

NEWS BULLETIN

A SOLO WALK ACROSS AFRICA



Author and former editor of *Rough Guides*, Fran Sandham took on the challenge of a lifetime by walking across Africa alone from coast to coast. His 3000-mile walk from Namibia's Skeleton Coast on the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean near Zanzibar was the first recorded time that anyone had crossed Africa solo entirely on foot by this route. He told his tale to Bookham u3a at the Barn Hall on 7 June.

The idea occurred to Fran at a New Year's Eve party in London just over 20 years ago. He would walk every step of the way from one coast to the other, alone without backup or support team, no-one to carry his gear, fund or sponsor him, no film crew or journalists, no

fuss, no cheering crowds, and no strings attached. Above all, it had to be on a one-way ticket without safety nets, get-out clauses or anything to fall back on.

He took a year to save the £2000 cost, working long hours at a bookshop. Eventually he had the fitness and cash to make the trip.

Why Africa? He had had romantic ideas about the place since reading Tarzan comics as a child in hospital. It turned out very different from he had imagined - and indeed from what Victorian explorers David Livingstone and H M Stanley had apparently experienced long ago with their native guides.

He decided to start from Namibia's Skeleton Coast because it sounded exciting with the many old shipwrecks

found there. He would finish near Zanzibar because of its legendary history as a centre of the slave trade.

He set off with a backpack weighing some 100 lbs and soon found it impossible. So while in Namibia he bought a donkey to carry for him. See bottom left. It was a mistake. The donkey was too small and simply ran away so had to be returned. Instead he bought a much stronger mule (bottom right) and spent two weeks making a cart. Unfortunately the mule proved uncooperative too and he ended up back on foot with a third of his funds gone.

From then on he stuck to
Continued on Page 2





Continued from Page 1.

his earlier plan regardless of any difficulties.

He walked some 40 kms a day, using a Michelin map and gaining a two-tone tan by the time he reached Lusaka, Zambia, half way along, with the sun permanently on his left.

The human population grew steadily as he moved eastwards and he was taken by the extreme friendliness and hospitality he found everywhere. Village children especially would follow him wherever he went and local women would want to mother him. Everyone wanted to be photographed and he was always able to find water (see top picture) and food.

He was especially taken by the mysterious man in the picture shown right, wearing warm clothing and posing without an introduction or explanation of any kind!

But what about dangers? He had been warned about snakes but avoided stepping on the puff adder shown below on a tarmac road and was otherwise not troubled.

In Zambia he was warned about bandits but at no stage did he come across any. In the Caprivi Strip wildlife reserve he faced the possibility of meeting lions and consulted some game wardens about what to do should he be attacked. Their advice was not very practical,

but even though he had to pitch his tent half way across the reserve overnight he had no encounters. It was all very different from the old myths.

A much more real threat was that of contracting malaria but he avoided mosquitoes by remaining in his tent overnight and only caught the disease after completing the entire journey!

Another genuine danger came from drunken drivers, particularly at weekends. In Tanzania he encountered an aggressive bus driver who raced past him and struck him with a stick while passing him. He took it in good spirit - after hurling the appropriate abuse.

He also encountered a very grumpy border guard between Malawi and Tanzania. The man grilled him



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for information and insisted on knowing his job at home. When he said “bookseller” it was recorded as “boxer” so he left feeling tougher.

In fact his worst problem were blisters from endless walking and despite carefully selected footwear his feet never actually adapted to the whole experience.

The contrasting temperatures and above all the scenery brought surprises but also met his expectations for the year-long journey. From the long sandy beaches of the Skeleton Coast, through the Namib desert, the bush and water of Caprivi, the fantastic Victoria Falls between Zambia and Zimbabwe, forest in Malawi and the magnificent but sometimes tempestuous Lake Malawi.

His most memorable moment was the sense of freedom and timelessness at the start, while at the end he reflected on all he had seen and regretted that it was over although he would subsequently tell his story in his book *Traversa* which was reviewed on both sides of the Atlantic.

Fran’s weight dropped from 12½ to 8½ stones over the year. He compared himself to the exceptionally slim palm tree shown right. But he was amused by a Chinese review of his book which claimed he had “suffered” by crossing Africa solo. Clearly not. It was a good way to end his talk.



WHY NOT USE THE *NEWS BULLETIN* TO PROMOTE YOUR OWN U3A GROUP?

