



MARCH NEWSLETTER

PUBS AND CHURCHES

The cold, wet and miserable New Year was forgotten as we made our way on a morning of bright sunshine and blue skies – especially arranged by Group Leaders Margaret and Peter - to St Mary’s Church in Funtington. Leaving the car, our nostrils were assailed by the “fresh country air” (actually the pungent smell of dozens of free range pigs spread around the fields adjoining the church).



We had time for a brief tour of the extensive graveyard, trying to keep feet dry, where we noted a venerable and huge yew (which unfortunately stops natural light illuminating the stained glass windows on the church’s north aisle), and the family vault (very well maintained) of the Churcher family, dating from the 17th century and one of whom in the 18th century made an endowment for “12 boys to be taught mathematics” which subsequently became Churcher’s College in Petersfield. (see pic below)

Inside, Fr Andrew invited us to sit in the choir stalls as he told us of the Victorians’ efforts to “improve” the church,



and drew our attention to various items, in particular the glorious and huge east window, glowing in the sunshine with vivid reds, blues and purples. Below this window and above the altar there is a row of carved heads about which there is still some mystery – one of the central heads has a halo, so they are assumed to be Jesus and the Gospel writers. However there were only four Gospel writers, so the fifth head is still unidentified. (None of the

heads is accompanied by the usual insignia enabling us to identify them, like St Peter’s keys for example.)



Fr Andrew suggested that, although the church has no direct link to the Navy, the several naval plaques in the aisles, plus one uncoloured window whose glass has been etched as a naval memorial, could be explained by former naval personnel retiring to the area. Bringing us into the 21st century, Fr Andrew told us of a very generous donation which has enabled new lighting (with movement sensors) to be installed inside the church and they have now installed solar panels on the church roof which not only gives them “free” electricity, but also allows them to sell excess to the utility company.

Ann Sims

(with grateful thanks to Group members who supplied the pictures)

(Below: The Reredos heads)



They thought it was all over but.....



Local History is probably the largest interest group in our u3a, and yet when leader Reg Newnham wanted to step down after more than eight years at the helm, nobody was prepared to take over. May be it was just because the group is so large and popular, that members felt the job was too daunting??

But there is always a solution to a problem, and the idea of each in turn taking the responsibility to arrange a talk or a visit soon was adopted. (after all – 72 members – 10 meetings a year – equals each member stepping forward once every SEVEN YEARS!), On this basis Reg kindly agreed to continue to act as coordinator! The very first meeting under the new arrangements was held at

the Community Centre on Friday 3rd February. The speaker was Richard Swaine and the subject was the COPP memorial on Hayling Seafront. Not many of us knew about the undercover activities of the COPPists (COMBINED

OPERATIONS PILOTAGE PARTIES) but Richard soon changed that as we learned about the activities of these brave service personnel who led the actions in World War Two that preceded the Sicily, the D DAY and the Far East invasion landings! Nearly thirty attended, and they will no doubt visit Hayling Island with different thoughts in future!

Next meeting (2.00pm Friday 3rd March) the illustrated talk is titled "FIVE HAMPSHIRE INVENTIONS THAT CHANGED THE WORLD"

As our u3a becomes larger with a greater number of members wishing to join interest groups, no doubt this idea is sometimes the way forward – SHARED RESPONSIBILITY of leadership.

Alan Borrow

And another appreciation from Kate Wiggins:

Richard Swaine gave us a Talk on a team of largely unknown but extremely brave heroes of the Second World War. They operated in deepest secrecy out of Hayling Island Sailing Club (then requisitioned for the War Effort). This incredible operation is recognised by a Memorial Stone at the eastern end of Hayling Island. Richard's informative narrative (with illustrations) showed how the COPPists provided absolutely crucial preparation for the invasions of Sicily (operation Torch), and Normandy for D-Day and yet this work has been woefully neglected by many (even notable) historians. Richard went some way to redressing that lack.

