

A vibrant photograph of a flowering tree in a field of yellow wildflowers under a blue sky. The tree's branches are covered in green leaves and clusters of white and pink blossoms. The ground is a lush green field filled with numerous small yellow wildflowers. The sky is a clear, bright blue.

Senior

U3A

Moments

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

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David Middleton's photos of a beginners bridge session under the watchful eye of Peter Clarke



Bookham and District U3A

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There is much to see and read about in this issue of Senior Moments. Anita Laycock not only has her usual piece on vegetable gardening, but has also written about a family history. There are four reports on London walks, with photos. One of the walks, led by David Middleton was to the Houses of Parliament. Marian Kemp has sent her latest poem for us to enjoy. David also took his group on another day to the Wellcome Collection which is always an interesting place to visit in London. David Middleton is always ready to contribute photos and this time he has a page on Bridge for Beginners with the Peter Clarke looking on and giving guidance on the finer points of the game.

There is an article by Elizabeth Stephenson who was present in a small town in France when it was liberated by the American Army during the Second World War. So there is much to read and photos to see on a wide range of subjects that is so appropriate for a U3A with so many different interests.

If you have an idea for an item that would make good reading in your magazine, please let me know about it. You don't have to write it up, just come forward with the idea and see if it can be developed into an article ready for publication.

Maurice Baker



Some of the wines ready for tasting by the Wine Group 5

Cover photo of a garden in Leatherhead

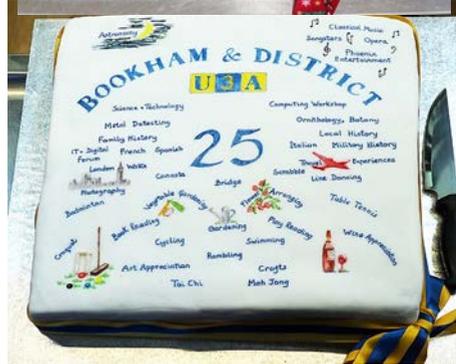
Chairman's Report

Spring is definitely in the air; the clocks have gone forward, the trees have started to come into leaf and the sound of lawnmowers can once again be heard as the gardens begin to take shape for another year.

Our U3A has continued to grow and we now have 600 members and in excess of 80 Interest Groups. As I go around the groups I am constantly struck by the level of engagement and friendship created within the groups. It reinforces my view that our U3A plays a really important role in the social life of our members and is truly an asset to the life of our village and local area.

Since my last report I have visited the Military History Group, the Play Reading Group, taken a walk through Brixton with 3E London and taken a Morning Hike around the local Norbury Park, Mickleham Priory area. Next up will be the Photographic Group at the end of the month. My plan is at least one group a month, and I am ahead of schedule. I must highlight my visit to the Play Reading Group. Under Jenny Gaskell's guidance we read "Wedding of the Year" by Norma Robbins. The various parts were randomly allocated by choosing from a collection of folded papers and I selected Melvin Thornton – "an untidy dishevelled young man". I have my suspicions as to how random the choice was and my wife considers it 'perfect type casting!' It was great fun and my thanks go to all involved for a highly enjoyable afternoon.

I would also like to take the opportunity of highlighting the contribution made by our very own 'Star Baker'. Janet Meyer has been producing the most wonderful cakes for our celebrations, such as Christmas and particularly for our Silver Anniversary events last year. They have been magnificent and on behalf of all our members I would like to thank her for all of her cakes over the years. They have not only looked good but I am assured they have all been very tasty. Hopefully I will be closer to the front of the queue for her next one – they are very popular!



U3A London Walking Group I - Notting Hill and Portobello Road

In February, Colin and Diana Jackson led us on a tour around Notting Hill and the Portobello Road. After a coffee stop, we set off around the Notting Hill area. We found the first of several murals covering a wall over 25 feet long. Continuing on, we encountered garden squares which are for the sole use of the local inhabitants and a key is needed to get in.



