

# Newsletter

September/October 2023 No 17

## Letter from the Chair



We are now well into what has become a rather wet summer, and I guess we can only hope that it will turn into an Indian Summer. However, the sun did shine on our Summer Lunch, and around 80 members enjoyed a lovely meal at the Bletchingley Golf Club, bathed in brilliant sunshine.

The lunch was a fun event, brilliantly organised by Sheila Frost and Keith Lawrance. Congratulations to them both. I was delighted to see and chat to quite a few relatively new members. It is a wonderful way to get to know people, when you first join an organisation, and I was pleased to see them being made welcome. The lunch was preceded by a lovely concert in the entrance hall by our Recorder Group. Not only did they play some beautiful music, but they all looked very chic in their matching uniforms. Many thanks to Barbara Holloway and the ladies.

We have some interesting social events scheduled for the Autumn, including an educational visit to Bletchley Park, which will include a guided tour. In November a party is going to Thursford for the Christmas Spectacular. (There is more information about our programme later on the Newsletter). It is very satisfying for the Social Committee that our events always sell out (and indeed an extra coach is being arranged for Portsmouth) as it suggests that we are picking the right events.

You will read later in the Newsletter an account of the growing number of new groups. Well done to the Group Leaders and to Liz Whittaker.

Our Open Day is set for the 22nd of September, which coincides with National u3a Week, so it is important that we make it a success. Paul Knight is looking for more help, including some members to help with tea and coffee, as well as volunteers to man the stands. Please do step forward, as this is our chance to show our local area what a vibrant organisation we are.

As we have now reached a milestone of 700 members, let's hope our Open Day sees us on the path to 750!

You will find the official notice for the AGM later in the Newsletter and I hope that many of you will be able to attend as it will be once again a live event (followed by our traditional pre Christmas celebration).

I hope you all enjoy reading our latest Newsletter.

Michael Brigden Chair



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## Open Day 22nd September 2023



We want to showcase our u3a to non members, but it is also a chance for members to come along to see what the u3a groups are

in the afternoon. This coincides with the National u3a Week.

You will all be aware that we are holding an open day in Caterham URC Hall on 22 September, starting at 10.30 and going on until 2.30

doing.

We have about 17 stands put on by a number of the groups, and we are hoping for a good turnout. It has been advertised locally, and Paul Knight and his team have put in a lot of work. Please do come along to support your friends who are manning the stands, and have a look at what we are up to. You might find a group that is looking

for members which is of interest to you.

We are still looking for some volunteers to help serve tea and coffee, so if you can help, please contact Paul Knight ASAP Mike Brigden Chair

# Caterham & District u3a Annual General Meeting. Monday 27th November 2023, 2.30pm

Dear Member,

Once again our Annual General Meeting will be a LIVE event!!

To be held at: The United Reformed Church, Harestone Hill, Caterham, CR3 6SX

You will soon receive, either via Beacon email or letter, an AGM Information Pack containing the following:

- The Meeting Agenda
- Minutes of the 2022 AGM
- Treasurer's Report
- Accounts

Please note that these documents will also be available on the Caterham and District u3a website, together with details of the current committee members and some of the group leader reports.

Please advise us if you intend coming to the meeting as this helps us with setting out the seating and with refreshment catering.

It would be much appreciated if you could submit any questions with regard to "matters arising from the 2022 AGM minutes" or under Any Other Business ahead of the meeting – by noon on Monday 13th November 2023. This enables your committee to do any research needed to answer the question ahead of the meeting.

Any nominations for members to serve on the next Branch Committee should also be sent in by noon on the 13th November.

Please send questions etc. to Ray Jessop

Following the formal business part of the meeting, it is very much hoped that you will join us for a social get together with mince pies and mulled wine.

Your support for the Caterham and District u3a in attending this year's AGM, is very much appreciated.

Ray Jessop Administrative Secretary

# **Groups Coordinator Update**

Are you ready for an autumn of action courtesy of our groups??? I do hope so.

Our wonderful Group Leaders have been busy updating information about their groups. Please visit the webpage <a href="https://u3asites.org.uk/caterham/groups">https://u3asites.org.uk/caterham/groups</a> and follow the link to any group that takes your interest. On each page is a link to the group leader for more information.

Up to date lists of groups and the timetable is attached with this Newsletter.

