



We crossed a membership milestone in January and now have over 1,000 members who belong to Waterlooville u3a.

COFFEE MORNINGS 10:00 am – 11:30 am :

Sacred Heart Church, 356 London Road, Waterlooville, PO7 7SR

Monday 10th February and 10th March

All members, particularly new ones, are very welcome.
Find out about our interest groups and social events.
Bring along your friends.
Have a cuppa and chat, make new friends.



FEBRUARY GENERAL MEETINGS 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm :

Wednesday 19th February

Cosham Baptist Church, Havant Road, Cosham, PO6 2QZ

Speaker : John – HIOWAA: Hampshire and Isle of Wight Air Ambulance

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Air Ambulance is the charity that delivers an advanced Critical Care Team to sick and injured people in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight when they need it most. Available both day and night, 365 days a year, the Air Ambulance Critical Care Team is called out many times a day to attend road traffic collisions, sporting accidents, collapses and many other incidents.

Wednesday 26th February

Sacred Heart Church, 356 London Road, Waterlooville, PO7 7SR

Speaker : Jeremy Prescott – Bomber Command



Jeremy tells the story of how Bomber Command took the fight to the Germans after the evacuation from Dunkirk. He talks about the evolution of the Lancaster Bomber and the life of the Bomber Command Crew. He sheds a light on various operations such as Op Chastise (Dambusters), the Bouncing and Tallboy bombs (the latter the only plane capable of carrying a 4-ton bomb), the bombing of German cities, Op Manna (food drops to Holland) and Op Exodus (repatriation of POWs), as well as the sacrifice made by Bomber Command and how they are commemorated today (Bomber Command Memorial in London and International Bomber Command Centre in Lincoln).

MARCH GENERAL MEETINGS 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm :

Wednesday 19th March

Cosham Baptist Church, Havant Road, Cosham, PO6 2QZ

Speaker : Jackie Dimmock – The Good, The Bad & The Downright Funny

Jackie will recall stories relating to her 30 years as a Hampshire Police Officer, using a series of mini quilts to depict the stories. (The quilts are fabulous.) Jackie's talk uses the full range of human emotions to keep the audience interested and enthralled.

Wednesday 26th March

Sacred Heart Church, 356 London Road, Waterlooville, PO7 7SR

Speaker : Jessie Thurtell – Dining with History



Jessica guides us back through time to discover the food and eating customs from Anglo-Saxon time to the present day – the evolution of English eating.

It's not all wealth and feasting – think about peasant meals of pottage, working class dinners and middle class genteel dining too. Discover the evolution of table manners and how to eat politely – from daggers and fingers to soup spoons, fruit knives and oyster forks!.

GROUPS MONEY MATTERS

Glen Bush, Groups Treasurer

For those members who are part of a group and make payments for venues / tutors via bank transfer, can we please make the following plea?

Waterlooville u3a has a number of bank accounts used to manage the funds that we receive and it is important that payments are sent to the correct account. Since the last annual subscription renewals we have noticed an upturn in group payments being wrongly sent to the Subs account - this delays the funds being credited to the relevant group's ledger and can delay payments of outstanding invoices for that group.

If you are ever unsure if you have the correct details, please ask your Group Coordinator or contact me at groupstreasurer@waterloovilleu3a.org.uk . As a reminder, for groups money, the account details are :

Account name : Waterlooville U3A Social

Sort code : 55-70-34

Account number : 80857396

Reference : (group name your surname)

Prefer not to receive member bulletins?

We issue regular bulletins to our members to inform them of meetings, social events, group activities, membership information, etc.

IF YOU DO NOT WISH TO RECEIVE THIS BULLETIN, please tell us so that we can remove your details from the distribution list. A confirmation email will be sent to you but you can change your mind at any time and request your details to be added back on to the distribution list.

Members also receive the "u3a Matters" magazine issued several times a year by the Third Age Trust.

To unsubscribe from either of these, contact the Membership Secretary at members@waterloovilleu3a.org.uk.

SPEAKER'S CORNER - review of January's talk :

Speaker : Andrew Baker – Charles Dickens : his life and legacy

While many of us will have read at least some of Dickens' novels, his life story will not be as familiar. Andrew Baker was able to reveal the man behind the wealth of literature that he left behind.

