



MAY 2024 newsletter

WHAT IS u3a?

It is amazing how many people do not know anything about The University of the Third Age. I guarantee that 50% of the population will not be able to tell you what **u3a** stands for.

Yes, we all know that we are a group of likeminded people who are no longer in full time employment and who wish to learn and become involved in leisure activities by drawing on the knowledge, experience and efforts of our own members. (There are now over 400,000 members in the U.K. in 1250 different u3a.) But the country still needs to learn about our movement.

Way back, Peter Laslett wrote the objects and principles of the U3A. He firmly rejected the French model – the French Universite du Troisieme Age which started in 1972 - in which the local U3A was guided by the local university. Looking back, here in Emsworth, there was a group of people in the year 2006 who wanted to join a u3a. The existing Emsworth and District u3a was full and so Emsworth and District suggested that we form another separate u3a. A steering committee was formed and held meetings which progressed to our formation. The name “Ems Valley” – how was that decided? John Gains suggests that the Ems Newspaper just happened to be lying on the table of the room where the meeting was being held and it was thought that would be OK!



This u3a drew their members mainly from Emsworth, Southbourne and Westbourne. However the strength of any U3A is in its small specialised groups, and we have always been strong in the variety of our group subjects. Would you believe that there are some 400 different subject groups in the whole of the UK? We in Ems Valley already have some fifty plus different interest groups. If we are a little lacking in any subject matter, it would appear to be in the musical direction! A little while ago a member asked in the newsletter if anybody would be interested in forming a band/orchestra and there were, regrettably, very few takers! I see that Hayling u3a has seven different musical groups but then I also note that Ems Valley has five different Wine Appreciation groups! Better not pursue that one.....

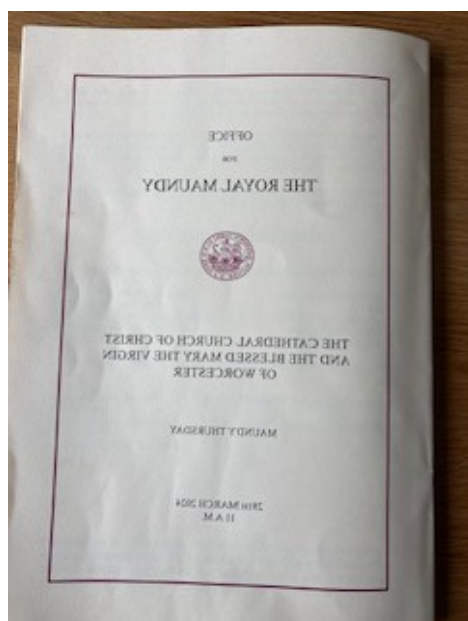
Incidentally, both Waterlooville and Hayling Island were both formed at about the same time as us and are both very active. Havant was formed some little time later with some help from us, and they are also thriving.

The secret to the success of u3a? Our members draw upon their knowledge and experience to teach and learn from each other - it is a classic case of give and receive. There are no qualifications to pass – what we do is just for pleasure. Learning is its own reward. It's all voluntary; from art to zoology and everything in between, or in our case perhaps - from Bricks to Ancient Greeks. Do you like the new strap line, Learn, Laugh, Live??

Editor

Helen Hockey awarded Maundy Money

'Singing for fun' member Helen was honoured at the Maundy Thursday service at Worcester Cathedral on 28th March.



Caption for above (clockwise) Helen, The Queen wearing Queen Elizabeth's brooch, Worcester Cathedral, Order of service and the Maundy purses.

Helen travelled to Worcester Cathedral for the service and presentation with a companion and sat in the south aisle from where she could just see the Queen. She said that she had completed the "any physical disabilities" form with a 'no'. It was only as she took her seat that the irony struck her – she being, in her words, 'half blind' and her companion being half deaf!

Any other memories Helen? "Well, the Queen did stop at the lady alongside me rather a long time and congratulated her on a long career playing the organ in church for over 50 years (a remarkable coincidence I thought because I had over 55 years doing the same). It was only afterwards when said lady admitted to Helen that she was puzzled because she had never sat at an organ in her life. Being 5 foot nothing her feet would not have been anywhere near the pedals! But you don't argue with the Queen. It transpired that this lady was a Church helper!"