Exciting news – we have new groups starting – Swimming, Creative Writing and Philosophy. A wonderful variety of options so I hope one of them appeals to you. More information on the website.

Shakespeare Discovery is offering a new course as the

present one is full. Badminton and Canasta are both expanding to offer twice weekly options.

Are you interested in social bridge? I've had an enquiry so please let me know if you would like to make up a foursome.

As always a huge thank you to all Group Leaders and Administrators - without them our wonderful selection of groups would not exist.

Everything within our u3a runs because members are willing to contribute. If you don't already do so please think about what you can offer.

Best wishes Liz (Whittaker)

# Badminton expands to twice a week

Badminton is proving ever more popular, so to meet the demand, U3A Badminton will soon meet on Mondays as well as on Thursdays. Thursday badminton is all year round with no breaks for holidays, whereas Monday badminton will first meet on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> October and run during the peak months. Both sessions are at the Pavilion in Queens Park, Caterham on the Hill, and from 2 to 4pm.

Badminton members can play once or twice a week, and can vary their choice from week to week. We welcome everyone from complete beginners to experienced, and the charge is £4 for each two-hour session to cover the hall hire cost. We have racquets that you can borrow.

Why not give us a try and join in the fun! We are a sociable bunch, including barbecues and meals out.

For further details please visit <u>Caterham & District u3a: Badminton (u3asites.org.uk)</u> or to sign up, please just email me on this link <u>Ron Houston</u>





The select few on a warm August Thursday.

Why not give it a try? All are welcome.

#### **French Conversation**

"Ours is a basic conversation group of about 10 who meet on alternate Wednesday mornings at my home



on Caterham on the Hill. It is very sociable, we have coffee, biscuits and a chat for about an hour – often longer. Sometimes someone has prepared a few paragraphs on a subject of interest or something in the news or it is just ordinary social chat in French. We help each other with vocabulary and use dictionaries if necessary but usually someone knows what is needed.

The group is full but an occasional visitor would be welcome, please contact me.

Monica Giddens.

# **Dancing Group**

Do you fancy learning to dance?

From Monday 11th September, why not join us at the Soper Hall & have a go! We presently cover both Ballroom and Latin techniques with the possibility of learning jive and other techniques as time goes on .

We're looking for new dancers (whether you've danced



before, or are a complete novice) to join us & are particularly in need of men! Couples, single men & ladies who are happy to alternate between learning ladies and gentlemen's steps are all very welcome.

Classes will be weekly, Mondays, 7-9pm, and the course will run for 12 weeks.

The cost is £10.00 per person per week

Please contact Susan or Rita for more information

Susan McCallum

# **Psychology Group B**

On the third Monday in July our group met in the delightful setting of The Chestnuts Care Home in Purley. We are extremely fortunate to have the use of a lounge area in the care home and are amply provided with tea/coffee and biscuits (the first month we had cake as well)! The staff are extremely welcoming and could not be more friendly and

accommodating; we are very lucky indeed to have the use of these splendid facilities.



This month five ladies met to discuss 'Sibling Relationships' and we had a most fascinating time discussing siblings and our own experiences of where we stood in the family hierarchy as well as our own children. The discussion was extremely wide ranging and thought provoking and we all found it immensely interesting.

At the next meeting we intend to discuss 'Is Technology Changing our Brains?' Every month we take it in turns to decide on a different topic and we are all encouraged to contribute to the discussion. None of us are experts, but we share an interest in the subject and a desire to investigate the subject of psychology through talking about various topics. We all do our own research, which I for one find very interesting and can lead down all sorts of avenues, which I am sure will keep our group occupied in the months to come.

Our group has room for ten people and there are currently two spaces. If you are interested please contact the group administrator Sue Seymour

**Debbie Cooper** 

# **History Group 3 visit to Spitalfields Market**

On 12 August History Group 3 ventured on their first outing together as follow up to a great presentation on The Huguenots in London by member Grethe Hauge. Grethe took us to Spitalfields Market and the historic Huguenot houses which had contained their weaving sheds on the top floor. The multicultural nature of the area was fascinating as was the varied and beautiful architecture, and we enjoyed getting to know a part of the city none of us had been familiar with. I suspect some of us will be returning to explore further, not least to revisit the splendid Indian sweetshop we discovered in Brick Lane!



