

Issue No. 61

AYLESBURY VALE U 3 A

December 2011

A LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN

You may have read recently that a national think-tank has suggested that older people should stop 'hoarding' property (their definition) and sell their houses and downsize.. It seems to me that they are unable to distinguish between a 'house' and a 'home' For most of us the building we live in is a repository of memories, both sad and happy. Memories of our children's lives; of early married life; of building alterations often saved up for over a long period of time; and of gardens brought to fruition after many years of hard work (and expense).

I am reminded of the story of a little girl whose parents had been in the forces and who had moved about the world many times. When they retired to civilian life a new neighbour sympathised with her, telling her that she must be glad to at last have a home of her own. She replied that they had always had a home, they just hadn't had a house to put it in. Many of us may have a spare bedroom or two, but who does not look forward to visits from children who now have homes of their own, our grandchildren, god children, and many close friends whom we may have known from childhood.

There is also a practical reason for not moving to smaller accommodation. During my work for a voluntary organisation, I often had to visit what local councils call 'old peoples housing'. It was usually one bedroomed with very small rooms. As we get older and less agile we need space to move around and for everyday housework. Most of us also have interests and hobbies developed over a lifetime, and they require space too.

The world population is growing but that is no reason to expect an older generation to give up its sense of identity and abandon all those elements that make up its life history. At Christmastide we are reminded of the story of a family searching for accommodation. I hope that the older generation is never going to be told that there is no room for them. A very happy and peaceful Christmas to you all with room to house all those gifts, both wanted and unwanted, which John Betjeman characterised as 'The sweet and silly Christmas things, Bath salts and inexpensive scent, And hideous tie so kindly meant' and to meet with family and friends to celebrate and remember times past and present.

Shirley Stokes

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

CURRENT AFFAIRS GROUP 2:

We meet on alternate Tuesday afternoons from 2.30 to 4 pm at Aylesbury Grammar School during term time. We enjoy lively topical discussions on varied issues including items which arise in the news & ethical, moral & other issues. Our members bring along written or word processed topics which they wish to raise at each meeting & hand them to the Chairperson of the day. We each take it in turns to be Chairperson. Whatever the topics, by the end of each meeting, we usually all end up smiling & looking forward to the next get together. Topics raised this term include the following:

‘Proposed 80mph Speed Limit on motorways; Replacement of BC & AD with religiously neutral terms BCE (Before Common Era) & CE (Common Era); Are the French going in the right direction regarding their revised policy on School Meals?; New Marriage Contracts in Mexico City, in response to the high divorce rate there; Will the installation of Smart Meters in every home reduce energy consumption? Organs for transplantation - proposed measures to increase the number of Organ Donors.’

In January 2012, we will resume our fortnightly meetings on Tuesday 10th January 2012 at 2.30pm at Aylesbury Grammar School. Please meet in Reception & we will all progress to our allocated room together. We always welcome new members or visitors, so if you're interested in joining us or in just coming along to see what a meeting is like, please contact me on 01296 484709.

Betty Sharp - Group Leader. email: Betty.sharp181@ntlworld.com

WINE APPRECIATION GROUP 2: HAS VACANCIES !

Wine Group 2 meets on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 2.30 pm in members’

homes. This is so that we can keep a pleasant friendly atmosphere for the tasting. But there is no pressure on members to host a meeting or to select the wines. At the end of each meeting we select the Country or grape and venue for the next tasting. Our next meeting is on January 18th, so if anyone is interested or would like more information please give me a call ;

Meryll Coe

The issue of burgeoning atheism in the USA was the subject of a recent discussion at Current Affairs 2. The friendly arguments moved Cyril Reed to compose a long poem with his thoughts on the issue. We only have room for an extract here, but interested readers can get a copy of the full poem from Cyril .

Second thoughts by Cyril Reed

What death is this? No time or space
No active part of human race;
No hurt, no shame. No-one to blame
No thirst, no hunger, touch or taste.
Flesh decomposed or vapourised
Bones ground or left to fossilise.
What happened to that promised place.
I had no faith; I said no Grace.

What other options might there be?
I wonder — now let me see!
In quest to clean the planet maybe
Fired up as trash in orbit mode
To join debris around the globe
The choice is limited I fear.
Too late now to shed a tear.
It's up to chance if I'm discovered
For my remains to be recovered.
Spoil or curiosity; dank place or repository.
I lived my life just as I pleased
Instead of praying on my knees.

