



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

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

SUMMER NEWSLETTER 2026 - GUILDFORD AREA u3a



CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

Dear Gu3a members,

Not such a light-hearted opening as usual this time... As I write, we've just come through a couple of days of intense heat – breaking the May temperature record by an extraordinary two degrees. We have a long, hot summer to come – and this is likely to be one of this century's *cooler* years... As I'm sure you're aware, these high temperatures are particularly perilous for our demographic, with there being some talk of an additional 3,000 heat-related deaths last year. Please, all of you, take care in that summer sunshine! And if you'd like to know what MPs and peers have been told – and why our security services issued a report ranking the risk to the UK as high – you should attend a screening of the National Emergency Briefing; there is a [map showing screening events around the country](#).

On a brighter note: summer means u3a summer schools! The [u3a Summer Festival in York](#) is a highlight of the national u3a calendar – a mix of learning, companionship and culture in one of England's most beautiful cities. Rather closer to home, our own [South East Summer School at Chichester](#) runs again this September (Monday 7th to Thursday 10th, at the University of Chichester). I've mentioned before that these courses consistently earn excellent reviews – if there are still places left in your subject of choice, I'd encourage you to snap them up quickly. The website has full course listings.

It's also not too early to start looking into next year's Surrey Network Study Days at Menuhin Hall. I'll certainly be signing up for World Affairs in Middle East and Africa, as well as Gilbert and Sullivan... how about you?

Finally, the perennial reminders/requests for your support. As you know, Gu3a only runs through the goodwill of volunteers. Could you please offer an occasional hour or two? No experience needed – new members particularly welcome! It's a great way to become involved. Margaret Sharp has kindly offered to host a drinks-and-nibbles garden party for those who may be interested to find out more – please sign up at <https://forms.gle/iyKFosjeiFyrPTTXA>. If you can't make it, but may be able to help out a little anyway, don't be shy - please just get in touch at chair@guildfordu3a.org.uk

Financial support, however small, is also appreciated. If you shop online, a wonderfully painless way to raise funds for us is through [Easyfundraising.org.uk](https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk). Simply sign up, nominate Guildford u3a as your charity of choice, and a small extension in your browser will quietly generate a donation to us – at no extra cost to you – every time you buy from any of around 8,000 participating retailers. Every little helps. Similarly, if you're thinking of a late-summer or autumn trip, our travel partners Riviera Travel will pass on a commission to Gu3a if you mention your membership – a rather pleasant way to contribute to our funds. Straightforward donations may also be given at <https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/gu3a>.

Wishing you all a safe, enjoyable, and intellectually stimulating summer – and do stay cool!

Best regards,

Philip Harris *Gu3a Co-Chair*

DIRECTOR OF STUDIES' REPORT



Guildford Area u3a
Group Enrolment Day

Come and join us and enrol at the event

Tuesday 11th August
2.00–3.30pm

At the Spectrum Leisure Centre
Parkway, Guildford, GU1 1UP
Arena B on the lower floor




Spanish Asparagus Committee Group


A Day Walking Group

With over 110 activity and interest groups

And over 1700 members

Visit our website <https://www.guildfordu3a.org.uk>

Do something brilliant and join the u3a

Registered Charity: 288087

Group Enrolment Day Our Annual Group Enrolment Day will take place on 11th August. As most of you will remember, this is the biggest event in the calendar of Guildford u3a, and takes place in the Spectrum Leisure Centre, in the afternoon. Group Leaders will be present in the hall on the ground floor (Arena B), where you can meet them to enquire about their group's programme, dates, activities, venues, and anything else you would like to discuss, before deciding to join a group or to continue in one. Some new groups will start in September as well, which you may want to find out about. The New Members team will be present in the hall next (in Arena A) where new members can enrol.

Already, I invited all Group Leaders to register their table for this event, and most of those responded. I am also looking for volunteers to guide those people to find our organisation in the Spectrum, a vast building where especially people coming for the first time may like some guidance to find the Arenas. We will need more than 30 marshals, for half an hour between 1:00-3:30pm, to take up a post just outside or inside the building. Please contact Alja at studies@guildfordu3a.org.uk if you can help.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL 2026

The current Gu3a year ends on 31st August so Renewal time is fast approaching and we hope that you will renew your membership for 2026 - 2027! Most of you, except those who have joined since 1st May or purchased an extended membership using the New Year 2026 offer, will receive an invitation to renew by email by mid July. Please actively look for this email and check your junk folder. Those who do not use email will receive a paper renewal letter.

