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# *Senior Moments*

23

*The quarterly newsletter of the  
Bookham & District u3a*

*Issue 81*

*May*

*2024*

## Chairman's Report

Welcome to the May edition of Senior Moments. I hope by the time you are reading this the April showers will have ended and we can all look forward to a bright summer including the Bookham Village Day on 15 June at the Old Barn Hall. If you are coming along, please drop by our stand and, if you can spare a few minutes, help us out with our exciting game.

Since the last edition of Senior Moments we have had three very different monthly meetings covering Morris Dancing, the Great Ormond Street Hospital Charity – when a bucket collection yielded over £300, and a demonstration of making paper by hand from the editor of this magazine.

We also held our first Group Administrators meeting since before the pandemic and I am pleased to say that two-thirds of the Administrators were able to join us for a very worthwhile meeting followed by a lovely lunch. As part of this event, GAs have been updating their group pages on the website as well as ensuring they are advertising any vacancies. So if you want to know more about any of our interest groups or are looking for a new activity, go to the Groups page on the website.

At the April meeting I was able to announce that three new interest groups are in the early stages of setting up. These are Dog Walking, Pickleball (see Paula's article later in this edition) and the u3a Singers

whose first get together will be on Thursday 23 May. If you are interested in any of these and have not already put your name down, please contact the Groups Coordinator through the website.

As you know I took over as Chairman from Chris Middleton and I find that, like him, I need to appeal for more assistance with running your u3a. In particular I want someone to step forward as Vice Chairman. This is not a particularly onerous role but will, I hope, provide a valuable sounding board for me during my chairmanship. If you are interested in helping to maintain and develop Bookham & District u3a please drop me a line and we can arrange to meet for a chat.

I wish you all the best for the summer and look forward to meeting as many of you as are able to attend at one of our monthly meetings.








*Phil Brown*



# Bookham and District u3a

Registered Charity No 1036386 u3a Membership No 254/239/93

## The Committee

 Chairman Phil Brown	 Secretary Gillian Arnold	 Treasurer Chris Pullan	 Membership Liz Looney	 Webmaster Carol Stilwell
 Speaker Secretary Frank Cross	 Assistant Treasurer Peter Osborne	 Minutes Secretary Pat Mander	 Publicity Viv Bignell	 Events Harold Reglar
 Groups Coordinator Chris Middleton	 Senior Moments Editor Maurice Baker	 Ass Membership Kim Kitson		

**Vacant**  
Vice-Chairman  
**Editor**

*There is plenty to read in this issue of Senior Moments that should be of interest to many of you including Jenny Wilson's piece on glass and its intriguing story, then there is Brian Chapman's discussion of the water treatment plant his group visited. We have a new member of our u3a, Paula Moss, who has not only formed a new group but has written about the new sport of Pickleball that should attract some of the more active members. Derek Wisbey has photographed the Lovelace bridges in Horsley. Myra Usher has given an account of her silk painting with illustrations from her book on the subject and she has also contributed photos of many of the flowers in her garden at this time of the year. Paula Reglar has reported on her book reading group. And Marian Foss has written about her connection with the Scottish Colourists that I knew little about until now. I have written a short piece on the thriving Painting Workshop group with photos on nearly all the members at work. Val Cross has written up about the demonstration of hand made paper at the April monthly meeting..*

*Maurice Baker*

Cover photo—irises at editor's garden May 2023

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## Book Reading Group I

We have continued our monthly meetings in members' houses on the first Thursday of every month. A lively discussion is followed by tea and biscuits and sometimes home made cake! Members also discuss other books they have read and films and plays they have seen recently.

During the last year we have read a wide variety of books from classics such as The Tenant of

Wildfell Hall by Anne Brontë, biographies such as A Spy Among Friends by Ben Macintyre, to more unusual books such as The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry, which received our highest marks. We were all disappointed by Anne Tyler's French Braid, although she is such a renowned author.

We ended the year with an afternoon of favourite poems and stories, preceded by a delicious lunch, to which everyone contributed.

