

## ***Dates for your Diary***

### 2026 Events

August 26th Group Enrolment for 2026-2027  
Church on the Heath, Elvetham

Oct. 23rd Quiz Challenge

Nov. 18th AGM

### Group Leaders' Meetings

July 3rd Group Leaders' Lunch at  
Victoria Hall Hartley Wintney

Sept. 25th Group Leaders General  
Meeting

### Monthly Meetings 2025/26 - The Harlington, Fleet, talk 11.00 to 12.15, coffee from 10.00

June 17th The saxophone, and my life as an  
Army Musician for 25 years.  
Speaker: Jonathan Woodhouse

Sept 16th The Crop Circle Mysteries  
An exploration of the history and  
theories that might explain them.  
Speaker: Andy Thomas

### Visits 2026

Sept. 14th/18th Potters Resort, 4 day visit to  
Hopton-on-Sea

### Chat from the Chair

I'm writing this with the temperature in Fleet at 32 degrees feeling slightly sorry for our neighbours who flew out to the Canaries yesterday where the temperature is a quite chilly 25 degrees!

I cannot believe that we are almost at the end of another u3a year and this will be my last "chat" until we return in September. I hope you have all had an enjoyable time in your various groups over the past nine months. As always, on behalf of the committee I would like to give a big thank you to all our group leaders and other volunteers who help make Fleet u3a the success it continues to be. We are always looking for new volunteers to assist, whether it's helping your group leader, shadowing a committee member or helping the visits or the catering teams, etc. Why not consider putting yourself forward. You will be surprised at how enjoyable it can be!

I hope all our members have a very good summer break and I look forward to meeting some of you at our enrolment day for 2026/27 which takes place on Wednesday 26 August at The Church on the Heath, Elvetham. If you have any questions on the above or any other aspect of our U3A please do contact me at [chair@fleetu3a.org](mailto:chair@fleetu3a.org).

*Stephen Grosvenor*

### **Reminder**

#### **Membership Renewal**

On line Membership renewal for the academic year 2026 - 2027 commenced on Tuesday 2nd June 2026.

You will have received the renewal instructions, by Beacon. They were sent to you on June 2nd check your emails, junk boxes etc. Please read these Beacon instructions carefully.

**You will receive your new  
programme and membership card  
after the 30th July.**

*Anne Morley  
Membership Secretary*

### **GROUP LEADERS LUNCH Friday 3rd July**

Group Leaders are reminded that the above Lunch will start at 12 noon on Friday 3rd July at the Victoria Hall in Hartley Wintney.

The Lunch is given as a 'thank you' to all GL's for all the efforts they put into running their Group.

If you, as a GL, haven't yet responded to Alan saying whether you intend to attend  
(i.e. **a yes or no is required**)  
will you please do so  
**before June 17th**  
**together with your choice of Menu**

## Fleet U3A Health and Wellbeing

Last year, 2025, marked ten years since the establishment of our Health and Wellbeing Group which was set up with the idea of raising health awareness in older people. At a time when the NHS was beginning to struggle, we felt it might be good idea to help older people to help themselves, as much as possible, in dealing with some of the health issues faced in later life.

During those ten years we have had a wide range of formal presentations - somewhere over a hundred - along with some very interesting after-tea discussions. In the last year alone, we have covered topics ranging from "modifiable risk factors in cognitive decline" to "skin complaints in older people" and "the importance of dental hygiene in later life". Over the years we've been very fortunate in attracting many professional speakers from national charities, local universities, local GP surgeries as well as from Frimley Park Hospital. For our members we charge a very modest £2.50/session, paid in advance for the term. There is no expectation that our members would come along to every meeting - indeed we couldn't accommodate everyone, but people just dip in and out of our sessions depending on their interests.

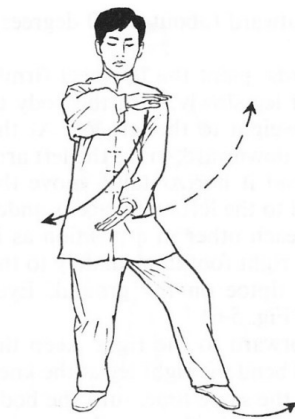
Over the years since its inception the group has actually grown from an initial twelve-fifteen members to now over two hundred and we regularly have hundred + coming along to our monthly sessions. In addition, we have an actively managed Facebook page where recent health articles, relevant to older people, are uploaded. Our meetings, which take place on the second Wednesday of the month, last for around two hours with a tea break in the middle - and a chocolate biscuit! After tea we have a general discussion on currently relevant health topics at which we have discussed topics such as over the counter treatments for hay fever and other common seasonal ailments. We also discuss recent press articles on health issues that are particularly pertinent to older people.

