

FROM THE CHAIR:

Welcome to the Spring edition of KiT Plus. As a time of awakening, renewal and regrowth it is hoped that many of you will take the opportunity to get out and about with your u3a.

There are six levels of walking and visits including those planned by the Churches, Gardening, Natural History and Outings groups. If you prefer activities that are less active there are plenty of pursuits such as Art4All, Art History and Cards, to name but a few. Why not dip in to the website and find out more?

It was great to see so many contributions from a number of Special Interest Groups. These are varied and interesting and share the activities of the last 3-4 months. Also, thank you to Wendy Hawkins, a former dance and movement teacher, who has agreed to facilitate the movement routines for the Movement2Music Group. Wendy and Cathy Twitchett will also be representing the u3a in the Chinnor Flower Festival, St Andrew's Church, first weekend in June 2024 (held in conjunction with the Chinnor Open Gardens).

There will be a stall promoting the u3a at the Green Fayre in the Chinnor Village Hall on Sunday 2 June so do come and say hello.

Welcome to the 28 new members who have joined since November. I hope to see some of you at the '**Thirsty Thursdays**' 18:00-19:00, a new social event where current and would be members can get together in a relaxed atmosphere with music, drink (wine, beer or non-alcoholic options). The first one will be on Thursday 11 April 2024, 1800 at the Chinnor Village Centre. March saw the end of the first series of the 2nd Sunday Silver Screen to return in September 2024.

There is so much going on and many more things we would like to do but volunteers are needed for these to be viable. So please think about whether you have some time to help in a small or a bigger way.

Christine Prior is looking for help with refreshments at the Speaker Meetings. Could you sign up for once a year?

Most of the Special Interest Groups would welcome members to undertake small tasks such as organising refreshments, registering attendees, offering ideas or contributing to the programme of activities. Could you lead a walk, organise just one session, or talk for 45 minutes on a subject that interests you?

If you would really like to make a difference, I would love to share with you the opportunities on the Committee. We only meet 6 times a year, the minimum time commitment would be about two hours 1030-1130, every other month from January.

Are you that Special person who would like to promote the u3a in the wider community and to communicate with new members? Please contact me (chair1chinnoru3a@gmail.com 07711337243

I look forward to seeing you at meetings and events over the next few months.

Nettie Dearmun (Chair)

GETTING ON LINE



More information about the groups, activities, holidays and outings can be found on the Chinnor and District u3a website <https://u3asites.org.uk/chinnor/home>

or this QR code can be used which will access the website

AGE UK has launched a campaign 'to stop online being the only option'. I thought it might be of interest.

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/globalassets/age-uk/documents/campaigns/digital-inclusion/offline-and-overlooked-petition.pdf>

This is particularly pertinent given that we are working towards renewals on line. New members, unless they chose to opt out, would be enrolled using the new process, those who pay by direct debit would see little difference but if you currently pay by cheque you will be encouraged to 'do it online'. There is also an option to pay with a credit card. BACS payments are, of course, already online.

Watch out for more information from Peter Lambert (Treasurer) and Pete Way (IT officer). It is anticipated that this will be launched in time for the renewal on 1 June 2024.

Remember you will always have a choice but if you choose to renew your u3a membership on line, you would be helping to reduce the workload of the Committee.

MEET THE COMMITTEE



MARGARET LAMBERT (BUSINESS SECRETARY)

I moved to Chinnor in 2018 and was aware of the u3a from media and from friends who were already members. As a relative newcomer to Chinnor, I became a member in order to meet new people, to pursue existing interests and discover new ones. As COVID restrictions eased I decided to get more involved. Armed with attributes acquired as a School Governor for about 14 years and with experience of committee work during my working life as a Pharmacist, I volunteered to join the Committee. They were in need of new Trustees and I felt that being involved with a small group of people was a good way in, and it was. I became the Business Secretary which is an enjoyable role as it uses previously acquired knowledge and skills and enables the development of new ones

I belong to the Art History, Bridge, Gardening, Natural History and Nordic walking groups and have also been on the walking holidays. My other interests include the environment and climate change, sewing and knitting. My career stimulated a particular attraction to healthy living and helping people to stay fit and active for longer. To this end, I initiated a series of u3a activities with a Health and Wellbeing theme, including a number of 'staying active' initiatives and a recent session about identifying and living with or caring for someone with dementia.