Helen started playing the Organ at school at 17 years of age and was playing for church services from that age. She played at Rowlands Castle for twenty years before moving to Emsworth in 1992. She now plays at Warblington and at Saint James. She joined our u3a in 2018 and plays the piano for "Singing for fun". She is also very active driving for "Good Neighbours", stewarding in our museum, and attending the WI at Rowlands Castle. Her allotment is still her pride and joy and her Hot cross Bun party with other allotment holders is a tradition – on the appropriate day of course. Indeed it carried on, right through lockdown with hermetically sealed buns!

What should we not do on Maundy Thursday? Helen said that we should eat fish on Good Friday, and refused to get involved with my research which said 'No Travel on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. Bathing, making noise, and laughing or smiling on Good Friday, especially at 3 p.m., are taboo. And roasting food during the Holy Week makes your face go black.....

In total, 75 men and 75 women received money this year (equivalent to the Monarch's age). The tradition of presenting alms on Maundy Thursday goes back to at least the 4th Century and in this country, the first record of the



monarch doing it is in 1213.

During the Royal Maundy ceremony, the Queen personally gives each pensioner a red purse and a white purse. The red purse contains a total of £5.50 in circulating currency representing the robe, food and clothing allowances. The white purse contains the Maundy coins minted especially for the occasion. The Queen was standing in for the King on this occasion.

In his role as Lord High Almoner, Bishop John accompanied HM The Queen. He said: "It was an honour to be able to welcome HM The Queen to Worcester. This is an immensely

special service and I know it will mean a huge amount to those who have been chosen to receive the coins, all of whom will have given years of service to their local communities."

And we all say "Well done Helen!"

Editor

Garden Group visit Champs Hill

On a lovely crisp and sunny morning, the Ems Valley U3A Garden group enjoyed a visit to the plant themed art exhibition and the garden at Champs Hill, near Pulborough. The subject of the art exhibition was 'Painting the Green:



flowers, grasses, shrubs and trees' and featured works of art from Mary Bowerman 's fabulous collection of modern and contemporary British art. Mary Bowerman is the owner of Champs Hill and she warmly welcomed us and gave a short talk about the history of the house and garden.

The gardens are spread over 27 acres of woodland and disused sand quarries. The sandy soil provides the perfect setting for the many varieties of heathers and rhododendrons around the informal beds. Following the devastating hurricane of 1987 the garden changed. Fallen trees and debris were cleared away, opening up



new vistas. Sculptures were carefully positioned in the garden and woods and these are now very much part of the interest and charm of the garden. The setting is dramatic, sitting high above the three unused sand quarries and enjoying wonderful views across the Amberley Wild Brooks to the South Downs. Following Mrs Bowerman's talk we enjoyed refreshments in the Barn before moving on to the art exhibition in the music room. The impressive paintings in the exhibition included both realistic and abstract styles and I felt there was something in the exhibition to please everyone. As with any interesting collection of artwork, there were paintings that were easy to appreciate and those that were more challenging.



Mary Bowerman said she particularly enjoyed being with us while we looked at the pictures and was very interested in our responses to them. She said that she preferred the more realistic paintings by Pissaro for example, rather than the more abstract works by Ivon Hitchens.

We were then invited to walk around the large garden and woods and admire the many sculptures on display.



Throughout the visit to Champs Hill, we were made to feel very welcome and there was no pressure at all to leave before we wanted to. It was a very



interesting and enjoyable visit which included both an impressive garden to enjoy and a plant related exhibition of very significant and

valuable artwork. I was very pleased to introduce our group to Champs Hill and all that it has to offer. At least two people have bought tickets to one of the music concerts, which I can thoroughly recommend.

Information about the Concerts, open days and Art days etc. can all be found on the Champs Hill website.

www.thebct.org.uk

Our members were asked not to take photographs of the art exhibition, hence no pics.

Annette Wood

RELICS AND RUINS - The Ancient Greece Group tour the Peloponnese!

After lockdown I wasn't sure that we would venture abroad as a group again, but suddenly it seemed like a good idea. We were all nearly six years older - but we were not past it— so off flew eighteen of us to Athens in mid-April, and have come back safely to tell the tale. This is a great relief to a tour party leader, I assure you! As I write this, we have only been home for a few days, so I imagine all of us still feel in a whirl of wonderful sights and impressions of Greece. It will take a while to process fully everything we have seen and done, but I hope that this article, and the accompanying photographs, will give you a flavour of the trip.