84 of our members were given an excellent insight into the life of Charles Dickens from his birth on 7th February 1812 at 393 Commercial Road, Portsmouth to maturity and fame as he became the most popular author of his time. He used his childhood experiences in his novels - even using his feckless father as a model for Mr. Micawber in his first novel *Pickwick Papers*.



After moving to Chatham in Kent Dickens began to roam the Kent countryside, including the marshes, later using the landscape in novels such as *Great Expectations*. A move to London followed, whereupon Dickens' father ended up as a debtor in the Marshalsea. At age 12, Dickens worked in a "boot blacking" factory in order to help his father and mother (who had joined her husband in prison) but at the same time feeling shame at his parents' incarceration. He needed, at 15, to find a career and end up in the Inns of Law for two years. Here he developed a contempt for the law as illustrated in *Bleak House*.

Leaving the law behind he then worked as a journalist. He liked to walk alone at night observing the dens of iniquity, overcrowding, poverty, hunger and disease. These memories nourished both his soul and his writing.

Dickens adopted the pen name of Boz and, using a quill pen and dark blue ink, he began to serialise his novels starting with *Pickwick Papers*. At the time, this was a new way for the masses to access popular literature.

He married Catherine Hogarth and had ten children. The marriage was a huge disappointment to him and in 1857 Catherine was sent from the family home with £400 per annum and a carriage : shabby treatment indeed.

As his wealth grew he moved to grander houses in London; he enjoyed good food and wine in excellent company. He loved the theatre and began an affair with an actress, Ellen Ternan, which lasted until he died. His popularity grew to the extent that *A Christmas Carol* sold in such numbers that seven editions were needed in six months.



Eventually, he moved into Gad's Hill - a large country house in Kent and began to travel, giving readings from his works across America. He continued his philanthropic activities at home including helping fund Miss Coutts Home for Fallen Women amongst many others.

He had a stroke in 1868 and began to get his affairs in order. He began to write *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*. Looked after by his sister-in-law, Georgina Hogarth, who had remained as his housekeeper since Catherine's departure. Whilst working on his novel he had another stroke and died on June 9th 1870.

Charles Dickens wrote 15 novels, several novellas, many short stories, plays and several non-fiction books. Is it any wonder that he is still remembered for the comical and tragic characters that he created ? The truth of the matter is that he was at times unlikeable as a man but he brought the ills of his day to the attention of the great and the good who would begin the task of righting the wrongs of the day.

Hilary Ryan, Speakers' Secretary

GROUP MATTERS

To join or leave a group, or for more information :

visit the Groups table at a general meeting or coffee morning, email groups@waterloovilleu3a.org.uk or ring 07769 266879

NEW CANASTA GROUP

A third Canasta group has started. It will meet twice a month on the 2nd and 4th Monday afternoon. Let me know if you'd like to join.

NEW POTENTIAL GROUPS

The following new potential groups need a few more interested people and it will be worth starting new ones!

CYCLING FOR PLEASURE – Have a cycle ride (push bike or e-bike) with some other members. Stop for coffee somewhere too?

DINING OUT – Have lunch possibly twice a month – could include Sat/Sun.

LOCAL HISTORY – Learn the history of places in our area – may include a guided tour and talk.

MEMBERS ON THEIR OWN – To provide companionship for members living on their own – visit gardens, stately homes, have a pub lunch, or coffee and cake etc.

OUTINGS – Visit places of interest, tours, lunch etc

PHOTOGRAPHY How to use a digital camera, how to take a good photo and get members to comment and make suggestions, visit locations for a photoshoot.

SNOOKER – Budding champions or just for fun

TABLE TENNIS for beginners and experienced players knocking a ball over a net indoors.

WEEKENDERS – Looking for things to do at the weekend? Pub lunch, a walk, meet for coffee or a drink?

TUTORS NEEDED

There are some groups with a waiting list of members that are eager to form a new group – but there can't be a group where everyone wants to learn and there's no-one to teach it! Are you able to tutor for any of the following? And no, you don't have to be the Group Coordinator as well.

ARCHAEOLOGY

LINE DANCING

SPANISH CONVERSATION

TAI CHI FOR BEGINNERS

Have an idea for a new group?

Groups don't magically appear – they are born when enough members express an interest in a particular activity and someone (or two) volunteers to act as Group Coordinator. There is a wealth of support for budding groups so get in touch and see what happens.

