

# AYLESBURY VALE U.3.A.



Issue No. 91

June 2019

## CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

As I sit here writing this letter I can see the lovely pink blossom on our Cherry Tree and the leaves appearing on the other trees. Spring is a wonderful time when everything in the garden comes to life again and I know when you read this it will be June but let me enjoy this moment after the cold and windy weather we have had. I am so glad we have been able to fill the vacant posts on the committee when they arrive in October. I shall be very sorry to lose those who have completed their 3 years in office because they have helped me to settle in but also have pulled their weight. Everyone gets on and I, for one, look forward to Committee meetings as much as the monthly meetings.

Ken and I went to Portsmouth for his annual ship's reunion. Ken served on the Cossack and we have made many friends over the years, unfortunately the reunion is becoming smaller as members age and infirmity take their toll. We had good weather, lovely hotel and food, a great time was had by all. They don't get up on the dance floor like they used to! They like their rum! Oh the joys of getting old!!

I hope you all enjoyed Easter. I did except when the oven packed up and then the fridge freezer also decided that after 15 years it would leak all over the floor and no longer freeze, expensive time. I am convinced that after 5 years everything electrical breaks down. The other problem I had was an e-mail from the Manager of Meadowcroft to say we would have to put our own chairs out and put them back after the meeting. I knew the lady who did the job was giving it up but she did say she would put them out if we put them back, which we agreed, unfortunately she is giving it up altogether. At this moment in time I am frantically trying to find members who will help. I hope by the time you read this I will have it under control.

In May Ken and I plus our dog Poppy, are going on holiday to the Isle of Wight for a week on a houseboat moored in Bembridge harbour. We have spent many holidays on narrowboats on the canal so I thought a houseboat would be on a river. I hope we do not have to climb up or down steps with a very frisky Westie. Watch this space.

There are some lovely trips coming up Leeds Castle, Sissinghurst Castle and Gardens, Longstock Park Water Gardens and Basildon Park, Ham House, Strawberry Hill House to name a few. Also do not forget the Mid-Summer Rock & Roll Party.

Time to feed the dog, oh and the husband!

That is all folks.

*Sheila Satterthwaite*



## OUR NEW ADMINISTRATION SYSTEM:

At the start of the new year we have adopted the 'Beacon' administration system produced by the Third Age Trust. We joined the group of some 300 other U3A's who have adopted the system to hold their data securely.

The system looks after our membership data and information on groups and soon it will also hold the financial data. Some of the advantages that it has over our previous systems are;

- It is more secure and all the data is held and backed up 'off site', more important after the recent GDPR legislation.
- It is an integrated system so the membership data, e.g. renewals automatically feed the finance system etc.
- Members of the committee have access to the data appropriate to the needs of their post.
- There are emailing facilities which we are beginning to use.
- There is information on Groups which Jane is maintaining but others have access to.

We can use the new system for making our returns on Gift Aid etc.

Any system, old or new, relies on being kept up to date with changes so if you change your address, telephone number or email address, gift aid status etc please make sure that the membership secretary is informed, either by email [membership@avu3a.org.uk](mailto:membership@avu3a.org.uk), or by giving him/her the information at the monthly meeting, or failing that, if you do not use email or attend the monthly meeting, asking the leader of one of the groups you attend to pass on the information.

If you are a group leader please make sure any changes in meeting times/dates/venues or, in the worst case, cessation of the group are passed on to Jane ([groups@avu3a.org.uk](mailto:groups@avu3a.org.uk))

We will keep you informed on progress.

*Derek Ayshford*

## MARCH MONTHLY MEETING:

You may remember that at the March monthly meeting Ron Syrett sold tickets for an Easter Egg raffle organised by the Aylesbury Lions Club which raised £166 for Florence Nightingale Hospice and other chosen charities. The raffle was won by Heather Edwards. At the subsequent meeting Heather told us that her youngest grandchildren had enjoyed demolishing the egg with the aid of a small hammer—and much giggling!





Welcome to new members

Barbara and John Hamilton; Terri and Gerry Mould and Gareth Prior.

