



Issue No. 105

AUTUMN 2022

Our first monthly meeting at Roman Park, Berryfields in June. As you will see, it was very well attended and the queues for coffee were rather long! The reward was a delicious, home-made chocolate chip cookie.

CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

Dear All

I hope that you have survived the very hot weather we have been experiencing this summer., as I write it has cooled down.

This year we have finally found a suitable venue for our monthly meetings in which we can grow and whose management are friendly and helpful. There are smaller rooms available for meetings and outside space for events. They are in the process of installing tennis courts so how about a tennis group? It is a shame that both our Gentle Walks and Scottish Dancing Groups have been unable to maintain viable membership after some members have moved away from Aylesbury and the impact of Covid.

I hope that your groups are flourishing with items that interest you. Don't forget that anyone can start a group. If you have an interest that you think others may like to share, help will be given to set up a group. One of the groups I attend is Military History and our members give interesting talks on relevant subjects. Our outing this year is to the helicopter museum and associated activities in Hampshire. Maybe we could find a chopper they don't want and bring it home to have fun in it!

By the time you read this we will be looking forward to our Tea Party on 14 September. I would like to thank Ken Satterthwaite for organising it and to Dot, John, Bobby, Sheila and others for their hard work in setting everything up for a special day.

Our Annual General Meeting is in October and we have three vacancies on our Committee. I have organised a good programme of speakers for the rest of this year but we do need someone to come forward to take on the role of Speakers Secretary. With the sad passing of Jackie Rickard, we now need a Groups Co-ordinator. And our Social Activities Co-ordinator role also needs to be filled. You will find details of these roles on page 2. New members especially are encouraged to become involved. It's a great way of getting to know people and our committee members are very friendly and welcoming.

Now, Christmas. Andy Carter is organising entertainment for you to enjoy at our December monthly meeting. At our July meeting he asked for volunteers to come forward to join him on the stage. So, anyone who can read a poem, sing, tell a story or put on a short play please contact him at ukelele@avu3a.org.uk Your U3A is looking forward to being entertained!

I look forward to seeing you at the tea party and at the AGM.

Chris Lowe

As parking at our new monthly meeting venue at Roman Park Hall, Berryfields is limited we suggest that, if possible, you car share, use public transport, cycle or, if near enough, walk.

The parking in front of the hall is reserved for those who are either disabled or have ambulatory difficulties, our speaker, or any member who must bring equipment to the meeting, for instance. All other members must use the spaces reserved for Berryfields Parish Council (BPC) at the top end of the Chiltern Railway car park. On arrival at reception make sure you add your car registration to the list held by BPC and ensure your entry is clear and legible. Once in the system you do not need to register your reg number again.

If there are none of these spaces available you should park in a normal space and pay the parking charge. You will be responsible for paying your own car parking fines.

Chris Lowe, Chairman AVu3a

GROUPS CO-ORDINATOR

Groups Co-ordinator is a very rewarding role. Yes, there are some challenges but finding solutions have been so worthwhile. After all, the groups are the heart and soul of our U3A.

Most of the time our Group Leaders are very efficient and need little support. Helping to set up a new group is very satisfying, and you also get to know so many more members.

As a Committee member you are never on your own; you will always have their support. The monthly committee meetings are also very enjoyable.

If you are interested in knowing more, please do not hesitate to contact Chris Lowe by email at: chrislowe614@btinternet.com

SPEAKERS' SECRETARY

Apart from attending the monthly (except August) AVu3a committee meeting, this role involves sourcing suitable speakers for our monthly meetings, making arrangements for them to present to our members, and assist with setting up any equipment in the hall if required. You will also introduce the speaker and at the end of the presentation, invite questions from the audience. The current incumbent will ensure a complete handover is carried out. If you are interested in knowing more, please contact Chris Lowe by email at: chrislowe614@btinternet.com

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES CO-ORDINATOR

The main roles are to organise a bi-monthly coffee morning at a suitable venue and attend the monthly Committee meeting. Other social events can be organised as decided throughout the year. The current incumbent is happy to assist. This post is ideal for anyone who is new to our u3a as you will soon get to know lots of people. For more information contact Mary Singleton at social@avu3a.org.uk or call on 07986 582903.

MEMBERSHIP

At the time of submission, we have 416 members of which 94% are on email.

Since the Summer Newsletter we have welcomed 22 new members:

Lesley Read, Susan Spencer, Lawrence Fenty, Chris Styles, Moyra Ansell, Lynda Duce, Mark Jordan, Geraldine O'Leary, Linda Heggie, Kathleen Spiers, Sandra Chadwick, Anna and Roy Balmer, Lesley Skinner, John Fuller, June Watson, Janet Davis, John Tovell, Hilary Craig, Sheila Acharya, Jenny Mackay and Nigel Pike.

