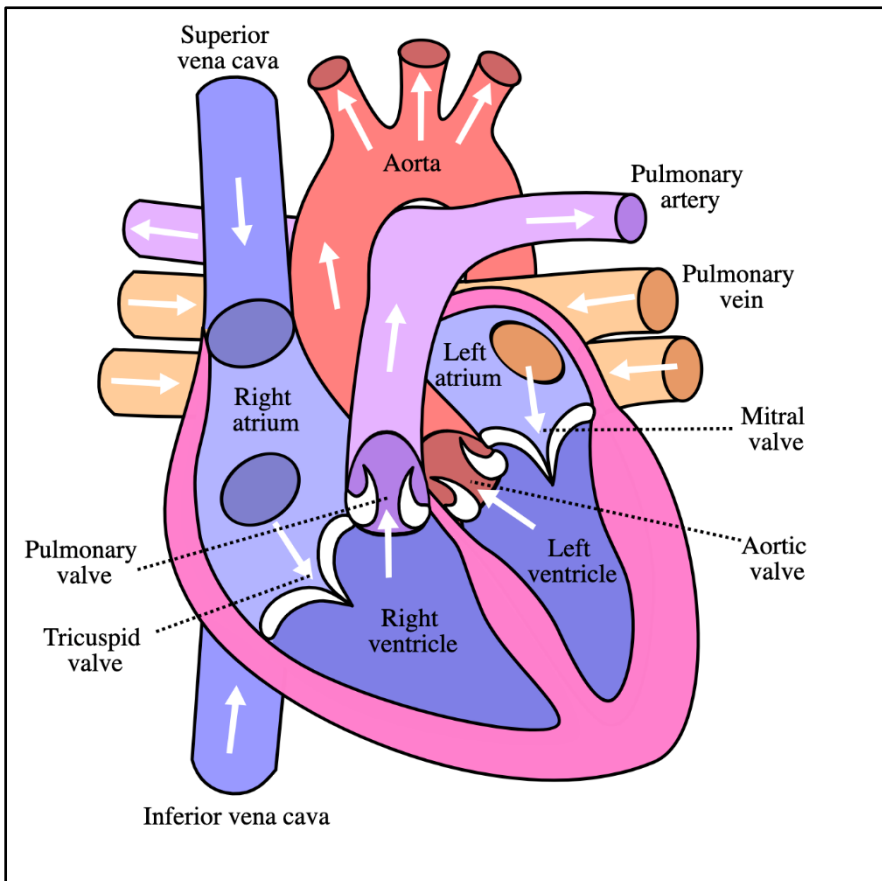




# MARCH 2025 NEWLETTER

## STEM February meeting - What Makes us Tick?

For our February meeting we were again treated to a talk by one of our members, Wendy Jones. Wendy was well placed to explain the intricacies of how our hearts work - she began life as a nurse, specialising in cardiology. She then progressed to teaching those skills to others, before moving into palliative care, then training doctors and



nurses in that specialist area. She even taught doctors in Russia! So....about 40 of us were in very capable and knowledgeable hands to learn why our hearts do indeed beat more or less regularly .

Various charts showed us the make-up of this vital organ, where and how the blood comes in and then out of it, supplying the oxygen our bodies need. It's working in the background all the time, under involuntary (by us) instructions from our brains (clever word for this background, steady instruction is parasympathetic!). Pacemakers can help to speed the heart rate up for when it begins to not work so well – but we can help it a lot by doing exercise. As we were told, the heart is a muscle, and making it work harder, regularly, will strengthen it – and also stop our arteries furring up. For those of those wanting more in depth information,

Wendy invited us to pore over a huge tome she'd brought with her on physiology but the knowledge she had was enough for us all. A very enlightening talk.

