

u3a

Bishop's Stortford









**Painting by Eileen Valder
North Street
Bishop's Stortford**

Summer 2023 Magazine
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Website: <http://u3asites.org.uk/bishops-stortford>
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The View from the Chair



Five months in and I am (so far) loving my time as your Chair! The Committee is a team of kind, committed and fun-loving individuals who do what they do out of generosity and enthusiasm for our u3a. They should all be applauded for their efforts and dedication!

I have also enjoyed getting to know so many members, who themselves are often inspiring, interesting people with varied and fascinating pasts.

Please do continue to introduce yourself to me as we meet and let me know how you are benefiting from our u3a.

We're steadily increasing our numbers now and with that will hopefully come an ever-increasing diverse range of groups for our members to organise and run. I have an especially big Thank you to all the group leaders as I know it's sometimes a tough act! I am continuing my visits around the groups so if you haven't seen me at yours yet do get that email out to me and I'll do my best to visit.

Meanwhile look out for our Bishop's Stortford u3a Facebook pages, our diary sheet, notices on our website & emails from our group leaders.

I look forward to learning, laughing and having a great time with you all in the months to come.

Dr Sue Rayner Jacobs

Bishop's Stortford u3a Chair

chair@bsu3a.org.uk

Message from the Editor

Many thanks to Lesley Mishan for her many years of being the editor of this fine magazine. Lesley, you are a hard act to follow!

Please email photos and articles, preferably in Word, for inclusion in the next (early 2024) BSu3a magazine to magazine@bsu3a.org.uk, especially those about group activities and outings or special events. BS u3a members are keen to find out about the various groups and events, especially new members.

A reminder that the editor reserves the right to edit articles and photographs so that they can fit within the overall layout of the magazine, so that we can keep within the recommended number of pages.

If you would prefer to receive a digital copy only of this magazine in future, please email your preference to membership@bsu3a.org.uk, stating your name and email address.

We are still searching for an Editor for the magazine so if you fancy trying your hand at or assisting with the next issue(s) please email magazine@bsu3a.org.uk



Maureen Gould (Editor)

Front cover photograph: Eileen

Valder's painting of North Street. Elaine & her partner Chris are valued members of the Bishop's Stortford Art - painting & drawing group. New members welcome. Please contact Derek Crowther 01279 832580 john.crowther2@ntlworld.com

Visit by Barbara Cordina – Trustee - 13th March 2023

I was very much looking forward to my visit to Bishop's Stortford u3a in Herts for their AGM. Many years ago I lived in the vicinity and spent many afternoons walking around the shopping area with our young son and enjoying the park and facilities. I was actually married there in the Registry Office in 1975 so this visit on March 13 would bring back fond memories. In the event I became very lost when navigating the streets – so many changes – which of course, I should have expected. Two distress calls to the chair later I arrived at the Methodist Hall and met up with the delightful members.

I had been asked to give a short presentation on the u3a movement as a whole and worked through my PowerPoint presentation, prior to the AGM. I was pleased to see how interested the members were.

During refreshments following the AGM, many said how informative my talk had been and that they had learnt a lot about the movement which they did not know before.

The AGM proceeded professionally and quickly. Chair, Jim Paterson, was stepping down and new chair, Dr Sue Rayner Jacobs, spoke to the meeting briefly and was generously received by the members. A new treasurer has also been recruited, Dr Alice Dain, so Bishop's Stortford u3a can confidently move forward. I look forward to joining the members again in the not too distant future and know I can look forward to friendly conversations.



The new Chair addresses our April monthly Meeting in the Methodist Church

Adult ADHD and Unintended Rudeness - a letter



If you ever meet me, please don't feel offended. I'm just one of many whose mind may think differently to yours, and appear rude as a result. That's actually about 1 in 7 people, who are like me for life. My brain is hyperactive and never stops, unfortunately with a mouth that is permanently engaged with it. I even opt for local anaesthetic so I can talk during surgery, seriously! I'm impulsive, and may interrupt your conversations, finish your sentences, wander off topic, or even just wander off 😊. Apologies if I talk too much about what is going on in my life, random thoughts in my brain, rather than your interesting life. Please believe me, I am interested in your life, sometimes to the point of bombarding you with questions about it, if you are unlucky enough to be the victim. I don't mean to be intrusive or rude, I'm just excessively curious.

