

NEWSLETTER – 6 FEBRUARY 2023

MEETING INFORMATION

Next Meeting:	09 February		
Venue:	Roding Valley Hall		
	Station Way		
	Buckhurst Hill		
	IG9 6LN		
	(car parking is available on-site)		
Times:	2.00 pm	Doors Open	
	2.30 pm	Speaker: Richard Cohen	<i>Churchill's Legacy</i>
Future Meetings:	09 March	Speaker: Andrew Baker	<i>The Christine Keeler Scandal</i>
	13 April	Speaker: Howard Slater	<i>Andre Rieu – Dutch Violinist and his Johann Strauss Orchestra</i>
	11 May	Speaker: Brian Carline	<i>Days of Dolly Blue & Izal</i>

BUCKHURST HILL u3a COMMITTEE

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OTHER CONTACTS

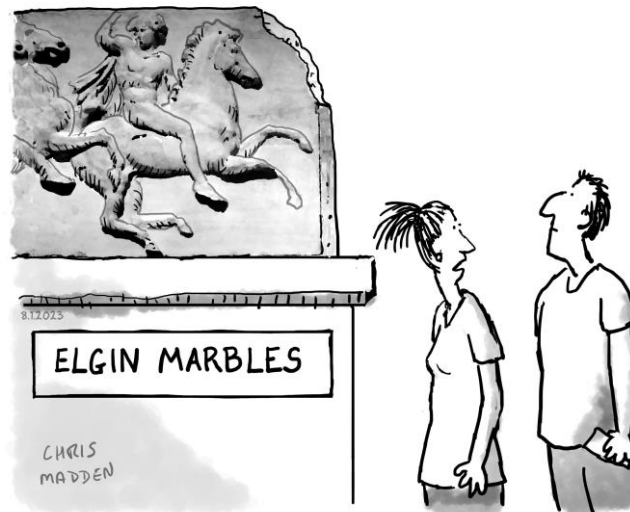
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Welcome from the Chair

Welcome to the February 2023 edition of the Buckhurst Hill u3a Newsletter.

I suspect I am not alone in feeling bewildered by much of the nonsense we read about in the press these days, especially the trend of trying to rewrite history. With this in mind, I was amused to find this cartoon.



"They were made by a civilisation built on slavery, so they should be returned to the bottom of the Aegean."

The membership renewal season is fast approaching, and the relevant form is accompanying this Newsletter. We encourage members to pay by direct bank transfer for subscriptions and, also, for the various events that are in the pipeline. If you choose to pay by this method, it would be very much appreciated if you could please follow the reference instructions noted on the forms. The correct reference makes the job of identifying the payments much more straightforward and saves our poor Treasurer, Sue Bird, from spending hours trying to decide which payment links to which outing or event.

The next monthly meeting is on Thursday 9th February and our speaker is Richard Cohen who will be talking about Churchill's Legacy. As MP for Epping from 1924 to 1945 and then Woodford from 1945 to 1964, Winston Churchill has played an important part in our local history. I am sure this will be a fascinating talk.

My plea last month for assistance in moving the chairs from the stage to set up the hall was heard and my grateful thanks to those members who arrived early and helped. If any members are able to lend a hand this month, please arrive at Roding Valley Hall at 1.30pm on the 9th.

I look forward to seeing you on 9th February.

BUCKHURST HILL u3a NEWS

Mahjong Group (*Christina Yeung*)

We have seven enthusiastic members in our group but need at least 8 people to make 2 tables. With occasional absences, it would be wise to invite 1 or 2 more people to join us. We presently meet only once a month on a Monday from 2.00 – 4.30 pm in Chigwell, with the possibility to meet more frequently later on.

The SAS (Special Air Service) The Early Years

During the Second World War, Germany and Italy planned to gain air superiority in the Mediterranean Sea. The rapid advance by the Germans along the North African coast, where several airfields were located in Libya, threatened the British Army in Egypt.

