

# A Day in the Life

Carers in Hertfordshire

Carers Camera Club

## Welcome to our 2022-2023 exhibition.

*"A Day in the Life"* is the third exhibition of the Carers in Hertfordshire Carers Camera Club following our previous *"Insights"* exhibitions in 2015 and 2018. It was originally planned for 2020 in the run up to our 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2021.

The exhibition uses visual imagery to show how we, as carers, experience our caring role both symbolically and in reality. Brief explanatory text accompanies the images to aid understanding, and we have also included some relevant information in bite-size chunks.

The Club is a peer-led support group facilitated by carers for carers. This exhibition is only possible because of the ongoing support of *Carers in Hertfordshire*.

All of the images on display have been provided, printed, mounted and framed by members of the camera club as part of ongoing club activities. In addition to the actual photography, these activities provide opportunities to have a break from caring, engage in some socialising and learn some practical and transferable skills.

Photography allows us to showcase our creativity and skills through our images, telling our stories and provides a break from caring responsibilities.

We hope you enjoy it!



*Image by Lloyd Kirby*



## About the Carers Camera Club

Our Club was established following a photographic course organised by Carers in Hertfordshire, we are all unpaid carers. What started with just a handful of members has grown steadily over the years and now has around 30 carer-members.

We are an informal peer support group, we provide a supportive atmosphere and shared interest to promote well-being. All skill levels and experience are welcomed, participation in Club activities is gently encouraged but is completely optional.

We are a non-competitive club, we hold a monthly "Photo Challenge" rather than competitions, with a constructive and supportive feedback session via our private online gallery. We incorporate this into an informal monthly meeting where we encourage social interaction and enjoy a coffee – and the occasional biscuit or three!

During lockdown we introduced monthly video meetings, online Quiz Nights, which still continue, and talks & workshops by club members and guests - including our first international speaker in May 2021!

We arrange a monthly activity, usually a "photo-walk" which can also include a casual lunch depending on where we are walking.

If you are interested in joining please contact Carers in Hertfordshire.

You can call 01992 58 69 69 or Email: [contact@carersinherts.org.uk](mailto:contact@carersinherts.org.uk)





The practical work preparing *"A Day in the Life"* was completed entirely by carers over a period of eight months at home individually, using dining tables or sheds (see front cover image!), or together in facilities generously made available by supporters.

The Town Clerk of Ware Town Council made a large, light room available for a week which meant we could complete the mounting of our images and give all exhibitors a chance to see their completed images..

It was key to us completing the preparation on time, and allowed us to have a break from caring and meet friends.

Did you know?

Carers in Hertfordshire can give you the chance to meet other like-minded people and provide opportunities to learn new skills.

In the Carers Week 2020 Research Report, by Carers UK, 66% of unpaid carers identified not being able to have time away from caring in their Top 3 issues along with managing the stress of caring, and the detrimental effect it has on their own physical and mental health.

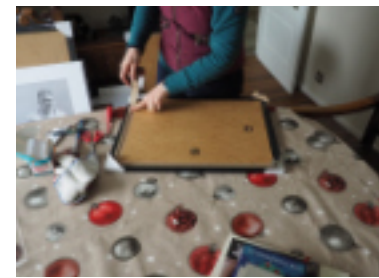


We continued to build on skills learnt from previous exhibitions, with many members learning new skills, to produce around 90 exhibition images and information panels, utilising - 180 individually cut photo mounts and backing boards; 90 frames;

Close on 200 wall mount brackets and almost 400 screws;

Several rolls of tape – single and double-sided; and

Almost 100 protective sleeves.



Plus measuring tools, cutters and blades, pencils, labels, table covers, cutting boards, storage boxes, many hours and people, and of course a good supply of sustenance!

Now, let's meet some of our members and see their images . . .





# Paulette Kane

I have been a carer for over 40 years for family members. I had struggled to get the support I needed, until I found Carers in Hertfordshire in 2008.

I have had a love of photography since childhood, but in relatively recent times I had been unable to pursue it.

This changed when I was given a bridge camera by Carers in Hertfordshire, as part of their "Make a Difference" scheme in 2011. That then enabled me to pursue my love of photography.

More recently I was given a DSLR camera by my mum. I learnt how to use it on a course arranged by Carers in Hertfordshire thanks to a very good and patient teacher. It has also given me a break from my caring role.

