

WISHING YOU A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HEALTHY AND HAPPY NEW YEAR
from Aylesbury Vale U3A Committee



Issue No. 93

December 2019

CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

I am pleased to say welcome and well done to our new editors, Sheena, Richard and Mary. I am so pleased they are prepared to take over from Shirley Stokes who did a magnificent job over the years.

By the time you read this I hope we will have the PAT testing done and dusted. There always seems to be one crisis or another, is it me? I have such a good committee that between them it gets sorted and I appreciate all the help they give me.

Moirra very kindly took me to the Thames Valley Network meeting at Benson where I was presented with the certificate for the Aylesbury Vale U3A 30 years anniversary. There were certificates for 10, 15, 20, 25, 30 years being presented. There was a lot of applause to begin with but by the time they got to Aylesbury Vale 30 years I think they had lost interest and only a few people clapped for us. I must say that the Notice Board there had mostly photographs of the Ukulele Study Day and there were many accolades for Greig who organised it.

You will see some new faces on the committee and I look forward to their input. Maureen Clark is taking over from Moira, who we will all miss, but I am sure Maureen will do well as she gets to know the job of Secretary. Sheila Page has taken over as Speaker Secretary from Joe, who used to eat most of my home-made biscuits at our committee meetings. I wish Sheila all the best in her new role — the programme for our first three meetings (see page 12) certainly looks promising

Well, the dog is asking to go for a walk and I expect him indoors will want a cup of tea before I go, so on with the thermals and the kettle.

See you all at the next meeting

Sheila Satterthwaite



Sheila receiving the 30 year Certificate at the TVA meeting at Benson

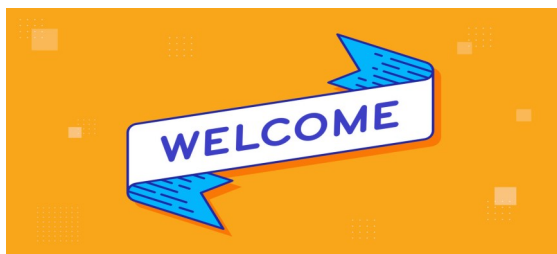
YOUR NEWLY ELECTED AYLESBURY VALE U3A COMMITTEE

2019—2020

Chairman:	Sheila Satterthwaite
Vice Chairman:	Chris Lowe
Secretary:	Maureen Clark
Treasurer:	Mike Park
Group Co-ordinator:	Jane Trow
Membership Secretary:	Ken Roberson
Social Activities:	Mary Singleton
Speakers Secretary:	Sheila Page
Outings Co-ordinator:	Dan McGregor
Hall Manager:	James Cartwright

Non-Committee Activities

Newsletter Editor	Sheena Hudson
Assistant Newsletter Editor	Mary Singleton
Assistant Newsletter Editor	Richard Clark



NEW MEMBERS

**Donna Flooks, Jill Gigg, Mike McCabe,
Myra Spence**



What does Santa suffer from if he gets stuck in a chimney? **Claustrophobia!**

What do they sing at a snowman's birthday party? **Freeze a jolly good fellow**

Why does Santa have three gardens? **So he can 'ho ho ho'!**

Knock, knock Who's there? Arthur Arthur who? **Arthur any mince pies left?**

What do vampires sing on New Year's Eve? **Auld Fang Syne**

THAMES VALLEY REGIONAL NETWORK PROGRAMME:

Don't forget that as members of AVU3A you can take advantage of all the activities arranged by 'our' Regional Network. The choice is enormous! It ranges from The History of The Thames and its boats at The River & Rowing Museum in Henley on 18 March through to a TVN holiday to Istanbul in October.

There is to be an Architecture Day (Understanding Historic buildings) again at Benson in April, a Geology Day in May and a visit to RHS Wisley in June, always popular.

The programme carries on into October – take a look at their website: <http://u3atvnetwork.org.uk>

The objectives of the Thames Valley U3A Network are to advance the education of members of U3As in the network and to encourage the provision of leisure activities for their social welfare by facilitating cooperation between U3As in the Network. If you would like to receive information direct from TVN with details of Study Days and Workshops please email

info@u3atvnetwork.org.uk with your request to be put on the list. You can of course unsubscribe using the same address at any time. Those who have attended TVN events in the past know that they can be both stimulating, enjoyable, and an opportunity to make new like-minded friends, so why not try them out?

Transport for Bucks Road Safety Update

Winter is here! Are you clued up about Winter Driving?

