

NEWSLETTER JANUARY 2024



Your new committee is now in place
There is only one with a different face
Yvonne, replaced Peter to whom we gave thanks
And a lovely new person has joined the ranks



For those that don't know them, first there is Jerry
Deals with your money and is always so merry
Then comes Vivien and her great Events troupe
To have Stephen her husband is really a scoop



The other Stephen organises those who give talks
And Oliver, clever webmaster, who also does walks
Marion our secretary, always keeps us in line
So efficient and giving so much of her time



Sue who keeps membership under review
To check where you live is part of her due
Anthea also has our money in mind
When your payments for outings might just get behind



Steph is a whizz at getting groups off the ground
It is a great pleasure to have her around
So therefore, at last it has to be me
Trying to make it what you want it to be



It is not always easy and we do get some moans
And despite our best efforts some members have groans
But I do hope on balance we come out on top
You have 11 more months now to give us the chop



We all do our best and that's all we can do
We try to be there for you, you and you
So please no complaints, just enjoy and contrive
To continue to make our own U3A thrive

IT IS UP TO YOU

This year's resolution
be kind = write something for the newsletter = don't make me struggle.
PLEASE
and enormous thanks to all those who pre-empted and filled in this months.

GROUP NEWS AND VIEWS



Love Jigsaws – join Diane Myers and the group to do them together and/or to use as a library.

The puzzle exchange group started in November, I'm very happy to say there has been a great interest.

This is our first puzzle project we did together for Xmas, thank you to all those that helped and hope to see you all in the New Year. **Diane**



Vegetarian cooking

A big thank you to Cathy Pole for making Xmas lunch for the vegetarian cookery group. We are a group of 8 that meet once a month for many years now, I would like to say thank you to my wonderful group for being so supportive and looking forward to 2024 and all our lovely new recipes. **Diane**



The **Longer walking group** is still working its way around the Hertfordshire way.

November's walk was cancelled because of a "named" storm but a few hardy stalwarts did a circular route taking in the Shenley tea rooms!! In December we did a circular walk taking in the part of the way between Bricket Wood and Radlett, and trying but not succeeding to avoid the mud!! We finished up with a seasonal treat of a meal at the Round Bush!! **Fiona**

Do you play guitar? Did you once play guitar and it is still lying around somewhere or in a cupboard? Do you like listening to, or playing along with, the music of:-Rod Stewart, Buddy Holly, Everly Brothers, Bob Dylan, Andrew Lloyd Webber, Beatles, Abba, Simon & Garfunkel, The Animals, The Beach Boys, The Seekers etc? If you answer YES to any of these questions, the u3a 'One Accord', Guitar Group could be for you. So, if you've got a guitar, whether you just know some basic chords or are a seasoned strummer, come and join us. We meet once a month. **Kay Bagon**



Love to Dance is on hold for the moment as so few participated. Hopefully Norma will try again in the spring.

Keep Fit with Pam Rose is also going to retry in the spring.

Canasta group is closing as there were not enough participants to pay for the hall. Please contact Ruth or Marion if you are interested and it may also restart



The Looking@ Art group had their last visit for this 2023. They went to the British Museum to see the Elgin Marbles. Their guide was excellent telling the story and history of how the Marbles arrived in England. A very enjoyable and interesting time was had by all. **Melvyn**

Purcell School Concert- December 7th

We had the most delightful afternoon at the Purcell School of music.

We have had a concert there for many years, and this year was just perfect joy! We had a mixture of classical and modern music in a well-mixed variety of the programme., including a lovely sing-along of a carol.....I'm sure every person in the audience will be booking for next year, as soon as I open the booking page !

The students are outstanding, and deserve many accolades, their talents are incredible and everyone in the audience, who paid a meagre £10 most certainly got their money's worth! I would say this was a wonderful afternoon, and I think

everyone who was there would agree with me.

Carole Constad, Purcell concert organiser. (**Local History Group**). See pictures at end of newsletter



The Evening Book Club has continued to meet steadily throughout the year. We've read a variety of genres and rarely do we agree on which books we like / don't like. This is the way it should be! How boring it would be if we all had the same taste in literature. We are a group of 10 (and have to stay small as we meet in each other's houses). This means that we often have 10 differing opinions - not only about the current book but about life in general. You see, once we've finishing discussing the book in question we invariably move on to such topics as- what did you watch on TV last night, who's been to the theatre recently, can you believe what Putin has done now!. Who wants some lemon cake..... if you'd like to join us, let me know and I'll happily add you to our waiting list. **Yvonne Brown**



Beginners Crochet is no more. The class have completed a blanket which will be donated to Keech Children's Hospice. Now we all are experienced crocheters, next term we will be beginning a new project and a new form of crochet - Tunisian or sometimes called Afghan crochet. This is using a long crochet hook with all stitches on the needle, rather like knitting with one needle. I will not be inviting any new participants to this group, I along with the class will be learning this technique too. **Carole Yude**



Fringe Theatre

Our newish group has been running for about six months now and we are beginning to find our feet. The general idea is to run it rather like a book group and for as many members as possible to see the same play in any given month, in order to engender a good discussion and even debate about what we've seen. The aim is to see a variety of productions - perhaps some new and experimental or revivals at hopefully lower prices than many mainstream shows. Of course, it's entirely up to each member of the group as to what they see. Our theatre-loving members also talk about all the other productions they've seen and offer suggestions, opinions and tips.

We are meeting in members' homes in order to keep things simple and are so grateful to all the hosts who have offered their homes so far – and also for the tea and biscuits/cakes. We meet from 2 pm – 4 pm monthly and after about an hour of discussion we stop for a chat and social part of our get together. We are having fun together in true u3a style. After each meeting a report is sent to all participants as an aide memoir. Below please see an extract of one such report to give you a flavour.

