

# IN TOUCH OCTOBER 2024

Dear all,

Welcome to October edition of In Touch. The nights are drawing in as autumn is now upon us; however, we have lots to occupy us with our many groups and meetings.

The November meeting will include the AGM and, as always, we are asking for help in the running of our u3a. The committee should represent a good selection of the membership, which it currently does, however we are looking to the future for new people on the committee, as some of us are getting quite close to the time when we will stand down. Committee meetings are four times a year and last for approximately two hours. If you are interested in joining the committee, then please contact any current committee member, or fill in the application form on on the website.

*Roger Laidler*  
*Chairman*

# u3a

## Shaftesbury and Gillingham

### Forthcoming Events

**TALKS AT THE  
CHARLTON  
REMEMBRANCE HALL**

**Thurs 3 Oct  
Dr James Taylor FRSA  
Grace Darling and the Fine Art of  
Saving Lives at Sea**

**Thurs 7 Nov  
AGM  
Followed by  
The Journey to Rehabilitation and  
Why It Needs Supporting**

## 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.

### **3 Oct - Dr James Taylor FRSA - Grace Darling and the Fine Art of Saving Lives at Sea**

Darling's daring rescue of steamship passengers off the Northumberland coast in 1838 brought her international fame and celebrity. Discover more about her bravery and short life (died aged 26) living in the Brownsman and Longstone lighthouses, and the full extent of the artistic contribution that has helped keep her in the public eye. Grace became the 'poster girl' of the RNLI and was the first woman awarded their medal for gallantry.

James is a former curator of paintings, drawings and prints at the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich.

### **7 Nov – The Journey to Rehabilitation and Why It Needs Supporting**

This will consist of a short presentation by Friends of Guys Marsh Trustees followed by an in depth look at the pathway to rehabilitation by one of the men supported called Kam.

## Group News



### **Bridge**

Would you be interested in forming a Bridge group?

Perhaps you already play and just want to play more, perhaps you play and would be willing to teach others, or perhaps you simply want to learn. One of our members has been learning online and wishes to practice in a supportive environment. Whatever your reason, let me know if you would like me to try and form a new group.

*Barbara Hurst*

01747 825646

[barbara@pbhurst.com](mailto:barbara@pbhurst.com)

### **The Literature Group**

The literature group met in person, instead of on Zoom, at their leader's 90th birthday do at The Royal Chase on Saturday 28th of September.

We talked over old times, remembered old faces and congratulated ourselves on our long history as one of the founder groups of the Shaftesbury and Gillingham u3a. Work and pleasure combined are never far from our thoughts, of course, and we look forward to 'Under Milk Wood', 'Venus and Adonis' and 'Julius Caesar' to keep us busy till after Christmas.'

**Peter Rolfe**

## French For Fun 1

Our group started this month after our usual August break. Having completed the book of Short Stories in French, we have now moved on to read 'Le Petit Prince' by Antoine de St- Exupery.

**Ron Beard**

## Garden Visits

Our visit was to Carroway Barn Marnhull. Catherine and Mark were super friendly and hospitable and it was most enjoyable listening to how their garden developed from only seven years ago.



A first for us was the 'Natural Pond', which is quite deep and has special filters for the water to pass through, enabling it to be used for swimming.

This does not detract from the wonderful wildlife in and around the pond.



Apparently newts are abundant and there is plenty of plant-life, including water lilies. Walking around we discovered a lovely waterfall half hidden by a massive Gunera. There's a lovely walled garden full of plants and another pond that was so enjoyable that some of us chose to look around it whilst enjoying our cake and tea. The garden overall has many shrubs, large and small, which proved an inspiration, especially the choice of planting so that plants indeed compliment each other.

On the 14 October we will be visiting Barcroft Hall South Petherton

**Irene Gordon**

## International Folk Dancing

Have you considered trying International Folk Dancing?

It's a bit like a virtual holiday - in a typical session, we might 'visit' Greece, Albania, Hungary, Armenia, Romania, Macedonia, Poland, South America and Kenya!



Come and have some fun, get some exercise for both body and brain, and enjoy the company of a friendly bunch of people

According to Michael Moseley, dancing is one of those 'Just One Things' that can enhance your well-being, so why not give it a go? Your first session is free!

Click on the Blue Bird on the website to contact me if you'd like more information,

or just come along - full details on the Group listing on the website

*Barbara Robson*

## Philisophy

This month the Philosophy and Discussion Group decided to investigate the question: 'Do we need immigration'?

