



Dorking & District u3a

**u3a** learn,  
laugh,  
live

# Newsletter

Summer 2021



**BEST FOOT FORWARD!**

*Painting reproduced with kind permission of new member Phyllis O'Shea*



KEEPING D&D MEMBERS INFORMED OVER THE YEARS!



**WELCOME** to the summer issue of the Newsletter.

Last month, I was reminded that this year was the 30th anniversary of Dorking and District u3a. Many long-time members are sadly no longer with us, people like Charmian Corner and Mike Thurner to name but two. However it feels right to celebrate their commitment and drive and reflect on how we might go forward after months of '*suspended animation*'.

As restrictions are being relaxed, many groups are considering when and where to start meeting again. Although some groups have decided not to restart, there is good news too.

From July we hope to run monthly meetings initially at the Christian Centre with limited numbers. Surrey Regional Study Days are also starting up at the Menuhin Hall from September. We also have several days out planned for the summer and autumn as well as a residential trip. You will find details in the Newsletter and on the website [www.dorkingu3a.org.uk](http://www.dorkingu3a.org.uk).

The Committee is working hard to put systems in place for booking events and running 'live' and real-time 'virtual' monthly meetings. The website is constantly being updated to ensure members are well informed of activities past and future.

All this effort means that we need more support to cope with the challenges of organising COVID-safe events for members. We have a dynamic and forward-thinking Committee who works tirelessly to bring you news and organise events. BUT we need new group leaders, a publicity officer and extra members to help organise days out and other activities. And I for one struggle putting a Newsletter together every quarter with few contributions.

Without help we risk not being able to run as many activities as we do - I feel we owe it to the founder members who had the vision to set up the D&D u3a 30 years ago to keep going. Leafing through past copies of the Newsletter it would seem that the '*call to arms*' generally remains unheeded. If we want to keep our u3a alive, we all need to work **TOGETHER**.

*Beryl Sinclair*

# Membership

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## Membership subscriptions

In March 2021 we invited current members to renew their membership. If you have not yet done so, we hope you will renew and send payment as soon as possible.

To renew your membership of D&D u3a, you may use GoCardless on our website, [www.dorkingu3a.org.uk](http://www.dorkingu3a.org.uk), or send a cheque payable to **Dorking & District u3a** with a stamped addressed envelope to John Sinclair, u3a Membership Secretary, 2 The Street, Capel RH5 5LE.

Subscription rates remain unchanged at £16 for individual membership or £28 for joint membership for two people at the same address. You can also pay by cheque - but no cash please.

*Please note, if you used GoCardless for 2020/21 you must set up a new direct debit payment for 2021/22, as the mandate is for a **one-off** payment only.*

For new members who joined since November 2020, your membership is paid to 31 March 2022.

In the meantime, we are pleased to welcome the following new members:

Phil Day  
Ann Forrest  
Nicholas Jupp  
Paul Clark  
Sharon Felton

Sheila and Bryan McCansh  
**Phyllis O'Shea**  
Richard and Amanda Rumble  
Helen Davies  
**Kate O'Reilly**

*John Sinclair*

### **SURREY REGIONAL STUDY DAYS**

After 18 months of lockdown, Study Days are back at the Menuhin Hall from September. See the calendar of events at the end of the Newsletter. Full details and application forms can be accessed on the D&D u3a website or on the Surrey u3a Network website.

The Menuhin Hall is operating a COVID-secure limit of 50% normal capacity so places are limited and attendees must observe regulations. Members may also apply to view the presentations remotely.

Booking fees will be £10 for u3a members, £12 for non-members and £5 for Zoom attendance. Should you need help downloading or printing out the forms please contact John Sinclair on 01306 711542.



# ***In conversation with Jim Docking***

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**JIM DOCKING CELEBRATING  
25 YEARS OF D&D u3a  
Copyright Dorking  
Advertiser**

*Founding Chairman of Dorking & District u3a Jim Docking recalls the early days of the local movement which celebrates its 30th anniversary this year.*

## **What made you set up a u3a organisation in the Dorking area?**

Reigate had had a u3a for some time. Betty Wright, as an existing u3a member, and I met with a group of people and decided that Dorking should have its own u3a because it deserved it.

We held an initial meeting at the Christian Centre, and got Dr Len Lamerton, Chairman of Banstead u3a, to do a presentation about how the movement had begun in France in 1972, following a summer school in Toulouse for retired people.

## **How many people attended the first meeting?**

We called a public meeting at which over 200 people attended. We had to spill over into the smaller hall with a loudspeaker.

## **How did you set up a committee?**

We set up a committee at Betty Wright's house – 6 or 8 of us expressed an interest to be part of the Committee, with Betty as vice-chairman and myself as Chairman. Our most important task was to elicit the willingness of a number of people to convene study and interest groups

## **How did you bring people together and set up groups?**

The opening address was followed by group conveners in turn explaining what they planned to do and encouraging us to join their groups. A number of people in the hall came up afterwards to express willingness to start other groups, and by July 1991, there were 29 up and running.

## ***In conversation with Jim Docking***

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We wrote a letter to the Dorking Advertiser Editor, and this attracted a great deal of interest. Notices were placed in parish magazines, shop-windows and libraries and we ran some workshops alongside.

By the summer of 1995 we had 48 groups. People like Charmian Corner ran a drama group and my wife Anne first of all ran a Philosophy group and then she diverted to Singing. There were lots in the Singing group. We also had garden parties to bring people together in the movement.

