



Dorking & District University of the Third Age

newsletter



The Dorking U3A Bells Group in the café at Denbies last December during their first public performance *Photo by Michael Docker*

Number 80

March 2015

Inside: Plea from the Chair – **Membership News – Group News – South East U3A Forum one-day conference – History of Pippbrook House – In Praise of the Days Out Team – Articles, Illustrations and Poetry – Reports on Monthly Meetings and Days Out – Diversions & Delights**

Inset: **What's On? – Your guide to study and interest groups, monthly meetings, study days, days out, theatre trips, holidays, conferences**

Study & Interest Groups



Top: The Painting for Pleasure Group Photo by Mike Thurner
Bottom: The Line Dancing Group Photo by Michael Docker

Editorial

We mustn't let go of our wonderful U3A

It is a truth universally acknowledged that voluntary organisations these days find it difficult to persuade members to take on responsibility. Our U3A is unfortunately no exception. This is a pity because we do so many really good things that our members enjoy and appreciate.

The number and variety of groups continues to increase, we have very interesting speakers at our monthly meetings, the days out are very popular, as are the holidays. We are building up our membership to almost 600, with high attendance and enthusiasm shown at meetings for new members.

But there's one thing we are not good at – attracting members to serve as Chairman and Vice-Chairman. As Doreen highlights on the next page, we face an existential crisis if we don't secure nominations for these posts.

We have reason to be very grateful to Doreen, who courageously decided to end the embarrassing silence when the matter was brought to a head at the AGM in 2011 by standing up and announcing, to everyone's relief, 'I'll do it!' But constitutionally the Chairman's maximum term of office is four years, and in May a new Chairman must be elected.

Surely not one of our members is willing to let our U3A – all its groups, monthly meetings, days out, and holidays; the companionship, making new friends, and the satisfaction of sharing knowledge and interests – be destroyed after 24 years?

In thinking about whether you yourself or some other member would be willing to stand, do please remember that there is no one way of chairing an organisation, or being its vice-chairman, or occupying any other post: you are free to adopt your own way of doing things. There is much scope for delegating specific tasks; and, in any case, just as study and interest group leaders can rely on support from their members, so can newly elected committee members, including the Chairman, rely on support from more experienced members.

Please don't think that only long-standing members are eligible for any committee post: new members can be nominated and will be welcome for their perspective on the U3A they have recently joined.

We have two months to solve the problem. Let's do it!

Jim Docking

A Plea from the Chair

Our Annual General Meeting will be on **20 May 2015** (THIRD Wednesday in May).

Elections of your Committee and its Officers will take place then, as required by our Charity status.

The Committee may comprise up to **TEN** members, of whom **FOUR** must be the **OFFICERS**, ie, Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer.



WITHOUT THESE OFFICERS, DORKING & DISTRICT U3A CANNOT CONTINUE.

Because some of us will have completed the terms of office permitted by our constitution, and because the existing Vice-Chairman has had to stand down for personal reasons, **ALL** the Officer posts will require nominations. It appears that we have potential nominees for the posts of Secretary and Treasurer,

BUT WE DO NOT HAVE A POTENTIAL CHAIRMAN OR VICE-CHAIRMAN.

As I have regularly made clear, this is a self-help educational organisation. We cannot function without you.

YOUR U3A NEEDS YOU!

Please!

Doreen

(Telephone 01306 886817 if you would like further information or have suggestions)



Membership

Welcome!

A warm welcome to each of the new members listed below. We now have 598 paid-up members.

Mrs Bea Baldock	Mrs Cheryl Neale
Mr Bob Ball	Mr Anthony Neale
Mrs Beryl Betts	Mrs Thelma Parrott
Mr Edgar Costello	Ms Angela Rixon
Mr Peter Crook	Mrs Pat Smith
Mrs Elaine Enoizi	Mrs Isabelle Somerville
Mrs Caroline Floyd	Mrs Christine Tame
Mr Tony Golding	Ms Molly Taylor
Mrs Annette Golding	Mrs Sue Thorne
Mrs Sheila Harris	Mr Brian Thorne
Mrs Janice Kerr	Mrs Pat Wombwell
Mrs Ann Moon	

Bob Crooks, Membership Secretary

Membership Renewal The Option to Pay by Direct Debit

The current membership year ends on 31 March 2015. Next year's subscription will remain unchanged at £16.00 for a single member and £28.00 for two members at the same address.

A renewal form is enclosed with this newsletter together with details of how to make your payment online by direct debit rather than cheque.

I hope that many of you will choose to use direct debit, which greatly reduces the work involved with managing subscriptions; but of course cheques will still be accepted.

I thank you in advance for your prompt payment.

Bob Crooks, Membership Secretary

Group News

Groups Now Being Planned

From the Group Coordinators

**Lionel Cartlidge (01306 898491; ljcartlidge@lineone.net)
and Pam Toler (01306 882970; pamtoler1929@hotmail.co.uk)**

Bridge

We still hope to set up a new Bridge Group, but before being able to do so there are two problems that need to be solved. The first is to identify a member willing to act as Group Leader. The Group Leader will be responsible for overseeing the organisation of the group but should be well supported by group members who would do some of the necessary (but straightforward) work such as handling money or recording attendance. We cannot make progress until the Group Leader is found, so we would invite any member who feels able to take on the role to get in touch with one of us.



History and Local History

Following a productive preliminary meeting we have now set up a Local History Group led by Hilda Burden (see below) and intend to launch a new group for History as well. Sarah Wakeford has agreed to act as group leader for the History Group provided that she is given good support. Her details are: Sarah Wakeford (01306 883641; sarahewakeford@gmail.com)



There is a good deal of work to be done to identify venues, dates and times for group meetings, and more information will be provided when available. An initial programme will also have to be outlined in order to give the early meetings direction. Sarah and Hilda will both appreciate contact from any members who have not yet recorded their interest in joining one (or both) of the groups and will welcome contributions from the membership to the development of their programmes.

