



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE



# Bishop's Stortford U3A Summer 2019 Newsletter

Registered Charity Number 1132055  
Website <http://u3asites.org.uk/bishops-stortford>

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## **Important Notice: PLEASE READ**

### **Personal Data Check**



All of you who are active members of any of our Groups should have been asked during the latter part of last year or early this year to check that the contact information we hold on file about you centrally was correct. Apart from putting right any details that were wrong, we were also hoping to use the exercise to collect more mobile phone numbers, e-mail addresses and emergency contact phone numbers where these were not on file already.

The process was not as successful as I would have liked and it seems that some members had misgivings about participating fully in this exercise so I thought it might be useful to explain in more detail why your committee was doing this.

Our primary purpose was to ensure that the contact details we held on file were correct. We have a postal address and landline telephone number for almost everyone but these details are collected from the Application Form you fill in when you join. Many people have been members of Bishop's Stortford U3A for many years. If someone moved house or changed their phone number we thought it likely they would have informed their Group Coordinator but we could not be sure the information would have reached the central records. In any case there is scope for human error in recording the details.

Last year two important things happened – firstly the latest Data Protection Act came into force (giving everyone more rights in relation to how their personal details are treated by others, and putting more responsibility on organisations holding the data to ensure it is properly respected) and secondly our U3A moved all its membership records on to

a centralised computer system designed for U3As ( called Beacon), with the intention that Group Coordinators would use this database rather than each maintaining their own records. This makes us far more secure in terms of complying with the Data Protection Act but also makes it even more important that the details on our central records are correct. Also by showing members the details we held and asking them to sign to confirm they were correct and that they understood we did not share information with third parties without permission, we hoped to reassure them.

Our second purpose was to expand our database of e-mail addresses, mobile telephone numbers and emergency contact phone numbers. The world has changed significantly over the past 25 years or so since this U3A has been in existence and we still have founder members. It was only relatively recently that we started asking new applicants for this information. Consequently we did not have these details centrally for many of our members. Over the years we hope we have improved our communications with members. However, less than half come to the monthly meetings and with over 1000 members in total, communicating with them regularly by post is now becoming too expensive, whereas e-mail is quick, cheap and easy (but it only works if we have an e-mail address - currently our coverage is about 83%). In relation to mobile numbers, if a sudden last minute change needs to be communicated or someone needs to be consulted urgently there is a chance a member could be contacted on their mobile if they were not at home, although in most cases a landline would probably be used first. Also these days it is becoming increasingly common for people to have only a mobile number and no landline.

I was also hoping to fill in some of the gaps in our 'Emergency Contact' information (i.e. the person you would like informed if something happened to you while

you were participating in a U3A event). As most of you know, we put this number on your Membership Card. We should all be very grateful to the people who put a lot of time and effort into organising groups and trips for us. It seems quite unfair to me to put them in a situation where if something unexpected happens to a member they have no means of knowing who they should inform. Such circumstances are very rare but nevertheless my aspiration is to have a recorded Emergency Contact Number for every member, and we are currently well short of this.

I would like to stress that e-mail addresses, like all other personal data, are only recorded on our central Beacon system and access to this is limited. Group Coordinators only have access to the information about their own group members and Trip Organisers only to the members participating in the event. Only 3 people are authorised to change personal information records. We do not give e-mail addresses or phone numbers to anyone outside the B.S. U3A without the express permission of the member unless required to do so by law.

As I mentioned at the beginning, we carried out this process via the Group Coordinators and apart from the 'gaps' in their returns, it seems only about 73% of our members belong to one or more groups. Thus, this exercise did not reach the remaining 27% of our members. If you are in this category, or if you are one of the people who were reluctant to divulge an e-mail address, mobile phone number or emergency contact number when asked originally, I would urge you to get in touch with me now to help our U3A operate more efficiently.

**Kath Hird**  
**Membership Secretary**

## Message from the Editor

Please email articles to me, preferably in Word, **with images sent separately**, to arrive by Friday 29th November 2019 for inclusion in the next newsletter. Please note: one page is about 350 words, two pages could be about 550 words and a photo.



I do reserve the right to edit articles and photographs so that they can fit within the overall layout of the Newsletter, especially as we have a **limit of 48 pages**.

I should also point out that any views expressed in the Newsletter are not necessarily those of the Committee.

**Lesley Mishan** [lesley.mishan@phonecoop.coop](mailto:lesley.mishan@phonecoop.coop)

## Caption Corner

Do you remember this photo from last time?



"Skinny dipping?  
I'm not ready to  
go all the way."

**Caption from Richard Owen**

## **Ella Fitzwater - A Good Reason to Celebrate**

Ella who was a member of Bishop's Stortford U3A for many years reached the fantastic milestone of 100 years young in March this year.



All at Bishop's Stortford U3A would like to wish her the very best of health for now and the future.

**...HAPPY BIRTHDAY ELLA...**

Ella now lives at:-  
Falcon House,  
Little Hallingbury,  
Bishop's Stortford,  
CM22 7PP

**Richard Cawse**

## If you need me...

Last December a group of us visited St Albans with an optional guided tour of the cathedral and time to visit the markets and shops.

As our 'procession' approached what is officially known as the Abbey Church and Cathedral of St Alban, I noticed a line of colourful scarves tied to the railings.

When we came out of the Abbey after our excellent tour, there was time to find out more.

Each scarf had been painstakingly hand-knitted and a card label attached contained the words 'If you need me take me'

A lovely thought as my friend and I had both foolishly come out without suitable neck gear so we took one each.

Looking around I expected to find boxes for financial donations, except there weren't any.

Exploring more closely, I saw that each scarf had a label stuck on which said '67 blankets for Nelson Mandela Day.'

