

Summer 2023 Magazine



The Third Age Trust

(Operating as the University of the Third Age)

Croydon u3a Registered Charity Number 1029466

www.u3asites.org.uk/croydon

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Foreword

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

Our glorious spring rather fizzled out during July, with the heatwaves in Europe staying firmly off our shores. Let's hope that the latter part of the summer is a little warmer.

In this issue we have reports from just a few of the more than 60 interest groups offered by Croydon u3a, which highlight the diversity of interests catered for.

However, I need to apologise to those members who sent in articles which have not yet been used. Sometimes we just run out of space! Rest assured I will do my best to ensure they appear in future editions.

Meanwhile, all contributions for the next edition will be gratefully received.

Please send to: Magazineeditor@croydonu3a.org.uk

Editor – Tess Smith

Letter from the Chair

Dear Member,

You will have received your Membership renewal letter and I hope you have completed the process. Whether you receive information by email, by post, whether you are a Joint Member with a partner, or whether you are an Associate Member also belonging to another u3a, I'm sure you will agree that the annual fee is the bargain of the year.

Please spread the word – being a member of Croydon u3a definitely does you good. We are all living proof of that. Keeping active mentally (Learn), socially (Laugh) and physically (Live) is what we promote to anyone who is no longer working fulltime. There's no age limit and no residency requirement. We have members in quite distant parts who belong to groups which meet virtually, and this is also a bonus for anyone who has mobility concerns.

Our Trees4Croydon project went really well. The collective response of members taking part and the collaboration with other local groups was very effective. There will be more news about this in the coming months.

Please always keep in mind that the committee is very ready to help members set up new groups. It just needs an idea, some enthusiasm, and a chat to Maggie Chan our Interest Group Co-ordinator, to start the ball rolling.

You will be receiving your Annual General Meeting Pack in the near future. Please support the work of the

volunteers who stand for election to the committee by attending on Wednesday 11th October at 2.15pm, when Stella Morris our new London Region Trustee will be present. If you can't attend please send an email or a note of support to Roger Brimble (Business Secretary) or myself.

E: rogerbrimble@btinternet.com

E: jennywilson63@live.co.uk

Very best wishes to you,

Jenny

Croydon u3a Chair

Reports from interest groups

Out and About with History of London Group 4

It's about eight years since History of London 4 first met and there are still many founder members, as well as more recent members. With a gap for Covid we have run a program of talks and visits covering many aspects of London's history. Over the year we have 10 meetings (all months except August and December) and 12 outings.

This has included about 50 plus places of interest, only duplicating those with a new exhibition. In 2022/23 our programme has included visits to Hackney, Southwark, Richmond, Biggin Hill, Eltham and London's Archives and Museums. Asking members for their thoughts on which has been the most interesting, these were some comments:

The Foundling Museum was "very interesting but sad". It also chimed with another member's interest in genealogy. It was rare to be reunited and "maybe some of those foundlings never knew their origins". *

A combined visit to Southwark Cathedral, small sites in the area and an exhibition of pictures of Elizabeth II during World War Two at the Imperial War Museum was also a popular choice. Members enjoyed the architecture of the Cathedral, a huge model of the earth (Gaia by Luke James) floating over head-height in the nave, and the local sites particularly "a hidden gem of history of the past at Crossbones Cemetery and Red Cross Cottages".

In Hackney we visited the municipal museum and Sutton House “a well-preserved Tudor house – with a good tour of the building”.

Eltham Palace was “a very interesting visit learnt a great deal about the history of the (1930s) period and enjoyed the beautiful garden.”



“Musical theatre experience at the V & A was like going down memory lane, seeing the costume used by Julie Andrews as Eliza Doolittle in My Fair Lady.”

Museum of London Docklands gave “a superb overview of London’s heritage as a part of the world”. This Museum has a regular place in our programmes. This year we visited the exhibition about Executions. This included the execution of Charles I during the Civil Wars but also those of thousands of Londoners across the centuries – to the extent that everywhere in the inner boroughs is no more than 500 yards from a site of execution.

