



Hello everyone ...

We can't ignore the feast of Christmas any longer. It is December and seasonably cold with it. Whether we shall see snow remains to be seen but I wouldn't put my money on it.

Just in case you wanted an alternative, or even additional, reason to celebrate, there is also the Winter Solstice at 03:27am GMT on Friday 22nd December.

And with my usual love of trivia there's also Bodhi Day (8th), Human Rights Day (10th), and Wear a Christmas Hat Day (15th). Something for everyone there, I think.

Best wishes, and I hope your Christmas is all you want it to be,

Val Darbyshire
Newsletter Editor

New members

A warm welcome to our new members:

Carin Eilerts de Haan, Pamela French, Karen Oglethorpe, Ross Oglethorpe, Paul Mander, Julie Mander, Lynne Lanigan, Robin Lanigan, Christine Kearley, Ninu Roots, Rachel Popely, Steve Dunn, Jane Dunn, David Church, Peter Romeril, Lorna Andrew, Patricia Murphy, Elaine Whitehead, Suzanne Terry, John Terry, Barbara McMullen, Alison Borton, Nina Croft and Gill Croft.

Please be sure to check out the information on our website and the contact list on the back two pages of every newsletter.

New Members Coffee Mornings

There was another very well attended new members coffee morning in November at GXCA. There will not be one in December. The date for January meeting will be circulated nearer the time.

Did You Know?

Our u3a offers 6 different sports groups and 3 health and fitness activities to help keep us all supple, fit, and healthy in later life.

From retirement to writing

Our u3a has a lot of very talented members. Among them several authors. David Liston is the latest of our members to have published his first book recently. David's journey to becoming an author started when he retired. First, David played a lot of golf, becoming Vice Captain and then Captain of his Club. But his wife suggested he needed to do more, so after recovering from the shock of her comment, David decided to undertake a degree course and then write a book.

He had never been to university, but had always enjoyed writing, so creative writing courses were the obvious choice. David studied with the Open University choosing a course called 'How to write fiction' which lasted only three months. Impatient to get going on his book David contacted a writing group run by a former Oxford creative writing tutor, and so his creative journey began. He started with short stories, entering competitions, and receiving commendations; and then he decided he would write a financial thriller, based on corruption and money laundering, with some murders thrown in for good luck.

He found the first five chapters came easily, then he got "stuck" and his writing stopped. Sometime later Covid provided the perfect opportunity to start again and with help from an established author the ending of the book was resolved.

The book is now available to read, and David is already halfway through writing another one. If you fancy honing your creative writing talents, you could consider joining our creative writing group, or even starting a second creative writing group— who knows where it might lead you!

(David Liston's book, Loose Ends, has been published recently and is available online or from most bookshops)

Monthly meeting dates for your diary

13 December 2023 at 2pm - A Christmas Special! A touch of magic – Mind reading and Mentalism



Please note this meeting will not be available on Zoom

Steve Wilkinson is a magician who can read, and influence people's minds! Steve will perform an effect on all of us, and then progress to different Mind Reading and Mentalism concepts with members of the audience.

Join us all for a glass of mulled wine and a mince pie!
Please bring some change for your donation towards the cost.

Don't forget to wear your Santa jumper and some tinsel in your hair!

10 January 2024 at 2pm – What is your pet trying to tell you?

Lucy Lofting will talk to us about the psychology that goes on between our pets and us: how they communicate with us and show their feelings towards us. How can we improve our connection with them?

Lucy is a second cousin of Hugh Lofting; author of the Dr Doolittle books. "He talked to the animals and they talked back".

14 February 2024 at 2pm – Amersham in Bloom

Andy Honour will talk to us about Amersham in Bloom, and other Amersham projects – the Lone Soldier statue and the Coronation Clock, recently erected in the Memorial Gardens, and the replica Metropolitan Line Railway locomotive on display in top Amersham.

