



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

Portsdown Post

January – May 2018

Message from the Chairman

Now that the festivities are over, I hope you are all looking forward to the New Year. I am hoping that 2018 will not be quite so busy as 2017, but I don't hold out much hope. The Annual Lecture was a great success with over 120 people present. We are already planning next year's.

I am pleased to inform those of you who don't know that Peter Smith is now the editor of this Newsletter and also our Speaker Secretary; Joyce Wilkinson has taken over as Group co-ordinator. I am sure you will all give them your support.

We have lost two groups in recent months, the latest being Crafts and no, I had nothing to do with it, just as I had nothing to do with the demise of Photography 1 despite consistent rumours to the contrary. I cannot stress too highly the need for people to volunteer. Group Leaders only need to be the contact point for receiving information etc; how they organise the various duties is a matter for the group.

The Christmas meeting arranged by Carole and myself was warmly received by most members and I am delighted that next year will be down to Peter.



Just to prove I have a life outside of Portsdown U3A, I attach a photograph of me receiving an Award at the House of Commons from Fabian Hamilton MP.

Beryl Shepherd

Interest Groups

The U3A is run by members for members. The interest group leaders are essential and at the heart of the U3A movement; without them there would be no association.

Unfortunately, the Craft group has had to close – not through lack of numbers but because no one was willing to be the group leader.

If you feel you could take over running the craft group or, if you have a particular interest and would like to start a new group but feel daunted by the role and don't know what's involved, I am available to help and support you.

Please contact me or see me at the monthly meetings.

As a quick guide, here are some of the duties of a group leader:

- Arrange date, time & place for meetings of their group,
- Maintain a list of group members,
- Check that all members of your group are paid up members of Portsdown U3A,
- Coordinate the activities of the group in collaboration with the members.

Joyce Wilkinson, Group Coordinator

Art Appreciation Group

Fine art is that in which the hand, the head and the heart of man go together

John Ruskin 1819 – 1900

2018 and another exciting year of discovering works of art to look forward to! Finding out more about something you love is always a joy as is looking back at what you have previously studied.

2017 was the year the group looked at a wide range of artists from the 15th century artist Fra Angelico right up to the present time and the art of Tracey Emin. That was quite a journey! We also looked at two diverse subjects; African Art and Railways.

The coming year we have plans to look at eight artists, all chosen by the group and four subjects, one of which is looking at the art held by the Portsmouth Museum Art Collection.

We are a small group with limited spaces, but if you would like to know more about the group, please contact me.

Carol Evans

Bridge Group

Our Bridge group is doing well, and we have a lovely group of people who are all doing very well. They are now all competent players and enjoying playing Chicago Bridge. If you would like to learn this fascinating game then you are more than welcome to come and join us.

It is very much a game of numbers, counting high card points, adding partner's values, and working out if you can make game. It might sound difficult but, with a little bit of tuition and encouragement, you will soon be making bids and achieving slams.

If you would like to know more then please ring me.

Janice Henderson

Buildings Appreciation Group

The group has continued to maintain good attendance. Numbers and members have consistently brought interesting and comprehensive contributions to our discussions. I am proud of them!!

We decided to look at Greek and Roman architecture as they have had such a strong influence on classical buildings. We aim to consider architecture in Britain preferably, so not a lot of it around here! However, we did do a successful visit to Fishbourne Roman villa in November, much enjoyed by all. We spent a good bit of time in the garden, restored to its Roman plan and plantings, as it was a lovely sunny, but cold, day. We toured the mosaics and their informative accompanying notice boards, which are now under cover... Don't be surprised at that comment if you have recently visited – many of us hadn't been since our children were small, and MUCH has changed! Do take yourself there if you are in that situation – you will be pleasantly surprised.

We had a talk in the afternoon given by a member of staff who kept us enthralled for longer than her allotted hour. In her reply to my letter of thanks, she said that she had been happy to do so, as we had asked such intelligent questions!!!! We got to handle various pieces, such as tiles, and other materials. Afterwards, we broke up into smaller groups and did different things; the museum rewarded my visit, and it would have been good to linger longer there.

We recommence on 23rd January at my home, where we will be discussing, mostly, Saxon architecture. Again, not a lot of evidence, but several people have identified churches in the area and we are hoping to visit some of them, and maybe a reconstruction as well. At this meeting, we also need to discuss if we need to find a venue for meetings, as we sometimes get a bit squashed in each other's homes! We will end with a post-Christmas lunch – always good to extend the eating – and the waistlines...