Dot Toler
Membership Secretary

Welcome

The next **Coffee mornings** will be on Tuesday 6th September and 8th November at 11.00 am at the Watermead Inn in the Piazza, Watermead, Aylesbury HP19 0FX. There is plenty of free parking available. The cost will be £3 per person for as many cups of coffee or tea as you wish and biscuits.



NOTICE BOARD AT MONTHLY MEETINGS

There is no dedicated u3a notice board in our new monthly meeting venue at Roman Park, Berryfields. However, there will be a portable notice board available for us to use.

Any notices for groups, outings, or other events can be fixed to this board on a temporary basis. But must be removed after each meeting. The notices can only be fixed using Velcro sticky pads. NO DRAWING PINS will be allowed as they will damage the board. These are the house rules.

Velcro sticky pads are easily purchased in any DIY store at a reasonable price. If there are lists to sign or fill in, you can do that on a nearby table.

Many thanks for your co-operation.

John Wilford, Hall Manager—sound@avu3a.org.uk

U3A's Legendary Rock'n'Roll Christmas Party

Featuring Music from the 50s, 60s, 70s

ROCK'N'ROLL DISCO

Licensed Bar, Raffle, Christmas Lights & Mince Pies

Thursday 15th December 2022 7.00 - 10.00 pm

Aylesbury Tennis Club, Wendover Road HP21 9NJ

Tickets. £5.00

All proceeds go to **'alec's angels'**
For tickets and information please contact
John Wilford - email: sound@avu3a.org.uk

SEARCH 400,000 aerial pics in historic England archive

You can now search over 400,000 aerial photos using the Historic England's free Aerial Photograph Explorer which contains images going back to 1919.

To search these visit www.snipca.com/41382 then type a location in the top bar and click the magnifying icon. You can zoom into the map using your mouse wheel then click a hexagon to see how many photos an area has. The darker a hexagon the more photos there are. If a hexagon is missing then there are no images of that area.

Among the images are remains of Iron Age forts in Dorset and abandoned medieval villages such as Old Sulby in Northamptonshire. Interesting photos include a shot of dummy aircraft at airfields in North Yorkshire created to fool German pilots.

This collection will let "historic photography be able to unlock England's past".

Richard Clark

Letter from Ed Schoon

I had an appointment at the Memory Clinic on 12th July 2022 and was diagnosed with MCI, Mild Cognitive Impairment. I was glad about this until I read the leaflet they gave me. I quote from that leaflet:

"It is not a type of dementia, but a person with MCI is more likely to go on to develop dementia." It goes on to give tips to reduce the chances of this happening:

- 1 Take medicines prescribed by a Doctor.
- 2 Stop smoking, and if you drink alcohol, stay within limits.
- 3 Avoid stress.
- 4 Have a regular routine but avoid boredom, and keep things in the same place.
- 5 Use calendars and diaries.
- 6 Get regular physical exercise.
- 7 Break down tasks into small steps.
- 8 Balanced diet with plenty of fruit, vegetables, starchy foods, and fish. Go easy on dairy products.
- 9 Keep brain active.
- 10 Relax.
- 11 Sleep well.
- 12 Stay socially active.
- 13 Use MCI support groups.

My Chief Carer says that my falls may be responsible. I recall two falls which may have damaged my head, one in 2020 and one in 2021. The lesson for elderly u3a members is DO NOT FALL!

Hallow's Eve – Not Halloween

No witches on broomsticks flying around,
Or ghosts and goblins floating off the ground,
No trick or treat to play and run,
Satan makes you think that is fun.
That's how he works in your mind.
Prowling round, the innocent to find.

The truth is far from this you see,
It's a night of prayer for you and me,
The eve before All Saints Day
Is a time for worship and to pray
To rid the evil from our shore
It is what's needed more and more.

So don't be deceived or misled
Turn to the earth's creator instead.
As followers of Christ we must stand fast
And Halloween's darkness out it is cast.
Dedicating the time to love and light
And not to the horrors of a spooky night.

Beverley Harris— July 2022

U3A STUDY TOUR TO NORTH WALES

Under the excellent guidance and direction of Jill Davis and Roger Fox a total of 51 u3a members travelled to North Wales for a 4 night stay at LLANDUDNO MARINE HOTEL.

