



## APRIL NEWSLETTER 2023

### **An Interview with Mary Mumby (a longstanding leader of our Family history and Playreading groups):**

[Hello Mary, when did you join our u3a?](#)

I think it was when you were Chairman, Alan in 2008?

[How long have you lived in the Emsworth area?](#)

We moved here in August 1974.

[Where did you live before?](#)

After I married in 1969, my husband and I lived in leafy Potters Bar in Hertfordshire. Dave was working at Tottenham Technical College in North London as a Lecturer in Mechanical Engineering and I was at ICI Plastics Division before becoming a full time Mum to three children under the age of three, (a son and identical twin girls). Life was very busy and we wanted to move out of the London area to somewhere more rural, hopefully near the sea. Fortunately for us, Dave then got a job with the brand new Southdowns College in Purbrook, which opened in September 1974. We were lucky enough to find our new home in Southbourne, complete with a large rambling garden, and it is still our home today.

[Tell us about your family and your upbringing.](#)

I was born in Woolwich, South London – the second of four children. My mother died when I was four years old and when I was six we moved to Burton on Trent, Staffordshire, where my father, who was an industrial chemist, was promoted to head up a new research facility for the company he was working for. He employed a series of housekeepers to look after us and eventually he found one who looked like Nanny McPhee, complete with warts and a bun, who took us on!! I was about eight, I think. This lady remained with us until her death and was much loved by all the family. We had a very happy childhood despite a terrible tragedy.

[Can you tell us a little about your working career](#)

My favourite subject at school was chemistry (surprise, surprise), which I had hoped to study at university. However, after a disappointing result in my A Level maths exam, my father 'guided' me to pursue a qualification in Plastics Technology! Strange, you may think, but plastics was one of THE materials being developed during the sixties. So, at the age of eighteen, I was sent off on the train, with my trunk, containing everything I needed, to the Northern Polytechnic in Holloway road, North London to study for three years to become a Graduate of the Plastic Institute (later an Associate). The department was actually a college within a college and was called The National College of Rubber Technology, which no longer exists! I was the ONLY female student in the whole of this college. It was a bit of a shock, putting it mildly, to go from a girls' grammar school to a college full of young men! At first my fellow students were very kind and polite but that didn't last and then I was teased mercilessly. However, I settled down very quickly and loved the challenge. I soon became just 'one of the boys'!

I graduated in 1964 and after a post grad year doing research, I was appointed as the assistant to the General Manager of The British Plastics Federation in Piccadilly, London, right opposite Fortnum and Masons. This was the trade association for the plastics industry in the UK and I loved both the job and its location. The salary however, was not so good and after a year I joined a company producing fusible interlinings to start a technical information department for the research staff. I later moved into the research department itself but soon after getting married, I joined ICI Plastics Division in Welwyn Garden City as a Technical Information Officer. I worked there until the birth of my son in 1971. My twins were

born in 1974 and I then became a full time Mum until 1984.

It was very difficult to contemplate returning to work after ten years of domesticity! However, I was lucky enough to be offered the job of Librarian at my son's secondary school – Bourne Community College. It was initially part time but as the role expanded it became full time, term time only and I loved it! I realised that if you enjoy seeking information, it didn't matter whether the subject was plastics or general learning resources. In time, all the stock was transferred to a digital system and the library was extended to include computer work terminals for information retrieval. As the Library Manager I was responsible for the choice and purchase of the books and other resources which enhanced my love of reading. I retired after twenty years with great affection for the staff and pupils of the school.

#### What do you do in life when u3a is not the subject?

I have a close circle of friends that I share social activities with and of course love spending time with my children and grandchildren, none of whom live nearby. My son is a Marine Biologist and lives in Brisbane, Australia.

We have had two lovely holidays there, one with all the family, when we stayed on an eco island next to the Great Barrier Reef which he is involved in trying to save! For many years I have enjoyed taking part in amateur dramatics, with an emphasis on 'amateur'. This progressed from bit parts in student rag week shows to a 'rather nice' group in Potters Bar shortly after I got married. It was a well respected group which produced excellent plays and opera and I loved being involved. One of my first parts was in a comedy based on a short story by Oscar Wilde. I played the part of the hero's fiancée, Sybil, but my new mother-in-law was somewhat disapproving about the amount of 'snogging' which took place! In 1975-76, shortly after we moved to Southbourne, a few of us founded a new drama group – the Southbourne Players. It quickly became a very popular group within the community and produced two shows a year – a play in July and a pantomime in January/February.

