



Here & Now

Reigate & Redhill u3a Magazine



Fresh as a Daisy

No 91

Spring 2024

EDITORIAL



Welcome to our latest edition. I hope you like the look of the fresh, cool, Spring colours and enjoy reading the many varied articles, based around the theme of 'Fresh as a Daisy'. The team enjoy the brainstorming meetings when ideas are banded about and creative juices start.

As well as the many varieties of flowers that fall into the category of 'Daisies', it has been a popular first name for centuries, with 'Daisy Bell' being the first song to be 'sung' by a computer!

It is so nice to see the Spring flowers in our gardens and parks. Let's hope the endless days of rain are over and we can finally get out and about without raincoats and brollies!

As you will see from Pat Cockett's report, she is standing down and taking a well-earned rest after her long term of office on the committee. She has been unfailing in her help to me as editor and her contributions to the magazine have been invaluable. Thank you so much from the whole team.

I hope you will find the articles interesting, entertaining and even thought provoking. We would love to hear from you, if you have ideas and information to share. As I've said before 'It's your magazine'. Let's promote our successes and new groups.

Tina Pankhurst

Poirot...?

Poirot looked closely at the band of u3a members in front of him in the Park Church Hall. All were standing bar one who was slumped head forward on a chair, stone dead. It was time for the final denouement! Poirot gathered himself up and addressed the members.

"Mesdames and messieurs, I had not expected my Friday talk on Murder Travelling on the Thameslink Express to be followed by a mysterious death! How bizarre."

Lynne piped in *"Monsieur Poirot, do you think the victim's blackened fingertips point to arsenic poisoning?"*

"Non Madame" Poirot replied firmly. Mike took up the mantle *"Monsieur Poirot, do you think that the severe bruising around the neck points to death by strangulation?"*

"Non Monsieur" Poirot replied equally firmly. Tina chimed in *"Monsieur Poirot, do you think that it could have been ricin poison laced in the chocolate chip cookies which we served with the teas and coffees?"* Tina pointed to crumbs around the victim's chair.

"Madame, you have a very febrile imagination, but again definitely non!" Despite expecting a further rebuke, Martin asked *"Monsieur Poirot, do you think that the carving knife sticking out of his back is the cause of death?"* Poirot

fixed Martin with his most reproachful gaze *"Non Monsieur, you have been playing too much Cluedo perhaps?"*

At this point, Poirot pointed to the slightly crumpled piece of paper in the hand of the victim. *"It is clear to me that that piece of paper is the cause of death."* Pat gingerly eased the piece of paper from the stiffening fingers of the victim, and opened it out. *"It is a Reigate and Redhill u3a notice of lapsed membership."*

"Exactement Madame" Poirot exclaimed triumphantly. *"The victim died from the shame of forgetting to renew his RRu3a membership. He could not face the world with this news. He believed that he had no other alternative than to end it all!"*

"Maybe but that does not explain..." started Hilary but the others quickly escorted her away before she could remonstrate further. It was clear to them that Monsieur Poirot was not in a mood to be challenged in his finest hour.

If you do not want to risk being labelled as a social outcast or worse, please make sure that you have renewed your RRu3a membership. You can do so on our [website](#) with the online renewal form, or pay by cheque or card at our next Friday meeting. If you are not sure if you have renewed, simply email membership@rru3a.org.uk to check.



John Cousins

From the Chair

Fresh ideas built on secure foundations.

This edition of 'Here & Now' marks my last year as Chair of Reigate and Redhill u3a and also my last year as a committee member.

I was pondering on the changes over the 14 years since I joined the committee. Although the number of members has risen from 580 to nearly 1000, the basic structure and pattern of activities remains constant – a monthly meeting; groups; outings; new members meetings; holidays; Surrey u3a Network study days; a website; a magazine (in black and white); regular communications; teams making refreshments at meetings.

One other thing that has stayed the same is the price of membership – thanks to rising membership, Gift Aid and increasing use of technology!

However, within that framework, much has changed and been added – Coffee Mornings; a tech help team; monthly bulletins; entertainments; events linked with local community initiatives; using the technology in the Church for notices; live streaming at Friday meetings; a Welcome team and Come and Join us tables; a Car Parking team; using Zoom for groups; a colourful magazine available in print and online; a social media presence; online booking for outings and events; an integrated database managing membership, finance and groups; online courses and events offered nationally; a virtual office for storing committee documents; cooperation with activities run by local u3as; Gift Aid.

All these changes came about through members making suggestions that were investigated, tried out, adapted and implemented until they became a part of the fabric of u3a life.

The Third Age Trust, the umbrella organisation for all u3a, is in the process of reviewing its model of Governance to reflect the needs of what is now a very large organisation of over 400,000 members and I would encourage you to read about what is happening nationally through the link in our Bulletin.