14th October marked the start of the 'winter season' here – we're now ready and waiting to start gritting when the temperature drops! With lower temperatures and winter weather it means there are more risks to consider when driving or using the roads.

Last year, we launched our award-winning Winter Driver Module, to help people out with driving in winter weather conditions. This module aims to inform people about driving during the winter period, as well as advising them how to prepare for the worst. Do you know what you should have in the boot of your car in case you get stuck in the snow? Take a look at the module to find out. You can find the module hereon Bucks CC web site, search for "Winter Driving".

In addition to promoting the module, we also have a winter driving radio campaign going live from 1st November 2019 on Mix 96. This campaign will run throughout the whole of November and December with plenty of winter driving tips and information being shared every day across the station and on their website too. Make sure you tune in to have a listen!

Remember to make use of the Morning After Calculator!

The festive season is fast approaching and a lot of people spend a large portion of this final segment of the year making rather merry with their family, friends and work colleagues!

We want everybody to have a good time, enjoying staff Christmas parties and family get togethers. If alcohol is involved, please make sure that you arrange for a taxi or lift home and do not get behind the wheel.

It's also important to consider whether or not you should be getting behind the wheel the next day. People don't always realise how long it takes for alcohol to pass through the body, and that they might still be over the drink-drive limit the morning after. A handy tool you can use is the brilliant Morning After app. This app has been produced to help people calculate roughly when it will be safe to drive the morning after drinking alcohol. It can also help people to calculate when they need to stop drinking alcohol if they need to drive the following morning.

The app is available to download free of charge, or can be found online at <http://morning-after.org.uk>

Festive Season



Christmas will soon be here,
It's good to think of others,
Especially at this time of year.
As another year rolls round,

There'll be lots of novelty things in the shops,
And many twinkling lights.
They'll brighten up dreary December evenings,
And long winter nights.

It's time to think of family,
And those we hold so dear.
For lots a get together,
And a sociable, warming glass of cheer.

In our celebrations with family,
Not oft seen sisters and brothers,
Spare a thought for those,
Who don't have nearest others.

Look out for our neighbours,
And those who are on their own.
It's good to show warm caring hearts.
By kindnesses that are shown

Let's hope we can all enjoy,
The festive season and a celebration
Christmas can be a coming together time,
For our caring, sharing nation.

Phil Rance

OUTINGS 2020

TUESDAY 3RD MARCH 2020 CITY OF WARWICK AND HANBURY HALL (NT)

A chance to see some of Warwick's sights such as the historic Lord Leycester Hospital. Dating from 14th century with its 12th century chapel next door, these amazing buildings housed the city's medieval guilds and were and still are a place of retirement for old soldiers. Or you can explore some of the quirky streets with their independent shops, and visit the Mill garden by the river at the foot of Warwick castle.

In the afternoon we visit HANBURY HALL (NT).

Hanbury is a large stately home built in c1701 surrounded by parkland and both formal and 'relaxed' gardens, including an orangery and a walled garden. The house contains original wall paintings, full of politics and drama, which show the birth of Georgian society.

Cost £17 pp (Hanbury Hall £11 extra for non-NT

COLLECTING IN JANUARY

Depart Jansel Square, Bedgrove 8.30 am
return 6.00 pm approx

Outing organiser Dan McGregor

WEDNESDAY 1ST APRIL 2020 A DAY IN CANTERBURY

Explore the iconic cathedral. There are guided tours, audio tours and free mini talks. You can also chat to researchers recording some of the ancient graffiti. Take a boat trip and learn stories of the city and the buildings you pass. Explore the museums & medieval streets or walk along the city wall.

COST £31 pp. (Includes £11.50 entry to cathedral)

COLLECTING IN FEBRUARY

Depart Jansel Square, Bedgrove 8.00 am
return 6.00 pm approx

Outing Organiser - Dan McGregor

DID YOU SEE THE DUNG BEATLES?

Phil Toler is a Aylesbury Vale U3A member and plays with the highly acclaimed Dung Beatles. Recently they played at the Waterside in front of a very appreciative audience of 1000. The British Beatles Fan club describes The Dung Beatles as “definitely not your average !”.

