



# Senior

**U3A**

# Moments

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

Issue 59

July 2018

Don't Forget  
Renew your  
Membership of  
Bookham U3A  
by

**31st July**



Mini making David Middleton photos



# Bookham and District U3A

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

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## The Committee



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Social Events  
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The July edition of Senior Moments is often a bit of a rush because it follows on so soon after the May edition, but this time we have a good crop of contributors with interesting things to read about. There is the visit to the Mini factory where we saw automation being expertly used in the production of this famous car—a new model comes off the line every 67 seconds and 80% go for export! There are more contributors to articles in this edition than with any previous edition of Senior Moments and long may that continue. It makes for so much more interesting reading and it eases the task of the editor considerably, so thank you all and thank you David Middleton for your many and splendid photographs of all the places you have been to with other members.

*Don't forget it's membership renewal month!*



Cover picture, back & front: from an original watercolour by Jan Dicker

## Chairman's Report

**M**y – the Committee has still been very busy since I last wrote. It's just as well that it is not usually quite this hectic and will now have calmed down.

Hopefully the data protection and privacy policies will have been published on the web site and the new financial guidelines will be with the group leaders. Work is well under way for our Silver Anniversary celebrations in October and the new IT system is being worked on - there are sub-groups for both of these projects. The end of July is the cut-off date for renewals and Pam has been making sure that the forms have been updated to meet the new requirement, aided by David. Village Day also makes it into our plans; I hope some of you managed to visit our stall in the Harrison Room and say "hello". Hopefully when I step down at the October meeting only two items that are not on our usual agenda will remain to be done, the first to enjoy the Silver Celebrations and the second to continue the work on the new IT system.

In amongst all of this we (the committee) have been keeping up with the families and looking after grandchildren, doing our gardens, taking holidays and enjoying the benefits the U3A as well as all the other commitments we have outside of the U3A including Probus, WI, Rainbows, Camera Club etc. As they say – if you want something done, ask a busy person.

What else have we been up to? We had a meeting to welcome new members, many of us attended the Murder Mystery Evening, another really good event with a lovely meal and some very lively company. In May our speaker was the son of George Orwell, Richard Blair who spoke of his father's life and work. Broadcast media – fact or fiction was the June talk given by Pat Mitchinson which gave us much to think about. This month Roger will be talking about, and illustrating street art with his wonderful photography, his talk is entitled "From Graffiti to Street Art". I've had a preview of a couple of his photographs and am very much looking forward to his talk. There is no meeting in August and many of the groups take a holiday so enjoy yourselves and we will see you in September (if not before in the High Street). Have a lovely time.

Lynn



## Silver Anniversary Celebration 24 October 2018

25  
years

The Bookham and District U3A achieve an important milestone this autumn as we reach our Silver Jubilee. It was in September 1993 that Cassie Walters became the first Chairman of our U3A and the initial set of 12 groups was established. The Walking Group led the way with their first outing on 24th September and our first monthly meeting on 5th October heard a talk on Family History by Shirley Parnell.

25  
years

In the intervening years we have grown into a vibrant organisation of over 600 members and at the last count have over 80 different groups that cater for a wide range of different activities and interests.

25  
years

To mark our Silver Anniversary, we will be holding two events on Wednesday 24th October 2018.

25  
years

During the afternoon, from 1pm to 4pm we will have a showcase of all our activities. The Barn Hall will be full of tables displaying the activities of our various groups. You are all invited to come and see the wonderful range of activities we undertake and have a chat to the various group members. There will also be light refreshments available.

25  
years

In the evening the Old Barn Hall will be transformed as we hold our Silver Anniversary Party. There will be plenty of food and music to entertain you – but you will have to bring your own drinks and glasses.

25  
years

Entrance to the afternoon Showcase is free, so please come along and bring family members and other friends who you think might be interested in our work.

Tickets for the evening will go on sale in late August and further details will be circulated to everyone in the coming weeks.

We are a very successful U3A and our Silver Anniversary is the ideal opportunity to celebrate our success and share it with all our members. I am sure you will enjoy the day and look forward to seeing as many of you as possible on 24th October.

*Roger Mendham*  
Vice Chairman

## Visit to BMW's Cowley Mini Production Line

On the 2nd May, 28 U3A members left a soggy Bookham on a trip to Cowley organised and led by David Middleton. Most, but not all, of the participants, were members of one of the Science and Technology Groups.



We were split into two groups on arrival, met our guides and were given Hi-vis vests and safety glasses. After a brief introduction and visit to the Exhibition Centre, we were issued with excellent wireless receivers and earpieces linked to our guide's microphone and set off to the Body Assembly Shop.



