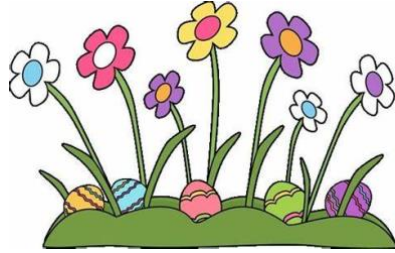


IN TOUCH

APRIL 2024



Dear all,

I do hope that you are enjoying the extra daylight hours we are now having, more time for the garden and getting out and about.

Your committee continues to work hard to ensure that sgu3a is an efficient, full of purpose organisation. Our governing body is the Third Age Trust to which we give approx. £4.50 per person per year. There are only 23 full time employees of this organisation serving over 1000+ u3as with a membership of over 430,000, so not a great financial burden to us as members. The Trust has recently had a full review of its organisation and changes are planned to update it to modern standards. The proposals will be voted on at the next AGM conference, later this year.

The whole organisation therefore does require the many volunteers we have to ensure everything runs smoothly. We are always looking for help to run our u3a and would urge anyone who feels that they can help in any small way (not necessarily to go onto the committee) to contact one of the current committee members.

Roger Laidler
Chairman

u3a

Shaftesbury and Gillingham

Forthcoming Events

Thurs 4 April

Paul Barwick

**The Life and Crimes of Double
Agent Zigzag**

Thurs 2 May

Peter Gill

**The Wit and Songs of Noel
Coward**

**Copies of this newsletter can be found
on our website**

<https://u3asites.org.uk/sgu3a/>

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.

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. He has worked with partner agencies in the field of national security and counter terrorism.

2 May – Peter Gill **The Wit and Songs of Noel Coward**

Born in 1899, Coward was an actor, composer, director, producer, and in later life painter – and he excelled at them all. He said of himself “I am an enormously talented man, and there is no point in denying it”. This is a reminder of that talent and some of the wonderful songs and wit of the ‘Master’ including A Bar on the Piccola Marina, Don’t Let’s Be Beastly To The Germans, Mrs Worthington, There Are Bad Times Just Around the Corner and Mad Dogs & Englishmen.

Peter lives in Ross-on-Wye, Hertfordshire. He has been writing and producing for the theatre stage for the last 25 years. He is also an experienced piano/vocalist and spends much of his work life touring the country in a variety of theatre shows. We welcome him back to speak to us by popular demand after his talk last year on Private Godfrey.

Group News

Music for Pleasure

We could all do with a little lift of mood after the winter, so I played a recording of part two of the last night of the BBC proms. The music, the talent and the presentation of this evening was magnificent. When it came to Rule Britannia, I handed out some Union Jack flags and the afternoon ended on a 'high'.

Our group not only enjoys educational elements, but it has an invaluable social part to play for members living on their own. The tea break seems to last longer and longer, so we need to programme one hour of music and one hour of 'discussion', or extend the afternoon to two and a half hours. Whatever, needless to say, we have excellent attendance in our group.

Eileen Haddleton

Garden Visits

The March visit to The Flower Company was unfortunately cancelled due to the hostess having Covid. We were offered another date but we have some interesting gardens booked already, which I am feeling very enthusiastic about, not least our April outing.

For April, I have booked Yew Farm in Martock, TA12 6NF, and I just know we are all going to have a really lovely time there as there is something for everybody, whatever their interest. The garden has topiary, intensive planting, working vegetable garden also pigs hens and orchard. £10 inclusive of tea and cake.

Irene Gordon

Lunch Club

The SGU3a lunch group was started about two years ago by Ros Ham, who has done a brilliant job of looking after it ever since. Ros recently decided that it was time for a change so she asked if I'd like to take over, which I am happy to do, starting with the April lunch.

A huge thank you to Ros who has done an excellent job in taking us to some very interesting and enjoyable venues, and in building up the membership to its current level of 24. We generally have about 10-12 people at each of the lunches which are held on the fourth Friday of the month. At our March meeting we had a lovely time at the White Lion in Bruton.

Everyone is welcome to join the group, although if we keep expanding at the present rate we might need to consider splitting into two groups. I will be contacting all the group members about the April Meeting shortly.

Michael Pittman

Knitting and Craft

The group had another lovely afternoon, although missing two members, but we still managed to chat away and share our projects.

Jackie finished a lovely warm cardigan in a gorgeous cherry red colour with lots of texture and pattern, made with Alpaca and wool.



I finished my navy cardigan, lovely and warm, using baby alpaca, which gives a beautiful soft texture.

Lynda our talented embroiderer is finishing some white work and I hope to take a photo next time as it is simply stunning.

We are looking forward to meeting maybe another one or two knitters of crafters to complete our little group so do contact me.

