

MiniMag

Rye & District u3a 2023-24

Annual Group Reports

Rye and the Arts

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This years 'theme' is 'Rye and the Arts'. Rye and district has a vibrant record of all things artistic, present and past. This year we've tried to include a flavour of those connections to our town and area. I trust that you find something of interest.

My thanks go to Georgina Lowe and Heidi Foster, for their help and input into the 'theme' content. And my special thanks also go to our unsung heroes, the Rye and District u3a Group Leaders.

MiniMag Editor

So what is the u3a?

u3a is a nationwide network of interest groups, aimed at encouraging older people to share their knowledge, skills and pastimes in a friendly environment. There are no exams and no homework, just regular meetings of like-minded people, or groups, to pursue their particular interests. It's learning for fun, not with the aim of gaining qualifications.

In the words of the UK u3a head office ... 'u3a is a UK-wide movement of locally-run interest groups that provide a wide range of opportunities to come together to learn for fun. Members explore new ideas, skills and activities together. There are 1,035 u3as with nearly 400,000 members; membership costs less than £20 on average per year and is open to everyone who's not working full-time'.



Throughout this edition of your MiniMag you will find items with an 'arts' connection to Rye. A lot of my sources have been from the Internet and I am happy to redress any errors or omissions, which are purely mine.

Ian Scott ...





Are you new to the Rye area and looking for things to do? Are you wanting to make friends locally? Or do you simply want to take up a new interest? Well maybe we can help you.

The u3a (or University of the Third Age) is not a highbrow organisation, but rather an affiliation of a number of local activity groups, appealing to a wide range of interests. The Rye branch currently has 24 active groups and you can see these on our web site at - www.U3Asites.org.uk/rye or on the accompanying sheet.

Why You Should Join

In addition to the regular group meetings, the Rye u3a meets monthly, at the Community Centre (Conduit Hill), where an invited speaker gives a talk on a varied selection of topics (see this year's on page 5). This is also an excellent opportunity to meet other u3a members over a cup of tea/coffee and to catch up on other group activities. If you are new to the Rye area, or just wanting to 'give us a try', then you are welcome to join us for one monthly meeting (3rd Monday in month) before deciding to join and pay your annual subscription. Just talk with any u3a member, or contact a committee member, about our next meeting and how to join us.

Patrick Bonham - Membership Secretary (u3aryesecretary@gmail.com)

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Joy Davenport - Chair Rye and District u3a

As the newly elected Chair of Rye & District u3a, I am delighted to introduce this latest edition of our MiniMag, which gives a glimpse of the many and varied interest groups currently running.

This year has seen us gradually returning to full strength, enjoying lively and entertaining talks at our monthly general meetings, held on the third Monday of the month in the Community Centre. We aim to find speakers to give a wide range of talks and Carol Cambaces, Our Speakers Organiser, does a brilliant job.

We have had some changes to the committee this year, with Ian Scott becoming Vice Chair, to keep me on the straight and narrow. My role as Treasurer has been passed to Mike Taylor. Jacqueline Pankhurst remains as a most efficient Business Secretary and Patrick Bonham has taken over the role of Membership Secretary from Gill Scott, who has stepped down from the Committee. Georgina Lowe is continuing in her demanding role as groups Coordinator, which she fulfils efficiently and with good humour.

A full list of the Committee and their roles are included in this magazine. You will see that there are also many roles fulfilled by members who are not on the Committee. Any organisation relies on the commitment of all members to volunteer to help. If you think you could play a part, however small, to help with the on-going success of Rye & District u3a, please speak to any member of the Committee and you will be welcomed with open arms!

Joy



Lunch Group Visits in 2023 *Mike Wade*



We began the year visiting Layla's Turkish restaurant in Rye for January, when six of us had a good lunch there. I afterwards thanked Paula for taking over temporarily last year, when I had problems continuing during the summer.

In September, 2022 we had a lunch at Paula's when she offered to organise lunches until January this year. I then resumed with the next lunch, for February, at the Diamond Koz in Rye, when eight came to a good meal.

As we now had more members not driving it was thought more of us could attend if we limited the venues to those on bus routes, and so being easier to get to. So the next venue for March was the William the Conqueror, at Rye Harbour, when nine of us attended for a good lunch. In April ten of us came to the Playden Oast for a nice lunch and always time for a long chat.

Not so many got to the Plough on the Udimore Road in May with four of us having lunch there. In June seven of us came to the Broad Oak pub which we hadn't visited for a while for a welcome lunch. In July, when members can be on holiday, our numbers were down again to four when we visited the Cock Inn for a good lunch and the same number made it to the Red Lion in Broad Oak in August.

Some venues are no longer doing lunches on Tuesdays which has limited our choice. After our lunch at the Cock Inn for September we could not go to the Robin Hood at Icklesham for October as planned, as they are closed on Tuesdays now. So for October we went to the Three Oaks in Three Oaks village, when only three were able to come as unfortunately the two members in the village had a hospital appointment that day.