Has your group done something interesting recently? Would other Bookham u3a members be interested in your news? Or do you have vacancies to fill which would help strengthen your group? If so, you can use this monthly News Bulletin to reach our whole membership and attract the attention you need. Try contacting Tony Matthews, Editor, at newsletter@bookhamu3a.org.uk. The more we all share, the more we get to know about Bookham u3a and its potential for future growth.



A GREAT DAY FOR BIRD SIGHTINGS AT THE WEY NAVIGATION

Bookham u3a Ornithology and Botany Group had a fine walk along the Wey Navigation canal and water meadows in Guildford on Tuesday, 10 May.

Group leader Tod Wilson said: “We were lucky to see a kingfisher speed past us, plus sightings of reed buntings and sedge warblers. For the botanists too it was an opportunity to enjoy marsh marigolds and red campion.”

Three stars of the show pictured right were a reed bunting (top), house sparrow (centre) and sedge warbler (bottom).

If you would like to join future outings contact Tod at todsayshi@yahoo.co.uk.



ENJOY OUTINGS ON TWO WHEELS IN GOOD COMPANY

Members of Bookham u3a Cycling Group welcome others to join them on the first and third Fridays of the month for a gentle ride to a pub for lunch, returning around 2.30pm. Any type of bike and rider, including

an e-bike, are acceptable.

Cycling is a great way to see more of the countryside while keeping fit, and all rides avoid main roads while taking tracks and bridleways where and when possible.

The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee this month means the outings this time round are on 10 and 24 June.

See Page 6 regarding the u3a Cycling Network.

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HAVING YOUR SAY ON CURRENT AFFAIRS

Bookham u3a Current Affairs Group has been continuing to meet monthly, mostly in person except for the occasional Zoom.

In May they discussed the following topics in no particular order but often with broad agreement on the concerns.

Of course it is often frustrating that many of the issues are so much bigger than any of us can solve but it is nevertheless really refreshing to hear a range of different slants on an issue.

The problems of NHS dentistry and GPs are so extensive. What are the solutions? More staff, more money or perhaps different management?

Government responsibility is an obvious subject, with the need to do what is right rather than to chase votes.

Following Sinn Fein's success in becoming the largest political party at Stormont, does its increased influence threaten Northern Ireland's position within the UK?

Should the import of products involving cruelty to animals - pâté de foie gras and furs in particular - be prohibited by law?

How should land be managed across the country in order to improve the supply of affordable housing?

With reduction in CO2 emissions vital to offset climate change, how should the effects of population numbers and industrialised agriculture be handled?.

There was a general discussion about Ukraine and Russia. Two particular matters raised were what could be done about the reduction of exports from Ukraine through Russian port blockages? Would allowing traditionally neutral Sweden and Finland to become members of NATO provoke Russia or increase international security?

If you would like to join the Current Affairs Group and stimulate your thoughts each month, please contact Edmund Morgan-Warren at CA01@bookhamu3a.org.uk or 01372 458136.



PRESENTING EDWINA, THE INSPIRING TEACHER

Above: A tribute to Edwina Vardey, founder and leader of the Bookham u3a Creative Writing Group since the 1980s, appeared in the April News Bulletin. It was converted into a card signed by all active group members and presented to her, together with a bouquet, by group representatives Bill and Gillian Whitman. Edwina's daughter took this photo.

Edwina is still chipper at 98 and just frustrated by age. She was a professional editor of London published magazines and well known locally as editor of the History of Leatherhead, first published by the Leatherhead & District Local History Society in 1988.

Members of the Creative Writing Group were given a title and two weeks to compose an original piece. Some 20 students from across the district belonged to the group over the years.

Edwina inaugurated Penny Readings as part of Arts Alive and as an annual occasion to show off the group's achievements. Penny Readings started in Barton's Bookshop, Leatherhead, but out-grew that venue and for many years took place in the Green Room of the Leatherhead Theatre with an audience of about 40, a bar and a musical interlude.

The Creative Writing Group lives on despite Edwina's retirement. To learn more about studying, practising and joining, please contact Bill Whitman on 01372 375324.

U3A BACKS GROWTH OF SUBJECT NETWORKS NATIONWIDE

The u3a has been exploring a new type of network, bringing together members with a particular interest across the country rather than their own location. Subject networks aim to grow subjects within the u3a, create new opportunities, and showcase members' skills.

Subject networks offer an opportunity to share ideas and resources, build relationships and access more learning opportunities around particular subjects than might be possible in individual u3as. More subject networks are being developed all the time, both with and without the support of the u3a national office.

Subject networks already established include the u3a Chess Network, for example, which now has an online u3a chess league bringing together nearly 200 members. The initiative came from subject advisors David Castle and Rob Kruszynski who aim to encourage local u3a chess groups to play face-to-face and the playing of chess online at local, regional and national levels. All chess abilities are catered for and first timers are especially welcome.

