



**u3a** Farnham

**eNews**  
December 2024

Blue skies, a crisp November morning, birds all over the bird feeder and deer making their presence felt in the garden, it's a lovely time of year when the sun shines, lifting the spirits, if not the temperature. As the year draws to a close, for many it's time to reflect on the past year. The world seems less secure, politics seems to be ever more social media driven, which surely can't be a good thing, and proper, civilised debate where a disagreement doesn't mean you are my enemy, seems to be disappearing fast. There are

exceptions, and just this week in separate local u3a activities, I have seen and heard heartwarming examples of good people doing and saying good things. Long may this remain and grow and ....



**Welcome to the December 2024 edition of eNews!**



## The Editor's part

Our u3a in Farnham is an independent charity. We file our own returns to the Charity Commissioners every year and have a very considerable say in how we operate. There are over 1,000 u3as in the UK and nearly 450,000 members. You may know that most of the groups in the majority of other u3as around the country meet in members' houses. This inevitably restricts both the size of groups, and indeed the number of groups. Sitting what traditionally would have been called 'above' us is the u3a Trust, which provides us with advice, guidance and some services. The Trust has recently undergone a reorganisation, intended to improve the communications with and support for local u3as. In general we have very little to do with the Trust but looking at the proposals for the reorganisation we were unable to see that it would make a significant difference to our operations so we voted against it. We were however significantly outvoted so it remains to be seen if the promise of the new organisation is made good. I have recently written to the newly appointed CEO, Iain Cassidy, wishing him well and including a clear statement of what we would consider a success for the new structure. I'll report back; watch this space.

Steve Tilburn, who runs the Marketing team is still in need of one more helper. You don't need any specific skills, just a desire to help and an outgoing nature, not something I've noticed lacking in the membership. It's a couple of hours a week maximum. If you would like to know more please contact Steve on [marketing@farnhamu3a.org.uk](mailto:marketing@farnhamu3a.org.uk).

Finally, and still on the subject of charities this country is famous for the amount of work carried out by charities and I am always willing to give them some space in the newsletter. This month there are two, unusually one is focussed entirely on women and may be one for your children and grandchildren as well as you; the other is here because one of our members is a Trustee and has asked for some help.

## Important dates for your diary

### Monthly Meetings



The 17<sup>th</sup> century equivalent of bitcoin, tulips created a huge financial bubble which suddenly imploded. What was it about tulips which caught the imagination of the speculators? Come along and find out on **9<sup>th</sup> December** when **Chris Herbert** presents on this unusual topic in a talk entitled **Crazy for Tulips** at **2pm in the Barley Room**

### Theme Meeting

**The Christmas meeting 20<sup>th</sup> December 2pm in the Barley Room.**

There are still a few tickets left and you can purchase tickets in person at the following events.

**The Quiz on 6<sup>th</sup> December**

**The Monthly meeting (above) on 9<sup>th</sup> December**

### News from Jane Moberly

#### Cuppa and a Chat

These are becoming ever more popular, so please feel free to drop in. They are held at the café in the Maltings reception and the next two are on the on **Tuesday, 10<sup>th</sup> December** and **Thursday, 16<sup>th</sup> January**. Both at 10am.

#### Quiz

The next quiz will be on **Friday, 6 December**. It's pretty full so no more teams please but individuals to make up a scratch team are always welcome Just let me know if you plan to come or need a lift. The first quiz of 2025 will be on **Thursday, 6<sup>th</sup> February**. Book early to avoid disappointment!

Details of all of the quizzes and C&Cs are on the u3a website. You can find them here

<https://farnhamu3a.org.uk/social-events/>. You can reach me here [membereng@farnhamu3a.org.uk](mailto:membereng@farnhamu3a.org.uk)



## News from the groups

### News from Andrew Morgan

## FARNHAM U3A - THE FILM SET DECEMBER 2024

November's screenings were very well supported with one hundred and sixty members and guests enjoying too very different films. The majority headed for "Small things like These" an award winning Irish film starring Cillian Murphy. It is based on novel by Claire Keegan. Many members appeared to have read the book.

The rest were treated to “Juror #2”. A court room thriller directed by Clint Eastwood. Responses to both films has been very positive and particular mention has been made of the experience. Watching films in a brand-new cinema with plenty of leg room and comfy seats adds significantly to the experience.

Andre Rieu’s Gold and Silver Christmas Concert will not be available for a u3a screening. Reel has enquired but they are only allowed one showing. If you are interested, it will be available at Reel for an evening screening. It lasts three hours and I think will cost around £15.00. If you wish to know more, then contact Reel Farnham.

