



August 2024 newsletter

Update from your Speaker Secretary:

Our meeting on 25th July featured a very entertaining and informative presentation by Wayne Newton on “Theatrical Superstitions, Myths and Legends”.

After tea we were joyfully entertained by shanties from The Estuary Men. (see pic later in Newsletter)

There is no monthly meeting in August, but our meeting on 26th September will begin with a talk by Dr Gale Pettifer on “The History of the New Forest Pony”.

The New Forest pony has been present in the area since at least the Ice Age, and still lives a semi-feral life on the unenclosed landscape. Known as the architect of the Forest, this native breed has, since ancient times, shaped (and been shaped by) the ecology, economy, and cultural heritage of the New Forest.

This informative and entertaining talk explores the development of the New Forest pony from a prey species in the Pleistocene era to the status of tribal god in modern times, and asks, what does the future have in store for this ancient pony breed?

After tea there will be a demonstration of the techniques and benefits of Pilates.

A full schedule of all our main speakers at the monthly meetings from now until November 2025 is posted on our website emsvalleyu3a.org, where you will find information about our events, groups and other useful information. I would like to hear from Members who might be interested in doing a presentation in the after tea slot (20-25 minutes). Please contact me at speakersecretary@emsvalleyu3a.org if you might be willing to consider this.

Rod Lipscombe

“Wine One” escape the showers for annual Barbecue!

Tuesday 16th July will be remembered by Wine One members for something other than the 8 different white wines



and the 10 varied reds that they tasted on that evening! Dark, very ominous, clouds were also present! But not a spot of rain spoilt our annual barbecue. I am told that just four miles away the opposite was experienced. It was quite amazing to be bathed in sunshine one minute and shaded by the blackest of the black the next. Needless to say it did not detract from the pleasure of the evening and Geoff Wiggins and Richard Galloway cooked the fare with their usual culinary skills. The trusty awning, seen in the background, housed the

magnificent desserts that members had made, and it was remarked that these were “the best ever”! Forty five attended and once again it was a most enjoyable event. Perhaps numbers were slightly down this year, because the Theatre group were visiting Oliver at Chichester on that same evening. (see review elsewhere)

The old Hospital Gardens where you see us celebrating above, are a unique little backwater in Emsworth and we are



very lucky to be able to use this facility for these functions. Recently these have been improved and now provide a lovely hidden garden haven right in the middle of our town (village?).

The committee that administer the garden, now called “The Friends Community Garden” say on their web site that it is open every day and evening for everyone to enjoy, except when let for private functions.

I quote: “It is a traditional, walled and gated green space right in the centre of Emsworth town providing opportunities for community activities and events, surrounded by mature and new trees with traditional flower borders.

The garden contains a brick built BBQ and a small pavilion with lots of chairs and tables for community use. We have embarked on a programme to upgrade and enhance the garden, and would like to thank our members for offering their time and effort in weeding and digging. The south west area of the garden now has a round wood pergola thanks to all the hard work of Vic Evershed. We have laid a patio in the north west corner which will aid summer BBQ’s.”

Our continuing thanks go to this committee!

Alan Borrow

Why are Hydrangeas so good this year?



The hydrangeas are in full bloom early this year and gardens in Emsworth are showing this. The above photos were taken by Sandie Swaine’s front door and she told me that they have been transplanted three times as and when they

have moved house! Hydrangeas are the colourful round flowers that are often the mainstay of many gardeners' floral arsenal. Is it because they come in such a variety of colours including blue, green, pink, purple, red and white? These popular perennials are particularly vivid this summer. Apparently, wet summers and warm winters make for good hydrangeas, and plants form flower buds for the next year in mid to late summer, so rain throughout the year is essential. The books say that as perennials, hydrangeas go dormant in the winter to avoid cold weather. Wherever you go in Emsworth you will find magnificent blooms at the moment. Maybe we could get another knowledgeable quote or two on this subject, from our Gardens group?

Editor

Folk night at the E.C.A.

Sunday 14th July is a revolutionary day ("Bastille Day") , but in Emsworth u3a members were treated to an evening of Folk music, a little more gentle than the French equivalent!



Musical sisters Alice (violin) and Juliet Beadle (flute) and Louis Suc (tenor saxophone and percussion) travelled down from their London bases to let us hear their tuneful adventures exploring 17th century broadside ballads, traditional English, medieval, and Nordic folk music. They included new numbers that they had written themselves, and the evening was much enjoyed.

