

NEWS BULLETIN

A SCHOOLGIRL'S WAR

Guest speaker in the Old Barn Hall this month, former head-teacher MARY SMITH (right) told the story of school life in Kent during World War 2, featuring the highly original artwork of a local art teacher who lived through it with the pupils.

Miss Helen Keen's work takes a light-hearted look at how the war disrupted normal schooling, brought air-raids, and introduced subterranean lessons over several years.

In 2013, two fascinating discoveries were made at a large girls' secondary school in Maidstone which had hosted 240 evacuees from another school in London.

*Left: Miss Helen Keen
Below: One of her paintings.
(Copyright: Maidstone Grammar School for Girls)*



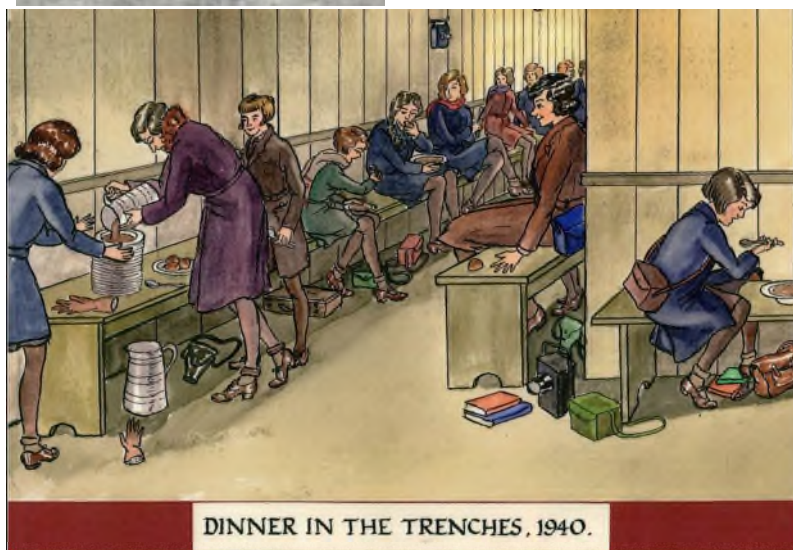
The first discovery came about because the school was about to turn 125 years old and head-teacher Mary was looking around for something interesting to celebrate the anniversary.

A member of staff came up with the idea of investigating the site of one of the underground shelters that had been dug for the girls during the war. Was anything left there to see?

To everyone's surprise, six zigzagging tunnels were discovered, still completely intact, under the tarmac at the back of the school. Several wartime benches lining the walls and a wooden dado rail, that had kept the girls' backs from the concrete wall, were still in place.

The tunnels had been designed to reduce the impact of blast. As one 'old girl'

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DINNER IN THE TRENCHES, 1940.

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put it when interviewed by Mary: “They were zigzagged so that if a bomb fell on one section, it would only have wiped out that class!”

Chalked lessons - ghosts of wartime learning - were still visible on the walls after more than 75 years. They provided a fascinating glimpse of lessons underground.

A second discovery was even more exciting. Interested to see if there was any information about the school during the war, Mary and other members of staff went searching in the school archive. There they found a large flat cardboard box containing a book labelled *War Diary 1939-1946*.

Instead of written entries, it contained watercolour paintings and drawings by art teacher Helen Keen, created as the war unfolded. The collection provided a unique and intriguing record of school life in the war.

Miss Keen painted scenes from the taping of windows at the beginning of the war to protect children in the classroom from shattered glass, to ripping off of the tape after VE day.

Her paintings had a characteristic style, simple but full of colour and often capturing a vivid sense of movement. They were also packed full of detail.

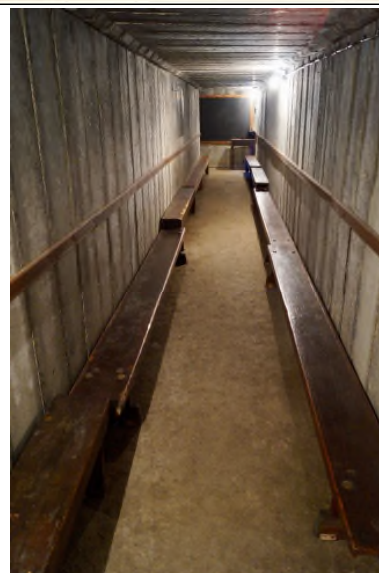
A teacher bent down to pick up dropped papers as she rushed to an air-raid



shelter. A child held up a book up to catch the light in a tunnel. A teacher on fire-watching duties used a stirrup-pump. A girl held on to her hat as she raced to school on her bike during an air-raid. Teachers knitted and read with their legs swung up on to benches in the shelters.

