



Bourne End & District Monthly Newsletter November 2021

Chairman's Message

By the time this newsletter reaches you we will have held our first monthly talk in the Community Centre for over 18 months. We are also aware that many groups, both indoor and outdoor, are resuming and that participation numbers are increasing. We are still conscious about the Covid prevalence figures being high locally and that we need to remain vigilant about taking precautions to minimise risks, so social distancing is still recommended as is mask wearing when moving around and good ventilation remains important for indoor meetings.

Our membership numbers continue to increase and are now close to last year's peak. We know that the most effective way of attracting new members is word of mouth. So with so many activities resuming we hope you will feel able to let other locals know what we can offer! For this still new local u3a to go on developing, we need help to run things, not just on the Committee but also through small groups focusing on recruitment and retention, on formatting and updating the website, as well as relying heavily on the continuing commitment of convenors. Please talk to any Committee member if you are willing to help the continued development of our u3a. We would like to encourage any member to come and observe at a committee meeting with a view to joining the committee – please contact me. Mike Bellamy, chair@bourneendu3a.org.uk



On Saturday, 11th September some of us 'manned' a stall at the Bourne End Community Market to spread the word about our u3a. We had plenty of visitors and several of them signed up as members there and then. As you can see, we also enjoyed ourselves – spreading the word about our u3a!

A Warm Welcome to these new Members who have joined us since September 2021:

Pauline, Lynda, Robert, Angela, Marilyn, Janet, Jacqui, Joan, Lynne, Annette, Wendy, Nigel, Jean T, Kay, Jean W, Leonora, Carolyn. We very much hope that you will enjoy your u3a membership.

Our next Speaker's Meeting is on **TUESDAY 23rd NOVEMBER** at 2 p.m. in the Community Centre. It is likely that this will be another hybrid meeting.

Our speaker is Quentin Falk - Desert Island Flicks. With an illustrated talk, journalist, local author and critic, Quentin Falk explains his lifelong passion for cinema in ten famous and not-so-famous film clips. Quentin has written ten books, including the award-nominated 'Travels in Greeneland': - the Cinema of Graham Greene, as well as acclaimed biographies of Anthony Hopkins, Albert Finney and Alfred Hitchcock. He has reviewed films for the Daily Mail, Daily Telegraph, Sunday Telegraph and Sunday Mirror and was also Editor of Screen International, the industry trade paper, and Academy, the BAFTA journal.



Dates for your Diary: December 7th and 14th

Christmas is coming and we are planning on holding two Christmas parties this year, to allow for social distancing in the Hall at the Community Centre. We will start with a fish and chip lunch followed by a quiz and then tea and mince pies to finish. There will be a subsidised cost for each member of £5. Further details will be forthcoming but fingers crossed that Covid will allow us to socialise in this way for the first time in ages !!

Outings

The first outing since lockdown will be to Milestones, Hampshire's museum of living history on Friday 12th November 2021.

Departing Bourne End at 9:30 am and returning by 4.00 pm, cost £23.00 to include return coach travel from Bourne End, admission charge & tip to driver.

"Immerse yourself in the past at Milestones, Hampshire's museum of living history. Explore the museum's streets, shops and buildings to discover how people used to live, buy a ration of sweets from our 1940s sweet shop, view our unique collection of vintage vehicles and have a go in our penny arcade! Your trip to Hampshire past will take you as far back as the age of the Victorians, with cobbled streets, a replica Victorian school room – complete with chalkboard and teacher's desk – and even a working printing press."

We have a few places still available - contact Tony Radstone

Current affairs October

This month we had two topics. The first was about how important was charisma to a political leader? Comparisons of Johnson with Merkel and Biden led to an understanding that popularity and effectiveness were not necessarily linked. We came back in the end to success or failure in dealing with the pandemic.

We also discussed the attitude of the police towards women, bearing in mind the murder of Sarah Everard. Changes in the workplace were explored and regrets were expressed that courtesy to everyone had declined.

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Golf - Bob Woodmansee

The intrepid band of BE U3A golfers continue to meet at Huntswood Golf Club every Friday morning – come rain or shine – and some of our number have been rewarded with excellent scores during the nine weeks since my last report.

