



u3a
Wadhurst
NEWS

June 2022

WADHURST u3a

Registered Charity No: 1160124

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News Magazine Editor: Philip Cheung

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Please email copy to the editor: newsmag@wadhurstu3a.org.uk

TO JOIN WADHURST u3a

Download a membership application and Gift Aid form
from the 'About Us' page on the Wadhurst u3a website:
www.wadhurstu3a.org.uk

Print, complete the form and return with
a cheque for the annual fee of £25, payable to 'Wadhurst u3a', to:
Pam Coyne,
38 Chartwell Lodge, Bishops Down Road,
Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN4 8AF

OR contact the membership secretary on **01892 710678**

ONLINE PAYMENTS TO WADHURST u3a

Lloyds Bank, sort code: 30-98-77, account number: 48499968,
In name of: *Wadhurst u3a*

FROM OUR CHAIRMAN

Dear Member,

As we emerge slowly out of the pandemic, it is interesting to put Wadhurst u3a through a health check. We reached a peak membership of over 260 just before lock down. At the end of the 2021-2 membership renewal period last December, 195 members have renewed. This represents a loss of one in four members! Some of these have of course sadly succumbed to the virus and others are still struggling to recover from its effects, while some are probably in good health but wary/weary of returning to an active life and crowds.

But like the rest of the nation, we are regaining confidence and returning to a state of normality, thanks to triple and quadruple jabs, and the mutation of the virus to a less threatening form. After cancellations earlier in the year, recent visits organised by the Gardening and Historic Building Visits groups have been well supported. I know that many of the smaller interest groups have met regularly for many months now, with their customary numbers. We are having around 40 at our monthly speaker's meetings, and tea was served again after a long hiatus at our most recent meeting in May. We also organised a 'Pop the Question' night that was enjoyed by a good if diminished gathering. Encouragingly, a dozen new members have joined us in the past months.

As we continue to recover it is now a good moment to reflect on what we are and what we aim to achieve as an association. The cover of this magazine contains some words that characterise our u3a. *Learn, Laugh, Live* appear in the logo of the national organisation. *Share, Educate, Laugh, Fun, Friends* are our own. Of these latter, I would single out *Friends* as a special attribute of Wadhurst u3a.

Being a relatively small u3a, we have the advantage that we can get to know each other well. Belonging to an interest group makes a good start to meeting people who share a common interest. Attending a meeting or social event, and going on a trip provide

further opportunities to meet and make friends. We have currently 26 interest groups, down from the pre-pandemic total of 33. The national average is roughly 10 interest groups for every 100 members so we were doing very well, and not too badly now. If you wish to do something that we do not cater for, send an email or speak to the Group Coordinator.

Yet another way to make friends is to join one of the teams of volunteers that keep Wadhurst u3a running. Working together as a team and helping others to get something done is a sure way to gain their trust, gratitude, and naturally, friendship. There is a rota to provide tea at monthly meetings; teams to organise Pop the Question, Race Night, the Birthday and Christmas Parties. When a call for volunteers appears, be sure to respond!

There is then the committee of Trustees. It is often said that “The committee worked very hard” to get this or that done, but we know that many hands make light work. So send me an email if you are at all interested in becoming a trustee. There is a great variety of things to be done and different gifts and abilities are needed. I almost forgot to say that it is nearly always great fun and you will be in a team of friends.

So it appears that the other important word, after *Friends*, is *Active*.

With best wishes,

Philip Cheung

As you may know, Jacqui Harman, our previous Chairman and a trustee since day one of Wadhurst u3a, has moved away to live in Devon. She has continued to look after our website for many months after her departure. At the end of June, however, she will be stepping down from this role. Jane Austin has kindly agreed to be her replacement.

We thank Jacqui for her devotion to Wadhurst u3a during all these years and welcome Jane, who has recently become fully retired, to her new ‘job’.

Pop the Question

Nine teams participated in our quiz night, *Pop the Question*, on 26th March, down from the eighteen teams we had in pre-COVID 2018. While it will be some months before we return to those halcyon days, everyone had an enjoyable evening in 2022.

