learn, laugh, live

u3a Warley

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Newsletter Issue № 146
November 2026
Website: http://WarleyU3A.org.uk

MONTHLY MEETING

The next meeting will be on **Thursday 26th November** which will be a talk by **Jean Fullerton – 'Put That Light Out'.**

As usual 2:00pm start. We will have time for refreshments and a chat before the talk begins promptly at 2.30pm at the **Warley Scout Headquarters, Eagle Hall, The Drive, Warley, CM13 3BH**.

Message from John

Is polydactyl a species of pterodactyl? Not at all, as those of you at our monthly meeting will know.

There are many animals which can be born with an extra digit or digits on a hand or foot but cats seem to be most prone to this with extra claws on their paws!

Our talk covered the history of this phenomenon, its link to the witch trials and also that Anne Boleyn had an extra finger on one hand. Of course, we also got to see some cute pictures of cats!

Many of you will remember that last year Michael told us about going to see his son Alex receive his CBE. Well, this month he reached 100 so we all sang him happy birthday at our meeting and there was cake to take home. (See photo on next page).

If anyone else is approaching that milestone, do let me know so we can share your celebrations.

Now for a couple of reminders.

Don't forget that we have our annual Christmas Lunch in December and you need to book if you wish to attend. Details are included elsewhere but Maria needs to know your food choices for starter and dessert, and whether you want the vegetarian option. Please get in touch with her asap.

Secondly, we have the lovely quilted square made by the Craft and Textiles group which is being raffled to support the air ambulance – tickets will be on sale at the next meeting when the draw will take place.

Our changed arrangement for the meeting with refreshments first seems to be going well so we will continue it for November. Please do feedback to the committee whether you like the change or if there are problems.

chairman@warleyu3a.org.uk

Warley u3a Christmas Lunch

Bentley Golf Club – 3 course carvery menu

Monday 7th December
12 noon for 12:30pm

3 courses, plus coffee/mince pies with tip included (drinks purchased separately)
£33.00

This year, like previous years we will only have to choose a starter and dessert in advance as the main course will be a choice from the carvery.

Please see attached flyer for details.

Deadline for payment, seating requests and menu choices (starter/dessert) and details of any dietary requirements: by **Midnight, *Friday 20th November*. We cannot accept any more payments after this date or give refunds.** Please email Maria Buckley.

Dates and Speakers for the Monthly Meetings 2026

November	Jean Fullerton – 'Put That Light Out'.
December	Christmas Meal

Coffee/Tea Rota

November	Industrial Heritage Group
January	Walking Group

Michael's 100th Birthday



Ad Hoc Group - Visit to Trinity House

Since 1796, Trinity House has been based at Tower Hill in London and at the start of October, 20 of us enjoyed a most illuminating tour of the building whilst at the same time learning about the long and fascinating history of the Corporation and the work that they do.

The Corporation of Trinity House was incorporated on 20th May 1514 when a Royal Charter was presented to "The Master Wardens and Assistants of the Guild Fraternity or Brotherhood of the Most Glorious and Undivided Trinity and of Saint Clement in the Parish of Deptford Strond in the County of Kent."

In 1566, Elizabeth I granted Trinity House the power to build lighthouses and other seamarks for the protection of seafarers and in 1594 she conferred ballastage rights on the Thames, an important early income for the charity

With a mandate that has expanded considerably since then, they are today the UK's largest-endowed maritime charity, the General Lighthouse Authority (GLA) for England, Wales, the Channel Islands and Gibraltar and a fraternity of men and women selected from across the nation's maritime sector.

Trinity House maintains over 60 lighthouses around England, Wales, the Channel Islands and Gibraltar and they maintain and inspect over 10,000 buoys per year around the coast of the UK.

Many, many thanks to Julie for organising this (and booking the lunch venue) – and we hope that someone will offer to organise a second trip for those who were unable to make this one.

Book Group

Annette Jones.

The next meeting is **Monday 2nd November at Susan Straw's house.** Our book title is **'Crisis' by Frank Gardner**. We have room for anyone who would like to join a friendly group of ladies.

Bridge

Pam Bulmer.

There are two bridge sessions **in November - Monday 9th and 23rd - in the upstairs room, Warley Scout Hut (10:30am to noon).** Newcomers welcome although some experience required. Please contact Pam Bulmer.

Contemporary Haiku

Heather Brialey.

In September our group wrote to the themes of: Autumn, News, Space and harvest and these were our personal favourites.

Sapped leaves on the branch
Silhouettes against twilight
Summer's (a) distant dream.

Bayeux bash begins
Track the conquest shuffling by
Mobile history.

Goodbye Monty Don
20 years at Gardener's World
Gardener's pin up boy.

Space; final frontier
That's according to Star Trek
Boldly go out there.

Golden red, yellow
Colourful mix of the leaves
Changing through autumn.

Harvesting the fields
Mice and Shrews run for their lives
Is it a good year?

