

The Windmill

Eastbourne & Wealden u3a

Charity No. 1184226

Issue 109

July – September 2026

AGM Tuesday 7th July 2026 at 2.00 pm at VBC, Eldon Road.

Followed by talk by Sharon Wright entitled “Sex, Scandal and Mrs Sage.
The first female balloonist”.

After many years Sylvia James and I are stepping down from the committee. Sharon Phillips, Membership Secretary and Groups Coordinator, is also relinquishing both roles. I wish to record my thanks to them and the committee, both past and present, for all their hard work and help over the years. Sylvia and Sharon will continue to run their groups and I will continue as Editor of The Windmill. *By John Riley*

Subject to formal approval at the AGM the new committee will comprise:

Chair: Mike Gordon (see p.2).

Treasurer: Catriona Sheen.

Secretary: Karen Newing.

Membership Secretary: Janice Barnby.

Groups Coordinator: Angela Waite.

Web Manager: Norman Brown.

Committee Members: Gwenda Purvis and Maxine Smith.

WE STILL NEED A VICE CHAIR



**The Photography
Group “Photo of the
Month” by Peter
Dunford taken on a
recent photo shoot
outing to Batemans.
The group has
vacancies. See p.8.**

From the New Chair

Mike Gordon

I'm a "Bodger".

That is not to say I bodge things. I try not to make or repair something in a clumsy, makeshift, or unskilful way.

Traditionally, a "bodger" is a woodland woodturner who specialises in working with green (freshly felled, unseasoned) wood. Historically, these were itinerant craftsmen who set up temporary shelters deep in the woods to turn chair legs and spindles on a pole-lathe, selling their parts to furniture factories.



After taking early retirement from a very stressful job of teaching Craft Design Technology for eighteen years, I developed my passion for green wood working and working with trees. Generally, we only use seasoned wood when it is appropriate for specific purposes.

My main expertise is with spindle turning on a pole-lathe, which I have been lucky enough to put to good use locally and around the country. Travels to Uganda and Lithuania have offered the craft in those countries. Helping young Ugandans to become self-sufficient is probably my proudest achievement.

I am still active in green wood working but not aiming to earn money, just for enjoyment and for passing on my skills and knowledge to others. My overall interest also includes blacksmithing to make some of my own tools, leather working which might include covers for sharp knives and tools, spoon carving and bowl carving in green wood.

I am also active with a power lathe for turning more delicate and decorative items.

I am a local lad from Polegate. My first job was at the Congress Theatre as a stage hand, including working in the 'Limes Box' putting spotlights on the performers. I tried several other jobs before enrolling on a teaching course at Shoreditch Teacher Training College in 1976.

Another passion of mine is the Isle of Man TT races. I also enjoy cooking and tend to start with raw ingredients rather than convenience food and have quite a reputation with my Bodger friends for 'high end camp cooking'.

I enjoy most music except punk, some 'screechy' opera and rap.

I am a hands-on person. I hope to be a hands-on Chair. It will be a new challenge. I hope not to bodge it.

Editor: John Riley

Submission date for the October to December issue is the 15th September.

Website: <https://eastbourne-wealden.u3asite.uk>

SPEAKER SECRETARY, Carolyn Brown

Have you heard a good speaker elsewhere? If so, please send details to Carolyn through the website contact page



July 7th AGM followed by

Sex, Scandal and Mrs Sage. The first female balloonist
by Sharon Wright

Sharon tells the *hilarious*, heroic saga of PR disasters, floppy gasbags and rude cartoons that dogged Letitia Sage's history-making London lift off in 1785 – and explodes the myth that she invented the Mile High Club (the truth is even saucier). If you missed Sharon at the Ashridge Circle in February, now is your chance.



AUGUST CREAM TEA

Tuesday 4th August at 3.00 pm
Langham Hotel, 43-49 Royal Parade.

Tickets: £11.50

**Buy your ticket at the July monthly meeting or
from Catriona by phone/text 07747 620699**

September 1st

The Suffragettes and the Suffragists - Votes for Women

by Melenie Gibson-Barton

A popular, thought-provoking talk. Originally commissioned for the centenary of Leigh WI. The term 'Suffragette' will always be associated with women's fight for the right to vote but this talk will present a much wider insight into the struggle, including the early, often overlooked, pioneers of women's rights.