It seems with fewer members driving and some of us becoming more elderly we cannot always make all the lunches, but for those who come there is always a good chat over the lunch and plenty to discuss.

If you are interested in joining us, please contact me.

Monthly Speakers 2024

Carol Cambaceses

January:	Coco Chanel	Delia Taylor
February:	Talk on Sussex Rural History	Ian Everest
March:	Adventures in Borneo	Ray Hale
April:	Eva Braun: Victim or Contriver?	Melanie Gibson-Barton
May:	A History of London Theatres	Pete Allen
June:	<i>to be advised</i>	

History Group (formerly history discussion group) - *Mike Wade*

The strength of this group arises from the fact that anyone can join who wants to learn and/or contribute to a discussion about history and how we can benefit from it, using sources they have found including evidence from their own experiences.

We are less academically based and more involved in investigating historical events, often little known that we have discovered, and seeing if progress can be made towards discovering guiding themes in history, which if developed and applied educationally can provide practical guidance for avoiding repeating the same mistakes in history that feature so widely in our own cultural story so far.

In 2021 Grace Price, who had run the History Discussion group for so many years, decided she would not be able to continue to run it as she was likely to be moving soon. So as we wanted it to continue I offered to run it and we began to meet at 'The Old Hall' near Iden village hall from January 2022. There were many interesting meetings with members reporting on their own experiences as well as historical events that they had personal experience of, as well as using other sources concerning events we were not usually aware of, so discovering how incomplete history can be.



In June 2022 we decided to hold the meeting at Grace Price's house again and thank her for running the group for such a long time. We also heard from Jo Kirkham about how Rye tried to save the railway foot bridge by the level crossing on Ferry Road, which had it been successful would have reduced the regular wait there for many pedestrians today. Due to travel for hospital appointments I had to temporarily suspend meetings after June and restart them in April 2023 at Iden, when we had further interesting reports from members' own experiences including some examples of family migration and international education. Perhaps the event that stands out was discovering how the parents in Northern Ireland had taken matters

into their own hands with their charity, 'All Children Together', and had set up ten new schools with government support, which enabled children from the different religions to learn together in a way that greatly improved the outlook for their future together, by greatly reducing the previous educational environment that had been facilitating the 'troubles'. This appears to be a lesson from history that parents can apply elsewhere which we have not appreciated yet.

This theme has become of increasing interest now because we seem to have arrived at a point in our history when our children's survival regarding the climate emergency etc., now depends on our applying knowledge of how to avoid repeating mistakes, which the Northern Ireland parents have succeeded so well in doing, but so far elsewhere we have not been very successful in achieving.

The origin of the u3a itself, also appears to be a key part of this, as it can be seen as an opportunity for retired family members through discussion, to make a contribution to improving the collective future for all of our children, now so much needed. We look forward to further discussions which seem so essential now.

BIRD-WATCHING and WILDLIFE GROUP

Here is a brief summary of our activity in 2023 to whet your appetite.

This group has continued to meet monthly on the 3rd Thursday for field meetings in the local area to find and appreciate the prolific wildlife of our region. I have been very lucky to have had the help and expertise of Pat Bonham who has also been prepared to lead the odd meeting when I have not been able to do so. While birds continue to be at the forefront of our expeditions, with the Rye Harbour area and Dungeness being frequent venues for our meetings, we also focus on visits to sites featuring other interesting aspects of nature with, for example, Footland Wood for fungi and Rye Cemetery for general wildlife, ferns and wild flowers.

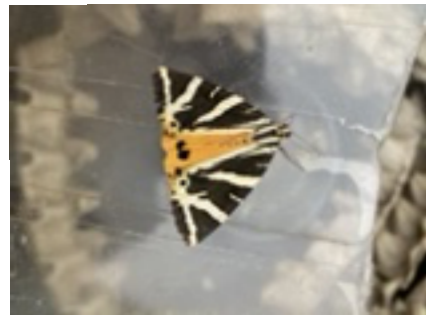


A regular feature of the group meetings is that they normally begin with Keith and Patrick showing selected examples of moths caught the previous night in their respective garden moth traps. The moths are collected in tubes or small plastic containers and are released shortly afterwards near to where they were caught. Although there are far fewer, if any, specimens to look at in the winter months, some very colourful and unusual examples, eliciting many “oohs” and “aahs”, are demonstrated at the summer meetings. A couple of photos are shown below.

Please do come and join this thriving group on the 3rd Thursday mornings throughout the year. At the very least you will enjoy a walk in fresh air, getting some much needed exercise. We do nothing indoors ! And you will get a chance to witness some of the remarkable wildlife of this part of Sussex which you may not have realised even existed.

