

September - October 2023

Message from our Chair

Writing this on a damp, windy, grey August day I can only hope that by the time the Newsletter is published we will all be enjoying some wonderful days of late summer sunshine. Optimism trumps defeatism every time!

To continue that theme, we are remaining optimistic that some of you are going to step forward this autumn to volunteer as a committee member. The responsibility and amount of work involved is really not great!

It would also be lovely to think that some of our newer members might want to start a new group focusing on one of their interests or ambitions. Walking football? Bird watching? Latin? Singing?

Whoever starts a group doesn't have to be an expert – just interested enough to share their thoughts with others. Learning as a group is often more fun than learning on our own. Member-run groups are the life blood of u3a.

I am also going to break my own rule by mentioning Christmas (twice it appears!) before December 1st.

Please make a note of the date of our social get together, which this year will be on Monday December 11th 2 – 4pm at Arreton Community Centre. The afternoon will include a quiz, teams will be chosen at random, the focus will be on fun and even those who hate quizzes will be guaranteed a good time. It's not too early to register your interest with me if you would like to take part.

Save the Date!

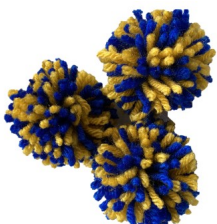
Monday 11th December 2023 14:00

Social at Arreton Community Centre

The speaker meetings in September, October and November will be held on Thursdays at St Johns in Newport. The September speaker will be David Fairlamb on "Wight Wildlife Through the Seasons' Details on page 20.

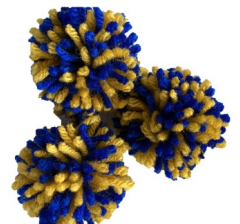
Alison Botha

chair@u3awight.uk



Coffee Mornings around the Island:
1st Wednesday of the month at 10:30
at the Bargeman's Rest in Newport.
2nd Monday, Winter Gardens Ventnor, at 11:00
4th Tuesday, at Ryde Castle 11:00

Look out for the **blue** and **gold** pom-poms.



New: Bridge at home Group

Sara Gilding's new Bridge group is still looking for new members. We have four interested players now but need more to allow for date matching. This group is not for beginners but rather those who have a reasonable understanding of the game.

Please contact Saraif you would like to join us playing bridge at home.

rykastopdog@gmail.com



Online learning with the u3a

Do not forget to check the u3a national website for new online learning and entertainment.

www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events

There you will find a 3 part series on **Electing the US President in 2024** presented by Paul Carter. Tuesday, 10am, on Zoom, 12th, 19th and 26th September.

Paul is u3a subject adviser for UK & US Politics and is also a member of our Thursday discussion group when he is on the island..

The online offerings also include:

- Laughter Yoga
- Mathematical Puzzles
- The British Secret Intelligence
- Services as portrayed in the media

It is worth signing up for TAT emails to find out what is on offer every month.

Let's Go!

A group to support members doing whatever takes their fancy. Since the last newsletter we had a very interesting guided walk around Bonchurch led by David White. Full of quirky bits of history - the inspiration for Lady Haversham apparently - and some extraordinary gardens. Who would have thought, looking at an old quarry, "I know let's build a village here"?

We also had a delightful Eat-Out and Review at No 7 in Niton, organised by Jacky Carter. Review page 14.



Let's Go! - Dates for September and beyond

Moonlight Swim

Thursday, August 31st

Well August 1st was grim, the sea was grey and the moon remained hidden. The swim was postponed to Thursday August 31st. Fingers crossed for better weather.

Walk with Ray Braithwaite

Friday, September 8th

Ray is a local metal detectorist who enjoys leading walks, sharing interesting gems of local knowledge and showing personal treasure found on the Island.

Following two very interesting and different walks in early summer, looking for squirrels and then for fossils, the next walk will be a circular walk from Fort Victoria via the causeway and All Saints Church in Freshwater.

Numbers limited so please book.

Walk The Wight Flat Training Tuesday September 19th

Would an eight mile flat walk be an achievement for you? Come and train with us and build your stamina and your confidence. Training walks, starting on September 19th will challenge you gently to gain confidence to join the fun on the flat Walk The Wight 2024.

Several u3a members walked this year including Annie Mathura.



Annie Mathura with her Walk The Wight Medal 2023

I was feeling jaded, uninspired and in need of doing something which pushed me beyond my comfort zone. So, with much resistance, I prised myself off the sofa, dusted the cobwebs off my walking boots and took part in "Walk the Wight 2023" along with 7,000 others. I opted to do the 14 mile section from Carisbrook to Alum Bay.

The atmosphere on the day and scenery, when visibility allowed, was fabulous. Of course there were times during the walk when I felt so weary, throwing myself off the nearest cliff seemed preferable to taking another step. But somehow I managed to haul my aching limbs to the finish line. And when I received my medal the sense of achievement was immense. I felt euphoric and exhilarated for the first time in ages. Which made it all worthwhile. So if a couch potato like me can do it, you certainly can.

Start training now, you won't regret it.