QUESTIONS FROM OUR 2011 QUIZ

Which religious leader visited the U.K. for the first time on 20th October 1973?

Which Essex town took its name from a spice which was grown there in the 16th and 17th Centuries

What is the lowest score not possible with one dart?

Identify this book and author from its initials: TKAM by HL

Who wrote the 'Concierto de Aranjuez'?

The chemical ethylene glycol is most commonly used as what ? Bleach, Antifreeze or Nail Varnish Remover?

According to the song, which animal was standing 'on the banks of the cool Shalimar'?

In which city would you find the Astronomical Clock and the Franz Kafka Museum?

1) The Dalai Lama; 2) Saffron Walden 3) 23. 4) To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee
5) Joaquin Rodrigo 6) Antifreeze 7) The Hippopotamus 8). Prague

ANSWERS TO THE QUIZ QUESTIONS

THE BOWLS CLUB REPORTS ON ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL YEAR:

Our Group continues to grow and once again we have had a very successful season due in no small part to my deputy Ron Lloyd. It emphasises again just how important it is for each group to have a deputy. Following my accident in early July which left me virtually house-bound, Ron stepped up and has run the weekly roll ups and then organised the Eric Dorrance Pairs competition in a far more efficient way than I ever did – thank you Ron for all the hard work you have done.

This year the Dorrance trophy was won by Elinor Paterson and Tony Simmons who staged a magnificent comeback after lunch overtaking the considerable lead held by Marg Southam and Eddie Clifford. We ended all too soon, as the heat wave, which now seems a distant memory, struck after the Green was closed ready to be put to bed for the winter. Tony Simmons is running carpet bowls in the club every Thursday during the winter and all those who are social members as well as full members of the club are very welcome at these. At the moment he is having afternoon and evening sessions but please see him for times if you would like to join in. Our Presentation Lunch will be held at Foxhills Indoor Bowls club on 19th January.

We welcome new members, beginners and all abilities; if you fancy trying the game before committing you can have a couple of goes before we take your money; see me next April and I can give you more details including next years fees. It's a great game with lots of fun and laughter.

Mary Rogers

AYLESBURY GRAMMAR SCHOOL SENIOR PRIZE GIVING:

Once again your representatives were privileged to be invited to attend the A.G.S. Speech Day to witness the award of the Aylesbury Vale U3A Prize for Community Involvement. It was fascinating to see the wide variety of subjects for which awards were made. Subject Prizes ranged through Computing, Italian, Politics, Japanese, Philosophy and Ethics, Mathematical Physics as well as all the subjects with which we would be familiar from our own long past school days. The curriculum is obviously much more wide ranging than the dozen or so available at my Grammar School.



The Headmaster talked of a watershed year, with the school taking on Academy Status—retaining the same name, same uniform but having control of its own destiny. Students entertained with musical interludes expertly played and the Deputy Head Boy gave ‘A Student’s Review of the Year’ with great aplomb.

There were a great many special Prizes, and the Master introducing them mentioned “the generous award from the Aylesbury Vale U3A”. Our Prize was awarded this year to Matthew Ricketts for outstanding work as a prefect, and as a sports leader, both within the school and at Stocklake Park. The Guest Speaker was Christian Purslow an Old Aylesburian, co-founder of private equity firm MidOcean Partners and former Managing Director of Liverpool F.C. He looked back at his own days at AGS when, he freely acknowledged, he didn’t initially study hard enough. But he must have caught up, as he went on to graduate in Modern and Medieval Languages at Fitzwilliam College Cambridge and to earn an MBA at Harvard Business School.

OUR ANNUAL QUIZ:

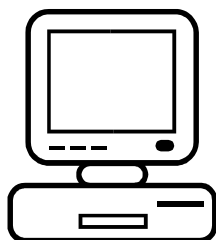


Our quiz took place at the Aylesbury Town Bowls Club H.Q. at the end of October. Once again our U3A brains were emitting steam as we struggled with questions on everything from ‘This Day in History’ to ‘Sport and Leisure’ or ‘Pots and Pans’. It is always an enjoyable afternoon finishing with the fish and chip supper at 6 p.m. There was a Marathon photo quiz on each table for members to work on between times, and the initials of the photographic subjects very cleverly spelt out ‘The Aylesbury Vale University of the Third Age’. The brilliant winners scored an amazing 72 points ahead of the winners of the wooden spoon (and no, we are not going to name them).

