

## Newsletter

## Spring 2025

**From the editor Ursula Dunne** - I am sure that all of you are looking forward to springtime and all of the good things it brings, from sunshine and more daylight to spring flowers, new leaves on our trees and of course a new u3a Newsletter. I hope that you enjoy reading this as much as I have enjoyed collecting the information and learning more about the brilliant groups that are active in our u3a. Groups are running well, friendships are flourishing and many of us are learning new things in an easy environment. I think that hearing from individuals about how groups run gives us a real flavour of what is happening. Many of the articles are quite different in style, but all demonstrate clear enjoyment. **A big thank you to all who contributed.** However, as you start to read, you will also see that:

**Your u3a Committee needs you now** - This good organisation just could not work without a committee and as you will notice from the following information, several of them are looking to hand over their jobs this year at the May AGM. Many have done sterling work over years so please consider helping out if you can, and contact us if you require more information.

### From the Committee

#### \*Chairman wanted

Hallo all,

I have enjoyed the experience of being Chairman for the past 3 years - but at this year's AGM in May, I shall retire. It is and has been a privilege to work with an expanded and enthusiastic committee. Our membership has increased and new classes added, demonstrating a positive momentum forward. I was aware in the beginning that I had a lot to learn about u3a behind the scenes, however with help and advice from committee members I soon found my way and enjoyed the positive camaraderie between us all.

The focus of the committee has always been to promote the smooth running of our u3a remembering our watchword, "Learn Live Laugh." There are ups and downs but we aim to give support and advice where needed to our group leaders and members thereby solving any problems that arise. Please give thought about taking the position of Chair - it is not an arduous task. Do email me if you have questions, [sue.thurgood@gmail.com](mailto:sue.thurgood@gmail.com). I look forward to meeting you at the AGM. **Sue Thurgood**

## \*Group Coordinator wanted

We need a member to take over this important role from the AGM. Full details and responsibilities plus help when needed will be provided. Please contact the Secretary in the first instance – link on the **Contact Us** page.

## From the Secretary

As we approach the AGM, this will be the last time I will officiate at one as I have been in office for the three years permitted by our Constitution. The current membership of our u3a is in the order of 507. Your Committee numbers 9, including the 4 Principal Officers require by the Charity Commission, [Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, Secretary] plus 2 coopted members who have special expertise such as website.

My time as Secretary has had its challenges as the u3a has sought to rebuild numbers and activities following the pandemic. This last year has been the first time we have had a full complement of Committee members, although some are now leaving, and the enthusiasm from new blood is obvious and beginning to provide a revival of old favourites and new activities. I trust some of our 500+ members will make contact with me or other members of the Committee about joining your committee. **Martin Kennard**

## From the Treasurer

I volunteered for the role of treasurer in April 2021 and have thoroughly enjoyed the role and getting involved with the committee and the groups I attend. When I moved to Somerset over 7 years ago I enquired about joining the u3a and really wanted to learn to play the ukulele, and what a friendly welcoming group of people I met and have formed long lasting friendships. If there is anyone who would like to get involved, possibly with a view to becoming Treasurer in the future please contact myself or any member of the committee for more information. The Accounts for 2023-2024 are given at the end of this Newsletter. **Gill Donkin**

## From the Membership secretary

Our membership for 2024/2025 at the time of going to press is 507. This number is made up with 494 full members and 13 associate members. Over 30 new members have joined since December. However, please remember to inform your friends and family of the benefits of joining the Street and Glastonbury u3a. Perhaps they will be our next new member. You can join online at <https://streetandglastonbury.u3asite.uk/join-us/> Once you have completed the online form and pressed 'Send' you will get an acknowledgement on screen that your form was submitted. Thank you. We will be in touch with payment details later. Your details will be sent to me – it may take two or three days – and I will then send you details of how to pay and if you're a New Member you will receive a pack of details that we hope you will find useful and your new membership number.

