



**Happy Festive
Holidays**

Message from the Chair

It's time to Nominate!



As I write this (mid-November), the weather has turned noticeably colder, with threats of colder to come – I am particularly feeling the difference having just returned from a week in Malta with temperatures 20 degrees or more. It means Christmas will soon be with us, followed by the New Year, and membership renewal and voting for the Committee members for 2025/6.

The voting form for election to the Committee is on the website, Maureen and Lyn are willing to continue as Treasurer and Secretary. I can't be Chairman next year, having been Vice Chair and Chair for 6 years in total, so we need someone to step up and take my place. (I am staying on the Committee as Membership Secretary) If all that is stopping you from offering to be Chair is the thought of fronting the monthly meetings, fear not – some of us could do that in turn so you don't have to!

Richard, Maggie and Linda are happy to continue on the Committee but Marlen is stepping down – she is very busy with activities outside U3A. We shall be looking for someone to take over doing the newsletter and supervising the Groups. So please get nominating, particularly we need members with some basic competence in email, Word and Excel as so much of what we do these days is on line.

As our financial position remains very sound, I am pleased to announce that the fee for members for our monthly meetings will be just £1 next year instead of £2. The fee for visitors remains unchanged at £3. The membership fee for next year is also unchanged at £10. I am sure that next year, like this year, you will all continue to show your enthusiasm for our U3A and keep it a very enjoyable part of our lives.

I wish you all a

Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

Your Committee Members

Nick Rose	Chairman & Membership Sec.	01462 713897
Maureen Gates	Treasurer	01525 715793
Richard Bowsher	Speakers Secretary	01525 630 335
Marlen Jackson	Editor, Group Organiser & Complaints	01525 721564
Carol Smithers	Away days Secretary	07721030203
Lyn Fairweather	Secretary & Registration	07927364286
Maggie Hathaway		07947934835
Lynda Lees		07986539390

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To my final issue of 2024 as editor of your u3a newsletter.

I would like to take this opportunity to inform you of my decision to resign from u3a committee that I served over the last seven years. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time with the organisation and I am also grateful for the opportunity given to me to contribute to its mission.

I would also like to express my sincerest gratitude to committee members, group members and to you, all the dedicated members for the support and opportunities I have received during my time here for which I'll always be thankful.

Please continue to give your help and support to my successor and keep sending your articles to email below.

Email : newsletfd@outlook.com

I wish you all a wonderful Christmas and Prosperous 2025.



2025 General Monthly Meetings and Speakers.

Jan 9th Chris Burleigh presenting
“Self and Traditional Publishing”

Feb. 13th
U3a Annual General Meeting &
Traditional Quiz

Mar. 13th David Longman presenting
“Tales from the staffroom experi-
ences from a teachers life”

Apr. 13th Steve Dimmer presenting
“Talk on “Dad’s Army”

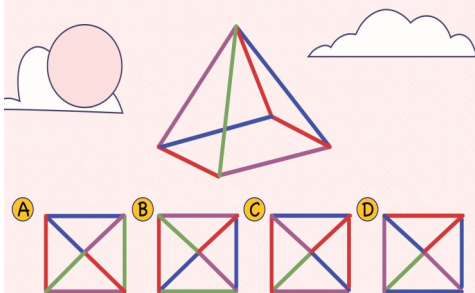
May 8th John Hutchinson presenting
“Tales of a Concord Pilot”

June 12th Richard Luscombe
presenting “World War 1, the hos-
pital @ Wrest Park”

July 10th Rob Brewer presenting
“Life as a TV/Film extra”

Richard Bowsher

Which one is the Top View
of this Pyramid?



U3A Notices

If you have moved or changed your address, please let us know, so we can keep in touch with you. Equally, if you know any other member whose details have changed do prompt them to get in touch with us

Nick Rose (membership secretary)

Contact Details: phone: 01462 713897
or email: memsecu3afd@outlook.com
or write to;

2 Wilson Close,
Shillington
SG5 3PN

To join any of our groups you need to be a full member of Flitwick and District U3A.