We then arrived at St. John's Church, Notting Hill, which, while fairly plain inside, contains an interesting, detailed display depicting the history of the area. We followed the local streets admiring the individual large houses which were grand in the early years, but which were then converted into flats to meet the shortage of accommodation after World War



II. Nowadays, outsides are being renovated to look like the Grand Houses they once were.

We then came across a 19th century Kiln amongst a street of houses. A plaque informed us that "This Kiln is a reminder of the 19th century when Potteries and Brickfields were established here amid some of the poorest housing conditions in London. It is one of the

few examples of a bottle kiln left in London."

The name of the Mews behind is the only surviving evidence of the Hippodrome Race Course which stretched around Notting Hill in the mid-19th century.

Continuing our walk, we passed along streets where more houses had been renovated and looked imposing in varied pastel colours. In some cases, the streets contained green hedges, plants and flowering trees. In the Portobello Road, we visited an original, traditional, Electric cinema with a difference. The interior had been renovated to its original, colourful, state and the seating was unusual in that one sat on upholstered armchairs or sofas. Alternatively, the front row of the cinema comprised beds for two.

Outside again, we walked through the streets lined with market stalls for which the Portobello Road is renowned, passing more



murals and colourful houses until we reached The Tabernacle. This is an imposing Round House with Twin Towers and serves as the local



Community Meeting Place. The Skull pictured stands guard outside the entrance.

By now, it was time for

lunch, so we made our way to The Duke of Wellington, where we enjoyed a delicious meal, before making our way back to Bookham.

Don Edwards



Don Edwards took photos of the Lego display at Wisley



It's Summer - It's Croquet Season!

Mallets are being polished, it's the start of a new croquet season! The smart new U3A website has an extensive croquet section, thanks to Martin. Croquet players might like to look at the various sections, which include the season's diary dates, rules of play and a gallery of photos.

On 6th April we held a croquet taster session by kind permission of Polesden Lacey and although some basics were learned and several hoops run in a game of golf croquet, it was a bone chilling afternoon and it was hard to convey the picture of hot sunny days on the lawns. We hope they return!

This season we have extra time allocated to us by the National Trust: we can now play on Wednesday and Thursday afternoons, much needed time for the growing groups. There is now a second large golf croquet group; golf

borrow during lessons and could be used for extra practice. It's a big outlay to buy a mallet until you're sure of playing regularly and while we're grateful for the use of the NT round mallets, they are not ideal for serious play. Please contact Martin 01372 453565 or email j.m.pulsford@btinternet.com if you can help.

Finally, Martin thinks that the time has come for him to have a "deputy". This would involve someone from the croquet group learning from Martin how things work, ie allocating groups, attending two committee meetings per year and eventually liaising with the National Trust. If you would at least like to find out more, please contact Martin as above. The U3A only works so well because members are willing to share their time and expertise, so please have a think. When the season gets going each group basically looks after itself and we would not have U3A croquet without "a Martin"!



croquet has proved to be very popular since a group was formed last year.

An appeal - if anyone has a mallet/mallets they no longer use, the croquet group would be very pleased to have them or consider buying them; they would be for the beginners' group to



Val Cross

The Russells in Surrey

My talk to the Social History Group meeting in January was about 'The Russells in Surrey' – the story of my maternal grandmother Edith Ethel Russell. Known as Ethel she was born in Chertsey in 1898 and her parents were Ernest and Mary Russell. Ethel's brother Henry was born in 1901, again in Chertsey.

In the 1911 census Henry aged 10 is living with his parents, but Ethel is staying with her grandmother Ann, a widow, in Cobham. I assumed she was staying overnight, however, she was living permanently for several years with her grandmother and some of her aunts and uncles. My mother has given me several books that Ethel (her mother) won over the years from the Headmaster at the Church of England school in Cobham for Progress and



Henry and Mary

Good Conduct. My mother told me that Mary died of cancer some time before 1939 on the South Coast.

Ann Russell (née Beck) married Thomas Russell in 1865 in Stoke in Guildford. Thomas was born in 1838 in the parish of St Nicholas in Guildford. He was a painter and they had their first four children in Chertsey before moving to Cobham and going on to have another six children.



