

The Windmill

Eastbourne & Wealden u3a

Issue 98

Charity No. 1184226

October – December 2023



Mike Grierson and John Riley were amongst Chairs and Reps of the ESE Cluster of u3as to attend a meeting with Liz Thackray (in yellow top), Chair of the Third Age Trust and Susie Berry (in green), South East Region Trustee.

ESE CLUSTER MEETING WITH u3a TOP BRASS

Report by John Riley and Mike Grierson

On 19th July Eastbourne u3as hosted a meeting of the ESE (East Sussex East) Cluster of u3as with Chairs and Representatives from eight other local u3as, attended by Liz Thackray, Chair of the Third Age Trust, and Susie Berry, the South East Region Trustee.

The main topics were governance, namely, clarification of the differences and status between affiliated and non-affiliated u3as and the terminology used by such networks/clusters. Linked to this, clarification in respect of TAT insurance for events, the use of the logo and access to Beacon was discussed.

The advice from Liz and Susie was that a group of u3as should seek affiliation to TAT as this would entitle the group to use the u3a logo and enable it to apply for funding towards major events. TAT would also prefer such a group to be called a network rather than a cluster. Insurance was not an issue because each u3a member is individually covered by TAT insurance.

A further meeting will be held in October to discuss, inter alia, the way forward. Hopefully then the Cluster/Network (whatever it is called) will then start actually doing something. We wait and see.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FOR 2024

We will do things differently this year. You will not be asked to complete a membership form.

Instead you will receive a personalised email or letter from our Membership Secretary, Sharon Phillips, inviting you to rejoin. It will include the personal information we have on record for you, namely name, address, phone numbers and email address.

The email/letter will include a reminder of our Terms and Conditions of Membership, Privacy Statement and Gift Aid.

Obviously, if any of your details have changed the onus is on you to notify us.

The subscription remains £12 (or £8 for Associate Membership if you belong to another u3a and have paid a full fee to them which includes the capitation fee sent to the Third Age Trust).

Payment by bank transfer is our preferred method as this incurs no bank charges.

Our second choice would be cash – this may be paid at a monthly meeting or sent direct to our Treasurer, Catriona Sheen.

A cheque is also welcome although our bank charges for each one paid in.

We think this will be a much easier way to renew. It will certainly reduce paper/ink usage and the amount of time spent by you form filling and the membership secretary in dealing with paper forms.

Membership Cards, which again will provide details of speakers at our monthly meetings, will be available for collection at a monthly meeting. Upon request cards can be posted to members who do not attend monthly meetings.

From January we will offer to send you by post the four issues of The Windmill magazine, provided you add the cost of postage to your subscription. For members on email, we will continue to send you a PDF version. Print versions will continue to be available at monthly meetings.

We hope you will support us in trying this new renewal process. Any queries please contact Sharon Phillips, Membership Secretary on 07743 102151 or email eastbournewealdenu3a@outlook.com

IT'S MEMBERSHIP
RENEWAL TIME!



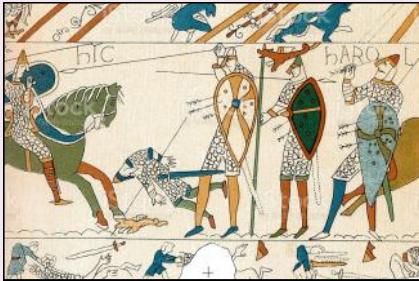
Monthly Meetings

Venue: Victoria Baptist Church Hall, Eldon Road, Eastbourne, BN21 1UE

When: 1st Tues of the month (except Aug) at 14.00

Meetings with a speaker are free to attend (i.e included in your annual subscription).

Meetings are not open to the public, but prospective members are welcome to attend two meetings as a taster before joining. Members may bring along a guest who must pay £3.



October 3rd

A treat for local historians, *David Clarke* 's talk is entitled "1066 The Battle of Hastings - We Should Have Won", an examination of the battle that sealed England's fate and ended 600 years of Anglo-Saxon rule.

November 7th

Robert Slater with a talk entitled "Crime, Smuggling & Punishment in East Sussex", an overview of Crime and Smuggling in the area from C13th through the ages - a talk in three periods with appropriate costumes from Medieval, Victorian and early C20th Century.

