



Learn, laugh, live

Newsletter – Summer 2024

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chair: Vacancy

Business Secretary: Phil Cook

Treasurer: Simon Beck

Groups Organizer, Website Manager: Chriss Pickles

Membership Secretary: Sarah Hewlett

Newsletter Editor: June Slater

Publicity Officer: Joan Anderson

Hello Everyone

Until we have a volunteer to Chair our organisation, as Newsletter Editor I will say “Welcome to Summer 2024 with Woodspring U3A”. Your Committee hopes that all members are continuing to enjoy the wide variety of activities offered by the Groups. As you will see below, the Coffee Socials are a great success and offer an ideal opportunity for members to meet others from groups outside the ones to which they belong. Needless to say, any and all volunteers to assist with the Coffee Socials and any other activities will always be welcomed.

Looking forward to meeting you all.

June Slater, Newsletter Editor

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Coffee Social, AGM and Speaker

I’m pleased to report that our last coffee social held at the Methodist Church in Nailsea was well supported and enjoyed by all who attended, and we had more than enough members to hold our AGM. The AGM was followed by our guest speaker explaining how the Penny Brohn organisation supports people with cancer, their families and friends. Those who attended were very generous with their donations to Penny Brohn.

These events don’t happen by magic and I’d like to extend a really big thank you to everyone who attended, especially the volunteers who oversaw refreshments and all the washing up after. They did a brilliant job. Special thanks to those who set up the hall, sound etc and cleared up after. Every little bit helps with these things.

Further COFFEE SOCIAL dates for your diary.

- The White Hart, Western in Gordano - Monday 22nd July, 10.30 to 12.00
- Scotch Horn Leisure Centre in Nailsea - Thursday 29th August, 2.00 to 3.30
- Clevedon Community Centre (CCC) - Monday 30 September, 2.00 to 3.30.

An information email will be sent out before each coffee social.

Joan Anderson, Publicity Officer

Membership News

The busy time of year is over for me now, renewal is complete after 6 weeks of frantic activity - I always need a holiday after April is over! Thank you all for your quick responses to my invitation to make your annual renewal. Most people paid by transferring their annual fee directly to the Woodspring u3a bank account, which does make it much easier for myself and the Treasurer. A minority of people paid by cheque and a couple of people sent cash. Our membership numbers are steady, and indeed higher than at this time last year, at 468. We have welcomed 42 new members recently, so if you know of anybody who is interested in joining us, do let them have my contact details.

Sarah Hewlett (Membership Secretary) at s.hewlett103@gmail.com or 01275 876199

Groups Update

Welcome back to our regular update about our interest groups. We are very fortunate to have so many volunteers willing to give their time to make sure we have a really good selection to offer. Please get in touch if you feel you could do the same and share your knowledge about a particular interest or be the organiser of a group that allows people with similar interests to get together, to perhaps learn and to make friends. Support is readily available. All our groups are listed on our website, and all have contact details. Even if it looks like they're currently full, do get in touch if you'd like to know more or to join a waiting list for a particular group.

Come and sing your socks off

I wanted to highlight our singing groups in this edition. Music for Fun has been running for a while now, Sea Shanties is relatively new. They run on alternate Tuesdays in Nailsea, so there's scope to join both! No-one is looking for people with professional-level talent, all you have to bring with you is a desire to join in with some fun singing out loud – a very therapeutic occupation!

Tony says about his **Sea Shanties** group:

'The main point of the group is to get together to have fun singing sea shanties. Sea shanties teach us something about maritime heritage as they all tell a story. Limited singing talent will not bar membership of the crew, but any reasonably tuneful singers would certainly benefit the rest of us! Reading the dots isn't required. Musical instrument accompaniment isn't necessary but would be welcome. We meet fortnightly on Tuesdays in Nailsea, and on June 25th we'll be joined by one of Nailsea's own shanty group, the Harry Browns, who will be holding a shanty workshop for us. All welcome.' Contact Tony on 01275 853112 / 07770 739822

And a message from Maggie about **Music for Fun**:

'The group has gone from strength to strength. We have a variety of musical instruments, John and Barbara on guitars, with Tony on the bass, Beth on the Banjolele, Graham on baritone uke, Annette, Eleanor, Erica and Mary on ukeleles, Graham on keyboard and not forgetting Chris who keeps us all in time on the Cajon Cahon drum. Added to this we have eighteen singers who don't play instruments, but do help out with percussion and kazoos – too many to name here, but all valued! Members are becoming more confident – Graham leads the sessions, but he now has help from Annette, Barbara, John, Graham and Lynn who have led some of the songs. There is absolutely no pressure on anyone to lead any of the songs, but it is wonderful that some people are happy to do so.

We are, as it says on the tin – Music for FUN. We do have lots of fun – music always lifts the spirits. Occasionally we have themed sessions and we celebrated Easter wearing our Easter bonnets. Halfway through the afternoon we stop for a cup of tea or coffee and biscuits, or more usually cake. Our programmes are made up from pop songs of 50s, 60s, 70s and maybe 80s or 90s with an odd folk song or two sneaking in. We meet fortnightly on a Tuesday afternoon from 2pm until 4pm.

