



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

North Wiltshire Group

covering Chippenham, Corsham & Calne area

Learning for Pleasure

Registered Charity number 1048393



Newsletter Issue No. 245

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From History & Archaeology group



NEW! From Sci & Tech group

From the EDITORS ...

COPY DEADLINE
for NEW Annual Handbook - 1st April 2023

*** See Notice on Page 11 ! ***

WEBSITE ADDRESS:
www.northwilts-u3a.org.uk
Contact for queries: Pip Higman, pip@higman.eu

FACEBOOK
N. Wilts U3A Facebook page is at www.facebook.com/NWU3A

EDITORIAL

At the Committee meeting in January, it was decided to change from Quarterly Newsletters to an **Annual Handbook (in hard copy)** to go to each household, with monthly Updates by email.

- **See Page11** for a detailed explanation of how this will work!

Frances Alexander & Sue Taylor



We welcome the following new members:

Cynthia Laity, Chris Norris, Steph Barker, Chris Higman, Aaron Sollis, Edwin Davies, Keith Clifford, Patricia Evans, Brett Ceazar, Margaret Lambe, Chris Brown, Janet Yull.

CHAIRMAN'S CHAT



Diary entry: 1st November 2022: Visited the inaugural meeting of the Science and Technology group where five members were discussing how to proceed. From there, went on to the Bridge group where Kenneth spoke to me about having reserved space for a u3a table-tennis group at Stanley Sports Centre. At home again I had an email explaining that two of our three French groups no longer exist. Perhaps it is a good thing this is not a typical day in the life of the u3a Chairman.

Since then the Philosophy for not-Philosophers group has had its first meeting so, although the French situation is unfortunate, our u3a does seem to be expanding. Anne has also been reporting increased membership, though we are still a long way off where we were before the pandemic. In January we are having a coffee morning for our 'newcomers' and most group leaders have agreed to come along so as to be able to talk about their groups. Often people join the u3a to come to one specific group and are not always aware of what else there is on offer.

At our committee meeting in January we will also be making a decision about our Newsletter, but more elsewhere once the decision has been made.

Once again, I would like to appeal to everyone to think about what you can do for our u3a. **The committee needs more members**, and we have a small group of people who make tea and coffee at our monthly meetings, but a few more volunteers there would mean everyone has less to do. We don't need more than 2 or 3 each time, but it should not always be the same two or three. How about a new year's resolution? – 'I'll help with teas twice in 2023!'

On that note, I wish all our members and their families a happy and healthy 2023,

Pip

MONTHLY MEETINGS

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

Wed. 08 FEBRUARY: Jackie Lucas – 'Power of Attorney Made Simple'.

Wed. 08 MARCH: AGM

Wed. 12 APRIL: To be announced

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	01249 247269

**** Planned change from Newsletters ****
to Annual Handbook!

This will be your last Newsletter!

Please see Page 11 to view Committee's decision to change from quarterly Newsletters to an Annual Handbook and email updates.

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 st / 3 rd	2 pm	Leader's home
Book group	Fri	3 rd	2pm	Leader's home
Bridge	Tue	Mainly wkly	10.15am	Club room at St Andrew's
Calligraphy	Tue	2 nd / 4 th	10am	Room at rear of Neeld Hall,C'ham
Common Thread	Tue	4 th	2pm	Scout hut, Derriad's Lane, C'ham
Creative Writing	Fri	4 th	10am	Leader's home
French Conversation	Tue	fortnightly	2pm	Members' homes
German Conversation	Thu	3 rd	2pm	Members' homes
History & Archaeology	Fri	2 nd	10.30	Chippenham Museum
Luncheon Club	Sun	1 st	12.30	Indoor Bowls Club
Mahjong	Wed	wkly	2.30	Members' homes
Music Appreciation	Thu	1 st	2pm	Leader's home
Opera Appreciation	Thu	3 rd	2pm	Member's home
Philosophy (for non-philosophers)	Thu	2 nd	2.30pm	Members' homes
Play Reading	Fri	1 st / 3 rd	2pm	Leader's home
Science & Technology	Fri	3 rd	10am	'Grounded', upstairs
Scrabble	Mon	2 nd / 4 th	2 pm	Leader's home

Information from Groups

ART

Rosemary Mace

As usual we meet on Thursday (10am-12) every week in The Cause, Chippenham. To cover the rent, we have to charge £26 for the 13-week term, and would ask for this to be paid in full, please, at the first session of the term.

BOARD GAMES / UPWORDS Alan Thorpe

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! More members welcome!

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

BOOK group

Pip Higman

The book group continues to meet monthly to discuss whatever the current book is. Mostly we read novels, but occasionally biographies, which we have been borrowing from Wiltshire libraries. However, in the new year we will be reading a novel by a local author who will come to our meeting to discuss her book, which is the third she has written.

BRIDGE Contact: Ann

We meet in the Club Room at St. Andrew's Church in Chippenham, 10am - 12 midday each Tuesday. This is a small venue, which is ideal as our numbers are still depleted compared to pre-Covid. A few more experienced players would be most welcome. The aim of the group is to play bridge in a friendly, sociable atmosphere, using simple systems. If interested, ring me, Ann Green, on the above number.