December 5th

CHRISTMAS PARTY at VBC at 14.00

Come and join in the Christmas spirit at our annual party. There will be good cheer (well, tea and coffee) with heaps of food and a hamper to be won.

Cost: £5. Tickets obtainable at the October and November monthly meetings or from Sandra Rowe Tel: 01323 724671



January 2nd

A welcome return by *Michael Smith*, this time about Sir Ernest Shackleton entitled "The Man and The Myths". Shackleton, who lived in Eastbourne, became a legend on four epic voyages of discovery to the Antarctic a century ago, including the famous Endurance expedition.

MAH - JONGG AND HARRODS

by *Michael Simms*

Anyone who has visited Eltham Palace, such as those of us who went on Sylvia James' perfectly arranged day trip on 21st August, will know that in 1923 Stephen Courtauld bought his wife Virginia a ring-tailed lemur from Harrods. This animal became a much-loved pet named Mah-Jongg or 'Jonggy' (pronounced 'Johnny') and when the couple moved to Eltham he was given his own specially designed heated room on the first floor decorated with Madagascan bamboo forest scenes by Gertrude Whinfield (1873-1961).

During the day Jonggy was allowed to descend by means of a bamboo ladder to the ground floor where he was then given the freedom of both house and gardens.

The Courtaulds took him along on all their foreign travels including to Rhodesia where they all settled in 1944. Jonggy's bamboo ladder emerged into the flower room near the front door where, in the 1930s, about 90 flower vases and bowls were stored. One wonders what were the feelings of staff arranging flowers in this very small room. One can also not help wondering if the 14 ladies' maids that Virginia went through in just two years left her, not just because she was difficult to work for and sometimes threw things at them, but might have had something to do with a pet lemur running around them.

I remember as a child being told by my mother that Harrods had a slogan that you could buy there 'anything from a pin to an elephant'. It appealed strongly to my imagination and I was slightly disappointed when we went there, as part of an annual Christmas treat, to see only a rather elegant pet shop and no elephant. But, of course, the slogan was true. Harrods legendary Pet Kingdom was opened in 1917 selling animals such as tigers and panthers. In the 1930s an advertisement suggested 'Choose one of many fascinating pets in Harrods Zoo if you want to give an unusual present for Christmas'. It then went on to list animals from bright green lizards at 2/6 each to Bill the African Mandril at 20 guineas. Bill was advertised as having 'a blue-striped face (which wears a most human



expression) and a pair of unusually mischievous eyes’.

In 1967 the son of the King and Queen of Albania bought a Harrods elephant as a gift for Ronald Reagan but perhaps the most famous pet bought there was Christian the lion who was taken home by John Rendall and Anthony Burke to their flat in the Kings Road. When he got bigger he was housed in the basement of their furniture store aptly named Sophisticat. Finally they asked George Adamson of ‘Born Free’ fame to release him into the wild and there are many videos of him on YouTube – particularly of his amazing and affecting recognition of the couple who bought him when they visited him in the wild a year later. Harrods finally stopped selling exotic pets with the Endangered Species Act in 1976 and their domestic pet department finally closed in 2014.

Going back to lemurs it is well known that they are relatively friendly creatures, as can be attested by the many Lemur Experiences available even in these Health and Safety conscious days. Jonggy however had one very unfortunate habit – he would bite anyone to whom he took a dislike. My favourite story about him is when the Courtaulds gave a farewell lunch aboard their yacht to the 1930-31 British Arctic Air Route Expedition when Jonggy bit the hand of Percy Lemon the wireless operator severing an artery. Unfortunately the poor man was allergic to the iodine used on the wound and it took him three months to recover. Presumably the lemur was confined to his cage-fronted, centrally heated room when Queen Mary came to tea at Eltham in 1935 and when her daughter-in-law Elizabeth Duchess of York visited the following year.

CHRISTMAS PARTY

Tues 5th December at 2.00pm

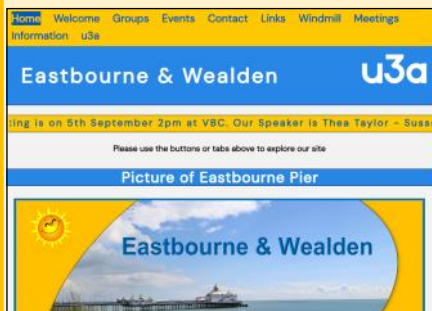
Tickets on sale at October and November monthly meetings

or from Sandra Rowe Tel 01323 724671

Cost (subsidised) £5

Photo by Sue Bishop at last year's party

Website News



About 18 months ago all the U3A Websites suffered a failure resulting in nearly every U3A site in the UK becoming unavailable to view. This was caused by an issue with the website hosting company which the U3A was unable to fix and much of the branch data was lost.