This was very poignant as 67 refers to the years of Mandela's public service and there is a worldwide movement to knit scarves or blankets or to volunteer for at least 67 minutes.



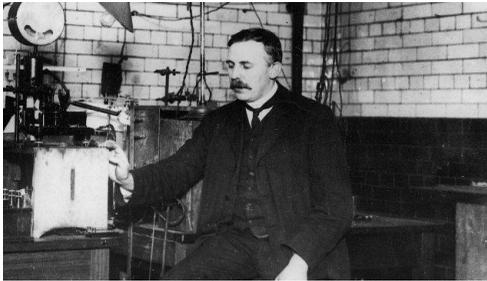
Food for thought. So if a stranger does something good for you, then you might do similar. Or as they used to say in the hippy era, share the love!

**Carole Scott**

***We are Survivors*** submitted to the last newsletter by Jean Garrett prompted several responses, including this one from **Bob Parker**.

I really liked Jean Garrett's article about those born before 1940. I know it well, although similar articles have been around for some time.

However here are a few observations.



Ernest Rutherford demonstrated the splitting of the atom in 1917 and two German scientists Otto Hahn and Otto Frisch had split uranium atoms,

discovering nuclear fission in 1935. Good job the Germans did not follow up this work as the Americans did.

Penicillin was discovered by Alexander Fleming in 1928 and the material was later scaled up following work by Howard Florey and Ernst Chain. Penicillin was certainly not in any general medical use by 1940, and when supplies became available later in the War they were reserved for battlefield injuries.

Robert Watson Watt had demonstrated practical radar systems by 1936 at Bawdsey on the Suffolk coast (although it had been discovered previously by Heinrich Hertz), and so we were able to win the Battle of Britain in 1940!

**Bob Parker**

**We are Survivors** also brought back lots of memories to **Terence Wells**, as he explains below.

14 years ago when I was working in a building merchants various texts were passed around and this one I have kept and shared many a laugh with my grandchildren over it. I was born in the east end of London (Stepney) and didn't move out until I was 20, and the text has always reminded me of the good old days.

**CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL THE KIDS  
WHO WERE BORN IN THE  
1940'S, 50'S, 60'S, 70'S,**

First, we survived being born to mothers who smoked and / or drank while they carried us.

They took Aspirin, ate Blue Cheese dressing, Tuna in a Tin, and didn't get tested for Diabetes.

Then after that Trauma, our baby cots were covered with brightly coloured Lead-based paint's

We had no childproof lids on Medicine bottles, doors or cabinets and when we rode our bikes,

We had no helmets, not to mention, the risks we took Hitchhiking.

As children, we would ride in cars with no seat belts or air bags.

Riding in the back of a Van-Loose- was always great fun. We drank water from the garden hose pipe **NOT** from a bottle.

We shared one soft drink with four friends, from one bottle and **NO ONE** actually died from this.

We ate cakes, white bread and real butter and drank **POP** with sugar in it, But we weren't overweight because

.....

**WE WERE ALWAYS OUTSIDE PLAYING!!**

We would leave home in the morning and play all day, as long as we were back when the street lights came on.

**NO** one was able to reach us all day. And we were O.K We would spend hours building our go-carts out of scraps and then ride down the hill, Only to find out we forgot the Brakes. After running into the bushes a few times, we learned to solve the problem.

We did not have Playstation's, Nintendo's, X-boxes. No video games at all,

No 99 channels on cable, no video tape movies, no surround sound,

No cell phones, no text messaging, no personal computers, no internet or internet chat rooms.....

**WE HAD FRIENDS** and we went outside and found them!

We fell out of trees, got cut, broke bones and teeth and there were no lawsuits from these accidents.

We played with worms and mud pies made from dirt, and the worms did not live in us forever.

Made up games with sticks and tennis balls and although we were told it would happen,

We did not poke out any eyes.

We rode bikes or walked to a friend's house and knocked on the door or rang the bell, or just yelled for them.



Local teams had try-outs and not everyone made the team. Those who didn't had to learn to deal with disappointment. **IMAGINE THAT!!**  
The idea of a parent bailing us out if we broke the law was unheard of.  
They actually sided with the law!

This generation has produced some of the best risk-takers, problem solvers and inventors ever.  
The past 50-70 years have been an explosion of innovation and new ideas. We had freedom, and failure, success and responsibility, and we learned  
**HOW TO DEAL WITH IT ALL!**  
And **YOU** are one of them!  
**CONGRATULATIONS!**

You might want to share this with others who have had the luck to grow up as kids, before the lawyers and government regulated our lives for our own good.

And while you're at it, forward it to your kids so they will know how brave their parents were.

XX  
XXXX

Kind of makes you want to run through the house with scissors, doesn't it?

PS- The **BIG** type is because your eyes are shot at your age

**Terence Wells**

## **Evacuation 1939 to 1945**

In September 1939 at the outset of the 2nd World War with Germany, the British Government urged all Parents to evacuate their children out of the big cities to avoid the danger of bombing. The actual bombing of London started in September 1940 and didn't end until May 1941. At one time during the Blitz (short for the German "Blitzkrieg" meaning "Lightning War") London was bombed for 57 nights in a row.

### **An Evacuee's Story**

At the age of 5, together with my Mother and elder Brother and Sister (my Father had enlisted into the Army) and all of the local children, we were lined up in our respective school playgrounds, and had name labels pinned to us. We were provided with Gas Masks as after the experience of the First World War it was feared that Gas may be used during any bombing. We were given a packed lunch which included a bar of "Blended chocolate" and put on buses and taken to the local railway station where we boarded a train to take us, as far as we children were concerned, to an unknown destination for a holiday. After quite a long journey we arrived and were put on more buses and taken to a playing field and lined up to be selected by local residents who were prepared to take us into their homes. As there were 4 of us, including my Mother who insisted that we stayed together, we were chosen by a lady who had unfortunately lost her husband in the Airship 101 which crashed in France in 1930. Her house, which was in a small village called "Wood End," had a very large garden which, for us children coming from London, was lovely.

