

Dates for your Diary

Members

2024 Events

13th December Christmas Lunch 12.00 - 14.00 at the Garretts Club House, Queens Avenue, Aldershot

2025 Events

14th March Inter U3A Quiz 2024/5
14.00 Victoria Hall, Hartley Wintney

16th April Open Morning from 11.00
The Harlington, Fleet

Monthly Meetings 2025 - The Harlington, Fleet, talk 11.00 to 12.15, coffee from 10.00

15th January Sullivan and Gilbert
Speaker : Richard Wigram

19th February Horatio Nelson, Britain's Greatest Admiral.
Speaker: Dr James Taylor

19th March Blackbush Airport, Past and Present.
Speaker: Pete Vickery

Visits

10th December Motown Magic Xmas Party
Shepperton Holiday Inn

12th September Four Night visit to Kynren

Chat from the Chair – December 2024

Let me start with an explanation. (One which the 217 members who attended the AGM will not need.)

Yes, I am continuing as Chair of Fleet & District U3A, *but only on an interim basis*. In the Spring of 2025, I shall hand over to our current Webmaster, Stephen Grosvenor who was voted in as Chair Elect at the AGM.

The Trustees saw this as the best way through a period of significant change in roles and responsibilities, and I could see the sense in that. I am delighted that Stephen has agreed to become our Chair: he is the ultimate 'safe pair of hands'. We have a number of new faces on the Committee for 2024 – 25 and on your behalf, I offer them a warm welcome.

I must have mentioned back in the summer – while recovering from my *first* hip surgery – that my computer chair could be set at the right height to make it the most comfortable in the house. Sandy our Newsletter Editor got in touch a few days ago to ask if this was still true for 'hip two'...

Which is how I'm writing a Chair's Chat only a couple of days after my return from hospital. The work of our U3A goes on.

As you will know, the work and our activities are organised on the basis of academic terms. This, I guess, has much to do with the origins of the U3A in France, where the 'u' represented a priority given to academic study, less a 'u' for *universality*, which is how we have evolved in the UK.

Having these 'Terms' also helps with 'grandparent duties' so that U3A activities can wind down at the start of the three major holidays. Of course, some groups, notably those which meet in private houses, continue to meet, but in general our venue providers are glad of opportunities to offer holiday schemes and other child – focused activities.

But let me be clear, while rewarding and very satisfying, U3A work as a Trustee or Group Leader is time consuming and quite demanding. *Not* doing it for a while gives welcome opportunities for rest and recreation, escaping emails and telephones... *and just doing something else.*

John Gawthorpe

**The Fleet & District U3A
wish you all a
very Happy and Healthy
Christmas and New Year
See you all in 2025**



Spanish is back, see page 3

Tai Chi



Hardly a month goes by without some mention of the health benefits of Tai Chi. A recent study on exercises that can stave off dementia found that Tai Chi and Pilates were shown to protect against it by lowering stress and anxiety by lifting mood, with Tai Chi also improving cognitive function and skills, like decision making. The major finding of the study was that taking some form of exercise was the key to lowering the risk of developing dementia. This is one of the great strengths of Fleet U3A, which supports almost 40 classes of this nature, accepting that some require paid tutors to provide the necessary expertise.

The four Tai Chi classes have gone from strength to strength this year, with more than 80 U3A members involved in the 4 groups. We also run two, ever more popular, Summer Schools ourselves each July. We last started a new group in 2016, to cater for the increased demand, and we try and find places for those wanting to join us, but it gets increasingly difficult - so, perhaps 2025 is the time to set up a 5th class, if there is anyone who would like to take this on. Volunteers welcomed.

Ken Molyneux-Carter

Phyllis Tuckwell stall at the November Monthly Meeting

Once again a big thank you to everyone who visited our stall. We raised a very impressive £244.50 with Linda's marmalade and chutneys proving popular as always. The winner of the raffle was Heather Todd who took home a selection of chocolate goodies. Thank you to the two ladies who responded to our request and donated empty Bonne Maman jars. Linda will hopefully be able to fill them in time for our next appearance at the January monthly meeting.

Margaret Garrod and Linda Martin



MOTO 3 - Goes Walking

Susan Way and Chris Mundy led a smaller than usual group of walkers on November's short walk from the Barley Mow canal car park around the Tundry Pond. Even though the weather was largely overcast, we were treated to some beautiful reflections of autumn colours when the water was perfectly still. Skeins of geese flew over the fields. One goose became detached from its fellows and was seen honking hopefully on the branch of a tree.

Those that could stay on after the walk enjoyed coffee at the Barley Mow afterwards.



