

June 2026 Newsletter



A Message from the Editor:

I enjoyed the committee meeting last month as the new Chairman, Hugh asked us to think about what u3a meant to us. It was decided that at the next committee meeting, 5th June 2026, we would talk about what things we liked and what things we would like to change.

Perhaps you would like to put you views forward. There are indeed some comments that members have made in this Newsletter. Thank you.

This is our June edition with contributions from our members and we have some interesting things. Thank you to all that have contributed.

Susan Francis

newsletter.weyportu3a@gmail.com

Remember I'm only the Editor!

Chairman's Chat

I must start by thanking Susan for her work in producing this Newsletter. It is no easy task collating, editing and producing the Newsletter. And my thanks to all of you who have contributed.

At the completion of my first term of office as Chair, I did not imagine that I would find myself back in the role!. I appreciate the support I have received since the AGM, and I hope that I am able to adequately support the organisation over the coming year.

I welcome our new members that have joined this year and hope you enjoy your group activities.

In this edition you will find some pictures of the Committee Members. This is at the request of some of the new members, so they can easily identify who they can approach if they wish to raise any issues.

As we enter the Summer months, a reminder that there is no Monthly Friday Meeting in August, and the September one will be our popular Annual Group Fayre.

I will finish by thanking all our group leaders and Committee Members for your hard work and commitment

“I wish all of you continued good health.”

Hugh Pelham

The Speaker in April—Mary Smith

The Speaker in April 2026 was Mary Smith, a retired head teacher from Maidstone Grammar School for Girls. Her talk was called “A School girl’s War”.

The talk started with Mary telling us how a large box was discovered at the school containing a remarkable collection of paintings and drawings; the work of the art teacher of the time, Miss Helen Keen..

She then went on to tell us what life was like at the school during the war years using the pictures.. The girls had lessons in the underground shelters, one of which still exists.

Mary Smith researched the time the paintings showed and spoke to many ex-pupils to see what they could remember.

The talk with pictures was a remarkable insight into a time that is all but forgotten. This story about the paintings of a witness at the time, brought it back to life and reminded us of those terrible times.

Thank you Anne for arranging it.

Speakers for Monthly Meetings:

Anne has arranged some more interesting speakers for us at the u3a group meeting:

19th June 2026 - Street Pastors

17th July 2026 - Sailability

August - No meeting

18th September 2026 –Group Fayre

Group News

Weymouth and Portland u3a Ukulele Group

Sylvia Simmonds: I joined Weymouth u3a Ukulele Group when it started with Bernie at the helm, about two years ago. Bernadette is a superb teacher and we all have great fun during the lessons. I have met some lovely people and thoroughly enjoy playing and singing. New members start at 9:30am on the 1st & 3rd Wednesday of the month at the John Reynolds Centre, Broadwey, with the rest of us joining in at 10.00 am to 12:00 noon. If you want to learn a new instrument or gain further knowledge of the ukulele, I cannot recommend these sessions highly enough and at only £1.50 each session , fantastic value.

Hazel Vekic: We are increasing our membership of Ukulele players. We meet every other Wednesday at The Frank Reynolds Hall. The session starts with beginners at 9.30 and more members join at 10 o'clock until 12 o'clock.

We all enjoy playing and singing in a relaxed atmosphere. Bernie always starts the beginning of the session with some music theory. She is very knowledgeable. We are building up a wide repertoire of songs played in different strumming rhythms. We are learning to chuck and play arpeggio strings which is sounding fantastic! Bernie is an excellent teacher and very patient! Rod keeps us in time with his bass guitar which enhances our playing as he sets the beat. So, we are a fun Ukulele group of all abilities.

We have a great time and friendships are developing. Why not come and join?

Jane Hubbard:

The word ukulele might conjure images of warm seas, blue skies, yellow sands and lilting Hawaiian music. However, this is not Weymouth Beach on a sunny August day, but a small, rather inconspicuous hall just off the Dorchester Road every other Wednesday

morning. There you will hear these exotic (?) instruments being plucked by a group usually happy, always

friendly group of University of the Third Age (u3a) ukulele players.

