

Winchester **u3a** learn,
laugh,
live

November 2024

Issued quarterly
February – May – August - November

www.winchesteru3a.co.uk
Winchester U3A Reg Charity No 1026342



35th Anniversary Cake at the August Celebration
Photo by Paul Haines, Photography group

<u>Contents</u>	<u>Page</u>
Chairman's Letter	4
Christmas Party Advert	15
Mayor's Charity Events	5
New Members	3
News from Groups (in alphabetical order)	12-16
Newsletter Info	5
Monthly Meetings & Talk Reports	6 & 7-10
Vice Chairman's Reports	11
Website information	3

Winchester u3a Committee 2024/5

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We welcome the following new members from:

Winchester

Jennie Brown	Jean Bryan	Julie Charles
Sheila Cooper	Helen Corner	Sally Heather
Roger McKearney	Kevin Perlmutter	Freda Pritchard
	Myrtle Trumper	Jennifer Lacey

Kings Worthy Nadia Freemantle

Itchen Abbas Rob Harris

Alresford Janet and Pelham Allen

Barton Stacey Patricia and John Lander

Chandler's Ford David Biddlecombe Roger Buchanan

Hamble Alex Green

South Wonston Helen Claydon

Our website can be found at "**www.winchester.co.uk**

Almost all the information there is freely available, but in order to access the phone numbers of Group Leaders you will need a password.

Please let us know by emailing webmaster@winchesteru3a.co.uk if you experience difficulties or have suggestions or need help using our web.

Chairman's Letter - Joan Sherrin

Here we are now firmly into Autumn with clocks adjusted for the winter months. From this month – **November** – our Winchester u3a is implementing a trial to amend the start time of our winter monthly talks to **'Doors open at 1.30pm with the talk starting at 2pm'**. This should enable us to return home before it gets dark. The results of the trial will be at the March 2025 Annual Meeting.

It's going to be a thought-provoking and busy meeting in March when we will be making decisions about the future and way forward for us all. We will be presenting a resolution about the constitution. The wording will be given in the February Newsletter. Following the Annual Meeting we have an interesting speaker booked for the afternoon talk. Watch this space!

Amongst all this you will have the opportunity to vote in the new Committee for the coming year. Please let Susan Shannon (our secretary) have names and contact details of those you wish to put forward as nominees - with their consent.

I will be standing down this time. The rules tell us that Chairman may only be in post for a maximum of 2 years. It is a job covering so many aspects of the u3a. It is a privilege to be given an opportunity to fulfil the role. I hope my successor will have as much pleasure as I am having. Susan our secretary is also standing down. Remember that jobs can be shared or split. It's never a case of 'one size fits all !' We need lots of you to help us make these decisions. I understand that the hall is insured for well over 100 people. Can we reach that number? With 1100 members it should be easy! Join us – there's even a cup of tea/coffee and a biscuit to round the afternoon off. That is the plan for the future.

I can now look back on our August celebration meeting and thank you all for making it such a super afternoon. Good food, Good company, Good speaker – what more could we possibly ask? We received personal thank you letters from both Mayor and Mayoress and many others from members. We will be advertising the Mayor's charity events as a thank you to him for giving us some of his very precious time. However, I was saddened to see some empty places on the day but know those missing members would have joined us had they been able. They missed a superb speaker, afternoon tea, goodie bag to take home and the commemorative pen given as a present.

Finally – when you are deciding whether or not to stand for election to the committee for the next year – always remember that 'the more that you put in the more you get out'.

Mayor's Charity Events

The following Mayor's Charities events have been confirmed, with tickets being sold via : [Mayor of Winchester's Charities event tickets from TicketSource.](#)

Wine-tasting,	29 th November
Mayor's mince pies,	4 th December
Christmas charity chalet,	21 st December
Eggheads quiz,	28 th February
Pie and Mash,	2 nd March
Rick Stein dinner,	29 th April

Winchester walks:

Saturday 8th March 2025

Saturday 22nd March 2025

Friday 4th April 2025

Notes for Contributors to the Newsletter.

The deadline for inclusion in the **next** newsletter is

Friday, 12th January 2025.