A home team saw to it that the proceedings were relaxed and ran smoothly: Paul Brown was our quiz master; Sarah Parry, Eileen Ramm and Philip Cheung set the questions; Allan Newton, whose 'live' computer scoreboard is much admired by other quiz nights in Wadhurst, was scorer. Memory recesses were dredged and brains teased by eight rounds of questions on *Wadhurst & Ticehurst*, *Natural World & Animals*, *Ukraine*, *Food*, *Drinks*, *Covid-19*, *Geography* and *Competition & Prizes*. In addition, there were two table rounds on *Lyrics & Quotations* and *Climate Change*.

The Stormflaps were the clear winners with a magnificent performance. *The Challenged* were runners-up after a closely fought battle with *Table Tennis*. We had thought the questions were on the hard side, but not for our winners who would have scored an A** if it were a GCSE paper.

The round of questions on *Ukraine* was included to increase our awareness of the country, as a mark of our solidarity. If you were not there on the night, you may like to have a go now:

1. What is the name of the TV show in which President Zelensky starred before his election in 2019?
2. Who is the mayor of Kyiv? Hint: he is a former world heavyweight boxing champion but you must give his first and last names.
3. Which of these Soviet/Russian leaders has or had Ukranian as 'ethnicity' in his passport?
Stalin, Khrushchev, Brezhnev, Gorbachev, Yeltsin, Putin.
4. The Russian composer Mussorgsky wrote a collection of pieces called *Pictures at an Exhibition*. You will hear the last piece, No 10. What is its name?

5. Odesa used to be spelt with two S's (Odessa). Why have the BBC and newspapers started recently to spell it with one S?
6. The *Old Hem Bar (Pub)* in honour of Ernest Hemingway was in which Ukrainian city?
7. Name the two football teams from the Ukraine who qualified for the group stage of the 2021-2 UEFA Champions League. (1 point for each correct answer)
8. What is the name of the river flowing through Kyiv, dividing the country into two?
9. Ukraine borders onto two seas. One is the Black Sea, what is the other?
10. In what year was the Chernobyl Disaster?

The Stormflaps scored 8 out of a possible 11 in this round!

ANSWERS:
1. Servant of the People. This became the name of Zelensky's political party.
2. Vitali Klitschko. It is not enough to say Klitschko because his brother Wladimir is also a former world heavyweight boxing champion.
3. Leonid Brezhnev.
4. The Gates of Kyiv (Kiev).
5. Ukrainian spelling, Одеса, has 1 's', Russian spelling, Одесса, has 2.
6. Kharkiv. The bar was destroyed by Russian bombing on 14/03/2022.
7. Dynamo Kyiv and Shakhtar Donetsk.
8. Dnieper.
9. Sea of Asov.
10. 1986.

Race Night

Following the success in 2019, we shall host another Race Night on Saturday 2nd July. Invite family and friends to join in the excitement of a make-believe 'afternoon at the races'.

u3a learn,
laugh,
live
Wadhurst



SATURDAY 2ND JULY

Wadhurst Commemoration Hall

Doors open 7.00pm

Under Starter's Orders 7.30pm

Bring your own picnic and drinks

OPEN TO ALL

Tickets £5.00 each from

Carillon Cottage, High Street, Wadhurst

There will be eight races on which you can place a bet for as little as £1. The proceeds are divided equally between the holders of the winning tickets and the social fund of Wadhurst u3a. (The social fund contributes to the social events that are free for u3a members, such as tea at the monthly meetings, the Birthday Party in September, the Christmas Party... etc.)

SELECTED GROUP NEWS

Wadhurst u3a has 28 Interest Groups to offer. Here are news items from some of them. Do not hesitate to contact the convenor if you are interested in an interest group. Contact information can be found on the centrefold. You can also email the convenor using the 'Blue Bird' on the relevant group page in Wadhurst u3a's website:

www.wadhurstu3a.org.uk

GARDENING

Sheila Jemmett

The Gardening group met in the Commemoration Hall in March for a talk about 'Flowering Meadows' and a discussion about whether they are an easier option than 'normal' gardening and whether they just end up looking untidy! The general consensus seems to be that they are good for insects but may need to be created where it won't matter when they become scruffy, also they are not an easy option as the maintenance routine is quite demanding (although infrequent).

We had a trip to Capel Manor Gardens at Capel Manor College at the end of April. This had been arranged by Ken before the first lockdown! Unfortunately, at the last minute, Ken and Jean were unable to come with us, but thanks to his arrangements the trip was hugely successful on a lovely warm Spring day.

