



**WELCOME** to the season of mellow fruitfulness and with all the rain we've had it seems it will be a very good year for it! Following an August break for a number of our groups we have a lot to look forward to, please see the suggestion for a new music group and also a beginners' Bridge session. Now is a good time to put forward any suggestions you may have for a new group. Don't be put off, help is at hand to get started, just contact a committee member. Remember too that u3a is member led for all of our benefits and we should all do what we can to keep it thriving.

## From Robbie Philip – the new Churchdown u3a Chair

Dear Members

I was honoured and also excited when I was elected as your new Chair for 23/24. I am very aware that I have a hard act to follow but all I can say is that I will do my best and give the position the wholehearted commitment that it deserves. I was very disappointed that I was not able to attend my first meeting as Chair in July due to Covid. Yes, it's still around and I was really glad that I had all the jabs as it wasn't very nice. I am also pleased to welcome Gary Murden onto the committee.

At present we have a membership of circa 270 and a total of 28 different wide-ranging groups. I personally belong to three of these groups, the Lunch Group, Art Appreciation where Martin, the Group Leader, has a wealth of knowledge, not only of the painting itself but also of the artist and the stories behind. My third group was initially labelled the Politics Group but because our discussions are always broader, we have become the Current Affairs Group which we think is more apt. I did think at one time that I would like to introduce Walking Football as one of our groups but unfortunately hips and age have put the kibosh on that!

What about the plane landing on the Golden Valley By-Pass! It's something I have seen on TV but never expected it to be on my doorstep. The pilot did such an amazing job landing the plane safely on the central reservation without any casualties. It would be very interesting to know if any of our members were involved in any way in what must have been a very scary incident.

The committee and I are always open to new ideas and suggestions so please do not hesitate to contact either myself or a committee member to discuss. The same goes if there is something that you are not happy with don't bottle it in! Please let us know. You will find all our contact details on the Committee page of the web-site or control click to follow this link [Committee Contacts](#)

## **WE NEED YOU!**

**Volunteers needed to help at monthly meetings**

**such as registration, refreshments and setting up and**

**clearing the hall after use.**

**Contact me at**

**[ann.stollery@btinternet.com](mailto:ann.stollery@btinternet.com) or see me at**

**the September meeting. Thanks**

Editor: Sue Grierson Please send contributions to: [suegrierson@gmail.com](mailto:suegrierson@gmail.com)

Tel: 07783061063

## Membership Matters

### Kate Methven

We are well into the renewal of members' subscriptions for 2023-2024, thank you everyone who has already returned their forms to me. If you have not received your membership card yet it will be available at the monthly meeting, or I will aim to get it to you soon afterwards.

With the help of Ann Stollery and her band of volunteers, to whom I extend very grateful thanks, we will also be processing membership renewals after the talk at the monthly meetings in September and October. Please arrive with your completed form, I need this for my records as proof of payment.

I would also like to extend a warm welcome to **Adrian and Helen Ryder, David Anderson** and **Maureen McVitty**, who have joined us recently.

### A message from Dave Bebbington:

**Bridge for All** will be re-starting our usual Thursday afternoon meetings on the 28<sup>th</sup> September after our summer break. We welcome new players, whatever your level, however, we also want to encourage beginners and learners into our group; surely learning something new is what the u3a is about after all. This September Louise, one of our members, will be starting a course of lessons for beginners. Details are available on our group page of the Churchdown u3a website [Beginner Bridge Course](#). At the time of writing, there are still spaces available.

Bridge is an interesting card game that will get you thinking and concentrating but, that doesn't mean that it shouldn't be fun. So come on, this could be the challenge you've been looking for, why not give it a go. We meet every Thursday afternoon from 4pm to 6pm at the Methodist Church Hall on Chapel Hay Lane. If you think you might be interested, either to join the main group or to sign up for the beginners' lessons, contact me via the link on the Churchdown u3a website or at [davebebbington@outlook.com](mailto:davebebbington@outlook.com) I very much hope to hear from you.

### Calling any musicians or instrument players!

It's been suggested that we could start a Churchdown u3a musical band. Do you play a musical instrument (no matter how well)? Are you learning a musical instrument? Have you played in the past and want to pick it up again? Do we have any musicians, perhaps retired music teachers in our membership who would be able to support such a group?