I have developed friendships via the Camera Club and no longer feel so isolated.



*Footprint in The Sand - Paulette says "This reminded me of Robinson Crusoe on a desert island, the isolation and the loneliness - often felt by carers.*



*Blue Damselfly - Sometimes the little things make the biggest difference. It would appear to be a fairly innocuous and fragile insect but it is both prey for larger dragonflies, spiders and birds and a predator, of smaller insects such as aphids.*

*It, and all insects, are crucial in our worlds survival.*



*Marley and Small Dog - This is my dog, Marley, cautiously greeting a new friend.*

*Making and building friendships can be difficult for many carers who, perhaps, experience a reduction in opportunities to socialise as they take up their caring role. It's not always easy but don't be afraid to make a new friend.*

# Lloyd Kirby

I retired early to become a carer.

I have been interested in photography as a hobby for many years.

I purchased my first DSLR camera after a photography course provided by Carers in Hertfordshire and started taking photographs for leisure.

I really enjoy digital art and manipulating images but I also venture into the natural world and enjoy "Still Life" photography.

Ten years on and I am enjoying photography and image manipulation as much as when I started. Encouraged and supported by the Camera Club members I have also provided an online "Desktop Photography" workshop for club members.



*Off to Dinner - Lloyd says "This was taken for a Carers Camera Club monthly photo challenge. The club is a supportive place where I have the freedom to explore the creative side of my photography that overlaps with digital art."*



*Blue Tit -Resting in the garden on a beautiful day I saw this Blue Tit, it reminded me of the freedom that animals have.*

*Rose - The scent of these roses was quite intoxicating and a world away from the aggro of life.*





# John Prestage

I started taking pictures in my early teens, my earliest recollection is of taking pictures of steam trains speeding through Hitchin station on my Kodak 127 camera.

Through the years I had several 35mm slide and film cameras before moving to digital in 2006.

My preferred subjects are landscapes, buildings, trains and motor-sport.

I have been a carer to my wife since 1992 and joined Carers in Hertfordshire as soon as I became aware of it. I saw the Camera Club mentioned in the Carers in Hertfordshire's Carewaves magazine and joined in 2018 to meet like-minded people and to get tips and advice in order to improve my photographic skills.



*Ribbleshead - John says "This image of Ribbleshead Viaduct and fells, is taken from the train."*

*Ribbleshead viaduct was built by the Midland Railway between 1869 and 1875 to take the railway above Batty Moss. The viaduct is situated within the Yorkshire Dales National Park and is undoubtedly the most impressive structure on the Settle-Carlisle Railway.*



*Awaiting Collection - A familiar sight from the past as milk churns await collection by train at Bodmin General railway station, Cornwall. It was the terminus of the Great Western Railway's Bodmin branch line, and is now the principal railway station of the heritage Bodmin & Wenford Railway.*

*Breaking Waves - Waves breaking on rocks beside the harbour wall at West Bay, Dorset. West Bay, once known as Bridport harbour, is west of Chesil Beach and is the gateway to Dorset's famous Jurassic Coast.*



# What it means to be an unpaid carer

At the basic level being a carer means that you look after someone who couldn't cope without your help, you give the time and energy you once devoted to other things to the practical day to day tasks of looking after a friend or family member. Being a carer, like much of life, has its downsides but there are opportunities and support to help you in your role.

You might find -

- parts of your life, your interests, work, social activity seem to fade away; ➡ Through organisations like Carers in Hertfordshire you get opportunities to meet other people in the same boat, ask questions, and make new friendships;
- you need to deal with administrative tasks and systems that seem designed to prevent those with a genuine need for help from getting it; ➡ You can get a great sense of achievement in knowing your work and your efforts make a difference to the care your loved one receives;
- you have to stop paid employment, with a resultant drop in income, in order to continue to care for a friend or loved one; ➡ Contact Carers in Hertfordshire who can help you understand your options before you make a final decision.
- you feel no one is there to care for or support you, your own health and well-being maybe compromised; ➡ Carers in Hertfordshire will help identify support for you, and will provide opportunities to look after yourself physically and mentally;
- time for yourself may be at a premium and unpredictable, you may feel guilty about taking a break; ➡ Activities and relaxation techniques are available for all, as are supportive coping strategies;
- the person you care for no longer recognises that you are caring for them and may not know who you are. ➡ Support and interest groups of carers in similar positions can help you come to terms with the tough personal aspects of your caring role;

# Carers (Ron Baber)

Carers come in many guises, we're different shapes and different sizes,  
We're different ages and demeanours, some are bigger, some are leaner,  
Some are healthy, some less so, some with health issues on show,  
Some are trying to be hired, others working, some retired,  
Many still in education, all giving healthcare to the nation.

