



Senior

Moments

The Newsletter of the Bookham & District

University of the Third Age

Issue 70

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If you want to get involved in Zoom there are full step by step instructions from Chris Middleton on the website, here are the first two pages

1

zoom Installation Instructions

Before starting it is advisable to check that you have an Operating System version equal or later than shown opposite; go to 'Settings' from the bottom LHS Start Button, then 'System', then 'About'. No damage will be done by just looking into Settings.

Windows 10 users should have the latest version because of Microsoft's automatic monthly updating. Other Operating Systems may not be automatically updated.

System requirements

- An internet connection - broadband wired or wireless (3G or 4G/LTE)
- Speakers and a microphone - built-in or USB plug-in or wireless Bluetooth
- A webcam or HD webcam - built-in or USB plug-in
- Or, a HD cam or HD camcorder with video capture card

Supported operating systems

- macOS X with macOS 10.7 or later
- Windows 10
Note: For devices running Windows 10, they must run Windows 10 Home, Pro, or Enterprise. S Mode is not supported.
- Windows 8 or 8.1
- Windows 7
- Windows Vista with SP1 or later
- Windows XP with SP3 or later
- Ubuntu 12.04 or higher
- Mint 17.1 or higher
- Red Hat Enterprise Linux 6.4 or higher
- Oracle Linux 6.4 or higher
- CentOS 6.4 or higher
- Fedora 21 or higher

2

Use Google to find <https://zoom.us> and click on the Plans & Pricing tab.

This will take you to instruction 3.



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Chris Middleton



Bookham and District U3A

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With this issue of Senior Moments we welcome our new Chairman Chris Middleton, who has had to wait six months before taking office due to the complications of the pandemic. We all welcome him and look forward to his term of office where the first main task will be to re-establish the normal working of Bookham u3a. Also, starting with this issue, a new logo for u3a has come into effect where lower case letters are used in place of capitals.

It has been a strange old time these last many months as we have all had to cope with the lockdown and all its implications on so many of our activities.

There are many good things to read in this edition we have a whole biography of John Evelyn who had connections with Surrey told to us by Colin Jackson and then Brian Williams most interesting article on fungi giving all sorts of facts about mushrooms I was unaware of it and it put me in mind of something I heard on Radio 4—all mushrooms are edible, but some of them only once! We have two poems this time on issues of the moment and there is a piece to help anyone who is thinking of producing a book—it's so much easier now with digital printing and professional results can be achieved at very reasonable cost.

Chris Pullan has written an amusing piece about the new words we have learnt since the pandemic started. There is a reminder that we are always looking for new members to join the Committee. It doesn't have to be too onerous and there are plenty of friendly and helpful people to guide you during the early stages as a Committee member.

Don Edwards has contributed a piece on War Memorials inspired by Roger's Zoom talk on the subject.

Maurice Baker

Cover photo—cowslips in a member's garden

Chairman's Introduction

Welcome to another edition of our Senior Moments, which this time comes with a new Chairman's introduction.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to become your Chairman and I hope that I live up to your expectations. There are two ways of looking at the position one as an honour, which indeed it is, but also as a 'poisoned chalice'. Throughout my life I have always taken the view that the best way to enjoy something is to become involved. So, when our sons were in primary school, I became involved with the PTA and ultimately became a school governor. Little did I know then that I would remain a governor for over 20 years, spending 15 years as their chairman. That was far too long to find a replacement and although I have some staying power, I am really glad that our constitution limits my period of office to 2 years maximum!

When you first accepted me as Vice Chairman, I was asked on more than one occasion would I be heading the revolution when I became chairman. No, I said but I would be encouraging evolution. Little did I know then that we would be set back and have more than a year disrupted by a pandemic. Much has been written about that already, so let me just say that I hope you have managed to find something that our u3a has been able to offer which helped you through difficult times.

So now we face the prospect of a new normal, whatever that means. I know that many of our interest groups have either not met at all or have been reduced to Zoom calls except when government restrictions allowed outdoor groupings. If the Government's road map out of COVID-19 is followed, then we should be looking again at starting up interest groups. However, they may be different. Some group members interests may have changed, some may still be wary of meeting face to face, whilst other members may be looking for a new activity. All this brings us to potentially relaunching our u3a so that we can remind ourselves of what we have to offer each other and advertising our u3a for the benefit of potential new members. Your Committee will be looking at this and planning for the future. Already they have decided to have a presence at Village Day on the 30th August.

An organisation like ours always needs 'new blood' if it is to move forward and as you can read elsewhere in this edition, we are reminding you of the need for members to come forward and volunteer their services as new Committee members. If this doesn't happen then our u3a could look a lot different.

