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Your u3a Friends Newsletter - December 🎅

1 message

Sam Mauger at u3a office <info@u3a.org.uk>
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13 December 2023 at 17:35



Click [here](#) to open the newsletter in your browser.



Members of King's Lynn u3a's ukulele group - who recently featured in their local magazine. Read more in media news, further down this newsletter.

December

Dear Peter,

It is that festive time of year - and we in the u3a team are looking for our

Christmas jumpers to brighten up the office.

As we move into December many u3a members will be getting together to enjoy this time of year and also to plan for 2024.

We are always interested to hear about any unusual events that you may be having with u3a Friends or any new activity your u3a is running in their community to attract new members.

Keep warm and keep enjoying yourselves.

With very best wishes

Sam Mauger

CEO of the Third Age Trust

In this issue...

Bollywood dancing at Wyre Forest u3a

Learning More About: Metal Detecting

Spotlight On: Croydon u3a member Prabhat

Bitesize Newsletter

Download the Bitesize Newsletter

Your u3a highlights of 2023

We have a wonderful Outings and Travel Group, who have organised some amazing trips this year, including to Scotland, Northumberland and Norfolk. If I have to pin my highlight down to one thing, it has to be the Kynren in Bishop Auckland.

Very few people have heard of this, but it is an outstanding pageant of

English history, running for approximately six Saturdays in the summer, with a cast of 1,000. I realise I am so lucky to have such an active and enterprising group in my u3a.

Lynda, Mill Hill u3a

News From the Trust

Your favourite radio stations

Thank you to everyone who took the time to email us to share your favourite radio stations. We will collate these and share some of your radio memories in the January newsletter.



Our highlights of 2023

Looking back on 2023

It has been an incredible year for u3a. Members have shared their personal u3a highlights throughout this newsletter, and some of the milestones we've shared as a movement can be seen in the video above.

u3a News



Happy Feet to a Latin Beat

Lancaster and Morecambe u3a have been dusting off their dancing shoes and learning to wiggle their hips to Latin beats.

The new Latin dance group is very popular, with members learning to Salsa and Merengue. After only three sessions, it already has 54 members.

Photo taken by Dave Green



Barnsley and Rotherham u3as have a kick about

Barnsley u3a's walking football team recently took part in a six-a-side tournament, where they were able to play against Rotherham u3a. It was a great opportunity to meet other u3a members.

Barnsley u3a would love to organise more walking football matches against u3as - if you would be interested in this, [get in touch](#).



Bollywood dancing at Wyre Forest u3a

At a recent multicultural event held by Wyre Forest u3a, members broke out into Bollywood dance routines. The group worked with local dancer Rohini on the dances. The first was a gentle love song, the second, a drumming dance and the last a very lively Bhangra party dance. This set the pulse racing and ended with a triumphant yelp of joy.

Read more about the event on [our u3a blog](#), [Sources](#).

Lichfield u3a has a Memoirs group and they've put together a project, called 'Everyone has a Story', with guides to help people who might be taking the first steps towards writing their life story.

Find the resources on [the Lichfield u3a website](#).

Social Media



The end of November saw St Andrews Day. To celebrate, Long Eaton & District u3a's art group painted thistles - the national flower of Scotland.

See more pictures on [the Long Eaton & District u3a Facebook page](#).

Your u3a highlights of 2023

My u3a highlight has definitely been discovering u3a Interest Groups Online. I've joined Spanish, meditation & mindfulness and a Jane Austen book group.

There are so many groups on offer to suit all interests.

*Linda, Interest Groups Online, an online u3a learning community.
Find out more on [the Interest Groups Online page](#) of the u3a website.*

Learning Across the Movement

These are just some of the [national activities members can get involved in](#) - see more on our website.



Bognor Regis u3a members collect Second World War memories from their community

On 11 November, just after the two minutes silence, members of Bognor Regis u3a held a digital collection day, interviewing members of their local community about their experiences of the Second World War. By the end of the day, over 60 memories had been collected and a thousand images had been taken.

The event was part of Their Finest Hour (TFH), a Lottery funded campaign run by the University of Oxford to collect and to digitally preserve the stories, memories and objects from the Second World War before all these memories are lost. The project is being supported by u3a nationally.

