



## MARCH 2022 NEWSLETTER – 2

**Our “interview” for this edition is with Sandie Swaine. She has been a member since 2009, but you will be surprised when you read what else she has packed into her full and interesting life!**

Hi Sandie,

I think most members in Ems Valley u3a know you, because of your high profile in The Emsworth Community Association, as well as being an active member of our u3a. However, not many know of your other work over the years. Firstly, tell us how you met Richard, our past Chairman.

I grew up in Chesterfield Derbyshire, with my two sisters and brother. I left my home town to travel south with a friend, to work as an assistant manager in The Pines Hotel in Swanage, for the season. One evening, I received a visitor asking for a Miss Sandie Parker. “That’s me” I said, and he replied “I am Richard Swaine, a local boy, I am returning some items from a friend of yours who has just left the Navy”. We chatted, he obviously picked up on my Northern accent and thought I needed to be shown around the area!! A few weeks later we met again, and the rest is history. That was how I met my sailor!

We left Swanage, to get married, Richard joined his new ship HMS Zulu in Rosyth. We moved into our first home in Inverkeithing (a converted butchers shop) of 2 rooms and those winter months were freezing cold. HMS Zulu sailed for the Middle East for sanction busting work associated with Ian Smith in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). What to do? I returned to my home town of Chesterfield, Derbyshire to work for the year while he was away.

### **That was a difficult start to marriage?**

For our first wedding anniversary, Richard called from Mombasa to a public phone box a few yards from where I was living in Chesterfield. By chance, a local person heard the phone ringing, answered it as you could in those days and ran to fetch me! After a year apart, HMS Zulu returned to Portsmouth and we moved to our naval married quarters in Lovedean, for two years, Richard was posted to HMS Mercury. Our first son was born a year later.

### **How did you arrive in Emsworth?**

One Sunday while exploring the area, we came across this village called Emsworth, it was so delightful, the main A27 ran through the village centre, we walked around the Mill Pond which looked beautiful with the sun flickering off the water, as it still does today. We decided this was the place we would like to live one day. Besides, our coal merchant, “Haskins” was always speaking about the village. We found our first house in Highland Road, Emsworth, where our second son was born.

### **Did Richard go to sea again?**

No, **he** decided to leave the Royal Navy in 1969 and join IBM in Havant. In 1976 our daughter was born, and we needed more space, we moved to Christopher Way which was near St James School, where the children later attended.

A year later, I decided to go back to college to study and it was there I met a local person who was about to open the first Havant Women’s Aid, a refuge for ‘battered wives’. I was interested and undertook training to join the group. I loved working with those families, they so appreciated finding a safe place to live be it for long or short stays.

### **But a bigger move was on the cards?**

Yes, in 1981 an IBM assignment was offered for us to live in Belgium for 4 years. This was also an opportunity to have our children educated in the prestigious British School of Brussels. We rented a house in a Flemish speaking area,

moved in the September for the start of the school term. I had a brief lesson on driving on the right, that was quite scary and needed 100% concentration, but finding my way to the BSB with three kiddies in the back (no sat nav in those days) was yet another story! Totally lost, I suddenly spotted an English number plate and hoped the driver was going my way! I followed, along a road via a forest, then a motorway, and then with a right hand turn I was at the school. I pulled up alongside this person, and she could see that I was so relieved, she had fortunately noticed me following her! Jill was so helpful in those early days and we became great friends.

In 1982 I was pregnant with my "Little Brussel sprout" and was now to learn about the Belgium maternity system. Doctors, gynaecologists, clinics and finally birth in a multi-cultural clinic in Brussels. What an experience that was, shared with other Mums-to-be. The Belgium system of care is rather different to ours.

All of these experiences made me decide that the school needed an information office for newcomers to the country. The number of documents needed from your local commune, ID cards, driving licenses is all bewildering when a person arrives from another country, to say nothing of finding your way around!

Civil laws are also different, drivers can be pulled over by '*de politie*' to show papers, if not correct you were often spot fined.