Local History

The new Local History Group will meet on the third Monday of each month at 10.00am. The first meeting is on 16 March. The venue will vary as we will be meeting in members' homes. The Group will be very proactive and all

members will be involved in research and will occasionally lead a meeting when the topic is of special interest to them.

If you are interested in joining this small group, please get in touch with me.

Hilda Burden (01737 842516; info@hildaburden.co.uk)



Quilting

We are still trying to set up a Quilting Group but are having difficulty in finding a suitable meeting place. Meanwhile, if you haven't already done so, please let me know if you would be interested in joining this group.

Pam Toler (01306 882970)

Established Groups

Line Dancing Group

This group is progressing well as we become more proficient and faster. We have enjoyed moving to upbeat country music to dispel the winter blues. Do think of joining us – we are still waiting for our first cowboy!

Gill Crooks (01306 740062; gillcrooks1@gmail.com)



Science and Technology in Everyday Life

Please note the change of our group name from 'Science, Technology and Society'

Our programme for 2015 will include subjects decided upon by the members of the group. The spread of interests addresses new procedures in medicine; changing weather patterns (for example, floods and soil erosion and their impact around the world); an appreciation of the outcomes of space research in astronomy; and obesity in adults and children.

A visit to the Diamond Light Resource in Harwell is planned for 14 July.

There is a gender imbalance in the group. Would more ladies like to try us out? You would be very welcome.

Sheila Green (01306 883038)



New Groups

Computing

A preliminary meeting has been arranged for anyone interested in joining a new Dorking U3A Computing group. The group will be for those with some computer knowledge who are interested in learning more, but you don't need to be an expert to participate. The aim of the meeting will be to decide on times and venues and suitable topics for future meetings.



The meeting will be at 10:30am on Monday
16 March at Deepdene, Longfield Road RH4 3DE.

Please email me if you would like to attend.

Bob Crooks (robertcrooks@rocketmail.com)

Suggestions for New Groups

Calligraphy

I would be happy to start a Calligraphy Group. If you would be interested, please get in touch with me.

Tony Golding (01306 881926)

Other suggestions

At a recent meeting for new members the following possible groups were suggested:

- Archaeology
- Debating
- Drama/Pantomime
- Geography
- Music Theory
- Upholstery
- World Religions

If you would be interested in joining a group on any of these subjects, please get in touch with one of the Group Coordinators:

Lionel Cartlidge (01306 898491; ljcartlidge@lineone.net)

Pam Toler (01306 882970; pamtoler1929@hotmail.co.uk)

South East U3A Forum

More Learning – More Enjoyment

This one-day conference open to all U3A members in the South East region is on Wednesday 22 April at Meridian Hall, East Court, College Lane, East Grinstead RH19 3LT. It opens at 9.15am for registration and tea/coffee and ends at 3.30pm.

The South East U3A Forum Conference brings together U3As across the region, giving members an opportunity to meet, exchange views and news, and hear of innovations and examples of good practice.

The speakers will include:

- Carole Millin, National Training Support Officer of the Third Age Trust, talking about learning developments in the U3A
- Anthony Hughes, Trustee for Wales, talking about the use of technology within U3As to aid learning
- Hilary Robinson, our new Regional Trustee, talking about her vision for the future of the South East region.

There will be opportunities to learn about interesting U3A activities across the South East and to take part in discussion groups on topics which we hope include some of your current interests and concerns. Attendance and a light buffet lunch is FREE. Attendance is on a first-come, first-served basis and is open to all members, who should apply individually.

Please send your application, using the form below, to: Alison Gaitonde, 7 Ashurst Road, Tadworth, Surrey KT20 5ET (01737 812646; alisonmgaitonde@gmail.com) by 14 April, or earlier where possible.

I wish to attend the 'More Learning; More Enjoyment' One-Day Conference

Name Your U3A

Address.....

.....

Postcode Phone

Email address

Please tick if vegetarian lunch option required ☐

History of Pippbrook House Group

Do you, or anyone you know, have memories of the house?

A small number of people expressed interest in joining this group after we had been invited by Dorking Museum and Transition Dorking to research the history of Pippbrook House.

We have met three times to plan and discuss the material we have uncovered and still wish to uncover, and we have

had one joint session exploring the Museum archives, following an initial investigation by one member. Another member has gleaned enormous amounts of information from websites and other sources, and he has already written up a large amount of this.

We now know that there has been a house on this site since the middle of the 16th century and that the present house is the third. The second house was bought by William Henry Forman, and he replaced it in 1856-58 with the existing house built to the design of George Gilbert Scott, the renowned and prolific architect of the period. Pippbrook House, as it is now known, was designated a Grade II-listed building in 1973 and upgraded to Grade II* in 2012.

Pippbrook was purchased by Dorking Urban District Council in 1930 and has been used since then for various purposes, all related to our local community. Most local people now know it as the recent premises of Dorking Public Library while the building was leased to Surrey County Council. However, it has served as council offices, and then home to the Library, Civil Defence, the WVS, possibly a wartime British Restaurant, and Social Services.

One of our members remembers being pushed in her pram by her mother when they collected her allocation of orange juice (probably from the WVS) from Pippbrook.

Most of our material has been obtained from archives of various sorts. However, **in order to focus on the value and relevance of the existing Pippbrook House to the community**, we would very much appreciate any



other ‘anecdotal’ history you or your family members and friends can contribute. **Please let me know if you have anything to tell us, however small.**

We shall be submitting a synopsis of the history of Pippbrook House to Transition Dorking in the next few weeks, but it is clear from the large amount of information already uncovered and written up by Jim Docking that there will be sufficient material to be able to produce a small, beautifully illustrated booklet.

Doreen Raine (01306 886817)

In Praise of the Days Out Committee

The many members who have been on one of the day excursions organised by Jean Williams and her team will understand that organising the trips requires a good deal of work. Some members enjoy the outings so much that they come on a regular basis. Deciding where to visit, where to have lunch, costing, and making arrangements with the venue and coach company is quite a time-consuming business.