We are sisters, daughters, mothers, we are fathers, sons and brothers,  
We are neighbours or good friends, well-meaning with a hand to lend,  
We are experts, we are learners, with projects shelved or on back-burners,  
We are musicians, painters, singers, sailors, golfers, football wingers,  
Archers, drummers, skillful knitters, shopaholics and babysitters

We're quizzers, gardeners and we're grafters, photographers and home crafters,  
We are readers and we're writers despite the pains of our arthritis,  
We write poems some of us, one of us can drive a bus!  
We are twitchers, anglers, walkers, chatterboxes, non-stop talkers,

Most are partners, husbands, wives, some living shared yet separate lives,  
All helping out from day to day, without question, without pay,  
Without time off, without wealth, there in sickness and in health,  
Mostly busy sometimes bored, sometimes invisible, often ignored,  
Every day we care for hours, but none of us has super-powers,  
Exhausted, worn out, ineffective, no time to sit and be reflective,

We like a coffee, tea or cake, what a difference those three make!  
We like to laugh and chat and chew, in many ways we're just like you,  
Life these days holds few surprises, but Carers? . . . we come in many guises!

# Sandy Robertson

I am a carer, but because of health issues I am also cared for. My own disability is not visible.

I rediscovered photography over 10 years ago after I found that active pursuits and even basic social activities had become significantly restricted. That was initially due to my own health issues and the additional impacts of caring for my other half, until her death last year. Over recent years I have also had a caring role for my father.

The Carers Camera Club has been extremely helpful for me in maintaining some social interaction and encouraging me to continue learning about photography both through club activities and courses run by Carers in Hertfordshire.

My photographic interests cover a broad range of subjects and techniques and include some aspects of digital art and experimental work. I have a particular interest in wildlife photography and atmospheric optics phenomena.



*Rainbow Lighthouse - Sandy says "A summer storm and a low sun created this rainbow which lasted only a short time. The vehicle did distract from the scene but there was no time for it to be moved before the rainbow faded. After I took the shot it made me think. If you get an opportunity to get something that is really good, make the most of that opportunity even if it is not perfect."*



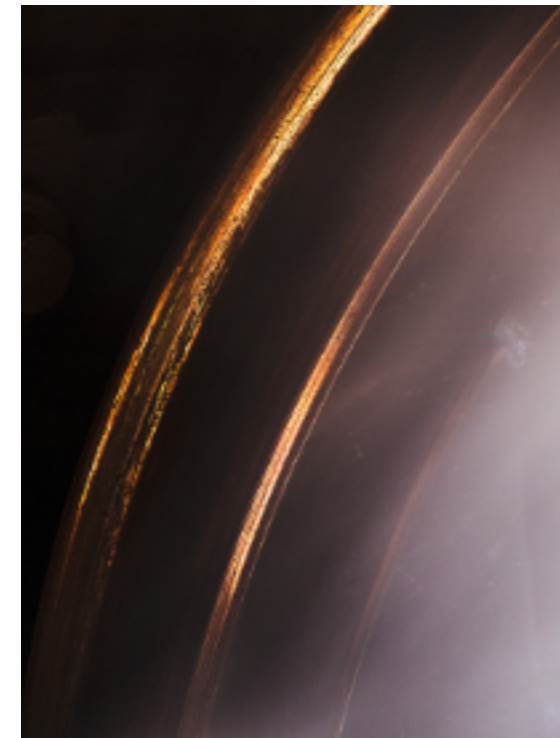
*Don't Make Assumptions - The above image is of my late wife, Barbara, who died in 2021. She was my carer as much as I was her carer. It was often wrongly assumed that I was the carer and she was the one being cared for. In the image she is shown making use of the accessible bird hide at Mannez Quarry in Alderney.*

*Not all disabilities are visible, and many people with their own disabilities have significant caring responsibilities in their own right.*

*Having accessible facilities at nature reserves and other public attractions makes a really big difference for people with limited mobility.*

*Members of the Camera Club will sometimes get together informally to go on photographic outings. The image below was taken on an outing to the Epping and Ongar Railway.*

*Driving Wheel - part of a steam locomotive.*





## Brenda Dalton

I have been caring for my son, who has learning difficulties and epilepsy, since 1981, and part time for the past 10 years.

