FLEET & DISTRICT u3a 2022 Newsletter

Dates for your Diary

2022 Events

16th November AGM and Monthly Meeting at 10.45 in The Harlington

2nd December Christmas Lunch at Victoria Hall, Hartley Wintney

13th January Members Coffee Morning at Church on the Heath, Elvetham Heath (note date change)

Monthly Meetings 2022 - *The Harlington, Fleet, talk 11.00 to 12.15, coffee from 10.00*

16th November Two Million Years of Food Processing
Speaker - Vivian Ash

Visits 2023

23rd January "Sister Act" at Woking

10th February " Goldilocks & the Three Bares" Adult Pantomime at Bricklane Music Hall

A NEW BOWLS GROUP

We're delighted to announce a new Bowls group, starting in Spring 2023. Grateful thanks to Jenny Keyte and the Committee of Crondall Bowls Club for making this possible. Please contact Jenny to join the group.

BOWLS 2 - OUTDOORS

TUESDAY 10.30 - 12.30
CRONDALL BOWLS CLUB

Apr	18th, 25th
May	2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd, 30th
Jun	6th, 13th, 20th, 27th
Jul	4th, 11th, 18th, 25th
Aug	1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd, 29th
Sep	5th, 12th, 19th

Jenny Keyte Mobile 07759 248998
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Chat from the Chair

How quickly a year goes by! Fresh in my memory is my feeling of satisfaction at having found my successor, not immediately spotting that this was an exchange of roles, not a handover. Always good to be outmanoeuvred by a professional ... and Paddy is a great Monthly Meeting Secretary.

This newsletter is our link to you, the members. Most of us now have access to email, so the Trustees can be pretty confident that important messages do reach you. However not everybody has an email address that they are willing to share with us, so we still rely on our Group Leaders to print a copy of each edition to be passed round at a meeting.

Even better, if in conversation with other group members you find yourself talking to somebody without email, you could offer to be an 'email buddy', and ensure they keep in touch through you. In many families, this task is delegated to a younger generation, with varying degrees of success.

Returning to the theme of 'in conversation', I think that post - pandemic some of the larger groups are still operating in 'social distancing' mode. Perfectly understandable given the prevalence of the common cold and the impending flu season, let alone the latest covid variants. However, that has meant that some new group members are finding it harder to get to know others in their group. Could you do your bit to ensure that every group is as welcoming as it can be, looking out for and speaking to new faces? Its one of the ways you can support your Group Leader and ensure your group continues to be attractive and stimulating.

Responding to feedback from members and Group Leaders, we have made alterations to the programme of events, so it is no longer as printed (last May!). Please annotate your programme with the new dates we announce in newsletters.

One date which is set in stone is the AGM on 16th November, starting at 10:45. The current committee members have agreed to offer themselves for re-election, but some people are stepping down in a year's time. We depend on members taking a *'turn at the wheel'*, so please talk to any of us if you would be prepared to consider taking on a role.

In my last chat I mentioned that being abroad for the late queen's funeral, we returned to a country which felt very different. It now seems that by the time you get to read this newsletter, the political landscape will have changed yet again. Thank heavens for the ability of the u3a to engage, educate and enthuse us all, providing a welcome shelter from political storms. ***John Gawthorpe, Chair***

Creative Writing 1

Down in the Cellar by Margaret Garrod

Lisa was in her kitchen making coffee when she heard the post land on the mat. The agency had told her the report would arrive the day before, but there had been no delivery. Another day would make no difference she told herself. She left the bean to cup machine to work its magic and went to collect the post. Amongst the routine items for David and some circulars, there was a large brown envelope addressed to Mrs. L. Watkins marked private and confidential. She picked up all the items, collected her coffee and went to sit in the armchair next to the Aga.

She stared long and hard at the envelope and was not surprised there was no indication as to the sender, but there was little doubt in her mind it was the item she was expecting. Only one way to find out for sure but she had finished her coffee before finding the courage to open it. The report was thorough, and it took her a quarter of an hour to work her way through it. She was almost at the end when her mobile rang.

'Sophie! It's been a while. How are you?'

'I'm good thanks. Are you ok? You sound different.'

'I'm fine. Wishing we'd never bought this huge house and wondering if we can afford to heat it this winter. David has been saying I might have to go back to work. Why don't you pop round, so we can have a proper catch up?'

