



Chat from the Chair



It's been a busy year so far but way back at the beginning you might remember that, due to buildings works in The Pavilion, we had to move our January and February monthly meetings into The Ocean Suite? We had mostly very positive feedback as many members felt that The Ocean was a much smarter venue, had great views, softer seats, nicer toilets and better coffee (OK – a couple of people did not like the coffee).

We've also had issues every year with getting availability in The Pavilion whenever they have long running events so we have for the whole of 2025, booked The Ocean Suite for all our monthly meetings.

Dates for your diaries are the second Thursday of each month (with one exception) –

- January 9th.
- February 13th.
- March 13th.
- April 10th.
- May 8th.
- June 12th.
- July 10th.
- No meeting in August as everyone assumed to be on holiday.
- September 4th (the exception due to a prior booked event on the 11th).
- October 9th.
- November 13th.
- December 11th.

Please let us know your opinions on how this new venue works out. You can always get your coffee from the Pavilion cafe and walk down the road – both venues are run by LED Leisure.

Earlier this month, we hosted a 'Tea Party' for all the group organisers at The Ocean which went very well with great service from the venue. It was good to be able to chat with and say thank you to those of you who spend your valuable time in setting up and running U3a groups which are a key part of our U3a.

I also want to say a big thank you to all the volunteers who have been organising the social trips throughout the year, all of which have all been fully booked. It's not generally appreciated just how much effort goes into trying to make these events go smoothly – and fixing it when it doesn't.

Regards – Mike Turff, Chairman

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

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 next two meetings will be held at the Pavilion.

Date	Presenter	Title	Description
<u>Thursday 14th November '24</u>	Lynne Caroll	Convicts and Settlers; the characters who built Australia	Join Lynne Carroll to step back 200 years to discover the early Europeans who formed the backbone of the settlement of modern-day Australia. Learn something about the life of the early convicts whose major sentences were commuted from life imprisonment in UK to transportation to the Colonies. How different was their experience to that of the free settlers who risked all to embark on a new life on the other side of the world? Get to know some of the most colourful individuals who helped to form the 'typical' Australian character. Working for 5 years in a heritage Australian settlers' homestead, Lynne offers anecdotes from her own personal experience to add colour to this fascinating period of history.
<u>Thursday 12th December '24</u>	Robert Hesketh	Christmas Theme	The History of the Christmas Card

Hi Everyone,

We have some wonderful opportunities coming up for you to join in and help make your local U3A the successful thriving organisation that we all enjoy and benefit from! 😊

We are soon going to be looking to replace some folks in key roles. In order to make sure that we have a smooth transition and that everyone is set up for success we are starting the process now...

Firstly, our **Group Coordinator** is standing down. John Smith has done an amazing job as Group Coordinator and we would like to thank him for all his efforts. John has an admin helper who will continue to support this role but would like someone to take over looking after all the Groups and also to support the formation of New Groups. John would be very happy for you to shadow him with the view to taking over next May .

Secondly, Jane Stephen our **Speaker Coordinators** also standing down after doing a sterling job in organising the speakers for our monthly meetings. She would also be very happy to work with someone to settle them into the role.

Lastly, I too am stepping down as **Vice Chair!** I will continue my role on the Social Committee but we are looking for someone to replace me as Vicechair with a view to hopefully stepping into the



Chair Persons role the following year. I will happily work with someone to make sure the handover is smooth and they are confident of success going forward...and I'll still be around!

If you feel you might be able and willing to help, please contact me and we can have a chat and I can give you more information on any of these roles.

Thanks in advance from the Committee and
Lyn Holmes, Vicechair Exmouth u3a Registered Charity No 1165438

Local Hub Groups November 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

Hub Groups

Brixington

Meeting at The Farmhouse on 3rd Monday in the month 2pm. Next meeting 18th November
Contact Julie Jefferies **Please contact Julie before you attend**

Littlemead Local Tuesday Rivermead Area/Mount Pleasant

They normally meet on alternate Tuesdays 10am at Greenfingers, the next meetings are 3rd and 12th November. Please contact Glen if you would like to go

Littlemead Local Wednesday

Nicola Antoni _Rivermead Area

There are a couple of places at the moment.

