

NEWSLETTER – April 2021

THE BLUEBELLS HAVE ARRIVED AND WE'RE BREAKING OUT TOO!

It hasn't taken our groups long to get going again. Members are already walking, cycling and playing croquet– all being very careful to keep to current rules and regulations. We always make sure we keep up to date with those. Our walking photographers will probably be making the most of the bluebells, and we're looking forward to seeing some of their photographs on our Facebook page too.

We're excited about three new outdoor activities we have in the planning – rounders, walking netball and walking football. Thank you to everyone who expressed an interest in taking part via our online survey. We're hoping to start off in our local parks, so look out for further information on our website and Facebook page.

There's plenty going on indoors too

Carefully controlled indoor exercise is starting up again as well, with activities such as ballroom dancing, line dancing, badminton and table tennis expecting to resume next month. Technology has enabled us to do far more indoors during lockdown of course, especially in our creative and learning groups. Arts, crafts, bridge, science & technology, sewing, flower arranging, languages, history and music carry on – to name but a few!

You don't need to be online to take part in the fun

Over the past year, many of us have kept in touch using technology, others haven't wanted to or have been unable to, and some of us, a little more house-bound, have welcomed it. So going forward we'll continue to plan to include everyone and to keep us all in touch with each other.

Like many organisations, we're likely to continue with a mix of online and face to face activities. First thoughts are having informal get-togethers of groups with similar interests, such as sewing, arts, dancing, languages, and literature perhaps. We are also thinking about having informal 'picnics in the park' around Basingstoke this summer, to give all the members in each area an opportunity to start meeting up again! Any comments, thoughts or ideas you have about this will be very welcome.

Your committee

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Ian Stimpson	Committee member	
Marie White	Co-opted member	

Supported by:

Brenda Austin Minutes secretary

Please send any general enquiries to:

basingstokeu3aenquiries@gmail.com

Monthly meetings

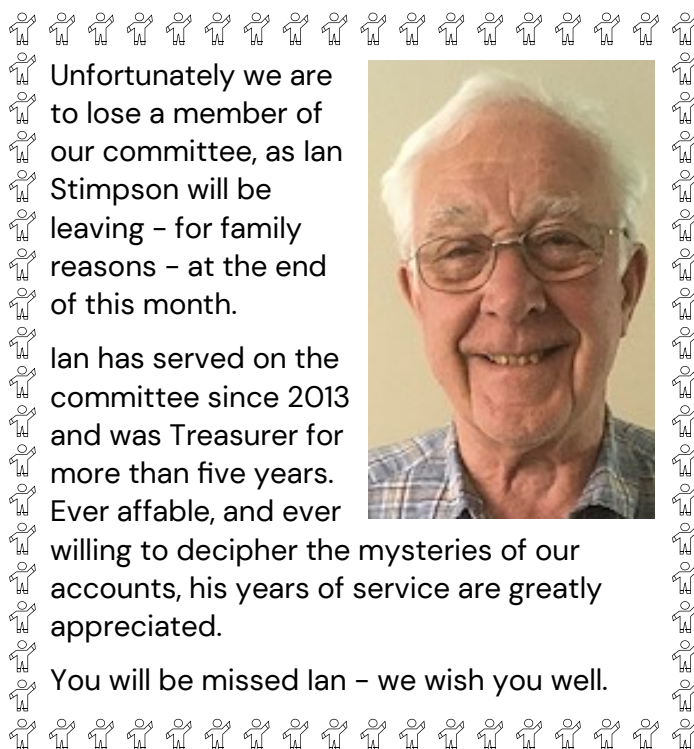
There are 'two for the price of one' this month!

Starting at 2pm on Wednesday 14 April, Guy Caplin will give a presentation about Percy Hobart, a forward-thinking career soldier who was Britain's foremost tank commander during the 1920s and 30s. Despite being thrown out of the British Army twice for his unconventional views, he was recalled and became one of the unsung heroes behind D-Day.

We are also able to offer the opportunity to catch another Mirthy talk, starting at the unusual time for us of 11 a.m., on Wednesday, 21 April. This is a talk that the Overton u3a has kindly offered to share with us. The title of the talk is *Cascade Gardens - Jungle to Paradise*.

It may be of particular interest to members of our Meditation Group.

After that, our next monthly meeting will be a Mirthy talk on the *Life of Grace Kelly*, starting at 2 p.m. on Wednesday, 12 May. The talk planned for June and announced last month has been cancelled - news of what is replacing it will follow as soon as possible.



Unfortunately we are to lose a member of our committee, as Ian Stimpson will be leaving - for family reasons - at the end of this month.

Ian has served on the committee since 2013 and was Treasurer for more than five years.

Ever affable, and ever willing to decipher the mysteries of our accounts, his years of service are greatly appreciated.

You will be missed Ian - we wish you well.

Philosophy group

This small, friendly group would love to welcome new members. In our last (Zoom) meeting we discussed the treatment of non-human animals. Topics are agreed from meeting to meeting, so why not join us and share in the exchange of views? Details can be found on the website.

Forthcoming group meetings on Zoom

Some of our Group Convenors have announced topics for upcoming Zoom meetings. This information has been added to their pages on [our website](#) but a summary of the topics is also shown below in case any are of interest.

Additions to this list are always welcome!

If you would like to attend a Zoom meeting for a particular topic but you're not a member of that group, just [send us an email](#) saying which meeting you would like to attend. We will forward your email to the Group Convenor concerned and you will receive an invitation.

