

May - June 2025

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### Notes from the Vice-Chair



**Your Chair** is presently away so it falls to me to keep you up to speed on the state of the IW u3a. We currently have nearly 300 members as we settle down after renewal

time. We have over 40 active groups listed, some of which are full and need duplicating. There is help available to start new groups - if you want to share an interest or activity then you can start with talking to a committee member - there is bound to be someone else who would also like to do it. Time and date and be there! While some groups are full, others are very small and niche.

For some reason people are always reluctant to say that they have too much time on their own - we hear of people who, now they are retired, never have enough time to do all they want but this is not true of an awful lot of folk. Sometimes it just needs a little bit more oomph to get out and join something.

Our coffee mornings at Newport, Ryde, Cowes and Niton are flourishing and an ideal place to chat, meet old friends and new members, and maybe find out about new and existing groups. A new coffee morning has just started in Yarmouth, and another will start in Lake in May – see later in this newsletter for details. Once Chris returns (hopefully next

month) we will also be establishing our groups of ‘meet and greeters’ for such social gatherings so no one is left on their own.

Make an any-time resolution to “just do it!”. Come to the next speaker meeting - whatever it is - they’re always interesting - and there will be meeters and greeters to chat to.

My main group activity is leading the cycling rides. Numbers joining me vary a lot in size - sometimes it’s just myself and one other, other times six or so, but then I enjoy cycling around the Island and taking in the look of nature through the seasons, and we always have an enjoyable ride.

Our newsletter editor would welcome you to one of his K-drama evening viewings. He’s an indoor sort but likes a view of a different part of the world,. Two of his group have actually gone to Korea to see for themselves (see elsewhere in the newsletter).

Our chairman, meanwhile, has in his absence been really getting to know the membership through his exhaustive member survey. Full overview will appear in the next newsletter when he is back fully functioning.

I hope you will also get to know our committee more, which now comprises Andy, Chris, Dave, Hilary, Peter, Roger, Sally, Sara, Sherlie and Val (alphabetically!) all doing their part to bring you the best u3a they can.

Contd...

Remember, our u3a is for the benefit of all our members, and we always welcome feedback on what you find is good and also the not so good, ideas for groups, speaker talks and events etc. We will review all feedback – some we will try to implement, others may not be possible for a variety of reasons, but we will always respond – if we don't please remind us – we are only human after all! Email me with your thoughts, or come and have a chat with any of our committee members at the various social events or group meetings.

***Happy u3a-ing!***

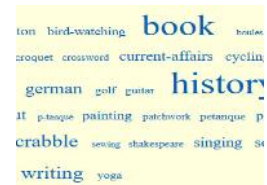
**Dave Vodden**  
**Vice-Chair**

[dave.vodden@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:dave.vodden@tiscali.co.uk)

## Know Our Website:

Your editor views the website as a source of useful information, comprising Groups, Venues, Events and Contacts, all sorted by various attributes.

If that is not enough, you can view activity across the country with “national oversights” [here](#).



Underlined headings through the newsletter should link to the right place if viewing in PDF online.

[www.u3awight.uk](http://www.u3awight.uk)

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## New Guitar Group

I wonder how many of our members have played guitar in the past. I suggest a small get-together every couple of weeks to get those guitar fingers working again.

I need to get mine out after many years and it would be nice to do it with friends. (Not a beginners' group.). Could be at my house (Shanklin).

**Glenys**

[enjoyaplay@outlook.com](mailto:enjoyaplay@outlook.com)



## New “Tech” Group

Do you get stuck at the very beginning? Scared of IT? (You can be scared at any level!)

Contact the Editor,  
[rogerskid@zen.co.uk](mailto:rogerskid@zen.co.uk)

Note that both the [IW College](#) and the [Council](#) put on courses at various levels for various subjects.

## New Games Afternoon Ventnor Sunday May 11

Fancy an afternoon of game playing? Mah-jong, backgammon, scrabble, ludo, trivial pursuit, Harry Potter trivial pursuit, cards, jacks, pick up sticks, tiddlywinks, Monopoly, Rumikub, bring your own favourite!

**Jennifer Hinton**

[jgh.iow@gmail.com](mailto:jgh.iow@gmail.com)

## **New Coffee Morning - Lake: Thursday 22nd May, 11.30 to 13.00hrs**

The inaugural coffee morning at Lake will be on Thursday 22nd May at The Merrie Garden pub which is on the main A3056 Newport to Lake road, opposite ALDI and the Spithead Business Centre. Postcode is PO36 9PT. There is plenty of free parking at the pub with level access. Stops for Southern Vectis buses nos. 8, 22 and 24 are close by.

Our coffee morning starts at 11.30 which is when doors open at the pub. In addition to hot beverages and the normal range of pub drinks, they also offer a range of meals from light snacks to traditional pub grub. There is plenty of indoor and outdoor seating- look out for our blue and yellow pom-poms!

All our coffee mornings are open to all members across the Island. New and prospective members are especially welcome to meet new friends and learn more about our activities.

This new coffee morning is in addition to those existing at Newport, Ryde, Cowes, Niton and Yarmouth, and we look forward to seeing you there; also receiving feedback about this new venue.



