



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

## **North Wiltshire Group**

covering Chippenham, Corsham & Calne area

*Learning for Pleasure*

Registered Charity number 1048393



***Newsletter Issue No. 244***

**November 2022 – January 2023**

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Please note:

## **SUBSCRIPTIONS !**

**Membership Fees for 2023 are NOW DUE.**  
**£15 SINGLE, £27 for a couple** (two people at the same address)

Our bank is now charging for each cheque we deposit or write out, so please could you either pay **in CASH or by BANK TRANSFER** (ie NO cheques!)

The details for a **bank transfer** to HSBC Bank account are: North Wilts u3a, Sort Code 40-17-17, account number 71419927, with your name and membership number as reference.

If you pay in **cash**, please put in an envelope with your name and membership number for identification and hand it in to Anne Ellis at a monthly meeting. Some group leaders plan to collect fees from their groups, and Anne does plan to visit larger groups in coming weeks when payments by cash will be possible.

New members can access a membership form from our website or contact our Membership Secretary (See Page 6).

**We aim to collect all of our fees by our financial year end of December**

If you have any **queries**, contact the Treasurer or the Membership Secretary (See Page 6 for contact details).

**Cover photo:** Poppies near Morgan's Hill

From the **EDITORS ...**

## **COPY DEADLINE**

for the next edition: **1<sup>st</sup> January 2023**

**Please send copy to:**

Frances Alexander

or Sue Taylor

**WEBSITE ADDRESS:**

**[www.northwilts-u3a.org.uk](http://www.northwilts-u3a.org.uk)**

**Contact for queries: Pip Higman, [pip@higman.eu](mailto:pip@higman.eu)**

**FACEBOOK**

N. Wilts U3A Facebook page is at **[www.facebook.com/NWU3A](https://www.facebook.com/NWU3A)**

## **EDITORIAL**

How lovely to be able to welcome so many new members and to be able to announce several new groups!



**On a practical note, Annual Subscriptions are now due!**

See Page 2 (opposite) for details.

**Frances Alexander & Sue Taylor**

**We welcome the following new members:**

Dee Masters, Diana Jones, Peter and Rosemary Crayford, Alison Parkes, Maggie Bushnell, Rita Battison, Joan Thake, Chas Lillystone, Karen Hurley, Natasha Bristow, Patrick Ellis.

## **CHAIRMAN'S CHAT**



. There will be some interesting talks for the rest of this year; Cynthia has been able to put together a varied programme and it is so nice to see members attending and enjoying the monthly meetings. Having a chance for tea/coffee and a chat before the talks seems to be working well – there is only one slight problem: as yet we have not really had enough volunteers to make the tea and coffee to get a proper rota going. So far the volunteers all seem to come from one group. How about some of the other groups seeing if they can help too?

I am very happy to say that we have had several new members joining. A very warm welcome to them all; I do hope they will enjoy the u3a. But our numbers are still well below the pre-covid ones so we may start a recruitment drive before long. The more members we have, the greater the chance that people will also want to start new groups - we have lost a few groups as well as members. Anyone who would like to start a group will be given support from the committee. It does not take very much work and can be very rewarding.

In October I shall be attending the National AGM virtually and will pass on any resolutions which have any repercussions for our u3a. The slight raise in our membership fee, which we have decided we must ask for in 2023, is due to the increase in the 'capitation' fee we pay to the National Office, agreed at the AGM in 2021. As a committee we try to keep our fees as low as possible to keep membership as accessible as possible, which seems to me and the committee especially important at present with the rise in inflation.

As we head towards the end of another year, I hope that you can look back and feel that this one has had some very good times and look forward to more in the future. It is really rather early for the usual end of year greetings, but I do wish you a lovely autumn – such a beautiful time of year with the trees changing colour.

**Pip Higman, Chairman**

## **MONTHLY MEETINGS**

in the Rotary Hall, Station Hill, Chippenham  
\*\*\* at 11am ( Tea / Coffee from 10.15am ) \*\*\*  
on the second Wednesday of the month.

### **Wed. 09 NOVEMBER**

#### **'Unity & Loyalty' – Ray Alder**

Ray is the Chairman of the Friends of Chippenham Museum and has always had a strong interest in local history. The subject of the talk and the title of his book is 'Unity & Loyalty' which is the history of the Chippenham Red Cross Hospital which was set up in 1915 in the Town Hall. This was not a military hospital but a base for convalescent soldiers who were recovering from horrendous injuries and who were often many miles from their homes. The local families in this small market town did everything they could to care for these stranded people and to ease the feelings of loneliness that they must have been feeling.

