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<b>Barbara Dixon; Annie Lowing; Jean Roberts; Mary Taylor</b>		

## Chairman's Corner

My last article to grace this Newsletter was to wish you all greetings of the season etc and here we are in March, just 3 or 4 weeks away from the clocks changing. Where does time go? I must admit I look forward to this time of year, the weather hopefully improves, flowers sprout forth through the weeds and pensions rise.

One of my final tasks as Chair is to hand over to Stephanie a thriving U3A with a full complement of committee members. In order to fulfil that task, I still need a couple of volunteers to make up the numbers of those who have to "retire" in accordance with our constitution. As I've said before; new faces needed, no previous experience necessary as on-the-job training is provided! Please have a word with any member of the current committee if you consider you can help out as soon as possible.

Our membership figures continue around the 150 mark and the monthly meetings regularly attract about 50 attendees. One of the main attractions of our meetings is the speakers. In March due to a cancellation, we now have a talk by Alan Jones who will speak about the human body so get the inside story here, you won't go anywhere without it! At the April meeting, Debra Watts will tell us about bee keeping then John Hughes will give us a presentation on Seabirds on Ascension Island the following month. At the AGM in June, our own Margaret Cooper will give us a presentation on European wildlife. Thanks again go to all our speakers and of course Wilson for booking them.

As always, a big 'thank you' from me to the Questers and AHA committees for the interesting programmes they continue to arrange throughout the year. Likewise, all the other group leaders for their hard work in keeping the groups functioning with varied programmes. Information about their activities plus all other U3A news can be found on the web page ([www.antonu3a.org](http://www.antonu3a.org)) and my thanks go to Robert Smith who continues his good work keeping this as up to date as possible so please remember to tell him of any changes to your programmes. Oh yes, thanks also go to my committee who continue to help keep my sanity and well away from sharp objects! Liz says crayons are just acceptable, but nothing sharper!

I must thank everyone who helps make our meetings so successful, you know who you are. And please

remember, we are all volunteers. If we forget that simple point, our task becomes twice as difficult. A small success is the monthly list on the books table for names for making the refreshments, it's getting used! But it's time there was a few new names included!

Finally, I hope health, wealth and happiness continue for you and yours.

*Peter Duncan*

## Membership Secretary's Notes

It's now come around to the time of year when your membership of Anton U3A needs to be renewed. Payment is due on 1st April so please will you make sure that we've received your subscription by the end of April at the latest. The subscription stays the same at £10 per person and may be paid either by a cheque made out to Anton U3A or by cash. If you're paying by cash then please will you put it in an envelope with your name clearly written on the outside.

Payments can be made at either the March or April meetings and you can collect your membership card at the same time. Alternatively your cheque may be sent direct to our treasurer Chris Coffin, in which case please contact Chris directly to ask for his address if you don't already know it. I'm afraid we can't post your membership card to you but it can always be collected at any of the monthly meetings.

*Tessa Cross*

## Questors

### Visit to Charlton Park Crematorium

Nineteen Questers enjoyed a visit to the new Charlton Park Crematorium on a dark and cold evening in November.

Our host was the site manager Zoe McMillan who, despite her youthful appearance, has many years experience as an embalmer, undertaker and crematorium manager. Zoe explained the history of the privately-owned Pure Cremations Company which owns and operates Charlton Park. The complex was built in 2018 at a cost of £6.5M and employs state of the art technology to provide many options for cremation from traditional services for any faith, to unattended committals.



After an introduction in the reception area we entered the impressive main Ceremonial Hall. Zoe explained the many facilities

available to families and to funeral directors, and then expertly fielded a lively question and answer session. We then moved to the smaller 'Oak Room' which is used for smaller ceremonies but can also be used for streaming live video from the Ceremonial Hall so that family members including young children and distressed or autistic adults can view the proceedings without disturbing others.

We then moved in to the Cremator Hall to see what happens 'behind the scenes' and this was the highlight of the visit despite the two piles of 'tester' empty coffins and the cold room full of Pure Cremations customers waiting their turn. There are currently two cremators, which cost £1M each, and there is capacity for two more. There is a small viewing area for those faiths such as the Hindus whose funeral rites include watching the coffin in the flames. We were able to watch the coffins being loaded in to the cremators and then look through the viewing glass to see the effect of the 800 degrees heat. The less squeamish members were then able to see the ashes being raked out and prepared for storage (a unique fireproof ceramic identity disk is placed in every coffin). This reinforced our impression of the care and consideration given to every aspect of the cremation process. On a lighter note, Zoe did also show us the fascinating collection of heat-proof artificial hip and knee joints which they have collected from the cremators.

