



Dorking & District u3a

u3a learn,
laugh,
live

Newsletter

Spring 2022



'PRICKLES AND PAWS' - Pastel by lanthe Cox

'This was taken from my Art Safari speed drawing sessions run online by Jake Winkle'.

GROUPS IN ACTION - SPRING 2022



ABOVE: MEMBERS OF THE U3A READING FOR PLEASURE ENJOYING A MONTHLY MEETING (*photograph Jill Taylor*)



LEFT: GROUP LEADERS AT THE FEBRUARY IT WORKSHOP
(*photograph Beryl Sinclair*)



Hello!

I'm reminded of the old adage *'you can lead a horse to water, you can't make it drink!'*

Since January, the Committee has worked hard to provide a programme of days out and residential breaks for members as well as continuing with monthly meetings both live and online. Sadly the take-up from members has been slow and we have had to cancel events to the disappointment of those who booked.

We appreciate that months of restrictions, bad weather and the current political crisis has left people bruised and perhaps reluctant to join in. However we hope to bring members together for a Jubilee picnic in June either at Buckland Lakes or Polesden Lacey. To commemorate 40 years of the u3a movement, we are planning a barn dance in September. And to show off our gardening skills we have agreed to help Dorking Town Partnership with planting up and care-taking planters around Dorking. This would be an opportunity to advertise the u3a further afield so we hope many members will sign up.

Following my appeal in the last Newsletter, more people have contributed articles and poems for this issue - hopefully you will enjoy the variety and appreciate the talent of the contributors.

Sadly there has been little change in the group listing since the autumn so we have done away with the groups information which is available on the website and in the Handbook. This allows us to give more information on days out which we hope will whet your appetite.

Groups that started up in September or January are doing well and we congratulate group leaders and members for their energy and commitment.

In February we welcomed six group leaders to an IT workshop under the guidance of Bob Crooks, John Sinclair and Gareth Balle. A revised handbook will be available in June/July and I am hoping that there will be fresh ideas for new groups or workshops.

We continue to serve with enthusiasm in the hope of better days to come.

Beryl

Membership subscriptions

Since January, the following new members have joined Dorking u3a and we are pleased to welcome them.

David Barrett

James Coughlan

Alison Everness

Norma Hitchcock

Pamela Joel

Laura and Clive Marett

Norman Pilling

Bernadette Smith

Meg Thomas

Please note that after 30 November 2021, any unpaid memberships for 2021/22 were deemed as lapsed. If you have not yet paid but wish to renew your membership, you may do so via GoCardless on our website, www.dorkingu3a.org.uk, or by sending a cheque payable to **Dorking & District U3A**, with a stamped addressed envelope if you would like a membership card, to **John Sinclair, u3a Membership Secretary, 2 The Street, Capel, Dorking RH5 5LE**.

Subscription rates remain unchanged at £16 for individual membership or £28 for joint membership for two people at the same address.

You can also pay by cheque - but no cash please. If you joined after 30 November 2021 your membership is extended to 31 March 2023.

*Please note, if you used GoCardless for 2021/22 you must set up a new direct debit payment for 2022/23, as the mandate is for a **one-off** payment only.*

In March 2022 we sent out invitations to all current and lapsed 2020/21 members to renew their membership. If you have not yet done so, we hope you will renew and send payment as soon as possible.

John Sinclair

Study and Interest Groups

Details of all current interest groups can be found in the handbook or on the Dorking & District u3a website www.dorkingu3a.org.uk. Alternatively you can contact **Groups Coordinator** Gareth Balle on 07734 045180 or email dorkingu3agroups@gmail.com. For general member enquiries contact **Members Contact** Hilda Burden on 01737 842516 or email hildaburden@gmail.com.

THE LOCKDOWN POEM

We've had instructions from on high
To tell us all what we can buy
In Lockdown Two as we have
learned to name it.

You can buy food that's fresh or
canned

But inessential goods are banned
Like clothes unless, after repair, you
claim it.

Some pens and pencils, shoes and
socks.

A painting, bicycles and clocks
And all the things that make our
lives worthwhile.

Curtains for the living room,
Lightbulbs to dispel the gloom
Deemed not essential for the rank
and file.

Tennis racquets, fishing hooks,
Birthday presents, toys and books
Or a budgie to replace your
parakeet

Kettles, towels, nails and screws
And all the daily things you use
Must not now be bought along your
street.

But at the market square today
I saw fresh flowers on display
Available for sale in all their glory.
Thus Mother Nature strikes again
To mitigate the nation's pain
For banning these would cause a
huge furore.

Even stranger was the sight
Off licences with entrance bright
Accessible to anyone who passes.
It's clear that persons influential
Decreed that alcohol's essential
For Lords and Ladies and the lads
and lasses.

What would an alien make of this,
The Covid Metamorphosis
With principles beyond our
understanding?
You can buy that which makes you
drunk
But not new pillows for your bunk
Nor even a new carpet for your
landing.

Robert Edmondson



shutterstock.com - 1940991743

IN CONVERSATION WITH



JOYCE KINGSLEY-JONES has been a member of Dorking u3a since April 1991 and has been involved in a number of groups.

"Age Concern Surrey were running an AGEING WELL project, and, as Welfare Officer, I had to do my bit. ACS found a truly delightful VOLUNTEER leader. We set up in Westcott Reading room, where we have been ever since. Numbers slowly picked up

and levelled at about 20 per class. The charge was deliberately low, at one shilling, collected at the door.

The idea of elderly women (and the occasional men) doing exercises to POP MUSIC was quite daring! Coffee and biscuits afterwards were an important part of the whole experience. When I gave up, my place was taken by Pauline Huxtable. I then took over the Reading for Pleasure group.»