PLEASE NOTE - There are 2 important changes to Renewal for 2026/27

- I. As agreed at the AGM in November 2025 the annual subscription has increased to £35 for individual membership and £70 for joint membership.
- II. Gu3a has a new bank account. Those of you paying by bank transfer please use the **new** bank details that you will find in your renewal letter.

Please help me to process everyone's renewal efficiently by following these guidelines.

- Renewal invitations include the data that Gu3a hold about you. Please check this carefully and email me with any updates or omissions, particularly with phone numbers, email addresses and Emergency Contacts. **There is no need to return your renewal invitation with your subscription on this occasion.**
- Renew straight away as this spreads the load. All renewals will be dated until 31st August 2027.
- Payment by Bank Transfer is our preferred method, using your **membership number as the reference**. If you have forgotten your number you will find it after the salutation on the Weekly Bulletin – it will be a 4 digit number. **Joint members paying with one payment should use both membership numbers as the reference.**
- If you pay by cheque, make your cheque out correctly, sign it and write your membership number on the back of your cheque. There will be a post box for cheques in the Membership Area at Group Enrolment Day on 11th August for those who wish to avoid postal costs.
- There is the option to pay using Paypal but they have become greedy and will take about £1.20 of your £35 in fees so your membership subscription does not go as far if you pay this way.
- New membership cards will be sent as an email attachment that you may print at home or save to your phone or other device. If you prefer a physical card please send a stamped, self addressed envelope to Guildford u3a, PO Box 1631, Guildford GU1 9HA. If you would like a paper prospectus please make your envelope C5 size, 23 x 16cm with a standard rate stamp.

- Prospectus will be available for members to collect at Summer Coffee mornings and in the Membership area at Group Enrolment Day on 11th August.
- Please do not pay twice as making a refund involves a lot of work for our treasurer who is a volunteer like everyone else.

We will endeavour to send out all the new membership cards by 1st September but I do need you to help by following these guidelines to achieve this.

Sue Watson, Membership Secretary Membership@guildfordu3a.org.uk 01483 323631

VIRTUAL COFFEE MORNINGS

These are run on Zoom, usually twice a month, the days varying in order to avoid always clashing with the same groups. Dates are listed on the Gu3a website, under Events, and the Zoom link will be sent to anyone who requests it via v-coffee@guildfordu3a.org.uk, plus regular attendees. If you can't get out and about then this provides an opportunity to meet up virtually with other u3a members for an hour of friendly chat.

Moira MacQuaide

SURREY NETWORK STUDY DAYS

18th September 2026 9:30 am - 4:00 pm

The Bayeux Tapestry: Its Creation & Its Interpretation

Presented by Imogen Corrigan - Places will be available in the hall or for on-line viewing. Bookings at September 2026 Study Day **Venue:** The Menuhin Hall

16th October 2026 9:30 am - 4:00 pm

World Affairs in the Middle East & Africa: Iran, Saudi Arabia, South Africa & Nigeria

Presented by Steve Bird. Places will be available in the hall or for on-line viewing. Bookings at October 2026 Study Day **Venue:** The Menuhin Hall

20th November 2026 9:30 am - 4:00 pm Study Day

Surrey Network Study Day: The Music & Satire of Gilbert & Sullivan

Presented by Bernard Lockett, Gilbert & Sullivan Society Places will be available in the hall or for on-line viewing. Bookings at November 2026 Study Day

Venue: The Menuhin Hall

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

BALLROOM DANCING GROUP

This is quite a new group, only starting two years ago, but in that time we have learnt a lot. Those who have joined as complete beginners can now manage a fairly decent dance – whereas others who have had more experience have learnt some 'new moves'. The sessions are taught by Kylie Jones, a World Amateur Ballroom Champion who appeared as one of the professional dancers in the very first series of *Strictly*, and now has a wealth of experience teaching locally.



She is very patient with us all – giving clear instructions and plenty of practice to be sure we've 'got it' and then gradually introduces different steps, such as a corner or an underarm turn. She covers one dance over two or three sessions - usually alternating between a Ballroom and a Latin dance. After the taught part of the session, we can then practice what we've learnt. We also take a short video of the steps

which is shared in our WhatsApp group so that we can practice at home. Some people come along together and dance as a couple, whereas others who are on their own dance with different partners in turn.