All of the 16 people present had seen The Interview at The Park Theatre, based on the Martin Bashir interview with Princess Diana and the subsequent revelations. This resulted in a very lively and lengthy discussion about the play, the writing, the staging, acting and even the lighting. Two members' email critiques of the play were read out as they were unable to attend. A number of people felt the second half was better than the first and comments were varied: "well done and interesting", "lacked pace", "flat", "disappointing", "lacked information about the bank statements", the actress playing Diana was both "liked" and "disliked", "the lighting was poor in the first half", "boring" (one person amusingly even fell asleep during the first half), "should have been better clarification of the facts". One of our members unfortunately had to suffer two understudies who were reading from the script when she attended. So a rather mixed bag but it certainly generated an interesting conversation – just what we hope for at our meetings.

Our suggested choice for January 2024 is Rehab: The Musical at Neon194 (12/1/24 – 17/2/24): a newly refurbished venue at 194 Piccadilly formerly the home of BAFTA - A wildly-funny musical about a very serious issue, Rehab: the Musical deals with the subject of mental health, fame and addiction, with warmth, compassion, humour and heart. It's 1999 and jaded 26- year-old pop star, Kid Pop, finds himself in court, after being caught red handed in a drug fuelled tabloid sting. An understanding judge gives Kid the choice between jail time or a rehabilitation centre for six weeks. It's a no-brainer for Ki: Rehab will be a holiday. But how could he have got it so wrong?

Perhaps a February/March group choice: Cable Street at Southwark Playhouse Borough (16/2/24 – 16/3/24) - World Premiere of a new British musical featuring a contemporary score about disparate communities, whose lives are changed forever by the events of 4th October 1936, when half a million Jews, Irish workers and communists united to blockade the East End against a march by Oswald Mosley's British Union of Fascists.

David Stetson & Sandy Cohen



Play reading group

The group had its first monthly meeting in March 2023, and since then we have read / performed such plays as "An Inspector Calls", "The Importance of Being Ernest", "Hobsons Choice" and in December we did "A Christmas Carol" - *bah humbug!* Members are allocated parts and take on different roles. The undemanding, friendly and relaxed sessions, without the need to remember lines, wear greaspaint or endure the fear of stage-fright results in enthusiastic and positive conclusions, with all looking forward to the next meeting



The group is limited in size to 10 members in order that everyone gets an opportunity to take part, as well as limitations of room space. We are now full with a waiting list, but if anyone is interested in joining the waiting (aka understudy) list, please contact me by clicking on the carrier pigeon icon link on the group page of the website. **Jerry Packman**

Radlett u3a Philosophy Discussion Group.

Due to the cancellation of our December meeting -we will cover the 10 ways to be a Philosopher at our next meeting which will be on Thursday 18th of January at 2.00pm. I wish you and your families the very best for the holiday season, and look forward to seeing you in the new year. **Christopher Langdon.**



Religions of the World

In our festive gathering on Monday, December 18th, over thirty enthusiastic members delved into the rich traditions of the Jewish festival of Chanukah. The party room was adorned with vibrant blue and white decorations reminiscent of the Israeli flag, Chanukah balloons, and themed tableware, creating a joyous ambiance.

Despite a small technical hiccup with the video presentation, Jerry Packman's expertise came to the rescue, ensuring an insightful exploration of the origins and customs of Chanukah. We discovered the significance of artifacts like the Chanukiah candlesticks, and Dreidels, the latter serving as components in a lively Chanukah game.

Following the enlightening session, we indulged in a delightful Chanukah feast featuring classic treats like potato latkes, doughnuts, pastries, and biscuits—all accompanied by steaming cups of tea and coffee. The lively chatter and laughter, combined with a backdrop of Chanukah music, created an atmosphere of merriment.

Looking ahead, our next meeting on Monday, January 15th, 2024, at 11:00 am promises another enriching experience as we visit the Greek Orthodox Church in Hatfield. Stay tuned for more details, and if you're interested in joining our vibrant group, reach out to me at jacquiehyams@gmail.com.

As we bid farewell to 2023, I extend warm wishes to everyone for a happy and healthy 2024. May the new year bring joy, discovery, and meaningful connections to each of you. **Jacquie**

Walking 4-5 miles

Mon 8th Jan 2024 at 10:00, Walk Leader: Allan Cole. 10:05 601 bus from Radlett outside Gail's to St Albans, walk from Prospect Road along a disused railway line to Hatfield, 602 back to Radlett. A 'dry' walk (unless it's raining)

Mon 12th Feb 2024 at 10:00, Walk Leader: Brian Weller. Circular walk from Shenley Park Car Park round area

Mon 11th Mar 2024 at 10:00, Walk Leader: Peter Weber. Walk round Rickmansworth Aquadrome from Car Park at Frogmoor Lane (off Harefield Road) Rickmansworth WD3 1NB

Mon 8th Apr 2024 at 10:00, Walk Leader: Edward Cross. Meet at 10:10 at Radlett Station platform 2 for a circular walk from St Albans City Station.

Mon 6th May 2024 at 10:00, Walk Leader: TBA. Circular Walk from Battlers Green Farm via Letchmore Heath

These walks are for reasonably fast and fit walkers only. Please do not come if you are unwell and/or walk slowly. **Oliver**

Music Appreciation Group

The Music Appreciation Group meets on Monday 22 January 2.30 at St. John's Church, Gills Hill Lane, Radlett.

David Bagon will consider music on the subject of Kings and Queens.

David writes: What do Sheba, Mary, Anna, Phillip, Solomon, Francis and Macbeth have in common? They were all Queens and Kings about which composers wrote incidental music, grand marches and of course operas. The composers of the music for this presentation will include, Gounod, Tchaikovsky, Adam, Verdi, Delibes, Donizetti and Handel.

