

### Message from the Chair.

Dear Friends,

July proved a busy u3a month reflecting the vibrancy of Canterbury and District u3a.

My u3a month began with joining a full coach of members for the day outing to Romney Marsh and Dungeness, organised by Rose John and Tim Landsman. It surprised me how one can learn something new about an area that is on our doorstep Do sign up for the next outing on 12th September to the Sussex Coast.

Our monthly joining day on 7th July proved very busy with another 14 people enrolling, taking our membership up to 1,030. Welcome!— and we continue to appeal to you all for help to run Canterbury u3a, in whichever way is practical for you, to sustain our thriving organisation for the future.

You will have seen the new Courses and Activities Programme for 2023–24. The number of courses and activities offered is a remarkable achievement for an organisation run solely by volunteers. Canterbury u3a is indebted to the Courses Team; Ursula Steiger, Angela Tippet, and Jane Dennett who have developed an amazing programme spanning a wide variety of interests and tastes. We are also indebted to the enthusiastic tutors/course/activity leaders who make a huge personal contribution of time and unsung effort to prepare and run the courses and activities.

Many of us enjoyed a thoroughly light hearted and social monthly Wednesday meeting on 12th July thanks to the engaging demonstration of gongs and chimes by Helen Natrass followed by a delicious Strawberry Tea organised by Steve Dungay, Pauline Terry (with two grandchildren acting as waiters), and the hospitality team.

We belong to a terrific u3a, thank you all.

*Robin Terry*



### Important Dates

**August Joining Session:** Friday 4 August, 10.30 to 12 noon. Please send any interested friends, or, better still, bring them along and have a cuppa with us.

Please note there will be no monthly meeting in August.

**Wednesday 13 September.** Monthly meeting 2 p.m. at St Mary Bredin Church, Nunnery Fields. 'Name-Dropping during Forty Years in Show Biz'. Keith Simmons.

**Canterbury Festival.** Members will have noticed references to the coming Canterbury Festival which runs from 26 September to 4 November. Two of our u3a musical groups are performing on the Beautiful Noise day, Saturday 21 October. Look out for more details in the September and October Bulletins, and come along to support us.



### Bulletin team members

Chris Plant and Cindy Vanebo have mailed hard copies of our News Bulletin to members who do not have the internet, so we would like to say a big 'thank you' to these two members of our Bulletin Team.



## It's quiz time!

What do the following have in common? —



John Buchan's *39 Steps*, the stories of Billy Bunter, T. S. Eliot's *The Wasteland*, Lord Northcliffe's newspapers, including the *Daily Mail* and *Daily Mirror*, the swashbuckling films of Douglas Fairbanks and Mary Pickford, and the mysteries of Wilkie Collins.

ANSWER – They were all inspired by the Kent coast, around Botany Bay and Kingsgate, as 16 hardy souls from Canterbury U3A found out as we undertook a very pleasant and inspiring summer walk in the area, with wonderful sea and cliff top views, along with walk leader and provider of all the local literary references, Penny

Stevens. Penny not only safely led us through the route and kept us on the strait and narrow, she also provided the morning's entertainment and tested our brain cells with the literary quiz.

A very enjoyable morning was rounded off by a social and convivial lunch in the Botany Bay Hotel.

*Tony Ullman*



## u3a Dungeness Coach Tour on July 4th

A few days before the outing, there was still one ticket left for the tour, and I was lucky enough to be able to book it. Dungeness and the area around it were my husband's favourite part of the world, and we often went there for lunch at the Pilot Inn and a walk around the stony beach and the dry heathland with its weather-beaten houses, tall dark lighthouse and grim-looking power station.

And now, many years later, I was off to see it all again, in the company of so many Canterbury u3a members, on a tour arranged by Rose and Tim Landsman. As I stepped on to the coach, the adventure began. Our first stop was for coffee at Dobbies Garden Centre and then on to Romney Marsh where a steaming hot fish and chips lunch was waiting. How the restaurant was able to provide so many meals is unbelievable. Fresher fish you can't get anywhere.

Well fed, we were soon back on the coach for a drive around the area and looking at the scenery, while our wonderful guide talked us through the well-known sights. She was fantastic. We stopped again at the Dungeness Little Train Station, where we all piled into the tiny train carriages pulled by a shiny engine, which has operated across the marshes for so many years. And off we went to New Romney, where the coach was waiting for us with our wonderful, knowledgeable guide, who made the journey to Rye extremely interesting with her deep knowledge about everything.

Rye, which is so full of historical places, was our final stop and our amazing guide just seemed to know absolutely everything there was to know about them all. She took us round the narrow, cobbled streets and showed us as many of the sites and incredible views as time allowed.