Please send contributions as a **Word document (not pdf)** by email attachment in **Arial font, type size 10, single line spacing** to the editors, (Sheila Ayling and Judy Smith), at

u3aletter@gmail.com.

You will receive an automatically generated reply acknowledging receipt. If you do not receive this reply, we have not received your contribution!

**Reports of visits should not be longer than one page (about 400 words):
the editor retains the right to edit items if necessary.**

Monthly talks at Littleton Memorial Hall
2nd Tuesday of each month,

Please note new trial Winter times: doors open at 1.30pm for 2.00pm start.

Tea/coffee and biscuits to follow.

(If you need a lift to the Hall please contact Freda Bates preferably by email or if that isn't possible by phone.)

November 12th 2024

Chris Mulvey Emeritus Professor of English, Winchester University

The English Language in the County of London from East Saxons to The East Enders

This talk is an eye opener about the origin of the Cockney rhyming slang.

December 10th 2024 - See Christmas Party Advert on Page 5

Ann and Vernon are preparing an interactive festive quiz for our Christmas meeting. There will be a small prize for members of the winning table and tea and mince pies for everyone. As places are limited, please email Ann at vicechair@winchesteru3a.co.uk or phone 881527 if you'd like to come.

January 14th 2025

Judith Elson MOTO member

The story of coffee; it all started with goats.

Judith gave such a good talk last July about 'Tea – worth its weight in silver' so we booked her again. This time we have the other very popular beverage to learn about!

February 11th 2025

Claire Wills, Neighbourhood Watch

Cyber Crime; How to protect yourself

One of our Members attended this talk elsewhere and highly recommended it. This is very modern crime that seems to be lurking everywhere and is quite unsettling. We owe it to ourselves to be aware and to be able to warn others about these despicable deeds.

March 11th 2025

Following the **AGM** when we need a large attendance as there are matters that need your vote: Alan Jones - A man with a very varied career.

Tales of a roving reporter

Twenty years of weird, wonderful and downright crazy stories, from nudists, to royalty, dangerous animals and nervous Bishops. Anything can happen and go wrong when there is a "Live Microphone". Enjoy anecdotes from the unfortunate experiences of a radio reporter and discover what really happens both "On" and "Off Air"

Monthly Talks

All Reports by Vernon Tottle

Food for thought

There was certainly enough food at the 35th Anniversary celebrations for Winchester u3a.in August. When the caterer quoted for a sandwich, a quiche, a pork pie, a scone and cream with assorted cakes, we didn't realise he meant about four of each of those items per customer. Fortunately there were plenty of bags available to take home the surplus for tomorrow's lunch.

The tea came after an excellent talk by auctioneer and antiques expert Peter Raw. Chatting about a dozen various items he had brought with him, Peter invited us to guess how much they might fetch at auction. And then explained why this didn't necessarily reflect how much they were "worth", the latter term very much dependent on personal interest.



The Mayor of Winchester, Councillor Russell Gordon-Smith, cut our celebration cake to much amusement when the blunt knife wouldn't go through the pretty ribbon around the edge of the creation. In his speech, the mayor compared Winchester u3a to Winchester University, saying that, at the latter institution, students absorb knowledge in the hopes of securing a job in their chosen career.

A financial incentive for all those hours spent swotting in the library or laboratory.

He noted that u3a members study for the sake of knowledge alone, without any monetary gain in mind. Nevertheless, our educational successes should be acknowledged just as much as students when they graduate.



Maybe we should adopt his ideas. A certificate for any member who attends all the year's meetings of his or her group. A diploma for all cyclists who stay upright on their bikes all year. A scroll for members who attend every monthly talk. And a wooden spoon for any member of the cookery group who manages to burn a simple Victoria sandwich.

Now there's food for thought!



Photos by Paul Haines, u3a Photography Group

Would I lie to you?

With a message of, basically, don't believe anything anyone ever tells you, Simon Clark, from Bristol University, led us on a trail of deceit and manipulation for our **September talk titled, “Why do people believe things that aren't true?”**.