Despite the above, if you would like to join us, we would be pleased to welcome you.

Christine London

Computer Group

The group now meet at The Church of the Resurrection in Drayton on the second Tuesday of the month. Sessions start at 2pm.

Tony delivers the sessions and produces a 'Tec News' which recaps the areas of learning that have been covered. The Tec News can be accessed on the 'Computer group' web page. This can be printed off directly or downloaded whichever people prefer. There is even a page for how you can access the Tec news from an iPad.

I am pleased to be able to offer 'drop in' sessions for anyone from Portsdown U3A who would like some help in using the computer to access the web for their interest. If you would like any more information please do contact me.

Joyce Wilkinson

IPAD support Group

This group is for people with Apple iPads. It is a very popular group and it aims to provide some tips and tricks to help people find their way on the web, manage their settings and organise their photos. The iPad is fairly easy to use and is a quick way for people to access their emails, get reminders, take photographs and even play music and games.

The group meets quarterly at Cosham Baptist Church. The next meeting is in January 2018; date to be decided. If you are not already in the group and would like to be notified of the date of the next meeting please contact me.

Joyce Wilkinson

Craft Group

The Craft group are an enthusiastic group of ladies who are eager to socialise whilst we do craft. We meet between two and four on the first Wednesday of the month at Cosham Baptist Church. The group has continued to explore and learn a variety of different craft activities, drawing on the skills of the group members, and taking it in turns to lead the group.

In September we made felt robins for Christmas. In October we had fun doing the découpage on pots or jars, and in December we made twine flowers.

Having set up and organised this group for the last five years. in September I decided to step down as the Group leader from January 2018. As no one volunteered to lead the group, it was closed at the December meeting. However, if you are keen on craft and could lead the group. please get in touch with Joyce Wilkinson, the U3A Portsdown group coordinator.

Sharon Searle

Dining Group

We have seen a change of leadership in 2017 as Audrey Evans, who has been the Group Leader since its inception over 10 years ago, decided to stand down. I am sure all members both new and old would like me to thank Audrey for all her sterling work. Happy “retirement” Audrey!

I have now taken on the role of Group Leader, mostly responsible for restaurant bookings and updating “stuff” on our group page on THE PORTSDOWN U3A Website. Audrey Piper is your day to day contact in regards to letting you know about our forthcoming venues via the “old fashioned” way... a phone call!

This year (2017) has seen us visiting old haunts and cuisines... Italian, Chinese, French, Indian etc and, oh yes, our traditional Sunday Roast.

We are constantly looking for new venues to try in and around Portsmouth so, if you have discovered an exciting restaurant, please let us know. We are extremely lucky here to have so many restaurants in Southsea and Gunwharf Quays that I think we could literally eat our way around the world. As you probably all know, the good old iconic South Parade Pier has been restored to its former glory and there is now a fantastic new fish and chip restaurant at the end of the pier so we will be going there in 2018... but not until the summer months!!

Just as a reminder that we are “ladies wot lunch” on the 2nd Thursday of the month and The Sunday Club every 4th Sunday, normally meeting at 12.30pm. HOWEVER we are still looking for a few gentlemen to join us... don't be scared, we will be gentle with you!!

If you would like to join us, I can be contacted via the website.

Viv Grigson

French Groups; Beginners and Refreshers

These two groups have continued to meet regularly – the Beginners on Friday afternoons and the Refreshers on Monday afternoons. We have been meeting since February 2014, and some people have been coming along for all that time, while we have been pleased to welcome some new members to both groups recently.

Our sessions aim to help people to improve their confidence in understanding spoken and written French and we practise making ourselves understood in everyday situations. If you aren't yet convinced of the benefits of learning another language, perhaps the following will help!

Ten Amazing Reasons Why You Should Learn a Foreign Language

10 *Impress people around you*

Whether at a fancy restaurant ordering dishes like Boeuf Bourguignon using correct pronunciation, or talking with the locals in their native tongue, learning a foreign language is bound to impress more than a few people around you.

9 *Develop confidence*

Learning a foreign language is an incredibly rewarding experience and a serious confidence booster.

8 *Improve your decision making skills*

Bilinguals are more confident with their choices after thinking it over in the second language and seeing whether their initial conclusions still stand up.

7 *Increase your brain power*

A study conducted by Researchers from University College London has shown that learning other languages altered grey matter – the area of the brain which processes information – in the same way exercise builds muscles.

