

Awards for Roshan and Helen

The manager of our Centre Roshan Raghavan-Day has received a coveted Mayor's Award for services to older people at New Horizons – on the same day as the Director of our Open Age parent charity Helen Leech was similarly honoured.



Helen, who retired a few weeks later and who gave a celebration lunch in the Orangery Café to staff, was recognised for services to older people in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and for her work as director of Open Age. Helen's successor is Iain Cassidy (see page 2).

Helen and Roshan were among six people invited to a champagne reception given by Kensington and Chelsea's Mayor, Cllr Marie-Therese Rossi, on March 21.

Unfortunately Roshan was off sick all week, so her sister Pras Ali picked up the award on her behalf. Pras and her husband Hassan, both members of New Horizons, together attended the ceremony at Kensington Town Hall.

Numerous people were put forward for awards, but just six were chosen after a committee looked at letters and evidence of work. The other four winners were Maria-Elena Arana, Harvey Grossman, Fiona Greenwood and Sue Lupton.

Roshan's citation described Roshan, manager of New Horizons since its opening in 2007, as the creator of the centre's ethos – a love of learning and of joyful participation. One supporter wrote:

"Roshan's warmth wraps around the Centre and all those who enter the building."

The citation continues: "She shows great leadership skills and takes tough decisions when they are needed. Roshan has demonstrated how with careful organisation and timetabling, New Horizons can cater for the sheer diversity of what older people want, regardless of where they come from and whatever their income, health, class, culture or circumstances. All the users are made to feel welcome and valued."



Pras Ali with the Mayor Cllr Marie-Therese Rossi and council leader Cllr Elizabeth Campbell

"One supporter spoke highly of the ways in which New Horizons now encourages and assists older people to embrace new technology."

Roshan said later she was humbled to be nominated for the award. She added: "Thank you to everyone who nominated me. It was a total surprise, but how amazing! It is truly uplifting to be appreciated and recognised for the work I am passionate about."

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Manager's spring update

Open Age says farewell to our hard-working and dedicated Director Helen Leech, who joined the charity in January 2005. Helen has been instrumental in growing the charity from a staff team of 10 to over 35, a turnover of over £1.5 million, providing services in various boroughs, as well as expanding on the services provided within RBKC and in raising our profile amongst the movers and shakers of local and central government!



I have worked with Helen since April 2007 and while I am truly happy that Helen has found love again (the reason why she has decided to retire), I am sad that we are losing yet another vital source of local knowledge and that special connection with the history of New Horizons and the borough.

Taking on the role of CEO in April was Iain Cassidy. We welcome Iain (whom we will profile in the next issue) and hope he has a smooth transition into the role and carries on with the great relationships already forged by Helen.

We will also unfortunately be losing Fiona Small, our Support Services Coordinator, who after just over three years with us, has decided to try new adventures and do some travelling. Fiona leaves in

June. She has been an invaluable part of this centre, always welcoming, calm, level-headed and caring. We wish Fiona all the very best and thank her for her hard work and dedication to the centre.

New Horizons is on the lookout for more volunteers. We need help facilitating new activities, helping cover reception and data entry, helping with IT during Drop-in sessions and 1:1 support, helping to distribute programmes and leaflets to venues around the south of the borough such as GP surgeries, libraries, sheltered accommodation and chemists, as well as helping Henriette with the new Pont Street Social every Tuesday (see below). Please call on 020 7590 8970, or email Fiona at fsmall@new-horizons-chelsea.org.uk

Open Age is doing a lot of work around Will Writing and leaving a legacy. For more information, please call 020 8962 4141 to speak to Iqtadar Hasnain, the Deputy Director of Open Age, or email him at ihasnain@openage.org.uk

Finally, as we approach the start of summer, please can I ask you to remember New Horizons and help us raise much needed funds to enable us to maintain our current level of services into the next financial year.

Roshan Raghavan-Day

News from the Forum

More than a dozen people attended the bi-monthly NH Members Forum on March 21 – up from only two the previous month. They talked about classes they enjoyed, dates and venues, and problems they had encountered. Several people said that classes such as chair exercise were sometimes fully booked, and they wanted more taster sessions.

Open Age's new Link-up Worker, Henriette Bramstedt, who will work 1.5 days at New Horizons for the next year, spoke about a new social

group, aimed at people aged 50-plus living in Chelsea's Hans Town and Brompton wards who may be isolated, as an introduction to the activities offered by Open Age.