I have really enjoyed my time on the committee and being part of such a unique organisation in which all the activities are managed by the members for the members. It sometimes takes new members time to absorb this ethos of self help and really understand that unless all members contribute in some way the organisation does not function well.

New, fresh ideas are always needed and always welcome as are new members on the committee.

The notices about the Annual General Meeting that will take place on Friday 7 June, will be sent out in April and will invite nominations to the committee. Please think seriously about whether you could put yourself forward for one of the roles. You don't have to commit yourself for 14 years! I just kept going because I enjoyed it so much!



Pat Cockett



Reigate Summer Festival - the weekend of 14 -16 June 2024

Several of our groups will be performing in this new local initiative celebrating local creativity. This weekend of free entertainment will have live music, dance, film, literature, art and history and pulls together the town's numerous creative and cultural groups into one event around Reigate town centre.

Click on the image for further details and look out for future announcements.



The Daisy is not just a pretty flower!



When you think of daisies, you probably picture the English daisy or Lawn daisy beloved of children with fond memories of making daisy chains, but they can also be used in salads, teas and garnishes.

There are in fact, 20,000 species of daisies in the family Asteraceae and have been cultivated for over 2,500 years, first in China for medicinal uses.



Another useful property of the Painted Daisy (*Tanacetum coccineum*) is that it contains pyrethrum which is a key ingredient in commercial insecticides and therefore helps to control pests in the garden.

20,000 species in the Asteraceae family

The properties of daisy varieties are endless and they have been grown around the globe for food, medicine and their colourful beauty and versatility for centuries with the added bonus that they attract bees, butterflies and other beneficial pollinating insects to the garden. They have, therefore, become a staple choice in most gardens in some form.

Jean Goulding
Gardening Group



In Japan the *Chrysanthemum* became much revered and the symbol of the Emperor and Imperial family, and featured in the Imperial Seal and Throne representing longevity and good luck.



Echinacea (Coneflower), *Rudbeckia* and *Gaillardia* have long been grown by North American tribes for treating infections, snake bites, and wounds and as a natural remedy for colds and flu, and *Gaillardia* was used as a food source and for dyeing textiles.

In S.Africa, *Gerbera* are grown for their stunning colours and their exceptional air purifying qualities as they are very good at absorbing carbon dioxide and releasing oxygen.

Whilst *Felicia amelloides* (blue daisy), a delicate flower, is known as a pioneer species as it is often the first plant to grow after disturbance by fire, and Cape daisies (*osteospermum*) protect their pollen by closing overnight.

Treat snake bites, infections, flu, pests!



What to Make of Artificial Intelligence?

Every day nowadays brings news about the latest wonders of artificial intelligence (AI), whether it be for earlier cancer diagnoses, better weather forecasts or driving autonomous robots, or for threatening new harms, such as its use to create disinformation and false images. So what should concern us elderly computer users, if anything, about AI?

Some of you may have fun by choosing to access a LLM directly and exploring its creative potential, but most of us will experience AI as passive users of whatever our tech suppliers decide to load on our tech devices.

First, what is AI?

What makes our computer, tablet or phone intelligent as opposed to just smart? AI has actually been around for decades, but it was the release of 'Large Language Models' (such as ChatGPT4) whose power astonished even its creators that fanned the current interest in AI.



Adding AI to your device introduces two sorts of problems. First, like every technology that has ever been invented, AI has its malign uses. The list of these is endless. You should not normally encounter them but do stay alert for disinformation and fake news, and do carry on taking the usual precautions against hackers and fraudsters. For them, AI is simply a powerful new tool.

LLM's are complex software systems running on extremely powerful computers that have 'learned' by vacuuming up colossal amounts of data from the internet and organizing it into a network similar to how the human brain stores data. You, the user, can then ask a question from your device and an LLM will search its network to find an answer. AI clearly exhibits some form of intelligence, but it neither understands anything it produces nor is it conscious, as are living creatures. There is no threshold where computers cross from 'smart' to 'intelligent'. Think of AI as simply putting existing technology on steroids.

Second, LLMs are still immature and can make mistakes. They sometimes 'hallucinate', producing responses that are false or nonsense. Their accuracy will improve over time and new laws will eventually help by putting the onus on system suppliers to protect ordinary citizens from harm.

Where will you encounter AI?

The short answer is 'everywhere'; it's unavoidable. AI is used for predictive text on your smartphone and for language translation. When you go on-line or open your social media app, AI decides which news items and advertisements are likely to interest you, all based on what it has learned from your previous on-line clicks.

LLMs are not yet, therefore, 100% trustworthy. Unfortunately, Google and Microsoft have already 'enhanced' their search facilities with their LLMs so be careful when carrying out an important on-line search. Don't rely on the first AI-generated text response, as I did when I checked that my passport was still valid for travel to Rome last October, with over three months to expiry. If I had looked for more detail I would have found another EU-specific rule, namely that a passport must be less than 10 years old at the date of entry to the EU. I found out this rule on being refused to board my flight at the gate at Gatwick. You have been warned!

