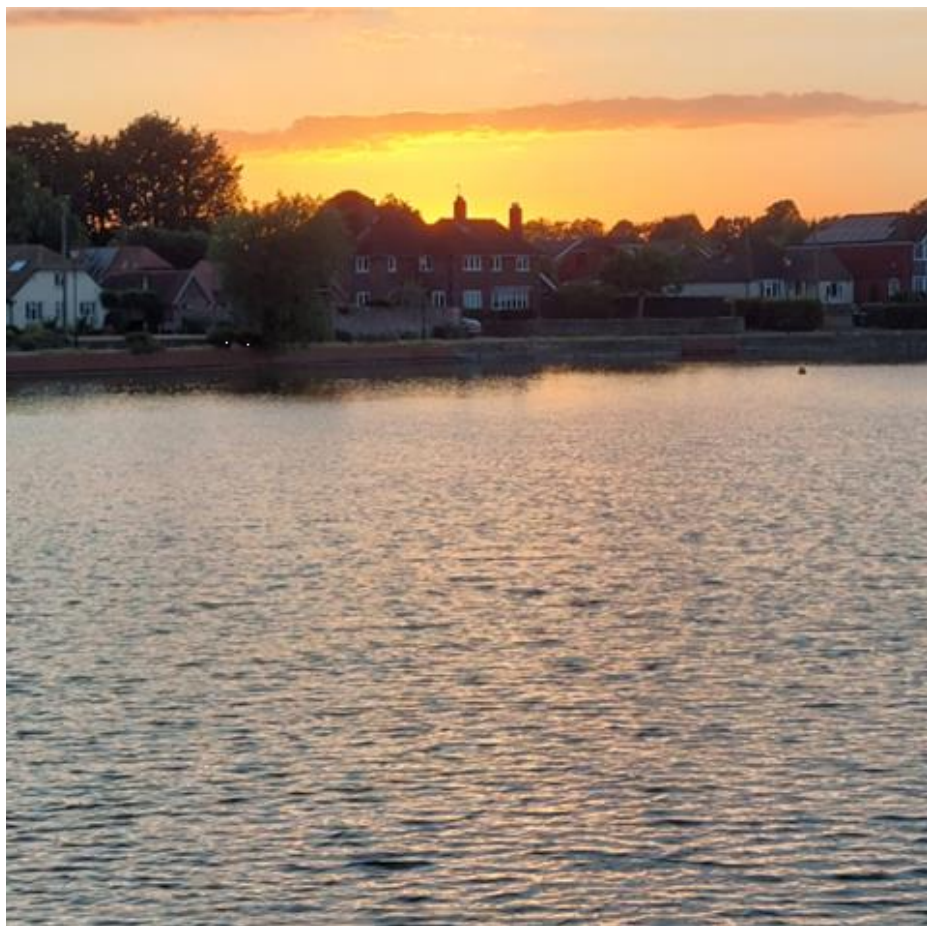


## **Newsletter Middle 2023**



*Another beautiful sunset across the millpond*

## Chairman's Report

This is my first report through our newsletter to you, the members of our u3a, since my election earlier this year and I will begin by emphasising our good fortune. We are privileged in our u3a: we have the South Downs just to our north and the sea to our south. Such a marvellous environment and, through our u3a, as well as other activities in which many of you partake, we also have an environment of friendship. Many of our activities enable us to get out and about to enjoy our good fortune.

There have been a number of pluses over this period of which we can be proud. Of course, our specialist groups carry on with their dedication to the u3a motto of "Learn, Laugh, Live". I often forget in which order these three simple words are supposed to be, but it does not really matter. Have I told you that we are always on the lookout for new blood to assist groups? Our leaders are a heroic bunch, and I am truly grateful for their endeavours. But I would ask you to not shy away from offering a helping hand and even to assume the reigns of leadership. Without leaders, groups fold and there is a special gratification that Group Leaders can feel for being of service. So, think about lending a hand.

*"There are many wonderful things that will never be done if you don't do them." Charles D. Gil.*

I was especially pleased with our outings over the last few months. The combined trip to the Gin Distillery and Silk Mill was an outstanding day. Both sites are of historic and current importance, we learned a lot from expert guides and samples were enjoyed by all! Later we had a trip to Mottisfont House, and its glorious gardens sited by the idyllic River Test. I thought that the walled rose garden was stunning and was fascinated watching the trout in the river. A huge vote of thanks to our Events & Outings Organiser, Maureen Nicholas for all her planning for and then shepherding us on visits.

Monthly Meetings remain an important aspect of our u3a activities. We have had some memorable speakers – thank you to our Speakers Secretary, Gill Davies. The speakers may be the highlight of each meeting, but these get togethers are also such a good opportunity to just chat and exchange information within our community.

