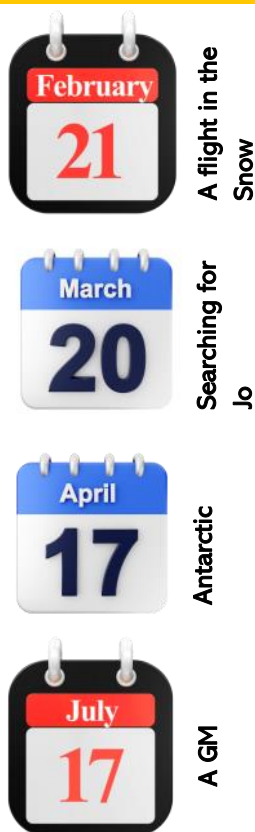


Editor: [Sue Anderson](#)

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Dates for your Diary



Dear Members

I trust that you have all come through Christmas, New Year, outrage at the Post Office scandal, dry January along with floods, snow and wind, generally unscathed and are, like me looking forward to some brighter days ahead. We have some excellent speakers booked for our next few Open Meetings and Interest Groups are back up and running to make sure that we have plenty to occupy us during these somewhat dreary winter months.

Thanks to all who came to our Christmas social event – it's always good to meet up with u3a members from different groups and I was pleased to meet people who I didn't know before. The u3a is such a force for good for those of us of a more mature age. I read an article recently which outlined the activities and lifestyle which helped to offset dementia. Keeping fit, engaging in hobbies, socialising and having a reason to go out were all mentioned and are all part of what the u3a is all about. I'm so pleased that our u3a is thriving and as always thank all the people who help to run it either at committee level or as group leader (and often both).

To help support our wonderful u3a, can I ask that you 'save the date' on Wednesday 17th July at 2.00p when we will be holding our Annual General Meeting. We need to ensure good



attendance at the meeting so that we will be quorate and last year we offered cheese and wine as encouragement to attend. I have no reason to think that we won't do something similar this year so please try to ensure that you are free. Two of the original u3a committee members, Bob Boden and Hugh Scriven, will be stepping down at the AGM this year after eight years of service each so we need to be able to thank them properly.

In the meantime – let's keep calm, warm and carry on.

Best wishes,

[Janet Walsh](#) (Chair)

Photographer Ric Morris, Feather & Hay Photography, presents:

A FLIGHT IN THE SNOW

Wednesday 2pm
Minsterley Parish Hall
A488, Minsterley, SY5 0EH
Refreshments available
Free entrance

February 21

learn, laugh, live

OPEN MEETING
Members & non-members welcome

u3a Pontesbury & Rea Valley



u3a P&RV news



We are looking forward to our first Open Meeting of the year on February 21st, 2pm at Minsterley Parish Hall for an entertaining presentation by Ric Morris, who joins us again to present his most up to date talk of snowy Shropshire – taken from a hot air balloon.

Many of you will have enjoyed his presentations before (2022 and 2021) and to experience more beauty of Shropshire from the skies then make sure you 'save the date'.

As always, refreshments will be served afterwards for the chance to catch up. Meetings are open to both members and non-members so bring along a friend if you wish.

Our Open Meetings are always held on the third Wednesday of the month. This slot is chosen as there are no other meetings/interest group activities running at the same time. We try to book a range of speakers so that all interests are catered and are always happy to receive ideas or nominations for speakers.

There is an exciting programme of speakers over the next few months, so save the dates:

**Photographer Ric Morris,
Feather & Hay Photography,
presents:**

A FLIGHT IN THE SNOW



Wednesday 2pm
Minsterley Parish Hall
A488, Minsterley, SY5 0EH

Refreshments available
Free entrance

**learn,
laugh,
live**

OPEN MEETING

Members & non-members welcome

u3a Pontesbury
& Rea Valley



u3a P&RV news



The Health & Safety policy has been revised taking into account new guidance issued by the U3A Trust. This is available to view on our website in the About Us section:

www.u3asites.org.uk/pontesbury-reavalley

The new Constitution, agreed at the AGM and now lodged with the u3a Trust, is also available to view on the website.



