

IN TOUCH

JUNE 2023

News Updates

Dear All,

I am writing this a tad early as we are away for a few days! May has been rather a busy month for many with the Coronation and associated festivities. I do hope that you were able to watch the broadcast as well as being able to take part in local festivities. We went to the village Coronation lunch in the glorious sunshine on the Sunday. A lovely event.

Now we are heading into June, and a return to a more normal daily routine, no doubt including gardening and an assault on the weeds which will persist in returning! Whatever you have in mind for June, I do hope the month is kind to you.

Liz Greenway
Chairman.

To celebrate Summer, we have arranged a members' lunch at the Royal Chase Hotel on Thursday 3 August. To book your place(s), and avoid disappointment, please ensure that you return your completed form and payment by 28 July. (all details and menu can be found at the end of this newsletter).

The committee very much looks forward to seeing you there.

Barbara Hurst

The proposed Choir/Singing Group: Eight members have expressed an interest so far, which isn't enough to create a choir/singing group. Singing offers huge benefits as we grow older, including improved cardio-vascular health, mental health and social interaction, as well as giving pleasure to both singers and audiences. If you would like to give it a try, please let me know as soon as possible.

Barbara Hurst



Shaftesbury and Gillingham

Forthcoming Events

1 June – u3a Talk

Dr. Francis Burroughes
The Wonderful World of Glass

6 July – u3a Talk

Sandrine Maubeche
The History and Study of Nine Paintings –
13th –19th Century

3 August

Summer Lunch
Royal Chase Hotel

4–8 September 2023

Autumn Holiday to Norfolk

Here is the links to our web page

<https://u3asites.org.uk/squ3a/home>

Next u3a Talks

Monthly open meetings are held on the first Thursday of the month at 10.00 for 10.30am start at The New Remembrance Hall, Charlton, Shaftesbury, Dorset, SP7 0PL A small charge of £2 per person is made, to cover the cost of speakers and refreshments. Open meetings provide an opportunity to have a coffee, socialise and to enjoy presentations from invited speakers. Non-members are welcome to attend one open meeting, free of charge, to sample what is on offer.

Details of speakers for the coming year can be found on our website; the next two are shown below.

Thursday 1 June

Dr. Francis Burroughes – "The Wonderful World of Glass"

This remains the most popular of Francis's talks. From his own collection, he brings historic and valuable items of glass for members to examine for themselves, to illustrate the history of Glass-making from 3000B.C. to the present day.

Francis is an acknowledged expert, and often asked to lend pieces and speak about them for various television antique programmes. He is a lecturer and after-Dinner Speaker, for W.I.s, Rotary & Round Table, U3As and special interest groups and societies. Francis is now retired, but in his long career he has been a school teacher, and director of several companies. In his spare time he has been a church organist for over fifty years, a keen flower arranger, and conductor of numerous choral societies, operatic societies and musical groups.

Thursday 6 July

Sandrine Maubeche – "The National Gallery – The History and Study of Nine Paintings – 13th –19th Century"

It is difficult to choose a selection of paintings from the National Gallery that hosts 2300 paintings from the 13th to 19th Century, and has one of the finest collections of European Art. Although the collection is relatively small, the pieces are all masterpieces by famous artists, and the following selection spans six centuries of History of Art: Cimabue, Jacopo Di Cione, Van Eyck, Holbein, Botticelli, Rembrandt, Velazquez, Turner and Constable.

Sandrine was born in Paris and after gaining a Baccalaureate in Philosophy, Art and History of Art, she went on to study Architecture, Art and History of Art at La Sorbonne, Paris. Now settled in Wiltshire and raising a family she has used her artistic talents in producing portraits of children, adults and animals, as well as houses, heritage properties and classic cars. Sandrine also worked in parallel as a French teacher at Port Regis School, Shaftesbury and a T/A at Ralph Allen School, Bath. She has been a Longleat House guide and in 2012 qualified as a Blue Badge guide. Is a member of the Guild of Tourist Guides. Now guides and lectures on Art, Folklore, Geology, Archaeology, Literature, Music in the West Country in various languages and works both in the UK and abroad as a Tour Director

Group News

Art Appreciation

Meeting from 2.00pm till 3.30pm on the second Monday of each month at the New Remembrance Hall in Charlton, this group is working its way chronologically from the Renaissance to the present. Our focus currently is the Renaissance in the North: France, Germany, England and The Netherlands during the 15th and 16th centuries.

