



FEBRUARY 2022 NEWSLETTER – 2

SHOULD THEY GO OR SHOULD THEY STAY?

The Minister for Art and Culture is going to be under pressure now that our Ancient Greek group have met for their February meeting!

Juliet Walker writes: It is not often that you can listen to a talk, where characters as diverse as George Osborne, Janet Suzman, the Earl of Elgin, John Keats and Amal Clooney fit seamlessly together, but that happened in February's meeting of the Ancient Greece Group.

We had a treat when Geoff Wiggins gave us a full, well-illustrated presentation – with tea break built in! - on the historical, political and legal aspects of the much-discussed Elgin Marbles. He had researched every facet of the Marbles, from their creation during the building of the Parthenon, in the fifth century BC, through their controversial removal from the Acropolis in the early years of the nineteenth century, to the continuing and various arguments about whether everything should be returned by the British Museum and sent to Athens, where there is now a purpose-built Acropolis Museum.



The Elgin Marbles

As you may well have read in the papers recently, it does not help the cause of the BM that the Duveen Gallery, where the sculptures are housed, has been closed for over a year, because of a leaking roof. Pictures of buckets beside the magnificent works of art go very much in favour of those who believe that their rightful place is in Athens – not back on the crumbling Parthenon, but in the new museum, which is exactly aligned with the temple, and looking directly up to it. Space is left in there for the sculptures, particularly poignantly where the five Caryatids (figures of maidens used in place of regular columns) from the Erechtheion [another temple on the Acropolis] wait patiently for their missing sister, who has resided by herself in Bloomsbury for just over two hundred years.

Geoff made it clear to us that the question of whether the Marbles should go back to Greece is not a straightforward

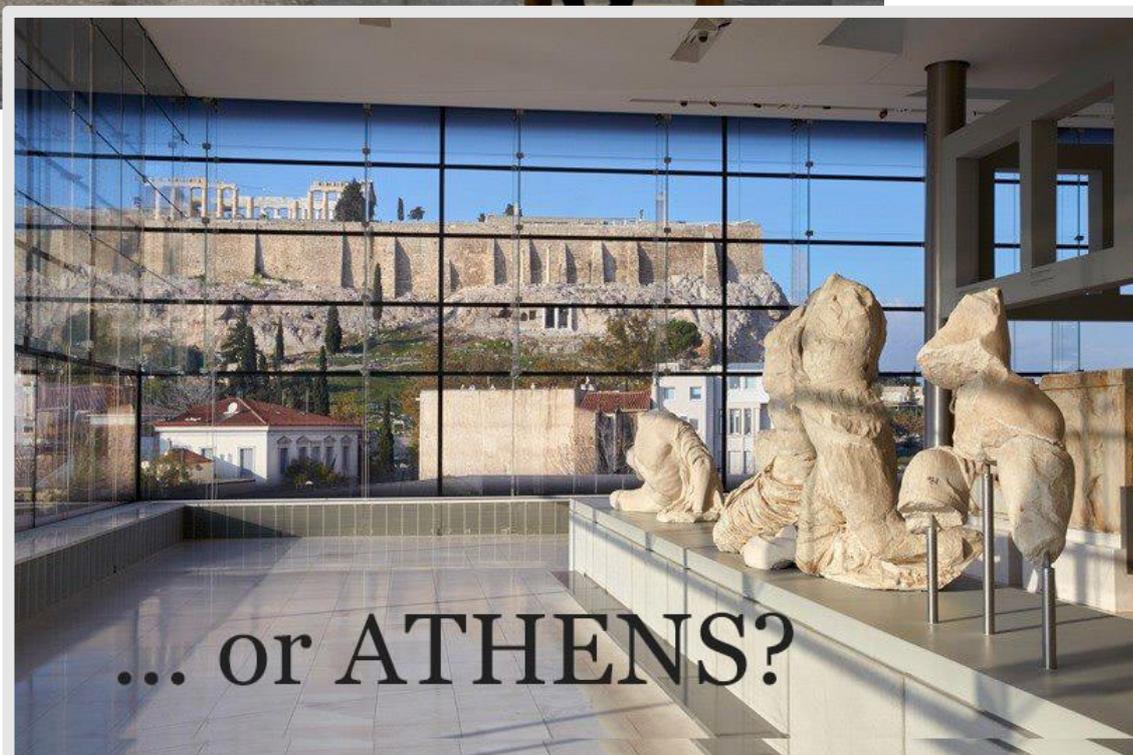


one to resolve. He hoped, though, that his presentation would have clarified matters somewhat for our group, and asked us to vote at the end. There was one No, and a few undecided, but the majority felt that the Parthenon Marbles should be reunited with their fellows. When you have half a torso from the West pediment in

Athens, and the other half in London, surely now is the time for at least some degree of sense and compromise.