There were 45 nationalities in the school, many from large companies and embassies. We established an office in the school and an information centre was opened. This proved to be very popular and valued and we helped all nationalities deal with a wide range of questions or problems or just offered support.

I later became the lower schools coordinator for three years

### **That sounds very "Sandie" to me! What did you do next?**

We returned to UK in 1985 and it was emotionally hard work resettling the kiddies back into new schools and I was looking to go back into social services again. Quite soon, I got a job with the Partially Sighted and Blind Association at Bishopstoke, and helped set up various craft and social groups.

But In 1987, a new IBM assignment was offered to Richard which meant a return to Brussels for 5 years. I wasn't so keen on this, moving the children's schooling yet again, a family gathering was called and a decision was made to return, although this time, I was more confident and able to find my way around the city. Many old friends were still resident and I knew they would make me welcome once again. I returned to join the school and soon found myself appointed the middle school coordinator this time, also helping the sports and drama departments.

The school had a large auditorium and I became involved with stage productions! Now, with three boys, sport was high on the list and we organised rugby trips to other International schools. Every year I would bring a group of boys over to UK to play rugby at Leighton Buzzard. I managed one year to setup a visit to Twickenham, the boys were allowed to go onto the pitch. I remember that England had played France the day before.

### **Did you have a sport then Sandie? I know that you are now an active tennis player.**

I played in a squash and tennis team at our local Flemish club this led to me to becoming friendly with the local people from our town, Overijse. I had a group of girl friends, and we decided every three months that we would take

off and discover places in Belgium, Germany or Holland, and we were off on our own! These proved to be great fun and led to some memorable weekends.



### **When did you return to this country?**

It was 1992 when we packed up and returned to Emsworth, no more moves. But wait, in the Spring the following year, we sold our old house and purchased in Park Crescent where we are now living, with 29 years and counting!

I joined the Tourist Information Centre in Havant and Hayling for five years. I enjoyed helping people to understand areas of interest, accommodation, events etc. After a

few short years, cutbacks from the local council determined that the office would finally be closed. I was very disappointed.

### **What did you do?**

Whilst looking for a new challenge, I decided to go back to college and do a medical training course which led me to obtaining a place with a local optician. These were memorable years, I stayed with the practice for 9 years working in Arundel, Storrington and Emsworth. I got to know lots of local people.

In 1995, our lovely neighbours decided to 'downsize'. One always becomes concerned who might be moving in! What a pleasant surprise to find a charming couple, yes, you, Alan and Diana and we soon became close friends. Up till then we had never heard of u3a. I believe at the time you were Chairman so we had the full story and you sold it to us, we joined in 2009.

### **Gosh, did it take me 4 years to sell Ems Valley u3a to you? What groups do you belong to?**

I have joined the Gardening Group 2, U3A Cycling, Travellers Tales and of course Wine tasting 1 which has taught me to "Observe the wine in your glass, smell, Identify unique aromas in your wine, taste, acidity, tannin, alcohol level, sweetness, and body, put it all together to enjoy it and drink it". Yes, with all my lovely friends from Wine One. I must not forget to mention the Wine trips arranged and organised by you, Alan, they were exciting trips full of fun, enjoyment, wine knowledge and very 'Boozy'. My favourite trip of all was the Mosel visit, it was the only winter trip we did, Germany was at its best the snow fell and settled to make that magical wintery scene.

Second favourite was the Languedoc, hence my pic above overlooking the oyster beds at the Etang de Thau.

