

Keeping you up-to-date with
BArts and local Arts' news

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Make a Date with Summer!

All events at the Spotlight,
unless otherwise indicated

01992 441946

3rd	My Kind of Music <i>Piano Concert</i>	19th	Taylormania
5th	Silent Disco	19th	Behind the Seams <i>Exhibition</i> LW
5th	Man in the Mirror Jackson Tribute B	19th	Community Concert HS
8th	Capel ManorTalk	20th	Phantoms of the Popera
9th	Forum Film Classics Cabaret Top Hat Film B	21st	Open Day HS
10th	Embracing Colour <i>Floral Art</i> JH	23rd	Arts Café Paintings, Craft, Photographs, Poetry, Live Music
10th—13th	Vicar of Dibley <i>Play</i> B	24th	Open Air Shakespeare 'A Comedy of Errors'
12th	Let's Do Lunch <i>English,</i> A Language for the World	25th	Boticelli's Florence Art Lecture
12th	Thank You For the Music	26th-28th	Celebration of Creativity HPC
13th	The Magic of Motown	26th	Community Concert HS
14th	Tea Dance <i>Barry Sapsford</i> SM	26th	Tribute to Dire Straits
14th	Fun Dog Show Barclay Park	28th	Family Day HZ Rock Painting HL
14th	Family Day, Hoddesdon Cricket Club	28th	Family Funfair Heritage Walk LW
18th	Summer Serenade Words and Music for a Summer Evening—Piano and Flute	28th	Jazz at Southern Maltings Sarah Ellen Hughes Quartet

B Beam, **HL** Hoddesdon Library, **HS** Hertfordshire
Studios, **HPC** Hoddesdon Parish Church,
HZ Hoddesdon Zoo, **JH** Jackson Hall, **LW** Lowewood



Love Hoddesdon Midsummer Festival June 14th - 28th



Café Concert Summer Serenade

Words and Music
in celebration of Summer

June 18th

With Barbara Manning, piano,
Jane Rose, flute
7.30 pm. Tickets £20

Broxbourne Arts Forum
presents

Shakespeare Comedy and the Play

A pre-performance introduction to the
characters, themes and language.....

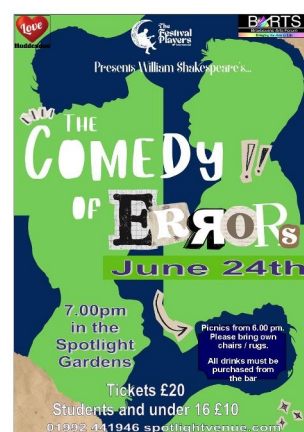
June 24th



4.30 pm

Tickets £5

01992 441946 spotlightvenue.com



Unaware of each other, two sets of identical twins
are in the same town.... and chaos is guaranteed!



Poets and Painters. Competition! Art and Poetry



for Summer

Is There Anybody There?

A few years ago, BArts ran a number of Art and Writing competitions with cash prizes. We could fill the Spotlight bar walls (oh happy days!) with the entries and it was a real pleasure to see so much enthusiasm and creativity from 'ordinary' people.

While, inevitably, "*the times, they are a-changing,*" have we *really* lost the creative spark? Or is it just too much hassle in a hectic life, to actually get around to doing something other than gazing at a screen?

The closing date for the current competition on the theme of *Summer* was originally April 21st, with three cash prizes—£50, £25 and £15— offered in each category. By the deadline, we had received entries of just *three* poems and *four* pictures!

OK. We *know* that Broxbourne doesn't have *quite* the same demographic as Hertford and Ware and the Borough's reputation for the Arts has never been good, BUT.....

NEW CLOSING DATE JUNE 7TH

Call: 01992 467420 e-mail: leerayner_arts@hotmail.com



June 23rd -Last Arts Cafe Until September!

Closure of the Spotlight for maintenance, for six weeks over the summer, has wiped out our July and August cafés, so we need to ensure that June 23rd is worthwhile, especially as it's part of the Love Hoddesdon Midsummer Festival. We have another group of local musicians booked, **The A Train**, who should appeal to most people with their emphasis on familiar pieces and the Great American Songbook. There will be some special art and craft demonstrations, too, including quilt making

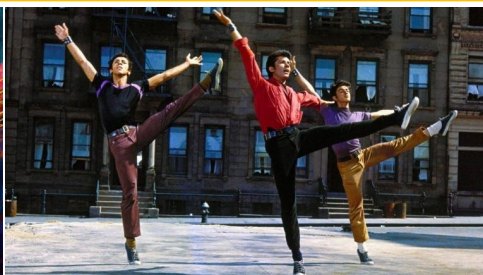
... So what are you waiting for?

