

Senior Moments

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

Issue 80

November

2023

Chairman's Commentary for the November 2023 Senior Moments

It gives me great pleasure to write this first piece as your new Chairman having been elected at the AGM. I would like to thank the one hundred or so members present who voted for me and inform our other 400 members that you can blame them if you are not happy with my appointment. Joking aside, the AGM each October is your opportunity to help shape the Committee of your u3a, and hence how we move forward, so encourage as many as are able to come along next year.

I am pleased to say that we have a full programme of speakers lined up for the remainder of this year and the whole of 2024. Our last meeting of 2023 will be held on Tuesday 5 December. For the last couple of years we have celebrated the upcoming festive season with food boxes from Pearce's Bakery – expertly organised by our then Social Secretary. As we have no-one in that role to organise it this year your Committee will determine what can be provided.

As well as having no Social Secretary, we also have vacancies for a Vice Chairman and an Assistant Webmaster. As you know, I volunteered as Vice Chairman last year and can tell you I have had a wonderful experience supporting Chris Middleton throughout that time. Whilst it is traditional for the Vice Chairman to later step into the Chairman's role this is by no means compulsory so if you think you could spare the time to work with me to support the u3a, I would love to hear from you.

Our Webmaster carries out the many tasks involved in maintaining our website, assisting the Membership Secretary in managing the members' database, and so

on. We are looking for someone to assist with some of the routine duties, eg in running monthly backups and ensuring updated policies and guidance are uploaded to the website. This role does not require an IT specialist but simply someone who is comfortable working on their computer. You would not have to join the Committee unless you chose to do so but to regularly touch base with the Webmaster to ensure our systems are safe and sound.

Apart from our monthly meetings, the lifeblood of any u3a is its Interest Groups of which we have around 65. I want to express my thanks to the Group Administrators – many of whom have held their position for a number of years – and say that I look forward to inviting them to join me for an update session followed by lunch in the New Year.

For those who have not looked at the website for some time I can tell you that you can find those groups with vacancies on the Groups page. Do have a look and see if there is anything you fancy and get in touch with the Group Administrator. If you have a passion to do something not already covered, please send a message to our Groups Co-ordinator and put your ideas forward.

As I start my tenure, I can say I am eager to meet as many members as possible. If you have something you want to say to me, please do not hesitate to send an email or speak to me at a monthly meeting.

Phil



Bookham and District u3a

Registered Charity No 1036386 u3a Membership No 254/239/93

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Editorial

With this edition of Senior Moments we welcome our new Chairman Phil Brown and four new committee members, who will join with the continuing committee to lead the Bookham u3a.

In this issue of the magazine we hope you will find plenty to read but I have had to resort to including two articles from the main u3a website and hopefully you will also find them interesting reading. You will also find details of the Bookham u3a 2024 calendar that is available and will be on sale at the monthly meetings for just £9, payable by bank transfer, cheque to Bookham u3a or cash..

Maurice Baker



Senior Moments
Editor
Maurice Baker

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Peter Osborne



Pat Mander



Groups co-ordinator

Chris Middleton

U3A Book Group 3

Thriving and Surviving since 2014, so probably getting something right.

Asked to write about my Book Group for the Newsletter, I realised that we have enjoyed far more than a, now very long, list of remarkable books read and shared since March 2014.

Every meeting is not only a discussion about the current book, but talk around new books; authors; films; theatre; programmes; news; and old favourite books. We have tackled challenging topics, and occasionally biography; classics and non-fiction books. We agree that a good

around it can feel quite hard to find the perfect read for everyone. So, we don't worry too much, and choose a book that we like.

Personally, I have really enjoyed being offered authors whom I have not known about, or topics that are difficult to tackle alone. As there are many well-read and knowledgeable readers in our group, there are always interesting authors to look out for. We also gather recommendations from our families and friends, booklists and the proliferation of Literary Prize prizes, like the Booker, or Women's Prize for Fiction. One Prize I have recently heard of is the



book group read has a story that is a page-turner with plausible characters, and that includes topics for discussion, oh, and not too many pages!