We also made two visits to the London Metropolitan Archives for exhibitions. One about the mapping of London for many purposes, including pandemic cholera, poverty, railways and bomb damage. The other on researching the stories of Londoners of African, Caribbean, Asian and Indigenous heritage who lived and worked in the City between 1560 and 1860.

We had a lovely visit to Fulham Palace, a Grade 1 listed building with medieval origins. The site was the main residence of the Bishop of London from the 11th century until 1973.



The gardens were beautiful, and the garden seat looked as though it were created for our group!



Photos by Sheila Newbold. (Who also took the cover picture,)

The group is open for new members, please contact Barbara on 0739 8866950 if you would be interested in joining. We meet at Purley URC on the third Wednesday each month (afternoons) and charge £15 per term to cover the costs of the talks. Outings are by public transport plus any admission charge for the venues we visit.

Many thanks for the comments quoted from Angela, Barbara, Doreen, John, Marion, Philippa, Sheelagh, Sheila and Sue.

Barbara Lister

*The u3a had a shared learning project with Coram to transcribe petitions for the admission of infant children – usually under one year old – to the Foundling Hospital. This task is now open worldwide through Zooniverse too.

<https://www.zooniverse.org/projects/jojo38/voices-through-time-the-story-of-care/about/research>

Environment and Climate Crisis Group

Woodland Trust site Longbeech North near Charing
Kent

We were privileged to be invited to visit this site on Wednesday as a “thankyou” for being long-term large donors. It made such a difference having Clive, the knowledgeable forest manager, show us around.



History

The site covers 250 acres and was purchased in 2016 in the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. There are adjoining privately owned woods and farmland. The soil is poor, clay with flints on top of chalk and the woods have probably been in existence since the ice age, there are Saxon relics e.g. Boundaries. The Archbishop of Canterbury owned the woods until recently.

In medieval times trees were important for all aspects of life, housing, fuel, furniture, shipbuilding charcoal etc. and the trees would have been mixed broadleaved varieties. In the 1850's fast growing coppiced sweet chestnut was introduced over most of the area for hop poles, pit props and fencing.



Chestnut coppice



Douglas Fir Plantation

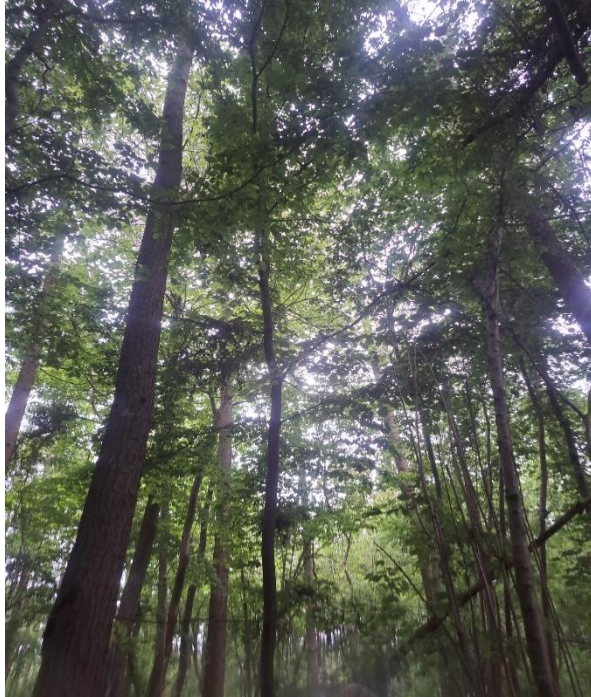
Then in the mid C20th forceful methods were used including chemical poisons to kill the chestnuts and over 2/3rds replanted with Douglas Fir, Norway Spruce and Larch to meet the needs of the construction industry. Disaster struck in 2012 when a fungus infected the larch and 25% of the woodland was clear felled under statutory rules.

Although the site is classed as ancient woodland there are no ancient trees left as the timber has been regarded as a crop and continually felled and cleared causing stress to the environment.

