

Editor: [Sue Anderson](#)

**W**e welcomed our 200th member last month and although we are a relatively small group compared to other u3as in more urban places we are growing steadily and haven't been negatively affected by the lockdowns in 2020/2021.

I like to think that we are a friendly organisation with a range of interest groups so that there is something for everyone – and of course we are always happy to receive ideas for new groups. The principle of the u3a movement is that we are self-sufficient and run ourselves. In practice this means that we rely on our members to organise events and groups. Group coordinators are always pleased to accept help and support from group members so if you are able to offer a little bit more time, then let your coordinator know and help to share the load – even if it's only buying the refreshments from time to time.



Our Open Meetings have been warmly received during 2023 and we've had a wide variety of speakers and topics. We have regularly had over 70 attendees and people have welcomed the chance not just to learn about something new, but to meet up with other members and share news and gossip. More about our Open Meetings on the next Page...

Hope to see you at our next Open Meeting on the 15th November.

Best wishes,  
Janet

[Janet Walsh](#) (Chair)

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## Dates for your Diary



**Festive Flowers**



**Christmas  
celebration**

## Festive Flowers

A talk and demonstration by much loved local florist Ann Whysall



**Wednesday 2pm**  
**Minsterley Parish Hall**  
Refreshments available  
Free entrance

**u3a** Pontesbury  
& Rea Valley

*Anne Whysall*  
FLORISTS



## u3a P&amp;RV news



Our most recent well attended presentation by Lizzie and Jane Hulton-Harrop centred on a new approach to farm management in The Stiperstones area and once again we were able to get an insight into a topic that we perhaps haven't really thought about before.



Our next Open Meeting is on Wednesday 15th November at Minsterley Parish Hall at 2.00pm. We will be welcoming yet another member of our community – Anne Whysall – who will be talking to us about life in the floristry business. She will be doing an arrangement which will be raffled off at the end of the meeting.



We are pleased to welcome two new members this month:

Lesley Holmes  
Meurig Jones

This means that we have now more than 200 members with membership now at 201, with several more potential members in the wings.

Membership secretary  
[Steve Anderson](#)



On Wednesday the 20th December we will be having our u3a Christmas Celebration at The Pavilion in Pontesbury starting at

2.00pm. There will be refreshments and an opportunity to share your Christmas memories and plans with u3a friends.

If you would like to make a cake or mince pies etc. for the event then we would be delighted to accept – but please let [David Taylor](#), our vice chair (who also seems to be in charge of cakes at such events), know in advance.

**learn, laugh, live**

## Festive Flowers

A talk and demonstration by much loved local florist Ann Whysall



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**u3a** learn,  
laugh,  
live  
Pontesbury  
& Rea Valley

*Anne Whysall*  
FLORISTS

OPEN MEETING

Members & non-members welcome





## u3a P&amp;RV news



You may have seen advance publicity for an 'Elvis Tribute Concert' to raise funds for Pontesbury Library.

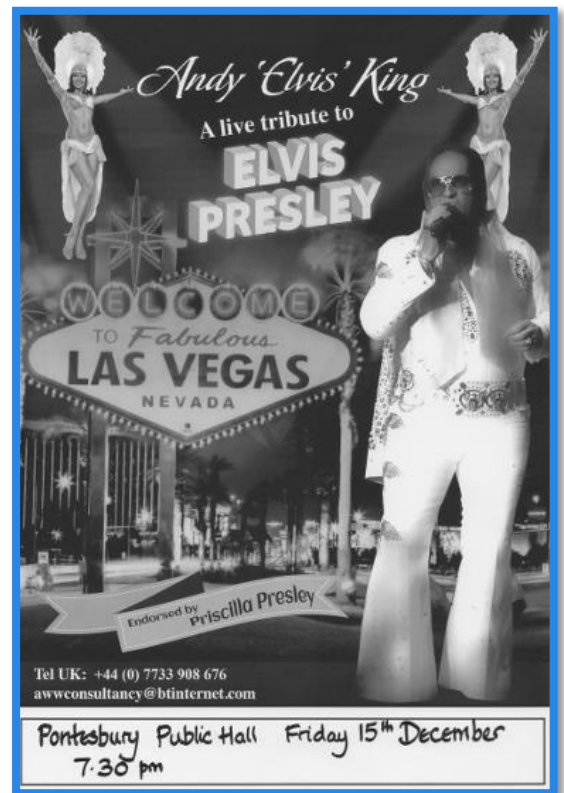
This is taking place on Friday 15 December at The Public Hall and tickets are on sale at the library and at Hignett's. I know that many of our u3a members are also FOPL supporters so I'm sure I'll see you at the concert.