The trip to Wakehurst Place in May was cancelled due to a lack of interest.

No meeting in June as a number of us are taking a 5-day trip to Yorkshire, taking in both the new garden at RHS Bridgewater and the older garden at RHS Harlow Carr. We are also visiting Harewood House.

We will be back in the Commemoration Hall on Tuesday 19th July at 10am. This will be about increasing plants by taking cuttings and will be a practical demonstration of 'how' and 'what'.

As a result of our discussion about 'Flowering Meadows' in March, we have decided to visit 'Superbloom' at the Tower of London on Tuesday 2nd August. This is an exciting opportunity to walk through the moat among the flowers. For details call Sheila using her contact information on the centrefold.

HISTORIC BUILDING VISITS

Paul Brown

Ham House & Gardens, Richmond

27th July

A rare and atmospheric C17th house on the river Thames. Built in 1610, it is unique in Europe as the most complete survival of C17th fashion, power, luxury and grandeur.

Oldest Orangery in UK, icehouse, dairy herd, extensive gardens. Cafe with terrace outside with views across the walled kitchen



garden. Picnic area is available outside.

Depart 0830 The Bell, Ticehurst, 0845 The Greyhound, Wadhurst.

Return 1600.

Cost £34 for National Trust members. Extra £13.25 for others.

Organiser Jan Whiteley

Penshurst Place & Gardens, Penshurst 24th August

14th century Manor House which is owned by Viscount de L'Isle and his wife Isobel. It was once the property of Henry VIII and was left to his son Edward VI and given to the Sidney family in 1552. It has remained in the family ever since.



Extensive well-tended gardens with plenty of seating. Slight uphill walk from entrance to gardens. State rooms and huge baronial hall with some steps. This is where *Wolf Hall* and *The Other Boleyn Girl* were filmed. It has also a lovely Toy Museum.

There is a shop, toilets, cafeteria and a small area selling plants.

Depart 1000 The Bell, Ticehurst, 1015 The Greyhound, Wadhurst.

Return 1530

Cost £30 including entrance

Organisers John and Val O'Dwyer

TEMPLE CHURCH, LONDON

21st September

First proposed in March, this trip will now take place in September. As the Temple Church is only 15 mins away from Charing Cross Station by foot, we shall travel by train. Details, already given in an earlier edition of this magazine, may be found at Wadhurst u3a's website: www.wadhurstu3a.org.uk.

Depart 1030 Wadhurst Station

Return at each one's leisure

Cost Train fare + £3 entrance to The Magna Carta Exhibition

Organiser Philip Cheung

Weald and Downland Living Museum

Val O'Dwyer

We boarded the bus of our new coach company, Ham Travel, to be greeted by Paul and Barry our driver, one April morning. This was our first u3a Historic Buildings visit for 2 years, due of course to Covid, so quite an occasion. Barry took us a scenic route through some very attractive countryside. Blue skies, rolling hills with lots of sheep and lambs, villages with very narrow streets not built for large coaches. We passed Cowdray Park with its Estate cottages recognised by their yellow window frames, Polo pitch and ruined castle. Barry kept us well informed with local information such as that. On our homeward journey we passed Goodwood Racecourse looking sparkling in the sunshine.

The Weald and Downland Living Museum was such an interesting place. Beautifully presented in a lovely setting in a valley. Staff and volunteers everywhere were smiling, polite and informative. It was school holiday time so there were children out with their entry forms looking for clues to win an Easter egg. Interestingly we noticed most of the adults with them were obviously grandparents!!

All the houses and other buildings, there are 58 of them, have been rescued from various parts of the South of England and rebuilt here. Beautiful medieval cottages, shops, schools and farm buildings and equipment.