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*During the summer of 1991, the steering committee arranged affiliation with the Third Age Trust and a formal constitution was drafted by Ken Kelsey and adopted at the first AGM on 13 November 1991. On this occasion a committee was elected to replace the original steering group. Thirty years on, activities continue to run along the same lines although in addition to monthly meetings, study groups and day outings the D&D u3a also runs residential breaks and has run trips abroad.*

### **How long were you Chairman and why did you stand down?**

I did it for so long – something like 26 years. I felt there should be new blood.

### **How do you see the future of the Dorking u3a?**

The development of the u3a has been hampered by the inability to meet face-to-face because of coronavirus, though some groups met virtually via the internet. Some members may have been discouraged about being a u3a member when “real” meetings have not been possible. Once we get to grips with the problems of the virus, the u3a should continue to develop as more members feel that membership is worthwhile for them.

Ken Kelsey was one of the few surviving code-breakers of WW II. A retired Barrister and Chartered Secretary, he was one of the founder members of our Dorking u3a. For many years, he ran a group *Writing for Publication* but sadly died in 2019. He had a number of books published including ***A Book of Humorous Poems*** (published by [CreateSpace Publishing](#)) from which the following poem is taken.

## THE CHECK-UP by Ken Kelsey

You can get dressed now, and when you've done that  
Come and sit over here and we'll have a quiet chat.  
I'm pleased at the way you are coming along,  
Your pulse is quite steady, your heartbeat is strong.  
One-four-five over eighty, not bad for your age;  
No need for tablets, no, not at this stage.  
I see from the screen you've a touch of angina;  
No major threat, that, nor yet is it minor.  
You still must keep active; brisk walking is best.  
The knack is to know when to stop, when to rest.  
You say you get breathless when climbing the stair.  
At your time of life, you must take extra care.  
Now, we both know the cause, so once again, please,  
You must lose some weight – it's not fair on your knees!  
Cut down on all fats, salt, sugar and eggs.  
Losing weight will diminish the pain in your legs.  
Drink cod liver oil; it could ease your arthritis.  
I'll give you some pills to relieve your cystitis.  
Are you sleeping, OK? You get cramp at night.  
Well, try wearing socks, but make sure they're not tight.  
By and large (no offence!) you're in pretty good nick.  
I've seen far worse cases when tending the sick.  
As long as you're careful I'm willing to get  
You've a good many years still in front of you yet.  
I can reassure you, you've little to fear  
So goodbye and God bless, till I see you next year.  
She liked that young doctor – a wonderful bloke.  
She was ever so sad when he died of a stroke.





## ***Life begins at Sixty!***

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*I'm grateful to Gay Fraser and Phyllis Palfreeman for telling me some memorable experiences they had as founding members of D&D u3a.*

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For a few happy years in the mid-nineties, I thoroughly enjoyed my u3a membership. I was involved in no less than four u3a activities.

With Harry Gort I represented the u3a on the Town Twinning Committee. This was a memorable experience, going to meetings at Pippbrook under the chairmanship of Derek Edge who sadly died soon afterwards. My husband and I joined many friends to go to the Twinning Ceremony at Gouvieux in May 1998.

I was invited by Jean Thompson, the u3a National Languages Representative, to work as an interpreter at three national conferences during the European Year of Older People and Solidarity between the Generations. The first was an Ageing Well conference organised by Age Concern, held at the Royal Lancaster Hotel, London, in November 1992, just before my sixtieth birthday. Our guest of honour at the conference was the politician Virginia Bottomley. We



stood behind desks offering to help delegates whose English was poor. I was trying to speak French, Italian and Portuguese which was quite a challenge, but there were many of us together covering the main languages. We had super bedrooms in the hotel but were on duty all day. At the conference itself, it was fascinating to watch the official interpreters translating spontaneously into other languages.

The second conference was harder work. It was held at Imperial College and I was only asked to speak French but, even with a rusty degree, found it daunting.

The third and last conference I



helped with was at Yeovil in October 1993. This was a conference between French, Portuguese and English social workers on social care. It was absolutely fascinating going round care homes seeing and comparing what each country did.

I was very impressed that the elderly people enjoyed the daily presence of small children, and went on outings with them and their mothers. The Portuguese also encouraged four elderly ladies to share one house, so that they didn't feel lonely.

I attended the National u3a conference in Lancaster in

September 1994, but have little recollection of it.

My mother died the following week, and my mother-in-law a month later, and my husband became permanently ill. So our lives changed enormously. But this enabled me to start up the first and only u3a Portuguese group in the country. I ran it at home for seven years - it was a marvellous experience and left me with many happy memories.

*Gay Fraser*

"My husband, John, had recently retired from his job as a research physicist with Philips and we thought the u3a would be a good organisation for us to be able to do things together but apart according to our separate interests. We joined the Natural Science group led by John Sankey, and later by John. John started a Science and Society group, and attended the Current Issues Group.

He and I were both members of the Committee. We enjoyed many outings and holidays over the years, and celebrated the anniversaries

and Open Days. I joined the Oral History Group recording people's memories of being in service and their lives locally. I have also attended the Exercise class since its beginning - I have got much stiffer and wobblier since lockdown!

I carried on with Current Issues and started attending the Luncheon Club till lockdown. I think over the years we have had much enjoyment and also done as much as we could to give as well as take. That is the whole idea, isn't it?"

*Phyllis Palfreeman*

## Tribute to Charmian Corner

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A founder member of Dorking u3a in 1991, Charmian Corner remained an enthusiastic and dedicated supporter and group leader until her death in May. She came to the inaugural meeting and promptly established the play reading group with fifteen members to read *The Importance of Being Earnest*. At one stage this group became so popular that two groups were needed.