The Pont Street Social meets every Tuesday, 2–4pm, in the library of St Columbus Church for a trial year. Admission £1 includes tea and cake. If the scheme is successful, a similar group could be started in other wards.

The next Forum is due to be held in the Orangery Cafe from 11 to 12 noon on May 16. Please note the date.

Alistair's Valentine's party

Lots of members got into the hearts and flowers spirit on February 14 when New Horizons hosted a musical Valentine's Party, with guitar and vocal entertainment by our popular choir and guitar tutor Alistair Mackenzie.

As well as eating tasty sandwiches and cakes and quaffing tea, attendees joined in the songs, as you can see if you go to YouTube and check out the video filmed by member Daphne Morgan. Once you are in YouTube, type in three words: Val Concert Hor (for Valentine Concert Horizons).

Daphne writes:

Alistair Mackenzie started up the popular Horizons guitar club three years ago, which has gone from strength to strength. He stepped in to rescue the Chelsea Belles and Guys last Christmas when it seemed for the first time in ten years that they would not be doing their annual carol concert and he is now their permanent tutor.

Alistair was born in London (he has a Scottish father) and discovered his love of music when he was 12, singing in the church choir. He moved to London and went on to do other things to make a living but his heart was always in music, so by the age of 25 and mostly self-taught he decided this would be his life's path. He is



now a full-time tutor for guitar, ukulele, banjo and singing.

He teaches at various locations in London and also gives private lessons. He can be seen doing his solo gigs at various venues, unfortunately out of our area, but we did have the pleasure of him entertaining us on Valentine's Day (see above).

For more details of venues where you can hear Alistair doing one of his gigs, ask him or at the reception desk.

Getting to know the lingo

As a member of the older generation I am amazed at some of the new "lingo" in common usage these days.

My chief pet hate is the truly dreadful "from the get go". I suspect the phrase originated from the US and is undoubtedly one of the most pretentious I have ever had the misfortune to hear.

Another of my pet hates is "going forward" – whatever happened to "in the future"? "Back in the day" is another ghastly innovation, far worse than the good old-fashioned "in the past" or "previously".

It's not all bad, though. I don't mind "Now, here's the thing". It has

a kind of conspiratorial ring to it, like Max Bygraves' catchphrase in the good old days – "Now, I'm going to tell you a story".

Of course, the English language is always developing, which is good because it keeps it vibrant and alive. There are some clever new words – for example "glamping" – glamorous camping – and "crowdfunding" – raising money online.

It would be interesting to hear of any other "modern" phrases that readers find irritating – or even uplifting. Please drop me an email to: peterheyman@btinternet.com

Peter Heyman

Ocean challenge to rid seas of plastic

Four brave women, including London-based Mariana Cadore and Emma Rogers, are training to row 2,400 miles across the Pacific in world record time.

Rowing as Team Ripple Effect, the rowers will be taking on their challenge in June, when they will row from California to Hawaii. They are aiming to raise awareness of plastic pollution and climate change, as well as break the current world record for an all-women crew of four by completing the row in less than 50 days, 19 hours and 14 minutes.

Emma and Mariana, a former Brazilian national team rower, and now a personal trainer in London, will be joined by American-based Eliza Dawson and Lindsay Gibson.

Mariana says: "The Great Pacific Race is one of the toughest challenges on the planet. We will row in pairs for two hours on, two hours off, non-stop, for around 50 days."

Mariana is passionate about ridding the world's seas of plastic pollution. "Our oceans are slowly turning into a plastic soup. Big pieces of plastic are choking and entangling turtles and seabirds and tiny pieces are clogging the stomachs of creatures who mistake it for food. Plastic is entering every level of the ocean food chain and even ending up in the seafood on our plates.

"Right now an estimated 12.7 million tonnes of plastic – from bottles and bags to microbeads – end up in our oceans each year. That's a truck load of rubbish a minute. Travelling on ocean currents, this is now turning up in every corner of our planet – from Cornish beaches, to uninhabited Pacific islands. It is even found trapped in Arctic ice."

Mariana added that UK supermarkets generate one million tonnes of plastic packaging every year. "By ditching plastic packaging super-



markets can lead the way in dramatically reducing the amount of single-use plastic produced."

The all-women crew needs to raise £80,000 between them in order to pay for their boat, ship it to the US, and buy or hire all the equipment.

