



# Dec 2023 / Jan 2024 Newsletter & Diary Dunmow

**u3a**  
learn, laugh, live

## Forthcoming monthly meetings

### Wed 29<sup>th</sup> November ... **Christmas Concert** with the Rock Choir

*Full details have been circulated and all places are now reserved (for seating and catering). If you are not on our list, please don't turn up on the day - we are sorry but you will be turned away.*

*If you have reserved a place but can no longer join us, please email [Christmas@Dunmowu3a.org.uk](mailto:Christmas@Dunmowu3a.org.uk) asap so your place can be offered to someone on the waiting list.*

*\* Please leave the limited parking at Foakes Hall for those with limited mobility. Thank you \**

***We wish you a wonderful Christmas and a peaceful New Year***

### Wed 31<sup>st</sup> January 2024 ... **Big Cats Around the Globe** by Barbara Meyer, Wildlife Photographer

*Barbara promises to take the audience on a journey around the globe, exploring what are big cats, where do they live, what are their situation and problems in their natural habitat as well as what conservation efforts are out there to help them in their fight against extinction.*



The front 2 rows of chairs at the monthly meeting are reserved for those members who are **hard of hearing**. The seats are identified by a '**reserved**' sign. You do not need to book, just turn up.



**All our monthly meetings place at Foakes Hall in Dunmow CM6 1DG  
1.30pm for a 2pm start**

***\* Please do not arrive before 1.30pm - we won't be ready for you! \****

- ⇒ Please remember to **bring your own mug** with you  
- we are no longer using disposable cups.
- ⇒ There will be no **Magazine Swap** table at the Christmas Concert.



## In this issue ...

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## From the Editor

Welcome to the end of year Dunmow u3a newsletter covering both December and January. It has been great to receive so many reports from different interest groups, some of whom we haven't heard from for a while.

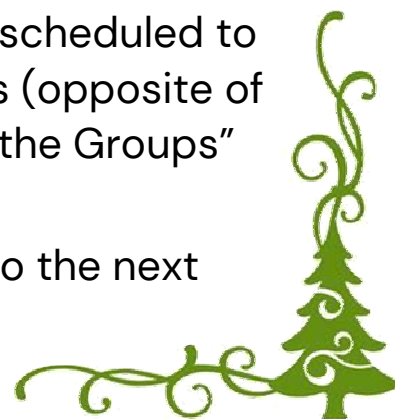
Thank you for the notes left in our new Suggestion Box at the last monthly meeting. Your comments and suggestions have been passed to the relevant committee members for consideration. It won't be available at the Christmas Concert but will return at the January monthly meeting on Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> January. Ideas for new interest groups, outings and speakers will all be read and considered.



On the subject of new interest groups, we've had four in the last couple of months: *Cribbage* on alternate Tuesday afternoons, *Pickleball* on Friday afternoons, *Wool & Waffle* (for knitting, crocheting and all wool related crafts) will start in January on alternate Tuesday mornings and *Sequence Game group* is scheduled to start in February on alternate Tuesday afternoons (opposite of Cribbage and Whist). Check out the "News from the Groups" section of this newsletter for more information.

I'm taking a break over Christmas and New Year so the next newsletter deadline won't be until 24<sup>th</sup> January.

*Heather Quiney, Newsletter Editor*



## Message from the Chair

This week we will come together to enjoy our Christmas concert with the amalgamated Rock Choirs in what will be music director Adam's last concert with his choirs before moving onto new things. We wish him well for the future. We have had to limit the numbers who attend largely for catering reasons but hope that those who wish to attend will have been able to do so. It should be a good afternoon.

This will be our last meeting for 2023, a year which has seen our numbers grow and where we have resumed normal activity following the pandemic disruptions. Helped by the suggestions of members and our recent Games afternoon, several new groups are starting up in the form of Cribbage, Sequence, Wool & Waffle as well as the Pickleball for those wanting a more physically active group. We frequently try to change our offerings at our monthly gatherings; next year we will be thinking how we can show you more about what goes on in our Groups, so we will be sounding out the leaders about how to do this in an interesting and helpful way.

At our next meeting on 31<sup>st</sup> January, I will be showing you about an organisation called Dementia Adventure and how they exist to offer holidays to people living with dementia and their carers. That will be followed by Barbara Meyers illustrated talk about big cats. I hope to see you then.

Let me close by wishing you all a merry Christmas time and a healthy and peaceful New Year.

*Mike Best, Dunmow u3a Chair*



A poppy wreath was laid on behalf of Dunmow u3a at the war memorial on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> November, as part of the town's Remembrance Parade.



## Past Monthly Meeting

### "Riccarda Hambrough – A Forgotten Nun" – Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> November

Retired journalist, Joanna Bogle, was our speaker at the monthly meeting. But before getting on to the main story, we were taken to a ruined castle on the Isle of Wight and given an insight into the family who used to live there but, due to reduced funds, had to move to the mainland with their two children. Joanna then moved on to tell us of the wonderful story of the Bridgettine Nuns, who ran the Casa di Santa Brigida guesthouse in Rome, and how they hid Jewish families during the Second World War.