Two very different British officers in Cairo thought of a plan to destroy the enemy aircraft on the ground by attacking them from the vast areas of sand to the south. Lewes was a military paragon. He had been in Tobruk leading attacks behind enemy lines. Stirling was a lazy officer whom senior officers found impertinent and irritating but he had the nerve to approach the senior officers with a new plan of attack and obtained permission from General Auchinleck and Winston Churchill to recruit 100 highly trained, disciplined but independent minded commandos who were parachuted into the desert with their supplies and weapons to attack the airfields on the coast from their unguarded rear as the Germans and Italians were only expecting to be attacked from the sea or the air.

Although not trained in explosives Jock Lewes invented a homemade incendiary bomb which could be stuck to the wings of planes which was then used throughout the war.

Coincidentally, a British colonel had been tasked with deceiving the enemy into thinking that the army was stronger than it was, and he had invented a parachute brigade called the SAS with uniforms which were then adopted by the new group of commandos.

Their first mission in November 1941 was a failure because they parachuted into a violent windy desert storm which ended with torrential rain and less than half of the fifty-five men involved survived without enough equipment to continue.

It was then decided to base the brigade at an oasis with a wooden fort one hundred and fifty miles from the coast which had recently been captured from the Italians and planned their next attack with the help of the Long-Range Desert group (which had been formed in June 1940) and conveyed to the coast in trucks.

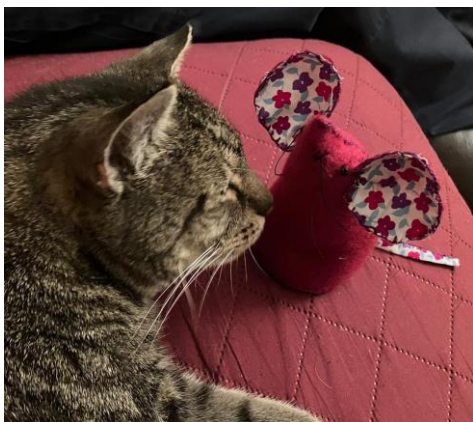
In December 1941, they were successful and over ninety enemy planes were destroyed together with ammunition dumps, lorries and enemy soldiers and airmen. The raids were led by Lewes, Stirling, Mayne and Fraser. Lewes was killed when a low flying German Messerschmitt strafed the commandos when they were retreating. Fraser managed to get back to the SAS base in the Oasis several days later. A winged dagger insignia was then adopted by the SAS and the motto "Who Dares Wins".

Stirling had obtained Churchill's autograph on a visit to Cairo which he used to obtain supplies for his new regiment. It was the first new regiment in the British army since the Boer War. A new base in the desert, an oasis, was one hundred and fifty miles from the coast and hundreds of miles behind enemy lines. Cleopatra had swum in a pool at the Oasis when she was Queen of Egypt.

Benghazi on the Libyan coast had been lost but reoccupied by the Germans and it was decided to attempt to sink ships in the harbour. Stirling, together with a group of SAS men, bluffed their way into the town by pretending to be either German or Italian, damaged the wireless station and a warehouse and hid overnight before managing to escape back into the desert.

Craft Group (*Fiona Lucas*)

To start the year, a very large number of Crafters met to make a mouse, which could be used as an ornament, a paperweight or as a pincushion. The mice's bottoms were filled with rice which gave them a lovely weight, and which made holding them very pleasurable! We had a lovely afternoon, chatting while we sewed. All our mice, although made from the same basic pattern, looked really colourful when we made a 'nest' of them at the end for their photocall! Some Crafters took them home to finish – you can see Sara's cat becoming acquainted with her new housemate!



Next month, the Group will be meeting on Friday, 17th February when we shall be making some greetings cards made with pages from an old book, our paper cutting skills and a bit of Zentangle! Unfortunately, our friendly Group is full at present, and we are operating a waiting list. If you are interested in finding out more about the Craft Group, please look at the Buckhurst Hill u3a website.

