



Chairman's Message.

The good news for this newsletter is that our newly formed groups are going from strength to strength in members. Canasta, Gardening and MOTO are battling it out for top place on the new group leader board!

Our Friday January talk recounting the activities of Agent ZigZag attracted our largest turnout for many months and I believe everyone who attended had a good time. It's lovely to see people lingering over their coffee/tea and cakes chatting with old friends and new. These events rely on a small and dedicated team of helpers. Their hard work does not go unnoticed so a big thank-you.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Liz Simmons who has been working hard to maintain some warmth in Milford Village Hall by getting up early and switching on the electric heaters. I'd also like to thank the various groups who meet there for their forbearance, we had some particularly cold days and cold fingers. The good news is that a new boiler has been purchased and hopefully this will be installed in February. Your group leaders will be informed of dates when the hall will be closed.

September 2024 will be the twenty fifth anniversary of our u3a so the committee are hard at work exploring innovative ways to mark the occasion. Watch this space.

I look forward to seeing many of you at our next monthly talk on Friday 9th February, in the meantime keep warm and active and make the most of the groups and activities we have on offer.

Thank you for your support.

Lisa

MVH Closure!!!



Milford Village Hall will be closed for one week from Monday 19th February. Affected group leaders have been informed and they in turn will let their participants know.

Milford and District u3a Monthly Newsletter February 2024



Photo taken by Sue Losson on her Outings Trip to Welford Park in February 2023

The Monthly Friday Talk 9th February 2024 2.00pm

'Meeting Disaster Head On With Hope'

Chris & Denise Arthey

*A life-changing road accident and a remarkable recovery.
An incredible story of hope, faith, love and perseverance.
Milford Village Hall, Portsmouth Road, Milford GU8 5DS*

Talk, tea, coffee, cake and conversation
£2.00

WANTED! A new Editor for the Newsletter

I am sorry to have to step down from being the Newsletter editor. This is the third time of appealing for another member to take over. I don't want it to close.



Please contact me if you can volunteer, perhaps to look into the process with me? This will probably be the last Issue of your Newsletter.

pam-brown@milford-u3a.org.uk

Godalming Writers Group

COME & MEET THE GODALMING WRITERS GROUP AT GODALMING LIBRARY
2.00 – 4.00 ON TUESDAY 20TH FEBRUARY 2024
 TICKETS FROM THE LIBRARY AT £3 INC REFRESHMENTS
 OR EMAIL THEM AT: Godalming.Library@surreycc.gov.uk



Witches, Cats, Skulduggery, a Bank Robbery, Emergency Pants, Nostalgia, Parking Problems & a Graveyard. So what's the link? Godalming of course.

All sorts of stories by all sorts of local writers. Some may even be true, sort-of. Several local U3A members belong to the Godalming Writers Group who have now published four books of short stories set in the area of Godalming & the Surrey Hills.

In December they had a book-signing in WH Smiths and, on **Tuesday 20th February (2.00 – 4.00)** they are holding an event at Godalming Library where they will talk about the group. (New members very welcome).

The main part will be authors reading out short, (five minute) extracts from their stories, from the four books we have published and answering any of your questions.

They will also be selling copies of the books! These are full of stories and myths about our Town. So please do come along and give them your support.

Tickets £3.00 from Godalming Library
Contact: 0345 6009 009 or

Godalming.Library@surreycc.gov.uk



Look out for catkins, they will be opening soon.

Pickleball - Potential u3a Group

The sport of Pickleball, an American import, has elements of tennis, ping pong and badminton.

Pickleball is particularly popular with those aged 50-plus and you can see why: it's not about the power with which you hit the ball, it's more about waiting for the right shot – so you don't have to be very young to win.

For most racquet sports you need hours of lessons even to get the ball over the net. The coach said, 'I'll have you playing pickleball in half an hour.' He wasn't far wrong. The rules are fairly simple, underarm serves from the waist, over a reduced sized net, which means no ferocious Federer-style aces. 'The Magic of pickleball is the actual ball. It has holes in it so it doesn't move as fast or bounce as hard as a tennis or ping pong ball.