Charles Symons





Holiday Sept 2024

The Historic Houses and Heritage of Oxfordshire and Warwickshire
5 days from £729 Departing 23 September 2024

Details of this holiday are available from sally.baker@rru3a.org.uk or 01737 221766 or by clicking [HERE](#)

Group news

Most of our 102 groups are thriving, with many not only full but with waiting lists too. However, we still have plenty which could do with more members, such as Play Reading, Latin, Bridge Improvers and Rubber, Creative Stitch, Family History 1 and Earth and Environmental Science.

It's great that some of you are coming forward with ideas for new groups:

If you speak Dutch or Flemish and are keen to meet up with others speaking the languages, our newly formed **Dutch/Flemish Interest Group** could be ideal for you.

Craft and Chat, which had to go on hold for a few months due to the closure of the Harlequin Centre has a new home in the Pasodera Lounge which is located opposite The Light in the pedestrianised zone in Redhill. The group meets fortnightly on a Wednesday.

Coffee mornings

Coffee Mornings are held in the lounge of The Light in Redhill meeting once month on alternate Tuesdays and Thursdays. They are a great way to meet with other members. Computer support is always on hand so bring your laptops, tablets or phones. Coffees and teas are available

We seem to have rather a lot of French linguists, so many that the two groups cannot accommodate them all, hence the need to start a third, **Advanced French!** The only requirement, really, is that you can converse at A level or beyond. We just need a couple more members to start the group.

A second **Sunday Lunch Group** is also on the cards.

If you would like to join any of these groups, or could do with further information, please contact the groups' coordinators. If there are any other of our groups which are of interest to you, please let us know.

There are several ways you can get in touch with us:
Email: groups@rru3a.org.uk
Phone: 01737 929104
or complete the online groups enquiry form which is on the [groups page](#) of our [website](#).
Hilary Loney & Nikki Stoddart
Groups Coordinators

Outings

Wednesday 22 May 2024
Historic City of Rochester - Cost £27

Departing 9am by coach to Rochester, there will be time to buy refreshments before a one-hour walking tour by guides from The City of Rochester Society. Afterwards you will be free to purchase lunch and have the afternoon to visit one of the attractions in this lovely town. You may wish to visit Rochester Cathedral or Guildhall, which are free. Rochester Castle

for purchase. There is usually a Book, CD, Jigsaw puzzle swap. We will meet from 10.15 to 11.30 on the following dates: Tuesday 9 April, Thursday 9 May, Tuesday 11 June, Thursday 11 July and Tuesday 13 August. Do check our website [What's On](#) calendar and under Coffee Mornings for the latest information.

grounds are free; there is an entry fee to go into the Castle. The Huguenot Museum (over 65s £4.50) may interest some members. We return to Redhill by approx 6pm.

Tuesday 13 August 2024
Chichester Festival Theatre - Oliver! - Cost £ 55

Enjoy a coach ride to Chichester Festival Theatre, to see a matinee performance of Lionel Bart's musical Oliver! The outings team have obtained top price tickets at very competitive rates.

Depart from Redhill 9.30am, picking up in Reigate, then travel to Chichester Festival Theatre to drop off around 11.30am in time for coffee or lunch. Return to the theatre in time to take your seats for the 2.30pm matinee of Oliver! After the performance the coach will return to Reigate & Redhill by approx 7.00-7.30pm. Places are limited to 53. It has been necessary to purchase tickets in advance of the performance and on this occasion, it will not be possible to offer refunds for cancellation after the end of May.

All details available and link to the booking form are on the Reigate and Redhill u3a website on the [What's On](#) page.



Monthly Meetings - 2pm

We are currently holding meetings with most people present at Reigate Park Church and others watching at home.

Friday 3 May
The search for the yeti
Presented by Clare Walker

In 1988 Clare Walker's husband, Iain, who was Executive Editor of The Mail on Sunday newspaper, persuaded his boss to give his blessing to an expedition to the Himalayas in search of the legendary yeti. The expedition would be led by renowned British mountaineer, Chris Bonington, who had considerable experience climbing the Himalayas. Mail on Sunday photographer, David O'Neill, also took part as did a BBC Natural History team whose film was broadcast after their return to the UK.

Friday 7 June AGM and -
The history of Gatton Park
presented by Alan Mortlake

Friday 5 July
Andy Smith - Wartime and Romance - From Boaters to Anti-Bac!

War is a grim business, but romance doesn't come to a grinding halt ... and neither does British humour. In both wartime and peace, love and laughter soldier on! Andy Smith 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 that stimulates response from audiences who inevitably have their own family stories to tell.

