

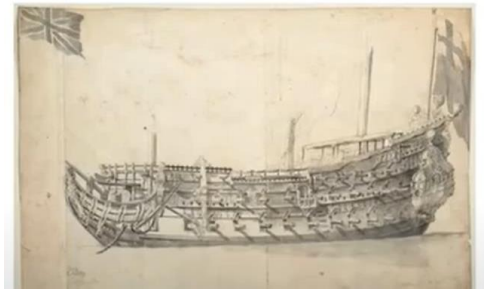
## Welcome to the February Edition of our Newsflash

Firstly, a heartfelt thanks to Ian Flack who stepped in at very short notice at our January Speakers Meeting after we were 'stood up' by our nominated speaker. Ian gave a very impromptu talk (speaking without notes for almost half an hour!!) about Sir John Young (Baron Young of Dartington), with whom Ian had worked alongside for a number of years. In 1982, Sir John co-founded the U3A with Peter Laslett and Eric Midwinter, as well as numerous other organizations. Thank you Ian. You dug us out of a big hole.

Our Monthly Speakers Meeting is on 4<sup>th</sup> February at the Leigh Community Centre  
Doors open at 2.00pm for a 2.30pm start

Discovering The London a talk by Steve Ellis

Steve will talk about the shipwreck of the London, a warship which was accidentally blown up in the murky waters of the Thames estuary in 1665. He has dived to the London about 500 times. It is such a shame that this wreck – and an important part of our history – is being washed away. Preserving the London has become the legacy of his life.



## Group News

Our lovely Moira Sweet retired as Leader of the Days Out by Coach Group in December following a last hurrah with our Christmas day outing at Waddeston Manor, with a lovely lunch, a tour of the manor house and a walk around the grounds to see all the beautiful lights. It was a superb ending to Moira's tenure. Thank you Moira for all your hard work over the years from all your coaching friends!!!



Over our lunch, Vic Beadle spoke a few words:

'As you know, this is Moira's last trip. She's been running these trips for the last twelve years and we've been to some lovely places including stately homes, vineyards and on river trips. Moira has always had a smile for us despite all the problems. There has been talk of someone taking over after Moira but, if this does happen, they can never replace our Moira. We recently arranged a collection for Moira and were overwhelmed by the amount raised. We were able to send a lovely bunch of flowers to Moira's home yesterday which she loved because she sent us a photo. I'm also pleased to give Moira this card, signed by as many of us as possible, as well as Marks & Spencer and John Lewis vouchers. **Moira, from all of us -- thank you.**'

I am very pleased to say that Valerie Lewis has agreed to take over the leadership of the Days Out by Coach Group, ably assisted by Mandy & Barry Freshwater. Look out for details of the first trip.

The Guitar Group has had to close for the time being as it is so popular that they group has outgrown its current meeting place. Jim is looking for an alternative.

The following Groups all have vacancies:

Table tennis on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays  
Craft Group  
Bridge Intermediate  
Just Sew  
Art for Pleasure  
French Intermediate and Advanced  
Church Visiting Group  
Pétanque  
Canasta on Wednesday. Beginners welcome



Details for the above groups and their co-ordinators can be found on the Leigh Estuary u3a website under the Groups section or by contacting the Groups Co-Ordinator, Jim Jennett at jimjennett@btinternet.com.

Ballroom & Latin American Dancing – a new group opportunity

Leigh Estuary u3a has received the following: Our names are Harley Nelson and Thomas Purdy, and we are professional ballroom dancers. We are currently working with a few U3A groups hosting ballroom and Latin classes and would like to offer them to your group! If you would be interested, we would love to have a call or be happy to have a meeting to set up any arrangements or answer any questions you may have! We are also happy to provide a free taster session to gauge the interest of your group. We look forward to hearing from you!

If you are interested in taking part in a taster session, please email Maire at maireberryu3a@outlook.com

**Group Co-Ordinators** If you have any Group spaces or Group news that you would like to share with the LEu3a members, please contact Trish at: [leu3anewsflash@gmail.com](mailto:leu3anewsflash@gmail.com)

## St. Valentine's Day

Valentine's Day is celebrated every 14<sup>th</sup> February as couples across the globe honour their spouses, partners and sweethearts. Hundreds of years of traditions and customs have made it into the holiday that we observe today.

