

Chairman's Message



It's Christmas Jumper Time! Whilst Christmas might not be everyone's cup of tree (sorry!) it is fast approaching along with the New Year and new experiences in the form of a few new groups. More details in our January Newsletter. Watch this space!

At our meeting on 10th November, members voted to change our name to Milford and Godalming U3A. The committee are now in the process of informing all the relevant organisations, and hopefully the necessary internal and external changes will be in place by the end of January 2024. However, please note we have decided not to change our email addresses so it's business as usual should you wish to contact group leaders or committee members.

To get us in the mood for Christmas, following the monthly talk on Friday 8th December, Wayne will lead us in singing a few carols accompanied by crackers and mince pies. Please bring friends, family and neighbours – we all know how important singing is for our mental health and well-being, so let's raise the roof and pull a cracker or two.

Christmas is a time for reflection so I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who make our U3A the success it is. First and foremost I'd like to thank our enthusiastic members – overall attendance has been excellent since September – without you we wouldn't exist. Secondly, I'd like to thank our committee members who beaver away behind the scenes making sure we run like a well-oiled wheel. Lastly, but most importantly, a heartfelt thank you to all our group leaders and facilitators without whom we could do nothing. A Big Thank You – you all give your time freely, sharing passions and skills for the benefit of others. Your hard work does not go unnoticed.

However you spend your Christmas holiday, I hope you have an opportunity to smile with friends and family.

Looking forward to seeing everyone in 2024.

Lisa.

**Lighting Up of Milford's Christmas Tree
Milford Village Hall
With Carols and hand bell ringing
1st December7.00pm**

Milford and District u3a Monthly Newsletter



December 2023

New Members' Tea Party

We are very happy to say that we are introducing a regular New Members' Afternoon Tea event. The first of these took place at the Clockhouse Community Centre Café on Thursday 9th November.



The event was very well attended by 21 new members, 3 guests and 2 existing members, who were able to share their experience. Two of the three guests signed up as new members - a lovely result!!

There were Committee members present and available to answer any queries and assist in any way necessary. A lovely atmosphere permeated the café and those who attended enjoyed the opportunity to meet other members to simply sit down for a 'chat' and share their experiences so far, and for members to express interest in groups they perhaps had not previously considered.

Mike, a new member who has recently moved to the area but was previously a U3A member elsewhere, has volunteered to facilitate a MOTO group (Members On Their Own), see more detail on page 8.

We intend to hold these events quarterly. The next one will be held in February. New Members who were invited to this event but were unable to attend, will be invited to the February Event along with any new members who have joined us since the beginning of November. Sue Allen

07393 984148 email: <mailto:member-liaison@milford-u3a.org.uk>

The Monthly Friday Talk

Working with the Ghosts of Hampton Court

By
Sarah Slater



The King's Chancellor, Cardinal Wolsey created Hampton Court Palace. He made it grand and beautiful enough to entertain a king. It was so successful that King Henry VIII took it for himself. Sarah Slater will tell us what happened next and what it's like to work with its Ghosts.



Talk, Tea, Cake and Conversation £2.00

A performance from our singers in aid of the Phillis Tuckwell Hospice

HART MALE VOICE CHOIR with **MILFORD u3a SINGERS** u3a
present a

CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Fun and laughter in song and carols to support

Phyllis Tuckwell®
Hospice Care

...because every day is precious

Holy Trinity Church, High Street, Guildford GU1 3RR

7.00 p.m. Saturday 2nd December (Doors open 6.30 p.m.)

Tickets £12.50 (children under 12 free) available now from

www.hartmvc.org.uk

Phyllis Tuckwell Hospice Care shops
at Fleet, Godalming and Guildford (High Street)

Wayne Richardson (wayne-richardson@milford-u3a.org.uk)

Milford Village Hall has recently had some improvements made to the guttering, the toilets and other parts of the building. The new u3a Gardeners Group are going to support improvements to the appearance of the ground outside on the front of the building. Milford Village Hall is an Arts and Crafts building and must be preserved.

