



After the calm of the 'Dunkelflaute' comes the violence of the storms. Scudding clouds, flashes of sunlight, lashing winds and driving rain, no wonder we British spend so much time discussing the weather! Early signs of hope for better things are here; the bulbs sprouting, the mahonia in full yellow radiance, and even a bush honeysuckle in full flower in my garden, the promise of joy to come. Which brings me neatly to February's eNews where you will find much to do, as spring waits in the wings.

Welcome to the February 2025 edition of eNews!

The Editor's part

A couple of sombre reflections to start the Editor's part this month. The first concerns our relationship with the Maltings, which is absolutely fundamental to the success of our u3a. Were it not for the Maltings we would be meeting in members' homes, drafty halls and other nooks and crannies around Farnham. Many of the staff at the Maltings are volunteers (as are all the people who run our u3a) and may not be as familiar as the staff there as to how and where u3a works. There have been a couple of instances recently where staff on the front desk and in the café have been spoken to sharply by u3a members. Volunteers or not, it is reasonable to expect that the members of u3a will treat everyone at the Maltings in a manner in which they would like to be treated. The committee takes these complaints from the Maltings very seriously and have, in the past, thankfully rarely, issued suspension warnings to members for such behaviour. If you see a fellow member acting unreasonably please do have a word with them or let a committee member know.



The second reflection is again about a member who, having been watched using a cash machine in Farnham, immediately had their card stolen along with their pin number. Please, please take the normal precautions when using cash dispensers, or anywhere, including in the supermarket, you may be seen entering your pin number. I will be writing to all members about this incident as, to my continuing surprise not everyone reads this newsletter.

On a much happier note our call for volunteers to support committee members in their work has delivered us some lovely people. Committee members with responsibility for finance, membership and marketing have all discovered excellent helpers. Now it's the turn of the Events team to ask for more help.

The Events role involves liaising between the organiser of each Event and the Maltings staff. The aim is to make sure that the room is set out with chairs, tables and whatever other equipment is needed for the particular meeting, that appropriate catering is provided when required and that there are enough helpers on hand. "Events" include both the Monthly and the Theme Meetings, the AGM, the Open Morning, New Members receptions, Group Leaders meetings, Quizzes and other social get-togethers together with any other one-off occasions. This is quite a busy programme so there is something to be thinking about and preparing for throughout the whole u3a year. You need to be reasonably well organised and keep a good diary! Anyone interested in playing a part in this role would be very welcome. Contact Vivienne Miller at events@farnhamu3a.org.uk

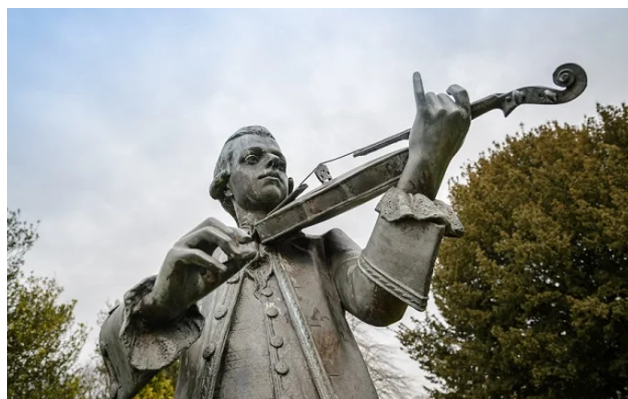
In addition, there is some specialist support needed;

The "Theme Team" is a small group of volunteers who choose the theme and organise the programme of speakers for the series of Friday morning talks to be given each u3a year. They are now preparing for the year beginning in September 2025 and would like some help from someone who can become a new member of the team. It is not a very onerous job and no special qualifications are needed other than an enthusiasm for the task and perhaps some new ideas for subjects and speakers. You are not required to give a talk yourself, unless you want to! If you might be interested in joining the team or just finding out more about what is involved please contact Pauline Belfield at theme@farnhamu3a.org.uk.

Important dates for your diary

Monthly Meetings

On **3rd February, 2pm** in a talk entitled **Prague and Mozart's travels**, **Jan Parsons** will take us on a photographic journey showcasing the beautiful architecture of the places Mozart visited during his short life, interwoven with the story of his life, his music and his struggles.



