

u3a learn,
laugh,
live

Wadhurst & District

NEWS

December 2023

Wadhurst u3a

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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 'How to Join' 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 April 2024 issue: 20th March 2024. Please email
copy to the editor at: newsmag@wadhurstu3a.org.uk



FROM OUR CHAIRMAN

Dear Member,

At the end of the year we have many people to thank!

If you have accepted the invitation to Wadhurst & District u3a's Christmas Party, you may well have already been to it by the time you read this. The members of the social committee have spent a great deal of time and energy, coming up with many great ideas, to make the party a success. We are grateful for what they have done on this and other occasions, and I thank them on everyone's behalf.

Unlike the two most recent parties, you have not been asked to bring a contribution. With the fall in membership, caused by the Covid epidemic, and the still rising cost of living, we had to be cautious with our expenditure. But finally we are again able to offer you an entirely free party, even though it will not be 'tea at the Dale Hill Golf Club', as we could once afford! We are able to do this without raising our subscription because of stabilising membership numbers and the economies that we are making. Some of you may have received this copy of NEWS delivered by a u3a volunteer postman. They save us at least 75p per copy. To them we also owe our thanks. (Wearing my editor's hat, I thank all the contributors to NEWS.)

Interest groups are the heart and soul of the u3a. If you are not a member of an interest group, make joining one a priority for 2024! We thank our convenors who kept their groups going through thick and thin. I thank especially those who have started a new group or revived an old one this year: David and Jane Austin for Croquet, Mary Brewer and Iris Glover for Singles Sunday Lunch, and Val Smith for Poetry.

The committee of trustees has worked hard to keep the u3a running and I owe them my personal thanks. A special mention goes to Norrie Hazel who stepped down at the AGM in October, having served since 2021. Norrie was Speaker Coordinator in 2021-2 which means that the talks we enjoyed in the past year are due to her initiative and efforts. She also proposed that we have a membership survey, of which the results concerning NEWS are described below. We welcome Jan Whiteley and Sara Irwin who joined the committee as Groups and Welcome Coordinators. Jan and Sara are already contributing to the work of the committee with energy and ideas.

There are many others who have helped that I cannot remember. I thank them, with apologies.

I wish you a Very Happy Christmas,
Philip Cheung

VIEWS on NEWS

From Survey of July 2023

Philip Cheung

A survey was sent to members in June to ask for their views on various aspects of our association. The results of the survey are on the website and we show here the two questions which are related to NEWS. Disappointingly, there were only 22 replies out of our membership of just over 200. Nevertheless, some interesting views were expressed.

5. How do you rate the contents of NEWS Magazine:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

(10 = highest)

Suggestions for improvement:

6. NEWS is expensive to produce, would you like to change

- **the number of issues to bi-annually?**
- **the format to electronic?**
yes / no / not sure

The replies to these questions are listed in the four tables below:

Rating	
9 - 10	9
7 - 8	7
5 - 6	5
no reply	1

Bi-annual ?	
yes	8
no	12
not sure	2

Electronic ?	
yes	4
no	14
not sure	4

Number of replies (out of 22).

No suggestion as the magazine is only as good as the material available.

Letters from members?

Layout, fonts and styles need editing.

Shorter and snappier newsletter rather than long articles. Deliver by hand. Too much focus on the past.

Stop wasting money on postage. Collect at meetings or Carillon Cottage or suitable venue in Ticehurst.

Comments from the trustees

From the replies we see that:

1. The general rating for NEWS is high, with 70% rating it 7 and above, and 40% rating it 9 and above.
2. A clear majority, 64%, would NOT like to see NEWS in electronic form.
3. A small majority, 55%, would NOT like the number of issues reduced to two per year.

During the past months the committee have considered the views expressed in the survey and have decided on the following actions:

- a) NEWS should continue to be published in paper form.
- b) It is noted that NEWS overlaps in function with our electronic Monthly Bulletin. In future the Monthly Bulletin will be charged with short announcements and notices while NEWS will carry longer articles that are not time critical.