The forest is more vulnerable to pests and diseases when there is no regard for biodiversity. These are becoming more frequent with foreign imports and the climate crisis. Despite the earlier clearance of the Sweet Chestnut some have survived, and some broadleaved trees have grown under the conifers.



Sweet Chestnut regrowth on old stools



Hornbeam growing amongst conifers

The Woodland Trust is using this site to demonstrate how ecological resilience can be improved by gradually transforming the age and diversity of species by encouraging broadleaved regeneration. This slower approach is to take out specific mature conifers for commercial use and plant hornbeam, lime and hazel saplings under the canopy as they tolerate more shady

conditions, whereas oak and birch require sunnier conditions. All the new trees are grown in Britain and Ireland as there are many potential threats from pests and diseases just across the channel.

Research is ongoing to demonstrate how to convert the monoculture growth which existed previously, into other types of forestry which are more resilient. We could see how Clive the manager had marked certain trees to be retained and others to be nurtured to become the ancient trees of the future. We now understand much more about soil health and the fungal communications underground between plants. Clear felling and replanting with a single monoculture is not the way nature works and the Trust is hopeful that this more sympathetic management style will be implemented more widely.

Sheila Kemble

Local History Group

Addiscombe Military Academy – Maggie Chan

When trying to imagine what the area we live in would have looked like in years gone by - one clue is to look at street names. These can sometimes give us a glimpse of a forgotten landscape: for example, *Upfield* must refer to a high field, now long gone and built upon; *Cherry Orchard Road* reminds us of a part of Croydon once covered by cherry trees; *Fairfield* was the site of the annual Croydon Fair – and so on.

However, there are some street names which recall people and events that seem to have little to do with our area. For example, in Addiscombe there are five parallel roads, *Canning*, *Outram*, *Clyde*, *Elgin* and *Havelock* whose names celebrate men scarcely remembered today but who were once prominent Officers of the East India Company. At first sight, it is hard to see what could link them to Addiscombe!

To understand the connection, we need to go back in time to 1700, when a large estate at Addiscombe was acquired by William Draper, son-in-law of the Diarist, Sir John Evelyn. William demolished the old Elizabethan house and in 1702 built a new Palladian-style mansion, *Addiscombe Place*, on a site which is now the corner of Outram Road and Mulberry Lane.

Sir John Evelyn recorded in his diary "I went to Adscomb on 11 July 1703 to see my son-in-law's new house. It has excellent brickwork and Portland stone

features, that I pronounced it good solid architecture, and one of the very best gentlemen's houses in Surrey."

The estate was passed down in the family until, in 1808, it was sold to the Honourable East India Company (HEIC) for £15,500 plus another £1,104.10/- 'for timber and standing trees'. The mansion became home to *The Addiscombe Military Academy*, which was founded in 1809 by the HEIC to train officers, especially Engineers and Artillery, for their Indian regiments.

Initially the Academy took in 60 cadets, but this number soon increased and eventually there were 150 Cadets in training at any one time. During the 52 years of its existence, some 3,600 students passed through the Academy's doors. As the number of Cadets increased, some extra buildings were erected - until the Academy comprised the mansion, various barrack blocks, a drawing and lecture hall, a hospital, a dining hall, bake-house, dairy, laundry, brew-house, various storerooms, a sand-modelling hall, a gymnasium, a fives and racquet court and a chapel.

With some 150 young men on the loose in the area, the Academy had considerable social impact locally. Cadets began their studies aged between 14 and 18 and, like all young people everywhere and in any age, they enjoyed their recreation as much as their lessons.

Stories abound of the high jinks and downright bad behaviour of the Cadets and they were at times banned from entering Croydon because they were too fond of

fighting with the local young men. They found themselves refused entry to the popular annual Croydon Fair following an incident in which some of them (uninvited) mounted a stage to take part in a dance and a fight ensued. They were well known for frequenting the local pubs – the *Sandrock* on Shirley Hills being a particular favourite - and induced local people to join in their rowdy behaviour.