Members are encouraged to research artists or paintings of the period and share their discoveries with the group, but I'm happy for people to just come along and enjoy learning about art. Contributions may be pictures in books, prints of artworks downloaded from the internet or PowerPoint slides for projection, and I'm happy to create PowerPoint presentations for anyone who isn't able to do that themselves. Together, we learn a great deal about history and the lives of artists, as well as examining a wide range of artworks.

Please get in touch if you would like to know more.

Barbara Hurst

Reading Group

Our group meets at Gillingham library from 11.00am till 12.00 on the first Friday of each month, and our focus for the next six months is memoir. For June's meeting we'll be discussing '*Goodbye to All That*' by Robert Graves, centred on his army service during WWI. July's selection will be '*The Chicken Chronicles*' a memoir by Alice Walker, which will transport us to the Deep South of the USA. At present, I make the selections, though that may change in time. Places are limited but do get in touch if you would be interested in joining this lively and thought-provoking group.

Barbara Hurst

Literature

The Literature Group continues its exploration of the world's writing. We have just finished '*David Copperfield*' by Charles Dickens, and much preferred our reading of it to a recent TV perceived travesty of the book. Discussion, as always, has been lively and informed. The Zoom sessions are a delight for all of us.

We are now beginning '*Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*' a play by sixties American writer Edward Albee, familiar to many from the film of the same name starring Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton. The language and themes are very different from *David Copperfield*, but we have tried not to be too shocked! After our reading and discussion of the play, the plan is to share, through the wonders of technology, the YouTube video of the film.

Then it will be something different yet again, perhaps the poems of William Blake. Who can tell!

Peter Rolfe

Garden Interest

This month saw our garden visit to THE OLD RECTORY at Manston. A 5-acre garden with a south facing wall along with a 120ft herbaceous border edged by an old brick path. Enclosed yew hedge continued alongside a wonderful flower garden.



The visit afforded us a great variety of different garden rooms and the star for me was the twisted stem wisteria with weeping blossom



All in all, a very interesting visit with wonderful alliums being the prominent plant at the moment.

Our next visit is to OLD DOWN HOUSE Wimborne on Friday 9 June a 3/4-acre garden This promises to be another inspirational visit to look forward to.

Irene Gordon

There were delightful wild flower areas with mown paths running through it. So attractive for wild life, and a pleasure for us all to admire. Lovely knot garden and walled Victorian kitchen garden.



Philosophy

This month the Philosophy Discussion Group is analysing a very topical subject:

- *What is Religion?*
- *What utility does religion have?*
- *Is it still relevant?*

For a long time, man has tried to explain why or how certain things happen. When science or simple observation could not provide answers, man turned to religion to provide those answers. Indeed, myths existed during the time of Greek civilisation, many of which found their way into Roman civilisation. Both Christianity and Islam have their roots in Judaism. They claim that God has to exist to explain the origin of the world. Science, as outlined in the book "A Brief History of Time", concludes that science does not prove that God does not exist; it does however, make the existence of God unnecessary, to explain the origin and existence of time and the universe!

The idea that Gods may exist still impacts on our daily lives. Indeed, it is found in the days of the week – each being named after a different God. Sunday, after the sun God (Apollo or Helios who exists in both Roman and Greek mythology); Monday, after Luna the moon God; Tuesday (named after Twi, a Germanic God of war and the sky); Wednesday after the Norse God Woden (the supreme God and creator, God of victory); Thursday after the Norse God Thor (God of thunder, the weather and home); Friday after The Norse God Freya (the Goddess of love and the night); Saturday, (Saturn a Roman God). Even today, when there is a thunderstorm, Norwegian children are told that it's "Thor's Hammer"!

