



**THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE
REGISTERED CHARITY NO 296975**

Issue No 90 Editor: Margaret Morgan email editor@guildfordu3a.org.uk

AUTUMN NEWSLETTER 2025 - GUILDFORD AREA u3a



CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

Dear Gu3a members,,

This summer has flown past... from no-mow-May, through still-too-soon-June, don't-even-try-July, mower's-bust-August, didn't-remember-September... And now it's more or less the last chance before winter sets in. Oh well - there's always next year...

Seriously, though, this year really has passed quickly. Aply assisted by our wonderful team of volunteers on ExCom and in the wider Gu3a community, Bernie and I have settled smoothly into our new co-Chair roles; I tend to deal with more administrative and paperwork issues (like this!), whereas Bernie does more "pressing the flesh" and interacting with, for example, our external (regional and national) partners. Our availability for various meetings and so on does seem to alternate, so it's been extremely useful that there are two of us to cover for each other.

Speaking (again) of summer, I wish I could tell you that I spent it at lots of u3a summer-school activities around the country... I didn't - not least because of family commitments - but as always I hear wonderful feedback about the excellent quality of provision. It's certainly something to consider for the future. If though you prefer an autumn break, and like the idea of a cruise or holiday at this time of year, perhaps you might consider our partners Riviera Travel (<https://www.u3a.org.uk/news/our-partners/riviera-travel>) - if you let them know that you're a member of Guildford u3a, they will pass on a commission to us, which in turn will help us keep costs to a minimum for our members.

If you happen to shop online, another straightforward way to raise money for us is through [Easyfundraising.org.uk](https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk). Just sign up, and nominate Guildford u3a as your charity of choice. They can then add a small extension to your browser so that each time you buy at any of about 8,000 outlets a small donation will be given to Gu3a at no cost to you.

Such financial considerations bring us on to the subject of our upcoming AGM - it's by far our most important meeting of the year, and you will have received papers for it alongside this newsletter. Please do attend if you can, whether in person or online, as quoracy is essential. The single most important item for debate concerns our membership fees. These have been fixed at £30 per annum since 2020. With inflation being what it is, we are now running a substantial deficit, drawing on reserves built up during the Covid years. Had fees increased at the rate of inflation, the annual membership fee for 2026-27 would be £38; we will propose instead at the meeting that we should continue to draw upon our reserves, but making a rather smaller loss, by increasing the fee to just £35 per annum from next year. I do hope that members will agree that it is a prudent, sensible and acceptable step to take - and that this fee still represents extraordinarily good value for money, giving as it does access to such a wide range of opportunities. Incidentally, this year, as an added incentive to attend the meeting, we will have a speaker present to give us insight into the holiday activities of our royal family.

I shall close here, wishing you all the very best for the start of this new academic year with Guildford u3a. Should any of you have just a little time available to help us to run this wonderful organisation, please do get in touch.

Best regards,

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

MESSAGE FROM DIRECTOR OF STUDIES

Our Group Enrolment Day in August went well, with about 80 Group Leaders there to tell interested members about what their groups can offer. We had about 250 visitors to the event, and our Membership Enrolment Team signed up almost 70 new members to Gu3a. It is good to see that the majority of our groups have started their meetings again for the new academic year. We have welcomed Birdwatching back to our programme, and a new group, Practical DIY Solutions. Some groups have noted that they have a lot of names on their registers, but far fewer attendees at meetings. If you have signed up for a group, but now find that you can't attend the meetings, then please let the Group Leader know so that someone else could be offered the place. If you are interested in joining a group, then please contact the Group Leader before turning up at a meeting, so that you can check that there are available spaces and that it is the right group for you.