On the membership front, we have six new members since the last newsletter. Please give them a warm welcome if they join any of your groups::

- Neil Bates
- Richard Gulliver
- Avril Dickinson
- Liz Thomas
- Sue Smith
- Jane Rowan

Membership secretary

[Steve Anderson](#)

learn, laugh, live



The next film at Marton will be *Lunana - A Yak in the Classroom* - on Friday the 16th February at 7.30 p.m. Admission £5 - with Fish & Chips £10.

If you would like fish & chips beforehand they must be pre-ordered by contacting John Rice on 07810230860 or john47rice@outlook.com.

For details of all future films at Marton and other village halls search for the Arts Alive website.

Pontesbury & Rea Valley u3a is a member of the Third Age Trust (Registered Charity 288007)
u3a National Office: The Third Age Trust, 52 Lant Street, London SE1 1RB



Lunana - A Yak in the Classroom

Cert: PG - 109 mins



Fri 16th Feb - 7.30 pm

Marton Village Hall

Admission: Adults: £5 Child: £2.50


Film only £5. Film and Fish & Chips £10. (Fish & Chips must be pre-ordered) Bar and refreshments available from 7.00p.m.
All enquiries to 01743-792790 or 07810-230860.

A teacher, in search of inspiration, travels to the most remote school in the world. Thanks to the enthusiasm of his young students and the unassuming warmth of the village folk, he ends up realising how important his job is and appreciating the value of the yak and its dung.

Starring: Sherab Dorji, Ugyen Norbu Lhendup, Kelden Lhamo Gurung

www.u3asites.org.uk/pontesbury-reavalley



Thu 1	10h00	Creative writing Pavilion	Tue 13	14h00	Geology Pavilion, Pontesbury	Wed 21	14h00	Open Meeting Pavilion, Pontesbury
	16h30	Pickleball Mary Webb School, Pontesbury		16h30	Badminton Mary Webb School, Pontesbury			
Fri 2	10h00	Table Tennis 3 Congregational Church, Pontesbury	Wed 14	10h00	Table Tennis 2 Minsterley Parish Hall	Thu 22	10h00	Walking (Long) As announced
Mon 5	10h00	Walking (Short) Pontesbury School Green		10h30	Italian Coordinator's house	Thu 22	16h30	Pickleball Mary Webb School, Pontesbury
	13h30	Table Tennis 1 Congregational Church, Pontesbury		14h00	Literature Pavilion, Pontesbury	Fri 23	10h00	Table Tennis 3 Congregational Church, Pontesbury
	14h00	Folk Music Minsterley Parish Hall	Thu 15	10h00	Creative writing Pavilion	Mon 26	13h30	Table Tennis 1 Congregational Church, Pontesbury
	16h00	Committee meeting Pavilion		16h30	Pickleball Mary Webb School, Pontesbury		14h00	Folk Music Minsterley Parish Hall
Tue 6	10h00	Cycling Pontesbury School Green	Fri 16	10h00	Table Tennis 3 Congregational Church, Pontesbury	Tue 27	10h00	Cycling Pontesbury School Green
	16h30	Badminton Mary Webb School, Pontesbury	Mon 19	10h00	Walking (Short) School Green		16h30	Badminton Mary Webb School, Pontesbury
Wed 7	10h00	Table Tennis 2 Minsterley Parish Hall		10h30	History Pavilion, Pontesbury	Wed 28	10h00	Table Tennis 2 Minsterley Parish Hall
	10h30	Italian Coordinator's house		10h30	Table Tennis 1 Congregational Church, Pontesbury		10h30	Italian Coordinator's house
	14h00	Photography Shrewsbury Abbey shoot		13h30	Table Tennis 1 Congregational Church, Pontesbury		14h00	Café Society Mytton Arms, Habberley
Thu 8	10h00	Walking (Long) As announced		14h00	Art History Venue to be advised		19h30	Astronomy Bog Visitor Centre, Stiperstones
	16h30	Pickleball Mary Webb School, Pontesbury		14h00	Folk Music Minsterley Parish Hall	Thu 29	16h30	Pickleball Mary Webb School, Pontesbury
Fri 9	10h00	Table Tennis 3 Congregational Church, Pontesbury	Tue 20	10h00	Cycling Pontesbury School Green			
	14h00	Gardening Pavilion & members garden—Snowdrops		14h00	Local History Minsterley Parish Hall			
Mon 12	10h15	Family History Pavilion, Pontesbury	Wed 21	16h30	Badminton Mary Webb School, Pontesbury			
	13h30	Table Tennis 1 Congregational Church, Pontesbury		10h00	Table Tennis 2 Minsterley Parish Hall			
	14h00	Folk Music Minsterley Parish Hall		10h30	Italian Coordinator's house			
Tue 13	10h00	Cycling Pontesbury School Green						