We have very varied tastes within the group, so, when our turn comes to offer a book come

Walter Scott Prize for Historical Fiction.

From early days, our group has attended various Book Festival events and Live Screenings and for our December meeting we watch a film of a book we have

read. With a lunch and chat too, of course. We also have an annual literary outing. These have included Jane Austen's home at Chawton, Kipling's home at Batemans and Virginia Woolf's home at Rodmell and the local independent bookshop that opened in Ashted. Always with coffee and a nice lunch!

I would like to pay tribute to the determination and skills gained among group members to stay in touch during the Covid Lockdowns, learning fast about how to run and log onto Zoom meetings and supporting each

other. Then when possible, offering hospitality outdoors and ultimately to meeting in our homes again.

With many good memories of our book group activities, for me a special moment was listening to the recital of a Kipling poem, memorised by one member in childhood, as we sipped coffee and ate Danish pastries whilst sitting all together in the sunny garden at Batemans.

Viv Bignell



Raoul Dufy

Raoul Dufy was a French artist who lived 1877 to 1953 known as



Fauvist. He was born in Le Havre, where he began to study art at night while working as an

errand boy during the day. When he obtained a small scholarship in 1900 he went to Paris to study with Bonnat. About five years later, he met Matisse and the other Fauve painters, whose colour delighted him. Throughout the 1920s, Dufy



worked in a variety of materials, producing ceramics, tapestry hangings, and large-scale

architectural decorations.

I first became interested in Dufy very many years ago because I was attracted to his almost casual pen sketching with watercolour wash.

His commission for the 26th Venice Biennale won him the International Grand Prix for painting in 1952, a year before his death on March 23, 1953 in Forcalquier, France. Raoul Dufy liked to paint beach scenes in his native Normandy, France. He also painted scenes of the fashionable South of France,

including crowded beaches, yachts and parties. Some of his early works include *The Popular Dance*, *The Bathers* and *The Olive Trees*. During the first half of the 20th century, the Fauves, the Cubists, and the Surrealists dominated the art of France. Dufy's palette and his taste for beauty eventually led him to the world of fashion and fabric design.

He eventually became one of the most sought-after illustrators of his day and designed sets and costumes. Raoul Dufy's painting reflected this aesthetic until about 1909, when contact with



the work of Paul Cezanne led him to adopt a somewhat subtler technique. The optimistic, fashionably decorative and illustrative nature of much of Raoul Dufy's work has meant that his output has been less highly valued critically than the works of artists who have addressed a wider range of social concerns. Raoul Dufy painted murals for public buildings and produced a significant number of tapestries and ceramic designs. Dufy had his first

exhibition at the Salon des Indépendants in 1903, but three years later he abandoned Impressionism. He produced works with glowing colours and broad sweeping brush strokes



aligned which aligned him more closely with the Fauvists such as Henri Matisse – whose paintings greatly impressed Dufy. Fauvism, derived from the French word *fauve* meaning ‘wild beast’ was an art movement known for its radical use of vivid, contrasting colours. A trip to Munich in 1909 led to Dufy’s discovery of Expressionism and the possibilities of wood-engraving. Dufy had a number of friends who were writers, including the famous French poet Apollinaire, and he illustrated a number of books with woodcuts. In 1911 he began using woodcut in textile design in association with Paul Poiret, the most fashionable dress-designer of pre-First World War Europe. From 1912 – 1930 Dufy designed fabrics for Bianchini-Ferrier, a leading French textile company.

Dufy was also an accomplished interior designer, and regularly exhibited his

designs at the Salon des Artistes Décorateurs. He carried out a number of important commissions, including the decoration of Paul Poiret’s three boats.