David Stopps, the founder of The Friars Club Aylesbury, who was responsible for booking some of the world’s most famous acts including David Bowie (three times), Pink Floyd, Genesis and The Police (to name only a few!) described them as “the best Beatles tribute band in the world”!!!
Read more about Phil and The Dung Beatles at www.thedungbeatles.co.uk

TVA UKULELE STUDY DAY



There has recently been a revival in ukulele playing, since it was first made popular by George Formby. In fact, there are nearly sixty U3As ukulele groups in the South of England and Thames Valley regions. Identifying this interest, **Greig Sneddon and Andy Carter** from our U3A, organised a Thames Valley U3A Ukulele Study Day, and persuaded High Wycombe, Bourne End, Chess Valley, Bicester, Wokingham and Milton Keynes, to join them at the event.

It was planned that the day would consist of each U3A group playing a set of their own songs followed by a “Thrash”, where everyone would play the same songs together.

After visiting each group followed by analysis and discussion Greig and Andy prepared music for everyone to play. They then visited and rehearsed with the individual groups. Andy also prepared two short training sessions aimed at all levels of playing ability.

The event took place on 22nd October in Benson Village Hall and about a hundred ukulele players attended with about twenty of an audience. On the day, the individual groups played a wide variety of tunes from the pop charts, musicals and old-time music hall. Every single person in the hall took part at some point, either strumming energetically, or singing along with the choruses.

The groups displayed a variety of approaches, some happily strummed and sang as a group; some had extra instruments, and ukuleles of different power; some had strong solo singers. This added to the depth of the day. The fun continued with Andy Carter’s training session which included the history of and types of ukulele, strumming patterns and details of the five most common mistakes when learning to play. The grand finale was the Thrash with the wonderful sound of the large number of ukulele attendees playing the same songs. The feedback from the day has been very good with words such as “inspirational”, “great fun” and “learned”. It is hope that it’s success would encourage them

Quiz with Fish and Chip Supper

Following the success of last year's quiz, another was organised on Thursday 17th October at Aylesbury Town Bowls Club. There were 8 teams of six—well a couple had seven and five team members! Peter and Jean Ashton put together a challenging quiz with several rounds based on various themes eg: train stations, pots and pans, Shakespeare plays, identifying famous Irish people.

It was amazing how competitive our U3A members are but we all had a lot of fun especially when marking each other's attempts. It was also remarkable that there were only 20 marks difference in the results of the highest and the lowest scoring teams. The winners each received a bottle of wine whilst the lowest scorers each took home a bag of chocolates.

Many thanks to Peter and Jean for all their hard work in devising the questions and also to Dot and Tony Simmons who provided tea and coffee when people arrived, also for setting up the tables for our fish (or chicken) and chip supper and then clearing it all away afterwards.

Finally, many thanks to Peter Hemming and Malcolm Webber from the bowls club for manning the bar throughout the afternoon.

Mary Singleton

Social Activities Co-ordinator

The Winning Team

Brenda and Roger Surridge,
Margaret Birch, Janet Wilkes, Phil Bryant,
Ann Dwyer, Jayne Douglas



NEWS FROM THE GROUPS:

Group Leaders Annual General Meeting

Friday 18th October 2019 saw the AGM for our Group Leaders held as usual at the Aylesbury Bowls Club and chaired by the Groups Co-ordinator. The meeting was well attended.

Following the usual introductions and minutes from last year, Derek Ayshford talked to the Group Leaders about Beacon, and our involvement as Aylesbury Vale U3A. Derek also explained some of the advantages of using the system for our group leaders.

He explained that they could register to use it and access their own group for information, but also add and change their list of members. Several group leaders took Derek up on this offer at the end of the session. Some details and instructions were subsequently emailed to all group leaders.

Members were reassured of the efforts made to now ensure we comply with the Data protection laws.

A discussion took place regarding possible new groups. A list of very varied topics was discussed, and this was added to by the end of the discussion. We now have 44 active groups, but it would benefit everyone if we could increase this to 50.

Efforts being made for group leaders not on email was explained. Reminders of the Health and Safety guidance issued last year for those holding their meetings at home.

The progress made this past year of keeping our records of groups up to date was explained, and thanks to all group leaders for assisting with this. It was explained that members should receive an update of the list of Group Leaders twice a year, February and July, but in addition to this, an up-to-date version is posted on the board at every meeting.

Group leaders were told of the increased number now attending the Coffee Mornings held bi-monthly and were encouraged to attend. They were also encouraged to send in articles, news or even just a photo with a caption for our newsletter.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks for Dot Simmons for her valiant efforts once again in providing teas and coffee and biscuits for everyone.

DO YOU FANCY BEING A GROUP LEADER?

