

Welcome

Firstly a big thank to Brenda for her efforts in producing the newsletter for the past year and her assistance in handing over to me. With the clocks going forward Spring has really arrived. As each day passes it gets slightly longer and hopefully warmer. The removal of the corona virus restrictions gives you the opportunity to get out and about more, however it is up to you to make your own assessment of the risks and decide what your new 'normal' will be like. Best wishes,

Brian Webb - newslettereditor@sidmouthu3a.org



Although I am your new newsletter editor, not many of you know me as I am a 'part time' member! My wife, Judy and I live in West Sussex and are fortunate in having a static caravan near Seaton. We come down to Devon fairly often and have been members of Sidmouth U3A for about 3 years. In West Sussex we have been involved in our local U3A for many years and have both been involved in running our own groups as well as serving as Committee members. On hearing that you were going to be without a 'news editor' I decided to volunteer because I know how difficult it can be for the organisation to be without a regular newsletter. So Janet and I decided we would try to manage this task 'remotely'. Well this first edition has worked, albeit with a few wrinkles to be sorted out. We will continue with this for the foreseeable future but I must admit an assistant on the ground locally in Sidmouth would be a help! Would anyone like to give us a hand?

Chairman's Message

It was really good to see so many of you attending the AGM last month, we had 92 members attend. For those of you who couldn't make it you can see my report at the end of this newsletter. There is an important section for all Group Leaders to see.

Thank you to Brian Fernley who was our speaker last month giving us an interesting talk about the involvement of Dunkerswell Airfield during the Battle of the Atlantic. I'm sorry the room was so cold, many of you were huddled in coats and hats. Whilst we have to maintain good ventilation we will do our best to try to make the room a bit warmer this coming meeting, hopefully the sun will shine for us. I would like to wish our new Editor; Brian Webb a very warm welcome. This is his first newsletter so I hope you enjoy it.

My apologies for a missing obituary last month. Doreen Standing has been a member of Sidmouth u3a for over 22 years and her work, along with everyone else who has had an active role in the success of our organisation, should be applauded. Please see Doreen's obituary later in this newsletter written by Maurice.

I know quite a few people have Covid at the moment so I hope you all recover quickly and are able to get back to normal life. If you need any help or you need to talk to anyone please contact our Social Friend; Andrea Talbot socialchair@sidmouthu3a.org

As the weather starts to improve I hope to see many more of you at meetings and events.

Best wishes,

Janet.

Open Meeting, Stowford Rise Community Centre on Tuesday 12th April 2022 Tea/coffee served from 1.30–2pm

Ellen Holah:- About Frauds & Scams!



Ellen is a Police Community Support Office who has offered to inform us of current malicious activities we need to avoid.

The speakers at our next Open Meetings are:

10th May, Steve Davis

On The History and Work of the Thames River Police

Originating as a partnership between the Government of the day and the West Indian planters and merchants, the Marine Police were formed to protect the vital trade between the West Indies and London from widespread theft on the Thames. Over the last two centuries the Thames River Police, as they have come to be known, have continued to protect the river, patrolling, with very few exceptions, 24 hours a day, seven days a week since their foundation.

Today the Thames River police still protects the river, as they have done since 1798. They are now recognised by UNESCO as the longest continuously serving police force in the world and, as forerunners of the Metropolitan Police, are the founders of modern policing.

June 14, Helen Baggott

“Posted in the Past” more details to follow.

A note from Brian Fernley

Following my talk last month (Hunting the hunter) we collected donations from the audience totalling, a magnificent,£91.60. On behalf of the South West Airfields Heritage Trust (SWAHT) I would like to sincerely thank all those who contributed. Your donations will help towards the continuing work of SWAHT in preserving our local aviation heritage. **Brian Fernley-
speakerfinder@sidmouthu3a.org**

A note from your Treasurer

I would like to express my sincere thanks to everyone who helped me during a difficult time following my husband's stroke in the last days of the old financial year and preparing the Treasurer's Report for the u3a AGM. A big thank you to David Brittan who helped getting the accounts in order and for Paul Swinburn for checking through everything and signing the Accounts off. Also big thanks to our Membership Secretary, Chris Ward, for patiently answering my requests.