On the way we stopped at RAF Cosford museum. **The first account is by Billy McCunn:**

It was a great journey back in time for me as I had spent about 9 years in the area during various postings to Cosford during my time in the Air Force. The Museum was in its very early stages when we left there in 1982. I remember the excitement, and the many crossed fingers, when the Vulcan flew in with an almost empty tank of fuel – a very tricky operation as it had only that one chance to land safely. Now, of course, it's there, on display, in the Museum, along with the 2 other V-bombers and many more aircraft. The whole set-up is excellent and was well worth the visit.

Another aircraft which generated a lot of controversy in its day was the TSR2. The government at that time cancelled it so the prototype is the only one ever made and is on display at Cosford. Another incomplete prototype can be found at RAF Duxford.



This second account is by Judith and Robin Hamilton

R.A.F. Cosford in Shropshire was the ideal place to break our journey from Aylesbury to Llandudno. There we found a large family-friendly Aerospace Museum dedicated to the history of aviation in general and the R.A.F. in particular. The facilities were good – modern and clean – with an outside picnic area, café and knowledgeable staff and volunteers.

Amongst the large displays of military 'planes housed in huge purpose-built hangars, we found a unique collection of Research and Development aircraft including one of only two existing examples of the prototype British TSR2– a multi-combat aircraft which led the World in its innovation and technical advance.

The first Spitfire was there, along with the Messerschmitt and the Japanese Mitsubishi fighters. We saw the Cold War nuclear V bombers, the Victor, the Valiant and the Vulcan – the latter a British deterrent which saw active service in the Falklands.

There were scale models of the Airfix Spitfires featured in the Toy Story series and a flight simulator – in fact – there was something to interest everyone. The captions were clear and informative and, best of all, entry was free although a donation was encouraged.

A very enjoyable start to our trip.

Llandudno overview–Jill Davis and Roger Fox

The hotel is situated on the promenade with stunning views across the Irish Sea with a pool and a bar. LLANDUDNO is the largest seaside resort in Wales which straddles a flat peninsula with long sandy beaches on either side. The twin mounds of ancient mountains, the Great Orme and the Little Orme, loom over the Victorian town. The promenade is approximately 2 miles long. There is an old school tram and cable car to the Great Orme for breathtaking views of the Snowdonia range. There is a tenuous link with Alice in Wonderland – Alice Liddell used to holiday there so there is an 'Alice Trail' with statues of characters from the book around the town. Llandudno Pier, Victorian, 670m, the longest in Wales, was opened in 1878. Originally its main purpose was as a disembarkation point for passengers from the Isle of Man steamers. Llandudno Museum has displays of paintings, porcelain, sculpture and Roman artifacts, also a reconstructed rural Welsh kitchen. Happy Valley Gardens are near the pier.



Bodnant Gardens – Helen Amato

Stunning doesn't describe the beautiful gardens we saw on the second day of our North Wales trip. The weather was kind to us when we took the short ride from our hotel in Llandudno to Bodnant Gardens. What a beautiful surprise awaited us around every corner—stunning flowers, plants and trees with an abundance of colours everywhere. The famous laburnum arch over 80 years old was magnificent. The terraced gardens sensational and wonderful views everywhere. On return to the coach, it was fun to watch everyone trying to get to their seats as it looked like they were climbing Snowdon because the coach was parked on a steep incline.



Conwy Castle and Town – Joe Southall

After a lovely morning at Bodnant Gardens we boarded the coach for a short trip to Conwy. After a very nice light lunch with a glass of wine in one of the many cafes around we walked along the estuary front and spotted 3 bridges next to each other, the first was a road bridge built in 1958. We walked across then came back over the Telford suspension foot bridge. This was completed in 1826 and was one of the first suspension bridges built. Running alongside was the enclosed railway bridge, built by Robert Stephenson in 1849. We then walked round the castle. Some walked along the ramparts which have lovely views over the town and waterfront. It was then time to head back to Llandudno for dinner.



Puffin Island –Elinor Patterson

Puffin island is designated a place of special interest and as such, no visitors are allowed to land there as it is a bird sanctuary. Thirty-eight of our party were keen to see not only puffins, but as much sea life as we could including the resident seal colony. Our visit was timely as puffins can only be seen there between April and July.

When we went to the pickup point a small boat awaited us. It seemed scarcely big enough for our party but in fact it was licensed for more than 50. Our journey took us out to the island and around it. As we rounded the island more and more birds appeared, seemingly undisturbed by our presence. Puffins were standing very upright with others flying very close to the water.

As well as the puffins, there were many cormorants, guillemots and razorbills returning from fishing trips to nest or rest on the island. To add to our visit, several seals popped their heads up as if to keep an eye on us.

This was a most enjoyable part of our tour to Llandudno.



For those 13 who chose not to be sea bound various options in Beaumaris were available including the necessary shopping, refreshments as well as the beautiful moated castle. This castle was easier to walk the walls than Conwy and had very pleasant views. A final stop for all was to the longest place name in the UK known to all as Llanfair PG.