The Chess Network provides occasional newsletters, Zoom meetings and the opportunity for contact with other members wanting to play online. Advice is available via the u3a News for Networks website or via the chess subject advisors on the national u3a website.

The u3a Climate Change Network regularly meets on Zoom where group leaders share their approaches, successes and challenges. The u3a Science Network encourages science activities and has held annual meetings in August since 2003 although the last one was in 2019 and meetings are now online. The website allows u3a members to identify and contact other Science groups across the country and has links to some useful resources. The u3a Geology Network is another established one.

Sporting u3a subject networks include the Cycling Network which shares favourite routes, and the Crown Green Bowling Network. Andy Cowan, Crown Green Bowling subject advisor, aims to provide a link between u3a groups and the British Crown Green Bowling Association, the governing body responsible for providing and updating the laws of the game. He has produced a basic coaching manual which allows u3a group members to acquire basic skills.

If you want to help bring members together around a subject or to help expand existing connections, contact the u3a national office. The next Network Link meeting is this month on 22 June.



u3a Chess Network



u3a Climate Change Network



u3a Geology Network



u3a Science Network



u3a Crown Green Bowling Network



u3a Cycling Network

THE EVOLVING STORY OF POSTAL SERVICES

BENITA MIDDLETON told last month's Social History Group 1 meeting the full story of how our postal services began and adapted to a changing world.

There were postal systems in Egypt in around 2000 BC, in China, Persia and the Roman Empire, which needed reliable communications with distant provinces. The *cursus publicus* used relay stages at intervals along the great roads of the empire. Over 170 miles could be covered in 24 hours. The empire's collapse saw the disappearance of this system although it survived in the Byzantine and then Islamic empires. The Incas and Mayas too maintained postal services by foot messengers.

International commerce and business correspondence developed in the later Middle Ages. Corporations and guilds had messenger systems with customers. This was extensive in Italy and for six annual fairs in the Champagne area of France.

Horses and drivers for the transport of couriers were kept at regular staging posts for the carriage express which gradually developed into an organized system for the exchange of letters. Those between private persons involved substantial fees.

In the late 15th century, Gutenberg's printing press increased demand. The Thurn and Taxis family set up

MIDDLE AGES - Business

- Corporation or Guilds
- Italian mercantile cities mid 13th Century
- fairs Champagne area France
- Venice - Constantinople
- Russia
- private correspondence



Charles I – Thomas Witherings

- 1632 appointed Postmaster of Foreign Mails
- 1635 proposed setting up public postal service – state monopoly
- Post Office to raise funds for state activities
- first Post Office Bishopsgate Street October 1635
- build 6 great roads
- postmasters supply horses at 2½d per mile
- 1657 conveyance tariff set
- paid by recipient



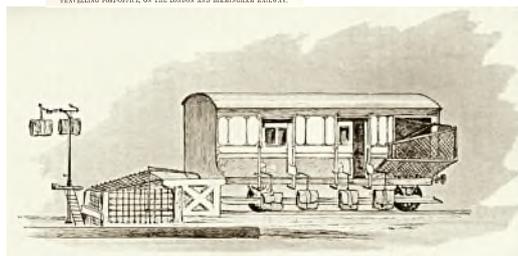
1784 MAIL DELIVERY BY COACH



- increase in trade
- improvement in roads
- John Palmer Bristol theatre
- guards
- costs
- passengers



Trains take over from 11th November 1830



1837 of Post Office Reform: Its Importance and Practicability, by Rowland Hill

- 1837 – first adhesive stamp
- 1840 - payment by sender
 - stamped with date and time of posting
 - uniform charge by weight



•A Treasury Minute dated 22 April 1840 ordered:

“That the issue of Postage Stamps for sale to the public be commenced as early as practicable; that such issue be, the first instance, confined to London; and that it be extended first to Dublin and Edinburgh, and afterwards to other parts of the kingdom in such order as the Commissioners of Stamps and Taxes may determine, and as rapidly as the necessary supply can be obtained.”

an extensive network of postal routes linking the empire of the Habsburgs. It covered most of Europe, using 20,000 couriers.

In England, Henry VIII appointed a Master of the Posts in 1516 to maintain a regular postal service along the main roads from London. A separate public service was set up in 1635 by Charles I “for the settling of the letter-office of England and Scotland.”