If interested in joining please contact

Keith Hillier-Palmer



Art Galleries in Rye

Rye has several private art galleries, catering for different mediums and taste. All are worth a visit, but you might be encouraged to especially visit the **Rye Art Gallery**, in the High Street. With their permission I quote extracts from the web site (www.ryeartgallery.co.uk), which you are encouraged to visit.

Step through our door in the High Street and you will be on a journey of discovery. Inside the Gallery, you will find interlinked spaces and changing displays of contemporary art to browse and buy. You can also treat yourself to a view of some of our Permanent Collection.

The unique layout is because the Gallery has been created from two domestic houses on two different Rye streets, now combined via a short staircase link. Artists Howard Gull Stormont (1859-1935) and Mary Elizabeth Stormont (1871—1962) lived in Ypres Studio, an Arts and Crafts house on Ockman Lane, and artist Eileen Easton lived at 107 High Street. The houses now make one premise.



Just a sample of the many works held by the gallery and which can be viewed on their web site.

These and others from the collection are displayed on rotation, at the gallery in the High Street.

Mary and Howard had eloped to Rye, as Mary's parents in Essex had thought that their daughter marrying a man somewhat older than she, and a practising artist at that, was not a desirable match. They married in Rye church. Both were regional exhibitors while Mary in particular regularly exhibited her flower paintings, landscapes and interiors at the Royal Academy. She created the Rye Art Gallery Trust in 1957 and bequeathed the Ypres Studio to the Trust at her death in 1962. One of the couple's many artist friends, the painter Eileen Easton, became one of the original trustees and she later bequeathed her High Street house to the Trust as well. The domestic history of the buildings has left its mark. There are stunning views down to the Rother estuary, especially from Howard and Mary's old studio (the Stormont Room) at the top of the building.

Rye Art Gallery - contined ...

The Permanent Collection includes many works by artists of national and international importance as well as regional favourites. We have uploaded most of our Catalogue and future plans are to provide you with an image for every work along with its descriptive entry.

The Gallery holds a Permanent Collection of around seven hundred works of art, mostly two dimensional, but including some three-dimensional pieces. There are also holdings of Archive material.

The Trust was founded by Mary for the benefit, education and enjoyment of the people of Rye. She would probably be delighted that the Gallery is now so well-established and appreciated, not only by those in Rye, but regionally and nationally. The Trustees, friends, supporters and donors, by gift, purchase and bequest, have continued to expand the Collection to its current status.

Military History



Our group has enjoyed a really positive year. We meet on the third Tuesday of each month, in Iden old Church Hall at 7.00 and sessions usually last about an hour and a half. Talks this year have included local topics, such as Dumbo: the planning, construction and importance of the Pluto Pipe Line stretching from Dungeness to Boulogne 1942-5.

Next month we will be hearing about The Volunteer Auxiliary Coastguards of Rye Bay from 1878 – 2023. We have also looked at international/historical issues – The Naval Fortifications of Malta and the Franco Prussian War of 1870 and watched films including the chilling news reels shown in German cinemas 1939 – 40.

There have also been opportunities to meet with experts outside our club. We played host to a speaker from *The Commonwealth War Graves Commission*, who was able to tell us about sites locally and internationally – some of us did not know that there are British veterans buried in the USA. Mike Fox, the u3a National Co-ordinator is very efficient about letting us know of activities taking place in other u3a groups and on line talks we can access.

Our summer visit to Robertsbridge Aviation Museum was fascinating, despite the rain – we went in July! This is well worth a visit. The Society hold monthly open days for much of the year and the site is accessible for all and would be enjoyed by children too, if other u3a members care to check it out.

Our meetings start with light refreshments and drinks. Everyone is welcome, whether he/she is an expert or just wants to learn more about military history. At present we have 12 regulars but anyone who wants to come along for a one off meeting is very welcome.

Boule Group

Gill Scott



**Born
to
Boule**

The u3a Boule Groups continue to be very active, meeting on Strand Quay every Tuesday and Wednesday, at 10am. We keep going into the winter months if weather allows, but usually playing is not possible through January and February.

There are 21 members in all, and this year we have had two competitive evening matches, to decide who wins the **Golden Boule Trophy** (especially made for us by Bruce Luckhurst). The Wednesday group won this year, but the Tuesday group put up a good fight and is very keen to make sure they win it next year. The competition was followed by an enjoyable meal, at the Quayside kitchen, under Strand Court.



The Annual Evening Competition

We do have a lot of fun, and our games are not taken too seriously. We always go for coffee afterwards. The two groups are full at the moment, but we have a waiting list. If enough people were interested, it would be possible to start a third group. Each group is 'self run', which is not difficult, and help/tuition can be given. Basically, members just turn up

on the day - and play!

Equipment is minimal - a set of three boules, chalk board for scoring, two hoops and a rake for the gravel. If you are interested, maybe you can come along and watch, on one of the mornings we are playing.

Pat Goddard and John Roberts run the Tuesday group and Gill Scott runs the Wednesday group.