'That would be good. I could do this afternoon. Around 2 suit you?'

'Perfect. See you soon.'

Lisa finished reading the report and placed it in a drawer where there was no chance of David finding it.

Just after 2, the doorbell rang, and Lisa opened the door to her best friend.

'Come in. Still favouring the stilettos, I see. I'm afraid these days, I look for comfort in the shoes I buy. Do you want to take them off?'

'No, better not. They might not go back on again.' Lisa smiled and led the way through to the lounge.

'Tea, coffee, wine?'

'A glass of red would be good.'

'There's an open Chateau Neuf-du-Pape. Will that be ok?'

'Lovely.'

Lisa returned with the bottle and two glasses.

'Are you sure you're ok?' Sophie asked. 'I know I haven't been in touch for ages, but you don't seem your normal jolly self.'

'I've had some bad news.'

'You're not ill, are you?'

'No, nothing like that. I'm not sure where to start. It's David. For some months I've suspected him of having an affair...'

'…David? Not again. Are you sure?'

'At first, I thought I was being silly. After the last time, he swore it wouldn't happen again, but all the telltale signs were there. Working late at the office, random weekend courses and texting at odd hours. I tried checking his phone, but he's changed his pin. Suddenly, it all made perfect sense.'

Sophie put down her wine and put an arm round her friend.

'But it's only a suspicion? You could be wrong. Have you confronted him?'

'No. I wanted proof first.'

'Proof?' Sophie took a large gulp of her wine.

'Yes. I consulted one of those agencies to do an investigation for me. Cost a fortune but worth every penny.'

'And what did they find out?'

'They confirmed my suspicions. He is having an affair. I have dates and times and some fuzzy photos of the woman.' Sophie took another gulp of wine.

'Fuzzy, you say. So, you don't know her identity?'

'Not as yet, no.'

'So, what's the plan, take vengeance on his best suits?'

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Cont. from page 2

'I thought I'd start in the cellar by smashing up his prized wine collection. Sometimes I think it was his only reason for us buying the house. Come let me show you.'
Lisa opened the cellar door and invited Sophie to follow her down the narrow steps.
'Damn it. The lighting is poor, we'll need the torch. Wait there while I get it.' She eased herself past Sophie, returning with the torch seconds later and indicating her friend should continue and she would follow.
'You know Sophie those photos may have been fuzzy, but I would have recognised you anywhere.'
As Sophie turned to face her, Lisa shone the torch in her eyes, and it only took the gentlest of pushes with her unseen hand to send Sophie flying down the stone stairs. ***© Margaret Garrod***

Monthly Meetings

The 200 members and guests who came along to the Harlington for the October Monthly Meeting had a real treat. Paul Barwick, retired Met Police Officer, told us the amazing story of 'The White Mouse'. Nancy Wake was a highly successful secret agent of the Special Operations Executive in France in WW2. Paul told her story with original photographs and such understanding of her precarious life that we were all spellbound. Paul offers more talks with an espionage theme so I suspect we will be inviting him back to the Harlington for another fascinating talk next year.
Our next Monthly Meeting is on November 16th. Our speaker is homegrown and a member of Fleet U3A. Vivian Ash has a B.Sc. in biology from Queen Mary College, London and a D.Phil. in evolutionary biology from the University of York. He spent over 30 years teaching science in Lima, Peru, living there with his wife and two daughters. Vivian's talk is entitled, "Two million years of food processing". It sounds like an interesting talk that will appeal to a wide range of our membership. In the pre-view Vivian gave me he describes his talk in this way, 'Cooking developed earlier in our history than previously supposed and is now considered an important reason for our evolutionary success. Further developments in food processing followed, helping humanity, but in recent times the ultra-processing of food has led to many health problems such as obesity and diabetes.' It looks like we will all learn something from Vivian.
Please note that November 16th is also Fleet U3A's AGM and the meeting in the main hall will start at 10.45 to give time for the AGM before the guest speaker begins his talk.
The Harlington is still unable to provide refreshments for us so it's BYO coffee or tea as before (we do have biscuits though!). The small hall will be open from 10 o'clock as usual for a chat and a catch-up. The book and jigsaw swap table will be there again. Please remember that it is not a depository for unwanted books and jigsaws. If you bring books or jigsaws to swap you must take the same number away with you. We have nowhere to store extra stock. The visits' desk will be in the foyer along with our signing in and information table for guests. As a special treat we will have a table in the small hall selling jams, marmalades and chutneys in aid of Phyllis Tuckwell Hospice Care. Margaret and Linda say the items make great Christmas presents so come along with some money and a shopping bag to take away your treats.
Please spread the word about our monthly meetings and bring along your friends and neighbours. We must be generous in spreading the word about all the delights Fleet U3A has to offer.
Group Leaders, please let me know if you would like to set up a table and/or display to show your wares or to attract new members for your group.
The Monthly Meeting Team and I are looking forward to seeing you on Wednesday November 16th at 10 o'clock for a chat, 10.45 for the AGM and 11ish for the talk. ***Paddy Powell***