Our visit ended with refreshments and a vote of thanks for a most interesting and informative visit.

*Jane Leishman*

### **Visit to the Countess of Brecknock Hospice**

The new hospice opened in February, and they organised two days of tours in January so that the public could see the new facilities. A group of a dozen Questers took advantage of this opportunity and were shown round by the Matron who had a large say in the final design and equipment selection. There will be ten larger rooms replacing the previous six much smaller ones, all fitted with the very best labour saving equipment on the market.

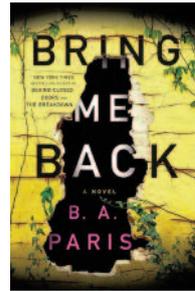
The remarkable finished building will then be one of the very best in the country, and a facility of which Andover can be proud. The £4m+ cost has all been raised from charitable donations and the NHS will cover the running costs.

The hospice offers a range of other services to the community in addition to their traditional end of life care, such as dialysis, respite care in a day centre for those being looked after at home. This was a fascinating visit and well worth attending.

*Norma Bryan*

## **Reading Group**

**Dec 2019 – *Bring Me Back* by BA Paris**



BA Paris's previous book was *Behind Closed Doors*, which was a best seller, and very successful. So, the author has another go and produces this.

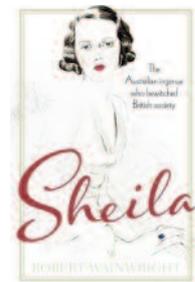
The book opens with the protagonist, Finn's, account of the night on which his live-in girlfriend went missing.

As Finn told it, the couple was holidaying in France. While travelling on a secluded highway at night, Finn decided to pull over to use the facilities at a remote rest area. He left his girlfriend, Layla, asleep in the front seat of the car. When he returned he found her missing. After a brief yet relatively exhaustive search, he left the rest area and went for help. But she was never seen again.

12 years after the disappearance of Layla, Finn begins to receive messages and find tokens that suggest that Layla is both very much alive and very eager to reignite her love affair with Finn.

Gosh, sounds creepy doesn't it? Well the group thought so too, until around a third of the way in to this book, and then it all gets rather silly and predictable. I have no idea why this tome received such high praise on some review websites, but we agreed [I think] that it was a reasonable lightweight read over the Christmas period.

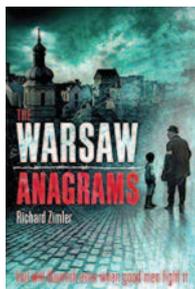
**Jan 2020 – *Sheila* by Robert Wainwright**



This is the story of a young Australian woman who arrives in England just before the outbreak of the First World War, ends up in Egypt working with injured soldiers during that war, marries a Lord, returns to England and promptly inserts herself into the upper echelons of English Aristocracy, right up to the Royal

Family themselves, becoming good friends with the young Princes, and ultimately having an affair with the future George VI.

This book promoted a good discussion around wealth and the aristocracy, and the Royal Family, and it's relevance today. It's a piece of social history, that is sometimes fascinating and informative, and at others a long drawn out recital of names. An interesting look at the period of war, abdication and The King's Speech from a different perspective. Sheila married into the aristocracy then, like many of her class and generation, worked her way round pretty much anyone who was anyone and beautiful including the future King George VI of England and kept letters from many of her lovers. Sheila also remained friends with Wallace Simpson and the Duke of Windsor and visited them in Paris on numerous occasions. Her final marriage was to a member of the exiled Russian aristocracy. So, this is how the other half live (despite 'never having any money' Sheila and various husbands never seem to have lacked staff, country weekends at various mansions, trips to the US etc)!



*'I've had a map of Warsaw in the soles of my feet since I was a young boy, so I made it nearly all the way home without any confusion or struggle'* – this has got to be one of the best opening lines of a novel ever?

Set in the Warsaw ghetto during 1941, it features a psychologist certain that his nephew was deliberately murdered. Amidst the graphic and realistic depiction of the horrors of life in the ghetto with its pervasive aura of slow death by starvation, disease and brutality, the solving of a single crime seems odd - but it is an obsession which keeps Dr Cohen alive. And even after death his spirit survives to tell the story.

Not for the faint hearted, this is an extraordinary story of love, humanity and resilience in the most appalling circumstances, from the perspective of an old man rather than that of a younger person. The group generally thought the book was well written, and a good read, and there was a much discussion on anti-Semitism, man's inhumanity to man, and deliberate ignorance to protect one's own.