Originally the guesthouse was a tranquil and welcoming sanctuary for weary travellers, including many single women, who had travelled to Rome. It was a safe and inexpensive place for the ladies to stay. One of the nuns was Mother Riccarda, the young woman known affectionately as "Mamma", and the girl who was born on The Isle of Wight.

With the outbreak of war, and the arrival of the Germans in Rome during 1943, Mother Riccarda and the other Nuns, took in the Jewish families and hid them from the Germans in very cramped conditions. Food was scarce and with an extra 60 plus mouths to feed (the ration books belonging to the families could not be used), the Nuns used to scavenge in the markets, even using weeds and wild food, anything they could find, to make soups, their staple diet.

The Nuns risked their lives hiding the families, they would all have been executed had the Germans found them. Amazingly, everyone survived and it was only once peace was declared that the families dared to come out of their hiding places within the guesthouse.

Every year, the families, their children and grandchildren, meet back in Rome to celebrate and give thanks to the Nuns who protected them, cared for and fed them through those difficult times. There are now plans for Mother Riccarda and two other Nuns to be considered by The Vatican for Sainthood, as thanks for the risks they took in saving so many lives.

Joanna's story of the Nuns was very interesting but the glimpses she also gave us of her own life in journalism sounded fascinating. And I am sure many members would enjoy Joanna returning to Dunmow u3a some time in the future to tell us more stories of her own life.

*Linda Herring*



## Past Outing

### Ely Cathedral Christmas Gift and Food Fair – Friday 17<sup>th</sup> November

Always an awesome sight as 'the ship of the Fens' comes into view. Ely Cathedral promised to give us a good day transformed into a huge Christmas market. Many fast food and beverage outlets were available outside the main building as well as two roomy marquees. The interior of the



cathedral was reserved solely for retailers' stalls with virtually every square foot of floorspace in the nave and transept taken up with interesting stalls hiding the elaborate floor tiling.

The range of craftwork was amazing such as jewellery, woollens, leatherwork and various artwork and several innovative skills were on display which added to our enjoyment of discovering everything that was on offer.

As we were leaving, the light was beginning to fade but still enough daylight to admire the grandeur of the building, the outer façade architecture being both Romanesque and Gothic. By modern contrast, a traditional musical carousel was giving rides to children and young-at-heart adults to round off their day.



*Liz Pickford*

## Keep in Touch

If you move house or change your phone number and/or email address, please let Terry Parker (Membership Secretary) know. He can update Beacon and all your groups will know in one go. Simply call the Du3a mobile phone **07385 879846** and leave a message or email Terry ... [membership@dunmowu3a.org.uk](mailto:membership@dunmowu3a.org.uk)



## Forthcoming Outing

Drop the Dead Donkey: The Reawakening – Thurs 29<sup>th</sup> Feb 2024

**Drop the Dead Donkey: The Reawakening**

**Cambridge Arts Theatre**

**Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> February 2024**



**Code DD**

Featuring the **original cast members** including Stephen Tompkinson, Neil Pearson, Susannah Doyle, Robert Duncan, Ingrid Lacey, Jeff Rawle and Victoria Wicks.

The play follows a group of seven funny flawed characters, from Globelink News, in the cutthroat world of modern 24-hour news gathering. We watch them as they try to navigate their way through the daily chaos of social media, fake news and Interim Prime Ministers.

**Cost:** £57 per person

**Food & Drink:** There is plenty of choice close to the Theatre.

**Timings:** Leave Don's at 10.30am, CASA (previously Fitch House Café) at 10.35am, Takeley Four Ashes at 10.55am.

Est. arrival back at Don's 6.45pm

**Important:** All seats are in the circle but there is a lift.

**Contact Outings Team:** Email: [dunmowu3aoutings@btinternet.com](mailto:dunmowu3aoutings@btinternet.com)

Tel: 01279 870870 Mob: 07909 688401

**For more information visit:** [www.cambridgeartstheatre.com](http://www.cambridgeartstheatre.com)

## Opportunity to Volunteer Website Design Experience

Dunmow u3a is looking for people with website design experience.

We need to move our website from SiteBuilder to WordPress. It is an exciting opportunity to create something new and inviting, but we need to find a few members with suitable experience to join a team and work together to help us design the new website.

It needn't be a long term commitment – if it all goes to plan, a couple of months in the New Year might be enough to get it up and running.

We have a membership of nearly 600 members. There must be a few of you who have the relevant skills and could help us.

Please contact Peter Watson if you would like to be involved. Thank you



## The Bigger Picture u3a National Poetry Competition

The u3a national poetry competition is back for its fourth year, and the theme for this year's competition is: **'What If'**.

The competition opened on Wednesday 8 November 2023 and the deadline for submission is **12pm on Friday 26 January 2024**.

You must read the competition rules before submitting your poem.

To read the rules and submit your poem, please visit ...

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/poetry-competition>

In summary, it must be your own, individual, original work, in English, a maximum of 16 lines, and not submitted anywhere else.

Your submission must be on the theme of: **'What If'**.

You must read the rules of the competition before entering. The link for these can be found at the bottom of this webpage.

Any submission which does not meet these rules will not be considered.

All submissions will be judged by group judging panels and the best story from each group will be compared to decide on an overall winner.





The Rowena Davey Centre is open each Tuesday and Thursday from 9.30am for tea, coffee and cake. We serve lunches at 12 noon.



