

# IN TOUCH FEBRUARY 2024



Shaftesbury and  
Gillingham

## Forthcoming Events

Dear all,

Welcome to the New Year of 2024, and I hope everyone has recovered from Christmas and other celebrations. The first meeting of the year was excellent. David Boag entertained us with his brilliant nature photos and we have many more exciting speakers to look forward to this year.

Good to see so many more of you coming to this monthly meeting; Charlton Hall is proving to be highly suitable for us, particularly as the new sound system is working very well.

The committee is looking for a few people to help with the running of the monthly meeting, to step in if one of us is absent and help with things like refreshments, setting up, technical issues, the book exchange and welcoming members. If you are interested then do contact me, even if you could only commit to two or three meetings a year.

This year will be our 25th anniversary and we hope to celebrate with something suitable, please let us know if you have any suggestions.

I look forward to seeing you over the coming months at meetings and group activities.

*Roger Laidler*

**Thursday 1 February**  
**Lieutenant General David**  
**Leakey CMG CVO CBE**  
**'The War in Bosnia 1992 to the**  
**Present Day'**

**Thursday 4 April**  
**Paul Barwick**  
**'The Life and Crimes of Double**  
**Agent Zigzag'**

*link to our web page*  
<https://u3asites.org.uk/sgu3a/home>

## Next u3a Talks

*Monthly open meetings are held on the first Thursday of the month at The New Remembrance Hall, Charlton, Shaftesbury, Dorset, SP7 0PL - opening at 10.00am for 10.30am start. A small charge of £2 per person is made, to cover the cost of speakers and refreshments.*

*Open meetings provide an opportunity to have a coffee, socialise and to enjoy presentations from invited speakers. Non-members are welcome to attend one open meeting, free of charge, to sample what is on offer.*

*Details of speakers for the coming year can be found on our website; the next two are shown below.*

### **1 Feb – Lieutenant General David Leakey CMG CVO CBE 'The War in Bosnia 1992 to the Present Day'**

This talk gives a fascinating account of the Bosnia War from General Leakey's personal experiences, as he spent long periods between 1992 and 2010 commanding operations in Bosnia with the UN, NATO and European Union Force securing the peace in Bosnia, and was also the UK's military negotiator at the Bosnia Peace Talks in 1995.

David Leakey comes from a distinguished military family with two Victoria Crosses. After reading law at Cambridge his first job was in the Army. He commanded British and multinational forces on operations in various parts of the world and held senior appointments in the MOD and the European Union. After leaving the Army in 2010, he undertook a variety of media and consultancy projects, including some university lecturing until 2011 when he was appointed Black Rod, sometimes known as the Sovereign's representative in Parliament. He is a trustee, governor of numerous charities, sporting organisations and schools. He has many hobbies, including golf, tennis, skiing and squash.

### **4 April – Paul Barwick – "The Life and Crimes of Double Agent Zigzag"**

Eddie Chapman hated authority and from an early age was in trouble with the law. After being imprisoned for burglary in Jersey he offered himself to the Germans as a German agent. However he became a double agent after turning himself in to MI5. A true story of British espionage history.

Paul is a retired Police Officer with a career background in the national security arena. Has worked with partner agencies in the field of national security and counter terrorism.

## Group News

### The u3a Christmas Lunch

56 Members came along to the Royal Chase Hotel for our Christmas lunch, which was a great success after a shaky start; a seating plan invariably causes problems but was a condition of our reservation. That aside, the room was festively decorated, the food both delicious and plentiful, and the service excellent. Judging by the noise level, members had little difficulty striking up conversations, and hopefully those who had come along felt warmly welcomed.

*Barbara Hurst*

### The Literature Group:

We have finished our study of and discussions about *The Old Wives Tale* by Arnold Bennett, led by one of our members – we loved it! We are now in the process of updating the list of all the books studied over the last 20 years or so and I can send it to anyone interested.

In preparation, we have read and discussed the Choruses to Shakespeare's *Henry V* and are about to embark on our study of the play. There will be some surprises, I think. Most of us have seen the Olivier and Branagh films, so there should be plenty of enjoyable differences of opinion!