Vera Arnold – treasurer@sidmouthu3a.org

Missing EMAILS from Sidmouth U3A?



Have you checked YOUR SPAM, TRASH or JUNK, FOLDERS? You could be missing out, on a timely event that has passed before you see the information. Depending on your IT device, would all members please check that emails from your u3a Sidmouth contacts are noted as 'OK' to view in your inbox. We believe that some of our members have not seen important emails because of this problem.

If an email from a u3a Sidmouth contact is dumped automatically into your Spam/Junk folder then you can mark it as OK. or move it to your inbox this should then ensure that contact is acceptable for the future.

Thank you from your u3a Committee.

What's Going On

U3a Sidmouth asks all members to self-assess for Covid19 symptoms prior to attending any u3a meeting, activity or event and not to attend if they have symptoms. If any member feels they may have Covid19 symptoms, it is advised that they get tested - lateral flow or PCR - or contact the NHS helpline by dialling 111.

**CALLING ALL QUIZZERS! Want to join a team?
Contact Veronica Swinburn**



invites

Members of the East Devon u3a Network Link and
Mid Devon, Honiton, Tiverton and Exe Valley u3as

to an **Inter u3a Quiz**

on

Thursday 28 April 2022

From 14:00 – 16:00

at **Willand Village Hall**

Gables Rd, Willand, Cullompton EX15 2PL
(Car Park on site)

Each u3a may enter up to 3 teams and
each team must have 4 players.

Cost: £10 per team of 4

Refreshments available

Please contact shlawrieu3a@gmail.com

to register your team/s by

Thursday 31 March 2022



**Six rounds of 10 questions
PLUS a picture round.**



Joker can only be played on one round.

SKITTLES & LUNCH

@ BLUE BALL INN, Sidford
FRIDAY 6TH MAY 2022 £7.95

11am for coffee and skittles, followed by
soup and sandwich lunch.

Only one place left!

For more information and to book, contact
Carla or Martin Scott

Sidmouth u3a has always had a very good reputation for the social activities that take place in addition to the regular monthly group meetings. To continue to offer a range of different events the group needs more members to come forward with new ideas who are willing to join the social committee. With enough new members on the social committee the role would not be onerous. Do contact me to find out how the social committee works.

Andrea Talbot

socialchair@sidmouthu3a.org



ADVANCED NOTICE:- We are currently arranging a coach trip to Bristol to see the S.S. Great Britain for mid September. Full details will be in the next newsletter."

Membership News

470 members now have signed up for the new year. Thank you to ALL who paid their dues before the end of February. It helps tremendously. After the last two turbulent years we have increased our membership.

With lots of interesting plans for the future, our new members afternoon should have been and gone by the time you read this, welcoming and introducing new people to our groups and the committee etc. Tea and Biscuits will have been served by our team of Ladies who help out at all these events plus the monthly meetings. Thank you to them for all they do..

Please get in touch with any questions about membership matters.

All the Best **Chris Ward** - membership@sidmouthu3a.org

Help needed!

We need a new *Webmaster* to keep our website up to date. Not a huge task and no specialist knowledge needed. Contact Brian Fernley for more information, speakerfinder@sidmouthu3a.org

Groups Galore

New Group leaders required

Bridge Group – A new group leader is needed

Rummikub Groups 1 & 2 require group leaders

Singing for Pleasure – A group leader is needed.

Recorder Group – From April the Recorder Group will meet on the 2nd Wednesday morning each month instead of 1st Wednesday.

Groups with vacancies

Curry Club The Curry Club is a group of people who enjoy cooking and eating curries. Everybody cooks a curry of their choice and we get together in a member's home to enjoy each others efforts in a relaxing meal. We aim for authentic tastes made from the basic ingredients to try different dishes from the Indian subcontinent. Because we meet in people's homes, the number in the group is limited however, currently we have a small number of vacancies.

Janice Paul

Painting for Pleasure are keen to have more members, There is a relaxed format in as much, that everyone chooses their own subjects to paint and in a wide variety of mediums. They meet weekly on Wednesdays.

