

Ver-Colne Valley



General meetings 3rd Thursday each month at 10am
Greenwood Park Community Centre,
Tippendell Lane,
Chiswell Green, AL2 3HW

Charity No:1156215

VCV Web Site: www.ver-colnevalleyu3a.org.uk

Username = valley

Newsletter: No 183 March 2024

Greetings one and all,

With Easter fast approaching, I am reminded there are quite a few people that are by themselves so, if you know of anyone who is in that position, if you can, please make their Easter brighter.

I seem to have a lot of scam emails and texts from all sorts of companies, so I would like to reiterate the advice we put in the last Newsletter. If you get an email, text or phone message that seems to be too good to be true (it probably is) or if you are suspicious in any way, **don't** acknowledge it, **don't** click on their link or **don't** engage them in conversation. Find their details separately if you can. It always pays to be safe, if it is a legitimate company or request they should not take offence. If you have a trusted person you can get advice from then speak to them before doing anything.

You should have received your membership renewal notice, hopefully you are all rejoining. Please follow the instructions on the email and let our Membership Secretary know if there are any alterations to your details.

Once you receive your Membership Card please put you Emergency Contact details and any medication you are taking on the back. I hope we never need to contact the Emergency Services on your behalf but in case we do they will need to know this vital information. Please also remember to have your Membership card with you when you take part in any VCV activities.

Since being the Chairman I have been asked what it's like? I think it's like sitting on a dining chair! The seat cushion makes you comfortable, your back is supported and the legs hold you up, the other chairs around you back you up so that you do not feel alone. That is a committee!!

Please can I also remind you to bring your own cups to the General Meeting.

Look forward to seeing you then.

To those of you who celebrate it may I wish you a

Nick Photi

Chairman



To contact any committee member please go to

<https://u3asites.org.uk/ver-colnevalley/contact>

and select with whom you would like to communicate.

Committee News

Refreshments



Group

Creative Writing
Croquet
Current Affairs/Family History
Garden Allotment/Geology
Grumpy Old Men
Grumpy Old Women
Singing For Fun
Table Games/Spanish
Walking Group 1 Amblers

Month

March
April
May
June
July
August
Sept
October
November

Closing date for articles for Newsletter
NO LATER than the morning of **Friday 5th**

April 2024

Please note articles received after the
deadline will be published in the next
newsletter if appropriate.

Please send your articles to
newsletter@ver-colnevalleyu3a.org.uk

Speakers' Corner

Gill Davies

March 21st

It's my pleasure to welcome back Sarah Slater.
Unfortunately, when she last visited us, I was on holiday
but was mobbed by members when I got back saying how
great she'd been! Her talk this time is all about Tudor
fashion and she will be bringing some examples with her.

April 18th

Again, I can't quite believe my luck, but I have been able to
book Gail Stuart who just happens to be Eric Morcombe's
daughter! She is going to give a talk about her life with her
Dad. I feel sure we will all thoroughly enjoy her talk!

Hi Everyone,

Good to see so many of you at the last
GM and thank you to the Canasta
group and helpers for providing
everyone with refreshments.

The Art Appreciation Group now
have enough members interested to
make this viable. I will need one of
these members to take the lead or
arrange a discussion group to finalise
arrangements, if you would like to
contact me regarding this that would
be great. I am always around at the
general meetings for a chat too.

I have nearly enough people to form a
Philosophy group, I will keep the
sign-up sheet out at the next GM and
hopefully we can get this going.

Our canasta group could do with a
few more members too, if you are
interested, I will have a sign-up sheet
ready at the next GM.

If you have an idea for a group, please
let me know and I can see what we
need to do to make it happen

Take care and see you all soon.

Julia

There is a QR Code on the first
page of this Newsletter. To use
this, scan the code, from any
directions for 360 degrees using
the camera on your smart phone.
It is a direct link to the home page
of the VER-Colne Valley website.
Not all phones are compatible
unfortunately.