6 *Completely transform your travel experience*

Learning a foreign language, even as little as a handful of phrases, will make your travel experiences so much better.

5 *Improve your employability (This might not appeal to U3A members so much!!)*

We live in an increasingly globalised world and companies are constantly expanding overseas and dealing with clients from all over the world.

4 *Study or live overseas*

If you feel like you're in for some change and you're looking for some excitement and adventure in your life, a foreign language might just be the door that's waiting to be opened.

3 *Become more open-minded*

Seeing the world from a different perspective, and understanding where you and others come from, is a fantastic, eye-opening experience.

2 *Discover a new culture*

Music, films, food, literature, poetry, theatre, fine arts: the list of fabulous things that culture brings to our lives is endless. You can learn a lot about a culture, but you can't feel it fully without throwing yourself in, and that begins with the language.

1 *Meet new people and develop life-long friendships*

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, meeting new and interesting people and developing life-long friendships (or, who knows, even the love of your life!) are certainly objectives well worth aspiring to, and learning another language is a sure way to speed up that process. Plus, learning a language is FUN!

I hope I've managed to convince at least some of you of the amazing rewards that learning another language can bring. Of course, it's not an easy process, and it does take time and effort. But the investment is well worth it.

Heather Rogers

Local History Group

In general, the Group continues to thrive, membership now stands at 19. Given the new format of the monthly meetings we have decided that the moratorium on new members should be suspended. So, at least while we can still get people into the venue, new members are welcome to join us. Meetings are at The Church of The Resurrection, generally at 10am, and have historically been on the first Monday of the month. However, due to an increasingly noisy mother and toddler group in the room next door, as from February 2nd our meetings will be on the first Friday of each month. These monthly meetings will continue to be a forum for discussion of any aspect of local history; with a modicum of nostalgia as well, it must be admitted.

The first phase of the Group's Jutland Project has now come to an end, and members of the Group are beginning to turn their thoughts to other matters.

For 'new readers' we, in conjunction with members of Genealogy, have been researching those sailors and marines who were born in, or resident in, Portsmouth or Gosport, who lost their lives at the Battle of Jutland that took place at the end of May 1916. Our Roll of Honour identifies 661 local men of the 6097 of the British fleet lost. The Roll of Honour has now been printed, and a free copy has been offered to all those people who

responded to our request for information on their relatives who were lost at Jutland. For other interested people, it is for sale for £5; which includes a booklet illustrating the exhibition panels. In addition, our map of Portsmouth and Gosport in 1910 with the home addresses of the men lost, can be viewed on Portsmouth University's Port Towns and Urban Cultures website.

Phase II of the Jutland project is now progressing. This being an analysis of the data on the families of some of the local men lost, to gain some idea of the impact of the loss of these men on their families, in the ensuing years. Work is progressing on a first draft of a research report, which we hope will lead to a paper on the matter. The problem is that the 1921 census, that will undoubtedly provide additional information, will not be available until 2022. In the interim, a short article briefly covering June 1916, has been submitted to The Historian magazine and is scheduled to be published early in the New Year.

Since the last magazine, the Portsdown U3A Annual Lecture has taken place with a very interesting presentation by Nick Jellicoe on how we remember such events as Jutland, and at which the Group's Jutland Exhibition was again featured.

Audrey Evans' series of booklets on Drayton that, in the last magazine I reported had now reached volume 5, has apparently reached volume 7! My previous jocular remark that the series could make double figures appears to be in serious danger of becoming a reality. Watch this space; or at least the shelves of the bookshop in Cosham High Street.

Since the last magazine, the project on the history of some of the large houses within our area and the families who have inhabited them, has been commenced by those members interested. There are also plans afoot to become involved with a national research project, being run by Royal Holloway, University of London, entitled "Citizens", that is to explore the history of liberty, protest, power and rebellion. For our part it is anticipated that we, together with other local U3As, will look at the Suffragette movement in the area.

The alterations to the format of the monthly meetings seems to have been well received, with the showing of various short films and 'slide' shows relevant to the area's history being shown. There have also been two short talks so far by certain members, one on local 19th century author Sarah Doudney, and another a reading of the Jutland article submitted to The Historian magazine, mentioned above. These have been interspersed with some other more light hearted items; including two music hall monologues by Marriott Edgar (possibly most famous for his Albert and the Lion monologue); one on the Battle of Hastings, and the other on the Magna Carta. While the future programme of internal talks is fairly fluid, short talks on the emigration of redundant Portsmouth dockyardmen to Canada, and sailors' wives in mid nineteenth century Portsea at least, are proposed for the early New Year.