- c) The question of reducing the number of issues of NEWS per year was necessary as a measure to reduce expenditure. The survey suggests that twice a year may be too drastic. The committee has therefore decided that NEWS should be published three times a year: in April, August and December.
- d) To reduce postal charges, there will be a trial delivery of copies by hand to the relatively densely populated pockets in Wadhurst and Ticehurst, leaving outlying and distant addresses to the printer who has a discount with Royal Mail.

Collection of NEWS from Carillon Cottage, or similar, has several drawbacks. First, members living far away need to be catered for. Second, Carillon Cottage and others cannot be expected to deal with copies collected by mistake, left uncollected etc.

We hope that the reduction in the number of issues per year and the trial delivery scheme will produce the desired result. Of course, against the continuing rise of printing and postal costs, we may only manage to just 'stand still'.

The Quality of NEWS (from the editor)

When NEWS was launched at the start of this u3a, its remit was to be more than a bulletin. We wanted a magazine that was pleasurable to read, and which provides a creative space for members, for reporting, story-telling, poetry, art and photography. In my opinion, we do quite well. I personally enjoy especially the poems by our poets, of whom two are represented in this issue, and the wry comments on various subjects that I find in many articles. If we have a tendency to recall the past (but I hope not to dwell in it) my explanation would be that past events, pleasurable or horrific, often leave deep impressions on our consciousness. Perhaps we need to be more like the god Janus, who faces forwards and backwards at the same time, as his month, January, approaches.

Letters from readers are a good idea. For the next issue (in April) you are invited to write the figurative letters-to-the-editor. The deadline is 20th March.

Matters of style are purely subjective. One person's tired font may be another's retro-chic. One of the few perks of the editor is to set the overall tone of the magazine!

SELECTED GROUP NEWS

Wadhurst & District u3a has some 30 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

POETRY

Val Smith

The first meeting of the newly formed Poetry Group took place on Friday 17th November at 2 pm in Carillon Cottage. Eleven of us met for introductions and to share some examples of our favourite poems. We then discussed the way forward for the group and how best to meet individual expectations. Five people expressed an interest in writing their own poetry. Five wished to learn more about poetic forms and language or about specific poets and their work.

All members were happy to listen or read more poetry, familiar or unfamiliar, so opportunities for this to occur will happen on every occasion we meet. A shorter period of time will be allocated to the words chosen and how they are placed in the poem to contribute to the chosen style of writing.

Workshops for those interested in writing will take place at intervals in 2024. The present venue is not suitable for working on texts. Enthusiasm and media will dictate when and where these sessions will be, so watch this space.

To close may I share a topical limerick written by a local poet, Rudyard Kipling.

*There was a small boy of Quebec
Who was buried in snow to his neck.
When they said ““Are you friz?”
He replied ,“Yes I is -
But we don’t call this cold in Quebec!”*

CROQUET

Jane & David Austin

End of Season Finale

We celebrated the end of our first season of croquet in style... cakes, nibbles, glasses of bubbly, awards and lots of lively conversation. After 27 meetings and almost 250 individual games, the final match was very close with the top four players all within three points of each other as they headed for the last peg. This, of course, added to the fun and jeopardy as the season came to a close.



After some hard-fought competition, **Jan Whiteley** was declared the overall Winner of the 2023 trophy, closely pursued by **Deirdre Holland** (2nd place) and **Graham Burden** (3rd place).

Special thanks must go to the **Wadhurst Cricket Club**, who very kindly allowed us to use their pavilion for our tea breaks!

Thank you again to all those who helped to make our first croquet season such a success. We look forward to welcoming even more members next year. Croquet will resume in April 2024 (weather permitting!)



PLAY READING

Philip Cheung

During 2023, we have been reading plays written mostly by playwrights who are alive, or who have died only recently. These include two comedies: *Yes Minster* by Anthony Jay and Jonathan Lynn and *Wife After Death* by Eric Chappell; two 'serious' plays: *A Family* by Ronald Harwood and *Liberty* by Glyn Maxwell; a comedy about a serious subject (free speech) in *Trial by Laughter* by Ian Hislop and Nick Newman; and a thriller, *A Touch of Danger*, by Francis Durbridge of Paul Temple fame. Below is an account by Sarah Parry of our November reading, *The Reading Group*, written in 1999 by Fay Weldon who died in January this year.