It is now estimated that there are around 9,000 picklers in the UK and more than 360 clubs.



Competitive pickleball is big too: Chair Karen Mitchell, 63, co-founder of non-profit PICKLEBALL ENGLAND, is confident that numbers playing will more than treble in the next two years. Want to take up pickleball but don't know where to begin? For coaching and places to play: [Pickleball UK](http://PickleballUK) email info@pickleballengland.org Or the You Tube link below:

<https://youtu.be/NgpUA2TfF3U?si=JSSjvWM20510kWZ2>

(If you use this YouTube link it is easier to put **pickleball** into the search space at the top of the You Tube page).

!!!!!!!

David Sowerbutts, our Treasurer, has been offered a taster session of pickleball in February at Rodborough School in the next couple of weeks. His message to all our members is: "Would you like to try the growing sport of pickleball? If so, please email David Sowerbutts at david.sowerbutts@gmail.com by February 5th. Our aim is to have the taster session at Rodborough School in the next couple of weeks, with a view to starting a group if there's enough interest.

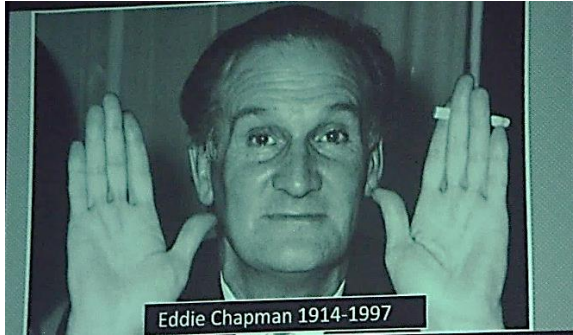
First come, first served." !!!!!!!!

Review of the Monthly Friday Talk on 12th January 2024

'The Life and Crimes of Agent ZIG ZAG'

**By
Paul Barwick**

Photo - Eddie Chapman - Double Agent ZigZag



The Monthly Talk on January 12th was very warmly received. Paul Barwick was an excellent speaker. He mixed with the audience before the Talk, talking and laughing with them. When he related his true tale of ZigZag, the double agent of WW2, he had the audience reacting to his story all the way through it.

I think everyone had some sort of empathy with the villain/hero who was Eddie Chapman, Agent ZigZag. Chapman began life in a small village in the Durham coalfields. He began stealing at an early age, but socially climbed to be a man who was handsome, tall and impeccably dressed, apparently rich, owner of a Rolls Royce, frequenting hotels and clubs with high society, and was a magnet for beautiful girls. He was dashing and fun to be with, and he enjoyed a charmed life, taking everything he wanted.

At the same time he was a dedicated, professional criminal of the slipperiest kind. Breaking the Law was his vocation. His wealth was based on criminal activities. His love life was promiscuous, although there were some relationships that meant more to him. He became part of an infamous 'jelly gang' who broke into buildings, and blew open the safes with gelignite. He was caught and put into prison, but he escaped and, with others of his gang, managed to get to Jersey in the Channel Islands.

He was in prison in Jersey when WW2 broke out and Jersey was occupied by the Nazis. On the Nazi controlled island, Eddie Chapman eventually offered his services to train as a spy for the Germans against the English, in the hope that they might smuggle him back into Britain. After much investigation into Eddie's past and realising that his criminal

experience, his skills and his expertise with explosives as well as his contacts in the underworld, would make Eddie a perfect spy, he was tested and trained for a year to carry out acts of sabotage. In particular the Germans wanted him to attack the De Havilland aircraft factory in Hertfordshire, which built the much-feared Mosquito bomber.



'At 2.13am 16th December 1942, a German spy drops from a black Focke-Wulf reconnaissance plane over Cambridge... The stars are out, but the land beneath his feet, swaddled in wartime blackout, is utterly dark. His nose bleeds copiously....' From 'Agent ZigZag' by Ben Macintyre.

Eddie landed and found his way to the police and MI5 and so he became Agent ZigZag, one of the most important British double agents of the Second World War. He made radio contact back to the Germans and told them that he was making plans to carry out his mission to attack the De Havilland Factory. MI5 sent him to the factory at Hatfield, (with an MI5 minder), to plan a fake bomb attack which he would need to report to the Germans later as evidence of his bogus success.

