

Thoughts from the Chair

At last my favourite season has arrived. Spring is very much the season of new beginnings and a time to start putting plans for my garden and allotment into practice. Each spring, I promise myself that I'll devote more time and be better organised with tasks, such as seed sowing and planting, in order to achieve a more colourful and more productive summer season than the previous one. Sadly, despite my careful planning and enthusiasm, I suspect other priorities will take over and weeds will grow just as vigorously as my plants.

I mentioned in the January *Newsletter* that your committee would be putting together an action plan for 2022 and this task has now been completed with twelve key areas identified. I should like to take this opportunity to highlight six of these:

We plan to continue our publicity drive to keep our u3a in the public eye and most of you will have seen evidence of this with our very impressive stand at the recent *Love EG* event. Despite the wet weather, the Publicity team chatted to a number of local residents and introduced them to the benefits of joining us. Look out for our stand at the EG May Fair on 2 May.

We will update the *Newsletter* and our website to make them more appealing and easier to access information. We would love to hear from members who'd like to get involved in producing content for a newsletter or have experience of using Microsoft Publisher.

We are reviewing the format of our monthly meetings. Julia, our Events Coordinator, has outlined our thinking in her report in this copy of the *Newsletter*. She explains that we propose to develop our monthly meetings into an EGu3a Hub, providing a welcome environment and an opportunity for all members to meet, get the latest news and exchange ideas. The Meridian Hall will provide the space needed for a Hub-style meeting. We're mindful that we'll be leaving Chequer Mead at a difficult post-pandemic time for the theatre but will continue to support them as much as possible by holding other u3a group and committee meetings there.

We wish to do more to make our newest members feel welcome and get involved in interest and activity groups. We are looking to set up coffee mornings at Chequer Mead, and we hope the new Hub will provide better opportunities for meeting new members.

We would like to increase the use and range of social media to increase communication and to reach younger prospective members. Our Facebook page is now well established with links to other Facebook pages such as *What's happening in E. Grinstead*. In addition, we'll look at Instagram (many u3as now have Instagram pages) and You Tube.

We need to decide how we'll celebrate the 40th anniversary of the u3a movement in the UK. This is likely to take the form of a *Picnic in the Park* one day over the Platinum Jubilee extended weekend in June, but more info will follow. [There is indeed more elsewhere in this *Newsletter*. Ed]

As you can see, your committee has lots of plans to improve our u3a, but each of the twelve action points will require a considerable amount of work. We're extremely fortunate to have a dedicated and hard-working committee with additional support from some group leaders and members. We're always looking for extra help and support, so please don't be shy – if you'd like to get involved, please let us know.

Sandra Webb

Your Committee

Chair: Sandra Webb (01342 324611) Email: Chair@eastgrinsteadu3a.co.uk

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Newsletter Editor: Mike Kilfiger (01342 321629) Email: Newseditor@eastgrinsteadu3a.co.uk

We're also delighted to have the services of a co-opted member who attends committee meetings:-
Carolyn Tanner (IT, website ,& Beacon management)

News & Dates from SUN

SUN is the Sussex U3A Network, covering U3As over all parts of our County, both East and West. Our rep. is **Ian Tawse.**

Summer School: University of Chichester, Monday – Thursday, 20–23 June 2022.

The U3A Summer School is getting closer and closer! – it is being held, once again, at the University in Chichester, and you can take part as a resident or day student.

There are no less than eleven programmes in which you can choose to participate, viz: cycling, Earth matters, four 19th & 20th century British poets, fun with French, family history, Hatha yoga, mah-jong, mathematics: power & pattern, music: jazz, blues and folk music in the US, ukulele for beginners, walking on the Downs & coast.

Full details are now available on the SE Forum website

u3asites.org.uk/southeastu3aforum/events – just follow the links to "Summer School".

Coming right up-to-date, there are still some of these courses open, but a number are now full with a waiting list only.

The Forum have also asked us to let you know that they are looking for a number of volunteers to help plan and run the 2023 Summer School at Chichester. If you are interested and would like to know more, further details are on the above website; follow the link to the contact page and Summer School 2023.