I will be running the raffle on the evening so would be very grateful for suitable raffle prizes if you would like to donate. These can be dropped off at the library or at our next Open meeting. Thanks in advance for your support.

Chair

Janet

[japa.walsh1@btinternet.com](mailto:japa.walsh1@btinternet.com)

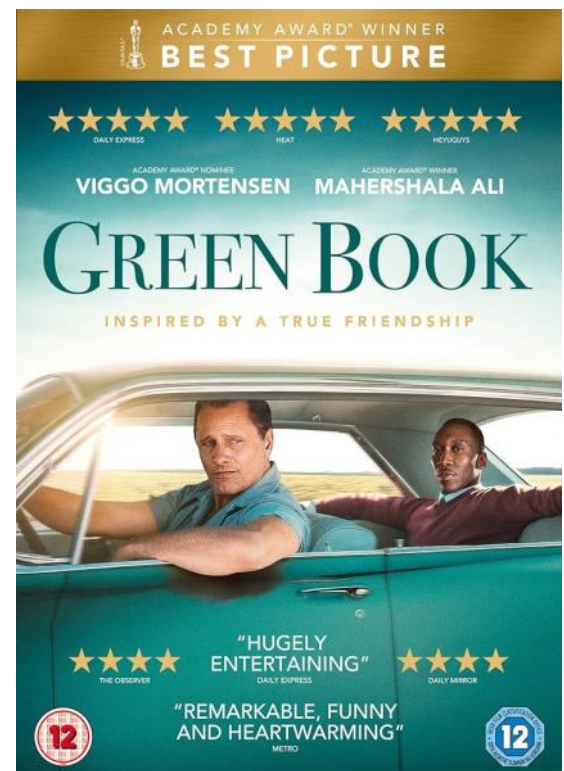


## learn, laugh, live

The next film in Marton will be "Green Book": a New York Bouncer chauffeurs a black pianist around the southern United States at a time when racism was dominant.

Fish and chips can be pre-ordered at a cost of £5, plus £5 to watch the film.

Further details can be obtained from John Rice ([john476ad@gmail.com](mailto:john476ad@gmail.com) or 07810 230860).