Find out more about how you can get involved on the [Their Finest Hour website](#).

Subject Advice News

See all the latest updates and the full list of Subject Advisers on [the](#)

[Subject Advice page.](#)



Roger's biggest find - the Reigate Hoard.

Learning more about: Metal Detecting with Subject Adviser Roger

When did your interest in metal detecting begin?

I became interested in "digging up old things" as a small boy. Our next-door neighbour employed a full-time gardener, who used to dig up old 18th century copper coins. In my mid-thirties, I realised that my days as a club rugby player and cricketer were numbered, and I decided to buy a metal detector.

What has your best discovery been?

I had a life changing experience in September 1990. In April that year, I and two other local detectorists discovered that a playing field in Reigate was being sold off. We obtained permission from the builders and began searching. After five months of enjoyable detecting, I made one last visit.

At 6pm, I picked up a very large signal in one corner. It was getting dark and for some bizarre reason, which even now I cannot explain, I decided to dig.

I found myself looking at the top of a broken jug full of vertically stacked coins. This is what is now known as the famous Reigate Hoard. The collection of 6,705 coins date from 1278 to 1455. This is the largest post-1350 coin hoard ever recorded in the UK.

What advice would you give to members interested in trying metal detecting?

In simple terms, one needs to buy a suitable metal detector. The next step is to find land to search. Finally, learn how to deal with your finds responsibly!

Read more about Roger and his discovery of the Reigate hoard on [our u3a blog, Sources.](#)

Contact Roger for support for your u3a metal detecting group on [his Subject Advice page.](#)

Are you passionate about Science?

With over 230 u3a Science interest groups, we are looking for a member with a love and passion for the subject and can help as a Science Subject adviser.

If you are running a successful Science group, or doing something unique in your u3a around this subject, you may be interested in the role of science subject adviser. Email us at subjectadvisers@u3a.org.uk.

News from the Board

Liz Thackray, Chair of the Third Age Trust

On Thursday 30 November, I was privileged to join representatives of a number of organisations which were founded by Sir Michael Young at a reception hosted by the Young Foundation.

As one of the speakers, I joined a platform including those from the National Extension College, the Open University, the School for Social Entrepreneurs, the Consumer Association and the Economic and Social Research Council. The focus was on different ways in which our organisations engage and empower people, fulfilling the vision of our founder.

We were encouraged to consider how we continue to embrace the spirit of Michael Young. For the u3a this includes our principles of mutual aid and self help and how we are meeting the challenges of a changing world and society. It is good for the u3a to be associated with and seen in the company of these other organisations with shared parentage – and it is one of the ways in which we raise our profile nationally.

Personally, I found the evening stimulating and thought provoking as we all need to consider what we do well and in what ways we need to reinvent ourselves for the world of today.

You can find an essay I wrote on the Young Foundation website

<https://www.youngfoundation.org/foreveryoung/>



Meet Jean, new Trustee for the North East

Jean Cubbin was appointed as the Trustee for the North East at the Third Age Trust AGM.

When asked what she enjoys about being a u3a member, Jean says, "I am loving having learning AND laughter at u3a. Life would have been so different if this had always been my experience." She is looking forward to "having a greater understanding of the management of such a large charity and making a positive contribution to an ever changing and growing organisation."

You can see the full list of Trustees on [the u3a website](#).

Your u3a highlights of 2023

Dear friends, in Canterbury u3a we have a small but keen Classical Greek group. Although it is difficult for us, we tackle texts in the original Greek, working through it slowly but surely.

Over 2023 we have been doing 'Medea' by Euripides. I was very inspired by reading this work in its original language.

