



FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER

The Truth about u3a Myths

In the u3a national newspaper for December, there was an item in the form of an Advent calendar which sought to dispel some myths and misconceptions about our u3a movement. The following are taken from that calendar:

Myth: The Third Age Trust is our “Head” office.

Truth: We have no overarching head office. There is a ‘u3a Office’ but that only provides support and administration services.

Myth: A local u3a is not a charity but a branch.

Truth: All u3as are independent organisations. Most are independent charities. They are not governed by a head office. (Ems Valley u3a is a registered charity)

Myth: It's against the rules to seek outside funding, i.e. Lottery Funding.

Truth: Local u3as can look for sources of funding as can the Trust. So long as this doesn't interfere with our guiding principles. (Ems Valley u3a had a massive grant when we first started from the Lottery fund!)

Myth: You have to be over 55 to join a u3a and / or you have to be retired.



Truth: There is no minimum (or maximum) age criteria to join a u3a. ‘Not in full time employment’ is the only criteria.

Myth: u3as ‘do’ and the Trust’s only job is to support u3as.

Truth: A high proportion of the Trust’s efforts is to support the independent u3as but they do much more. The Trust also offers national events, national projects and a national learning programme.

Myth: It’s a University, like going back to school.

Truth: There are no exams or certificates issued. While we hope that we can promote learning this can be done by sharing our life

experiences. We aim to ‘Learn, Laugh, Live.’ Social development is also a form of learning.

Myth: Members can never discuss politics or religion.

Truth: u3as shouldn't promote any specific religion or political perspective. A quote from the Charity Commission – “a charity may give its support to specific policies advocated by political parties if it would help achieve its charitable purposes. However, trustees must not allow the charity to be used as a vehicle for the expression of the political views of any individual trustee or staff member”.

Myth: You can just pay £3.50 and get a day’s membership and hence get insurance cover on u3a outings.

Truth: A day’s membership is not possible. Everyone has to join a u3a and pay the full due subscription before attending any of that u3a’s activities (other than events under, for example, a ‘Taster’ or ‘New Members’ event).

Myth: The movement is just for white, middle-class people. The Trust doesn't promote diversity.

Truth: We want a diverse inclusive membership from all walks of life and professions.

Myth: Single sex groups are permitted.

Truth: They are not, we are an inclusive organisation.

Myth: The magazine, TAM, isn't popular and isn't green.

Truth: TAM has a distribution of over 200,000 households and uses fully recycled paper. Advertising covers production cost. Those taking TAM only have to pay for the distribution costs.

Myth: The u3a organisation is seeing continued steady growth.

Truth: Through the pandemic membership dropped. More severely in some areas compared to others. There are also more competitors now so we need to all help raise our profile and grow our membership.

Myth: There is a big Head Office with a large number of paid staff.

Truth: We have only one room as an office and 17 full time paid staff (mostly working from home). The over 60 daily queries received from members by email and telephone are answered by a small dedicated team of staff and Trust Volunteers.

Myth: Online learning is isolationist and no fun.

Truth: Online methods can open up access to many members and improve our accessibility. We want a mix of local delivery and online accessibility. 'Trust u3a' offers online learning where members enjoy the social setting within an online u3a.

Myth: u3a is a small national organisation.

Truth: We are actually 17th largest organisation in the UK, just below the Labour Party and the Scout Association.

Myth: The u3a is just a British organisation.

Truth: It's actually an international organisation, strong in France and America. We maintain contacts with a few sister organisations and share experiences.

Myth: The u3a movement is for ex-teachers.

Truth: We want a diverse inclusive membership from all walks of life and professions.

Myth: It's a top down organisation with management from above.

Truth: All local u3as govern themselves and have their own Constitution.

