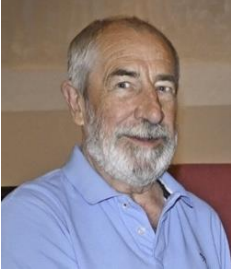




Chat from the Chair



As Christmas and New Year celebrations fade away into the past, we need something new to look forward to in these post-holiday days. The days are getting longer and spring must be around the corner and for your u3a committee the season of membership renewals is fast approaching.

As existing members, you do not need to do anything at the moment – we'll be detailing the membership renewal process in the next newsletter in March with renewals from April 1st. However, if you have any friends, family or colleagues who wish to join as NEW members during January, February or March then they will get full 2024/5 membership immediately meaning they benefit from up to 15 months of membership for the regular £12 payment. Please contact membership@exmouthu3a.org.uk for a form.

Our regular Monthly Meeting is moving temporarily as the Pavilion building is having some refurbishment works performed during January & February. We will be meeting instead in the Ocean Suite on January 11th at 10 for a 10-30 start. This is the top floor of the Ocean (just along the seafront from The Pavilion) and has spectacular views across the estuary so well worth coming along even if you don't listen to this month's presentation – 'A Day in the Life of a Magistrate'. There is a lift in the building and tea, coffee & cakes are available in both the ground and first floor bar/cafes.

Further ahead, we expect our February 8th meeting to also be held in the Ocean Suite and the presentation will be 'The Merrie Wives of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha'. The March 14th presentation will be 'Grace Darling and Rescue at Sea' – hopefully we will be back in the Pavilion by then.

There is one upcoming social trip – Birdwatching with Stuart Lines on February 23rd. Details are on page 4.

Finally, we have our monthly u3a Committee meeting on January 8th. Any U3A member is welcome to come along and observe – just contact one of the committee members in advance so we can make sure a chair is ready.

Any questions or ideas – please contact me at chairman@exmouthu3a.org.uk

Regards

Mike Turff
Chairman

Next two monthly meetings

You are most welcome to join us for our monthly meetings at **10:00**, usually for a **10:30 start to 11:45**. These two meetings will be held at **the Ocean Suite – top floor of Ocean on Exmouth Seafront** whilst the Pavilion undergoes refurbishment. Where possible we will live stream our monthly meetings on Zoom. The details of the Zoom link are in the members' edition of the newsletter which is sent direct to members.

Date	Presenter	Description
Thurs. 11 th January 2024	Peter Scott JP	A Day in the Life of a magistrate
Thurs.8 th February 2024	Stewart Raine	The Merrie Wives of Saxe-Coburg

Groups Report – Updates from Groups

Website Developers Group	This newly-formed group is now actively seeking new members. Our priority is to offer the opportunity for members to have free training in WordPress – a vital skill for our own new website when it becomes operational next year (and useful also for creating and/or maintaining other websites). This is a great chance to learn a new and very useful skill with full support being given. If you wish to join us or if you would like any further information about this, please contact Graham Wood, Group Organiser, by email.
Birdwatching Group 2	There are now vacancies in the Birdwatching 2 group. If you are interested please contact Liz Geach by email.
Solo Diners 3	Whether you are single, widowed or divorced or in any circumstances that you find yourself dining on your own, this is an opportunity to go out to restaurants and pubs with 6 – 7 members. We meet on a weekday evening in local venues. If interested please contact Peter Waters by email.

Speaker reviews

December 14 2023 Exmouth & District u3a were lucky enough to have a fascinating and entertaining talk from Sheila Parker, entitled 'From Tiller Girl to Vernon Girl'. Sheila trained as a dancer and in music from an early age and had an extraordinary life in showbiz. Sheila knew and performed with many stars and was clearly known for her professionalism and dedication. She performed with many well-known entertainers, appeared on the 65 Special and many other memory stirring shows. Sheila also knew Paul McCartney as a child, when they lived on the same estate and received a televised apology from him for breaking her nose!

A fabulous talk enjoyed by all who heard it. Thank you Sheila.

