

**September Memories** *Jane Wolsey, Webmaster & Newsletter Editor*



Some lovely, sunny holiday weeks enjoyed by many members – including myself on a week’s holiday at my little holiday chalet at Medmerry Park that grew to two as the weather was so good! Managed to capture fabulous views of sunsets on Earnley Beach in front of the park with the Isle of Wight in the distance.



Medmerry Park is located next to RSPB Medmerry Nature Reserve in West Sussex. The sunset photo captures Brent Geese on their daily evening flight from the Nature Reserve to nearby Chichester Harbour from whence they return about the same time every morning – always in a v-flight formation.... It’s like watching a geese version of the Red Arrows with their own special sound accompaniment!



The Reserve was created in 2014 following construction, by the Environment Agency, of 4.25 miles of new floodbank inland from the sea between Selsey and Bracklesham. The existing shingle beach was then breached to create the largest managed realignment scheme on the open coast in Europe, creating amazing new wetland habitats surrounded by wide walking and cycling pathways. [See further information about the RSPB Reserve.](#)



Another favourite place, recommended if you are in the area, is on one of the reaches of Chichester Harbour - the 16<sup>th</sup> century Crown and Anchor at Dell Quay with fabulous views across the Harbour. Michael and Mary (Committee) were trying it out this week tucking into the local seafood! [Click here for more local views.](#)

## Annual General Meeting & Election of Officers 7 Oct 2020

At the beginning of our next Speaker's Meeting, we will be holding our first Annual General Meeting via Zoom at 2pm. The purpose of the AGM is to approve the annual and financial reports for the year 2019/2020 and to elect members of the Committee for the year 2020/2021. For details, please refer to the recent email/letter that was sent out by our Chairman, Paul Atkins, entitled **Woodley and District U3A: Notice of Annual General Meeting (AGM) 2020 and Election of Officers.**

A full agenda for the short meeting and copies of the annual and financial reports are being sent to all members in the coming week.

The AGM will be followed by a talk given by Warren Ashton. Please see below.

Note, If you would like to virtually attend the AGM and the Speaker's Monthly Meeting, you will need to have Zoom installed on your device and register your interest in attending. You will be sent a link and instructions to follow.

To apply to attend the AGM and Speakers Meeting via Zoom, please contact Mary Brenchley-Hole – [membershipsecretary@woodleyu3a.org.uk](mailto:membershipsecretary@woodleyu3a.org.uk)

Annual General Meeting

### Speakers Meetings



Our third in the series of virtual Speakers' meetings was conducted via Zoom on Wednesday 2 September. Our talk this month was by Reverend John Fieldsend on 'The Kindertransport', a rescue effort of nearly 10,000 predominantly Jewish children who were placed in UK foster homes, hostels, schools and farms in the nine months prior to the outbreak of WW II. We were very privileged to have shared John's very moving memories of his own experiences as a 'Kindertransport' child.

**Our next Speakers Meeting** will be on **Wednesday 7 October** and will follow our Annual General Meeting.



The talk, given by Warren Ashton on "**METAPHORS, CLICHES AND PHRASES** - avoid them like the plague" will explore Warren's fascination with the English language and the origins and use/misuse of everyday cliches and phrases.

For booking, please contact Mary:- [membershipsecretary@woodleyu3a.org.uk](mailto:membershipsecretary@woodleyu3a.org.uk)

**Mary Brenchley-Hole, Acting Speakers Secretary**

Topic details for Speaker's Meetings for the rest of the year have been posted on the Diary Page and reminders will be posted on the News Page and in the monthly newsletter providing information about upcoming meetings.

Speakers Meetings

## **Group News**

The Cycling, Badminton and Guitar 2 groups had their first meetings – thanks to Angela, Linda and David for their work in getting these groups started.

Groups made great use of the last few weeks of summer to meet outside in our local parks and members' gardens, in small socially distanced groups but obviously as we move into Autumn that will become less feasible.

Lockdown rules continue to change and since the last newsletter we are now permitted to meet indoors in groups of six or less providing COVID-safe procedures are in place.

