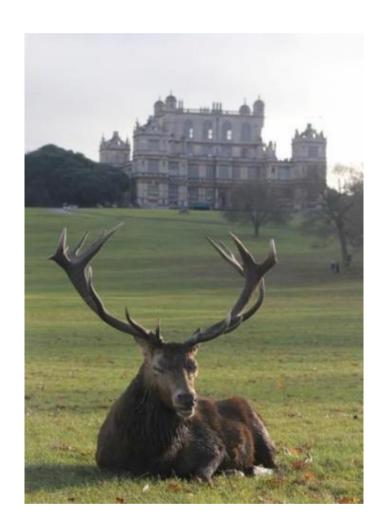
Wollaton Words

Wollaton u3a **Magazine Summer 2023**

Learn, Laugh. Live: United in our 3rd Age



By the Members for the Members



Welcome to this Spring/Summer edition of the Wollaton u3a magazine. I hope that you enjoy reading all the contributions that have been written by our members. Our Magazine is a great way to showcase Wollaton u3a and encourage new members to join us.

A big thank you to all of you that have written a piece and provided our photos for this issue and to our chief editor, Liz and her Team for putting in all the time and effort needed to get this edition into print.

If you have enjoyed reading the magazine, why not write something for the next one, as we are dependent on our members for content. If you have an idea but need help to put it into words, the editors are here to help you.

Sarah, Chair, Wollaton u3a

Thought

Look to this day for it is life the very life of life.

In this brief course live all the realities and truth of existence, the joy of growth the splendour of action the glory of power.

For yesterday is but a memory and tomorrow is only a vision.
But today well lived makes every yesterday a memory of happiness and every tomorrow a vision of hope.
Look well, therefore, to this day!

"An ancient Sanskrit poem" Khalidasa

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Ever wondered what really goes on in our 'Interest Groups'? Some are selfexplanatory – the language groups, the board games, walking tennis and so on. Read on to find out about the activities and meetings of some of our other groups

THE ALLOTMENT GROUP

We are pleased to have two new members, taking us up to a group of 11. Over the winter, we have met at least once most weeks, covering maintenance work, work on building up the new plot and making the existing beds ready for the new season. Cabbages, chard, spinach, onions & purple sprouting broccoli have overwintered.



A year ago, we took on a third plot between us which we inherited in rather overgrown condition and I'm pleased to report that we have made tremendous progress. We are very pleased with our new wooden shed which has 5, soon to be 6, water butts plumbed in and three large composting bins. One of the current projects is building a fence across the front of the plot. Next week we plan to put the mesh joining the posts across the front. Over the year, we have cleared & dug 6 beds, moved a large mound of soil and have planted blackcurrant & raspberry bushes & also elephant garlic to join the existing rhurbarb. We even had a crop of potatoes from the plot last year. We have just planted a batch of seed potatoes to harvest later this year which, together with other produce, we hope to bring to the u3a meetings (as we did last year!). A small herb garden has been planted and also several tyres have been put down our boundary with the next allotment to serve as

small herb gardens. This year we will try to plant more bee friendly plants. We have

just finished picking the purple sprouting broccoli and are just picking the new season's rhubarb.

Some of the proceeds of the sale of our produce at the u3a meetings was put towards a compost shredder which takes a lot of work out of the sieving of compost from our compost bin.





Liz S. Convenor

WORD SEARCH

Can you find the following words in the grid below

appreciation art cake camera coffee early guest hammer hers his icicle Interest groups local lunch music photography plant sew singing stroll tree walk wine

р	h	0	t	0	g	r	а	р	h	у	m
е	r	е	m	m	а	h	m	t	h	0	r
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а	р	р	r	е	С	i	а	t	i	0	n
W	i	n	е	k	е	n	m	n	r	I	С
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FRENCH CONVERSATION

This group which started at the beginning of October last year meets fortnightly on Monday afternoons in the Snug at the Admiral Rodney. We are of mixed ability but everyone can join in a conversation. Our themes have included rail journeys, food and our recent regular activities or experiences; we've done some role-playing and shared our frustrations with the internet with the rest of the group. It's very informal and friendly.

We're always hungry to learn new words and expressions and help each other out. New French words we've learnt are water leak, supermarket trolley and to commute!

