



## Ashburton u3a Newsletter – March 2024

Dear Members

### **Chair's Report March 2024**

Signs of Spring have arrived, daffodils, snowdrops, primroses, crocus, and the morning chorus, bringing longer days and the promise of more outdoor activities. Through joining many of our Interest Groups you can experience all that is on offer, learn something new, develop your skills and enhance your knowledge whilst socialising with other members.

Thank you to all who came to this month's speaker event 'The First Cornish man to climb Everest', 37 members attended, plus 3 visitors and 4 new members, so 44 people altogether. The coffee morning at the Dartmoor Lodge was also well attended and the feedback was positive. Thank you also to all of our members who have allowed us to claim gift aid on their subscription last year.

Our Annual General Meeting (AGM) will take place on Tuesday 28 May 2024 @ 2.00pm in Ashburton Town Hall preceding our usual speaker. The AGM offers members an opportunity to review our financial standing, ongoing changes, and to elect the committee for the upcoming year. We need your support to get a new committee in place so that your u3a can continue to function throughout the coming year.

### **U3a Website**

The intention is that by the end of 2024 or soon after, all u3a's using **Site Builder** will have the opportunity to migrate to **Site Works**. At this point support for Site Builder is expected to be withdrawn. Bob Heath, our Webmaster, has indicated that he will be stepping down in the near future, but has very kindly stated that he is willing to continue with both the **Site Builder** work and also act as the front person for the u3a in the migration project and early days maintenance. The committee has agreed to this migration and signed the Terms and Conditions. To help us keep running our u3a website the committee has also agreed to provide full support with training and each managing their own area(s) of interest.

However, if there any members who can offer support in any way with this project, can you please let us know.

Happy Easter!

Diane Rees, Chair  
Ashburton u3a



**Our next Coffee Morning will be held  
on THURSDAY 18 April 2024 @ 10.30 am,  
The Dartmoor Lodge, Pear Tree Crossroads, Ashburton**

Look forward to seeing you there!

**Bring a friend!**

# South East u3a Forum Summer School

## 2nd - 5th September 2024

If you are looking forward to Summer School well wait no longer; the following information will help you get ready for the **booking date and time of Thursday 11th April 2024 @ 10.00am**, when access to the *Booking Information* and the *Booking Form* will be available.

Here is the latest [\\*Flyer](#) for Summer School 2024, please download and circulate in your own u3a, or amongst your friends; really anyone you think might be interested.

To help you answer those questions that come to mind, please see [\\*FAQs](#), as the answer maybe there. If not, please get in touch, ways to do this are at the end of this update.

### Please note: All links can be downloaded

This is primarily a 4-day residential Summer School held at the University of Chichester, although, participants do have the option to be non-residential. Details about the choice of accommodation, costings and payment along with other relevant information can be found on the [\\*General](#) Information sheet.

Just **click** on [\\*General](#) for full details

The participants register on the Monday afternoon and they are with their tutors by 4.30pm for a short introductory session. Then, there is full programme with their chosen subject on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday morning. The summer school finishes after lunch on Thursday – home time!!

This year we have some course favourites returning:

- [Cycling](#)
- [Mah Jong](#) – Beginners
- Puzzling with [Mathematics](#)

The new subjects are:

- [Art & Mythology](#)
- [Bridge](#) - Beginners
- [Crochet](#) - Improvers
- [Latin](#) Remembered
- [Life Story](#)
- Irish and Anglo-Saxon Illuminated [Manuscripts](#)
- [Patchwork](#) – Beginners
- [Philosophy](#)
- [Photography](#)
- [Politics](#) – Electing the US President
- Demystifying [Science](#)

Just **click** on the subject for full details

There is a programme of events each evening:

- **Monday** – Quiz night – getting to know each other and having fun
- **Tuesday** – Film night on campus – a recent film OR
- **Tuesday** – [Theatre](#) visit Chichester Festival Theatre – “Oliver” production
- **Wednesday** – [Speaker](#) – Alan Kingshott: “The Tower of London”

Just **click** on [\\*Theatre](#) and/or [\\*Speaker](#) for full details of event

**Theatre visit, extra information:**  
A visit to the Festival Theatre’s production of “Oliver”, will take place on Tuesday evening, the evening meal will be at an earlier time for the theatre goers to accommodate the performance start time of 7.30pm, so please check our **theatre link** above for the synopsis.