The project to collect the stories of the Children of World War 2 is going well. It is uncovering some fascinating social history and a few close calls for

our members in their younger lives! These stories will ultimately find a place in national archives so be available for future generations when they consider that heroic period in our national story. Some of the stories are in this newsletter.

I have given a special mention above to two of our committee members, but I must also extend my thanks to all your committee and to the "Really Useful Group". They have your best interests at heart. Some will be standing down at the next AGM. We are, of course, thinking about their replacement. Another opportunity to serve your fellow members!

We will have a stall at the Emsworth Show on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> August. It is a great show so do come along to support us and have a good day out.

Now we must accept the end of summer is in sight. A summer that has been part damp squib and part roaster. So, let us enjoy what remains of summer and have a great Autumn!

Take care of each other

Adrian Wakeford

Chairman, Emsworth and District u3a

**Your u3a**

## **The monthly meetings and talks**

On Friday 19th May the speaker was Brian Freeland talking about "The View from the Wings". Brian's talk related to the world of variety entertainment, (Butlins, the London Palladium, the Shakespeare Company, National Theatre, Scottish Opera and Sadler's Wells Ballet.) The manager's view from the prompt corner is very different to that from your comfortable seat in the Stalls or Circle! An excellent talk (the dirtiest one in his repertoire, according to Brian!) which kept the audience enthralled, listening and chuckling for the full time. His take on his life in the theatre from set design and building to show and artiste management, at home and abroad, in touring repertory companies and the big London theatres, both about how things went and about some of the personalities he met and worked with, was thoroughly entertaining. His dirtiest talk? Only one tale at the end which related to the standards upheld at Butlins and a joke being told about a man cutting a hedge minus trousers and that was it, but it did cause one of the best laughs of the morning!

*Toni B-Reynaud*

## A clock face made from three nines

Well, there was only one email about what may or may not be wrong with either or both of these pictures, so let's look at it and see if I can give a satisfactory answer to the query/comment.

Hi Toni

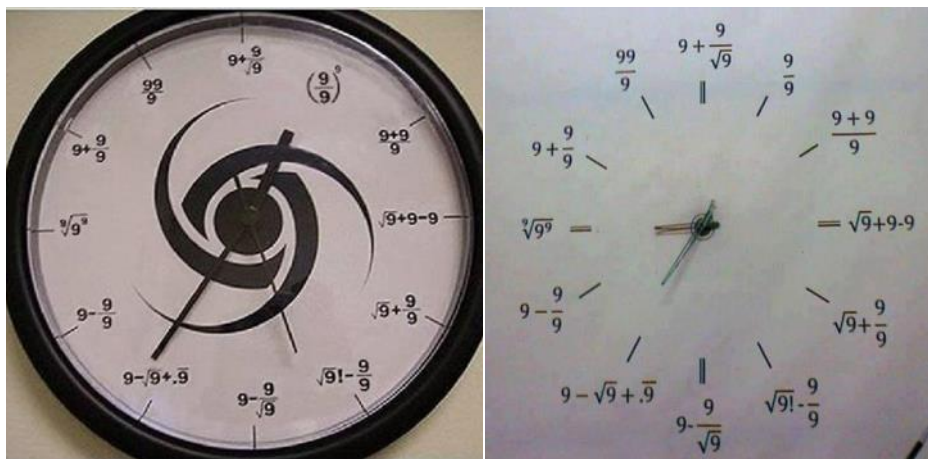
*I enjoyed your clock puzzle. I think both the clocks are incorrect, but the right hand one more so than the left.*

*Both of them have an expression for the clockface 7 which will always be  $< 7$ , as  $.9$  with a bar over, which I take to mean  $.9$  recurring is always going to be infinitesimally less than 1.*

*The right hand one only uses two 9s in its expression for clockface number 1. Also for clockface number 5 the square root sign should not go over the factorial sign  $!$ , it should only go over the 9.*

*I think I count as finicky, but isn't that the point of mathematics?.*

Gill



\*\*\*\*\*

A couple of weekends ago I was out on a walk of 7 1/2 miles with a walking group. It was interesting that at a coffee stop, one of those present took a good look around and said "do you realise that one third of this group are octogenarians?" It just goes to show that age is not necessarily a bar to getting out and about and enjoying the countryside.

I am not a mathematician, but I have done a wee bit of research and would offer the following in answer to Gill's comments.

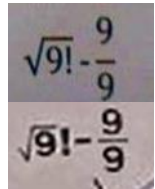
*Both clockfaces have an expression for the clockface 7 which will always be <7, as .9 with a bar over, which I take to mean .9 recurring is always going to be infinitesimally less than 1.*

0.9 recurring is a number that gets infinitely close to 1, but never quite reaches it. However, in the context of limits, it is considered equal to 1 (Google is your friend!!)

*The right hand one only uses two 9s in its expression for the clockface number 1.*

To the layman (me) this is correct. The left hand face uses  $(9/9)^9$  which to me looks like it's saying 1 to the power 9, which is definitely not 1!