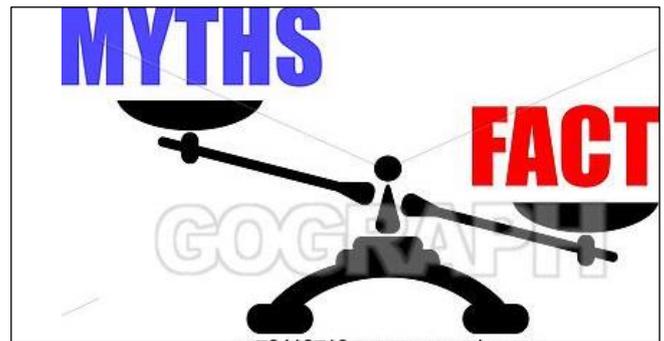
Myth: Trust Committee members are not Trustees. Committee members are not equal, the Chair has overall authority.

Truth: The Trust has 6 main Committees. Each is comprised of a mix of Trustees, (paid) Staff and Volunteers (non-Trustees). Each committee works to achieve consensus but the Chair of the Committee has the deciding vote.

Myth: It is "illegal" to have paid tutors.

Truth: Paid tutors are not "illegal". u3as are discouraged from using them regularly as:

- (a) it's not self-help learning
- (b) there can be financial problems - a regular tutor could be classed by HMRC as an employee for National Insurance and have employment rights
- (c) there could be insurance implications if it is an activity group (for example Pilates, Tai Chi).



Jane Yoward

GEOLOGY GROUP EXAMINE THE CARBONIFEROUS PERIOD

The Geology Group recently looked at the Carboniferous period (approximately 360 to 290 million years ago) as part of their longer term study of the geological timescale of Great Britain. Here are some of the “highlights” of their January meeting, hopefully to wet the appetite of those who might wish to join the group.

This was a time when geographically Great Britain was astride the equator and part of a larger northern landmass known as the Old Red Sandstone Continent that included North America, Greenland and Scandinavia. During this period a larger landmass to the south called Gondwanaland crashed into the northern landmass to form part of a single supercontinent called Pangea.



Geologically the period was generally one of sedimentary rock formation with Great Britain covered by warm shallow seas that laid down tropical carbonates such as limestone. Later the shallow seas were invaded by deltas formed by rivers flowing in from higher adjacent ground. Shale and sandstone rocks subsequently evolved. With the climate becoming more humid, the deltas

started supporting swamps and tropical rain forest growth. Changes to these deltas plus many changes in sea levels led to inundations of the swamp areas with the burial and decay of the lush vegetation, leading to the eventual formation of coal seams and measures.

The carboniferous period was also a time when organisms evolved from soft bodied sea creatures into fish, amphibians, reptiles and eventually mammals. The development of skeletal features to sea creatures evolved during the Carboniferous period such that bony fish were the most diverse fish group by the end of the period. Amphibians developed limbs and spent a greater time out of water. Their development would lead to the establishment of the next major animal group in earth’s history namely reptiles that didn’t need to live in water. Arthropods including lobsters, crabs and spiders appeared on land and winged forms of insects took to the air.

Meanwhile photosynthetic algae gave rise to the first land dwelling plants and trees. This required the development of cellulose that allowed for their support out of water as well as the movement of water through their systems. Woody tissue in some plants allowed for very tall growth. The abundance of land plants living and dying together with the prevailing climate at the time, the arrangement of continents and the evolutionary state of these land plants all combined to favour the formation of coal seams.

If you would like to learn more about how the world has evolved around you why not come along and join the Geology Group. We are very much a self help beginner’s group in expertise and we meet every first Tuesday of the month at 2pm in the Community Centre. Hopefully we might even get out on a field trip or two when the weather warms up. If you would like more information, please contact Roy Gask on 01243 431179 or roygask@hotmail.com.

Bill Dawes

Art Appreciation – Opportunity to join our next visit!

On Friday 25th March, 10.30-12.30 the Art Appreciation Group is once again visiting the Bowerman Charitable Trust at Champs Hill to view the Spring Exhibition of works by **Classic Newlyn artists (1880-1910)** Introducing the Bowerman Charitable Trust's major recent acquisition, Walter Langley's Breadwinners, and focusing on the works of Langley and Forbes in the period from 1880, when Langley first visited Newlyn, to 1910 when Forbes exhibited 'Old Cronies' at the Royal Academy.