Friday 2 August
Veronica King - Undercover & Protection by Female Private Investigator

Tense tales of lurking in shadows, of her undercover work from protecting a princess to serving writs on shifty figures. Veronica has doorstepped lords, TV celebrities and high-profile footballers with petitions for divorce and other court documents, and was even involved in a custody battle for a dog. She's also been thumped and called all manner of names, but Veronica wouldn't have swapped it for the world.

STUDY DAYS

Surrey U3A Network Study days are open to all U3A members and guests are very welcome. They are held in the Menuhin Hall, Stoke d'Abernon; starting at 9.30am with registration and running from 10am to 4pm. The fees, including coffee/tea and biscuits, are £12 for members attending and watching at home and £15 for guests. Attendees should bring a packed lunch. Prior booking is necessary. All details can be found on our website.

The details of the next two study days for 2024 are below. Booking details can be found on the Surrey Network website by clicking [HERE](#). Booking forms are also available in the hall after Friday meetings.

Friday 19 April 2024
Earth's Atmosphere - Our Life Support System

Presented by Professor David Phillips, Imperial College London.

This study day covers the development of the Earth's atmosphere over geological time and the impact of man on the atmosphere since the Industrial Revolution. The great London Smog, the Hole in the Ozone Layer and the recognition of Global Warming have all occurred in our lifetimes. Society has significantly tackled the first two challenges and now we face the third and greatest challenge.

Friday 17 May 2024
The Jazz Age and Beyond
Presented by Howard Lawes, Grace Evans, Christie Lee Manning & Dave Allison

The novels of F. Scott Fitzgerald chronicled the hedonism and excitement of the Jazz Age

in America — Fitzgerald once claimed that the 1920s were "the most expensive orgy in history". In Britain the growing interest in jazz music brought black and white musicians, artists and audiences together, and was crucial in influencing changes in British society, while in Europe, Ballets Russe, Hot Club de France, Ballets Russe, and Bauhaus have left a lasting legacy in dance, music and design. The influence of jazz on society and society on jazz will be discussed with plenty of musical and visual illustrations.

Friday 21 June 2024
Planned study day on Science Topics Presented by Dr David T Jones,

Natural History Museum and Andrew Hanson, National Physical Laboratory
Details not yet released

Famous Daisies

Do you know someone called Daisy?

The name Daisy originated as a nickname for Margaret, because Marguerite, the French version of the name, is also the French name for the Oxeye daisy.

It became very popular in the late Victorian era after British songwriter, Henry Dacre, wrote the popular music hall song 'Daisy Bell'

But even before then, the name was seen as having an aristocratic air. In 1869, Louisa May Alcott published 'Little Women'. In her book one of the daughters is called Margaret. She is known as 'Meg' to her family but 'Daisy' to her wealthy would-be-friends.

Daisy, Princess of Pless was a socialite in the Edwardian era. Her social life was constantly reported in the press. Her diaries, describing her life as a member of the European aristocracy caused a sensation when they were published in 1922, for their frank descriptions of significant political and social figures.

Daisy Bates was an Irish-Australian journalist who was the first anthropologist to carry out a detailed survey of Aboriginal culture. In 1933, she was awarded a CBE by King George for her work as an advocate for protecting their traditions, languages and dialects.

Daisy Parsons was a pioneer for woman's



suffrage. Born in 1890, she opened and managed a baby clinic during World War I to help support families in the East End of London. In 1922 she was elected as a councillor and became a strong advocate for services

to support mothers and families. In 1935 she became the first female Mayor of West Ham.

There are many famous modern day women called Daisy.

Daisy Lang is a pioneer for women's sport. Born in 1972 in Bulgaria, she grew up in Germany where she became European champion in Tae-kwon-do. Moving to the USA she became World champion in karate and kick boxing. It was Daisy Lang who successfully lobbied for woman's boxing to be included in the Olympics.



Daisy Cooper is a politician. She is Member of Parliament for St. Albans. She became Deputy Leader of the Liberal Democrats in 2020 and is also spokesperson for Health, Wellbeing and Social Care.

Daisy Aitkens is an actress, writer and director. Born in Sydney, Australia, she moved to the UK where she appeared regularly in many TV programmes, including 'The Bill', 'Casualty' and 'Doctors'. She co-wrote the comedy sitcom, 'My Family' but has recently returned to acting, appearing in the latest 'Dune Drifter' film in 2020.

Daisy Goodwin is a screenwriter, novelist and TV producer. She has published several volumes of short stories and poetry. She has created many programmes for television, most notably 'Escape to the Country' for the BBC and 'Grand Designs' for Channel 4.

Most famous is probably **Daisy Ridley**, an English actress who has starred in many films like 'Murder on the Orient Express'. But she is best known for playing the character Rey – the brave heroine in the Star Wars sequels. Her great uncle was Arnold Ridley who played Private Godfrey in 'Dad's Army'.



