



# Pewsey Vale u3a

## NEWSLETTER

Issue 60

July 2023

### Message from the Chair

Dear Members

Well I was wishing for better weather and we certainly have had it these last few weeks. Now I am hoping for a bit of rain to water the garden and refill my water butts. We are never happy with our weather are we?

I do hope you are all well and enjoying life. Reading through this newsletter and seeing all that has been happening within our u3a that certainly seems to be the case! What a diverse range of activities and visits we have had during the last 3 months - it's amazing how far and wide we get and how fascinating some of our group activities are. The photographs certainly show us all "Learning, Laughing and Living".

It is 15 years this August since Pewsey Vale u3a was formed by Peter Mander and friends. We have come a long way since, and there have been lots of ups and downs - Covid being the most recent - but Pewsey Vale u3a is flourishing. I hope that we will be able to expand our activities and I know that there are plans afoot for some more interest groups. Please don't forget that any suggestions you have for a new group are very welcome, we will help in setting up and running them.

It is an interesting thought that as more and more people are opting to reduce their working hours, many could now become members. We must think of ways of enticing them to join us with some new activities as well as those we currently have.

We are looking forward to our next social on Tuesday July 18<sup>th</sup>, about Victorian Etiquette, further details in this newsletter, and a Cream Tea on August 3<sup>rd</sup>, both in the Bouverie Hall. I hope to see you then, it is always nice to meet new members and get to know the regulars better.

I must thank Joanna for all her hard work in putting together the newsletter each quarter, what a magnificent job she does. She tells me that this is the biggest yet and that is partly due to all your amazing contributions and of course all her hard work, collating them and publishing it. Thanks again from us all. It is so much appreciated.

Take care and keep smiling.

Fiona Cook

**This newsletter is distributed electronically to Pewsey Vale u3a members every quarter. If you are one of the few members who have been getting it by post and can now receive it by e-mail, please let us know.**



# Your diary page

The committee is working on other events: we'll keep you posted

**Pewsey Vale u3a**

learn,  
laugh,  
live

## "MANNERS PLEASE, DEAREST!"

Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> July  
at The Bouverie Hall at 2pm

David Allen presents Etiquette in the Victorian era



*This is an interactive presentation so you'll need to bring along the following items with you:*

- A teaspoon
- A paperback book
- A fan (If you don't own a fan, a folded piece of paper will do)

### HOME MADE CREAM TEA



Tuesday August 3<sup>RD</sup> 3-5pm

at The Bouverie Hall

It's our 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and we invite you to a Home Made Cream Tea

The cost is £5 person and is for PV u3a members only

If you are interested please contact Jean Rickard at:

[londonladyjean@btinternet.com](mailto:londonladyjean@btinternet.com)

phone 07501 713460 or 01672 563896



Make cheques payable to Pewsey Vale u3a and send them to Jean at:

2 Cygnet Place, Pewsey, SN9 5AN

or

Pay by BACS at Lloyds Bank

Pewsey Vale u3a

SORT 30-92-63 ACCT. NO. 00441504

*If paying by BACS please advise Jean*

July 2023	Thursday 6 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday 18 <sup>th</sup>	CHINES Wilton Social Meeting with David Allen on "Manners Please Dearest"
August 2023	Thursday 3 <sup>rd</sup> Friday 4 <sup>th</sup> Monday 28 <sup>th</sup>	Afternoon cream tea party CHINES Winchester <i>Bank Holiday</i>
September 2023	Friday 8 <sup>th</sup> TBC	CHINES Living Rainforest
October 2023	Monday 9 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday 17 <sup>th</sup>	Cheese and Wine evening Social Meeting with the Great Bustard Project
November 2023	Tuesday 21 <sup>st</sup> Friday 24 <sup>th</sup>	Annual General Meeting followed by Social Meeting with speaker to be announced Quiz and BYO supper
December 2023		

Dear Members

## THIRD AGE MAGAZINE FROM HEAD OFFICE (TAM) AND RENEWALS

Next time we renew subscriptions, which will be 1<sup>st</sup> October 2023, the committee has decided that members will be asked to **OPT IN** for the Third Age Matters magazine. That is the printed one that comes from Head Office, not the one that Joanna compiles every few months. Unless you are a new member when you will receive it for a year. This isn't the case at the moment when I ask you to tell me whether you would like to **OPT OUT** of the magazine or not, and I do not get a response about Yay or Nay from many members. This is part of our push to be more ECO friendly and use less paper.

So **please OPT IN** if you would like the TAM magazine, there is no additional cost to you for this magazine, but we feel that many members just put it straight in the recycling bin.

Please have a think about it and do subscribe to the magazine if it is useful to you.

Thank you for your time reading this.

*Jill Woodhams Pewsey Vale u3a Membership Secretary*

## WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS



Hello and welcome to those of you who have joined Pewsey Vale u3a in the last three months. We hope we haven't missed anyone out - if we have, please accept our apologies and claim your free gravel from the editor.

If you're a new member at a Social Meeting or outing, do come and say hello to one of the committee - we're all labelled and easy to find - so that we can introduce you to some friendly faces. At individual groups, this will happen anyway, so you won't feel left out.

## GROUP LEADERS' PARTY



We recently held a little get-together for our Group Leaders to say thank you for all the work they do throughout the year. If we had no Group Leaders we'd have no groups, and if we had no groups we wouldn't have much of a u3a!

Thank you, all of you, for everything you do. Many of your reports also appear in this newsletter, so read on Dear Reader.