Alongside the Langleys and Forbes are paintings from other members of the classic period of the Newlyn colony including Elizabeth Forbes, Edwin Harris, Frank Bramley, Norman Garstin and Albert Chevallier Taylor.

We will also look around the gardens and sculptures. Champs Hill is a delightful venue, near Pulborough with an airy, spacious art gallery and outstanding gardens **and only accepts group visits.** Transport will be in private cars. Tea or coffee will be included.

We are extending an invitation to all members of Ems Valley U3A. If you would like to take up one of our spare places, please contact Catherine Davis daviscph@gmail.com and post or drop your £10 for entry (either cheque made out to Ems Valley U3A or cash) in a labelled envelope by **Monday 28th February** to Catherine Davis 12 Beach Road Emsworth PO10 7JS. Please include a phone number. Let me know if you would like a lift or could offer one to another member.

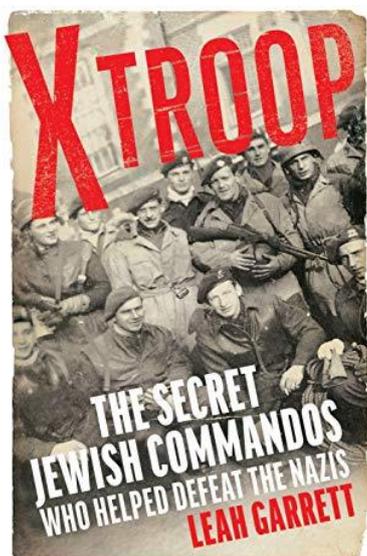


We have another trip there planned for May 19th 2 – 4 p.m. to see an exhibition of the later Newlyn artists.

For more information, please visit www.thebct.org.uk - where you will find some beautiful photographs of the gardens and sculptures, as well as directions of how to get to Champs Hill which is in Coldwaltham, nr Pulborough, West Sussex.

Kindertransport - Esther Rantzen and Fred Stern in Australia

For those of you interested in Kindertransport, the method by which thousands of Jewish children manage to escape to the UK before the Second World War started, listen to this podcast in which Esther Rantzen interviews Fred Stern, one of those Jewish boys. Enter into your browser: our [u3a YouTube channel](#), (I am not sure how long it will be "alive" – it was good on 20th Jan.!)



In the January episode, the team discuss the Kindertransport learning initiative, talk to a member of u3a in Australia and hear about the milestone of 5,000 trees being planted in the u3a 40th anniversary wood.

Also. I may have mentioned previously in this newsletter, a new book I have just read entitled "Troop X". By an American author, the book explains how a group of 70 were selected from these KINDERTRANSPORT children – aged 18 and 19 – and trained to be commando intelligence soldiers. They were annoyed that they had been interned by us in the Isle of Man or sent to Canada and Australia. They complained bitterly that their hatred towards the Nazis was far more than any UK soldier, so why intern them, why not let them fight. It is an amazing read! If anyone wishes to borrow my copy, please contact me. **Ed.**

Camera Workshop Outing

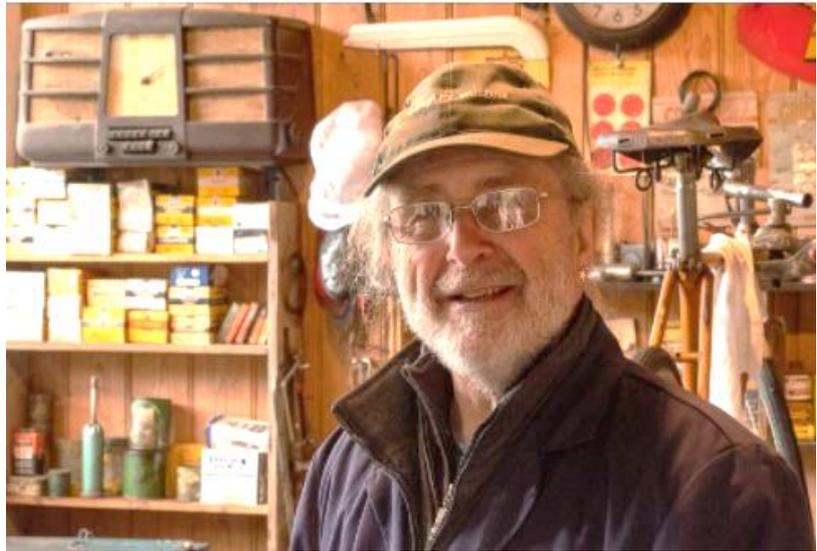
January can be cold or wet so the Amberley Chalk Pits Museum was our chosen venue for this month as there are several places where you can go inside. The genre for this outing was portraiture but of course members were free to take other subjects along the way using their knowledge of macro etc. The light was not very good and at one time it rained. Of course the day had to start with a coffee!

