

## Chairman's Update December 2023

**u3a Epsom & Ewell**

<https://epsomandewellu3a.co.uk/>

Email enquiries to: [u3aepsom@gmail.com](mailto:u3aepsom@gmail.com)

*LEARN, LAUGH & LIVE*

Welcome to our December newsletter.

As the year comes to an end it is time to look forward to meeting up with friends and family to enjoy the festive season.

However you decide to spend your Christmas I hope it brings you peace and joy.

Our u3a will be hosting our usual monthly talk on December 4<sup>th</sup> and members of the committee will also be joining the Residents Association and manning a stall at Ewell Yule on Friday December 8<sup>th</sup> in the evening (hope it stays fine!!).

The Methodist church in Epsom are hosting warm Wednesdays in Roots Café, and St Mary's in Ewell village are hosting their Friendly Warm Friday Hub in the Ewell Village Hall during December. Full details on our website on the Local Links page.

The social committee have some new offerings on the website and in this edition.

Also check out our new website page. Curious?



**Happy Christmas  
and a peaceful  
New Year**

We hope that you have enjoyed reading our newsletter each month.

Thank you to all the group leaders and members who have contributed with articles and pictures to entertain our members.

If you would like to contribute an article or picture that you think may be of interest to our members please email to:

[epsomwebsite@gmail.com](mailto:epsomwebsite@gmail.com)

“Singing for Pleasure“ welcomed 14 ukulele members to our session on the 3rd November, for some players this was the first time both ukulele groups had joined up, all credit to Sue Overy. This was our “rock ‘ n roll” session, we sang along to Mary Lou, Teenager in Love, Runaround Sue, Sweets for my Sweet, I’m into something good, a Buddy Holly melody and finishing with “Let’s Twist Again” when we all clapped and danced (some of us even did the twist) 😄

This was such a joyous session we are already talking about meeting up again next spring. Our next session will be “Songs from the Musicals”, then Christmas practice followed by our Christmas Concert with our Musical Trio on December 8th .

Group Leader Jenny Sparrow 🎵



“Singing for Pleasure” pleasure!

On Friday 3rd November “Singing for Pleasure” were joined by the ukulele group for a “Rock and Roll” session. To be honest I wasn’t really looking forward to this session as it’s not (or so I thought!) my taste in music. I had explained this to Jenny Sparrow, who runs the group, a couple of weeks before. Well!!! I must say it exceeded all my expectations and I thoroughly enjoyed it! The songs we sung were nowhere near what I thought they would be and the extra voices and addition of the ukuleles gave a different ambience to our normal sessions. I of course informed Jenny by way of an apology how much I enjoyed it.

Jan Stevens



### **Garden Visiting Group**

**This month the Garden Wanderers were back at Wisley Gardens for the autumn tints and the very smart craft fair.**

**We were congratulating ourselves on managing to dodge the rain - then it found us out, and provided a great rainbow.**

**Next month we will be visiting Wisley Gardens at night for the Glow light festival.**



In November u3a members joined Andrew's regular Magic Moments clients for an evening at the Royal Albert Hall. The show was entitled Icons Rediscovered and featured The Nutcracker Act II followed by lolanta. This unusual combination was commissioned in 1890 by the Director of Moscow's Imperial Theatre following the success of The Sleeping Beauty. He commissioned Tchaikovsky to compose one opera and one ballet. Together they would become his last opera and ballet, completed just two years before his death.

Our seats were excellent and close to the stage. The conductor was Vasily Petrenko who is the musical director of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. It was fascinating to watch the way that he controlled the orchestra. I had never been close enough to see in such detail the signals given. He was incredibly animated as he swayed to the music and gestured to the musicians exactly when to come in and the timings for each piece. It was fascinating trying to work out exactly which musician was going to play next.

Act II of the Nutcracker is best known for the Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy which is the centerpiece with the unmistakable sound of the celeste.