We are returning to the newly-rebuilt St. John's Church with effect from this meeting. Please do not go to Tabard Rugby Club; there will not be a meeting there! There is very limited parking at the church; please do not park there unless you really have to for reasons of disability. We suggest parking at Phillimore Recreation Ground, accessible from the top corner of Gills Hill. A short walk alongside the tennis courts and bowling club brings you to Gills Hill Lane opposite the new church.



Please bring your u3a membership card and £4.00 to cover the (increased) cost of hall-hire and delicious refreshments. **Edward Cross** Edx2017@outlook.com / 07961 102197

Superb talk on Tom Lehrer by Edward last month

The Recipe Exchange Group has had a wonderful first year. When we first started, I never thought I would make such lovely new friends and wasn't sure there would be enough people who would be interested in sharing their recipes. Well, ten months later there are 12 of us, 8 regulars and others who join us if we have room. We all



have a portfolio of new recipes that we know will work as they've already been tested.

We look forward to many more get together and on behalf of everyone in our group we wish everyone at Radlett U3A happy holidays and a healthy 2024. **Stephanie Moore**





Our Book Group had a wonderful celebratory lunch at Per Tutti Radlett.

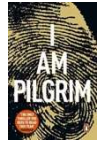
The food, company and decor were delightful.

Quite a few of us had managed to complete our latest book *The Good Pilot* Peter Woodhouse by Alexander McCall Smith.

It was agreed that it was a lovely book and an easy read despite being set in World War Two and we highly recommend it.

This month we have included a very interesting and poignant article from one of our founding members Gill Ayling as follows.....

At one of our recent Book Club meetings, we were as usual recommending books to each other. The novel *I Am Pilgrim* by Terry Hayes was mentioned and I immediately confirmed it was a good read and unusually for me seemed to remember quite a lot of detail of the plot. When my excellent recall was questioned, I remembered why I had such a vivid memory of the novel. I had read it in Cuba when on holiday with my daughter in September 2017.....



So, what happened in September 2017 in Cuba? Hurricane Irma happened - the worst hurricane - category 5 - to hit the country since about 1932 - and we were there! I am not sure it is a trip either of us will ever forget. Partly because of the hurricane and the awful devastation it wreaked upon such a beautiful place but also because we were confined to our hotel room for over 48 hours having food parcels left at our bedroom door.

For over 24 of those hours, we read books, (hence my memory of the plot!) played silly games and even set up exercise routines to music (more my daughter than me if I am honest!) to pass the time.

As day two came to a close we were told by the staff that there would be no more food parcels as it was too dangerous for them to deliver anymore and we were advised to move into the bathroom. As it had no windows it was the safest place to be. We then spent the next 12 hours there, eventually ending up in the bath itself as the floor was covered in water. I was still reading *I Am Pilgrim* (it really is an engrossing read!) I had also at that point played the age card and made quite sure that my daughter had the tap end!

By midnight we had no power and no running water, so no flushing toilet, no light, no air con, no ceiling fan, no Wi-Fi



and certainly no way of being in contact with the outside world. It was very, very warm and very, very dark - no more reading was possible so we had nothing to do but talk - I think we both learned a lot about each other that night!

The storm finally subsided in the early hours of the next morning and as it got light, we could see the utter devastation the hurricane had caused to the hotel and the surrounding area. The hotel staff immediately set about trying to do what they could to tidy up and we all mucked in, but they said it would probably be the best part of a year before the hotel was up and running again. In a country that relies so heavily on tourism, a sobering thought indeed. When our tour rep arrived a few hours later she told us that the front door of her house had been totally blown away. Never mind she said, all my family are safe and nobody died. A lesson maybe to us all to make the most of what we have.

It was quite an adventure - probably worse for those at home who had no idea what was happening and whether we were safe or not. It could have been worse - my son was also due to come with us on the trip but had to cancel last minute due to starting a new job - that bath would have been very, very crowded!! **Gill**

Thank you Gill for sharing what must have been such a terrifying experience.

Our next meeting is on Thursday 4th January 2024

We wish all of our U3A members a Happy Healthy and Peaceful New Year for 2024. With very best Wishes. **Sharon**

Remarkable Women



At our last meeting in December, we welcomed David Bagon back to talk about the life of Alice Mary Smith (19 May 1839 – 4 December 1884) who was an English composer, who wrote a large collection of musical works and was elected **Female** Professional Associate of the Royal Philharmonic Society and an honorary member of the Royal Academy of Music. A significant achievement for a **woman** at that time. Our next meeting will take place on Monday January 8th at 3.15 pm at my house as usual when we will be exploring the life and many achievements of Joan Bakewell, journalist, television presenter, [Labour Party peer](#), president of [Birkbeck, University of London](#), and also an author and playwright. More details

nearer the time.

