



Newsletter No 88
Late Summer 2013



Butterfly Bush Eileen Forder

From the Editors Desk

Welcome to the Late Summer edition of the Newsletter.

Well when the summer came, it did so with a vengeance. Probably weather to suit us all at some time. As usual, the Spire U3A has been busy with interesting Coffee mornings and active Groups.

The July meeting was of great interest, despite the technical hitch of no projector, with the Bird's Eye View of Famous Landmarks by Heather Hook.

The much looked forward to August Meeting by Roy Deacon on the Great Storm of 1987 had to be cancelled due to the sad death of Mr Deacon. However, Carol Kitching from Wilton House stepped in, with an account of the Influence of Stuart and Tudor Courts on Wilton House. It certainly was the place to be in those days!

Zelah Bysouth

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A WARM WELCOME TO

Mrs Anita Taylor and Mrs Jill Preston

Group News

Playing the Recorder for Fun and Improvement

No doubt some of you will have learnt to play the descant recorder at school. If so, it may come as a surprise to learn that the instrument went out of fashion in the 19th century, as being **too quiet** to compete with the

(transverse) flute, oboe, clarinet etc. i.e. the woodwind section of the modern orchestra!

Whilst the descant (or soprano) recorder is an ideal size for small hands, there are other "family members" such as the treble (or alto) tenor and bass. It's very satisfying and rewarding to play the recorder with others, in a group, or "consort". We sometimes play unaccompanied or with CD or other "backing" music to help us keep together. Our repertoire is not limited to early music nor indeed to recorder music - although these forms are included amongst the many and varied pieces which we attempt.

At present we have several soprano players and an alto player. I play tenor or bass. We currently have room for more members. We need volunteers to take up the larger tenor* or bass* instruments. If you already play the piano or other musical instrument, or have learnt the rudiments of music, this would help, though not essential - but enthusiasm and commitment are! Why not attend a group meeting as an observer, if you are unsure of what to expect!? (*Men please don't be shy! We need you.)

We meet on the 3rd Wednesday, monthly throughout the year, at 2.00 p.m.

Contact :- Stuart Robson, (01722) 334310 or e-mail :- stuart.robson6@btinternet.com. for further details!



The Tea dance group started with only seven members in Nov 2010

We now have 24 and there is still room for more people if they would like to join. We mainly do ballroom but have a go at barndance or anything else that any one wants. We try to vary it as much as possible. We meet on the 2nd Fri

in the month 2.30pm till 4.30 all the summer. and two meetings a month from Sept - March. Photo Eileen Forder

The U3A Sci-Tech Group Recent Meetings

The past three meetings have been varied to say the least. The talks and a visit ranged from Satellites, the I-Pad to Bio-digesters.

Spire member Phil Whitmore gave a talk on 'How Satellites Have Changed Our Lives'. From Sputnik to the Hubble Space Telescope and on to Space Wars, Phil covered a wide ranging talk including the early history of satellite development, how they are constructed, and the different types of orbit they operate in. He then described a whole range of different types of satellite, including those used for astronomy, communications, weather, TV broadcast, navigation, reconnaissance (and spying!) and search and rescue. Phil talked about how space debris is providing an additional hazard for satellites in orbit, and also described how space hobbyists can have their own satellites launched into orbit. The Space Surveillance Network has tracked a total of more than 24,500 objects in space. And of those, it's currently watching about 8,000 objects currently in orbit. So, you could say that

there are currently 8,000 satellites in space. Approximately 560 of those objects in space are actually operational satellites, and the rest are dead or pieces of space debris.

In May we had a wonderful morning with a hands-on experience of the I-Pad. James Samson and Holly brought four of these amazing gadgets to show us. First they explained what they could do such as connecting to the world wide web. So emails could be checked anywhere that a signal [Wi-Fi] could be located such as the library. Then they let us play with them. Great FUN. Finally they had a question and answer session that lasted for ages because there was such enthusiasm from members. Subsequently several members have purchased these devices and have been delighted with them.

In June about 15 members turned up near Warminster to have a guided tour of the Malaby Biogas plant. This enterprise turns waste food from restaurants and the like into gas and then to run a generator to make electricity that is sold to the electricity company. This is a super way

to reduce our carbon footprint at very little cost to the environment. Transport of the waste food being the least green area. We felt that this was a marvellous way to make energy.

The new season's programme is gathering pace and the first talk should be on Colour Perception and the second about GM Crops. Both sound fascinating. Do come to these for only £1 on the last Monday in the month starting on 23rd September at 10am.

Peter Read

Using you Camera Group

Our summer season will be over when you read this. But we shall be off on our last outing soon. This time we shall have gone to the Langford Lakes, the Wiltshire Wildlife reserve, to try to get members using all the techniques we have taught them over the past few months.

