

## MEMBERS' NEWS UPDATE OCTOBER 2025



As Autumn draws in we are still getting some bright days but the evenings are cool. I resist putting on the heating and am still under a summer weight duvet – though often with a blanket on top.

Groups have all been back to regular meetings and I am sure it has been great hearing about summer adventures. I was lucky enough to have a wonderful holiday in South Africa & Zimbabwe but most of all I have had several visits to the South West where I am getting on with walking the amazing South West Coast Path. Only 80 miles to go!!

I had a real glut of reports from Groups last month – thank you - but very little this time. However we can celebrate a big success for our **Cryptic Crossword Group** see page 4. Also look out for dates of Christmas events and a December outing to Salisbury.

***A quick reminder that ANYONE from u3a Gosport can email comments, thoughts or reports related to their u3a experience – it does not have to be just your Group Co-ordinator. I look forward to hearing from anyone who is motivated to share.***

*Kathy Parker*

### THORNGATE MEETING

John Sherbourne gave an excellent talk about the **DEVELOPMENT OF THE MUSICAL**. The tradition of musicals – a story told through song, acting, talk and dance started in 1927 with Showboat – still the most performed Musical ever. Their



progress through the last 100 years was fascinating and we were reminded of the famous names of composers – Rogers, Hammerstein, Bernstein, Bart, Lloyd Webber and many more. Musicals appealed to real people telling stories of their lives, dramas and challenges unlike previous Operettas which usually centred around Dukes, Duchesses and high drama remote from most people's everyday lives. John talked about all the classic Musicals that we still know

and drew our attention to how composers adapted their styles to reflect changes in society. Many of them broke down barriers and challenged attitudes. John is so knowledgeable and such an engaging speaker that we were all transported into his world. He played many of the memorable songs – singing some of them and encouraging us to sing too. We did but most of us could have done with some words!!!



Our next meeting is on Wednesday 5th November when Nigel Gossop will give a talk entitled '**Untangling Christmas' or 'A load of Old Baubles'**

*Coffee afterwards in the Thorngate Bar for a chat and catch up with friends.*

## **NEWS FROM YOUR COMMITTEE**

Members will be sorry to hear that Tricia Stevenson has, for health reasons, stepped down from the Committee as our Publicity Officer. Friends will know that Tricia has been steadfastly battling with a few personal health issues recently, but the good news is that she does intend to carry on as co-ordinator and supporting her groups. Whilst looking after our Publicity, Tricia has been a real 'live wire' in pushing every opportunity to promote and raise the profile of Gosport u3a. We have all been grateful for Tricia's leadership in this very important function over recent months and we wish her a speedy recovery to full health. Obviously, this leaves a gap on the current front line, but we are pleased to report that our 'Helpful Group' co-ordinator, Val Havard, has been coopted to the committee and will be a valuable link and support to Maggie Gavin as we prepare our usual social events for members in the autumn and winter season.

### **CHRISTMAS EVENTS**

Recently you had an email from Maggie with all the details about the Christmas meal on **Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> December**. Please refer to the email sent on 18 September to ensure you book your place as numbers are limited.

As we did in 2024, we will be decorating a tree in St Mary's church for the Christmas Tree Festival which takes place between **Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> to Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> December**. The Craft groups will be sending an email with instructions about the theme and size. Look out for an email from the Craft group and get your creative members lined up.



*Maggie Gavin, Secretary*

### **HELPFUL GROUP AT GOSPORT HERITAGE OPEN DAYS**

Helpful Group members and others did an excellent job at Holy Trinity church, during the Heritage Open Days, with our Gosport u3a table being manned for most of the whole 9 days. Speaking to other members, and from my own experience, we found there were only a few visitors to the church, but quite a number of these visitors seemed very interested in Gosport u3a after finding out more about us. I would be very surprised if our presence at Gosport Heritage Open Days didn't result in new members. Thank you to everyone who made it a success.

*Val Havard, Helpful Co-ordinator*

**NEXT EVENT – Info Fest at Thorngate Hall on Friday 17 October 1030-1430** . We will have a table at this event alongside many other local agencies and services providing information and support for over 55s.