Thanks very much to Geoff for preparing and delivering the presentation so successfully. It is good when group members are happy to take an idea and to run

with it, and we're lucky to have a number in our group who will do this.



Juliet Walker

WINE ONE GET TOGETHER WITH WINE TWO AND THREE FOR FUNCTION

The occasion was our Annual Wine tasting Gourmet dinner and sixty tasters/fine diners sat down for this gala event



at the Emsworth Sailing Club on Monday 7th February. Well, the photos are not brilliant, **but everything else was!** The diners enjoyed six gourmet courses each accompanied by a matching wine. The enjoyment of those attending resulted in a very hearty vote of thanks for Chef Ollie Clift at the conclusion.

Wines were from Australia, New Zealand, Italy, France and Portugal. This was one of the very few times that the different wine groups in Ems Valley u3a get

together, and judging by the success of the evening we hope that it can happen more often in the future.

Wines were sourced by Alan Borrow and Neil Cowell handled the bookings. It was lovely to be free of Covid restrictions for a change. However, looking back, we have only had to cancel one of these dinners over the past 2/3 years. The stars of the show? Grant Burge's Barossa INK Shiraz served with the 'Tourtière de



Gibier' and the Miravel Provençal Rosé which accompanied the starter, intriguingly listed on the menu as "petit burger d'Agneau", but quite sublime and un-burger like!

Alan Borrow

See below for the Wine Appreciation One Table:



(well, it's only once a year!)

Brick Business

We returned to "in person" meetings for our January meeting after many months of Zoom meetings. The attendance was excellent, in fact very similar to our Zoom meeting attendances! We now have 44 members and between 25 and 30 will attend any one meeting. The subject for our January meeting was "A look around at today's brickwork". Yes, we examined 20 different recent developments ranging from social housing in London and Paris to colleges, universities, individual brick extensions, and small housing developments. (plus one new crematorium!).

Variety, indeed - we guarantee that! Probably the one that pleased the eye the most was some new Student accommodation at Clare College, Cambridge. There is a history at this college of Swifts returning from Africa each spring and nesting in special boxes in the old college. The picture below shows the swift motif very firmly and decoratively built into the front brick work of this new student accommodation block!!



Inset left: the main Clare College building

Below: The new student accommodation blocks



We look at these more modern examples of brickwork every six or nine months to keep up with trends in brick. We are fortunate to have an ally in the central London offices of the Brick Development Association and she sends full details of all new noteworthy developments providing that they show the humble clay brick to best advantage! On this occasion it was very noticeable that the vast majority of the sites we looked at, had chosen grey and buff bricks, there was hardly a red brick to be seen. (much to my chagrin, as the group well know that I will always promote the Reds and the Red multis!)

Our membership is made up of 24 men and 20 ladies, and the latest trend in new members is from ladies! Come and join us if you think you might be interested, we meet at Mountford Three room at the ECA and we are promised the blue padded seats to view in comfort! 2.00pm on the fourth Tuesday of the month.

The next meeting will be looking at mainly Georgian brickwork in Chichester. **Alan Borrow**

U3A Gardens Group visit to The Down House, Itchen Abbas - 8/2/2022

After the winter drought of garden visits, we had our first Ems Valley U3A Gardens Group visit of 2022.

It was a little trek into deepest Hampshire but we made it to The Down House in Itchen Abbas near Winchester. The garden is part of the NGS Snowdrop Gardens and as we were looking forward to masses of snowdrops and other winter delights we were not disappointed.

The charming owner Mark Porter, who is a Trustee of the NGS and Hampshire County Organiser for the NGS, greeted us. The tea rooms were out of use due to building works, so we were treated to coffee, tea and homemade cakes in the house. Coffee and cakes are always a good start to a garden visit.