Wishing all our members a Happy and Healthy New Year. **Carmel Byers**

Duplicate Bridge

We will play twice this month on the 11th and 25th January. If you would like to play and are not on my mailing list please let me know. As we play online there are no limits on numbers. **Gary Harding**



Film & TV Group

We will be showing 'Love Story' on the 4th January to mark the passing of Ryan O'Neal in December. The film won the Oscar for Best Soundtrack and received several other Oscar nominations, including ones for Ryan O'Neal and Ali McGraw. We show the film in someone's home so are limited in numbers with members of the group having priority, but if you would like to be on the waiting list please let me know. **Gary Harding**

Opera Group

The Opera group will meet online on Friday 19th. I don't know yet what opera I will show this month but if you would like to have the details please let me know. As we are online there is no limit on numbers. Regards, **Gary**

Heart of Herts Local History Group

We have had what I and I hope all members consider to have been another very successful year. I tried and will continue to try to vary the programme with a mixture of talks interspersed with a couple of outings to places of local interest in between. Although we are not an outings group they do seem to be very popular with my members and often have a waiting list. It is hard to select the highlights of 2023 as many of our topics were especially popular. However if I had to choose 2, I would say the most unusual and very well presented talk by Tom Dryer-Beers about Spielplatz - the Naturist resort in Bricket Wood was a "stand out" topic and certainly provoked much discussion both in the lead up and afterwards!. The talk on the Radlett Murder by Ian St John attracted a record attendance, with Ian having presented a highly interesting and well-constructed talk. Outings wise we had a really enjoyable and sociable trip to Tewinbury Farm with tour, talk and sumptuous tea (always a must on our outings!) And we rounded off the year with our annual outing to the Purcell School of Music for yet another festive concert by their wonderfully talented students - where a good time was had by all.

At the end of our November meeting we said farewell to our premises at Tabard which was our successful (albeit often rather draughty) meeting place for the last 2 or 3 years and in January we finally return to the hall in St Johns Church, Gills Hill Lane, which has been tastefully completely rebuilt with full Audio Visual facilities which will make everything so much easier. Our January meeting takes place on **THURSDAY 11TH JANUARY AT 2.30PM** when Laurie Elvin will speak about "The Bronze Age Hoard" which has been excavated in Watford. Laurie is a well recommended speaker. I



am so fortunate in having a supportive helpful team behind me and we all look forward to welcoming you to another successful and friendly year of varied meetings and outings, some of which have already been booked. If you would like to be added to my mailing list or have any suggestions for future topics, please email me via the Carrier Pigeon on the main website page or put your name down on the sign-up sheet at the next Main meeting at the Metropolitan Club in January. I take this opportunity of wishing everyone a Happy, and most importantly, Healthy New Year and send special best wishes to any of my members who are going through health or other difficulties at the present time. **Diana**

EVENTS AND OUTINGS

PLEASE NOTE:

It is important when booking an outing to please first check availability with the events organizer.

You will not have a confirmed place on our lists until your payment has been received.

We do not automatically offer refunds for any cancellations by our members . It is up to you to resell your tickets to another u3a member or, if we have a waiting list and are able to sell your ticket to someone on the that list, we will then refund you after receiving the new payment. Please note that if we do have a waiting list this is not a guarantee that we can resell the ticket as member's plans do change nearer the date.

When paying for outings and events please only pay by credit card (via the website) or by cheque. No cash please.

We cannot accept payments direct to the Radlett & District u3a bank account.

If you need assistance paying by credit card, to avoid long queues at the monthly meeting, please call Anthea on 01923 85 2274.

If you are paying for two members by credit card please show both names on the payments form.



AT MUSEUM OF LONDON – DOCKLANDS
MONDAY 4TH MARCH
LEAVE RADLETT 11am £25

WAITING LIST

STEP INSIDE A TRADITIONAL TAILOR'S WORKSHOP IN THE EAST END AND IMMERSE YOURSELF IN THE GLITZ AND GLAMOUR OF A CARNABY STREET BOUTIQUE AT THE HEIGHT OF THE SWINGING SIXTIES – WHEN LONDON WAS THE WORLD'S FASHION CAPITAL.

FOR THE FIRST TIME, THIS EXHIBITION WILL UNCOVER THE MAJOR CONTRIBUTION OF IMMIGRANT DESIGNERS IN MAKING LONDON AN ICONIC FASHION CITY. DISCOVER THE STORIES BEHIND THE FASHION MAKERS WHO BECAME LEADERS IN THEIR INDUSTRIES, FOUNDED RETAIL CHAINS STILL ON THE HIGH STREET TODAY, AND DRESSED THE RICH AND FAMOUS – INCLUDING DAVID BOWIE, PRINCESS DIANA AND MICK JAGGER.

FASHION CITY BRINGS TOGETHER PLACES AND SPACES IN LONDON WITH FASHION AND TEXTILES, ORAL HISTORIES, OBJECTS AND PHOTOGRAPHY TO WEAVE THIS FASCINATING HISTORY, WHERE EVERY STITCH TELLS A TRULY UNIQUE STORY.

Contact: Vivien Summers. events@radlettu3a.org.uk 01923 856728



BEHIND THE SCENES TOUR OF THE ROYAL OPERA HOUSE
On MONDAY 5th FEBRUARY 2024
DEPART RADLETT 9.15am £33

Join one of their expert guides and gain unique insight into the many secrets and spaces of the Royal Opera House. Take a look behind-the-scenes at rehearsal spaces, costume and props workshops and auditorium. Delve deep into the history, learning about how this came to be the third theatre on the site and witness first-hand the inner workings of one of the world's most renowned theatres. This 75-minute tour provides a special backstage pass for any opera or ballet lover to get up close to what happens behind the velvet curtain.

The Royal Opera House is a large building with long corridors and many stairs. You are required to walk distances and stand for the duration of the tour. Where possible, they can facilitate stops in the tour where you can sit.

Contact: Sandra Clark. sandrau3a@hotmail.com 07770 467381



THE CINEMA MUSEUM
WEDNESDAY 13TH MARCH 2024
DEPART RADLETT 9.30am £23

WAITING LIST

The Cinema Museum is located in Kennington, London. Its collection was founded in 1986 by Ronald Grant and Martin Humphries, from their own private collection of cinema history and memorabilia. Its current building was once part of the workhouse where Charlie Chaplin lived as a child.

Tours last for approximately two hours, including a screening of about thirty minutes of short films.