Annie

Eat-out & Review, Masala Bay, Ventnor Thursday, 28th September

French Bread Making with Eddie George Friday, October 6th

Eddie hosted an extremely enjoyable bread making morning last October culminating in a delicious lunch. He has agreed to host a replay, this year with shared contributions to the lunch. Friday October 6th. Numbers limited so please book.

Basket making and Christmas Wreaths from Found Materials with Jan Welsh, Friday November 17th and Monday December 4^h

Jan used the internet to teach herself to make baskets from roadside finds and she is offering to share some of her learning with us. We will gather materials, experiment and share a pot luck lunch. The split between baskets and wreaths will be determined by participants. Numbers limited so please book.

Over to you!

What would you like to do, go, eat, see? What are your ideas for future Let's Go activities.

The committee will support you to make an event happen but the ideas need to come from you.

Sally
groups@u3awight.uk



Annual General Meeting

The purpose of an AGM is to:

- Keep members informed
- Give members a voice
- Enable elections to take place
- Enable acceptance of the annual report and accounts.

We need you to be there, to support your committee, and more importantly we need you to think about joining the committee. Without new committee members in January this u3a will fold (really).

Keeping Members Informed.

At the AGM we will be asking you to approve some small changes to the constitution - some to make it more adaptable in this electronic age and some to make it easier to recruit and retain volunteers on the committee. However we are keeping the present constitutional requirement that the officers - Chair, Vice-chair, Secretary and Treasurer may only serve for three consecutive years. We believe that this is good for the health of the u3a and, perhaps more importantly, to the health of the volunteers.

Give Members a Voice

Let us know what you think about the changes and the way the u3a is run. Are there ideas that you would like us to consider at the AGM? There will be a call for members' resolutions with the November newsletter.

Enable Elections to take place.

Every year at the AGM the existing committee stands down and those that are willing then stand for re-election. Please think about it, come and talk to us to find out what is involved. It need not be a huge time commitment or effort - it can even be fun.

We have a Chair, Alison Botha a Vice-Chair, David Vodden, a Membership Secretary, Tony Williams and a Newsletter and Website Editor Roger Skidmore who are all willing to stand for re-election at the AGM. Sally Forster has been on the committee since the u3a's inauguration and although she is willing to stand again it will be without portfolio, continuing to provide support while taking a back seat. Carol Bradshaw, who was chair for three years and then served on the committee for one year as past-chair is stepping down leaving behind a full year of speakers planned for whoever will take over the speaker programme.

We have one new volunteer at the time of going to press. In an ideal world we would have at least two or possibly three more. Please come and join us!

Annual Report and Accounts.

We have a shared responsibility to ensure that the money we spend, collected from your membership subscriptions, is used wisely and in accordance with our aims as a charitable organisation. We will be circulating the annual report with the accounts prior to the AGM. Paper copies will be available at the November Speaker meeting.

Your committee -
Alison, Dave, Tony, Roger, Carol & Sally
committee@u3awight.uk

Save the Date!

*Thursday 11th January 2024 14:00
AGM and Speaker Meeting at St
John's Hall Newport*

Walk & Lunch

Held on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at various locations. Next Walk Wednesday September 20th.

We are still putting together a new structure for the autumn where we will ask different people to volunteer to lead a well researched route. We have volunteers to organise the lunch, to research the walks, to be 'Tail-end-Charlie', to plan the slow-walk, and a volunteer to coordinate the volunteers. All we need now are the walks and the volunteer walk leaders! This is a work in progress.

In the meantime the September walk will be an old favourite - Tennyson Down from the High Down Chalk Pit car park with lunch at the High Down Inn. Let me know if you would like to walk, walk & lunch, or just lunch. Table booked for 12:45.

The July walk was a meander through Parkhurst Forest making time for butterfly photography and up to the Blacksmiths for lunch.



Thank you Geoff.

The absence of trail markers, the choice of a non-circular route and the mixed walking speeds all made this a slight logistical headache.

The lunch at the Blacksmiths was delicious although marred slightly by some similar issues of pace. Some had starters, some had drinks, some wanted pudding and some had to rush off to a funeral.

Nevertheless, the food was delicious, the company mainly relaxed and the only disappointment was the much anticipated Strawberry Pavlova that had to be forsaken for another engagement!

Walks and lunches are open to all, including well behaved dogs and need to be booked.

Sally groups@u3awight.uk

Beach Walks

The next beach walk will be in September on Wednesday the 27th between Cowes and Gurnard along the promenade. We may stop for a coffee at the Woodvale before walking back to Cowes. 10:30 start from Cowes. Meet in front of Cowes M&S.

October beach walk will be at Compton Bay (Hanover Point). Time to be circulated when I have a clear idea about the tides (usually one week before the walk).

November beach walk will be from Ryde to Seaview. 10:30 start from Ryde bus station. There will be an option to walk back from Seaview or take the bus.

