

# IN TOUCH JULY/AUGUST 2025

Dear all

Welcome to July/August's edition of In Touch. We have a change in editorship for this edition as Anita had to step down because of health problems. I would like to thank her for continuing to produce excellent editions over the last couple of years, always on time and full of information. Barbara Hurst has taken over this position for the time being and would like to hand over her groups' organiser position. So once again we are looking for help in the efficient running of your u3a. If you are put off, or worried about being on the committee, there are options to be of help in the running, in a secondary role and not on the committee.

A healthy turnover of committee members is vital for maintaining a strong and energetic branch.

A reminder that the annual subscription is due from August 1st and remains unchanged at £12 per person, exceptional value these days. We have decided to stop the option of supplying the "Third Age Matters" magazine as it is fully available on-line. Those who like to receive a printed copy of "In Touch" are charged an extra £3 a year due the large increases in postage.

Details, from Peter Grange on how to pay are on page 11.

Finally I hope to see many of you at the August lunch at the Royal Chase, on page 10.

Best wishes and happy holidays if you're going away this summer.

Best wishes

*Roger Laidler*  
*Chairman*

# u3a

## Shaftesbury and Gillingham

### Forthcoming Events

TALKS AT THE  
CHARLTON  
REMEMBRANCE HALL

3<sup>rd</sup> July  
Kevin Patience  
Rolls-Royce and the Silver Lady

No talk in August

4<sup>th</sup> September  
Dr Francis Burroughes  
The Golden Age of Glass

website  
<https://sgu3a.u3asite.uk>

## 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.

### **3th July – Kevin Patience – Rolls-Royce and the Silver Lady**

The amazing true story behind how Rolls-Royce adopted the Spirit of Ecstasy mascot for its motor car radiator emblem in 1911. A tragic love story between Lord Montagu of Beaulieu and his secretary Eleanor Thornton who lost her life when the S.S. Persia was torpedoed in December 1915 and who had been the model for the mascot designed by artist/sculptor Charles Sykes.

This is a fully illustrated Powerpoint presentation by author and historian Kevin Patience whose ownership of four vintage Rolls-Royce motor cars developed into this fascinating insight into a little known aspect of the marque's history.

### **4th September – Dr Francis Burroughes—The Golden Age of Glass**

We welcome Dr Burroughes back to give us the follow-up from the previous talk which takes the story of English glass through the 19th and 20th centuries, when Britain led the world in the production of high-quality, extraordinarily inventive and colourful glassware. Again illustrated with superb museum-quality pieces from his own collection.

Dr Burroughes is a lecturer and after-dinner speaker. He is now retired but in his long career he has been a school teacher, and director of several companies. In his spare time he has been an organist for over 50 years, a keen flower arranger, and a conductor of numerous choral societies, operatic societies, and musical groups. He is an acknowledged authority on antique glass, and is often requested to provide samples for television programmes or give his expert advice. He has many years experience as a public speaker.



Christina Warrington

## Introducing your Committee

### Helen Warley—Meeter and Greeter



My career was centered on Nursing. Having qualified as a State Registered Nurse at Yeovil, I stayed there for two years as a Staff Nurse in Intensive and Coronary Care. Needing a change, I applied to the Princess Marys' Royal Air Force Nursing Service and enjoyed eleven years serving in the UK and at RAF Akrotiri, Cyprus, before getting my dream job of two years as an Aeromedical Nurse. This involved flying all over the globe and caring for the sick and injured Servicemen and their families at 33,000ft in a variety of military and civilian aircraft and helicopters.

I then worked at Center Parcs Longleat Forest for 23 years as a Nurse and was promoted to Nurse Manager of the Medical Centre. No two days were ever the same with lots of challenging cases.. On leaving there I took a short break before working at a local care home until retiring.

I was keen to find something interesting to fill my time, and on recommendation of friends in other branches, I joined u3a three years ago and met a large group of people, all keen to undertake both new and familiar activities, make friends and enjoy time together. After a few months I was offered the position of “Meeter and Greeter” on the committee, which allows me to meet visitors, to make contact with new members online pre-first meetings or at the monthly get togethers. I enjoy being in the Genealogy group, playing table tennis and participating in the gardening group when time allows.

## Group News

### Ballroom and Latin Dancing

Due to a mix-up the first of our dance sessions on 13<sup>th</sup> June didn't take place. Our instructors, Harley and Thomas, hadn't put it in their calendar, and asked me to pass on their sincere apologies. They did in fact offer a session one week later but the hall wasn't available so I had to decline.

