
Editorial

November is the biggest Newsletter ever (or for very long time anyway) with this issue standing at 21 pages as I type. We held a successful Open Day on Saturday 26th October at the Henhayes Centre, where we happy to welcome some 20 new members. These will be filtering through the enrolment process in the next few days and you will have a better than even chance of welcoming a newcomer to your groups in November. As they have not been registered on Beacon as I type, we are talking special steps to make sure that they receive the Newsletter link via email. Be sure to give them all a genuine Crewkerne U3A welcome. Some are new to Crewkerne: others are just new to U3A.

I don't have a full list of all the groups affected but I do know that French Conversation was so successful that we will have to look at splitting into two groups. Even Digital Technology (hardly a popular area of interest) managed to pick up two new members.

A call to Group Leaders now. You will notice a few pages on that we are listing the Jazz Appreciation group list of events through to April 2025. As soon as I receive information about your plans, I will publish it both as a table under your group name and as a series of entries in our Events section. Stop hiding your light under a bushel.

At the Open Day one member suggested that we give more prominence to notice of to our first Monday meetings as these are "U3A-wide" events. As this is the only suggestion anyone has ever made in 18 months I have responded (see list below). Anyone want to change anything else? More of this? Less of that? If you don't tell me, it won't happen.

Stephen Shipley

Forthcoming Events round up

Monday 4th November: Sheila Seymour will give a humorous talk "Get thee to a nunnery" (see below for more details)

Friday 15th November: A Tudor Christmas: Speedwell Hall at 14:30

Friday 15th November: The Teachers' Lounge (12A): FilmCrew screening at Wadham School at 7:00pm for 7:30pm (see below for more details)

Saturday 16 November: Berkeley Ensemble at the Dance House at 7.30PM

Saturday 23rd November: New Members Welcome Event: at the Dance House at 10:00.

Monday 2nd December: Christmas Quiz at Henhayes at 13:30 for 14:00

Monday 9th December: Christmas Lunch at Henhayes at 13:30 for 14:00

Friday 13th December: The Holdovers (15): FilmCrew screening at Wadham School at 7:00pm for 7:30pm (see below for more details)

Saturday 14th December: Christmas Tree Festival at St. Bartholomew's

Saturday 15th March: Swan Lake - Birmingham Royal Ballet.

Monday 14th April 2005 (Wed/Thu 16/17 – 2/3 nights): LONDON SOUTHBANK:

Thursday 1st May: Marriage of Figaro (opera): Mayflower Theatre Southampton for 7.00pm.


Monday 5th May 2025: U3A holiday St Ives and Scenic Cornwall:

Monday 18th August: Edinburgh Festival.

Saturday 8th November: Mamma Mia: Mayflower Theatre Southampton.

Events

Get Thee to a Nunnery – not what you think (Monday 4th November)



“Get thee to a Nunnery”
Hamlet: Act 3, scene 1

You're in for a BIG surprise!

A Talk by Sheila Seymour PhD, AFRHS

It all began when Sheila went to a country house charity book sale... there was nothing she wanted, but keen to contribute she bought a tome on impulse. Goodness. It turned out to be the definitive work on Medieval Nunneries. She couldn't believe what she read. Further research validated its thesis. Double goodness. In her talk she will share what she learnt – and if you go home disbelieving her, she will be disappointed, but not entirely surprised!

Berkeley Ensemble

Sophie Mather, violin
Second violin, tbc
Dan Shilladay, violin
Gemma Wareham, cello
Martin Ludenbach, double bass
John Slack, clarinet
Andrew Watson, bassoon
Paul Cott, horn

Programme

Mussorgsky: Pictures at an Exhibition
Howard Ferguson: Octet
Schubert: Octet

Venue

The Dance House, Crewkerne
on Saturday 16 November at 7.30PM

A Tudor Christmas (Friday 15th November)

There is a special treat in store for those who are interested in the Tudor period of history. The Speedwell Hall is offering a delightful afternoon when we can explore a Tudor Christmas with the Lady Katherine and her serving man.

Appearing in full period costume as Katherine Raleigh, mother to Sir Walter Raleigh, speaker and author Rosemary Griggs brings the festivities, feasting and fun of a Tudor Christmas to life in a delightful presentation interspersed with songs from the peasant David (husband of Rosemary). We can travel back in time to join Sir Philip Champernowne's Christmas feast at the Court House Modbury and discover the etiquette, the menu and the customs of the twelve days of a sixteenth century Christmas.