In 2022 an application to South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) for a 'Staying Active' Grant to set up a New Age Kurling Group was successful and this was established in 2023. Last year, with Dorothea Dunn (Speaker Secretary), another bid to SODC was submitted to start a Nordic walking Group. This group has now been set up and I am currently undertaking training to become a walk leader. The Committee is looking for ideas for 2024-25.

I am grateful to the Chinnor u3a for providing friendship, interests and laughs.

PERSPECTIVES ON THE 3RD AGE (3rd in a series of 3 articles) - Brian Fowler (u3a member – Coordinator of the History Group)



“A condition of growing old is... .. ALONENESS”

My mother was a clever woman. With little formal education, as the result of severe asthma in childhood, she had said that, for her, it was considered more important that she breathed good air than received wisdom. In consequence she had spent most of her formative years sitting in the open-air in the hope that her debilitating illness might be eased. Sadly, time was to show that such consideration had been to no avail and forever after she was never able to travel far without her atomiser close to hand; a bulbous, rubber contraption, squeezed forcefully and rapidly, to try to inject whatever medicine she had inserted into the necessary chamber for a purpose.

Self-educated then; by attending evening classes in later-life, she had achieved great success in her career as a Cordon Bleu cook. Self-educated too in her general knowledge, with a creative, imaginative mind, her intelligence quotient was perhaps above the norm. Her principals admired, and her intelligence respected, gave me all that I needed to know that she was the font of all knowledge; she was my mother – what else should I have known?

It came as a terrible shock then when she, at almost eighty years of age, cast out her opinion of a popular music celebrity who had recently died of HIV Aids. It was condemnatory, withering in its intensity, and so far-removed from until-then rational, considered, views that I had always previously appreciated. When I recoiled, as if struck, I asked her from where had come that almost venomous conclusion. Her response was that it was true; she had read it in her newspaper! My mother read a popular tabloid; not known for its unbiased assessments, but I considered it unlikely that even that publication would have expressed such an uncharitable account. I lived remembering that event for many years; until I too approached my eightieth year.

What had caused this paragon to act so far out of character? My conclusion – aloneness. This might not be a word found easily in the dictionary but I use it rather than, loneliness. The two aspects in old-age are quite separate. Loneliness is a state of mind brought about by the absence of, and the need for, company. Aloneness is merely a fact when one lives alone. Circumstances; the loss of a partner or spouse, or choice in the confidence and security of one’s own company, are the causes of such a situation.

In any event a consequence of such isolation is the likely affect that one’s considerations, and opinions, will have no influence brought to bear from another source. In conversations some self-assessment occurs preceding the issue of the words and the old adage of “think before you speak” is, hopefully, applied. Should that adage not be applied then a reaction to it from the recipient might be forthcoming; approval or criticism. In either case there is the opportunity, or need, to consider, even moderate, or withdraw, what has been said. In argument or discussion, the cause, and the effects remain malleable.

In my mother’s aloneness the consequences of her initial reaction to the newspaper article had not occurred. In her aloneness then she had no necessity to moderate her initial reaction. The human brain generates constant mental occupation and stimulation.

In the absence of a protagonist reacting to the spoken word, influencing the ramifications, then it is usual for the initiating thought to be regenerated. Without questioning, or contradiction, the initiating thought, mentally repeated, and then again and again repeated, without check, receives the same recurring perception with the effect of this likely to be an emphasis, an underlining, of that reaction. This cycle might then continue, with added emphasis, until what might have been a simple consideration of information received, is consequently elevated, in self-justification, to become “a fact”.

Many, in the aloneness of old-age, appear irascible and intolerant of the views of others. Might it be that, this is not in itself, condition of old-a age but a consequence?

NEW MEMBERS FAYRE (Karin Dawson Smith – Special Interest Groups Coordinator)



The annual group Fayre, where groups showcase the activities which are on offer, was held on 30 January at the Chinnor Pavilion. Invitations were sent out to all new members as well as established members who might be looking to explore new interests. There was a great turnout with 35 groups represented. The room was filled to capacity and the order of the day was for group leaders to get up and close and share tables!