This is also a good time to say thank you to our colleagues at the Heritage Centre. We use their Education Centre room for several of our groups and we held our party there, sitting on their delightful riverside decking. They always set out the room however we request, it's always clean and tidy and welcoming... and their rates are very reasonable and the people accommodating and flexible. Thank you, Pete, Carol, Paul and co.

## MAY WE BRING OUR .....?

Once upon a time, long long ago, we were very relaxed about inviting guests to our meetings and other events.

However, our masters at the u3a and the Charities Commission tell us that, alas, we're not covered for that degree of hospitality, so this is what we're allowed to do:

- ✚ All current members of Pewsey Vale u3a - of course - are eligible to attend our meetings, groups, socials, outings etc.
- ✚ Members of Kennet or Devizes u3a are welcome to participate in the activities of one of our groups, under our reciprocal agreement.
- ✚ Other than that, someone who is eligible to become a member of our u3a (ie no longer in full time employment) and has a genuine interest in doing so may attend one meeting before deciding whether to sign up as a member.
- ✚ That's all folks! So sorry, but no friends, family, neighbours, house guests or other no doubt lovely but ineligible attendees.

*Your Committee*

## OPPORTUNITY FOR A NEW GROUP LEADER CO-ORDINATOR

Here's a chance for you to get involved in the running of our u3a. And no, it won't take up a vast amount of your time. Here's how I see it:

I've been doing the job - among others - for some eight or nine years. It's time someone else had their say. I'm sure you'll think of lots of ways to enhance the role, but the basics are:

- ✚ **Be available to the Group Leaders as required.** On the whole, our leaders like to get on with things in their own way so there won't be much for you to do. If a new group is being set up, that's when your help is valuable, otherwise just be on hand to help or advise when needed.
- ✚ **Collect up all the group attendance registers and expense sheets** (where applicable) twice a year. As these are records which are (should be!) completed with every group meeting, it doesn't involve much work for anyone. Just a routine piece of bureaucracy, really. Why? So that we can check that people who come to our meetings are entitled to do so; so that we can keep some sort of overview of how well-used our groups are; and so that we can fulfill our obligation as a charity to account for any money changing hands.
- ✚ **Be a member of our committee** and help decide how we can best serve our members, as well as following the rules laid down by the u3a movement and the Charities Commission.

See? Nothing too difficult, or requiring special skills or experience. An interest in interacting with your fellow members is a distinct advantage 😊

Do get in touch if this might appeal to you, and we'll have a chat to see how you can get involved.

*Joanna Goulson*



## WHOSE MEDIA IS IT ANYWAY? DAY AT MARLBOROUGH COLLEGE

Several of us attended this event, which was postponed from last Autumn, and was very ably organized by our colleagues at Kennet u3a. Hats off to Jenny and her team for doing an amazing job. Sadly the auditorium was only half full but those who were there appreciated it very much.

Here are brief comments from some of our members. My apologies to those whose reports I have abbreviated. If anyone would like to see the full version please email Joann Goulson.

"I went not sure whether I would find all of it interesting. I was surprised as I found the whole day very inspiring, stimulating even. Every speaker who represented the wide range of skill sets in the media work were extremely interesting and much of their work was fascinating. An added bonus were the TED talks delivered by pupils of the lower sixth at the College. Thank you to the organisers of an excellent conference."

Lindsay

"Excellent speakers, including impressive contributions from five Marlborough College Sixth Form students, on this hugely complex and diverse subject. Stimulating, lively and informative day, good atmosphere, and .....a most excellent lunch. "

Ruth

"I found the whole day very illuminating and introduced ideas about the media that I had not contemplated. The talk about podcasts I found very interesting as I have only just discovered what a mine of information they are, from politics to music, mainly because I have found that I can listen to BBC sounds on our radio via Bluetooth. They asked are we at peak podcasts, I certainly hope not as they can provide insight into so many subjects" *(the rest of this report is available on request.)*

David

"I really enjoyed the Media Day. The organisation between the u3a and Marlborough College was excellent. The varied speakers included national and local journalists. The mix of professionals and the college students provided a good balance between the experienced and the younger minds learning. I felt pleased that the college students had been able to use the event to experience delivering a presentation and speech to an audience, as well as they research and knowledge into their particular topic.

I learnt that the media these days is very different from the past and the journalists' job roles are quite different, as social media and technology has now changed the industry vastly. The event provided me with a balance of views and experiences and it helped me to understand the challenges of modern day journalists, especially in the political environment."

Jo

For me, the highlight was probably some of the short TED (Technology, Education and Design) talks given by students from Marlborough College's Lower Sixth form. We understand that students had had considerable input into preparation for the day but unfortunately the deferred date clashed with exams, so we only saw half a dozen students. Those who spoke were obviously seasoned users of social media and other electronic communication, and their message was very much to warn against believing - or being influenced by - everything you read.

I wasn't sure what to expect of the day, the general theme of which turned out to be the means by which news is disseminated, largely by newspapers vs social media and how credible it is. The three professional journalists who spoke all insisted that reporters by and large tell the truth!

Joanna



# A FEW PHOTOGRAPHS FROM OUR CORONATION HOG ROAST





## STRETCH AND CURL

My name is Linda Towers. I run the Stretch and Curl Class. We are a fun and friendly group. My background is in Sports Massage Therapy and Personal Training. I ran my own Private Clinic for 20 years. Although I'm now retired, I'm enjoying looking after a great bunch of ladies and men in my class I run from the Bouverie Hall on a Monday. Doors open 10.15 to start at 10.30 am.