Tutored by their ever patient tutor Bernie, and with Rod maintaining time to keep the group together, they have turned a group of beginners into a competent ensemble. Novices, beginners, and more accomplished players are always very warmly welcomed, so if you feel the urge to add another string to your bow - sorry!

Contact Bernie!



Group News

History Group

We are a small, friendly and informal group and meet 2-4pm on the second Friday afternoon of every month (except August and December). We are interested in all fields of history and have many enlightening discussions.

We have two vacancies.

Our current topic for discussion is "FAMOUS PEOPLE", and we've already covered some very interesting folk, including Ernest Shackleton, Jack the Ripper, Cyrano de Bergerac,

Isambard Kingdom Brunel, Elizabeth Fry, Red Ellen (Wilkinson), Helen Keller, Catherine Grey, 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.

Outings and Theatre Group

From: Christine Hill

CALL CROSSWAYS TRAVEL TO BOOK ON 01305 851697 PLEASE STATE "I AM A MEMBER OF WEYMOUTH & PORTLAND U3A" TO GET THE REDUCED PRICE BELOW.

Seaton Tramway & The Donkey Sanctuary	NT Tyntesfield
16/06/26	29/06/26

American Museum or Historic Bath	Miss Saigon at Bristol Hippodrome
03/07/26	22/07/26

Westend on Wheels in London	The Bodyguard at Bristol Hippodrome
05/08/26	12/08/26

We Will Rock You at Bristol Hippodrome	Bucklers Hard
29/08/26	08/09/26

Port Elliott	Brighton
27/09/26	24/10/26

Madam Tussauds	London Museums
31/10/26	31/10/26

Cats at The Bristol Hippodrome	Xmas Train of Lights
26/11/26	29/11/26

Xmas Party Lunch at Warners	Exeter Shopper
17/12/26	19/12/26

Billy Elliott
05/05/27

Remember to say "I am a member of u3a" when you book with Crossways.

Meeting with Devon U3a Walking Group Friends

Following the arrival of the last "U3a matters" the organiser of the Teignmouth U3a walking group got in touch suggesting that we meet up as they were coming to stay at Bowleaze for a week . Good Idea!

We met them up above Bowleaze Cove on our usual Tuesday morning. We'd planned a walk with lots of variety. Paul took everybody along the coast, past the Riviera Hotel, around, back and up to Preston and then up the valley path to Sutton Poyntz, with its lovely river and ridge views. We left the climb up to Ridgeway for another time!

Finally, we went back down the River Jordan to the Bridge pub and along into my garden for tea and buns.

We managed to arrange beautiful weather and I think they were impressed! The photo shows some of both groups enjoying the garden. We were impressed by their uniform- blue T shirts- printed on the back with



details of all the 30 trips they've done in four years . Maybe we should get some too!

As usual if anyone would like to go on the walk notification list just let me know . Anne Lindley

First Aid Workshops

Two successful first Aid workshops were held in April. We are indebted to the volunteer from the Red Cross for running both workshops. Below are a few of the comments received:

“The course was well worth attending. What I thought was particularly beneficial was that it concentrated on older age-related medical emergencies, e.g. choking, hypothermia and dementia.”

“The Red Cross First Aid course was absolutely brilliant. The instructor, in a very friendly and enjoyable way, gave a very good outline of some medical emergencies one could be faced with and very clear instructions of how to deal with each one. Time was given for demonstration and discussion so to meet the understanding for all attendees. I would strongly recommend this course to anyone who maybe, one day could ‘make a difference’.”

“I attended the recent first Aid Workshop and wanted to let you know how much I enjoyed it. Not only did it serve as a reminder, but it was so relevant, informative and presented in a very enjoyable way. More of the same please!”

Thank you to everyone for attending. We hope to run further workshops in the future.