Photography Group (Kevin Lucas)

The early months of the year are always difficult for the Photography Group as we rely so much on reasonable weather which can be very elusive in January and February. It has become our normal practice to visit a photographic exhibition in January and this year was no exception.

A group of twelve photographers visited the V&A Photography Centre where two galleries are currently operating. Both galleries are being extended and are due to open later in 2023 which will enable far more from the V&A's extensive photograph collection to be displayed.

The first gallery we visited was showcasing the work of Maurice Broomfield (1916–2010). Broomfield photographed the changing face of industry in the 1950s and '60s. His images show skilled men and women at work in factories throughout the UK and abroad.



Broomfield is considered to have created some of the most spectacular and important depictions of 20th-century manufacturing. Nowadays these photographs are all that remain of many of the factories and the communities of workers and skills that supported them.

The subject matter of the second gallery was "Known and Strange – Photographs from the collection". The gallery narrative states:

"A photograph has the power to transform the familiar into the unfamiliar, and to make the ordinary extraordinary."

"Since its invention, photography has changed the way we see the world by inviting us to interpret reality in our own way. Its creative capacity to blur fact with fiction is the focus of this display".

It is fair to say that this was a very eclectic collection of photographs which prompted a lot of comment and debate, but which did not seem to pass anyone's "wall space" test!

Our next outing on 23rd February will be a local forest walk followed by a coffee morning or if the weather is bad... just a coffee morning!!

To join the Photography Group, no special expertise or equipment is normally required and members with no interest in photography are welcome to join us purely for the outings. We have visited some very interesting locations in London.

Please contact me for further information.

Creative Yarns (*Yvonne Hall and Joan Brunt*)



Crocheting was our choice for our first meeting this year. We had a lot to talk about and got to make a small rose.

Recipe: Three Ingredient Cooking (*Hilary Wrightman*)

Creamy Ham and Potato Casserole

180g Ham Hock

4 Potatoes

600g tin Cream of Mushroom Soup

1. Preheat oven to Gas 8, 230°C or 210°C fan.
2. Peel 4 large potatoes, chop 2 of them into small cubes and parboil for 5 minutes and drain.
3. Slice remaining 2 potatoes as thinly as possible and put aside.
4. In a medium casserole dish mix 180g ham hock, 600g tin Cream of Mushroom Soup and the cubed potatoes.
5. Top with the thinly sliced potatoes and brush with a little olive oil.
6. Bake 50/55 minutes until piping hot with a crispy top.
7. Serve immediately.

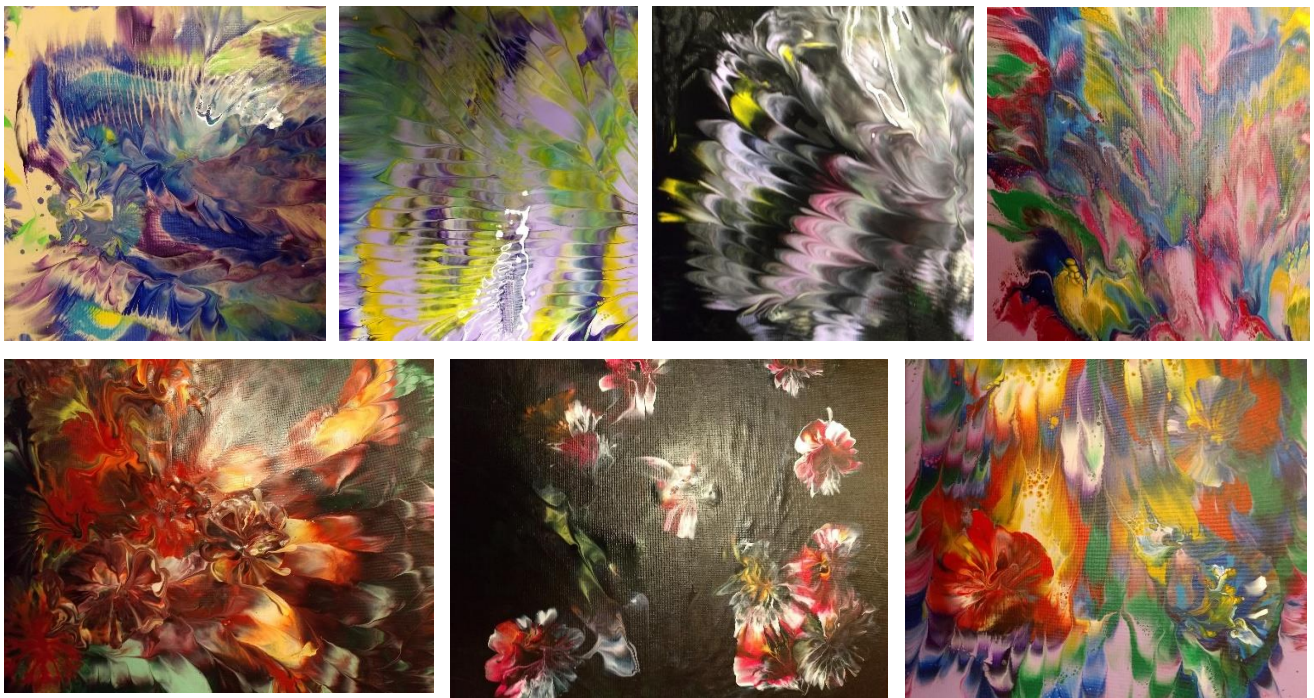
Can be frozen if required.