Daisy Bell

(Bicycle Built for Two)

This is a song written in 1892 by British songwriter Harry Dacre and is said to have been inspired by Daisy Greville, Countess of Warwick, one of the many mistresses of King Edward VII.



At Bell Labs New Jersey, two computer programmers and a 'techie' music composer got together and made an artificial device sing for the first time. It's the earliest song sung by a computer

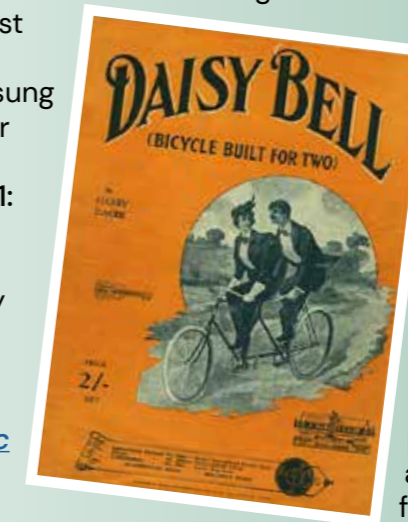
using an IBM 7094, programmed using speech synthesis in 1961. In the film 2001: A Space Odyssey (1968) this feat was referenced when HAL, the AI computer, asks to sing as the computer's sentience (capacity for sensation or feeling) dies.

[Listen on Youtube: https://youtu.be/rWQkXmNHMj8?si=dSswkvW8Rx9etp5c](https://youtu.be/rWQkXmNHMj8?si=dSswkvW8Rx9etp5c)

The song was written at a time when riding bicycles had become very fashionable. During the 1890's a bicycle craze was sweeping through American and European society. Women especially embraced the freedom that the bicycle gave them. Due to the price, the bicycle was affordable to the majority of people although it was the middle and upper class woman who had the time to enjoy cycling.



During the 1890's, many self help books were written to help women learn to ride. Elizabeth Willard, a temperance activist, encouraged cycling to stop women from drinking alcohol. Elizabeth Cady Stanton wrote that the bicycle was an essential tool which motivated women to gain strength and health, to allow them to take on increased roles in society. Others emphasised the emancipation which cycling gave to women.



In 1894, Annie Londonderry became the first woman to bicycle around the world. She was an American entrepreneur who obtained sponsorships to finance the trip – mainly because most of it was on ships. Her bicycle carried an advertising placard attached to the rear wheel and hung ribbons and signs for other products. It took her fifteen months and on her return she entertained audiences with lectures about the sights she had seen.

One of the most famous English cyclists was Beryl Burton. Born in Leeds in 1937, Beryl dominated female cycling through the 1960's and 1970's, winning numerous road races and becoming world champion five times. In 1967, Beryl broke the record for the 12 hour endurance race, beating the men's record and overtaking Michael Macnamara, who was the current champion. Allegedly, she gave him a liquorice allsort as she overtook him!

Female cyclists were only admitted to the Olympic Games in Los Angeles in 1984. British women have won many medals in recent Olympics, most notably Victoria Pendleton, Laura Trott and Rebecca Romero.

Sally Baker

Dakota Daisy-May



The **Daisy-May** was parked between the road and our boarding school, so if you went anywhere you had to pass it. When I say parked, it sounds as though I am referring to a car, but in fact the Daisy-May was a WW2 American transport aircraft, a Douglas DC3, better known as a **Dakota**.

Images, depicting sharks and barracudas which fitted the plane's nose shape made them look particularly menacing. You may be familiar with some of the named planes such as 'The Memphis Belle' used in the famous film or the 'Enola Gay' (the B36 that dropped the atom bomb) but my favourite plane name is 'Wabbit Twacks' painted onto a US army B17 aircraft.

Several artists specialised in the 'nose art' technique. One of whom was Don Allen, who depicted mostly cartoon characters. He became quite famous charging \$35 for each plane he decorated and made a small fortune doing so. My favourite in this art form was Alberto Vargas who started with pin-ups for lockers and went on to paint, using an air brush technique, exquisite idealised pin-up girls for the centrefold of Esquire magazine, much treasured and collected.

I was eleven when I was sent, as a boarder, to an unusual private school near Newbury, sited on Greenham Common, later the home of the peace camp. This progressive school was run very much like the Steiner schools. I was sent there, partly for my own safety during the Blitz and because, unlike my academic sister, this school was known for its encouragement of the arts, in which I was showing a preference.

'we soon got to know Daisy-May's crew'



There had been an RAF base on Greenham Common when I arrived at the school. We children used to watch the flyers in Whitley planes pulling gliders, practicing for D Day. When the USA joined the War they had taken over the RAF base and the Whitley's were replaced by Dakotas, one of which, it seemed, did not fit inside the base and had to be parked outside, on ordinary turf not on an official runway! As far as I know, most WW2 planes could stand, take off and land on firm ground without a tarmac base, on runways called 'Lollypops'.