The pictures show the group; a typical Huguenot house and one of the fashion warehouses used to show off the clothes they made.





# Yoga

Our Yoga enthusiasts continue to meet every Thursday under the watchful eye of our excellent teacher, Dimi Booth.

Anyone who would like to join us would be most welcome. We meet at 3.00pm just for an hour in Warlingham Methodist Church Hall where there is plenty of parking on site.

Please feel free to contact me via the website if you need further information.

Julia Sunley



## The Recorder Group

The Recorder Group performed in St Lawrence Church at their Afternoon Tea Session in August attended by a large audience making a lovely happy atmosphere. The Theme was "Music from around the World" in which the audience were invited to sing along with the recorders.



# **Shakespeare Discovery Group**



The <u>Cobbe portrait</u> (1610), The <u>Chandos portrait</u> (early 1600s) and the <u>Droeshout portrait</u> (1622): three of the most prominent of the reputed portraits of William Shakespeare (WikiCommons).

The launch of the Shakespeare Discovery group in May this year has been very successful and very enjoyable! With members at all levels of prior Shakespeare knowledge, from forgettable school lessons to English bachelor's level, we have had fascinating conversations, intriguing questions, plenty of humour and lots of learning. We are working our way through Shakespeare's plays and meet on the last Wednesday of each month. A reading guide with ideas to think about and links to productions and other material is provided for each play together with a follow-up note of any books, podcasts, productions, or news discussed. Feedback has been very positive and enthusiastic! This group is now full, but a second group will commence in January 2024. If you're interested, please contact me at <a href="https://u3asites.org.uk/caterham/page/129040">https://u3asites.org.uk/caterham/page/129040</a>

Colette Ramuz



# **London Discovery Group visit** to Chelsea Royal Hospital

On 21st August, 38 members of our u3a enjoyed a guided tour of the Chelsea Royal Hospital, home of the Chelsea Pensioners. After an introductory video, we were split into two groups, each led by a resident Pensioner, resplendent in red uniform. We heard about the history of the hospital, founded by King Charles II and admired the beautiful Wren buildings and extensive grounds. We saw the graves of Margaret and Denis Thatcher in the small graveyard. A particular pleasure and privilege was to get to know our guides, to hear about their military experience and life in the hospital, which is really a residential home for about 300 old soldiers - a very happy place.

Corrie Ball



# **Gardening Group**

The Gardening Group have had a very busy year visiting lots of different gardens. As well as visiting our own member's gardens, which is always a pleasure, we have had several outings to see a variety of gardens further afield. In the Spring we visited the Tulip festival at Wisley which was newly planted this year. We picked a beautiful warm Spring day and the tulips looked quite magnificent. We ventured out to Leonardslee Gardens, near Horsham, where the wallabies delighted us, as did the Dolls house exhibition. We also visited Lullingstone World Garden. u3a member Moira Smith was kind enough to take us for an orchid walk on Coulsdon Common where we saw some spectacular examples of rare orchids. Moira amazed us with her knowledge of the species and we all had our eyes opened to

the beauty around us. We still have one more trip out, to visit the Chelsea Physic Garden in October, before we end our gardening year with a Christmas party.



Wisley Tulip Festival

If you have a garden that you would be happy to show us, I would love to hear from you.



Leonardslee Gardens



Kate Nash Gardening Group Leader



Orchids with Moira

# London Discovery Group visit to the Canal Museum

Twenty-two of us visited the London Canal Museum in August. It was sponsored by the Third Age Trust but I booked a group visit. It is situated near King's Cross on the site of an old ice store where an entrepreneur shipped ice over from Norway for use in ice cream during the summer.

We had a fascinating talk from a volunteer covering the history of the canals and the present wild life that is encouraged to live around them in modern times. We then had time to view the exhibits including the interior of an old boat and a rather noisy and basic engine which eventually took over from the horses. The cavernous ice store was also on view from above.

We were then taken on a one-hour exploration of the canal where the most dangerous things were cyclists and joggers. There was much evidence of wild life in the centre of London and the whole area is now a thriving local community. A very enjoyable and informative afternoon out.

Paul Knight London Discovery Group Leader.









#### Summer Lunch 2023

On Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> August eighty members of the Caterham u3a gathered together for our Summer Lunch at the Bletchingley Golf Club.