*Diane Richards*

## Bird and Natural History Group

A group of hardy Birders, joined by members of Andover U3A, braved wind, rain and peak groundwater levels to visit the Swindon Lagoons Nature Reserve in February. This recently established Reserve on the site of the old Thames Water sewage works on the River Ray is managed by Wiltshire Wildlife Trust and is not open to the public. The visit was led by the WWT warden who first explained the unique history of the 15 lagoons on the 23 hectare site and then guided us to the two viewing hides. There were plenty of waterfowl including teal, widgeon, gadwall and little grebe. Herons peered down from four nests high in the trees and cormorants, kites, egrets and gulls swooped above. Taking advantage of a break in the rain we then walked through the extensive reed beds which hosted bunting and warblers. The warden regaled us with the spring-time antics of the large cuckoo population and also described the Trust's participation in research into microplastics entering the food chain – he has to collect and label the faeces from the mice, vole and shrew populations! As the sun came out we walked through the grassed areas which are home to many grass snakes and slow worms,



under the watchful eye of a photogenic peregrine falcon perched high up on an electricity pylon.

Taking lunch at The Three Trees Café in Chiselden, all agreed that this was a most interesting, and unusual, outing.

*Robert Kemp*

## Andover and Anton U3A Art

New Year and early Spring has seen 4 new members join and produce beautiful work already, all using different media: pastel, pen and ink, watercolour, pencil.

Our workshop in portrait drawing stimulated both interesting work and much hilarity as we drew each other's faces in pencil or charcoal. Portraits of celebrities and political figures have followed! Comments like 'we didn't realise his eyes were so close together' have been heard.

Renate West, our teacher, will show us techniques in using pastels before the end of February and will provide pastels, if we don't have our own, for us to have a play. It's great exploring new ideas even if we don't want to stick with pastel.

As always Renate encourages us to do whatever we are interested in. Classes continue on Tuesdays at 2.30-4.30pm Burghclere Hall.

*Annie Willens*

## History

In December our morning was, as always, something a bit different. This year it was a quiz about all sorts of ephemera from the years 1900-1952, with the interest more in finding the answers rather than winning. Do you know why Queen Mary hid her face in her programme at the first Royal Command performance in 1912? Do you know who or what was Little Willie? Do you know which car was voted the second most influential car of the 20th century after the Model T Ford? If you do, you would have done well.

In January we enjoyed a talk by Chris Coffin on *The Mapping of South Australia* by the Lincolnshire-born explorer Matthew Flinders. He was the first man to circumnavigate Australia and popularised the name 'Australia' in his book, *Voyage to Terra Australis*.



In 1789, Flinders joined the Navy as a midshipman and subsequent voyages took him to Tahiti and to Sydney where he developed a passion for cartography. Returning to Britain in 1800, he gained the support of Sir Joseph Banks, President of the Royal Society, for a voyage to chart the remaining uncharted coasts of Australia. He took with him botanists and scientists to study the land and its resources. His successful expedition brought back 4000 dried plant specimens including 1500 species new to science.

On his way back to Britain, he stopped in Mauritius for urgent repairs and was imprisoned by the French as a spy for six years. While in prison he wrote up the notes of his voyage for his book. He returned home in 1810

but died four years later aged 40 on the day after his famous book was published.

Chris illustrated his talk on this remarkable man with photographs he took on a trip to Australia,

In February Ray Cutis gave us a very interesting talk on Persecuting the Submarine from the Air, much of it drawing on his own RAF experience. He explained that, after the German conquest of France and the Low Countries, U boats could operate from French ports on the Atlantic coast and attack merchant shipping supplying food and war materials to Britain. Initially, RAF Coastal Command was ineffective because it lacked appropriate aircraft and weaponry. That changed with the introduction of aircraft able to carry out long-range patrols to close the Mid-Atlantic gap – the Catalina, Hudson, Sunderland and Liberator – and with technological advances especially in detection radar.

WW2 was followed by the period of the Cold War when the RAF became part of the forces deployed to guard and defend against a potential Soviet naval threat in the Atlantic. Its main operational aircraft became the Shackleton and after 1970 the Nimrod.