Eighty two members and friends were entertained by this Trio, who performed their routine straight from their appearance at the Sidmouth Folk Festival. But Folk music is only part of their repertoire. They also play in the classical arena and they enjoy playing Jazz! I even saw them last month playing "Big Band" music with the well known Oxford Maqam's music group in their sell out shows: 'Tarab and Tango' and 'Cairo Nights', at the Greenwood

Theatre, London. Thank you all for your notes of appreciation!

Editor

Croquet Match v Chichester u3a

Ann Newnham tells me that this is scheduled for 31st July – Watch this space for the result!

This group has really taken off, everybody I talk to seems to be a member of Ann's Croquet group (or groups!)



20 Daytrippers on the canal at Loxwood



Members of the Day Trippers Group visited the Wey and Arun Canal at Loxwood on 11th July and enjoyed a trip on a narrow boat along a stretch of that canal. The visit got off to an unfortunate start as the Group Leader overlooked the start of the Goodwood Festival of Speed and got caught up in the traffic visiting Goodwood and as a result arrived 30 minutes late! Fortunately it was possible to delay the departure and the rest of the Group were supplied with tea and coffee whilst waiting for the Leader's arrival.

This section of the canal is owned by the Wey and Arun Trust which is in the process of restoring the 23 mile abandoned canal which runs through the lovely Surrey and Sussex to create the missing link

between Britain's inland waterways and the English Channel. Only parts of the canal are navigable and the extent of our trip was slightly curtailed due to low water levels despite all the recent rainfall! Never the less we enjoyed the peace of the countryside in pleasant sunshine and experienced going through a lock operated by the Trust's volunteer crew.

On return to the Trust's visitor centre, the Group enjoyed a pub lunch at the adjoining Onslow Arms where we were well looked after by very friendly and efficient staff.

After lunch, some members took advantage of the setting and took a walk along the tow path whilst others left for home hoping to avoid the Goodwood traffic!

History of the canal:

Before a canal system was established in Britain, the only means of transporting large cargoes was aboard ships that sailed around the coast. In order to bring these goods inland, they were then transferred to carts pulled by horses or oxen over muddy, rutted, unsurfaced roads that were often impassable in winter. So, in an attempt to join the Wey and Arun rivers, thus creating a waterway from London to the English Channel, a plan was first hatched in 1641 for a

