



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE
REGISTERED CHARITY NO 296975

Issue No 89 Editor: Margaret Morgan email editor@guildfordu3a.org.uk

SUMMER NEWSLETTER 2025 - GUILDFORD AREA u3a



CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

Dear Gu3a members,

Well, summer is definitely here – rather early, with August weather in late April! As we're spending more time outdoors I've just dug out an old badminton kit for my daughters; not that I have any talent for it myself – I'd probably struggle to beat a human opponent; I was wondering though whether I might stand a chance against a newly developed [badminton-playing robot](#). It has four legs, one arm to hold its racket, and a camera to locate and aim for the shuttlecock. It maintained a rally of 10 shots after a little practice, so it would probably still beat me after all.... The miracles of modern technology!

Talking of technology, my ageing ears are leading me to consider hearing aids. Last year Celia Woodward ran a very well received course on coping with hearing loss. It may have reached most of its target audience first time around, because this year it was undersubscribed, so we have decided not to run it next year. Fear not, though: if all goes well we are hoping to run it again in spring 2027.

However reliable your own ears may or may not be, I'm sure you'll have heard that Guildford u3a is now four full decades old! My sincere thanks to Julie Beattie, who organised an excellent (and very well received) celebratory Barn Dance and Tea at the Masonic Lodge, a wonderful venue overlooking the river. I'll be sure to pass on to my successor that Julie will be the ideal person to organise our 50th anniversary celebrations in ten years' time!! . .

This being the summer, it's time to look into the excellent opportunities afforded by the [u3a summer schools](#). Actually, it's well past time, because many courses are already

fully booked. There are still places available though in the [South East \(Chichester\) summer school](#) for Mathematics, Patchwork, Poetry, Yoga and Intermediate Italian. (I can highly recommend the [Mathematics](#) course, best suited for those with little or no knowledge of mathematics; it's being run by the inimitable Roger Luther, an excellent and inspiring former colleague of mine.)

I've no doubt that you'll tire of me promoting the excellent Study Days at Yehudi Menuhin Hall: <https://surreynetwork.u3asite.uk/events>. If you haven't tried them yet, you just don't know what you're missing. The May event gave a fascinating overview of the rise of India, China and Japan, as well as of the current major-powers race for dominance over the oceans. I'm very much looking forward to Catherine Heffernan's June overview of our beloved National Health Service. That will be the last in the series for this academic year – but do take a look at the list already in place for next year. Book early to avoid disappointment!

I've gone on for long enough, but I have just two more things to add before I close. First of all, we are, as always, desperately short of volunteers. We'd be most grateful to you if you could set aside a little time – it doesn't have to be all that much – to help us to run our wonderful u3a organisation, from which so many people benefit. Margaret Sharp has kindly offered to host a garden party on Thursday 26th June, 5:30-7pm at 96 London Rd, Guildford GU1 1TH for those of you who feel you may be able to help out. Just so we know how many to expect, if you would like to be there please respond by giving your name at <https://tinyurl.com/gu3a-garden-party>. We look forward to seeing you then.

Finally, we'd love to hear from you if you have any feedback or suggestions, whether about this Newsletter, or about u3a more generally. Please do feel free to get in touch at chair@guildfordu3a.org.uk.

Best regards

Philip Harris, on behalf of myself and Bernie Cohen, Gu3a Co-Chairs

40th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATORY TEA AND BARN DANCE



Guildford Area u3a was founded in 1983 but only affiliated to the Third Age Trust in 1985, so this year is our 40th anniversary. It was hard to decide what to do to celebrate but we thought we would do something for our members rather than something more public and I reckoned a barn dance would do the trick. I had been to one held by Dorking u3a, I was impressed by their D'Arcy Spice band and caller, all I had to do was find a venue. This proved much more easily said than done. Spectrum, being the obvious one, had no onsite catering and bringing in all the tables, cutlery, napery and staff as well as the food

pushed it well over budget. I went round all the venues we usually use but none was big enough for 100 people or so to have tea and dance. I am grateful to Linda Baker for the suggestion of the Masonic Lodge just off the Portsmouth Road. There was room for everyone and an excellent view over the river to Shalford Meadows.