If you would like to help Mariana raise her £20,000 share of the total, you can donate to this important cause online at <https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/mariana-cadore>

Peter Heyman

Dead Oceans

Box the daffodils,
Make them plastic.
Empty the oceans of its fish,
Fill it with waste.
Is that your idea of nature?
Cover the earth with tinfoil,
See how it sparkles,
Is that your idea of nature?
We were given a paradise,
See what we have done.
Is that your idea of nature?
Nothing grows anymore.
Threads of plastic everywhere
Is that your idea of nature?
The hands in supplication, beg
YOU
Look beyond yourself
WAKE UP!
Recover what is lost.

Yonita Fairfax

BOAT SONG – John’s latest challenge

New Horizons member John Hall Spencer has been writing challenging books since the 1960s, but his latest work could be his most controversial yet.

It’s a modern day novel about the monarchy, in which a candidate for the British throne suddenly pops up as a rival to the present day Prince Charles.

The claimant, Sobieski, is said to be a descendant of the Stuart pretender Bonnie Prince Charlie, popular hero of the Skye Boat Song, and his claim is given the codename BOAT SONG – hence the title of the novel.

In the 18th century, Prince Charles Edward had a brother, the Duke of York, who was a cardinal in Rome. In John’s story, the Prince fathers a son. This child is sent to the cardinal to be baptised, and it is claimed that Sobieski is his descendant.

His challenge is backed by a media mogul Gordon Wallace who is modelled on Rupert Murdoch, but the supporters of Prince Charles launch their own campaign to raise money by visiting Saudi Arabia to promote the Prince as ‘defender of faith’.

John, best known for his first fact-based book *Battle for Crete* published in 1962, is aware that the latest subject matter is sensitive and potentially awkward, which is why he plans to use the pseudonym Spencer Carstairs. He is now looking for a publisher.

“I think I’m entitled at my age to write a novel like this, and they are running out of time to sack me!”, jokes John, 90, who is putting the finishing touches to the book, working in the library at St Wilfrid’s Care Home in Tite Street, Chelsea.

“The subject is very current, bearing in mind other recent books like *Rebel Prince*, which deals with the issue of whether Camilla becomes queen or just a consort.”

Much of John’s writing is based on personal experience. Educated at Bedford School and the Royal Naval College,

Greenwich, he was an officer in the Royal Marines before joining Beaverbrook Newspapers and J Walter Thompson as an advertising and publicity executive. He then set up his own international marketing business, working on assignments in the Middle East, Europe and the USA.

After the success of *Battle for Crete*, he was encouraged to write a novel, and in 1965 published *The Wall Is Strong*, a thriller set in Colditz Castle in East Germany at the height of the Cold War.

In 1976 he was commissioned to write a fact-inspired novel called *The Surgenor Campaign*, in which a daring advertising executive boss helicoptered a crew into Red Square, Moscow, to shoot a TV commercial and then took off before the Russians knew what had happened.

He returned to factual writing in 2008 with his book *Hitler and the King*, an unsolved murder mystery to rival *Schindler’s List*. It tells objectively how the late King Boris of Bulgaria saved 50,000 Jews from the death camp at Auschwitz, and then died, possibly killed by the Nazis.

John was awarded the OBE in 2011 for business, and charitable work with young people in London.

Will *BOAT SONG* be just as thrilling as his earlier books? John is confident that it will. He says: “*BOAT SONG* is about two contrasting characters and the story is full of excitement and romance – sparks fly! I have changed the ending, but the new ending should be just as gripping.”

Battle for Crete has been republished as a hardback from the original Heinemann edition by Pen & Sword, and is in print. John has also been published in France by Presses de la Cité, in Italy by Mondadori, and in America by Suspense Publishing, California.

Kay Shelley



Kensington Palace – royal retreat

As the wedding of Harry and Meghan approaches, their home together will remain the small two-bedroomed residence called Nottingham Cottage – not out in the countryside, but in London in the heart of K and C.

Nottingham Cottage is one of many homes within the estate of Kensington Palace, bought by King William III more than 300 years ago as a country retreat when the area was rural, and now used to house his royal descendants.

So the newly-weds will have lots of familiar royal neighbours, including Harry's brother Prince William, his cousin and two of his grandmother's cousins.