Moira MacQuaide Director of Studies

SURREY NETWORK STUDY DAYS

21st November 2025 9:30 am - 4:00 pm

The History of British Industry: Iron & Rivets, to Electronics & Jets, to Robots & AI

Presented by Dr Richard Marks Places will be available in the hall or for on-line viewing. Bookings at November 2025 Study Day Venue: The Menuhin Hall

Booking Required

MONTHLY MEETINGS - Venue QE Park Centre

24th November 2025 2:30 pm Meeting

Annual General Meeting

Notice of meeting and associated documentation will be sent to members two weeks before meeting. The meeting will be preceded by a jigsaw/book exchange, tea and chat starting at 2:00pm

24th November 2025 3:30 pm **Royal Christmas** - Siobhan Clarke has worked for Historic Royal Palaces for 25 years. She has lectured for the British Museum, and other such organisations, and worked in broadcasting. The talk will explore how the Royal Family celebrated

26th January 2026 An Alaska Adventure

Paul Whittle's professional career was mainly in the City of London, being granted the Freedom of the City of London in 1999. Over 20 years his public speaking has raised funds for charities in Myanmar (Burma), India, Nepal and elsewhere. He also lectures on cruise ships

23rd February 2026 Operation Pied Piper – evacuate

Glyn Powell Evans has been an innovator, inventor and entrepreneur for more than fifty years. As a photographer, his latest project is a picture book about London evacuees sent to Womersley. Profit from sales will be shared with the Rural Life Museum in Tilford.

23rd March 2026 – Serendipity Follows Me on my Journey

Jenny Mallin is an author and winner of "Best in the World Cookbook" (2017) by the Gourmand World Cookbook Society. Many of her talks are based on the subject of her published book "A Grandmother's Legacy" covering five generations of her British India family.

VIRTUAL COFFEE MORNINGS

Virtual coffee mornings are held particularly for those who are unable to get out and about. The next dates will be 30 October, 14 November, 1 & 16 December, 8 & 23 January and 9 February - 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.

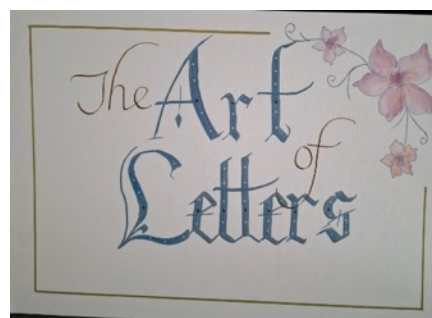
Moira MacQuaide - Director of Studies studies@guildfordu3a.org.uk

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

BIRDWATCHING

We are delighted to announce the re-launch of the Guildford U3A Birdwatching group. This group is for beginners and enthusiasts alike and meets every second Monday. It will involve walks around local birding areas such as Burpham Riverside, Jacob's Well and Whitley Common, looking and listening for whatever birds are around depending on the season. The next meeting is on 10 November 2025 and will be a gentle stroll around Riverside Park Nature Reserve. Meeting at Bowers Lane car park (GU4 7ND) from 10.15 for a 10.30 start. Anyone interested in joining please contact the group leader Marie Jarvie at marie.jarvie@btinternet.com.

CALLIGRAPHY



Janet Thorpe Group Leader

CARDMAKING & PAPERCRAFT GROUP



We are a small group of cardmaking enthusiasts, some new to the hobby and some more experienced people. We started off the year making stained glass cards and colouring-in cards (see the photo), which were very successful. We'll spend the next couple of months concentrating on Christmas cards, then from January we'll focus on a different technique each month.

Moira MacQuaide

CROQUET

Come and join in this fun game of skill and tactics. All equipment is provided as well as excellent coaching and support from experienced members of the Guildford & Godalming Croquet Club. £100 for full season or £20 paid monthly by standing order.

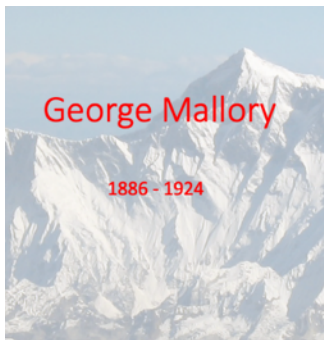
Leader for U3A: Jayne Grant. Contact at GGCC: Wendy Lockwood
info@guildfordandgodalmingcroquetclub.co.uk

Day & time: Every Thursday 10.30-12.30 Dates: From end of April (free taster sessions 30 April & 7 May) until end of Sept

Venue: Guildford & Godalming Croquet Club, Broadwater Park.



EXPLORING LOCAL HISTORY 2



We meet on the last Friday afternoon each month, except December, in Burpham Village Hall, and our members do some research then give talks about what they've learned. We have one external speaker each year, and members contribute to the cost of the speaker fee. We started off the year with a talk about George Mallory and his ill-fated attempt to reach the summit of

Mount Everest in 1924 (see the photo), and we have a wide range of interesting talks for the rest of our programme. We run the meetings as hybrid, so that some members can join us from home, via Zoom, and we also record the presentations and circulate these to members after the meetings. We always welcome new members, especially those who are willing to give talks.