All the productions were staged in Southbourne Village Hall and we had some very happy times in that venue. Eventually the summer play was dropped because the cast were all too busy doing other things in the summer months, but the pantomime became an annual event in the village and included many of the local children. I became secretary of the group in 1977 and was very involved until our last performance in 2006 – thirty years later. The last four pantomimes were performed on the stage of the Main Hall of The Bourne Community College as 'The Players' had been given notice to quit by the Village Hall Management Committee in 2002. No reasons were given and the group fought a long battle against this decision but to no avail. The Head Teacher of the college, who had often come to our pantos, invited us to perform at the school, and all the relevant staff, from teachers to caretaker were incredibly supportive. We had even bigger audiences! Unfortunately it became too expensive to carry on as we had to hire both lighting and sound, so Southbourne Players had to close.

#### Which Ems Valley u3a interest groups do you belong to?

Discussion group one, Play Reading Group One, the Theatre Group and, of course, Family History.

#### I know that 'Family History' was your 'Number One baby'. How did it all start?

It was not long after I joined the u3a in about 2008 I think. A group of friends, including Monica Sutcliff and



Mary playing the fiancée in the Oscar Wilde's LORD ARTHUR SAVILE'S CRIME



Jackie Oiller from the Southbourne Players, had all expressed an interest in tracing our ancestors, so we used to meet in Monica's house and 'have a go', using her very slow dial-up internet and ancient computer. Jackie had signed up to the subscription website Ancestry and we all used to 'borrow' it to look things up. We were all absolute beginners. Eventually we moved to 'The White Horse' pub in Westbourne where Monica's son was the manager. He offered us the use of his computer and display screen which he had had installed to show films! At last we could all view our searches and the membership grew rapidly. Jill Stanley joined at that time and quickly became a very valuable member of the group. In time, Jill, Jackie and I ended up doing most of the organising and "the rest is history", as they say.

They are a great group. Many of them have contributed ideas and talks and also discovered very important facts for their Family Trees. We eventually moved to the ECA which had excellent facilities for group talks. Sometimes we would also hire the Computer Suite and help individual members find information using commercial websites. We do miss the Computer Room!!

#### [You are now handing over?](#)

Well I've tried twice before but at last have succeeded in handing over to Karen Rodger. I think thirteen years is long enough, don't you? All groups need new ideas and approaches and I know that Karen will do an amazing job – hopefully with the help of the other members.

#### [How do you relax when u3a activities are put to bed?](#)

I love going to the theatre. We're so lucky to have such a wonderful theatre on our doorstep and many others within a short travelling distance. I also belong to two Book Clubs. Reading is a great pleasure and one which my husband shares and sometimes we even like the same book!!

#### [How do you view this past lockdown and – looking back - our efforts to keep going on zoom?](#)

We were lucky that the first part of the lockdown coincided with a beautiful spring and early summer and many of us enjoyed the utter peace of quiet roads and the sound of birdsong in our gardens. We were glad to have the excuse for not being busy. We all calmed down. However, this began to be replaced with a growing anxiety and the wish for personal contact with friends and family.

I was doubtful about trying Zoom, but Jill Stanley and I were persuaded to try it out for the Family History Group. Richard Swaine arranged some practice sessions with us and the ensuing meetings were absolutely brilliant! I then tried it out with our Play Reading Group – this time using the free '40 minutes' sessions. Well, all I can say is that I've never laughed so much in all my life. We had so many different problems that Jackie Oiller and I had to put pen to paper and write a sketch!

#### [We always end the interview Mary with this question: If you were marooned on a desert island, what would you like with you, in addition to the Bible, the Complete Works of Shakespeare and a photo compendium of all your friends in u3a?](#)

But I would hate it! I'm too much of a chatterbox. However it would give me the chance to write up my Family History for my family. So please could I have a copy of all the research I've already done and lots of notebooks and pens!



## Art Appreciation



Our Art Appreciation Group voted to research “Art In Sport” for our 2022/2023 meetings. Sport is not an interest of mine, but the subject is proving really fascinating.

