



## Spring 2024 Magazine



## **The Third Age Trust**

(Operating as the University of the Third Age)

Croydon u3a Registered Charity Number 1029466

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Face Book: Croydon u3a

### **Croydon u3a Management Committee 2023–2024**

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Committee Member	<b>Andy Beaumont</b>	

**To see photos of your Committee members visit the Governance tab on our website**

<https://u3asites.org.uk/croydon/page/109995>

where you can also see relevant documents.

**Croydon u3a** has an army of volunteers apart from the twelve members above, who have taken on various roles to make our u3a run well. See some of them on the Off-Committee Volunteers page on the website: <https://u3asites.org.uk/croydon/page/108531> look on the right hand side at the Links.

We must include our Group Leaders and their assistants, for without them we would literally fall apart.

We are always looking for volunteers to discuss starting a new group or offering a taster session or a short course. Please contact Maggie Chan (above) if you would like to discuss this. The guiding principle of the u3a is:

### **Run by the Members for the Members**

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#### ***Foreword***

**Hello** and Welcome to the latest edition of the Croydon u3a magazine.

Well, spring is finally here and the days are getting longer. With the clock going forward, bringing longer summer evenings, we can come out of hibernation and start enjoying our gardens again. (If we have one.)

Having just taken part in the Big Plastic Count I am pleased to include an item from Everyday Plastic about greenwashing.

We also have some fantastic articles from members, plus our usual puzzles pages.

I hope you enjoy it.

All contributions for the next edition will be gratefully received. Please send to: [Magazineeditor@croydonu3a.org.uk](mailto:Magazineeditor@croydonu3a.org.uk)

Editor – Tess Smith

## Letter from the Chair

Dear u3a Members,

Croydon u3a keeps going from strength to strength. We have a tremendous offer in terms of Interest Groups, Outings, Lunches, Taster Days, friendship and support. About 80% of new members join through recommendations from family and friends. We do however, need to get the word out to those people who have not come across us before – they just don't know what they are missing do they?

I recently gave a talk at the Unison Head Office at Euston. The audience was pretty gob-smacked when they heard about the movement, how widespread it is and how much is available.

The Trust of the u3a is in the process of evolution. Unlike many other organisations we have a bottom-up structure. Each u3a is an independent registered charity with the Trust providing umbrella support in terms of compliance, legal and financial issues. u3as are not 'branches' and the national office is not the 'Head Office'. It has made the structure more complicated in terms of feeding ideas up the chain. The current proposal is for a smaller Board to deal with the legal and financial considerations, and a Council which will liaise with and support u3as directly. None of this will affect individual members or Interest Groups but it will mean that your committee will find it easier to suggest innovations, ask for support if needed and consult on day-to-day running. London Region needs two representatives for the Council so if you are interested in finding out more, please get in touch with me.

Sometime later this year I will be able to give you information about our new website. The current Sitebuilder platform will cease to be available by the end of 2023. We have a dedicated team working on this change which will mean that the 'look' will be slightly different but

the main features and content will still be there. The aim is to create a new website which is appealing to people searching for a u3a while at the same time providing all the information members need in easy to access ways. The team is of course, Croydon u3a member volunteers, diligently giving their time and expertise for us. I am very grateful to them for their commitment as this is essential for our place in the community.

Very best wishes to you,

Jenny

Jenny Wilson, Croydon u3a Chair

E : [chair@croydon.org.uk](mailto:chair@croydon.org.uk)



## Greenwash = hogwash!

Greenwashing! It's a term I'm sure you've heard of before, but do you know how to spot it?

At a time when environmental concerns are at the forefront of our consciousness, companies are eager to capitalise on the growing demand for planet friendly products and practices. However, some businesses engage in deceptive marketing strategies to make their products or services appear more environmentally friendly than they truly are. This practice of greenwashing not only misleads their customers but also undermines the efforts of genuinely eco-conscious businesses.

### *So how can we spot greenwashing?*

Greenwashing takes on many forms, from words and phrases to colours and visuals. Here is a selection of the most common buzzwords used to portray planet-friendliness, which in reality are pretty woolly:

🗑️ **Eco-friendly** = There are no rules that require companies to prove something is beneficial to the environment so this term is often exploited.

🗑️ **Natural** = This term isn't regulated and does not guarantee that it's better for the environment or healthier. What does it actually mean?!

🗑️ **Chemical-free** = Everything is a chemical, but not all are bad, so check out the ingredient list. If you can't pronounce it, it's probably best to avoid it.

🗑️ **Biodegradable** = This claim can be misleading if the product only biodegrades under specific conditions that usually don't exist in a landfill. Biodegradable packaging is also unlikely to be home compostable and can cause issues if put into the recycling.