READING FOR PLEASURE

The Reading for Pleasure group met up on a sunny St Valentine's Day morning for their monthly meeting. The book for February was *The Giver of Stars* by Jojo Moyes. Inspired by Eleanor Roosevelt's programme involving around thirty libraries in Appalachia from the mid-1930s, the novel details the lives of five women librarians who start delivering books on horseback to the people of Kentucky during the depression.

The story follows Alice Wright, a British woman who marries American Bennett Van Cleve and moves to Kentucky. Dissatisfied both with her marriage and small-town life, she joins the group of travelling librarians. Despite their seemingly inoffensive mission Alice and the other women begin to disturb the sensibilities of their town who see them as a threat

not only to the morals of the inhabitants but also to the laws of nature. Moyes depicts the courage and resourcefulness of these librarians. It's a tribute not just to these brave women who brought the light of knowledge in dark times but also to the rejuvenating bond of women's friendship.

There was plenty to discuss as the Reading for Pleasure Group members tackled the sexism, racism and injustices of the time portrayed in the novel. We agreed that the story's theme of love and friendship rooted in a lesser-known piece of history made it an enjoyable and hopeful read. We rounded off our session with plenty of laughter, chatter and a heart shaped chocolate - after all, it was Valentine's Day!

Jill Roome

LINE DANCING

Keep Calm and Carry On - Yeeha!!

I celebrate the loyalty, resilience and enthusiasm of the Line Dancing group.



Blithely 'grapevining' and box stepping across the floor in February 2020, we had no idea of what was to come.

Stop in March, start in October, stop in November, start in December, stop in January, start in May – this has been the pattern of sessions since then.

When we were first able to start again in October 2020, we had to follow the guideline for dance classes, namely participants being three metres apart. This meant we could only have eight people in the hall, so a rota was necessary. Our teacher had also decided not to return so it was Do It Ourselves for the time being, following the detailed safety strictures laid down

BRIDGE

Our friendly bridge group meets regularly on Mondays at the Christian Centre and caters for different abilities. If you've thought about learning to play, and don't know where to start, we have a

in the Risk Assessment required by the United Reform Church.

In September 2021, we were able to return to a fuller class with a new teacher, the lovely Sue, an experienced teacher of Latin and Ballroom and Line Dancing enthusiast in her spare time. She revisited some dances familiar to us.

"Are those the steps we learnt?" was a cry in an early session. "Yes", was the reply, "It's just that Sue performs them so beautifully we don't recognise them."

At the time of writing, we are still following rules and enjoying plenty of fresh air. Why have we stuck with it through thick and thin? Many reasons - it's good for body and brain; no partner required; a variety of lively music; friendly faces. It's fun and lifts the spirits! We are now building a repertoire of new dances and have room for a few more members so do get in touch.

Gill Crooks

beginners group led by the excellent Nick Bridge. It can be challenging but great fun, so why not come and join us. You can have a free 'taster' session to see if it's for you. Contact Sue Greenacre on suegreenacre49@gmail.com

SCRIBBLERS

Murder most foul - Dorking woman arrested!

Inspector Smarty-Pants investigates!

TUESDAY 8 FEBRUARY:



Delighted customers flocked to the newly opened coffee shop in West Street. But mid-afternoon, a loud scream rang out. People rushed to the café kitchen and there, sprawled on the ground, lay the just-murdered body of the tea-room's owner, 35-year-old Lucille.

"She had worked so hard to make this cafe happen," said her distraught sister Jeanne. "But I suspect the murderers were after me. Me! But I cannot tell you why..."

Her voice trailed into silence, and she glanced around at the other customers waiting to be questioned by Inspector Smarty-Pants. All had a reason to kill her: Barbara, angered at Lucille's double dealing over a valuable antique; Kathy, who was jealous of her and had all the opportunity in the world to bump her off; Anne-Marie who suspected her husband of having an affair with

Lucille because of their mutual interest in classic cars; blind Mary Grant whose acute senses made her suspicious of her husband's infidelity; the exotic Russian Countess Moblinski who had employed Lucille as a maid then discovered that Lucille was stealing her beloved camellias and selling them for a fortune; Sebastian Smith who had offered Lucille an exclusive contract to sell his 'tantalising tortillas' but discovered that she was in fact running a tearoom where his tortillas had been ignored.

No-one suspected Jack, belligerent and hostile teenager, student at Ashcombe School, although, perhaps

But murder will out and order was restored when, after incisive interrogation by Inspector Smarty-Pants, everyone guessed who had murdered poor Lucille.

And they all got it wrong!

In case you are concerned about your safety when entering any tea-room in West Street, Scribblers conducted February's murder mystery session at Christique. We have space for two new members, so contact pat2africa@yahoo.co.uk if you'd like to come along.

Pat Smith

CURRENT ISSUES

There's an end to it!

Views on the ethics and implications of assisted dying, also known as voluntary euthanasia, were aired at the last 2021 meeting of the Current Issues group who are not afraid of tackling some hard issues. This came to the fore because of the latest Assisted Dying Bill in the House of Lords, sponsored by Baroness (Molly) Meacher with support from Baron (Frank) Field.

The topic needs to be handled with delicacy and careful consideration of other people's views and feelings. End of life issues raise questions about individual free will, the avoidance of suffering, interference with 'the natural order' or even God's will, and our obligations to friends and family.

The articles circulated prior to our discussion made clear that there is a worldwide trend towards making assisted dying more accessible by legislative changes which still safeguard the interests of all those involved. Some places already allow it, notably Switzerland, Canada, some American and Australian states and recently New Zealand, and many others like the UK are considering it.