Slate Museum and railway –Maxine and Keith Robinson

On Sunday 22nd May our first stop of the day was to see Betwys-y-Coed ... a 'mecca' for tourists, walkers and climbers. The railway station was nothing special but, on the platform, stood a net gorilla and a net rhino. These are 'stuffed' with waste plastic and waste paper and act as rubbish bins. When fully fed the contents are taken for disposal. There was no litter!

We then drove down the Llanberis Pass to the National Slate Museum through mist and rain past streams skittering down the hillside, and taking in the beautiful scenery. The workshops and buildings are laid out as if the men have just downed tools and left for home. There were a great many pieces of equipment and rolling stock scattered around but not a great deal of information telling you about it. We felt that the National Museum was not being sufficiently supported by the Welsh Assembly as slate was for many years Wales largest export before being overtaken by coal.

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At the edge of the site stood a row of quarry men's cottages. The first one we stepped into was as it would have been in 1861. Lighting was by candle, food cooked over an open fire, a large bible had pride of place on the Welsh dresser. By 1901, (the next cottage) there was an open fire with a blackleg oven to one side for cooking, candle light, stone sink and a meat safe. In the tiny back garden was the 'netty' with a one-hole thunder box. The 1969 cottage caused instant memory of many items – a radiogram, proper carpet, china collection, coloured bathroom tiles. All the houses had collections of ornaments that would now be thought of as collectable. Three thousand men were originally employed at the quarry and May 2022 is the 50th anniversary of the opening of this museum.

Back onto the coach now for the final experience of the day ... a train ride past the lake to the foot of the Snowden Mountain Railway with very limited views due to mist and rain. We returned through the station to halfway down the lake. The guard approached each of our carriages waving pictures of what we would have seen had the weather been bright and sunny! We returned to the station to a warmer and drier coach.

After dinner at the hotel, we were entertained for the evening by two of our u3a ukulele players, Ken Roberson and Phil Bryant, with much singing and clapping and so to bed.



The ukulele players are Ken Roberson and Phil Bryant with added vocals from Phil Toler (far left)



Shrewsbury Impressions–John Aldous

Homeward bound! Our main stop was the lovely town of Shrewsbury which is a large town, well signposted with an eclectic mix of old buildings and modern ones. The town was founded by the Saxons and developed by the Tudors. This was apparent by the presence of many Tudor buildings that were dotted all over. It would be hard not to recognise the wealth of history in front of you. Situated in a bend in the River Severn there are two bridges, one called the English and one called the Welsh.

The visit was hampered by the inclement weather. To avoid the rain, we lunched in a pub that was designed to look like a Victorian pub with many pictures and old photos on the wall. There were also five magnificent chandeliers! I left feeling a return trip would be necessary to do justice to this place.



Outing to Kentwell Hall

Kentwell is a privately-owned family home acquired by Patrick and Judith Phillips in the 1970s when it stood neglected and in need of restoration. Over 50 years of renovation have passed and repairs continue to this day.

The House: part original Tudor with later classical elements mixed with the owners' personal style. Tudor portraits, interesting artefacts and historic tapestries make this a family home with a difference.



The Gardens: romantic moats, extensive lawns, walled gardens, massive clipped yews, espaliered fruit trees and giant cedars surround the House. Over 30 acres of tranquil breathing space, with a surprise to delight the senses around every corner.

The Moat House: this rare survivor of a 15th Century service building rises sheer from the moat and contains a working dairy, bakery, brewhouse and stillroom.



Peter Ashton

The Gunpowder Plot

Of course we remember
the 5th of November
and the dastardly plot
to blow up the lot
including the King
in the Parliament building.

But how did it come to this?

Well, when King Henry VIII
denounced the Pope in Rome
Catholics ceased to be safe, even behind
the locked doors of their home.

If a priest was found hiding
in the space behind the fireplace
he would be removed and tortured
and then the hangman he had to face.

When the Gunpowder Plot was discovered
and Guy Fawkes was wracked with pain
and the conspirators hanged, drawn and quartered.
For the Catholics, yet again there was no gain.

Richard Stevenson



Coach trips in the forthcoming months are as follows:

Thursday 1st September – Salisbury Cathedral & Wilton House

Salisbury is home to one of our most iconic cathedrals and there is much to see there. It houses one of only four surviving copies of Magna Carta, the world's oldest working mechanical clock and a beautiful and unique modern font. Apart from visiting the cathedral itself, you can take a delightful walk around the cathedral close (Britain's largest) with many impressive houses to see. You can picnic here or have lunch in the cathedral's excellent refectory.



