

# Keeping In Touch

## Hitchin U3A

[www.u3asites.org.uk/hitchin](http://www.u3asites.org.uk/hitchin)

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February 2024



### *Chairman's Comments from Heidi Ebrahim*

## Chairman's Chat February 2024



The winter chills and rains still linger but the whisper of spring is in the air and the nights are getting shorter. However, we did not allow the dark days to stop us celebrating during the festive season and enjoy ourselves at meetings and especially the Musical Monday in January. I don't know who had more fun, the band – Not Tonight Josephine plus guest musicians - or our members, some of whom displayed some spectacular dancing skills. The bar has now been set fairly high for the next few Musical Mondays: a one-woman show by a star from the West End with songs from the musicals in April, and by popular request a return of the jazz band in July and the Sea Shanty singers in September. Who said last year, nobody would attend any evening meetings?

And the programme for the day trips will be out very soon too. As ever, your committee will be working hard to make this year as enjoyable as the last one.

See you all at the AGM in March, so that you can tell us what else you would like us to try out – with your help and input, of course!

Heidi

# From Winter ....

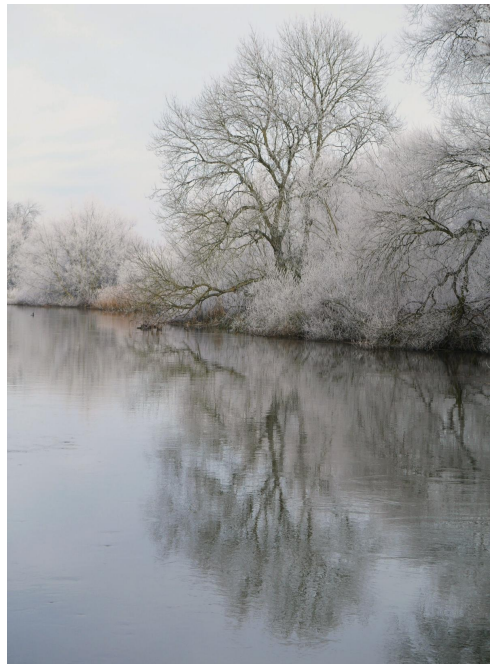


## Winter

When the geese are flying south  
And the sky is grey, my dears,  
Close your eyes and lift your nose;  
Listen with your careful ears.

Feel the winter coming on;  
Hear it in the crackling trees;  
Note the crisping, quivering wind  
Sharply snapping at their leaves.

Excerpt: "Suze Brier Was Afraid of the Dark"  
By Barbara Vance at SuzeBrier.com



*On 22nd January we decided to go to Paxton Pitts nature reserve. It was quite cold and slightly frosty in Baldock but when we got to the reserve we were met with these amazing and mesmerising sights.*

*Saroj*

# ..... To Spring

## ***Lines Written in Early Spring'***

**By William Wordsworth**

I heard a thousand blended notes,  
While in a grove I sate reclined,  
In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts  
Bring sad thoughts to the mind.

To her fair works did Nature link  
The human soul that through me ran;  
And much it grieved my heart to think  
What man has made of man.

Through primrose tufts, in that green bower,  
The periwinkle trailed its wreaths;  
And 'tis my faith that every flower  
Enjoys the air it breathes.

The birds around me hopped and played,  
Their thoughts I cannot measure:—  
But the least motion which they made  
It seemed a thrill of pleasure.

The budding twigs spread out their fan,  
To catch the breezy air;  
And I must think, do all I can,  
That there was pleasure there.

If this belief from heaven be sent,  
If such be Nature's holy plan,  
Have I not reason to lament  
What man has made of man?



### **Spring Cleaning Tip 1**

Are you fed up with steamed up mirrors after showering? This will solve your problem and your mirror will remain free of steam for up to 8 weeks.

Take a dry cloth and put on plenty of hand wash liquid or use a slightly damp bar of soap. Rub this all over a completely dry mirror then polish off with another clean dry cloth until the mirror is clear. No more steamed mirror.



