
From the Chair

Annual General Meeting, September 2023

It was good to see such a good attendance at our AGM on 18th September. My anxiety that we would not reach our quorum of 20% of members attending proved to be unjustified!

I was able to give a very positive report on the past year's activities across our interest groups, and it is clear that there is a great deal to be pleased about as new groups are formed and other well-established groups are flourishing. Of course, it is disappointing that one or two groups are currently not active, mainly because no-one has stepped forward to convene the group. The u3a is very much an organization where members take the lead and contribute to the activities we run. It would be good to see more members volunteering to take the lead – and giving existing convenors a bit of time off! If you want to know more about what is involved, the Groups Coordinator, Barry Baker, would be very pleased to help. It really isn't a daunting role, and is a really good way to contribute, to engage with more members and to make friends.

Members may have become a little tired of hearing or reading my pleas for more people to volunteer to serve on the committee. It seems my pleas have not been falling on deaf ears! I am delighted to report that we now have two new members of our committee – Khim Sim and George Mansfield – and Bob Clark has indicated that he will be pleased to be 'co opted' onto the committee in the near future. These new members will give us the opportunity to review how the current tasks are distributed and how they are done. I have no doubt that our new members will make a significant contribution.

A good indication of the impact that Khim Sim can make is that her new role as convenor of the Lunch Club has already seen members enjoy a meal at Sticky Rice and there is strong support for the Christmas Lunch.

It was also agreed to adopt a revised constitution for the Dawlish & District u3a. For most of us, this is a somewhat remote document which hardly impacts on our daily lives. However, there are some aspects of it which do make a real difference to the way we operate, in particular the length of time committee members and

Living

•
Laughing

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Learning

office holders can remain in place. If you wish to read more about this, the full document will be placed on our website as well as a brief explanation of what this entails.

John Vick

Monthly meeting report

Monthly Meeting, Monday 16th October

What has Marketing done for us?

The guest speaker at our next monthly meeting will be 'one of our own'. David Pickton will answer the question, "*What has Marketing done for us?*". He'll tell us a little more about what marketing is: how important it is in our lives, how it affects our behaviour, how marketers get to know more about us and, interestingly, he'll tell us where Santa Claus really comes from. He'll invite us to wander down memory lane in a marketing quiz and pose the questions, "*Does marketing actually work and if it does, is it a good or bad thing?*". Have you ever wondered what the world would be like without marketing? Why not come along and ask David?

David has been involved in marketing throughout his working life; he's now retired. He's worked in the public and private sectors, but most of his career has been spent in marketing education, becoming a founding member, and subsequently Head, of what grew into one of the largest university marketing departments in the UK. He has provided marketing training and education to students, management executives and small businesses in the UK and overseas, he has been on the editorial boards of a number of business journals, is the author of two marketing textbooks and many journal papers. He was awarded Fellowships of the Chartered Institute of Marketing, the Higher Education Academy, the Royal Society of Arts and is Honorary Academic Fellow of De Montfort University.

This talk promises to be fascinating and entertaining - and important. Marketing affects us all and often in ways which I suspect we are hardly aware of, and as consumers and citizens we need to understand what is being done for us.

I am very grateful to David for agreeing to give this talk. I think it is particularly exciting when our own members are able to share their knowledge and enthusiasm with the rest of us: very much the u3a ethos!

John Vick

George Lipscomb

At the AGM there was warm support for the proposal that the Chair should write to George Lipscomb to express the whole membership's appreciation for his outstanding service to the Dawlish & District u3a. George was one of the founder members of our u3a about a decade ago, and over the years he has been a member of countless interest groups (History, Natural History, Scrabble, Great Lives and many others immediately come to mind but he could no

doubt extend that list) and he convened most of these. He also served as Chair for several years. Through personal example and leadership, he did a great deal to establish the ethos of the u3a, and we are all the beneficiaries of this. I know it is a disappointment to him that he no longer feels able to continue as such an active member.

Following the AGM, I was very pleased to speak to George and hand him the letter on behalf of the members, and also to tell him that the Committee wished him to become our very first Honorary Member. George has set a very high bar to qualify for this distinction so I do not imagine the list of 'members emeritus', as he playfully described this award, will become very long in the near future! I hope his new distinction will mean that we will continue to enjoy George's participation in our affairs.