If the answer to any of the above is yes, please contact me, Dave Bebbington (vice chair) via the group web site, or email [davebebbington@outlook.com](mailto:davebebbington@outlook.com)



Before we get to Group news, **Diana Sinden** says: Many thanks to those members of Churchdown u3a who supported Churchdown Village Junior School's open afternoon on Sunday, June 25th. The school's Gardening Club was included in Gloucestershire's Open Gardens scheme this year and several hundred people visited the allotment, polytunnel and Forest School on a sunny afternoon and were impressed with what they saw and with the enthusiasm of the children. The afternoon raised £900 for the NHS charities which are supported by the Open Gardens scheme.

## Walking Group Coach Trip to Weymouth

On August 11<sup>th</sup> 44 of us boarded the coach at the CCA bound for Weymouth. The group was split almost 50-50 between walkers and non-walkers and we hope those who had to drop out at the last moment are recovered. Walkers were dropped off at the top of the drive down to Osmington Mills to use



the facilities and take refreshments before starting the walk on the South West Coast Path to Weymouth, a distance of roughly 5 miles. The rain mainly held off and it was good to walk along with the lovely, blue sea of Weymouth Bay on our left and undulating fields to our right. A warm breeze blew away any cob-webs and there were still a number of wild flowers to be seen on the cliff-top.

As we approached the outskirts of Weymouth we spotted a, now disused, holiday complex in a stylish blue and white art-deco design which harked back to the hey-days of British seaside holidays. Soon after this there was a large, grassy area with benches where we stopped to have our packed lunches and just to sit, look at the sea and watch the seagulls swooping around, thankfully as far as I know, we all managed to keep our sandwiches safe.

It was then quite a walk along the prom into Weymouth itself, finishing at the clock-tower where we had a couple of hours to explore. I know a number of people from both groups took the opportunity to have a paddle and I think many portions of fish and chips, cups of tea and ice-creams were consumed. All in all, a grand day out! Many thanks to Mary for working out the walk for us and to Paul for organising the coach.

You may remember the Walking Group's first outing was to Dunster, Somerset in 2017 which proved popular and was the start of Churchdown u3a coach trips. The next Walking Group trip was to Ludlow and the Long Mynd in 2018 and Ogmere-by-Sea in 2019 before Covid stopped all trips until Lacock in Wiltshire last year. Watch this space for 2024!

## News from the Groups:

**The Ambling Group** continues to enjoy a stroll every second and fourth Tuesday of the month. We have braved all the weather and enjoyed social walks around Churchdown, exploring the many footpaths and alleys, finishing with a cup of tea or coffee in one of the cafes in the village.

We are also planning the occasional drive out of the village for an amble with a pub lunch. We are hoping our first one will be from Fromebridge Mill along to Saul Junction. These walks will always be decided on a democratic basis, to accommodate the abilities of everyone in the group. We would be delighted to welcome new members to our group, feel free to contact Kate Methven (07814 933531) for more details.

**The Industrial Heritage Group** has had a varied and interesting programme this year. We started in January with a talk on the industries along Bristol Road, Gloucester in the '50s and '60s. The following months saw talks on the History of Bricks, Repairing Railways at Night, The Stroudwater Archives and Aircraft Accident Investigations. In June we visited the Dean Heritage Museum and this month we looked at the Gloucester and Cheltenham Tramroad which went through Churchdown between 1811 and 1861, following the current cycle path.

Our next meeting is in September when we will visit the National Waterways Museum, in October there will be a guided tour of the docks and a visit to the Churchdown Railway Station is planned for November.

**The Lunch Group** meets on the second Thursday of each month (except August). We aim to start the meal at 1 pm and the venue varies each month, but those selected are all

within fairly easy travelling distance of Churchdown.

The group have lunched at local hostelrys such as Hatherley Manor Hotel, Gupshill Manor, The Queen's Head Longford, The Norwood Arms Cheltenham and The House in the Tree this year.

Although not all premises can accommodate our 25 active Lunch Group Members, there are sometimes fewer numbers attending so any u3a members who wish to join the group should contact the Group organiser.

