

BLANDFORD & DISTRICT u3a

Charity no: 1092984 Website: <https://u3asites.org.uk/blandford/home>

AUTUMN 2023

WELCOME one and all to the Autumn edition of our B&D u3a newsletter - our committee have obviously been very busy planning and plotting lots of extra social and fun events for everyone to enjoy, so make sure you get the diary or calendar out and add a note of some great up-coming social events. Christine (Editor)

MEANDERINGS FROM THE CHAIR:

As I sit here, listening to the Test Match commentary (between rain showers), I am trying to plan a variety of u3a entertainments for the Autumn of this year and the Spring of 2024. I say "I am" but, in reality, you have an amazing committee of just ten members who do so much of the work and organization for all our u3a events! So, what have we got planned? Apart from the regular quarterly meetings we have:

- "A Day at the Races" – 27 October
- Pre-Christmas meeting – 24 November
- Wine Tasting with a difference!
– January 2024
- Quiz Evening (with fish & chip supper)
– February 2024
- Skittles – Date and venue to be announced

We, the committee, held a welcome and "get to know the committee" coffee morning at Blandford Parish Centre in July. The morning was well attended and one new member, Dick Taylor, suggested a regular quiz event. So,

whether you are a Mastermind contender or just fancy coming along for a fun afternoon, we'll be pleased to see you. Again, details are to be arranged, so do look out for further info. We have also added a "Singles" get together group which is already proving very popular. Just to quash any rumours or misapprehensions, I'm told there is no "speed dating" involved !!! The group is just a friendly get-together. Do contact Annie Love via the website.

That's it for now – hope to see you at some of the events. Enjoy the summer – Rob Clarke

*Rain is one thing the British do better than anybody else -
Marilyn French*

SEPTEMBER OPEN MEETING

**Durweston Village Hall
Friday 29 September 2023**

2.00pm – Doors Open

2.15pm – Welcome & Notices

2.30pm – Speaker

Followed by tea and cake (£1.50pp)
and lots of chat!



SPEAKER:

*Joanna Gardiner on 'Medical
Detection Dogs'*

"A DAY AT THE RACES"



Enjoy a fun afternoon, using skill,
guesswork and Monopoly money!

Durweston Village Hall

Friday 27 October 2023

2.00pm

Tickets: £5.00 per person including
refreshments

Tickets available from any Committee
Member – just contact them via the
Website.

PRE-CHRISTMAS GET TOGETHER

Durweston Village Hall

Friday 24 November 2023

2.00pm – Greeting & Seating

2.30pm – Entertainment



**Wassailing with Bonny Sartin of
The Yetties**

Followed by festive tea and cake
(£1.50pp) and lots of chat!

ACTIVITY GROUP NEWS

WALKING

We have a good selection of walks planned until the end of the year with various levels of difficulty and trying to take in most areas of Dorset and a couple of new ones.

We had something different in July when Phil Brown planned for us to meet in Blandford, use the bus to get to Poole and then a walk around Holes Bay and bus back to Blandford. We still have spaces for a few new members if you want to give it a try, we try to stick to 5 miles or so and 2 to 2 ½ hours.

RIP: Stuart McAinsh, one time joint leader of the Walking group, past committee member and invaluable tech support for Music Appreciation, died on 9th August 2023. We send sincere condolences to his wife Jill and family at this sad time.

BIRD WATCHING



Left: Great Bustard

We have continued to be well supported by our members, although we do not meet in July/August as so many people are away or have grand-

parenting commitments in the holidays.

We have paid recent visits to Durlston Head where we not only had excellent views of guillemots and razorbills but also found ourselves standing close to a raven guarding its site, and Martin Down where we did well with raptors and small birds such as yellowhammer and linnet. In April we went on an organised visit to the Great Bustard Project on Salisbury Plain followed by lunch. The group continues to grow and many of us have knowledge of other aspects of nature such as butterflies and wildflowers, which

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Bird Watching (cont)

added a further dimension to the above visits as they were all on chalk grassland.