Last year I went along to the Speedwell for an audience with Lady Katherine and what an enjoyable afternoon it turned out to be. Rosemary creates and wears 16th century clothing which compliments her love for bringing the past to life through a unique blend of theatre, history and re-enactment. It was a fascinating afternoon and I bought her book 'A Woman of Noble Wit' which I thoroughly enjoyed reading. I was delighted that Rosemary would be returning this year with Bessie's Tale about the life of a typical 16th century serving woman when she dressed as Bessie. So followed another fascinating and interesting afternoon when I also bought her second book 'The Dartington Bride' an equally enjoyable read.

A Tudor Christmas is on Friday 15th November from 2.30pm until 5.30pm which also includes refreshments. Tickets are £15 and available at the Green Dragon Book Shop in Crewkerne. If you are interested then I suggest you get your ticket as soon as possible as entry is by ticket only.



Leslye Stansfield

Christmas Quiz for all

“Nostalgia ain’t what it used to be.”

This will be held **near** Christmas – it doesn’t mean that the questions will all be **about** Christmas. The questions will be aimed at “our” age group. Do we remember the people, the music, the events of the 1950’s., 1960’s and 1970’s?

The event will be held at Henhayes on Monday 2nd December at 13:30 for 14:00 as usual and will be a Cream Tea event, cost £3.70. Please pay on the door, **but you must book in advance with me, by email, in the usual way**. There will be 8 tables each of 6 quizzers. Make up your own teams or we can put you together.

John Bartholomew

Christmas Lunch

Monday December 9th.

Henhayes Traditional Christmas Dinner for U3A Members. The charge will be £14 for Henhayes members (£16 otherwise). Once you have signed up via Beacon email you will need to make payment, **in person**, at The Henhayes Centre at some point before December 9th.

We are having a Christmas Lunch at the Henhayes Centre on Monday 9th December at 13.00 for 13.30. There will be two courses:

- Roast Turkey or Veggie Roast (with all the trimmings)
- Christmas Pudding or Ice Cream

Please pay on the day to the Henhayes bar, **but you must book in advance with me, by email, in the usual way.**

John Bartholomew

Christmas Tree festival

The Christmas Tree festival will be held in St. Bartholomew’s as usual. Trees will be on display from the 14th to 21st December. Sue Moore is looking for a group of craft-oriented members to trim a tree on the theme of “Your Christmas”.

Trips

Events Coming Up in 2025

For further information about any of these events, please go to the U3A website, select Information, then select Contact Committee and then Click here for Treasurer Contact and send a message. Or go directly to: <https://u3acrewkerne.org.uk/contact-treasurer/>

Or reply to emails from John Bartholomew

Theatre Trips in 2025 at *The Mayflower Southampton*

Three trips are planned. **We have to pay by January 5th.** The prices shown require that we fill a 16-seater minibus.

Saturday March 15th: 2.00pm *The Matthew Bourne Swan Lake* £70 all.

Thursday May 1st: 7.00pm *The Marriage of Figaro (Welsh National Opera)*. £55 all in. As this is an evening event, we will leave in time to explore museums etc. and return late.

Saturday November 8th: *Mamma Mia* - The musical. £75 all in.

John Bartholomew

London South Bank trip Monday 14th April 2005 (Wed/Thu 16/17 – 2/3 nights)	
Attractions:	Royal Opera House for ballet and opera and London Theatres a short walk away. Tate Modern; Galleries; Globe Theatre; Millennium Wheel; Royal Festival Hall etc. Opera: Turandot or Carmen. Ballet: Romeo & Juliet and/or any choice of West End Theatre.
Accommodation:	Premier Inn County Hall; Museums, Galleries and Concert Halls on the doorstep.
Cost:	Hotel (3 nights) and transport - £500-£600.
Travel:	Door (Oscars) to door travel by coach or minibus.
Arrangements:	Early planning allows Hotel booking – pay now but with free cancellation up to 28 days before travel for both trips and access to cheaper prices for flights.
Booking:	To book, please respond to the separate email you will receive.

Edinburgh Festival: Monday 18th August (to Friday 22nd August)	
Attractions:	Main (classical) and Fringe Festivals. Tattoo. Meetings beforehand to plan event booking.
Accommodation:	Premier Inn on Princes Street or “Hub” on Royal Mile.
Cost:	Hotel and Transport (Bus/Plane & Tram) about £750
Travel:	Fly from Bristol Airport. Door (Oscars) to door travel: coach/minibus to Bristol Airport; Flight to Edinburgh; Tram to Edinburgh Centre.
Arrangements:	Early planning allows Hotel booking – pay now but with free cancellation up to 28 days before travel for both trips and access to cheaper prices for flights.
Booking:	To book, please respond to the separate email you will receive.

