u3a Chalfonts

# NEWSLETTER

November 2026: Issue No: 144



Welcome to the November Newsletter.

The heating is on and the clocks have gone back – even after well over 70 years, it still comes as a shock to the system!

The Excursions Group's trip to Winchester on 3rd December has proved so popular that they have hired a second coach.

This means that even more people can go to the Christmas Market or visit the cathedral – all for £25, and is open to all Chalfonts u3a members – you don't even have to be an Excursions Group member - See Page 3 for further details!

David Powell, newsletters@chalfontsu3a.org.uk

## Committee News

### The Third Age Trust AGM

The Third Age Trust 43rd Annual General Meeting was held on 14th October in Manchester as a hybrid meeting allowing delegates to attend in person or online.

The presentation slides from the day and a full recording are available on the Third Age Trust website https://www.u3a.org.uk/what-we-do/events/agm-2026

## Groups Coordinator

**Seated exercise group 2**
This group needs just a few more members to get it started. Please get in touch with me if you're interested in joining.

**Pickleball 3**
Another mention for this group. Six people have expressed an interest, but, again, I need a few more people to try and get it off the ground.

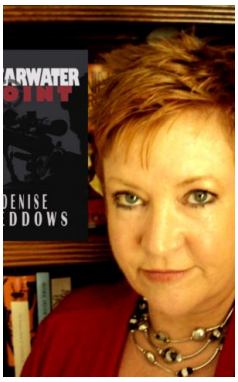
**Carers Coffee Break Group**
A suggestion has been made to form a new group for those who are caring for a loved one, and would like to meet others in the same position for a chat over a cup of coffee/tea. If you are interested, please get in touch with me.

I can't think of anything else, although I am considering a **tap dancing group**!!

Lyn Cameron, Groups Coordinator - groupcoordinator@chalfontsu3a.org.uk

# Chalfonts u3a Monthly Meetings:

## 11th November 2026 at 2pm - A Talk by Denise Beddows - Cosy Crime




Denise Beddows, author of the 'Misbourne Murder Mysteries' series, explores this increasingly popular sub-genre of crime, looking at a variety of series, including S.J. Bennett's 'Her Majesty Investigates'; Richard Osmond's 'Thursday Murder Club'; Robert Thorogood's 'Marlow Murder Club'; Steph Broadribb's 'Retired Detectives' Club', and many more.

She examines the reasons for cosy crime's burgeoning appeal and suggests reasons why 'Midsomer Murders' and many of Agatha Christie's novels do not actually fit the conventions of the genre.

## 9th December 2026 at 2pm – Christmas Entertainment from Sun Jester "The Harrisons"

Come along and be entertained with a feast of anecdotes and music on a seasonal theme, including Christmas songs from the Golden Age of Hollywood musicals combined with humorous tales about the artistes.

The Harrisons have performed musical entertainments for the following u3as in the past couple of years, Thame and District, Verulam, Watford Park, Chinnor, Aston Clinton, Harpenden, Mid Bucks and Western Turville. They also take a look at the origins of some of our Christmas traditions and how one of them was (and still could be) illegal.

## 13th January 2027 at 2pm - A Talk by William French "The Butler"

### My Life as Butler to Royals & Stars

William French will regale us with his story, sharing his unique perspective on the inner workings of the Royal family and of high-profile celebrities, notably Tom Cruise and Nicole Kidman.

His talk will take us on a journey from the beginning of his career as a trainee chef and steward in the Royal Navy, then serving as a gunner on HMS Battleaxe during the Falklands War. Subsequently, he seized the opportunity to join the crew of the Royal Yacht Britannia and travelled the world with his employers. During this time he had many treasured experiences and met with heads of state and celebrities.

After serving on the Royal Yacht, William joined the Royal Household at Buckingham Palace and was appointed the Queen's Breakfast Steward.

William's talk will be accompanied by an impressive display of medals, which he has received for his services, as well as by many photographs, spanning several decades of his service.

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

# News from our Interest Groups

## Excursions Group

**Places available!**




**This is a popular trip – so we're now taking two coaches. Join in the festive spirit!**

Come along on Thursday 3 December for a festive day out in the historic town of Winchester.