Information regarding cost will be available on the Booking Information sheet and further information will be sent out, in due course, to those who have expressed an interest. **Please note:** *To book the Theatre visit - see Booking Form in April.*

**Please note: All links can be downloaded**

If you do not have internet access, please contact Martin on 07749 023766 and the relevant information will be posted to you.

For all enquiries, please select the Contacts page on this website.

Please read **carefully** the *Booking Information sheet* on how to book, before filling in the *Booking Form*, **available on Thursday 11 April 2024 @10.00am.**

We look forward to seeing you all in September.

The South East u3a Forum Summer School Team



**The Committee would like to hear from any members, who would like to attend a specific talk,**

**at the Ashburton Town Hall (date and time to be arranged)**

Are you aged 60 or over?

**Have you ever experienced or witnessed domestic abuse and/or sexual violence?**

Would you like to help improve services?

Age UK Cornwall and The Women's Centre Cornwall are working together to learn more about the experiences of older people across Devon and Cornwall.

Within a safe and confidential environment, they are here to listen to how we can make domestic abuse support services work for you and other people over 60.

To find out more about what they are doing and/or how to take part, please contact us by emailing [OPP@ageukcornwall.org.uk](mailto:OPP@ageukcornwall.org.uk)

or by calling 07436 589679 and leave a message and we can call you back.

**The Ashburton u3a has an opportunity to offer a presentation in this regard, if we have sufficient members to attend.**

**Please contact Shirley Buckley if you are interested**

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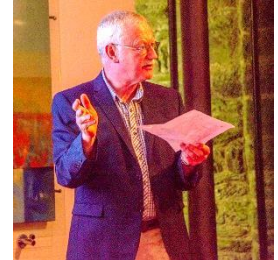


# Tuesday 23 April at 2.30 pm

## “Beatrice Chase, My Lady of the Moor”

### Talk by Simon Dell

## Ashburton Town Hall



The year 2024 marks the 150th anniversary of the birth of Olive Katherine Parr or more commonly called Beatrice Chase and this talk explores the life and works of this complicated yet interesting character who spent most of her life living at Venton near Widecombe. This talk will explore who she was, her works of literature and the aura that she created which perhaps disguised her real self. This year also marks the 110<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the publication of her first Dartmoor Novel

“The Heart of the Moor”.

Few people in 2024 might have read her books – written in the language of her day between the war years in the early part of the twentieth century. Accused of being ‘over-flowery’ and too lush and romantic she courted fame and notoriety in her day. Indeed, had she died at the height of her popularity her passing would have been mourned nationally; but at the time of her death in 1955, just a few days before her 81<sup>st</sup> birthday, she has become an embittered and tragic figure.



Non-members are welcome to attend our talks,  
£4 payable on the door which includes:  
Tea, Percolated Coffee & biscuits at  
Ashburton Town Hall from 2.15 pm

If you would like to find out more about our activities,  
or better still to join us for one or more of our interest groups,

visit: [www.u3asites.org.uk/ashburton](http://www.u3asites.org.uk/ashburton)

## Below is a list of the Speakers booked throughout 2024

| <b>4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month 2024</b> | <b>Ashburton Town Hall<br/>u3a Speakers for 2024</b>                     | <b>Speaker</b>       |
|---|--|----------------------|
| 23 April  | The Life of Beatrice Chase   | Simon Dell           |
| 28 May + AGM                                    | Devon Land & Sea Piano Presentation held at <b>Ashburton Arts Centre</b> | Adrienne Hesketh     |
| 25 June   | Dartmoor's Industrial Archaeology & how Nature is Taking Back Over       | Emma Cunis           |
| 27 August                                       | The Origins and Work of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.          | Mark Bailey          |
| 24 September                                    | Making a Difference – Working in a Rural Village School in India         | Angela & Mike Walker |
| 22 October                                      | Tawny Owls – Coming to a Wood Near You                                   | Stephen Powles       |
| 19 November                                     | My Life in Theatre & Television as a Production Designer                 | Lynda Kettle         |

### Ashburton u3a Committee Members:

| <b>Name</b>     | <b>Position</b>                      |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------|
| Diane Rees      | Chair                                |
| Jan Skerritt    | Secretary                            |
| Janet Morris    | Treasurer                            |
| Anne Wilkinson  | Membership Secretary                 |
| Shirley Buckley | Group Coordinator                    |
| Jayne Hartley   | Speaker Secretary                    |
| Philip Carlisle | Events Secretary & Publicity Officer |
| Penny Martin    | Committee Member                     |
| Bob Heath       | Webmaster **                         |

