

Milford and Godalming u3a

Autumn Newsletter 2026

Jottings from the Chair

I would like to welcome both our new and returning members to the 26/27 season, and hope that once again, all will enjoy what we have on offer. Most of the groups we had last year are again in operation. Although some of the Group leaders have retired from their role, existing members have stepped forward and taken over leadership. I am sure the groups will continue to be as successful as before, although there are likely to be minor tweaks to their format.



The Staycation and wider renewal process has resulted in some of our groups gaining a significant number of new members but, as ever, there are some groups where places remain. We are always looking to start new groups, and the new member's meetings we hold during the course of the year provide stimulus in that regard, but more generally we would ask existing members to come up with ideas. It is still relatively common to hear things such as I would have like to have joined Group A but it is on a Wednesday morning and that is a time I am unavailable. If this resonates with you, then come forward and we will endeavour to see if there are enough like-minded people to start a new group.

As well as our own offerings as part of the Surrey Network we have access to a series of monthly, day long presentations on various subjects which are held in the Menuhin Hall in Stoke D'Abernon. More information on these later in the newsletter. Historically the numbers of attendees from our own u3a has been small, but some of these talks will be of particular interest to our groups during the year.

Although I have referenced them in this email, we often wonder at committee level the best method of communication for our members to highlight local events. Our Facebook page seems to work in attracting new members, but is not frequented that often by members, and the same is true to some extent about our web page. We can send out emails, and generally this has the broadest reach, but we still get comments

from members that either they have received unnecessary emails, or they never received the message as it ended up in spam. We would welcome your comments via my email below, or in person at our monthly meetings, so we can adjust our strategy.

As you will know I have taken over the Chair role until we can find a new Chair during the course of the year. If this is a role that may interest you do get in touch. In addition we are actively looking for a new Committee member to take over the role of Membership Secretary from Lavinia Martins at the end of this season. We would welcome somebody to join the committee in the coming months so they could shadow her, ready to take over the role next year. Outside of the Committee we are still looking for a "Tea Co-ordinator" to help serve refreshments at the conclusion of our Monthly Talks. Again, do contact me if you would like to find out more.

John Oakey
chair@mgu3a.org

Surrey u3a Study Talks

Surrey u3a holds monthly study days which are open to all u3a members. Guests are very welcome. The talks are held in the Menuhin Hall, Stoke d'Abernon starting at 9.30am with registration and running from 10am to 4pm. Flexibility is made so that members can attend the hall in person or view the study days online. The fee per day, including coffee/tea and biscuits, is £12 for hall attendance or £7 online, £15 for guests and £15 for all attendees paying at the door, although booking in advance is preferred. Bookings can be made at <https://surreynetwork.u3asite.uk/events/>

The next study dates and subjects are as follows:

Friday 18th September 2026 – The Bayeaux Tapestry: Its Creation and Interpretation – presented by Imogen Corrigan, Lecturer in Medieval History

Friday 16th October 2026 – World Affairs in the Middle East & Africa: Iran, Saudi Arabia, South Africa and Nigeria – presented by Steve Bird, Lecturer on Military History & Current Affairs

Friday 20th November 2026 – The Music & Satire of Gilbert & Sullivan – presented by Bernard Lockett, Gilbert & Sullivan Society

Friday 19 February 2027 – Lunar Exploration – Past, Present & Future – presented by Craig Underwood, Emeritus Professor of Spacecraft Engineering

Friday 19 March 2027– AI in Society & the u3a Movement – presented by Russell Whitworth, Andrew Freeland and Dr Andrew Rogoyski, University of Surrey

Singing for Fun
meet on Tuesday 10.00-12.00
Chichester Hall, Witley

On Tuesday 23 June, **Milford u3a Singers** were guests of **Guildford u3a Singers** when they staged their Songs for a Summer Show – **WITH A VOICE OF SINGING** – at **St Nicolas Church**, Bury Street, Guildford.