I may even get fixated on a topic and hyperfocus on it, to the exclusion of everything else going on around me. That's good for problem solving, but not at a social gathering - well, unless people want me to solve their problem.

So if I meet you, I'll do my best to appear "normal". But what is normal? Every personality trait of people is somewhere different on a personality distribution, even between different cultures. If you are interested, here's some reading about ADHD and rudeness. And please don't get confused about my adult ADHD and difficult children, I was never like that.

<https://www.healthyplace.com/self-help/adhd/adhd-and-rudeness-how-to-change-people-s-perception-of-you>

Bye, and all the best to you,
Anon, u3a Bishop's Stortford member

Herculaneum by Adrienne Tinn

Old Herculaneum, once-buried city
 where wild poppies blow,
 crimson fresh floral blood
 reddening the tops of walls,
bordered by bright green grass
below which we tourists pass.

Vesuvius once reared its head
 and bursting long years ago
in violent and fearsome flood,
 created its path, its bed,
 silencing calls and cries
of people in hopeless flight,
 who, seeing the lava flow,
could not believe their eyes.

They, reaching the caves below,
 hoped to find succour there
 down by the surging sea -
 but once in, nowhere to go
and breathing the burning air,
 succumbed in a single flash
 to molten rock, fiery ash.

Old Herculaneum, once-buried city
 enclosed by a grey rock wall
where birds swooping, sailing, pass,
 chirruping birdsong call.

Down fifty feet they dug
 seeking the buried past.
Homes shops and temples found
 buried deep underground.

Exposed to the light at last
patterns that greet the eye,
 bright tessellation

telling of tales, beliefs,
polytheistic mores of a dead nation.

Down in the dusty street
trodden by tourist feet,
a gecko moves swiftly by,
patterns a dusty trail,
glances with half closed eye
leaves with an echo of its tail.

(Written on a visit with the Italian Group some years ago)

Bs u3a Book Group 6 - Garden Party Summer 2023



We meet at 2pm on the first Friday of the month and generally have a lively discussion on a variety of novels, including contemporary, crime, adventure, historical, the classics and non-fiction.

Sue McEvoy
Group Co Ordinator

Reflections on his time as Chair by Jim Paterson

I took over as Chair on 9th March 2020 just as the world was shutting down due to the COVID19 pandemic. Of course, Bishop's Stortford u3a was not immune and we effectively closed for a couple of months before gradually reopening on-line then face to face. It was an interesting period in history we lived through, and it tested our resolve in more ways than one.

We all got through it, however, not without some scarring, especially a sizeable drop in membership numbers. I tried to address this issue with the u3a day promotion in September 2022 which was considered a success with a good turnout on the day resulting in

over 40 membership applications.



The biggest challenge during my time as Chair was encouraging ongoing recruitment to the Committee and therefore, by extension, the continuation of Bishop's Stortford u3a. There were new faces joining the committee during my period as Chair but there was no interest in anyone coming forward to take on the future roles of Chair or Treasurer. These positions needed to be filled otherwise our u3a

would be in breach of its own constitution and Third Age Trust/Charity Commission rules.

As time moved closer to the AGM without any succession in place, I had no choice but to start contingency planning for the merger or even the winding up of our u3a.

Fortunately, these plans did not need to be enacted as Dr Sue Rayner Jacobs and Dr Alice Dain stepped forward for the roles of Chair and Treasurer.

In order that this situation can be avoided in the future, I would ask all members to give some serious consideration to standing for the Committee at next year's AGM. I will be standing down as Vice Chair in 2024, and others' terms will also come to an end. Sue will therefore be looking for new committee members and a deputy who could, hopefully, take over the chair in 2026.

Finally, I would like to thank everybody for their help and support during my 3 years at the helm. We faced some serious challenges but overcame them with a mixture of humour and determination.

Jim Paterson

Vice Chair BSu3a 2023

Former Chair 2020/23

Your Membership



Membership Payments in 2023/24

In case you know someone who is considering joining (or re-joining) the Bishop's Stortford u3a, I thought it might be useful to set out the details of our current payment arrangements which you could share with them.

Our Membership Year runs from 1st April to 31st March and for 2023/24 anyone joining from 1st April to 30th September 2023 must pay £15. Anyone joining from 1st October 2023 to 31st March 2024 will only have to pay £8.