Yes, I leave you on a sobering note, but we have a real challenge requiring self-help in the spirit of the u3a movement if we are going to shape our new normal. Please don't dwell on it for too long but instead pick up the phone and talk to one of the current Committee. Until next time, take care.

Chris



LOCKDOWN BLUES

*I long to wander the hills again
To feel unfettered and free.
I crave to visit the coast again
To savour the air of the sea.
Yes, and I yearn to canoe the canal again
To glide 'neath the old willow tree.
But I've got those lousy lockdown blues.*

*How I'd love to see my grandchild again
To bounce her with joy on my knee.
And oh! to have friends to visit again
To sit in the garden for tea.
And I'd like to go to the pub again
But I know not when that will be.*

*So if I sound rather maudlin', please me excuse
Oh lordy! Oh yeah! I've got those lousy lockdown blues.*

David King (March 2021)

TRAFALGAR SQUARE – an Interesting History

It was almost exactly 40 years ago that I started working in central London and my office was in Northumberland Avenue, less than 100 yards from Trafalgar Square. I walked in the square on most days and, for me it changed from being a tourist attraction to becoming an old friend as I came to know all the statues and other interesting points of this most famous location.

As with everyone else, my travels



in the past year have been severely curtailed but I managed to take a day trip to London last December to take some photographs, and it was quite strange to visit familiar places without the usual crowds of people. I revisited my 'old



friend' and standing in a deserted Trafalgar Square I was reminded of the history of the place and an unusual link to the current vaccination programme, more of which later.

The history of the square dates back

to the early 1800s when the area had been part of the Royal Mews and was in need of redevelopment. The equestrian statue of Charles I at the top of Whitehall is a reminder of those earlier times and has stood there since 1675. It stands at Charing Cross, the former site of an Eleanor Cross



and a plaque records the fact that this is the point where all mileages to and from London are measured. A replica of the cross stands outside the nearby Charing Cross station.

The plan for the redevelopment was to create a large open space in front of the National Gallery; no statues, no fountains just an open piazza for people to enjoy. It was originally due to be named after George IV but after his death in 1830 the authorities decided to name it after Nelson's victory in the Napoleonic war and it became Trafalgar Square. It opened in 1840 and plans were drawn up for a monument to Nelson to be erected in 'his' square and after much fund raising and changes in design Nelson's column was unveiled in 1843. It was originally planned to be 30 feet taller, but they were worried about its stability and it was reduced to its current height of 170 feet – including an 18ft high statue of Nelson. The lions around the base were an addition in 1867 and the sculptor, Sir Edwin Landseer used

the corpse of a lion from London Zoo as a model. Unfortunately, the lion decomposed before he finished and if you look carefully you will see the paws are wrong - and were based on those of domestic cats.

To the rear of the square there are two plinths. The one on the right has an equestrian statue of George IV dressed as a Roman Emperor. This statue was paid for by the King and he wanted it to go on top of the monumental arch outside



Buckingham Palace, but the money ran out. That arch was also moved and we now know it as Marble Arch, but the equestrian statue has remained in Trafalgar Square. When it was unveiled it did not have any engraving or plaque to say who it was, but a few years later they added the inscription 'George IV' because no one knew who the 'Roman Senator' was.

The second plinth remained empty for over a century until they started placing a rolling programme of artworks in 1999. There have been some really different exhibits that have added some modern interest to the square

Two statues have been moved from the square one of General Gordon of Khartoum which was removed in 1943 to allow a Lancaster bomber to be placed there for a fundraising campaign, and the other has a connection with the current vaccination campaign.

Edward Jenner was the pioneer for vaccines and 'the father of immunology'.

At a time when smallpox was responsible for the deaths of 10% of the population his development of the world's first vaccine was instrumental in saving countless lives not just in Britain but across the world. In 1858 a statue to Edward Jenner was erected in the south west corner of Trafalgar Square and generated much adverse comment not just from the anti-vaccineers (and yes, they have been active for over 150 years) but also from leaders in society. They complained that Trafalgar Square was an inappropriate location for the statue, because Jenner was 'not a military man' and a report in the papers said 'the veterans of the Horse Guards and Admiralty were scandalised at the idea of a mere civilian, a doctor, having a place in such distinguished company, and moreover daring to be seated while his betters were standing'.

Prince Albert had supported the statue being placed in Trafalgar Square and so it remained there, but after the Prince's death in 1861 the call for it to be moved gained momentum and in the following year it was moved to its current location in Kensington gardens. I suspect the statue is much happier in its new surroundings.