Apprendre ensemble dans un environnement convivial nous permet de rester plus jeunes. (Learning together in a friendly environment keeps us staying younger)

Hilary, Convenor

CRAFT GROUP

We currently have 11 members at the Craft Group, meeting on the first Thursday morning of the month 10am until 12 at Grangewood Methodist Church. We have a few vacancies to join our very friendly and welcoming group.

Each month we plan for the next session so that all members are prepared. We are eager to try any craft that our members suggest and our recent



creations have included: macrame key rings, decal soaps, woven ribbon greetings cards and flower decorations. We are currently designing and making a u3a table cloth for use in





our Speaker Meetings and Coffee Mornings

Some of our recent accomplishments were on a poster displayed at the Coronation Celebration coffee morning as shown below



Maria, Member

FAMILY HISTORY - an interesting hobby!

Why not join our Family History Group? We are a few enthusiasts with different knowledge and experience and will welcome any new members who would like to join us on the 2nd Wednesday of each month in The Royal British Legion in Wollaton. Our meetings start at 11.15am.

Do you have a photograph of when when you were a youngster?

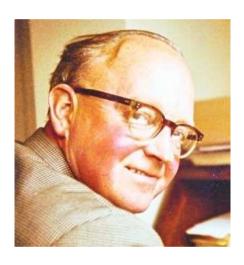


I am sharing this photo of me that was taken during the 2nd WW when we lived in Lincolnshire. Petrol rationing meant that my Paternal Grand Parents did not see my parents and me very often as they lived in Lytham St. Annes. A copy of this photo was sent to them.

What is your earliest memory?

One of my early memories was being woken up to find our house being used as a refuge for some airmen who had been

rescued from an aeroplane that had been shot down in a field near our home. Dad was serving in the Home Guard during the war as he was not enlisted due to a very bad car crash in which he suffered injuries a few years earlier. Note the dent in his skull in the photo taken some years later.



Mike, Convenor

COFFEE MORNINGS

Three years ago the Coffee Morning was born. We quickly recruited a few willing helpers but before we could become established subsequent lockdown happened. Not to be deterred we quickly adopted Zoom and continued having virtual meetings. On 5th November 2021 we were able to cautiously restart face to face meetings. Adverts were circulated and we soon reached between 25 and 35 members regularly enjoying coffee and biscuits and chats with friends. We quickly realised that most months we were attracting visitors who often became new members. So far we have recruited 32 members through our coffee morning.

In our first year since Lockdown we had cakes and festivities at Easter and Christmas, and of course last year we celebrated the Queen's 70th Jubilee. Our resident music makers, Steve, John and Mo, provided entertainment and led a singalong at these ifunctions. Recently we have formed a coffee morning organisation team of 5 members. Together we have planned 'events' for each

month. Our first major event this year was the Coronation celebration. In addition we agreed to have a monthly book exchange.

In June our theme was "Wellbeing". Approximately 15 of our members enjoyed the benefits of hand massage. The Garden Group planned an exhibition of how gardens and plants can assist in wellbeing, including use of herbs such as lavender, rosemary, parsley, sage, bay, and thyme. Marianne bought along some lavender bags, and Anne made some hot drinks from mint and lemon balm.

Future themes include plant exchange, produce from the allotment group, pressing flowers and making pictures and cards. The craft group will be exhibiting some of their work and giving demonstrations of some of their skills. Of course, we will be celebrating Christmas with cake and mince pies, and a sing a long of Christmas songs and carols.

Our Coronation Celebration

Friday 5th May at last. The day before the coronation of King Charles and Queen Camilla. Hours of planning, of



cooking, baking, preparing posters and photos of interest group activities, rehearsing music and songs. We were ready. Well nearly! Flags (a vintage flag from Queen Elizabeth's coronation in 1953



provided by Richard) and bunting needed to be arranged, tables set up, The Cake displayed (made by Chair's sister), coffee cups ready, hot water boiled.



The music ensemble, Mo on keyboard, Steve and John with guitars welcoming all. Later to lead a 'Commonwealth' sing a long



Fifty-seven members and thirteen guests joined together to celebrate the crowning of our new King and his Queen.

Liz

STROLLERS GROUP

The Strollers meet at The Hemlock Stone on the 4th Wednesday of the month at 10am. We spend an enjoyable 1 ½ hours strolling along pleasant country or park paths around Wollaton and surrounding area. The terrain is mostly flat with only very short gentle inclines and covers up to 2 miles. We always finish up with a sit down and a drink (sometimes a cake or bun) before heading back home. Recent strolls have included Wollaton Park, and around Beeston Marina. If you are interested in Joining us, please get in touch with the Group Coordinator, contact details on Page

Cowslip Primula Veris

Other names: St Peter's Keys, palsy flower, galligaskins, cow flops, plum rocks, fairy cups.

