



Blue-footed Booby

Maggie Macbeth Art for All

Newsletter Spring 2025

Website: www.u3asites.org.uk/portsmouth

<https://portsmouth.u3asite.uk/>

Officers and Committee 2024

Chair	Mandy Richards	07496 009401
Secretary	Fiona Rosen	02392 824 414
Treasurer	Olivia Quinn	07506 145293
Beacon Co-ordinator and Website Manager	Andrew Barrow	07849 678 357
Beacon Assistant	vacancy	
Membership Secretary	Elaine Lawson	07976 930 880
Newsletter Editor	Susan Johnson	02392 669 938
Publicity & Information Officer	Andrew Wiltshire	07767 519835
Speaker Secretary	Carol-Anne Turner	07767 474792
Social Secretary	vacancy	
Group Co-ordinator	Rosemary Sirett	07540597804



Chair's Letter Spring 2025

Dear member welcome to my first message as Chair. I want to thank all of you who have wished me luck with my new role and shown me their support. So far, I am enjoying the challenge, although it is early days. Thanks to my fellow committee members for being so reliable and helpful in their roles. On that note I want to introduce you to a recent addition to the committee.

Andrew Wiltshire has agreed to take on the role of Publicity/Information Officer and will have ample opportunity to show us his flair for producing visual materials. If any of you feel you could contribute your energy to the Committee then please contact us.

The Spring term is generally light on news but there are some dates for your diary. The Easter Social has been arranged for Tuesday 1st April from 1:30pm and there will be a new members meeting on Wednesday 30th April for those who have joined since November 2024. I know for the Architecture group another visit to London is on the horizon and I wish you all a happy and safe time.

The major event coming up this year will be our fortieth anniversary celebrations. We have booked the Sports Hall for the afternoon of Friday 19th September and intend to invite some dignitaries to highlight the work of the U3A. The main purpose is of course to celebrate our past and present through the memories of members and provide a social occasion for us to enjoy. We will issue a special invite to past Chairs and hope that many of you who have served on the committee will attend.

For this event to be a huge success we will rely on you to help with providing entertainment e.g. poetry readings, singing, playing of musical instruments and producing examples of work to display e.g. artwork, sewing, knitting etc. The committee is in the process of thinking about how we provide food and drink, and we have already received an offer of a special cake! If you believe you could contribute to this special

event, please contact a committee member so we can co-ordinate all your offers.

Finally, on a sad note, I want to acknowledge the passing of two members. Betty Currie had been unable to attend classes in recent years due to ill health George Jenkins was coming to the Hub regularly until part way through the Autumn term. Both will be missed by their friends at the U3A. Best wishes for the coming term.

Mandy Richards Chair 07496 009401

Welcome to new members.

New: David Hunter, Helen Hunter, Paul Robinson, Alison Fraser, Gillian Hawkins, Colin Harris. Jean Manchester.

Welcome to Returning : Jean Manchester, Jayne Bennet



In Memory of George Jenkins who sadly passed away just before Christmas

George was born in Watford in 1931. His early life was spent in Pontypool during the war. He gained a place at Grammar School in Rhos and excelled both academically and as a middle-distance runner and cricketer.

After school, National Service took George into the Royal Military Police, which later encouraged him to join the West Sussex Police. While living in Birdham he met and married Diana, and had two children Nick and Becca, of whom he was very proud.

After ten years with the police, George had an opportunity to follow a degree course in English and History at Southampton University. This led him to taking a teaching post in Leigh Park, where he was revered by his students, so much so that they organised a reunion and party for his ninetieth birthday! On retirement, George bought a farmhouse in rural southwest France, and lived there for fifteen years, immersing himself in French culture and rural life, as well as perfecting his French language.

He returned to Southsea at the age of 72, to be close to Becca, Nick, David and his grandchildren. He joined the Hampshire police choir, which became a big part of his life, resulting in recitals at many music festivals. He also loved playing the clarinet.

After a few years he joined the u3a and started leading French classes, and this is where I met George in 2009. He was such a kind, generous and gentle man, with some amazing attributes and skills. At the age of 93, almost twenty years my senior, his memory and quickness of thought were far superior to mine. Over lunches, as well as in our French classes, I was often astonished by his knowledge of history, particularly European history, and, of course, he spoke French 'comme langue maternelle', which George would explain, means 'like a native speaker'. When I visited George in QA in December, one of his ex-sixth form students, now an English teacher, was also visiting, and, while reminiscing with her, he seemed to be able to recall all his students' names and strengths from what must have been over thirty years earlier.

The effort he put into his French classes went way beyond the call of duty, he wrote and typed all his handouts, incorporating cartoons, quizzes and crosswords, I have a thick pile of these still, I just can't imagine how many hours he spent each week on all this

preparation. His wit and positive attitude were an example to us all, always smiling and charming the pupils in his class. George also helped to set up the twinning visits with the u3a in Caen. I remember one beautiful day during one of these visits to France where we were all taken to Giverny, and George was explaining all about Monet. What a wonderful time we all had.

Another example of George's drive and generosity, in 2013, when George would have been just a youngster of about 82, someone suggested that the u3a start up a Spanish class, akin to his French courses. Anyway, typically, George agreed to take on this challenge alongside his French classes, despite his previous lack of knowledge of Spanish. He selected an excellent BBC textbook, and we worked our way through this, with, as George put it, the teacher being just one chapter ahead of his very grateful pupils!

Even at the age of 93, George had quite amazing physical agility, always walking from his flats to u3a events, eschewing offers of lifts home in all but the most inclement of weathers. Before Covid we used to have regular lunches with a group of my ex-work colleagues in a Malaysian restaurant in North End for his favourite nasi goreng, and George used to walk all the way there from his seafront flat with his trademark hat and scarf, and a copy of the i newspaper to read while he waited for us.

When I saw George at our French class in November, he mentioned that he was feeling a bit below par, and later he was joking with me, mentioning that if you buy an old banger, you expect the odd part to give you trouble!

I'm so glad I saw him at The Limes ward in Milton on 17th December, the first time I met his charming daughter Becca, and just a week before he died, he seemed so full of joie de vivre and in great mental shape, just like the George we all knew and loved. He was even singing carols and talking of coming out to visit his family on Christmas day. The Limes environment seemed to take him right back to his old self, chuckling away and eager to get on with a crossword. So that's a marvellous memory of him that I will always hold onto.

So farewell dear George, many thanks for the pleasure, knowledge and fun you gave us all. I'm sorry, for my part at least, that my French didn't improve quite as much as you deserved.

From now, under Susan's watchful eye, we'll all strive to do you justice. **Neil Botton**

Architecture



Every year, when autumn propels us towards winter and the excitement and bustle of Christmas, it also brings the annual onslaught of flu, snuffles and coughs and sudden dips in our health. When this happens at the u3a, the new deputy system comes into play. An unavoidable absence, due to an unexpected health problem for me, meant that Architecture's indefatigable Jim Sweasey was thrust into spotlight.

Fortunately, there were three videos in reserve, as yet unseen, about the three famous London food markets, designed by the prolific but little-known architect of Tower Bridge, Horace

Jones for the class to watch but there were also the finishing details to organise the Architecture Christmas lunch! It goes without saying that it was handled in Jim's always unflappable and efficient manner for which I'm so grateful. Thank you, Jim, not only on behalf of myself but for everyone at Architecture.

