photographs and some ab fab costumes to browse. Thank you, Meryl. This was one of the best stories I have heard. You have worked hard for so long and have acquired a mountain of knowledge about your chosen subject. Well done and many thanks for the chance to listen to your story.

If anyone else has a story to tell, then why not bring it along to one of our monthly What's Your Story? meetings, or if it is a bit grander then we would be very interested in hearing about it at a general meeting. Email or text me if you have something you wish to talk about.

**Our next meeting will be on Wednesday, 23rd September at the Almshouses, Church Street.**

**Watford Central u3a - 15th Anniversary**

**We will be celebrating this event at our meeting in October 2026!**



Robert Pitt  
(Facebook friend)



Martin Bullock  
(Brother of Lynda Bullock)



Stephen Danzig  
(Facebook friend)

## Who witnessed the Eclipse on 12th August 2026?

- More than 90% of the Sun was obscured by the Moon, the most it has been blocked above UK skies since the total eclipse in 1999.
- Dhara Patel, who is a space expert at the National Space Centre, said some people may have become emotional while watching the eclipse. Speaking at the UK's largest space attraction in Leicester, she said it was "incredible" to be able to witness this eclipse, adding:
- *"We've had solar eclipses over the last couple of years, about 30% coverage. 'They've been good, but this is definitely a different scale.'"*
- Millions of Britons turned their eyes to the skies for the best solar eclipse in decades – with crowds flocking to viewing events and shops selling out of protective glasses.
- One couple even planned their wedding a year in advance, timing it to coincide with the event.
- The Royal Greenwich Observatory said it had sold approximately 15,000 pairs of eclipse glasses, a sellout, in the last month.
- John Lewis said colander sales increased nearly 40% compared to last year, with Nasa recommending the kitchen item as a way to watch an eclipse by viewing the shadows it casts on the ground.

Whilst reading the (August) Newsletter it reminded me of a story I heard about snails, Zipper and Speedy, who on a trip along Watford High Street came across a discarded copy of the Watford Observer. With the pavement being so hot underfoot they decided to travel upon it. On the newspaper they saw an advert for the opening of the new Aldi offering a money off voucher. On approaching the voucher Speedy suddenly sped ahead leaving poor Zipper behind. When Zipper finally caught up with his exhausted friend he said "what happened to you, why did you rush off like that?" "Well," said Speedy "it said tear along the dotted line, so I did!"

Wendy Norwood (Boom, boom Wendy - had to slip this one. in.)



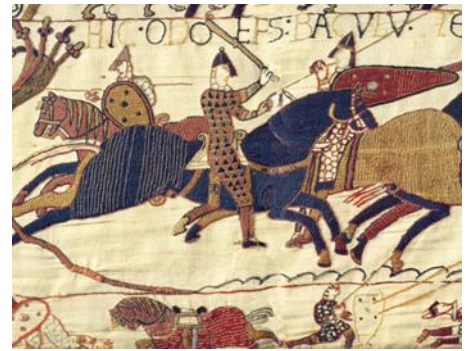
## Bayeux Tapestry

### British Museum from September 2026 to July 2027

For the first time since it was made nearly 1,000 years ago, the Bayeux Tapestry is returning to England

Following a historic agreement with France, the 70-metre-long tapestry, depicting events leading up to the Battle of Hastings and the Norman Conquest of England in 1066, will be loaned to the British Museum from September 2026 to July 2027.

This monumental embroidery tells the dramatic story of a moment that changed England forever. No year in the country's history is more famous than 1066. It was the last time England was successfully invaded, and it is the year from which the modern monarchy dates itself. And there is no other object that is as instantly recognisable, as studied in schools and as copied by artists as the Bayeux Tapestry.



One of the wonders of the medieval world, the Tapestry offers a vision of life in 11th-century England both before and after the Conquest, from castles, warfare and ships to clothing, food and furniture. Likely commissioned by a Norman patron and made by English embroiderers, using manuscript drawings from Canterbury, the Tapestry is both a precious historical record and a remarkable work of art.

We will try and get tickets **BUT** there are so many people trying to do the same thing we may not be successful. To begin the process, we have to know how many people would be interested to see it.

At the moment we have no date or time in mind, much of the planning depends on when we can get free spaces. So, if you add your name but are unable to go on the date we plan there will be no penalty. If later you sign up and a ticket is bought but you can't go then we shall have to ask you to honour the ticket. The rules of the u3a insist that we make no profit nor loss on events.

We began the list at the August meeting and it will continue at the September meeting. Email me if you can't come on the day and I will add your name to the list. If you have never been out and about with us before we will travel by public transport on a pay-as-you-go basis. Not a minibus this time.

**Christmas Lunch 2026 will be on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> December** at 12.30 p.m. for 1 p.m. at The Oddfellows Hall, Cassio Lodge, 22 The Avenue, Watford, Herts, WD17 4NS

The cost will be **£25** for a two-course meal and **£28** for three courses, the meal includes coffee or tea and the price includes £1.01 each towards a gratuity for the staff. **An order form is on the next page of the newsletter and I will need to have all the orders by the 5<sup>th</sup> November.**

You can pay by cash or cheque but I will not put the money into the bank until nearer the day of the lunch. This allows for return of money should the need arise.

We can adjust numbers until three days before the lunch but after that food will have been bought and so we have to honour our commitment. If you are not able to come to this month's meeting there will be two further opportunities or you can post me the information, the address is on the order form.