Ann, Mary and Ethel Russell

Sadly, Thomas died on the 4th January 1894 aged 55 after suffering a horrific accident at work in Cobham. The newspaper report stated that he had been burnt on the head by a benzoline lamp which they had found with its top off. The skin of the entire vault of his head was charred and looked like leather. The coroner commented on the fact that a number of accidents happened through imperfectly fitted lamps and said that the Government ought to insist upon all lamps being marked in the same way as guns were. With the approval of the jury, the Coroner undertook to write to the Board of Trade on the advisability of lamps, before being sold to the public, being officially marked. Mr Russell was a painter and subject to fits.

What happened to several of Thomas

and Ann's children? My mother used to write to her Auntie Minnie in Saskatoon (Saskatoon is the largest city in the Canadian province of Saskatchewan) but I was astonished to discover that 5 children had emigrated between 1893 and 1909 to Canada and America. There were 3 domestic servants, a blacksmith and a painter.

Some of the family made the return trip back to England in 1921 and Ann returned with them to Saskatoon. On her arrival she developed pneumonia and died. Her obituary states that members of her family have been greatly shocked. The circumstances of her death make it doubly grievous. Just a week prior on March 31st, Mrs Russell arrived in Saskatoon from England, having come on a long-anticipated visit to two of her children, Frank and Minnie, who had been here for some time and had urged her



St Nicholas Church Guildford

to make the trip to Canada. She is buried in the Woodlawn Cemetery in Saskatoon.

Thomas' parents were Charles and Mary Russell (née Seager) who married at St Nicholas church in Guildford in 1831 and had 13 children. Half of them died in childhood. Charles was an agricultural labourer and then a corn and coal Labourer.

Charles' parents were John and Ann Russell who married at St Nicholas in 1807. Three other children were born – Harriott, Donald and Susan.

In the 19th century the parish of St Nicholas was in the Tything of Artington and the Russells lived at 20 Park Street for many decades.

St Nicholas church has a fascinating history. The present church is the third (at least) on this site. It was built in 1876 to replace the second church, built only in 1836, but of poor quality. This church had replaced an earlier pre-13th century building which had suffered from being too near the river. The only remaining part of this earlier church is the Loseley Chapel, itself a late 15th century addition. This chapel contains memorials of the More-Molyneux family of Loseley.

The drive to build the new church in 1876 came from its rector, Dr J B Monsell. He emphasised the importance of worshipping in a beautiful church. The architects chosen to create and decorate the new church were of the highest calibre producing top quality work: Samuel Sanders Teulon, with an aggressive Victorian gothic style (he designed the Buxton Memorial in the Victoria Gardens in London). The task was completed by Ewan Christian (designer of the National Portrait Gallery in London).

Dr Monsell did not live to see his church completed. While inspecting the progress of the builders he fell into the foundations and died shortly afterwards. There is a memorial to him in front of the parish centre which can be seen from Millmead.

My talk aroused the interest of the group to learn more about the history of Guildford. We hope to book into one of the guided tours which are led by very knowledgeable guides.

Anita Laycock



Five days in No-Man's Land

It was August 1944. Our parents had taken us for safety from Paris to a village in Brittany called Nozay, where we were living in an inn along with a dozen other refugees.

We had heard on the clandestine crystal radio that the Americans were fast moving south from the Channel, but the Germans were still around. Then one morning - day one of the five - we awoke to the news that the Americans were only 30 km to the north. The whole village exploded in the rejoicing (we children were given bits of red, white and blue material to make into flags), But the fearful Mayor put out a rumour that the Germans were coming, so people and flags disappeared from the streets. And so it went on for five days - flags and people out, in, out, in. The first thing that happened was the breakdown of law and order. The village had one "collaborator", called Voisin, and a mob rioted outside his home. Eventually, the village's two gendarmes arrived and took him into custody for his own protection. But one of the local resistance groups (there were in France two Resistances: the Gaullist FFI "Forces Françaises de l'Intérieur" and the Communist "Francs Tireurs et Partisans Français") arrived in force at the Gendarmerie and took him away in a charcoal-powered car with a trailer into which FTPF were piled, singing the "Internationale" with fists aloft. Voisin was never heard of again.