With Christmas and New Year celebrations well behind us, I found inspiration for the next two meetings in the many images, during the festive season, of cathedrals and churches, the stained-glass windows and soaring arches of buildings still standing after nearly a millennium in some cases. We set out over the next two meetings to investigate why, historically, they were built, how they were built, the styles in which they were built and the men whose labours produced these miracles of stonework.



We spent the January meeting looking at the craftsmen who created them and at the historical reasons for Britain suddenly becoming a huge construction site for the building of castles and cathedrals. History is rarely simple. There were many undercurrents in the period after William the Conqueror's invasion, but the big reason was to imprint the country with his brand. The Norman presence was announced very loudly with the many castles that were built and the soldiers garrisoned within them, but the message got even louder with the awe-inspiring and massive cathedrals that began to grow in the seats of power, gradually piercing the sky to heights never seen before.

These were castles of religion that would be ruled over by aggressive Norman bishops, waging war on the conquered population for their bodies and their souls, their bodies for servitude to the new Norman landowners, for taxes, tithes and soldiering and their souls to be saved from hellfire.

The men whose skills achieved these extraordinary structures were the master masons. Sometimes spending decades or even lifetimes on one building, there were even



dynasties of masons who passed on their skill down the family, son to son, on the same building. A job for life. But their lives were hard. A mason was apprenticed at a young age to a master mason for at least 7 years to learn his

trade. There was no pay, just bed and board provided. Finally, an experienced master mason, at the top of his abilities, would earn the grand sum of around 36 old pence (3 shillings) a week, about £12 a year. Work stopped from November until February but when they did work, it was from

sunrise to sunset. They worked on wooden scaffolding of doubtful safety, with no protection, harness of hard hats - and, of course no insurance for injuries or death. The set square and the compass were the basic technical items they used for planning and designing and the mallet and chisel remain the same instruments used today as then.

Our February meeting took us further into their world to discover the main constituents of the Norman architectural style. Called Romanesque in mainland Europe, where it used the rounded Roman arch as the foundation of its design, in Britain, being more parochial, it was called Norman, having been brought to us by the invaders across the Channel.

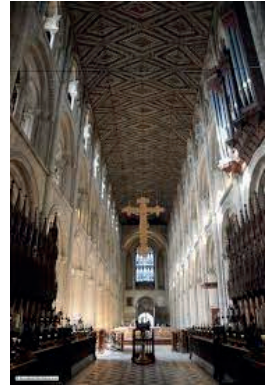
The rounded arch needed massively strong columns and walls where only small windows were possible and the decorative motifs were mostly simple and geometric, as in the zigzag chevron, the dogtooth and the nailhead. The skill required to build in this way



was well beyond the Anglo Saxon builders and that skill was supplied by an influx of experienced Norman stone masons from Europe.

To find out more about how the whole thing looked when finished, I chose the lesser-known cathedral at Peterborough. After Durham cathedral, it's possibly our most solidly Norman structure with only a couple of additions in 400 years. The immensely long nave, 482 feet in length, with its massively Norman columns and walls has no signs of the Gothic or the pointed arch. The ceiling is totally unique in England, being elaborately painted with 40 lozenge-shaped frames, each containing

its individual motif in brilliant colours. These flat, decorated ceilings were greatly prized during this period, before the vaulted Gothic style but this, from around 1240, is the only one remaining in this country complete and original. There is a late addition, from around 1500, a retrochoir at the east end where there is an explosion of delicate and delicious fan vaulting, only matched by the ceiling of the chapel of King's College, Cambridge. This isn't so surprising as the same man, the top Tudor architect, John Wastell, designed both. Nothing but the best for Peterborough, it would seem. It may not have the charm of most cathedral cities, but the sight of its ecclesiastical splendours had several members of the class planning a possible visit. I admire their enthusiasm!



Our next planned actual visit will be our annual London trip in April to explore Southwark on a guided walk and to go downriver to Greenwich's multiple wonders. More reports will follow in the summer Newsletter! **For more information contact:**

Gilly Zeffertt 07845 849752

The Music Discovery Group

The Music Group has a stalwart collection of members, with attendance averaging around 12 persons per meeting. The Group's membership is not growing greatly, but it is very stable and so the group will continue to meet for the foreseeable future. We are a democratic group; the theme of the following meeting being decided by the group at the close of the previous meeting, bearing in mind that the 'purpose' of the group is 'discovery', exploring music that is unfamiliar; either an unfamiliar work by a familiar composer, or a work in which both the piece and the composer are unfamiliar. One recent meeting was, as a mark of respect, themed around music, all of it French, that was loved by George Jenkins, a popular and much-loved group member who passed away at Christmas. And finally... Every group needs an effective and enthusiastic Deputy Leader, and I am very blessed in having the continuing support and encouragement of Gilly Zeffertt. Thank you, Gilly, from me and the other group members.

For more information contact: Andrew Barrow 07849 678 357



French Experience

We continue to look at all aspects of French life. We started by looking at the re-opening of Notre Dame. What an amazing sight it is now. Whether religious or not, it is a sight to behold. Interesting



to note that some of the workers restoring the building formed a choir, maybe inspired by the location and the acoustics. This term we focussed on idioms with animals. We may say a frog in the throat but the French have a cat in theirs. Also, if you speak French badly it is said you speak it like a Spanish cow. Fortunately, that doesn't apply to anyone in our group. We had the unusual nursery rhyme of the little shepherdess who killed her cat because it ate her cheese. Of course, this was not just intended for children and referred to Marie-Antoinette who pretended to be a shepherdess in the Trianon. People take it in turns to lead us through some aspect of French life. We have had ooh la la Bingo which was great fun and a quiz about famous French people. One formidable French woman we had never heard of was their first female general who died recently at the age of 102. Valerie André who had been a doctor, a pilot, a parachutist and a surgeon. In later life she took up the fight for women's rights. Apparently, she is the most decorated woman in the world.



Oly found an interesting article about the woman who was the model for the Statue of Liberty. She was the widow of Mr Singer who had invented the sewing machine. A famous society beauty she was the inspiration behind the face of this famous statue. Thanks to Phil and Janice for their quizzes and Angela for Ooh la la Bingo. Who knows where we will go next.

For more information contact: Susan Johnson 02392 669938



Brush up your French Conversation

This new U3A group meets on Mondays at 2pm – 4pm fortnightly. The aim is to practise speaking French, not to be anxious about lack of fluency but to verbalise what we know already, to listen and communicate. This is helpful to anyone at level A1 & A2 (Debutant)

Some activities are: -

- * Preparing stories to tell each other/ asking questions
- * Using a French CD course to practice speaking and listening.
- * Listening to Alexa, a French teacher on YouTube

If you're interested it would be helpful if you'd assess your French level. Go to:- Français avec Nelly on YouTube

'What's your French Level? Take this test!'

(This is a good speaking/listening test- it gives you a 10 second response time. It doesn't give you a level- you assess your own level by stopping when it gets too difficult. I came out A2. I tried B1, couldn't answer quick enough but was able to translate if I paused it.

· Lingolia francais test. What's your French level. Take the free test. (I took the A2 test – 7/14 correct – they gave me level A1)

· ESL Free French Test.

This takes 20 minutes – it's reading with no time limit. I got 28/40 correct – they gave me Intermediate B1

· TEFL Oxford House Language courses. This is a reading test. I got 24/42 correct and they gave me B1.

(the group is not suitable for complete beginners or any fluent speakers sneaking in!!)