Lockdown meant that, for a lot of that time, we were not able to see each other. I have, in the past, also cared for elderly parents.

I still consider myself a "snapper" rather than a serious photographer so take pictures for my own pleasure and to preserve memories, although I should now have more time to spend looking for photo opportunities.

I like architecture but I'm also fascinated by cloud formations, reflections and texture.



*Sunrise Over Gribbin Head - Brenda says "This is one of a series of photos taken looking towards Gribbin Head, Cornwall. The weather conditions, cloud formations and the light, were constantly changing."*



*Banksy in Mevagissey! - This was a complete surprise to turn a corner and spot this on a wall.*



*Is That Really The Time - Clock in Hemel Hempstead Old Town.*

*Having time away from the caring role is really important for recharging your batteries. Well it is right twice a day!*

*Taken on one of the Carers Camera Club outings.*

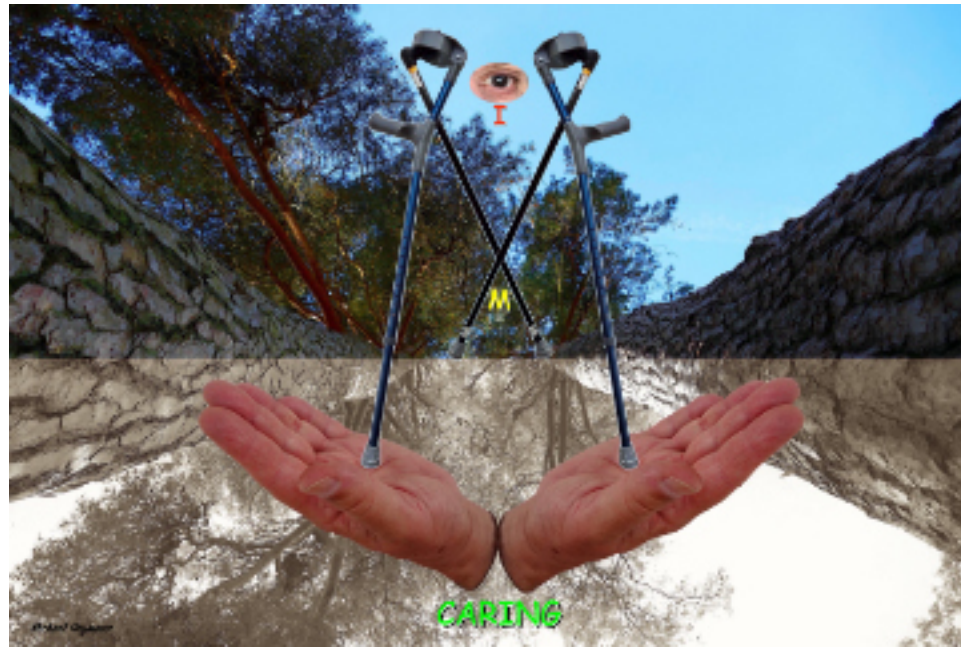
# Michael Heymann

I have enjoyed photography since my school days, including black & white, colour, 35mm film camera, colour slides, dark-room work, digital photography and computer presentation.

Being a qualified architect, architectural photography is of special interest.

Over ten years ago my wife developed a rare disability and I had to take early retirement in order to care for her.

I have joined the Carers in Hertfordshire Camera Club and very much enjoy the Club's activities, which I find to be of great interest and of a highly professional level.



