



## Hi everyone !

This year the summer has been a mixed bag of weather, although we did have a period of hot weather at the beginning of September. The nights are drawing in and Yuletide will soon be upon us. How are you planning to occupy yourselves during the coming months? Why not try something new. There's plenty to choose from.

You are never too old to learn. See Ann Traynor's article below about u3a Summer School. Congratulations are in order for one of our members who has just completed an Open University course and has been awarded a BA(Hons) in Art History and History. Well done Tina Pattinson. See her journey on page 2.

A quick reminder that the Christmas Party (limited ticket only event) will be held on 7th December 2023. The tickets will be allocated on a first come, first serve basis at the November monthly meeting.

*Dave Brennan*

### WRITE ON

I dug deep in a drawer and resurrected a few short stories I had written long ago. Indeed so long that they were typewritten and duplicated with carbon paper – remember those? I was not sure whether to produce these or not when I went on the u3a Summer School Creative Writing course I had signed up for.

I had no idea what to expect from the course but as it turned out it was brilliant! I checked into my "student" digs at Chichester University campus and was seated at my first seminar shortly afterwards. We were a group of eight students with our tutor Jackie Green. None of us were sure what to expect, but all bringing different life experiences. There was a range of age including one inspiring lady of 94. See photo on page 2.

From the outset Jackie was bubbly, inspiring and she dropped us right in at the deep end. Her material was well structured and made great use of skilful prompts to get us writing straightaway. Starting with a single phrase or even one word we were all soon busy producing our masterpieces – short stories or simply scenes drawn from a mixture of our own past experiences and lively imaginations. The group gelled very soon; meaning we were all prepared to read our pieces aloud which meant we could learn from each other as well as from Jackie.

However, it was Jackie's expert guidance which gave us pointers on how to make improvements and perhaps come from a completely different angle with some of our pieces. My favourite piece was centred on a story of a dog I had rescued from Battersea. It was OK, but Jackie suggested writing the piece with the dog's voice – something I had not thought of. Two or three attempts later as I retired to my room during breaks, I brought the story to life with this new version – so much more an example of truly creative writing.

We were all sorry when the course was over and it was time to part company, but Jackie, herself a published author and winner of many prizes, has left us with a wealth of information on how to carry on, the courage to try our luck with competition entries and other paths to getting our works published.

Thanks, Jackie.

*Ann Traynor*

*Ann, will we see one of your stories in print soon?*

### This month's talk

The speaker for the October meeting will be Graham Short, who will be giving a talk entitled

*"Life as a Micro-Artist"*

### A talk about dementia.

**Friday, October 6th, 12 noon  
until 1.30pm, in the Orton Hall  
in Greenwood Park  
Community Centre**

I'm sure we're all aware of people who are either starting a journey along the dementia road, or who are already some way along it. It is enormously helpful for the sufferer and for us, if we have an understanding of how best to interact with them in a helpful way.

Rob Kember, a member of Dementia Friends, came to our u3a to do this talk some years ago and it was very well received, so we are pleased to welcome him back.

Do join us on Friday 6th October if you are interested.


### Calling all members and Blue Badge holders

At our big, Thursday meetings, if the top car park is full, BB holders have to use the spaces in the lower car park. That's quite a walk away from the Community Centre! Can we all look out for people who might appreciate a lift up the drive. We can use the bay opposite the entrance as a drop-off point. Many thanks.

### INTEREST GROUP

#### Refreshment

#### Rota



|          |                       |
|----------|-----------------------|
| Oct. 5th | Needles & Pins        |
| Nov. 2nd | Photography 2         |
| Dec. 7th | Xmas Party (ticketed) |
| Jan. 4th | Play Reading          |
| Feb. 1st | Quiz                  |



### Thought for the day:

For what it's worth it's never too late to be whoever you want to be. There's no time limit, stop whenever you want. You can change or stay the same, there are no rules to this thing. I hope you make the best or worst of it. I hope you see things that startle you. I hope you feel things that you have never felt before. I hope you meet people with a different point of view. I hope you live a life you're proud of.

If you find that you're not, have the courage to start all over again.

*F. Scott Fitzgerald 1896-1940*

### HANGING OUT OVER THE NORTH SEA

My 30 year career with an American oil company included ten years as HR Manager of our Southern Operation. Based out of the office in Great Yarmouth the Hewett Gas Field comprised of four platforms producing and feeding gas by pipeline for processing at the Bacton Plant on the Norfolk coast just south of Cromer.