Merchant Thomas Witherings organised regular public services to run by day and night along the great post roads. In the 1640s and 50s, Parliament replaced this with a succession of postal services until on 9 June 1657, it created a monopoly Post Office for the whole British Isles.

In 1660-1, Charles II set up the General Post Office under the first Postmaster General and a seal was first fixed to the mail. However,

the first local collection and delivery services were established by private enterprise in both London and Paris. William Dockwra set up his Penny Post in London in 1680.

Letters were now prepaid and stamped to indicate place of posting and time sent for delivery. There were almost hourly deliveries. This service was closed down in November 1682 but then reopened by the government.

Economic growth with road building in the later 18th century brought demand for better mail services to the growing commercial and manufacturing centres. From about 1765 the stage-coach era began.

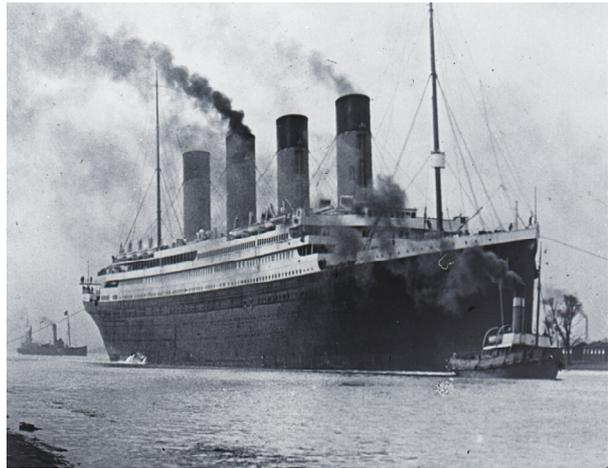
John Palmer, a theatre owner from Bath, organised a rapid carriage service to transport actors and props between theatres. He planned a similar scheme for the postal service. In 1782 he

sold his theatre interests, and went to London to lobby the Post Office. William Pitt, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, accepted the idea and an experimental mail coach journey, undertaken at Palmer’s expense, started from Bristol at 4pm on 2 August 1784. It reached London at 8am next day, exactly on schedule.

A journey from Bristol to London that had taken up to 38 hours now took just 16. In 1786, Palmer was made Surveyor and Comptroller General of the Post Office.

By the 1830s, better vehicles and roads brought speeds of 10mph. Letters could be delivered the morning after posting in towns more than 120 miles from London.

Mail coaches built to an approved design were run by independent contractors. The mail was held in a box at the rear where an armed guard employed by Royal Mail stood. Passengers were



Steam ships 1815 - 1840

1840 Royal Mail ships e.g. RMS Titanic

taken at a premium fare. There was seating for four passengers inside and more outside with the driver. A mail coach service ran to an exact and demanding schedule. Aside from quick changes of horses the coach only stopped for collection and delivery of mail and never for the comfort of the passengers.

There were four coaches per route, two in each direction with two spares in case of breakdown. London was served by over 120 stagecoach inns.

In 1837, Rowland Hill's *Post Office Reform: Its Importance and Practicability* showed that charging scales based on distance inflated operating costs by requiring many clerks to prepare complicated accounts. Collection of payments on delivery could be replaced by a uniform rate with prepayment by postage stamps.

This system arrived in 1840 with the Penny Black as the first adhesive postage stamp from 6 May. Envelopes

too could be purchased from the post office or from licensed stamp distributors. Envelopes were sold in sheets and the buyer had to cut and make them up.

The stamps were printed on watermarked paper and each stamp also had a crown watermark. Within a year, it was found that the black stamp could easily be reused so it was discontinued and the penny red issued instead, remaining in use until 1879.



Inland small boats e.g. Cornwall

Rowing boats delivered to ships on the Thames to 1952



Hovercraft introduced unsuccessfully 1960's reintroduced to Isle of Wight in 1980's



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Britain was the first country to issue prepaid postage stamps and unlike others, British stamps do not bear the country's name. Brazil and Switzerland both followed in 1843.

A cheap form of correspondence, the postcard was introduced by Austria in 1869 and soon adopted by most other countries.

The arrival of the railway and the steamship brought far speedier, more regular, and more reliable mail services worldwide.

The Railways (Conveyance of Mails) Act obliged railway companies to carry mail. Postal administrations now introduced sorting of letters in transit. In 1866, apparatus for picking up and setting down mailbags without stopping was installed at Slough and Maidenhead.

The first travelling post offices ran in 1838 between Birmingham and Liverpool

and London and Preston. By the end of the century, Britain among European countries, the United States, and India all had complex travelling post office networks. In Britain they lasted until 9 January 2004. However, mail continues to be carried in sealed train carriages without postal staff on board.