### Background

The first car was produced at Cowley in 1913 when William Morris bought the site. It became one of the biggest car production factories in the world, and was the home of the Mini from its inception in 1959. More than 5.5 million Minis were produced, making it the bestselling British car of all time. Production of the classic Mini ceased in 2000, by which time the once thriving site had seen mergers, nationalisation and sales reduce it to a shadow of its former self with a sad list of poorly made and unloved cars (remember the Allegro?)

When BMW bought Rover at the end of the 90's, they discarded all of the group apart from the Mini, which they felt had a future because of its iconic status. However, bringing the model up to date whilst retaining the essence of the brand required serious investment of cash, time and expertise. £750 million was invested over the next few years; the second generation Mini was launched in 2001 and the third generation in 2013. The plant has been a resounding success and now produces 5,500 cars per 5½ day week of 24 hour working with 80% going for export. A type of Mini rolls off the production line every 67 seconds when it is in operation, with a lot of them going into specially configured trains at the site's own railway terminal. Every car is made to order; there is no building for stock.

The site management are especially pleased to have won the internal bidding competition to build the forthcoming electric Mini.

The plant has three main sections involved in production: the Body Assembly Plant, the Paint Shop and the Final Assembly Plant. We toured the first and last of these facilities.

### *The Body Assembly Plant*

The size of 14 football pitches, this truly astounding area is home to some 1200 robots but only 200 people (of which we probably saw a dozen). Robots are used for assembling, spot welding, measuring and inspecting, and to see them at work is

mesmerising; they move and manipulate large body components rapidly and precisely with only minimal clearance to their neighbouring machine. It takes about 7½ hours to assemble each body shell before they go to the Paint Shop where they remain for 9-13 hours to be treated and painted.

#### *Final Assembly Plant.*

This area is where the body shell becomes a car with the installation of the engine, wheels, seats

mechanical aids. The cars are painted with the doors in place, but these are removed as soon as the shell enters Final Assembly, and are taken to a special area to have all the motors, handles, mirrors etc. fitted. They are re-united with their car at the very end of the production line. Each car has a small box containing a transponder attached to its bonnet which enables every detail of the car to be tracked as it passes through the plant.

Perhaps the most amazing and mind-boggling aspect of the whole process is that, as every car is made to order and varies from every other car on the line, and there are 15,000,000,000,000,000 possible configurations, every component specified for that particular vehicle has to



and all the other components which make it a fully functioning vehicle. In contrast to the Body Assembly area, this plant employs about 900 people but only 12 robots, although extensive use is made of lifts, hoists and other



arrive at the appropriate assembly point at exactly the right time in order that the car meets the customer's requirements. Even more amazing when you consider that components come from all over the world and have to arrive just in time as there is no warehousing of stock.

Many thanks to David for all his hard work in organising this very instructive and enjoyable trip, and to our knowledgeable guides for being so informative and patiently answering our many questions.

*Frank Cross*



*Photos by Frank Cross, David Middleton and Maurice Baker*

## Why “the Bookhams”?

**B**ookhams” as there are two villages. The spring-line north of the chalk caused the original settlements and the Guildford-Leatherhead railway led to them. The population has continually increased since World War I and ‘it (Great) has now gone too far to hope that any village character will survive’ according to one quote I read. ‘Little Bookham is appropriately a small edition of Great Bookham.’

So how Great and how Little? Well, a map of 1894 has very accurate figures. 928,539 acres for Little and 3294,155 for Great Bookham. These figures reflect the position following the loss of the south of the parishes when Ranmore was set up in 1870.

But how old? Back in the 5<sup>th</sup> century, the Saxons identified the Bookhams as suitable places to live. They left us with such names as Hogden and Pigden. A Charter of c675 AD and relating to Chertsey Abbey, refers to Bocham cum Effingham as having 20 dwellings. The name has gone through a number of spellings including as above and Bokeham until it settled on

Bookham. Almost certainly this happened to make the name recognizable.

There were beech trees to the south on the chalk. ‘Boc’ means beech tree and ‘ham’ refers to a settlement, almost certainly in terms of a satellite settlement of Chertsey Abbey.

Interestingly, the use of ‘ham’ only occurs in the north of Surrey and we are part of 4 villages in a row.

The spring-line, as mentioned earlier, was very important in determining the position of the villages as the springs produced a regular supply of fresh water. Of course, following heavy

rain, we get flooding from this close to Lower Road. The spring-line loops north beyond Leatherhead and reaches Epsom. It became a spa and Epsom Salts are known to this day.