An exception to our 'recent' plays was *Christopher Columbus*, a radio play written in wartime 1942 by the poet Louis MacNiece to celebrate the 500th anniversary of the discovery of the New World, while in August, we read personal selections from William Shakespeare.

During the year three new members joined our group, taking the total to 14. Of course not everyone takes part at every reading. About six of us take turns to host. If every now and again, you wish to spend a pleasant afternoon reading an exciting play, with tea at the interval, send me an email using the Blue Bird on the Playing Reading webpage on www.wadhurstu3a.org.uk.

The Reading Group

Sarah Parry

When our play-reading group took on Fay Weldon's witty play (or playlet?) we discovered an Awful Warning about the dangers of reading groups. Spiky and sharp-eyed as ever she takes us through the afternoon that the reading group met and managed to turn the lives of several of its members upside-down.

Five women gather in Oriole's house in a small, rather dull town in Wales to read a book that they don't seem to have chosen and find it impossible to agree on : some don't want a "classic", some don't want anything modern or "difficult", others nothing by a man nor anything that shows women as submissive or conventional... They

propose and reject various options: Jane Eyre, Vanity Fair, Ibsen's play *The Doll's House* all get short shrift. We do suspect that they never get around to reading anything at all... Instead, the women, who represent a cross-section of contemporary society being a mixture of the divorced, married, widowed and single, busily dissect their lives, loves and their airily confident claims to be living "their best lives". Zelda is defiantly single, Anne, happily and conventionally married, Oriole is widowed and wondering whether to marry Tom, her much younger, Hungarian lover who resents the inevitable *toyboy* label. Avril, a stress-counsellor, never loses an opportunity to present herself as the "professional" amongst them and the self-appointed "expert" on relationships. The two token men, Tom and Anne's high-flying executive husband Harry are initially and ignominiously excluded from the group but, ironically, both end up playing pivotal roles in the final few pages.

Over a mere 26 pages of sly and very funny dialogue, self-delusions are dismantled revealing all the very human frailties and compromises the women have been doing their best to conceal. Avril is discovered to have been counselling Harry, unbeknownst to Anne and leading to deep suspicions on her part that Avril and Harry have been having an affair, indeed, all her friends marvel at what they see as her credulity and do their best to disabuse her of such sad naivety, all for Anne's benefit of course. However, suspicions prove to be unfounded and Anne and Harry exit happily albeit with a more realistic understanding of each other; Oriole and Tom do decide to marry, rejecting the doubts raised by the group that he's only doing it to get a visa: again, love triumphs. The one left spitting with rage is Avril who will have to deal, apparently, with being sued by Harry's firm for unprofessional conduct.

So what happens? Not a lot but things have changed for the members of the group, some are chastened, some reaffirmed and then they all go home. Are they sadder? wiser? happier? Who can be sure but do we think that the reading group will be meeting again? We doubt it.

SINGLES SUNDAY LUNCH *Mary Brewer & Iris Glover*

The new group kicked off with its first monthly lunch on Sunday 15th October, when seventeen ladies met for a Sunday Roast at The Elephants Head. This was followed by a second lunch on 19th November when thirteen members had an excellent meal and enjoyed companionship around the tables.



Lunch at The Elephants Head. Those of you who recognise Jan Whiteley will know that she is not single. Mary Brewer explains that she transports members to the venue, a real asset of the group.

Twenty four members have, to date, indicated their interest in this group.

Sunday 17th December will be a traditional Christmas Lunch with all the trimmings for a set price of £28.00, including tea/coffee and mini mince pies. It is imperative that those wishing to come to the lunch ring the convenors (either Mary 01892 783538 or Iris 01892 782181) by the Wednesday, 13th December, to reserve their place, as it appears that this will be popular and the limited number of places will be taken quickly.