CALLIGRAPHY

Tricia Weaving

The Calligraphy Group will be meeting in the Town Hall for the time being, while building work goes on at The Meeting Place. Our first project will be working on the Half-uncial script, which is based on lettering in Celtic manuscripts. There will be an opportunity to try our hand at Celtic decoration, which should be quite a challenge.

COMMON THREAD

Lynda Clifford (contact)

We are a thriving group continuing to work on our own projects. One of our ladies recently completed a tapestry cushion cover. Others have been concentrating on knitting, embroidery, crochet and patchwork. New 'stitchers' are always welcome.

COMPUTER SKILLS

Pip Higman

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

CREATIVE WRITING

Frances Alexander

We have been really enjoying ourselves in sharing each other's work (prepared in advance on a common theme or style), with a bit of brief, often frantic spontaneous writing on the day! We welcomed two new members in January and so must now, I fear, declare ourselves as 'full'. Meetings: 10am on 4th Fridays at member's home.

FRENCH Conversation (2A)

Margaret Barratt

Since September, we have continued to base our conversations on loose themes, for example, 'Une journée difficile', 'Le weekend'. Themes are decided by the person who is hosting the meeting. Our conversations can take some very interesting and surprising turns. On 13 December we had our very enjoyable group Christmas Lunch at La Flambé in Sutton Benger.

GARDEN Club

Dora Emmett

The Garden group should get going in the spring – with luck!

GERMAN Conversation

Dora Emmett

In 2022 we lost a very dear member of our Group - Irma Ogbe who died last September. She was a long-standing member of our Group. We are now back to meeting in members' houses on the 3rd Thursday afternoon of every month at 2 p.m. We try to converse in German as much as possible and are also looking at German texts to help us learn more. We have had some new members join us recently which is really good.

HISTORY & ARCHAEOLOGY

David Shockley

We have continued our look at events across the world during the middle years of the 19th century with an account of some of the earliest Polar expeditions in keeping with our own wintery weather. In February we will be discussing events in Africa before moving, in March, to Central and South America. At the end of March the topic for Archaeology is the ancient civilisations of Meso-America - we do have a varied programme!

LUNCHEON CLUB

Tony & Wendy Reeves

We had pre-Christmas lunch on 18 December, thoroughly enjoyed by all. The caterers served up lovely meals to their usual high standard at a really competitive price. So why not give us a try in 2023! Our next meeting will be on Sunday 15 January 2023 at 12.30 for 13.00.

MAHJONG

Kathy Tunsley

Kathy Tunsley is now the contact for the group which meets in members' houses. Therefore 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 operas and, as these often last for more than 2 two hours, we spread them over two sessions. To fill in the gaps we listen to CDs of singers.

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.

More members would be welcome to join either group.

PHILOSOPHY for non-Philosophers Pip Higman (NEW group!)

We have just started to explore the book *How the World Thinks* by Julian Baggini. This is described as 'a global history of philosophy' and is introducing us to philosophies from all parts of the world. We will be reading short sections at a time and discussing what we read at home. It is early days and we do not know where it will lead us.

PLAY READING Contact: Mary Henning

We all very much enjoy our play reading afternoons. We would be very happy to welcome 2 or 3 new members to make it even better.

SCI / TECH Roger Tunsley

Your local u3a has recently restarted a group for all those interested in learning about science and technology topics. We meet on the third Friday of the month at 10:00 am upstairs at the Chippenham Grounded coffee shop. Our January topic is 'Our Universe', presented by member Keith Clifford. New members are always welcome.

For more information, contact Roger Tunsley at rtunsley@gmail.com.

SCRABBLE (NEW!) Maggie Bushnell

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 2nd and 4th Mondays at leader's home.

NEW! Introducing North Wilts u3a Annual Handbook

We have been wondering for some time about our quarterly Newsletter and whether it has now run its course. Much of its content is repetitive and therefore probably unread by many - and we feel we need a new approach.

So we have decided to change to an **Annual Handbook**, giving basic information for the year, backed up with email updates from Pip as the year progresses. The Handbook will be the same sort of size as the current Newsletter (though possibly with a few more pages!) A hard copy will be sent to every household in April / May, after the AGM in March. Please **keep it safely for reference** on your favourite bookshelf and consult it, as necessary, during the year!! New members will receive a copy on joining.

The contents will include such things as:

- Chairman's introduction
- Principles of the u3a movement – self-help learning etc.
- Monthly meetings – Dates etc, though obviously not speakers; this information will come on the regular emails from Pip.
- Activity groups – A grid showing what and when and where; Also clear descriptions from group leaders about how their group works – esp. important for new members and, hopefully, for current ones who may be thinking of joining another group.
- Fees – how much, when to pay and various options for paying.
- Support networks / Third Age Trust etc.

Pip's regular emails will give details, as the year progresses, of Monthly Meeting speakers, names of new members, local u3a news / requests etc.

If you think of any other areas we should cover, please let me know asap.

Frances