We are still in discussion with Reel about December. The arrival of the Christmas holidays means that the focus of the cinema not surprisingly turns to young people whose tastes may not be shared by our members.

There are a few films around that are not necessarily in the mainstream of cinema but are award winners at the Cannes Film Festival. A couple are in the same vein as “Touch” which itself was award winning and greatly enjoyed by members who saw it.

Holidays can also have a major impact on attendance numbers. In the summer we decided not to have a session in August as many members were away. A similar situation may well happen as we move towards Christmas. Once I know something one way or the other, I will let everyone know.

### **Boules Pétanque**

I recently had a message from Keith Robertson of Richmond u3a about starting a pétanque Group. Over twenty members have expressed an interest, and I am trying to clarify the details.

Again, once I have some answers, I will let everyone know.

Andrew Morgan

Groups Coordinator (and part time cinema usher)

### **News from Sally Bowden**

#### **Dementia Friends workshop**

We will be running a repeat of the very successful Dementia Friends workshop on **Friday, 13<sup>th</sup> December at 2pm.**

During the workshop Sue Keogh from The Alzheimer's Society will educate us about how dementia impacts people and what we can all do to make life a little easier for those people that may be suffering from a form of dementia. The session will be interactive and there will be an opportunity to ask questions.

Booking is not necessary but if you have any questions about the session please contact Sally Bowden via email using [secretary@farnhamu3a.org.uk](mailto:secretary@farnhamu3a.org.uk)

### **News from Annette Kratz (who organizes the programme; scheduling all the groups, events and workshops).**

A question from some members:

Can I add the dates for group meetings to my (electronic) calendar?

Group meetings and the monthly and theme meetings can be added to the calendar on your PC, Mac or phone. This makes it easier to remember when your favourite groups and other meetings are taking place. Be aware that you will need to take care to filter just the meetings you are interested in before adding them to your computer (otherwise you could get all the meetings!). This document shows you how to add the meetings that you want. Note that if you want to add meetings for more than one group you will need to repeat the steps for each group.

<https://farnhamu3a.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Add-u3a-meeting-to-your-calendar.pdf>

## Two charities, one old and one new

### The established one first - Home-Start Waverley

Homestart are looking for at least 10 new volunteers across the Borough; could one of them be you? Our volunteers are a part of a trained team who support local families with young children facing challenging times. Volunteers visit the family each week for between 2-3 hours including travel time. We aim to increase the family's confidence and independence by offering practical and emotional support, tailored to each individual family. Our courses run twice a year in the Autumn and Spring. At the moment we have more families who are being referred than the number of new volunteers we are recruiting. To find out how you can help visit [Thinking of Volunteering? | Home-Start Waverley](#) call 01252 737453 or email [volunteers@homestartsurrey.org](mailto:volunteers@homestartsurrey.org)

### Now the new one - Optimise Foundation

Did you know that one in two women over 50 suffer osteoporosis, compared to one in nine men, while the lifetime risk of developing Alzheimer's is one in five for women, compared to one in ten for men. With odds like these, it is great news to hear about the recent launch of the [Optimise Foundation](#), an innovative charity here in Farnham, working to empower girls and women of all ages to remain strong, healthy and enjoying sport. New research suggests that women and girls will enjoy improved health and wellbeing if they exercise more in tune with their physiology, whether the hormonal fluctuations of the menstrual cycle or the hormone decline in menopause. [Optimise Foundation](#) communicates education on female health to schools, grassroots sports clubs and organisations to empower girls and women to understand how exercise, nutrition and lifestyles can be optimised to improve health and stay strong into old age. Please visit [www.optimisefoundation.org](http://www.optimisefoundation.org) for more information. (Full disclosure: my daughter is Chair of this charity)

## Other dates of interest

### From the Maltings own programme:

Each month we highlight three or four events from the Maltings programme.

#### **Christmas on Exeter Street from the 13<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> December.**

Maggie Mistletoe is hosting Christmas. She's expecting all the usual family members, but come Christmas Eve the doorbell won't stop ringing as guest after unexpected guest arrives! From eccentric Uncle Bartholomew who's just returned from Australia to Maggie's five aunts from Abingdon and their three Pekinese dogs. Where will they all sleep? Adapted from Diana Hendry and John Lawrence's classic children's book, Farnham Maltings' production of *Christmas in Exeter Street* promises brand new songs, plenty of humour and a sprinkle of festive magic.