If a group is full, you can be placed on the waiting list; you will be offered a space when one becomes available and you are at the top of the list. Don't wait to go on a waiting list – popular groups usually have one and being on the waiting list increases your chances of being offered a space.

Kevin Stock, Groups Liaison

GROUPS WITH VACANCIES (as at 5th February, 2025)

As there are so many groups with vacancies at the moment, the list won't fit on one page! Please see the separate **Group vacancies** document that accompanies this news bulletin. To join or leave a group, or for more information, visit the Groups table at any Coffee Morning or General Meeting, email groups@waterloovilleu3a.org.uk or call 07769 266879. You can also find out more about our groups by visiting the Groups page of our website at <https://www.waterloovilleu3a.org.uk/groups.htm>. All of our groups are listed there and each have their own web page – just click on a group name to open their page.

Kevin Stock, Groups Liaison

CALLING ALL LINE DANCERS – IMPROVER GROUP LEVEL

We are looking to recruit additional line dancers for our group; it is both fun and enjoyable for all ages, helps to keep the mind active, provides a basic level of fitness and is also a way of socialising with like-minded people.

The group has members of different levels so if you have previous line dancing experience or just want to improve then this may be for you.



We meet for an hour every Monday afternoon at Waterlooville Baptist Church which is very central and easy to locate with adequate parking. The hall is excellent for line dancing with space for more members.

We would welcome newcomers to our group. If you would like to try before you commit you can come along for a free taster session.

To enquire about joining the group, for further information or to make arrangements for a taster session please contact Kevin Stock (Group Liaison) at a coffee morning, a general meeting or by email at groups@waterloovilleu3a.org.uk

Dave Dawson & Mike Webster, Joint Group Coordinators

WEBSITE NEWS FROM SOME GROUPS

Archaeology added write-ups and photos of their field trips to the Cotswolds and Cranborne Chase : <https://www.waterloovilleu3a.org.uk/Archaeology.htm>

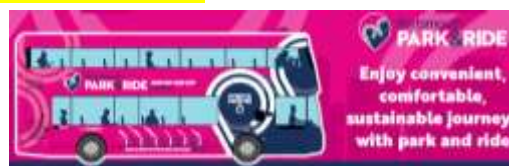
Birdwatchers published their 2025 programme : <https://www.waterloovilleu3a.org.uk/Birdwatchers.htm>

Photography 4 added a photo to their page. Taken by one of their members whilst on a whiskey tour in Scotland, the tour company asked for photos which were then voted on and this was the winning one : <https://www.waterloovilleu3a.org.uk/Photography4.htm>

Walking 1 Striders added some photos from their walks in 2022, 2023 and 2024 : <https://www.waterloovilleu3a.org.uk/Walking1Striders.htm>

PORTSMOUTH PARK & RIDE UPDATE

Changes are afoot at Portsmouth Park & Ride – new blue and pink buses and signs to catch the eye and make it easier to navigate the services provided. A full range of tickets may be bought via the First Bus app but you can also buy a day ticket directly from the driver – by cash or card. More information, together with maps and timetables can be found at <https://parkandride.portsmouth.gov.uk/news.shtml>



NATIONAL U3A ONLINE EVENTS

Each month, national u3a offer online talks and workshops on a wide variety of topics to keep our minds and bodies going.

The list shown here goes to the beginning of March, but events on the web page currently go to the end of March. Click the link, then click on the event of your choice for full details and how to book: <https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events>

The current offerings include :

Laughter Yoga with Judith	12 th February
A Few Small Nips : Frida Kahlo and the art of pain	13 th February
Claude Monet's Garden in Giverny	14 th February
Hadrian's Wall – A Celebration	14 th February
Agritech : technology enhancing agricultural productivity & sustainability	19 th February
Things you didn't know you could do online, for older people	18 th February
Mindfulness and Meditation	20 th February
An Introduction to Vedic Maths	20 th February
Artificial Intelligence in Government and social housing	21 st February
Laughter Yoga with Merrie Maggie	25 th February
Science : Nanophotonic Devices for Healthcare Applications	26 th February
Penguins – Icons of Antarctica	26 th February
Future Lives - Initiatives for Care	27 th February
Secrets of the human brain – the visual pathway	27 th February
Philosophy as a way of life – the ideas of Pierre Hadot	28 th February
Lifecycle of a laser, from prototype to making stars on Earth	3 rd March
Flight Inspirations – AI transforming safety, efficiency & sustainability	4 th March
Apps to help seniors being out and about – a travel focus journey	4 th March
The Truth in Ten – Brenda Ainsley and the science behind the climate crisis	5 th March
Let's Talk Tech - How to best use Facebook	5 th March
Growing up human – the evolution of childhood	6 th March
The Gothic novel – from Medieval architecture to the Goths	7 th March