Events

Thank you for your flexibility over the past couple of months, when we had to make last-minute changes to our Monthly Open Meeting arrangements. The rapid spread of the omicron variant back in January prompted us to resort, once again, to Zoom. Our February speaker had to cancel at the last minute and our increasing numbers meant we needed to relocate our next 3 meetings to Crawley Down. Then local covid rates spiralled again in March, forcing us back on Zoom. That's a lot of change by anyone's standards! – apologies for any inconvenience caused – thank-you for your understanding.

We are pleased to confirm the following dates for your diaries – see below for further details about the meetings prefixed by an asterix (*)

Dates for your Diaries

Friday 22 April ALL GARDENS GREAT AND SMALL – Haven Centre, Crawley Down

Friday 20 May SINGING FOR PLEASURE CONCERT – Jubilee Centre, Charlwoods Rd, 2pm

Friday 27 May A TREK TO EVEREST BASE CAMP – Haven Centre

*Wednesday 15 June LAUNCH OF HUB MEETINGS – Meridian Hall, East Court

*Wednesday 6 July PUB LUNCH – Dunnings Mill

*Wednesday 3 August SHORT MAT BOWLS – Jubilee Centre, Charlwoods Road

Wednesday 7 September OPEN DAY – Meridian Hall

Wednesday 5 October HUB MEETING – Meridian Hall

Wednesday 16 November AGM – Meridian Hall

Christmas Lunch – TBA

Event timings

Haven_Centre: Monthly Meetings_– we need to set up the hall ourselves, so we should be able to start welcoming you from 2:30pm for a 3:00 start. Tea/coffee will be available on arrival for a token £1 per person. Please note only CASH is accepted here – no cards.

The talk will last approx.. 1 hour, but we need to clear away and be out by 4:30pm, so we trust this will give you enough time to enjoy your afternoon.

Jubilee Community Centre: the session will start at 2pm; we'll play for just under an hour, then enjoy a wonderful cream tea in the interval, and play until 4pm. We'll need to disperse before other centre users arrive.

Meridian Hall: Hub Meetings (see below) You'll be welcome to arrive from 2:30pm for a 3pm start and 4:30 finish. See below for further details.

(continued overleaf)

Hub Meetings

To date, we have held Monthly Open Meetings and Members Only Meridian meetings. . Whilst these have, over time, fulfilled their purpose, on review, the committee have decided to amalgamate them and have them all (with the obvious exception of the AGM) open to the public and call them **Hub Meetings**. The idea of a hub is for it to be a 'one stop shop' where members can gather with one another, prospective members can be welcomed and the committee keep in touch with the membership. At the same time, it'll be an opportunity for group leaders to 'sell their wares'. We'll still have a speaker but we'll have a more open platform from which to operate. We've been fortunate to be able to book the Meridian Hall for most 1st Wednesdays of the month, (not 15 June & 16 November) as an *aide memoire* and for continuity.

Other Meetings

Whilst we don't have formal meetings in July & August, we're aware that members might still like to meet. We are therefore encouraging members to self-book into **Dunnings Mill** on **Wednesday 6 July** for lunch – you decide when and with whom you'd like to meet. The pub have been advised of our suggestion, but we have not made a formal booking. Whilst they have plenty of availability at present, they are likely to get busy as the summer approaches, so you may wish to book sooner rather than later.

On **Wednesday, 3 August** we have arranged a Short Mat Bowls taster at the Jubilee Community Centre (JCC), Charlwoods Road, from 2 – 4pm There will be people on hand to give guidance, and JCC have generously offered to provide a cream tea, all for a very modest fee of approx. £3 per head. We will need to know numbers in advance.

Some members may prefer an evening's Ten Pin Bowling at Hollywood Bowl in Crawley. The committee are looking to attract new, younger members who may still be working part-time, for whom this would be an open invitation to a fun evening out with new friends. Do please contact me at events@eastgrinsteadu3a.co.uk if you are interested and I'll be in touch to arrange a date.

In conclusion

Thank-you for your continued support of our activities. Please get in touch if you have any suggestions for future events.

Julia

xxXxx

Spanish for Beginners

Would you like to learn Spanish? We have a few spaces in the U3A beginners' Spanish course, with our excellent tutor, Kikina.

We meet every Monday afternoon between 2:00 and 4:00pm at the East Grinstead Museum, in Cantelupe Rd. if you are interested in joining us, please contact me via the U3A website.