Also for the right hand clockface number 5 the square root sign should not go over the factorial sign ! as it does.



It should only go over the 9 as on the left hand clock face.

This is in agreement with most of what I found using Google, but a few purists (?) suggest that this  $(\sqrt{9})! - 9/9$ , is the right way to show the formula,

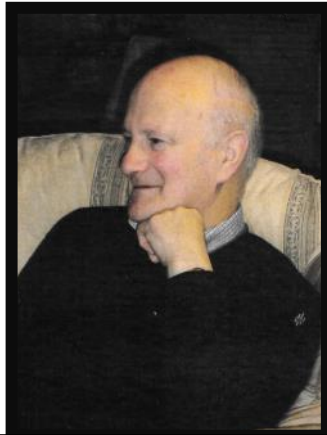
So there we are ,a minor puzzle with answers which are generally in agreement, but one needs sharp eyes to see the detail sometimes.

Toni

\*\*\*\*\*



## Tribute to Bob Hailey



Bob was an active member of Emsworth and District u3a for well over 15 years. He was Outings Secretary for a number of years, taking trips to Highclere Castle, Great Dixter, Bath, Lacock and Forde Abbey amongst others.

He also stood in, on occasions, for missing speakers, as away from the u3a, he gave many talks to a variety of organisations.

Within the u3a activities, he led the German group until 2012 and the Classical Music Appreciation group until 2018. Despite the onset of dementia, he continued to come to the Classical Music group meetings and the monthly general meetings, where he was a familiar, helpful figure, collecting up the empty mugs. He will be remembered for his always cheerful face and wide knowledge on many subjects. His love of the music of Brahms and chocolate biscuits will stay in everyone's memory.

Classical Music Appreciation Group

## Scrabbling around on the floor

We thought Scrabble would be good for our brains, but we didn't know it involved crawling around on the floor.

Well, it doesn't normally, but at our June monthly meeting it did. Our first game was well underway between three competitive players - Wenda, Brian and Gill. Gill took an early lead with a lucky 7-letter word which scores a bonus of 50 and then after asking the other two whether "humming" would be allowed, citing "the hummings of the bee and the humming bird are quite different" was given reassurance that yes that would be OK. Which again was a 7-letter word, earning Gill a second bonus 50. With about 10 tiles left in the bag to pick Brian leant his elbow gently on the table, while he put his thinking cap on. But the table was having none of it. One end collapsed and the board and all the tiles, racks and all slid inexorably to the floor. Wenda, Gill and Brian were soon to be scrabbling



around on the floor collecting all the tiles, with great guffaws of laughter. The other seven players, from the other two games, were surprised at all the commotion from our end of the room and Brian took much ribbing in the tea break about deliberately sabotaging the game as he was so far behind.

Anyway, two good things to report: all three scrabblers or Scrabblers got up off the floor with no assistance needed, and Gill and Wenda reported Valerie and Lincoln keep a very tidy house, with no dust under the sofa!

*Gill Polgreen*



## **“What did you do in the plague Grandma?”**

By *Ann Lilly*

Well I know what I didn't do.

I did not make marmalade or sourdough bread.

I did not learn a foreign language.

I did not clear out cupboards and put aside stuff for  
the charity shop when the C word was over.

I did not join Joe Wicks on Zoom to bounce around  
the kitchen.

I did not learn to play the violin, or even the  
recorder though I did sing along to a CD of “We all live in a yellow  
submarine” many times.

I did not make my own face masks or scrubs for hospital workers  
though I clapped for them on Thursday evenings.

I did not grow my own runner beans, no point in growing something  
you don't want to eat.

I did not learn to knit Fair Isle gloves.

I did not watch Kirsty Allsopp repeats in order to make my own  
Christmas decorations.

I did not learn to paint landscapes or how to mend a puncture on my  
bike

“So what did you do in the plague, Grandma”

I washed the car I couldn't use.



I did a spot of meditation.

And drank gin and tonic





This poem was written in Greenwich Park and is about a new puppy.  
He's a Schnauzer named Sunny Biscuit.

## **Sunny Biscuit**

**By Kim Shelley. 2023**

He runs he stumbles  
he tumbles but  
he gets up and runs again

to his master or mistress  
to be lovingly caught  
and hugged

after exercise he sleeps  
exhausted dreaming perhaps  
of frolicking on the grass

little pup Sunny  
has brought joy and love  
to melt hearts

one day he will run confidently  
and strong  
protective of his family

little pup Sunny Biscuit  
sleep now  
and awake refreshed

for more adventures  
in the big wide world  
giving more love to it.



## **Outing to the Bombay Sapphire Distillery and the Whitchurch Silk Mill.**

On Monday 20th March 40 members set off in the rain by coach to the Bombay Sapphire Distillery in Laverstoke Mill. Here is a selection of members' comments.

