

The Buntingford Banner u3a

Learn, Laugh & Live!

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Chairman's Remarks

At last the weather is finally improving, albeit slowly. It is still quite chilly at times but at least we seem to be getting more sunny days, although I realise I am tempting fate by saying that! Has spring finally arrived?

Hopefully the further easing of lockdown has allowed you to meet up with your families and friends outside – much better than only seeing them on Zoom or WhatsApp or just speaking to them on the phone. You maybe have also taken advantage of the ability to visit a pub for an outdoor drink or a meal – just remember to wrap up warm if you do!

Little has changed on the u3a front as we need the rules to ease further for most of our activities – some groups could meet outdoors but the limit of 6 people makes most things impractical and obviously we are not allowed to meet indoors yet. But keep the faith – things are continually improving so hopefully it is only a matter of time before we can start to spring into life again! (Well, maybe slowly stumble back into life would be more realistic at our age!)

In this month's edition of the newsletter we have details of an extra Zoom presentation being held on Wednesday 12th April (this week!) as well as a link to allow you to view a video of the talk about diamonds from last week's monthly meeting. Details of both are included below.

As this year is the 50th anniversary of decimalisation there is also a reminder of the changes which took place at that time. Although I remember decimalisation very well there are many things in there that I had forgotten about and it was a great trip down memory lane.

Take care & stay safe, *Jim Farquhar (buntingfordu3achair@gmail.com)*

As you get older, you've got to stay positive. For example, the other day I fell down the stairs. Instead of getting upset, I just thought, "Wow, that's the fastest I've moved in years!"



50th Anniversary of Decimal Currency: D-Day 15th February 1971

Let's take a short walk down memory lane!

Before D-Day

On 1st March 1966 the Decimalization decision was announced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, James Callaghan. The 5p and 10p coins were introduced on 23rd April 1968 and were the same size, composition and value as the shilling and two shilling coins in circulation. On 14th October 1969 50p coins replaced 10/-notes. By then half the decimal coins were already in use, more than a year before D-Day. This reduced the number of new coins required to be introduced on Decimal Day itself, meaning that the British public would already be familiar with three of the six new coins.

Before D-Day, small booklets were made available, containing some or all of the new denominations. A substantial publicity campaign took place, including a song by Max Bygraves called "Decimalisation", the BBC broadcast a series of five minute programmes entitled "Decimal Five" (to which The Scaffold contributed some specially written tunes) and ITV broadcast a short drama called "Granny Gets The Point", starring Doris Hare, in which an elderly woman who does not understand the new system is taught to use it by her grandson. Shops carried posters with the prices in old and new money.

The week before D-day the country's banks all closed for the Thursday and Friday (this was a time when they were already closed at the weekend) to convert accounts. The Stock Exchange closed, and on the Friday Post Offices were shut.

On D-Day

Shops switched their pricing posters so the new prices were shown first.

The only coinage changes were the addition of the new 1/2p, 1p and 2p – to complete the full range of six coins. The old 1d, 3d and 6d remained in circulation.

Nobody was obliged by law to abandon £sd and adopt decimal trading on D-Day itself, but all banks switched immediately to decimal working. The Post Office, Inland Revenue, the Department of Health and Social Security and most other Government departments also made the change along with a large part of commerce and industry.

After D-Day

Within an hour or so of its official introduction on 15th February the 1p coin was being used by quick-thinking citizens to feed slot machines geared to the 6d piece!

Shops continued to accept payment in old coins but always issued change in new coins. The old coins were then returned to banks, so most of them were quickly taken out of circulation. Within two weeks of Decimal Day, the 1d and 3d coins had left circulation, and 6d coins had become rare. On 31st August 1971, the 1d and 3d were officially withdrawn from circulation, ending the transition period to decimal currency.

Since it was impossible to replace or convert overnight the five million or so business machines and slot machines which either recorded £sd amounts or were operated by £sd coins, there was a changeover period to enable this work to be done.

The government intended that the new units would be called "new pence"; however, the British public quickly began to refer to pennies as "pee" when shortened, with "10p" pronounced as "ten pee" instead of "ten new pence". Other shortenings previously common, such as "tuppence", were now rarely heard, and terms such as "tanner" (the silver 6d) were no longer used. However, some slang terms such as "quid" and "bob", previously used for pounds and shillings respectively, survived from pre-decimal times.

Extra Members Zoom Meeting: 2pm WEDNESDAY 21st April Sue Shanahan, Hertfordshire Trading Standards, "Scams"

This talk is to update us on the ever present threat of Scams and will include examples of the different types of scams which are around, how we can protect ourselves and how to report them when they occur. Topics covered will include telephone scams, doorstep salesmen, buying goods online, and also what happens if we believe one of the phone calls and press a number on our telephone as directed by the message!

This is a very topical warning as scams have increased dramatically and the scammers are getting cleverer and more sophisticated by the day so we need stay alert.