All Monthly Meetings are held at CSP Community Centre, Gravel Hill, Chalfont St Peter, SL9 9QX

Thames Valley Network U3A Zoom events:

As well as our own monthly meeting talks, Thames Valley Network also put on talks – generally over Zoom. Details are on their website <http://u3atvnetwork.org.uk/>

Here's their current program:

Friday 8th December – Winter Quiz at 2.30. Questions set by Avis Furness of TVN.

Monday 15th January – Genetics of Ancient Populations in Britain. A talk by Dr. Tom Booth at 2.30pm

News from our Interest Groups

French Conversation Advanced

Our group will have been in existence for nine years by the end of 2023. We still have the same membership as the original one which started at the inception of Chalfonts u3a in 2015.

At the outset we studied an excellent book of grammar exercises, "Living French", which helped to reinforce the grammar we had learnt at school. We meet every two weeks throughout the year. Meetings are hosted in our own homes, based on a rota.

Our reading and translation homework for each meeting is selected by the host from a bi-monthly French magazine "La Vie Outre-Manche". This contains articles on a wide variety of interesting subjects such as history, geography, gastronomy, politics, tourism, and education which forms the basis of our French discussions and gives an insight into all aspects of life in France.

Most members enjoy visiting France independently and often travel to some of the places we have read about such as museums, castles and beauty spots. We play Scrabble in French and some members complete wordle.louan (French Wordle) daily.

Our comprehension and pronunciation levels have improved significantly over the years but there's always more to learn! Judy Cutter, group convenor.

Pickleball

Since we started this time last year, the Pickleball group has gone from strength to strength, fully utilising our three Pickleball courts at the Chalfonts Leisure Centre. In order to accommodate the many U3A members who would like play Pickleball, we are starting a new group playing on Monday mornings. It is mainly aimed at those new to the game or who simply want to try it out, but more experienced players are welcome too.

Those currently on the waiting list, and those that have tried us out during the past twelve months, will be invited to join the group, but the membership will not be restricted, and new Pickleballers should apply to Diane Eaton, the convenor for the new group. Her email address is pickleball2@chalfontsu3a.org.uk .



Diane expects the new group to start in mid-January, so please check the January newsletter for the exact date. No equipment is required, although mobility and hand-eye co-ordination are desirable. Richard Cranston, Group convenor, pickleball@chalfontsu3a.org.uk

Mixed Walking Cricket

The Mixed Walking Cricket group 8 a side friendly match vs Windsor is taking place on Wednesday 13th December with Christmas celebrations to follow in a local hostelry! Wish us luck! Eileen Powell, group convenor.

Garden Visits

Save the Date -Tuesday 27th February 2pm - This year we are kicking off the season with an afternoon tea at the Chalfont St Peter Community Centre. As well as a lovely tea with cakes and savoury items we will have a speaker and a quiz. This is a very sociable event, and we will also be sharing our garden visits programme for 2024. Look out for more details shortly.

Guitar Group



Despite the fall in numbers this year, we stalwarts are making good progress. We have moved to members' houses for the lessons, mostly in Chalfont St Peter.

Our term is coming to an end on the 13th of December. The next term will start in January 10th and thereafter on the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month. Hence – Jan 24, Feb 14 and 28, and March 13 and 27.



We are keen to add new members and have one interested member. Please contact Clyde Perkins on guitar@chalfontsu3a.org.uk to learn more.

Coffee mornings

We had another very successful coffee morning in the Greyhound Pub. Our December gathering is on Wednesday 20 December at 10 o'clock for festive mulled wine or coffee and mince pies. It is a great time to have a chat and catch up and make new friends. If you are interested in attending, please let Lesley Bedford know at groupcoordinator@chalfontsu3a.org.uk

New Experiences Group

23 members of the New Experiences group attended a "War of the World's" immersive experience in London in November.

We saw the Martians attack, with victims bursting into flames and being eaten alive. We had to escape through various underground tunnels followed by trips in a boat and a hot air balloon. We

were helped by various soldiers, maids, boatmen and pilots. At several points in our escape we donned virtual reality goggles and we really were inside the horror.

The War of the World's music played in the background and special effects included changes in temperature, wind, water and more. The actors involved were brilliant and there were amazing props and special effects. Some of us needed a stiff drink at the end to recover. Angela Cranston, convenor.

