

u3a learn, laugh and live
Ross-on-Wye & District
u3asites.org.uk/ross

A Word from the Chair

I was really pleased but a little apprehensive to be voted in as Chair at the AGM. It is something completely new for me and I hope that along with the Committee and you as members, we can all commit to getting the most out of our u3a over the next three years.

As most of you don't know me, I thought it may help to give you some of my recent background. I moved to Ross from Oxfordshire in October 2017 whilst still working and joined our u3a in November 2023, shortly after retiring. I go to Spanish Segundo; Current Affairs 3 and I am the Group Coordinator for Pub Walks 2. I really enjoy all of them and it was a great way to get to know people and feel part of something after I retired.



I joined the Committee as Group Secretary last Spring and I have found it really interesting; it has also been good working with the Group Coordinators and to help six new groups get up and running. There has been a lot to learn but there has also been a lot of support from other Committee members and the broader u3a.

So, that's a short introduction at this stage, I am sure I will get to know more of you over the coming months – and whilst I will try, I can't promise to remember everyone's names and faces!!

Carol

Email: u3a.ross.chair@gmail.com



This will be my last Newsletter message to you all as my 3-year term as Chair of the Ross and District u3a terminates in June 2026. The time has seemed to fly by, but it has been an honour to hold the position of Chair of such a worthy enterprise.

During my time in office I have been supported by an executive committee who have selflessly devoted a huge amount of voluntary time and effort to keep things running as smoothly as possible and I should like to record my most sincere appreciation and heartfelt thanks to them for all for the work they have done – I have merely been a minor figurehead. It is they who have done all the often very demanding backroom work – they deserve your support!

I have enjoyed introducing both this newsletter and also the regular monthly Speaker meetings, which have attracted large numbers of attentive members and I trust this will be the case for all the coming events. Whilst relinquishing the position of Chair person I know I will leave the post in very good hands. I will retain my own contact with u3a by attending as many Speaker meetings as I can and continuing my enthusiastic support of the History and other Groups.

Many thanks and best wishes for a successful future of the I Ross and District u3a.

William

COMMITTEE NEWS

Committee

Chair and Cotswold Link - Carol Carney

Vice-chair - Vacant

Business Secretary - Anne Pye

Treasurer - Mike Stringer

Membership Secretary - Heather Whitehouse

Groups Secretary - Carol Carney (until someone new is appointed)

Beacons Administrator - Mike Stringer

Outings Secretary - Jane Pendlebury

Co-opted

Website - Jim Christie with support from Mark Eardley

Newsletter - Vacant

Speaker Secretary - Catherine Silver (until August)

AGM



Good turnout for the AGM

The Ross u3a Annual General Meeting this year, was well attended, as it has been every year, with enough quorum to appoint new members on the Committee. Voting went smoothly with all the members proposed given full support without any opposition.

Carol Carney is now Chair, taking the helm from William Lyons after his 3-year term. Mike Stringer was confirmed in position as Treasurer. All positions but two are now filled: Vice-chair and Groups Secretary. We are also looking for an Editor to take charge of the quarterly Newsletter.

The AGM was followed by an interesting talk by regular speaker Fiona Morison.

GROUP NEWS

Italian

In the last newsletter we asked if anyone would be willing to coordinate a new Italian Group. There was a lot of interest and Sid Cumberland, who has lived in Italy, kindly volunteered.

“We have a new Italian beginners group starting in June. We’ll be meeting twice a month, concentrating on conversational Italian to begin with and possibly moving on to reading, writing and grammar when we’re ready. The group is full at present, with a couple of people already on the waiting list,” said the group coordinator.

Buona fortuna con questo gruppo.

Book – Group 4

Who knew we had so many enthusiastic readers? We had so much interest when we started Book group 3 that we launched Book group 4 as well and they met to discuss their first book in early June. Thank you to Beth Gwynne and Peter Hird who have agreed to coordinate this group. They meet on the 2nd Wednesday at 2pm and there are still a few spaces so please let them know if you would like to join.

Rummikub

We have vacancies for our afternoon sessions on the second and fourth Wednesday of the month, starting at 2.

Craft

Our Craft group is keen to have some new members. We meet on alternate Thursday afternoons at a member's home. We do all sorts of crafts such as felt, plastic canvas, English paper piecing and embroidery and are open to new ideas. Members decide which craft to try and then focus on that for a few weeks before trying something new.

SANDIE COTTERELL

Writing for Pleasure – Group 1

This is a small friendly group that is looking for one more member to fill a vacancy. We meet at my home in the afternoon on the second Thursday of each month.

