

u3a

Crowborough

Winter 2024

learn,
laugh,
live

Charity number 128386
www.u3asites.org.uk/crowborough



Chairman's Message

Welcome to membership of Crowborough u3a for 2024, especially if you are new. Please don't hesitate to contact a member of the Committee or the Support Team if you encounter any problems.

We are trialling a table at the Monthly Meetings for this very reason. If you haven't been to a Monthly Meeting yet, perhaps give it a try. They are held on the third Thursday in the month at the Community Centre. There isn't a hint of any general business or tedious discussion, just an opportunity to meet others over a cup of tea or coffee, hear a talk from a diverse selection of speakers / performers and perhaps find the answer to some of those niggling issues.

A big thank you from me to everyone who has and continues to provide activities for over 750 members. Group Leaders give a considerable amount of time to ensure interesting and fulfilling activities take place under the very capable hands of our Groups' Coordinator. Shirley Moss is soon to depart this role, which will be subsequently in the capable hands of Rhona and Colin Condon. If you encounter any problems concerning groups, please contact the Leader initially or Shirley for general enquiries.

Membership renewal is almost completed now, thanks to the efforts of Martin Castle and Trevor Probert. Please remember that we are not continuing with membership cards but you still have a number. We have had substantial success with introducing BACS payments. Unfortunately, not all those using this facility have returned [renewal forms](#). This not only prevents you from receiving necessary information but is extremely time consuming for Martin and Trevor. Please check we have your correct email. If you are not receiving information, contact Martin to discover why.

You should, by now, all have access to the speakers that have been booked for 2024. We must be grateful to Gill Noakes for engaging such a variety and to Kathryn Willig for making sure all needs are met and that they are welcomed in true Crowborough u3a style. Gill will shortly be stepping down, to be replaced by Jenny Bartlett. Thank you, Jenny, for agreeing to fulfil this task.

If you can't find the list that came in your membership pack, please check on the website for [forthcoming speakers](#), or the Monthly Bulletin that is available to all members. And, while we're on the subject, a really big thank you to the monthly tea and coffee gang. Where would we be without you?

Also, to Pam Checkley and helpers for diligently keeping the register and Jenny Scott for manning the Notice Board. Have a look at the board on your way past at the Monthly Meeting.

Sandie and Pam will continue to meet and greet, particularly new members. If you know someone is new, make them welcome. I'm sure you do.

We are extremely lucky to have Lynda and Peter Lenton organising so many trips for us. Many of you enjoyed a variety of outings in 2023. We have even had members from other local u3a's joining us. I have already had a sneaky preview of what might be in store for 2024 outings and they will not disappoint. Please give your support if you can. Have a look on the website for future trips, make sure you check the Monthly Bulletin, and speak to Lynda or Peter at the Monthly Meetings.

Brian and Sally Child have become very much part of our Support Service. Their help is principally with publicity, then add a couple of catered events, Christmas Cracker and spreading the word with Sea Shanties. If anyone is able to offer assistance in the area of publicity, please contact one of them. There is even a whisper of possible social media usage.

Please check our [website](#) occasionally. It's frequently updated by Paul Penrith and very easy to navigate. If you have any group or general u3a information, ask Paul if it's possible to add it. Equally, if there is anything you spot that should no longer be there, let Paul or a member of the Committee know.

Stephan Butler has now taken on full responsibility for our quarterly Newsletter. All correspondence concerning this should be sent directly to Stephan. If an article doesn't appear, there is probably a good reason. Perhaps check that items have been received. I'm sure Stephan would also be grateful for suggestions, particularly if they're backed up with offers of help.

If you're not receiving an actual copy of the Newsletter through the post and have requested one, please let me know and this can be rectified. The latest Newsletter is always put on the website and sent electronically if requested. If you want to keep up to date with events, please check all methods of communication regularly.

The main focus in 2024 is going to be on New Members: making them feel welcome, checking they have access to all events and groups, and making them feel part of Crowborough u3a from the outset.

There is already a group of people working on ways to introduce new members and encouraging them to meet others. If you have any ideas and would like to be involved, please let me know.

Lastly, I would like to make mention of Yvonne Stone, who has the title of Business Secretary. What this title doesn't involve is nobody's business. Apart from keeping us all on track with events, both local and u3a Trust, Yvonne manages to magically find missing members' emails, print absolutely anything (even a few copies of Murder Mystery sheets!), make sense of what is discussed at meetings, volunteer at catered events and still belong to a few Groups. I have a feeling Bob may be involved somewhere too. So, when you see her, give her a smile, she definitely deserves it.

No doubt, I have missed someone off this amazing group of people. If so, I can only apologise. Like these other wonderful volunteers, I wake up in the morning intending to do my best and certainly not to upset someone's day.

I have had a fantastic 2023 being part of Crowborough u3a and hope you have too. Let's work together to make 2024 even better. How can you be proactive in this? Have a good think.

All the Best for 2024.