Religion also provides the basis of a value system. This combination generates power for religious leaders. Sometimes power can be seen as barbaric; as the example of the Spanish Inquisition demonstrates: burning enemies at the stake, using the excuse that it is saving their soul! Kings use religion to justify their position of power, as can be seen where the Christian religion states the Divine Right of Kings. This also justifies the position of priests. Indeed, the recent coronation of our king is based on a Protestant church service where the king agrees to be head of an established Protestant Church of England, (removing the idea that the pope is head of the Christian Church) while establishing Bishops in the House of Lords. The Egyptian Pharaohs had a similar relationship with their priests. The Holy Roman Empire was based on this relationship with the Pope and Bishops having a great influence and power over the kings and princes, and thereby making the church rich.

Ukraine had a church that was subordinate to Moscow. That has changed, and some priests have been sanctioned, and fined for suspected links to the Kremlin!

Today, in many countries, religion is extremely powerful: in Afghanistan there has been a loss of children caused by lack of medical attention, in turn caused by religion. For 20 years billions were put into health care. Now funding goes elsewhere. Furthermore, the Taliban do not allow women to be nurses. This has been described as "the largest humanitarian crisis in the world" (UN).

The Republic of Ireland was built on the Catholic Church. It was a poor, backward country for many years. Many lived in poverty. The change called the Celtic Tiger, was dramatic. Ireland is now is very much richer. Indeed, by some measures it is more productive than the USA. It is a cosmopolitan society, which is generally very forgiving. Despite the majority of schools being Catholic, the influence of the church is reducing. When Ireland held a referendum on same sex marriage, the Church campaign was robust and determined against it. The result was an avalanche in favour of making same sex marriage legal.

Does this mean that Religion is less important than it was previously?



I have set up a new group for those wishing to explore churches and other places of worship. If you are interested in history, art and architecture, this is the group for you. The visits will be quarterly, without a specific schedule, and we would welcome your recommendations. It could be a cluster of small rural churches or somewhere much grander. It could be a mosque, temple, chapel or synagogue. It could be nearby or farther afield. And I hardly need mention that a convenient tea shop nearby would be fabulous.

Our first visit will be a guided tour of St Nicholas' Church in Moreton at 2.00pm Thursday 13 July. You may remember this church was mentioned by Sue Vincent in her talk T E Lawrence in Dorset at May's monthly meeting. Lawrence's grave and the Walled Garden are nearby, so you can make an afternoon of it if you wish. The cost of the church tour is £2.50 per person. Given the distance, I strongly recommend car-sharing. I will help organise that and I'm happy to take three others from Gillingham.

Please let me know if you would like to join us.

Barbara Hurst
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Marion Hammond is stepping down as leader of the Natural History group in June. As things stand, nobody has volunteered to take over, so the group will not continue beyond the events already scheduled. This is particularly disappointing because it is a large, enthusiastic group but without a leader it cannot continue. If you think you could take on the leadership, either by yourself or in a joint arrangement with a friend or group of friends, please contact Marion via the website to discuss how the group might be saved.

Other groups / items for interest

Pétanque

Although nobody has come forward to set up a u3a group, which is disappointing, there was considerable interest, so bear in mind that you could still play at the new international-sized Gillingham 'terrains' with your friends. All you have to do is go into either The Red Lion pub or The Phoenix pub anytime, pay a £10 deposit to hire the kit, go out and play (in Town Meadow), and then get a full refund when the kit is returned. This is a sport for everyone and very good for your health, so why not give the new facilities a try? For more information, contact: www.GillinghamDorsetPetanque.co.uk.