By the late 19th century, there were between six and 12 mail deliveries per day in London, permitting correspondents to exchange multiple letters in one day.

The first Post Office pillar box was erected in 1852 in Jersey. Pillar boxes were introduced in mainland Britain the following year.

The London Pneumatic Despatch Company started in 1863, sending mail by underground railway between postal depots. The Post Office began its telegraph service in 1870.

By the turn of the 20th century, London's congested streets and fog meant mail transported between main post offices and railway stations was severely delayed.

In 1913 the Post Office (London) Railway Act was passed. Construction of underground tunnels began in 1914 and was completed in 1917 but World War One intervened and work did not resume until 1923.

The London Post Office Railway opened in 1927. Each 27-foot long single-car train carried four mail-bag containers, each with an average 15 bags of letters or six bags of parcels. Replacement trains were trialled in the 1960s and a new fleet introduced in 1980. A centralised control system was introduced in 1993, enabling the entire railway to be controlled from a single point, handling four million letters a day.



Tunnels
1937



Storing
paintings
during the
war



Loading
containers
1960's



Last
upgrade
1980's

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Declining use since then and with closure of the above ground offices the system eventually became uneconomical to run and closed in 2003.

Until the 20th century, moving the mail by sea was the only way to send post abroad from Britain and to its islands. Packet boats operated as early as the 17th century to the continent. From 1660 they ran regularly from Harwich to Holland. Other routes included Dover to Calais and Falmouth to Spain, Portugal and the West Indies.

Both ships and crews were contracted by Royal Mail. They were attacked so often that there were official compensation rates for death or injury: £8 for a sailor's arm or leg, £4 for an eye.

Sailing packets carried the mail up to 1815 but then gradually steamships took over. From the 1840s commercial shipping lines such as White Star Line (later Cunard), Peninsular and Oriental Shipping Company (P&O) and the West Indian Royal Mail were contracted. Like the earlier stagecoaches, the ships were popular with passengers as they ran on strict timings.

The Pool of London had its own River Postman who delivered mail by rowing boat to moored ships. Five generations of the same family worked in the role until 1952.

The first airmail service, from Hendon to Windsor, began on 9 September 1911 as part of the celebrations for the coronation of King George V.

In 1918, an overseas air-mail was organised by the Royal Air Force and the British Army Post Office, co-operating on an experimental Folkestone-Cologne service. The RAF also operated a mail and passenger service for delegates from London to the Paris Peace Conference of 1919.

On 14 June 1919, John Alcock and Arthur Whitten-Brown completed the first non-stop flight across the Atlantic, carrying 196 letters. Ross and Keith Smith carried the first airmail from England to Australia between 12 November and 10 December 1919.

On 11 November 1919, the first public overseas air-mail service began, flying between London and Paris. The service was extended to the Netherlands, Belgium and Morocco in 1920.

In April 1924 the airlines merged into a single firm, Imperial Airways, based at Croydon. At first it concentrated on developing traffic with Europe but on 30 March 1929 the first service to India left Croydon. Services throughout the empire developed until finally, on 8 December 1934, a regular London to Brisbane service began, taking around 12 days.

On 20 August 1934, inland airmail began serving London, Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool, Cardiff, Belfast and Glasgow.

An Empire Air Mail Scheme was conceived in 1933. It aimed to carry all first class mail through the British Empire at a rate of one and a half pence per half ounce, with a charge of one penny for postcards.

The scheme began on 28 June 1937 and was intended to last for 15 years but was halted by World War Two and formally ended on 31 March 1947.

During the war, the Post Office introduced the Air-graph Service for messages between servicemen and civilians. The message was written on to a special form which was then given an identification number and photographed on to microfilm. This was flown to its destination, developed into a full size print, and posted to the recipient. The service ended on 31 July 1945.

Today airmail operations centre on the Royal Mail International building at London Heathrow, with Gatwick, Manchester and Edinburgh airports handling smaller amounts of outgoing mail. The Post Office's national air network, Skynet, ensures millions of letters reach their destination the day after posting.

Postal services have adapted to the age of digital communications.



JOIN THE TEAM



Chichester Summer School 2023

Meet interesting people and enjoy working with a great team! The Summer School is looking for volunteers to join the team organising this popular and long-running event.

Very few particular skills are required, just basic computer skills, for listing classes and attendees, and zoom meetings. And enthusiasm of course!

Note: team members live all over the SE Region and talk on the phone during the year. They meet in Chichester in June.