The 22-room four-storey pad known as Apartment 1a, a grand terraced house formerly occupied by Princess Margaret, is the home of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge – William and Kate – and their children.

Cousin Eugenie, daughter of Prince Andrew, recently moved into three-bedroomed Ivy Cottage, which she shares with her fiancé Jack Brooksbank. Next door is Wren Cottage, home of the Duke and Duchess of Kent.

Apartment 1 is home to the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester, and Apartment 10 accommodates Prince and Princess Michael of Kent. Though minor royals, as grandchildren of a king – George V – they have the same rights to live at the palace as the others.

Queen Victoria is said to have shared a bedroom at Kensington Palace with her mother until she was 18, when she received news of her accession to the throne.

Some of the occupants now pay rent, but this seems unlikely to apply to Meghan and Harry, since he



is sixth in line to the throne. Their small cottage may also be temporary, as there are bigger apartments available, currently occupied by staff, in what must be the poshest housing project in the country.

If the couple do get offered bigger accommodation, it will probably be when Meghan, 36, gets pregnant.

What an amazing rise to fame for the biracial beauty from LA! She could never have imagined when photographed aged 15 sitting outside Buckingham Palace during a holiday trip to Britain that she would ever become an honoured occupant of those hallowed halls.

- Parts of Kensington Palace, including the formal State rooms and the Sunken Garden, are open to the public daily. Current exhibitions included are 'Diana: Her Fashion Story', and 'Victoria Revealed'.
- Tickets from 26 April 2018 will involve timed entry. Online concessionary prices for over 60s start at £15.50 peak, £12.70 off-peak (gate prices are higher).
- Over Easter 2018, there was a 90-minute TV programme about the royal history of Kensington Palace, with a big emphasis on Princess Diana. It may still be available to view on the internet.

Kay Shelley

Last rites – wills and funerals

The Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB) came to New Horizons in March and April to give a five-week course on Last Rites. The course comprised details of

- Writing a will
- Appointing a Power of Attorney
- Planning a funeral
- Considering organ or tissue donation
- Making an Advance Care Plan.

Briefly, a will needs, unless it is very simple, to be made by a lawyer, signed and witnessed.

You can download a Lasting Power of Attorney for someone who can make critical decisions on your behalf if you are unable to do so yourself, mainly with reference to finance or health. This document has to be registered with the Office of the Public Guardian.

Planning a funeral is as complicated or as simple as you wish (see the Good Funeral Guide and the Natural Death Centre for information). A cremation requires two doctor's death certificates. Some funeral companies own the crematoria. Chelsea, Green Endings and Sherry's are independent. Co-op Funeral Care is the biggest chain with standardised prices across the country.

Some offer an Advance Care Plan but it restricts you to a specific company, and pre-paid funerals costing between £3,000 and £5,000 may not cover the full cost.

Eight CAB reasons to make End-of-Life plans:

1. Thinking about death is not much fun, but avoiding it can lead to many different problems: most people report a sense of relief when they've faced it and tied up loose ends.
2. 1 in 6 will struggle to meet the cost of a funeral. We can plan ahead to save our loved ones the added distress in a time of grief.
3. You may feel funerals are for the bereaved, but what if heirs don't agree or don't know what you'd have

preferred? Don't let it turn into a family row.

4. You may feel you have nothing of any value, but why not take the opportunity to gift a memento to a special person or a donation to a charity you support – like New Horizons?
5. Who do you want to make decisions if you become unable to communicate – a strange doctor, or a loud-mouthed relative? Granting a Power of Attorney makes sure it's someone you trust.
6. Do you feel that life might eventually be no longer worth living? Might there be a time when you'd prefer not to submit to intrusive treatments? Would you prefer to die at home among your loved ones? You can write this down in an Advance Care Plan.
7. On average, 3 people die every day due to the shortage of organs for donation. Although most people are willing to consider donating organs, very few have told family about this. You can also donate tissue for medical research, but make sure you register and let your loved ones know.
8. Research has shown that people who record their end-of-life wishes are much more likely to have their wishes respected. Their loved ones suffer less grief in their bereavement afterwards. Medical and care staff also feel more positive and experience less stress at work when they can carry out their patients' wishes.

Anyone not attending the course can contact K & C Citizens' Advice Bureau and ask about the Last Rites project, which helps you explore the options available. They can also help you prepare for difficult conversations with carers, friends and family. You can change them whenever you want, and live in peace knowing that it's done.