Enjoy.

Paint Pouring (*Jacqueline Jacques*)

The paint pourers tackled two different, equally challenging techniques in January. One was a 'flower dip' where the actual pouring is done directly onto a sheet of plastic and transferred to the canvas by pressing it face down onto the paint. The second method was a 'chain pull'. Paint is applied to a ball chain which is then laid in a wiggly shape on a painted canvas and pulled off the edge, creating a feathery effect.





What beautiful results.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

(1) Forthcoming Outings (*Hilary Wrightman*)

29 Mar	National Stud at Newmarket	£55.00	Includes morning coffee and lunch	places available
18 May	Tour of All England Lawn Tennis Club (Wimbledon)		11.15am	20 places available
28 Sep	Brick Lane Music Hall: Diva's Show with afternoon tea	£45.00		30 places available
30 Oct	Goldsmiths' Hall Visit, 12.30pm			20 places available
16 Nov	Ely Christmas Market			
18 Nov	Entertainment Evening			70 spaces
7 Dec	Kew Gardens Christmas Light Show	£40.00		
In the pipeline – awaiting confirmation				
	DSI Croydon – behind the scenes tour		Behind the scenes tour (costume and shoe providers for "Strictly")	
	Angels Costumiers – behind the scenes		Behind the scenes tour (the largest privately owned collection of costume for film, theatre and television anywhere in the world)	

(2) [Kew Gardens Christmas Light Show \(Hilary Wrightman\)](#)



As one of the highlights of the UK's festive calendar, Christmas at Kew Gardens is an unmissable opportunity to herald the start of Christmas. It's a botanical world brimming with seasonal cheer as twinkling lights and seasonal sounds fill the air.

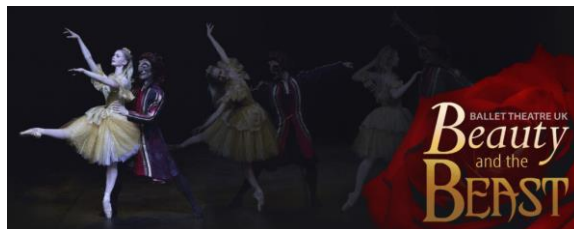
There is a new illuminated trail around these world-class Gardens, so discover glittering tunnels of light, dancing lakeside reflections and trees drenched in jewel-like colour. Pause at mesmerising flickering flames in the fire garden, wander beneath larger-than-life illuminations.

Along the route, independent street food vendors will offer tasty festive delights, from hot food and sweet treats to spiced winter warmers and hot chocolate.