Another of our alterations to the Group's 'constitution' is that we have agreed to increase the monthly subscription to £2 per person. This will not only cover rental of the room, and teas, coffees, and biscuits, but may also provide sufficient money to be able to pay for an occasional outside speaker.

In addition, visits are being organised for next year, to both the Bombay Gin distillery, at Whitchurch (purely for the historical importance of the buildings, of course), and Chichester Alms Houses.

While we are still in the throes of winter and dark nights prevail, the immediate future for the Local History Group does appear to be bright!

Mahjong Group 1

We are now in our new 'home' at Cosham Community Centre, which easily accommodates us, even at full strength. We've found the 'noise' a little disconcerting sometimes, especially when we are all 'washing' (mixing up the tiles on the tables) and chatting at the same time. We're getting used to it and to be fair, that doesn't often occur – the simultaneous tile-mixing, not the chatting! Of course, this has meant we have had to charge for the meetings, but it's not a lot for two hours entertainment! I suppose if we did bet, we could in theory recoup our losses (though probably not me!).

We have had one new member since we moved – one very brave man, (amongst a dozen women!) who beat us hollow at his first attempt! We have plenty of room to welcome more newcomers, even if they are better than we are! Please get in touch with me if you would like to join us.

Christine London

Mahjong Group 2

We have a lovely little friendly group playing on the 2nd and 4th Monday afternoon of the month.

This is a very fascinating Chinese game played with tiles. It is very easy to learn and is a bit like Rummy the card game. The aim of the game is to make sets of 3 tiles, and to be the first to get all your tiles out. It is normally played with 4 people but can be played with 3, which changes the rules a little.

We have room for a few more members, so if you would like to come and join us, please contact me.

Heather Henderson

Photography Group

The photography group is running very successfully with a total of 19 members who enjoy each other's company and meet every 2nd Monday of the month at our various homes. This provides a very informal and friendly atmosphere where we can view each member's contributions with a gentle critique added.

Our most pressing concern is fitting everybody in a lounge or dining room and finding enough chairs to go around!! The number of photos presented is limited to around 6 of the best per member so we can see everyone's efforts.

Our U3A Website is constantly updated with information regarding the next photo topic and the details of our photo shoot trips which of course always end up in a suitable café or tea room. We are retired after all and it can get cold outside!!

The web site address is shown below where some of our best work is presented in a picture gallery:

<http://www.portsdownu3a.org.uk/digital-photography-group-2/>

We all have different camera equipment from Point and Shoot and Smartphone to Bridge and DSLR cameras which makes discussions and comparisons of our work more interesting.

This group has an occasional gentle technical discussion where we are slowly encouraging the use of photo editing software to improve our pictures. However, the subjects that benefit everyone are emphasised, such as the rules of competition, the need for sharp focus, depth of field and the awareness of dynamic range in photography.

The standard of photography in the group is improving all the time, which is nice to see, and there is little doubt that this is happening because people get to know each other better and comment more freely on the pictures presented.

The group has ventured out on many photo shots this year, probably the most rewarding was the CASS Foundation sculpture park near Goodwood that produced some great pictures. We also covered the Wicor shoreline, Chichester, Emsworth, English countryside, buildings, colours, and much more.

Popular Music Group

Our group meets on the second Thursday of the month and we share our choice of music. At the December meeting we heard songs by a wide variety of musicians, including Billy Fury, the Foundations, Los Lobos, Loudon Wainwright III, Little Anthony and the Imperials, Tom Lehrer, Gallagher and Lyle, Michael Bubl , David Cassidy, and Katie Melua, among others. Some of these names may be familiar to you; some may be new to you.

Why not join us in 2018? We are a friendly group of people with eclectic tastes and an interest in all sorts of popular music. You would be very welcome.

Heather Rogers

Strollers and Striders Walking Groups

We have completed another wonderful year of fascinating walks.

We ended the year with our usual Christmas Dinner at the Toby. A good time was had by all.

There are plenty of interesting walks for everyone. There are now 3 groups all with different levels of ability. The Striders being the most difficult to the Stragglers being the easiest. There really is something for everyone. If you enjoy a bit a fresh air, a little exercise and good company, then I am sure you will find our walks very invigorating. You can see the beauty of the countryside many interesting buildings, and visit many areas you have not seen before.