Do not be put off by this role, it is one of the most satisfying roles within the U3A and provides such a service to members, and its fun. Some people might be concerned about what they must do to start a new group. Well, help is on hand for this from your Groups Co-ordinator, Jane who will guide you through the initial process and offer advice if you need it. Remember our groups are the "heart and soul" of the Aylesbury Vale U3A.! You do not have to do it all on your own, you could share the leadership. Lots of ideas have been put forward—do have a look at the list—there are many of you out there with the skills, even if you haven't got those skills you can lead a group

<i>Knitting</i>	<i>History of Aircraft</i>	<i>Indoor Kurling</i>	<i>Horticulture/Gardening</i>
<i>Singing for Pleasure</i>	<i>Wildlife</i>	<i>Boules/Petanque</i>	<i>Ballroom Dancing</i>
<i>Flower arranging</i>	<i>Ornithology</i>	<i>Tennis</i>	<i>Films</i>
<i>Cookery</i>	<i>Travels</i>	<i>Local Churches</i>	<i>Dressmaking</i>
<i>Extreme Activities</i>			

These are just a few ideas, I am sure you will have more.

If interested, do not hesitate to contact the Groups' Co-ordinator, Jane Trow.

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

The Railway Group



The first meeting of the Railway Group was held and 14 members attended. A programme of meeting at regular intervals starting on 13th January was agreed. Visits to open days, model and vintage railway galas are proposed as well as films and possible speakers.

Chris Lowe

PROTECTED VIEW

The views of London from Greenwich Park are stunning. The photo (left) is an example of one of the protected views. The view of St. Paul's Cathedral from Greenwich Park is uninterrupted by tall buildings such as the Shard and buildings of the City of London. The protected views of London are to ensure that St. Paul's and the Palace of Westminster have unobstructed views from such places such as Richmond Park in the west, Hampstead Heath, Kenwood House and Alexandra Palace in the north, and of course Greenwich Park in the south.

From Greenwich Park there are other stunning views to be seen. The photo (right) gives a great view of the Isle of Dogs and buildings of the financial centre surrounding Canary Wharf.

These photos were taken on the Exploring London Walks, walk from Blackheath to Greenwich in September 2019.



SOUNDS OF THE 60's

The Sounds of the 60's Music Group meets on the 4th Tuesday of the month at the Tennis Club on the Wendover Road Aylesbury.

It's from 2 'til 4 with a tea/coffee biscuit break half way through.

If the Animals or Zombies, Beatles or Yardbirds or anything between tickles your musical memory why not pop in for some toe tapping reminiscing.



Jenny Corton making her debut presentation about her music from 1960-1969 as she was growing up in Lincolnshire. Phil Davies is DJ

CRAFT GROUP

The next project for the Craft Group will be block printing. We hope to start in the New Year and we have a good selection of blocks. The blocks are hand carved in India with many modern animal designs as well as traditional patterns. We set the fabric paint with an iron and then items can be washed. Apart from tea towels, draw string bags, cushion covers etc, the blocks can be used with poster paint to make greeting cards.

Heather Edwards



POETRY GROUP 1

2019 has been a very enjoyable year for the Informal Poetry Group. We meet at the Grange School twice monthly at 3.30 p.m. term time only and always leave with a smile on our faces!!

Our poets this year have included many of the more famous poets but also lesser known poets such as William McGonagall – who was described by his peers as an extremely bad poet (which we felt unfair!), Simon Armitage (the new Poet Laureate), Maya Angelou, Benjamin Zephaniah and, soon Ella Wheeler Wilcox, an American poet who is unknown to most of us at present. Some of our more creative members put pen to paper and write their own poems which are always very well received.

We also have a theme at each meeting. One lovely theme was “Where I was born” when it was fascinating to hear the poems chosen by individuals, reflecting either the work of a poet born in their area or, indeed, poems about that area. Members read out their chosen poems and then reflected on their earlier lives – from Jamaica, London, Lincolnshire, the West Country, Wales, Suffolk and more, including one of our members who had been born and bred in Aylesbury!