We were lucky enough to have Allan Walmsley, chair of the Third Age Trust and Sally Ingledew of the South East Forum as our guests of honour. Everybody joined in with the fun and dancing and some even managed to wear something in honour of VE day. I had accidentally chosen the same date. Their catering team treated us to an excellent afternoon tea (of which very little was left by the end!) and our newsletter editor's daughter, Julie Phillips made a memorable cake. It was a most enjoyable occasion and I thank everyone who joined in the spirit of the afternoon to make it such a success.

Julie Beattie

DIRECTOR OF STUDIES' REPORT

Group Enrolment Day

Guildford Area u3a Group Enrolment Day

Come join us and enrol at the event

Tuesday 12th August
2.00-3.30pm

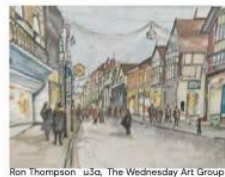
Celebrating
40 years in the
Guildford Area

At the Spectrum Leisure Centre

Parkway, Guildford, GU1 1UP
Arena B on the lower floor

With over 110 activity and interest groups

And over 1500 members



Visit our website <https://www.guilfordu3a.org.uk>

Do something brilliant and join the u3a

Registered Charity: 296975

Our annual event will be on Tuesday 12th August 2025, from 2.00-3.30pm, at The Spectrum Leisure Centre. This is an opportunity for you to meet with Group Leaders and find out about their groups, enrolling where you can. Most of our groups will be represented on the day, or contact details will be taken so that someone can get in touch with you after the event. There will also be information about trips and outings, and our MOTO group. The Group Leaders will be located in Arena B, on the lower floor of the Spectrum, and our Membership Enrolment Team will be next door in Arena A.

Enrolment Day is intended for our members to sign up to groups, rather than to renew their subscriptions, which should be done in accordance with the instructions in your Renewal Letter – paying either by online bank transfer or by cheque.

The Enrolment Team will be there to sign up new members joining Guildford u3a on the day. If you have a friend who might enjoy being part of u3a then please do bring them along to our event, where they can find out more and join us. We will have volunteer marshals around the site, pointing people in the right direction to get to the two Arenas. There will be two access points – either through the front door at the top of the ramp from the car park, or through a fire exit close to the underground car park, which has no steps to manage.

If you are able to help as a volunteer for Group Enrolment Day, or for any other Gu3a activity, then please contact Moira on studies@guildfordu3a.org.uk. We welcome all offers of help in running Guildford u3a.

More information about Group Enrolment Day will come out via our weekly bulletins nearer the time. We look forward to seeing lots of you there on the day.

AI – Friend or Foe?



It is impossible to escape the impact of Artificial Intelligence on everyday life. From weighing vegetables at Sainsbury's, to scams and fake news; AI is all around us. In u3a, many of us would like to understand this technology, and learn how it can help with tasks such as researching a topic, identifying birdsong, writing a song, creating an image, or planning a holiday itinerary.

That's the aim of the "Silver AI Project": an in-person course of six one-hour sessions, originally designed by Yate & Sudbury u3a, and adapted by Russell Whitworth for presentation to Guildford u3a. A successful pilot was run in February and March, and the course will be run again in September and October. Watch for it in the 2025/26 Prospectus, and sign up at Group Enrolment Day on August 12.

Another resource is u3a's "AI for Everyone" library, containing news items, presentation materials, and contact details for u3a's national AI team (of which Russell is a member): <https://u3acommunities.org/interest-groups/computing/ai-for-everyone/>

The AI for Everyone team hosts a monthly "AI News" on-line event with a different host and topic each month. In addition, there are one-off events focussing on specific aspects of AI. All of these can be found in the Online Learning Events page: <https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events#Events>

AI was not used in writing this article... apart from the image, which was created by Angela Gilmour using Microsoft Bing Image Creator during our Feb/Mar course.

CROQUET

The Guildford & Godalming Croquet Club has offered us an opportunity to learn and play croquet with them. There is a cost to this, payable directly to GGCC. There were free taster days in April and May, but if you're interested in joining them then the details are as follows and please contact the named Group Leader:

We will play every Thursday morning 10-30- 12-30 from Thursday 30 April until the end of September (22 sessions) – the play each week depending on the weather. The play is at Guildford and Godalming Croquet club, (GGCC) Godalming. All equipment is provided and all you need is flat shoes. There are club mallets. The group will be taught/assisted/supported by members of the GGCC each week. There may be an end of season pairs competition.

We offer two free taster sessions on 30th April and 7th May. The cost will then be £100 for the full season payable by standing order to the Croquet Club as a lump sum or in £20 monthly instalments.