Irene Gordon

u3a Promotion Event at Shaftesbury Library

Several group leaders and members joined me at Shaftesbury library on 9 March, at the invitation of the chief librarian, to promote u3a. Our display board had been at the reception desk for a week already and this was an opportunity to talk to visitors face-to-face about the many benefits of u3a and our group activities. Barbara Watkinson played a game of canasta with one of her group, while Marion Pace brought along a selection of Mahjong tiles from her extensive personal collection.

There was a lot of interest, with many visitors taking away flyers, and *This is Alfred* sent a reporter keen to learn more about u3a, who interviewed three of us at some length. The library staff were very pleased with the way the morning went and would be happy to host further promotional activities in the future. I would like to express my thanks to all those who came along and helped to spread the word about u3a.

Barbara Hurst

Groups Coordinator

Church Visits

Nine members braved dreadful weather to drive to Blandford Forum for a visit to the Parish Church. This was a church I particularly wanted to support because it is undergoing major renovation following many years of damage due to a leaky roof. The roof is now watertight and work to repair the damage has begun, with a stunning restoration of the apse that gives a glimpse of how the church looked when new and hopefully will again in time.



We had two very enthusiastic guides who painted a vivid picture of the Great Fire of Blandford in 1731, when residents took shelter in their medieval, stone-built church believing themselves safe as the fire raged all around. Sadly, the church caught light, they had to flee for their lives, and the church burned to the ground. The people of

Blandford were determined that the church should be rebuilt, and the idea of a phoenix rising from the ashes captured public imagination. Donations poured in, with even the king contributing. Eventually, sufficient funds had been received for local architects the Bastard brothers, John and William, to begin work, building on the same footprint as the previous church and incorporating some surviving walls. The church we see today is largely to their design, though a dispute led the brothers to abandon the project and the spire they planned was replaced with a rotunda.



Having toured the church and especially its apse, we all climbed a narrow spiral staircase to, first, the ringing chamber, where bell ringers have been carving their initials for generations, leaving a social history in the fabric of the building. Then it was up to the clock chamber, where we saw the mechanism for the church clock (and were deafened by it striking the ¾ hour). Then up a few more steps and we were in the roof void, where a walkway has been installed as part of the renovations, so we were able to examine the roof's structure closely. Then it was back down for refreshments and a chat with our lovely guides.

Forthcoming Visits

Our next tour will be on 29th May, at St Michael's Church in Colehill, near Wimborne. It is an Arts & Crafts church, so very different from those we've seen already. We will meet at 11.00am for coffee in their Community Café, take our tour and then return for a light lunch afterwards. Those who want to make a day of it could visit Wimborne Minster in the afternoon. I'll provide more details nearer the time but only to group members, so if you would like to go, you'll need to join the group.

In August/September (date to be confirmed) we shall visit Sherborne Abbey, when it will be hosting a touring embroidery exhibition called *Threads Through Creation*. Members who have seen it elsewhere tell me it is wonderful, so you won't want to miss that.

If you don't drive, there are always willing volunteers who can offer lifts.

Barbara Hurst

Feasibility Study

u3a Coach Trips to the BSO Concerts at the Lighthouse Theatre Poole

The Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra is one of the top orchestras in this Country, if not the world; their home is in Poole less than an hour away from us in North Dorset. The next concert season is from 24 October- 25 May on Wednesday evenings in Poole. It has been an important winter calendar event for myself and a friend for more years than I care to remember, but the night time driving is taking its toll as we grow older.



If this group happens, the first year will be managed by me, ably supported by Peter Hurst in the background to cope with the banking, etc. Initially I hope to run six BSO coach trips, three from October to December 2024, three February - May 2025.

I have approached two local bus companies; I can't give them enough information for firm quotes but the estimated charges quoted are feasible to run a 53-seater coach with two pick ups in Gillingham and two in Shaftesbury arriving at the Lighthouse at 7.00pm for the concert start at 7.30pm. We would be collected outside the Theatre after the concert finishes at about 9.30pm and delivered back to our pick-up points.

The Lighthouse offers a 30% discount for 30 or more tickets blocked booked. These are booked as soon as we decide which concerts we want to attend and must be paid in full one month before the concert date, any unsold tickets will be returned for the public to purchase.



I can't offer any pricing information at the moment because next seasons' program isn't released until May.

What I need now is an indication of interest. You are not committed in any way at this point but I will need to compile a contact list by email so that I can keep interested members updated. Both Peter and I understand GDPR compliance; I am not sure if it will be held on the u3a Beacon system or by me; your email address will only be used for passing on information about the proposed coach trips to the BSO concerts 2024/25 season.

I believe we need at least 40 members average going to the concerts to make this viable; not the same people going to each concert there will be no commitment to attend all six concerts.

If you are interested in exploring this further, please email your name, town/village of residence and your mobile number to jennifer@farmadmin.co.uk

Jennifer Day

Other Groups / items for interest

The Bournemouth Writing Festival

Here's something of interests for all members who are interested in writing - either non-fiction, poetry, fiction or memoirs.

