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Message from the Chair.

Dear Friends,

The first two weeks of September for me were filled with u3a activities and I pass on my thanks to you for your companionship. The month opened with another successful joining day bringing our membership to 1,086. Welcome to you all!

There are many opportunities to help so do discuss your interests with any committee members and course/activity leaders.

It was a joy to be able to celebrate some of our volunteers with afternoon tea, brilliantly organised by Lizzie Arrow and John Wetherell, at the Falstaff Hotel on 8 September.

My wife Pauline and I enjoyed the company of many of you on the five day coach holiday to Hampshire and the Isle of Wight (see personal musings in the Bulletin). Special thanks to Helen Natrass who puts her life and soul into running these holidays.

A committee meeting and a Wednesday afternoon meeting also featured in the first half of my month, for which I thank all who organised and supported these.

I smiled when I read in a recent study that "active hobbies in later life leave people happier and healthier" and that this "did not vary by gender or retirement status". In u3a I think we would say, "No surprises there!".

In addition, we belong to an organisation with new friends yet to be met.

So, I hope to meet some of you at our next Wednesday afternoon meeting on 11 October. We aim to start promptly at 2 pm with some general announcements before the Speaker is introduced at 2.15.

See you there,

Robin Terry



Important Dates

Next Joining Session: Friday 6 October: 10.30 to 12.00 at St. Peter's Methodist Church.

Monthly meetings:

Wednesday 11 October. Jane Scotchmer will talk on 'Burma/Myanmar: A Captivating Journey'. Many of you will have realised by now that our monthly meeting has developed into more than just a meeting—you can find out about outings, membership issues, talk to members of the committee, organisers of activities, meet other members, in fact, it's fast becoming the event to attend!

Wednesday 8 November: A Quiz—same time, same place.

Thursday 12 October 11 a.m. at St Peter's Methodist Church Hall.

Informal meeting for any members who are thinking of leading or coordinating a course or activity. Come along for as chat, coffee and cake. I look forward to seeing you. Ursula Steiger



Courses with available places.

There are a number of courses with places still available. Please consult the courses page on the booking site rather than the programme, as some important details such as numbers, addresses and timings may have changed.

We are also hopeful that one or two new Interest Groups may soon be set up—look out for more information in future Bulletins.



Courses and Activities News.

Greenfingers Gardening Group.

Please do not worry if you are wondering about this group. It will be run by Christine Cayley as a new Interest Group starting early in 2024. There will be more information in a future Bulletin.

Existing Interest Group: Knit and Natter

We are a small friendly group of knitters who meet twice a month to knit and chat. Our next meeting will be on 12 October in The Dolphin pub from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.

We have sent many garments and blankets to the premature baby units at Margate and Ashford hospitals, but if someone wanted to join us and knit or crochet items not related to babies we would love to meet you. To join us either just turn up on 12 October or email me for more information.

Lilias Adamson

Another new learning opportunity

If, like me, you have an interest in viewing old churches; and if (also like me) you have struggled to identify their features, then this course may be for you.

When visiting churches, I often buy church booklets when available to help understand aspects such as the age(s) of the church, the windows, architectural style and important features including its setting. A particular interest of mine is in graffiti, which I see as signs that people from all walks of life have attempted in the past to leave their names or other marks of their presence. Masons' marks are always interesting to see.

This course is proposed as an experiential one, i.e. with a focus on visiting accessible churches, perhaps within a ten mile radius of Canterbury. These could be arranged monthly and we could discuss any necessary transport arrangements. We will hopefully help each other to improve our recognition skills, perhaps seeking assistance from friendly church staff on occasions. Many years ago my wife and I had an informative visit to the beautiful church at Framlingham in Suffolk, our guide being the church cleaner who clearly enjoyed showing us interesting features, including medieval and other graffiti.

A planning and introductory meeting is scheduled for 2 p.m. on Friday 27 October at a central venue yet to be confirmed. I will bring a few books that I have found helpful and hope to agree a programme of monthly church visits, perhaps starting in January of next year.

People of all abilities and levels of knowledge are welcome and we will aim for a group membership around a dozen.

If you are interested in becoming one of those group members, please contact Christine Plant by email or phone.

Peter Hunt



Cinema Interest Group

Serpico (1973) (15) — A screening for its 50th Anniversary.