Please contact the Hub organiser before you go. They normally meet on alternate Wednesdays 10am at Greenfingers next meeting 13th November then fortnightly.

Withycombe area contact Jan Collett

Withycombe

Our venue is the Tennis Cafe on alternate Tuesdays at 2pm. Next meetings 5th & 19th November. We have a few spaces.

Littleham area contact Susan Hall _meets on various days and times. **Email Susan for information.** Venues to be arranged

Salterton Road and The Avenues

Anne Coles is the contact

Meets every 2nd Tuesday of the month at 10.30am in bar area of The Devoncourt Hotel. Just turn up on the day you; will be most welcome.

Woodbury Woodbury Salterton and East Budleigh Lin Milsom-Ashby

Woodbury to meet every 3rd Wednesday in the month at 10.30am at The Maltsters Woodbury

The next meeting is on 20th November

Beacon Group general area of The Beacon or central Exmouth contact Sally Parnell meetings Imperial Hotel 3rd Friday in the month @10.30am

Budleigh Salterton

The Budleigh hub meets for coffee and chat on the second Friday morning of every month. Venues vary, as we haven't settled on a particular place in Budleigh, so any new members are best to contact Sue Glover by email, or telephone.

New Members Meetings

Pippa Gibbs will be holding these on:

Monday 11th November – Tuesday 10th December – Monday 20th January

More details to follow

Social Committee

Dartmouth Naval College – 1st October

This was the second u3a visit for the year to the Naval College, with a party of just 30 (all the College will take on a guided visit). For over 150 years Dartmouth and the River Dart has been home to initial Naval Officer training. The current building dates from 1905. The visit included a tour of the parade ground, the quarterdeck, the museum and the chapel amongst others. We had a very



knowledgeable guide who gave us an insight into all the history associated the College. Following this visit, there was a free afternoon for lunch, exploring, retail therapy or a boat trip and enjoying all Dartmouth has to offer. We were well blessed with a fine day and some splendid scenery.

For the remainder of the year, we have a return trip to Dartmouth for the **Food Festival** on 25th October; this is fully booked.

On November 7th, there is a trip to **Cribbs Causeway** which will provide an opportunity for some Christmas shopping or just retail therapy! The mall has over 150 shops, a few department stores and 40 restaurants or eateries – something for everyone. There are a few tickets remaining, so if you are interested please contact Lyn Holmes (vicechair@exmouthu3a.org.uk) in the first instance.

Our final event of the year is **Christmas lunch at The Belmont** in Sidmouth which completely sold out at the monthly meeting in October, the day the tickets went on sale.

Social Committee

Clare, Elaine, Janet, June, Lyn & Pam

Groups' news

U3A Groups Update

Bridge

This newly formed group is organising its first 'playing' meeting. If you are an experienced player and would like to join in the fun, and the bidding, then please contact: Marilyn Daly for further information

History Group 2

Following the successful launch of History Group 1 (now full), a second History group has just formed. If you would like details of meeting dates and programmes, then please contact: groups@exmouthu3a.org.uk

Books Exmouth 2

Now has a vacancy.

For more details contact: Pippa Gibbs

Cycling

Now has a vacancy.

For more details contact: Anthony Cline

Calligraphy

The Calligraphy Group meets on the third Monday morning of the month

We meet at a town centre venue from 10.30 – 12.00pm.

We are a friendly beginner's group still learning and looking for new members to join.