Here's a letter received from RNLI after their recent presentation:



Jane Stephen
Speakers Coordinator

First Aid Course

Several people have enquired about the possibility of taking a first aid course within the U3A. We have found a course which lasts around 4 hours and is suitable for people who wish to learn basic first aid for adults. The course will include: Dealing with an emergency; Bystander effect; Unresponsive and breathing (recovery); Unresponsive and not breathing (CPR and AED); Seizures; Burns; Bleeding heavily; Broken bones, strains and sprains; Head injury; Choking; Heart attack; Stroke; Severe allergic reactions and Diabetic emergency. The cost of this would be around £40.00 per person in a group of up to 12 people. If you are interested, please could you contact me at secretary@exmouthu3a.org.uk by 22th January 2024.

Happy New Year,

Olivia Pyne

Social Committee Report

Christmas Lunch at The Belmont, Sidmouth – 6th December 2023

The Christmas lunch was well attended and very well received. The food, service and organisation by The Belmont were all superb. They delayed the meal by a quarter of an hour with the late arrival of the coach without affecting the quality of the meal. This is certainly a venue to return to.

Forthcoming event

River Exe Bird Watching Cruise – 23rd February 2024 at 12:45pm, £12.50 per person

There are 30 places available on Stuart Line's River Exe Bird Watching Cruise. If you've never been on this cruise before, it's an opportunity to see the birds that winter on the river close-up before they fly off to pastures new. There is an ornithologist on board to help with identification so if you have binoculars, it is well worth bringing them. Places are limited so please book early. You can book pasties by Chunk of Devon (steak or roasted root vegetable (vegan) at £4.50 each). The cruise departs at 12:45pm with boarding from 12:15pm and lasts approximately 3hrs.

Before arranging any event, the social committee research facts relating to health and safety in order to fully support our members. Any particular issues relating to health and safety are listed on our webpage as well as included on your ticket, but it cannot be stated too strongly that members must consider their own capabilities before joining groups and excursions. In addition, members must ensure they wear suitable apparel and take walking aids as necessary to meet all weathers and ground conditions.

Health and safety considerations for this trip: February can be cold, so please wrap up well especially if spending time on the open deck. The boarding can be a little slippery at that time of year.

Payment Details for the Trip:

1. Send a cheque to Mrs L. Holmes made out to Exmouth & District U3A. **Please send a stamped addressed envelope and supply emergency contact details with your cheque.** You will then be sent a ticket.
2. Pay via internet banking. Please email Lyn Holmes at vicechair@exmouthu3a.org.uk to confirm payment and supply an emergency contact as well. You will then be sent a ticket.
3. Buy your tickets at the Monthly Meeting on January 11th at The Ocean. We would prefer cheques but we are able to take credit card payments or you can pay by cash ideally, please bring the correct money.

Clare, Elaine, Jenny, June, Lyn & Pam
Social Committee

Local Hub Groups – January 2024

Listed below are local hub groups where you can go for a coffee and chat and meet local u3a members. Please contact the local organiser for information or just go along to the meeting where you will be made very welcome.

If you would like to start a new hub group or have any questions re hubs please contact Lyn Holmes - vicechair@exmouthu3a.org.uk

New Hub Groups – January 2024

Brixington – Meeting at The Farmhouse on 3rd Monday in the month 2pm. Next meeting is on Monday 15th January. Contact Julie Jeffries.

Littlemead Local Tuesday Rivermead Area – Contact Anne Howard, Mount Pleasant Area. Please contact the Hub organiser before you go. They normally meet on alternate Tuesdays at 10am at Greenfingers.

Littlemead Local Wednesday – Nicola Antoni, Rivermead Area, Mount Pleasant Area. Please contact the Hub organiser before you go. They normally meet on alternate Wednesdays at 10am at Greenfingers.

Withycombe area – Contact Jan Collett. Our venue is at The Tennis Club on alternate Tuesdays between 1pm–4pm.

Littleham area – Contact Susan Hall. Group meets on various days and times. Email Susan for information.

Salterton Road and The Avenues – Contact Jan Harper Shea. Meets every 2nd Tuesday each month at 10.30am in bar area of The Devoncourt Hotel.