The Post Match Meal

Photographic Art in Rye ...

Photography is also well represented in Rye and district. For starters, we have two excellent photographic galleries in Rye High Street.

Opened in October 2007, the **Purdie Gallery** showcases the contemporary photography of David Purdie, who also holds one day photographic workshops once a month, where photographers can join him for the day. (<https://purdiegallery.co.uk/>).

Clive Sawyer was born in Brighton and raised in Sussex, and the **Clive Sawyer Gallery** has found a home in the heart of Rye, for over 14 years. Specialising in the Chromaluxe' process, his works have a really dramatic appearance. (<https://clivesawyer.gallery/>)

ART APPRECIATION GROUP

We are a group of art lovers, and our activities range from visiting local galleries, more distant galleries, and events in members' homes.



During the last year we have visited *The Towner Gallery* in Eastbourne where we enjoyed the Barbara Hepworth Exhibition and *Towner 100 - The Living Collection* (we also enjoyed ice creams on the beach - as you can see from the photo!).

A visit to *Hastings Contemporary* saw us enjoying the Soutine - Kossoff exhibition, and a trip to *Hastings Museum and Art Gallery* allowed us to immerse ourselves in a diverse display of art and artefacts from the area.



Summer saw us enjoying a BIG DAY OUT with a trip to the *National Gallery* in London where we enjoyed two exhibitions - *St Francis of Assisi* and *After Impressionism*.

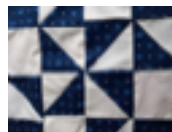
Closer to home, we shared a DVD at a member's house and learned about Botticelli's "Primavera".

Plans for the coming year include another trip to Eastbourne to share our opinions on the always-controversial Turner Prize exhibits, a trip to

Brighton Pavillion and Art Gallery and a discussion on "My Desert Island Painting".

New members are always welcome. Georgina Lowe

Needles and Pins Group



We meet on the second Thursday of the month at 2pm in each others homes, to do our current sewing, knitting etc.

An offshoot of this group is a patchwork session, led by Jenny Wilsher, held on the third Thursday of each month at 2pm.



Carol Baxter

Rye and the surrounding area has always been popular with poets, both as a home, and as inspiration - whether that is from the ever-changing coastline, the undulating countryside, or the romantic legends of pirates and smugglers.

If you Google “poets in Rye”, you will be offered a plethora of options, including poems about rye whisky, rye bread “comin thro the rye” (Robbie Burns), or Catcher in the Rye. However, if you dig deeper, you will soon discover a wealth of poets who have been captivated by the area.

Conrad Aiken moved to Rye from America in 1921, and lived in Jeake’s House in Mermaid Street.

Spike Milligan (see the item on Performing Arts) also joined the ranks of famous poets living in the area (was there anything that man couldn’t do?).

Rudyard Kipling’s poem “A Smuggler’s Song” can be found on the walls of The Mermaid Inn, and should act as a warning to us all when “we wake at midnight and hear a horse’s feet”. Not content with warning us about smugglers, Kipling also penned the famous poem “Sussex”:



*Choose ye your need from Thames to Tweed,
And I will choose instead
Such lands as lie 'twixt Rake and Rye,
Black Down and Beachy Head.*



Lady Maud Warrender may not be a name you are familiar with, but in 1903 she bought Leasam House with her husband George. In 1917 she became the District Commissioner of Rye Girl Guides and wrote the Girl Guides Marching Song (the chorus of which is “Be prepared is our watchword”). In 1909 she was one of the founders of The Poetry Society.

The tradition continues, with many modern poets taking their inspiration from the area. Many perform at the Rye Arts festival, and poetry recitals are held at many venues in the area, including free recitals at the library. Recently members of the poetry group attended a recital by Henry Normal, who lives in Fairlight and has recently published a book of his poems “The Fire Hills” inspired by the area.

Some of you may also recall the Poet in Residence project at Rye Harbour Nature Reserve, featuring poet Jane Lovell. Although the project finished in 2021, her collected poems inspired by the reserve have been published in a book “New Ways of Looking at Rye Harbour Nature Reserve”.



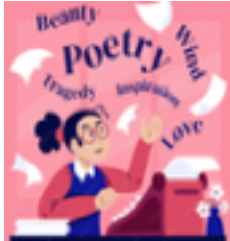
Georgina Lowe

"Tread softly because ...

POETRY GROUP

... you tread on my dreams"

We are a fairly small, very friendly group. If you enjoy reading, listening to, or if you are brave writing, poetry, this group is for you!



We always have a cuppa and cake, and a good chat. We meet at each others homes, mostly in Rye.

*We would be very happy to become a larger group,
so do join us.*

Paula.

MOTO Members On Their Own



This group is for those members who are on their own.

We can do any activity that you fancy! It means, that if you want company to go to something, the chances are that I can link you up with someone else. You will not be under any pressure to join in with things you are not interested in.

