

YOUR LATEST NEWSLETTER is ready for you to read below, or to download and print off.

[View this email in your browser](#)

# u3a Newsletter

**News From u3a Guernsey**

**Issue 69**

**February 2024**

**Membership - 1031**

Dear << Test First Name >>

Hi All,

Another month passed already!! Where did it go? As I write this short missive whilst it rains outside I look forward to the sun shining as we move into Spring and the Daffodils and Tulips start to flower. Please keep the photographs and reports coming in for the Newsletter as they are all worth reading and looking at. They provide a great snapshot of activities taking place every week in our u3a.

Next month's guest Editor will be Ian Daish, kindly filling in for Alison and myself.

Live, Learn and Laugh

Ian Jowitt

Newsletter Editor

## Message from the Chair

Getting the most out of your retirement is very important and developing routines by attending groups can help give structure and purpose to your week. Keeping our brains active is another important part to ageing well.

Some of you enjoy solving puzzles or completing crosswords while many of you listen or watch quiz programmes on the radio or television and hopefully try to beat the contestants. One of our members Caroline McManus went one step further and actually achieved success on the popular Countdown program. She has kindly written an article for this newsletter about her experiences and it certainly is an interesting read.

Perhaps you have a tale to tell. Please do let me know if you have entered competitions or taken part in something which other members might be interested in trying. Remember it is the taking part which is important.

Have you taken advantage of any of our Discounts? If you didn't get the newsflash in January check out our website you'll find it on the documents page. So get shopping and make some savings!!!! Also if you have contact with other businesses who would like to be included in our lists then please do contact us so we can increase the numbers of businesses to help all Guernsey people.

In previous newsletters I've mentioned the importance of being involved in voluntary work. Recently I was

contacted by the local branch of the multiple sclerosis society. They are looking to recruit an admin/secretary volunteer so if this might be something of interest please do consider carefully and contact them. I'm confident you will find the work rewarding.

Jane  
Chair u3a Guernsey  
*Live, Laugh and Learn!*

A couple of pictures from the talk by Lesley Perchard at the Villettes on Thursday afternoon. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed Lesley's anecdotes and recollections about Guernsey. She is a brilliant entertainer .

June



## My Countdown Experience

I have been an avid Countdown watcher for many years (although I confess to taking a break whilst Anne Robinson was the presenter) and used to use the

numbers game with my classes when teaching Maths. It's a great way to exercise your brain! But it was only when Colin Murray became the presenter that I thought again about applying to be a contestant. He says that presenting Countdown is his dream job and it shows. He clearly enjoys himself.

About a year ago I began the process with an email to the show. Over the next few months a telephone audition led to an invitation to head over to Salford for recording. The company pays your expenses and arranges a hotel stay. They record 5 shows a day so you have to arrive prepared for a stay to cover the maximum of 8 shows. My first show was to be in the afternoon and so I had to expect to be away for 3 days to cater for travel times.

As the recording date approached I started to have cold feet. Some of the young contestants particularly seem to have swallowed dictionaries; I hoped I wouldn't meet someone of that calibre for my first show. Not only did I not want to embarrass myself, I also fancied coming home with the teapot; the prize for winning at least one show. I practised and practised using the actual show and an app I found. (I later discovered that those exceptional young lads play online and know each others' strengths!)

Another part of the preparation is deciding what to wear. You are told to take 5 changes of clothes with you, given advice on what is suitable (eg no narrow stripes, no plain white, pink is good!) and they warn you that you may be told "you can't wear that!" I was fortunate, only one of my tops was turned down!

On arrival at the studios you are looked after by a team of contestant researchers and watch the previous match

to yours. I watched the lady I was about to play displace a reigning champion....I didn't think I would be taking home the teapot! I was so nervous!