October 6th

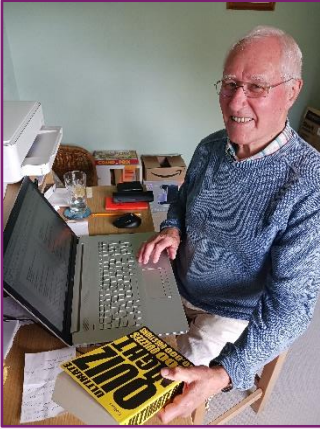
Memoirs of a Media Composer

with Paul Lewis

A whistle-stop tour through a busy TV composing career beginning in the '60s, the "Golden Age" of British TV, and lasting 47 years until Paul had outlived all his director and producer colleagues! Anecdotal and entertaining, with behind-the-scenes insights into the workings of TV in the pre-digital age, illustrated with CD extracts from TV themes.

Spring Quiz Night

Teams Quizzed on St. George's Day



Roger Lee
Quiz Master at work

Ten teams met at the Victoria Baptist church on St. George's day to participate in the u3a Spring Quiz. Colleagues from u3a Central, Meads and Hailsham were also well-represented. The quiz consisted of five rounds, each with 10 questions, with a maximum of 50 points on offer.

The first concerned *Henry VIII's Chancellor* and, already, several whispers could be heard around the room clamouring for *More (Thomas, that is)*. Soon after, the teams were asked to get their *teeth stuck into a full set of adult molars (32 in fact)*. Detective work was then needed to identify *Professor James Moriarty as the arch enemy of Sherlock Holmes*. Some believed, mistakenly, that he resided at *Thames House, Millbank, London SW1*, but that was, of course, *the home of MI5*.

A feast of questions

All the groups had brought their own nibbles to help revive and refresh their competitive instincts during the evening. They were no doubt encouraged to learn *that Napoli was still the home of pizza*, while those gourmets, who love a curry or two, easily digested that *Chennai* was previously known as *Madras*. Those of the Asiatic persuasion would also have been correct in assuming *the Chagos Islands* were in the *Indian ocean*, yet some were unable to *fathom* the depth, in places, as a mere *six feet*. Others were all at sea to find *that Canada was the country that contained the most lakes (around 878,000 in all)*. These are, of course, a continent away from *Robben Island*, located just off the coast of South Africa, *where Nelson Mandela was incarcerated in prison for 27 years*.

All to play for

Approaching the refreshment break it was an open contest with just one point separating four teams; the 'Misfits' and the 'Gamblers' were level on 23, with 'Kevin's Pals' and 'No Eye Deer' on 22. Apparently, 'We Thought It Was Bingo', had turned up on the wrong night but were, nevertheless, keen to join in



The 'Misfits' from l-r, Sue & Laurie Bishop, Denise Morgan-Smith & Keith Henderson.

and test their general knowledge. Other teams also hoping to make up the ground included 'Meads Must', the 'Georgians', 'Table 3 Anon', 'All Alone', and the 'Numbskulls'.

Questions slipped by and *It's Now or Never* was the last chance for *Elvis* fans to score with his *best-selling UK chart hit*. Crucially, time was also running out for *horologists* to *clock up* sufficient points as the minutes passed. The final round caused a few teams stumble on the run-in, particularly over the *number of grams* that make up *an ounce (28)*. So, it was left to the *artist George Stubbs*, best known for *his painting of horses* to see the 'Misfits' first past the post with a total of 39 points, beating the 'Gamblers' by a short head who were followed home in third place by Kevin's Pals'.

Sylvia's swansong



A special mention though, must go to Sylvia James, who, among her many other u3a duties, has worked tirelessly in organising the various quizzes down the years. She says this was her last. Her unflagging determination, persistence and enthusiasm have been a major factor in making them so successful and enjoyable.

In the immortal words from the *Rubaiyat of Omar Khayamm* – *the moving finger writes, and having writ moves on...*

Thanks again, Sylvia.