After a lot of hard work by U3A volunteers at HQ, these sites were eventually brought back online and made available for public viewing. However, the U3A Trust felt it was time to reconsider how all its websites could be hosted and presented in a more up to date form.

Following much more effort by the central IT volunteers, a fresh approach has been designed. The Hosting will now be undertaken by Wordpress, a company that provides many websites worldwide.

A new website editing system known as SiteWorks is being employed which will utilise the basic Wordpress software, modified specifically for U3A use, this will allow individual branches to design a website to their own requirements but with a common U3A theme.

The good news is that much of the SiteWorks system has now been completed and individual branch websites will be transferred from the old SiteBuilder editor to SiteWorks in the next few months.

An early Beta version of the new system was made available to the Eastbourne and Wealden U3A branch some months ago for evaluation and customisation for our needs.

I have used this to put together a new website which I hope will prove to be an improvement on the current site when it goes live. Watch this space!

Submitted by *Norman Brown*

NEW

CANASTA FOR BEGINNERS

Do you want to learn Canasta?

Mick Garner, Group Leader, will set aside a beginners table (comprising three learners and one teacher) on the first Friday of the month, starting on Fri 6th Oct at 2pm. The venue is St. Barnabas Church Hall in Langney.

For information and to register your interest, phone Mick on 01323 728541.

TEA AND TALK GROUP – vacancies

The Reading Aloud Group has changed it's name to Tea and Talk Group. We have also changed our day. We now meet on the 3rd Tues each month at 2pm at the Group Leader's home in Willingdon.

We discuss/debate a range of issues and interests, usually bringing an article/poem to read to the group as a starting point. You might be surprised where this can take us!

We can welcome 2 new members.

Please contact me, Pat Brinson, Group Leader, on 503585

READING FOR PLEASURE – vacancies

This is a book club like no other. Instead of having to read a set book each month, members talk about the books they have read or are currently reading. This way they discuss many different genres, all in the relaxed atmosphere of a member's home.

The group has a couple of vacancies.

They meet on the 1st Mon each month at 2pm.

If interested contact the Group Leader, John Moore, on 01323 507781



Photo John Riley

NEW SCRABBLE GROUP

When: Every 2nd Tues of the month at 10.00 am

Where: JPK Old Town Café, 39-41 Church Street, Old Town, Eastbourne.

If interested, please contact Group Leader, Denise Morgan-Smith (on the right in the photo) on 07852 664063

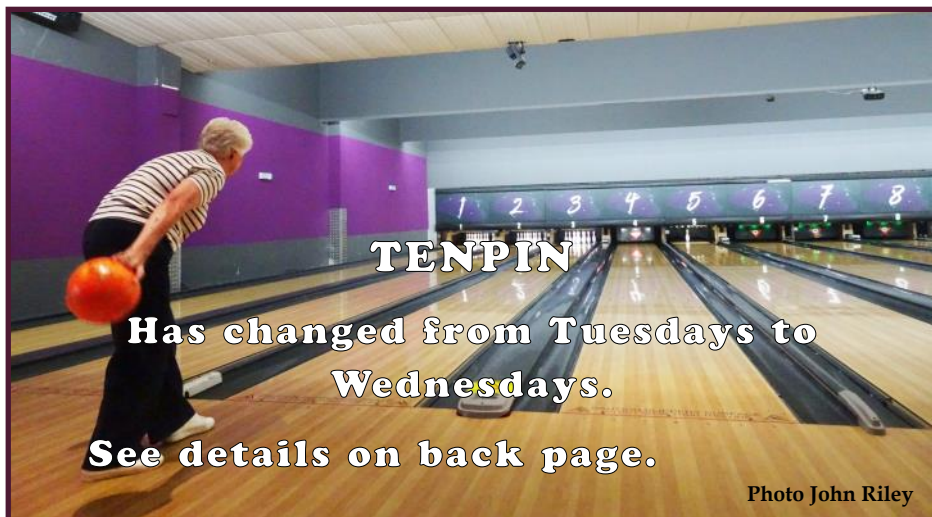


Photo John Riley

GLOBETROTTERS

Globetrotters meet on the 4th Monday of the month from 2pm to 4pm at the leader's house in Willingdon. Members give talks on interesting places that they have visited. Most talks are illustrated. New members who enjoy travelling are welcome to share your travel experiences with us.