The idea was to explore some of the less visited places, because many of us had previously been to the more well-known ones, so we spent only one morning in Athens before heading off to tour the Peloponnese, which begins once you have crossed the bridge over the Corinth Canal. Our first stop was Nemea, an area most famous for its wine and for being the location of the First Labour of Herakles - slaying the Nemean Lion - but we had come to look at the archaeological remains, with the picturesque Temple of Zeus (see left); a fabulous site overall. The sun was out, the birds sang, the Judas trees were in flower, the countryside looked glorious – and we were almost the only visitors. That's how we like it! We also wandered up to the ancient stadium, but our experiences relevant to the 2024 Olympics – and

there was a special one - will appear in a summer issue, nearer to the Games.



I should mention now that we were to move to a new hotel every day. This might not be everyone's idea of a restful holiday, but to see so much, and not spend even more time in a coach, this was the answer. The next day we started our explorations at the ancient theatre of Argos, which was brought to life for us by the unexpected arrival of a group of drama students, who were there to film their performance of the myth of Argos.

After this we travelled a hairpin bendy route, which opened up panoramic views of sea and land, before heading south west to Sparta for lunch and a quick look at the archaeological site. Our main visit of the day was to the incredible Byzantine medieval ruins of the town of Mystras (see left), perched on a spur of the Taygetos mountains. It defies a brief description, but statuesque fennel, steep footpaths and spectacular frescos is a starting point. The next day we reached the far western coast and the Ionian Sea, at the town of Pylos. Before the only rain of the trip arrived, we managed to visit the Mycenaean Bronze Age Palace of Nestor – the fabled king who went with Agamemnon's army to the Trojan War. Luckily the following morning it was clear and bright, for we were to



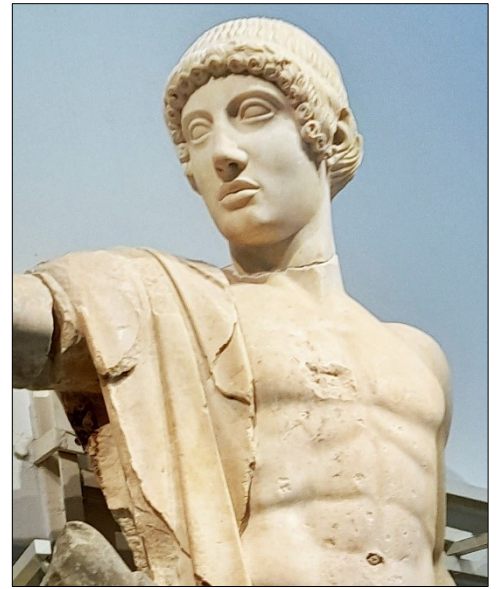
head north, climbing high into the mountains – along a rather tortuous road and an alarming narrow bridge – to the Temple of Apollo at Bassai. To preserve the building, and to allow restoration to take place, the entire structure is covered by a tent (see right), which is a bizarre sight, but once inside it, this UNESCO World Heritage site, the first one to be listed in Greece, is remarkable.



We went on to Olympia – about which more in due course – a re-visit for some of us, but eminently worth it, then drove back across the Peloponnese for our last night, by the coast in Tolon, to a hotel that we had stayed in a few days before. On that occasion Alan managed to arrange that he could run a local wine tasting for us this time; an entertaining and different way to end our tour. The following morning, before we said goodbye to the Peloponnese, we fitted in a visit to the citadel of Tiryns, with its secret stairways in mighty walls; a contrast to the unfortified Palace at Pylos.

Then, to the airport, and a late flight home, just hours before the Sahara dust storm coated everything in orange. By the way, the 'Relics and Ruins' heading is the title some wit gave to our trip WhatsApp group. Whether it applies to what we saw, to us, or perhaps both, is up to you to decide! What is without doubt, though, is that we had a wonderful time, not just visiting the ancient sites but relaxing in downtime and enjoying each other's company. The group gelled well, everyone was supportive of each other, and all members made excellent travelling companions.

Juliet Walker; Ancient Greece Group



*Top left – The ancient Theatre at Argos
Bottom left – your vice chairman Rod leads the group
from the Olympic stadium*

*Top right – Apollo from the temple of Zeus, Olympia
Bottom right – an alfresco lunch along the route*



Fancy a day out?

