

## NEWSLETTER

January 2022

# u3a Sidmouth

## Welcome

It's a new year, time for resolutions and fresh starts. There's a list of Groups with vacancies on page 4, so maybe this is the year for you to try something new and meet some new, like-minded people.

The days are starting to draw out slowly but surely, but not yet the weather for swimming in the sea without a wetsuit! For more information about the painting on the right, see page 4.

And it's time to make a note in the diary of upcoming u3a Sidmouth events shown on pages 1 and 3.

**Brenda Birmingham** [newslettereditor@sidmouthu3a.org](mailto:newslettereditor@sidmouthu3a.org)



## Chairman's Message

Happy New Year to you all.

I want to start the year by saying a huge well done, and thank you, to all our members for 2021. We have just come out of our second difficult year and we've come up smelling of roses. In a year that saw many, many u3as close due to lack of interest or lack of members willing to help, we have gone from strength to strength. Our membership increased by almost 100 new members and our interest groups have gone from around 50 at the start of the year to about 65 now. So thank you to everyone who has had a part to play in that.

We don't know what this new year will hold for us in terms of restrictions. At the time of writing Covid19 case numbers are doubling daily, although the number of positive tests are less than 10% of the number of tests carried out. However, let us build on the success of last year and make it work, whatever life throws at us. I can assure you that your Committee will do everything it can to make Sidmouth u3a the best it can be for the membership.

Would you like to be an active part of our successful team? We need a Front of House Manager to help with the running of monthly open meetings. Contact me on [chairman@sidmouthu3a.org](mailto:chairman@sidmouthu3a.org) if you would like to know more. The u3a is run for the members by the members and I feel positive that someone will come forward.

Keep your eyes on each month's newsletter to discover all the exciting things the Social Committee has planned for you this year.

I wish you all a very happy and healthy New Year and look forward to meeting you during the year.

Best wishes,

*Janet*

It is with great sadness that I have to inform you of the recent death of Joyce Deary in December 2021. Joyce was a member of Sidmouth u3a for many years and a keen member of the Curry Club during that time. Our thoughts are sent to her husband Mike at his time of loss.

*An important date for your diary*

**The next u3a Sidmouth Annual General Meeting will be held  
on Tuesday 8th March 2022. More details to follow.**

**Janet Bailey** [chairman@sidmouthu3a.org](mailto:chairman@sidmouthu3a.org)

## Membership News

- The Sidmouth u3a Membership List now stands at 502.
- New members are continuing to contact us and join our thriving u3a.
- People signing up in January are being offered 13 months for the price of one annual membership fee.
- NOTE! No membership payments are being processed between December and February 2022 to help our Treasurer.
- Our annual fee is nominally £12 which is excellent value for all the facilities and groups on offer to our membership.
- This year we have had a lot of new members join since the end of the first Covid lockdown.
- It seems people want to stay near home and take part in something local.
- If you have any change in circumstances to your postal address, phone or mobile numbers, or more especially your email address, please don't forget to contact me as soon as you know of a change.
- As our u3a is now using email as the preferred contact method it is important we are all up to date.
- Thank you all for an interesting 8 months since I took over from Ruth.
- May I wish you all a Safe and Healthy year in 2022.

If you need any more information, please let me know. I can be contacted by email

**Chris Ward, Membership Secretary** [membership@sidmouthu3a.org](mailto:membership@sidmouthu3a.org)

## 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.*

There's now a wide range of events arranged by the Social Committee for your enjoyment.

### **Exeter Northcott Theatre Visit**

**Sunday 27th February. Show starts 7pm.**

#### **The Show Must Go On**

Enjoy songs from Bugsy Malone, Fame, Hairspray and many more in a West End style concert

**Tickets £14.75 (concessions £12.75)**

**Minibus at shared cost if sufficient demand**

### **St George's Day Lunch**

**Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2022**



Join us to celebrate St George's Day in style this year with lunch at the Belmont Hotel. Three course lunch with entertainment £30.00. We'll be seated in the small dining room so numbers will be limited.

We're hoping to have a coach trip in the Spring if the then current situation allows. We'll be going to Bristol for a tour of Brunel's SS Great Britain following the February General Meeting talk about the history of this national heritage ship. Details to follow in a forthcoming newsletter.

Sadly the Christmas Wreath Making session was cancelled as the demonstrators felt that it was best to cancel with the prevailing Covid19 situation. Hopefully another similar event will be arranged for the Spring.

**Andrea Talbot** [socialchair@sidmouthu3a.org](mailto:socialchair@sidmouthu3a.org)

There's a regular u3a newsletter issued by the national organisation which gives information about on-line events, training, news and advice on current issues. There are also details of how to subscribe direct to receive your own copy. Simply copy the link and paste it into your browser: <https://mailchi.mp/u3a/your-u3a-national-newsletter-december-2021?e=989185885d>