Wadhurst u3a Interest Groups

Interest Group	Convenor	Day of Month	Time	Venue
Art at Ticehurst	Peter Sewell	last Friday	14.00	<i>check with convenor</i>
Art at Wadhurst	Sheila King	2nd Tuesday	10.00	Orchard Room
Art Appreciation	Margot Yeo		<i>check with convenor</i>	
Book Group One	Georgina Cheung		<i>check with convenor</i>	
Book Group Two	Janet Pelham		<i>check with convenor</i>	
Bridge	Lesley Thompson	Thursdays	10.00	Sparrows Green Pavillion
French Conversation	Paul Brown	2nd Monday	14.00	<i>check with convenor</i>
Friendly Computers	Allan Newton		<i>check with convenor</i>	
Gardening	Sheila Jemmett	3rd Tuesday	10.00	Commem Hall
Historic Buildings	Paul Brown	See website for latest news		
Knit & Natter	Kate Metcalfe	1st Tuesday	14.30	<i>check with convenor</i>
Life Writing	Jessica Brown	alternate Tue	10.00	<i>check with convenor</i>
Mahjong	Norwill Hazell	2nd & 4th Thu	14.30	Sparrows Green Pavillion

Mindfulness & Relaxation	Sue Swift	4th Friday	10.30	<i>check with convenor</i>
Modern Architecture	Jane Austin	every 6-8 weeks		<i>check with convenor</i>
Play Reading	Philip Cheung			<i>check with convenor</i>
Pub Lunch	Jean Turner			<i>check with convenor</i>
Science & Technology	Philip Cheung	2nd Tuesday	14.00	Sparrows Green Pavilion
Scrabble	Juliet Conrad	2nd & 4th Tue	11.00	The Greyhound Inn
Table Tennis	Philippa Standley	Tuesdays	12.30	Uplands Sports Centre
Ten Pin Bowling	Lynda Emberson			<i>check with convenor</i>
Theatre Visits	Lynda Emberson			<i>check with convenor</i>
Ukulele	Iris Glover	Mondays	10.00	<i>check with convenor</i>
Walking	Sarah Parry	2nd Thursday	10.00	<i>check with convenor</i>
Wine Appreciation	David Austin	4th Wednesday	17.00	Carillon Cottage
Yoga	Sara Irwin	Mondays	9.30 / 11.00	Zoom

To email convenor: On the u3a Wadhurst website (see below) select the Group concerned.

Click on the **Bluebird** icon (top right corner) to send an email.

To leave a message: ring **01892 710678**. State your name, tel number and the group(s) of

*** Consult u3a Wadhurst's website: www.u3asites.org.uk/wadhurst for up-to-date information.

The first place we headed for was The Repair Shop (as seen on TV) as they were filming. (This had nothing to do with my admiration of Will the furniture repairer on the series!!). No photographs as they thought it would spoil the surprise if people were told what was to come on future programmes. A lady was being filmed entering the barn with her excited husband standing behind us. We saw Sue the leather repairer working outside but others told us they also saw Jay Blades.

We then headed off to watch the bakers at work in their traditional bakery. The metalworker was busy making a traditional wall hook and very keen to tell us how. A huge anvil which some children were allowed to bang long and hard! A working watermill fed from a crystal clear lake which was kept filled and flowing by a recycling pump. A lady with a spinning wheel spinning sheep's wool. We stopped to chat to a volunteer standing outside a beautiful old Flintstone cottage. We were interested because we had moved to Wadhurst from Norfolk where so many cottages and houses are built with flint. He was very informative and during the course of our conversation asked us if we had been to see Tindalls Cottage which had been rescued from the valley before it was flooded to make Bewl Water!! He told us it had been kept in store for 40 years until they had the finances to rebuild it on their site. We were more than interested as the back of our house overlooks Bewl Water and also we often walk there. I had always imagined the house in question had been a grand house but in fact it was a small, cosy cottage.

We moved on to the Victorian schoolroom (only 6 pupils), the farm and its various outbuildings and machinery. The market square had a traditional market hall, shops and a church. We didn't manage to see everything but will certainly go back at some time.

It was a most enjoyable day. Thank you Paul for organising. If you have never been do go some day.

KNIT AND NATTER

Kate Metcalfe

The group has been meeting again. Some of the items being knitted include slippers, woolly hat, tortoise, a jumper and some crochet work. The Natter part of the group is flourishing!

PLAY READING

Torquay, East Sussex

Eileen Ramm

It's a sunny afternoon in April. I am looking down my drive, anticipating. Not before too long my drive is in gridlock, the doorbell rings.

In comes the most incongruent group of people you could come across. A physicist, administrator, manager, government officer, teacher, housewife. All retired, what they used to be. What's brought them here? What can I offer them, what do I do with them?