The evacuee children were provided with a school which was set up in a very long cricket pavilion which was

divided into three classes for infants and juniors. Some of our teachers had come with us, the downside of this was that it was nearly 3 miles away from where we were living without a bus service and the weather was very wintry at times, it made for a very long cold walk. The Seniors were integrated into the local schools.



Because there hadn't been any bombing in London at the beginning of the war my Mother returned home with my Brother due to his illness. My Sister and I were relocated with different families as the lady we were living with didn't want the responsibility of us without my Mother being there. I was taken in by a Mr. & Mrs. Radford who lived in a small "picture book" thatched cottage in a small village called "Green End" where I stayed for the remainder of the war. It was here that I was at my most happiest despite being away from the rest of my family. I could not have been treated any better by anyone, they treated me as if I was one of their family; by this time I was 6 going on 7 years old. I was taken to the local village school where a good education was provided. Mrs. Radford was a very

good cook which was just as well as all the cooking was done on an open range fire with an attached oven. This was also the only form of heating, there was no gas or electricity, the lighting was by oil lamp and there was no running water - this had to be collected from a communal pump over the road. The toilet was situated outside and without the luxury of a cistern it had to be emptied into a cesspit in the garden. Toilet paper was cut up squares of newspaper as it was for many people during the war. Considering the food shortages of the time Mrs. Radford always provided good meals, her bakewell and treacle tarts were really something special and she also baked her own bread which was just as well as tea times mostly consisted of bread and jam, which was fine, as the school provided lunch time dinners.

Although in wartime, being out in the countryside we were quite isolated from it. The main town, which was about 6 miles away, was badly bombed and there were times when German bombers flew overhead on their way to bomb the bigger towns and cities. Also there were many aerial dogfights which resulted in some crashed aircraft in the area; these provided a lot of excitement and interest for us children. Village life was good for us as there were another 4 evacuees of my age as well as 3 or 4 local boys and we had the freedom of being able to roam the countryside climbing trees etc. At that time the Government had introduced 'double summer time' which meant that it didn't get dark until 10 o'clock, not that I was allowed to stay out that late. During harvest time we would help the local farmers in the fields. I even learnt how to milk a cow, sometimes earning a little cash by potato picking (very back breaking work). I wasn't old enough to go apple picking as it involved climbing ladders.

One of the most exciting times was when the build-up to the invasion was taking place. There were lots of American soldiers camped in the area together with tanks,

guns, jeeps etc. which were lined up on most of the surrounding roads getting ready for D-Day. Obviously we did not realise the significance of this at the time.

Three of us boys did have a scare one day when a German Junkers 88 flew over us taking photographs, just to be safe we jumped into a ditch. On occasions my Mum would come up from London to visit, and I did go home for a while. I must admit when there was an air raid it was very frightening and certainly a lot noisier than when in the countryside. The V1 Doodlebugs were bad enough, at least you could hear their distinctive engine sound although no one knew where they were going to crash when their engine cut out, but the V2 Rockets were much worse as they were silent until they crashed and exploded, causing so much death and destruction. We did have two that crashed quite near to where we lived in London causing many casualties.

As the war gradually came to an end in Europe and then in Japan, village life continued in its quiet way, we would go to watch local cricket matches, gymkhanas, church fetes etc. The final declaration of peace was celebrated with a village party which was tinged with sadness as some of the residents had lost Husbands, Sons and Relations during this terrible war.

Being evacuated played a very important and influential part of my life and although it was a happy day to go home to my family and pick up with living in London, it was tinged with sadness at having to leave Green End at the age of almost 11.

## **A World War Two Evacuee**

## Monthly Speakers 2019

During the first half of 2019, Bishop's Stortford U3A has enjoyed a wide variety of speakers at the monthly meeting. The speaker meetings are held at the Methodist Church, South Street on the second Monday of the month, commencing at 2.30pm.



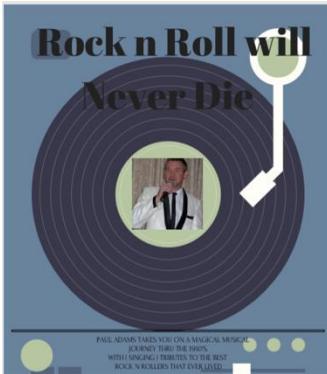
In **January** we heard from **Ian Keable**, about the life of David Devant reputedly England's greatest ever magician and a founder member of the Magic Circle. The talk was accompanied with some of Devant's original card tricks.

**February** saw **Brian Carline** talk about his upbringing in 1940/50's Salford and included some pretty harrowing but funny antidotes from a time which only lives in people's memories.

**March** saw the AGM with the highlight of a presentation by **Paul Winspear** the Editor of the Bishop's Stortford Independent newspaper. Paul relayed how after being made redundant by the Herts and Essex Observer the team managed to launch a local newspaper that in 2 years managed to see off the Observer.

In **April** there was a talk from **Martin Lloyd** on the history of passports which was meant to coincide with the first meeting since UK left the EU. C'est la vie.

In **May** we heard from **Warren Ashton** about the origins of the odd phrases we get in everyday conversation. They weren't all from Shakespeare.



Live music is earmarked for **June** when Paul **Adams** gives a musical talk on the origins of Rock and Roll. It will be good to see our members rocking in the aisles to the old favourites.

The remainder of the year sees **Brian Wass** give a talk on the favourite tricks of shoplifters and how they can be prevented in **July**.