Contact: Joan Altman joanaltmanu3a@outlook.com 01923 404920



JOIN US FOR AN EXCITING OUTING TO BLETCHLEY PARK

On TUESDAY 26th MARCH 2024
DEPART RADLETT 10am £37



Explore, experience and enjoy the once top-secret world of iconic Codebreaking Huts and Blocks set within an atmospheric Victorian estate.

Bletchley Park is a place of exceptional historical importance. It remains highly relevant to our lives today and for the future. It is the home of British codebreaking and a birthplace of modern information technology. It played a major role in World War Two, producing secret intelligence which had a direct and profound influence on the outcome of the conflict.

Contact: Stephen Summers u3asummers@gmail.com 01923 856728

NEW NEW NEW



**ELLEN KENT AND THE UKRAINIAN OPERA & BALLET
THEATRE PRODUCTION OF PUCCINI'S
*MADAME BUTTERFLY***

**AT AYLESBURY WATERSIDE THEATRE
ON SUNDAY 28th APRIL 2024
DEPART RADLETT 5.30pm £54**

One of the world's most popular operas, Puccini's Madama Butterfly tells the heart-breaking story of the beautiful young Japanese girl who falls in love with an American naval lieutenant – with dramatic results.

Highlights include the melodic Humming Chorus, the moving aria One Fine Day and the unforgettable Love Duet.

Sung in Italian with English subtitles

Contact: Sandra Clark sandrau3a@hotmail.com 07770 467381



**LIVING CRAFTS FAIR – HATFIELD HOUSE
CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF CREATIVITY**

FRIDAY 10th MAY 2024 Leave Radlett 10am £22

Come and enjoy the 50th anniversary year of this creative event offering you an inspirational shopping and crafting experience, workshops and entertainment, a great day out.

Living Crafts showcases the talents of acclaimed designer-makers from across the UK and celebrates contemporary British craft of an exceptional standard.

The Food and drink pavilion is packed with flavoursome foods from chocolates and cheese to delicious drinks. Tantalize your taste buds!

Admission includes entry to the famous West Gardens

Contact: Vivien Summers events@radlettu3a.org.uk 01923 856728

From our Film and TV critics



We have watched two good Australian series this month. The first one is a 6part series called The Newsreader (BBC2) about two anchors on a television news programme called News at Six. It is season 2, and if you haven't seen season 1 you can easily catch it up. It's well worth it and is a great watch, with good acting and it also ends well.

The second one is called Scrublands and is in 4 episodes on BBC4 about a charismatic, young priest who shoots and kills five parishioners and then himself, in a small town. A reporter from the big city arrives to investigate how the people in this town have survived the trauma and instead unravels the cause and background of the shooting, and it is again well acted and very good.



The One Note Man is a short film that has been nominated for an Oscar, starring Jason Watkins (a great actor who happens to be the son-in-law of a close friend of ours!) It is a very sweet non-talking film about a man who falls for a violin player in an orchestra he plays in. It's only about 20 minutes long and is worth seeing.

It is available on YouTube which we believe most of us can now view on our TV's

The Couple Next Door is a six-part series on Channel 4 starring Eleanor Tomlinson. It was very interesting about a couple who want to start a family and move to an attractive neighbourhood. They get on really well with one couple and the story is quite intriguing for the first few episodes. However, it became quite convoluted and the last one - which we had to finish and find out what happens - was quite silly. Shame as it showed a lot of promise. Any opinions on this?



The third series of Slow Horses on Apple is really good. Gary Oldman is a dishevelled and curmudgeonly head of a group of agents, all of whom have failed in their spying career in some way. It also stars Kristin Scott Thomas and Sophie Okonedo. There is a great (although quite complicated!) plot with plenty of action, and the dialogue is very clever and amusing, with great acting. We are enjoying this series very much.



Whale is a four-part documentary presented by Steve Backshall and is beautifully filmed and very interesting. He free dives and scuba dives with whales to observe them and the programmes examine the lives and behaviours of many different species of whales. It's amazing how they are now able to hear the whales "talking" to each other and hope to soon understand their language. This is on Sky Nature.

The fifth series of Fargo on Prime is supposed to be based on a true story in 2019. It's just as quirky and far-fetched as the usual unconnected stories in this series and is very well acted as always. We find it very entertaining and this time it stars John Hamm and Juno Temple. We'll comment further when we've seen the final episodes.....



Finally, we saw the film Maestro about Leonard Bernstein and starring Carey Mulligan as his wife and Bradley Cooper, (who also produced and directed it), as the great conductor and composer. It was very well done, with amazing acting performances from the two main stars. It showed his complicated life from the early days onwards and what an extremely talented man he was, but his genius came at a cost at times. (Over the closing credits they showed the real Bernstein and you could see how exactly Bradley Cooper had portrayed him!). A good film. Released on Netflix.

Thank you to a few of you for your recommendations for other programmes, which we haven't got around to watching yet. We'll try to see and critique them for next month's Newsletter.

We wish you all a merry Xmas and a happy and healthy New Year. **Terri & Brian**

Spa retreat for anyone ??????



Finally, after years of wanting to go to an Ayurveda spa retreat in India it was booked. It has been a long time since I have flown economy long-haul but the flight was expensive and BA using Avios did not fly to Kochi. But there I was on a Zoom meeting of one of the u3a groups when a message popped up to upgrade to business class for a fraction of the price, so I took it.

After a two-hour delay, we finally took off. The Air India hostesses were charming, the plane needed upgrading and there we were on a packed flight. We got through immigration and e-visa in no time, got our luggage and were met by a driver from the retreat and off we set for two-hour transfer by car and boat as we were staying on an island. We went through many villages and towns with our driver forever honking which I do remember from a trip to India many years ago, only this time there were no cows in the road. We arrived and were greeted with herbal water and shown to our rooms.