Interest Group news

Adventure Group

Sea Kayaking – Friday 15th September 2023

Seven members met at the Point Car Park in Teignmouth for our kayaking adventure.

We met Nils, our guide, who gave us our safety briefing and our sea kayaks which we all helped to carry down to the shore. The tide was coming in and we soon were paddling along in the direction of the pier.

Once near the pier we had an option to go ashore for a break or turn round and go back to the start point. As the sea was becoming rougher and the wind stronger (and some of us were getting a bit wet) we decided to go back. Once ashore and the kayaks secured we joined Nils for a group photo.

We all had a great time. I have kayaked before on the river Dart but not in the sea which was great fun. I would definitely do it again! Thanks everyone for coming.

Carolyn

Don't forget that all members of Dawlish & District u3a are welcome to join in Adventure Group activities. On October 31st we will be going on a foraging walk on the

Dartington estate. Look out on the website for full details and let us know if you wish to join us.

Miggie

Art and Crafts Group

We continue to meet on the first Wednesday of the month at 2pm in The Manor House. All welcome and please bring along your current project you are working on. No particular skill is required just enjoy the company of a group with multiple interests with always someone on hand for help if you are stuck. Kim will be bringing something for anyone who wishes to have a go at painting/sketching a still life. Just bring along a sketch pad, pencils, paints etc. Please email enquiries if you would like to join us as due to work at The Manor House we are not always in the same room.

Kate McCarthy & Kim Walker

Art Appreciation

Visit to the Box, Plymouth

The September meeting saw the Art Appreciation Group break new ground by venturing to Plymouth to see the exhibition at the Box in Plymouth. Very few members of the group had visited the Box, so we were curious to see the permanent collection in the gallery itself as well as the exhibition on Sir Joshua Reynolds, 1723-1792.

Reynolds was born in Plympton and much of his work originated in his connections with the local community, and in particular those associated with what is now the Devonport dockyard and the navy. While his later career took him far beyond this area, the contacts that he made here remained a significant thread running through his life.

Reynolds was extraordinarily prolific, painting over 2000 portraits in his lifetime. Needless to say, he had a number of assistants to help him complete these portraits. It should also, perhaps, be no surprise that in his early life and career, he owed much to his two devoted sisters who helped with his education as an artist and helped to support him.

He became an extremely well-connected figure in fashionable and intellectual society, and was much sought after to paint portraits of leading figures of the day. He counted amongst his friends the great and good of the age, including Samuel Johnson, Edmund Burke, Oliver Goldsmith and David Garrick, and his work was highly regarded by Turner. He was knighted by George III and was an early member of the Royal Academy.

In this exhibition, Reynolds' work was shown alongside an exhibition by the contemporary artist Rana Begum who was exploring the innovative use of colour in Reynolds work. Some examples of Rana Begum's work were shown alongside Reynolds' portraits, with

another exhibition of her work elsewhere in the Box.

We moved on to see some of the gallery's permanent exhibitions. This included several works by Barbara Hepworth. She is best known for her sculptures but there on display were some of her paintings. We enjoyed some of Beryl Cook's amusing work, as well as lesser-known local artists. The focus on the local area allows the viewer to see the development of Plymouth through the eyes of artists over several centuries.

Our Senior Railcards reduced the cost of this trip to a very reasonable £6.45 so this makes it very likely that we will be looking to enjoy future exhibitions at the Box.

Our October meeting will see us back in the Mayor's Parlour on Tuesday 10th October when David Gearing will be talking to us about some women artists of the 17th century.

Lynne Vick, Convenor

Dog Walking



Dog Walking Group

We are currently meeting on Tuesdays at 1030 as this day suits the majority of us. Walks this month have been Bakers Park, Dawlish Countryside Park and through the woods down to Cofton for coffee,

Teignmouth Beach and East Cliff Park. Dogs still need to be walked whatever the weather but owing to people being away on holiday just two of us met in the playing field next to the Sports Centre last Tuesday.

Contact enquiries if you wish to be added to the group or just come along and join us.

Kate McCarthy

French Conversation

The French group met only once in September as there weren't enough of us on one occasion.

We continued our listening to a French song and heard Françoise Hardy's "Mon amie la rose" which is a sweet but sad song / poem about love, loss and death. Here's a photo of her in 1964 which is when the record was released .