Contact Jim Farquhar (buntingfordu3achair@gmail.com) if you haven't received the Zoom link sent out this afternoon.

Members Zoom Meeting: 2pm April 12th Louise Prior, "Diamonds, Mine to Mistress"

Louise took us on a journey through the 3 billion years from the creation of diamonds, to mining, cutting, grading, jewellery manufacturing, the workings of a fascinating industry, its ethics and sustainability and finishes with some fascinating stories about famous diamonds and diamond scandals.



Louise kindly allowed us to record her presentation and this is now available on YouTube via the link below. Please respect Louise's intellectual property by not passing this on to anyone outside of Buntingford u3a. The video will be available for approximately 3 weeks.

<https://youtu.be/EShE8mPT61c>

Members Zoom Meeting: 2pm May 10th Philip Caine, "Barrow to Baghdad & Back Again"



The first 10 years of Philip's working life was as a chef and manager in the hotel business. His career developed in the oil industry and 30 years were spent in places such as the North Sea, Algeria, Nigeria, Kazakhstan and Russia with the last 10 years in the Middle East.

Since retiring in 2015, he has become an author and guest speaker and will tell us how a career that began in Barrow-in-Furness ended in Baghdad where he thanked God for bullet-proof glass (see photo)!

Group News

New Group - Yarn Crafts for Charity

This new group, provisionally called 'Yarn Crafts for Charity' (but looking for a better title!), knits/crochets items for charity and sends them through "Loving Hands" to distribute to charities that send items to outlets that include hospitals, women's refuges, community groups, and hospices as well as to developing countries. Donations are welcomed of everything from burial items for tiny babies who do not survive, to knitted 'boobs' which are used to teach breastfeeding in UK hospitals, blankets, knee rugs and shoulder wraps for the elderly, fiddle muffs for dementia sufferers, toys for babies and children in hospital, warm clothing for the homeless and for children living in freezing conditions in places like Serbia, Ukraine and Moldova.

Baby clothes and knitting toys are always needed. These photos show toys and a baby hat made by Mary Godfrey. Mary explained she has enjoyed learning how to knit in lock-down and how to make toys.



Dementia patients' restless fingers can be occupied with the bits and bobs inside and outside fiddle muffs and this is very calming. Photo show muffs knitted by Kate.

We don't meet at the moment due to Covid, however it is intended that we meet for coffee/tea once members feel comfortable in doing so.

Have you wool going spare - we'd be glad of donations!

Please contact Kate at buntingfordu3asec@gmail.com if you'd like to join us or have wool donations to be picked up. Thank you very much.

Kate Farquhar

Not the sharpest tool in the box.....

A noted psychiatrist was a guest speaker at an academic function where a prominent politician happened to appear. He took the opportunity to schmooze the good doctor a bit and asked him a question with which he was most at ease.

'Would you mind telling me, Doctor,' he asked, 'how you detect a mental deficiency in somebody who appears completely normal?'

'Nothing is easier,' he replied. 'You ask a simple question which anyone should answer with no trouble. If the person hesitates, that puts you on the track.'

'What sort of question?' he asked.

Well, you might ask, 'Captain Cook made three trips around the world and died during one of them. Which one?'

He thought a moment, and then said with a nervous laugh, 'You wouldn't happen to have another example would you? I must confess I don't know much about history.'

Film and TV

1. Pongo and Perdita were dogs in which film?
2. Which TV cartoon character was fond of shouting Yabba Dabba Doo?
3. Paul Martin hosts which two-word TV show?
4. What colour blood does Mr Spock have in TV's Star Trek?
5. Who has won the most Best Actress awards?
6. In which decade did Blue Peter first hit the small screen?
7. What was the first full programme to be shown on Channel 4 in 1982? It is still with us.

General knowledge

1. What sort of creature is a ladybird?
2. Which Shakespeare tragedy features the line, "What's in a Name"?
3. In which country was Adolf Eichmann arrested by Israel's secret forces?
4. How many teeth does the typical healthy adult have?
5. How many hoops are there in the game of croquet?
6. What word can mean a bend in a river or to wander slowly?
7. In which country is Air Labrador based?

History

1. In which country was political activist Che Guevara killed?
2. In which American State was Davy Crockett killed?
3. Which member of the Royal Family got married in 1973 and again in 1992?
4. Which convicted British murderer had the first names Hawley Harvey?
5. What age did the Queen Mother reach?
6. What is known as Old Glory in America?
7. How many of Henry VIII's wives outlived him?

Science and nature

1. How many legs does a dragonfly have?
2. What sort of a bird is the Kookaburra?
3. How many incisor teeth does a healthy adult have?
4. From what country do we get the spicy sauce Wasabi?
5. The Antirrhinum has what other ten-letter name?
6. Which planet has the most moons?
7. In the periodic table, what's the symbol for zinc?