The members of the winning team were Libby and Eric Rose; Gay and Ian Hancock, Jill and Tony Davis, and Jean and Peter Ashton. There must be something about married life! We have given you a taste of the questions on page 3 with one question from each of the rounds. Our grateful thanks to our Social Secretary, Jill Bartlett for her overall organisation; to Tony Simmons our ever cheerful man behind the bar, and to all the ladies who lived in the kitchen, making tea before the afternoon started, serving the supper and washing up after, all with great good humour. Particular thanks to Jane Hobson and Paul Fincken who compiled the questions and talked us through the rounds. They have even volunteered to do it all again next year!

DON'T FORGET THE CARD LADY!

Val Young kindly takes on the task of writing on our behalf to any member who may be ill, or otherwise in need of a kindly word. Don't forget to let her have details of any of our members who might welcome our good wishes.



DON'T FORGET AVU3A.ORG.UK

As we only publish our newsletter quarterly ("Quite often enough" says the editor) we urge you to send urgent news which cannot wait until the next edition (December, March, June or September!) straight to the website. It is a wonderful vehicle for getting out news quickly and we know that some things can't wait. Last year there were 14,000 'hits' on the page from all parts of the world—so we are quite popular. We do realise that not all our members have access to a computer, but quite a large number do, so if the matter is urgent.....www.avu3a.org.uk.

DON'T FORGET—U3A ADVICE SHEETS

Our membership of the Third Age Trust entitles us to use the many services it offers—including valuable advice sheets: Help for the committee includes:- Accessibility for Disabled Members; First Aid; Applying for Gift Aid on subscriptions, Organising your AGM; Data Protection: Sorting out problems/grievances; Organising Residential School; Social Events and Travel; Keeping your U3A vibrant and The Challenge of Finding Group Leaders.

Of more general interest to our group leaders and members are the many hundreds of booklets, pamphlets, films and DVD's available from the Resource Centre. They hold helpful advice about all subjects from gardening, to the lives of great explorers, and are a wonderful source of help to individual groups.

(resource.centre@u3a.org.uk).



A VERY WARM WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Peter Harding, Margaret Harding, Peter Karmali, Jane Lawrence,
and Vivienne Makin

A WINE APPRECIATION GROUP CO-ORDINATOR'S SACRIFICE !

A Very Serious Business:

Wine Group 2 were on our second tour around the world of wine, but so far had not tried any German wine. Sacrifices were needed so I volunteered to go with some very knowledgeable friends to a Wein Fest in Saarbürg. I knew this would be a big learning curve as like a lot of Brits I remember Liebfraumilch and Blue Nun from the days when a party was not a party without a bottle of each and some Spanish plonk. So loins were girded and I prepared for the very serious business of being educated about German Wine.



Lesson one began in the Hotel garden with a bottle of wine. German wine is to be drunk any time of the day, or night, with friends. It is not to be drunk with food. So the sweet, fruity wines from the Riesling grape with low alcohol are ideal leaving you with the feeling that another bottle would be a very good idea. If you're eating you drink BEER, or in my case a halb trochen (half dry) wine.

Pouring Meryll a drink
at the Wein Fest.
Photo by Angus Coe

Lesson two started early next day on our trip to Klüsserath, Piesport and Bernkastel. Every single inch of the south facing hills is covered with vines, each vineyard proudly proclaiming its name. The villages are scattered with houses proclaiming Weinhaus or Weingut – probe & verkauf (Wine – to try and to sell). The owner will have grown the grapes and made the wine himself in the vats in his cellar under the house and all you do to try it is knock on the door. What you're looking for is that ideal balance of sugar and acidity giving you that taste of the grape without the sickly sweetness of too much sugar. After much tasting of Kabinett, Spätlese and Auslese understanding gradually dawned.

Lesson three was the Wein Fest itself, when the banks of the Saar are transformed with lights, stalls, food, people and wine. Here we could try lots of different wines whilst listening to the local bands vying for the biggest audience and ooh and aah at the firework display. Obviously the occasion is very jolly, the amount of wine consumed great, the good humour amazing and bratwürst mit frites just the job after learning lesson four – how to turn a very serious business into fun. Yes I did come back with some suitable wine, enough for two tastings.