Just outside the front door porch, we were enveloped in the most glorious fragrance of a Daphne Bholua standing at least 10 ft tall, if not higher.

Mark explained he and his wife, Jackie, bought The Down House in 2001. The garden was a blank canvas and after extensive renovations to the house, they turned their untrained hands to the garden. Neither had any formal experience but between them they transformed it into what it is today - 3 acres of garden, with fields beyond and the River Itchen running at the bottom. In 2004 they called upon the assistance of Chris Beardshaw who helped with the design, introducing pleached hornbeams, yew and hawthorn hedging. There is a small vineyard of about 250 vines which produce roughly 350 bottles of red and white wine a year – no tasting was on offer!



When visiting the Sir Harold Hillier Gardens in Romsey, Mark and Jackie were inspired by the coloured winter stems of the dogwood (Cornus) and varieties of willow (Salix) and made a stunning Winter Stem Border in their garden. (see below) The stem colours ranging through from yellow



to orange, red and burgundy looked wonderful. There was the most delightful wooden hut made into a café for the grandchildren to play in.

Mark very proudly extolled the virtues of his three Robo mowers, saving him valuable gardening time by not having to mow the lawns himself. They even have their own little storage huts!

As we walked through the garden we saw before us a breathtaking carpet of yellow, white and purple made up of Winter Aconites, Snowdrops and Crocus Tommasini. The majority of the snowdrops were the common Galanthus Nivalis, and in a side border, there was a variety of specialist Galanthus such as S.Arnett and Lady Beatrix Stanley, all beautifully labelled making life so much easier.

We crossed the lawn to the other side of the garden, stopping to admire a very elegant life-size bronze statue of a young lady sitting on a bench reading.



The Potager, at the moment in its winter coat, will later in the year have vegetables, herbs and flowers. Definitely a good reason to return in the summer, as well as seeing the Rope Walk with climbing roses. The Down House has a



summer open garden day on 3rd August. Tuesday, however, was a February visit to a winter garden in its full glory and well worth the extra miles to get there.

Our next visit is to The Old Vicarage, Washington, West Sussex on 8th March. Ronnie Tyler

Nostalgia

Yes, we can all recognise this cross roads at Havant but bear in mind that West Street (straight ahead) formed part of the main road from Portsmouth to Chichester. As the horse and cart makes a right turn to the water trough on the corner, we cannot envisage the articulated lorries of today's size negotiating the narrowing West Street. And then, barely 2 miles on, they would have had to negotiate West Street Emsworth, yes I am talking about our little alleyway that houses the Emsworth Antiques Shop! (see second picture – the covered carriage is just emerging)



