



Blackwater Valley Newsletter

Volume 16 Edition 12

December 2023

A Merry Christmas



What the Dickens, Mr Allen?

Story Page 4

Chat from the Chair

Hello everybody!
As this is our last News-letter for 2023, I would like to wish you all a Very Happy Christmas and a Happy & Healthy New Year!



We have a most interesting number of guest speakers lined up for 2024, beginning with CHRIS DAVIES from THE ASCOT BREWING COMPANY, the multi award-winning Surrey based micro-brewery!

Chris will be with us on THURSDAY AFTERNOON, 18TH JANUARY, so come along, meet up with Chris and hear about the many areas (and beers...) of this successful Camberley based Company.

Whilst writing, I would like to thank everybody who have helped to keep Blackwater Valley u3a active.

I hope to see you at our Christmas Party on 21st December – don't forget to bring a bite to eat!

Regards
BARBARA

Forthcoming Meetings

December 21st Christmas Party

PARTY DRINKS
FREE RAFFLE
PICTURE QUIZ
ART EXHIBITION
MUSIC

Bring your own food for main table or for
your own use only

NEXT YEAR

January 18th

Chris Davis: *Ascot Brewery Today*

February 15th

Paul Whittle: *The Venetian Connection*

March 21st

Mel Rees: *Further Thoughts*

April 18th

Sarah M. Slater: *The Ghosts of Hampton Court*

May 16th

Paul Barwick: *'White Mouse' Nancy Wake*

June 20th

Malcolm Wells: *"So Far So Good [2]"*.

Our last speaker

What a pleasure it was to have another visit from the entertaining David Allen. Well-known for his “theatrical” performances he did not disappoint when on 16th November he gave us “Merry Christmas Mr Dickens”.



This performance came with a modicum of education and along with a lot of laughter we learnt the darker side of Dickens’ life from his birth in Portsmouth in 1812, moving with his family in a fairly nomadic way, while his father dabbling in business eventually ended up in debtors’ prison. Perhaps a rôle model for Mr Micawber in David Copperfield. On leaving school at twelve he worked in a blacking factory amongst other humble ways of earning a living before his ultimate rise to become perhaps the greatest author of his age, creating some of our best known and loved characters in fiction.



Charles Dickens

David Allen is always good value for money and he left behind a satisfied audience and Club.

If we can avoid Marshalsea ourselves and perhaps sell off the family silver another dose of his wit and scholarship is surely prescribed.

Whilst he was here

One of the duties of a visiting speaker is to pick the winning ticket for the monthly prize draw. David Allen drew Ann Atkins’ name from the hat.



Catching up with the Groups

MOTO

In November we enjoyed a Sunday lunch at The Dog & Partridge in Yateley. Early in December we will be visiting The Crown & Cushion for our Christmas Lunch. The New Year will see us meeting up for lunch at The White Lion in Yateley so that we can plan and discuss ideas for our Spring Programme. Best wishes for the Festive Season to all members of Blackwater Valley u3a.

JUDITH SHAW (0118 973 2724, 07508 724876,
email jmshaw17@hotmail.co.uk)



The next meeting of the Photography Group will be in the Gallery of the Tythings on Tuesday January 23rd starting at 14.00 hrs.
The subject matter is: In the Water.

Contact: Philip Rowling 01252 870879
rowingphilip@g.mail.com

The Book Group

Well here we are hurtling towards Christmas at a fast rate of knots. But always time to have a few quiet breaks and a little read with “Who done it” genres frequenting the Book Club lists a fair amount.