Yoga groups



Our regular yoga groups will be taking a break over Christmas. Your convenor will notify you of the dates.

We have a new Wednesday class that has just started at Chalfont Leisure Centre from 1300 to 1400. Our Tuesday and Friday classes are currently fully subscribed.

If you'd like to try one of our classes, then the link is below, or use the contact form on the website.

yoga@chalfontsu3a.org.uk

Excursions Group



We start the festive season with a visit on 6 December to the medieval cathedral city of Salisbury. A chance to visit the Christmas market, enjoy their light trail and make a start on the Christmas shopping!

Then on the 21 December it's the joint theatre and excursions groups outing to go to the evening Carol Concert in the Albert Hall followed by a tour to see the London Christmas lights and decorations.



Please note: There will be two coaches going. The Theatre group will be handling transport and liaising with the venue. The **Excursions** group from now on will be in contact with you concerning this outing as the lists have been combined. Any queries please email excursions@chalfontsu3a.org.uk

Riviera Travel Holidays

Riviera Holidays - Provider of holidays including cruises and signature tours. Unbeatable value for money & honest pricing, backed by price match guarantee. Which recommended.

Book with Riviera Travel, tell them that you belong to Chalfonts u3a and your u3a will receive a payment from Riviera which helps support our activities.

See advertisement in Third Age Matters magazine for further details. www.rivieratravel.co.uk

Well, that's it for another edition of your u3a newsletter. Apart from the contact list on the last pages, of course. Do make use of the contacts listed there as I know from personal experience that the only silly question is the one you didn't ask.

Finally, it is time to say goodbye to you all as Newsletter Editor. This is the last edition I will edit and I have enjoyed it so much but present circumstances mean I cannot commit to the role any longer. It has been wonderful to talk to you all every month. I remain an enthusiastic member of our u3a and I look forward to meeting you at events and interest groups.

Your new Newsletter Editor is waiting in the wings but I'll leave them to introduce themselves in the next edition.

Goodbye, thank you for all your support and Merry Christmas. Val Darbyshire

Chalfonts U3A Directory of Interest Groups

For general enquiries about interest groups please contact

Lesley Bedford – Interest Groups Co-ordinator - groupcoordinator@chalfontsu3a.org.uk

Telephone: 07970 848617

Or, if you know which group/s you wish to join please contact the convenor direct

INTEREST GROUP	CONVENOR	EMAIL
Badminton	Chris Pearcey	badminton@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Ballroom Dancing	Laura Fordrey	ballroomdancing@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Birdwatching	Tony Micallef	birdwatching@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Book Club 1	Carol Lyons	bookclub1@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Book Club 2	Marsha Partridge	bookclub2@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Book Club 3	Marsha Partridge	bookclub3@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Bridge for Beginners	Bob Borwick	bridgeforbeginners@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Bridge	Sue Fisher	bridge@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Cake Decorating	Jane Douglas	cakedecorating@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Chess	Tony Micallef	chess@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Computing	Gary Tomlin	computing@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Coffee Mornings	Chris Coteman	coffeemornings@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Cribbage	David Burbidge	cribbage@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Cricket- Mixed Walking	Eileen Powell	mixedwalkingcricket@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Creative Writing	David Brodie	creativewriting@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Crochet	Jeanette Galletly	crochet@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Cryptic Crosswords	Bob Leven	crypticcrosswords@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Cryptic Crosswords Too	Val Darbyshire	crypticcrosswordstoo@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Current Affairs	Val Hadfield	currentaffairs@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Cycling Longer Routes	Dave Duckworth	cyclinglongerroutes@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Excursions/Outings	Val Smith, Kate Trotman,	excursions@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Family History	Jan Sawyer, Marguerite Fletcher	familyhistory@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Family History2	Linda Kedge	familyhistory2@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
French Conversation Intermediate 1	Sandy Oldham	frenchconversation1@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
French Conversation Intermediate 2	Ray Luker	frenchconversation2@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
French Conversation Advanced	Judy Cutter	frenchfluent@chalfontsu3a.org.uk