Part two was the opera lolanta which was played out at the front of the stage with the backdrop of the orchestra. lolanta is a love story with a twist. The story was excellently depicted and there were screens with subtitles to enable you to follow the story. In a highly unusual move, the strings are completely silent throughout the Introduction – instead a gloomy combination of woodwind and horns, with a poignant solo cor anglais, set the scene. It was fascinating.



*Did you know? The Nutcracker has featured in everything from Disney's Fantasia and Tom and Jerry to music by Madonna, The Pet Shop Boys and Mariah Carey.*



The Ballroom dancing group started in October 2022 and is still going strong. Originally aimed at complete beginners, we can now consider ourselves 'Improvers.' Thanks to Tim, our expert teacher, we have covered some basic moves in the slow (social) rhythm, waltz, and quickstep, and have learned complete routines in the rumba and cha-cha. Not to mention the party samba, which is a great way to finish a lesson – or indeed, a party.



We meet every other Monday from 2.00 - 3.30 at St Marks Hall, Great Tattenhams – the cost is £2.50 per session – which may well represent the best value for anything anywhere in the South East!

Our group currently numbers in the high teens, but we could accommodate more members. It is unlikely now to be suitable for beginners, but, if you have some experience – from a range of a little to quite a lot – you could find the sessions useful and enjoyable. You do not have to have a partner and – so far – we have not had to resort to ladies dancing the man's steps.

Here are some comments from a couple of our members:

*"Tim is an excellent dance teacher, he's very patient, going over the moves, giving plenty of help. It's well attended and I have made a new group of friends. We have all come a long way since starting and it is an excellent exercise for the body and brain. It may take a while before we dance at the Blackpool Tower ballroom but we are all having a great time!"*

*"Tim Palmer is a professional dancer and teacher and it is a real treat to be taught by someone with so much knowledge and love of his dancing style. He is teaching us routines and moves and repeating them and reusing them to encourage our confidence on the dance floor!"*

If you like the sound of this and want to know more, please contact Bernadette on [brhurcombe@gmail.com](mailto:brhurcombe@gmail.com).



**WEDNESDAY 20<sup>th</sup>  
MARCH 2024  
WOKING THEATRE  
2.30pm Matinee**

Head from the aisle to the isles in the official Stock Aitken Waterman musical featuring the soundtrack of a generation with music from pop royalty including Kylie Minogue (*I Should Be So Lucky*), Rick Astley (*Never Gonna Give You Up*), Jason Donovan (*Especially for You*), Bananarama (*Love In The First Degree*) and more, all intertwined in an original story of love, laughter and last-minute getaways!

*I Should Be So Lucky* is about family, friends and being there when it matters most. Featuring ten Number 1 singles and over thirty era-defining songs from the Hit Factory, slip into those summer sandals, pop on your shades, and lose yourself in this whirlwind of sun-kissed adventures and iconic pop classics.

Get ready to hear Stock Aitken Waterman's beloved chart-toppers like never before in the brand-new musical sensation of the year.

**£43.50 PER PERSON**

**Excursion price includes:**

Stalls ticket Rows N or P, return coach travel, and administrative charges.  
(Does not include driver's gratuity, discretionary to individuals)

**COACH BOARDING POINTS**

- 11.45am **NORTH CHEAM, London Road** – Bus Stop, Outside Costa Coffee
- 11.55am **EWELL, The Spring** – Bus Stop, Opposite Bourne Hall Bus Shelter
- 12.00pm **EWELL, Epsom Road** – Bus Stop, by the top of Mongers Lane
- 12.10pm **EPSOM, High Street** – Bus Stop, Outside Santander
- 12.15pm **ASHTHEAD, High Street** – Bus Stop, Opposite Betting Shop