We started with lawn tennis: from Realism of the 19th century in watercolour and oils, to tempera on wood Surrealism in the early 20th - not forgetting the “Tennis Girl” poster which adorned so many student rooms in the late 20th Century.

Then Stubbs’ beautiful depiction of Whistlejacket led us into horse-racing. (see left)

“Saving art for the nation” was debated as we looked at Lowrie’s “Going To The Match” along with other depictions of northern working-class spectators enjoying their Saturday afternoon sport-watching – and a contrasting Portsmouth artist’s painting of spectators queuing at Fratton Park.



Another debate was “Is Photography Art?” as we looked at posed depictions of Zola Budd on the running track and action photographs of swimmers and divers.

Cricket was represented by Jack Russell – not only a formidable cricketer, but also a very talented self-taught artist, who sketched while waiting for his turn to bat, and produced some very sensitive depictions of players and officials, as well as “action shots” of games in progress.



Since retiring from cricket he has become a full-time artist with famous people sitting for him. We considered the prehistoric cave paintings with their hunting scenes – sport to us, but a depiction of survival skills for the artists.

Two high spots for me (so far) have been the astounding information that when the Modern Olympics were introduced in the late 19th century, the Games included art competitions: paintings and sculptures of athletes were awarded gold, silver or bronze medals which were added to a country’s sporting medal totals. (These competitions were discontinued in the mid-20th century because artists were judged not to be amateurs because they sell their work!)

The second high spot was being introduced to the exuberant work of Mexican-born Monica Kim Garza - Voluptuous ladies scantily dressed in little more than sun visors, brief bikini bottoms and inappropriate footwear, in many skin shades and all obviously hugely enjoying their activities! I’m looking forward to being introduced to many more aspects of “Art In Sport” in the coming months.

**Ann Sims**



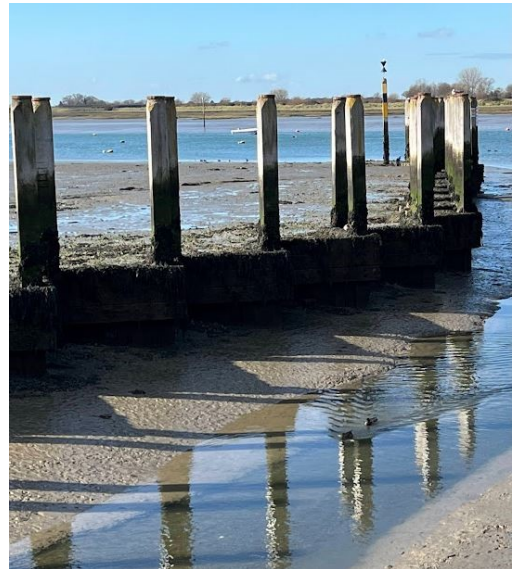
top: “Tennis” by Eric Ravilious painted in 1930

Middle: Jack Russell A flying catch

Bottom: LS Lowry. Going to the Match



## Camera Workshop Group



Monday 27th February was bright and sunny when we arrived at Bosham.

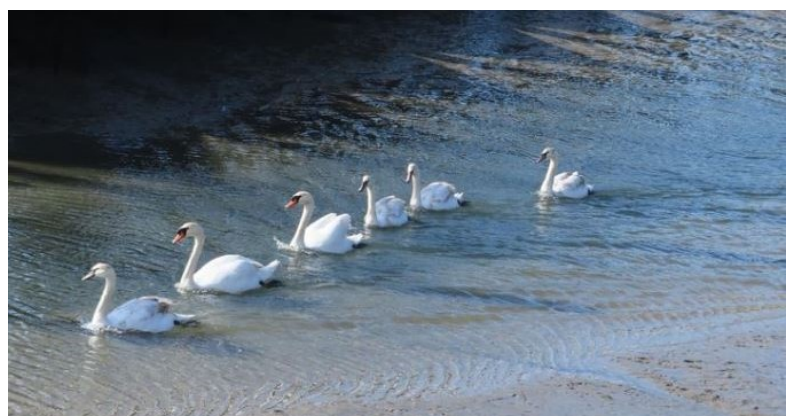
The Workshop was in two parts,

a) the harbour where there was an incoming tide and b) the church and precincts.