Bob Gettleson. Web master

WELCOME

DON'T FORGET TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

Newsletter: Tina Photi: Email: newsletter@ver-colnevalleyu3a.org.uk
Sound & Lighting: Roger Barry / Trevor Spinage
Catering & Supplies: Steve Bowler
Welfare: Pam Kimber: Email: c.kimber@ntlworld.com

Dates for your diary

| Event | Date | Contact | Current Position |
|--|---|--|---|
|  Petals Flower Arranging Easter Workshop | Tuesday 19 March | Denise Manning | Please contact Denise |
|  Amblers | Friday 22 nd March | Joy Dobson | Please contact Joy |
|  Walking Group 2 | 29 th March | Angela Wright | Please contact Angela |
|  London Walk - Jack the Ripper | Tuesday 9 th or Friday 12 th April. | Bob Gettleson | Friday walk sold out |
|  Walking Group 3 | Tuesday 9 th April | Penny Collins | All VCV members welcome please contact Penny |
|  VCV u3a Railway Trips Group | 16 th April 2024 | David Choppin | |
|  Garden Appreciation Chenies Manor Tulip festival | 23 rd April 2024 | Pat Hammond/ Ann Allam/ Barbara Nash | Details to be confirmed |
|  Calendar Girls | Saturday 20 th April 2024 | Maggie Fenn | Sold out come and put your name on the waiting list |
|  Garden Appreciation Rousham Gardens Garden | 9 th May 2024 | Angela & John Wright | Date to be confirmed |
|  Appreciation Ashridge House Rhododendron | 13 th June 2024 | Barbara Nash / Gill Founds | Details to be confirmed |
|  Garden Appreciation Church Gardens, Harefield | 16 th July Date to be arranged | Cindy Binnions / Pam Baladi | Date to be confirmed |
|  Garden Appreciation Audley Manor | | Cindy Binnions / Pam Baladi | Details to be confirmed |
|  Garden Appreciation Swiss Gardens | September 2024 Date to be arranged | Bronwyn Hewer / Zandra Johnson | Date to be confirmed |
|  Lion King | Wednesday 9 th October | Maggie Fenn | Sold out |
|  Garden Appreciation West Lodge Arboretum | October Date to be arranged | Sue Lekey / Anne Mitchell | Date to be confirmed |
|  Garden Appreciation Proposed Garden talk | November Date to be arranged | | Date and venue to be confirmed |
|  Garden Appreciation Christmas Garden visit | December Date to be arranged | Brenda Kember / Cathy Jones | Date to be confirmed |
|  White Christmas | 3 rd January 2025 | Maggie Fenn | On sale at March GM |



AMBLERS - Joy Dabson

Please meet for an 11am start, Friday March 22nd, car park, Highfield Park Trust West Lodge, Hill End Lane, St.Albans, AL4 0RA

Day Trips and Events

Trips Contact Barbara Croom – trips@ver-colnevalleyu3a.org.uk

On sale now

Royal Opera House



Date – Monday 29th April

Price - £34pp

Depart GWP – 9am

Depart London – 3pm

A unique look behind the scenes at one of London's most prestigious theatres. The guided tour includes the rehearsal spaces, costume and props workshops and the auditorium. Learn some of the history of the building and how this came to be the third theatre on the site. There is a fair amount of walking involved but it does include pauses/breaks while the guide is talking. There will also be some time to visit Covent Garden Numbers are limited so get your name down early.

Lee and Stort River Cruise

Date – Wednesday 19th June

Price – £58pp

Depart GWP – 10.45am

Depart Ware – 4.15pm



A two-and-a-half-hour cruise through Hidden Hertfordshire. We start with a two-course lunch at the Waterside Inn in Ware, then board the boat directly from the restaurant's private garden terrace. On the cruise we pass the Ware gazebos that overhang the river's edge, continuing along the flood plains of the River Lee to reach Hertford. We also pass the Amwell Nature Reserve which attracts a great many varieties of birds, before travelling on to Stanstead Abbots where we start the return journey.

Forthcoming events

Monday 5th August – Denbies Vineyard

Wednesday 2nd October – Voulez Vous Aha, Abba tribute band plus lunch

Theatre Trips

Theatre Trips Organiser: Maggie Fenn
Email: theatre@ver-colnevalleyu3a.org.uk

The interest list does not guarantee a ticket. Payment is required before your name is added to the booking list for the event.