Beach walks are open to all members and are held on the last Wednesday of each month. The location varies and is sometimes actually on the beach and other times on the paths or promenades by the sea. Everyone is welcome, including well-behaved dogs. Come and have a walk by the sea, a bit of a chat and perhaps a hot drink (or cold) at the end of it. Let me know if you would like to come.

Carol Bradshaw

carolbradshaw@u3awight.uk
07748 886246

Bookies' Favourites

Bookies Favourites met at Monkton Arts to review "Never" by Ken Follett. This is a fast moving, roller coaster of a political thriller, with many disturbing elements drawing uncomfortable parallels to the current international political situation. Whilst it is a work of fiction, we felt it was incredibly well researched. The characters, of different cultural and political backgrounds, are a strong vehicle to move the action of the story forward. As a group, we all rated this thought-provoking story quite highly.

We meet on about a six week basis, finding a future date that is mutually convenient at each meeting. Our next meeting is on Thursday 28th September at 14.30 at Monkton Arts in Ryde. We will be discussing "The Beekeeper of Aleppo" by Christi Lefteri.

We would welcome anyone who feels they might like to try us out! Please feel free to join us just to get a feel of what the group is like, even if you haven't read the book. Our chats are informal and friendly. If you think this might be for you, please contact

Steph, stephedwards2@gmail.com

Signs of the Times: A Dance through History, 4

Come and join us for a "dance through history". A themed look at Pub signs and what they can tell us about local and national history with a different twist. New members welcome.

1st Monday - 2nd October, 2pm
Venue to be revealed.

Ray Scarfe

Contact rayscarfe@hotmail.co.uk

St Lawrence Wine Group July/August

Eight more bottles were tipped in our fearless quest to travel the world of wine, this time to Northern Italy, from the comfort of Peter Cross's dining table in Chale.

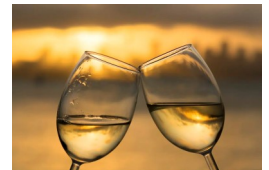
Unlike previous meetings, the most celebrated, (i.e. most expensive), wine topped our reviews. This was Definition Barolo DOCG from the Piedmont region, followed by a Barbera from the same area, and a Pinot Grigio from Trentino.

In August we will take a look at English wine, a bit less exotic you might think, but according to some wine experts, one of the most exciting developing regions worldwide.....

Cheers!

Frank

frankj.kelly@icloud.com



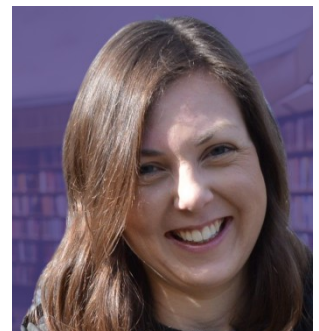
Humanist Philosophy

Tuesday 12th September, 7.00 pm,
Riverside Centre, Newport,
joint meeting with
[IW Humanists](#)

**Maddy Goodall on
"The Heritage of Humanism"**

rogerskid@zen.co.uk

 Isle of Wight
Humanists



News from the Groups

Scrabble Group

A few of us have continued to meet monthly during the summer, taking it in turns to host at our homes.

Some players are quite competitive and play to win, others enjoy a more leisurely pace. We have no strict boundaries – if all players agree that checking with a dictionary is OK, then that's what happens.

We also can allow access, if requested, to a list of those tricky little two and three letter words which can make such a difference to the game.

It would be lovely to have some more players in our group – you would be made very welcome!

Let me know if you are interested in coming along and watch out for information of when and where the September session will be held.



Alison Botha

chair@u3awight.uk
07866 489042

Mah-Jong +

The Mah-Jong group is growing steadily. A small group meets in Cowes weekly. We also meet in peoples' homes.

Contact: **Sally**
groups@u3awight.uk



Cribbage Group

If you would like to be in an email group that gets notified when Cribbage games are being played contact groups@u3awight.uk or contact Christine on 01983 811562 and leave a message.

Sunday Cookery Club

In July we explored the creation of Thai salmon fish cakes, Asian Slaw, and an exquisite summer pudding!

Next meeting Sunday, September 10th.
Tea time specials - with star of the show Rock Cakes.

We meet approximately monthly on a Sunday in the crypt of Aspire Church in Ryde. The date is agreed at each meeting. We each pay a small contribution to the room hire and to the cooks for the ingredients. We have space for a couple more members.

Contact groups@u3awight.uk

Wine Appreciation, Cowes



This group is now meeting at 16:00 on the 2nd Tuesday of the month. At our first full meeting we tasted and appreciated French rosé wines. Much enjoyed by all, to the surprise of some with a previously held prejudice against pink wine.

Our next meeting will be on September 12th when we will consider Cabernet Sauvignon wines from Chile and Argentina. We would welcome one or two new members.

Contact groups@u3awight.uk

Film Studies

Reviews of recent films (mostly on Netflix) we have seen and discussed:

"Spanglish" (2004)

A warmly dramatised account of a Mexican student's letter of application to join Princeton University in which she avers her loyalty to her mother and her Latino heritage. Box of tissues required.