Our topic was "What's the bravest thing you've ever done" and only a couple had offerings . One had very bravely located to Australia leaving behind family and friends . I think generally change whether chosen or forced upon us was a shared experience .

As ever we talked about the ailments of age!

Gardens and Gateaux Group Visit 15 September 2023

What a treasure we have in Forde Abbey and their wonderful gardens! Our coach party enjoyed a rewarding visit to explore this amazing venue.

First, a bit of history – Forde Abby monastery flourished for 400 hundred years before King Henry VIII decided to help himself to the riches of the religious establishments in 1539. After a long period of neglect it was purchased by the Lyme

Regis M.P. Edmund Prideaux in 1649 to make it into his grand home.

Whilst Forde Abbey experienced modification and additions throughout the centuries, it is still possible to recognise some of the original Cistercian elements like the Undercroft, which now houses the café. Several of our group enjoyed refreshments here and admired the complexities of the distinctive multi arched ceiling.

Those of us who chose to explore the house were duly impressed by the richness of the interior, like the substantial wooden Jacobean staircase, the intricate plaster ceilings, the Great Hall and, my personal favourite – the Cloisters; bathed in sunshine the panels of Bath stone light up and give a tranquil golden warmth while green palms line the walk.

Outside, we were dazzled by the colourful beds full of bright autumn flowers – dahlias, orange Mexican sunflowers, salvias humming with bees. Despite the vegetable garden attracting an enormous number of cabbage white butterflies, there appeared to be remarkably little damage to the brassica plants which will be used in the café dishes later in the year along with the many varieties of ripening pumpkins and squashes



At the front of the house people gathered to witness the turning on of one of the highest powered fountains in the UK; it rose gracefully to around 6ft, hovering tantalizingly before soaring up to 160ft amid gasps of delight from the audience. Three members of our Gardens and Gateaux group kindly submitted to being photographed in front of this spectacular sight.

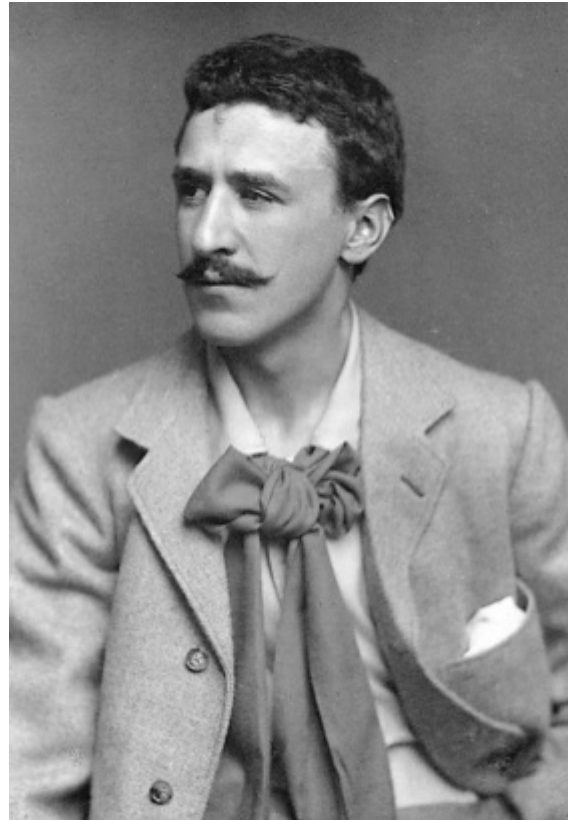


We were blessed with a beautiful afternoon to explore the many areas of the gardens and arboretum. I was happy to sit on a swing seat and admire the mix of cosmos and wild flowers gently waving in the spiral garden before a quick trip around the temptations of the plant nursery and shop until it was time to return to the coach load of contented visitors.

Jenny Lancaster
Convenor

Great Lives

Charles Rennie Mackintosh (1868-1928)



Nine of us met on 22 September, when Rosemary talked to us about the life of Charles Rennie Mackintosh, Scottish architect, designer and artist. He was born in Glasgow, the 4th of eleven children, and was the only one who showed such artistic talent.

Charles Rennie Mackintosh was apprenticed as an architect and attended Glasgow School of Art in the evenings, and there he met his future wife Margaret Macdonald, her sister and James Herbert McNair. They became known as the "Glasgow Four" and their style was known as the "Glasgow Style".