It should not be thought, however, that the Cadets were known locally only for their anti-social behaviour! They were also seen working in the fields of several local farms and the sight of the Cadets in uniform parading to church on Sundays was a popular spectacle. The Cadets - some very young and away from home for the first time – could also often be found at *Mother Rose's Cottage*, where they enjoyed more innocent fare than in the local public houses and seem to have been “mothered” by Mother Rose herself.

Mother Rose's Cottage was situated opposite Ashburton Road on what is now the Lower Addiscombe Road. Mother Rose was the daughter and wife of farm labourers and moved into the cottage in 1840 with her husband, John Rose. She seems to have ‘mothered’ the Cadets to some extent – allowing them to smoke – which was forbidden at the Academy – and to sing the latest songs. She served them with bread and butter, but no alcohol, and kept them in order with a small cane. She is known to have cleaned the Cadets’ white gloves for them with pipe clay and was remembered by many of them with great affection.

A Cadet's Day:

The Cadets slept in dormitories, each having a small (6ft x 9ft) private screened off area, called a "kennel". They were awakened at 6.00 a.m. and had a breakfast of tea and bread and butter or bread and milk.

The day was given up to lessons and parades, interspersed with substantial meals. Lunch usually consisted of bread and cheese, while on the dinner menu was a variety of meats – beef, mutton, pork and veal. A great deal of bread and butter seems to have been served and there was beer available at lunch and dinner.

The young men played different team games and had their own version of football which they called *The Rosh* and which seems to have been a pretty rough affair with nothing much disallowed. The boys played cricket and took part in athletics and boxing. Extra-curricular activities included billiards/pool at the King's Arms pub.

According to [The Book of Addiscombe](#) as soon as Parade was over, the fastest runner would be sent off to secure a pool table. Such activities were not officially encouraged, and the Cadets had often to dodge their officers and teachers. They were not supposed to leave the college grounds without a letter of invitation but they were known often to forge these. According to Colonel HM Vibart, a graduate of the Academy, his days at the Academy were an "ebullition of harmless fun"!

The Seminary at Addiscombe provided trained officers for the HEIC's private army. The First War of Indian Independence of 1857 (the 'Indian Mutiny') and the

subsequent removal of the HEIC from the government of India brought that to an end.

It was at first proposed to retain Addiscombe as a military college, however, the War Office decided that the existing establishments at Woolwich and Sandhurst were sufficient for the needs of the army. And so, on 30 August 1861, Addiscombe College and its grounds were sold by auction to the British Land Company for £33,600. The mansion, the barracks and most of the other buildings were demolished. All the fixtures and fittings from the mansion were ripped out and sold off and the house was then razed to the ground with dynamite. Many of the 1,000 trees that the East India Company had planted on the estate were cut down and used as timber. Those trees that survived are now protected.

By 1863, most of the military college had gone and in its place, fine villas were under construction along five parallel new roads. Of the original buildings, only two teachers' houses and the Gymnasium survive - however some architectural features from the old mansion were reused in building the new villas and have been preserved. While many of the villas were pulled down during the 20th century, a significant number remain and the character of these roads, now known as the East India Estate, has been protected through its being awarded Conservation Area status.

For more information on the Conservation area, see: [EIAMP_20140113.indd \(lbc-app-w-localgov-corpwebsite-p.azurewebsites.net\)](#)

Beginners Belly Dancing Group

It's fun to try something new and different now and then. The Beginners Belly Dancing class has been running for nearly 2 years. When you think of trying something new off the list of Croydon u3a Interest Groups, Belly Dancing is not an activity which most people think "I'd like to give that one a go". Those who have joined and attended regularly are developing into graceful and confident dancers. This style of dance requires the disciplined skill of isolation, balance and you get a wonderful workout, strengthening those core muscles and keeping the hips supple and legs strong.