Planning a programme of visits is the starting point of most the Days Out Committee meetings. The team receive many suggestions from members, some of whom have visited the place, others who have read about it in a magazine or who have just heard what an interesting outing it would make. The numbers on each outing can depend on the venue restrictions and the availability of a standard coach. The BBC, Buckler's Hard (benefiting from a beautiful day), Bletchley Park and Romney Marsh churches (twice) are among the specially successful trips. Very few outings have had to be cancelled due to lack of support.

The team share the various tasks involved. Judy Peace and Sue Grant undertake much of the investigative work, contacting the venues, arranging dates and times and working out the costs per head. Judith Kingsley provides descriptions of each outing for *What's On?*, while Jean receives the bookings and makes the travel arrangements.

All this might sound reasonably straightforward, but issues do arise from time to time. The main problem at the moment arises from the mobile

numbers that are given for the two team members who are responsible for each trip. As *What's On?* makes clear, these numbers are given only for emergency use on the day of the outing, such as needing to inform the trip leaders that, after all, you need to cancel. Yet some members use the mobile numbers on days other than the trip date and for non-emergency calls – even to make a booking. So please use Jean's landline number to apply to make a booking, and use the mobile numbers only if you need to contact a trip leader on the day of the outing.

Another problem is getting the cheques in after a booking has been made. This can be done at any monthly meeting or by post to Jean. Again, as *What's On?* makes clear, Jean must receive your cheque not later than 14 days before the outing. This then confirms the booking and enables Jean to know whether there are vacancies. It is obviously unfair to put Jean in a position where you have to be chased.

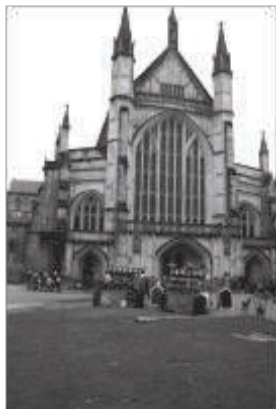
Then there is the problem of getting someone to write a report on the trip for the newsletter. This does not need to be long – two or three paragraphs will be fine – so it shouldn't be a burden on the writer. So another plea: please show willingness to help in writing up a trip if you are asked to do so. If you are not used to this sort of thing, you can always ask someone else to help you in a joint effort.

All that said, turning up in good time rarely presents a problem, so usually the coach can leave promptly from each stopping place.

If you have any suggestions about how arrangements might be improved, the Days Out Committee will always be pleased to consider these.

So thank you Jean, Judith, Judy and Sue. You do a great job, which is much appreciated.

The Days Out team were interviewed by the Editor



**Winchester Cathedral and market, visited
on a Day Out on 26 November 2014**
Photo by Laurie von Weber

Prose & Poetry

Robert Browning

Out of fashion perhaps, but his poetry has much to offer the modern reader, argues Bette Phillips

After the glamour and the daring of the Metaphysical Poets, I feared that Browning would seem rather ‘old hat’ for a group to study. He has been out of fashion for years, and the poet with whom he has always been linked – Alfred, Lord Tennyson – has been studied for his hidden depths, his Freudian significance, and his melancholy and ennui. Browning’s reputation has suffered from his incurable optimism, muscular Christianity, and the wilder adulation of the Browning Society.

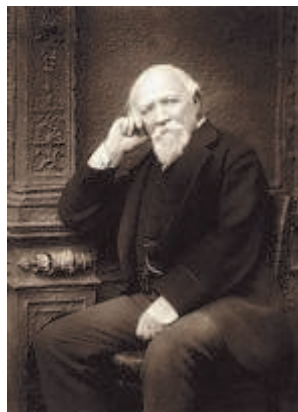
But one cannot deny the attraction of his love affair with Elizabeth Barrett. It fulfils all the promise of a Gothic melodrama. (Jane Austen’s Catherine Morland would have adored the story.) There is the stern and unyielding father, Edward Moulton Barrett, of Wimpole Street, who didn’t wish any of his children to marry, who carried his grievance to the point of returning Elizabeth’s letters unopened and refusing to see his eldest grandchild; the ruined fortune built on slavery and sugar cane to which Elizabeth was heir; the plot which required a secret marriage and a return to the parental home for a week before catching the boat train for Italy; the many months of visits to that parental home by the aspiring – but unsuccessful – young poet who was winning the heart of the poor invalid, Elizabeth...

However, it is Browning’s poetry which is the chief subject of our study, not his life. There is a great deal there to appeal to the modern reader: his understanding of the female heart is exceptional (*Any Wife to Any Husband*, *A Woman’s Last Word*); his ability to depict a landscape (*Love Among*

The first stanza of *Any Wife to Any Husband*

My love, this is the bitterest, that thou---
Who art all truth, and who dost love me now
As thine eyes say, as thy voice breaks to say---
Shouldst love so truly, and couldst love me still
A whole long life through, had but love its will,
Would death that leads me from thee brook delay.

the Ruins, *Two in the Campagna*) and make it both a background and relevant to the human drama which unfolds before it; his knowledge of Renaissance art and artists (*Fra Lippo Lippi, Andrea del Sarto, A Toccata of Galuppi's*); his ability to get beneath the skin of very differing human beings, living in different times and in different societies (*Karshish, Cleon, Master Hugues of Saxe-Gotha*); and strong feelings about topics which are of interest to us still (religion and spiritualism, politics and patriotism).