Bridget Lister

Assistant Groups’ Coordinator



This building, at the Eastern end of Wyke Road, was built to meet the requirements of the Poor Law Act of 1834. Completed in 1836, the Union Workhouse plan of the building is standard cruciform as were most of the buildings put up for this purpose. Its austere Portland stone front in large scale ashlar is not without dignity. Later, known as the Poor Law Institution, the building served as an hospital from 1939.

It was given Grade 2 listed building status by English Heritage in 1974.

The Maternity Centre was opened there in 1948. Indeed, two of my sons were born there in the early 1980s but by the time my third son was due in 1989, I had to travel to the new maternity unit in Dorchester Hospital.

It is now a mixture of private and social housing called Union Court consisting of fifty-five dwellings. It was awarded the Weymouth Civic Society Award in 1994.

The Sinking of TS Lancastria

A 19 year old soldier of the British Expeditionary Force in France was told that he had just missed evacuation from Dunkirk and that the only way he would get to England was to make his way over 200 miles southwest to St Nazaire where there would be a ship to take him home.

After marching, walking and cadging lifts he stole a bicycle eventually reaching St Nazaire on June 17th 1940 to find two troopships Lancastria and Oronsay anchored in the Loire estuary.

These liners dared not enter the port as they would have to go through the locks and would be sitting ducks for air attack until the tide rose again.

Our young soldier, still with all his kit, tin helmet, greatcoat, blanket, rifle, and all the “webbing” to hang it all on, was ferried out to the Lancastria where he found a spot on the after deck to rest.

At about 3:30 that afternoon, Junkers Ju88s from Kampfgruppe 30 attacked the Lancastria and hit her with three bombs which blew out plates on the port side of the bow and caused her to roll over and sink within 23 minutes. The brave airmen of the Luftwaffe circled the sinking ship machine gunning the survivors and trying to set fire to the oil coating on the surface of the water. Dishonourable.

From going on board with all of the kit issued to him, our lad was pulled out of the water three hours later wearing just one sock and a wristwatch.

He was taken back to UK where he eventually married his sweetheart. But then on 6th June 1944 he was sent back to FranceD DAY!

Lancastria sinking, photographed from HMS Highlander as they picked up survivors.



The medal awarded to
to my Dad and received
by me from Alex Salmond
First Minister of Scotland
12th June 2008.



He was lucky, he survived the trek across France, the Lancastria sinking and the invasion of Normandy and when he was “demobbed” he left the little north-country town where he had been born and where he had learned to swim in the local mill reservoir, and became a policeman in a tiny village in Somerset.

He rarely, if ever spoke of his experiences until very late in his life, and when he died my feeling was that his story was just too important to be ignored. I therefore joined the Lancastria Association of Scotland who were campaigning for recognition of the loss of Lancastria and the Five Thousand lives lost aboard her.

In 2008 the Scottish Government confirmed it would strike a medal to be presented to the survivors or the next of kin of those who died and on June 12th 2008, I was invited to Edinburgh to receive on his behalf, the medal that my father (Yes, this story is about my Dad) won all those years ago.

This account is in honour of:-

2587114. Brooke, Victor, Linesman, Royal Corps of Signals.

And all his friends and colleagues who died that day in the oily waters of the Loire estuary.

"They shall not grow old as we who are left grow old.

Age shall not weary them nor the years condemn.

At the going down of the sun and in the morning,

We will remember them."



From our Members

A Return to Weymouth

We moved to Weymouth in October 2020, having spent the previous eighteen years of our retirement living on Dartmoor, but this is not the first time my wife, Claire Pilkington (nee Burwell) has lived in Weymouth.

In 1968, she qualified at Bath College of Domestic Science as a teacher, as did Mary Berry some years before.

Claire applied for her first teaching post in the same year at Weymouth Grammar School, now Budmouth Academy. It was a fairly new school at the time and was one of the largest Grammar Schools in the country. Her tutors advised her that she was unlikely to be successful.

However, she got the job and started at the school in the Autumn term of 1968. At 21 years of age, she was only a couple of years older than her “A” level students! She was given the task of introducing the subject to the boys of the school. Prior to this, there had been a strict demarcation where only girls did domestic science while boys did metalwork or woodwork.