So, Trafalgar Square is an iconic location in the very heart of London and has seen many changes over the years. The open space sets off the National Gallery particularly well and the statues both present and former are a reminder of our rich history.

Roger Mendham



Do you have a book inside you?

Many people have ideas of having a book printed but have been unable to fulfil this wish partly because of the costs involved and I have heard of several cases where this long filled wish has materialised only to find that quite apart from getting all the words down on paper. Now more likely as a digital document

they find great difficulty in finding a publisher and then when the cherished books have eventually been printed too few are sold and all known friends and relatives have been given their copy but still the remaining copies that could be in the thousands or high hundreds are boxed up and kept in their boxes under the bed until the author passes on to that other life. However, the introduction of

Some of the illustrated books I have produced



digital printing has now changed all that together with several advanced new "publishing houses". Amongst them are Amazon, who seem to get everywhere, (they may not pay their full taxes but what a service they provide in this online buying age) and Blurb, a San Francisco based company I have favoured for many years. I came across Blurb when I first lead the Digital Photography Group for this u3a. I was using my laptop to demonstrate how to manipulate images and I showed members of the group the books of photographs I had produced through Apple and very fine they were. Several members wanted to produce books and while I could show them how I did this on an Apple computer not many, if any, would want to change to Apple from their Windows computers, so I looked for a company that could produce books on both computer systems and the first company I came across was Blurb. There are many companies out there now that do the same thing, but I have never seen any reason to change from Blurb who produce books from supplied templates where all you need to do is drop your photos in place on the pages along with any text. Many of the members produced books that look very professional, a little less expensive than Apple and a faster service. Whenever I want to make a photo book these days I always make it through Blurb. They can also market the book for you at minimal cost and supply the ISBN number just like a proper book that even book shops will consider taking. I produce books



Some of the text only books I have produced

through Blurb mainly full of photos to commemorate some family event or holiday but I have also produced several text only books.

Digital printing means it is no longer necessary to print three thousand copies

in order to get the unit cost down. The unit price of digital printing is the same for the first ten copies and this reduces the more copies you have printed. Everybody these days can type and there is no need to have the text re-typed and setup for printing. Text produced digitally can be easily cut and pasted into a publishing document ready for printing. A few years ago I helped Gordon Elsey, a Bookham u3a member, but not a member of the Digital Photography Group, to produce a book from the photographs he had taken on his coast to coast walk across northern England. It was a fine book and it inspired Gordon to produce a further book about his great grandfather-in-law who was coal mining and railway entrepreneur in the 19th century. There were plans and papers in Gordon's possession that enabled him to make a book that would be of interest to descendants now scattered across the world. Gordon had the idea that by producing a book through Blurb it would make an interesting book and the main interest would be the relatives and descendants of a man who had done all the work over 100 years ago and Gordon had



Layflat photo books feature a seamless spread without having any part of the image to the centre.

				
Small Square 10 x 10 cm (3.9 x 3.9 in)	Standard Landscape 10 x 18 cm (3.9 x 7.1 in)	Standard Portrait 10 x 15 cm (3.9 x 5.9 in)	Large Square 15 x 15 cm (5.9 x 5.9 in)	Large Landscape 15 x 21 cm (5.9 x 8.3 in)
From £29.99 for 20 pages.	From £49.99 for 20 pages.	From £49.99 for 20 pages.	From £59.99 for 20 pages.	From £79.99 for 20 pages.

The book formats offered by Blurb

the very bright idea that by producing the book through Blurb it would be on their website and the many descendants who were now scattered all over the world could go online to see and buy the book without involving Gordon in any work or costs involved in packing and posting distribution. He only needed to email everyone he knew who might be interested in obtaining a book.

If you are thinking about a book but not sure how to get started give me a call me and I will help you.

Maurice Baker

The life of John Evelyn 1620-1705

John Evelyn was born at Wotton House in 1620.

Wotton House just outside Dorking was built by George Evelyn, John's grandfather, who was given a monopoly to manufacture gunpowder by Elizabeth I in the aftermath of the Spanish



Wotton House

Armada—this good fortune gave him sufficient income to provide for two wives and twenty-four children.

On his death Wotton House was inherited by his son Richard—an estate of 700 acres and annual income of £4,000.

Richard married and had five children who grew to maturity, George the eldest son was educated to inherit the estate in 1640.

John, born in 1620, was able to escape the pressure and duty imposed on his brother.

Early Years

John Evelyn was educated in Lewes, where he lived with his grandmother. All three brothers lodged at the Middle Temple, before going to Oxford.

He is renowned for his Diary, covering 80 years in 5 volumes.

