

Purbeck



Registered Charity No. 1075342

Newsletter

May 2014

Designed to keep you in touch

Purbeck U3A Annual General Meeting

Thursday 15th May at 2.30 pm

Harman's Cross Village Hall

Free
Members Only
Event!



With entertainment from ...

Ball & Socket

The Local Singing and Comedy duo in the genre of Flanders & Swann

Also featuring a display of work by the Painting and Creative Photography Groups

Please bring your completed Invitation and Nomination Form which is included in the Paper edition of this Newsletter and is downloadable from the [Forms Page](#) on our website www.purbecku3a.org.uk

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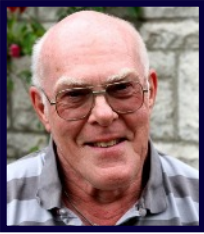
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Singing for Pleasure

It is with great regret that we have to report that John Almond, who has been the enthusiastic Group Leader of our Singing for Pleasure Group for the past nine years, has decided that, through reasons of ill health, he cannot continue.

He has informed his group members that he has "been finding running the Wednesday session increasingly more stressful, so it is with great sadness that I have decided to discontinue as Group Leader of the Singing for Pleasure group with immediate effect. I will, therefore, not be returning after the Easter break."

Please go to [Page 5](#) to read about John and the Music Groups.



From the Editor...

With Summer just around the corner, the winter floods gone and rainfall amounts again becoming normal, we can look ahead with optimism. With approximately 19 inches of rainfall measured so far this year here in Ridge as I write (in early April), you will see that already we have had well over half our annual 30 inches in just over three months. Indeed on two days this year – 17th January and 7th February - I measured daily rainfall amounts of 1.15 and 1.22 inches respectively and the totals for January and February were 9.49” and 7.05”, more than three times the norm. However March made up for it with 16 consecutive days with no measurable rain at all!

Having finished the weather report, on to the Summer line-up of U3A events starting with the AGM on Thursday 15th May which, as you will have seen elsewhere, has been given added interest this year by the appearance of the Dorset singing and comedy duo *Ball & Socket* – billed as “A varied and humorous musical afternoon of local and topical relevance by the much travelled local ‘joint act’”. I am told they are modelled on the well known duo from the past: Flanders & Swann of *The Hippopotamus*, *The Gnu* and *A Transport of Delight* fame. It should certainly be a good antidote to the formal nature of the AGM.

It is important to come along to Harman's Cross for the AGM if you can, so that all members can be brought up to date with the current position of the Purbeck U3A and to hear the latest business from Committee members who work tirelessly in the background on your behalf to make your local U3A run smoothly and efficiently. Don't forget to print out and fill in your

Newsletter Editor: John Hale
Email: newsletter@purbecku3a.org.uk

Chairman: Julie Seidel
Vice-Chairman: Charles Miller
Business Secretary: Ann Churchill
Treasurer: Patrick Webb
Membership Secretary: Clive Bacon

Committee Members:
Norma Foster; Brandon Broadbent

(Committee contact details on back page)

Views expressed in published articles and correspondence are those of the contributors alone and are not necessarily the official views of Purbeck U3A

Invitation and Nomination Form which is enclosed in this printed Newsletter or is available on our website by clicking the address: www.purbecku3a.org.uk and then selecting the Forms tab.

With this issue of the *Purbeck U3A Newsletter* I have completed my first year as Editor, producing four quarterly editions. It has been an interesting challenge to produce a small attractive publication which includes as much information and as many articles as possible within the space of eight pages that will interest and satisfy most, if not all, members.

Have I succeeded? It is difficult for me to judge this without some feedback from you, the readers. Please let me know what you like and what you think could be improved by sending an email to me at newsletter@purbecku3a.org.uk This is the same address to use to submit short articles, Letters to the Editor, Group News and any other useful tidbits of information (plus pictures as email attachments) to be included in the next issue out in August. All will be welcome!

John Hale, Newsletter Editor



Meeting Points - Lifts

Would you like to go to Meeting Points but have no transport?
If you would like to attend our social gatherings held on the fourth Thursday of the month then contact Janet at lifts@purbecku3a.org.uk and she will do her best to put you in touch with someone offering transport in your area.