CALENDAR GIRLS

Saturday 20 April 2024 – Matinee performance
Theatre The Mill at Sonning
Pick up Point Greenwood Park
Departure Time The coach leaves promptly at 10.30 am
Return Time Approx 5.00 pm
Price £86

LION KING

Wednesday 9th October 2024
Theatre Lyceum Theatre, London
Pick up Point Greenwood Park
Departure Time The coach leaves promptly at 10.30 am
Return Time Approx 5.15
Price £47



FIDDLER ON THE ROOF

Thursday 22nd August – Matinee performance
Theatre Regents Park Open Air Theatre
Pick up Point Greenwood Park
Departure Time The coach leaves promptly at 10.30 am
Return Time Approx 5.30 pm
Price £46

WHITE CHRISTMAS

Friday 3rd January 2025
Theatre Mill at Sonning
Price £89.00 which includes lunch, programme, coach and driver's tip



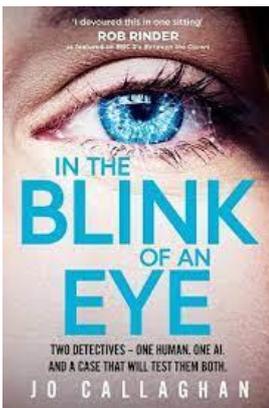
News and Features

It is with great sadness that I must inform you that Shirley Humphreys has passed away. She was a very fondly known member of VCV of many years. She was a regular on many of the holidays and trips and will always be remembered for her giggle and the naughty twinkle in her eye.



Book Review

Have you ever wanted your own personal assistant? Maybe someone who could organise your life, making sure you were on the right path and making decisions based on logic and facts to enhance your well-being? - and to clarify, this would be far superior to an Alexa or some such box sitting on a table! Does that sound fun or scary to you?



Our book group has just read *In the blink of an eye* by Jo Callaghan, a detective novel set in present-day England, where one of the main “characters” is just such an entity. We all loved it. It is so original.

The main protagonist is DCS Kat Frank who lives with her teenage son. She is still mourning the loss of her husband to cancer. Her boss wants to bring her back to take part in a research project instigated by the Home Office and run by a University to work on cold cases with the help of an Artificially Intelligent Detecting Entity called Lock. Kat absolutely hates the idea finding it insulting to her and her profession but is forced to go ahead with it for the sake of her career. It doesn't help that the professor from the university working on AI believes that the police are not very efficient and that working with AI will eventually be the answer to solving crime.

So, there is a clash of opinions and personalities straight away. Also, all the other characters appear to have personal issues so there is a lot of “meat” to work with. The taskforce is charged with investigating a couple of cold cases concerning two, apparently unconnected, missing teenagers.

It is a real page-turner, exciting and reads very smoothly and fast. It is also very procedural but comprehensible and using the AIDE meant that the number crunching procedural stuff was researched instantaneously which moves the story along.

I loved Lock, in fact we all did, and the way it (hologram in the guise of a male) and Kat interacted. There was a certain weird chemistry between them while they learnt from each other.

I decided I would love this sort of personal AIDE. I recommend this book to you.

Sandy Norman
Book Discussion group

Walking Group 3

Thank you to Neil and Ann for agreeing to lead us all from the quaint old village of Sarratt, alongside the River Chess and through the lovely surrounding countryside.

As the morning was a bit damp, it was great to see so many members turn up for the 4-5 mile walk, which ended back at The Cock Inn, Sarratt, a favourite of the walking group. Most of us stayed for a well-earned drink after our exertions and the conversation continued to flow over a delicious and relaxing lunch.



News and Features

'Guys and Dolls', The Bridge Theatre Ron Fenn

This was another unusual show in the way it was presented. The show was written in 1960, recreates a past and fictional New York based on the stories of Damon Runyon and is full of colourful characters whose main interest is gambling. The theatre is set in the round with the audience in small galleries around a large central space where some of the audience can also stand. The



The floor is divided into several blocks which can be raised in different patterns to match the pace of the story. It was a non-stop performance with the characters moving from block to block as each scene unfolded. Add to that night clubs, a trip to Havana, a Salvation Army Hall, and some terrific dance routines plus opportunities for the cast to gamble. There was never a dull moment, and the fictional world was created as we watched. Two of the songs from the show were 'Luck be a lady tonight' and 'Sit down you're rocking the boat' and the presentation brought the house down. The stage management was excellent, and the movement of the blocks up and down was effortlessly controlled. The actors in the cast mingled with the audience in the centre which made it very alive and spontaneous. The story revolves around two couples who fall in love; one couple had been engaged for 14 years and gambling is the reason the wedding does not proceed. The other couple revolves around another hardened gambler who falls for a young woman in the Salvation army; she feels the same way but is unable to forget what she preaches. Needless to say, there is plenty of confusion aided by the other characters until finally both women decide to marry their men and convert them from gambling later. The ovation at the end reflected the non-stop pace of the show and the continual interaction of the cast who created the environment for the story.