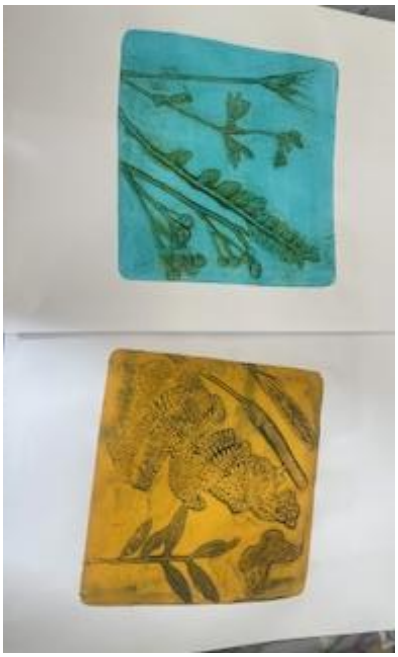
There is so much to do – visit the **Cathedral** (free guided tours available), bring your National Trust card, visit the **City Mill** in the town centre and of course, buying that special present in the **Christmas market** or in the nearby indoor **Brooks Shopping Centre**

Cost: **£25 per person** to cover coach costs and coach parking so excellent value!

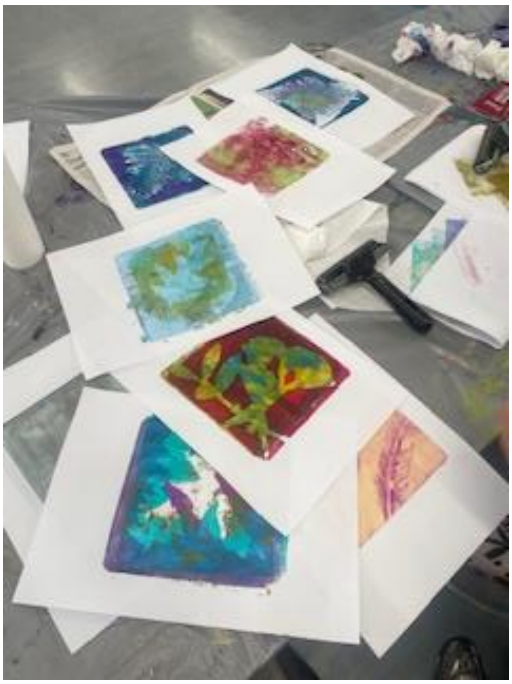
If you'd like a seat on the coach then email excursions@chalfontsu3a.org.uk just as soon as you can!

*PS: If you've already emailed about this trip we've got your details!*

## Textiles & Crafts Group



In October we arranged for a local artist, Holly Casey, to hold a workshop for us on gel printing, where you place paint with a roller and special details like leaves & feathers onto a gel base and then roll paper on top to make the patterns as shown in these photos.



We had such a good, interesting and messy couple of hours that undoubtedly we will invite the very talented Holly back next year.

Sandra Dawson & Paula Walker, Co-Convenors for Textiles & Crafts Group textiles@chalfontsu3a.org.uk

## New Members' Meeting



The next New Member's Coffee Morning will be held on **Thursday 5 November 2026** at 09.45 for a 10am start in the café at The Gerrards Cross Memorial Centre, East Common, Gerrards Cross SL9 7AD.

This an opportunity to meet fellow new members and hear more about Chalfonts u3a and what's on offer.

Recent new members have already been notified by email but anyone who couldn't make a previous meeting is very welcome to come along. Just turn up.

Eileen Powell & Val Smith, Joint convenors newmemberscoffeemorning@chalfontsu3a.org.uk

## New Experiences Group



In October the New Experience Group tried indoor skydiving at Milton Keynes.

This involved getting into a huge wind tunnel with air keeping you afloat and pushing you upwards into the air.

Some were a bit nervous but most people got the hang of it and enjoyed the experience.

Maybe we'll try real skydiving next!

Angela Cranston & Sharon Duncan Co-convenors

newexperiences@chalfontsu3a.org.uk

## Mixed Walking Cricket Group



We are now back playing indoors at Chalfont Leisure Centre on Tuesday mornings from 10-11 which is probably the best place due to the current very stormy weather!