‘Day Trippers’ is pleased to announce their Spring and Summer Offerings.

Join us for an interesting visit and make new friends and discover new places.
Each outings brings new faces and our group is always friendly and welcoming.
We hope you can join us,

(Payment details for each event: Mr.Steve Gorban, HSBC, Sort Code: 40-45-22 Account Number 11658476)

Historic Portsmouth Walk and Pub Lunch at Still and West with views of the Harbour Wednesday 15 May start time

11:00. Cost per person is £4.00. **Sign up deadline is 11th May.**

Uncover 800 years of rich Spice Island history on this special guided walk.
Discover the story of The Point (also known as Spice Island), named for its
importance as a major port importing exotic spices from around the world.
It’s here that the city sprung to life, and the perfect starting point to uncover
the history of Portsmouth. We meet at The Square Tower on Broad Street. Menu to be sent out closer to the day.



Loseley Park House and Garden Tour with Lunch. (just south of Guilford)

6th June Start Time is 1045 for 11:30. Cost per person is £37.50

Sign up deadline and payment by 23rd May

Loseley House is situated in acres of rolling parkland with views that have changed very little in 500 years. The house is a fine example of Elizabethan architecture featuring many fine works of art. Loseley was built as a family home and it still remains so. Hospitality is a family tradition and they take pride in opening their estate, house and gardens to visitors as well as for weddings, corporate events, country fairs and artisan shows.

The guided tours of Loseley House cover a multitude of fascinating artefacts, including many fine works of art, panelling from Henry VIII's Nonsuch Palace, the magnificent chalk fireplace, and our Walled Garden that surprises and delights the visitor.

THE GARDEN

Tour of the garden is led by head Gardner Bernie following lunch. Comparable with gardens considered national treasures, the Walled Garden covers 2.5 acres and is divided into 'rooms' each with its own unique planting scheme and personality.

There's the Rose garden with over one thousand bushes, the Flower Garden with its maze of pathways and hidden corners and the White Garden that contrasts spectacular, showy, blooms with lush yet subtle silver and grey foliage.

Then there is the extensive Herb Garden, the Organic Vegetable Garden with its unusual varieties and, just outside the walls, the wildflower meadow – a haven of calm and tranquillity. Bernie, the head garden was responsible for the current design .



Loxwood Canal Chartered Boat Journey and Pub Lunch – 11th July.

Canal tour cost is £16.00 per person. Signup deadline and payment is on 4th July.

We must have 20 people to make this outing possible.

Join us for a journey lasting 1 1/2 hours on the this little known section of the Wey and Arun Canal.

The canal route across Loxwood High Street had been blocked since the late 1890s and involved a complex and



costly project lasting five years to get it to the flagship site it is today, where it houses the Canal Centre and is home to our three trip boats: Zachariah Keppel; Josias Jessop; and Wiggonholt.

The plan involved: building a new lock to the west of the High Street; lowering the section of the canal next to the Onslow Arms (east of the High Street); reconstructing Brewhurst Lock to fit with the new canal level; and building a new bridge under the road.

The work was divided into three phases: In the first phase, in 2005, Trust volunteers built a new lock next to the road. In 2006, the section of canal next to the Onslow

Arms pub was lowered to provide enough headroom for the new bridge, without altering the level of the road. The third phase finished the jigsaw by connecting the new lock to the lowered section of canal. Some £2m was spent, achieved through members' generosity and donations from Charitable Trusts.

The Loxwood High Street Canal Bridge officially opened in May 2009, with a further project to improve the appearance of the Loxwood High Street Canal Bridge completed later.

Simon and Steve

Do you enjoy painting?

Do you usually paint alone but would welcome a more sociable way of pursuing your hobby?

Would you like to join a new proposed group to be named **“The very creative art group”**

Proposed start date 9th July



Ems Valley u3a are exploring the possibility of establishing a new Group “Painting For Pleasure”, or “The Very Creative Art Group”!. This Group would meet monthly and members will bring along their work-in- progress to continue alongside other members, with friendly chats and discussion. This is not intended to be an instructed group, rather members bouncing ideas off one another and sharing problems, solutions and inspiration whilst working on their current artwork. The group would meet at Emsworth Community Centre on the first Tuesday of every month from 9.00 a.m. to 11.00 a.m. If this sounds interesting to you, please e-mail. You will not be committing yourself to anything at present – this is just to gauge interest in this prospective new Group.

