

# Senior

# Moments



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

Issue 50

May 2016



*From an acrylic painting at the Painting Workshop by Jan Dicker*

## Bookham U3A Vegetable Gardening Group

As winter turns into Spring our Group are looking forward to the coming months. There are seeds to be sown, plots to be dug over and tidied up not forgetting enriching the soil with plenty of compost and manure.



In November Peter Almond gave us an interesting talk about Allotment Gardening emphasising the use of raised beds and crop rotation. He brought along some very useful garden tools and equipment to show us.

Our December meeting was lunch at the newly refurbished Old Crown in Bookham where we enjoyed our usual friendly banter.

There was no meeting in January and the wet

weather meant that it was very difficult to work on any of our plots during this month.

Wendy led our February meeting when we visited her plot at Little Bookham Allotments. This was my first visit and I was surprised by the general tidiness of all the plots. They are all individually fenced with wire to keep out the surrounding wildlife. The council come and deliver plenty of manure and wood chippings which keep the plot holders supplied with plenty of compost.

Wendy has a well laid out plot complete with a lovely shed. She still has leeks and parsnips to dig up and enjoy.

We then visited Gerda who has three plots on these allotments. She has been on this site for over 20 years and has many established fruit bushes and trees.



Wendy kindly provided us with refreshments in the log cabin on the site. It was a chilly morning and we were lucky to finish our tour just before it started raining. We enjoyed our cups of coffee and tea not forgetting the delicious cakes and biscuits! We chatted about our own plots and our ideas for the coming months.

Anita hosted the March meeting when we discussed plans for our own plots.

Further meetings will include a trip to Wisley, Painshill Park and a return to the Grace & Flavour Walled Garden in West Horsley.

*Anita Laycock*

# Bookham and District U3A

Registered Charity No 103686 U3A Membership No 4/239/93

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## The Committee



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This issue of Senior Moments has plenty to read and hopefully to enjoy. There is a review of the Flower Arranging Group with many photographs to show their excellent work. Lynn Farrell, apart from several other contributions has written a long article on the Groups that are of course the backbone and indeed the lifeblood of our U3A and it contains much very useful information. The ever popular wine groups are there—well one of them anyway! Then there is a report on the Murder Mystery evening that many members enjoyed so much. An outing to Guildford Cathedral makes interesting reading and a long article on the history of canals covers many aspects that may not be known. Jean Loose submitted a piece of nostalgia on page 14 reminding us of how things were just 100 years ago without any mention of the War! I went on my first Study Day on the subject of spying, even though Study Days have been advertised in every issue of Senior Moments since the start of this U3A. Bill Whitman has written a cautionary tale that should be noted by all email users. On this page there is the reminder for the Barn Dance in May, so there is plenty for everyone to enjoy. I thought the cover provided a timely reminder of the outings regularly on offer.  
*Maurice Baker*



**Barn Dance**  
**Old Barn Hall**  
**Friday 20th May**

## NOTES FROM YOUR CHAIRMAN

The Winter is over, thank goodness, and Spring is well and truly with us. It is the season of new beginnings and the time when we look forward to a flourishing year ahead. And so it is with our U3A. During the last 3 months five new Groups have started and are flourishing and our Membership has been increased to 530, the most we have ever had.

For myself and other members of the committee, it has been a busy but exciting time. The Committee and Harold Reglar, in particular, have been investigating a new Membership Database and Website, which will, in due course, bring us more into the 21st Century and make information more readily available to our membership. It will also help those committee members who organise such events as the Group Leaders Meeting and the New Members Coffee Morning. Whilst on this subject, can I make a plea to those members who are being invited to these events to respond and say whether you are able to attend or not. This will save a great deal of time for the organisers in not having to send reminders. After all, it is only a matter of common courtesy. On the question of attendance, please do not forget to let your Group Leader know if you are unable to attend your usual meeting – again just a common courtesy.

In addition to the two events just mentioned, we have had the annual

U3A Bridge Lunch at Clandon Regis Golf Club, very ably organised by Graham and Alma Nichols for, I believe, the 23rd year. During February, Lyn Farrell and I attended the Network Meeting in Reigate where our own Jan Hudson gave an amusing account of her experiences during the twinning meeting between Poznan (Poland) and our own Network.

I have also attended the IT and Digital Group's meeting, when the presentation by Michael Jennings about Windows 10, which was for me very fortuitous as I had only loaded that programme myself the day before. I have also attended the Table Tennis, Badminton and Metal Detecting groups during the last month, together with a Study Day at the Menuhin school when the subject was "Spying through the Ages". I was pleased to learn that 10 members from Bookham attended this presentation. You can see what a wide variety of topics are covered by U3A and Bookham in particular.

During April, several of us will be attending the South East Forum in East Grinstead and of course, we have our own Barn Dance to look forward to in May. Get your tickets early from Jan Dicker as I am sure this will be a "Sell out".