The online Membership form can be found here:

<https://streetandglastonbury.u3asite.uk/new-membership/> If there are any members who can't remember their Membership number please contact me using the form on the Contact Us page of the website ([Contact Us](#)) You can contact me at *Sanctuary Cottage, Newtown Lane, West Pennard BA6 8NL* if you would like a paper enrolment form. **John Roberts**

## Website man

After 10 years as a committee member, I think I have exceeded the maximum time allowed, under Head Office rules! I was treasurer for 6 years, and then I stayed on to set up our website, **Streetu3a.org**, and to edit the Newsletter. At the last AGM I was co-opted for one year to oversee the setup of the new u3a website, <https://streetandglastonbury.u3asite.uk>. This work is now complete, and we have a number of Group Leaders who are doing an excellent job of keeping their Group pages updated. So, it is time to leave the committee and hand over the Administration of the website to someone new. The committee have seen a number of personnel changes in my time, and the current committee comprises very capable and committed people keeping our u3a strong and providing popular and worthwhile activities for all members to enjoy. Long may it continue. **Andy Pickford**

## News from the groups

### Book Group

*Julie Hillman has asked me to write a few words for the newsletter so here goes. I've always been a mad keen reader and worked as Librarian in a local community school for many years, trying very hard to pass on my enthusiasm for the joy to be had through reading for pleasure. I joined the book group many years ago, and have read maybe hundreds of books with my friends. I love the fact that we're a group of maybe 12 or 15 people, initially strangers, we all have different reading tastes, and can talk solidly for two hours about a particular book. Some of us may love it and some may hate it, but we're united in being glad to have read it and to hear everyone's opinions. Add to all that a good cuppa and a biscuit, and it's an afternoon to look forward to each month. **Marian Keery***

### Chinese Brush Art

I started Chinese Brush Art with Molly several years ago and immediately loved it, finding it much easier than watercolour. You don't usually have to paint a background! When you get the hang of holding the brush correctly, which is quite different to how you handle watercolour brushes, and you relax and let it flow you can soon be producing bamboo stalks and leaves with ease.





Our group is very friendly and we meet in the Crispin Centre in Street every other Monday from 10am until 12.00. We help each other out and have had several exhibitions in St John's Church which is great fun. Some of us make greetings cards from our work and our course facilitator creates a calendar each year so we can show friends and family what we've achieved in the year. **Jeane Bradban**

### Cycling – for easy outdoor exercise in good company

We set off on a gentle ride from Glastonbury Market Place alternate Thursdays (u3a Week 2) at 10am. Rides are between 15 and 20 miles with minimal climbing, keeping to country lanes, and always stopping for a break at a local café. Then, more pedalling, and we're back in Glastonbury before 1pm. All welcome. £1 for u3a costs. We always go at a pace that's comfortable for everyone. So, don't worry about keeping up. And, don't worry about having a mechanical; one of us will stay with you until you get home. We also have an occasional longer, day-ride of thirty-or-so miles going out to Bruton, Cheddar or Somerton in the summer months. **Contact Charlie: 07802-422091; cbeaton@gmx.co.uk**



On our way to Baltonsborough on a misty morning. January 16th 2025



Same spot viewing the Cedar Walk, August 29th 2024

### French

*French was one of my favourite subjects at school and I took every opportunity to speak it when on holidays in France. Accompanying my husband to the U3A enrolment day I noticed the "French Conversation" table. The group was full but they took my details anyway. A few weeks later I had a call to say there was now a place if I was still interested. My first thought was that I would give it a go and here I am ten years later still giving it a go! I was very nervous on that first visit and didn't know anyone but I needn't have worried, I was given a very warm welcome from everyone. The classes are enjoyable, informative and great fun. The levels of French within the group vary. We are fortunate to have the wise Bernard, our native French speaker, who can be relied upon to help out when a word eludes us. We take turns to give une petite histoire about what we have been up to since our last meeting. After our coffee break (it is worth coming along to the group for the biscuits alone trust me!) we listen to a CD recording whilst reading the printed copy of an article. The articles are from a French magazine which the group subscribes to. We then read and translate the chosen piece before listening to the recording again – it always makes much more sense the second time around. The subjects covered in the magazine are incredibly diverse and enrich our vocabulary considerably. During my time with this group, I have met some amazing individuals and picked up a fair bit of French along the*

way. Some of us have been members for a few years, whilst others vont et viennent (come and go). New members are always welcome. **Jackie Gingell**

### **The Greek Tragedy group .....except that it is not called that for the present**

Up until 2024 this was a group that read Greek tragedies in English, but last year we branched out into Greek Epic and delved into the **Iliad** by Homer (still in English). We read two chapters (for some reason always referred to as Books) before each class and then discussed the most striking aspects of these in class. We covered the Greek idea of a hero, the part the gods played in the action, the prevalence of similes and their effectiveness, Bronze Age armour, and how Greek moral attitudes and religion differed from ours. We also looked at how some of these were depicted in Greek pottery.