Where assisted dying is legal, it is usually restricted to those who are medically close to death and face great pain but are of sound mind and uncoerced. We spent some time considering the exact conditions under which it might be made available.

Suicide ceased to be a criminal offence in the UK in 1961, in recognition that individuals might reasonably be entitled to some agency regarding their own existence. A large majority of British voters now support the availability of assisted dying, but our MPs don't and have quashed several attempts to liberalise the law in recent years.

The campaigning to oppose assisted dying comes from a variety of viewpoints. Safeguarding people against pressure from others when they are ill or vulnerable is clearly important, especially when inheritance may be an issue. It might be argued that proper palliative care is rarely universally available and that we should not be helping people die before we have helped them live. Better care might substantially reduce the case for assisted dying, especially to avoid pain, indignity or dementia. Medical professionals involved in terminal care also need legal clarification of their permitted roles to protect them

against allegations and prosecution.

There are also obvious religious objections to assisted dying, as this might be seen for example as contrary to the divine plan. The proponents say that while people's religious views should be respected, these should not be allowed to constrain the majority who are of a different opinion. We also read that David Hume argued in 1755 that suicide is no more a rebellion against the will of God than is saving the life of someone

who would otherwise die.

The case for assisted dying centres on the freedom to make one's own choices when faced with suffering and/or the prospect of likely death. Perhaps people need to be able to say, "I don't want to die but I can't live like this." Woody Allen may have had a point when he said, "I am not afraid of death. I just don't want to be there when it happens."

Andrew Gibbons

DIY DRESSMAKING



Our groups continued to work individually during lockdown but we are now enjoying working and learning from each other again. Two small separate groups meet once a month to receive individual help on all aspects of dressmaking, from choosing patterns and fabrics, through the processes of fitting and making up, to completing a garment.

Anne Blanchard



COP26 - COP OUT?

Queen warns: *'time for words has moved on'*.

Dubbed the 'last, best hope' to limit climate change to 1.5°C, I had to be there. Nine of us travelled by train to Glasgow for the final week of the Conference and hired an eco-house, with a heat pump and state-of-the art insulation. and wanted to add our voices to those demanding action, rather than words.

So, what did we find? There were plenty of chances to attend meetings around Glasgow, wave banners and join in street theatre. Zombies dancing to amended words of Michael Jackson's 'Killer,' bodies strewn across roads and pavements, the occasional coffin procession around the centre of Glasgow, demonstrations outside the offices of JP Morgan who are major financiers of fossil fuels and deforestation, marches which echoed the Queen's words – an unusual action for Extinction Rebellion (XR) members...

One area that was a focus for me was the XR Faith group. Several of them had walked on pilgrimage from Dover to Glasgow and throughout the Conference they conducted a 24-hour vigil outside the Conference Centre, at times candlelit. Their testimonies of faith

and courage were moving.

Although not allowed into the 'Blue Zone' of the Convention Centre, where 40,000 delegates joined negotiations, we joined the many members of eco-groups outside. The largest single delegation was from the fossil fuel industry and outnumbered the combined delegations from the countries worst affected by climate change in the past 20 years.

We talked to many delegates, many of which said that it was easy to become discouraged by lack of progress - talking to 'ordinary' people gave them hope for the future. I spoke about being a NIMBY (*Not in My Back Yard*), a sentiment that is to be applauded, depending on the size of our back yards: our road, our town, our country or the world?

So many things are happening world-wide that we would never tolerate closer to home; we need to think globally to avert climate change disaster.

What also angered us was how indigenous people were treated. Many had to fund their own journeys and accommodation. The few treated as 'official guests' were paraded and photographed for propaganda purposes; their real

concerns were mostly ignored. On the last day, they walked out of the Conference and spoke to those of us outside the 'Blue Zone' of their countries and the very real, sometimes, personal dangers that they are facing.

So, what 'real' progress have we made on climate change? Some well-publicised policies were introduced (though we suspect that these had already been decided well before the Conference!) and there was a lot of 'behind the scenes' negotiations. But no major

resolutions! To quote Greta Thunberg: '*Blah, blah, blah.*'

Their major decision? To hold another COP in November 2022 in Egypt - not the most accessible of places! I wonder how they will accommodate over 40,000 delegates and find the space for countless meetings.

For better, for worse, I have already booked a villa there. To avoid flying there – does anyone know of a dependable camel owner?

Pat Smith

DORKING CONCERTGOERS AT THE DORKING HALLS

Saturday 26 March 2022 Grand Hall 7.30pm

CHAMBER PHILHARMONIC EUROPE

Corelli Concerto Grosso Op.6 No.4

Neruda Concerto for Trumpet & Orchestra in E flat major

J.S. Bach Concerto for Oboe & Violin, BWV1060

Elgar Serenade for Strings, Op.20

Rachmaninov Vocalise

Mozart Divertimento F major, K138



Saturday 14 May 2022 Martineau Hall 7.30pm

CHARLOTTE SALUSTE-BRIDOUX VIOLIN & ARIEL LANYI

PIANO

Biber Passacaglia

Schubert Fantasy in C major, D934

Amy Beach Romance for Violin & Piano, Op.23

Poulenc Sonata for Violin & Piano, Op.119



The 2022-23 Season will include the Grimethorpe Colliery Band, the Philharmonia Orchestra and the Carducci Quartet.