Ah, but there is a pile of scripts, it's a meeting of the u3a Play Reading Group. These people might look normal now, but with the use of these scripts they turn into Manuel, Basil, Polly, Sybil, the Major and Mrs Tibbs.



We are reading two episodes from 'Faulty Towers'. Characters are chosen randomly, but all get a chance to shine and read a part. It's like a screen production without the action, you have to imagine Basil slapping Manuel across the cheeks or Sybil storming out and slamming the door. Stage direction notes help you in this. But your attention is thoroughly focused on the script.

I am surprised when I observe a normally meek and mild mannered individual turn into a raging psycho! Other personality traits emerge where you least expect them to. Some are made for their part.

It's entertaining, it's a transportation to a different place, not a middle class lounge in rural East Sussex but a hotel lobby in Torquay, bustling and bungled.

A break for tea sees the return to normality. But then, voice boxes refreshed, we are off again, another episode, another change of roles. The sun's rays creep in, it's late afternoon, does anyone notice until we run out of script? The end. So out the door goes bungling Basil, supreme Sybil, accommodating Polly, the pompous Major and underdog Manuel. Back to their normal selves.

It will all happen again, another month hence, a different play, a new cast, a myriad of opportunity. Come and join us!

We read Michael Frayn's 'Alphabetical Order' in May, a gentle comedy where the record office of a local newspaper tries to put its affairs in order. Frayn, born 1933, wrote many West End hits, the most famous of which is perhaps 'Noises Off', a farce which tells of what goes on backstage behind the production of another farce.

Our reading in June will be Jean Anouilh's 'The Lark', a play about the trial of Joan of Arc with a surprising ending. We read a translation by Christopher Fry.

If you want to take part in a reading, contact Philip Cheung using the information in the centrefold or Wadhurst u3a's website. You will then be sent the date and venue of the readings, as they are decided by the group from month to month.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Philip Cheung

In May Dr. Cheryl Lovelace from Paddock Wood gave us a very interesting talk on the thirty or so years she spent at universities in Ghana and Uganda, teaching and doing research as a biochemist.

Our programme for the coming months:

Jun 14	Heating your home and the Laws of Thermodynamics	Philip Cheung
Jul 12	Nutrition	Derek Hayes

We meet at 2pm at the Sparrows Green Pavilion. If you are interested in any of the talks, just come along.

Diary of a Dream

Allan Newton

1st Jan 2022

New Year's Day, so according to a well-established tradition in the household I settle down to watch the New Year's Day Concert from Vienna. The mince pies are being warmed and the sherry ready to support me during the broadcast.

This year seems so much better than the previous one. Possibly the presence of an audience suggests that at long last we were reaching the end of Covid 19. (Unfortunately this hope died in the next two weeks.)

3rd January 2022

Thinking about the concert a couple of days ago I decide to look again into the possibility of actually attending in person for 2023. Rosemary and I had talked about it but my attempts at finding how to get tickets only found complete tours at incredible prices in the past. This time I have more luck and find the official website with details of the procedure for entering the draw. There are three separate draws in different months, so I note the details and determine to enter the draw.

2nd February 2022

The February draw has opened for registrants on the 1st, so I begin my registration. The website tells me there are already 15,000 registered for this draw, that on the first day!! Knowing the number of tickets available it should be possible to estimate the probability

of winning. The first steps convince me that my chances were negligible but what do I have to lose? I complete my application and hope for the best.

The tickets are expensive but not unreasonable so the decision is made that the rest of the trip, hotel and travel, will be in style and possibly expensive.

4th February 2022

Lunch with friends and I mention my plan. They know Vienna a bit and suggest a hotel. They think they can remember the name which they tell me.

6th February 2022

A search on the internet finds what is probably the correct hotel and indeed it looks just right in terms of facilities and location. No need to book yet, wait until I get the ticket. Remind myself to check it is the right hotel before booking.

8th February 2022

This is almost the day of the brick wall. What can be simpler than using the internet to find a flight from Gatwick to Vienna? The first search shows what appears to be a dozen or more flights. However, actually looking at the details shows that many are Ryanair from Stansted to some minor airport in the next-door country. Skipping over these the next suggestion looks OK: an early start from Gatwick but possible, but the evening arrival in Vienna worries me, so digging into the flight details is clearly necessary. This reveals a 10 hour wait at Munich Airport between flights.