Time has been allowed for pre-show wander/refreshments, traffic permitting

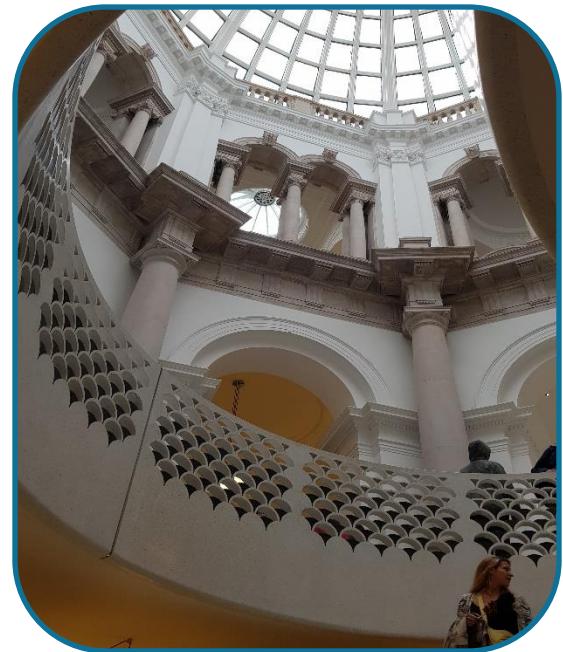
## Architecture Group

Eleven members of our group went for a stroll around Tate Britain this month to see the many and varied styles of the original building and its 8 different extensions & refurbishments.

We started by walking around the outside of the substantial building to seek out evidence of the changes that have taken place over 120 years and then moved inside to see if matching evidence could be found. We found it was actually quite difficult to tie in the many different styles internally as they were more blurred, but learned that the public can get their own way when a proposed renovation is clearly inappropriate.

Staff & volunteers were more than co-operative with hints and tips, and even access to behind the scenes to pick up the best angles of some of the more radical developments. However, it became a challenge just looking at the building itself, and we all succumbed at one time or another to distraction by artwork.

Next month we will be taking Christmas lunch in Cheam in one of the oldest pubs in our area.





For our Exploring London Group 8 November walk John decided to lead us on a stroll around the Paddington basin, starting at Paddington Station and the statue of Paddington Bear of course. The picture top left is part of the Paddington Pawprint Trail that you can follow starting at Paddington Station. The centre top is Sir Simon Milton. Although he was only deputy mayor there are seven statues of him around London, that's more than Winston Churchill. Top right is the Floating Pocket Park. The pictures bottom left and centre are two bronze figures that are set several feet apart and are designed to look as if they are going to meet each other. Lastly bottom right is the Puppet Theatre barge which is in Little Venice.

We were very lucky the rain held off and we had a very interesting morning finished off with a very nice lunch at Baker Street.







**Thursday February 29<sup>th</sup> 2024**

**Booking opens on December 1<sup>st</sup>**

**We are limited to 48 members for this day out.**

**£38.50 per person includes return coach travel, driver gratuity, entrance to the museum and three 20-minute workshops.**

**Amberley Museum is a large, mostly open-air site with plenty of space to explore within a safe environment. Our inspiring natural setting, varied working exhibits and volunteer welcome make us a popular choice among further education colleges, universities, language schools and adult learning.**

**We have booked three additional experiences for members to enjoy which each last for 20 minutes. Our party will be split into three groups and there will be a short break between each experience to allow for coffee, comfort breaks and lunch. Members can either take a packed lunch or use the Amberley Museum café facilities.**

**The three additional experiences are as follows:**

**Orientation Talk, Amberley Museum 10 objects, High Voltage Demonstration**

**Most of the site is accessible to those with limited mobility except for our bus fleet, nature trails, the Billingshurst Signal Box, and some viewing platforms.**

**Further details are available on our website, social events page.**

Gertie's Gardeners welcomed Claire as a new member of Gertie's team in October. It is that time of year when we were sweeping, pruning, and tidying but also we planted a new wisteria along the back railing that we are hoping to train along the fence.

Hopefully it will survive and flourish and bring lovely flowers and scent and encourage the bees.



