

## Chair's Chat



Dear Member

Welcome to our July newsletter, where we bring you the latest news and all our upcoming events.

I had the pleasure of hosting the Group leaders' lunch at the Banking Hall this month. Nearly 60 of us sat down together in a



convivial atmosphere for a delicious meal. This was an opportunity to say THANK YOU during National Volunteers' week to all the members who give their time to help keep our u3a so vibrant and diverse. Again a huge thank you to all of you Group Leaders.

**Mary Greer** has stepped down from her role as Membership Secretary (and before that as Business Secretary) after 7 years on the committee. I personally am enormously grateful for her tireless work with members and behind the scenes as well as her invaluable contributions on the committee. We are fortunate that she is going to continue to support us by maintaining our website which Mary had a huge role in creating.

Membership is now in the capable hands of **Daina Gromadzki** so thank you to her for coming forward and ensuring a smooth transition.

We are still actively looking for members to shadow **John**, our Groups Coordinator, and **myself** as Speaker Coordinator- maybe you'd like to consider either of these roles ?

Please get in touch if you could help us. We'd love to have you on board! Speak to any of the committee- details on the back page.

Have you read your u3amatters summer magazine yet? On page 80, our walking group **Loosenders** feature again after their visit to Sudeley castle as a competition prize. And finally, don't miss the article in this newsletter about Art group member and Aviation Interest group leader **Geoff** who has a photograph displayed at the Royal Academy summer exhibition - on until August 17<sup>th</sup>.



Best wishes

Sally Whyte Chair Pershore and District u3a [u3apershorechair@gmail.com](mailto:u3apershorechair@gmail.com)

### Dates for your diary in July

- |      |         |   |   |
|------|---------|---|---|
| Sat  | July 5  | Midsummer Brass   | <i>at various locations around Pershore</i> |
| Tues | July 15 | u3a Monthly Meeting: Prof Janet Lord "Healthy Ageing – is it possible and how?" | <i>Number 8, 2pm</i>                        |
| Sat  | July 19 | Pershore River Festival   | <i>King George's field all day</i>          |
| Mon  | July 21 | u3a CAMEO (Come And Meet Each Other)  | <i>Riverside Centre, 2-4pm</i>              |

## Interest Groups' Latest News from John

Hello Everyone,



It's the hottest day of the year today, the heat just saps any energy we still have. Yesterday we had a Loosenders walk around Dumbleton in the morning and Croquet in the afternoon at the cricket ground. Too hot!!



I hear that even some of the indoor events are being cancelled over the next few days because of the anticipated temperatures. Don't forget your hats, lotions and water bottles whenever you are taking part in outdoor activities. I'm hoping it cools down for our activities in July!

The 60+ of us who attended the group leader's lunch at the Banking House in June had a chance to catch up and share experiences. Thanks again to everyone helping to keep the shows on the road, month after month. Don't forget to let me know about group vacancies, and to send in stories and pictures to share with everyone. And if you think you might like to get involved with a new group then please let me know.

The wish list referred to last month is still current - check it out again.

We have our next CPR session with our local responders on July 7th. There are a couple of places available for group leaders if you are interested.

**Vacancies:** (not everything happens on a Wednesday, but as it happens ...)

I hear that there are a few vacancies in one of the walking groups offering a four to five mile walk over two to two and a half hours. They meet on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month - get in touch with me if you want more information.

The Wednesday Croquet groups can accommodate more players as well.

**Day Trip:** I will soon be planning the next Day Trip on August 27th to Shrewsbury. Let me know if you might be interested. They are always good value for money and have become a really popular feature of our u3a.

You may have heard that I have to stand down as the Groups Coordinator next January after what will have been four enjoyable years of helping promote existing groups and in adding new groups on offer in Pershore. I will be continuing as a group leader for Petanque, Croquet and Day Trips along with my involvement with the Badminton, Skittles, Racketball and two of the Walking groups. I remember when I retired five years ago I thought to myself "how will I fill my time!"

If you might be interested in taking over from me, or would like more information and would like a chat about the role, then please get in touch. I'm happy to help someone settle into the job!

As we move into July I wish you all "Happy Holidays", be it here in the UK or further afield.

