



CAM, DURSLEY & DISTRICT u3a
The Bulletin May 2022

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 Branch News

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN OF THE 8th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
OF CAM, DURSLEY AND DISTRICT U3A**

in Dursley Methodist Hall on 16th June 2022 at 10am

AGENDA

- 1) Apologies for absence
- 2) Appointment of tellers
- 3) Amendments to AGM minutes dated 17th June 2021
- 4) Acceptance of AGM minutes dated 17th June 2021
- 5) Chair's report
- 6) Treasurer's report and acceptance of examined accounts 2021/2022
- 7) Appointment of independent examiner of accounts for year ending 2022/23
- 8) Any proposals/propositions
- 9) Election of officers for the coming year
- 10) Election of committee members for the coming year.
- 11) Next AGM to be held on 15th June 2023

Please note: Proposals/propositions and nomination forms for officers and committee members must be returned to the Secretary by 1st June 2022. Either post to : Sue Gibson, 2 Graham Edge, Dursley, GL11 5JF or email secretary@camanddursleyu3a.org.uk

We've decided to set up some simpler ways to get in touch with committee members. But don't worry, these new emails redirect to any previous ones in your system, which still work. We've also included phone numbers for the benefit of non-internet users. Here's the current list.

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Messages for the whole committee: committee@camanddursleyu3a.org.uk	

The AGM will be followed by our regular monthly branch meeting. This time it's a talk by Paul Barnett on "The Life and Times of Henry Hook VC." If you remember the 1964 film "Zulu" you may recall James Booth's portrayal of Hook at the Battle of Rorke's Drift. But there's more to him than that, as you will discover. Monthly meetings are back to their regular format in the Methodist Hall, with coffee and a chance for a chat after the talks. And speaking of the sixties, that's where April's presentation took us. More about that next. May's talk, on the 19th, is "Charlotte Bronte & Jane Eyre" by Dr Keith Hooper

Back to the Sixties

The nineteen sixties! An iconic decade still celebrated as an era when everything changed and, as legend has it, if you can remember it you weren't there. But for those of us who lived through it, the changes were more gradual. The forgotten images, artefacts and events that formed a background to that momentous decade were stirred in our memory by Virginia Adsetts, assisted by her husband David, during their talk on Thursday



21st April. Virginia, a former Outreach Officer at Cheltenham Museum has assembled an array of artefacts guaranteed to bring back the sights, sounds and even the feel of life during the period. Her scramble through the sixties began with some of the biggest news stories. Kennedy's assassination, Churchill's funeral, the moon landings and royal events from Princess Margaret's marriage to the investiture of the Prince of Wales were all represented by souvenirs and commemorative publications. A book of Green Shield stamps sat alongside pre-decimal coins. Kitchenalia ranged from Pyrex dishes, Suzy Cooper tea cups Denby coffee cans and Tupperware. A Mateus Rose wine bottle could be converted to a candle holder. Girl's dolls went from conventional

Cindy via Pippa to curvaceous Barbie. The lads had Action Man. Sooty and Sweep were subverted by the arrival of Sue, controversial with some commentators. The traditional titles of the Christmas Annual market, Dandy and Eagle, were joined by TV spin-offs such as Thunderbirds and even Rawhide. Considering the importance of music to my memories of the time, records hardly featured but the Adsetts did have a rare early Beatles album, recorded in Hamburg. Virginia remembered the fashion changes; stockings to

tights, the rise of Crimpelene, Mary Quant mini dresses and the start of psychedelia. Gents ties went from slim and Italian to wide and flowery. And while some brides risked a mini wedding dress, most went for a more traditional Empire line. Altogether, a wonderful hour of memories

Group News

It's time to set up some new groups. Pam Davis invites you to think outside the box with ideas that could be learning, creative or sporting. Please contact her with your ideas

Country Walking Group

The next, circular, walk, is on Thursday 5th May at 10.30 am. Four miles out through Kingscote Wood to Binley Farm then back via Boscombe House and Horsley village shop. Easy out on forestry and farm track but the return has a couple of moderate climbs and one short steep descent. There are two small streams to cross and seven stiles. Meet at starting point, Horsley small car park on B4058, on left coming from Nailsworth. If full, park in lane opposite or near village shop off Priory Fields.

