

Welcome to the u3a Newsletter for the Isle of Wight No 11 – November 2020



The **u3a** is a UK-wide collection of locally-run interest groups that provides a wide range of opportunities to come together to learn for fun. We enjoy exploring new ideas, skills and activities together.

Web: www.iowu3a.uk

Email: info@iowu3a.uk

Follow us on Twitter @u3aWight

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/iowu3a> closed group for members
<https://www.facebook.com/u3aWight> open page for the public

Dear Members

Thank you to all who were able to attend the Zoom AGM. It was good to 'see' you and to hear your comments and suggestions. Your feedback during the group discussion was useful and thought provoking. Based on what you said, we have been researching a programme of Zoom talks which we hope you will find interesting and entertaining. More details of these will be found later in the Newsletter.

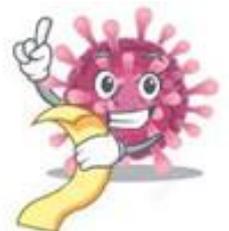
During the past few months Third Age Trust of the u3a has been working on a rebranding programme. This has been launched within the last month and you will notice in the coming months amongst other things, small changes to the colours on our publications and a change to our logo. The u3a are trying to refresh our image and to appeal to a

wider audience. Thanks to Sally for her work in keeping us up to date with all of the changes. Sally is also working on a national Pathfinder exercise to help the u3a promote itself and to attract new members.

Two new groups that I mentioned in the October newsletter, The Garden Appreciation group and the Beaches group, both met during the month. You can see a report of both of these and the details of November's dates and venues in the groups section. These two groups are open to everyone. Contact me on groups@iowu3a.uk if you would like to come along.

Stay Safe and Well,

Carol Bradshaw
Chair



Please check for errors and omissions.

News, articles and updates always welcome.

Newsletter editor Roger Skidmore, rogerskid@zen.co.uk, 01983 822900

The AGM 2020 follow up

For a first AGM, and on Zoom to boot, we had an encouraging audience – thank you to all of those who attended, particularly those who had not used zoom before.

The business of the day was conducted uneventfully, the constitution was adopted, the new Board installed, and the financial report accepted. We had a Q&A session that worked very well, mainly focused on what was possible under the present social distancing guidelines. We have two new outdoor groups, Beaches and Garden Appreciation that will meet outside, socially distanced, whatever the weather, both of which have met this month as reported on the groups' pages.

The idea of online Speaker Meetings was generally endorsed by the membership, and there was some discussion about the choice of speakers. Once again, I would exhort anyone shy of using Zoom or the internet more generally to contact me for support by phone to get you up and running (740511). I was an IT teacher many moons ago (when computers were very different, less powerful than a modern mobile phone!) and I am quite likely to be a more patient teacher than your son or your granddaughter, who move too quickly and cannot seem to see what you don't understand.

Speaker Meetings

We are delighted to announce that we have secured Fool's Gold Acoustic (poster on page 10) for our first Zoomed speaker meeting on November 12th. They will present a mixture of songs and their background stories. Please contact Booking@iowu3a.uk for zoom details.

We will be having further Zoom meetings on second Thursdays of the month. December 10th will be "Secrets of the Solent" and details for January 14th will follow.

Group Meetings

All Groups are listed at
www.iowu3a.uk

Because of the Coronavirus only a few of these groups are being held in person at the moment, the rest are continuing remotely.

We are considering ways for face to face meetings to carry on with appropriate social distancing. "Walk and Talk About Gardens" has been meeting in person but has now returned to winter mode and email only. The writing group and the games group meet inside, in groups of 6 or fewer, all suitably physically distanced and in an airy and maintained environment. The new Beach Group will also be in person, again in groups of 6 or fewer and outside - at the beach! Please check with the group leader through groups@iowu3a.uk for up to date information.

Walk and Talk about Gardens - Wednesday p.m.

Contact by email - groups@iowu3a.uk

Normally we would be having our last meeting in late October but thought it prudent to cancel this year, with the hope that we will all be able to meet again in the spring.

The gardens continue to look good at this time of the year, in fact much better than in July and August. Members of the group have been exchanging some beautiful photographs of the plants that are flowering in their gardens. Work in the garden continues of course and some of us have caught a nasty disease called 'lawn nibbling', which I am told on good authority is highly contagious. This is a gradual removal of lawn to make room for more plants and is often the result of a very addictive activity called 'perpetual propagating'. Normally the results of this propagating can be off loaded at church fairs, plant sales etc. but this outlet has been denied us this year, although you may have seen boxes of plants in driveways, with a notice begging people to take them away.