Come along and try it out. It's only £1 each session. Just bring a mat (or blanket) and wear stretchy clothes and you can see if our lovely class will suit you.



## ART GROUP

The art group continues to meet twice monthly in Manningford village hall.



At our last meeting in April we welcomed a local artist, Cathy Pearce, to give a demonstration of her work with pastels. Cathy works in several media but especially pastels.

During the afternoon we watched Cathy demonstrating the various ways she uses pastels to full effect. She produced a spring woodland scene as we watched but also brought along with her more examples of her work including still life pictures and landscapes. She also had with her sketch books showing how she develops her techniques.

We know that her demonstration inspired some of the group to get out their own pastels and try different ways to use them.

During our absence in Greece the group continued to meet - thanks to Dot and other group members, so we look forward to seeing what the group has been doing in our time away!

*Bob and Ann Smith*

*You will see pictures from this amazingly talented group throughout the pages of this newsletter (Ed).*

## MAHJONG FOR BEGINNERS

We have five registered players. Due to other commitments which participants have been unable to avoid, attendance at the last three sessions have been sporadic.



In order to play MahJong a minimum of three players are required, four players ideally. To allow the sessions to run we have had to backfill with members of the Kennet MahJong Group who happen to play in Burbage on a different day.

We are coming up to full-on holiday season, so I think this process of backfilling will have to continue until the Autumn. It's the only way games will be able to go ahead.

Those who have attended say they've enjoyed learning and very much want to continue. I've produced handouts for members to take away explaining the game and I will continue with that process, six more handouts and instructions are being worked on.

The group meets on the *4th Monday of the month from 10.30-12.30* in Burbage.

*For further details please contact Ginny Carnighan*

## WORDSMITHS

If this tickles your fancy, you might be a budding wordsmith:

**RUSTICLE:** An icicle-like formation of rust, as on an underwater shipwreck.

A blend of rust + icicle, coined by oceanographer Robert Ballard while describing such formations on the hull of the *Titanic*, the wreckage of which he discovered. Earliest documented use: 1986.

**USAGE:**

*"Andrea Leadsom [British MP] resigned, forcing a mini-reshuffle. This was not so much rearranging the deckchairs on the Titanic, as getting into James Cameron's mini-submarine, dropping to the wreck 12,500 ft below, sweeping down the rusticle-festooned grand staircase, and swapping out one of the light fittings because it looks 'a bit much'."* Marina Hyde; Exit Theresa May; *The Guardian* May 24, 2019.

We meet in Upavon on the third Wednesday of the month, with friendly dog(s) present.

*Joanna Goulson*

## JIGSAW SWAP

Don't forget that there is a Jigsaw Swap available at Social Meetings and on the second and fourth Tuesday afternoons each month. It's free!

Come to The Bouverie Hall between 2 and 4pm to borrow a jigsaw. When you have finished with it bring it back and choose another. There's a good variety of different pictures and styles to choose from. Most are 1000 pieces but there are a couple of 500 piece puzzles too.

*Lynne Batsford*





## GARDENING GROUP

The U3A gardening group continues to flourish and it is getting rather warm so it was lovely to meet up in a gorgeous garden just by the river in Pewsey. The sunflowers are continuing to grow, though not everybody's are still alive. Here is how a new member talks about our gardening group:



Hi, my name is Nigel Talbott and I retired about 12 months ago. We have lived in Pewsey for the last 35 years, owning 2 very different properties, in the village, in that time.

Our first house was a new, detached 4-bedroom corner plot, on a new estate, which we had the opportunity to set up with lawns for our 3 young children and a vegetable garden with a small fruit orchard. During this time, we grew a lot of our own food and it had to be low maintenance as I was working away in Europe from Monday to Friday.



Once our children had grown, been to university, and moved abroad we downsized to our current property, a pretty, 2 bedroom bungalow on the Swan Meadow estate, which now has a mini orchard in the front garden and is currently set up as a wild-flower meadow, complete with a mini hive of Bumblebees.

Joining the U3A Gardening Group was an obvious step for me as it gave me the chance to meet with other like-minded gardeners, share ideas and resources and have the opportunity to visit other members' gardens and exchange both plants and gardening tips.

At my first meeting, only 2 months ago, I was made to feel very welcome and was not surprised to know that I was already acquainted with many of the members.

The meetings are very relaxed, with ample opportunity to walk the host's garden, talk to and make notes on what works well and discuss the challenges the host may be having with their garden, and how these ideas could be used by other members. There is also the chance to swap plants and cuttings, and also time for tea and cake too. I would encourage anyone, regardless of their current gardening knowledge or circumstance, to join the U3A Gardening Group to take advantage of the many years of gardening wisdom that exists within the group. It also enables the sharing of ideas and getting to know, not only the other members, but also what kind of soils there are in the various parts of the village(s) and the plants that can, and cannot, be successfully grown.

I look forward to inviting the group to our garden in July to share our experience of creating a wildflower meadow and how it has created so many varying habitats for insects, birds, and small mammals. It should be interesting.

Can I take this opportunity to thank the members of the Pewsey U3A Gardening Group for making me feel so welcome.

*Group Leader Lizzie Humfress*



## CHINES

We are well into our year of CH(urches), IN((ns) and ES(tates) outings. Since we last reported, we have had guided walks of Calne and Malmesbury and a visit to Salthrop House garden (under the National Gardens Scheme). They've all been delightful days out and even the weather has co-operated.

We're very lucky in having the services of several helpful, pleasant and well informed guides, who are a delight to work with and who make our job so much easier. And we've seen some beautiful churches and, of course, eaten some tasty pub lunches.