In **August** we hear from U3A Member **John Robinson** about his career in the RAF and Civil Aviation.

**September** brings back the music as we hear from **Michael Grillo** who traces the story of Country music under the heading of 'Your Cheatin Heart'.

For those not of a nervous disposition **October** has an early Halloween visit from **Damien O'Dell** who gives a talk on the 'Adventures of a Ghost Hunter'.

In **November**, **Jenny Kelsey** provides a historical presentation on the role of women in Victorian society and the year comes to a close in **December** with a visit from **Keith Baldwin** who promises to provide a selection of festive entertainment, anecdotes and readings which are guaranteed to set the scene for your Xmas celebrations.

I hope there is something of interest in the programme for all our members and I look forward to seeing you at the meetings.

**Jim Paterson**  
**Speaker Secretary.**

## Combined Garden Groups Flower, Vegetable, Crafts and Photography Show 2019

The 25th Bishop's Stortford U3A Annual Show is fast approaching and this is your cue to start preparing your entries. To ensure the show is a success we rely on our members to showcase their skills and talents by submitting an entry (or entries) into one or more of the forty-nine categories on offer, which include vegetables, plants, fruit, flowers, art, crafts, cookery and photography.



The show will be held at the Markwell Pavilion on Tuesday 20th August, and has always been one of the highlights of the U3A calendar. We would love to see a record number of exhibitors and visitors this year, particularly as we are unsure if the show will continue in the future.



Exhibitors are required to deliver their exhibits between 9.00am and 11.00am on the day for judging to take place. Please complete an entry card for each exhibit (each entry will cost 30p). The doors open to all members and guests at 2pm until 4.15pm when an awards presentation and raffle will take place. The entrance fee for visitors is only £1.50 inclusive of tea/coffee and cake.



N.B. Any Bishop's Stortford U3A member is welcome to submit an entry, not just members of a specific group.

For further information, contact **Debbie Monkhouse** on 01279 653832, Mobile 07870 490025, email [debbie@monkhousefamily.co.uk](mailto:debbie@monkhousefamily.co.uk) or go to <http://u3asites.org.uk/bishops-stortford>

SHOW SCHEDULES AND ENTRY CARDS AVAILABLE AT MONTHLY MONDAY MEETINGS FROM NOW ON ALSO AVAILABLE FROM BISHOPS STORTFORD TOURIST OFFICE, MARKET SQUARE

**Debbie Monkhouse (Annual Show Coordinator)**

## History Group 1

### Beware Walls Have Ears!!!

In the autumn of 2012 two members of B/S U3A, on a Wednesday walk at Clavering, were heard discussing why the U3A should have a history group. This was the catalyst that saw half a dozen members meet to plan a way forward. Two suggestions were forthcoming. One was to have a group researching various projects, a second was to be more formal and to have lectures, talks, visits etc.



The latter prevailed and in February 2013 History 1 came into being with a talk on “The History of Workhouses & Almshouses”, in the Elsie Barrett Room. Membership increased rapidly forcing a move into the Markwell Pavilion. Later as it continued to grow, the group moved to the Baptist Church. It still has a waiting list. However a second history group has now been formed.

External speakers have given talks on many varied topics including “The Russian Revolution”, “The Battle of Hastings”, “Sutton Hoo”, “The Naughty Nineties”, “The English Language”, a “Trip along the Roman Fosse Way”, etc. etc. Speakers have come from the National Trust, the University of East Anglia, Anglia Ruskin University and many other organisations.

Members themselves have contributed telling about their variety of interests. We have heard about a visit to North Korea, Medals and their History, English Civil War Re-Enactments, and Growing Up in a Mining Village. Also small groups have talked about their Heroes, their

Memories of World War II and their Favourite Places in history.

Local history has not been forgotten and has included a walk to Clavering to learn about it in WW2. Another walk was in Much Hadham to discover its history and Easton Lodge must not be forgotten, along with the restoration of Copped Hall at Epping.

Trips in the summer months have included Battle Abbey, Sutton Hoo, the Gunpowder Mills at Waltham Abbey, the Fen Museum at Prickwillow, the Postal Museum and Richard III at Leicester & Bosworth Field, etc.

When using the Markwell Pavilion, the group joined with the Keep Fit for the Less Athletic group's coffee morning in aid of MacMillan nurses. This support has continued at The Baptist Church.

The Group's success has been due to its originator and co-ordinator for the seven years of its existence, **Kay Poynter**. She has now decided to relinquish her work as co-ordinator and just concentrate on organising the programme. All of the Group's members, past and present, and the B/S U3A, thank her for all the work, effort and enthusiasm she has given to make the group so successful.

At February's meeting the History 1 Group had a collection to present Kay with a bouquet, card and gift voucher as thanks for her hard work.  
Thank you very much, Kay.

**Dave Branchflower**

## London Explorers January Jaunt

### William Morris and Walthamstow



We had learned a little about William Morris' later life on our walk to Chiswick last year, where he had a fine riverside house, the result of a successful career as arguably the 19th century equivalent of our Terrance Conran. He satisfied the wealthy Victorian and Edwardian ambitions to spend and “do up” their homes with exotic wallpaper, carpets, tiles, pottery and even linoleum: and he prospered from it. But what about his origins and how had he “made it”? We were to find out all about this on our visit to the William Morris Gallery in Walthamstow. We walked from Walthamstow Central station down long and winding Hoe Street, an eclectic mix of shops where exotic cake displays seemed to pre-dominate. We managed to resist these as we had already had our obligatory “coffee stop”. Maybe get something on the way back?!