Many people in Chippenham today can recall stories about their relatives who became very involved with the VADs and others who undertook so much work, mostly unpaid, to care for these injured servicemen. 'Unity & Loyalty' is the town motto and features on the town crest - and the names were adopted for the two large wards that were set up in the hospital.

### **Wed. 14 DECEMBER**

#### **The History of Highwaymen in Wiltshire – Ruby Vitorino**

Ruby is a keen local historian who enjoys giving guided walks around the Salisbury area. She graduated from Bournemouth University and has since become a full time writer and lecturer. She has always been fascinated by highwaymen and wondering how their romantic image evolved, as they were certainly not nice people to know. One of the handsome young highwaymen that she will concentrate on had his body hung in chains in Chippenham after robbing the mail coach there!

Contd.....

Wed. 11 JANUARY 2023

**Bath at War – David Lassman**

David was born and brought up in Bath and is now a lecturer with Frome Community Education (FCE). When not involved with that, he is a freelance journalist and writer with topics ranging from Jane Austen to the history of the Frome area. In this lecture he explores Bath's experience of WW2, covering in detail life on the home front, set against the background of the wider theatres of war. The focus is on the ordeals faced by Bath's inhabitants with insights into the life of the bombed city.



**NORTH WILTSHIRE WINTER WALKS**

**Here is a summary of some of the walks, mainly circular, that helped to lift our spirits over the past two winters.**

We are not fans of muddy winter fields and footpaths, so these routes used minor roads and byways. Occasional vehicles passed by but, in general, the peace of the countryside filled these interludes of about an hour to an hour and a half. We have happy memories of beautiful views of the changing seasons and of twittering skylarks! We look forward to walking these in the coming season and wondered if you might enjoy them too.

If you want more detail, we can email a photo of the route on a map. If you have any similar walks to share, please let us know.

**FOXLEY- NORTON:** From the large lay-by just south of Foxley Green. Turn right from the lay-by and turn right at each junction. The route passes The Vine at Norton.

**BREMILL:** From the lay-by in Charlcott with a possible extension to Bremhill village. Turn right through Charlcott, turn right through the gate to the driveway past Bremhill House. Then at the crossroads, if not visiting Bremhill which is ahead, turn right up the hill, then right again at the top to walk along the road back to Charlcott with wonderful views in all directions.

**DEVIZES WHITE HORSE / ROUNDWAY DOWN:** a circular walk with various places to park. We usually drive carefully along the bumpy byway alongside the North Wiltshire Golf Course clubhouse to a crossroads of paths. Walk up the hill ahead, turn right through the woods near the White Horse, then right along the byway past Oliver's Castle, then right back to the parking. After very heavy rain there can be the odd large puddle to negotiate!

**YOUR COMMITTEE**

Chairman	Pip Higman	01249 247269
Vice Chairman	Dora Emmett	
Treasurer	Kathy Tunsley	
Secretary	Tricia Wilks	
Membership Secretary	Anne Ellis	
Speakers' Secretary	Cynthia Spragg	
Groups' Co-ordinator	Dora Emmett	
Gift Aid Officer	Anne Ellis	
Welfare Officer	Dora Emmett	
Newsletter Editor	Frances Alexander	
Website	Pip Higman	

**A little thought to fill a space:**

Tell me and I forget. (*Very true nowadays, I find! – FA*)  
Teach me and I remember.  
Involve me and I learn.

**Benjamin Franklin**

**CORSHAM:** From Springfield Campus. This is part of the Peacock Trail in leaflets available in Corsham Library. Left up Beechfield Road, right into Valley Road, left then carefully across the A4 by The Hare & Hounds. Right, then left into Pickwick Road. Left towards Hillgreen Lodge and Pickwick Lodge Farm. Left through the farm, then follow the road back to the A4. Left back to the pub and then retrace your steps to Springfield.

**LACOCK:** From the National Trust carpark. Turn immediately right, then right again with the abbey on your left, along the road and over the bridge; then left along the road past Bewley Court, left along to Reybridge. Turn left after crossing the river and then, as the road bends, look for a path between two cottages, then across the field. Then left down the hill to Lacock village.

**SLAUGHTERFORD / FORD:** From the Giddeahall lay-by on A420. Down the road from the lay-by to join a road from Biddestone joining from the left. Left at the next junction, down into Slaughterford, right up and over Common Hill to Ford, right up the hill past Toplands Farm, and left fork back to the car.

**BIDDESTONE / SLAUGHTERFORD:** From Biddestone church. Leaving the village, fork right down to Slaughterford, right through the village, right up the hill, fork right back to Biddestone.