Join the Dorking Concertgoers and receive a discount on your tickets

Tickets from Dorking Concertgoers' Box Office **01306 740619** or Dorking Halls **01306 881717**

Details of membership from Dorking Concertgoers on 01306 740619
www.dorkingconcertgoers.org.uk www.dorkinghalls.co.uk



LOCAL HISTORY - BOX HILL'S OWN DOWNTON ABBEY



It all started with a photograph! Country houses and estates are said to be Britain's greatest legacy to art history and architecture and every year millions visit stately homes which have escaped demolition due to good management or luck. As a nation we're proud of these monuments to history. However, hundreds of houses, big and small, have been lost. Until the 1970s, there were few legal limits as to what the owners did with their properties. Houses passed down through generations of the same family could be lost within a few years, due to financial hardship or tax demands, urban or industrial development, lack of use, requisitioning during WWI and WWII, or natural threats such as fire, dry or wet rot.

The Lost Heritage project provides a comprehensive list of many significant English country

houses which have disappeared or been severely reduced over the years. Most houses included in the list would now be classified as Grade I, Grade II* or II and range from smaller manor houses to the vast Victorian Gothic palaces.

When u3a member Christine Bass came across photos of her mother and a group of girls in front of a large manor house, she delved into the history of the estate and its past owners.



The earliest reference to High Ashurst Estate is John Morsfold who inherited the area, known then as 'High Ashes Farm', in 1706. By 1740 it was owned by Mr Richard Rougier, and in 1827 the farm was sold twice. From 1836 to 1918, the estate was the seat of the Earl of Harrowby. The owner of the house was William Strahan, descendent of William Strahan (1715-1785) who printed Dr Samuel Johnson's Dictionary.

In 1918 the 5th Earl sold the estate, and then the surrounding lands in 1921.

In its heyday the estate spanned 1300 acres. Between 1921 and 1924, after the death of Lord Harrowby and the Dowager Countess, it was sold to the Young Women's Christian Association.



In 1924 Mrs Law needed room to expand and moved her private boarding school in Islington to the country, where it became

Wentworth Hall, a school for ladies, which boasted a timetable with such disciplines as elocution and housewifery. This is where Christine's mother attended sixth form, between 1927-28.

Like many large properties in Surrey, the estate was used as a base for Canadian military personnel during World War II. It was sold in 1937 to Surrey Country Council who used it as a school for handicapped children. After the war the house fell into disuse and was pulled down in 1950. It is now an Outdoor Education Centre, running courses such as climbing, mountain biking, orienteering and woodland skills, for children and adults.

CARD GAMES



The Card Games group is meeting again at the Community Building behind St John's church, Inholms Lane, North Holmwood RH5 4JH, on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month 2.30 - 4.30pm. We have much more room than before and we play anything but bridge, choosing what to play on the day, so each table may be playing a different game from the others. Parking at the church is limited, but there is further room on the adjacent roads.

Please contact the Card Games Group Leader, Michael Giles, on 01306 884598 or email mibridge@mac.com if you would like to join in.

Wednesday 20 April 2022

NOOKS AND CRANNIES

Here is another opportunity for members who missed the autumn private tour of West Horsley Place to join in our repeat visit.

Members are expected to make their own way to WHP but arrangements can be made to share a car. Members need to arrive 10 minutes before the start of the tour and the tour will start on the carriage sweep in front of the house.

Coming by car the post code is KT24 6AN, reached from the A246 Guildford to Leatherhead road and lying between East and West Horsley. On this road, travelling towards Guildford you will pass a 'Welcome to West Horsley' sign; approximately 150yds further on, take a right onto the main drive (through wrought iron gates). If you pass St Mary's church on your left you will have gone too far. Follow the traffic signs to the car park and once parked follow pedestrian signs to walk from the car park to the Manor House.

Members with access needs may park in front of the house but please let Deanne Rhodes or Sally Connett know.

Price of the visit only is £21.

You may pay online but if you wish to pay by cheque, this should be made payable to '*Dorking & District u3a Social Events*' for £21 and sent to Sally Connett, 3 Hill View, Dorking, RH4 1SY.

Leaders: Deanne Rhodes (07770 273407) and Sally Connett (07546 229462)
Please use these numbers only in an emergency on the day of the trip.



Tuesday 24 May 2022

VINTAGE ESSEX

In partnership with Lodge Coaches of High Easter, near Chelmsford, we bring you Vintage Essex, a very entertaining day out for those who like to see a lot without walking too far. We have a Blue Badge guide to take us round the picture postcard villages of Essex, with an afternoon at the Lodge HQ in the Essex Rodings including a ploughman's lunch and rides out in their vintage coach fleet.

We begin in Thaxted, Queen of Essex, at 10.30am for morning refreshments in an old coaching inn. Betjeman said Thaxted was about as good as it gets! We'll visit the old wool church where English composer Gustav Holst played the organ and the vicar flew the Red Flag. From the church we weave past black and white-striped Tudor houses and jolly colour-washed homes from the mediaeval to the Georgian period and then to the beautifully wonky old Guildhall.

From high in the coach we can take in the gently rolling landscapes of rural Essex and the chocolate box village of Finchingfield as we head south to the little known Essex Rodings. Eight villages full of old thatched cottages, timber-framed manor houses and farmhouses form the largest group in the country to share a common name. The Rodings name comes from the Anglo-Saxon Hrodingas who sailed up the Thames 1500 years ago, turned right at Barking Creek and kept going until he found this remote and fertile landscape.

A ploughman's lunch is ready for us at the Lodge Garage in High Easter. We are surrounded by the vintage vehicle collection and old coaching ephemera of the Lodge Family who are approaching their centenary in the coaching business. It's a lovely time to enjoy looking round the collection and taking rides out in immaculately restored 1940s and 1950s coaches that have starred in television series, including The Crown. We finish the day with a cup of tea and cake. We will be ready to leave for home at 4.45pm.

Leaders: Deanne Rhodes (07770 273407) and Sally Connett (07546 229462).

Please use these numbers only in an emergency on the day of the trip.