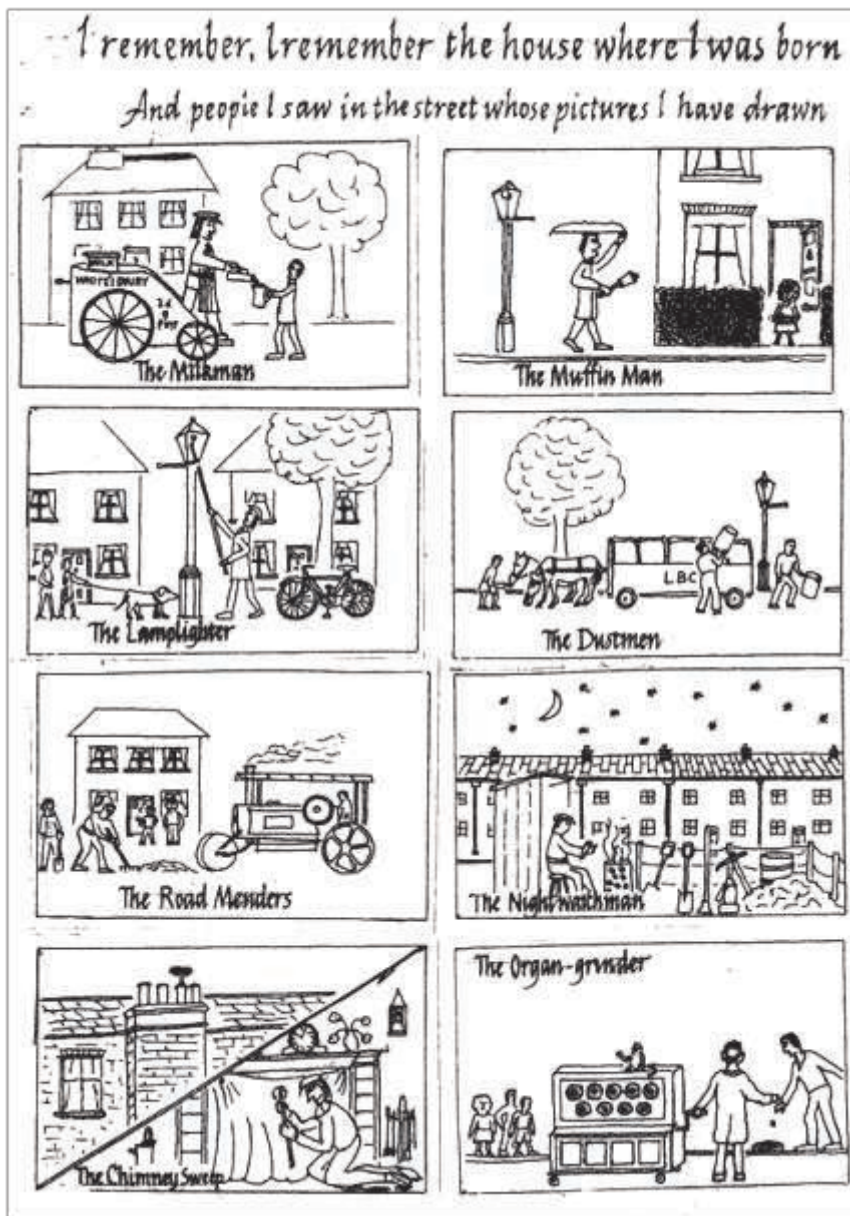
He matches that doyen of Romantic poetry, Coleridge, in his chillingly symbolic *Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came*, which is so haunting and suggestive that, like Coleridge's *Kubla Khan*, it is no surprise that both were inspired by a dream, though the abrupt ending of *Childe Roland* was not caused by the blundering intervention of the 'person from Porlock'. I think that Browning has a lot to give to 21st century students of poetry and is due for a revival of interest. I think our group in the U3A would agree with me about this, while not succumbing to the adulation accorded by the 19th century Browning Society. Certainly, they would laugh at the usual criticisms levelled at Browning in the early 1850s, like the review in the *Athenaeum*: 'Who will not grieve over energy wasted and power misspent, over fancies chaste and noble, so overhung by the "seven veils" of obscurity, that we can often-times be only sure that fancies exist?' We who have studied TS Eliot and the Metaphysicals are not bothered by Browning's 'obscurity'.



Design and calligraphy by Tony Castello

Memories of the 1920s

Tony Castello, a new member, recalls episodes from his childhood days



Steven Stone

A cautionary verse for the enthusiastic gardener

I'll tell the tale of Steven Stone,
Who thought that he could grow his own
Produce to reduce the bills
He paid at supermarket tills.

He had an unrealistic dream,
An appealing and seductive scheme,
To harvest food from his front door.
Could anybody ask for more?

Self-sufficiency was the word
And aiming lower was absurd.
For him it mattered not at all
That his garden space was rather small.
He simply failed to understand
The limitations of his land.

He'd buy the tools. He'd buy the seed
And everything that he would need.
His yields would be beyond compare.
He'd even have enough to share
With friends and colleagues, next door
neighbours,
Enjoying the product of his labours.

'Impossible,' said those around.
He'd prove them wrong. He'd stand his
ground.
To local shops he promptly went
And there he subsequently spent
So many pounds he soon lost count
But was (he thought) a fair amount.

A wheelbarrow, first on the list,
Was too important to be missed.
He bought a trowel, fork and spade
And sacks of compost (premium grade)
To bring his poor soil up to scratch,
To standards he would have to match.



He bought a giant compost bin
For putting waste and prunings in
And give new victuals to the soil
Without unnecessary toil.

Recycling was the modern fashion.
He'd undertake it with a passion.
He bought some canes and poles and lots
Of bulbs and seedlings, herbs in pots

Expensive packs of fertiliser
He purchased – for he was no miser –
Some cold frames and a kneeling mat
And when he'd finished doing that
He bought a scythe. He bought a sickle
And onion sets for making pickle
(When all the sets were fully grown).
He would not leave a single stone
Unturned. The motto for his quest
Was 'Buy the dearest. It's the best.'

He bought a dibber and a rake.
A watering can he'd also take.
De luxe, in stainless steel? Of course!
And rhubarb crowns that he would force.