Email: Research@kensingtoncab.org.uk

Yonita Fairfax

What is a Chelsea Gem?

Chelsea is well known for its famous Flower Show. But what is a Chelsea Gem? It is a pelargonium which has soft pink double flowers and green leaves edged in creamy white. It has been around since 1880 when it was first introduced to an admiring public by its creator William Bull.

It is not only a living souvenir of the days when Chelsea was London's market garden, but it commemorates the horticulturalist who gave his name to Bulls Gardens behind Draycott Avenue.

William Bull's largest nursery was at 536 Kings Road, at the corner of Gunter Grove. Today it is the site of a seven-storey development. Bull was one of many nurserymen who chose Chelsea for its gravelly soil and climate tempered by the nearby river Thames to grow their unusual and exotic plants from South Africa and the Antipodes. The Kings Road of the 17th to 19th centuries was famous for its nurseries.

William Salisbury had six acres on the East side of Sloane Street, James Davey, who specialised in carnations, was on the west side of Blacklands Terrace, and Joseph



Knight at Stanley Place near Flood Street could even provide gardeners to care for the pineapple plants, orange and camellia trees he supplied. James Colville near Blacklands Terrace is remembered in a pub.

These beautiful flowering native and exotic trees and plants disappeared under concrete and brick in the late 19th century. But happily many Chelsea gardens still bloom to please the passer-by, and Chelsea Gem is still for sale and easy to find under the RHS Plant Finder website.

Diana Delouche

New Horizons on the internet

In the latter half of 2017, you may have noticed a film crew popping in to New Horizons at regular intervals. They were making a promotional video about us to feature on the internet and elsewhere.

The 3-4 minute film features clips from many of our activities, views from the café and brief interviews with many of our members.

It is now on display at: <https://m.youtube.com/watch?feature=youtu.be&v=uX5EHVNEf9g>. It is also on the New Horizons Facebook page and the Open Age website, and has been sent out to all NH funders.

The film was made by a two-person team called Planet Hero, who specialise in socially-engaged filmmaking, travel photography, eco projects and animal conservation.

Hester Jones from London works part-time at Open Age in North Kensington's St Charles' Centre as an activity co-ordinator and outreach worker, but she is also an award-winning artist and writer with an MA in Photography.

Roni Rodrigues, Hester's husband, is a visual effects artist, originally from Brazil, who holds a Master's Degree with distinction in Digital Effects. He has since worked on the post production of Oscar and BAFTA nominated/winning feature films.

NH manager Roshan arranged for the film to be made to promote the work of New Horizons after a member came forward as benefactor. She says: "We wanted to give people a snapshot of what the centre is all about and why people love it."

Arts fair beats the weather

A Good Friday Arts and Crafts Sale and Fundraiser defied the torrential rain as members, visitors and trustees flocked to the centre to see the stunning array of items on display.

The event, which was held in partnership with the 'Drawn Together Art Collective', which often hosts art exhibitions and craft fairs in South London, played host to more than 20 professional stall-holders with items ranging from handmade recycled-coil trinket trays from Africa to original art prints, upcycled furniture and handmade art deco style jewellery.

'Drawn Together' arranged all the stall-holders and asked for a £10 donation to be made for the use of each stall, with all the money collected going to printing A5 flyers, paying for an advert on Facebook and buying refreshments. A free

glass of wine was offered on the door.

The footfall to the event was steady despite the weather and 30% of all sales came back to the centre, raising over £350. Among the visitors was a family from San Diego, California, who had seen the advert for the event on the Time Out website. And many NH members who couldn't make it on the day kindly made donations instead to show support, bringing the fundraising 'appeal' total to over £500!

The stall-holders were encouraged by the number of people who turned out in the appalling weather and would like to hold another event, but perhaps on an ordinary day of the week rather than over a Bank Holiday.

Fiona Small

Lumiere Festival returns

The Lumiere London free light festival returned for a spectacular second edition from January 18-21, with more than 50 artworks celebrating London's architecture and streets, transforming the city into a dazzling nocturnal art exhibition.

The display focused on six areas of central London – the West End, Westminster and Victoria, Mayfair, Fitzrovia, King's Cross and South Bank and Waterloo – lighting up the cold dark streets for four evenings with light art and light installations.

Commissioned by the Mayor of London, Lumiere London is produced by Artichoke, a charity that creates art for the benefit and wellbeing of communities.