Purbeck U3A

Chairman's Report



My final newsletter article before the AGM – how time flies, can it be a year since I became Chairman? But what a busy but enjoyable year it has been for the committee. We have seen changes to the line-up of the committee and the start of the Development Team which is looking at ways of running Purbeck U3A smarter and more efficiently. We had hoped that we would have started Shared Learning Projects with local organisations and Intergenerational Projects by now but these are currently on hold – all we need is a volunteer to work with me to get these off the ground. Are you interested?

John Hale has worked hard to develop *your* Newsletter for you. I am very pleased with it and think it is an interesting and informative newsletter but what do you think? Do you read it? Is it informative enough? Why not let us have your feedback? If no-one responds, we think no-one is reading it. Prove us wrong!

As you will see elsewhere in the Newsletter, our AGM is on 15th May and we do hope that you will be able to attend. We need your support at the AGM and Ball & Socket will entertain us after the business part of our AGM. The committee works tirelessly on your behalf – why not come and show them that you appreciate their efforts.

We will be looking for new committee members to help share the load but we also have some jobs that would not require you to be on the committee eg Welfare and contact with new members, Transport Co-ordinator and Outings co-ordinator. It would be great if someone could organise outings for Purbeck U3A – could that be you?

The ethos of U3A is shared learning and sharing of skills and life experiences. If you are able to, come and join in, help us and get the rewards of being part of the team developing Purbeck U3A into the 'must join' organisation for retirees in Purbeck and the place to be seen! See you at the AGM! *Julie Seidel*

MEMBERSHIP *matters*

The committee is very much aware of the high price of postage, particularly with regard to the cost of membership renewals, and of the adverse effect it would have on subscription rates if we were to continue using the Royal Mail postal service. Those of you who have previously renewed your membership at Open Days will probably also be aware that the process there is far from satisfactory. For those and other reasons it has been decided that Membership Renewals will not in future be handled at Open Days.

In order to keep costs down for both U3A and our members we intend, where possible, to avoid sending items by post and instead handle renewals through Meeting Points or other U3A groups/activities where a committee member is present – or better still handle renewals completely

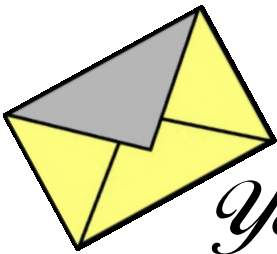
electronically. Further details regarding Subscription Renewals will be sent as an email Broadcast in May, but those without email are receiving a Renewal Form with this newsletter.

For those members with online banking it is a very simple matter to renew without even having to fill in a form – simply make a bank transfer electronically of the appropriate amount and send an email to us as notification - in turn you will be emailed your new Membership Number. You won't even have to carry a membership card as your Group Leader(s) will be advised directly of your membership number.

If you do not wish to pay by online banking, any committee member will be happy to receive your completed renewal form and remittance if handed to him/her in a sealed envelope. Some Group Leaders will also be able to collect your renewal forms in this manner.

All this will be explained in more detail in May when we shall start asking for your renewal subscriptions ... and I'm sure you'll be pleased to know that the annual subscription is being held at £16. It will help us enormously if you will please renew early and we hope it will benefit you too by not having to spend money on stamps.

Clive Bacon, Membership Secretary
memsec@purbecku3a.org.uk



Please send messages to:
newsletter@purbecku3a.org.uk

Views expressed are those of the correspondents alone and are not necessarily those of the Editor nor of the U3A. Letters may be shortened for reasons of space.

Your Letters & Emails

Please include your Name and Membership Number when sending messages for publication

Dear Editor,

Singing for Pleasure

As a long-standing member of this very enjoyable singing group, I feel that its closure should not happen without a few well-deserved words of thanks to our leader, John Almond.

John set up this group some 10 years ago, in Swanage originally. I have been an active member for the past 9 years and can honestly say that I have enjoyed every single minute of every session. John's enthusiasm, musicality and careful selection of songs have enabled us to experience a wide range of both fun and challenging pieces. Most importantly, the choir members have enjoyed each other's company and are grateful to John for all his efforts and support over the years.

Thank you, John, from all of us at the U3A "Singing for Pleasure" Sandford group. We wish you good health and many more happy years of singing. **Jan McGeachie**

Dear Editor,

This is my first attempt at writing a letter of this nature which is in itself a positive outcome of my participation in the Beginners' Computer Group which I joined last September after several years of deliberation. There was an awareness that even though I could use several functions on my computer, I was sticking firmly to pathways which were familiar to me. It was becoming obvious that I was 'stuck' and falling behind friends and associates. This has now changed, I find myself having courage to press new buttons in order to do 'new stuff'.