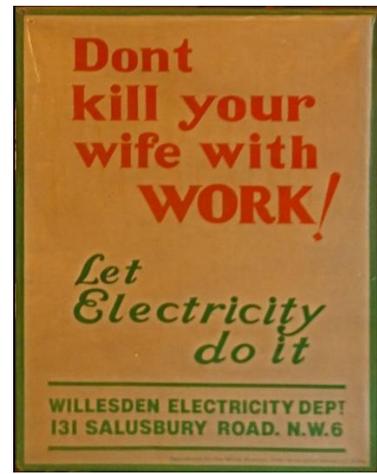
Across the road from the cafe was an old single decker bus so we journeyed to the far end of the site.

Photography was rather challenging because many of the smaller artefacts were behind glass which meant that reflections were a problem.

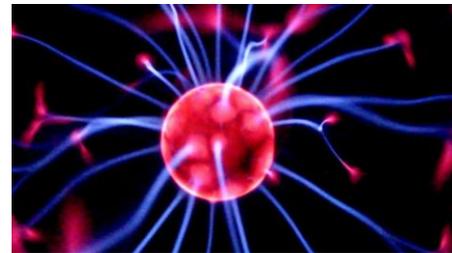
It seemed that it was mostly manned by volunteers and they appeared to be quite happy for us to take their photos. Some members of the Group were interested in the technical aspects of the displays but nearly all images were different. **See below**

Diana Driver





Science and Technology Group
Visitors Welcome at Next Meeting
Thursday pm, 3rd February



We've enjoyed some very interesting meetings during 2021, our first year. Our Chairman, Anne Powell, is a keen member and has suggested that we should open up the meetings to other Ems Valley members, if they are particularly interested in one of our wide range of topics. In December we had an excellent talk and discussion about pollution in Chichester Harbour and could have easily seated another dozen or so. On Thursday February 3rd at 2.00, in St James's Hall, we will be treated to a talk on:

DNA Fingerprinting - by Professor Peter Goldfarb.

All members are invited, but we have to keep an eye on numbers, so if you would like to apply to attend, please email the Group Leader, Geoff Whalley, by clicking the "Messenger Bird" on the Science and Technology Group page on our website. There is a limit on numbers so first come first served. You will be assured of a warm welcome and will get a reply confirming that you have a place.

Here is an extract from our provisional programme for 2022:

6th Jan	No Meeting
3rd Feb	Forensic DNA Fingerprinting
3rd March	A Career Scientific
7th April	The Development of Hong Kong's Chek Lap Kok Airport
5th May	Technology in Model Railways
2nd June	Spring Bank Holiday - Meeting TBD ?
7th July	Submarines
4th August	Possibly No Meeting - TBD
1st September	Revisit - Harbour Water Pollution
6th October	Stem Cells and Regenerative Medicine

3rd November Follow up Discussion on Global Warming

1st December Getting the Best out of a Solar Array
& Christmas Networking Session!

Note:

1. *Regular members of the Group are requested to let Geoff know if they are planning not to attend a particular meeting, so we can offer places to others!*

2. *Tea/Coffee, biscuits and a chat afterwards .*

Geoff Whalley

An interview with Keith Davies, the fourth Chairman of Ems Valley u3a:

Hello Keith , were you there at the very start of Ems Valley u3a?