Our new first session will now be on 11<sup>th</sup> July and anyone is welcome to come and join in, or just to watch. Participation is £5 per hour and you can attend either ballroom or Latin or both. There is also an additional charge of £2 towards the hire of the hall. I hope to see lots of you there, even if only to see me making a fool of myself!

*Barbara Hurst*

## BSO Concerts

The 2025-26 concert season will soon be here; it is a very varied and exciting program this year.



A couple of our group live in Mere and drive to Gillingham to catch the coach. South West Coaches are based in Wincanton; if we have six or more Mere residents who would like to join the concert group I believe we can include a pick up point in Mere. I cannot guarantee that this can happen but if there is enough interest I will contact the coach company to explore the viability of this. Mere residents do some marketing on the group's behalf; as you know it

is a great evening out. Please be aware for this season they will have to become U3A members (not necessarily Shaftesbury and Gillingham) but the annual fee is good value for such a varied programme of groups, meetings and trips. Anyone can come twice as a guest to try us out before joining.

*Jennifer Day*

## Philosophy and Discussion

We had a meeting recently which compared Plato's *Republic* with today. Then Philosophers had all the power and wealth. We then looked at an article in the *Observer*, 15 June. It analysed who owned land (and hence had wealth and power), in England and Wales.

The answer was as follows:

Church of England 0.5%  
Crown Estates and Royal Family 1.4%  
Conservation Charities 2%  
Home Owners 5%  
Public Sector 8.5%  
Corporations 18%  
Oligarchs and City bankers 17%  
Unregistered 17%  
Aristocracy and Gentry 30%



Aristos continue to have startling levels of influence- there are still 92 members of this group in the House of Lords.

*Chris Spencer*

## Garden Interest: Visit to Wisley on 9th June.



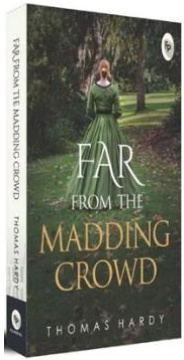
There was inspiration everywhere we looked, from long borders to succulent displays, exotic glass houses to planting of various species together. All plants were wonderfully and clearly labelled so that us amateurs could take plenty of notes for possible use in our own gardens. I myself have already ordered seeds to try next year. Wandering around was a joy with plenty of ideas to emulate.



*Irene Gordon*

## Literature

We're now well into Hardy's *Far from the Madding Crowd*, enjoying the novel of course and looking closely at what makes Hardy so readable - his descriptions, character depiction, clever and varied dialogue, etc. We've shared his sense of the past and his Wessex settings. We see these extracts on Zoom and there is always plenty of discussion about what we have read. Sometimes we try to turn the dialogue into drama, with each of us taking a part - not always successful, but no-one minds!



'Before our Hardyfest we briefly looked at the history of Elizabethan and Jacobean theatre, something we shall come back to, so interesting is it to find out about the nuts-and-bolts background to the drama of the time. Few people are aware of the other Elizabethan and Jacobean playwrights who were Shakespeare's rivals, so there is much to learn there too.

'Next, though, comes a look at Thomas Hardy's poetry, discussing how it reflects his life and experiences. He said he really wanted to be remembered for his poetry rather than for his novels. I wonder if we shall agree.

*Peter Rolfe*

## Walking

It seems a number of things conspired against us for our June walk. Ros had a lovely one planned but a combination of illness, injury and absence through holidays meant that so few could actually go on it, it was cancelled. Hopefully, it can be resurrected for another time.

Our next walk on 1st July takes us further afield to explore the lovely woodland along the river Stour, past the Vine Inn, possibly the 2nd smallest pub in Dorset. The walk starts at 10.30 and afterwards there will likely be an early lunch at the Pamphill Dairy café. And then for those who want a longer walk, there's the option of another after lunch at Badbury Rings. Badbury is an ancient Iron Age circular hillfort (dating back to 800 BC, in use until the Roman occupation of 43 AD) with different levels of ramparts/ditches with far reaching views and full of trees. It is also the site of many battles and rebellions, and there are different options, walk-wise, depending on what people prefer.

