

WOODSIDE U3A NEWSLETTER FOR MAY 2021
MEETING ONLINE UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

<https://u3asites.org.uk/woodside>

Charity Reg.: 1182140



Hi Everyone

Welcome to our May newsletter.

I hope you are all well and enjoying the longer days and Spring weather. The good news is that we can meet indoors from 17 May with a maximum group of 6 so some interest groups could possibly meet up again (socially distanced of course). If you are meeting, please ensure your group leader writes a risk assessment.

Our April General Meeting via Zoom featured a talk by Paul Robbins on *The Great British Eccentric*. It was really entertaining - he told us about some very strange people through history, including the comedian Spike Milligan and Lord Clancarty, who edited the *Flying Saucer Review* magazine.

Also this month your committee have been logging in to u3a meetings on your behalf. One meeting I logged into, organised by Third Age Trust was on Recruitment and Retention; to give advice on how to increase our membership. We were informed that, because of the pandemic, membership figures in most groups had fallen by an average of 20%. Woodside is no exception and we will need to re-launch the group and expand again once we start face to face meetings (hopefully in September but we are dependent on when the Church of the Nazarene invites us back). We hope to raise our profile at the Open Day on Wednesday 2 June - perhaps you would like to join us - 11am to 12.30pm in Abbots Langley - meeting outside Henderson Hall. Or 2.30pm to 4pm at Garston - outside the Arriva Garston Bus Garage. Please wear the u3a colours - blue and yellow and bring blue and yellow balloons if you wish.

This month, our group project takes us to France. Next month will feature Ireland. Please send your contributions to Val May who is co-ordinating this project.

Take care, stay safe and see you on Zoom.

Barbara Elman
Chair

May General Meeting

The next General meeting of Woodside u3a is on Tuesday May 18th at 10.00am. Our speaker will be Andy Smith with a talk entitled 'Wartime and Romance - From Boaters to Anti-bac!' Andy is a performance poet who shares real-life perspectives of two world wars gleaned from family and friends over several decades; he weaves romance and humour into an entertaining yet poignant presentation. You are all most welcome to join the meeting which can be accessed by Zoom and enter the following Meeting ID 949 9856 3831 - Passcode 463880 or see Lesley's email sent last Saturday morning for a direct link.

Rickmansworth u3a

They have a trip going to Austria on the 25th September until the 1st October 2021 and have a couple of double rooms available. The cost is £959 p.p.

For further details please contact Jean Margaret Paddick <j.paddick@ntlworld.com>

Our trip to France

Once again we find ourselves in our virtual departure lounge, passport and Covid certificate at the ready.

'Þakka þér Ísland fyrir svona sjónræna ferð um heillandi land þitt.'

We are awaiting our flight to France and it's array of wines and foods, architecture and arts. Thank you to all the contributors of this leg of our virtual tour of the world. You have given us some wonderful facts and insights.

Quiz from Sue at the Quiz Group

How much do you know about France? - to tickle those little grey cells

1. What is the first name of President Macron ?
2. Which French newspaper's title translates to "The World" in English ?
3. Which French President formally opened the Channel Tunnel with Queen Elizabeth 2nd ?
4. What do the French call the English Channel ?
5. What was the main airport of Paris prior to the construction of Charles de Gaulle airport ?
6. The Chablis region is the northern most wine district of which French region ?
7. What title was given to the heir apparent to the throne of France from 1350 to 1791
8. Which city on the River Seine in the north of France was the place of Joan of Arc's execution?
9. Name the country's second largest city , after Paris ?
10. On which annual date is the public holiday called Bastille Day ?
11. What is French for snail ?
12. Name the longest river in France ?
13. Which French high fashion luxury goods manufacturer has a logo consisting of a 'Duc carriage with horse'?
14. The University of Paris is better known by what name ?
15. Brigitte Bardot became world famous in 1957 after starring in which controversial film ?

Bonne Chance mes Amis !! Answers at the end

Foodie fun fact about France Barbara E

Turning a baguette upside down is unlucky

There are a number of different origin stories linked to this French superstition, but the most likely dates back to medieval times. When an execution was scheduled in town, legend has it the executioner himself would not have time to pop to the bakery before work. The baker would therefore reserve his loaf by turning the bread upside down. Thus, turning a baguette on its head came to be associated with death and misfortune - and the superstition lives on.

From the Spanish Group 1

A weekend in Paris

So you've arrived in Paris for a sightseeing weekend trip and have taken a taxi to your hotel. Carol, Penny, Robin, Sue and Tom of the Spanish Group 1 thought the following French phrases may help during your stay. See how many you may already know.

Bonjour. J'ai une reservation d'hôtel réservée pour aujourd'hui. Pouvez-vous me dire le numero de la chambre s'il vous plait. Merci . (Good day, I have a hotel reservation booked for today. Can you tell me the room number please. Thank you)

Avez - vous un plan du metro s'il vous plait? Merci.
(Do you have a map of the metro please. Thank you)

Pouvez -vous recommander un bon restaurant pres d'ici, s'il vous plait?
(Can you recommend a good restaurant near here please?)