I have updated all of the group convenors with this information and some groups may now consider indoor meetings if they have sufficient space and their members feel safe to do so. (There are obviously U3A risk assessments to be done to ensure minimum risk). It is also possible for groups to meet at restaurants and pubs indoors or outdoors in groups of six or less. Do talk to your group convenor if you think it might be possible for any of your groups to try and run face-to-face meetings.

I will continue to monitor the guidance from U3A National Office and government guidelines and attempt to make sense of it...

Local halls now have COVID-safe procedures in place but obviously can only allow groups of six or less to use them. I am talking with Woodley Town Council to find out what might be possible.

It always nice to hear of informal get-togethers happening with friends made through Woodley U3A and I expect ad-hoc outings to be arranged with people in the Galleries and Local Trips Out groups in small groups. One of these is the upcoming Walking Tour in Reading.

Virtual groups are continuing to run successfully for several groups. I was delighted that Shirley was able to offer spaces in the on-line Play-reading group to members on the waiting list.

If you have ideas for new groups that could run during the colder months or if you could help a group you are in to run virtually, then please email me. Possible ideas for new groups include a jigsaw swap group, on-line Travel group, puzzle group, or a Culture discussion group to discuss a wide-range of topics including Art, Theatre, Music, Film and Books.

**Paula Dove**, [Groupsco@woodleyu3a.org.uk](mailto:Groupsco@woodleyu3a.org.uk)

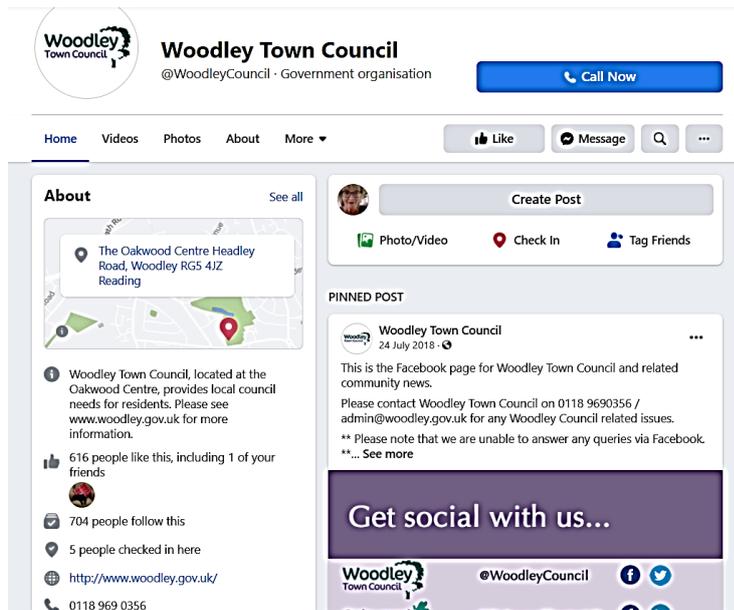
### **Book Lovers Group**

This U3A group met for the first time in July 2019. A year on, in a world none of us could have imagined, we gathered in Woodford Park after a gap of five months. We had kept in touch as an online group, with whoever chose the month's 'set text' introducing it by email and the rest of us pitching in with our impressions. But there's no substitute for meeting in the real world and we were delighted to be able to gather once again. For our second post-lockdown meeting, in August, we decided to return to our former home: The Waterside in Fairwater Drive. They looked after us very well, and gave us a great spot in their covered outside area; it felt safe.

Who knows what lies ahead, but we do enjoy reading and discussing new authors, even when the chosen book takes us out of our comfort zone, so we're fully prepared to adapt as the situation changes.

**Margaret Cain (Group Convenor)**

# Woodley Town Council News & Developments



**Woodley Town Council**  
@WoodleyCouncil · Government organisation

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**About** See all

The Oakwood Centre Headley Road, Woodley RG5 4JZ Reading

Woodley Town Council, located at the Oakwood Centre, provides local council needs for residents. Please see [www.woodley.gov.uk](http://www.woodley.gov.uk) for more information.

616 people like this, including 1 of your friends

704 people follow this

5 people checked in here

<http://www.woodley.gov.uk/>

0118 969 0356

**Woodley Town Council**  
24 July 2018 ·

This is the Facebook page for Woodley Town Council and related community news.

