

Wadhurst u3a

Registered Charity No: 1160124

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To contact a member of the Committee, please use the dedicated number **01580 200647** or the email addresses listed above.

TO JOIN Wadhurst & District u3a

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

You can either

print, complete the forms and return them with a cheque for the annual fee of £25 to our membership secretary by post,

or

fill in the forms electronically, email them to our membership secretary, and pay the annual fee of £25 online to Wadhurst & District u3a.

Further details are given on the application form. Ring Sheila Jemmett at **01580 200647** if you have any questions.

ONLINE PAYMENTS TO Wadhurst & District u3a

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

NEWS Magazine Editor: Philip Cheung

COPY DEADLINE for the June 2023 issue: 20th May 2023. Please email copy to the editor at: newsmag@wadhurstu3a.org.uk

FROM OUR CHAIRMAN

Dear Member,

Spring will soon be upon us. It is the season that brings new growth and our u3a can certainly do with some. In 2022, we finally (?) saw the end of the pandemic. We saw a stabilisation and then a gradual increase in the attendance at our monthly meetings, even though many of our visits in the summer were cancelled because of lack of numbers. Our recovery was not helped by the war in Ukraine nor the sharp rise in the cost of living which cast a depressive pall all round.

Nevertheless, we had an enjoyable Birthday Party in September, and after a postponement due to snow, our Christmas Party squeezed into the last of the Twelve Days of Christmas. Some astonishing 'modern' magic tricks by Jimmy Sheridan made this latter a memorable occasion. I urge you to support our monthly speakers meetings, where we have had some very entertaining speakers, and where you can meet up with friends over a cup of tea. Of course there is *Pop the Question*, our quiz night on Saturday 25th March.

We have always had rules for admission to our events and activities. However, they have not always been communicated clearly to everyone in the past, leading to some confusion. The rules have been revised by the trustees since the AGM in October and they are listed on the following page.

With best wishes,

Philip Cheung

P.S.

As editor of NEWS, I would like to point out that this issue has only 20 pages instead of the usual 28. Most of what appears in these pages comes from our readers. Do make an effort to write when something interesting happens or is about to happen to you or your interest group. This is not to forget that some of our best pieces are reminiscences, fond or otherwise, as you will discover in this issue.

Admission to Wadhurst u3a Events and Activities January, 2023

Events organised by the Trustees and financed by Wadhurst u3a's central funds.

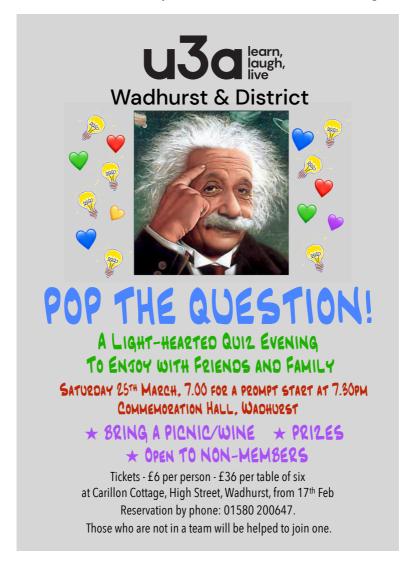
- Members-only Events only members of Wadhurst u3a are invited free-of-charge to such events. Guests may be invited under special circumstances. The Birthday and Christmas Parties fall into this category but other events may be added at the discretion of the trustees.
- 2. **Open events** (such as fundraising events) are open to members and non-members, at a charge as advertised.
- 3. **Monthly speaker meetings** are free for members of Wadhurst u3a. Non-members, belonging to another u3a or not, pay a charge to be reviewed by the trustees from time to time. (The charge is set at £2 since the u3a started).

Interest Group Activities, financed by the members of the interest group and independently of Wadhurst u3a's central funds.