The booking form has already been circulated in advance. The closing date for bookings is **Tuesday 28th February**.

(3) [Social Events \(Mary Nathan\)](#)

[Ballet: Beauty and The Beast](#)



See you at the Kenneth More Theatre on Saturday 18th February for a 5.00pm start.

[The Roding Players Orchestra](#)



The Roding Players Orchestra are delighted to be able to hold their Spring Concert at St Mary's Church, High Road, Loughton (opposite the "Wimpy") on **1st April** (no joke!). They will play music from "Stage Musicals".

Doors open at 6.30pm, and the concert starts at 7.00pm, ending at 9.30pm approx.

Tickets are £9.00 (including refreshments during the interval).

Coronation Party



On **Friday 5th May** we will be holding a Celebration Party for King Charles III Coronation. This is now SOLD OUT!

(4) Ladies Who Lunch (*Ann Denwood*)

Red Rose Lunch



I look forward to seeing all those ladies who have booked and are coming along to the Red Rose Lunch on Friday, 10th February at 12.30 pm for Lunch at 1.00 pm at:

Linguine Italian Restaurant
Hainault Forest Golf Club
Romford Road
Chigwell IG7 4QW
(Large car park & lift at main entrance)

Also, as we are celebrating Valentine's ♥ (14th February), if you have a Red fabric Rose 🌹 or something Red in your wardrobe, please wear it for the lunch – particularly Red headbands/fascinators. 🌹 Glam-up Ladies and banish the Winter blues!



MEMBERS' CORNER

A facebook account ... of a sort (Part One of Two) (Stephen Skippen)

I opened a facebook account in 2013 after publishing my first novel in 2012. I viewed it as an opportunity to promote my work and widen the reach: without any form of marketing the best book in the world will remain on the shelf.

In order to be honest about my intent, I didn't open a personal account: I opened what was deemed to be a business account, in my case, 'risktakernovel', with the objective of focusing on subjects related to writing.

However, in recent times I have relaxed the criterion and included content of a personal nature on the basis that folk might grow weary of me banging on about my books. Mind you, I have kept the bar above posting stuff such as the loss of reading glasses and how they were eventually found – in the face of the fact that many a reader likes a good mystery!

It would be disingenuous of me not to mention I have added posts and content into the mix of this article which were not included in my facebook page. The essence of facebook appears to be short and punchy so the worst I can be accused of is colouring in to add interest. And while I have my hand up, I should also own up to rescheduling the posts to chronicle the events.

So in summary, using facebook as a template, I have attempted to deliver insightful information into my writing, thoughts and deeds and everything else I could legitimately throw in – and by the way, any reference to us or we means me and the good lady.

Let us begin.

The Year is 2013

June – This was the first photo I posted on facebook. Taken at Bicester Aerodrome in Oxfordshire, it was formerly an RAF airfield and used as a gliding centre at this time. So what triggered my interest?

Picture this. 1968 and you are sitting in a London cinema watching the original *Thomas Crown Affair*. Steve McQueen is piloting a glider and in the background you can hear Noel Harrison singing *The Windmills of Your Mind*.

The music draws to a close as the glider lands, scythes through the grass and snaps you out of your trance. And from that moment on there is a gap in your life which you can only fill when you, too, are able to glide silently through the void.

Excuse the purple prose – I got carried away.

Alan Trustman wrote the original story ... my kind of story. I also liked the later version starring Pierce Brosnan – but not as much.



The following day I was back in the real world – out of the hotel and heading for another experience: Bicester Village shopping outlet – although I can't recall fantasising about that! However, folk arriving in coaches by the dozens might take issue with me.

July – and back in Oxfordshire again. We stayed at Whately Hall in *Ride a cockhorse to Banbury Cross to see a fine lady* ... for a couple of nights.



Nice hotel, I liked it – charming, with dated grandeur, but don't think of going there just yet. It has been in the news lately: currently closed to the public due to a sudden influx of overseas visitors.