U3A Holiday 2025 St Ives and Scenic Cornwall: 5th May 2025 - 5 Days

St Ives, St Michaels Mount, Penzance, Cathedral City of Truro, Falmouth

Twin and double rooms still available, but no singles.

Maggi Davey

A new group (not u3a but . . .)



Need a listening ear?

Come and try the Chat Cafe
At Bilby's every Wednesday 3.30-5pm

Drinks half price!

*Meet new people
Friendly conversations
Share what's on your mind
Tips to improve your outlook
Everyone welcome*

Organised by Crewkerne
Community Kitchen -
new name and website:
www.opendoorssomerset.org.uk


OPENDOORS
[/crewkernecommunitykitchen](https://www.facebook.com/crewkernecommunitykitchen)

 **Open**
Mental
Health

Rotary 

 **Crewkerne**
Town Council

 **NHS**
Crewkerne
Health
Centre

Committee

Vice Chair

We have unfortunately lost the services of our Vice-Chair, Viv Wiles. Viv just has too much on her plate and can no longer help us in this way.

If you would like to take her place (full guidance and support will be given) please contact Angie, or any member of the committee. You could be co-opted as soon as it suits you and you could be confirmed in your place at the AGM.

Membership Secretary

All members who joined for the first time in 2024 are invited to a New Members meeting. This will be held at the Dance House on Saturday 23rd November at 10:00. This meeting will be **for** new members and **by** new members. We hope as many of as possible will come along to share your experiences during these first few months. If you are a new member and would like to come to the meeting, please contact me in the usual way.

Lynn Browning

Publicity

Open Day

We had a very successful day Open Day on Saturday 26th October. Thank you to all the members and Group Leaders who came and supported the event. We enrolled 20 new members and look forward to seeing them again at the at the New Members Welcome Event to be held on Saturday 23rd November at the Dance House. In the meantime, please make sure that everyone welcomes them into their Groups.

Sue Moore

Christmas Tree Festival

We will be taking part in the Christmas Tree Festival, held at St Bartholomew's Church, again this year It runs from Saturday 14th to 21st December the theme is YOUR CHRISTMAS. That is something to reflect the U3A organisation or group. Just when you thought it was safe to come out from behind the sofa, we are asking each group to give us a short description/photograph, something creative or anything that will represent your Group. We will need your contributions by Friday 6th December. The trees will be erected on the 11th and 12th December and have to be taken down from 4pm on the 21st December.

Sue Moore

Website

Our webmaster, Ken Armstrong, who has look ed after our website for many years, is taking his well-earned retirement in March. Your Newsletter editor will then step into his shoes. This is made possible by the development by the Third Age trust of new website software which is both much easier to manage and will make it easier for various people to edit their own parts of the website. More details to follow.

Stephen Shipley

Groups

Acting from Scratch

This group started because of one question – “Why do they do it?” It is a strange way to earn a living but being “other than oneself” can be revealing and liberating. We are a small group with no intention of performing in public (yet?) but find character studies fascinating. Everyone has a wealth of experience and observation to draw upon.

We have 6 members at the moment and would welcome 2 more. If you are interested, please contact the Group Leader, Ann in the usual way.

Folk Dance

Don't forget that it's never too late to enjoy an afternoon of folk dancing in the Speedwell Hall in Abbey Street from 2 - 4pm on the second and 4th Monday afternoons of the month. November dates are 11th and 25th and our final dance of the year is on December 9th. Should you decide to leave it until the new year then we will be back dancing on January 13th. It is great fun and there are two callers who will guide even the most befuddled to dance. Don't be shy just give it a try.

Leslye Stansfield

Jazz Appreciation Group.

This group meets from 2:15 – 4:15 on the 4th Wednesday of each month at various venues. Here are details of the programme right through to next Spring.

November 22 nd	The Guitar
December 6 th	Christmas Meal
January 23 rd	Saxophone players
February 26 th	My favourite track
March 26 th	Trad Jazz
April 23 rd	Modern Jazz

Val Warren

Opera Appreciation:

The Opera Group will meet for the last time this year on Monday November 25th to watch: **Donizetti: "Don Pasquale"** This is amongst the best of the *bel canto* operas of the early 19th century and is presented in a very funny production. Doors open at 2.00pm. Programme 2.30-4.30.