On a more sober note - During lockdown many people have turned to working in their garden, but remember, a garden can be a dangerous

place. A close friend and neighbour of ours in France has recently died of septicaemia. She was only 40 and a market gardener. Please make sure that you clean and treat appropriately any wound, no matter how small, immediately, when working in the garden. Also make sure your tetanus jab is up to date.

Enjoy your gardening

Beryl Tillman

Writing Group

Members get on with existing work, but we also set a possible project every month in case inspiration dried up, or we just fancy a change. This time, we each had to bring along an object which would inspire, or be included in, a piece of writing.

You can see the objects in this picture: a leather document wallet, a wooden carving of a cat, a stargazy hare, a broken piece from a blue glass vase and a cup and saucer. We had a chat about these items and we'll have to see what they inspired. We'll keep you posted.

More excitement: one of our members has been lucky enough to be invited to attend a National U3A Creative Writing course in November, so there should be much sharing when they return, full of ideas and wisdom.



Please get in touch if you would like to get involved in the group; we are very nice - honest.

Christine



Garden Appreciation - Visit to Mottistone Gardens

The Garden Appreciation Group and others visited Mottistone Gardens on Wednesday October 21st. The forecast was poor and the rain was heavy at the appointed time to meet. However, meet we did, in our hats, waterproofs and smiles. We decided to test out the café while the rain fell, where the undercover seating area allowed those of us who knew each other to catch up and those who hadn't met before, to chat. Fortunately for us the rain soon moved away and we were rewarded with sunshine.

The gardens are beautiful. The trees are in their full autumnal glory and even in October the flower beds are full of colour with plants and shrubs in interesting planting patterns. There are useful information notices by some of the borders explaining the new planting ideas or plans for change. I found it all fascinating. Others, more knowledgeable than I were able to help me with plant identification and a good time was had by all.

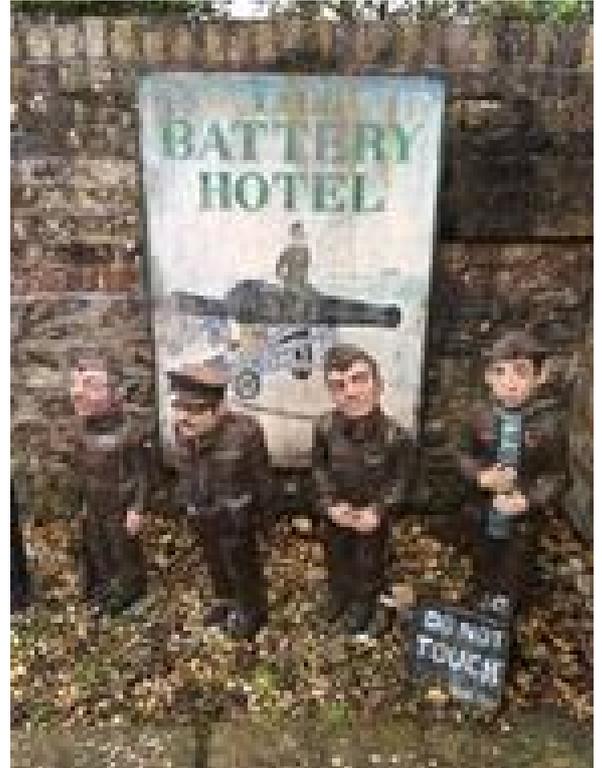
The next garden visit will be to Ventnor Botanical Gardens on Wednesday the 11th November. All welcome. Contact me on groups@iowu3a.uk if you would like to come.

Carol Bradshaw



BEACHES

Five intrepid souls met at Ryde bus station on Wednesday 28th October, and, in spite of the poor weather forecast were rewarded with a largely sunny walk from Ryde to Seaview and back. Huge thanks to Chris Priest who suggested this walk and, in spite of nearly missing each other at the bus station, took us on an interesting walk. Those of us who have walked this way before were amazed by the things that she pointed out that we didn't know, a folly and a nature reserve, an historical plaque, a salt marsh, Bram Stoker's house and a lot more in between. To me it was a real revelation. Thank you Chris from all of us. Some walked to Ryde and caught the bus back, one joined at Seaview and walked back to Ryde and others walked both ways, fortified by hot chocolate from The Old Fort at Seaview. Join us the next walk on November 25th, venue to be announced later.