Helen had had a wicked sense of humour, delighting in poking fun in paint and pencil at endless government instructions. In a series of sketches, she ridiculed the directive that all children should be trained to play in their gas-masks. Girls were depicted trying to play various games including netball while encumbered by the masks.

The Board of Education told schools in November 1941 that they could no longer afford the manpower to fill the third-pint bottles of milk for school-children.



Top: Study during a doodle -bug attack.

Above: Part of an air-raid tunnel.

(Copyright: Maidstone Grammar School for Girls)

Helen mocked the lengthy instruction telling teachers how to measure one-third of a pint per child from the much bigger containers that were sent instead.

She illustrated in paint what the queue would have

looked like it if they had followed that instruction.

While the paintings and drawings were full of humour, Helen did not avoid the nastier side of the war on the home front. She painted bombers in the skies, explosions, girls rushing to an underground shelter during an air-raid, a senior girl on doodle-bug lookout duty, and a girl sheltering under a desk during a doodle-bug attack.

The paintings provided a remarkably vivid record of those days, and the story they told has since been enhanced and expanded by the accounts from 53 'old girls' whom Mary Smith managed to track down.

Their memories present an eloquent account of their extraordinary school days, and range widely across emotions.

One said: "I remember being given the option of learning German or Latin. I chose German because I thought it would come in handy if we didn't win."

Others recalled practical details. Here is an account from one girl of lunch being served out in the underground shelters:

"The cook, she was tiny, used to stagger in with a huge iron pot full of hot stew or casserole. Then the other maid would bring in the plates and we had to get off the benches so they could line them up on the bench and dollop out the

plates of food.

"They were absolutely wonderful people to go to and fro, bombers or no bombers. We were jolly hungry and it was beautiful food."

Others gave vivid accounts of the dangers they faced. One girl's diary recorded events on a particular day:

"Slept until siren sounded and bombs were dropping at 4am. A two-hour loud raid. Guns heard as I went to the station but no warning. As school started the siren sounded and the raid lasted an hour.

"We came out of the shelters but only until 11.15am when there was terrific gunfire. The siren sounded half an hour later. Bombs dropped on the town. The noise was deafening.

"We tried singing, covering our ears, chanting Latin verbs, but we couldn't escape. We came up starved at 1.15pm. A late lunch then back to the shelter from 3pm to 4pm. Missed our normal train home. Another terrible night and lots of incendiaries were dropped."

Helen Keen's beautiful illustrations of wartime school life and the memories of the 'old girls' have been reproduced in *A School-girl's War*. The book can be purchased (£10 + £2 p&p) online at mggs.org/war or by cheque or bank transfer by contacting Mary Smith at marysmithjones@hotmail.com.

Mary paid tribute to Helen Keen for the time and effort

she had devoted to creating these inspiring paintings and drawings. Sadly, she was probably never acknowledged for them during her lifetime (1912-2005).

Once the war was over it seems the book of her work was simply put in a box and stored in a cupboard where it languished unseen for more than seven decades. Finding it was rather like uncovering a treasure trove.

SPRING LEARNING PROGRAMME

The u3a national website is promoting a new u3a Spring Learning Programme packed with member-led initiatives from across the movement. The aim is to share skills, talents and opportunities for new things to learn.

Named new possibilities include getting involved with the u3a Book Group Forum, Logic Puzzles for Fun and Extreme Crochet and Knitting. Paper Craft focuses on a new craft skill each month, starting with kirigami. Other areas for learning include Kindertransport memories, maths challenges, painting or drawing, poetry, creative writing, and "Run for the World" to raise funds for u3a sports and exercise groups

Alison May, head of member services, said: "Our initiatives are always popular so don't miss out; sign up to try a new challenge."

CORAM FOUNDLING HOSPITAL - u3a TRANSCRIPTION PROJECT

MICHELLE HOWES told Bookham Social History Group 2 on Zoom about the current national u3a project to transcribe historical records from the Coram Hospital.

Established in 1741, Coram Foundling Hospital was London's first residential home for children whose mothers were unable to care for them, and it continued in this capacity until 1955.

Meticulous records were kept of every child who passed through the institution. Now held at the London Metropolitan Archives, these records include entrance registers, medical records, letters from mothers and other documents dating back to Thomas Coram's campaign to establish the Foundling Hospital.



They give unique insights into the problems and dangers faced by vulnerable children and their mothers across the centuries.

While children's needs remain the same, understanding of the best ways to meet those needs has changed radically over 280 years.

The archives give a perspective on those changes, showing how Coram has reflected contemporary thinking and pioneered

good practice in helping vulnerable children; work that continues under the Coram group of charities to the present day.

From 1763, the Foundling Hospital required mothers seeking admission for their babies to submit a petition letter, detailing the circumstances of their pregnancy, employment, and current situation.