Title	Author	Content	Style	Enjoyment and Interest
The Lincoln Highway	Amor Towles	8	7	7
The Tenant of Wildfell Hall	Anne Bronte	7	7	7
The Conductor	Sarah Quigley	8	8	7.5
A Spy Among Friends	Ben MacIntyre	7	7.5	6.5
One Hundred Years of Lenni Margot	Marianne Cronin	7	7	7
French Braid	Anne Tyler	5	5	5
The Reading List	Sarah Nisha	6	6	6
Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry	Rachel Joyce	8	8	9
Average		7.5	8	8



Paula Reglar

## Introducing Pickleball - A fabulous blend of fun, fitness and sociability.

Pickleball is taking the world by storm. It's a fun, easy to learn and play. It combines elements of table tennis and tennis and is played on a badminton size court with specially adapted rules to ensure that it can be enjoyed by people of all ages and fitness.

The game is usually played in pairs using a tennis sized ball with holes. The bat is basically an oversized table tennis paddle. The restricted court size makes it a sociable and fun game and the rules ensure that rallies get going. Serving is underarm and

volleying is limited to the back half of the court so it's not a wham-bam serve and volley style game. It's ideal for people looking for fun and exercise. Indeed, a recently commissioned study for The American Council of Exercise (ACE), concluded that,

"Pickleball is as an ideal form of physical activity for middle-aged and older adults."

Pickleball is an excellent choice



for anyone looking to stay active, connect with others, and have a blast on the court. If this interests you, please get in touch. I'm



looking for 8-9 u3a members for a core group to play once per week for up to two hours in rotation.

Paula Moss—(potential) Group Administrator [paulamoss@sky.com](mailto:paulamoss@sky.com)



## U3A Science & Technology Group Visit to SES Water Bough Beech Reservoir and Water Treatment Plant



It's not often U3A members get the chance to combine a visit to an important science and technology site with a pleasant stroll around a scenic reservoir in the mid-winter sunshine, but that's what eight members from the combined Bookham Science and Technology Groups did mid-January when we were shown around SES Water's Bough Beech reservoir and water treatment



plant near Edenbridge in Kent. Throughout the day, educational coordinators Lisa and Anna, and Rob their Water Quality Manager provided an entertaining and knowledgeable insight into the day-to-day running of the

reservoir and treatment plant that supplies clean 'potable' drinking water to vast swathes of the local Kent and East Surrey population. And how early on the local geology of weald clay enabled the reservoir containing billions of gallons of water to be established from a man-made dam in the 1960s whilst continually fed by the local river Eden, precipitation and the natural water cycle. This local geology makes Bough Beech reservoir a unique resource in SES Water as the remaining water supplies to well over a 300 square mile catchment area are serviced by chalk and Greensand aquifers, springs, and boreholes.

First up, Lisa and Anna took us through the different stages of the water cycle and the need for the on-site water treatment process to remove large and mini sized solids, bacteria, dissolved chemicals, and gases found in the reservoir. Their entertaining and informative demonstration took place in a purpose-built facility where they run several educational visits for local schools each week. The largely automated water treatment process involves many stages and different processes including immediate and final

pipe chlorination, initial screening for large solids, clarification using activated carbon and sand filtration, UV reactors for bacteria removal and finally de-aeration towers to exclude trapped gases before the water is stored and released to the mains supply. Their on-site laboratory undertakes extensive daily testing to meet established water quality standards for potable water.

To a backdrop of a cloudless sky, views of local farmland and sparkling sunlit



water, shared by a great-crested grebe, we were treated to a pleasant stroll along the banks of the reservoir and dam. Then followed a visit deep under the reservoir

along extensive tunnels housing pipework and machinery which deal with the overflow from significant seasonal water level changes which eventually flow into the river Eden. The tour concluded with a fascinating walk through all the different stages and components of the water treatment plant. The day ended when Lisa and Anna

were joined by Rob to provide an overview of SES Water's ambitions and activities in improving the sustainability, preservation, biodiversity and water quality across the site and catchment area. A Q&A session was followed by the Group having fun exploring some innovative hands-on tools and games that help demonstrate how we can save water in our own homes and the importance of water to all our lives. We would like to thank Lisa, Anna and Rob for making our visit to Bough Beech such a memorable, instructive and fun day and reminding us how we should not take for granted the water that comes out of our taps each day.