**2 Course Lunch £7 – pre-booking required. Ring 01371 872874 or email [rdcmeals@gmail.com](mailto:rdcmeals@gmail.com). Or visit us at the centre.**

*Come and try us out! You will be most welcome.*





## Upcoming u3a Online Learning Events for November



### The story of Eva Urbach & Ulli Adler

Lesley Urbach tells the story of her mother and aunt who arrived in the UK on the Kindertransport, and the family left behind.

**Fri 1 Dec at 2pm**  
Free - online via zoom



### When Art and Literature meet at Christmastide

Catherine Stevenson of Newcastle u3a looks at the connections between art and literature at Christmastide.

**Tue 5 Dec at 10am**  
Free - online via zoom



### Live Cookery Demonstration - Christmas special

Chef Alex from 'Vegetarian for Life' demos his delicious festive recipes live from his kitchen.

**Thur 7 Dec at  
10.30am**  
Free - online via zoom



### The Art of William Morris

A journey into the incredible work and beautiful art of William Morris

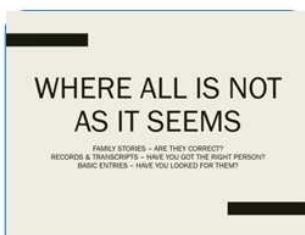
**Wed 6 Dec at 2pm**  
Free - Online via Zoom



### Exploring World Faiths: Christmas

Although Christmas is regarded as a Christian Festival celebrating the birth of Jesus, we will explore how other faiths celebrate Christmas.

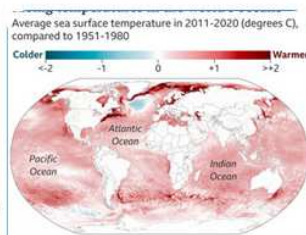
**Mon 11 Dec at 10am**  
Free - Online via Zoom



### Family History: Where all is not as it seems

Insights, tips and examples for family historians. The importance of looking at information critically, by Julie of Syston & District u3a

**Wed 13 Dec at 2pm**  
Free - Online via zoom



### Climate Change and the Oceans

Ian Hawker of East Suffolk u3a discusses the climate change's effect on our oceans

**Fri 15 Dec at 10am**  
Free - Online via Zoom



### How to Insulate Your Home Better

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

**Thurs 4 Jan at 2pm**  
Free - Online via Zoom

**More talks are added weekly.** For further details, visit ...

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events>

## The Bigger Picture – National u3a Online Learning

Tea – a favourite tippie of us seniors. But what do we know about the ‘king of commerce’ and one of the colourful characters who helped bring us this commodity? Guildford u3a’s Neville Lyons revealed all in the Third Age Trust online event ‘Sir Thomas Lipton – from cabin boy to tea tycoon and international yachtsman’.



Lipton found work in the US grocery business after sailing as a cabin boy from Glasgow. There he learnt American retail tricks and advertising stunts and returned to the UK vowing to become rich as a marketing showman. Like today's tech entrepreneurs, he put in 18 hour days and slept on the floor of his first business. Realising the power of cutting out the middleman, he capitalised on the tea boom of the 1880s and bought his own plantations in Ceylon. Setting up retail chains across the UK and with business interests in America, he became rich.

A socialite rubbing shoulders with royalty and presidents, he never forgot his humble origins and actively supported charitable works for the poor and unemployed and sponsored a hospital ship in WW1. Though eligible and a ‘ladies’ man’, he didn’t marry and his Southgate mansion was bequeathed as a nurses’ home.

Ever wondered why you can get Lipton branded tea everywhere on holiday but not at home? It’s too light a blend for everyday British tastes as my grandma’s tea attested – you could stand a spoon in it.

## It’s Easy to Sign Up for the National u3a Newsletter

The u3a national newsletter connects the online u3a community. It is packed full of u3a stories and information, including from local u3a groups, learning news and exclusive discounts for u3a members.

To sign up to receive monthly u3a updates in your email inbox, visit <https://www.u3a.org.uk/news>





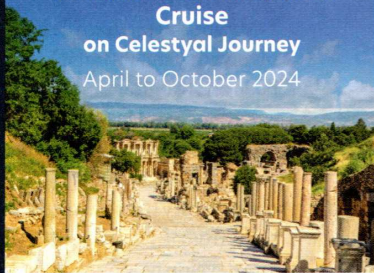
# NEW for 2024

Book a holiday and we will give  
10%\* of the cost back to your u3a



#### Small ship cruise

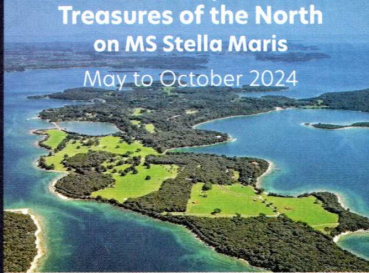
**Athens & Greek Islands  
Cruise**  
on Celestyal Journey  
April to October 2024



11 days from £2,399pp

#### Yacht cruise

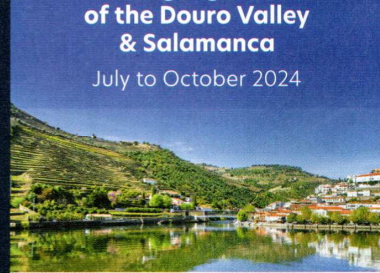
**Venice, Split &  
Treasures of the North**  
on MS Stella Maris  
May to October 2024