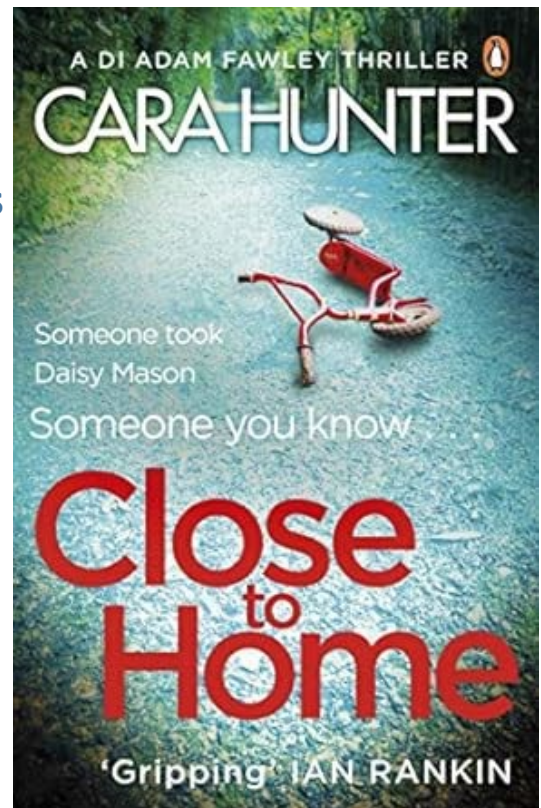
This month *Close to Home* by Cara Hunter is a good one. Eight year old Daisy disappears from a family party. What makes this book a little bit different is the style it’s been written in. The story is interspersed with snippets from a social media site such as Twitter or X as it is called now. The Twitter (social media) comments get out of control and, as what often happens, becomes a vindictive amount of comments surrounding the parents/family. Wide spread hate campaigns on social media always escalates without any real evidence one way or the other.

Very well written, with plenty of red herrings. So we end with, were the parents involved with Daisy’s disappearance or was someone else involved? Give it a read and find the answer!

If you are interested in joining our little book club, we do have one space available. Please speak to Chris Bowen I know many of you know her through the U3A.

We will all be swapping books at the U3A party on the 21st December and we look forward to seeing you all then.

Please have a happy and healthy Christmas and peaceful New Year.



WENDY DAUVEN
CHRIS BOWEN

Walking Together

WITH MIN GARDINER AND ROMY WHITE

Well, that was a lovely walk from the Church Yard at Eversley along the Welsh Drive crossing Bramshill Plantation to the New Mill. Then along the Blackwater Valley Path to Eversley Village and back through the trees of Warbrook House to the Church.

Thanks to Tony Buckle for leading us and for telling us so much about the large number of fungi that we found along the way.

There were ten of us today including three new walkers - welcome Michael, Janet and Sarah - and we had a lovely lunch at the *Tally Ho*.



MIN



The Art Group

The Art Group meets at the Darby Green and Frogmore Social Hall on Mondays at 11am until 1pm. All BVu3a members are welcome to join us and enjoy a tad of creativity. We are taking a break over the Christmas period from 18th December restarting on the 8th January '24.

THE ANNUAL JIGSAW PUZZLE COMPOSITE



This picture is the result of collaboration between the members of the group to produce a single work of art from many sources.

**Contact; Martin Brooks 01252 871333 or
thebrookies73@gmail.com**

On a Musical Note



Following on from our pre-Christmas party at the Tythings and our Wednesday afternoon get-together, at No 7, here's the next diary dates for the start of 2024.

Wednesday 2pm – 3.30pm 3rd January 2024 Tythings

Wednesday 2pm – 3.30pm 17th January 2024 7 Sandhurst Lane

Wednesday 2pm – 3.30pm 7th February 2024 Tythings

Wednesday 2pm – 3.30pm 21st February 2024 7 Sandhurst Lane

As previously mentioned, we are not a choir, we just sing for fun and health.

All songs are chosen by our members and DJ Graham performs wonders to include them on the 'Play List of Songs' for the following session.

If you have a free afternoon, please come along, meet up with the group (we are a cheerful bunch)....sing and of course enjoy a cuppa!!

BARBARA

In for a "Hug" and a Christmas Selfie at No. 7



About time for some laughs

My husband and I divorced over religious differences. He thought he was God, I didn't.

I don't suffer from insanity; I enjoy every minute of it.

Beauty is in the eye of the beer holder.

I'm not a complete idiot -- Some parts are just missing.

God must love stupid people; He made so many.

Procrastinate Now!

A hangover is the wrath of grapes.

Ham and eggs...A day's work for a chicken, a lifetime commitment for a pig.

I smile because I don't know what the hell is going on.