I had a consultation with the doctor, had dinner, and now exhausted, took to lying on the bed.



The programme is yoga twice a day at 6:30 AM to 5 PM for an hour but only if you want to.

First treatment was an all over oil body and hair massage given by two girls working simultaneously.

They give you a paper sumo type cover-up for your modesty and you lie on a wooden table - not a lovely soft thick massage table.



Finished off with an all over body wash, some paste rubbed all over - they don't use soap and jugs of warm water thrown over you!!! My hair was washed and tied up in a head wrap. No inhibitions. Every day you get given different medicine and pills to take following on from the consultation.

Another treatment with a short neck rub and then brown paste rubbed on my back and lay down and wait for an hour after which they come and wash it off.

Then it was muslin bags filled with some kind of heated medicine and pummelled by two girls for 45 minutes.

Next were cotton pads soaked in warm oil and put on my shoulders and lower back for pain.

OMG Today was purgation day!!

I didn't know what it was. Do like me and look it up in Google - Purgation in Ayurveda.



After that I only wanted a simple treatment this afternoon so I had a foot massage lying on my bed in the room.

It was a rice massage, brown rice wrapped up in a type of muslin dipped in warm milk squeezed out to make the milk-chocolate-looking gunge which was then rubbed all over the body.

I looked like a mummy. I said I had sciatic pain so I had to sit in a hip bath with some herbal water for 20 minutes, then they soaked some healing oil cotton pads on my hip and knee and

wrapped me up in a bandage.



Four of us went to a pilgrimage town called Gureveyor, but they only let Muslims inside the temple. We walked around the temple and at the back is holy water where people can bathe After which the treatment was being rubbed all over with oil and massaged with herbal powder.



This afternoon I had a foot massage and what they call a little enema.

Today's treatment was buttermilk poured onto my forehead and I think it went into my hair.

Today I had a face massage and brown mud tight type paste on my head and wrapped up in a banana leaf.

That was the last treatment going to have lunch and leaving going to Fort Kochi for one night before coming home.

Is this place for everybody definitely ? NO

Is this place for me definitely ? YES

Maxine Sherman. (It's a No from me. Adrienne)



EVERYONE IS TOO SERIOUS. I HOPE THIS HELPS SOMEONE SMILE .

TEXT MESSAGE:

DEAR NEIGHBOUR:

Hi, George. This is Richard, next door. I've been riddled with guilt for a few months and have been trying to get up the courage to tell you face-to-face. When you're not around, I've been sharing your wife, day and night, probably much more than you. I haven't been getting it at home recently. I know that's no excuse. The temptation was just too great. I can't live with the guilt & hope you'll accept my sincere apology and forgive me.

Please suggest a fee for usage and I'll pay you.- Richard

George, feeling enraged and betrayed, grabbed his gun, went next door, and shot Richard dead. He returned home, shot his wife, poured himself a stiff drink and sat down on the sofa. George then looked at his phone and discovered a second text message from Richard.

SECOND TEXT MESSAGE:

Hi, George. Richard here again. Sorry about the typo on my last text. I assume you figured it out and noticed that the darned Spell-Check had changed "Wi-Fi" to "wife." Technology, huh? It'll be the death of us all. **Jerry P**

2024 is on its way, and I have been thinking how the year went for me.

It has been a horrific year for the world with global warming causing disaster after disaster and the fighting in so many countries.

However, on a personal level I have a roof over my head, food on the table etc but mainly I have had an interesting year. This leads me onto what I have gained by being a member of Radlett u3a. I have joined so many Groups and would love to go to several others but there are not enough days in the week. What a wonderful problem to have. One particular event I enjoy is the monthly meeting where I look around the Hall and enjoy meeting up with so many lovely people who I have met through our u3a. The Committee work so hard and put in so much thought in selecting speakers and entertainers. With so many members it must be so difficult to try and please everyone all the time. That is why I support the Main Meetings, sometimes (but rarely) I don't enjoy the entertainment as much as at other times but I know how difficult it is to hit the right note especially at the December Meeting. This is why even if the entertainment is not really to my liking, my way of supporting the Committee and the performers is to make the best of it, and see it through, and enjoy catching up with all the friends I have made through the years.

So, I take this opportunity of saying THANK YOU, and a Happy New Year to one and all, and may 2024 be fun filled within our organisation. **Marion K**

Follow up from Adrienne – week of 18th December.

To continue Marion's post, this week I have.....

Monday morning– attended the Religions of the world group – run by Jacquie and her Committee. This was the first time out after over a week of having a very nasty bout of Covid and it was such a warm atmosphere and everyone was concerned if I was well and a delightful social, informative, chatty morning.

Monday afternoon – another wonderful presentation on Tom Lehrer by Edward Cross, ably assisted on the technical side by Tony Clayden at the Music Appreciation Group. They have a great programme coming up for the next few months.

Tuesday – Chanel outing to V and A. where we walked with Queen Camilla and her bodyguards

Wednesday Invite to the Wine Society Christmas party

Thursday cancelled Philosophy so went out for lunch

Friday gardening group. **YOU DON'T NEED TO BE LONELY OR MISERABLE**



If you were at the concert at The Purcell School on Wednesday 6th December, you may have noticed a large crest on the back wall behind the musicians which looked like this. You may even have wondered what it was. If both of the above apply to you, then the following may help !

The Purcell School site was bought from the Royal Caledonian School in the 1960s which was a school for deprived Scottish children and for the children of active servicemen. What is now the Constance Pilkington Hall was called, at one time, the "Hall of Chieftains and also "Hall of Clans". The crest is the basis of every Scottish clan leaders' crest to which is added some symbols of the actual clan. Not a lot of people know that!