For more details please contact: Jane Wells

Group Reports

Birds Group 1

Male Ring Ouzel at Emsworthy Mire 21st October '24



Five of the fitter members of Bird Group 1 went to Emsworthy Mire on Dartmoor to look for Ring Ouzels. There must have been 50 bird watchers all doing the same thing and we were rewarded with several sightings. The numbers of Redwing were also impressive. Some 250 flew past in one single group. A Mistle Thrush was also spotted and a

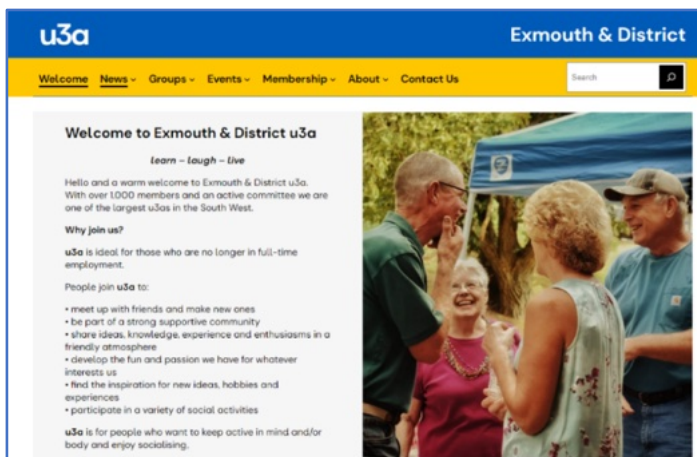
Green Woodpecker amongst other species. Thanks to Dick for leading us.

Vicky Swain, Group Organiser

Our Exmouth & District u3a website – eight questions

Our new Exmouth & District u3a website has been up and running for over 6 months now. Here are some questions which you may like to consider:

1. Have you looked at our new Exmouth & District u3a website recently? You can find it by tapping or clicking on this link - <https://exmouthu3a.org.uk> - and you can also get to it via <https://exmouthu3a.online>, or you will find it on Google or other search engines by searching for Exmouth u3a.
2. How often do you look at our website – especially the Latest News section? There is a quick access button to this on the Welcome page, or you can go to this section direct by clicking or tapping on this link: <https://exmouthu3a.online/hot-news/>.
3. Have you seen the video tour of our website. It's on our own Exmouth & District u3a YouTube channel and you can see it by clicking or tapping on <https://youtu.be/CZzGKB9nHms> or on the link to it on the Welcome page of our website.
4. Have you logged into the Members-only view on our website yet?
5. What do you think is the best part and/or most useful part of our website?
6. What do you think is the least useful part of our website?
7. How could our website be improved further?
8. What else would you like to see on our website?



Sadly we have had very little feedback from our members about our new website. If you would be willing to share some or all or some of your answers to these question that would be really appreciated, or if you have any further thoughts or comments, please contact me. My email address below. Thank you very much.

Finally, could I remind you that our u3a continues to offer other online digital resources for the benefit of members:

- Our u3a YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/@exmouthu3a>
- Our u3a Connect & Learn website: <https://sites.google.com/view/connectandlearn>

John Hunt,
Website Manager
website@exmouthu3a.org.uk

Science Matters Group

Report by David Flockhart – Science Matters group organiser.

The study of genetics.

At the last Science Group meeting one of our members, Joan Blumire, gave a most interesting talk on the life in the 19 th century and studies of Gregor Mendel, considered to be the instigator of modern genetics. Gregor lived and worked long before the concepts of DNA. He cultivated pea plants and studied the outcomes of cross fertilisation in the colour of the flowers produced. Thus he was able to postulate the laws of heredity and the adopted characteristics of dominant and recessive genes (although he did not know the word)

Joan concluded her talk with a short piece on biological latent sensing, the journey of fish and eels across millions of miles of ocean, and the inflight control of a murmuration of starlings.

She finished with this short poem :-

NOW HOW CAN THAT POSSIBLY BE?

(with apologies to “the matrix of the mind” by David John Barrington Parsons)

Hundreds of starlings are flying high
They circle, soar and swoop
Barely a wingspan distance apart
They fly in a perfect group

They do not ever crash or touch
Such perfection is stunning to see
Then suddenly they break apart
Now how can that possibly be?

There’s thousands of turtles who land at low tides
And hatch their eggs simultaneously
And deaf, blind termites who work in a group
Building perfect columns vertically.