Facebook entry reads – stayed there not so long ago. I did some writing there, as did Jonathon (Gulliver's Travels) Swift. To date his sales exceed mine by seventy million. Probably more! But he does have a three hundred years start.

And whilst we were there we drove to Stratford-upon-Avon.



Facebook reads – went to pay my respects to another Stratford (okay) on-Avon guy. They called him the Bard. Was he the best storyteller ever? Seems like it. He's been gone for nigh on four hundred years.

We also went to Hook Norton and Chipping Norton amongst other places. And amongst those other places was Bicester, again. Sorry. This dream was too long in the making. I had to go back for another couple of flights to clear my system.



August – We stayed in Norton Disney in Lincolnshire for a couple of days. It happened to be an open day in the grounds on the day we arrived ... barbeque and ice creams, games in the field, steam roller and a Field Marshall tractor which was of especial interest to me because back in the day my mother's cousin restored one of these tractors which were once used to power threshing machines.

Then we went to Lincoln for a recce and when we returned later that evening, we had drinks with the proprietors of the hotel and their family and friends and other guests, in the bar – all on a lovely summer's day.

The following morning, we visited Lincoln Cathedral for a Sunday service and, later, Lincoln Castle where we walked the walls and watched re-enactment ceremonies with knights in armour jousting with lances and infantry men firing muskets.



The photo on the right was taken in the Separatist Prison in the grounds of the Castle. This is the Prison Chapel where the chaplain stood and looked down at inmates who sat in pews with high doors as they were prohibited from having contact with other inmates anywhere within the prison.

Facebook entry reads something like this: the sequel to 'The Risk Taker' is entitled 'The Separatist'. But it's okay, the scary geezer on the cross isn't in it. Right!

Next time. In part two, I go to mecca – in a manner of speaking.

Until then ...

stephenskippenwriter@yahoo.com

COMMUNITY

Advice on Digital Skills (Chris Embling)

Are you a bit of a Luddite like me? Are you scared of doing something new on that computer in case you break it?

Do you keep your mobile phone switched off to save the battery? Do you have to resort to asking your 12-year old grandson for help?

What's the betting you did not know that Epping Forest District Council will help? They have drop-in centres at Limes Farm, Chigwell (Mondays 9.00-10.30am) and the Civic Offices in Epping (Thursdays 9.30am -12.30pm) where you can go for free advice and support with your digital skills. Indeed, if you were to look at the Council website under the heading BookingLive you will find details of a variety of free activities which are inclusive of all age groups (something for you to do with the grand kids during half term for example).

Furthermore, if you are unable to get to the drop-in centres the Council website, under "Community – digital skills learning and support", provides very useful advice on computing basics including the use of social media/networking et al.

Give it a try and surprise the family!

STANDING NOTICES

Tell Mary (Mary Nathan)

I report and send a card to members who are unwell, in hospital or to the family on the passing of a loved one. So please tell me if you want to share sad or happy news. We want to hear about it. Phone Mary on: 020 8506 2203. If I don't pick up, please leave your name and number and I'll call you back.

Congratulations and Best Wishes (Mary Nathan)

On a brighter note, we can send best wishes to members who wish their friends to rejoice on their special birthday or wedding anniversary.

'Phone me on the above number and tell me your name, date and age of your birthday, and names, date and number of years of your marriage. This will be put in the newsletter. If you don't want us to know, don't 'phone me!

Charity Collections

Greetings Cards (*Hilary Wrightman*)

I'm collecting greeting cards (including birthday and Christmas). They are being used by a local special needs group for making pennants and decorations.

They can be brought to our monthly meeting or dropped in to me at home.

Stamps (*Sylvia Medhurst*)

Reminder: **please leave a half-inch border around the stamps to help protect their perforated edges** – stamps without this border are unusable and should be discarded.

Milk Bottle Tops (*Valerie Thame*)

We no longer collect Milk Bottle Tops. Please dispose of them with your usual recycling method.