It is always interesting to see the results which show the different ways members react to the environment. As it was very bright it was a good idea to look out for shadows. Inside the church lighting was very low so quite a challenge. . - All in the day of the Photographer.

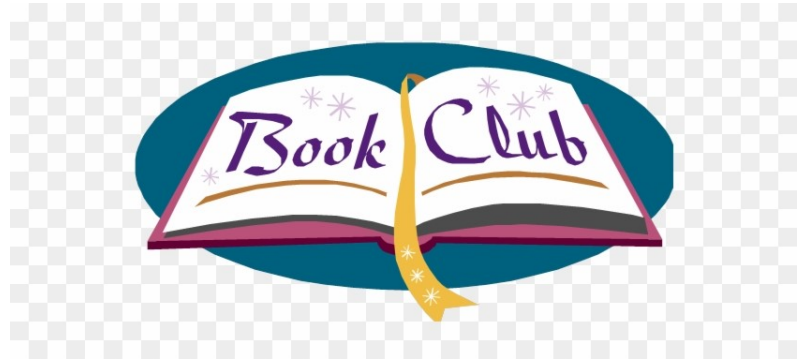
See photos below as well.

**Diana Driver**



## BOOK GROUP THREE

**Book group three have two vacancies – this is an offer that does not come up often – please contact Diana Kingswood if you are interested, via the web site.**



## Night out with the stars on 3 March 2023

A "Daytrippers" outing in 2 parts:

Our evening began with an enjoyable meal at the Reina Kitchen Meze & Bar restaurant in Chichester. Most of us



were unfamiliar with the venue so the hot and cold meze starters (see the picture on left) allowed us to try a number of dishes without a full plate commitment. The staff were accommodating and patiently explained the variety of dishes. For the main course, there was something for everyone on the menu. The lamb casserole was enjoyed by quite a few. We were too full for dessert but left the restaurant with satisfied tummies, having had a tasty meal with good service. Many of us talked of returning to the restaurant again.

We left the town centre and headed for the South Downs Planetarium on the outskirts of Chichester. From reclining chairs, we looked up to the dome-shaped screen at images of the night sky.

Firstly, we learned about the recent northern lights or Aurora Borealis. Electrically charged particles emitted from the sun enter the earth's atmosphere, which comprises of two primary gases – oxygen and nitrogen.



*(picture by Karen Foulkes in Curdridge, Hampshire February 2023)*

The aurora colours are determined by their speed and type of gas as they hit the earth's atmosphere. If the sun remains active at its current levels, scientists believe

that there may be further northern light experiences in the next few weeks.



We were also taught about the rare sighting of the planets Venus and Jupiter during a recent conjunction. This is where two planets appear to align, due to their orbital paths reaching the same vision point in the sky when seeing them from Earth. Having 'passed' by, they continue on their respective orbits around our Sun and will look as



though they are separating. Venus takes 225 days to complete one orbit whereas Jupiter takes 12 years or 4333 days. The next great conjunction is due in 2040 when Jupiter and Saturn are due to 'meet'.

*(Picture left - Venus and Jupiter. Venus is the brighter planet as it is closest to the Sun. This planet basks in sunlight twice as brightly as we receive on Earth and about 50 times more intense than the sunlight that reaches distant Jupiter. In addition, it's almost seven times closer to Earth).*

There were a number of facts imparted about the Orion constellation:

1. It 'disappears' from earthly sight during the months of May, June and July as it is hidden by the Sun's daylight.
2. It contains Betelgeuse, a supernova star, 500 light years from Earth, which has swelled in size over millions of years, earning it the title of a "red supergiant". Eventually it will implode.
3. According to modern astronomers, the Orion nebula is an enormous cloud of gas and dust, one of many in our Milky Way galaxy. It could have been thrown out by the explosion of a dying star, such as a supernova or be a region where new stars are beginning to form. Another such nebula is in the constellation of Pleiades, sometimes known as The Seven Sisters whose stars were believed to have been formed around the same time.

We hope this gives you an insight into our interesting and informative evening with the stars which we very much enjoyed and hope the group will consider another visit to the Planetarium. Each talk will be different as space is forever evolving.