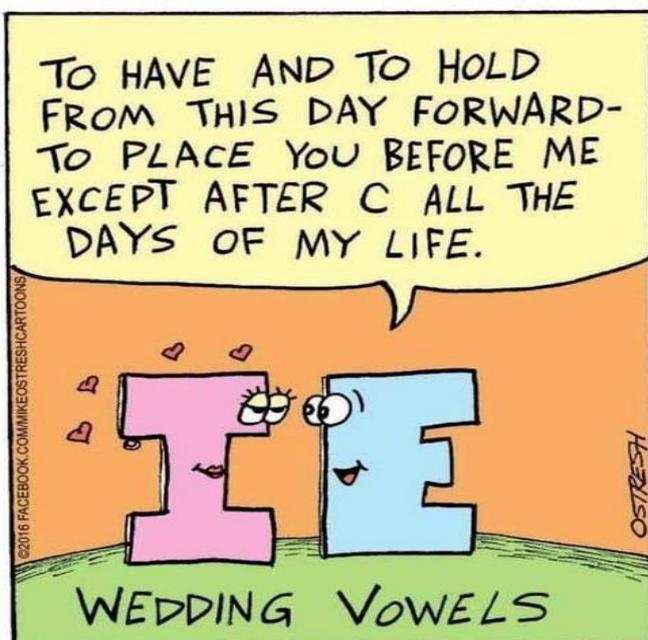
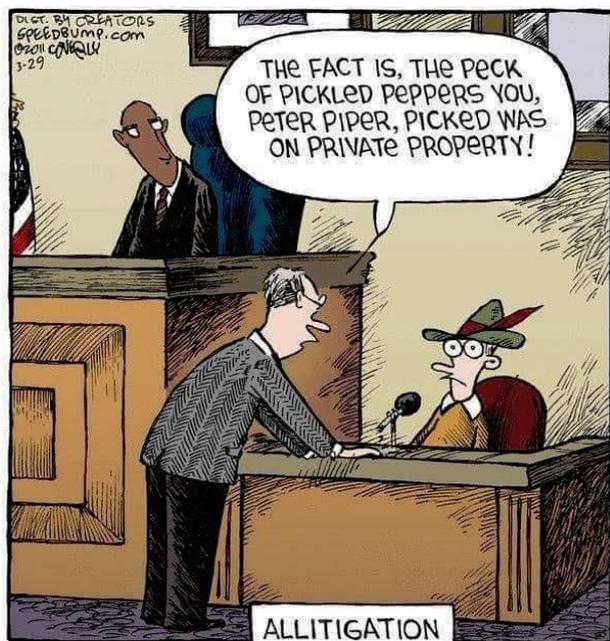
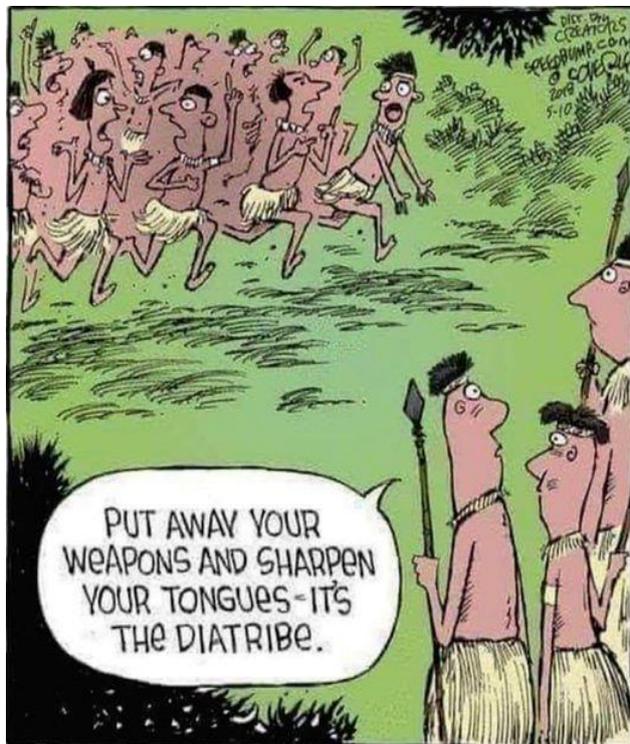
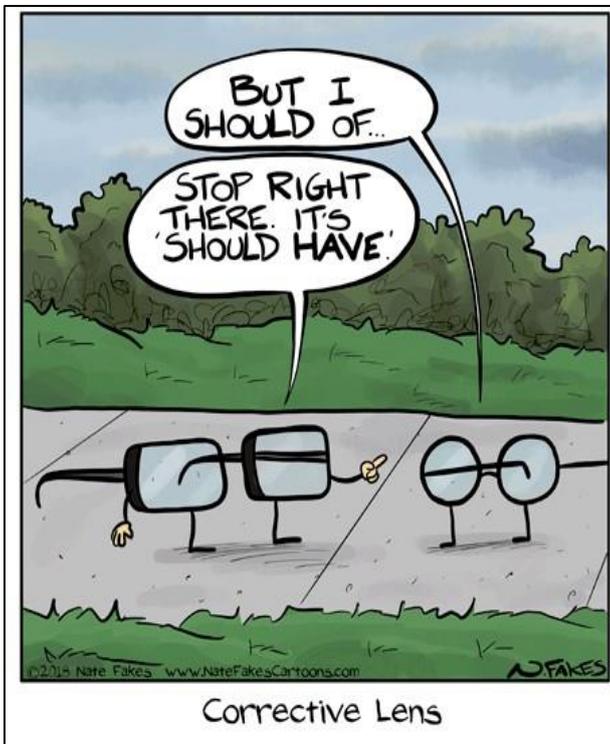
I can well remember making this trip in the 1950s from my home in Waterlooville, and it was quite a "difficult" journey!

