

Senior

Moments



The Newsletter of the Bookham & District
University of the Third Age

Issue 47

July 2015

Don't Forget
It's time to renew your
Bookham U3A Membership



Vegetable Gardening Group



Photos from the International Wine Festival on 28th May by Don Edwards



Bookham and District U3A

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This July edition of Senior Moments follows just two months after the last issue in May. This is to avoid heavy posting costs in August when all copies would have to be posted because there is no August meeting. While saving on postage it presents increased pressure on getting copy to put in for you to read. Fortunately, there have been some good and interesting pieces to read this time with many excellent photos. Talking of photos reminds me to ask you to submit a photo, if you can, for the 2016 calendar. I hope to have the 2016 calendar printed for the October meeting and that means photos must be submitted by 31 August to me preferably as a jpg image (that's the type of file the cameras produces) or a print that I can scan. The subject is U3A activities, so there is plenty of scope for interpretation!

The July issue also carries the reminder, both on the cover and on page 13, to renew your membership before the end of August. If your membership lapses, the insurance cover on you and others in your group become void and that is not a situation we would wish to face..

You can read about three fairly new groups— Gardening, Thai Chi and Metal Detecting that are creating interest within the membership. Even if you are not interested in Metal Detecting, the group like to work in people's gardens and I can report that they do minimal damage even when they get a good reading in the middle of a lawn! They remove the turf very carefully and replace it so that it is extremely difficult to find where they have been working and they are so well organised they even bring their own tea in flasks!

Anita Laycock has written a good piece that follows on from the London walking visit we did to the Foundling Museum in February.

If you have an idea for something to be included in Senior Moments, even if you do not want to write it up, please let the editor know.

Maurice Baker

Notes from your Chairman

Our U3A continues to flourish as two new Groups having recently started namely Bridge for Beginners and Tai Chi and a further two Groups, Science & Technology 2 and Wine Group 5 just requiring a few further members before being launched. When I was reviewing other U3As groups, I noticed that many of them had a "Current Affairs" group and the thought crossed my mind that this may be of interest to some of our members. If so, please speak to Peter Clarke our Groups Co-ordinator who can assist in setting up this group.

I have made mention at our Monthly Meetings and in previous issues of Senior Moments that as an organisation we are looking for newer members to come forward and help at Committee level. Currently we are looking for a new Minute Secretary to start in September and we have two places on the Committee for people who would like to get involved but not having a specific role for this coming year. It will give an opportunity to observe how we operate and perhaps give a greater idea where you could assist in the future. So please, if you enjoy your U3A, give some thought as to how you could further assist and expand your enjoyment.

As I write these notes, we have just experienced our International Wine and Food Festival, which will be more fully described

elsewhere in this magazine. What an unbelievable effort by so many Members, how it was enjoyed by those working on the night and those eating and drinking their way through the evening. Congratulations to all those members who gave so much time and thought to this event.

Next week I will be visiting the new Tai Chi group, a group I am really looking forward to visiting and if there are any other groups who would care to invite me, I would be delighted to attend.

Do not forget to renew your Membership which is due on the 1st August and at the very latest, 31st August.

Finally, please continue to enjoy your U3A and make full use of the facilities which are made available to you.

Neil Carter



Vegetable Gardening Group

The newly formed Vegetable Gardening Group held its first meeting in March. Eight members met at Anita's house and then we had a tour of Eastwick Allotments (just over the road!).



First stop was the Trading Hut where Howard Taylor (the Chairman & Trading Secretary) told us the history of the allotment site which began in 1850. He

also pointed out the very reasonably priced products for sale there every Sunday morning from 10-12 and open to anyone. On our way down the main path we took a turning to the right where Fetcham U3A Vegetable Gardening group have a newly acquired plot. This is sub-divided

into six plots so each member works their own patch of ground. On our particular visit there was a lone gentleman hard at working digging his patch. However on talking to him it transpired that his wife was the member who had told him to go and dig it for her!