We started by looking at our history of over the last 2,000 years. From the Beaker People, the Celts, the Romans, the Angles (from Denmark), the Saxons. (from Germany), the Normans (Vikings - a corruption of Norsemen), Vikings, a spin off from the slave trade, the French Huguenots with their knowledge of silk, the Empire Windrush (after the Second World War), and from the collapsing empire. The Army has foreign soldiers who fought in the battle for the Falklands. Our head of state can trace his ancestry right across Europe. Indeed the Royal Family had to change their German name as we were fighting the Germans!

We say that we are a Christian Country, but recent surveys suggest less than 50% of the population believe that there is a God. Those that do believe are spread across different regions.

More recently we have used immigration to fill holes in our National Health Service, and medical care generally. We use them to care for the elderly. Foreign students prop up our Universities by paying for their education. In fact we need immigration right across commercial base, many doing jobs we don't know how to, or want to do ourselves.

Our society is changing. Developments in medication have resulted in people living much longer. In addition the balance of power between the sexes has shifted. In particular the role of women has changed dramatically in the last 100 years. They have the vote. Fifty years ago women

were expected to run the home and have any children. Married women did not work. Many now have careers: recently we have had a number of female Prime Ministers. This has resulted in young women wanting fewer babies, and having them later in life. One outcome of this is global birthrates are declining: women on average had 4.7 children each in 1950; by 2100 this is projected to fall to 1.7. This trend is particularly pronounced in wealthier nations: 23 countries, including Japan, Spain and South Korea, are forecast to see their populations halve by 2100. The result is that we are facing the prospect of shrinking, ageing societies in which there will be fewer working-age people for every retired person.

So do we need to look towards immigration to help solve these challenges?

*Chris Spencer*

## Church Visits

On the 20 September, fourteen members took a guided tour of Sherborne Abbey and viewed the 'Threads through Creation' exhibition that is currently arranged around the East end of the abbey. We were split into two groups and my group's tour guide, Jennifer, proved a gifted story-teller



who really brought the abbey's history to life. Since its foundation in 705CE, the church we see today has served as an abbey, a cathedral and a parish church, and evidence of each phase survives. Perhaps the most spectacular survival is the glorious fan vaulting dating from the great rebuilding of c.1380-1500 that replaced the Romanesque abbey church dating from about 1140, which itself replaced an earlier church.

Other treasures include the new West window, created by John Hayward, and dedicated by Queen Elizabeth II in 1998, the tomb of Sir John Horsey II and his son, Sir John III, in the Wykeham Chapel, a curious confection

designed to convey entirely fictitious ancient lineage and status, and an etched glass reredos by Lawrence Whistler in the Lady Chapel. We learned about the long association with Sherborne School and its impact on the fabric of the church, and with the Digby family; a vast, baroque memorial to John Digby, 3rd Earl of Bristol dominates the South Transept.





Our tours had focused only on the abbey and afterwards we were free to view the 12 enormous panels that comprise Threads through Creation, by Jacqui Parkinson, textile artist, which depicts the story of the Creation as told in Genesis (plus the fall of Satan from Isaiah). Starting quietly with a simple triple spiral representing the Holy Trinity in the formless void, we are taken on a journey as light, water, plants and animals are introduced with increasing colour and excitement until Adam and Eve are expelled from the Garden of Eden. Both the conception and execution of the work is extraordinary.

The tour and exhibition, (with lunch and visit to The Sherborne in my case), provide a wonderful day out, which I heartily recommend.

My thanks to those who generously offered lifts. We try to ensure that nobody misses out through lack of transport

*Barbara Hurst*

## Other Groups / Items of Interest

### **Call for help from the Friends of Guys Marsh prison for young offenders**

The Friends are looking for donations of unwanted art materials, craft items and games in boxes (eg puzzles) for their work with inmates at Guys Marsh. If you have any unwanted items, they can be collected by phoning the link A-M on 079000 56551.

*Rosalind Ham*

### **Volunteer drivers needed**

#### **Enjoy driving? Enjoy meeting people? Have some spare time?**

#### **Why not join Gillingham Area Car Link?**

Our volunteer drivers take people living in the SP8 area who haven't got any transport to their doctor, hospital and other medical appointments. Due to the heavy demand for our services, we are urgently trying to recruit extra drivers. Might you be interested?

Our drivers find this a really rewarding way to help the community. It is such an essential service, I'm sure we are all aware of the poor public transport available, and our clients are truly grateful. "A lifesaver" is what we hear.