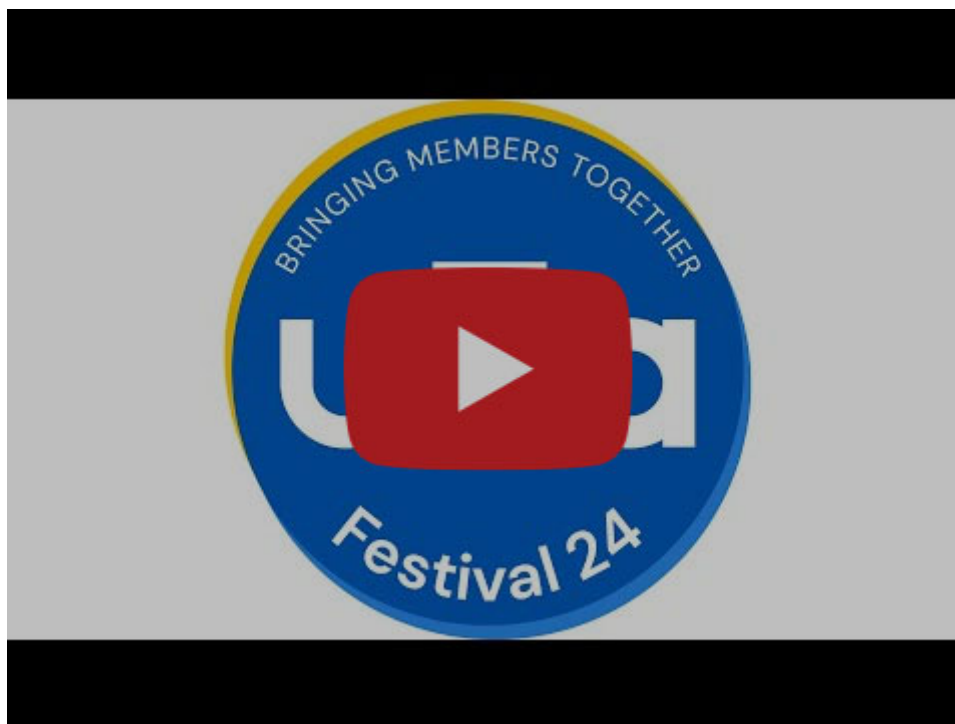
I decided to go to Siracusa in Sicily to see it in the open air ancient Greek Theatre built in the 5th century BC. Then I noticed there was a production of Medea going on in London. So I went to that one too, in April.

I would never have been so inspired to go to these productions were it not for group leader Virginia and our group in Canterbury u3a.

Helen, Canterbury u3a

u3a Festival 24

u3a Festival 24 is taking place 18-20 July 2024. Find out more about the festival on [the u3a website](#).



"It's drenched in history. That's the lovely thing about York."

In the latest Festival vlog, Margaret Fiddes talks to York u3a member Richard, who regularly leads history walks around the city. For u3a Festival 24, Richard will be showing u3a members some of the historical highlights of York - with a particular focus on the Georgian period.

In the vlog, he shares some insights about the Judges Court, an easy-to-miss building with an interesting past. Watch it above.

Book your accommodation now

You can now book single en-suite B&B accommodation on campus, where the festival will be taking place. The booking dates are 17 - 19 July, allowing members to arrive the evening before the festival starts. This costs £61.80 per room, per night, including VAT – bookings to be made via the link below only.

For more information, or to enquire about accessible rooms, contact us via festival@u3a.org.uk

Book your festival accommodation

Online Learning Events

These are just some of the events for members that are coming soon. You can book onto all of these events on the [online events page](#).



How to better insulate your home

Thursday 4 January, 2pm

The best and greenest ways to treat all parts of your home, where possible, for minimum heat loss, and with minimum outlay by Martyn of Southampton u3a.



Chinese Wand Exercises for Mobility, Fitness and Fun

Friday 12 and 19 January, 10am

Sit or stand to do Ancient Chinese exercises for fitness, mobility, strength, balance using a lightweight cane and incremental movements.



Toulouse-Lautrec and the Music Halls of Paris

Thursday 18 January, 2pm

Join distinguished art historian, writer and print collector Dr Peter Webb for a talk on the world of Toulouse-Lautrec and 1890s Montmartre in Paris.

Remember Concorde?

The 20th anniversary of the last commercial Concorde flight from New York to London was 24 October this year. There was something very special about that aircraft.