### **But I know that your main interest at that time was the Emsworth Community Centre.**

Yes, this goes back to 1972, "The Hole in the Wall" was opened by a friend, Clive Yeomans, he taught me how to throw my first pot, he wanted me to help him to form a youth group. We opened a pottery class for youngsters, both of my sons enlisted. The pottery is adjacent to the Community Centre, now renamed after its founder. The old St James school was closed in, I think, 1974 and for a while it was left empty before being converted to a Community Centre. The organisers were asking for help to start various groups, so I became involved to set up a children's activity group and a Thrift Shop for people to bring in good quality children's clothing to sell. The seller would get a third of the income and the centre the rest. This became so successful and profitable it expanded to adult clothing and ran for over 15 years! By helping to set up various other activities, I have been involved with the Emsworth Community Centre ever since, it is such an important part of Emsworth. As many know, 6 years ago, we could have lost it through a proposal for it to be demolished. Who could forget that wonderful evening, when the large number of local people who attended an emergency meeting held in St James Church listened to the various arguments. The massive audience unanimously voted to save the building.

### **Yes I remember it well!**

Since that time, the facilities have been transformed, the building redesigned and it now offers so many activities. Over one thousand local people can now be seen using the Centre each month. The addition of the public library on site has helped the Centre to be better known. It continues to thrive and grow. This is an incredibly busy Centre which needs a lot of maintenance and management, fortunately we have a dedicated group of Trustees who meet monthly with the aim of starting new projects and improving the experience for its users. I believe everyone should become a member, at £ 5.00 per year, it's a 'steal' and helps to contribute to our local heritage. I have been a committee member for the ECA for many years and became a trustee when the demolition plan was voted down.

***Picture below shows Sandie and Richard enjoying a coffee in the square at Salamanca on the 2013 wine trip to Spain.***



### **And your latest project – The Men’s Shed?**

Men's Sheds are community spaces for men to connect, converse and create. In the spring of last year, The Trustees realized that the old Pigeon Hut in the Centre's car park was only storing rubbish. I had visited various Men's Sheds in the area and was impressed. With three other trustees, we put forward a document detailing how the building could be repurposed for the benefit of so many more people. Soon we applied for grants and were very successful.

Work started quickly. We employed a local builder to put in new windows, doors and knock down inner walls, an electrician to install power and lighting. In June, we advertised that a Men's Shed was opening. At our first meeting in July 2021, 20 people attended. Eight months later it is up and running and becoming very active by taking in small repair projects. Research shows that men typically find it more difficult to build social connections than women. Also, older men have existing networks of friends. This can mean that, particularly as retirement comes, some men have little social contact and their emotional and mental wellbeing can suffer. So we are trying to help tackle the issues of social isolation. I have handed over my responsibilities now to a new Committee.

### **And you haven't mentioned what you do on Wednesdays?**

In 2017 I became a volunteer for Chestnut Tree House, a charity which raises money for a local children's hospice in Arundel. This is a charity very close to my heart, as I know how many families need support. I enjoy working in their Havant store. Also on occasions, I help with RNLI, another rewarding involvement.

### **Gosh, Sandie it's been a job to take all this in! You do and are still doing such great work! But we have to end it with you being cast away on a desert island. What would you wish to take besides the normal allowance and some bottles of special White Wine?**

I would have to take my 'Memory Box' which is full of memorabilia from my life, my children, grandchildren, family and friends.

The Art Appreciation Group's next trip is to the Bowerman Trust at Champs Hill near Pulborough is on Thursday May 19th 2-4 p.m.

We invite all members to join our group to see the:

Summer Exhibition: Late Newlyn (1900-1939): Harold Harvey and Lamorna Birch

An exhibition of the second wave of Newlyn artists centred on the works of Lamorna Birch and Harold Harvey and featuring the work of Harold and Laura Knight, Alfred Munnings and Dod Procter with some late examples of Stanhope Forbes. If interested, please contact Catherine Davis [daviscph@gmail.com](mailto:daviscph@gmail.com) Admission is £10 (cash or cheque made payable to Ems Valley U3A) to be given/ sent to Catherine Davis 12 Beach Rd, Emsworth PO10 7JS by Friday 22 April. Transport will be by private car and please state whether you need or are willing to offer a lift.

## PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP TO EXHIBIT IN ARTS TRAIL

The Photography Group is excited to be exhibiting again in the 2022 Emsworth Arts Trail and our work will be on show in the Community Centre during the second weekend of the event - from Saturday 30 April to Monday 2 May. We feature in the Arts Trail Guide and on the Arts Trail website, and hope that Ems Valley U3A members will look us up.

As members have rarely been anywhere very far from Emsworth in the last two years, we do not perhaps have as wide a variety of subject matter as usual, but this hasn't stopped us aiming to put on a high quality show.

Photography Group members have all been invited to submit suitable photos for exhibition.

The available exhibition space allows 40 mounted A4 nominal size photographs to be shown and we put together a small team to select the best, bearing in mind that, as is our Group custom, all members will be represented. Having reduced the number of photos submitted to 42, the selection team's computer went on sick leave, subsequently diagnosed as terminal, which brought matters to an abrupt halt.

With that hiatus sorted out and selection complete, the digital files will be sent away for printing.



Then comes the big job of mounting the prints. All the mounts will have to be cut individually to suit the prints for, although the prints will be nominally A4 size, there will be discrepancies which appear as white edges. For example, while most cameras use a 4:3 aspect, there are some which use a 13:9 aspect. A4 size at 297 x 210 mm is neither of these. In addition, some images may have been cropped to a totally different aspect.

The exhibition itself requires stewards in attendance. For this

we ask our Group members to volunteer for a rota covering all three days of the exhibition.

To recap - the Photography Group will be exhibiting over the second weekend of the 2022 Emsworth Arts Trail from Saturday 30 April to Monday 2 May. Our venue is Mountfield Room 3 at the Emsworth Community Centre and our exhibition will be open daily from 10am to 5pm.

**Roger Bleasby, Photography Group Leader**

## Camera Workshop Group

After a bright weekend the following Monday, when we visited a boat yard, it was grey and dull but at least it was not raining. The brief was to take macro and or close-up shots, and generally show dilapidation. Of course, true macro is a ratio of 1:1 or more, in other words life size. I was so pleased that there was very little duplication.

Enjoy the following, some of our groups results:

**Diana Driver**





Captions top to bottom, left to right: Ivy and rust, Held fast, New growth, Neglected, Uncared for and Boat bow view. Thanks for these Diana – congrats to the group! .Ed.

## ART APPRECIATION

Our late February Art Appreciation meeting opened in sombre and poignant mood as we silently contemplated four paintings by Ukrainian artists. *see below by Olyesa Hudyma*

Our theme over the past few months has been women artists, and this meeting introduced us to two twentieth-century artists: Maggi Hambling and Hilma af Klint.

Hambling's work caused much discussion – also laughter as we saw in every photograph, she always has a cigarette in hand.



We spent more time with her sculptures than her paintings, with her recent Mary Wollstonecraft (writer, teacher, feminist) depiction arousing strong criticism, (*see below*) but Hambling's 13 ft. high "Scallop" on Aldeburgh beach (a monument to composer Benjamin Britten) was much admired and enjoyed.

To view "Scallop" sculpture – enter into your browser:

[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/a/a7/The\\_Scallop%2C\\_Maggi\\_Hambling%2C\\_Aldeburgh.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/a/a7/The_Scallop%2C_Maggi_Hambling%2C_Aldeburgh.jpg)

An interesting comparison with women artists from past centuries, was that many of them had learned their craft by helping in their father's studio from an early age; Maggi Hambling was an established artist who taught her father to paint when he reached retirement age!

Klint was a Swedish painter, not known by any of us, but her work provoked very lively discussion. Surprisingly, it was the scientists in our group who related most to the works; some of the paintings reminded us of our maths and



the Fibonacci Sequence, the former chemist noted "aspects of the equations to describe and represent electron orbitals"; the scientist with interests in genetics noted biological shapes, particularly those resembling ammonite fossils; and several members saw the inspiration for Spirograph half a century before its invention!