John Bartholomew

Shakespeare

The group meets on the 3rd Tuesday from 2pm to 4pm. This informal group watches various productions of the Bard's work on DVD and discusses their difference and common points. This is a frank and open discussion. The group is full at the moment as meetings are held in a private house. If you are interested, please contact the Group Leader, Ann in the usual way.

Contributions from Members

Adrienne Mole goes to university

Here are some more diary extracts as promised for the Newsletter. This time the action fast forwards to 1978 when I am in my first year at Sheffield University.

- Wednesday
4 Jan 1978 Actually finished my English essay today. It gave me a lot of problems but solidly worked through. Started to pack for return to Uni at the weekend. Watched the play *Forgotten Love Songs* which showed how men cannot accept the idea of an independent and liberated woman. My earrings began to hurt. Horoscope for 1978 is good!
- Friday
6th Jan Left on my own in the house while everyone else was out at work. Watched the first episode of *Gangsters* with Jas (our beagle). Glad he was there during the scary bits. Dad gave me £2 for extra pocket money. Amazing! Dad and I stayed up late watching the Old Grey Whistle Test. Last night in my own warm bed before returning to 'Loxley Towers'.
- Wednesday
11th Jan English tutorial on the nature of Colloquialism in Henry IV Part I. I just sat with a stupid expression on my face trying to look intellectual. It won't do! However, our new History lecturer is a decided improvement on Mr Greengrass. Although not a Marxist, Dr Kirk is lively, amusing and certainly well-informed. Went back to Chris & Tom's for coffee.
- Thursday
12th Jan Snow fell in earnest today. Its beauty completely took my breath away. The surrounding hillsides were covered in a white blanket. I was enraptured. The wind was extremely strong. Ed (my flatmate at our digs in Lockley-situated on the edge of the moors) and I couldn't be bothered with work at all. We both long for an exciting adventure. We talked all afternoon about things in general. Jean (our landlady) was in her usual sour-faced mood, Tomorrow we going to apply for our own university flat in the city. Hopefully we will get one. I am going to buy a plant to cheer myself up.
- Wednesday
18th Jan Back at home. Finished English essay on Syntax. After 8 hours of work, completed my history study. Listened to Manhattan Transfer. Went down to John and Penny's house and had a long chat with Penny about things who was very sympathetic. Watched a news item on Lesbianism on Nina's new portable colour TV.
- Saturday
28th Jan Got up late having watched The Fonz and Swap Shop. Went out despite rain & later wrote letters. In the evening went to see *American Graffiti* which was excellent. Music was great and the plot wasn't too corny. Went onto the Red Deer - a very crumbly pub with a 'Mrs Mills on the Piano' pub entertainer. Good night out.
- Thursday
2nd Feb Ed's birthday. This was excellent. Took her breakfast in bed and her pressies. Met her Mum and Dad for the first time. Her Dad who is a gas man was hilarious with his Norman Wisdom hat. Spent all day in Bar One with Ed getting more and more drunk. She eventually had to be carried to the taxi. Sat up with Tom and Chris chatting. Very happy Ed had such a good time.
- Friday 3rd
Feb Ed had a bad hangover. Went over to Sorby (hall of residence) Disco in the evening. Some very strange people there.
- Sunday 12th
Feb An eventful day. Got up early. Had already done half my essay on fascism when Angie got up at 12:30. Spent the afternoon beautifying ourselves for the night. Angie made *Coq Au Vin* and then we went out to see *Snoopy Come Home*- the Peanuts movie. I laughed until the tears ran down my face. Spent the rest of the night in Bar One.

More to follow in next month's edition...

Jo Lawrence

I've never felt so cold

When someone utters those five words "I've never felt so cold" they invite us into a sort of frozen daydream.

At its surface, this sentence speaks of physical discomfort. Perhaps it's a childhood memory of a biting wind on a frosty morning, many of us older ones remember walking to school or waiting for buses on cold mornings when the climate was much colder. We've all been there - the numbing fingers, the chattering teeth, the desperate search for warmth. But this isn't just about degrees on a thermometer; it's about vulnerability. When we say, "I've never felt so cold," we're admitting our fragility, our susceptibility to the elements. It's a shared human experience an acknowledgement of our human frailty. Many of us remember the days before central heating and often having to wash in cold water. The echoes of a lifetime stepping back in time.