Jane Lazell

Chairman

Tel: 07974 369408

Email: janelazell.crowb.u3a@hotmail.com



News from the Groups

We have 83 groups at the moment, most have vacancies. A few are full, but are keeping waiting lists, ready to start a parallel group. To join a group please apply to the Group Leader via the [Crowborough u3a website](#) or by phone, using the list of groups that is always in the latest Newsletter.

New groups seeking members:-

Latin: Not for beginners. Phone Bob Jupp on 01892 662867.

Pickleball: Popular racket sport (see below). Phone Pat or Alan Gaukroger on 01892 482300.

If you have a special interest or expertise that is not covered by our existing groups, why not start a new one. Plenty of help to get it going is available if needed.

I am writing this in the last few hectic days in the run-up to Christmas. Many of the groups have celebration events planned so I hope they all went well. I wish you a happy and healthy 2024 with lots of fun and interest in your u3a groups.

Shirley Moss
Groups' Coordinator

Pickleball

Fellow u3a members, are you feeling the need for some beneficial exercise after the Christmas & New Year Festivities? Perhaps you already have experience of playing a racket game such as squash, tennis or badminton, though this is not essential? Well how would you like to try a new sport that is becoming increasingly popular, not least amongst those of a certain (third) age?

We are talking about Pickleball. This video by Sky News will give you a flavour of how it's played: [Judy Murray, Kim Kardashian, and Leonardo DiCaprio all reported to be among the fans of this increasingly popular sport.](#)

Some members of the u3a Table Tennis Group have recently tried this out, but we need more potential members before we can go forward with a formal Pickleball Group. So if you think it is something you might enjoy, get in touch and we can arrange a 'taster' session at Goldsmiths whereupon you can gauge whether the game might suit you.

Alan & Pat Gaukroger

Monthly General Meetings

We are looking forward to starting 2024 with an interesting talk from Mike Hewens about working for the Royal Family.

Details of all upcoming [Monthly Meeting](#) can always be found on our website. They are held in the Main Hall at the Crowborough Community Centre on the third Thursday in the month. Doors opening at 2pm for tea and coffee.

Thursday 18 th January	Michael Hewens – Below Stairs at Buckingham Palace
Thursday 15 th February	Milton Hide – Your Stories in Song
Thursday 21 st March	Lucy Buck – Good Company in Crowborough
Thursday 18 th April	Helena Griffith's – Volcanoes and Earthquakes

Michael Hewens Below Stairs at Buckingham Palace

I worked for the Royal Household for about 35 years in a part-time capacity as a Page. It was a unique, interesting job and I interfaced with a wide diversity of guests and the royal family, working at Buckingham Palace, Holyroodhouse and Windsor Castle. My talk will be an overview of my activities and I hope will bring an insight into life behind "closed doors".

Milton Hide

Milton Hide are singer songwriters Jim and Josie Tipler. They invite you to come along to listen to some of their songs and to hear the stories behind them, which include characters, events, legends and landmarks. If you have a story that you would like to keep alive, either write it down, tell it in person or fill in the form on their website (www.yourstoriesinsong.co.uk). There will be a suggestion box on the day and the duo will pick one to write a quick chorus with your help.

Lucy Buck, Care Reform in Africa to Good Company in Crowborough

Lucy is the co-founder and chief executive of [The Good Company People](#), a local social enterprise that aims to help older people, many of whom are living with dementia, enjoy more independent, fulfilling lives, for longer. Lucy has a track record of providing sustainable alternatives to complement the existing social services. She founded and ran Child's i Foundation, a charity which helped communities to provide a safety net for vulnerable families, so they didn't have to give up their children to orphanages in Uganda.

Gill Noakes

Speakers' Secretary

Outings

We are looking at attending an evening performance of [Clueless the Musical](#) on Tuesday 13th February at the Churchill Theatre in Bromley. Clueless is a new musical comedy based on the film. It is a modern spin on Jane Austen's Emma. We need a minimum of 30 people to make it viable. The cost for coach travel and a theatre seat would be £64.50. (If more than 40 people book, we might be able to reduce the cost per person). Please [email us](#) in the next few days if you wish to go. The [Trip Booking Form](#) can be found on the Crowborough u3a website.

Peter & Lynda Lenton

Trips' Co-ordinators

Rosemary Cottage, Crowborough Hill, Crowborough TN6 2SD

lyndalentontennis@gmail.com

Committee Members & Support Services

Committee

Chairman	Jane Lazell	07974 369408
Treasurer	Trevor Probert	654278
Groups Coordinator	Shirley Moss	852658
Speakers' Secretary	Gill Noakes	654705
Business Secretary	Yvonne Stone	331303
Membership Secretary	Martin Castle	663972
Trips' Co-ordinators	Lynda & Peter Lenton	652766
Committee Member	Margaret Bird	655487
Committee Member	Kathryn Willig	652861

Support Services (non-committee members)

Webmaster	Paul Penrith	664731
Newsletter Editor & Designer	Stephan Butler	07714 765258
Publicity	Brian & Sally Child	325064
Registration	Pam Checkley	665126

A list of [phone numbers](#) can also be found on our website. You can also send Committee Members a message through the [Contacts](#) page.

