

Southend U3A

Charity No. 1030682

Visit our website: <https://southend-on-sea.u3asite.uk>



Southend-on-Sea
U3A 2011

Newsletter

Winter
2025

❑ Each U3A is essentially a co-operative of men and women who meet to share common interests and a desire to learn for its own sake

Welcome Back!

Hello Everyone!

I hope you all enjoyed your Festive Season and here's wishing you a happy and prosperous 2025. Our Christmas Lunch on 3rd December was attended by 35 people and the feedback I received was unanimously positive re the meal and atmosphere! So GOOD JOB to all who organised and attended.

Thanks to Kay and Anne who organised the raffle (which raised £61) and to those who supplied prizes.

Thanks also to Betty Boote who staunchly organises BOTH our Christmas and Summer Lunches every year!

Our new website has been up and running for several months now and the old web address will no longer forward enquires to the new one so please note the new URL:- (with hyphens!)

<https://southend-on-sea.u3asite.uk>

in 2024 we had to take the decision, due to the increased costs of speakers, to only engage paid speakers on two of our four monthly meetings. The other two would have to be filled by an appeal to our Group Leaders and members to do talks/presentations to our members.

The response to this has been excellent and I would like to sincerely thank all members and Group Leaders who have offered to do presentations for us.

Only May 20 and June 24th still need to be filled at the time of writing so please talk with your groups and see what you can come up with. Please let either myself or Barbara Cohen know if you are able to do one of these dates.

Alan Stevenson, Chair, U3A Southend-on-Sea.

Art Appreciation Group

Still a very keen but small group. As Art Appreciation Group 1 has stopped meeting, 2 of their members have joined our group and we are now just known as Art Appreciation. We are continuing with our research of Artists alphabetically, and we are now looking at Artists with surnames beginning with N and O. Some letters are more difficult than others of course.

We are gathering paintings for our display board in March. We hope you will enjoy looking at our choices.

As soon as we know the theme for this years Open Day we will start working on that.

We have got space for any members who are interested in Art.

Diane Silverston

Classics at home Group

The Classics at Home group continues to meet on the second Wednesday of the month, with a pretty consistent turnout.

There are no vacancies at present but a waiting list is available.

John Hanks

Meetings and study groups

Meetings of Southend U3A are held each Tuesday at Westcliff Free Church in London Rd, Westcliff. The church is near Westcliff Library, on the corner of Ronald Park Avenue.



Doors open at 2pm, notices are read at 2:20pm, listen to our speakers from 2:30pm. Study groups meet at leader's homes, the church and other venues. Details available at Tuesday meetings on request.

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Your Seaside U3A

Knit and Natter Group

A very lively group who love to natter but do get the knitting done as well.

Still knitting blankets (now over 170. Fortunately we have found a place to donate them to.) Just lately we have had a large amount of wool donated to us . . . so off we go.

Members continue to knit things for the family and friends; at present some beautiful jumpers and cardigans are being produced.

Chris knitted characters for the photograph for her Christmas cards - well done.

We are planning to knit penguins to fit in with Huddle On Sea Southend's theme this year. Also as soon as we know the theme for this year's Open Day we will get busy knitting.

These caused a lot of chatter, many laughs and a few calls for HELP! Some things seem to work better than others but we hope to be able to put on a good show.

We do have space for new members.

Diane Silverston

Discussion Group

We have discussed many subjects that affect our local area, such as:

Pot holes, (strangely enough they have just resurfaced my road . . . at last!),

Building work on properties that have been a landmark for some time,

Dentist and Doctors surgeries,

Bus services and their changes and car parking.

These subjects don't seem to be resolved and many need urgent attention.

We will continue to be looking at our local news and the theme for this year's Open Day.

Room for more members. **Diane Silverston**

Photography Group

We meet on the first Thursday of the month at Di Silverston's house from 10.30 to 12.00.

Each month we set a subject and display these photographs on the board at the back of the hall at the Tuesday meetings.

Subject for:

October was Fountains

November was Green

December was Holidays in the UK

If you would like to join us, please contact me and if we have space you would be most welcome.

