

# Milford & District u3a Monthly Newsletter



**June 2023**

**Ambling Group Led by Kirsten Osa**

**Contents:** Chairman's Message, AGM, Friday Talk – MEDECINS SANS FRONTIERES, Change of Chairman, Godalming Staycation, Singing for Fun, Review of talk on 'Boomerang Myths', u3a Poetry Competition results, Potential Groups: Canasta & Gardening.

**Our website:** [www.milford-u3a.org.uk](http://www.milford-u3a.org.uk)

## Chairman's Message:



Although we have a number of activities during the summer, most Groups will have finished at the end of May. The Monthly Talk in early June, together with the re-arranged AGM will be a chance to reflect that we have had a successful year, with a broad spectrum of interests available to our members.

The summer represents an opportunity to recharge batteries, as people go off on holiday, or simply enjoy the sunshine in the gardens and parks nearer to home. Over the next month or so the finishing touches to the Programme will be put together, for publication in early August, but please look out for the Newsletter over the summer which will highlight various key events coming up.

Many of those in existing Groups will know what the plans are for next year, for many this will mean very little change, whilst in others a change in Group leader will have slightly more nuanced effects. In some cases the Groups have decided that they wish to modify their focus. As an example one of the music appreciation Groups has decided after several years studying the Symphony, and then the Concerto, to return to Great Choral Music. In the language area there will be a German Group this year rather than French.

All of these changes mean that there are new things to try out. At the same time, for those with a specific interest which isn't being covered there is an opportunity to set up a new Group. The newsletter and Monthly Meetings are ways of communicating with other members to find out if there are like minds. The Third Age Trust resources are then available if you need source material and advice in particular subject areas.

I hope to see you at the Monthly Talk, but if not enjoy the summer and come back in the autumn to enjoy another set of opportunities to learn and have fun with the u3a.

### **AGM 9<sup>th</sup> June at 2.00pm**

Our next Monthly Meeting will also be our AGM before the Talk at 2.00pm on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> June and we ask you to use your vote to consider the re-election of present members of your committee. We are also looking for people to fill a number of committee roles which we believe will improve the service to members. If you would like to register an interest in joining our committee, then there will be an opportunity during the AOB in the meeting, but if you are unable to attend, then please contact any committee member at any time. This will be followed up by contact from the chairman who will explain what's needed.

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|----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Group Co-ordinator –       | Someone to liaise with Group Leaders, for example when a Group is full and they have to form a waiting list, to discuss whether, rather than having to disappoint new members, it may be possible to make other arrangements. |
| General Committee Member – | A general member who can help at those times when an extra hand is needed. As experience is gained he/she is likely to be assigned to help with some specific events                                                          |
| Vice Chair –               | Someone who will deputise for the Chair at internal or external u3a Meetings. Can act as a second pair of eyes in assessing developments within the local as well as the regional u3a's                                       |
| New Members Co-ordinator – | A person able to help new members, so that they get a personal welcome to the Branch and to offer information and help if required.                                                                                           |

### **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING and MONTHLY TALK – FRIDAY, 9<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2pm** **MILFORD VILLAGE HALL**

Unfortunately, the AGM scheduled for 12<sup>th</sup> May had to be adjourned for administrative reasons but it is now re-scheduled for Friday, 9<sup>th</sup> June. It is very important that we have a good attendance for the AGM, but a couple of weeks ago you should have received revised paperwork relating to this meeting. Amongst these documents is a Proxy Voting Form which, if you won't be able to attend the AGM in person, you can complete and return by 7<sup>th</sup> June. Both printable and electronic versions are available.

Hopefully, you weren't unduly inconvenienced by the adjournment and, if you came along on the 12<sup>th</sup> May, that you enjoyed the Talk on 'Boomerang Myths' The Story of the British Boomerang Society. We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible. Lavinia Martins, Membership Secretary.

### **Monthly Friday Afternoon Talk on 9<sup>th</sup> June 2023**

**Milford Village Hall at 2.00pm After the AGM**

### **'MEDECINS SANS FRONTIERES/DOCTORS WITHOUT BORDERS'**

**By Mr. James Kliffe**

Medecins Sans Frontiers/Doctors Without Borders is the world's leading emergency medical, humanitarian organisation. This is a non-governmental organisation of French origin known for its projects in conflict zones and in countries affected by endemic disease.

Right now, people affected by conflict and wars make up the largest proportion of MSF's patients. They are saving lives from the consequences of violence, helping pregnant women who have travelled for hours to give birth safely.