Please email me to register interest hilary@poley.co.uk

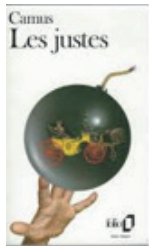
FRENCH READING GROUP, Mondays

Le plus grand risque est de ne prendre aucun risque

Well, I don't know about the climate, and democracy, but have we taken any risks in our French group? That's for you to judge. We continue to enjoy our fortnightly meetings at the hub, where we enjoy reading the French language in its many guises. We savour novels, plays, articles from "Le Monde", as we try to keep up with politics in France, and even celebrity gossip as we pried into the lives of Francois Mauriac and Francoise Hardy, who died only last year. We are of an age where her songs were part of our youth, reminding us how different the world of the sixties was!



As Ruth Guyer says: "We are a small but happy band of enthusiasts, who enjoy reading aloud round the table. Over the years we have tackled almost every type of French literature, including novels – classical and modern, short stories, poetry, plays and newspaper articles. Along the way, we improve our pronunciation and vocabulary. Recently, we even caught up with some street slang."



This term we have been reading Albert Camus' play, "Les Justes", known as "The Just Assassins" in English. It is based on the true story of a group of Russian revolutionaries who assassinated the Grand Duke Sergei Alexandrovich in 1905. It was a departure from our usual fare, and reactions were mixed: "interesting!", "philosophical", "gloomy!" It explores the moral issues associated with murder and terrorism, which Camus deals with in an erudite and dark way, provoking interesting discussions.

At the time of writing, we are reading the first Maigret by Georges Simenon, "Pietr-le-Letton". It is a pleasure to read, and we all want to know how Maigret will solve the puzzle. We discovered Simenon musing about the creation of Maigret's character: he was sitting on his boat, and imagined a "large, powerfully built gentleman I thought would make a passable inspector. As the day wore on, I added other features, a pipe, a bowler hat, a thick overcoat with a velvet collar, and as it was cold and damp, I put a cast iron stove in his office." Charming!

Finally, who could disagree with Juliet, when she says that, "one of



the most difficult aspects of a French Reading Group is choosing what to read next. There are always articles from current affairs, and poetry is always a fallback; it does encourage one to look around." On her quest, Juliet found "Angelique, Marquis des Anges" by Anne and Serge Golon, which was recommended by HM Queen Camilla. However, Juliet found the archaic vocabulary too long and tedious! Ah well! C'est la vie!

So, while we dive into our myriad choices, if you have a fairly fluent grasp of French, you are welcome to join us. Did we take any risks? Come along and help ensure that we do! A bientot!

For more information contact: Jane Helliwell 07778 484974



German Studies

This term we started our new project, looking at German cinema. 20th German history has meant that their film industry has undergone many reincarnations. The first film studio, the largest in the world, was Babelsberg, founded in 1912, located outside Berlin. Films from the early years include *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (1920) and *Nosferatu* (1922). The years between 1924 -29 became known as the Golden Years: a well-known name from this time is the director of *Metropolis*, Fritz Lang. In the Weimar period, the rise of the Nazi era, films were mainly under the control of Joseph Goebbels. With the industry now effectively an arm of the totalitarian state, no films could be made that were not in accord with the views of the ruling regime. You might recognize the name Leni Riefenstahl, who made many propaganda films for the Nazis, including film of the 1936 Olympics. Many would-be directors left the country during that time. One left Vienna for Berlin in 1927, then when the credits rolled for his 14th film (*What Women Want*) in 1933, his name had been expunged from the credits. He managed to escape, changed his name slightly: have you by now guessed it was none other Billy Wilder! Post-WW11, it was believed that 1950's German cinema was turning out the same old genre formulas, just slightly laundered of Fascist content, as it had in the 1930's. Huge change was afoot by the 1960's. A quote from that time was "We don't go to the cinema to see daily life among the ruins, but rather to forget our daily lives in the ruins. For our money we want the illusions that reality has robbed us of." Melodramas and also crime dramas were exceedingly popular – the latter because crime dramas had been discouraged during the Third Reich, because there was supposedly been no crime under Hitler.....(Plus ça change: there are national leaders nowadays who, with a stroke of the pen, change the facts!) We have looked at some famous actors; yet to come is a look at films from the divided Germany also the more modern era. Once again, we are hugely indebted to Jim who always manages to find clips for us to watch to get a flavour of the films we are discussing.

For more information contact: Hilary Nicklin 02392 297 867



Beginners Spanish

We are a small friendly group eager to improve our spoken Spanish we study different subjects each week i.e. numbers, dates introducing ourselves, how to ask questions etc we then review the verbs used. All useful for holidays in Spain we then review each person's homework from the previous week, sparking conversation in Spanish within the group we even found ourselves singing along to a song about colours in Spanish (I can sing a rainbow/ canto los colores) last week.

No one worries if they get anything wrong , we just see it as an enjoyable learning experience. So come and join us!

For more information contact: Howard Parsons 07784 760947

Spanish

We started the term with the traditional topic of "What did you do during the holidays" We seem to be a well-travelled group. We then moved on to fairy stories with modern takes on the old favourites. It seems that after eating their porridge Goldilocks disappeared and the bears were no longer hungry (possibly eaten?) There was a very moving story of the whale and

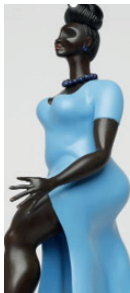


the bird who fell in love but had to separate as neither could live in each other's world.

There was also the amazing story of the man from Venezuela who was swallowed by a whale in Chilean waters and spat out again. We have tried Bingo and word searches (sopa de letras) and even fit in a bit of grammar now and again. We follow a course book Pasos 2 but of course supplement with videos and songs. We even tried "What's My Line" in Spanish. Nobody takes it too seriously and we focus on having fun while learning.

For more information contact: Susan Johnson 02392 669 938

Art Appreciation



We started the year with a look at our own turnip prize entries. The winner was Di Wren with a small mirror entitled "self-portrait" It fulfilled the criteria of minimal effort having been made and absolutely no artistic merit. A late entry by Tony Valvona throwing down" The last straw" that he had picked up during the break was a strong contender.

On a more serious note, we looked at the various items that had been on the fourth plinth in Trafalgar Square. They do range from the weird to the wonderful. At the moment there is a display of masks taken from transgender people from across the world. In 2026 it will change to this vibrant statue. Wonder what Nelson makes of it all!



We then looked at the talented couple of Eric Ravilious and Terziah Garwood. For many years Eric had the limelight but now his wife is getting her share of the glory and Dulwich Picture Gallery have an exhibition dedicated to her. The talented couple could do everything from wood engravings to murals and captured what life was



they were commissioned in 1866 by the Society of Arts, today they are administered by English Heritage.

Today London has over 1000 Blue Plaques. Unfortunately, the country's first blue plaque no longer exists – it marked 24 Holles Street, the birthplace of the controversial poet Lord Byron, it was removed when the building was demolished.

In 2000 English Heritage extended the scheme from London to other cities, including Portsmouth, chosen because of its naval history and its diverse range of historical figures.

In addition to the English Heritage Plaques Portsmouth City Council operates its own Blue Plaques Scheme to commemorate other notable people and their achievements. They include men and women from all walks of life - Military, Authors, Poets, Artists, Architects, Politicians, Sports, Engineers, Educators, Explorers, Actors, Comedians and Musicians,

There are too many in Portsmouth to be able to describe them all here. However, as well as the well-known figures including John Pounds, Charles Dickens, Thomas Telford, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Isambard Kingdom Brunel, Peter Sellars and Rudyard Kipling there are other plaques in Portsmouth commemorating less well-known people who also have fascinating stories to tell.