These letters give personal accounts of experiences of motherhood among the urban

poor, but were rarely penned by the women themselves. Most petitioners relied on the goodwill of literate family, friends, neighbours or employers to help them produce their letters, and provide testimonials as to their good character.

The u3a has been offered its own distinct project transcribing the various documents that



*Left: Receiving day.
Top: Original image
of the hospital.*

Registered Charity No 1036386

made up a mother's petition. As a follow-on activity, we have the option of using any skills and resources from our own family history research, to try and trace the mother, the child, and any other person named in the petition we are working on, to discover and document their story. Our cases start in 1841, aligned with the first national census in England and Wales.

The Bookham cluster comprises 11 u3a members, arranged in pairs and a trio to cross-check each other's work, and collaborating with each other to help discern words from the sometimes barely-legible handwriting.

Between us we will piece together the fascinating story that emerges from the documents. Our first petition provides three to four pages for each individual to work on, all concerning the same woman and her baby.

As time goes on, we will move forward at different paces, being allocated new cases on an individual basis, but continuing to support each other and share ideas, hints and findings.

Michelle Howes is coordinating the Bookham cluster, and liaising with the local and national project organisers, who in turn liaise with Coram to ensure we are all on the right track. We'll let you know in future *News Bulletins* how we are getting on!

BOOKHAM U3A SUMMER DAY TRIP TO OXFORD



We are taking bookings now for a summer coach trip to Oxford organised for Wednesday, 17 August. The all-in transport costs are £14 each. Extra options include a 30-minute guided tour of the Bodleian Library at £7.70 and a visit to an Oxford University College with costs from £3 to £7.

Enjoy the delights of a summer's day in this beautiful city with pick-up in Bookham at 8.30 am. Book your tickets through the Bookham u3a website or enquiries to Viv Bignell at viv@bignells.co.uk or 01372 450392

VISIT TO WEST HORSLEY PLACE

The visit scheduled for 8 June is now sold out but a second one is planned. The guided tour lasts up to two hours and the price of £20 includes a copy of *West Horsley Place: A New Start* by the late broadcaster Bamber Gascoigne who inherited the property and set up a charity to restore the 380-acre estate as a centre for performing and visual arts and crafts. Email Rosemary Coleman rosemaryjcoleman17@gmail.com to apply for the second visit.



O&B GROUP RISES AGAIN IN SPECTACULAR FASHION

Bookham u3a Ornithology and Botany Group is back and ready for more great discoveries after the first spring outing for three years on Tuesday, 8 March.

The group was formerly run by polymath John Dicker who sadly died last year. Before that, bad weather killed off the traditional spring walk for two years running.

Ornithologist Tod Wilson has now taken up the reins and organised what turned out to be an immensely successful walk from Leatherhead Leisure Centre, first to Fetcham Mill Pond and then along the bank of the River Mole towards the crematorium.

The weather was kind and ten u3a members joined the stroll in search of birds and plants. Group member Val identified two ferns growing from the railway bridge. They



Top: The group stops at Fetcham Mill Pond.



Above: Mammals put in unexpected appearances too. A mink was one star of the show, fishing in the river.

Left: A lone roe deer made its way on to an island.

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were Wall-rue (*Asplenium ruta-muraria*) and Black Spleenwort (*Asplenium adiantum-nigrum*).

Tod said: “The bird count reached 25 species including redwing, gadwall, tufted duck and grey wagtail. We were especially lucky to see a flypast by a pair of goosanders.

“Plus we saw a mink on the bank and in the water, fishing and eating its catch. Right at the end of the walk we also saw a roe deer on the island upstream from the town bridge.”



*Clockwise from top:
Mill Pond;
a pair of goosanders;
grey wagtail; little egret;
tufted duck.*

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN AN APRIL FOOL?

Social History Group 1 discussed April Fools' Day as one of the most celebrated events of the year. Or do only fools celebrate it? Or then again, only those clever enough to fool others?

It's not normally a sad event of course. But this year has particular pathos. The only city in the world where it has ever become an official public holiday happens to be Odessa in Ukraine – the one country where no-one is now laughing. From 1973 until this year, April Fools' Day was especially celebrated there with a large parade in the city centre with free concerts, street fairs and performances. Not so now.

By contrast in Britain we can still look back on centuries of mainly innocent fun every 1 April. The BBC is an old hand at this. In 1980, BBC News announced that the clock-face of Big Ben was going digital and the clock hands would be given away as a memento. Some people steadfastly refused to be amused so an apology was issued afterwards.

This was small beer compared with the public response in 1957 when *Panorama* included the world's first ever April Fools' Day deception on television. This was the now renowned three-minute segment on the year's bumper spaghetti crop in Switzerland. Farmers were supposedly shown with bumper harvests from spaghetti trees thanks to mild weather and the elimination of the spaghetti weevil. Hundreds of credulous viewers wrote in asking how to cultivate their own spaghetti trees. A spokesman said: "Place a sprig of spaghetti in a tin of tomato sauce and hope for the best."

