



## January 2024 newsletter



Happy New Year to you all from your Editor.....

Remember to keep the news snippets, articles, stories and u3a happenings coming to me regularly to ensure that this monthly newsletter is informative, lively and up to date!

Email to [alanborrow1@gmail.com](mailto:alanborrow1@gmail.com)

Note how a crash course in knitting plus the u3a workshop in Christmas garland making has prepared me.....

## Our Photography Group

Our Photography Group meets on the third Monday of the month from September through to July, interspersed with occasional outings.

Throughout the year we enjoy presentations or workshops from members on aspects of photography with related assignments on which to practice our techniques. The aim is to keep all our members involved within their comfort zone. Since September we have had a Workshop on how to mount prints, and presentations on Self-Portrait, Colour, and Composition. On the subject of colour hues we were left thinking about the light we see which is red/yellow/blue (RYB), the transmitted light the camera sees which is red/green/blue (RGB), and what a printer does which is cyan/magenta/yellow/black (CMYK). Hey - how come black is K? Well, we have to distinguish it from blue ... If you want to know more then come and join us, we have a few spare places on our Group.

Our Group entry on the u3a website will be up-dated every two months to show member's latest photos (just click



on GROUPS and then on PHOTOGRAPHY) and, in addition, we will also be exhibiting other photos six-monthly at the u3a Monthly Meetings. Our last exhibition was at the November meeting and was on display in the foyer of the Baptist Church. If you missed it, we'll give you due notice of the next one which we plan to coincide with the April 2024 Monthly Meeting. Here are a sample.

Left is Halnaker Windmill by Nigel Tay.



Below left: Jumping through hoop by Jackie Rea. Below right: Cathedral colours by Juliet Walker



## Day Trippers go to Panto

A merry band of 20 Day Trippers set off on a wet and windy December day for a morning performance of Puss in Boots at Portsmouth's Groundlings Theatre. We were warmed by a coffee on arrival in the very cheerful reception area and further heartened by the panto's opening salvo –



‘Another Day of Song’ from ‘La La Land’. As many will know from the U3A's recent tour of the Groundlings, the historic theatre is home to The Old Benny drama school but the lead parts for this panto went to an open audition and all five main characters had fine voices. We were all in fine voice too as we booed and hissed, and shouted the obligatory “he’s behind you”!! Well you have to, don’t you. They were supported by a young cast of dancers and

singers who gave it their all.

The panto was very loosely based on Puss in Boots and I must confess at times I felt I was in La La Land myself as I tried to follow the plot (why were so many called ‘Bucket’?) - it was all good fun!

Special mention must go to the black leather clad Mayor who was very reminiscent of Lord Flasheart in Blackadder (do you remember those “moves”..?) and the Principal Boy who had a wonderful voice.



After well and truly getting into the Christmas spirit, 12 of the group then adjourned to Abarbistro in Old Portsmouth for warming glasses of mulled wine and other treats, followed by a delicious lunch.

And yes, we got soaked again as we returned to the cars and bus station but was it all worth it? Oh Yes It Was!

**Nicola Hammond**



## **“MODEL RAILWAYS” may change to “MODELLING” .....**

Les Pallett writes to inform us of a possible change of group interest name to widen their scope! He assures us that the change of name to “Modelling” will not involve members prancing around and trying to look glamorous, (impossible I know –he says). But member Patrick Pead has recently joined the group and his interest is in tramcars. At the December meeting, Patrick hosted a visit to see his oo gauge layout, which was partly inspired by the Seaton to Colyton Tramway in East Devon. He tells us that this began as a lockdown project and has continued since. His main interest is the landscaping and some of the buildings reflect a few found in the villages on the real tramway. He says that “I run a series of model railcoach trams based on the Brush Railcoaches that carried passengers on Blackpool seafront in the 1930s. A few trams from those times still exist and are used on heritage days.



The layout is unfinished because my time spent on it is limited. It contains ‘St Bees Priory’ where the monks have beehives. Periodically, the stained glass windows illuminate and the church bell sounds. The tram workshop next to the depot has a welding facility, and emits a series of workshop sounds. There is also a working water mill plus various other set pieces. When finished I will probably sell it and move on to something else.” The session finished with an illustrated talk about the real tramway.

## **Science and Technology Group Workshop on Electric Cars**

For our December meeting STEM held its second workshop, as opposed to a talk - this time on Electric Cars. It’s generally accepted that we need to reduce CO2 emissions and these EV/cars are being seen as one route in helping us do that. Not the only answer, but one of the answers. A few in the group already had personal experience of owning a hybrid or electric car, so four of our members did short talks to share their opinions. Over-all the owners of these cars were totally “sold” on them – a huge drop in running costs, particularly if one has a solar supply at home. Even if one doesn’t have that the cost of topping up at home outstripped filling up at the garage on petrol, and one doesn’t actually need a special charging point at home – although it’s much faster charging if one does. Buying these cars currently costs approximately £10k more initially than a petrol equivalent, but the running costs seem to balance that out over 4-5 years. There’s far less routine maintenance required. We were told acceleration is excellent, and the range/ distance they can travel without topping up has improved enormously. So....we heard a lot of pluses, then one speaker gave a very balanced talk, showing us the Pros and Cons. Insurance costs have rocketed. On longer journeys charging on motorways is stressful, with too many systems operating, too few points available and the topping up cost is high. It’s a



bumpier ride due to the heavier weight. The cars silence can be an issue.

