

Monthly Newsletter: December 2023



Artwork by Pam Wilson (see page 15)

Monthly (and other) meetings

Dates for your diaries below. All meetings start at 2.30pm, with the exception of the coffee morning, and are held at the Friary Hall, Haslett Avenue:

- **Friday 8th December** – Christmas Party (see note on page 15)
- **Friday 12th January** – Sarah Slater, *Royal Jubilees*
- **Friday 9th February** – Tony Harris as *Henry VIII*
- **Tuesday 20th February** – Coffee morning at **11.00am**
- **Friday 8th March** – Graham Crozier, *Mark Lemon and His Circle*
- **Friday 12th April** – Martin Lloyd, *Becoming a Famous Author*
- **Friday 10th May** – Andy Smith, *Prosthetic Perils*
- **Friday 14th June** – Derrick Hughes, *More Heads and Tails*
- **Friday 12th July** – Neil Sadler (title to be confirmed) *‘(Almost) Death in Paradise, Pirates and Rum’*
- **Friday 11th October** – Dr Janet Pennington, *Sussex Inn Signs*

Report on AGM on 10th November

I am delighted to report that we had an excellent turnout for the AGM (see photo below). I will leave it to our Secretary, **Margaret Lloyd**, to report on the formal part of the meeting (see page 3). The second photo shows our Chair, **Jim McGough**, presenting our departing Groups Coordinator, **Peter Beckley**, with a token of our appreciation.



*Appearances can be deceptive,
there were bottles of beer inside the bag!*

Secretary's report from the 10th November Annual General Meeting (AGM)

Thank you to all those members who were amongst the 94 who attended the AGM.

We apologise for both the low temperature of the Friary Hall, which was beyond our control, and for having to cancel the entertainment part of the afternoon as a result of technical problems with our slide projector. It was purchased back in 2010 and would not connect to the laptop which held the slides. We have since decided it is time to purchase a new one and will make sure you get a chance to see the "Crawley u3a highlights of 2022/23" before the year is too distant a memory.

The Trustees elected for the 12 months to the next AGM are:

Chair	Jim McGough
Vice Chair	Alan Rew (new Trustee)
Secretary	Margaret Lloyd
Treasurer	Graham Friday
Communications Coordinator	Sue Parker
Members Coordinator	Jacqueline Mercer
Groups Coordinator	Janet Newson (previously Access Coordinator)
Events Coordinator(s)	Vacant
Systems Coordinator	Vacant
Migration Webmaster	Vacant

You can contact any of these Trustees via the Contacts page of the website:

[Crawley u3a: Contact \(u3asites.org.uk\)](http://u3asites.org.uk)

We welcome **Alan Rew** to the Committee. We also thank **Peter Beckley** for filling the position of Groups Coordinator for the last three years. He will continue many of his previous duties assisting **Janet Newson** who takes over as Groups Coordinator.

We still need to fill the other vacant positions and would be happy to recruit volunteers who are willing to take on the function without acting as a Trustee.

Please contact me if you are interested in finding out more, or see the Volunteers page [Crawley u3a: Volunteers \(u3asites.org.uk\)](http://u3asites.org.uk) on the website.

The draft minutes of the AGM are on the AGM 2023 web page:
[Crawley u3a: AGM 2023 \(u3asites.org.uk\)](http://u3asites.org.uk)

Other New Volunteers

We are pleased to announce that **Christine Willows** will be acting as Minutes Secretary to the Committee.

Margaret Lloyd, Secretary

New Local History Group

Having had my appetite whetted by **Graham Crozier's** informative local history walk during our midsummer celebration in June, I was excited to hear that he would be starting a Local History Group at Crawley Museum early next year. The group will run for two terms – from January until Easter then after Easter until July – meeting on the second Friday of each month from 11.00am-1.00pm at Crawley Museum. The first meeting will be held on Friday 12th January 2024.

One thing which struck me during Graham's walk is how little I know about the town I have lived in for more than 40 years. If, like me, you would like to learn more, then this new Group is the perfect opportunity to do so. The venue is ideal as Crawley Museum is full of fascinating objects and information about the history of our town.

Why not join this new Group and discover more about Crawley and its history? As a bonus, it will give you a chance to explore the Museum's collections.

Cost per session will be £2.00.

Expressions of interest to peter.beckley@yahoo.co.uk

Thank you do for the RUGs on 17th November

To thank the RUGs for all their hard work in ensuring that our events run smoothly, the Committee hosted an afternoon tea for them at Holy Trinity Church, Tilgate, to show our appreciation. Thank you to **Graham Friday** and **Olivia Strand** for their sterling work in the kitchen making cups of tea.



Welcome to new members

I would like to extend a warm welcome to our new members:

Roberta Carey, Jenny Lavery

Gardening Group's visit to Kew on 7th November

Twenty-five members of the Gardening Group boarded the train to London for a visit to Kew. Once there, they parted company to do their own thing before reuniting to travel back to Crawley. As can be seen from [Janet Newson's](#) stunning photograph, not only was the weather kind to them but there were also some spectacular autumn colours to be seen. To see more of Janet's excellent photographs, why not head over to our Facebook page [Crawley u3a | Facebook](#)



Out & About 4's trip to Knole House on 13th November

Out & About 4 were also fortunate with the weather for their trip to Knole House. My thanks to [Janet Newson](#) for the photo.



u3a National Poetry Competition

We have a Poetry Group so there must be a few poets in our midst. If so, why not take part in the u3a National Poetry Competition? The competition opened on Wednesday 8th November and will close at midday on Friday 26th January. For more details and to read the rules, follow this link:

[u3a - Poetry Competition](#)

Needles Group: first meeting on 15th November

The Needles Group held their first meeting on 15th November at the home of new Group Leader, **Wendy Townend**. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 17th January at 2.00pm at Wendy's home in Ifield.