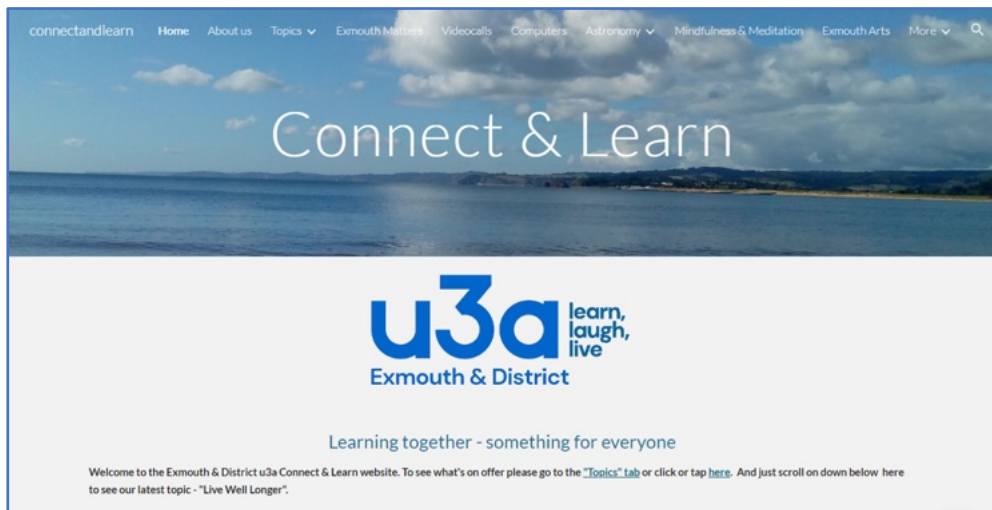
And bees from organised colonies
Individually they cannot survive
But together they feed their larvae
Bringing pollen back to the hive

Bees act in the interest of colonies
Each role known by each bee
They feed the queen ‘til it’s time to swarm
Now how can that possibly be

Joan Blumire

Live Well Longer – our Connect & Learn website

Did you know that the latest topic on our own u3a's Connect & Learn website (click or tap on this link - <https://sites.google.com/view/connectandlearn>) is 'Live Well Longer' where there are many useful resources. Just scroll on down the home page to see them all.



At our October Monthly Meeting in Exmouth Pavilion, Jonathan Hanbury gave a presentation on 'Dementia – How can we keep our brains active?' If this is something that interests you, Professor Sir Muir Gray has given a presentation on a similar topic as part of the national u3a's Future Lives initiative, and a recording of this is available for anyone to see.

Here are extracts from the Latest News section on our Connect & Learn website which give the details:

- Sir Muir Gray recently gave another excellent presentation, this time on '**Reduce Your risk of Dementia**' as the latest offering from the national u3a's Future Lives initiative. This is something that does or could affect us, our family and our friends and so is well worth a watch. You can see this by tapping or clicking on this link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p-L5dMklbGk&ab_channel=u3a
- Slides from a presentation from Patrick Holford, Founder of the Food for the Brain Foundation on '**Upgrade Your Brain**' have just been posted on the national u3a's Future Lives webpage – see <https://www.u3a.org.uk/our-impact/future-lives>

If you have any comments on this topic or on any other topics of our Connect and Learn website, or if you have any views on how this learning initiative could be used to benefit members, please contact me via the email address below.

John Hunt,
Website Manager
website@exmouthu3a.org.uk

Tribute: Dr Ian McLauchlin

It was with great sadness that we learnt that Ian McLauchlin unexpectedly but peacefully passed away at the Royal & Devon and Exeter Hospital on the evening of 19 October.



Ian had been a very active member of our u3a and made a major contribution to our activities. He served on the previous committee as Secretary for some three years from 2020. He established our u3a Facebook Group at the beginning of 2020 and ran this until earlier this year. In the challenging years of the pandemic and various lockdowns he played a vital role in ensuring that our u3a (unlike many other u3as) could function continuously throughout this entire period by facilitating meetings on Zoom. A good example of Ian's enthusiasm to help members actively participate in our u3a was his

innovative technical expertise developing the design of online voting at the AGM.