Each group worked on six songs, and eight songs that we sang together: songs like Billy Joel's "And so it goes"; that old favourite "Dry Bones"; "I'd like to teach the world to sing" (remember the Coca Cola TV advert?); Elton John's "Can you feel the love tonight and "Rhythm of Life" from Sweet Charity.

It was fun and song all rolled into one!



Then, on our last session on Tuesday 30 June, we held our own **In-house Show** when some of us volunteered to entertain our group with jokes, poetry, and songs like "We are the Champions"; "What a mouth" (you have to be old enough to remember!) and "Do you love me?" (from Fiddler on the Roof). Matthew Smith, our brilliant pianist on his fantastic keyboard, played his own arrangement of "I've got you under my skin", followed by David Jopson playing his own Wedding March composition.

And to follow all this, we had a feast of nibbles (instead of biscuits) with our tea/coffee. What a wonderful end to a great year!

After the summer break, we will be working on our Christmas Show which you can enjoy at 2pm on **Friday, 11 December** at **Milford Village Hall**.

Musically yours
Wayne & Kay Richardson

Trip to Hever Castle Monday 20 April 2026



We enjoyed an excellent group outing to Hever Castle, once the childhood home of Anne Boleyn. It is an attractive and well-preserved castle. Some of the group had a great walk round the gardens with the head gardener. He explained the history of the castle and development of the garden by Henry Astor. It took 2,000 men to develop the gardens, 800 of whom spent two years digging out the lake! It was well worth it as the gardens are spectacular. Others just strolled at their own pace to enjoy everything. Our visit also coincided with their tulip festival so there were plenty of colourful borders.

Trip to Penshurst Place - July



The stately home and gardens were once used as a hunting lodge by King Henry VIII and have been owned by the Sidney family since 1552. They feature opulent staterooms that have been showcased in popular TV and film productions such as

Wolf Hall. The Queen Elizabeth Room and Long Gallery contain a collection of beautiful family portraits from across the centuries, antique furniture and skillfully crafted tapestries. We had a wonderful guide who brought the place to life with her stories - fascinating! The historic formal gardens are a superb example of Elizabethan garden design, but sadly it was too hot to really enjoy all of them.



Monthly Talk Tea Co-ordinator

We are looking for a new co-ordinator for the tea rota at our monthly talks. If you think you could help please contact our Chair, John Oakey.

chair@mgu3a.org



Monthly Talks

Friday 11 September – 2.00pm - Milford Village Hall

The Restoration of the Wey & Arun Canal – Richard Shenton

Richard will give us an update on the restoration of the canal followed by a journey along what you can see today, ways to enjoy the canal and how funds are raised for continuing restoration.

Friday 9 October – 2.00pm - Milford Village Hall

The Real “Call the Midwife” – Ian Porter

Ian gives us the history of midwifery and Poplar and how the two came together in the mission that was the real life Nonantus House.

Friday 13 November – 2.00pm - Milford Village Hall

Laurie Lee – Jonathan Jones

An informative look at the life and works of Laurie Lee, interspersed with readings of his prose and poetry.

Friday 11 December – 2.00pm - Milford Village Hall

A Christmas Concert – Singing for Fun u3a Group

We look forward to welcoming all members for a festive afternoon

Visit to Denmans Garden – 3 June 2026

I was delighted that the Gardening Group were able to fill a coach with 53 members on this my first arranged visit with this group.

Denmans in Fontwell, East Sussex is the award winning Grade 2 garden of influential landscape designer John Brooks MBE. The tranquil garden features dry river beds, a walled garden, ponds and unusual plants.



Unfortunately on the day the dry river beds were not dry. We had torrential rain throughout our visit with the sun only coming out as we boarded the coach for home. However spirits were not too dampened by the rain and many vowed to return at a later date.