- 4. **All members of Wadhurst u3a** may attend, subject to the terms set out by the individual groups. For instance, a waiting list may be used when the number of participants is restricted.
- 5. A guest who is not member of another u3a may participate in up to three meetings on a trial basis, if invited by members of the group. At the end of the trial meetings, the guest will be required to join Wadhurst u3a if he/she wishes to continue attending the group meetings. There is no guest charge but a guest will contribute to expenses as other participants during the trial.
- 6. **Members of another u3a** may attend the activities of an interest group on a regular basis if the group concerned decides to admit them. The decision by the members of the interest group to admit members of another u3a, or not, may be reconsidered from time to time. If there is a restriction on numbers at group meetings, priority will be given to Wadhurst u3a members.

Pop the Question

Our quiz night will take place on Saturday 25th March. Details are in the poster below. Last year, Sarah Parry, Eileen Ramm and Philip Cheung took over from Paul and Jessica Brown to set the questions. This year Peter Sewell takes the place of Eileen on the team. Some of you have told us that the questions last year were too hard. We have made adjustments. Join us for an evening of fun.



MONTHLY MEETINGS

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

	<u> </u>
Mar 16	A CONSPIRACY THEORY OF THE WORLD Andy Thomas
Mby do no	anle ingressingly believe in conspiracy theories and

Why do people increasingly believe in conspiracy theories and what is the evidence to support them?

Apr 20 WHAT MAKES A 'SUPER STAR' Simon Mott

There are 10 secrets in making a superstar and this mystery person used all of them.

May 18

SO FAR SO GOOD Malcolm Wells

Amusing stories from this ex-Army musician who played at Kensington and Buckingham Palaces.

Jun 15

A POLICEMAN'S LOT Neil Sadler

Tips from his 30 years as a police officer include where not to try and escape the traffic cops & a novel use for a policeman's helmet.

Jul 20

VICTORIAN LONDON STREET LIFE Delia Taylor

Fascinating insight into how poor people in London lived and survived in the late nineteenth century.

Monthly speaker meetings, with a cup of tea and biscuits, are free for members of Wadhurst & Distract u3a. Non-members are welcome, with an admission charge of £2.00.

SELECTED GROUP NEWS

Wadhurst & District u3a has 25 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 & District u3a's website:

www.wadhurstu3a.org.uk

NEW INTEREST GROUPS

We are exploring the possibility of establishing some new groups. These include:

- Armchair Traveller (winter months only)
- Croquet at Wadhurst (summer months only)
- Pétanque (Boules) at Ticehurst (summer months only)
- · History Revisited
- Spanish Conversation

If any (or all) of these groups appeal to you, please contact our group coordinator, **Jane Austin** via the website or at

e.jane.austin@btinternet.com or 07837 958867

with details of the group(s) you are interested in.

Similarly, if you have any ideas for new groups, then please let us know and we'll see what we can do to make it happen.

FRIENDLY COMPUTERS

Philip Cheung

The aim of the group is to help u3a members to use more effectively their personal computers, tablets and smart phones, to send emails and messages, to access the internet to look for information, to buy, to bank... etc.

Currently I am running meetings for users of Apple devices only, that is: iPads, iPhones, MacBooks and iMacs. We are beginning at the beginning with the basics: downloading useful apps from AppStore, using passwords and/or finger print, editing text... etc.

To give adequate help to everyone, I have to keep numbers small, This also means that meetings can be held at my house. Please contact me using the information in the centrefold or on our website if you wish to come to the meetings.

GARDENING

Sheila Jemmett

Our next meeting in the Commemoration Hall is on March 21st when Valerie Baines will show us how to go about making a garden for butterflies, with lists of plants, illustrated by her drawings, that attract them.

The Gardens & Heritage of Norfolk

I now have the details for the proposed 5-day trip to East Anglia this summer. This will depart Monday 3rd July. The cost is £529 per person for 4 nights on a half-board basis staying just outside Norwich.

On the list of gardens to visit are Beth Chatto, East Ruston Old Vicarage, Bressingham Gardens, Peter Beales, Fullers Mill, Helmingham Hall and RHS Hyde Hall. All of these, except RHS Hyde Hall, are mainly flat! Bressingham has a railway. There is also time for a morning in Norwich with a guide.

Further details may be found on <u>www.tailored-travel.co.uk</u> using the reference **waug231**.