- Please send all your editorials to our new email address:
- Marlen Jackson
newsletfd@outlook.com
- Our U3A Website address:
<http://u3asites.org/flitwick>
- Facebook.com
- Let us know of future local events and activities
- If you have any comments on the newsletter or other matters do let us know.



U3a the national picture – what else can your membership of Flitwick and District u3a offer you? The Third Age Trust!

Are you a member who would like to try something completely new and it's not available in our u3a?

There is a plethora of help and ideas for you on the Third Age Trust website (<https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/learning-activities>). These vary from writing and photographic competitions to a quiz library to puzzles and games and opportunities to share your own memories. I must admit that the weekly maths challenge is beyond me. There are specialist subject advisers available who have a wealth of knowledge and enthusiasm to share with group leaders (or anyone else who asks) to liven up your meetings if you would like some extra input. You just need to set up a username and password for the website to find all of this for free. I counted 52 different subject advisers!

If you're a person who likes to listen there is a monthly podcast (<https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/u3a-radio-podcast>). The podcast can be listened to online where you can also pick up subtitles. It's available via the website or on YouTube and you can subscribe to it for free.

If that is not enough, there are also Online Learning Events (<https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events#Events>) – talks lasting an hour or so on specific topics. September topics include amongst many others: Mods v Rockers – a 1960s 'Moral Panic', a 'Mindfulness and Meditation' 6-week course and 'Visualizing Statistical Concepts'. These are all presented via Zoom at different times. If the timing suits you, book a place on whatever interests you. *By Lynda Lees*

Awaydays 2025 Team

We are busy planning next year's trips but are finding it too early to confirm these. So keep an eye on the Website and the timetable at the General meetings. These will be updated when we receive confirmation from the venues.



Sadly Ken Jones, Jenny Teague & Lyn Dove passed away recently, our sincere condolences to their families.

SINGING FOR PLEASURE GROUP— by Carol Thompson



The Singing for Pleasure Group recently celebrated 10 years of singing with a lunch at the White Hart, Flitton.

Our first meeting was on 28th September 2014 at the Flitwick Village Hall after a few members, interested in having a singing group, had approached William (Bill) Fudge to be their leader. We met at this venue until the end of 2015 when it was decided to move to Flitton and Greenfield Village Hall and then in 2017 we moved to Flitton Church Hall where we still meet on the third Thursday of every month.

The group has gone from strength to strength and we currently have over 30 members. Over the years we have performed at local sheltered accommodation in Flitwick and Ampthill, as well as singing at the general meeting in December at the Rufus Centre to celebrate Christmas.

We sing a variety of music from old favourites to seasonal tunes, from Beatles to popular musicals ably led and accompanied by Bill.

We are looking forward to the next 10 years of Singing for Pleasure.

AWAY TRIP TO RUTLAND WATER & MELTON MOWBRAY ON MONDAY 12TH AUGUST 2024—By Pat King

We had fine weather and a good journey to Rutland Water for our cruise on the boat Rutland Belle.

Various points of interest were pointed out to us on the cruise plus the history of when the reservoir was constructed in the 1970s, and why Rutland was chosen. It has a clay bed which was ideal for water storage and would have the shortest dam, compared to other sites. It is fed by the Rivers Nene and Welland. We passed by the dam which was 115 feet in height, though most was under water. We made our way to the partially submerged Normanton Church, which is now a very popular wedding venue. It originally formed part of the Normanton Hall Estate, and it's tower was modelled on St. Johns in London. A guide was waiting to give us a brief history of the building.

Whilst we were in the church, the boat crew were busy laying the tables for our cream tea which we enjoyed as we continued to sail around the lake. We passed the boating club and saw yachts circling in a competition. Lots of water fowl were on the banks, though many more come later in the year.

The road to Melton Mowbray was closed but our clever driver, Glen, found another route and we were soon there.