Our outings appear on the diary page in each newsletter and I let members know when we are taking bookings. Remember that it is first come, first served as places are usually limited, but it's very rare that we have to turn anyone away.

And just to remind you that we don't provide transport: travel is by car, with as much car sharing as possible.



## WHAT ARE YOU READING?

Hello? Is anyone reading this column? I haven't had a single response so far. Do you want me to continue to suggest books you might like to read? Have you enjoyed any books I've suggested? And what books would you like to add to my list?

This time, no blurbs, no comments, just a list of books I've read and enjoyed. I won't bother you with the ones I've read or tried to read and have found dreary (eg an Anne Tyler) or well-written but far too wordy (Jonathan Franzen) or not quite funny (Tom Holt) or rubbish (Marple: Twelve New Stories). So:

- The Storied Life of A.J. Fikry by Gabrielle Charbonnet
- The Five People You Meet in Heaven by Mitch Albom
- Darling by India Knight (modern rewrite of The Pursuit of Love)
- Only Dad by Alan Titchmarsh
- The Life and Loves of a She Devil by Fay Weldon
- Agatha Christie by Lucy Worsley
- The People on Platform 5 by Clare Pooley
- My Name is Leon by Kit de Waal
- House Rules by Jodi Picoult

*Joanna Goulson*

## 1<sup>ST</sup> BOOK GROUP

Ann, Audrey, Pam, Janet and Sue,  
Have read many books, some old some new,  
Mother's Boy, Dickens' Son,  
The Lido was fun,  
With Still Life yet to come

*Group Leader Ann Saxton*

## WINE TASTING AND APPRECIATION



In recent months we've sampled wines from high altitudes, from Italy and New Zealand. At our most recent meeting, Jane and Brian introduced us to American wines most, but not all, from California. There were some pleasant surprises and certainly nothing that we felt was the same as its counterparts from the Old World.

As I said before, I am sorry that we're now so full (no, not like that!) that we can't welcome any more members into our group. We already run two consecutive sessions so I can't take on any more, but will be happy to help any member(s) who want to start an additional or similar group.

*Joanna Goulson*



## BOARD GAMES GROUP

There have been a lot of Bank Holiday Mondays lately which have interfered with the meeting dates of the Board Games Group.

Hopefully now we will meet regularly on the second Monday afternoon each month.

We have the opportunity to play a variety of games and members have learnt how to play new games as well as joining friends in well-loved favourites.

We are a friendly group and there is plenty of room for more members. So please get in touch if you would like to come along.

We play from 2.30 until 4 at the Heritage Centre room in Pewsey.

Lynne Batsford

## CARD GROUP

I wonder if our members are now just sending e-mails instead of sending cards through the post, as postage is getting so expensive, and have they cut down on who and why they send them?

It is lovely to open a card, be it for A Baby Shower card, A Celebration of a Birth "It's a boy" " It's a girl "card, Happy Birthday card, Christening card, Starting school card, New school card , Confirmation card, Passing your exams, Passing your driving test, Good Luck, Engagement, Wedding, Congratulations, Let's Party, Happy New Year, Mothering Sunday, Father's Day, Anniversaries, Halloween, Easter, Christmas, Bon Voyage, New Job, New Home, Sorry it's Late, Thinking of you, Get Well, Wishing you a speedy recovery, Sympathy, Thank you. (Sorry, I know there are a load more, I am well aware that I have missed out other religions: forgive me).

So why do we send them or hand them out personally and not send an email?

Group Leader Julie Peglar

## DOG WALKING GROUP

Josh here oh my paws what a year! Me suddenly me older dog have aches in my back it hurt! I not say, but my mistress think I do big jump on table see out not good now door closed when she out! My mistress get me pills (me not like much)! She hide them in food me not eat! Here pictures decent walk early when cool, came home with cool coat. Time to find new cool place. Woof 4 now.



What of our walkies? We have had one when we walked a similar route to that in the pictures, but sadly it's been far too hot until late in the evening, which is not ideal with this group, however we do hope to start walking again when it is cooler! aches and pains permitting! I am still being careful: this minor break seems to be taking its time!

We meet on the 1st and 3rd Monday of the month at 2pm outside the dentists in the High Street Pewsey. We welcome new members. Our walks are around Pewsey unless anyone would like to share one closer to their home, as long as there is enough safe parking.

Margaret Blacker & Josh leaders

## SINGING FOR PLEASURE

Not a great deal to report really. There is a steady trickle of new people, who are always very welcome.

The sessions have become more and more democratic. We start with a (suggested) playlist, but that's just to get things going and maintain momentum. However, anyone can call out a song from the book and we'll do it, there and then. If it's not in the book we can't do it, but if it's in the book, we can do it at zero notice. We actively encourage (require) requests in this way, and it makes the sessions very interactive, with lots of conversation and jollity that keeps up the pace.

The hour goes very quickly, and before you know it, it's time for tea and biscuits. It's what Friday morning is for 😊

We meet in the Bouverie Hall on the second and fourth Fridays of the month at 10.30am.

*Andy Vowles*

## WALKING4EXERCISE



Flowers have been a highlight of our walks recently.

We visited West Woods in May to walk amongst the wonderful bluebells and then enjoyed a beautiful walk in mid June with breathtaking views and hundreds of delicate orchids on the downs near Cherhill.

There was a very yellow walk earlier in May when the oil seed rape was in full bloom around Burbage and a wide variety of lovely wild flowers on display when we set off from Small Grain Picnic Site between Devizes and Calne.