Moira MacQuaide

INTRODUCTION TO DIGITAL LIVING

Accessibility Options in Smartphones, Tablets and Computers; Do you struggle to read your phone screen or hear your tablet or computer?

Modern digital devices—like smartphones, tablets and computers—include built-in accessibility features to help people with different needs use technology more easily. These tools are designed to support vision, hearing, mobility and cognitive differences, and they're available on nearly all devices.

For those with vision challenges, **screen readers** (like VoiceOver on Apple or TalkBack on Android) read aloud what's on the screen. You can also enlarge text, increase contrast, or use **magnifiers** to zoom in. **Speech-to-text** lets you speak instead of typing, and **dictation** is available in most apps. If hearing is a concern, devices offer **live captions**, **visual alerts**, and support for **hearing aids** via Bluetooth. You can also adjust audio balance and enable mono sound.

For mobility, features like **AssistiveTouch**, **on-screen keyboards**, and **voice control** help users navigate without needing precise finger movements. You can also customize gestures or use switches and external devices. Cognitive support includes **simplified interfaces**, **focus modes**, and **reminders** to help with memory and attention.

For once, no matter which device you use, the way you find these features is standardised. Go to the **Settings** on your device and then to the option called **Accessibility**. Give it a try, there is so much there that can help you get more from your digital device.

Paul Kassell - Group Leader

SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY

The Social Anthropology Group adopts a book at the British Library.

For many years, we trudged in with the Book Box, Social Anthropology Library. Some people probably read all the books and others none so it seemed time to dispose of them, so I offered them to the group for a donation which raised around £53. (I still have some left!), The British Library offers the opportunity to adopt a book for conservation at a cost of £40. See below. I made up the rest to £15 for an ordinary donation.

I chose 'Robinson Crusoe' because the story identifies well with Social Anthropology. We have Man Friday as the perfect 'Other', plenty of 'exotic' and I am sure that R.C. developed his ethnobotanical skills considerably. Certainly, he would have benefited from my last class presentation, on 'The Ethnobotany of the Coconut.'

The British Library gratefully acknowledges that Guildford u3a soc.anth.group has contributed to the Library's vital conservation programme by adopting **Daniel Defoe The Life and Strange Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe (1905)**

This adoption enables us to preserve our literary heritage for future Generations
Thank You

A LOCAL DAY



We started at the Shah Jahan Mosque and listened in the cool shade of the pretty gardens to the history of this tiny mosque which some of us had visited but others had passed this pretty green and white building on the train. It was commissioned by Gottlieb Wilhelm Leitner and designed by the Victorian architect W.L.Chambers and completed in 1889. It is now a Grade 1 listed building. Leitner a Jew from Hungary, was a committed Orientalism and he opened the Oriental Institute in 1883 and commissioned the mosque for students and visiting dignitaries. It is worthwhile reading up about this unusual man who spoke 15 languages. (I had always puzzled as to why Oriental Road was so called).



Muslim Burial Site Woking

A short ride and convenient coach space for the Muslim Burial Ground and Peace Garden. Easily seen from the road and approached via a shady pine-wood path this peaceful spot was commissioned in 1915 as the final resting place for 19 Muslim soldiers killed in WW1. Now a Grade 11 site, it was restored in 2015 to remember the 27 Muslim soldiers who fought for Britain. The bodies were later re-interred at Brookwood Cemetery in 1969 but remains sacred land. It follows traditional Islamic Garden style with 27 Indian Silver Birches

On to stops 3 and 4 where we divided for entrance to the WWF Living Planet Centre over the Brewery Car Park in central Woking. It is a two-storey, 3,666 m² office building designed with sustainability at its core. It features a large, timber diagrid roof that spans over the open-plan office space, with glazed gable ends and larch louvers. The building is raised on a concrete podium above a car park and includes features like ground source heat pumps, rainwater recycling, and a photovoltaic array.

The Living Planet Centre shows that, through the smart use of design, materials and technology, it's possible to create a state-of-the-art building with minimal environmental impact, BREEAM Outstanding status confirms its place as one of the greenest buildings in the UK, and the RIBA National Award, recognises its

architectural significance. See website for visiting. Due to proximity and timing, most people had lunch at the Lightbox.