However, one player has really stood out – Bob S having posted the day's best score on no fewer than six occasions – five of these with scores below 90 – excellent work – and only a year until the next Ryder Cup, Bob – put the date in your diary now – Rory McIlroy really does have something to fear! Other 'winners' in recent weeks (although, as the U3A is more about participation than competition, we don't like to overuse the term 'winner') have been Tony P (with 90) and Graham T (89). In addition, Mike B posted a new personal best with a round of 89 and Bob W equalled his 'PB' with 90. Also - Andy C has had a couple of great rounds since his return from holiday – his 95 only one shot shy of his 'PB'. And, by way of a variation, we had a team game/competition** a few weeks ago with Mike B, Andy C & Tony P representing Abbotsbrook (under the team name 'Abbo'!) and Mike T, the two Bobs and Graham representing the rest of Bourne End – loosely describing themselves as - yes, you've guessed – *'The BE Gees'* (*'Bee Gees'*)! A close contest ensued with everyone saying how much they enjoyed the variation to our normal format – and, for the record, the day was something of a *'Tragedy'* (!!) for *'The Bee Gees'* as *'Abbo'* won by two shots to a chorus of *'The Winner(s) Takes it All'* – although, sadly, they didn't win any *'Money, Money, Money'*!! **Oh - and by the way – *'The Name of the Game'* (!!) we played is called a *'Texas Scramble'* in golf (OK – you'll have to 'Google' it!) – and that's the last of my musical puns for today - I promise!

Finally - although our active playing membership has remained at 11 for some time now, recent weeks have seen holidays and various ailments take their toll on our numbers. Most concerning of these 'ailments' has concerned Frank (our bridge-playing, long-distance cyclist from Burnham) who had a heart attack in mid September and, since then, he hasn't been able to play golf - or do anything else active, for that matter. Happily, Frank is recovering after an op' - we all wish him well and hope to see him swinging his clubs again very soon. If you'd like to find out more about our small and friendly group then please drop me an email or give me a call –

Theatre Group – Andy Becker

First of all, an explanation – there is no actual theatre group. When a show is chosen that sounds like it would be of interest to our u3a members I send an email out to all members asking for anyone who is interested in seeing the show to contact me. If you are not interested in joining us for that theatre visit then you can ignore the invitation.

During September we made two visits to theatres. At the beginning of September, we went to the Mill at Sonning to see *Two into One*. As it was a Sunday matinee, we enjoyed an excellent lunch before the show and thoroughly enjoyed watching the show afterwards.

On the last day of September, we visited the Kenton Theatre in Henley on Thames to have a very entertaining evening with Pam Ayres. This visit was originally arranged for March 2020 and had been postponed twice but it was well worth the wait. Our next theatre trip will be to see *Top Hat*, again at the Mill at Sonning.

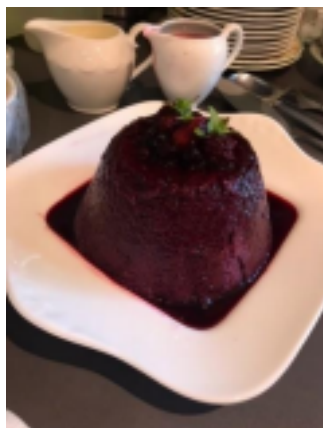
French – Marie Willingham

Our keen students continue to enjoy their classes. We are trying to improve our spoken French. We hope to achieve this by having fun with games like lotto, Kim's game and LOTS of revision! Occasionally some grammar gets thrown into the ring. The clanking of brain cells being reactivated is evident on the earnest

expressions suddenly giving way to a moment of joy when realisation dawns that all has not been lost! Lots of fun and firm friendships have developed. We seem to be down to our original 3 groups again. We have a conversation class which meets on alternate Monday afternoons. Our 2 improvers groups meet on Monday mornings or Thursday afternoons. At the moment we have spaces in all 3 so please get in touch if you think you would like to brush up your language skills. We are only open to those who have at least O level standard.

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Pudding Club



This month at pudding club the theme was Autumn fruits. As always we had a variety of flavours, all of which went down very well. The room suddenly goes very quiet when the puds are served!