His father, Richard Evelyn, was able to provide for his three sons, with an allowance sufficient to obviate the need for a profession.

With Royalist sympathies and increasing political turbulence, John decided to absent himself from the usual career of an aspiring country gentleman attending court and in 1641 he travelled to the Low Countries. In 1642 Civil War broke out. He came back but was too late to join the Royalist forces at the Battle of Brentford. To avoid further involvement in the Civil War – many Royalists had their property confiscated for their involvement – he returned to the Low Countries for a Grand Tour.

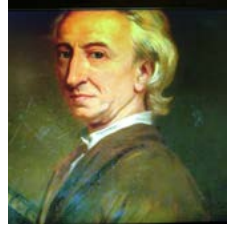
He was particularly interested in

painting, art and architecture and wanted to improve his Italian and French.

Charles II was in exile having fled England after his defeat at Worcester. Evelyn went to Paris where Charles II's resident, Sir Richard Browne, was Ambassador. The Embassy there had become a gathering place for Royalist exiles.

In 1644 he travelled to other countries

and enrolled at Padua University. This was one of the oldest in Europe, being founded in 1222, and for 50 years it had established a reputation for anatomy and medicine. Evelyn studied Dissection under the Professor of Anatomy, Johann Vesling



John Evelyn

who was in poor health and welcomed the interest of John in his subject which led to John purchasing rare anatomical tables of Veins and Nerves, Lungs and Liver from the university which he transported to England. He says -The first of that kind ever seen in our Country and ought I know in the World. This was at a time when we relied on Barber/Surgeons.

The tables were life-size on solid oak doors and heavily varnished - Evelyn bequeathed them to the Royal Society and they ended up in the Hunterian Museum in Lincoln's Inn Fields

In 1647, Evelyn married Mary Browne, daughter of Sir Richard, the Ambassador in Paris she was 13 years old. He left her with her parents and continued travelling and his studies and they did not cohabit until two years later.

In 1652 Evelyn returned to England with his wife and managed to rent Sayes Court, Deptford, from the Parliamentarians;

it had formerly belonged to his father-in-law but as he was a Royalist it had been sequestered by them.

Sayes Court was next to Deptford



Sayes Court

Shipyard, which was one of the most important Tudor dockyards in the country until after the Napoleonic wars, when it could not build larger vessels.

Evelyn involved himself with gardening, studying and literary pursuits. He stayed at Sayes Court for 42 years, obtaining a 99-year lease of the property from Charles II, and it became his main interest.

He rebuilt and enlarged the house and, inspired by French and Italian ideas, turned the surrounding orchard and pasture into one of the most influential gardens of his day. It was 62 acres. He was particularly keen on evergreens such as juniper, box, cyprus, pine, fir, holly as well as oak, elm, walnut, and ash.

He describes the garden in his Diary — *Adjacent to the house on the west was a walled garden "of choice flowers, and simples", that is, medicinal herbs, laid out in formal beds surrounding a large fountain.* There was also an arbour under two tall elms at the north-west corner, as well as transparent glass bee-hives. This space he regarded as his own private garden. The rest of the gardens were on a much grander scale. The main features included: a long terrace walk overlooking an elaborate box parterre; a large rectangular area ("the grove") planted with many different species of trees, inset with walks and recesses; large kitchen gardens; a great orchard of three hundred fruit trees; avenues and hedges of ash, elm, and holly; and a long walk or promenade from a banquet house set against the south wall of the garden down to an ornamental lake with an island, fruit bushes and summer house at the north end

In 1658 he writes - *Died that arch rebel Oliver Cromwell called Protector the joyest funeral that ever I saw, for there were non cried, but dogs.*

In 1659 he published *Elysium Britannicum*, an encyclopaedic work on horticulture that occupied him, intermittently, for the rest of his life.

In 1660 Charles II was crowned – and Evelyn was presented to Charles II and attended court frequently afterwards. However, although attracted to him as a

man he became increasingly disapproving of his morals and policies.

Also in 1660 Evelyn was one of the founder members of the Physics Society which became The Royal Society (1662) when Charles II joined. It was formed to promote experimental philosophy with a particular interest in scientific experiments. Evelyn was active in the Society for 20 years.

In 1661 he published *Fumifugium, The Inconvenience of Aer and Smoak of London A Dissipated*. It was about London air pollution and was dedicated to Charles II.