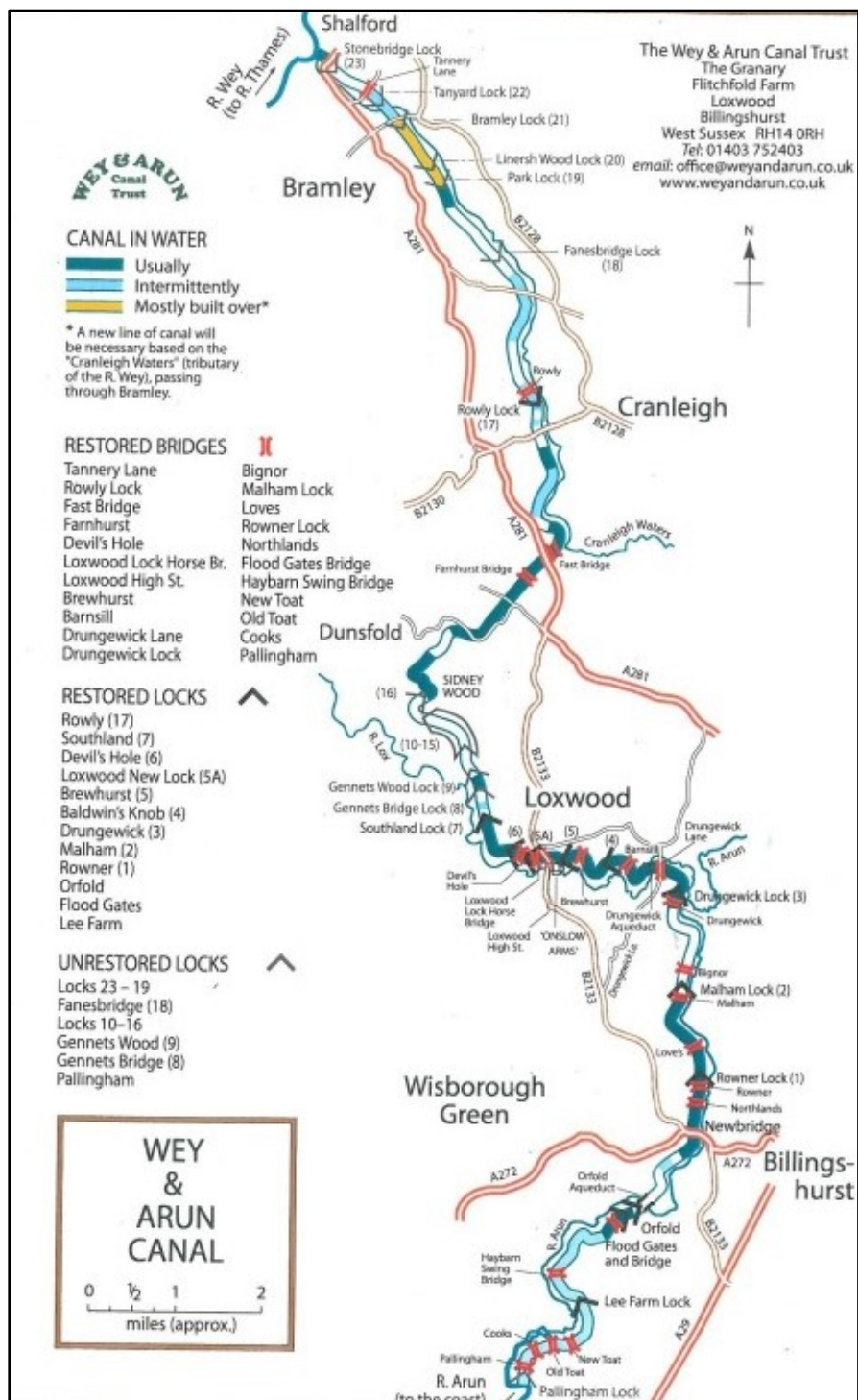


two-mile section of canal to link the Wey to a small branch of the Arun at Dunsfold. It was said that "Every barge carrying 20 tons would save keeping six score (120) horses." For a number of reasons, the plan did not proceed. During the Napoleonic wars (1799-1815), the sea route from London via the English Channel to Portsmouth where

the Royal Navy was based, was fraught with danger from French ships. It was always realised that by joining and making navigable the Thames, Wey and Arun rivers, cargoes including naval supplies could travel more safely. Also, the journey would take only four days and goods could be delivered to inland wharves along the route. Thus, in 1784 a Petition was presented to the House of Lords to cut a new canal. An Act of Parliament was then granted for two canals to connect and improve existing navigable river sections, namely Coldwaltham to Hardham and Pallingham to Newbridge Wharf.

The estimated costs rose because farmers demanded high prices for the compulsory purchase of their land, saying that their farms would be divided by the canal so they would not be able to get to their fields. A problem therefore arose raising the money to build the canal. Other difficulties included the fact that as the local roads were so poor the canal company had to lend the parishes of Wisborough Green, Billingshurst, Slinfold and Pulborough £600 in order that they could mend the roads which would serve the canal. Inhabitants of Pulborough and nearby parishes protested, saying that tolls would be imposed whereas the river had previously been free for them to use, harm would be done to the countryside by the building of locks and there would be no advantage to the inhabitants of Newbridge.

Despite all these objections, the plan proceeded. The workmen who built the navigation were usually Irishmen with some local unemployed and French prisoners of the Napoleonic wars. There were no lorries or mechanical diggers, just saws, picks, shovels and wheelbarrows. As each section of canal was dug, it was 'puddled' with clay to make it watertight. The builder, Zachariah Keppel, became the first casualty. Eventually it was completed and the Wey & Arun Canal had a total of 23 locks, 35 bridges, eight wharves, five lock-keepers' cottages and two aqueducts. It was 30 feet (9.15m) wide and three feet six inches deep. But, as the Napoleonic wars were over by the time the canal was completed, demand for the carriage of naval supplies was far below that envisaged. However, some canal-side industries grew up in many places along the waterway, served by boats drawn by horses walking along the towpath. The barges also had masts and sails that were used on wider parts of rivers and estuaries. These barges had no accommodation cabins, as boats did on the northern canals, barges instead staying at canal-side public houses whilst their families lodged in nearby cottages. The canal served to carry heavy cargoes to Sussex so that roofs could now be tiled instead of thatched, fires could burn coal instead of wood and imported goods could be carried in from ocean-going ships at Portsmouth. However, the coming of the railways revolutionised the speed



of travel and the Wey & Arun Canal finally closed to goods traffic in the early 1870s. It was quite a short life.

