

October 2025 Newsletter



A Message from the Editor:

Many thanks to all of you who contributed to OUR Newsletter. I've been overwhelmed by the amount of contributions this edition. I think you will find it more interesting to read about the groups of our u3a and members ideas and compositions. The group fayre was held on Friday 19th September. I, for one, was delighted to meet our group leaders who do a very good job at providing us with all kinds of groups. Without them, there would be no Weymouth and Portland u3a. Thank you group leaders.

Susan Francis

newsletter.weyportu3a@gmail.com

Remember I'm only the Editor!

CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

September for me was spent on the good (P&O) ship Aurora visiting Canada and New England. While you were enduring awful weather, I was experiencing the reverse.

Why am I telling you this? Well, I'm telling you this because while you have been acclimatising I have not, and this last couple of days has hit me like I don't know what! So serves me right for going away.

But, on the bright side I have this newsletter. It is sure to brighten mine and your day, packed with goodies as it always is. Once again our newsletter editor has done a great job - thank you Susan.

While I was away, there has been the Group Fayre, which was a great success; attracting more members to add to the 130 we already have. Well, that's what the minutes of the West Dorset Regional Meeting states!

Of course, a truer figure is nearer 730 members. Not a bad number for an area the size of Weymouth and Portland. Thank you all for your commitment.

As you all will have heard by now, we recently lost our president Paul Brickell and our Vice Chairman Trevor Lindley. Both will be greatly missed, certainly by me. I had known them both for a number of years.

We welcome Carol Greene as our new president. As was Paul, Carol was a founder member of our U3A. Past Chairman, Hugh Pelham has stepped in as our new Vice-Chairman.

Which brings me nicely to the question of your committee.

I say again *your* committee. February and our AGM will be upon us before you know it. It is a time for new blood on the committee.

A time for you to step forward, a time for you reader to have a say in how our U3A is run. After my second stint in the job I will be stepping down and a new chair at least will be required and the committee generally needs new members. It is not onerous or hard work it is fun and very satisfying. So come on, come and have some fun!

Steve Millin

WEYMOUTH AND PORTLAND U3A Contact details

WEBSITE: www.weymouthportland.u3asite.uk

Weymouth & Portland u3a website where you can find out about groups and events. You will also find the Members' Portal where members can update their name, address or other contact details. From January each year you can renew your membership via the members' portal, using PayPal.

beacon.weyportu3a@gmail.com

Contact Karyn, the Beacon Admin if you are having any problems with Beacon or you are unsure how to do something.

gc.weyportu3a@gmail.com

Tomas, the groups' co-ordinator: For group information if you are unable to contact the group leader or you would like to start a new group.

membershipsec.weyportu3a@gmail.com

Diana the membership secretary. All questions about membership.

newsletter.weyportu3a@gmail.com

Susan, the newsletter editor would be pleased to receive any contributions for the next newsletter.

treasurer.weyportu3a@gmail.com

Chris the Treasurer. Notify him if you have paid money into the u3a Barclays account. Group leaders can also scan their group registers and email them to Chris if they are not attending the monthly meeting.

web.weyportu3a@gmail.com

Caz, the Webmaster. Contact her with any questions or suggestions for the website. If you are unable to use the internet, we have a u3a dedicated mobile phone that we lovingly call the "bat phone". This will be answered by the membership secretary when she is at home. If there is no answer, please leave your name and phone number and she will call you back as soon as possible. The Bat Phone number is 07833417243. Updated September 2024

Group News from the Groups' Coordinator, Tomasa

Games Afternoons:

The next games afternoon is on Friday 31st October at 2pm in the Conservative Club. These will continue with a new leader, dates to be confirmed later.

The Golf Club would be happy to take more members. Running on Tuesdays, both men and women are welcome.

NEW GROUPS:

Italian Conversation -sorry, not for beginners and is full at the moment.

These two groups have been previously advertised and are starting off as small groups.

If interested now, you may find yourself on a waiting list.

Dealing with Hearing Loss -this will run in several small groups.

There may be a few spaces.

Do you fancy joining any of the following groups?

The Theory of Music Group -is starting another set of 6-8 sessions, monthly from Monday 20th October at 2 pm. There are spaces.

Singing for Pleasure -will meet, after a break, at the Frank Reynolds Centre from Friday 3rd October at 10 am and then on the 1st Fri in the month. Do come and join us.