In the afternoon you visit Wilton House, Home to the Earls of Pembroke since the 1540s. The house is set in 22 acres of parkland and gardens, and houses a world famous art collection.



COST £45 pp. (includes entry to the Cathedral and Wilton House)

Depart Jansel Square 8.00 am, return 6.30 pm approx

Tuesday 4th October – Fulham Palace & Kew Gardens

Fulham Palace was the residence of the Bishops of London for 750 years. Explore the historic rooms and discover the stories of the bishops who lived there. (Guided tour £8). The house also has 13 acres of beautiful botanic garden including a walled garden and a knot garden. Lunch will be in their café.



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In the afternoon we visit Kew. Discover the recently renovated Temperate House, wander through the arboretum with its stunning autumn colour or see the Mexican show in one of the glasshouses.



COST £32 pp. (includes entry to Kew. Fulham Palace free.)
Depart Jansel Square 9.00 am return 6.00 pm approx

Wednesday 2nd November The Vyne (NT) & Henley on Thames

The Vyne is a beautiful Tudor house built for Henry VIII's Lord Chamberlain. It was restyled in the 17th century into a family home. It houses a superb Tudor chapel and one of the earliest long galleries in the country. It sits in 1,500 acres of gardens and woodlands and in autumn you can stroll beneath a copper canopy.



In the afternoon we call in at Henley-on-Thames.



There is plenty to see in Henley. It has riverside walks and an award-winning River & Rowing Museum, attractive buildings around the market square, an array of small and quirky independent shops and a wide choice of cafes for afternoon tea!

COST £17 pp (The Vyne £12.35 extra for non-NT Members)
Depart Jansel Square, Bedgrove 8.45am return 5.45 pm approx.

Dan McGregor—Outings Organiser

Life on TS Arethusa – or ‘Arry’ as she was affectionately called – 1952–1953



TS Arethusa moored at Upnor.

She was a four-masted steel barque, still with her masts but yardarms only on the foremast. She looked enormous, moored fore and aft and home to 240 boys between the ages of 14 and 16 and under the command of a retired RN Commander (Cmdr Le Mare). There was a Lieutenant Commander (Blackburn) as Chief Officer, with other officers (retired Chief and Petty Officers or R.M. Sergeant) to see to our education and other needs. There were several school teachers to make sure we kept up with our academic studies. The headmaster was a Mr 'Boots' Orme; and there was Mr Wakeman. I cannot remember others' names.

Arethusa had originally been built in Germany and sailed under the name of 'Peking' and, along with her sister ships Passat and Pamir, carried nitrate. The ship had subsequently been purchased by the Shaftsbury Homes and refitted for use as a boys training ship.

I joined her one cold January day at the tender age of 14 and a half and she was to be my home for the next 18 months. She had one main deck which ran almost the length of the ship broken only by an 'island' amidships where the galley and various other facilities were, such as the ice cream store, access ladders to the locker rooms, mail room, boiler rooms, coal bunkers, school, and seamanship classrooms. Another ladder led down to the boot store and the gymnasium, band store, hammock stowage, etc. Hammocks had to be lashed with 7 turns with marline hitches. At the forward end of the main deck were the washroom and showers and a broad ladder led up to the upper deck and the 'heads' or toilets. There was no privacy – the toilets consisted of a continuous plank with a series of holes cut in it. Underneath was a semi-circular drainpipe along which a continuous flow of water flowed. At upper deck level was the fore well deck which was our fair-weather recreational space. We also hung our washing out to dry there by tying it to a line with pieces of cord about 9" long called stops. Aft the fore well deck were the captains' quarters, the after well deck and the poop. On the main deck, just aft the 'island' on the port side was a small cubicle which contained the canteen, where we could buy sweets, etc. Right aft of the main deck was the quarterdeck (which we always saluted in accordance with naval tradition) and sick bay presided over by a female "battle axe" nurse – she enjoyed squeezing the boils which we boys were prone to. The Wardroom and Officers' quarters took up the rest of the stern of the ship.

The main deck forward of the island served as a mess deck with 24 messes each housing 10 boys and containing a long wooden mess table, two long wooden stools and a rack fastened to the bulkhead which contained tin mugs and plates. Within the mess was a jealously guarded hierarchy whereby the senior boys (oldest inhabitants and leading boys) were called 'top-enders' and inhabited the outboard end of the mess whilst the 'bottom-enders' occupied the other end. The top-enders always had the biggest meals, were first in the shower, and enjoyed any other perks they could acquire.