A school production of the *Merchant of Venice* ignited a lifelong fascination with Shakespeare's plays. For many years she would see every major Shakespeare production in London and make an annual trip to Stratford on Avon to see the RSC's new productions.

Naturally, she joined Muriel Brooks' u3a Shakespeare study group and later took over its leadership right up to the start of the first lockdown last year. Jackie Rance, who now leads the group, read Sonnet No. 30 at her funeral.

Charmian had a full and varied life. She was born in Brighton above her father's bakery business. After working as a nurse in the navy, she went out to Singapore to work for the War Disposable Board and then the Joint Intelligence Bureau. There she met her husband Freddie who had been sent out to restart ICI in Singapore. After they were married back in Brighton, they returned to live and work in Singapore, where they had the first two of their four sons. After a further posting in Kuala Lumpur, they returned to live in Brighton, before moving to Dorking in 1959.

Charmian and Freddie were keen travelers - taking a 3-month around the world trip after Freddie retired, making several visits to their eldest son who lives in South Africa, and taking their caravan all over Europe. After Freddie died, Charmian joined a U3A group holiday, the first of many such trips. Eventually she visited dozens of churches, museums and hotel swimming pools across Europe and as far afield as New Zealand and Alaska.

In many ways Charmian embodied the spirit of the u3a. The older she got the more she wanted to learn about new things, go to new places, and gain new experiences. She never saw herself as old. At 70, she decided it was time she got a degree and enrolled with the Open University to study Art History and English Literature. She became a lively and energetic 75 years young graduate.

Her good humour, resilience and humanity will be a lasting inspiration to all those who knew and loved her.

Chris Corner

## ***Study and Interest Groups***

- ◆ At the time of publication details of groups are as accurate as possible. Although at present some groups are not meeting, members may wish to keep in touch, enquire about future events or ask for information about any online activities being organised. All the information is also on the Dorking & District u3a website.
- ◆ You may also ring the contact number or send an email for further details as appropriate. If you wish to make a general enquiry, please get in touch with **Groups Coordinator** Gareth Balle: [dorkingu3agroups@gmail.com](mailto:dorkingu3agroups@gmail.com) ; 07734 045180 or  
**Members Contact** Hilda Burden: [hildaburden@gmail.com](mailto:hildaburden@gmail.com) ; 01737 842516

### **Acoustic Guitar**

Brian Joannou: 01306 887411  
[brian.joannou241@btinternet.com](mailto:brian.joannou241@btinternet.com)

### **Archaeology**

Peter Horitz: 01306 898057  
[peter.horitz@uwclub.net](mailto:peter.horitz@uwclub.net)

### **Art Appreciation 1**

Pat Lucas: 01306 711653  
[patalucas1976@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:patalucas1976@yahoo.co.uk)

### **Art Appreciation 2: Ways of Seeing Art**

Beryl Sinclair: 01306 711542  
[jandbsinclairuk@gmail.com](mailto:jandbsinclairuk@gmail.com)

### **Astronomy**

Geoff Saunders: 01306 884812  
[geoff.m.saunders@gmail.com](mailto:geoff.m.saunders@gmail.com)

### **Bowls - indoor group (Oct-April)**

non-beginners only  
Ann Watney: 01306 889115  
[ann.watney@btinternet.com](mailto:ann.watney@btinternet.com)

### **Bowls - outdoor group (May-Sept)**

David Pettman: 01306 883043  
[david@pettman.co.uk](mailto:david@pettman.co.uk)

### **Bridge (Beginners to more advanced)**

Sue Greenacre: 01306 886832  
[cgreenacre9@mail.com](mailto:cgreenacre9@mail.com)  
Lionel Cartlidge: 01306 898491  
[lionelcartlidge@gmail.com](mailto:lionelcartlidge@gmail.com)  
Fliss Guille: 07900 911920  
[flissguille@icloud.com](mailto:flissguille@icloud.com)  
Lesley Pearce: 07954 381873  
[lesleypearcemassage@gmail.com](mailto:lesleypearcemassage@gmail.com)

### **Card Games**

Mike Giles: 01306 884598  
[mibridge@mac.com](mailto:mibridge@mac.com)

### **Classical Music Appreciation**

Mike Stewart: 01306 884153  
[carolandmikestewart@outlook.com](mailto:carolandmikestewart@outlook.com)

### **Cryptic Crosswords**

Lyn Groves: 01306 898339 or 07587 695254  
[lyngroves@talktalk.net](mailto:lyngroves@talktalk.net)

### **Computing Workshops**

Bob Crooks: 01306 740062  
[robertcrooks@rocketmail.com](mailto:robertcrooks@rocketmail.com)



**Current Issues 1 and 2**

Andrew Gibbons: 01306 742650  
[andrew.gibbons@pobox.com](mailto:andrew.gibbons@pobox.com)

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**DIY Dressmaking**

Anne Blanchard: 01306 884359  
[barothon@gmail.com](mailto:barothon@gmail.com)

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**Enjoying Architecture**

Roger Stones: 01306 886754  
[roger.stones@btinternet.com](mailto:roger.stones@btinternet.com)

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**French Conversation**

Julie Mellows: 01306 889404  
Christine Lawrence: 01306 882316  
[french@dorking.u3a.org](mailto:french@dorking.u3a.org)

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**French Conversation Lunch**

Geoff Saunders: 01306 884812  
[geoff.m.saunders@gmail.com](mailto:geoff.m.saunders@gmail.com)