Woodbury, Woodbury Salterton and East Budleigh – Contact Lin Milsom–Ashby. Meets every 2nd Tuesday in the month at 10.30am at The Maltsters Woodbury.

Beacon Group – Dagmar Road (bonded by The Beacon, Louisa Terrace, Trefusis and Rolle Road)– Contact Sally Parnell. Meets at Imperial Hotel 3rd Friday in the month at 10.30.

Budleigh Salterton and surrounding areas – Contact Sue Glover. Meets on 2nd Friday of the month. The group meets 10.30–12 at Wesley's cafe (in the grounds of the Methodist Church) in Budleigh.

Topsham & District – The times for our bimonthly meetings are now:
First Thursday 12.30 – 2.30 at St Bridget's Nursery café, Sidmouth Road, Clyst St Mary
Third Monday 11am – 1pm at Nancy Potter House café, Nelson Close, Topsham
All u3a members are welcome.

Group Reports

BAKE & TASTE – CHRISTMAS LUNCH



Rather than preparing a lunch for our December meeting, we usually go out somewhere – this year we went to The Puffing Billy and had a very enjoyable lunch (Photo: Philippa White).

QUIZ GROUP – CHRISTMAS QUIZ



A Christmas-themed quiz was held on the 14th December at the Wings Bar. There were six teams, with congratulations to the winning team, The Christmas Belles.

RECORDER GROUP

In November the Exmouth u3a recorder group joined up with the Sidmouth u3a group for a recorder playing day. Members chose their favourite music from our repertoire.

We played a variety of music, written for 3 or 4 parts. We have descant, treble, tenor and bass players, including one contra bass. We started with some well known hymn tunes to warm up and then moved on to tunes including: Skye Boat Song, Blow the Wind Southerly, music from Handel's Water and Firework music, Bach's Fugue in C major and some early music written in the 16th and 17th Centuries.

We did stop for coffee and cake breaks! We all had a fun day and it was lovely to play with the Sidmouth players.

WEEKLY ZOOM COFFEE & CHAT



All members of Exmouth & District u3a are VERY welcome to join us on Thursday mornings for our Zoom Coffee & Chat (C&C) sessions. They are very friendly, informal sessions held every Thursday morning, starting at 10:15 for 10:30 and lasting about an hour.

We talk about anything and everything. You don't have to attend each C&C or stay for the whole session. It's a good opportunity to introduce a 'newsy' item, make friends, share a few photos, tell short stories, share art and craft work or just enjoy a Thursday morning by listening and chatting. Some of our members have told us it is a unique opportunity for those who are pretty much housebound. From time-to-time we experiment with live 'outside broadcasts' just for interest and for fun! Examples: sharing train journeys, walks, holidays and, once, a holiday walkabout in a medieval town in France.

So why not make yourself a cup of coffee or tea and join us? **The Zoom login details always remain the same.** A reminder email of these is normally sent to members who are on our email circulation list the day before. A follow up summary email is sent afterwards. If you want to join or receive a reminder, contact Ian or Bryan.

If possible, we aim to stream talks from our monthly meeting in Exmouth Pavilion at the same time as our regular C&C sessions. If in doubt, just give *your* Coffee and Chat Group a try. We think you'll like it.

Ian McLauchlin & Bryan Webb, Joint Group Organisers

SYMONDS YAT – A TALK TO OUR ZOOM GROUP



At our Zoom Coffee and Chat Group meeting on 9 November 23, Ian McLauchlin remembered a few of the many walks he'd done. He mentioned a school Geology Field trip and the relief when descending from Scafell Pike in the Lake District, but he concentrated on a wonderful walk in Herefordshire around Symonds Yat, adjoining the River Wye. He'd found details in the AA Book of Country Walks – "No Through Road".

It was a warm sunny day in spring, just the sort of weather to tempt you out after a cold winter. We parked in the Ferrie Inn car park and set off along the banks of the river, and soon headed uphill into the forest. There were caves and views from a rocky outcrop over the River and you had to be careful not to go too near the edge. Further along, through Lord's Wood, we came across King Arthur's Cave. If you were brave enough, you could clamber through it while the headroom became frighteningly low. We were brave enough! Eventually, after a few bangs on the head and scrapes on the arm, we emerged into the sun at the furthest exit.