Italian Improvers - This group started in September 2019 as Italian Beginners. Our aim was to learn the language using a book entitled Italian in Three Months!! Although lockdown happened a few months in to our group starting we have been very lucky that members are happy to meet on Zoom and have continued to meet 'virtually' almost every Friday.

I am sure you will all be very impressed when I tell you that we have finally got to Chapter 9 of 10 and are currently considering our onward journey for 2024!!

We have decided that we would probably be very good as a group out and about, as between us we know a lot of words and phrases!!



# EPSOM HOT JAZZ CLUB

*(Sponsored by Epsom & Ewell u3a Jazz)*



## **Tuesday 12 December 2023** **Geoff Hiscott's Artful Dodgers** **Christmas Party Band**

**Tickets £23 (£20 u3a members) includes mulled wine & mince pies**

*Geoff Hiscott MC, piano, tuba: "Magic" Mike Henry cornet:  
Mike Innes trombone: Mark Aston reeds;  
Mike Deighan banjo: Terry Davis bass;  
Graham Collicott percussion*

**free parking & tea break refreshments**

**All Saints Community Hall, Fulford Road, West Ewell KT19 9QY**

**Doors 1.40 - Music 2 - 4.20 pm - Info 0791 3655 458 [m.stevensatlap@gmail.com](mailto:m.stevensatlap@gmail.com)**

**Website: [epsomandewellu3a.co.uk/jazz/](http://epsomandewellu3a.co.uk/jazz/)**

**2024 bookings Tickets £17 (u3a members £15)**

**8 Jan 2024 Paula Jackman's Clarinet Masters (2)**

**13 Feb The Washboard Resonators (from Leeds)**

**26 March The Hot Teapots (from Verona, Italy)**

**(April & May not yet booked)**

**11 June The Forest Hill Owls**

# Festival 2024 18th – 20th Jul 2024

Tickets are not yet available to buy but the cost of attending the festival will be as follows:

Day 1 – Thursday 18 July – £25 including buffet supper

Day 2 – Friday 19 July – £10 for the full day

Day 3 – Saturday 20 July – £5 for a half day

Full festival to include all 3 days and a buffet supper on day 1 – £35

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/festival-2024>



York  
University

## Please wait for the online booking to open.

### Rooms on campus

Rooms on campus will be £61.80pp for bed and breakfast. They are all ensuite single rooms with tea and coffee making. There are no larger rooms available on site. Some are accessible on the ground floor.

### Other accommodation options

For those who wish to book for more than one person we are compiling a list of local self-catering, B&B, campsites, and hotels. They will be as close to the campus as possible and although we cannot recommend them, they will all be from the York Tourist Information list.

For up-to-date information on the festival from the Trust click on the link below.

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/news/newsletter>



## WEDNESDAY 24<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2024 WOKING THEATRE 2.30pm Matinee

WINNER of Best New Musical (What'sOnStage Awards 2023), the West End smash-hit **BONNIE & CLYDE** is set to hold up Woking following two hell-raising seasons in London's West End.

Starring **Catherine Tyldesley** (*Coronation Street, Strictly Come Dancing*) as Blanche, with **Danny Hatchard** (*Eastenders*) and **Katie Tonkinson** (*Bat Out of Hell*) as the notorious lovers and **Sam Ferriday** (*The Cher Show, Rock of Ages*) as Buck. **Nate Landskroner** (*Waitress, Heathers*) will play the role of Clyde at midweek matinee performances - casting for alternate Bonnie will be revealed soon.

Fearless, shameless, and alluring, this award-winning production has garnered a mass following, much like the infamous pair themselves, and now they are set to take your city by storm.

Featuring music by Tony® nominee **Frank Wildhorn** (*Jekyll & Hyde*), lyrics by Tony® and Oscar® winner **Don Black** (*Sunset Boulevard*), a book by Emmy® Award nominee **Ivan Menchell**, directed and choreographed by **Nick Winston**.