Crochet and Knitting -will resume on Wednesday 8th October 2pm at the Frank Reynolds Centre. There are spaces.

Whist -on 24th September 10 am at the Frank Reynolds

The Group Fayre

I walked around the groups fayre and saw groups I would have loved to have joined, but sadly I do not have the time in my schedule to fit them in. I also took note that I can learn or speak; French, German, Latin and even Italian with like minded people, or play games like Mahjong or darts....I can of course delve into the Music side of things and learn to play a recorder or ukulele with others. That makes me wonder, Is 'Music' an art or a science....I go to the Science and Technology table to discover that there is no question, it's a science! I wander over to the Ukulele group and I am told by the husband and wife team there, I am wrong, 'Music is an art', so I wonder, who is correct?

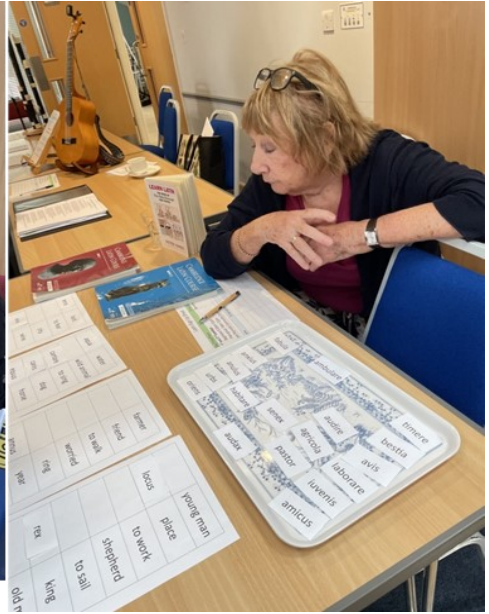
I now know that if I join MOTO (members on their own) group, they will let me have a birthday celebration...something my family always tactfully forget! I can crochet and knit, or do other crafts while I have a 'natter' with others or I can go on an outing organised by their group leader Mr Dave Cave....watch out here I come....oops! You mean I have to show decorum, inclusiveness and be polite to other members....me...the person who wears a t-shirt saying 'I have an attitude problem, who knew'.

So what is this U3A all about....its for YOU and ME; it will help me appreciate my fellow members; I will learn that everyone has a value and something to offer; I can socialise with others on my terms, when it's convenient for me and when I choose; I can learn how to do new things, play new games and not worry that my 'gammy leg' or lack of ability to cook really matters. I already know two words of Russian, Glasnost and Perestroika, so I guess that makes me bilingual....

Watch out U3A I am here and on my way.....

Fiona

(From Professor Fiona Scott Johnston-Jones, GL of Science & Technology group)



(Clockwise from Top Left), Science and Technology Group run by Fiona, Latin Group run by Sue and Bernie on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the month at the Frank Reynolds Centre, Moto group is lead by Sharon Parrott.





(Clockwise from Top), Walks local is weekly on Tuesday mornings, Recorder Group is run by Caz Cousins on the 2nd and 4th Monday morning of the month at the Frank Reynolds Centre, Many people were interested in the watercolour groups display.



Committee news:

There will be a meeting for new members on 24th October 2025 in Rooms 4 and 5 at St Aldhem's at 10am

The Repair Café is at a new venue: Southill Community Centre, DT4 9SS

It is on the second Saturday of the month, 10am—12:30.

NEW GROUP LEADERS

If you have an idea for a group, and would be prepared to organise or share this with another member, talk to Tomasa.

We could use any of the following: Keep Fit, Pilates, Darts, Badminton, Bird Watching, Chess among other things. Any queries to gc.weyportu3a@gmail.com or contact the group leader where it is shown on the listing.

Speakers for the monthly meetings:

October 17th: Bobbie Darbyshire, a published and prize winning author.

"A beginning , a middle and an end ; where do novelists get their ideas? "

November 21st: Our very own Stephen Green

"Customs Aids for Special needs"

Anne Lindley

News from our groups:

The Quiz Club

We meet on the 3rd Tuesday afternoon of the month at the Frank Reynolds Centre. The idea is that it should be fun and not too taxing. There are teams of up to 4 people and the quiz consists of 60 general knowledge questions, a table round (puzzles etc.) to think about while having coffee and biscuits and then a music round. It takes around 2 hours.

There's no prize - it's just for fun but it keeps the brain active!

