



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to ALL



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 |
|--------------------------------|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 15 th December 2022 | Jonathan Jones | Christmas Cracker Recital A miscellany of prose and poetry for the festive season |
| 19 th January 2023 | Jeff Evans | The Questionable History of the TV Quiz Show |

Geoff Short – Chair

Welcome to the final Newsletter of 2022 and to the last meeting of the year. We welcome Jonathan Jones whose talk is entitled “Christmas Cracker Recital”.

We are also holding a raffle in support of a local hospice and mince pies, courtesy of Simon Reeks, will be on the menu! This seems to be a good moment to thank Alex and her band of helpers who look after refreshments for us each month.

This has been another difficult year as I’m sure we have all experienced. We have lost a few members on the way and remember them in our thoughts and prayers at this time. Here’s hoping that 2023 will be an improvement!

Dave Rogers – Editor

Roll Out the Barrel on Boxing Day



Beer is delivered to pubs in different casks containing different amounts – a **Barrel** contains 36 gallons of beer. The standard size for cask beer is a **Firkin**, meaning a quarter of a barrel (9 gallons). The next size is a **Kilderkin**, meaning half a barrel (18 gallons). After a barrel, you have a **Hogshead** and these contain 54 gallons. Two sizes that you never see in pubs are a **Butt** (2 hogsheads – 108 gallons) and a **Tun** (2 butts – 216 gallons). In fact, some brewers have gone the other way and send their beer in a **Pin** (half a firkin – 4.5 gallons).

Situated on the River Cam to the south of the city of Cambridge, Grantchester is not only a tourist attraction due to the ITV series based on the James Runcie novels known as “The Grantchester Mysteries” but also for barrel racing on Boxing Day.

The race began in the 1960’s, when it’s believed the locals of each of the four pubs in the village (Blue Ball, Green Man, Red Lion, Rose & Crown) challenged each other to a race. The relay race is run by teams of four, who must roll their empty barrel up and down Coton Road. Although the course is only 100 yards long, it takes about 40 minutes to complete the race.



Protected by a thin line of straw bales, the crowd cheers on their family members and friends as they attempt to tumble a barrel along the road as fast as possible. This version took place until in the 1970s, the organiser’s son was accused of cheating in the competition, prompting the organiser to cancel the event.



The event was revived in 2004. Nowadays, more than 100 people take place in a number of races. In addition to the Pub Race, there are categories for Men, Women, Family v Friends, First Time v Next Generation and Guests Teams with prizes awarded for each category. The Guests Team are usually representatives from pubs in the vicinity of Grantchester.

Jasmine & Simon Reeks – Local History Group

At Methodist Church

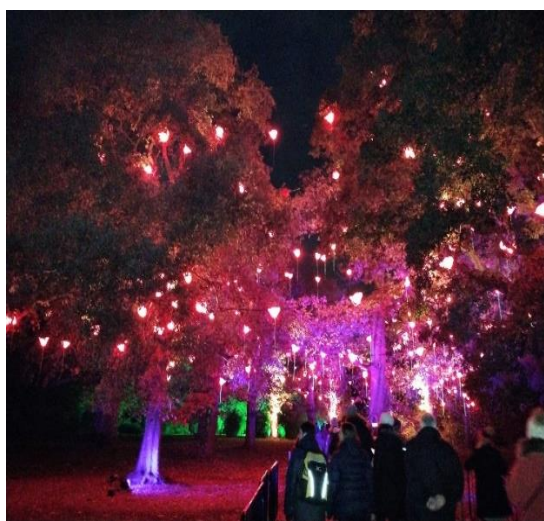
Planning Meeting 26th January 11.00

At Southcourt Community Centre

23rd February 14.00 Buckinghamshire Workhouses with section on Aylesbury. An illustrated talk by Julian Hunt. *ALL U3A MEMBERS ARE WELCOME. PLEASE SIGN SHEET SO WE HAVE SOME IDEA FOR REFRESHMENTS*

Many thanks to all those who have arranged meetings for our group, worked on admin, hospitality and provided cakes. You are very much appreciated by those in the group.

A bit of Festive Cheer!



A view of 12 days of Christmas

I left Simon at home and went to view the Kew Christmas Lights on the Motts coach. These pictures don't do it justice. It was amazing. The extravaganza on the lake in front of the Palm house was a joy and the duck sleeping on the installation in The Hollow a hoot! Actually, that should have been a quack, but a quack is not a well-known expression!



A goose a-laying

and

Tony Vickers

A Defining Moment; The Invasion Threat 1940 – Protecting Shores and Skies

It was not until the Munich crisis in 1938 that serious plans for war were put into action. By early 1940 Britain, as the last remaining Allied country, was in a state of alarm and confusion. Seriously caught 'off-balance', it was desperately short of armaments, manpower, ships and planes, provisions and logistics. With the formation of the Home Guard in May, 1940, a 'Dad's Army syndrome' developed, in which resolve and fighting spirit prevailed; this tended to obscure Britain's exaggerated belief in and limited ability to engage in large scale combat against highly skilled German forces mustering across

the Channel. The Luftwaffe was able to call on over 3500 strike aircraft while battle-hardened German troops numbered over 600,000. Even after the Battle of Britain, the military situation remained precarious, especially in the face of precision night raids, delayed-action bombs, the Blitz, U-boats and the destruction of Atlantic convoys and mounting bomber losses over Germany. Germany even planned to build a channel tunnel as an alternative invasion route.

