



**Clocks are now on Summertime.  
The days are lengthening.**

We wish you all a happy time at this first big holiday season of the year. We begin with a letter from George our loyal Chairperson since November 2022.

*The AGM seems to come round so quickly and for me this year it's time to pass on the baton to a new Chairperson. Our constitution is designed to ensure that we not only have 'new blood' on the committee, but also to avoid getting too set in our ways as an organisation - when some might say 'Same old, Same old' to borrow a current phrase. So, at this year's AGM on May 6th, please come and grab the opportunity to say what you want from Gosport u3a and what changes you think may be needed to make it more interesting and attractive to members ... and to encourage others to join too. Been on a committee before? - your experience will be welcome. If not, and you have a little time to spare, it's just an hour a month at our meetings. There's an old training saying, originating from the Lancashire cotton mills, - "Go sit by Nelly". When new people went for work, Nelly was referred to as the most experienced hand and was able to show the newbie! We don't have a 'Nelly' on the committee, but we do have people willing for you to 'shadow them' before taking it on later. - Think about it, your u3a needs you!*

*And a final word from me -*

*A Heartfelt thanks to all my colleagues and members for all your support over the past three and a half years - I've really enjoyed it - and of course, I did it my way.*

*George Cantrill*



## **THORNGATE MEETING**

On April 1<sup>st</sup> Claire Butler gave her talk 'The Earl and the Player.' We were given a history of the Wriothesley family who became Earls of Southampton and later took Titchfield Abbey as their home. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl had an adventurer's life in the early colonisation of Virginia, and some military activities which placed him in the Tower with the Earl of Essex. He avoided execution when James 1 succeeded Queen Elizabeth. His passion for the Arts - especially the stage links him to Shakespeare. He may have been a patron of the Bard. Many of Shakespeare's works have references to Southampton and the Tempest could be influenced by tales of the voyages to America. There was a playhouse at Titchfield so it is highly likely that Shakespeare visited and performed there.



*Another detailed and fascinating insight into more local history.*

We were delighted to have a great turn out of 115 members at the Richard Osgood meeting in March . It was a real treat to have such an expert giving this talk – I was delighted to see him on **Digging for Britain** with Alice Roberts recently. We hope to continue getting good numbers at these meetings.

## **NEWS FROM YOUR COMMITTEE**

**Next Month on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> May is our AGM. Minutes of the last meeting, the Agenda, and Financial Report will be sent to all members after the committee meeting on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April. Please come and support the work of the committee as we move into 2026-27. We hope to see lots of you there. Refreshments afterwards in the Thorngate Lounge Bar.**

## **MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL**

We are now into our new membership year and thank you to the many of you who have renewed and can carry on "learning, living and laughing" with us this year. If you have decided not to renew, I would be very grateful if you could let me know, and it would be helpful if you could indicate your reason(s).

*Tinou Neal, Membership Secretary*

## **GIFT AID**

Gift Aid allows U3A Gosport to claim back the basic rate of tax you have already paid on your membership. I am planning to send the gift aid form to all members together with the Annual Accounts and Treasurer's Report prior to the AGM but in the meantime you can download it from the members page of the website. If you have already completed this form with your membership application recently, within the last year, you do not need to do so again but for members of longer standing it would be helpful to have a more recent completed form (always useful in case of HMRC checks!)Thank you.

*Judith Ridley,Treasurer*

Go to ..... <https://gosport.u3asite.uk/members/>

## **BEACON – OUR MEMBERSHIP DATA BASE**

### **TO ALL GROUP CO-ORDINATORS**

As we are now in April and the new u3a year, you can check that your Group's list is up to date on Beacon. You will be able to see if members have renewed their membership. If you have problems accessing the Beacon Database please contact the Beacon Administrator for help. It is an easy system to use and a useful tool for Group Co-ordinators especially to ensure members' personal data is secure and communications comply with Data Protection Regulations.