PLEASE NOTE EARLY COACH DEPARTURE TIMES

8.00am Brockham

8.10am Dorking Halls

8.15am Opposite Waitrose

8.20am Bus Stop near Knoll Road

**Cost: £60 includes ploughman's lunch,
morning / afternoon refreshments.**



Monday 25 July 2022

ROYAL LONDON WITH BUCKINGHAM PALACE

Our Royal London tour includes the services of a Blue Badge Guide. We meet our guide at 10.30am in Trafalgar Square for morning coffee (included). After a short walk to see the Changing of the Queen's Life Guards we board our coach for an entertaining tour which traces the story of where the royals have lived over the past twelve hundred years. We look at birth places, scandals and successes.

We break for lunch on the South Bank with a choice of cafés and restaurants or you can bring a packed lunch.

We then go to Buckingham Palace. In celebration of the Queen's historic Platinum Jubilee in 2022, the State Rooms at Buckingham Palace will feature a display looking at the Queen's accession to the throne in February 1952. On display will be examples from the remarkable series of portraits taken by Dorothy Wilding that formed the basis of the Queen's image on stamps and in British embassies across the world until 1971.

There will be time to buy afternoon refreshments in the marquee in the garden before heading home at 5.30pm.

Leaders: Deanne Rhodes (07770 273407) and Sally Connett (07546 229462)

Please use these numbers only in an emergency on the day of the trip.

PLEASE NOTE EARLY COACH DEPARTURE TIMES

- 8.30am Brockham
- 8.40am Dorking Halls
- 8.45am Opposite Waitrose
- 8.50am Bus Stop near Knoll Road

Cost: £59



The Committee

BERYL SINCLAIR - Chairman / Newsletter Editor 01306 711542;

dorkingu3achair@gmail.com

TONY PARKER - Vice-chairman 01306 884050; bacdocs7@gmail.com

GEOFF SAUNDERS - Secretary / Online Courses Coordinator 01306 884812;

geoff.m.saunders@gmail.com

IAN THE COX - Treasurer 01737 843105; treasurer@dorkingu3a.org.uk

MICHAEL DOCKER - Web-master 01306 501640; michael.docker@ntlworld.com

JOHN SINCLAIR - Membership Secretary / Equipment Coordinator 01306 711542;

johnsinclair@dorkingu3a.org.uk

GARETH BALLE - Groups Coordinator 07734 045180; dorkingu3agroups@gmail.com

HILDA BURDEN - Members Contact 01737 842516; hildaburden@gmail.com

DEANNE RHODES - Speakers Coordinator / Days Out Team 01737 844768;

07770 273407; deannerhodes@btinternet.com

LINDA WILLMOTT - Speakers Coordinator linda_susanne@hotmail.com

ROSEMARY HARBRIDGE - Minutes Secretary rharbridge@sky.com

Days Out Team

DEANNE RHODES - 01737 844768; 07770 273407 deannerhodes@btinternet.com 9

The Avenue, Brockham, RH3 7EN

SALLY CONNETT - Publicity 01306 740596; 07546 229462; sallyconnett@hotmail.com

3 Hill View, Dorking, RH4 1SY

Residential Trips

IAN THE COX 01737 843105; ianthecox72@gmail.com

Editorial Team

BERYL SINCLAIR - Editor 01306 711542; dorkingu3achair@gmail.com

ROSEMARY HARBRIDGE - Sub-editor rharbridge@sky.com

ELIZABETH HOLMES - Newsletter distribution 01306 884831; Morcote, 36 Bentsbrook

Park, North Holmwood, Dorking RH5 4JN

MICHAEL DOCKER - Web-master 01306 501640; michael.docker@ntlworld.com

PRINTER - Eyes Wide Digital 01306 875150



HELLO DORKING IN BLOOM !

Let's Talk Plants!

*Robert Edmondson loves to talk about wild plants – the local, common but nonetheless colourful flowers that bedeck our common land in and around Dorking. In this first article in a series, Robert introduces us to the Green Alkanet (*Pentaglottis sempervirens*).*

Commonly seen on roadside verges, woodland edges (and in gardens!) this hardy plant can reach one metre tall. It has large, bristly leaves and small, white-eyed, intensely blue flowers resembling forget-me-nots. In fact, it is from the same Boraginaceae plant family. Not native, it was introduced into the UK from Southern Europe in the

early 18th century. The name Alkanet is derived from the Arabic for *henna* - a red dye may be extracted from its roots. The long flowering period extends from April to late July and unusually it changes colour as it develops from bud (red) to flower (blue) as the cover photo shows. The plant dies down in late summer, but leaves reappear in winter or early spring. This feature gives the species its scientific name - *sempervirens* (always living). Most important though is the nectar-rich flower which attracts large numbers of bees and other pollinating insects, including butterflies.

Robert Edmondson

Calling all gardeners, horticulturists and keen volunteers

DORKING NEEDS YOU!



After winning the Dorking in Bloom Gold award last year, the Dorking Town Partnership Team want to continue bringing the beauty of the Surrey Hills countryside into the town. Projects include art trails, hanging baskets, floral planter displays, and garden enhancements around the town for everyone to enjoy.

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Nurturing young plants, planting, watering, and maintaining planters, improve and enhance garden areas weeding and clearing invasive species. If interested contact the Dorking Town Partnership team on info@dorkingtowpartnership.co.uk or telephone Beryl Sinclair on 01306 711542 or email Hilda Burden on hildaburden@gmail.com.



BOOK REVIEW - BETWEEN THE SHEETS!

Author and member Robert Higham has kindly given us permission to reproduce extracts from his two-volume publication 'Between the Sheets, 400 years of the Warming Pan', due to be published in May by Artisan Publishers, Data Transcripts Ltd.