The Group were very pleased that our member, Susie Barker was present at the meeting because her father, Sub Lt Robin Harbud, RNVR was one of the COPPists. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross (DSC) for his dangerous work in the midget submarine, X20 off Normandy, just prior to D Day, and for his subsequent work in the Far East where the invasions of Japanese held territories took place. Susie's mother also worked in an admin role with the Coppists and this is how they met and subsequently married. Many years later, in 1981, Robin Harbud became Commodore of Emsworth Sailing Club and his name is proudly displayed on their honours board.

We enjoyed a good discussion after his talk which was followed by tea.

Kate Wiggins

Stem Group

At the February STEM meeting we had an interesting talk by Peter Morse. He covered the process of pharmaceutical clinical trials both in general, and also the recent vaccinations and other treatments for COVID. The entire trials process was fascinating – especially hearing about the many years before a drug is approved. And its cost! Both pieces of information were a surprise to most of us.

I then sounded out the group for interest in a new hobby of mine, given two relatives have suddenly developed serious allergies – one at 72 years old, one at 5. I'm sure many amongst us have grandchildren who have allergies (e.g. nut, wheat, lactose) that we never heard of when we were young. Having read a fair bit on this in the last few weeks I gather it's a worldwide issue. Why is that?

Some of it is no doubt down to better testing, and the improved sharing of information between research centres. Are some people genetically disposed to some allergies – and it's kicked into action by an illness or something else?

But allergies do seem to be on the increase, and many experts say we're ingesting far too many chemicals - the additives in foods, chemicals in household products. All of those substances are entering our bodies, and our systems are reacting to them.

Other experts believe we've become obsessed with cleanliness. Those household cleaners boasting the ability to kill off 99.9% of bacteria are doing exactly that ... including the good bacteria that exist in our gut and *constitute* our immune system. I've even read that dog owners

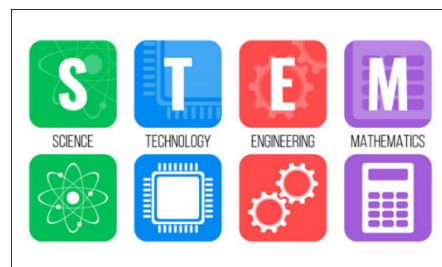


have a stronger immune system – simply because they are routinely exposed to tiny traces of poo!
So, I am wondering if we have an expert amongst us , or have a contact, who could enlighten us on this topic please? If so please let Geoff Whalley know via the STEM email address.

Pam Palmer

STEM Group – Update from the leader.

The Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths Group covers a very wide spectrum of topics, varying from Space Exploration, Computing, Solar PV Arrays, Green Energy, Electric cars, through to Medical Science and Research. This is often discussed in the context of its impact on everyday life, so you don't need to have a science or technical background to join in!
Our next meeting will be on Thursday March 2nd, 2.00pm, at St James' Parish Hall.



On 2nd March, Roger Kevern will be talking to us about “The Chemistry of Limes and Mortars”. I have seen the talk, which includes a bit about the relevant geology, and I think you will find it fascinating!
We will finish the afternoon with our popular networking session over tea or coffee and biscuits – where we can discuss the talk subject further and also mull over ideas for our future programme, and/or just meet new friends and have a natter.

One subject that has been suggested is to look into AI (Artificial Intelligence), which, like it or not, is now affecting all our lives.

A quote from Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates :-“Artificial intelligence like “ChatGPT” will change our world and make it far more efficient, AI technology has meaningful opportunities to improve outcomes and efficiency in the office, in health care, and in education. “

But does it, and do we want it? Will it take away our freedom / free will and ability to reason, to increasingly allow computers to make decisions for us?
If anyone has enough expertise / experience in this field to give a short talk or contribute to one of our group discussions, please let me know.

Ems Valley members, interested to attend our talk on 2nd March or wanting to join the group will be assured of a warm welcome. Just contact me via the Science and Technology Group Website Page.