The museum is in the fine mansion to which Morris moved in 1847 at the age of 13 with his mother, following the early death of his wealthy father. This is preserved in its original state with large rooms which lend themselves to displaying the different aspects of his work; design, manufacturing prowess, innovative techniques and not least, his ability to market and sell his wares world-wide. A room is also dedicated to his contemporaries; many well-known poets, artists and authors with whom he had become friends at University. You can imagine they probably had an influence on his work and designs. You should really go and visit this museum so I will not elaborate further – it's nearby and it's free – the ultimate incentive!

One wing of the Gallery is dedicated to temporary exhibitions for which they do suggest you make a donation. We were happy to do this, as after lunch we saw a wonderful display of paintings entitled the Enchanted Garden featuring the works of well-known artists who were Morris' contemporaries. Look on the website for what's on currently if you plan to go.

We had a good lunch for a modest expenditure at a local pub, so we were able to resist the exotic cakes on our route back home.

Back home I am still wondering if a feature wall in an exotic wall-paper is needed to brighten up my home - William Morris' influence is still alive and well today!

Website [www.wmgallery.org.uk](http://www.wmgallery.org.uk)

### **Derek Crowther for the London Explorers**



## City Trekkers

### March 2019

On a bright but chilly Monday morning, 18 of us gathered together for our March walk.



We got the train to Stratford, meeting 3 of our walkers from Stansted on the way, then on to the DLR to Woolwich Arsenal. After a few facts about the area were told, we went to a Wetherspoons – The Great Harry, named after King Henry III Flagship, on General Gordon Square for a coffee.

We saw places that once belonged to the RACS (Royal Arsenal Cooperative Society), churches that are now used in other ways, and references to a boxer from the early 1800's, called Tom Cribb.

We then went to St Magdalen Church, where the Warden opened up the church for us and we saw the stained glass window that came from the SS Princess Alice, a passenger paddle steamer, which sank in the Thames in 1878 with a loss of about 600 people. They also have some other lovely stained glass windows.

We then walked to the start of the Woolwich Arsenal, of which part has been built on. We walked along the river to see the Woolwich Ferry. There used to be 3 ferries going back and forth, but they have now gone to France to be scrapped and they have 2 brand new electric ferries – Dame Vera Lynn and Ben Wollacot, named after a 19 year old who drowned in 2011 while preparing the ferries for sailing. We then walked around the corner to see the entrances to the Woolwich Foot Tunnel, one each side.

Then we went to 'First Choice' Restaurant/ Café, for lunch which had a lovely choice of freshly cooked food, enormous portions and cheap. All served by delightful Kurdish people.

Then back to the river, to Woolwich Arsenal 'Proper'. There are quite a few of the original buildings still to be seen, some have been converted to gyms and flats. There are a lot of new apartments, which when the Cross-rail is finished, will be an ideal place to live.

This is the area where the Arsenal Football Club, known as The Gunners, first started, so called from the area being The Royal Artillery! They were the Dial Arch FC first, then Woolwich Arsenal FC and when they moved to Highbury, dropped the Woolwich to become the name they are today.

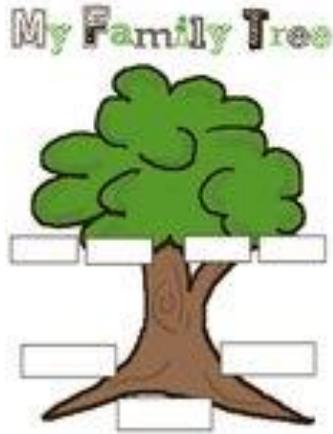
Then back to Beresford Square and on the DLR to Stratford and back home.

### **Jenny McGregor**



## Family Tree Research

Researching your family history enables you to travel distance and time together. Starting with your own birth certificate and the certificates of your parents you will find many surprises along the way. Don't imagine knowledge will happen overnight, it doesn't. It takes many hours of research and recording the results of your research. But as you delve deeper into the past you cannot help being intrigued by what you uncover.



Thirty years ago you went along to the local record office or Katherine's House in London and peered into large volumes of names recorded at birth, marriage or death. It was time consuming and painstaking. Now many of those records are digitised and you can do your research at home on the computer or with a likeminded group.

**Genealogy** or **Family History** – what's the difference?

**Genealogy** is putting the dates and timelines together.

**Family History** is putting the flesh on the bones.

There are many tools to help you such as software packages for research and software packages for recording the results. Finding out what happened to Uncle George and Auntie Mabel is big business today. And, not least is joining a likeminded group where you can compare notes, pick up all sorts of tips and listen to not only

professional speakers but learn from others who are members of the group.

Amazingly much information can be collected from the census returns, electoral rolls, military museums and newspapers dating back to the early 1800's. The National Archives at Kew is an absolute treasure trove of information from much earlier than the 19th century. The data available has grown like 'Topsy'.

I could not close this small article about a very big subject without mentioning the local Family Records offices. In our innocence we imagine our ancestors were unable to travel far from where they were born. Not so, they travelled as far and wide as we do. Using different vehicles it's true but they still managed to cover some miles. This is where the family records offices come in. They are situated in towns and villages throughout the U.K. and once you establish the family origins you can view the data they have available sometimes dating back to the 16th century.

Who needs a Tardis or Inspector Morse when you can follow the trail of your own family?

**Daphne Page**

<https://forebears.io/england/hertfordshire/bishops-stortford>

This looks like an interesting website to whet your appetite!

**Editor**

## Science and Technology 2

Talking to different people in U3A, I realise that they don't understand what the subject means. Those words evoke memories of test tubes and science labs at school. In fact, practically everything day to day involves science. This includes your health and longevity, your food, the shampoo and washing up liquid you use, your home, your car, your power supply and all the gadgets you own.