Thank you Gillian Martin - Speakers Organiser



Gillian has produced a Monthly Talk for every one of our Monthly Meetings this year, in spite of caring for her twin sister, our branch secretary, who passed away after a painful illness on 2nd September. Even that didn't stop Gillian

negotiating superb Talks for our pleasure. Thank you, Gillian, we have all enjoyed them and we appreciate your dedication to the creation of this important part of our monthly meetings.



Water, Water Everywhere – appropriate for October - and - not a drop to drink' for many of our members in November 2023.

Last year was the driest on record at this time.

THE CHRISTMAS MONTHLY MEETING

Our Singing for Fun Group will begin our Celebrations immediately after the Talk.

We're also having crackers and Christmas fare.



Review of the November Talk – The History of Town Criers by Jonathan Jones

Oyez,
Oyez,
Oyez
(Hark! Hark! Hark!)



Jonathan Jones gave us a lovely exhibition of what it is to be a Town Crier. He has been the Town Crier for Farnham for 17 years. He explained to us that a Town Crier has to have a Stentorian voice, an ability to reach the lowest and loudest sound, from the stomach as well as from the lungs. He demonstrated this remarkable deep shouting voice at the end of his talk. How they sustain this voice for long messages, in the open air and over the normal roar of people and traffic, it's hard to imagine.

He explained that towns and villages choose the costume for the history of the town they represent. His 'Farnham Green' Coat represents the famous royal hunting grounds of Farnham. The colours have to attract the crowd, so the scarlet waistcoat shouts to them before the voice is heard. He rings a beautiful, bespoke bell too. In some places the Crier is called The Bellman.

The position of the Town Crier was a very important one. The general public tended to be illiterate until more recent years and they would not have been able

to read a notice as we might today. The news of special events, or reporting from battles were desperately needed by the common folk. In this country, this activity goes back to the Norman King William the Conqueror's invasion of Britain in 1066.

In modern times, a Town Crier may display his local colours and other significant references to his town: a copy of the Town's shield embroidered on his coat, other local references like Jonathan's Farnham Castle as a particular place of note in the town, perhaps the river on which the town was built and more. Town Criers take their part in exhibiting the town to tourists too and in their actions they help to earn money for their town. They are not normally paid, but the upkeep of the costume may be covered by the local Council. Jonathan told us of the Town Crier for Liverpool who greets the big tourist ships that come in from America and other places. He is always ready as they dock, to welcome them to the British Isles.

Some Town Criers are more historically dressed than others and Jonathan was certainly able to show us the accurate style 18th Century costume in genuine material, the old style linen shirt and the knee-length trousers with white stockings and the most beautiful black, hand-made shoes. It was amusing to learn that in the old days, the cobbler only made one style of shoe which could be worn on either foot. He just had to buy two of them. The Jabot it was interesting to learn, was for perfume and could be lifted to the nose when things got too smelly. It is not difficult to see why that would be necessary when you remember that there were no baths, sewage ran in the street and there was plague.

Pamela Brown



A ROTARY YOUNG CITIZEN AWARD 2024

Following the success of our inaugural award in 2023, Rotary in Godalming will be running their Young Citizen Award again in 2024.



Some of the winners from the 2023 award with their certificates

Our late member Malcolm Keene worked relentlessly, to inspire young people in Godalming. So, in his memory, the Rotary Clubs in Godalming wish to reward those young people who have made outstanding contributions to our local community and deserve recognition. This may be as a carer, a fundraiser for good causes, involvement with voluntary organisations or other similar tasks that a young person has, or group of young people have, done to benefit the community that often has not been recognised.

If you know a young person, or a group of young people, aged between 10 -18, who is/are doing good things within the community, then please nominate them for our award. The nomination form is available on the Godalming Woolsack Rotary website or by email to: godalmingrotary.youth@gmail.com

A cash prize together with a commemorative plaque will be awarded to the individual or the group that the Rotary judging panel consider to be the most deserving. All nominees will receive a certificate recognising their nomination.