*Judy Foster Beacon Administrator*

## **NEW MEMBERS MEETING**

**THE NEXT MEETING AT THE VINE, 64 STOKE ROAD WILL BE ON TUESDAY 5<sup>TH</sup> MAY at 1030**

This is rescheduled from the Discovery Centre on the Monday as that is a bank holiday. New members are welcome to attend. Order your drink from the bar and join me and other committee members at the back of the café.

*John Draper Welfare Officer*

*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**

Several new groups have started up this year. Members, *including some new members*, come forward with ideas and work with the committee to launch the group within the overall timetable of groups already meeting. This is such a positive reflection on our u3a indicating that it is an active vibrant community that is not static. Sometimes groups find their numbers dwindle – maybe when they have been meeting for many years or lead coordinators are no longer able to fulfil their role. This can be an opportunity to take a pause and relaunch the group with some new ideas.

### **CLIMATE CHANGE – TAKING A PAUSE**

This group which has been meeting in the Methodist Church is taking a temporary pause in their schedule of meetings from April to August. This is due to a fall in numbers which cannot justify the cost of the venue. However they hope to resume again in September when, maybe, some new interested members will be keen to get involved in this very important and interesting topic. The Group Co-ordinator Pauline Potter says:-

*"The Climate Change group has been meeting on the second Monday of each month (not August and December) since 2020. It started during lock down when we met through the Zoom system. At the beginning we had over twelve members but now it's only seven and sometimes, through member's other commitments, we may only have three to four members attending.*

*Our topics have been very varied over the years from milk, world population, trees, transport, space, ingredients on packages, climate change in many different countries - just to mention a few.*

*If you think this group may suit you then you would be made very welcome". The group page on the website is still open and you can contact me via my name link  
I look forward to hearing from any interested members"*

*Pauline Potter*

### **PAINTING – APPEAL FOR NEW MEMBERS**

New members are needed to enable us to relaunch this long-standing group. All welcome, no painting expertise required just an enthusiasm to have a go at putting paint to paper. To find out more, please email

Judy at [Beaconadm@u3agosport.org.uk](mailto:Beaconadm@u3agosport.org.uk) or Judith at [groupcoord@u3agosport.org.uk](mailto:groupcoord@u3agosport.org.uk)

### **PLAY READING – NEW COORDINATOR**

After a very successful "re-boot" of this group, eight of us met in the museum to verbally enact the slightly out of season play that Angela brought in. *The action was taking place on Christmas Eve!!!*

Our next play will be Alan Bennett's Habeas Corpus and we will be reading it on Thursday 16th April at 1400-1600 in Rogers Room at the Museum. If you fancy passing an enjoyable afternoon with us, please contact me; you will be very welcome.

*Tinou Neal*

### **FINE DINING & WORLD CUISINE**

Unfortunately these groups are now closed. We thank Jan Damerell and others who have been leading and organising these groups as part of u3a Gosport over recent years.  
*Maybe a new group in the future?*

## FRENCH

### Debrouillons-nous en francais (Lets get by in french)



We are a small enthusiastic group of varying abilities who meet fortnightly by video conferencing (Google Meet) on Thursday at 1000.

We welcome new members, just come and listen if you are at all apprehensive. Very suitable for francophiles. We cover a variety of topics. History, geography and culture of France.

We have recently discussed the recipe for Gateau Basque and Quiche Lorraine. (Tip: if you put cheese in the Quiche, it is not Quiche Lorraine but Quiche Vosgienne!)

Please email [richardf.lovett@gmail.com](mailto:richardf.lovett@gmail.com) or tel 023 9258 5194 for further information.

## LOCAL HISTORY

**Our group continues to flourish with many new members joining this year.**

At our March meeting Lewis Sharp presented The Siege of Portsmouth 1897. He detailed how in 1895 The News serialised a “pot boiler” vividly describing a counterfactual invasion of Portsmouth by Franco- Russian troops. Many details were included such as the name of warships, forts and local men. Each episode described the invading forces and the tactics used to repel them. They hi-lighted the vulnerability of the Solent forts and the city’s defended. The newspaper articles were timed to finish on the eve of the elections and add impetus to Lord Beaverbrook’s attempt to be elected as MP for the city. Unfortunately the ploy failed and Beaverbrook turned his energies to acquiring newspapers.