We started the season in March with about 11 members when we discussed the basics of cameras. So we got members to change the ISO settings to account for the changes in the weather. That is the dimmer the light the higher the setting. Then to try out the Exposure

Compensation to make the camera over or under expose deliberately. The camera does not always know best but

a human can see when the result is wrong. Things like white clouds can so easily be just white blobs.

Then the following month we set our members a Photographic Treasure Hunt around the village of Harnham. This was greatly enjoyed by all. They were able to put into practice some of the things already explained. We had a look at some of their results immediately by using our computer at home.

After this Sheila and I took them to Homington village where there were a number of targets for them to find and photograph. We managed to get into the church where there are several items of interest for photographers.

In June we ventured to the Italian Market on the newly laid market square setts. Lots of pictures of cheese and sausages were taken as well as the stall holders. A very colourful scene.

In August we took members to the Moot in Downton. Here they were able to wander at will and take images of the lake and the river and the village of

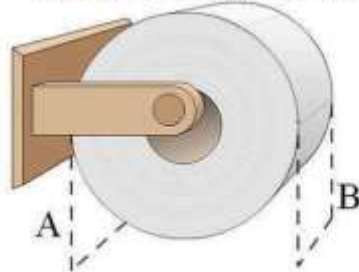
Downton from on high. We finalised this occasion at the White Horse.

In summary we have had a successful season. For members I think they not only enjoyed the outings but learnt more about getting the best from their cameras.



A Stall holder at the
Italian Market P Read

THE GREAT



DEBATE



Computers Are For Fun Too

PCs, Apple Macs, iPads, tablets and smartphones all have great gaming capabilities. Computer games can keep our minds active, they can fill in those times we are away from home travelling or waiting around, and they can entertain. Solitaire, Freecell and Spider have been around for ages and are still favourites today. Many games in the Apple 'Apps' store and the Google 'Play Store' are free, but you need to be aware of the potential money trap of 'in-Apps' purchases – these are the extra purchases you can make to extend a game, gain extra lives, or just remove annoying and intrusive adverts. It might be only 69p

a time, but this can soon add up to a sizeable sum. Selling and developing Apps is a lucrative business. For example, our current favourite game is ‘Candy Crush Saga free’. This is free to download but just as you start to feel the thrill of accomplishment, you run out of lives and have to wait before continuing, or pay 69p for more lives. More cost provides more powerful game tools. About 45 million people play Candy Crush each month; it’s the most downloaded mobile game on both Android and Apple devices, and it’s the top-grossing mobile app. It is estimated that Candy Crush brings in over £400,000 a day—almost £150 million a year—for its British creator.

The numbers are impressive:

	Google	Apple	Microsoft
Number of users (in millions)	900	600	12
Number of apps (in thousands)	800	1250	160
Number of developers (in thousands)	150	235	45
Number of downloads (in billions)	48	50	65
Paid to developers (in millions)	900	5000	100



The U3A Stand at Harnham Flower Show

P Read

Elderly hit by new phone scam.

Housebound and elderly people are being targeted with a new telephone scam that involves con men posing as bank staff or police, a fraud watchdog has warned.

The fraud, which has cost victims £7m in a year, is difficult to detect when well- executed, Financial Fraud Action UK said.

The criminals instruct the victim to disclose credit and debit card information before emptying the person's bank accounts.

Those who have fallen into the trap have had their life savings wiped out within 24-hours. Around one in four adults in the UK has received a

cold call like this. Financial Fraud Action said 43pc of victims have been aged over 50 — possibly reflecting the higher proportion of elderly people who spend working hours at home.

The new con is dubbed “vishing”. It involves a fraudster posing on the phone as someone from a bank or building society fraud investigation team, the police or another legitimate organisation such as a telephone or internet provider. An automated system calls the unsuspecting victim. Once they pick up the receiver the criminal, posing as a representative of a reputable organisation, claims an urgent need for their debit or credit card details, this often involves telling the bank customer their card has been cloned and fraud is about to be enacted on their account.

The crook urges the victim to act straight away to avoid the disaster. If he or she can sense doubt, they urge their victim to put down the phone and ring back. However, the criminal simply stays on the line and either pretends to answer the phone or passes the receiver to another member of the gang.

It may sound far-fetched, but the scam is so believable that four in ten people fail to see through tricks, Financial Fraud Action said.

Once the details have been handed over, the criminal simply empties the account. In some circumstances, victims are being persuaded to go into their bank, withdraw their life savings and then hand them over to a courier who arrives at their front door later in the day.

Financial Fraud Action said it had seen a £36m increase over the past year in crimes involving either online or phone banking, purchases made online and over the phone or criminals filling out fraudulent applications.

The fraud prevention body said people should not be afraid to just put the phone down on someone if they are unsure about handing over details.

It warned consumers never to assume a caller is genuine just because

they hold some information about them. Criminals may already have obtained some basic information to try to make the call appear legitimate. Real bank employees would never ask for passwords, it stressed.

Kyle Caldwell and Jessica Winch. Daily Telegraph. 31.8.2013