Wed <b>1</b>	10h00	<b>Table Tennis 2</b> Minsterley Parish Hall	Mon <b>13</b>	14h00	<b>Folk Music</b> Minsterley Parish Hall	Tue <b>21</b>	16h30	<b>Badminton</b> Mary Webb School, Pontesbury
	10h30	<b>Italian</b> Coordinator's house	Tue <b>14</b>	10h00	<b>Cycling</b> Pontesbury School Green	Wed <b>22</b>	10h00	<b>Table Tennis 2</b> Minsterley Parish Hall
Thu <b>2</b>	10h00	<b>Creative writing</b> Pavilion		14h00	<b>Geology</b> Pavilion, Pontesbury		10h30	<b>Italian</b> Coordinator's house
	10h00	<b>Walking (Long)</b> As announced		16h30	<b>Badminton</b> Mary Webb School, Pontesbury	Thu <b>23</b>	16h30	<b>Pickleball</b> Mary Webb School, Pontesbury
	16h30	<b>Pickleball</b> Mary Webb School, Pontesbury	Wed <b>15</b>	10h00	<b>Table Tennis 2</b> Minsterley Parish Hall	Fri <b>24</b>	10h00	<b>Table Tennis 3</b> Congregational Church, Pontesbury
Fri <b>3</b>	10h00	<b>Table Tennis 3</b> Congregational Church, Pontesbury		10h30	<b>Italian</b> Coordinator's house	Mon <b>27</b>	10h00	<b>Walking (Short)</b> Pontesbury School Green
Mon <b>6</b>	13h30	<b>Table Tennis 1</b> Congregational Church, Pontesbury		14h00	<b>Open meeting:</b> <b>"Festive Flowers"</b> Minsterley Parish Hall		13h30	<b>Table Tennis 1</b> Congregational Church, Pontesbury
	14h00	<b>Folk Music</b> Minsterley Parish Hall					14h00	<b>Folk Music</b> Minsterley Parish Hall
	16h00	<b>Committee meeting</b> Pavilion				Tue <b>28</b>	10h00	<b>Cycling</b> Pontesbury School Green
Tue <b>7</b>	10h00	<b>Cycling</b> Pontesbury School Green	Thu <b>16</b>	10h00	<b>Creative writing</b> Pavilion		16h30	<b>Badminton</b> Mary Webb School, Pontesbury
	16h30	<b>Badminton</b> Mary Webb School, Pontesbury		10h00	<b>Walking (Long)</b> As announced	Wed <b>29</b>	10h00	<b>Table Tennis 2</b> Minsterley Parish Hall
Wed <b>8</b>	10h00	<b>Table Tennis 2</b> Minsterley Parish Hall		16h30	<b>Pickleball</b> Mary Webb School, Pontesbury		10h30	<b>Italian</b> Coordinator's house
	10h30	<b>Italian</b> Coordinator's house	Fri <b>17</b>	10h00	<b>Table Tennis 3</b> Congregational Church, Pontesbury		14h00	<b>Café Society</b> Mytton Arms, Habberley
	14h00	<b>Literature</b> Pavilion, Pontesbury	Mon <b>20</b>	10h30	<b>History</b> Pavilion, Pontesbury		19h30	<b>Astronomy</b> Bog Visitor Centre, Stiperstones
	14h00	<b>Photography</b> <b>Venue to be advised</b>		13h30	<b>Table Tennis 1</b> Congregational Church, Pontesbury	Thu <b>30</b>	10h00	<b>Walking (Long)</b> As announced
Thu <b>9</b>	16h30	<b>Pickleball</b> Mary Webb School, Pontesbury		14h00	<b>Art History</b> Venue to be advised		16h30	<b>Pickleball</b> Mary Webb School, Pontesbury
Fri <b>10</b>	10h00	<b>Table Tennis 3</b> Congregational Church, Pontesbury		14h00	<b>Folk Music</b> Minsterley Parish Hall	<b>Notes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Changes from last month are marked in red.</b></li> <li>• Please check in advance with the coordinator if a session is to go ahead.</li> <li>• Details of the Interest Groups are on the last page of the newsletter or website.</li> </ul>		
	14h00	<b>Gardening</b> <b>Gloucestershire visit</b>		14h00	<b>Cycling</b> Pontesbury School Green			
Mon <b>13</b>	10h00	<b>Walking (Short)</b> Pontesbury School Green	Tue <b>21</b>	10h00	<b>Local History</b> Minsterley Parish Hall			
	10h30	<b>Family History</b> Pavilion, Pontesbury						
	13h30	<b>Table Tennis 1</b> Congregational Church, Pontesbury						



## Interest Group news



The newly formed Badminton group is now up and running (although in my case not fast enough!)

We meet in the sports hall at Mary Webb School on a Tuesday evening 4.30pm – 6.00pm. Light clothing and suitable footwear needed – spare racquets available. There is a full spread of ability in the group so don't be put off if you've not played before

and want to try it. This new group will run on Tuesday evenings 4.30pm – 6.00pm in the Sports Hall at Mary Webb. It will be £3 per session at the moment but likely to increase during the winter months when an additional charge for heating is made.

Contact me if you are interested.