**Les and Andrea Brokenshire**

## **'Day Trippers' visit to Brooklands - Wednesday, 19th April 2023**

There are still places available for this trip to Brooklands in Weybridge to visit Mercedes-Benz World and the Brooklands Museum. This should be a really interesting trip and will appeal to everyone and not just motoring enthusiasts.

Mercedes-Benz World comprises 3 floors of fascinating displays of legendary vehicles, their Formula 1 racing cars and all the latest additions to their range. There is a cinematic experience of the latest Formula 1 races and visitors



can watch cars being put through their paces on the adjoining track and skid pan.

Brooklands Museum is next door and comprises a huge display of aircraft, classic motor cars and motor cycles. It includes a section of the old Brooklands Aircraft factory housing the Loch Ness Wellington bomber and several other World War 2 aircraft including a Hawker Hurricane and a section devoted to the Barnes Wallis bouncing bomb. The cars include the famous Napier-Railton raced by John Cobb Napier-Railton raced by John Cobb Napier-Railton raced by John Cobb as well as more modern cars including two McLaren Supercars. Plenty for everyone to enjoy. One

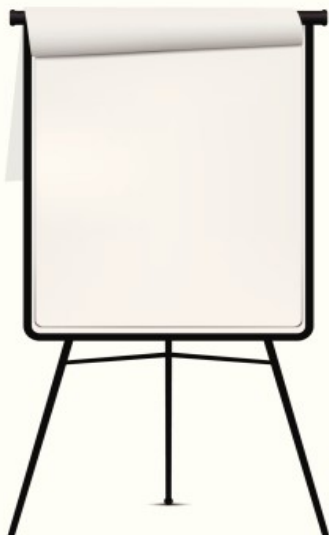


of the main attractions is the Concorde Experience which includes a virtual take-off in Concorde as well as the Sultan of Brunei's personal plane - a VC 10 no less! The trip will leave Emsworth at about 9.00am on a car sharing basis - there are several spaces available for those who do not wish to drive themselves and will return at about 6.00pm. Entry to Mercedes-Benz World is free and entry to Brooklands Museum is £17.20pp provided we can get 15 people for a group discount. If not the cost will be £19.95pp with tickets booked on line in advance. The Concorde Experience is an additional £6.00pp. There is a coffee shop at Mercedes-Benz

World and a coffee shop/restaurant at the Museum.

If anyone is interested in joining this visit they should contact either of the Group leaders - Steve Gorman or Simon Winslow through the U3A website."

## ANYONE need a flip Cart??



Ems Valley u3a have an excellent Flip Chart if any interest group should ever wish to borrow it. This is currently held by member Judi Milburn, and she can be contacted by your initial enquiry to the newsletter editor.

## Birds and Wildlife Group boat trip on St Valentines day.



A group of seven joined a special boat trip on the Solar Heritage solar powered boat from Itchenor around Chichester harbour. Although the advertised Guide was unable to join us there were several others who gave a commentary as we silently glided around. Earlier it was foggy and the boat was 20 minutes late arriving at Itchenor as it was required to wait until the fog had lifted. The sun then came out and it was the perfect weather for the two hour cruise.

The tide was low exposing the nutritious mud upon which many birds were feeding. They were however rather a long way off except for a great crested Grebe and some red breasted Mergansers including a lovely line of 13 Mergansers.





**LEFT: Red breasted Mergansers, one in foreground eating his lunch!**

Other birds seen included two Peregrine falcons, a Raven, many Brent geese, Dunlin, Redshank, Curlews , Grey Plover, Swans and a Heron. Two seals were also seen and a very large drone flew high above us!

There were only a few sailing boats seen and a boat with a crane to lift moorings. An area of raised shingle had been created to encourage Terns to nest. The telescope provided was of limited use as the boat was moving.

Most of the Solar Heritage boat trips are from Itchenor, but in late July to end of August, there are trips at high tide from the jetty at Emsworth. One can book by contacting Chichester Harbour Conservancy.