**STEM March Meeting: Our next meeting is March 6 TH at 2.00pm, usual venue, for a talk by Graham Timms entitled "The Discovery that Fed the World!"**

All members of Ems Valley U3A are invited to join us if interested. Just let Geoff know, via [stem@emsvalleyu3a.org](mailto:stem@emsvalleyu3a.org).

## Wine One enjoy their annual Wine tasting Dinner!

Sixty members sat down to a six course gourmet dinner at the Emsworth Sailing Club on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> February. It was the fifteenth dinner in Wine One's vinous history! The photo below shows some of the diners with facial expressions not seemingly quite in the mood.... They were intent on listening to the welcome from Neil Cowell who was MC for the night.

Later their demeanour was quite different when the six courses were served, each matched with a different wine. I think these pairings went down well - Here are a few quotes from Neil and others on the evening:

#Smooth as silk. Food very attractive, interesting and punching with taste and eye appeal. Very, very well received and enjoyed by everyone!

# Thank you Alan for organising yet another lovely evening for us all. Food and wine perfect, as always.

#The food was fabulous, I wondered whether it would be a touch 'nouvelle cuisine' but it was perfect! The wines were great too,

#The Malbec and the Carmenere were both sublime - brilliant with the main course and the cheese and long, long after taste. Really enjoyed them!

# I particularly thought the soup was utterly wonderful, but quite honestly everything was good, really good.

# Of course you were much missed and many words of appreciation for the delicious meal and the careful wine pairings were expressed. You and Ollie had worked your usual magic.

# They all enjoyed themselves and expressed their amazement at the quality and diversity of the food and the wines.

#The dinner was superb and we both enjoyed it immensely. Ollie did us proud with delicious food and the wines matched perfectly. Well done and congratulations on the organisation. Please can you put us on your list for any further Wine Tasting Gourmet Dinners as we would love to attend..

# The plaice was beautifully cooked and presented but it sat on the most delicious 'moules' sauce that I have EVER tasted!



# This Kakapo wine is a most interesting New Zealand wine and matched the Roasted Pumpkin and Coconut Soup perfectly, especially with its Lemon grass and ginger notes.

Thank you diners for these notes of appreciation, I was sorry to miss this dinner but really glad that it went so well. And thank you Ollie at the Emsworth Sailing Club!

**Alan Borrow**

## Yes, those Prison Hulks were real!

In the Last Newsletter, Richard Swaine's article on the January Cycling for fun run mentioned the Prison Hulks in Langstone Harbour. In case he was not believed (!) I post this picture:



It is dated Portsmouth 1770, and is a painting by Daniel Turner depicting Prison hulks moored in Langstone and Portsmouth harbours, together with a hospital ship. These hulks were ships that were no longer seaworthy with masts removed and, landward ports boarded over to deter escape. They were used to alleviate the growing populations of the on-shore prisons and regrettably, would have been havens for disease, plague and infestation. Many of the war hulks were captured French, Danish & Spanish ships. (From the National Maritime Museum)

It would seem that we are looking out to the Solent and the open sea with the IOW in the right background.

On the right is a water colour titled 'Prison Ship' from the Portsmouth museum. This ship is moored outside Portsmouth harbour and shows convicts being transferred on board. The painting is signed, J.M.W. Turner but is actually a copy of an engraving of the prison hulk, York.

A similar painting (see below) suggests that this is the upper reaches of Portsmouth harbour and states: "behind these ships, to the south-east, lies the town of Portsmouth, its skyline visible against the sky in the centre, with Gosport to the right and the entrance to the Harbour in the centre. To the right,



other ships with pennants flying, are also anchored 'in ordinary' (reserve) in the Upper Harbour. Among them is a fully rigged two-decker flying Spanish colours, which suggests the picture dates from after May 1808, when Spain

became a British ally against Napoleon and such a ship would have been a friendly visitor rather than a prize of war. In the foreground, small craft have been depicted with their sails billowing in the stiff breeze. A swathe of pink cloud dominates the picture and symbolically progresses from dark immediately above the hulks to a more brilliant light above the channel leading to the open sea and France. The loss of the American colonies in the 1770s as a place to send convicts condemned to transportation, created an acute shortage of prison space. There was not time to build more prisons so as a temporary measure ships were converted into prison hulks, which could easily be made secure although the conditions aboard their often-rotting hulls were very tough. It was during the French Wars of 1793 to 1815 that the greatest use of hulks was made to accommodate additional prisoners of war.”