🦋 **100% recyclable** = Soft, flexible plastic is very hard to recycle, as there is little infrastructure to do so in the UK. If a bread bag says so, exercise your sceptical side.

🦋 **Carbon neutral** = This doesn't mean that the brand doesn't produce any emissions. Instead, it usually means that the company has 'offset' its emissions by investing in projects which supposedly absorb an equal amount of greenhouse gases from the atmosphere. Currently it is very hard to prove a product is carbon neutral.

🦋 **Green** = This phrase is vague and misleading, as it lacks any specific details about the product's sustainability.

EVERYDAY PLASTIC

<https://www.everydayplastic.org/>



## Local Heroes

Our Local History group has been looking at the lives of famous Croydonians.

Fiona Bowles looked into the life of a great 19th century talent from Croydon, Samuel Coleridge Taylor.



Born august 1875 in Holborn, his father was an African doctor, a Krio, who left for Sierra Leone never to return, unaware his girlfriend was pregnant. Samuel's mother was 17-year-old Alice Hare Martin.

Samuel was given a violin by his grandfather and was given free music lessons aged 7 from Joseph Beckwith. He sang in the choir at St George's from age 10 then sang alto at St Mary Magdalene, a Presbyterian Church in Addiscombe.

At the age of 15 he gained a scholarship to the Royal College of Music, where he met his future wife, Jessie Walmesley.



*Samuel and Jessie with Hiawatha and Gwendoline*

Samuel looked for inspiration from poets and loved Longfellow, learning the poem "Hiawatha" off by heart. Unsurprisingly, he named his first child Hiawatha and also composed a trilogy of works based on Longfellow's poems. These and other works brought him great success, both here and in the USA. In his lifetime Samuel wrote 109 compositions.

Between 1901-04 he taught at the Croydon Conservatoire, Trinity college of music and Crystal Palace school of Arts.

In 1910 the family moved to Duppas Hill and here Samuel composed his only opera, "Thelma".

The family later moved to 30 Dagnall Park, Selhurst and the blue plaque, below, commemorates this.



He collapsed at West Croydon station and died of pneumonia aged 37. His funeral was at St Michael's West Croydon.

The poet Alfred Noyes wrote his epitaph "Too young to die, his great simplicity, his happy courage in an alien world, his gentleness, made all that knew him love him".

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*In the Summer 2023 version of this magazine David Talbot wrote about two famous people he had interviewed for the Second World War Experience Centre. Here is reproduced an article he wrote for their magazine in 2021.*

## **Interviewing veterans**

***David Talbot***

When I was sixty-four and shortly to leave paid employment, I started a fifteen-year stint as a volunteer interviewer for an archive called the Second World War Experience Centre which is based in Yorkshire. I did over 1,600 interviews, many in London and the South-East, but also at times elsewhere where there was no other interviewer trained and willing to do the job.

This arose because in the year 2000 the archive had a volunteer interviewing my late father, Godfrey Talbot LVO OBE about his time reporting for the BBC on the progress of the Eighth Army from Alamein and into Italy, including Cassino. Not many months later he died, and his wartime diaries and other memorabilia came into my possession. My two sons did not especially want to keep these, so I donated them to the above archive. On doing so I asked if there was any other way in which I could help, and the reply was twofold: write some articles based on the diaries for their twice-yearly journal, and then do some interviews. I did not feel particularly equipped for this, but I was about to retire and thought, as an ex-teacher for much of my career, I could give it a go!

In 2016, after all the interviews I managed to do, I called it a day but I am still in demand as a speaker about the people I met and their experiences, though nowadays I tend to talk to smaller groups – not quite following the footsteps of my late father who was a regular on the Foyles and other lecture circuits, principally because of his post-war experience as the BBC's Court Correspondent and his voyages

around the Commonwealth with royalty. When I talk, it is difficult to select who to talk about.

Should it be the famous, like Bernard Weatherill in India, Dennis Healey in Italy, Derek Bond as a prisoner of war, Richard Baker in the Navy, Marguerite Patten the cookery lady, Brian Rix as Donald Wolfitt's juvenile lead, etc? But no, I usually found that the most gripping stories were not from celebrities, though two who died in recent years and had long, printed obituaries, are always difficult to leave out. There is Eric 'Winkle' Brown, the Fleet Air Arm man who has the never-to-be-equalled number of landings on carriers, and a great deal else about his experiences as a German speaker in 1945; and Fergus Anckorn, at ninety-nine was the oldest member of the Magic Circle, a POW of the Japanese (many harrowing stories), but also one about the tricks he did at the command of a Japanese commandant when he had VIP visitors – needless to say, these always involved food, a real bonus for starving men.