***If you can help at INFO FEST contact Val Havard via HELPFUL GROUP on the website.***

## **U3A GOSPORT MEMBERSHIP CARDS AND THE ANNUAL MEMBER INFORMATION LEAFLET**

An email was sent to all members last month because it appears the membership secretary Tinou Neal is still holding some 2025-26 u3a Gosport membership cards. While you may not need to produce them very often they are needed for the u3a cinema and if you are accessing discounts available to members. See the National u3a website below.

Many members have not picked up their annual member leaflet which gives an overview of how u3a Gosport operates and a list of all current groups. Of course, this information is on the website where it is constantly updated but we continue to produce this leaflet as requested by members. ***Pop into the monthly meeting to collect either of these or contact the Membership Secretary – address on page 6.*** *Tinou Neal, Membership Secretary*

## **WHAT CAN THE NATIONAL U3A WEBSITE OFFER YOU?**

Visit <https://www.u3a.org.uk/> and create an account

Once in become a u3a FRIEND so you can gain access u3a FRIENDS EXTRA

### **How does a u3a Friend access Friends Extra?**

- Friends Extra is exclusively available to anyone who signs-up to receive the u3a Friends Newsletter.
- When someone signs up to the u3a Friends Newsletter for the first time, they will receive an email with a link to the Friends Extra benefits website.
- Each issue of the Friends Newsletter includes a link to the Friends Extra benefits website.
- Sign up to our u3a Friends Newsletter

### **What kind of benefits does Friends Extra offer?**

Friends Extra covers a wide variety of benefits such as:

- Health and wellbeing discounts on eye care, health tests, gyms, spa deals and golf courses.
- Shopping savings on major brands and retail discount cards.
- Travel discounts from selected partners.
- Lifestyle and leisure offers, like family days out, trips to the cinema and theatre.
- Insurance offers on home, car and travel insurance.
- Access to financial advice and a legal helpline.

The u3a website has so many resources and helpful advice for members and Group Co-ordinators. It is worth logging on and exploring it.

**To contact any committee member go to the Contact page on our website or find their email address on the back page of this Update**

## REPORTS FROM GROUP CO-ORDINATORS

To find out about any of our 47 groups visit the group section of the website.  
Follow this link and scroll down to find the page for each group.

<https://gosport.u3asite.uk/groups/>

From each group's page you can easily contact the Group Co-ordinator  
by clicking on their name to open up a secure email link.

### CRYPTIC CROSSWORD SOLVERS SUCCESS

Last month we told you that we were hoping to have our cryptic crossword published – Look at page 83 of the Autumn edition of u3a Matters which has just recently arrived. (See photo of the cover here) Well done to this group who devised it even managing to get all the symmetry for the black squares. Give it a go!!! Jennifer is willing to explain answers if you can't work it out.

*Jennifer Bellamy*



### LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

In September the members heard about recent research into the two Turkish ships that anchored in Gosport in 1850 on a diplomatic and training mission. We then previewed the Turk Town exhibition set up by Bee Schmitt for Heritage Open Days.

This month we are researching the History of Breweries in the Local Area. Amongst others we will look at Blakes, Biden and Hobbs Breweries and compare them to more recent creations - the Fallen Acorn Brewery, Newtown Brewery and Powder Monkey Brewery.

We will meet on Tuesday 14 October in the Robert's Room of the Museum at 2pm.

*Liz and Ian Backhouse.*

### DANCE GROUP

As the October session of the Dance Group is on the 28th October and is near Halloween, members are welcome to wear fancy dress if they wish (optional) and there will be a prize for the best costume.

*Pat Luke*

### CALLING ALL KNITTERS AND CROCHETERS

Waitrose in connection with British Wool and Shaun the Sheep, who is now 30 years old, are asking for knitters and crocheters to make squares for London Homeless. Any colour/pattern should measure 20x20cms. They will be stitched together at an event in London on 28th October. More details can be found on this [Can Ewe Knit link](https://www.facebook.com/reel/1257247062800890).

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There is not a lot of time for this but I am sure someone can be inspired to while away an hour or so on an evening as the daylight slips away earlier and earlier!!!