The closing date for nominations is Friday 12th April 2024 with an award evening planned for Friday 17th May 2024 at the Wilfrid Noyce Centre, Godalming.



The Priory Orchard Cemetery The Hidden Cemetery of Godalming

Milford u3a Group - The History of Godalming – Leader Ian Honeysett, were fascinated to have a live zoom with Dr Lia Betti the archaeologist in charge of analysing the remains in the excavation of this ancient and hidden cemetery near Eashing Lane.

The existence of this historical site was only discovered when building work began on the site near Church Street. Excavations took place in 2014/5.

The cemetery dates back to about 800 – 1100 AD. In all some 350 skeletons were found but the cemetery probably contains some 5000 in all. There are another 300 in storage, still to be examined.

Dr Lia described how much we have learned from studying the remains regarding how people lived then, their health, origins etc. If you would like to learn more then watch the zoom recording by holding your CTRL key and clicking on this link. When you see a black page, find the brown arrow- head below, pointing right. Click this to begin the video.

The research and remains of 300 individuals not yet examined, are at Roehampton University. The research is on hold at present due to Dr. Betti's move to UCL. She hopes to continue her studies when further arrangements can be agreed.

<https://1drv.ms/v/s!AnsezTQhUvHMg8wHZIsWLVubbafeCg?e=wejjH7>

Poetry Competition Open Now

The u3a national poetry competition has been launched for its fourth year, with the theme of

What If

Your poem should be a maximum of 16 lines and the deadline for submission is 12pm on Friday, 26th January 2024. This is fair warning to give you time to write. All details for submitting your poems will be in the January Newsletter.

From Peter Stevenson – Gardeners Group - Visit to Garden of Peter Herring on the 9th November 2023



Members of the new u3a Gardeners Group enjoyed a glorious walk through Peter Herring's garden and woodland glade on



Thursday, 9th November to enjoy the Autumn colours.

Peter also showed just how many autumn colours there are with a table top display which he put on especially for us. Thank you Peter, much appreciated by all.



Zoom Time Group

Fortnightly 11.00am – 12.00 noon. . First Meeting: Friday 15th December. Dates for 2024 depend on response.



The suggestion of having a Coffee Morning on Zoom was not of any interest to our members and so that suggested group has been withdrawn. However, if

there is anyone who would like to experiment with using with ZOOM for a session or two, that offer is still open.

You don't have to have zoom on your computer, because I will be sending the link from my laptop. Your access is by an emailed blue link like the one below, it's almost the same as using an email.

Please email me or phone before the date, so that I can send the link to your email address. Contact: 01252 702075 or pam-brown@milford-u3a.org.uk

Creative Mixed Media Art

First and Third Thursday of the month
2pm - 4pm Unitarian Church Hall, Godalming.



It was a great pleasure to visit this vibrant and enthusiastic group which has been very ably led for several years on a twice monthly basis by Pamela Dalton Williams who has a teaching background and taught in primary and secondary schools with art as one of her specialist subjects.

The emphasis of the group is very much on 'mixed media' where all sorts of materials are used, from textiles to plastics, paper to material collected from the wild, paints, pencils and clay to name but a few! Pam is very keen that the group is run to allow full freedom of expression from the participants.

However, the interest does not stop in the church hall, and the group go on at least three or four outings and visits together a year, which can inspire further creativity and are enjoyed by all. Some of their most recent visits include:

Petworth House
The New Ashgate Gallery, Farnham
Farnham Art Society exhibition



To round off the calendar year, this friendly group meet for a very sociable Christmas Lunch together. There are no limits to what you may produce, only possibilities!

Do feel free to contact Pam Dalton Williams by email if you are

interested in joining her. *Sue Allen*

pam-daltonwilliams@milford-u3a.org.uk

Table Tennis

There are two table tennis groups who meet weekly, every Monday and Wednesday morning at St Marks Community Centre.