Yonita Fairfax captured on camera some of the displays in Trafalgar Square (illuminated balloons swaying in the wind) and Leicester Square (Brer Rabbit and Squirrel Nutkin).

She was particularly impressed with the animal displays. Yonita says: "When I read Beatrix Potter to my sons, we learnt about McGregor's farm. I had married a Mr



Macgregor and we also lived on a farm. But in Africa!

"Children are intelligent and they can tell the difference

between the real and the imagined at an early age. I thought it would be a good idea to have the experience between the two, so we kept rabbits. There are many small furry animals which are not as cuddly as in the picture books!

"Meercats may seem very sweet on TV, but they have razor sharp teeth and are clever enough to open anything, including food boxes."

- If you are a Beatrix Potter fan and have not seen the recent animated film about Peter Rabbit, beware! It's beautifully created and acted, and often funny, but it's quite violent in places and not quite as cute and charming as the book.

How pelicans defused a diplomatic row

Can you imagine that St James Park once had crocodiles, elephants and a camel, and exotic waterfowl? This was in James I's time – the king who had come from Scotland and whose son Charles I was recently in the news with a major exhibition at the Royal Academy.

Then later, the Russian ambassador, knowing that Charles II was especially fond of exotic birds, thought he might like some pelicans. The park was now open to the public and Charles II was keen to redesign it.

The rosy pelicans did reasonably well in our climate and were kept replenished by the Russians over the years.



One day the American ambassador visited the Foreign Secretary whose window overlooked the Park. He was curious and asked how the pelicans got there. Not to be outdone, he sent over some American pelicans, but the two types did not get on.

During the Cold War, the US suspected the Russians of harming the American pelicans because they were not thriving and were miserable.

The British National Audubon Society stepped in. They discovered that the American pelicans preferred salt water. Tactfully they

were sent to the Zoo and given a salt water pool. The Americans then sent over some white ones which settled down happily with their rosy European cousins. The diplomatic feud was defused.

The Park has now received pelicans from many different sources. All pelicans are gratefully received. But remember they need to be fresh water ones!

Yonita Fairfax

Preventing fire in the home

How to prevent fire in the home was the subject of a public meeting organised by Kensington & Chelsea Council in March, following concerns after the Grenfell disaster. The booklet that they provided deals with every type of fire.

Top causes of fire in homes are smoking, cooking, candles and plugs. It is essential to check the batteries of smoke alarms regularly to ensure they are working, as they provide vital early warning.

They may also alert neighbours to a possible fire. The London Fire Brigade is willing to visit residents to fit smoke alarms and assess an individual's needs.

Batteries for laptops need to be charged during the day, and you should use the charger that came with the phone, tablet, e-cigarette or mobile device.

Carbon monoxide is a silent killer, which you cannot taste or see, or smell.

It is essential to make an escape plan which is regularly practised. Rented accommodation should have a fire door, as should the main staircase.

Carelessness in the kitchen is the most common cause of fire. When you are tired is not the best time to cook. Toasters especially should be cleaned out regularly. Check before leaving the kitchen that the cooker and hob are turned off. When deep fat frying, if the pan catches alight, it is advised not to throw water on it.

Yonita Fairfax

Arnolfini – a famous conundrum

I am a regular visitor to the National Gallery and I have always been fascinated by the couple pictured in one of its best known portraits – the Arnolfini Portrait by Van Eyck, a 15th century mystery story.

It took centre stage during the winter (October 2, 2017–April 2, 2018) when it was exhibited for the first time alongside works by the Pre-Raphaelites to show its influence on the Brotherhood.

Of the painter Van Eyck, a Guardian reviewer wrote: “His famous Arnolfini Portrait is the first really lifelike domestic interior ever painted and seems to deliberately evoke images of the Annunciation.”