Anita Roberts Quiz Group Leader

History Club

We are a small, friendly and informal group and meet 2pm –4pm on the second Friday afternoon of each month except August and December. We are interested in all fields of History and have many enlightening discussions. Our current topic of discussion is “Famous People” and we have already covered some interesting folk, including Earnest Shackleton, Jack the Ripper, Cyrano de Bergerac, Isambard Kingdom Brunel, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Captain James Cook, William Penn and Peter the Great. Every group member researches a person of their choice and produces about a page and a half of work to be read out at the meeting.

There is no need for you to produce a piece of work for your first meeting; Please just come along and meet us all.

Lin Davies Leader U3A History Group

News from our groups continued:

The Spice Club

This picture shows most of a group of Spice Club members outside the Tagine Zhor, a Moroccan restaurant very close to Bath Abbey, on a warm summer's day. We'd just enjoyed a plentiful lunch, before continuing to explore the city at our leisure and catching a train back to Weymouth.

Ros and I try to vary the locations and cuisines which our members can enjoy throughout the year in our monthly get-togethers. In previous summers we've enjoyed Thai and Indian lunches in Bridport on Wednesday market day and an Indian buffet lunch in Wareham, using public transport. Throughout the year we also seek out interesting restaurants for lunches or dinners in Dorchester and Poundbury, as well as close to hand. It's heartening to see that new restaurants, such as a Malaysian one on Weymouth seafront, are opening up all the time. As well as the usual Indian, Chinese and Thai offerings, we try Pan-Asian, Turkish and anything else which crops up. We welcome members on their own or in a couple and our meetings are very sociable and full of conversation.

Maggie Stansfield and Ros Dean, Spice Club Group Leaders



News from our groups continued:

PIANO PLAYING GROUPS

Playing for many years

This is a group of six people who play in each other's houses, giving us the opportunity to play on a variety of instruments, grand pianos, uprights, electric pianos. All of us have been playing for many years, and it's a great opportunity to hear other people play.

Our choices can be completely different, classical, jazz and popular music with mixtures of the three. Composers range from Bach, Schubert, Shostakovich and Gershwin.

It's always an enjoyable and uplifting time

PIANO BEGINNERS AND IMPROVERS

If you've always wanted to learn to play or to polish up long lost skills, but don't have time to commit to the pressure of regular lessons, come along to this small, friendly and supportive group.

Each session starts with a little bit of theory and then, if they wish, each person shows what they have been working on during the preceding weeks which might be very little, or a completely new piece, or anything in between. The consistent theme is that each member decides what they want to play in a non – pressurized, friendly and encouraging atmosphere which acts as a motivation to try and make time in between meetings to keep at it!

News from our groups continued:

Bridge Group

Our group meets on a Monday from 2pm to 4.30pm at the Conservative club on Dorchester Rd.

We aim to play a friendly, sociable game. Every 4 hands players move, in accordance with the scores, which means different partners and different opponents during the afternoon. Recently, we have started a duplicate session once a month where you play with the same partner for the afternoon.

Although we are not a teaching group (most players have several years' experience), there is the opportunity to discuss hands afterwards, helping us improve. Currently, the group is at capacity, but we do operate a waiting list.

Group leaders: Chris Penny and Chris Carley

News from our groups continued:

Birdwatching

My name is Tony Dobbs. I used to be a member of the U3a Birdwatching Group which, unfortunately, folded earlier this year. I have now joined The South Dorset RSPB Local Group as a volunteer and will be leading a walk for the Group, around Lodmoor, on

Friday 9th January 2026. in the morning.

It is a very knowledgeable and friendly group and we would welcome local U3a members who might like to join in.

As the walk leader, I need to be concerned about total numbers. If you would like to join us, or want to know more about the group, please contact me first using this email address:

rspb.southdorset@gmail.com



News from our groups continued:

Watercolour Painting Group B

I run Watercolour Group B at the Women's Institute Hall in Wyke Regis. The group is for watercolour painters who have some experience. We share ideas with each other. Each session has a topic which members volunteer to introduce. Topics are selected by members for the year ahead. We are happy for members to pursue their own choice of watercolour art.

The venue has plenty of room, good flat tables to work on and a kitchen where we make hot drinks. Parking can be an issue but is free. The No 1 bus runs along the end of the road.

We currently have a couple of vacancies.

Liz Cooper



News from our groups continued:

A Wellness Group?