*Neil Carter*



## Flower Arranging Group



The beginning of the month sees the flower arrangers finding containers, collecting ivy leaves and other greenery from their gardens (or their familie's and neighbour's gardens) and finally buying (usually) some flowers ready for the morning meeting on the first Thursday of the month at the Barn Hall.

We are a small group who appreciate having some guidance so that we have some nicely displayed flowers, rather than what was my usual habit of "plonking" them in a vase of water and hoping for the best! Each month we are given a worksheet (with some pictures so that we get the idea of what we are aiming to produce) which sets out what we need to take along to the meeting – suitable flowers (and how many), types of greenery and any other accessories ie candles, Easter Bunnies, etc.

Cynthia shows us in stages how to do our arrangements – coming round between each part to give advice and answer questions. We have done many different styles, for many different occasions – Christmas and Easter; some fun ideas like creating a Christmas tree from Aspidistra leaves, putting our flowers in a twig cage, putting chicks and bunnies amongst spring flowers, to more formal arrangements suitable for a hall table or dining room centre piece.

When we have all completed our arrangements we take time out for tea and to discuss the differing interpretations we have come up with for our display, how well colours work together, if foliage hasn't worked well as we expected and general chit chat.



Finally we have to get our creations home! Probably the most difficult part of the morning.

It's a great way to spend a couple of hours once a month to have some lovely flowers decorating your house.

The group currently has some vacancies so if you are interested contact Alma Nicholls 01372 800832, or e-mail [alma.nicholls@ntlworld.com](mailto:alma.nicholls@ntlworld.com)

Rather than more words have a look at the pictures and on the back cover, so that you can get an idea.

## Focus on Groups – History, Games and Walking

In November we looked at groups covering literature, wine appreciation and science & technology, this time we will be covering history, games and walking. There seems to be something for everyone, indoors, outdoors, active, more sedentary, competitive and relaxing. If there is nothing here for you – help us start a new group.

*History* - The U3A must be populated by a large group of history buffs - we boast 6 types of groups.

### **Architectural history**

Each member of this group takes a turn to research and present a short talk on a selected topic. Originally the group concentrated on British architecture across the centuries but has now broadened their interest to modern European and American architecture. They generally meet in group member's homes' but also try to fit in at least one visit each year to a building or venue relevant to their studies.

### **Family history**

We have two groups interested in genealogy encompassing both more experienced and beginners. The meetings are held at the Old Barn Hall where internet access allows for on-line research into family information, newspaper archives, migration records and specialist sites for occupations etc. Although most of the meetings are self-help with "brick-wall" busting meetings, presentations of research done by members of the group there are opportunities for outings to the National Archives, local record offices and the like. Occasionally a speaker will be invited to give insight into their researches. Most of the members, although not all, use Ancestry or Find My Past to assist with the charting of their family tree. Some members of the groups were involved with the Peter Tilley (a local historian) researching Edwardian Bookham.

### **History – Classical Period**

What do you know about Egyptian hair styles or the myths of ancient Greece? If you would like to know more about history from the earliest written history to about 320 AD, this group may be studying something of interest to you. During the winter period (September to March) this group meets twice a month and have talked of Egypt, Greece, Rome, India amongst many others looking at some specifics of their lives: politics, language, philosophy religion etc. As with most of our groups there is no specialist knowledge just a thirst for information in an area that interests them.

*Talks for 2015/16 include:* Hadrian had a wall, The

Greeks have a word for it, Macedonia and Virgil.

### **Local History**

This group likes to have a morning visit once a month to a local place of interest to find about the history of the area. Visits, which are usually guided, have included Dorking Caves, walks around Guildford, Ripley & Send, local churches – St Barnabas on Ranmore Common, our own St Nicolas, Horsley Towers and many more. Most recently the visits have been a walk around East Clandon, Shere Museum and Epsom Race Course. During the worst of the winter months the group may meet indoors for a talk and have looked at a film of Olde Guildford, and had talks on Leatherhead and the Dorking Estates.

### **Military History**

The members of this group research and present a talk on a subject which interests them. They meet in the Pastoral Centre at St Nicolas' Church. For 2015 the programme has included: The U-boat War, Military Blunders, An Evacuee to North Wales and The Crimea from Catherine the Great to Putin. Their full programme for 2016 is available on the web site and varies from the history of V1 and V2 rockets to the life and loves of the Duke of Wellington.

### **Social History**

Are you prepared to research and present something from British Social History from 1700 to 1920? There is much to find out and to learn of the history above and below stairs, their clothes, work and recreation, their modes of transport and taboos. They do also venture out and you will probably have read about their visit to the Spike at Guildford in the February Edition of Senior Moments. Study our not too distant past with this group.

**Games** - It is not only card games that we play at the U3A, we obviously like tiles as well. What we don't have is a crossword group which appears popular at many other U3As.

### **Bridge**

Bridge is very popular – we currently have seven groups! The groups suit all levels of play from the very experienced through those who wish to learn the finer points and hone their game to a group for beginners. The groups generally meet in members' homes and usually have two tables. Not only are there all these bridge players in the U3A there are often opportunities to play with other U3As and at charity events.