Don't take life too seriously; No one gets out alive.

The surest sign that intelligent life exists elsewhere in the universe is that it has never tried to contact us.

My family's menu consisted of two choices: take it or leave it.

OK everyone, line up alphabetically according to your height.

If you live to be one hundred, you've got it made - very few people die past that age.

Never under any circumstances take a sleeping pill and a laxative on the same night.

The difference between stupidity and genius is that genius has its limits.

My opinions may have changed, but not the fact that I'm right."

All the people in favour of birth control are already born!

British Humour

Children are quick!

Teacher: Why are you late?

Child: Class started before I got here.

Teacher: John, why are you doing your maths on the floor?

John: You told me to do it not using tables!

Teacher: Glenn, how do you spell crocodile?

Glenn: K,R,O,K,O,D,I,A,L.

Teacher: No, that is wrong.

Glenn: Maybe it is wrong, but you asked me how I spell it.

Teacher: Donald, what is the chemical symbol for water?

Donald: H-I-J-K-L-M-N-O

Teacher: What are you talking about?

Donald: Yesterday you said it was H to O

Teacher: Wendy, name one thing we have today that we didn't have ten years ago,

Wendy: Me.

Teacher: Glenn, why do you always get so dirty?

Glenn: 'Cos I'm nearer the ground than you are.

Teacher: George Washington not only chopped down his father's cherry tree, but also admitted it. Now, Louie, why did his father not punish him?

Louis: Because George still had the axe in his hand?

Teacher: Now Simon, tell me frankly, do you say prayers before eating?

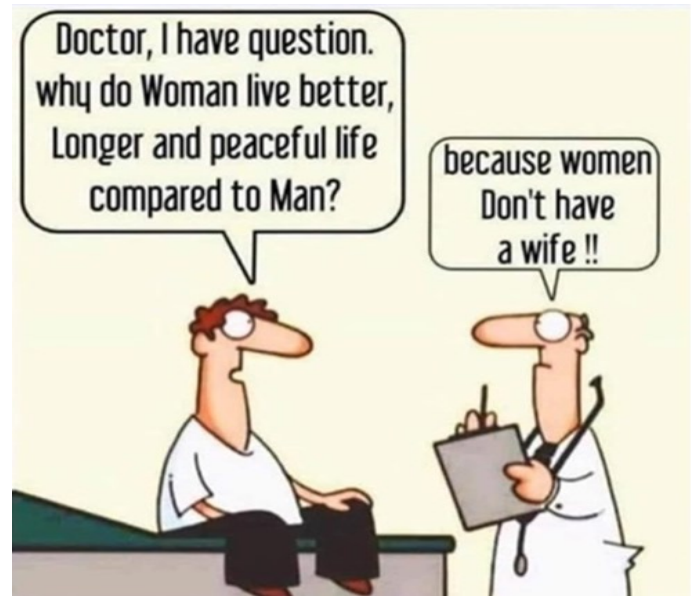
Simon: No Sir, no need, my mother is a good cook.

Teacher: Clyde, your composition on 'My Dog' is exactly the same as your brother's. Did you copy his?

Clyde: No Sir, I don't have to. It's the same dog.

Teacher: Harry, what do you call a person who keeps on talking when people are no longer interested?

Harry: A teacher.



How about a Quiz?

November's past, Christmas is coming - fast!

- 1) What countries made up the Axis powers in WW1?
- 2) What is the first number that contains the letter 'a'?
- 3) What animal is on the Porsche car badge?
- 4) How long did the first commercial plane flight last?
- 5) What letter never appears in any USA state names?
- 6) In which country does MacDonalds serve spaghetti?
- 7) Demolition of the Berlin Wall began in which year?
- 8) What is currently the biggest music single of all time?
- 9) Who was the first gymnast to score a perfect 10?
- 10) What was the tiny jean's pocket designed to carry?
- 11) What is the fastest land animal?
- 12) What country has the most natural lakes?
- 13) What can be broken but never held?
- 14) What comes down but never goes up?
- 15) How many colours in a rainbow?

Questions set by Barb Bell

Remember November's? The answers are here!