“We set off with excitement with the prospect of a pre lunch gin - who knew this was a thing in retirement!”



Organised by Maureen Nicholas.  
Photos and words by various  
members



“We wandered through beautiful and historic buildings learning about how Bombay Sapphire is made, and the glasshouses where some of the botanicals are grown were a spectacular interlude.”



“The tour of the Distillery was excellent with a very knowledgeable guide. It was so good that I am treating my husband to this experience for our Ruby anniversary.”



“We had a very enjoyable and informative day out.”

“We aim to return on a fine day to take advantage of all this area of Hampshire has to offer.”

“Our u3a Spring trip kicked off with an ‘iconic glass’ – a tipple or two of Bombay Sapphire’s unique gin at the distillery in Laverstoke.”



“A tasty sandwich lunch was enjoyed at the 19<sup>th</sup> century Whitchurch Silk Mill, followed by a fascinating tour of the Industrial Heritage museum, displaying looms and examples of old and current silk weavings. We also saw the workings of the old water wheel which powered the mill.”

## Monthly meeting talks for 2023

15th Sept	Pauline Rowson - "Murder, Mystery and Mayhem". Local best selling crime author, Pauline Rowson will give a lively and entertaining talk on the inspiration behind her novels and how she plots, researches and Writes them. Pauline will have some of her novels for sale and will hold a book
20th Oct	Speaker from Co-op Legal Services will come along to give a talk entitled "Tax, Care and Toy Boys". The talk will involve giving advice on Financial Estate Planning.
17th Nov	Ian Gledhill --- "The Magic of Pantomime". The history of this enduring and peculiarly British institution, from its origins in the 16th century to 19th century Music Hall, to the family shows that are stil much loved today.

## Emsworth U3A Committee

<b>Adrian Wakeford</b> <a href="mailto:adrian.wakeford@gmail.com">adrian.wakeford@gmail.com</a> 07860 189099	Chairman	<b>David Bittles</b> <a href="mailto:davidbits@sky.com">davidbits@sky.com</a> 01243 945494	Secretary
<b>Maureen Nicholas</b> Events and Outings organiser. <a href="mailto:maureennicholas7@gmail.com">maureennicholas7@gmail.com</a> 07745 172890		<b>Jackie Treacher</b> Groups Co-ordinator <a href="mailto:jackietreach127@gmail.com">jackietreach127@gmail.com</a>	
<b>Hazel Irwin</b> Membership Secretary Sunnyside, 6 Jeppson Walk, Nutbourne, PO18 8FZ <a href="mailto:hazel.i@btinternet.com">hazel.i@btinternet.com</a> 01243 940310		<b>Sandy Bell</b> Webmaster & Technical Co-ordinator Meeting Technical Support <a href="mailto:sandy.bell43@outlook.com">sandy.bell43@outlook.com</a> 01243 378842	
<b>Kenneth Laing</b> <a href="mailto:klaing@ntlworld.com">klaing@ntlworld.com</a>	Treasurer	<b>Gill Davies</b> <a href="mailto:gilldaves21@hotmail.com">gilldaves21@hotmail.com</a>	Speakers Secretary

Remember to look at our website – lots of useful information on there.

[www.emsworthu3a.org.uk](http://www.emsworthu3a.org.uk)

# COFFEE ROTA

Shown below is the rota for serving the tea, coffee and biscuits at the monthly meetings.

Depending on the size of Group there may be two Groups for any one month - will Group Leaders please liaise and ensure that at least three people from their Groups 'volunteer' for this duty.

*If insufficient people turn up to provide the service, then no refreshments will be served at that meeting*

<b>2023</b>	August	No meeting
	September	Birdwatching / Creative Writing 2
	October	Scrabble 2
	November	Book Groups 1 & 2
	December	No meeting

Any queries please contact:

Bridget Watts, [bridget.watts@btinternet.com](mailto:bridget.watts@btinternet.com) or  
Maureen Nicholas, [maureennicholas7@gmail.com](mailto:maureennicholas7@gmail.com)

Don't you just love our dear NHS . Our maternity department is going paperless, for hospital notes and the ladies we care for. I arrived in my office, ready to do the whooping cough immunisations that day , only to find 7 pieces of paper on my desk to remind me that we are 'going paperless' ! *Carol Stupples*





## SOUTH DOWNS WAY

Following completion of the Wayfarers Walk in Autumn 2021, Pamela and Geoffrey Eardley were casting around for their next walking challenge. They eventually settled on the South Downs Way and planning began. The journey was to lead through the magnificent, rolling chalk hills of Hampshire and Sussex encompassing the whole of the length of the South Downs National Park. It crosses striking chalk meadows alive with orchids and wild flowers, crop fields and finally along the edge of the epic white cliffs of the Seven Sisters and Beachy Head. In order to make transport less of an onerous task Sue and David Bittles happily agreed to join them on their expedition. Had the willing accomplices been more aware of what this entailed – 100 miles of footslog from Winchester to Eastbourne and 12,000 feet of ascent and descent – they might have had second thoughts!