MODERN ARCHITECTURE

Jane Austin

Tour of the Barbican

In September, some members of the Modern Architecture Group and their partners joined a guided architecture tour of the Barbican, a Brutalist complex in the City of London. It was a glorious day and the water features around the site sparkled in the late season sunshine. We began our visit with lunch (and a few cocktails) on the terrace of the 'Bonfire' restaurant, overlooking the picturesque lake.

Our guide was young, enthusiastic and extremely knowledgeable about the history of the complex, its buildings and architectural features, and its famous residents. He also described the 1952 competition, organized by the Royal Institute of British Architects on behalf of the City of London. The competition resulted in young architects, **Chamberlin, Powell and Bon**, being awarded the contract to design

what is now considered to be one of the greatest examples of urban architecture in post-war Britain. The Barbican is also London's principal example of the **Brutalist Style** of architecture although some prefer to describe it as **Tropical Modernism**.



Members enjoying lunch at the Bonfire Restaurant

Construction of the site started in 1965 and took eleven years to complete. Our guide took us on a walking tour all around the Barbican Estate, starting with the engineering and utility tunnels that run through the complex.

As we entered one of the tunnels we saw the 60 test cladding panels of different materials which were originally exposed to the

Wadhurst u3a Interest Groups

Interest Group	Convenor	Day of Month	Time	Venue
Active Plus 1 20-20-20	Jane Austin	Tuesdays	11.10	Uplands Sports Centre
Active Plus 2 20-20-20	Jane Austin	Thursdays	10.05	Uplands Sports Centre
Art at Ticehurst	Kris Armstrong	last Friday	14.00	Ticehurst Village Hall
Art at Wadhurst	Sheila King	2nd Tuesday	10.00	Orchard Room
Art Appreciation	Margot Yeo	<i>check with convenor</i>		
Book Group One	Margaret Jones	<i>check with convenor</i>		
Book Group Two	Janet Pelham	<i>check with convenor</i>		
Book Group Three	Jane Austin	2nd Mondays	14.00	Orchard Room
Bridge	Geoff Daddy	Thursdays	10.00	Sparrows Green Pavillion
Croquet	Jane & David Austin	To resume in April 2024		
French Conversation	Paul Brown	2nd Monday	14.00	<i>check with convenor</i>
Friendly Computers	Philip Cheung	<i>check with convenor</i>		
Gardening	Sheila Jemmett	3rd Tuesday	10.00	Commem Hall
Historic Buildings	TBA	<i>See website for latest news</i>		
Knit & Natter	Kate Metcalfe	1st Tuesday	14.30	<i>check with convenor</i>
Life Writing	Jessica Brown	alternate Tue	10.00	<i>check with convenor</i>
Mahjong	Norwill Hazell	2nd & 4th Thu	14.00	<i>check with convenor</i>
Kindfulness	Sue Swift	4th Friday	10.30	<i>check with convenor</i>
Modern Architecture	Jane Austin	every 6-8 weeks		<i>check with convenor</i>
Poetry	Val Smith	<i>check with convenor</i>		
Play Reading	Philip Cheung	<i>check with convenor</i>		
Science & Technology	Philip Cheung	1st Tuesday	14.00	<i>check with convenor</i>
Scrabble	Juliet Conrad	<i>Temporarily suspended - awaiting new members</i>		
Singles Sunday Lunches	Mary Brewer & Iris Glover	<i>check with convenors</i>		
Table Tennis	Philippa Standley	Tuesdays	12.30	Uplands Sports Centre
Ten Pin Bowling	Lynda Emberson	<i>check with convenor</i>		
Theatre Visits	Lynda Emberson	<i>check with convenor</i>		
Walking	Sarah Parry	2nd Thursday	10.00	<i>check with convenor</i>
Wine Appreciation	David Austin	4th Wednesday	17.00	Carillon Cottage
Yoga	Sara Irwin	Mondays	9.30 / 11.00	Zoom

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

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

To leave a message: ring **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. ***



elements – everything from granite, concrete, marble to slate. These panels were allowed to weather for several years before the final choice of textured concrete cladding (using the bush/pick hammering technique) was made (see left). Now the use of hand-hammered concrete would not be permitted due

to (i) the cost and danger of such physically hard and labour-intensive work, and (ii) the fine cracks that pervade the surface as a result of this hammering technique.