Here is the full list of Groups with vacancies, who are keen to recruit a few more members, please contact the leaders direct for more information:-

Around the World in 80 bites, Australian Mah-jong, Aviation, Bridge, Canasta Beginners 1, Circle Dancing, Cribbage, Curry Club, Evening Book Group, Exploring Art, Fantastic fiction, Geology, German Conversation, Heritage, Jigsaw Swap, Life Stories, Modellers, Nature Walks, Painting for pleasure, Recorders, Samba Band, Scrabble, Science, Engineering & Technology, Singles Weekend Lunch, Sidmouth Nature Explorers, Table Tennis, 20th Century History.

To find out more, please contact the **Group Leader**, contact details can be found on the groups list.

Obituary to Doreen Standing

Doreen passed away at home very early Friday morning 22nd January. She was a founder member of the original u3a Scrabble Group where we first met and became long-standing friends. Doreen had a very sharp intellect and was always good company. At Scrabble she was almost unbeatable. She was an active member of the Bird Watching Group and the Luncheon Group and for a while was a member of the Quiz Group but her 'hard of hearing' caused her to leave about 3 to 4 years ago. She had struggled with cancer for many years and was confined to her bed/sitting room chair, for the last few months of her life. She was a very good friend of mine and helped me through some dark days whilst I was fighting Myeloma (a blood cancer) and we used to exchange phone calls every two or three weeks during the Covid pandemic. Doreen was married to Trevor for over 60 years. **Maurice Ault.**

Chairman: Janet Bailey chairman@sidmouthu3a.org
Vice Chairman (vacant)
Secretary: Christina Isis secretary@sidmouthu3a.org
Treasurer: Vera Arnold treasurer@sidmouthu3a.org
Membership Secretary: Chris Ward membership@sidmouthu3a.org
Groups Co-ordinators: Marilyn Burton groupsm@sidmouthu3a.org
Mary Holliday groupsm@sidmouthu3a.org
Social Committee Chairman: Andrea Talbot socialchair@sidmouthu3a.org
Newsletter Editor: Brian Webb newslettereditor@sidmouthu3a.org
Committee Member: Veronica Swinburn – veronica.swinburn@icloud.com
Open Meetings: Brian Fernley speakerfinder@sidmouthu3a.org
Front of House Manager: Jo Fox frontofhouse@sidmouthu3a.org

u3a

Committee

Contact details

Sidmouth u3a Annual General Meeting held on 8th March 2022

Chairman's Report

Our previous AGM was held in May last year rather than March, so I'm reporting on the last 10 months rather than a full year. In March last year we were still in lockdown so it was decided that the AGM would be postponed until May in the hope that we could hold a face to face meeting rather than a virtual one. Unfortunately, in May, we were still unable to hold a meeting in the venue and the AGM was successfully held on Zoom with over 80 members present. I'm delighted to be able to present this report to you this year in person.

The past 10 months have still been a challenging time for us. The difference now is that the vast majority of members have had their vaccinations and boosters, which has allowed us to meet in venues with some confidence, although I understand that some members still prefer to stay at home. We continue to provide hand gel on entry, face masks for those who choose to wear them and windows open to increase ventilation

After last year's AGM our committee consisted of 9 members whose names can be seen on screen now. I continued to cover the role of Groups Coordinator until July when we had the pleasure of welcoming Marilyn Burton onto the committee. Marilyn worked tirelessly to look after all the groups until being joined in the autumn by Mary Holliday. Our groups have continued to grow in number and we now have 67 active groups. My thanks go to all of our group leaders and our two groups coordinators for their continued time and energy in making Sidmouth u3a the success it is.

In order to support our groups getting back to face to face meetings after what was for some, a long gap, we introduced the Welcome Back Bonus where group leaders could claim up to £50 to provide extra equipment, books, speaker, visits etc. I'm delighted to report this was a great success for the groups that took advantage of it with the money being spent on the following. Card table, first aid kit, books, speakers, lunch, afternoon teas.