Belly dancing crosses many cultural boundaries, started in the Middle East and Africa and moving on to evolve in western cultures. Our teacher has been dancing professionally for over 20 years; she is a u3a member too. She brings her expertise, supportive attention and creative process to each member irrespective of their ability.

We shimmy a lot, improvise to the music, use undulating flowing movements and hip hits which make us laugh with glee as we move around and express our joy and passion together. We can now perform a simple dance routine as well as build on more challenging hip drops and upper body movements. You rush in through the door bringing all the stresses of the day and by the end of the lesson you are gliding out, smiling and feeling relaxed until the next time.

We meet on the first Thursday of the month and welcome newcomers. Pop in and see what we are up to.



We have an array of props that you can borrow. As you can see from the photo, we wear traditional costumes consisting of a long flowing skirt or Harem pants, a hip belt and veils which helps us get into role and focus on the discipline and artistry of the dance itself.

Come and give it a go, you might just enjoy it.

Jacqueline Harriott GL

Darts and Pub Lunch Group

I popped into the Wednesday Darts group meeting and had a smile on my face from beginning to end; what a lovely, welcoming, fun loving medley of players.

Another two new members joined the regulars today one of whom said she had never thrown a dart before but managed to achieve a stunning three dart finish that would have made the late Eric Bristow proud: not surprisingly she won the player of the month trophy.



In the final knockings, Pamela "Darted" past (sorry couldn't resist) the equally brilliant high scoring Pat (H) to win the trophy for Highest score of the month. The only brief interruption to play was when competitors were tucking into the tasty Pub Grub.



The next Darts group meeting is the Tuesday group's get together on Tuesday the 12th September.

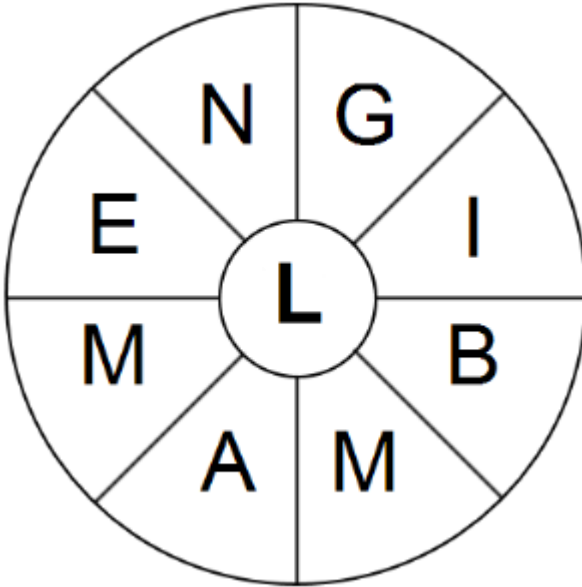
My thanks to all the Wednesday Darts players.

Cliff Brett.

Puzzle Page

Ancient Egypt Word Wheel

Around 5000 years ago the Ancient Egyptians built a great civilisation. We are fascinated by the pyramids, mummification, the Egyptian Gods and Goddesses, canopic jars and the ancient curses of the pharaohs.



This Ancient Egypt themed word wheel is made from a 9 letter 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 L and at least two others. No plurals, proper nouns or foreign words are allowed.

Sudoku

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

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

Hard

Word Sudoku

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

E, G, Y, P, T, I, A, N, S, Normal sudoku rules apply, but with letters instead of numbers.

		t		p				
y						s	e	
	e		g		s			
i	y			e				
	s		t		a	e	i	y
t	g			s				
	n		p		g			
g						n	p	
		p		n				

So each row, column and small square must include the letters above.

AFTERNOON TEA *by Colin Read*

'Afternoon T' said letter S. 'How are you these days? Haven't seen you for ages'.

'Mustn't grumble' replied T, 'I've been spending most of my time at the moment up at the other end of the alphabet with A and B. They've got a host of good stories and keep me in fits! B used to be in a long-running Scrabble tournament but fell out with F. They don't speak.'

'I'm not surprised', said S. 'Everyone seems to fall out with F at some time or another. I've never seen 'I to I' with him. Miserable old so and so.'