There were wonderful displays including cards, Nordic walking poles, Art and a PowerPoint presentation from the Natural History Group.

As people began to arrive, it was reminiscent of the January sales and at the peak there were 75 attendees, many more than expected. There was a real buzz and energy in the room, and the opportunity to chat to group leaders and other members whilst partaking of the refreshments was relished.

The hope is that this will have whetted appetites. It is pleasing that some people, who were not current members have decided to join the u3a and a number have already enrolled in the groups



Nettie Dearmun (Chinnor and District u3a Chair) provided further information about a number of new initiatives to be introduced during the spring/summer including early evening drinks and nibbles drop in session and she provided feedback on the some of the suggestions, from members for new groups, for example, Photography, Scrabble, Ballroom dancing, Scottish or Barn dancing, Table Tennis, Singing, Golf, Knitting/Crochet, Travel and even Drone flying!! Further information will be available in Mini KiT and on the website.

Do you enjoy BOARD GAMES - the GROUP needs a coordinator; could you volunteer for this?. Support would be provided in booking the venue and providing the games.

If any of you have the enthusiasm for this or feel you might be able to coordinate some of the other groups, either on your own or with a partner, please contact Karin 07702800240 or groupschinnoru3a@gmail.com. Succession planning is also a priority for some of the existing groups.

MOBILISING & SOCIALISING: WALKING WITH THE u3a.

There are walking opportunities for all abilities and proclivities. Full information on all the walks and how to book one is available on the website. The Health & Safety information has also been updated so please take the opportunity to read this. There is also information about how to set up an ICE (In Case of Emergency Contact) on a mobile telephone



HISTORY, ICONS & TEA Nettie Dearmun (Chair u3a)

In February I attended the most recent short walk, a stroll around West Wycombe Village. Gillian Taylor (u3a member) led the walkers and provided interesting facts about the ancient buildings. There have been Iron Age, Bronze Age, Roman and Saxon settlements and even a pagan temple similar to Stonehenge until 1340 when 'Haveringdon', later renamed West Wycombe, moved to the top of the hill after the Black Death. The Dashwood personality is imprinted on the area, making it the home of architectural projects, follies, fountains, a Palladian styled manor house, the famous Hell Fire Caves built in 1750, the Mausoleum

at the top of the hill and the raising and crowning of the mediaeval tower at St Lawrence's Church with a golden sphere. Another church in the high street, St Paul's, built in 1870, is unusual in that it shares worship with the Serbian Orthodox congregation. The most prominent feature of the interior is an iconostasis covered with icons. To conclude the walk there was tea and cakes at the Old Walled Garden (previously West Wycombe Garden Centre).

Short walks take place on the 2nd Wednesday. For more information contact Simon [07939304229](tel:07939304229) simon@simon-thorpe.com

RAIN, RAIN, GO AWAY: MEDIUM WALKING GROUP JANUARY WALK AROUND OXFORD

Jean Wadsworth (u3a Member)

I have been a member of the medium walks group for over ten years and have enjoyed discovering the countryside whilst getting exercise in congenial company. The leader of the medium walk group, Frances Wells, compiles the monthly programme with volunteers from the group choosing, researching and leading the walks.



Winter walks are difficult to plan as the weather is uncertain. Frances and I had enjoyed an interesting walk around Oxford last summer and thought it would be a good option for the walk in January – lots of interesting features, unlikely to encounter mud as it was mainly on solid paths, and flat with no stiles. We made a plan to do a further reconnaissance in the New Year. Then came the floods!

On 6 January we went back to Oxford, fearing the worst as a large part of the route was alongside the Cherwell, the Thames and the canal. Sure enough, the first part of the walk was flooded and the water levels of both the Cherwell and the Thames were very high. Fortunately, there was a diversion, and so we made a record of the alternative route. The next stage, walking along the canal, we found that the towpath was submerged and inaccessible. A helpful cyclist suggested a way of bypassing the closure. Further on, another impassable towpath meant a significant detour but eventually it was possible to complete a much-amended walk. As the forecast promised no further rain the decision was made to revisit the walk a week later, three days before the planned walk. This time it was much better with only one diversion and so the hope was that it would be all right on the day and we had a contingency plan!