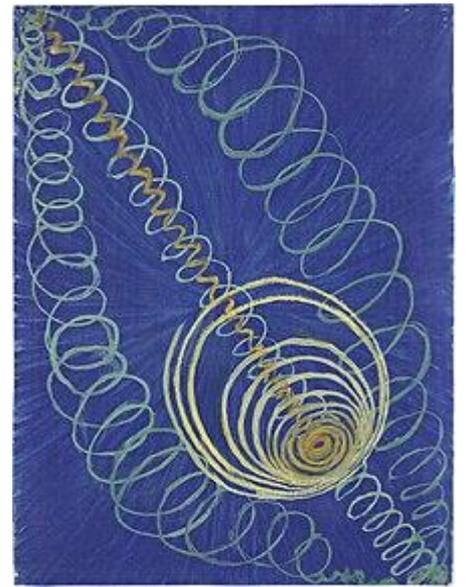
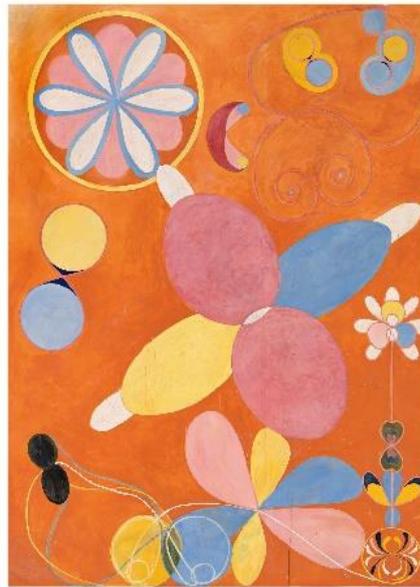
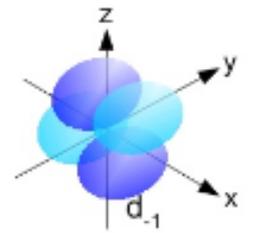
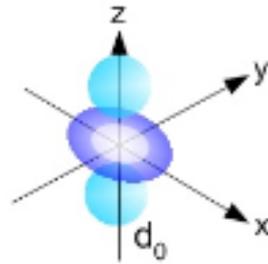
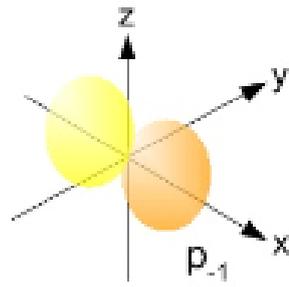
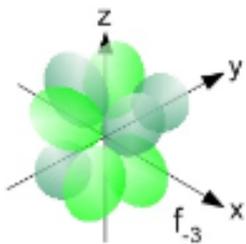
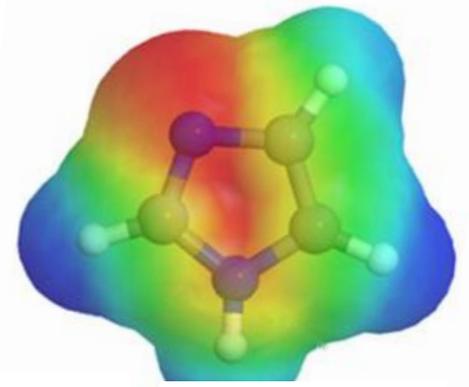
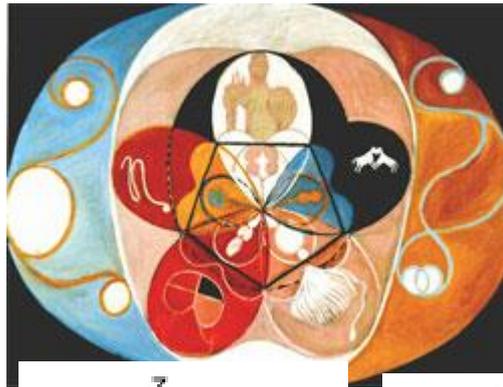
*The above article is a collaborative submission from several Art Appreciation members.*