NATIONAL U3A PUBLICATIONS

The *u3a Matters* magazine is published five times a year. It includes stories about members and u3a activities, celebrity interviews and features on technology, recipes, travel and competitions as well as a letters section. The magazine is available as a hard copy sent to you by post or you can read the online digital version by visiting <https://www.u3a.org.uk/news/u3a-matters/screen-reader-editions>

Many members receiving the physical magazine do not read it and leave it to gather dust in a corner and it eventually finds its way into the recycle bin. If you do not wish to receive the physical magazine, please ask for your details to be removed from the distribution list by emailing the Membership Secretary at members@waterloovilleu3a.org.uk

PETERSFIELD MUSEUM EVENTS

BOUND TOGETHER EXHIBITION (FEBRUARY - MAY)



This exhibition delves into the artistry of bookbinding with a programme of events at the museum. Renowned local bookbinder Roger Powell from Froxfield transformed the knowledge of bookbinding for generations. Tradition and innovation connect his work with William Morris and the Kelmscott Press, the Book of Kells at Trinity College Dublin, conservation work on flood-damaged books in Florence in 1966 and outstanding contemporary bookbinding today.

The exhibition and events run from the 18th February until the 3rd May. More information : <https://www.petersfieldmuseum.co.uk/events/bound-together-modern-british-bookbinding>

CONTEMPORARY CAPITALS WORKSHOP (1ST MARCH)

Discover the art of decorated lettering in this hands-on, all-day workshop led by artist Jan Pickett, focused on creating decorative capitals.

Delightful to draw and wonderful to decorate, capital designs were originally seen in 1st-century Rome, hand-carved into columns, serving in the historical development of calligraphy and lettering.



Constructed using a series of basic shapes in different combinations, you will be led from the initial lettering construction of the forms to their embellishment with watercolours and accents of gold gouache.

Find out more and book tickets from

<https://www.petersfieldmuseum.co.uk/events/contemporary-capitals-workshop-jan-pickett>

WRITING WORKSHOPS AT NEW THEATRE ROYAL

As part of Portsmouth Book Fest 2025 the New Theatre Royal in Guildhall Walk, Portsmouth is running a number of writing workshops. There's something for everyone, whether you're starting from scratch or have had a go at writing before.

See below for dates, contact the theatre direct for more information on 023 9264 9000 or book tickets via the link provided :

Fri 28th February 2025 – Write Your Novel.

Friday 14th March 2025 - 'I come from...' Writing Your Life

Friday 28th March 2025 - Writing for Procrastinators

Friday 11th April 2025 - Poetry (Part 1)

Friday 25th April 2025 - Poetry (Part 2)

Friday 9th May 2025 - Writing for Children

Friday 23rd May 2025 - Short Stories or Folklore

Friday 13th June 2025 - Speak Up: Perform Your Writing

<https://newtheatreroyal.ticketsolve.com/ticketbooth/shows/1173655551/events/428675489>

FEBRUARY DATES

1st (all month) **Kew Gardens Orchid Festival.**

Kew's famous festival runs throughout the month. Transport yourself from the cold British winter to Peru, with a vibrant floral celebration in Kew's Princess of Wales glasshouse. Book your ticket at :



<https://kewgardensorchids.seetickets.com/timeslot/kew-gardens-orchid-festival>

2nd **Hedgehog Day.** Hedgehogs are natural predators of pests such as insects, snails and slugs, with an important role in the ecosystem but their population has been declining in recent years. Visit <https://www.britishhedgehogs.org.uk/> to find out more; there are sections on Hog Heroes, Hedgehog Street, the Hedgehog Friendly Football League and much more,

12th **Full moon** – known as the Snow Moon, this full moon marks the peak of winter in the Northern Hemisphere. The Snow Moon brings a bright light to the long, cold winter nights and is traditionally a time for reflection and connection with nature. Many



believe that it represents a time for clearing away old habits, thoughts and feelings, much like the snow cleanses the landscape; it can be a reminder to let go of the past and prepare for the growth that will come with the arrival of spring.