Our October themes included the international date line, clocks changing, news and one of the members of the group went 'off piste' and wrote one on nature.

Pole to Pole dateline
Where today meets tomorrow
Or is it yesterday?

Fly around the world
Lose or gain a day each way
Beam me up Scotty!

Thames Tideway tunnel
16 miles and full of s**t
Flushed by its success.

Are you a traitor?
Of course I am said Richard
The game's in turmoil.

A streak of azure
Just above a calm still pond
A ripple: dinner.

Contributors: Jean, June, Eric, Glynis and Heather.

Explore London

Kate Alexander.

The last day of September saw us completing our Exploration of the Royal Docks. As we wandered past the desolation that is Albert Island, there was a consensus that as the proposed site for the new Spitalfields and Billingsgate markets it was an ideal spot. We all found it difficult to imaging just how busy, noisy, dirty and smelly the area would have been when the docks and associated industries were in their heyday. It is believed that there has been some sort of ferry crossing between Woolwich and North Woolwich since 1066 and we spent some time simply watching the latest ferries transporting vehicles between the two banks.

Our October Exploration saw us back in Bermondsey. After learning about the Great Tooley Street fire, which led to the formation of the London Metropolitan Fire Brigade, we continued eastward, passing the outflow of the River Neckinger, St Savior's dock and the site of Jacob's Island – once a most unsavoury area - described in 1849 as "the Venice of drains". After stopping to watch as Tower Bridge opened (and closed) we continued along the Thames Path before heading back to Jamaica Road and "Biscuit Town" before catching the train back to London Bridge,

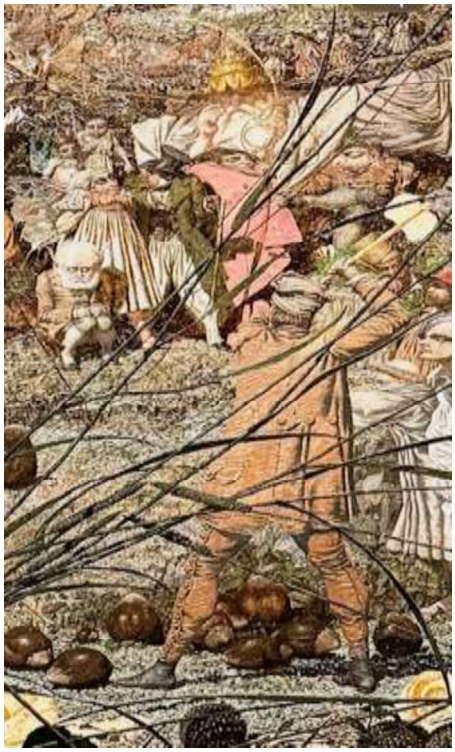
Next month we will be in the City for the first of three Explorations.

We have space for one or two more members – please contact Kate for more information.

Galleries, Exhibitions and Museums

Eric and Jean Mitchell.

Our Group visit for October was to the Royal Academy Piccadilly to view an intriguing exhibition of art by Richard Dadd entitled "Beyond Bedlam" His works are best known for his fairy tale paintings that draw upon literature, legend and memory.



The Fairy Fellers Master - Stroke 1855 (selected portion of the full work shown).

Despite Dadd's seclusion in the Victorian asylum system for many years, his paintings, watercolours and exquisite sketches in pencil are among the most original and imaginative works in British art.



The Flight out of Egypt (1849)



Portrait of (fellow artist) Augustus Egg in Character. (1838).

All images are by kind permission of the Royal Academy, London.

German Group

Regine Dyer.

Sprechen Sie Deutsch? - Flüssig oder nur ein Bischen?

The German Conversation Group is looking for one or two new members who want to improve or refresh their existing knowledge of the language. This friendly group meets on the 2nd & 4th Tuesday afternoons and sessions comprise of general chit-chat, a look at basic grammar and formal reading and translation from text books and other media.

Industrial Heritage

John Alexander.

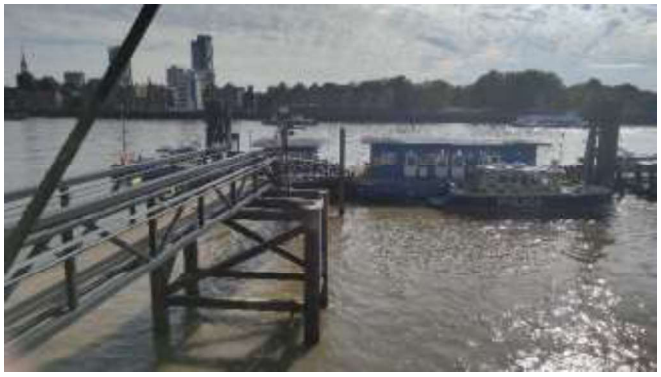
In the late 18th century, the Port of London and the River Thames suffered from massive cargo theft and looting by organized gangs of river labourers, lumpers, and corrupt customs officers, costing merchants an estimated half-million pounds a year.