A wire mesh cage would contribute
To keeping blackbirds from the fruit.
He also had to keep at bay
Those greedy pests with toxic spray.

With recent research as his guide
He bought the latest fungicide.
(His vegetables and fruit would not
Be tainted by a mouldy spot.)

The weed killers he bought were strong.
Unwanted plants would not last long.
Unless a plant was used for food
Its death was quick: by poison crude.

The powerful insecticide
He bought ensured that insects died.
But, eager to achieve his ends,
Forgot that most, like bees, were friends.

To make raised beds he bought some
planks.
To Alan Titchmarsh then gave thanks.
He knew the score. He'd read the book
Called *Kitchen Gardens for the Cook*.

In this, the King of Spending Sprees,
He even bought some baby trees
For apples, pears and juicy cherries,
Some bushes, too, for gooseberries.

But finally he was presented
With a bill he much resented.
Now he was bankrupt, assets zero,
And suddenly no local hero.

His hard-earned savings lost and gone,
Now poor Steve could reflect upon
This fact, which usually is true
And has made many a grower rue:
Skilled gardeners know when to stop –
**SOME FOODS ARE CHEAPER AT
THE SHOP!**

Robert Edmondson



Monthly Meetings

London 1901-14: Michael Gilbert, 12 November 2014

Michael Gilbert brought to life many aspects of London in the pre-war years of the 20th century, with the help of many slides.

In 1900 Queen Victoria was still on the throne and Britain was a supreme world power. The Boer War was still being fought, and a slide showed the City of London Imperial Volunteers leaving for South Africa. They had been granted the freedom of the city and, as a military privilege, they marched 'with drums beating, colours flying and bayonets fixed'. Today, martial freedom is entirely a ceremonial honour, but it remains the oldest and one of the highest civic honours. Crowds cheered outside Colonel

Baden-Powell's house when, after 217 days, Mafeking was relieved.

In the same year, the District Line was built beneath the Embankment, but members of the Inns of Court and MPs refused to allow the railway engineers to run trains beneath Parliament Square or the Inns of Court unless extra precautions were taken to ensure that there was no noise or vibration. The engineers agreed to include a thick layer of finely chopped tree bark beneath the tracks, and even today the District Line trains run more smoothly in the approach to Westminster underground station.

Do you remember the pneumatic tube system for giving change? The Finchley



Road John Barnes department store (now a Waitrose), which opened in 1900, used this device, and the cylinders travelled at 2,500ft a minute. Other openings that year were the London Hippodrome for music hall and variety and the Russell hotel with its fantastic mixture of château architecture and terracotta bricks. You can go there today and see its famous dining room, replicated in the *Titanic*.

We saw slides of the gun carriage bearing Queen Victoria's coffin on the road to Windsor on 2 February 1901. The horses became restless on the bitterly cold day, causing a piece of equipment on the carriage to break. Rather than wait and effect a simple repair, a Royal Navy detachment grasped the ropes and started up Windsor Hill to St George's Chapel. Ever since, royal funeral carriages have been hauled by a Royal Navy contingent rather than horses.

Also in 1901, the Renaissance-style Wigmore Hall was opened by Frederick Bechstein next door to his piano showrooms.

In 1902 the dramatic bronze statue of Queen Boudicca (pictured) was unveiled on Westminister Bridge, and the first crematorium and graveyard in London was opened in Golders Green. Before this, coffins had been transported by train to Woking for burial.

Edward VII and Alexandra were crowned in Westminster Abbey in August, the coronation having been delayed after Edward contracted appendicitis. He survived a life-saving operation thanks to the development of better anaesthesia and antiseptics, and was sitting up the next day smoking a cigar!

One of the most impressive buildings in London – Westminster Roman Catholic Cathedral – opened in 1903. This Byzantine-style building reflects the early architecture of Catholic churches, and contains Eric Gill's bas-reliefs of *Fourteen Stations of the Cross*.

Three future kings, the Prince of Wales and his two eldest sons, Edward and Albert, created quite a spectacle as they enjoyed the unique experience of sitting on the front seats of the open-top deck of the first electric tram, which ran from Westminster Bridge to Tooting.

If you had been to the Coliseum when it was first built in 1904 as the largest theatre in London, you would have marvelled at its three-section revolving stage and a revolving electrically lit globe on the roof – which is still there.

At the start of the century all public transport was horse-drawn, each bus requiring 11 horses to service a 60-mile route every day (the manure providing a gift for gardeners). Trams were also horse-drawn and the fire brigade, too, used horses. By 1904 many fire stations were buying motorised vehicles as well as turntable ladders and breathing apparatus. In that year, WG Grace became the first paid manager of the London County Cricket Club, based at Crystal Palace. He maintained that the public had come to see him play, so even when the umpire said he was out, he played on!

How do you get rid of a slum area? In 1905 the London County Council created a whole new commercial district to compete with the City of London, demolishing Wych Street and building the Aldwych and Kingsway. The Gaiety theatre, the Waldorf hotel, WH Smith and Kodak House all made their appearance then, too.

The War Office occupied a massive neo-Baroque building on Horse Guards Avenue, built in 1906. With seven floors, 1,000 rooms and 2.5 miles of corridors, it took five years to build at a cost of £1.2 million. The building, designed as a trapezium to maximise the oddly shaped plot, is still owned by the Ministry of Defence.

London's developing underground railway system, the oldest in the world, scared the public in 1906 with its first escalators. So Bumper Harris, a man with a wooden leg, was hired to go up and down them all day. Eventually, the public thought if he can do it, so can we. The Piccadilly line was opened that year and the first electric advertisements in Piccadilly Circus appeared four years later.

In 1901 hundreds of thousands at Crystal Palace watched an army airship circle St Paul's and travel over the City to the West End, marvelling at its wonderful manoeuvres and its speed of 24 miles an hour.