Roger Skidmore



"The Circle" (2017)

Featuring Tom Hanks and Emma Watson. A techno-thriller about extending surveillance to all aspects of life in the cause of "safety" and "truth". An apt warning about the dangers of social media, but we thought it rather predictable and lacking in subtlety. An OK film that could have been a great one.

"Pan's Labyrinth" (2006)

Directed by Guillermo del Toro's and regarded as his masterpiece. A gothic fairy tale for adults, set just after the Spanish Civil War. Considered to be a critique of fascism and absence of choice. It blends fantasy and a real world where humans are the most evil beings. We thought it an excellent and engrossing film deserving its reputation, but a warning that there are violent scenes.

"23 Walks" (2020)

A British romantic comedy-drama starring Alison Steadman and Dave Johns about dog walkers and love in later life.

Please think about films for future viewing and let me have suggestions.

Kind regards,

Paul Bowskill

Future Film Discussions:

4th September

"The Resistance Banker" (2018)

Based on a true story about a banker who funded the resistance during WW2 in the Netherlands. Not a well known story in Britain, but the most watched Dutch film of 2018

18th September

"Missing: The Lucy Blackman Case" (2023)

A Netflix documentary about Lucy Blackman who went missing and was murdered in Japan in 2000. There is an Island connection as her father still lives here.



All meetings are via Zoom and start at 5.30pm on alternate Mondays. Anyone interested in the group can contact groups@u3awight.uk

News from the Groups

u3a Cycle Group

Tuesday 5th September 10.30 - Merstone

The September u3a Cycle Group ride will be a 'back to basics' event to encourage those of who would like to get on their bike again but are maybe lacking confidence as they haven't ridden for a while.

We will meet at Merstone on the cycle track – plenty of free parking here and a safe cycle track to build your confidence again with others at the same stage of their 'recycling' journey. If you haven't a bike but are thinking of getting one it is also an opportunity to chat with other members about their bikes as there are many different types available.

Depending on progress we can then take a short ride to Pedallers (café) at Newchurch for coffee etc. and a chat to discuss future cycle rides etc.

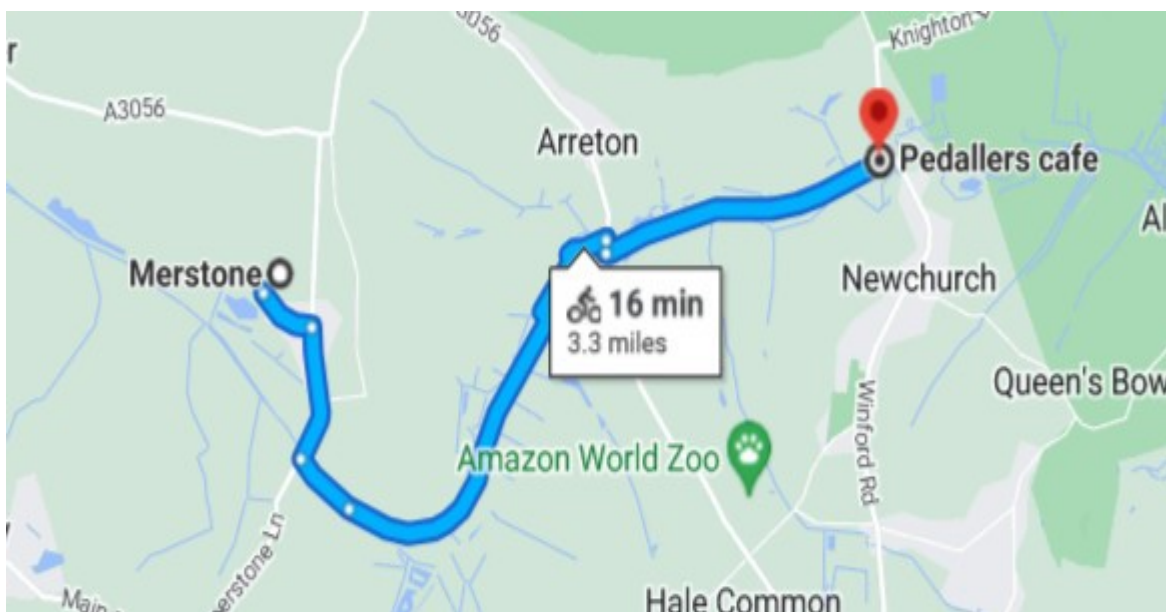
The more adventurous can go even further, the cycle track eventually taking you to Shanklin. Those more experienced are very welcome, of course, to help out, encouraging those less experienced.

If you would like to come along to this event please email me at dave.vodden@tiscali.co.uk.

If you cannot make 5th September please email me and we will try to arrange additional dates.

Or maybe you would like to suggest a new route for a future ride?

Dave Vodden



Walk and Talk about Gardens

There are not many gardeners complaining about the weather this July and August.

Last year the lawns were brown and the plants struggling to survive but now we have lush green lawns and the plants are flourishing. The early potatoes may not have been brilliant but all other vegetables are doing well.

