

Dear u3a members

Our talk last month was ***Unnatural Selection: Evolution at the hand of man*** and was an interesting look at the evolution of animals. Our speaker next week is the popular Alan Jones and the topic is ***Keep Your Hair on***. This is an hair-raising story embracing culture, fashion and faith that is sure to grip you by the long, short or curly (apparently!) - discover the lucrative but very secret world of Hair. All members are invited to St Hugh's Hall **Thursday 4th April** at 1.45 for 2pm talk (visitors £2) followed by light refreshments.

Please look out for an email in next few days with **membership renewal information** – and at our meeting on 4th April we will be pleased to take renewals by bank transfer, cheque or cash - but please do not action before 1 April – please wait for the email from Susan.

We will then hold our AGM on 2 May directly after the speaker has completed – around 3pm. We now have **The Woodland Trust – standing up for trees** coming to us, instead of the originally booked speaker, and the hall booking is extended until 4.45pm.

OUR SEARCH CONTINUES TO FIND A NEW PRESS SECRETARY - can you help – please contact myself.

INTEREST GROUPS' NEWS

A quick round-up of news from some of our groups via Janet.

The next **Coffee Morning** will be held at The Crown Hotel, Woodstock on the first Saturday of the month - 6 April from 10 am to 11 am. Our host Denise looks forward to welcoming any members that wish to come along.

The **Canasta group** is still meeting regularly on a Monday afternoon at the Turnpike Pub in Yarnton. There is room for one more player.

Historic Churches had a great visit to St James the Apostle Church at Cowley in February, discovering two Green Men and one Norman Sundial in what is apparently, the only church which has a tower that is lower than its roof. The next planned visit will be to St Philip & St James Church, Summertown on the 18th April at 11.00 am.



The **Art group** is continuing to flourish with seventeen members and two people waiting to join. On 12 March, the group held their first annual lunch since the pandemic - fifteen members went to Kirtlington Golf Course and enjoyed a lovely meal.

The newly-formed **Mah-Jong for Beginners group** attracted twelve members who have been taught the rules in two separate groups. By the end of March, members will have advanced from beginner status and the sessions will run once a week for all players together to practise their basic skills and improve their strategies in friendly and light-hearted meetings. From Friday 5th April the new weekly sessions will be at Nai's Eatery, 104 Islip Road, Oxford OX2 7SW which has plenty of free parking on-street and in a nearby free car park. These will be casual, drop-in sessions for anyone who can play Mah-Jong at any level, so feel free to come along and meet fellow Mah-Jong enthusiasts.

French conversation has been very successful over the two years it has been operating and there is now a waiting list. This indicates that there may be interest in commencing other foreign language – Italian, Spanish, German, Greek or even Welsh? Anyone interested in developing this?

The **Bridge group** are meeting regularly, usually once a week on Tuesdays or Wednesdays at the leader's house.

The **Thursday Board Games group** often has the maximum of six players attending so from April this year Ann will be offering 2 afternoon meetings a month. The 3rd Thursday afternoon in a month will continue and the new date will be the 2nd Thursday in the month - so it will not clash with the Monthly Speaker Meeting or the Quiz group. Meanwhile the two **Wednesday** afternoons continue to be well supported on 1st and 4th Wednesday of the month usually with five players present and we select games according to attendees' preferences. More than 25 games are available with some special occasion ones (interesting!) and Ann has space for a couple more members into the Thursdays group at her home in North Oxford – please enquire through the website.

The **Next Quiz** with host David Duthie (and Alan) is 25th April 2-4pm at Woodstock Scout and Guide Hut – all welcome.

We had a very successful first meeting of the **Photography group** at the Woodstock Bowls and Tennis Club. We each showcased a range of photos on the subject of water; there was a stunning range of quite different representations of water. Our next meeting is on 23 April and the subject is buildings. New members are welcome.

The **Play Reading group** met again in March, rattling through a good slab of Jean Anouilh's **Ring Round the Moon**, a West End blockbuster of the 1950s which starred Paul Scofield, Margaret Rutherford and Claire Bloom. We have room for new members.

The **Theatre group** had a very pleasant trip to the Oxford Playhouse to hear the Pasadena Roof Orchestra. The music and songs were lovely and took us back to the pre-war years with songs such as Top Hat, White Tie and Tails, A Nightingale sang in Berkeley Square ... it was surprising that so many songs from the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s were so familiar. Our next Theatre trip is to see **Me & My Girl** at the Oxford Playhouse at the beginning of April. We will be organising the trips for May and June in the next couple of weeks. If you would like to go on the mailing list, please email susanbrettu3a@outlook.com.



The Friday walking group visited Blenheim and Long Hanborough during March, enjoying always the post-walk coffee and convivial company.



For further information on all our activities and all contacts please visit our website - www.woodstocku3a.uk.

AndBeyond the County

TVN - **NORTH SEA OIL OPERATIONS** Ted Peycke Supporting the North Sea Oilfields by Helicopter Wednesday 10th April at 2.30 p.m. on Zoom – attached flyer.

TVN **BORDERING ON INSANITY** – creating an all-year-round border Timothy Walker, Lecturer, botanist, gardener, author. Tuesday 23rd April at 2.30 p.m. on Zoom - attached flyer.

South East u3a Forum Summer School Monday 2nd – Thursday 5th September 2024 University of Chichester – attached flyer.