We have a monthly planning meeting, and go for Sunday lunch once a month, at a local pub. Various other activities are available & you can suggest some yourself.

If you are on your own, don't be ! Come & join us. Paula.

WORDPLAY

We are a small group who enjoy sharing interesting articles, poems and stories that we have written, spending a few minutes writing on a given subject and enjoying word games.



Nothing too demanding or serious! We share ideas and thoughts on many subjects and some enjoy tackling a little homework in readiness for discussion at the next meeting. We just enjoy words in all their forms and one another's company.

Why not join us? We can offer tea and cake! Margot

1066 Camera Club



Last year, in this report, I mentioned that our founder, John Wylie, was unwell. It is with sadness that I must now report on John's recent death, after a long illness.

Over the past year three of the members have led the group's activities - being Mike Taylor, Frances Hadfield and myself. Although we have 'lost' one or two members, the stalwarts continue to form the core of the Camera Group, who meet monthly at the moment.

During the warmer months we go out on 'shoots' to a variety of venues. In inclement weather our meetings are held at Tilling Green Old School, where we experiment with 'studio' subjects, and show examples of our work to each other.

For any new u3a members interested in joining, our aims are simply to encourage all levels of experience, to develop and expand their practical knowledge. It doesn't matter if you have a simple 'point and shoot' camera, or a DSLR set-up.

Ian Scott

Wine, Beer and Cider Appreciation Group



The group has had a full programme, meeting mainly at Iden Old Hall or St Mary's Centre in Rye, but occasionally at a member's house.

The autumn season started with a comparison of Beaujolais Crus. Four of the ten Crus were tasted and compared with Beaujolais Village. This was followed by a presentation of Italian wines, covering six typical Italian grape varieties from Puglia, Sicily, Piedmont, Tuscany and Veneto. Two more regions were covered: Eastern Europe and Alsace. In both cases, typical wine varieties from the region were presented.



Early in 2023, we had our first tasting of beers. Six Belgian beers were presented, all of which had a high degree of sophistication. Three were made by Trappist monks, these being of an exceptionally high alcoholic content so caution was required!

Christmas last year was celebrated by a lunch at Webbes Fish Café. During the summer, we had an excellent visit to Charles Palmer Vineyards for their 'Wine and Cheese Experience'. We were offered four of the vineyard's wines, including two of their acclaimed sparkling wines, complemented by four local cheeses.

MUSIC



As the years have gone by, the Music Group which met on Monday afternoons, to listen to music of all genres, has declined, largely through natural wastage and younger members not coming along to join the group.

It has therefore been decided to abandon the group as originally formed and hopefully to restart in 2024 with an exclusive focus on **CLASSICAL MUSIC** only. Now I am sure there are classical music buffs out there who would love to come to listen for a couple of hours to some of the most beautiful music ever written.

Hopefully members would every so often provide the music for an afternoon meeting and be able to put the pieces chosen in context for the rest of the group. The whole range of Classical music would be welcome, from baroque through the strict so-called "Classical" period of Haydn and Mozart and romanticism to modern classics.

Please let me know as soon as possible if you would like to join this new musical group and then we can get going early in the New Year. Many thanks.

Keith Hillier-Palmer

Rye Town Guide online - lists many of the authors associated with the town. Check them out at: <https://ryesussex.uk/directory/arts/authors/>.



Russell Thorndike was an English actor, playwright, and novelist.

John Ryan (1921-2009) was a British artist, illustrator, and children's book author.

Arthur Christopher Benson (1862-1925) was an English author, poet, biographer and essayist.

Malcolm Saville was a British author of children's books, best known for his "Lone Pine" series.

Conrad Aiken (1889-1973) was an American poet, novelist, and critic.

Henry James (1843-1916) was an American novelist, short story writer, and critic.

Radclyffe Hall a British author known for her groundbreaking novel, "The Well of Loneliness."

H. Montgomery Hyde was an Irish barrister, politician, and prolific author.

John Christopher (1922-2012) a pseudonym for Samuel Youd, an English science fiction author.

Rumer Godden was a British author who wrote over 60 books, including novels, short stories, and children's books.

Novelist, biographer, and benefactor of Rye. Edward Frederic Benson was born July 24, 1867.

Monica Edwards, born Monica le Doux Newton. As a child, her family moved to Rye Harbour.

Ford Madox Ford (1873-1939) was an English novelist, poet, and editor.

FURNITURE RESTORATION

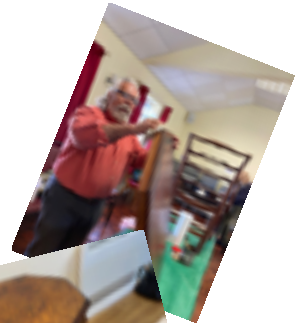


The 2023/4 series of furniture restoration classes has recently started a fourth successful year. Group members bring small pieces of occasional furniture, boxes, chairs and tables of their own choice.