## Discussion Group One

Our group has been led by Val Swarbrick for many years in her own home and a most informative, happy, and, sometimes impassioned afternoon it is. Full details can be found on the EVU3A website but sadly the group is full at the moment. We all like a discussion and we all have points of view. The subjects are so varied we stick to them like glue (well sometimes) We nearly always have a laugh and if the subject warrants, we can be very serious in many of our comments. Democracy and speeding cars, DVDs and more have all been tackled by the group before we exit through the door Anon.

Each member of the group supplies a note of a subject we might discuss, which is then chosen by the lucky dip method. In the past we have tried to avoid the old taboo subjects, politics, money and religion but these days it is impossible, but we always respect an individual's point of view. Should the discussion subject begin to disappear in "chat" our leader is expert in calling us kindly to order!

Some of the subjects we have discussed are:

The Americanisation of our language.

Immigration

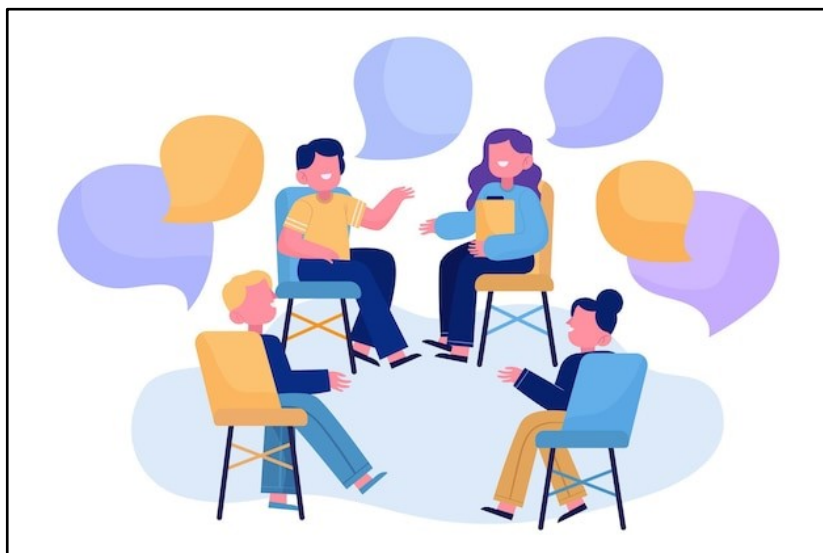
The Turner Prize

What and where makes us happy

Current Royal family problems

NHS and teenage mental health, gender

changes



Should Britain pay compensation for past history eg. Slaves

Difficulty of finding a human to talk to on the phone to sort out a problem.

As you can imagine subjects like these lead to lively discussions and we are all ready for our most welcome tea and biscuits when a most agreeable **social chat** is enjoyed. **Gill Thatcher on behalf of Val Swarbrick and her group.**

**Editor: As Gill mentions in this article, Discussion Group One is currently full, but if you are interested or wish to join something similar, another Discussion group is very easy to set up, especially if your aim is to keep it to a small group who could meet in their own homes. First step – let Ann Sims know. She is our group coordinator and can help you get things moving to fulfil your dream.**

## **BLAST FROM THE PAST**

### **Are you at that age when you really enjoy looking at old photographs? Or is it just me?**

We all have our own collection of photos that remind you of another age – otherwise we would not be a member of a u3a group. Also, not sure if you have noticed, there is a growing proliferation of “Do you remember” groups showing historic photos of our local area. These are mainly on facebook pages. It is very easy to join these groups, you do not need to pay anything, or even contribute – you just need to show interest. Some that I have recently joined include, Historic Hampshire, Portsmouth in old Postcards, Horndean and Blendworth Heritage, Nostalgic pictures of Cosham, Drayton and Farlington, Memories of Waterlooville, Cowplain, Horndean, Denmead, Memories of Emsworth. I remember when I produced a “PAST EMSWORTH” presentation for our Local History group, it was well received, and then Reg Newnham encouraged me to present it to the Monthly meeting. I did it under the quiz guise and it was quite successful!