### International Folk Dance Group



This new group had its first meeting in January, and got off to a good start with thirteen people enjoying a mix of dances from Scotland to Kenya via Serbia, Romania, Macedonia and Greece, all set to beautiful music

Lively chat ensued during a break for tea and biscuits

We meet in the afternoon on the 2nd Tuesday of each month, in the Royal British Legion Hall in Shaftesbury, and have room for more folk if you fancy joining us. You do not need previous experience of this type of dancing – all the dances are taught, slowly enough for everyone to grasp them

You can contact me via the blue bird logo on the website Groups page

*Barbara Robson*

## Italian for Beginners

We meet every Tuesday from 10-11.30am at my home in Shaftesbury. There is a lovely enthusiasm to the group and a real feeling of mutual support. There are six members. We all enjoy learning the language together (especially the idioms) and sharing our experiences of previous visits to Italy and of course plans to go again!



The sessions place an emphasis on speaking and you can see our members chatting away about their hobbies in our most recent lesson in the photograph.

Although the class is full, I can recommend the 'Al dente 1' course we are using to anyone interested in learning independently.

You can buy the textbook on Amazon and it comes with audio and video resources, all of which are free of charge if you follow the links below:

[cdl-edizioni.com/tracce-audio-al-dente](http://cdl-edizioni.com/tracce-audio-al-dente)

[cdl-edizioni.com/video-al-dente1](http://cdl-edizioni.com/video-al-dente1)

In bocca al lupo(Good luck!) to anyone beginning their adventure in learning Italian.  
*Alison Rigby.*

## Gardening Club news.

We don't start of course until March and even then it's difficult to find a garden with something to show at that time of year. However, we have planned a visit to The Dorset Flower Company. They are English flower growers who sell there beautiful produce to the public and of course flower shops. Katie does workshops and when we visit, after showing her seedlings and polytunnel, her seedlings will be for sale and a choice of her gorgeous bouquets. We shall finish with tea and cake in her studio. We are also hoping to visit Highgrove which will be a day out and I shall book as soon as we are able.

So plans for the year are beginning to formulate and I am hoping to find gardens which are new to us, but we shall see.

*Irene Gordon*

## Shared Interests

Patricia Brown and I had a lovely trip to Bristol Museum to see the Wildlife Photographer of the Year Exhibition.



*Pliosaurus in the Natural History Collection*

The photos were fantastic and beautifully presented with just the right amount of information accompanying each exhibit. Some of the animals captured were new to us, but photography is prohibited, so unfortunately I can't show you examples.

Leaving the exhibition behind, we had lunch in the cafe and went on to browse the rest of the museum. Although there were impressive exhibits including oriental ceramics, glass, silverware and ancient artefacts, I found the most interesting area was the animal collection; fossils, both ancient, and current. Again, this included some animals that we had not heard of before. There were also some very strange and interesting geological artifacts.

We also enjoyed the art gallery which had a few lovely pieces and lots of otherwise interesting pieces. One of the art exhibits was called "Ton of Tea". I thought it was a block of stuff left on a pallet by the builders to be used later as a plinth for another exhibit!



*A Ton of Tea by Ai Weiwei*

Neither of us had visited this free museum before and would certainly recommend it for an interesting day out.

*Michael Pittman*

## Scams Awareness

In the last issue of In Touch, I asked for volunteers to help members sort out their problems with computers, tablets and smartphones, and I am very grateful to two people who have come forward.

*Peter Hurst* has offered to help where he can, though he's mainly familiar with Apple products. His email address is [peter@pbhurst.com](mailto:peter@pbhurst.com) and telephone number 07971 848906.

*David Stokes* is offering support of a different kind. He says:

I am South Wiltshire's Cybercrime support volunteer. If anybody suspects they are being or have been scammed, or their accounts hacked, then they can contact me for advice.

For instance, if they are contacted by a person who states they are from their bank and asks them to move money then they would be able to reply "I will contact my cybercrime support and get back to you" That in itself will usually do the trick!

David's email address is [davystokes@gmail.com](mailto:davystokes@gmail.com) and his telephone numbers are:

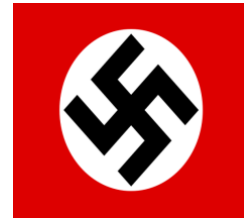
Landline: 01747 860741

Mobile: 0747 9867 354

Please make a note of these contacts so that you have them readily to hand should you need help.