So, to end with, my story is from Wigan in the war and then, a lifetime later really, how I found out about other people's war as well.

*The Second World War Experience Centre safeguards recorded interviews, letters, diaries, photographs and other wartime memorabilia collected from ordinary men, women and children caught up in extraordinary circumstances.*

**<https://war-experience.org/>**

Talking of wartime experiences.....

### Memories of evacuation.

I well remember the chuga chuga chuga chug.

Of an approaching doodle bug

It sent us running helter skelter

Down into the air raid shelter

Where we crouched with hands clamped to our ears

Trying to suppress the fears

Of a secret weapon in the sky

Approaching us from up on high.

Then silence.....the noise cut out

15 seconds or there about.

15 seconds with terror filled..

Would it land on us. Would we be killed.

Then BOOM ..we rushed out with relief

To see who may have come to grief,

And watched with awe the huge black cloud

Expanding like a funeral shroud.

Such was the worry increased

That children were evacuated

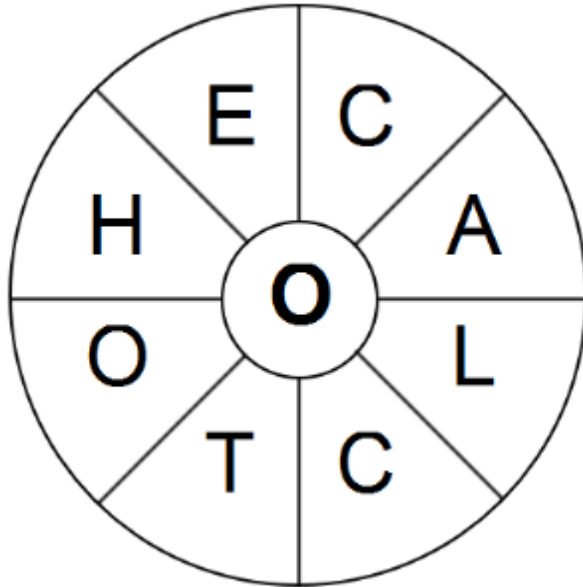
And I remember going forth by train,  
To somewhere strange, somewhere up north.  
With big sister with me it was OK  
But oh! how I recall the day  
When 10 months on mum came for us.  
Just imagine the joy and fuss  
When I got back, I was nearly eight  
And thought 'there's no bombs, isn't it great?'  
No more bombs, no more helter skelter  
No more nights down in the shelter  
No more leaving our warm beds at night  
No more wardens calling "put out that light"  
No more bombs, and even today  
More than 70 years on, I still feel that way.

**Janet Ambrose**

## Puzzle Pages

### Easter Word Wheel

Easter is an important Christian holiday celebrating the resurrection of Jesus. Traditionally eggs are given at Easter which represents the empty tomb of Jesus. In modern times people like to have a family Easter egg hunt to find eggs hidden by the Easter bunny.



This Easter themed word wheel is made from a 9 letter Easter themed word. Try and find that word, then make as many words of any length as you can from these letters. You can only use each letter once, and each word must include the letter **O**.



## Sudoku

Each row, column and small 3x3 square must contain the numbers 1-9

			3					
9		5	4					8
2	3		7		5			9
		7	2	3		5		
			1	4		8	2	
		2	5	9		7		
7	2		9		3			6
8		4	6					5
			8					

	5					6		
9								7
6			3	5	8			9
		7				8		
	9		8	2	6		3	
		3				2		
3				8				5
				4				
			2		5			

## Word Sudoku

It's Sunflower Sudoku- fill in the grid with the letters

S.U.N.F.L.O.W.E.R

	r	o	n					u
						w	f	s
		s	w		u	n		o
	w	l	r			s	e	
o	s	r	f	e	l	u		w
	f	e	s			l	o	
		w	l		r	f		e
						r	s	n
	n	u	e					l

Normal sudoku rules apply, but with letters instead of numbers, so, each row, column and small square must include the letters above.

## THE LAST VOYAGE OF THE "GLAMORGAN" - part 1

*Valerie Hunter*

A true story of heroism, courage, and determination, dedicated to the brave sailors of yester-year, who risked their lives in the tempestuous seas of the Atlantic, saving others in distressed circumstances on damaged and sinking ships.