### **Canasta**

This is another popular pastime with two groups; one meeting twice a month and the other once. The groups are small as again they meet in the homes of the members. Again the experience levels vary but the learners are monitored by the more expert players.

#### **Mah-jong**

This is a long running group, which has been meeting for 15 years in the Old Barn Hall. They play the game as set out in the book "Know the Game: Mah-Jong". What draws the players? – Well it's not only the excitement of play but the style and formality of its oriental origins and the beauty of the materials.

#### **Scrabble**

Scrabble was a slow starter back in 1993 but now flourishes as two groups, one for learners and one for experienced players. The groups meet in the afternoons, which means that after flicking through their "Official Scrabble Words" books and checking their two and three letter word lists looking for some unusual combinations of letters they finish their games with tea, biscuits and a good chat.

**Walks** - Back outside for a nice walk, perhaps around London to take in the sights, history and culture or more locally to enjoy the views, flora and fauna. You can take a good hike or a gentle ramble.

#### **London Walks**

We have four groups regularly visiting London, all involve an interesting day out, usually starting with the first train after 9am from Bookham station and returning in the afternoon just before the rush hour. Travel around London is usually by bus so that bus passes can be used and sightseeing done (rarely is the underground used but sometimes there are river/canal trips). One group has the title 3E London (explore, experience and enjoy), other are just called London walks but the outcome is usually the same. The walking is usually limited to around 4 miles and is done at a leisurely pace with stops for coffee and lunch either at a pub or based at a place of interest but have included a Moroccan cake shop and the Salvation Army's latest café.

Some of the excursions that have been done are: Portobello Road, Angel to Victoria Park Canal, the Welcome Collection and Kings Cross station. Our newest group formed this year has already had a trip along the river coming back to Hampton Court and a look at Chelsea. The outings often try and fit in with the weather, more leisurely, outdoor visits in the summer and more indoor venues in the worse weather months. London is exciting and vibrant, full of culture, history and architecture with many glorious outdoor spaces – parks, squares, canals and the river. If you would like to visit or re-visit the popular and the less explored part of the Capital join a group.

#### **Local/Rural Walks**

We have something for everyone if you would like to walk through the local countryside: Easy rambling, Morning hikes, Walking 7K and walking 12K.

#### **Easy Rambling**

This group is just the one to try for some gentle exercise in good company, they try to avoid wherever possible stiles, steep hills, mud and rain! The walks last for about an hour or approximately 2 miles and are mostly local with occasional trips further afield, and finish with some refreshment.

#### **Morning Hikes**

If you would like something a little more strenuous a morning hike (maximum 6 miles) at a reasonable pace could be for you. There are hills, stiles and of course mud included. The walks start at various points around Bookham and explore Effingham, Effingham Common, Bookham Commons, the River Mole, Fetcham Downs, Norbury Park, Ranmore Common and the Polesden Lacey Estate. A little road walking is necessary in the village but not too much. Once in the summer and again before Christmas the group plans a coffee stop at Polesden Lacey although on other walks group members usually bring along some refreshments as short breaks are usually taken along the way.

#### **Walking 7K (4-5 miles)**

This is an all year round, twice a month group, starting out at 9:45am from the recreation ground car park, doing the walk before a pub lunch. The group car shares wherever possible to travel to their starting destination. The walk leader tries to find something of historical, archaeological or other points of interest along the way and the members are asked to contribute by offering to lead a walk.

#### **Walking 12K (7.5 miles)**

Another early start (9:15am) at the Lower Road Recreation ground sees this group off for their 7-8 mile walk. The area covered is bounded by Farnham, Wisley, Reigate and Godalming and so usually starts with a car journey to the starting point. The majority of the walk is usually covered before a lunch taken at a local pub with a shorter walk after to get back to the cars for the return home.

Details of all our group together with the Group Leader's name and contact details are on the web site <http://bookhamdistrictu3a.org.uk/Groups/Groups.aspx> (you will need this year's password to log in).

Lynn Farrell

## Wine Group 3's Travels Around the World



Without leaving the area, Wine Group 3 travelled the world and also followed a typically quintessential English pursuit giving us a wonderful chance to try many different wines.

The more usual tastings showcased French, Italian and Spanish wines albeit sometimes from a different angle. A selection of 6 different French cheeses were tasted with each of the 6 French wines - we now know which wines do, or don't go with Roquefort, Camembert etc. An Italian week at Lidl's provided the opportunity to sample wines with the appropriate accompaniments without the need for a plane ticket to Venice. Almost mainstream was the evening of Chilean wines while some of the more unusual meetings included wines from

Crete, the Czech Republic (again with the appropriate food cooked by a family member who popped into our session to answer questions on the food etc) and finally kosher wines. We also tried a selection of wines with nonsense names. During the summer we took the opportunity to intersperse our tastings with some croquet matches. Finally for our Christmas meeting we originally planned a trip to a local eatery but this fell through and so everyone chipped in with wine and food for a festive evening at one of our member's homes. There was a selection of cheese straws, (by popular demand), nut roasts, beef stroganoff, rice and vegetables rounded off with mince pies and a festive cake and a selection of 7 wines from sparkling, white, rose, red and



desert. There were paper hats and crackers aplenty and also some defective feather blowers – a great end to a good year of tastings.