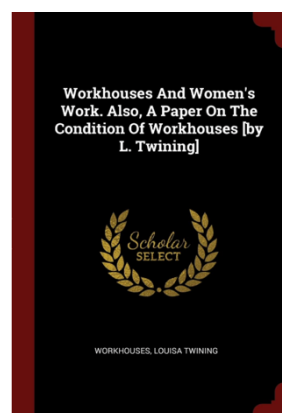


On **3rd March at 2pm**, **Mornington Crescent** will be the subject of a talk by **Mike Grundy**. A beautiful early-Georgian Crescent, whose obliteration by a factory in the 1920s triggered the legal protection of London's other green squares and crescents. A place that has inspired artists from Walter Sickert to Frank Auerbach. Mike will not, I understand, be explaining the rules of the game played on 'I'm sorry I haven't a Clue' on Radio 4 which will remain a closely guarded secret.

Theme Meetings



On **7th February at 10:30am** in a change to the original programme **Chris Herbert** will introduce us to **Louisa Twining** who, as well as being a member of the famous tea family, was a courageous and canny Victorian social reformer devoting her life to improving the conditions of the workhouse poor. She wrote this very influential paper which is still available on Amazon!



On **14th March at 10:30am**, **Adrian Martin** will talk about a subject dear to many of us - music. He will look at **great musicians**; come along and see if you agree with him!

From Jane Moberly

Cuppa and a Chat

It was great to see so many of you in January - and the next opportunity to drop in and catch up will be on **Tuesday, 11 February** when I shall be in the Reception area of The Maltings from **10 to 12 midday**. The conversation is wide ranging the company excellent - and coffee (or tea!) is available!

Quiz

Thank you to all of you who have booked places for **Thursday, 6 February** - it promises to be another evening of good quizzing, good humour and good company. The quiz masters are limbering up. We are more or less at capacity this time but do consider penciling **Thursday, 3 April** into your diary which will offer a further opportunity to pit your wits.

If you have yet to sample a u3a quiz, then why not give it a go on **Thursday, 6 February**?

Both these offerings give members a chance to meet up and enjoy the company of others which underpins the value of the u3a. May the New Year bring you all both some fun and good friendship.

Jane Moberly - Membership Engagement

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 on membereng@farnhamu3a.org.uk

From Sally Bowden

We seem to have found another area of interest to members and already this workshop is full. Please do let Sally know of your interest- we may have enough then to run another workshop.

Deaf not Daft workshop

We are pleased to offer an inaugural workshop exploring the developing area of deaf awareness and the day-to-day management of hearing loss led by one of our members, Linda Harris. The group will share experiences and support strategies through discussion and practical activity. Please bring along writing materials, a smartphone (if you have one) and any hearing related items, such as equipment and documentation, that you are willing to share.

The workshop is aimed at both those suffering from hearing loss and those that would like to understand the subject better in order to support friends and family with their hearing loss.

Date - Monday 10th Feb

Time - 3:00 – 4:00pm

Place - Farnham Maltings – check board in foyer for location

To book a place or for any questions please email Sally Bowden – secretary@farnhamu3a.org.uk



We could really do with someone to lead a **Beginners Italian group** (this would be a new group as the original Beginners Italian has now been going a few years), ditto a **Beginners Spanish group**. Also we could do with someone else to help with a French Group as one of the two leaders for **French Elementary** will not be carrying on and the other does not have time to run the group on her own, so it will fold if we can't find someone. Many of our groups are led by two or even more people. So if you think you can help, even if not take on the full leadership role, please contact groups@farnhamu3a.org.uk. This is the contact too if you would like to help set up a new group. Lots of help is available.

From Mandy Caine

Day Trips!

27th February – Orchid Festival at Kew

27th March – Ideal Home Show at Olympia

For more information contact Mandy at u3adaytrips2@outlook.com

Other dates of interest

From the Maltings own programme:

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

One for the grandchildren, (and the child in us all) on **18th February Paddington in Peru** follows Paddington and the Browns as they go to Peru in search of Paddington's grandmother who has gone missing. A heart-warming family adventure featuring Ben Wishaw, Hugh Bonneville and Olivia Coalman and a lot of humour!