We cover the subjects that our members are interested in. This includes:

1. The health and medical sciences - food [all types], nutrition and health, microbiology and food safety , diseases or conditions, genetics, agriculture, food production and supermarkets, pharmacy, the ambulance service.
2. Environmental issues – nature, pollution, plastics, geology
3. Computing and mathematics – many topical subjects here including Big Data, the history of computing, and phone technology.
4. Physical sciences and engineering- astronomy, power stations and nuclear energy, transport – planes, super tankers, cars and metal technology, graphene, and explosives and weaponry.

Occasionally, we go out on visits – e.g. Bletchley Park, Cambridge University Astronomy department, talks at the Rhodes centre and sometimes we have speakers e.g. Astronomy and up-to-date genetics.

We take it in turns to host meetings and to arrange or take the sessions. 4-10 people attend each meeting. Sessions last 2 hours.

All you need to join is an interest in some of the above topics. Please get in touch – you are all welcome!

**Roz Howlett**

## International Lunch Club 2

Do you like to eat foods from other countries? This includes food from any country such as Italian, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Indian, Mexican or anything else you fancy.



If so, you are welcome to join us. There is no other qualification!. This is a new group which is growing steadily. Currently we have between 4-8 people at each meeting.

We take it in turns to choose and book a restaurant each month. We enjoy our food and socialise and it is a great way for new members to meet people and make friends.

## Roz Howlett



## Spanish Conversation

A joint group with Thorley, with about 25 members which has been running for about 5 years. We meet weekly in a public place and the group is suitable for everyone, from complete beginners to fluent Spanish speakers. Sessions last approx 2 hours.



We are a self learn group and beginners use the BBC Talk Spanish regime. Complete beginners start with Book 1 and when ready, move on to Book 2. Once you feel you have studied enough grammar, you can move into a simple conversation group. The final step is to participate in the advanced conversation group.

We are very flexible, with people attending more than one session at a time. 2-8 people can be at any one session. Currently we have 5 sessions:- Wed pm – Book 1, Thurs am – Book 2, Simple conversation and Advanced conversation, and Fri am – Simple conversation.

As group co-ordinator, I would say you need clear motivation as to why you want to learn to speak Spanish. And to succeed!!

Reasons our present members have given include:

1. You have a relative[s] who are Spanish speakers and you wish to converse with them, especially a grandchild.

2. You love Spain and Spanish culture or Spanish speaking countries and visit them regularly.
3. You have a house or apartment in Spain or similar.
4. You have read that learning a language in retirement is a good way of keeping your brain active.
5. For some other personal reason.

Many of our members have tried learning on their own and in formal, taught lessons, both here and in Spain. Some are still having supplementary lessons. Nearly all of us are using Duolingo.

So.... Everyone is welcome! or 'cada uno es bienvenido'

### **Roz Howlett**

For some ideas check out these websites which Roz mentioned.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/languages/spanish>

<https://www.duolingo.com>



## Weekly Walk and Monthly Amble Group

2018 ended with our Christmas Amble – an enjoyable short walk around Birchanger Woods organised for us by Peggy Griggs – followed by lunch at the Nag's Head in Bishop's Stortford. Thankfully the weather was kind to us as the previous year the walk had to be cancelled because of icy conditions underfoot. Whilst waiting for our food to be served Peggy also provided us with entertainment in the form of a logo quiz which taxed our memories! All in all a very enjoyable festive occasion!



The 2nd January saw a group of 26 walkers heading off past Wickham Hall in the direction of Farnham before returning to Rosey Lea's for brunch, a tradition which David Pearson introduced several years ago. I wonder, was it that they were keen to get back to walking after the two-week Christmas break or was it the thought of a chat and some tasty food at the end of their trek?

In February, on a spring-like morning, Kath Hird organised a varied walk for us from Van Hage Garden Centre in Great Amwell. After setting out along leafy footpaths and lanes we eventually arrived in the built-up area of Ware. However, it

wasn't long before we were enjoying ambling alongside the River Lea Navigation, initially passing houseboats and occupied buildings on the opposite bank before leaving civilisation behind and appreciating the quietness of the countryside. After a while that had to be left behind and we made our way up a steep winding road to return to the Garden Centre for lunch.



March had seen the arrival of Storm Gareth but that did not put off 26 intrepid walkers, led by Wendy Shipperlee, from braving the elements and enjoying a bit of fresh air. Fortunately it did not rain that morning and the ground underfoot was not as bad as had been expected as fierce winds had dried the ground remarkably quickly. However, the walkers still had to battle with gusty winds and for their efforts were rewarded with a walk which took them along part of the Flich Way and through Great Hallingbury parallel with Hatfield Forest, affording lovely panoramic views over Bishop's Stortford before returning to The Nags Head, Bishop's Stortford in time for lunch.



On a lovely day in April 25 walkers set out from The Cock in Henham led by Jeanette Barker and Carolyn Parker. Passing St Mary's Church they soon found themselves out in the open countryside with a vineyard on one side and a fishing lake on the other. Continuing walking they eventually came to the River Cam which, at that point, is just a tiny stream. With spring in all her glory the walkers took pleasure in seeing beautiful flowers in the hedgerows and crops beginning to grow in the fields. They also passed a few large houses and farms with beautiful grounds, not to mention a field in which llamas were to be seen! It was then back to the pub for an enjoyable lunch.



Wandlebury Country Park in the Gog Magog Hills was the location for our Amble in May led by Jeff Poynter. I would like to say the weather couldn't have been better but, as it was, light rain fell on 13 stalwart walkers who braved the elements. However, the wet conditions did not stop us from enjoying wandering along footpaths amongst trees with fresh, bright green leaves and being shown a Roman road which, at one time, led to Colchester. We also saw Tadlow Granary which dates from the 15th century and passed a blossoming orchard. Lunch was taken together at Scotsdales Garden Centre in Great Shelford where afterwards I, and possibly other members of the Group, couldn't resist making a purchase or two!