Many thanks and well done to the members of the group who have led us on such gorgeous walks this spring.

We meet fortnightly on Monday afternoons if you would like to join us.

*Lynne Batsford*



Cathy Pearce



Cathy Pearce



## QUIZ GROUP

Despite my own abject failure to come up with a mnemonic for the five rivers of Salisbury - Avon, Nadder, Wylie, Ebbles, Bourne - I proudly present some brilliant answers from members:

From Avril: Never Eat Bananas When Angry

From Ann: A Beautiful Emerald Needs Wearing

From Alison: We Need A Better Explanation

From Cathy: A Bad Egg Never Works

From Michael: American Bald Eagles Never Wander

*(See also Liz's report from Creative Writing Group 2.)*

And Cathy has set us another perpetual question (to add to Nuuk, the five rivers and Amhenotep/Ankhenaton): what is the Tibetan name for Mount Everest? CHOMOLUNGMA (meaning Goddess Mother of the World). Let's see who can remember that!

*Joanna Goulson*

## 567 WALKING GROUP

Our walks this Spring have started from Rowde, Savernake Forest and East Grafton so we have enjoyed canal paths, wooded tracks and farmland.

There has been much to see and enjoy along the way and the company has been excellent. Walkers volunteer to plan our walks and they have done an excellent job.

Many of our walks include a pub lunch or drink for those who want to participate.

We will be visiting areas around Caen Hill and Urchfont in the near future.

You are welcome to join us if you would like to walk 5, 6 or 7 miles with a friendly group of people.

*Lynne Batsford*





## HISTORY OF TRANSPORT



The themes of our talks for this Group have been quite varied over the last couple of months - and a couple it is since we had an "away day" in May when a group of us went to Haynes Motor Museum. Several of us had been before, but this time we had a guided tour which certainly added to our enjoyment and knowledge of the exhibits. The "Red" room (a hall entirely populated by red cars) is always an eye-opener and most of us agreed the Ferrari's were particularly stunning. The vehicles always look so immaculate, their paintwork gleams such that you feel the volunteers with their dusters must spend all day doing nothing else but polish!

Just a bit of a side-note, Haynes is a wonderful place to stop off for a comfort/sandwich break and cup of coffee if you're en route to the West Country on the A303.

Our April talk was certainly a lot different, and there was marital dispute in this household as to whether it should have been designated for the Military History Group or not, since it was all about tanks! Certainly not a usual mode of transport, but Peter Wilson's expertise and anecdotes made it a really different and interesting presentation, particularly with a comprehensive historical background about tanks.

Our June presentation was again very different, a talk by another Group member David Hodgson about his career as a River Pilot on the Mersey for 30+ years. This aspect of maritime life is probably something few of us know much about and take for granted, so David's talk filled in a lot of blanks for most of us.

I have been the Leader for this History of Transport Group for about 8 years now and feel it is time to hand over to someone else, so please let me know if you would like to pick up the mantle or indeed know of someone who might be an ideal replacement for me. I have speakers lined up for September, October and November

(December's meeting always falls at Christmas time anyway), and I am quite willing to lend a hand, make suggestions and help to get things up and running again in the New Year. So please ..... help keep this Group active!

Sue Greatorex

## COUNTRY DANCING

There has been lots of fun and laughter at Country Dancing and luckily the Bouverie Hall has been very cool during the hot weather. We have had the doors open and a lovely breeze has been blowing through.



We have danced our regular old favourites. We have begun to learn some new dances and practised those dances which we enjoy but find difficult.

Family Waltz has been rejected because it was too twirly, although I like it and the music is very pleasant!

Nothing is ever perfect and nobody minds if dances go a bit wrong. We are satisfied doing our best, not falling over and getting together for a dance, a cuppa and a chat.

Come along if you fancy it. Second and fourth Tuesday afternoons each month at 2pm.

*Lynne Batsford*

## CREATIVE WRITING GROUP 1

We still meet on the second and fourth Wednesdays from 2 till 4pm We are taking a break in July to make sure members can go away without feeling guilty about not doing their homework.

The group has no spaces at the moment for additional members but the waiting list has disappeared as it has turned into Creative Writing Group 2. Thank you to Liz for taking that on.

Our members were set the task of writing a limerick either about the writing process or our group. Some of the results are below.

*Wendy Argent*

A bunch of old scribes from the sticks  
Still knew they had plenty of tricks  
They wrote poems and prose  
About life, loves and woes  
And even a few limericks.

In Pewsey a group likes to write  
We practice with all our might,  
From poem to prose  
Where we go no-one knows  
But the end result always delights.

The writers all needed a break  
So they just drank their tea and ate cake  
No homework was set  
But no, please don't fret  
For this news is totally fake.

In Pewsey a group of keen writers  
Meet twice a month, they invite us  
To enjoy tea and cake  
And the writing we make  
On topics that always excite us.

There once was a writer nearby  
Whose material was sourced from the sky.  
She asked what is better for,  
Simile or metaphor,  
Those ideas that drop from on high.

Wendy, two Ann(e)s, two Janets and Graeme  
Then Fiona and David both caeme  
If our rhymes ain't as good  
As they aughter should  
We have only ourselves to blaeme.

## CREATIVE WRITING GROUP 2 (aka WRITING FOR FUN)

Our group meets on the 3rd Wednesday each month from 2.00 to 4.00 pm where we discuss our 'challenge' that was set the previous month. Everyone is very kind and encouraging. We have space still for two, perhaps three people to join us. Why not come to see if you would enjoy writing a very short story or poem? The writing leads us to discussing all sorts of things besides, and it's not at all 'heavy' or intellectual.