We know there are many benefits of ballroom dancing for people of our age – improved physical health, cognitive stimulation, improved balance as well as the enjoyment of the music and social engagement. The classes are held at the QE Park Centre on the first and third Wednesday afternoon of the month. There is an additional charge to cover the teaching. Occasionally we hold a social practice session for which there is no charge. Come along and give it a go!

Please contact me if you would like more information.
ring_jackie@yahoo.co.uk

CALLIGRAPHY



Calligraphy is a happy group who have produced some really good work this year.

Topics covered have included Harvest festival, World book day, World children's day, Music, Theatre, and the hundredth birthday of Winnie the Pooh.

We had fun learning to draw spirals and to blend two colours together.

Janet Thorpe

CARDMAKING & CARDMAKING & PAPERCRAFT GROUP



New members are welcome to join our small group of cardmaking enthusiasts. We meet on the 4th Thursday afternoon each month, at Burpham Village Hall. There is some demonstration of techniques and a lot of playing with new ideas! Some paper/card/embellishments are supplied (and a small contribution to costs is required), but members can bring along their own supplies if

they wish. We explore different techniques each month, and focus on seasonal cards for Christmas and Easter. Some of our members are experienced cardmakers, but some are new to the hobby, but we all help each other. Members are welcome to lead a session, showing the rest of us how to do something different.

Moir MacQuaide

EXPLORING LOCAL HISTORY 2

We meet on the last Friday afternoon each month, except December/July/August, in Burpham Village Hall, and our members do some research then give talks about what they've learned. We usually have one external speaker each year, and members contribute to the cost of the speaker fee. This year's talks so far have included George Mallory, Crime in Surrey in the 19th Century, The Castle and Guildford Park, and we are on the way to confirming the programme for 2026/27. 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.

Moir MacQuaide

JAZZ GROUP

We have enjoyed listening to a great line- up of bands during the last year. The music was mainly trad jazz from the '20s and '30s New Orleans and Chicago, Dixieland and ragtime – but also a wide range of other styles from swing and bossa nova to blues and even dirge music for funeral processions. Included was music from the repertoires of Stephane Grappelli and Django Reinhardt, Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, Bix Beiderbecke, Hoagy Carmichael and Miff Moler, plus many others. Over the concerts we have seen quite a range of instruments being played – piano, trumpet, cornet, trombone, sousaphone, banjo, clarinet, drums, banjo and a Stroh violin. And one musician played the drums and sousaphone at the same time. Band members tell us about the pieces they are playing, something of the lives of the musicians, as well as entertaining stories about their own musical journeys - perhaps when they've met one of the original players or what inspired them to take up their particular instrument.

We learnt the difference between a trumpet and cornet, for example, and how the shape affects the sound – and the Hawaiian word for ‘jumping flea’. Stand-out memorable moments from the year for me were the unusual pieces - Eric Coates’ *Dam Busters March* played on the ukulele, Gershwin’s *Rhapsody in Blue* combined with *Fascinating Rhythm* on the piano, plus Duke Ellington’s *Mood Indigo*.

We hold six concerts a year on the third Tuesday afternoon of the month from October to April (not in January) in Shalford Village Hall. Admission is £6 for each concert to cover the cost of the band and refreshments. Advance booking is necessary, so that we know beforehand that we’ve got enough money to pay the band, and that we don’t overfill the hall. After each concert I put a write-up on the group’s webpage – so please have a look at that if you’d like to read more about what we heard last year.

Please contact me if you would like to receive information for next year’s concerts, which will be circulated to all Jazz Group members in September.

Jackie Ring 01483 824450 ring_jackie@yahoo.co.uk

LOOKING AT ART

Our first year was a success. We’re not yet arranging visits to galleries (though we’d bite the hand off anyone wanting to undertake that task!). But we’ve enjoying looking at and talking about paintings, architecture, sculpture and more. If you’d like to join us (friendly enthusiasm preferred to academic expertise), email Nigel at lookingatart@guildfordu3a.org.uk.