Meryll Coe

NEW TECHNOLOGY FOR 'OLDER AND WISER' USERS

Just a reminder that the Third Age Trust are joint publishers of the Older and Wiser book series, which consists of guides to various aspects of new technology, from digital photography to social networking. The latest in the series is '*iPad for the Older and Wiser*' and details of the whole series can be found at www.pcwisdom.co.uk.

DATES TO REMEMBER FOR 2012



Wednesday 22nd February – The Olympic London Explorer

Meet our expert Guide in Stratford for included morning refreshments. Then drive over to the Lower Lee Valley to the delightfully named Pudding Mill & Fish Island for a short walk up to the viewing point for the Olympic Park. The scale of this project is truly breathtaking. The vast Olympic Stadium is complete, floating in a cradle of steel. Nearby is the Basketball Arena and the Aquatic Centre with its butterfly fairy cake roof. See the quite extraordinary Orbit, a helter skelter of red steel, Britain's largest piece of public art designed by Anish Kapoor. Then it's back to Stratford for an included roast beef carvery or vegetarian lunch. In the afternoon we drive to visit other venues before our final stop at Woolwich Arsenal where you can purchase afternoon tea.

Wednesday 21st March – The Historic City of St Albans



Take a fresh look at one of our closest neighbours. After a short refreshment stop we meet our City Guide for a combined 90 minute historical tour of the city and a private tour of the Abbey. The City has a long history starting as a settlement of the Catuvellauni tribe before becoming the Roman City of Verulamium. St Alban was the first British Christian Martyr, beheaded on the orders of Emperor Diocletian in

AD308. During The Wars of the Roses two battles were fought in St Albans all adding to a very chequered history. After our conducted walk we will be free to find our own lunch and explore the city.

Friday 18th May – Group Walking Trip to Bourton-on-the-Water

Bourton-on-the-Water is a fascinating Cotswold village, a favourite with visitors from all parts of the world. The Gentle Walking Group will be able to follow the many footpaths and back streets along the river Windrush while the Local Walks Group will be able to take a more energetic walk through the local fields and woodland. If you do not feel like joining an organised walk there are plenty of places to explore on your own including Birdland which has a large breeding colony of Humboldt and Emperor Penguins.



Tuesday 10th July – The National Memorial Arboretum and Lichfield Cathedral.

Set in 150 acres of grounds, the Arboretum was conceived as a living tribute to the wartime generations of the twentieth century as a gift to their memory for future generation to reflect upon and enjoy. The Millennium Chapel of Peace and Forgiveness is a central part of the site and was created in such a way as to offer a place of tranquillity and reflection to people of every faith or none. After a two course included lunch we will drive to Lichfield for a guided tour of the Cathedral ending with afternoon tea.



See Diary Dates on page 11 for details of the September Study Visit to Kent

PHOTOS FROM THE GROUPS:

This happy group are the members of our Bowls Club (plus one or two friends) taken before their last match of the season.

Photo by Dot Simmons



Who was drunk –the telephone boxes or our London walkers?
This photo was taken at Kingston upon Thames by Tony Poth (who also took the following photos for us)

This river boat arrives at Hampton Court to carry the London Walkers to Kingston upon Thames. We always knew that they didn't walk everywhere!



A breezy day on Coombe Hill for our 'Gentle' walkers.

The Gentle Walkers see if their guide can conjure up the devil at the John Schorne Pilgrim's Well in North Marston



SPEAKERS CORNER

11th January - "Designing a Comfortable Seat" –

Alex Paterson

Alex is a well known member of Aylesbury Vale U3A, having worked on the committee in various positions, including that of Chairman. During his career he worked on many scientific and engineering projects, both at home and abroad. He has already given several thought provoking talks including "Energy for Life" and "Our Species". He returns with another fascinating subject "Designing a Comfortable Seat".



8th February – "Pain" – Dr. Tony Maisey

Tony is another well known speaker to the Aylesbury Vale U3A. He is a retired GP from Princes Risborough who has had a life long interest in health education. Those of you who were here last January will remember his talk on "Spare Part Surgery" which was both informative and amusing. I am sure he will present "Pain" without the need for an aspirin!