If you'd like to find out more about free school trips to Bough Beech, including Flow Zone, a state-of-the art Education Centre, please email [lisa.downes@seswater.co.uk](mailto:lisa.downes@seswater.co.uk) or visit - <https://flow-zone.co.ukz>



*Brian Chapman*



## Hand Made paper

Maurice Baker is one of our long standing members, involved with the committee, various groups and editor of this magazine. Maurice did find time however to give the

paper. Maurice's career was in printing, initially at Oxford University Press and to the Printing Research Association in Leatherhead and later to various destinations including Finland.

The equipment needed was set out, including a large washing up bowl, a food blender, 'J' cloths and a large piece of fibrous paper. A fine mesh frame was essential and a webcam meant that Maurice's demonstration could be seen on the screen behind him.

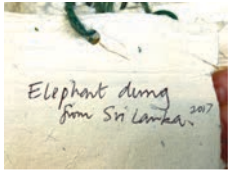
A talk about the history of paper and paper making, with many interesting facts (too many to mention here) followed. Questions were asked before the end, always a good sign. Maurice told several

April monthly talk and a demonstration of how to make



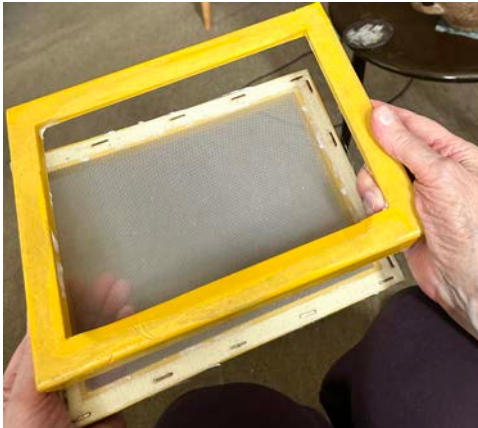


anecdotes along the way, including one where the late Queen had toured a factory, walking the length of a pink coloured paper production line, to be given a fresh copy of the Financial Times at the end. Someone said she might have



*Elephant dung paper with no discernible odour*

preferred the Racing Post! The fake Hitler Diaries were proved to be so by the paper on which they were produced. They were allegedly written in the 30s but were produced on paper only made from the 50s.



*The mesh mould and the deckle frame*

Maurice then proceeded to make a sheet of paper by preparing the pulp in the blender, mixing it in the washing up bowl and scooping the frame to collect the fibres to rest on the grid. The frame or

mould was then turned over, and the very wet sheet of fibres pressed onto a drying cloth and sponging the back of the wire to extract as much water as possible and left to dry.



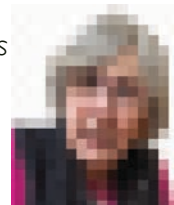
*Hand made paper with dried pressed flowers*

One definition of paper making is panning for a minute quantity of fibres in a deluge of water.

Flowers, threads and dyes can be added. Maurice asked if anyone would like to have a go and Virginia Harvey volunteered. Virginia's sheet of paper turned out well, was placed in several layers of cloth and paper and she took it home to dry. Just as well it wasn't made from elephant dung! Maurice had several sheets of paper, one of which was made from it. It seems paper can be made from just about anything fibrous, including rags.

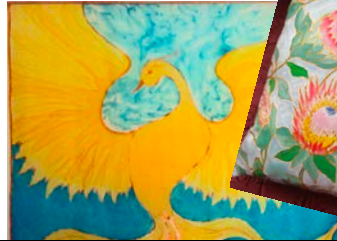
Thanks to Roger Mendham for the loan of the tripod, webcam and advice which made the demonstration visible and to Maurice for sharing his knowledge and skill in what was a very informative talk.

*Val Cross*



## Painting on silk

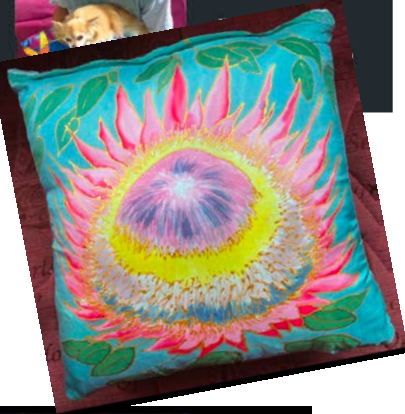
**M**yra Usher, a member of Bookham u3a, has amongst her many artistic talents turned her attention to silk painting from time to time. A big work space needs to be set aside and the silk stretched onto a frame before painting can begin. It is the preparatory work that restricts the frequency of using this technique for much of her work but the results are often remarkable, Myra has now produced a book *Silk Art* (mainly cushions) of her work.