Notes:

- Changes from last month are marked in red.
- Please check in advance with the coordinator if a session is to go ahead.
- Details of the Interest Groups are on the last page of the newsletter or website.



Interest Group news



**NEW GROUP
UNDER
CONSIDERATION**

Board Games of all sorts seem to be a popular interest group with our neighbouring u3as and we would like to investigate the possibility of whether this would appeal to our members as a potential new interest group.

Board Games have many benefits – a great way to connect and engage with others, build friendships, improved physical and mental health and, dare I say it, improved cognitive function.

The direction of the interest

group e.g. what games, frequency and where played will be up to the members of the interest group to decide.

If you are interested in joining a group like this, could you please contact David Taylor :by email. If there is sufficient interest a set-up meeting will be arranged to see if this is a viable possibility.

Contact

David Taylor

d.a.taylor@btinternet.com

07746 567 788



learn, laugh, live



This group continues to go from strength to strength. After discussing at our December meeting the different methods for collating and recording our family history, we dedicated our January meeting to interesting photographs and family mementoes, and treasures.

We had an inkstand gifted by the Duke of Grafton, a repaired necklace and a memory book of old schools and homes, photographs of grandparents circa 1870, a high chair which has so far seated five generations from the same family, a rediscovered wooden casket containing all sorts of 'nick-nacks'

and a poignant letter to a grandma.

The item which caused the most discussion was a beautiful stuffed canary displayed in a lovely glass presentation case. It transpired that Betty Auckland, who was part of a child/father Music Hall act in the early 1900's is a distant relative to a Family History Group member. 'Little Tweet', the singing canary, was part of their act and remains in the family after a long and distinguished career on the stage.

Coordinator

David Taylor



Interest Group news



This recently formed group meets on Tuesday evenings (4.30pm – 6.00pm) in the Sports Hall at Mary Webb school – you need suitable loose clothing and training/gym shoes (for inside use) – we have some spare rackets.

We are a friendly, mixed ability group so all abilities are welcome – £4 a

session.

Contact Janet Walsh if you are interested. .

Coordinator

[Janet Walsh](#)

Email: japa.walsh1@btinternet.com



Greetings from the Art History Group. We will be reconvening for our February meeting at the Old Market Hall Cinema on Tuesday February 27th for an 11am showing of 'Painting the Modern Garden: Monet to Matisse' showing the evolution of art from 1860s to 1920s.

Coordinator

[Mary Lovegrove](#)



January's foul weather seriously restricted the u3a Cycling Group. However, the month was greatly improved by 18 cyclists enjoying a New Year Meal at the Stiperstones Inn.

A good time was had by all and this will definitely be an annual event

Coordinator

[Pat Frost](#)



The next Short Walking dates are:

Monday 5th February 10h to 12h

Monday 19th February 10h to 12h

Monday 4th March 10h to 12h

Coordinator

[Irene Windows](#)



Interest Group news



Our current topic, 'Decisions that have changed history' continues to provide the History Group with plenty of opportunity for interesting discussion.