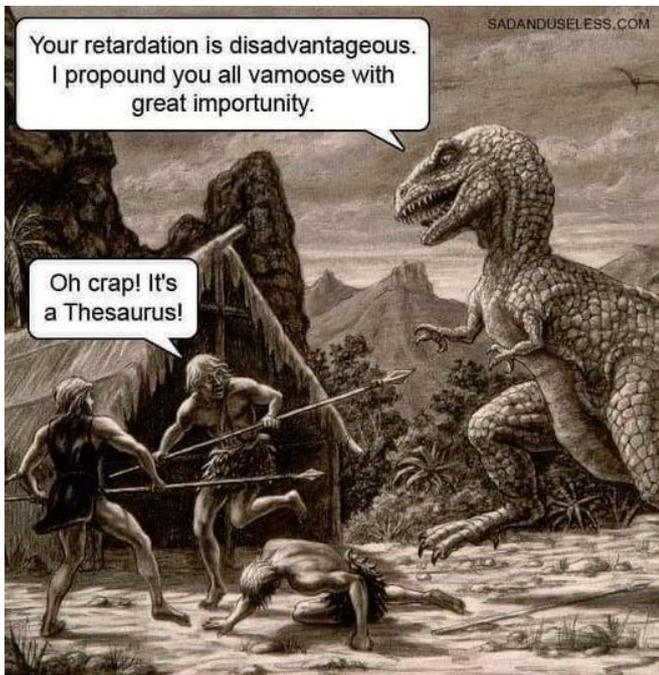
So difficult that the preference for us was to travel south to Portsmouth for shopping and negotiate all the dockyard bicycles! But Emsworth has not changed too much, has it? We still have the distinctive and attractive atmosphere of a bustling village - or is it a town? Send your opinion on an email to

the editor marked "Village/Town? You could win a walking trip to Emsworth square..... ED.

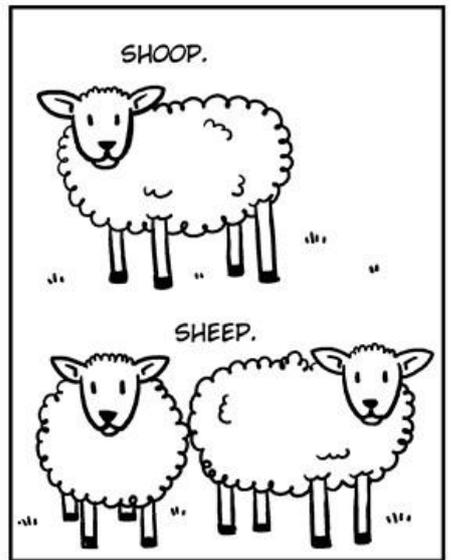
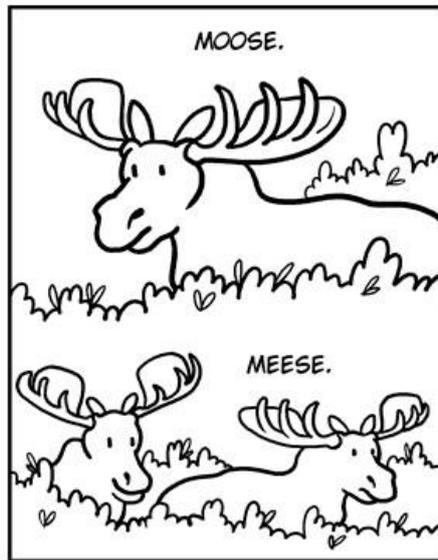
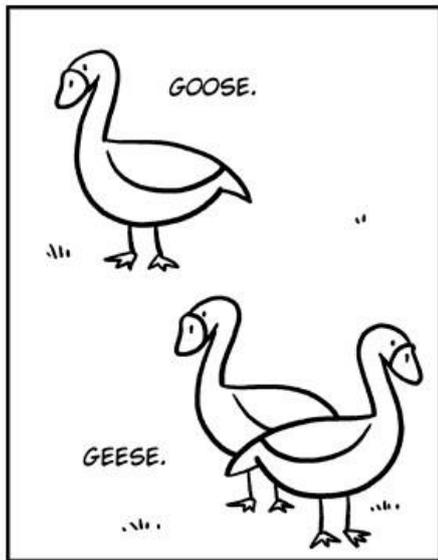
Our English Language

We have 50 interest groups in Ems Valley u3a, but not one which has the word "ENGLISH" in the title! So I endeavour, in this edition, to stimulate your interest – surely someone will come forward.....