Topics under consideration for next year include Ceramics, Banksy, Stitched Art, Hurvin Anderson, The Newlyn School, Tracey Emin, and George Stubbs.

Nigel Smallbone

SCIENCE FORUM

We had nine visiting speakers in the last academic year and at our review meeting in June we had a vote on them. the most popular ones were: Prof Sue Lanham-New on vitamin D and its importance in general health and research in this area.

1. Helen Gower on "How to feed a human" including the dangers of ultra-processed food.
2. Prof Michelle Collins on "The hunt for dark matter". It plays a key role in galaxy formation and dictates the future of the universe - but what is it?
3. David T Jones on jungle ecology in which he explained why ants are the top predators in the jungle.
4. Suzie Hingley-Wilson on the global burden of tuberculosis and how the tubercle bacillus hijacks the white cells that are sent to kill it.

We also used the review meeting to make plans for the next academic year which must include chemistry, physics and psychology.

John Nichols Chair of Science Forum

SNOOKER GROUP



Robert Abrams

Members of the snooker group enjoy watching an exhibition by the legendary Jimmy "Whirlwind" White MBE at the recently refurbished Woking Snooker Centre, where we play. He is still 94th in the world rankings. We are occasionally honoured to see Jasmine Bolsover, 32 on the world ladies rank, practising on a nearby table. The group is still chasing the magic top score of 147, or in our case 20!

OUTING TO THE GARDEN MUSEUM AND THE CINEMA MUSEUM, LAMBETH

Small museums with dedicated staff are often easier to cope with. Certainly, the Garden Museum set in a former church right next door to Lambeth Palace. The Garden Museum building has a lovely atmosphere of peace although I never not been there when there was a school visit! The exhibits are varied ranging through gardening history, old implements, catalogues and text, art and the garden, leisure and lots of fascinating well labelled artefacts.

On the ground floor there is an excellent shop and area to relax where free temporary exhibitions are set. This time we were lucky enough to see the work of American artist Jane Hammond with her inspirational collages.

There are a beautiful connatural courtyard gardens and several plantings outside, Across the road in Old Paradise Gardens is a developing Community Garden, tended by volunteers.



Last but not least the Garden Cafe, revamped in 2018 has been judged the best museum cafe in the world. Some people did treat themselves the specialities but in all fairness the cafe is patronised more by the public than museum visitors. Excellent coffee and cakes. Otherwise, lunch meant exploring this fascinating area of the South Bank, somewhat devoid of the usual places.

Approximately a mile further on to the Cinema Museum, last visited in 2018. The Museum is housed in what is left, namely the Administrative and receiving area and the Chapel, of the old Lambeth Workhouse, opened in 1874. We were given much interesting information about the workhouse and the cruel regime where sexes and families were separated. Also, division by 'behaviour' Charlie Chaplin and his mother were admitted twice and there is much C.C. memorabilia. The Chaplin family have maintained a close relationship.



The remaining edifice is impressive and no doubt contributed by the nearby Royal Doulton Factory, in fact, the Foundation stone was laid by John Doulton, Chairman of the Board of Guardians. The water tower also remains and has recently been converted into a 5-bed/4-bathroom house. The museum is run by ardent enthusiasts. It houses a unique collection of memorabilia and equipment that preserves the history of cinema going from the 1890's until now. The visit includes a selection

of screenings in cinema mode including 50s/60s adverts, shops in Tunbridge Wells and Tom and Jerry.

However, I had an unscheduled event in the first hour, resulting in a visit to St Thomas A and E. I am well recovered. Julie Beattie was able to take over and lucky she was able to contact my son as 'Emergency' although when we completed the details for the Outing, I was not planning to be the one who would need it!

Sheila Darzi

U3a SPRING VISITS

The three spring visits provided a varied programme combining horticulture, heritage, creativity and social enjoyment. From the spring flowers of Waddesdon Manor, through the craftsmanship and history of Hatfield House, to the literary and horticultural treasures of Bateman's and Great Dixter, the programme provided a fitting celebration of the season and another successful series of U3A outings.

Our first spring outing took us to **Waddesdon Manor** in Buckinghamshire. On arrival, we were warmly welcomed with morning coffee and shortbread, served by waitresses in the manor's delightful tearoom. The elegant surroundings provided a relaxing start to the day before we enjoyed a private guided tour of the house. Our knowledgeable guide brought the history of the Rothschild family and their magnificent collections to life, giving us a fascinating insight into the manor and its treasures.