Oliver



I was very excited to be invited to the Wine Appreciation Group's Christmas meeting /party

I went to buy a new Christmas jumper all ready for the party and our monthly meeting (which I missed due to having Covid).

I arrived at Alison's to find lovely festive decorations, the group sitting round the table with their glasses at the ready in front of them. It was interesting that I did not know 4 of the group, even though they were long term members and it was particularly nice to meet them for the first time.

It was explained to me (a complete wine novice and non-drinker) how the group worked.

The presenter of the session researches, chooses, describes with history, and shops for the wines of the day.

They have a theme and go through the names, grapes, place, country, price etc.

Today each of them had brought a different wine and the food suitable for eating with it.

They were Prosecco, 19 Crimes Rose, Riesling, Campaneo, Port, Tokay, Garnacha and together with smoked salmon an blinis, frittata, spring rolls, cheeses, christmas fruit cake, mince pies etc, a veritable feast.

I had the most amazing afternoon and even feel ready to belong to a new wine group if anyone would like to start one.

The present leaders Gary and Alison would be very happy to help set it up.

Roll on 2024 and thank you for the lovely afternoon. **Adrienne**

The Majesty of British Justice. By Edward Cross



The case of the unsatisfactory lavatory seat.

It was an ordinary day in Hitchin. Actually, most days in Hitchin are pretty ordinary. But this one, unusually, was to bring a me little bit of harmless pleasure. It came in the form of Mr. Snodgrass. I can't remember what his name really was. I don't think his name was actually Snodgrass. But it should have been. Because he talked *like this**

Let me explain; I was working in Hitchin. In the County Court. I was, in fact, the Judge of the Hitchin County Court. It was my job to provide the basic product of the county court, i.e. a bit of justice.



It was the day of the week I had to hold the Small Claims court. People would bring all sorts of claims. Car crashes that apparently were not the fault of either driver. Computers that wouldn't work. Ruined holidays in horrible hotels. That sort of thing. I had to deal with 5 or 6 cases in a day.

In came Mr. Snodgrass. He was complaining about his lavatory seat. He wanted his money back, because, he said, the lavatory seat was *completely unsatisfactory*. As everyone knows, under the Sale and Supply of Goods laws, consumer products must be of satisfactory quality.

Mr. Snodgrass explained that he had bought the seat on-line from the website of Toilets-R-U's (or something of that general nature). He explained *I specifically ordered it because it was a Leonardo Lavatory Seat. I had previously had a Leonardo for many years and was very happy with it and accordingly desired to replace it with one of exactly the same pattern so that it would tone in the with rest of the bathroom accoutrements. The Leonardo is a particular design but the original manufacturer no longer sells it. The Defendant supplied one which they advertised was a Leonardo seat, but although it may initially appear similar it became clear that its contours and edges were significantly different from the true Leonardo. A very poor copy indeed. I therefore wrote to the Defendants and requested my money back on the grounds that the goods supplied were unsatisfactory.*

I turned to the representative of the Defendant. He patiently explained that while they supplied various popular and well-known models of out-of-production lavatory seats and bathroom accessories, their website expressly pointed out that while every effort was made to conform to the original design, their seats were made out of wood. The original Leonardo was made out of plastic. There is no way that a wooden object can exactly reproduce the smooth plasticity of curvature, slimness of profile and lightness of moulded plastic. All this was clearly pointed out on the website. In any event he could not possibly be expected to take back a lavatory seat after it had been used; how could it then be sold to another customer ?

Mr Snodgrass objected strongly to that. He said that he had certainly never used the seat. Indeed, he had made no attempt at all even to connect it to the lavatory; it was clear the moment he took it out of its packaging that it *wholly failed to fulfil the triple test of Form, Fit and Function*. *Indeed, it was at that very moment in the court waiting-room, along with the original packaging, untouched by any untoward part of the human anatomy.*

I had never heard of this triple test, even in nearly 40 years in the law - I think that is because it doesn't actually exist. But I was curious about one thing. I asked Mr. Snodgrass why, if he had been content with the fit, form and function of his existing Leonardo, why did he wish to obtain a replacement? He solemnly told me that *over the years it had inevitably become stained, due to exposure to the vapours, you know*. I didn't know, but thought it unwise to inquire further.

Well, that was the end of what in a higher court might be called evidence and learned submissions. Time to make a decision. As far as I could tell the lavatory seat was completely OK. It was sturdy and strong, suitable to be sat on. It hinged properly so that the seat and the cover could readily be put up or down, together or separately. It had the sort of fittings that looked like they could be fitted to a lavatory in the usual way. Admittedly it was not precisely the same shape as the plastic one, but that had been fully explained on the website which Mr. Snodgrass could, and should, have read before proceeding to place his order. It was actually rather a nice lavatory seat, every bit as nice as mine. Under the Sale & Supply of Goods laws it could not be described as not of satisfactory quality.

But he had bought it on line. That made it a Distance Sale. Under laws going back at least 100 years, if a buyer has no opportunity to inspect goods when he buys them, he has an absolute entitlement to return them and get his money back if he finds, when they are delivered, that he doesn't want them after all. Provided he says so within a certain number of days. This started with postal catalogues, and the Distance Selling Regulations, part of EU Law as it happens, applied the same rule to purchases made over the internet.

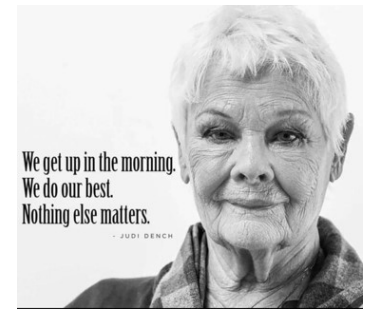
So Mr. Snodgrass got his money back, and the Defendants got their seat back. And so justice was done. But I never did find out about *the vapours*.