### **Spring Cleaning Tip 2**

To give your microwave an easy Spring clean, put some slices of lemon (or lemon juice) in a large dish of water. Turn the microwave on to full power for a minute and a half (or longer if it's really grimy!). Wipe off all the steam from the insides, and it should be sparkling!

# Glasses

PINT POT  
SINGLE SHOT  
IRISH COFFEE  
SOMETHING HOT  
HIGHBALL  
LOWBALL  
MARGARITA  
THAT'S NOT ALL  
COLLINS GLASS  
SNIFTER GLASS  
NICK AND NORA  
NEED TO ORDER  
COPA GLASS  
COUPE GLASS  
JULEP CUP  
FILL IT UP  
GLASS OF SHANDY  
POCO GRANDE  
BALLOON AND BRANDY  
COMES IN HANDY  
NOSING GLASS  
SLING GLASS  
TRY A GOBLET  
NOT A DROPLET  
TRY A GRAPPA  
CHALICE  
OR SHOOT  
WET YOUR WHISTLE ON A FLUTE  
GLASSES  
GLASSES  
FOR THE MASSES  
NOW WHERE DID I PUT MY DAMN  
GLASSES

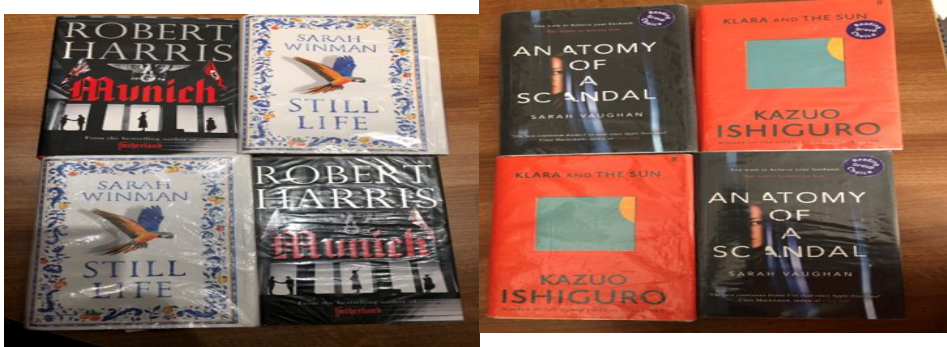


*From the Writing Group*



# Book Group 1

Gosh how can a few books produce so many views? In the last year Book group 1 has read a wide choice of titles, mainly chosen from the “Good Read” list provided for reading groups from Hertfordshire Libraries. We have read novels based on actual events (*A Place of greater safety* by Hilary Mantel; *Munich* by Robert Harris *Still Life* by Sarah Winman), through to a projection of the future (*Klara and the Sun* by Kazuo Ishiguro), but I think it’s fair to say that a couple of classics (*The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* by Anne Bronte and *Travels with my Aunt* by Graham Greene) that caused the greatest dissent.



We meet on the first Monday of the month to discuss our group choices and from March we are relocating to the library for our meetings. If you’d like to start another group I can help. I know there are people on a waiting list longing to join a group to discuss books.

*Anne R. for Book Group 1*

## Photography Group

*The Photo Group went to Hitchin museum to see the Diane Arbus photos.*



*There was lots of discussion, especially over coffee and cake!*

# A Visit to Kew Gardens

I have just had a lovely visit to Kew Gardens. After re-checking travel arrangements and the three most feared words appeared on the screen - rail replacement service....I almost changed my mind, but I am glad I didn't.

At Kew at the moment there is the orchid festival, in the Princess Diana House, bit of a queue to get in and your bags are checked for plant stealing equipment. The specimens are artfully displayed on totem poles and arches covered with the plants of every shape and hue. Land growing orchids are dotted through the various zones depending on their different requirements.