Including –

Artist, George Vicat Cole (1833-1893), born at 11 Pembroke Road, Southsea, He was one of the most popular landscape painters of his time. Another artist William Lionel Wyllie known for his paintings of the southern counties, lived in Tower House, Old Portsmouth, he died in 1931 and is buried in the churchyard at Portchester Castle.

Military Historian and Artist, Fred T. Jane. lived at, 17 Elphinstone Road, Southsea. Jane (1865 – 1916) was editor of the annual reference books still used today: *All The World's Fighting Ships* and *All The World's Airships*.



Victoria Cross

Scientist, Hertha Ayrton. Was born at, 6 Queen Street, Portsea. Born Phoebe Sarah Ayrton (1854 – 1923), she is one of the foremost scientists in history, helping to make key advances in electronics. She was the first woman to be nominated as a Fellow of the Royal Society and she was involved in the Woman's suffrage movement

Commander Norman Holbrook. (1888-1976) lived at 18 Grove Road South, Southsea. He was the first submariner to be awarded the Victoria Cross for his bravery, sinking a Turkish battleship during the Dardanelles Campaign of WW1. Captain Edward Unwin (1864-1950) -12 Helena Road Southsea also received the Victoria Cross for bravery at Gallipoli in 1915.

Nevil Shute Norway. 14 Helena Road, Southsea, lived there between 1936 and 1940. He was an aircraft designer and a novelist. Shute started the company "AirSpeed" based at Portsmouth Airport. Not content with one successful career, he also wrote over 20 novels including 'A Town Like Alice'

Children's author, Percy F. Westerman. (1876-1959) was a Children's author who lived at 55 Campbell Road, Southsea. He wrote his first book for his son, John, and would go on to write 174 children's adventure books.

Thomas Ellis Owen (1805-1862) and Frank Matcham (1856-1920) were both architects. Owen lived in Southsea from 1820 and is recognised as the man who built some of the finest buildings that still exist in Southsea.



Frank Matcham was a theatre designer who built both The Kings Theatre and The Theatre Royal.

Sir Alec Rose (1908-1991) owned a greengrocer's shop at 38 Osborne Road, Southsea. In 1968 he completed a single-handed voyage around the world in his yacht "Lively Lady". He was greeted as a hero when he returned to Southsea, he received the 'Freedom of the City' and a Knighthood from the late Queen.

As well as individual achievements being recognised groups of people and organisations are also celebrated with Blue Plaques.

The Cockleshell Heros lived in Worthing Road and Spencer Road while they were training for their mission in 1942. They trained at Lumps Fort (now the Rose Garden) and Eastney. The mission was to use canoes – the cockleshells – to access the French port of Bordeaux which was used to supply the German army. Twelve men embarked on the mission, only two returned. Winston Churchill said of their mission *"it shortened the war by six months"*



The Birdcage - A plaque on the building in Eastney Road opposite Bransbury Park stirs memories for many people who grew up in Portsmouth in the 1960s, it was one of the best venues on the south coast for music and dance. Many famous entertainers of the day performed there including – Rod Stewart, Pink Floyd, David Bowie and The Who.

The Badminton Association - In 1893 a meeting was advertised, by the Secretary of the Portsmouth Badminton Association it was held at 8 Waverley Grove, Southsea its purpose was to form a 'Badminton Association' for England, the first in the world. Also, a plaque at 103 High Street Old Portsmouth remembers Kathleen Marjorie Henderson, a badminton player. Born in Portsmouth in 1905, she won the All-England Badminton Championships ladies doubles four times and represented England six times

Portsmouth Football Club – the initial meeting to form a football club in Portsmouth took place at 12 High Street, Old Portsmouth. In 1898 a group of local enthusiasts including the owner of the local Brickwood's Brewery came together to form a syndicate to buy a patch of land in Fratton on which to build a football ground and Portsmouth FC was started.

Plaques are still being unveiled. The public can nominate someone they think deserves a plaque and if it fits the criteria, it will probably be accepted.

Two of the most recent in Portsmouth commemorate women - Margaret Rock who worked at Bletchley Park during WW2 is remembered at Portsmouth High School in Kent Road. Also at 2 Kent Road, Kate Edmonds, the first female Portsmouth City Councillor in 1918, has a plaque on the building that was the Woman's Suffrage Headquarters.



So, make sure as you walk around Portsmouth that you are looking out for the many Blue Plaques, Enjoy Hunting!

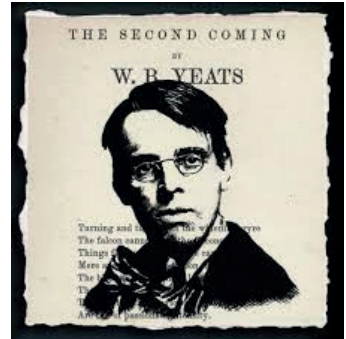
For more information contact: Rosemary Sirett 07540597804

POETRY and POETRY & DRAMA Groups, Wednesday & Thursday

OUR REVELS CONTINUE

What rough beast, its hour come
round at last,
Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and
everywhere
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world.

(From William Butler Yeats' "Second Coming")

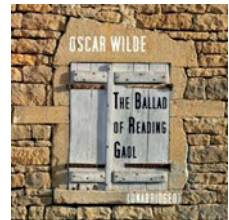


Well, thanks, Bill! That's cheered us up! How much longer will our revels be able to continue? No relief there from the daily diet of doom. However, it does make clear poetry's ability to focus the mind with surgical precision. Metaphor, simile, imagery and rhythm and all the other tools in poetry's fabulous repertoire have an almost magical ability to clarify our minds. (And, of course, the opposite, leaving us in a wonderful state of mystical confusion!) That, in a nutshell, is why our poetry and drama groups go from strength to strength.



So, what have we been up to? In our Wednesday group, which sticks to poetry only, (whatever that is!), we have looked at American poets: Maya Angelou's inspiring "Still I Rise" still manages to raise the spirits (especially if you can find her performing it!); Sylvia Plath's "Mirror" enthralled us with its multilayered commentary on life. Away from the US, I'm particularly fond of Hopkins, and especially love his grumpiness when talking to his god in "Thou art indeed just Lord" – you can almost hear the "but!" We've also enjoyed new and popular poet, Brian Bilston, with his boundless energy for wordplay.

Also in the Wednesday group, we have again started to read longer poems: we have sympathised with the "The Lady of Shalott" in Tennyson's famous tale, and with Oscar Wilde in his "Ballad of Reading Gaol". Come to think of it, plenty of sympathy was required also for the characters in Christina Rossetti's "Goblin Market" and Robert Browning's "Pied Piper of Hamelin".