For more details on the pub itself visit [www.merriegardenpubisleofwight.co.uk](http://www.merriegardenpubisleofwight.co.uk)  
01983 405997

## **News from two intrepid K-drama viewers:**

We have spent three wonderful weeks travelling around South Korea. We started in Seoul which is a vibrant and exciting city, and then drove north to Sokcho. After a few days there we drove down the East coast stopping overnight in Uljin.

We realised that Korea is quite lumpy and drove through many tunnels on the way. If our Island ever decides to have a tunnel they could ask some Korean engineers to help. We visited temples and folk villages, museums, palaces, markets and beaches. We tackled the Seoul underground, rode trains and buses.

We went to Gyeongju, which is known as the museum without walls, an area full of tourist attractions, and then on to Busan. Then we

drove along the South coast to an area called Namhae. We flew to Jeju island and stayed a week.

The Korean people are sensible and practical, and very kind. It is a very easy country to explore, and if you stand still for a few minutes, someone always comes up and asks if you need help.

We have had an amazing time, and would definitely come back again if we have the chance.

**Marianne  
and  
Ed Hulse  
April 2025**



# News from the Groups

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## Playtime with Watercolour

We have been meeting every two weeks for the last couple of months but with the sun making an appearance and the garden calling we will be going back to every 2nd Wednesday.

As a result of meeting more often we have been playing with many different techniques and continuing to use the tree design as a base. One really colourful one was placing many different colours as if a tree canopy and trunk then using a fineliner to outline the squiggly shapes made by the mixing of colours. Love doing this as a shaky hand really adds to the effect!

One other was a stained glass effect painting with just water then dropping in strong pigment and let it do its thing. By placing it in a mandala the outside edge was decorated with a Zentangle effect. For those that haven't heard of this before it is a form of doodling with a pen or fineliner and making patterns. Very relaxing to do as requires little thought or concentration, great for in the evening with music, tv or listening to a talking book.

One other little titbit was using coloured wax crayons (£1 in Poundland) to enhance and add texture on top of watercolour paint. Another good effect for little effort or skill.



This is just a taster of what we have been up to and a couple of pictures to help make sense of my words. I hope you like and have a go yourself.

***Barbara Howard***  
[barb.mill@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:barb.mill@yahoo.co.uk)

## Poetry Group

The re-convened **Poetry Group** looks like it will grow and thrive. It focusses on appreciation of poetry and does not require any written work. It allows for centuries of poems changes in style. Gaining knowledge and sharing knowledge with using the back up facility of Google provides for pleasant and stimulating chat around a kitchen table.

For May's meeting we set ourselves the activity of exploring poems involving the word or idea of May. This does not limit us to the month of May but expands to such things as the May Day distress signal, dancing round the Maypole and holidays in May.

***Regards, Helena Hewston***  
*Group Leader*  
[sybug@aol.com](mailto:sybug@aol.com)

# News from the Groups

## I Can't do Art Group

Here are some members of the 'I Can't Do Art' course at the beginning of a new area of study, which is COLLAGE.

These are exploratory ideas for the final piece of art, using cut paper shapes and torn paper, together with printed material and card.

These early ideas will eventually be the starting point for a collage of their own design on a canvas board or canvas, in a colour scheme of their own choosing. I am sure there will be some more amazing work.....watch this space!

**Kay  
Evans**



## **New Bamboo Pipes**

Just the opportunity you have always wanted - the chance to play a musical instrument and to have made it yourself. No woodwork skill required. No musical knowledge required.

Email [junecfoster@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:junecfoster@hotmail.co.uk). Please mark the email "Pioneer Bamboo Piper" for more details.

**June  
Foster**



## Creative Writers

The **Creative Writers** have been challenged recently with thinking about AI but decided not to use it yet as our creativity is our focus. Then writing pieces illustrating anthropomorphism and recently taking a quotation and writing two pieces from different angles, one short and one long.

A letter to the national press, on any subject, is another piece as it challenges a short word count of 300. Talking to non-creative writers we hear the comment "I do not have imagination". The answer to that is that imagination is not what is needed because we all have experiences and can tell a friend etc. about them. It is joining knowledge and experiences together that gives the originality we call imagination. Try it. It can be fun. Over time we discover our own style and how to improve it. Live, learn and laugh.

Other examples our work can be found on the [web link](#).

Regards, **Helena Hewston**  
Group Leader  
[sybug@aol.com](mailto:sybug@aol.com)



# News from the Groups

## Bookies' Favourites

Bookies Favourites met to discuss "A History of Burning" by Janika Oza. This is a debut novel from a young Canadian novelist of Asian descent. The narrative spans more than a hundred years as it follows the history of an Indian family who find they are at the mercy of colonialism and displacement as they move from India to Uganda and on to Britain and Canada.

The novel has some beautiful and lyrical passages and descriptions of African landscapes etc. and some vividly written but harrowing parts, especially when describing the expulsions from Uganda in Idi Amin's time. However, it was generally felt that it was a book of two halves, with a fragmented and focused historical timeline in the first half, quickly introducing characters as it marched through the early decades. There was a paucity of character development in this half and it was a challenge to keep track of everyone and their cultural customs.

The second half was focused on the family's new life in Canada. This was easier to read, with a setting that would be more familiar to us, but was almost written in a different style and was somehow more "wishy-washy".

Whilst most of us found it an interesting read which provoked a good discussion, we were actually divided as a group as to whether we would recommend this book to others.