Carol

Family History and Genealogy:

Those new to tracing their roots and others who are more experienced will be very welcome. The aim will be to help each other make progress and share successes and pitfalls. This is a far reaching topic with a great many fascinating themes for future discussion and research. **(starting January)**

Games Group: Thursday afternoon Newport - Scrabble, Rummikub, Monopoly or Tiddly Winks anyone? Also Cribbage or Dominos, Friday afternoon - Seaview.

Reading - Not a book group where we all read the same book but just a 'Reading' group - share what you love to read, what you are reading - articles, papers, research, short stories, History - whatever inspires you or brings you pleasure.

Literature of the English Country House - Study a short course online, for free, hosted by the University of Sheffield that looks at social history through the eyes of (a few) literary greats from Thomas More to Oscar Wilde, and then discuss your thoughts, struggles and delights with u3a fellow travellers.

<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/country-house-literature>

groups@iowu3a.uk for more details.

IoW U3A Film Studies Group

Our Film Studies Group has met online for discussion every two weeks since the Sars-Cov-2/Covid-19 hit everyone's meeting arrangements. From the lively way Group members engage in the discussions there is every reason to think we shall carry on merrily in the same way for the rest of this year at least.

In the last two months we have viewed individually (on Netflix as this is what members have access to) and then discussed collectively *The American President*, *K-9*, *The Widowmaker*, *Julie & Julia*, and *Juliet, Naked*. Even when some of us might not have otherwise viewed a film or did not particularly appreciate it when we did, our discussions have still seized upon unsuspectedly interesting aspects of production and acting etc.

We seem always able to find something pertinent to talk about in films from among the best to the less promising; this is an achievement illustrating how members engage

Winter Watch

National u3a is looking for interesting photos that fit in the theme; whether this is an image of your garden, a warming meal, a festive tradition or anything you personally associate with the colder months.

Whether you are submitting a high-quality image fit for National Geographic magazine, or a whimsical picture taken in the moment - we want to see it!

Photos submitted will appear on the National Website.

We encourage you to think outside the box and get creative, why wait for the perfect scene to come to you?

Please only submit one photo of your chosen subject. Your photo should also not include any people.

in the study of film that our group exists to promote.

In coming Wednesdays fortnightly, we aim to watch and discuss:

The Laundromat (11 November) – Meryl Streep's character tracks fraudsters to Panama City.

Enola Holmes (25 November) – young Enola has to prove herself against brother Sherlock.

The Social Dilemma (9 December) – exploring the human impacts of social networking.

A Christmas special is yet to be decided for 23 December.

And we shall talk about *A Beautiful Mind* on 6 January 2021.



Jim Moody

Please submit your images using this form: <https://u3auk.wufoo.com/forms/winter-watch-photograph-project/>

Thank you and happy snapping!

u3a Isle of Wight have decided to piggy-back onto their project by inviting members to submit your photos to us as well - (editor@iowu3a.uk) We will publish your photos on our website (no pictures of people please) and we will choose our own winner ... prize is a year's free membership of iowu3a !



A Stroll in the Woods

A retelling of a traditional tale -
October's writing challenge.

1

Sitting in the sunny kitchen at the big wooden table was preferable to the relative isolation of the desk in her bedroom: so thought Scarlett, revising for her mock A level exams. Lucy, her mother, was working in the garden, the cat lay in the sun and came in occasionally to check that the young woman's notes and textbooks were all in order and then lying on top of them to show her approval.

When her mother next came in and put the kettle on, Scarlett felt ready for an official break. Over their drink on the bench outside, Lucy asked Scarlet if she could pay Grandma a short visit and take a few things to her.

- 'Is Grandma unwell, Mum? I saw her three days ago and she seemed fine then.

- I'm not sure. I had a quick chat with her on the internet this morning and she was still in bed when I called. She looked tired, I think her arthritis might be troubling her again.

- What time was that?

- Around nine.'

'Yes' thought Scarlet, 'it's a bit late for Grandma.' Grandma Marianne was an active woman.

- I'd go myself but I have a dental appointment at twelve.

- I know Mum, that's fine, I'll go: I need a few hours away from my books anyway. What shall I take?

- I thought a loaf of bread and a few of those buns I baked yesterday, some nice cheese, plum jam, some milk, in case she didn't manage to go shopping. And when you are there, you might pick some vegetables for her, make some soup or something.

Scarlett took her books back to her room, tied her hair up and slipped on her jacket, the red one with a hood that she wore for outdoor activities. Mum had wheeled her

bike out of the garage and was putting all Grandma's things in the wicker basket fitted at the front.