Our Thursday group has mostly concentrated on drama recently, with Priestley's "An Inspector Calls", and Shaw's "Pygmalion", presenting totally contrasting fates for poor but honest underdogs. Shakespeare's "Julius Caesar" was also a riveting read. Poetry has not been neglected, though, and, as usual, many vibrate with contemporary and personal resonance: T S Eliot's "The Wasteland" (excerpts only, so far), Hardy's "Drummer Hodge" and Shakespeare's "Fear no more the heat o' the sun", which leads me appositely and fondly to the late George Jenkins:



George was a monumental force in U3A. Over the years, he inspired hundreds of people to study and love the French language. Not satisfied

with that, he was a magnificent contributor to our poetry and drama group, often treating us to a song (he had a lovely voice, having sung in a police choir) and his insight and teaching experience gave real heft to his speaking parts in our drama group. He particularly loved Shakespeare. Well, your revels now are ended, George - we'll miss you. **For more information contact: J.M. Floyd Pattison 07778 484968**



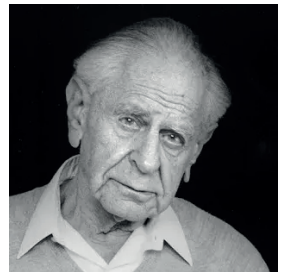
Writing Group

Since our last report, the Writing Group has thoroughly enjoyed reminiscing on paper about our vivid memories of going to live pop and rock music (plus some R&B) during the 50s and 60s in Portsmouth; also covering New Beginnings, The Journey, and Spring. Next month, we are intending to start some fiction, creating opening

paragraphs for a short story to be continued by a different writer the following month. We tried this last term. It was amusing! Members of the Writing group can write about non-fiction subjects, memoirs/ past experiences, fiction as in ghost stories, fake folk tales or comedy sketches - just as they please. We like to cover a wide variety. Do join us if you are interested. We meet fortnightly on a Thursday afternoon at 2.00 – 3.30. You would be very welcome. **For more information contact: Barbara Spiegelhalter 07966 219764**

Philosophy

The New Year has welcomed some new members and provided some important sessions by skimming just a little off the top of the rich brew prepared by the mind of Sir Karl Popper. The label 'falsificationist' does not come to grips with many of the most important aspects of his work. During the dark years of WWII, he was engaged in writing 'The Open Society and its Enemies' where he took certain philosophers to task for their role in encouraging totalitarian thinking. The lesson is very timely today. Our world seems to be rushing Lemming-like back to the Thirties with its populist psychobabble and upended values.



Against the notion of Democracy embodied in the Democratic Republics of the Eastern Bloc Popper maintained that the trappings of the voting system were extrinsic to Democracy. The basic requirement was that political leaders could be replaced without the need for bloodshed. This insight seems to have passed even the writers of the American constitution by.

Further insights to be gained from Popper's work relate to the Mind/Body problem. His Evolutionary Epistemology and Theory of the Three Worlds offer useful cues.

Happy New Year, Folks!!! **For more information contact: Tony Stutters 07739 832 774**



world of Books

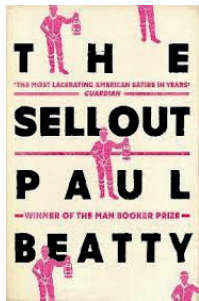
Straight back after half term we accepted a book called, My Sister, The Serial Killer. Well what can I say, there were two siblings, sisters, so so different but so very much the same. The eldest sister, tall skinny and very plain the younger sister petite curvy and very beautiful, sister one a nurse, sister two a dress designer and a serial killer.

The book explores family dynamics where the youngest pretty sibling

can do no wrong but the older sister who is very protective of her younger sibling ends up being complicit in her murders by clearing up the mess made and disposing of the bodies.

This need she feels to protect her younger sister even causes her to sacrifice the man she loves but this level of protection also leads to jealousy when she felt she was losing this man to her sister. At this she loses her rational being damages the ring he was about to give her sister and ransacks his office. This vandalism was blamed on one of the hospital cleaners for which he was sacked and this she is happy to go along with.

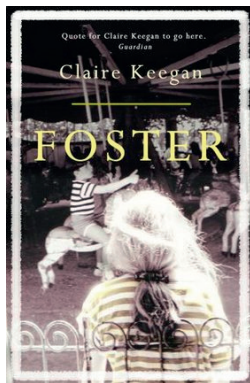
We know their father is dead and while it would appear to be a very unpleasant accident in the home there is always the element of doubt as to whether this was a genuine or was he also murdered? This is a very readable book which explores the interactions within a family and the differences in siblings not only while growing up but also when they reach adulthood.



Our second book was completely different (be careful what you wish for). This book *The Sellout* by Paul Beatty was very much acclaimed and awarded, it also won the Man Booker Award and one of the judges an Olivia Williams, felt it was one of the funniest books she had ever read, even Simon Schama felt it to be hilarious and profound. Not sure which edition they were reading but we all struggled with this book it did not appear to have any sort of story there was certainly no beginning, middle or end and the language was not the sort of thing you would read in Sunday school.

I think this book attempted to outline the life of the author and the changes in the environment in which he lived i.e. the encroachment of urban living and the attempt by people of colour to reinstate segregation between black and white, not really sure what his point was, but he missed it big time.

A very controversial book maybe the lack of humour we found is due to the book being set in America and catered to the American sense of humour, not a book I could recommend very hard to read and even when finished I was asking myself what on earth was that all about.



Just at the beginning of our new term we were given Foster by Claire Keegan this traces the experience of a child who comes from a quite barren environment whose mother did her best against all the odds but there was little creature comforts of time for the many children who filled their home just survival of the fittest, she was then sent to relatives while her mother had yet another baby and there she found a completely different lift style, she was cared for given time by the adults given different experiences and thrived, when the time came for her to go back to her birth parents confusion reigned while she felt she should be loyal to her parents and go back in her heart she did not want to do this, too young to understand her feelings she remained torn between the two families and the book never tells you which way it went in the end. A lovely book but a very quick

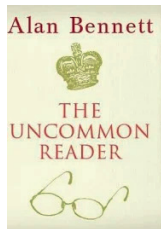
read. Our next offering was the *Secret Chord* by Geraldine Brooks an amazing book not easy to read but very much enjoyed by the whole group. It outlines the rise of King David from a young shepherd boy to the much-acclaimed King of Israel. This book should not

be read as a factual account but as a story as the research available to the author was very limited and relied very much on other people's accounts. Albeit this is a brilliant book, unfortunately there is a lot of bloodshed, family intrigue, sexual assault and murder. David's rise to power is tumultuous and the consequences of his choices will resound for generations. In a life that taken him from obscurity to fame, he is in turns and hero and a traitor, a glamorous young tyrant and beloved king murderous despot and remorseful and diminished patriarch. His wives both love and fear him and his sons will betray him surrounded by all this bloodshed and violence one would expect his death of be on the battlefield or as part of a plan against him, but no his death is described 'as coming on padded feet' and he surrendered to age and illness. **For more information contact : Christine Courtney-Wells 02392 297723**



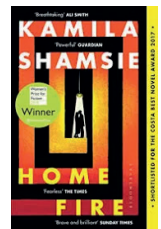
Pelham Book Group

Our four books this season have been revelations, introducing us to characters and situations previously unknown. What learning experiences we were asked to consider!

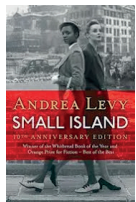


Our first read, Alan Bennett's novella "The Uncommon Reader", 2007, was a delight. It had his wit, humour and poignancy as a truly "uncommon" reader - the late Queen Elizabeth II - through bizarre, accidental circumstances is drawn into the joy of reading. She becomes obsessed with books, desperate to discuss her reading with her advisors, visiting nobles, members of her household with dire, often very amusing consequences that ultimately threaten her constitutional position. The touching conclusion made us reflect on her years as a monarch and the responsibilities that went with it. Alan Bennett is a literary master and we all applauded this short but valuable read.

"Home Fire", Kamila Shamsie, 2017, our next book took us into the complex, difficult lives of a Muslim family coping with British bureaucracy and attitudes, then the horror of terrorism. We were all shocked by events in the novel as it explored the family's attempts to maintain a unique cultural and religious identity in a hostile Britain and beyond. Themes of grief, love, loyalty and survival were evident in her five characters who each speak to us, the reader, as the plot develops.