**\*\* The vacancy for a webmaster is still available – if you are at all interested in helping with this non-onerous task, please contact Bob Heath via the website.**


**Should you wish to contact any of the committee, please use our website.**

**PLEASE CONSIDER BECOMING INVOLVED IN THE RUNNING OF YOUR u3a to help spread the load. It could be fun!**



**If you would like to find out more about our activities, or better still to join us for one or more of our interest groups, visit: [www.u3asites.org.uk/ashburton](http://www.u3asites.org.uk/ashburton)**

Did you know - **we also have a facebook page!**

Please visit and comment or “like”  as appropriate. It would be good to hear from you! The more “likes” we receive, the further up the search list we are positioned which motivates new enquiries and members, thereby keeping our u3a actively positive.



**'The group they're interested in is just one click away'**

You can enhance your u3a experience by joining [Interest Groups Online](#) (IGO). IGO is an optional addition to your local membership and offers the opportunity to join groups from the comfort of your own home via Zoom.

IGO is perfect for those seeking to share a niche interest with others, those wanting to connect with people from other areas and those who simply want more accessible opportunities during the winter months. You can join existing groups or will be supported to start your own.

[View the groups on offer](#); with topics ranging from a Jane Austen Reading group to Science in the News.

A year's membership of Interest Groups Online costs £12, joining now will cost £6 and give you access to groups until April 2024.

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# New Interest Groups

## The Ologies Group (Geology/Biology)

Angela wrote: I would just like to report that, despite my anxiety, the first Ologies get together went well. The feedback I got was encouraging. It was clear to me, that the knowledge of the members who attended was very varied but I think everyone enjoyed it and lots of members contributed to discussions that resulted from the subjects raised.

We all enjoyed looking at the specimens from a variety of countries and rock types: Igneous, Sedimentary and Metamorphic. However the more I have learnt about rocks, the more I acknowledge that it takes a real expert to identify many of them, for example, diamonds can be clear, yellow, pink, violet, blue, green, grey and many more colours! Many of the crystals are very beautiful. However ordinary rocks are fascinating because their structure tells the story of their formation. We shared drinks and snacks including donated cake!

Here are the details of the planned meetings – if you would like to join this group, please contact the Group Leader, Angela Walker: [coombemeadow2016@gmail.com](mailto:coombemeadow2016@gmail.com)

### Meeting on the 4<sup>th</sup> Friday in the month

2.30pm at Coombe Meadow, Angela's House (and possible field trips)

| <u>Date</u>          | <u>Topic</u>   |   |
|----------------------|--|---|
| <u>22 March 2024</u> | <b>Volcanoes and Crystals</b><br>to include numerous specimens from Angela's collection  | Members can bring their own specimens   |
| <u>26 April</u>      | <b>Fossils</b><br>to include numerous specimens from Angela's collection   | Members can bring their own specimens   |
| <u>24 May</u>        | <b>Wildlife in our ponds and stream</b><br>to include using Angela's microscope and hand lenses to reveal the wonders of freshwater ecology. | This is a beautiful world which we may have seen on TV but to see it first hand is very special |
| <u>28 June</u>       | Geology and Gems of the Himalayas  |   |
| <u>26 July</u>       | Geology of Dartmoor  |   |

## Film Group

Meetings: Weekly or monthly, depending on the films available. Variable days of week.

**We went to see Wicked Little Letters and we're going to see Vindication Swim next week.**

If you would like to join in, please contact Anne Wilkinson ([anni.wilkinson@gmail.com](mailto:anni.wilkinson@gmail.com))

Event Leaders: there will NOT be a group leader as such. When the group is established, any member of the group will be able to contact the rest of the group by email to suggest a film viewing/venue/date and time, stating details of their booking, i.e. row and seat number. The rest of the group will respond if they are interested.

Tickets: Each member to individually book online to avoid disappointment, or buy a ticket on the day.

Venues: **Alexandra Cinema**, Newton Abbot - Wednesday mornings. £4.50 includes refreshments  
**The Barn Cinema**, Dartington – 5pm and 8pm variable showings. Café available.  
**The Totnes Cinema** – 2pm, 4pm and 8pm showings – varies according to schedule. Bar and refreshments available. Seating is not reserved, people sit where they want. Choose either tub chairs or sofas on ground floor OR gallery with cinema seating.