A quote from 1929 states ‘no place in Surrey has so completely changed aspect in recent years. Walkers of 25 years ago knew the Bookhams as villages which had survived unaltered since medieval times.’ A major cause was the sell off of the Eastwick Park estate after World War I, which made available nearly 1000 acres for residential development. That part near to the A246 is described as ‘A revolution has been effected, and what is known a Bungalow Town has sprung into being. Land here is cheaper. It may be bought for about £150 per acre. Small bungalows may be put up here at about £500 -£600 upwards.’ So the small bungalows on big plots were extended but they are now being knocked down and small estates built.

The Bookhams are strip villages on the spring-line. To the South is chalk, which provides pasture for sheep. Either side of Lower Road, there is a narrow strip of water bearing gravel known as Thanet Sand. Where the porous rocks against the impervious clay, there are the springs. It is about this area that is best for arable farming. Further to the north, there are London clays which supported fish ponds and pigs rooted in the woods. Residents of the Bookhams will know these differences from practical experience in their gardens.

Chris Pullan  
5 May 2018

*Illustrations are, included with permission, from Great Bookham by Lyn Spencer and copies are available from the Wishing Well.*

The village is one of many settlements that developed along the line of springs below the North Downs and John Blair’s diagram illustrates some of these parishes with their long thin shapes. The spring line is an area where water is at or near the surface and can erupt in ponds and springs.



Map 6: The dip slope pattern and spring line. Courtesy of John Blair

Spring Grove has two ponds fed by springs, and there is a pond in The Park that is spring fed. A pond called Soole Pool in Church Road used to be spring fed but this was filled early in the 20th century. In periods of heavy rain a spring called Earborne erupts in the Lower Road Recreation Ground.



Figure 3: The Earborne spring gushing tumultuously in the Lower Road Recreation Ground in 2014





## Flower Arranging

Every month the flower arranging group receives an instruction sheet: it sets out what we need for our arrangement and a picture example.



When Maurice came along to take the pictures shown here the theme was "oblong space" – the idea was to create a low arrangement of flowers with the height being added by loops of grass. As you can



see from the picture many variations appear from this central theme. At the end of the session we all gather to look at the various



containers of flowers to gather ideas, talk about problems we may have encountered, and to see how the interpretations work. It's



amazing the different outcomes when the flowers and containers are changed.

Sometimes the theme for the month is very traditional like the lazy "s" of the Hogarth curve, the whimsical egg based Easter arrangement, topiary for Christmas and the latest modern format which incorporates twigs decorated with



buttons to echo the chosen flowers.

If you would like to come along and join us we can guarantee that for eleven months of the year (we don't meet in August) you will have a lovely fresh floral arrangement for you home.

We meet on the first Thursday of the month,



in the Waterfield Room of the Old Barn Hall at 10:00 am.

*Lynn Farrell*

## Horror at Care Awards Celebration

On 10th May Charlie Wilkes was viciously murdered at an awards celebration for the Care Workers of the Meadowfields Retirement Homes.

Many people were at the ceremony having a wonderful dinner and chatting to friends,



family and Meadowfields staff. The owner, Max Schneider and his daughter Jasmine Webb were hosting the evening and a good time



was had by all. However there were some problems being detected under the goodwill



of the evening. Charlie seemed to have had a meteoric rise in the organization and had a big effect on Max. This made Lauryl very disgruntled as she had hoped to become the manager of the new venture. It turned out

that the chef, Anna was very unhappy about her transfer and there were financial problems for Ian. Was one of the residents murdered? The diners were listening to discreet but noticeably unhappy interactions and some very loud disagreements but only fragments of the issues could be heard at any one time. There was a lot of participation: eight of the diners



received awards along with the team members from Meadowfields. When the scenes were being played out there were gasps and knowing looks as another clue or red herring were offered.



Then Charlie crashed through the doors, her head bleeding and she died on the hall floor. Soon all the diners were trying to sort out all the clues they had been given and work out the murderer. Some very fanciful solutions were aired, pertinent (we hope) questions asked of the care home staff and finally we had to give our answers.

It was a mixed bag of answer: some wrong but with good reasons, other right but without working out the "why", some funny ones and one table actually managing the right answer and finding the reasons.