(NB London relied on sea coal that was brought down by colliers from Newcastle, but it was highly sulphurous)

In 1663 Charles II visits Sayes Court. In 1664 Evelyn was charged by the Royal Society with three others to deal with enquiries from the Royal Navy about the management of woodlands following depredations of the Interregnum. "Silva" published discourse of Forest Trees and Propagation

of Timber in his *Majesties Dominions*. This book was the basis of his reputation. It covers medieval authorities, his correspondents, and his own experience. It is

the first edition of a practical handbook of woodland management and the information was instrumental in creating resources essential to the building of Nelson's navy. Later editions included fruit trees and a gardening calendar: It put Evelyn in touch with nearly all the landed gentry. "A Discourse of Salads" published followed up on an interest in herbs from his earlier medical studies. (He was a vegetarian)

In 1664 in anticipation of war with the Dutch (called *Hollanders*) Charles II appointed Evelyn



Silva



Commissioner for the Sick Wounded seaman and Prisoners of War.

In 1665, he writes of the Plague –
There died of the Plague in London, this week in August – 1100 there perished this week above 2000 There dying this week in London 4000/5000. The contagion growing now all about us. I went with my wife and whole family to my brother's at Wotton, trusting to providence and goodness of God.

In September he came home – There now perishing nere ten thousand poore creatures weekly; however I went all along the City & suburbs from Kent street to St James's a dismal passage and dangerous, to see so many confines exposed in the streets and the streets thin of people, the shops shut up and all in mournfull silence, as not knowing whose turn might be next.

In 1666, The Great Fire in September. This fateful night about 10, began that deplorable fire, near Fish Street in Lond. I had prayers at home and after dinner the fire continuing. with wife and son and took coach & went to the bankside in Southwark, where we beheld the dismal spectacle, the whole City in dreadful flames near the waterside & had now consumed all houses from the bridge, all Thames Street & up-towards Cheapside

The Fire having continued all night (if I can call it night which as light as day for 10 miles around after a dreadful manner)

Evelyn draws up several plans for the rebuilding of London and Sir Christopher Wren does another – all rejected due to the complexities of land ownership.

In 1667 Anglo-Dutch War. There were conflicts due to mercantile interests and the spice trade. The Dutch invaded Medway, set fire to numerous English ships and towed away two prestigious ones.



In 1682 further accommodation of wounded sailors and soldiers was taken on by Evelyn, Sir Christopher Wren and Sir Stephen Fox who undertook the building the Royal Chelsea Hospital
In 1685 King Charles II died, leaving no heir. Evelyn writes

. Frequently changes favourites to his - A vigorous and robust constitution and in all appearance capable of a longer life. A prince of many virtues and many great imperfections, debonair, easy of access, not bloody or cruel, his voice great, proper of person, a lover of the sea and skilful of shipping, had a laboratory and knew many medicines and mathematics. Loved planning and bought a politer way of living, which passed to luxury and intolerable expense.

An excellent prince doubtless had he been less addicted to Women greater prejudices to other publique transactions and unhappy miscarriages.

Charles fathered 11 children by 7 mistresses (including Nell Gwynn); 4 were ennobled. He converted to Catholicism on his death bed.

In 1685 James II crowned. There was tolerance for his personal Catholicism but this did not apply in general and when the English and Scottish Parliaments refused to pass his measures, James attempted to impose them by decree.

In June 1688, the birth of James's son and heir threatened to create a Catholic dynasty and exclude his Protestant daughter Mary and her husband William of Orange.

Representatives of the English political elite invited William of Orange to assume the English throne. He landed in Brixham in November 1688; James's army deserted and James went into exile in France.

In 1688 Evelyn went to London where he found the Court in the utmost consternation upon the report of Prince of Orange landing. News of Princes of Oranges landed in Torbay with a fleet of neere 700 sail King James passes into France,

In 1689 accession of William III and Mary II Evelyn wrote *The whole nation exceedingly alarmed by the French fleet braving our coast even to the Thames mouth, our fleet commandeered by debauched young men & likewise inferior force. God mercy defend this poore church and nation.* (Hollanders beaten at sea)
King William vanquished King James in Ireland

In 1694 Evelyn moved back to Wotton as his elder brother was in poor health and needed assistance with running the estate.

