

# Hi everyone !

## INTEREST GROUPS

### Refreshment Rota



Sep 4th	Family History 1
Oct 2nd	Family History 2
Nov 6th	Flower Arranging
Dec 4th	Xmas Party
Jan 8th	French (Intermediate)
Feb 5th	Garden Visits

## From the Chair

Is it just in retirement that time seems to go so fast? Well here we are nearly half way through our Chiswell Green u3a year and perhaps a good time for some reflection.

Working with the committee members is a real delight and I was so pleased, and relieved, when they all decided to seek renewal at the AGM. This has been enhanced by Joy returning to the committee bringing to our advantage her considerable experience.

I also want to highlight that Joy, with husband Tony, have been putting in considerable behind the scenes efforts to make early plans for 2026 trips with negotiations to retain some 2025 costings. They work incredibly hard for our benefit.

As normal we did lose some members at renewal time but a steady influx has brought the number back to just under 400 which is where we seem to operate so well. Some join as a result of 'word of mouth' but others join specifically to take part in our range of group activities which are in excellent order. It is a pleasure to have groups demonstrating their activities at the monthly meetings.

Once again our June meeting in the form of a Summer Party was a success and plans are now underway for our Christmas Party in December.

If like me you celebrate the arrival of the New Year—it's my North East roots—you will be relieved that with the first Thursday in January 2026 falling on New Year's Day, Greenwood Park is closed, and we have been able to rebook our meeting for 8<sup>th</sup> January. My head should be clear by then.

*Best wishes, Tony*

## SPEAKER'S CORNER

At the meeting in September our speaker will be Bill Hamilton and the title is

**"Oh no! Not you again"**

\* \* \*

In October the speaker will be Geoff Lambert who will be talking about

**"Medical Detection Dogs"**

## CALLING ALL GROUP ORGANISERS

We would love you to come to Coffee and Chat morning on Wednesday 22nd October at 10.30am.

This year the venue will be **Park Street Baptist Church Hall, Penn Road (AL2 2QF)**, and as usual the cakes and coffee will be of a very high standard.

*The Committee*

## THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

Difficulties mastered are opportunities won.

*Winston Churchill*

## ENJOYING THE OUTDOORS ONE PEDAL AT A TIME

For once, it rained, the wind got up too, but did it spoil the joy and camaraderie of the Cycling Group - not a bit of it! The bond that has formed among the members over many months of pedalling the country lanes and pathways has boosted the camaraderie and feeling of happiness in a way few other pastimes can achieve.

Our latest ride incorporated the now vastly improved cycle path to Harpenden with a welcome coffee stop at the Rothamsted Research Centre café before snaking our way through town to join the now tarmacked bed of the former Welwyn to Luton railway line which provides an idyllic ride all the way to Luton Airport Parkway station. With threatening clouds overhead, you can't dodge the rain forever and down it came before we reached our lunch stop on the return journey - a most welcome and generous plate of fish and chips at the renowned Godfrey's restaurant.

One of the great benefits of cycling is that you can gorge on heaps of food without feeling guilty as you burn all the calories as soon as you hop back on the saddle again. What's more, by riding a bicycle, you leave no carbon dioxide behind which makes both the world and Greta Thunberg happy! That surely can't be bad.

Maybe you'd like to join us on a future ride ... a chance to meet new friends, keep fit and do your bit to help the planet.

*Bill Hamilton*



# STOP PRESS

Great news, back to **The Mill at Sonning** for a matinee performance, Saturday May 9th, 2026 check Joy's board or the website for further details

## KENTWELL

As usual Joy and Tony found another exciting adventure to keep us out of mischief. On a rather hot August day we headed for Suffolk - thank goodness for air conditioning on the coach! We were about to enter into a dual time experience with living, breathing Tudors dressed in authentic clothes and leading the lives they would have lived back in those days at Kentwell Hall in Suffolk.

The year we entered was 1536 and our first conversation with our friendly Tudor hosts reflected their anxiety about events in their lives at that time and highlighted their friendliness to strangers. We went into the house, visiting the kitchen where the food was being prepared for the family meal and also for the following day's feast, *The Feast of Assumption for Divine Mary* when visitors were expected to the house. Back then nothing was wasted, as they were too dependent on the summer harvests and needed to be mindful that food supplies would get low the following winter and spring.

We then wandered through the house seeing life as it was then. In one room we saw one of the young Tudor gentlewomen being taught how to walk with a book on her head to improve her deportment. Later we saw one of her attendants copy the mistress but she placed a basket on her head. We spoke to the chaplain, brother of the Lord of the Manor who informed us of his pilgrimage to St Albans, "a fair long way". He also gave us a brief history of the house and the family living there, then suggested where we should visit next. As we left the house, a group of young noble men and women were practising their songs in readiness for the next day's feast.

The life of the house continued around us as we explored; we watched barefoot children running around and playing games, household staff going about their daily routines, always with a cheery greeting as they passed. Members of the family were taking the air under the trees beside the moat, attempting to keep cool while a group of young gentlemen with their tutor punted on the water.