As one MSF doctor's has said, 'If MSF didn't do this work, I genuinely I don't know what would happen to some people. It is so important – saving lives, returning some dignity, and supporting people who are broken' *Elma Wong MSF Doctor.*



## Change of Chair

*After many years of stalwart service to Milford and District u3a, John Oakey has decided to step aside as chair. With the support of existing members he is offering to remain on the committee in order that his knowledge and expertise will not be lost but put to good use. Thank you John.*

*Members may have noted from the AGM paper work that I (Lisa Seeley) have indicated my willingness to step into John's shoes and if elected will do my best to continue to improve on what we do so well and explore ways we can ensure all group leaders have adequate support and all members are able to access groups of their choice.*

*Like many organisations I believe we are experiencing symptoms of collective "long covid", an overall drop in membership, loss of group leaders through poor health and a loss of appetite and enthusiasm to start new projects. A large membership and a wide range of groups were once the cornerstone of Milford and District u3a. In order to ensure our outgoings do not exceed our income we need more members and more people willing to lead and or co-ordinate an interest group. Please see the piece in this newsletter regarding the Staycation slot on 9<sup>th</sup> August.*

*Some people may know me, some may have heard of me and to others I will be a complete stranger. However anyone attending the monthly talks will have come across me as I often sit on the door collecting money.*

*If elected we will have a strong and enthusiastic committee who share my commitment to build on our successes so that we become a fully accessible and inclusive organisation who takes pride in its achievements and investment in the local community.*

*Lisa Seeley...25 May 2023*

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### **SAVE THE DATE – we need you!**

#### **GODALMING WEDNESDAY 9<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 9.00 – 12.30 - WILFRID NOYCE CENTRE STAYCATION –**

Milford and District u3a have been given a great opportunity to showcase all our positive and creative activities.

Open day - enrolment day - learn, laugh and live day - all rolled into one!

Most of you will be aware our membership numbers are down and due to poor health of some of our group leaders a few groups will not be restarting in September.

Fewer members may require further increases in annual fees and supplements in order to balance the books after 2023/24. The Staycation is such an amazing opportunity to redress this balance.

Therefore we're asking all group leaders and members to actively join in this event. In doing so we will raise our profile and actively demonstrate what an inclusive, friendly and fun organisation we are. Hopefully, as a result of the Staycation we'll be enthusing new members and group leaders, and encouraging existing members to join more activities.

I will be contacting group leaders and existing members over the next few weeks in order to plan our programme. In the meantime if you have photos, exhibits and stories to tell please gather them in advance of August 9<sup>th</sup>.

**Lisa Seeley 25/05/23**

**Singing for Fun** Group has had another great year, starting in September with u3a's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary when we joined the Poetry for All Group and put on an entertainment in the Village Hall.



Then it was straight into rehearsals ready for December, when we put on two 'Christmas Crackers', firstly in St John's Milford when the collection raised £225, followed the next weekend in St John's Farncombe, with the collection raising £200.

But, bad news erupted to start the new year. Over the Christmas period, Chichester Hall had a dreadful water leak which meant the venue couldn't be used for at least 6 weeks so we had to find somewhere else – luckily, we managed to get in touch with the Godalming Unitarian Church Hall caretaker where Tuesday mornings in January were available.

By February, we were back in the Chichester Hall and into rehearsals for our Easter Presentation of "Hallelujah, What a Savior!" at St John's Milford, when the collection raised nearly £300 for the church.



Immediately after Easter, we had another set of music to prepare, ready for "An Afternoon Tea with Milford u3a Singers at The Clockhouse".

Then an invitation to join the Godalming Choral Society to sing at the Farewell "Do" for their retiring Musical Director.

And we've already got a booking for Christmas, when we will be singing with the Hart Male Voice Choir at Holy Trinity, Guildford.

Wow. Just shows how fantastic our 70+ singers are, no matter what music we sing!!



And here we must give a big 'thanku' to Matthew Smith, our brilliant accompanist, and to Ann Stewart who assists in the running of the Group – we couldn't manage without either of them.

*Musically yours*

Wayne & Kay Richardson



## u3a Short Story Competition

The u3a Short Story Competition is back for its fourth year. The theme is 'Decision(s)' and the deadline is Monday 26 June. The full competition rules can be seen on [the u3a learning pages](#).



## Review of the Monthly Talk – Friday 12<sup>th</sup> May – Boomerang Myths by Sean McKenna-Slade

Who invented the Boomerang? Australia? Alas, probably not! Although it's hard to tell, because wooden boomerangs, as used by Australian Aborigines, don't leave long-term traces. An ivory boomerang with gold tips was found in the tomb of Tutankhamun, together with a picture showing it was used to kill birds, but the record goes to a 23,000-year-old boomerang made from a mammoth tusk, and that one was found in Poland. The Boomerang as we know it today, that is as an object which returns to the sender, is not a weapon, although there is a similar shaped object which 'does not come back' and would have been used as a weapon.