We look forward to the autumn migrations and the many waterbirds who flock to our shores in the winter.

Claire Smith

BRIDGE

The bridge group meets on the first and third Friday of every month in the Woodhouse Pavilion, Blandford. Standards vary, but we all enjoy the game from 2 - 5 pm

There are also on-line games. "Trickster Bridge" is enjoyable.

We would welcome new players.

Jean Palmer

FRENCH AND GERMAN

As I write this France is reeling after days of rioting and mindless destruction, followed by a freak storm in the North and the first major fire of the summer in the South. The three parties in the German coalition government are arguing furiously amongst themselves whilst the far right party makes alarming electoral gains in the east of the country. Post-Brexit Britain? Three great countries with issues to resolve.

In this troubled world our French and German groups are small oases of calm. We continue on our own sweet way studying the languages and cultures of our continental neighbours. Learning a foreign language is a proven way to keep the brain active and healthy. We like to think we are still good Europeans. I'm afraid both groups are currently full.

Richard Pearson

SINGING FOR FUN

Due to recent attendance having become very sporadic, and Rachel having various health issues, it was decided in May to put our sessions on hold for the time being. However, we hope to resume on Monday 11th September – usual time of 10.30am at the United Reform Church Hall on Whitecliff Mill Street. We look forward to welcoming any new members – do come along and join in some light-hearted singing.

Editor: we send best wishes to Rachel and hope she's recovering well in time for a return to singing in September.

JUST FOR OURSELVES



'Just for Ourselves' is a newly created group for single people of either sex. We meet approximately every couple of weeks for coffee, lunches and, later, we plan to go to events and on trips.

The group has got off to a flying start with over 20 people joining in its first couple of weeks and there's room for more if you'd like to come along.

Annie Love

*If you think it's difficult to meet new people,
try picking up the wrong golf ball –*

Jack Lemmon

RUMMIKUB



Rummikub (actually pronounced rummy cube) is a tile-based game for 2-4 players combining elements of the card game rummy

and mah-jong. It was invented by Ephraim Hertzano, a Romanian-born Jew, who emigrated to Israel in the 1940s. The game started as a brilliant idea that had occurred to Mr Hertzano when he was living in Romania where card-playing was outlawed under the Communist regime. Mr Hertzano envisioned playing a game that would use small tiles instead of cards to play a game that could be played by young and old alike and that had no ties to any language or religion. He wanted to create a game that would bring people together and one day change the world's leisure time. It became an overnight hit and when he moved to Israel after World War II, he continued the development on Rummikub in the backyard of his house in Bat Yam. He started selling the games door-to-door, sometimes giving shop owners copies on consignment to convince them to carry the game. In the 1970s it was brought to the USA by Irv and Arline Kossoff to sell in their New York Gift, Games and Luggage store. Arline translated the rules from Hebrew to English and by 1977 it became a bestselling game in the US, and from there around the world. The World Rummikub Championship is held every three years and the competition is fierce. Japanese, Dutch, Egyptian and Brazilian winners have all been crowned, not only winning the coveted Rummikub World Cup but also a pair of airline tickets for around the globe travel.

I don't think any of us in the Blandford and District u3a Rummikub group will ever go on to take part in the World Championships, but we certainly have fun every third Tuesday afternoon from 2.30 p.m. in the Woodhouse Garden Pavilions. Please come and join us some time – it really does what Ephraim Hertzano intended and brings us together.

Lynne Rogers

STROLLERS

Come and join us for walks through our lovely Dorset countryside, much of which is on our doorstep. Whether the weather's hot or cold there is so much to be seen in the different seasons. We are a very welcoming group and always pleased to see new members. There is lots of chat along the way and often end with a coffee stop. We meet on the 4th Friday of the month and if you would like to join the group, please contact me through the Website.

Pam Rees

DANCING



We continue to meet every second Monday of the month and cover mainly swing jive/strolls.

New members and beginners welcome - you don't need a partner. In October there will be dancing to Halloween music and a prize for best fancy dress!