Ray explained that aircraft searching for submarines carried magnetic anomaly detection equipment to pick up disturbances created by the metal

hull, but that the submarine's main give-away was the sound it makes. Soviet submarines based in the north of the USSR have to use the straits between Shetland, Iceland and Greenland to access the Atlantic. Their movements have been monitored using arrays of bottom-mounted hydrophones and patterns of sonar buoys dropped from patrolling aircraft. The P8 is the RAF's latest submarine-hunting aircraft and carries ever more sophisticated technology and weapons for attack if needed.

*Erica Tinsley*

## AHA Group (Art, History and Architecture)

Despite the miserable weather that we have all been facing, ten brave souls braced themselves for a visit to Alton. We assembled for coffee before making our first stop at the Curtis Museum.



The museum was crammed with information using every available space. As we travelled through history of time starting with the Romans, we

learnt about the Hampshire countryside, soil and how it has influenced industry, lifestyle through the ages. They have a number of permanent exhibits including a rare Roman enamel cup, ancient Saxon burials, hop picking and brewing, the 1643 Battle of Alton - with a Civil War era helmet, breastplate and sword. Plus the notorious tale of Sweet Fanny Adams – many of us

would have heard of the saying "sweet Fanny Adams", but not knowing it originated from the very sad story of a young girl named Fanny, brutally murdered for no



known reason. The museum is also the home of a very rare piece of Anglo Saxon artefact, known as the Alton Buckle, this was exquisite in detail. It

consists of a silver gilt body with filigree wires and set with AD Cloisonné garnets and glass. Its centre panel design is gold filigree on a gold base. Archaeologists have dated the buckle to 6 / 7th centuries and it is one of the very finest examples of Anglo Saxon craftsmanship ever found

The group all felt that this was most certainly one of the better museums visited and I believe we all learnt something new.

After two very informative hours we all deserved lunch. Once again braving the wind and rain, we strolled down Alton High Street to the Swan for a pie and a pint as the saying goes. I consider it is worth saying that Alton is a vibrant town, with a mixture of old and new from shops to architecture, steeped in history.



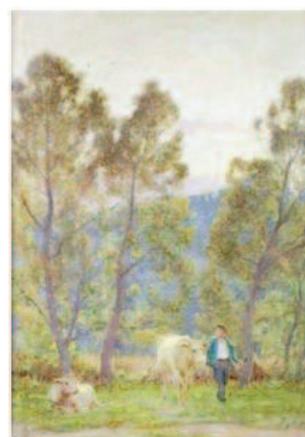
Now all fully refreshed, we moved onto the Allen Gallery. This is home to one of the best collections in the south of England of ceramics, porcelain, pottery and

tiles dating from 1250. In addition, they hold an excellent collection of



perfume bottles, medals, shoe buckles and much more. They have a cabinet holding a wide range of Wedgwood and porcelain figurines,

some from the great British producers: Bow, Chelsea, Derby and Worcester.



After our tour of the above we found ourselves in the café / exhibition area, and to the delight of some we enjoyed a small exhibition of art by William Herbert Allen. Most of his life he worked as an artist which spanned more than fifty years, from the late 1880s to the early 1940s. He became Art Master and later director at Farnham School of Art, whilst also

painting thousands of pictures of the countryside around the south of England and the continent.

Both venues were managed by a group of volunteers, who were most helpful and very informative. Well done Alton!

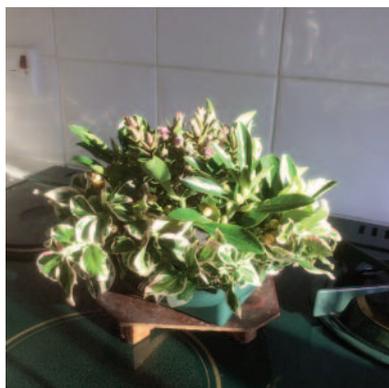
Our excursion ended about 4pm and hopefully everyone felt that they had a great day out, costing very little.

Any U3A Member is very welcome to join us on any of our monthly outings. I suggest keep checking the webpage for up-to-date information of places that may be of interest to you.

*Rosemary Crumplin-Clark  
AHA - Excursion Co-ordinator*

## Floral Art

The Floral Art Group met recently when the theme was 'A Green Arrangement'. We had an interesting array of plants and managed to produce a variety of arrangements; we had not realised how many 'greens' we could produce. One effort was particularly praised by a daughter!



Our next meeting is on 26th March at 2.00p.m. The theme is Spring.

*Lynda Stockings*

## Skittles

Skittles is once more on the agenda after a long break. The January meeting was taken by the Questers group for their annual lunch.

We are once again meeting at The Queens Head Ludgershall which has a very nice alley and Jane, the proprietor, is very accommodating.