We have visited two very different gardens in the last month. The first, the smaller of the two, is packed with plants and we have noted that the lawn gets smaller as new plants are accommodated. This garden definitely has kerb appeal as tall, dramatic grasses make a huge impact in the front garden.

The second garden has an outstanding view down to the sea. The owner's vegetable garden, the envy of many of us, provides a steady supply of vegetables for the family. In spite of being caged and covered some brassicas were attacked by caterpillars.



Composting is very important in this garden, with a hot bin for household waste, a series of compost bins for garden waste, cages for leaf mould and comfrey for making a liquid fertiliser.

Both these gardens have been in their present ownership for about three years and it has been fascinating watching the changes during the years that we have been visiting them.



**Happy Gardening,
Beryl Tillman**

tillmanberyl@gmail.com



Roger's phantom groups - four groups more aspirational than active, but if you think they may be of interest, then please contact the editor:

[AeroPress Coffee](#)



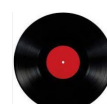
[K- Dramas](#)



[Humanist Philosophy](#)



[Vinyl Revival](#)



News from the Groups

Photography Group

Examples of members' work can be found at: <https://www.flickr.com/groups/14827860@N22/pool/>

The meetings are on 3rd Mondays 14:00. If dropping in, just let me know and I will send you a Zoom link.

Fred fred.wp.dawson@googlemail.com

At the meeting on 19th July Ian explained how he goes about photographing events at theatres and the difficulties caused by stage lighting. We had a very interesting discussion about the difference between commercial photography and the style of photography for camera club competitions.

The photography group had a physical meet-up on the 27th July at Mottistone Down. The weather was grey with drizzle. There were only two of us. We walked through the woods where the mist among the trees made for some dramatic photographs.



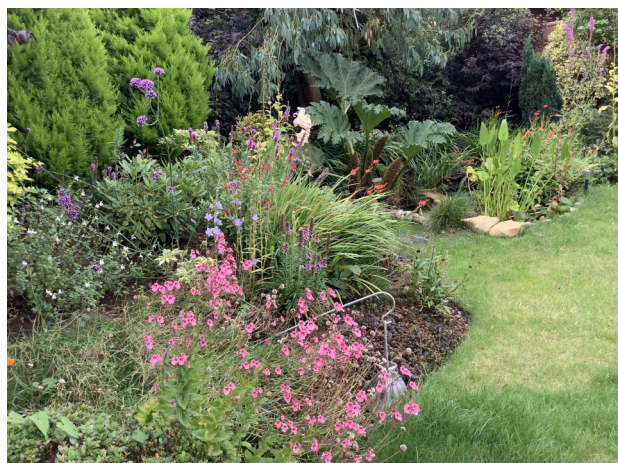
Photography is all about the making the best of the weather and light whatever the conditions.

The Garden Group

We have enjoyed a lively Spring and Summer visiting so many members gardens & enjoying their hospitality But in the Autumn, as the seasons change we inevitably look forward to our gardens evolving again next year confident that our members support will boost our efforts.

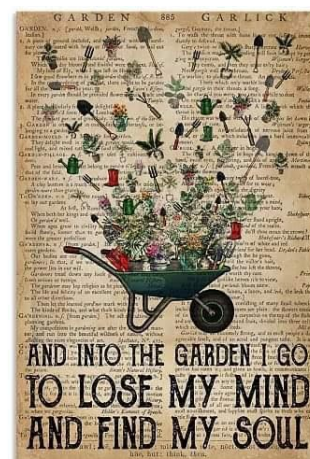
This year it has been particularly nice to take delight in new members' gardens in addition to seeing how 'older' members' gardens have matured and developed over the years.

We have a few left to enjoy this year before we take off our gardening gloves for the colder months to come, knowing that we have it all to look forward to again in the Spring.



Many thanks to everyone for their involvement and hospitality this year.

Robin and Patricia
ntylr60@gmail.com



News from the Groups

Spanish Improvers



The group is friendly and welcoming. There is no pressure - we are here to enjoy ourselves and get the satisfaction of learning a new language.

Lola, from Spain will continue to coach the group and there is probably space for one or two new people with a foundation in Spanish.

Contact groups@u3awight.uk

Italian Beginners Saturday 14:00



and

Italian Conversation Saturday 15:00



Contact **Isabelle Schloesing**

Isabelle.schloesing@btinternet.com

Isabelle also teaches French, Italian, Spanish and Turkish privately.

Spanish and Italian with Isabelle, at Utilita in Newport...

Spanish Beginners



On Saturdays, (13.00 pm) the Spanish beginner group is going well with 6 to 9 people.

We go at our own pace, and I am always ready to spend time again on things we have already studied. It is one of the advantages of u3a: plenty of time!



Allotment Gardeners

Our July meeting was held at Rebecca's Allotment where Sarah and Annie joined Rebecca and enjoyed the home made banana bread. We plan to visit Dave's allotment in August. Reports from our members of the much needed rains have brought on the growth of beans, courgettes and should make the Autumn fruit and vegetable crops develop successfully.