Contact David Ashton via the website

<https://u3asites.org.uk/southeastu3aforum/home>

on the **Contact** page

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DAY TRIP TO OXFORD



We are taking bookings now for a summer coach trip to Oxford organised for Wednesday, 17 August. The all-in transport costs are £14 each. Extra options include a 30-minute guided tour of the Bodleian Library at £7.70 and a visit to an Oxford University College with costs from £3 to £7.

Enjoy the delights of a summer's day in this beautiful city with pick-up in Bookham at 8.30 am. Book your tickets through the Bookham u3a website or enquiries to Viv Bignell at viv@bignells.co.uk or 01372 450392

FANCY A SHORT HOLIDAY IN DEVON IN JULY?

Mary Chandler, Events Co-Ordinator for Leatherhead u3a, is inviting Bookham members to join a short holiday to South Devon being organised from 4-8 July. Unable to fill all the hotel rooms for this package she contacted us to offer the trip to our members too.

Two twin rooms and three doubles were available at £504 each. The holiday included a coach trip to Teignmouth on 4 July and coach outings every day, returning 8 July. Contact her on 01372 813709, 07758 498016 or email mary.chandler18@virginmedia.com.

U3A SCIENCE ANNIVERSARY

The Science Network meeting online on 26 July will mark the u3a's 40th anniversary. Book via the national website.

Three presentations of 45 minutes, each followed by questions and breaks, will include John Marriage of Lyme Regis u3a on *Blowing hot and cold in the 1980s*; Mike Perry of Tring on *The Carbon Imperative*; and Leigh Edwards of Exeter on *The Human Colonisation of Space*.

See **Networks** on Page 6.

THEATRE SHOW IN AUGUST

The Theatre Interest Group is arranging a trip to see the matinee performance of *The Play that Goes Wrong* at 2.30pm on Thursday, 11 August at Guildford's Yvonne Arnaud Theatre. Tickets cost £39 each, including the coach fare.

The coach will leave Bookham at 1pm from various pick-up points and return here after the show.

Places are limited. To ensure your ticket, please book early with a cheque for £39 payable to 'The Bookham & District u3a' and hand-post it along with your contact details to Brian Williams at Foxholme, 14 Howard Road, KT23 4PW.

For any problems or queries please email the01@bookhamu3a.org.uk

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COMING TALKS IN THE OLD BARN HALL THIS YEAR

Tuesday, 5 July: John Griffiths-Colby Emily Connell's Autograph Book
Emily Connell was a staff nurse at the 3rd Western General Hospital in Cardiff when World War 1 broke out. She kept an autograph book in which her patients drew and wrote messages. This is Part 2 of the story of her own highs and lows and struggles with the system.

Tuesday, 6 September: Ian Keable The History of Cartoons
Cartoons became standard in *Punch* magazine from the 1840s but Hogarth and Gillray employed satire, caricature, speech bubbles and captions long before then. Masters of the craft have since included John Tenniel, John Leech, David Low, Vicky, Ronald Searle, Heath Robinson, Giles, Gerald Scarfe, Steve Bell and Peter Brookes among others.

Tuesday, 4 October: Paul Barfield The mysterious death of MI6 spy Gareth Williams
In August 2010 Gareth failed to return to work at MI6 HQ in Vauxhall after annual leave.. Police found him dead in his flat inside a large sports bag, padlocked from the outside and placed in his bath. The flat was locked from the outside. The speaker delves beneath the media headlines into the world of international espionage. Who would want to kill this mild-mannered maths genius? A former policeman, Paul recalls how events unfolded to a disbelieving world. We ask if this was a tragic accident, a deliberate act by Gareth or something a lot more sinister. We look at the part played by MI6 and the police enquiry and ask whether international agents had a hand in his demise.

Tuesday, 1 November: Neil Hanson Ghostwriting
Author Neil Hanson has led an extraordinary life but as a professional ghost-writer of over 60 published books, he has also worked with a remarkably diverse collection of fascinating people. His clients include household names, among them an American showbiz legend, England's most famous cricketer, a famous actor, one of Britain's most decorated soldiers and an England football manager. Others include SAS men, fast-jet pilots, explorers and adventurers, a treasure diver, a kidnap negotiator, a hugely successful businessman, a spy, a notorious gangster, an around the world walker, a submariner, a maxillofacial surgeon and many more.

Tuesday, 6 December: Jacques Arnold The House of Windsor
Jacques Arnold, author of the *Royal Houses of Europe* series of genealogical books, draws on a lifetime interest initially encouraged by Lord Mountbatten when Jacques was a school-boy 40 years ago. He is now one of Her Majesty's Deputy Lieutenants of Kent. He will provide a wealth of interesting anecdotes, drawing on European history with all its dramas and personal triumphs and tragedies.