The discussions we had were amazingly revealing and forced us to re-examine the value of our modern ideas. They gave us an intimation of the greatness of Homer even when not read in the original language. I am immensely grateful for the opportunity to do this with a highly articulate and thoughtful group. Based on the interest raised by the **Iliad**, we are going to tackle the **Odyssey** from September. It tells the story of Odysseus' adventures on his journey home after the Trojan War and it is a swashbuckling tale! I think we are all looking forward to it and would welcome others to come and join us. **Jennifer Martin.**

### **Latin Group A class with Pat Thompson**

"Why?" is a question that often crops up when I tell friends that I study Latin at our local U3A. It's a fair question and one that I have asked myself from time to time since the class started 8 years ago. I could respond that as a guide at Wells Cathedral it is helpful to know some Latin. That is certainly true but it sounds so pompous and, in any case, there are guides who do a great job without any background in Latin whatsoever. All of our class members will have their own reasons for taking Latin, some are keen horticulturalists for example, but we all seem keen to keep our brains ticking over and enjoy a challenge, and Latin can be very challenging at times. But it is not just about the language.

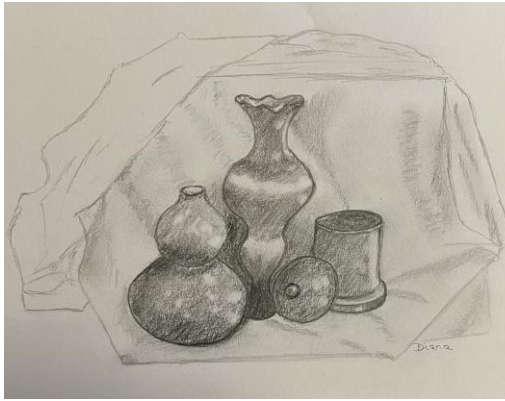
We get out and about and have visited places nearby such as the city archives at Wells and further afield including the Roman remains at Caerleon. So we learn about the history, culture and uses of Latin as well as the language itself. Most importantly, we have fun. Learning should be enjoyable, and despite getting ourselves tied in knots with deponent verbs and suchlike, we are able to see the funny side and support each other when it gets a bit tricky. More than anything, we owe a huge debt of gratitude to our class teacher, Pat Thompson, who has been unfailingly patient and good humoured throughout and helped the intellectual mist to clear when we don't understand what we are trying to learn. The fact that we have made so much progress is due to her skills as a teacher. **Richard Kilroy.**

### **Learning to Draw with Garnet Hosein**

As you will see from the wonderful drawings below, u3a members have clearly done well, but Garnet says, "Unfortunately, after these lessons with the beginners I will be stopping. I will be getting back to working on my own work for an up-coming exhibition in April and in May. However, I have told all students that I am hoping to continue with these lessons for anyone who is still interested. All details I will be sending to all nearer the time. Also, the advanced

class did not continue this term due to lack of numbers. Most felt that they have achieved what they wanted out of the lessons.”

### **Beginners**



*Well, what can one say – rather marvellous. In a short period of time, I have managed to go beyond stick man type drawing under the tutelage of Garnet. I now look at everything in shades – watch out shady people! Seriously though, I have almost completed the first six weeks of size, the friendly, maddeningly talented tutor, which can be a tad frustrating for us lesser mortals, the mixture of abilities, the encouragement the course and enjoy the relaxed atmosphere, the small class and learning about something I have long wished to have a go at. There is hope for us all methinks! Garnet the man – laidback, smiley, teaches without one realising how much, positive and inspiring, drives us forward (I even enjoyed the four-down-to-one-minute sketching session, a good lesson in getting the basics down before commencing the detail).*

### **Annie**

Here are a few words from one of my advance students who has attended my classes from the beginning.