Veronica Edney

FROM THE EDITOR

As part of the u3a 40th anniversary this year, I do hope you were able to peruse TAM editor, Joanne Smith's piece on u3a co-founder, **Eric Midwinter**, in the February issue of that organ. Her article nicely fleshed out my efforts in the July 2021 *Newsletter*, where I was attempting to outline the events leading to the genesis of our movement in the UK. Peter Laslett and Michael Young (co-founders) are also covered in some detail, and Joanne explains how, unlike the French UTA*, U3A in our country was to be a mutual self-help organisation in which its members (the so-called third-agers) managed their own activities. The founders were very concerned that, on reaching pensionable age, an individual was thought, at the time, only to be fit to sit around watching TV! They were undoubtedly pioneers in the concept of life-long education for all.

Now, aged 90, Eric's views on *National Service*, which – born in 1932 – he had to endure, very much mirror mine. However, being a 1945 baby, I was spared the experience, which, I know, I'd have utterly hated! Eric describes it as a period of "relative boredom and wasted time". I wonder if, in our ranks, there is anyone who underwent NS – I'd be very pleased to hear from you!

I suppose Eric is essentially an educationalist, and his attitude to some of the features of education in the 21st century are quite enlightening. Thus, for example, he describes the National Curriculum as "abominable" and "too tied up with exams and Ofsted". He is clearly pleased with the way u3a has developed over the 40 years, and, with official (i.e. local authority) adult education in this country having withered on the vine over the past few years, u3a now provides one of the main sources of education (in its broadest sense) for a great many adults.

* Université du Troisième Age

U3A Jazz Appreciation group

We have been meeting since September 2021, usually on the 3rd Monday in the month, at the Felbridge Village Hall (in a warm and well-ventilated space!). Each session deals with a chosen topic, and we listen to a selection of tracks and talk about them. So far, we have covered the Blues, the Kansas City swing jazz scene of the 1920s and '30s, and two jazz trumpeters: Miles Davis & Fats Navarro.



Over the next few meetings, we're planning to listen and talk about the 1959 Miles Davis album "Kind of Blue", the violin & guitar duo of Joe Venuti and Eddie Lang, women in jazz, the music of Kenny Ball, Theolonius Monk, Sonny Rollins etc.... the list goes on!

If you're interested in the vibrant and diverse musical genre which is jazz, why not come along? You can get in touch via jazz@eastgrinsteadu3a.co.uk

Ed Drury

Poetry Corner

[This poem represents a follow-up to the well-received article back in the October Newsletter by Hilary Lagden on lip-reading. David composed it back in 1995. Ed]

On going deaf

I cannot remember the sound of your voice
As your lips move in their sweet rhythm
Trying to penetrate the wall of water
Imitating the sea raging in my ears.

I can see the love in your eyes
That tells me sound is not everything
That the message will reach me
As you ride the surf to touch my mind.

Your gentleness will overcome the fear
Of never hearing you laugh again
And in time I shall learn to play
A symphony for you through my hands.

David Tas

E. Grinstead USA Singing for Pleasure Choir

Our choir, numbering nearly 80, has been delighted to welcome several new members since Sept 2021. Under the direction of our choirmaster, Tom Scratchley, accompanied by our pianist, Kim Retallick, we have been enjoying learning and singing together medleys of songs from the musicals *West Side Story* and *Carousel* as well as pieces from *Chess*, *the Lion King* and *Blood Brothers*. We've also been learning songs written for the *Military Wives Choir* and pieces performed by Bette Midler, John Denver and the Carpenters. I mustn't forget the theme tune from the *Vicar of Dibley*.

We'll be performing these pieces at our summer concert to be held on **Friday, 20 May at 2pm** in the Jordan Hall at the **Jubilee Community Centre**, Charlwoods Rd., EG, RH19 2HL.

Tickets are £5 and can be purchased at the door. The cost of your ticket includes tea/coffee as well as a delicious selection of cakes and savouries. Please do come along and support us. We'll be raising money for charity and, as always, there will be an opportunity to win some wonderful prizes in our excellent raffle.