We then visited Lee's allotment plot and she told us about her plans to plant courgettes, dwarf green beans, potatoes, mange tout, strawberries, herbs and cutting flowers this year. Back to the main path again and at the end we took a right turn to where Anita has her plot. This is a large plot originally full of brambles, rubbish

heaps and perennial weeds! However over the past six years she has worked hard to gradually clear the plot enabling more vegetables to be grown. She shares the plot with her sister and husband who excel at producing large quantities of runner beans and courgettes in the summer along with a succession of salad crops.

At the end of last year Anita had six large raised beds built and is now busy digging each one removing the perennial weeds and large stones. This is proving to be extremely beneficial and already can see how much easier it will be to keep weeded with the added bonus of easier planting and better crops. Watch this space!

It was a chilly morning and we returned to Anita's house for a welcome cup of coffee and some delicious hot cross buns and cakes. We chatted about



future outings ie Grace & Flavour; a community walled garden in Horsley, and browsed through kitchen garden magazines exchanging tips and ideas.

Our meeting in April will be a visit to Little Bookham Allotments. We decide the day (either a Saturday or Sunday morning each month) two months in advance.

Anita Laycock

U3A FREE LEGAL ADVICE

Colin Jackson has contributed this very useful advice:

I was asked recently by a member for advice on a matter of Probate.

This is something of which I have only a hazy notion; but I recalled that U3A could offer legal advice.

Contacting a committee member I was able to obtain and pass on the contact information.

Should you wish to have free legal advice, it is quite straightforward.

Log onto www.u3a.org.uk.

On the heading, click Third Age Trust.

You will be directed to a page where you are required to create an Account with Full Name, User Name, E-mail address, Password & Branch.

A confirmation will be sent to your e-mail address.

Go back to the original page and Log In as a member; you are then directed to another page where many other facilities are listed.

In the Search Box on the top; Insert 'Legal Advice'

You will then be directed to a page that Lists 'First Assist Legal Advice Line'

24 hour Legal Advice for U3A Members – Tel No -----

U3A

by Peter Laslett

In 1981, Cambridge University academic Peter Laslett hosted a conference in Cambridge to discuss the possibility of bringing the U3A to Britain.

OBJECTS

First:

to educate British society at large in the facts of its present age constitution and of its permanent situation in respect of ageing. One of the first of the 'old' societies, we find ourselves in a position which is bound to share with all developed societies and finally with the whole world's population.

Second:

to make those in their later years in Britain aware of their intellectual, cultural and Aesthetic potentialities, and of their values to themselves and to their society. To assail the dogma of intellectual decline with age.

Third:

to provide from amongst the retired, the resources for the development and intensification of their intellectual, cultural and aesthetic lives. In this way to help them to make effective and satisfying use of their freedom from work at the office, shop or factory. To devise methods of doing this which can be afforded in Britain.

Fourth:

to create an institution for these purposes where there is no distinction between the class of those who teach and those who learn, where as much

as possible of the activity is voluntary, freely offered by the members of the university to other members and to other people.

Fifth:

so to organise this institution that learning is pursued, skills acquired, interests are developed for themselves alone with no reference to qualifications, awards, or personal advancement.

Sixth:

to mobilise members of the university so as to help the very large number of elderly persons in Britain standing in need of educational stimulation but who have no wish to engage in university studies.

Seventh:

to undertake research on the process of ageing in society and especially on the position of the elderly in Britain and the means of its improvement.

Eighth:

to encourage the establishment of similar institutions in every part of the country where conditions are suitable and to collaborate with them.

[Please note: these Objects & Principles were originally published in September 1981 and slightly amended in 1984 for national circulation. They were generally accepted by the Founding Committee of the University of the Third Age but have never been taken as hard and fast rules. These are the amended version.]

Tai Chi Group at the Tithe Barn

A very enjoyable 'Tai Chi' group, organised by Val Cross, is held weekly at the Tithe Barn with our instructor Mark.

our Chairman (Val has hopefully signed him up for the next course!!)

On one occasion Mark was joined by his colleague Dave and they were persuaded



This health promoting exercise practised worldwide has slow and gentle movements to help reduce stress, improve fitness, balance and general mobility.

We have really enjoyed participating and occasionally trying to remember which is our left or right arm. Sometimes it has been warm enough to be outside - under blue skies and to the sound of doves! The one hour lesson flies by, after which we retire to the Tithe Barn kitchen for refreshments and a chat.