Where can you find four busts in the four corner gates of an area with a statue in the middle? The answer is a small park in the centre of Leicester Square. The statue is of William Shakespeare (pictured) and the four busts depict Sir Isaac Newton, Sir Joshua Reynolds, John Hunter (a pioneer of surgery) and William

Hogarth. A more recent addition is Charlie Chaplin.

The present Central Criminal Court at the Old Bailey was built in 1907 on the site of Newgate Prison. Designed by Edward Mountford, it's in a style that intimidates both guilty and innocent alike!

The 1908 Summer Olympic Games were held in White City, so named because it was built of stucco and painted white. A specially erected Great Stadium, built for the games at a cost of £60,000, housed a running track, a cycling track and a large swimming pool with diving platforms. Holding 150,000 spectators, it was considered a technological marvel. Much of this area is now occupied by BBC Television. The original distance for the marathon was 25 miles, but this was changed so that it could start at Windsor Castle and finish at the stadium; so, rather awkwardly, the distance is now 26 miles, 385 yards.

It seems to have been always with us, but the Victoria & Albert Museum was opened by King Edward VII in June 1909. In the same year, the Boy Scout movement started shortly after the publication of the first part of *Scouting for Boys* by Robert Baden-Powell. There was a rally at Crystal Palace where Baden-Powell was asked to let girls become scouts. Until then girls had not been allowed to run, swim, ride a bike or raise their arms above their heads! But it wasn't until 1976 that girls were admitted to the scouting association.





bodies were recovered, but what happened to the others remains a mystery. That year the Victoria Memorial, now a Grade I-listed monument, was sculpted by Sir Thomas Brock and placed at the centre of Queen's

What happened at 39 Hildrop Crescent, Islington? Dr Crippen killed Belle Elmore there in 1910, ran away with Miss le Neve 'right across the ocean blue, followed by Inspector Dew'. Using modern technology, a telegram was sent to the ship and Dr Crippen and his lover – disguised as a boy – were caught.

In that year, Edward VII died. His parting words were, 'I am very glad,' because he heard that his favourite horse, Witch of the Air, had just won at Kempton Park.

On 3 January 1911 the infamous Siege of Sidney Street (pictured) took place in London's East End. It started as a raid on a jewellery shop, but escalated and involved nine unarmed police, called by a neighbour. Expecting heavy resistance, 200 men cordoned off the area and the Home Secretary, Winston Churchill, called in a detachment of Scots Guards. Six hours into the siege a fire began, but when the fire brigade arrived, Churchill refused them access to the building while everyone waited for the men to come out – but they didn't. Two

Gardens in front of Buckingham Palace. The surround was designed by the architect Sir Aston Webb from 2,300 tons of marble.

On the night of 2 April 1911 Emily Davison hid in the crypt of the Houses of Parliament so that her residence on the 1911 census would be the House of Commons. More recently Tony Benn MP placed a plaque there to commemorate this event. At the Epsom racecourse on Derby Day, 1913, the suffragette stood in front of King George's horse, expecting it to stop: it didn't, and she was killed. At her funeral, tens of thousands lined the streets of London to see her coffin go by.

The London Museum opened in April 1912 at Kensington Palace. It moved to Lancaster House, but moved back in 1946. In August 1912 'General' William Booth, founder of the Salvation Army, was buried with full 'military' honours. Fifty-one Salvation Army brigades accompanied the coffin from the Embankment to the cemetery, and thousands lined the route.

Suzanne Willis

Philip Johnson was a monk at Ampleforth Abbey, a Benedictine community in North Yorkshire attached to Ampleforth College. After leaving the order he went on to teach history and classics, and then worked at Hampton Court Palace for 17 years as head warder and visitor services manager.

His talk led us through the centuries from 597AD when St Augustine landed in Kent on a mission to convert the king to Christianity. He succeeded and became the first Archbishop of Canterbury and is considered a founder of the English Church.

There are monks everywhere, some of whom stay in their monasteries while others go out into the world working in various capacities. Benedictine monks, who follow the Rule of St Benedict, which was written around 480AD in his own abbey at Monte Cassino, were known as Black Monks; and Cistercian monks, who originated in 1098 in France, were known as White Monks.

Having been sent to England by the Pope, St Augustine started a monastery in Canterbury on land donated by the king, and over the centuries many more monasteries followed, including Glastonbury Abbey, a Saxon community originally which became the richest monastery in the country after the Norman invasion in 1066. By the 12th century there were monks at Durham – whose original monastery has grown to become Durham Cathedral (pictured), a fantastic Romanesque building housing the Shrine of St Cuthbert and the tomb of the Venerable Bede – Whitby, Byland, Tintern, Bolton, Riveaux and

Fountains Abbey in Yorkshire, where there are the ruins of large buildings which provided sanctuary and hospitality for pilgrims. Waverley Abbey, founded in 1128 just outside Guildford, which is now a ruin, was the first Cistercian monastery in England.

A monastery's domestic buildings – consisting of dormitories, kitchen, burial ground and chapter house, where the monks would have met each day – were usually on the south side of the abbey, with a strong gatehouse being the way in. They often had a lavatory situated where natural water could run through to keep it hygienic.

A monk's day follows a strict rule of seven offices, from matins in the early morning to compline at night. Meals are usually eaten in silence with someone reading, perhaps a psalm. Cistercians' meals would not have contained meat, although their wealth came from the sheep which they tended. In fact, the Woolsack in the House of Lords, on which the Lord Speaker sits, came from this order.

Today many monastic communities occupy large properties that have been adapted to house monks; and some of them are schools, such as Ampleforth, and Worth Abbey, near Crawley.

Cliff Weight



There was a large and enthusiastic audience in January when Paul Whittle returned to talk to us about the Darjeeling Railway. The locals have given it the nickname ‘toy’ out of affection rather than mockery, and it resembles the 2ft narrow-gauge Ffestiniog railway in Wales. The class B locomotives used on this Himalayan railway were all built in Britain. Although they do use some diesel engines to pull the train now, they still have 12 of the original steam engines in service. The stoker sits on top of the coal and fills baskets of coal to tip into the firebox. Two outriders stand in the front of the engine to put sand on the line if the wheels start to slide.