Other searches on a range of sites from airlines to flight bookers fail to show anything that would be suitable. 7.00am take off from Heathrow does not seem fun. Arriving in Vienna at 10.30pm also does not appeal.

Can travel between two capital cities in Europe really be this difficult?

I give up in despair and decide that the next day I will see if I could hire a bicycle!

9th February 2022

Back to the internet but looking not for bicycle hire but trains. This is so much better, and the preferred route appears to be Eurostar from St Pancras at about 3.00pm to Brussels and then a night sleeper from Brussels to Vienna arriving at 9.00 am the next day.

Lots of variants on this of course. One which does appeal is Eurostar to Brussels then fast train to Munich with an overnight stay there, with the possibility to spend a day revisiting one of my favourite cities.

It looks like we have a plan. "All" that remains is for me to win a ticket and then synchronise travel and hotel. I have a sneaking suspicion which will be the more difficult!!!

15th February 2022

There must be civilised flights between London and Vienna? So back to the internet, but this time try just the airline sites, not the third-party flight bookers. The BA site yields realistic flights, so I have more options for travel.

The moral is always try the business you want to use, not intermediaries.

4th March 2022

Disaster! The email from the Wiener Philharmonic tells me I have been unlucky in the draw.

So, 2023 will start, yet again, with enjoying the concert in Wadhurst complete with mince pies and sherry. Try again for 2024?

Rationing in Post War UK

Linda Forrest

Ration books! All of us who are 70 plus can recall these drab beige books with their various coloured coupons, without which it was impossible to buy food essentials both during and after WW2. These were not totally phased out until 1954. Each child and adult was issued with these books containing a ration of coupons limiting

the amount of food you were entitled to. For example each person was allowed one egg and 2 ounces of butter each week.

I can vividly recall from the age of 7 being sent to the grocer's earnestly clutching a ration book in one hand and basket with purse and shopping list in the other. The shopping list, ration book and money were handed to the grocer who would remove the required coupons and hand over the goods and diminished ration book, counting out the change. (A far cry from today's simple flashing of a card!)

Fruit and vegetables were not rationed but scarce, so that families with gardens grew their own and allotments became very popular. We loved helping to dig up potatoes, carrots etc or pick strawberries only half of which made it into the house! No fruit was imported so bananas, oranges, mangoes, avocados etc were merely exotic sounding luxuries only seen in picture books. The government made an effort to ensure that children had a balanced diet, and issued them with free orange juice in order to prevent scurvy.

Then of course who can forget free school milk? Each day without fail the loud rattling of noisy metal crates announced the arrival of small bottles of milk to each classroom. A milk monitor was appointed to make sure that every pupil received a bottle of milk and straw, and no child was allowed to leave the classroom for mid morning break until their milk was finished. In theory this was an excellent nutritional idea, but somehow the actual practice was not generally popular. The smell of the farmyard accompanied these bottles, which in summer were lukewarm and in winter often arrived topped with ice. Only the lure of the playground made it possible to down these daily freebies!

There was one luxury that arrived along with the immigration of Italians to the UK during and after the war. Italian cafes sprang up selling the deliciously creamy Italian ice cream which was the absolute antithesis of the UK's usual synthetic tasting Walls paper wrapped blocks.

Puddings were often milk based. Our family favourite was oven baked rice pudding but some of the others were not so popular.

“Eat it up, it’s good for you” was my mother’s refrain as all three of her offspring shrank in their chairs at the sight of such delicacies as sago or tapioca pudding. The most hated of these was junket. Even today I shudder at the very mention of that name, all the more so since discovering that it is made from rennet which in turn is derived from calves stomach lining!

Junket apart, our diet in the 40/50s was actually very healthy. With butter and sugar strictly rationed, child obesity was unheard of and the focus was on a basic healthy diet. I cannot recall any child in my class of forty being overweight which is certainly no longer the case in today’s classrooms. A little boring and basic our diet may have been compared to today’s wide international choice, but did we suffer? I think the answer has to be a resounding NO.