Yes, I was. I had just retired and finished with the relentless commuting to London which meant that I was away from the house from 6.00am to 6.30pm! We did not know many people in Emsworth and thought that u3a would be a good idea to alter this. A friend from Essex knew about the movement and suggested that I should try the library for information. This led to me contacting Emsworth and District u3a who told me of their "Deadmans shoes" policy, and that their waiting list was long! But a phone call two months later suggested that a second u3a could be set up. I attended a meeting at the Community Centre where I remember meeting Val Swarbrick, Anne Beard and Anne and John Gains. There was also an American lady who appeared to be a contender for the first Chairman, but she returned to America shortly after. I joined and was helping put chairs out for a meeting when Val Swarbrick's husband introduced me to Anne Beard who immediately signed me up as "Sound Technician"! I was introduced to a sound box – about 5 feet high and weighing more than one could lift, and I was suitably saddled. I seem to remember that you, Alan, was initially my mate, and then I became your mate as this box of tricks was posted to your garage??



Has membership of our u3a affected your life?

Yes, but all to the good, I am pleased to say! We had not met many people in Emsworth, now we suddenly knew many!

Tell us a little about how you met Sue, about your working career, and of course, children?

We lived very close to each other in Birmingham. I was 15 and she was 14 when we first became friends. But when I joined the Navy and wore a 'Sailors Suit' she took a renewed interest! (there weren't too many Sailor suits in Birmingham!) We married when I was 20, in 1959 and I was posted to Yeovil in the Fleet Air Arm where I was trained in Safety and survival equipment. This was to be my 'trade' for the whole of my Navy service. My life was ashore then at sea – generally two year periods. Our daughter Karen was born whilst I was away at sea. We came to Lee on Solent where we had a married quarter. Then we were in Malta for two years where our son Neil was born. This was a happy posting for us and it counted as an away at sea posting! Then a return to RNAS Yeovil for another two years, followed by two years away in the Far East with HMS Eagle.

Left: Keith, when he was working at the M.O.D.

It was on this posting that we created a world record of keeping a plane in the sky for 71 days continuously whilst making certain that oil tankers did not get through to Ian

Smith's Rhodesia! I was then offered a commission which I accepted and was then posted to various 'grooming' establishments at Portsmouth and Greenwich before emerging a proud Sub Lieutenant!

A remote posting to the Tain Bombing range in Scotland followed and we survived for two years in a crofters cottage, where the light from the adjacent lighthouse would light our whole world up every 51 seconds, night and day, regardless of whether we were trying to sleep or not. Our Children would walk to the Village School and Sue learnt the life of a Crofter, even if she didn't really want to be one! Then to Plymouth married quarters where I was off in HMS Bulwark to the Mediterranean, America and the Caribbean.

I heard that you had to handle the Royals in your position as Safety and Survival Officer.

Yes my next job was Yeovil again and we had Prince Charles for survival training prior to his learning to fly helicopters. Then I needed extra warm clothing teaching air crew how to survive in the Arctic and Northern Norway in temperatures which went down to minus 35 degrees. I was then fortunate to go on loan to the US Navy in Norfolk, Virginia which meant that I could take Sue and the children with me! It was a great posting and as I was a qualified football referee, and the game was beginning to catch on out there, I was often called on to officiate! Back to the UK in Bulwark followed by HMS Invincible and this posting included Prince Andrew flying helicopters. I seem to remember that he was always first off the ship when we docked (with his detective) and generally last back on when we sailed! I returned to Lee on Solent as CO of the Navy's Survival Training School for two years and then finished my service with four years at the Ministry of Defence where I was fortunate to head the Survival Training Branch.

What did you do when you left the services?

I worked in Monarch Airlines as their Safety and Security officer, but after three years we had the first Gulf War and people stopped flying. I was fortunate to obtain a job in Property Management in London and stayed there until I retired in 2004. We had moved down to Emsworth in 1995. U3a started in 2005!

How do you look back on your two years as Chairman of our u3a Keith?