In February 2022 the 4 of us waved goodbye to King Arthur and began our climb out of Winchester. The daily sections were primarily planned by Pamela with the help of the excellent book “Trekking the South Downs Way” in the Great Treks of England Series. The length of each stage was dictated by available places for car parking, one at the start of each section and one at the finishing point. We settled on 11 sections varying between 7 and 13 miles but the ideal we found to be about 10 miles. The further East we travelled meant an earlier start to the day but the days toil always incorporated a pint or two and a hearty pub meal which was well earned at the end of each days walking. It was agreed



at the start of the project the our expedition was to be **FUN** so plans were always flexible to allow for inclement weather and the conditions under foot. Wet, chalk slopes can be very slippery but as Geoffrey never failed to remind us “There is no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothing.”

By the middle of May ‘22 when a



temporary break was planned for holidays, hottest weather and the many casual strollers on the downs, we had completed some 54 miles over varying terrain with spectacular scenery, outstanding views, not to mention challenging climbs and descents.

Plans were made to recommence in late September/October '22 but our plans were put on hold

when illness intervened. We were able to take up the challenge again at the end of March 2023. A reservation had been made for an overnight stay at The Ram in Firle on the 10/11<sup>th</sup> May for the final 2 sections, meaning that the second half of the trek was squeezed into just a few weeks paying less regard to the weather but hoping for the best.

Much of the second half was spent mainly on the high open grasslands passing Chanctonbury Ring and Devils Dyke and descending to the Rivers Adur, Ouse and Cuckmere. Climbing again to the high ridge we passed the two historic windmills known as Jack and Jill and passed Ditchling Beacon, continuing to the picturesque village of Alfriston. During our travels we also passed by the finger post marking the Greenwich Meridian showing the Western Hemisphere towards Winchester and the Eastern Hemisphere in the direction of Eastbourne. By now many of the views were of coastal scenery and for 6 miles the route negotiates the undulations of the grassy cliff-tops, never far from the edge, high above the blue waters of the English Channel. There are two main sections of cliffs separated by the Birling Gap. The Seven Sisters comprise the most famous stretch, a striking white section of chalk cliffs. Finally we passed the iconic candy striped lighthouse at Beachy Head arriving at the kiosk cafe on the outskirts of Eastbourne. This was greeted with a mixture of elation and exhaustion. There only remains now to make a final decision on the next adventure!!

*David Bittles*





# Holiday Morning

By Kim Shelley. 2022

I am the chef you see in the morning,  
I start my work at the crack of dawning.  
It's all about the preparation,  
First I clean down my work station.



To make their breakfast they forget,  
How I make the perfect omelette.  
You can have ham or you can have cheese,  
You can have whatever you please.

I'm on my feet all day to make a way,  
To fry their eggs and onions.  
They don't understand what it does to a man  
When his feet have painful bunions.



No-one knows what's involved in the making,  
It's all real and there's no faking.  
Frying eggs and cooking bacon,  
This is the route my life has taken.

Some want mushrooms, some want peppers,  
They want it now and they won't let us  
Take more time to cook it right  
And serve them a plate of pure delight.

Some rush quickly, some have ambled,  
For their fried eggs or even scrambled.  
Eggs over easy or sunny side up,  
Have as much as you like and fill yourself up.

I don't do poached there isn't time,  
People need to get to the poolside.  
The water's warm and the weather's fine,  
Got to get their breakfast inside.

So fill your plate and eat it quick,  
And rush off like a fool.  
There is a chance you might miss the pick  
Of the sun-beds by the pool.

But if you win the race and get your place  
And no-one gets in your way,  
You'll get a prime spot and that's your lot,  
You'll be happy for the rest of the day!



Holidays in the sun can be such fun,  
If you get the things you desire.  
In the shade you'll have it made,  
As the sun gets higher and higher.

With the sun block on and a cooling swim,  
Then a drink that packs a punch.  
As time goes by you'll just get dry  
And then it's time for lunch!



### **Outing to Mottisfont National Trust Property**

On Monday 19<sup>th</sup> June 46 members, including some from Ems Valley u3a, set off on our coach for Mottisfont National Trust Property, near Romsey. The weather was bright and dry and I was very relieved! One of Mottisfont's big attractions is their world-famous collection of old-fashioned roses which flower once a year in June. I had planned the Outing with this in mind.

For the medieval canons, roses were sacred symbols. In the 1970s, Graham Stuart Thomas saved rare and beautiful blooms from extinction and created this glorious garden. I have been sent some beautiful photographs of some of the roses, and there are also photos of some of our members among the roses.