Here are ten interesting facts we learned during our tour:

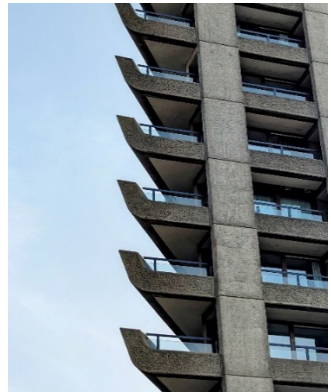
1. The Barbican Estate is built on a 40-acre site in the City of London, on the northern edge of what was once Roman Londinium. The remains of the Roman London Wall are still visible (see right), and Shakespeare once lodged in a brothel on the site. Largely occupied by the 'rag trade', the area was almost completely razed by the Blitz.



2. The development was intended to be a visible symbol of how London could really rise again after the destruction of the old city. It was not just a social housing project, but also a way of repopulating the City of London after the war. At its height, the Barbican was home to almost 6000 residents. Now full-time occupancy is much reduced due to the 'right-to-buy' and second home ownership.

3. The **Barbican Estate** comprises:

- **Residential accommodation** in blocks (six storeys high) plus three 40 storey tower blocks and several rows of mews houses, reminiscent of the classic Chelsea mews;
 - The **Barbican Centre** ('The Centre') which contains the Barbican Concert Hall, 2 theatres, art gallery, multi-screen cinema, public library, 7 conference halls and 2 exhibition halls and 3 restaurants.
4. Its design - described as a '**concrete ziggurat**' (a terraced compound of successively receding storeys) - has always been controversial but, in 2001, it was designated a Grade II Listed Building because of its scale, cohesion and ambition.
 5. The Estate incorporates many different influences from around the world including Egyptian tomb-like structures, French Modernism, an amphitheatre plus gondolas on the corner of the balconies (see right), and Scandinavian design.
 6. The parquet floor in the entrance of the **Concert Hall** is supported by over a million bricks and is deliberately sloped to encourage people not to block the foyer but to move down towards the Hall.



7. The **Barbican Conservatory** is a leafy sanctuary, featuring tropical vegetation, birdlife and exotic fish. One of the main factors driving the choice of the Conservatory's final location was the need to conceal the concrete stump of the theatre's fly tower which was considered an eyesore by residents in the neighbouring Cromwell Tower. The Conservatory was first planted in 1980 and took four years to cultivate. It is the second largest conservatory in London after



the Princess of Wales Conservatory at Kew Gardens.

8. The **balconies** of adjacent apartments have doors that allow the balconies to open up to form fire escape corridors.



9. The water in the **man-made lake** is dyed green to give the illusion that it is deeper than the one metre it actually is. Some residents have private circular peninsular gardens on the lake; others make use of the allotments to grow vegetables.



10. Following concerns about the harsh image of the Barbican, (not helped by Stanley Kubrick's film *A Clockwork Orange*) efforts were made to soften peoples' perception with the introduction of art works and sculpture. One such work was a reclining semi-draped female figure, referred to as the '**Barbican Muse**'. She holds in her left hand masks of Comedy and Tragedy, whilst her right hand is pointing the way to the entrance of the Centre.



Installed on a wall near the Silk Street entrance, the figure is nicknamed 'Zoë', after the Cambridge student who posed for Matthew Spender, the sculptor.

Love it or hate it, the Barbican remains an icon of Brutalist Architecture and one of the UK's most ambitious architectural achievements.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Philip Cheung

In September and October, we held three meetings related to Charles Darwin. Others outside our regular core of group members were invited to attend and participation on some of these occasions was as a result about double our usual numbers.