Payment can be made by any of the methods detailed below:

1) In person at any of our Monthly Meetings. Payment can be made in cash or by cheque.

2) By bank transfer using the following information

Name of account: Bishops Stortford University (no apostrophe 's')

Sort Code: 60-02-36 Account Number: 67945651

Reference: Surname followed by the words 'New member'.

3) By sending a cheque made payable to 'Bishop's Stortford U3A' together with any other joining documentation and a stamped self-addressed envelope to the person who issued the Application Form.

Membership Cards are issued as soon as possible after the joining paperwork and subscription payment have been received.

Kath Hird
Membership Secretary



Members of our Committee at monthly meeting & below our tech team



Fortnightly Footers – a diary of a local walk

On Thursday 25 May, we set off from the Coach & Horses, this walk being led by Ian and myself.

It was a lovely morning and a superb walk going through many different landscapes, vegetation was lush and high (including the nettles!). The route included two stiles and a railway line to cross near the pub, several bridges and paths that were dry, just a little rocky in places.



The route follows the Stort Navigation then goes across fields and farmland and through a private property - a thatched cottage with a beautiful garden and the alliums in full bloom.



We measured the walk at just over 4 miles and it took us 2 hours with a short break at Tednambury Lock, which is about halfway.



The pub was open when we returned for drinks and lunch.

Oh, I nearly forgot the birds - cuckoos were in full song! A most enjoyable walk.

Jackie Cable

u3a Weekly Walkers



Bishop's Stortford has a very active weekly walking group that meets on a Wednesday at Silver Leys Car Park with walks leaving promptly at 10.30 a.m. EXCEPT the 2nd Wednesday of each month from February to December when an Amble (this includes lunch at a pub) takes place. Generally, the walks are in the region of 4 miles taking c2hours, but occasionally an extended walk of around 5 miles takes place and Members are given prior notice when this happens. The local walks normally take in the local countryside however there are also town walks which are popular during the Winter months. The responsibility for planning Ambles and leading walks is shared amongst members of the Group. Maps and directions of the local walks are available to members.

If you are interested in walking, then please contact the Group co-ordinator, Jim Paterson on jim.paterson@bsu3a.org.uk or 07504 104679

Canalability day on the Stort



On 23rd May a small number of us had a really perfect day on the River Stort. We assembled at Harlow Moorhen, Burnt Mill Quay. The vehicles were parked in a good shady car park only a few yards from the river.

Lots of chatter and smiles as we were soon on board. Our **Canalability** Boat was exceptionally well equipped and fitted out for folk of little mobility, even wheelchairs, and we soon boarded by the lift. When all were ready, settled in the spacious lower deck, having had a tea or coffee all laid out for us, we were introduced to our leaders and crew. We were asked to bring our own lunch, but this was hardly necessary as there were many biscuits and drinks around and there was always boiling water.

The boat was so well fitted out for all depending on one's mobility. It had wide toilet doors, hoists, lifts, a wet room and extra handrails. We only had to ask for help or advice and it was there. We were soon out on the quiet water with

sometimes overhanging trees sometimes open farmland and sheep not far away. The birds were numerous and away from traffic noises we just loved the bird song. We went around bends, and straight stretches, and sometimes had dogwalkers on the tow path beside us. A couple of times the strongest amongst us went out to help with the hand-operated locks. Some folk even agreed to go with our skipper and see how the boat was steered. They were good and each got a certificate. We passed some beautiful gardens and our turn-around point was one of the best. Some folk sat outside by the bow and others moved around the boat. It was so agreeable and the 4 hours passed far too quickly. To sum up I would say it was a day of friendship, calm, good weather and good company which passed without a hitch, being so well organised.

Thank you Bob, Stuart and Carol.

Gretta Hudson



Operating the
lock gates on
the River Stort

Dickens' London Walk

“It’s a dear, good world, and I love it!” - *Little Dorrit*

In May, the **London Rovers Group** enjoyed an interesting walk around Dickens' London. Starting in Holborn, we visited his former home at 48 Doughty Street, now the Charles Dickens Museum (<https://dickensmuseum.com/>); unfortunately, the Charles Dickens Museum was not open on the day of our walk (Tuesday) so we couldn't go inside but it looks well worth a visit.