I have to admit I attended the Friday talk with not too much expectation of being wowed! How misplaced can our expectations be! Unfortunately, it seems that the subject matter didn't appeal to many of our members as the attendance was sadly rather sparse, but for those of us who did attend, it was a real treat! Sean who had been a teacher of Physics in his working life, gave us a very lively talk about how he became interested in boomerangs with many amusing anecdotes and interesting facts. He described the many different materials that they could be made of (basically just about anything from a cardboard box to carbon fibre, including old LP's!) and how their size, shape and weight affected how far they would travel, how quickly they spin and how long they would remain in the air –



he holds the Guinness book of records for flying the largest boomerang at over 9' wingspan (which he made himself). Sean arrived with a plethora of Boomerangs for us to look at, of all shapes and sizes, indoor and outdoor, some of which were amazing works of art in themselves and are illustrated here. He also demonstrated how to make a boomerang (in minutes!) from an old cereal box and then proceeded to fly it. It was a most enjoyable afternoon and encouraged the question as to whether he would consider running a boomerang making workshop for us!.... We'll let you know if anything comes of this.

Sean gave his time, humour and knowledge to us completely free of charge, but would welcome any donations to the Godalming food bank which is one of the charities he actively supports.

*Sue Allen*

The u3a Poetry Competition 2022/23 received over 600 entries. The winners were: **FIRST** Jo from Ilkley & District with her poem 'Home' which explored the climate crisis. **SECOND:** Philip from Sidmouth with his poem 'A CLAMOUR OF ROOKS' and **THIRD** Kathryn from Sandbach with her poem : 'A LETTER FROM KHARKIV'. You can read the top ten poems on: [Our learning pages.](#) My favourite won third place.

### Letter From Kharkiv by Kathryn Sim:

Anatoly it's grim here. You've done the right thing.  
Now I'll move our old man from this crazed happening.  
We'll dodge the stray bullet, shield from the shell  
Sprint past the sniper, we're living in hell.  
Ghost stories are written in this underground place,  
Five flickering candles light up this dank space.  
The roaming of rats is our only distraction.  
While we wait for the signal that starts off the action.  
The boom of the sirens signals more pain  
As sharp shrapnel fragments shower us like rain.  
Anatoly I'm hungry, I'm tired and so cold.  
But on this front line the heart needs to be bold!  
Noisy children fall silent as their parents can't cope  
In Kharkiv my hometown that once held such hope.  
The blood of the innocents has been spilt yet again  
In this fierce fight for freedom,  
For our homeland, Ukraine.



## GROUPS – Reviews of 2023

### U3A QUIZ CHALLENGE Led by Ian Honeysett Monthly 2nd Monday 2.00pm

The Quiz group has been going since 2016 with Ian Honeysett still the jovial quizmaster. Each quiz comprises 6 rounds of 10 questions. Typical subjects are: Pot Luck (ie anything), Inventions, TV Chefs, Authors & their books... In fact, anything might be included although we've not yet had a round on West Ham United (though it might yet appear?) Here's a sample question: 'What type of commercials did ITV ban in 1965?' (Answer below \*).



When you arrive, you pick a button from a bag & that allocates you to a team: so it's different teams every time. This

means it's a great way to meet new people. You don't need to be a great quizzier to take part. It's all for fun. Really. There are no prizes other than the simple pleasure of winning.



We meet on the second Monday of the month at 2pm at the Unitarian Hall, Meadow (near Godalming Town football club).

And not only do you get to keep mentally active, you also get to hear some of the most groan-provoking puns ever.

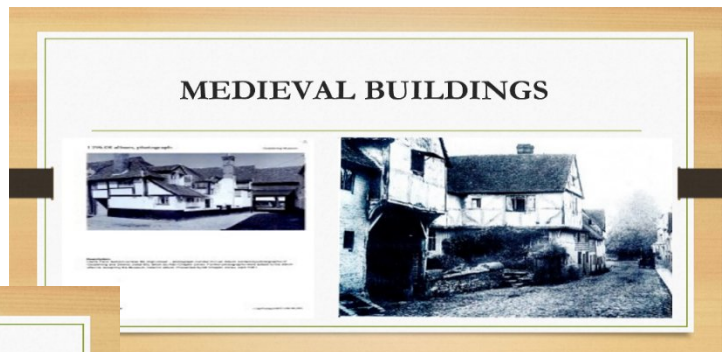
Like: What is the longest two word sentence in the English language? I do!

(Answer to above: \* Cigarette commercials).