The first one was an autumn pudding, similar to summer pudding but made with brown bread, fruits of the forest and a most important



ingredient, port. Delicious!

We then had a Swiss apple tart, an open tart with apples and creme anglaise, which also got a big thumbs up. Finally we tasted Roasted pears with Armagnac, a very grand title for something that turns out to be pear crumble!

However, it is the best crumble mix I've ever

found, and the taste of the pears is definitely uplifted by the Armagnac.

Next month the theme is Halloween and Guy Fawkes. Watch this space.....

New Experiences Group

We tried to get this group up and running just before the first lockdown and, sadly, had to shelve the idea for the next 18 months or so.

We are now trying to revive it and the purpose is for members to try activities which they have never done before or not for a long time. All activities will be risk assessed and covered by The Third Age Trust Insurance policy but we are hoping that they will be fun and exciting!

Examples of the type of activities we are looking into are: Archery, Foraging, Canoeing, Backstage Theatre trip, Ice skating, Go karting, Abseiling, Ballooning, Crazy Golf, Clay pigeon Shooting, Segway. The first activity will be on November 16th and is to the bowling alley in Wycombe as a gentle introduction to the group! We are hoping that an activity will be arranged every 2 months and Jan Perry would welcome some help as there is a lot of work involved in setting up these events.

If you would like to support Jan please contact her

Aerobics Group - Convenor - Leah Thompson,

Now that the Headway Charity has resumed their session in the Egham Room at the Community Centre, the Aerobics Group has had to move out but luckily the May Woollerton Hall (the big one) was available and we are now located there every Tuesday morning from 11.00-12.00 hours. The

move has been great as there are now over 20 people coming along regularly and with the extra space, we can really spread out! New exercise bands and dumbbells have been purchased so every one can use something which is clean and safe!

The group has men and women in it and ages range from low 60's to over 90 years! The 90+ year olds sometimes put the rest of us to shame with their enthusiasm and efforts. So why not come along and see what we do - you might even like it! You know the old saying- use it or lose it, we're determined not to!

Art Appreciation

We are now meeting in person and last month we discussed the community paintings of the Breughel family; very well supported, with the pictures each member of the group chose, projected on to the screen. The River and Rowing Museum current exhibition is booked for November, with plans building for future sessions.

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Painting/Drawing Group - Libby Evans

We meet in Flowerland cafe every Thursday at 9.30 am.
I can take a couple more painters. All standards welcome.





Family History:

We have welcomed some new members recently, now that we are able to hold our face to face meetings once more. The sessions are often a combination of input about a particular recommended website and personal progress shared; together with details of our different methods of recording the information. One excitement at our recent meeting was to hear that two of our members had discovered a shared link in their ancestry!

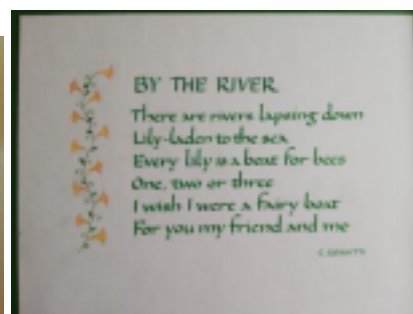
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U3A Calligraphy - Calligraphy is re-starting!

The first session since lockdown was on **Tuesday 12th October** from 1.30pm -3.30pm in the Target Room at the Community Centre, Bourne End. (There is a small charge to cover the cost of room hire.) The dates of the next sessions are **Tuesday 9th November** and **Tuesday 14th December**.

We look forward to meeting members old and new and to get our pens out and start being creative. See below for some of the projects that members of the group have been involved in recently. We hope to do small projects on our own or as a group during the sessions.

For more details please contact Angela Ramsay - cornishrobo@gmail.com





The

Android Groups - Convenor: Roger Carter

There are two Android groups, one meeting on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month, the other meeting on the next day, normally the 1st and 3rd Thursdays. The meetings are face-to-face (not Zoom), and are held at the convenor’s house at 2pm.