Une table pour deux s'il vous plait et est-il possible de voir le menu - Merci. (A table for two please and can I see the menu - thank you)

Deux autres verres de vin rouge s'il vous plait, et pouvez-vous apporter l'addition. Merci.
Two more glasses of red wine please, and can you bring the bill. Thank you

Au revoir à Paris et du groupe espagnol.

Garden group

A vineyard in the Rousillen Wine Region. One of the largest regions in terms of Vineyard surfaces and production. Much of France's cheap bulk wines are produced in this region; so called the wine lake.



The Notre-Dame de Sinanque is a 12th Century Abbey near Sault. It is set high in the Mountains. Sault holds the region's most popular Lavender Festival each August. The Lavender is harvested July-August.

Curry group - Anne

French food is known around the world for its finesse and flavour. Their food relies on simple combinations of rich, natural flavours that come together to create unforgettable, internationally renowned dishes. In fact, French cuisine is so highly regarded around the world that in 2010 UNESCO added it to its list of intangible cultural heritage. We all know and love cheese and the selection from France is delicious. Below is a list of best French cheeses, some we will recognise:

Camembert- a soft cheese from Normandy, Roquefort- a Blue yews milk cheese from Aveyron, Comte -a pressed cheese from Franche, Brie - a soft cheese from Ile de France, Bleu d'Auvergne - a blue cheese from Auvergne, and Salers - a pressed cheese from Auvergne Soupe à l'oignon (French Onion Soup) This is a traditional French soup made of onions and beef stock, usually served with croutons and melted cheese on top. Dating back to Roman times, this was traditionally a peasant dish although the current version dates from the 18th century. The soup's unique flavour comes from the caramelisation of the onions, which often have brandy or sherry added during the slow-cooking process. If you're in a soup mood why not try the recipe below, taken from a Nigel Slater classic.

The recipe - Serves 4-6

700g onions

40g butter

2 tbsp flour

1.75 litres beef stock

1 glass of white wine

Baguette to toast

Gruyère or Emmenthal



Peel and thinly slice 700g onions, then leave them to soften in 40g butter and a small glug of olive oil over a low to medium heat. Stir them regularly. They are ready when they are soft, sticky, sweet and deep gold in colour. Some add a pinch of sugar at this point to help the onions caramelize. Stir in a couple of tablespoons of flour, cook for 3 or 4 minutes, then pour in 1.75 litres of boiling beef stock and a glass of white wine. Partially cover with a lid and leave to simmer for a good 45 minutes.

Season, ladle into deep, heatproof bowls, place several thin slices of toasted baguette on to each, then cover with thinly sliced Gruyère or Emmenthal. Bake in a hot oven for 20 minutes or grill until the bread is toasted and the cheese has melted but not browned.

French Group - Heather

FRENCH BABY NAMES

Like many countries, France has rules restricting the names parents can legally give their children. In 1803 Napoleon decreed that French babies must have French names, which at that time meant the names of saints in the Roman Catholic calendar (Pierre, Marie etc) and later included the names of historical and mythological figures, such as Achille and Diane. The list of options expanded until, in 1993, parents received the right to choose any name for their child. French officials, however, retain the power to reject a name if they decide it goes against the best interests of the child, by subjecting them to ridicule, for example.

Here are some of the names that have been rejected by the court -

NUTELLA - this was rejected and, when the parents failed to appear in court, the judge renamed the baby Ella.
PRINCE WILLIAM - this was rejected as it would bring the child 'a lifetime of mockery'.
MINI COOPER - also denied.
FRAISE (strawberry) - the parents wanted an original name, but the judge objected as 'ramene ta fraise' is slang for to 'butt in'.
JOYEUX (happy) - this was rejected, so the parents then tried PATRISTE (a phonetic take on 'pas triste - not sad). This was also not approved, but finally the court decided he could be called SOLEIL (sun).
BABORD (port) and TRIBORD (starboard) - a couple in Brittany wanted these names for their twins - this was also rejected!

Fashion from Tina and the sewing group

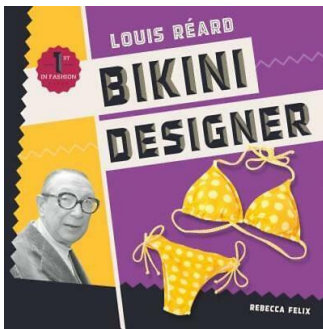


During the French reign of King Louis XIV between the mid-1600s to early 1700s, there was a significant boost in the country's economic power as he ceased the import of goods from other countries. He encouraged French industries to become the largest producers of luxury fabrics such as silk, lace, ribbons and other fine textiles and export them throughout Europe. As the luxury goods industries came increasingly under royal rule, French fashion consequently rose to prominence and recognition on a worldwide scale. The first French fashion press was developed by Jean Donneau de Visé in the mid-1600s to advertise and showcase the clothing styles worn by members of the French royal courts.

