

BLANDFORD & DISTRICT u3a

Charity no: 1092984 - Website: <https://u3asites.org.uk/blandford/home>

AUTUMN 2024

MEANDERINGS FROM THE CHAIR

Wanted . . .

We urgently need a replacement for our treasurer, Jack Shonfield. Jack is retiring after many years in the post and will be greatly missed.

The rules state that we, Blandford & District u3a, must have this post filled to continue running:

B&D u3a will be forced to close if we are unable to find a replacement for Jack.

The post is not particularly onerous: you do not have to be an accountant or need a financial background, just to be familiar with spreadsheets. Neither our income nor our expenditure is great, so it only requires a few cheques to be paid in or sent every month and the transactions recorded. Jack is happy to talk through the treasurer's post with you. Don't assume another u3a member will do it – they are all assuming the same . . .

To paraphrase JFK – Ask not what your u3a can do for you but what you can do for your u3a!

The clock is ticking, and time is running out.

Contact Jack or a member of the committee for an informal chat (contact details on the website).

THE GREAT PICNIC IN THE PARK

For those that missed the occasion, we had a bright sunny day for the Picnic in the Park in Upton Country Park on 3rd July. The numbers were swelled by Peter Aldous routing the cycling group to the event, a really nice surprise. Many members wandered through the lovely grounds after lunch and of course we had the obligatory cup of tea/coffee.

NEW B&D U3A WEBSITE

U3a head office will be closing the existing website hosting system later this year and we (the u3a's using the current program) will have to swap onto a new program. The new-look site will be smarter and should be easier to use, it will give you more information and allow some members (e.g. group leaders) to add "Special Events" to their Group webpage should they wish to.

Initially, we will start with an enhanced replacement of the existing site but with more information and pictures and, once it is bedded in, will introduce some of the advanced features.

We will run both the old and new sites in parallel for a short time and will announce the launch of the new site in due course . . . and await your comments!

Enjoy the rest of the summer.

Rob Clarke

SEPTEMBER OPEN MEETING

Durweston Village Hall

Friday 27th September 2024

2.00-2.15pm – greet, meet and seat

2.30pm – speaker: Dawn Lawrence – Two Steps Behind
(on the endangered species of the natural world)

3.15pm – tea, cake and chat: £1.50 for homemade cake and tea/coffee

EVERYONE WELCOME!

A THANK YOU

When I retired as Chairman of B&D last year I was asked if there was something I would like as a memento and I decided on a couple of 'Peace' roses, reminiscent of my parents' garden in the 50s and 60s. Lynn Hawkey and June Lane hunted around all the local nurseries but to no avail (wrong time of year apparently) and we decided I would go on-line and see what I could find. Last winter my bareroot roses arrived and were duly moved to posh new terracotta pots when the weather improved. And they have bloomed and bloomed this summer! Thank you for a lovely memento, Christine Smith



NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

MAH JONG

The group continues apace and we have welcomed three new members recently. It is always a difficult juggling act to get the right number of members as ideally we play on tables of four but can play with three, so not quite as difficult as bridge! It is extraordinary how the numbers can vary with either a full to bursting house or relatively few! We continue to play from 2pm until 5pm with a break for a cup of tea and chat in the middle.

Lynn Hawkey

JUST FOR OURSELVES

Phew, what a year it's been. The time has gone by so quickly since the new, Just for Ourselves group was formed. I think all of us in the group can say we've met some lovely, lovely people and made firm friends since we started, which is the aim of the group. We're all single and we 'get it.' We're a warm friendly bunch - we know what it's like.

Last February, when we hadn't known each other long, some of us took the plunge and went on a cruise round the Med together. We all did our own thing if we felt like it, there was no pressure (the cruise was organised completely separately from the u3a) and we came back relaxed and recharged. We had such a lovely time we're doing it again! This time we're going away over Christmas for two weeks round the Med again with some different stops that will include Vigo, Maderia, Portugal etc. Fancy joining our group or even coming on a cruise? We only have a few places left in the group.

Annie Love

NB: Please note that the cruise is entirely independent of B&D u3a and as such the u3a cannot accept any liability for any matters resulting from it in any circumstances.