In 1695 Evelyn was appointed one of the Commissioners for Greenwich Hospital for Wounded and Retired Seamen as Treasurer

In 1699 Evelyn inherited the estate and family seat on the death of his brother. Sayes Court was let to a series of tenants. A notable tenant was the Czar of Muscovy – Peter the Great, who was in England to learn boat building skills to improve the Russian Navy. However, he was responsible for the destruction of Evelyn's precious garden that he had spent decades cultivating. He wrecked the prized holly hedge by having chariot races on wheelbarrows through the hedges. Evelyn writes – *Went to Deptford to see how miserably the Tzar of Muscovy had left my house after 3 months making it his Court, having gotten Sir Christopher Wren his Majesties Surveyor and the gardener to go down and make an estimate of the repairs, for which they allowed 150 pounds in their report to the Lord of the Treasury*

John Evelyn had many sorrows: Mary bore 8 children, 4 died in childhood or infancy, another at 5 years, one at nineteen, one in his 40's and, of his children, only his daughter Susanna outlived him. Mary outlived him by 3 years. Interestingly, he turned down a knighthood on several occasions

In 1706 Evelyn died and was buried in the family chapel at St John the Evangelist, Wotton.

Legacy

After Evelyn's death Sayes Court estate was held in trust for his grandson, Sir John Evelyn, as all his own male

children had predeceased him. As well as almost 62 acres around Sayes Court itself, the estate comprised 160 tenements, a dock, and a watermill.

During the next century, the estate was quickly broken up, the dockyard closed, and tenants' houses built. Much of the site of Sayes Court as was available was turned into a recreation ground for their Deptford tenants. The public garden and playground of about 10 acres was carefully laid out with grass, plants, and edged with flowers and shrubs, planted with trees and intersected with level walks. In the centre of the ground was a bandstand and a large neoclassical building.

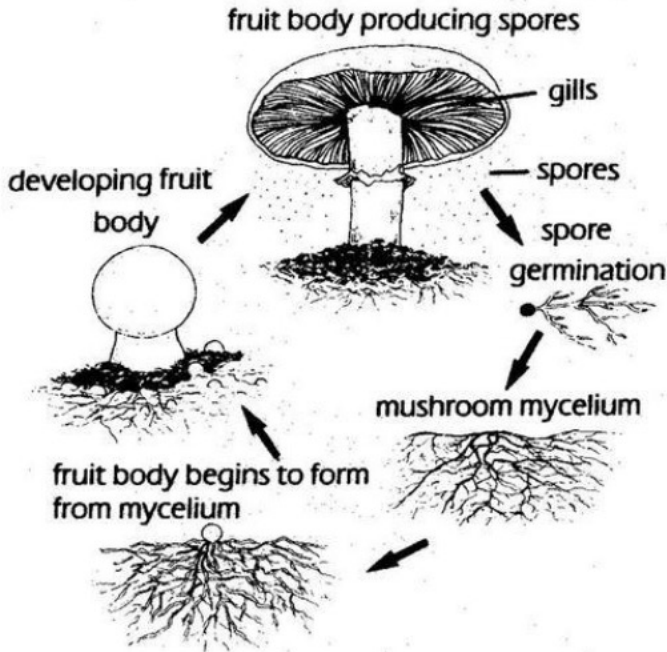
In 1884 William Evelyn, one of his descendants, approached Octavia Hill with the suggestion that the garden should become publicly owned and offering the hall which could be used as a museum, but there was as yet no organisation with the necessary legal powers for holding the property for permanent preservation. It was advised that they should set up a land company with the aim of protecting "the public interests in the open spaces of the country". Octavia Hill proposed that this company be called "the Commons and Gardens Trust", but on Hunter's suggestion, the "National Trust", was adopted. Unfortunately, the Trust took ten years to reach the point where it could be properly constituted, by which time the opportunity to take ownership of Sayes Court had passed.

In 1886 some 6 acres remained of the estate and of these William Evelyn dedicated an acre and a half in perpetuity to the public. Until then the only other piece of land that had ever been given to the London public was Leicester Square. In his history *The National Trust: The First Hundred Years*, Merlin Waterson writes "*It would be hard to conceive of a property which encompassed so many of the future purposes of the National Trust.* The garden was of exceptional importance, the historical associations fascinating, and it was a valuable open space in the heart of London Docks. An updated edition of his book *Sylva* was published in 2014
Colin Jackson

Fungi And All That Mould

One is led to believe the largest living organism ever to inhabit the Earth weighing in at a whopping 175 tons and almost 100 feet in length was, and is, the blue whale. Wrong! The biggest and

the move. Not content with that they digest and recycle rotting matter and break down plastics. They can be used as building blocks and insulation material and, while we are on the subject of material; clothes, bags and shoes are already being



Mushroom life cycle

heaviest (if it could be weighed) is a single specimen of *Amillaria Ostoyae*, better known as the Honey Mushroom. Found in the Malheur National Forest in Oregon USA where it covers an area of 10sq kilometres!" This startling fact was shared with the Vegetable Gardening Group at their recent Zoom meeting.