We are following a course covering all aspects of using your Android smartphone or tablet. The topics include: Touchscreen Interactions; The Home Screen and the Navigation Bar; Managing Apps and Widgets; Settings; The Hardware; Contacts and Sharing (inc. Email), and doing more with apps. Further topics include taking and editing photos, using maps on your device, using the File Manager Plus file manager, and taking advantage of Cloud storage (such as Google Drive and Microsoft OneDrive).

Each session includes activities enabling you to practise what you’ve learned, and comprehensive notes are provided. These notes are also available as a free ebook.

Both Android groups are currently full. However, if you wish to be placed on a waiting list for the next Android course please contact the convenor at u3aroger@gmail.com

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The Walking Group - Convenors: Roger & Sandra Carter

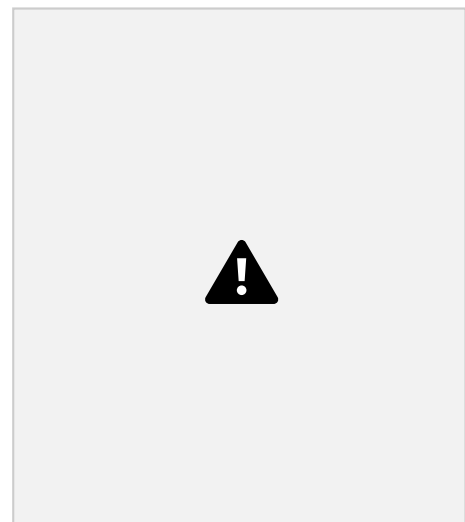
We meet on the first and third Mondays of the month at 10am for walks between 4 and 5 miles long (2 - 2½ hours) at a variety of locations within a 20-minute drive of Bourne End. Recent walks have been along various stretches of the Thames (Windsor, Marlow, and Hurley) as well as in the Chiltern Hills. The photo shows the group crossing a bridge at Hurley (taken on 18 October).

We are a large, friendly group, with normally around 25 attending our walks. If you are interested in joining us please contact the convenors at

Poetry Group – Andy Becker

Our theme for September was ‘Plants’ and we had a wide selection of poems that included flowers and trees, well-known poems and amusing ones. We do try to leave the choice as open as possible and it is very interesting to see the results. One of our members added to the selection she had made by writing her own poem – see below. We would welcome any members who would like to join us.

Woodland Walk – Judi Lamb



On my daily woodland walk
Beautiful birds chirp and Squawk.
Squirrels scampering among the
trees, As boughs bend in the gentle
breeze. I love to watch the colours
change, As seasons change, it's
strange
How nature knows when to grow and die.

The multitude of birds that fly high.
Mice, badgers and sly foxes too
Are born and die, the circle through
Life never ends, despite mankind.
This Wonderful World we find
The plants and creatures that talk,
When on a woodland walk.

Wine Tasting Group - co-convenors Steve Woodward and Mike Bellamy



The group continues to meet face to face on the third Monday evening each month. This month we sampled 6 wines from Portugal - 3 white and 3 red. They were from three of the five wine growing regions and were made from less well known grape varieties, were generally quite light although some had high alcohol levels! They were reckoned to be good value for money. The group very much welcomed a new member Roger - who will undoubtedly increase our knowledge level as well as our sampling capacity!. Next month we move to Greece. The photo is from our final session on Italy.

Solo

We meet together on the second Friday of each month, and often in small groups away from these main monthly meetings as friendships form over shared interests. We had a delicious meal together at The Queen's Head last month, and while some will join the outing to Milestones others will meet at Bourne End Garden Centre for a cup of tea or coffee and a chat. A December meeting is planned where we will discuss plans into the coming year.

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Bridge Group - Co-convenors - Marc Bond and Mike Bellamy

Recently we did a survey of group members and got a positive response to re-starting face to face sessions. We subsequently had a social in the Community Centre with nibbles and drinks, generously funded by one of the Group - Ingrid. (We also talked through some "hands"). Our first face to face session was held at the Community Centre on Friday 15th in the afternoon and had 13 players. We would like to re-start the Friday morning sessions. We need a minimum of two tables (8) players for a session to be viable (to cover the cost of the room hire which equates to £3 a head, but £2 if we get 3 tables going). We are conscious of the need to make such indoor sessions as safe as possible. New as well as returning members are very welcome.