Of course the corporation soon admitted the hoax but there was no going back. Since then every year has witnessed elaborate pranks on radio and television as well as the press. Websites and corporations also now use the day as a PR opportunity to get brand names across.

The spaghetti hoax occurred in the days



Above: Harvesting a record spaghetti tree crop in 1957 c/o BBC Panorama.

Below: The Guardian's travel destination, the islands of San Serriffe in 1977.



of black and white television. On 1 April 1962, the Swedish national television network announced that technical expert Kjell Stensson would show how to view colour images on a black and white set. He explained about the prismatic nature of light and said a fine mesh placed in front of the screen could bend the light to appear in colour. Viewers could simply cut open a pair of nylon



*Left:
Romantic
love between
Margaret
Thatcher
and Mikhail
Gorbachev?*

stockings, tape them over the screen and they would see full colour. Thousands of viewers fell for this.

In 1977 *The Guardian* newspaper ran a brilliant April Fools' Day joke with its now classic San Serriffe travel guide, a seven-page travel supplement to a non-existent island whose names consisted of type fonts and other printing terminology. Readers unfamiliar with the print industry were either fooled or bemused but the hoax's success inspired countless other media outlets to try to outdo each other.

Much of *The Guardian's* 1 April 1981 edition discussed an exciting scientific breakthrough. Scientists had developed a machine to control the weather within a 5000-kilometre radius. Britain would be guaranteed long summers with rainfall only at night while other parts of Europe would lose out. A photo showed the inventor expressing satisfaction as a computer printout announced sunshine in England and a forthcoming blizzard over Marseilles.

In 2017 the *Daily Mail* ran a two-page hoax headed "Harry's Secret Wedding". This claimed that the Prince and Meghan Markle had eloped and had a secret wedding in Las Vegas costing just \$300. A photo showed a rather paunchy Harry look-a-like

and supposed Megan hidden by a veil.

Back in 1987 the *Daily Mirror* announced a romance between Margaret Thatcher and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev during her visit to his country. Photos of the two canoodling arm in arm in Moscow's Gorky Park produced outrage from readers.

In 2009 on 1 April, the Swiss Tourism Board released a video explaining why the country's mountains looked so clean. This was due to the hard work of the Association of Swiss Mountain Cleaners whose members climbed the Alps every day to scrub rocks of unsightly bird droppings. Millions watched the video online and 30,000 took a suitability test for the job of mountain cleaner.

On the last day of March in 1998, the *Financial Times* ran an article on an agreement between the Royal Observatory at Greenwich and the Guinness Brewery that Guinness would be declared the official sponsor of the Observatory's forthcoming millennium celebration. Greenwich Mean Time would be renamed Guinness Mean Time, and instead of counting seconds in "pips" the Observatory would count them in "pint drips". The newspaper itself may have been taken in by a Guinness press and

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release and retracted the story afterwards.

In 1995 Polo Mints ran newspaper adverts claiming they would no longer be producing mints with holes because European Community rules banned the practice. All existing stock of Polo Mints would now be supplemented with a “euro-conversion kit” containing 20 7mm “hole fillers” for each mint. Did anyone believe it?

The following year, Virgin Cola ran an advert announcing that it had integrated a new technology into its cans. When the cola passed its sell-by date, the liquid would react with the metal and turn the can bright blue. Virgin warned people not to buy any blue cans. By coincidence - perhaps - Pepsi Cola had recently unveiled newly designed cans that were bright blue.

Richard Branson already had a proud history of pranks for April Fools’ Day. On the evening of 31 March 1989 a flying saucer was spotted in a Surrey field. Police investigated and a silver-clad figure emerged. It was a pal of Branson’s who was himself hiding inside. Closer inspection revealed the flying saucer was actually a hot-air balloon which had been blown off course on the way to Hyde Park in London, due there the next day.

Another year, Virgin Atlantic issued a video and media release about the launch of the Dreambird 1417 aircraft. This had wings that bent and flexed to create a flapping motion which not only propelled the plane forward but generated its own power to meet every electronic need on board. Not to be outdone by their airline colleagues, Virgin Trains later announced the launch of an “innovative new contactless ticket system” called Tick-Ink that allowed customers to have season tickets tattooed on their bodies.

April Fools’ Day actually began centuries ago. Some historians have linked it to ancient Roman festivals such as Hilaria (Latin for *joyful*), celebrated at the end of March by followers of the cult of Cybele. People dressed in disguises and mocked each other.

Another theory is that the spring equinox at the start of April was when Mother Nature fooled people with unpredictable weather.