Description: A very pretty delicately scented vivid yellow flower which grows to 8"(20cm). a plant originally of meadows which can be seen, at this time of year, growing between Beeston Rylands and Attenborough Nature Reserve on Meadow Lane, and also extensively on Pit Lane Recreation area, Trowell.

According to legend St Peter dropped the keys to Heaven and where they landed cowslips grew. Its single flower stalk with its head of drooping yellow bells was thought to resemble bunch of keys.



Taken on a walk near Beeston Marina in April 2023.

Herbalists have used cowslips as a remedy for paralysis

Today the root and flower are used as a relaxant or sedative and are also used as an anti- inflammatory to treat arthritis and gout. It has been used throughout history to make wine, mead, jam, tea and ointments. Cowslips used to be popular in Elizabethan knot gardens.

Culpeper noted " The flowers preserved or conserves, and the same quantity of a nutmeg eaten each morning, is a sufficient does for inward disease; but for wounds, spots and sun-burning, an ointment made of leaves and hog's grease."

Cowslips are believed to be the favourite flower of nightingales, which were said to only frequent places where cowslips grew.

Girls once made balls of cowslips called "tossies" which they threw up in the air to try and divine the identity of their future husbands!

Reference: Breverton's Complete Herbal

Sarah

RECIPES

Apple Nut Cake

A healthy tray bake but beware Nuts and Sugar!

You will need a square 8" tin to make 9 pieces, Cook in a cool oven gas mark 2 or 150C for 1 ½ hrs.

<u>Ingredients</u>

5oz wholemeal plain flour
5oz margarine
6oz demerara sugar (can substitute granulated sweetener but not as nice!),
I egg
3oz chopped or minced nuts (I use a mixture of pecans, walnuts and cashews)
2 ¼ oz sultanas
10 oz cooking apples, peeled, chopped or grated

Method

1/4 oz baking powder

Cream margarine with 4 ½ oz of the sugar
Beat in the egg
Fold in the flour and baking powder
Add and mix sultanas with 1 ½ oz of nuts tin
Stir in apples
Spoon into greased tin
Sprinkle with remaining nuts and sugar
Bake in heated oven.

When cooked leave to cool and then cut into 9 pieces and enjoy.

Maria

LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

Exploring the history around us.

In January Graham Woodward gave a presentation on 'The history of the Cinemas of Nottingham'. It was entertaining, informative, and evoked many a happy memory for some members of our group. Did you know that the Broadway Cinema site began its life as the Broad Street Wesleyan Church, which was built in 1839 by the architect

S. S. Rawlinson? This church is reputedly where the founder of the Salvation Army, William Booth, was converted. A plaque commemorating this is to be found in their lobby.

Photo of plaque at Broadway by Ashley Jones

Text Reads: 'In this building formerly the Broad Street Wesley Chapel, William Booth founder and first General of the Salvation Army gave his heart and life to God in his fifteenth year in 1844'

In **February** some of us took to the dizzying heights and



cool depths of Wollaton Hall in February. We were fortunate to have the clearest of days to explore the view from the 'half roof' or 'the leads' which were used in the past to enjoy the views and take exercise in the open air. The sandstone cave system leading to the 'Admiral's Bath' provided perfect conditions to store the Halls beer and wine.

Photo taken morning of our visit. Lucy Cooper

In **March** Val Bird of the Bramcote Local History Society regaled us with the history of Bramcote Hall built by Frederic Chatfield Smith, head of Smith's Bank in Nottingham, in the late 19th century. Frederic was described as a "shrewd, clear headed, cultivated man". In Bramcote he took over the patronage of the church, served as a church warden and often paid off the church debts. He supported the school and held an annual treat in the grounds of The Hall for all the children.

Forthcoming trips:

May: Nottingham University Park. Once the desirable fashionable estate for the wealthy of Nottingham. The Friends of the University Park will give us a guided visit around the gardens and historic buildings and tell us of the people who lived there. June: Guided tour of Watson Fothergill buildings in Nottingham City Centre. July: Wollaton Dovecote: Displays: Tudor room with timeline showing events in lives of Willoughby's & Monarchy etc + new exhibition about coal mining in Wollaton. August: Hidden history of Church Cemetery, better known as Rock Cemetery because of its sandstone caves. A wide tract of land, around 13 acres in total, bounded by Mansfield Road, Forest Road, and The Forest recreation ground. Huge crosses, stone angels standing blind and silent, weathered markers for the rich and famous, the poor and downtrodden of Nottingham.