Liz Coult

For more information about the Gardening Group please contact

peter.stevenson@mgu3a.org

Educating Rita by Willy Russell

Touring village venues across Surrey this September, this high-quality production is being brought to local community venues by Stafford Productions. Rather than journey into London you have the opportunity to enjoy one of Britain's best loved plays right on your doorstep.

Performances taking place locally are at:

Shere Village Hall – 19 September

Bramley Village Hall – 25-27 September

Tickets can be booked online here:



<https://www.ticketsource.com/stafford-productions/educating-rita-by-stafford-productions/e-olxlr>

Would you be Interested in Running a New Group?

We often get asked about new groups on a range of subjects from wine tasting to cooking, flower arranging to creative writing. If you have a skill that you would like to share with others, do get in touch with our group co-ordinator, Robert Bellamy (robert.bellamy@mgu3a.org), or any other member of the committee. It doesn't have to be labour intensive, and can be a lot of fun. Why not give it a try?



Your Committee Needs You!

Our u3a is run by volunteers – without these our u3a cannot continue. We are urgently seeking the following new members to join our committee:

Chair of Trustees
Membership Secretary

We are a friendly supportive group, as you would expect from the u3a! Role descriptions for these positions can be obtained from any member of the committee. Also, our existing postholders are available to support you for as long as you need help in your new role.

Please do think about this – without your help our u3a will not be able to continue.



If you are interested in joining the trustees of Milford & Godalming u3a, please contact John, our current Chair, in the first instance for more information about the committee, the roles available and the skills you will be able to contribute.

chair@mgu3a.org

Cycling Group

Wednesday 10.30-12.00

Cold wet winter mornings do not encourage a recreational cyclist. With that in mind the Wednesday morning cycling group set their eyes on a Spring week cycling in Germany in Münsterland.



The flight on 20 April took us to Düsseldorf, then train (well several trains!) to Münster, for a 3-night stay. If you are fed up with SouthWestern Trains, come and try German Regional Railways!



We collected our hired bikes and set about sizing and adjusting saddle height, then a cycle around the hotel car park familiarising ourselves with a German style bike – 7 hub gears, back-pedal braking, upright seating position. Then off on our first trip 44km circular trip to Telgte and back. Using cycle paths and Fahrradstraße [cycling Roads] through the Boniburger Forrest along the winding banks of the Rivers Werse

and Ems. Our return journey took us through Käsewinkle and its mounded fields of ripening asparagus.

The next day we did a 49Km round trip and a change of scenery as we headed towards Schloss Senden, a grand moated Castle-Manor House and through many more fields of asparagus – Germany is big on white asparagus and we joined asparagus season in full swing. As part of our engagement with German culture, many enjoyed an asparagus based evening meal as most restaurants offered special seasonal menus featuring such dishes.

On day 4 the team headed off to Lüdinghausen, 53Km via the banks of the River Werse and moated houses. After the long ride that the change of sites involved, we took a leisurely walk the following day from our hotel to Burg Vischering, a large castle the building of which started in the 13th Century. Then back to town and lunch at the local 'Bäckerei' which had become an essential part of our active day. A vast choice of bread rolls lay before us ready to receive a filling of your choice; cheese, cold meat, salad...



Day 6 and our final cycling day and it was agreed to go on what would be our longest challenge 58Km. Total distance covered during the 5 days of cycling- 252km (156.5mls) Everyone agreed it was a very enjoyable week despite a few aches and sore parts!

Boules (3rd Thursday 2.00-4.00pm) The Winterton Arms

The boules group has had a fantastic Summer of meetings – none have been called off due to rain – a record! Let's hope it stays fine for our last two meetings before we hibernate for the Winter.

Boules is for everyone regardless of fitness or experience. It is a lovely way to spend a social afternoon – with a little competitive spirit added in!

We have had a lot of interest in the group and think there is probably scope for setting up another afternoon. The Winterton Arms is a great venue with a purpose-built boules



court – so if you think you would be interested do get in touch with Liz to see how she set up the first group – no experience required!!