All Forms – Membership and Booking Forms (*Christine Slade*)

Please send hard copies only – scanned copies are not accepted.

We will provide on request copies of all forms in hard copy, but we require members to submit all forms in hard copy. (It's an issue of practicality: some handwriting is more difficult to read than others. On a scanned copy it is impossible to see the imprint of pressure on paper etc, which can make all the difference to deciphering handwriting!)

Membership Renewal (*Christine Slade*)

For those paying by bank transfer – your Membership Card will not be issued until I have received your completed and signed Membership Form. If you need a hard copy of the Membership Form, please either email me at membership@buckhillu3a.org or telephone 020 8505 1005.

Both the 2022-2023 Membership Form (valid till 31 March) and the new 2023-2024 Membership Forms are available on our website. The **2023-2024 Membership Form** accompanies this newsletter. It has been revised, so please don't use the 2022-2023 version with a date change!

Please don't forget to include a Stamped Self-Addressed Envelope with your Membership Form, otherwise your Membership Card will be retained for collection at the monthly meeting.

Members' Contact Details (*Christine Slade*)

Have you moved, or do you have a new email address or 'phone number? Please let me know your new contact details.

I need an up-to-date home address. This is important because communications from the Third Age Trust such as "Third Age Matters" are sent by post and home addresses in particular need to be current, even though we ourselves contact members predominantly via email.

Newsletter (*Christine Slade*)

Articles should be sent to my account: newsletter@buckhillu3a.org or hard copy can be sent to: Miss C Slade, 18 Scotland Road, Buckhurst Hill, IG9 5NR. Our next newsletter will be issued on **Monday 6th March**. The closing date for inputs is **Friday 3rd March**.

GROUP INFORMATION

GROUP	MEETING DAY
Book Club	Monthly on 2 nd Monday 10.00 – 12.00 am
Bridge (Social)	Weekly, each Wednesday 10.00 am – 12.30 pm
Coffee Morning	Monthly on 3 rd Thursday 10.30 am – 12.00 noon
Craft	Monthly on 3 rd Friday 1.00 pm – 4.00 pm
Creative Yarns	Monthly, usually 2 nd Wednesday, 10.00 am
Cribbage	Monthly, on a Thursday evening, as arranged
Family History	Monthly on 2 nd Saturday 10.30 am – 12.30 pm
Forest Walks	1 st and 3 rd Mondays at 10.00 am
Gardening Group	Monthly on 3 rd Thursday
Grumpy Old Men's Club	As arranged
History	Monthly on 2 nd Tuesday 2.30 pm
Italian: Beginners & Intermediate (shared)	Alternate Wednesdays 2.00 pm – 4.00 pm
Jazz Appreciation (Roding Valley)	Monthly on 3 rd Wednesday 2.30 pm
Ladies Who Lunch	As arranged
Local Visits	As arranged
Lunch Club 1	Alternate months 2 nd Tuesday
Lunch Club 2	Alternate months 2 nd Monday
Mahjong	First Monday, monthly 2.00 pm
Outings	As arranged
Paint Pouring	Monthly: 1 st or 3 rd Tuesday or 1 st or 3 rd Wednesday, or 1 st Friday, 2.00 pm
Photography	Monthly usually 4 th Thursday
Play Reading	Monthly on 1 st Thursday 2.00 pm
Rummikub	Monthly on 2 nd Monday 2.30 pm
Scrabble 1	Monthly on 2 nd Wednesday 2.00 pm
Scrabble 2	Last Friday of the month 2.00 pm
Sunday Club	Monthly on 4 th Sunday 2.30–4.30 pm
Tai Chi	1 st and 3 rd Wednesday each month 10.00 am
Ten Pin Bowling	Monthly on 1 st Tuesday (unless school holidays)
Theatre Outings (Local)	As arranged
Theatre Outings (West End)	As arranged

VISITORS

Visitors/potential new members will be allowed to attend the Monthly Meeting TWICE ONLY (free of charge).