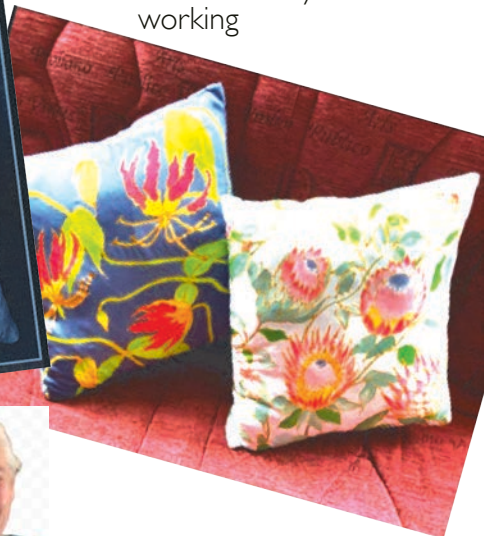
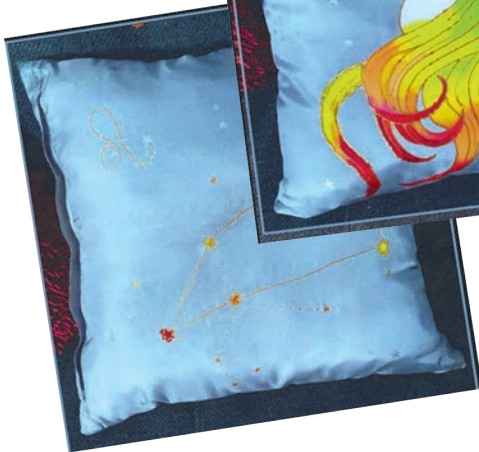
**silk art** (mainly cushions)

a portfolio  
Myra Usher





Silk stretched and ready for working



Myra Usher



Just some of the Spring flowers in Myra's garden



## A MUSING PAINTER

I wielded the brush with great aplomb  
To impress the group to whom I belong.  
I laid some washes, not too strong,  
But oh dear me! They've all gone wrong.

Well never mind, I'll carry on.

I could see the landscape in my eye.  
For a start there'd be a wonderful sky,  
But the washes look awful now they're dry.  
I ask you, have you ever seen  
A morning sky that's coloured green?  
(I suppose I could scrub the paper clean.)

Well never mind, I'll carry on.

If I turn the painting upside down,  
The sky can be a chalkland meadow.  
Some autumn trees, I'll add in brown  
And a rape-seed field in brilliant yellow.  
I'd better paint a sky in blue  
With a touch of red to improve the hue.  
But no, oh no! to my dismay,  
The colour's turned out pallid grey.

Well never mind, I'll carry on.

Now I think I'll add a winding stream  
To enhance the lovely pastoral scene;  
I'm sure that won't be overkill,  
But look at that! it goes uphill!

Well never mind, I've finished now.

So when my friends come passing by  
To view the landscape, poking fun,  
I chastise them with a heavy sigh,  
Saying they lack artistic eye,  
For surely its clear to everyone,  
'Tis an **abstract** painting I have done.

*David King*



*Jenny King*

## Painting Workshop

The group meets every Monday from September to April 9.30 to 12. There is a summer session. The current

leader is David King assisted by his wife Jenny. 25/30 members usually attend and they encompass all abilities from complete beginners to experienced and established artists. There is never a formal agenda,

**Marian Foss** members paint or draw wherever they wish and because it is such a friendly group there is always plenty of help and advice available. A recent member,

Gillian Feary said she would ever get around to painting if wasn't for the discipline of having to get all her painting things ready each Monday morning.

There is one big project the group has been involved with over the past several years and that is the Bookham u3a calendar that requires 13 pictures each time and we are never short of submissions.