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**Gardening**

Vivian Wildman: 01306 644950  
[vivian.wildman.12@gmail.com](mailto:vivian.wildman.12@gmail.com)

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**Genealogy Workshop**

Christine Holloway: 01306 889310  
[leschris.holloway@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:leschris.holloway@hotmail.co.uk)

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**German Conversation**

Bob Crooks: 01306 740062  
[robertcrooks@rocketmail.com](mailto:robertcrooks@rocketmail.com)

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**Handbells**

Jill Sorrell: 01306 740732  
[jillsorrell@talktalk.net](mailto:jillsorrell@talktalk.net)

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**Jigsaw Exchange**

Hilda Burden: 01737 842516  
[hildaburden@gmail.com](mailto:hildaburden@gmail.com)

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**Line Dancing**

Gill Crooks: 01306 740062  
[gillcrooks1@gmail.com](mailto:gillcrooks1@gmail.com)  
*Tutor: Kate Deadman*

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**Luncheon Club**

Tony Parker: 01306 884050  
[bacdocs7@gmail.com](mailto:bacdocs7@gmail.com)

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**Military History**

Barrie Friend: 07796 633516  
[mhgu3adorking@gmail.com](mailto:mhgu3adorking@gmail.com)

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**Natural World**

Lionel Cartlidge: 01306 898491  
[lionelcartlidge@gmail.com](mailto:lionelcartlidge@gmail.com)

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**Opera Appreciation**

Paddy Driver: 01306 640835  
[ppdriver@btinternet.com](mailto:ppdriver@btinternet.com)

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**Philosophy**

Marjorie Hudson: 01306 888281  
[hudmarjorie@gmail.com](mailto:hudmarjorie@gmail.com)

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**Philosophy On-line**

Virginia Wheeler  
[virginia.s.wheeler@gmail.com](mailto:virginia.s.wheeler@gmail.com)

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**Photography 1**

Graham Speed: 01306 889448  
[grahamspeed27@gmail.com](mailto:grahamspeed27@gmail.com)

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**Photography 2**

Bob and Caroline Brown:  
07842 929676  
[dorkingu3aphoto2@prjb.org.uk](mailto:dorkingu3aphoto2@prjb.org.uk)

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**Pilates 1, 2 and 3**

*Overall group leader:*  
Mary Cranston: 01306 883372  
*Tutor: Tina Westwood*

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### **Plant Lovers**

Hilda Burden: 01737 842516  
[hildaburden@gmail.com](mailto:hildaburden@gmail.com)

### **Portfolio Management**

John Holder: 01737 845907  
[holdj851@gmail.com](mailto:holdj851@gmail.com)

### **Quilting 1**

Deanne Rhodes: 01737 844768  
[deannerhodes@btinternet.com](mailto:deannerhodes@btinternet.com)

### **Quilting 2**

Juliet Eberle: 01306 884569  
[juliet.eberle@ntlworld.com](mailto:juliet.eberle@ntlworld.com)

### **Reading for Pleasure**

Joyce Kingsley-Jones: 01306 885789  
[joycekingsleyjones@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:joycekingsleyjones@hotmail.co.uk)

### **Science & Technology in Everyday Life**

Richard Rumble: 01372 450142  
[richrumble747@gmail.com](mailto:richrumble747@gmail.com)

### **Scribblers**

Pat Smith: 01306 889278  
[pat2africa@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:pat2africa@yahoo.co.uk)

### **Shakespeare & His Contemporaries**

Jackie Rance: 01306 887416  
[jaxrance@gmail.com](mailto:jaxrance@gmail.com)

### **Spanish Conversation (Intermediate)**

Andrew Gibbons: 01306 742650  
[andrew.gibbons@pobox.com](mailto:andrew.gibbons@pobox.com)

### **Ukulele**

Julie McCulloch: 07968 084505  
[juliemg.mcculloch@gmail.com](mailto:juliemg.mcculloch@gmail.com)  
*Beginners are offered starter sessions  
before joining the group.*

### **Upwords**

Sue Jex: 01306 882673  
[suelucas51@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:suelucas51@yahoo.co.uk)

### **Walking**

Jane & Michael White: 01306 888886  
[19white@gmail.com](mailto:19white@gmail.com)

### **Wine Appreciation**

Geoff Saunders: 01306 884812  
[geoff.m.saunders@gmail.com](mailto:geoff.m.saunders@gmail.com)

### **Words, words, words (NEW)**

Rosemary Harbridge: 01306 881520  
[rharbridge@sky.com](mailto:rharbridge@sky.com)

### **PROPOSED NEW GROUPS / WORKSHOPS**

Local History  
Board Games  
Italian Conversation  
Qi Gong  
Seasonal crafts  
World Music

## *The Committee*

**BERYL SINCLAIR - Chairman / Newsletter Editor** 01306 711542;  
[dorkingu3achair@gmail.com](mailto:dorkingu3achair@gmail.com)

**TONY PARKER - Vice-chairman / U3A Plus** 01306 884050; [bacdocs7@gmail.com](mailto:bacdocs7@gmail.com)

**GEOFF SAUNDERS - Interim Secretary / Online Courses Coordinator** 01306 884812;  
[geoff.m.saunders@gmail.com](mailto:geoff.m.saunders@gmail.com)

**IAN THE COX - Treasurer** 01737 843105; [treasurer@dorkingu3a.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@dorkingu3a.org.uk)