Report by Roger Lee

RAMBLING GROUP by Theresa Hancock



Our recent rambles have all been able to go ahead as the weather has been kind to us.

For April's ramble we bussed to Rottingdean from where I led the last walk that the late Heather Rudman led for us in June last year, to Ovingdean, Roedean and along the seafront. In May John and Marion took us on a route from the Seven Sisters Visitor Centre through Friston Forest to Westdean and all along the River Cuckmere to the sea.

In June Alan led us from Arlington Reservoir on a walk with lots of stiles, taking in Chalvington, Ripe and Selmeston on the way.

If interested, see website for full information

"Would I recognise her?"

By Denise Morgan-Smith

Reading Avril Robertson's article in The Windmill about penpals encouraged me to send in a little script.

In 1964 my friend Ann emigrated to Australia with her young family and was housed in a block of flats in Melbourne. In this same block was a fourteen year old girl, curious about Great Britain who was hoping to find a penpal. Ann gave her my name and so started, like Avril, a lifetime of letters.



Pauline and I still write letters although not quite so frequently these days. It is strange how our both been married twice and are both widows, who nursed our respective husbands through long and sad illnesses. Our jobs were mainly clerical and we both had daughters.

Pauline now lives in a seaside town in Australia and me in Eastbourne. It has been so interesting sharing our lives with each other across the world, with just a few photos to help frame the information we have. We know all about each other's family, and the trials and tribulations of ordinary life whether you are in Britain or thousands of miles away.

Unfortunately, I have not been able to get to Australia, but Pauline has been to Britain twice, and the first time I stood on Eastbourne Station awaiting her arrival was really exciting. Would I recognise her? Of course, and after a few minutes together it was as if we had always known each other – well I suppose we had but, in the flesh, it is different but she was really how I thought she'd be, and we got on like a house on fire. Her friend had come with her and the three of us went on a tour of the surrounding area as I proudly showed off our town and 1066 country. Busily chatting all the time, suddenly it was time to take them to the station to return to London.

We have used the internet for special occasion presents which has been exciting, ordering fresh flowers or chocolates to be delivered so far away. I am always excited when a letter with an Aussie stamp pops through the letterbox to read what Pauline has been up to since her last missive. Sixty two years of letters is friendship indeed.

Editor: Thank you Denise for this story. I would love to hear from anyone else who has a story to tell.

Spend a Day with the u3a

By Michael Jones

Activity/Study Day at the Birley Centre, Carlisle Road.

Thursday 22 October from 10.00 am to 4.00 pm



Organised by the East Sussex East (ESE) Network of ten neighbouring u3as, with volunteers from each participating u3a, the activity/study day is expected to include **two keynote speakers**, a lively mix of **interactive activities**, and plenty of chances to explore what the u3a has to offer in our area.

A Day Built Around Curiosity

This year's theme is **History**, interpreted in the broadest and most enjoyable way. Planned activities include **Traditional Pub Games** – A cheerful display and demonstration, including the ever-popular *Toad in the Hole*, **VR History Experience** – Step into the past with guided virtual-reality sessions, **Devonshire Quarter Walks** – Morning and afternoon walks led by local historian Kim Adams, uncovering the stories behind this distinctive cultural area, **Hands-on History** – Explore Rye Museum's loan boxes (WW2, Victorian objects, and more) with help from knowledgeable volunteers, **History Quiz** – A light-hearted challenge for anyone who enjoys testing their knowledge ... and more activities to be confirmed.

Two guest speakers—morning and afternoon—will anchor the day. Both will reflect the historical theme with engaging stories and fresh perspectives.

Tea, coffee, and biscuits will be available throughout the day and are included in the ticket price. Bring your own picnic or visit one of the nearby cafés and restaurants.

A Collaborative Effort

The aim is to showcase the breadth of learning, friendship, and fun that the u3a offers, and to welcome both long-standing members and those curious to find out more.

Tickets and Further Information

Ticket prices and further information will be issued as the programme is finalised.

MEANWHILE, RESERVE THE DATE. GET YOUR FRIENDS TO DO THE SAME.

THE NUMBER OF TICKETS PER u3a MAY BE LIMITED.