Judy Mendell

Love EG Day, Sunday, 13 March 2022

The day began looking quite promising, and shortly after 9:00 we started setting up our new gazebo, together with display boards and pennant. Sadly, by late morning, the rain had started, but didn't dampen the spirits of the great East Grinstead public, many of whom had been looking forward to the event.



There were some 50 stands lining both sides of the High Street, representing various organisations such as clubs, shops, food outlets etc. We felt we had been allocated a good location outside Caffé Nero and before long people came to speak to us. It was lovely to meet some of our existing members, along with past members and members of other u3as. But we also wanted to meet some prospective new members and we did! We were surprised at how many people had never heard of the u3a – but they have now! – and hopefully they will decide to join us. The rain ceased by lunchtime, the High St. became quite busy and the Town Mayor paid us a visit and tried out our handbells. I think we can safely say that a good day was had by all and we look forward to setting up our gazebo again for the Lions May Fair on 2 May.....

Audrey Bateman

Family History, Intermediate group #1

The Family History Intermediate group one managed to meet regularly on Zoom, throughout the pandemic – the photo below shows us all in good spirits on the lap-top screen!



We are now meeting in person, which we don't take for granted any more. The u3a Zoom licence gave us the opportunity to keep the group together during difficult times.

Eileen Baber

East Grinstead u3a: Our foundation

You may possibly know that I took over the role of unofficial archivist, following the very sad demise of my friend and neighbour, Roy Adderley in 2020. A keen u3a-er, many of you will probably recall that Roy used to run East Grinstead library back in the '70s and '80s.

I was hoping to display some of the material at the 25th anniversary lunch last July, but owing to –yes, you've guessed it, Covid 19 – this event was cancelled, so, in this 40th year of the u3a movement, I've decided to write a few words about *our* u3a foundation for the *Newsletter*.

EGu3a can trace its formation back to the spring of 1995, when **Yvonne Wavell** (who later became its secretary), visiting her friend in our county town, noticed paperwork relating to Chichester u3a on her friend's coffee-table. Yvonne was approaching retirement, and, asking what u3a was about, thought it was just what she was looking for! She wrote: "I loved the idea that retired or semi-retired [people] could get together and share their knowledge and ability, in subjects they were enthusiastic about". Making enquiries at the library, she discovered that the nearest u3a was in Haywards Heath, which she felt was too far away. Contacting the National Charity Organisation, she was given the name of Micky King of Whittington College (in Felbridge), who allowed their lounge area to be available for the first few public meetings. The library were also very supportive, offering their large windows by the door to publicise meetings. These resulted in a steering committee being set up, leading to E. Grinstead U3A (upper case

letters then!) actually being launched in May '95, with 13 interest groups involving just over 100 members.

The original groups were:

Ambling, art, calligraphy, circle dancing, coffee & conversation, earlybird swim, literature, music appreciation, science & technology, social history, Spanish, theatre outings, villages & gardens.

They also introduced the occasional open meeting, held in Meridian Hall.

May I finish by quoting Yvonne again. She writes: " Each U3A is unique; there is no hierarchy; a U3A can only exist because people are willing to give their time and to share their talents and interests". How very true!

Mike Kilfiger (Ed)

Litter matters

Litter dropping can be an unconscious act. People don't actually stop and think. Finished with my coffee, crisps, chocolate bar.....? Can't see a bin? Just drop it anywhere. I recently witnessed a paper coffee-cup thrown into a garden hedge. And yes, I did speak to the perpetrator! The response: "There's no bin!"

Of course, most of us would not act in this way and, faced with the absence of a bin, will wait to dispose of our litter responsibly. Exasperated councils launch litter campaigns from time to time. These include targeting specific areas, changing to brightly coloured bins – some add witty slogans such as:

At a quayside: "Don't teach your trash to swim, please walk it to the bin".

Town centre – double-slotted bin for general waste and cigarette butts: "Batman or Superman? Pop your litter in the slot to register your vote".

Zero Waste Scotland: "Flingin's Mingin" (I love that one!).

It works for some people for a while, but there needs to be a constant turning of the wheel and rethinking the strategy.

Several of our *Litter Matters* members tell me that people make an effort to say "thank-you" when they see them clearing the trash. I've had the same reaction from passers-by. It gets dropped, we pick it up – but it's a real "feel good" factor when we do!