So what is this all about?

It is an idea for a new interest group – titled “**Blast from the Past**” My idea would be for the group to meet to view and discuss old photographs, especially those that resonate in a way that would amuse, remind, raise interest or just make us feel good about viewing something from a bygone age. If this idea for a new interest group is something that you would like to join **please contact me - the newsletter editor – via the Ems Valley u3a web site.**

I enclose a few photos that interested me this week, do they do the same for you?

### ***Dredging the river at Ovington to get rid of weeds***



**The USS Leviathan alongside White Star's Majestic and Cunard's Berengaria in Southampton Docks**



**Airspeed Factory, Portsmouth. Eastern road bottom right, Portsmouth airport top right. Airspeed's glider was critical to the success of the Allied Forces during the D-Day landings. The Airspeed AS. 51 Horsa was primarily a wooden troop-carrying assault glider, designed and built by Airspeed for use during World War II.**



**When we ate more Rabbits than Chickens!**



## WATTS GALLERY OUTING - NEW DATE: Tuesday 18 March 11:00

Greetings all, from your "DAYTRIPPERS" group!

Below please see the details of our outing to Watts Gallery-Artists Village. Founded in 1904 as the only gallery in the UK devoted to a single artist, Watts Gallery – Artists' Village offers a unique insight into the life and work of 'England's Michelangelo' George Frederic Watts and his wife Mary Watts, the designer and founder of The Potters' Arts Guild at Compton.

**Watts Gallery is a wonderful place with lots to see and explore. Arrive at 10:45 for a 11:00 start to our guided tour of Watts Cemetery Chapel. You will have time after lunch to explore the gallery at your own pace.**

Click on the link to learn more!! <https://www.wattsgallery.org.uk/>

(Please note the change of date: from Thursday the 13th to Tuesday 18th of March)



Watts Cemetery Chapel is a labour of love and an amazing piece of art and architecture - the final resting place of artists, George and Mary Watts. Our u3a has enjoyed many visits here, and no doubt will enjoy many further ones! The terracotta chapel was designed and built by Mary Watts. She built it with the help of local villagers in Compton, to whom she taught arts and crafts. It opened in 1898 and remains a working chapel to this day. The Grade I listed Chapel is a unique fusion of art nouveau, Celtic, Romanesque and Egyptian influence, with Mary's own original style. It is impossible not to admire the work and inspiration that lies behind this beautiful little building.

After our 75 Minute Tour, we Lunch at 12:15 in our own private space in The Old Kiln within the cafe.

The menu is Sandwich and Fruit Platters. Coffee and tea or pitchers of Elderflower are also available. Please specify your beverage choice and include it with your payment, see below.

Cost for the day is as follows: Admission and Guided Tour £18.00 - Lunch £9.25 - Optional Tea or Filter Coffee £ 2.95 Elderflower Cordial in pitchers shared by 3 or more people £1.75..

Bank details - Mr S Gorban – Sortcode 40-45-22 – Account Number 11658476

Steve Gorban Art Deco Furniture - [psasibs@gmail.com](mailto:psasibs@gmail.com)

## THE DISCOVERY THAT FED THE WORLD

Our next meeting of The STEM group has the exciting title “The Discovery that fed the World” and if this awakens your interest buds – and you are not a member of this group – contact Geoff Whalley via the web site, and I know he will be pleased to allow you to attend!