The grounds are very extensive with lots of ancient trees. The enormous tree by the house which caught my eye is a London plane and is thought to be the largest of its kind in Britain. It forms part of the National Collection of plane trees which stand in the grounds. Lots of members enjoyed the riverside walk, as a tributary of the River Test flows through the grounds. We spotted lots of trout basking there as this swan glided by.







I also spotted a beautiful banded demoiselle! Bridget even managed to capture a photo of it.

I know some members had picnic lunches, sitting at the various tables in the welcome shade of the trees while some ate in the Old Kitchen or the Coach House Cafe. Others sat outside in the sunshine. Some members took advantage of the buggies to tour the site. Members were also able to explore the house which is steeped in history.

Just need to plan the next Outing now!

*Maureen Nicholas*



## Groups Coordinator

I had the opportunity to take over from Adrian as Groups Co-ordinator earlier this year when he was elevated to Chairman. I am enjoying getting to know many more of you and have a glimpse at the numerous great groups we have. I have also gained a greater understanding of the importance of the groups to all of you.

Currently we have 31 groups, including 2 shared with Havant. As you are all aware, the principle of the U3A is to promote the values of lifelong learning and encourage self learning. Our groups are key to achieving this and over 75% of our Emsworth members belong to at least one group, with many members belonging to multiple groups. As well as providing new learning opportunities they are also a great way to make new friends and have fun.

Our groups take many forms and range from philosophical discussion through to garden visits and our ever popular amble and pub lunch group, plus many more. Many of our groups are at capacity and we haven't seen any new groups come forward for a while and it would be great to bring some new ones on board. The loss of our cycling group continues to be lamented and our craft group is looking for a new direction. So if your interest currently isn't being met or you have a



great idea for a group please get in touch and we can work together to take it forward.

Don't be put off by the 'Group Leader' tag. There are lots of ways groups can be successfully run. So if you have a great idea for a group please get in touch.



Our thank you lunch for Group Leaders and volunteers is now up and running again post covid, and will be held on the 30<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

The photos are from our popular Gardens Group visit and Bombay Sapphire trip.

*Lackie Treach*

## **The Walk to School in Wartime**

**by Liz Mardel-Ferreira (then Dib McMeeking)**

Child evacuees, wearing labels and carrying square gas mask cases, are standard images of World War Two.

Luckily I escaped both. There was no mass evacuation of children from Nottingham as there was from more vulnerable cities and somehow our mother had found us gas mask cases with no corners! (Ours were cylinder-shaped, with a round lid over one end. They fitted snugly across the small of the back like a satchel and we thought them very cool!)

I was eight when the war started so had been doing the daily three-quarter mile walk to Wyvil School for three years, towed by my big brother in our little scarlet blazers. Later, gas mask on back, I would be towing my younger brother and collecting an assortment of young friends along the way

We lived at the top of Pembroke Drive, off Tavistock Drive. The name of our little road had itself got wartime connections. The officer-training of one of my mother's adored twin brothers had been at Pembroke College, Cambridge but at 20 he was killed just five weeks from the end of World War One. So when my parents married in 1927 and built The End House (for £750!) their little private road was named in memory of our uncle.

Our father had also served in France in World War One and was now too old to be called up so we had none of the disruptions suffered by the families whose fathers were away from home. However, the walk along the switchback of Cyprus Road and up Sefton Drive to Wyvil, a school then on the borders of Mapperley Park and Sherwood, brought daily reminders that life was anything but normal for many of our neighbours.

Our route to school took us down a path between 'Redlands' and 'the field' (where two houses now stand.) Half the field had become a vegetable garden and hen run but my ten-year-old brother and his friends had busied themselves digging trenches bordering Cyprus Road to defend us from the might of the advancing German army! The nerve centre of the trench system was The Fort – a deep hole they had dug under the wide elderberry bush. Ammunition was rows of sand-filled Quink bottles that doubled as hand grenades.

Along the path, down the steps, through a gate and we were on Cyprus Road. One or two of the children from the house at the highest point usually joined us on our walk. Their mother told us one day that Gabriel had just joined the Air Force. It seemed particularly



appropriate. I don't know whether he ever got his wings! Another day, at the bottom of that hill we passed a young couple from Mapperley Hall Drive with their little boy in a pushchair. I remember thinking how pretty she was, and how handsome her young husband, on leave in his naval officer's uniform. But his ship sailed off to the Far East and he was later posted forever just 'Missing'. Years later it was a shock to see that it was still his name rather than hers in the phone book.