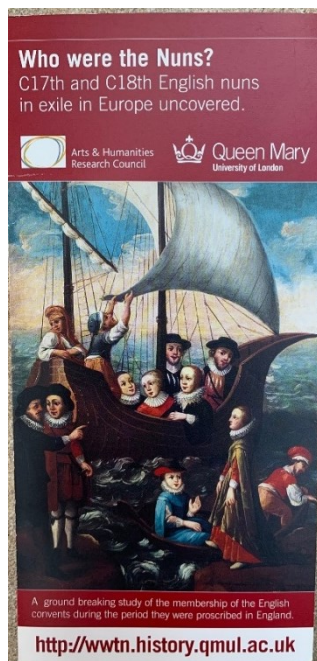
EMAIL: CreativeArt@emsvalleyu3a.org and meet likeminded people, enjoy your

hobby and maybe become famous.....

Stop press: I am told that many have already expressed interest – you will need to hurry.....Ed.

WHO WHERE THE NUNS? PORTSMOUTH – CHICHESTER – HARTING – EMSWORTH

Interested? Why not attend a talk by Dr. Caroline Bowden at 2.00pm (our local history group) Mountford Three ECC. On Friday 3rd May.



Reg Newnham thanks Yvonne Copeland for arranging this talk. Dr Bowden directed the “Who were the Nuns?” Project at Queen Mary University of London until 2013. The project team studied the membership of the English convents in exile creating a widely used database and website. Caroline has continued to expand her research and will talk about the convents and the families whose daughters left the local area to join the exile convents and consider evidence from other convents in the area in recent times. This will include Emsworth’s own Convent.

“The talk focusses on the Catholic community in South West Sussex before the Emancipation Act of 1829. It will be of particular interest to local historians and those researching family history and will discuss how Catholicism survived in the area in spite of legal restrictions. The speaker will use her research experience of the English convents in exile to illustrate the talk including an account of Martha Randall, born in Emsworth who travelled to Bruges in 1761 to join the English Convent there.”

Portrait right: Abbess Mary Knatchbull from the Benedictines in Ghent who led the foundation of the convent at Dunkirk in 1662 where Mary Caryll of Harting became the first Abbess.



Letters to the Editor



Hello Alan, In the last newsletter it was suggested that the wine groups should put forward their recommendations, so here are two bottles from Wine Appreciation Group 5. The first is a red Primitivo from Southern Italy, called Notte Stellata. A good rich, full bodied red, a fine example of its type. This one came from M&S Havant priced at £12. The second is a white Sauvignon Blanc from the Loire, France, called The Pebble. Another good example of the grape at this price, just under £8 in Tesco Havant last week but have seen it stocked elsewhere. The label recommends this one goes well with Fish & Chips!

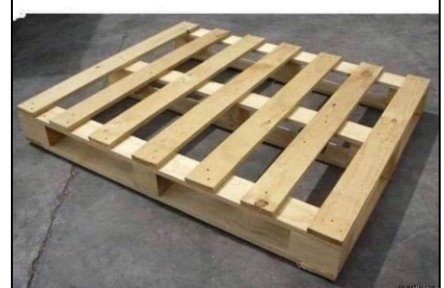
Happy drinking from Wine Appreciation Group 5

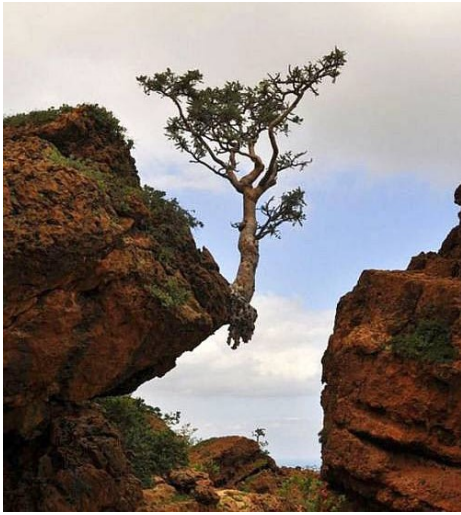
Editor: I am intrigued Mark, are those a fine specimen of home grown leeks in background? But should they not be earthed up a little??

A Love poem....