Group leader; Bruce Merrells brucemerrells@gmail.com for details.

GOLF



We have been approached by Bramley Golf Club about the possibility of starting up a Golf Group. We used to have one, but it folded in 2020. There were about 30 members, who played three times a year, and there was a charge to cover green fees, refreshments, etc. Bramley are willing to offer something similar, if there is enough interest from Guildford u3a members. So far, we have six members who would like to join, but it would be good to have more, in order to consider starting our own

group. We would also need someone to take on the role of Group Leader, managing the group membership and communicating with members. If you are interested in a Golf group then please contact Moira on studies@guildfordu3a.org.uk.

FUNDRAISING FOR u3a

Support the work of the u3a - sponsor **Liz Mc Donnell** as she takes on **the Great North Run 2025**. On 6 September this year, Liz, who is Group Leader for our Italian Intermediate and Target Shooting groups, along with 60,000 others will take on the challenge of running a half marathon from Newcastle to South Shields. Liz said: "This will be my first ever half marathon and will push me beyond my current 5K experience into unknown territory. I will be raising money for The Third Age Trust, its 1,000 u3as and 400,000 members across the UK.

I'm a firm believer that learning can be life-changing; it is never too late to learn - it feeds our mind and our spirit. When we join the u3a, we become part of a community – and through sharing our interests, we create new friendships. All this while keeping fit together, learning together, discovering skills we never knew we had and the courage to do so but, ultimately, we have fun together.

The u3a is looking to expand its membership to anyone in the country. With your fundraising and support we can continue to support u3a activities up and down the country and help create a future where everyone has a community around them – together we can help reduce loneliness and ensure everyone can learn, laugh and live to our fullest, no matter our age."

Guildford u3a's Executive Committee supports Liz's endeavour and wishes her the best of luck with the run. Liz has created a page where you can donate to the u3a and follow her progress here:

<https://ajbellgreatnorthrun2025.enthuse.com/pf/elizabeth-mcdonnell>

SURREY NETWORK STUDY DAYS

20th June 2025 9:30 am-4:00 pm Study Day **NHS: The Next 10 Years**

Presented by Dr Catherine Heffernan, Director of Health Improvement at Southwest London Integrated Care Board. Places will be available in the hall or for on-line viewing. Bookings at June 2025 [...]

Venue: [The Menuhin Hall](#) **Booking Required**

19th September 2025 9.30 am-4:00 pm Study Day

Vulcan & Concorde: Iconic Aircraft

Presented by Guy Bartlett, Aviation Historian The stories of the Vulcan Bomber and of Concorde, the only successful Supersonic Passenger Aircraft, will be told. Places will be available in the available in the hall or for on-line viewing.

Venue: [The Menuhin Hall](#) **Booking Required**

SUMMER COFFEE MORNINGS 2025

7 Jul - Stoke Park Café, Stoke Road, GU1 1ER

The student car park at Guildford College on Stoke Road can be used after 6pm weekdays and is open to the public all day during weekends and college holidays (Summer Term finishes 5 Jul). Walk into the park from the car park, turn right past the swings and left through the arch in the wall on the left. Walk past the tennis courts and the café is on the left at the top of the path.

- The coffee shop is adjacent to the boating lake
- Nearest Toilets: Stoke Park Nursery Toilets. 9 Nightingale Rd, Guildford GU1 1ER
- No inside space.
- There is also limited parking at Home Farm on Nightingale Road (**GU1 1ER**) and it is a short walk from the Gardens.

23 July- Olive Tree, Sutton Green , Guildford GU4 7QD

- Parking on site.
- Filter coffee and Tea ordered as wait times were lengthy at this venue last year.

The Tea and coffee will be £2.50 a head – please pay the venue direct, before leaving the pub.. Please note: last year some left accidentally without paying their bill!

7 August – The Weyside Pub, Millbrook, Guildford GU1 3XJ

- The nearest car park is Millbrook (cash or Ringo) next to the Yvonne Arnaud Theatre.
- Large outside deck area next to the River Wey. Tables with benches or chairs are available.

- THERE ARE A NUMBER OF STEPS AROUND THE DECKING AREA. PLEASE TAKE CARE.
- Shade provided by multiple parasols and a roofed area over some of the tables

18 Aug – Rokers Farm House Cafe, Holly Lane, Worplesdon, Guildford GU3 3PB

- Parking on site.
- Order and pay inside on arrival and join everyone outside if a fine day.
- We are no longer able to pre-book, so we may be split up.... those arriving early do please try and find some tables for us.