This Walking Group has proved very popular and it has now been necessary to set up a Waiting List – maybe you'd be interested to setting up another Group.

**Valerie Porter**

## Garden Seedlings Plants and Gardens



On a warm sunny day in May, the two U3A garden groups, 'Garden Seedlings' and 'Plants and Gardens', amalgamated to hold a 'Bring and Buy' sale to raise funds for both groups.

Members donated plants, cuttings and seedlings surplus to their requirements and while enjoying tea, coffee and biscuits, everyone browsed the selection on offer and purchased new items for their own gardens. An enjoyable occasion and a positive way to increase our revenue.



Thank you to all who participated by either helping to set up and clear away, and who donated or purchased plants.

## Debbie Monkhouse

**Did you know?** As a BSU3A member you can get 15% DISCOUNT by showing your card at both Coopers and Floral Desire in Newtown Road (not deliveries).

## Mass Observation Project

Several of the articles in this edition seem to include references to looking back and reminiscing. I would like to tell you about a way to pass your thoughts and ideas forward to future generations which I have recently decided to take part in.



I first heard about the The Mass Observation Project (MOP) several years ago but was prompted to act when I read an article in the recent Third Age Trust (TAT) magazine. MOP is a unique national writing project about everyday life in Britain, capturing the experiences, thoughts and opinions of ordinary people. Each year the project issues 3 'Directives' or open questionnaires to a panel of hundreds of volunteer writers known as 'Observers'. The Archive collates the responses and makes them available for research within 3 months of receipt. Directive replies are only identifiable by your Mass Observation number so your identity is not disclosed to researchers. Any personal information which has your name and address on is kept private for 50 years, so you need not feel constrained by people reading your submissions.

It differs from other similar social investigations because of its historical link to the original Mass Observation movement and because of its focus on voluntary, self-motivated participation. The 'Observers' do not constitute a statistically representative sample of the population but can be seen as reporters who provide a window on their world. The Directive themes need to have some relevance to everyone who writes and they are therefore careful to maintain a balance between personal, political and historical.

I am enjoying how the directives make me sit and reflect on my life, in the past, present and future. It is also rather fun to think that a future historian may be very interested in my everyday life and write their thesis based on my daily routines. For more information look at <http://www.massobs.org.uk>

**Lesley Mishan**

## Poetry Corner

### Life is What Shapes Us



Don't be forlorn  
For times long gone  
And in the past.  
They can never last,  
Forever

Remember just the happy days  
Existing somewhere  
In a haze  
Within your mind,  
Forever

It's what made me who I am  
I am the past  
I am the future  
Life is what shapes us,  
Forever

**b.s.farley 2018**



## The Return of Owl and the Pussycat (with apologies to Edward Lear)

The owl and the pussycat sailed  
back home  
In their beautiful pea-green boat.  
They'd eaten the honey and lost all  
the money  
Wrapped up in the five pound  
note.  
The owl looked off to the distant  
east  
And sang to the soft guitar,  
"Oh horrible pussy, oh pussy you  
beast,  
What a hard wicked pussy you  
are, you are, you are,  
What a hard wicked pussy you  
are."



Pussy said to the owl, "You silly old fowl  
How awfully bad you sing.  
We're no longer married. That burden I've carried  
Has gone and I've sold up the ring."  
So they sailed back fast to their distant past  
From the land where the bong tree grows  
And tried to forget the snakes and the wet  
And the pig with the ring on his nose, his nose, his nose,  
And the pig with the ring on his nose.

The pig who was willing to sell for one shilling  
His ring, stole their money and ran.  
They saw him rush off with the turkey and scoff  
As the two raced away in a van.  
Pussy gobbled the mince and chewed up the quince  
And cast off the runcible spoon.  
Now she eyed up the owl, that gullible fowl  
As they sailed by the light of the moon, the moon, the moon,  
As they sailed by the light of the moon.

**Adrienne Tinn**

## **Creative Writing Group**

We are a small group of people interested in creative writing. We formed two years ago, under the guidance of Merrill Lilley who had recently moved to

Bishop's Stortford from Kent. Merrill, for many years, had been the leader of a creative writing group in Dover.



We have tried a wide range of experiments with our writing from poetry to prose, fiction to factual reporting as well as story telling from fifty words to several thousand words. Our crowning achievement is an anthology selected from our work and published last year. Copies of this booklet are available from Peter Latham email: [yp.latham@uwclub.net](mailto:yp.latham@uwclub.net) or from our stand at the BS U3A 8 July 2019 monthly meeting.

Merril feels that the group has now developed sufficiently for the leadership to be shared and Kathy Sumpter, Roz Howlett and Peter Latham are collaborating about how to take the group forward.

Some of us had little writing experience whilst others had had work published. Each month we explore a variety of subjects and at subsequent meetings we read our work and encourage constructive comment. No one is ever put under pressure and a great deal of interest and enthusiasm is generated.

We would like to expand our group, and anyone interested in joining should contact Kathy Sumpter by email: [gerry.sumpter@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:gerry.sumpter@yahoo.co.uk) or visit our stand at the July meeting.

We meet monthly on the last Monday of the month at Nicol's Lodge, South Street but think that in future we might meet at a member's home.

**Peter Latham**

## **Spain and England – a Sonnet**

Clear, strong colours and contrasts define Spain  
White paint, bright blue skies, burnt sienna, blue greens  
Unlike England, all misty and damp rain  
Gentle greys, dark steel, pale skies and soft greens  
Spanish plants must survive in aridity  
Therefore, are hard, tough, prickly and striking  
English plants need damp, cool fluidity  
And are succulent, soft and inviting  
Spain is hot, dry, sunny and challenging  
Whilst England is cool, wet, dark and depressing  
Life in Spain is slow, gentle and relaxing  
In England, fast, furious and stressing  
They share a history of warring lands  
Of empire, blood on sands and on their hands.