I enjoyed my time as Chairman, it was during that time that the Church Hall where we met, was upgraded to meet new disabled requirements, together with changes which upgraded the Hall's Fire and Safety regulations. These changes meant that the hall capacity was increased from 120 to 150. Also they installed an integral sound and projector system.

What interest groups do you belong to now?

I have great fun in Playreading and in Singing for fun! I also enjoy Bricks, which I think you know something about Alan, Book club and Wine Appreciation, so you can see that I am busy!

I remember attending my very first Wine Appreciation meeting in your house Keith?

Yes, I remember that meeting too. I can see the look on Sue's face now as member upon member came through our front door. Pauline Tyrer was the leader in those days, and I had no idea of who might turn up. How we found enough glasses I don't know and how we made the limited wine go round was another miracle!

Wine Appreciation holds fond memories for both of us, what was your favourite trip abroad, I know that you are one of the few who came on all ten trips.

I would pick the very first one when we went to Rioja via the ferry to Santander. But the winter trip to the Moselle in Germany was my very close second choice.



How do you view this past lockdown year – year and a half, and our efforts to keep going on Zoom?

I think that everyone has a story to tell. We were luckier than many. We all talk about getting back to normal, but what is 'normal' going to be? Zoom was very useful once we got used to it but you cannot beat the real thing in mixing and interacting with your friend – and family!

Picture on left: Keith and Sue on a u3a Wine trip in Italy, June 2018.

We always end the interview with you being cast away to a desert island with the Bible, the complete works of Shakespeare and a great big picture of all your Ems Valley u3a friends! You are allowed to request one other thing, what will that be?

I would take pictures of my family and

also a survival kit - just the same as the one we issued to the Navy aircrew!

Letters to the Editor:

Your picture in the last newsletter shows a iconic small loco pulling carriages over the bridge over Horndean Road Emsworth, and I wonder if any of your readers know the reason why that bridge is the only rail bridge over the road between Chichester and Havant? All other villages/hamlets have crossings that involve traffic to give precedence to the railway. Apparently the reason for this is that the landowners/farmers who sold their land for the construction of the railway made a stipulation that the line must not interfere with movement of people and stock between New Brighton/Southleigh [to the north] and to the town itself.

On another point I have a friend here in Emsworth who writes and prepares exhibitions - she did one for me when we started the St Georges Parade in 2007-on The Land Army Girls and it was quite fascinating and full of local interest. She is now planning one on the **Nuremberg [war criminal] trials** at the end of WW2 and it might be useful if any of your readers have relevant knowledge or information that might assist her?

Brendan Gibb-Grey

When my husband and I learned of the then new Group called Science and Technology, he was immediately interested, his career having been in that area. I must admit it was not something that held much appeal for me. My School Science lessons didn't get much beyond watching iron filing form patterns when close to a magnet, oh yes, and making soap! My Technology is limited to something as vast as getting to grips with a modern T.V. I do sometimes yearn for a tele with just an on/off switch and volume control... But, I didn't want to be left out, so we both attended the inaugural meeting. It was pretty humbling as all of the members' seemed to have qualifications and special interests in the S & T field.

Well I couldn't pretend so I went all out for Confession. I explained my lack and hoped I could still enjoy the meetings without the worry of having to take an exam or even be expected to remember much of it!

Over the course of the meetings a number of the attendees have given illustrated Talks on the subjects of their choosing and despite only understanding a fraction (note, I do not put a number to the fraction) of it, I have nevertheless come away with the feeling that, yes, I have gained something, been entertained and educated and so

not quite so ignorant as before. As a known 'non-technocrat' I can ask questions that others secretly want to know or they can feel superior (because they already knew the answer). So maybe my presence had been of some use. I do hope my "Confession" will encourage others, with whatever degree of Science and Technology experience they have, to come along to a meeting, just to listen and who knows, perhaps learn too. **Kate Wiggins**

Crafts group gain new members

We had our first 2022 meeting on Wednesday 5th January and welcomed a new member Alison Humphreys who was interested in learning to Crochet. Yet another creative afternoon, we started Fabric Applique sewing by hand to be made into various items, ie, cushions wall hangings and cards, also made gift boxes and bags from paper and card, we all have such fun and the times seems to slip by.