Some of his most famous architectural designs were The Hill House (now owned by the National Trust for Scotland) and the Willow Tearooms.

Charles Rennie Mackintosh later became disillusioned with architecture and concentrated more on painting. He moved to



Suffolk but in 1915 during World War I he was suspected of being a German spy and briefly arrested. This resulted in his work losing popularity. He died aged 60 of cancer of the tongue and like many great artists his work gained greatly in acclaim in the decades following his death.

As we were all acquainted with some aspects of his work, Rosemary's interesting talk led to much discussion about his iconic style and the work of similar artists of the time.

Our next Great Lives meeting will be on Friday 27 October when David will be talking to us about Ida Lupino.

Literature

The Racketeer by John Grisham

The Racketeer is an intricately plotted book on the themes of a miscarriage of justice and the desire for revenge.

It is related in the first person by former attorney Malcolm Bannister who, whilst working for a law firm, got tricked into involvement in a money laundering scheme on behalf of what he thought was a legitimate company. By the time he realised it was too late to extricate himself. The criminals, adept in these activities, had covered their tracks. Malcolm, it is relevant to point out, an African American was

subject to the full force of the law and the FBI threw the book at him.

Sentenced to 10 years in a federal prison, he lost his liberty, his career, wife and son, the firm who employed him are implicated and his morally upright father holds him in contempt.

He comes up with a plan to get his own back by cooperating with the FBI in solving the murder of a judge and his secretary and in return obtain a new life with reward money, witness protection and a new appearance after plastic surgery.

Malcolm had other agendas and John Grisham kept us guessing throughout the many twists and turns in his book.

The use of the first person narrative gave us an immediate connection with the main protagonist though one of the group felt the characters were a bit one-dimensional and found the book rather flat. Without wishing to give the plot away, there was a suggestion from another reader that greed got in the way.

John Grisham's knowledge of the law and the penal system are clearly demonstrated in the Racketeer as is sympathy for the underdog taking on powerful corrupt forces which added to our appreciation and enjoyment of the book.

Most of the group were familiar with John Grisham through screen adaptations but we thought that, judging by this book, we would read him again.

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Lunch Club



Our first u3a lunch club was attended by eighteen members in the " Sticky Rice " venue/ restaurant opposite the Co-Op. for September 19th 2023.

All the set lunch and the a la carte choices were passed to the chef and head manager.

The lunch arrangement and food choices turned out successfully.

I am grateful to all u3a attendees who participated today, because the event would not have otherwise been possible. Everybody interacted cordially with each other, and it was a pleasure for me to meet you all as it was for you all to meet each other. At our first gathering, we openly discussed other venues for future luncheons.

Here are some reviews from members. "I really enjoyed my first u3a lunch at Sticky Rice. The lunch was well organised by the convenor, my food was delicious and I enjoyed the company. I will be joining this group again." - Meryl

"I applaud your organisational skill, your patience and the effort to make the luncheon a great success." - Les

"About 18 of us met for the first Lunch Club at Sticky Rice in Dawlish. There was a good selection of dishes - mainly Thai, and we could choose between a la Carte or a set meal. The food was excellent and the staff efficient and friendly. It was so all well organised by Khim-Sim and I enjoyed meeting up with old friends and new. A really good addition to the u3a interest groups" - Jill

October 17th u3a Lunch Announcement:

It is important to support our local Dawlish restaurant so for our u3a lunch will be on October 17th at 12.30 pm.

We will go to Gurkha Dawlish. It is a Nepalese and Indian Restaurant.

Please let me know if you want to come to Gurkha Dawlish by contacting me by October 5th via enquiries@u3a.dawlish.info

Venue:

Gurkha Dawlish

30 Park Road Dawlish EX7 9LJ

Khim Sim Tan-Mephram

Convenor

Quiz Group

Another two quizzes were held in September and covered a range of subjects.

On the 18th the topics covered, as well as the usual General Knowledge round, were The foods they ate, the drinks they drunk, True or False, Famous Ancient Romans, Ages and Eras. The final round focused on Stadiums around the world.

The participant's scores revealed a good knowledge of both the foods they ate and ages and eras. First time I think that we have had a joint top subject!

The outcome also clearly showed that Famous Ancient Romans was not their

strong point. Reminds me of the sketch in Monty Python 'What have the Romans ever done for us Reg?' ..All good fun though!