"The task has been massively demanding" says Robert. "I have recorded over 1000 information sources and been supported by inputs from museums and the Antique Metalware Society".



Bed 'warming pans' go back to the mid-1400s, although the earliest written reference in English to an actual bed-warming pan

appears in 'Nooks and Corners of English Life', which mentions an 'inventory of the goods of Sir William More, of Loseley, near Guildford in Surrey, A.D. 1556, in which occurs "a warmynge." Queen Elizabeth I slept at Loseley and it is reasonable to assume that her bed was warmed with the same warming pan.

Unfortunately, the term 'warming pan' has been and is still wrongly applied to items other than those specifically made for the purpose of imparting warmth and dryness to a bed. Cooking pans are a typical example and embrace culinary

items such as: chestnut roasters, popcorn roasters, chafing dishes and milk skimmers...

The bowls of early warming pans were traditionally filled with hot embers from a fire, being wood, charcoal, or perhaps peat. The pan was moved up and down, or across the 'bed' between its covers (sheets) depending on the style and size of bed, or a bunk or the equivalent sleeping arrangement. This could take half an hour!

By 1450 warming pans were already viewed as 'essential belongings among noble households' and by the 17th century such pans as graced the bedchambers from kings and queens to lowly folk.

During the 1600s, winters were harsh and severe and climatologists regarded the next 150-200 years as the climax of the Little Ice Age. Hence, across Europe the attraction of owning such a 'cosy' item as a

warming pan frequently provided the only solace in an otherwise harsh, unhappy and hum drum daily existence...

A warming pan featured among people's most treasured possessions and was undoubtedly measured in terms of value far beyond actual cost. A spinning wheel and warming pan were the most treasured possessions by a majority of people.

Several Mayflower passengers took warming pans with them. Military Captain Miles Standish agent' passenger, who died in 1656, took a warming pan, a frying pan, featherbed, sheets, pillows, guns and other items.

The manufacture of early warming pans took place when people were obsessed with mortality and eternity.

Biblical, alchemical and mythological 'aspects' often in company with animal, floral and foliage motifs and scroll patterns, reflected abstract ornament in a belief among rich and poor alike,

that such forms portrayed eternal or heavenly bliss.

A deeply entrenched popularity of a host of symbolic shapes and hieroglyphs (symbols that represent words) and geometric designs in various combinations and art forms, has existed for centuries as an expression of man's consciousness of the truth. Everyday concerns for people's well-being were manifest in all sorts of prejudices and superstitions, many stemming from fear, which fostered a strong, almost obsessive desire for protection against evil.

Metal items were typically embellished with 'iconographic' symbols, commonly linked to allegorical tradition, ancient mythologies, legend or Christian and Cabalistic cultures.

Although the main purpose of a warming pan was to warm the 'coverings of a bed' and secondly to reflect candlelight on dark days, a warming pan also performed an entirely different role as a 'silent communicator.'

REALLY USEFUL GROUP - RUG

We have had little response to our call for help with monthly meetings, Days Out. We also hope to organise small teams to work on special projects such as Dorking in Bloom. If you can spare an hour or two every so often, please contact **Tony Parker on 01306 884050** or email [**bacdocs7@gmail.com**](mailto:bacdocs7@gmail.com). We would appreciate the support.

THE EMERGENCY



Reading Hilda's excellent article about her wartime in Dorking made me realise what a wealth of stories are out there about times that are slipping into history.

As a baby-boomer, I grew up in the dark shadow of the war, or as we knew it in Ireland, 'The Emergency'. Ireland declared itself neutral on the outbreak of war, but of course would not be untouched by the conflict. Irish people, though, were far from neutral and large numbers volunteered to join the forces, or to fill vacancies in the wartime economy. My father, although British, settled in Ireland but joined the Royal Artillery. My recollection of his friends is of veterans.

One of the oddities of this situation was how home leaves were managed. No uniforms were permitted to be worn in Ireland, so changing rooms were provided at Holyhead for soldiers to put on 'civvies' before embarkation, and uniform on return.

Ireland was at that time called the Irish Free State or Eire and was

of course impacted by the war, directly and indirectly. While there was rationing, home-grown food was generally plentiful and much was exported to England. Food from abroad was almost impossible to obtain. Tea was of particular concern, and a lively black market developed, exchanging butter from Eire for tea from the North.



More directly, to keep the nation going, the Free State bought any ship they could to bring supplies from America and Iberia. Being neutral, these ships usually didn't use the convoy system, so travelled with huge Irish flags painted and floodlit on their sides. But many were sunk, with considerable loss of life.

Another concern was fuel - cars almost vanished from the roads, coal was kept for the railways and for making electricity and gas, both of which were strictly rationed. To enforce gas rationing, the town supply was switched off in the afternoon and evening. But there was always some gas in the pipes, so people would sometimes try to

boil a kettle, using the residual gas, with the danger of letting air into the pipes. Occasionally an inspector, the 'Glimmer Man', might call, to check if any gas rings were warm outside permitted hours.

For home heating, peat cut by hand from the vast peatbogs in the Midlands was transported to towns and cities by canal and rail. In Dublin, a stockpile in Phoenix Park was distributed, mostly by horse and cart. But the peat was usually very wet and drying it before use was a major chore. Grass-covered remains of the stockpile were still visible in my childhood.

Dublin was bombed by the Luftwaffe on several occasions. In North Strand, 28 people died and 300 properties were destroyed or damaged, probably in retaliation since it happened just days after Dublin firefighters were sent to tackle fires in Belfast. The bomb site was only redeveloped in the 1960s.