Lucy

LITERARY MOMENTS

We have several Interest Groups that explore the written word, **The Poetry Group**, **The Creative Writing Group** and the **Book Clubs** being the main ones. The following contributions are from members of these groups, plus some independent pieces.

If you would like to join any of these groups, please contact our Interest Group coordinator details on the back page

BOOK CLUB

The Book Club meets once a month on a Monday Morning at the Admiral Rodney. We do not all read the same book but introduce a book we have read that month.

'The Marriage Portrait' Maggie O'Farrell

This novel was inspired by Robert Browning's poem 'My Last duchess' which in turn was inspired by a portrait of the young Lucrezia de Medici. Painted before her wedding to Alfonso, Duke of Ferrara within 18 months she was dead. Rumour and Browning believed she had been murdered, though historians think this is unlikely.

Maggie O'Farrell has well researched the life of a young girl growing up in a Renaissance palace in Florence. There young princes are taught to fight and rule but girls only wait for puberty, to make good marriages and produce heirs. The second half of the novel deals with Lucrezia's life after her marriage to Alfonso. Far from home she she learns about her new husband, his family and his friends. Gradually she she comes to believe he is planning her murder.

The construction of the book is confusing. The narrative flits back and forth through the years, as many modern novels do. In this case though it does not work.

The writing is disappointing. There are wonderful descriptions, but it is all too rich, too lush, too 'over the top'.

Parts of the plot are unbelievable. Yes, from the portrait this girl might have had a strong personality - look at her 15-year-old face! But she could not have run round the palace at night, listening at doors, which is the device used to move the story along. As for the ending, I found it completely unbelievable.

I was so disappointed when I finished this book. I admire Maggie O'Farrell. 'Hamnet', 'After you'd gone', and 'The Vanishing act of Esme Lennox" are so good. I looked up reviews and many were very positive, praising her book highly. A few felt it was too melodramatic. The New York Times described the characters as one dimensional and over wrought. The British Times reviewer stated "...so heavily perfumed is her prose, it's almost like a drug!'

So.... I am not alone in my criticism of this book. Why not read it and see what you think?

Rosemary Bartlett Book Club Member

WINE TASTING GROUP

Wine Tasting: When we go out for a meal these days we are often offered a choice of varietal wines (i.e. wines produced from a single grape variety rather than blended from several varieties). What are the differences that we should expect from these wines increasingly from the Southern Hemisphere?

Chardonnay: got a bit of a bad reputation back in the 90s for super-oaky new world styles produced but chardonnay makes some of the finest wines in the world. In warm climates chardonnay takes on vibrant citrus fruit flavours and mineral laden aromas and flavours.

Sauvignon Blanc: Zesty, fragrant sauvignon blanc is probably the most popular white wine variety in the world at present. Tropical fruit tinged New Zealand sauvignon style graces most wine lists, but it is worth discovering that there is much more to this aromatic grape variety. In Europe it showcases its aromatic character and refreshing acidity at its best. This is the style adopted by most other countries to produce pure zesty wines.

Pinot Grigio: from Northern Italy is most familiar: from the mountainous regions this grape is charmingly light with mouth watering citrus, peach and floral aromas. It's brilliant drunk on its own as an aperitif or with salads and creamy cheeses.

Syrah: or Shiraz as it's known in the New World, is considered to be one of the great noble black grape varieties because it can produce deliciously dark, full bodied wines. Expect rich, brooding flavours of blackberry, black plums and blackcurrant, with spicy, coffee, leathery and liquorice notes from hotter regions.

Merlot: is characterized by its soft texture and easy, fruit forward character – think ripe plums, summer fruits and touches of vanilla and spice. So versatile it is the grape behind many good value any day reds. On its own it produces juicy, soft, plump reds. Chile is particularly known for its full bodied, plummy, spicy merlot and good examples make very easy drinking.

Malbec: is Argentina's most popular variety. High altitude and continental climate provide malbec with the challenging growing conditions in which the grape thrives. Deeply coloured, rich and robust wines are produced with sufficient alcohol, tannin and acidity to support oak ageing.