We visited the dairy where butter was being made from the Estate's cows, the Bakhaus to see the fresh loaves of bread baked that morning; white for the gentry, brown for the servants. In the Brewhus they were busy preparing beer for the following day's religious feast which was then stored in the Stillroom. In the same building were the needle women hard at work spinning, embroidering, making clothes and doing repairs for the family members. The "sotlers" began serving the potage for the servants; a meal of vegetables and leftovers from previous meals, served with bread. This reminded us it was time for us to take a break and have our picnic.

Later we resumed our wanderings visiting the smithy, the glassblowers, the potters, the felters making hats for the winter, watched the basket weaving, had an interesting conversation with a spice merchant who showed us his wares and allowed us sample some as he explained what each spice was used for.

Finally, we saw the wood carvers and instrument makers. We were lucky enough to be shown a beautiful *viola da gamba* (see page four) by its maker who then played for us. As he played, a young Tudor girl standing nearby watched with a huge smile on her face. She was the instrument maker's granddaughter whose pride in her grandfather was touching; the pride was reciprocated as grandfather showed us the first wooden spoon she had just finished making.

The journey home was smooth and a little quieter than earlier in the day as we absorbed what we'd seen. It was a really excellent day and so unusual.

Janis Brennan



## MARTIN MELZACK

As you are now aware, it is with profound sadness that we received the news of the passing of Martin Melzack, one of the founder members of the Chiswell Green u3a.

In 2014, Martin was an enthusiastic member of the original group of people who volunteered to try to get a second u3a "off the ground" in the Greenwood Park Community centre, the VCV u3a having been born some five years before. Martin generously offered the use of his house for our first meetings, and he immediately put himself forward to be "Membership Secretary" which suited his social skills perfectly. Although Martin questioned his skill with technology, his determination and commitment meant that he soon developed his own, unique method of coping with the record-keeping, and it worked!

Many of you will remember how helpful and friendly Martin was. He was always the first to volunteer to do jobs on the committee, especially when it concerned interacting with members. He loved talking to people and he was genuinely interested in their welfare. His dedication to his committee role – notably, helping people to feel welcome in our u3a – was unquestionable. He was a unique character who helped to set the enduring tone for our u3a.

At this very sad time our thoughts go out to Bridget, Martin's wife, and his extended family.

Barbara Gerwien

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING TRIPS

Please remember to have with you or wear your CG Membership card and, more importantly, an up to date emergency contact card, preferably kept together on a lanyard. Details of each event can be found in the Newsletter or on our website. Please note the month when tickets are available for trips. Purchase of tickets (cheques only please) can be made at our monthly meetings via Joy Dabson, Event Organiser.

**Tickets:** Chiswell Green u3a members ONLY for the first month when tickets for trips are on sale. Tickets for guests will be allowed in the second month when they are on sale. This is to avoid waiting lists for members when guests have taken up places. Tickets must be paid for on the day they are booked, with cheques made payable to "Chiswell Green u3a". Please ensure when writing cheques in payment for Trips that you have filled it in EXACTLY correctly, and write your membership number on the reverse. Lloyds bank is returning cheques with mistakes even if the change is initialled. Cheques are paid into the bank as and when they are received, unless otherwise stated. If paying for more than one outing by post, please send separate cheques for each event. Obviously, they can go in the same envelope. If you wish to make a booking for an outing, you can still do so by contacting the Event Organiser (Joy Dabson) by phone (01923 268018) or email ([trips@chiswellgreenu3a.org.uk](mailto:trips@chiswellgreenu3a.org.uk)) or via our website. Payments should be made within seven days.

**Pickup point:** The coach will be in Tippetdell Lane, at the entrance to Greenwood Park. Please be **prompt** – the coach will not wait. A driver's tip is included in the price of the outing. **If you are unable to go on an outing, or running late**, please contact the Event Organiser by phone, up to 10pm the night before the trip landline (01923 268018) or on the day landline FIRST and if no reply then events mobile (07824 671857). Please make a note of this number. If someone is able to take your place, you may be able to have a refund but this cannot be guaranteed. Ideas and suggestions for trips are always welcomed, and can be placed in the Suggestion Box on the signing table.

\*\*\*\*Disclaimer:\*\*\*\* If you are participating in any Chiswell Green u3a trip or event, please read the Disclaimer below.

*It is the personal responsibility of each member to decide on their own capability to participate in any trips or events organised by the Chiswell Green u3a. Chiswell Green u3a cannot accept any responsibility for your fitness to undertake a trip or participate in a group, event or journey. By committing to any activity you will be declaring that you are fit and able to participate in the said activity.*

### Thursday 9th October 2025—DAY IN WINDSOR - COACH ONLY TRIP

Selling: Sept/Oct

The coach park is a 10 minute walk to the centre of town (castle), which will be the drop-off and pick-up point.