Dickens' writing desk at Doughty Street



The Dickens' Museum

We then walked along Grays Inn Road to Clerkenwell, Spitalfields (where we lunched in a pub), Cheapside, Fleet Street, St Paul's Cathedral and ended the tour at the Bank of England. It was at 48 Doughty Street that Dickens wrote at least 4 of his novels, including *Barnaby Rudge*, *Great Expectations*, *Our mutual Friend* and his unfinished *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*. Our walk took us to several of Dickens' former homes (he lived at at least 22 London addresses) and we saw many examples of surviving Dickensian-era buildings which I'd never noticed before. Dickens (1812-70) wrote over 12 major novels, numerous short stories, plays, essays, non-fiction and articles. *Barnaby Rudge* & *The Pickwick Papers* between them name 206 different London locations.

It was a very enjoyable amble around familiar parts of London which brought otherwise unnoticed buildings to our attention and which shone a new light on the poorer parts of the city which Dickens frequented.

Thanks to leaders Carolyn & Maureen for planning an interesting tour, and for their guidance and information.



St Paul's Churchyard

Words & photos by SRJ

Battersea Power Station and Lift 109



I expect we all remember this iconic power station. Those 4 wonderful chimneys! Well, now it has been regenerated. Lots of shops and a restaurant and flats inside. Not all filled yet as it hasn't long been finished. We had a good look round, inside and out. And it is so lovely to see it all.

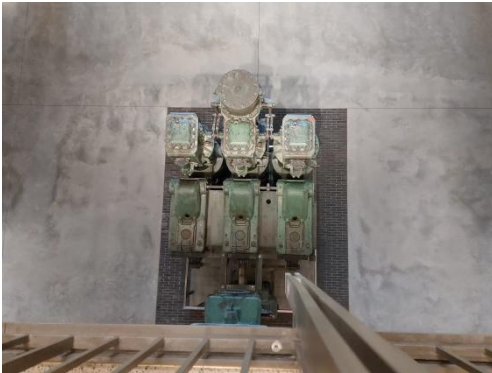


We had previously booked to go up Lift 109, so called as it goes 109 metres up to the top of one of the chimneys. What an experience. You get some modern light shows first, then into a lift. Out of that lift, into another one, which is the one that will take you to the top. It is all clear, so you get a wonderful view of your trip to the top.



The glide up is an experience in itself. Then you reach the top, with the wonderful 360 deg views.

You don't even have to go out into the cold, just stay inside and walk around, taking pictures. After 10 minutes, it is back down again, and of course you arrive in the shop!!



If you like an experience, do try it. It is cheaper on Mondays, Tues and Weds and also in the afternoon. We went via Liverpool St, then Central Line to Bank, change on to Northern line to Kennington, then another Northern line to Battersea Power Station. All very easy.

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### **Beryl Jones**

It is with great sadness that we report the passing of Beryl Jones in mid-July. Beryl, who was in her 90's, was the founder and first Chair of our u3a in 1985. She belonged to many different groups, including the Garden, Art, Bridge groups and the Singers. She was featured in our 2020 Winter edition. She will be sadly missed by all who knew her.



**Family History Group – Stortford's Pre-History**  
***The early Stortfordians***  
***by Chris Lydamore of Southmill Arts Centre***

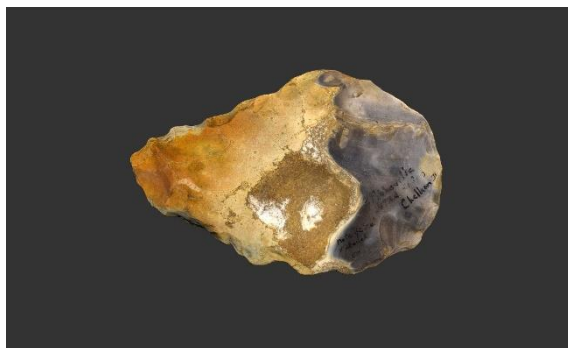
We were treated to a riveting talk in late May by Chris Lydamore of the Southmill Arts Centre on the pre-history of Stortford and Britain generally. Chris had broken his holiday to drive back to Stortford to deliver his talk to the group. He left straight after to drive all the way back to meet his wife for a pub lunch. Such professionalism and devotion to duty was much appreciated!