The Ship was divided as Port and Starboard (left and right), then subdivided into divisions – forecastle, midship and after. The instructors were allocated a division as Divisional Officer and were responsible for the welfare of the boys in their division. Each division competed against each other in many activities in order to score points to become the best division. If you lost points for the division, a kangaroo court was convened by your peers and the punishment meted out would be to run naked at shower time between two lines of boys in your division – knotted wet towels were used to hit you. You would have to "run the gauntlet" for how many points you had lost so I can assure you we were very careful not to lose points if we could help it.

One misdemeanour which some of us would take part in is smoke. We would hide in various places in the ship which we thought we were safe known as 'Luggers Corner'; of course, the smell of smoke carries and we would get caught. One of the punishments we had to suffer was having to pick hemp. This involved taking a piece of three core rope and pick it to pieces. This became hemp and was used with tar to seal the seams of the wooden planks of the upper deck. After an hour or so of doing this the end of your finger became very sore.

On joining each boy was allocated a number between 1 and 240 and this determined your mess. I was 114, Port Midship division. At night the mess became a dormitory – 240 hammocks slung from steel bars attached to the deck head (Roof), each to his own billet. A night watchman prowled the decks to watch for any hanky-panky or deserters. Any boy who wanted to use the heads at night had to report to the night watchman before and after going. Reveille was at 6.30am then it was lash up and stow hammocks, wash, cocoa and biscuits (hardtack – like dog biscuits). The boys detailed to stow the hammocks kept an eye open for any evidence of someone “wetting their bed”; when detected it meant a week sleeping with your hammock flat on the deck which most uncomfortable. We then had to scrub decks, barefoot (we were always barefoot on board) with saltwater hoses, scrubbers and squeegees, winter and summer. We also had to sand and canvas the wooden decks (a derivative of holystone) in order to make them look cleaner. This was a most uncomfortable experience, kneeling on sand and water (bare knees) pushing a square piece of canvas (approx. 18” x 18”) back and forth.

Back to daily routine – after breakfast of porridge, bread and margarine and tea, we dispersed to do schoolwork and seamanship e.g. knots and splices, signalling, rule of the road, parts of ships, boats, rowing, etc. We were also required to climb the foremast each morning up to the first cross tree at least; the total height of the mast was about 130ft though I never reached the very top. Our bodies were kept in good condition with Physical Training in the gymnasium which was one deck below the living deck. We learned to swim in the indoor heated swimming pool which was on land alongside the ship. The sports field lay up a winding path on a hill above Upnor which we had to climb with bare feet; we also were taught how to march, salute naval fashion, etc.

Monday mornings were washdays. 24 tubs were half filled with hot water, although it was cold by the time the last was filled as the heating system was not up to the task. The tubs were then pushed to the messes and we washed our clothes using hard yellow soap (pusser’s soap), top enders first of course. By the time the bottom-enders got their chance the water was dirty and scummy. Not that we had a lot to wash – flannel shirt, underpants, socks, and duck suits in summer. We didn’t have luxuries like pyjamas and sheets; all we had in our hammocks was a mattress (filled with coir) and a blanket. After rinsing, weather permitting, clothes were hung from lines on the upper deck tied up with ‘stops’.

Captains rounds (inspection) took place on Saturdays. The two boys detailed as cooks of the mess would get a bucket of hot soapy water, scrub the stools and tables then line up across the deck on their hands and knees under supervision of a leading boy and scrub the deck fore and aft, then it would be hosed down with sea water and squeegee dried. In the meantime, all the other boys would be dispersed to various departments around the ship (e.g., schoolrooms) to clean these. As soon as we could make our way back to the mess to help the cooks, but not for altruistic reasons. We would emery the steel table brackets, wash the plates and the plate rack, and polish the cup hooks and mess tins with Bluebell metal polish.

The captain would inspect the messes and award the two best messes cake for tea on Sunday evening!! The rest got **See-no-cake** (in joke) with their bread, margarine and jam which was the standard teatime meal. The mess tins would then go to the galley for Saturday dinner which was always bangers and mash.

When you had completed six months and behaved yourself, you received a good conduct badge (GCB) which was worn on your upper left arm (much the same as the GCB awarded to RN personnel for four years of good conduct). A pay rise was also awarded but I cannot remember how much. There were also leading boys and Petty Officer boys, again like the RN. I did not reach any dizzy heights during my time on board. I had a couple of mates which I can remember – one was Bert Worthington and another called Scotty. Bert and I met up again at an Arethusa reunion and subsequently kept in touch, but sadly he died in 2017.



Me, Scotty and Bert

**Me and
Bert circa
2007**



Sunday was a day of rest with three hours shore leave in the afternoon. The first Sunday in the month was visitors' day when relatives were allowed on-board.

