

**Copy deadline for
newsletter 108
(October/November)
23rd September 2024**

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Regd Charity No 1139443



The Historic Dockyard Chatham
Cathedral like structure - 3 slip the Big Space

A word from the Chair

Hello and welcome to our Newsletter

At long last we do seem to be having something like summer weather after what was a very wet and chilly spring. Blue skies and sunshine always help to lift the spirits when so much else around us appears to be contriving to spread nothing but gloom. It is nice to get out for a walk in the beautiful countryside we are blessed with in our area or visit one of the many gardens that are within an easy drive from home. Hopefully joining in the various u3a activities and meeting fellow members with similar interests also makes us feel happier.

We enrol new members throughout the year so if you see a new face at a meeting why not go and say hello and make them feel as welcome as I hope someone did when you came to your first meeting. We like to pride ourselves on being a friendly u3a and first impressions are very important and who knows it could be the start of a lasting friendship.

What a summer of sport we have been able to enjoy this year from the Euro's, Wimbledon, The Open Golf, Test Match Cricket and now the Olympics to be followed by the Paralympics.

Sue and I have just been watching Andy Murray and Dan Evans win their first round match in the Olympic Tennis Doubles, absolutely unbelievable as they were five match points down in the final set but through pure determination managed to come out as winners and their reaction afterwards was as though they had won the Gold Medal. Hopefully they can continue to progress and can we dream of a medal for Andy in his last ever competition.

We moved Sarratt u3a's bank from HSBC a few years ago because they were introducing charges and made paying into the account more difficult. Our current bank, Metro, have advised us that from October they will be introducing charges for paying cash into the account. In order to minimise these charges it would be appreciated if you could pay for coach trips and other outings by cheque if possible. The committee have been looking at other ways of making payments but at the moment we have not found a method that suits our needs without creating more work for our treasurer.

Best wishes

Don

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY 2024

Monthly meetings in the Village Hall - Doors open 10am.
Coffee from 10.10 followed by notices at around 10.30. Talk to start at about 11am.
Please return empty cups/holders before the meeting starts.

Remember to wear your u3a badge and to register when you arrive.
If you leave early sign out in the book (in case we should need an emergency headcount).

- August 7th •Tim Perkins - *Lowland Rescue*
Sept 4th •Jenny Smith - *Hearing Dogs*
October 2nd •Nick Bowles - *Moths and Butterflies*
November 13th •tbc
Dec 5th Thurs •Bobbie Darbyshire - *A Middle, A Muddle & an End!*

You are invited to bring your own mug to the monthly meetings as it helps to save on cups but we will continue to make disposable cups available if you forget or do not wish to bring one.

Also bring your used stamps (separated into British/foreign) to put into the RNIB collection box (not printer ink cartridges as we have no means of recycling them)

FORTHCOMING TALKS

Sadly, there have been recent newspaper headlines about missing persons, some ending in tragedy. In August Tim Perkins is coming to talk to us about the importance of work done locally to search for missing persons. Lowland Rescue is part of Midshires Search and Rescue, a Voluntary group who assist the police to locate missing persons in Beds and Herts. It was formed in 1999 as a small but dedicated group of volunteers available to assist the police 24/7, 365 days per year. The team has grown to around 40 on call professionally trained volunteers with 3 specialist vehicles, remaining free of charge to our police forces and emergency service partners across Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire.

In September Jenny Smith will talk about the work of Hearing Dogs, a charity which has helped thousands of deaf people and people with hearing loss. Jenny has a hearing dog called Tamsin whom we hope to meet and understand how she helps Jenny in her daily life.

Do come along and show your support.

Future dates of the main meetings in 2024/25 are
4th September
2nd October
13th Nov
5th December Thursday (note the change of date)
15th Jan
12th Feb

Graham Smith entertained us in June with his talk about how he became a micro-artist and taught himself the skills he uses to engrave quotations on what seem to be impossible surfaces, such as the head of a pin or the edge of a razor blade. His style of delivery was quite fast paced and comments have been taken on board to remind speakers about the need for clarity of speech and awareness that some of the audience may have hearing difficulties.