Bookies Favourites also met to discuss "James" by Percival Everett. A recently

written novel, it turns "Huckleberry Finn" upon its head and retells the story from the point of view of James, a house slave known to his "masters" as Jim. Unflinching in the spotlight it throws onto the cruelty and absurdity of the slavery system, it reflects the fact that slaves were intelligent and thinking beings who were living their lives in parallel but never equal to their white slave masters. Many of the adventures described in the original novel, are portrayed in a different light as James and Huck make their ways to their own kind of freedom.

This book was hugely well received by everyone in the group who gave an input. It had humour, drama, tension and violence before coming to an end. The language was beautiful with passages that stopped the reader in their tracks as they reflected on the thoughts being expressed. The only note of caution was that a couple of us felt it had a very sudden ending. Many of the group wanted to read more novels by this author.

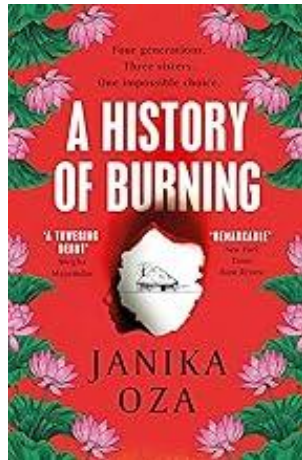
Bookies' Favourites has recently welcomed three new members and is now closed to any more until we have space in the future.

**Steph**  
[stephedwards2@gmail.com](mailto:stephedwards2@gmail.com)

## Groups

If reading this on-line then Groups with titles underlined now link to the appropriate web site Group page. This includes most of them.

Emails are also "active" - just click on an email and it should enable an email.



# News from the Groups

## The Reformed Garden Group

*Summer is on the way!*



The Reformed Garden Group is endeavouring to structure a completely leaderless group!

We are meeting 2 or 3 times a month over the summer with people offering up their gardens or allotments for a meeting space. The aim is to share knowledge, experience and ideas about our gardens or gardening in general with the occasional public garden visit.

Where there is limited space in a garden we are using a WhatsApp poll to manage a first come first served.

Contact [groups@u3awight.uk](mailto:groups@u3awight.uk) to join the WhatsApp and the email group.

**Would you be interested** in a more active gardening group? Cooperative or companionable gardening where gardening together, sharing the work and the rewards as well as providing resource for jobs that take more than two hands or for people whose mobility is becoming limited...

Contact [groups@u3awight.uk](mailto:groups@u3awight.uk) if this idea appeals.

## Quizzing



We are basically a bunch of friendly people who enjoy socialising and taking part in quizzes. Our regular venues at the moment include the Crab in Shanklin Old Village, Newclose Cricket Club in Newport and Mountbatten Hospice. We were also running teams at the Taverners in Godshill until it suddenly closed - however we aim to get back there soon. We like to try out new venues and encourage our members to suggest pubs that run quizzes appropriate to our membership - i.e. not aimed at people under 40!

We also have occasional Social Quizzes hosted by members at their homes which is proving very popular. We regularly remind ourselves that it's the taking part that matters, not the winning - although when one of our teams makes it into the top three we are very happy! Contact details below if you fancy joining this happy band of quizzers who all share the same aim of keeping the old grey matter stimulated.

**Alison Botha**

[alisonbotha@hotmail.com](mailto:alisonbotha@hotmail.com)

## Exploring Historic Churches

Visits to Historic Churches: Nine of us visited Quarr Abbey on the 13th April, and then walked along the lane to look at the ruins of the original Abbey, followed by a cup of tea in the garden of the cafe. Our meetings this year will be on the first Sunday of the month at 2pm.

In May (4th) we are going to St John the Evangelist in Sandown, a lovely Victorian church which is on the Historic Buildings at Risk Register. Contact me if you are not yet on the list so that I can send you the details.

**Hilary Ranger**

[hilary@hilarycorricks.co.uk](mailto:hilary@hilarycorricks.co.uk)  
07876 560439

# News from the Groups

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## Random Rambles

Twelve walkers enjoyed a leisurely walk along the River Medina in the glorious April sunshine.

We started with a visit to the Post Office Museum on Fairlee Road. What a pleasure it was! Enthusiast Arthur has well over 200 exhibits and I am sure if all the books and documents were included, it would run into a thousand.

With every post box was a story, including those from hotels, companies and one from Ventnor. The old sorting shelves from East Cowes were set out as it would have been before automation. What a collection! We also heard how to spot a fake antique box.

In May the “Nutty Knitters” will be decorating all the boxes for charity so it’s worth a visit. After our walk, most of us enjoyed a lovely lunch in the Bargeman’s Rest.

Random Ramblers has been set up to have different levels of walks to cater for everyone. If you are interested in showing others your favourite walk, please contact **Jacky**

[jackyiowu3a@gmail.com](mailto:jackyiowu3a@gmail.com)

Random  
RAMBLES



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**Random Ramble Friday May 9 Fort Victoria, Yarmouth to Freshwater.**  
Lunch at the Red Lion Freshwater, Walk or bus back to Yarmouth.

Lunch only a possibility if not all places taken by walkers. If you are interested in this option your restaurant place would be confirmed by May 5.

A mainly flat walk with a couple of gentle inclines - roughly 2.5 miles in either direction. Contact [sheilaherrando@gmail.com](mailto:sheilaherrando@gmail.com) for more details.