The day dawned cold and cloudy and with the hope of sunshine later and no rain, 22 walkers set off to Oxford on public transport (good old bus passes!). Everyone was glad to be out and we followed the waterways around the south of the city centre. Useful historical information was provided by Frances at various points, the "Gas Bridge", the Castle, the Quaking Bridge and Rewley Road Swing Bridge. All the paths we had originally planned were open and a 'banana break' was enjoyed under blue skies and sunshine, by the water on the fringe of Port Meadow (which had been a lake the previous week). The last part of the walk involved some pavement walking before passing through the University Parks and heading back past the Natural History Museum into the University area, via the Sheldonian Theatre, the Bodleian Library, the Bridge of Sighs, the Radcliffe Camera and several colleges. There was then an option to visit the central area, stopping for a coffee or lunch before returning home. Despite all the earlier concerns, all in all, it was a successful walk which was greatly enjoyed by all. For further information on the medium walks contact Frances on 07958 684666 or franceswells43@gmail.com



MOVEMENT2MUSIC GROUP

This group was initially set up by Brian Fowler who wanted to inspire people who no longer wanted to or were unable to exercise in the usual way. The aim is for participants to enjoy facilitated gentle movement to music to improve both their body and mind. This involves both seated and standing movements and some free form dance. At its core the health benefits will be experienced by participants and hopefully they will also have fun! Wendy Hawkins, a former dance and movement teacher, has agreed to facilitate some of the movement routines. If you

want to know more best come and experience it firsthand come along to the Reading Room on 1st Tuesday 1430-1600. For more information contact Karin groups@chinnoru3a.com

CARD GROUP - A COMPENDIUM -

Pearl & Mike Dix (Group Coordinator)

There are vacancies and no equipment required – just turn up and play The group meets bi-monthly (1st & 3rd Wednesdays), 1400-1600 at Chinnor Village Centre - Chiltern Room.

For more information contact Mike and Pearl Dix **01844 352355**
michaeldix636@btinternet.com



CANASTA – Spanish for basket

Sandy Thomas (u3a Member)

"the most recent card game to have achieved worldwide status as a classic".-



Having recently joined the U3A to get out and meet new people, the next decision was which groups to join. A friend recommended the Canasta group as sociable and good fun, as well as good brain exercise! - so I went along. I had never played Canasta before but was welcomed by the existing group and they patiently advised as I learned the rules and played my first few games. Like all beginners I made mistakes but with gentle reminders from my fellow players I've improved - though I still do daft things at times (who doesn't?). At

times the group is silent in concentration on the game but more often there is laughter and chatter as the games unfold and disbelief at the good luck some people seem to have in being dealt more than their fair share of jokers and wild cards!! I really look forward to the twice monthly sessions and the two hours whizz past. If you're looking for a new group to join I would definitely recommend this one.

For more information on this group contact Jean on **01844 354824** or wadsworthjean@hotmail.com

GARDENING GROUP

Ann Hine (Group coordinator)



The winter programme commenced in November, with a talk by Timothy Walker entitled *'Two for the price of one'*. As he was renowned for being a really good speaker, the event was very well attended.

What followed was an informative and very engaging and entertaining presentation about plants and shrubs. They have several uses in the garden, one being to look lovely, displaying flowers or

to emit a wonderful scent but some also have other purposes, including to improve soil stability, enhance air quality and create habitats. The pictures he had taken over the years showed the foliage in all their splendour. The hour flew past, and was enjoyed by all. Who knew that a talk about plants could be so amusing?



In December, there was a coach trip to Windsor Illuminations. Parking in the Saville Garden car park, the group walked through the entrance to the displays of various light forms. The trail through the woods, all the way around the lake was magical. There were holograms of fairies and elves and searchlights scanning the trees. Beside the lake, there was an opportunity to stop to admire the coloured fountains playing to music, and further round unicorns, and even Father Christmas with reindeer and sledge.

There was a light tunnel constantly changing colour and rippling right through with amazing shapes. Further along the trail many more mystical creatures, including dragons, wolves, rabbits, reindeer and serpents, all running through the trees. At one point the floor of the forest was covered in miles of strands of LED lights with beautiful effect.