10 days from £2,399pp

#### River cruise

**Highlights  
of the Douro Valley  
& Salamanca**  
July to October 2024



8 days from £2,099pp

**Visit our brand new website today to start planning  
your next group adventure!**



To book call **01283 248 304** and mention your u3a  
Visit [rivieratravel.co.uk/u3a](http://rivieratravel.co.uk/u3a)



Bookings for individuals as well as groups are accepted. \*Some elements are not commissionable - for full details on the affinity offer, visit <http://rivieratravel.co.uk/affinity>. Please remember to mention your u3a when you book. The 10% will be paid to the Third Age Trust, in the month following that of your departure, and the Trust will then forward 9% of it to the nominated local u3a. Riviera Travel retain the right to withdraw this offer at any time.

- The commission will be paid to the Third Age Trust in the month following your holiday. They will then forward the commission (less their fee) to **Dunmow u3a**.
- **Dunmow u3a** is not endorsing or encouraging you to book a holiday with Riviera Travel. There may be other offers and/or companies which better suit your requirements. However, if you do choose to go with Riviera Travel, you need to mention **Dunmow u3a** at the timing of booking.



## News from the Interest Groups

Sonia was our host for the November meeting of the **Wine Appreciation Group 2**, and we were treated to a selection of South African wines, most of which had travelled back with Sonia after she visited there earlier this year, on holiday.

### WHITE WINES

2021 Sauvignon Blanc – Vergelegen Winery 13.5%

Extremely aromatic with ripe passion fruit and rich guavas, black currant leaf, a touch of lemongrass and good minerals.

\* 2021 Chardonnay – Chamonix Winery 13.5%

At an altitude of 450m above sea level, this wine has been aged for 12 months in 225 litre French oak bottles.

2022 Chardonnay – Eagles Pass 12.5%

A fresh fruit driven wine with layers of ripe pineapple with zesty lime flavour, peach and vanilla.



### RED WINES

2020 Pinotage – Rickety Bridge Winery 13.5%

Red fruit forward with black and blueberry flavours in the background, while the light oaking accelerates flavours of redcurrant and blueberries. (All grapes picked by hand).

2018 Shiraz – Vergelegen Winery 14.5%

Stunningly ripe and concentrated berry fruit including ripe black cherry fruit, hints of liquor, violet and spice. The flavours on the palate are intense and long-lasting with soft tanning leading to a clear finish.

\* 2020 Pinotage – Fishhoek. 13.5%

Full bodied wine with flavours of plum and fruit cake and a touch of oak.



The Chardonnay Chamonix Winery and Pinotage Fishhoek were the most popular white and red wines, indicated with an \*.

Following on from the tasting we were challenged by a wine quiz.

Our next meeting will be with Debbie. It is our regular Christmas get together and will be a little different from our normal meetings.



## NEW GROUP – Wool and Waffle

Suitable for knitting, crocheting and anything other wool related crafts.

We will meet alternate Tuesday mornings at the Rowena Davey Day Centre – same time as their Coffee Mornings – starting Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

There won't be a fee but we are all expected to buy a drink and/or cake from them.

You could also stay on and enjoy a 2-course freshly cooked lunch for £7 – see page 8 for their advert.

*Maureen Best, Wool and Waffle group*



Five years ago, a couple of months after the launch of Dunmow u3a, the then Groups Coordinator started the **Zumba Gold group**. Having done Zumba for some time a few years ago I decided to go along.

At the end of the first session the Groups Coordinator announced that she was only a caretaker Group Leader and that a permanent Leader was needed. I asked what it involved and she said, 'Opening and locking up and taking the money'. As I was keen for the group to continue I said that I would do it. I have since realised that it is more than this! However after a few teething problems I took over in January 2019.



Over the years numbers have fluctuated, but there are several of the original members who turn up regularly while other come and go.

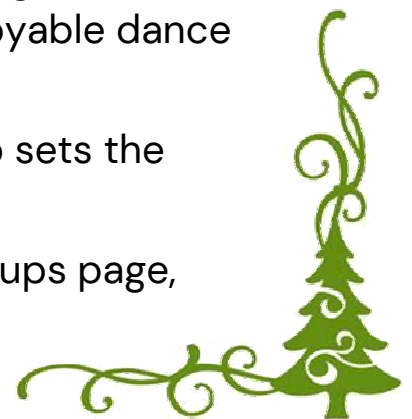
Zumba Gold is a low impact but high energy dance class that includes cardio, balance and stretching. The class is fun and friendly with enjoyable dance

routines such as Cha Cha Cha, Mambo and Salsa.

We are fortunate to have Petra as our instructor who sets the music and dance routines to suit our membership.

For more information, see Dunmow u3a website, Groups page, Zumba Gold. I can also be contacted via this page.

*Rosemary Jensen, Zumba Gold Group Coordinator*



I've been asked to write a bit for the Newsletter about our reading group – **The Bookworms**. I can tell you that for the most part we have, well, read books! These have varied considerably from *The Woman in White* by Wilkie Collins to *Heartbreak Hotel* by Deborah Moggach.