Pat Luke

POETRY READING & LISTENING

The poetry group continues to meet on the second Wednesday of the month. Although a small group we enjoy sharing our choices on varying topics from food to celebrations and

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Poetry Reading & Listening (cont)

everything in between. The choice of an initial letter for our poet's surname of the month has led to some interesting discoveries, taking us away from favourites and well-known writers.

We don't write poetry, nor are we concerned with dissecting a poem for its meaning and language, we just read them aloud and enjoy sharing.

This is an extract from one we have shared:

***Pigeons** by Richard Kell*

They paddle with staccato feet

In powder pools of sunlight,

Small blue busybodies

Strutting like fat gentlemen

With hands clasped

Under their swallowtail coats;

And, as they stump about,

Their heads like tiny hammers

Tap at imaginary nails

In non-existent walls.

Elusive ghosts of sunshine

Slither down the green gloss

Of their necks in an instant and are gone.

Sue Murty

HISTORIC VISITS: OXFORD AND THE ASHMOLEAN LABYRINTH EXHIBITION

A big thank you to Bridget, who managed to get enough people together for the Oxford trip (it was nice to see some members from both Salisbury and Sturminster Newton u3a).

Some of our members booked into the Ashmolean Labyrinth Exhibition, which explored the myth of the Minotaur and Labyrinth built at Knossos Palace in Crete.

This was quite special as there were over a hundred objects which had not previously left

Crete on display, alongside archival material from Arthur Evans (the archaeologist) who



Arthur Evans amongst some of the pottery he discovered at The Palace of Knossos

was responsible for the excavation and our perception of this palace.

Others of our group enjoyed visiting some of the 30 colleges of Oxford University, and guided walks: thankfully the showers held off. A word of warning: if you book for the lovely rooftop restaurant at the Ashmolean, make sure you have plenty of time, as it can take a little while for your meal to arrive!

Maddy Sever



*The Porus Ewer
c.1500-c.1450 BC*



*Carved limestone vessel in shape of triton shell,
c600-c1450BC*



Minoan ladies - the Minoans worshipped a “snake goddess”, who is the equivalent to the Phoenician goddess Astarte, the patroness of female fertility.

DORSET ARCHEOLOGY

If you haven't already booked your place on this four-part lecture course being given by local historian John Smith on Dorset Archaeology, then contact Bridget Spiers (leader of Historic Visits) for more information. To be held in a local village hall on four Wednesday afternoons at 2.30pm on 4 and 18 October and 1 and 15 November.

COMMITTEE NEWS

Publicity Officer

We need someone to help with our publicity

The Publicity Officer will be a co-opted member of the committee and the role will be as follows:

External publicity:

1. Publicise u3a in general and group activities to the local press.
2. Make arrangements for posters and other publicity material to be displayed around the local area (normally by asking other u3a members to put up and take down posters in village halls, libraries, etc.)
3. Ensure that good, current publicity material is available on the web site (liaising with the website team).

4. Working with the membership secretary, to promote & encourage the recruitment of new members.

Internal publicity:

5. Working particularly with the newsletter editor and website team, to advertise events & activities within our groups and u3a.
 6. Look after the notice board, keeping it up-to-date and making it available at general meetings.
- You will be joining a great team and we would not expect the job to be too time consuming. Please email Rob Clarke or any of the committee (via the website) if you would like further info.

Welfare Officer

Our Welfare Officer's primary aim is to ensure all our members have access to support when needed, such as a friendly phone call (or email if preferred) when things aren't going so well, such as ill health or a bereavement. It also means our membership has a contact point to let us know of occasions such as a u3a friend's big birthday, anniversary or even a wedding coming up so we can send congratulations from all of us at B&D u3a. Whatever your news or need, let us know by contacting our Welfare Officer, Annie Love. Annie is here as your point of friendly contact, someone to have a chat with or just simple support when needed the most. Annie is a member of the committee, as well as being leader of the Scrabble Group – contact details on the website.

WEBSITE

Find all the information you need on:

www.u3asites.org.uk/blandford/home