I'm assisted by Brian Beellen and attendees are helped with structural and veneer repairs, cleaning, waxing and polishing surfaces, paint and varnish finishes. Sorry, but upholstery is NOT covered by this class.

If you would like to be added to the waiting list, please contact

Bruce Luckhurst ...



Rye and District u3a Membership

Our membership at the end of the 2022–23 year stood at 171. Your committee will continue to discuss ways to promote membership of Rye & District u3a, as we need to maintain a certain level to ensure we remain financially viable. Please remember that YOU are our best opportunity to recruit new members – just tell friends and acquaintances and bring them to a monthly meeting.

Your Committee (*) & u3a Team 2023-2024

Chair
Deputy Chair
Business Secretary & Minutes
Treasurer
Membership Secretary
Special Interest Groups
Speakers Organiser
Communications & Technical

Joy Davenport
Ian Scott
Jacqueline Pankhurst
Mike Taylor
Patrick Bonham
Georgina Lowe
Carol Cambaceses
vacant

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Christmas Lunch
Monthly Newsletter Editor
MiniMag Editor
Meet & Greet
Technical
Website
Good Wishes Cards

Jen Tomkinson
Keith Hillier-Palmer
Ian Scott
Yvonne Metcalf
Jeff Warley
Linden Thomas
Patrick Bonham



Rye Arts Festival ...

This Festival is Rye's principal annual arts event, taking place over the weekends and last two weeks in September. It has developed over the past **51 years** into one of the most successful and respected small festivals of its kind, dedicated to high quality performances in music, literature, theatre and other art forms coupled with a range of activities in heritage and the environment.



Rye Arts
Festival



The 53rd Festival Dates are Friday 13th - Sunday 29th September 2024, but please check their web site at: <https://ryeartsfestival.org.uk>



We are a friendly, sociable group and welcome all u3a members.

Our teams take part in a range of fund-raising quizzes in Rye and the surrounding villages for enjoyment, rather than being too competitive, and some of our hosts provide supper at half-time!

Causes we have supported in the last year include Rye Bonfire Society; the Rye Harbour Nature Reserve; Rye, Winchelsea and District Memorial Hospital; St. George's Church, Brede; Winchelsea Museum and Playden W.I.

Members will see details of the quizzes on the monthly u3a chart and are invited to contact the coordinator to reserve a place on the team, as well as letting the co-ordinator know of any local quizzes they hear about.

John Ryan of Captain Pugwash fame ...

Ryan was born in Edinburgh, the son of diplomat Sir Andrew Ryan. As a young child he had a fascination with pirates, every night looking out at his window wishing for some to appear. After serving as an officer in Burma during the Second World War, Ryan studied at the Regent Street Polytechnic, where he met his future wife Priscilla.



A John Ryan panel from the 1959 Eagle Annual No. 8: Harris Tweed: in Man Eater! After meeting Marcus Morris at his wedding, Ryan first created Captain Pugwash as a comic strip for The Eagle in 1950, although the strip was dropped after three months as it was felt to be aimed at younger readers than the target audience.



Unperturbed, Ryan created Harris Tweed, Special Agent, for Eagle, which ran until 1962. However, in 1957, after seven years, his first Pugwash picture book was published, which then led to a long-running Radio Times strip and a television series made using cutout animation.

He also created Lettice Leefe for Girl magazine, which ran from 1951 to 1965, crossing over with Harris Tweed, and through his animation studio, John Ryan Studios, he created Mary, Mungo & Midge in 1969, which featured his daughter Isabel providing the voice of the titular character, and The Adventures of Sir Prancelot in 1972. In 1981, Ryan presented The Ark Stories for Yorkshire Television, the series being produced by Anne Wood. Each episode saw Ryan present and illustrate a story about Noah's Ark, either prior to or during the Great Flood, each starring a crocodile named Crockle. Ryan, a Catholic, provided illustrations and cartoons for Catholic newspapers, including the Catholic Herald, and several collections of these cartoons were published as books, and featured the recurring character of Cardinal Grotti. Towards the end of his life, he was resident in Rye. Ryan died in hospital in Rye, East Sussex. He is survived by his wife Priscilla and his three children, Isabel now runs his archive, organising exhibitions and talks.

Performing Arts and Rye

A few notables from the performing arts, have connections to Rye, or have made their homes in the area. Here are just two:

Paul McCartney

Paul McCartney was born in Liverpool in 1942, where, together with John Lennon, George Harrison and Ringo Starr he formed The Beatles, probably the most influential band of the 20th century.



Writer, or co-writer of many of pop's classics, such as Eleanor Rigby, Yesterday, Hey Jude, She Loves You and (of course) Yellow Submarine, his career with The Beatles lasted until 1970, when the group split.



He then went on to form a new group "Wings" with his wife Linda. In addition to his prolific music he has written books, animated films and documentaries.