The fullest accounts of the martyrdom of Saint Valentine can be found in early medieval texts, which reveal there were two Christian martyrs with that name. The first tale, written down in the sixth century AD, concerns a priest based in Rome who cured the blindness of an official's daughter. The official was so grateful to Valentinus that he and his household asked to be baptised. Furious, the emperor Claudius has the priest beaten and



beheaded on the Via Flaminia (a major road heading north out of Rome) on 14 February. A woman named Savilla buried Valentinus' corpse at the site of his execution. The second version, attested in the eighth century AD, focuses on Valentinus, the bishop of Terni, a town in Umbria. Valentinus was summoned to Rome to help a student whose head had been stuck between his knees for three years. The bishop cured the student, which led to his father, a famous orator, converting to Christianity. Valentinus was arrested by the prefect of Rome, who ordered him to sacrifice to the pagan gods; when the bishop refused, he was beheaded, and his body was buried outside Terni. The similarities between the two stories are obvious, and it may be that these miracle tales were originally told of the same individual. Over time both Rome and Terni claimed Valentinus as their own saint.

Some trace Valentine's Day origins to a Christian effort to replace a pagan fertility festival that has been dated as far back as the 6th century BC. During the festival of Lupercalia, Roman priests would sacrifice goats and dogs and use their blood-soaked hides to slap women on the streets, as a fertility blessing. According to legend, women would later put their names in an urn and be selected to be paired with a man for a year.

The Valentine's Day tradition of giving a box of candy was started in the 19th century by Richard Cadbury, a scion of a British chocolate manufacturing family. With a new technique recently established at the company to create more varieties of chocolate, Cadbury pounced on the opportunity to sell the chocolates as part of the beloved holiday.

During the Victoria Era, those who didn't want the attention of certain suitors would anonymously send "vinegar valentines." These cards, also called penny dreadfuls, were the antithesis of customary valentines, comically insulting and rejecting unwanted admirers. They were later used to target suffragettes in the late 19th and early 20th century.

The term "wearing your heart on your sleeve" may have origins in picking a valentine. During the Middle Ages, men would draw the names of women who they would be coupled with for the upcoming year while attending a Roman festival honouring Juno. After choosing, the men wore the names on their sleeves to show their bond during the festivities.

The iconic chalky heart-shaped candies that have been passed out lovingly every Valentine's Day started out as lozenges. Pharmacist and inventor Oliver Chase created a machine that would quickly create the lozenges before switching to using the machine to create candy. Chase's brother came up with the idea to print messages on the candy in 1866, and the candies got their heart shape in 1901, appealing specifically to Valentine's Day sweethearts.

The chubby baby with wings and a bow and arrow that we call Cupid has been associated with Valentine's Day for centuries. However, before he was renamed Cupid, he was known to the ancient Greeks as Eros, the god of love. Eros, the son of Greek goddess Aphrodite, would use two sets of arrows, one for love and another for hate, to play with the emotions of his targets. It wasn't until stories of his mischief were told by Romans that he adopted the childlike appearance that we recognize today.

If you would like to write a few words on a topic close to your heart, have an anecdote from a group meeting or something you think readers would be interested in, please do get in touch. Would you consider becoming a regular contributor to a section? Email: [leu3anewsflash@gmail.com](mailto:leu3anewsflash@gmail.com)

### Scam Watch

Police have issued a warning after a series of reports of people receiving messages claiming to offer help with winter fuel payments. The scam encourages you to click on a link to 'update' or 'provide' your details to receive the payment. These details will likely include asking for your bank account information. However, the council or government would not ask people to click on links to make a claim for anything. And those who are eligible for winter fuel payments will be paid automatically.