Day Trippers Autumn Events

Monday 16 SEPTEMBER – Double Local Gems!

GOODWOOD HOUSE FOLLOWED BY LUNCH AT THE ANGLESEY ARMS, Halnaker + A VISIT TO THE BOXGROVE PRIORY CHURCH OF SAINT MARY AND ST BLAISE in the afternoon.

10:15 for a 10:30 start.



We will first enjoy a private guided tour of Goodwood House, then lunch, then a guided tour of the Boxgrove Priory Church and Priory Ruins in the afternoon, with afternoon tea served in the Church Hall - Cost for the day, excluding lunch, is **£33.00 per person**.

Goodwood House is well worth a visit both for the quality of the furnishings and the fact that it feels like a lived-in home rather than a fossilised museum piece. Tea and biscuits will be served prior to the house tour. Although one of the area's best known attractions, it has not been experienced by many, and it has a most fascinating history.

Following the morning tour, we will lunch at the nearby Anglesey Arms in Halnaker PO18 0NQ.

theangleseyarms.com

After lunch we continue our day out with a visit to Boxgrove Priory Church (<http://www.boxgrovepriory.co.uk/>) with a guided tour followed by a tea in the church hall. "It is a magical church full of echoes of French influence along the Sussex coast," according to Sir Simon Jenkins!

Sign up and full payment deadline is 30th of August.

Tuesday 15 October - A visit to Albourne Wine Estate for a tour and tasting. Following the tour and tasting, a special luncheon menu is being planned by our friends from Southdowns Cellars and the Royal Oak in Wineham, where we will have lunch.

**11:15 for an 11:30 start at the Albourne Estate
Tour and tasting cost is £26.50 per person
albourneestate.co.uk BN6 9DX**

**Sign up and full payment deadline is 30th of August
Read below about this vineyard:**



Albourne Wine Estate was established in 2010 by husband and wife team, Alison Nightingale and Nick Cooper, and has rapidly established itself as an innovative and quality-led English wine producer at the forefront of this rapidly growing industry. Following a career in marketing, working overseas for large multinationals, Alison took a step back in 2004 and with two young children completed a Viticulture & Enology degree at Plumpton College, before searching for their own site to establish a vineyard in England. After a lengthy search they came across Albourne Farm, just 5 minutes from where they lived in Hurstpierpoint, with the perfect combination of location, geology and buildings.

Over the past 14 years they have established the vineyard, a winery and a stunning Tasting Room. From winning 'UK Wine of the Year' in 2015 with a Bacchus wine from the second ever harvest, the range, quality and reputation of Albourne Estate wines has grown to include traditional and charmat method sparkling wines, white and red still wines and one of the first English Vermouths. Alison continues to manage the day-to-day running of the Estate and lives on-site with Nick.

Following the tour and tasting at Albourne we will drive to The Royal Oak in Wineham for a special lunch planned just for us. See: theroyaloakwineham.worldpress.com Post Code : BN5 9AY. Not included in price.

The Royal Oak pub has operated since the late 1700's but the building itself goes way back to the 1400's.

Enjoy the rest of the Summer, Simon and Steve

Book Group 2 Annual Summer Outing

We decided this year to visit the Watts Gallery – Artists' Village in Compton, Surrey. As our current book theme is The Arts, it seemed appropriate to visit the home and studio of the artist George Frederic Watts.

Our visit in July co-coincided with the site's Tea Shop being closed for refurbishment but we were relieved to see when we arrived a mobile catering van so we were able to start our tour with a much needed coffee.

A guide filled us in on the details of Watts' life, which included marrying the actress Ellen Terry, when she was 16 and he was 46. The marriage lasted less than a year.

Among the collection of Watts' works is possibly his most famous painting, "Hope". (see below)



Barack Obama claimed its depiction of a blind girl sitting on the globe plucking at a lyre inspired him to go into politics. There was also a section devoted to Watts' sculpture, for which he is less well known than his paintings. The huge models gave us a sense of the scale of his works. While we were visiting, there was an exhibition on of Edo Pop: Japanese Prints 1825 – 1895, which we also took in. Quite a bit of time was spent in the gallery shop and several purchases were made; we were impressed by the quality of many of the products.