After more than a hundred different health talks, we would now like to get some fresh ideas and to that end would very much like to hear from anyone willing to contribute to the group. While it might be helpful if any willing volunteers had some healthcare knowledge this is much less important than coming up with some novel ideas as to future topics and perhaps even how the group 's activities might usefully be expanded in the future.

If you might just be interested but would like to learn more then please do contact either:

**Richard Franklin** at [richard.franklin2@outlook.com](mailto:richard.franklin2@outlook.com)  
or **Stuart Williams** at [stuart.williams27556@ntlworld.com](mailto:stuart.williams27556@ntlworld.com)

## Tai Chi



We were delighted to have over fifty enquires about our new Tai Chi class, Tai Chi Group 5, which started on Friday the 1<sup>st</sup> of May. It quickly became over-subscribed and those who did not manage to get a place are now on our Waiting List for September.

The new class is currently grappling with the intricacies of the Beijing 24-Form, busily learning postures such as "Parting Wild Horse's Mane" and "White Crane Spreads its Wings", while getting to grips with the subtle way in which each posture moves into the next. Much of the focus is on alignment and balance, whilst remaining relaxed.

If you want to know more, Mike Moseley in his "Just One Thing" radio programme "Try Tai Chi", which is still available online, describes: "How this 'meditation in motion' can improve your immune system, boost your heart health, and help your brain. It's also a surprisingly good workout."

**Ken Molyneux-Carter**

## Creative Writing

**Shoreline** by Alison Edwards

Blye Cove is my favourite place for beachcombing, the shoreline captures flotsam and jetsam which I use in my artwork. I like to arrive just as the sun rises, avoiding any possible crowds.

That mid-summer's day, I climbed over one of the groynes and nearly landed on him. I thought for a moment that it was a dead body – I was reaching for my phone when I noticed his eyelids flutter and then open, pinning me with a laser glare. "What you looking at?"

Soaking wet, longish black hair plastered to his scalp, straggling round several days of stubble, he was wearing a blue and white long sleeved shirt, dark trousers which clung to muscular thighs. Bare feet. I thought of the Mr Darcy scene from *Pride and Prejudice* as he stood up. He was yummy. I was still staring – I may have drooled a bit before I remembered my manners and closed my mouth.

"You're very wet – are you cold? I've got a towel in my car, are you Ok? Are you hurt? Can I help?"

The words tumbled out of my mouth before I could stop them. This was six foot of drop dead gorgeous maledom. I had never seen anything like him in my life. My heart fairly stuttered in my breast. My mouth was hanging open again as my wits packed a suitcase and left.

"Don't just stand there – lead on. I'm bloody freezing."

I led the way up the cliff path – my little red car was the only car in the car park.

"Be careful where you tread, you might cut your feet."

He looked startled and glanced down. "Shoes. Didn't think of that, did I?"

It was an odd thing to say, but we had reached the car. I passed him a towel –

"May I give you a lift somewhere? Do you need to go to the hospital? How long had you been lying there?"

He smiled – a dimple forming at the corner of his mouth. I was in deep trouble! "Coffee, no and not long."

Casting caution to the wind, I decided that coffee at my place was a good idea. My studio was an eclectic space, north facing for the light, so that I could paint, a kiln for my pots. Upstairs was a compact flat where daylight was streaming in. It would be a perfect day.

"I'm Jenny Frances."

"Jack Seaman."

We talked. Coffee became breakfast, we talked more. I was captivated by this mystery man. His reason for being on the beach, fully dressed, was neatly evaded, but I felt reassured that there was nothing in the least bit sinister about him. He wandered round my studio, picking up paintings and looking carefully at the collages.

"You found that in Blye Cove, didn't you?"

He was pointing at a piece of fishing net, and a frayed, knotted rope on one of the larger pieces of work.

"How could you know that?"

"I have a confession to make.... I'm not quite what I seem. I only get to be on dry land once a year. Mid-summer's day, until the sun goes down. Then I must return to the sea." "Your boss sounds a bit harsh!"