Al Pacino gives a dynamic central performance in Sidney Lumet's gripping film as an NYPD cop who realises that the institution is built upon corruption . . . and quickly finds out how far those involved will go to protect themselves. *Serpico* is a classic film of the paranoid 70s, one that offers a detailed depiction of a system gone bad where nobody can be trusted. Formerly blacklisted screenwriter Waldo Salt exposes the failures of American society, as he did four years earlier with his script for 'Midnight Cowboy'.

There will be a speaker to give an introduction and host a Q&A after the screening.

Saturday 7 October: 3 p.m. at Gulbenkian Arts Centre, University of Kent, Canterbury CT2 7NB. Free parking. Also note Triangle buses run between the University and City Centre bus station every 15 minutes.

☞ u3a members can access £5 tickets by using the promocode shown in your personal copy of the bulletin.

When you click book, a promocode box appears—enter the code and then click the small grey arrow so that the code appears in the top right of the screen. The £5 ticket won't appear straight away, but if you select a full priced ticket and click 'Add to Basket', the £5 ticket will show up in the basket.

<https://thegulbenkian.co.uk/events/cinema-rediscovered-serpico-50th-anniversary/>

Robin Terry, Chair



News from Your Business Secretary

I would like to make Canterbury u3a members aware of additional benefits they can tap into through the Third Age Trust (TAT). Online talks and workshops as well as courses, programme initiatives and competitions are available on Zoom on many interesting topics.

To find out more go to the TAT website and type in: Online Learning Events Page.

Some of the learning opportunities are:

Online:	Cryptic Crosswords	Exploring world faiths, faith and the environment
	Philosophy and travel	Into the mind of the artist Van Gogh
	Hadrian's wall	Mindfulness and meditation
	World music day	Learning the elixir of healthy life
	The magic of writing	The National u3a initiative

Also on offer are interest groups bringing together members from all across the u3a movement online for collaborative learning. These are mostly presented by members and sometimes by expert speakers.

In person events include events at venues like The Royal Institute.

Future events from the Science network include talks on Quasars, CRISPR, the Genome, and the Aleutian Islands

In 2024 there will be a national u3a festival running from 17–19 July, which will be held at York University. Look out for details to be posted on the Third Age Trust website and in The Third Age Matters magazine.

Why not tap into these opportunities which are part of your u3a membership benefits?

Christine Hughes, Business Secretary



Walks

Thursday 5 October at 10:30

A flat 5-mile walk (4 stiles, allow 2 hours) offering both countryside and coastal views.

Our starting point is outside 'The Minnis', Minnis Bay, Birchington. There is free roadside parking on The Parade, CT7 9QP. Toilets are situated in the public car park to the rear of the pub. There are several cafés as well as the pub nearby for refreshments and/or lunch.

TO BOOK A PLACE please contact the walk leader Pam Godden.

Friday 20 October, repeated Wednesday 25 October at 10:30

MEET at 10:30 am at the Church of St. James the Great, The Street, Staple CT3 1LN. Street parking.

The walk is on quiet country lanes and in fields. Gentle to moderate elevation changes. No stiles.

We'll stop at The Old Dairy café at Goodnestone Park for refreshments. Then we'll walk through part of the Serpentine, made famous by Jane Austen's frequent visits, over to the Chillenden Windmill. The Volunteers of Chillenden Windmill have kindly agreed to open it for our viewing (free, but donations happily accepted). Fingers crossed for fine vistas.

TO BOOK YOUR PLACE please contact Ponda Thomas stating which date you require and your contact details. Each walk will be limited to 12 members due to limited space in the windmill.



COP goes to CAT

I've wanted to go to the Centre for Alternative Technology ever since it took over a disused quarry near Machynlleth in Wales 50 years ago. This year, finally, I was given the chance when I joined the National Interest Group on Climate Change and the Environment called Countdown to COP at their two-day summer school.

The programme was packed with presentations from experts, and there was opportunity for discussion. I returned energised and exhilarated by stories of how much is being achieved in Wales. We heard about a successful community clean energy scheme and how a potential new coal mine had

been refused permission to open. We saw a hilarious film showing how ridiculous carbon offsetting is and had a 'show and tell' session on makes and models of electric cars with their owners. We compared our local council Climate Change score cards and found out how well the countries of the world are doing. Most of the damage, inevitably, is being done by wealthy countries and most of the pain caused to the poorest.

Although meeting face to face is completely different from meeting on zoom, without the monthly Zoom meetings I wouldn't have met these amazing people and had access to their knowledge at all. I am also bringing home the experience and new understanding to our local group, named after the fabulous book by Mike Berners Lee: *There's No Planet B*. If you'd like to join us fortnightly on a Thursday afternoon, there are still spaces. Contact Helen Howard.