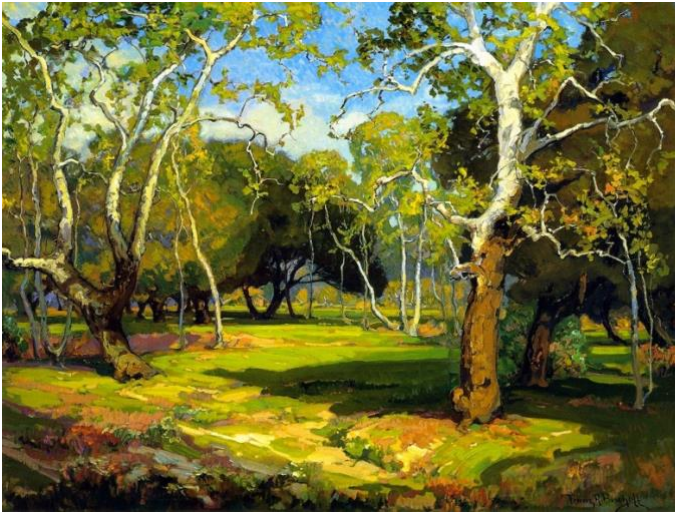
If this appeals to you and you are not a member of our friendly group, please message me via the web site.

*Ian Watson*

## Art Appreciation

For the last few meetings the subject has been "Landscapes", from any artist and any period. I always stress that if anybody comes across an artist they like, they can introduce them at any meeting. For any period I usually give examples of a few artists (I have the works of thousands

of artists on my laptop), and if requested I will provide examples of the work of any artist being investigated by the group members, which is working well because it encourages the group members to investigate, and then inform the group, of the histories of their particular choice of artists. After each meeting I send out, (via Dropbox) all that occurred at the last meeting, allowing the group members to build up their own portfolio of artists discussed. Attached are 3 examples of landscape artists works:



“Amidst The Cool and Silence” by Franz Bischoff (1864 – 1929)



“Rocky Triptych” by Erin Hanson (1981 to Present Time)



“Wivenhoe Park” by John Constable (1776-1837)  
*Gil Watkinson*

**Come and join us as a VOLUNTEER DRIVER!**

Become a volunteer driver to transport local people, who don't have transport, to medical appointments.

**We're not looking for super heroes** although for the people who use our service you probably are one!

- Have some spare time?    ● Like meeting people?
- Want to help?    ● Enjoy driving?

As a volunteer driver you can help to keep this **crucial community service** on the road.

- You decide what journeys you can take
- You need to have your own car
- We pay mileage expenses

To become a volunteer driver or find out more contact Philip  
**01747 824645**  
 walkerphilsu@gmail.com

To use the Gillingham Area Car Link service call  
**07599 311443**  
 to book your journey  
[www.gillinghamcarlink.org.uk](http://www.gillinghamcarlink.org.uk)

Gillingham Area Car Link Scheme Registered Charity Number 1138732

## Summer Italian Course

Hello. I am Alison Rigby and I am the Coordinator for the two U3A Italian groups which meet in Shaftesbury each week. The groups are flourishing and I intend to offer three groups from September. They will be Beginners, False Beginners and Intermediate Plus. Please sign up as soon as possible for the first two groups in particular.

In addition to this I am offering a Holiday Italian Course in Shaftesbury during the final week of August. All details are on the flyer on page 9. It may be of interest to anyone considering joining the U3A Italian Beginner/False Beginner groups in the autumn and will focus very much on speaking the language. All course fees will be donated directly to Shaftesbury Abbey Gardens where I am a volunteer guide.

# HOLIDAY ITALIAN COURSE

1 WEEK- ONLY £99!



Monday 25th-Friday 29<sup>th</sup> August, 2025

9.00am-12.30pm daily

The Lodge, Shaftesbury Abbey Museum and Gardens

All course fees paid directly to the Abbey

To register, call Alison on 07895 720 975

# Summer Lunch



7<sup>th</sup> August

12.30 for 1.00pm

## Menu £28

### Mains

- Slow braised beef in a red wine & mushroom sauce, with creamed potatoes and vegetables, topped with parsnip crisps
- Salmon fillet with hollandaise sauce, new potatoes and fresh vegetables
- Red Thai vegetable curry with rice and poppadom

### Desserts

- Sticky toffee pudding with clotted cream ice cream
- Eton mess
- Lemon meringue pie
- Cheeseboard, crackers, chutney & grapes

## Payment (sorry no cash)

Cheques payable to: Shaftesbury & Gillingham u3a  
Send to Peter Hurst, Firlie House, Dolphin Lane, Gillingham, SP8 4HQ

BACS: Account name - Shaftesbury and Gillingham U3A  
Account number – 22925860  
Sort Code – 30-99-08  
Reference – lunch followed by surname

Send your menu selections to [barbara@pbhurst.com](mailto:barbara@pbhurst.com) or telephone 01747 825646

# Membership Renewal

## Membership Renewal

I'm afraid it's that time of the year again, I'm after your money!

Membership is from August 1st to July 31st. The fee for the year 2025/26 remains at £12 per person. We have discontinued Joint membership, it was always double the Individual membership so served no real purpose. You may still pay for two members at the same address at the same time. We have also discontinued the Third Age Matters magazine subscription, as the Chairman has already advised by email.