*The author, Ann Sims, thanks them for their helpful input.*

### **Above subject - A Scientist's View – John Ridge writes:**

There was a pleasing familiarity in various elements of the paintings we were shown by Hilma af Klint who, we were told, was deeply involved in theosophy and who is considered an early pioneer of abstract art. She was also skilled in matters of maths and symmetry and so there was for me, perhaps inevitably, a fleeting resemblance to the textbook style representations of the probabilistic paths of electrons around molecules and atomic nuclei as well as the experimentally observed traces of sub-atomic particles under high energy collisions. As to whether Klint had foreseen such

scientific progress made several decades later, whilst we all enjoyed a coffee and biscuit after the meeting, it would probably be dangerous to read too much into any tea leaves!



Message to John Ridge from the editor: Knowing you are an active member of my “Bricks Business” group, why have you never expressed such profound thinking when considering my common old brick, 215 mm x 102.5 mm x 65 mm???

## CRAFT GROUP KEEP CREATING.....



**Angela Blunden** reports that their Crafts group March meeting was yet another creative time! “ We have all been busy making, alsorts: Worry Worms, Applique Pictures, Flower Cards, knitted Chickens and a Rabbit for Easter, Felt Brooches, a Macrame Wall hanging, and lots more, what a creative talented group they are!”

## YOU ARE INVITED:

The next group planning meeting of "DAY TRIPPERS" is on 22nd March at the Waterside Reformed Church starting at 2:00pm.

We welcome everyone to come to the meeting, even if you have not yet join Day Trippers. All are urged to join the the group. There is strength in numbers!!



For men under the age of 80

**PSA BLOOD TEST EVENT – SATURDAY 23<sup>rd</sup> APRIL 10.00 – 2.30pm**

**EMSWORTH BAPTIST CHURCH**

Organised by HAVANT LIONS in conjunction with Prostate Cancer Support Organisation

Know your PSA – an indicator of Prostate health

BOOK ONLINE – APPOINTMENT ONLY – [www.psatesting.org](http://www.psatesting.org) (OPEN NOW)

## The Bikers are off again!



the countryside to our lunch stop at Leigh Park Gardens Cafe. The route back was new, interesting and impossible to retrace!

Viv particularly enjoyed the elevated walk up and over a railway bridge that most did not know even existed ! Finally, somehow, we exited through a path that brought us out into the Southleigh Road and from there, home. Well almost, as the invitation from Richard H to celebrate

**Richard Swaine** writes: Who would have thought that a ride through Leigh Park or 'North Bedhampton', as some say, would have revealed such lovely countryside and not a pub to be seen .....until later..

Our route through Havant took us towards Bedhampton and then we turned off where Neil had discovered safe and off road routes, some quite steep but all the more interesting! We made our way to Havant Thicket and discovered the expanse of what will be the Portsmouth Water Reservoir. Onward through



his birthday was very tempting and so five of us took him up on that and raised a glass in the Kings Arms. Thank you Neil for planning and setting up the route and leading us around and about. Next scheduled ride should be March 21. But It needs organising???

## **A Tale of two Toilets....(or maybe two tales of one toilet??)**

*Members will be astounded that one of our number could experience two such different happenings from the one toilet...*



### **Chapter One – The pantry moth**

I recently had a bad dose of Pantry Moth in my kitchen. I was paranoid about these moths and at every opportunity I would swat them with a fly swat. Fortunately, they were confined to the kitchen, so every night before I went to bed I would carefully scan the kitchen to eliminate the pests. On one night I did my usual scan and saw two on the ceiling. Unfortunately, I missed them both. No way was I leaving it at that. I then got a very powerful pesticide spray, and taking a deep breath, as I backed out of the kitchen door, I sprayed every inch of the kitchen, and went to bed. A little later I woke, not feeling too well and went into my en-suite to spend a penny. As I was sitting there, I came over very faint and knew I was going to pass out. So, hanging on to the toilet seat for grim death, I did pass out. A few minutes later I came round, lying on the floor, thinking what's this on my chest. It was the toilet seat which I had literally torn off the pan. I then realised I was lying in a pool of water, no, not water, but blood. On the way off the toilet, I had severely cut my head on the tiles that were covering the pipe work. Now what? I just grabbed the towel and wrapped it round my bleeding head and stayed that way for the next few hours until I thought it was a socially acceptable hour to phone my brother to ask him to come and look at my bleeding head. He lives 20 minutes away but over an hour later he turned up. After looking at the massive bleeding gash on my head he decided to ring 999 for an ambulance. A paramedic arrived first and examined the head and then organised an ambulance to take me to St. Richard's Hospital, where I spent the rest of the day being patched up and testing my mental faculties! Then they were going to keep me there overnight as I lived alone. After bribing my brother to stay overnight I was released. I haven't been right since!! The pesticide had a very detrimental effect on me, **and** I still had the pesky pantry moth!!