### £44.50 PER PERSON

**Excursion price includes:**

Stalls ticket Rows N or P, return coach travel, and administrative charges.  
(Does not include driver's gratuity, discretionary to individuals)

#### COACH BOARDING POINTS

11.45am **NORTH CHEAM, London Road** – Bus Stop, Outside Costa Coffee

11.55am **EWELL, The Spring** – Bus Stop, Opposite Bourne Hall Bus Shelter

12.00pm **EWELL, Epsom Road** – Bus Stop, by the top of Mongers Lane

12.10pm **EPSOM, High Street** – Bus Stop, Outside Santander

12.15pm **ASHTOAD, High Street** – Bus Stop, Opposite Betting Shop

Time has been allowed for pre-show wander/refreshments, traffic permitting



For November the social committee arranged an outing for two coachloads of members to Hever Castle for lunch and the light show. The price covered return coach journey, driver gratuity, entry to the grounds and castle, lunch in the pavilion restaurant and finished with the Christmas lightshow.

Hever Castle started life as a country house built in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. From 1462 - 1539 it was the country estate of the Boleyn family. Ann Boleyn, the second wife of Henry VIII, spent her early life here.



In 1903 Hever Castle was acquired by William Waldorf Astor and became their family residence.



The rooms have beautifully ornate carvings and were decorated for Christmas with trees and decorations in every room.



We were greeted at the Pavilion restaurant with a glass of mulled wine or warm spiced apple juice and seated at our tables.

Our tables soon filled up and we were called up to the buffet table for our carvery Christmas lunch which members commented was very tasty.

Dessert, mince pies and coffee was then served at the tables.



After lunch members were free to explore the castle and enjoy the light show which started at 4pm before boarding our coaches at 5.30pm for the journey home.





**WEDNESDAY 5<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2024**  
**WOKING THEATRE**  
**2.30pm Matinee**

**Timothy Sheader** (*Crazy for You, Into the Woods*) directs this mesmerizing new production of the iconic global phenomenon. Originally staged by London's Regent's Park Open Air Theatre, this reimagined production won the 2017 Olivier Award for Best Musical Revival, garnering unprecedented reviews and accolades.

Choreographed by **Drew McOnie** (*King Kong, Strictly Ballroom*), with music and lyrics by **Andrew Lloyd Webber** and **Tim Rice**, **Jesus Christ Superstar** is set against the backdrop of an extraordinary series of events during the final weeks in the life of Jesus Christ, as seen through the eyes of Judas.

Reflecting the rock roots that defined a generation, the legendary score includes 'I Don't Know How to Love Him', 'Gethsemane' and 'Superstar'.

Don't miss your chance to see this "gorgeous, thrilling, heavenly musical." – The Guardian. BOOK NOW!

**£46.00 PER PERSON**

**Excursion price includes:**

Stalls Rows N or P / Royal Circle Row G, return coach travel, and administrative charges.

(Does not include driver's gratuity, discretionary to individuals)

**COACH BOARDING POINTS**

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12.00pm **EWELL, Epsom Road** – Bus Stop, by the top of Mongers Lane

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Coffee morning Wednesday January 17<sup>th</sup> 2024 10.00am-12.00noon

The u3a is a members for members organisation and works on the premise of sharing knowledge and helping each other.

The committee will be hosting this event in the Begonia Suite at Bourne Hall.

There will be a short introduction followed by a chance to mingle and ask questions.

This meeting is aimed at:

*Any members interested in setting up new groups.*

*Any members interested in finding out about helping to run our u3a by joining the committee.*

*Welcome*

*New members interested in joining groups.*

*Group leaders with spaces in their group.*

*In fact, anything that enhances the enjoyment that can be gained from being a member and sharing with friends.*

The beer group found another new victim this month to join our merry band on a blind tasting experience. He waited a whole year from joining the U3A before summoning up the courage to try us out, obviously we didn't try hard enough & he's coming back!

