

Message from the Chair

Graham Pursey

With summer's arrival, many of our groups and Group Leaders take a well-deserved break before restarting in September so now seems a good time to look at some of our successes and some of the challenges that we face in the coming year.

On the positive side, we now have 961 members and, as concerns about Covid lessen, participation in outings and in many groups has increased to the extent that some waiting lists have had to be introduced, or places rationed. We have some very successful new groups, including the Speaker Programme, the first meeting of which took place in April, with a second, 'Heroes in Space', scheduled for Tuesday 25th July at 3.00 p.m. in the Methodist Church. As before, if anyone has a problem with registering for the talk, give me a call or send me an email and I'll book you a place.

None of these groups would exist without our Group Leaders, or without the efforts of our committee members and I'm grateful to everyone who works tirelessly to help to make Cranleigh & District u3a such a success.

We do, however, have some challenges, the greatest of which is the need to find Group Leaders, either to replace those who will be stepping down this year, or to start new groups to cater for our growing membership. Whilst some groups – languages, for example – need specialist knowledge, many simply require Group Leaders to have an interest in the subject, to have some organisational skills and to be able to communicate. There's an increasing trend for Group Leader roles to be shared, as happens with some of our walking groups, or to have a group of helpers in support. I know I couldn't lead Wine Appreciation without my team!

We will be holding a session for potential Group Leaders later this year so, if you'd like to set up a new group, or to help with an existing one, there'll be plenty of advice and guidance on hand.

Another challenge is publicity. As a committee, we know we're not good at it and I still meet people who either don't know what u3a is, or who assume that you have to be retired to be a member. I'm setting up a small working group, initially made up of committee members but we really need a few more people, either with practical experience of publicity, or with some creative ideas, to join us. If you'd be interested, please get in touch with me, or with any other committee member.

Finally, I hope you all have a great summer and I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at our Open Day in the Village Hall, between 2.00 p.m. and 4.00 p.m. on Tuesday 8th August.

Graham Pursey chair@cranleighu3a.org

Group Leader Coordinator's Report

Angela Hardman

Preparations for our 2023-24 u3a programme of activities are well under way and we look forward to seeing you at the Open Day on 8th August, which will be held in the Cranleigh Village Hall between 2pm - 4pm. You can of course sign up either with your Group Leader or via Beacon and further details on how to do this will be given in your membership renewal information.

I am very grateful to all our Group Leaders who are taking their groups forward for another year. The success of our u3a depends on members volunteering to organise/facilitate/lead a group. Without them we would not be able to offer our members such a wide and varied programme of activities.

This year we have 56 group activities to offer our members plus our Outings and quarterly Speaker Programme as well as Bowls and Yoga, which are offered through our links with other organisations.

Unfortunately, we are unable to continue to offer General History, Italian Conversation or Opera groups as no members have come forward to take over from our out-going leaders. On the plus side, I am pleased to tell you that, since the April Newsletter, Marilyn Wood and Gillian Ward have come forward to lead the Monday Walking group.

Also, Stephen Halloran offered to organise the Photography group when Owen Scott stepped down. We wish Owen all the best with his move to the south coast. Steph Witt, supported by a team of experienced Bridge players, will be running the weekly Chicago Bridge group. We also have one new group, Games Hub, suggested by member, Jo Scurry who will be running the group with support from Jutta Anderson.

As always, if you have a suggestion for a new activity and you are willing to help take your idea forward, we'd love to hear from you.

Please email Angela Hardman: glcoordinator@cranleighu3a.org

MESSAGE FROM THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Around mid-July we will be sending everyone an invitation to renew their Cranleigh u3a membership for the year September 2023 – August 2024. The easiest way to do this is online via the Beacon Portal using the following details, which will all be confirmed in your renewal letter.

To Access The System

- Go to Cranleigh & District website (www.cranleighu3a.org.uk).
- Click on BEACON along the top tool bar.
- Click on Beacon Members Portal.
- Log in. As a reminder, you now only need to enter your email address and password. [NB - if you have not already chosen your own password, you just need to click on "Register for a membership account" and follow the instructions]

Ways To Renew Your Membership

- The easiest way to do this is online via the Beacon system (full details will be given in your renewal letter).
- You can send the Membership Secretary a cheque (details will be in your renewal letter).
- You can also renew your membership at our Open Day on Tuesday, 8th August at Cranleigh Village Hall, but we would encourage you not to use this option as there may be long queues.

As was the case last year, we will not be issuing membership cards. The number you were given last year will remain with you for your entire u3a membership.