Peter Dorsett

peterdorsett4@gmail.com



News from the Groups

French Conversation

Friday am: Lake

Friday pm: Newport

Wednesday pm: Newport



These three conversation groups are all aimed at having fun while endeavouring to speak French. There is no teacher and we share the responsibility for supporting each other to improve, or at least not lose, what French we have.

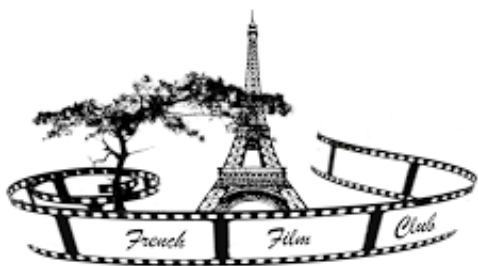
Contact groups@u3awight.uk

French Film Matinee

In conjunction with Ventnor Arts Club. 1st Monday of the month 15:00 restarting September 4th. The first film will be “*Le Mari de la Coiffeuse*”.

There will be a charge of £8 per screening which will include tea or coffee. This is a change as the previous arrangement proved not to be viable for the club. Club members can of course come to the French films for free.

Contact anthealangelan@yahoo.co.uk



French Happy Hour

The first meeting was a definite success and this will now be a regular monthly event, held in the last week of the month. Watch the Diary for dates.

Bargeman's Rest, Newport, 16:00

German



Two groups, alternate

Friday mornings 10.30am – 12.30pm. Meetings are held either at Utilita in Newport High Street or at the Roman Villa in Brading.

Improvers' German

A lively and lovely group of people who already have some German under their belts, and are keen to stay engaged and improve. We concentrate on the four main skills: speaking, understanding, reading, and laughing. While we are theoretically “full”, it is worth applying, as after the holidays circumstances tend to change and some people find they can no longer attend.

Advanced German

We happy few, we band of siblings... Currently there are six people in this group, all from different backgrounds and learning experiences. Some have German relatives, some started learning at school and took the academic route, some are avid German Krimi and YouTube watchers, some have lived and worked in Germany.

Here too we practise the three main relevant skills: speaking, understanding and reading. Some people are more advanced than others, so if you are not sure of your level of competence do come along and give it a try. We are a very friendly bunch and don't take it too seriously! .

Please phone or email for further details.

Mary Longley.
melongley1@gmail.com

07815 901252

News from the Groups

Eat-Out and Review No 7, Niton

The venue is deceptive. From the outside it looks like a shop and Post Office. Once inside it opens out into a café /restaurant/ bar and a big garden. The bar started about 4 years ago when the pub in the village closed. The entrepreneurial locals set about converting a small back room in to a bar and the front area into a café.

This beginning was really successful and the expansion continued into the former residential area at the back.

A wood fired pizza oven was the finale. After an initial hitch when the fire got a little too big, Lloyd took over the cooking and produces excellent hand-crafted pizzas.

There is always an unusual special and that evening it included fresh peaches and chilli jam. Most of us stuck to the more traditional but No 7 certainly lived up to its excellent reputation.



Jacky Carter

Discussion Group

Do contact us if you'd like to hear more about our lively and enjoyable discussions. We'd love to hear which issues you'd like to discuss and your views on those raised.

Some topics recently discussed include:

- The right to strike
- Adapting to change
- Whether new British Gas and oil developments should continue to be approved
- The expansion of the Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) to Greater London
- Unidentified Flying Objects - the USA Congress hearing

Our meeting dates in September and October are

Sep 14th & 28th
Oct 12th & 26th

We meet twice a month, every second and fourth **Thursday**, at Utilita Hub, 121 High Street, Newport, between 10.30 and 12.00.

Please contact Pauline
paulinehunter12@gmail.com
if you'd like to come along.

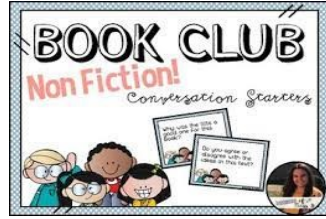
Pauline



News from the Groups

Non-Fiction Book Group

Zoom, 2nd
Tuesday, at 17:00



Meeting monthly on Zoom, the Non-Fiction Group keeps going through the summer months.

Recent reads have included “**Being Wrong**” by Kathryn Schulz, an exploration of our contrasting experiences of, and emotional and behavioural reactions to, being right and being wrong about something....indeed, anything....., rational beings though we like to think we are. Less personally challenging, Matthew Walker’s book “**Why We Sleep**” provided a readable, evidence grounded exploration of sleep and its functions that prompted a lively discussion of our own sleep patterns and habits.

If you might be interested in joining us, drop me a line.

Nigel Hastings 07967 371635
hastingsnigel01@gmail.com

Creative Writers

We generally meet on the 1st Thursday of the month at the Utilita Energy Hub in Newport High Street. Start at 2pm. The September meeting will be on the 7th. We do have space for more members - you are more skilful than you think you are. It's having the challenge and practice that help you to fulfil your dreams and it helps to share that knowledge and skill. You can join at any time because it is not run as a course.