LET's DISCUSS DISCUSSION—by Terry Waine

The benefits of a discussion are that people share their knowledge, experiences, and nights, enriching the collective understanding of the topic. It encourages critical thinking as the group analyse, evaluate, and discuss contrasting viewpoints.

Different forms of debating and discussion can be traced back to Ancient Greece and India where philosophers, scholars and intellectuals would use early forms of debating to develop their ideas. In Ancient Rome, debating was used by the military Strategos as a means to ensure success on the battlefield. Socrates, a Greek philosopher, credited as being the founder of Western Philosophy, was a proponent of discussion. He was known for his relentless pursuit of knowledge, and his willingness to question everything. Socrates most famous quotation was, “The Only True Wisdom is in Knowing You Know Nothing”. It is worth noting that a simple definition of Philosophy is, 'love of wisdom'.

Although the words, discussion and debating have been used synonymously, there is a marked difference between the two. A group discussion is a collaborative effort where everyone is encouraged to participate and share their ideas without trying to win the argument. On the other hand, a debate is a competitive effort where participants try to convince others that their point of view is correct and win the argument. 'I'm not arguing, I'm just explaining why I'm right'. There have been no pistols at dawn during the years that I have been on the Flitwick U3A Discussion Group!

Ideally there are basic rules of etiquette to follow in a group discussion. Try not to interrupt while others are speaking. Do not allow emotions to take over. Prioritising quantity over quality is unlikely to persuade listeners, as is cramming in too many statistics. Those readers who are familiar with the Sharpe books will remember when he was first promoted to an Officer from the ranks, he struggled to exercise control over his men. The partisan leader, who was eventually to become his wife, gave him sage advice, “You have two ears and one mouth, and you should listen twice as much as you speak”.

I have found during my years on the Discussion Group that doing preparatory work, and listening to other members of the team, quite often modifies, or even changes my thoughts. The subjects chosen by members at the start of each year can be quite substantial, topical and challenging. Everyone can agree that the House of Lords should be changed, but to what? Large sections of the NHS are already privatised, G.P.s and Dentists for instance. Whatever the views on Euthanasia, Canada probably shows how the intention of the initial legislation has expanded more widely than anticipated.

The Flitwick U3A Discussion Group comprises of a number of people who are enthusiastically committed to its ongoing success, and has been ably led by the late, respected Brenda Manning, and now by the equally competent Mary Kerswell.



What is the history of the Christmas Pudding?

It has its origins in medieval England, with early recipes making use of dried fruit, suet, breadcrumbs, flour, eggs and spice, along with liquid such as milk or fortified wine. Later, recipes became more elaborate. In 1845, cookery writer Eliza Acton wrote the first recipe for a dish called "Christmas pudding". *MJ*

My Holiday in Croatia—by Nick Rose

Ten of us flew out from Stansted Airport early Saturday morning 24 August. My son Chris, my daughter-in-law Rachel and their two girls, were driven up from Kent by Rachel's Mum. My daughter Charlotte and son-in-law also Chris, and their three children and me made the ten. Charlotte and family currently live with me while they have astonishing work done on their house, which was roofless while we were away.



This holiday had been planned back in December, almost entirely by Charlotte (she's very good at that sort of thing), and she had found us a great house to rent for the week, with 8 bedrooms over 3 floors with each floor having its own kitchen/diner and bathroom. We happily spent a lot of time around or in the pool, they are all good swimmers, unlike me. But in 35 degree heat, the pool was very inviting.

I didn't have any preconceived idea of what Croatian scenery would be like, and was a little surprised to find it so rugged - low level mountains and steep valleys, lots of holes and caves. Then I remembered my geology lessons, that area was a Karst region where ancient limestone had been eroded to form caves which had then collapsed to form plateaus below the surrounding area, many of which became lakes.

Monday we went to one of their National Parks, which was one of those lakes. Bussed down to the bottom, we followed a wooden walkway round past many connected mini waterfalls and pools, and past the main waterfall. There were so many fish in the pools, it was amazing (fishing wasn't allowed!)