*I have tried watercolour painting in the past but being colour blind that presented some serious problems! So, I thought this Group would be good. And so it proved. With Garnet's guidance and help I found drawing was something I could do, although not expertly. The sessions were great fun and I feel I have achieved something I have always wanted to do.*

All of the following drawings are from this group of advanced students:



## Line Dancing with Elaine

*Line dancing 10.30 on a Monday morning is a great start to the week. I joined the U3A Line Dancing group as a complete beginner about a year before Covid. During lockdown, Elaine Robertson the group leader, provided line dancing classes from her living room via Zoom. It was a terrific morale booster. Elaine has four helpers who take turns to remind us of the dance steps before the music is played. Pat, Jenny, Jan & and Lyn, when not taking their turns teaching at the front of the hall are strategically positioned so when we turn there is always someone in view that knows what they're doing. I'm not one for going to the gym however I knew I needed to partake in some form of exercise and for me line dancing fits the bill perfectly. It tests the memory and the dance steps help with balance and coordination.*

*The group is very friendly and new people are made very welcome. One piece of advice I would give to new line dancers is to become familiar with the various steps so when they are called you will have a good idea of what your feet should be doing. There is plenty of information online. Just spend a little time at home practicing, it will make a world of difference. Also, when you begin line dancing do not become discouraged. Everyone goes through periods when they feel they will never get the hang of it. Stick with it and line dancing will become a source of great fun. **Mike Vernoum***

## Philosophy

*As a person with lots of opinions and a desire to meet new people who are like minded, I have very much enjoyed the philosophy group. We have been fortunate to have Richard who keeps us in check and prompts us when we get distracted. In the last year we have looked at the writings and musings of philosophers from Aristotle and Plato and to more recent times. It's amazing to think that the ideas and thoughts of previous generations have been the bases of education, morality and politics that are so important today. We have pondered religion, culture and Art and its place in society today. There is time for a pleasant tea break and the discussions around topics has been really interesting. We might all be quite different in our backgrounds but this has been a space for ideas to flourish. Thanks, Richard. **Jackie Rymill***

## Shakespeare

*I have been a member of the Shakespeare group for nearly ten years. Each term we read one of Shakespeare's plays, so we must have read 18 since I joined (we had a break over Covid). I am not even the longest attending member of our group of 12, and we have recently welcomed several new members. This term we are reading Pericles, one of the later plays, and probably not all written by Shakespeare himself. We watch some DVD scenes from the play first and then read these together. Much discussion (and sometimes disagreement) ensues. Julie keeps order and brings us back to the text when necessary. The evident enjoyment of the group and the liveliness of our discussions reflect Shakespeare's continuing appeal and relevance to our modern times. **Jenny Lewis***

## Strode Sports Centre u3a Table Tennis.



Overall this term attendance have been very poor. This was due to a combination of injuries, change of circumstances, and a few other issues by the usual regulars.



When I took over from Andy about a year and a half ago, we still had a group of 12 or more which continued for a good while. I organised tournaments which we all enjoyed. I even made the trophies being an ex-design and technology teacher which were presented to winners etc. Singles and double tournaments were played. We now need to recruit new players urgently for these sessions to continue.

I have plans to continue with what I have done before (tournaments etc) and a few other ideas to the enjoying of the sessions. **Garnet Hosein**

## Table Tennis at Ashcott.

*I have always loved table tennis so when the opportunity arrived I joined the Friday morning group at Ashcott village hall in September. The players range from the highly experienced to the highly enthusiastic. That's me! I was welcomed and encouraged all the way! Arriving in the*

hall on a chilly morning I soon cast off my scarf and gloves as we played. You play with a partner up to 11 points, then the winners move up a table and split to play with new partners.