Recent UK statistics suggest that around 95% of the population support the Arts in some form, but *active* participation is slowly declining and sustaining current venues is doubtful. The *benefits* of the Arts are less well publicised or understood than for Sport.. and, therefore, are usually **under-funded**.



"Regular gallery visits, choir rehearsals or pottery classes could slow ageing, according to a study of more than 3,500 people.

Researchers at UCL found that those who took part in an arts activity at least once a week appeared to age around 4 per cent more slowly, at a biological level, than those who rarely engage with them."



Original 1961
American musical
film
'West Side Story,'
May 12th



'Open' Piano Day
May 19th

Featuring Barbara Manning,
guests Rachel Cargeeg and
Broxbourne School student,
Alex Hoggarth.



Between 11.00 am and 1.00pm, there was an impressive selection of music—Mozart, Chopin, Rachmaninov, Khachaturian, Debussy.... and bravura performances. Barbara is an old friend of BArts, playing mostly easy listening melodies every month for **My Kind of Music**. She will be with us again for a special concert, **Summer Serenade** on **June 18th**. Rachel and Alex are new to BArts, but will definitely be welcome to play for us again.



May 22nd

That Was The Week, That Was!

Just a little reminder of how lucky we are to have such a wide range of excellent music from BArts' programme— American musical theatre, classical and folk instrumental, talented pianists and first-class, cool jazz... all in one week!



Alex Hoggarth from Broxbourne School



Barbara Manning—our 'resident' pianist

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Surprise Extra!

Shortly after our Arts' Café opened on May 19th, a policeman arrived saying that he had been booked in to have a display table and talk to the public. We knew *nothing* about this and felt that someone should have *told* us in advance. However, on chatting to him we discovered that his hobby was... marquetry ...and he may be offering some examples for our next café!!



Learn, Laugh, Live!



The University of the Third Age

Over 1,000 branches in the UK, with more than 430,000 members

Broxbourne u3a meets at the Spotlight on **the third Thursday** in the month at **9.00 am** 07496 702998 broxbourneu3a.org.uk

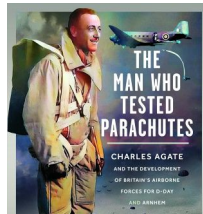
June 18th



Crime Scene Search

Speaker: Alex Mair

July 16th



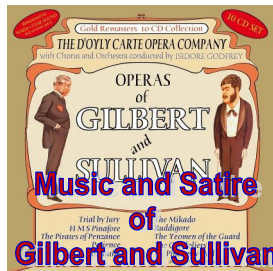
Speakers:
Andrew Colley and John Neil

More than 50 interest groups with something for everyone ...Art, Craft, Dancing, Languages, Music, Indoor Games, Tai Chi, Sport, Walking

Guests welcome to try a taster session

Cheshunt u3a meets at the Laura Trott Leisure Centre on **the fourth Thursday** in the month at **1.30 pm** 07984 791184 cheshunt.u3asite.uk

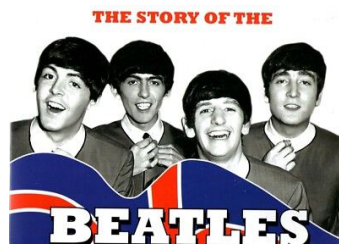
June 25th



Music and Satire of Gilbert and Sullivan

Speaker: Bernard Lockett

July 23rd



Speaker: Paul Lillie

Indoor and outdoor activities, day trips and short breaks.

Art, Birdwatching, Bookclub, Country Dancing, Languages, Needlecraft, Sailing, Singing, Theatre Visits

Lea Valley u3a meets at the Spotlight on the **second Monday** in the month at **1.00 pm** 01992 916485 lvu3a@live.co.uk

June 8th



Capel Manor

Speaker:
Dr. Steven Dowbiggin
OBE

July 13th



Henry VIII

Musician, composer, poet sportsman...

Speaker: Tony Harris

Archaeology, Art, Astronomy.

Croquet, Exploring London, Family History, Heritage, History, Languages, Music Appreciation, Pub Lunches,

Quizzes,

Reading For Pleasure, Walking, Walking Netball

Adult Book Making Workshop



Friday 12th June, 1pm-3pm
In the Lowewood Café

Come and make a 'one sheet wonder'

Textiles Artist, Christine Lockton, will work with you to create your own notebook by stamping, cutting and stitching.

*No experience necessary—
 all materials provided.*

Tickets £12.
01992 445596

**PEOPLE AND PLACES
 HERITAGE
 WALK**

**SOUTH HODDESDON
 AND BARCLAY PARK**

Weds, June 24th, 11.30 am
Sat, June 27th, 2.00pm

Discover the history of South Hoddesdon on a guided circular walk from Lowewood Museum to Barclay Park. Hear fascinating stories of the Warners, Barclays and Rawdons—three influential families in the history of Hoddesdon.