The atmosphere in the studio is lovely, the relationship between the presenters (Colin Murray, Rachel Riley and Susie Dent) is great, there is a lot of banter and you, the contestant, are included. I was asked about various things but I wanted to make sure that Guernsey got a mention. Susie had been over for a Literary Festival event and it turned out that Colin had performed here many years ago doing a DJ set at one of the night clubs. If you saw Susie when she was over, you may remember that she was interested in the fact that we had our own patois, so I took her a copy of "Room on the Broom" in patois. Colin asked me about the patois and I was able to speak a few phrases which I was delighted made it through to the broadcast. Other things we talked about such as cake club and U3A were not so fortunate. I was delighted, and shocked, to find myself winning my first game and to know that I had achieved my goal, I had got myself a teapot!! After a short break my second game began and again, to my surprise, I won. I could not have been more surprised when I left the studios that night with 3 wins under my belt. I knew that I had missed some words I would have got playing at home and I blame my nerves for the fact that I missed several number games that I would have solved at home. So, that night, at the hotel, I practised some more!!!

The following day it all began again. The guest in dictionary corner changed and a magician, Ben Hanlin, arrived. We all watched really carefully as he did his magic but none of us could work out how he managed

his tricks. Each show ended with a conversation about how on earth they could have been achieved! As the day progressed Colin commented that he was surprised that I was so good at the words whilst making silly mistakes in numbers. He enjoyed teasing me about the fact that as a retired Maths teacher it was the numbers game that was letting me down. He ribbed me about that throughout my appearances. He also said that he felt that I might make Octochamp....that wasn't what I thought! Rachel tried to encourage me to choose a different pattern of numbers; I always chose 1 large and the others small but she had noticed that I missed the easy ways and always looked for the complicated solutions – perhaps I should have taken her advice. After the lunch break that day Colin asked one of the team if they had checked out “that fact about Guernsey” I thought he was going to ask me something about the island But, as I continued to win and eventually get my eighth success, it turned out that the fact he was checking was whether Guernsey had ever had an Octochamp! And I was very proud and thrilled to discover that I was Guernsey's first! Now I would be invited back to take part in a finals series where the Octochamps would compete in a knock out competition to determine a series winner. I was fairly sure who would win that, a young lad called Harry had, at that point, been by far the best player of the series.

Consequently, in November I returned to Salford for the quarter finals. As the 6th seed I would be playing the 3rd seed, a Maths teacher from a private school in the South West. I had thought I could beat him but I made some really silly mistakes, including misreading what I'd written down for one numbers round where both of us



missed a really easy one, I confess that at that point my nerves took over and that was the end of my challenge!! I watched the rest of the finals from the green room and really enjoyed the company of the other contestants. The two young lads, eventually the finalist and semi finalist, Harry and Viraj , had their families with them, and they made really good company. I don't think any of us doubted that they would be the two finalists, but I was surprised how nervous they both were at the start of that match. But I was delighted to congratulate the eventual winner and the runner-up afterwards and then return to my hotel ready for my return home. Proud of what I'd achieved and hoping that Guernsey had been well represented. Now I would say, if you fancy a go, go for it. The team are so friendly you'll have a great time, and maybe you too will surprise yourself.

Caroline Bowker



---

## Sculpture from Scrap Metal

The metalworking group have been working hard. You may have looked at their work previously at the KGV events as there is always a selection of work on display. The two works of Art here were produced by Hilary and Marie.



---

## Forthcoming Events and Reminders

---

### **New Craft Group - Felting 360+**

Karen Winter is resurrecting her felting group, with a twist. It will include Needlefelting, Wet Felting, Nuno Felting all combined with Painting, Jewelry Making, Sewing, Embroidery with Crochet!  
So if you want to learn new skills, new techniques and



meet new and old friends then join in the fun.

This group is full for February but there are spaces for March and April.

Contact Karen on: [Kaggie6773@icloud.com](mailto:Kaggie6773@icloud.com) for further details.

### **New Beginners and Improvers Euchre Group**

Friday 2 - 4pm at The Deerhound starting 9th February. Lunch available to order beforehand is optional, but please advise staff that you will be playing euchre later on.