*I Am Caring - Michael says "Caring makes the difference between a grey emotionless state and fully coloured determination and encouragement. This is a composite image and highlights the support aspects of caring for a loved one."*



*Mushroom Rock - or Rock Pedestal, usually found in desert areas and formed over thousands of years, is a typical mushroom-shaped landform formed by the action of wind erosion in which transported materials hit an exposed rock surface and polish it.*

*Podarcis Siculus, Italian Wall Lizard - or Ruin Lizard, taken in Tuscany, basking in the warmth of the Italian sun. This is the most abundant species of lizard found in southern Italy.*







*Caring and dealing with mental health issues can easily lead to an “existence” rather than a life. These Grebes were heading the same way but symbolise the gap which can easily develop when two people have different views on their joint situation.*



*Left : Feeding Kindly by Michael Heymann;  
Below : Staving off Battle Fatigue by Sue Haynes*

*Understanding the loss of capabilities, the difficulty of coming to terms with illness - mental or physical - and the realisation that you can no longer manage some tasks which were “routine” can lead to frustration by both the cared for person and the carer.*



*Above: Parallel Lives by Ron Baber  
Right : Frustrated by Karin Hollick*

*Caring comes in many guises from compassionate physical acts such as feeding or giving medication, to giving support and help to battle “the system”. When the grey cells fail to function anymore after filling in forms for the DWP, there’s nothing better than a cup of tea.*





## Karin Hollick

Our *"A Day in the Life"* exhibition brought it home to me, how loneliness and isolation becomes a very large part of day to day life. I used these connotations to hopefully portray this, through my images.

My initial inspiration for photography came from my uncle Heinz, many years ago. Now it is my husband, family, and carers photography club, where I get full encouragement to push boundaries and to think out of the box.

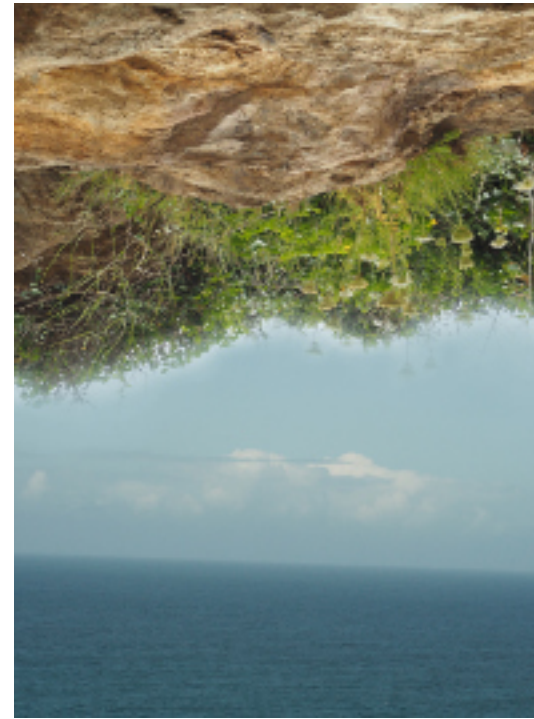
In the past I would not have dreamed of entering an open exhibition. I did in 2019 and to my amazement I was awarded second prize. It proved to me that I have grown as a photographer. Also gained more confidence.

As a carer being behind the camera is a source of inspiration, however long I have, it is my meditation. It is my time for myself.



*Old Mines - Karin says "The isolation and emptiness of the engine houses in the Crowns section of Botallack Mine, Cornwall. The mine buildings on Botallack Cliffs which once produced, Tin, Copper and Arsenic, are now protected by the National Trust.*

*The remaining buildings are set low down the cliffs north of Botallack. There are two engine houses and the remains of another pair on the cliff slopes above; the mine extends for about 400 metres out under the Atlantic ocean; the deepest shaft is 250 fathoms (about 500 metres) below sea level.*



*Turned Upside Down - A deliberate image inversion which represents what happens when you lose someone you love. Your world is turned upside down and those things which were straightforward now become a little more difficult to accept, understand and negotiate.*



*Eye on You - this adult Red Kite is ever alert to danger, always aware of it's surroundings and ready to protect it's family.*

# Sue Haynes

I care for my adult son and have campaigned for appropriate services for a better life for him and others for more than 25 years. It made me sad selecting my images, as he has been involved in so few outings over his adult life.

I also shared my dad's care with my sister, when he became very frail towards the end of his life. Since being widowed I care alone, receiving support from my daughter, carer friends and Carers in Hertfordshire.