For more information contact

liz.simmons@mgu3a.org



This bulletin is published three times a year

**If you would like to have an article included in the next edition please send copy
and photos to**

newsletter@mgu3a.org

Copy deadlines: 15 December 2026, 18 March 2027 and 20 August 2027



Online Events

Free Online Talks, Workshops and Courses

u3a members can access a wide range of free online talks, workshops and courses through their membership. Most sessions are led by fellow members, sharing their expertise, with additional talks from notable speakers and organisations.

All events are bookable via Eventbrite. Please ensure you can attend when booking and cancel if you're unable to make it so others can participate. Events are exclusively for u3a members. Sign up to events mailing to get monthly online events straight to your inbox.

A flavour of what's coming up in September:

- **Wild, edible autumn seeds**, Friday 4 September at 10am
- **Exploring world faiths: faith and gratitude**, Monday 14 September at 10am
- **Life in your smallest room**, Friday 16 September at 10am
- **The Titanic Sails at Dawn – punk in the 1970s**, Thursday 17 September at 10am
- **Live cookery demonstration**, Friday 24 September at 10am

For more information go to:

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/what-we-do/events/educational-events>

New Groups in *Interest Groups Online (IGO)*

The online community *Interest Groups Online (IGO)* continues to grow, with enthusiastic members starting new and exciting groups that you can join from the comfort of home. This month's new groups include Russian reading and conversation 2 and opera appreciation. There is something to suit all interests, from history to science to the arts. Join *IGO* today to meet like-minded members and learn something new. Please note there is a small annual fee of £12 to join.

For more information:

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/what-we-do/learning/interest-groups-online>

MOTO (Members on their Own) (meet on 2nd Thursday 2.00pm-4.00pm) Burton Pavilion

MOTO has run a busy and varied programme of events and meetings over the Summer period. Here are a selection of photos to give you a flavour of what the group can offer. New members are always welcome.



For more information about this group do
contact Mike at mike.jones@mgu3a.org

Did you know the u3a has free online training events for members?

u3a members can access a wide range of free online talks, workshops and courses through their membership. All events are bookable via Eventbrite. Sign up to events mailing to get monthly online events straight to your inbox.



Use this link to access the information page:
<https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events>

Milford & Godalming u3a Website Information

As well as finding information about all the groups and activities being run by our u3a, the website also has copies of all our policies and procedures. You will need to sign in to access these. In addition, copies of the job descriptions for committee roles are also available in this area.

All members should note that when joining our u3a they agree to abide by the Code of Conduct for Members, a copy of which can also be found in the member's area of our website.



Do you know anyone who may interested in joining Milford & Godalming u3a?

All the information about joining us can be found on our website
<https://mgu3a.org>

Do you want to keep up to date with what is going on in our group?
Why not join our Facebook page – Milford & Godalming u3a -where we post new information about groups and activities?



Volunteers wanted for nutrition study!

Help research the effect of prolonged overnight fasting, with or without additional protein, on body composition, muscle function and metabolic health!

What to expect:

Random allocation to one of four study groups for 8 weeks: control or three variations of time-restricted eating

You may be asked to consume a daily protein supplement depending on your group allocation

Two study visits to measure your body composition, muscle strength and function and take a blood sample

All volunteers will have **state of the art measures of body composition** (fat, muscle, bone mass) and be entered into a **prize draw** to win one of 1x£200, 1x£100 or 2x£50 vouchers!

You could be eligible if you are:

- **At least 60 years old**
- Generally healthy
- Have a BMI of 21-30kg/m²

Interested?

For more information

email

yp00228@surrey.ac.uk

or scan the QR code



Recruiting until end of December 2026 or target number participants reached
This study has received favourable ethical opinion from an NHS Research Ethics Committee,
reference number: 361019
Poster v1.2 16/06/2026