We then visited the nearby Watts Chapel, which was designed by his second wife Mary Fraser Tytler. The guide books describe its style as Arts and Crafts and Celtic Revival. It certainly was an unusual find in the Surrey countryside.

In the graveyard surrounding the chapel is the Huxley family grave, where the ashes of the writer Aldous Huxley were interred. Our trip out ended with lunch at The Withies Inn in Compton, which was popular and packed. It was a day that was both fun and cultural.

See pictures of our visit below.

Sandra McGregor



Above left – The Chapel



Above right – the group enjoying coffee

Below – The Gallery



The Theatre Group at "OLIVER" - Chichester Festival Theatre

This production was particularly interesting for some of us who had been students in London in the 1960s.

Perhaps an essay question? Compare and contrast?

It was much louder and faster than the original. The sets, special effects and costumes were excellent as is usual at Chichester.

The choreography was fast and furious during the first half and, to me, just a little bit frantic. After the interval the dancing slowed down a little. Characters of note were Mr Bumble, a self-righteous, unsympathetic person



with no care for the hungry and unloved children in the orphanage, well played by Oscar Conlon-Morrey. His main concern was to make money for himself and impress the governors. His voice, his diction and demeanour were excellent and he was well supported by the Widow Corney played by Katy Secombe. The Artful Dodger (Billy Jenkins) was also very well cast, a confident young actor, and I think that he will probably do well in his professional life. He

groomed and led Oliver in a very believable way.

Fagin (Simon Lipkin) was perhaps less devious and mendacious than expected, though very manipulative and funny.

Bill Sykes (Aaron Sidwell) was not quite as terrifying as expected and in this day of readily available well trained dogs it would have been nice if he had had a real animal and not just the barking in the background. Perhaps there are the same sort of laws as there are for children though it would never have been on stage for long. Nancy was lively and sang the Ompapa song with great gusto.

It was a very uplifting evening, always good to have a happy ending!!!! The music was as catchy as ever and the songs have kept popping up in my head ever since!

Chris Gibb

Editor: Chris posted this after thought: *I have been thinking about Oliver and looking at it from a modern point of view. Far from being "glorious", as one review said, it really is a sad story of woman and child abuse, the worst thing being that it all still goes on today in children's homes and with violence against women. Even the gangs of thieves are back in the big cities together with much homelessness. Sorry about that dismal thoughts I get them at times!!!!*

Sussex u3a members feature as extras in new film

Members of Brighton, Worthing and Sussex u3as got a taste of the spotlight as extras in upcoming film, 'Vindication Swim.'

The film tells the true story of swimmer Mercedes Gleitze who in 1927 became the first British woman to swim the English Channel. Written and directed by Elliott Hasler, this biographical drama tells of the bravery and determination of one woman to succeed against all odds.

Mercedes championed what is now referred to as wild water swimming. She was the first known person to swim the Straits of Gibraltar and, as mentioned above, the first British woman to swim the English Channel. The name of Mercedes Gleitze was used to market Rolex's new waterproof case, the "Oyster". She established endurance records for swimming including a record of 46 hours in 1932. She was able to raise funds to found the Mercedes Gleitze Homes in Leicester via sponsorship. The Mercedes Gleitze charity is now linked to the Family Action charity. Mercedes died in 1981.



The production company behind the film, Relsah Films, were keen to involve the u3a movement and contacted u3as in our region. u3a member Lee, who provided the photo of Worthing u3a members, says, "Several members answered the call for extras on the movie and spent the day at Worthing Town Hall filming.

Left: A selfie of four of the u3a ladies, dressed in period costume

Suzanne from Brighton u3a said of her experience, "We spent the day walking up and down a road, in crowd scenes and best of all, interacting with a beautiful old 1920s bus with

outside stairs, open top deck and being issued with authentic 20s tickets by a very smart 20s dressed conductor. "We got on and off many times, were driven along the museum's roads for numerous takes, both downstairs and upstairs with a little black car of the period following us. It really was an extremely interesting and enjoyable day."

The film was released on International Women's Day 2024 on Friday 8 March.

Simon Hasler, who runs Relsah Films, says, "The u3a members who came along to join us in making this film were so valuable. We hope they had as much fun as we did. And we think the amazing results speak for themselves!"