## **BOWLS HOLIDAY IN BEMBRIDGE, ISLE OF WIGHT:**

Our Aylesbury Vale U3A Bowls Group has been running for many years now, first led by Mary Rogers and, for the last few years by myself. On Thursday mornings during the summer months, if you are within a mile of two of Aylesbury Town Bowls Green, you will hear loud shouts of triumph or despair as the bowls either reach their target or end up in the ditch. Winning or losing we all have an enjoyable morning, helped along by a cup of tea and a lot of chat.

The highlight of our season this year was our bowling holiday in March, in Bembridge, Isle of Wight. Where our numbers are not sufficient to justify the expense, we ask other bowlers to fill any gaps. Two of our members had to cancel close to departure for health reasons and we were fortunate that we found another two bowlers from Cheddington to take their place. This year we had 46 players and spouses.

While our other recent holidays were purely for the pleasure of playing bowls in different surroundings, this year involved taking part in an open fours competition. There were 41 teams of four in the competition and we entered nine. Three of our teams got through to the quarter final and one to the final. What an exciting final that was! It came down to the last end and we were all on the edge of our seats when the umpire had to be called to decide a close measure. Aylesbury Vale U3A's Joan and David Catton, partnered by our late entrants Jessie and Stan Dunn from Cheddington, had triumphed. We raised the roof!

*Elinor Paterson*  
(Bowls Group Leader)



Elinor took this photo. of AVU3A's Winning Bowls Team—Joan and David Catton with Jessie and Stan Dunn.

## **CAN YOU ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS ?**

Name a sport in which neither the spectators nor the participants know the scores until the contest ends.

What fruit has its seeds on the outside ?

Only three words in standard English begin with the letter 'd w.' Can you name them?

How many of the 14 English Grammar Punctuation marks can you name ?

**ANSWERS:** Boxing; Strawberries; Dwarf, Dwell and Dwindle; Punctuation—Full stop, comma, colon, semicolon, hyphen, dash, apostrophe, question mark, quotation marks, exclamation mark, Brackets, Parenthesis, Braces.

## RENEWING YOUR MEMBERSHIP FOR 2019-2020

The committee has decided to spread the membership renewal process from the May meeting through to the September meeting. This will ease the bottleneck usually encountered in July. Renewal forms may be downloaded from the website:

[https://www.avu3a.org.uk/wordpress/renewal\\_2019](https://www.avu3a.org.uk/wordpress/renewal_2019).

**A limited number of printed copies will be available at the May, June & July meetings for those without email or printer.**

Members without Emails or who do not regularly attend meetings will have renewal forms posted during July. Memberships renewed from May will cover the period until 31st July 2020.



Methods of payment will be by Bank transfer or cheque (made payable to : University of the Third Age (Aylesbury Vale) We have a stamp!

For those of us who bank on line the method is simple. AVU3A's bank details are on the renewal form, simply enter your surname & Membership No. as reference. Your Membership No. is on your current badge. If you do not regularly bank on line & wish to use the bank transfer method simply call into your bank & ask to transfer your fee directly to us & the cashier will do it for you (remember your name & membership no. as reference)

Badges for 2019/2020 will be issued from the desk from the May meeting in return for renewal forms & payment. BACS (Bankers Automatic Clearing System) payers just have to tick the box.

**FINAL PLEA.** Please don't give or send post-dated cheques as they have to be held safely and may become lost. If you don't want to renew until 31st July please send renewal form, cheque & pre-paid envelope on that date.

*Ken Roberson,*

Membership Secretary.

## THIRD AGE MATTERS MAGAZINE.

There will be a question on the renewal form regarding Third Age Matters Magazine where you will be asked if you still wish to receive it. This follows an increase in the cost to us of distribution. We are not trying to deprive anyone of receiving this publication but as we have been told that some people don't read it we thought there is little point in our U3A paying for it to be posted. Those who wish for copies to continue to be posted to them should answer 'Yes.'