Some examples of our challenges of 250 and 800+ words can be found on the u3awight website.

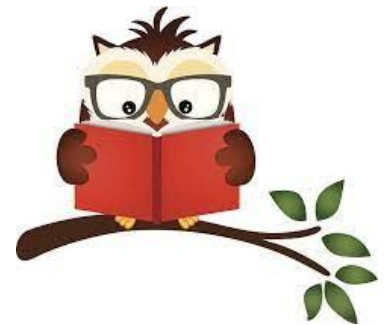
<https://u3asites.org.uk/isle-of-wight/page/102132>

Helena Hewston sybug@aol.com

Reading Group

We meet monthly in Newport on the 1st Tuesday of the month at 15:15 and discuss what ever we are reading - sometimes with a question about why, sometimes just with delight.

Sally
groups@u3awight.uk



Wootton Book Group

We enjoyed both book choices for July and August. Nearly everyone in the group gave 'Before I go to Sleep' by SJ Watson 10/10. We thought it was a very exciting page turner and it created much discussion as to how important memory is to our sense of identity. 'Longbourne ' by Jo Baker split the group, with half really enjoying the lyrical language while others felt it had a lack of pace and disliked the description.

Our choice for September is 'The Dickens Boy' by Thomas Keneally. Each month a member of the group chooses a book and this introduces us to book titles and authors who we may not normally pick up and read

We meet on the first Friday of each month in Wootton. At present our group is full but there is a second Book Group called 'Bookies Favourites' which is based around Ryde and follows a similar format.

Allison Rogers
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News from the Groups

Green Issues - Climate Crisis

u3a Climate Change Network

Green Issues - Climate Crisis
u3a Climate Change Network.
This UK wide group continues to flourish with 20-30 or more people tapping into the Zoom session on the 4th Wednesday of the month at 10.30 am. There are so many new developments on sustainability explored on this forum which helps people make rational decisions when reducing their carbon footprint and in many cases reducing costs as well. At the start there is a question time, so if there is something you need information on you can submit the question beforehand to give members the opportunity to prepare possible answers. This is really useful as many replies are based on actual experience and

not on advertising waffle. You can also ask questions when the session actually starts. This is a really friendly group with humour as well as serious information.

To join, contact Rien at <http://u3acommunities.org/climate> . For further information please don't hesitate to contact Dina, Green Issues Group, on our website under Groups. Looking forward to seeing you online.

Dina Jung

www.u3asites.org.uk/climate-change/events



Family History

The group is still on recess for the summer and will reconvene in October for the 2023/24 session.

Six workshops for new members and beginners will be held monthly on the first Thursday afternoons. Existing members will continue to meet on the third Thursday afternoons.

We focus on research skills to help make the most of online websites such as Ancestry and FindmyPast.

All members ideally need to bring their own laptop, iPad/device and have a paid subscription to either Ancestry or FindmyPast but this is not essential.

Just be enthusiastic!

Alison
rhawebb@gmail.com



Stay Alert to Scams

It's so easy to think you know how to stay safe and so easy to let down your guard.

It's the business of scammers either on the phone or online to look and sound harmless and helpful - and for anyone of us that can always look welcoming.

If it's unfamiliar, unwanted, unasked for, then you probably in fact do not want it. Don't get sucked in.

*If it looks phishy,
it probably is.*

Ed.



... and contact the editor if you would like to be part of a volunteer crew at the Quay Arts Centre.

Marmalade Trust

Charity number:
1174217



Did you know that there is a charity and a government department devoted to loneliness? Did you know that this is AgeUK's principal concern? And it was the theme of our chairman, Sam Mauger's inaugural speech?

And there is an article in a recent Economist magazine about this which you can read [here](#)?

Autumn Passion – a sonnet by “ChatGPT”

In twilight years, when time has etched its trace,
Love's flame still burns, with gentle warmth and grace.
Though bodies age, and memories may wane,
The heart's devotion does not dull or wane.

Through wrinkled skin and locks of silver gray,
Two souls entwined, in love's sweet ballet.
With tender touch and whispered words so dear,
They find a haven where love conquers fear.

Their hands, weathered by life's relentless tide,
Embrace in unity, side by side.
Each crease and line, a testament to years,
Etching a tale, deeper than any tears.

For love knows naught of age, or passing time,
Its essence lingers, pure and so sublime.
In the embrace of elders' love, we find,
A love that's timeless, boundless, and divine.

Note - this apparently sympathetic sonnet was created on demand by “Artificial Intelligence” - your editor requested it and “AI” delivered it. ChatGPT is an Internet device using AI, and AI, for better or worse it is said, is going to change our lives (if it has not already done so.)