GARDEN VISITS (April to September)

At the time of writing we have just passed the halfway point having visited four out of the six gardens booked so far this year. Our first visit was to Fonthill House (pictured right) near



Tisbury in April, then Wincombe Park near Shaftesbury in May. Our first coach outing was in June to Wildside (below left) and the Garden House in Yelverton, Devon (on



the edge of Dartmoor) and lastly to Broomhill in Rampisham in July. We have Saddlestones, Witchampton still to come in August followed by our final coach trip, this time to Hartland Abbey on the north Devon coast. The weather has not been too kind to us this year but despite a drenching at Wincombe Park

we have seen glimpses of sunshine from time to time! If you would like to read more please see our website by clicking on the following link and then clicking on the links to the right of the page for individual gardens. Bookings are essential. <https://u3asites.org.uk/blandford/page/116966>

Lynn Hawkey

HISTORIC NOVELS

Planned to start at the end of the summer, Bridget Spiers' new group will be looking at the genre of the historic novel in all its guises. If you're interested in joining the group to talk and discuss the best or worse of the books you've read, get in touch with Bridget via her Historic Visits page on the website.

We owe to the Middle Ages the two worst inventions of humanity:

gunpowder and romantic love.

..... Andre Maurois

DANCING



This is a photo of hubby and me at a D-Day dance at Winterborne Kingston at the end of June when we danced to the local Moonlight Swing Band, who were brilliant . One of our u3a dance group members attended with us and we all danced the night away . She had never learnt to dance until she joined the group and it was great to see her on the dance floor. She wouldn't sit down!!.

The hall at Winterborne Kingston will also be holding a Christmas dance, which we are planning on attending, so if any members would like to join us, come along to our monthly group on the 2nd Monday of the month to prepare. You will be very welcome, even if you are a beginner.

Pat Luke

MUSIC APPRECIATION

Our very friendly group meets once a month in Blandford Parish Centre to enjoy a wide variety of music. Some members have been coming for some time and some new ones have joined us, but we have room for more! We are about to enjoy a DVD, 'Eroica: The day that changed music forever', with Ian Hart as Beethoven supported by a very impressive cast. In September we are welcoming Tim Fisher who plays with The Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra in the First Violins. We start at 10.00am, coffee at 11.00am and finish at 12.00noon.

Viv Chapman

CRAFT

We decided this year to carry on through the summer months and our optimism that those not away on holiday would come for an afternoon of crafting, chat and tea was not wrong. Diana H and Stella have been completing quilting projects, Diana B has nearly completed a needlepoint footstool for a daughter-in-law and there have been embroidery and cross-stitch pictures taking shape and lots of knitting. There has been a call-out from the Dorset & Wiltshire Fire Service for more knitted 'Trauma Teds' that are carried on fire appliances for youngsters caught up in incidents. So, patterns have been distributed among the group and we will be using up odds and ends of wool to bring some cheer. [Dorset & Wiltshire Fire Service | Trauma Teds \(dwfire.org.uk\)](http://dwfire.org.uk) for more information.

Diana Berridge

STROLLERS

Over the last few months we have enjoyed walks in Wareham Forest and around the Kingston Lacy area all without too much mud!

Our July walk took us along the Trailway to Fiddleford Manor and the Fiddleford Hydro Turbine with its Archimedes Screw. They are both well worth a visit. Fiddleford Manor was completed in about 1370 and was probably built for William Latimer, Sheriff of Somerset and Dorset. The timber

roofs over the great Hall and solar are said to be the most spectacular in Dorset. The Manor is open for visits most days. On our return walk, we visited the Buzz Café and the Countryside Regeneration Trust – very interesting.

So join us for a walk and you may take in some history as well! We meet on the 4th Friday of every month and walk about three miles.

Pam Rees

WRITING FOR PLEASURE

It is with great sadness that we, as a Group, have said goodbye to a founder member of the Writing for Pleasure group, Thelma Wood, who died on 26 June. Thelma was a witty and talented contributor to our meetings and she will be greatly missed.

The Group will take a break for the month of August. There is currently a waiting list and this will be addressed in September.

Bee Wallis

OBITUARY FOR THELMA WOOD

Thelma joined B&D u3a just a few years after the formation of the organization in Blandford and took on the role of Hon. Secretary on the committee shortly after, plus she was editor of the quarterly newsletter for many years. She was a founding member of the Writing for Pleasure group, but also loved the theatre and started a Theatre Group, visiting Salisbury Playhouse throughout the year. Many will have known her as the ‘Book Exchange Lady’ at the quarterly open meetings, when she sorted and displayed the books (“Paperbacks only, please!”) right up until a few months before she died in June this year. She was a lady who loved words and was a strong exponent of passing on the joys of reading, writing and the spoken word to children and adults alike. She will be much missed.

MEMBERS CHRISTMAS MEETING

Durweston Village Hall

Friday 29th November 2024

2pm-4pm

Speaker: Dr Cindy Wood – A History of Christmas Celebrations

£1.50 for tea and cake and lots of chat!