Supersonic commercial travel is scheduled to return with the

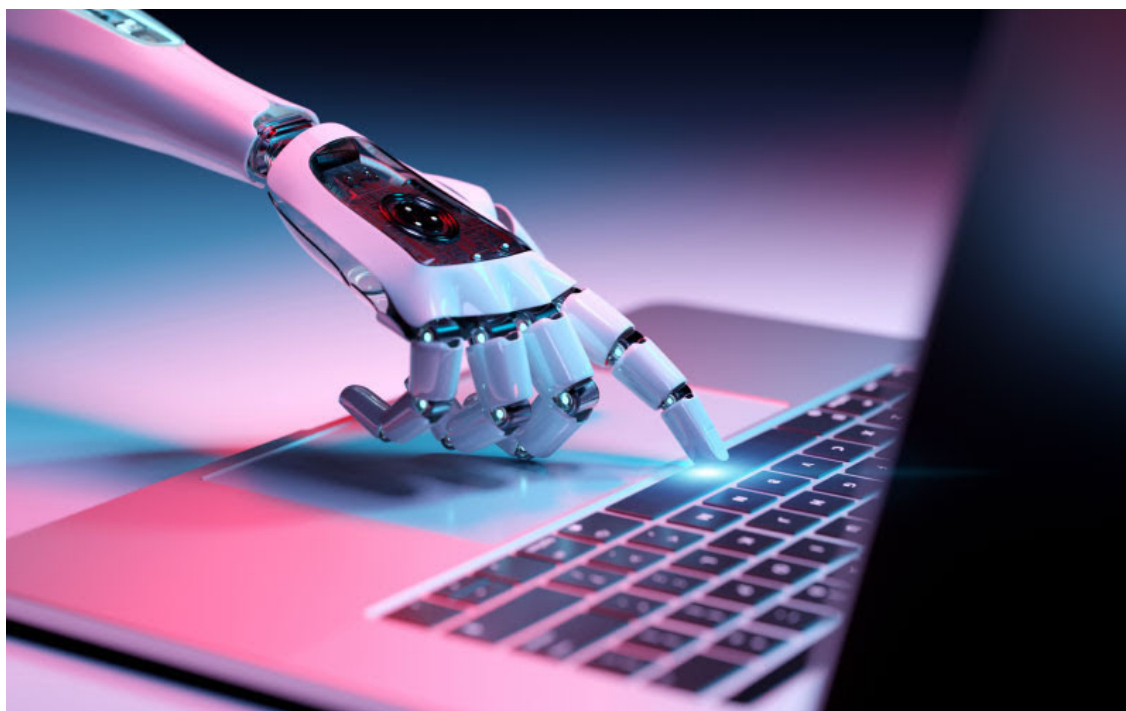
Overture aircraft in 2029. Boom Aviation will complete their production facility in North Carolina next year with the first test flight scheduled for 2027.

To learn about this programme and 'all things aviation', please join us in the u3a East of England Aviation Group. We meet on the first Tuesday of each month at 10.00 via Zoom.

To join the group please contact barbara.cordina@u3a.org.uk

Our Impact

u3a is developing the movement's voice to make a social impact. Read about ongoing projects [on Our Impact page](#).



Artificial Intelligence and You in 2024

The u3a Future Lives group is starting 2024 with a look at how Artificial Intelligence might impact our lives. On Tuesday 16 January at 2pm, join u3a AI Subject Adviser Barry to get the lowdown on artificial intelligence and what might be in store for us next year. Register on [our Future Lives page](#).

Media News



The Belfast Telegraph, Northern Ireland's main regional daily newspaper, published a story about how u3a has changed the lives of members. Pictured above are members of Ards Peninsula u3a; Linda, Susie and Heather. In the article, Linda says that she has "met so many interesting people and made many good friends" through u3a. Read the full article on [The Belfast Telegraph website](#).

Members of Causeway u3a's Current Affairs group shared their thoughts on the Chancellor's Budget Statement and how it will impact older adults on BBC.

King's Lynn u3a recently featured in their local free publication, KL Magazine. The three page article featured interviews with members about their experiences of u3a. It was published just prior to King's Lynn u3a's annual open day, which encouraged visits and new members to join. The article appeared in the September-October edition on page 132-133 and can be read be on [the King's Lynn Magazine website](#).