On the corner of Mapperley Hall Drive and Carisbrooke Drive lived a family we knew at the Scottish Church. Three of their four sons were in the services, one army, one navy and one air force. Roy was a pilot in the Battle of Britain. But his plane was hit and part of it fell and killed him as he bailed out. The day that the announcement of his death appeared in the Evening Post was the first time we had ever seen our mother cry. At the bottom of Sefton Drive was a friend whose daughter had been called up for the Women's Land Army, doing backbreaking work on farms. On the right at the top of Sefton Drive was a spare building plot. The school turned it into a kitchen garden and we all regularly 'Dug for Victory'. Was it in class time or lunch break? I can't remember but I do know that this was the first time I'd seen sweetcorn, and we'd grown it ourselves!

And so to the Mapperley Park entrance to Wyvil School, up a steep wide path off Arlington Drive that to a small child seemed to go on forever! The brick gateposts are still there. The school had once been a big family house – Georgian or early Victorian – and another entrance was in Private Road. There were about seven classrooms, a playground, a tennis court and a dug-out air raid shelter



*Wyvil School before the war.*

Miss Hancock and some of the cast of  
"The Pied Piper" in 1937

under the tulip tree. It was ruled over by the formidable Miss Hancock. On the day France fell we'd been home for lunch and picked up the seriousness of the situation from the news on the radio. We returned to school full of foreboding and went round saying 'Isn't it awful, isn't it awful'. But we had Brownies that afternoon and Brown Owl (our lovely Miss Trease) sat us down for a pep talk. Firmly but kindly she said "There's no point in going round saying 'Isn't it awful'. If there's



My big brother and me in “The Pied Piper” in 1937

something you can do to help, then get on and do it. If not, then carry on as usual” and we all felt a lot better!

So school life carried on – punctuated by the occasional air-raid siren and training for getting us into the shelter. Children appeared or disappeared every now and again. Hilda, Helga and Ruth, three older girls, arrived from Germany but seldom spoke. I wanted to talk to them but was too shy. I would see them standing

together quietly under the yew tree beside the playground. Perhaps they’d arrived on the ‘Kindertransport’, I’ve often wondered. And there was the frightened little German boy being chased round the playground by a baying pack of young monsters taunting ‘Nazi, Nazi’. Oh to have had the courage to stand up to them!

At the end of the school day the journey home usually took a different route. The war had brought Claudine to the school for a year or two. Her father was an army officer and her mother was French. She had four older siblings and like many service families they had moved around. So whereas I was a sheltered, timid goody-goody

Claudine was adaptable and fearless. She was also naughty and led me into mischief for the first time in my life. I thought she was wonderful!

One little trick she taught a group of us was performed near the bottom of the school drive. A car owner had installed a mechanism that enabled him to drive over a metal plate like a manhole-cover, in the tarmac at his entrance, so springing open the gates in the high fence surrounding his garden. A group of us would crowd onto the metal plate and at a command from Claudine we all jumped, the gates flew open and we removed ourselves hastily!. One day, however, the gardener was waiting behind the fence with a hosepipe.....! So there was no repeat performance!

Claudine’s house was near the far end of Arlington Drive and I sometimes went there after school to play. Her three oldest siblings were seldom at home but it was only in

the nineteen-sixties, when a weekend supplement published an article about the SOE, that I knew where her big brother Cyril had been at the time. He had been trained as a wireless operator, parachuted into occupied France and joined partisans in blowing up factories and ammunition trains for which he was awarded the Military Cross and the Croix de Guerre. Her two sisters were also, I've just discovered, in the SOE. After her father was posted to Scotland they moved to Edinburgh and I didn't see her again.

Many, many more of the homes along our route must have harboured stories of wartime tragedy or courage, sadness or success behind their walls and fences but we passed them by - unaware.

And so from Arlington Drive back up the hill to home

Of course we were affected by the war – my big brother had moved on to The Dolphin which was one school that was evacuated to the country. One night in four my father stayed at the Control Centre in Nottingham as a Senior Incident Officer ready to co-ordinate the civilian services (ARP, fire and ambulance) during air raids. We were affected by the shortages of course, and by the fear we felt on hearing the wail of the sirens or the thudding drone of German bombers flying above us. We slept in the shelter every night for several months while they flew over to attack other cities. One night my father was standing outside the shelter, about to leave for the Control Centre when my mother called him back for some reason. At that moment a piece of white-hot shrapnel fell on the spot where he'd been standing. The one stray bomb that irreparably damaged the foundations of the home of friends in Mapperley Hall Drive came without warning one afternoon as we lay in bed with measles. There were raids, but only once did Nottingham feel the full force of a blitz and that night our father's factory in the Lace Market took a direct hit. The miles of mosquito and camouflage netting then being produced instead of glamorous lace and net were safe. However the wing of the factory that was destroyed in a massive fire that night had been let to a storage company and must have been filled with the treasured possessions of men, women and children now displaced.

Yes, we were all affected but, compared to the experiences of children in Portsmouth near to my current home, I think most of the young of Mapperley Park escaped the war relatively unscathed.