We can now look forward to a new year with the 1st four months' walks planned. They will be listed on the web site which can be downloaded. Hard copies will be available at the meetings.

Any enquiries, please ring me.

Janice Henderson

Stragglers Walking Group

We decided to start this group during the summer because some of us felt that we would like to have a walk every week but knew that we would not be able to manage the Strider walks. The Stragglers walks take place every other Friday (the same day as the Strider walks) and are for a shorter distance and at a slower pace than the Strollers. Walks start at 11.00 am and are between 1 and 1½ miles, on flat terrain, followed by a pub lunch if you wish. The list of walks can be found on the Portsdown U3A website under Groups, Stragglers, walks.

These walks have proved to be popular and have been supported by regular walkers with the Strollers and by others who want an easy stroll either because they are recovering from an illness or have slight mobility problems. We try to organise car sharing for members who do not have cars.

Mary Chappell

Travel Group

The Travel Group continues to thrive, and we have had new members since the October open day earlier this year. We have had a busy time since the end of August, both with day trips and holidays, which you can read about on the Travel Group blog. They include the following:

- October 26th* We had a visit to the Royal Naval Dockyard and had a guided tour of behind the scenes where the public do not go. Thank you, Beryl.
- October 27th* Julie arranged a four day visit to Weymouth where a good time was had by all.
- November 6th* We had a guided tour visit to the Guildhall followed by a cream tea. Thank you to Julie.
- November 28th* We had another day out arranged by Christine at the Roman Palace at Fishbourne. This was very interesting, especially as some of us had not visited this place since our children were small. We had a walk around the mosaics, which were on a larger scale than what we could remember. We then had an interesting talk afterwards giving us an insight into the structure of the building and what life was like at the Palace.
- December 4th* Janice arranged this trip to Thursford Christmas Spectacular and a day trip to Norwich.

Judy Jones

Proposed Garden Lovers' Group

NEW GROUP! Do you enjoy Gardens and Gardening? I am hoping to start a new "Garden Lovers" group soon after Easter.

All are welcome whether you have a window box, a few pots on the patio or a large garden and greenhouse!

Meetings will give members the opportunity to share knowledge, skills, plants and cuttings and to go on regular trips out to gardens, nurseries and garden centres.

No definite day or venue has been set yet so if you may be interested please contact me by email (lynneweyman@gmail.com) to let me know which days you can and cannot do.

Lynne Weyman

Housing plans for Havant

Quite a lot of new housing is planned for Havant. Some of the areas that may be developed could affect some of our Portsdown U3A members. Havant Council will be holding a number of exhibitions about these plans. We may attend whether we live within Havant Council area or not.

The date, time and location of the exhibitions are set out below.

Tuesday 23 January	3pm – 7pm	Cowplain Evangelical Church Durley Avenue, Cowplain, PO8 8XA
Friday 26 January	3pm – 7pm	United Reformed Church Hollow Lane, Hayling Island, PO11 9EY
Saturday 27 January	10am – 4pm	Meridian Shopping Centre Elm Lane, Havant, PO9 1UN

Tuesday 30 January	3pm – 7pm	Emsworth Baptist Church North Street, Emsworth, PO10 7BY
Wednesday 31 January	3pm – 7pm	Hayling Island Community Centre Station Road, Hayling Island, PO11 0HB
Thursday 1 February	12pm – 7pm	Havant Public Service Plaza Civic Centre Road, Havant, PO9 2AX
Monday 5 February	3pm – 7pm	Leigh Park Community Centre Dunsbury Way, Leigh Park, PO9 5BG
Friday 9 February	3pm – 7pm	The Stride Centre Daffodil Way, Denvilles, PO9 2FA
Saturday 10 February	10am – 4pm	Waterlooville Community Centre 10 Maurepas Way, Waterlooville, PO7 7FA

Maureen Vilar

Meetings in the Coming few Months

Unless otherwise stated, all General Meetings will be on Wednesdays at the Cosham Baptist Church starting at 2pm and will include a talk by the speakers and on the subjects named below.

21 February	Richard Spearing	Scout Heritage Memorabilia
21 March	John Webster	The Air Transport Auxiliary Association
18 April	Dave Allen	Dance Bands of the 50s and 60s, and Other Music
16 May	Caroline Timlett	Langstone Coastal Defences
20 June	David Slade	The Lifeboat <i>Aguila Wren</i>

Peter Smith, Speakers Secretary