Whats this, there is going to be a U3A (Weymouth & Portland) Wellness group....wow....count me in!

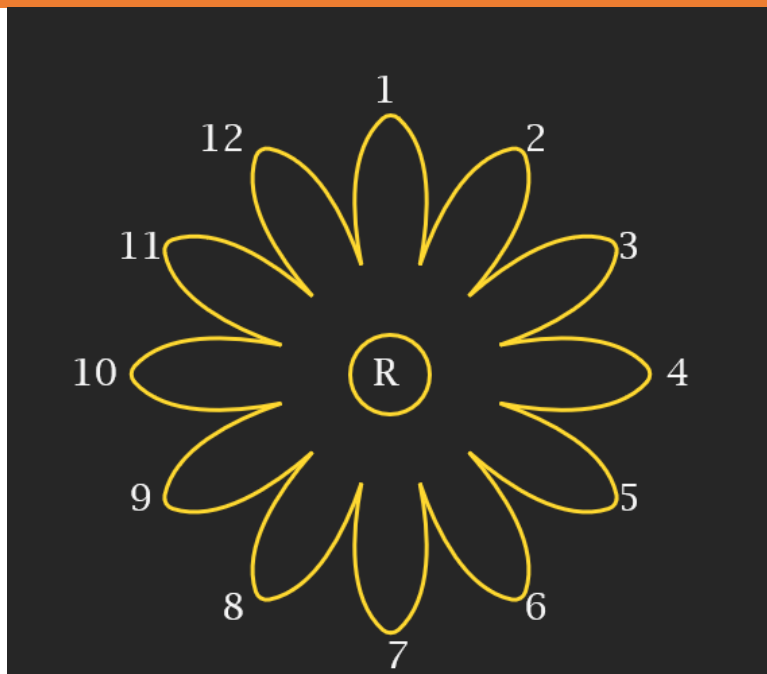
Ah...just one question, what is Wellness? Will it make me look after myself, help me feel better, keep fit and active for longer. It does all of that and more...when and where are they meeting? whats this, TBA, Group Leader needed, now come on...I want to join this group so please, pretty please, pretty please and a free bottle of my homemade wine, will someone, anyone, just step up and become the group leader, so this group can start and I can learn which vitamin gummies I should buy and what UPF means.

Seriously, if you are interested, or not interested but feel you can assist me and other potential members, , then please contact the Groups Coordinator (Tomasia Sherwood) and offer your services, so we can get this group up and running!

I am aware that many groups actually could go ahead if we had the group leaders, which is actually quite an easy task and gives one a great sense of fulfilment, so please dust off those cobwebs and think of me and offer your services to run a group. If you have a skill, you can share, then why not share it with like minded people and in so doing you will not only help yourself, but you will be helping others....I also believe that one of the 'perks' of the job is going along to the 'Group Leaders Lunch' where you can eat lots of nice scrummy food with a clear conscience, now if that does not entice you, nothing will, short of being struck of my Christmas Card list, I have nothing to threaten you with...so please take pity on me and other desperate members!!

Remember the U3A here in Weymouth & Portland can only function if people volunteer and help run and teach their skills in groups.... A note for others, I can't cook, I know the theory, I can read a recipe but the practical bit eludes me, so I am desperate for someone to teach me how to make sour dough

Quizzes



DAISY

Each petal has a 6 letter word ending in R. When answered correctly a 12 letter word can be read clockwise from the petal tips 1 to 12. The clue for the 12 letter word is EXTREMELY ANGRY.

1. Harm, weaken. 2. The drink of the Gods. 3. The roe of a sturgeon. 4.

Come into sight. 5. Closer. 6. Be ambivalent, hesitate. 7.

Cream cake. 8. Precious metal (Ag) 9. Large cavity in the ground. 10. A magical potion.

11. Numeral, digit. 12. Prepared wood.

Quotes from our members

'Life is short. Break the rules. Forgive quickly. Kiss slowly. Love truly. Laugh uncontrollably. And never regret ANYTHING that makes you smile'.

Mark Twain

And from Sheila Sibbert:

“ It is human nature to follow The Law of Least Effort. People will naturally gravitate to the option that requires the least amount of work. “

French Philosopher Guillaume Ferrero 1894

Book Review

Shrines of Gaiety by Kate Atkinson

Kate Atkinson is probably best known for her Jackson Brodie series, but I thought this book was even better. It's a riveting tale set in the sleazy nightclubs of 1920s' Soho, based on the life of a real person, Kate Meyrick, known as "The Nightclub Queen".