Wednesday was spent on a speed boat from just outside Split, round some of the offshore islands, stopping for lunch at one of them and swimming in the sea in sheltered bays. We transferred to a smaller boat to enter the Blue Cave, where the sunlight reflecting off the limestone floor created bright blue water.

Friday was at a fortress, on a site originally built on by Romans and subsequently rebuilt and then attacked by Venetians and Ottomans, with a museum of various weapons used by both defenders and attackers over the centuries. While we walked round there was suddenly brass band music emanating from one of the rooms - a small group of brass players played daily from 11 to 12.



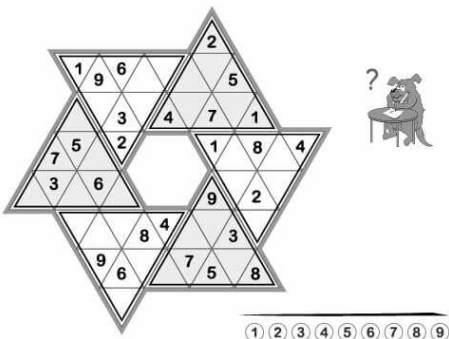
Saturday back home, early start at 2am to get our 6 am flight - then on Monday while everyone else went back to work or school, I went to France with friends for a few days of golf!

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE QUIZ —By Margaret Downie

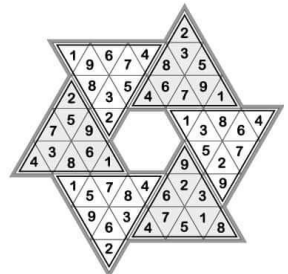
- 1 What has been the most northerly Summer Olympics venue?
- 2 In which year did the Titanic sink?
- 3 Shane Fenton is the real name of which 1970's popstar?
- 4 How many members of the European Union are there currently (October 2024) ?
- 5 In which year did the UK switch to decimal currency?
- 6 Who succeeded Elizabeth I in 1603?
- 7 Which US state has the nickname 'The Sunshine State'?
- 8 Which iconic car was designed by Sir Alexi Issigonis?
- 9 Which tree is popularly associated with graveyards?
- 10 Who Painted "The View of Delft" and "The Girl with Pearl Earring"

Quiz Answers

Helsinki, 1952 / 1912 / Alvin Stardust / 27 / 1971 / King James I / Florida / The Mini / Yew trees / Johannes Vermeer.



Solve the Sudoku task so that each big triangle, each horizontal row and each diagonal have different numbers from 1 to 9.



U3A WALKING GROUP—By Keith & Jenny Sampson



It's a grey February morning, it's windy & threatening rain. I have planned to go on the U3A walk, but I am now tempted to stay at home. But I do go & join the group gathering, some wondering about the accuracy of the weather forecast & others whether

they have the 'right' attire for the two hours.

We walk along chatting about this & that - every now & then stopping to admire the local countryside or find the person in the group who can identify a bird or a point of interest.

As we get towards the end we start thinking about the coffee stop, which the walk leader has built into the walk (a sort of unwritten rule!)

Back at home I feel renewed energy to tackle a few tasks & smug enough to recognise a feeling of well being.

It's really strange but I don't ever remember feeling sorry that I went on any of those walks come rain or shine.

The Rotary Club of Flitwick Vale - By David Straughan

Rotary is a global network of 1.4 million neighbours, friends, leaders and problem solvers who see a world where people unite and take action to create lasting change across the globe.

Solving real problems takes real commitment and vision. For more than 110 years, Rotary's people of action have used their passion, energy and intelligence to take action on sustainable projects. From literacy and peace to water and health, we are always working to better our world and we stay committed to the end.