But what if this cold isn't external? What if it's the chill of loneliness - the kind that gnaws at your insides even in a crowded room? Or sadness and disappointment with the realisation that the world is not always a warm happy place. I picture myself as a child, in an unheated bedroom, in the London of the early 1950's, a solitary figure by a frosted window, tracing patterns on the glass. My breath mingles with the mist, my imagination wondering far and wide. A young boy experiencing and understanding winter. Suddenly, it's not about mittens and scarves; it's about memories left out in the snow. Memories of my mother taking me to school walking along snowy pavements on the Kings Road in Chelsea. Of snow filled bomb craters and burnt-out buildings. Of seeing people walking along the street, huddled up against the elements. Memories of an old man with a club foot struggling on the icy pavement, his disability possibly the result of some distant war. Of an old woman with a white stick tapping her way along the curb of the pavement, seeing nothing but feeling her way to a journey's end.

Sometimes, "I've never felt so cold" carries the weight of missed chances. Imagine standing on a bridge at twilight, watching a river flow beneath you. Reminiscing about the love you didn't declare, the dreams you shelved, the apologies unsaid—they all converge in that moment. The cold creeps in, not from the breeze, but from the memories that haunt. It's the chill of regret, of paths untaken and words unspoken. Regretful things said to parents in the past but now too late to retract. Old friends now no longer with us, memories only we can now enjoy. The cold feeling of rejection by someone who you want for yourself but cannot have.

Yet, paradoxically, there's beauty in this cold. It's the canvas for introspection, the backdrop against which epiphanies unfold. Think of a poet in an unheated room huddled around a flickering candle with pen scratching paper. Their breath fogs the air as they craft verses that will outlast them. Or the ancient stargazer on a frosty hill, tracing constellations - the cold amplifies the wonder. In these moments, "I've never felt so cold" becomes an anthem of creation. Again, in childhood recalling the crunching of snow under my feet, the snowball fights with my school mates, the fun of building a snowman in the back yard. All now distant memories.

Mike Luff

I Saw a Child

I saw a child who couldn't walk,
sit on a horse, laugh and talk.
Then ride it through a field of daisies
and yet he could not walk unaided.

I saw a child, no legs below,
sit on a horse and make it go
through woods of green
and places he had never been
to sit and stare
except from a chair.

I saw a child who could only crawl
mount a horse and sit up tall.
Put it through degrees of paces
and laugh at the wonder in our faces.

I saw a child born into strife,
Take up and holds the reins of life
and that same child was heard to say,
Thank God for showing me the way.

*John Anthony Davies
submitted by Liz Best*

Smile for me

Smile for me, go on, I love it,
When you smile your eyes light up,
There's a glow in your face,
And a dimple in your cheek.

It shows me you're happy,
Shows you're pleased to see me,
Makes me feel kind of special,
Sorta shows your love.

When you go away you smile,
A sad sort of smile,
Which tugs at my heart,
Shows you'll miss me.

If you're not with me,
I remember your smile,
It reminds me of you,
Forever in my mind.

Whenever I'm lonely,
Your face I see,
And the smile that I love
Is as special as you are to me.

Submitted by Susan Dyke

Shepton Mallet hospital

Recently I had a minor operation at Shepton Mallet hospital and I found all the staff so kind and reassuring. I had heard that this was the case but now I have experienced it.

Sue Cannell

Pets as Therapy

My Standard Poodle, Monty, qualified as a PAT dog (Pets as Therapy) a couple of years ago now and we have been going into one of our local schools to listen to the children read. Last year we listened to readers from various classes, reading their own books. The children loved reading to Monty and always asked to stroke him when they had finished their session.

This year it is more structured and we are listening to 12 readers in groups of three, reading from a piece of written text and then answering between 6 - 10 questions in their own words. So far, we have been working on vocabulary, commentating, predicting, retrieving and inference. The children seem to enjoy reading to Monty and he enjoys going to the school. He wears a special vest and badge, with his photo on when he is attending as a PAT dog, so he always knows exactly where we are going when I get him ready (he seems to just "know" when he is on duty). When we leave in the afternoon, Monty always receives a gravy bone from the office staff for being a good boy, which he looks forward to!

Hopefully this is all working towards helping with their SATs tests.

Carol Bennett

Ants

The house I live in is very old
Its thick stone walls keep out the cold;
But 'cos it's stone, it's full of gaps
That's ideal for these six-legged chaps.

They live in peace for months on end
And cause no grief, as any friend;
But what these little beggars do,
I'm now about to tell to you.