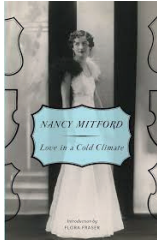


Shamsie bases this novel on Sophocles's "Antigone", an interesting but unnecessary dimension as the novel stands alone as a disturbing, thought-provoking challenge to the Western understanding and attitudes.



Our next novel proved to be another learning experience for us all, "Small Island", Andrea Levy, 2004, which covers mainly the post-war Caribbean migration, the Windrush episode and its consequences. The story is told by four narrators - Hortense and Gilbert who migrate to London in 1948 and an English couple, Queenie and Bernard, in whose house Hortense and Gilbert find lodgings. The chronology shifts between 1948 and before the outbreak of WW II as we learn of the lives each lead before London, 1948, the climax of events. We all felt this is required reading as it is so thoroughly

researched and carefully written illustrating the appalling attitudes to Caribbean people who have fought for their mother country. It is a story of black and white people who have survived the war and want to move on.



With relief we turn to this month's novel, "Love in a Cold Climate", Nancy Mitford, 1949, yet to be discussed. I anticipate this will be pure escapism as we follow the very wealthy aristocracy seeking love and/or an advantageous, perfect marriage, perhaps never to live happily ever after. We will be there as debutantes in beautiful gowns for the Season, a complete change for us.

I do hope some of you might be guided by these titles or authors. They are all good reads, if uncomfortable at times.

Our monthly Zoom sessions are currently full, so follow us here.

Continued thanks to Maggie Macbeth and Havant Library for supplying our novels.

For more information contact:

Judith Wise tel: 07530854969. judewise1@googlemail.com

Art for All - Tuesday mornings

This is a practical group where members bring their own work to focus on during our fortnightly meeting. Activities include drawing, painting under various mediums, calligraphy, crystal work and iris folding. Whilst not experts in any field we are always happy to help others and discuss new techniques so that we can learn together.

We are a sociable group and in the school holidays have been known to meet up for a cheeky breakfast in Southsea, though this is not obligatory.

We can accommodate a few new members so please do contact me if you would like to attend.

For more information please contact: Lynn Timms 07851 069146



**Gill Pridmore
Roe Deer**



**Gallina Miller
Matisse nude**

For more information contact: Lynn Timms 07851069146



**Brenda Colman
Toucan**



**Lin Schofield
Frog Prince**



**Lynne Foord
Tokyo**



**Maggie Macbeth
spring green woodpecker**



**Lynn Timms
Wedding card**



**Jean McQoid
Shoreline**

Needles and Pins Group



Gill Pridmore
Teddy Bear



Heather Lewis
Hats for premature babies



Jean Banthorpe
Colourful poncho and hat
and Patchwork blanket
and ball

For more information contact: Penny Scipio 02392 832 500

Science and Technology



The Group investigated many different subjects under the umbrella title of science and technology. Many deviated but we continued as long as they were interesting. One example was Greenland which appeared to have a “not for sale notice on it”. We believe that Greenland could be a great country for holidays when global warming kicks in. Tui the holiday company is already advertising package deals, in the summer only of course!

We were looking at the two NASA ground stations near the pole for polar orbiters, and that includes the international space station, when we discovered Pituffik the station in Greenland (the other one is Fox in Alaska) both named a Space Force Base. Pituffik has been manned by the USA since 1946 after the last war and Denmark has been trying to remove it since then unsuccessfully. Now USA is offering to buy the island of Greenland, but the Danes are not interested although a precedent was set when they did sell the Danish West Indies in 1917 to USA for \$25M in gold.



We look forward to investigating anything that looks interesting and is especially cutting edge and that means newspapers and Television and that includes EVERYTHING in this fast-moving Tech world and also lots in the nostalgic world as well. We have spent a lot of time looking at the huge aircraft industry England supported in the 1940 to 1950's. Whatever happened to it....I think we know! During our investigations we found a problem with something we all suffer from, Old Age. It is rather disappointing but all of what seems like insolvable problems for mankind will have been solved. Our forecasts of doom and gloom we hope will have melted away but of course by then we will not be around to appreciate the solutions.

For more information contact: Brian Greener 02392863381

Religion, Spirituality and Life

In writing for this newsletter, I commonly summarise the topics that our vibrant and well attended group have been talking about in our Religion, Spirituality and Life Group. This time I adopt a different approach by describing the sort of imaginary discussion we might have – like in one of Plato’s dialogues, if that’s not too pretentious. But at least one of which you could be part, especially if you think it’s at all relevant to the peace in the world.



I was once asked if I thought religion was the primary source from which people learn about morality. I said that I didn’t think it was - and provoked considerable shock that I thought it wasn’t! Most American people after all, think it has a lot to do with religion.

I explained that I felt sure that homo sapiens was capable of making moral choices long before any organised religion occurred; and certainly long before the Bible and the Q’ran were written; and even longer before the earliest Sanskrit religious texts appeared. However, it was observed, that it is also true that these written texts may be just the **records** and not the **sources** of people’s moral principles which they may have obtained through their religious beliefs and practices long before the texts appeared.

Another observed that religious beliefs and practices are very evident in the works of the famous Athenian Greek playwrights of the sixth century BC. In Sophocles’ play Antigone, the tragic consequences of perceiving law exclusively as either a human invention or a divine command are laid bare. To approach **justice**, the law must be conceptualized as not only human and divine but take account of our human nature, for it is **natural law** that could mediate the divine and human aspects of the law that clash in Antigone, and take account of our planet?

Interesting? But it leaves out another Greek concept of morality as a skill – commonly called virtue? I wonder how the discussion will go. Will nature trump virtue? Or is that a dangerous word today? Do join us.

For more information contact: John Strain 07834 637 744



Mahjong is a tile-based game that was developed in the 19th century in China and has spread throughout the world since the early 20th century. It is played by four players The game is played with a set of 144 tiles based on Chinese characters and symbols. Help will be given to beginners. **Mah Jong** still takes place Friday mornings. Come along and give it a go. **For more information contact: John Hall on 02392 732980**



Board Games and Rummikub

During the Christmas recess I thought long and hard about a theme for the Spring term’s games, I went down a few blind alleys carrying a theme that I was not entirely happy with, when suddenly a different twist on that theme hit me, ‘Portsmouth u3a Groups’(maybe the games somewhat tentatively keep to the theme!)

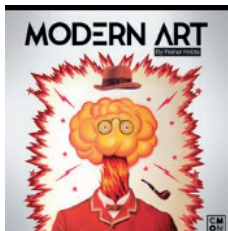
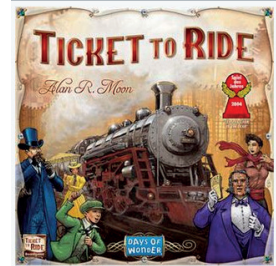
The first meeting saw AUF ACHSE represent German Studies, this being about the German road freight hauling industry in which players need to bid to purchase the right to move freight from one German city to another, a seemingly simple task in itself, however combining this with



the need to undertake this in the most efficient manner whilst contending with traffic jams, road repairs, mechanical problems, adverse weather conditions and numerous other problems . combined with the need to deliver loads to a city within easy reach of collecting the next load presented the players with real challenges ‘like being back at work’ was one comment overheard!

Rummikub was the game of choice of the players who resisted the temptation of the autobahns, which results in very close games being completed.