In the entrance foyer, we were welcomed by our excellent Recorder Group who played a selection of tunes for us.

After welcome speeches by the organiser, Sheila Frost, and our Chairman, Mike Brigden, we were served our choices of food from the menu by the friendly and efficient waiters and waitresses.

Everybody was pleased with the quality of the meal served.

As usual, there were some Quiz sheets to keep us occupied and amused, plus a free raffle.

A lunch date again enjoyed by all.







Date for Your 2024 Diary: our Festive Lunch is planned for Friday 12th January

\* \* \* \* \*

#### Over 700 members!!

In the last few weeks we have grown to over 700 members! A very warm welcome goes to these new members who have joined since the last Newsletter:

lan Adam, Bob Cherry, Janet Crichton, Don Middlecoat and Carol Tysall from Caterham; Veronica Beckitt, April Taylor, Doreen Ward and Anne Watling from Warlingham; Hiromi Aizawa Lucas from South Croydon; Frances Conn from Coulsdon; Chris Papanastasiou from Purley and Gaynor Goss from Horley.



# Caterham and District u3a Social Committee Coach Trip to Portsmouth 20th October 2023

The trip to Portsmouth has proved so popular that we have booked a second coach. Having offered places to everyone on the waiting list, we still have a few places left. If you would like to join us please email me

The coach will drop us near Gunwharf Quays, which is in walking distance of the Historic Dockyard and the Seafront.

There will be three pick up points:

- Warlingham, outside Chez Vous, 432 Limpsfield Road, Warlingham, Surrey, CR6 9LA.
- St. Mary's Church, Church Hill, Caterham, Surrey, CR3 5RA.
- Caterham Railway Station, Station Avenue, Caterham, CR3 6LB

Pick-up times will be confirmed nearer the time, but we will be leaving Caterham at approximately 9am and leaving Portsmouth at 4:30pm. The journey is approximately 90 minutes.

#### IMPORTANT-DO NOT SEND PAYMENT UNTIL YOUR PLACE ON THE TRIP HAS BEEN

**CONFIRMED.** Once your place is confirmed I will send you a confirmation email with payment instructions. The cost is £10.00 per person.

Things to Do - Portsmouth (visitportsmouth.co.uk)

Gunwharf Quays Designer Outlet | Homepage (gunwharf-quays.com)

Portsmouth Historic Dockyard - Historic Ship in Portsmouth, Portsmouth - Portsmouth (visitportsmouth.co.uk)

#### **Important**

This event requires members to be fit enough to walk a reasonable distance and to get on and off the coach without assistance, or with help from a carer.

This event is for members only (carers exempt).

To join Caterham & District u3a Caterham & District u3a: Membership (u3asites.org.uk)

#### Guidelines and Advice to Members.

Please note that the u3a and its event partners accept no responsibility for any loss, damage or personal injury during events. Participants are requested to wear appropriate clothing and footwear and take due care and attention.

The u3a often uses members' photographs on social media and on our website. If you are not happy to have your photo taken during the event, please notify us in writing prior to the event and make the event organizer aware on the day.

If you have an Art Pass, you get 50% off entry to Portsmouth Historic Dockyard. Also, all PHD tickets are valid for a year, so

you can return as often as you like within the year. Deb





## Caterham Probus trip to Durham 20-24 May 2024

Your committee thought some of you might be interested in this kind offer from Caterham Probus for a holiday in Durham in May 2024. We of course are planning our own holiday to Germany in June next year, but these are very different holidays.

An outline of the trip is below. For full details, please contact John Jackson—his details are at the bottom of this page

Dear Members and Friends of Caterham Probus

Below is the outline itinerary for a 4-night stay based in the City of Durham from Monday 20 May 2024. The Hotel is the 4-star Radisson Blu, which is situated in the city centre on the banks of the River Wear.

The cost of the holiday, £597 per person, is based on a party of 35. Higher numbers would reduce that cost.

#### Cost includes:

- 5 days coach hire with Passenger Plus and our usual excellent friend and driver, Neil.
- Entrance to Durham Cathedral,
- Crook Hall and Gardens free to National Trust members remember to take your membership cards an entry fee is payable for non-members.
- Admission to Beamish Museum.
- Group entrance to Chillingham Castle and the Holy Island of Lindisfarne
- 4 nights Half Board at the hotel.
- All gratuities

Rooms have been provisionally reserved and the hotel require a deposit of £100 per person to secure the bookings. The deposit is refundable until mid-February 2024.