23rd October Wendy Brownlow will give an illustrated talk on Northern Ireland

27th November Sylvia James will present an illustrated talk on Moscow. Part 1 of her Russian trip.

Part 2, St Petersburg, and the river Volga coming in 2024.

Group Leader: Wendy Brownlow 01323 486138

Sylvia James writes about **Moscow**:

In 2012 I took a river trip along the river Volga from Moscow to St Petersburg.

Moscow is a dynamic city, with awe inspiring architecture, wonderful museums, ancient monuments, memorials, and ruins from the Soviet period. Its political and military past can be seen in the buildings and statues around Moscow.

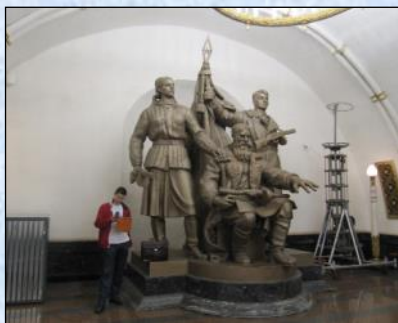
Most accommodation in Moscow is in apartment blocks. 54% of people own their property, 11% rent and the rest live with friends or relatives. A small one room apartment costs 99.945 euros. Many families also own a small basic house within the forest along the river Volga where they spend their weekends.



The best known of the Kremlins (Russian Citadels) is surrounded with high red stone walls and looks very formidable. But, inside there are five palaces and four cathedrals. Also within the complex is the Grand Kremlin Palace that was formerly the residence of the Russian emperor in Moscow. Tsar Nicholas II worshiped there.

The Russian tomb to the unknown soldier is situated in the Kremlin and the military guard at the tomb is changed in an elaborate ceremony which happens every hour on the hour from October 1 through March 31, and every half hour from April 1 through September 30.

A visit to the underground stations was very enlightening. Our Russian guide took us to several stations which were beautifully decorated with huge chandeliers, tile murals, and many large statues. All gave a message of propaganda. We learned that following a power struggle on the death of Vladimir Lenin in 1924 Joseph Stalin became the Leader of the Soviet Union. During his dictatorship work began on an underground railway system for the city of Moscow in the 1930s, and the opening stage was built from 1935 to 1937; the first line stretched from Sokolniki to Park Kultury. It was a clear message he gave to the population that his dictatorship would be controlled by the military.



Rambling Group

The rambling group has managed to get out each month over the summer, despite the dismal weather at times and the September heatwave. Two of our members have led walks for the first time – in June Norman led a lovely walk around the Herstmonceux area and in August Brian took us from Folkington into Jevington and up onto the hills with what should have been beautiful views, except that it was very cloudy! Trisha took us around Seaford Head in July and in September Theresa led us from Kingston to Lewes and the Priory.

Our next ramble is:

Friday October 13th

John and Marion will be leading a 4.5 – 5 mile ramble from Seven Sisters Country Park Visitor Centre at Exceat to Westdean and the Cuckmere. It will be slightly hilly through the forest but otherwise mostly flat, though if anyone wants to detour to the site of the old Exceat Church this can be included, but it would involve a climb. There is a £4 car parking charge, or the Visitor Centre is on the No 12 bus route. To book onto this walk please text John on 07732 971557.

The rambles for November and December have not been finalised at present so if you are interested in coming along please look at the poster on the information board at a monthly meeting or contact me.

Our walks are about 4.5 to 5 miles long, take place on the second Friday of the month and start at 10 o'clock unless otherwise specified.

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me on 01323-726685 or jandtmhancock@zen.co.uk

Theresa Hancock U3A Rambling Group Leader



Sun tanned and looking very fit are Brian, Brenda and Theresa below Kingston Windmill. Or are they just very hot?