**Coordinator**

[Janet Walsh](#)

Email: [japa.walsh1@btinternet.com](mailto:japa.walsh1@btinternet.com)



The Local History group had a stimulating meeting with three of the trustees of Abbey Station in Shrewsbury on Tuesday afternoon, 17 October. This followed up David Owen's visit to the group in September.

The aim is for the Local History group to research and record the history of the train lines that ran from Shrewsbury through Hanwood, Cruckmeole, Pontesbury and Minsterley. If any member of our u3a would like to join our next meeting, 21 November at 2pm at Minsterley

Parish Hall, they will be most welcome. David Morris, one of the Abbey Station's trustees, will be present to give advice and information. If any u3a member has any photos or memories they could share with our group, that would also be most welcome. Please contact me, Susan Lockwood at [susanlockwood345@btinternet.com](mailto:susanlockwood345@btinternet.com), if you would like to attend on 21 November.

**Coordinator**

[Susan Lockwood](#)





## Interest Group news



At our September meeting, we welcomed Jane as a new member and we discovered the work of **Edna O'Brien** (born 1930).

After watching an fascinating interview between her and Russell Harty made in 1976, there was an animated discussion about being Irish and the strong role Religion played, with Edna's honest sharp condemnation of so many aspects of her childhood years, but she explained during the interview that the breathtakingly beautiful scenery sucked her back at times to the small village in County Clare where she grew up.

By the end of the afternoon, we all acknowledged what an exceptional, charismatic writer she is, and, at the age of 92, she has recently written a play about the women in James Joyce's life (he was her greatest hero), and she says "If I don't write, I might as well not live!"

We focussed on her book, "**Mother Ireland**" - a memoir of her childhood and a meditation on the spell the island situation can cast. To quote one critic: "In Mother Ireland there is plenty of ecstasy, plenty of shame, plenty of humour

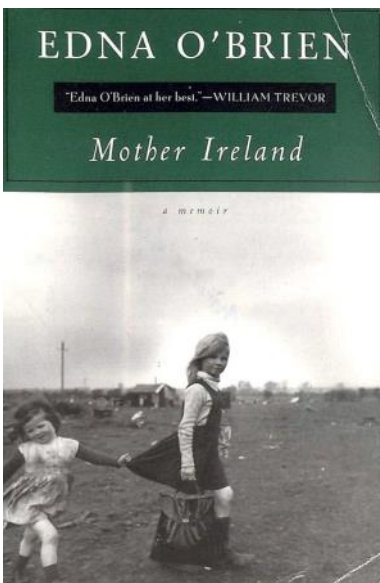


Edna O'Brien (Born 1930)  
Photo: Andrew Lih / Hay Festival 2016

and plenty of beautiful writing!"

Our next meeting on 8th November will be all about another contemporary Irish writer, Anne Enright with the chosen book being "The Gathering." If you would like to have a taster session, please contact Doreen Thomas on 790332 or email her at [doreen.thomas614@btinternet.com](mailto:doreen.thomas614@btinternet.com).

**Coordinator**  
[Doreen Thomas](#)



Classical Music Appreciation will start again in February 2024 if there is enough interest.

All that you need is a liking of classical music so bring along a CD or two to share your enthusiasm.

If you would like to join in, please send an email to John Rice at:

**Email:** [john476ad@gmail.com](mailto:john476ad@gmail.com)  
**Telephone:** 07810 230860.

**Coordinator**  
[John Rice](#)



## Interest Group news



Our first full meeting for a couple of months was a huge success. We re-introduced Ray Graham to those who hadn't met him previously as well as welcoming new member, Ann Purchase.

We enjoyed Joan's excellent hospitality (including cakes, which I am sure were the most delightful I've had in a long time) whilst running through some of the excellent photos taken by group members during the last two months.