Since joining the computer group my experience is one of amazement. Both Paul Laurie and Clive Bacon address the ambitions of new members by starting at their point of need with patience and respect. The challenge of turning on a computer for the first time, making it do things which were previously unattainable is very rewarding and satisfying. I believe it has an impact on self worth/value, it brings about changes in personal ability and in my case, 'self inflicted boundaries'.

'Lifelong learning' is something which is very important to me and it feels great to have found two wonderful advocates of this. There has been an impact on many areas of my life since joining the group. I find it stimulating and satisfying, now doing things on my 'wish list' plus making new friends, swapping ideas and new found abilities.

What is the thing you would like to do? Buy a computer for the first time? bring about new personal outcomes in the use of your computer? Learn how to look after your machine? Want to join a group with enthusiasm where you can learn at your own pace and have a nice cup of coffee? Why not be brave? Just take the first step. **Beryl Hardy**

Points from the March Committee Meeting

Ann Churchill

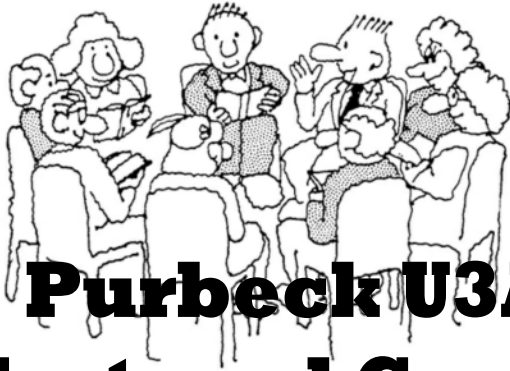
- The chairman reported on the success of the February Meeting Points, our largest audience so far and thanked all those involved. We have a list of future speakers covering a wide range of topics.
- The Treasurer reported that we have had a good year financially, carrying forward a substantial surplus. Membership levels were maintained and Gift Aid contributions increased.
- The Membership Secretary reported that currently we have 490 paid up members.
- The Group Co-ordinator announced that a new group, Beginners German would be starting on 24th April.
- It was decided that anybody working as part of the Meeting Points team would not have to pay the admission charge.
- The AGM was confirmed as taking place on 15th May at 2.30 pm. immediately followed by entertainment.
- There will be a variety of ways to pay subscriptions all of which will be publicised to the membership.
- The paper version of the Newsletter will be printed in house in colour on a trial basis.



**Nature Walks
with Peter Orchard**



We enjoyed an interesting guided walk at Arne RSPB reserve in wonderful weather on the 13th March. As ever, Peter amazed us with his knowledge of the flora and fauna, telling us about everything we saw, including birds, bees, mosses, and lichens. In the picture, he is telling us about lichens, things that you'd just walk past without even noticing. But with Peter's help, a whole new world opens. **John Kirwin**



Purbeck U3A Featured Group

In each Issue we will be featuring one of the Purbeck U3A Groups, with background supplied by Group Leaders
Group Leader contributions to:
newsletter@purbecku3a.org.uk please!



Singing for Pleasure

By John Almond



The Singing for Pleasure group was initiated by Tony Capon around 11 years ago under the leadership of Geoff Sloper. The group started in St Mary's Church hall, Swanage with around 20 members. When Geoff died early in 2005, the group was kept going by Jean Gibbs and Jenny Jones until the sessions finished in June. I then took over the group on a temporary basis until a permanent leader could be found.

In addition I started and led the Drama Group which, over a period of about three years, performed several pantomimes, plays and musicals for the U3A membership. This group eventually stopped due to the inability to recruit male actors, but it was great fun while it lasted!



As the singing group started to grow it moved into the Rectory classroom, adjacent to St Mary's Church where it continued until 2010 when the group numbers reached forty

members. So in January 2010 it moved to All Saints Church hall in Swanage. Due to the demand for places, I started another group in Sandford Community Hall, and ran both groups until June 2011. The Swanage group has since closed and, until now I continued to lead the Sandford Singing for Pleasure group which has 46 members. With great sadness, however, through my continuing and increasing health problems, I feel that I can no longer continue to lead the Singing for Pleasure group and a new Group Leader must be found for it to continue.