Claire loved her time at Weymouth Grammar School and has many happy memories of working there.

We got married in 1970 and my job was in engineering, so this necessitated a move by her to Wiltshire, where she continued her teaching career.

We are very happy to be back in Weymouth fifty years later.

The u3a is a wonderful organisation and we both enjoy attending various of the interest groups, as well as the superb monthly meetings. When we walk into the town, very likely we unknowingly pass some of her pass students from all those years ago.

Chris Pilkington



U3A to the rescue once again!

A few years ago I learnt of the Weymouth and Portland Golfing group and quickly signed my husband, Dave up for membership

which meant that I no longer had to trudge around a golf course trying to act enthusiastic trying to hit a small ball in a straight line!

It was a brilliant move as Dave absolutely loved his mornings with the group of “lads” as he called them. Our week revolved around the group which gave Dave so much joy and confidence. Sadly, when he knew that he would not survive his totally unexpected cancer battle, he told me the hardest thing for him would be telling the “lads”.

I don't think he ever managed to tell them but I know how his passing was sadly viewed by the group.

So three months on...I too have joined two U3a groups...the walking group and the MOTO groups.

Both groups are giving me a lifeline just like the golf group gave to Dave.

As I am unable to leave our aging Labradoodle in the static caravan where I mostly live now, I can only attend group functions which are dog friendly

and I'm so glad to say that most of the meetings allow me to bring her along.

Having a dog is proving a real ice breaker when it comes to meeting new people and I am very thankful that the U3a members are so welcoming.

One day I will be able to attend other groups but for now, I hope that is quite soon in the time ahead.

Marion Land

Bright Colours

My latest quilt:

This has taken me 3 months to make. I love bright colours so I incorporated some here. I had great fun making it and I am happy it is finally completed.

If you are a U3A member and would like to learn how to make quilts phone me on [0770374655](tel:0770374655). We are in Greece till 17th May.

There is an exhibition of my work at St John's church, Weymouth from 24rd May - 6th June. 10:30am -3:00pm.

Free entry. Refreshments available.

Nava Young



Dr. Matt Hill
School of Psychology and Vision Sciences (SoPVS)
University of Leicester
Email: [REDACTED]

Dr. Matt Hill has sent us an email:

“requesting our assistance in sharing information about a research study we are conducting on concern about falling in older adults. The study aims to understand whether witnessing or hearing about other people falling (e.g., friends, family members, or others) influences individuals’ own concerns about falling.

We would be grateful if you could circulate the study information and survey link (at the end of this message) to members of your group/organisation. Participation is entirely voluntary, anonymous, and confidential. Members can access the survey online at their convenience, and there are no right or wrong answers – we are interested in participants’ experiences and perspectives.

If you are willing to assist, we can provide you with the study information sheet that you can share with your members. We will be happy to answer any questions you may have about the study.

Thank you very much for considering this request. Your support would be invaluable in helping us understand concerns about falling and informing future falls prevention strategies.”

<https://app.onlinesurveys.jisc.ac.uk/s/leicester/how-seeing-or-hearing-others-falling-affects-older-adults-worri>

I will say that there is no obligation for you to complete this survey. It is purely on the understanding that you personally are happy to help.

Quotes:

Jiddu Krishnamurti :

There is no end to education. It is not that you read a book, pass an examination, and finish with education. The whole of life, from the minute you are born to the moment you die, is a process of learning.

Ken Dychwald Ph/D:

HEALTH - We also have people dying longer. We are able to keep people alive, without much quality of life in many cases. We haven't done a great job of making HEALTHSPAN match up with LIFESPAN, which is both miserable and unbelievably costly, and frightening.

Quotes contributed by Sheila Sibbert

A book review:

Summer Crime

The DS Cross series by Tim Sullivan

I really enjoyed this crime series written by the film director Tim Sullivan and featuring the autistic detective, DS Cross. I thought I'd had enough of autistic detectives on the screen but in his books Sullivan treats his character sensitively and thoroughly, building up an empathetic picture of the detective's condition over the course of the series.