Taking place next month on the 26, 27 and 28 April, The Bournemouth Literary Festival will feature over 100 free and ticketed writing events and activities to inspire people to write. From 'Writing Your First Full-Length Book' to 'Writing a Synopsis' and 'Digging for the Gold in your own Life Story', there is plenty on offer over the three days in Bournemouth Town Centre.

The Sunday evening finale showcases five local arts groups with spoken word performances, and the free poetry activities give lots of opportunities for everyone to get involved - whether a complete beginner or a more advanced writer. There will be 'Typewriters in the Bandstand', 'Writing on the Beach', a 'Literary Walk of Bournemouth' and a 'Poetry Machine' to get your own bespoke poem written for free.

All of the paid events and activities are priced individually (there isn't a festival-wide ticket) with most of the talks costing £8.50, and a few Pay What You Can. For further information, contact Dominic: dominic@bournemouthwritingfestival.co.uk
Or visit the website: <https://www.bournemouthwritingfestival.co.uk/>

Shaftesbury Town Twinning association Ceilidh Motcombe Village Hall- Sat 6 April - 7pm

Booking information

Please contact Helen English by phone 07789 845498 or e mail englishhv49@gmail.com



Adults £15 Members £12 Under 18s (accompanied) £5
(includes Ploughman's Supper)

Payment can be made by any of the following methods:

Bank transfer - please forward remittance to Shaftesbury Town Twinning Association Sort Code 30-93-45 account number 01328833

Cheque - made payable to Shaftesbury Town Twinning Association and forwarded to

Roy Mitchell, Treasurer, 2 Heathfields Way, Shaftesbury SP7 9JZ (Tel 01747 858219)

Cash - place cash in envelope with your details and hand in to address above.

Please note - Tickets will not be issued but e mail confirmation sent

Helen English

TRADING STANDARDS

Website checks to clean up e-commerce

Dorset Council Trading Standards have helped with national checks on websites for businesses offering renovation and repair work. The checks found that nationally, the vast majority of websites for these trade types, don't comply with the law.

- 97% of 184 websites did not comply with relevant consumer protection law.
- 85% of websites did not comply with three or more laws.
- 14% failed to comply with six or more laws.

The Trading Standards profession is concerned that this lack of basic information, such as business contact details, may make it much harder for people to get things put right, or get a refund if things go wrong.

The checks also found websites failing to display company registration numbers. A registration number provides potential buyers with more certainty around the legitimacy of a company. This is even more important given that copycat and scam websites can exist.

Most businesses checked also failed to mention whether cancellation rights existed. Such omissions can potentially turn customers away, affecting a business' reputation and profits.

This year the national checks focussed on the Home Maintenance Sector. Businesses of all sizes were included in the check; small and large, local and national. Websites were checked for electricians, general builders, plumbers, window companies and gardeners.

The focus was on these trade groups first because they are the types of traders that Trading Standards continue to receive complaints about. Typically, that involves work carried out to a poor standard, unnecessary or excessively priced.

Dorset Council Trading Standards offer free business advice to businesses based in our area. If you'd like more information, then visit www.businesscompanion.info or call a business advisor on 01305 224702.

If you've concerns about a business or would like advice on your consumer rights, then visit the Citizens Advice consumer helpline at citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer or phone 0808 2231133.



A very warm welcome to all our new members who joined in March

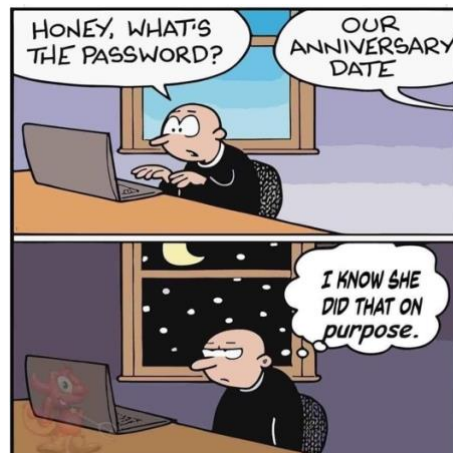
Katharina Alder
Nicholas & Barbara Ford
Patricia Godbold
Howard Henshall
Julie Hillier
Joe & Apryl Moore
Rosalind Wetherill

and finally.....

When I get old I don't want people thinking "what a sweet old lady" – I want them saying "what is she up to now!"



I asked the librarian if she had any books on paranoia, she whispered "they're right behind you!"



Is it too much to ask the Romans to re-invade Britain. Someone needs to resurface the roads. 🤔

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

In Touch is published by Shaftesbury and Gillingham u3a (SGu3a)
Registered Charity No 11078452
Editor - Anita Keogh
keoghanita@gmail.com
01747 828818