We meet in the morning on the 2nd Friday of each month – new members always welcome.

You can contact me via the e-mail option on the EGu3a website.

Anne White

Meridian FM

Meridian FM is the local community radio station serving EG & surrounding areas. They are keen to promote local groups.

Back on the "Love EG Day", Samantha Day, one of their presenters came to chat to us about their programmes and the possibility that EGu3a could host a show on a regular basis. This would comprise music with time for news about the u3a, interviews etc. They'd provide a playlist and give training. The show would be live.

Is there someone amongst our many members who has always fancied being a DJ? Or maybe a group could share it between them? It's wonderful opportunity for us to tell our friends and neighbours all about EGu3a and how much it has to offer.

Have a think about it, and let me know if you'd like further details.

Susan Hodgson

Celebrations in the Summer

This summer, around the start of June, we'll be celebrating the **Queen's Platinum Jubilee**. To mark this occasion, East Grinstead Town Council will be arranging special events over the 4-day long weekend, starting with fun for children and lighting of the Beacon at King George's Field on 2 June and culminating in Picnic in the Park on Sunday, 5 June. This will be combined with East Court Live, which many of you will remember fondly from previous years.

Coincidentally, this year is also the 40th anniversary of the u3a movement, and we thought how lovely it would be to combine these two special events. We're hoping that many of our EGu3a members will come along with friends & family and join us at East Court on 5 June for a special picnic to celebrate both anniversaries. We'll give you more details nearer the time, but in the meantime, make a note in your diary – it will definitely be 'the more the merrier'.

You'll also be interested to hear that the Town Council are planning to hold a tea-party for EG residents who can remember the Queen's coronation in June 1953. I bet that include many of us! Tickets will be on a 'first come first served' basis. I'll let you have details as soon as I have them.

Susan Hodgson

Ukraine

[I wanted, in this issue of the Newsletter, to include an item drawing out the horror, barbarity and futility of this war; I thank Lin so much for her words and feel her poem should provide you with food for thought. Ed]

***Poor people of Ukraine how our hearts bleed for you
We feel so helpless, but what can we do?
Send money, supplies, clothes to keep warm
But it seems oh! so little, won't shield you from harm
We sit here in comfort at home and in peace
And fervently pray you may soon know some ease
You're there at the mercy of a man who has none
Who'll give no relent until his war is won
Desperately fighting a fight you can't win
A struggle you've faced again and again
To hold on to the homeland you each hold so dear
To live independent and free from all fear
We hope and we pray for reason, for sanity
But you are victims of one who has no humanity
Who sends in young boys, not knowing their fate
To kill, to maim neighbours whom they've no cause to hate
So many will mourn for those they have lost
And once again history will recall futile cost.***

Lin Kanji

[I'm including this latest version of the Groups Timetable, particularly for those lacking access to the internet or who infrequently visit our website. My thanks to Carolyn Tanner for help with its transference to the Newsletter! Ed]