Group Reports

Please refer to the list of 'Interest and Activity Groups' at the end of this Newsletter for the phone number of the Group Leader and the meeting times. You will find details of all [Groups](#) on our website and you can also send the Group Leader a message that way.

Apple iPad

The iPad Group which used to meet monthly has been disbanded, after running for 18 months. Members who attended this Group have gained considerable knowledge, but it is now time to move on.

A re-structured iPad Group starts in January. They run for six sessions, every two weeks, on a Wednesday. The Group is for members who wish to improve their knowledge and skills in using an Apple iPad. They are a mixed ability, hands-on 'course'; where members bring their own iPad to the meeting at my home. I have to limit the numbers to a total of eight.

If you want to join the next series of six sessions then get in touch. They will begin on Wednesday 17th April, and will run fortnightly until June.

Phil Singleton

Art (Practical)

The art class started when u3a first came to Crowborough, and has been very popular ever since. We meet most Monday mornings for three hours at All Saints Church coffee room. We are a group of 24 artists of all abilities who each has their own style of painting, from very traditional landscapes to portraits and modern art. We are led by Michael Page, a former commercial artist, who is kind and supportive. We recently had our first Christmas lunch which was a great success. We are a welcoming and friendly Group and do all mediums except oils. We still have a few vacancies for next term, if anyone would like to join us. You are very welcome to drop by and visit before you sign up.

Aviation

In October some of the members of the Aviation Group visited the [Spitfire Heritage Hangar at Biggin Hill](#). We could not have wished for a better tour guide. His knowledge proved encyclopaedic. Providing new facts and figures to people who by nature of their interest and background have already a fairly extended knowledge of the subject was an achievement. We spent an excellent few hours in his company, and in an environment where all these illustrious aircraft, we know so well, are worked on. The first hangar was largely aircraft maintenance work and components production. Whereas the second hangar was partly a WWII museum and partly static aircraft display. Differences between British and German aircraft

became obvious, with the British being meticulously constructed, whereas some German aircraft showed some of the hurry in which the planes were put together. Interesting also were the different philosophies that produced the beautiful Merlin versus the ME109 Daimler Benz inverted engine. Food for the soul for aircraft buffs.

We got the chance to see a lot of activities close-up, which together with the sounds and smells, added to the experience. The visit was a thorough success and more of these kind of outings will be arranged.

The Aviation Group meets monthly at The Oasis on Beacon Road. New members, with or without aviation backgrounds, are always welcome.

Louis Lombert



Canasta

The Canasta Group has been running now for several years and our numbers fluctuate. At the moment we have over 40 on the register with between 28 and 35 people attending each week.

Many of you may have seen the ordinary game of Canasta being played, it's relatively easy to learn and is a really social game allowing for chit-chat as well as play. In the picture the first two groups on the left are Canasta groups trying to obtain seven cards all similar, or with the odd 'wild card' mixed-in.



The other two groups on the right are different, these are examples of Samba. This is a set of seven cards in rank order, all of the same suit. Here the Hearts run from

the Jack to the 7, so just a couple more to go before the Samba is complete. The Clubs however, are complete running from the Ace to the 8. A Samba can run from any card as long as it finishes up with seven cards, so it could go from a 4 to a 10, all in the same suit. 3's are not including in a Samba and Ace is always high. Samba is much more thought provoking; and most people who have learnt it, really enjoy it, and would not change back.

Anne March

Cardmaking

The Cardmaking Group meets each Monday at 10am. There are seven of us at the moment and we meet up in each others houses. Making cards can take up a fair amount of space, so we are unable to offer a place to anyone else right now. However we would be willing to help anyone interested in starting up another group. Our cards are a mixture of recycled, embroidered, painted and decoupage and many other ways that we experiment with. At most u3a Monthly Meetings we sell some of our cards and the money made goes into buying more supplies.

Carole Taylor

Church Visits

We have been busy during the last months, and have been joined by several new members. We started with a visit to Frant church, with a talk about the history of the church and village, the most interesting memorial being to Colonel By, founder of Ottawa in Canada, and culminating with a group of 19 visiting *St Margaret the Queen*, Buxted, in November. This is one of very few English churches dedicated to the Scottish queen. Our next visit will be in February.

Barbara Collins



Creative Writing (Group 1)

The following is a contribution from one of the Group's members, which seems appropriate at this time of year.