'Anyway' said T, 'A and B are thinking of forming a double-act and going on tour. I wish them well. By the way, did you hear about Q and U?

'Yes I did' replied S. 'Of course, they're virtually inseparable, as usual, but the other letters are beginning to talk. I'm fairly broad-minded but really – the things they get up to! Makes my toes curl! All legal now I suppose.'

'W and X have patched things up after their tiff I gather' said T. 'I saw them down the pub last week. Bit of a storm in a D cup if you ask me!'

'Y told me that Z's doing well after his incident', said S. 'What happened?'

'Oh, you didn't hear. Well, he fell off the Scrabble board and the dog - Jay - ate him! They had to wait until the tile passed through naturally. Z still has nightmares over what he went through, so to speak. And the family haven't played Scrabble since! Anyway, nice talking to you T; just off to get old M's afternoon tea ready. He's not getting any younger you know. Rheumatism. See (C) you around'!



Interviewing Veterans

Like many people who retire, I wondered then what life would have for me, and I was fortunate! Having to stop teaching at the age of 65, I was asked by an archive called the Second World War Experience Centre to record people's memories of the war, and when I stopped 15 years later I had 1,600 interviews under my belt. From them I have selected two eminent people, and these should in fact be the heading for this article. Sir Ernst Gombrich and Lord (Claus) Moser.

Sir Ernst Gombrich OM,CBE,FBA,FSA,PhD was born as long ago as 1909 in Vienna, and when I met him in 2001 was quite obviously well advanced in years and in poor health. Our interview was punctuated by fits of coughing, and so I quite naturally asked him if he wished to continue, but he assured me that he did. Being Jewish he came to London before the war and even then began his distinguished academic career working at the Warburg Institute. Then in the war he was a Monitor of German Language Broadcasts, and he was the first in this country to hear of Hitler's death, which news he passed on to Churchill. Then he held Professorships and Emeritus Professorships not just in London and Vienna but in several European countries and the United States, also having been a Trustee of the British Museum. His best-selling books included a popular "History of Art".

In 2003 I met **Lord Moser KCB,CBE,FBA** when he had been Chairman of the British Museum Development Trust since 1992. Born in Berlin in 1922 with a German schooling until 1936, when like many Jewish families he came to the United Kingdom. I met him on an extremely hot day at the Museum. As an enemy alien he had been interned in 1940 but then studied at the London School of Economics until 1943 when he joined the RAF working as an Instrument Flight Mechanic, firstly at Manston on Mosquitos, then at Pocklington on Lancasters. Next he was given the job of assessing the damage that had been caused by the raid on the Ruhr Dams. Later, a very serious accident led him to East Grinstead and "The Guinea Pig Club". A distinguished academic career then followed, with Professorships in Statistics at several universities and many books written. His love for music was reflected in recreation from these jobs as well as a twelve year stint as a Director of Rothschilds.

Was I not really fortunate to meet two such men!

David Talbot

Tales from a Devon Book Club

My daughter runs a book club and has provided this book review for our magazine. Ed.

Miss Benson's Beetle, by Rachel Joyce.

Our book club recently read *The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry* by Rachel Joyce – we had mixed opinions, although it was generally declared a decent read. For August we're reading another of Rachel Joyce's, *Miss Benson's Beetle*. This is an author who likes to use a physical journey as a conduit to personal growth within her stories, but apart from that this book was entirely different (and, in my opinion – and that of my next-door-neighbour – far better).

Starting in 1950's London, with rationing and smog, the book follows the eponymous Miss Benson as she undertakes an expedition that she's wished for since childhood. Now middle-aged and deeply discontented, she decides to make a change and travel to the other side of the world in search of a - possibly non-existent - undiscovered beetle.

The book follows her discovery of herself, her limits, and her challenges, as well as the developing friendship with an unlikely assistant. You wouldn't expect two very different women to find happiness in the rainforest of New Caledonia, but they each do in their own way.