14th March – "The Titanic – A Survivor's Story" - Philip Littlejohn

We could not allow the 15th April 1912 to be forgotten and who better to tell the tale than Philip Littlejohn, whose grandfather survived after being ordered to row Lifeboat 13 to safety. Philip lectures widely in England and overseas for cruise liners, professional groups, schools and universities. He is the author of "Titanic – Waiting for Orders" which describes the sinking of the Titanic based on his grandfather's eyewitness account. Whether you have seen the film or not, this will be a most interesting presentation.

HOUSEKEEPING NOTICES:

Your newly elected committee:

Chairman: Shirley Stokes; Vice-Chairman: Geoff Young; Secretary: Peter Gasson; Treasurer: Bob Colliver; Groups Coordinator: Anne Wales; Speakers: Jeni Davies; Membership: Diane Richardson; Outings: Ron Meadowcroft; Social Activities: Jill Bartlett.

Hall Manager– vacancy needs to be filled urgently.



CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY RESEARCH:

We have received the following request from Victoria Page, a Trainee Clinical Psychologist at UCL currently conducting a piece of research as part of her doctoral thesis. 'My work is supervised by Dr John King and Dr Joshua Stott at the Research Department of Clinical, Educational and Health Psychology. I am looking to recruit a number of adults between the ages of 65 and 70 to take part in this research and am currently in the process of contacting organisations which may serve this age group. I have received a very positive response from some of the central London U3A's and am now looking to extend my request further' The Secretary has copies of the relevant details for anybody interested. Participation involves going along to University College London for 1 hour and completing 2 tests of memory, visuospatial & language ability and 2 self-report measures of mood.

HAVE YOU THOUGHT OF HOSTING?

HOST is a voluntary network of people—including a good number of U3A members across the U.K.—who enjoy occasionally welcoming international students to their homes. Margaret Stevens their Publicity Officer says “U3A members are just the kind of interesting and interested people students love to meet. People come from all over the world to study at Universities in the U.K. Apart from gaining academic qualifications, they hope to immerse themselves in the life, language and culture of this country; only to find that the university is not the best place to achieve this. The ‘real’ Britain is found outside the campus, in towns and villages and above all, in people’s homes.



You can get to know what makes a country tick by chatting to the locals, cooking and eating with them, asking their views and visiting their favourite local places with them. And in sharing their own culture with the hosts, students can make their countries come alive too. Hosting a student for one week-end, or at Christmas, or just for a day, makes a personal and meaningful contribution to international understanding and good will. U3A members make ideal hosts!

If you would like to know more, please visit www.hostuk.org or call HOSTS local organiser Paul Ryall on 01692 630710. HOST is a national charity founded in 1987 by The British Council, the Victoria League and the Foreign Office. Hosting students is a voluntary activity.

NORTH MARSTON VILLAGE GUIDED WALK AND TALK

In early October, a record number of twenty-six members of the Gentle Walks Group gathered at North Marston village. Over coffee at ‘The Pilgrim’ pub, our guide for the day, local historian John Spargo, gave an introductory talk, outlining the history of the village, from the thirteenth century to more modern times. John Schorne was Rector of the church from 1290 to 1314. He was a saintly man credited with creating a spring, which became the source of a holy well, with curative powers, in particular for gout! This phenomenon was considered miraculous and, after John Schorne’s death, North Marston became the third most visited pilgrimage site in the country (after Canterbury and Walsingham). As a result, the village attained great fame and prosperity during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. With the Pope’s permission, the relics of John Schorne were removed from this church, in the late fifteenth century, to a shrine at St. George’s Chapel, Windsor. In compensation, the Dean of Windsor financed large-scale improvements in 1480 to North Marston Church.

We visited both the well and the large church, The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, which also has a most fascinating history. There is an interesting connection to Queen Victoria! A very wealthy local landowner and miser, John Camden Nield, left his entire fortune of £250,000 to her. and of this vast sum, in 1854, the Queen spent £5,000 restoring the chancel of the village church and installing the large stained glass east window. . Nield is buried under the chancel floor and commemorated behind the altar and in the window. Queen Victoria spent the major portion of her legacy in building her beloved Balmoral Castle.

continued on the next page....