Included among our illustrious members are our Deputy Chairman and her mum and last week a special invited guest,

to demonstrate Tai Chi in unison, with their swords swooping - a very graceful sight.

We are going to continue instruction throughout the summer with



another ten week course starting on 24th June; please see the Tai Chi Group details on the U3A website for information.

David Middleton

The Art of Seeing

David Hockney is a very well known artist and apart from his own art which you may or may not like, he is a supreme art critic and explains aspects of art that are not always immediately apparent. One aspect that greatly appeals me is his interest in photography over a very long period of time. This first came to my notice with what he calls joiners. This is



3 of Hockney's joiners

where he takes a large number of photos of a particular subject and puts them all together. Included in this article are Steering wheel, and his mother and Bolton Abbey. I have made a joiner of a cat we had and another of the



Joiner by Maurice Baker

Radcliffe Camera library building in Oxford. It's a great exercise in photography that I would recommend any keen photographer to try. More recently Hockney had nine cine cameras mounted on the front of a Land Rover and filmed driving through a forest in East Yorkshire during the four seasons of the year so that you had the same scene in winter snow, spring

freshness and summer glory. These he displayed at the London exhibition of the trees he painted in East Yorkshire and that too was most impressive but quite a bit out of my range in both cars and cameras! It is of course all part of his interest in the way we see things and he has also stated—that *the ubiquity of photographic images has caused us to confuse*

a camera's view of the world with our own, when in fact the way in which human binocular vision records its surroundings is infinitely more complex. He uses this observation to explain the cubist and distorted images of many modern artists including Picasso who painted in this way and this has made me look again at many modern art works.



Picasso—Weeping Woman

If you have never seen the original in this life size painting at Tate Modern—it's well worth a look. It changed my view on the distortions in modern art

Hockney's constant looking and commenting on art, artists and the way we see things has made him come up with many innovative ideas, not the least of which he published in his book *Secret Knowledge*. In this book he claims there is good evidence to show that artists used devices to help produce their works—nothing too unusual in that, but he goes on to claim that many famous artists used a camera obscura or similar device (that incidentally inverts and laterally reverses the images it produces) to help produce their paintings and he sights some pretty convincing arguments to support this view. The idea first came to him, apparently, when he saw an exhibition of the work of Jean-Auguste Ingres, a 19th century portrait painter, who made many excellent portraits where the face is exceptionally good but the body of the subject is often not only 'badly' painted but doesn't really seem

to fit with the head. In order to support his idea he bought as many postcards of paintings he could find over a very long time period and stuck them on a very large wall in date order. He says it is noticeable that the drawing and painting of face and figures changed dramatically in the late 1400s which was about the time the camera obscura first came



Frans Hals(detail)—all left handed

into use. He makes the point that portrait painters always spend a very great deal of time in getting the facial features correctly positioned on the canvas and says that unless the artist has the position of the eyes, nose and mouth accurately placed a good likeness will never be achieved. Incidentally, a friend of mine at the U3A Painting Workshop who only paints and draws portraits says it's a waste of time and effort to try to start getting a likeness on your paper or canvas, you must first measure meticulously the distance between these essential facial features and mark them down and then the likeness will come as you fill in the details. Hockney



Caravaggio's fruit basket

shows many examples throughout the book in support of his argument and even goes so far as to show that many left handed subjects in famous paintings look so much better when they are photographically reversed to become 'right' handed. One picture shown in the film he made on *Secret Knowledge* by Frans Hals has three people and they are all left handed!

Hockney also explains the way our two eyes see is so very different from the single camera view by showing side by side Caravaggio's famous still life of a bowl of fruit next to Cezanne's plate of apples. At normal viewing distance Caravaggio's fruit is very life like and Cezanne's typically 'fuzzily' impressionistic, but the further you move away from the two pictures the more indistinct the Caravaggio becomes while the apples in the Cezanne appear more realistic.