Enchanted by the many amazing lighting displays, there was also a chance to explore food outlets and partake of refreshments, including mulled wine. Luckily the weather held fair and the rain waited until we arrived back home. Everyone agreed it was another fantastic outing.

In January, a new speaker recommended by the RHS, Alan Clarke (Landscape Gardener) took the stage to give a talk with the promising title of *'It ain't Rocket Science, It's much more complicated, how plants grow'*. The presentation began with images of a rocket launch at Cape Kennedy (which he had witnessed in person) and a description of the power and energy needed to propel the rocket. Then he showed a picture of a bean seed growing, the roots coming first, followed by the plant tip, growing upwards. This was accompanied by a detailed scientific explanation including a journey back to the beginning of time, the Universe and the Big Bang. There were copious graphics and reference to the periodic table to explain the physics and chemistry involved. Although there were occasional references to plants, they were unfortunately too few to make the talk relevant. It was a great talk, but perhaps would have been more appealing to a different audience!.

For more information about the gardening group contact Ann: 07811081766 ann_hine@tiscali.co.uk

ART HISTORY GROUP Rob Holdaway (Group Coordinator)

Recent Art History Topics

Following a really interesting and fun year (2023) of Art History, ranging from topics as diverse as ...

'Paul Nash & The Wittenham Clumps'; 'Gaudi: Architect or Artist'; 'Dragons in Western & Eastern Art'; and 'Australian Art & History Intertwined .. the Emergence of a Nation's Identity' including amazing First Nations art



..... these meetings have left the vibrant group thirsting for more art stories.

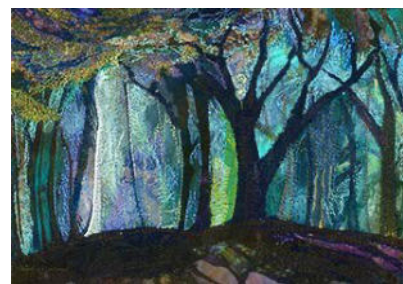
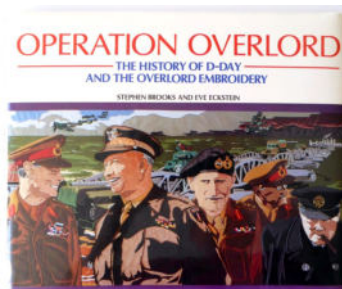
So most recent presentations took us through to early 2024 ...



'Textiles/Embroidery: Art or Craft?' (Thelma Jones)

A very different and stimulating presentation traced the historical journey from tapestry into embroidery, and from employees working on a large scale, producing tapestries for rich patrons, to embroidery produced by individual artists which have undeniably shown their potential to evolve into 'works of art' themselves. Inspired by her own obvious passion for textiles and embroidery, we were undoubtedly left with the impression that textiles and embroidery as a medium is equal to any other in being capable of expressing and conveying the feelings and emotions of the artist 'yeh, we thought, that's art, for sure!

Convincing examples shown included 'art' by American Faith Ringold, the inimitable Grayson Perry; the 'Overlord Embroidery' and the beautiful work of local embroiderer Rachel Wright.



'Nikolai Astrup .. Mystical Norwegian' (Christine Barnett)

Christine gave us a fascinating and refreshing presentation on Nikolai Astrup ..



Overshadowed by Edvard Munch ('The Kiss' and 'The Scream!'), who knew Nikolai even existed until well after his death?

Not only was Nikolai of little renown internationally but he lived remotely in Western Norway (Sandelstrand, 'near the lake') where his environment and cultural surrounds (mystical and almost pagan in some respects) dramatically affected his bold brush-stroke artistic output.

Enough words! As many of our audience witnessed, his paintings spoke to all these influences, so look up examples yourself, including the wonderful: 'A Morning in March'; 'July Night in The Garden'; and 'Midsummer Fire'.

'Who were the Celts ... Artisans or Artists?' : Janet Erskine

Janet skilfully and extremely knowledgeably traced the history of the Celts and Celtic art from 700BC to the present.

