

LEARN, LAUGH & LIVE on the Isle of Wight

Welcome to the IoW U3A Newsletter
No 4 - April 2020



Future Speaker Meetings

The April & May talks are definitely postponed. The AGM has tentatively moved to October 8th

Thu Apr 9th was going to be Talk/demonstration on Reiki and Tapping by Beth Gelhard, clinical hypnotherapist, who demonstrates as well as talks - it will be on Reiki, Tapping & EFT.



Thu May 14th was going to be on "Secrets of the Solent" by Susan Gibson, who will be looking at the hidden wonders found in and around our Solent shore.



June 11th in place of the AGM (which has been deferred until October) - we will aim to hold an online meeting in some form - ideas welcome, details to follow!

If you struggle to get to meetings then let us know. We will (in due course) try and organise a lift – email: membership@iowu3a.uk

Your committee are looking at ways of holding virtual online meetings. In fact we have just had our first online committee meeting using "Zoom" conference software. As almost all our members are online we intend to try to help all our members participate in this way.

The U3A is an educational and social charity which encourages people in their third age to carry on learning. It encourages social interaction and combats loneliness

Always check our website www.iowu3a.uk

email info@iowu3a.uk

Check out our new Facebook page - www.facebook.com/groups/iowu3a

The core of our U3A comprises a monthly speaker meeting when everyone has the opportunity to get together for a social and interesting afternoon, also an ongoing program of special interest groups which meet frequently either in members' homes or other accessible venues.

Your committee meets (remotely) once a month to ensure growth and continuity of both these core activities.

We hope from time to time to organise other group activities, visits, etc... which will develop as we move on.

We rely on Internet access for contact and updates (see above).

Please check for errors and omissions. News and articles always welcome.

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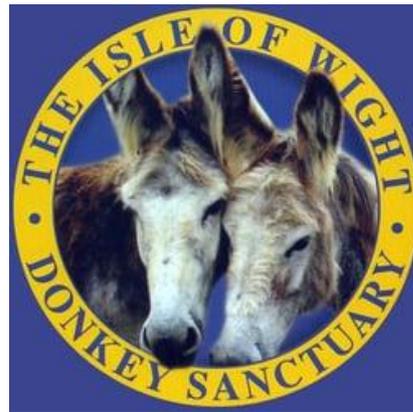
March Speaker meeting: A presentation on the Donkey Sanctuary.

Derek Needham and Carol Foote gave an entertaining account of how they rescued the Donkey Sanctuary from the brink of financial ruin – and the neglected donkeys within it – and transformed it into a thriving and respected Sanctuary for donkeys who no longer have satisfactory alternative accommodation. They spoke with passion about the need for the Donkey Sanctuary and with affection for the individual characters that they care for.

They also spoke of the important role that the Sanctuary plays in the life of the Island and of Islanders: the sanctuary is popular with both visitors from over the sea as well as for islanders, visiting is free and children love it. It is a learning centre for students studying animal husbandry, it is a provider of Donkey Therapy - the donkeys enjoy being loved and caressed by children and adults in

various care settings where they offer a much needed injection of physical contact, warmth and humour.

The Donkey Sanctuary is a charity entirely dependent on the partnership work that they do, together with donations and adoptions for their survival. A couple of members were moved to adopt a donkey following the talk. You can find more information about the Donkey Sanctuary, including their volunteering opportunities at www.iowdonkeysanctuary.org



Note from Carol (Chairman)

I was so impressed by the passion and enthusiasm shown by Carol and Derek in their talk about The Donkey Sanctuary, that I decided that I would visit it the following weekend. I have lived on the IW for 40+ years and have known about the Donkey Sanctuary but have never visited it. Why not? I wondered.

We went on a damp, windy and cold day, and even then I could see that the area is beautiful and would be a wonderful place at any time of the year. The volunteer on the reception gate was well wrapped up against the cold but cheerfully told us where to find the various animals and also the café. She also showed how we could donate (by contactless or cash, at her reception table), and how we could adopt a donkey. The Donkey Sanctuary relies heavily on donations to make ends meet.

The animals looked well and happy in their social groups and their accommodation and fields look well cared for. The keepers obviously love their jobs and were cheerfully engaging with the donkeys when we visited. Some people were grooming donkeys. We were offered the opportunity but declined. We went into the café and had a welcome hot chocolate, determined to go again in warmer weather.

Group Meetings

All Groups are listed on the web site at www.iowu3a.uk with up to date details.

Email: groups@iowu3a.uk

Because of the **Coronavirus** problem none of these groups will be held in person for the time being. But we are looking at ways of drawing groups together either by email or by conferencing software. We will be sending "how to" guides out to members by email to hope to get this going.