It is not just mushrooms that are fungi, moulds, and yeasts are too. Between them they produce alcoholic drinks, bread for our tables, truffles, mushrooms and blue cheeses to eat and antibiotics to cure our ills; as well as biofuels to keep us on

made from fungi!

But be warned, if you eat the wrong mushroom it will kill you – which happens to a number of people each year who think they can tell the difference between Portobella mushrooms and *Amanita Phalloides*, better known as Death Cap for obvious reasons! However, if you fancy an out of body experience without the inconvenience of dying why not take a 'trip' with *Psilocybin* mushrooms for that psychedelic experience!

When we look at a fungus all we see is a small mushroom head (fruit body) or mould on a damp wall or yeast in bread

dough; so how can it be the largest living organism?

Mushroom life cycle

Spores from a mushroom fruit body rely for their spread on wind currents or by an 'ejection' force from the gills depending of the species. Given the right damp conditions germination takes place with the development of very fine fibres, thinner than a human hair, called mycelium. From this mycelia web new fruit bodies erupt which produce more spores and so the life cycle goes on which can lead to a very large organism – the Wood Wide Web!

Mycelium fibres can be pressed together and dried to produce a 'leather-like' material ideal for clothing and the 'vital' accessories.



Bag, shoe and jackets

Another manufacturing process produces 'blocks' which are stronger than conventional building bricks and light enough to float on water.

As one research scientist said; "As far as their versatility in agriculture, medicine and in the laboratory there isn't much fungi can't do!" That includes improving the water and nutrient uptake

of plants, acting as the main food supply for many invertebrates as well as being



A 70 foot tower constructed with a selection of various shaped mycelium bricks

toxic to a variety of pests; not forgetting, as mentioned earlier, their ability to breakdown and digest plastic!

Without fungi the world would be a VERY different place – not the blue planet we all call home. So, next time you see a wild mushroom just remember and appreciate what it's doing for mankind!

Brian Williams



Remembrance

Having enjoyed Roger's illustrated talk entitled "Remembrance", I was reminded of a visit I made to Victoria Park at Netley, Southampton and I thought it

both allied and enemy casualties. Inevitably, some patients did not survive and they were buried in a clearing in the woods behind the



might be of interest to others.



In the park is what was The Royal Victoria Hospital, adjacent to Southampton Water; constructed shortly after the Crimean War to care for casualties from the war. The hospital was opened by Queen Victoria who arrived by ship and landed at a specially



hospital, which is now an Official Military Cemetery and includes a Memorial Cross.

As can be seen in the accompanying photographs, the early graves were placed among the trees, creating a very pleasant landscape. In later years, probably during or after World War II, the graves were more uniformly laid out.



constructed pier adjacent to the Hospital.

The hospital continued to be used for war casualties during the two World Wars, treating



I hope the photographs convey the beauty and solemnity of the cemetery and I would recommend a visit, in better times. The hospital closed down in 1958 and, subsequently, was badly damaged by fire in 1963. However the Chapel survived to this day. If you would like to know more, you can search the internet for Netley. The Royal Victoria Hospital, more pictures, and visit "documents.hants.gov.uk" a Short History about the Hospital which is an interesting read.

Don Edwards

U3A Covid Trivia

The Covid19 pandemic has resulted in lockdown so we live in bubbles and communicate by Zoom but if we go out maintain social distancing and get vaccinated in a hub. This sentence makes sense but if I wrote it in 2019, how many of you would understand what I'm talking about?

Language evolves and this shows how it is evolving. We have examples of new words, new uses of words and products entering the language.

Covid 19 – I assumed referred to the 19th variation but no, it is an abbreviation of “2019 novel coronavirus.” Interesting as the disease only appeared in 2020.

SARS-cov-2 –This is the name of the virus.

Lockdown-This does not appear in my Chambers dictionary so is a variation of shutdown.

Bubble –This is a completely new use by referring to a limited number of people. Also, Support Bubble

Zoom – Is a product name that has wider use. Rather similar to Jeep and Hoover.

Furlough – Leave of absence but normally in the military

R –number – An invented concept as a target to relax restrictions. It is the Rate of Infection. Flattening the Curve – As infection spreads, a graph would show an upward slope, so it needs to

flatten before it is under control. As an aside, even though I understand numbers, a lot of the statistics confuse me.

Self-Isolation- There are many Selfs in Chambers but not this one
Social Distancing – A concept which has a distinct set of rules behind it – such as 2 metres.

I play on-line Bridge and we have a glossary of abbreviations. For example, WPP is Well Played Partner and BRB is Be Right Back but also there is LOL .

I thought it would be Lots of Luck but it is Laughing Out loud and perhaps also, as a PM (Cameron) is alleged to use, Lots of Love.