And what an arc of time we covered! ... from the **700 BC Halstatt periods' artefacts** preserved in salt mines, to the **Swiss La Tène iron age culture** with its swirly decorated metal ...



... onto the **1st century BC Norfolk Snettisham** discoveries (wow, that gold 'great torc' neck ring!) .. then through to the **medieval, Christian influenced period** (Celtic crosses and the wonderful Book of Kells) and finally

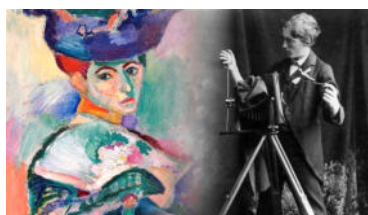


... the **19th century Celtic revival** and its 'Celtomania', to the influence on **Art Nouveau** and associated **modernism revivals** (eg the Glasgow style Rennie Mackintosh).

A **great sweep of Celtic art history** ...'artisans' or 'artists'?... They indeed seemed to embrace both over time!



Coming soon:



March 15th: Brian Fowler's presentation will provide insights into 'Art in Photography'

April 19th: We welcome our first guest speaker of the year, Lizzy Rowe from Oxford, who will share her intimate knowledge of 'Royal Art Collecting'



May 17th: Vicci Bentley will add a completely new dimension to our Art History perspective by talking to us about 'Ekphrasis' : **Art Through Poetry** ... should be fascinating!

For more information contact Rob : **07788694444**
robholdaway2@gmail.com

HISTORY GROUP What is History?

Ann Hedges & Brian Fowler (Group Coordinators)



This is considered every third Friday of the month. There is a simple aim Whatever the subject (and history is broad enough to allow us to accommodate “whatever...”), it should have been influenced by what went before, or have an effect on what is to follow. That, surely, is History.

So, that is the brief applied when arranging speakers. In the main they come from within the group; that’s the ethos of u3a – sharing knowledge, and ideas, with each other – and personal life experience is always a very interesting. However, it is sometimes good to invite speakers from a wider spectrum; professionals, or those from other u3a’s, to bring their favourite times, and characters, to share and appreciate.

So, no “Kings and Queens” by rote, but people, events, and occasions to activate the grey cells – and some lively, and worthwhile, discussion too is a definite yes.

Examples of recent topics include the Mystery of the light keepers on the Flannan Isles in 1900, this has been the basis for many films, music and books; the diary of an 18th Century shop keeper, who lived in Sussex, exploring the social, and historical background in which the events occurred; the History of the Ridgeway.

If you are keen to meet up with history groupies and like-minded people, starting with refreshments and concluding with much to mull over, The Reading Room at 1430-1600 is a good way to spend the afternoon. It is fine to simply listen but it is even better to share opinions – and, if there is something intriguing, let us know. There is a warm welcome on the third Friday of the month.

For more information contact Ann on 07936 875248 annmhedges@gmail.com or Brian on 07815784708 brianrfowler130@gmail.com

FAMILY HISTORY GROUP

Barbara Francis and Sue Wright (Group Coordinators)



Since taking over the coordinating of the Family History Group last year Sue and I have been on a steep learning curve but fortunately the other group members greatly assisted, some of whom have a vast knowledge on the subject.

Family History can be so much more than just discovering the names of your ancestors and fitting them together on a tree. It is possible through records, that have been kept over the centuries, to discover where our ancestors lived and worked and place them into the prevailing social conditions under which they brought up their families.



During 2023 there were contributions from outside speakers and several u3a members on some interesting subjects including: Our Father’s Stories; Breaking



Down Brick Walls; Past Coronations; The Female Line; A Workshop on the 1939 Register; House History; and Putting the Jigsaw together.

Our own findings were shared over coffee, stories about relatives who fought in the two World Wars were recounted and the year finished with an excellent quiz and some nibbles.

The new programme for 2024 is being developed and if you are interested in any of the topics from last year have a look at the u3a website for this year's offering. This group is open to new members. You do not need to be an expert, just interested in finding out about your ancestors and the place and times they lived in.