Start from Lowewood Museum
 Distance: Approx 1.3 miles
 Duration :Approx 1.5 hours

Pre-booking required.
 Scan the QR code or visit
www.lowewoodmuseum.com/

**Suggested Donation
 £3 per person**

Lowewood Museum, High St,
 Hoddesdon. EN11 8BH
 01992 445596
info@lowewoodmuseum.org.uk

Friends of Lowewood Museum
 BOROUGHS OF BROXBORNE
 Designed by Broxbourne



TWENTY-SIXTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
3rd June 2026 – 7.30pm, United Reformed Church,
Mill Lane, Broxbourne, Herts. EN10 7BQ.



Oh dear! *Another* AGM! I can hear you yawning already! They *aren't* a lot of fun, but they *are essential*, both from a legal and general admin point of view and it's the opportunity for group members and individuals to.... ask questions, make suggestions, **volunteer, Sponsor!!!**

After 26 years in existence, we assume that we must be doing *something* right, BUT support for events is a bit sparse and hard to come by, response to surveys is minimal and we don't actually get to meet on many social occasions!

Perhaps we should have more?

Well, the AGM offers wine and cheese after the business bit, so that's 'social'. If you've *never* been before, give it a try! You may learn a bit more about us—our small triumphs and slightly larger perennial problems.....

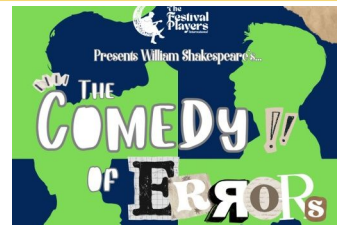


Open-air Shakespeare at the Spotlight

With the all-male Festival Players

Part of the Love Hoddesdon Midsummer Festival

June 24th, 4.30 pm Talk, 7.00 pm Performance



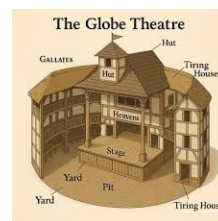
What is it about Shakespeare? Things you may not know...



About Him .. England's, possibly the world's, greatest playwright... Born 1564, Stratford-on-Avon, during a period of plague, so baptised quickly and lucky to survive. Son of leather / glove maker and farmer's daughter. Three surviving brothers and two sisters. Probably went to local Grammar school, as his father was a local Alderman (councillor / mayor). Got his 26 year old girl friend pregnant when he was only 18. Shotgun wedding forced by her parents. Daughter, Susannah, followed by twins Judith and Hamnet. Hamnet died aged only 12. (possibly of plague)

A playwright in London by 1590s, with several noble patrons, increasingly popular and arousing jealousy in other writers. Performed for royalty. Became a shareholder in the Globe theatre company and made enough money to buy one of the best houses in Stratford. Died in 1616, possibly after a drunken night out with another writer, when he fell into a ditch and was exposed to rain and cold... Didn't become really famous until C18.

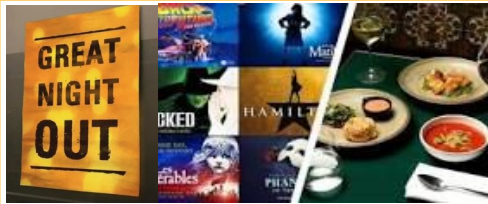
About Theatre Strolling players performed in rich men's houses or inn yards. First proper theatre not built in London until 1576. Open-air, no roof for most of the audience. The poorest people **stood** to see the play for a few pence, the well-to-do sat under a bit of cover, or on the side of the stage. London theatres were a great place for pick-pockets and prostitutes, so had a poor reputation, as did all touring actors, because they were of no fixed abode. No women allowed on stage, so all female parts played mostly by young males. Plays were either Tragedy, Comedy or History, with no scenery or make-up, but lavish costumes. The most popular ingredients of a play? Fighting, madness, witchcraft, disguise, love, revenge, mistaken identity, servants getting the better of their masters, clowns.



About Language and Poetry Shakespeare didn't talk 'posh'. He probably had a Warwickshire accent, which, with old pronunciation, sounded like a mixture of Scottish and north-country. His 'poetic' style, known as 'iambic pentameter' had 5 strong beats in a line and still had 'thee, thy' and the old-style endings 'dost, thinkest.' Lots of his particular expressions are still part of everyday speech—'in my mind's, eye, eat me out of house and home, one fell swoop, cold comfort'. Lots of bawdy, vulgar expressions that aren't easy to spot today!

About the Festival Players Founded 1986, Patron Judi Dench, all-male touring company, performing in traditional style and costume, usually with specially written music.

Spotlight gardens open from 6.00pm for picnics.
Bring your own chairs and rugs, but not your booze!
Performance inside, if wet.
BOOKING 01992 441946



Food! Drink! Entertainment!