Walking with History

I was recently invited to join a History Group walking tour of Brookwood Cemetery and what a treat that turned out to be. The cemetery is a grade II listed Historic Park and Garden of 220 acres, so plenty of space to wander through. The walk was led by a very well informed leader, Malcolm Hitchcock, who introduced us all to a some of the intriguing, talented, notorious and dangerous people who are buried or reinterred within the walls of Brookwood. He had also arranged for us to be invited into the former Anglican church which is now being used as an Orthodox Church, the inside of which is quite stunning, and contains the relics of Edward II a young Saxon King who was slain in 978.
Thank you Malcolm for inviting me and getting me enthused about local history. ***Sandy aka Editor***

Health and Wellbeing Group

Medical Detection Dogs

'Pepper' an ambassador dog for medical detection dogs visited our October meeting of Health and Well-being with her owner retired consultant pathologist Dr Farrer Brown. They gave a presentation on how dogs are used to detect a wide range of conditions from cancers, bacteria, neurological conditions, diabetes and recently Covid19. Dogs have traditionally been used for hunting and more recently to detect drugs, money and tobacco arriving at our borders. The sensitivity of the dog`s nose can detect one part per trillion that is equivalent to one teaspoon in two Olympic size swimming pools. Given that 1 in 2 people born after 1960 will develop cancer and that early diagnosis is paramount to survival a non-invasive test that has a reported 94% accuracy is very impressive. Dogs are working on two NHS clinical approved trials on prostate and colorectal cancers using urine samples and research is ongoing as to whether a very early diagnosis of Parkinson's can be made. Children patients from the Gambia sent socks for testing to see if the dogs can detect the malarial parasite and early indications are very positive.

With all these tests the benefits are that they are non-invasive (do not require a blood test) portable and do not need a laboratory. Each dog is trained specifically for one condition and the training can take between one and five years but unlike Blind Dogs who are retired with age they retain the ability to detect well into old age.

In addition, the charity also trains and supply medical alert assistance dogs to live with patients suffering from such conditions as

- Type 1 Diabetes
- Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome (PoTS)
- Addison Disease
- Severe Allergies
- Other Endocrine Disorders
- Episodes of sudden health deterioration

By assisting individuals with their conditions, it gives them greater confidence and allows them to lead a full life.

Stuart Williams

Mah Jong Group

Every Thursday morning Church Crookham Memorial Hall resounds to the clatter of the tiles as around twenty to thirty friendly regulars embark upon two hours of fun, playing the ancient Chinese game of Mah Jong. Sounds difficult - no it's not.

The U3A version of Mah Jong is a friendly game played in groups of four sat around card tables, and it's anything but boring - it can become quite addictive.

It is played with tiles rather than cards. We have three suits rather than four and picture cards equate to winds and dragons. We build a square wall of tiles and your playing hand of tiles comes from this wall.

Newcomers are made to feel welcome, with or without a Mah Jong set, and our leader Liz, is very good and very patient introducing the game gradually so newcomers can learn at their own pace and have fun.

The entertainment is all about playing the game which means that there's not a lot of competitiveness in the air.

Thursday morning Mah Jong is an entertaining way to keep your brain active whilst meeting new friends, enjoying a coffee and biscuit, and having fun.

Come along and try it - you will be pleasantly surprised and hopefully become addicted like we are.