Now, in the summer, when it's hot,
They fancy coming out a lot;
And wander round our unit tops
Like bargain hunters at the shops.

They forage here and climb up there,
You find them hid in places where
You'd never think they'd dare to go
And cause the wife no end of woe.

Then one day we found a cure
That meant we no more need endure
This pesky inconvenience;
The answer's cheap, not even pence.

Some sugar, spilled by accident,
It seemed to dictate where they went;
The grains to them like manna came
And brought out both the halt and lame.

They trotted out and had their fill
Then home again, felt no ill will.
But all good things will sometime end,
Though unintended by a friend.

One lunchtime I had filled a mug
With Perry's cider from a jug.
When finished, thought the ants might be
Pleased to have some on their tea.

They were indeed, but you won't guess
The carnage, caused so much distress.
They found the sugar pile all right,
But after, they began to fight.

They had no chance at all to find
Their way back home, completely blind.
And some fell off the unit top
And hit the floor, inverted, FLOP.

I did feel guilty, even sad
That Perry's cider made them mad;
Or even at the very least
To make the poor sods go off piste.

They had no chance to find their way
Back to their home the usual way.
Their pheromones were up the creek
And different routes they tried to seek.

Eventually they most lay down
After their night out on the town;
And slept it off until the morn
And wished perhaps they'd not been born

Then in the sober light of day
They staggered off and crept away
And since that day I really can't
Say that I've seen a single ant.

Gordon W. Rendell© 10th October 2017

MAGNIFICENT MAHLER

Sunday 20th October at the London Barbican was the venue for the first of two performances of Mahler's Symphony No 2, the "Resurrection", conducted by American conductor Michael Tilson Thomas as part of his 80th birthday celebrations. We were lucky enough to be present for the occasion.

Following his recent serious illness problems, and subsequent conducting issues earlier this year, it was amazing to see how his control over the orchestra was as sharp as ever. Fair to say, the performance was slightly more restrained than some others I've heard but it certainly lacked nothing in its intensity at the appropriate moments.

The symphony itself is arguably one of Mahler's best. From the aggressive opening double-basses through to the sublime and majestic choral finale this piece cannot fail to excite and uplift even the hardest of hearts. Mahler himself said, after receiving generally poor reviews of its early performances, that 'my time will come' and more prophetic words were never spoken.

The London Symphony orchestra and chorus were, as expected, more than equal to the task of conveying this fabulous music at its best. Tilson-Thomas (or MTT as he is affectionately known) received a long-standing ovation, as did the mezzo and soprano soloists who were clear and faultless in their presentation. We can only hope that MTT will feel able to continue to deliver the musical goods for a little while longer.

Finally, for those who have not yet explored the magic of Mahler 2 (and his other symphonies) I would say 'give it a try', you'll hopefully be nothing other than moved by the experience.



John Elliott

Europe by Rail

I completed my tour of Eastern Europe and managed to avoid flying except for one stage. This journey started on 4th September from London to Brussels by Eurostar. I had planned an interrail ticket which allowed me ten days travel over a month. One night in Brussels gave my daughter Mary Clare and I a chance of visiting the Grand Place with its beautiful palaces and the cathedral where the Belgian royal family are crowned, married and baptised. We also were able to attend mass, a good thing as we were travelling over the coming Sunday and not sure when we might get the chance to go to mass.

We travelled by Nightjet, the evening express train from Brussels to Vienna. Our cabin was comfortable and breakfast was served in the cabin but it was a bit noisy from time to time. Vienna was a beautiful stop. We toured the centre on a bicycle rickshaw before visiting the splendid museum of musical instruments in the old Palace. 24 rooms filled with musical treasures, including pianos owned by Beethoven, Mozart and Schubert. There were also many historic instruments that my daughter, a professional musician, had never seen. Next a cruise up the Danube to Bratislava. Our cousin who lives there was awaiting us on the quay. Bratislava is a beautiful city, much loved by its inhabitants, clean and with many musical links to musicians of past centuries.

Our next stop was Budapest, a city I had long wished to visit. The site is magnificent, on two sides of the Danube, but unlike Bratislava, the citizens did not appear to love their city. The streets were full of litter and the flower beds full of weeds. What a disappointment.

The railways in Eastern Europe are being updated, so our journey south of Budapest to Belgrade was a stop/start mix of train and coach. It was a chance to meet the people and see some pretty little towns that we might not have seen otherwise. One town, Subotica, is a delightful art nouveau town, with a beautiful square with fountains and an impressive model of the town with its main buildings. Once completed the station will be a fit place to arrive and I hope it will bring more visitors to this little-known gem.