SURREY u3a NETWORK

UP AND COMING STUDY DAYS

Study days are open to all u3a members and guests are very welcome. They are held in the Yehudi Menuhin Hall at Stoke d'Abernon, starting with registration from 9.30am and running from 10am to 4pm.

The fees, including coffee/tea and biscuits, are £12 for members and £15 for guests and £5 for virtual attendance. Attendees bring a packed lunch and prior booking is necessary.

Click on any study day link at the website www.u3asites.org.uk/surreyu3anetwork/events for a programme and booking form. Surrey Network treats your privacy rights seriously and its Privacy Policy can be found by following the

link History of Study Days. Please contact Surrey Network Chairman, Caroline Sawers on 01483 560590.

Coming up:

17 June
Understanding Turner: The Man, His Life & His Work
Presenter: Professor Maria Chester

16 September
Cuneiform Tablets & Noah's Ark
Presenter: Dr Irving Finkel

21 October
Eureka - A Brief History of Maths from 3000 BC to 2000 AD
Presenter: Roger Luther

18 November
Industrial Archaeology at 50
Presenters: Professor David Perrett & Professor Martin

21 April 2023
The Story of Polar Exploration & the Recent Impact of Security Considerations & Climate Change
Presenters: John Ash & Robert Headland, Scott Polar Research Institute

19 May 2023
The Dead Sea Scrolls
Presenter: Professor Hugh Williamson

16 June 2023
The Vikings & Their Influence in the World
Presenter: Imogen Corrigan

A NEW STYLE AFTER 60 - LIFE ALONE TRANSFORMED BY U3A

The story of how u3a transformed one particular lonely life probably struck a chord with members across the country last month.

The Guardian told the tale of Marian Elliott who was devastated when her husband left her after almost 40 years together. New u3a friends helped her rebuild her confidence and enjoy her freedom.

"I felt such pain, I didn't know what to do with it," she said. Having to buy her own place for the first time at 64 and moving from Surrey to Kent, she had to face a

solitary responsibility. She already knew about u3a and our motto of "Learn, Laugh, Live" but had always been too busy to sign up. She now looked up her local branch.

"I knew I needed people. They have somebody on the door. If you look a bit lost, they say: 'Have you been here before? Oh, I'll sit you down with somebody'. By the time you walk out of that first session, it's like you've been there for ever.

"Your confidence builds up. You get to walk through another door."

Now she attends Spanish, family history, creative writing and gardening groups (most of her new flower bed has been stocked with the help of her generous and kind-hearted friends). She also sits on the committee, organises AGMs and hosts coffee mornings.

She said: her new friends were showing her that "there is still lots for me to enjoy and do. They have enabled me, through their friendliness, to make a new life all by myself. And that's quite an empowering feeling."

YOUR OPTIONS FOR GROUP MEETINGS

Please go to the website to ensure you connect to the latest information on each group.