Please contact Woodley Town Council on 0118 9690356 / [admin@woodley.gov.uk](mailto:admin@woodley.gov.uk) for any Woodley Council related issues.

\*\* Please note that we are unable to answer any queries via Facebook.

\*\*... See more

Get social with us...

Woodley Town Council @WoodleyCouncil



Be sure to make use of Woodley Town Council's Facebook Page which keeps you up to date with all the latest information on happenings in and around Woodley town, developments that can affect our future and notices of upcoming Council Planning and Community meetings.



**THE WOODLEY & DISTRICT U3A, READING U3A AND WOKINGHAM U3A HISTORY OF WOODLEY PROJECTS**

WOODLEY.GOV.UK  
Wokingham Borough Council urges people to shop local and stay safe ...

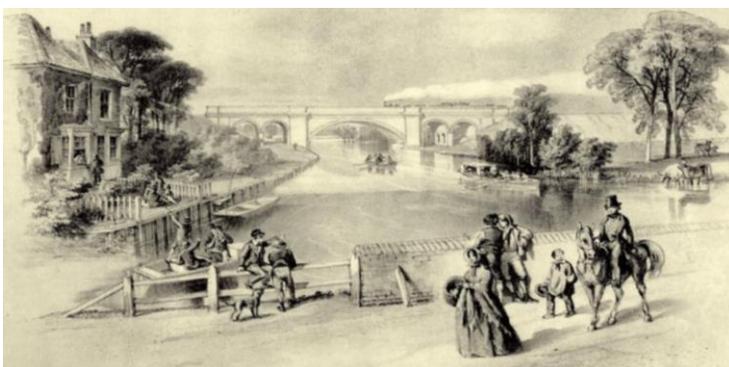
Learn about Wokingham Council's campaign to support local businesses

**We have added more Woodley history articles to our website thanks to the Woodley & District U3A (link in comments)**



We have a mention on the Town Council website for our contributions to their History of Woodley page. Click on the box to see the menu page. On the Woodley Pubs page, an entry from Smiths Directory 1907 for The George Hotel shows opportunities for fishing, boating, picnics and excursion parties!

**THE GEORGE HOTEL,**  
**LODDON BRIDGE,** Three-Quarters of a Mile from Early Station—S.W. and S.E. Railway, **READING**  
Is situated in the most picturesque part of Berkshire, on the River Loddon and is well known for its comfort, excellence and moderate charges.  
**WINES & SPIRITS OF THE CHOICEST BRANDS.**  
First-class Accommodation for Boating, Fishing, Pic-nic & Excursion Parties.  
**Traps meet any Train to Order.**  
**Proprietor:—ARTHUR HORSLEY.** 'Phone No. 0752, Reading



View from Loddon Bridge of the George, The River Loddon and the railway bridge beyond. Shows punts, boaters in rowing boats and an excursion group in a canopied boat enjoying the scenic beauty of the river. Reproduced for research and information purposes. Source : Reading Central Library Local Studies Collection [Catalogue Link](#)

**Jane Wolsey, Webmaster & Newsletter Editor**

A stunning print of The George and Loddon Bridge by A. Maclure c1849, from Reading Library Local Studies Collection, shows the beauty of the area at that time and how the Loddon was used for recreation purposes in the 1800s and early 1900s. A clear example of the high price of urban development!

Woodley Town - Useful Information

Woodley History Project

## Contacts

***For special enquiries:***

**Email:** Paul Atkins [chairman@woodleyu3a.org.uk](mailto:chairman@woodleyu3a.org.uk)

***For membership and speakers' meetings queries:***

**Email:** Mary Brenchley-Hole [membershipsecretary@woodleyu3a.org.uk](mailto:membershipsecretary@woodleyu3a.org.uk)

***For queries about groups and related activities:***

**Email:** Paula Dove [groupsco@woodleyu3a.org.uk](mailto:groupsco@woodleyu3a.org.uk)

***For queries about Social Events:***

**Email:** Jane Wolsey at [socialevents@woodleyu3a.org.uk](mailto:socialevents@woodleyu3a.org.uk)

***For General Enquiries***

**Telephone** the duty officer on **07565 585545**.

**See below, a directory and pages of recommendations and links for the Arts & Local Happenings by Paula Dove and Jeff Green :-**