The steamship "Glamorgan" left the Mersey on February 8<sup>th</sup>, 1883 in heavy weather. On 12<sup>th</sup> February the weather having moderated after a day or two, she continued her voyage, making usual time. However, at midnight on 13<sup>th</sup>, the storm recommenced, with terrific force, and between 1 a.m. and 2 a.m. on the 14<sup>th</sup>, the sea was very heavy, and the wind blew in a terrific cyclonic gale. An enormous sea broke over the "Glamorgan", carrying away the foremast, plus nos. 1 and 2 steam winches, and smashing in the fore and main hatchways.

Shortly after 12 o'clock Captain Court and Mr Robillard went into the cabin, and were seen looking through the forward deadlights to see if water was coming in through the hatch, which had been stove in. At that moment, the ship gave a lurch and a huge mountain of water swept up from port and struck the upperworks of the Glamorgan amidships, with great force. For a moment the ship was submerged, and nearly capsized.

It was feared for some time that she was gone, but after a while she slowly righted a little. However, the waters sweeping back on the port side poured in through the hatchways and ventilators and deluged the engine rooms - quenching the fires and stopping the engines. The engineers rushed on deck only to find that the saloon, bridge, boats, bulwarks, hatches, and stoke-hole covers had been swept away.

The passengers and some of the seamen clung to the forecastle deck, but they could not venture aft, owing to the sea which rolled back and forth over that portion of the ship where the cabins had stood a few moments before.

Chief Steward Ward, torn and bleeding, was seen creeping out of the debris of the cabin. He said he was in his stateroom with Second Steward Barrel when the sea struck the cabin and the torrents of water carried Barrel overboard. Mr Ward had clung to his berth and saved himself, although he was badly injured.

The seas struck the front of the midship deckhouse, carrying away the saloon, the steward's, boatswain's, and carpenter's rooms, as well as the pantry, and bathroom. Water burst the deck, the captain's cabin and almost all the cabins on the port side. On the starboard side all cabins as far as the lamp-room, the chartroom, the flying bridge, and all the boats were lost. The funnel, all the rails forward of the bridgehouse, and some abaft it, the forward fiddle gratings, and

bunker lids in the alley ways, and the front of the engine-room casing were also smashed in.

Then going aft, it carried away the after deckhouse, the ventilator sockets, and stove in the fore part of the wheelhouse, knocking down and seriously injuring the man at the wheel, and damaging all the compasses.

The chief officer, who had only just returned from the captain's cabin, where he had been talking with him, was on the point of laying down when the sea struck the ship. He jumped up but was at first unable to get out of his cabin, owing to the pressure of the water in the alley way. When he finally got out, he found the water up to his armpits. He immediately made his way to the wheelhouse aft, and on his arrival there found that the steam steering gear had become damaged, and that the vessel had fallen into the trough of the sea.

In the meantime, the carpenter and the boatswain had also come to the wheelhouse, and the chief officer directed them to assist the third officer to ship the hand gear. On then going forward he met the chief engineer, who told him that the fires were nearly drowned out, owing to the quantity of water that had come into the engine room, and the engines would soon have to stop.

On mustering the crew, it was found that the Master, the second officer, the second steward, two A.B.s, and a stowaway were missing.

All hands were sent to the engine-room. The only pump not broken was worked for some hours, but the water poured in faster than it could be pumped out. At daybreak the pump gave out and the men were obliged to pass up the water in buckets. The work of bailing out the engine-room was very difficult and slow, as the water poured into the ship in an immense volume. Sea after sea poured in, filling her fore and aft. After daylight they got sails spread over the hatches and

all other openings to try and keep out some of the water, but there being nothing to tie them to, they soon gave way.

Shortly after daybreak the cattlemen and seamen from the fore-castle made their way along the torn deck and joined the rest of the crew. All hands went to work with a will and bailed until the depth of water was slightly decreased. The remainder of the day was spent by the crew in bailing out the water and working the pumps that still worked.

Despite all exertions the water gained on them; the sails over the hatches and openings giving way constantly and requiring frequent fixing. They found that nearly all the provisions had been swept overboard and the only food which they now had was salt pork and hard bread.

By Wednesday evening they were making some progress. All day Thursday, the 15th, the survivors worked with their buckets, and slowly decreased the depth of the water in the engine-room. For two days those on board worked with the energy of desperation and lived in alternate hope and despair. They knew they could never reach any land and might not be able to keep afloat for any length of time. Their clothing was soaked and dripping, but they could make coffee.

Having succeeded in boarding up the hatches, they tacked sails over them, and steadily kept up the bailing. That night they had to give up working the pumps, as the sea was breaking heavily over the vessel, and there was no shelter for the workers. On Friday, the weather again moderated, and all hands were called to the remaining pumps, while the damages to the hatch coverings were repaired as far as possible with the last boards and sails that they had. Their main hope was to keep them intact.