We all made the decision that for future meetings we will do our own thing so we will all be giving each other all our ideas to share with each other. Please find some of the photos from the meeting. **Angela Blanden**



BIRDAWARE – Are you aware?



On my daily constitutional, I saw this smart blue van covered in bird motifs and signed “Solent Bird Aware”! Next I saw a huddle of people at the bottom of Warblington Road and two very professional looking tripod telescopes. The two attractive “RANGERS”, Lizzie and Charlotte were inviting passer byes to partake! It is amazing to experience the power of their equipment! When it was my turn I had a perfect ‘shot’ of Widgeon, Teal and Godwit. So close that I could seemingly reach out and touch them!

I was interested in how this new setup was funded and was told that their funds mainly came from what we – or they - call “Planning Gain”! (When a developer wishes to apply for planning permission in the Solent area, he needs to give something back to help preserve that area. Hence the Solent Birdaware setup!)

The rangers very kindly took the below photos and sent them to me that evening. Bottom left shows the lovely Godwit and bottom right, three Widgeon, two males and a female in the foreground.



I could not wait to speak to Reg Newnham, the leader of Ems Valley u3a “Birds and Wildlife”, but he (of course) knew all about Bird Aware and had arranged outings with them! If you are walking the shoreline, keep a lookout for Lizzie and Charlotte! **Ed.**

DAY TRIPPERS

We last met on 12 January and planned the following lineup of events through to June:-

23 February: **Microbrewery Tour and Lunch at The Gribble Inn, Oving.**
Sorry, this trip is fully subscribed.

16 March: **Southwick House, Southwick.** Join us for a presentation/lecture of the planning for the DD Invasion. This is not to be missed. Arrangements need to be confirmed and we will contact you as soon as plans are completed. We will be in the mapping room where the invasion was planned. Below is a snippet of what faced the leaders of the Alliance:

According to historian and retired Colonel Jeremy Green, the weather underpinned 'the key decision' to postpone D-Day, made by General Dwight Eisenhower in the library room of Southwick House.

Launching more than 4,000 vessels and 11,000 aircraft to carry 154,000 troops to liberate Europe required nothing less than optimal conditions.



April/May: **Arudel Castle's Spring Tulip Festival.** The date has yet to be announced, but stay tuned for our announcement of the date.



May/June: **Ride and Lunch on the Watercress Line.** We will be back to you with detailing in the near future. **Suggestions for Places and Events for us to consider are always welcomed!!**

Pam Palmer, Simon Winslow and Steve Gorban



Did anyone bring this Footstool to the Monthly meeting on Thursday?

If so please contact Anne Powell.

More Nostalgia

The picture below shows a snowy scene in West Street Havant in 1910. Prominent on the left is Pullen and Rose millers and corn merchants, which was a shop at the corner of The Pallant. The building was built right into the corner of the churchyard and had no back door but a side door which can be seen in the picture. On the right, you

can just see the Post Office and Capital and Counties Bank which is now Lloyds Bank. Judging by the posers, both adult and children, it was either unusual to have some snow, or to have your picture taken!

There is still time for the white stuff this year.....



A rat catchers tale



During the late 1700s and early 1800s our Havant Town Mill tenant was Thomas Raiss, and he was famous for his invention of a rat powder which he advertised extensively in the newspapers of the day, and sold, apparently, worldwide!

But trouble was brewing with lookalike counterfeit alternatives. It caused our Thomas to insert the below advert in the national press:

I would have hated to have been in poor Mr Goadby of Sherborne's shoes after he returned his powder for a refund....

Ed.