Next month our group will be heading to the wilds of North London for a beer festival.





**Surrey Network Study Day**  
**Rembrandt**  
**from Fame to Poverty**  
**to Final Acclaim**

On 17<sup>th</sup> November I attended another interesting study day covering the well known Dutch artist - Rembrandt.

Colin Wiggins, who was the Special Projects curator at the National Gallery until 2016, gave an excellent insight into the life of the artist providing facts about his personal life, which in some ways was quite tragic.

Rembrandt's fame began during his lifetime and by the time he was 30, his work was represented in Charles 1's Royal Collection. He was highly successful and it was rumoured that people had to beg, as well as pay, Rembrandt to paint for them. One of his most famous paintings is 'The Night Watch', which shows his incredible talent.

Sadly, his success and fortune waned after the death of his wife Saskia, with whom he had one surviving child, due to he and the nurse he employed, to look after Titus his son, having their own child. Their relationship was condemned by the Dutch Reformed Church, after which the respectable folk of Amsterdam turned away from him.

Rembrandt was alone and in poverty at the time of his death and buried in an unmarked grave.

I have attended a few of these study days on various topics and always find them interesting. Good value too at just £12 for members (guests £15)

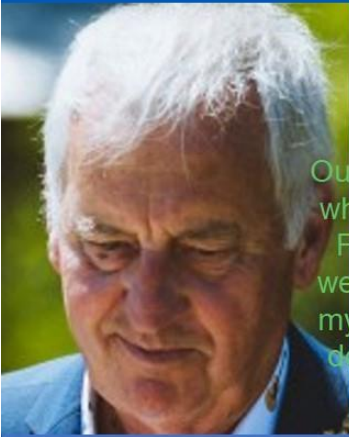
Fiona Bath



# THE THREE KINGS - THE REAL STORY?

**TONY RAWLINGS**

**Bourne Hall Monday 4 December at 10:30**



Our Christmas special. A light-hearted seasonal talk for Christmas, describing what we actually know about the three kings – or rather what we don't know. For a start, we don't know how many "kings" there were. We assume they were three because they brought three gifts. But why gold, frankincense and myrrh? Also, there's no reason to suppose they were kings of anywhere. We don't even know their gender. And since they gave away the location of the baby Jesus to Herod they weren't too clever – let alone wise!

**DR GEOFFREY MEAD**



# SCATTERED SQUALOR - DOWNLAND HOMES: ASPECTS OF HOUSING HISTORY

Between the wars there was an enormous growth in British suburban housing, but not all were Tudorbethan semis with clipped lawns and an Austin 7 in the drive. Many were what are now termed 'plotlands', but in the past had harsher terms applied - hutments, track and shack or simply shanty towns. These plotlands are a largely ignored aspect of our housing history but one that has implications for present day and future UK landscapes.

**Bourne Hall Monday 8 January at 10:30**

Our very successful coffee club run by Rosie and Sue at Roots Café in Epsom have booked their dates for the next few months.

Thursday December 14<sup>th</sup>, Wednesday January 17<sup>th</sup>, Monday February 12<sup>th</sup>, Tuesday March 19<sup>th</sup>, and Monday April 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Don't forget to notify Sue if you haven't attended before in order that Rosie and Sue can welcome you (details on their website page).

Welcome



Our plans for 2024 are well underway. Clive has booked our monthly speakers for the whole year, details on the website monthly speaker events page.

Magic Moments have 3 matinees at Woking Theatre lined up for March, April, and June for which booking is now open. The social committee have Amberley in February, booking opens December 1<sup>st</sup> and spaces are limited to 48 so please book early.

The Thames at War lunch cruise and the Alresford Watercress festival are both in May, full prices tbc and booking will open in the New Year.

Take care and stay safe,

Tony



## OUR MONTHLY BOURNE HALL MEETING

You no longer need to book your seat as we will have a list of regular attendees on the registration desk.

However, you do still need your membership card and more importantly your cup!!!!