Estuary Men entertain Ems Valley on Thursday 25th July



Bricks Business

We did not meet in July after our mammoth series "History of the Brick". However, have a look at what a shower of rain can do to liven the appearance of the fired clay product: Left below: the pavours outside the Baptist church with thanks to MaryAnne Mathews for perspective feet, and Right below: the clay tiles on the Emsworth Community Centre building.



Ten black crows
sitting on the
posts.....
If one black crow
should accidently fly –
There would be nine
black crows sitting on
the posts
(forgotten the rest of
the words.....)



Cycling for fun in the New Forest.



U3A Cycling for Fun group enjoyed a change of terrain in July with a New Forest ride. After a smooth and speedy rail journey to Brockenhurst the jolly group tarried to enjoy the fleshpots of Brockenhurst with Cheese scones, cake, hot chocolates or coffee at the village tea rooms within sight of the station. Well it had been an early start (for some) and a second breakfast just topped up the blood sugars for the challenges ahead. Crossing the level crossing we turned off right away and in only a couple of minutes plunged into delightful ancient oak woodland leaving the sounds of rush and road far behind us in only a few minutes. There were New Forest ponies of course roaming freely and ignoring our intrusion almost contemptuously. We enjoyed the calming peace and tranquility and surprisingly varied

terrain of ups and downs over gravel tracks and soft verdant pathways. Out of the woodland and higher in the Forest we had extensive views over gorse and bracken with glimpses of the high coast at Portland before descending to the Beaulieu River at Bucklers Hard where we enjoyed a sunny al fresco lunch. After recharging ourselves we paused for a group photograph with the old ropewalk and the Master Builder's house in the background then down to the riverside and the decayed shipbuilding berths with reminders of Nelson's navy, then on along the riverside, inland to Beaulieu village itself. Our return ride to Brockenhurst took us on a combination of forest tracks and a couple of sections of fairly quiet roads, quickly back to the station for our return to Emsworth.

About 19 miles in all and very much enjoyed by all with special thanks to Ray Davies who mapped out the route and ably and cheerfully led our ride



Our August 19th ride will be 'Petersfield Circular' led by John Auric.

Neil Cowell

A strange old lady has moved into my house.

I have no idea who she is, where she came from, or how she got in. I certainly did not invite her. All I know is that one day she wasn't there, and the next day she was.

She is a clever old lady and manages to keep out of sight for the most part, but whenever I pass a mirror, I catch a glimpse of her. And, whenever I look in the mirror to check my appearance, there she is hogging the whole thing, completely obliterating my gorgeous face and body. This is very rude! I have tried screaming at her, but she just screams back.

The least she could do is offer to pay part of the bills, but no. Every once in a while, I find a £5.00 note stuck in a coat pocket or some loose change under a sofa cushion, but it is not nearly enough. And I don't want to jump to conclusions, but I think she is stealing money from me. I go to the ATM and withdraw £50.00 and a few days later, it's all gone! I certainly don't spend money that fast, so I can only conclude the old lady is pilfering from me. You'd think she would spend some of that money to buy wrinkle cream. And money isn't the only thing I think she is stealing. Food seems to disappear at an alarming rate-especially the good stuff like ice cream, chips, and sweets. She must have a real sweet tooth, but she'd better watch because she is really packing on the pounds. I suspect she realizes this, and to make herself feel better, she is tampering with my scales to make me think I am putting on weight, too.

For an old lady, she is quite childish. She likes to play nasty games, like going into my wardrobes when I'm not home and altering my clothes so they don't fit. And she messes with my files and papers so I can't find anything. This is particularly annoying since I am extremely neat and organized.

She has found other imaginative ways to annoy me. She gets into my mail, newspapers, and magazines before I do and blurs the print so I can't read it. And she has done something really sinister to the volume controls on my TV, radio, and telephone. Now, all I hear are mumbles and whispers. She has done other things - like make my stairs steeper, my vacuum heavier and all the knob and taps harder to turn. She even made my bed higher so that getting into and out of it is a real challenge.

Lately, she has been fooling with my groceries before I put them away, applying glue to the lids, making it almost impossible for me to open the jars. She has taken the fun out of shopping for clothes. When I try something on, she stands in front of the dressing room mirror and monopolizes it. She looks totally ridiculous in some of those outfits, plus, she keeps me from seeing how great they look on me.