**Books**



**Music**



**Theatre**



**Film**



**Galleries & Museums**



**Local Happenings**

Contacts

Directory of Recommendations & Links

## Book Recommendations from Paula Dove

Due to lack of space I wasn't able to fit in Moira Hatton's excellent review of Robert Harris's Archangel in the August newsletter so here it is now:

I recently read 'Archangel' by Robert Harris, a gripping thriller that explores the lingering presence of Stalin amidst the corruption of modern-day Russia. The author's understanding of both the Soviet Union and modern Russia is impressive. Real figures from Soviet history mix with contemporary characters. An experienced political journalist, Harris's knowledge of social, economic and political changes gives the reader a setting on which he expertly builds. The failed state, the humiliation and the resentment are all vividly captured in an 'ideology versus reality' scenario.

The Stalinesque soviet past and drastically declining modern Russia depend on brief moments, accidents and coincidences. The sudden appearance of a brainwashed, psychopathic son of Stalin creates a sense of fear. He may or may not survive at the end. The final point leaves Russia's future – and that of the world – in the balance.

The novel was published in 1998 but even now, twenty-two years later, incidents involving Putin's Russia still provoke ominous dread. Is he trying to rebuild on the shaken foundations of Stalin's Soviet Union?

If you fancy immersing yourself into some books based in variants of our world then you could read another Robert Harris novel "Fatherland" set in a world where Germany won WWII.

Some quirky books with alternative realities, that I would recommend, are:

Rivers of London by Ben Aaronovitch

The novel centres on the adventures of Peter Grant, a young officer in the Metropolitan Police; who, following an unexpected encounter with a ghost, is recruited into the small branch of the Met that deals with magic and the supernatural. Reviewers liked Aaronovitch's juxtaposition of the magical and the mundane and his storytelling prowess. I found the book to be easy to read, enjoyable with interesting characters and some surprising plot twists. The book is full of humour but there is darkness in it as well.

The Eyre Affair by Jasper Fforde

The book takes place in an alternative 1985, where the Crimean war is still in progress and literary detective Thursday Next pursues a master criminal through the world of Charlotte Brontë's Jane Eyre novel. It is difficult to say what kind of book it is as it contains elements of fantasy, science fiction, mystery, satire, romance, and thriller. Fforde's quirky writing style has led to comparisons with other notable writers, most frequently Douglas Adams for similar "surrealism and satire" and Lewis Carroll for similar "nonsense and wordplay". I suggest you read it and make up your own mind.

Both have multiple sequels which are enjoyable but, in my opinion aren't as good as the originals perhaps because the element of surprise is reduced.

## Music/Theatre recommendations from Paula Dove

There are many more live-streamed musical events happening now – often from venues rather than musician's homes so sound quality is much better.

I would thoroughly recommend the Green Note concerts – donations requested. Lots of interesting folk/acoustic/american artists.

<https://www.greennote.co.uk/events-page/>

The Live Room at Saltaire is also worth looking at. They are doing live shows from their venue which are live streamed. I would recommend Edgelarks and Black Feathers two of the acts coming up later in the year.

<https://theliveroom.info/>

For the classical lovers the Barbican are putting on socially distanced concerts which are also live-streamed from October.

<https://www.barbican.org.uk/whats-on/2020/series/live-from-the-barbican>

Lots of good things happening at Kings Place as well – ranging from classical to jazz to folk to comedy etc. Many events are being performed to a live socially distanced audience as well as being live-streamed.

<https://www.kingsplace.co.uk/>

## Theatre Recommendations

Live indoor theatre has returned but not in the pre-COVID form.

The theatre highlight for September for me was the stunning performance by Andrew Scott in "Three Kings". I hope that they continue to put these performances on as they are excellent.

<https://www.oldvictheatre.com/whats-on/2020/old-vic-in-camera>

Chichester festival theatre have just announced their autumn season which includes live performances in the theatre and livestreams.

<https://www.cft.org.uk/whats-on>

Bridge Theatre in London is now running a season of one person plays that you can see in person running through September and October.

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

National Theatre will be re-opening with a one-person play in the main auditorium, the Olivier, in late October. I have just booked my ticket today for November.