*Lynn Farrell*

## More tragedy for Celia

 On Wednesday evening 100 of us joined Celia and her family and friends (plus a journalist she did not invite) for her



retirement party as she was leaving local politics.

The room was decorated for the occasion and her presents and cards were on the stage. The scene was set for our Murder Mystery evening. On our tables we found background papers, pens and an answer sheet, and for some of the tables there was a spare seat for an actor to join the table.

There was a short introduction where we were told to listen and observe everything that happened. Throughout the evening vignettes



were acted out – some lovers discussing if they had been found out, was there scandal about property development, was her son a “ne’er do well”? All of this was taking place while we amateur sleuths tucked into a hearty and tasty stroganoff followed by profiteroles. During the meal Celia and the others moved from table to table for a chat (or interrogation!) and so everyone got a chance to question all of them and jot down our thoughts. *Were they clues or red herrings?*

Not long after pudding was eaten there was a nasty crash and we had a death (it was quite obvious that the first aiders would not be needed). The body was removed from the scene and Celia

et al left the area. We were left to contemplate all that we had



observed and found out. Shortly after this interval the suspects returned to the room and each table was invited to ask a question of an individual.



Having got our thoughts in order we completed our “results form”, these were whisked away and we waited for the results. A number of the tables guessed (or cleverly deduced) the murderer but only one got close to the motive and were therefore adjudged the winners and duly



presented with a certificate. The rest of us had to make to do with an explanation sheet to fill in the blanks without reasoning.

We had a thoroughly enjoyable evening and would like to thank The Killing Game for their great organisation, the six actors for keeping to their characters despite a succession of interview/interrogation techniques and a great story for us to try and unravel. Home Cooking by Elizabeth provided a wonderful meal. As always we need to thank our events’ organiser – Jan Dicker.

Lynn Farrell

## GUILDFORD CATHEDRAL

What makes a cathedral?  
It's a cathedra, otherwise known as the bishop's throne.

The hardy (or foolhardy) local history group braved storm Imogen for a trip to Guildford Cathedral. It really wasn't too bad



except when we decided to try a walk around the outside when being right at the top of the hill the wind was strong!

For a modern building there was much to find out and in the Treasury there are artefacts dating back to the sixteenth century. The building took a long time to complete as the war interrupted the work. Subscriptions were raised for the work and individuals "bought a brick", in fact some of those on the tour had done this but the only ones that were identifiable has been signed by famous names like Elizabeth R, Philip, Margaret and Marina.

The first thing we were told was that the Earl of Onslow gave the land for the replacement cathedral—the original cathedral was the Church of the Holy Trinity which is at the top of Guildford High Street. However having been given the top of the hill for the project the church then had to buy some land to create the access. The highest point of the hill is also the mid-point of the building marked on the floor by the only brass decoration, a small stag, in the ceiling by an impressive boss and outside the tower with the angel.

The cathedral is a large, light, airy space with wonderful views along the length of the building. Most of the stained glass is only a small proportion of the windows except for the oriel window over the altar and one over the cathedra which casts wonderful colour across the pale walls when the sun shines. There are

two fonts, a very modern and impressive moveable one which sits in the middle of the main aisle and a second one in a side chapel which is used much less but is nonetheless very impressive. The architect, Edward Maufe, had very strong views on how the cathedral should look and was helped by his designer wife to take this through, even to the design of the kneelers which are individually designed but all with a diagonal division of the background into blue and white. This theme is carried through to the hand-woven carpet at the high altar.

There are a number of smaller chapels which include one for the Queen's Royal Surrey Regiment, the Children's and the Lady Chapel. As with most churches congregations are falling and the quiet, serene Lady Chapel is used for most services. The chapel is dominated by a simple but elegant carving of the Madonna and Child; lignum vitae (a rare hardwood which is so heavy it won't float) was used for this work which was carved by a local bank manager.

The Treasury is the repository not only of the cathedral's valuables but also those of the churches within the diocese. We found two artefacts from St Nicolas church, a large, early silver tankard and the cap to a censer. Amongst the other treasures around the building are an embroidered banner by Miss Charleston who worked for William Morris and two charts showing the churches of the diocese of the Cathedral.

As with most buildings there are repair works to be carried out and hopefully the soon to

be started work to the inside of the building will be finished by mid-2017. In order to keep the building running it costs £4500 per day. Some of this is due to the underfloor

heating which makes for a warm and inviting space.

I had always thought of the outside of the building to be rather uninteresting but many of the bricks were made from the clay which was removed to construct the foundations. There are many carvings, the bishop's crosier door handles and the children's garden as well as the impressive views across Surrey to be admired. If you haven't been it is well worth the trip.