In France, you risk being known as a “poisson d’avril” or April fish. This may date back to 1564 when France switched from the Julian to the Gregorian calendar. People who were slow to notice that the New Year now started on 1 January rather than the spring equinox became the butt of jokes which included having paper fish pinned to their backs and being referred to as “poisson d’avril” to denote being gullible or easily caught.

In 1686, 1 April was described as “Fool’s holy day” and on that day in 1698, people were tricked into going to the Tower of London to “see the Lions being washed”. There was no such event but it still attracted gullible visitors each year for many years afterwards.

In 1965, *Politiken*, a Copenhagen newspaper reported that a new road safety law had been proposed in the Danish parliament that would require all black dogs to be painted white so as to be seen more easily at night. In 1986 perhaps the ultimate Danish April Fools’ Day hoax was made by no less than the Prime Minister Poul Schluter. He held a press conference demanding that the British government impose right-hand driving to match mainland Europe. Schluter, known as an enthusiastic cyclist, said he was afraid to ride his bike in Britain. But as he was leaving the press conference he turned and added: “April Fools!”

In the newspaper *USA Today* in 1998, Burger King advertised a “Left-Handed Whopper” hamburger specially created for left-handed customers. Cottonelle, an American producer of toilet paper, used the same idea in 2015.

Finally in 1994 an American computer magazine ran a column about a bill going through Congress that would ban use of the Internet while intoxicated. The contact for more information was given as LIRPA SLOOF.

A HISTORY OF THE 465 BUS ROUTE

Some interest groups have found the 465 bus service very useful and reliable, but it always seems an oddity.

Not being a ‘bus anorak’, you are spared the finer detail here of changes in company livery and bus type but why exactly does a London bus route operate way beyond the Greater London boundary and put a noticeable red spike on the map of the Surrey countryside?

Indeed, it travels a shorter distance within London than it does in Surrey. The capital’s bus network has plenty of anomalies but at least the majority actually are London bus routes.

The 465 travels deep into the Surrey countryside after it leaves Kingston’s boundary at Malden Rushett to make its way across Leatherhead to its terminus in Dorking. That is some 21 miles from Charing Cross.

The service started life in 1991 as a non-London bus route when it ran from London via Leatherhead to Dorking and Horsham. Since then the route has had many changes and one could say a chequered history.

In 1997 it was designated the service from Teddington via Kingston to Leatherhead and Dorking and was operated by the firm London & Country (top right).

Tellings-Golden Miller took over in 1999 (middle right) and the route was then



diverted at Leatherhead via Great Bookham to Effingham Woodlands Road but that was withdrawn 18 months later except for two peak journeys. After another six months, those peak journeys were also withdrawn.

In 2006 the Teddington to Kingston section was curtailed and the following year the route passed to Arriva Guildford & West Surrey

for what turned out to be just two years.

In October 2009 Transport for London signed a new contract for route 465 with Metrobus. That lasted for three years until the route was re-assigned to Epsom Coaches subsidiary, Quality Line (see above).

Quality Line became in turn a subsidiary of the

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Paris-based RATP Group in 2012. In 2020 the 465 route was transferred to another RATP subsidiary, London United, but at least some stability had been achieved with RATP subsidiaries continuing to operate on behalf of Transport for London for the past 10 years.

But only up to a point! In 2017, Transport for London proposed to shorten the route at Leatherhead. This would have killed off public transport altogether for the unfortunate residents of Mickleham and seriously undermined Dorking's transport too.

The residents of Mickleham and surrounding areas got the support of Surrey County Council to oppose this change. As the stretch from Leatherhead to Dorking is entirely within Surrey and it was in the interests of local residents to keep the route as it was, Transport for London and Surrey County Council reached a new agreement.

The first section of the route between Kingston and Leatherhead would be funded by Transport for London and the second between Leatherhead and Dorking by Surrey County Council for five years.

Each manages its own sections and they share the fare revenue proportionally under the overall route management of Transport



Above: The 465 bus as we currently know it, travelling between Kingston and Dorking via Leatherhead and Mickleham every day. Its future has been secured - for the time being!

for London.

For Bookham residents the nearest it comes is the Fetcham Downs roundabout on the A246 at the top of the hill from Bockett's Farm. But at least it still exists as an essential service into London as well as a link with both Leatherhead and Dorking. It is also generally more reliable than our other remaining bus services as it operates both evening and weekend services after they stop running.

So that is why we have a noticeable and very important red bus on our local roads today.





JOIN THE TEAM



Chichester Summer School 2023

Meet interesting people and enjoy working with a great team! The Summer School is looking for volunteers to join the team organising this popular and long-running event.

Very few particular skills are required, just basic computer skills, for listing classes and attendees, and zoom meetings. And enthusiasm of course!

Note: team members live all over the SE Region and talk on the phone during the year. They meet in Chichester in June.