During the past year we have devoured, discussed and dissected ten books so far (one a month), our current one being *The Hundred Year Old Man who Climbed out of the Window and Disappeared* by Jonas Jonasson. This we agreed was clever and fun and some of us could identify with Allan (the hero of the book) in that we might do the same to escape our 100<sup>th</sup> birthday party although it might not lead to the adventures he then had along the way. The book also covered some of his previous life and the many historic people and events he got involved with all because he was a whizz with dynamite!

Our next book is completely different: *Becoming* by Michelle Obama. We shall be discussing this at our December meeting, after our Christmas lunch! And this will also, I am sure, promote some lively discussion.

Other titles we have read include *White Nights* by Ann Cleeves, *The House of Silk* by Anthony Horowitz, *Behind the Scenes at the Museum* by Kate Atkinson, and *Falling Angels* by Tracy Chevalier.

If you are interested in joining us, we are a full group at the moment but we can add you to a waiting list as people do move on from time to time.

In the meantime, happy reading!

*Fiona Watson, Bookworms group*



The Friday afternoon **Pickleball group** is now in its second month and it is going very well.

Everyone is enjoying being taught the game.

We have a few places left, so if you are interested please call either Debbie on 07949 763999 or Selva on 07713 987893.







The latest meet-up for the **Flower Arranging group** was looking at SPIRALS



The **Line Dancing group** is very popular with ladies who enjoy music and dancing. Each year, we have a Line Dancing weekend away, a Christmas dinner and dance and a Christmas Party Session with a Raffle for Charity.

It has become a very sociable Tuesday Morning Session.

*Jan Barlow, Line Dancing group*



A new **Line Dancing group for beginners** was started in April. We meet every Wednesday morning at the Priors Green Community Hall in Little Canfield. The cost is £5 per session plus £13 membership and we meet all through the year.

Line dancing is a great form of exercise and sociable interaction and we have an experienced tutor who is very patient with all ladies .



So, if you have never tried Line Dancing and wish to do something new, come along and give it a try – no experience is required and you will be made very welcome.

*Jean Hull, Line Dancing (beginners) group*

A small group of 5 from the **Cycling group** braved the sudden cold weather on Friday to do a 20 mile circular ride around Little and Great Canfield stopping off at one of our favourite stops for a coffee – Ashfield's Country Kitchen at the Carriage and Polo Club (see photo).

We ride twice a month on Friday mornings from 10–12 a.m. for 10 months of the year– having a break in January and February. However, this year has brought a huge increase of rain on Fridays and we have had to cancel many more than usual recently.

I usually check the weather forecast about 2 days before; because we ride for pleasure and do not enjoy the rain! This is also why we do not ride out in January and February– although we do occasionally have a New Year ride (weather permitting). We always stop for coffee and cake or toasted





► teacakes – not obligatory to eat, but – let's face it, this is the reason some of us enjoy being in this group. We get to socialise in addition to helping keep fit. And it is lovely cycling through some of our country lanes in different seasons of the year

We always welcome new members, whether on a regular bike or an electric bike and keep to a comfortable pace that everyone is happy with.

*Jenny Versey, Cycling group*



**Did you know** that there is a “Dunmow u3a” facebook page? Feel free to take a look and reminisce about past outings and monthly meetings. Just search for “Dunmow u3a”



This month the **Thursday Art Group** have a variety of paintings for inclusion in the u3a Newsletter.



There have been two ongoing themes in the past month – Autumn landscapes and Remembrance Day tributes. However some of our members prefer to explore ideas of their own. It really is a treat for us to see what each other has achieved at the end of a session, whether completed or not.



We are also busy making plans for the Spring term.

*Jan Clinton, Thursday Art group*

A small group of intrepid stitchers from the **Quilting and Stitching group**, went to explore Lady Sew and Sew's warehouse in Marlow, Buckinghamshire. It was like an Aladdin's cave with such a variety of fabrics and yarns. The manager greeted us on arrival and showed us to a small meeting room for our use during our visit to their family run business, also available online.



After refreshments, we had an interesting presentation about the new advances of Vleiseline interfacing where we joined another group of ladies from Oxford. We were shown several other products as well.

We then spent a glorious hour amongst the fabrics and making various purchases, some of which were not on our lists! We then returned in Amanda's car on a glorious sunny Autumn afternoon.

*Maureen Best, Quilting & Stitching group*



October saw our last trip out for the **Garden group**. This was a very enjoyable walk around Marks Hall. For those who have never been it is easy to get to, just off the A120, near Coggeshall. Although there was only a small group of nine they had a most enjoyable time viewing the walled gardens and the beautiful trees. A lovely time of year to visit as the trees start to change colour. The group were also lucky as the rain (mostly!) stayed away.

Our next date is our Christmas lunch at Feast21 on 14<sup>th</sup> December.

Please note there is no visit in January. Our first garden visit for 2024 is 15<sup>th</sup> February to Blunts to see their collection of snowdrops. See the website for more details of all upcoming garden visits.

*Anne Howatson, Garden group*





Following our September games afternoon to which I brought along my Sequence game, quite a few members were keen to start up a **Sequence group** and the first job was to find a time that suited us all – which turned out to be Tuesday afternoon, alternating with the whist group which some were also involved in.