Views were mixed within the group – that’s what we’re about! – but there were a lot of positives. From some of us knowing very little and being sceptical (guilty as charged, your Honour), after our session I think we’re all more knowledgeable and I for one am less close minded about the idea. Surely that’s the idea of these

discussion groups? The last discussion was led by Les Pallett, who’d recently been researching Hydrogen Powered vehicles. This was a new topic for us all - we didn’t have any answers or views really given it’s such a new area but there were a lot of intelligent questions. Something to watch for in the future.

Feedback is that the workshop format is great for learning – lots of relaxed interaction, lively, enjoyable and really informative. We completely over ran and almost missed the chance of our year end Social! Almost....

Please note – there is no STEM meeting in January.

Our next meeting is the first Thursday in February, a talk on Fungi.

In March we have a talk on Medical Research. Planning is underway for the rest of 2024 programme.

All Ems Valley u3a members are welcome to attend our meetings - just let us know via the messenger bird on the website or email to: [geoff.whalley@gmail.com](mailto:geoff.whalley@gmail.com).

For anyone reading this who thinks they wouldn’t join this group because Science isn’t their thing – that is exactly why I joined it. At every meeting I’ve learned a lot because I know so little, I love it!

**Pam Palmer**

## ART LOVERS....

Of course you heard about the art heist at the Louvre. Luckily they caught the thief because he had no Monet to buy Degas to make the Van Gogh!

Speaking of Van Gogh...

(And please bear I mind that this contribution comes from Tony Carter and the Canadians always pronounce Van Gogh as “Van Go” and not “Van Goff”!)

### Laughable Relatives of Van Gogh were:

His dizzy aunt ----- Verti Gogh  
 The brother who ate prunes ----- Gotta Gogh  
 The brother who worked at a convenience store --- Stopn Gogh  
 The grandfather from Yugoslavia ----- U Gogh  
 The brother who bleached his clothes white ----- Hue Gogh  
 The cousin from Illinois ----- Chica Gogh  
 His magician uncle ----- Where-diddy Gogh  
 His Mexican cousin ----- Amee Gogh  
 The Mexican cousin’s American half-brother ----- Gring Gogh  
 The nephew who drove a stage coach ----- Wells-far Gogh  
 The constipated uncle ----- Cant Gogh  
 The ballroom dancing aunt ----- Tang Gogh  
 The bird lover uncle ----- Flamin Gogh  
 His nephew psychoanalyst ----- E Gogh  
 The fruit loving cousin ----- Man Gogh  
 An aunt who taught positive thinking ----- Way-to Gogh  
 The little bouncy nephew ----- Poe Gogh  
 A sister who loved disco ----- Go Gogh  
 Italian uncle ----- Day Gogh

And his niece who travels the country in a van --- Winnie Bay Gogh

Well, there you Gogh!

**Thanks Tony!**

## NOSTALGIA

Woodlands crossroads, north of Emsworth, spans Horndean Road, with Bartons Road to the right and Emsworth Common Road on the left. In times past it was referred to as the Skull and Crossbones crossroads – does anyone know why?



The skull and crossbones symbol, has been recorded on flags from the 17th century. It is believed that the idea was borrowed from the designs on the flags of Barbary pirates (who were Ottoman corsairs) that used to operate under a green flag with a skull symbol.

One of the earliest reports of the skull and crossbones design dates back to December 6th, 1687 in a logbook entry. In this log, it is said that this type of pirate flag was used on land instead of on a ship. Emanuel Wynn, a French pirate captain, is often credited as the first pirate to use the Jolly Roger. In his design there was an hourglass under the skull and crossbones, as stated in a British Admiralty report from 18th July, 1700. According to that report, a ship named HMS Poole engaged Wynn's ship which was carrying the previously mentioned flag.

Pirates often used red and black Jolly Roger flags which were uniquely decorated. The images depicted on the flags usually symbolised death or the devil.

The black Jolly Roger banner was not always used on a ship. Pirates had many different flags and regularly sailed under false colours. The Jolly Roger was shown only when the prey was within firing range. They used to raise it and fire a warning shot. It was used as a signal and identification. The victims had the option to surrender or resist. If the ship decided to resist, the black Jolly Roger was changed with a red one. This meant that they wouldn't show mercy and will take the ship without any prisoners.

But why at our northern crossroads – please help solve the mystery?