**Ros Norton**



**Above: Brent Geese feeding along the low water mark. Above right: An intruder drone from Thorney. Above left: Black headed Gulls just missing lunch!**



## LOCAL ROMAN FINDS – GUEST SPEAKER

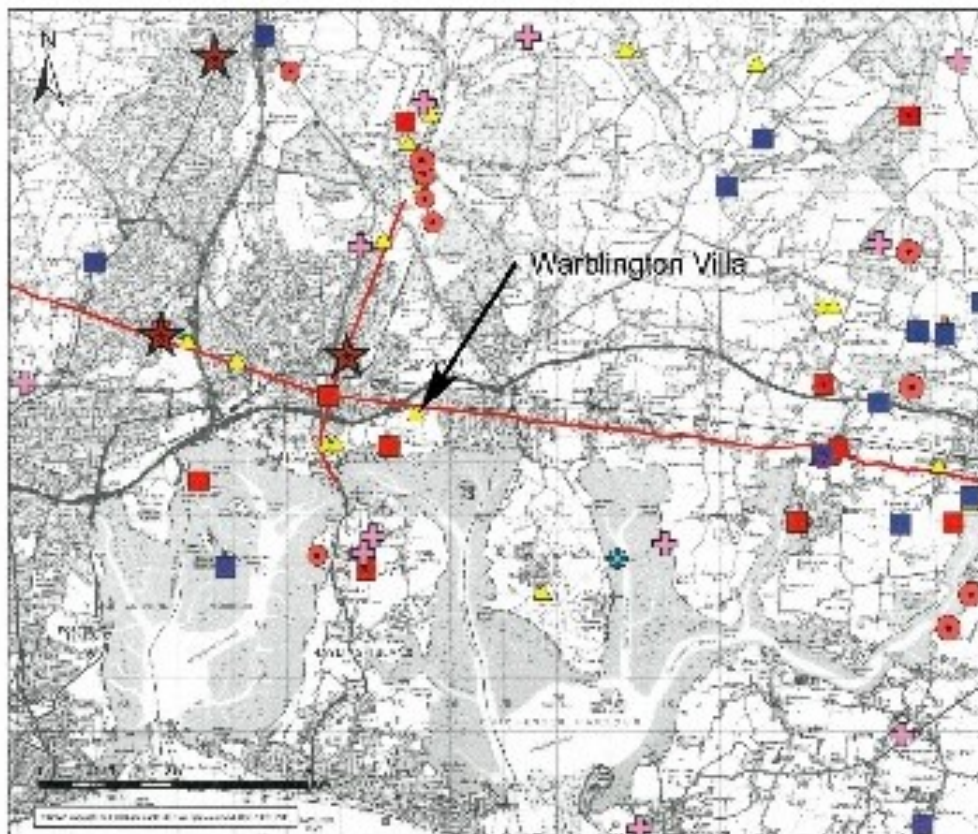
Richard Galloway has arranged a guest speaker to talk to Ancient Rome group on Monday 27th March, at 10.00am.

Mountford Three room  
ECA.

The Subject "Digs - Local Roman finds"

Speaker: Trevor Davies, Archaeologist and Chairman of the Emsworth Museum.

If any other member of Ems Valley u3a, including members of the Local History Group, wish to attend this talk, please contact Richard Galloway by going to the web site, Click on "Groups" Click on "Roman History" Click on the carrier pigeon – top right hand corner – and send a message.



Roman AD42 - AD409





## VISIT TO ROSE HARDY'S NURSERY 17th May 2023 10.30 - 12.30 - DAYTRIPPERS

We are making arrangements for a visit to Rose Hardy's Nursery in Whitchurch on Wednesday 17th May. Rose will be giving an RHS Partnership talk on Early Summer Flowering Perennials, covering their attributes, how best to grow them, combine them with other plants to create great planting combinations and how to avoid common pitfalls.

This is no ordinary nursery and not akin to garden centres. For those who do not know, Rose is a multi award winning exhibitor at RHS and other horticultural shows. Hardy's of course exhibit in their own right at Chelsea (where they have achieved 24 RHS gold medals) and Hampton Court Flower Show as well as supporting professional Garden Exhibitors, suppliers, designers, landscape contractors etc. They also sell to the public directly from the Nursery and online.

The Talk is very popular and is on open sale so the tickets will have to be paid for in advance. We have reserved 12 (possibly 15) places at a cost of £20 each or £17.50 for RHS members. Can you please indicate your interest and make payment if you will attend by 20 March.

BACS payment as follows:

Graham Mortimer Sort Code 60-04-04 Account Number 24112151

Also please indicate if you can 'car share' or if you would like transport.