Geoff Whalley, STEM Group Leader



Crafts Group

This month we did 3 crafts, Knitting and Crochet, no photos as their work was on going, we also did Airdrying clay, which was such fun but very messy, (like being back at school)! and of course it meant we had to take our pieces home to dry out, the more ambition ones did a Welsh Dragon which was very effective, albeit a little challenging, the rest of us made, Hearts, fish, rabbits and birds, which we will turn into mobiles etc., We will bring along the finished items to the March meeting.

June Morse, (a very talented Quilter) came along to demonstrate Patchwork Logging and she had gone to a lot of work with wonderful samples to show us the techniques, from the very beginning with one strip of material to the finished corner, it really was so effective, and inspired us to have a go, she kindly donated the samples to take home so we had a guide on how to proceed, Thank you very much June, and a very enjoyable time was had by all.



Angela Blunden

MAH JONG SOCIAL!



Every year the two Mahjong groups used to get together for a joint 'social' and to award the winners' cups and enjoy a drink, a few nibbles and a chat. Now that the two groups have combined, we thought it would be a good idea to continue this tradition. We have missed out on this for the last two years so it was lovely to reinstate it again in January. Nearly every member was able to attend including Sheila Morris our founder who introduced many of us to this fascinating

game. The pictures tell the story!



You never know who you might bump into.....



As I was pounding the streets of Arundel on 5th Feb., I was photographing buildings for my next "Bricks business" presentation, I kept bumping into a history group of about twenty people being led by a blue badge guide. And, as you do, I passed the time of day with them on more than one occasion! When I was returning to my car at the end of my day, I saw a Woods Coach with a familiar driver sitting in the driver's seat, waiting it seemed, for that very same history group!

Members of my wine appreciation group will immediately recognise Eddie, our driver who escorted us on wine trips to the Moselle (in the snow), to Alsace (in the rain), to Burgundy and Champagne (in the sunshine), and to the Loire (in the lea of the chateaux). I had not seen him for five years and an animated and reminiscent half hour followed! He reminded me of the day when I ordered him off piste to drive down through the vines in Hautvillers after a tasting at the

Champagne house, and I reminded him of the time he viewed a narrow steel bridge over the Loire – with a low roof as well – and said "I might get through if I take a run at it!" I didn't, however, remind him of the low bollard he hit in Strasbourg – that would have been too painful. Eddie sends his kind regards to all you wine travellers and not surprisingly said he misses you all and those times! He is now 76 and just drives very part time for Woods of Bognor.

Alan Borrow

Day Trippers – next outing!

DAY TRIPPERS NIGHT TIME OUTING - FRIDAY 3 MARCH – Early dinner + Planetarium show

Join us for a fabulous Turkish dinner feast followed by a visit to the SOUTHDOWNS PLANETARIUM AND SCIENCE CENTRE!



“A FUN AND INFORMATIVE EVENING”

DINNER IS AT 5:00pm AND THE PLANETARIUM PRESENTATION BEGINS AT 7:30pm

REINA KITCHEN MEZE AND BAR. 11/12 Market Rd, Chichester PO19 1JW (across from Cattlemarket Car Park).

We will be treated to Mixed Cold Meze Platters to start, then move onto Mixed Hot Platters as our main course.

Cost for dinner is £25.00 per person. Drinks and Dessert are additional.

The Southdowns Planetarium PO19 8EB (on the Chichester High Schools Campus with 2 Carparks.)

ADMISSION is £8.00 per person.

Please book your seats online - Go to southdowns.org.uk (there is a “ Book to see a show” link)

We will have A GUIDED TOUR of some of the celestial wonders of the Winter Skies to include the Constellations of Orion, Taurus and the Pleiades that establish themselves and dominate the skies during our winter. The presentation lasts approximately 60 minutes.

Please let us know you have booked your Planetarium Tickets, AND confirm you will be joining us for dinner.