On an annual basis I would negotiate a pay settlement with the union representatives of the offshore workforce. The operators worked a 7 days on/7 days off shift pattern so when the union representatives requested that I explain the negotiated offer to the workforce it meant visiting each of the four platforms on consecutive Thursdays. For each helicopter flight it meant putting on then taking off the flight suit which was no fun in June temperatures.

The pattern was for me to meet and explain the offer then leave the meeting for the union representatives to get the vote for acceptance/rejection from the group.

On one trip all was well until fog descended so the helicopter back in Great Yarmouth could not fly. The choice I had was stay overnight and hope to fly the next day (Friday) but if the fog persisted I would be on the platform over the weekend. The alternative was to ride back into Great Yarmouth on the supply boat which was in the field. This meant being lowered onto the boat and as it was flat calm that was my choice.

My flight bag went into the middle of the rubber ring, I stepped onto the rim, looped my arms through the ropes, the crane took up the slack and lifted the ring up and out over the North Sea. It then stopped and the crane driver who happened to be the union representative popped his head out of the cab window and shouted "Would you like to negotiate now Tony?" My reply cannot be put in print, but he then lowered me onto the boat. We are still in contact and laugh at the memory.

*Tony Jackson*

### MY JOURNEY TO A DEGREE

Although I attended a very good grammar school and attained A levels, in the late 1960s it seemed that girls were not encouraged very much to consider university – my parents certainly expected me to get a job and the school didn't suggest further studies either. As things turned out, I did obtain a very good position with a West End bank but there was always "an itch to be scratched" regarding what I might have missed out on. Six years ago, whilst working locally part-time and cruising towards retirement, I read a newspaper report that there was a poor uptake of university places in the over-60s and I thought ... why not? I applied to the Open University to read Arts and Humanities on a part-time basis (supposedly 15 hours of study a week, but as essay deadlines approached, very many more!) and obtained a student loan. Study was online although I did attend the occasional tutorial in London and Cambridge until Covid 19 intervened: sessions were then arranged online only, so personal interaction with other students and tutors was unfortunately limited. Subjects covered were wide-ranging and included

Creative writing

Netsuke

Religions, particularly the effects of the Protestant Reformation

Philosophy

Analysing artworks from the Renaissance onwards  
Stalin

Benin bronzes

Cleopatra

Dr Faustus

Colonialism

Creation and maintenance of empires (not always very palatable!)

After six years of study, with varying marks for my essays, I was very surprised in August to be awarded a 2.1 and graduated on 22<sup>nd</sup> September at the Barbican with a BA (Hons) in Art History and History. Age has not been a barrier to university study for me and shouldn't put off anyone from taking the plunge.

*Tina Pattinson*



**IMPORTANT:** Please remember to have with you or wear your CG Membership card and, more importantly, an up to date emergency contact card, preferably kept together in lanyard.

Details of each event can be found in the Newsletter or on our website. Please note the month when tickets are available for trips. Purchase of tickets (cheques only please) can be made at our monthly meetings via Joy Dabson, Event Organiser.

**Tickets:** Chiswell Green u3a members ONLY for the first month when tickets for trips are on sale. Tickets for guests will be allowed in the second month when they are on sale. This is to avoid waiting lists for members when guests have taken up places. Tickets must be paid for on the day they are booked, with cheques made payable to "Chiswell Green u3a". Please write your membership number on the reverse. Cheques are paid into the bank as and when they are received, unless otherwise stated. If paying for more than one Outing by post, please send separate cheques for each event. Obviously, they can go in the same envelope.

If you wish to make a booking for an Outing, you can still do so by contacting the Events Organiser (Joy Dabson) by phone (01923 268018) or email ([trips@chiswellgreenu3a.org.uk](mailto:trips@chiswellgreenu3a.org.uk)) or via our website. Payments should be made within seven days.

**Pickup point:** The coach will be in Tippendell Lane, at the entrance to Greenwood Park. Please be **prompt** – the coach will not wait. A driver's tip is included in the price of the Outing.

If you are unable to go on an Outing, or running late, please contact the Events Organiser by phone, up to 10pm the night before the trip (01923 268018) or by Event Mobile on the day of the trip (07824 671857). Please make a note of this number. If someone is able to take your place, you may be able to have a refund but this cannot be guaranteed. Ideas and suggestions for trips are always welcomed, and can be placed in the Suggestion Box on the signing table.