In September, Oenone Warr gave a talk on the life and work of Darwin at her beautiful home. Sixteen of us were enlightened and entertained by an interesting talk, followed by tea in the garden surrounded by acres of parkland. A cake made to Mrs Darwin's recipe was served. We also had the opportunity to admire George Warr's mother's collection of fossils, rock crystal and eggs. We thank Oenone and George for a truly memorable afternoon.

In October, a slightly different sixteen of us travelled to Down House, Darwin's home at Downe, near Biggin Hill, to visit its garden and house.

In the garden we saw Darwin's experiments which led to his 1881 book titled *The Formation of Vegetable Mould through the Action of Worms, with Observations of their Habits*. His collection of carnivorous plants is reproduced in one of several greenhouses.

In the house, in addition to furnishings of the period, an exhibition produced by Richard Attenborough was on display. The documentation of Darwin's life included interesting facts concerning his upbringing, his old age and his children. The voyage of the Beagle in 1831-6, the announcement of his Theory of Evolution, jointly with the work of Albert Wallace, in 1857, and the publication of his book, *On the Origin of Species*, in the following year



At Down House, Charles Darwin's home at Downe, near Biggin Hill.

obviously took pride of place. Unsurprisingly, the house is also replete with cartoons satirising Darwin's ideas by his critics.

The outing was much enjoyed by everyone and we shared many interesting conversations over lunch and all through the day.

At a meeting later in the month, we discussed some modern day developments in evolutionary biology.

Following on the popularity of Charles Darwin, I thought Albert Einstein might have the same appeal. I gave a talk in November on *The Early Life of Albert Einstein*, to be followed by another on his *Theory of Special Relativity of 1905* in January 2024 (postponed from December 2023).

Einstein's life is every bit as interesting as Darwin's but he did not leave behind a house to visit in England! Relativity is usually considered a difficulty subject to explain to the layperson. I shall give it a good try. Do come along in January but first contact me for details. Use the Blue Bird on the webpage of the group on our website: www.wadhurstu3a.org.uk.

The Grudge

Val Smith

Animus Perpetuus
more commonly known
as a grudge
arrived beady-eyed
on my doorstep
and then refused to budge.
Enmity I called her
so small
when I let her inside.
She came from a family
of grudges
who died from wounded pride.
Her mother was called Malice
her father was Ill Will
but her brothers
Miff and Huffy
are out there growing still.
She only drinks gripe water
fed on the bitter rue,
slept on a bed
of hard feelings
and moaned the whole day through.
Her cage
cast such a shadow
and had begun to reek.
Thank God
she died last Wednesday
from a final fit
of pique.

REMINI

Val O'Dwyer

Watching a quiz show on television the other day I was amazed at how many contestants said "I don't know, it was before my time" or just did not recognise the things which to me were part of growing up.

Here are a few things I remember.

Virol (a malt extract given to all children after the war) - a spoonful each morning - I loved it but others hated it.

1/3 sized milk bottles at school every morning - warmed by the heater in the winter. Drunk through straws. I found them disgusting. Stopped by Mrs Thatcher.

Milk delivered to our house every morning. Pint sized bottles with wide necks stoppered by cardboard discs. We used these stoppers as children to wind with wool to make bobbles for our knitted hats, beanie hats or the end of our scarves. My husband remembers helping their milkman deliver milk by pony and cart.

14" black and white TVs. I seem to remember we usually watched these with the main light out and a small light on or near the TV. We had our first colour TV to watch the wedding of Charles and Diana.

Elastic garters to hold up our school socks. Socks were darned with wool when they got holes in the heels or toes. We called these holes 'potatoes'

Going to school either walking or on our bicycles.

Grannies' homemade treacle toffee.

Steam trains and stations covered in soot. Train windows that opened by pulling a leather strap up and down.

Department shops with overhead pulleys to send the money to the accountant who sent the change back.

Coins - in regular use then as we did not have cards. Half crowns, sixpenny pieces (often left by the tooth fairy). Paper money - 10 shilling and £1 notes. Granny did not believe in banks so collected white £5 notes which we found under the stair carpet when she died.