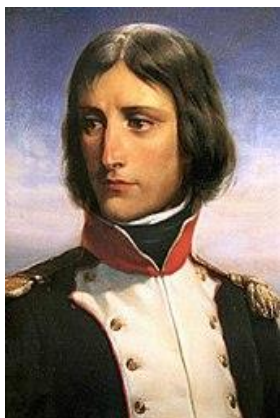
Pearl Harbour

In December Bob Clare explained how Japan's decision to attack **Pearl Harbour** probably altered the outcome of WW2,



Portrait of George Digby, 2nd Earl of Bristol, by Sir Anthony van Dyck, c. 1638

And then from Sue Piggott-Forster we learned how **George Digby's** indecisiveness possibly led to the downfall and execution of Charles 1st.



Bonaparte, aged 23, as lieutenant-colonel of a battalion of Corsican Republican volunteers. Portrait by Henri Félix Emmanuel

David Taylor then explained how the decision to exile **Napoleon** to Elba resulted in the Battle of Waterloo.



Head of the Colossus of Constantine, Capitoline Museums

In January, John Rice gave the group a wonderful insight into why **Emperor Constantine** converted to Christianity making it the predominant religion of Rome and how, if he had made a different decision, the spread of Christianity may have been much different.

The History Group is a wonderful forum for learning about history in an informal and relaxed atmosphere. If you feel you may be interested, we meet every 3rd Monday of the month, in the Pavilion at 10.30am.

Coordinator
David Taylor

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live

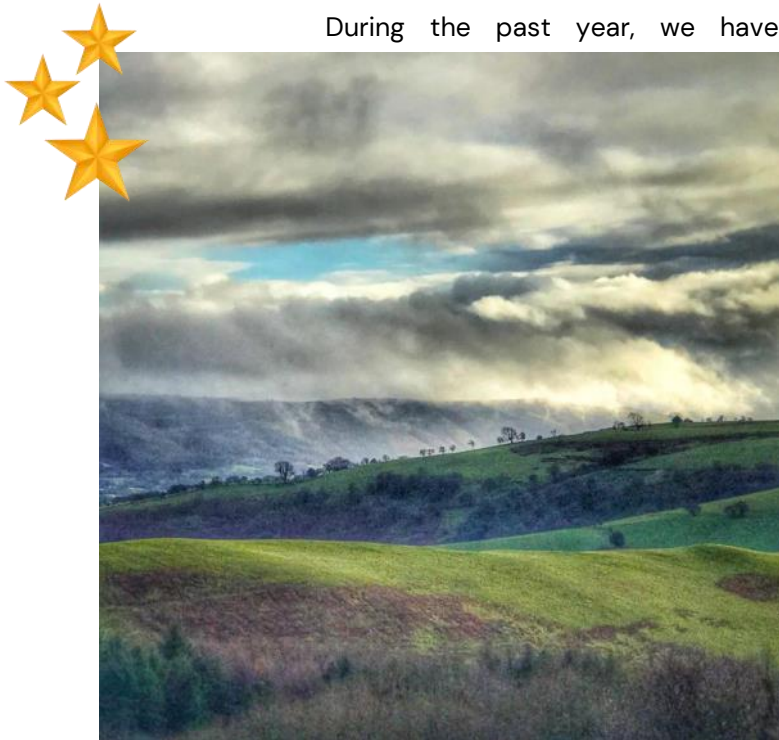


Interest Group news



The Photography Group appears is going from strength to strength. We have had some fantastic, interesting and eventful meetings during 2023, including our Post Christmas/New Year Social, held at The Mytton Arms in Habberley. Such was the event that there wasn't much Photography discussed!

During the past year, we have



enjoyed a number of different topics that have rewarded us with some absolutely stunning photos. Hopefully we will be displaying some at one of the General Meetings.

The group especially enjoyed the trips out but one of the best, in my opinion, are the stunning photos of our Shropshire Winter Scenes including the recent floods.

2024 will see a few additions to our 'normal' with us exploring amongst other topics, Portraiture and Portrait Photography. The next meeting will be at The Abbey in Shrewsbury on the 7th February 2024.

"Keep Snapping"

Coordinator
[Roy Forbes](#)

Congratulations to our Jane Simms for another exceptional photo which won Photo of the Day on the Shropshire Photography Group Facebook page.