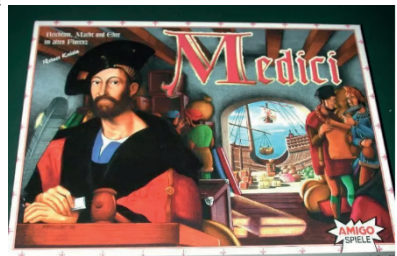
In our second meeting the focus turned to Armchair Travel with a trip to North America and a game called TICKET TO RIDE, which has been played several times by the group and is very much enjoyed. Players need to complete railway routes between a host of Canadian and USA cities, the game can be quite cutthroat at times particularly if a long-planned route becomes impossible to complete through other players blocking the route or simply running out of time and such failure inflicts a heavy price, the difference between winning and losing. Again Rummikub was played by those not wishing to be railway pioneers, this time one player winning the majority of the games played.



MODERN ART was the game of choice for the third session, representing both the Art Appreciation and Art For All groups. Players were both gallery owners seeking to purchase the best pieces of art for their gallery, and auctioneers looking to over inflate the prices raised in order to increase their own wealth and to decrease the amount of cash held by their fellow players, for the objective was simply to be the player who had the most amount of money at the end of the game, however the amount of money held

by each player was not known to their fellow players throughout the game, it transpired to be a very close game with very little separating the players when the game finished. Yet again those not involved in the shady dealings of the art world chose to play Rummikub, on this occasion one player won all three games!

Our fourth and final meeting will see a game representing the History group with the subject matter being the Italian Renaissance.



Tony Valvona 02392 822641

Film Club Starts at 1:45



Wed 14th May “Conclave” (2024) A political thriller starring Ralph Fiennes.

Cardinal Lawrence has one of the world’s most secretive and ancient events, participating in the selection of a new pope. Surrounded by powerful religious leaders in the halls of the Vatican, he soon uncovers a trail of deep secrets that could shake the very foundation of the Roman Catholic Church.



Wed 18th June

“Lady Bird” (2017) Comedy/drama directed by Greta Gerwig and starring Saoirse Ronan.

As senior year comes to an end, Lady Bird must strive to navigate through the ups and downs in her relationships while trying to get into a prestigious college and become popular.

It won a Golden Globe award for best motion picture

Wed 16th July

“Persuasion” (1995) Romance/ period drama based on Jane Austen’s novel of the same name. Starring Ciaran Hinds as Captain Wentworth and Amanda Root as Anne Elliot. When Frederick Wentworth -- the one who got away -- crashes back into Anne Elliot’s life, she must choose between putting the past behind her or listening to her heart when it comes to second chances.



For more information contact: Barbara Spiegelhalter 07966 219764

The Walking Group

Thorney Island 1st March

Not much to report at the moment as we tend to be fair weather walkers.

We have been out for a couple of walks though. The first was to Chichester to walk around and on the Walls. It is about one and a half miles to complete.

We started at the Novium museum where we picked up leaflets on the history of the Walls. We started near Priory Park where you can walk up on the Walls. A lovely opportunity to peek into people’s gardens. We followed it on round to Bishops Palace Gardens and eventually arrived back at Priory Park. On the way we passed a historic church with a triple pulpit and a gallery surrounding the church.



Of course all of this activity gave us an appetite for lunch at The Boston Tea Party. Very nice it was too.

Our most recent walk was on a beautiful sunny day and we headed off to Thorney Island. After coffee at the Deck at Emsworth Marina we set off along the shore path as far as the army gate and returned on the lower path. The sea was like a mill pond and the sun was starting to get stronger.

We hope to get out again a couple of times before Easter so come along and join us. For more information contact: **Jackie Forsyth 02392 666 680**

Speakers' Programme

Tuesday 21st January 2025 Speaker : Lt Colonel Jeremy Prescott (Rtd)



Jeremy was representing his charity 'Sacrifice and Remembrance' which he founded in January 2014. The overarching purpose of the project is to support the restoration and upkeep of memorials dedicated to those killed in combat. Through his presentations Jeremy collects money to donate to 'Combat Stress' which helps those suffering from mental ill health caused by military service.

The subject of this presentation was Violette Szabo. She became an agent for the S.O.E

(Special Operations Executive) from the latter part of World War Two and was one of only four women to be awarded the George Cross. This award is for bravery not in the presence of the enemy. She also received the Croix de Guerre from France.



Violette was born in Paris on 26th 1921 to a British father (George Bushell) and a French mother (Reine Leroy). Her parents moved back to London, but Violette stayed with her aunt in Picardy for over a decade. She came back from France, but she did not get on well with her parents and at the age of thirteen she crossed the Channel again. On Bastille Day in 1940 her mother suggested she should attend the parade in London and bring home a soldier! She met Etienne Szabo who had joined the French Foreign Legion and was eleven years older than Violette. Within a few weeks they were married and their daughter, Tania, was born on 8th June 1942.



Tragically Etienne was killed in October 1942. This led to Violette wanting revenge for her husband's death and motivated her to join F Section of the S.O.E. She was recruited in July 1943 and began training in things such as navigation, weaponry, demolition, evasion and communications. The final stage of her training was in parachute jumping which resulted in an injured ankle and this delayed her deployment to France. Reports of her abilities in training were mixed but the head of F Section was convinced that Violette had the qualities to become an effective agent.

Before she parachuted into France in April 1944 Violette nominated a friend Vera Maidmont to be the guardian to Tania if she did not survive. Every agent needed to have a secret code that would identify them, and Violette's was a poem called 'The Life That I Have', which will be familiar to those who have seen the film. The purpose of S.O.E was to cause disruption to the German war machine and in particular, before D Day, to keep the German troops away from the Normandy beaches. She parachuted into Southwest France near Limoges on 7th June 1944. During a courier trip her car was stopped by the Germans and Violette covered her fellow agent with gunfire so he could escape. She was interrogated at Fresnes prison in Paris before being sent to Germany. She ended up at Ravensbruck concentration camp and endured all the horrors that name can conjure up. In February 1945 she was executed and her body incinerated.

In January 1947 Tania, now living with her grandparents, went to Buckingham Palace to receive her mother's George Cross. A fitting tribute to an exceptional young woman.

Speaker Shorts at the U3A General Meeting Tuesday 25th February '25.



Due to a cancellation by the scheduled speaker at the General Meeting on Tuesday 25/02/25, five U3A members offered to give short talks about influential women in keeping with International Women's Day celebrated on 8th March. First up was Susan Johnson with a lively talk about **Josephine Baker**, famous as an exotic dancer, French Resistance spy & pilot during WWII, Civil Rights activist, and mother of a Rainbow family. Working as a dancer in nightclubs, including the Folies Bergère, Baker became recognised for her 'banana skirt', later copied by Diana Ross and Beyonce. During WWII she worked as a spy and pilot for the Allies; later she created a 'rainbow family' of 12 adopted orphaned children (somewhat like Angelina Jolie); after her death in 1975, she was inducted into the Panthéon in Paris, the only black female among 6 other females.



Using the Desert Island Disc choices of **Tanni Grey-Thompson**, Jean Barrow revealed to us her impressions about Tanni, retired wheelchair athlete, TV Presenter, now a Baroness in the House of Lords. When she was 7 years old, Tanni succumbed to a form of spina bifida, becoming paralysed from the waist down. Jean speculated that Tanni's island choices clearly reflect the nature of her character; these include 'Guide Me Oh Redeemer' and 'Bread of Heaven' as well as the theme from the TV show 'Mash', indicating her fortitude, parental support and determination to get on with what life threw at her. Tanni became a professional athlete following the London

2012 Para-Olympics, and during her sports life received 11 gold medals, 4 silver, 1 bronze, other awards, including an MBE, OBE & DBE. Tanni's other island disc choices include Abba's hit 'Waterloo' and Soft Cell's 'Tainted Love', as well as any book about edible food, and 5 juggling balls; these all indicate her determination and playfulness about life along with her competitive spirit as she simply refuses to be bound by her wheelchair.