Finally, to Brookwood Cemetery where a tour of the non-conformist graves had been arranged. However, it was afternoon on perhaps the hottest day of the year and our guide explained that she was unwilling to expose us to a non-shady area of 31C..So, we agreed to the cool shade of the Military Cemetery and a shortened version. How peaceful under the shade of the Sequia avenue and many other trees. These American redwoods were planted around 150 years ago.

Visit to Horniman Museum

Yet another very hot day for my fourth U3A visit to this jewel of a Museum in South London which has so much to offer.

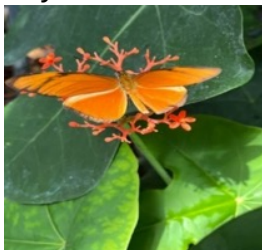
The Natural History section of stuffed beasts is closed for another year. This surely represents the museums of our childhood. In the past 10 years the Museum has been thoroughly transformed. Not only is there an extensive representation of musical instruments but there are videos of them being played and, most addictive of all, are the two tables where you can select a picture of any instrument from the Jew's harp to the zither to African drums and hear them play.

Not surprisingly my favourite room is The World Gallery recently recently re-vamped from its whimsical cabinets packed with anthropological loot.

There is also the Aquarium (extra cost) where amongst 15 exhibits is the pioneering Project Coral Outside now passing the small animals and a remarkably large bunny which has been there for years



Anyone with the energy climbed the hill to the Butterfly House(extra cost).. Excellent.



The gardens are extensive with lots of shady benches. There is a refreshment kiosk and excellent café with the largest almond croissant you have ever seen and tasty sandwiches.

On the way is the panorama which always comes as a pleasant shock when you see the City of London with the Shard in particular, Battersea Power Station and Wembley Stadium. Despite the heat haze some were still visible.



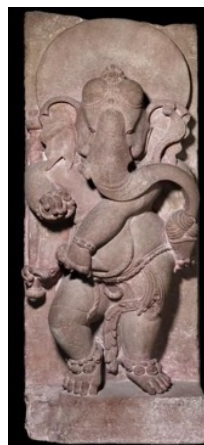
In fact I consider the Horniman to be one of London's best family assets. It is not simple to get there independently but is a pleasant journey by coach. We were back in Burpham in just about an hour.

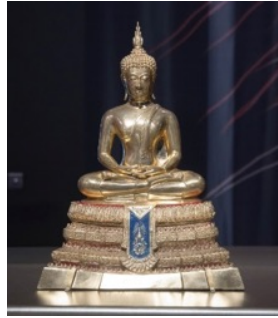
OUTING TO THE BRITISH MUSEUM SEPTEMBER 2025

After much uncertainty due to shortage of numbers, we eventually made it to the British Museum. The main focus was 'Ancient India, Living Traditions'. The exhibition goes back more than 2,000 years, and explores the origins of Jain, Budiman and Hindu origins of sacred art in the ancient and powerful nature spirits of India and the spread of this beyond the sub-continent.

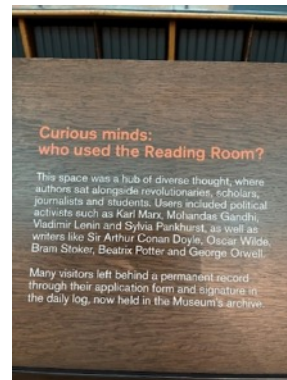


It looks at India from a multi-faith, contemporary and global perspective, highlighting the inspiration behind the now familiar depictions of the deities along with the enlightened teachers and the spread along the Silk Road . There are more than 180 objects including sculptures, paintings drawings and manuscripts from the South Asia Collection of the British Museum as well as international loans





THE BRITISH MUSEUM READING ROOM



This Reading Room, opened in 1857, was part of a trend in towns and cities to give the working classes the opportunity for self help.

The British Museum became the British Library, a haunt of the elite (I used to find it dark and daunting) which moved to the newly built British Library in 1997. It now houses 25,00 books etc. volumes relating to the contents of the BM and is accessed by private tours.