## MEMORIES OF WORLD WAR 2

**By Keith Lawson**

We lived in a house which was on the edge of a village near to Maidstone in Kent. I was born in 1937 and the second world war started in 1939. Soon after in 1940 the "flying battles" started over Kent. One day I was playing in our garden when one of these battles started right above me - which I found very exciting because the when the machine guns fired between the 2 planes the "used" bullets landed around me. I grabbed a few but found that they were very hot. They cooled down very quickly and I proudly showed them to my friends - I was 4 years old.

One day in 1943 I was getting dressed to go to school when I saw a very strange looking plane flying not far from our house. I shouted to my Dad (he was shaving prior going to work at Chatham Dockyards where he had been recruited as the Fire Officer) to come and see it. He rushed into my bedroom and said "Oh my god" - we did not see him again for several months. What I had seen was one of the first of the so-called "doodle bugs" coming in from Germany. They were programmed by Germans, but were very unreliable. One morning when I was 6 or 7 years old, I was woken up at about 6am by a huge explosion. I called for help, saying that I could not move. My parents rushed to see what had happened and switched on the electric light. This revealed that the entire ceiling had come down on to me and that was what was "holding me down" - so they pulled the ceiling off me. We had very thick curtains on the windows just in case a bomb came down close to our house and when my parents opened the curtains they saw that although all the window glass had been blown in, the curtains has kept the glass off my face - thank goodness! Opening the window showed that the bomb had come down just beyond the end of our garden and there was a large crater where it had landed.

Later that day an RAF pilot came to our house and apologised for the damage. He told us that he had seen the "doodle bug" flying low above a straight main road with lots of houses along the road. He realised that if it came down on the road, then many people would be killed or badly injured and so he flew beside the "doodle bug" and using his wing tip to tilt the "doodle bug" a little so that it would follow a curving path and land in one of the nearby fields. This is exactly what had happened.

## **MEMORIES OF THE WAR**

**By Christine Brown**

I was born in Tottenham, London so when war broke out and the government urged parents to send their children somewhere safe my parents took me to live with my mother's sister and her husband living in Sandy, Bedfordshire. A few months later, when my aunt became pregnant, I moved to her sister in law living in the next hamlet, Seddington. By this time I was five and started school in Sandy. This involved a two mile walk by myself morning and early afternoon. There were just 3 very good female teachers at this school and at lunchtime we marched about a mile to the next, larger church school for our dinner which I think were very good and I always enjoyed. We also had a bottle of milk in the morning, concentrated orange juice, rose hip syrup and, of course the dreaded castor oil so I feel that I had a very healthy start in life because even though food rations were small my foster parents ran a small market garden so there was always plenty of brassicas!

Once a month my parents would come down on a Sunday, braving the railway journey which was always unreliable, and walking the three miles from Sandy station for a Sunday lunch. We had a few hours together before my parents started the journey home again but before they left I presume they gave my foster parents money and left me with my dinner money and two shillings and sixpence to buy a savings stamp at school. They went back to London, both worked long hours in factories, both were air raid wardens so up firewatching on roofs at night, and when they had a night off, sleeping in a communal air raid shelter in the nearby park. One night because it was raining, they decided to go to another one and their usual one received a direct hit!

I had a very happy childhood. a good education and a healthy start in life. Although it must have been hard parting with a four year old, my parents did what was best for me. When I returned to London I went to another good school (I think the teacher was a Jewish immigrant) and he coached us so that most of his class passed the 11 plus which was very new so I was one of the very first children to go to a grammar school where again I received an excellent education so, now at 87 I feel that the war years, although hard in many ways were good for me. Afterwards, even with food rationing and clothing coupons for clothes and furniture, I was the generation of The New Look, Festival of Britain, The Design Centre and then The Swinging Sixties. After the war years nobody moaned about what they hadn't got because it was the same for everyone and we all felt that things were difficult to get but getting better all the time. None of my family were killed and I just feel grateful and lucky.

## Bird Watching Group

The bird watching group met at Emsworth Marina on a bright sunny May morning and walked down the Emsworth Channel into Thorney Island as far as the Great Deep. We were lucky enough to both hear and see (which is far rarer) a cuckoo as you can see from the photos. The group photo was taken as we all observed the Cuckoo which posed quite nicely on a branch for some time.



Some other photos were also taken.



White Throat



Dabchick Parent and chick



A deer which emerged from the brush near the Great Deep

## Things your mother said—does this ring a bell?

“If you don’t have anything nice to say, don’t say anything at all.”

What it really means: There’s no need to go around hurting other people’s feelings. Just be a nice person, ok?

“Don’t talk with your mouth full.”

What it really means: I don’t need to see a cement mixer of food, thanks.

“Because I said so.”

What it really means: Don’t question my motives. Just do it.

“Don’t say I didn’t warn you.”

What it really means: I told you so, you should have listened to me but you thought you knew better. I knew I was right.