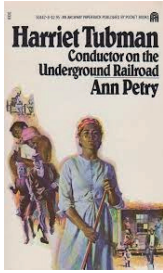
Next up was Rosemary Sirrett who gave a short talk about **Margaret Calvert**, Graphic Designer, whose typography work we are all familiar with yet without actually knowing who she is! All the triangular, red-edged signs with warnings to road users in pictograph form showing 'men at work', or 'children crossing', or 'deer ahead', etc., were Margaret's creation. She also designed the big blue Motorway signage advising drivers of road directions on 'M' roads, after testing different colours & letter styles. She

attended Chelsea School of Art, won a contract for Gatwick Airport signage using a black-on-yellow scheme, and later re-designed the British road signage which had to comply with European standardisation. Her skill in putting together the easy-to-understand pictographs not in an abstract form that we all recognise today garners her to be a super influencer without the need for social media!

Covering for Andy Barrow, Jean then read his contribution about **Rachel Carson**, American marine biologist, zoologist, writer and conservationist; Rachel's writing skills enabled her to present science to a broader audience than just the scientific community. She authored many articles and wrote 3 books-- 'Under the Sea Wind', 'the Sea Around Us' and arguably her most famous, 'Silent Spring' published



in 1962. She challenged US corporate and government interests and urged collective action against the use of pesticides and their overuse effect on the environment and was not afraid to criticise the chemical companies and regulatory authorities, leading to the ban of DDT. Carson was one of the first to speak out about the harms to the **natural world from excessive chemical usage; her writings and books helped to trigger growing interest in conservation and the environmental movement from the 1970s onwards.**



Our final speaker was Mandy Richards who spoke about **Harriet Tubman**, American Abolitionist, Social Activist, famous for forming the 'Underground Railroad' whereby slaves from the USA southern states could escape to the northern Free States during the 19th century. Born in 1822, into a family enslaved to a Maryland plantation, Tubman escaped to Philadelphia; she eventually rescued 70 family members and others by means of night travel, safe houses, Quaker church support, and a lot of secrecy. The 1850 Fugitive Slave Act meant anyone caught assisting escaped slaves could be arrested, this forced Tubman to take escapees to Canada. During the American Civil War (1861-65), she worked as a nurse, scout and spy for the Union Army. Eventually, she moved to New York state, retiring to the 'Harriet Tubman Home for the Aged' for ex-slaves that she had set up earlier; she also participated in the Women's Suffrage Movement. Prior to her death in 1913, she had become famous for her abolition work as well as her contributions to the Civil War, her legacy continues today for Black Americans struggling for civil and equal rights. *Penny Simpson*

Speakers for Members' Meetings 2025

20th May PC Alan Robertson The Blue Lamp Trust

17th June Mike Williams Sea Fencibles or Dad's Coastal Army

23rd September Julian Le Good A Portrait of the Architect as a Young Man

21st October Peter Rann A Brief History of Punch and Judy

11th November Fi Rosen Dicken Walks After Dark

Speaker Secretary Carol-Anne Turner

Social Secretary report Spring term 2025

As last Christmas fades into memory I need to report that the lunch at the Royal Maritime Hotel was well attended and enjoyed by all. The extensive menu had something to suit all dietary requirements and was generally reported as tasty and well presented. There were no alcohol shortages and the bar provided a pleasant social space for pre and post lunching.



The Mince Pie event was a pleasant opportunity for members to get together in the Hub and socialise without having to check the clock to see if their class was about to resume. It was a chance for us to meet people that we didn't already know and find out about them.

The next item on the menu will be the members only, Easter Social on Tuesday 1st April from 1:30pm in the Hub Cafe. This event is free, and gluten free hot cross buns will be available. I hope you will be able to come even though some of you may have a class to attend that morning. **Mandy Richards 07496 009401**



What is on offer in the Hub café served by Brendon, Molly and Jo

Breakfast

2 Bacon, 1 Sausage, 1 Egg, Hash Brown, Beans or Tomatoes, & Toast. Served with Tea, or Filter Coffee £5.30

Bacon, Sausage or Egg Bap £2.30

Cheese on Toast £3.00

Scrambled Egg on Toast £2.90

Beans on Toast £2.65

Toast & Jam/Marmite £1.15

Plain Omelette £2.50 Add Fillings Cheese & Onion, Ham, Bacon, Tomato, Mushroom, Onion

Main Meals

Chilli Con Carne, Chicken Curry, Thai Vegetable Curry, Spaghetti Bolognese & Garlic Bread, Macaroni Cheese & Garlic Bread

Ham, Egg & Chips, Omelette & Chips served with a side salad.

All main meals are served with a Tea or Filter Coffee **£6.25**

Light Bites

Sandwiches -£3.10

Toasties -£3.20

Baguettes -£3.25

Paninis -£3.35

Pasta Bowl - £3.85

Salad Bowl - £3.50

Fillings; Cheese, Ham, Egg Mayo, Tuna, Prawn Mayo Extra Fillings 0.60p



Jacket Potatoes

Plain Jacket Potato £2.50 Fillings; Cheese 0.60p, Beans 0.60p, Tuna £1.80, Prawn £2.00 Salad Garnish £1.25

Homemade Soups

Please ask a member of staff for which options we have available.

Served with Bread & Butter **£3.75**

HOT LUNCH EVERY WEDNESDAY

Served with a Tea or Filter Coffee **£6.25**

Please speak to a member of staff for any Allergen or Dietary requirements.

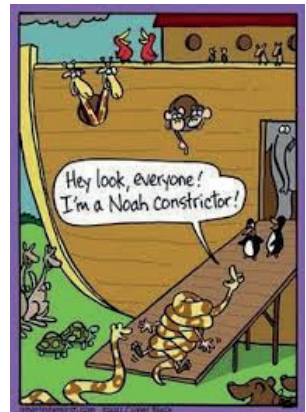
Changes are planned for the café.

Slightly longer opening hours and special daily offers. Watch this space.

Just for fun – some seasonal jokes



How to dress for Spring





Principles of the u3a Movement

- The u3a Movement is non-religious and non-political and has three main principles:

The Third Age Principle

- Membership of a u3a is open to all in their third age, which is defined not by a particular age but by a period in life in which full-time employment has ceased.
- Members promote the values of lifelong learning and the positive attributes of belonging to a u3a.
- Members should do all they can to ensure that people wanting to join a u3a can do so.

The Self-help Learning Principle

- Members form interest groups covering as wide a range of topics and activities as they desire, by the members, for the members.
- No qualifications are sought or offered. Learning is for its own sake, with enjoyment being the prime motive, not qualifications or awards.
- There is no distinction between the learners and the teachers; they are all u3a members.

The Mutual Aid Principle

- Each u3a is a mutual aid organisation, operationally independent but a member of The Third Age Trust, which requires adherence to the guiding principles of the u3a movement.
- No payments are made to members for services rendered to any u3a.
- Each u3a is self-funded with membership subscriptions and costs kept as low as possible.
- Outside financial assistance should only be sought if it does not imperil the integrity of the u3a movement.