Sadly we lost one of our members, Bob Crumplin, earlier this year and we send our condolences to his sister, Rosemary.

We are hoping to make The Queens Head our regular haunt and everyone is welcome.

*Barbara Dixon*

## Beginners' Bridge

The Beginners bridge group is held at the Lights every Thursday morning at 10am until 12.

We continue to thrive and all members are playing extremely well, no longer beginners!!!! We are a sociable group always ready for some fun albeit bridge is a serious game.

We had our Christmas lunch at the Mayfly, which was a very successful event. During the 3 months to Christmas I organised a competition, a trophy was awarded to the winner, Michael Leonard, who was the last person to join our group. So congratulations to Michael.

Another interesting snippet, one of our longer standing members became engaged over St Valentine's weekend. Congratulations Doreen.

I'm sorry but at present I cannot take any new members.

*Barbie Morrey-Stone*



*The Membership at our last monthly meeting in February.*

## French

We continue to meet fortnightly having chosen a topic the previous meeting to start things off.

Subjects range from 'New Year's Resolutions', 'Moments of Happiness', 'Spring' and the latest 'The Future of Andover'.

Gilly Roberts

## MOTO

We continue to meet on the second Monday of each month but our numbers are slowly decreasing. We are now meeting in Boswells in the Chantry Centre, it being more convenient to reach, especially from the bus station. New members would be very welcome.

Tricia Andrews

### Anton U3A Monthly Meetings

March 11th	A Day In The Life of a PCSO ( <i>cancelled</i> )	Lisa Moore
April 8th	Bee Keeping	Debra Watts
May 13th	Mapping Seabirds on Ascension	John Hughes
June 10th	AGM – European Wildlife	Margaret Cooper
July 8th	The Battle of Britain Andover and Middle Wallop	John Smith
August 12th	Summer Picnic	William Dawson
September 9th	Where do medicines come from?	Robert Smith
October 14th	Volunteer Bloodbikers	Sandra Simmonds
November 11th	Life After Iran	Ian Margetts
December 9th	Summerdown Mint	

### GROUP CO-ORDINATORS

SUBJECT	DAY & TIME	CO-ORDINATOR	E-MAIL
Art	Tuesdays 2.30-4.30pm	Annie Willens (01264 324 324)	anniewillens@gmail.com
Art, History & Architecture	By arrangement	Robert Taylor (01264 364 752)	mary-bobt@outlook.com
Birders & Natural History	4th Thursday at 10.30am	Rev Roger Bennett	antonu3a.birders@btinternet.com
Bridge	Thursdays 10am-12noon	Barbie Morrey-Stone (01264 335 597)	beesbubbles4@gmail.com
Floral Art	3rd Thursday 2pm	Lynda Stocking (01264 359 455)	stocklynray@gmail.com
French Conversation	Wednesday 10am-12pm fortnightly	Gillian Roberts (01264 335 899)	pelhamhouse@gmail.com
Genealogy	Fourth Wednesday 2.30pm	Mary Taylor (01264 364 752)	mary-bobt@outlook.com
History	2nd Friday 10.15am	Erica Tinsley (01264 365 563)	erica.tinsley@btinternet.com
Mah Jong	1st & 3rd Wednesday 2pm	Leslie Ward (01264 332789)	cliveandleslie@sky.com
MOTO	2nd Monday 2.15pm	Tricia Andrews (01264 332 921)	TriciaOnTheHill@btinternet.com
Petanque	1st Friday 6.30pm in Summer 10.30am in Winter	Adrian & Ann Truss (01264 313 242)	aatruss@yahoo.co.uk
Photography	Third Monday 10am	Chris Penney (01264 354521)	chrispenney42@btinternet.com
Poetry	Third Friday 10.30am	Glennis Dale (01264 323356)	glennis.dale@yahoo.co.uk
Questers	By arrangement	Jane Leishman (01264 351059)	grandma@oldreccs.com
Reading Group	1st Tuesday - 10am	Diane Richards (01264 392367)	georgeandedward@sky.com
Skittles	Last Wednesday of each month 10.30am	Barbara Dixon (01264 710712)	barbara.dixon.37@gmail.com
Walkers	Third Tuesday 10.15am	Anne Scott (01264 323011)	anne.scott@yahoo.co.uk
Webmaster	Contact webmaster to update website	Robert Smith	wincorms@gmail.com

Contributions to the Newsletter to Tricia Andrews - TriciaOnTheHill@btinternet.com or 01264 332 921