# News from the Groups

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## **Beach Walks May and June 2025**

The May beach walk will be on Wednesday 28th and will be another try for Compton Beach, Hanover Point, PO30 4HB. The beach is accessed by steps with a hand rail. There are toilets at the car park. We will walk along the sandy beach as far as we feel like. If we are lucky the National Trust van will be in the car park where there could be coffee or similar on our return to the car park. The start time will be tide dependent so I will email everyone a week before with the details. If you fancy a blast of fresh air and a brisk walk along the beach followed by a coffee, an ice-cream or similar, do let me know.

The June beach walk on Wednesday 25th will be on along Ryde beach to Seaview and return. We will meet by the Hovercraft steps next to Ryde bus station at 10:30. For those who want to, there is a bus from Seaview back to the bus station but you would need to check the times.

Beach walks are open to all u3a members and are held on the last Wednesday of each month. The location varies and is sometimes actually on the beach and other times along paths or promenades by the sea. Everyone is welcome, including well-behaved dogs. Come and have a walk by the sea, a bit of a chat and perhaps a hot drink (or cold) at the end of it.

Let me know if you would like to come.

***Carol Forster (formerly Bradshaw)***

[carolforster@u3awight.uk](mailto:carolforster@u3awight.uk)

07748 886246

## **Walk with Lunch**

The April walk was a glorious and reasonably challenging circular walk from the Sun Inn at Hulverstone.

We were blessed with a breezy and blue day and the walk took us along the coastal path, down onto the downs and down through a woodland dell. We returned to the Sun where we were joined by the non-walkers for a satisfying lunch.



The May lunch (Wednesday May 21st) will be just lunch at the Dairyman's Daughter. The walk will be on Monday May 19th round Hampstead Ledge.

The June lunch will be at the Birdham in Bembridge preceded by a gentle stroll of less than 2 miles.

The July lunch will be at The Propellor.

***Sally*** [sally.u3awight@gmail.com](mailto:sally.u3awight@gmail.com)

# News from the Groups

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## Discussion Group

Do join our friendly group for lively discussions of a wide range of topics. We've recently discussed for example:

Are aliens trying to contact us?  
This arose when Voyager 1, the farthest human-made object sent into outer space, started to send back 'gibberish'

Most of us felt that there are other life-forms in the Universe, though not necessarily as we know them!

Do we need a postal service for letters?  
This arose when the Danish postal service after 400 years announced that it was closing its letter delivery service

Opinion was divided. Some felt that with all the electronic methods of communication available, letters were no longer needed.

Do we welcome the idea of Amazon and other companies delivering to the Island via drones?  
This has been floated for the IoW & elsewhere.

We thought that it would depend .. One key factor was where the drone hub was sited.

We meet twice a month, every second and fourth Thursday. Our meeting dates in May and June are: May 8 and 22th; June 12 and 26th

Between May and July, we meet in the afternoon. From August, we return to our preferred meeting time of the morning.

**Pauline Hunter**  
[paulinehunter12@gmail.com](mailto:paulinehunter12@gmail.com)



## Recorder Group

We meet on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month, 2-3.30pm in Newport, to enjoy playing a variety of recorder music. The general feeling of the group is that we are improving, although practice has not yet made perfect!

New members are very welcome. It is a friendly group with the emphasis on having a relaxing time. If you are interested but not sure if your playing may be a bit rusty, please do drop in to the group and see what we do.

For further information, please contact me by email.

**Anne Baylis**  
[annebaylis15@yahoo.com](mailto:annebaylis15@yahoo.com)

## Scrabble Group

We play on the 4th Friday of every month at members' homes. The next two sessions will be on Friday May 23rd and Friday June 27th, both at 2pm, venues not yet decided. We are a friendly group and between us have a spectrum of experience ranging from 'I haven't played in 20 years' to 'I play online every day'!

We are always ready to welcome new members, so if you are interested the contact details are below.

**Alison Botha**  
[alisonbotha@hotmail.com](mailto:alisonbotha@hotmail.com)



# News from the Groups

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## Cowes Wine Appreciation

Kindly and superbly hosted by members Chris and Chrissie, the group met recently to taste and enjoy a selection of German wines. Despite a seeming scarcity of availability in local shops and stores, each member nevertheless managed to bring along a relevant bottle, albeit all white wines. However, this provided an ideal opportunity to discover and learn that each of the sampled wines provided a subtle nuance of taste, subject to the particular wine area of origin.

As anticipated, the Riesling grape was predominant, although a Cabernet Sauvignon was a nice surprise, the tastings all eventually culminating in a delightful Beerenauslese "sweetie", approved by all present!

Interest was also focused upon German wines' classification and history, with the advantage and usefulness provided in knowing and understanding German wine bottle labels - as well as the true definition of the wine term 'hock'.

The late Queen Victoria had a penchant for German wines, with members able to view the resplendent and colourful label that adorns bottles of wine from the still productive Rheingau vineyard named in commemoration of her historic visit.

All in all, a very pleasant and convivial evening for the whole group.