John Wright Groups Coordinator [u3aperhorejohn@gmail.com](mailto:u3aperhorejohn@gmail.com)

### 60s Pop Singers

would welcome new members. No singing talent required - just a love of 60s music and a trip down memory lane.

We meet at The Riverside Centre  
from 10.00-12.00 on  
1st and 3rd Thursdays.

Ingrid Fox

[https://pershore.u3asite.uk/u3a\\_groups/1960s-singing-group/](https://pershore.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/1960s-singing-group/)



## Sally Stops By in June

This month I have been able to visit three groups which challenged my palate, feet and mind. Firstly, was an invitation to Wine Appreciation in **Marian's** garden, tasting Ukrainian wines and sampling delicious eastern European food, amongst convivial company. Thank you to Julie for guiding us through the various varieties and allowing me to discover an unknown wine region. When bellringing practice began, it made for a very entertaining evening!

My next stop was Line Dancing in Fladbury, where I was warmly welcomed (on a very hot day) by lots of new faces, including many Cotswold Link members, who are expertly guided by **Maureen** as the tutor and **Ron** on music. My dance skills were seriously tested as we practiced a variety of dance steps in lines such as a rumba box, cha cha moves, mambo rhythms and Monterey turns. This group really proves that age is no barrier and dancing keeps you sharp! It was a lot of fun.



If you're looking for an activity that is less physical, but equally good for the brain Board Games run by **Jenny** (third Thursday afternoon at Stoulton Village Hall) might be for you. When I visited, Scrabble, Rummikub and Qwirkle were on offer in a friendly environment with a healthy level of competition. I

chose Scrabble and participated in a couple of close games. There are many obscure two-letter words I need to learn! Thank you to my opponents. Contact the GL via the website for more information.



Many thanks again to the Group leaders for allowing me to stop by and it's been a pleasure to meet new and familiar faces. Hopefully I'll see more of you in July!

Sally

## Some faces from the Group Leaders' Lunch at the Bank House



### June Monthly Meeting:

#### Chris O'Grady "Keep the sea on the left and remember to turn right at Lands End."

At our latest monthly meeting, we were treated to an inspiring and entertaining talk by Chris O'Grady who shared his remarkable journey walking the entire coastal path of England and Wales. With a pair of sturdy boots, (and recommending two pairs of socks), a great sense of humour, and plenty of determination, Chris took us all along with him — virtually, at least — on his haphazard but epic trek.



The path he took spanned 2631 miles and Chris tackled it not in one go, but because of work commitments in stages over many years from 2002 to 2017, walking mainly at weekends. His journey was not just a physical challenge, but a personal one too, full of unexpected encounters, glorious views, and the kind of unpredictable British weather that can go from postcard-perfect to rain jacket-worthy in minutes. He began from Poole in Dorset where his elderly father lived and fifteen years later Dad was there to welcome him after the final leg.

Chris brought his story to life immediately with a beautiful rendition of John Masefield's poem "Sea Fever" set to music by John Ireland and then told the story via photos and anecdotes — from navigating eroded cliff-edge paths and tidal causeways, taking ferries and transporter bridges, to stumbling across Jurassic fossils, D-Day landing medallions, hidden NT huts and surprising human and wildlife encounters.

We heard about the many positive aspects of travelling like this, such as the kindness of strangers, offering lifts, meals, beds and even first aid sometimes. More tragically Chris walked a while with a man whose son had drowned at sea and he was searching the coastline for his body. Chris mentioned the oddity of a beached ferry used as an amusement arcade and a lift from a man with his disconnected gas meter in the footwell of his car. He used wild camping and slept in churches and highlighted the quiet joy of watching the sun rise over the sea after an early start. He also talked about making connections which led to friendships – for example on the Wirral with a cellist from Seville and reconnecting with his late mother's teenage friend in Southport.

He shared reflections on how the path is more than just a route around the coast — it's a journey through history, culture, geography, and personal discovery. From the industrial shores of the northeast, the dramatic Cornish cliffs, and the empty expanses of Lincolnshire, every stretch has its own character. And Chris didn't shy away from the tough bits — long, lonely slogs, sore feet, and the occasional navigational hiccup were all part of the adventure.