- One was the great east coast floods and we had to help with the after-flood defences.
- One summer prize giving the Duchess of Kent attended and along with others I performed the horn pipe in traditional dress of Victorian sailors.

CONDUCT: *Very Good* ABILITY: *Substantial*

"ARETHUSA" TRAINING SHIP

1902-1903



Who is in Control, that *Training* Instructor.

who he served on board the ship, under any command, from the 1901-1903. The ship was then bound for a coast education and a good knowledge of Nautical Science, including land and sea, India and Canada and British and all other; and also a good knowledge of Coast, seaport and Marine) can swim; play a bow and so up.

If serving in the Merchant Navy he is entitled to one month as sea time (in accordance with Part 1; also Ministry of Transport Regulations).

Given under my hand, and the Seal of the "Aretusa," at Upton, on Rochester, this *fourth* day of *November*, 19*03*.

Wm. L. L. L.

I am a member of the old boy's association and they have an annual reunion at Upnor in Kent where she was moored during her time as a boys training ship. She is now back in Germany to be refitted and displayed at a port there in her original state with a reference to her time as the Arethusa.

15

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS



SOUNDS OF THE SIXTIES

Sounds of the Sixties is a friendly group that meets once a month at Aylesbury Tennis Club on Wendover Road from 2.00 pm to 4.15 pm to listen to music from the 1960s from different artistes, themes and genres, but can also include the 50's and 70's. Previous subjects have included rock, pop, soul, Motown, blues, folk, novelty themes, member's personal memories from their youth as well as specific artistes.

Tea, coffee and biscuits are served in the interval. Entrance is £1 to cover the hall hire and refreshments. Open 1.30 pm for a 2.00 pm start

August 23rd	From 21 to John Travolta (My life in music Part 2)	Ann Dwyer
	Protesting Songs	Terry Bloxham
September 27th	Open Mike Session	Paul Finken
October 25th	Birds and	Brian Little
	Chycks	Brian Little
November 22nd	The Crying Game	Jean Ashton
	American Hits—British Covers	John Wilford
December 20th	Age	Phil Rance
	Cool Yule	Brian Little

We are very fortunate that **THREE NEW GROUPS** for our members have been formed.

They are:

Belote (a card game)

belote@avu3a.org.uk

A panoramic View of Italy through Literature

italian@avu3a.org.uk

Italian Canasta

italiancanasta@avu3a.org.uk

These are all being run by a new member, Rosanna Stephaneli, who can be contacted either by using the above email addresses or by calling her on 01296 330869 if you would like more information.

CRAFT GROUP

The Woolly Walk for the Jubilee is the name chosen for the installation which graced the Greenway between Aylesbury and Waddesdon from 28th May until 11th June. Crafters from Aylesbury Yarn Bombing and Waddesdon Learning, with support from other local community groups, had lined the route with woolly wonders, everything from pom-poms to corgis. Talented knitters and crocheters from the u3a Aylesbury Tuesday Craft Group made many yards of bunting as their own special contribution.

Jill Gray



The **YOGA GROUP** is now going from strength to strength, with a mixture of ability and fitness levels. Everyone is welcome including those who are completely new to yoga, have been practicing for a while, or have perhaps had a break from classes.

There is a growing body of evidence about the benefits of yoga for physical and mental wellbeing and particularly for older adults aged over 65 years. So why not give the classes a try; there is something for everyone. For more information contact Jan Baker via the u3a website.

A zoom class is also available for those preferring to do a class in the comfort of their own home.

Jan Baker



SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE GROUP

As the Scottish Country Group has discontinued I should like to thank all past members who have supported us.

Sheena Swinburn

London Walks

My story of 2014 and the Exploring London Walks journey of 2022

The 'Exploring London Walks' group was excited to ride on the new Elizabeth Line (formerly called Crossrail) on Friday 10th June which had only been opened on Tuesday, 24th May 2022. The line enables a range of new options for travel in London but most importantly it reduces travel time remarkably in an air-conditioned environment. The walk made use of these advantages and the group were able to travel from Paddington to Woolwich in thirty minutes. The train runs every five minutes and connects up with stations such as Oxford Circus, Farringdon, Liverpool Street before ending at Abbey Wood. At Woolwich we were able to discover part of the refurbished Royal Arsenal Riverside development before strolling down to the river to look at the views of the river, the north Bank, with the ferry going to and fro whilst planes were landing and departing from London City Airport. We crossed underneath the river by the Woolwich foot tunnel and then arrived at the ExCel Centre by bus and DLR (Docklands Light Railway) at Custom House. After having lunch at the ExCel Centre and exploring the now developed dock area we took the Elizabeth Line back to Paddington and then Bakerloo Line to Marylebone before catching our train home.