14th (to 21st) **National Nest box Week.** As urbanisation increases and natural habitats decline, many bird species struggle to find suitable places to nest. Nest boxes are a simple and effective solution, giving birds a safe space to build their nests, lay eggs and protect their chicks. <https://www.nestboxweek.com/>



14th **Book Giving Day.** Dedicated to sharing the joy of reading by giving books to others. Books are a powerful tool for connection, education and entertainment. By giving a book you are not only sharing a story but also giving someone the opportunity to discover new worlds, ideas and perspectives. Give a book to your loved ones, your friends, donate to a school or charity.

17th **Random Acts of Kindness Day** Small gestures of goodwill can have a positive impact on someone's day. Kindness and the ripple effect it can create is a powerful thing. Perform a simple, thoughtful action – maybe pay it forward by buying someone's coffee or meal anonymously, compliment a stranger or send a kind message to a friend or family member to brighten their day, offer help to someone – carry their shopping, open the door for someone, let someone go ahead of you or simply offer a smile wherever you go today. <https://www.randomactsofkindness.org/>

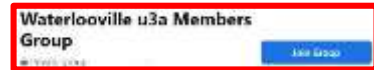
23rd **Banana Bread Day** This simple yet delicious treat gained popularity during the Great Depression of the 1930s and it has remained a favourite ever since with countless variations adding nuts, chocolate chips or spices such as cinnamon.

26th **Tell A Fairy Tale Day** Dedicated to the enchanting world of fairy tales where imagination, magic and wonder take centre stage. Why not revisit your favourite fairy tale or share a new one; introduce them to a young child in your life, spark their imagination and inspire their creativity. <https://internationalstoryteller.com/tell-a-fairy-tale-day/>



WU3A FACEBOOK GROUP

We have a private Facebook group that is open to any Waterlooville u3a member. To join, login to Facebook and search for 'Waterlooville u3a Members Group' and request to join. Or click this link



<https://www.facebook.com/groups/WaterloovilleU3A/permalink/5260385320729203/>

FEBRUARY ASSOCIATIONS & TRIVIA

Astrology

1st-18th Aquarius, ruled by the planet Uranus; element Air

18th – 28th Pisces, ruled by the planet Neptune; element Water

Bird of the month – Mistle thrush

The mistle thrush is Britain's largest songbird and gets its name for being rather partial to the berries of mistletoe. It is easily identified by its white breast, patterned with dark brown spots.



This bird is something of a fighter, guarding the plants that it has decided to feed on. They will nest from now until May, building scruffy nests in the forks of trees out of mud, moss, leaves and grass.

Trivia

The world's heaviest gooseberry weighed in at 64.83g (2¼ oz), grown by Graeme Watson and exhibited at the Egton Bridge Gooseberry Show, North Yorkshire which has been running since 1800.

Moth orchids were first identified by German-Dutch botanist Karl Ludwig Blume in the 1820s. Dr. Blume likened the flowers being blown by the wind to flying white moths, so the name was born. The Greek word *phalaina* means "moth" whilst *opsis* means "resembling" or "likeness".

The *Buddleja* is named in honour of the clergyman and botanist Adam Buddle, author of a complete English Flora, finished in 1708 but never published.

February fruit : rhubarb, bananas, blood oranges, clementines, kiwi fruit, lemons, oranges, passionfruit, pineapple, pomegranate.

February vegetables : brussels sprouts, cauliflower, celeriac, chicory, Jerusalem artichoke, kale, kohlrabi, leeks, parsnips, potatoes, salsify, shallots, swede, turnips.

Info gleaned from *The Wildlife Community, Awareness Days, National Trust Gardener's Almanac, National Farmers' Union, British Dietetic Association*

U3A EYE

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/learning-activities/u3a-eye>

"Anticipation"	"Orange"	"Everyday in a new way"
 <p style="text-align: center;">What lies ahead? Sue - Leigh Estuary u3a</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;">Atlas Moth Joy - Mawdsley u3a</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;">Our world in a wine glass John – Worcester Area u3a</p>