The u3a movement also featured in the December edition of Yoga Magazine, which has a readership of 32,800. In the article, Laughter Yoga Subject Adviser Judith and Yoga Subject Adviser Patricia talk about how practising yoga within u3a has been beneficial for them.

Dunstable u3a member John appeared on Good Morning Britain and in the Sunday Times where he spoke about living with grief. John started working as

an extra on films after losing his wife and worked with George Clooney on his latest film, *The Boys in the Boat*. He also joined his local u3a, where he is a member of the film club.

Your u3a highlights of 2023

During the summer break when there was no monthly meeting, a day trip was arranged for members who would still like to do something. 24 members went to Princetown on Dartmoor to visit the prison museum and local church to find out more about local history.

The day was a great success and everyone was surprised at the depth of history from local landmarks that were less than 20 miles from Callington.

We also had a lively discussion over lunch about how people rarely visit local places of interest. It looks like more trips are on the agenda in 2024.

Ann, Callington u3a

Read more on [our u3a blog](#), [Sources](#).

u3a Office in Focus

Meet Chris

I'm Chris, Head of Internal Services at the Third Age Trust - a role I've had for two years now.

The Internal Services department is responsible for the finances of the Trust, IT, the database of u3as, HR, and the premises of u3a office.



At the moment, I'm working on the budget for 2024/2025. During this process, I work closely with the Treasurer, Derek, and with the senior management team (Head of Member Services, Alison, and Head of Communications and Policy, Liz.)

Throughout the year, I am responsible for creating interim updates of our finances, invoicing for TAM and Beacon, annual returns and membership fees. Then when we get to April, it's time to focus on the audit and then finalising the annual report.

Advice and Volunteering News

See all the latest advice on [our advice pages](#). Also on the Advice section is our [programme of online workshops](#).

Workshops for 2024

u3a members can now book onto workshops taking place in early 2024, including

- Contingency Planning for your u3a
- Keeping it Legal, which covers all the key areas to be aware of when running a u3a including insurance, data protection and safeguarding.
- and the new Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Presentation

You can book any or all of these workshops, or other workshops taking place in the new year, on [the workshops page](#) in the Members Area section of our website.



Your u3a highlights of 2023

Our u3a thrives on cooperation and mutual respect and the Coronation Afternoon Tea, which was the highlight of the Spring, epitomises that spirit.

Our thanks go to Joan and Kay for coming up with the idea and to all members who made it such a huge success, especially the gentlemen who served the tea and Prosecco, Beryl for organising the table decorations and Audrey for her stunning Coronation cakes.

The whole event ran like a well oiled machine. It would be impossible to thank everyone by name, but special thanks go to Stuart and Pat who worked tirelessly all afternoon, up to their elbows in hot water, when the dishwasher let us down.

Christine, Mawdesley u3a

Offers and Services

u3a Offers and Services is the section of the newsletter offering discounts to u3a members and friends.



Save on last minute gifts with u3a Click and Save

With less than two weeks to go before Christmas, u3a Click and Save is here to help. Save on gift cards* from a range of different brands including Argos, Halfords, Ikea, John Lewis, M&S, Clarks and much more.

How can you access u3a Click and Save?

Here are some simple steps:

1. Create an account at https://www.u3aclickandsave.co.uk/x/_/
2. Once you've signed up, you'll receive a confirmation email with a link to the u3a Click and Save page.
3. You can find out more about using the scheme by looking at the 'how does it work?' tab on the website

**Terms and conditions apply. See website for details. Offer subject to change without notice. u3a Click and Save is managed and run for u3a by Parliament Hill Limited.*

u3a diaries for 2024

Purchase your u3a diary from [the u3a brand centre](#) as the perfect Christmas present for u3a members. Diaries can be bought individually (with a special reduced mailing rate) or in packs of 10 or 20.

Spotlight On:

Prabhat, Croydon u3a



Prabhat from Croydon u3a shares why u3a is special to him.

This is an easy way to share the newsletter. Click this [link](#) and copy and paste the URL to share on other platforms, including Beacon.

Did somebody forward this email to you?

Sign up at u3a.org.uk/news/newsletter and we will send it to you directly

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