**The Singing Together Group** meets on the second and fourth Monday of every month at the Methodist Church Hall on Chapel Hay Lane between 2.00 and 3.00.

We have been 'Singing Together' for some 5 years and have a loyal following with many of the original members still singing with us.

Our repertoire is wide from 'Silent Worship' by Handel to the 'Hippopotamus Song' by Flanders and Swan. Our main aim is to have enjoyment but we also seek to improve our singing by setting ourselves high standards. We sing most music *a capella* (without accompaniment). We also attempt some simple two-part work. There is the added incentive of coffee/tea and biscuits and an informal chat at the end of each session.

On November 1<sup>st</sup> we are giving a short concert at the Community Centre for the surgery sponsored group at the 'Chatty Café' which meets once a week on Wednesday from 10.00 - 12.00.

If you would like to join us or simply come along to see if the group is for you then please do so, we are very friendly and would be delighted to see you.

If you would like to contact me beforehand then my e mail address is [alanwin42@icloud.com](mailto:alanwin42@icloud.com) and mobile number 07717488044

*There is compelling scientific evidence that singing in a group is good for your mental health and well-being.*

## Yoga & Meditation

We've had a good year of **Yoga** with the group at capacity but, I'm pleased to say, no-one on the waiting list now. I'm very grateful to Val Coates and Lesley Sweetman who collect the hall-hire contributions and make sure our tea/coffee and chocolate biscuits are always available - a number of us look forward to this treat. In case you haven't looked at our web-page here's Lesley taken just after her 80<sup>th</sup> birthday. Please 'don't try this at home', Lesley has been practising and really enjoying her yoga for most of her life, I think! The rest of us continue to feel the benefits of a regular Yoga practice which includes physical *asana* along with various conscious breathing practices and relaxation techniques.



**Our Meditation Group** has continued steadily with 12 of us currently meeting on the first Thursday of each month at the Churchdown Club.

We start off by sharing any experiences from the previous month which augments our practice and often leads to some interesting explorations. There is space in this group for anyone interested in seeing what Meditation is all about so please contact me by email: [suegrierson@gmail.com](mailto:suegrierson@gmail.com) or phone: 07783 061063.

**From the Editor!** As I've got some space to fill, I thought I'd have a trawl through the website on your behalf and have come across a couple of tasty gems on the Cookery page in the shape of Wild Garlic Scones and Rhubarb and Stem Ginger Scones, just when I've decided I need to lose a few pounds!

The Film and Cinema page was a surprise and might be worth a look as their monthly screenings are open to all members with a maximum cost of £3.00.

The Italian Appreciation page is interesting as it is all in Italian! However, I'm pretty sure I could work out the first poem – what a good way to learn a few words to impress your friends. If Italian is not for you then hop onto the Spanish page, what a talented lot Churchdown u3a is.

The re-named Current Affairs Group sounds more inviting than its old title of Politics. You can clearly put the world to rights there if you wish and they are welcoming new members.

I ended up on the Wine Appreciation page and found that I'd missed out on a trip to a vineyard near Chipping Campden – they also have room for more people so if you fancy some wine tasting why not contact them.

I then moved on to the National pages and found *Interest Groups On-line*. During Covid a number of events were arranged on-line covering many interests, including Yoga which I took part in. Well this idea has clearly been expanded and has become a u3a in its own right basically. With the darker nights coming on or if you would like to be part of a group without having to travel this might be for you.

To join a group, you must already be a paid-up member of Interest Groups Online. It costs £12 to join for the year, which runs from 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024. To find out more follow this link: [Interest Groups On-Line](#)

I hope this has given you some ideas if you're looking for something new in September - Sue