All of us enjoy writing in whatever form we favour (fact, fiction, verse, prose, essay etc.). Each month a topic is chosen and then the resulting efforts are read out at the following meeting for which there is kindly feedback. There is a brief refreshment break, followed by a simple 10-minute writing exercise which is also read back to the group. We look forward to hearing that a Ross U3a member might like to join us.

MARIANNE WRIGHT

Never married and no children/family

We have a member who is keen to start a new group and so we are asking you to let us know if you would be interested in joining. The group will be for members who have never been married, whose career took over, or whose circumstances meant no time to start a family or have children. The group would meet initially at a pub in Ross one afternoon and then decide what they would like to do on a more regular basis, when and how often to meet and what they will do. They may go for walks or outings, meet up for coffee or a drink etc.

Cryptic Crossword

Fancy yourself as a cruciverbalist? Then the Cryptic Crossword Club is right up your street. We meet once a month (first Thursday) at Morecambe Lodge (erstwhile home of Dennis Potter), under the expert tutelage of Phil Angus and David Oakman.



The sessions involve working on a cryptic crossword from one of that week's 'dailies', exploring the world of anagrams, lurkers, charades, homophones and spoonerisms. There is much satisfaction to be gained in getting into the mind of the setter, and deciphering the clues.

The club is also very much a social event, which is enjoyed by all. There are currently 2 vacancies.

As a taster, have a go at the following clues:

'Unclear about form of energy' (7)

'Flying machine triple echo interfered with' (10)

'Unfortunately HR miscast comedians - they're employed only once a year' (9,5)

'Capital raised in addition' (4)

'Heart-throb's song and dance go wrong, getting upset' (6)

PHILIP ANGUS

Genealogy

The Genealogy group meets as usual on the third Friday of the month in the Tudorville Community Centre. If we all managed to make it to every meeting, there would be little room for newcomers, but this is seldom the case.

At our May meeting, there were only five of us and I announced that I had made a start on writing an account of my own life, most of which was spent in Zimbabwe. This would really be for my own family. It's not onerous to do - whenever I have time to spare, I simply sit at my laptop and continue where I left off. It does take one back, however, and if I wake in the night, I often find myself remembering long-forgotten things from the past.

Our meeting is relaxed and amusing. At our last meeting we found ourselves chatting about the 'Covid years', about how we had coped, the difficulties and the amusing things (like stock-piling toilet paper?). If you have any anecdotes then please send them to the genealogy group coordinator via the group website page.

DI TAYLOR

If you would be interested in joining any of these groups then please contact the group coordinator via the groups page on our website or email the group secretary on u3a.ross.groups@gmail.com

Sadly a group closed

Unfortunately the Geology and Landscape group closed as we couldn't find anyone to be the Group Coordinator. If anyone is interested in starting up a group like this in future then please let us know.

ACTIVITIES

Science and Technology

Monday July 13

Beyond Solar, Wind and Hydrogen

A presentation by Averil McDonald, Emeritus Professor of Science Engagement at Reading University and Chair of Monmouth u3a. Averil will discuss future new technologies

Venue: Larruperz Centre, 2pm

Cost: £2-£3 pp for room hire

History

The group, which meets on the 4th Wednesday afternoon of the month, has the following talks scheduled.

July 22 American Imposed Regime Changes

August 26 Venice (Part 1)

September 23 The War of Three Kingdoms (English Civil War in the Three Kingdoms)

October 28 Sparta

November 25 Mary Queen of Scots

Venue: Larruperz Centre, 2-4pm

Cost: £2-£3 pp for room hire

Art Group collaboration

Our Art Group (1) enjoyed a watercolour workshop with Brian Griffiths recently. We all painted

an owl in a loose style and then Brian demonstrated an easy way to paint trees. Brian does art classes at Brockhampton and Llangrove village halls.



MARGARET HAY
ROSS U3A ART GROUP COORDINATOR



Brian showing members the tricks of the trade



Join us for enjoyable trips and great company

At the end of February we had an interesting trip to Penderyn Distillery in the heart of wet, windy Wales. All thoroughly seemed to enjoy themselves, especially after a couple of samples! In fact, there's a couple of members who whenever they see me, remind me how much they enjoyed themselves.

Following this we had a trip in April to Newport to the Medieval Ship in the morning (fascinating), followed by a visit to RSPB Wetlands in the afternoon. Fortunately, the rain held off and our morning trip, although cold (the preservation of the wood has to be kept at a certain controlled temperature) we ate our picnics surrounded by interesting artefacts whilst the Volunteers provided us with hot drinks and homemade cakes. The afternoon proved somewhat different as the sun shone as we enjoyed our stroll or brisk walk followed by tea and cake in the sunshine. This was a well supported trip which meant it seemed worthwhile for all as well as keeping the costs low.