Hockney has always tried to find different and improved ways of seeing things. I remember, a few years ago the Royal Academy had a Hockney exhibition of his Grand Canyon pictures (not ones I particularly care for, being too red for my liking) but he had one of each of the four paintings (they are quite large) displayed on each wall in the room and in each corner was a long mirror. There was a step high plinth in the centre of the room where you could stand to look at the paintings and of course you could see one painting and the reflection in the mirror of another. The result was quite stunning and very memorable.

Maurice Baker



Cezanne's apples

Visit to the Olympic Park and the Crossness Pumping Station

A chilly but sunny May 1st saw yet another of Sheila's visits to London, this time to visit the Olympic Park to see the changes made since the end of the Olympics in 2012 and then, after lunch, to visit the Abbey Wood pumping station.



The Park has received a facelift to make it a green and spacious environment: 4,300 new



trees have been planted and four new outdoor spaces added on top of the miles of waterways, acres of woods and habitats for wildlife, where cormorants, kingfishers and swans are thriving once again.

We started in true U3A style with coffee, taken in the distinctive Pringle-shaped Velodrome whilst we watched a local cycling club go through

their paces on the track. Close by was the 390-metre-long BMX track and also three graded mountain bike trails. The world diving championships were in progress when we visited, which meant that we were unable to go inside the Aquatics Centre. Instead we went on a walk through the park accompanied by a knowledgeable guide, who updated us on the various developments undertaken prior to the park being reopened.

The same size as Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens combined and the biggest new park to open in London for a century, the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park is one of the most ambitious developments the capital has ever seen.

Planning permission for nearly 7,000 homes has been approved and November 2013 saw the East Village, formerly the Athlete's Village during the Games, welcome its first residents. In the summer of 2013 the Park welcomed more than 700,000 people back for concerts, festivals, National Paralympic Day and the Sainsbury's Anniversary Games. London Aquatics Centre re-opened in March 2014 for swimming and diving. April 2014 saw the south of the Park re-open, along with the Lower Lee Valley's historic waterways, and the ArcelorMittal Orbit, followed by the Lee Valley Hockey and Tennis Centre.

Work was underway on the main stadium ready for the Rugby World Cup later this year before closing for one last time for the final phase of its transformation. Then it finally reopens opens permanently as the new National Centre for Athletics in the UK and home to West Ham United Football Club. With many other events planned for future years and further development of residential districts and commercial areas, the highly successful 2012 Olympics have left a lasting, invaluable legacy to London.

After lunch we moved on to the 'Cathedral of Sewage' in Abbey Wood, a magnificent building designed in the Romanesque style in gault brick and

decorated with red brick arches and dog-tooth string courses. Opened in 1865 by HRH the Prince of Wales (later Edward VII), the Crossness Pumping Station was a key element in Sir Joseph Bazalgette's radical scheme to improve the health and sanitation of Victorian London.

At Crossness, four magnificent rotative beam engines, built by James Watt & Company, were used to pump London's sewage into a reservoir before being discharged into the

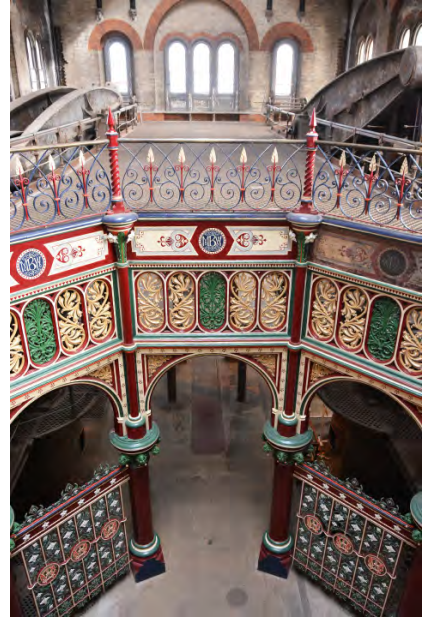


Thames on ebbing tides. The Crossness Engines Trust, a registered Charity, was formed in 1987 to preserve the now listed buildings and return these pumping engines to their former glory. In 2003 the restoration of one of the engines, the 'Prince Consort', was completed, an event commemorated by a visit to Crossness by the present Prince of Wales and Sir Joseph's great-great-grandson Peter Balzagette, who is President of the Trust. Described as a masterpiece of



engineering – a 'Victorian cathedral of ironwork', the building became a Grade I listed building in 1970

A very dedicated volunteer force is continuing the enormous task of restoration



today and a visit to the interior of the Engine house is amazing in itself, with the highly polished handrails of tubular brass and the ironworks painted in natural colours following those of the leaves, branches and fruits represented. The openwork upper iron floors are painted in vermilion and grey whilst the shafts of the main columns are in Indian red, the renewal of which is a long task, currently in progress.