During the pandemic Ian was key in establishing the weekly Connect On Thursday sessions for all u3a members, and this has evolved and still thrives today as the Zoom Coffee & Chat Group (in which he remained very active). He also ensured that we could continue with our monthly speakers' meetings when speakers had to present from their homes, and in recent years played an essential part in facilitating the live streaming of our monthly meetings when we could return to the Exmouth Pavilion so that members could see these in their own homes. More recently he became involved in work in supporting our website.

In addition he assisted in running the Exmouth & District u3a YouTube channel from its inception three years ago, and he was an expert in editing our videos to a professional standard. We have been leading the way nationally with our YouTube channel and currently have over 90 videos, and many of our most recent recordings have featured Ian himself with some fascinating presentations and poems. A shining example of what he created is his most recent presentation which he recorded and edited just two days before his death - 'Pop Goes the Weasel' - a wonderfully researched poem. You can see this video on this link - <https://youtu.be/XAc459GH-jM>, and all of the other videos are on our u3a YouTube channel - see <https://www.youtube.com/@exmouthu3a>

We have particularly appreciated Ian's creativity, his enthusiasm for such a wide range of interesting subjects, his impressive technical expertise, his wonderful and gentle sense of humour - and his friendship. Members of the Zoom Coffee & Chat Group have already spoken of his 'generosity of time and kindness', and have said he is 'one of life's gentle men, always had something to say which was worth listening to' and 'a real stalwart of the Exmouth & District u3a and contributed so much to it'.

His health problems limited his ability to leave his home and made in-person u3a meetings impossible for him. So whilst some members knew Ian in person, many more have known him online. He was a remarkable man in so many ways. He will be very greatly missed by many of us in the u3a, especially those who are members of the Zoom Coffee & Chat Group. Our thoughts are with his family at this sad time.

John Hunt, Website Manager

Bryan Webb, Group Organiser, Zoom Coffee & Chat Group

Remembering Dr. Ian McLauchlin

As former Chair of our u3a I would like to add these words to a most fitting tribute written by John Hunt and Bryan Webb.

I greatly appreciated Ian's conscientious input to our u3a, his time so generously given. As Secretary, his support for myself as Chair was particularly valuable.

As a u3a we were most fortunate that Ian gave so much of his time during the Lockdown years of 2020-22 with their varied restrictions, researching and experimenting with our newly set up 'Technical Team'. His technical knowledge came to the fore when we embraced on-line meetings with 'Zoom' – what a positive difference it made to our members! We were able to invite speakers from all over the country and abroad, because Ian was there to administer the Zoom sessions. Ian himself gave some wonderful presentations, keeping us informed and entertained. We always learnt something new and were amazed by his tremendous knowledge, particularly with respect to science and mathematics.

Sometimes his work for our u3a was rather tedious, such as revising our u3a Constitution. But he was thorough in his approach and his dedication meant that we were well prepared with a relevant, up-to-date Constitution that we presented at our AGM.

Ian rarely mentioned his Doctorate. His first degree was in Metal Science and Metallurgy. As Ian himself said *"Why settle for one degree when you can have two? No metal physics was going to get the better of me. Time to show it who's (sic) boss, particularly in the aluminium-copper-lithium field. This was the 1960s so I had to alloy my own alloys, roll my own sheet strip, coax my own electron microscope into action and recondition my own car engine at the weekend. There were no readily available copying machines so there were only four copies of my thesis – one top copy and three carbon copies. All figures were hand drawn and all electron microscope images and diffraction patterns were hand developed and printed. They don't know they're born these days . . ."* Ian's memories of his early studies and experiments was outstanding and he kept himself up to date too.

I had so much admiration for Ian and the way that he devoted so much time to our u3a, despite the health issues that he faced. In particular I will remember his cheery approach at our Zoom 'Coffee and Chat' sessions with his well-chosen background and his many vibrant and colourful shirts, always ready with a poem, often of the humorous kind, which lifted our spirits and made us all laugh.

Christine Chittock

Former Chair Exmouth & District u3a

[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 Groups news coming in for the next edition which will be at the beginning of January '25.

Thank you very much
Rachel Cockell, Editor