### HISTORY OF GODALMING led by Ian Honeysett on ZOOM Monthly 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday 2 – 4.00pm

Ian Honeysett took this Group on when Bernard Williams decided to move down to the west country and gave Ian a large container of notes. Ian turned them into slide presentations from Stone Age Godalming via Medieval Godalming to Modern Godalming.

Then he included, eg The Pubs of Godalming – including those long gone; the Industries of Godalming; not to mention, Criminal Godalming (so many juicy murders!). And there are the histories of Farncombe, Binscombe, Busbridge & even Compton.



#### THE OTHER GRAVEYARD



- The number of burials, their evidently Christian nature and the date and location of the site made it clear that the archaeologists had found the first cemetery of Godalming church.
- It had previously been assumed that Godalming's graveyard had always lain on its present site, east of the church.
- The cemetery's very existence was surprising; its survival for eight centuries, lying hidden beneath the gardens of properties in Church Street and Mint Street, was remarkable.

There's always time for discussion and opportunity to share memories (eg of Godalming schools). So why not join us from the comfort of your own home? And, if you would like to give your own presentation, then here's your opportunity!



## **Milford U3A Military History Group** **Led by Peter Stevenson First Wednesday 2- 4.00pm**

## **Southwick House Museum visit 18 May 2023**

Members of Milford's Military History Group joined up with members from Dorking U3A to visit Southwick House Royal Military Police Museum, near Portsdown Hill, Portsmouth on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> May. This is where the HM Royal Navy's plans were laid for the WW2 Normandy Landings on 6<sup>th</sup> June 1944.

Here is the grand entrance to Southwick House which was used by C in C Dwight D Eisenhower, Viscount Montgomery of Alamein, Admiral Ramsay and other top allied force commanders during 1944.



Alongside is the map room with the original wall chart showing the routes to be used by the naval forces to cross the Channel. An enormous undertaking (Operation Neptune) meticulously planned by Admiral Ramsay for the landings on Utah, Omaha, Gold, Juno and Sword beaches Normandy.

After the visit we had a splendid lunch in the Golden Lion village pub not far from the museum.

In the afternoon some of us went on to visit Fort Nelson, (right on top of Portsdown Hill) with stunning views across Portsmouth and the Solent. The Fort was built to defend Portsmouth from flank attacks from the West, North and East by Napoleon. All in all a great day, made all the more enjoyable with glorious sunshine!

## **Potential Groups?**

### **Canasta**



Anyone interested in learning or playing Canasta? This is a social and fun card game for 2, 3 or 4 players per team (though the usual is 2 or 4) which I played many years ago and would like to rekindle. I am considering starting a Canasta group in the Autumn for anyone who would like to join me. I would be happy to teach if you are interested in learning or playing with the more experienced. I haven't yet asked for this to be added to the programme for next year as it would be good to know what take up there might be. Please email me if you are interested. Many thanks, Sue. Email [sue-allen@milford-u3a.org.uk](mailto:sue-allen@milford-u3a.org.uk)

The link below is a basic video explanation of the game. Hold down the CTRL key and click the blue link.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HZp0PfxrFa0>



### **Gardening Group**

Once you have finished full time work and then celebrated this with a holiday, The garden may become a new interest, but where do you start?

Are there two or three volunteers who would set up a Group for those who would like to be able to share your interest in Gardening? There is so much to learn.

If you would like to discuss this project, please reply to Newsletter Editor [pam-brown@milford-u3a.org.uk](mailto:pam-brown@milford-u3a.org.uk)



### **Digital problems?**

*If you need to learn more about your digital device –Contact: Webmaster, Bob Fearnley  
phone: 01483 424475 or email: [webmaster@milford-u3a.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@milford-u3a.org.uk)*



### ***Roving Photographer.***

**Sue Allen**, leader of our Photography for Pleasure Group has volunteered to take photographs for our various Groups and to become our Roving Photographer. She may visit some of our groups to take some new photos, if you invite her. We are delighted by her visits this month. If you would like to invite Sue Allen to take photos of your group in action, her contact is:

[sue-allen@milford-u3a.org.uk](mailto:sue-allen@milford-u3a.org.uk)

***MANY THANKS TO ALL GROUP LEADERS WHO HAVE RESPONDED WITH WONDERFUL NEWS OF THEIR GROUPS THIS YEAR. I WILL LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING FROM ALL OF YOU AT SOME TIME IN OUR NEXT U3A YEAR 2023-2024. Pamela Brown Editor.***

***The Closing Date for all entries into the July Newsletter is Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> June 2023 but please send as soon as possible, please. I have a deadline to send this to the Webmaster for him to be able to post it to you on the first day of the month. I can't bear to pick up a new monthly Newsletter or magazine and find that we are partway through the month of its stated date. [pam-brown@milford-u3a.org.uk](mailto:pam-brown@milford-u3a.org.uk)***