When you renew online you will receive a confirmation email with a link for downloading the 2023/24 Handbook. Handbooks will also be available by post and at the Open Day.

If any of your personal details have changed, you can amend these yourself through the Beacon system or by letting me know, using my email address: membership@cranleighu3a.org.

Barbara White

NEWS FROM OUR GROUPS

Garden Group

REPLANTING OF FOUNTAIN SQUARE

The U3A Garden Group have raised the money to replant part of the beds in Fountain Square with Heucheras and Geraniums, to ensure that they will look pretty over the summer months. We are also weeding and watering the beds over the summer and this is a photo of Sue and myself adding the finishing touches.

We are also grateful for a donation from the Rotary towards the cost of the plants.

These beds were first replanted by the U3A Garden Group almost 10 years ago, as part of the Cranleigh in Bloom initiative. We chose long-lasting plants such as daffodil Tete-a-Tete, Appledorn tulips and Gladiolus Byzantinus, which has not lasted quite so well, so we will replant the gladioli in the autumn, hopefully using funds raised by us.

Please do enjoy the colourful display and I would like to thank everyone who will be helping over the summer.



Gill Ford

WINE APPRECIATION

With Wine Appreciation on holiday for the next two months and with some warm weather in prospect, now seems a good time to suggest some wines for summer drinking, including for when just sitting in the garden enjoying the sunshine (or rain), or for when firing up the barbecue. For this article, I'm sticking with 'traditional' summer wines, most of which are dry and all of which are readily available on supermarket shelves at affordable prices.

White wines and sparkling wines

Picpoul de Pinet, despite being an ancient grape, only became popular from the early 1990s but is now a staple of most wine lists. It comes from the Languedoc-Rousillon region of Southern France and, like the Loire's Muscadet, or Portugal's Vinho Verde, it's a great alternative to Sauvignon Blanc or Pinot Grigio as a refreshing, dry wine.

Albarino (known as Alvarinho in Portuguese), is a white-wine grape common across north-western Spain and northern Portugal and produces dry, acidic wines with intense floral and citrus notes. It is often overlooked as a less glamorous cousin of Sauvignon Blanc but is now surging in popularity, not least because it offers great value for money.

Vinho Verde (literally 'green wine, or 'young wine') comes from Portugal and is most commonly sold as a white wine in the UK, although rosé versions are beginning to appear. It is low in alcohol, mostly dry with green fruit notes and is slightly sparkling, which helps to make it readily quaffable and refreshing.

Cavas from Spain and Crémants from eight different regions of France are made in the same way as Champagne, with secondary fermentation (which produces the bubbles), taking place in the bottle. Despite this same method of production, these quality wines – which are typically dry or semi-dry – are often overlooked but offer great value for money.

Rosé wines

Provence in France is, perhaps, synonymous with rosé wines, which are refreshing as an aperitif but which also pair with a very wide range of foods. Other countries (dare I mention Mateus Rosé, from Portugal?) produce rosés but rosados from Spain's Rioja region have really caught on of late in the UK.

Red wines

Wines from France's Beaujolais region are often considered to be the archetypal red summer wine, especially when served chilled. There are many to choose from but Beaujolais-Villages perhaps offers the best value for money when balancing quality and price. Many other grapes, however, also make good summer drinking at affordable prices, including Pinot Noir from former Soviet Union countries such as Romania. For barbecues, more robust wines tend to be better so consider, for example, Australian Shiraz, or South American Cabernet Sauvignon or Malbec.

Graham Pursey

Outings

Please take a look at the July u3a Outings Programme which you will have received together with this Newsletter. We do hope you will find something to interest you from the four Outings on offer over the Autumn/ Winter.

All Members of Cranleigh & District u3a are entitled to apply for the Outings.

The application form is the last page of the Outings Programme.

N.B. Outings are allocated on a "first come first served" basis.

Please send any ideas that you may have for future places to visit to jenny@cranleighu3a.org

Requests will be considered and we will endeavour to include them in the Outings Programme if we feel they would be popular with a number of members.

Help with social media

Cranleigh & District u3a needs a volunteer to help take forward our profile on the Website and on social media platforms such as Facebook. If you have these skills, we would love to hear from you.

Please contact Graham Pursey, Chair: chair@cranleighu3a.org

Copy for the October 2023 edition of the Newsletter to reach the editor by 20th September

If any members would like submit an article relating to their group, please feel free to do so. It doesn't have to be a whole page. We would love to hear from you.

Please prepare your text as a Word document, photographs in jpg format, and send them as separate attachments to your email to:

newsletter@cranleighu3a.org

Thank you!

Brian