Lynn Farrell



## Card Making Group

Our group meets once a month on a Thursday afternoon under the tutelage of Margaret New. Margaret provides the materials and the ideas and we set to work, generally producing 2-3 cards during the afternoon.

Margaret has innovative and creative ideas and our cards are designed to suit various festivities and occasions throughout the year. We have learned a variety of different techniques using stamps, embossing, die cuts, chalks, paints, and inks. In the autumn, Margaret produced oat, barley and wheat stalks which we proceeded to use to make harvest cards, complete with little paper mice feasting on the cereal.

The cards at our February meeting were designed as Easter cards and are decorated with rabbits and flowers. It is always interesting to see how the different members of the group interpret Margaret's designs, and no two cards ever look the same.



the group. If you are interested then please



contact the group



leader for details.



Gillian Arnold  
info@bookhamdistrictu3a.org.uk

We have a couple of vacancies in

1915  
EITHER YOUR PARENTS OR  
GRANDPARENTS WERE LIVING  
DURING THIS TIME PERIOD.

THE YEAR IS 1915 - This will boggle your mind!

The year is 1915 "One hundred years ago". What a difference a century makes!

Here are some statistics for the Year 1915:

The average life expectancy for men was 47 years.

Fuel for cars was sold in chemists only.

Only 14 percent of homes had a bath.

Only 8 percent of homes had a telephone.

The maximum speed limit in most cities was 10 mph.

The tallest structure in the world was the Eiffel Tower.

The average British wage in 1915 was £15 per year!

A competent accountant could expect to earn £800 per year.

A dentist £900 per year.

A vet between £600 and £900 per year.

And, a mechanical engineer about £2000 per year.

More than 95 percent of all births took place at home

Ninety percent of all Doctors had no university education!

Instead, they attended so-called medical schools, many of which were condemned in the press AND the government as "substandard."

Sugar cost two pence a pound.

Eggs were 10 pence a dozen.

Coffee was five pence a pound.

Most women only washed their hair once

a month, and, used Borax or egg yolks for shampoo.

Canada passed a law that prohibited poor people from entering into their country for any reason.

The Five leading causes of death were:

1. Pneumonia and influenza
2. Tuberculosis
3. Diarrhea
4. Heart disease
5. Stroke

The American flag had 45 stars.

The population of Las Vegas, Nevada was only 30.

Crossword puzzles, canned beer, and iced tea hadn't been invented yet.

There was neither a Mother's Day nor a Father's Day.

Two out of every 10 adults couldn't read or write and, only 6 percent of all British pupils went to university.

Marijuana, heroin, and morphine were all available over the counter at local corner chemists.

Back then chemists said, "Heroin clears the complexion, gives buoyancy to the mind, regulates the stomach, bowels, and is, in fact, a perfect guardian of health!" (Shocking?)

Eighteen percent of households had at least one full-time servant or domestic help...

There were about 230 reported murders in the ENTIRE U.S.A.! In 2014 this figure had risen to 14,249.

In the UK the murder rate in 1915 was 1420. In 2015 it was 537. (Perhaps we are doing something right!)

I am now going to forward this to someone else without typing it myself.

From there, it will be sent to others all over the WORLD all in a matter of seconds!

Can you imagine what it may be like in another 100 years?

*supplied by Jean Loose*

# Out & About with Bookham U3A

OUTINGS & THEATRE VISITS from April 2016

To book telephone Sheila Pomfret — 01372 454706

## Theatre Matinees (by coach)

**Thurs 21 April** GOODNIGHT MISTER TOM at Woking. Adaptation from M. Magorian's story re young William's friendship with an elderly gentleman he meets when evacuated from London to the countryside during the war: "Spellbinding magic, tender, poignant and powerful" (Sunday Express report) Stalls seats + coach £26 NB early start from Bookham at 12.00

**Thurs 11 August** HALF A SIXPENCE at Chichester Festival Theatre  
New stage version of the British musical adapted from H.G. Wells' novel Mr Kipps. A fresh score inspired by (and featuring some songs from) the original production. Coach leaves Bookham to arrive in Chichester in good time for a wander round and lunch before the matinee at the theatre.

**Wed 15 June** Visit to BORDE HILL HOUSE & GARDEN. (near Haywards Heath)  
The gardens were laid out in the 1890's by Colonel Clarke, a patron of the botanists who travelled worldwide collecting exotic seeds and plants in Edwardian times. In the 17 acres surrounding the original mansion, which dates from Tudor times, the grounds are famous for their specialist rose gardens, formal Italian areas with water, lavender, mixed borders, etc. We shall also be guided through rooms in the mansion, where the owners live, to see their fascinating collection of antiques. (Cost to be confirmed)

**Wed 24 August** HIGHGROVE GARDENS visit to the Prince of Wales and Duchess of Cornwall's private gardens in Gloucestershire. Our very small allocation of tickets is oversubscribed and will be balloted for allocation.