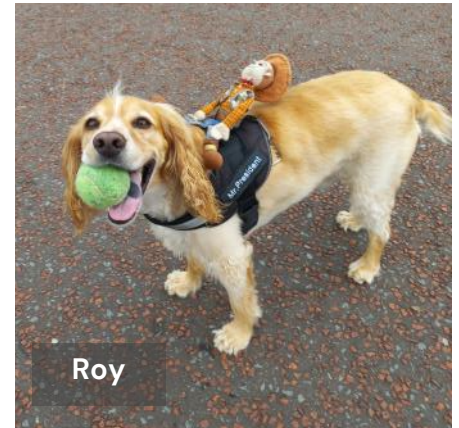
The two subjects were: **'Shuts and Passages of Shrewsbury.'** and 'Days out'. Our theme 'Shuts and Passages of Shrewsbury' highlights many of the somewhat unseen or un-noticed areas of our lovely town combining historical with architectural and other interests.

The theme **'Days Out'** was to explore days out with an open mind, bringing in fun, family, and, of course, fantastic scenery, just what we all look for on a day out. Presentations were not just locally but some were far afield and abroad. They were not limited to the present time but so long as it would be of interest and was fairly recent.

Our next project will be 'Autumn Colours', and at our next meeting, Ray Graham will be giving a presentation on 'Composure, Exposure and Closure.' Exploring the ways in which we can expand and enhance our photographic skills..

In the meantime we will be working on the theme of "Autumn".

**Coordinator**  
[Roy Forbes](#)



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## Interest Group news



In October the History Group finished its theme of 'Women in History' when Sue Piggott-Forster gave a fascinating presentation on **Ruth Ellis**, who in 1955 became the last female in Britain to be hanged. The case against her was never in doubt when she confessed to the premeditated murder of her partner David Blakely. Unfortunately for her, no consideration of her mental state after years of physical abuse was taken into account.

Sue then went on to describe a very similar story concerning **Marguerite Fahmy**, who in 1923 murdered her husband in premeditated fashion. However, she was acquitted of all charges. The significant difference between the two outcomes appears to be that Marguerite could afford to hire a top London barrister who

argued that she had been a victim of brutality. It has since been rumoured that she held love letters written by an old 'flame' to the Prince of Wales which most likely aided her cause.

Our next topic will be '**snap decisions that had an impact upon the course of history**'. We will consider how and why those decisions were made and what may have happened had the decision gone the other way. The scope of possible subject matter is huge and I am sure this will prove to be a most interesting topic to cover.

If you enjoy history, wish to learn and join in with our most interesting discussions you would be very welcome. The next meeting is on Monday 20th November.

**Coordinator**  
David Taylor



**Ruth Ellis**

Photograph: Wikipedia: By [1], Fair use,  
<https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?curid=29759349>



**Marguerite Fahmy**

Photograph: Wikipedia: By Unknown author - <https://amp.news.com.au/entertainment/celebrity-life/royals/the-murderous-mistress-of-edward-viii-before-he-met-wallis-simpson/news->

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Pontesbury  
& Rea Valley





## Interest Group news



Our final meeting for 2023 will take place on Wednesday 29 November at The Mytton Arms in Habberley – 2.00pm start. Among our other topics for discussion, we will do a review of the year and remind ourselves of what we have talked about and whether our views have changed.

There won't be a meeting in December but, weather permitting we will meet again on Wednesday 31 January 2024. Details on the website. Contact me for information. New members are always welcome.

**Coordinator**  
[Janet Walsh](#)



The next Short Walking dates are:

Monday 13th November 10h to 12h

Monday 27th November 10h to 12h

**Coordinator**  
[Irene Windows](#)



Sadly, heavy rain put paid to our planned outing on Friday 13th October to Cardington.

Our next meeting on Friday 10th November is scheduled for Glansevern near Newton, to see the restoration project taking place in

the garden and partake of the excellent tea rooms.

**If any other u3a members wish to join us, please contact me.**

**Coordinator**  
[Sue Anderson](#)  
Tel: 07762 977 432





## u3a national news

## Paint or Draw

A couple of pictures from the u3a's "Paint or Draw" monthly initiative: with the theme of "Theatre". If you wish you can enter too for next months theme "Global Warming" – deadline for submissions 15th November 2023.