**I SWALLOWED A
DICTIONARY. IT
GAVE ME
UnKNOWN PUNster @2018
THESAURUS THROAT
I'VE EVER HAD**



©2016 CHRIS HALLBECK • MAXIMUMBLE.COM • @CHRISHALLBECK • FACEBOOK.COM/MAXIMUMBLE • CHRISHALLBECK.TUMBLR.COM



"Great Scott, Ingrey, it's the Ottoman Empire!"

NEXT GUEST SPEAKER – THURSDAY 24th FEBRUARY

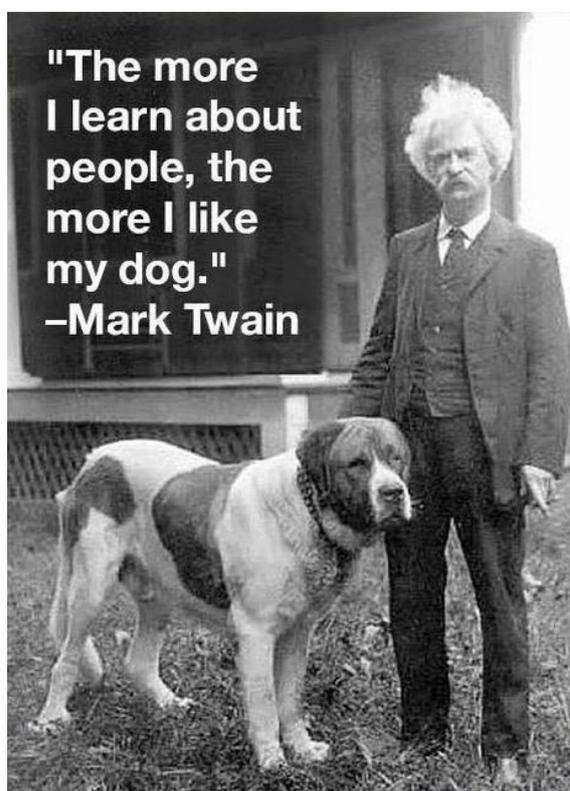
Parents at War - David Bickerstaff

David was drawn on a journey of discovery after finding nearly 150 letters that his parents had exchanged between 1942 and 1945, before they were married. With the help of the letters and extensive research, he has been able to piece together a detailed picture of their wartime experiences through his book "Parents at War".

He discovered how his father was in the crew of HMS Dorsetshire when she took part in the pursuit and sinking' of the Bismarck. His mother was a radar operator in the WAAF and served at 5 RAF radar stations and found herself tracking enemy aircraft on their bombing missions.

The young lovers met by chance in a Haverfordwest hotel in 1942 and had only a short relationship before his father was sent to the hostile waters of the Mediterranean where he commanded a minesweeper and was involved in 6 invasions. Jane Yoward

And for DOG LOVERS everywhere.....



BRAIN TEASERS



1. What is seen in the middle of March and April that can't be seen at the beginning or end of either month?
2. I speak without a mouth and hear without ears. I have no body, but I come alive with wind. What am I?
3. What English word has three consecutive double letters?
4. What is always in front of you but can't be seen?
5. What gets wet while drying?
6. What question can you never answer yes to?
8. Where does today come before yesterday?
9. If you've got me, you want to share me; if you share me, you haven't kept me. What am I?
10. What goes up and down but doesn't move?
11. It belongs to you, but other people use it more than you - What is it?

(Answers at the end of the newsletter)

All contributions for the next newsletter please to:

alanborrow@virginmedia.com

Answers to Brain Teasers

- 1) The letter 'R'
- 2) An echo
- 3) Bookkeeper
- 4) The Future
- 5) A Towel
- 6) Are you asleep yet?
- 7) A sponge
- 8) In the dictionary
- 9) A secret
- 10) A staircase
- 11) Your name