In 1945, Helene Lazareff founded the French fashion magazine, Elle, which is one of the leading fashion publications today. In addition, French fashion is featured prominently in designer shows during Paris' fashion weeks, which is held in February and September.

ELLE
MAGAZINE

The main types of clothing in French fashion: haute couture, prêt-à-porter ("ready-to-wear") and lingerie. The fashion term, haute couture, refers to high-end, tailor-made clothing. French haute couture designers include Chanel, Christian Dior and Louis Vuitton. In 1966, French fashion designer Yves Saint Laurent revolutionized the industry by designing ready-to-wear clothes that were manufactured for mass distribution. French lingerie includes designs incorporating various delicate fabrics made of lace, silk and/or other fine materials.



Denim jeans originated in Languedoc-Rousillon, the city of Nîmes, in France. Interestingly, the term denim refers to "de Nîmes," which means "of Nîmes." Denim jeans were then imported to California by Levi Strauss to supply gold miners with hard-wearing pants.

In addition, the two-piece swimsuit, also known as the "bikini," was invented by French designers Jacques Heim and Louis Réard in 1946, and was first sold in a beach shop in Cannes, France.

From the History Group - Jan R

Henry IV of France (1553- 1610)

Henry IV of France was the first of the Bourbon line, and is the most popular of all French Kings. He is also one of the most widely admired of all French monarchs outside of France. He was admired particularly in England, a country he was allied with.

The France he inherited was in the midst of a terrible and long lasting war of religion, between Protestants and Catholics. Henry was a brave king who led from the front, telling his soldiers to follow him and his white plume, which endeared him to his people.

One of Henry's sayings is well remembered, "I want every man to have a chicken in his pot." This illustrates Henry's tolerant mind, so exceptional in an age of violence and bigotry.

He conducted the war with clemency and moderation. Paris was in arms against him, during the siege he provided the city with provisions. Paris eventually yielded.

The King was successful because in political or economic problems he used common sense or persuasion rather than act dogmatically or violently. When Henry was crowned he made public the "Edict of Nantes". This ensured liberty of religion to Protestants in certain parts of France.

The loss of life during the war had been huge. There were thousands of deserted villages, and millions of fields left unploughed. The roads were useless, bridges destroyed and ruins left everywhere.

France recovered with astonishing speed. His minister Sully, a Protestant, laboured to reform the administration and above all to restore the real wealth of France which was its land.

Henry had his marriage to Marguerite de Valois annulled and in 1600 he married Marie de Medici, a fat and not very intelligent Queen who gave him a son. A risk of a Protestant succeeding to the throne was now resolved. His first wife bore him no malice and she herself carried the train of his new wife at her wedding. In 1610 Henry left Louvre palace to transact some business with his Minister Sully. In the narrow Rue de la Ferronnerie, an ardent young Catholic, stabbed Henry twice near the heart as he leant over the side of his carriage reading a letter. It was a senseless murder. Both Catholics and Protestants alike mourned Henry's death.

The Duke of Rohan said "you cannot be a Frenchman without regretting the loss to her wellbeing which France had suffered." Of how many Kings could this have been sincerely said?

An author, M.Jean Duche wrote of Henry IV "After the decadent depravities of the Vallois, do you know what was really the marvel of marvels? It was the fundamental healthiness of the man. In Henry IV every Frenchman recognised all that was best and truest in the essence of his race.

Quiz Answers

1. Emmanuel
2. Le Monde
3. President Mitterand (May 1994)
4. La Manche (translates to "the sleeve")
5. Orly
6. Burgundy
7. Dauphin
8. Rouen
9. Marseille
10. 14th July
11. Escargot
12. Loire
13. Hermes
14. The Sorbonne
15. "And God Created Woman "

Tres Bien

Une fois de plus, nous nous retrouvons à errer à travers les paysages et les odeurs qui nous aiguissent l'appétit - aliments, paysages, plages, et mode.

Thank you to those for your time and energy in providing us with another wonderful trip.

Next month - June - we are visiting Ireland. Again this country has much to offer and I'm hoping that perhaps those that haven't yet contributed to the Woodside journey would consider doing so. It's only a short paragraph taken from the perspective of the Interest group you are in, or a holiday snap or an anecdote. Nothing arduous- just something for us all to enjoy during these surreal times. Woodside had always been good at offering support and joining in - let's continue this wonderful approach. Thank you so much to those who've yet again provided articles of interest for everyone - I've really appreciated your time and effort. Ireland here we come - Barr na maidine duit - bain taitneamh as ár dturas tríd an eispéireas beag ach lán seo - tá na geataí bordála oscailte xx anois
Love to all for now
Val xxx

WANTED: NEWS & PHOTOGRAPHS

suitable for publication please send to
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andrew.cummingsu3a@btinternet.com

AND FOR THE NEWSLETTER

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<https://u3asites.org.uk/woodside>

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