We played an indoor 8 a side match vs Purley-on-Thames this month but although we fielded and bowled well we didn't put enough runs on the board. We hope for a better result in February when we will be hosting them.



Sian Lloyd who also plays with me (as well as Julie Hallam and Diana Wallace) at Chalfont St Peter Women's Cricket Club, was awarded softball player of the year at the recent club (see photo) awards which was very well deserved.

As always, anyone interested is very welcome to contact me for further information.

Eileen Powell, convenor mixed walking cricket, mixedwalkingcricket@chalfontsu3a.org.uk

## Lunch Group

Good Food, Good Company and New Friendships

The Lunch Group recently met at a restaurant in Gerrards Cross, and we nearly achieved a full house, with just two members unable to join us.

It was lovely to see 14 members chatting, enjoying one another's company and making new friends. The conversation was lively at times, and some of us even managed to put the world to rights. Name labels proved very helpful in putting names to faces and making it easier for everyone to get to know one another.

The lunch offered plenty of choice and was enjoyed by all. The only slight drawback was the sunshine streaming through the windows, with no blinds to provide some shade. Fortunately, a little rearrangement of seats soon solved the problem — and gave us another opportunity to chat to different members.

Another enjoyable Lunch Group gathering, with good food, good company and, most importantly, new friendships blossoming along the way.

Although the group is now full, we would love to hear from anyone interested in joining us. Please get in touch, and if a place becomes available at one of our lunches, you may have the opportunity to join us and discover what the group is all about.

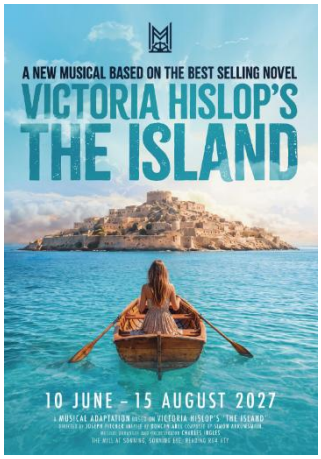
Helen Farndon, Lunch Group Convenor lunch@chalfontsu3a.org.uk

## Theatre Group

Following the sell-out performances of the Truth in August and Sinatra the Musical in October, our next show is ***The Cherry Orchard***, a tragicomedy about a Russian landowner who returns to find that his estate being auctioned off.

In the New Year, on the 11th January, we are going to see one of the most popular, emotional and spectacular musicals in the West End, ***Les Misérables***. This is followed by ***Osage County*** on the 18th March, which offers a fierce, funny, and deeply intense look at a messy family forced back together in Oklahoma.

On April 15th we are having our first visit to the National Theatre on the South Bank to see ***Suddenly Last Summer***, a gripping and sometimes upsetting exploration of truth, grief and repressed trauma.




On 27th June we are off to see a musical adaption of ***The Island*** (novel by Victoria Hislop) with a 2-course gourmet meal at the Mill, Sonning. The Island is about identity, courage, sacrifice and the unbreakable bonds that shape who we are and is brought vividly to life through music, powerful drama and poignant storytelling.

If you are interested in any of these shows, do join the Theatre Group (if you haven't already!) and ask to go on the waiting list.

If you would like further information, or to join, contact:

Tim Brooker, Theatre Group Convenor, theatretrips@chalfontsu3a.org.uk

## Creative Writing Group

**No no no November**

Thomas Hood (1799-1845) wrote a poem depicting grim life in the city. The poem starts.

*No sun, no moon, no morn, no noon.*
*No dawn, no dusk, no proper time of day.*
*No sky, no earthly view.*
*No distance looking blue.*

It finishes:

*No shade, no shine, no butterflies, no bees.:*
*No fruits, no flowers, no leaves, no birds*
*November.*

Within our creative writing group we were given just 10 minutes to rewrite the poem but bring it bang up-to-date.

This is an example of our creativity.