The next task was to find a venue. I thought that might be easy, but the Rowena Davey Centre wasn't available, and several other venues suggested were either not convenient for us all or not a suitable size or too expensive. I have now agreed with the Angel and Harp that we can use their small room which has enough space for two groups playing; but because of a busy time at Christmas and refurbishing in the New Year, we can't start there until February.

In the meantime, we are having our first meeting in November at my house; and another member has offered her house as a venue if I am away, so we should always have a fallback situation when the Angel and Harp can't host us- e.g. if they have a wake or other big function.

Sequence is a great game which can be played by up to 6 people on one board, best if 2 or 3 teams of 2 play. It is a good mixture of luck and strategy (mostly luck); easy to learn and each game takes about 15-30 minutes, so you can get several games in over 2 hours. You can even play Sequence on Zoom, which we discovered during the lockdown!

If you are interested in joining please contact me – you will be very welcome.

*Jenny Versey, Sequence group*



Over the last year the **French group** has enjoyed a wonderful Gallic-themed dinner as well as regular monthly meetings to discuss a wide variety of topics from books and films to holiday destinations and art, all whilst enjoying a variety of culinary and liquid delights!

The group meets once a month after the main monthly u3a meeting, 3:30-4:30pm at the Meadow Hill café. New members with a good standard of French would be most welcome.

Contact Valerie Newell for more information via the Dunmow u3a website [u3asites.org.uk/dunmow/groups](https://u3asites.org.uk/dunmow/groups)



The **Nature Walks group** meets on the penultimate Wednesday of each month, usually at 2pm and weather permitting.

The group is small, usually between 8 and 12 people and we wander rather than walk at any pace, chatting and talking about the surroundings and things people are noticing. People say they find it very relaxing.

In the early days we would travel some distance to recognised Nature reserves, parks or bird sanctuaries, but now we stay more local – Dunmow, Takeley or Easton– and



aim to have tea and cake at the end, although this is not always possible. In recent months we have walked along the river and through the tree plantation in Dunmow; Hatfield Forest; Great Canfield and the Flitch Way; the balancing ponds in Takeley; the churchyard and river in Great Dunmow; the nature reserve in Garnets Wood.

*Marilyn Hammond, Nature Walks group*



**Luncheon Group 2** turned out in force this month for lunch at local Dunmow pub, the Kicking Dickey, which has been recently refurbished in a light, contemporary style with more comfortable furniture.

We had all sent our orders in advance to group leader Debbie, so the food arrived promptly. Most of us chose from the senior super saver menu, which was competitively priced at £15 for three courses, or £12 for two. Fish and chips was a popular main course choice, though I went for the liver and bacon, on the grounds that I hadn't eaten liver for years.

The general feeling was that it was a good value meal – and “excellent company”, somebody was kind enough to add. Another winner!

*Philip Garrison, Lunch group 2*





Continuing from our October project "Sunrise in Venice", the **Friday Art group** were so pleased to see these results. This tonal, silhouetted work led by our talented member Barbara taught us how to handle varying shades of black.

Meanwhile, as you can see from our pictures, our members continue to create separate pieces of stunning work, including the silver gravy boat by Gillian.



As we enter the autumn season, we felt again we must attempt to reflect the colours of the countryside. Our group has produced a fabulous gallery featuring a riot of reds, oranges and golds as you would find on a woodland walk. It has been particularly pleasing that we have used a diversity of media: watercolour, acrylics and pastels.

Well done class!

*Felicity Cripps, Friday Art Group*

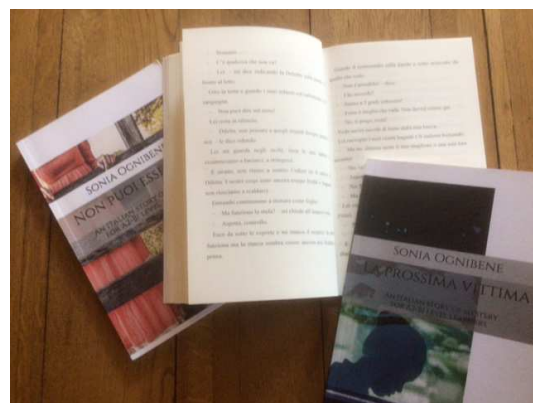


The **Italian Conversation Group** has been running for some years. We are a small group of seven people; the numbers deliberately remaining small as this suits the time available in class to give everybody room to speak and interact.

We usually talk for the first hour (in Italian, of course!) about our week and any exciting adventures we may have had. Some members have trips abroad and exotic holidays which have invited much discussion. We share many experiences; hobbies, new grandchildren, u3a visits, films seen, books read, family celebrations, etc and are well supported in our pronunciation and vocabulary by one of our group who speaks fluent Italian. How lucky are we?

After a much deserved coffee we continue reading and translating our current novel. We find this increases our vocabulary enormously – if only we could remember!

The photograph shows two of the books recently read and a new one which we shall start at our next meeting. Sonia Ognibene has written these three page-turning psychological thrillers which we have found both demanding and entertaining.



This Group is currently full but anyone interested in learning Italian is welcome to contact us or the other Italian Group via the u3a website.

Buon Natale e tanti auguri a tutti.