The wonderful love of a beautiful maid
And the love of a staunch true man,
And the love of a baby unafraid
Have existed since life began.
But the greatest love, the love of love
Even greater than that of a mother,
Is the tender and passionate, infinite love
Of one drunken sod for another.

Took me all day yesterday but finally finished. A pallet I made from an old coffee table.





TENACITY



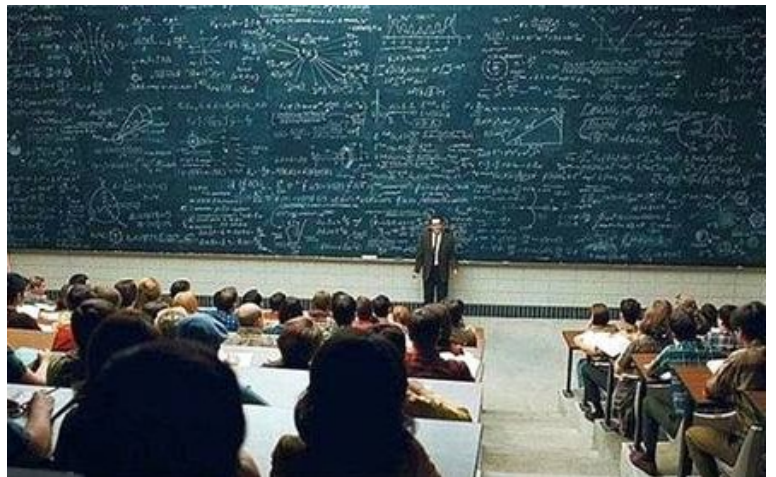
AWE



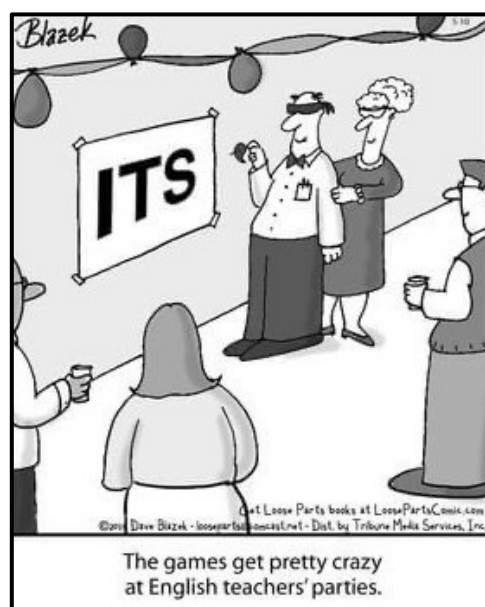
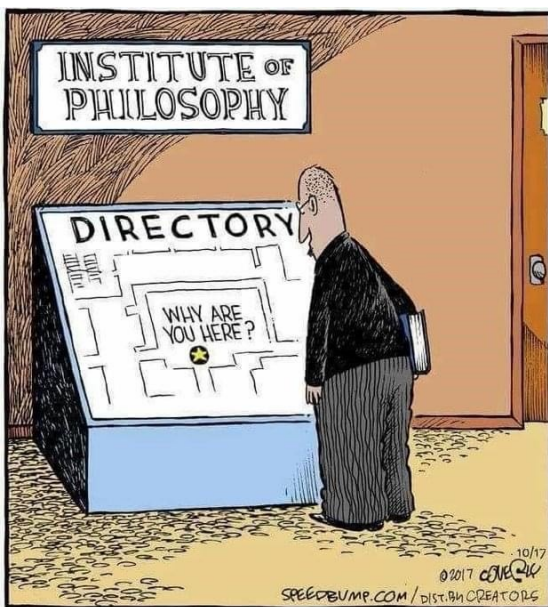
FRUITFUL



RELATING



CONFUSION





'You must learn to put up a tent in case one day you choose to be homeless'



YOU WERE RIGHT...

People don't land on their feet...

Husband: "Scientists have found that men say about 10,000 words a day, while women say about 20,000..."

Wife (shouts from the kitchen): "It's because we have to repeat everything twice to you blockheads!"

Husband: "What?"

One of the last coal-powered sheep .
Most sheep are all electric now.



If you ever feel like your brain is inadequate... Think of this guy!