My love of photography started in childhood, having been influenced by my dad, who was an amateur photographer. He developed and printed his own photos in the darkness of our larder. It was magic to a child. My parents bought me my first camera, a Kodak Instamatic 50, when I was 12 years old.

These days I have a digital bridge camera and my handy mobile phone to photograph mostly nature and animals.

Being part of the Carers Camera Club with like minded people has given me the chance to socialise while improving my photographic skills.



*Recharging the Batteries - Sue says "There's no better way to recharge the batteries than on Hastings' pier in the sun with a cup of Indian Tea, and time to reflect."*



*Blythburgh Church at Night - this photograph was taken from a holiday cottage in Suffolk. With little light pollution in the village, the well lit church looked stunning at night.*

*This is Holy Trinity Church Blythburgh. The church is known locally as "The Cathedral of the Marshes" a reference to the surrounding coastal area.*

*Down To The Sea - An Indian Summer break in sunny Barton on Sea in Hampshire. The beach was inviting me down to the sea.*

*A change is as good as a rest, this break achieved both!!*





# Peter Risley

Although being a member of the Carers in Hertfordshire Carers Camera Club for only the last couple of years I've been interested in photography for over 60 years and have amassed a large number of images on slides, prints and lately as digital.

All have been taken essentially as a record for family and friends of holidays, weddings, outings and get-togethers of various sorts and the opportunity to record dramatic or arty images has been very limited.

I am the carer for my wife who suffers with a debilitating and progressive illness and I myself am now of an age and reduced mobility and it has become difficult for me to get to places and events of interest for real photography so have instead had to rely on my library which thankfully is large and diverse.

It enables me to produce an acceptable image for most subjects and titles be they from the 1950's originally as slides through the days of prints to the most recent digital ones.

I have learnt a lot over the intervening years but unfortunately my library is no longer growing at the rate it did in the past and my equipment is getting a little dated.



*Railway Porter - Peter says "On a family visit to India we found this 90 year old porter who was still working on the narrow gauge railway that serves Shimla, the Himalayan Hill Fort of the British Raj, and who was the subject of a recent television piece."*



*Bass Beer Dray - taken on a visit to the Bass Museum at Burton on Trent on one of their open days with one of our other interest groups, The British Organ Grinders Association, where we played for the day.*

*Shanklin Beach - I took this image of very early in my photographic life and the fact that it has pictorially lasted through all the years still inspires me today. It was taken as a slide in 1957 using a basic film camera that required distance, aperture and exposure time to be estimated and was copied using my 10mp digital camera and a self built adaptor.*







*Right: Storm Coming by Toby Purnell*

*Below Right: The Cobb at Lyme Regis by Michael Heymann*

*Below Left: The London Eye by Toby Purnell*

*Photography is a great medium for recording memories of events and places, and can immediately rekindle those memories, and sustain them for many years, Images can stimulate positive feelings in people as they age and perhaps their personal faculties may falter.*



*These three images symbolise the desire many carers have to be able to take a break to relax and unwind.*

*Top left : Me Time by Ron Baber*

*Top Right : Taking a Break by Sandy Robertson*

*Bottom right : Dreamy Sea in Alderney by Sandy Robertson*



# Ron Baber

I joined the Carers Camera Club in 2015, photography had been a hobby for a few years at that time, and it still is today.

I enjoy nature and wildlife photography, but now find myself keen to try other genres - with varying degrees of success!

Photography provides me with a continual learning curve, whether that is new techniques or technical innovation.

This is my second exhibition experience with the Club. I hope you enjoy my images and those of the other Club members, and that you take something positive away from our exhibition.



*Blue Gannets - Ron says "Taken at RSPB Bempton Cliffs on a short break. The clear blue sky perfectly sets off the stunning Gannet."*

*The break was only for 3 days but for those 3 days I was relaxed, I calmed down totally and was completely immersed in my surroundings and these glorious birds!"*



*Waiting for a Train - Taken on a very wet Tuesday afternoon in London, it was drier underground!*

*I was drawn to the effect of the "skylight", which is actually a tiled ceiling recess, and the juxtaposition of the young woman using her modern mobile phone in the old station.*



*Child Care - Great Crested Grebes are extremely protective of their offspring (known as "Humbugs") in their early days, one adult protects them while the other brings in the food.*



# Toby Purnell

I first took up photography whilst at Brighton Polytechnic thirty-odd years ago. I started out with a second-hand film camera, and this taught me the basics of picture-taking. I continue to enjoy the challenge of non-instantaneous film photography, but now combine that with also using a digital camera.

