

Meet at Community Centre

Prebendal Avenue

1.30 p.m. for Notices at 2.00 p.m.

Full Refreshments this Month

**Face Masks are recommended
except for Eating and Drinking**

Sanitise at Door

Speaker booked for 2.45 p.m.

Date	Speaker	Title
20 th October 2022	Tony Ring	Wit, Wisdom and Lyrics of PG Wodehouse
17 th November 2022	Eve Bacon	Spices and Medieval Society

Trip on the Chinnor Railway

Members who are joining the train at Chinnor on Sunday 23rd October need to be at the station by 3.15 pm at the latest. Should there are any problems or difficulties could they please contact Michael Walden on 01844 291617. This also applies if you have any travelling difficulties.

Geoff Short – Chair

Good day to you all. Firstly, can I just say how sorry I am that I won't be at the meeting this month. Luckily, you are in the good hands of Simon Reeks who has volunteered to replace me on this occasion. We welcome Tony Ring and his wife, Elaine, who will be talking about P G Wodehouse – his wit and wisdom.

This month sees the end of Pat Pickering's time as leader of the Garden Group. We thank Pat for her efforts in this group over the years. This means that the group requires a new leader or leaders. While this role is open to any of our members, it seems a good time for existing members of the garden group to step forward and fill Pat's shoes! This is a well-attended group, and it would be a pity if we lost it due to lack of leadership. As I say, it doesn't have to be one person as it may suit a couple of people. If anyone is interested, please speak either to Pat or to me.

Talking of groups, I intend sending round an e-mail to all group leaders regarding the current position on each group – so watch this space. This month, the Third Aid Trust newsletter has included a section headed Subject Advice. They advise that there is a network of over 70 national advisers whose role is to provide advice on setting up new groups or maintaining existing groups. These roles cover a huge range of subjects from amateur Radio to Yoga! Their details can be found in each issue of Third Age Matters.

Southcourt Community Centre has advised us that the boiler has failed. This doesn't affect the hall itself but does mean that there is no heating for the toilets or kitchen areas. Arrangements are in hand for repairs.

Dave Rogers – Editor

Punkie Night – an Alternative to Halloween

A majority of people consider Halloween on 31st October to be an import from America, but according to the villagers of Hinton St. George in Somerset, Halloween has been stolen from their Punkie Night on the last Thursday in October that they have celebrated for over a hundred years. Punkies may be even older than that as, in Medieval times, records show that some farmers hung them on their gateposts to frighten away evil spirits from their harvest festival. Punkie is Old-English for “lantern”.



Hinton St. George is known to have been a settlement as far back as the 12th Century. As a feudal village well into 20th Century, essentially under the control of the Poulett family in Hinton House, the community has a heritage rich in listed buildings, ancient trees, and mature agriculture. On Punkie Night they hold a procession of punkies led by a King & Queen with attendants.

A local legend purports to explain the custom’s origin. The local menfolk went to Chiselborough Fair (a market place for “job-seekers”), four miles away, in order to find work. When they didn’t return later that dark night, their wives dug up some mangold-wurzels from the fields to provide protection for their candles from October winds, hollowed them out, put in candles and went off to search for the men. They found them lost but drunk-with-success before escorting them back to the village. All arrived safely as the women’s punkies had frightened away the evil spirits of that night. However, a neighbouring village of Lopen claims the same legend.

Nowadays, children of Hinton St, George hollow out their mangolds – a crop grown by farmers for cattle feed that looks like a cross between a turnip and a pumpkin. A design is then drawn on the outside, usually a face, before the punkie is perforated and a candle is put inside. Different coloured tissue may be stretched across the inside of the perforations to give a “Will-of-the-Whisp” effect. Health & Safety? Two holes are punched at the top of the punkie and string attached so that this lantern can be carried by the children in fancy dress around the village. The procession starts at 6 p.m. and ends at 9 p.m. in the Village Hall where a contest for the most original design takes place. During the procession, one of three versions (first verse plus verse 2, 3, or 4) of the Punkie Night song would be performed to the tune “Farmer in the Dell”.



*It's Punky Night tonight
It's Punky Night tonight
Give us a candle, give us a light
It's Punky Night tonight!*

*It's Punky Night tonight
It's Punky Night tonight
Adam and Eve would not believe
It's Punky Night tonight!*

*It's Punky Night tonight
It's Punky Night tonight
Give us a candle, give us a light
If you don't, you'll get a fright
It's Punky Night tonight!*

*It's Punky Night tonight
It's Punky Night tonight
Give us a candle, give us a light
If you haven't a candle, a penny's alright
It's Punky Night tonight!*

The first verse makes sense if the procession started with empty punkies or the candles weren't lit. The third and fourth verses are reminiscent of “trick & treat” but how they might fit into the legend is not known. Perhaps, over the years, the children had to beg for candles or accept money in their place. Farm workers’ wages can be low!