A very fun evening was enjoyed by all. We would like to give many thanks to Jan Dicker for arranging the evening, to The Killing Game who provided the entertainment, Elizabeth for the meal and to everyone else that helped. The Killing Game, Murder Mystery Evening – Nursing a Grudge  
*Mike Farrell*



David Middleton London walk



David Middleton London river trip

## The White Lining Machine

If you've walked near or played on the croquet lawns at Polesden, you probably haven't pondered on the mechanism which lays the white lines. There is, however a little story behind the machine that rolls out the paint to make those lines (and it isn't the machine's fault that they sometimes aren't quite straight!) I've wondered, as I held the smooth wooden handles, about the people who, down the generations, have gripped those same handles. So I traced it back to Val Shelton, a very long standing member and committee member of the croquet group and she told me the story.

Val's family had a tennis court at their holiday home in Felpham, a village on the south coast between Littlehampton and Bognor. White lines were required and the machine in question was bought, probably from Gamage's store\* and certainly before 1939. In those days distemper was used for the lines, which obviously washed away very easily during rain. (The tennis court was turned into chicken runs for the war effort).

Val inherited the machine in the late 80s and it eventually found a home in Martin Pulsford's garage; he in turn donated it to Bookham U3A's croquet group and it now resides at Polesden. Every Monday morning at 8.30am a rota of volunteers roll it out, fill it with special paint (longer lasting than distemper) and walk the lines of the lawns.

While I call it a machine it is essentially an open trough with two metal wheels which transfer the paint to the grass as you walk behind pushing it. Yes there are laser models available which I'm sure make perfect lines but there's something very satisfying about

still using the human touch, albeit with the odd wobble. It will be on display at the Silver Anniversary Celebration on 24th October in the OBH, from 1 - 4pm. if you'd like to see it, along with many other exhibits.

(\*Writing this has taken quite some time thanks to Google; there are fascinating facts



and photos if you put Gamage's store into your search engine and it may bring back a lot of memories for some!)

*Val Cross (with thanks to Val Shelton for her input).*

### 3E London -Shoreditch & Spitalfields Street Art Plus – April 18

This is my summary of the April walk sent out to all the members. Bring your sunglasses! You do not need to appreciate modern or street art to find this amazing, it's everywhere. Don't miss it because in a couple of years or less it will be gone! It's like spending a day in a foreign country – so different from Surrey! And it did not disappoint, everyone loved it.



I was given the walk by another Bookham USA London Walks group leader so I did not do any research like he did. I know we saw a Banksy but I am no expert in street art (I'll leave that to Roger Mendham in his July talk) so in true 3E London style we Explored, Experienced and Enjoyed. Apart from the colourful street art



there are lots of quirky niche shops, one where you can get your 'bought torn-jeans' mended,

another where you can get left-handed



shops and amazing designer Afro-Caribbean handbag and shoe and fabric shops (such bright colours!). A super day out!  
Kathy Gothard



## Vegetable Gardening

In March Anita gave us a very interesting tour of Eastwick Allotments. There was plenty of activity on the plots after a very wet and cold winter. We noted one allotment holder planting gladioli and asters at the front of their plot.

Of special interest were two plots alongside one another containing raised beds and large

taking note of the small foldaway fleece lantern cloches to keep out the dreaded



planters which looked like Fort Knox.

Unlike Little Bookham (where protection is designed) to keep out the wildlife, this has been built to keep out the other plot holders.

On Anita's plot we picked rhubarb and she was still harvesting her leeks, kale and rocket.

aphids.

In April Head Gardener John gave us a very comprehensive tour of the Grace & Flavour Walled Gardens at West Horsley. This is a community kitchen garden full of flowers, fruit and vegetables. There is now a 'no dig' policy and they do not use any pesticides or herbicides. They begin their vegetable plants in peat free compost and the only fertiliser they use is homemade comfrey, wormery liquid and farmyard manure. Many of the plants are protected with microfleece to keep out the pests.

The Potting Shed has now been rebuilt and is fully functioning complete with a small kitchen. The pond has been cleaned out and the Mallard ducks have returned. They have plenty of nest boxes around the site and you can spot the Great Spotted



Next month she will be planting out her early potatoes (Charlotte) and maincrop (Picasso) as well as carrots and beetroot along with the first sowings of salad crops.

We returned to Anita's to enjoy coffee and cake which had been brought from the Friday morning Country Market at the Old Barn Hall. We looked through Kitchen Garden magazines



Woodpecker, Fieldfares and Redwings. They have raptors in abundance including Red kites, Buzzards, Sparrowhawks and Kestrels.

Why not enjoy a visit? They are open to the public on Thursday and Saturday mornings when you can look round the garden and buy some of their delicious produce.