My main photographic interests are landscapes and architecture, enjoying both black & white and colour formats.

Whilst photography has been a key interest for a long time, it has had an added significance in recent years as a diversion and escape from my two caring roles and my own medical issues. There has been a strong need for something pleasurable, and something which helped retain this part of my identity.

This is the first time I have ever exhibited my images, thanks to the encouragement of Club members. I hope you enjoy the images in this brochure and in the exhibition.



*Kings Cross Station - Toby says "This was taken whilst waiting for a train home, it shows the lattice roof structure of the extension to the station."*



*Circle of Care - This photograph is of a sculpture called "Love" by Lorenzo Quinn, which stands not far from Tate Britain in London.*

*For me, the hands are those of the carer and the cared-for; the circular band depicts an entire lifetime.*

*Who is the carer and who is the cared-for changes over time. When I took my first breath some 50 years ago, my Mum was my carer. In recent years, the roles were reversed, as I had the privilege of being her carer.*



*We Will Remember Them - There are hundreds of public memorials to those who have lost their lives, like this one to the Merchant Navy in London. Many have the timeless words of Laurence Binyon – "We Will Remember Them".*

*All too often, carers willingly become the anchor for their families, whilst it can appear government and society both fail to fully recognise their heroic efforts to look after loved ones.*

*Will we ever see a national memorial to carers?*

*Will we ever see the word "Carer" on headstones in graveyards around the country?*





Did you know? Research, conducted before the Coronavirus outbreak, showed that the value of unpaid care is £132bn per year - the equivalent to a second NHS.

(Source: [www.carersuk.org](http://www.carersuk.org), Carers Week 2020 Research Report.)

*Image by Lloyd Kirby*

## Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the following people, without whose invaluable support and input, this exhibition would not have been possible:

- Cllr. Lynn Chesterman OBE, Cllr. Barbara Gibson, Cllr. Nigel Quinton, and Cllr. Richard Smith who supported the costs of this exhibition.
- Terry Philpott, Town Clerk of Ware Town Council, for providing a space to prepare our images.
- The team at Carers in Hertfordshire.
- The members of the Camera Club, whose hard work and team spirit has been the driving force in making this exhibition happen.

Contributors - Paulette Kane, Lloyd Kirby, John Prestage, Sandy Robertson, Brenda Dalton, Michael Heymann, Karin Hollick, Sue Haynes, Peter Risley, Ron Baber, Toby Purnell

If you are interested in joining the Carers in Hertfordshire Carers Camera Club please contact:

Carers in Hertfordshire on 01992 58 69 69 or email [contact@carersinherts.org.uk](mailto:contact@carersinherts.org.uk)

# About Carers in Hertfordshire

We are the county's leading charity for unpaid family and caring friends.

If you provide support to a partner, child, relative, friend or neighbour, who is elderly, disabled, has a physical or mental illness or misuses substances and they would not manage without your help, then you are a carer. We support carers of all ages - children and adults – if they live, work or care in Hertfordshire. Our services are provided free to carers.

We make carers count by giving them a powerful voice in society and choice in their caring role. Many of our staff and trustees are carers themselves.

Carers in Hertfordshire can:

- Help you plan your caring role and guide you through the health and social care system.
- Support you to arrange time off and ways to have a life outside caring, whether in education, employment or through leisure activities.
- Provide opportunities for you to learn new skills and gain knowledge to help you care.
- Bring you together with other carers to have a say on issues affecting carers.
- Give you the chance to meet other people like you.
- Provide high-quality home care and Carers' breaks through our Care Service in Hertsmere, Three Rivers and Watford.
- Provide bereavement support and continued access to our services for up to three years after a bereavement.

If you look after someone and would like to find out how we can help you or ask us about a caring-related query, or would like to support our work, please get in touch.

Call - 01992 58 69 69, or email [contact@carersinherts.org.uk](mailto:contact@carersinherts.org.uk)

We want to reach more carers so they have the services and help that they need. To do this we need the continued support of our community and partners, for which we are very grateful.

Charity Registration No: 1085491