**WEST KINGTON / MOUNTAIN BOWER:** From a lay-by on the Upper Wraxall to West Kington Road. Continue along the road past the nurseries and down into West Kington village, right up the hill and through West Kington Wick, right through Mountain Bower, right at a 5-way junction and then right back to the car.

**CHITTOE:** From a lay-by a short distance along the road signposted to Chittoe off A342. This is a there-and-back walk past the cottages and houses of Chittoe, continuing straight on along a broad woodland track until your legs tell you it is time to turn around to return to the car!

Hoping for some glorious winter sunshine!

**Sue & Bob Taylor**

## Chippenham u3a - Summary of Groups

**Costs vary** from nil or a nominal charge for refreshments to a sum per session to cover hire of room / hall / expenses etc, where relevant.

Group	Day	Week	Time	Where
Archaeology	Please ring	if you're	interested	
Art	Thu	wkly	10am	The Cause, C'ham
Board Games, including Upwords	Tue	1 <sup>st</sup> / 3 <sup>rd</sup>	2 pm	Leader's home
Book group	Fri	3 <sup>rd</sup>	2pm	Leader's home
Bridge	Tue	Mainly wkly	10.15am	Club room at St Andrew's
Calligraphy	Tue	2 <sup>nd</sup> / 4 <sup>th</sup>	10am	Room at rear of Neeld Hall, C'ham
Common Thread	Tue	4 <sup>th</sup>	2pm	Scout hut, Derriad's Lane, C'ham
Creative Writing	Fri	4 <sup>th</sup>	10am	Leader's home
French Conversation 2A	Tue	fortnightly	2pm	Members' homes
French (new group)	Fri	every other	10.15	Members' homes
German Conversation	Thu	3 <sup>rd</sup>	2pm	Small hall, St Andrew's
History & Archaeology	Fri	2 <sup>nd</sup>	10.30	Chippenham Museum
Luncheon Club	Sun	1 <sup>st</sup>	12.30	Indoor Bowls Club
Mahjong	Wed	wkly	2.30	Members' homes
Music Appreciation	Thu	1 <sup>st</sup>	2pm	Leader's home
Opera Appreciation	Thu	3 <sup>rd</sup>	2pm	Member's home
Philosophy (for non-philosophers)	Thu	2 <sup>nd</sup>	2.30pm	Members' homes
Play Reading	Fri	1 <sup>st</sup> / 3 <sup>rd</sup>	2pm	Leader's home
Scrabble	Mon	2 <sup>nd</sup> / 4 <sup>th</sup>	2 pm	Leader's home

### Note:

Interest is now being expressed about starting a Philosophy group, so do get in touch with Pip if you would like more information (01249 247269). One totally new group has now started (Creative Writing) and the original three groups of Board Games, Upwords and Scrabble have now done some merging and dividing to form two separate groups.

## Information from Groups

### ART

Rosemary Mace

As usual we meet every week in The Cause, Chippenham and, perhaps answering my comments in the previous Newsletter, two men have now joined us which is good! £2 a session covers the rent and the more artists we have, the lower the rent.

### BOARD GAMES / UPWORDS Alan Thorpe (NEW group!)

We have decided to include Upwords as part of Board Games, not as a separate entity, as it was previously. Please note that Scrabble has now 'broken away' and is listed separately!

Meetings: 2pm on 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays at leader's home.

### BOOK group

Pip Higman

Each month we embark on a new book to read and enjoy (or sometimes not!) and discuss – and these discussions can range far and wide. Currently we are reading 'The Trouble with Goats and Sheep' which, of course, has nothing to do with farming but is about life in the 1970s and is part whodunnit, part coming of age.

### BRIDGE Contacts: Ann or Wendy

The Bridge Group meets in the Club Room at St Andrew's Church in Chippenham each Tuesday morning. This is a relatively small venue and our group is almost at capacity. Our aim is to play bridge in a friendly, sociable manner - suitable for people who have played the game before. We could probably accommodate one or two more players; if you are interested, please contact me - Ann Green

### CALLIGRAPHY

Tricia Weaving

After the summer break, we have started a project with a text about circles, written in an experimental variation of the foundation hand and requiring precise pen work. Stencilled shapes of circles, using pastels, will form the background to the text. Other projects will include one on an Autumn theme, trying out different types of nibs and using masking fluid. This should take us up to Easter.

### COMMON THREAD Lynda Clifford (contact)

Common Thread 'stitchers' are now used to the change of the meeting day to the fourth Tuesday afternoon of the month. We will be continuing with our own projects. It is nice to see the progress being made by each person. In August eight of us met up for an afternoon 'cream tea' at the Angel Hotel. It was very enjoyable and thoughts are that maybe in December we could have a 'mince pie' treat to end the year.