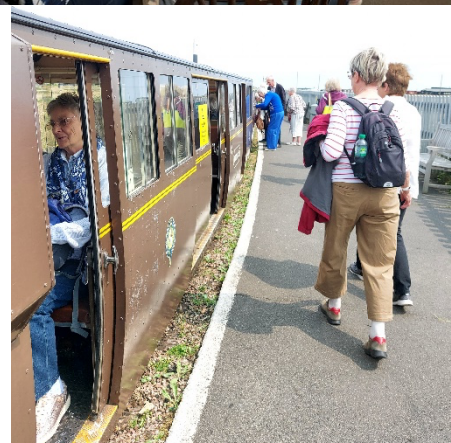
And then it was back on the coach again and home to Canterbury with our guide talking us through the journey, making even this stage of the tour memorable.

A very good day out in a comfortable coach with a good driver and absolutely crammed with happy experiences.

Thank you all very much.

*Ragnhild Scamell*

(More photos at the end)



## The Sussex Coast, our next outing, on Tuesday 12 September.

There are four places left on this outing. The day should be entertaining and easy on the feet. We will be visiting Bramber village and its unique reproduction of Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel, Lancing with the soaring Gothic chapel of Lancing College, and the sea front at Worthing. Either a chicken or vegetarian alternative lunch will be provided.

It will be an early start, 8 a.m. at Canterbury Bus Station, and the cost will be £55.

TO BOOK A PLACE, please email [outings@u3acanterbury.org.uk](mailto:outings@u3acanterbury.org.uk) with 'Sussex' as the subject, giving your name, membership number, daytime phone number and mobile phone to be used on the outing. Do state if you want an alternative to the chicken lunch or have any dietary requirements.

Please don't send cheques or pay by bank transfer until we can confirm your place.

*Rose and Tim*



## A message from the Outing Organisers

We have had a number of suggestions to organise a trip to the codebreakers museum at Bletchley Park and would like to get an idea of how many people would be interested.

For those who have never heard of it, Bletchley Park is an English country house and estate in Bletchley, Milton Keynes that became the principal centre of Allied code-breaking during the Second World War. It has now been reopened as a museum.

Note, the trip will be by bus/minibus and it will be a three to four hour journey each way, including a short comfort coffee break halfway. There have been previous outings there by Canterbury U3A but not recently.

So please email us at [outings@u3acanterbury.org.uk](mailto:outings@u3acanterbury.org.uk) if you are still interested in going at some point in 2024. It's not a commitment, but we want to get an idea of numbers.

*Rose and Tim*



## Courses and Activities News.

All members will now have received the new Courses and Activities Programme for Quarters 4 2023 and 1 2024. Please remember that electronic bookings will open on Tuesday 8 August between 9.00 and 9.30. Please read the Introduction, including page 3, so that, on the day you will be familiar with booking procedures.

We have sent out an addendum of seven courses and finally here is the last one for this programme. These additions are all bookable from the above date and in the way described in your programme.



### Course title: What is Culture?

NUMBER OF SESSIONS: 3. MAXIMUM NUMBER: 9

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This is a repeat course which offers an explanation of the term culture in anthropological terms. We shall explore culture differences, culture contact, culture change, and take a closer look at our own culture. Other cultures drawn on will include Thai, Chinese, French, Greek, Spanish, Melanesian and, hopefully, contributions from members of the group.

DATES: Tuesdays 5, 12 and 19 March. TIME: 10.15–12 noon

VENUE: Canterbury CT2 8BB

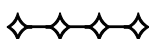
PARKING: In bays for up to 4 hours or on a single yellow line in the road after 10am.

BUSES to The Westgate Towers or St. Dunstan's Church then a 5–10 minute walk.



### Correction to Course Programme: Who Wrote the Gospels?

This course will run on a TUESDAY on the dates advertised on page 46 in the programme.

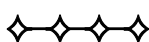


## Book Review: *Armadale* by Wilkie Collins

*Armadale* is a good read if you have the stamina. I recently rediscovered the pleasures of Wilkie Collins, and this less-well known novel was well worth the time. Full of action and suspense, its author, a friend of Dickens, is a master of plot, as befits the first detective story novelist. This novel (1866) doesn't actually feature a police sleuth, but is most certainly full of detective work and intrigue, not to mention spying, as well as being very much a 'sensation novel' appearing between Collins's more famous titles, *The Woman in White* (1860) and *The Moonstone* (1868). I certainly found it a page-turner with a clever and ingenious plot.