The next big town was Belgrade but it was very wet, and apart from a very comfortable apartment we had booked for the night and the very accommodating owners who fixed a taxi back to the station very early the next day, I do not have many memories. It is a very modern city with a complex road system and not much of the old city is to be seen.

Most of the rest of the journey to Istanbul, where my daughter flew back to Bristol, was by coach on the fantastic new system of motorways running through Turkey.

A day trip around the Bosphorus and a visit to a beautiful craft centre completed our travels together and I continued to Izmir for a week with my elder daughter and granddaughter. Izmir is so beautiful and clean, full of parks, flowers and lakes with fountains. It was recently voted the greenest city of its size in the world- 8 million inhabitants.

I could not travel to Greece by ferry as there were no cabins to sleep overnight, so I reluctantly flew to Venice. My journey continued by rail to Switzerland where I stayed in a lovely family run hotel in Lugano. From the receptionist to the head chef all the people were of one family and the grandmother and I had a pleasant conversation after breakfast. It seemed almost everyone lined up to wave me goodbye. I really felt I had been looked after by friends.

My journey continued to Frankfurt and thence back to Brussels and London. I arrived home five days earlier than expected with one day of travel left on my eurorail pass.

A very interesting way to see Europe.

Judith Morris

Here are some photographs of Judith's epic journey.



Bratislava old market



Subottica

Bratislava



Powering up the Danube



Tail Piece

Something to think about

"I see," said the blind carpenter
as he picked up his hammer
and saw.

Not to be outdone, the mute
bicycle repairman picked up a
wheel and spoke.

And then a deaf sheep rancher
went out with his dog and
herd.

Finally, a noseless fisherman
caught a barrel of herring and
smelt.

Our editing rules for the magazine

In case you were wondering, these are the rules we apply¹

1. Avoid Alliteration. Always
2. Do not use prepositions to end sentences with.
3. Avoid cliches like the plague. They're old hat.
4. Comparisons are as bad as cliches.
5. Be more or less specific.
6. Writers should never generalise.
- Seven: Be consistent!
- 8: Don't be redundant; don't use more words than necessary.
- 9: Who needs rhetorical questions?
- 10: Exaggeration is a million times worse than understatement.

¹ only joking!

Crewkerne and District u3a Group Activities for October

First week of the month

Monday



Badminton every Monday 1000-1200 at Merriott Village Hall
Table Tennis every Monday and Friday 1400-1600 at Misterton Village Hall
T@2 1400 at Henhayes:



Tuesday



Scrabble first and third Tuesday 1400-1600 at Henhayes
Ancient History 1400-1600 in a private home
Short Tennis weekly 1715-1815 at Wadham School



Wednesday



Snooker weekly 1030-1230 at Crewkerne Conservative Club
Whist first and second Wednesday 1500-1700 at Henhayes



Thursday

Mah Jong every Thursday 1400-1600 at the Dance House

Friday

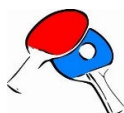


Table Tennis every Monday and Friday 1400-1600 at Misterton Village Hall

Second week of the month

Monday

Badminton every Monday 1000-1200 at Merriott Village Hall
Table Tennis every Monday and Friday 1400-1600 at Misterton Village Hall
Folk Dancing second and fourth Monday 1400-1600 in the Speedwell Hall



Tuesday

Poetry Appreciation 1400-1600 at the Dance House
Short Tennis weekly 1715-1815 at Wadham School



Wednesday

Snooker weekly 1030-1230 at the Conservative Club
Book Group Volume 2 1430-1600 in a private home
Whist first and second Wednesday 1500-1700 at Henhayes



Thursday

Digital Technology and AI second and fourth Thursday 1400-1600 at Oscar's Wine Bar