Off Scarlett went. It wasn't very far to her grandmother's cottage, just the other side of the wood in fact, where fields opened up and you got a broad view of the valley and villages below. Halfway, she passed the lane which led to Mr and Mrs Wilson's forest skills centre, a place Scarlett had visited many times and learnt much from. It welcomed groups of primary school children and also older students like herself, with an interest in biology and the environment, the ancient ways of life, the animals of the woods. It was also a favourite place for exchange students to visit and discover the country, the forest, the history.

When Scarlett arrived at the cottage, her grandmother was sitting outside in her dressing gown with a drink which fizzed and bubbled in a tall glass.

'Scarlett! my lovely! I'm glad to see you - how are you? How is the revising going?

Scarlett hugged the old lady. 'Hello Grandma, all well thank you. I have come for a break and to see you of course. I brought you a few things, shall I put them in the kitchen? I need to put the milk and cheese in the fridge'. While she did so, she couldn't help noticing that the kitchen was in a bit of a mess: there were cups and glasses on various surfaces, plates with crumbs, and even an ashtray full of smelly cigarettes stubs!

When she came back outside she diplomatically told her grandmother about Lucy's worries.

'Mum thinks that maybe you are not sleeping very well at the moment...because of your arthritis.

- I'm fine Darling. I just had a bit of a late night that's all...I had a few friends round for a games night, you know: silly Scrabble, charades, cards, that sort of things. It just went on a bit late, Greta didn't want to leave: 'just one more game, Marianne!', she kept saying... Thankfully, Annie Woods, who was driving, managed to lead her to the car, eventually.

That's outrageous Grandma, I don't think I should tell Mum.

- Indeed. No need to worry her. I think I'll have a bath and get dressed, Scarlett, as befits a respectable old lady.

Grandma went to the bathroom and Scarlett thought she would do a bit of housework: she filled the dishwasher, cleaned the kitchen and thought, while she was at it, she'd make Grandma's bed and tidy up her room. When she stepped into the bedroom, her heart missed a beat: there was a wolf in the old lady's bed. The animal turned over to face her, showing its large fangs in a sinister grin, its front paws resting on the embroidered coverlet.

'Wolfgang! You know you're not allowed on the bed! Get down this minute!'; Wolfgang wriggled round a bit and finally slid to the floor: he greeted Scarlett exuberantly. She tried to tell him off but it was difficult. She decided to change Grandma's bed and put the sheets to wash. By the time Grandma came out of the bathroom, Scarlett had finished her tasks. She was picking vegetables for the evening soup and some herbs to chop and add to the soft cheese they would have for lunch. Wolfgang wandered happily between the house and the garden.

When Scarlett told her about Wolfgang's disobedience, Grandma laughed: 'he still thinks he is a puppy, naughty boy Wolfie, you're not really allowed on my bed' - but they were all grinning. The scared grey puppy from the rescue centre might have grown into a large and imposing animal but he still needed the same love and care. After lunch Grandma decided to prepare the vegetables for her evening meal while Scarlett took Wolfie to the field opposite for a game of fetch the stick, by far his favourite. They played and gamboled about just like they had when they were both much younger and enjoyed it greatly. Wolfie, although he was getting on in years, ran around until he was exhausted at which point he simply refused to bring the stick back to Scarlett: that was their signal to stop. It was time for a drink of water and Scarlett had to go home, she brought the dog back to the cottage and hugged her grandmother goodbye, making her promise to have an early night. 'And you make sure you go straight home, my darling, and send me a little message when you get there.'

With a bunch of flowers for her mother in her

basket, Scarlett waved Grandma and Wolfie goodbye and started on her leisurely ride home. The light shone softly through the trees, the birds were singing, flowers covered the banks. She was happy her grandmother was well - if rather badly behaved. Glad that she had Wolfie to keep her company and make her laugh.

Round a bend in the narrow road, she saw some figures ahead of her. They were three, coming towards her, they occupied the whole width of the lane. Three boys, talking animatedly, gesticulating, one of them carried a short club and demonstrated some moves. She slowed down. They slowed down. Her mind was suddenly racing, she knew it was irrational, she should just ride on and call a cheerful greeting as they parted to let her pass. She stopped and put a foot down. They walked on slowly, seeming to consult each other, hesitant. 'Breathe, stay calm, they are probably just harmless kids, just out for a stroll, probably'. They were now quite close, and at that distance they looked more threatening, goading each other. 'What could they do anyway? Anything... Look calm, look strong, project your thoughts, will them to let you pass'. The boys stopped. Scarlett dared not relax yet, but it looked like they were frozen in surprise and horror. 'Un lupo' she heard one say incredulously, then they were all three repeating the word, louder, fearfully, and suddenly they turned round and started to run. Scarlett let out a deep breath and just glimpsed Wolfie running past her, following the boys. So there was the 'lupo'. He got to the spot where they had stood and picked up the stick: he trotted back towards Scarlett, looking pleased but a bit surprised: why had these people not thrown the stick for him to fetch? Scarlett stroked his head, overwhelmed with relief: 'you go home now, Wolfie. Good boy. Thank you'.