Contact David Ashton via the website

<https://u3asites.org.uk/southeastu3aforum/home>

on the **Contact** page

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COMING TALKS IN THE OLD BARN HALL THIS YEAR

Tuesday, 3 May: Howard Smith *Picture Post*

Picture Post, the first photo-journalism magazine published by Hulton Press, was selling two million copies a week in the 1940s. In the 1950s, editor Tom Hopkinson detailed post-war life in Britain with a message of the need for regeneration and social reform.

Tuesday, 7 June: Fran Sandham *My Walk across Africa*

Author Fran Sandham walked solo across Africa from Namibia's coast to the Indian Ocean near Zanzibar, a 3000-mile trek taking nearly a year.

Tuesday, 5 July: John Griffiths-Colby *Emily Connell's Autograph Book*

Emily Connell was a staff nurse at the 3rd Western General Hospital in Cardiff when World War 1 broke out. She kept an autograph book in which her patients drew and wrote messages. This is Part 2 of the story of her own highs and lows and struggles with the system.

Tuesday, 6 September: Ian Keable *The History of Cartoons*

Cartoons became standard in *Punch* magazine from the 1840s but Hogarth and Gillray employed satire, caricature, speech bubbles and captions long before then. Masters of the craft have since included John Tenniel, John Leech, David Low, Vicky, Ronald Searle, Heath Robinson, Giles, Gerald Scarfe, Steve Bell and Peter Brookes among others.

Tuesday, 4 October: Paul Barfield *The mysterious death of MI6 spy Gareth Williams*

In August 2010 Gareth failed to return to work at MI6 HQ in Vauxhall after annual leave.. Police found him dead in his flat inside a large sports bag, padlocked from the outside and placed in his bath. The flat was locked from the outside. The speaker delves beneath the media headlines into the world of international espionage. Who would want to kill this mild-mannered maths genius? A former policeman, Paul recalls how events unfolded to a disbelieving world. We ask if this was a tragic accident, a deliberate act by Gareth or something a lot more sinister. We look at the part played by MI6 and the police enquiry and ask whether international agents had a hand in his demise.

Tuesday, 1 November: Neil Hanson *Ghostwriting*

Author Neil Hanson has led an extraordinary life but as a professional ghost-writer of over 60 published books, he has also worked with a remarkably diverse collection of fascinating people. His clients include household names, among them an American showbiz legend, England's most famous cricketer, a famous actor, one of Britain's most decorated soldiers and an England football manager. Others include SAS men, fast-jet pilots, explorers and adventurers, a treasure diver, a kidnap negotiator, a hugely successful businessman, a spy, a notorious gangster, an around the world walker, a submariner, a maxillofacial surgeon and many more.

Tuesday, 6 December: Jacques Arnold *The House of Windsor*

Jacques Arnold, author of the *Royal Houses of Europe* series of genealogical books, draws on a lifetime interest initially encouraged by Lord Mountbatten when Jacques was a school-boy 40 years ago. He is now one of Her Majesty's Deputy Lieutenants of Kent. He will provide a wealth of interesting anecdotes, drawing on European history with all its dramas and personal triumphs and tragedies.

SURREY u3a NETWORK

UP AND COMING STUDY DAYS

Study days are open to all u3a members and guests are very welcome. They are held in the Yehudi Menuhin Hall at Stoke d'Abernon, starting with registration from 9.30am and running from 10am to 4pm.

The fees, including coffee/tea and biscuits, are £12 for members and £15 for guests and £5 for virtual attendance. Attendees bring a packed lunch and prior booking is necessary.

Click on any study day link at the website www.u3asites.org.uk for a programme and booking form. You can use the online form on the Contact page to send a message to John Kennedy, Booking Secretary.

If you want to comment on the organisation or content of the study day or would like to offer ideas for the future please use the Feedback Form and send it to John Kennedy as an email attachment or fill in the same form which will be available at the study days and hand it to any member of the committee.

The list of study day titles is given, together with a poster of a typical study day. When study day handouts or presentations are available for download they will be mounted for at least three months.

Surrey Network treats your privacy rights seriously and its Privacy Policy can be

found by following the link. History of Study Days.

Please contact Surrey Network Chairman, Caroline Sawers, on 01483 560590. Coming up:

22 April

Illuminated Manuscripts of the Medieval Period.

Presenter: Imogen Corrigan

20 May

Chemistry, Cosmetics and Killers. Presenter:

Dr Kathryn Harkup

17 June

Understanding Turner: The Man, His Life & His Work

Presenter: Professor Maria Chester

HOW TO CHALLENGE AGEISM

The Third Age Trust is leading a campaign against ageism in the UK. It is the country's most prevalent form of discrimination, with one in three people experiencing age-based prejudice or discrimination.