29 Aug -The Boat House Café, Millbrook, Guildford GU1 3XJ

- Parking is available in the pay and display Millbrook car park. (Cash or Ringo)
- There is undercover or outside seating.

VIRTUAL COFFEE MORNINGS

Virtual coffee mornings are held particularly for those who are unable to get out and about. The next date will be 23rd June - at 11.00am on Zoom. Contact me to join in; details of how to join in are also on the Gu3a website and each one will be advertised via the weekly Bulletin.

Moira MacQuaide - Director of Studies studies@guildfordu3a.org.uk

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

CARD MAKING AND PAPERCRAFT



This group has enjoyed learning about different cardmaking techniques each month, creating some wonderful and unique cards for family and friends. For a small contribution, paper, card and embellishments are provided, along with some equipment. Members can work on their own projects if desired and just enjoy the social element of being in a group.

We have a mix of members who are experienced card makers, as well as those who are very new to the hobby. We meet on the 4th Thursday afternoon each month at Burpham Village Hall. New members are always welcome. The photo shows Waterfall cards made in May.

Moira MacQuaide –Group Leader

Exploring Local History 2



We have enjoyed learning about lots of local history this year, including talks about Robert Baden Powell, Guildford Pub Bombings, Guildford's Medieval Undercroft, the English Civil War, Guildford High Street in the 1900s, Ripley – the Mecca for all good cyclists, Royalty in Surrey, Leith Hill House, Charles Sells, and the Development of Guildford 1860-1900. Members are encouraged to do some research and present their information to the group – help can be provided for putting images into PowerPoint. Meetings are usually hybrid, with most members in the hall, but some joining us via Zoom, and talks are recorded. We always welcome new members – especially if you're willing to contribute to the programme.

Moira MacQuaide –Group Leader

Poetry Group

The bees buy and sell

It's market day on Plum Street

Pollen changes hands.

A haiku by the Poet Laureate, Simon Armitage From his collection "Blossomise"

Every month at the poetry group is different : Ezra Pound one month, Rap/Dub poets the next; Fleur Adcock or Michael Longley. For some time we have concentrated on poets of the 20th and 21st century, this year we had a lucky dip. It might be Shakespeare or George Herbert, or it might be Jenny Joseph or Trees. We rarely have a "topic" so the latter subject is a bit of an innovation, although we did have an afternoon of "Poetry as Music."

Poetry sounds rather serious with memories of school and learning by heart. What is poetry? Does it need to rhyme? Come along and find out and enjoy two hours of fun. The members are lively with a lot of banter and laughter, we are a very relaxed group. "Strangely enough, it has been a most entertaining afternoon discussing Milton" someone said last month.

Brenda Thain Group Leader Support

OUTINGS AND VISITS REPORT

We have had a busy few months, going on a number of visits to a wide variety of places. In March we were able at last to make our second visit to **the Bank of England Museum and Mansion House**. This trip had been oversubscribed in 2022 and we'd been waiting all this time for a repeat visit. There were different exhibitions in the **Bank of England Museum**, updated since last time, with explanations of how we are all being impacted by digital and crypto currency, and the loss of the use of cash, and especially the effect this has on older people – all very relevant to us. Many attempted to lift a gold bar and had a go at solving clues to crack a safe (a necessary skill!).



After lunch around Leadenhall Market we had a guided tour of **Mansion House**, the official residence of the Lord Mayor of London, which he (next year will be a she) uses for official functions. The rather dark and imposing Palladian-style building contained a magnificent collection of artwork, statues, chandeliers, furnishings and decorations inside - particularly the magnificent Egyptian Hall used for formal

banquets. Our guide explained the history of the house, with stories of different visitors and dignitaries – and pointed out the chairs that only King Charles III is allowed to sit on. We completed our day in the City with visits to the **Sky Garden** and the open-air roof **Garden at 120 Fenchurch Street** for some wonderful views of the London skyline and the Surrey hills far beyond.