The railway was built between 1879 and 1881 and was primarily a goods railway for taking all the supplies needed from the plains to the hill station of Darjeeling and to return loaded with tea from the 80 plantations on the surrounding hills. It followed the contours of the dirt road and ran like a tramway through the small towns on its way. Nowadays, with only one train a day up and down, the locals often take advantage of this vacant piece of flat territory to park their bikes or set up their stalls, for the train never exceeds 15mph and its whistle echoing round the hills gives them plenty of warning!

Paul’s talk was prefaced on the screen with a magnificent view of Darjeeling, its splendid villas perched on the steep hillside amongst the trees, and views of the Himalayas in the distance alerting us to the difficulties of building a railway on such steep slopes. We were



shown some magnificent buildings in Calcutta, where Paul started his journey, along with crowded streets and living quarters and a building under repair covered in very dodgy bamboo scaffolding. Paul advised taking the buses rather than risking one’s life in a taxi in Calcutta. He then showed us the train he boarded to take him to the foothills and thoroughly recommended taking a journey on the magnificent Indian Railways. He did sneak in a picture of a train overloaded with passengers clinging to the roof and sides – but admitted that it was taken in Pakistan!

From the foot of the toy railway’s climb we shared its 1-in-30 gradient journey as it wound its way up 7,500ft. It went beside sheer cliff faces; it wound through forests and passed crowded stations, some with picturesque Victorian buildings. At some places it has been built with zigzags, where the train backs up a steep incline to reach a higher level; and then in some places the line loops over itself as it travels higher and higher. One shot showed some men looking slightly ridiculous perched on chairs in an open flat wagon trailed behind the train. These were out on inspection. Having

reached the top they could glide down independently, stopping to do their work on the way: a vital operation, as the monsoons bring deluges to the hills causing mud slides that endanger the railway on its precarious track, and it is important to keep it in good repair. We were shown places where landslides had temporarily halted the service, but repairs were quickly initiated, and only one major slide caused by the aftershock of a distant earthquake had kept part of the route closed for some months.

Threatened with closure by Indian

Railways in the 1990s, the railway is now a World Heritage Site, so its future should be secure. Paul is a member of the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway Society, which has supported it over the years and now runs a charity that helps provide schools and clinics for the people living along the route, for they tend to get forgotten by the state government in Calcutta.

His enthusiasm and brilliant illustrations made some of us want to do the trip ourselves.

Charmian Corner

Days Out

The Imperial War Museum, London, 21 January 2015

January is a good month for an indoor visit. The Imperial War Museum in Lambeth is housed in an imposing building which was originally the middle section of the Bethlehem Royal Hospital for the Insane (Bedlam). Over the door is a Latin inscription which translates as 'Founded by King Henry VIII. Completed by the generosity of the people.' The museum lies in Geraldine Mary Harmsworth Park, which was given to the people by Viscount Rothermere (of *Daily Mail* fame) in memory of his mother. The park also contains a Tibetan peace garden opened by the Dalai Lama.

The museum was established in 1917, while the First World War was still in progress. Originally at Crystal Palace, it then moved to South Kensington and has been on its current site since 1936. Over the years the building has been extended to include more exhibition and archive space. The latest refurbishment

was carried out in the past few years, and it reopened in July 2014 to commemorate the centenary of the First World War.

Anyone who visited the previous museum will be impressed by this redesign. You enter through a light and imposing atrium to reach the six floors open to the public, which focus on different aspects of war. All the displays have been pruned to favour objects which tell a story or highlight some important detail. In addition to written explanations, large touch screens can be explored if you want to find out more, while contemporary newsreels, music and artwork help to illuminate the subject.

The lower ground floor is devoted to the First World War, its causes and effects on those who fought in it and those at home. The overall narrative is clearly explained and there is much more to read and listen to if you want. This is obviously the most popular gallery at the



current time, and one could easily spend half a day in here alone.

The floor above is devoted to the Second World War. For me, the highlight was the focus on the Home Front provided by the story of one actual London family, the Allpress family, their home and their experiences during the war and afterwards. The museum hasn't the room to cover all aspects of such a long and widespread war: there was little mention of the Italian campaign, for example.

Level 2 covers the years since 1945 and includes the threat of nuclear warfare and more recent conflicts, again developed by the use of contemporary objects and more recent artwork. The artist Steve McQueen has created a memorial to those who died in the Iraq

war, which consists of a series of postage stamps depicting the faces of those lost.

The next level is devoted to various art and photography exhibits. The permanent exhibition contains the work of famous war artists such as Paul Nash, CRW Nevinson and William Orpen. Other galleries house regularly changing exhibitions.

Level 4 contains the Holocaust Exhibition which narrates the Nazi persecution of Jews and others between 1933 and 1945. The Lord Ashcroft Gallery on the fifth level tells the stories of those who won Victoria and George crosses and displays many of the actual medals. It is fairly quiet, away from the more crowded galleries below.

The cafe on level 0 is not huge but the service was efficient and the food varied. There are several shops selling the usual fare and a comprehensive selection of books to browse and maybe buy. Four hours was not sufficient to cover the whole of this exhibition and more than one visit may be required in order to explore an area in depth. Thank you to the organisers for a stimulating and thought-provoking trip.

Virginia Wheeler

Photo by Laurie von Weber

Some Foreign Words for which English has no Equivalent

<i>Hawaiian</i>	O ka la nokonoko	A day spent in dreading a coughing spell
<i>Japanese</i>	Bakku-shan	A girl who is pretty from behind but not in front
<i>Indonesian</i>	Goyang kaki Teklak-tekluk	Enjoying yourself as others solve your problems Your head bobbing up and down with sleepiness
<i>New Guinea Pidgin</i>	Liklik-box-you-pull-him-he-cry-you-push-him-he-cry	An accordion
	Hakamaroo	To keep borrowed things till the owner asks for them back

Diversions & Delights

Some Homographs*

When I hurt my hand slightly at my poetry group meeting ...