After the Nursery visit we have arranged lunch for 1:30 nearby, at the romantically named country pub The Watership Down Inn with a small choice menu for £25 or less for Main Course and Dessert. Payable on the day. Looking forward to seeing you,

Graham, Simon and Steve



A German walks into a bar and orders a fancy beer.

The bartender tells him : "100 euros!"

The German is shocked - "100 euros? yesterday it was only 10 euros !"

"Well, today it is 100 euros." - "But why 100, damn it?"

Bar tender : "I'll explain it,

-10 euros is the beer,

-10 to help Ukraine,

-20 assistance to European countries who have imposed sanctions and are not members of the EU.

-20 euros in aid to the UK, for successful implementation of sanctions against Russia.

-Then 30 euros are sent to the Balkan countries as aid to buy furnace coal/keep their corrupt politicians.

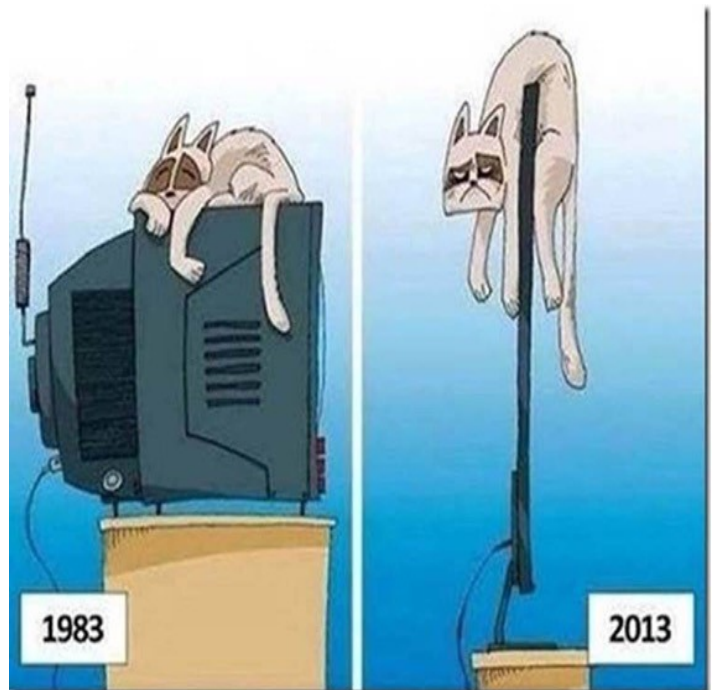
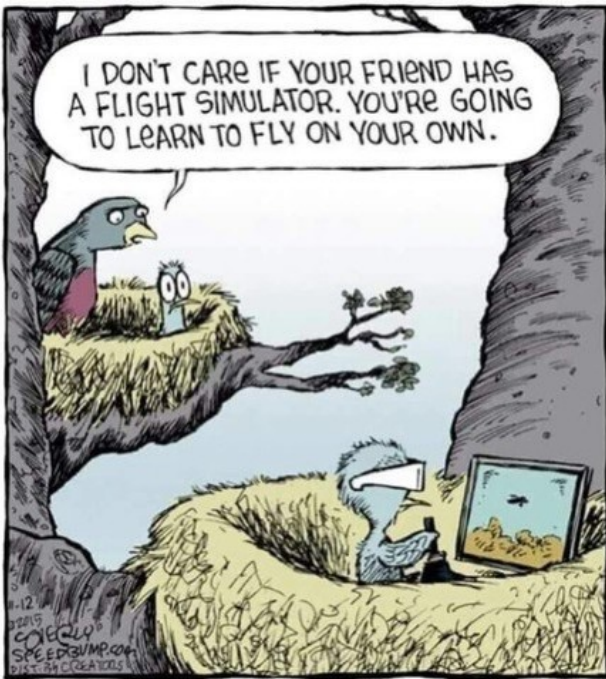
- and finally, 10 euros for a gas subsidy for the EU and fund to help maintain sanctions!"

The German silently with internal anger took out the money and gave the bartender 100 euros.

The bartender took them, entered in the cash register and gave him 10 euros back.

German in disbelief : "Wait, you said 100 euros, right ? I gave you 100, why are you giving me back 10 euros?"

".....There is no beer."



All contributions for the next newsletter please to:  
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