Spend free time in or around Windsor, some ideas for you are:-

- Windsor Castle and St Georges Chapel, a two hour trip £35.00pp (advance booking £31.00pp) or if someone organises a group of 15+ £27.90pp
- Watch the Changing of the Guard - usually at 11.00am by the castle
- A cruise on the Thames, French Bros Boats 40 minute cruise on the river for £11.70pp (advance booking £10.60pp) or for a different idea on the "Duck Splash Tour" for one hour at 11.30am or 2.30pm for £25.00pp
- A leisurely Lunch or Tea (by the Windsor Eton Bridge) at the Côte Windsor or The Brasserie at Sir Christopher Wren or for a more economical stop at The King & Castle - JD Wetherspoon (near the castle)

**NOTE:** Please make your own bookings and checks for availability/times/prices etc

**Depart Greenwood Park: 9:30am**

**Depart for home: 4:00pm**

**Cost: £17.00**

### Wednesday 26th November 2025—XMAS LIGHT TRAIL at BLENHEIM PALACE

Selling: September

The trail features over one million lights, including glistening reflections on lakes, tunnels of light, and flickering flames. There will also be appearances by Father Christmas and the Snow Queen. Our timed start is at 6.45pm.

The trail is 1.8 miles (90mins) designed to be suitable for all ages, though some sections may have uneven terrain or varying gradients. There are toilets at the beginning of the trail and half way along the trail. There are accessible toilets at these locations too. In some areas the lighting will be low level as this is part of the experience. Bring a torch in case of an emergency. The trail is not covered and all visitors are reminded that this is an outdoor Illuminated Trail and the weather may be inclement. Please wear appropriate outdoor clothing and footwear. Mobility scooters are unavailable to hire. You are therefore welcome to bring your own.

Drop offs and coach pick up point is at the cross road (200m) by Blenheim Palace and is as close as vehicles can get. There will be seasonal food and drinks serving hot, hand-held food, (and cater for most dietary needs.) in the East Courtyard. They will only accept card payments at all sale points. There is a Xmas Market in The Great Court for Christmas gifts, etc. but we will be time limited by arrival/trail start or market closure 8.30pm. You will need to keep your purchases with you.

**NOTE:** Greenwood Park Car Park will be closed by the time we return. **Do not park there!**

**Depart Greenwood Park: 4.30pm**

**Depart for home: 9.00pm**

**Cost: £38.00**

**Wednesday February 11th, 2026—GOLDEN OLDIES on Tereza Joanne**

**Selling October**

Join us for an afternoon of the best music ever with talented musician Pete George; he is a fabulous entertainer who knows how to make a party swing.

We will be on board the *Tereza Joanne* moored at King George V dock, and our coach parks within a very few yards of the entrance. Bar, dining, some toilet facilities and music areas are on the flat, and Joy will seat you at round tables for 8/9 with your friends. A two course lunch of main and dessert is served, with coffee after, and the bar is reasonably priced. Please let Joy know of any dietary issues when you book.

The view across the water to Canary Wharf is spectacular, (bring your cameras if you wish). As we are situated near to the end of the London City Airport runway, the noise is not over intrusive, and watching those planes take off is quite exciting. We have used this venue several times before, always much enjoyed. The food is excellent and the staff happy and smiley. This venue is special, not open to the general public. It may be just for us or with another like minded group.

**Depart Greenwood Park: 10.30am**

**Depart for home: 3.30pm**

**Cost £60.00**

**Wednesday 25th March 2026—BARNUM at AYLESBURY WATERSIDE THEATRE** Selling: September

Step right up and enter the dazzling world of P.T. Barnum, where imagination and ambition know no bounds. Hand in hand with wife Charity, Barnum's life and career twists and turns as he schemes and dreams his way to headier heights.

This spectacular new staging will feature an extraordinary ensemble cast of over 20 actor-musicians playing 150 instruments, acrobats and amazing circus acts. Audiences are certain to delight at every sight, wonder and miracle that the name Barnum stands for!



Come follow the band with the glorious music of multi-award-winner Cy Coleman, Michael Stewart's lyrics and Mark Bramble's book. Barnum features a whole host of classic show tunes including *Join the Circus*, *Colours of My Life*, *Come Follow the Band*, and *Love Makes Such Fools of Us All*.

**Depart Greenwood Park: 12.00pm**

**Depart for home: approx 5.00pm**

**Cost: £53.00**

**PARKING:** Could we please remind members not to park in either of the car parks at Greenwood Park if you are going on one of our trips. If parking in local roads, please park with consideration for the local residents, and if possible, car share to help ease the parking problem. **Thank you.**

Viola da gamba



*... and finally*

After being married for 50 years, I took a careful look at my wife one day and said, "Fifty years ago we had a cheap house, a junk car, slept on a sofa bed and watched a 10 inch black & white TV. But hey, I got to sleep every night with a hot 23 year old chick."

Now... I have a £1.5 million home, a £75,000 car, a nice big bed and a large screen TV, but I'm sleeping with a 73 year old woman. So I said to my wife, "It seems to me that you're not holding up your side of things."

My wife is a very reasonable woman. She told me to go out and find a hot 23 year old girl and she would make sure that I would once again be living in a cheap house, driving a junk car, sleeping on a sofa-bed and watching a small screen TV.

Aren't older women great? They really know how to solve an old man's problems.

*Author unknown*