Please contact me if you would like to join our group. We do not have many places left I'm afraid.'
Contact Maggie on 07939 09014

Astronomy

Our two Astronomy groups in Nailsea and Portishead continue meeting on the 4th Wednesday /Thursday of each month. We cover varied topics within the Astronomy field. We held a joint meeting of the two groups on April 8th to watch the total eclipse of the sun hit North America. We have studied the Sun recently to see why we were getting all the Aurora as far south as Portishead! We are also studying Galaxies and looking with interest at Tau Corona borealis as it is predicted to go Nova in the next few months. If you want to see why this is expected, and see it as it happens, then come along to meet with us. Contact Chris on 07456 556110

Book Bugs

Our 'Richard and Judy' reading group. Our group has stayed loyal to the books and have mostly enjoyed them. It's interesting that we spend more time discussing the books we disliked than the books we enjoyed! We don't have vacancies at the moment but get in touch if you'd like to be added to the waiting list

Contact Bryn on brynhatch17@gmail.com

Cinema Appreciation

This group is held on the 2nd Tuesday of the month in Nailsea and does have vacancies.

Contact Ernest on 01275 856643

Creative Writing

Our members continue to generate short stories and poetry every month and enter local and national competitions with mixed results. We seem unlikely to have any vacancies for a while, but I'd be happy to help if anyone wants to start a similar group

Contact Art on 01275 342238

Curzon Cinema Visits

This is a relatively new group; we've had three occasions when we've met up, sat together in the cinema and then spent time at the Teatro Lounge next door (optional). I have suggested some films but encourage others to say what they'd like and, if acceptable, contact details can be shared within the group to meet up.

Contact Audrey on audrey.callister@blueyonder.co.uk

Family History

Some of our members in November 2023 exhibited their research on WW1 ancestors. Our lively and sociable group welcomes all new members (beginners or experienced). Come and join us for a free taster on Wednesday 3rd July at the Folk Hall, Portishead.

Contact: Jacqueline Madill, 07517723548/jdmadill@gmail.com

Pickleball

Pickleball has taken off – in line with the rest of the country! Pickleball resembles tennis, badminton and table tennis, but has separate rules. Played with paddles (larger than table tennis), on a badminton court over a net a bit lower than a tennis net and played with a Wiffle ball. The rules all can sound confusing – keeping out of the kitchen, when to bounce and when and where to volley and the double bounce rule – but they all make sense when you play and despite this it is great fun. Our players are wonderful friendly people. Some people, as you would expect with senior groups, are more mobile than others, and so obviously play is adjusted according to who is playing.

We meet at the Scotch Horn Leisure Centre, Nailsea, Subs £2:50 per week: Friday 12pm -1pm; Beginners Sessions on Wednesday 1pm -2pm. There is a regular Friday slot that we are just trying out, first 16 lay on a Friday, anybody else wishing to play may wish to play on a Wednesday. It has become very popular, with

over 30 members, but as many of us go away in the summer we need to try to keep our Friday numbers up! After September there is a possibility of a permanent Wednesday slot.

We challenged a team from Weston Super Mare U3A to play. It was such a fun and friendly session. Where they were short of players, we filled in. The icing on the cake to the session was that we won! Hurray!

Poetry Appreciation

The Poetry Group has been running for 28 years but is now very small. We would love to welcome some new members. We meet once a month on a Wednesday afternoon and have a very varied programme taking it in turns to introduce a Poet or a topic. Although it is good if you can take a turn in leading there is no compulsion to do so. If you are interested do give me a ring and I can tell you more about the Group. Gay Maxwell tel 01275 875316

Rummikub

I run the 'Rummikub' group and I often get asked 'what is Rummikub'. It is a skill game based on Rummy and Mahjong using numbered tiles instead of cards. It is a great game for all ages. The object of the game is to get rid of all your tiles using different strategies. It is not only a fun game to play but also good for the brain! We meet every 2nd and 4th Monday of the month from 2.30 to 4.30 at the Consti in Clevedon. At the moment we have a healthy list of members but please get in touch if you'd like to be added to the waiting list. Contact Pat on 01275 866214

Science & Technology Group

There is no need to have a background in science or technology, just a curiosity in general. We have short presentations/discussions on topics of interest or on an individual speciality. We cover recent developments in science and technology and discuss their implications for society and the environment. The prime objective is to help members understand the principles and issues involved. We meet on the 4th Monday afternoon of the month in Clevedon. The group has vacancies - if you are interested please contact Hilary - hilaryu3a@gmail.com

Spanish group

We meet on the first and third Wednesday mornings of the month at my home in Yatton, and after a chat about what we've been doing recently, we revise a little grammar, then in turn make a short presentation on an agreed topic, such as Spanish history, our holidays, or anything topical. We end up by reading a Spanish story (usually over a period of several months). The group has been full for a long time, and I regret there are no vacancies, but I'd be happy to help anyone who'd like to set up a similar group. Contact Ken on 01934 833227

Ukulele

Play the ukulele on a Monday morning. Beginners and improvers welcome to come on the 2nd and 4th Monday of each month, 10.00am to 12.00 in Yatton to learn or restart to play the ukulele. If you don't have an instrument (yet) you can use one of ours to try. Please contact Krys by email, krys@yatton.me.uk