Chris explained that we use the term “**Ice-age**” far too loosely – we are still in an ice age as there is still ice at the poles. From the Devensian ice-age 110,000 years ago through to our present Flandrian, the ice-ages have been punctuated by interglacial periods where the entire land is not covered in ice. Chris described the effects of the heavy shifting ice moving across the terrain and how this affected the underlying geological substrates, forming marains as it retreated and glacial clay as it tilled the rocks beneath, carrying and depositing as it moved. Chris took us from **Paleolithic** (“Old Stone Age” 2.6 million –

10,000 BCE) to the **Mesolithic** (9000-3500 BCE) when Aurochs, Mammoths and other huge beasts roamed the land, the remains of which have been found in gravels in Stortford. Needless to say, there is little evidence of human activity from these times other than flint axes. He then took us into the **Neolithic** ("New Stone Age" 10,200-2500 BCE) when evidence of settlements, agriculture, tools, domestic animals and pottery begin to appear. Due to the advancement of tools such as mounted axe heads, forest clearing & farming became possible and this continued into the **Bronze age** (2300-750 BCE) – evidence has been found at Grange Paddocks of Bronze age farming and of pottery at Hazel End and along the by-pass. By the **Iron Age** (1200- 550 BCE) settlements became more structured. Inter-tribal conflicts between the "Essex" Trinovantes and the "Hertfordshire" Catuvellauni tribes is evidenced by finds in Hadham Road and Whittington way.

The end of the Iron Age marks the end of our pre-history and the beginning of (documented) history.



After a period of severe flooding in the 5<sup>th</sup> century when the settlement was abandoned, we passed into the early **Roman** occupation of Britain. You may recall the recent documentary on the Grange Paddocks archaeological digs, which showcased the early Roman finds discovered on the site. The



program stated that these discoveries had changed our knowledge of Roman Stortford. In fact, we were already aware of the Roman occupation here & of Stane Street, a major Roman road between London & Colchester, which runs past Grange Paddocks.

The museum at Southmill Arts contains many pre-historic and early historic finds from around Stortford, mostly from locations where new foundations have been dug. Chris has a wealth of knowledge on early Stortford and is a personable and generous man – he has offered to show any of us around the museum by arrangement. His assistant at South Mills Arts is none other than our former Chair, Jim Paterson!

At the end of the talk, over questions, we munched on some delicious Anglo-Saxon oatcakes made by Denise (see p33).



We look forward to Chris' next (promised) talk on the early history of Stortford!

**Sue RJ**

Chris Lydamore of Bishop's Stortford Museum at South Mill Arts

## Art - Drawing and Painting Group



If you would like to join the Art - Drawing and Painting Group which meets on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Friday of the month at Markwell, contact Derek Crowther at 0127983258 or [john.crowther@ntlworld.com](mailto:john.crowther@ntlworld.com)



**Wildlife by Margery Mafkell**

## History 1 Group – The Bells of St Michael's

Our History Meetings are always very interesting and fill a packed hall in the Baptist Church. So, when Alan Padgett, our speaker for May, started, we were all extremely interested to learn all about the Bells of St Michael's Church in Stortford.

We all listened with interest as to how many bells various churches have: they range from 3 to 8 bells; and how many tunes ("changes") can be played using different orders of ringing the bells.



One tune is called Queens and two of our members, Ruth & Paul, volunteered to learn how to play it on the handbells. After a couple of practices, they were able to play the Queens Change. It sounded really great, and everyone applauded them afterwards.

After the talk we had question time: many interesting questions were answered by our speaker campanologist, Alan Padgett.

At the end of the meeting I looked around the hall and reflected to myself that this is indeed a history group: we had among us in the audience 3 ex-Chairmen and 1 current chair. Which is itself the embodiment of recent u3a History!

We all agreed it was a very interesting and enjoyable meeting.



**Rose Anderson, History Group Leader**



## Bishop's Stortford & Thorley u3a Singers

*Do you like to sing? Can you hold a tune?*



If so, why not consider joining The u3a Singers? We are members of Bishop's Stortford and Thorley u3a's. We meet every Thursday between 1.45 and 3.45pm at Havers Community Centre, 1 Knights Row, Bishops Stortford (next to the new cemetery) to sing and practise songs from various musicals, gospel and popular genres and artists.



Above: singing *All That Jazz!*.