We must thank Sheila Pomfret for organising such a varied and enjoyable day with an excellent guide, which everyone voted a huge success.

Paula Reglar



Foundling Museum

I was interested to read that the London Walks group had visited the Foundling Museum in February. This subject has fascinated me for many years after I came across a Foundling in my own family history.



Captain Thomas Coram Founder by William Hogarth

My maternal grandfather was Leslie Cranston a gardener who lived in Rowtown and Hare Hill in Addlestone. Previous generations worked as Agricultural Labourers at Spratts in Chertsey living in small daub stone buildings which often had to be rebuilt.

In the 1861 census living at Spratts are William Cranston aged 34 and his wife Emma aged 32. Their children are Thomas aged 7 and Alfred aged 2. Also living with them is Gertrude Barlow aged 2 and a Foundling and her place of birth is Not Known.

A couple of years ago I carried out some research about Foundlings and then gave a talk on this subject to the Family History Group. I then presented this topic to the newly formed Social History group to which I belong.



William Hogarth self Portrait

The question I wanted answered is why was a Foundling living in my family? The babies being taken in by the Foundling Hospital set up by Thomas Coram needed to be fed. The answer was to board them out to mothers who already had given birth to a baby and would be able to feed not only their own but another baby. They are called wet-nurses and this practise was overseen by volunteer inspectors. You can see that Alfred and Gertrude

were the same age. The other bonus was that the mothers were given a small income which helped to supplement their very frugal subsistence.

I also found another five Foundlings living with various families at Spratts in this census. There are 3 Foundlings living at Spratts in the 1841 census and 4 in the 1851 census. Sadly

there are a number of Foundling Burials in the Chertsey records. But on balance these babies had a higher chance of survival than being left abandoned in London.

Aged about 5 they would return to the Foundling Hospital in London to be educated and then prepared for apprenticeships or sea service for the boys or domestic service for the girls.

So what happened to my Foundling, Gertrude Barlow? Happily she survives childhood and is on the 1871 census at the Foundling Hospital. In the 1881 census she is a Servant for George Lloyd, a Widower and Retired Captain in the Militia aged 65 and living in Richmond, Surrey. She is listed as being born in Middlesex London. It is difficult to then trace Gertrude in the 1891 census as there are several possibilities.

In conclusion I am proud to say that my ancestor Emma helped an abandoned baby to survive and hope that Gertrude led a happy and long life.

Anita Laycock



George Frederick Handel—patron of Foundling Hospital



From the Foundling Museum





In the Olympic Park by David Middleton

All members—Don't forget!

This year and all subsequent years you must remember to renew your membership of this U3A by 31st August 2015. Failure to do so could not only invalidate your membership but also risk the insurance cover for the whole of all the groups to which you belong.

You will need your new membership card to access the Bookham U3A website (well worth doing on a regular basis) because it contains the password that changes every year..

Bookham and District U3A International Food and Wine Festival

Bookham & District U3A's early summer social, held in the Old Barn Hall, took the form of an International Food and Wine Festival. Examples of food and wine from six countries (Italy, Australia, South Africa, Spain, Argentina and France) featured in what was a colourful affair; thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended.



Excellently organised by Neil & Pippa Carter and Jan Dicker, the U3A's social secretary, the concept of the evening was that small groups of U3A members were assigned a country and tasked with setting up a table and garden



umbrella, decorated to reflect aspects of the country from which typical wine and food would be served. And, my goodness, didn't the various groups of U3A members go to town! The Australian group even managed to get the Queen to put in an appearance although whether she will ever come back after the outrageous manners of John Dicker is anyone's

guess!