A survey of u3a members found that nearly 40% had heard ageist language used about their age group. A fifth (20%) of those surveyed in their sixties said they had been described as "elderly" with nearly two fifths (37%) finding the term offensive.

u3a and the Centre for Ageing Better have joined forces to produce advice to help members challenge ageism and promote positive ageing. They have produced an Ageism Toolkit which can be downloaded from on the Third Age Trust website.

This includes information and resources on

how to challenge ageism, including a Top Tips guide. Members are encouraged to read the toolkit, put some of the actions into practice and share their experiences.

A recent survey into how members used the toolkit showed they felt encouraged to take action as a result. Over half of those surveyed had read it, of whom two-thirds said they now understood more about ageism and how to tackle it.

One in five said they had challenged ageism in conversations and a further 50% said they might do so in future. Suggestions included being a role model, being open-minded and promoting acceptance, holding workshops, addressing inter-generational issues and raising awareness that ageism actually goes both ways.

WHY NOT USE THE NEWS BULLETIN TO PROMOTE YOUR OWN U3A GROUP?

Has your group done something interesting recently? Would other Bookham u3a members be interested in your news? Or do you have vacancies to fill which would help strengthen your group? If so, you can use this monthly News Bulletin to reach our whole membership and attract the attention you need. Try contacting the editor, Tony Matthews, at newsletter@bookhamu3a.org.uk. The more we all share, the more we get to know about Bookham u3a and its potential for future growth.

NEW CHESS GROUP GETS UNDER WAY

The new Chess Group held its first meeting on 5 April in the Waterfield Room and nine members attended. It is now every first and third Tuesday of the month at 10am. Novices are welcome and tuition is provided. Contact Brian Strutton.

TABLE TENNIS ALL YEAR ROUND

A second Table Tennis Group has been set up for summer, complementing the existing one for other times of the year. See groups list on Page 18.

MILITARY HISTORY

The Military History Group has vacancies to fill. It meets every fourth Tuesday of the month at 2pm.

EDWINA VARDEY STEPS DOWN



Edwina (left), who has led and inspired aspirant creative writers since Bookham u3a started in the 1980s, has decided to take a well earned retirement, writes BILL WHITMAN. She learned her craft as a professional editor of London published magazines, and is well

known locally as editor of the *History of Leatherhead*, first published by the Leatherhead & District Local History Society in 1988.

From a small, tentative beginning, the Creative Writing Group has thrived, encouraged by Edwina to avoid the obvious and to think and write creatively. It was never a class for diarists and writers of family history. Members were given a title and two weeks to compose an original piece.

About 20 students from across the district have been members of the group; just one remains of the original four.

Edwina inaugurated Penny Readings as part of *Arts Alive* and as an annual occasion to show off the group's achievements. Penny Readings started in Barton's Bookshop, Leatherhead, but out-grew that venue and for many years took place in the Green Room of the Leatherhead Theatre with an audience of about 40, a bar and a musical interlude.

The Creative Writing Group also read some of their pieces at Denbies and at a u3a anniversary. As a group we will greatly miss Edwina's gentle encouragement and challenging titles but we will continue as an ageing cooperative to endeavour to write creatively and avoid the obvious.

WILL YOU VOLUNTEER TO HELP U3A NATIONALLY?

Many u3a members volunteer at local, regional and national level, investing their time in a wide range of roles.

They help keep the movement running by offering

skills ranging from committee roles through to putting out chairs and making tea.

If you would like to make your own contribution to the national movement, you

can always contact the main u3a office to find out more. To do so or to come up with suggestions please email impact@u3a.org.uk.

YOUR OPTIONS FOR GROUP MEETINGS

Please go to the website to ensure you connect to the latest information on each group.