**MICHAEL DOCKER - Web-master** 01306 501640; [michael.docker@ntlworld.com](mailto:michael.docker@ntlworld.com)

**JOHN SINCLAIR - Membership Secretary / Equipment Coordinator** 01306 711542;  
[johnsinclair@dorkingu3a.org.uk](mailto:johnsinclair@dorkingu3a.org.uk)

**GARETH BALLE - Groups Coordinator** 07734 045180; [dorkingu3agroups@gmail.com](mailto:dorkingu3agroups@gmail.com)

**HILDA BURDEN - Members Contact** 01737 842516; [hildaburden@gmail.com](mailto:hildaburden@gmail.com)

**DEANNE RHODES - Speakers Coordinator / Days Out Team** 01737 844768;  
07770 273407; [deannerhodes@btinternet.com](mailto:deannerhodes@btinternet.com)

**LINDA WILLMOTT - Speakers Coordinator** [linda\\_susanne@hotmail.com](mailto:linda_susanne@hotmail.com)

**ROSEMARY HARBRIDGE - Minutes Secretary** [rharbridge@sky.com](mailto:rharbridge@sky.com)

## *Days Out Team*

**DEANNE RHODES - Publicity** 01737 844768; 07770 273407

[deannerhodes@btinternet.com](mailto:deannerhodes@btinternet.com) 9 The Avenue, Brockham, RH3 7EN

**SALLY CONNETT - Publicity** 01306 740596; 07546 229462; [sallyconnett@hotmail.com](mailto:sallyconnett@hotmail.com)  
3 Hill View, Dorking, RH4 1SY

## *Residential Trips*

**IAN THE COX** 01737 843105; [ianthecox72@gmail.com](mailto:ianthecox72@gmail.com)

## *Editorial Team*

**BERYL SINCLAIR - Editor** 01306 711542; [dorkingu3achair@gmail.com](mailto:dorkingu3achair@gmail.com)

**ROSEMARY HARBRIDGE - Sub-editor** [rharbridge@sky.com](mailto:rharbridge@sky.com)

**ELIZABETH HOLMES - Newsletter distribution** 01306 884831; Morcote, 36 Bentsbrook  
Park, North Holmwood, Dorking RH5 4JN

**MICHAEL DOCKER - Web-master** 01306 501640; [michael.docker@ntlworld.com](mailto:michael.docker@ntlworld.com)

**PRINTER - Eyes Wide Digital** 01306 875150



We welcome contributions for the **AUTUMN** handbook to reach the Editor by **END AUGUST 2021**. This issue will contain details of autumn start-up groups and planned events. Thank you.



## Group news



Let's not underestimate the time and energy it takes to run a group. The last year has taken its toll - reluctantly we say goodbye to **History, Finance, Exercise for Health** and **Table Tennis** and we are likely to lose other key groups such as **Painting for Pleasure** and **Natural World** if no one is happy to lead them.

Because we appreciate the commitment leading a group entails, we invite members old and new to help run one-off workshops on topics that interest them. From calligraphy to antique collecting, simple DIY or planting, nothing is too trivial. You will find inspirational ideas on the National u3a website and the Committee will help find venues, source materials and publicise the workshops to members in Dorking and elsewhere. Just contact Group Coordinator Gareth Balle on 07734 045180 or email [dorkingu3agroups@gmail.com](mailto:dorkingu3agroups@gmail.com).

For details of what is on offer, check out **What's On** or D&D u3a website. [www.dorkingu3a.org.uk](http://www.dorkingu3a.org.uk)

### World Music



Thousands of people across the world celebrate World Music Day by making music in parks, concert halls and the street. If music makes the world go round, then you'll be interested in this new group which we hope will start in the autumn. From djembe to sitar, cora to steel drums or sufi singing, experience the rhythms and sounds of music from across the continents.

Under the 'baton' of Theresa Macintyre, the group would explore some kinds of Fusion music, ranging from Portuguese Fado to Mongolian Throat Singing, Kora music from Senegal and Mali, Taiko Drumming to Bulgarian Polyphony. Theresa envisages that the Group might take a style or a country each month and listen to examples, discuss and enjoy. Members could share examples from their own collections, and maybe recommend relevant examples available to sample on YouTube. There would be an opportunity to go to concerts together when a big name is performing. To sign up contact Theresa Macintyre on [allsortsofmusic@outlook.com](mailto:allsortsofmusic@outlook.com).

### JAKE WINKLE ART WORKSHOP

On 16 June Jake Winkle treated us to a wonderful watercolour demonstration of two paintings - an owl and an otter. This was well attended by over 40 members, so we hope we can display some of their paintings on the u3a website.



We have been invited to take part in the **MOLE VALLEY ARTS ALIVE FESTIVAL** between 1 - 31 October. In addition to paintings, we hope to be able to showcase other creative work done by u3a members - ceramics, sewing, music, photography - anything that highlights the skills of members. There will be more information in July but as groups get back together again, please think about

how you could take part in this event.

For more information contact Beryl on [dorkingu3achair@gmail.com](mailto:dorkingu3achair@gmail.com) or 01306 711542.

### QI GONG/TAI CHI FOR BETTER BALANCE



34 members joined Jo Thompson online as she took us through some basic Tai Chi moves and breathing exercises, both standing and sitting. The feedback has been very positive so we hope to run regular sessions in the autumn. Please contact Gareth Balle or Beryl Sinclair, if you would like to be part of this new exercise group.

### ROTAWALK'21 - SUNDAY 12 SEPTEMBER 2021

There will be a sponsored walk around Holmwood Common to raise funds for charity. Some u3a members hope to take part thereby raising the u3a profile and supporting a community project.