Kerensa Pearson

Monthly Meetings

Thank you to the 217 members who arrived at the Harlington for the Monthly Meeting and AGM on November 20th. There was a good buzz beforehand over coffee and biscuits in the small hall with the Book and Jigsaw swap table doing good business. Thank you to all those who brought used stamps for Phyllis Tuckwell and to Margaret and Linda for running their charity stall again. In the foyer, the visits team were very popular as was the Fleet Lions table and our own welcome table, where several new members signed up on the day.



The AGM went well and thanks must go to the committee for all their preparation but especially to Neil Morley, our treasurer, for balancing the books and answering the questions and points for clarification so expertly.

Mike Rance then treated us to an expert's guide to the origins and development of Jazz from the early days in the deep south of America to all the Jazz styles we hear today. He illustrated his talk with some of his personal favourite tracks and we were entranced. Some people were disappointed that time did not permit the playing of a track from the era of Trad Jazz but that could also be down to Mike's personal aversion to that style of Jazz...

There will be no Monthly Meeting in December as the Harlington needs the space for Christmas events. The next meeting will be on January 15th 2025 when Richard Wigram will be talking about 'Sullivan and Gilbert'. Please note the odd order of their names! Richard will talk about their lives and influences individually and then at what they achieved together. He will illustrate his talk with pictures, music, movie clips and even a recording of Sullivan speaking.

I thank you for being loyal readers and attendees at our Monthly Meetings and I wish you peace and happiness over the Christmas holiday. The Monthly Meeting team and I look forward to seeing you again in the New Year.



Paddy Powell



Spanish Intermediate and Advanced Conversation Groups are back

I had to suspend these two groups while my wife, Margaret Keeley, was fighting a losing battle with a very aggressive cancer. Sadly, she died towards the end of October. I am now ready to resume leading the groups in January 2025.

Both groups have a similar format. We start with a question-and-answer session on a topic that will have been advised to you before the meeting. Usually, I will be asking the questions and sometimes you will ask similar questions to another group member. This may be followed by some reading practice, grammar explanation, written exercises or simple videos in Spanish. I will always try to make sure you have a chance to chat freely in a small group without my breathing down your neck.

Spanish Advanced Conversation is oversubscribed and much bigger than I would like, so unfortunately there are no vacancies at present. Rather puzzlingly, some random dates appeared in the printed Fleet U3A Programme despite correct dates having been signed off earlier in the year. I have advised members of the correct dates.

I do have vacancies for the Monday morning **Spanish Intermediate Conversation**, which will meet at my house. Dates in your printed U3A programme are correct. There will be a wide variety of abilities in this small group but, if you have done Spanish before and are just a bit rusty, why not give it a try? You will always know beforehand what you will have to talk about, and I will usually give you some useful vocabulary to help you prepare. I invite you to email or phone me if you are interested.

Nick Keeley

nickkeeley@holmail.co.uk 01252 676385

Creative Writing

In October, we lost our good friend and long-term member of the writing group, Margaret Keeley.

Margaret wrote numerous witty and brilliant stories, often featuring re-imagined fairy tale characters. My personal favourite was the feisty Bo-Peep sporting a pair of *Dr. Martens*. As a tribute, here is her last Christmas story.

Margaret Garrod

A Change of Plan by Margaret Keeley

‘Atishoo!’

The noise from Father Christmas’s bedroom reverberated around the house. Mrs. Christmas took a tray with some hot buttered toast and a mug of her home-brewed cold medicine.

‘I can’t eat anything and my head’s thumping,’ he complained, ‘and that medicine tastes foul!’

‘It’s good for you. After all, you’ll have to get up soon. It’s Christmas Eve tomorrow, your busiest day.’

He tried to get out of bed, but his legs felt like jelly.

‘I think I’ve got Covid,’ he said.

‘Oh, for goodness sake, it’s just a cold. Drink up and you’ll be fine by tomorrow. I’ll feed the reindeer and make sure the elves wrap up all the presents. Get some sleep now.’ She picked up the tray and stamped downstairs muttering ‘man-flu’ under her breath.

But the next day, his cold was even worse.

‘You’ll have to do the run this year,’ he croaked. ‘I can’t get up. If you borrow my jacket and trousers and wear a false beard no one will notice.’

‘Well thank you very much,’ snapped his wife, eyeing the girth of his trousers.

She met Niggle, the head elf, in the yard near the stables, and told him about the change of plan. He wasn’t pleased and muttered something about women taking over the planet.

‘Look,’ she said, ‘I don’t like this any more than you do, but there’s no other way the presents are going to be delivered on time, so we’ve just got to get on with it.’