East Grinstead U3A - Regular Meetings - updated 21st February 2022					
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	
AM	AM	AM	AM	AM	AM/PM
Intermediate Bridge 9.30-12.30: Weekly Forest Row Community Centre Peter Lamb	All Seasons Walking Group 9.45: 2nd in Month Meet as arranged Richard Argyle	Country Walking 9.45: 4th in month Meet as arranged Gary Wood	Book Club 3 10:30-12:00 3rd in Month Private venue FI Harvie	Singing for Pleasure 10.00-12.00: weekly Ashurst Wood Village Hall Judy Mendell	VARIOUS DAYS
PM	Ambling 10.00: 3rd in month Meet as arranged Brian Foxwell/Ken Stacey	Discussion Group 1 10.00: 1st in month Private venue Enid Isworth	Family History for Beginners 10:00 - 12:00 3rd in month Private venue Graham Edwards	Litter matters 10:00 - 11:00 2nd Friday of month East Court main car park Anne White	
Jazz appreciation 2:00-3:30: 3rd Monday in month Felbridge Village Hall (Main hall) Ed Drury	Book Club 1 10.15-11.45: 1st in month East Grinstead Museum Judith Wells	Short Walks 10:30: 3rd in month Meet at Forest Row Community Centre Val Osbon	Thursday Walking group 10:00 - 2nd Thursday in month Meeting as arranged FI Harvie/Janet Taylor	PM	Out & About III Various dates and times. Outings by train, car or coach. Lynne Fallowell Christine Mallett/Julie Rowcroft
Singalong 1.30-3.30: 2nd Monday in month St Mary's Church Hall Fay Morgan	Family History Intermediate 1 10.00-12.00: 1st in month Private venue Eileen Baber / Sheila Murray	PM	PM	British History 2.30-4.00: 1st & 3rd in month Forest Lodge Rita des Forges / Jan Langridge	Gardening Group I Varying venues and dates. Janet MacNutt/Danielle Clarke
German for Beginners 2.00-3.30: Weekly Chequer Mead Victoria Jackson	Family History Intermediate 2 10.00-12.00: 3rd in month Private venue Sheila Murray/Linda Howard	Craft 2.00-4.00: 1st & 3rd in month Trinity Methodist Cafe Ruth Dymock	Saving Planet Earth 2.00-4.00: 2nd in month Zoom currently John Wells	Monthly Open Meetings 2.30: Fridays Open to all. Chequer Mead Café Julia Harris	Gardening Group II 2.00-4.00: 1st in month Varying venues Margaret Tawse/Mary Swift
German Conversation 2.30-4.00: alternate weeks Private venue Marianne Greenwood	Tuesday Painting Group 11.00 - 13.00: alternate weeks The Forest Row Community Centre Val Osbon	Lunch Club 12.30: 2nd in month Various private venues Fay Morgan	Current Affairs Group 2.00-4.00: 3rd in month Private venue Lester Medcalf	Creative Writing 12.00-2.00: 1st in month Private venue Janine Boutelle	
Painting for Fun 1.30-3.00: 1st & 3rd in month Forest Row Community Centre Val Osbon	PM	Informal French 11:00 - 12:00: 3rd Wednesday Private venue Susan Berkshire	Latin 2.00-4.00: 2nd in month Private venue Georgina Rolls	Science & Technology 2.00-4.00: 3rd in month St John's Felbridge church hall Ray White / John Wells	
Watercolour and Drawing 1.00-3.00: 2nd & 4th in month Forest Row Community Centre Val Osbon	Basio Bridge 2:00 - 4:00 Weekly Forest Row Community Centre Katharine Wightman	Book Club 2 14:00 - 16:00 3rd in Month Private venue Pauline Mccomb	Mah Jong & Cards 2.00-4.00: weekly The King's Centre, Moat Road Lin Challis	Water Activities Meets 2:30 Apr - Nov. every week Hedgecourt Lake Marilyn Emmett / Sue Green	
Ukulele Group 1.30-3.30: 2nd and 4th in month Felbridge Village Hall Robert Everest / Mike Knibbs	Exploring Sussex 1.45-3.45: 1st & 3rd in month St Swithun's Church Hall Shirley King		Philosophy 2.30-4.00: 2nd in month Trinity Methodist Church Hall John Gibbs	Wine Appreciation Group III 3:00-5:00 pm second in month Private venue Sandra Webb	
Spanish for Beginners Every week 2:00-4:00 East Grinstead Museum Veronica Edney	History Themes 14:00 - 16:00: 4th in month Private venue Mike Killger		Hand Bell Ringing 1:30-3:30 weekly Felbridge Village Hall Committee Room Marilyn Emmett		
Wine Appreciation Group I 3:00-5:00 pm second Monday Private Margaret Jackson	Poetry 2.30-4.00: 2nd in month Trinity Methodist Lynn Box	EVENING			
	British Cinema Social History 2.00-4.00: 4th in month The Glebe Centre George Pearson	Wine Appreciation Group II 5:30-8:30 2nd in month Private Cheryl Mason			
	Intermediate Spanish 2:00-4:00 1st and 3rd in month. EG Museum Stephen Granger				

All meetings are still subject to the latest COVID-19 situation. Group information will be found on the EG U3A website. Due to GDPR we are unable to display personal data. Please contact a Group Leader using the link from the website (or phone the leader directly if you know the number). Confirmed days and time are highlighted in PALE GREEN. New groups are highlighted in YELLOW. Unconfirmed groups are highlighted in PALE PINK

UPDATED 21/02/2022