Jasmine & Simon Reeks – Local History Group

Remaining Meetings This Year & Planning for Next Year

John Milton House (church ???) 27th October 10.30

Rupert's Review 24th November 11.00

We have emailed the group with arrangements for John Milton's Cottage in October.

Planning Meeting 26th January 11.00

Buckinghamshire Workhouses with section on Aylesbury. 23rd February Talk by Julian Hunt 14.00

At the October general meeting, last chance to book and pay for the visit to John Milton House Museum in October. £6.00 each and if the church is available for a visit on the day, then Julia will collect the extra £1 coin on the 27th. So, exact cash would be helpful or a cheque written to S. Reeks.

Our September event was really interesting. The weather fairy was benign and our walk, guided by Roger King, led us through the old town of Hemel Hempstead. Well done and thank you Roger, a great morning.

September and early October has found Simon & I wandering through sumptuous gardens, touring historic houses and absorbing informative lectures on past Buckingham industries. I hope you all have had a good month.

Tony Vickers

ENGLISH SCHOOLS AND SCHOOLING DURING WORLD WAR TWO COPING WITH DESTRUCTION AND DISRUPTION

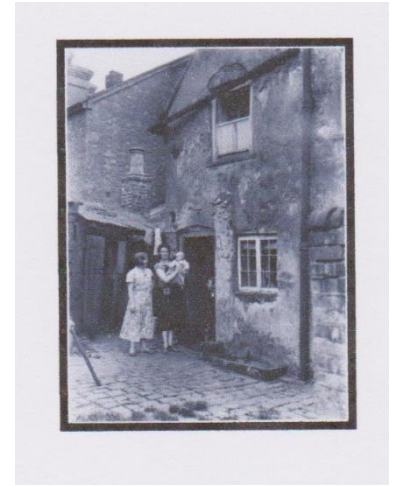
London	241,000
Manchester	84,343
Merseyside	79,930
Newcastle	52,494
Birmingham	32,688
Leeds/Bradford	26,419
Portsmouth	23,145
Sheffield	13,871

During the Second World War, major changes were made to English schools and schooling. Early German aerial bombing onslaughts on major cities led to massive destruction, an unprecedented evacuation programme (Operation Pied Piper), social upheaval and severe disruption to the educational experience of millions of children. Around 20% of all schools were destroyed; teacher shortages were severe. As city schools emptied, and teachers were conscripted, many schools taught locals in the morning and evacuees in the afternoon. Some 6 million changed their address out of a population of 38m by 1942. Around 8,000 children lost their lives in air raids.

The war not only brought personal disruption on a grand scale; it highlighted the ways in which different social classes underwent different educational experiences. One elementary school in London found its evacuated pupils spread out to over 23 villages in Norfolk.

As a military necessity, evacuation had been planned from 1931 and in detail since the autumn of 1938. A stark choice had to be made; risk bombing or endure evacuation. In its first phase from 1st September, 1939, more than three million children, nursing mothers, the blind and disabled moved from major cities to largely unknown rural locations to avoid aerial bombing. In Guernsey, over 17,000 children came over to the South Coast, hurriedly and precariously. Many travelled

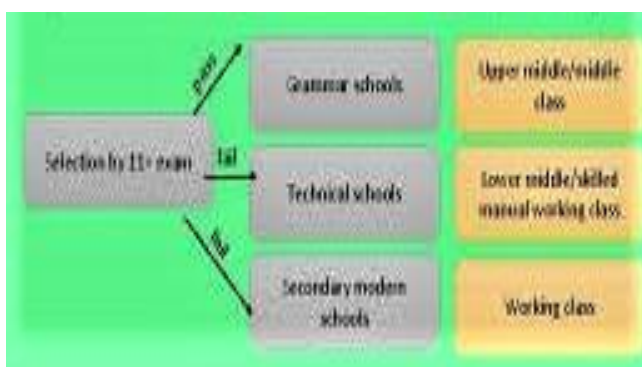
much further, to USA, Canada and Australia. Importantly, the trauma of family separation highlighted the degree of urban poverty and depravation. Billeting urban evacuees in private rural homes led to serious social mismatching and the rise of tensions between urban and rural communities. It opened our eyes to the extent of urban sickness (measles, diphtheria, impetigo, TB, scabies), lice infestation, bedwetting, squalid living conditions, foul mouthed and malnourished slum children and the extent of their anti-social behaviour. Large numbers of evacuees had never seen an indoor toilet, tap or bath, and slept on the floor, while many refugee mothers were regarded as feckless and deplorably mannered. One mother who came with her two children was viewed ‘as domesticated as a wildcat’.



In some areas evacuees were regarded ‘as strange incomers from an urban world’. For many poor and deprived urban families, dirty houses were an unavoidable reality. The evacuation experience created a damaging effect on the welfare of many evacuees. In order to save lives, ‘beds before desks’ (personal safety before education) became an important motto.