- | | |
|---|--------------------|
| 1) What is the most common disease in pirate ships? | Scurvy |
| 2) When was the United Nations established? | 1945 |
| 3) How many faces does a dodecahedron have? | 12 |
| 4) How many bones in a human ear? | 3 |
| 5) What is a group of cows called? | Murder |
| 6) What's the only human body parts fully grown at birth? | Eyes |
| 7) What is the largest known land animal? | Elephant |
| 8) In Fahrenheit at what temperature does water boil? | 212 |
| 9) What is the largest organ in the human body? | Liver |
| 10) An average human takes how many breaths a day? | 17000-23000 |
| 11) What is the chemical symbol for salt? | NaCl |
| 12) In miles, how far away is the moon? | 238,900 |
| 13) What colour is a giraffe's tongue? | Purple |
| 14) how many bones does a shark have? | None |
| 15) What was the first country to use paper money? | China |

More from Martin

A Christmas Greeting we send to you
To wish you luck the whole year through.
Let fortune ride with you and yours
To bring much happiness thro' your doors

We want to stay and be your friend,
And that's a place that we'll defend!
Even if this year again, we have not met,
It doesn't mean that we've forgot you yet.

So, to everyone we know today
We want you to celebrate this way,
To remember the days of fun we led
And relive them again in your head.

Happy Christmas

Fran – you have a good break away.
It's time you had a holiday.
Off to Greece with your mate.
Off to the airport, now don't be late.

Relax in the sun plus a glass of wine,
very soon you'll be feeling fine.
If you're down, have another glass,
and think of Scrabble – it'll soon pass!

(Sent to a friend who's had a difficult year)

SWAP OR BUY

Support our new BOOK STALL by bringing a couple of books for exchange at the Christmas Party.

Or perhaps browse the stall and purchase a few volumes that catch your eye for an appropriate donation.

Money collected will go towards the Club's general funds offsetting our increasing costs



COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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Philip Rowling	01252 870879	rowlingphilip@gmail.com
Meg Thomson	01276 33727	megtho@ntlworld.com

Group Meetings

Art

Meetings: Darby Green and Frogmore Social Hall
11:00 – 13:00 on Mondays
Group Leader: Martin Brooks 01252 871333
thebrooksies73@gmail.com

Books

Meetings: Private House at 14.00 on the last Thursday of the Month
Group Leader: Wendy Dauven 01276 513984
wendyandpaul53@gmail.com

Bowls (Summer)

Meeting: Hawley Bowls Club, Blackwater & Hawley Leisure Complex
10:30 to 12:00 every Wednesday between April and September
Group Leader: Dave Dickinson 01252 879056
daviddickinson9@btinternet.com

Canasta

Meeting: Private House
14:00 2nd and 4th Wednesdays
Group Leader: Clive Singer 07901568126
clive.singer1@gmail.com

Gardening

Meeting: Private House
t.b.a.
Group Leader: Catharine Airey 07518745736
catharineairey@hotmail.co.uk

MOTO A group for 'members on their own'.

Meetings: Arranged monthly times various
Group Leader: Judith Shaw 0118 9732724
jmshaw17@hotmail.com

Photography

Meetings: The Tythings, Yateley
14:30 on every 4th Tuesday of the month
Group Leader: Phil Rowling 01252 870879
rowingphilip@gmail.com

Rummikub

Meeting: Private House
To be arranged
Group Leader: Lyn Sado 01252 872221
sadlyn@ntlworld.com

Singing Group

Meetings: The Tythings Yateley
14:00 to 15:30 on the first Wednesdays of the month
Group Leader: Barbara Brooks 01252 871333
thebrooksies73@gmail.com

Various Sports

Table tennis, indoor curling, etc.
Meetings: Frogmore Leisure Centre
13:00 on Fridays
Group Leader: Val Green 07990 584571
greenvalley2043@gmail.com

Walking Together

A guided walk of about 5 miles
09.30 Meeting in the car park of Potley Hill Campus
Mornings Second Thursday of the month
Group Leaders: Min Gardiner 07450256948 xansamaz@aol.com
Rosemary White 01276 503813 romyandjohn@hotmail.com