On Friday morning the outlook was very gloomy.....

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Part 2 is on page 34

## Ship's Biscuits

Ship's biscuits were a vital part of a seaman's diet in the years before the introduction of canned food.

This recipe is from the Royal Museums Greenwich.



The holes in this biscuit are caused by biscuit beetles,

### Ingredients:

- 1lb wholemeal flour (course ground for authenticity)
- ¼ oz salt
- Water to create a stiff dough.

### Method:

Mix all the ingredients, adding the water slowly, until a stiff dough is created.

Leave the dough to rest for half an hour (while you scrub the decks), then roll to ½ inch thick. Use a cookie cutter to cut out biscuits and prick the tops.

Bake for 30 minutes in an oven pre-heated to 215C (190C, Fan)

Alternative ingredients could include powdered bone, or pea flour.

Weevils and maggots are optional.

## The Hotel

Chief Inspector Homes stood watching as the white PPE clad figures wheeled the trolley carrying a full body bag out through the front door of the hotel. The snow was heavier than when he had arrived some hours earlier, the driving snow now obscuring the car park. He was glad that this was an inside job, and he wasn't outside in this weather, up to his knees and freezing. He strode back across the large lobby of the hotel, past the fire blazing away in the huge stone fireplace, towards the ornate yellow doors to the library where his assistant Detective Sargent Whetstone stood talking into her phone.

"No time for phone calls now, Whetstone." Homes said gruffly as he passed her to stand in the doorway of the library looking towards the white outline of where the body had lain.

"Not a phone call sir! I'm taking notes, using voice text sir." Whetstone looked up at Homes thinking that, at his age and on the verge of retirement, he probably wouldn't have a clue what she was talking about.

"Aah, clever. Used to use a Dictaphone myself, back in the day, although it was very much frowned upon. You ever use a Dictaphone Whetstone?" Homes asked, his eyebrows raised as a slight smile crossed his lips.

"A what sir?" Whetstone replied puzzled.

"Wrong answer." Homes chuckled.

Whetstone looked up at Homes, she often had the feeling that he was being sarcastic but could never quite put her finger on it, but she did like working with him. He was very sharp, and she thought she could learn a lot from him despite his age. She looked up at the large carved, canary yellow double doors to the library.

"I wonder why they painted these lovely doors bright yellow?"



"A lemon entry, my dear Whetstone." Homes chuckled. "Thank you, I've been dying to say that for hours. Tell me what we know so far?"

Whetstone looked at Homes with the feeling that once again she was missing something, before peering at her phone.

"Okay sir. We've identified the victim as a Colonel Coleman, booked to stay in the hotel with a shooting party due to go out tomorrow onto the Eartie Moor. SOCO says he was killed about an hour before he was found, so that would have put it at about 3pm this afternoon. The murder weapon was an antique Chassepot bayonet, made in St Etienne in January 1874. No prints."

"Coleman as in mustard?" Homes asked looking up from his notebook.

"Er, yes sir."

"How do you know all that about the bayonet?"

"It's engraved on the spine sir. Thought it may be relevant, you know exactly 150 years old to the month, the devil's in the detail, as you say."

"Yes. Good." Homes looked back to his notebook.

"Right sir. It was a single thrust, under the chin, severed the spinal column and on into the brain. We won't know for sure until the autopsy, but SOCO thought that he was probably dead before he hit the floor."

"How big is the blade?"

"Google says it's 24 inches, sir, Yatagan style, brass hilt."

"So not a surprise attack then."

"Sorry sir?" Whetstone looked at her boss, cocking her head to one side.

“Well, it would be hard to walk up on someone with a 24inch short sword and kill them with a single upward thrust without them spotting you and trying to defend themselves, and the victim was ex-military. You didn’t mention any defence wounds, so I assume there weren’t any. Correct?”

“Right sir, no defence wounds. So, you think the victim knew his killer?”

“Working theory.”

Homes continued to look down at his notebook, frowning.

“Are all guests and staff accounted for?”

“Yes. Nobody left and with the weather the way it is, I don’t think anyone could leave now, even if they wanted to. We’ve got a couple of officers on the front and back doors, I’m told they’re the only way in and out, and we’ve another couple in the lobby taking statements.” Whetstone paused for a moment. “Do you think the killer’s still here in the hotel sir?”

“I think it’s a very strong possibility Whetstone and what’s more, I’ve an inkling to who it is.”

“Already! Really sir? Who!”

“I’ve a feeling we’re up against an old adversary of mine from London, Whetstone. The Waddington Killer.”