FUNNY THINGS KIDS SAY Submitted by Anne Beck

Four year old Adrian bumped his head badly. His yell brought Mum running to see what had happened. "Where does it hurt?", she asked. "There" said Adrian, pointing to a bump on his head. "There, where my brain wasand now I can't think any more".

At London Zoo, Trevor (aged 6) was intrigued by an exotic South American bird, almost as tall as him with unruly and exotic head feathers. They stared at each other for a few moments, then Trevor leaned towards the bird and shouted out "Punk" (the latest fashion in hairdos at the time).

Cream Tea Tuesday 1st August



Photo by Brenda Kenward

26 members met at The Old Town Café on Tuesday 1 August for our annual cream tea. We were served some fruit and plain scones with strawberry jam and cream together with fresh strawberries. There was plenty tea and coffee. There was, also, a selection of pre-loved items for sale together with jars of jam.

The JPK Project who run the café provide training and residential accommodation for people with learning disabilities in Eastbourne and the surrounding area.

It was good to know that we were helping a local charity.

Jill Hicks won our raffle, which was a Marks and Spencer Voucher.

As you can see in the photo everyone had a good time.

By *Catriona Sheen*

GARDEN GROUP



At the June meeting we discussed the importance of pollinators and how they fit into biodiversity and our gardens. We also covered the best flowers for happy bee pollinators.

At the July meeting we looked at rewilding (reasons and techniques) followed by the garden ecosystem. We noted that the RHS is launching a plant identification app this year and that the amount of peat used by

amateur gardeners has fallen steeply in the past year.

There was no meeting in August due to holiday commitments.

To enrol into this group next year, please contact Group Leader, Charles Ackerman, on 01323 730655

GROUP CONTACTS, MEETING DAYS AND TIMES

Group Leader Co-ordinator: Sharon Phillips 07743 102151

Some groups are full. Please ask to be put on the Waiting List. Any problems, tell Sharon.

2nd TuesGROUP	GROUP LEADER	PHONE/EMAIL	MEETING DAY	TIME	VACAN- CIES
Canasta	Mike Garner	01323 728541	Every Fri	14.00	Enquire
Day Trippers	Sylvia James	01323 500520	Varies	Varies	Open to All
Dining	Sharon Phillips	07743 102151	3rd Fri	18.30	Open to All
Spoken French	Susan Winge	07985 055296	Wed twice monthly	14.00	Enquire
Gardening	Charles Ackerman	01323 730655	4th Wed	14.00	Enquire
Globe Trotters	Wendy Brownlow	01323 486138	4th Mon	14.00	Yes
Literature	Christine Neuss & Janet Harper	01323 769004 01323 371317	2nd Wed	14.00	Enquire
Luncheon Club	Anne Newson	01323 472259	4th Tues	12.30	Open to All
MahJongg	Cheryl Bone	01323 726489	1st & 3rd Mon	10.00	Enquire
Music Makers	Ann & Ted Barden	01323 501334	2nd Thurs	10.00	Yes
Musicality	Bill Kipling	01323 411384	3rd Wed	14.00	Enquire
Photography	Norman Brown	01323 504952	3rd Mon	14.00	Enquire
Rambling	Theresa Hancock	01323 726685	2nd Fri	10.00	Open to All
Reading for Pleasure	John Moore	01323 507781	1st Mon	14.00	Vacancies
Scrabble NEW GROUP	Denise Morgan- Smith	07852 664063	2nd Tues	10.00	Vacancies
Small Group Lunches	Barrie Pipe	01323 638946	4th Tues	12.15	Open to All
Spanish	Anne Barden	01323 501334	Alternate Mon	09.30	Enquire
Stretch & Balance	Sylvia James	01323 500520	Every Tues except 1st Tues	14.00	Yes
Strollers	Carolyn Brown	clbrown0427@ btinternet.com.	2nd Mon	10.30	Open to All
Tea and Talk (formerly Read- ing Aloud)	Pat Brinson	01323 503585	3rd Tues	14.00	Vacancies
Ten-Pin Bowling	John Phillips	01323 768227	2nd & 4th Wed	10.15 for 10.30	Enquire
Theatre	Margaret Kipling & Marion Ward	01323 411384 01323 509471	Varies. Open to all.	Varies	Open to All

Windmill Editor: John Riley Tel: 01323 724972 and email jwriley@btinternet.com.

Final submission date for the January – March issue is the 15th December.