Home Cooking by Elizabeth undertook the catering, a challenging task since two types of food from each of the six countries was provided throughout the evening. Elizabeth and her team did us proud with the variety and quality of exemplar dishes. The food was washed down with two varieties of wine from each of the six



countries. The wine was provided by Majestic at Leatherhead who also gave a talk on the various wines chosen by a group of U3A members. These stalwarts generously gave up some of their spare time to sample a wide range of wines before making their selection. That's what I call dedication!

Entertainment for the evening was provided by mother and daughter; Beth Petrovic, on guitar, and Natasha on violin. The family is musically very talented, with Natasha being a pupil at the Yehudi Menuhin School in Stoke D'Aberson. The songs, much enjoyed by the audience, were composed especially for the evening by Beth, each song on a

theme appropriate to the individual country.

Bookham & District U3A has organised many social evenings on a wide variety of themes, but this one will stand out in members' memories for a long time. Peter Hudson, in a note to



chairman Neil Carter, commented:

May I offer my thanks and congratulations for a very successful evening, especially one that was so ambitious in its scope. It was, of course, very enjoyable for the food,



entertainment and wine. But what was to



me most impressive, although I am not surprised, was the effort put in by the various groups in charge of the countries. It really did show our U3A at its very best.'



Well said, Peter.

Harold Reglar



Metal detecting

The recently formed Metal Detection Group came to work in my garden. Frances Fancourt came a month before



the group visit to show and explain what would be involved. She set to work on the middle of the lawn where her instrument had indicated metal was buried. She assured



me the damage to the lawn would be minimal and then proceeded to lift a spade width of turf, carefully placing in upturned on a plastic sheet after she checked the underside, she proceeded to concentrate on the hole, removing earth with a trowel until the object was found. As Frances predicted the object was an old and rusty nail..

When the Group arrived for a two



hour 'dig' all four of them set about searching for metals. One of the boundaries to my property was once a public footpath but has



The result of two hours work.

not been used as such for over 60 years, but it maybe a source of some interesting finds. After two hours of work on very dry and hard soil nothing much was found but never daunted, they wish to return in a month's time for another did. After

they had left their was very little evidence of their visit.. The results were not very memorabe—quite a few nails, a paint tube, lead shot and something like a horse shoe but too small.

Maurice Baker



Olympic Park outing by David Middleton



Painting Workshop



Watercolour by Peter Brazier



Watercolour by Chris Edwards

Out & About with Bookham U3A

OUTINGS & THEATRE VISITS

Telephone Sheila Pomfret – 01372 454706

Theatre matinees at Woking by coach from Bookham

(discounted tickets may be available without transport if you wish to make your own way)

Thurs 23 July **MACK & MABEL** at Chichester by coach leaving Bookham at 9.30 for time to enjoy lunch, shop, etc. before the matinee. Coach and ticket @ £31 or £50.

1 or 8 or 13 October **THREE DAYS IN THE COUNTRY** at the National Theatre. A new play by Patrick Marber; inspired by Turgenev's "A Month in the Country". Travel by train - Ticket concession price £20.

Matinees at Woking by coach from Bookham (*discounted tickets may be available if you wish to make your own way*):

Wed 23 September **BEFORE THE PARTY** - Revival of Rodney Ackland's "bitingly funny" play, based on a short story by Somerset Maugham. Now starring Tom Conti - while the well-heeled Skinner family are preparing for the latest social gathering in 'leafy Surrey' they are in for a shock that threatens to upset their social status.....

Ticket + coach £25

Thurs 5 November **NORTHERN BALLET'S** Production by David Nixon of **THE NUTCRACKER** played live by their own Sinfonia.

Royal circle ticket + coach £32

U3A SURREY NETWORK STUDY DAYS at the Menuhin Hall

18 September—Music at the Menuhin School

16 October—The Architecture of Oxford through the Ages

U3A Tuesday Monthly Meetings

No meeting in August

1 September—An insider's view of the National Trust

6 October—AGM and talk on Bookham Library

3 November—The Story of the French Foreign Legion



Photos from the International Wine Festival on 28th May by Don Edwards

