

Newsletter

June 2024

Welcome from your Chair, Sue Derrick

Welcome to the second Newsletter of the Botley, Hedge End & District u3a.

The contributions in this June edition reflect how over the last 3 months our u3a community has been busy in pursuing its interests, learning new things and making friends. Coffee mornings, trips to places near and far, and the many interest groups, have given our community opportunities to come together to live life to the full. May I thank all the facilitators and members who have made this happen.

Thank you too to those who put pen to paper for this issue. Contributions from members are the lifeblood of each issue. Please continue to send your thoughts, reflections and photographs.

Your Newsletter needs you!

Happy reading.

Sue Derrick

Meeting speakers for this Summer

Group meetings take place on the second Wednesday in the month at 1.30pm in the Market Hall, Botley, SO30 2EA.

A wide and interesting range of speakers is lined up for the group meetings including:

- 12 June: David Russell Royal Yacht Britannia
- 10 July: Gerald Ponting 10 Years in the Outer Hebrides
- 14 August: David Bailey Wildlife Photography
- 11 September: James Bisson Vertex Osteopath



News from your u3a Groups

There is an extensive range of groups available for you to take part in: you may be interested in learning something new or participating in a favourite activity.

Details from a selection of our groups will be featured in each newsletter.

This month it is:

Church Exploration



The Church Exploration Group is not about religion. With a talk from the Vicar, Church Warden or Historian, we look at the historical content and architecture of the building. The group meets on the 4th Wednesday of the month. We hold a planning meeting at the beginning of the year to decide the churches we are visiting, and which members are organising the day. We do have a few spaces available in the group.

If you are interested, please contact David at davidmorris22@ntlworld.com

Italian Conversation



There are six of us in our Italian Group. We meet every other Wednesday afternoon. Mirjana is always our host and offers a welcoming and comfortable setting. We do not have a native Italian speaker in the group and so we are teaching ourselves, which, with the help of our book and accompanying CDs, are working well. We are progressing slowly, but very surely. We help and encourage each other. It is a friendly, light-hearted group.

We are all planning to dazzle the Italian population before too long with our newfound skills!



The Lunch Clubs



I am Richard Whiting and I am the facilitator for the lunch clubs. We meet on 4th Tuesday of each month. Members of the lunch club volunteer to organise one of the lunches. We have two venues each month, chosen by those volunteers. They book the venue and greet people on the day. We have 40 members of this group. I make a sign-up sheet for each venue, which are available at our monthly meetings. A few days before the lunch I send reminders to members who have signed up and let the member organising the lunch have a copy of the sheet so they know who to expect on the day. This group is very popular I am looking forward to forming a third group in the future.

Keep an eye out on our [website](#) and on the group sheets at the members' meeting as there may be new opportunities coming up, including groups for Boules, Music Appreciation, Beer Tasting and a Book Club.

If there is something you would like to be involved with or you have a skill to share, please contact Geoff at ga.bheadu3a@gmail.com

Our D-Day commemoration activities



There are a host of commemorative events scheduled nationally to mark the 80th Anniversary of the D-Day Landings to liberate occupied France. Our u3a is fortunate to be located close to Portsmouth and Southwick, both of which played a significant role in this daring operation.

The BHE&D members made visits to these and other key places, starting with a wet and muddy stroll by the river Meon to the Droxford railway sidings where Churchill met the Allied Commanders.

A stroll along Clarence Esplanade to Old Portsmouth ended at the D-Day Museum dedicated to the thousands of troops who took part in the momentous events of 1944. The impressive Overlord Embroidery, the last surviving tank landing craft and interactive displays gave insight to, and enhanced the excellent D-Day presentation given at the monthly members' meeting by Jeremy Prescott on 10 April.



The Chaplain at St. James's Without-the-Priory Gate started our Southwick day with an amusing talk on the part the village played in D-Day and also his role as Chaplain to the Squire.

Military security provided some consternation with the information members had to supply for the Map Room. Under Military escort we did eventually make it past the guard room, into the splendid Officers Mess at Southwick House and the magnificent Map Room where operation Overlord was planned and controlled. Jeremy Green's detailed presentation included the different approaches favoured by each Allied Commander and their advisers. General Eisenhower won the day with some help from the British weather forecaster.



The final outing was to Chartwell when 44 members of our u3a visited Chartwell House, the home of Winston Churchill. The house was very interesting and gave an insight into the life of the Churchill family.

Churchill's art studio was also open to visit. The gardens were well laid out, and many flowers were in bloom. The walled garden had a Rose Walk down the whole length, with roses each side, just starting to open.



Trips

Trips on offer this year include:



On **Monday 22nd July** we have arranged a visit to **Savill Garden**, situated in Windsor Great Park. We will arrive about 10.30am, time for coffee before you find your way around this wonderful garden. You can purchase lunch there or take a picnic. In the afternoon, we travel a few miles to Runnymede, where we board a boat for a two-hour river trip up the Thames. While on board you will be served with a Cream Tea. We still have seats available at just £58 each for this great value day out.



On **Tuesday 10th September** we have arranged a **Day Trip to Brighton**. This is a free day for you to explore at your leisure. There is a lot to do and see which will make it an enjoyable day. You could even take your swimsuits for a dip in the sea. I will not be leading the charge, but quite happy to hold your towel. The cost is £25.