Grid reference: ST839980 Nearest postcode: GL6 0PW

Group Reports

Wotton Wine Appreciation

We went up-market on Monday 4th April, [reports Claire Haines](#). We meet in the mistaken belief that it is "wine" appreciation, whereas we all know it is "conversation" appreciation, with the wine tasting helping the creative juices to flow and discussion to become more cogent. Peter, our host, decided the theme should be poetry. The wines were bought from Majestic which gives a generous discount for six.

We started with Portuguese *Vereza Vinho Verde*, always a winner with its low alcohol content setting the taste buds and discussions tingling. Next, *Rutherglen Shelleys's Block*, a delightful white wine scoring 96 at this year's International Wine challenge. Very different from the first wine, most agreed that it had an interesting nose with a zesty palate of apricot, ginger and hazelnut. I did say we 'd gone up market. A French Pinot Noir from the *Languedoc-Roussillon* region followed, which was quite delightful. It had a balanced and refreshing acidity. By this time we were all balancing nicely with tones of acidity coming into the conversation, namely about certain members of the royal family. Ian Botham of cricketing fame has developed several award-winning wines. We sampled the Malbec which comes from the *Uco Valley in Argentina*. It is not too rich and finishes with a bright plummy lift, and a touch of dry tannin. Perfect accompaniment to "[When I am an old woman, I shall wear purple](#)" by Jenny Joseph.

Back to France and *La Vielle Ferme Rouge*. This is a well known wine from the Rhone, created by the Perrin family. It is warm and elegantly structured and certainly did not go with the following poem.

*One day I saw a little worm
Wriggling on its belly
I watched it for a little while
Then squashed it with my welly*

Our last tasting was *Definition Côtes du Rhône*, which sets out to capture the quintessential qualities of the world's greatest wine styles. If you want to meet the most famous and revered styles, regions and grape varieties, this is the place to start. It proved to be an ideal accompaniment to a rendition of "The Lion and Albert". Other poems read were by Edward Lear and Alan Titchmarsh, with a couple more written by members themselves. But it was the conversation topics that accompanied the poems and wine that was as far ranging as ever. Funerals, Liberty Bodices, $E = mc^2$, to name but a few, and of course the atrocities taking place in Ukraine. Another fine and convivial evening, thanks to Peter's hospitality. Bearing in mind the Diversity and Inclusivity policy of u3a, we did consider taking our poems and wine into the hospital to sit at the beside of Carol Flack, who, among other things, is nursing a broken leg. Would we have been allowed in I wonder?

Historic Places *contributed by Sally Beynon and Carol Tripper.*



The April visit was to Stanway House. The manor of Stanway was founded in 715. The Tracey family took over the manor in 1530 and their descendant, the Earls of Wemyss and March, have inhabited the manor for the past 500 years. The Jacobean manor house includes a suite of rooms for James I, added gables, windows and an enormous square window containing 792 panes of glass; an enclosed courtyard; and gate entrance. The family had to wait until 1905 however before a monarch, Edward VII actually used the royal suite. Villages, farms, parkland,

woodland and avenues containing specimen trees surround the house. In 1219 the estate had four water mills. The last mill fell into disuse in 1950 but was fully restored in 2009 as a working flour mill. We saw the mill grinding wheat into flour, which is sold locally. Water is supplied by six springs above the mill.



The 18th century water garden, probably designed originally Charles Bridgeman, has been restored recently and on a terrace above the house, the formal canal, pyramid and eight ponds have been reinstated. A single-jet, 300 feet fountain was added in 2004. It is the highest fountain in Britain and the highest gravity fountain in the world.

Our party was treated to a special display from this unique attraction. It was a rather breezy day and those members who happened to be standing downwind had to beat a rapid retreat to avoid a soaking from the prodigious spray. Well it was the first of April.