Snow

William Douglas Jenkins

*A cautious man was he
Never walked under a ladder
Never sheltered under a tree.
He always ate five veg. a day
With prunes to help them down
Strong liqueur never passed his lips.
Small beer was taken in small sips
And coffee declined with a frown.*

William Douglas Jenkins

*Took no risk in any way
Checked for lumps in every place
Checked his BP every day
And then upon a great big chart*

*He'd log results, so very wise.
At ten o'clock he went to bed.
Straight to sleep. He never read
So's not to strain his eyes*

William Douglas Jenkins

*Always careful as could be
His demise was so untimely
A great surprise to me
He was walking his dog one winter eve
When it happened, and I will tell you
how
He'd been advised to wear white
If he went out at night
And was flattened by the Council snow
plough.*

Creative Writing (Group 2)

The Group continues to prosper. In December we set a new standard by literally acting on the suggestion of a Group member by writing and performing a Christmas panto entitled *Chalk White and the Seven Sisters*. The panto bore a passing resemblance to a previous effort by the Brothers Grimm, but featured instead references to the local coastline.

Previously unrecognized Thespian talents were revealed by the players and the authors, not to mention (in the absence of a geeky minor) some technical help from a willing other half roped in to assist; props and musical accompaniment were supplied by the production team.

Also in attendance at the premiere – lacking Royalty – was an ever-present canine guest who was mainly preoccupied with all the attention and in particular the Christmas fare we enjoyed during the interval. The event was recorded for posterity and will be distributed to all the guilty parties as soon as we can obtain the aforementioned geeky minor to process it.

An extremely comical afternoon was enjoyed by all, with the authors threatening to stage another production for Christmas 2024.

Alan Ground

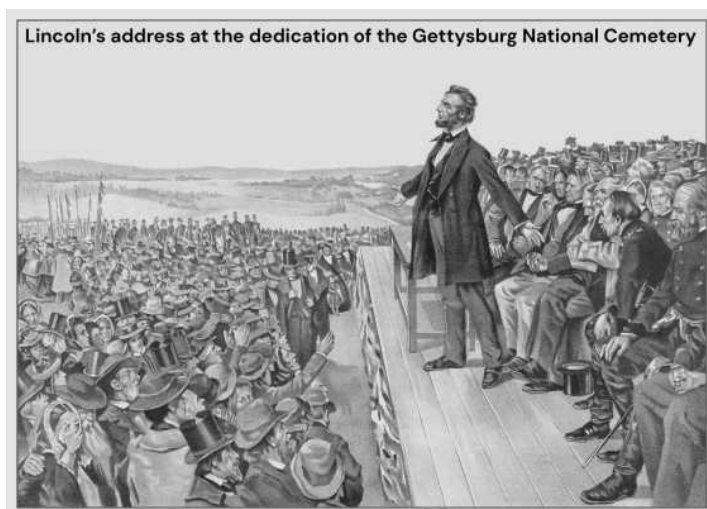


Dabbling in History

The Dabbling in History Group is busy as usual. The Group has four new members who have thrown themselves into every enquiry.

Continuing the topical themes, October's meeting focused on witchcraft, with its obvious connection to Halloween. Group members gave insightful talks on a wide range of topics, including Matthew Hopkins (the Witchfinder General in the English Civil War) and the Salem Witch Trials.

Rather than explore the Gunpowder Plot, the Group chose to shape November's meeting around events that had happened in Novembers past. Once again, the range of topics, in terms of both historical and geographical significance, was impressive. The Group travelled – metaphorically – from the USA (the Gettysburg Address) to England (the death of King Knut) to Egypt (the opening of the Suez Canal).



Our next meeting in January will focus on artisans and craftspeople. There are so many possibilities, Thomas Chippendale, William Kent, William Morris and Josiah Wedgwood to name but four.

Rhona Condon

Drawing

Due to increasing numbers attending my sessions and their mixed ability, I am introducing a new Group for beginners. This is an opportunity to start a new hobby with the help of an A4 sketchbook and assorted H&B pencils. I will be running the Group through some basic exercises with hints and tips on improving drawing skills. We draw from observation and will start with still life objects. The new Beginners' Group will be held at my home on the first Thursday of the month (4th January, 1st February and 7th March) from 2–4pm.

The Improvers' Group will remain on the fourth Thursday afternoon of the month, where we will undertake more challenging drawing from observation skills.

Gillian Cousins

Elizabethan England

The Elizabethans course is coming to an end. We have ridden the highs and lows of the Tudor period, culminating in a meeting in December which allowed us time to discuss whether or not Elizabeth deserved her epithet of "Good Queen Bess". We also had time for a quiz and the chance to share some Christmas food. It has

been an interesting and at times challenging journey through the Tudor period. Now we change tack, becoming Delving Deeper, a discussion-based group that will begin by looking at the European context to the Tudor period. We have already had some highly successful practices, combining short presentations with discussions of the



short and long-term effects of the Treaty of Nonsuch, in particular our relations with Spain. The new approach should be fun, if occasionally more of a white-knuckle ride than we have experienced to date. If you are feeling brave, please join us: details are on the Groups section of the website under [History](#).

Rhona Condon

Gardens (Group 3)

In September Carol arranged a visit to Falconhurst at Markbeech. We visited the garden some years ago and a lot had changed. There is a new barn used for evening dining functions and a farm shop. There was still a lot of colour in the beds, dahlias and late flowering roses. The weather was warm and we were able to take a leisurely walk around and even sit in the sun enjoying the view over the countryside.