The first ever **National u3a Festival** will be held in July in York. Other regions have planned summer schools (see above) information on the websites and detailed in the Third Age Matters (TAM) magazine, which is produced by the u3a five times a year for an annual charge of £3.80 in the coming year – amazing value as it includes posting to your membership address.

Please feel free to pass this newsletter on to anyone you know who may be interested in attending the speaker meetings and/or joining interest groups. I look forward to seeing you on Thursday and meanwhile wishing all members a peaceful Easter (and some sunshine).

Best wishes – Sue Blackshaw – Chair of Woodstock & District u3a - chair@woodstocku3a.uk

SE u3a Forum Summer School

Monday 2nd – Thursday 5th September 2024

University of Chichester



South East u3a Forum Summer School 2024

Everything is moving steadily forward with the launch of the first phase on **Thursday 14th March 2024 @ 10:00am** via the SE u3a Forum's website. You will be able to peruse the fourteen subjects on offer for Summer School 2024.

There are many new subjects, such as:

- Art & Mythology, Photography, Crochet
- Living History, Patchwork, Philosophy
- Latin Remembered, Bridge, Politics
- Illuminated Manuscripts and Science



Also, on the agenda are the returners:

- Cycling, Mah Jong and Mathematics

Please be patient, as **no places can be reserved**, prior to the initial booking date going 'live', see below - thank you.

The costings for this year are:

- Residential En-suite - **£390**
- Residential Standard – **£360**
- Non-Residential with dinner - **£195**
- Non-residential no dinner - **£140**

There will also be entertainment on campus, each evening, which is included in the price. But, if you would like to attend the theatre on the Tuesday evening, this comes at an extra cost – ticket price unknown at present.

The next phase will be the Booking Information sheet and the Booking Form; they will be going 'live' from **Thursday 11th April 2024 @ 10:00am**; a date for your diary - just Google - [se u3a forum](#) and they will be accessible to download.

The Forum's web address is - <https://u3asites.org.uk/southeastu3aforum/contact>

As we progress towards September more information will continue to be added, on a regular basis, to the Summer School webpage on the South East u3a Forum website.

The Summer School Team 2024, South East u3a Forum



All images are from Summer School 2023

Information Correct: 12th March 2024

Timothy Walker, Lecturer, botanist, gardener, author.

BORDERING ON INSANITY – creating an all-year-round border

Tuesday 23rd April at 2.30 p.m. on Zoom

If you have not heard a talk by Timothy Walker before, do not miss this opportunity. He is a very good speaker, has a wide knowledge of horticulture and a fund of great stories. After becoming director of Oxford Botanic Garden he then moved on to become lecturer in Plant Sciences at Somerville College, Oxford.



This talk looks exclusively at the herbaceous border in my Wife's previous garden. The border was created over 25-years and the talk covers the principles and practicalities that were adopted in an attempt to create a border that is interesting all-year-round. It concludes with a look at a collection of must-have plants for such a border, and associations in which they may be grown.

Cost for the talk is £1 per device. Please book electronically by clicking on the TICKETSOURCE icon immediately below the event on www.u3atvnetwork.org.uk. This is by far the best and easiest option. You will receive an acknowledgement immediately and the Zoom link about 48 hours before the event. If you experience any difficulty, please email the organiser Mike Price mikep@greaterthameu3a.co.uk giving your name and the u3a to which you belong.

Closing date for applications is Sunday 21st.April.

If you have not received the Zoom link by midday on Monday 22nd.April please check your spam / junk box before emailing the organiser as above.

PLEASE DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE DAY OF THE EVENT

To receive notification of forthcoming TVN events as soon as they are published, please email events_info@u3atvnetwork.org.uk

NORTH SEA OIL OPERATIONS

Ted Peycke

Supporting the North Sea Oilfields by Helicopter

Wednesday 10th April at 2.30 p.m. on Zoom



Ted Peycke is a retired North Sea Helicopter Pilot and will cover how he got into flying, passenger safety, aircraft performance, and the support provided by helicopter operations in the event of accidents in the oilfields.

A photo showing the aftermath of the Piper Alpha disaster taken from a support rig

Ted was born in South Africa in 1948 moved to Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia) in 1950 and then to the UK in 1961.

He joined the RAF in 1968, flying Chipmunk, Jet Provost, Gnat, and then rotary Sioux, Westland Whirlwind and Wessex helicopters. He served on flying duties in Northern Ireland, Northern Europe, Hong Kong and Singapore before leaving the RAF at the end of 1976.

Ted then joined British Airways Helicopters (BAH) operating out of Aberdeen, Shetland, Suffolk, Penzance, Gatwick / Heathrow, Denmark, Irish Republic and India, all whilst working for British Airways. After the takeover of BAH by Robert Maxwell, Ted moved to BA flying a variety of aircraft European and UK routes, ending up as a BA captain.

Cost for the talk is £2 per device. Please book electronically by clicking on the TICKETSOURCE icon immediately below the event on www.u3atvnetwork.org.uk. This is by far the best and easiest option. You will receive an acknowledgement immediately and the Zoom link about 48 hours before the event. If you experience any difficulty, please email the organiser Mike Price mikep@greaterthameu3a.co.uk giving your name and the u3a to which you belong.

Closing date for applications is Sunday 7th April.

If you have not received the Zoom link by midday on Tuesday 9th April please check your spam / junk box before emailing the organiser as above.

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