Please note that this trip cannot be booked online and all forms (available from me or downloaded from Tailored Travel's website) with deposits, should be sent to me before the end of April. No cheques or card payments will be banked or taken until I have a minimum of 30 people signed up.

HISTORIC BUILDING VISITS

John O'Dwyer

A meeting was held in January at Stonegate Village Hall for members to suggest and discuss ideas for visits by the group in 2023. In view of the high cost of coach hire, and the lower than normal participation by members during 2022, it was decided to organise only one visit by coach, for which we need a minimum of about 30 participants. A number of visits by smaller groups using car-share will also be offered.

Please sign up for the visits below at the monthly speakers meetings or by contacting John O'Dwyer (email: vicechair@wadhurstu3a.org.uk). Further information may be found on our website.

Dover Castle by Coach - 24th May 2023

Organisers: Valerie & John O'Dwyer

We visit a spectacular medieval castle, overlooking the Straits of Dover and of great importance throughout history. There is also a network of tunnels cut into the North Downs chalk where garrisons were housed.

Cost: £37 or £18.50 for English Heritage Members.

Visits by Car-share

Visits have been proposed for:

Chartwell, Charleston and Berwick Church, Polesden Lacey, Penshurst Place, Down House and Standen.

When sufficient numbers have signed up for a visit, the participants will arrange car-share among themselves.

Wadhurst u3a Interest Groups

Interest Group	Convenor	Day of Month	Time	Venue
Art at Ticehurst	Peter Sewell	last Friday	14.00	check with convenor
Art at Wadhurst	Sheila King	2nd Tuesday	10.00	Orchard Room
Art Appreciation	Margot Yeo	check with convenor		
Book Group One	Margaret Jones	check with convenor		
Book Group Two	Janet Pelham	check with convenor		
Bridge	Geoff Daddy	Thursdays	10.00	Sparrows Green Pavillion
French Conversation	Paul Brown	2nd Monday	14.00	check with convenor
Friendly Computers	y Computers Philip Cheung check with convenor		h convenor	
Gardening	Sheila Jemmett	3rd Tuesday	10.00	Commem Hall
Historic Buildings	TBA	See website for latest news		
Knit & Natter	Kate Metcalfe	1st Tuesday	14.30	check with convenor
Life Writing	Jessica Brown	alternate Tue	10.00	check with convenor
Mahjong	Norwill Hazell	2nd & 4th Thu	14.30	Wadhurst Manor Care Home
Mindfulness & Relaxation	Sue Swift	4th Friday	10.30	check with convenor
Modern Architecture	Jane Austin	every 6-8 we	every 6-8 weeks check with conven	
Play Reading	Philip Cheung	check with convenor		
Science & Technology	Philip Cheung	1st Tuesday	14.00	Wadhurst Manor Care Home
Scrabble	Juliet Conrad	Temporarily suspended- awaiting new members		
Table Tennis	Philippa Standley	Tuesdays	12.30	Uplands Sports Centre
Ten Pin Bowling	Lynda Emberson	Lynda Emberson check with convenor		h convenor
Theatre Visits	Lynda Emberson	check with convenor		
Walking	Sarah Parry	2nd Thursday	10.00	check with convenor
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 01580 200647. State your name, tel number and the group(s) of interest.

^{***} Consult our website: www.wadhurstu3a.org.uk for up-to-date information. ***

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Philip Cheung

After cancelling our meeting in December because of snow, we started the new year by looking at:

'recent inventions that made a difference to our lives.'

Members of the group were asked to speak for a few minutes about an invention, to start a discussion. We estimated that everyone would have had their say after two meetings, but as it happens this will not happen until after the meeting in March.

A summary of our expositions and discussions:

January

Alan Goddard took to the meeting some transistors similar to the ones his father had in his workshop in the 60's. These were button-sized semiconductor devices that replaced lightbulb-like thermionic tubes. This was the first step in a revolution that brought us portable electronic devices from transistor radios of yesteryears to the smart phones of today, through miniaturisation and the resultant reduction of energy consumption and processing speed. The webpage https://electronicshacks.com/what-do-transistors-do-in-a-mobile-phone/ describes in greater detail what the billion or so transistors do in a smartphone.