*Leader Liz Whitebread*

I also belong to the Quiz Group (fun on 2nd Monday at 4.30 in the Heritage Education Centre) and Joanna is trying to find ways to help us remember the five rivers of Salisbury, so I asked the group if they would like to try to write a poem - here's the result.

### To Them Folks in Salisbury

You folks what lives in Salisbury  
You seems a greedy lot.  
I hears you've got five rivers.  
Four more than what we got.

Us folks what lives in Marlbury  
We only needs the one  
That be our lovely Kennet  
What through our town do run.

So, you proud folks of Salisbury  
We're not jealous, not one jot  
Cos us fine folks in Marlbury  
Are content with what we got.

You can keep your buddling Nadder  
Your Avon and your Bourne  
It makes I cross and madder  
To hear you blow your horn.

Cos I hears the Ebbles bittish  
And the Wylle cribbles slow  
So you proud folks in Salisbury  
You know where you can go.

*Kate Morrison*

### How to Remember the Rivers in Salisbury

How to remember the name of each river?  
I have to confess that I'm all of a dither,  
Maybe the answer will come to my brain  
And stop this unending worry and pain.

I've tried rearranging the letters in each  
To see if that helps put the word within reach  
Which was easy for Avon, I simply made Nova  
But Wylle just flummoxed me over and over

I've tried a sentence with each initial letter  
But nothing I thought of was any better  
A map of them all just looked like a tree  
But the names didn't stick in my head, you see

I finally knew where I had gone wrong,  
Why not put them all into a song?  
But whatever I tried had an extra syllable,  
My notebook remained completely unfillable!

Maybe I should admit defeat  
And leave my memory incomplete,  
It seemed nothing could make me madder  
Than Wylle, Ebbles, Avon, Bourne and Nadder.

But wait .....I just remembered them all.  
I no longer need to do this at all!

*Margaret Slater*





## PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP 2 (PG2)

We try - and often fail - to stick to the fourth Friday of the month. Let me know if you'd like to join us.

Here we are at In-Excess garden centre:



and at Cholderton Rare Breeds Farm:



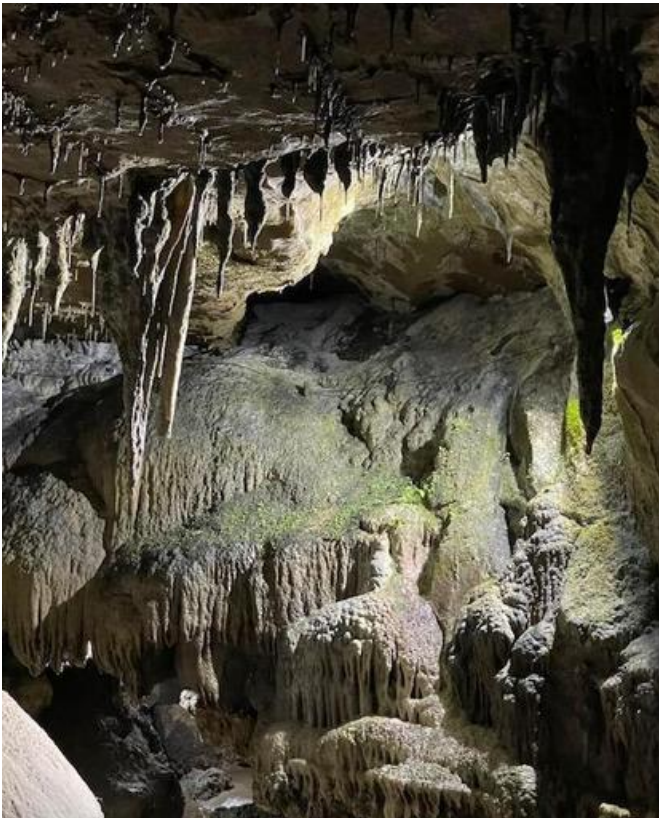
You can see the work of both photographic groups on:-

[https://pewseyu3a.slickpic.com/albums/\\_2023/?wallpaper](https://pewseyu3a.slickpic.com/albums/_2023/?wallpaper)

Joanna Goulson



## WALKING WEEKEND IN YORKSHIRE



Inside Ingleborough Cave near Malham taken by Usha Gupta on the walking weekend.

Some members of the Walking4exercise Group and 567 Walking Group travelled to Malham in the Yorkshire Dales for a long weekend walking with HF holidays.

We were fortunate to have fabulous weather and thoroughly enjoyed our walks in the glorious landscape. There was a choice of 3 interesting walks each day depending on how strenuous you wanted to be. We added to our packed lunches by visiting pubs, cafes and ice cream parlours along the route each day.

The hotel had recently been refurbished and was very comfortable, providing us with excellent accommodation, food and drinks.

Now we are thinking about where to go next!