"Not my boss. The sea. I am a Seaman. You might think that the nymphs of the sea are female, but there are males as well."

The light dawned. "You're a Merman?" He nodded.

Our talking continued. I was full of curiosity. And deeply attracted. One thing led to another. And another.

The daylight was fading as I drove back to Blye Cove.

We kissed, a long, lingering farewell that had my heart racing. I felt his quicken under my touch. He walked to the water, discarding his clothes, then, when he was waist deep, the sun slipped beneath the horizon. His tail was the most beautiful colours of the sea.

"Next year." he called and vanished beneath the surface. I watched long and hard, but he did not reappear.

Somehow, he knows when I will visit Blye Cove, for at the high tideline, there will be gifts - once a bag of gold doubloons, which I sold. A girl has to live! More often a pile of flotsam that works perfectly with my art.

Little Jack is three months old. As the sun rises on midsummer's day I feel the first change in him, from dimpled baby thighs to a short, perfectly formed tail.

I know I shall see my Seaman today.

**Alison Edwards**

**Visits** Who knew that our members had an inclination for dressing up? Robbie Hill who helps the guitar group, picture below, was the lady in question at our Highcliffe Castle visit.



Set in grounds originally landscaped by Capability Brown, it over looks Christchurch Bay to the IOW and The Needles and to the right Mudeford and Hengistbury Head. After two fires in the 60s, due to vandalism, the 'castle' lay abandoned for several years. The then Christchurch Council stepped in and started the extensive and very difficult job of renovation. There a is long way to go but there have been great strides forward.

The stained glass saved from the fires is still being conserved. It is too fragile to be put back in the windows, so a special display told us about this very old glass, some dating back to medieval times, and its location in the castle. The blue glass window was commissioned by Lady Waterford who lived at the castle for sixty years being its longest resident. In the refurbishment her husband said she was spending over and above what she had proposed to him and he was not best pleased! That is a woman for you! There was a display of all the women who had taken part in the castle's history. Lady Waterford was very much for looking after the local community and was responsible for planting trees to prevent the erosion of the cliffs as well as drainage, which to this day works. In the 'great storm of 1987', pine trees planted by her further along the cliff were felled by the wind that swept off the sea and caused structural damage to properties. Having just been told to return to base, firemen were recalled to the area where sadly a fire man died.

In the 1950's after being a children's home for a short while, a Catholic Claretian order, took over the castle and turned it into a Seminary training college, for the priesthood. They ripped out the staircase of the 'Great Hall' with the intention of turning it into a place of worship. It never happened and remains to this day with no staircase. The stone steps that were removed were used to make a foot path down to the beach.



The spectacular thirty foot tall Jesse Window in the Great Hall of Highcliffe Castle features 16th-century stained glass from France. It illustrates the family tree of Jesus and was salvaged from the ruined Church of St Vigor in Rouen during the French Revolution. The window dates back to 1547 and was purchased by Lord Stuart de Rothesay during his time as an ambassador in Paris. When he began constructing Highcliffe Castle, in the 1830s, the original French glass was only large enough to cover about a quarter of the vast North window. To complete the grand display his daughter Louisa Stuart worked alongside the glazier Charles Holloway to meticulously paint and fill in the missing sections.

Highcliffe castle is a Grade 1 listed building and is recognised as an important example of 'Romantic' architecture. The first mansion built in 1770 by John Stuart 3<sup>rd</sup>, Earl of Bute, which was called Highcliffe, consisted of thirty bedrooms, a Forty-foot saloon, libraries, and a laboratory to store his national history exhibits. Lord Bute helped to establish the botanical gardens at Kew. Sadly after thirty-eight years, due to the erosion of the cliff, it was demolished and set back further on its present site.

*Continued on page 5*





**Highcliffe castle**

In 1831-1836, Lord Stuart de Rothesay, the Earl's grandson and a prominent British Ambassador to Paris, commissioned architect William Donthorne to design the present-day castle. Over the 19th and early 20th centuries, Highcliffe became a fashionable retreat for royalty and international dignitaries. In 1907 Kaiser Wilhelm II, The Emperor of Germany, stayed there for a "rest-cure". Nancy Mitford, Dame Nellie Melba, William Gladstone, six Kings, (including King Edward VII and King Alfonso XIII of Spain), ten Queens and twenty Princesses. Between 1916 and 1922 Henry Gordon Selfridge rented the castle for £5,000 per annum, he had wanted to buy it but Lady Waterford wouldn't sell. 'Mr Selfridge' along with his wife Rosalie, are buried in St Marks church yard opposite the castle.