Niggle harrumphed his way to the workshop and slammed the door. She went to the stable to make sure the reindeer had been fed and noticed two small creatures sitting behind a bale of hay looking very sad.

‘Titch and Scrap, what are you doing in here? Shouldn’t you be helping?’

‘Niggle won’t let us,’ sighed Titch, the smallest elf at the North Pole. She stroked her best friend Patch, the smallest reindeer. ‘He says we keep getting in the way. And he won’t let us come on the delivery run, either.’

‘Really? I thought Father Christmas decided you could, because last year you were the only elf small enough to get down the caravan chimney to leave a present for Robin, the newest baby in the world. Who’s going to do that if you’re not there?’

‘He said Robin and her mum have moved into a nice house with a garden and a proper sized chimney, so we’re not needed.’

‘We’ll see about that! I’m in charge this year and I’m telling you that you can sit up next to me on the sleigh, whatever Niggle says.’

All the elves worked hard except for Niggle, who said he was only there to supervise. He ate so many of Mrs. Christmas’s special mince pies that he began to feel ill.

‘I think I’ve caught Covid from Father Christmas,’ he said.

‘Nonsense!’ said Mrs. Christmas as she harnessed the last reindeer. ‘Come on everyone, time to get moving.’

The elves jumped onto the sleigh and the reindeer stamped their feet.

‘Tally-ho!’ cried Mrs. Christmas, as they galloped the length of the yard and took off into the night.

The deliveries went well, once Mrs. Christmas convinced Niggle that there was no way she was sliding down any chimneys.

‘But it’s traditional,’ he said.

Margaret Keeley

Inter-u3a Pickleball Tournament

Firstly, if anyone is still wondering what pickleball is and would like to know more, please contact me at DCLAWES@yahoo.co.uk

On the 11th November Camberley u3a organised a tournament for u3a pickleball groups in Surrey and NE Hampshire. Thirteen u3as in the area were offered the chance of submitting teams and eleven did so. These were Basingstoke, Camberley, Cranleigh, Dorking, Elmbridge, Fleet, Horsley, Milford-Godalming, Spelthorne, Odiham and Woking. Each team consisted of a men's pair and a women's pair. To make up the numbers to sixteen teams, groups were offered the chance of submitting a second team. Fleet was marginally too late to get a second team entered but a second women's pair was accepted when one of the other groups had to withdraw their women's team. So, our playing representatives were

Women's Team 1: Pat Cutting and Jo Mills.

Women's Team 2: Eileen Mann and Kathryn Kindred

Men's Team 1: Alan Williams and Rob Rowley

The venue for the competition was Lightwater Leisure Centre. I went along as team captain and was pleased to meet Paddy Powell and Sandy Redman there, investigating inter-u3a ventures and gathering info and photos for the newsletter. Unfortunately, there was virtually no room for spectators except for those directly involved. The playing surface was dark grey, the lighting level much lower than at Hart and the amount of space behind each court was rather limited. You probably get used to this environment but familiarity with it would give some advantage to those who normally play there.



Pat Cutting &
Jo Mills

The format was for separate men's doubles and women's doubles but there was no time available for a mixed doubles competition. Teams were organised into groups of four in a similar way to football tournaments and each team played the others in the group during the first "group" phase. The two top scoring teams in each group went forward into the quarter finals - the knock-out phase of the competition.

Our Women's Team 1 had a tough draw with their first match against Elmbridge 1 who were the eventual runners-up. Also in their group was Woking who eventually came third, so they did well score any points at all.

Our Women's team 2 did a little better, winning one match (against Basingstoke 1 who did progress to the quarterfinals) and running a second match very close (against Cranleigh 2).



Eileen Mann &
Kathryn Kindred

Our Men's Team also had a tough draw with both Elmbridge 1 (eventual winners) and Camberley 2 (eventually 3rd) in their group. They did very well to win their third game against Woking.

The Odiham Women's 1 team included Julie Lysaght, who used to play in the Fleet group but moved to the Odiham group due to time clashes on Monday. Her team made it to the quarter finals so well done to her. Two other members of the Fleet group (Lynn Smith and Roger Greenhaigh), who also play with the Odiham group, were playing for Odiham

teams, regretfully without success. Full details of the draw and the results can

be found at: <https://www.evregsys.com/PBE/pets/index.php?gid=tKcePP1o8G25>

The eventual winners of both Men's and Women's competitions were teams from Elmbridge. We are wondering 'What is their secret?'

We all thank Camberley u3a for the hard work involved in organising the tournament and we were very impressed by the organisation both beforehand and on the day.