Anita Laycock



## Easy Rambling

The Easy Rambling group is for members who would like to walk for about an hour or approximately 2 miles. Our walks are mostly local with occasional trips further afield, and finish with coffee or other refreshment. We meet on the first and third Tuesday of the month at 10.00 a.m. Venues are arranged in advance and where possible avoid stiles, steep hills, mud and rain! Although the group is nominally full, we can usually manage a visitor or two.



I met them at the start of their walk in June from the Leisure Centre along the the river Mole towards Leatherhead then on the tow path to the Crematorium and back again. It only takes about an hour and this is what this group aims to do—a short easy walk that most people can manage. The only problem is at present it is so popular that Frances Pullan, the leader, cannot take any more members to her group but there is nothing to stop another member from forming a similar easy walking group.

*Maurice Baker*



Watching the video of Mini making David Middleton photo

## Creative Writing Group.

The U3A Creative Writing Group has decided to withdraw from the Mole Valley Arts Alive Festival. This means that for the first time since the Festival was started there will not be 'Penny Readings'.

The Creative Writing Group was one of the first Bookham U3A Groups but now draws its membership from several of the local U3As. It has had a long tradition of showcasing local creative writing, initially as part of Bookham Village Week, but when the Arts Alive Festival was founded, our Leader, Edwina Vardey, led us in participating, under the title of the Victorian tradition of 'Penny Readings'

These readings were initially held on the premises of Barton's Bookshop, but as our audience grew we moved to the Green Room of the Leatherhead Theatre, where we have thrived. The format has remained as two sessions of original readings, presented by the authors, punctuated by a musical interlude and a pause for refreshment and conversation. Over the years a number of musicians have provided the musical interlude; I remember the problems of a flautist tangling with the crowded bookshelves of Barton's Bookshop

and more than one performance by a young violinist who is now the Leader of the Dorking Symphony Orchestra.

Edwina Vardey has always undertaken the invidious role of selecting and organising the 'pieces' to be read, often performing miracles to reconcile proud and protective authors with the exigencies of a balanced programme.

Age is now catching up with us. Members of the Group are still enjoying the challenge of writing creatively and regularly on a variety of topics, while complaining loudly about the difficulty presented by the chosen title, but they do not now enjoy the additional stress of reading their work to a wider audience, and of being fit on a set date to perform.

As a Group we thrive, with seven authors meeting in alternate weeks and never failing to produce a piece of original prose or poetry that may be amusing, thought provoking or moving. Still under the leadership of Edwina and still with one of her original student writers.

We offer our thanks to our regular audience members for their continuing support and are sorry if we are disappointing them.

*W E Whitman 8 June 2018*







*London walk David Middleton photos*



# Out & About with Bookham U3A

OUTINGS & THEATRE VISITS  
To book please contact Anne Glyn  
Theatre Matinees (by coach)

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## The new arrangements for organising outings in Bookham U3A

**A**nne Glyn is now the coordinator for Bookham U3A outings. This means individual members are now expected to come forward to arrange "one off" trips. Anne can assist them with details of the most appropriate coach companies to consider etc. There is no need to think of only 52 seater coaches, but individual members will book the transport and venue. Once this is done they will inform Anne of the date of the outing and she will announce it at the monthly meeting, hand out booking forms, collect the money, issue receipts and make up the list for the outing. Any other assistance or advice needed will be provided.

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## U3A SURREY NETWORK STUDY DAYS

Fri 21st Sept      Planned study day in 2018 on Major Infrastructure Projects  
Presented by John Kennedy, U3A Member, & Others

Fri Oct 19th      Planned study day in 2018 on Music Therapy & U3A Singing  
Booking opens on 1 June

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## Do you have a smoke alarm?

**A**nyone with faulty or indeed no smoke alarms can contact Surrey Fire Service and have them fitted at no cost. The firemen will advise where they should be fitted and there is no drilling involved.

Tel: 03456 009 009 or email: [sfcontactqueries@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:sfcontactqueries@surreycc.gov.uk)

To avoid people listening to the usual stream of messages when getting through, on the telephone it's option 6.

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## U3A Tuesday Monthly Meetings

Tuesday 3rd July      From Graffiti to Street Art      Roger Mendham

Tuesday 7th August      No meeting

Tuesday 4th Sept      Personalised Cancer Care for Children Prof. Louis Chesler

Tuesday 2nd Oct      "I am a Tulip what are you?" Jacqueline Aviolet



*London walk with David Middleton who took the photos*