We do welcome other walkers to join us. Further details to follow; contact [dorkingu3achair@gmail.com](mailto:dorkingu3achair@gmail.com) or 01306 711542.



# Monthly meetings

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## Port Sunlight, Janet Shell, 14 April



Using family photographs and anecdotes, Janet Shell's talk focused on her childhood experiences and the history of Port Sunlight.

Janet lived in the village during the 1960s and 70s but when she began researching her family's history, she realised that she was the 4th generation of her family to do so. Her great-grandparents moved to the village in 1912. The village was built by William Lever in 1888 to house the workers of the nearby soap factory, Lever Brothers.

The village had architecturally interesting buildings, elm tree-lined avenues and allotments which made it a healthy and uplifting place to live and work. When William died in 1925, 30 thousand people attended the funeral and Janet's

great-grandfather was one of the pall bearers. Janet left the village in 1976.

Today Port Sunlight is managed by a trust and is home to a fascinating museum, Arts and Crafts style architecture, an art gallery and stunning parkland.

Janet's family attracted media interest in 2012 when she took part in the BBC programme 'Inside Out' and was interviewed by Jeremy Paxman for his series 'Britain's Great War'. She discovered that her great-uncle, John Harold Pritchard, a chorister at St Paul's, had served in WWI with the Honourable Artillery Company and his remains had been unearthed at Bullecourt, in the Pas de Calais.

Janet's book *The Sunlight Girl*, published by Talking Voice Publications, is available through online retailers.





## **The Story of Butlin's Holiday Camps, Stephen Wells, 10 March 2021**

Stephen Wells gave an interesting and personal account of his life as a Butlin's Redcoat. He started work at Butlin's Holiday Camps in 1963 as an entertainer to later become Entertainment Executive responsible for staging the biggest names in Show Business. His fully illustrated talk included amusing anecdotes about stars such as Cliff Richard, Des O'Connor, Jimmy Tarbuck, Ringo Starr, Dave Allen, Tommy Trinder and many more.

Billy Butlin was born in South Africa in 1899 and came to the UK

from Canada after the war in 1920. Billy's first enterprise was to supervise a fairground amusement pitch, making sure players could actually win. He reinvested all his profits until finally building a first holiday camp in Skegness in 1935. By the end of 1993, his empire stretched to 10 holiday camps and 7 hotels.

The largest camp in Filey, North Yorkshire, catered for 15,000 holidaymakers a week where they served 3 full meals a day.

*John Sinclair*

## **West Horsley Place - The House and its History, June Davey, 26 May 2021**

June Davey, local historian and volunteer steward at West Horsley Place, shared with us its rich history and the vision of the West Horsley Place Trust for the future of house and estate.

Horseledge, an Anglo-Saxon village situated near to the present house was first owned by Danes until King William handed the estate over to Walter FitzOtha (the family

name later changed to De Windsor) after the Norman Conquest. The Manor of West Horsley was acquired by Ralph de Berners in 1271, probably because his wife Christina was the heiress of the previous owner, Hugh de Windsor.

The Berners family and their heirs the Bouchiers held the manor for the next 260 years.



**WHP - RED BRICK FAÇADE**

When John Bouchier defaulted on a debt to the king, Henry VIII took possession of the property and gifted it to his cousin Henry Courtenay, Marquess of Exeter, only to have him beheaded five years later. Henry VIII retained ownership until his death in 1547 when he then handed it over to Sir Anthony Browne and Lady Elizabeth Fitzgerald (The Fair Geraldine) and in 1559 Queen Elizabeth I stayed at WHP as their guest.

From 1590 to 1642 the Montague family were in residence and Guy Fawkes worked there as a footman. In 1643 the house passed to Sir Walter Raleigh's son Carew who converted the old Tudor single storey manor house by adding the red-brick facade and installing the first and second floors along with staircases to make what essentially the house is today. Legend has it that Sir Walter Raleigh's embalmed

head was kept within its walls by his devoted wife.

In 2014, Bamber and Christina Gascoigne inherited the property and gifted it to a newly formed trust, The Mary Roxburghe Trust who restored the house and have managed it ever since.

Because the 15th-century manor house is filled with untouched rooms and is surrounded by walled formal gardens and 18th century farm buildings, it has been the setting for many film and TV productions such as *The Crown*, *the Durrell's* and *Howards End*.

#### **MAKE A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY!**

The D&D u3a plan to visit West Horsley Place on **1 November** when we will be able to explore the most prestigious rooms such as the drawing room and library, and walled gardens. Check our u3a website for booking details.



**WHP- LIBRARY**

## Rembrandt and the Third Age

Every month, the National u3a website advertises online art, craft and science events to members, in collaboration with the National Gallery, Royal Institution, and the British Library, generally at a nominal fee. They also offer free workshops delivered by members for members, ranging from chess to crochet, astronomy to gastronomy.

On 15 June, Catherine Stevenson from Third Age Trust welcomed 182 members on Zoom to consider how Rembrandt's many portraits and paintings reflect the human condition, warts and all.



Born in Leiden in 1606 into a comfortable life, Rembrandt married a wealthy woman Saskia and had four children. His career blossomed but in 1622 Saskia died of tuberculosis and three of his children died in infancy. He died alone and in debt in 1669, having outlived his only remaining son by a year.

From an early age, he started painting his own image either in

commissions such as the *Stoning of St Stephen* (1625) or as self-portraits - he is reputed to have painted over eighty self-portraits. As he advanced in years, his portraits reflected the physical decline of age, with sensitivity and compassion, at a time when painters popularised caricatures or 'tronies', such as Metsys's *Ugly Duchess*.