Backview

Anne Samuel  
Grantham u3a



"Shh do you want to know a secret"

Stephanie Brunton  
Saxon Shore u3a

## Online Learning Events

There's something for everyone this month with lots of interesting free u3a online zoom courses: [Click here for this months events](#) and to book your place:

- **Laughter Yoga**
  - Judith – Wed 11 Oct 10am
  - Maggie – Tue 31 Oct 3.30pm
- **Into the mind of an artist: Van Gogh Part3:** Tues 7 Nov 10am
- **Sir Thomas Lipton, from Cabin Boy to Tea Tycoon to International Yachtsman** Thus 9 Nov 2pm
- **The curious History of Labyrinths and Mazes** Fri 10 Nov 10am
- **Mathematical Games: Winning Strategies** Tues 14 Nov 10am
- **u3a Radio Podcast 17th of every month**
- **Meditation and Mindfulness Series** Wed 18 Oct 10am
- **Family History: When the transcript is not enough** Wed 15 Nov 2pm
- **Online resources for Curious Teachers and Students of Mathematics** Thur 16 Nov 2pm
- **Cryptic Crosswords for Beginners:** 6 session course Tue 5, 12, 19 Dec and 9, 16, and 23 Jan 10-11:30am
- **The story of Eva Urbach and Ulli Adler** Fri 1 Dec 2pm

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live





# Interest Groups Listing



There are a wide range of friendly groups, run by the group coordinators. Please check out the activities available and if anything takes your interest or you wish to suggest a new activity, please contact the Support team.

Please always check beforehand if the activity is being held and the venue before attending, as this could be subject to change.

## Groups Facilitator Support:

Pat Frost 07971 751978

David Taylor 07746567788

<b>Art History</b>	3rd Mon of month 2pm—4pm Venue to be advised		<b>Local History</b>	3rd Tue of month 2pm—4pm Minsterley Parish Hall	
<b>Astronomy</b>	Last Wed of month 7:30—9.30pm Bog centre, Stiperstones		<b>Painting &amp; Drawing</b>	Every Tues when in session 2pm—4pm Coordinator's House	
<b>Badminton</b>	Every Tue 4:30pm—6pm Mary Webb school		<b>Pickle Ball</b>	Every Thu 4:30pm—6pm Mary Webb school	
<b>Café Society</b>	Last Wed of month 2pm—4pm Mytton Arms Pub, Habberley		<b>Photography</b>	Second Wed of month 2pm—4pm Venue to be advised	
<b>Creative writing</b>	1st & 3rd Thu 10am—12 noon Pavilion		<b>Recorded Music</b>	To be started in January 2024 as Classical music appreciation	
<b>Cycling</b>	Every Tue 10am— around 1pm Pontesbury School Green		<b>Table Tennis 1 Pontesbury</b>	Every Mon 1:30pm—3:30pm Congregational Church	
<b>Family History</b>	2nd Mon of month 10:15am—12:15pm Pavilion , Pontesbury		<b>Table Tennis 2 Minsterley</b>	Every Wed 10am—12 noon Minsterley Parish Hall	
<b>Folk Music</b>	Every Mon 2pm—4pm Minsterley Parish Hall		<b>Table Tennis 3 Pontesbury</b>	Every Fri 10 am—12 noon Congregational Church	
<b>Gardening</b>	Second Fri of month 2pm—4pm As announced		<b>Walking (long)</b>	Alternate Thu 10am—12 noon Venue to be advised	
<b>Geology</b>	2nd Tue of month 2pm—4pm Pavilion, Pontesbury		<b>Walking (short)</b>	Alternate Mon 10am—12 noon Pontesbury School Green	
<b>History</b>	3rd Mon of month 10:30am—12:30pm Pavilion, Pontesbury		<h2>Potential groups under investigation</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pilates</li> <li>• Backgammon</li> <li>• Board games</li> <li>• Bridge</li> <li>• Play reading</li> <li>• Railway Modelling</li> <li>• Sunday Lunch</li> <li>• Seated Yoga</li> </ul>		
<b>Italian</b>	Every Wed 10:30am—12: noon Coordinator's house				
<b>Literature</b>	2nd Wed in month 2pm—4pm Pavilion, Pontesbury				