Geography

1. The Humber Estuary feeds into which sea?
2. The Mendip Hills can be found in which English county?
3. The RNLI is headquartered in which town in Dorset?

4. Happy Valley is what sort of entertainment venue in Hong Kong?
5. Spanish Town used to be capital city of which large island in The Caribbean?
6. In which city would you find the Dutch government?
7. What is the largest continent?

Words

1. Translate the Latin phrase tempus fugit.
2. From which European language do we get the words blunderbuss and yacht?
3. From which European language do we get the words déjà vu and faux pas?
4. A Wahoo is what sort of creature?
5. The term Grassy Knoll is a reference to the assassination of which American?
6. An Australian asking for A Cold One usually wants what?
7. Americans call them eggplants. What do we call them?

Observations on growing older

- ✿ Eventually you will reach a point when you stop lying about your age and start bragging about it.
- ✿ I love to hear them say: "You don't look that old."
- ✿ The older we get the fewer things seem worth waiting in line for. Mostly, because we forgot why we were waiting in line in the first place.
- ✿ Ah, being young is beautiful, but being old is (sometimes) comfortable.



Answers to Quiz published in March 2021 newsletter

General Knowledge

1. Complete the name of this children's game... Rock, Paper, What. Scissor
2. On which river does the English town of Stockton stand? Tees
3. Who was the oldest Von Trapp youngster in 1965 film The Sound of Music? Liesl
4. What is the main tributary of the Mississippi? Missouri
5. How many make up a tug-o-war team? Eight
6. The Wailing Wall is the last remaining section of which building?
The (second) Jewish Temple in Jerusalem
7. The Daewoo car company comes from which country? South Korea

Myths

1. What was the name of King Arthur's sword? Excalibur
2. Which German folk tale has an alternative name of Little Brother and Little Sister?
Hansel and Gretel
3. Which Knight of the Round Table succeeded in his quest for the Holy Grail? Galahad
4. What name is given to the nine handmaidens of Odin? The Valkyries
5. Who killed Achilles by shooting him in the heel with an arrow? Paris
8. What did Daedalus construct for King Minos on Crete so that he could keep the Minotaur?
The Labyrinth
9. Where did Odin feast with the souls of dead heroes? Valhalla

TV

1. Who did Rodney Trotter marry in Only Fools and Horses? Cassandra
2. How much, according to an American TV show of the Seventies, did it cost to reconstruct Col Steve Austin?
Six million dollars
3. In what year did Coronation Street first air on ITV? 1960
4. Which actor portrayed Inspector Morse? John Thaw
5. Which well-known Welsh village was the primary setting for the Sixties TV show The Prisoner?
Portmeirion
6. Which UK show started in 1953 and became the world's longest-running news and current affairs TV programme? Panorama
7. Police drama Life on Mars is named after a song by which late musician? David Bowie

Political figures

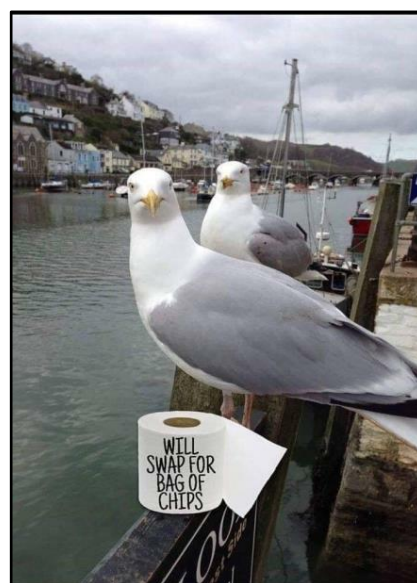
1. Anthony Eden married a niece of which other British Prime Minister? Churchill
2. Who are POTUS and FLOTUS? President (and First Lady) of the United States
3. What name is given to the people who make sure MPs attend important votes? Whips
4. What animal is the symbol of the US Democratic Party? Donkey
5. Who is said to have been Britain's first Prime Minister? Walpole
6. What is the name of David Cameron's wife? Samantha
7. Which fairly recent American President had the FBI nickname Rawhide? Reagan

The arts

1. Who painted the Mona Lisa? Da Vinci
2. What is the name of New York's theatre district? Broadway
3. What was the name of the Hunchback of Notre Dame? Quasimodo
4. Name Buddy Holly's backing band. The Crickets
5. Who painted The Scream in 1893? Edvard Munch
6. Rene Magritte's The Son of Man depicts a man with which fruit covering his face? Apple
7. Which British artist is known for an exhibit featuring a shark preserved in formaldehyde? Damien Hirst

Geography

1. Which is the only New York borough wholly on the mainland? The Bronx
2. Which country used to be known as Portuguese East Africa? Mozambique
3. The Basque Region spreads over which two countries? France and Spain
4. What is the capital city of The Ukraine? Kiev
5. In which ocean would you find The White Sea? Arctic
6. What is the capital city of Canada? Ottawa
7. Dublin stands on which river? Liffey



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