*Barbara Hurst*

## Other groups / items for interest



### The 80<sup>TH</sup> Anniversary D-Day Battlefield Tour

### Operation Neptune Thursday 10 October – Monday 14 October 2024

Price per person £815.00 (10% discount for u3a members)  
Single supplement £125.00 (no discount)

Price includes: Return ferry \*\* crossing from Portsmouth to Caen (Ouisterham)- travel by coach within France- three nights bed & breakfast accommodation at a hotel in Bayeux - full-time accompanying Guide/Historian & map pack

#### Old Country Military & History Tours



\*\* Night crossing on the 9 October afternoon crossing on the 14 October

**Not included.** Price for cabin night crossing and all other meals.

Contact 01747 828719 or email [oldcount@aol.com](mailto:oldcount@aol.com)

# Upcoming courses in Shaftesbury & Gillingham

## Arts & Crafts

### **Family Learning: Art for All Seasons**

5 weeks from Monday 8th January | 10am-12pm at **Gillingham Library**

### **Painting the Painter Landscape**

8 weeks from Monday 15th January | 1pm - 3pm at **The Slade Gallery**

### **Introduction to Painting Acrylics**

8 weeks from Monday 15th January | 6pm - 8pm at **The Slade Gallery**

### **Papercraft: Making Folded Books**

8 weeks from Thursday 18th January | 1pm - 3pm at **The Slade Gallery**

### **Textiles: Making Simple Clothes and Soft Toys**

8 weeks from Thursday 18th January | 10am - 12pm at **The Slade Gallery**

### **LivingWell: Drawing for Mindfulness**

6 weeks from Monday 19th February | 9:30am - 11:30am at **Lindlar Hall**

### **Painting the Painter Landscape**

3 weeks from Saturday 24th February | 10am - 12:20pm at **Gold Hill Museum**



## Digital Skills

### **AgeWell: Computers Beginners**

6 weeks from Friday 5th January | 1pm - 3:30pm at **Gillingham Library**

### **AgeWell: Getting to Grips With Your Tablet or Smart Phone**

5 weeks from Friday 23rd February | 1pm - 3:30pm at **Gillingham Library**



## Languages & Culture

### **Sign Language Beginners Step 2**

10 weeks from Friday 12th January | 6:30pm - 8pm - **Online**

### **Spanish Beginners**

10 weeks from Monday 15th January | 1:30pm - 3:30pm at **Gold Hill Museum**

### **Discover France: Language and Culture**

8 weeks from Wednesday 24th January | 1pm - 3pm at **Gold Hill Museum**

### **Everyday ESOL** (classes on Mondays and Tuesdays)

19 weeks from Monday 19th February | 10am - 12:30pm at **Gold Hill Museum**

### **Improve your English** (classes on Wednesdays and Fridays)

18 weeks from Wednesday 21st February | 10am - 1pm at **Gold Hill Museum**



**For more information visit: [skillsandlearningace.com](https://skillsandlearningace.com) or call: 01202 123444**



## Reporting to Trading Standards

If you think a business has broken the law or has acted unfairly, you can report them to Trading Standards. Call the Citizens Advice consumer helpline on 0808 223 1133.

There are two benefits in reporting this way:

Your call will be answered by a trained Citizens Advice helpline advisor. They take details and give you practical and impartial advice on how to resolve your consumer problem. They will tell you the law which applies to your situation and will provide letter templates if needed. They will then pass information about your complaint to Trading Standards.

Trading Standards will use the information you have provided to decide if to investigate unfair trading and illegal business activity. Often business advice is all that's needed. However, Trading Standards can take businesses to court when there have been major breaches and it's in the public interest to do so.

Here are just some examples of when you should report a business to Trading Standards:

- unsafe or dangerous goods, including electrical goods and food past its use-by date
- fake goods
- misdescribed goods
- you were pressurised to buy something
- You paid for something that you didn't receive, and you can't contact the seller
- A business seller has tried to stop you using your legal rights, such as saying you can't return faulty goods
- the price wasn't clear, or an unexpected extra cost was added
- a business is selling age restricted products to people underage
- work wasn't carried out properly at your address

Trading Standards will contact you back if they need more information about what has happened. Often Trading Standards look for persistence, so even if they don't act on one complaint, they may use your evidence to act against the business in the future if other people make complaints too.