I simply wound a bandage round the wound,
but I fear that my damages claim against the group, as an invalid, might be
ruled invalid.

You see, I'd hurt the same hand recently while going for a row: I got an
infected blister on it, but my decision to sue the rowing club led to a row
with fellow oarsmen. In the same incident

I suffered a tear in my rowing shorts, but of course I'm far too brave to drop
a tear over such a trifle.

A fellow oarsmen, a Polish man, told me that he, too, had injured a hand
when trying to polish some furniture.

He's accident-prone, for he injured the same hand while **sailing**. **He said:** 'It
happened because the wind was too strong for me to wind the sail, so I
fell and hurt my hand.'

*Words spelt the same but which have different pronunciations and meanings

Eating in the 1950s

Have things *really* changed this much in our time?

- Pasta had not been invented
- Curry was a surname
- A takeaway was a mathematical problem
- A pizza was something to do with a leaning tower
- Bananas and oranges only appeared at Christmas time
- All crisps were plain; the only choice we had was whether to put the salt on or not
- A Chinese chippy was a foreign carpenter
- Rice was a milk pudding, and never, ever part of our dinner

- A Big Mac was what we wore when it was raining
- Brown bread was something only poor people ate
- Oil was for lubricating, fat was for cooking
- Tea was made in a teapot using tea leaves and never green
- Coffee was Camp, and came in a bottle
- Cubed sugar was regarded as posh
- Only Heinz made beans
- Fish didn't have fingers in those days
- Eating raw fish was called poverty, not sushi
- None of us had ever heard of yoghurt
- Healthy food consisted of anything edible
- People who didn't peel potatoes were regarded as lazy
- Indian restaurants were found only in India
- Cooking outside was called camping
- Seaweed was not a recognised food
- **'Kebab' was not even a word, never mind a food**
- Sugar enjoyed a good press in those days, and was regarded as being white gold
- Surprisingly, muesli was readily available, but it was called cattle feed
- Pineapples came in chunks in a tin; we had only ever seen a picture of a real one
- Water came out of the tap. If someone had suggested bottling it and charging more than petrol for it they would have become a laughing stock
- The one thing that we never ever had on our table in the fifties ... was elbows!



Church Ladies With Typewriters

These sentences actually appeared in church bulletins or were announced at church services

- Please place your donation in the envelope along with the deceased person you want remembered.
- The Fasting & Prayer Conference includes meals.
- The sermon this morning: 'Jesus Walks **on the Water**'. The sermon tonight: 'Searching for Jesus'.
- Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Bring your husbands.
- Don't let worry kill you off – let the Church help.
- Miss Charlene Mason **sang 'I will not pass this way again', giving obvious** pleasure to the congregation.
- For those of you who have children and don't know it, we have a nursery downstairs.
- Next Thursday there will be try-outs for the choir. They need all the help they can get.
- Irving Benson and Jessie Carter were married on 24 October in the church. So ends a friendship that began in their school days.
- A bean supper will be held on Tuesday evening in the church hall. Music will follow.
- At the evening service tonight, the sermon topic will be 'What Is Hell?' Come early and listen to our choir practice.
- Eight new choir robes are currently needed due to the addition of several new members and to the deterioration of some older ones.
- The church will host an evening of fine dining, super entertainment and gracious hostility.
- The ladies of the Church have cast off clothing of every kind. They may be seen in the basement on Friday afternoon.
- This evening at 7.00pm there will be hymn singing in the park across from the Church. Bring a blanket and come prepared to sin.
- The Low Self Esteem Support Group will meet Thursday at 7.00pm. Please use the back door.
- GCSE students will be presenting Shakespeare's *Hamlet* in the Church basement on Friday at 7.00pm. The congregation is invited to attend this tragedy.
- The new vicar unveiled the church's new campaign slogan last Sunday: 'I Upped My Pledge - Up Yours.'

The Committee hope to use these pictures (but in colour) for a new triptych leaflet to be sent to prospective members of the U3A.

If you are featured in any of these and do not want your photo to be used for this purpose, would you please let Doreen Raine (01306 8868176) know ASAP, but by the end of March at the latest.





Newsletter is published three times a year – in March, September and December. *What's On?* is published four times a year – as a supplement to *Newsletter* and also as an expanded special groups edition in June.

Contributions for the June *What's On?* should be sent to the Editor (details below) to arrive not later than **Friday 1 May 2015**. Contributions for the September *Newsletter* should arrive not later than Friday 7 August.

Apart from reports of U3A activities, contributions of general interest – articles, short stories, poems, puzzles, humorous sketches, book reviews, letters, drawings, photos, etc – will be most welcome.

If possible, please type your contribution and, if you have the facilities, send it 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>	Jim Docking Winding Bromley, Old Road, Buckland, Betchworth, Surrey RH3 7DU <i>Email:</i> annejim@docking.eclipse.co.uk <i>Tel:</i> 01737 843260
---------------	--

<i>Sub-Editor</i>	Michael Docker (01306 501640)
-------------------	-------------------------------

<i>Editorial Assistant</i>	Joy Parry (01306 502477)
----------------------------	--------------------------

<i>Distribution</i>	Elizabeth Holmes (01306 884831)
---------------------	---------------------------------

<i>Printer</i>	Eyes Wide Digital, Dorking (01306 875150)
----------------	--

Study & Interest Groups *continued*



Top: DIY Dressmaking group leader Anne Blanchard (left) with member Jenny Mann
Above: The Singing for Pleasure Group at Denbies last December
Photos by Michael Docker

Study & Interest Groups *continued*

Photos taken by
the Photography
Group

Right: 'Flower' by
Camille Humphrey

Below: 'Little
Egret' by Mike
Turner