“You mean the one who’s England’s most notorious serial killer, the one who murdered people all over London, from Euston Square to Piccadilly in houses and hotels, even in the water works? The one who was never caught?”

“No, I mean the other one.” Homes said dryly

“Of course I mean that one, for goodness’ sake!”

“But what makes you think it’s him up here in Scotland sir?”

“Because he likes to play games. There’s the two of us, Homes and Whetstone on Moor Eartie, a play on words for my namesake’s nemesis, and we have a Colonel ‘Mustard’ murdered in the library, with a dagger. The Sherlock stories were first published in 1887 exactly 13 years after the dagger was made and..”

“Bayonet, sir.”

“What?”

“It’s a bayonet or short sword sir, not a dagger.”

“Good grief Whetstone, poetic license! Anyway, where was I? Oh yes and it’s been 13 years to the month since his last murder. He’s telling us its him!”

“But what’s the connection with Monopoly sir?” Whetstone asked quietly.

“Pay attention, Whetstone, it’s not Monopoly, its Cluedo! He’s moved onto Cluedo and if we’re not sharp about it, unlike in the game, he’ll kill again!”

Whetstone wasn’t going to ask what Cluedo was or what he meant by Moor Eartie being his nemesis, so instead nodded in what she thought was a sagely way. She’d google it all later.

**Chris Smith**

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## Norfolk

This county has always been an outlier, at the back end of England as it were, its inhabitants strangely distant and removed from the mainstream life of the country. They are an older race of people, settled in a slower way and pace of living – farmers and fishermen. They are by inclination and inheritance, tending their flatlands, waterways and trawlers with a practised pride and care, doggedly heeding the vagaries and rhythms of the natural world.

Burnham in Norfolk is Nelson's birthplace. He has brought an inextinguishable honour to the county, as he stands even taller than Churchill on his column in Trafalgar Square. The land has otherwise been quite unremarkable, being quiet, flat, and bucolically pretty with its inland stands of forest trees and its marshy coastal meadows which lie only marginally above sea-level.

The final road to Great Yarmouth runs dead-straight for eight miles through timeless pastures to a busy, wide sea-front esplanade which runs along a rather bleak expanse of beach and sand dunes. The town retains the festive air of its great Victorian heyday with its manic funfairs, games arcades and multiple fish-and-chip emporia. It is also home to 'The Empire', one of the very earliest cinemas, and 'The Hippodrome', the country's only indoor circus still functioning. The local scene is jollied along to a raucous, thumping musical accompaniment, competing cacophonies and the unrestrained screaming of the young determined to have a whale of a time in this heaving, winking outdoor palace of varieties.

Once home to the largest herring fleet in Europe until the 1950s, the port anchored Nelson's fleet before the Battle of Trafalgar. It supported a great marine industry and its Time and Tide Museum bears witness to a centuries-old means of livelihood now defunct. Charles Dickens is reputed to have written much of *David*

*Copperfield* here (the name 'Peggotty' features in the shop windows) and it also boasts a trim racecourse for punters who seek a more sophisticated form of diversion. The clearance of the ancient 'rows' of trawlermen's dwellings was much facilitated by the Luftwaffe which targeted the Norfolk coast as a first line of defence.

At Hoveton, the 'Mississippi' river boat takes us out on one of the 'Broads', the meandering waterways that snake inland, formed in mediaeval times from the excavation of peat for fuel. These pits were gradually filled with water and provide an extensive network of navigable channels. The boat's captain regales us with tales of the folly of ownership of riverside housing, where no-one can get either a mortgage or insurance since each dwelling is doomed to sink into the soft ground in spite of deep piling underneath. This did not deter Arthur Ransome, who spent sufficient time here to complete his classic children's book, *Swallows and Amazons*, before getting his feet wet. The birdlife is the best feature of this 'Broad': the captain points out herons and several species of duck and goose, moorhen and kingfisher, even a rare marsh harrier. The 'boom' of the bittern is sometimes heard. The water, he tells us, is flush with perch, pike and eel, which are not considered edible here, as they are in Continental Europe. The most fearsome local predator is the otter, which steals the young birds' eggs for his breakfast.

Cromer, up the coast, is a more genteel and compact beach resort, but with a shingle shore and a greater choice of seafood. A platter of dressed crab salad comes closest to being a local delicacy.



On the twisting esplanade the heroic exploits of the lifeboat service are inscribed in the paving, as are the words of a ten-year-old Winston Churchill, who remarked immortally, 'I am not enjoying myself very much' (in 1885).