*Mike Park* (Treasurer)



## OUT AND ABOUT WITH U3A MEMBERS:



Ukulele Group members enjoying the bracing air in Blackpool

John Harwood writes ‘On a lovely spring afternoon a small group of us (plus dogs) went to Ashridge to see the wonderful bluebells. After a few wrong turns we found both the bluebells and a good cuppa. Our lady chairman, Sheila, threw caution to the wind and managed to manoeuvre a large cream scone into her mouth.



### Local Walks Group:

The local walk in March started at The Globe Inn on the canal side near Linslade. We walked up into Rushmere Country Park and back along the canal tow path. The weather was kind and the photo shows the group around the “giant” chair.

*Heather Edwards*





### A VERY IMPORTANT NOTE FROM OUR TREASURER !

Our Bank has insisted that we must now use the EXACT names of our bank accounts as the payee on future cheques, as the Bank will NO LONGER ACCEPT CHEQUES made out to 'Aylesbury Vale U3A' (for Membership Fees etc), or 'Aylesbury Vale U3A No 2 A/C' (for Outings , Theatre Outings, Quizzes, Functions, Meals etc.).

In future, cheques for Membership Fees MUST NOW BE MADE OUT TO "University Of The Third Age (Aylesbury Vale)" - EXACTLY in these words with the brackets.

Similarly, cheques for Outings, Theatre Outings, Quizzes, Functions, Meals etc, MUST NOW BE MADE OUT TO "University Of The Third Age-Aylesbury Vale" - again EXACTLY in these words with no brackets but with the hyphen.

The good news is that if you are paying at a meeting there will be stamps we can use on your cheques to save you getting writer's cramp.

To prevent your cheques being 'bounced' it is important that you follow these notes.



### WEDNESDAY 10<sup>TH</sup> JULY: ANNE FLETCHER—FROM THE MILL TO MONTE CARLO:

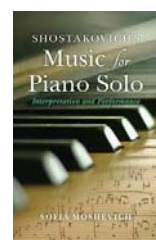
-

The story of the working class Englishman who beat the casino and changed gambling forever. Anne is a local historian and writer ( living in Aylesbury) and her book about her ancestor who broke the bank at Monte Carlo was published in July by (Amberley Publishing).

### WEDNESDAY 11<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER: PROFESSOR GERALD SEAMAN— MY MUSICAL LIFE IN RUSSIA OR HOW I MET SHOSTAKOVICH

This talk, which is completely informal and apolitical will discuss Russian music education in Tsarist times, the ethical ideals regarding the influence of music in society, the increasing role of the state and the manner in which this impacted on the music of Shostakovich. Our Speaker also includes his own recollections of his meetings with Shostakovich.

Professor Seaman is an international authority on Russian music and has lectured extensively around the world.





# Dates for your



**WEDNESDAY 10TH JULY:** At our July monthly Meeting payments will be collected for those members taking part in the September outing to Ham House and Strawberry Hill House. As there is no meeting in August late payments for any travellers on these outings will have to be sent in by post and reminder letters will be sent. Anybody wishing to go on the Outing in October to Bourton on the Water and Snowhill will also need to sign up and pay at this meeting.

**TUESDAY 16<sup>TH</sup> JULY;** Don't forget our U3A Coffee Mornings . Held on the 3rd Tuesday of every other month at 11 am at The Watermead Inn, 11 Lakeside, Watermead, Aylesbury. Why not come along to meet other members and hear about the groups they have joined or lead. A coffee and biscuit only costs £2 and you are all welcome. Further information from Mary Singleton at : [social@avu3a.org.uk](mailto:social@avu3a.org.uk)

**MONDAY 7<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER:** To Bourton -on -The- Water (Glos.) and on to Snowhill Manor (N.T.) and Gardens.



Bourton is a lovely place to visit however many times you have been before! Enjoy the morning at leisure and explore as you wish Bird-land, the motor museum, the award-winning model village and the pretty centre with its shops and many eating places. Time here for lunch.

Snowhill is a Cotswold manor house full of extraordinary treasures col-

lected over a lifetime by Charles Wade. The manor is packed with 22,000 unusual objects – always changing - from tiny toys to samurai armour, musical instruments to fine clocks. The manor is set in a beautiful terraced garden with fine views of the Cotswolds. Time here for a cuppa before we go home.