Artist Joanna Dewfall came in July to talk about her fascination with mosaics, both historic and contemporary, to the extent that it took over her life, leading to a career as a mosaicist, working on her own commissions and community projects.

RAMBLES

Wednesday August 21st.

Meet at 10.00 in King George V Playing Fields Car Park, Tolpits Lane, Watford WD18 9QD. This 4½ mile ramble takes us past the historic sites of Hamper Mill & Oxhey Hall as well as part of the Ebury Way and a short section of the London Loop.

Wednesday September 18th.

Meet in the car park on the edge of Whippendell Woods in Grove Mill Lane at 10.00am. The ramble of about 4 miles goes through Whippendell Woods then along the canal before following the trails around the grounds of The Grove.

Don



WALKING GROUP

Once more into the woods, on a very warm June day, followed by a picnic rendezvous with previous group walkers in the welcome shade of Valerie's garden.

Val MacDonald

TABLE TENNIS

Appeal for new members.

We meet twice a month for two hours generally on the first and fourth Mondays at Rickmansworth Lawn Tennis Club. We have two tables and enjoy refreshments half way through the session. We are a friendly group and if you are interested, please contact Marilyn West for further information at the u3a monthly meeting.

FREE talks on a range of subjects can be found via u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events. Available to members only, early registration is recommended. Here are some forthcoming dates:

Tuesday, August 6th 10am

Flight Inspirations Aviation Meeting: The 'Bloody Hundredth' Bomb Group. Don Mobley will present the history of the 100th Bomb Group serving honourably with 8th Air Force during WWII.

Wednesday, August 7th 10am

Cryptic Crosswords in Context
Their history, how they work, who does them and why – a talk by u3a Cryptic Crosswords subject adviser Henry Howarth. [On joining one of his sessions I learned a few tips and have since managed to complete the cryptic crossword in several of the RHS monthly magazines. Ed]

98% of attendees would recommend online u3a learning events

Thursday, August 8th 10am

Agriculture and Climate Change
Ian Hawker of East Suffolk u3a discusses agriculture's effect on Climate Change.

Wednesday, August 14th 10am

Laughter Yoga with Judith - August 2024 10-11am
Laughter Yoga combines hearty laughter exercises with deep yoga-style breathing (pranayama). Hosted by Judith Anne Walker of Edinburgh u3a

Thursday, August 15th 10am

From Monet to Modern: Exploring 'The Water Lily Pond' 1899 and Beyond
Catherine Stevenson of Newcastle u3a presents the fourth in the series National Gallery Treasures to Celebrate its 200th Anniversary.

MUSIC, MUSIC, MUSIC!

Put another nickel in....? No nickelodeons for us. No jukebox either, just usually a CD player or occasionally an iPad.

Well – first of all there were eleven and then ten, and now we are down to five. This means that we are getting a bit used to our sometimes-predictable choices for our themed meetings, so would like to recruit a few more members, to widen our selections. We meet on the 4th Monday of the month, at 2.30, rotating round members' homes and are a sociable bunch, breaking for tea, biscuits and a chat between our musical offerings.

At the moment we have been playing music relating to all sorts of themes: trains and boats and planes, weather, the seasons, holidays, etc. The other month our offerings on "Strings" ranged from Little Richard, the Shadows (always the Shadows whatever the theme) Eric Clapton and Brian May through Django Reinhardt, Craig Ogden, John Williams, and Nigel Kennedy, to Catrin Finch, Nicola Benedetti, and Yehudi Menuhin.

Our current theme, "Divas", started with an interesting discussion about the meaning of the term after one member read out various dictionary definitions of it. Wikipedia obviously had a different view, hence the wider-ranging selection, covering (to name but a few): Joan Sutherland, Lesley Garrett, Kiri te Kanawa, Elton John, Il Divo, Bette Midler, Barbra Streisand, Annie Lennox, Rod Stewart, Tina Turner and there's still Callas, Barry Manilow, Cher, Dusty, Dolly Parton, etc to go!