Mah Jong every Thursday 1400-1600 at the Dance House

Friday

Table Tennis every Monday and Friday 1400-1600 at Misterton Village Hall



Third week of the month

Monday

Badminton every Monday 1000-1200 at Merriott Village Hall

Local History 1030 at the Speedwell Hall

Table Tennis every Monday and Friday 1400-1600 at Misterton Village Hall

Tuesday

Scrabble cancelled due to holiday

Shakespeare 1400-1600 in a private home

Short Tennis weekly 1715-1815 at Wadham School

Wednesday

Snooker weekly 1030-1230 at the Conservative Club

Craft 1400-1600 in a private home

Discussion 1400-1600 at Crewkerne Museum and Heritage Centre

French Conversation 1000-1200 in a private home

Thursday

Photography 1000 at various venues

Mah Jong every Thursday 1400-1600 at the Dance House

Friday

Table Tennis every Monday and Friday 1400-1600 at Misterton Village Hall

Fourth week of the month

Monday

Badminton every Monday 1000-1200 at Merriott Village Hall

Table Tennis every Monday and Friday 1400-1600 at Misterton Village Hall

Folk Dancing second and fourth Monday 1400-1600 in the Speedwell Club

Opera Appreciation 1430-1630 at the Dance House

Tuesday

Family History 1400-1600 at the Dance House

Short Tennis weekly 1715-1815 at Wadham School

Wednesday

Snooker weekly 1030-1230 at the Conservative Club

Book Club 1030-1200 at the Dance House

Acting from Scratch 1400-1600 in a private home

Jazz Appreciation 1415-1615 in private homes

Thursday

Digital Technology and AI second and fourth Thursdays 1400-1600 at Oscar's Wine Bar

Mah Jong every Thursday 1400-1600 at the Dance House

Friday

Table Tennis every Monday and Friday 1400-1600 at Misterton Village Hall





Every other Thursday

Ukelele 1030-1200 in a private home

Last Friday of the month

Play Reading 1100-1300 in a private home

Last Sunday of the month

Sunday Lunch Club at various venues



Please let the group leader know through the Crewkerne and District u3a web site if you want to join a new group. Non u3a members are welcome and can attend two meetings before joining the u3a.

Recipes

Right! Winter is coming! Time for some serious comfort food. This time we have more of a menu than a recipe, second course first. Caroline and I are not Crewkerne natives, as some of you may well know, but we do our bit to adopt new ways. I am doing my best with cider and pasties and Caroline recently decided to attempt a Somerset Apple Cake when her sister and husband, long term residents from near Wellington, were coming to lunch. The recipe is adapted from the one by Tamasin Day-Lewis in her *Tamasin's Kitchen Bible*. This is a book I would recommend, having previously had a success with her recipe for Steak and Kidney Pudding.

The first course is a lovely twist on an old idea – Cauliflower Cheese with Almond and Parsley Crumb. I am very sorry to say that I have lost track of who sent this recipe in. Please let me know so that you can be credited.

Somerset Apple Cake

Ingredients

170g sultanas
150ml dry cider
225g unrefined caster sugar
170g unsalted butter
2 eggs
285g plain flour
1 ½tsp baking powder
1tsp cinnamon
Zest of 1 lemon
2 large Bramley apples

Method

Soak the sultanas in the cider for 30 minutes.

Preheat the oven to 170°C/Gas 3. Cream the sugar and butter thoroughly, then add the eggs, one at a time, beating as you go.

Fold in the dry ingredients, the lemon zest and the thinly sliced apples.

Add the soaked sultanas along with any remaining cider.

Bake in a greased, lined 20cm springform tin for 40-50 minutes, or until a skewer comes out clean.

Cool in the tin, then remove the cake to a rack.

To eat as a pudding, reheat it and serve with creme fraiche.

Cauliflower Cheese with Almond and Parsley Crumb

Serves 6 as a side. You can make this dish up to 2 months ahead. Freeze after step 2; defrost, then continue.

Ingredients

1 tbsp olive oil
25g salted butter
1 onion, finely chopped
1 garlic clove, finely chopped
1 tsp smoked paprika
¼ tsp crushed chillies
50g plain flour
200g semi-skimmed milk
1 veg stock cube + 250ml water
100g mature Cheddar
1 large cauliflower (750g),
broken into florets, stalk and leaves, stalk sliced
25g flaked almonds
8g fresh flat-leaf parsley, chopped
½ lemon, zested

Method

Preheat oven: gas 4, 180°C, fan 160°C.

Heat the oil and butter in a lidded frying pan over a low-medium heat.

Add the onion and garlic, cover and cook for 8 mins.

Add the paprika, chillies and flour; cook for 2 mins.

Remove from the heat; stir in the milk and stock.

Bring to the boil, bubble for 2 mins, Add the cheese. Mix until melted; season.

Boil cauliflower for 4 mins or more; drain and add to baking dish.

Pour the cheese sauce over.

Sprinkle the mixed almonds, parsley and lemon zest over;
Cover with foil; bake for 20 mins. Remove foil and cook for 5 mins until golden.