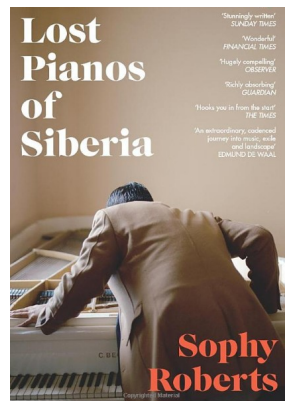


Info Page

Editor's books of the month:

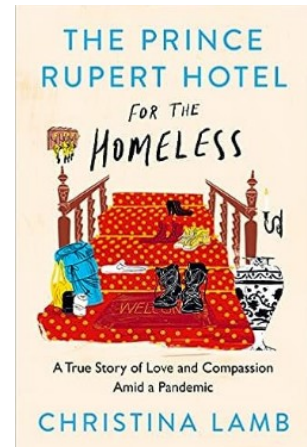
["The Lost Pianos of Siberia"](#) a Sunday Times Book of 2020 (Kindle £5.99)

When people were forced to migrate to Siberia many took their pianos with them. Sophy Roberts goes in search of both the pianos and the people.



[The Prince Rupert Hotel for the Homeless: A True Story of Love and Compassion Amid a Pandemic.](#)

'There will be an avalanche of books about the pandemic. None will be as eye-opening or humane or moving as Lamb's' - *Daily Telegraph*.



Facebook

We have both a Facebook members' private **group** and a Facebook open **page**:

The Facebook Members **Group** - is for members to share ideas, meeting plans, pictures and thank-yous and can be found at:

www.facebook.com/groups/iowu3a

Only members of the Isle of Wight u3a can be members of the Facebook group and you need to 'join' the group by pressing the 'join' button.

The Facebook **page** is a public page viewable at: www.facebook.com/u3aWight



We use it to spread the word about the Isle of Wight u3a. We publish the diary of events and occasional photographs of our activities there. If you think something is a good advertisement for the u3a then let us know and we will publish it. If you are a Facebook user you can help us spread the word by liking the page and setting up links to it.

Our normal website is: www.u3awight.uk



Info, copy, errors and omissions etc. to the editor:

rogerskid@zen.co.uk 07732 480201



Update: Speaker Meeting Programme 2023/2024

All Speaker Meetings are held on the second Thursday of the month at St. John's Hall, Newport, and start at 14:00.

The location/timings of the socials vary and will be advised well in advance.

Sep – David Fairlamb 'Wight Wildlife through the Seasons'

Oct – Sarah Lang, Princess Beatrix and her time as Governor of the IW

Nov – Beaver Recovery Programme

Dec – Winter Social

2024

Jan – Jeremy Thomas - National Coast Watch, Needles, about their work on the Island (plus AGM)

Feb – The Donkey Sanctuary

Mar – Mark Earp - Every Pond Matters

Apr – Kevin Shaw 'Lord Palmerston: Britain's Most Outrageous Prime Minister'

May – Forest Park Waste and Recycling

June – Summer Social

Have you tried something new recently, why not write and tell us about it!?

Something New

On Tuesdays and Thursdays I normally go folk dancing. We break up for the school holidays. A fellow dancer asked me what I did on Tuesdays and Thursdays when I wasn't dancing. I told her I walked. I like walking and I like dancing.

She then asked if I would consider pulling up Himalayan Balsam on Tuesdays and Thursdays. I agreed as I have walked along the cycle track into Sandown and seen for myself how rife it is.

I turned up for my first session wearing wellies and trousers and long sleeves and gloves as instructed. Necessary because you stand in wet ground in amongst nettles and brambles and bend down low to get the root out of the ground.

It rains on us a lot and the brambles scratch you through your trousers and the nettles sting you on your wrists if your sleeves ride up in your exertions to get the root out of the ground without breaking it off. But I really

enjoyed it. It was jolly good fun. I am now balsam pulling on my dancing days and will only stop when the classes recommence in September.

Carol Crawford

P.S.

I forgot to mention the midges. The midges bite you all over your head as it is the only part of your body exposed to the air.

Himalayan Balsam, while pretty and attractive to pollinators outcompetes native species and dies back in winter leaving stream margins prone to erosion.



Speaker Meetings

Speaker Meeting
Thursday, September 14th 2023 at 14:00
St. John's Hall, Newport, PO30 1LN

By David Fairlamb of [Natural-Links](#)

“Wight Wildlife through the Seasons”

From the spectacular coastlines to the chalkland downs and the wetlands and woodlands, the Isle of Wight is rich in wildlife habitats. With one of the only populations of red squirrels in southern England and home to the rare glanville fritillary butterfly and starlet sea anemone, it is quite unique.

It is a bird-watchers paradise, with thousands of wildfowl and waders overwintering, nightingales, nightjars and bitterns breeding and a hotspot for spring and autumn migration, with regular rarities. With seabirds and cetaceans in the surrounding seas, it truly is a Wild-Isle.

I heard David give a talk to the Isle of Wight Beekeepers in February. I really enjoyed it and thought that you would too.

I look forward to seeing you there.

Carol

carolbradshaw@u3awight.uk
07748 886246



We will be promoting our u3a in St Thomas' Square, Newport on Saturday September 30th, from 10.30 – 4.00 pm.

Please watch out for an email coming soon which will ask for volunteers to help distribute leaflets.

Alison



www.u3awight.uk