While this is how recent meetings have been organised so far, we could move on to covering the works of one composer or artist, have a selection of favourite works from one member or even "Desert Island Discs".

If you would like to join us, or know more, then please contact Sue Bussey (01923 245454 or sue.bussey@ntlworld.com)

GARDENING GROUP



On June 10th 41 garden enthusiasts on a cold and damp Monday morning, headed out by coach to Savill Gardens, a 35-acre haven nestled within Windsor Great Park.

The Garden was created by Eric Savill in 1932 and thanks to generations of plant-hunters, is home to beautiful specimen trees and plants from all over the world. There is something to see all year round whether you are a plant lover or simply enjoy wondering around the tranquil glades, ponds and streams. During the months of June and September, the garden offers a RHS partnership scheme (for the primary member) who can gain access to the gardens for free. (See Website).

On arrival, and after a welcome cup of coffee, we headed out to the New Zealand garden with an array of native Kiwi grasses and shrubs and then onto the glorious Summer Gardens. The Golden Jubilee Garden with its dramatic planting scheme was full of promise of what was to come. The Rose Garden by contrast was in full bloom offering up a colourful mix of wonderful specimens. Planted in a spiral shape, we could wander amongst the roses up close to enjoy the heady perfume, or get a birds eye view from the 'bridge' to appreciate the array of colour and form. There were also beautiful alpine beds, planted with colourful daisies, dianthus and other low growing plants which can survive drought conditions.

After lunch enjoyed in the café or restaurant, we headed to the shop and plant centre. Who could resist the lure of 'just one more plant' for that little space in bed or pot in a corner of the garden?!

Overall it was a successful day and the sun even put in an appearance! The staff made our visit very enjoyable and were helpful and friendly throughout. Worth a return when the hydrangeas are in full bloom and late summer flowers at their vibrant best.

Linda Hug

Much to my annoyance the small specimen of *Salvia Royal Bumble* which I bought at Savill Garden has virtually been eaten away. However the Rose *Perfect Harmony* which I also bought is very pretty and fragrant too! [Ed]

Garden Group Meetings and trips out are scheduled for the second Monday of the month. All members are welcome. Dates for your diary are:

August 12th- visit to JazzyRose Flowers in Chipperfield. This visit is full (more details will be sent to members who have signed up). Lisa gave us a fascinating talk in January and by August her field should be full of flowers. Lisa sells some of her flowers from her cottage overlooking Chipperfield Common.

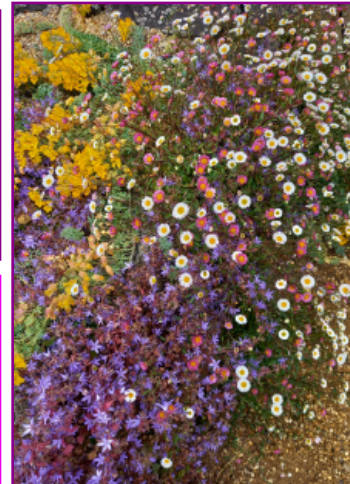
Sept 9th - Hyde Hall (coach visit) Our group has affiliation with the RHS so entrance is free for this visit so all you need to pay for is the coach £18.00 (and no doubt the lovely plants which you will be tempted to purchase!) **The deadline for booking with payment to secure your place is 7th August** (unless the trip fills up before then, only a few places are left).

Information about talks for the gardening group taking place in Sarratt Village Hall on the second Monday morning of the month will be sent out nearer the time but these are the dates for your diary;

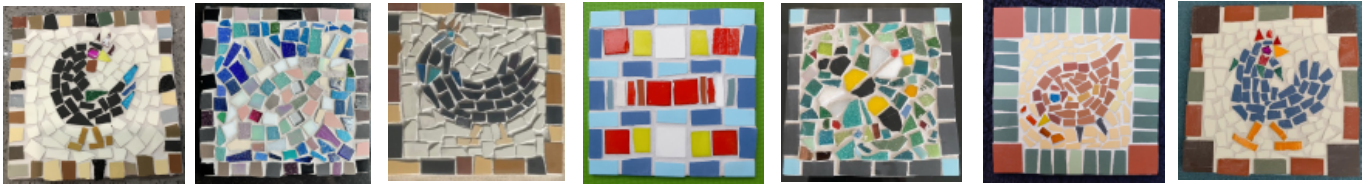
October 14th, November 11th, December 9th