## **Maurice Fairfall**

Contact:  
Jenny Hale  
[jennylodc@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:jennylodc@yahoo.co.uk)



## St Lawrence Wine Tasting

Hi everybody, and wine enthusiasts in particular -  
We sampled 7 Australian wines at our last get-together, and the best received was 'The Oath' Red Blend from South Australia which averaged 7.9 points from our 'esteemed' panel of tasters, with Peter Lehmann's 'True Legend' Sauvignon Blanc second with 7.2 points.  
I was looking forward to this tasting, hoping to change my historic personal view of Australian wine in general, but was a little underwhelmed, and felt we can usually find better value elsewhere. This was only a subjective snapshot though and maybe you can find better examples. In April we decided to branch out and extend our knowledge in a great wine venue at The Terrace in Ventnor, which as you can see in the picture, has a remarkable 'library of wine'.

The Terrace specialises in lesser-known wines, grapes and regions from often smaller, independent wineries. We participated in a friendly quiz, trying to identify the dryest wines from 3 samples of each of white, rosé and red. This wasn't as straightforward as it sounds, and the left field offerings caught us out on several occasions. I'm sure all the group would recommend a visit, and we hope to return on another occasion.  
It was a fun afternoon on a glorious, sunny, Ventnor day, and we learnt a lot from sommelier Tom!

***Cheers!***

**Frank**

[frankj.kelly@icloud.com](mailto:frankj.kelly@icloud.com)



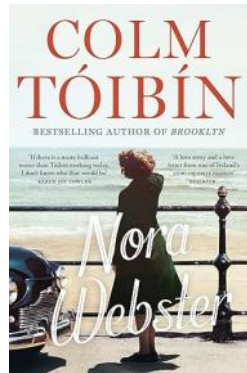
# News from the Groups

## Bookworms

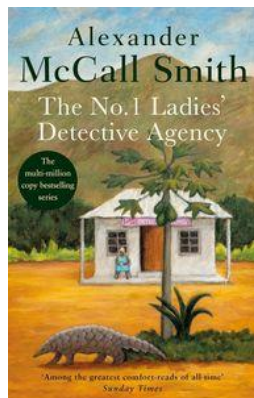
formerly Wootton Book Group

We meet in East Cowes on the first Friday of each month.

In March we read 'Nora Webster' by Colm Toibin. It's a story about how a widow copes with life after the death of her husband. It takes place in a small town in Ireland in the 1960s. Nora is a fierce, strong woman who is self-centred from grief and unable to talk with her family about how they are all feeling. Gradually she gains independence and power and transforms her life. Toibin is a master at taking the ordinary and 'with sublime writing and rich characters, changes our way of perceiving the world'.



In April we read, 'The No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency' by Alexander McCall Smith. This was a light hearted read which the group enjoyed. His descriptions of Africa were wonderful and one could sense the author's love of Africa and its people. It was interesting that both these books had a female as the protagonist; but were written by men, who managed to capture the essence of the character.



Our books for May and June are :  
'**Trespases**' by Louise Kennedy and  
'**Demon Copperhead**' by Barbara Kingsolver.

**Allison Rogers**

01983 616634

[davidallison36@hotmail.com](mailto:davidallison36@hotmail.com)

## Cribbage Group

We are a small friendly group. With some new enthusiastic members recently joining us we now meet most



Wednesday evenings at the Man In The Moon Newport at 18.00 as this is the most convenient time for all of us. Anyone interested in cribbage and possibly joining our group, please let me know: 01983 811562 or 07887 525424 and leave a message.

**Christine Priest**

[cm.priest1@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:cm.priest1@yahoo.co.uk)

## Non-Fiction Books

Non-Fiction books share but one feature so the variety is huge. Some deal with issues that are at least somewhat familiar. Others can provide introductions to fields of which we are entirely ignorant and even unaware. So it's not just the writer's style and skill that render some of our choices 'easier reads' than others: the subject matter makes a big difference.

And so it was with our choice for March where the subject was Oceanography, a science that only began in the late nineteenth century.

'Blue Machine: how the ocean shapes our world', by Helen Czerski, sets out to introduce lay folk to what is now known about the oceans, their movements and how they affect life on land. It's fascinating but as each paragraph deals with the unfamiliar it often requires two bites, with digestion sometimes limited to just a few pages at a time.

Consequently, when we met on Zoom to discuss 'Blue Machine' none of us felt ready and so extended our reading over April as well. We meet in ten day's time and I've still not finished it, but it is fascinating. We now meet on the last Tuesday of the month.

**Nigel Hastings** 07967 371635

[hastingsnigel01@gmail.com](mailto:hastingsnigel01@gmail.com)

# News from the Groups

## Cycling Group

### Beginners and Experienced

With the weather improving a little the cycling group scheduled two rides in March and two in April.

The first March ride was held on a gloriously sunny morning at the beginning of March when myself and two others cycled from Merston to Newchurch and the Garlic Farm where we sat outside in the sunshine having our hot drinks – Spring was on its way? Suitably refreshed we then cycled back to Merstone, from where my companions cycled home again to Cowes – twice as far!

The second March ride was a bit cooler but dry and I only had one companion this time, setting off from Quarr Abbey, along the cycle track to Ryde, then along the seafront to Seaview where we stopped for coffee at Lily's Café before retracing our route. Another most enjoyable ride!

Unfortunately, the early April ride for the 'less experienced' was cancelled as there were no takers to join me, but the later April ride for the 'more experienced' went ahead with seven riders braving threatening skies to cycle along the cycle path from Shide to Sandown, down to the seafront and along the revetment to Shanklin. En route we stopped at the Tradewinds Beach Café for an extended 'refuelling' stop in the sunshine before continuing up to the rail station and on to the cycle track to Wroxall.