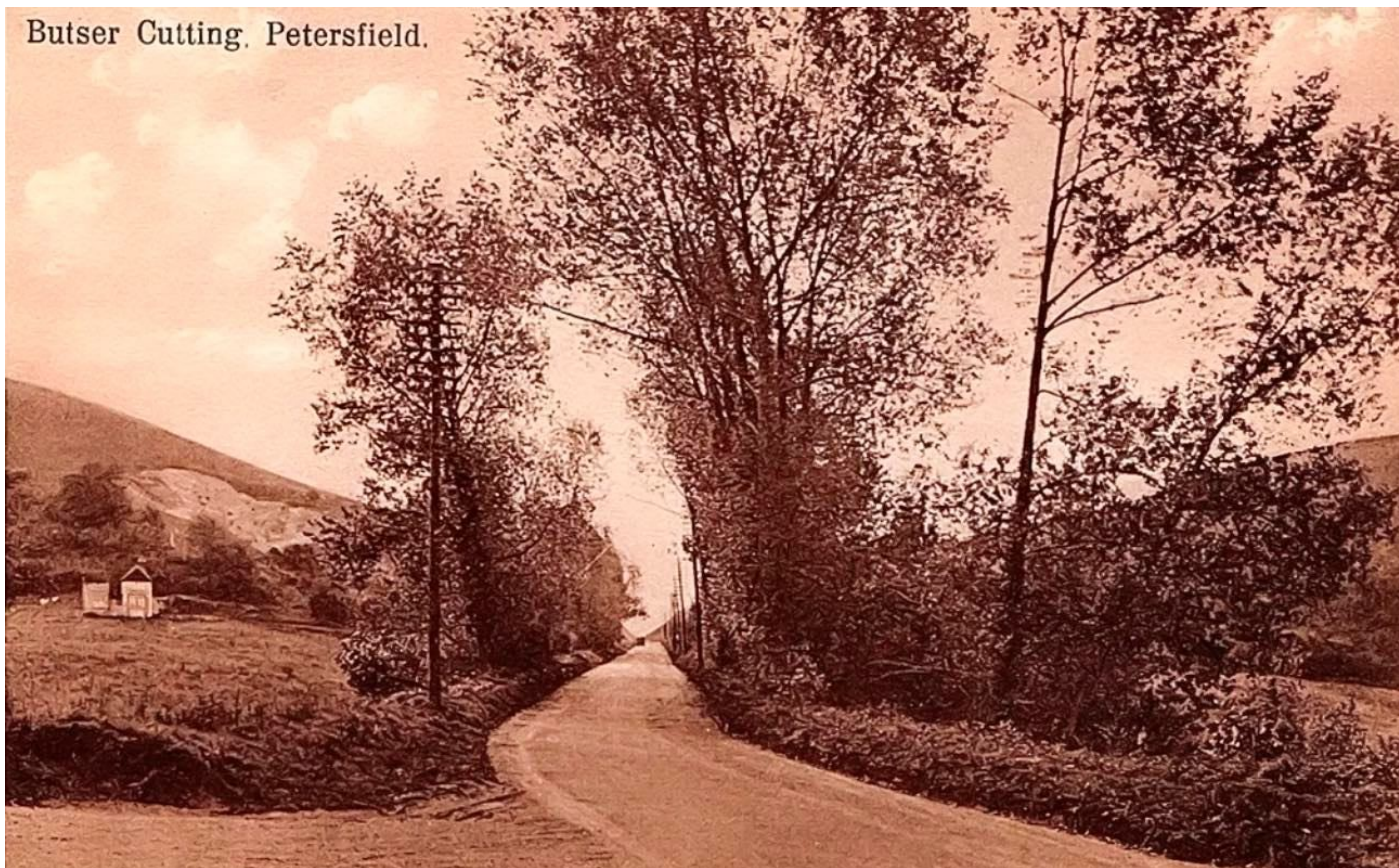
Just when I thought she couldn't get any meaner, she proved me wrong. She came along when I went to get my picture taken for my driver's license, and just as the camera shutter clicked, she jumped in front of me.

I do hope she never finds out where you live!

Anon, but definitely not by your Editor



Butser Cutting, Petersfield.



Travelling south, with the old chalk pit on the left. You would have needed to be in second gear.....

All contributions for the next newsletter please to:

alanborrow1@gmail.com

(please note new email address)

Please delete the Virgin media email address you may still have on your system – I do not receive these posts!