Formerly England's second city, Norwich grew prosperous on the weaving trade brought in from Holland and Belgium, but was finally overtaken by the Lancashire cotton mills of the Industrial Revolution. Its uncovered layers of earthen sub-strata attest to the waves of Anglo- Saxon, Danish and Viking settlement and the precious detritus of coin and ornament they left behind.

The city is chiefly known today for its football team called 'The Canaries' after the little yellow songbirds which used to sit alongside the weavers as pets as they worked on their looms. The yo-yo performance of the club from Premiership to Championship and back again is stalwartly supported by the literary efforts of the nation's favourite cookery writer, Delia Smith, as Chair.

The pride and joy of the place is the magnificent twelfth-century cathedral in the centre – the 'cathedra' or seat of bishops – with its awesome nave and lofty fan vaulting, refulgent great organ and delicately carved choir stalls. The building is truly one of the great 'Ships of Heaven' that adorn the English countryside, like its amazing fenland sister ship at Ely, constant reminders to the English of who they are.



**Barnaby Powell**

## Bethlem Royal Hospital

On a lovely June day last year, a dozen or so u3a members, including me, made their way to the bowls club in the grounds of Bethlem Royal Hospital for the first of three taster sessions. This was the subject of an article in the Summer 2023 edition of this magazine.

The setting for the bowls club is glorious. It is surrounded by trees



and shrubs, which are home to a wide variety of birds. The peace and quiet makes the club an especially attractive place to spend a sunny afternoon. (Not to mention the heavily subsidised bar!)

Several of us joined the club as a result of attending the

sessions and have been welcomed into an extremely friendly group. With all the roll ups, league games, friendly matches and competitions available to members it is possible to spend almost every day playing, if you wish. Additionally, there are social events held on a regular basis and you can join purely as a social member if bowls is not your thing, but you wish to enjoy the environment.

The club will again be offering taster sessions for u3a members this summer, dates to be confirmed. *Please check the May bulletin for details.*

Although I had lived remarkably close to the hospital for forty years, I had never been inside the grounds before. My children had played there when young but got in by climbing through a hole in the fence.

I had assumed they were trespassing and told them off accordingly. Now I discovered that the 250 acres, of what used to be farmland, is in fact accessible to the local populace and is so heavily used by dog walkers that the hospital issues licences to them, presumably in an attempt to restrict numbers.

The old farm fields are now wild flower meadows, interspersed with bands of woodland. It is similar to Selsdon Woods, but less busy and less hilly, making it a wonderful place to walk. It is also a great place for blackberrying in late summer.

The hospital itself comprises many buildings, from the large main building to small blocks of accommodation. There are also community cafes and a fantastic museum and art gallery.



The [Bethlem Museum of the Mind](#) features exhibits about the history of Bethlem Royal Hospital and the history of mental healthcare and treatment. It features a permanent collection of art created by some of its patients, as well as changing exhibitions. The Bethlem Gallery displays work by current and former patients, including Richard Dadd, a Victorian painter known for his paintings of fairies.



The museum and gallery are well worth a visit. The museum is open Wednesday to Saturday, 09.30 to 17.00. The current exhibition is “Alison Lapper: Lost in Parys” (until 2/6/24). There are also regular guided walks around the museum and grounds, the next being 13<sup>th</sup> April. If you cannot make it to the museum in person you can access it digitally, see the website for details.



The main entrance is in Monks Orchard Road and there is a bus stop right outside (now served by the new SL5 bus). There is a sizable visitors' car park, but parking is also allowed elsewhere on the site.

What a lovely local secret.

Tess Smith

## **THE LAST VOYAGE OF THE "GLAMORGAN" - part 2 – Heroic rescue of the survivors.**

***Valerie Hunter***

Between noon and 1pm on Friday February 16<sup>th</sup> the lookout on the steamship Republic, belonging to the White Star Line, reported a vessel ahead, which was evidently in distress, and in reply to their signals bore down towards them.

The vessel (SS Glamorgan) appeared to have been gutted amidships, and her foremast was gone. Although the sea was described as at that time running 'mountains high', she at once proceeded to lower two boats. One with the Chief Officer and four men, and the other with the Second Officer and four men .

They had, however, hardly got the first boat over the side, when a heavy lurch of the "Republic" jerked her [the boat] from the davit, throwing the chief officer, Mr Barrett, and seaman Forrester overboard. Mr Barret caught a lifeline as he went over, and thus saved himself; but poor Forrester drifted astern. The boat hastily extricated from her tackling, was completely launched, a rope thrown to the first officer by which he was rescued, upon which he and the remaining three seamen bent earnestly to the oars in pursuit of their drowning comrade who was being hastily carried by the waves away from the ship.