Each book centres on an occupation, for example "The Dentist", "The Monk", "The Politician", etc., which gives them a satisfying focus. "The Teacher" is the grittiest one, made more so by the fact that it is based on the writer's own terrible experience of a sadistic headmaster at his prep school.

Easy summer reading, and if you enjoy them, there are seven in the series to look forward to, plus a new one coming in July.

Fiona Fraser, Exploring Literature group.

The Other Bennet Sister by Janice Hadlow

We are all familiar with Jane Austen's *Pride & Prejudice* where Mr & Mrs Bennet of Longbourne are blessed with five daughters. The core of that story is that because the house at Longbourne was entailed to a male heir, when Mr Bennet died, the girls would no longer have a home. Mrs Bennet, then, had the unenviable task of getting her daughters married and hopefully, married well. Mrs Bennet succeeded with four of the Bennet girls. Mary was the middle sister and was described as "plain." The "Other Bennet Sister" is about Mary and her life after her father dies.

The story is very well tied into "*Pride & Prejudice*". Mary goes to each sister to spend time with them and for various reasons moves on, finally ending up with her Aunt Gardiner in London. From this point the reader sees Mary develop into her own person!

I freely admit that when I hear of novels being founded on previously well-known novels or authors, I am reluctant to try them to avoid disappointment. However, "The Other Bennet Sister" is well written and a delight. I am happy to recommend this book.

Susan Francis

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.

Chairman : Hugh Pelham - [REDACTED]

Secretary: Janet - secretary.weyportu3a@gmail.com

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

Tomasa, 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.

assistgc.weyportu3a@gmail.com

Bridget is our assistant group Coordinator.

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

Your Committee Members



Hugh Pelham
Chairman

Norman Wood
Vice-chairman

I joined the u3a last year and I was impressed by the scope of the organisation and the many opportunities/activities available to all members. I chose ukulele Group and enjoy the experience of learning a new skill albeit my singing leaves a lot to be desired! I volunteered for the committee to be able to give some of my time to assist where I can.

Volunteering can be enjoyable and has benefitted my well-being as a new chapter in my life evolves.