CODE	GROUP NAME	WEEK IN MONTH	DAY	TIME
His12	3E London	Fourth	Wednesday	AM
Art06	Architectural History	Fourth	Thursday	PM
Art02	Art Appreciation 2	Third	Monday	PM
Art03	Art Appreciation 3	Third	Tuesday	PM
Bee01	Beer Appreciation	Second	Wednesday	PM
Eng07	Book Reading 1	First	Thursday	PM
Eng08	Book Reading 2	Second	Thursday	PM
Eng12	Book Reading 3	Third	Tuesday	PM
Eng10	Book Reading 4	Second	Tuesday	AM
Bri01	Bridge 1	Weekly	Monday	AM
Bri03	Bridge 3	Weekly	Monday	AM
Bri04	Bridge 4	Weekly	Tuesday	AM
Bri05	Bridge 5	Weekly	Thursday	AM
Bri06	Bridge 6	Weekly	Friday	AM
Bri07	Bridge 7	Weekly	Thursday	AM
Bri0x	Bridge All Groups	Weekly	Various	AM
Bri08	Bridge Beginners/Improvers	Weekly	Wednesday	AM
Can01	Canasta 1	Second + Fourth	Wednesday	PM
Can02	Canasta 2	Second	Tuesday	PM
Cra07	Card Making	Last	Thursday	PM
Ch01	Chess	When required	TBC	PM
IT03	Computing Workshop	Second	Thursday	AM
Cra01	Crafts	First + Third	Tuesday	AM
Cra08	Creative Embroidery	First	Monday	AM
Eng03	Creative Writing	Every Other	Friday	AM
Cro01	Croquet (April to Oct)	Various	Various	AM
CA01	Current Affairs	Second	Wednesday	PM
Cyc01	Cycling	First + Third	Friday	AM
Wal03	Easy Rambling	Second + Fourth	Tuesday	AM
His10	Family History	Third	Monday	AM
Cra06	Flower Arranging	First	Thursday	AM
Fre01	French Conversation	Second + Fourth	Wednesday	AM
Fre04	French Intermediate	Second + Fourth	Thursday	AM
Gar03	Gardening 03	Second	Wednesday	PM
His22	History	Second + Fourth	Wednesday	PM
Dan01	Line Dancing	Weekly	Wednesday	PM
Dan02	Line Dancing Beginners	Weekly	Wednesday	PM
His11	London Walks	Third	Wednesday	AM
His13	London Walks 3	Third	Thursday	AM
His15	London Walks 4	First	Thursday	AM
His17	London Walks 5	Third	Friday	AM
His18	London Walks 6	Third	Thursday	AM
Mah01	Mah-jong	Weekly	Friday	PM
Met01	Metal Detecting	Second + Fourth	Wednesday	PM
His08	Military History	Fourth	Tuesday	PM
Wal04	Morning Hikes	Second	Wednesday	AM
Sci06	Ornithology & Botany	Second	Tuesday	PM
Art04	Painting Workshop	Weekly	Monday	AM
Per01	Phoenix Entertainment	Weekly	Thursday	PM
Pho01	Photography	Fourth	Wednesday	AM
Eng11	Play Reading	Fourth	Monday	PM
Eng01	Poetry Appreciation	Second	Thursday	PM

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CODE	GROUP NAME	WEEK IN MONTH	DAY	TIME
Zz01	Qigong	Weekly	Monday	PM
Sci01	Science & Technology 1	Second	Thursday	AM
Sci02	Science & Technology 2	Fourth	Thursday	PM
Sci03	Science & Technology 3	Third	Wednesday	PM
Scr01	Scrabble	When required	Various	PM
His16	Social History 1	Second	Monday	AM
His20	Social History 2	First	Monday	PM
Spa02	Spanish Group 2-Basic	First + Third	Monday	PM
Ten01	Table Tennis	Weekly	Monday	PM
Ten02	Table Tennis Summer	Weekly	Monday	PM
TC01	Tai Chi 1	Weekly	Thursday	AM
TC02	Tai Chi 2	When Required	N/A	AM
The01	Theatre Interest	When Required	Various	PM
Tra01	Travel Experiences	Third	Tuesday	PM
Mus11	Ukulele	Second + Fourth	Thursday	AM
Gar02	Vegetable Gardening	Second	Saturday	AM
Wal02	Walking 12km	First	Friday	AM
Wal01	Walking 7km	Second + Fourth	Friday	AM
Win02	Wine Appreciation 2	Fourth	Wednesday	PM
Win03	Wine Appreciation 3	Second	Tuesday	PM
Win04	Wine Appreciation 4	Third	Monday	PM
Win05	Wine Appreciation 5	Fourth	Monday	PM

SITUATION VACANT

Please contact Chris Middleton at chairman@bookhamu3a.org.uk or call him on 01372 454107 for more information on the role below.

VICE-CHAIRMAN

A Vice-Chairman is needed who will deputise for the Chairman and be able to fill that role when the current period of office expires. The Chairman has the following roles:

- Maintain the objectives/purposes of the u3a.
- Preserve order at meetings and ensure that the correct procedure is followed and the agenda covered
- Guide discussions in a positive manner while allowing different points to be expressed
- Encourage audience participation in discussion and decision-making
- Draw discussions to a conclusion and summarise for audience votes where required.
- Ensure decisions are followed through.

DONATE UNWANTED GIFTS TO UKRAINIAN REFUGEES

Winnie Benford has made contact with the Bookham Ukrainian Refugee Support Group. They were delighted with her u3a initiative, saying luxury items were not on their agenda at present.

She has established that some 30 local residents have

already – or will be – offering homes to Ukrainians in the next few weeks. She has met several refugees and their hosts who attended a meeting in Bookham Baptist Church.

At the Barn Hall meeting on 7 June she said she was overwhelmed by donations so

far and Bookham had been joined by Leatherhead u3a in the collecting effort.

Footballs and other games were particularly welcome, helping to bring together children speaking different languages but sharing common interests and pleasures.

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