The house is still lived in by the family. Many literary and parliamentary parties, with invented intellectual games, discussions, and writing each other's obituaries, were held in the boudoir prior to the first World War. In the audit room, rents are still collected four times a year from the seven farms and eighty-three cottages in five villages. As well as the audit table, among the valuable items are a 1750 hand painted Chelsea porcelain, a portrait of Barbara Villiers the mistress of Charles II, a picture painted in 1600 of Ann Colonsby in her wedding dress and a cross commemorating two sons killed in the Great War. 32 men from the estate were also killed in that conflict. In the Tudor great hall we saw William Morris chairs, a 1350 long oak shuffle board table carved only on the side facing the room, heraldic hatchments originally located in the local church, and stamps put on the ceiling by J M Barrie. On the dais is a 1750 Chippendale chamber horse for exercising, the first sprung piece of furniture ever made.



The trip concluded with a trip to Broadway and a guided tour of the museum in the former Angel coaching inn, once an overnight stop between Pershore and Moreton-in-Marsh, dating from 1660 and now the second oldest remaining building in the village. More recently it was used as headquarters of an antique firm. The displays include items from the Ashmolean Oxford, fine Bristol and Worcester porcelain, and a grandfather clock with a marquetry case. Local history including old postcards, a collection of 1970s toys, an exhibition by local artist Doug Eyre, and mementos of the many artists, musicians and writers who have visited Broadway.

Gardening Group

Cold windy weather seems to be a feature of u3a trips out at the moment. It was the same on Friday 22nd April when the group visited the Coach House Garden, Ampney Crucis. Mel Tanner, together with her husband Nicholas, acquired the property, that was in the process of being converted from stables, with half an acre of rough ground in 1989 and began creating the garden. In 1993, they bought an additional acre and extended the garden to the boundaries that exist today.

With no views to the countryside beyond, they set about creating a garden of rooms with internal vistas and axes, to provide all year round interest and that all important element of surprise. Structure was key and still remains the unifying component of the garden today. The date of our visit meant that the garden could not be seen at its best, but the water garden with its pavement designed by Chris Beardshaw can be seen as this month's cover picture.

The Tanners opened the garden for the NGS in 2012 and in the same year began to run Specialist Plant Sales, in aid of charity, with some of the leading nurseries in the country coming to sell their interesting, and expertly grown, plants. We visited on a sale day, which are so popular that the stalls have expanded into the village cricket field. As result, the Gornall garden now boasts several new plants.

Better luck with the weather for May's trip to Hellen's Manor, Much Marcle.

Science and Engineering: *My other car's a Morgan*

Our March trip out was to the Morgan Car Factory, beneath the Malvern Hills. The business is now over 100 years old. Its founder, H.F.S. Morgan, quit the Great Western Railway in 1904 and set up a motor sales and servicing garage in Malvern Link. In 1909 he designed and built a car for his own use, a three wheeler known as a "runabout". The car gained much popularity prompting him to build the Morgan Factory. These iconic three-wheelers were built from 1909-1954. Four-wheeled versions were introduced in 1956. The use of a Rover V8 engine ensured good sales for many years, helped by the fact that, for a while, this was the fastest production car in the world for 0-60 mph. To celebrate the company's centenary they produced a new batch of three wheelers and were so surprised at the success of this model that they continued production.



The motive power for their latest model is a Ford Fiesta engine mated to a Mazda MX5 gearbox.

Our party of 30 was split into two groups for a factory tour with a couple of enthusiastic and informative guides. During the tour we witnessed most aspects of the build, including bending and gluing the ash wood for the frame in the original wooden former, panel beating the aluminium panels and application of veneer to the dashboards. An attempt to import ash from Belgium failed after it was found to contain wartime shrapnel which damaged the cutting tools. Lincolnshire ash is now used, with enough available for the next 20 years. "Ash dieback" may be a problem in the future. Leather for the upholstery comes from Scotland.