Our next outing is to the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire on 9 July, where after our coach ride, we will be given a tour on a mini train, followed by lunch, then time on our own. The cost of the day including the guided mini train tour, lunch, return coach trip plus driver's tip is £48.50 per person.

Depart 8.30am: Wilton Road car park.

Arrive 10.30am: Burton on Trent

We get on the Land Train for tour. This is for all, so no buggies need ordering for those less mobile.

1pm: 2-course lunch plus coffee (If any dietary requirement, please let me know). Any spare time after lunch can be used for individual walking around the site.

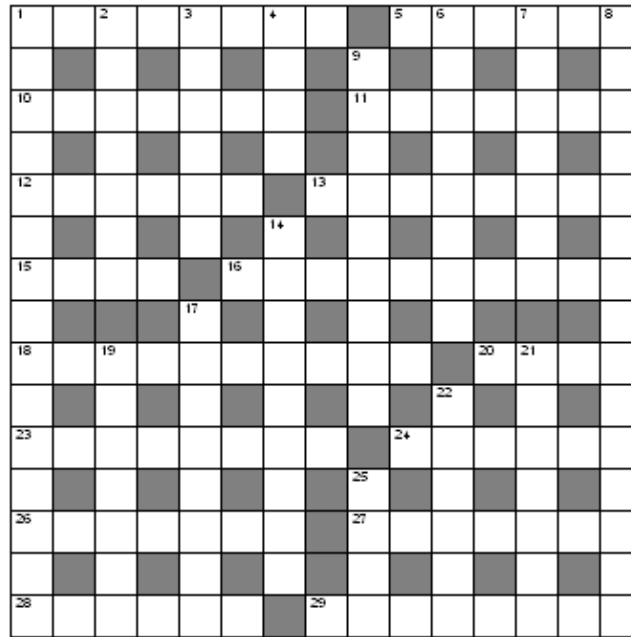
3.30pm: Depart, arriving back at Wilton car park for 5.30pm.

November 12 is the last planned outing for the year when we visit the Gloucester Recycling Plant which can be seen when heading South on the M5. This is limited to 15 people and a morning only trip, so early booking is advised. More details to follow.

The costs are kept to a minimum if many people join us on these trips, plus the camaraderie is vastly increased. So, if you haven't yet considered joining us, I hope you will. Single people have given me positive feedback that they don't feel alone, which to me is very important as well as good to hear. Please contact me via email: janependle@gmail.com.

JANE PENDLEBURY
OUTINGS SECRETARY

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD



Across

1. Dormancy from Abbey ants on the radio (8)
5. Headless marsupial gets around for conflict (6)
10. Greens dolt! (7)
11. Precedence on transmission? (7)
12. Odd spirit inverts to burble (6)
13. Impractical but scholarly! (8)
15. Frame to appear large! (4)
16. Among piers find nut tree (10)
18. Long break engineered from Swedish car in Baltic (10)
20. Tribesman at end of Letterland (4)
23. Marconi using article cooked pasta (8)
24. Base antacid (6)
26. Shallow sea zone sounds neurotic (7)
27. Constant in desert state for coffee (7)
28. 50 inserted in Ag for small piece (6)
29. Atmosphere in patient vehicle, we hear? (8)

Down

1. Successful conclusions! (15)
2. Degree therefore results in stoppage (7)
3. Counting beads for children (7)
4. Endless split at start of stave (4)
6. Does over, results in addiction? (8)
7. Bummer I upset lives in the Midlands! (7)
8. TV talk to transmit? (15)
9. Floral receptacle-like originating from lilac pine (9)
14. Additive against engine noise (9)
19. Odd clear spirit (7)
21. Gas giant member (7)
22. Collar Indian to expose his tongue (6)
25. Cultivate agricultural holding (4)

Answers on Page 8



Calling ladies over 70! A salutary warning

Mammograms are offered every three years to ladies aged 50-70. From then onwards you are no longer notified you are due for screening.

At the end of last year I suddenly thought: "It's been eight years, maybe I should just check". The mobile unit was not due in the area so I was advised to contact the BreastUnit at Worcester Hospital. You can park free and the staff and facilities are wonderful. But what followed was several weeks of anxiety as I was recalled for further investigation and then a second more intense probe and biopsies until a final all clear.