I visited the Wednesday group in November to be welcomed by an extremely sociable group of mostly ladies, more men would be very welcome! It happened on the day of my visit, that the group were celebrating the 90th birthday of Rita Port, a long-standing member of our U3A, the Table Tennis Group, and one of the original committee members of more than 20 years ago! Thank you for all your help and contributions over your time with the u3a Rita, and best wishes for many more years of activity! Below, Linda holds the Birthday cake and Rita blows out the lighted candles - all in one breath!



Wednesday's table tennis group has been running for around 15 years and is currently led by Janice. The room is set up with 2 tables, with 2 opponents at each end, with the aim of achieving a score of 21 and everyone had ample opportunity to get several games in during the course of the morning, with a little time to catch their breath in between. The group stop halfway through the morning for a coffee and refreshment break and a general 'catch up' with each other. In addition to their regular Wednesday morning

play they also enjoy a meal out together for Christmas and in the Summer for 'end of year' celebrations.

If you would like to join a happy 'band of batters'



please contact: Janice for the Wednesday group by email to: janice-horton@milford-u3a.org.uk or Lloyd for the Monday group by email to: lloyd-dingle@milford-u3a.org.uk Sue Allen

What HAPPENS TO OUR BODIES IN THE COLD?

"The current cost of living crisis will see more people exposed to cold homes", says Professor George Havenith, thermal physiology specialist at Loughborough University.

"In colder rooms, the skin closes its blood vessels to preserve heat. This increases blood pressure and through this stimulates urine loss and dehydration. That leads to more stress on the heart and the blood gets 'thicker'. "As your blood thickens it works harder to flow around your body, increasing the risk of heart attacks and strokes. According to Havenith, as we get older, our behaviour changes too, as our reaction to feeling the cold is less effective. It means we don't reach for that extra layer of clothing as soon as we should. We also tend to be less active, meaning we need more heat to keep warm.

The key to keeping warm is controlling our internal thermostat. The process is controlled by the hypothalamus in the brain that works as an internal temperature sensor, detecting when we're too hot or too cold. When it senses an imbalance it sends out a signal to get us back on track. Our body responds by sweating to cool down or shivering to warm up. Although the hypothalamus is pretty smart at regulating body temperature, if it drops by 2°C it's serious. Hypothermia sets in, an urgent medical condition that must be treated at once. Older people living alone are particularly at risk of hypothermia

To avoid any potential health issues Age UK recommends heating your main living space to a steady 21°C.".....Saga source.

Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Have you dabbled in this new 'dark art'? I have, and I have discussed it with an expert. I sought to create a photo perhaps to use for the newsletter. I entered words into ChatGPT. They were: **a 75 year old man happily playing tennis on a summers day.** This picture is the result.



Each word of what you ask for becomes an element in your result eg: 'happily' resulted in the expression on his face. Given the prompt words, ChatGPT figures out the most likely pixel elements required, and then repeats until it finds the place to

end this action, eg: to make the right number of fingers etc.

After several critical remarks while examining an enlargement of my photo, the expert said: *'At first glance, it's absolutely a 75 year old man playing tennis on a summer's day – exactly what you asked for, but there are a number of things that are 'a bit off', so if you had told me this is an actual photo, I don't think I would have believed you.'* All good fun though.'

How accurate is AI though? My expert gives two other examples:

'I gave ChatGPT a multi-choice question from my son's homework, but I didn't give it the 4 answers to choose from. It provided an answer that was quite long, detailed, and eloquent. It showed the formula it intended to use, and its workings. The answer was quite convincing but also completely wrong – the answer wasn't even one of the 4 multi-choice options – not even close.'

A second example – remembering that this is an American system. The ChatGPT answers are in red to aid comprehension:

'I asked ChatGPT 'What was the earliest computer? Chat BPT was convinced that ENIAC (American), was the first computer. I asked if it knew about 'Colossus' in Bletchley Park.

ChatGPT described Collosus as a programmable electronic computer from early 1944,

So the Colossus was surely the first?