From here we cycled via the quiet backroads to the junction with Amazon World, then along to Horringford and back onto the cycle track to Shide – 23 miles in all – more for those who cycled from their homes! An excellent ride in great company, and only a few spots of rain but some sunshine too!



Refuelling stop at the Tradewinds Beach Café – recommended! (We did do some cycling too!)

### **Latest News:**

CycleFest 2025 is being held again on the Isle of Wight on Saturday May 3rd. This is a celebration of all things cycling on the Isle of Wight.

With its main base at Merstone Station there are guided rides starting from Cowes, Newport, Sandown and Ventnor, whilst at Merstone there are stalls for cycling gifts, demonstrations and try-outs (including adapted cycles for those who find cycling difficult), storytelling and a photo competition, with a coffee shop and bakery proving refreshments. You can also share your views on CycleWight's future campaigns and learn about the next Kidical Mass ride.

CycleFest is a national event, organised on the Isle of Wight by Cyclewight. For more details go to:

[www.cyclewight.org.uk](http://www.cyclewight.org.uk)

***Happy cycling!***

***Dave Vodden***

[dave.vodden@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:dave.vodden@tiscali.co.uk)



# News from the Groups

## Walk and Talk about Gardens

In the second week of April our group had the first garden visit of the year and it was a very charming and peaceful garden. One could imagine it being the setting for an open air theatre as from the house the garden slopes gently down to a stream, which can be crossed by small bridges leading up into a neighbour's garden, which we also visited. (The neighbour even made a cake for us.)

This area was full of primroses, which seem to have had a bonanza year. As it is early in the year the trees were in various stages, some in nearly full leaf, others just breaking and others, like the beech, still tightly closed with those impossibly long copper coloured buds. It is quite interesting to chart the changes in colour of the leaves in any one tree, some starting deep red, then going through copper and eventually green, whereas others wow you with the appearance of their vibrant lime green early leaves, only later changing to a darker green as the season progresses.

We had a peek in the greenhouse which was full of seedlings and plug plants, giving promise of things to come.

It was good to meet up again as we have all become firm friends over the years that the group has been in existence - and talk about everything and anything while we have our tea and cake, which is part of the reason for being of the u3a.

We do have a couple of spaces if anyone is interested in joining us. We meet the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month, 2pm to 4pm, from April to October.

The only stipulation is that you have a garden! Happy gardening!

**Beryl Tillman**

[tillmanberyl@gmail.com](mailto:tillmanberyl@gmail.com)

**K-drama group** meets 4th Monday evening in Newport for a first episode viewing of a choice of K-dramas (mostly on Netflix).

We have watched "Navillera", the story of a retired postman who had always wanted to be a ballet dancer - and his young tutor who was a ballet dancer. Some beautiful scenes, but no spoilers!

In March we watched "Would you like a Cup of Coffee" - the story of a young man's ambition to be a barista - again, no spoilers, but you do get to learn a lot about coffee.

***Roger Skidmore.***

Contact [rogerskid@zen.co.uk](mailto:rogerskid@zen.co.uk)

P.S. Check out Netflix "Culinary Class Wars" if you are a "foodie".

Your Editor's list of (mostly) gentle Korean romances (with subtitles): [Roger's List](#)

***Find romance again with K-dramas!***



Scenes below sent by Marianne Hulse from Itaewon, Seoul, (after watching "[Itaewon Class](#)", of course).



# News from the Groups

## Psychology Group

The Psychology Group continue to progress well, with twelve or so members. We meet on the third Thursday of each month in the Newport Congregational Church Hall.

We are currently at full capacity but I'm happy to be contacted by anybody who is interested so they can go on the waiting list for if somebody drops out.

**Jeremy Turk**

[jeremy.turk@icloud.com](mailto:jeremy.turk@icloud.com)

07814 004456



## Debate Group

Still very much in its “trying to get off the ground” mode. It looks as if we have sufficient members to perhaps start a very small group.

My intention is to try for a date when time permits to see what the appetite is like. If it doesn't work this time I think we will call it quits and let it “blush unseen and waste its sweetness on the desert air”. Do let me know if you are swithering at all and would like to give it a go.

**Chris Ryan** - [chair@u3awight.uk](mailto:chair@u3awight.uk)

### **South East u3a Forum Summer School 2025 September 1st- 4th**

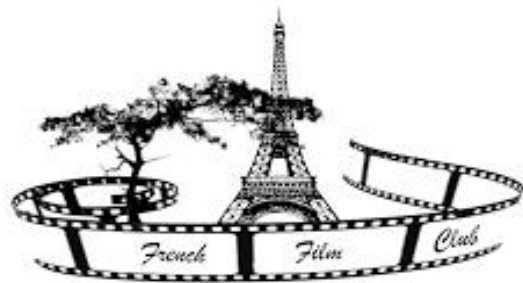
Full information on all aspects of this Summer School can be found on the South East u3a Forum's website:  
[2025 - South East u3a Forum](#)

## French Film at Ventnor Arts

Contact [wendy@ventnorartsclub.com](mailto:wendy@ventnorartsclub.com)

**Mon 12th May** - Mademoiselle Chambon (also known as 'Une affaire d'amour'), a 2009 film directed by Stéphane Brizé, starring Sandrine Kiberlain and Vincent Lindon.