Coronation Day

Sheila Minet

My mother woke me very early and we set off with macs, a picnic and warm clothes walking towards the Mall. It was only about half an hour as we lived near Victoria Station. We soon joined the crowds all heading the same way, and as we got to the Mall, we walked through the people who had been camping out all night, just waking up and putting away their bedding and having tea and breakfast. When we finally found our seats in the stand on the North side of the Mall, there was almost a riot; the stand had been built in front of offices with balconies, and there were huge pillars in front of our seats, and we had no view at all. To my shame I started to cry. I was ten, and getting up early, walking in the rain, and the build up of excitement and then let down was all too much.

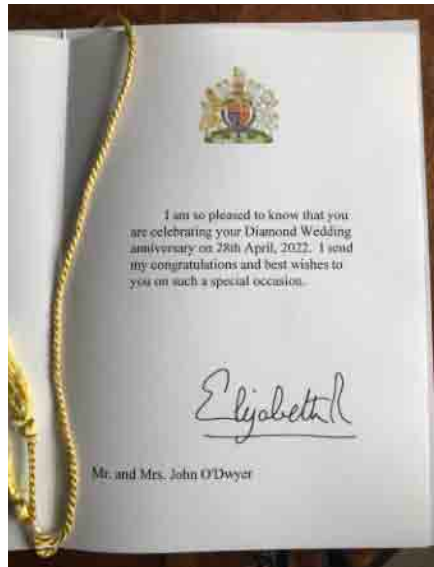
However, I then spotted a school friend, who was a few rows nearer the front, but who couldn’t see either, and we got together and looked around. One or two people pointed out that being small, we could climb under the seats, and onto the scaffolding, where there was a balcony, with gaps between the supports, and we could sit comfortably in the dry, and see the whole thing. Soon after this, the preparations for the parade started to hot up, with smart people in

uniform on horseback riding up and down, and the crowd below started singing, the police genially keeping everybody off the road, and loads of flag waving. Then the coaches and carriages began arriving from the Palace and somebody always seemed to know who was in each one. Queen Salote of Tonga was a great star, being a large imposing lady with a great warm smile. Somebody asked who was sitting beside her, a smaller less significant man, and some wit replied “Her lunch.”

At last the Queen’s coach drawn by all those horses came into view and we all cheered like mad. Then it was all over until they all came back ages later. Everybody seemed to know what was happening, but as soon as the procession passed back towards the Palace, we made our way home across St James’ Park. Back at school, we watched it all on the newly acquired TV. But Jenny and I had great kudos because we’d Actually Been There.

Diamond Wedding

John and Valerie O’Dwyer celebrated their diamond wedding in April. They received a card from Her Majesty! In return, we wish Her Majesty a ***Very Happy Platinum Jubilee!***



MONTHLY MEETINGS

Meetings are on the third Thursday of the month, at 2.30 pm.

Jun 16	LEWES PRIORY: THE SITE AND ITS PEOPLE Helen Poole
<p>This important Cluniac priory was founded around 1077-81 and the ruins now tell the story of its life and problems, not least its unwilling participation in the Battle of Lewes.</p>	
Jul 21	WHERE DO NOVELISTS GET THEIR IDEAS FROM? Bobbie Darbyshire
<p>Bobbie won the 2008 fiction prize at the National Academy of Writing and the New Delta Review Creative Nonfiction Prize 2010. Her latest novel is 'The Posthumous Adventures of Harry Whittaker'. Her earlier ones are 'OZ', 'Love, Revenge & Buttered Scones', and 'Truth Games'. She'd worked as barmaid, mushroom picker, film extra, maths coach, cabinet minister's private secretary, care assistant and volunteer adult-literacy teacher, as well as in social research and government policy. She lives in London and hosts a writers group.</p>	
Aug 18	WOMEN OF THE RAJ - Brian Freeland
<p>When the Colonial Administrators arrived to take over from the East India Company they were often accompanied by their wives: wives who spoke only English, who mixed only with other wives, and who couldn't even communicate with their household staff. Wives who made great demands on their husbands. As one Indian wrote later "<i>I don't think they realised what a menace they were. If the memsahibs had stayed in Britain there might never have been a Mutiny</i>".</p>	
Sep 22	A SCHOOLGIRL'S WAR - Mary Smith
<p>The talk tells the story of wartime school life using some recently discovered paintings from an art teacher who documented the lives of school girls and their teachers as WW2 unfolded. The talk includes a selection of these paintings together with some anecdotes from wartime pupils.</p>	



Long to Reign Over Us