We will pay individually for dinner at the Restaurant. Please reply prior to 1st March – sorry not a lot of notice!

Please email (via the web site) with any questions and/or if you would require transport.

Looking forward to seeing everyone, Pam, Simon and Steve

New Members Coffee Morning

On 16th February there was a coffee morning at the Community Centre for all new Ems Valley members and a good number of group leaders also attended to give a background to their interest group with a view to attracting new members.

Chairman Anne gave the attendees a resume of our u3a and then asked each group leader to elaborate on the activities of their particular group.



It was a very convivial get-together and a brilliant way to introduce these members to the groups. It is so important to have the opportunity to put names to faces, for new members and for the group leaders!

Calling all thespians!

Colin Ottewell, leader of Playreading Group Two announces an offer that all you would be thespians can hardly refuse! His playreading group, "Playreading Two" and Mary Mumby's "Playreading One" are full to the brim!

In true u3a fashion and spirit, he is very kindly offering to help set up a Playreading Three group. 'Colin will access enough plays to get you started, and will give his time and expertise for your first two or three meetings if you would like to take up his offer'. All he would need to proceed would be a potential leader who is willing to host the meetings in their house – not his! The next step would then be for the Groups Coordinator (Ann Sims) to be contacted to publicise the new potential group to the membership, and A NEW GROUP IS FORMED and a lot of fun is to follow! In the first instance, please contact Ann Sims or Colin Ottewell via our web site, Ems Valley u3a.

For Ann, go to "Contacts"

For Colin, go to "Groups", then "Playreading Two", then the carrier pigeon top right!



U3A Garden Group visit Mitchmere, Stoughton Nr Chichester

We couldn't have asked for better weather for our U3A Garden Group Snowdrop Garden visit on Tuesday 14th



February. Following our October 2022 visit, we returned to Mitchmere Farm in Stoughton near Chichester to see their magnificent display of early spring bulbs and swathes of snowdrops everywhere we looked. There were even snowdrops on sale for us to take home!

At the entrance to the farm we saw a stunning orange/red stems of a Willow. The owner, told us by careful planting of a tree, the sun captures the colours.

Mitchmere had an air of tranquillity with no sounds save the birds singing their hearts out and an abundance of bees busy collecting nectar from the crocus carpet. There were so many snowdrops, small and delicate and others stood tall and bold. Apparently, there are 20 native species and over 500 named varieties. It was easy to understand how people become obsessive collectors.

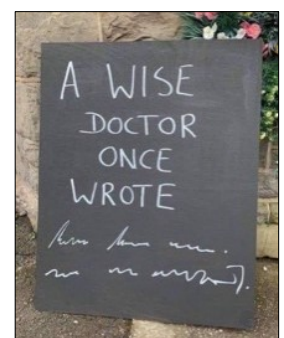
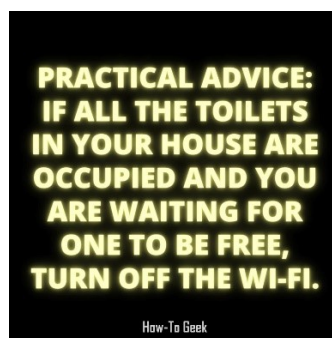
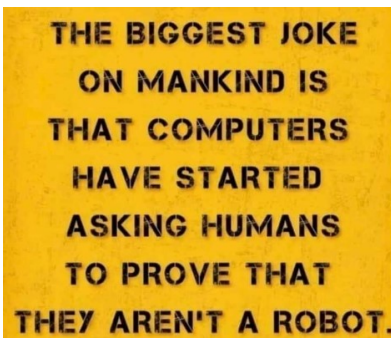
The early spring flowers, a spectacular Daphne and Saracococca infused the air with a marvellous, heady fragrance.



As we stood there with our cameras it made you think about how important it is just to take in the sounds and atmosphere, something never captured in a picture. It brought to mind the poem by W H Davies called 'Leisure':

WHAT is this life if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare?—
A poor life this if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare.