*"she would never get around to painting if it wasn't for the discipline of having to get all her painting things ready each Monday morning."*



Paula I



Marian Foss



Lee Saunders



Janet Anoyrkatis



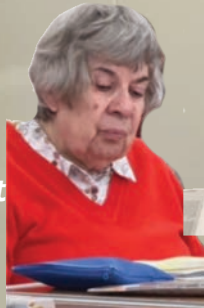
Chris Edwards



Barry Sh



**Pauline Fancourt  
Moss**



**Jill McClan**



**Jan Godding**



**Jenny Gaskill**



**Maurice Baker**



**Anne Parsons**



**Kate Broad**



**Jenny Wilson**



**John Lambert**



**Jill Perryman**



**Patricia Stevens**



**Shepherd**



**Alan Cleugh**



**Jane Bishop**



**Myra Usher**

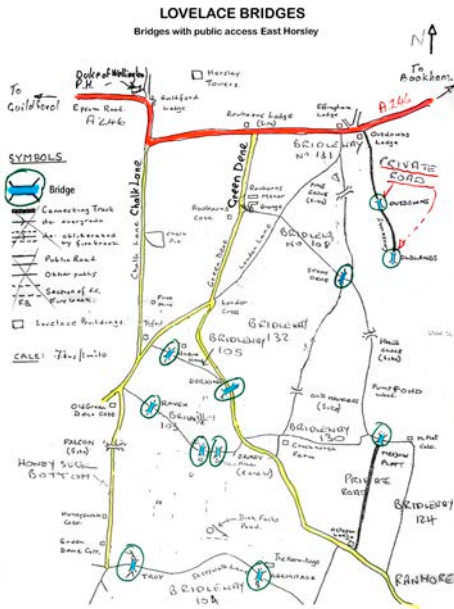
## Lovelace Bridges

The Lovelace Bridges were built by William King, 1st Earl of Lovelace (1805-1893) on his estate at East Horsley, Surrey, in the 1860s. Fifteen bridges were built to facilitate the transport of timber by horse-drawn carts. The bridges were built where the tracks crossed existing bridleways or roads. Ten bridges still exist.

The bridges were built so that his lordship and friends could ride around the estate over the



top of the paths being used to transport timber by his workers.



Lord Lovelace, once owner of the East Horsley Estate, was an enthusiastic forester. In order to facilitate the transport of timber by horse drawn carts in the very hilly woods to the south of Horsley Towers, he had tracks constructed with gentle inclines. This involved the construction of embankments over small





valleys and crossing tracks were bridged.



The bridges were usually horseshoe shaped, and there were fifteen in all, of which ten remain. They range from about six feet wide at Meadow Plat, to the eighteen foot span of the



Dorking Arch, which crosses Crocknorth Road. The style of the bridges is ornate, with a



brick and flint structure and various styles of ornamentation applied to the arches. All carried tile name plaques, of which two



survive. The remaining bridges are Hermitage, Troye, Raven Arch, Briary Hill East, Briary Hill West, Robin Hood, Stony Dene, Oldlands, Meadow Plat and Dorking Arch. Dick Focks



common near to Troy bridge is a well known birders haunt.

*Derek Wisbey photos*



## The Scottish colourists

We have all heard of the impressionists, Renoir, Monet and Manet; even possibly the post impressionists, Cezanne Gaugan and van Gough, but how much do you know about the Scottish Colourists? They were a group of prolific artists of the same era as the postimpressionists spanning the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. They were Francis Cadell, John Fergusson, Lesley Hunter and Samuel Peploe. Three of them from Edinburgh. They trained in France and were inspired by the work of Vincent van Gogh, Cezanne and Matisse, the post impressionists and Fauvism. They shared common interest in experimenting with light and shade plus bold use of colour. They painted French scenes and landscapes of Scotland, particularly the isle of Iona and were known for their portraits and still lives. Today, the Scottish Colourists are acknowledged as four of the most talented, experimental and distinctive artists of the 20<sup>th</sup> century of British Artists.

The group shared a common interest in the artistic development occurring in France where they trained and were shown to dabble with different styles such as Cubism, Fauvism and Futurism.