After being dazzled by all this horticulture I looked at the young artist of the year pictures. These are wonderful depictions of plants and drawn or painted with such skill, using various mediums. Then on to admire the photographs of the year - a mixed selection of shots from candid, albeit carefully staged, pictures to the digitally altered for a particular effect. All very clever and worthy of their place in the competition. It's worth a visit if you like orchids, but a word of warning - there are quite a few very tempting specimens you can purchase in the shop!!

Rosemary S



## Subscriptions

*There are still a few people who haven't yet paid their 2024 subscriptions of £20.*

*Please let Margaret know if you've any queries, or if you don't wish to renew.*

*We'll need to remove membership from anyone who hasn't renewed in the next few weeks.*

Thank you



## Walking Group

Thank you to everybody that came to the Feb 14th walk. We were very lucky to get it completed in between the rain showers.

The next walk led by Elizabeth Keech will be starting from the Motte and Bailey pub in Pirton. Postcode SG5 3QD. It's on the green as you enter the village from Hitchin.

We will be starting the walk at 10:30am covering a distance off 3.5 to 4 miles with lunch for those who would like to stay.

Please contact me if you'd like to join us.



# Please be aware of this scam

## Please be aware of this scam

Fraudsters are calling people claiming to be from a police station. They state that a particular branch of bank (in the latest example, NatWest in Hitchin) is giving out counterfeit currency.

They claim to be carrying out an investigation into that particular bank branch and that they want your help. They ask you to withdraw a sum of money from the branch so you can pass it over to them for the investigation. They also warn you that the staff in the bank will ask you particular questions and advise you on how to answer them.

At some point, the fraudster suggests that you can phone them back at the police station to check that this call is genuine. When you call back, you get straight through to the person you were just speaking to because they have held the line open.

### Tips to avoid being a victim of this kind of scam

- Police will NEVER ask anyone to take part in an investigation in this way
- If you have received an unsolicited call from ANYONE and are unsure about it, hang up and ring a friend. If the call goes straight back to the person you were just speaking to, they have held the line open and are absolutely trying to defraud you.



## AGM 25th March 2024

*Notice of 37<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of Hitchin U3A on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2024.*

As a current member of Hitchin U3A, you are invited to attend the 2024 AGM which will be held in person at Christchurch and also online via Zoom if you prefer to join us from home. It will be held on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> March at 2.00pm.

Please make a special effort to join us either at Christchurch or online via Zoom as we require a quorum of 20% of the membership for the AGM to proceed.

Members joining us via Zoom will be counted towards the quorum, and will have equal voting rights. At the AGM you are entitled to -

- Nominate another member (with his or her consent) for election to the committee.
- Second a member who has been nominated.
- Cast one vote for or against any proposals.

Afterwards there will be a short talk by Dennis Adler on **Lands End to John O'Groats**

# MY SOUL IS IN A HURRY

I counted my years and discovered that I now have less time left to live than I had lived until now.

I feel like the kid who won a pack of candy; He ate the first few with pleasure, but when he realised there were few left, he began to savour them deeply.

I don't have time for endless meetings where we discuss bylaws, rules, procedures and internal regulations, knowing that nothing will happen.

I no longer have time to put up with absurd people who, despite their chronological age, have not grown up.

My time is short to discuss titles. I want the essential, my soul is in a hurry...

Without many sweets in the package...

I want to live next to human people, very human. Who know how to laugh at their mistakes, who are not vain of their triumphs. People who don't consider themselves elected before their time, people who don't try to escape their responsibilities. I am looking for people who defend human dignity, people who only want to walk on the side of truth and honesty.

The essential is what makes life worth living.

\*I want to surround myself with people who know how to touch people's hearts\*...

People who have learned from the hard knocks of life to grow up with soft touches in their soul

Yes..., I am in a hurry..., I am in a hurry to live with the intensity that only maturity can give.

I intend not to waste any of the candy I have left... I am sure they will be more exquisite than the ones I have eaten so far.

My goal is to arrive at the end satisfied and at peace with my loved ones and with my conscience.

We have two lives and the second one starts when you realize that you have only one.....

***Carol M sent this poem for us to enjoy***