Theatre Royal, Bath has just announced a season of classic plays for its socially distanced main house, including Frayn's excellent play Copenhagen.

You can book to watch a new online play based on Apollo 13:

<https://www.originaltheatre.com/>

## Film Recommendations from Jeff Green

### On BBC iPlayer

Molly's Game Dir: Aaron Sorkin (2018)

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/m000m7ln/mollys-game>

"Drama based on a true story. When skier Molly's career is cut short, she becomes the assistant to a film producer who also happens to run the biggest poker game in town."

[https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/mollys\\_game](https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/mollys_game)

The Damned United Dir: Tom Hooper (2009)

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/b00t61gx/the-damned-united>

"Set in 1960s and 1970s England, "The Damned United" tells the confrontational and darkly humorous story of Brian Clough's doomed 44-day tenure as manager of the reigning champions of English football--Leeds United."

More here [https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/damned\\_united](https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/damned_united)

Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy Dir : Tomas Alfredson (2011)

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/m000m7yz/tinker-tailor-soldier-spy>

"In the bleak days of the Cold War, espionage veteran George Smiley is forced from semi-retirement to uncover a Soviet Agent within MI6."

More here <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1340800>

### Blu Ray / DVD also on Digital Platforms

Laurel Canyon Dir: Alison Ellwood (2020)

Laurel Canyon is a two-part doc series that pulls back the curtain on a mythical world and provides an up-close look at the lives of the musicians who inhabited it.

Featuring the music of Jackson Browne, Joni Mitchell, Linda Ronstadt, The Byrds, CSNY, Eagles and many more...

[https://www.rottentomatoes.com/tv/laurel\\_canyon](https://www.rottentomatoes.com/tv/laurel_canyon)

Deadwood The Ultimate Collection (2004-2006)

A show set in the late 1800s, revolving around the characters of Deadwood, South Dakota; a town of deep corruption and crime.

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0348914>

## Gallery Recommendations from Paula Dove

Lots of excellent resources continue to be made available on-line. One that looked particularly appealing was the Picasso and Paper virtual tour at the Royal Academy. (Thanks to Joan King for the pointer to the tour).

[https://www.royalacademy.org.uk/article/picasso-and-paper-virtual-exhibition-tour?fbclid=IwAR2rvVXXY3L6XcsLBET5-miaVe0om-8VXL-6WJpwBTQVJwm7myqbUC\\_KaKg](https://www.royalacademy.org.uk/article/picasso-and-paper-virtual-exhibition-tour?fbclid=IwAR2rvVXXY3L6XcsLBET5-miaVe0om-8VXL-6WJpwBTQVJwm7myqbUC_KaKg)

Their famous Summer Show has been renamed Winter Show and will be happening from October so may be worth a trip to London.

<https://www.royalacademy.org.uk/exhibition/summer-exhibition-2020>

The Woodley U3A virtual gallery visits continue to be popular – the September one to Boston Museum of Fine arts is fully booked with twenty of us going.

Galleries & Museums

## What's happening locally?

Woodford Park leisure centre has restarted most of their regular exercise classes and clubs from Afternoon Club to Tia Chi to Zumba. There is hand sanitiser on entry and at multiple places around the centre and it feels very safe. Places have to be booked a day in advance as spaces are limited to enable social distancing. Look at what is available on their website.

<http://www.woodley.gov.uk/parks-facilities/woodford-park-leisure-centre>

Showcase cinema are showing new releases, classics of recent years and Encore productions. There is well lots of space in the foyer and screens and is hand sanitiser available. I found wearing a mask while watching a film was not an issue even while wearing glasses.

Norden Farm is starting performances again and is continuing to offer livestreams of events.

Local museums now open include Reading Museum and Henley River and Rowing and Museum.

Rabble Theatre (formerly Reading between the Lines) have produced a radio whodunit which was broadcast on Radio Berkshire but is also available on their website.

<https://whokilledalfredoliver.rabbletheatre.com/>

If you fancy a walking tour of Reading – Terry's tours are now operating again. Two groups of five, friends from our Local Trips group, are going on one of his tours next month. His ghost tour look interesting as well.

<https://www.facebook.com/terrysreadingwalkabouts/events>

**Paula Dove, Groups Coordinator**

Local Happenings