The old ladder frame chassis has been updated to a bonded aluminium platform. This keeps the long standing power to weight ratio in check, ensuring good performance and roadholding. ABS braking is used but not traction control or electronic handbrakes. The ability to perform handbrake turns seems essential for some customers.

The record for seriously damaging a new Morgan is just 600 metres from the factory gate.

At one time, there was an eight year waiting list for a new car. Now the wait is five to six months. Paint colour options are in excess of 40,000 and many bespoke build options are available. The worldwide shortage of electronic chips, exacerbated by the war in Ukraine, does have a slight impact on Morgan, but not to the same extent as other manufacturers. Morgan want to use internal combustion engines for as long as possible, but have a secret experimental site for the electric cars of the future.

For most of its history, the company has been owned by the Morgan family, but In 2018 a majority stake was acquired by an Italian investment group *Investindustrial*, with family members remaining minority shareholders. Most Morgans are exported and 97% of Morgans built are still in existence.

I had been to the Morgan factory before and thought I knew what to expect but this visit exceeded my expectations. Morgan Cars have been kept up to

date without losing their hand built charm. The production line is the antithesis of the high tech BMW Mini factory in Oxford the u3a visited in 2019. Learning about both cars fully enlightened our brain cells. The only similarity however is that they both use BMW engines.

The tour ended in the recently built “Experience Centre”. This houses a museum containing an exact replica of Harry’s first “runabout”, a shop, cafe and showroom. Driving experiences are available at the Centre, ranging from a half day to as many days as you like, limited only by your bank balance.



Many members enjoyed sitting in a Morgan for a while and dreaming. With our age group, however, there were some moans and groans whilst getting in and out.

Paul Sheppard

Fifth Amendment book group: *from Rhona Wadsworth*



The Fifth Amendment book group has a few spaces for new members, and if you would like to join us we would all be happy to welcome you. We meet on the second Monday of every month at 2 pm, currently in members’ homes. Each month we read a book nominated by one of our members, and discuss it over a cup of tea and, if we’re lucky, a biscuit. If you would like to join us for a trial session click on [this link](#) to go to our web page and then click on the Bluebird on the right to contact group leader Rhona. Next month we will be reading *Home Stretch* by Graham Norton.

Coming Up

Date	Group	Event
Friday 6 May All Day	Historic Places Gardening	Hellen's House, Much Markle Tour of Tudor House and Garden More details from Carol Tipper
Thurs 12 May 10.00	Natural History	Dursley Methodist Church "The Limestone Grassland Conservation Project" by Jen Gilbert (As seen on Winterwatch on BBC2)
Thurs 19 May from 10.00	Branch Meeting	Dursley Methodist Church "Charlotte Bronte & Jane Eyre" by Dr Keith Hooper
Tues 24 May 10.00	Group Leaders Meeting	Dursley Methodist Church Update session
Tues 31 May Tues 7 June 10.00	Science and Engineering	Javelin Park Energy from Waste Plant Two more opportunities to visit the new incinerator Details from Graham Ellis
Friday 10 June All Day	Historic Places	Llancaiach Fawr Manor and Abergavenny More details from Carol Tipper
Thurs 16 June from 10.00	Branch Meeting	Dursley Methodist Church Annual General Meeting and talk Paul Barnett - "The Life and Times of Henry Hook VC."
Thurs 23 June 11.00	Science and Engineering	The STEAM Railway Museum, Swindon Details from Tony Wooldridge
Thurs 23 June 15.00	Gardening	Moor Wood Rambling Roses Details from Danielle Ellis
Friday 1 July All Day	Historic Places	Raglan and Chepstow Castles More details from Carol Tipper
Thurs 14 July 10.15	Gardening	Bourton House Gardens Tour with the Head Gardener Details from Danielle Ellis

**Full details of all these events, and lots more planned for 2022 are on our website.
Use the Bluebird to send leaders an email.**

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Contributions for future editions should be sent as Word or Pages documents or in the body of an email to mag.u3a@gmail.com. Please keep contributions as short as possible, target around 500 words. One or two photos per item welcome. Please compress jpg files to low or medium quality. All contributions may be edited for publication.