We pay mileage expenses, and you decide what journeys you will undertake. For example, some of our drivers limit their availability to one day a week; some restrict themselves to local journeys only.

If you are aged between 25-80, own a car, and are interested, please contact Philip Walker on 01747 824645 or email [walkerphilsu@gmail.com](mailto:walkerphilsu@gmail.com). Further information is also available on our website: [www.gillinghamcarlink.org.uk](http://www.gillinghamcarlink.org.uk)

**We are also looking for CO-ORDINATORS** to be the friendly link between client and drivers. Work from home – usually 5 days a month – using our dedicated mobile phone and laptop. Please contact Philip (details as above) if you might be interested.

If you would like to discuss what is involved, then please feel free to give me a call as I've been driving for Car-Link for more than 3 years now.

*Peter Hurst – 07971 848906*

## **Trading Standards**

### **Used cars top complaints list**

Citizens Advice has revealed that last year its Consumer Service received a complaint about a used car every three minutes. The charity, which helped with almost 43,000 complaints relating to used cars in 2023 alone, found most of these complaints were about defective cars, around 1 in 10 being about car safety. The most common issues included faulty cars, damage people were not told about, and cars having a higher mileage than shown.

Consumers are often left out of pocket when purchasing a used car. But unexpected car problems can cost more than just money, they can leave people missing work or unable to drop their children off at school. Buying a used car can be complex and that means consumers can be left confused and without the knowledge and information needed to make well-informed buying decisions.

People may be rightfully wary of the 'Del Boy' type car traders, but there is just as much harm and bad practice lurking behind used car adverts on online platforms, such as Facebook. Car clocking is still an ongoing issue where a car's mileage is adjusted and not declared at the time of sale, that's a Trading Standards' offence.

For peace of mind its recommended that people buy a used car from a garage that is a member of the Consumer Codes Approval Scheme (CCAS). These garages follow a robust code of practice. If a problem does arise, all garages in the CCAS family offer free Alternative Dispute Resolution to help resolve the issue quickly and effectively.

Alternatively, why not look for a Buy With Confidence Trading Standards Approved car trader at [www.buywithconfidence.gov.uk](http://www.buywithconfidence.gov.uk) or phone 0808 2231133.

For advice about something you've bought, or to report something to Trading Standards, visit the Citizens Advice consumer helpline at [www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer) or phone 0808 2231133



Roger Gaffney  
Sheila Hawley  
Catherine Curtis  
Roger Gaffney  
Sheila Hawley

## And finally.....

*They should make an alarm clock that sounds like a dog about to throw up.... Nothing gets you out of bed faster!!*

The importance of punctuation.

(Commas save lives)



*'Surprisingly, Robin,  
nobody likes your plan  
to steal from pensioners  
to give to train drivers'*

*Yesterday I wore something that I used to wear five years ago.....It was a pair of socks but heyho let's be positive here!*

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Registered Charity No 11078452  
Editor - Anita Adams  
Email: [anitaaliceadams@gmail.com](mailto:anitaaliceadams@gmail.com)  
01747 828818



Group	Date	Leader	Website
Art Appreciation	2nd Monday 2-3.30pm	Gil Watkinson	<a href="#">click here</a>
Canasta I	Monday pm – weeks 1 & 3	Hazel Baker	<a href="#">click here</a>
Canasta II	Wed p.m. – weeks 2 & 4	Barbara Watkinson	<a href="#">click here</a>
Canasta III	Thursday am – weeks 2 & 4	Pam Hooker	<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/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 Robson	<a href="#">click here</a>
International History	3rd Wednesday–am	Richard Sims	<a href="#">click here</a>
Italian - Beginners	Tues 10am – 11am weekly	Alison Rigby	<a href="#">click here</a>
Italian Intermediate	Tues 11.15am – 12.15am 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	Michael Pittman	<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 Wed - 10am - 12.30pm	Janet Fenton	<a href="#">click here</a>
Philosophy	Monthly Tuesday pm	Chris Spencer	<a href="#">click here</a>
Poetry & Play Reading	1st Thursday – pm	Janet Botterill	<a href="#">click here</a>
Reading Group	1st Friday 11am -12pm	Colin & Anne Marsh	<a href="#">click here</a>
Really Useful Group	Anyone who would like to help	Barbara Hurst	<a href="#">click here</a>
Scrabble	Weekly Friday – am	Jill Page	<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>
Writing for Pleasure	10.30am on the 2nd and 4th Monday each month via zoom	Peter Rolfe	<a href="#">click here</a>