**The meeting is on Thursday 6th March, 2.00 pm, at our usual venue - St James Parish Hall.**

The talk is by Graham Timms and titled is ‘The Discovery that Fed the World’. It is about a discovery that enabled the world to produce bumper crops thus avoiding mass starvation during the 20th century.

Graham has a degree in Chemistry (Graduate of the Royal Institute of Chemistry) and is a member of The Royal Society of Chemistry. He has spent his career working for a major pharmaceutical company, as a member of a team in their Discovery Research department.



### DIARY NOTE - July Monthly Meeting

Please note that our July Monthly Meeting will be a week early on the 17th July, due to The Baptist Church having been booked for a wedding on the 24th.

## The Monthly Meeting Speaker gets grizzly!

Our speaker at the February meeting was Ian Porter speaking about murders – solved, unsolved and wrongly solved – 150/200 years ago. Some of the detail made some of the audience wince at times but in general we kept the stiff upper lip and really enjoyed his light hearted style. Ian is a historian and lecturer who specialises in social history from the 1830s to the Great War and Spanish Flu. Jack the Ripper would have definitely been caught and prosecuted if Ian had been around two generations earlier!

Ian won the Chancellor's Prize at the University of Birmingham, before becoming a freelance journalist in the 1990's. During this time, for something entirely different, he wrote the leading ski resort guidebook, 'Where to Ski'. He has also run his own travel company. A novelist, historian and walks guide in London he travels the South East to give talks on a varied theme of Social history.

His recent novel: is “Whitechapel Autumn of Errors”, which was released on February 28 2024.

The idea for the book came from Ian’s frustration by the way in which the Whitechapel murders are now used for comedic walking tours around the murder sites, or to sell a book or television programme of dubious research claiming to have worked out the killer’s identity.

His book concentrates on making his audience aware of the living situations of that time period within the working class. Previous novels include Suffragette Autumn Women’s Spring and A Plague on Both Your Houses.

His talks cover such a diverse range of subjects, how does he have the time to research them?

They include : The Suffragettes, Women, The Home and Spanish Flu in the Great War, The Real Downton Abbey, Domestic Service before the Great War, The Real Mr Selfridge and the History Of Shopping, Elizabeth Garrett Anderson: First Woman Doctor, The Titanic: what happened after the ship sank, Famous Murders 1811-1911, Historic Greenwich, The Kray Twins, Young Charlie Chaplin, Young Dickens and How He "Invented" Christmas, Call the Midwife, The 1908 London Olympics, The Golden Age of Travel 1836-1936, Theatre in Shakespeare's London, and Jack the Ripper, .

Ian certainly kept Emsworth u3a entertained on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> February and we only heard one of the above! He finished his talk with the Sidney Street Siege (three policemen were murdered) and suggested that Churchill as Home Secretary, seen at the front in the photo below, caused a large degree of consternation by getting "in the way" when the bullets were flying! **Editor.**