These art 'selfies' not only advertised Rembrandt's skill as a portrait painter but provide a pictorial biography of his life. The *Night Watch* (1642), now thought to be one of the most famous but enigmatic paintings, represents a group of battle veterans, the Kloveniers, in out-of-date uniforms, armed with old muskets and halberds. In it Rembrandt is seen twice peering through the crowd, possibly suggesting his belief in the immortality of the human soul.





## ***How GREEN is your lawn?***

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*Robert Edmondson from the Natural World group asks us to consider what makes a lawn 'green'.*

We're all in favour of conserving butterflies and moths. So you may avoid using insecticides and other poisons on your plants and vegetables.

But have you ever thought about the conservation value of a lawn, often occupying over half the area of our gardens? Most suburban lawns are "no-go" areas for wildlife, sterile deserts drenched with herbicides and other toxins, which pollute the soil beyond the edges and to some depth as well as pollute lakes and ground water. Add to that the fumes of petrol driven mowers which can contribute to urban smog.

Despite this impressive "charge sheet" of the environmental cost of typical lawns there are benefits - prevention of erosion, acting as a buffer to minimise flooding after heavy rains and the sequestering of carbon dioxide by photosynthesis.

How do we keep the benefits of lawns while reducing environmental damage?

- ♦ Reduce the size of the lawn to what you need for sport or relaxation.
- ♦ Consider an alternative to a grassy lawn e.g., thyme, chamomile or clover are more wildlife friendly.

♦ Recent studies suggest that there is no need to water a lawn in the UK - it may turn brown during a drought, but grass will recover with the autumn rains.

♦ Adjust the mower to leave the grass longer. Turf maintains its strength and roots grow deeper. It can then be a nesting site for bumblebees and provide shelter for other insects.

♦ Avoid using insecticides, herbicides, and inorganic fertilisers on your lawn.

♦ Finally, create a meadow instead of a lawn, as recommended by the RHS.

Give a close cut once a year at the end of summer then leave to grow and diversify before mowing again. Food plants for our butterflies and their larvae together with native orchids will appear.

In the UK, we spend millions of pounds each year on lawn seed and maintenance. So, let's try to reduce an unnecessary expense as well as the environmental damage by restoring some biodiversity to the space devoted to our lawns!



# ***Residential trip***

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## **The Historic Houses & Heritage of the Peak District**

**1 - 5 October 2021**

**5 days from £529 + £28 insurance**

### ***What is included in the price?***

Travel by executive coach

Four nights in 4\* hotel - half board accommodation

All excursion travel & guided tours; entrance to National Trust properties free to NT members

### ***What will we see?***

**Day 1:** Visit to Baddesley Clinton, home of the Ferrers family and sanctuary to persecuted priests during 1590s.

**Day 2:** Blue Badge guide accompanies group to Bakewell, home of puddings and to Chatsworth, home of the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire set in the heart of the Peak District National Park.

**Day 3:** Visit to Renishaw Hall, home of the Sitwell family for almost 400 years; then to the Elizabethan NT property Hardwick Hall, designed by Bess of Hardwick to showcase the formality of 16th century courtly life.

**Day 4:** Leisurely stroll in Buxton followed by a visit to Haddon Hall, a 12th century fortified manor house, surrounded by terraced Elizabethan gardens.

**Day 5:** Homeward bound, members will visit the Crich Tramway Village, overlooking the Derwent Valley and home of the Tramway Museum.

### ***How do I book?***

Contact Group Organiser Ianthe Cox - email [ianthecox72@gmail.com](mailto:ianthecox72@gmail.com) or telephone 01737 843105. Check our website [Peak District trip \(dorkingu3a.org.uk\)](http://Peak District trip (dorkingu3a.org.uk))



**Hardwick Hall & Gardens**



**Crich Tramway Village**

# Peak around the District

How well do you know the Peak district? Try this cryptic crossword.



Answers on page 20

## ACROSS

4. WW2 heroes practised '*busting*' the Derwent.
5. It's a *tall* story but this John might be resting at Hathersage.
8. There's a shining example of a hill between Buxton and Macclesfield.
10. Mine Castleton Cave for this mineral.
12. At the Heights of Abraham, they may be old but not forgotten.

## DOWN

1. National Parks symbol is not round your neck.
2. Do this to get a good pudding!
3. Complete the jingle: 'Hardwick Hall/more ..... than wall.
6. 17th century Eyam was plagued by this disease.
7. Queen Mary got into hot water in Buxton.
9. If you're highly strung, just take a '*peak*' at what they made near Castleton.
11. Melandra outpost where Romans were garrisoned.



## Hannah Peschar Sculpture Garden

Wednesday 4 August 2021



Once part of a large estate, the garden was designed between 1915 and 1920 but subsequently fell rapidly into decline after the estate was sold. Over the past 40 years the garden has been remodelled by award-winning landscape designer Anthony Paul to include many large-leaved plants in bold groups, tall grasses and 3 new ponds.

A work of art in its own right, the Garden is just as important as the 200 or so sculptures exhibited there. The combination of nature and artwork creates a harmonious and magical environment that is constantly changing. Curator Vikki Leedham offers D&D u3a members a unique opportunity to visit the garden on Wednesday 4th August. The visit will start at 11am with a presentation about the Garden, its history and exhibits.

Members will then be able to roam the gardens at will and enjoy their own picnic lunch at leisure. No lunch will be provided so please bring a packed lunch if you wish.