Anne Sorrell

Whist Group

The Whist group has five members, but there is plenty of room for new members.

We play in a very relaxed manner and simply count the highest scoring woman and man at the end of each meeting for fun, but there is no 'League Table' or anything!

We meet on the **third Monday** of the month (except for the August break and occasional Bank Holidays) at the Novel Coffee Shop in Southend between 14:00 and 16:00 pm. There is no charge for use of the very nice room - we are just expected to buy a coffee and/or cake to contribute towards the MENCAP Charity who run the shop. So, a nice, social meeting – *with cake!*

Contact Alan Stevenson

Easy Listening Group

Again a small group who love listening to music. We have 2 members who have come along and joined us and enjoy being involved in our programmes.

We always have a good mixture of the Easy Listening music, often finding one we sort of knew but we weren't sure, one that is an old favourite or perhaps one that is completely new.

A lovely way to spend an afternoon with good music and lovely company.

Everyone bring their choice of CDs. We have room for more members. **Diane Silverston**

Bridge Group

Our Bridge Group of six members is now meeting on the 4th Thursday of the month at the same time of 10:30am –12:3pm.

We are an extremely informal group who meet mainly for fun and do not use any formal 'protocol' (e.g. ACOL) bidding process – just the point-count and make up of your hand, but we have great fun trying to 'make our bids'!

We meet at a member's house - who generously provides tea and coffee (we provide the biscuits and cakes!)

There is room for 1 or 2 more members.

Contact Alan Stevenson

Wine Group 1

How many new wines did you taste over the festive season, or did you stay with the old favourites?

Squealing Pig, Mud Hut, Bowler and Brolly, we try to taste new wines at each of our meetings but we did open a bottle of 'Black Tower' (a name from the past) and it scored very well on our tasting sheets.

Mateus Rose was another that was received well, and agreed good for the BBQ.

In October we welcomed a new temporary member to our group and it was good to have some fresh views on our subject, unfortunately we will revert back to 6 in April when she departs the area.

We had hoped last year to visit some of the local wineries, but with them being in the country and off the track, transport has been a bit of a problem, especially as we would want to sample the wines. (Maybe this year).

For those interested, a new vineyard called Missing Gate, has expanded in Creephedge Lane opposite Hyde Hall with Tasting and a Shop. If you do get a chance to visit, please let us know and share your views. On our tasting sheet it lists Luscious and Sexy as a description for taste and after ten years we are still hunting for that wine.

If you should find one, please let us know and we would be pleased to try it.

Although day time TV is not recommended, catchup with Alan Titchmarsh can give some reasonable ideas for wines, along with other cooking programs, (it's good to compare their views).

So a glass of wine with friends is a great way pass a couple of hours, and why not form another small group. Enjoy your wines.

Cheers, Mick Horner

Book Exchange Group

We are a very small group who enjoy meeting to discuss books we have read. We keep hoping other members might join us.

Our borrow box works well. We have all tried new authors and books during this year.

Once again we have had to cancel a couple of meetings due to members other commitments.

Spaces for other members who enjoy reading.

Diane Silverston

History/Military History Group

The History/Military History Group is still full regarding membership. It may be the case that if there are enough people, not currently members of the group, that show an interest in the subject, another group might be formed. Meetings are always interesting, lively and above all, fun. The end of every meeting is like opening a mystery parcel. No one knows their next assignment until a lucky dip bowl is passed around and a piece of paper reveals all. It could be an American Civil War battle, a Russian Czar or a Chinese Dynasty. There must be a lot people who attend Tuesday meetings who have good History brains as a History quiz was put on a board at the back of the hall and only 3 people asked me for answers. Who knows?

I will be giving a presentation at the Tuesday meeting on 25th March regarding the Zulu War.

Wally Bones

Canasta 2 Group

We meet on the second Thursday afternoon each month at my house, from 2 until 4.

We all enjoy the game, but it is also a social meeting. We have a cup of tea/coffee and biscuits.

Canasta can be played by varying numbers of players.

If you would like to join us, please contact me, you will be very welcome.