Proposed New Poetry Group

It's good to get out and meet others for company and shared interests.

A Poetry group will do this. After an initial meeting where you could bring your favourite poem, members would plan future themes to explore poets and poems. It would be a small group and members would be asked to bring copies, for each other, of the themes chosen. The themes often lead to a wide range of things to talk about when we have coffee or tea, that everyone can join in.

We would meet in my house in Willingdon for a relaxed afternoon.

If interested please contact me, Pat Brinson.

Social Weekenders

are going to the Hydro Hotel for afternoon tea on Sunday 19 July.

**If any members would like to go along, please contact Group Leader
Karen Newing for more details**



Photography Group

Until recently our Group was only able to accept a limited number of members due to restricted space at our meeting venue.

I am pleased to say we now have a new location which is a good deal larger. So, if anyone wishes to join us then please contact the Group Leader Norman Brown via the website.

Our Photography Group is friendly and informal who enjoy sharing our photographic efforts with each other. We set ourselves a little subject challenge each month and hold regular 'Hints and Tips' sessions where various photographic skills are explained.

There is no pre-requirement for any photographic skills.



The Humble Scone

by Roger Lee

The scone is such a humble bun
 A quite distinctive Sally Lunn
 Sweet or savoury to suit one's taste
 Devour at leisure not in haste
 They come in several shapes and sizes
 Their secret recipes winning prizes
 Plain are served with jam and cream
 Usually strawberry, the gourmet's dream
 Fruit are blessed with raisins sweet
 Date and apple, a special treat
 Cheese, still melting on the crown
 Rise in the oven golden brown

Spiced with pepper, sometimes herb
 To the connoisseur they are superb
 The word itself draws contention
 How to pronounce this Scot's invention
 The scrumptious cake provokes debate
 Whenever appearing on the plate
 Is it 'scoan' or is it scone?
 The argument will linger on
 Long after the last one has gone

FOR SALE £50 ono

Printer: HP LaserJet COLOUR printer model M254dw

Bought: June 2019. Not used since 2022.

Cost when new: £153.50.

Includes two compatible cartridges.

Bought by E & W u3a to print The Windmill but John prefers to use his inkjet printer.

Has now been replaced by a later model. For full specification see

[HP Color LaserJet Pro M254dw A4 Colour Laser Printer - T6B60A](https://www.hp.com/go/m254dw) .

For User Manual see <https://www.search-manual.com/hp-color-laserjet-pro-m254dw-laser-printer-246030-manual> .

If interested please contact Catriona.



Out and about

On safari

You may have seen in a recent u3a Matters magazine that the Stourbridge u3a has a Bus Safari group. They use public transport to explore destinations near and far.



Why has no one in our u3a come up with a similar idea?

We have the Brighton & Hove buses 12A and 12x running between Eastbourne and Brighton and the 28 bus going to Hailsham, Lewes and Brighton. We have Stagecoach buses 98 and 99 going to Herstmonceux, Bexhill and Hastings, and the 51 and 54 going to Uckfield and Tunbridge Wells.

There is a multitude of places to visit, all for free using our bus pass.

It just needs someone to take up the idea and to start a new group. A different member could organise each outing.

For help to start a new group talk to our new Groups Coordinator, Angie Waite, on 07974 648626.