*Lynne Batsford*



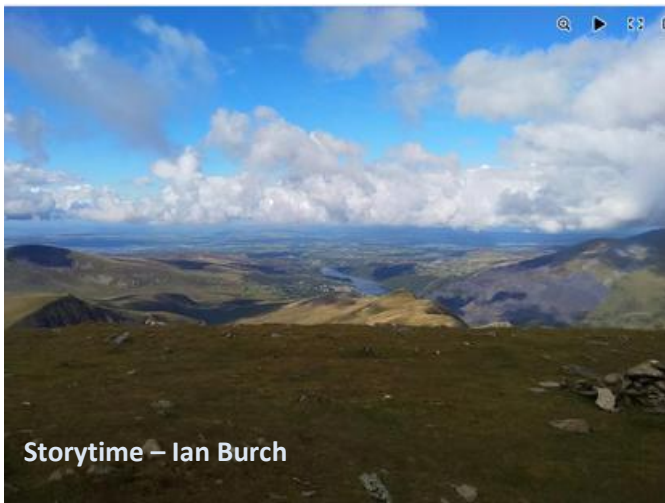
Dot Hague



## PRACTICAL PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP (PPG)



Sport – Sue Chillcott



Storytime – Ian Burch



Waterscape – Mary Allen



Waterscape – Pete Berry

Members managed to find a great number of sporting activities to photograph for our April meeting despite the dreadful weather, cancelled fixtures, teams playing away from home, and so on. Family visitors arriving on a day planned to take photos, a wife fracturing her finger on another day intended for a photo outing, all added to the frustration. Just another reminder that we should not leave things to the last minute!

There were some great action shots taken during a cricket match using a bridge camera (but with the aid of a very long lens); most of the group risked being struck by balls whilst taking photos of games of golf, tennis, football or rugby and one could easily have been shot!! Cycling, running, table tennis and badminton, hang gliding, bowling, fishing and archery also featured.

Another member keen to impress parked his car on the road, opened the sun roof (it just happened to be a day when it was not raining) and stood on the driver's seat so that he could peer over a tall hedge to take a photograph of an aircraft - there's dedication for you, or is it madness?

We were pleased to see that our new member had uploaded two photographs to the group's album but unfortunately he was not present to tell us about them.

The challenge to tell a story in eight photos resulted in a great variety of photographs being reviewed in May. Subjects covered were stained glass windows in the Pewsey Vale, baking cakes aided by grandchildren, milking time on the farm, the installation of a replacement boiler in the snow, coronation celebrations in Marlborough as well as a history of the High Street, "I want to go out" - a pet dog's plea, zoo animals photographed in colour and again in black & white, the arrival of a train at Pewsey Station and a walk to the summit of Garnedd Ugain (the second highest peak in Wales at 1065m) - from which U gain a spectacular view (sorry!).

With the amount of rain we had earlier this year one could be forgiven for thinking that there would be an abundance of puddles in our 'Waterscapes'. Not so. Reviewing this topic on an extremely warm and sunny day in June the nearest to a puddle we saw was a flooded road and fields under water. Most photographed scenes were of rivers, ponds, lakes, canals and, of course, the sea. The number of different locations within the UK was vast and beyond our coastline were the Outer Hebrides, Rotterdam, Paris and Portugal.

In June we started taking 'Summer' photos for our 'Seasons' project and the following month we will be compiling our list of topics for the next u3a year.

Monthly meetings are held in the Education Room (next to the Heritage Centre) from 10 'til 12 noon on the second Friday. We are nearing capacity but if you would like to know more about the group please contact the group leader.

*Group Leader: Keith Bew*

## **FRENCH CONVERSATION GROUP 2**

The second French conversation group (we only started meeting last September) has continued meeting once a month for a two-hour chat over coffee and biscuits. We always start our sessions with a general chit-chat, catching up on everyone's 'quoi de neuf' since the previous meeting. We have enjoyed hearing about holidays to far flung corners of the world, the trials and tribulations of having building work done, and the vagaries of the NHS - all of which have given us the opportunity to learn new vocab. We usually then read through an article or a poem and attempt to translate it, and one month we had a little quiz on useful expressions (test yourself below!).

We all seem to learn something new each month, although of course the best bit of getting together is just for the enjoyment of speaking French for a couple of hours and reminding ourselves why we love the language and the country.

So for the French-speakers out there, do you know what the following expressions mean?

1. **Être à côté de la plaque:**

- a) *To be at the wrong place*
- b) *To be wide of the mark; to be completely mistaken*
- c) *To be out of sorts*

2. **Prendre congé:**

- a) *To take some time off*
- b) *To take one's leave; to say goodbye*
- c) *To live on convenience food*

*See further on for answers.*

*Group Leader Jackie Reid*





## LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

Jonathan Gaunt, our invited speaker in April, spent his working life in photography both behind the camera and teaching the subject.

His passion for photography began when, age 10, he was given a Brownie 127 costing £1 2s 6d as a Christmas gift since when he has amassed a vast collection of vintage equipment and images.

Unfortunately, after 40 trouble-free years of service, Jonathan's projector had failed the day before the meeting so each slide, and there were dozens of them, had to be loaded and unloaded individually throughout his presentation.

Entitled '*Photography - the Pioneering Years*' his talk covered the period 1850-1890 and was both entertaining and educational, guiding us from the world's first permanent photo titled '*View from the Window at Le Gras*' taken with the aid of the camera obscura in 1827, through all the complex and often incredibly dangerous processes that developed thereafter.

Members were able to examine all manner of items from a bygone age and to witness Jonathan's wife sitting perfectly still for the time required to take a portrait photo. Prior to 1840 the early daguerreotype images needed an exposure of 20 minutes mainly to ensure no blurring occurred - the practice of smiling for the camera did not become standard until the 1920s when exposure times had been greatly reduced and the sitter could be more relaxed.



Of all the intriguing stories Jonathan told one that stood out for me was of Royal photographer, Roger Fenton, commissioned in 1855 to go to Crimea to photograph the aftermath of the Charge of the Light Brigade. He travelled with and worked from his horse-drawn photographic wagon loaded with all the necessary equipment, including the hazardous chemicals needed in the developing process, and sent the resulting images back to England. Here an engraving was made of them and published in the Illustrated London News. One of the most famous of photos of the Crimean campaign was his of the 'The Valley of the Shadow of Death' showing a dirt road in a ravine scattered with cannonballs.