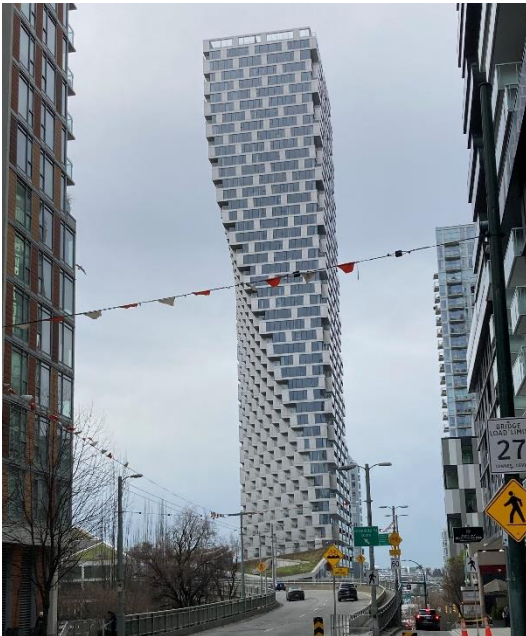
I've yet to hear what the rest of the group think about this one, but hopefully they all found it a good summer book.

Jess Smith

Vancouver, Canada

We arrive after an 8-hour flight over Greenland and Hudson Bay at Calgary in Alberta. There are traces of the recent snow bomb-cyclone on the runway and the connecting flight to Vancouver is delayed by forty-five minutes for de-icing. The plane is full of bright and lively, old and new Canadians and even a few 'First Nation' indigenous people. The first words we hear, like 'washroom' and 'garbage', tell us that English usage is infinitely uncommon. The city appears as a blazing nightscape of high-rise towers clustered around an inky inlet.

It's a new-made, New World place of glass-and-concrete canyons and wide, windy boulevards rolling



over its hilly contours. There is cavernous space between blocks that seem to jut and tumble upwards into the sky above.

Vancouver House is a massive, twisting spiral of Lego-like apartments,

designed by A I to test the limits of aesthetics, giddiness and gravity.

The hulk of the soccer stadium stands in rude juxtaposition with Chinatown. Raw concrete erupts everywhere, fresh and stained in the flyovers and smart and chic in the sharply angled corners of car parking decks and superstores. On the roof of the only 3-storey building on our block stands a weathervane surmounted by a figure in mediaeval cap and gown sitting backwards on a horse reading. This must be a remnant of the Old World, since he is clearly a pilgrim from Chaucer's 'Canterbury Tales'. There are no potholes in the streets, only wishful instructions to drivers to 'Share the road' and 'Yield to cyclists'.

The view over the port (third largest in North America) from the Granville waterfront is awesome. Huge container ships and oil tankers lie at anchor in the bay before docking. Flying boats water-ski off the waves to head up inland over glacier-mint mountain tops. On the north bank opposite endless Douglas fir stand sentinel. The beaches on English Bay are a-swarm with gulls, crows, cormorants, ducks and oyster-catchers – even an occasional bittern and a solitary heron perched one-legged on a rocky outcrop – and flocks of honking Canada geese.

On land, dogs and joggers trot among us walkers on a dedicated track. While you can tell an American at fifty paces from the size of his shoes, a Canadian gives himself away by pronouncing his 'out' as 'oat'. The famous rains reign most days. Stanley Park at the end of the promontory is pure Pacific North-West rainforest:

here run wild the wily coyotes, black squirrels and tiny chickadees of storybooks.

Talk of the town is not all about the Canucks' ice hockey: the city's mayor, a Chinese-Canadian, complains that Vancouver is losing its 'swagger' compared with Miami, Austin, Texas, and London for its ability to attract new investment and 'tech hubs and clusters'. In fact, the film industry has a solid base here as a kind of back-office for Hollywood for post-production and distribution work.