The wartime crews began to feel a bond with the plane they were using for dangerous missions and personalised them perhaps by giving them a name, of a loved one, a film star, or even a cartoon character. How did I know the name of **Daisy-May**, our own Greenham Common aeroplane? Answer! It was written on the fuselage, together with an idealised, busty pin up girl in what became the fashion called Nose Art.

Our Greenham common Yanks were friendly and generous and we soon got to know the Daisy-May's crew. We swapped freshly picked raspberries from Greenham Common for delicious Hershey chocolate bars! As I was one of the older pupils, it was my job to muscle a churn of milk to and from, the nearby farm to the school several days a week, so we passed the Daisy-May and frequently stopped for a chat! CARELESS TALK COSTS LIVES cautioned posters of that time. Finding the Daisy-May was not parked where it should be, a bewildered looking GI asked me if I knew where it was.

"Oh! it is in Southampton on the hospital run, it left an hour ago, and will be back Friday morning!"

I replied. "Damn" said the soldier, "I left my bike in it!" Good job enemy spies did not think of asking school kids the allied plans!

Pat King



PASSWORDS

Oh dear, what can the matter be
I'm losing my marbles, especially latterly
used a new password on Friday or Saturday,
can't find it wherever I look.

I discuss all my problems with organised daughter,
she said "Losing passwords? Then mother you orta
write them all down or you're dead in the water,
and keep them all safe in a book!"

You've got to invent one about seven letters,
and use a few numbers, or symbols are better
use pet names and relatives you won't forget a,
.... lot, get yourself right off the hook.

She bought me a notebook and wrote on the cover
"FOR PASSWORDS please keep this so you can recover
your various passwords, now treasure this mother
so then you will know where to look!"

But its oh dear what can the matter be,
I'm losing my memory and acting quite batterly
Daughter is angry, she thinks I'm Mad-hatterly
'cause I have now lost the book!

Pat King

Music Appreciation 2

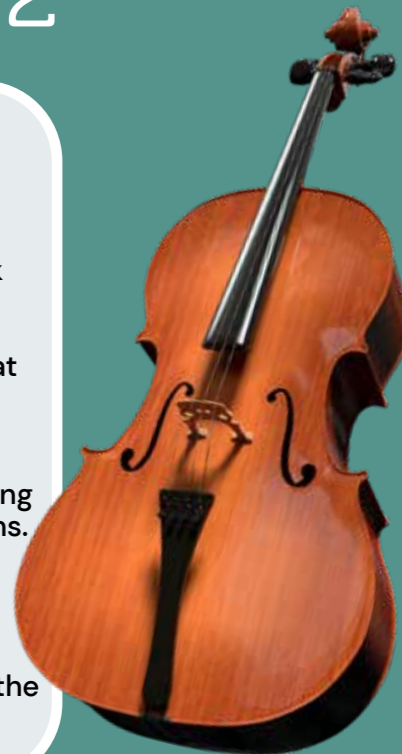
THE APPEAL OF MUSIC

When was the last time that you had the pleasure of rummaging through the contents of a music shop searching for your favourite music?

Back in the days when record shops were plentiful on our high streets, think back to what sort of music you were searching for. Did you confine yourself to the latest releases that the record labels were churning out, or did you have some deeper interest in the vast wealth of the classical music art form? An art form that stretches back through the centuries and upon which much of modern, popular music is based.

Our Music Appreciation Group revels in that rather special art form, listening, loving and learning more about the immense range of classical music and its many forms. Why not Join us in our relaxed afternoon meetings. Easy company, wide ranging musical choices and lively discussion. Or simply arrange to drop by for a session or two to see if our programmes appeal to you.

We meet twice a month on the second and fourth Tuesday afternoons. Apply to the u3a's Groups Coordinator, Hilary Loney (Hilary.loney@rru3a.org.uk) for details.



Keeping Food fresh

So many of us either live alone or with a partner. The children have flown the nest and the need for huge shopping lists and cooking large family meals are over. But, bulk buying saves money. It's more expensive to buy meals for one and often people don't enjoy just cooking for themselves. All these issues lead to us often wasting food. Many of us have grown up with the wartime mentality of not wanting to throw good food away. How can we keep food fresher for longer? How can we make cooking for one or two more enjoyable? If you have the answers, we'd love to hear from you. We have a recipe to start us off which can be doubled up for two, which hopefully you will try. Maybe you can send us one of your favourites!

Have you tried "Odd Box Fresh Fruit and Veg"? I have heard good things about this company that delivers wonky veg that is in season. They provide small boxes with the option of choosing some of what you like. My friend who hates cooking has been trying new recipes and has been converted to veg she thought she disliked!

We are given all-sorts of government guidelines that it's easy to get confused. Best before dates are just a recommendation. Generally, if it looks and smells fine, it will be okay for a couple more days. Use by dates are more important and to be aware of. Food poisoning is no fun! Food doesn't need to be thrown on the stroke of

midnight but meat, fish and dairy should not be eaten after the date given.