*Broadly, the whine of an outraged charlady in a black-and-white Ealing Comedy.

Names of things that you probably didn't know (or perhaps you did?).

Some are really weird. Good for scrabble buffs!

1. The space between your eyebrows is called a **glabella**
2. The way it smells after it rains is called **petrichor**.
3. The plastic, or metallic, coating at the end of shoelaces is called an **aglet**.
4. When your stomach rumbles, that's a **wamble**
5. The cry of a new born baby is called a **vagitus**
6. The prongs of a fork are called **tines**
7. The tiny plastic thing placed in the middle of a pizza box is called a **box tent**.
8. The day after tomorrow is called **overmorrow**
9. Your little toe, or finger, is called the **minimus**
10. The wired cage that holds the cork on a champagne bottle is an **agraffe**
11. The 'na na na' and 'la la la' which don't really have any meaning in a song are called **vocables**
12. The space between your nostrils is called **columnella nasi**
13. The armhole in clothes, where the sleeves are sown is called the **armscye**
14. Finding it difficult to get out of bed in the morning? This is called **dysania**
15. Handwriting that's unreadable is called **griffonage**
16. The dot over the lower case 'i' or 'j' is called **tittle**
17. The metal thing used in a shoe shop to measure feet is called a **Bannock device**
18. The end of a hammer head, opposite the striking face, is called the **peen**.



January Quiz Questions

1. Which state became a US state on the 2nd of January 1788?
2. Which sarcophagus was discovered by Howard Carter in the Valley of Kings on the 3rd of January 1924 ?
3. George Martin was a famous music producer born on the 3rd of January 1926. Who did he famously produce ?
4. Sir Isaac Newton was born on the 4th of January of which year?
5. Martin Luther King Jr was born on the 15th of January 1929. In which city ?
6. Dolly Parton was born on the 19th of January of which year?
7. Who received the patent for the lightbulb in January 1880 ?
8. Which siege was lifted in January 1944 ?
9. Dick Cheney was born on the 30th of January 1941. What was he the vice-president of?
10. When was Hitler appointed as Chancellor of Germany ?
11. Which island became a federal prison on the 1st of January 1934 ?
12. Who made January a month with 31 days ?
13. Bobby Fischer won his first Chess Championship on the 8th of January 1958. How old was he ?
14. I was born on the 11th of January 1757 and became the first US Secretary of the Treasury. Who am I?
15. Which peace treaty signed on January 27, 1973 which ended the Vietnam war ?

DINGBATS

HO HO --- +HO	W A T E R	H OME	ME ENU RATE
01	02	03	04
MAKE - MAKE = ZERO	legal legal	Iran divided by hymn	HEA DAC HE
05	06	07	08
POL MO MICE	revirdtaes	comp144etence	EgloGgHoT EgloGgHoT EgloGgHoT EgloGgHoT
09	10	11	12

Quiz answers. 1. Georgia 2. Tutankhamen 3. The Beatles 4. 1643 5. Atlanta

6. 1946 7. Thomas Edison 8. Leningrad Siege 9. George W Bush 10. 30th of January 1933

11. Alcatraz 12. Julius Caesar 13.14 14. Alexander Hamilton 15. Paris Peace Accords



**Hollie Blue
at the
December
meeting**





Purcell school concert



BLUE CHECK ANNUAL LUNCH – FANTASTIC – nearly 100 people !!



Chanel exhibition at the V and A



A LIFE IN FASHION

Gabrielle Chanel's designs arose inextricably out of her own interests, experiences and personal connections. Although Chanel herself often concealed or reinvented elements of her biography, details of her long and complex life provide insight into the circumstances that drove her creativity and determination for success.



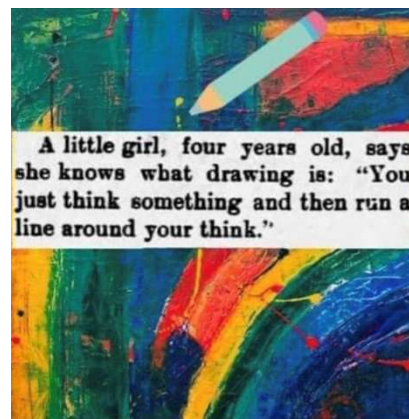
1937
Chanel's first two-tone slingback shoe is produced in collaboration with French shoemaker Massaro.
Gabrielle Chanel receives the Neiman Marcus Award for Distinguished Service in the Field of Fashion. She is honoured as 'the most influential female designer of the 20th century'.



1958

Dingbat answers

1. Tally Ho
2. Waterfall
3. Home Stretch
4. Count Me Out
5. Makes No Difference
6. Paralegals
7. I Ran Over Him
8. Splitting Headache
9. Mother In Law
10. Back Seat Driver
11. Gross Incompetence
12. Two Goes Into Eight Four Times





What did you do for Christmas or the New Year that was a bit different? Let's hear about it.

To all our members and their families, we wish you a Happy and Healthy new year and look forward to you joining us in groups and outings

We are hoping to do this holiday in September so please get in touch with Cathy Pole if you may be interested. – details will be available the next meeting, together with booking forms
Email: pole2pole@gmail.com

4* History & Beauty of Norfolk

Departs Sunday 1st September 2024

5 Days • 4 Nights from £625. • £100.00 single occupancy supplement Ltd. availability)

Organised by HARRY SHAW Group Travel  ABTA No. V1801 on behalf of Radlett & District u3a

4* Knights Hill Hotel situated on the outskirts of King's Lynn. Here accommodation is reserved for four nights on a dinner, bed & breakfast basis.