MI5 arranged for a false scene of The De Havilland factory, half demolished by bomb damage and wrote a fake story of the explosion in The Daily Express. This was accepted as truth by the Germans after their reconnaissance evidence and Eddie was awarded the highest German medal, The Iron Cross, and a large amount of money.

Paul Barwick's Talk was an excellent way to give us the experience of the story of Eddie Chapman, but he cannot get anywhere near covering the whole of this story. There is still a wealth to be told of Eddie Chapman's adventures. His story is true. Read more in the book 'Agent Zigzag' by Ben Macintyre.

The photo of Eddie Chapman above is one of the final slides of Paul's talk. What do you think Eddie is saying?

'It's a fair copy, Guv.', 'That's Life!' or, 'I don't give a damn!'

The photograph of Eddie Chapman above is the last slide that Paul Barwick showed us at the end of his talk. I took the photograph from the middle of the crowd of spectators, so it is not of the best, but I was delighted that anything came out.

Pam

Painting groups 2 and 3



Between them, these groups take place on every Friday morning of the month (except where a 5th Friday occurs!) from 9.30am until 12 noon at St Marks Community Centre.

Weeks one and three are led by Judy Fearnside, and weeks two and four are led by Pat Dodman, but it's pretty much the same people who attend each week!

Most artists present, seem to favour watercolour painting although watercolour pencils and acrylic paint were also in evidence. There was an array of topics being painted, from treasured pets to holiday snaps, or re-inventing a beautiful photo seen printed somewhere, wild birds, flowers and creating a beautiful card for a friend's birthday.



They all stop for a chat over coffee and biscuits halfway through the morning; and they continue to meet and paint informally through the summer months, for those who would like to and are available. They also enjoy a 'Christmas Meal' together.

One member showed me an amazing book which teaches painting with watercolour in a very simple, step by step, and straightforward way, the book is called: 'You can paint Watercolour' by Alwyn Crawshaw, should you want to have a look at this.

They are a friendly and enthusiastic group who would welcome new members, if you feel you are concealing artistic skill or would like to try your hand at something new then please contact either Judy at judy-fearnside@milford-u3a.org.uk or judy-fearnside@milford-u3a.org.uk

Pat at pat-dodman@milford-u3a.org.uk .

Sue Allen

MOTO - Members On Their Own



Thursday 14th December saw the inaugural MOTO get-together.

The intention is for members who are on their own to have a forum and the opportunity to meet others in a similar situation. They have their 'official' meetings on the second Thursday morning of each month at The Clockhouse Café opposite Milford Village Hall.

Their first meeting was an amazing success. Mike arrived early and set up three tables for anyone who turned up to join him and after a short time, after adding more and more chairs, another three or four tables and more chairs were added, so that the group took over, half the café! In excess of twenty members arrived to declare their interests and at least a further half a dozen called wanting their interest recorded but were unable to make the first meeting, I understand that there are now in excess of 30 members.

Since that meeting, members have been out for a Saturday evening meal at the Refectory, have a quiz arranged, a visit to Yvonne Arnaud theatre, a trip out to see a film, a possible excursion, and so much more.

This group promises to be vibrant and provide social interaction for those who find themselves on their own.

The group will meet for coffee, every 2nd Thursday of each month, 10.00 until 12 noon, with any additional events being circulated amongst and joined by the MOTO members.

If you would like to join the MOTO group, please email Mike on mike-jones@milford-u3a.org.uk or telephone 07394 282941
Sue Allen

PETS is the name of the Elstead Drama Group. They have been producing theatre performances since 1982.

In the Centenary year of World War One, they wanted to show how WWI affected the small village of Elstead and its villagers.

They wrote and created a show called '**Lest We Forget**' where the villagers recreated the life experiences of the village in the First World War.

The magazine 'Vantage' has generously provided us with a link to a 10 year old recording of their performance. CTRL and Click the link below.

This is a very old film, re-recorded to YouTube. It begins with a black screen, Wait, and be patient to learn about the recruiting methods of Vesta Tilley and other seductive methods which eventually took the lives of thirty-eight Elstead men..