## HOLIDAY TO DEVON & CORNWALL by coach 25-30 September

6 days half board at Jury's Hotel, Plymouth, itinerary includes visits by coach, train and boat.

Back-stage tour of the National Theatre, to include the impressive alterations, facilities and improvements recently completed - date & details to be confirmed

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## U3A SURREY NETWORK STUDY DAYS at the Menuhin Hall

**27 June** South East Forum Summer School at Chichester

**8th August** National Summer School Cirencester

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## U3A Tuesday Monthly Meetings

**7th June** An Exploration of Cryptic Crosswords Roger Luther

**5th July** Crime Novels Pauline Rowson,

## Early English cuts & canals

Canals had a large short term impact before being overtaken by the railways. The history of canal building goes back

### LEEDS & LIVERPOOL CANAL ROUTE



at least to the age of the Pharaohs. Canals existed on the Continent; used to transport food and bulk fuel to populated centres pre 17th century. In England a natural river network was initially sufficient for a mainly agricultural population. This was developed first using cuts prior to the need for canals. Cuts improved water flow, allowing for improved movement of goods and the flooding of meadows for agricultural improvement.

A cut is a waterway development that widens or deepens an existing river, using only natural water levels. No need for locks, bridges or aqueducts. The first major British examples occurred in the Middle Ages and involved London; the country's main commercial centre. The Thames was the first point of entry to the City where taxes were made on goods entering and leaving port. At the time of the Restoration, 1660, Bristol was next in size and importance as a trading centre.

The first major cut involved the Fleet, London's second river in importance at the time. Sir Christopher Wren and Robert Hooke were the surveyors and builders of London following the Great Fire of 2 – 5 September 1666. They suggested a waterway link development. This construction was to run from the River Thames to the brook at Holborn. It was to pass Bridewell, Fleet debtors prison and to include two bridges in the construction. It opened in 1675 and cost

£50,000. Never successful, it was poorly run and had problems with silt. Also damage by heavy horse and cart loads caused it to fail. Early in the 1700s contracts were made to fill in parts between bridges then eventually the entire route to assist in the building of Blackfriars Bridge in 1760s.

More successful at this time was the River Lea cut running from Hackney Down to Bow Bridge. Also the Limehouse cut at the point the flow became tidal. Another cut from the Thames is the WEY NAVIGATION, used to flood meadows, later developed as a canal down to the sea through Sussex.

Coal and its transportation were critical to canal development though other technical and financial needs had to occur first.

Coal was used to supply the steam engines that powered the industrial revolution although it was Cornwall's tin mines that became the catalyst. As mines became deeper water caused flooding problems which resulted in the first steam driven pumps. Thomas Newcomen is usually quoted as being "father of the Steam Engine".

Thomas Newcome (1664-1729)  
"father of the Steam Engine"



A series of industrial developments started with the first steam engine a condenser boiler patented in 1698 by Thomas Savoury. Developments followed, first came the introduction of a piston in 1710 with John Cowley and Thomas Newcomen's Stationary Steam Engine patented in 1712. This Atmospheric Engine became the first commercial true steam engine used for pumping in mines. Next came the James Watt Rotary Powered Steam Engine which had a separate condenser in 1769, the basis of all modern types.

The other major innovation occurred in 1709 when Abraham Derby

invented a metal smelting process using coke to replace charcoal. This immediately increased the demand for more coal.

Practical knowledge developed quickly during the first part of the 18th Century. It became recognised that the burning of limestone with coal at 1000 degree Centigrade made a good fertiliser to improve land used for agriculture.

In 1715 Liverpool constructed the country's first wet dock, well ahead of London whose main docks were not built until the end of the century. Liverpool eventually overtook Bristol to become England's second largest town. With increased importance, industry developed in the Midlands and the North. Industry started moving out of London for

lower labour costs.

It was the use of coal and the developed steam engine that enabled the next major innovation. In 1764 James Hargreaves invented a multi-spindle spinning frame named "Spinning Jenny", a key development in the industrialisation of weaving by simultaneously spinning 20 threads at a time. The mechanising of "labour intensive tasks" saw people migrating from the land into quickly developing towns. With increased production of manufactured goods the need for better transportation and more coal became essential.

Existing roads and waterways were inadequate with yarn manufacture mainly on the east side of the Pennines, while Ports were mainly on the west coast of England and had developed rapidly, Bristol being overtaken in importance by Liverpool and Whitehaven. Whitehaven, a Cumbrian port, became one of the six biggest English ports in the mid-18th century. The slave trade had much to do with this growth along with the need to transport bulk materials.

Whilst labour was both cheap and plentiful construction, was dependant on both finance and ownership of land. Finance was proving to be the initial problem—since the 1720 "South Sea Bubble" the bond market had

ceased to function. It took the land owners with coal mines on their land to overcome this. From the start in 1755, growth in canals was rapid.