A tale of unexpected romance between a construction worker and a school teacher full of misconstrued signals and ambiguous feelings.



**Mon 2nd June** - L'Atalante, 1934 film written and directed by Jean Vigo, starring Jean Dasté, Dita Parlo and Michelle Simon. Atalante is the name of a river barge and the film tells the story of the young freshly married barge captain and his wife. A simple plot but it has been said that it is not what happens but how it happens and how beautifully the interior world of the characters is explored in tandem with the sights and sounds of the ordinary world.

Admission £8, 3.00 pm Matinée

## Cinema group

The Cinema Group has been discontinued in its current form. If you are interested in being part of a reformed cinema group then please contact [groups@u3awight.uk](mailto:groups@u3awight.uk).



# News from the Groups

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## Mah-Jong +

A small group meets in Cowes weekly. We also meet in people's homes.

## Beginners' Mah-Jong

Would you like to Learn to play Mah-Jong? Sign up for new beginners' sessions.

Alternate Monday evenings in Newport starting June 2nd.

Contact: **Sally**  
[sally.u3awight@gmail.com](mailto:sally.u3awight@gmail.com)



## Bridge

The Bridge group meet in people's homes. They will be holding one or two regular games every month, so if you are a beginner, casual player or even a regular club player and want to join them, contact:

**Tony Williams**  
[shidehouse@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:shidehouse@yahoo.co.uk)

## Random Reads

We now meet approximately every 4-6 weeks as and when most of us can get together at the Bargeman's, Newport. New members welcome.

**Kate Rickman**  
[katerickman@aol.com](mailto:katerickman@aol.com)



## French Conversation



**Friday am:** Lake  
**Friday pm:** Newport  
**Wednesday pm:** Newport

These three conversation groups are all aimed at having fun while endeavouring to speak French. There is no teacher and we share the responsibility for supporting each other to improve, or at least not lose, what French we have.

**French 1** - with **Ally de Trey** - is held in a lovely room at Co-op Funeralcare in Lake on Fridays at 10 am. There are 10 group members and we generally have six to eight present at each meeting. Some of us are more fluent than others, with one a fluent speaker who can correct our French. We start each meeting with each person relating their news since they were last present, then we have coffee. The second half is a mixture of games, listening exercises and reading and translating French articles.

**French 2** - with **Robert Carter** - meets at Utilita's room in Newport on Friday 2pm. We are currently full. Meetings are very informal with no preparation and an unstructured conversation so as to achieve as natural and loose a flow as possible - as in real life in France. We have a qualified French teacher who corrects. Some members have made extraordinary progress in French conversation in this liberal environment with a concomitant improvement in writing skills.

**French 3** - with **Kay Evans and Corinne White** - meets at Utilita's room in Newport on Wednesday 2pm. We have 12 members with varying levels of French, although all members have greatly improved. Each week one person volunteers to email members to prepare a chosen subject which usually becomes very nostalgic, interesting and humorous.

Contact: [french@u3awight.uk](mailto:french@u3awight.uk)

# News from the Groups

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## German I & II

**Alternate Fridays,  
Brading Roman Villa  
or Utilita, Newport**



For the first time since we started, about seven years ago (can it really be that long?!), we have more participants in the **Advanced Group** than in the **Intermediate** one. Some of the latter group have graduated to the former, and some new talent has joined recently, so that we can actually hold conversations on topics beyond the price of eggs or the nuisance of road closures. However, there is still room in both groups for new people. Candidates for the **Intermediate** group typically spent a few years at school learning German, and might even have a GCE/GCSE. Everyone says "it was a long time ago, I can't remember much", but usually find they know much more than they imagined.

Candidates for the **Advanced** group may have an A level, or may have spent some years in a German-speaking country, or may just be very swift language learners. Newcomers are welcome to try both and see where they feel their level lies. Each session is designed to offer activities at various different levels and in different skills, such as conversation, aural comprehension, comprehension of the written word and sometimes just a smidgen of grammar. (Yes, some people actually like it!).

So if you would like to rub the barnacles off your language skills, why not come along for a taster? We meet every Friday morning (**Intermediate** and **Advanced** groups alternate) at 10.30am and finish at 12.30pm. For further details:

**Mary Longley**

[melongley1@gmail.com](mailto:melongley1@gmail.com)

07815 901252

## Spanish Improvers

**Brett Clark:**

[brett\\_iow@hotmail.com](mailto:brett_iow@hotmail.com)



**Zoom on Mondays from  
4pm - 5pm**

Much as in the last newsletter but now with an emphasis on listening at the present time. This is slightly more advanced than the beginners group and you would need to have a bit of knowledge of future tenses in addition to the Beginners Past tenses.

If anyone wants to join to learn or help us please come and join us.

## Beginners Spanish "Plus"

**Brett Clark:**

[brett\\_iow@hotmail.com](mailto:brett_iow@hotmail.com)

**Saturday Newport 1pm - 2pm**

A friendly Spanish for Beginners "Plus" group, perfect for those who already have some basic Spanish knowledge.

If you can count, use simple greetings, understand basic conjugation and identify masculine and feminine nouns, this group will help you build confidence and expand your skills and train your ears to everyday conversation.