In 1935 the artist began to explore a new medium—oil paints specially prepared by a chemist that reproduced the freshness and lightness usually associated with watercolours. He used these new oils in 1937 to create his remarkable work *La Fée Électricité* (The Electricity Fairy). The seventy-thousand-square-foot painting, was created for the Palace of Light at the 1937 International Exposition in Paris.

The Electricity Fairy based on *De Rerum natura* by Lucretius. Measuring 10 X 60 metres! (see previous 2 pages) it is divided into two themes, the history and applications of electricity. The



lower half features portraits of 110 great scientists and inventors who have

contributed to the development of electricity along with blending mythology and allegory. It took only ten months to complete and was donated by Electricité de France to the museum in 1964.

Maurice Baker





Dufy's very big 10x60 metre painting

A New Venue for the Easy Rambling Group

We enjoyed a warm and partially sunny September day at West Horsley Place followed by refreshments at the Windsor Castle.

The walk took just over an hour,



basically behind the house and



barns, extending down to the railway round and back. It's easy to park - entering through the second gated driveway as you approach from the East Horsley direction.

We had brief views of the opera house from behind. At the moment it is covered in scaffolding and extensions are being built on the top.



Frances Pullan



RHS—The pond



RHS—water irises

The Bookham Painting Workshop calendar Moments editor £9 each



is available from Maurice Baker Senior
which pay by bank transfer



Push Back Ageism

Push Back Ageism is a multi-layered, nation-wide initiative to change the narrative and challenge preconceptions around age and older adults and what it means to grow older.

The u3a movement believes that everyone has a positive contribution to make to the community around them and age should not be a factor in this. We want to see a world where people are seen for who they are not based on preconceptions to do with their age. We want a society which accepts that every age brings with it many new and exciting opportunities.

By providing people opportunities to come together, learn, volunteer and stay active, the u3a movement is integral to promoting health and wellbeing as we age. We believe that emphasising a positive view of ageing and working in a collaborative way with others holding the same values will show that there is a different way of looking at ageing and older people.

Credit: Philippe Leone

Challenging Ageism

In the UK, ageism is the 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 surveyed u3a members in their sixties said they had been described as 'elderly' with nearly two fifths (37%) of them finding the term offensive.

Credit: Centre for Ageing Better [Anti-ageism Toolkit](#)

u3a and the Centre for Ageing Better have joined forces to produce advice to help members challenge ageism and promote positive ageing.

The toolkit, which includes information and resources on how to challenge ageism, including a 'Top Tips' guide, is available as a PDF download:

[Ageism Toolkit \(1.14 MB\)](#)

At the end of 2021, we encouraged members to read the toolkit, put some of the actions into practice and share their experiences. Find out more [Anti-Ageism Toolkit Findings](#).

Anti-Ageism Toolkit Findings

Published : 06 February
2022 Views: 1357

A recent survey into how members used the Anti-Ageism toolkit revealed that members felt encouraged to take action against ageism as a result.

54% of the members surveyed had read the toolkit and 9% had taken some action as a result. Of those who had read the toolkit two thirds said that they understood more about ageism and how to tackle it. One in five of those who read the toolkit said that they have challenged ageism in conversations, and a further 50% said they plan or may take this action in future.

“Of those who had read the toolkit, two thirds said that they understood more about ageism and how to tackle it.”

u3a members also made suggestions for other actions that could be taken such as being a role model to others, being open-minded and kind and promoting acceptance, doing some self-reflection and checking in on your own internally and externally directed ageism, holding workshops, addressing intergenerational issues and raising awareness that ageism goes both ways.

The Anti-Ageism Toolkit was created with the Centre for Ageing Better and launched on 2 June 2021. It is part of ongoing work u3a is doing to challenge ageist assumptions.

View the toolkit and keep up to date on our work to challenge ageism on [Our Impact page](#).

Email impact@u3a.org.uk with comments or suggestions.