While the *details* may change over the years, the *idea* of ‘a great night out’ has usually included food, drink and entertainment, but recent huge increases in the costs of *providing* these is beginning to impact on the ‘hospitality’ sector—pubs, bars and restaurants—and affect theatre and cinema prices to the point where Mr. Average can no longer afford them.

Since Covid, there has already been a decline of around a third in memberships and attendance in various organisations, so people are spending more time at home and socialising less, except ‘virtually’ through social media. Eventually, this will affect human interaction and mental health, so it isn’t a trivial matter.

Twenty or so years ago, the Spotlight’s café was open all day, every day and offered pre-performance dinners for special events. A light lunch before a film, or tea and cake afterwards were popular, too, and there was always a tempting selection of home-made cakes available. Now the café is open only when there is an event, pizza is the standard offering, with a few sandwiches for certain events and people are actually sneaking in *their own* snacks!



Audience Behaviour!



With so much entertainment available *at home* and universal use of the mobile phone, audience behaviour isn’t respectful of others—chatting through the overture at a musical, or the opening sequences of a film, is all too

common, as is checking the phone, or texting, *during* the performance.

The behaviour of Dads at local theatre-school shows is often quite disruptive; since they are only there to see their *own* child’s performance; once this is over they are liable to leave their seat, *noisily*, several times to get more beer, or go to the gents, treating the occasion more like a football match or ‘pop’ concert!

Eating and drinking *during* entertainment has often been a source of distraction and irritation for those who *aren’t*, to say nothing of the poor performers on stage. Tea served *during* a matinee or cinema was once a regular occurrence and the noisy consumption of popcorn, crisps or sweets is all part of the average film-goers routine today.

Was it better in the past? Well, no, probably *worse*, since most people *stood* at a performance, could walk about and make loud comments and food sellers circulated with a variety of things to eat. Discoveries during the excavation of the Tudor *Rose* theatre site have included the remnants of cheap shellfish—mussels, whelks and oysters—and hazelnuts and almonds, as well as plums, pears and peaches. Bottled ale was the most popular drink, which made a loud hissing noise when opened, but actually came in handy when the original Globe theatre caught fire during a performance and ale was used to put out the flames!

STRUGGLING TO
MAKE **ENDS** MEET?



Existence v **Quality** of Life

The cost of living has always been a problem for *most* people, with the gap between rich and poor the origin of *most* of society's ills. To have *any* disposable income after vital necessities is good fortune indeed, but the *providers* of life's extras for leisure and pleasure also have to have budgets and balance income and expenditure to survive. This has become much harder over recent years and threatens to scupper even a *modest* programme like BArts'.

Performance fees have increased considerably, with at least £100 per hour per individual being fairly general and £3.5 k being normal for a small music ensemble or theatre performance. Venue hire is threatening to price itself out of existence, because of staff and amenities costs and then add little things like *licences*....

Two typical examples for BArts' events ...the Arts Cafés and Film Classics.

Arts' Cafés Café Hire **£260**, 1 hour of live music, at least **£70**, Total **£330**, Income **£0**, as it is a 'drop-in' *community* event.

Film Classic Dinant Room Hire **£168**,

Licence to show the DVD **£105** Hire of projector and screen **£105**. Total **£378**

Average Income@ £12 per ticket **£216**

The Spotlight Box Office charges 20% on ticket sales and printing.

VAT @ 20% is applicable in most cases.

BArts gets a small discount, but publicity and printing costs have to be added to each event.

This is not intended as a 'doom and gloom' article, merely as an *illustration* of what we're up against and how difficult it is to achieve *any* sort of balance. After 25 years of *just* keeping afloat, we wonder how long we can continue with the odds stacking up. We are blessed with *some* Sponsorship, but there are no guaranteesWould we be missed if we ceased to exist? Doubtful, but *every* loss of something that contributes to the *quality* of our existence is more serious than we realise.

Going to a London Theatre... Average cost of a simple meal out **£15-£30**.

Glass of wine **£5.17**. Cup of coffee **£3+**, Parking Costs **£5-£8** per hour

Return train ticket **£16.50**... so supporting *local* entertainment could be a cheaper alternative, but with less choice....

If you no longer drive and can't use public transport... 3 minute local cab journey is **£4.60**. To Spotlight from Wormley **£7.50** , so **£15** return

Average ticket prices by genre

Top price Musical

£72.98

25% up compared to 2023

Top price Play

£44.90

0.3% up compared to 2023

Bottom price Musical

£19.06

6.2% down compared to 2023

Bottom price Play

£18.86

17% more compared to 2023

**Average
Tribute Band
at the
Spotlight**

£33

Other top-price tickets by comparison in 2025

Comparison of top-price tickets in 2025:

- Odeon Aylesbury Cinema ticket: **£23.49**
- Oasis ticket Edinburgh: **£206.25**
- Football Liverpool FC home game: **£61**