### **Chapter Two – The very rare Piping Guan from Trinidad – see last newsletter!**

Believe it or not, I was sitting on the toilet, spending a penny with the door open, looking straight through to my bedroom window when I saw this very unusual bird, kind of walking across the branches of the big tree. I thought, - "wow, that's a very unusual bird I must get a photo". So, I quickly got off the toilet, and without bothering to pull my trousers up, because I knew I had no time to waste, I shuffled through to my kitchen, to retrieve my iPad. I then shuffled back into my bedroom, trousers still in same position, only to see that bird was gone. Panic set in as I desperately wanted that photo, so still shuffling with trousers round ankles, I went from my bedroom window, then into the hall to look out of patio door, then into spare bedroom to look out of that window, all to no avail. So back into hall, where joy of joys I spotted the bird. Quick take a photo, I thought, but one was not enough so spent the next few minutes shuffling between windows as bird would not sit still! Eventually I thought I had enough photos, so pulled up trousers and then sat admiring photos and wondering, what kind of bird is this. Next, I will tell you about when the postman called, but I think you've had enough excitement for one day!

News stories like the above do not come to light very often in the career of a Newsletter Editor. I obtained permission from Gloria in Tuppeny Lane to publish and she kindly agreed. **Now, do be careful Gloria!**

### **Telling American Quotes:**

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"Smoking kills. If you're killed, you've lost a very important part of your life,"

-- Brooke Shields, during an interview to become spokesperson for federal anti-smoking campaign

"I've never had major knee surgery on any other part of my body,"

--Winston Bennett, University of Kentucky basketball forward.

"Outside of the killings, Washington has one of the lowest crime rates in the country,"

--Mayor Marion Barry, Washington , DC

.....

, "Half of this game is ninety percent mental."

--Philadelphia Phillies manager, Danny Ozark

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"It isn't pollution that's harming the environment. It's the impurities in our air and water that are doing it.."

--Al Gore, Vice President

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"Traditionally, most of Australia's imports come from overseas."

--Keppel Enderbery

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**Bono, the pretentious lead singer of the rock band U2, was famous throughout the entertainment industry for being more than just a little self-righteous.**

**At a recent U2 concert in Glasgow, Scotland, he asked the audience for total quiet.**

**Then, in the silence, he started to slowly clap his hands, once every few seconds.**

**Holding the audience in total silence, he said into the microphone,**

**Every time I clap my hands, a child in Africa dies."**

**A voice with a broad Scottish accent from the front of the crowd pierced the quiet...**

**"Well, foockin stop clappin' then, ya evil bastard!"**

## **Nostalgia**

Can you date this picture? It is the Selsey Lifeboat, but it is not being launched at Selsey on this occasion. Any ideas?



**Today, 3 year olds can open Laptops  
and download Apps**



**Me? When I was three – I was eating mud**



'New London-based consortium is planning to buy Chelsea from Roman Abramovich'



CONGRATULATIONS to REX AND MAUREN BALLARD-NEALE on their Diamond Wedding Anniversary!

All contributions for the next newsletter please to:  
[alanborrow@virginmedia.com](mailto:alanborrow@virginmedia.com)