In 1797, Essex magistrate John Harriott and merchant magistrate Patrick Colquhoun designed a plan for a dedicated, preventative river police force, backed by the West India Committee.

The Marine Police Institution formally launched on 2nd July 1798 at Wapping with an initial staff of 50 trained and armed officers patrolling the Thames in open rowing galleys. It is widely regarded as the oldest continuously operating police force in the world.

The interest was so great that we had to split our visit into two trips and we all learnt a lot about the investigations and rescues the unit has been involved in. I think we were all surprised that they were not confined to the Thames but also covered all the other waterways in greater London.







Plans are being completed for trips next year and details are on the website.

Lunch Group

Judy Brookes. Christine Pandula.

Lunch Club this month will be **12:30pm at the Alma Arms, Horseman Side, Navestock Side, Essex CM14 5ST**. I look forward to seeing you there.

Occasional Historic Churches Visiting Group

Peter Brisbourne.

Seventeen of the Group attended St Olave's Church in Hart Street in the City of London to be treated to a talk and tour by the Rector, Philip Dawson, on the history of the church and its place in the modern City.



We learned that Olaf, probably Olav Haraldsson, a Norwegian, came to the help of the Saxon king, Ethelred the Unready, to help drive out the Danes from the then-called Lundenburh. Legend has it that this involved the demolition of the old Roman Bridge (???London Bridge is falling down, etc, etc???) with fierce fighting on both banks of the river. Olaf later became King Of Norway and also a saint, being today's patron Saint of Norway. He was commemorated at many sites on the North and South banks of the Thames, traces of which can be seen today.

A church, probably of timber construction, was established on the present-day site in Hart Street around a well which still can be seen in the crypt. It was dedicated to Saint/King Olaf and was known as St Olave-towards-the-Tower. The wooden building was replaced by one of stone in the 13th Century. It survived the Great Fire, but received serious damage at the hands of the Luftwaffe in 1941, being fully restored in the 1950s.

Historically, this has always been a busy church with its proximity to the docks, the Tower and the Royal and Merchant Navy. Its long association with the world of shipping continues with its location close to Trinity House and the International Insurance Market.

One of St Olaves' best known parishioners is Samuel Pepys whose grave and memorial are in the church. There is also a memorial to Mrs Pepys, it being a life-size head and shoulders high up a wall, staring down at the pew she and her husband regularly occupied.

To finish off the day, a contingent withdrew up the street for lunch at the site of the Friary of the Holy Cross (Crutched Friars) – lost during the Dissolution, eventually replaced by PLA warehouses, now repurposed as part of the Pubsmiths chain.







Sunday Lunch Club

Maria Buckley.

This is held every third Sunday of the month for members who live on their own. The next lunch will be on **Sunday November 15th November 12:30pm at The Kings Head, Billericay. 10 places booked.**
December's lunch will be on 20th December 12:30pm at The Plough, Mountnessing. 10 places booked.

Warley Wordle Group

Peter Brisbourne.

The scope of the group has now expanded to include Strands, Connections, Waffle and Pips (all via NYT website). Share your results with like-minded u3a colleagues and join the light-hearted banter. To get yourself added to the Group, please contact Peter Brisbourne.

Warley u3a Interest Groups by day held and frequency in the month.

Last updated 26th October 2026

	AM	PM
Mondays	Book Group: 1st week 10:30am Bridge: Fortnightly 10:30am	Meditation Group: 1st & 3rd week 2:00pm Lunch Group: 3rd week 12:30pm Knitters: 2nd & 4th week 2:00pm Crazy Golf: 3rd Monday pm (seasonsal)
Tuesdays	Drawing: 1st & 3rd week 10:00am Contemporary Haiku: 2nd & 4th week	Creative Writing: 1st & 3rd week 2:00pm German Conversation: 2nd & 4th week 2:00pm
Wednesdays	Explore London: 2nd week 10:30am Walking Group: 4th week am	Cinema Group: 3rd week times vary Quiz Group: 2nd week 2:00pm
Thursdays	Spanish Conversation: Weekly 10:15am	Monthly Meeting: 4th week 2:15pm Canasta: 1st week 2:00pm
Fridays	Galleries, Exhibition & Museums: 3rd week 10:30am approx Garden Visits: 4th week 10:30am approx Rummikub: Weekly 9:00 – 10:00am	
Saturdays		
Sundays	Lunch Club: 3rd week – various venues	

Ad Hoc Events

We also have several groups which meet on an ad hoc basis which are: -

The Ad Hoc Events, the Industrial Heritage Group, the Military History Group, Occasional Historic Church Visits Group and the Theatre Group

Shenfield u3a

Shenfield have advised us that some of their groups have spaces and they would welcome friends from Warley to join them. Current vacancies include Astronomy, History, a Lunch group and Singing for Pleasure. If you are interested Shenfield u3a have a link on their website for group information.