GPT: No, the Colossus was the world's first programmable electronic computer, but the world's first programmable electronic computer was ENIAC, unveiled in 1946

If Colossus came first and was a programmable electronic computer, how can you insist that the later

ENIAC was the first electronic computer?

GPT: 'I apologise for any confusion. You are correct that the Colossus was the world's first programmable electronic computer, and it was also an electronic computer, however, the Colossus was not the world's first electronic computer.



Which came first 1946 or 1944?

(ChatGPT appears to be faithful to its library of references, but perhaps not too good yet on reasoning.) Pamela Brown

'Tomatoes;



They're delicious, they're packed with powerful antioxidants and they can help to lower cholesterol.'

This advice was given by Saga in their October Newsletter.

You probably know that tomatoes are good for you. You can make them even healthier by cooking them. Michael Mosley has been singing the praises of this little red fruit in his 'Just One Thing' podcast, explaining how to cook them to release more lycopene, the potent antioxidant compound that makes them so healthy. 'While there is a lot to love about a raw tomato, if you really want to boost the benefits, you have to cook them,' says Mosley. 'Fresh tomatoes are great, and even that tin in your cupboard is a way to include them in your diet. As with the fresh ones, you do get more lycopene when you cook them.



A NEW GROUP - MOTO (Members On Their Own)



Mike Jones is a new member of our u3a, but he is an experienced MOTO member and he wants to show you what a friendly group it can be.

The Group will meet in the Clockhouse cafe in Chapel Lane, Milford, GU8 5EZ.

Meetings: once a month 10.00 - 12.00 on the second Thursday in the month.

First meeting 14th December!

The aim of the group is to meet informally over coffee, share interests and ideas, and make up small groups for visits.

Members can express their interest by messaging Mike, or just turning up.

Mike jones 07394 282941

Lynne_mike@tiscali.co.uk



WANTED!

'The time has come', the walrus said, 'to talk of many things...'

Very regretfully, the time has come for me to hand the Newsletter to the next editor. I love doing this job and I will miss it, not only because it takes all my time, (my own fault because of my style), but because making contact monthly with members of our u3a has been a delight. Many thanks to all who have contributed. I shall miss it very much including the challenges that the digital side of things has given me, but I want to finish writing my novel which also needs my time.

I will not be leaving the Newsletter until I have found a replacement, and so I invite all of you to email me, very soon please, if you would like to know more about the job with an idea of taking over. It really is the best job.

The new editor will have a lot of help and advice if needed, but will want to write it in his/her own style. He/she will be able to start from scratch and present it as they wish. There is no prescribed template.

Pam

pam-brown@milford-u3a.org.uk

Fascinating Fungi 2023

The autumn of 2023 has been an interesting one for fungi. After a couple of false starts the season really got going in mid-October and since then woods, parks, fields, gardens, cricket pitches and golf courses have played host to an amazing array of species of different shapes, sizes and wonderful colours. There have been the jewel-like waxcaps in unimproved grassland, the vibrant purple amethyst deceivers, blending surprisingly well with the fallen autumn leaves and the unmissable scarlet caps (with white spots of course) of the well-known Fly Agarics. Yellow Stagshorn, grey Clouded Funnels, green Death Caps and over 200 species of Brittlegills in a huge range of colours. It has been a real feast for the eyes.

We've probably reached the peak now and there will be a gradual decline in the number of species appearing. Frosts will finish off all but the most determined, although if we get some unseasonably mild weather, you could find fungi well into December and even January. These are truly amazing organisms.

Sara

sarashepley09@gmail.com



Newsletter

The Closing date for the January Newsletter is 26th December - so virtually the 25th for 'last orders'. I am engaged then in numerous technical activities and checking, and I like to give Bob or Lavinia a courteous amount of time to post it onto Beacon and send it round to all our members for the 1st of the following month's distribution

Pam

newsletter@milford-u3a.org.uk



**Happy Christmas to
all the members
of our u3a.**