The walk continued through the forest and eventually sloped down back to the River Wye. There was a footbridge. It was suspended precariously from wire ropes and it rattled and swayed when you walked across it. Not for the fainthearted. The footbridge was made of coarse wire mesh and that's what you walked on. You could see the river below with every step, which made each step a test of faith.



While we were contemplating the crossing we became aware of a film crew. They were shooting scenes for a TV detective series “Shoestring” with Trevor Eve. One scene involved two police cars racing towards each other. They braked hard and, because the surface was gravel, they skidded and collided with each other. “Cut” shouted someone. They had to shoot the scene again. They may have had to replace the cars too. . . . In another scene, Trevor Eve chased someone through the woods and they both ended up crossing that wire

bridge. You could hear the clanging and see the bridge sway.

In a way, that was the highlight of the walk, though it was such an interesting walk there were very many highlights. I’d thoroughly recommend it but, unfortunately, can’t promise any Shoestring filming.

You can watch a recording of the talk on our YouTube Channel – https://youtu.be/U_7Rc2hmeEI

Ian McLauchlin
Zoom Coffee and Chat Group Organiser

Photos for our new website

On 11 November, Mike Turff, Chair, sent an email to all members requesting photos for our new website. We only had a limited response and I would like to thank those members who replied and kindly sent me some great photos. But we are still on the look-out for many more so that we can build up a library of photos to use at some time in the future.

We are particularly interested in any photos showing what you and the groups that you are involved with are doing. Photos of members would be especially appreciated (providing everyone who features in them is happy about them being on our website – please check with them before submitting your photos). Informal photos rather than posed photos would be particularly good, and in fact any photos of people of our age-range (not necessarily involved in u3a activities) which would be appropriate and look good on our new website would be really helpful. We can also accept short video clips.

As we mentioned our current website will have to be replaced next year as the current website platform (which are used by most u3as in the UK) is coming to the end of its life and the national u3Aa will not be able to support these websites much longer. This gives us a great opportunity to update, refresh and completely redesign our website – which is where your photos come in.

If you are able to send any suitable photos to me as Website Manager at my email address below, that would be great. If you wish to find out any more about this or how best to send them, please email him or ring him on 01395 279132

With many thanks for your help.

John Hunt
Website Manager
website@exmouthu3a.org.uk

ALICE ROBSON

It is with great sadness I have to report the passing of Alice Robson on 8th December. She died peacefully in the hospice. We send our deep condolences to John her husband.

Alice was a staunch supporter of the u3a movement and was an active member of Exmouth u3a. I first met Alice on the committee, she was representing the Social Group, and quickly got me involved in the social activities. She was a member and trustee on the main committee for six years, she was a larger-than-life sort of person and always gave you a very truthful opinion and was ready to help and advise.

Alice was the founder member of the Social Committee we will all miss her sense of fun and commitment to Exmouth u3a members, one of the last things she did was to book members onto the Firework Cruise on November 3rd, she wasn't well but insisted on coming and helping. Thank you Alice for all you did for Exmouth & District u3a and on a personal note especially for being a great friend to me. It has been a privilege for as all to know you.

Lyn Holmes
Vice Chair

Exmouth & District u3a online – our digital world

Here's a reminder of all our online resources. We have such a lot to offer to all our members, so why not find time to take a look? Just do a Google search or click or tap on each of the links below. What do you think? How can you contribute? Please let us know.

- Our Exmouth & District u3a website: <https://u3asites.org.uk/exmouth/home>
- Our u3a YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/@exmouthu3a>
- Our u3a Facebook Group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/exmouthU3A>
- Our u3a Connect & Learn website: <https://sites.google.com/view/connectandlearn>

Our next edition

We hope you have enjoyed reading this newsletter, and thank you to our contributors this month. Please keep items of interest and Group news coming in for the next edition.

Thank you very much.

Rachel Cockell, Editor
newsletter@exmouthu3a.org.uk