## WINE CORNER

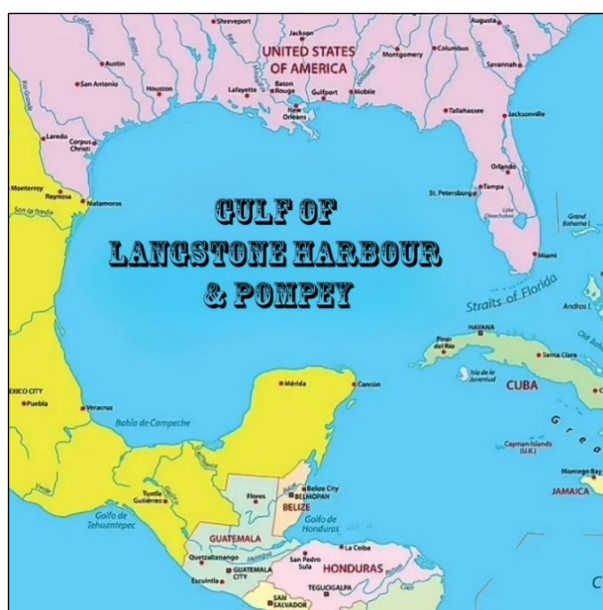
Rob and June Lineham's Wine Appreciation Four turned to your Chairman, Tim as it was his turn to choose the wines this month. Tim chose "Tesco finest" as his theme and purchased accordingly. One of the wines, Tim was telling me at the monthly meeting, was Peumo Carmenere from Chile and he said that it really rang the member's bells! His notes on this wine which he sent to me later read: A rich and well-balanced wine made from Chile's iconic Carmenere grape from the Peumo vineyards situated within the Cachapoal Valley. Deep in colour with gentle aromas of wild herbs, chocolate notes and balanced with juicy dark berry and plum flavours. Tim said that it was the evenings favourite by far! I thought that great minds think alike

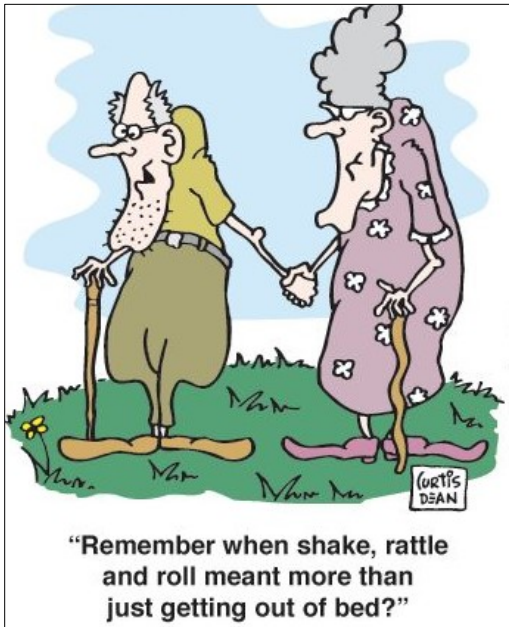
as I had paired a Carmenerere with the Cheese course at the dinner I reported on earlier in this newsletter. Lo and behold, when I look back it was the very same wine, Peumo Carmenerere! And I am told it went down very well as a cheese accompaniment!

However the story doesn't stop there, Tim told me that Wine Four have a Whats App group to keep up to date with their wine affairs! He sent me extracts from the resultant flurry of messages which led to Tesco running out of PEUMO Carmenerere and lengthy diatribes on the restocking of the said wine in many diverse locations! For instance, June Lineham, Rona Musker and Celia Lynch all said they were off to Tesco in the morning, Rob Lineham then lets on that Peterborough Tesco is his destination, Rona counters with "Good – all the more for us in Havant, Tim comments that Peterborough seems a long way to travel for a wine, Louise and Bill Jones complain that they could only find two bottle in Havant, Roger Bleasby then moans at 3.51 the next morning that there is no Tesco in Melbourne, Tim triumphantly announces **delivery** of a bulk Peumo, presumably causing the shelves to be bared again, Zena Chaddock reports a refilling of the shelves the following morning, David Griffiths chips in with ' I've bought some just to see what you are all raving about!' Iain Lynch suggests that Tim is on Tesco's commission sales staff, Roger Bleasby then apparently flies back to UK early to claim his Peumo in Tesco Chichester.



And that is just a small selection of the pages of Whats App messages that Tim sent me..... On a more serious vinous note, Tim did a bit of investigation to discover why Tesco did not state a vintage year on this Carmenerere wine. Apparently the supermarkets agree this with the wineries so that the wine – well, their big selling wines - can be presented as a close match each year, year on year. I assume that the winery keeps back a portion of the previous years wine for blending in with the current year. (Chateau wine producers would have a fit if they knew....)





All contributions for the next newsletter please to:  
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