Neil Lyn (Paddock Wood u3a) introduced us to the ADCP (Acoustic Doppler Current Profiler) which has made his life much easier as an oceanographer. This device is attached to the bottom on a vessel and measures the speed of water currents as a function of depth. It emits sound signals and obtains the depth and velocity of reflectors (particles in seawater) by the time-delay and frequency shift of the echoes received. Neil described the use of ADCP to measure the currents through the Straits of Gibraltar. As the Mediterranean has a higher salinity than the Atlantic, two currents flow to redress the imbalance: a surface current bringing fresher water from the Atlantic to the Med, and an undercurrent taking saltier water in the reverse direction.

Richard Fridd rounded off the afternoon by introducing us to meat substitutes. A brief history of the company, Quorn, who pioneered such products in the UK, was followed by a tasting of a snack, a 'sausage' and a 'fish filet' made from *mycoprotein*, derived from the *Fusarium venenatum* fungus. They were well-liked.

February

Oenone Warr brought with her samples of the OttoG switch invented by John Crawshaw Taylor, a British inventor. The switch is a clever mechanical device with many uses, including switching off of a kettle WHEN IT BOILS. This is a harder problem than it seems at first sight because water boils at different temperatures according to altitude and purity. (See https://www.ingenia.org.uk/ingenia/issue-80/how-does-that-work).

Maurice Cox (Hawkhurst u3a) described his disquiet about electric cars: their cost and the demands they make on our infrastructure such as charge points. A lively discussion ensued which soon broadened to the cost of going green in general, and the difficulties to modify the grid in a timely manner as we switch to electricity from fossil fuels. The use of hydrogen to fuel cars was also discussed.

Finally Philip Cheung brought up MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging) that has become an indispensable complement to X-ray based CT scans (Computed Tomography) for imaging the human body. MRI has a greater sensitivity to soft tissues and unlike large doses of X-rays, is non-carcinogenic. MRI is based on nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR) which was a scientific curiosity with no obvious applications outside a laboratory in Philip's student days.

March

June Hudson and Cheryl Lovelace (Paddock Wood u3a) will introduce the subjects of 3D Printing and Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) respectively. PCR is a biochemical technique that replicates traces of a DNA sequence billions of times to make them readily detectable, such as with traces of a virus DNA sequence in the PCR Covid test.

Our programme for the next two months:

Apr 4	Updates on 'Energy Storage on the Grid Scale' since 2020	All
May 2	How muscles get energy from the food we eat	Oenone Warr

If you are interested in any of the talks or discussions, just come along. We welcome members of other u3a's to our meetings. As can be seen from the above, their participation has given much greater variety and excitement to our activities.

From March 2023, we shall be meeting at 2pm on the first Tuesday of each month, in the Purple Room of Wadhurst Manor Care Home.

WALKING Sarah Parry

The u3a 3-5 mile walking group has carried on through the winter, albeit with a break for January. We are back on track for February with a walk along part of the Cuckoo Trail on Thursday Feb 9th. For those of you who don't know it, this is a walking/cycling trail created from the former Heathfield to Eastbourne rail line passing through Horam. Its advantage is that the route is all tarmac and therefore really suitable for winter: no mud!

Once we're into spring and, hopefully, the mud has receded if not disappeared we'll resume walking in the countryside. We try and vary the routes as much as possible in terms of length/ hills/number of stiles etc so that members can find enough walks that suit what they like. I aim to lead at least half and look to those other members who would like to do so to choose and lead their own. These can be repeats of routes we've already done or brand new. We tend to stick to the local area but have enjoyed going further afield. New members are always welcome (and their dogs too....)

Our next walk on 9th March will be Bateman's Estate. We'll meet at the public car park by The Bear in Burwash at 10 am. The route is through very pretty countryside and 3.5-4 miles. There are hills, some muddy patches and a bit of road but only 1 stile. If you're a National Trust member, do bring your card as Bateman's is one of the options for cake-and-coffee but if we're not all members there's an excellent cafe where we finish. Some NT members might like to

make a day of it anyway with a visit to Bateman's too. As usual, let Sarah know if you'd like a lift. Leaving at 9.30am.