Parking: Please car share to split cost, if you would wish to. All venues above will incur a car parking charge although some do not charge after 6pm. Please check meter information.

Face masks: Wearing of a face mask is an individual choice, which you may want to consider in an enclosed space. Stay safe, not only against Covid but also colds and influenza!



## Lunch Club

Dates: 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of each month, PLUS the occasional Sunday lunch.  
Venues: Variable, within a reasonable distance of Ashburton.  
Price: This will of course vary, according to menu choices. We will use venues with a reasonably priced menu, so no Michelin Stars! EACH MEMBER ATTENDING WILL PAY FOR THEIR CHOICE OF FOOD AND DRINK.  
Transport: Car share, if possible.

**Please contact Shirley Buckley, Groups Co-ordinator if you are interested.**

## Sewing for Charity Group

After the success of the Knitting and Crochet for Charity group, some people have shown an interest in Sewing for Charity. The idea would be to use scrap fabric to make small articles like bags, book covers, spectacle or i-pad/tablet cases, or cushion covers, and accumulate enough things to hold a stall at one of the Christmas markets next year. A charity would be chosen through popular demand.

**Please contact Anne Wilkinson, Membership Secretary, if you are interested.**

## Existing Interest Groups

### **Creative Writing group (Group Leader: Anne Wilkinson)**

We met as usual this month, despite some members being absent. We discussed a continuing family history project for one member, a revised idea for a project for another and a one-off piece of writing relating to planning your own funeral service that another member was working on. Whatever your interests, it's always possible to record your activities in writing - like writing a diary - and this is good practice for whatever writing you want to do.

### **Discovering Devon (Group Leader: Anne Aubin)**

The Discovering Devon groups met on Thursday 28 March, after having to change our arrangements due to the weather conditions. Unfortunately the trip to Shaldon Botanical Gardens had to be cancelled. However, we had two very interesting sessions, in the morning and afternoon, held indoors, as the weather continued to blow and beat down with rain! There are vacancies in the morning group - please contact [anneaubin@clara.co.uk](mailto:anneaubin@clara.co.uk) if you are interested in joining.

### **Family History Discovery (Group Leader: Vanessa Griffith)**

At the March meeting, David Sykes gave a highly informative talk on DNA and how best to use the results with Ancestry. This was followed by James Wrigley speaking about DNA in relation to MyHeritage. Both talks complemented each other extremely well. Very many thanks to these two members for giving up their time to prepare and present their talks to the group.

### **Knitting and Crochet Group (Group Leader: Anne Wilkinson)**

We continue to meet, and share our skills and materials. We don't have much wool left now from the original donation but continue to find bits and pieces ourselves and would welcome any more that people may have.

**The Mah Jong Group** has moved to a Monday afternoon, (2 pm) for the time being. We now have 8 Mah Jong sets between us (indicating the enthusiasm of the group). The size and shape of the table we use, means that this restricts which house will host us, but it doesn't prevent our playing in the open air in the summer. If any member wishes to watch a game or two, they would be very welcome Tea and biscuits provided.  
Doffy Milner. Tel 01364 652599

## Music Explored (Group Leader: Chris Avis)

Our March meeting was titled “Jazz on Screen” and led by Philip Carlisle who played a selection of jazz music associated with cinema films, beginning with *Now You Has Jazz*, a song written by [Cole Porter](#) for the 1956 film *High Society* in which it was introduced by [Bing Crosby](#) and [Louis Armstrong](#), describing what instruments are needed to create [jazz](#). Two years later, the opening credits of the documentary *Jazz on a Summer’s Day* were backed by Jimmy Giuffre playing a descriptive piece, *The Train and the River*. Also, from the same film we heard Anita O’day singing *Tea for Two*.

Jerry Fielding wrote the score for *The Gauntlet* starring Clint Eastwood and Sandra Bullock, the opening scene of which is of a sunrise over Phoenix, backed by a tune called *Bleak Bad Big City Dawn*. The 1950’s *Peter Gunn* is notable for being the first detective series whose character was created especially for television and is best remembered for its iconic jazz theme by Henry Mancini.