The battle was terrible and exciting. For fifteen minutes the drowning man was in view, bravely struggling for life, and the boat as bravely struggling to reach him. All could be seen from the deck of the "Republic". Sometimes the boat was within a few yards of him, but the waves interposing prevented the boatmen seeing him. At length the boat, which had been damaged in the launching, became almost filled with water and was obliged to return to the ship, leaving the poor fellow to his fate.

As the boat turned round to come back to the ship, a mighty swell came rolling down on the place where he was struggling, and when it subsided, he was not to be seen.

A look-out had been kept aloft Republic, but nothing was seen of him, and after an hour's fruitless endeavour to find him, the boat had to return to the steamer without the man. It was found the boat was so seriously damaged that she was sent adrift as useless. The other boat pulled towards the Glamorgan.

Finding it impossible, however, to get alongside they threw some lifebuoys as near to the vessel as they could for the men of the Glamorgan to get hold of. None of the crew being willing to go over the vessel's side to get hold of these lifebuoys, the chief officer of the Glamorgan volunteered to go himself, and having twisted a rope round his arm, he lowered himself over the side of the vessel. He was unable to get hold of any of the buoys, but whilst in this position the boat was washed under the ship's lee, and the men in it got hold of the man's legs and pulled him forcibly into the boat. Two other men then followed his example, lowering themselves by ropes over the vessel's side, and were successfully fortunately taken into the boat. The boat then returned to the Republic, but in getting alongside she also was smashed. Nevertheless, all were safely got on board.

It was blowing so hard that they did not dare to launch another boat. As the sea was growing heavier, the Captain was unwilling to risk the lives of a boat's crew until the weather became more moderate.

The Republic remained hove to, in sight of the disabled steamer during the whole afternoon. At 8 o'clock in the evening the weather had moderated, and the sea not being so dangerous, two further lifeboats were sent under the charge of the First Officer and Second Officer respectively, and in four trips rescued the remainder of the crew from the Glamorgan. There were 41 survivors, who saved nothing but the clothing which they had on at the time, some

of them having been severely hurt by being knocked about by the heavy seas which broke over their unfortunate vessel. One lifeboat was so seriously damaged on her last trip between the vessels that she was not worth lifting out of the water, and was consequently sent adrift, making thus a third boat lost.

Richard Nicklane, second engineer of the Republic, said that the passengers were very much excited in watching the saving of the wrecked crew, remaining on deck, and anxiously watching the efforts to lower the boats, cheering the sailors continually in their task.

When the survivors got on board they were provided with dry, warm clothing. Every kindness was shown them by the Captain and the men and also by the passengers. The injured were promptly attended to by Dr Isdell of the Republic under whose care they recovered rapidly.

The last man to leave the sinking vessel was Chief Engineer J. Cantlay, who had really been in command of the vessel since Captain Court had been swept overboard. Thus, the whole of the survivors of the crew of the Glamorgan were safely got on board the Republic; a more gallant effort to save the lives of these men has perhaps never been made than was made by the Master, officers and crew of the "Republic", conducted too with more skill and judgement, only one life having been lost, and that from the salving vessel itself.



SS Republic, a luxury liner of the White Star Line.

At 10 o'clock p.m. the Republic's engines were started up, and she proceeded on her journey to New York, reaching there on February 24th, where she landed the Glamorgan's crew. Glamorgan with 16 feet of water in her engine-room, her deck only four feet above the water line, was left to her fate and it was thought that she went down within a few hours after she was abandoned.

The Wreck Report for the Glamorgan stated that she was in a perfectly good, first rate and seaworthy condition. She was not overladen and retained her high class to the last; and that the damage and loss of life and the subsequent abandonment and loss of the said vessel were due to an exceptionally high wave which broke over this vessel, such a wave as is occasionally met with in the Atlantic. She was probably near the centre of the cyclone which caused the violence of the sea which swept her decks on 14 February and at the point of its greatest intensity and exposed to its greatest force, when the wave broke over the vessel, leaving her a complete wreck.

One of the assessors at the Wreck Inquest Investigation at Liverpool said that only on one occasion had he encountered such a wave which did similar damage. Everything was done that could have been done to save this vessel, but with the fires out, the foremast gone, the vessel lying in the trough of the sea, and without any means of preventing the water getting into the vessel, it was marvellous that they were able to keep the vessel afloat as long as they did, and those on board deserved every credit.

When the Republic arrived at her dock Captain Irving was presented by the passengers with resolutions congratulating him on his success in saving the crew of the Glamorgan. They were taken away by a committee to be engrossed and framed and hung in the cabin of the Republic. The other officers were also personally congratulated.

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