Woolwich Station on the Elizabeth Line



ELW group outside Woolwich Station looking at Royal Arsenal Riverside development



Commemorative sculpture to former dock workers in the ExCel Centre grounds

This trip and the recce on June 1st had even more excitement for me. In January 2014 I had been able to see the Crossrail tunnel being built. My daughter-in-law's brother is a tunnelling engineer and had invited me to see what was being constructed near Farringdon Station. As we were going to descend 25 metres into the depths of the tunnel we were required to wear special safety clothes, including a gas detector, steel capped boots and name tags to identify us and to hand in at strategic points of the tunnel workings. But before we could start the visit we had a safety lecture on what we could and couldn't do and what we should or shouldn't do if some problem occurred. It was detailed, precise and necessary.

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The workings were awe inspiring. There were lorries and special machines driving along the extensive tunnel held together by the concentric concrete hoops. There were instruments attached to the sides of the tunnel to detect movement and water leakage as well as cables and air conditioning conduits. We walked a considerable distance underground and saw where a tunnel boring machine had been abandoned as it was no longer required and would be too expensive to dismantle. In addition, I was privileged to see where the tunnel for an escalator at Farringdon was being constructed. Work was being undertaken continuously during the day and night. This activity involved workmen using 'spray concrete' which is designed to produce a strong and rigid tunnel structure.

During the two hours at this site the visit revealed a highly complex, organised project being undertaken. Crossrail was a very expensive project with many problems to solve. But for me the eight years wait, from tunnel construction to riding in the tunnel, was a very worth-while experience I will never forget.



Peter Harding all 'dressed-up' in the Crossrail tunnel



Tunnel workings



The tunnel boring machine – abandoned

AYLESBURY VALE u3a BOWLS GROUP

The sun is shining, the birds are singing. The new season for bowls has just begun! In the meantime we have memories of 2021 and our successful season. We started quietly with only 14 people playing on our opening day, but as summer warmed up, numbers increased until we had almost 40 people on our register. It was such a beautiful summer that we didn't have to cancel any games because of rain which, in our climate doesn't happen very often, and because of the hot sunshine, our coffee break was even more welcome than usual.

We don't play bowls only on Thursday mornings but have various challenges throughout the year, including a fun day with Aylesbury Town players, and an annual match. We are grateful to Aylesbury Town Bowls Club on Wendover Road for the use of their excellent green and facilities. Although we lost our match against Aylesbury Town u3a, we did have a winning Triple, Ralph Rickus, John Loughran and Elinor Paterson, who were presented with the Mary Rogers Cup. We thoroughly enjoyed the meal that Aylesbury Town provided after the game. We also enjoyed a Fun Day, with different challenges on each of the six rinks, from bowling between wooden blocks to bowling into a hoop.

I am very grateful to Jenn and David Merrison for their help throughout the season and so pleased that they will help again in the coming months. Our new season 2022 has just begun, Thursday mornings at 10.00 am. Players need to wear shoes with flat soles but we will be able to lend beginners some bowls. We look forward to seeing our seasoned bowlers again and introducing new players to a compelling new game.

Elinor Paterson

Speakers at forthcoming Monthly Meetings

Please note that these and future meetings will be held at the **Roman Park Hall at Berryfields** (next to Aylesbury Park Railway Station) at 10.30 am (doors open at 10.00 am)

Wednesday 14th September 2022 No meeting – Tea Party (Ticket required) 2.00 pm to 4.30 pm

Wednesday 12th October 2022 Travels with Auntie – BBC World Service by Alistair Lack

Wednesday 9th November 2022 Disraeli– Life at Hughenden by Fritha Irwin



Wednesday 14th December 2022 Christmas Party



QUIZ AND FISH & CHIP SUPPER



Tuesday 15th November 2022, 2.30 pm to 6.00 pm

at the Aylesbury Bowls Club, Wendover Road, Aylesbury, HP21 9NJ

Further details to follow but places will be limited. Teams of 6 which can be made up on the day.

Food will comprise Fish, Chicken or Sausages with chips. Other options, if available, to meet special dietary requirements.

If you are interested in taking part please contact Mary Singleton on 07986 582903 or social@avu3a.org.uk

Answers to last Quiz

1. Andorra
2. Monaco
3. Vatican
4. San Marino
5. Luxembourg
6. Liechtenstein



Identify these plants

Last date for copy for the Winter 2022 Newsletter will be 1st November 2022 so please send any items you may like to share with us to newsletter@avu3a.org.uk.

If you do not use internet/email then please send your contribution, either typed or handwritten, by post to Mary Singleton, 6 Redwing, Aylesbury HP19 0WB.