(Photography: Gerry Sumpter)

Our next concert will be at 7.30pm on December 1<sup>st</sup> at The Hub, Portland Road opposite the Apton Road car park. Tickets will be available nearer the time from choir members and on sale at monthly u3a meetings. Come along and join in the fun! **If you're interested in joining us**, please contact Theresa Paterson on 01279 504844 or come on Thurs afternoon to The Havers Community Centre. You'll receive a warm welcome!

**Theresa Paterson**

## Talks at our Monthly Meetings – Ideas Sought!

Hello. My name is Charis Bailey, and I am the Speaker

Arranger for the Bishop's Stortford u3a. I am new to this position (since March of this year) and am looking for your help, please.



Looking at the diverse talks we have had over the last couple of years, they fall into a number of broad categories – History (eg Tudor, Elizabethan), History of Transport (eg trains and planes), The War, Language, Music, Humour, Travel, Wildlife, and Motivational Life Stories are some examples.

We have an average attendance at the monthly meetings of around 100 members which, of course, presents a challenge, trying to find topics to suit a huge variety of tastes! This means that, for any particular month, the topic might not immediately appear to be your cup of tea, but you may find, as I have done, that you unexpectedly enjoy a talk which is outside your usual areas of interest.

I am putting together the programme of speakers for next year and would welcome any suggestions: I have already had one member recommend a particular speaker and have booked him! For 2024 so far, we have talks booked in the following categories - Musical, Humour, Travel/Wildlife and Science. Please let me have your comments: likes, dislikes, preferences, suggestions on broad categories of talks, particular subjects or even specific speakers and I will do my best to maintain the quality and variety we have enjoyed courtesy of my predecessor. I cannot promise to please

everybody every time but, with your help, will aim for a wide range of topics with something for everyone during the course of the year.

So please do come along and join the meetings and please let me have your ideas for future themes at the email address below. Thank you!

**Charis Bailey**, Bishop's Stortford u3a Speaker Arranger  
[charis.bailey@bsu3a.org.uk](mailto:charis.bailey@bsu3a.org.uk)





## **Fun Crafts - Denise Kennard**

### **Make Anglo-Saxon Honey Oat Cakes**

#### **Materials Required**

- Honey - 225g
- Porridge Oats - 350g
- Butter - 225g
- Pinch of Salt
- Saucepan
- Spatula
- Wooden Spoon
- Mixing Bowl
- Frying or Griddle Pan



Time Required: 1-2 hours including time to cool

- 1) Prepare and measure out all your ingredients.
- 2) Melt the butter into a medium-sized saucepan.
- 3) Add the salt, honey and oats and mix well.
- 4) Leave the mixture to cool down.
- 5) When cooled, take a handful of the mixture, roll into a ball and flatten down to make a small, flat cake.
- 6) Do this with the rest of the mixture and put the cakes on a plate.
- 7) To cook the cakes, heat some butter in a frying or griddle pan. Carefully place the cakes into the pan. Don't overcrowd the pan as they won't cook evenly.
- 8) Cook lightly on both sides until they are golden brown, taking care not to burn them. Turn out onto a plate and enjoy.

<https://www.yac-uk.org/activity/make-anglo-saxon-honey-oat-cakes>

## Rhubarb ginger gin (pink gin) with ginger if you like

How to make rhubarb gin, a complex drink of sour and sweet from the rhubarb, floating on a herby base, with whispers of juniper, lemon and geranium. And sometimes, freshly cut grass.

### ***Ingredients***

- 800 g (1¾ lb) rhubarb stalks
- 1 litre (4 cups) good quality gin
- 400 g (14 oz) white sugar
- 200 g (7 oz) fresh ginger (optional)



### ***Instructions***

- 1) Chop up the rhubarb stalks into 5cm (2") pieces.
- 2) Scrub the ginger with a vegetable scrubber, no need to peel. Slice thinly.
- 3) Place everything into a large, sterilised jar, and give it a good stir. Or as you can see from the image, I placed some of the rhubarb straight into a bottle.
- 4) Cover and place in a dark place for 4 weeks. I place mine in a kitchen cupboard. Stir it every other day, or as often as you remember to!
- 5) To drink, strain through a sieve or, if you like a crystal clear pink gin, strain through a double layer of muslin or cheese cloth into a sterilised bottle.

Notes: You will need 4 weeks of infusion time. Total time DOES NOT take into account the steeping period (the soaking time or infusion time, whatever you want to call it).