If you have never played before, come along and see if think you would like to learn. **Anne Sorrell**

Writing For Fun Group

The group is still going strong with 8 members.

Our system is simple. Each month a suggested title is given to prompt a short story, which can be anything from flash fiction to 1000/2000 words.

We call ourselves Writing For Fun because we do not instruct, there are no projects to do or lessons to learn, we write purely for the pleasure of writing a story, enjoying reading it out to the group and enjoying listening to the stories of the rest of the group.

Over the past few months we have written about: 'Good luck'/Bad luck', 'Not a lot of people know' and 'Devil may care'.

We welcome Paul to the group and we hope he enjoys our scribbling.

Pete Norman

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Your Seaside U3A

Board Games Group

Our very sociable group meets at my house on the 4th Wednesday of the month between 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. Some of us meet beforehand for lunch and a chat at 1 p.m. (bring your own lunch!)

We play the usual board games, e.g. Scrabble, Yahtzee, Rummikub, Outburst and Articulate, but we have also been enjoying several different games brought along by members.

Sometimes we play in teams, sometimes solo, but always competitively!

At the moment our group is full, but as we've had a few enquiries, I wonder if anyone would like to form and host Board Games 2

Chris Hey

Computer

I'm always willing to help anybody out with computer problems, but I'm by no means an expert! However, I'm always on hand to help with things like making the most of your digital photos by downloading them and making slide shows – with music or without – or making them into a photo book.

I'm afraid I'm not familiar with Apple, but do have a good knowledge of anything Microsoft.

Chris Hey

Weekenders Group

Unfortunately we still have not managed to start up our outings yet {my fault}. Fingers crossed for this year...

Watch this space.

Diane Silverston

Wine Group 2

The group are still enjoying discovering or tasting new wines.

In November re re-visited a local wine bar and had a very enjoyable pre-Christmas evening trying Portuguese wines with delicious charcutier and cheese platters supplied by the wine bar.

In January we decided to have a late Christmas meal and had a lovely evening at Spaghetti Junction.

Kay Odey

Walking Group

Hi everyone. Our group continues to be well supported. Despite the heavy frost and being very cold, we had a lovely walk in January at East Beach, followed by coffee at the cafe.

We have a 'town walk' this month meeting at the Southend bus station and walking to Chalkwell Park.

Future walks we are planning include a trip to London and hopefully Hanningfield reservoir. We are a friendly chatty group and new members are always welcome.

Our walks are general between 3 and 5 miles.

Jenny and Joan

Arts and Crafts Group

Our lively group continues to try new skills and improve on old skills. We have tried new ideas and will be showing photographs of them on our board in May, we hope you find them interesting. Once we know the Open Day theme for this year we will start our plans for that. This has caused much discussion and laughs.

We do have space if any member is interested in joining us.

Diane Silverston

The Thursday Cosy Book Club

Come and join our friendly book group. We meet on the third Thursday of the month at 10.30 am. We have coffee and the odd biscuit ... and we discuss books. We read whatever book we choose. That way we discover new authors from each other.

Yvonne McHugh

Gardening Group

A very eventful year, with enjoyable visits to our members' impressive gardens, a day out to Hyde Hall and we even visited an allotment.

Finished the year with a gardening fun-based quiz and some Christmas fare.

A small but friendly group, we have room for more.

We are hoping to plan more trips for 2025.

Howard Gale

These are your committee members

Chair: Alan Stevenson, **Vice-Chair:** Lois McClory, **Business Secretary:** Mick Allen, **Treasurer:** Anne Sorrell, **Membership Sec:** Mike Lamb, **Group Coordinator:** Diane Silverston, **Reception Desk:** Kay Odey, **Tech & Banner Team:** Wally Bones, **Programme Co-ordinator:** Barbara Cohen, **Meet & Greet:** Jo Hedley, **Newsletter Editor:** Pete Norman, **Summer/Christmas lunches:** Betty Boote

Anything to share? News, photos or ideas for the Newsletter? then please contact: **Pete Norman**
The next Newsletter is due in May 2025