In October High Beeches opened especially for us. For many it was a first visit and we were very pleasantly surprised. With 27 acres of woodland and water gardens it has a plant collection that includes specimens from many parts of the world. With Autumn being quite late this year there was far more beautiful colour to be seen than we perhaps expected. A visit in the Spring would I'm sure also be very worthwhile.



At the end of November we had our Christmas Lunch celebration again at the Rugby Club. Everyone in the Group attended and the meal again was much enjoyed. It's a good time to look back on the year and remember all the gardens we have visited whilst asking for volunteers to organise visits for next year. It was very rewarding this year to note that five people had already made bookings for 2024 so we look forward to another very successful year.

Fran Fisher

Geology

We meet on the 2nd Wednesday morning of each month in each other's houses, and would welcome a couple of new members.

In our first nine months we've enjoyed a series of introductory sessions on fossils, minerals and geological time, along with gaining a basic understanding of geological structures and the workings of the plate movements that have shaped our continents.

We managed to get out into the field in November, later in the year than we had hoped. We explored the geology of the cliffs and foreshore at Fairlight Cove where there is a submerged pre-historic forest on the beach, so it was the tides that dictated the best time to visit. There are also some excellent dinosaur footprints and a selection of faults that are beautifully displayed in the cliffs. The weather however, was determined to make our field trip as challenging as it could be, throwing gale force winds and horizontal rain at us! But we're geologists (a pastime that should perhaps be re-defined as "Intrepid, Determined, Indomitable, Observers of Terra-Science" or "I.D.I.O.T.S." for short), and we carried on regardless! Thank heaven for the Fairlight Cove public house where they were serving hot coffee and snacks allowing us to dry out in the warm.

Trevor Probert



Trevor Probert holding a cast of a dinosaur footprint

Just Voices

I am delighted to say that since the name change from 'A cappella' to 'Just Voices' this Group is thriving. Several ladies signed on at the u3a open day and the Group has been much invigorated by their presence and their voices!

This is an informal group. No Judgement. Just Fun.

Now the Group is bigger again I hope to do more simple harmonies but we also enjoy singing in unison; we do rounds, British folk songs, American blues, bright songs from the shows, sea shanties, some popular modern for example Michael Jackson and the Drifters. All suggestions tried! We sing for free at the Fire Station and they tell me I can have 25 singers in there.

Ann Arthur



Ann Arthur on the Just Voices & Serious Science Fiction table at the Group Display Afternoon

Literature

The Group continues to explore the wide and varied world of novels in the English language. "Balzac and The Little Chinese Seamstress", set in rural communist China in 1971, tells a fascinating story of young people, with minds shaped by Chairman Mao, discovering 19th century European literature. "The Towers of Trebizond" by Rose Macaulay is a riveting picture of Turkey just after World War Two with a camel taking a major role. Then, a real classic, "Fathers and Sons" by Ivan Turgenev, a story set in mid-19th century Russia about family relationships and nihilism.

Ian Hutchins

Local History (Group 2)

October: Alan Kingshott gave us a brilliant talk on his life as a Beefeater. Alan ended his military career as Chief Yeoman Warder at the Tower of London, serving six years at the Tower. He lived at the Tower, something only experienced by a few people. His family must have found things strange indeed. Alan was one of those speakers who can talk without notes for an hour, and held the audience spellbound. A talk to be remembered.

November: We were set to hear from Delia Taylor about Coco Chanel. Unfortunately she was unwell and we had to resort to our young resident speaker who gave a talk entitled "The Crumbles Murders" which happened in the 1920s. Although unconnected, they both happened in the same area (The Crumbles is where Eastbourne Marina now is), both culprits were tried at Lewis Assizes, both before the same judge, all found guilty, and all three ending up doing the "Hempden Jig" at Wandsworth Gaol. Even the Hangman was the same! Nice to see a satisfactory conclusion to people who deserve it!

December: Group member Pat Mellett introduced a wonderful lady called Sonya who gave a talk on Campanology. A seemingly boring-sounding talk was actually fascinating and enjoyed by everybody, particularly the hand bells at the end of the meeting. Who could have guessed that bells could be so interesting? As usual, we had mince pies and drinks, and a collection for Chailey Heritage raised £170. Sincere thanks to everybody.

Jim French

Local History Explorers

So, Crowborough has little of interest to historians – well you would be wrong. In just the last few months we have had talks on:-

- The Building of the Roman Road near Crowborough.
- Windmills in Crowborough.
- A walk around Chapel Green and St Marys Church looking at the history.

- Comparing photographs of Crowborough Town Centre in Edwardian Times against the scene today.
- Crowborough Witches.
- Crowborough Life just before and after the outbreak of World War II.
- Crowborough Fire Stations.

All these talks have been prepared and presented by members of the Group. To round off 2023, at our December meeting, we heard about the history of Christmas Cards, had a quiz on aspects of local history and celebrated with festive food and drink. Those celebrations included a demonstration of the horse racing game Escalado (photo). Our Group has now been operating for nearly two years. Due to its interactive nature, it is limited to a maximum of 16 members to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to contribute. If you would like to join us, then contact me since we may have a few spaces for new members in the New Year.