A close friend who helped me through the worrying time, realised she had not been screened for some years. Aged 75, she booked a mammogram. She was found to have breast cancer – a shock as she could feel nothing. The consultant told her: "You are lucky the lump was found before you could feel it; if you can feel a lump the prognosis is not so good and the treatment more invasive." She had a lumpectomy (stage 3 cancer) and is undergoing 10 rounds of radiotherapy. It's been six months full of anxiety and worry – but she will live and is in excellent hands. She tells everyone I 'saved her life' by nagging her to go for screening.

That's the emotion – here are the stats:

**1 in 7 women in the UK will be diagnosed with breast cancer*

**The incidence is highest among women aged 50-64, but over a third of cases diagnosed are in women aged 70 and older*

**Survival rates are improving.*

Given the age range of u3a members it seems worth passing on the message! I could not recommend more highly the Haven Unit at Worcester Hospital 01905 760145. The Hereford Unit is 01527 488055.

If you have not been screened since you were 70 – just do it!!

YVONNE MCKEON

Speaker Meetings at the Larruperz Centre, 2.30pm

July 29: Nathalie Mignotte,
Gardens of the Sun King at Versailles

August: No meeting

September 21: Neil Hanson
In and Out at the Top

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD ANSWERS

Across: 1. ABEYANCE, 5. COMBAT, 10. CABBAGE, 11. PREQUEL, 12. MURMUR, 13. ACADEMIC, 15. LOOM, 16. ANGIOSPERM, 18. SABBATICAL, 20. ZULU, 23. MACARONI, 24. ALKALI, 26. NEURETIC, 27. ARABICA, 28. SLIVER, 29. AMBIENCE

Down: 1. ACCOMPLISHMENTS, 2. EMBARGO, 3. ABACUS, 4. CLEF, 6. OVERDOSE, 7. BRUMMIE, 8. TELECOMMUNICATE, 9. EPICLINAL, 14. ANTIKNOCK, 19. BACARDI, 21. URANIAN, 22. OLLARI, 25. FARM

Ross and District U3a Group List - June 2026

This list is intended to give you an idea of our groups and whether there are vacancies in them. Please note the information does change and so if you're interested in a group that appears to be full then it is worth checking with the group coordinator. You can do this by using the link on the Group's page on our website or by emailing our Group Secretary on u3a.ross.groups@gmail.com. We can start new groups if enough people are interested and so it's important to let us know if you would like to attend a group that is full so we can review when to start a new group. Also if you have an idea for a new group then let the Group Secretary know.

Group	Subject area	Coordinator	Meeting time	Spaces
Applied Philosophy	Social Study	Frank Bowden	2nd Tuesday 2 pm	Yes
Armchair Opera	Music	Jenny Geyl	2nd & 4th Tuesday 10.30 - 2.00 - break for lunch	No
Art 1	Arts and crafts	Margaret Hay	1st & 3rd Friday 2 pm	Yes
Art 2	Arts and crafts	Lynda Mower	2nd & 4th Thurs 10 am	No
Book Group 1	Literature	Ginny James	3rd Wednesday 11 am	No
Book Group 2	Literature	Judith Mackie	4th Thursday 10 am	Yes
Book Group 3	Literature	Pauline Boughan	2nd Tuesday 10.00	No
Book Group 4	Literature	Beth Gwynne / Peter Hird	2nd Wednesday 2pm	Yes
Bridge	Games	Rochelle Nash	4th Tuesday 2:30 pm	No
Canasta	Games	Pat Milnes	2nd & 4th Weds 2 pm	Yes
Chess	Games	Dave Tomlin	1st & 3rd Thursday 10:30 am	Yes
Crafts	Arts and crafts	Joyce Meyer	Alternate Thursdays 10 am	Yes
Creating Your Life Story 1	Literature	Sheila Heath	1st Thursday 10 am	Yes
Creating Your Life Story 2	Literature	Felicity Hearn	2nd Tuesday 10 am	Yes
Creating Your Life Story 3	Literature	Fay Cummings	3rd Thursday 10 am	Yes
Creating your Life Story 4 (Men)	Literature	Andrew Mackie	3rd Wed 10 am	Yes
Crewel & Embroidery Group	Arts and crafts	Marie Eaton Smith & Eleanor Sheanton	2nd & 4th Mon 2 pm	Yes
Crime Books	Literature	Sally Beswick	3rd Thurs 10:30 am	No
Cryptic Crosswords	Games	Phil Angus	1st Thursday 10 am	Yes
Current Affairs 1	General	David Mason	1st Friday 11 am	Yes
Current Affairs 2	General	David Dawson	2nd Friday 10 am	No
Current Affairs 3	General	Mary Alam	4th Monday 2:30 pm	No
Cycle & Coffee	Fitness	Yvonne McKeon	4th Thursday 10 am	Yes
French conversation	Language	Jon Stern	1st & 3rd Tuesday 2 pm	Yes
French revisited	Language	Elizabeth Holleis	Monday 10 - 12 am	Yes
Gardening	Nature & Environment	Maggie/Ken Jones	2nd Tues 10.30 am	Yes
Genealogy	Social study	Di Taylor	3rd Friday 11 am	No
History	History	Brian King	4th Wednesday 2 pm	Yes
Italian Beginners	Language	Sid Cumberland	1st & 3rd Thursdays 10 am	No
Jewellery Making	Arts and crafts	Nola Bates	1st & 3rd Thurs 10:30 am / 2 pm	Yes
Keep Fit	Fitness	Rae Duffield	Wednesdays 11:30 am	No
Line Dancing	Fitness	Elaine George	1st & 3rd Wednesdays 2.00 - 3.30 pm	No