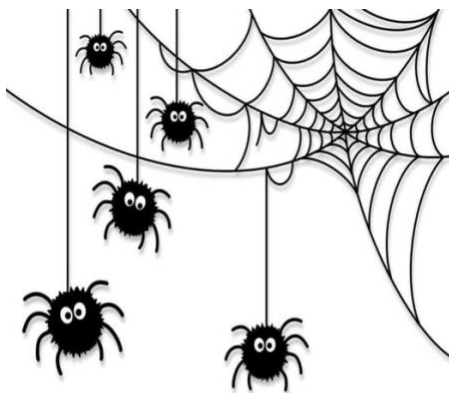
## .....and finally

Having resigned from the Committee at the AGM and passed the baton of In Touch Editor to Anita back in the Autumn I was very pleasantly surprised to receive your thanks and a gift card at the January meeting.

Editing In Touch was a pleasure although sometimes daunting when, towards the end of a month, I would be wondering how to fill the pages, but somehow you came through with material for an interesting read.

Once again thank you for your appreciation.

**Bill McIntyre**



THE ONLY THING WORSE THAN  
FINDING A SPIDER IN YOUR ROOM IS  
LOSING A SPIDER IN YOUR ROOM



*"You know you're getting old when everything hurts, and what doesn't hurt doesn't work."*

Group	Date	Leader	Website
Art Appreciation	2nd Monday 2-3.30pm	Barbara Hurst	<a href="#">click here</a>
Canasta	1st and 3rd Monday – pm	Hazel Baker	<a href="#">click here</a>
Canasta	2nd & 4th Wednesday p.m.	Barbara Watkinson	<a href="#">click here</a>
Celtic World	4th Monday - am	Denise Sims	<a href="#">click here</a>
Churches/Places of Worship	To be Arranged 4 visits per year	Barbara Hurst	<a href="#">click here</a>
Cosmology	2nd Monday - am	Denise Sims	<a href="#">click here</a>
Digital Photography	3rd Thursday – am	Andy Newton	<a href="#">click here</a>
Embroidery	3rd Wednesday – pm	Lesley Frost	<a href="#">click here</a>
French for Fun 1	Tuesday/fortnightly - am	Ron Beard	<a href="#">click here</a>
French for Fun 2	Wednesday /fortnightly pm	Chris Stotesbury	<a href="#">click here</a>
Garden Interest	2nd Monday – am	Irene Gordon	<a href="#">click here</a>
Genealogy	4th Monday – pm	Liz Greenway	<a href="#">click here</a>
German Conversation	Wednesday /fortnightly – pm	Robert Light	<a href="#">click here</a>
International Folk Dancing	2nd Tuesday -pm	Barbara Hurst	<a href="#">click here</a>
International History	3rd Wednesday – am	Richard Sims	<a href="#">click here</a>
Italian for Beginners	Tuesday 10.00 – 11.30am weekly	Alison Rigby	<a href="#">click here</a>
Knitting/Crafts	2nd Tuesday - pm	Irene Gordon	<a href="#">click here</a>
Languages of Planet Earth	3rd Friday – 2.00pm	Denise Sims	<a href="#">click here</a>
Literature	1st & 3rd Monday - am on Zoom	Peter Rolfe	<a href="#">click here</a>
Lunch Club	4th Friday in the month	Ros Ham	<a href="#">click here</a>
Mahjong	2nd & 4th Friday – 2pm	Marion Pace	<a href="#">click here</a>
Music for Pleasure	2nd & 4th Thursday – pm	Eileen Haddleton	<a href="#">click here</a>
Natural History	2nd & 4th Wednesday 10.30-12pm	Janet Fenton	<a href="#">click here</a>
Philosophy	Monthly Tuesday pm	Chris Spencer	<a href="#">click here</a>
Poetry & Play Reading	1st Thursday – pm	Audrey Cross Janet Botterill	<a href="#">click here</a>
Reading Group	1st Friday 11am -12pm	Barbara Hurst	<a href="#">click here</a>
Scrabble	Weekly Friday – am	Yvonne Hill	<a href="#">click here</a>
Shared Interests	Varied	Barbara Hurst	<a href="#">click here</a>
Spite & Malice	3rd Monday – pm	Sue Walker	<a href="#">click here</a>
Table Tennis	Weekly Thursday 2pm	Elizabeth Lewer Chris Stotesbury	<a href="#">click here</a>
Walking Group	1st Tuesday – am	Barbara Robson	<a href="#">click here</a>

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