Many of you probably know all this but I was reminded of a few things I'd forgotten:

- If mince or meat is soon on the way out, cook it into something that can be stored for longer. Make a Spag Bol or Stew. Use up old veg and make a delicious batch of soup.
- Keep cheese in porous paper rather than cling film. Dry left-over herbs or keep them in water with a plastic bag over the top. Some say wrap them in newspaper and store in the fridge.
- Wrap celery and broccoli in foil. They will happily store for a month like this. Never store onions and potatoes together, they spoil faster.
- Keep bananas separate from other fruit because they produce more ethylene. Apparently, if you wrap the stalks in clingfilm this can help bananas stay fresher for longer.
- Keep an apple with your bag of potatoes to stop the spuds from sprouting.
- Keep lemons in an airtight plastic bag in the fridge. They will last much longer!

I hope this helps.

Mary Brett

Creamy chicken & broccoli pasta for One

- A few sprigs of broccoli
75g pasta penne or twists
1 tbsp olive or sunflower oil
1 chicken stock cube
1 chicken breast or mini fillets cut into cubes
1 tsp Dijon mustard
1 splash lemon juice
1 tbsp crème fraiche
Salt & pepper to season



- Cook the pasta in a saucepan with boiling water according to the packet instructions, adding the broccoli sprigs to the pan during the last five minutes of cooking time.
- Whilst the pasta is cooking, add the cooking oil to coat a small frying pan and heat, blend the crumbled stock cube and oil with a wooden spoon.
- When the pan is hot, add the cubed chicken to brown, then lower the heat and continue to cook stirring occasionally.
- After 10 minutes add the mustard, lemon juice, salt & pepper to the frying pan and continue stirring gently.
- When cooked, drain the pasta and broccoli and return to the saucepan.
- Add the cooked chicken to the saucepan and mix with the pasta and broccoli
- Stir in the crème fraiche and continue to heat for a further couple of minutes until mixed and creamy.
- Serve and enjoy!

Cooking time 15-20 minutes

Serve leftover crème fraiche over strawberries for an easy dessert!

SEE IT, SAY IT!

Can you spot the well known saying?

Atla drop ntic

1

THE PAST

2

3

£2

KNEE LIGHTS

4

SILENCE

5

Answers page 15

Chairs in Shops!

Shopping can be a tiring business, particularly if you are of advanced years or have a Physical or Mental Disability. For some time I have been intending to launch a "Seating in Shops Campaign" and did in fact write to Saga Magazine who printed my letter in the January Issue but with no further feedback.

However to my delight when visiting my local Morrisons Supermarket in Reigate I found a table and 4 chairs inviting shoppers "To take a break during your shopping".

The photographs show my husband Johnny and a couple of other weary

u3a members making good use of the table and chairs close to the bakery area.

On leaving the store we were able to speak to the Manager who was delighted to receive a complimentary response and that we had taken the trouble to express our gratitude for this great and welcome idea.

Please join my campaign and appeal to all retailers large & small to follow Morrisons lead to provide seating for their customers, even a single seat would be most welcome.

Hazel Sheldrake



DAISY ASHFORD

When we were brainstorming the word 'Daisy', Pat King immediately said "Have you ever read a little book by Daisy Ashford called 'The Young Visitors or Mr Salteenas Plan'?" She showed us her copy published in 1949. You can still buy it today from Amazon. The illustrations throughout the book, by Heather Corlass, are charming and quaint.

Margaret Mary Ashford, but better known as Daisy, was born in 1881 in Petersham, Surrey. She was largely educated, with her two sisters, at home. It seems amazing that at the tender age of four she dictated her first story to her father. Between 1889 - 1896 she wrote several stories and plays but probably her most famous short story, written when she was nine, is titled, The young Visitors or Mr. Salteenas Plan". It is a novella about the upper classes of the 19th century. As you can see 'Visitors' is not spelt correctly and what makes the book so endearing is the childish spelling, so close and understandable but not correct! There are no speech marks to denote conversation but it doesn't matter when you think how young she was.

I loved teaching creative writing and poetry, mostly with children aged eight and nine, I tried to get them to focus on the ideas, the use of language and vocabulary. I loved how imaginative they could be when not restricted by correct spelling. That could be done later. The children loved making books, illustrating the front covers and then going to read them to their peers or to younger children in the school.



Recently I read Amanda Prowse's biography entitled 'Women like Us'. From a young age she had wanted to be a writer but, unlike Daisy, she stored her stories in her head like a filing cabinet of ideas. She was asked what she wanted to be when she grew up and of course she replied 'an author'. Sadly, her teacher was derisory and for many years Amanda didn't follow her dream. Later in life she had the chance to write her first novel which was accepted and from then on, she hasn't stopped!