## WALKING GROUP PROGRAMME to DECEMBER 2023

|                                     |   |               |
|-------------------------------------|---|---------------|
| <b>TUESDAY SEPT 12TH</b>            | LASSINGTON & HIGNHAM 4.5 MILES  | MARY WHITE    |
| <b>TUESDAY SEPT 19<sup>TH</sup></b> | THE SLAUGHTERS & BOURTON ON THE WATER<br>5.5 MILES - DOGS ON LEADS ALLOWED      | PAUL GRIERSON |
| <b>TUESDAY OCT 10<sup>TH</sup></b>  | WINCHCOMBE: WALK TO SOURCE OF RIVER<br>ISBORNE<br>6 MILES DOGS ON LEADS ALLOWED | PAUL GRIERSON |
| <b>TUESDAY OCT 31<sup>ST</sup></b>  | CHEDWORTH 5MILES  | MARY WHITE    |
| <b>TUESDAY NOV 14<sup>TH</sup></b>  | SHIPTON OLIFFE 5 MILES  | EVE ANTIS     |
| <b>TUESDAY NOV 21<sup>ST</sup></b>  | BIBURY & RIVER COLN<br>6 MILES DOGS ON LEADS ALLOWED                            | PAUL GRIERSON |
| <b>TUESDAY DEC 5<sup>TH</sup></b>   | NORTON /TWIGWORTH AREA<br>4 -5 MILES DOGS ON LEADS ALLOWED                      | MARY WHITE    |
| <b>TUESDAY DEC 12<sup>TH</sup></b>  | SHORT WALK & CHRISTMAS MEAL<br>From The CORNER CUPBOARD, WINCHCOMBE             | PAUL GRIERSON |

## SPEAKER PROGRAMME

### September - December 2023

Meetings are held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month at 2pm

At Churchdown Community Centre, Parton Road, GL3 2JH

| Date                      | Subject                            | Speaker        |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------|
| September 20th            | The Story of Tin Pan Alley         | Roger Browne   |
| October 18 <sup>th</sup>  | A First-Generation Farmer          | Chris North    |
| November 15 <sup>th</sup> | Charlie Wheatstone's Clever Tricks | Stephen Rowley |
| December 20 <sup>th</sup> | A Gloucestershire Christmas        | John Putley    |

## Current Group List

Please contact the Group Convenor if you wish to join a group, or for more information go to our web-site: <https://u3asites.org.uk/churchdown>

**Note:** If you do not have the means to contact a convenor via the web page, please phone the Membership Secretary who will contact them for you.

Group Coordinator: **VACANCY**

Contact: Kate Methven, Membership Secretary on 07814 4933531 in the interim

| Group  | Convenor                     | Contact Details      |
|--|------------------------------|----------------------|
| Ambling  | Kate Methven                 | 07814 933531         |
| Art History/Appreciation                             | Martin Bowden                | 01452 854007         |
| Book Club/Literature                                 | Joyce Winwood                | 01452 715099         |
| Bridge for All                                       | Dave Bebbington              | 07587 151191         |
| Cookery  | Eve Anstis                   | 01242 235833         |
| Crafts   | Wendy Martin                 | 01452 714049         |
| Creative Writing                                     | John Hawkswell               | 01452 730528         |
| Cribbage   | Diana Sinden                 | 01452 698713         |
| <i>Exploring Churchdown</i>                          | <i>Temporarily suspended</i> |                      |
| Current Affairs <small>(previously Politics)</small> | Robbie Philip                | 01452 715033         |
| Family History                                       | Di Medland                   | Contact via web page |
| Film and Cinema                                      | Norman Davies                | 07957 994390         |
| Gardening  | Ann Knight                   | Contact via web-page |
| Garden Visits  | Jane Moore                   | Contact via web-page |
| Industrial Heritage                                  | Louise Keeling               | 01452 712753         |
| Italian Appreciation                                 | John Hawkswell               | 01452 730528         |
| Lunch Club   | Tom Arnot                    | 01452 498934         |
| Meditation   | Sue Grierson                 | 07783 061063         |
| Petanque   | Ann Stollery                 | Contact via web-page |
| Photography  | Ann Knight                   | Contact via web-page |
| Singing Together                                     | Alan Winwood                 | 01452 715099         |
| Spanish (Language & Culture)                         | Maggie Thomas                | 01452 676751         |
| Table Tennis   | Syd Leuillette               | 01452 857039         |
| Walking  | Mary White                   | 07817 007706         |
| Wine Appreciation                                    | Louise Keeling               | 01452 712753         |
| Yoga   | Sue Grierson                 | 07783 061063         |

**PLEASE RETAIN FOR FUTURE REFERENCE**