There are 4 tables so 16 can play and a few may have to wait on the chairs, enjoying a little rest!! We start at 10am and keep playing until 11am, when we have a well deserved break for coffee and a chocolate biscuit which is organised by helpful volunteers and is 50p. We then play on again until 12noon. **Sandi Baird**

## Ukulele

As a relatively new-comer to Wendy's 'Ukelele Band' I have been really impressed by the warm, friendly atmosphere where members gather to sing and play and most importantly, have some fun! There is no pressure to perform individually, but plenty of opportunity to join in, in a very supportive way. The resources in the group's song books cover every kind of musical genre and are presented clearly and attractively. I can truthfully say "Playing a uke is so much fun, just pick one up and start to strum. They make us feel happy I have to confess, they ought to be prescribed on the **NHS!** Once you start strumming you will find, you have left your blues far behind!" **Chris Dunne**

## Walking Group

Members have offered these words:

"The walking group is a joy! A lovely group of people set off at a sensible pace, along beautiful routes planned out by our hardworking and good-humoured group Leader. The walks are just the right length for me, and not too far from home. At just about the point where I think, "I fancy lunch now" there is the option to join the group for a post walk meal. I've discovered new countryside, new places to eat, and above all new friends. All in all, a great experience – Thank you!" **J**

"I have been on these U3A bi-weekly walks for the past 3 years. They are well organised, with different people finding walks when they can. We rely on our Leader who is very conscientious with Health and Safety, and gives clear details of the next walk by email, well in advance. I really enjoy these walks. They are 4 miles which is doable in 2 hours. I meet and catch-up chatting during the walk with old and new friends. The countryside around Street Glastonbury is beautiful, and we get to see delightful villages and great views. After the walk there is always a pub lunch for any takers which is very sociable and delicious. **another J**

To see photos and get more information please use

[https://streetandglastonbury.u3asite.uk/u3a\\_groups/walking-group/](https://streetandglastonbury.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/walking-group/)

## Whist Group

*Well - you see, I come from a "gaming " family - not you understand " X - box " and " Play station" and the ilk, but good ' ol fashioned " cards " ..... " Queenie , Chase the lady , Red Fred " to name a few , so you see " cards" are in my blood so to speak !!*

*Life passed by, work, family, retirement ...then endless TIME .....looking for things to do.....The joy of " cards " re surfaced - U3A offered WHIST , so naturally I joined. I 've been a member now for 3 years and love it - what's not to like - camaraderie , action in the game and laughter , lots of laughter . It doesn't matter whether twelve folk " rock up " or three , as you see we can have a " dummy " to play the 4th hand - crossed words when someone makes a human error - not on your nellie !! ....just understanding and more laughter and oh...time to move tables depending on whether you are the " winning or losing couple " Exercise all part of the afternoon as folk "shuffle" around to the next table if enough participants ....clockwise or anti-clockwise depending on gender - runs sometimes as smooth as a broken clock .....but who cares as " off we go again .....!! ""Hearts Trumps again?" , someone asks ..." No clubs ,hahaha " is the resounding chorus from the table. Oh and one could win the participatory " jackpot" and go home with a small win of £2.40 in one's pocket*

*....what more could one ask for in an afternoon? **Linda Williams***

## Petanque

*In my younger days on holiday with my family we always played beach games, such as cricket, rounders, French cricket or Boules. We played with colourful plastic boules which showed up easily on the sand or pebbles. We didn't know the proper rules so played individually scoring a point if your throw was the nearest the jack. What great fun it was walking, or breaking out into a run to see who had won the point! First to ten was the winner!*

*Therefore when I joined U3A and saw there was a Petanque group, I had to join and am so pleased I did! Our group is friendly, enthusiastic and encouraging, therefore I soon understood the rules and format for team selection. I think we all are a little competitive (some much more than others!) which makes the game so enjoyable. It's always good to hear 'well done or great throw' if you've been ok, but oh dear sometimes your arm doesn't do what you want it to do and your boule goes a bit haywire! Not to worry, pick up your boules and wait for your next throw to hopefully get a point for your team and enjoy the camaraderie of both teams.*

*Our big thanks to Gabriella and Martyn, who organise our session so happily enabling our group to enjoy fresh air, friendship and pleasant exercise! We play in all weathers, wrapping up warm on freezing cold days or enjoying the sun on warm days!! **Lin Skirton***