Garden Visits	Jane Barker, Jacqui Greenham, Kate Trotman	gardenvisits@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
German Conversation	Renate Danner	germanconversation@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Guitar - intermediate	Bob Borwick	guitar@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
History	Trish Hart	history@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
iPad User Group	Phil McAvoy	ipad@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Italian Beginners	Awaiting a convenor	groupcoordinator@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Italian Beginners Plus	Lesley Bedford	italianbeginnersplus@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Lawn Bowls	Pam Anderson, Mike Alderton	lawnbowls@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
London Walks	John Hardwick, Caroline Ashcroft, Susan Mills	londonwalks@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
MacOS Computing	Gary Tomlin, Les Klein	macoscomputing@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Mah-jong	Sam Patel	mahjong@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
New Experiences	Angela Cranston, Sharon Duncan	newexperiences@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
New Members Coffee Mornings	Eileen Powell	newmemberscoffeemornings@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Old Time Musical Hall Singing	Bob Leven	musichallsinging@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Philosophy	Rob Robinson	philosophy@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Photography	Tony Darbyshire	photography@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Pickleball	Richard Cranston	pickleball@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Pilates - all groups	Lesley Bedford	pilates@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Poetry & Literature	David Burbidge	poetry&literature@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Portuguese	Brian Wapshire	portuguese@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Quizzing	Margaret Turner	quizzers@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
RUG-Really Useful Group	Sharon Duncan	rug@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Rummikub	Georgina Cane	rummikub@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Scrabble	Anne Higson	scrabble@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Science & Technology	Richard Simmons, Tony Micallef	science@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Short Mat Bowls	Sheila Woolgar	groupcoordinator@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Singing for Pleasure	Brenda O'Gorman	singing4pleasure@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Spanish Conversation	Linda Walton	spanishconversation@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Spanish Beginners 2	Peter Shaw	spanishbeginners2@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Spanish Improvers 1	Margaret Burbidge	spanishimprovers1@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Sunday Group	Sue Fisher	sundaygroup@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Table Tennis 1	Sue White	tabletennis@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Table Tennis 2	Eileen Powell	tabletennis2@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Table Tennis 3	Gio Pedalino	tabletennis3@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Tai Chi – both groups	Lesley Bedford, Lyn Tatnell	taichi@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Textiles and Craft	Teri McAvoy	textiles@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Theatre Visits	Howard Dawson, Angela Windsor	theatretrips@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Ukulele	James O'Flynn	ukelele@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Walking 6 – 10 miles	Marion Clegg, Sally Buckley	walking6-10miles@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Walking less than 6 miles	Nigel Trotman, David Cooper	walking2-6miles@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Walking Strollers	Kate Trotman	strollers@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Weekend Group	Kathy Beattie, Tina Gilvear	weekendgroup@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Wine Appreciation	Grace Hunter	wineappreciation@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Wine Appreciation 2	David Hillis	wineappreciation2@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Yoga	Geoff Clegg	yoga@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Yoga Friday pm	Helen Hall	yoga3@chalfontsu3a.org.uk

Chair	Jane Barker	chair@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Vice Chair	Eileen Powell	vicechair@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Secretary	Chris Hardwick	secretary@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Treasurer/Finance	Chris White	treasurer@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Finance Officer	Christine Hillis	financeofficer@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Beacon Administrator	Vince Barker	beaconadmin@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Interest Group Co-ordinator	Lesley Bedford	groupcoordinator@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Membership Secretary	Maureen Green	membershipsecretary@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Newsletter & Publicity	Val Darbyshire	newsletters@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Speaker	Geoff Clegg	speakercoordinator@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Venue Co-ordinator	Lesley Bedford	venuecoordinator@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Webmaster	Gary Tomlin	webmaster@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Co-opted member	John Krushner	projects@chalfontsu3a.org.uk

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Chalfonts U3A suggestion box	suggestionbox@chalfontsu3a.org.uk
Chalfonts U3A website	www.chalfontsu3a.org.uk
U3A National website	www.u3a.org.uk
Thames Valley Network website	www.u3atvnetwork.org.uk