Tina Pankhurst



Forest Adventure

The terrain, the gradients, can be a wee bit challenging here and there, but we stay together as a group. There's plenty of time, to stop for a break, and just take in the beautiful sights all around us. All these movements help towards our mobility, flexibility and strength.

Priory Park offers us a variety of trees, different mosses and lichen; sweeping vistas too. Travelling steadily but taking short stops, all go toward us enjoying 'Shinrin Yoku', the Japanese "forest bathing" experience mentioned earlier.

So, please join us. The planned schedule, which is confirmed in advance every month, is for two sessions per week, Mondays and Thursdays, starting from the Pavilion at 10.00am sharp. We get back to the Pavilion on or before 11.30am, which gives those time enough with a car parked in Morrison's. The sessions go in any weather, sticks or walking poles are good for many, as is clothing layers and suitable footwear of course.

If you think that maybe this is the group for you, then contact Hilary or Nikki, the group co-ordinators and they will put you in touch with me

I look forward to seeing you soon.
Terry Keen



I am Terry Keen, 77 years old, and a fully qualified Fitness Professional. I have always been drawn to the outdoors – running and biking in deserts, amongst mountains and in forests.

I love trees for their lifestyle, their beauty and for what they give us, unconditionally. For the huge health benefits that being amongst trees can give. Apart from reducing stress, anxiety and improving mood, trees, – as they communicate with each other through their phytoncide chemical messages, which we inhale – actually enhance our immune systems through increasing our natural killer cells. Over time the risk of inflammation is reduced, which then helps better fight those chronic illnesses that afflict so many. The Japanese were the first to recognise this and their now, accepted "forest therapy" is prescribed to help with many conditions.

Living in Reigate, I have been able to enjoy the benefits of Priory Park, and especially it's beautiful forest. I have encouraged and worked with older person groups to enjoy the outdoors,

exploring the fitness activity opportunities readily available for us all, I have started again some group fitness and wellbeing activities, centred in and around the Priory Park Forest. It is called Forest Fitness, but it is also a Forest Adventure!

The main activity is the actual moving through the forest.



Did you Know?



It has been 125 years since a Bassett's sales rep in 1899 supposedly tripped up and dropped a tray of liquorice samples he was showing a client and the idea of 'allsorts' was born. Liquorice Allsorts are a mixture of liquorice, sugar, coconut, aniseed jelly, fruit flavourings and gelatine.

Bertie Bassett is the company mascot. He was designed by Frank Regan who used sweets and pipe cleaners to create the first Bertie. I found it interesting that when the TV programme 'Dr Who' created a villain, he looked

very like Bertie. Instead of Bassetts causing a huge fuss they agreed to allow the villain to proceed but for only one episode!!

Liquorice comes from the root of a plant called 'glycyrrhiza glabra'. It has a sweet flavour and contains over 300 different active compounds. It can be effective in helping a number of conditions including indigestion, hot flushes and low blood pressure. I remember we had a small glass jar of powdered liquorice in the medicine cupboard and my mother swore it cured allsorts!

Do you remember buying a liquorice root to chew from the local Tuck shop? I wasn't so keen on that but I loved spending my pocket money pennies on liquorice laces and spirals or other shapes from a huge box on the sweet shop counter. Of course, a box of Bassetts Allsorts was a great treat. All those different shapes, flavours and colours.



Tina Pankhurst

DAiSY (Disability Arts in Surrey)



'IN THE MARGINS' is a DAiSY project, working together with Neurodivergent Artist, Jon Adams, and several of their member organisations; Art Matters, Bloomin' Arts and The Orpheus Centre who have created a fantastic collection of artworks (both large and small) that have been installed at Reigate Library and forms part of a Surrey Libraries collaboration. The artworks displayed throughout the library are a result of this project, which aims to empower marginalised disabled artists and share their life experiences. The project tells their life stories, explores their passions, and highlights places where they feel a sense of belonging. Visitors are invited to explore these stories through small and large interventions throughout the library, promoting understanding, empathy, and inclusion.

To kick start the exhibition Reigate Library hosted a showcase event on Thursday 8 February, which I attended. I met and spoke to several of the artists who were excited and proud to show me their work. I was instinctively drawn to some pieces and in particular to a mixing bowl – 'A trilogy of Baking Concepts' by Jay Hughes. Then there was an eye-catching piece entitled 'Bookmarks' by Heather Perkins. Also, there were several stunning Self Portraits drawn on very relevant copied pages of literature and one such by Megan Inglis-warren was compelling.

I would implore our members to visit Reigate Library to fully appreciate this instillation which will be in situ until April. There is no need to book, just drop in to join in celebrating this wonderful collection of artwork in a place of belonging and tranquillity.



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Answers See it, Say it Page 12

1. A drop in the ocean
2. Blast from the past
3. The price is right
4. Neon Lights
5. Silence is golden