If this seems interesting to you come and join us by contacting; Roger Phillips president of Rotary Club on Tel: 07717 295248

Literature 2 Group—By Marilyn Calder

Michael Wingrove who for many years has been Group Leader for the Literature 2 group has made his decision to retire as Group Leader due to ill health. Thank you Michael for the wonderful way you always put everyone at ease and made the Literature 2 group a pleasure to be a part of.



The Literature 2 group will continue to meet every 3rd Thursday of the month at 2 pm in a nominated member's house and I - Marilyn Calder - as the new Group Leader of the Literature 2 group and with the great circle of members in the group (yes you know who you are!!!) will endeavour to ensure the group remains successful. The books we shall be choosing will come from reviews and recommendations covering various genres and as is the norm a lively discussion is expected.

DID YOU KNOW



- The first person processed at Ellis Island was a 15-year-old girl from Ireland.
- Google Images was created after Jennifer Lopez wore the green dress at the 2000 Grammys.
- Lemons float, but limes sink.
- The Eiffel Tower was originally made for Barcelona.
- It would take 19 minutes to fall to the center of the Earth.
- Hot water will turn into ice faster than cold water.
- The Mona Lisa has no eyebrows.
- The strongest muscle in the body is the tongue.
- Ants take rest for around eight minutes in 12 hour period.
- "I Am" is the shortest complete sentence in the English language.
- Australia is wider than the moon.
- Venus is the only planet to spin clockwise.

THE CRAFT GROUP and Tibbs Dementia Foundation —By Enid Clark

Enid of our group members suggested that we help out the Tibbs Dementia Foundation by knitting some Christmas themed covers for chocolate oranges. For those of you who are not aware, Tibbs is a Bedfordshire based charity who provide support to families and people at all stages of dementia.

We took up our knitting needles and produced a range of covers as shown in the photo, Christmas trees, Rudolph, Christmas puds, robins, Santas and snowmen. The target needed for Bedfordshire was 500 and we contributed approximately 50 items. If anyone feels they could make some too, please contact Enid Clark by email; enidjclark@btinternet.com



Quotes to make you smile

“Adults are always asking children what they want to be when they grow up because they’re looking for ideas.

“A perfect parent is a person with excellent child-rearing theories and no actual children.

“Just be good and kind to your children. Not only are they the future of the world, they’re the ones who can sign you into a home.

“When I was a kid my parents moved a lot, but I always found them.

R I D D L E S & P U Z Z L E S

1. I have keys but no locks. I have space but no room. You can enter, but you can't go inside. What am I?
2. What has a heart that doesn't beat?
3. The more you take, the more you leave behind. What am I?
4. I have cities, but no houses. I have mountains, but no trees. I have water, but no fish. What am I?
5. What is always coming but never arrives?
6. The man who makes it doesn't want it, the man who buys it doesn't need it, and the man who needs it doesn't know it yet. What is it?
7. You walk into a pitch-black room, and you only have one match. You have some newspaper, a candle, and some firewood in front of you. Which should you light first?
8. There are two ducks in front of a duck, two ducks behind a duck and a duck in the middle. How many ducks are there?
9. What gets broken without being held?
10. What is it that no one wants to have, but no one wants to lose either?
11. You'll find me in Mercury, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn & Uranus but never Neptune or Venus. What I am?
12. What three numbers give the same result when multiplied and added together?

Answers: keyboard / an artichoke / footprints / a map / tomorrow / a coffin / the match / 3 ducks / a promise / a lawsuit / the letter R / 1, 2, and 3 ($1 + 2 + 3 = 6$ and $1 \times 2 \times 3 = 6$).

MONDAY AM

Groups	Leader	Week in Month	Venue
Spanish	Olivia Chelache	1st & 3rd	Rufus Centre
Table Tennis	Alan Davies	Weekly	Leisure Centre

TUESDAY AM

Bridge	John Milton	weekly	British Legion
Craft	Gwen Halsey	Once a Month	M.H.
Literature 1	Jean Reeves	2nd	M.H.
Petanque	Alan Davies	Weekly	Musgrave Arms
Paper Craft	Collen White	1st	Rufus Centre
Ten Pin Bowling	Janet Denyer	2nd & 4th	Henlow Air base

WEDNESDAY AM

Jazz Appreciation	Val & David Barrick	Monthly	M.H.
Jazz & Blues Appreciation	George French & Jim Reeves	Monthly	M.H.
Knit & Natter	Gladys Fisher	2nd	M.H.
MahJong	Ashley King	2nd & 4th	M.H.