Link to: Elstead PETS WWI Show:

'Lest We Forget'

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yrQmW7xYI_A

New Group

Zoom Time Group

Fridays - Fortnightly 11.00am – 12.00 noon.



Dates by arrangement.

If you would like to practise using ZOOM for a session or two, 10.00 – 12 noon for experience, this group would suit you.

You don't have to have zoom on your computer: I will be sending the link to you from my laptop. You only need to Click on a blue link like the one below, it's almost the same as using an email.

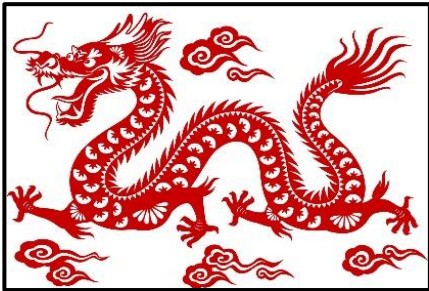
Please email me or phone, so that I can send the link to your email address. Contact: 01252 702075 or

pam-brown@milford-u3a.org.uk

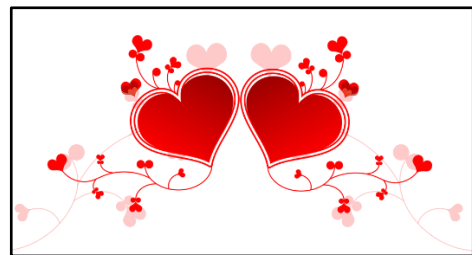
There are new photographs and articles on our Website

Have you logged into it recently?

www.milford-u3a.org.uk



Chinese New Year 10th February – 25th 2024 is the year of the Wood Dragon



St Valentine's Day 14th February 2024

u3a National Online Learning

Do take a look at the many [online talks & workshops](#) which are available via Zoom for all members.

These video talks are free and very good. *This is the link I have signed up to:*



The Secrets of the Human Brain

A series of seven interactive talks which cover many aspects of our amazing brains. The series starts with a simple description of the structure of the brain and subsequent talks include subjects like sleep, dreams, behaviour, pain, the spinal cord, brain scanning and more.

Talk 1: One hundred million nerve cells inside every head!

This talk provides a simple description of the structure of the brain, how nerves work and how different parts of the brain do different things. Later on, the talk allows the audience to test how left or right handed they are. The audience can also use their own brains to see things that are not really there and the talk also explains how men and women's brains are different.

About the Speaker: Dr. Bob Pullen is a retired University Lecturer who has spent many years giving lectures on the brain to Medical, Pharmacy and Biology students. He has also undertaken brain research in England and America. He is not a Medical Doctor but has a Doctoral Degree in Neuroscience from Oxford University. He has learned many interesting facts about the human brain which he includes in this series of talks

This event is for u3a members only.

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events>
CTRL and Click

Need support to stay warm?



With the rising cost of living more of us are turning to support to keep our homes warm and reduce our energy bills.

As well as the [winter fuel payment](#), you could be eligible to receive assistance through the Government's [Help To Heat](#) schemes. [Citizens Advice](#) also has information on grants and benefits to help you pay your energy bills.

Heat the rooms you use

When the climate is cold, heat the rooms you live in. Cut back on spare rooms or spaces you use less often by turning down the radiator and keeping doors closed.

One way to keep our core temperature stable is to exercise. Even when it's too cold to go outside, there are ways to keep moving inside. You can follow YouTube videos for easy indoor exercises. Even stretching will help and will keep you flexible.

Put on more clothes, in layers, wearing several thin items of clothing. These will keep you warmer than one thick jumper as warm air gets trapped between the layers and acts as an insulator. Once you are warm, you can shed one layer and still feel comfortable.

There are [exercises you can do at home](#), meaning you can stay warm and boost your mood at the same time. And even if you don't fancy going for an all-out [cardio workout](#) or [strength training](#), simple stretches will get you moving and [improve your flexibility too](#).

SAGA notice

The closing date for the March Newsletter is Saturday 24th February. February is a short month.

newsletter@milford-u3a.org.uk