[https://www.linsfood.com/wprm\\_print/30050#](https://www.linsfood.com/wprm_print/30050#)



**Denise runs the Fun Craft Group which meets on the first Tuesday of every Month**



## **Trips**



**Carriages**



**Kentwell**

## **Language learning at the U3A – Alice Dain**

I joined the U3A because I wanted to practise speaking Spanish. I knew from my zoom class and Duolingo that I was fairly good at reading and writing Spanish. But in real life, you want to talk and understand the spoken language. For that, there is no substitute other than talking and listening to real people.

I joined a group of about six people with varying levels of expertise. The group is mutually supportive, and much use is made of “Google Translate” and “Word Reference” – smart phones are wonderful ! There is nothing like struggling to find a phrase or sentence in your head whilst others are patiently waiting for your response.

This is a conversation group, which is exactly what I wanted. There are other groups, of different levels, who learn grammar, and spend their time differently.

It is amazingly easy to get to know people in a conversation group. The whole 1-2 hours is spent discussing anything under the sun – hobbies, holidays, politics, house DIY – anything that has happened in the previous week. It is a great way to meet new people and to make new friends.

I have just joined / started a French conversation group and find the same great things. New people, new opinions, new friends, as well as the opportunity to practise speaking in French in preparation for my holidays.





You do not need to be an expert for a conversation group. As long as you can string a few sentences together (precise grammar is an optional extra), you will do fine and the reward is becoming much more confident in speaking to local people when you are abroad.

### **Alice Dain**

#### **Look out for new scams!**

They just get more and more clever. I was nearly caught by this one, and I am supposed to be tech savvy !

An e-mail from Evri to say they couldn't deliver a parcel, and to update my address. As I am expecting some parcels and my house is hard to find, I clicked on to the link supposedly taking me to tracking my parcel. I was surprised to be taken to a Google search page that looked real, except the orange arrow was pulsing, obviously an invite to click onto it. Luckily, I did not click this.

I tried again with the same result ... Only then I noted that the e-mail address was weird.

Lesson learned – ALWAYS check sender's full expanded e-mail address. This can be done on phone or pc. If you do not yet know how – ask your nearest teenager!

## **Fitness With Fun - Rose**

Our inimitable Rose Anderson runs 3 groups for our u3a, the very popular History I (Baptist Church, last Friday of month), Cards & Crochet (3<sup>rd</sup> Weds) and the gentle Fitness with Fun.



The Fitness With Fun meets upstairs in the Baptist Church every Tuesday afternoon from 1.30pm. It consists mainly of seated activities – leg and arm exercises - and is therefore suitable for most abilities and mobilities. Led by an experienced and cheerful leader, with a musical accompaniment, we march, wave and wiggle to a range of tunes and much laughter.

For variation we bring out the pom-poms and pretend to be cheerleaders!

Despite being a mostly seated class, the exercises get the adrenaline going.



(photos: SRJ)



The group is a lively, happy, informal one and the venue is a good light space to work in.

And of course, when we've burned all those calories exercising for an hour, we head downstairs to the hall to replenish them with tea and cake!

**Rose Anderson**





### Always dancing

Long-time member of our u3a, Kay Newton (pictured above), was a former amateur ballroom dancer who took part in many competitions and shows, including in the famous Blackpool Tower Room, in Yorkshire finals and the like.

Here is Kay in conversation with her small grandson:

Grandson: Gramma, do you still dance?

K: Past it!

K: But I do still shake, rattle & roll.

Grandson: How do you do that at your age Gramma?

K: I wake up in the morning and I **shake**; I take my tablets and I **rattle**; & eventually I **roll** out of bed!

## Cabaret Lunch at the Hunters' Meet in June



What a great way to spend an afternoon! (photos: SRJ)

## Shaun and the Giant Jumping Flea

Did you know that a tiny 3mm high flea can jump 150mm or 6", that's 50 times its own height! So how high do you think a giant flea the size of a dog could jump? Most people think that jumping over a house seems reasonable, as 50 times a 2ft high dog is 100ft.



But, as an engineer, my first reaction was apply a little bit of science first and think about the energy required to do that. Here's how Shaun the Sheep explained it:

Shaun was peacefully grazing on his farm but was getting really annoyed by a flea that was jumping all over him, "Whee! I can jump so high", it said. But Shaun had a cunning plan. He made a deal with the flea, "Flea, I've got a wizard friend who can make you giant sized. Just imagine yourself having fun jumping all over the place. But you must promise to leave my sheep alone". "Yes please" said the flea, and the wizard turned it into a fearsome giant flea.