*Liz Parker, Italian Conversation group*

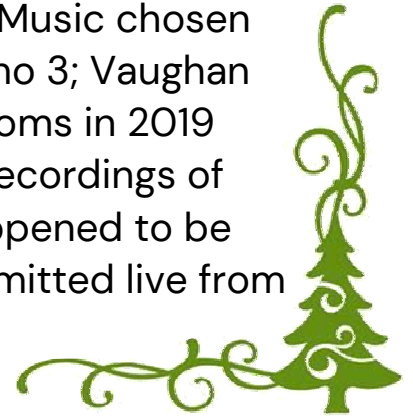
Our **Music Appreciation** meetings are held monthly on a Wednesday afternoon at 4pm at one of the leaders' houses. It is a friendly gathering of approximately 9 members who have an interest in not only classical music but also music from the Middle ages to the present day. We enjoy listening to many versions on numerous instruments. It is usually a favourite piece that is chosen by a member and the music itself can be a short or long recording that can be found on YouTube with a video included showing the actual recording of the piece. As a group we are able



► to watch and listen to these recordings and discuss the overall impression it had upon each person and make comments as to whether it was a successful piece of music.

Before we close each meeting a date is chosen for the next meeting when 2 members are selected to choose 2 pieces of music that they would like to present at the next gathering on an agreed date. Music chosen has been the last movement of Mahler's Symphony no 3; Vaughan Williams 'Serenade to Music' recorded at the BBC Proms in 2019 and shown also on YouTube. There have also been recordings of music chosen from The Magic Flute whilst it also happened to be shown at the Metropolitan cinema in Braintree transmitted live from the Opera House .

*Patricia Fletcher, Music Appreciation group*



### Canasta Group

Monday mornings for the working world are often viewed with apprehension. The good thing about being retired is that we can now embrace Mondays and participate in whatever we really enjoy doing. Mondays have now been elevated to a Fun Day!

If you like games, then playing cards with like-minded people is not only fun but also good exercise for the brain, and a relaxing way to start the week.

Most of the group had not played Canasta before so complete learners are welcome. For those with experience and who wish to take the game further, I also teach Bolivia

Canasta, which is the next level. Canasta is played within a partnership so you will not feel alone, and I often sit with newcomers as support! We are a mixed gender group, although there are more women, so it would be nice to have a few more men involved.

The Angel and Harp in Dunmow provides us with a room and offers coffee/tea (or something stronger if you prefer). It's all very sociable, so come along and give it a try!

*Jan Moffat, Canasta group*





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## Interest Groups Calendar

This is an alternative way to look at all the groups that Dunmow u3a has to offer.

For more details of where and when they meet, plus the name of the group leader/coordinator, please see the list on the next page.

As always, if you are interested in joining any of the groups, or have a suggestion for a new group, please speak to Rosemary Jensen, Groups Coordinator at one of our General Meetings.

Alternatively, you can use the contact links on the Du3a website or call the Du3a mobile **07385 879846**.



Day	Morning	Afternoon	Evening
<b>Mon</b>	Canasta – W Walking – W	Family History – 4W General Crafts – M Mah Jong – W Zumba Gold – W	
<b>Tues</b>	Golf – W Line Dancing – W Wool and Waffle – F	Cribbage – F Luncheon Club 4 – M Quilting/Stitching – F Sequence (game) – F Whist – F	Science & Society – M Wine Appreciation 1 – M Wine Appreciation 2 – M
<b>Wed</b>	Cycling – F Golf 2 Italian Convers. – W Line Dancing (beginners) – W	French (Advance) – M Grow Your Own – M Luncheon Club 2 – M Luncheon Club 3 – M Nature Walks – M	
<b>Thur</b>	Art (Thursday) – W Book Club – M Geology – M Scrabble – W Walking – W	Bookworms – M Bridge – W Garden – F	
<b>Fri</b>	Art (Friday) – W Flower Arranging – 3W	Italian Convers. 2 – W Luncheon Club – W Pickleball – W Table Tennis – W	W = weekly F = Fortnightly M = monthly 3/4W = 3 or 4 Weeks

## Interest Groups List

If you are interested in joining any of the groups, or have a suggestion for other groups, please come and talk to me during the General Meeting. Or you can contact me or any of the group leaders via the Du3a website or the mobile **07385 879846**. *Rosemary Jensen, Groups Coordinator*