My mother's brother was in Malta during the siege, while her two sisters served in the ATS in England. When her younger sister became very ill, my mother was sent for. Her journey from Eire to England was virtually impossible, but somehow, with the telegram, and a lot of bluster, my mother made it onto the Mail Boat. Her sister recovered, an early recipient of penicillin.

Nazi Germany and the UK both maintained embassy buildings in

Dublin throughout the Emergency. It must have seemed odd to see the Swastika and the Union Flag on Dublin's elegant Georgian Merrion Square buildings. Bizarrely, the Irish leader, de Valera, visited the German Embassy to sign a condolence book on hearing of Hitler's death.

My father was posted close to the front as the war moved into Germany. As a driver he took their Medical Officer to Belsen following the camp's discovery. He and his mates celebrated VE-Day by liberating a brewery! But soon they were training to leave for the Far East before the bomb dropped and the war ended. He was demobbed in August 1946, and my brother was born in April 1947!

Like many wartime couples, starting a family must have been a great blessing. I sometimes try to imagine, but cannot, what it might have been like, separating, not knowing, getting letters that said little, and then the sheer joy of peace! Enduring Covid and then emerging from lockdown can come nowhere close.

Geoff Saunders



CHANGING ROOMS



A full house at St Joseph's Church Hall was treated to a fascinating talk by antiques expert and u3a committee member Hilda Burden on the subject of our changing tastes in interior decor.

With reference to the nearby Falkland Road and Hampstead Road, Hilda began by describing how homes came to be constructed at the turn of the last century, with the builder erecting a three-storey house at the junction of two roads, from the top of which he could observe progress on the building of a row of two-storey homes alongside. When the builder moved on, the ground floor of his three-storey house often became the 'corner shop'.

Using an array of exquisite 1/12th-scale room sets that Hilda herself had made, she revealed decade-by-decade how the contents of our front rooms had changed, reflecting the transformation in our way of life through the past century.

Starting in Victorian times with the coal fire as a focal point beneath the ornate mantelpiece, cornices and picture rails, we saw how the atmosphere produced by the fire, tobacco smoke and burning candles could be dangerous to one's health. The popular green wallpaper containing arsenic was also a mortal hazard.

Unveiling one miniature room set at a time, each containing objects and furniture typical of its period, Hilda took us through the coming of gas and electricity and evolving soft furnishings, floor and wall coverings right up to the point when modern owners knocked down walls to create the more spacious open-plan living area that is in vogue today.



After the very entertaining talk members gathered round the display of room sets to take a closer look at the craftsmanship and details, no doubt recognising artefacts and fashions from their own home lives.

Report and photographs by Mike Docker

AND FINALLY ...

Thank you Rosemary Dudley of the Scribblers group for this amusing take on buying and wearing....

A PAIR OF SHOES

You would think that buying a pair of shoes
Is a simple task to undertake;
All one does is go out and choose
The right colour and a very good make.

Not so me and my dreadful feet!
It's a mammoth chore each time I buy,
It's a lost cause with my plates of meat,
No matter how many times I try.

I have a cupboard that's full to the brim
With all kinds of footwear that appeared to fit.
Most of them were just bought on a whim,
Then two days later they fit not one bit.

I feel sorry for the person on Sales
They'll earn their wages there is no doubt
When I sit and try on all the fails
There's great piles of boxes lying about.

There's no place for fashion any more,
No more high heels to squeeze and crush,
Comfort now when I walk out the door
My Sketchers 'Go walk' are really quite plush.



JUBILEE QUIZ - BRITAIN SINCE 1952

In this quiz, the first letters of the correct answers in order spell out a word associated with the Queen.

1. Where was Prince Charles invested as the Prince of Wales in 1969?
2. What is an 80 year jubilee called?
3. Which home secretary ended theatre censorship and effectively abolished capital punishment?
4. Give the title of the children's book that Prince Charles wrote in 1980?
5. Which British couturier was asked by Queen Elizabeth II to design her 1953 Coronation dress?
6. Who was the prime minister after the last general election in which Conservatives won the majority of votes in Scotland?
7. What was introduced by Prime Minister Edward Heath on 1 January 1974 and lasted until 7 March that year?
8. Against which European country did Britain fight two undeclared wars in the 1970s?
9. To which once-controversial writer was a stained-glass memorial unveiled in Poets' Corner, Westminster Abbey on Valentine's Day, 1995?
10. When James Prior was sacked as Secretary of State for Employment in 1981, apparently for being too 'wet', which more hard-line figure replaced him?

Answers on page 24.

RESIDENTIAL TRIP

THE HISTORIC HOUSES & HERITAGE OF THE PEAK DISTRICT

17-21 OCTOBER 2022

**5 days from £689 + £28 insurance
(£99 single room supplement)**

What is included in the price?

Travel by executive coach; four nights in 4* hotel - half board accommodation; all excursion travel & guided tours; entrance to National Trust properties free to NT members.

What will we see?

Day 1: Visit to Baddesley Clinton, home of the Ferrers family and sanctuary to persecuted priests during 1590s.

Day 2: Blue Badge guide accompanies group to Bakewell, home of puddings and to Chatsworth, home of the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire set in the heart of the Peak District National Park.

Day 3: Visit to Renishaw Hall, home of the Sitwell family for almost 400 years; then to the Elizabethan NT property Hardwick Hall, designed by Bess of Hardwick to showcase the formality of 16th century courtly life.

Day 4: Leisurely stroll in Buxton followed by a visit to Haddon Hall, a 12th century fortified manor house, surrounded by terraced Elizabethan gardens.

Day 5: Homeward bound, members will visit the Crich Tramway Village, overlooking the Derwent Valley and home of the Tramway Museum.

How do I book?