Cost £17 (collection in July) Snowhill an additional £12 for non NT members. Departing Jansel Square 8. 00a.m. returning 6. 30 p.m.

Snowhill Manor and Gardens

**THURSDAY 7<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER RAINHAM HALL (NT) & EASTBURY MANOR HOUSE:**

These are two very different houses to the east of London. Rainham Hall has recently undergone a £2.5 million conservation project. It is one of the country's finest examples of an early 18th century merchant's home. Built by John Harle in 1729, it was to be partly a show home for the building supplies he imported. There is a new café in the old stables and a NT shop.



Rainham Hall

Eastbury Manor House is a brick-built Tudor gentry house set in tranquil gardens dating from 1573, with little altered since. Early 17th century wall paintings show fishing scenes and a cityscape and there is a fine original spiral oak staircase. NT shop and a café for light refreshments Cost £17( Rainham Hall £6 extra, Eastbury £5 extra for non-NT members) . To be collected in September. Depart Jansel Square, Bedgrove 8.30. a.m. return 5.30 approx.



The attic at Eastbury Manor

DON'T FORGET TO PUT YOUR NAME ON THE RESERVE LIST EVEN IF THE CLOSING DATE HAS PASSED. WE SOMETIMES HAVE CANCELLATIONS.

## OUR WEBSITE

We are trying to keep the website relevant and up to date but we need your help. If you are running a group or organising a one-off event please let us know well in advance so that we can add it to the diary. If your group has a programme mapped out for the future, however long, please let us have a copy so it gets the widest possible circulation. If you have photographs of your activities please let Shirley Stokes have copies in the first place so she can have the option of publishing them in the Newsletter. The website has more space so we can add any others to our gallery.

If you have any suggestions about how we might improve the site, or other information you would like us to include, please let us know ([webmaster@avu3a.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@avu3a.org.uk))



## YOU NEED NEVER FEEL ALONE AT SEA—FIRST STEPS

P&O Ship Oceana

When my son moved to Dubai I took my first tentative steps to going it alone when I flew out to visit. It wasn't too difficult as I had requested assistance at the airport so from check in I was escorted right to the plane and the same in reverse when I arrived so the only actual time I was on my own was on the flight. Having done this several times I decided it would be a nice change to go out by sea. It was a little daunting to find the voyage would take 20 nights but at least I could always pass the time with my head in a book I thought. How wrong I was to worry. On boarding the P & O liner Oceana I quickly found my cabin and had a short tour of the ship before dinner. I was sitting on a table of 8 solo travellers, all of whom apart from me took 2-3 cruises each year and I was soon made to feel very welcome. Next day I decided to attend a Bridge class for Improvers and from that I was assured I would cope with the Duplicate Bridge in the afternoon even though I had never played it. Another lady asked if I would be her partner for that and so my days not in port were determined with Bridge twice a day. This meant I had two groups of people who quickly became friends so I was never left to feel lonely. I found that everyone on board chatted and of course there were so many things to do other than cards, talks, films, quizzes and of course first class entertainment every night.



The highlights for me were many; the sea staying like a mill pond the whole voyage was a blessing. Visits to Cadiz, Valetta, Salalah and Muscat were interesting (needless to say I took the tour that involved Sherry tast-



HMS Dragon

ing in Cadiz). Before passing through "Pirate Alley" we had a pirate drill in the event of trouble but as we took on three SAS men and guns at Suez none of us felt too threatened but it meant I could tell my children of the danger I faced, only to find that none of them believed me! Just before we reached Dubai the naval commander we had on board had liaised with the R.N. destroyer HMS Dragon which was on a 7 month tour in the Gulf helping to stop drug smuggling and arranged a rendezvous for that evening. As it drew alongside we had all our lights blazing, the band played, we lined the decks singing Rule Britannia and other patriotic songs while waving our Union Jacks for quite a long time. The captain of the destroyer had made sure those of his crew who had friends or family on our ship were among those on his deck. It was a truly special event and we heard later that they had been amazed at the reception we had given and morale on board had risen.