UKULELE Iris Glover

It is with sadness we have removed ukulele from the u3a groups. In spite of constantly trying to recruit we realise that it is not many who wish to give up time to learn a musical instrument. Unfortunately, since we started at the beginning of the u3a, three of our members have died, two have left, and one has moved away. Our Crowborough gentleman started his own u3a ukulele group in Crowborough. We have managed to recruit four new players over the years and there are three originals. If anyone is ill or on holiday, we are unable to make the same sound and as we have to sing as well it sounds a bit "thin". Therefore we are continuing but will be recruiting outside u3a members.

Should any of you wish to learn to play the ukulele (I have a spare ukulele to try first) you would be made very welcome. I can be contacted on 01892 782181 although will no longer be a convenor or running the group but I would still offer information and assistance.

The Winter of 1946-7

Thai Goulton

The recent snow and frost reminded me of the winter of 1946/1947 in northern Germany. We had temperatures of -20 degrees Celsius and less for weeks on end and a lot of snow. The lakes froze over and we went ice skating frequently – great fun and no Health and Safety to tell us that it was dangerous as the ice might break – in fact you could see air bubbles in the ice to the depth of 30 to 40 cm and I don't know of anyone falling in. The boys played ice hockey.

In those days we had to clear the footpath in front of our property from ice and snow by about 8 o'clock and spread ash to avoid slipping, so, if there had been new snow over night, we were out there bright and early before school, shovelling away. We had little fuel, just enough to heat one room in the house with a little stove. Such an effort to get yourself to the kitchen to prepare a meal or to a cold bedroom. My mother had some trees in the garden cut down for fuel.

To keep the water pipes from freezing we let the water run just a little bit, they still froze as did the waste pipes. Over Christmas we had a bit of a thaw, the water pipes thawed, the waste pipes didn't, result: floods in the bathroom.

Of course, energy was not so expensive but rationed. If you used too much electricity they cut you off for a bit, so lights had to be switched off in empty rooms. To save energy there was a blackout every night for up to two hours when we sat around a little paraffin storm lamp playing silly card games. Makes me very thankful for a warm and well-lit house.

The cold weather lasted well into the early months of 1947 but the summer of 1947 was sunny and hot. So dream on.

Battles Won, a War Lost

Eileen Ramm

A few days ago, coincidentally suffering with flu, I commenced battle in my kitchen with a common enemy to us all, I expect. Packaging!

I needed some sunflower oil, cooking oil, for a meal I had just begun. There was the pure golden liquid in a plastic bottle staring me in the face, if only I could open it. After close inspection, I knew what I had to do. Under the cap was a tight coil of plastic I had to somehow grab onto with about a 3 mm grabbing point. I grabbed, I twisted, I cursed. Nothing happened. I tried again, and again. No good. Then, battle lines drawn, I reached for a knife. Not a sharp one, I learned that lesson ages ago, but if I could just get that knife into the join, it would work....

It did not. The knife slipped and dug into the fleshy joint between my thumb and index finger and the blood flowed. Not bad, but bad enough, and I still needed the oil. I had to use butter instead. Lucky for me, 2 hours later (and the blood flow stopped), a man friend with big burly hands came to the door and within half a minute the oil was conquered.

Then later on it was the inside cap of a UHT milk bottle, that I eventually had to hammer into with a wooden spoon, losing half a litre (of milk, not blood) in the skirmish.

The last battle of the day was one I had faced many times beforemy bottle of Listerine mouthwash. I swear that the queen's jewels are not as well protected as this half litre of blue liquid which I am sadly attracted to. I mean, it's not radioactive waste, it's mouthwash!

First, it has a tight, clear plastic shroud needing scalpel-sharp scissors to remove. I did this on the 3rd attempt. This then reveals an ingenious device requiring equal hard pressure from 2 fingers to release 2 tabs. My fingers don't do equal pressure at inhuman strength. But I'd been there before, I had my plan, and with the help of sharp scissors, toenail clippers and a wrench, it was mine, all mine, less the sizeable amount of liquid left on the kitchen counter.