Mitchmere is worth a visit at any time of the year, there is always something interesting, and we will return later in the year for the autumn colours. **Ronnie Tyler**



Have you got something to say?

The discussion group is looking for new members to join them in lively but friendly discussions. Subjects range from



comparing health services around the world, should everyone have the right to strike, the impact of social media etc. A subject is chosen at the end of each meeting for the following meeting so everyone has time to do some research if they

want to. There is always time for informal discussion on current news items.

The group meets in their homes on the second Friday morning each month. If you are interested contact

Barbara Molyneux on 07787 290430.

THEATRE GROUP MEMBERS MEETING - 13TH FEB 2023

Twenty theatre group members joined me on the 13th February at the Community Centre. Over coffee, we discussed opportunities to expand the range of theatres and events that might appeal to our theatre group members.

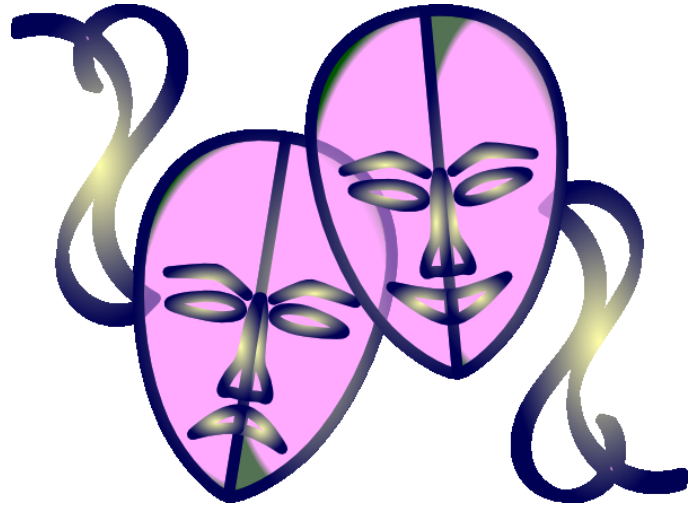
Several possibilities were discussed and the following shortlisted. I have agreed to look into What's On at the following venues:

1. Theatres within a 40 mile radius, accessible by train or by car with park & ride available at Guildford and Brighton:
Guildford – Yvonne Arnaud Theatre for matinee performances
Brighton – Theatre Royal for matinee performances
Southampton – Mayflower Theatre for matinee performances
Portsmouth – New Theatre Royal* for evening performances
Portsmouth – Guildhall for evening performances



*Group booking discount depends on the show producers of the touring companies.

2. London Theatres
The Globe – matinee performances
National – matinee performances
Barbican – matinee performances
3. Streamed performances (plays, concerts, operas, ballets and exhibitions)
New Park cinema, Chichester
The Spring, Havant
4. Open Air events
Proms, Stansted House
West Green House Gardens, Hook – Opera on the Lake
West Dean Gardens



5. Theatre and overnight stay
We discussed a visit to RSC Stratford Upon Avon with an overnight stay. This suggestion was not supported by the majority of those present. However, should 10 (min. number for a group discount) or more members be interested, I would be willing to look into this for later in the year.

Maureen Falloon

Wine Appreciation enjoy a Gourmet Dinner

It was our 13th annual Wine tasting dinner at the Emsworth Sailing Club on Monday 20th February and the exceptional chef, Ollie Clift did not fail us! Six courses – seven wines drawn from New Zealand, Australia, France, Italy and Moldova and most of us were full! Wine One, the organisers were able to invite some members from Wine two,



three and four to make up the sixty diners. It was perhaps fitting that International Wine Pairing Day was two days earlier on Saturday 18th February. (who knew that there was a Wine pairing day – what does one do on the other 364 days??). In his opening remarks, Alan Borrow mentioned that there were now 140 “Wine Appreciators” in our Ems Valley u3a, albeit meeting in five different groups. Is this a record, we wonder, in the UK? The best course? Some said the roasted courgette soup, others the oriental Sea Bass. But I enjoyed my Seville Orange marmalade soufflé, some unlucky members missed this course as it was served at 10.40 and their taxi had already arrived!