With the morning devoted to the house, members were then free to spend the afternoon exploring the gardens at their own pace. The weather could not have been better, with warm sunshine throughout the day, making it ideal for strolling around the extensive grounds. The spring displays were at their peak, with beautiful spring flowers providing spectacular colour throughout the gardens and particularly around the famous parterre. Lunch arrangements suited everyone's preferences, with some members enjoying picnics in the grounds while others took advantage of the outdoor café facilities. The combination of a fascinating house tour, glorious spring flowers, excellent weather and good company made this a memorable and highly successful start to our spring programme of visits.



Our second visit of the season was to **Living Crafts at Hatfield House**, one of the country's leading arts and crafts festivals. Set within the beautiful grounds of Hatfield House in Hertfordshire, the event brought together talented designer-makers and craftspeople from across Britain.

Members spent the day browsing a wide variety of stalls featuring ceramics, jewellery, textiles, woodwork, glass, paintings and many other handmade creations. Demonstrations provided a fascinating insight into traditional and contemporary craft skills, allowing us to watch artisans at work and learn more about their techniques. Particularly impressive were the opportunities to see skilled craftspeople creating their work before our eyes; the glass-blowing demonstration was one of several that attracted considerable interest. Many members also took the opportunity to purchase unique handcrafted items. A small number of members took advantage of the practical workshops available during the day to try new skills and create handmade keepsakes. Your trip organiser could not resist the chance to etch her name onto a wine glass, ensuring that she now has a personalised glass for future occasions! A variety of other workshops were available throughout the day, adding another interesting dimension to the event.

In addition to the craft fair, a guided tour of the gardens was available. This proved particularly enjoyable, not only for the beauty of the gardens themselves but also because of our enthusiastic guide, who entertained us with stories about the many film stars and celebrities he had met while productions were being filmed at Hatfield House

Although Hatfield House itself was not open to visitors that day, members were able to enjoy the extensive gardens and learn more about the estate's rich history. Hatfield House is famously associated with Queen Elizabeth I, who spent part of her childhood there. Today it is also one of the UK's most popular filming locations, providing a backdrop for productions including *The Crown*, *Bridgerton*, *The Favourite*, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* and *Batman* (1989). We have earmarked a visit to the house itself as a future trip.

The combination of exceptional craftsmanship, beautiful gardens, fascinating history and entertaining commentary made this a most enjoyable and memorable outing.



Our final spring outing combined two outstanding Sussex attractions: **Bateman's**, the former home of Rudyard Kipling, and the world-famous garden at **Great Dixter**. We began the day at Bateman's, the seventeenth-century house where Kipling lived from 1902 until his death in 1936. A particular highlight was a fascinating talk given by one of the National Trust volunteers, who brought Kipling's life and career vividly to life. We heard about his early literary success, the personal tragedies he endured, and how he lost much of his money when a Japanese bank failed, only to rebuild his fortunes and achieve even greater success as a writer.



Members were able to visit the room where Kipling worked and see his writing desk, giving a real sense of connection with one of Britain's most celebrated authors. The house, gardens and famous watermill provided a delightful setting, offering a glimpse into the landscape that Kipling loved and which inspired much of his writing.

In the afternoon we travelled to Great Dixter, one of Britain's most influential and inspirational gardens. Created around the former home of gardener and writer Christopher Lloyd, the garden is renowned for its bold planting combinations, vibrant colours and imaginative design. The borders were full of seasonal interest and demonstrated the adventurous style of planting for which Great Dixter is famous. Many members found plenty of ideas to take home for their own gardens.

The contrast between the historical atmosphere of Bateman's and the exuberant planting of Great Dixter made for a particularly enjoyable day. Members returned home with a greater appreciation of both literary history and horticultural excellence, bringing a memorable conclusion to our spring programme of visits.

By the time you read this article we should have been on our day trip to Dover Castle, and a report on that will appear in the next newsletter. We also have our trip to Chichester to see *My Fair Lady* to look forward to. Please do check the Outings section on the Groups webpage for details of future trips – and once a trip has been advertised and is open for booking, the form will be on the Events section of the website.

THE DEADLINE for the **AUTUMN 2026** newsletter is **12 OCTOBER 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