More information from Terry by email: [naftel@cwgsy.net](mailto:naftel@cwgsy.net)

### **New Beginners Canasta Group**

Terry is offering to support those who are complete beginners and those who wish to improve. The group meet weekly at the Hampshire Lodge on a Thursday. Please contact him on: [naftel@cwgsy.net](mailto:naftel@cwgsy.net) if you want more information.

### **Girls Breakfast Group**

This group will NOT meet in February.

### **Boys Breakfast**

The next Boys Breakfast of 2024 will be on Thursday 1st February at the Saumarez Park Cafe at 9.30am. Just turn up for a hearty breakfast and a good natter.

### **New French Conversation Group**

Anyone interested in practicing their conversational French is welcome to join Susan on Thursdays 10am at Community Cafe at KGV. Susan Becker is offering a weekly session for those who simply want to practice

conversational French. She may be offering sessions for beginners in the future contact her on: [subecker@wanadoo.fr](mailto:subecker@wanadoo.fr) for further details.

### **Bridge Group**

Suspended until week beginning 26th February

### **Reading Group**

The group is now NOT open to newcomers.

If there is anyone keen to start another reading group please contact me, Jane, on : [1991pearson@gmail.com](mailto:1991pearson@gmail.com) as there are others keen to join.

Jane Pearson.

---

The first ever national u3a Festival is taking place 17-19 July 2024 at the University of York. It's an opportunity to bring members together to celebrate the joy of u3a membership.

Find out more about the festival on the u3a website and if you have any questions or would like to register your interest, please email [festival@u3a.org.uk](mailto:festival@u3a.org.uk). Please share this with your members who may be interested and want to take part.

---

**National Newsletter**

Are you receiving your own personal copy of the u3a National Newsletter? If not and you would like to see it then you need to go to this link:

[https://u3a.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?  
u=656ad5962b370cc9e2731d1ed&id=3cc1ed5b1c&e=2  
1dcf0fcf2](https://u3a.us9.list-manage.com/track/click?u=656ad5962b370cc9e2731d1ed&id=3cc1ed5b1c&e=21dcf0fcf2)

A bite-sized version is also posted by Alan on our Facebook page GUERNSEY U3A.

Copies of this newsletter and the National Newsletter can be found on the u3a Guernsey website.

All group activities can also be found on the u3a Guernsey website.

---

You can browse all the current interest groups on our website's [GROUPS PAGE](#). Click on this link to get there instantly.

Also check out the [EVENTS PAGE](#) to see what's happening. New events are added as soon as they have been organised.

Our website and [NEWS PAGE](#) are regularly updated with the latest information and pictures of group activities.

Please send in photos and news articles from your group to [u3aguernsey.news@gmail.com](mailto:u3aguernsey.news@gmail.com)

We would love to hear from you and to display your efforts on our website, newsletter and Facebook pages.

NB To access some of the documents on our website you will need a username and password.

These are common for all members and are the same for any document that is passworded. These are case sensitive and are as follows:

Username: U3aguernsey

Password: Lihounineteen

If you have any problems accessing the newsletter or any other document, please email us at

[u3aguernsey.news@gmail.com](mailto:u3aguernsey.news@gmail.com)

---

If you have any ideas on how to make being a u3a member a better experience, please share them by emailing [u3aguernsey.suggestionbox@gmail.com](mailto:u3aguernsey.suggestionbox@gmail.com)

These will be treated in confidence before being presented to the committee for discussion (anonymously if requested).



U3A Guernsey (Closed) Facebook Group



U3A Guernsey Website

---

This email was sent to [ianj@cwgsy.net](mailto:ianj@cwgsy.net)

[why did I get this?](#) [unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)

u3aguernsey.news@gmail.com · 5 Belmont Rise · Les Croutes · St. Peter Port, Guernsey GY1 1PZ ·  
Guernsey