In Bucks, only evacuees regarded as ‘clean and presentable’ were initially allowed into local homes. Dissenters soon opposed this, emphasising ‘let them come dirty and with disease, and we will care for them’. In early 1940, Aylesbury was soon overwhelmed with over 1500 evacuees, with very few schools able to take them. In Macclesfield, over 12,000 ‘bombed out’ children from Manchester created massive disruption. Although in the early phase some 900,000 evacuees drifted back to their target areas, for the remainder evacuation was a deeply emotional experience that reshaped an entire generation of youth. Over 2000 empty school buildings were requisitioned, leaving over one million children running wild in cities. Cases of juvenile delinquency soared.

In the midst of war, and with a schooling crisis looming, the passage of the 1944 Education Act was seen as optimistic and innovative. Deep seated change was desperately needed; in 1939 some 80% of all children received no formal education after the age of 14. Instead ‘they were pushed off the plank into the labour market’. The Act became a critical part of the need for a fairer society and the provision of more equal educational opportunities once Germany and Japan had been defeated. Raising standards for all pupils was a somewhat new aspiration – in previous centuries the poor had been predominantly excluded. Largely based on free, compulsory and ‘mass secondary education for all’, schooling would be extended to 15 years (achieved in 1947), then 16 years in 1973.



The dominant theme which emerged was that education would be based on ‘age, aptitude and ability’. A distinction was made between secondary grammar schools for academically able pupils (the main route to university and a professional career) and secondary moderns providing



more basic education. There were also several technical schools alongside adult provision (evening institutes). More teacher training places became available. GCE’s at O and A levels were then introduced in 1951. This massive investment in human capital and meritocratic life chances was

undertaken despite austerity, rationing, low consumption and the forthcoming Korean war in 1951. However, consensus frequently broke down, while many plans were hotly contested (I/Q scores as the basis of grammar school selection). Provision between regions was patchy and often poor. Where you lived became a critical issue in educational opportunities and career prospects.

Addressing a class of evacuees, a teacher asked if they knew who wrote the famous poem 'Oh to be in England....' A bright lad at the back responded 'Hitler'!

Ann Burman – Quiz Group



The next meeting of the Quiz group is on [Tuesday 18th October](#) at a cost of £1 per person. No prizes, just a fun afternoon with tea/coffee/biscuits provided. **ALL ARE VERY WELCOME.** 6/7 sets of 20 questions, all general knowledge.

Any queries contact ANN BURMAN tel.no. 01296 422084 (or Chris Blaik tel.no. 01296 425964)

Jan Paver – Pub Walks



The intrepid group of pub walkers made it to the top of Quanton Hill earlier this month. We had a good walk, only getting slightly lost at one point, but making a swift recovery back to the right path! Lunch in the George and Dragon was well deserved.

Unfortunately, due to holidays, and winter weather, the group is taking a break until the spring. Looking forward to getting the walking boots on next year.

Jane Elliston – Art Coffee Morning



U3A art Coffee Morning next meeting is 8th November, 10.30 at Jane's house. The topic we will be showing will be Christmas of which there will be many different interpretations. There will be a not-for-profit raffle in November.



Jim Wilding – Group Leader

History Of Transport

Unfortunately, I am having to try to set up a new meeting date for the group following clashes with other group meetings. At present there is no date fixed for our October meeting so I will contact members directly if I can establish a date for October, and, hopefully, set up a fixed date for meetings in future.



Musical Appreciation



We meet at 2.30 on 25th October at 9, Mill Mead, Wendover, with the prospect of welcoming two new members!

Simon Reeks – Gadget Group

Another busy month, including fixing “broken” broadband, “reluctant” email systems, an “awkward” projector amongst many other things.

Windows 10 has only 3 more years of life left in it; all Microsoft support will end on 14th October 2025. Whilst it will still function after this date, there will be an ever-escalating risk without continuing security updates. Similarly, support will be withdrawn from Windows 8.1 after 10th January 2023. This means that in the New Year, ONLY Windows 10 and 11 should be used – ALL older versions of Windows will be potentially insecure.



I have migrated our family computers to Windows 11 which is very similar in usage to Windows 10. As a result, I have a number of spare PCs which run Windows 10 exceptionally well – they currently have Windows 11 installed but will require occasional manual tweaks to keep them running as they are not on the official list of Microsoft supported PCs for the new operating system. If you would like a replacement PC for Windows 10 or indeed want to try the new Windows 11, I'm offering them free to good homes (although you might want to make a donation to your favourite charity).

If you need a PC, advice about the new Windows 11 or indeed any other (non-Apple) "gadget" subject, please contact me on 01296 482735 or reeks@fangio.co.uk and I'll see what I can do, although I will be out of circulation for the last 3 weeks or so of November.

Next Contribution Date Friday 11th November 2022

Contributions Welcome from ALL Members