Mercedes World and Brooklands Museum – Wed. 19th April - DAYTRIPPERS

At the last planning meeting held earlier this month, members expressed interest in a trip to Weybridge to visit Mercedes World(www.Mercedes-Benzworld.co.uk)and the Brooklands Museum(www.Brooklands museum.com) Mercedes World is effectively a giant showroom with virtually every model they made on display - it's very impressive and you don't need to be a petrol head to appreciate the displays. Entry is free and there is both a coffee shop and restaurant. I would suggest we aim to get there at about 10.30am and spend about 1hr 30mins there before going onto the Brooklands Museum which is virtually next door.



Brooklands Museum is famous for its extensive collection of cars, motor bikes and airplanes and you can't help but be impressed by the variety of different displays. Provided we can muster at least 15 people for a group discount, the entry fee is £17.20 pp; otherwise the fee is £19.95 if booked on line in advance or £21.00pp if paid at the gate on the day. There is a tour available lasting approx 1 hour at a cost of £3.50pp as well as an onboard tour of Concorde at a cost of £6.00 pp.

There are the usual catering facilities available for lunch. There is much to see so I would suggest that to take advantage of what's on offer, we should plan to depart at around 4.30pm. Travel time would be about 1hr 30mins depending on traffic conditions.

Transport - depending on numbers, the easiest form of transport will be car sharing. If however there is demand for say 25 or more, a coach alternative might be appropriate. Coach/ minibus hire costs have shot up recently and have

become very expensive. We are planning this visit for Wednesday, 19th April, leaving Emsworth at around 9.00am and returning at approx 6.00pm.

Could you please confirm if you would be interested in joining us and if so, if you would be prepared to car share on the understanding that any passengers would be asked to contribute towards fuel costs.

Discover the pioneers of speed, flight and adventure including Concorde, all British motorsport and aviation history.

We look forward to hearing from you shortly,

Pam, Simon and Steve

FOR THOSE WHO LOVE THE PHILOSOPHY OF AMBIGUITY, AS WELL AS THE IDIOSYNCRASIES OF ENGLISH:

- ONE TEQUILA, TWO TEQUILA, THREE TEQUILA..... FLOOR.
- ATHEISM IS A NON-PROPHET ORGANISATION.
- IF MAN EVOLVED FROM MONKEYS AND APES, WHY DO WE STILL HAVE MONKEYS AND APES?
- I WENT TO A BOOKSTORE AND ASKED THE SALESWOMAN, "WHERE'S THE SELF-HELP SECTION?" SHE REPLIED, "IF I TELL YOU, IT WOULD DEFEAT THE PURPOSE."
- WHAT IF THERE WERE NO HYPOTHETICAL QUESTIONS?
- IF A DEAF CHILD SIGNS SWEAR WORDS, DOES HIS MOTHER WASH HIS HANDS WITH SOAP?
- IS THERE ANOTHER WORD FOR SYNONYM?
- WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN YOU SEE AN ENDANGERED ANIMAL EATING AN ENDANGERED PLANT?
- WHY ARE PETROL STATION TOILETS LOCKED? ARE THE OPERATORS AFRAID SOMEONE WILL BREAK-IN AND CLEAN THEM?
- CAN VEGETARIANS EAT ANIMAL CRACKERS?
- IF THE POLICE ARREST A MUTE, DO THEY TELL HIM HE HAS THE RIGHT TO REMAIN SILENT?
- WHAT WAS THE BEST THING BEFORE SLICED BREAD?
- ONE NICE THING ABOUT EGOTISTS: THEY DON'T TALK ABOUT OTHER PEOPLE.
- DOES THE LITTLE MERMAID WEAR AN ALGEBRA?
- HOW IS IT POSSIBLE TO HAVE A CIVIL WAR?
- IF ONE SYNCHRONISED SWIMMER DROWNS, DO THE REST DROWN, TOO?
- IF YOU TRY TO FAIL AND SUCCEED, WHICH HAVE YOU DONE?
- WHOSE CRUEL IDEA WAS IT FOR THE WORD 'LISP' TO HAVE 'S' IN IT?
- WHY IS THERE AN EXPIRY DATE ON SOUR CREAM?
- CAN AN ATHEIST GET INSURANCE AGAINST ACTS OF GOD?
- WHY DO SHOPS HAVE SIGNS, 'GUIDE DOGS ONLY'? NEITHER THE DOGS NOR THEIR OWNERS CAN READ THE SIGN.