In April we have arranged a trip to Chichester to visit the Novium Museum to see the Roman bath and the Bersted Warrior. After lunch we will look round Chichester Cathedral and admire the Arundel Tomb, Chagal Window and the colourful modern tapestries that hang behind the altar.

*Liz Backhouse*

## PICKLEBALL

A fun Sunday afternoon playing pickleball was enjoyed by a number of our Pickleball players at the inter club friendly hosted by Wickham Pickball Club. A variety of games were played and Wickham Pickleball Club kindly provided snacks and drinks.

If you are interested in playing Pickleball please contact **Jane McArdle** via U3A website.



## **FOLK DANCING - A SUCCESS STORY**

For the first year of our existence we operated each month with 10 or less and most people were new to the activity. However, they were all enthusiastic and wanted to meet more than once each month in order to learn more quickly, so we began to meet on the 4th Monday as well, with the members contributing to the additional rent. I thoroughly enjoy sharing my love of these English 17th & 18th Century dances and I have been joined by an experienced musician which made my job a lot easier and the event more enjoyable. In recent months we have had several newcomers to the Group, so that we now have 16/18 people at each meeting. Perseverance has paid off and we are now well established! Folk Dance is for "as many as will" so there's still plenty of room for others. *Barry Bullimore*

## **WALKING THE EXTRA MILE**

Last Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March we combined Local History with a 7.5 mile walk from Cheriton. Liz Backhouse led 19 of us on a walk around the countryside near the beautiful, peaceful village of today, telling the story of the Battle of Cheriton on 27-29 March 1644 in the English Civil War. In this battle during the earlier period of the war, the Parliamentarians led by William Waller defeated the Royalists led by Sir Ralph Hopton, Earl of Forth.. We learnt that the two men had been friends or comrades in arms before the war when loyalties of families and friends became fiercely divided. This defeat prevented the Royalists from securing South East England for the King. We visited several information



boards at key locations – including this picnic spot – a road triangle at the battle memorial! Liz told us how the battle developed and about the challenges the men on both sides would have faced. It was a really good walk too – we almost didn't notice the rain!!!!



Thank you Liz.

*Kathy Parker*

## **TRAVEL GROUP- DAY TRIP TO THE ROYAL HOSPITAL CHELSEA**

*Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> April - Report and photos next month*

To find out about any of our 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

## FOR THE DIARY

DATE/TIME	EVENT OR ACTIVITY	LOCATION
2/04/2026 All Day	Travel Group Trip to Chelsea Hospital	Coach trip
5/05/2026 at 1030	New Member Meeting	The Vine, 64 Stoke Road
6/5/2026 at 10.30	ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING	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	helpful@u3agosport.org.uk

*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

**Saturday 16th May 7pm Lee Choral Society Spring Concert** .Joseph Haydn's Nelson Mass and the Little Organ Mass with vocal soloists and guest musicians.  
Tickets £15 available on the door at St Faith's Church, Lee on the Solent

**Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> May 6.55 for 7pm start – Spithead Arts Talk . The Empty Chair in Contemporary Art –** Angela Findlay, Anglo-German Artist and Public Speaker will explore the humble chair in a variety of art mediums as a conduit for ideas. We will follow empty chairs through various art movements in the last century.  
Guest £7. Bay House School, Gosport

*If you know about any events in the local area, that you think may be relevant for our u3a members please let Kathy know the details for inclusion here.*

***Thank you for all your contributions – keep them coming!!***

***The next News Update will be published on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2026  
The deadline is Monday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2026 but earlier the better - to guarantee your space***

*Kathy Parker, News Update Editor*