Latin Group – Leah Thompson



In our
Latin
studies
we
have
been



learning about Chief Cogidubnus who was a real person who lived in the 1st century A.D. He was the chief of one of the biggest tribes of Britons living in the south of England and was a supporter of Rome. The emperor granted him a high status, and he was able to build a huge palace - said to be the one we recently

visited near Chichester. The first mosaic was discovered in 1993 when a man was ploughing a field and uncovered it. The actual Palace was twice the size of what has been uncovered to date (work is still on-going) but the parts you can see represent about 50% of the total, the rest is probably under a big housing estate. The exhibition shows how the important people lived, what they ate (a kitchen garden full of the plants the Romans brought with them is on the site) and also how future generations remodelled the building to suit changing needs.

We really enjoyed our visit and learnt more about the Roman way of life!

Crochet and Knitting Group – Gill DeVille



Everyone was pleased to get back to some semblance of order and brought some of their latest work with them as you will see from the photos. We lost one member, who has become a grandmother and now has all the duties that come with that title and we gained two new members, which was nice. The photos show our work, finished or in progress, laid out on Veronica's increasing blanket and also a lovely sparkly shawl she is making. There is a Doctor Who scarf of many colours, being made by Christine for her husband, that must already

be 30 inches long, a bag and crochet hook holder made by Glen, Barbara's pretty version of My Little Pony and penguins also made by Barbara, and a cat and seal made by me. You can just see Norma's blue crochet square to the right after being taught how to crochet by Glen. All in all a very productive afternoon.

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TVN Events

The movies from Muybridge and Meliés to Miramax and Marvel" (a history of film), a talk by Dr Jeffrey Aronson on Wednesday, 10th November, at 10.30 a.m. on Zoom. This event is free of charge - booking is through TicketSource - <http://u3atvnetwork.org.uk/?p=2186> for more information. Closing date for bookings is November 7th.

Colin Carritt returns, following his previous talk about the Spanish Civil War, to tell us about the Basque children who came to Britain as a result of that conflict, many of them to the Oxfordshire area. This will be on Friday, November 19th, at 10.30 a.m., on Zoom - Saving the Basque Children 1937. Booking is via TicketSource - see our website at <http://u3atvnetwork.org.uk/?p=2204>. The cost is £1 per device, and booking closes on November 16th.

"Otters are Back in the Thames" - a talk by Graham Scholey of the Environment Agency. This will be on Tuesday, 23rd November, at 10.30 a.m., on Zoom. The cost is £1 per device, bookings are via TicketSource and the closing date for bookings is November 19th. See information on <http://u3atvnetwork.org.uk/?p=2226>

"Van Gogh, the Golden Years" - a talk by Keith Appleby, who is making a welcome return to the Thames Valley Network events calendar. This talk is free of charge and booking is via TicketSource - see more information on our website at <http://u3atvnetwork.org.uk/?p=2224>. Closing date for bookings is November 20th.

David Marsh, *The Garden Trust Study Day Convenor*, is kindly offering TVN u3a members a **25% discount** off any of their lectures between now and Christmas. No need to be a member of Garden Trust. Simply access their website via: <https://thegardenstrust.org/events-archive/>

Clicking on any event there that appeals to you will take you immediately to the Eventbrite page (similar to our TicketSource system). To access the discount.... Go to the buy tickets page and in the top left corner there is a box which says in blue PROMO CODE. Enter/write TVNU3A and then press Apply..... 25% should disappear from the price. Then follow instructions re: your payment (£3 per online lecture). Any problems please contact the Gardens Trust secretary, these are not TVN events.

This special offer is only available until Christmas, so all garden lovers have a good look at what is on offer.

Mud'n'Wellies:

We have continued to explore nurseries and gardens while the weather holds; a most enjoyable recent visit to Waterperry Gardens in Oxfordshire was completed with a talk from the Curator of the Garden Museum on site to hear about the history of the building and estate. One more nursery visit before we move forward with discussions on individual gardening plans and a practical session with a chance to create a Christmas Wreath.