\*\*\*\***Disclaimer:**\*\*\*\* If you are participating in any Chiswell Green u3a trip or event, please read the Disclaimer below.

*It is the personal responsibility of each member to decide on their own capability to participate in any trips or events organised by the Chiswell Green u3a. Chiswell Green u3a cannot accept any responsibility for your fitness to undertake a trip or participate in a group, event or journey. By committing to any activity you will be declaring that you are fit and able to participate in the said activity.*

### Travel Quote:

They say travel broadens the mind; but you must have the mind.

G K Chesterton (1874-1936)

### Wednesday November 29th 2023 early evening

#### CHRISTMAS LIGHTS TRAIL AT KEW GARDENS

Sold out/Waiting list

Discover glittering tunnels of light, dancing lakeside reflections and trees drenched in jewel like colours. Don't forget to glimpse Father Christmas on the way. The Light Trail is approx 3km long, the route is on pathways. There are no covered areas so wear appropriate clothing and footwear. We have our own designated entry time, and our coach will drop off and pick up at the Elizabeth Gate. Along the route independent street vendors will offer tasty festive delights from hot food and sweet treats to special winter warmer drinks and hot chocolate. Victoria Plaza will be open all evening to buy gifts, treats, toys etc.

**NOTE: ALL PAYMENTS AT KEW ARE CASHLESS/CARD ONLY**



Depart Greenwood Park: 3.30pm

Depart for home: 8.00pm

Cost: £31.00

### Saturday January 13th 2024—THE MILL AT SONNING

Sold out/Waiting list

"**HIGH SOCIETY**" Matinee performance. Cole Porter's classic feel good musical is based on *The Philadelphia Story* and the film starring Bing Crosby, Grace Kelly and Frank Sinatra. Full of songs you will know including "True Love" and "Who wants to be a Millionaire". As usual the price will include a two course meal (several choices, help yourself main, waitress service dessert, coffee), theatre ticket, coach and driver's tip.



**Now open to family and friends**

Depart Greenwood Park: 10.30am

Depart for home: approx 5.00pm

Cost: £84.00

**PARKING:** Could we please remind members not to park in either of the car parks at Greenwood Park if you are going on one of our trips. If parking in local roads, please park with consideration for the local residents, and if possible, car share to help ease the parking problem. Thank you.



## Additional visit to Kew Gardens Lights Trail !!!

Due to the excessive demand for the November 2023 visit to this popular venue, Joy Dabson has been able to negotiate tickets for a second visit on Wednesday 3rd January 2024 early evening. Family and friends will be welcomed. Tickets will be on sale from September's meeting.

The Lights Trail is approx 3km long, the route is on pathways. There are no covered areas, so wear appropriate clothing and footwear. We have our own designated entry time, and our coach will drop off and pick up at the Elizabeth Gate. Along the route independent street vendors will offer tasty festive delights from hot food and sweet treats to special winter warmer drinks and hot chocolate. Victoria Plaza will be open all evening to buy gifts, treats, toys etc.

**NOTE: ALL PAYMENTS AT KEW ARE CASHLESS/CARD ONLY**

**Depart Greenwood Park: 3.30pm**

**Depart for home: 8.00pm**

**Cost: £31.00**

## And where would you like to visit in 2024?

Over the last few months Joy, ably assisted by Tony, have been scanning through various source materials and making some reconnoitre visits to potential places that Chiswell Green members may wish to visit.

At the October and November monthly meetings Joy will be putting up our "ideas boards", so that you may give your views on what we could offer for 2024. We need your feedback, so that you get what you would like. The following are potential trips for 2024

Brick Lane Panto

"Call the Midwife" Tour & Chatham Dockyard

Chiswick House

Christmas music at the Royal Albert Hall

Cottesbrooke Hall

Cruise on Lee and Stort Boat

Golden Oldies at the Teresa Joanne

Jordans Mill

Mary Rose & Portsmouth Dockyard

Peacocks Auctioneers

Romford Greyhound Stadium

Steam Train on Kent & Sussex Railway

The Mill at Sonning

The Romney Marsh Tour

Vineyard Tasting Tour & Amersham Fair  
Organ Museum

Fill in the Trips sheet, and have your say now!

**We need your feedback to help us to help you!**

*... and finally*

Are you aware that one tv channel has, from early September 2023, scheduled Christmas themed films seven days a week until the end of the Christmas period?