Chris ended with an encouraging nudge for all of us: you don't need to walk the whole coastline to find adventure — even a local ramble can lead to something memorable. As Chinese philosopher Lao Tzu said "The journey of a thousand miles begins with one step"

All in all, it was a thoroughly enjoyable and motivating talk that left more than a few of us checking our walking boots and eyeing up maps!

Sally Whyte, Speaker coordinator

[u3apershoresally@gmail.com](mailto:u3apershoresally@gmail.com)

## Upcoming Monthly Meetings @ No.8

### JULY MONTHLY MEETING

**“HEALTHY AGEING:  
IS IT POSSIBLE?  
AND HOW?”**

Speaker: **Professor Janet Lord**, who has researched and published extensively on this topic and is renowned both academically and in popular culture



**TUESDAY JULY 15<sup>th</sup>, 2pm**

### SEPTEMBER MONTHLY MEETING

**INSIDE THE MIND OF  
A CRYPTIC  
CROSSWORD  
SETTER...**



With u3a member **Mark Hartshorne**, known as “PostMark” in his crossword life, delving into the world of words

**TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 16<sup>th</sup>, 2pm**

All monthly meetings are held at Number 8, High Street, Pershore, starting at 2 pm  
*Open to all. Non-members and Cotswold link members are welcome*  
Sally Whyte Speaker Coordinator [u3apershoresally@gmail.com](mailto:u3apershoresally@gmail.com)

## August Picnic

**SAVE THE DATE !!**

**AUGUST 19<sup>th</sup>**

**12.30 - 16.00**

**Abbey Park, Pershore**

u3a Pershore and District

**PICNIC IN THE PARK**

As there is no monthly meeting at Number 8 - please join us for a summer picnic in Abbey park from 12.30 - 4.00.

Bring a chair, food, drink and hopefully the sun will shine. Griff is going to play his guitar and sing to us and there will be some lawn games.

Weather permitting

Ingrid [u3apershoreingrid@gmail.com](mailto:u3apershoreingrid@gmail.com)

Remember you can always check out our Facebook page  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/492749534935804/events>  
and website events page  
<https://pershore.u3asite.uk/events/>  
for more details of all our activities

## Notices

Pershore u3a member Geoff Hodgson has just had a photograph of his accepted for the 257<sup>th</sup> Royal Academy Summer Exhibition. Selected from an initial entry of 16500 this is the largest Open Art exhibition in the world and has been held annually since 1768 without ever missing a year! This is the sixth time that he has exhibited his photography at the RA since 2014. Here is a copy of the photograph together with a statement about Geoff and his work.



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Geoff Hodgson works within the photographic documentary archive practice by identifying, objectifying and transforming the seemingly mundane man-made objects into strangely beautiful photographs. He reveals the largely unseen, isolated objects, devoid of people and tranquil, to show the solitude of most of these artefacts, which are in fact made as places for people to

gather, wait and shelter.

Hodgson has a BA (Hons) in Fine Art Photography and an MA in Photographic Practice and has exhibited widely and, since 2014, has shown his photographs at the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition in London 6 times, the Royal West Academy Open Art Exhibition in Bristol six times, plus several other venues including the Royal Birmingham Society of Artists four times.



## Pershore & District u3a Committee Members and Key Contacts July 2025

Chair	Sally Whyte	u3apershorechair@gmail.com
<i>Vice-Chair</i>	<i>To be filled</i>	
Treasurer	Ian Smith	u3apershoretreasurer@gmail.com
Business Secretary	Helen Barrett	u3apershoresecretary@gmail.com
Membership Secretary	Daina Gromadzki	u3apershore@gmail.com
Groups' Coordinator	John Wright	u3apershorejohn@gmail.com
<i>Beacon Administrator</i>	<i>To be filled</i>	
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Facebook: [Keep Connected – Pershore & District u3a](#) Registered Charity no. 1093328

Please send photographs and any articles for publication in the August 2025 newsletter to: [u3apershorenews24@gmail.com](mailto:u3apershorenews24@gmail.com) by 20<sup>th</sup> July

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