Your committee members



Groups' Coordinator

Tomasa Sherwood



Secretary

Janet Armstrong



Membership Secretary

Diana Morton



Newsletter Editor

Susan Francis



Speaker Organiser
Anne Lindley

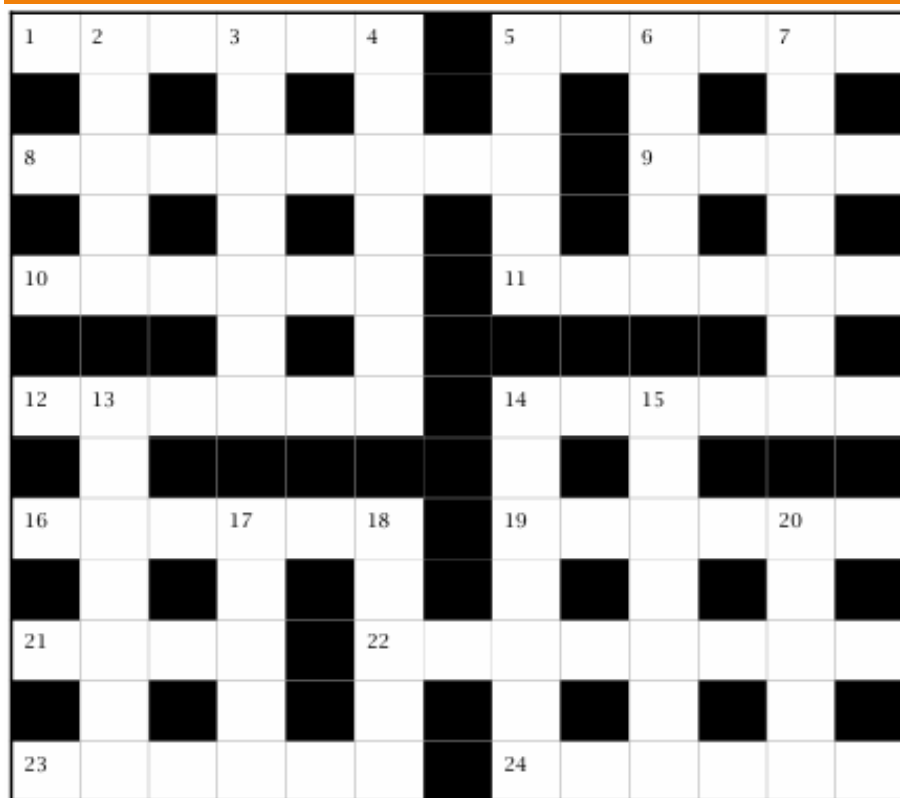


Assistant Groups' Coordinator
Bridget Lister



Committee Member
Gwyneth Gardiner

Quizzes



Across:

1. Short sighted. (6
5. A language. (6
8. Audacity, boldness. (8
9. Semi-precious stone. (4
10. Convivial. (6
11. Impetuously. (6
12. Imparted knowledge. (6
14. Growing out of a trunk. (6
16. Presentation, set up. (6
19. Downy, soft. (6
21. Sharp taste. (4
22. Non-intervention. (8
23. Partly shaved hairstyle. (6
24. Happens. (6

Down:

2. Web service company (5
3. Placing a plant in a container .(
4. Second person in a cockpit (2, !
5. Dislike. (5
6. Declares. (5
7. Heavenly, perfect. (7
13. Alligator pear. (7
14. Wild ox. (7
15. Relating to water. (7
17. Fluid within the Earth's crust. (
18. Cunning act to deceive. (5
20. Baking ingredient. (5

Wordsearch

L	I	V	O	E	Y	A	B	T	S	E	W	C
Y	O	D	R	N	N	O	T	I	N	O	H	B
M	S	U	H	W	A	R	E	H	A	M	M	A
E	N	O	T	N	U	A	T	W	A	W	A	R
R	O	R	U	R	R	E	T	E	X	E	H	N
E	D	T	O	T	O	R	Q	U	A	Y	N	S
G	N	S	M	L	H	H	T	A	B	M	E	T
I	I	L	E	S	O	A	M	E	R	O	T	A
S	W	A	N	A	G	E	M	R	I	U	L	B
S	S	E	R	E	L	O	O	P	S	T	E	L
T	D	O	U	S	L	L	E	W	T	H	H	E
H	T	U	O	M	Y	L	P	R	O	O	C	S
Y	R	U	B	S	I	L	A	S	L	E	N	T

WORDSEARCH Places in the South and Southwest England

There are 22 places to find going forward, backward, up, down and Diagonally. The remaining letters spell which 3 Counties.

WORDSEARCH ANSWERS PLACES in SOUTHERN and SOUTHWEST ENGLAND

BARNSTABLE BATH BOURNEMOUTH BRISTOL CHELTENHAM EXETER HONITON
LYME REGIS PLYMOUTH POOLE SALISBURY SOUTHAMPTON STROUD SWANAGE
TAUNTON TORQUAY TRURO WAREHAM WELLS WEST BAY WEYMOUTH YEOVIL
The 3 Counties are CORNWALL, DORSET, and WILTSHIRE

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

ACROSS 1. MYOPIC 5. ARABIC 8. CHUTZPAH 9. ONYX 10. JOVIAL 11. RASHLY
12. TAUGHT 14. BRANCH 16. FORMAT 19. FLUFFY 21. TANG
22. INACTION 23. MOHAWK 24. OCCURS
DOWN 2. YAHOO 3. POTTING 4. CO-PILOT 5. ABHOR 6. AVOWS 7. IDYLLIC
13. AVOCADO 14. BUFFALO 15. AQUATIC 17. MAGMA 18. TRICK 20. FLOUR