"Come on, follow me, I'll race you around the field!", said Shaun, and jumped over the fence. The flea was ready and flexed his enormous muscles and tried to jump over, but no matter how hard it tried, it could only manage the same 150mm as before. It was very unhappy and thought he had been tricked, and that's why all the sheep were laughing at him. So, Shaun explained:

"Of course, your jumping muscles are thousands of times stronger, and could have made you jump higher - but only if you weighed the same! As you are also thousands of times

heavier, that cancels out your more powerful legs.” And he drew the equation that explained the energy needed to jump a particular height.

Energy = Weight x Height

$E = W \times H$ , which can be rearranged to give height

$H = E/W = \text{constant}$ , as  $W$  and  $E$  increase by the same amount

So, no matter how big a flea is, it will always jump the same height as before, definitely nothing like the height of a house or the Eiffel tower. Biology just explains the difference between different animals, or between a lazy and active animal. For fun, how high do you think a flea sized human could jump? ..... Yes, it's the same as before, about 1ft or 300mm, which is better than a flea. Now that is surprising.

By the way, Shaun's wizard friend made the flea as small as before, and it promised never to bother the sheep again.

**Brian S. Farley, 2023**

## **There was a young girl called Amelia**

There was a young girl called Amelia  
Who thought it was very peculiar  
She dug a deep hole  
With a very long pole  
And found herself in Australia

**Brian S Farley, for Amelia**

## Stuart - Song

Tune: As used for the hymn "Be Thou my Vision"

As <sup>D</sup> I was out <sup>G</sup> walking one <sup>D</sup> bright summer's morn  
I <sup>A7</sup> saw a young lassie with <sup>G</sup> looks so <sup>A7</sup> forlorn  
I <sup>G</sup> asked what could <sup>D</sup> ail her on <sup>A7</sup> such a fine <sup>G</sup> day  
<sup>D</sup> Never <sup>Bm</sup> expecting the <sup>G</sup> words she would <sup>D</sup> say

Kind sir she did tell me, I'm in great despair  
I'm going to the river to drown myself there  
Along with my unborn united we'll be  
With my dear Stuart who died while at sea

Oh, dear lassie, this I cannot allow  
I'll be the child's father, I truly avow  
But my true love was Stuart, no other will do  
With fair hair and blue eyes, exactly like you

But, dear lassie, why can't you see  
I'll be your Stuart, my name it shall be  
She sobbed and she cried, what was she to do  
Then looked in my eyes for the Stuart she knew

She saw deep within me a love that was strong  
She saw I could give her a place to belong  
She saw a good father for children to be  
That's when she decided that she'd marry me

We now have three children we treat with great care  
With bright blue eyes and light golden hair  
So Stuart he didn't die, I'm sure you'll agree  
His name it lives on in our children and me.

**Brian S. Farley, Bishop's Stortford, 2015.**



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is a self-help organization run entirely by volunteers, relying on everyone making a contribution of some kind.

We look to members to give time and effort as well as to receive the informal learning, enjoyment and friendship that the various

activities provide. Our u3a can only thrive if all members accept this principle.

A new group only comes about when a member expresses an interest in a particular area and others join to form the group and run it themselves with support from the committee.

Newcomers can have one free taster session before joining the u3a. All members can play some part in our u3a, whether it be leading or taking an active part in a group, serving on the committee or volunteering in some other capacity.

Any Member can attend a Committee meeting by arrangement.

### **Courtesy and Common Sense Reminders**

The u3a is run by volunteers who give their own time freely for the benefit of our groups so:

**Please** take note of the organiser's phone number&/or email address in order to

- Let the leader know if you are unable to attend a meeting
- Let the leader know if you wish to leave the group
- If you miss 3 sessions in a row without contacting the leader, it will be assumed that you no longer wish to be a member of that group.
- Arrive at the group meetings in good time.
- Make a note of meeting dates and times
- Remember that individual groups are self-funding so contributions may be requested when there are expenses (such as hire of hall) to be covered.

If you would prefer to receive a digital version only of this magazine in future please email [membership@bsu3a.org.uk](mailto:membership@bsu3a.org.uk).

**Thank you!**