Frank Sinatra played a musician with a drug habit in *The Man with the Golden Arm*, the theme for which was composed by Elmer Bernstein. Gold continued with *The Golden Striker* written by John Lewis of The Modern Jazz Quartet for the film *No Sun in Venice*. The film *Around Midnight* is based on a composite of two American musicians in Paris. Herbie Hancock wrote the score, but he used as the theme tune the jazz standard of the same name, *Around Midnight*. The jazz saxophonist Dexter Gordon played the lead, so the music in the film was live rather than mimed by actors.

A rather surreal film, *Siesta*, about a lady skydiver, had a soundtrack performed by the trumpeter Miles Davis. We returned to crime and punishment with the theme music from the soundtrack score written by Duke Ellington for *Anatomy of a Murder* starring James Stewart. Then an entirely different film with a theme written by Sonny Rollins for *Alfie* starring Michael Caine. The familiar Cilla Black song didn’t feature in the film but was written for the advertising trailer by Burt Bacharach.

Finally, Elmer Bernstein again for a film about seedy New Orleans with a rather unlikely lead in Lawrence Harvey. The music that plays over the closing credits is sung by Brook Benton, though the version we heard was played by Jimmy Smith, including the uncommon use of an organ in jazz. The film and the tune are titled *Walk on the Wild Side*, which is what Philip encouraged us all to do with his jazz music, pushing our musical boundaries into what were for some of us new grounds to explore. Thanks Philip!

## Scottish Country Dancing (Group Leader: Janet Morris)

We meet on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month from 2-3.30pm in the Town Hall and anyone is welcome to come along and give it a go.

## Writing your Family History

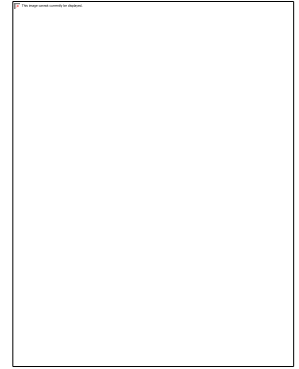
Anne Wilkinson wrote about her father's Royal Navy service during World War 2, using information he sent home in letters and his records obtained from the National Archives. He received a Distinguished Service Medal for bravery during the Allied Landings in North Africa in November 1942 and also served in Ceylon (Sri Lanka) and worked on small boats on the English coast. The letters also included a report of learning to make apple pie and smuggling a bottle of rum home to his family in London and he sent back sketches of boats and his fellow officers.





William Llewelyn Griffith

Vanessa Griffith spoke about Midshipman William Llewelyn Griffith (a first cousin - twice removed) who was killed in action aged eighteen in the Battle of Jutland in 1916. William is commemorated on Panel 10 of the Plymouth Naval Memorial on Hoe. Both he and his brother Henry had attended Brighton College. The following year, Henry, also lost his life, aged twenty-six. Following active service in the Great War, Henry had returned to the UK where he became a flying instructor, only to lose his life in an accident at the Instruction Camp at Dartford.



Henry Hall Griffith

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**As you all know, there are many other interest groups in the Ashburton u3a; please visit the website to see all details, and send a message if you would like to know details.**

If **you** have an interest or skill you would like to **share with other members**, and maybe would like to start a new interest group, please contact Shirley Buckley, Groups Co-ordinator ([buckley387@btinternet.com](mailto:buckley387@btinternet.com)), who will liaise with the members, and will also be able to point you in the right direction for any support or guidance you may wish to receive.

ALSO - The national u3a website has information and support for new Group Leaders.

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**Sharing Transport** – thinking about the rising costs of fuel and living generally, also of climate change, pollution of the environment etc., Ashburton u3a would like to promote **CAR SHARING**, if possible. Some of the members already car share; those of you who can offer a lift to another member or friend to a meeting, you will be helping to saving the planet, albeit in a very small way. If you would like a lift to any one of our events, please go to our website [Ashburton u3a: Contact](#) and click on either Membership Secretary or Chair to send us details of your request. We will then email the whole membership seeking someone able to give you a lift



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**Please inform the Membership Secretary, Anne Wilkinson, if you change any of your membership contact details, especially your email address, to enable all communications to be successfully sent. Thanks**

[Ashburton u3a: Contact](#)

**Many thanks to all who have contributed to this Newsletter.**

The Newsletter would be nothing without all your involvement and support.

**If YOU have a story to share, please send to Shirley Buckley via**

[Ashburton u3a: Contact](#)