A still life of "Pink Roses in a vase" by Samuel Peploe sat above our mantelpiece for many years inherited from my grandfather, Dr Reggie Mackay a Scottish GP. Grandfather loved art and bought paintings

whenever he could, particularly anything Scottish! He liked and admired the modern Scottish Colourists and post impressionists including Matthew Smith whose work now hangs in the Tate



Gallery. He told my mother once that he would have liked to paint on a tropical island like Gauguin, away from the cares of the world. This was not surprising considering he was a surgeon on the battlefields of France and Italy during the First World War. But he stayed on in Edinburgh as a GP, sketching Scottish scenes in pastels and playing golf. When he died we inherited a few paintings from his collection—the "Pink Roses" was one of them.

The Scottish Colourists work fell out of favour during the Second World War but was re-discovered in the 1980s. Around this time my mother decided to downsize and discovered that the "Pink Roses" by Peploe was now worth money. This was a painting I loved and

had seen almost everyday of my life so I begged her not to sell, but to no avail and it went to auction in Glasgow and was snapped up by a private buyer I think as I cannot find it on the internet or in the Scottish National gallery of Modern Art in Edinburgh. There is a lot of Peplow's work there but none of them as fine as our painting.

So the question is: do we keep a painting for its beauty or go for the money? For me there is no choice. I would rather have had the "Pink Roses" any day. The money we got from the sale was all gone and forgotten about pretty quickly but the painting lives in my memory.

Paintings these days are classed by their value, be it Tracey Emin or Damian Hirst, whatever it looks like it will make money. What of beauty verses price?

Surely, we go into galleries and observe art for its beauty and how it raises us up or challenges us from the norm? That is what I feel art is about and our Peplow was no different.

Looking now at the work of the Scottish Colourists on line I am struck again how good their work was and how overlooked they were at the time. Recently I saw on Bargain Hunt a small section dedicated to the Scottish Colourists where Peplow's grandson was talking about his grandfather's work. He claimed

that currently a Peplow painting will sell averagely for a million pounds. Not that the family had profited from those sales he quipped and I realised what a privilege it had been for me to live with that painting for all those years.

So if I still had the "Pink Roses" how high would my insurance policy be? I did manage to hold onto one of grandfather's paintings of "Iona" by a Scot called William M Glass. He was of the same era but not officially



one of the Scottish Colourists. I held onto it because it is not worth a huge amount. It is a nice painting in the Colourist style but it is not a Peplow, but at least my insurance is affordable.

*Marian Foss*



## Does your glass vase glow in the dark?

The element uranium is usually associated with nuclear power and nuclear warheads, but did you know that it was widely used in the glass industry? As early as Roman times glassmakers knew that



adding metals or metal oxides to the ingredients of glass could create a range of beautiful colours, and uranium oxide may have been used as a colouring agent in glass since as early as 79 AD. This is the date of a



mosaic from a Roman villa on Cape Posillipo in the Bay of Naples, which includes yellow glass tesserae (small tiles) containing 1% uranium oxide to make part of

the pattern. However, some academics dispute whether these tesserae are actually Roman, suggesting that they may have been imported, or added later.



Although there is some doubt about whether the Romans used uranium, other metals and oxides they are known to have used for creating coloured glass include copper (turquoise), copper oxide (dark red), cobalt (dark blue) and manganese (light purple).

More recently, in the late Middle Ages, a form of uranium ore called pitchblende was extracted from the Habsburg silver mines in Bohemia (now the Czech Republic) and was used as a colouring agent in the local glassmaking industry. (Marie Curie also famously extracted the element radium from pitchblende, but that's another story). The first major producer of items made of uranium glass was an Austrian

Franz Xaver Riedel, who worked in Bohemia from 1830 to 1848.

During this period uranium glass was usually heavily coloured crystal glass with beautiful facet cutting and polishing done by skilled craftsmen.



Pressed or moulded glass was first patented in the US in 1825, and by the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century most glassware was mass-produced by this relatively cheap method. Uranium glass was no exception and was made into a wide range of decorative tableware and other household items such as bowls, vases, candlesticks and lamps.