Then the Germans came. The Saint-Nazaire power station having been disabled by Allied bombs, the village had no electricity, and no running water; and we children took it in turns to fill water jugs at the village pump. That day in the middle of dinner the two girls on duty came running back with half-filled jugs, panting "the Germans are here". The whole dining-room emptied into the two bedrooms overlooking the village square. There we watched as the Mayor—a lovely old French farmer with a big white walrus moustache—was brought to be interrogated by the German officer. The Mayor kept shaking his head, the German kept pointing his revolver at him; eventually he and the Germans walked off

towards the cottage hospital.

There, we heard later; lay two injured Austrian soldiers and the Germans were convinced they had been wounded by the local Resistance.

The party then went to question the Austrians, who told them they had been injured by the American forces, which was just as well, as otherwise the Germans had planned to blow up the village and I wouldn't be writing this piece today.

Other strange things happened, such as the town crier reeling off indiscriminately orders from the American and German commanders

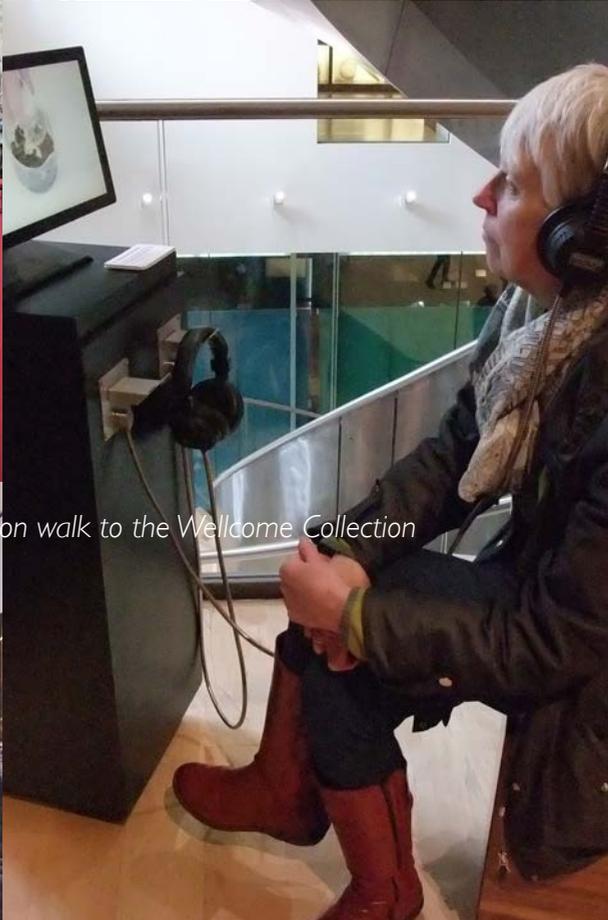


American troops freeing a French town

and the sight of bedraggled Germans fleeing in ones and twos on presumably stolen bicycles, or even on foot pushing presumably stolen prams loaded with presumably stolen possessions.

On the evening of day five, we were sitting in the local doctor's garden when we heard far-off cheering. We all ran as fast as our legs could carry us to the other end of Nozay, and there at last were two handsome all-American faces smiling down at the crowd from a tank. It was the single happiest moment of my life.

Elizabeth Stephenson



David Middleton's London walk to the Wellcome Collection

Visit to The Palace Of Westminster and the House of Lords

A small group of our members were invited by Baroness Sheila Hollins to visit the Palace of Westminster and in particular to see the House of Lords in session.

We set off on a bright, sunny but cold day with a tight timetable - meeting at Bookham Station at 7.30am for the train to Waterloo, walk to the Palace, going through security and then relaxing for coffee before our guided tour start at 9.50am.

Sheila joined our tour, run by a very knowledgeable guide who took us through Westminster Hall, St Stephen's Hall, Central Lobby, the House of Commons and the House of Lords before their afternoon sittings.

Our party were fascinated by many things especially Westminster Hall with the ancient great hammer-beamed timbered roof, the size of The House of Commons and Lords (they seemed small), the Queen's throne and canopy and the 'New Dawn' the Women's Suffrage artwork. ('New Dawn' was designed by Mary Branson a local lady and installed in 2016.)