Mike Reid

London Explorers (Group 2)

On a wet day in October our visit was to the Kings Cross area where we saw the building of the new London to Birmingham station and a giant statue where people meet when arriving at the station. We then walked around the area and went to the famous Mornington Crescent and saw the infamous tube station made famous in the radio program *I'm Sorry I haven't a Clue*.

November saw us following in the footsteps of [William Shakespeare](#). The City is where he lived and worked when in London and there are several other places around The City associated with The Bard, including the church where he was registered.

December was our Christmas Lunch. We will resume in February or March.

Alan Collins



Museums & Galleries

Our October visit should have been to the V&A, but as the train was cancelled at the very last minute an instant decision was made to go to Newhaven Fort Museum. So we all piled in our cars and drove to the south coast. Being a very old site of a fort it was interesting to see all the preparations made for many different wars. Afterwards we had a very good lunch at a local pub.

Our November visit was cancelled owing to Storm Ciaran which caused the trains to be disrupted, but the storm turned out to be a bit of a damp squib.

December was our Christmas Lunch and we will resume in February with, weather and trains permitting, another try to get to the V&A.

Alan Collins



Play Reading

We are a small group of eight meeting in my home monthly. No need for any experience – just being able to read! The parts are sorted out according to how many attend and the books are ordered from Crowborough Library, which offers an excellent service obtaining the “sets” for us to use. We tend to do light hearted plays/comedies, and it is a lot of fun. Recently we have read:

- The House Guest by Frances Durbridge
- An Inspector Calls by J B Priestley
- Wedding of the Year by Norman Robbins
- Beyond Therapy by Christopher Durang
- Wild Goose Chase by Derek Benfield, and
- A Small Business Affair by Alan Ayckbourn

We have four people on our waiting list, if more want to join, another group could be formed.

Susan Horne

Poetry (Group 1)

At our monthly meetings, we sometimes follow a pre-chosen theme, choose poems at random from our anthologies or start with an offering brought by a member that has caught their interest. In October, we started with one of John Betjeman's less familiar poems entitled 'Dorset'. This held references to place names in rural Dorset and a mixture of real or imaginary persons in 'Melstock Churchyard' all chosen for their euphony. They certainly were effective read out loud. Further Betjeman poetry up for discussion included 'Seaside Golf' which evoked a coastal setting vividly.

In November, we acknowledged the 400th anniversary of the publication of Shakespeare's first folio by bringing along our favourite sonnets which included 'Shall I compare these to a summer's day?', 'Like as the waves make towards the pebbled shore', 'Let not the marriage of true minds' and 'My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun'. An added interpretation was given by the reading of their modern equivalent from 'Shakespeare's Sonnets Retold' by James Anthony, rewritings but keeping the same sonnet form and structure. Shakespeare's confidence that his words would stand the test of time and therefore he, and his subject matter, would continue to exist proved correct!

For our December Christmas treat, we invited Carmel along to show us her photographic addition to the 2012 broadcast of the Peace Camp poems. Along with spectacular visuals and evocative sound track, we enjoyed the snippets of many familiar poems ranging from Yeats to Donne and Duffy to Coward read by famous actors. We will make the focus of our January meeting, some of the poems in full. We finished with some seasonal offerings such as Eliot's 'Journey of the Magi' and Robert Louis Stevenson's 'Christmas at Sea.'

Christine Round

Pub Lunches (Group 4)

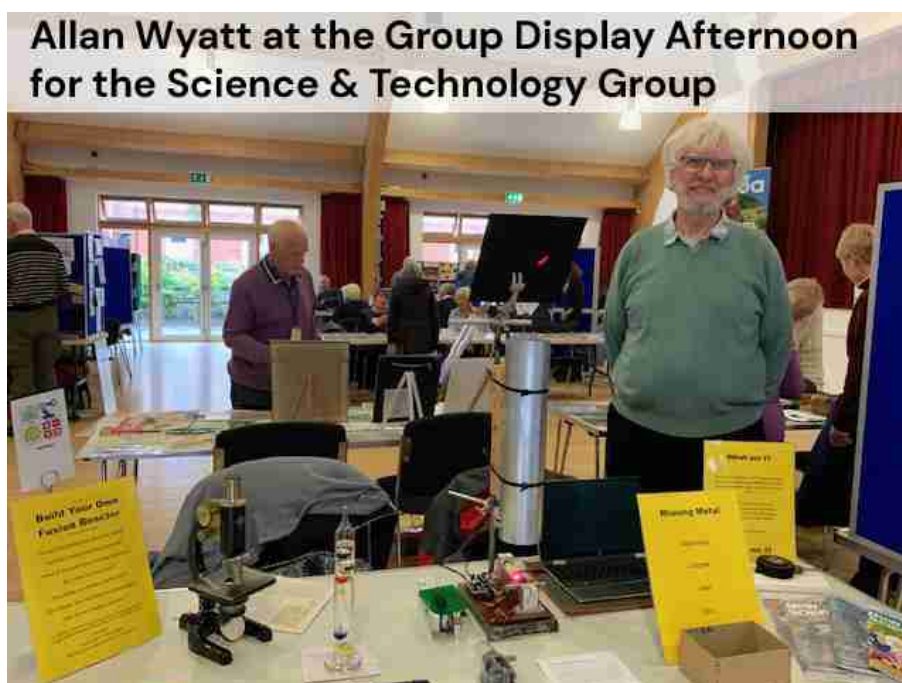
We ended the year with a Christmas lunch at the [Boars Head Inn](#). The food was delicious and, despite the time of year with colds, flu etc, ten of our twelve members were able to come along and enjoy it. (This time last year only two members made it to the Christmas lunch mostly due to illness!). With the twelve of us, our Group is still full, and now looking forward to visiting more pubs in 2024.