Canal construction started with an Act of Parliament on 20 March 1755 entitled An Act for making navigable the River or Brook called Sankey Brook and Three several Branches thereof from the River Mersey below Sankey Bridge, up to Boardman's Stone Bridge on the South Branch, to Gerrard's Bridge on the Middle Branch, and to Penny Bridge on the North Branch, all in the county palatine of Lancaster". It is thought to be the only time a canal was authorised by Parliament without anyone petitioning against it. The canal was first used in 1757, running from a point where the brook joins the River Mersey to north east of St. Helens with three branches to nearby collieries.

Next came the Bridgewater Canal Act in 1759, completed in 1761. Bridgewater is usually considered the first canal to be built in England. The construction was instigated by the 23 year old Duke of Bridgewater. He wanted to solve his mines flooding problem, improve efficiency of the mine and get coal from his Worsley estate mines to Manchester cheaply.

The Duke had visited the Canal du Midi in France and watched construction at Sankey. His solution to the flooding problem was to build an underground canal between Worsley and Salford. This would both drain the mine and provide a reliable source of water at the surface for the canal. Coal loaded underground also eliminated the difficult and expensive need to lift it to the surface. The canal boats were to carry 30 tons load of coal, pulled by only one horse.

The mine flooding problem was due to the coal seam lying beneath a layer of permeable sandstone. At the time coal was being transported along the Mersey and Irwell Navigation or by packhorse.

James Hargreaves ( 1720-1778)  
Inventor of the "Spinning Jenny"



Each method was inefficient and expensive; waterways levels were changeable and so unreliable, whilst packhorse loads were limited by the weight they could carry.

**James Brindley**  
1716 - 1772



The Duke along with his estate manager John Gilbert produced a plan of the proposed canal and obtained an Act of Parliament in 1759 enabling work to start. James Brindley was brought in to manage the project since he had the experience of installing a pumping system at the local Wet Earth Colliery. Brindley moved into Worsley

Old Hall and spent 46 days surveying the route. He suggested varying the route away from its original destination Salford to terminate instead at Stretford, then on to Manchester. This needed a second Act of Parliament which Brindley assisted by giving evidence before a committee.

Work started immediately with the first boat able to use the canal in 1761 less than a year from construction start. The completed canal was 41 miles long, later extended to connect with other local rivers and waterways. Construction was by using manual labour; hand digging the proposed waterway. The canal was made watertight by "Puddling", a technique which lined the canal base with impervious clay. The clay was mixed with water, spread on the canal base then trodden down using cattle.

Although the canal keeps to one water level similar to a cut it has features which make it to be considered the first English canal. It required the construction of an aqueduct to cross the River Irwell and tunnelled into the mine.

In 1760 the estate coal income was £406 and by 1803 £48,000., whilst the price of coal sold in Manchester was half the previous price once the canal opened. An expensive project at a construction cost of £168,000 (over £23million at today's prices), the canal was seen to pay for itself which caused canal construction to mushroom. Canal investment became desirable though later proved to become the next "financial bubble".

In 1769 James Brindley was also asked for advice on the LEEDS & LIVERPOOL canal project. This is considered to be the first major

canal development in England. A difficult construction crossing the 2,000 feet high Pennines, a major undertaking eventually involving several project managers before its completion. A major problem was the Bradford to Keighley link, Dowland Gap requiring an aqueduct to span the River Aire. Brindley designed this with seven arches 30 feet high. This was James Brindley's last design before he died in 1772 requiring a new manager for the project.

None of the subsequent managers had any real experience or knowledge about a similar undertaking. Brindley was replaced by John Longbotham. In turn he was replaced due to a large budget overspend and suggestions of vested interest, by Robert Whitworth. It took to 1795 before the first section was finally opened. Further canal development had ceased for a period due to finance being diverted to fight the American War of Independence of

1775 – 1784. The project was eventually completed in 1811, William Jessop taking over from Whitworth, he in turn being replaced by Benjamin Outram and then by Thomas Telford assisted by John Rooth.

**Thomas Telford**  
1757 - 1834



A number of people were killed during the construction but considerable knowledge was gained during the period resulting in canal mania. Telford was to become the first president of the Institute of Civil Engineers, a post he retained for 14 years until his death. John Rennie and William Smith were also to increase knowledge further.

Railways developed rapidly and suppressed canal development in the 19th century but recent growth of leisure interest in boating has generated renewed interest.

*David Bishop*

**CANALS became a short term solution to transporting goods pre Railways**



## London Walks The old Operating Theatre

Colin Jackson organises some fascinating London Walks for his group. I went on the latest to the .Old Operating Theatre, close to London Bridge Station. In fact the original hospital moved out when the

for and Barry Davies was pushed forward. He laid down on the original operating table—a simple but crude wooden bench that had ominous dark stains on it. Because the patients



were fully conscious throughout the procedure the operation had to be quick. Our guide, who spoke for over an hour on the history, said a leg could be amputated in about 6 minutes! She showed all the instruments for his work but fortunately did not begin to work on Barry! As usual Colin had found a very good pub nearby in Borough High Street.