But the war is not over yet, and more and more when considering a purchase, I am looking at the packaging rather than the product. And I know there are all kinds of ingenious devices out there for sale to deal with these problems. But, is it time to rise up? Is this all necessary?

An Artist in Our Midst

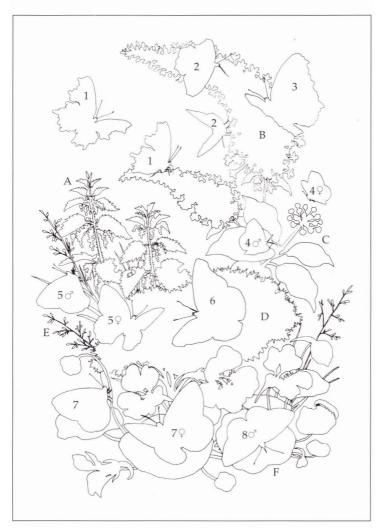
Valerie Baines has drawn and painted as long as she can remember and has always had an interest in the wild-life around her. As a school-child she reared butterflies (especially cabbage whites, because she didn't like cabbage) and kept various pets, who were models for drawings and paintings. She went to Harrow Art School, and the Royal College of Music, and then became a designer in the studio at Sandersons, where an aptitude for design and flower painting is essential. On leaving Sandersons she continued free-lance designing and illustration.

Valerie is a Fellow of the Linnean Society of London, founded in 1778, the oldest extant natural history society in the world. She is also a founder member and past Vice President of the Society of Botanical Artists. Her paintings have been exhibited at the Royal Academy, the Royal Society of Miniature Painters, the Royal Horticultural Society, the Linnean Society, the Museum of Garden History, and annually with the Society of Botanical Artists among other venues in England; the Hunt Institute of Botanical Painting at the Carnegie Mellon University, U.S.A, the Botanical Gardens of the Memorial University, Newfoundland, Canada, and at Le Jardin des Cinq Sens, Yvoire, France.

She has illustrated fifteen books concerned with Natural History, including *The Naturalist's Garden* and *The Story of Silk* by John Feltwell, *Glorious Butterflies* for Butterfly Conservation and *Mindful of Butterflies* by Bernard Jackson, butterflies becoming something of a speciality. She has written articles for magazines on drawing and painting in watercolour, and gardening for butterflies, and tutors courses on painting at Pashley Manor and Juniper Hall Field Centre, Dorking, Surrey, where there is the butterfly garden full of nectar and larval food plants that she has designed for the Surrey and S.W. London branch of Butterfly Conservation. Besides butterflies and botanical subjects, Valerie has painted portraits of John Aspinall's gorillas at Port Lympne, and published two sketchbooks, of Guernsey and Wadhurst.

Having lived in Wadhurst for some twenty years, Valerie joined the u3a only quite recently, having lost her husband to COVID. She will be speaking to the Gardening Group about 'making a garden for butterflies' on 21st March. Our u3a is indeed fortunate to have as its member someone who has led such an interesting and accomplished life and who is happy to share her expertise with our members.

The back cover of this issue shows 'Garden Butterflies', one of eight paintings from Valerie's book *Glorious Butterflies*. The painting has been reduced in size by a half to fit on to a page of NEWS, but it is hoped that you can still enjoy the details of the butterflies in their natural habitat.



Butterflies in the Garden

from

Glorious **Butterflies** and their flora

Paintings by Valerie Baines

Edited by

David Dunbar

Published by Butterfly Conservation Society.

BUTTERFLIES IN THE GARDEN

- 1 Comma
- Small Tortoiseshell
- 3 Peacock
- 4 Holly Blue
- 5 Meadow Brown
- 6 Red Admiral
- 7 Large White
- 8 Small White
- A Stinging Nettle
- B Buddleia
- C Ivy
- D Sedum
- E Annual Meadow-grass
- Nasturtium

Polygonia c-album

Aglais urticae Inachis io

Celastrina argiolus

Maniola jurtina

Vanessa atalanta

Pieris brassicae

Pieris rapae

Urtica dioica

Buddleia davidii

Hedera helix

Sedum spectabile

Poa annua

Tropaeolum majus