Teresa Colley



Science & Technology

We could do with some more members! I booked the bigger room during the recovery periods of Covid; at that time there were about 25 members and I didn't want us all crammed in the small room. Gradually members have left for various reasons. We have two options. Ideally I would like some more members so we don't have to increase the subs or we may well have to find a smaller venue elsewhere.



There were two good meetings in the Autumn. In October we enjoyed a comprehensive talk from Martin Bates about the restoration and the engineering of Argos Hill Windmill. Lots of technical questions from the group and we were all happy! Similarly in November we enjoyed Simon Hudson's most informative presentation on the Shuttle, its engineering, successes and sorrows. If you might be interested in joining us please let me know and I can forward our schedule for 2024.

Ann Arthur

Serious Science Fiction

Our Group met in October and November and had very full discussions regarding our favourite science fiction authors and their works which covered time travel, dystopian societies and similar themes. If you enjoy films such as Avatar, Star Trek, Lord of the Rings etc why not join us in 2024?

We currently have vacancies within the Group and meet every third Tuesday at 2.30pm. Our meetings alternate between discussing various aspects of science fiction and fantasy and viewing related films. Do come back to the future with us; we look forward to seeing you there.

Alan Ground

We are now in our fifth month and we have 40 names on our register. The Group is coming together really well, taking the initiative on various shanties and discussing how best to sing them. It is a really social group full of enthusiasm. We will have our first gig at the Blue Anchor for The Good Company People on the 9th January. We have also been approached by Heatherview and The Oasis, but still to confirm. Our aim is to put on a show that will be remembered by both the audience and performers. We now have a printed shanty book, which I believe has been well received. Who is to say where this will lead us.

Stamps, Coins and Postcards

We have recently found there may be some useful links between our Group and others. For instance, members of the Local History Group asked whether we had material on Crowborough within our collections. We did, and were happy to share some items of interest. If your group has an interest in local history, topography (eg family history), social history, history, geography, transport etc, then we may well have material that is of interest. You are welcome to get in touch and, perhaps, create a link between our groups.

John Wilson



Woodwork

The Woodwork Group have continued with our various projects and have recently made some traditional woodworking tools called 'rounders'. Effectively a type of spokeshave that operates like a giant pencil sharpener to produce a 'tenon', that maybe used in the woodworking joints of chairs etcetera.

Currently, we have just begun making some small wooden clamps.

The Group now has a rare vacancy, due to a member moving away and would welcome applicants, no previous experience is necessary.

Richard King



World of Wine

Another successful year ended on 20th December with our Christmas party. We now have some new members and a full program for 2024 has been set up. Again we will have a couple of visits to local vineyards and presentations from wine shops. The general purpose is to explore the variety offered by different regions of the world.

Robi Willig

Interest and Activity Groups

For further information about times, venue etc. please telephone the Group Leader or contact them by email via our website: u3asites.org.uk/crowborough.

Please note that you may not attend any u3a group meetings unless you are a subscribed member of Crowborough u3a.

Group	Leader	Phone	Meeting Times
Android Phones / Tablets	Rod Smith	01892 655792	2 nd Tuesday
Apple iPad	Phil Singleton	07907 077633	2 nd Wednesday
Archaeology 1	Jenny Scott	01892 653431	4 th Tuesday
Archaeology 2	Clive Gilbert	07989 811018	3 rd Friday
Art Appreciation	Sue Taylor	01892 665673	3 rd Monday
Art (Practical)	Michael Page	01892 661300	Mondays
Aviation	Louis Lombert	01892 664210	Please enquire
Birdwatching	Peter Lane	01892 665437	Last Friday
Book Circle 1	Jenny Scott	01892 653431	2 nd Wednesday
Book Circle 2	Susan Andrews	01892 654738	Last Sunday
Bridge	Fred Reddy	01892 661918	Please enquire
Canasta	Anne March	01892 611342	Thursdays
Cardmaking	Carole Taylor	01892 663795	Mondays
Church Visits	Barbara Collins	01892 663745	2 nd Monday
Classical Music	Valerie Rodgers	01892 669666	2 nd Wednesday
Creative Writing 1	Peter Jeffery	01892 655670	2 nd Wednesday
Creative Writing 2	Alan Ground	01892 667336	1 st Friday
Cribbage	Annie Marsh	07427 442818	3 rd Wednesday
Croquet	Murray Brown	01892 661503	1 st & 3 rd Tuesdays
Current Affairs	Coral Larmour	01892 664067	2 nd Tuesday
Dabbling In History	Rhona Condon	01892 663424	3 rd Tuesday
Debates	Peter Lane	01892 665437	1 st Monday
Detectorists	Dik Cook	07879 131368	Please enquire
Drawing	Gillian Cousins	01892 278389	Thursdays
Elizabethans	Rhona Condon	01892 663424	2 nd Tuesday
Embroidery	Rosalind Marriott	01892 662892	1 st Monday