It's an amazing evocation of the seedy life in Soho at the time, the drugs and the abuse of young women who have been tricked into working in the clubs. Despite the subject matter, the book manages to be great fun, with touches of humour.

Recommended by Fiona Fraser, Exploring Literature Group.

A Poem by Iris P. Bool

Temptation

I joined a happy ladies' group
All hoping to get slimmer,
And every week we tried so hard
Avoiding food for pleasure.

I bravely stood upon the scales,
Breathed in to look much slimmer,
The Leader smiled and then announced
"Well done, you're this week's winner."

I glanced around,
but could not see
That anyone was looking.
If I was quick, no-one would know
About my teatime cheating.

I stepped inside the pastry shop,
My heartbeat skipped with pleasure,
'One Strawberry Cream' was certainly
To be devoured at leisure!

Then as the weeks rolled slowly by
Our shapes began to alter,
The shapely group were soon to learn
Their final weigh-in data.

I felt so pleased as I walked home,
Then suddenly felt hungry,
I stopped outside the pastry shop
And viewed the cakes and sundry.

IT'S IN (OR ON) THE CARDS

Back in the 80's my wife Lynda and I dabbled in Cartophily, you know – collecting fag cards. I know – sad in't? Lynda collected anything to do with British castles and me anything to do with naval matters. But there was always that “Oh, they look good, I think I'll get them” sets. And so it was that the other night when my body, brain or whatever decided sleep was boring I got to thinking about Dorset on cards. And actually, there were quite a few. And that's just those I can lay my hands on! One of the oldest, if not the oldest card I have in my collection is from 1899 and is one of Wills' “Seaside Resorts”. If you look at it closely you can

tell it's the view from the Nothe Gardens looking across the harbour towards

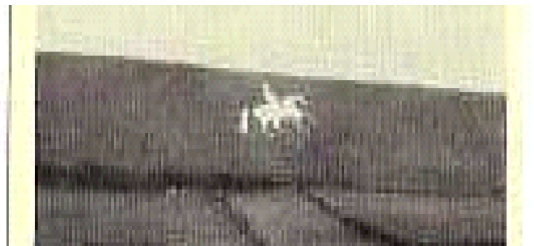


Weymouth Bay and the beach. There are two other cards directly associated with Weymouth, one is from Churchman's “Holiday's in Britain” (1938) which features a view of Sandsfoot Gardens. The other is from Ansties “Places of Interest” (1939) which is a picture of the White Horse.

Ansties, based in Devises, was one of the smaller cigarette manufacturers. Many of their issues were devoted to the “Wessex” region. Consequently, we get Dorset views that other companies ignore. Hardy’s statue in Dorchester, the pulpit rock and Old Harry Rocks for instance.)



I don't intend to list all the Dorset related cards, That would be boring, but Dorset subjects appear in sets as



diverse as Wills' Historic Events, Player's Picturesque Cottages, Wills' Old Sundials, Sarony's Links with the Past and more. One final observation, the subject most depicted is Corfe Castle.

There are doubtless many more cards depicting Dorset view and scenes; I have but a few.

Steve Millin

Quiz Answers

No Peeking!

DAISY 15 ANSWER

1. Impair 2. Nectar 3. Caviar 4. Appear

5. Nearer 6. Dither 7. Eclair 8. Silver 9. Crater 10. Elixir

11. Number 12. Timber

The 12 letter word is Incandescent

Belfield House

Belfield House is an eighteenth century country house built between 1775 and 1780. Built in the late classical style of stone and yellow brick, it has four ionic columns at its front entrance. It was designed by John Crunden on the same lines of a popular London gentlemen's club at the time—Bootles.



The house was built for Isaac Buxton and his wife. The grandchild of these people Thomas Fowell Buxton was an MP and social reformer.

He was born in 1786 and died in 1845.

He served as MP for Weymouth 1818—1837.

He is remembered for

The Slavery Abolition Act of 1833.

Although the slave trade had been abolished in 1807, existing slavery remained. Buxton campaigned to abolish it completely. His fame is indicated by the statue of him in Westminster Abbey and there are further memorials of him around the world.

Belfield House remained in Buxton ownership until mid nineteenth century. Originally, the house had a parkland of thirteen acres but parts of the land were sold off through the twentieth century.

The house was listed grade II in 1953.