For those of you who might be thinking of cruising solo, go ahead, you will never be lonely but also you can do what YOU want when you want. I hope to do it again soon.

*Mary Rogers*





Photographs from Chris Rosental and Derek Ayshford



### TRENCHARD MUSEUM VISIT:

A group of about 40 visited the Trenchard Museum situated within RAF Halton. We were treated to a brief history of the site, explaining how Alfred de Rothschild who owned the Halton Estate gave permission for the infant Royal Flying Corps to practice manoeuvres on the estate in 1913 and then his friend Lord Kitchener came to an agreement with him to create an army base on his land during WW1. In 1916 the Royal Flying Corp established workshops on the site and thus started the long history of Halton being associated with RAF engineering. After the war Lord Trenchard set up the scheme for training apprentices for the now renamed Royal Air Force and this continued to be its main role until 1993, at its peak the annual intake was nearly 1500 young men. It's prime role now is basic entry training for new RAF recruits. The current plans are for it to be wound down and finally close in 2025.

In the main museum building, there are examples of the intricate work the apprentices did and various objects and pictures reflecting life there. The more recent second building, the James McCudden Flight Heritage Centre has a collection of Link flight simulators from various periods, from the early one that relied on church organ bellows to a collection built in Aylesbury before the firm left Aylesbury in 1972. We saw demonstrations of a number of these together with one that allows you to take control of a Chipmunk and 'fly' it over Halton and even try to land it!

The museum is normally open to the public on Tuesdays but because as it is within the security of RAF Halton you must book in advance.

For full details visit their website <https://trenchardmuseum.org.uk/index.html>.

*Derek Ayshford*



## **NOBODY SAID THAT RETIREMENT SHOULD BE BORING: ISLE OF MAN CLASSIC TT LAP OF HONOUR 2018.**

Many of us have a bucket list of things to do in our lifetime and I am no exception. I have achieved a few of mine like Trekking to Everest Base Camp, Flying in Concord and Racing a Classic Motorcycle, but I had never thought I would ride my Classic Manx Norton around the Isle of Man on closed roads until last year. A motorcycling friend of mine who was going to the Island to marshal at the Manx Grand Prix race week suggested entering our bikes for the one lap parade and as we were going over anyway, I thought it was worth a go.



David in action –Gooseneck bend

It stated in the regulations that Helmets should not be more than five years old, no problem there I thought, mine is only four years old. Technical inspection went well, no problems, until it came to my helmet. The scrutineer pulled back the lining and said “That’s no good it was made in 2003 you might as well wear a cardboard box.” My friend had suffered the same problem the day before and bought another helmet from a stall in the Paddock, so I quickly went to the same stall and bought myself another helmet, panic over.

The briefing was at 08.30 Monday morning so my friend and I and our other halves set off early for the extension paddock at the side of the Grandstand set aside for paraders. Briefing went well and everything settled down for our 16.10 start time. Racing on the circuit was delayed because of mist on the mountain and we were given a revised start time of 18.30 so we relaxed and busied ourselves checking the bikes over again. I was riding my 1957 Manx Norton. At around 14.00 an official came into the paddock and said to be ready for 14.30 and it became more of a rush to fire up the bikes and get our leathers etc. on. At 14.30 we headed off for the assembly area and then waited for the more well known riders to set off ahead of us.

At around 15.00 we slowly moved forward and onto the Start/Finish area and were waved away. This was great as we were on the circuit before any of the races had been run so we had all the crowds to ourselves. There isn’t enough space for me to go into great details of the route, but any motorcyclists among you will recognise some familiar names; Quarterbridge and Braddan Bridge came and went; then it was on to the faster section to Ballacraine. Glen Helen and Ginger Hall were passed - then Ramsey - a bit more tricky and very bumpy; Ramsey Hairpin had a few damp patches under the trees but nothing to worry about,

The run over the mountain was great, longer straights and long flowing bends. I was mostly on my own so I could choose the lines I wanted to take. Creg-ny-Baa arrived quickly and was every bit as good as I thought it would be. What a great afternoon, and one that I will never forget.