For more information contact Barbara on [01844 352522](tel:01844352522) bffhuta8974@gmail.com or Sue [01844 354043](tel:01844354043) suewright@suecol.co.uk



WRITING FOR FUN

Coordinated by Ann Long, this cheerful creative group meets once a month in the members' homes. The meetings start off with a quick writing task followed by the members reading out the results of their 'homework'. You'll find a taste of their fares below.

WHERE DID THAT COME FROM?

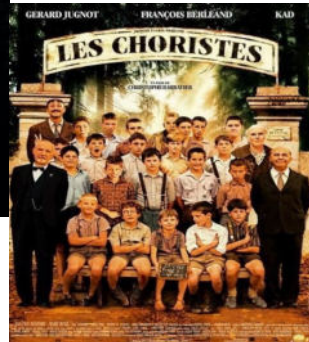
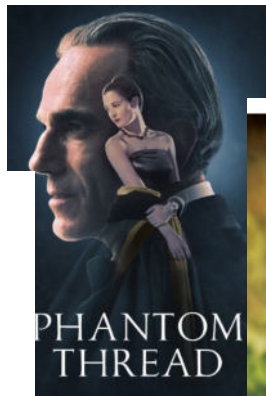
Janet Erskine (u3a member)

These were his favourite words. Perhaps heard during his youth as a joke phrase, he had learned over time to make them appropriate on many occasions as a way of shedding responsibility. Blessed with a casual name, Fred had grown into a callous man, if such a term could be applied to him. Rather still an uncaring youth, he had gained the nominal sum of 30 years, when, thinkingly or perhaps more correctly, drunkenly, he had proposed marriage to a naive girl a good few years younger than himself. Four years of marriage and they were still childless, mercifully so, Fiona had come to realise. She'd been immersed in his handsome, happy face not realising that that was all he had to offer. Besides that, he was a shallow vessel of quips and cheap laughs. When first married she'd wisely suggested that they wait a while before starting a family and had taken it upon herself to make sure no babies were made by mistake. But as the years passed, she began to be increasingly alarmed about the moment when she had agreed to marry Fred. Her mother had shrugged her shoulders and said nobody ever knew a person until you lived with them. Council she could afford to give because she had been lucky when she had married Fiona's father, a solid, serious man who thought about life and others. Fred had turned out to be the opposite of her father. Her mother just sighed when Fiona expressed her doubts and fears, reminding her of the solemn promises she'd made at the wedding ceremony. She was beginning to blame herself for finding it difficult to cherish Fred and grew alarmed at the prospect of "Till death us do part". Could she see herself with him 50

years down the line? Fred was fit and good for many more years to come. She now feared that if she had ever got pregnant, instead of expressing any joy or joining up his brain to the fact that he'd become a father, Fred would have blurted out "Where did that come from?", mindless of all its insulting implications about Fiona and her fidelity. They lived in a midlands town and Fiona was beginning to see herself as a character from a D H Lawrence novel, getting some comfort from the fact that she wasn't the only one. So she 'had' Fred and she would continue to 'hold' him after his increasing bouts of drinking. They had certainly been richer when he could hold down a job and now they were poorer. Childlessness meant that Fiona was free to find work for herself so now just the two of them were financially better off than they were relying on Fred alone. Each time he got the sack he'd inevitably ask her, "Where did that come from?" He even had the temerity to look disappointed and disillusioned as if these things happened despite himself. It wasn't him it was everybody else. But her mother told her, "Whatever you do, don't nag!" so she didn't, but in the end she grew not to care and just thought about herself and her job. Fred's mother would tell her that he was and always had been, 'Such a Lovely Lad. Just look at him!' as she patted his cheek. So Fiona came to accept him as a child and the only one she would ever have. Into his 40s this child was beginning to become a cliché and Fiona stood back and let the demon drink do its worst. She excused herself of any preventative measures. I mustn't nag she told herself. She couldn't see herself shaming him into leaving the pub and his mates by physically pulling him out. Besides, she was half his jolly self. Any residue of drink on his clothes was of course queried with 'Where did that come from?'. If he really were a child he would have been described as feral. On his journey home from the pub he visited, whether in or out of work, he had to cross the railway line at the level crossing. As a lad he and his friends had taken great delight in going through the pedestrian gate when the main gates were closed, dashing across the line when a train was in sight, playing their brand of Chicken. One winter's night Fred was found dead on the crossing when the gates were opened. Nobody had been with him on his way home from the pub. Had he been playing Chicken with the goods-train? Had he run and slipped on the ice? Nobody knew. But all to her smiling self Fiona had the thought that a split second before the train had ploughed into him, the last question going through his brain was, for the first and last time aptly used, 'Where did that come from?' It was the only form of vengeance she would ever have over Fred for the sterile life he had caused her to lead.