Canterbury u3a Outing to the Sussex Coast

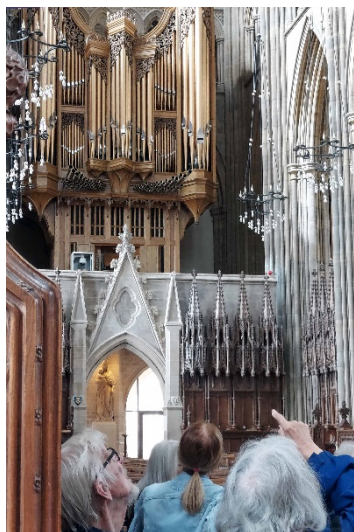
We had an early start, but what a treat of a day! The journey was uneventful, but comfortable and companionable and I would not pretend to remember the name of all the pretty villages we admired. When we reached our coffee stop the rain had subsided, the sun was beginning to shine, and we were looking forward to seeing Lancing College Chapel.

No introduction could have prepared us for the magnificence of this building, which has historical links with figures such as Trevor Huddleston and Nelson Mandela. The architectural style resembles that of a cathedral. There were exquisite carvings in the stalls (see photos) donated by Eton College, some spectacular stained glass and light everywhere. The change in the weather meant we could enjoy the gardens too.

After lunch we visited the Church of the English Martyrs in Goring which possesses the only known reproduction of the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican: In 1987 Gary Bevan, a member of that church, went on a pilgrimage to Rome and spent the next five years single-handedly reproducing the famous ceiling, using life-size drawings to ensure correct perspectives. The finished artwork covers 3500 square feet, approximately two thirds the size of Leonardo da Vinci's masterpiece.

We ended our day in Worthing, where many of us enjoyed an ice cream in the late afternoon sun.

Huge thanks to Rose and Tim for organising such an enjoyable day for us and to our driver for conveying us safely there and back.



Ursula E. Steiger

This Year's Outings

A big thanks to everyone who came along to our Outings this year. We really hope you enjoyed them as much as we did. Some of you came to all three which makes us feel that we must have been getting something right. We shall be asking the Committee about some sort of reward for loyal supporters.

Rose and Tim



The History & Heritage of Hampshire & the Isle of Wight



The coach trip set off on a Sunday and the weather was consistently superb.

Stopping en route at Stonehenge we stayed in Winchester, where we visited The Hospital of St Cross and Almshouse of Noble Poverty in Winchester, described as 'England's oldest and most perfect alms-house' (see photo). We then nipped across to Chichester for an amazing visit to Fishbourne Roman Palace, apparently the site of the largest Roman home found in Britain. The day finished at Winchester Cathedral.



During the middle of the trip we saw a lot of Portsmouth. Did you know that Portsmouth is the only island city in the UK thanks to the narrow Portsea Creek separating it from the mainland?

We took a ferry on day three to the Isle of Wight and were drove along the 'Military Road' where we stopped at Pearl Café and enjoyed amazing views across the English Channel, finishing our day with a visit to Osborne House.

Our second day in Portsmouth began with a boat tour around the dockyard, the highlight being the amazing *Mary Rose* Museum (see photo).

The final leg of our trip took in Wisley Gardens, home to some of the largest plant collections anywhere in the world. It was a very hot day and after a few hours we were glad to get back on the coach. All credit to Helen for masterminding such an enjoyable trip. We look forward to the next one, which is to South Yorkshire on 26 April 2024.

Robin Terry, Chair



Future Holidays

The spring 2024 holiday to Yorkshire is now full. There are always a few cancellations, so if you wish to be informed of these, contact Helen Nattrass (see below).

Autumn 2024. WW1 history in Belgium

We are hoping to get a group of around 20–25 people to visit WW1 historic sites in Belgium. It would be a 5-day 4-night holiday, September or early October 2024 staying in south Belgium visiting a mix of museums and historic sites, with a half day in Bruges. Travel directly from Canterbury by coach, channel crossing by ferry.

Prices are of the order of £550–£600 with about £140 single supplement in a 3* hotel bed & breakfast only. Final prices depend on actual numbers and the accommodation available.

We need a minimum of 20 people interested to pursue a firm enquiry with a specialist WW1 visits travel company. If we get that far, then a £100 per person deposit will be required very quickly to secure our deal.

Please forward your expression of interest promptly to Helen Nattrass.