With a starting point of the rational consumer, as proposed by the economist Adam Smith, Simon proceeded to show that we, as consumers, are anything but rational. We make irrational purchase choices, being influenced by how advertisements are set out.



Suppliers, who wish us to choose one product over another, will set out to manipulate our thought processes and influence us to buy whatever makes more profit for them, regardless of whether or not it is better value for us.

This behaviour has been codified within the concept of *cognitive bias*, which attempts to describe how misinformation is designed to mislead and delude. Deception has always been possible with the printed word but deliberate bias is now being further promoted with the advent of the internet. Deep fake videos can look authentic, as Simon demonstrated, where alternative words can easily be superimposed over a film of someone talking.

Although in the world of product advertising, the worst that might happen is we buy the wrong thing, misinformation and manipulation in the world of politics can lead to corrupted elections and has been seen to result in misguided riotous behaviour. Efforts are being made to counter this bias by teaching in schools and general public education. Nevertheless, it is best to consider any and all information given to you carefully and to be aware of possible deception.

Would I lie to you? Well, normally not, but wait until you see the u3a annual accounts!

Vernon Tottle

Burma and how not to leave it

Our **October talk** was given by Jenny Mallin and described the attempts made by hundreds of thousands of Burmese to leave the country following the invasion by Japanese troops in the Second World War. Jenny talked about the generally relaxed atmosphere in the decade before the assault and detailed some of the very English activities enjoyed by the wealthy British colonials living there.

Among those residents was Jenny's great aunt Constance (pictured), whose father and grandfather had worked as engineers on the Indian railway network. When Constance married



an Irishman, Patrick Delaney, the couple moved to Rangoon in Burma, along with many others, to form the backbone of the civil service. All went well until the end of 1941 when the days before Christmas saw the beginning of continuous bombing raids by Japanese planes. A couple of months into 1942, the general evacuation of Burma began but alas it was far from an organised retreat. Many civilians started out carrying and wearing those possession most dear to them but soon realised that silk gowns and silver candlesticks were far from ideal when walking along the muddy tracks. Far better to have left home with waterproof coats and stout boots.

This level of unpreparedness dogged those fleeing from the hostilities and it is estimated that out of 500,000 refugees, 150,000 failed to reach safety and died along the road. Not that it was much of a road. A lot of the mountainous countryside was as yet almost unexplored and the thick jungle and high mountain ridges, together with the monsoon weather, made progress very slow and highly dangerous. This wasn't helped by British forces attempting to move their troops and machinery in the opposite direction, churning up the tracks and making walking even more difficult.

After a talk, let down to an extent by too many photos and some very blurred images amongst them, Jenny told us that her great aunt and family did reach the safety of India after a trek of several months. Nevertheless, a very moving and somewhat depressing talk for a wet October afternoon.

Vernon Tottle

Reports from Ann Edwards

Hampshire record office

On the 25th July I visited the **Hampshire Record Office** in Sussex Street and was particularly fascinated to read through the scrap books and other documents from Winchester u3a's early years. Any current members can ask to see the files although you would need to book. I learnt some interesting facts, such as: In 1990, there were only 105 members and in 1999; the annual subscription was £10, £2 more than it is now; until 2002, there were no photos in any of the newsletters but ten years later, they were all in colour; In 2013, there were 3 Theology Groups whereas now there are none! I was also interested to find out that at the beginning of the century, shared learning projects on a particular theme were set up between Winchester u3a and both the British Museum and the British Film Institute. Food for thought?

If you have any documents or notes or photos from any u3a Groups or activities you have enjoyed that you no longer wish to keep, please contact me at vicechair@winchester.co.uk so that I can collect them and submit them to the Record Office in November.

Red Cross Training Session

On the 6th August, Barrie from the Red Cross provided a free training in First Aid for Winchester u3a members in Littleton Hall.

Barrie told us a bit more about his work and it was a very informative and useful session in which we learnt what to do in the case of a medical emergency such as a stroke, heart attack, sever bleeding or choking as well as how to use a defibrillator.