Local History 1	History	Belinda Legge	1st Tuesday 10:30 am - 1.30 pm	No
Local History 2	History	Diane English	3rd Thurs 2 pm	Yes
Mah Jong	Games	Jane Collins	Every Friday 10.15 am - 12.30	No
Mini Bridge	Games	Roy Milnes	1st & 3rd Thurs 10 am	No
Members on their own (MOTO)	General	Helen Donald	Last Monday - 10.00 for coffee & to agree other activities. Members also meet in smaller groups so as to have company for doing things	Yes
Nature	Nature & Environment	Catriona Pearson	1st Monday 10.30 am	Yes
Philosophy	Social study	Brian King	1st Tuesday 2pm	Yes
Photography	Arts and crafts	Gordon Hay	2nd Tuesday 10 am	No
Photography 2	Arts and crafts	Andrew Mackie	2nd Wednesday 10:30 am	No
Photography 3	Arts and crafts	Robert Felton	3rd Wed 10:30 am	Yes
Pickleball	Fitness	Lesley Lyons	1st & 3rd Fri 2 pm	No
Play Reading	Drama	Anne Summers	1st Tuesday 2 pm	No
Play Reading 2	Drama	Dave Symonds	3rd Tuesday 2 pm	Yes
Pub Walks	Outdoors	Dixie Collins	2nd Friday 10 am	Yes
Pub Walks 2	Outdoors	Carol Carney	1st Friday 10 am	No
Pub Walks 3	Outdoors	Wendy & Graham Watling	3rd Wednesday 10.00	Yes
Quiz	Games	Gail Spolton	4th Monday 10 am	Yes
Rock Music Group	Music	Rich Neal	Every other Tuesday evening 7 pm	Yes
Rummikub 1	Games	Sandie Cotterell	1st & 3rd Tuesday 10 am	Yes
Rummikub 2	Games	Sandie Cotterell	2nd & 4th Wednesday 2 pm	No
Science & Technology	Science and Technology	Simon Silver	2nd Monday 2 pm	Yes
Scrabble	Games	Susie Kemp	2nd & 4th Wednesday 2 pm	Yes
Spanish Beginners Primero	Language	Marilyn Reynolds	1st & 3rd Tuesday 10:30 am	Yes
Spanish Beginners Segundo	Language	Marilyn Reynolds	2nd & 4th Tuesday 10:30 am	Yes
Spanish Conversation	Language	Saleha Way	Mondays 10.30 am	Yes
Sunday Lunch	General	Brian Davies	4th Sunday 12.30	No
Table Tennis	Fitness	Keith Westwood	2nd & 4th Monday 2 - 3.30 pm	No
Table Tennis 2	Fitness	Catriona Pearson	1st & 3rd Thurs 3 - 4.30 pm	Yes
Tai Chi	Fitness	Linda & Kevin Graddon	Every Thursday 2 pm	No
Theatre	Drama	Fiona Leathart	1st Thursday 2.00pm	Yes
Walking	Outdoors	Julie Smith	2nd Monday 9.30 am	Yes
Whist	Games	Rochelle Nash	1st Thursday 2:30 pm	Yes
Writing for Pleasure	Literature	Marianne Wright	2nd Thursday 2:30 pm	No
Writing for Pleasure 2	Literature	Lynda Roger	2nd Thursday 2 pm	No
Yoga	Fitness	Marilyn Reynolds	Every Wednesday 11 am	No