Art (Thursday)	Thursday am - Weekly	Barnston Village Hall	Jan Clinton
Art (Friday)	Friday am - Weekly	Rowena Davey Day Centre, Dunmow	Colin Bradley (Admin)
Book Club	Thursday am - Monthly 2nd Thur of the month	Members' homes	Christine Coates
Bookworms	Thursday pm - Monthly 2nd Thur of the month	Members' homes in Dunmow	Fiona Watson
Bridge	Thursday pm - Weekly	Rowena Davey Centre, Dunmow	Bryony Rees
Canasta	Monday am - Weekly	Angel & Harp, Dunmow	Jan Moffat
<b>Cribbage * NEW *</b>	Tuesday pm - Fortnightly	Rowena Davey Centre, Dunmow	Pat Kelly
Cycling	Fri Mornings - Twice monthly	10-20 miles in Dunmow area	Jenny Versey
Family History	Monday pm - Every 4 weeks	The Maltings, Dunmow	Heather Quiney
Flower Arranging	Friday am - Every 3 weeks	Barnston Village Hall	Christine Bishop
French (Advanced)	Wednesday pm - Last Wed of month	Meadowhill Café, Dunmow	Valerie Newell
Garden	Thursday pm - Monthly (winter)	various	Anne Howatson
General Crafts	Monday pm - Monthly 3rd Mon of the month	Rowena Davey Centre, Dunmow	Lucy Myers
Geology	Thursday am - Monthly 3rd Thur of the month	various inc trips	David Cole (Admin)
Golf	Tuesday am - Weekly	Elsenham Golf Club	Paul Bryant
Golf 2	Wednesday am Monthly (no fixed Wed)	Essex Golf & Country Club, Earls Colne	Jackie Lapwood
Grow Your Own	Wednesday pm - 1st Wed of the month	Members' gardens	Alison Lavelle
Italian Beginners	Friday pm - Weekly	Usually Highfields, Dunmow	Colin Bradley (Admin)
Italian Conversation	Wednesday am - Weekly	Angel & Harp, Dunmow	Liz Parker
Line Dancing	Tuesday am - Weekly	Priors Green Hall	Jan Barlow
Line Dancing (Beg'rs)	Wednesday am - Weekly	Priors Green Hall	Jean Hull



Luncheon Club (Fri)	Friday lunch – usually Last Fri of the month	various	Paul Bryant
Luncheon Club (1st Wed)	Wednesday lunch – 1st Wed of the month	various	Debbie Miller
Luncheon Club (3rd Wed)	Wednesday lunch – 3rd Wed of the month	various	Lyn Fitzgibbon
Luncheon Club (Tue)	Tuesday lunch – 3rd Tue of the month	various	Anne Preece
Mah Jong	Monday pm – Weekly	Oakroyd House	Julie Coates
Music Appreciation	Wednesday pm Monthly (no fixed Wed)	Members' homes	Patricia Fletcher
Nature Walk	Wednesday pm – Penult. Wed of month	various	Marilyn Hammond
Outings			Pat Jones
<b>Pickleball * NEW *</b>	Friday pm – Weekly	Dunmow Leisure Centre	Selva Govender
Quilting & Stitching	Tuesday pm – Fortnightly	Rowena Davey Centre, Dunmow	Maureen Best
Science & Society	Tuesday eve – Monthly (no fixed Tue)	Members' homes	David Cole
Scrabble	Thursday am – Weekly	Saracen's Head, Dunmow	Helen Manley
<b>Sequence (game) * NEW * (Feb 2024)</b>	Tuesday pm – Fortnightly	Rowena Davey Centre, Dunmow	Jenny Versey
Table Tennis 1 & 2 (each 2 hours)	Friday pm – Weekly	Rowena Davey Centre, Dunmow	Lucy Myers
Walking (Monday)	Monday am – Weekly	4–5 miles in villages around Dunmow	Mike Best
Walking (Thursday)	Thursday am – Weekly	Hatfield Forest	Anne Preece
Whist	Tuesday pm – Fortnightly	Rowena Davey Centre, Dunmow	Mike Best
Wine Appreciation 1	Tuesday eve – Monthly Last Tue of month	Members' homes	Peter Watson
Wine Appreciation 2	Tuesday eve – Monthly 1st Tue of the month	Members' homes	John Stanley
<b>Wool &amp; Waffle * NEW *</b> (9 <sup>th</sup> Jan 2024)	Tuesday am – Fortnightly	Rowena Davey Centre, Dunmow	Maureen Best
Zumba Gold	Monday pm – Weekly	Priors Green Hall	Rosemary Jensen

## Du3a Committee

You can contact any of the post-holders by visiting the Du3a website <https://u3asites.org.uk/dunmow/page/66948> or by calling **07385 879846**.

Chair .....	Mike Best
Vice Chair .....	<b>VACANT</b>
Treasurer .....	Ian Marshall
Exec Secretary .....	Anna Fletcher
Membership Secretary / Beacon Administrator .....	Terry Parker
Groups Coordinator .....	Rosemary Jensen
Outings Coordinator .....	Pat Jones
Outings Assistant .....	Derek Jones
Assistant Treasurer / Asset Management .....	Derek Jones
Events Manager .....	Hilary Jinno
Committee Information Administrator .....	Peter Watson
Newsletter Editor / Publicity Officer .....	Heather Quiney
Welfare Coordinator .....	Maureen Best
Minutes Secretary .....	Phil Garrison

## Dates for your Diaries ...

Wed 29 Nov .....	<b>Du3a Christmas Concert</b> at Foakes Hall .....	pg 1
<b><i>We wish you a wonderful Christmas and a peaceful New Year</i></b>		
Wed 24 Jan .....	Deadline for February newsletter .....	pg 2
Wed 31 Jan .....	<i>Monthly Meeting</i> ... <b>"Big Cats Around the Globe"</b> by Barbara Meyer, Wildlife Photographer .....	pg 1
Wed 28 Feb .....	<i>Monthly Meeting</i> ... <b>"My Tutu Went AWOL"</b> by Iestyn Edwards, International Vaudeville Headliner	
Thurs 29 Feb ...	Trip to <b>"Drop the Dead Donkey"</b> at Cambridge Arts Theatre .....	p6