In the 1970s Paul and Linda bought a farm in Peasmarsh. They became a part of the local community, supporting local causes such as Rye Hospital, their children attended the village school, and they could often be seen shopping in Jempson's.

Many of you may also have walked past his recording studio, which is in the windmill between Winchelsea and Icklesham. Of course he is now Sir James Paul McCartney.

Spike Milligan

Although Irish, Spike Milligan was born in India in 1918. Multi faceted, he wrote poetry, books and comedy shows, and was a talented musician (who could forget the Ying Tong Song?), poet, film and theatre actor.

During the second world war Spike served as a signaller in the Royal Artillery. Initially based in Bexhill, he went on to serve in Africa and Italy.

After the war, together with his pals Harry Secombe, Peter Sellers and Michael Bentine he formed the popular comedy group *The Goons*. Following the success of the *Goon Show* on radio, Spike went on to have a successful career on TV.



In 1988 Spike moved to Rye, where allegedly Paul McCartney frequently visited to play his grand piano. He is famously buried in Winchelsea where the inscription on his gravestone reads "I told You I Was III", written in Gaelic. To give "Spike" his full name, it's Terence Alan Milligan KBE.



Performing Arts Today

Rye Theatre is based at Rye College and hosts many entertainment events, including Pantos and BBC recordings.

There are also many thriving amateur theatre groups in the area - Rye Players and in Rye Harbour, Icklesham and Fairlight, to name but four.

SCRABBLE



Judith Dean



There are games entirely of skill and strategy, like chess, while some board and card games depend only on luck. Scrabble remains popular because it combines the luck of the seven letter tiles drawn at random from the bag with one's ingenuity in forming words on the board, adding to or linking whatever's already there.

It's tempting to go for a coloured double or triple letter or word square, the nine dark red ones being the much-coveted 'triple word' squares. And you never know what the other players will do before your turn comes, so it pays to always have a 'plan B'.

Picking a J, Q, X or Z might seem unlucky, but these high-value letters can greatly add to your score, though they can be a real liability towards the end of the game. Perhaps the most difficult rack is of seven vowels or seven consonants.

Unlike some games, Scrabble doesn't need exactly four players – anything between three and five is fine. We meet in each other's homes, usually play a couple of games before a break for tea, nibbles and chat, then if time allows might play a third game. There's a lot more to Scrabble than pure luck – come along and join us!

The Rye Arts Club was formed in the early 1920s based at Lamb House, with Henry James the writer listed as an early president. Between the wars the club had a tantalising roll-call of members including Augustus John, Dame Laura Knight and Edward Burra.



After the Second World War there was an influx of artists to Rye and in 1951 a visionary and idealistic new group of eight artists appeared in Rye and launched their own modern movement. This group of artists called themselves RX8 (referencing a local fishing boat) and they held their first selling show during Rye Festival Week. This exhibition of paintings, lithographs and sculpture was shown at the Mermaid Street School in Rye which went on to become the Boys Club. Exhibitors in that first show included Geoffrey Bagley, Margaret Barnard and Walter Cole.

In 1952, RX8 merged with a newer group which included Ken Townsend and Wally Cole and the *Rye Society of Artists* was born. The society is still artists-led and has gathered many professional artists as members and includes several Royal Academicians. Our first elected photographer was Fay Godwin and John Ryan of Captain Pugwash fame was a member for many years.

More than half a century since its inception, the RSA show is still held every summer in its new venue at the Dance Hall on Conduit Hill and is an inspiring cultural fixture in the Rye calendar. <https://ryesocietyofartists.co.uk/history-of-the-society/>

WALKING GROUP



We offer two walks each month, one longer (around 5-6 miles) on the 1st Wednesday of the month, and one shorter (3-4 miles) on the 3rd Wednesday in the month.

Both walks start at 10.00am, and will usually be within a 10-15 mile radius of Rye, to make them accessible to as many members as possible (although the 2023 June Long Walk was an extended walk on the South Downs which was very successful and we will probably repeat something similar next year).

On The Seven Sisters.



On both walks we always have a short stop every so often, for a breather and water, and on the longer walk in particular several Group Members like to bring coffee and a snack or sandwiches.

We Sometimes Have a Swinging Time



Because we always check out the condition of the route shortly before the walk, details are notified to Walking Group Members around 10 days in advance by email – and for those who have a “Smart” mobile phone, we also have a dedicated WhatsApp Group, set up to help with communication between members (for example car sharing, change of arrangements etc).

We typically have around 8-12 walkers on each walk, so there is plenty of scope for new members - Best wishes.

Peter Challans

Mah Jong Group



Nita Franklin

The Mah Jong Group continues to flourish although, sadly, we have lost some of the original members during the past 3 years, due to illness.

We meet in the home of a group member twice a month and have been pleased to welcome some new members in the last few months. Both experienced players and those who have never played before, but wish to learn, are welcome.