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY



TUESDAY 3rd JANUARY: Join the Gentle Walks Group—for those who don't want to walk too quickly or too far. Eythrope Road Stone, for the Waddesdon Estate. (Limited parking so share cars please.

TUESDAY 7th FEBRUARY: Another Gentle Walk around Bedgrove Park. Use the rear car park at Jansel Square and meet by the coach lay by.

TUESDAY 14th FEBRUARY: Garden Group meeting at Meadowcroft Community Centre at 3.15. Chris Day to give talk on 'A-Z of Foolproof Gardening'

TUESDAY 6th MARCH: Gentle Walk around Wendover Heron Path and Fishing Lake. Parking free for 1 hour at the Public Library car park.

THURSDAY 12th – MONDAY 15th APRIL: – Study Tour to Floriade (fully booked) Based in the medieval city of Mechlen in Belgium we will be visiting this World Horticultural Event, Floriade 2012 held near Venlo in Holland. We will also visit the Chateau de Grand-Bigard for a wonderful bulb display and take a river trip in Ghent.

TUESDAY 13th MARCH: Garden Group meeting at Meadowcroft Community Centre At 3.15. Edwin Rye to give talk on 'The day Alan Titchmarsh spent in my garden'.

FRIDAY 21st – WEDNESDAY 26th SEPTEMBER: – Study Tour of Kent Half board for 5 nights will enable us to explore Kent, possibly visiting Rochester associated with Charles Dickens to see the Cathedral and Castle; Whitstable for oysters and Margate for the new Turner Gallery; the historic Dover Castle and the WWII Tunnels; Canterbury and its magnificent Cathedral; The Romney, Hythe and Dymchurch Railway for a remarkable ride through Romney Marsh to Dungeness; then maybe on by coach to Rye and possibly Sissinghurst Castle originally the home of Vita Sackville-West, with a garden in the ruins of an Elizabethan house set in the Kentish landscape .

Continued from previous page:

We made our way back to 'The Pilgrim' for lunch, stopping on the way at buildings of interest, as our guide described the village's more prosperous times. There was H.J. Holden's thriving tailoring business, which specialised in hunting silks, located in the imposing Shakespeare House. A very successful private school, Schorne College, was opened in 1876 adjacent to the church. The vicar, Samuel James was its Head Master. The village boasted three carriers which were kept busy transporting goods, as well as parents and boys to and from the school to Winslow railway station. Lace making was a popular cottage industry from the late eighteenth century. Fashionable black lace as well as white was produced in the Victorian period until mechanisation took over in the twentieth century. The Gentle Walks Group had enjoyed an unusual but most interesting morning, in glorious sunshine.

Veronica Stagnell

AYLESBURY VALE AND THE EUROSTAR - *The Editor-*



We must send a post card home!

the tram system which took us from a stop just outside the hotel to the centre. Participants followed their own itineraries but most rode on one of the city bus tours which took in all of the main buildings, parks and, of course, the famous Atomium. There was an excellent presentation in the new European Parliament Visitors Centre, and on another day we hived off in all directions, between us taking in Bruges, Antwerp and Namur.

The skies were a bright blue for the whole of our stay; we ate out each evening and finished our last morning with an exploration



of some of the city's flea markets. We all realise how much hard work goes into the organisation of these visits on our behalf, and we are grateful to the Meadowcrofts not only for their commitment but also for the flawless arrangements.

Admiring the view over Brussels from the Palais de Justice.

21 members took advantage of Ron and Rosemary's excellent planning to make a 4 day visit to Brussels in October. For many of us it was our first journey on this now well established fast train route (4 hours from Brussels Central Station to my doorstep!) While the train ride is like almost every other train journey (although considerably smoother) we were impressed by the facilities at St. Pancras Station and our speedy transit through customs and passport control. We stayed at an excellent hotel and soon learned our way around



Outside the European Parliament Building

All photos taken by one of the Meadowcrofts

Last date for copy for the Spring Newsletter will be February 8th (the date of the February Monthly Meeting) so please don't forget to contact Shirley Stokes on treveris9@btinternet.com or by post to 9 Windsor Road, Aylesbury HP21 7JG. Telephone 01296 392726.

It always helps the editor if she can have material before that date—so don't delay but send her your news and photos as soon as they become available. That way she knows how much she has to invent to fill the gaps!