Thanks to **Peter Beckley** for the photo.



Science Group: request for speakers

Are there any members who would be willing to do a presentation to the Science Group or come and lead a discussion on a scientific topic they feel would be relevant? Expressions of interest to me via sueparker5@yahoo.co.uk

Out & About 7's visit to Harvey's Brewery, Lewes on 16th November

Out & About 7, joined by members of other Out & About groups, enjoyed an interesting and informative early evening visit to Harvey's Brewery in Lewes. Thanks to **Phil Light** for sending me the photo.



Inaugural National u3a Festival 18th-20th July 2024 at the University of York

The u3a's Festival24 will be held at the University of York from 18th-20th July next year.

There will be a wide variety of activities to enjoy, with talks, sporting events, musical entertainment and workshops.

For more information, including the detailed programme and booking details, follow this link [u3a - Festival 2024](#)

Walkers One Chelwood Gate walk on 17th November

Walkers One enjoyed a sunny walk around the Chelwood Gate area before adjourning to the Red Lion for lunch.

Thanks to **Phil Light** for sending me **Janet Newson's** photo for inclusion in the newsletter.



New Bus/Strollers Group

The new Bus/Strollers Group I mentioned in last month's newsletter has been set up on WhatsApp. If you like the idea of spontaneous outings such as short walks with coffee and cake at the end, a trip to the cinema, a wander around the shops, or a bus trip to another town, then email me at sueparker5@yahoo.co.uk and I will add you to the group. The group will shortly be holding an informal planning meeting in a town centre coffee shop so why not sign up now?

Walkers Extra Chelwood Gate walk on 23rd November

Chelwood Gate was a popular place for u3a walking groups, as six days after Walkers One's visit, Walkers Extra enjoyed a five mile walk in the Ashdown Forest, taking in the Chelwood Vachery, before heading to the Red Lion at Chelwood Gate for lunch. Thanks to [John Peters](#) for taking the first photo. As can be seen from the third photo, [Jan Morris](#) found an ingenious way to avoid the mud!



Out & About 1's trip to Winchester Cathedral Christmas Market on 29th November

On a cold winter's day, Out & About 1 travelled by coach to the lovely old cathedral city of Winchester. Most members chose to visit the Christmas Market held in one of the Cathedral's closes as well as investigating some of the city's other shops and cafes but one or two ventured up to the Peninsular Square to visit one of the military museums there.

Thanks to [Jean Manuel](#) for organising the trip and to [Margaret Lloyd](#) for sending me the report and photograph.



Smartphone Photographic Group competition

At the AGM in November, prizes were awarded to the winners of this year's Smartphone Photographic Group competition. Shown below, and on the next page, are photos by the first, second and joint third place prize winners. I must stress that the prizes were awarded to individual members on the basis of all of their photos entered into the monthly competitions. The photos shown here are just one example of their work. Thank you to Smartphone Photographic Group Leader, **Monique Tovey-Mansfield**, and the photographers, for allowing me to reproduce their fantastic photographs here.



Reflections by Gill Penny (1st place)



Fruit by Carol Frisby (2nd place)

Smartphone Photographic Group competition (continued)



Autumn by Isabel Baker (joint 3rd place)



Christmas by Cherie Corely (joint 3rd place)

Christmas Party on 8th December

All tickets for this year's Christmas Party have now been allocated. Members who were unsuccessful have been notified. Please note that there is a waiting list as there may be cancellations nearer the date, in which case the vacant space will be filled from the waiting list. Please do not turn up on the day if you do not have a place as sadly we will be unable to admit you due to the limits on the number of people we can take in the Friary Hall.

This month's front page image

As soon as I saw **Pam Wilson's** excellent painting at Crawley Art Society's exhibition at Crawley Museum in September, I knew that it would be perfect for the December edition of our newsletter. My thanks to Pam for allowing me to reproduce it here.

Next year's front page images

For the front page photos for next year's newsletters, I plan to post photos I have taken in and around Crawley. For some, it will be immediately obvious where they were taken; others may be less so and will give you an opportunity to find out just how well you know Crawley!

u3a Online Learning Events

Did you know that the u3a run free online learning events via Zoom? I have browsed through the events for December and two caught my eye. The first one on Wednesday 13th December may be of interest to our **Family History Group** – *Family History: Where all is not as it seems*. The second one is on Friday 15th December at 10.00am – *Climate Change and the Oceans*. To find out more about these and other events follow this link:

[u3a - Online Learning Events](#)

Newsletter distribution

This is probably the wrong month to ask for volunteers with the colder weather at this time of year, but if any members who live **in Langley Green, Northgate, Southgate or West Green** would like to deliver a few copies of the newsletter in their neighbourhood every month then to find out more about how much work it would entail (not a lot!), please contact me via sueparker5@yahoo.co.uk

On that note, I would like to thank the kind members who already deliver the newsletter in their neighbourhoods. I am most grateful for the time and trouble you take to do so.

I would also like to thank the members who send me photographs and reports of activities for inclusion in the newsletter. Please keep them coming!

The January newsletter will be emailed to members on **Tuesday 2nd January** and posted or hand delivered to those without email shortly thereafter. Please note that this is a day later than usual to allow me to recover from a late night!

Finally, I would like to wish all of our members a peaceful and joyful festive season.

Sue Parker

Newsletter Editor

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