Group	Topic	Date	Time
Environment and Us	Flooding, causes and possible solutions - Margaret Hayes	5 May	14:00 - 16:00
	Rewilding, especially forests and trees	2 June	14:00 - 16:00
	A Virtual Tour - Margaret Hayes	7 July	14:00 - 16:00
Literature	<i>The Enchanted April</i> - Elizabeth Von Arnun	22 April	15:30 - 16:45
	<i>The Children Act</i> - Ian McEwan	27 May	15:30 - 16:45
	<i>Where Angels Fear to Tread</i> - E.M. Forster	24 June	15:30 - 16:45
	<i>The Fall</i> - Albert Camus	22 July	15:30 - 16:45
Science and technology	How to arrange your life effectively	4 May	10:00 - 12:00
	Why IT data projects fail	1 June	10:00 - 12:00

Free digital training for u3a members

u3a nationally have partnered with Barclays Digital Eagles to offer a week of digital training events for u3a members.

The first week of sessions starts on 19 April and each one lasts 90 minutes. The sessions are all free and being run specifically for u3a members, helping them to become digitally confident. The programme includes the following topics and you can join whichever ones you wish:

- Internet basics
- Digital safety
- Online entertainment
- Alternative ways to bank
- An introduction to Digital Wings

There is a maximum of 50 attendees per session but further sessions will be arranged as demand dictates.

For further details and to register for the sessions that interest you (just click on their links), go to:

www.u3a.org.uk/events/online-events/barclays-digital-eagles

Third Age Trust AGM on 26th August 2021

The 38th Annual General Meeting of the Third Age Trust will be held as a hybrid meeting, allowing delegates to attend in person (subject to government restrictions in place at the time) or online, on Thursday 26th August, commencing at 11.15.



We are pleased to say that details about our u3a – including a contact telephone number and email address, our website address and the address of our Facebook page – are now held by Basingstoke Voluntary Action and available via www.bvaction.org.uk.

Creative writing success

Congratulations to the members of our Creative Writing Group, who had recent success in some local competitions.

Bramley

Mary Armitage won first place for poetry on a Christmas theme. We are delighted to present her poem below now, even if we are in April!

Basingstoke

Between members the group secured the following positions:

- First places – Flash fiction (local theme) and letter writing
- Second place – Short story writing
- Third places – Article writing and letter writing

There were many other commendations for our entries too – well done to all concerned.

Crazy Christmas

At number 2 on Christmas Day
they did some crazy things
They opened sacks, the adults too
Decorated the turkey with a tattoo
They stuck a Santa in the loo!
They did some crazy things

At number 3 on Boxing Day
they did some crazy things
They all went swimming in the sea,
They had spaghetti hoops for tea,
They played Squeak Piggy on every knee
They did some crazy things

At number 4 on New Years Eve
they did some crazy things
They all got very very drunk
All vowed to declutter junk
They all tried to sleep in one bunk
They did some crazy things

At number 5 on New Years Day
all was very quiet
The decorations had been put away
No games or puzzles did they play
They'd gone to Grandma's for the day!
They did some crazy things!

Mary Armitage

Needles and Pins

The Needles and Pins group met via Zoom on Good Friday.



We all dressed in an Easter theme including Easter bonnets, earrings, necklaces, yellow jumpers and spring flowers.

We also had a hot cross bun with our coffee.

As usual our conversation covered a range of topics, including knitting of course. Val showed us some Maundy money which had been presented to her uncle by the Queen.

Our masterclass demonstrated how to keep the excess wool tidy when knitting Fair Isle jumpers.

We're currently knitting nests, dressed dolls, twiddle muffs, blankets and hat, scarf and mitten sets for a range of local and national charities.

New members are always welcome.

Janet Field

Recycle your medicine blister packets

Medicine blister packets can now be recycled at participating pharmacy drop-off points.

The *Little Packs, Big Impact* recycling initiative allows you to recycle any empty prescription and over-the-counter medicine blister packets, simply and freely, by dropping them in dedicated bins the next time you visit a participating branch of Superdrug or an independent pharmacy which participates in the scheme.

Superdrug in Festival Place is our local collection point – just take your clean and empty packets to the pharmacy counter.

Shopping online

We are pleased to report that Amazon has donated £15.27 to our u3a as a result of AmazonSmile programme activity during the final quarter of last year.

If you shop online using Amazon, please consider doing so via AmazonSmile at

<https://smile.amazon.co.uk/ch/1086263-0>

and **Amazon will donate to us at no cost to you.**

AmazonSmile is also available in the Amazon Shopping app to all AmazonSmile customers using an iPhone or Android phone. Once you have activated AmazonSmile in the app, every eligible purchase will automatically generate a donation for us. Go to "Programmes and Features" in your app's menu to activate AmazonSmile.

Thank you for your support.

For group convenors

Please remember you can use our Facebook page to promote your group to potential members. If you are not on Facebook yourself, draft what you want to say, attach a picture or two if you so wish, and email it to:

basingstokeu3aenquiries@gmail.com

We will take care of the rest.

DON'T FORGET!

You can stay in touch by emailing basingstokeu3aenquiries@gmail.com

checking on our website at

www.basingstokeu3a.org

joining in with us on Facebook at

www.facebook.com/Basingstokeu3a

or, if you're not online, ring 07787 520281