Garden Tip

Apparently, the herb *Lemon Balm* has antihistamine properties. Rub a crushed leaf or two on a nettle sting or bite and it helps to reduce or take away the tingling. [I tried it and it worked for me! Ed]



12 of us enjoyed a one-off mosaic workshop following the talk by Joanna Dewfall in July. She is an inspiring teacher and explained step by step what we needed to do to make a small mosaic without causing injury to ourselves or each other while cutting up tiles! The results were so different, even when using the same template. The time passed quickly and it was a bit of a rush at the end but we all went home clutching our mosaics to wait for the glue to dry fully, ready for the grouting. Some of the output is shown. Joanna's work can be seen on her website dewfallmosaic.co.uk



JAUNTERS

There was an upsurge of interest after the trip to Ely was mailed out to all members so don't miss out on future trips! If you want to be included contact Julie or Mike Hawkins juliemike.hawkins@outlook.com You will be very welcome. The next trip is Friday 22nd Nov - Knebworth Christmas Market.

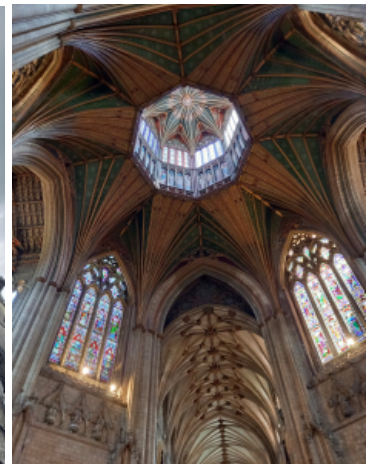
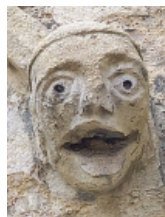
Full details including costs and booking forms will be circulated a few weeks ahead. Be aware that in order to keep the costs down it means that we must fill the coach and if this is not possible then we may have to cancel the trip.

Jaunters' Committee

The coach was full when the Jaunters visited the beautiful historic City of Ely on a sunny day in June. Many of us enjoyed a cuppa at various street cafes before setting off to explore what is said to be the smallest city in England; there is a lovely riverside walk, the historic city centre and of course the magnificent 14th century Cathedral, also known as the 'Ship of the Fens'. I was one of three people who had booked to climb the tower steps (in stages, not all at once!) to see the lantern ceiling up close and to walk outside on the roof with our guide Jenny - what a treat! The original Norman Tower collapsed suddenly in 1322 and the idea evolved of building an octagon surmounted by a lantern. Its width of 74 feet (23m) was too great to support a stone vault, and so it was built in wood and covered in lead.

The whole visit was a delight and I hope to return to Ely in the future, it is certainly worth exploring further (if you go, note that one or two attractions close on Mondays).

Janet Taylor



u3a Learning Activities

Send in pictures of your original artwork on a monthly theme to feature in the u3a online gallery. No prizes, just prestige!

This monthly challenge aims to encourage people to paint or draw a piece of artwork, then take a photo of their work and submit their pictures online. There will be a different theme each month. This is not a competition and it is not about ability – what we want are interesting pictures, possibly different perspectives on everyday scenes or objects, anything which has inspired you to paint or draw. Peter Akers, a member of the paint or draw network, has shared his helpful tips on Starting out in pastels, Sandra Foster has some tips on Acrylics and David Wrigley, another member, has shared some thoughts on Watercolours. We will be extending this network of members so please do contact janine.aldridge@u3a.org.uk if you would like to find out more. At the end of every month, we will choose and publish up to 15 photos of artwork on an online gallery for each theme to share the pictures with all of our members.