Book Review: *In the Middle of Somewhere* by Tessa Woodward

This is an exploration of the ups and downs of a couple deciding to leave the busy, noisy life in London for the idyll of life in a Kent village. We follow the adventures of the couple, which is told in a humorous way; and a very believable picture emerges of what such a move entails.

Ben is a gardener and adjusts with ease to life in the country. Kath, an events organiser, finds it more challenging. An experience with rats is an unwelcome discovery and teething problems with the house unexpected.

Gradually we are introduced to the interesting characters who live in the village and learn about the activities that are part of any English village life.

The proposed building of new houses, along with the planned caravan park, horrify Kath but Ben reassures her.

Although Kath agrees to edit the Parish Magazine and designs websites for people, she seems disgruntled and not able to settle into the new life. The proposal to create a biodiverse areas of trees, ponds, butterflies and birds appears to fire her imagination and she becomes enthusiastically involved. When there is an urgent need to plant the trees the occupants of the caravans come to her aid. Thus new connections are made. She no longer talks about moving and may well be beginning to feel really involved in village life, as do the folk from the caravan site.

This is an enjoyable book to read, Tessa is obviously very in tune with village life.

Christine Plant



And finally . . .

A little nonsense now and then is relished by the wisest men. Proceeding from this premise, I here write about the inventor of nonsense verse, an Englishman, Edward Lear.

Lear was born in North London, the 20th of 21 children, in 1812. Following this unusual family placement, he was reared by his eldest sister Ann, who also looked after his basic education. From early life he suffered from asthma and bronchitis, and was also afflicted by depression which he termed 'the Morbids'. Aged 15, he began to make a living as an artist, concentrating on wildlife. A few years later, he began to write nonsense verse in rhyming form where, with very few exceptions, the last line echoed the first. He did much work for the family of the Earl of Derby and also taught Queen Victoria drawing. HM found him 'remarkably good' and he referred to her as 'a dear and absolute duck'. Although he liked women, he remained a life-long bachelor stating that 'At 103 I may marry—possibly.'

It was in the 1840s that he introduced verses/stories with (now familiar) dizzying nomenclature: The Yonghy-Bonghy-Bo; Mr & Mrs Discobboles; the Jumbly Girl and the noble 'Akond of Swat'. Of course there is his best-loved poem for children 'The Owl and the Pussycat'.

We now return to the particular verse form of Limericks. First, two fine exceptions to the repeat last-line rule:

There was an Old Man whose despair
Induced him to purchase a hare
Whereon one fine day he rode wholly away
Which partly assuaged his despair.

And even better:

There was an Old Man who made bold
To affirm that the weather was cold,
So he ran up and down in his grandmother's gown
Which was woollen and not very old.

These inconsequential outcomes have feeling and nonsense mixed up. A particular richness is in his rhyming ability, like the old man of Thermopylae who never did anything properly, and the Old Man of Vesuvius who studied the works of Vitruvius.

In the last years of his life, he settled in San Remo and following the deaths of his faithful manservant, Kokali and his 17-year old cat Foss, became both lonely and depressed. He died in Italy in 1884.

Most of us will have encountered Limericks in our early life and if we delve into memory, we can come up with a few examples. I have managed the following:

There once was a student at Kent
Who worked doubled-up in a tent.
When they asked him why so? He replied I don't know,
I suppose it's my scholarly bent.

Prince Hamlet thought Uncle a traitor
For having it off with his mater
To revenge Dad or not, is the gist of the plot,
And he does, nine soliloquies later.

There was a young man in his prime
Who married 3 wives at a time.
When asked 'Why the third?' He replied one's absurd,
And bigamy, Sir, is a crime.

A vice both obscure and unsavoury
Held the Bishop of Bantry in slavery.
'Midst terrible howls he de-flowered young owls
In a crypt kitted out like an aviary.

and for the high-minded:

There once was a man who said 'God
Must think it exceedingly odd
If he finds that this tree continues to be
When there's no one about in the Quad.'

The riposte . . .

'Dear Sir, your astonishment's odd;
I am always about in the Quad,
And that's why the tree will continue to be
Since observed by, Yours faithfully, – GOD.'

I am sure that many of you could out-limerick me . . . go on, try!

Barbara Vosper

PS. I am indebted to an excellent book on my shelves: *The Nonsense Verse of Edward Lear* written (and marvellously illustrated) by John Vernon Lord.

PPS. I was born in Limerick.



Thank you for all your contributions, from a couple of sentences up to 250 words.
Keep them coming, as this is your News Bulletin.
Send them to Ursula Steiger: ursulae@btinternet.com.