Much of the story hangs on mistaken identities, and the *Armadale* inheritance, set in Victorian England, and several exotic locations abroad, in which the spectre of the past, at times literally, hangs over the storyline. Lydia Gwilt is a fascinating creation too, a flame-haired femme fatale who shocked contemporary Victorian critics with her attitudes to men, marriage and laudanum. But this is part of her attraction, of course! Collins, who had a great understanding of the place of women in nineteenth century society, seen more obviously in his later writing, created a compelling figure. It is also bang up to date with the science, and the poisons of the day. There are some examples of over-complication (which even Dickens noticed), but not for nothing did T. S. Eliot say, '*Armadale* has the immense—and nowadays more and more rare—merit of never being dull.' It was turned into a drama, but not successfully. Perhaps that is because part of the attraction is in its subtlety of plot, but above all in its effortless prose, varied between dialogue, letters and narrative. It all adds to the exciting story of Linda Gwilt and the men who fall under her spell. It was published, to many howls of moral outrage from the reviewers, in serial form, in 1866. It is not outrageous in 2023, but nor, most definitely, is it dull!

Jonathan Dagley



## Threads through Creation

And here is a real treat for any members interesting in the applied arts, textile art and sewing.

Spectacular textile art at Rochester Cathedral—creating the world with eight million stitches!

'Threads through Creation' is an astonishing textile art exhibition showing at Rochester Cathedral from now to the 3rd September. It'll be a great time to visit the cathedral, and enjoy a wonderful exhibition in a wonderful location.

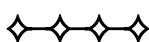
The show is touring twenty cathedrals, and consists of twelve beautiful silk panels re-imagining the story of creation from the Bible. They're huge—2.7m high, up to nearly 4m wide. It's one of the largest textile art projects by a single artist, ever. It took artist Jacqui Parkinson three years—and eight million stitches! You'll find the huge scale, vibrant colours, dramatic and complex designs truly breathtaking. You'll have never seen anything like it. . .

See: <https://www.rochestercathedral.org/new-events/2023/7/29/threads-through-creation>, and [www.creation-threads.co.uk](http://www.creation-threads.co.uk) (this includes the touring schedule around the country to end of 2024).

Admission free/donations welcome. There is a small charge for guided visits.

There are excellent train services from Canterbury East to Rochester with an easy walk from the station to the Cathedral.

FREE PDF: Whether or not you decide to visit the exhibition, you may find a free downloadable 24-page pdf very interesting: 'Behind the scenes' is full of detail, especially for people with a focus on textile art and stitching. It explains the background and shows the extraordinary techniques used: visit [www.creation-threads.co.uk](http://www.creation-threads.co.uk), go to the bottom of the page, and click on the button.



## Spring Holiday: Friday 26–Tuesday 30 April 2024 Art, History and Industrial Heritage of South Yorkshire

Booking is now open for our spring holiday, a super-long-weekend after Easter 2024. A superior 3\* hotel in Retford, housed in an eighteenth century property, provides the base for our holiday.

Our comfortable coach leaves from and returns to Canterbury Bus Station.

5 days 4 nights half board: £599 per person in a shared room, single supplement £99.

There are 15 single rooms available.

Our itinerary includes Woolsthorpe Manor (NT), the Barbara Hepworth Gallery, Yorkshire Sculpture Park, the historic centres of Hull and Beverley, Kelham Island Industrial Museum, a cutlery factory, an afternoon in Bakewell and the Portland Collection & Harley Gallery at the Welbeck Estate.

For a copy of the brochure including the booking form please contact Helen Natrass by email. For those who don't use the internet, please send Helen a stamped addressed envelope. See your personal copy of the August bulletin for contact details.



### Things my Mother taught me.

My mother taught me to appreciate a job well done. "If you're going to kill each other, do it outside. I've just finished cleaning this room."

My mother taught me religion. "You better pray that will come out of the carpet."

My mother taught me logic. "Because I say so, that's why."

My mother taught me about time travel. "If you don't straighten up, I'm going to knock you into the middle of next week."

My mother taught me more logic. "If you fall off that swing and break your neck, you're not coming to the shops with me."

My mother taught me foresight. "Make sure you wear clean underwear in case you're in an accident"

My mother taught me irony. "Keep crying and I'll give you something to cry about."

My mother taught me taught me about the science of osmosis. "Shut your mouth and eat your supper."

My mother taught me about contortionism. "Will you look at the dirt on the back of your neck."

My mother taught me about stamina. "You sit there until all that spinach is gone."



Romney Marsh outing: Brookland Church, the gravel desert of Dungeness, picture of the local scene on the wall of the Pilot PH.

Thank you for all your contributions, from a couple of sentences up to 250 words.

Keep them coming, as this is your News Bulletin.

Send them **before Thursday 24 August** (it's the holidays!) to Ursula Steiger: [ursulae@btinternet.com](mailto:ursulae@btinternet.com).