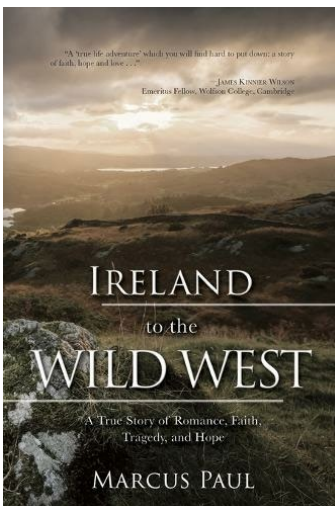
*In-line with our Covid19 Policy, the spacing between seats for our monthly meeting at Stowford Community Centre will be increased to help reduce the risk of spreading any virus. Unfortunately this will result in reduced capacity in the hall. We hope there will still be enough seats to accommodate all attendees, however, in the event of a very high turnout access will have to be restricted and some people may be disappointed. This is an unfortunate scenario we would not like to happen, but under the current circumstances feel it would be necessary to ensure the safety of all our members. We hope you will understand and bear with us as we work through these difficult and changing times.*

*The organisers will follow all the requirements of the hall. The hall will be well ventilated which may make it chillier than usual, so please come prepared. Sanitiser and discretionary spare face masks will be available. Your name and contact details will be taken and retained for 21 days in compliance with the government Track & Trace scheme. If you're diagnosed with Covid19 up to 10 days after a meeting, please inform [frontofhouse@sidmouthu3a.org](mailto:frontofhouse@sidmouthu3a.org).*

## Open Meeting, Stowford Rise Community Centre on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> January 2022

Talk starts at 2.15pm. Tea/coffee served from 1.30-2pm.

### From Ireland To The Wild West by Marcus Paul



Born in 1846 in Ireland at the start of the Great Hunger, James Kinnier Wilson emigrated to Philadelphia to start a new life at seventeen years old. After his life took a dramatic turn, he found himself attending Princeton and then a college in Scotland, where he met Agnes Hatley, the talented daughter of a famous figure in the Free Church of Scotland. Agnes and James married and settled in rural New Jersey. Whilst there, Agnes wrote intimate letters home describing her experiences in 'the new land'.

In 1878 she moved west to found churches and to farm. Agnes again revealed in detail the conditions of her life on the frontier and her impressions of American women, cowboys, servant girls, churchgoers, and provided some never seen before detail about what is called the 'Last Indian Raid in Kansas'.

In his talk, Marcus Paul uses the letters penned by Agnes to take us on a journey from her engagement to James, to the pioneering days in America.

## Zoom Talk: 'Working with the ghosts of Hampton Court Palace' by Sarah Slater – Monday 31<sup>st</sup> January 2022 starting at 2pm

A welcome return for Sarah Slater who will be recounting her experiences working with the ghosts at Hampton Court Palace. What it's like to wander the galleries late at night in the dark; the history, stories and sightings of ghosts over the years. It's very 'Woman in Black' and certainly a conversation starter!



#### Dates for your diary

8 February	Ian Caskie	The SS Great Britain
23 February	Nick Lockett (Zoom)	Beaming the Dreamtime

## Groups Galore

### **New Group Leaders Needed**

**Environmental Issues Group** Unfortunately, Roger Holliday has had to stand down from running this group.

**Strollers** It's been suggested that we start another Strollers group as the current one has quite a long waiting list.

Interested in either of these roles? Please contact Marilyn Burton, Groups Co-ordinator:  
groupsm@sidmouthu3a.org

### **New Groups**

**Curry Club Vegetarian/Fish** – Anthony and Helen Goodman Payne. This will be held at their home in Newton Poppleford on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday lunchtime.

**Snooker**- Janis Huntley is leading this group. The first meeting was at the Conservative Club in December,

### **Groups with vacancies**

These new and established groups all have vacancies and will be delighted to hear from you.

A Good Read, Art Appreciation 1, Australian Mahjong, Aviation, Canasta Beginners 1, Circle Dancing, Digital Photography, Evening Book Group, Exploring art, Fantastic Fiction, Geology, German Conversation, Heritage, Jigsaw Swap, Life Stories, Line Dancing, Mahjong, Modellers, Music Appreciation, Painting for Pleasure, Recorders, Samba Band, Scrabble, Science Engineering & Technology, Sidmouth Nature Explorers, Singing for Pleasure, Singles Coffee Meet, Snooker, Writing for Fun, 20<sup>th</sup> Century History.

To find out more, please contact the Group Leader, or **Groups Co-ordinators**

**Marilyn Burton on groupsm@sidmouthu3a.org or Mary Holliday on groupsmary@sidmouthu3a.org**

**Exploring Art Group** At our first in-person workshop this Autumn the group tried out water-mixable oil paints, which we found both interesting and challenging. In October we went to an exhibition at the Thelma Hulbert Gallery in Honiton, where we looked at art works by The London Group with a view to gaining inspiration for our next piece of work. Our ideas were then put into effect at the November workshop at the Guide Hut. The illustration on page 1 is an example by new member Liz of our original works inspired by the exhibition. In January we are having a collage workshop, led by Martin. The group does have one or two vacancies, if anyone is interested.

## **u3a Sidmouth Committee**

**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 groupsmary@sidmouthu3a.org**

**Social Committee Chairman: Andrea Talbot**

socialchair@sidmouthu3a.org

**Newsletter Editor: Brenda Birmingham**

newslettereditor@sidmouthu3a.org

**Committee Member: Veronica Swinburn**

**Open Meetings: Brian Fernley**

speakerfinder@sidmouthu3a.org;

**Front of House Manager:**

(vacant) frontofhouse@sidmouthu3a.org