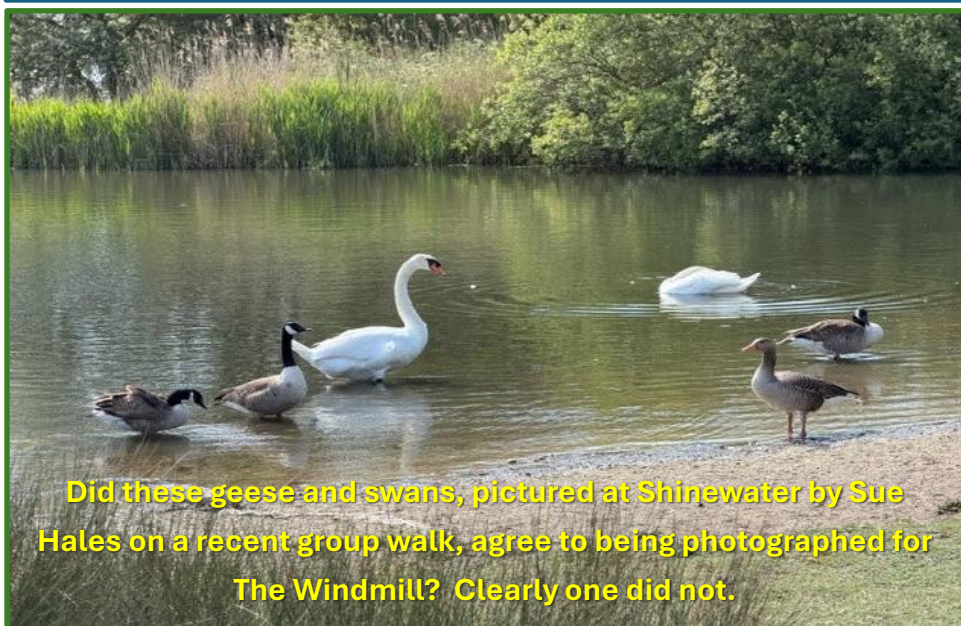


Langham Lunch Club.

May's speaker was John Young, ex BBC South reporter. The Theme was Royal Weddings then and now. His angle was from the reporting point of view, with interesting video examples.

The meal was excellent and we had the added bonus of John being seated at our table. A good time was had by all. *Group Leader: Sue Hales*

**The Theatre Films and Shows Group
went to Meads Village Hall on Easter
Good Friday to watch a comedy “The
Ballad of Wallis Island”**



**Did these geese and swans, pictured at Shinewater by Sue
Hales on a recent group walk, agree to being photographed for
The Windmill? Clearly one did not.**

GROUP CONTACTS, MEETING DAYS AND TIMES

Groups Co-ordinator: Angie Waite Email: angela_waite@hotmail.com

GROUP	GROUP LEADER	PHONE/EMAIL	MEETING DAY	TIME	VACANCIES
Breakfast Club	Karen Newing		1st Sun	10.00	Enquire
Canasta	Mick Garner		Every Fri	14.00	Enquire
Day Trippers	Sylvia James		Varies	Varies	Open to All
Dining	Sharon Phillips		3rd Fri	18.30	Open to All
Langham Hotel Lunches	Sue Hales		Alternates Tues & Thurs monthly	12.00 for 12.30	Enquire
Literature	Christine Neuss & Janet Harper		2nd Wed	14.00	Enquire
Luncheon Club	Mary Bradley		4th Tues	12.30	Enquire
Mah Jongg	Cheryl Bone		1st & 3rd Mon	10.00	Enquire
Music Makers	Ann & Ted Barden		2nd Thurs	10.00	Vacancies
Musicality	Bill Kipling		3rd Wed	14.00	Enquire
Photography	Norman Brown		3rd Mon	14.00	Enquire
Poetry (See p. 8)	Pat Brinson				Enquire
Pub Games	Michael Jones		2 nd Mon	14.30	Vacancies
Rambling	Theresa Hancock		2nd Fri	10.00	Open to All
Reading for Pleasure	John Moore		1st Mon	14.00	Vacancies
Scrabble	Denise Morgan-Smith		2nd Tues	10.00	Vacancies
Small Group Lunches	Barrie Pipe		4th Tues	12.15	Open to All
Spanish	Anne Barden		Alternate Mons	09.30	Enquire
Solo Whist	Ian Newson		Mons fortnightly		Enquire
Stretch & Balance	Sylvia James		Most Tues	14.00	Vacancies
Strollers	Carolyn Brown		2nd Mon	10.30	Full
Ten-Pin	John Phillips		2nd & 4th Weds	10.00	Enquire
Theatre, Films and Shows	Wendy Hylands		Varies.	Varies	Open to All
Walkers	Sue Hales		3rd Wed	10.00	Open to All
Weekenders Social	Karen Newing		3rd Sun	Varies	Enquire

Some groups are full. Please ask to be put on the Waiting List. Any problems, tell Angie.