Father cleaned our car every weekend and the bumpers particularly, which were chrome and not plastic, were cleaned and shone.



Late 50's Cars with lots of chrome to be polished.

In Norfolk even in the early 70s everything was delivered, fish, bread (hot cross buns at Easter) and veg.

There were no motorways.

No takeaways.

I never remember locking our doors.

We used typewriters, carbon paper for copies, Tippex for errors, telex machines and later fax machines.

I am sure you can think of many more.

P.S. And there were no mobile phones.

PARTYGATE

Eileen Ramm

In my youth parties were spontaneous and lively and fun
We drank too much, danced, stayed up for the sun

But parties change as the years unfold
Manners are kept, you are observed, you become less bold

I failed on many occasions to be a good guest
So have come up with some guidelines to get thru it best:

Don't drink too much wine,
don't eat too much food,
Or they'll think you are
exceedingly rude

Remembering names is vital,
A rule uppermost
Especially those
of your lovely hosts

Don't wear the latest dress
you got in the sales
Lest someone bought hers
off the very same rail

Don't stand on your own,
Find a group and just hover
Its safer in numbers
And gives you good cover

Don't knock someone's elbow
Sending drink far and wide

You must walk like a robot
With arms at your side

Never drink dark red wine
If their carpet is white
if you spill, no apology
Will ever make it right

Don't keep watching the clock
For your get-away time
It will surely be noticed -
It's quite a crime

You'll know when the party
is waning, make your move
Find your coat under the stack,
Don't put another's on your back

Find your hosts, let them know
You'd had the best time
Don't trip down the steps
Say it's at yours next time!



LONG SOCKS

by Sue Burns

I like Autumn – I like the colours on the trees and the mists and the mellowness of the air – soft and gentle. I try not to think about what it portends, but try to enjoy the season for what it is.

However, there was a time when I was much younger and I felt very differently about Autumn. Then it meant going back to school after the long summer break – wondering who your teacher would be, who you would be allowed to sit next to, if the work would be much harder. It meant putting on school uniform again and when I was at infant and junior school age putting on long socks. I hated wearing long socks – it was often still warm summery weather but my mother insisted. I told her that most of my friends were still wearing short socks, but in spite of my protestations I still had to wear long socks.

I always walked home from school but one day we were going straight to the dentist so my mother came and met me at the school gate. There she was standing waiting for me and I could tell she was closely observing everybody. Most of the girls walking past were in fact wearing long socks. My heart sank and I tried to think of some plausible reason that most girls were wearing the dreaded long socks – most of them had only started wearing them this week – this particular day they had run out of short socks – even I thought that was an excuse too far!! I could tell by the look on her face that I was in for a rocky time. Added to that we had a visit to the dentist to endure. There was absolutely no point in trying to get out of this hole I was in. My mother had seen with her own eyes that her daughter had blatantly lied so I took the berating due to me.

I still maintain there were some girls wearing short socks!!

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Meetings are held on the third Thursday of the month
2.30 pm, The Commemoration Hall, Wadhurst

Jan 18	LIVING THE AFRICAN DREAM <i>Alison Mees</i>
Alison is a professional photographer. She will speak of her journey through Africa with her photographs and stories.	
Feb 15	BOHEMIAN PARIS <i>Brian Freeland</i>
Brian has lived in France for many years. He will speak about the painters, performers and composers at the time of Puccini's opera <i>La Bohème</i> .	
Mar 21	A WALK AROUND RYE <i>David Clarke</i>
David is a local of the historic and picturesque town of Rye.	
Apr 18	MY LIFE IN COMEDY <i>Colin Bostock-Smith</i>
Colin is a comedy writer who has written for Rowan Atkinson, The Two Ronnies and Clive James.	
May 16	THE KNEPP REWILDING PROJECT <i>Matthew Phelps</i>
The history of the 3,500-acre Knepp Estate in West Sussex, and the theory behind the rewilding project and its success to date.	

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.

Floral Companions



For Christmas