**No, no, no November**
*No Halloween, no Poppy Day.*
*No snuggling under the double duvet.*
*No flu and Covid jab.*
*No flicking on the central heating and searching for my down jacket.*
*No last-minute holidays in Portugal or Spain.*
*No missing the last booking for Christmas delivery at M & S.*
*No searching for the antifreeze.*
*No continuous loops of carols at the supermarket.*
*No ordering the perfect present for the grandchild from Amazon.*
*No public fireworks display on Bonfire Night.*

*November!*

David Brodie, Convenor, creativewriting@chalfontsu3a.org.uk

## Regional u3a Zoom events Thames Valley Network

Thursday 12th November at 10.30 using Zoom

# Uncovering life and death at Cookham Abbey

an 8th century Anglo-Saxon monastic settlement.

A Talk given by Paul Seddon.



The archaeological project at Holy Trinity Church, Cookham has been running since 2020. Led by the University of Reading Department of Archaeology, the targets of the dig are the buried remains and traces of buildings and people of Cookham Abbey.

Paul Seddon is one of the leaders of the volunteer archaeology community and is a Trustee of 'Friends of Cookham Abbey'.

The fee for this event is £2.00 per device.

Please book electronically here: www.u3atvnetwork.org.uk

Applications close on 9th November

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## Did you know?

As well as the 70 Interest groups that we have in our own Chalfonts u3a, there are many more that are available to us online.

Interest Groups Online (abbreviated as IGO) is an online u3a community that gives you the opportunity to join groups, talks and courses from the comfort of your home.

The activities are run by members and are a great way to meet people from all across the u3a movement. It costs £12 annually to join, and there are 140 groups to choose from!

Details: https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/interest-groups-online/interest-groups-online-groups

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## 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 our u3a will receive a payment from Riviera which helps support our activities.

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

# Chalfonts u3a Directory of Interest Groups

**For general enquires about interest groups please contact**
**Lyn Cameron, Groups Coordinator - groupcoordinator@chalfontsu3a.org.uk**
**Telephone: 07503 481537**
**If you know which group(s) you wish to join, please contact the convenor(s) direct.**
**A group shown with (F) alongside indicates it is full.**
**For waiting list information please contact the group convenor.**

| Interest Group | Convenor(s) | Email |
|---|---|---|
| Badminton | Jacqui Robinson, John Park | badminton@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Ballroom Dancing (F) | Christine Hardwick | ballroomdancing@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Bird Watching | Tony Micallef, Jan Sawyer | birdwatching@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Book Club 1 (F) | Carol Lyons | bookclub1@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Book Club 2 (F) | Marsha Partridge | bookclub2@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Book Club 3 | Sue Williams | bookclub3@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Bridge | Sue Fisher, Ainsley Kemps | bridge@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Coffee Mornings | Chris Coteman, Lesley Bedford | coffeemornings@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Computer Clinic | Suzy Mills | computerclinic@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Computing | Les Klein | computing@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Creative Writing | David Brodie | creativewriting@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Cribbage | David Burbidge, Sharon Duncan | cribbage@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Cricket - Walking (Mixed) | Eileen Powell | mixedwalkingcricket@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Crochet | Paula Walker, Kate Trotman | crochet@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Croquet (F) | Sharon Duncan, Clyde Perkins | croquet@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Cryptic Crosswords | Bob Leven | crypticcrosswords@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Cryptic Crosswords Too(F) | Val Darbyshire | crypticcrosswordstoo@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Current Affairs | Bob Leven | currentaffairs@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Curry Club | Chris Franklin | curryclub@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Cycling Longer Routes | Dave Duckworth | cyclinglongerroutes@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Dining Group (F) | Lyn Cameron | dininggroup@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Entertainment | Val Smith, Kate Trotman | entertainment@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Excursions and Outings | Val Smith, Kate Trotman | excursions@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Family History (F) | Jan Sawyer, Marguerite Fletcher | familyhistory@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Family History 2 | Awaiting convenor | groupcoordinator@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| French Con Advanced (F) | Heather Glasgow | frenchfluent@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| French Con Intermed 1(F) | Sandy Oldham | frenchconversation1@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| French Con Intermediate 2 | Ray Luker | frenchconversation2@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Garden Visits | Julia Edwards, Kate Trotman | gardenvisits@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| German Conversation | Renate Danner | germanconversation@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Guitar - Beginners (F) | Clyde Perkins | guitar@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| History | Trish Hart | history@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Italian Beginners (F) | Les Klein, Margaret Turner | italianbeginners@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Italian Beginners Plus | Lesley Bedford | italianbeginnersplus@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Lawn Bowls | Mike Alderton | lawnbowls@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| London Walks | John Hardwick, Caroline Ashcroft Susan Mills | londonwalks2@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Lunch Group (F) | Helen Farndon | lunch@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Mac OS Computing | Les Klein | macoscomputing@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Mahjong (F) | Sam Patel | mahjong@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| New Experiences Group | Angela Cranston, Sharon Duncan | newexperiences@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| New Members Coffee Morning | Eileen Powell, Val Smith | newmemberscoffeemorning@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Old Time Music Hall Singing | Sharon Duncan, Richard Campbell | musichallsinging@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Photography | David North | photography@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Pickleball (F) | Richard Cranston | pickleball@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Pickleball 2 (F) | Diane Eaton | pickleball2@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Pilates | Lesley Bedford | pilates@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Poetry & Literature | David Burbidge | poetryandliterature@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Quizzers | Margaret Turner | quizzers@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |

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|---|---|---|
| Really Useful Group (RUG) | Sharon Duncan | rug@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Really Useful Technical Team | Les Klein | rutt@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Rummikub (F) | Anita Crosbie | rummikub@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Science: Earth and Space | Tony Micallef, Karen-Anne Devoil | science@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Scrabble | Anne Higson | scrabble@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Seated Exercise 2 | Awaiting convenor | groupcoordinator@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Seated Exercise Group (F) | Lyn Cameron | seatedexgrp@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Short Mat Bowls | Sheila Woolgar | shortmatbowls@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Singing For Pleasure (F) | Sharon Duncan | singing4pleasure@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Snooker | Gio Pedalino | snooker@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Spanish Aspiring Intermed | Ann Robinson | spanishpreintermediates@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Spanish Conversation | David Hillis | spanishconversation@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Table Tennis | Gio Pedalino, John Park | tabletennis@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Table Tennis 2 (F) | Eileen Powell, Gio Pedalino | tabletennis2@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Table Tennis 3 (F) | Lesley Bedford, Gio Pedalino | tabletennis3@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Tai Chi | Lesley Bedford | taichi@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Textiles and Crafts | Sandra Dawson, Paula Walker | textiles@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Theatre Group | Howard Dawson, Tim Brooker | theatretrips@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Ukulele Group | James O'Flynn | ukulele@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Walking (6-10 Miles) | Marion Clegg, Sally Buckley | walking6-10miles@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Walking (less than 6 Miles) | Sue Fisher, Frances Byrne | walking2-6miles@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Walking-Strollers group | Kate Trotman | strollers@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Weekend Group (F) | Kathy Beattie, Sue Fisher | weekendgroup@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Whist | Lyn Cameron | whist@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Wine Appreciation (F) | Grace Hunter | wineappreciation@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Wine Appreciation 2 (F) | David Hillis | wineappreciation2@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Wine Appreciation 3 | Rory Christie | wineappreciation3@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Yoga (F) | Geoff Clegg | yoga@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Yoga 3 (F) | Geoff Clegg | yoga3@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Zumba Gold | Lyn Cameron | zumbagold@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |

Groups with '(F)' after the name are full. For waiting list information please contact the convenor.

## Chalfonts u3a Committee

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Chair | John Krushner | chair@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Vice Chair | Val Smith | vicechair@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Secretary | Kate Trotman | secretary@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Membership Secretary | Paul Hirszowicz | membershipsecretary@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Treasurer | Susan Graham | treasurer@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Finance Officer | Jenny Brooke | financeofficer@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Beacon Admin | Paul Hirszowicz | beaconadmin@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Group Coordinator | Lyn Cameron | groupcoordinator@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Newsletter Editor | David J Powell | newsletters@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Speaker Co-ordinator | Robert Kiddy | speakercoordinator@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Venues Coordinator | Lesley Bedford | venuecoordinator@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| Webmaster | Les Klein | webmaster@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |

## General Information

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|---|---|
| Chalfonts u3a general enquiries | contactus@chalfontsu3a.org.uk |
| 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 |