Chris Pullan

AGM of Bookham and District U3A

The 27th AGM of our U3A was held on Zoom on Tuesday 6th April. The Chairman, Roger Mendham, explained that all the relevant paperwork and facilities for electronic voting were emailed out in advance and also placed on the website. For those members without email addresses a pack was posted with a voting slip included. This meant that the business part of the AGM could be covered quite speedily.

The response to the electronic and postal voting was quite pleasing with 30% of the membership responding and providing more votes than would have been counted in an AGM at the Old Barn Hall.

The minutes of the 26th AGM, held in October 2019 were approved with no outstanding matters arising. The Chairman's report highlighted the positive aspects of what has been a difficult period due to Covid. Monthly meetings on Zoom have been well attended and the extra meetings during the winter months have been appreciated. It is hoped that some of the Interest groups will be able to resume activities outside and that monthly meetings will resume in the Old Barn Hall in the autumn, provided the infection rate does not spike again. Roger has now completed his term as Chairman having started with the high of the 25th Centenary celebrations. His one regret was that he did not get to visit a different interest group each month as had been his original plan.

The treasurer's report and the accounts were approved, noting that members will be asked to pay a subscription of £6 for the year 2020/21 and £14 for 2021/22 making a total of £20.

The Honorary Examiner Paul Hartley was re-elected and the election of committee members was approved. Roger Mendham has stood down and Chris Middleton is now Chairman. Other members of the committee remain in office forming an interim committee until the AGM in October.

The AGM finished with a vote of thanks from Neil Carter highlighting the work done by Roger and the committee to keep the U3A going during this difficult period and thanking Frank Cross for his excellent choice of speakers.

When we all joined the U3A, we made a commitment to uphold the guiding principles of the U3A movement, one of which is to recognise that we are a self-help group in which volunteering is essential for the organisation to function.

We now have a need for new volunteers to support the committee in running our activities. A number of the current committee are retiring soon, having served for several years. So we need some new committee members to continue offering the range of activities you all enjoy and potentially to contribute new ideas.

Could you make a bigger contribution to our U3A? If so, please let any member of the committee know. Alternatively, do you know another member who you think could do a good job on the committee?

We have potential vacancies across a variety of roles on the committee and some positions are more urgent than others. So please talk to any member of the committee to find out more as we try and match your interests and skills with the roles. Role descriptions are on our website.

If you are concerned about the level of commitment required, please talk to any committee member so that they can describe their experience.

Our contact details are on the website and in this Senior Moments.

From your Management Committee

Second Thoughts On : “In Praise Of Hugs”

*I wish to make a little plug
In favour of the common hug.
.....A timely hug can often convey
Much more than words could ever say.*

*Writing those lines a few years ago
How could I guess, how could I know
That one of the things you can no longer do
Is hold someone dear, close to you
To give them a hug, a warm embrace,
To have a laugh, to chat, face to face.
Sadly, close contact means an exchange of breath
Which can spread infection and lead to death.
So the only safe hug, it would seem
Is mimed through a window, or a computer screen.*

*When we are allowed to meet again
It will take more than a hug to ease the pain.*

*Marion Kemp
February 2021.*





Bookham & District u3a

Registered Charity No 1036386

Dear Member

The last year has been unprecedented and you will be aware that we have tried to continue activities as best we can. Communication has been maintained even though the normal meetings and group activities have been curtailed due to Covid restrictions.

The Committee has been working in the background to try to keep you all informed about activities, either by Zoom monthly meetings, email or post.

As a result, you will know that no renewal process took place in July 2020 and we will now be inviting you to renew by 31 July 2021.

The renewal fee will remain at £14 for 2021-2022 but will also include a £6 charge for 2020-2021 making a total of £20 payable on or before 31 July 2021.

The £6 fee will help to cover some of the expenses incurred during the past year although some expense has been covered from the reserves.

The expenses include:

- The annual fee payable to the Third Age Trust our national organisation which provides a wide range of services and benefits, including liability insurance cover.
- Publication and distribution of the Third Age Matters magazine,
- Publication and distribution of our own Senior Moments,
- Zoom fees which allowed us to hold the virtual monthly meetings
- Lecturers' fees
- General expenses including postage for mailing out information to members with no email address
- The maintenance of our website and membership system, SimpleMembership.

As we approach renewal time, information will be made available with all the necessary instructions of how you can pay.

A renewal form and renewal instructions are included with all hard copies of Senior Moments. They will be sent by email, by post for those with no email address and be available on the website (www.bookhamu3a.org.uk)