STAY AWAY FROM WEYMOUTH - I witnessed some terrible behaviour on the seafront from a couple arguing in front of a load of kids. It started off as an argument but soon escalated to violence. The police attended the situation, the lead police officer tried to placate the couple but had no choice but to use his baton on the bloke, but the bloke managed to snatch the baton and started hitting the police officer and the woman with it. Then a crocodile turned up and stole all the sausages.

A lovely woman from West Sussex died. She found herself outside a beautiful garden with splashing fountains and bright flowers; but she was alone and the gate was locked. Then St. Peter finally came by, the woman said to him, "This is surely a wonderful place, it must be heaven. How do I get in?" "You have to spell a word," said the saint. "What word might that be?" "Love." said he. Well, she spelled it all right and was admitted through the Gates of Heaven.

About a year later, St. Peter asked this woman if she would mind guarding the Gates a short while for him. While she was waiting, her husband arrived! "How've you been?" she asked. "Oh, not bad," he said. "I married the pretty nurse who took care of you, and then I won the lottery. I sold our little cottage and bought a lovely mansion. My wife and I travelled round the world. Today I was skiing and broke my neck and...and here I am. How do I get in?"

"You have to spell a word."

"What word?"

"Pseudopseudohypoparathyroidism"

I asked the Librarian if she had any books about Paranoia.
She whispered: "They're right behind you..."

If aliens landed and said, "Take me to your leader," can you even imagine how embarrassing that would be?

When I was young, I was poor. But after years of hard work, I am no longer young.

Did you know you have the right to remain silent even when you're not being arrested?



Seen on the Hayling bridge – Monday 20th February. I thought that Blue Plaques were supposed to be affixed to buildings??

Then another thought crossed my mind: The need for an adjacent plaque: "Site of the largest multiple vehicle collision ever on a bridge – February 2023" (and I only stopped to read a plaque!)

American Tourist reviews of THE TOWER OF LONDON – recently expressed:

One left a one-star rating after they were disappointed to not see the ghost of Anne Boleyn, the second wife of King Henry VIII who was executed at the Tower of London in 1535. The reviewer, named Steve, wrote: "The Warden told me the ghost of Anne Boleyn wanders around the grounds, carrying her own head, but I didn't see it, obviously not true."

A one-star review of the Tower of London said it had left them "feeling tired, bored and angry". The reviewer, named Peter, wrote: "My tower visit today taught me little more than that the British monarchy was littered with horrendously immoral people. I didn't bother with the hellish-looking line to see the crown jewels but I'm pretty sure I'd rather see them melted down or sold for scrap. "

Another review described the Tower of London as "absolute trash" and said a beefeater, which is a popular historic nickname for a Tower of London guard, had "really hurt" their feelings. They wrote: "Very bad and I won't recommend it because of the guards thinking they are tough just because they have got a posh uniform on."

Another one-star review referred to the rainy weather. They wrote: "In nice weather, the Tower is a pain but bearable. In the rain, it is really unpleasant."

All contributions for the next newsletter please to:

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