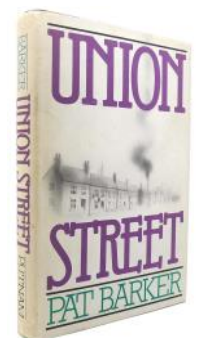


For the first half of 2024 we have chosen to study the work of **Pat Barker**, who was born into a working class family in Yorkshire in 1943. She has won many awards for her fiction, which centres on the themes of memory, trauma, survival and recovery. Her work is described as direct, blunt and plain spoken.

At our January meeting, we concentrated in her first book, ***Union Street***, depicting the lives of seven working-class women, young and old, living on Union street

and how they respond to the harsh challenges of poverty and survival in a precarious world.

We also welcomed Liz as a new member, and if you would like to join our group, please contact: doreen.thomas614@btinternet.com



Coordinator
[Doreen Thomas](#)



Interest Group news



If you fancy a bit of a discussion/debate about issues of the day then come and join our Cafe Society group. We meet on the last Wednesday of the month at the Mytton Arms in Habberley at 2.00pm for a couple of hours. There is no charge for the room but members are

expected to buy a drink and maybe some of the lovely cake that's usually available. We're a friendly group with a range of life experiences and interests so we always leave the meetings with a new take on life.

Coordinator
[Janet Walsh](#)



Despite it being winter, we've had a full monthly gardening diary. In December we were very lucky to have a Christmas festive meeting with Alan Terrill and his wife Claire talking on their fascinating sculpture garden (which will be followed by a visit this April)

In January, we met at the Mytton Arms in Habberley for a New Years get-together in a very "snug" snug

for some fun analysing garden designs submitted at last years Southport Flower Show.

February's meeting on the 9th February will be a "Snowdrop" talk by our resident snowdrop specialist, Caroline Wright, at the Pavilion, followed by a visit to her garden to see her 30+ species.

Coordinator
[Sue Anderson](#)



u3a national news

Festival 2024

The u3a is holding its first ever Festival on the 18 to 20 July 2024 in the beautiful city of York. For more information on the Festival:

www.u3a.org.uk/events/festival-2024



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 14 Dec 10am
- **Mosaic Art:** Thur 1 Feb 10am
- **When Art and Literature meet at Christmastide** Tue 6 Feb 10am
- **Housing options in later life: The role of retirement housing** Tues 6 Feb 2pm
- **Mindfulness and Meditation Series:** Feb—Mar Wed 7 Feb 10am
- **Introduction to the Air Fryer, with simple recipes** Thur 8 Feb 11:30am
- **'Safe bind, safe find' : locks and keys** Wed 14 Feb 2pm
- **Cryptic Crosswords in Context** Thur 15 Feb 10am
- **David Hockney and the Theatre** Fri 23 Feb 2pm
- **Science Network Event:** talks on Pathogenics and Botany Tue 27 Feb 9:30am
- **Advances in Public Health Talk 1 of 5: The Role and Tragedy of Semmelweis** Please wash your hands it can save lives. Wed 28 Feb 10am
- **More Number Fun with Dr Knott** Thur 29 Feb 10am
- **Secrets of the Human Brain: Talk Two: Sleep and Dreams** Thur 29 Feb 2pm
- **u3a Radio Podcast** 17th of every month
- **Mindfulness and Meditation Continuation Sessions: Dec-May** Thu 21 Dec 10am

Short Story Competition 2023

The stories from the shortlisted 13 finalists for the u3a short story competition 2023 can be found here:

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/short-story-competition-2023>

These were chosen from over 400 entries. The overall winner was Laurene Henderson from Wissey u3a in the East of England with her story 'See Emily Play'. Joint second place goes to Lynne Patrick of Witney u3a with 'Moving On', and Jane Guinery of Malvern u3a with 'Colours in the Fog'.



See Emily Play

by Laurene Henderson, Wissey u3a



Moving On

by Lynne Patrick, Witney u3a



Colours in the Fog

by Jane Guinery, Malvern u3a

u3a
Pontesbury
& Rea Valley

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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

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