In contrast to our day amongst the office blocks in the busy city, we went to leafy Berkshire for our April outing. Our morning visit was to the small **Sandham Memorial Chapel**, built in the 1920s to accommodate a series of paintings by Stanley Spencer which were inspired by his own experiences of World War 1. Created to honour the 'forgotten dead' who were not remembered on any official memorials, the series shows Spencer's everyday experiences as a medical orderly and soldier on



the Salonika front with some personal and unexpected details, such as the preparing of food and of himself clearing up the rubbish left by the troops. An informative guide explained the different panels – unfortunately we weren't allowed to take pictures inside.



We then travelled the short distance to **Greenham Common Control Tower** for the afternoon. Enthusiastic guides explained the history of this place, including its important role during D-Day when planes with paratroopers took off in the night at 11-second intervals. It was then a hive of activity during the Cold War when the Americans had a base there – it was said that the jet fighters were so loud during the night that local children went to school to get some sleep! And of course we

heard about the Peace Movement, which became the Peace Women, some of whom still remain camped on the edge of the site. We went up onto the Observation Deck where instrument panels showed live flights, and there were some lovely panoramic views of the now-green common land which has reverted back to nature, with just glimpses of the old runway and bunkers. Some people walked around the common to get closer views of these. A lovely day ended with tea and cake in the sunshine.

In May we set off to **Salisbury** for the **Flower Festival in the Cathedral**. Our morning visit was to **Arundells**, the private home of Sir Edward Heath, located right by the Cathedral. This is an attractive house, with each room set to show his different interests – from humble beginnings he became a politician, racing yachtsman, musician and art collector. There was an interesting display showing how he spent his time while in the army during WW2, and a collection of satirical newspaper cartoons – X (formerly known as Twitter) of its day, I suppose. He also loved China, being instrumental in establishing diplomatic relationships with the country, which he visited a number of times and brought many objects and gifts back to the house. The garden was a delight, especially on this sunny spring day, with flowering shrubs and lawns reaching down to the river Avon – Sir Edward had wanted the gardens to be open to the river so he could enjoy the views and access it, but security forces insisted the garden was fenced off due to the IRA threat at the time.





After some free time to explore this lovely city, we went into the **Cathedral** to see the Flower Festival. The theme this year was The Spirit of Water. There were some very creative displays, ranging from waterfalls and lakes, to jelly fish made out of umbrellas, to a world with no water at all, which was quite a depressing sight. The cathedral itself has some stunning modern tapestries and artwork, stained glass windows, Medieval graffiti, an unusual 'dip stick' which measures the water level underneath the building to make sure it's still safe (it is built on a water meadow where five rivers converge) and one of only four originals of the Magna Carta.



We have just returned from our June trip to **Osborne House on the Isle of Wight**. After re-arranging Shalford pickups at the last moment and with rainfall of biblical proportions when leaving Guildford on the A3, we took the ferry from Portsmouth when blue sky started to appear and this turned into a lovely sunny day

Osborne was the holiday home of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, mainly designed by him, and where she became almost a recluse after his death. Inside the house we toured the state rooms, as well as the dining room, bedrooms and dressing rooms where they'd had the luxury of having a bath installed. Of the state rooms, the most spectacular was the Durbar room, which the Queen installed after she became Empress of India and fascinated with the country. Guides explained the many portraits of their family members, most of whom were married off to European royalty or heads of state. The formal gardens and grounds at Osborne are extensive and luckily there was a shuttle bus which took some members around – so many of us went down to the beach to enjoy the views of the Solent and an ice-cream – and some even had a paddle.



Our next visits will be to see two lovely gardens at **Pashley Manor and Great Dixter** in July, and then to **Chichester Theatre's** summer musical offering of **Top Hat** , and a second visit to **Osborne House** in September. Details of these trips have already been circulated. We're also planning ahead to the end of the year with a visit to **Chatham Dockyard** with an optional **Call the Midwife Tour** in October, the **Tower of London** to see the '**Tower Remembers**' poppy display in November, and in December to **Brick Lane Music Hall's Jingle Bell Show** and a return to the **John Rutter Christmas Concert at the Royal Albert Hall**. Dates of any planned trips are listed on the Outings page of the Groups section of the website; details will be circulated when finalised and the trips are open for booking.

Ann Elms and Jackie Ring-Visits and Outings

THE DEADLINE for the **AUTUMN 2025** newsletter is **10 OCTOBER**: please submit your contributions as a **Word.doc or compatible** in Arial font, single spacing. **Photos as individual jpg files** please. Anything sent after the deadline will be held over until the next newsletter