If you've been watching Dr Who recently you'll have seen the joyful Ncuti Gatwa in the Doctor's role. Now he brings his talents to Oscar Wilde's popular romp '**The Importance of Being Earnest**'. The FT declared it "Immensely enjoyable, delivered with irrepressible, infectious glee". It's an NT Live production and you can see it on **Thursday, 20th February**.

On **27th 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 £6 and 10% off food and drinks! Details on the Maltings website.

From u3a member Jonathan Jones

I will once again be performing at **the Farnham Literary Festival**, in a one-man play entitled '**An Audience with C. S. Lewis**'. My interest in 'Jack' Lewis first arose after playing him in an amateur production of 'Shadowlands' at the Electric Theatre in Guildford some years ago. Hopefully, as with my last year's play about Rudyard Kipling, this will be another 'sold-out' performance. The Farnham Festival web site is <https://farnhamliteraryfestival.co.uk>

On which note I would point out that the **Farnham Literary Festival** is going from strength to strength. Now in its fourth year, it runs from **6th to 16th March**. Many of the venues are very small, so book early!

Public talk: Discover the Story Behind Wintershall's Biblical Plays

In a captivating insight into the world of Wintershall's acclaimed biblical plays, the Guildford and District Knights of St. Columba are set to host a revealing talk on **Saturday, 1st March 2025**, at St Dunstan's Church in Woking.

Wintershall, an estate nestled in the beautiful Surrey Hills near Bramley, is renowned for its large scale open air productions of biblical events, including *The Nativity*, *The Passion of Jesus*, and *The Life of Christ*. Stephanie Pena, celebrated for her roles as Mary Magdalene and Angel Gabriel, will delve into the profound journey behind the scenes of these transformative productions.

Attendees will gain unique insights into Wintershall's history, mission, and its dedication to authentic storytelling, as well as the spiritual challenges of portraying biblical figures. With tickets priced at £5 and proceeds supporting Wintershall's work and the Knights of St. Columba's charities, this event offers a deeper appreciation of Wintershall's legacy and its powerful portrayal of Christ's teachings. Advance booking is highly recommended at <http://www.ticketsource.co.uk> (search "Wintershall"): <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/guildford-district-knights-of-st-columba>

News from the Committee

A dozen or so day to day items, all of which will I hope, eventually benefit members. They included member safety, additional member benefits, group leadership, insurance for the day trips and the alignment of our financial and membership years. More news when we have something actionable.

A Technical point for those of you moving to **Windows 11** from Annette and the web team.

Instructions about how to change your default emailer, especially once you move to Windows 11. We have had some members saying that when they click on the generic u3a email address (one ending @farnhamu3a.org.uk) on the website it does not take them to where they expect, i.e. it goes to Outlook when they are using Google mail.

The text of what to do is below:

To pass 'mailto' links to Google Webmail, you can change your web browser's default email client for 'mailto' links:

Google Chrome

1. Open Google Chrome and log into your Gmail account
2. Click the two diamond icons in the address bar
3. Select "Allow mail.google.com to open all links"
4. Click "Use Gmail" and then "Done"

Phew!

...and finally

With thanks to Jenny Bray...

A boy told his friend that his Mum had got a new toaster and that it rang a bell when the toast was ready. His friend said that his family's was better because when the toast was done it sent smoke signals.

A Vicar went to see a new Parishioner who had a parrot which had a red ribbon tied to his right leg and a blue one tied to his left. She explained that when she pulled the red ribbon he sang 'Abide with Me' and when she pulled the blue one he sang 'All Things Bright and Beautiful'.
The Vicar asked somewhat mischievously: "What happens if you pull both together?"
To which the parrot promptly replied: "I fall off my perch".

A small boy is slowly walking to School when his mother calls to him to hurry up or he'll be late.
He shouts back that "There's no hurry. They're open until half past three"

A dentist was treating a patient and asked her to scream very loudly.
She obliged - but afterwards asked him why he had asked her to do that.
He said that he needed to catch a train in 30 minutes and that he had a full Waiting Room

Philip