As soon as she got home, she messaged her grandmother: 'Got home safely. Mum says thanks for the lovely flowers. Really enjoyed seeing you today. Early night, remember Grandma! Love to you and Wolfie.'

Christine Crossley

(Writing Group)

Lockdown 2

There will be no chick balls of love and fluff to bring cheer to this November lockdown, blown in with gales and rain. Outside exercise will be a lot less appealing this time around too. And gardening – which seemed to be the salvation of many in the spring – will be less rewarding this time. According to Monty it is the time to be potting up some winter colour.

How else can we support ourselves? We can go online, we can use the phone, we can still meet outside with one other person. Carol and I will continue to go beach walking and other pairs can walk.

We can read and write – we have reading and writing groups who will continue to talk to each other using zoom or phone.

What would you like? Let us know?



Sally

This is an invite to all loW U3A members to get rid of their unwanted plants and acquire some new ones. There will be a **PLANT SWAP**, one afternoon during the first week after lockdown has finished - date to be decided

The location is in Wootton really close to the no 9 and 4 bus stop and if you bring a mug there will be tea, coffee and cake. Outdoors and masks must be worn. There will be timed slots if the numbers are too great.

Please email Dina at dinajung@gmail.com for information.

If viewing on computer use the enlarge/shrink control to enlarge the small print on the poster overleaf - for Windows hold the CTRL button down and use mouse scroll. For technical advice phone 740511.





About zoom

Zoom is a free online meeting program that allows people to join meetings on the Internet. Attendees can chat using voice or type, they can see each other (or not - your choice) and they can attend and take part like any other meeting.

There's lots of info on the internet about it, you could start on this page:

www.foolsgoldacoustic.co.uk/zoom

More about Fool's Gold.

There's lots more I could tell you about us, but it's best I just point you here:

www.foolsgoldacoustic.co.uk.

You can find out all about us here, see our videos, listen to our studio recordings and even buy the books and CD's

To Book a Place on Zoom
email
booking@iowu3a.uk

FOOL'S GOLD



THE ZOOM SHOW!

U3A Isle of Wight

12 November 2020 2.00pm

SHOW PROGRAMME

Show Programme

Welcome to the Fool's Gold Zoom Show!

Today we will be presenting some of our favourite songs: but we will not stop at the songs! All songs have a story - a history, mystery or tragedy; we like to tell you the story as well as simply perform the song. To help things along we will be using some of the images from our live show to help bring the tales to life - and these will continue throughout the songs too!

The programme changes each time we perform, but here are some of the stories and songs you might hear - but we will keep the song titles a secret - just for now!

The American Election Song.

Sounds rather dull doesn't it? But this VERY well known song was, and is very popular. People don't know that it started life as an election campaign song in Louisiana in the 1940's. And the title is the name of someone VERY special. Singing along at home is not mandatory - it's just hard not to!

The Love Ballad.

Yes, it IS a love ballad, but not in the way you might think. And it's not by who you think, nor is it from when you think! There is a strange history to this much loved classic.

The Shipwreck Song.

We started off in Folk Clubs so of course: we do a shipwreck song. The ship in question did sink, but in doing so, it has a profound effect on someone standing by the shore. Find out who in the song!

A Heroine:

a special lady from a few years ago - you DO know of her, but you probably have never heard of the strange secret she took with her to her grave...

The famous song:

a very famous song indeed, the only trouble is, that it isn't about what you think!

And there will be more!

About Fool's Gold

Carol and Steve Robson are musicians who have been presenting their mixed story/image/live music shows to audiences all over the UK. Often our shows have a theme and include well-known and original music. We began in the folk clubs of the North East of England, which probably explains why some of the songs are about coal mining!

Carol Plays: Flute, Tenor Guitar, Bass Guitar, Whistles and voice

Steve Plays: Guitars, Ukulele, Bouzouki and voice

About The Zoom Show

The zoom show is our answer to the CV lockdown. We can't get out to play, so we will come to you using the magic of the internet. The show is an adaptation of our live show. One of the big differences in the zoom show is, Steve has to stay still! However all the music is played live and the images and stories are taken and adapted from the live show.



THE STORY