Book Group

The U3A book group has met twice since the last newsletter at our new venue which is the Target Room in the Community Centre. On August 26th, we discussed *The Family Upstairs* by Lisa Jewel. This was a sort of thriller with an unexpected ending and was not very well received by the group, scoring only six out of ten in the approval rating.

On Sept. 23rd we met to discuss *Hamnet* by Maggie O'Farrell. This much hyped novel was a bit of a marmite exercise with some loving it and some hating it. It managed a score of 7½. Some felt that the link with Hamlet was rather tenuous but others loved the narrative.

Our next meeting is on Oct 28th when we will talk about *Klara and the Sun* by the Japanese author Kazuo Ishiguro.

Annual Survey of Members of the Bourne End and District u3a - 2021/22

Each year members are asked to give feedback on how our u3a is working. Please complete this survey as the replies help the Committee to make improvements. All responses are treated as confidential and the results are collated on an anonymised basis.

Members have a choice on how to fill in the survey. This copy can be completed on paper and dropped off at the Community Centre where there is a collection box. If you can fill in the form electronically please do so, as it makes the collation of replies much easier. An email will be sent to members giving the address to find the survey on-line.

For couples who use the same email address you can send in separate comments by accessing the form twice on-line or just complete two paper copies.

Thank you for your continuing support.

Mike Bellamy.

Membership

1. Did you belong to another u3a before you joined the Bourne End & District one?

A Yes B No

2. Do you still belong to another u3a?

A Yes B No

3. How did you hear about this u3a?

A Word of mouth B Other

4. Did you join because you wanted to be in a particular interest group(s)?

A Yes. B No

5. Did you use the website to find out more about activities before you joined?

A Yes. B No

6. How many interest groups do you belong to?

A none B 1 C 2 D 3 E 4 F 5 or more

7. Do you come to the monthly talk?

A Most B Few C None

8. Have you used Zoom to listen to the monthly talks?

A Yes B No

9. Have you accessed the website since you joined?

A Yes B No If yes, please provide a comment on its usefulness.

Annual membership fee

10. Should the Committee continue to keep the annual fee as low as possible by expecting individual interest groups to cover their own costs?

A Yes. B No

11. The fee could be reduced by making the 5 editions of the national magazine an optional extra, would you support this?

A Yes. B No

12. Do you think that reverting to our local newsletter being produced every 3 months is frequent enough?

A Yes. B No

13. To simplify the membership renewal process we would like to exclude cash and cheques and rely on payment by credit card or internet banking. (We will have a card reader at Community Centre meetings). Would renewal by card or using the internet cause you a problem? A Yes B No If yes, please indicate the reasons.

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14. Would you support the membership fee being increased to allow for more social events to be organised?

A Yes B No

General activities and Interest Groups

15. Have you joined in any u3a events organised nationally, regionally or by the Thames Valley Network?

A Yes B No

16. Would you like to see more social events at the Community Centre in addition to the monthly talks?

A Yes B No

17. Would you join in if more outings to theatres and other venues were organised (with transport provided)?

A Yes B No

Please give us some ideas.

18. Do you feel that your Interest group(s) is/are meeting your expectations?

A Yes B No

Please indicate how it/ they might be improved.

Convenors and the Executive Committee

19. If you are a Convenor, do you feel you could be better supported by the Committee?

A Yes B No. If yes, please indicate how.

20. Do you feel all groups ought to have a co-Convenor to share the work?

A Yes B No

21. If you are a Convenor do you feel you could be better supported by other members of the group?

A Yes B No If yes, please indicate how.

22. Do you think the Committee could do more to support the participation of members in activities?

A Yes B No If yes, please indicate how.

23. Many members have skills/talents that could be really useful in continuing the development of the u3a. Please provide your email address or phone number if you would like to use your previous experience to help the u3a.

24 Would you be prepared to take on a Committee role or support the Committee by being in a small group focussed on a specific topic, e.g. recruitment of new members, producing the newsletter, helping run the website, IT support, developing our social media profile, producing articles for local media. If so please provide your email or phone number.

25 Please add any other comments you would like to make

Many thanks for completing the survey the results will be included in a future newsletter.