These two pieces were taken from the u3a website. Ed

An utterly Incomplete History of Keyboards, and keyboard music

This was the title of September's StudyDay at Yahudi Menhuin Hall and what a study it turned out to be. I

have never been able to play a keyboard instrument nor indeed any musical instrument but this has not stopped me from enjoying music during a long life and particularly keyboard music in the form of piano playing.

clavichord

For a very long time I have particularly enjoyed J S Bach's 48, The Well Tempered Clavier, composed in the form of a prelude and fugue in every K signature throughout the classical range, but while I have enjoyed so many pianists who have recorded this and some, they go so far as to say they always play at least one prelude and fugue everyday no matter what else

they do. Bach of course who



clavichord

died in 1750 never knew or heard any music played on an iron framed grand piano and the sound this instrument

makes is quite different from any other keyboard instrument. He may have composed the work and first heard it on a clavichord which is a keyboard instrument that plucks the strings rather than

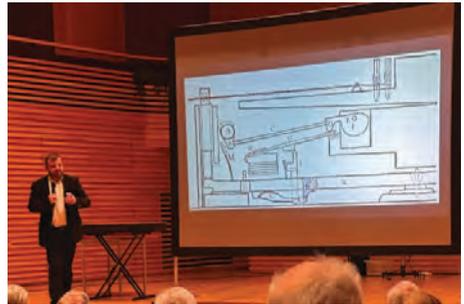
The Clavichord

- ◆ Earliest reference 1404
- ◆ Unlike harpsichords, didn't really die away
- ◆ Continues being made right through to the present day
- ◆ Various different styles & sizes
- ◆ Surprisingly widespread – many composers used them as domestic/practice instruments



harpsichord

hammer them as a modern piano. The sound produced by a clavichord is extremely quiet and when the speaker on the



Study Day, Steven Devine, demonstrated it was still very difficult to hear even in the fine acoustic of the Menuhin Hall.

Maurice Baker

Learning Events

The u3a members can join a wide range of online talks, workshops and courses for free with their membership!

Most of these opportunities are presented by members themselves; sharing their knowledge or skills with others across the movement. We also have a wide range of talks on offer from well-known speakers and organisations, plus in-person events at venues like the Royal Institution.

All of these events can be booked below via Eventbrite. At the time of booking, please ensure that you can attend and if you later find

that you're unable to, please cancel your place through Eventbrite to avoid others missing out unnecessarily. All events are for u3a members only.

If you are considering offering a talk or workshop please get in touch at events@u3a.org.uk - we'd love to hear from you.

Our online events are hosted on Zoom. We have some 'How to Guides' for using Zoom if you are unfamiliar with the platform. Don't forget u3a also runs many projects, initiatives and competitions available for all members to get involved in too.



Autumn leaves —Derek Wisbey



RHS Wisley



RHS Wisley

Bookham u3a future events

The table below shows upcoming meetings open to all members. For more information on these meetings please refer to the Bookham u3a website. You will need to be logged in to see the additional information.

The monthly meetings always start at 2.30pm

- 07 Nov **London through the eyes of Hogarth**
- 05 Dec **Walking into Grandma's kitchen in 1940's Madras**
- 02 Jan **Utterly immoral - Robert Keable and his scandalous novel**
- 06 Feb **Morris Dancing and what the Industrial Revolution did for it.**

Study Days at Yehudi Menuhin School

Always on a Friday 10am to 4pm

Bring your own lunch

£12 u3a members

Fri Oct 20th [Quarks, the Universe, and Everything](#)
The aim is to introduce some of the basic constituents of the Universe. No scientific background knowledge is expected. It will include a few songs to sing along to, the occasional joke, and guest appearances by a well-known Bear of Little Brain. Presented by Professor Philip Harris, University of Sussex

Fri Nov 17th [Rembrandt - From Fame to Poverty and Final Acclaim](#)
Presented by Colin Wiggins

Seating places are available in the hall or for on-line viewing and booking will open in May

Bookable on line surreyu3astudyday@btinternet.com