All tickets are available at the members' meetings.

If you are interested in either of these events please talk to David Morris, contactable by email at davidmorris22@ntlworld.com or by phoning 07495 525 707.

Crafty Chocolate Making



BHE&D member Anna Polhill took part in a chocolate making event back in February. Here is her report:

On 28 February Marjorie Watkins and I went to The Crafty Chocolatier at Waterlooville for a course on chocolate making. This course was organised by the Monks Brook u3a who had a few spare places and offered them to our U3a.

We learnt how to fill ready-made chocolate balls with various fillings, how to temper chocolate and how to cover and decorate the chocolates. What a delightful time we had, being taught how to produce beautiful chocolates with each of us taking home our box of handmade and decorated chocolates. Needless to say, we did plenty of sampling along the way!

If you think this is an activity you would like to take part in, please contact Carol Hussey at carol.hussey@hotmail.com. If enough members are interested, we will see if we can arrange a visit.

Coffee Mornings

Summer dates:

The Hillier Garden Centre Café, 10.30am:

- Thursday 6 June
- Thursday 20 June
- Thursday 4 July
- Thursday 18 July
- Thursday 1 August
- Thursday 15 August



Haskins Garden Centre Café, 10.30am:

- Monday 3 June
- Monday 1 July
- Monday 12 August (5 August is Bank Holiday)



Meet our members

There is an opportunity in the Newsletter for you, as a member, to tell us more about yourself. Molly Toomey has provided details on her past and present experiences with the u3a and her memories of the Second World War.



I moved to Botley just over a year ago to live near to my eldest son Michael. Michael mentioned he had joined a new u3a group that had just opened in the area. I had been in a u3a near my home in Surrey since 2009, taking part in many of their activities. Being on the edge of Greater London and having bus and train passes. ‘Exploring London’ was an excellent group in which to belong. This u3a became a very large club with over 1000 members so consequently had numerous divided groups. One occasion I didn’t thank them for was an afternoon tea to celebrate the Queen’s last Jubilee. It was organised as an outdoor occasion but down came the rain! We moved indoors where the ukulele group with singers entertained us. The sun did eventually come out. A few days later I was looking forward to a trip but developed a sore throat and phoned my apologies only to be told that almost everyone in the party had gone down with covid!

As we currently think about the 80th Anniversary of D-Day, I will give my remembrances as there are few of us left who lived through it. I lived in Worcester Park during the war. School classes were held in houses while shelters were dug out on the school field. Living due South of London on a hill we had a good view of the German bombers on their way over London. Barrage balloons and anti-aircraft guns were positioned on Clapham Common to track their routes. The best part of the war for me was being evacuated to Polperro in Cornwall for three months. It was idyllic, but my father stayed in London working at the Hawker Aircraft factory making Hurricane fighter planes.

It has been a good move for me coming to Botley, making lots of new friends and getting to know the village. I have been on the Bus Pass Group trips to Salisbury and Southampton. I keep up with the Strollers. I’ve looked up my family with the Genealogy Group. I’m getting tech savvy with the Home Technology group and have made two visits to the theatre. It’s all good, thank you u3a.

Molly Toomey

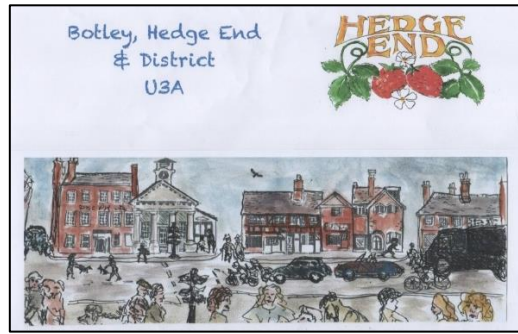
If you would like to tell us about yourself and your experience of the Botley, Hedge End & District u3a please send your feature, around 150 words long, and a photo to carol.hussey@hotmail.com and we’ll include it in a future newsletter.

Membership update

We are really pleased to let you know that our membership figures remain extremely healthy with most members renewing their subscriptions this year.

If you have family or a friend who may be interested in joining us, please forward our contact details as we will be delighted to meet them.

New logo picture



We hope you noticed the new logo picture which appears on our BHE&D u3a web page and features on the opening page of this newsletter. It was created uniquely for us by artist Ashley Ailes. Ashley and his wife Ann are members of our u3a.

Ashley is in the Wine Tasting, Heraldry and the Church Exploration groups. He takes his sketch book to the latter two groups and does very accomplished drawings as the meetings go on!

He was a barrister (KC), called to the bar in 1975, ceasing practice in March 2020 as we went into lockdown during the covid pandemic. We thank Ashley for his beautiful artwork.

Thanks

We would also like to send our thanks to those members who have been providing features to our local Church magazines:

- Ken Thomas and Sue Perry for their reports on their Church Exploration trips in the Botley Bridge magazine.
- Geoff Warden for his features in the Curdridge Parish magazine.

Full details of all activities taking place with the Botley, Hedge End & District u3a can be found on the [website](#) or by emailing bhedistrict.u3a@gmail.com or see our Facebook page for more news.