## Yoga

*I really look forward to Ursula's Wednesday morning yoga session at the Victoria club in Street as it sets me up for the day and that feeling lasts a few days as well which is welcome. Sometimes it's a bit of an effort to go if the weather is bad or I've got a few aches and pains but afterwards I feel stronger and more flexible and I think my mind is calmer with a more philosophical attitude to life.*

*So how does yoga manage to achieve this? I think it's because I can stretch into the asanas(movements) as little or as much as I like – there is no pressure to compete or to achieve an unrealistic pose. Ursula's advice is always to listen to your own body and that's what I have learnt to do.*

*We are also taught how to use our breath well which makes me feel that I have control over my body and mind – not the other way round! I sometimes use this breathing technique when going to sleep as it reduces distractions and all the thoughts of the day so I sleep more soundly. The relaxation time at the end is lovely and it's often a bit of an effort to arouse myself to head off into normal life. Over the years, I have been to various yoga classes when I have had time for a brief respite and to focus on myself as it helped me to cope with the ups and downs of life. I also enjoy catching up with people before and after the session and making new friends of course! **Stephanie Beaven***

### **AND BEFORE YOU GO... Some important dates**

**NEXT COFFEE MORNING MARCH 14<sup>th</sup>**

Lynne Sedgemoor. She will be talking about the Town Deal. She will be explaining what we have done with the £23 million we were given as a Town and how the various projects are developing.

**AGM MAY 8<sup>th</sup>**

**GROUP LEADERS JULY 10<sup>th</sup>**

**ENROLMENT DAY AUGUST 14<sup>th</sup>**

For more information, please look at the website but maybe put these dates on your calendar now.

## Accounts for 2023-2024

Treasurers Report	Street and Glastonbury U3A	Registered Charity 1076664	Annual Accounts for year Sep2023-Aug2024		
<b>INCOME AND EXPENDITURE</b>					
<b>Income</b>	<b>2023 -2024</b>		<b>EXPLANATORY NOTES</b>		
Membership Fees	5,253.90		The Charity Commission advises that between 6 and 12 months running costs are maintained.		
Group Attendances	11,644.00		Existing policy is to hold sufficient funds to:		
Non-Core Income	0.00		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• maintain operational activities</li> <li>• cover costs of future increases in room hire charges</li> <li>• fund start-up costs of new groups</li> <li>• replace U3A equipment which cannot be repaired</li> </ul>		
Gift Aid from HMRC	285.40				
	<b>17,183.30</b>				
<b>Expenditure</b>			<b>NON-CORE ACTIVITIES</b>		
Groups Venue Hire	11,628.04		<b>2023/2024</b>	<b>Income</b>	<b>Expend</b>
TAT (7mths Sep23-Mar24 members subs)	940.33				<b>Surplus/Loss</b>
TAT (5mths Apr24-Aug24 members subs)	711.67			0.00	0.00
Publicity	24.00		donations	0.00	0.00
Newsletter (S&G)	346.83		coffee mornings	0.00	44.00
Magazine (U3A Head Office)	91.20		christmas party	0.00	131.96
Non-Core Expenses	175.96			0.00	0.00
				0.00	0.00
Equipment	8.95			0.00	0.00
Administration	514.35				
	<b>14,441.33</b>		<b>Surplus/Loss</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>175.96</b>
					<b>-175.96</b>
<b>Surplus for Year</b>	<b>2,741.97</b>				
<b>STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION</b>					
<b>Current Assets</b>	<b>2023-2024</b>				
COIF Account 31Aug2024: CCLA	14,454.40		<b>COIF Charities Deposit Fund CCLA</b>		
Current Account 31Aug2024: HSBC	8,713.14		1Sep2023 b/f	13,912.26	
Pre-Paid TAT (7mths Sep24-Mar25 members)	996.33		interest added	724.67	
			dep/withdr	0.00	
			<b>Total c/f</b>	<b>14,636.93</b>	
	<b>Assets 24,163.87</b>				
<b>Current Liabilities</b>					
Pre-payment Membership Fees 2024-2025	<b>4,207.10</b>				
Pre-payment from members for					
	<b>Liabilities 4,207.10</b>				