Taking a question from each round, I wonder if you would have known that:-

In 2016 the 100th birthday of Roald Dahl was marked with a dictionary of his words and a parade through the streets of Cardiff.

Ambrosia was the food of the Greek Gods.

In New York city approximately 1,600 people are bitten by other human beings each year.

Scipio Africanus was the General who crushed Carthage in the 2nd Punic war.

The Bronze age was followed by the Iron age.

The FNB stadium is located in Johannesburg.

The following week, as well as the normal General Knowledge round, the questions focused around the themes of Israel, National founders, Current monarchies, Singers who went solo and People who died young. One of the group suggested it was a weird medley of topics! Well, would you have answered the following questions correctly?

What is the name of Israel's national intelligence agency?

In the Harry Potter stories what was the name of the goblin run wizard's bank?

Which country did Cyrus the Great found?

King Philippe is the present monarch of which country?

Which group did George Michael sing with before going solo?

Who died young in a car accident in California in 1955 ?

It was the first time in ages that we had three 10 out of 10 scores and the quizzers excelled themselves when it came to 'The people who died young'. However it was a

case of could do better when it came to the Current Monarchies round.

Our October group meetings will be held on Mondays 9th and 30th.

Graham Carey

Strollers Social Walking Group

The Strollers decided this month, to avoid the possibility of heat exhaustion, to take it very easily indeed, and caught the bus to Babbacombe. From here it's possible to descend to Oddicombe beach, or join the coast path for an invigorating hike, but we did neither, preferring to go and admire the dahlias in the Tessier Gardens. We followed



that with an amble along Babbacombe Downs. It was a glorious afternoon, the views were superb, and the chalk cliffs at Beer were clear on the horizon. That reminded us of something, and fearing dehydration we spent the next hour resting in the pub gardens, before leaving to return home. A thoroughly enjoyable afternoon, spoiled in the knowledge that, unlike the tourists, we could do it again any time we wanted.

Tea and Chat

We meet in the Riverside Centre next to the Manor House, on the first Thursday of the month from 2 – 4pm. Come along for a friendly chat or if you fancy a board game, bring one along. Most Committee members are present and as many Convenors as possible. New members and those thinking about joining are strongly encouraged to come along to talk to Convenors and group members about any interest group they may be interested in trying.

No need to book a place just turn up on the day.

Kate McCarthy & Michael Heyden
Convenors

Theatre

From October the group will meet at Tea and Chat on the first Thursday of the month. In September a group of us went to see Saving Grace screened at Shaftsbury for Teignmouth Film Club. Tea and cake was very welcome prior to the screening. This is an old time favourite with a feel good factor and the Theatre was full.

We are currently taking bookings for The Cripple of Inishmann for Saturday night 7th October. If you are thinking of going and you don't want to be on your own, email enquiries and I will let you know where we are sitting.

Kate McCarthy
Convenor



Christmas Festivities

The first meeting of the new Committee focused on the really important matters of life: how to celebrate Christmas!

New committee member and Lunch Club convenor Khim Sim reports that 40 members have now signed up for the Christmas Lunch at the Langstone Cliff Hotel on Tuesday 19th December. This is a great response!

The booking for Langstone Cliff Hotel Christmas lunch is now closed.

Those with a close eye on their diaries will have seen that this lunch is the day after our scheduled monthly meeting. Now that we know that a large proportion of our members will be lunching together, we have decided that this event will take the place of our scheduled monthly meeting and so we will not meet on Monday

18th December. However, for those who would like to have another occasion to come together to prepare for the festive season, the regular Tea and Chat gathering on Thursday 7th December will have a Christmas flavour, probably including mince pies and mulled wine. As well as a chance to be with friends and to meet new people, there will be opportunities to play board games and other activities.

Tea drinkers and chatters meet from 2pm in the Riverside at the Manor House. Further information can be found on this link [Tea & Chat - Dawlish & District u3a](#).

John Vick

Contact us:

You are invited to send us all your group news and updates.

Newsletter Editor: Please contact Roz Summerton via newsletter@u3a.dawlish.info.

Webmasters: Please contact Dave and Miggie Pickton via webmaster@u3a.dawlish.info

Want to know more about Dawlish & District u3a? Check out our website: u3a.dawlish.info.