MONDAY PM

Groups	Leader	Week in Month	Venue
Discussion	Mary Kerswell	2nd	M.H.
Flower Arranging	Carole Preston	2nd	Rufus Centre
Literature 4	Marion Tucker	Monthly	M.H.
Croquet	Eddie Fisher	Weekly	Wrest Park

TUESDAY PM

Gardening 1	Eyleene Timothy	Monthly	M.H.
Gardening 2	Kay Chambers	Monthly	M.H.
Lunch Group 5	Nick Rose	1st	Varies
Rummikub 1	Elaine McAlister	2nd & 4th	M.H.
Ukulele	Michael Clark	Weekly	Rufus Centre

WEDNESDAY PM

Art (looking at paintings)	Pam Wilson	3rd	M.H.	
Gardening 3	Anne Slack	868409	Monthly	M.H.
Rummikub 2	Janet Denyer	717064	2nd & 4th	Rufus Centre

Groups	Leader		Week in Month	Venue
Away Day Group	Carol Smithers		2nd	Rufus Centre
Paper Craft	Colleen White	752040	3rd	Flitwick Village Hall
Jewellery & Craft	Colleen White		3rd	Flitwick Village Hall
Singing for Pleasure	Bill Fudge		4th	Flitton Church hall
Painting 2	Richard Bowsher	630335	1st & 3rd	Rufus Centre
Ocarina	Hilary Plummer		1st	Eversholt Village Hall

Canasta	Jane Davies		1st & 3rd	M.H.
Latin	Ashley Carter		weekly	On Zoom
Latin Intermediate	Heather Valentine	755024	weekly	M.H.
Quiz Group	Barbara Moody		Last Friday	Manor Court
Spanish (Intermediate)	Shelia Walden	752858	Fortnightly	M.H.
Walking	Lesley Cogan		weekly	Various

**There are number of vacancies in most of our groups
Please support the groups.**

No active groups on Saturdays

'M.H.' Means Members House

THURSDAY PM

Groups	Leader	Week in Month	Venue
Astronomy	Heather Valentine	2nd	M.H.
Literature 2	Marilyn Calder	3rd	M.H.
Lunch 1	Vida Turk	3rd	Varies
Understanding Shakespeare	Simon Young	4th	M.H.

FRIDAY PM

Groups	Leader	Week in Month	VENUE
Camera Club	John Parkins	3rd	Rufus Centre
Lunch 2	Barbara Moody	Last Friday	Varies
Whist	Nick Rose & Maureen Gates	1st & 3rd	M.H.
Scrabble	Hillary Jackson	4th	M.H.

SUNDAY

Groups	Leader	Week in Month	VENUE
Lunch	Diana Jarrad	406909 3rd Sunday	Varies

Cards made by members of the Papercraft Group are on sale at the monthly u3a meetings. On alternative months there will also be Jewellery available for sale. A percentage of the sales are donated to the Air Ambulance.

Personalised cards can be made to order.

Jewellery orders can also be taken.

Contact Colleen at the Monthly meeting or

Email: uk.whitehouse@ntlworld.com

Phone: 01525 752040

HANDMADE CARDS AND JEWELLERY

BY COLLEEN



WHAT IS THE IMPORTANCE OF THE NEW YEAR?

New Year's Day holds importance because of multiple factors.

It denotes a new beginning, an opportunity to abandon the difficulties and wins of the previous year and embrace new chances and opportunities.

By the way January was named after Janus, the roman God of all the beginnings. *MJ*

NEXT NL ISSUE APRIL 2025