We are happy to welcome new members, so long as they are prepared to host the occasional session in their home (between 4 and 8 people) and to provide them with light refreshment.

Rye and District Contacts

Monthly Newsletter - Keith Hillier Palmer

Please let Keith have your information for the monthly newsletter and activities chart in good time. Allow at least 7 days before the monthly meeting date.



U3A Rye Webmaster - Linden Thomas

All matters regarding our website should be addressed to Linden on <https://u3asites.org.uk/rye/home> or www.u3asites.org.uk/rye and email webmaster e&oe.



PAYMENTS TO RYE u3a

All cheques for u3a events and membership should be made payable to '**University of the Third Age**' and NOT to Rye u3a, or an individual.

Direct payments – Bank Details are as follows:

Account no. 02750155 sort code 30-97-66

The Resource Centre at the u3a National Office

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/>



FREE Legal Advice for ALL u3a members simply telephone 'arc legal assistance on 0344 770 1040

Minimag Editor: Ian Scott

phone: 01797 226732 email: scottiesinuk@gmail.com



DATA PROTECTION REGULATIONS

Your personal data supplied on a membership form will be held in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act and maintained on a computer for the purposes of correspondence and contact only. Details will not be released to outside agencies or third parties. Details may be passed to and held by Group Leaders of their group members only.

Text and graphics used in this free magazine, are by agreement with the originator, or are believed to be free-use from the InterNet.

Text 'factoids' are mainly from Wikipedia, to whom a donation was made and to whom the editor gives thanks.

Italian Conversation - Group Coordinator: *Linden Thomas*



This newly set up group meets on the 3rd Wednesday each month at 10.30 at the Lookout Cafe.

We now have 8 people in the group and we concentrate on general conversation, although we do have a theme for each week in case conversation flags!

New members are always welcome - just let me know if you are coming.

U3A Spanish Group

Know your Spanish onions – and come and join our stimulating gatherings which take place in one of our homes on the last Thursday of each month.



Amongst other Spanish language exercises, we read fairly simple stories in Spanish and translate them verbally into English. This way we learn more vocabulary and improve our comprehension. We practise grammar and pronunciation (really essential if you want Spanish people to understand you!).

We discuss matters of news and general interest in Spanish although this can transpose into English when over enthusiasm prevails.

A basic knowledge of Spanish is preferable if you would like to participate in these get togethers. However, if you are an absolute beginner and would like to start from scratch, then we would consider forming a separate group.

Bring some 'sol' into the Winter afternoons, ready for your next trip to Spain, South America or Mexico. Chat with our co-ordinator

Trevor Collins

French Circle *June Hawkins*

The group meets twice a month for a coffee in a Rye café, usually at the Lookout, Rye Lodge Hotel.



It is an informal **conversation group** for those with reasonable fluency in French. We usually base our discussions on an article from a French publication and also discuss current affairs and local activities.

Rye - A Landscape for Artists

Many artists have made their homes in or around Rye, and many more have been inspired by the town and local landscape to create wonderful pictures.

Arguably the most notable is **J M W Turner**. He spent much of his life along the South Coast, and famously painted many sea scapes from Margate, which is why the Turner Gallery is based there. However, he also spent much of his time in East Sussex and painted many pictures of Rye, Winchelsea and Hastings, including the one shown here.



Edward John Burra (29 March 1905 – 22 October 1976) was an English painter, draughtsman, and printmaker, best known for his depictions of the urban underworld, black culture and the Harlem scene of the 1930s. In addition to paintings, he was also a book illustrator and theatre set designer, designing sets for many theatres including The Marlowe, Sadlers Wells and The Royal Opera House.

Although born in London, his parents lived at Springfield Lodge, Rye. He took art classes with a Miss Bradley of Rye before moving on to Chelsea School of Art and the Royal College of Art. He travelled widely in Europe, and whilst in Italy met **Paul Nash** (also from East Sussex).



In 2011, the BBC aired an hour-long documentary, *I Never Tell Anybody Anything: The Life and Art of Edward Burra*, which followed Burra from his native Rye to the Paris nightlife spots he loved and the jazz clubs of prohibition-era New York and the war-torn landscapes of the Spanish Civil War, and back to England during the Blitz. It shows how Burra's increasingly disturbing and surreal work deepened and matured as he experienced at first hand some of the most tragic events of the century.

Lucien Pissaro (son of Camille Pissarro) also spent time in the South of England, making many images of the Rye area, including this painting of Rye from Cadborough Cliff:



Keeping up the tradition of Rye's links with the artistic world, many artists continue to live and work in the area, and their work can be seen at the many art galleries in the town, the annual South East Open Studios, the annual summer exhibition of the **Rye Society of Arts**, and the annual **Rye Arts Festival** (see separate articles for each of these).

Provided and adapted by Georgina Lowe