The tour finished at 11.30am and we left the Palace and passed the 'Brexit in or outers demonstrators' and press boxes set up for the busy week ahead. We then had an excellent lunch at the Methodist Hall before returning to the Palace, through security again and spending time in Westminster Hall whilst waiting for the afternoon sessions to commence.

At 1.45pm we set off for the House of Lords to be taken into the Peers Lobby to see the opening procession. This consisted of the Lord Speaker followed by the Mace bearer and entourage passing by us to enter the House to allow the sitting session to

commence at 2.30pm.

Our party then climbed the stairs to the gallery where we were seated to get a great view of the Lords in session covering 'The Business of the Day'. We were all impressed seeing Democracy in action which too many take for granted.

From the gallery we were taken by Sheila



to see The Chapel of St Mary Undercroft, a richly decorated vaulted Chapel still in use for religious services. From here we set off for home leaving our Baroness Hollins to return to the 'Business of the Day' in the House.

We all thoroughly enjoyed the day and thanked Sheila for organising the outing and for her very interesting anecdotes during the tour.
David Middleton



David Middleton's London walk to the Houses of Parliament



Gardening

In February, Garden Group 2 visited Wisley for a 'behind the scenes' tour kindly arranged by Martin, one of our members who regularly volunteers there.



This was an indoor tour of the labs, offices and library within the attractive buildings close to Wisley's main entrance. Built in the Arts and Crafts style, there are a



number of rooms on different levels connected by narrow corridors and stairs. All quite small, shabby and in need of refurbishment. However, they expect to move into purpose-built new premises next year.

Through the attractive oak panelled entrance hall with beautiful stained glass windows,

we reached the Herbarium, dedicated to the collection of ornamental garden plants of the UK. They have dried material dating back as far as the 1700s, water colours, slides, photos and now digital images. We were shown



colour charts resembling paint charts which are used to accurately describe plant colours.

Next was a lab, devoted to research on plant diseases. We were shown examples of the effect of honey fungus, obviously a bad fungus, but reminded that there are also good fungi such as mycorrhizal useful for adding to soil for the development of plant root systems, particularly



for newly planted shrubs and trees.

Bugs were next, where they have a vast collection of garden insects. We then had an interesting discussion with a scientist researching slugs of which there are a great number of types. She hasn't yet found the definitive way to control them!



Finally we visited the research library, again a vast collection of books published over many years. Anyone researching a garden related subject may make an appointment to visit. They also have a large wooden 'Dig for Victory' box, which was sent out from 1941 containing instruction packs, including photographs on how to grow your own vegetables.

Interestingly, nearly all the staff were female, and also from my great age seemed very young!

Frances Pullan



Vegetable Gardening

In February we met at Annie's house to watch Christine Walkden's DVD on 'No Nonsense Vegetable Gardening'. I had this on loan from the U3A Resources Centre. Christine gave us so many helpful tips but the most important was treating your seeds and plants very gently like babies.

A few of the tips were to water the seed drill

first before sowing the seeds, use a watering can with a very fine hose, and rows should be north to south. Water sparsely to begin with and then water a lot more when the plants are in flower.



Handle tomato plants by the leaves and use any shrub sticks as pea sticks. Buy banana shallots instead of onions and harden plants off before planting out. Nikki has since told me that she bought the book and said that this was excellent.

We then enjoyed Annie's delicious and very light chocolate cake.

In March we had a very enjoyable and lively visit to The Vineries Garden Centre. The new stock of barbecues and garden furniture was tempting along with the very expensive hot tubs. We were lucky that the salesman gave us an in-depth demonstration and what could be better at the end of a hard day working in our garden or allotment.

Mr. McGregor, our new mascot, enjoyed meeting everyone. Thanks to Brian for suggesting his name – it was between Mr. McGregor, Monty and Adam. I won him in the Bookham Choral Society raffle the Saturday before. He caused hilarity and mischief popping up in various places during the morning.

Future meetings will include trips to the Kitchen Garden and Orchard at Polesden Lacey, Little Bookham Allotments and National Gardens Scheme gardens and allotments.