Explaining Fairtrade

What does Fairtrade do? Fairtrade works with farming co-operatives, businesses and governments to make trade fair. Together with Fairtrade farmers and workers they have a vision: a world in which trade is based on fairness so that producers earn secure and sustainable livelihoods.

Fairtrade has a network of dedicated supporters who help to raise awareness of the issues of unfair trade and fundraise to support them in their work.

Fairtrade sets social, economic and environmental standards for the companies and farmers involved in the supply chain. For farmers and workers, the standards include protection of workers' rights and the environment, for companies, they include the payment of the Fairtrade Minimum Price safety net and an additional Fairtrade Premium



The core FAIRTRADE Mark is recognised around the world. An amazing 93% of UK shoppers recognise and 83% trust it when deciding whether a product is ethical. Please where possible, look for and support Fairtrade.

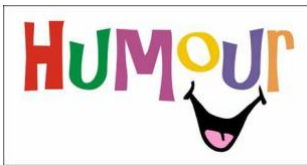
Radio Alfred

Alfred is a not-for-profit organisation. The radio station covers Shaftesbury, the Blackmore Vale and Cranborne Chase areas of North Dorset and South Wiltshire. They broadcast on 107.3, stream at thisisalfred.com and provide a daily local news podcast- 'The Alfred Daily'.

Alfred is an entirely volunteer-run community. The station was founded as a podcast in 2018 by residents who wanted to create a platform for local voices to be heard. It broadcasts various programming, including daily local news, local music, interviews, short stories, poetry and community events. The station also offers training and support to local people who want to get involved in radio or podcast-making.

If you want to get involved with Alfred, please visit their website or contact them on social media or [email hello@thisisalfred.com](mailto:hello@thisisalfred.com)

.....and finally



My mother-in-law fell down a wishing well, I was amazed, I never knew they worked.

'I went to the doctors the other day and I said, 'Have you got anything for wind?' He gave me a kite. '

My older relatives liked to tease me at weddings, saying things like, "You'll be next!" They stopped once I started doing the same to them at funerals."

Group	Date	Leader	Website
Art Appreciation	2nd Monday 2-3.30pm	Barbara Hurst	click here
Art Workshop	1st & 3rd Monday 2pm-4pm	Joan Stewart	click here
Canasta	1st and 3rd Monday - pm	Hazel Baker	click here
Digital Photography	3rd Thursday - am	Andy Newton	click here
Embroidery	3rd Wednesday - pm	Lesley Frost	click here
French for Fun 1	Tuesday/fortnightly 10-11.30am	Ron Beard	click here
French for Fun 2	Wednesday /fortnightly pm	Chris Stotsbury Elizabeth Lewer	click here
Garden Interest	2nd Monday - am	Irene Gordon	click here
Genealogy	4th Monday - pm	Liz Greenway	click here
German Conversation	Wednesday / fortnightly - pm	Robert Light	click here
International History	3rd Wednesday - am	Richard Sim	click here
Literature	1st & 3rd Monday 10.30am on Zoom	Peter Rolfe	click here
Lunch Club	Last Friday	Ros Ham	click here
Mahjong	2nd & 4th Friday - am	Marion Pace	click here
Music for Pleasure	2nd & 4th Thursday - pm	Eileen Haddleton	click here
Natural History	2nd & 4th Wednesday 10am to 12.30.	Marion Hammond	click here
Philosophy	Monthly Tuesday pm	Chris Spencer	click here
Poetry & Play Reading	1st Thursday - pm	Audrey Cross Janet Botterill	click here
Reading Group	1st Friday 11am -12pm	Barbara Hurst	click here
Rummicub	Weekly Tuesday - pm	Avril Fletcher	click here
Scrabble	Weekly Friday - am	Yvonne Hill	click here
Spite & Malice	3rd Monday - pm	Sue Walker	click here
Table Tennis	Weekly Thursday 2pm	Elizabeth Lewer Chris Stotesbury	click here
Walking Group	1st Tuesday - am	Barbara Robson	click here

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