> The Church Ladies

- >
- > LOVE THOSE CHURCH LADIES. They're Back! Oh, those wonderful Church
- > Bulletins! Credit the church ladies with typewriters. I am told that these sentences
- > (with all the BLOOPERS) actually appeared in church bulletins or were
- > announced in church services: (PS it is possible that some were "Church Men!")
- >> -----
- > THE FASTING & PRAYER CONFERENCE INCLUDES MEALS.
- > -----
- > THE SERMON THIS MORNING: 'JESUS WALKS ON THE WATER.' THE SERMON
- > TONIGHT: 'SEARCHING FOR JESUS.'
- > -----
- > LADIES, DON'T FORGET THE RUMMAGE SALE. IT'S A CHANCE TO GET RID OF
- > THOSE THINGS NOT WORTH KEEPING AROUND THE HOUSE. BRING YOUR HUSBANDS.

> DON'T LET WORRY KILL YOU OFF - LET THE CHURCH HELP.

> -----

> MISS CHARLENE MASON SANG 'I WILL NOT PASS THIS WAY AGAIN,' GIVING
> OBVIOUS PLEASURE TO THE CONGREGATION...

> -----

> FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO HAVE CHILDREN AND DON'T KNOW IT, WE HAVE A
> NURSERY DOWNSTAIRS.

> -----

> NEXT THURSDAY THERE WILL BE TRYOUTS FOR THE CHOIR. THEY NEED ALL THE
> HELP THEY CAN GET.

> -----

> IRVING BENSON AND JESSIE CARTER WERE MARRIED ON OCTOBER 24 IN THE
> CHURCH. SO ENDS A FRIENDSHIP THAT BEGAN IN THEIR SCHOOL DAYS.

> -----

> A BEAN SUPPER WILL BE HELD ON TUESDAY EVENING IN THE CHURCH HALL.
> MUSIC WILL FOLLOW.

> -----

> AT THE EVENING SERVICE TONIGHT, THE SERMON TOPIC WILL BE 'WHAT IS
> HELL?' COME EARLY AND LISTEN TO OUR CHOIR PRACTICE

> -----

> EIGHT NEW CHOIR ROBES ARE CURRENTLY NEEDED DUE TO THE ADDITION OF
> SEVERAL NEW MEMBERS AND TO THE DETERIORATION OF SOME OLDER ONES.

> PLEASE PLACE YOUR DONATION IN THE ENVELOPE ALONG WITH THE DECEASED
> PERSON YOU WANT REMEMBERED.

> -----

> THE CHURCH WILL HOST AN EVENING OF FINE DINING, SUPER ENTERTAINMENT
> AND GRACIOUS HOSTILITY.

> POTLUCK SUPPER SUNDAY AT 5:00 PM - PRAYER AND MEDICATION TO FOLLOW.

> -----

> THE LADIES OF THE CHURCH HAVE CAST OFF CLOTHING OF EVERY KIND. THEY
> MAY BE SEEN IN THE BASEMENT ON FRIDAY AFTERNOON.

> -----

> THIS EVENING AT 7 PM THERE WILL BE A HYMN SINGING IN THE PARK ACROSS
> FROM THE CHURCH. BRING A BLANKET AND COME PREPARED TO SIN.

> -----

> LADIES BIBLE STUDY WILL BE HELD THURSDAY MORNING AT 10 AM. ALL LADIES
> ARE INVITED TO LUNCH IN THE FELLOWSHIP HALL AFTER THE B. S. IS DONE.

> -----

> THE PASTOR WOULD APPRECIATE IT IF THE LADIES OF THE CONGREGATION WOULD
> LEND HIM THEIR ELECTRIC GIRDLES FOR THE PANCAKE BREAKFAST NEXT SUNDAY.

>> -----

> LOW SELF ESTEEM SUPPORT GROUP WILL MEET THURSDAY AT 7 PM. PLEASE USE
> THE BACK DOOR.

> -----

> THE EIGHTH-GRADERS WILL BE PRESENTING SHAKESPEARE'S HAMLET IN THE
> CHURCH BASEMENT FRIDAY AT 7 PM. THE CONGREGATION IS INVITED TO ATTEND
> THIS TRAGEDY.

> -----

> WEIGHT WATCHERS WILL MEET AT 7 PM AT THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.
> PLEASE USE LARGE DOUBLE DOOR AT THE SIDE ENTRANCE.

> -----

All contributions for the next newsletter please to:

alanborrow1@gmail.com

(please note new email address)