Should you wish to join the group. Please advise me and pay, preferably by bank transfer, to account number 90840343, sort code 20-24-61, identifying yourself as the sender using the reference Durhamxxxxxxx where xxxxxxx is your surname, or by cheque payable to "Probus Club of Caterham" sent to Rob Richards, 38, Dorin Court, Landscape Road, Warlingham CR6 9JT

All enquires and replies to John Jackson

The Probus Club of Caterham Social Committee





#### **Thursford**

It seems so long ago that we made the decision to visit Thursford and see the spectacular show in November. Those members who have signed up will be getting a reminder about the final payment shortly (It was sold out).

The coach is arranged, the hotel is booked, and Thursford are expecting us! Fingers crossed for good weather.

I have been asked by a few members about a waiting list, and I have created one. So if you are interested in going to Thursford in November and have not booked, let me know. When organising these events we usually get a few cancellations and we always try to resell the tickets.

I am really looking forward to the visit, as I went last year, and it was wonderful. I am sure that it will be a trip to remember!

Wendy Brigden

# Proposed Caterham & District u3a trip to Germany 2024

We're still waiting for the final details of this proposed trip to be finalised. The dates may change to a few days later than what was in the last newsletter

Day 1 A full day travelling to Cologne.

Day 2 Travelling on to Berlin, making a stop at the Mohne Dam (Dambusters) on the way.

Day 3/4 in Berlin. Itinerary to be confirmed

Day 5 Travelling back to Koblenz—confluence of the Rhine & Mosel Rivers at Deutsches Eck, German Corner

Day 6 Travelling to Calais for ferry to Dover & on to Caterham etc.

If you are interested in joining us on this trip, please send email to Deb, with Germany 2024 as the subject & please indicate if you would be wanting a double, twin or single room.

# Interrailing

Wendy and I decided that we would recapture our youth recently, and embarked on an Inter Rail experience! I will be sharing my stories with the Travel Group, but if anyone is fed up with the trials and tribulations of modern day flying, this is an experience worth considering.

We bought Interrail passes and travelled to Cortona near Perugia where we spent a week, and then to Bolzano in the Italian Dolomites, and finally back to London. We had great many adventures, met some lovely people, stayed in some interesting cities, and found out that European trains were no more efficient or reliable than ours! In fact, the worst trains that we travelled on in terms of reliability were the German trains!

We started on Eurostar to Lille (much easier to change at Lille than Paris) and then to Lyon via TGV, where we spent our first night. Then on to Milan using Trenitalia, where we spent our second night. Finally on to Cortona.

The second leg of our journey was spent in Bolzano and we travelled there via Verona (where we went to see Tosca in the Roman Amphitheatre). Our return journey was via Frankfurt, to Brussels and that was when we found out how unreliable the German trains are! They too have scheduled engineering works which cause train cancellations! Finally, we returned to London via Eurostar.

Despite the problems that we encountered, we would do it again, but I do not think that I would like to organise one as a u3a trip!!!!

Mike Brigden



## u3a Surrey Study Days

Hi Everyone

Greetings from your Surrey Network Coordinator. As I'm sure you're aware, u3a Surrey runs 1 day learning events, "Study Days" at The Yehudi Menuhin Hall at Stoke D'Abernon, near Leatherhead. I think "Discovery Days" is probably a better name as they are generally very informative and entertaining days at a fabulous venue with wonderful acoustics, led by entertaining and lively specialists.

When you consider that one day of study/learning on a typical university course now costs students £62 (£9,250 annual tuition fee divided by 30 weeks of 5 days) then you will be absolutely amazed to learn that these U3A Study (Discovery) Days only cost £12 and you get good presenters and free tea and coffee!!!

Each day starts at 9.30 am and finishes by 4.30 pm. Please note that it is also possible to "virtually" attend all of these events, but hey, it's not quite the same!