1940 was clearly a defining moment for Britain – the fall of France, the retreat from Dunkirk, the Battle of Britain, the ever-increasing threat of a German invasion. Operation Sea Lion, launched on 2nd July, was the title given by Hitler to the planned invasion of England on a ‘broad front (Ramsgate to IoW)’. Initially it was only a plan, a last resort to force Britain to capitulate, but it became a firm directive on 16th July after a detailed military assessment of its feasibility and the substantial risks involved. Amassing such a mighty armada in one month in the face of air attacks, submarines and Royal Naval bombardment pointed to high prospects of failure and defeat.



In the first wave there were even plans to move 4500 cavalry horses in flat bottomed barges. Axis Army and Naval top brass remained permanently divided; while the military were ‘fired up and ready to go’, Naval chiefs pointed to their reckless confidence and lack of experience in large amphibious operations; they were adamantly opposed to such an unplanned, hasty, high-risk invasion.



In Britain, as complacency gave way to alarm, a concerted campaign developed, pointing to resolute determination, ruthless intelligence planning and total dedication to the resistance of invasion (with plans to use gas and chemical weapons). This was part of a new ‘profound sense of purpose, of belligerency and resolve’ as the nation enthusiastically stood up to Hitler. A proposal to fill Buckingham Palace with German prisoners to deter Luftwaffe air raids was soon dropped. Persistent rumours of spies dressed as Nuns, of invasion by gliders and parachutists, of the capture of the IoW, of Cornwall as the first invasion point, continued; these were usually fed by Lord Haw-Haw and German propaganda.

Maintaining morale became a critical, daily task for the Ministry of Information. In Liverpool, despite the devastation of aerial bombardment, a report on morale noted residents maintained the northern tradition of endurance with ‘high levels of dancing, drunkenness, singing, shouting and cat calling’ even during the intense blitz.

In the face of a very real threat, extensive preparations such as the internment of aliens, the bombing of invasion barges in channel ports, the mass evacuation of 31 coastal towns, the building of pill boxes, sea defences and extensive minefields were given top priority. Map Orders prohibited the use of large-scale maps. Yet, such preparations varied in importance; at Sealand, a major aerodrome in Chester, production of pikes and sharp knives was stepped up for the local Home Guard.



In Deptford, local volunteers were offered WW1 revolvers and cudgels to repel parachutists. In the August, as anticipation of invasion grew rapidly, the Buckingham Advertiser warned of the ‘threat of

imminent extinction which hangs over us all this Summer'. A month later the Bucks Herald reported on the 'nation's determination to stand alone, with honour and pride, among the European nations against invasion'. By early September invasion preparations were intense as it emerged Hitler had set the 15th as invasion day. Nevertheless, deducing Hitler's invasion plans became at times an almost impossible task since he frequently resorted to crystal-ball gazing and astrologers, much to the frustration of his own military advisers and British Intelligence. What has emerged is the importance of intelligence reports unlocking the secrets of over 1000 captured Luftwaffe pilots and U-boat crews from July to October, 1940. These revealed vital operational details for invasion and Germany's expansion plans. Overall, while only 5000 POWs were held in 1940, this rose to over 1 million by 1945. Their value in the planning of D Day, four years later, in June 1944 was immense.

Yet the invasion never came. By the 16th October the whole operation was 'stood down' (the threat still remained) as Hitler's attention turned eastwards and 'Operation Barbarossa', the invasion of Russia on 22nd June, 1941. Vast numbers of troops, planes and munitions centred on the Channel ports were transferred as the war moved to a new, dangerous and for Hitler, 'an eventual catastrophic phase'.

Ann Burman – Quiz Group



There is no Quiz Meeting in December. The next meeting will be Tuesday 17th January 2023. All are welcome

Any queries contact ANN BURMAN
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tel.no. 01296 425964)



Jim Wilding – Group Leader

History Of Transport

There is no meeting in December, our next meeting will be at 2.30 on Wednesday, 18th January 2023, at 9 Mill Mead, Wendover.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!



Musical Appreciation



There is no meeting in December, our next meeting will be at 2.30 on Tuesday, 24th January 2023, at 9 Mill Mead, Wendover.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Simon Reeks – Gadget Group

December now sees me a bit more mobile and I look forward to seeing you at the Christmas meeting. I have started to resume my gadget activity, helping (hopefully!) with things such as setting up new mobile phones and sorting out photo filing.

A gentle reminder that official Windows 8 support ends in less than a month, on January 10th - using it after this date will incur an ever-increasing security



risk. If you use Windows, **ONLY** Windows 10 and 11 will be supported. There is a reasonable chance that Windows 7 and 8 can be upgraded free to Windows 10 - let me know if this is something that you may be considering.

Our landline and broadband are supplied by Virgin who have changed our phone system to be totally digital - the home phone now has to be plugged into the broadband router rather than the old phone socket. All telecom companies are moving towards this "phone over the internet" technology but there are some potential issues to consider. Firstly, any wired phone extensions will stop working - any extensions in the future will need to be cordless. Secondly, some systems wired directly into your phone connection will not function - examples being many burglar / fire alarms and emergency help / contact buttons. Also, your landline will simply stop working during a power cut as there will be no access to the internet. Perhaps it's time to use a mobile phone!

There are still a few Dell PCs that I'm offering 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 and I'll see what I can do, by phone / email on 01296 482735 or reeks@fangio.co.uk

PAT Testing

We need to thank Peter Ellison for performing this task on all our electrical equipment.

Next Contribution Date Friday 13th January 2023

Contributions Welcome from ALL Members

The Nativity Story