Overall, I think everyone who took part enjoyed the experience and, although we have to accept that other groups have been playing a lot longer than our 14 months, we were not that far off the pace. So very well done to all our players. We look forward to more inter-u3a competitions and I am sure that the preparation has significantly improved the abilities of those who took part.

David Lawes

Paddy and I went along, by invite, and learnt a lot about the game. We both had a very enjoyable time.

Fleet U3A Quiz 2024

Well Surprise, Surprise they did it again! Caroline and Co. won this annual competition again. Those of us who were also competing put up what we felt was a strong challenge.

It has been suggested that in future we have two cups for this competition. One cup for Caroline and Co. and one for the real winners. Having been in the team that came third I must confess I quite like this idea. I'm sure that the team that came second would approve.

Anyway sour grapes being set aside.

Congratulations go to 'Always InQuizitive' The team consisted of Caroline Noad, Carolyn Greenhaigh, Roger Greenhaigh, Tony Hall, Bob Johnson and Ron Binks (who was standing in for 'spotty shingles Jeff Dee'). Jeff's quiz speciality being Den-



mark. However, I don't recall any questions relating to Denmark so unfortunately they weren't struggling.

Our thanks go, once again, to our Quiz Master, Brian Proctor, and his scoring helpers, Jane Jefferson and Barbara Jones.

Its worth entering a team just for the Jam and Scones that are served half way through. The Catering Team provided an excellent tea -Thank you on everyone's behalf. **Sandy aka Ed.**



Walking Cricket

Come and join your fellow U3A members at Hampshire Cricket's – Walking Cricket. It takes place in the Main Hall at Hart Leisure Centre, Tuesdays 1-2 pm. Cost £3, first session free.



Designed to be fun, social and encourage increased activity in the over 55's. Very inclusive for all abilities. Everyone gets to have a go at every element of play and it is all just a bit of fun.

Hampshire Cricket has set up three walking cricket groups and we are lucky enough to have one of them in Fleet. The Fleet group has only been going a few months but already has between 10 -15 regular players both men and women, so come and join us, no experience of cricket is required.

For more information and to register please contact Steph Trueman at

Steph.trueman@utilitabowl.com or call 07519 312 314

Michael Lysaght

**Why is there a 'D' in
Fridge, but not in
Refrigerator**

**How come Noses Run
and
Feet Smell**

**Did you know that if you re-
place 'W' with 'T' in "What,
Where and When" you get
the answer to each of them.**

Always remember you're unique. Just like everyone else

Beginner's Bridge Play

This group started in April 2024. It has been going well. The members learnt strategies for playing and defending No Trump contracts in the Summer Term, and similarly for Suit contracts in the Autumn Term. Many people have said that they have found the class useful and how much their play has improved. In the Spring Term of 2025, we aim to play duplicate sessions with dealt hands, but unlike a Bridge club, or the Monday and Thursday u3a groups, we support the members who would like help to bid and play and if there is time after playing the hand we discuss it and consider how it could have been played differently. If anything of interest comes up from the previous week, or if it would be useful to discuss any aspect of play, then we have a five to ten minute session at the beginning of the class. The term starts on 8th January (not the 1st as shown in the Programme).

The group meets on Wednesday afternoons and is open to anyone who has completed at least two terms of Paddy's Tuesday 'Introduction to Duplicate Bridge' class or others at the discretion of the group leaders. You do not need a partner.

If you would like to join the group, please email Liz and Dee on u3abridgeplay@outlook.com. There is further information in the Fleet u3a Programme and the Fleet u3a website: https://fleetu3asite.uk/u3a_groups/bridge-beginners-play/



Liz Rougier

We now have 440+ Fleet U3A members in our private Facebook Members Group for contact and discussion between members. This is a Private Group for members of Fleet U3A only, you are encouraged to join.

Group Leaders - Important

In the event that you have to cancel a session will you please let Barbara, the Venues Secretary, know a.s.a.p. as she may then be able to avoid us paying for the venue on that occasion.

Fleet U3A Website

Keep up to date with all our activities,
News, Events, Visits Monthly
Meetings on our website
www.fleetu3asite.uk

Find us on Facebook

Find us on Facebook - Fleet U3A has its own Facebook Members' Group, our Facebook page can be found by entering "Fleet U3A" in the search box at the top of any Facebook page. You can then request to join our private Members only group, you will be asked for your Name and Membership number.

COMMITTEE EMAILS



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**PLEASE AVOID TELEPHONING MEMBERS
BEFORE 9 a.m. OR AFTER 5 p.m.**