## WALKING THE EXTRA MILE

Eve, Shirley and Cora led 22 of us on our first Autumn walk in the New Forest. The recent rain (and we had some while walking) seems to have given the trees a new lease of life making everything green and luscious. We walked past the home of Shirley Williams –



daughter of Vera Brittain politician and writer. She wrote 'Testament of Youth', her memoir of the First World War which was made into a TV series and later a film. Eve had brilliantly researched the house's history and of course it was a thrill for our Shirley who shares the same name.

Lunch stop on a collection of wooden toadstools!! Getting to the beautiful New Forest is arduous with the road works but it is so worth it.



*Kathy Parker & Anna Wood. .*

## TRAVEL GROUP-DAY TRIPS go to Salisbury on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> December

You have heard all about this – in last month's News Update and in a recent email sent to all members on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> September. This newly formed group need to fill their coach so they hope there are lots of you keen to join us for a day out in this beautiful city at Christmas time. Visit the Cathedral, go shopping, explore the old city and enjoy dining. Coach pick up includes Brockhurst which a great help for Elson area residents.

Brockhurst Fort bus stop 9.05am  
Ferry (Castle Tavern lay-by) 9:15am  
Waitrose, Stoke Road 9:20am  
War Memorial Hospital bus stop 9:25am

Cost £33 including a tour of the Cathedral. Closing date Nov 6th  
Contact Fiona Meredith by email [meredithfiona@btinternet.com](mailto:meredithfiona@btinternet.com)  
Or use the contact link on the Travel Group page on the website.

*Fiona Meredith*



## IS YOUR GROUP DOING SOMETHING SPECIAL AT CHRISTMAS?



Many groups are organizing their Christmas celebrations.

I hope you will let me know what you are doing and send some photos after the event.

### **DATES FOR THE DIARY**

DATE/TIME	EVENT OR ACTIVITY	LOCATION
17/10/2025	Info Fest 1030-1430	Thorngate Hall
1/11/2025	New member meeting 1030	Discovery Centre
5/11/2025	Monthly Meeting 1030	Thorngate Hall
3/12/2025	Monthly Meeting 1030	Thorngate Hall
4/12/2025	Travel Group Day Trip to Salisbury	Coach to Salisbury
4-6/12/2025	Christmas Tree Festival	St Mary's Church, Alverstoke
11/12/2025	u3a Gosport Christmas Meal	The Castle
7/1/2026	Monthly Meeting 1030	Thorngate Hall

### **COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND ROLE HOLDERS 2025- 2026**

Chairman	George Cantrill	Chair@u3agosport.org.uk
Vice Chair	John Draper	Vicechair@u3agosport.org.uk
Secretary	Maggie Gavin	Secretary@u3agosport.org.uk
Treasurer	Judith Ridley	Treasurer@u3agosport.org.uk
Beacon Administrator	Judy Foster	Beaconadm@u3agosport.org.uk
Membership Secretary	Tinou Neal	Memsec@u3agosport.org.uk
Groups Co-ordinator	Judith Ridley (TEMP)	Groupcoord@u3agosport.org.uk
Welfare Officer	John Draper	Welfare@u3agosport.org.uk
News Editor	Kathy Parker	Newsed@u3agosport.org.uk
<b>Publicity</b>	<b>Vacant</b>	
Speaker's Secretary	George Cantrill	Speaker@u3agosport.org.uk
Website Administrator	Jennifer Bellamy	Webadm@u3agosport.org.uk
Helpful Group Co-ordinator	Val Havard	Contact via Helpful Group Page

**Make direct contact with any committee member from the Contacts Page on the website**  
<https://gosport.u3asite.uk/contact/>

### **NON u3a EVENTS THAT MAY INTEREST MEMBERS**

**SPITHEAD ARTS** meets at Bay House school on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month for a wide range of lectures given by experts in their field. It starts promptly at 7pm. Annual membership for 10 lectures is £50 but you can attend as visitor for £7 on the door. The next lecture is on Tuesday 28 October.

**Dame Laura Knight'** - the first woman to be elected to the Royal Academy. The lecture is an overview of her fascinating career and remarkable achievements.

**Thank you for all your contributions**  
**The next News Update will be published on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> November.**  
**The deadline for contributions is Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> November**

*Kathy Parker, News Update Editor*