CODE	GROUP NAME	WEEK IN MONTH	DAY	TIME
His12	3E London	Fourth	Wednesday	AM
Art06	Architectural History	Fourth	Thursday	PM
Art02	Art Appreciation 2	Third	Monday	PM
Art03	Art Appreciation 3	Third	Tuesday	PM
Bee01	Beer Appreciation	Second	Wednesday	PM
Eng07	Book Reading 1	First	Thursday	PM
Eng08	Book Reading 2	Second	Thursday	PM
Eng12	Book Reading 3	Third	Tuesday	PM
Eng10	Book Reading 4	Second	Tuesday	AM
Bri01	Bridge 1	Weekly	Monday	AM
Bri03	Bridge 3	Weekly	Monday	AM
Bri04	Bridge 4	Weekly	Tuesday	AM
Bri05	Bridge 5	Weekly	Thursday	AM
Bri06	Bridge 6	Weekly	Friday	AM
Bri07	Bridge 7	Weekly	Thursday	AM
Bri0x	Bridge All Groups	Weekly	Various	AM
Bri08	Bridge Beginners/Improvers	Weekly	Wednesday	AM
Can01	Canasta 1	Second + Fourth	Wednesday	PM
Can02	Canasta 2	Second	Tuesday	PM
Cra07	Card Making	Last	Thursday	PM
Ch01	Chess	When required	TBC	PM
IT03	Computing Workshop	Second	Thursday	AM
Cra01	Crafts	First + Third	Tuesday	AM
Cra08	Creative Embroidery	First	Monday	AM
Eng03	Creative Writing	Every Other	Friday	AM
Cro01	Croquet (April to Oct)	Various	Various	AM
CA01	Current Affairs	Second	Wednesday	PM
Cyc01	Cycling	First + Third	Friday	AM
Wal03	Easy Rambling	Second + Fourth	Tuesday	AM
His10	Family History	Third	Monday	AM
Cra06	Flower Arranging	First	Thursday	AM
Fre01	French Conversation	Second + Fourth	Wednesday	AM
Fre04	French Intermediate	Second + Fourth	Thursday	AM
Gar03	Gardening 03	Second	Wednesday	PM
His22	History	Second + Fourth	Wednesday	PM
Dan01	Line Dancing	Weekly	Wednesday	PM
Dan02	Line Dancing Beginners	Weekly	Wednesday	PM
His11	London Walks	Third	Wednesday	AM
His13	London Walks 3	Third	Thursday	AM
His15	London Walks 4	First	Thursday	AM
His17	London Walks 5	Third	Friday	AM
His18	London Walks 6	Third	Thursday	AM
Mah01	Mah-jong	Weekly	Friday	PM
Met01	Metal Detecting	Second + Fourth	Wednesday	PM
His08	Military History	Fourth	Tuesday	PM
Wal04	Morning Hikes	Second	Wednesday	AM
Sci06	Ornithology & Botany	Second	Tuesday	PM
Art04	Painting Workshop	Weekly	Monday	AM
Per01	Phoenix Entertainment	Weekly	Thursday	PM
Pho01	Photography	Fourth	Wednesday	AM
Eng11	Play Reading	Fourth	Monday	PM
Eng01	Poetry Appreciation	Second	Thursday	PM

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CODE	GROUP NAME	WEEK IN MONTH	DAY	TIME
Zz01	Qigong	Weekly	Monday	PM
Sci01	Science & Technology 1	Second	Thursday	AM
Sci02	Science & Technology 2	Fourth	Thursday	PM
Sci03	Science & Technology 3	Third	Wednesday	PM
Scr01	Scrabble	When required	Various	PM
His16	Social History 1	Second	Monday	AM
His20	Social History 2	First	Monday	PM
Spa02	Spanish Group 2-Basic	First + Third	Monday	PM
Ten01	Table Tennis	Weekly	Monday	PM
Ten02	Table Tennis Summer	Weekly	Monday	PM
TC01	Tai Chi 1	Weekly	Thursday	AM
TC02	Tai Chi 2	When Required	N/A	AM
The01	Theatre Interest	When Required	Various	PM
Tra01	Travel Experiences	Third	Tuesday	PM
Mus11	Ukulele	Second + Fourth	Thursday	AM
Gar02	Vegetable Gardening	Second	Saturday	AM
Wal02	Walking 12km	First	Friday	AM
Wal01	Walking 7km	Second + Fourth	Friday	AM
Win02	Wine Appreciation 2	Fourth	Wednesday	PM
Win03	Wine Appreciation 3	Second	Tuesday	PM
Win04	Wine Appreciation 4	Third	Monday	PM
Win05	Wine Appreciation 5	Fourth	Monday	PM

SITUATION VACANT

Please contact Chris Middleton at chairman@bookhamu3a.org.uk or call him on 01372 454107 for more information on any of the roles below.

VICE-CHAIRMAN

A Vice-Chairman is needed who will deputise for the Chairman and be able to fill that role when the current period of office expires. The Chairman has the following roles:

- Maintain the objectives/purposes of the u3a.
- Preserve order at meetings and ensure that the correct procedure is followed and the agenda covered
- Guide discussions in a positive manner while allowing different points to be expressed
- Encourage audience participation in discussion and decision-making
- Draw discussions to a conclusion and summarise for audience votes where required.
- Ensure decisions are followed through.

RE-DESIGNING EVERY DAY

The national u3a is collaborating with This Age Thing and The Design Age Institute at the Royal College of Art to help identify everyday items in our homes that we find most irritating.

Poor design is believed to be making the lives of many members more difficult and thousands have helped u3a identify the 25 most frustrating everyday objects.

50% identified food packaging as a real frustration, while medical packaging was found to cause irritation and stress by 12.5% of those surveyed.

Other items identified were changing duvets (13.3%), TV remotes (5%), high cupboards (5%), and keys and locks (3.5%). The aim is to put older voices at the heart of design and re-educate business on what we really need.

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