In the 1840s, many European glassworks began to produce uranium glass, which reached the height of popularity between 1880 and 1920. At this time, uranium oxide was commonly used to create a pale yellowish green glass, sometimes called 'Vaseline' glass because of its colour and slightly greasy appearance. A brighter yellow glass was known as 'canary

glass'. Green glass was increasingly popular, and could be created by adding a mixture of uranium oxide and iron oxide to the mix. Pieces from the late-19<sup>th</sup> and early-20<sup>th</sup> centuries generally contained between 2 and 7% uranium oxide, but could contain up to 25%. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, glassmakers discovered that uranium glass with certain other mineral additions became milky white when heated at high temperatures. This resulted in a range of increasingly opaque glasses, from the traditional transparent yellow or green to a completely opaque white.



We now know that as well as its distinctive colours, uranium glass has additional properties that make it attractive to collectors. Uranium oxide contains a small amount (less than 1%) of a special form (isotope) of uranium, U-235, which is radioactive. This causes uranium glass to glow bright green in the dark when an ultraviolet light is shone on it, and registers on a Geiger counter.

Jenny Wilson



## Grace & Favour

In March the Vegetable Gardening Group spent a very enjoyable morning at Horsley Villages' Community Kitchen Garden and Allotments.

It was created in 2008 from the National Trust's derelict three-acre site comprising a walled garden and orchard at Dene Place, Ripley



Lane in West Horsley.

They grow and sell vegetables relying on a team of volunteers. They distribute fruit and vegetables to local needy residents through a tithe system each summer.

We were shown round the garden by its Chairman Gerry Robbins who enlightened us on the history of the site. The garden has been No Dig for several years and Peat Free from 2022/23. The garden is also pesticide and chemical-free.

They start sowing seeds in

polytunnels on 14 February and there we saw rows of salad leaves and coriander already being harvested.



We were joined by Ray Beard a Volunteer Gardener who answered our questions as we looked round the site. Trevor Wykes another Volunteer Gardener was busy clearing paths.

Gerry is also their Wildlife Expert, and we admired the pond and visited the compost area behind the garden wall.

We had refreshments in their potting shed and gave a donation for their produce table. This included kale, coriander and I took a squash home which turned into a delicious soup.

On the 4<sup>th</sup> August from 1-4pm they will be opening under the National Gardens Scheme and selling refreshments in aid of Cherry trees in East Clandon who provide short care breaks for children and young adults with a range of complex disabilities.

Anita Laycock



## StudyDay Menuhin Hall

The recent StudyDay was very topical at the Menuhin Hall and was given by Gordon Corrigan MBE

UK military history.

While I appreciated the military viewpoint I am still pleased it is the politicians, with their many shortcomings, that we get the



on War in Europe: Putin's war in Ukraine. This retired army officer gave an excellent talk explaining first Putin and his background that was from very humble beginnings in Leningrad, now St Petersburg, and how he came to be President and has held power in Russia for the last 25 years. He then went on to explain the history of Ukraine and the difficulty that country will have in eventually claiming Crimea. He explained the UK defence situation in 2024 that he considered to be falling far too short for what is probably needed for our likely future commitments before finishing with an appreciation of the

chance to vote on every 5 years who decide when and whether we



should go to war:

*Maurice Baker*

# Bookham u3a future events

The table below shows upcoming meetings open to all members. For more information on these meetings please refer to the Bookham u3a website. You will need to be logged in to see the additional information.

The monthly meetings always start at 2.30pm

07 May	Tax, Care and Toy Boys
04 Jun	Passports, Assassins, Traitors and Spies
02 Jul	Mary's Meals

## Study Days at Yehudi Menuhin School

Always on a Friday 10am to 4pm

Bring your own lunch

£12 u3a members

Friday 17 May	The Jazz Age & Beyond - With Talks, Film, Demonstrations & Musical Finale Presented by Howard Laws, Woking u3a & Jazz
Fri Jun 21st	Science Topics Presented by Dr David T Jones, Natural History Museum and Andrew Hanson, National Physical Laboratory
Fri Sep 20th	Artificial Intelligence Presented by Russell Whitworth & Dr Andrew Rogoyski, Surrey Institute for People-Centred Artificial Intelligence
Fri Oct 18th	The History of Photography Presented by Roger Mendham, President of Surrey Photographic Association

*Places will be available in the hall or for on-line viewing.*