*Maurice Baker*

train station was built. Our guide gave us a very complete introduction to the workings of the operating theatre in the days before patients were anaesthetized. One volunteer was called

## Study Day

The Study Day in March was on the history of spying. It was given at the very fine Menuhin Hall in the grounds



of the Yehudi Menuhin School. Some 190 people packed the hall and included several Bookham members. Hugh Davies, a former Bletchley Park guide, took us through the history of spying from Elizabethan times to the present day although the second oldest profession goes back well beyond Tudor times but it was in Elizabeth I's reign when it



Yehudi Menuhin monument near the hall

all became so much more sophisticated involving code breaking and closer to the workings of Bletchley Park and our own times. It concluded with nothing being secret anymore in this age of internet access and very

little chance of turning the clock back, there are so many ways information can leak into

the common domain whether we like it or not. There were two one hour talks in the morning with screen projected pictures, figures and charts and a further

two after lunch. It wasn't all on how clever the UK system has been. The head of the German Section in 1939 apparently said publicly 'there was no need to worry about Germany they definitely were not going to war, it's all bluff, it's my job to know'.

It was also pointed out that the internet is inherently insecure—

it's like democracy in assuming everyone would abide by the rules!

Some of the other memorable quotes were: Churchill said 'Things happen all the time'. Mao—It's too soon to judge the effect of the French revolution. If you have done nothing wrong you have nothing to fear. Technology has changed, people have not. There's nothing new. 'No computer can spot human mistakes. History depends on who is describing it.

If you have never been to a Study Day at the Menuhin Hall it is well worth the effort of finding a subject of interest and spending a day in the lovely surroundings of the school in Stoke D'Abernon. Upcoming Study Days are always shown on the 'Out and About' page of Senior Moments. Lunch is not provided, but there is plenty of space to bring and enjoy your own.

*Maurice Baker*

## Istanbullocks.a cautionary tale.

I am telling this tale of an e-mail scam to warn others of what may happen.

Seated one day at my computer I found on my mail list:

Subject: AOL Team

We received a request to delete your email box permanently. Please reconfirm your request by choosing either of the two options below but please note that if you fail to click on option one we will have no other choice than to delete the email box.

1. 'Click here' to continue using our service [log in your details]

2. 'Click here' to discontinue using our service.

Yours sincerely,

AOL Team

From: E-Mail Info dl54@nyu.edu

I consulted with my wife and we clicked to retain the service and duly filled in the detail requested which was 'screen name' and password.

By next morning our phone was ringing continuously – friends, acquaintances, relatives were checking that we were alive and well and not mugged and helpless in a seedy hotel in Istanbul with no money, credit cards, phones etc and in need of money to pay the hotel so that we could catch our booked flight to UK.

Yes, many of us have seen these scams, and assumed they were just that but several friends were quite prepared to put up the money requested, for which I thank them most sincerely, and one friend actually did make the payment. The requested payment method was a 'moneygram'.

We heard of this later:

We went wrong because we did not check and observe the peculiar return address – surely AOL would use an AOL return address, not a dubious sounding New York University one and because we gave my password. But it was a stressful event, just at a holiday time [Easter Tuesday]. What was the alternative?

If you are sent an appeal for help, please check with the friend or a mutual acquaintance – many people had seen me in Church on Easter Sunday and we feel we are too old to go off to seedy hotels anywhere, let alone Istanbul.

We changed my password, of course

and I spent a whole day, laboriously typing back into my computer my disappeared address book, or those bits I needed, [fortunately my wife had printed out my entire address book, 18 pages, a couple of months ago and I could still find the print-out.]

If it happens to you report to Action Fraud tel 0300 123 2040, there is also a web-site but it is not very reliable at present. I gave up after four gos. They will give you a ref no to follow-up.

Bill Whitman

*A reply to this email came from Ian Nayler*

*Thanks Bill for this warning.*

*Glad you haven't had a late life crisis and eloped to Turkey or en route to join Isis!!!!*

*This is a combination of two common scams.*

*Obvious wise after event but good reminder that it is NEVER good idea to enter passwords in response to emails or click on links unless you are 100% certain are genuine.*

*No proper internet service, bank, utility or financial institution will ever request this sign on action or information. Just ignore or telephone them to be sure.*

*I know fraudsters are also sending similar spurious emails purporting to be Virgin/Media, Lotto, Scottish Power and most banks.*

*Also begging emails apparently on behalf of stranded friends are again becoming a common trick. Best practice is to use another means of communication to the alleged unfortunate to verify eg text or phone or their genuine email address.*

*By the way, merely deleting dodgy emails is insufficient as that merely moves the listing of the offending item into a different folder where it can still do damage. The best procedure is to press the Shift button at the same time as Delete. You will get a message saying "Do you want to permanently delete this item?" OK is exactly what you need. The computer operating system will forget about it and overwrite at next opportunity.*

*Regards*

*Ian*