### BOOKING

Price of entry is £13.20 including tea and coffee on arrival.

Spaces are limited to 30 members so early booking is advised. Bookings and payment can be made online on [Days out arrangements \(dorkingu3a.org.uk\)](https://dorkingu3a.org.uk) or contact John Sinclair on 01306 711542 or on [johnsinclair@dorkingu3a.org.uk](mailto:johnsinclair@dorkingu3a.org.uk)

Please note that members are expected to make their own way to The Hannah Peschar Sculpture Garden.

### SPECIAL NOTE

Some paths in the park are uneven and steep and are not accessible to wheelchair users or members with mobility issues. Every effort has been made to provide seating throughout the park and there are enough sculptures for everyone to enjoy the experience.

## Calendar of Events: July - December 2021

July	14	Monthly Meeting	A Conspiracy History of the World by Andy Thomas
August	4	Day Out	Hannah Peschar Sculpture Garden
September	8	Monthly Meeting	Anne of Cleves by Helen Poole
	12	Rotawalk'21	Sponsored walk around Holmwood Common
	17	Study Day	Landscapes of South-East England by Geoffrey Mead, University of Sussex
October	1-5	Residential Trip	Peak District
	13	Monthly Meeting	The Mysterious Disappearance of Amy & Amelia by Jim Barnes
	15	Study Day	Tutankhamun, The Boy King by Clive Barnham Carter, Lecturer for the Arts Society
November	1	Day Out	West Horsley Place (TBC)
	10	Monthly Meeting	Brinks-Matt Gold Bullion Robbery by Ian Brown
	19	Study Day	The Development of British Style by Antiques Roadshow Presenter Paul Atterbury
December	8	Monthly Meeting	A Royal Christmas by Siobhan Clarke

### PROPOSED SURREY u3a NETWORK STUDY DAYS FOR 2022

Understanding Turner: The Man, His Life & His Work - Prof Maria Chester  
 The Art and Objects of the Mughal Emperors - Ursula Weekes  
 Industrial Archaeology - Professor David Perrett  
 The Art of Drawing - Colin Wiggins  
 Illuminated Manuscripts of the Medieval Period - Imogen Corrigan  
 The Story of Polar Exploration /The Impact of Climate Change - Lt Cdr John Ash & Bob Headland  
 Gravity wave astronomy - Dr Chris North

Dorking & District u3a publishes a **Newsletter** and **What's On** four times a year in March/April (Spring), June/July (Summer), September/October (Autumn) and December/January (Winter).

The **Newsletter** cannot survive without contributions from members.

Articles and photographs are all welcome, as well as reports on u3a activities. Please try to limit reports to no more than 300 words and if possible, submit a typed contribution by email, either as an attachment in Microsoft Word or in the main body of the email. If you send a handwritten contribution, please write names of places and people in CAPITAL LETTERS.

<i>Editor</i>	Beryl Sinclair 01306 711542; <a href="mailto:dorkingu3achair@gmail.com">dorkingu3achair@gmail.com</a>
<i>Sub-editor</i>	Rosemary Harbridge <a href="mailto:rhharbridge@sky.com">rhharbridge@sky.com</a>
<i>Distribution</i>	Elizabeth Holmes 01306 884831
<i>Printer</i>	Eyes Wide Digital 01306 875150

### Peak around the District crossword answers:

**Across:** 4. Dam; 5. Little; 8. Tor; 10. Blue John; 12. Fossils.

**Down:** 1. Millstone; 2. Bakewell; 3. Glass; 6. Bubonic; 7. Thermal; 9. Rope; 11. Fort.

### Slim pickings!

My new printer was delivered while I was out so the postman left me a kind note:

*'Sorry we missed you.  
Your parcel left next to the **waist** bin'.*





# OUT AND ABOUT IN DORKING

If you're looking for gentle exercise to music try **EXTEND** on Tuesday mornings in the United Reformed Church Hall in West Street. For more information contact Mrs C.T Read, telephone 01306 887297.



## DORKING COMMUNITY FRIDGE



Did you know that on average mid-Surrey Community Fridge saves some 8 tonnes of food a month by welcoming customers to different distribution centres in Dorking and around Dorking? So help save a little of our planet by visiting the Community Fridge at the Christian Centre weekday mornings 10 - 11.30am and Wednesday afternoons 1.30pm - 3pm. Give a little, take a little - it makes a big difference.

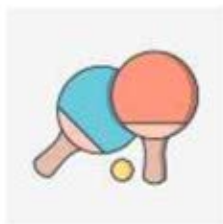
## CHRISTIAN CENTRE ACTIVITY GROUPS

**TABLE TENNIS** - group meets on Monday and Friday afternoons 2-4pm.

**CHAIR EXERCISE** - group meets on Tuesday mornings 11-12am.

For more information contact Janette Masters or Debbie Turner on 01306 886830;

[centremanager@dorkingchristiancentre.org.uk](mailto:centremanager@dorkingchristiancentre.org.uk)



## PATCHWORKING GARDEN PROJECT



In Dorking there is a little corner of nature that brings comfort and friendship to people's lives through gardening. The walled garden is run entirely by volunteers who also offer opportunities to learn new skills. They are organising an Open Day on Sunday 18 July. For more information

contact [info@patchworkinggardenproject.co.uk](mailto:info@patchworkinggardenproject.co.uk) or phone 07814 544420.

## PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP 1



LIGHT AT THE END OF  
THE TUNNEL!  
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IN AND OUT!  
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