There is a marked inequality in living standards: Chinese investors have pushed property prices up beyond affordability for all but the wealthy, while the slightly warmer climate attracts a growing under-class of addicts and homeless away from the harsher and often brutal weather of Central and Eastern Canada. The Vancouver Institute announces a public lecture on 'Moving and Grooving: Musical Rhythm's Effects on the Brain'. There's French toast and maple syrup for breakfast, clam chowder, cinnamon apples and wine in cans. And trolley buses in the streets, powered by plentiful hydroelectricity.

Out in the backwoods of the Big Country (i.e., British Columbia) are some of the world's tallest trees - there's more lumber than you can shake a stick at - and some of the biggest salmon runs on Powell River. 'First Nation' totem poles like the Thunderbird abound on higher ground in the belief that storms were caused by his anger - his flapping wings created thunder - while the Grizzly Bear carving grasps a human figure in its paws to depict him at the mercy of nature. These were

often the roof beams of their longhouse dwellings. The tomahawk is the great symbol of the Squamish and other native tribes claiming 'Land Back' in campaigns for restitution as vociferously as those of Australian aboriginals.

The old rivalry persists between Eastern (French-speaking) and Western (English-speaking) Canada. 'Knuckleheads' and 'Pepsis' are not always terms of endearment. But innovation is evident all over: euthanasia (assisted dying) is legal, as is 'terramation' or the composting of human remains for burial in the earth. Domestic food waste goes not to an incinerator but to an 'insinkerator' in the kitchen which emits a startling digestive roar. Cannabis is also legally sold in retail outlets – British Columbia experiments with decriminalising drugs and treating addicts purely as medical cases for treatment. Gun control is still a wrangle with the hunting lobby. Dapper city types are casually dressed, tieless and T-shirted, while the big 'moose' outdoor guys are a match for the brawny lumberjacks of legend.

To the theatre: 'The Cull' is a witty reunion of old friends showing how the human mirrors the wolf pack in its dealing with hurt and injury. This is performed on a bare, revolving stage with only six chairs moved as props to represent the different permutations of scene. It also mirrors the predicament of many of the thousands of refugees arriving in Canada as they enter a free society, a haven of studied inter-dependence, inclusivity and mutual tolerance.

Barnaby Powell

Bowling the Way - Meet the Go Bowlers

As we passed through the wrought Iron gates of the clubhouse, we were greeted by the sight of a wide expanse of a well maintained, lush, green lawn, in the distance men and women in clean bright whites appeared. We had arrived on a mild overcast Monday morning. Fingers and toes crossed and a spring in our knees, the fun was about to begin.

We registered, got settled with cups of hot tea and coffee, a name label and a warm welcome was extended ...so important. This year's Taster sessions attracted fewer members, but nevertheless everyone who participated was keen and ready to give it a go. 80% of the group attended all the sessions.

We weren't nervous, were we? Perhaps unsure as to what we were going to be asked to do. There was no delay, the session was for two hours for the next 3 Mondays, so we needed to familiarise ourselves with the order of play, how to use the equipment correctly and to understand the rules of the game. Positive and patient words of encouragement from the coaches helped to build our confidence, keep us focused and to make us laugh at our faux pas, especially when things went disastrously awry and that happened frequently at the start.

We got down to some serious coaching from competent and understanding coaches as the sessions progressed. Never a harsh word or dismissive attitude was made. So much so after three sessions we began to look, act and play in quite a professional manner, I got told. The final

session ended with us playing against each other in teams of 2. A u3a member was heard to comment “I’ve learnt an awful lot in 3 sessions, I’m thinking of joining”.



The photos are proof that there was no sashaying around or hanging back, there was such a positive attitude and this was commented on by Peter the club secretary. As well as being fun, we ultimately connected as a group, promoted Croydon u3a and maintained links with our community. Everyone was lovely and it was another great success, without a doubt everyone developed a passion for learning.



Thank you to everyone who supported this second collaborative event.

If you would like to know more about Lawn Bowls Taster sessions at BRHBC then drop me an email.

Jacqueline Harriott

June 2023

At least four members have joined the Bowls Club as a result of participating in the taster sessions – Ed.