The present and near past tenses are being used with these conversation-based sessions focusing on essential vocabulary and phrases for everyday situations, led by authentic recordings.

# News from the Groups

## Absolute Beginners Italian

We had the first official meeting of the Absolute Beginners group earlier this month. Mary-Anne Williams was kind enough to host and did a magnificent job. A big thank you to Mary-Anne!!



All the group are pretty much absolute beginners, so fit the bill perfectly. We had great fun working with cognates (words that are identical or almost identical in both languages) which is a great way to start any language. We'll do the more boring grammatical "stuff" bit by bit as we progress. Great fun was had by all. There is still plenty of time if anyone else would like to join in.

We now meet officially every first and third Wednesday at 11 am at Mary-Anne's house in Newport. The link below is to the WhatsApp group which is the prime mode of communication between us all.

<https://chat.whatsapp.com/FqUfnpXPXdjBU1rxrYGEPF>

If you are interested, please also join the **Absolute Beginners** Italian group on our Beacon Database through the membership portal. (Membership portal is [here](#).)

**Chris Ryan** - [chair@u3awight.uk](mailto:chair@u3awight.uk)

## **Italian: Step Up**

**Saturday Newport**  
**2pm - 3pm**



No longer truly beginners, this group meets at Newport Library (rather than Utilita) with our tutor John McGee. John prepares handouts each week and sets homework on a regular basis.

Many of our members have been with the group for almost 18 months so I guess we

could almost call ourselves Italian Improvers.



Our group members take turns to present a talk on aspects of Italian life, food, arts, history and travel which adds enjoyment to each session.

Some of our members are also members of the Italian Conversation group led by u3a Chair Chris Ryan, who joins us from time to time.

**John Mittelheuser**  
[john.mittelheuser@gmail.com](mailto:john.mittelheuser@gmail.com)

## Italian Conversation

Having been AWOL for the last couple of months, the group have been sharing the load of tutoring between them. They have done an absolutely outstanding job of keeping things entertaining and current. I can't tell you how proud I am of them all, and how much they embody the spirit of the u3a. There is still opportunity to join us. The whole point of the Italian Conversation is just to practise, (Learn, Laugh, Live) rather than to follow any fixed schedule. Although we do try to keep in sync somewhat with the Italian Step Up group which is more formally structured and more advanced.

This is not really a group for absolute beginners but if you have some "Holiday Italian" then you would fit straight in. The WhatsApp link is below.

<https://chat.whatsapp.com/EwCBPDBhWMN2EMfoHFP5xG>

**A la prossima**

**Chris Ryan** - [chair@u3awight.uk](mailto:chair@u3awight.uk)

## Forthcoming events

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### Coffee Mornings around the Island Most start at 11.00 am



**Newport:** Bargeman's Rest, Wednesday 7th May (1st Wed)

**Yarmouth:** Monday 12th May

**Niton:** MJ's Café, Wednesday 14th May (2nd Wed)

**Cowes:** New Holmwood, Thursday 15th May (3rd Thu)

**Lake:** Merrie Garden, 11.30 am, Thursday 22nd May

**Ryde:** Castle Hotel, Tuesday 27th May (4th Tue)

(check the June diary for June coffee mornings)

We look forward to seeing you there!

Look out for the **blue** and **gold** pompoms or u3a sign.

## Diary Date - Find us at

## Wolverton Manor Garden Fair

## Saturday 30th & Sunday 31st August 2025

(Volunteers needed, of course!)

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Just to show we are up to date,  
you can link directly to our  
website by pointing your phone  
camera at the QR code here:



Our webmaster says that pictures are welcome on the Website!  
If you would like to submit a picture please contact [webmaster@u3awight.uk](mailto:webmaster@u3awight.uk)

# **Speaker Meeting**

**Second Thursday of the month  
2.00 pm St John's Hall, Newport, PO30 1LN**

Speaker Meetings are open to all.  
The presentation is followed by refreshments and chat.

## **Thursday May 8th, 2.00 pm - "Pond Life"**

**Every hour in the UK 3 ponds are lost and every hour a pond is created. At this current level of pond loss many UK amphibian species could be extinct in the wild by 2070.**

Come and listen to Mark Earp's talk and see what you can find in a wildlife pond, how you can make your own pond even in a washing up bowl and encourage wildlife to use it!

This photo is of a great crested newt, 22cm in length, the largest found on the Island but there are many more newts out there looking for a home and it could be in your garden!



**Look forward to seeing you on 8th May.**

## **Thursday June 12th, 2.00 pm - Vera Lynn**

**The life of Dame Vera Lynn and a personal friend's memory.**

**The life of Forces Sweetheart Dame Vera Lynn who lived for 103yrs- from Vera's early life to being the second voice of World War II after Winston Churchill.**

Hear Vera's life after the war and how she spent 95 years in show business. Vera Lynn was a personal friend of James in his 20's and early 30's. Now James, aged 37 with his guide dog, talk about her career, their friendship and talks about his meetings with the legend on more than one occasion.

As we mark 80 years of VE Day, we'll Meet Again with the life of Dame Vera Lynn in your U3A meeting - you must come.



A small group turned out 10th April for a very informative and colourful slide presentation about wild orchids on the Island. Stephen Oakes-Mongers is very knowledgeable and we all enjoyed his engaging and witty talk.