Anita Laycock



3E London Walk – Brixton

It was a typical Wednesday morning on Bookham railway station as I arrived to board the 09.18 train to London. The platform was very busy, predominantly with members of our U3A as we waited for the



first train where Cheap Day tickets are valid. I was joining Kathy Gothard's 3E London walk, but first I had to find the right crowd to join. There were 3 of our walking groups on the platform and I had a choice of going with Colin Jackson's group to Pall Mall with a Blue Badge guide, a smaller group heading off for a Dicken's walk and, at the far end of the platform, Kathy's group.



We started at Herne Hill, with a coffee and snack stop before seeing our first piece of street art – a M C Escher inspired piece by the well known artist Phlegm.

Thanks to some assistance from a young man we then found the right bus stop and set off to Brixton and its

famous market. This was fascinating as we wandered round the various market lanes, with tiny shops hosting small businesses such as tailors, travel agents and hairdressers. There were also some of the best stocked fish merchants we



have ever seen. Fresh fish is obviously very popular in the Brixton area. All of the stall holders were very friendly and going around the markets was a real pleasure.

Some well-known street art was seen, including the iconic David Bowie painting by Jimmy C and a brand new image of Michelle Obama by Dreph. This work was commissioned to celebrate the publication of 'Becoming', the memoir of her time as First Lady of the United States.

Lunch was taken in the Trinity Arms before we headed south to see the Brixton Windmill and to work our way back to Herne Hill via Brockwell Park. The Brockwell Lido features in



Libby Page's book 'The Lido', which had been read by a number of the group and one of our members used to swim there when she was a young girl – this walk brought back many happy memories.

Another quick break for tea in Brockwell Hall, with wonderful views across London, was the final element of the walk before we returned to Herne Hill station and the train home.

It had been a lovely walk, the weather was reasonable and I thoroughly enjoyed the company of Kathy and the members of her group. Thank you for inviting me and I may well come with you again in the future.

Roger Mendham



David Middleton walk Temple Place



Out & About with Bookham U3A

OUTINGS & THEATRE VISITS

The new arrangements for organising outings in Bookham U3A

Individual members are now expected to come forward to arrange "one off" trips and a number of members have arranged some very good outings.

Roger Mendham has organised on 11 July a visit to the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst

U3A SURREY NETWORK STUDY DAYS

- Fri May 17th People and Places of Surrey
Presented by Speakers from Lewis Carroll Society, Watts Gallery, Woking
Surrey History Centre & Guildford Cathedral
Places available
- Fri Jun 21st Mathematics in Action
Presented by Dr Roger Luther, Sussex University and U3A Member
Places available

Do you have a smoke alarm?

Anyone 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

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

U3A Tuesday Monthly Meetings

- May 7 Roger Mendham: The Power of Photography
- June 4 Dr Bob France: Emma Hamilton
- July 2 Dr Kathryn Harkup: Mary Shelley

HOW TIME FLIES!??

February 2019

Do you, like me, wonder why
Time so often is in short supply?
And do you find, with some surprise,
The older you are, the faster it flies?
So there's always a race against the clock
To get everything done before you flop
Into a chair, comfy and deep,
Switch on the tele, and fall asleep!

The shape of our lives is governed, of course,
By the use we make of this special resource.
Time can drag waiting for a bus or train
Which is suddenly cancelled, or late again.
Or when 'hanging on' at the end of a line
Listening to Vivaldi for the umpteenth time!
But there are also moments to always treasure
"Oh to stop the clock", so they last for ever!

We can dwell on times past and reminisce
On things well done, or chances missed,
Or look ahead and make fantastic plans
Then circumstances change – so it's out of our hands.
For some, time is a burden, no end in sight,
A dark, empty tunnel, with no sign of light.
For others, it's a furious, frenetic race,
A time of stress, at a dangerous pace.
If only, somehow, a way could be found
To slow down this relentless merry-go-round?

As you flop in that chair, so comfy and deep,
Close your eyes, but don't fall asleep.
Switch off the mobile, clear your mind,
Relax, lie back, and try to find,
Amidst the noise of a bustling home,
A moment of stillness for you alone,
A deep well of calm, to show you how
To value your time in the here and now.

Marion Kemp





David Middleton walk Temple Place