The £3.00 annual charge for members who wish to receive a printed copy of "In Touch" is also unchanged

If none of your details (for example name, address, phone, email, membership, gift aid status) have changed you do not have to complete another membership form. You may renew via:

- Online by the membership portal by following "Membership Renewal" on the web site. You will need your membership number, and may pay via a PayPal account or a credit card. You do not need a PayPal account. If you haven't done so already follow the "register for a membership account" link to create an account for future use.
- By Bank Transfer (BACS). Our Sort Code is 30-99-08, Account Number 22925860 and Name "Shaftesbury and Gillingham U3A". Please use your Surname and Membership Number (on your Membership Card) as a reference.
- By cheque (**much preferred to cash**) or cash (right money please!) at a Monthly Meeting.
- By Cheque posted to: SGU3A Membership Secretary, 9 Peacemarsh Farm Close, Gillingham, Dorset SP8 4XQ. Please write your name(s) and membership number(s) (on your membership card) on the back of the cheque.

If any of your details have changed please either send a message to the Membership Secretary via the web site "Contact Us" page (<https://sgu3a.u3asite.uk/contact/>) or write to the Membership Secretary at the address above detailing your changes.

Membership cards are normally emailed. If you wish a printed card please indicate when you renew. Printed cards can be collected at a monthly meeting, or posted to you if you supply a s.a.e with your renewal. Your old membership card will continue to pass the scanner check at Monthly Meetings for a short while.

Peter Grange

Membership Secretary

Group	Date	Leader	Website
Art Appreciation	Monday 2-3.30pm – week 2	Gil Watkinson	<a href="#">click here</a>
Ballroom/Latin Dancing	Friday 2-4pm – week 2	Barbara Hurst	<a href="#">click here</a>
BSO	To be arranged	Jennifer Day	<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>
Churches/Places of Worship	To be Arranged 4 visits/year	Barbara Hurst	<a href="#">click here</a>
Digital Photography	Thursday – am – week 3	Andy Newton	<a href="#">click here</a>
Embroidery	Wednesday – pm week 2	Lesley Frost	<a href="#">click here</a>
French for Fun 1	Tuesday/fortnightly - 10am	Ron Beard	<a href="#">click here</a>
French for Fun 2	Wednesday /fortnightly-pm	Chris Stotesbury	<a href="#">click here</a>
Garden Interest	Monday – am - week 2	Irene Gordon	<a href="#">click here</a>
Genealogy	Monday – pm – week 4	Liz Greenway Valerie Hencken	<a href="#">click here</a>
German Conversation	Wednesday - fortnightly-pm	Robert Light	<a href="#">click here</a>
International Folk Dancing	Tuesday -pm – week 2	Barbara Robson	<a href="#">click here</a>
International History	Wednesday–am week 3	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	Tuesday – pm – week 2	Irene Gordon	<a href="#">click here</a>
Literature	Monday-am on Zoom Weeks 1 & 3	Peter Rolfe	<a href="#">click here</a>
Lunch Club	Friday – week 4	Michael Pittman	<a href="#">click here</a>
Mahjong	Friday – 2pm weeks 2 & 4	Marion Pace	<a href="#">click here</a>
Medieval World	Monday 10.15am – week 4	Denise Sims	<a href="#">click here</a>
Music for Pleasure	Thursday – pm – weeks 2 & 4	Eileen Haddleton	<a href="#">click here</a>
Natural History	Wed - 10-12.30pm – week 2	Janet Fenton	<a href="#">click here</a>
Philosophy	By arrangement	Chris Spencer	<a href="#">click here</a>
Planets & Exoplanets	Monday 2-4pm – week 2	Denise Sims	<a href="#">click here</a>
Poetry & Play Reading	Thursday – pm – week 1	Janet Botterill	<a href="#">click here</a>
Reading Group	Friday 11-12pm – week 1	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	Friday – am - weekly	Jill Page	<a href="#">click here</a>
Shared Interests	Varied	Barbara Hurst	<a href="#">click here</a>
Spite & Malice	Thursday – 2.00pm – Week 3	Sue Walker	<a href="#">click here</a>
Table Tennis	Thursday 2.00pm - weekly	Elizabeth Lewer Chris Stotesbury	<a href="#">click here</a>
Walking	Tuesday - 10:30am - week 1	Ian Watson	<a href="#">click here</a>
Writing for Pleasure	Mon 10.30am Weeks 2 & 4 via	Peter Rolfe	<a href="#">click here</a>