Not bad for a 73 year old ;

*David Catton*



### **The Exploring London Walk on Red Nose Day**

What a surprise it was, when we went to the bus stop outside Marylebone Station, to catch a No. 2 bus to Pimlico. The normal bus had been replaced by a 'special' 1967 Routemaster bus, just for Red Nose Day. We travelled in style and gave generously to the conductress. We saw many tourists taking photos of the bus as we travelled on this iconic London vehicle  
(Photos: Peter Harding and Ron Tomasina)





## FOLLOWING IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF GEORGE FORMBY: MEMBERS OF OUR UKULELE GROUP HEADED FOR BLACKPOOL



The George Formby Ukulele Society was formed in 1961 with the aim of honouring and playing the work of George Formby, who was a virtuoso ukulele player. Arthur Askey was at the first meeting and George Harrison and Ken Dodd were past members. In 2016 members Frank Skinner, Ed Balls and Harry Hill led the singing at the Queen's birthday celebration in the Albert Hall. The Society holds four conventions a year in the Imperial Hotel in Blackpool and six of the U3A Strummers, and two partners, attended in March. We stayed in the Tiffany's Hotel, which was only a short walk from the venue. It was just as well as the weather was dread-

ful, with high winds and heavy rain.

The Convention took place in the Imperial's large ballroom and was attended by about 150 enthusiasts. A session was organised for first time attendees like ourselves, where the lovely Caroline, a Society Member, welcomed us and gave details about the history of the Society as well as outlining the format of the two days, both of which were very similar with concerts, lessons and a couple of George Formby films. The performers at the concerts (members of the Society) were very good and covered all ages from fifteen years old to those of advanced years. They ensured that the concert programmes were varied so that we didn't get twenty versions of "When I'm Cleaning Windows". The lessons concentrated on a couple of George Formby's unique strumming patterns, which we found quite difficult. Our trainer said that the secret to mastering them is like anything else in life i.e. practice, practice, practice.



Three times each day, it was announced there would be a "Thrash", in which anybody with a ukulele was invited onto the stage to join in the playing of three George Formby songs. To our regret, we didn't feel confident enough to join in but the sound of about fifty ukuleles was amazing. However, four of us did venture onto the stage, but only for a group photo.

The weather and the packed programme prevented us from seeing too much of Blackpool, however we still managed to buy "A Little Stick of Blackpool Rock". All in all we had a great time and it left us motivated to practice harder and join in the "Thrash" next time we attend. As a lasting reminder, we were all included in the "Thrash" photograph with all the other players at the end of the convention.

*Greig Sneddon*



Can you find our intrepid 6 amongst the throng?





Our exploring London walkers enjoying their moment of fame on a London Routemaster bus on Red Nose Day.

(See page 10)

## READERS CIRCLE 2 :



Readers' Circle 2 manned a busy book stall at May's meeting selling copies of used books. We collected £44.15p altogether which was a good result as the books were mainly priced at 50p each with a few hardbacks selling for £1. Together with other donations we will be sending a cheque for £50 to the Prostate Cancer Charity this year. Many thanks to all who bought the books or donated and we hope everyone enjoys reading them in the future. Our sincere thanks to you all.



*Brenda Daniel*

Last date for copy for the September Autumn Newsletter will be 10<sup>th</sup> August so please send any items you may like to share with us to Shirley Stokes at [newsletter@avu3a.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@avu3a.org.uk). Thanks as always to all of you who contribute to the finished product, and who forgive me for my errors! Please continue to send in news of your activities within the U3A and for any other items which you feel might interest our readers. This issue demonstrates that there are many of our members getting out and about and doing interesting and exciting things outside U3A and it is good to share in them.

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 plain! My thanks as always to Alan Robinson for proof reading, Richard Clark for photographic editing and particularly to Derek Ayshford who, when my computer says 'No' manages to make it behave properly. He is frequently called upon !

Don't forget to look at our website [avu3a.org.uk](http://avu3a.org.uk) where you will find up to date news and details of all our activities.