To Farmers, Maltsters, Millers &c. The great success with which the HAMPSHIRE MILLER'S RAT POWDER has been used for the destruction of Rats and Mice in malthouses, mills, outhouses, barns, stables, granaries, &c. as well as on-board ship, induces the PROPRIETOR, T. RAISS, merchant and Mealman, at Havant Mill, Hants, to recommend it to the Farmers at this particular season of the year to destroy the vermin infecting their barns, before they bring in their corn at the approaching harvest. Maltsters of SHIPS may also, on one night's trial, be witness of its astonishing effects, by alluring their vermin to the spot, where they will eat it till they drop, and will not be driven from it. – No cat will touch it. The success, with which it has been used in the Sugar Plantations, and in hot climates, deserves the attention of Merchants and Planters. And as the inventor is a person of established character, and in affluent circumstances, it is scarce necessary to add, that his motive in offering it for sale is solely for the public good. There is a counterfeit sort, but the genuine packets, price 2s 6d. each, are done up in a red stamp, whereupon is the name of T. Raiss; and they are sold by Champante and Co, Aldgate; by J. Wye, No 59, Coleman-street; at the British Directory Office, Ave-Maria-lane, St Paul's; and by all country booksellers, stationers, news-distributors, &c WHEREAS, several SPURIOUS Compositions having been made to imitate the HAMPSHIRE MILLER'S RAT POWDER, I think it incumbent on me to protect the public from such FRAUDS. This is therefore to give notice, that whoever will give information of any person or persons having counterfeited the said powder, and sold it under my NAME or SIGNATURE the person so informing shall receive a reward of TWENTY GUINEAS, to be paid on conviction, by me. The real powder is covered with a red stamp, having my name and signature upon it; and is sold wholesale by Champante and Whitrows, Aldgate, London; by the printer of this paper, and his newsmen; and by appointed persons in every town, in packets of 2s. 6d. each.

it has never been known to fail, when the directions are followed; and , though I have authorised all my vendors to return the money if it does not answer, yet, out of TWENTY THOUSAND PACKETS sold within the present year, only seven have been returned; and those came from the customers of Mr Goadby, of Sherborne, which I immediately took, exactly in the state they came back to me, and laid them at a neighbour's house in the presence of a dozen persons, who are witnesses that all the rats about the premises were destroyed in less than two hours. this composition is inevitable destruction to every species of rats and mice, most of which are too nice to eat Dutch paste or powered arsenic; and it has cost me many experiments and great expense to find it out; and if any man in the kingdom can make the same, I will forfeit a hundred pounds; in proof of its efficacy, the rat catchers now buy it in considerable quantities, finding it highly superior to all their cakes and contrivances, and yet no cat will touch it. It has cleared ships in one night, that have been likely to have been sunk by them; and the instances it has furnished of clearing Mills, Barns, Warehouses &c in a few hours only, are no less astonishing than true. Sold wholesale and retail by the printing- office, Winchester, and by all the agents.

THOMAS RAISS. HAVANT MILL, HANTS. Dec. 1. 1791.

One day, a letter came to the post office, addressed in a shaky handwriting to God with no address. The postal worker opened it to see what it was all about.

The letter read:

Dear God,

I am an 83 year old widow, living on a very small pension. Yesterday someone stole my purse. It had £100 in it, which was all the money I had until my next pension cheque.

Next Sunday is Christmas, and I had invited two of my friends over for dinner.

Without that money, I have nothing to buy food with. I have no family to turn to, and you are my only hope.

Can you please help me? Sincerely, Edna

The postal worker was touched. He showed the letter to all the other workers. Each one dug into his or her wallet and came up with a few pounds. By the time he made the rounds, he had collected £96, which they put into an envelope and sent to the woman.

The rest of the day, all the workers felt a warm glow thinking of Edna and the dinner she would be able to share with her friends.

Christmas came and went.

A few days later, another letter came from the same old lady to God.
All the workers gathered around while the letter was opened.

It read:

Dear God,

How can I ever thank you enough for what you did for me? Because of your gift of love, I was able to fix a glorious dinner for my friends. We had a very nice day and I told my friends of your wonderful gift.

By the way, there was £4 missing.

I think it must have been those ba****ds at the Post Office.

They say it might snow.....



Would you mind picking me up Bill, Agnes is using the car after all...



"No, playing golf isn't a sin. However, lying about your score, swearing, playing for money, wishing the other players will play bad, and not returning that 7-iron you found is."

All contributions for the next newsletter please to:
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