### COMPUTER SKILLS

Pip Higman

Contact Pip if you would like to improve your current skills.

### CREATIVE WRITING

Frances Alexander

(NEW group!)

A group of five keen writers met to share their enjoyment of writing. We had each prepared a short piece (on any subject and in any style for this first meeting!) and then read it aloud to the group and shared some discussion of it. A most enjoyable morning. In future we will decide on a set subject / style for advance preparation and sharing each meeting and, after a cup of tea, hope to fit in some very brief spontaneous writing as well.

Meetings: 10am on 4<sup>th</sup> Fridays at leader's home.

**FRENCH Conversation (2A)** Margaret Barratt

We have recently resumed meetings after the summer holidays. We meet fortnightly on Tuesday afternoons at 2:00 pm in each other's homes. At present we are experimenting with the format of meetings: some may be structured around a chosen topic; others may be more generally conversational with no preparation required. At present we have a space, but the group may not be suitable for a complete beginner.

**FRENCH (3)** Vincent Pycroft

Sadly Vincent has had to close down this group, as numbers fell too far to continue.

**FRENCH Conversation** Lesley Jefferson

We meet every other Friday (literally, across the months!) for French conversation.

**GARDEN Club** Dora Emmett

Before Covid, we had a garden club. Would anyone like to start it up again?

**GERMAN Conversation** Dora Emmett

We meet to practise our spoken German in various members' houses. Contact me if you are unsure where we are meeting for that session!

**HISTORY & ARCHAEOLOGY** David Shockley

Seldom do we experience an event which we immediately recognise as being truly historic. The death of HM Queen Elizabeth II was such an event and to mark the occasion and as a small tribute, the

scheduled Archaeology session was postponed and an opportunity given for our members' memories and recollections of royal visits, glimpses or even actual meetings with the Queen. We also gave some thought to the possible form and place of the Monarchy in the future.

Our next meetings: 11<sup>th</sup> November and 9<sup>th</sup> December, when we will continue with our look at the World in the mid-years of the 19th Century.

**LUNCHEON CLUB** Tony & Wendy Reeves

We are enjoying meeting up for our monthly Sunday lunches again. Tables are allocated to us according to booked members. They fill up as people arrive and so we have a mix of couples, friends and singles, changing slightly at each table, which gets us all acquainted with both existing and new members. Average attendance is about 20. The North Wilts Bowls Club is happy to continue with our monthly meetings and the food is really excellent in cooking, portion size and price.

**MAHJONG** Kathy Tunsley

Celia has now decided to retire as group leader and Kathy Tunsley is the contact for the group which meets in members' houses now. So contact her if you need to know where and when etc.!

**MUSIC & OPERA Appreciation** Ann Seyfang

**The Opera Group:** We have been watching DVDs of *Die Fledermaus* (Strauss), *Aida* (Verdi), *Un Ballo in Maschera* (Verdi), and *Il Trovatore* (Verdi). As these often last for more than 2 two hours, we spread these over two sessions. To fill in the gaps we listen to CDs of singers. The DVD of John Adams' *Dr Atomic* was not popular as some felt it lacked real melodic line, so we only watched the first two Acts. I plan to continue showing Donizetti's Tudor Operas, having already seen *Roberto Devereux*. I welcome suggestions for singers or operas to listen to, so sometimes we digress a little! Now the Astoria is showing opera & ballet streams from *Covent Garden* and *The Met*, I am trying to see something of these operas first so members can get a feel for the opera before going to the cinema. More members would be welcome to join either group.

(Contd.) David has kindly agreed to host the **Music Appreciation** Group at his house. They have been watching concert recordings. Further details of dates and times from David on 01249 659806.

## **P**HILOSOPHY for non-Philosophers (NEW group!)

Based on the book 'How the World Thinks' by Julian Baggini, the group will learn and discuss world philosophies and how they affect current life. Meeting on 2nd Thursday of the month at 2:30pm in members' houses.

## **P**LAY READING Contact: Mary Henning

We were very pleased to welcome two new people to the group. There is still room for a couple more. It is very informal and we all enjoy reading the plays, which are a varied selection from the library.

## **S**CRABBLE Maggie Bushnell (NEW group!)

Dictionaries and word-lists can be consulted to check proposed words. Maggie can only host 4 people and currently those places are filled, so do contact her if you would like to play at any session, in case any of the current 4 players might be away. Meetings: 2pm on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Mondays at leader's home.

## **U**PWORDS Now incorporated in Board Games (above).



The u3a stand at River Festival on Bank Holiday Monday



Admiring Tunisian crochet pencil case