Contact Group Organiser Ianthe Cox - email ianthecox72@gmail.com or telephone 01737 843105. Check out the website [Peak District trip \(dorkingu3a.org.uk\)](http://Peak District trip (dorkingu3a.org.uk)) for further details.



RENISHAW HALL



HARDWICK HALL

SURREY REGIONAL STUDY DAYS



Surrey Study Days are held at the Menuhin Hall in Stoke d'Abernon. Full details and application forms can be accessed on the D&D u3a website or on the Surrey u3a Network website.

The Menuhin Hall is operating a COVID-secure limit of 50% normal capacity so places are limited and attendees must observe regulations. Members may also apply to view the presentations remotely.

Booking fees are £12 for u3a members, £15 for non-members and £5 for Zoom attendance. For help to download or print out forms please contact John Sinclair on 01306 711542.

15 APRIL - ILLUMINATED MANUSCRIPTS OF THE MEDIEVAL PERIOD by IMOGEN CORRIGAN

The talk will look at what beautifully illustrated medieval manuscripts can tell us about the history, culture and philosophy of the time.

19 MAY - CHEMISTRY, COSMETICS & KILLERS by DR KATHRYN HARKUP

How does chemistry influence our everyday lives? The talk focuses on how men have manipulated elements and molecules for good and evil, how compounds keep us healthy and beautiful, as well as how we can have too much of a good thing.

17 JUNE - UNDERSTANDING TURNER by PROFESSOR MARIA CHESTER

Professor Chester will recount Turner's troubled life and explain how the painter developed new approaches and techniques to landscape painting.



Calendar of Events: April - December 2022

April	13	<i>Monthly Meeting</i>	John Rae and the Discovery of the North West Passage, speaker Nigel Barraclough
	20	<i>Day Out</i>	Nooks and Crannies - West Horsley Place
	22	<i>Study Day</i>	Illuminated Manuscripts of the Medieval Period, speaker Imogen Corrigan
May	11	<i>Monthly Meeting</i>	Behind the Scenes at Wimbledon, speaker Alan Chalmers
	20	<i>Study Day</i>	Chemistry, Cosmetics & Killers, speaker Kathryn Harkup
June	4	<i>D&D event</i>	Picnic in the Park (TBC)
	8	<i>Monthly Meeting</i>	Royal Jubilees, speaker Graeme Payne
	17	<i>Study Day</i>	Understanding Turner: The Man, His Life & His Work, speaker Maria Chester
July	13	<i>Monthly Meeting</i>	Brides, Booty and Battles, speaker Helen Poole
	25	<i>Day Out</i>	Royal London with Buckingham Palace
September	3	<i>D&D event</i>	Barn Dance (TBC)
	14	<i>Monthly Meeting</i>	By Greyhound Bus around America, speaker Tim Albert
October	12	<i>Monthly Meeting</i>	Dining with History, speaker Jessica Thurtell
	17-21	<i>Residential Trip</i>	The Historic Houses & Heritage of the Peak District
November	9	<i>Monthly Meeting</i>	Cinque Ports, speaker James Dickinson
December	14	<i>Monthly Meeting</i>	A Christmas Cracker, speaker Jonathan Jones

Dorking & District u3a publishes a **Newsletter** and **What's On** four times a year in March/April (Spring), June/July (Summer), September/October (Autumn) and December/January (Winter).

The **Newsletter** cannot survive without contributions from members.

Articles and photographs are all welcome, as well as reports on u3a activities. Please try to limit reports to **no more than 300 words** and if possible, submit a typed contribution by email, either as an attachment in Microsoft Word or in the main body of the email. If you send a handwritten contribution, please write names of places and people in CAPITAL LETTERS.

<i>Editor</i>	Beryl Sinclair 01306 711542; dorkingu3achair@gmail.com
<i>Sub-editor</i>	Rosemary Harbridge rharbridge@sky.com
<i>Distribution</i>	Elizabeth Holmes 01306 884831
<i>Printer</i>	Eyes Wide Digital 01306 875150

WE WANT TO
HEAR FROM YOU



We **NEED** contributions for the **AUTUMN** Newsletter to reach the Editor by **END AUGUST 2022**. These can include poems, articles and photos about your groups or activities. Without contributions the Newsletter will not survive. Thank you.

ANSWERS TO JUBILEE QUIZ ON PAGE 20

The word is **CORONATION**

- (1) Caernarfon Castle; (2) Octogintennial / Oak; (3) Roy Jenkins;
(4) (The) Old Man of Lochnagar; (5) Norman Hartnell; (6) (Sir) Anthony Eden (1955); (7) Three-day week; (8) Iceland (two Cod Wars); (9) Oscar Wilde; (10) Norman Tebbit.

ANSWER TO THE POLESDEN LACEY QUIZ IN THE WINTER ISSUE - the number of books used to make up the book tree was 390.



**A FEW OF THE LINE DANCERS
STRUTTING THEIR STUFF**
(photograph Gill Crooks)



DRESSMAKING GROUP
(photograph Angela Day)



WALKING ON NORBURY PARK WITH JANE & MICHAEL
(photograph Brian Lynch)



EAST POND ON BOOKHAM COMMON (*photograph Denis Kellaway*)

*'Ah les bons vieux temps
Où nous étions si malheureux!'
Pre-Covid, pre-Brexit, pre-war,
Ante bellum, antediluvian,
Past happiness in Arcadia,
Children's voices in the garden,
Laughing and climbing in the orchard.
Is it always in the past?*

Post Brexit, post Covid we look
ahead.
Captain Tom when interviewed said:
"Remember tomorrow is a good day.
Tomorrow you will find maybe
Everything will be better than today.
Tomorrow remember is a good day."

Edward Williams