A new members meeting was held on 29th July 2021 to welcome any new members joining since our previous meeting which was pre-Covid. This successful afternoon was organised by Chris Ward our Membership Secretary where we had 70 attend. Well done Chris. During this meeting we had 81 new sign ups for groups, keeping Marilyn very busy indeed.

Chris has increased our membership number to 512 by the end of Feb.

We have another new members meeting planned for later this month. The groups display in August was successfully organised by Marilyn where we had 113 new sign ups for groups, plus 2 new groups.

In August of last year I attended the National AGM on behalf of Sidmouth u3a in Kennelworth, Warwickshire. During the AGM the retiring Chairman took time to thank all u3as that had remained active in some way during lockdown. Sidmouth of course was one of these.

By September our Social Committee was meeting again under the leadership of Andrea Talbot. Many events have been held since then. Some of which you can see on screen. Thanks to Andrea and the team for their work.

Our first annual lunch for years is booked for April of this year and I hope many of you can join us.

As you know Covid guidelines have changed numerous times over the last year but Keith, Front of House Manager kept us up to date to make sure we were operating under correct recommendations.

Keith stood down as Front of House at the end of October after some years in the role. During his time he wrote all of our detailed Health and Safety guidelines, which can be found on the website.

The role was temporarily covered by Jack Richmond until 10th Dec. We now welcome Jo Fox as our new Front of House Manager. Jo joined the committee in January. Thanks go to Keith, Jack and Jo.

All u3a groups, whatever they are and wherever they meet, must be financially self-supporting. All costs must be borne by the members of the group. However, due to a legacy bequeathed to us some years ago, we have been supporting the room hire for groups that are too large to meet in the home of the group leader. To start with, the support was up to 50% of the cost of the venue but was later increased to £18 per month. Book hire for the book groups was also included. That legacy money has now been used up but the committee decided to continue support from the savings account for a little longer. We have been able to do this because of the reduced expenditure during Covid.

This support will continue until the start of the autumn 2022. So from the beginning of September all groups must, once again, cover their own costs entirely. For any group leaders wanting to look for cheaper venues, a list can be obtained from your Groups Co-ordinators.

During the course of the year we have had many interesting talks at our open meetings. During the winter months we also held three meetings on Zoom for those members not wishing to attend large groups. These were very popular and we will consider this again for next winter if there is enough interest. Many thanks to Brian Fernley for his continued hard work as our Speaker Finder.

In the Autumn of last year Diana Crowther stood down as Treasurer and the role was taken up by Vera Arnold who joined the committee in October. Vera is assisted in the role by her husband Jim Wright. Thanks to Diana, Vera and Jim. Vera has worked hard to get the accounts in good shape for the end of the financial year and I must thank David Brittain, without his help we would still be working on them now. The accounts I will be presenting this afternoon are provisional and still need to be checked by a member of the organisation before being signed off as correct.

As you know, u3a is an organisation run for the members by the members and every single job that is carried out is done so voluntarily by members. We rely on the willingness of members to take on the various roles that are needed to keep Sidmouth u3a running and I am very grateful to everyone who takes an active part. This month Brenda stands down as Editor and her role will be filled by Brian Webb who will produce the next newsletter. Brian lives in Sussex, but hasn't let the distance between his home and Sidmouth prevent him from stepping forward to take on this role. Many thanks go to Brenda for the excellent quality of the newsletter over the past year. Brian will be welcomed onto the committee when we get to elect the new committee members.

In December we had our first Christmas Party. This is the first time we have planned something like this where we had a singer instead of a talk. Simon Rees was invited to entertain us and what a brilliant job he did. The whole afternoon went extremely well and I think everyone left with a smile on their face. We had many positive comments after the event, so if you would like a similar thing this year, do let us know.

I am looking forward to another year of leading Sidmouth u3a into whatever life holds for us and I thank everyone who takes an active role in helping me to do this, whether that be on the committee, making the tea and coffee, putting out the chairs, signing people in, making new members feel welcome, being a Group Leader or working on the Social Committee, and to everyone who attends our groups and open meetings THANK YOU.

Janet Bailey chairman@sidmouthu3a.org