Watch out for emails claiming to be from online payment system PayPal saying you have bought a high value item such as an iPhone. The messages ask you to call a specific number if you did not make the purchase. But, once dialled, it will put you through to a scammer who will try to gather your personal information. Do not call the number and never give out any personal information or bank details to anyone you are not 100% sure about. If you think your account has been compromised, change your password and security questions.

Criminals are using the switchover from analogue to digital telephones to scam vulnerable people. From 2025, the old analogue copper telephone landline network will be switched to digital, meaning that all phone calls will go through the internet, and everyone will require broadband to make landline phone calls. Scams include calls claiming your bank details are needed as part of the switchover or their service will be disconnected.

Drivers should beware a scam email impersonating the Driver & Vehicle Licensing Agency. Tricksters message saying that that you are overdue on your vehicle tax and that you must complete a form to ensure 'compliance'. The email threatens that your vehicle is 'not legally permitted to be on the road without tax'. Do not click on the link to complete the form as this is malicious.

**Do not click on the links or give out information over the phone.** Instead forward any email to [report@phishing.ov.uk](mailto:report@phishing.ov.uk).

## Quiz

I would like to pay tribute to our Quiz setter, Shirley Eastwood, who has valiantly been sending in a quiz for us every month. Shirley does an excellent job and I would like to thank her on your behalf.

1. Which London Underground line is coloured dark blue?
2. The 500km mountain range 'Ou' is in which country ?
3. Who wrote The Gruffalo?
4. In which film franchise do the Ewoks appear?
5. What is the 19<sup>th</sup> 1920 amendment in the American constitution?
6. What position does Simon Armitage hold in the UK?
7. If a dish on a menu mentions Veronique, which fruit would you expect to see in it?
8. What is the Chinese astrological symbol for 2025?
9. Which TV comedy written by John Sullivan featured Vince and Penny?
10. Bogota is the capital of which South American country?
11. Who composed the music for the films 'Jaws' and Jurassic Park?
12. Who sang about The Road to Hell in 1989?
13. In which city could you visit the Rijksmuseum?
14. Who is the current Foreign Secretary?
15. Who succeeded Queen Victoria?
16. Which car is considered to be the first affordable mass produced automobile?
17. Jazz, Pink Lady and Jonagold are varieties of which fruit?
18. Who was men's champion at Wimbledon in 2024?
19. Which UK city has been named City of Culture this year?
20. How much was a florin worth?

## This Month's Pause for Thought

Being deeply loved by someone gives you strength, while loving someone deeply gives you courage. –*Lao Tzu*

My bounty is as boundless as the sea, My love as deep; the more I give to thee, The more I have, for both are infinite. — *William Shakespeare*

If I had a flower for every time I thought of you I could walk through my garden forever. – *Alfred Tennyson*

Love is composed of a single soul inhabiting two bodies. – *Aristotle*

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways. – *Elizabeth Barrett Browning*

Age does not protect you from love. But love, to some extent, protects you from age. — *Anais Nin*

The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched. They must be felt with the heart. – *Helen Keller*

Love does not dominate; it cultivates. – *Johann Wolfgang von Goethe*

Love makes your soul crawl out from its hiding place.– *Zora Neale Hurston*

Love is life. All, everything that I understand, I understand only because I love. Everything is, everything exists, only because I love.– *Leo Tolstoy*

Love is like quicksilver in the hand. Leave the fingers open and it stays. Clutch it, and it darts away. – *Dorothy Parker*

Love is the voice under all silences, the hope which has no opposite in fear; the strength so strong mere force is feebleness: the truth more first than sun, more last than star. — *E.E. Cummings*

I have learned not to worry about love; but to honour its coming with all my heart.– *Alice Walker*

There is no remedy for love but to love more. — *Henry David Thoreau*



## Quiz Answers

1. Piccadilly
2. Japan
3. Julia Donaldson
4. Star Wars
5. Women allowed to vote
6. Poet laureate
7. Grapes
8. Snake
9. Just Good Friends
10. Colombia
11. John Williams
12. Chris Rea
13. Amsterdam
14. David Lammy
15. Edward VII
16. Model T Ford
17. Apple
18. Carlos Alcaraz
19. Bradford
20. 2 shillings

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