Please contact Liz by email if you are interested in joining the group: Fleetu3aMahJong@outlook.com

Ukulele Group

At last we look like having a 'normal' year - as long as we can all stay warm through the winter energy crisis. Enrolment was welcomed back and we have managed to add fourteen new Beginners, meaning we now have ninety four 'Ukers' in the three groups (Beginners, Improvers and Players), with a dozen or more now in the advanced Fingerstyle Group. The Songbook has grown yet again through the summer break and were very lucky to have had access to Kevin Fox's Church in Gally Hill Road on some Thursday afternoons to try the new ones out, with anyone who wanted to come and play along. Some new instruments have been added as well as the harmonica and cahon that we added last year - a flute and the odd guitar have been introduced on some of the songs too.

Charity concerts are now a regular feature again and we are already booked up until Christmas - as usual our only remuneration amounts to tea and cake and a good chat!! We will be playing at the Christmas Lunch / Fleet U3A 40th Anniversary, that means we really need to start dusting off some of our Christmas songs that have not been played for a few years.

I'm beginning to think that we should be included in the category of Wellbeing. Some of our members have had some very difficult times over the last 2 years and really looked forward to getting back to our regular sessions. Some have even joined both Improvers and Players Groups for a weekly fix... As William Shakespeare wrote - *If music be the food of love, then play on.* This means a whole lot more to our Players when we perform, especially for local care homes and other support groups.

One of our recent concerts was at Knellwood in Farnborough. This facility cares for a wide range of aged, physically, and mentally impaired people by a group of staff who do such a fantastic job. As soon as we start playing many of the audience light up, start singing and even dancing with the staff, this is what makes it all worthwhile for us all. Knellwood has become an annual event and we really look forward to it. In fact, we seem to be accumulating quite a few 'annual events' and 2023 bookings are already well underway.

There are still a few spaces in all the Groups for anyone who wants to come and join our happy bands of minstrels. One of the FAQs we got at enrolment from potential new Beginners was - I don't have a musical background, can't read music, and have never played an instrument in my life, does that matter? The answer is a big NO - in the first hour of the Beginners Group our experienced Leaders will have everyone playing and singing at least 3 songs as a group.

Just a thought - the 14 new Beginners we have now is 6 more than we had in the whole Group when it started 9 years ago. Maybe we'll join the 100-club next year?

For further details contact Richard Fielding 01252 621182 or email ***RHJFielding@aol.com***

2022 Christmas Party Lunch

Plus the 40th Anniversary

Celebration of the U3A

This will take place on Friday 2nd December, 12.00 for 12.30, in the Victoria Hall at Hartley Wintney.

Following the meal and raffle there will be a brief entertainment.

Tickets will be on sale at the November Monthly Meeting and directly from Pam.

Price £6.00 per person Contact: Pam Openshaw Events Secretary

Email : events@fleetu3a.org.uk

STROLLERS Autumn

Well, it's almost clocks back, booster planned, flu jab done and batten down the hatches winter here we come. I was just reminded at our Stroll last Monday that we continued throughout the last winter even strolling in the rain. Such are our stoic band of hardy annuals.

We have strolled twice this month, with record numbers, seventeen, last Monday.

We have changed our route now to facilitate a choice of short or longer strolls. We have left the pond as it gets very muddy underfoot over the wetter days. Instead, we stroll round the green opposite the De Havilland pub.

Sadly, the café in Morrisons closed. However, the De Havilland provides us with coffee and a biscuit now, all good.

We are having a Christmas lunch in the De Havilland on December 5th. All past and present members welcome. Do let me know if you would like to join us by November 21st.

I feel very privileged to lead the Strollers group, thank you all for your generosity of spirit and forever "seeing the bright side of life." ***Jenny Teagle***

Coffee and Biscuits at the pub

Fleet U3A Website

Keep up to date with all our activities, News, Events, Visits and Monthly Meetings on our website www.fleetu3a.org.uk

Find us on Facebook

Find us on Facebook - Fleet U3A has its own Facebook Members' Group, our Facebook page can be found by entering "Fleet U3A" in the search box at the top of any Facebook page. You can then request to join our private Members only group, you will be asked for your Name and Membership number.

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PLEASE AVOID TELEPHONING MEMBERS BEFORE 9 a.m. OR AFTER 5 p.m.