Not everyone went to the exhibition or even the British Museum, where in addition to overwhelming collections there are informative tours. I had not realised that some of the original British Library remains the very centre of the glass domed atrium. Some went to the Thomas Coram Foundations and others just took advantage of a comfy ride to London and did some exploring.

These three Outings have been a test as to whether I shall continue. I have decided to carry on a bit longer, probably for another 2 years until I reach the end of my 20th year. I shall do fewer and perhaps only repeats of popular visits like Southwark and Spitalfields, and I might risk a few special Exhibitions at the V and A, the British Library and the British Museum.

There will be a half day Outing to Brookwood Cemetery at the end of October to visit the area we were unable to see due to exposure at 30C. I am considering re visiting the Christmas Fair at the Scandinavian churches in Bermondsey , and Bermondsey Street at the end of November/early December.

Sheila Darzi Social Anthropology Visits

OUTINGS AND VISITS REPORT

We've enjoyed another busy summer, going out and about, usually in lovely weather.

Pashley Manor & Sissinghurst Castle Gardens



Our July outing took us to two of the finest examples of traditional English country gardens. With a full coach and the promise of summer colour, we set off in high spirits for our morning visit to **Pashley Manor Gardens**.

Pashley was at its best — a picture of midsummer abundance. The beautifully maintained flower beds were brimming with colour, the roses in full bloom and their scent lingering on the warm air. Members enjoyed strolling through the delightful walled garden

and along shady woodland paths beside the little stream, where dappled light and birdsong added to the tranquil atmosphere. It was a truly charming and quintessentially English scene. The visit was made even more enjoyable by the excellent café, offering a tempting selection of **homemade cakes, light lunches, and freshly prepared local produce** — all served in a lovely garden setting. Many of us took full advantage and agreed it was some of the best food we've enjoyed on our outings!

After lunch, we continued to **Sissinghurst Castle Garden**, our alternative destination as Great Dixter was unfortunately closed. Sissinghurst, with its famous garden "rooms," provided a perfect contrast to the morning's visit. The richly planted borders and climbing roses spilling over old brick walls were a joy to behold, offering inspiration at every turn. Despite the change in plans, the day was a great success. Both gardens showcased the best of English horticultural artistry — thoughtful design, vibrant colour, and timeless beauty. Members returned home relaxed, inspired, and perhaps with a few new ideas for their own gardens!



At the start of September, we returned to **Chichester Theatre** on what seems to have become an annual visit. The show for this year's Festival was **Top Hat**. Some of us toured backstage beforehand, which we found very interesting as many of the cast's costumes were hanging on rails ready to put on. The ladies in the wigs department were particularly informative and gave an explanation and demonstration of how the many wigs are looked

after and prepared for each performance. It was also explained to us how the set on stage moved around to show different scenes – we watched out for these during the performance. Those who didn't come on the back-stage tour had free time in the town, visiting the cathedral or independent shops – with many members returning with large bags. The show has had some mixed reviews, but it was full of sparkle - with tap dancing, songs we all recognised and some funny one-liners. We all felt jolly and full

of song as we returned on the coach. We are wondering what next year's production will be.

A couple of weeks later we went on our second visit to **Osborne House on the Isle of Wight**, the home of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, where they raised their family. This was as enjoyable as our first visit in June. Even though the weather was not quite so hot, many of us had a very pleasant time on the beach with an ice-cream – none of our group paddled this time although we spotted some hardy swimmers. It's quite a large site, so a number of members used the useful shuttle bus which took them around the grounds from the House to the Swiss Cottage and the beach. As I've been twice this year, I found it interesting to see the gardens and grounds in different seasons – some of the plants in the formal gardens which had just been planted in the summer making this area look rather bare had grown taller than me! (These might have been canna lilies – I'm not an expert.) The ferry crossing from Portsmouth made this visit quite an adventure – all that fresh air meant there were some nodding heads on the coach on the way home.

Our next visits will be 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, in December we'll be going to **Brick Lane Music Hall's Jingle Bell Show** and a return to the **John Rutter Christmas Concert at the Royal Albert Hall**. We felt we needed cheering up in February which is often rather dreary so are going to see **Mama Mia!** the musical. Details of these trips have already been circulated. Dates of any planned trips are listed on the Outings page of the Groups section of the website. We are currently planning our outings for the spring and 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 **SPRING 2026** newsletter is **30 MARCH 2026**: 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