The next three events are as follows:

**Fri Sep 15th** An Utterly Incomplete History of Keyboards & Keyboard Music Presented by Steven Devine.

Fri Oct 20th Quarks, the Universe, and Everything The aim is to introduce some of the basic

constituents of the Universe. No scientific background knowledge is expected. It will include a few songs to sing along to, the occasional joke, and guest appearances by a well-known Bear of Little Brain. Presented by Professor Philip Harris, University of Sussex.

Fri Nov 17th Rembrandt - From Fame to Poverty & Final Acclaim Presented by Colin Wiggins.

For more information or to book any of these events, visit https://u3asites.org.uk/surreyu3anetwork/events

**Need transport?** I will have space in my car for 3 passengers for the September & October days, and for 2 passengers in November. Please contact me alanjohnspeed if you'd like a lift. I do hope some of you will also attend some of these Study Days.



Copyright Ashmolean

# Family History Conference 16th September, Buxton, Derbyshire

The annual u3a Peak District Family History Network Conference is to be held this year on Saturday 16th September at The Palace Hotel, Buxton, Derbyshire. This conference is the 10th that the various u3a Family Groups, in and around the Peak District, have organised.

Tickets cost £30 which includes the talks, refreshment, a 2 course finger buffet lunch and a free goody bag! There is also a free prize draw with top prizes including free 12 month subscriptions to some of the major genealogy sites. We would welcome any members that wish to attend.



# Online Talks and Learning Events

Talks and Learning opportunities on subjects such as: Stay Safe Online/ Climate Change/Hadrian's Wall events/Philosophy and Sport/World Faith/Bletchley Park/Family History and much more....www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events

# **Diary Dates 2023**

#### Live Talks

#### (Held at the United Reform Church, Caterham Valley at 2.30 pm)

#### Monday 25th September Speaker Richard Marks: British Engineering

"British manufacturing is in decline and 'we' don't make anything anymore" are often comments seen in the media, where factory closures also make headline news. In 2022 the belief that British manufacturing is in terminal decline could not be further from the truth. In this talk Ricahrd Marks, industrial historian and former manufacturing system engineer, looks at the condition of manufacturing in Britain today. Is the depiction of Britain's factories as derelict monuments to the past really justified, or is something different occurring? What does Britain actually make in the 21st century? Where are the massive factory buildings of the immediate postwar years and does Britain really have a role to play on the world stage any more as a manufacturing great? You will be surprised at what the real situation is.

#### Monday 30th October Speaker Helen Astrid: Unwrapped Christmas Carols

In this popular seasonal talk, Helen leads you through 300 years of musical history throughout Europe and further afield. Discover the legends and stories behind your favourite Christmas carols as well as discovering new gems. How and why did they begin? Helen invites you to join in a special festive sing-a-long at the end.

## Heritage Open Days 8-17 September 2023

For anyone who doesn't know about this, Heritage Open Days is England's largest community led festival of history and culture, involving thousands of local volunteers and organisations. Every year in September it brings people together to celebrate their heritage, community and history. Stories are told, traditions explored, and histories brought to life. It's your chance to see hidden places and try out new experiences – and it's all FREE. See https://www.heritageopendays.org.uk/visiting for more information

I've done a search for events within 25 miles of Godstone. There are several local churches listed that have special events planned (they may be open regularly anyway) —here's a few that might be of interest:

- The College of St. Barnabas, Blackberry Lane, Lingfield, Surrey, RH7 6NJ
- Gatton Park, Royal Alexandra and Albert School, Reigate, Surrey, RH2 OTW
- Holmesdale Natural History Club Museum, 14 Croydon Road, Reigate, Surrey, RH2 OPG
- Reigate Tunnel, Tunnel Road, Reigate, Surrey, RH2 9AY
- Reigate & Banstead Borough Council, Town Hall, Castlefield Road, Reigate, Surrey, RH2 OSH
- Light Vessel 21, moored at St Andrew's Quay, Royal Pier Road, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 2BD
- The Pepperpot, High Street, Godalming, Surrey, GU7 1AQ
- Quaker Meeting House, The Mint, Mill Lane, Godalming, Surrey, GU7 1HB
- There are also guided town walks, bell-ringing demonstrations, costumed re-enactors, exhibitions.... All sorts. Take a look & have a (few) days out for free! (One for the Buss Pass Adventurers Group?)

With many National Trust properties open for free, if you're not a member, this week's a good time to visit!

Deb Skinner