On **Saturday, 14<sup>th</sup> December** join **Mark Jennings** for an evening of virtuoso **Guitar Classics**. Known for his brilliant technique, stunning sounds and musicality, Mark will transport you to serene, dynamic and beautifully exotic musical landscapes, treating you to some of the masterpieces of Rodrigo, Albeniz, J. S. Bach, Tarrega and others

To a guitarist of a different sort, **Bob Dylan** fans will want to make a note of **Girl from the North Country, a big Screen Musical** showing in the Great Hall on **14<sup>th</sup> January** at **7pm**. Featuring 20 of Dylan's best-known songs as they've never been heard before this musical is set in Duluth Minnesota in 1934.

On the **27<sup>th</sup> February** at **2pm** and **7pm** **David Tennant** stars in a critically acclaimed version of **Macbeth** (5 stars in both the Telegraph and the Guardian) filmed at the Donmar Warehouse. Unsettling intimacy and brutal action combine at breakneck speed in this tale of love, murder and nature's power of renewal.

Please do think about becoming a member of the Maltings. Films for £4 and 10% off food and drinks! Details on the Maltings website.

The lovely **Brandenburg Choral Festival of London** is offering us discounts again.

At slightly the last moment they are delighted to be able to announce the repeat of the Betty sponsorship for u3a members. There is a special event on **Monday, 9<sup>th</sup> December** promoted by the London Region which includes some extra educational elements. For all the other traditional Christmas concerts there is a small allocation of complimentary tickets. They are password protected and the password is **BETTYC**.

Once they have gone there is a further allocation of tickets with the price reduced by £10 to £17. They are also password protected and this password is **BETTYL** These discounts apply to the whole series of our long-established traditional Christmas concerts.

Monday, 9<sup>th</sup> December 2024 5.30 pm – St Margaret Patten  
Friday, 13<sup>th</sup> December 2024 2.00 pm – St Margaret Patten  
Friday, 13<sup>th</sup> December 2024 5.30 pm – St Margaret Patten  
Saturday, 14<sup>th</sup> December 2024 2.00 pm – St Margaret Patten  
Saturday, 14<sup>th</sup> December 2024 5.30 pm – St Margaret Patten  
Thursday, 19<sup>th</sup> December 2024 2.00 pm – Holy Sepulchre  
Thursday, 19<sup>th</sup> December 2024 5.30 pm – Holy Sepulchre

All these concerts include free mulled wine (made personally to an old family recipe) and mince pies. Sadly, the discount doesn't apply to it but in case you are interested, to fill in that boring gap between Christmas and New Year, we are presenting our much-loved post-Christmas Messiah

**Saturday, 28<sup>th</sup> December** 6.30 pm – Holy Sepulchre

They are all available at our regular Box Office

[www.ticketsource.co.uk/brandenburg](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/brandenburg)

## News from the Committee

A shorter meeting than usual this month where we discussed amongst other items the possibility of a Tea Dance next year, (further work to take place) and the fact that very few (only 11) programmes had been sold despite some fairly vociferous calls for them to be produced. We agreed to increase the publicity for their availability. In addition we agreed to place u3a advertising in the revised version of the Maltings brochure for the coming year. Although this is not cheap, it reaches a very wide audience and the new A5 format will, we hope, bring our offer to potential members who don't know us.



## ...and finally

Some positive feedback about the quiz last month. In order of appearance (I hope) here are the answers: Redstart, Kite, Linnet, Jackdaw, Gander, Stonechat, Swift, Raven, Dove, Teal, Gull, Nightingale, Eagle, Thrush, Plover, Owl, Tit, Martin, Heron, Crow, Hawk, Gannet, Tern, Finch, Stork, Swan, Lark, Sandpiper, Mallard, Ibis

And a few of the old faithfuls – with thanks to Jenny Bray.

“She said she missed me. Normally that would be good but she's reloading.”

“As I walk through the valley of the Shadow of Death, I remind myself that you can't always trust Google Maps.”

“I took my suit to the cleaners, who wanted to charge me £40, so I gave it to the charity shop next door. They cleaned and pressed it and put it in the window. I bought it back for £15.

‘There are three ways of telling if you’re getting on: people of your own age start looking older than you; you become convinced that you’ve suddenly become equipped with a snooze button; and you start getting symptoms in the places you used to get urges.’ (Dennis Norden)

And another allegedly true sign from a US church:

‘The pastor would appreciate it if the ladies of the Congregation would lend him their electric girdles for the pancake breakfast next Sunday’

Please feel free to send me contributions to the newsletter, especially groups information, quizzes or jokes!

Have a lovely Christmas!

Philip Oliver

Farnham u3a