At time of going to press:

Books, Topics & Chat - Tuesday p.m.

This Group takes it in turns to suggest Books, TED talks, Newspaper articles, etc., to discuss. We also look for appropriate trips to literary festivals, etc., to go to. The aim is to cover a wide variety of subjects to achieve variety and hopefully widen horizons.

A trimmed down version of this Group is being planned which focusses on the TED talks. Anyone wanting to participate in this Group could you please let Dina know (via Groups link on the IoW U3A website) so that time and topics can be arranged.

Film Studies Next Meeting - April t.b.a. - Virtual

To develop an understanding of the language of cinema and a deeper appreciation of film through group viewings and discussions of films' apparent and underlying meanings and significance.

Once a month - day to be decided - Jim Moody - make contact through email groups@iowu3a.uk



Gardening Cooperative - Carol

Well, in these uncertain times, obviously cooperative gardening as it was envisaged is not possible, however, the group is determined to keep in touch. We had planned to meet in each-other's gardens and help on individual projects as well as possibly community projects. Instead we are communicating by email monthly with lists and tips,

achievements, photos and ideas. At this time of year, the lists seem to be endless. All of us had 'clear out the greenhouse' on our lists and I was the only one not to have already done it. Motivated by them, I started the next day and mine is now done too.

My first job (after clearing out the greenhouse), was to walk around my garden taking photos of all the jobs that needed doing, focusing not on the beautiful bits but on the worst bits. These photos are my list of jobs for this period. I intend to take an 'after' photo too. I also am fortunate enough to have an allotment and government permission to work on it, so my hands are full. Anyone with ideas to keep us all well and working in our gardens, do share them.

Anyone who has not signed up for Garden Cooperative but who would like to be involved in monthly, or more frequent, emails about garden hints, tips, successes or failures, do go to the website www.iowu3a.uk go to Groups and register your interest. All welcome.

I think our getting out and about in society restrictions are going to last for some time. Our gardens will be our refuges and inspiration.



Multicraft - Dina Jung - Tuesday p.m. But Dina will update with online ideas.

This group is for those people who love making things, in any material. Many people have experience in crafts that are not "run of the mill" and can come along and share this knowledge. We could also learn from books or online if no-one has experience in something that interests us. Things on offer so far are handmade leather goods, pewter casting in cuttlefish, spinning (mainly alpaca) and silver chain mail jewellery but this is just for starters as other people can make suggestions for us to try. We aim to meet once a month at 2pm and it is generally held in someone's house with tea and biscuits, etc.

(Multi Craft is on hold at the moment.)

Rummikub - Starting online very soon.

Contact Sally on groups@iowu3a.uk
According to Wiki - Rummikub is a tile-based game for 2 to 4 players, combining elements of the card game rummy and mah-jongg. There are 104 number tiles in the game (valued 1 to 13 in four different colours, two copies of each) and two jokers. Players have 14 or 16 tiles initially and take turns putting down tiles from their racks into sets (groups or runs) of at least three, drawing a tile if they cannot play. In the Sabra version (the most common and popular), the first player to use all their tiles scores a positive score based on the total of the other players' hands, while the losers get negative scores. An important feature of the game is that players can work with the tiles that have already been played.

Scrabble - Still Planning but starting online.

Contact Sally by email - groups@iowu3a.uk



Walk and Talk about Gardens - Wednesday p.m.

Walk and Talk about Gardens Group - Beryl.
This group was formed by a few friends with a mutual love of gardens, gardening and plants and who wished to share their enjoyment and enthusiasm with others. We meet twice a month, from April to October on a Wednesday afternoon to visit one of our gardens, exchange plants, cuttings, seeds ideas and occasionally knowledge. These visits always finish with tea, cake and more talk.

This Group is still continuing and a flourishing email and photoswapping system has sprung up which is motivating, informative and supportive. To join please contact Groups link on the IoW U3A website. Sorry no cake at the moment.

Planned:

(these are listed on the web site but some are awaiting "adoption")

DIY & Tool Knowledge;
French;
Mah Jong;
Medical Matters;
Photography ;
Posh Dining/ Theatre;

Spanish;
Using Technology;
Walking;
Genealogy - starting November - Alison;
IoW History - in the Autumn - Sally

All queries re Groups to groups@iowu3a.uk please.

Starting a Group -

if your group isn't listed here then it probably could be!
Contact Sally or Dina (usual email address) and we could get one started.



You don't have to be an expert to start a group - just show an interest.