This was a fascinating and illuminating talk presented with great enthusiasm and enjoyed by us all. Of course no talk on this subject would be complete without mentioning 'selfies' but can you guess in what year the first self portrait photo was taken? Answer printed at the end of this article. In closing Jonathan commented "What a sad world it would be without photographs" - I am sure many of us feel the same.

In view of the King's coronation, the many celebrations and all the Bank Holidays a speaker was not booked for our May meeting. Instead a handful of enthusiastic group members presented their own research based on a '*Royal*' theme. Suggested options included discovering more about a royal figure from the past or any pre-1953 coronation.

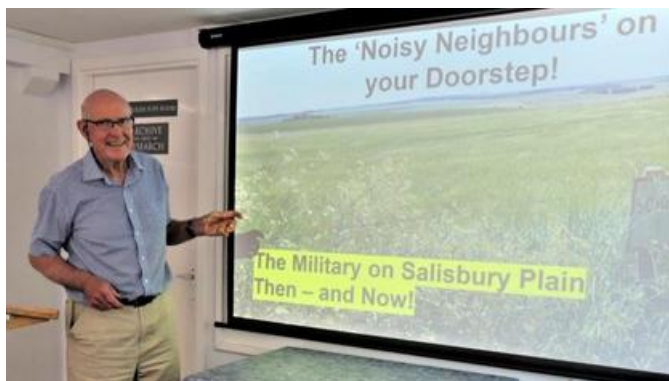
George V, whose coronation is commemorated on the pedestal that supports King Alfred's statue in Pewsey, was the choice of two members whose presentations surprisingly complimented one other so well having been approached from entirely different perspectives. As were two pieces about early coronations. One explored the lives of three kings and a saint involved in the establishment of

Westminster Abbey whilst another highlighted some of the strange and amusing things that happened during several coronations after 1066.

Always present at our meetings is a lovely cheerful lady who is never without a smile and invariably makes us laugh with her tales. This month was no exception when her very personal recollections of seeing (or almost seeing!) the Queen and other members of the Royal family had us all in stitches.



It is not customary for us to have an interval but on this occasion we celebrated the coronation (and the group leader's imminent birthday) with tea and a selection of cakes consumed in glorious sunshine on the decking, followed by a draw which allowed everyone to win a prize. Such a good time was had by all that our meeting over-ran by half an hour and ended with the agreement to hold a similar 'themed research' meeting in October.



Morton Burdick has quickly established himself as a popular and excellent speaker within and beyond our u3a community and kindly accepted an invitation to talk to us in June about '*Our Noisy Neighbours on Salisbury Plain*'.

Many members had arrived early which led to an exchange of military stories and questions even before the talk started. In fact it was by far the liveliest pre-lecture chat I have experienced in my three and a half years as group leader!

The MOD has 1700 ranges across the globe, 64 of which are within the M5 corridor. As a Range Safety Officer Morton was responsible for the overseas ranges giving him the opportunity to travel the world.

He first explained the various reasons, not least the blunders and inefficiencies of the Crimean War, for the Government's War Office to acquire ever larger pieces of land for the training of troops. The 1897 Military Land Act permitted the purchase of whatever land was needed to meet their requirements. Salisbury Plain, the largest unfenced chalk downland in Northern Europe, provided the ideal solution and with five rivers either running round or across the area had sufficient water for the Army's thousands of horses.

We were shown the earliest photo of firing at Stonehenge taken in 1899 and one of Larkhill Camp being built in about 1915 - the Pewsey to Salisbury light railway visible in the background!

The main programme for acquiring the land was completed in 1920, and the major garrisons were constructed over the next 30 years.

The Ministry of Defence was formed in 1964 and now owns the largest military training area in the UK.

The Defence Infrastructure Organisation plays a vital role in managing the delivery of what the Armed Forces need to live, work, train and deploy on operations. They also form the unarmed security service ensuring the safety of all who use Salisbury Plain be they military personnel or the public.



The talk was packed with interesting facts, figures and tales supported by a slide show of maps, diagrams, tables and photographs, so many that my note-taking could hardly keep up. It has been impossible to do justice to this absorbing presentation which led to even more questions and discussions after the meeting. Thanks to Morton I also heard for the first time the use of the now rather dated word 'rusticate' meaning 'go to the country' proving once again that we are never too old to learn!

Morton had prepared the lecture especially for our group so was presenting it to an audience for the first time. Judging by the interest shown by some members responsible for engaging speakers for other organisations it will definitely not be the last.

We meet in Pewsey on the third Thursday of each month and would love to have more presentations by Pewsey Vale u3a members - we are always willing to help!

*Group Leader: Wendy Lawrence*

*Answer: The first self-portrait photo was taken in 1839 by Robert Cornelius.*

**PATCHWORK GROUP**

Here are two very different quilts: the first very formal following an intricate design using elongated hexagons, and fine liberty fabrics.



The second, which will be using a variety of shapes and colour fabrics for a child's bedspread.

Here we have octagons and little squares on the larger piece then broad diamond shapes to create the illusion of tumbling blocks. The two areas will be joined by strips with unicorns and castles; these are fat quarters brought from the Gnome Hut.



*Group Leader Margaret Blacker*

**French Answers:**

- 1. b) *To be wide of the mark; to be completely mistaken,*
- 2. b) *To take one's leave; to say goodbye*