Jenny Corton

Visit to Rainham Hall and Eastbury Manor

We arrived at Rainham Hall, in the pretty village of Rainham about 10.30 having driven through the worst possible part of the Essex/London suburbs full of old junk yards, breakers yards etc. Anyway, we were welcomed by the hall manager who took us to the hayloft for coffees and teas, before being split into two groups- the first going around the hall and second being given a tour of the gardens. We left there at 1.30 and proceeded to Eastbury Manor near Dagenham. We obviously took the manager there by surprise as we were not expected even though the group booking had been made and confirmed! The manor was disappointing (as far as this writer is concerned) having very little of interest in it's empty rooms except one room with two walls having their original painting preserved. Most of us had tea before leaving earlier than expected as there was little to see and do. Anyway, the group said they all enjoyed the day, good weather blessed us, and will look forward to next year's programme of outings. Dan McGregor



Above Sue Goodband in the Drawing Room

Daphne in the Gardens

Right Christine and John Dilkes leaving the Hall

Pat Baker on the Japanese Sculpture



Dates for your



AVU3A COFFEE MORNINGS

Our bi-monthly coffee mornings at the Watermead Inn are becoming more popular with about thirty people attending. We have a very pleasant hour or so consuming coffee and biscuits and having a chat about all and sundry. It is especially good to see new members or potential members coming along to talk to well-established members to learn something about what we do and the groups we either run or take part in. Forthcoming coffee mornings are held on the third Tuesday every other month at 11 am at the Watermead Inn, 11 Lakeside, Watermead, Aylesbury, HP19 0FX as follows:

21 January 2020

17 March 2020

19 May 2020

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Wednesday	11th December 10.00 – 12.00	A Journey Through Rock & Roll Sound with John Wilford	Monthly Meeting
Thursday	12th December 19.00—22.30	Rock 'n'Roll Christmas Party	Tennis Club
Friday	13th December 15.30—17.30	Painting—Cosy Christmas	Grange School Art Block— Room D1
Tuesday	17th December 14.00-16.00	Sounds of the 60's—Quiz Time	Tennis Club
Friday	10th January 15.30-17.30	Painting Group Restarts Programme to Follow	Grange School
Tuesday	28th January 10.00-12.00	Psychology—Hospice (Bereavement)	Tennis Club
Tuesday	25th February 10.00-12.00	Psychology—Empathy	Tennis Club
Tuesday	3rd March 8.30-6.00	OUTING —Warwick and Hanbury Hall	
Tuesday	24th March 10.00-12.00	Psychology— MIND	Tennis Club
Wednesday	1st April	OUTING —Canterbury	

SPEAKERS

8 January 2020

Alex Paterson – Energy for Life

At the start of the new year, and a new decade, we are invited to look at the sources of our energy, our consumption, and the causes and consequences of climate change.

The origin of our main energy sources is explained, together with how we exploit them to support our modern way of life. Can our species respond quickly enough to meet, sustainably, the expected future increase in global energy demand? Or will we continue to accelerate our burning of fossil fuels, resulting in uncontrollable global climate change?

12 February 2020

Roberta Darbyshire – Where do novelists find their ideas?

Bobbie Darbyshire says:

“From initial spark to realisation on the page, I explain how the complex world of character, location, plot and subplot arrives in a writer’s mind. I won the 2008 fiction prize at the National Academy of Writing and the New Delta Review Creative Nonfiction Prize 2010. My latest novel is ‘The Posthumous Adventures of Harry Whittaker’. My earlier ones are ‘Oz’, Love, Revenge and Buttered Scones’ and Truth Games. I’ve worked as a barmaid, mushroom picker, film extra, maths coach, cabinet minister’s private secretary, care assistant and volunteer adult-literacy teacher as well as in social research and government policy/ I live in London and host a writers’ group.”

11 March 2020

Graham Twemlow - Art & Design in the Chilterns

Designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the Chilterns has played host to many artists and craftsmen. Graham’s illustrated talk will focus on some of the 20th century artists who either made the Chilterns their home or found inspiration here – and sometimes both. Works by artists such as Paul Amp, John Nash, John Piper, Eric Gill, Clare Leighton, E. McKnight Kauffer and the textile designer, Marion Dorn, will be discussed and include their contribution to the applied arts in its many forms. Although those interested in art history will find this talk fascinating, it also appeals to everyone who loves the Chilterns.

Last date for copy for the Spring 2020 Newsletter will be 7th February 2020 so please send any items you may like to share with us to Sheena Hudson at newsletter@avu3a.org.uk. Thanks as always to all of you who contribute to our newsletter. Please continue to send in news of your activities within the U3A and for any other items which you feel might interest our readers. Our very productive photographers are reminded that under the new Privacy Laws, members featuring in the very welcome photographs submitted for publication should have given permission for their image to be so used. If you do not want your photo reproduced please make that clear! Our thanks go to Alan Robinson for continuing to proof read our final copy and also to Derek Ayshford for his ongoing support! Don't forget to look at our website avu3a.org.uk where you will find up to date news and details of all our activities.