Cabernet Sauvignon: Cabernets from the southern hemisphere tend to develop a sense of fullness and weight. Expect to taste blackcurrants, cedar, cassis, liquorice and roasted coffee beans.

There are of course many other grape varieties and all of the above can be blended to produce different textures and flavours but the above is a short description of what you might expect from your everyday varietals

Allan, Convenor

CREATIVE WRITING

Sky

Ethereal, endless blue – a place of dreams and hopes – a calm sea with cloud islands – an infinite world where thoughts can wander, untrammelled by earthly limits. Freedom, exemplified by its inhabitants who fly, glide, soar through the air. It is the ultimate severing of responsibility, from worry, from the sheer clagging weight that pulls us down and drags our feet.

When storm clouds obscure the blue and cast dark shadows, looming over the earth, things change – we feel trapped beneath their oppressive weight, no longer free. Thunder roars and lightening reveals a stark world of harsh light – so different from the softer light of our northern sun. Then – the rain – battering the flowers, smacking the leaves, spearing the earth and filling the hollows, flooding the fields.....The clouds disperse, revealing our sky and a newly cleaned landscape of fresh green as our land breathes again under the blue sky.

Above the clouds the storm was but a mark on the carpet. The mighty atmosphere remained above lit by its golden sun.

Outside the earth, in the vast darkness of space, our small blue dot shows quite clearly. The sky is our atmosphere, bearing water which lends it its azure hue. Small, yes, but so special – alone yet found in the universe. From space, that arc of infinite blue appears as a cocoon. It is not infinite – it a barrier, a fence against a hostile environment.

And within it life was able to evolve.

Rosemary

Creative writing

Relaxation?

Relaxation as defined by the Oxford Dictionary is:

- cessation from work
- recreation
- amusements
- diminution of tension
- restoration of equilibrium following disturbance (physical)

Cessation of work rings true as I have been retired from work now for 7 years.

Relaxation for me has taken many forms over the years. I used to swim regularly at the Leisure Centre when working and in the days when the water was warm.

Keep fit has taken many forms from 'Swing into Shape' working with a partner and chiffon scarves. Alas barriers raised their head in the form of parking problems when in the darkness I hit a low piece of street furniture and damaged my car.

Yoga was next in the Church Hall Which was not heated but exercise kept us warm. One wintry dark night I again had a parking issue when I reversed over some shattered glass which I was unable to see due to lack of light. The outcome was changing my flat tyre on a cold wet winter's night with the help of some cheerful pub customers.

Singing in a choir in Ruddington was next. Fantastic! The choirmaster made us work really hard on breathing, using breath control exercises, scales and singing beautiful pieces of music. BUT again car parking raised issues. This time a car park was available, but no lighting after 7pm. I parked on the grass but did not see a tree trunk barrier which became lodged under my exhaust. To crown it all it was raining cats and dogs! I was drenched trying to free the small tree stump causing the problem. Eventually I succeeded and with trepidation, made my way home.

Creche, Mums and Tots followed. This was enjoyable and exciting working with young mums, doing jigsaws, exploring different crafts, role playing in kitchen corners and shops. We also enjoyed singing action rhymes and dressing with the children to enact bible stories.

Nordic walking was marvellous at the University and Bramcote Hills. We had an inspiring teacher who advised us about the benefits of fresh air and ski preparation exercises. Home and garden, painting, decoration and tidying up were kept strictly for the spring summer and early autumn months.

Nowadays my recreation focuses on u3a. I take up one new activity each year. This year it is French conversation fortnightly. Let's hope 2024 will be a year of relaxation and family reunions. A welcome reminder from the definition of 'restoration of equilibrium, following disturbance"

Marion

Creative writing

Lament of the DIY Wife: To be Fair



He can tackle most jobs around the house and has a variety of tools. *To be fair, which I always am,* he has done some marvellous jobs, meticulously planned and executed to a high standard.

Well, the reality can be a little different. Starting with the aforementioned tools. I get that it is important to have the right tool for each task, and that better tools become available periodically. These of course can enable a job to be done quicker, with less physical strain on ageing joints and

perhaps safer. However, each tool has to be accommodated ('a place for everything, and everything in its place') in such a way that it is readily accessible when needed. This often involves detailed planning followed by creating new shelving with locations tailored to each tool. Never mind about other rooms that are in desperate need of storage facilities.