We have nearly come full circle in this narrative as today the castle is on its way to being fully restored, it will take years, but with its interesting history and grounds by Capability Brown overlooking Christchurch Bay, it really was an interesting visit, and certainly needs to be visited again in a few years' time.

Our trip into Christchurch gave members the chance to browse the market, which sadly was not very good as we arrived later than we hoped, but everyone with the aid of a map found the ducking stall, Priory and the harbour/quay. Several had a late lunch at the many restaurants pubs and cafes. I have had several emails saying how much everyone enjoyed it.

**Carole Matthews**

**N.B.** Our next visit is to Hastings 27<sup>th</sup> June, that will be our last in this U3A year, as our trip to Buckingham Palace & Kings gallery has been cancelled due to lack of numbers.

## **Outdoor Bowls 2**

The U3A Outdoor Bowls 2 season has begun!

Players have had some mixed conditions so far, typical English weather! Some lovely warm sunshine then some colder days when a nice cup of tea and biscuits have been welcome. After playing indoor bowls everyone is adjusting to being outside. All agree that it's good to be outside again in the fresh air and as usual games have been great fun with friendly rivalry.

We have found that some members, for various reasons, are finding the distance needed to bowl more of a challenge so we now have a shorter version which we are playing alongside the conventional game. So, if you think you would like to try this shortened version, enjoy being outside in lovely surroundings do come and have a go. You will be most welcome!

Bowls 2 is held at Crondall Bowls Club on a Tuesday from 10.00 – 12.00, every week from now until September when we move indoors. The green is surrounded by lovely quiet countryside where you will receive a very warm welcome. If you have not tried the game before why not come and have a go. There is plenty of help on hand and all you will need are some flat shoes. Bowls and tuition are always available.

**Jenny Keyte 07759248998**



**MOTO 3** Tony organised another sleuthing aka a Murder Mystery evening which was excellent.



Did we work out 'who dun it'? Answers on a postcard.



### **Group Leaders & Members** **Important**

***We are now paying for all booked sessions at the majority of venues. If you have to cancel a session please be aware that you will still have to pay the venue for that session***

### **Fleet U3A Website**

**Keep up to date with all our activities,  
News, Events, Visits Monthly  
Meetings on our website  
[fleet.U3Asite.uk](http://fleet.U3Asite.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**



|                                   |                   |                                                                                                                                                    |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Chair & Webmaster                 | Stephen Grosvenor | <a href="mailto:chair@fleetU3A.org.uk">chair@fleetU3A.org.uk</a><br><a href="mailto:webmaster@fleetU3A.org.uk">webmaster@fleetU3A.org.uk</a>       |
| Vice Chair & Monthly Meetings     | Mark Goodwin      | <a href="mailto:vicechair@fleetU3A.org.uk">vicechair@fleetU3A.org.uk</a>                                                                           |
| Secretary                         | Anne Smith        | <a href="mailto:secretary@fleetU3A.org.uk">secretary@fleetU3A.org.uk</a>                                                                           |
| Treasurer                         | Neil Morley       | <a href="mailto:treasurer@fleetU3A.org.uk">treasurer@fleetU3A.org.uk</a>                                                                           |
| Membership Sec                    | Anne Morley       | <a href="mailto:memsec@fleetU3A.org.uk">memsec@fleetU3A.org.uk</a>                                                                                 |
| Group Leadership Liaison & Beacon | Alan Jones        | <a href="mailto:groups@fleetU3A.org.uk">groups@fleetU3A.org.uk</a><br><a href="mailto:beacon@fleetU3A.org.uk">beacon@fleetU3A.org.uk</a>           |
| Venues Sec                        | Barbara Jones     | <a href="mailto:venues@fleetU3A.org.uk">venues@fleetU3A.org.uk</a>                                                                                 |
| Newsletter & Programme            | Sandy Redman      | <a href="mailto:news@fleetU3A.org.uk">news@fleetU3A.org.uk</a><br><a href="mailto:programme@fleetU3A.org.uk">programme@fleetU3A.org.uk</a>         |
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**PLEASE AVOID TELEPHONING MEMBERS  
BEFORE 9 a.m. OR AFTER 5 p.m.**