Health and Well-being Event

On the 4th October, the Sport and Leisure Centre at Bar End Road hosted their second event this year and we were again asked if we would like to participate. Four Committee Members volunteered to advertise Winchester u3a and there was quite a lot of interest by those who attended. However, we were disappointed that the event hadn't been more widely advertised.

News from Groups

Architecture 2



On 30th August, we visited The Homewood, which is a very modern 20th Century house set in the Surrey Woods to the south of Esher. It has been gifted to the National Trust by the last owner.....the son of the original owner / architect. They have brought in tenants who act as caretakers and viewing is by appointment .

The house is very striking with many parts "open plan" and as the guide explains many features reflect the personality of both the father and son.....well worth a visit.

Stephen Pinch



MOTO (Members On Their Own)

We continue to meet for coffee every 3rd Thursday of each month at the Mercure Hotel at 11am. Members can just come along without booking to spend a convivial hour or so with friends. Other events held over the summer needed booking and planning, for example Sunday lunches in local pubs and a theatre visit.

The highlight for 5 of us was a day trip in early September on the New Forest Hop On Hop Off Tour bus. We went by train to Brockenhurst where we caught our first bus (a double decker but not open top which was good as at that time it was very windy!)



We had a 2 hour break for lunch at Milford on Sea, followed by a short walk along the shore and ice creams sitting in the sun before joining the next bus to do a short hop to Lymington for an hour spent, window shopping & sitting on the quay, before finally catching the open top bus back to Brockenhurst!

We all thoroughly enjoyed the day and definitely plan to repeat the trip next year.
Sheila Ayling

Quester 1 Highgate to Hampstead Walk in September

A group of 13 members assembled at Waterloo & took the Northern Line to Highgate emerging on the Great North Road. The scene was set with information about the history of the London 'villages' of Highgate & Hampstead. It's all linked to their geography! Set atop sandstone ridges with underlying clay creating a fresh water spring line, this area has clean air & clean water attracting affluent settlements & homes for writers, poets & artists since the Middle Ages. Blue Plaques abound – 'spotter's badges' for some!

A stop in Highgate High St at Gail's – a local bakery institution – provided coffee & delicious cake. Our walk continued past Pond Square & through Waterlow Park, a C19th provision of 'a garden for the gardenless'. Thus we reached Highgate Cemetery - a highlight of our walk.

It is a Victorian extravaganza of graves, tombs & mausoleums – impressive & atmospheric. With the aid of a plan of notable graves, we explored together the older West Cemetery, the Egyptian Avenue & Circle of Lebanon catacombs. We then had time to ourselves for the East Cemetery.

Continuing downhill past the 'Tudor Cliffs' mansions of 1920's housing for single working ladies, we reached the Duke of St Albans pub for lunch, craft beer & a welcome sit down.

Suitably refreshed, we entered Hampstead Heath passing between the Men's Bathing Pool & the Model Boat Pond. The ponds of Hampstead Heath were originally C16th reservoirs made by damming the spring-fed streams which drained into the Fleet River & eventually the Thames. Paul declared the waters to be 17deg but there were no takers for a swim!



A short, steep climb brought us to the top of Parliament Hill with a view southwards over London from Canary Wharf to Westminster. The clouds were gathering but the rain held off

Time for that group photo!!

Leaving the Heath past the Hampstead Mixed Bathing pool, we reached the streets of Hampstead. Making our way up towards the tube station, we passed some places of note:- 2 Willow Road, a National Trust 1930's modernist building designed by Erno Goldfinger whose disgruntled neighbour, Ian Fleming, was not impressed & named his James Bond villain Goldfinger! :- the Chalybeate Well (meaning 'iron-rich') where the spring water was bottled & sold for its curative properties in C18 & C19th :- the Wells & Campden Bath & Wash Houses which only closed in the 1960's & where Kate remembered visiting as a student!!

A little weary (we had covered 5.2 miles) & somewhat satiated with information, we took the high speed lift down to Hampstead tube platform, the deepest on the underground system, for the Northern line back to Waterloo.

I think I can safely say – here's to the next time !!

Mary Pittam

The 35th Anniversary of Winchester u3a Party in August
Photos by Paul Haines of the Photography Group