U3A subject advisers cover a wide range of subjects from American Archaeology to Yoga, with a real mix of academic, practical and leisure activities in between.

<https://u3a.org.uk/resources/subjects>

On-Line Groceries

Times are changing and on-line grocery shopping is becoming ever more popular. For many people this will be a new experience but at least it will avoid long social-isolation queues. It can take as long as 40 minutes to work your way with your trolley to reach the checkout under the new conditions.

Shopping on line has its difficulties too, trying to find a delivery "slot". One hopes that when our larders and freezers are stocked to the gunwales normal provision will ensue.

For those who have not yet tried this then maybe in an idle moment do so. Google search for the delivery option for your favourite (or any) supermarket and follow the links. Some require a minimum shop and you will need to check out with your credit card - but you won't be charged until the delivery is sent and you will be able to change you order as often as you like.



One wonders when this is all over whether shopping will ever be the same again.

The Low Vision Journey

Your newsletter editor used to be an optometrist and back in history started continuing education activities amongst the professional optician community on the Isle of Wight. Maybe 20 years ago this activity became compulsory, as it is now for all the other registered medical professions. Now it is the case that optometrists and dispensing opticians have to gain 36 “brownie points” over a three year cycle, by doing both comprehension tests on printed articles and attending educational activities in person.

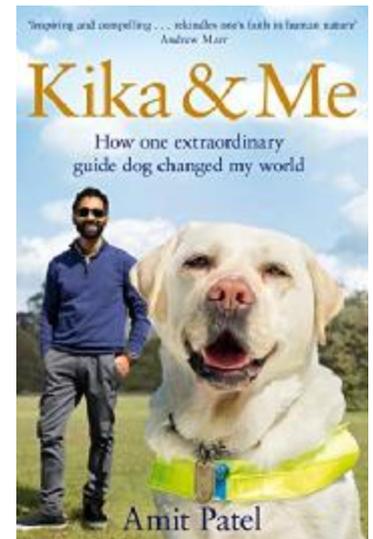
The Isle of Wight Optical Society (www.iwos.org.uk) usually holds at least two “peer discussion” groups with a pair of lectures later on in the year. This year we have a consistent theme - “The Low Vision Journey” looking at aspects of managing the onset, management and progress of poor vision. This is particularly relevant on the Island with its more elderly population but poor vision is not of course restricted to the elderly.

Unless you are blind from a very early age, loss of vision is something which usually comes upon you gradually. While not always resulting in total blindness it does incur a “journey” from initial

awareness of loss through referral, medical management and then social management. Most common is macular degeneration and then glaucoma. These days cataracts are routinely well managed, while some macula degeneration and often glaucoma can be held at bay. Early management is usually key.

When things can't be held back this journey takes you through the Hospital Eye Department with associated advice and support, help in the home via Social Services rehabilitation and further support from “Sight for Wight” (a.k.a. IW Blind Society).

An excellent book recounting one person's journey is “Kika and Me” by A&E surgeon Amit Patel which I read on Kindle - available from Amazon. Kika is the guide dog which after a time became central to the author's life.



Committee Chat

The committee had their first remote committee meeting using Zoom <https://zoom.us/> on March 25th. The meeting was successful with one member of the committee choosing to join by telephone.

The telephone/computer interactions worked very well and the rest of us could see each other on screen and the committee was able to get on with business in the usual way, planning how to keep the spirit of U3A alive and well during this period of social-distancing and/or shielding.

Groups will find ways to interact remotely and we have started an iowU3A Facebook page – you can join here. www.facebook.com/groups/iowu3a



How the “Zoom” conferencing system works:



People have been inventing ways to communicate with each other over distances since the earliest smoke signals produced to alert others to the presence of friend or foe. From smoke signals to semaphore, from Morse Code through telegraph to telephone and teleconferencing, we are now in the age of Video-Conferencing and the Coronavirus is causing a surge in ways and means. I imagine that those of you with smart phones are already familiar with using face-time to keep in touch with remote loved ones. Video conferencing is just one step further. Zoom is free to use for meetings of less than 40 minutes and may be the perfect way for your group to stay in touch with each other during the lockdown. We will also be looking at

ways of staying connected with members who are not on the Internet.

Having trouble using Zoom? Don't understand Facebook? Don't have the Internet and would like to stay in touch, call Sally on 740511. You will probably get my answer phone as I will probably be in the garden but leave a number and I will call you back.

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Facebook page

Check out our new Facebook page
www.facebook.com/groups/iowu3a



Coronavirus

We hope all our members steer clear of this by following the rules. We can't give any advice you haven't already heard, but if you are in trouble then please let us know. We can at least lend an ear if you would like to talk.