Embroidery Group Change - Brenda Kember

Do you like to embroider? If you were at the January General Meeting, Julia Scott announced that the old Intro to Japanese Embroidery Group has changed and now welcomes stitchers that enjoy any type of embroidery. We usually meet on the fourth Tuesday morning of each month from 10:00 until 12:00, The group now meets at a member's home so there are no costs other than a donation for refreshments.

Just bring along any embroidery that you like and enjoy a chat whilst stitching.

A hot drink is provided if desired. Group members are always happy to provide support and assistance if needed.

If you would like to join us, please contact me via my email (bren.kember@virginmedia.com) or Julia Scott via her email which is published in the newsletter.

It will be lovely to see you.



Classic Music Appreciation Group - David Stanley



The Classic Music Appreciation Group is a small friendly group that meets on the third Wednesday afternoon of each month at a member's home for around two hours. Everyone would be welcome, and you don't need to know anything about music. The music, which can be orchestral and/or opera/choral, also chosen by a member, generally ranges from early religious music to the late twentieth century composers

such as Gershwin. The music can be from well-known composers such as Bach, Brahms and Beethoven to lesser-known writers such as Telemann or Bantock.

The music selection can be on a theme such as History of American Music, instrument type such as piano or violin, string quartets, seasonal themes, development of music through the centuries, a specific composer, soloist virtuosity or chosen just because they like it. The choice is endless and varied. The person who chooses gives a little background to the music or a short anecdote as to why they have chosen it.

The choice of playing medium is not restricted to just CDs or vinyl but can include internet-based videos such as You Tube and various library-based sources.

Tea, coffee, biscuits and chat are also involved. Do come along.



Ukulele Sunshine Band news - Irene Kerr

At the beginning of January our leader Tessa Pyke organised a ukulele get together for the band members, their partners and some ex-members. The venue was Burston's Garden Centre. She asked the manageress if we could bring our ukuleles with us. The brave lady said that it would be fine. On the day we sat in the area beyond the main cafe. The Christmas decorations were still there - green foliage, twinkly lights and brightly wrapped presents. It was very festive. We ordered teas, coffees, cakes, biscuits etc. and then got down to the serious business of playing. People walking by stopped to listen,

Brian Baxter and the manageress took photographs and we all really enjoyed the session. The highlight of the performance was when Mike Taylor's grandchildren Max, Chloe and Sophie joined us to sing "The Wheels on the bus." Of course, they brought the house down! Great fun!



- 1: About how many chocolate bunnies are produced each year?
- 2: Where is the most popular Easter parade held each year?
- 3: The first Easter eggs were dyed what colour?
- 4: In the 13th century, the church prohibited eating what during Holy Week?



- 5: The world record largest chocolate Easter egg was made in what city?
- 6: How much did the world's largest chocolate Easter egg weigh?
- 7: What was the circumference of the world's largest chocolate Easter egg?
- 8: What sort of animal delivers the goods in Westphalia, Germany?



- 9: How many marzipan balls are traditionally on a simnel cake?
- 10: Easter Island is part of which country?

Quiz Answers
 1: 90 million; 2: New York; 3: Red; 4: Eggs; 5: 64 feet, 3.65 inches; 6: 15,873 pounds, 4.48 ounces; 7: Tosca, Italy; 8: A fox; 9: 11; 10: Chile

COME CELEBRATE! 15 YEARS OF VCVU3A

Come along and join our Groups Fair,
See what activities we have to share.
From dancing and yoga to reading a
book,
There's something for everyone, come
take a look!
Members are invited to bake a cake for
this occasion, there will be a prize!
(Drawn by raffle ticket given on entry to
the baking competition)

Thursday 20th June at 10.00 am
Greenwood Park Sports Hall

Contact Julia if you wish to join in and bake:
juliadscott@hotmail.co.uk