## **Roz Howlett**



## Sea Fever by Meril Lilley

The sea in all its various moods  
Attracts like a magnet force,  
Wherever in the world I go  
It calls me to its nearest source.

It beckons me to harbour walls,  
With crashing waves and waters grey,  
To silver beaches in the sun,  
Or clifftop view across a bay.

Rivers or lakes are not the same,  
Only the restless sea will do,  
I care not for the state of tide  
Or if the skies are dark or blue.

I must go to the water's edge  
Wherever in the world I be,  
The magic waters of the Med.  
Or rigours of the Baltic Sea.

The Bay of Biscay holds no fears,  
Nor chill of the Alaskan ice  
And Caribbean island shores  
Just wait to welcome and entice.

Atlantic breakers fascinate  
I watch windsurfers ride each crest,  
Tossed like frail puppets in the waves,  
They rise, collapse and come to rest.

The sea will ever call to me  
Whether I stand on golden sands  
Or cruise upon its waters deep  
And visit new exotic lands.

The sea in every shade or guise  
Attracts like a magnetic force.  
Wherever in the world I be  
It calls me to its nearest source.

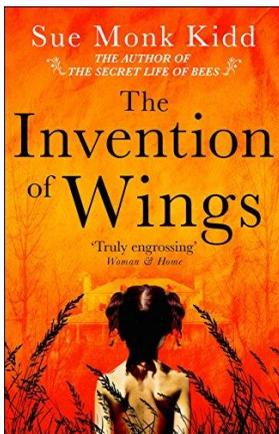
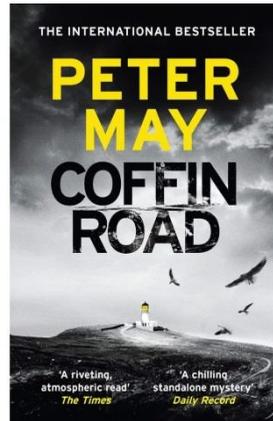
## Book Corner

## Book Group Recommendations



### Coffin Road by Peter May

This crime thriller story is set in the Outer Hebrides, with some action in Edinburgh. We all thought the scene setting was very atmospheric and the believable plot, involving a scientist, moved at a decent rate. The reader becomes involved in the various twists and turns of this story and the characters. A novel we would recommend to other people.



### The Invention of Wings by Sue Monk Kidd

This novel covers the difficult subject of slavery. The characters were all well drawn and believable. The interaction between characters was particularly well portrayed. We also felt we could imagine the different places in the book as if we were actually there. This is definitely a book worth reading, together with its easy writing style.

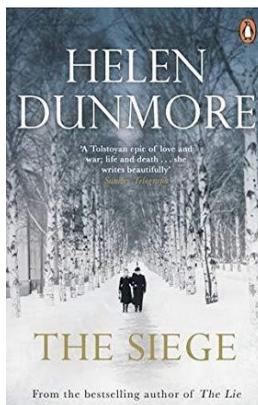
## Sue McEvoy, Book Group 6

## The Siege by Helen Dunmore

In September 1941 German forces surrounded Leningrad at the beginning of what turned out to be one of the harshest Russian winters on record.

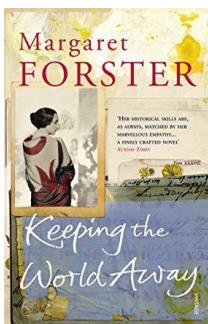
The story is told through the eyes of young lovers, Anna and Andrei, Anna's father and Marina, a banned actress.

The Siege is essentially a book about hunger, how hunger defined every moment of each of the characters in the book. It is also a deeply affecting story of survival and love.



## Zona Butt, Book Group 3

### Keeping the World Away by Margaret Forster



We all agreed this was an enjoyable and well written book. The novel starts with Gwen, elder sister of Augustus John. Gwen's passion for painting leads her to believe that by detaching herself from society she will become a true artist. In Paris she falls passionately in love with Rodin. She paints a small picture of the corner of her attic studio. So far the story has been based on the facts of Gwen's life. It then imagines that Gwen gives away a copy of this painting as a present, which is then lost, stolen, and passed on from one woman to another. All are intrigued by the painting, which helps them to find the freedom they need in their own way.

## Ruth Rawlinson, Book Group 4



## Our U3A Ethos



### Bishop's Stortford U3A

Is a self-help organisation run entirely by volunteers, relying on everyone making a contribution of some kind.

We look to members to give time and effort as well as to receive the informal learning, enjoyment and friendship that the various activities provide. Our U3A can only thrive if all members accept this principle.

A new group only comes about when a member expresses an interest in a particular area and others join to form the group and run it themselves with support from the committee.

Everyone can play some part in our U3A, whether it be leading or taking an active part in a group, serving on the committee or volunteering to help in some other capacity.

### Courtesy & Common Sense Reminders

#### For U3A Group Members

The U3A is run by volunteers who give their own time freely for the benefit of our groups so:

#### **Please**

Take note of the organiser's phone number and/or email address in order to let the leader know if you are unable to attend a meeting.

Let the leader know if you wish to leave the group, as there may be a waiting list.

If you miss three sessions in a row without contacting the leader, it will be assumed that you no longer wish to be a member of that group.

Arrive at the group meetings in good time.

Make a note of meeting dates and times.

Remember that individual groups are self-funding, so contributions may be requested when there are expenses to be covered.

Thank you

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