To be fair, which I always am, I do see the justification for the above. The most used items even have their locations identified so that if I am acting as his mate he can tell me what and where to look. To be fair, which I always am, his DIY does save us a lot of money, even allowing for the cost of all those pesky tools.

Then there are the dreaded WIP's, ie Work In Progress. This euphonism sounds better than 'Unfinished Job', which is what we are talking about here. *To be fair, which I always am, I* do understand that sometimes higher priority tasks intervene, or even that I request his services for something new, but do I really have to wait 4 years for work to recommence?

The customary sequence of events leading up to a project is first to think about how to do it, perhaps involving some research, and then to cogitate about it on and off for some time to assess alternatives and decide on the optimum method. *To be fair, which I always am,* this can lead to a better solution, covering all eventualities, be aesthetically pleasing and quicker to execute. Does this process really have to take up to 2 years though?

Whilst undertaking carpentry it is inevitable that offcuts of wood are created to add to those emanating from deconstructed assemblies, surplus lengths from packs of timber and even from other tradespeople employed to do jobs he cannot. Of course, these need to be organised by type, section and size so that the closest match to what is required can be readily found. First there was one wood store, then a second and there is even talk of a third. *To be fair, which I always am, I* do see the benefits of not having to go to a shop, spending money and also of recycling.

Then there is the vast range of bits and pieces to be kept 'in case they come in useful one day'. Irritatingly on rare occasions they do thereby justifying their retention. And of course, they have to be organised into a variety of containers of appropriate sizes duly labelled and placed on yet more shelves. *To be fair, which I always am,* this can be extremely useful and even enable repair of an item rather than replacing it.

Am I lucky? Oh, for a reliable tradesperson to be at my beck and call

DH

Hands of my First-Born Grandson - Charlie 12.01.21

He was so small. I would scan the crib a half second to find him, face down in a corner, head against the top of the crib. A limp body, as something flung down or fallen from some sky, an inch above the mattress. I would take his hand along his

side and slowly turn him over. He would tumble part by part, like a load of damp laundry in the dryer. I would slip a hand in. under his neck, slide the other under his back and evenly lift him up. Charlie. Imagine.....his little bottom fitted into the palm of my hand! I was afraid of his little neck. Once I almost thought I heard a quiet snap - I looked at him and he swivelled his slate blue eyes and looked at me. He was in my care, while his mother slept in the room nearby. The ten little fingers and toes with shell like nails. I visited every 6-8 weeks and as time progressed, I watched the ballet of his twirling hands, his chirping [and loving]



sounds, his gurgling. Perpetual expectation, wonder and [perpetual] surprise.

I study his every movement with love, tenderness and pride. Now I watch and play games, 'One Little Piggy went to market ', 'Row, row, row the boat', Round and round the garden'. He is kissed a thousand times a day. What a joy! What a wonder! My little gift to the continuance of the human race. The circle of life is complete as I remember him when I am washing dishes, staring at the mirror and I remember Charlie's hands, feet and lungs with a smile of tenderness and joy.

Marion

Thankyou from the editing team to all who have contributed ideas, articles, support and technological help.

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"I wish you a day of morning light"

Rosemary found this greeting from a book "The Beekeeper of Aleppo" by Christy Lefteri . The book is the story of agonising refugee journeys, the pain of loss and the holding on to hope through seemingly endless suffering. This greeting calls upon the hope every morning brings as the new start to the day. When there is nothing that seems true, worthy, helpful – even permanent, the inevitability of dawn becomes a precious thing. For all of us we could wish for a day of morning light.

Disclaimer

The contents of Wollaton Words are contributions from members of Wollaton u3a and do not represent the views of the trustees and committee of Wollaton u3a.

The Editorial Team will edit the magazine in accordance with the guidance and rules laid down by the trustees and committee of Wollaton u3a.

Editorial Code

Offensive pictures or articles will be returned and not accepted for publishing

Editorial suggestions for change in either title or content, will be discussed and agreed with the contributor before publication

If no agreement can be reached the member can withdraw their contribution which will not be accepted for publishing

The Editorial Team's decisions on all matters relating to the content of this publication is final

All original work submitted by members to the editorial team will be assumed to have consent for publishing using the members forename or given alternative

Any copied text or pictures are subject to copyright rules and must be referenced to the original author, artist or photographer. These texts or pictures should not be altered from the original

All original photographs that include distinguishable features of individuals must have explicit consent of those individuals for publication. The photographer must state that this has been requested and consent given before publication. The subjects must be able to refuse alterations

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