2ND SUNDAY SILVER SCREEN

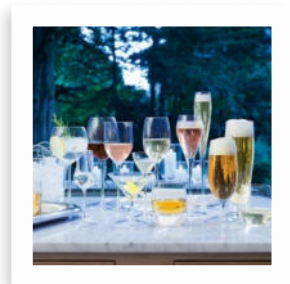
has come to the end of the first season but we will be back in September 2024. The audience enjoyed seven films from different genres. One a month on the 2nd Sunday. With drinks, popcorn and icecream. For more information and to join the list for the next season contact Nettie chair1chinnoru3a@gmail.com



LOOKING AHEAD
JOIN US FOR THE FIRST
'THIRSTY THURSDAY' at CHINNOR VILLAGE CENTRE
11 APRIL 2024 18:00-19:00

RSVP chair1chinnoru3a@gmail.com by 1 APRIL 2024

Cash on the door: £3.00 (to cover room hire, a beverage & nibbles)



SPEAKERS SCHEDULE FOR 2024

DATE	SPEAKER	TITLE
Mar 21	Dr James Taylor	'Grace Darling and the Fine Art of Saving Lives at Sea'
Apr 18	Philip Caine	'Barrow to Baghdad & Back Again'
May 16	Richard Anderson	My Time at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst
June 20	Jeremy Holmes	'Mad, Bad & Dangerous to know Lord Byron & his Women'
July 25	(AGM) Caspar Hendersen	A Book of Noises
Aug 15	Eddy Smythe	'Sierra Leone to Thame' – John Henry Smythe, QC, MBE(mil), OBE
Sept 19	Ann & John Ford	Morris Minors in the Media
Oct 17	Stephen Barker	'Six Warrior Women of English Civil Wars'
Nov 21	Bobbie Darbyshire	'A Beginning, a Muddle & an End' Where do novelists get their ideas from?
Dec 19	Graham Harrison	A Christmas Entertainment

OUT & ABOUT WITH THE u3a

Away with the Birds....



The visit in January to Slimbridge Wetland Centre was fully booked with the 37 people armed with binoculars in the anticipation of seeing some bird life. The birds seen commonly in January include Russian White-Fronted Geese; Snow Geese; Bewick's Swans; Whooper Swans' Lapwings; Canada Geese; Tufted Duck; Snipe and Peregrine. This year, according to their website, there were also some otters with their young. There were some interesting sightings of birds that would ordinarily only be seen in distant locations and also a significant number of non- indigenous birds. The weather was dry and warmer than expected and the feedback from the visitors was very positive.

DATE	OUTING
Monday 25- Friday 28 March	Nidd Hall - Yorkshire *
Monday 22 April	British Library Courtauld Institute*
Wednesday 14 May	Chinna Town & lunch*
Wednesday 26 June	Dyrham Park, Tour of Gloucestershire & The Cotswolds with afternoon tea
In the pipeline	
August	Boat Trip on Thames and Greenwich
September	Criminal Tour of London
Sunday 29 September - 6 October	tbc
October/November	Walking holiday Exmoor
November	Winchester Christmas Market
December	Christmas lunch

OTHER INFORMATION

OBITUARIES: Some of you have told us that you would like to be informed. If so you will need to contact Pete Way 07450171964 sysadchinnoru3a@gmail.com

MOBILE PHONE NUMBERS: The BEACON records are being updated. If you have not provided a mobile phone number please send this to Nettie chair1chinnoru3a@gmail.com

The next edition of KiT will be in the SUMMER and it is hoped that you feel inspired to contribute. The deadline for submission is 31 May – please send to Karin groupschinnoru3a@gmail.com or Nettie chair1chinnoru3a@gmail.com