The theme for this month is: "Different sizes"
Deadline for submissions: 14th August 2024. For more information and how to submit see u3a.org.uk/learning/learning-activities/paint-or-draw

The 14th century Octagon tower and its unique wooden lantern is considered one of the wonders of the medieval world. It took 20 years to build and cost £2,406 6s 11d.

ENGINEERING GROUP

For our July outing 13 of us visited the Museum of Brands & Packaging in Ladbroke Grove. Robert Opie started this collection over 50 years ago and he opened the first museum in Gloucester Docks in 1984.

After our usual coffee and cake (outstanding homemade cakes!) we entered the Time Tunnel which illustrates how daily life has changed since Victorian times through to the present day. The amount of items on display was quite extraordinary, ranging from household appliances, toys, games, comics and magazines, a vast selection of TV's and radios and a huge variety of branded packaging of grocery items and sweets. It was interesting to note how some packaging designs have hardly changed over the decades e.g. Colman's mustard, HP sauce, Heinz soups. It was also nostalgic to see some of the iconic brands of the past that are no longer around. Reaching the 50's, 60's & 70's sections probably provided the most discussion bringing back so many and varied memories to us all. I was amazed to see an



U3a Subject Advisors.

More than 80 advisers are available to help you and your interest group. Advisers are u3a members who want to grow their subject and share their knowledge within the u3a movement. Any u3a member can contact a Subject Adviser. They are here to support any member or group leader with an interest in their subject, whether you have a group or not. You do not need to wait until your group is stuck for ideas, you can contact them for resources, to

old Hotpoint twin tub washing machine very similar to one my mother owned. It was such a timesaver in the day even though I recall it was still a job to get it out and operational in the middle of the kitchen!

To round off an interesting morning there was a delightfully planted private garden area in which to enjoy a lunchtime snack – again homemade. This museum is well worth a visit being an easy journey to Ladbroke Grove station and only a 2 to 3 minute walk from there.

Sheila Malin

It was a hot day in June when a small group of us went to the Historic Dockyard at Chatham in Kent. It is a massive site including the famous Ropery where ropes are still made using processes dating back 400 years (some the size of tree trunks) and where workers use a bicycle to get from one end of the double ropewalk to the other, at over 1000ft long.

Built in 1838, the immense covered 3 slip was, when built, the largest wide span timber structure in Europe. Its amazing cantilever roof features a gracefully curved 'apse' at its landward end, designed to accommodate a ship's bow. Although buildings of this kind were constructed around the world, 3 Slip is now a rare survival (see picture page 1, it now has a mezzanine floor to allow access to see the roof).

Other exhibits include a Call the Midwife tour, RNLI, Steam Steel and Submarines telling the Dockyard story through the industrial revolution and two World Wars.

An extra treat apart from the many exhibits, we were surprised to see a collection of Classic Cars from a group who were visiting that day - no bangers or charabancs there, they were beautifully restored and cared for and I noticed Sue Bussey in particular drooling over at least one sleek specimen! There is another Classic Car Show at the Dockyard on 7th September.

Janet Taylor

connect with others, to energise your group or just to get inspired! We are always looking for new advisers in any subject, you do not need to be an expert. To find out more contact subjectadvisers@u3a.org.uk

Beacon, the national database is used by many u3a branches, it keeps the data secure and separate for each u3a. We maintain your data and send emails via Beacon in order to keep costs down. If the newsletter is not reaching you call Penny on 01923 776143 she will be pleased to get your details updated. If you don't have access to email, arrangements can be made to post the newsletter to you in return for a small administrative charge to cover costs - speak to Penny.

Copy for newsletter no 108 (October/November) should be submitted to the Editor Janet by 23rd September 2024. It would be lovely to have input from some of the other groups, and it doesn't have to be from the group leader. If you have any comments about the newsletter or items you would like to see contact Janet at j.taylor0402@ntlworld.com

Please remember to take photos of your u3a activities which we might be able to use on the website or the rolling screen or in the newsletter. Some 'action' photos would be welcome and try different perspectives sometimes. If you enjoy what you are doing it will show. If you take pictures of people please check that you have permission as it is assumed that any u3a members shown in photos submitted for the newsletter are happy to be included.