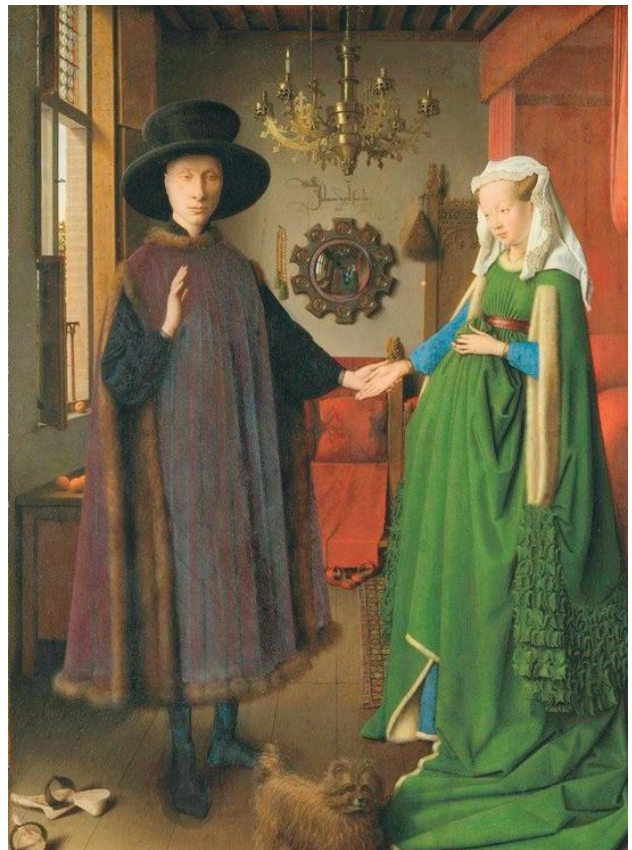
But who are the two people in the portrait? It apparently showed the wedding of Giovanni Arnolfini and Giovanna Cernami. But were they in fact bride and groom? Or celebrating a betrothal (as according to Edwin Hall)? Or an already married couple (as per Margaret Carroll)?

The portrait continues to be debated among art historians. I agree it was not a marriage vow. They were married 13 years after the portrait was painted in 1434, and 6 years after the death of Van Eyck.

The portrait appears in the catalogue of the 16th century Chateau de Maulnes, south-east of Paris. This distinctive five-sided chateau was built on top of an earlier site previously used by the Duke of Burgundy for boar hunting.

Arnolfini was of a merchant banking family from Lucca, and an aspiring member of the Burgundian court, and it was the family of the lady, Giovanna (Jeanne) Cernami, who financed the building of the Chateau de Maulnes.

As Carroll suggests, the portrait could have been painted to allow Jeanne to do a business deal. The



bankers are known to have promoted the trade in silks from the east and at Lyons, but also the woollen trade with Antwerp.

Advertising the woollen trade might explain the green cloth which is bunched up in front of Jeanne. NOT a pre-marriage pregnancy, as has been suggested.

One of the most original and sophisticated of all early oil paintings, this work is famous for its “elaborate symbolism, detailed rendering, geometric perspective, use of light, and for the various detailed elements in the painting, such as the mirror, to create a realistic space”.

Van Eyck’s quest for realism means he probably employed a magnifying glass to paint the minute details, such as the highlights in the amber beads hanging beside the mirror and the smaller pictures within the mirror’s surround.

Yonita Fairfax

The Disillusioned Silver Surfer

I used to love technology and the apps it could supply
But I became disillusioned and here's the reasons why
Started chatting on Facebook with a nice single bloke
Turned out he came from a village in Africa with two wives,
six kids and a goat!

Ordered a dress on Amazon but didn't get it right
'Cause an Uber driver delivered it in the middle of the night
I came upon Google Maps and found it rather neat
'Till it tracked into my toilet window instead of in my street
Don't mention YouTube videos – I never want to see one again!
So many show-off cats and dogs did something to my brain
If I want to make new friends, I'll just walk out the door
And if I want to see cute pets, I'll just walk out the door
And if I want a nice new dress, I'll just walk out the door
And as for information, I'll just do as I always did before
Just walk out of my house and go to the library door.

PS. And if I want to meet a new chap, I'll find one ... in the pub!!

Daphne Morgan

Or maybe at New Horizons, Daphne? – Ed.

Future Events

📱 **FREE Digital help from Barclays** – bring in your tablet, smart phone or laptop and get help with any queries that you may have with them from representatives of Barclays Bank in these free sessions in the New Horizons cafe: Wed June 13th, 10am–12 noon; Wed July 11th, 10am–12 noon
Please book and register your name at reception.

For other courses, see notice boards in reception.

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New Horizons is a pioneering activity centre for older people delivered by a consortium of three charities, Open Age, Age UK Kensington and Chelsea and the Guinness Trust, in partnership with the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and NHS Kensington and Chelsea. Lead organisation: Open Age, Registered Charity No 1160125.

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