Family History (5 groups)	Margaret Bird	01892 655487	Please enquire
Fashion	Jill Owens	01892 652761	3 rd Wednesday
Fit 'n Fun	Alison Allcorn	01892 661838	Wednesdays
French (Conversation) 1	Janet Locke	01892 661374	2 nd & 4 th Fridays
French (Conversation) 2	Marie-Rose Bunce	01892 610775	Fridays
Gardens 1	Pauline Bastick	01892 661087	Last Friday
Gardens 3	Fran Fisher	01892 667473	4 th Wednesday
Gardens 4	Mandy Smith	01892 654647	3 rd Monday
Gardens 5	Alan Gaukroger	01892 482300	Please enquire
Geology	Trevor Probert	01892 654278	2 nd Wednesday
History (General)	Sean Larmour	01892 664067	1 st Monday
Italian Chat	Sally Allport	01892 653939	2 nd & 4 th Wednesdays
Italian for Tourists	Robi Willig	01892 652861	Please enquire
Jazz Appreciation	Martin Bartlett	01892 662816	4 th Monday
Just Voices	Ann Arthur	1892 459742	2 nd & 4 th Thursdays
Literature (Classics)	Ian Hutchins	01892 663576	2 nd Wednesday
Local History 1	Brent Moore	01892 665614	3 rd Tuesday
Local History 2	Jim French	01892 610534	1 st Tuesday
Local History Explorers	Mike Reid	01892 655967	1 st Tuesday
London Explorers	Alan Collins	01892 663745	Please enquire
Mindfulness	Gabrielle Symonds	01892 662720	4 th Monday
Museums & Galleries	Alan Collins	01892 663745	1 st Thursday
Patchwork & Quilting	Barbara Diamond	01892 663837	Please enquire
Pastel / Mixed Media	Gillian Cousins	01892 278389	2 nd Thursday
Photography	John Wayte	01892 660027	3 rd Monday
Pins & Needles	Anita Tull	01892 459737	Wednesdays
Play Reading	Susan Horne	01892 655727	4 th Tuesday
Poetry 1	Christine Round	01892 652924	3 rd Friday
Poetry 2	Shirley Moss	01892 852658	3 rd Tuesday
Pub Lunches 1	Janette Parks	01825 278317	3 rd Friday
Pub Lunches 2	Janet Little	01892 654292	2 nd & 4 th Wednesdays
Pub Lunches 3	Laurel Soden	01892 662198	1 st Thursday
Pub Lunches 4	Terry Colley	01892 661164	2 nd Thursday
Pub Lunches 5	Tony Bruce	01892 661160	1 st Thursday

Rail Interest	Graham Bucksey	01892 660428	4 th Tuesday
Rock, Blues & Pop	Martin Bartlett	01892 662816	2 nd Monday
Science & Technology	Ann Arthur	01892 459742	3 rd Wednesday
Scottish Dancing	Clarissa Featherbee	01892 665204	2 nd & 4 th Thursdays
Scrabble	Frances Arrowsmith	01892 665176	1 st Thursday
Sea Shanties	Brian Child	01892 325064	1 st & 3 rd Tuesdays
Serious Science Fiction	Anne McArthur	01892 610566	3 rd Tuesday
Shakespeare	David Bryer	01892 315967	4 th Tuesday
Short Walks in Crowborough	Sean Larmour	01892 664067	1 st Tuesday
Singing for Pleasure	Margaret McCartney	01825 508253	Wednesdays
Spanish (Conversation)	Barbara Lombert	01892 664210	3 rd Monday
Stamps / Coins / Postcards	John Wilson	01892 653145	2 nd Tuesday
Table Tennis	Sue Frawley	07984 571205	2 nd & 4 th Tuesdays
Ukulele	Paul Gamba	01892 652963	2 nd & 4 th Fridays
Walks (2 – 3 miles)	Janet Little	01892 654292	1 st Monday
Walks (4 – 6 miles)	Colin Henderson	01892 668044	3 rd Thursday
Woodwork	Richard King	01892 853317	1 st & 3 rd Wednesdays
World of Wine	Robi Willig	01892 652861	3 rd Wednesday eve