Singing is something that most of us enjoy. It can be nostalgic, recalling happy memories, or perhaps you just enjoy joining in when listening to a music track or the radio. However, belonging to a group can be more beneficial and is also a really good way to meet and socialise with people.

There are a variety of singing styles that can be experienced by joining a choir. Some people find this daunting and excuse themselves by saying that they can't sing well enough or can't read music. In fact, if you can talk, you can sing, maybe not with an operatic voice, but well enough to follow a tune. The ability to read music is not essential and most of the songs are from musicals and sung in unison.

What is generally not known is just how good singing in a choir can be for you. Not only does it improve the immune system significantly during practice sessions, but even more during a performance. It has also been found that it stimulates your emotional state by boosting your immune system as well as physical benefits, such as improved breathing and posture, and an increase in your concentration and self confidence.

The Singing for Pleasure group meets in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere and new members are always welcome so, if you would like to join us, why not come along? I will probably continue taking an active, if somewhat sedentary, part in the U3A but wish the Singing for Pleasure group success in the future under new leadership.



Christmas Party 2013 photos: Tony Smith

TABLOID OR BROADSHEET?

Promoting Purbeck U3A

I am a newish member of the Purbeck U3A, having joined last year and now finding myself in the position of Publicity Officer.

I know your Committee is keen to promote the U3A to our target audience; raising awareness of what we are and what we can offer the active retired folk of Purbeck, particularly those who are newly retired or new to the area.

Currently, a key strand of our publicity is aimed at introducing non-members to our monthly Meeting Points, and hoping this will whet their appetites. We have also held Information Days in both Wareham and Swanage, which have successfully enticed new members.

A recent informal straw poll of some 11 retired people on the streets of Wareham showed that no one knew exactly what the U3A did, and more importantly, what it could offer them. The six that had heard of the U3A did not really know anything about it, some thinking it was something akin to The Open University. Encouraging was the fact that eight of those I spoke to would be interested in finding out more and perhaps getting involved, possibly attending Meeting Points by way of putting a toe in the water. So, yes, we have a job to do to get our message across and hopefully attract more members.

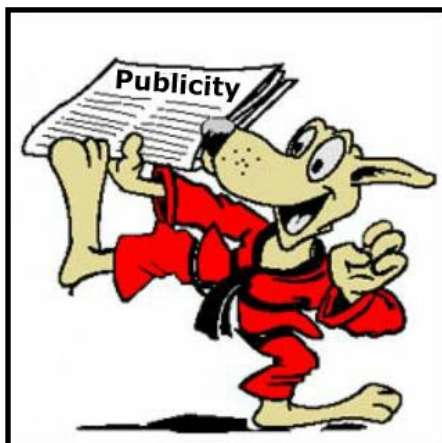
For the last few months I have been wondering how best to tackle the publicity task. On the one hand I could emulate the tabloids and ring all the bells and blow all the whistles – on the other hand I could imitate the broadsheets and take a more subtle, measured approach. Or perhaps something in between? All suggestions will be welcome (drop me an email).

It is widely acknowledged that word of mouth is by far the best form of promotion. So, if all our 490 members each told just three eligible friends, neighbours or acquaintances, then that's 1,470 potential members. If only 10% decided to join, then that's 147 new members. New members mean new interests and hopefully more

people willing to lead or assist in the leading of a new group. That's one simple suggestion.

A quick trawl through the websites of the 16 Dorset U3As shows that whilst we offer a lot (some 41 active groups, some of which are full), there are still many exciting and attractive activities that could be offered if we

increased our membership and had more people willing to undertake a leadership role. Some examples of our neighbours' offerings are: 'Scrabble', 'Apple Computing', 'Theatre Visits', 'Antiques', 'Genealogy', 'Indoor Bowls', 'Singing for Fun', 'Boating', 'Local History', 'Cribbage', 'Architecture', 'Humour' . . . and so the list continues. It would be really great if we could attract more active members who are prepared to offer their expertise to run or assist in the running of such new groups.



So, there are three things for all you existing members to think about ...

- tell at least three of your circle of friends, neighbours and acquaintances all about benefits of being a U3A member, and perhaps bring them along to Meeting Points as an introduction
- let me know of any novel places where we might promote the Purbeck U3A – publications, display spaces, suitable venues for mounting stands/information points etc etc.
- consider putting your hand up to lead or help lead a new group or activity. We surely must have a lot of latent talent out there?

I look forward to hearing your suggestions. Anything legal considered!

Thank you, David Knott
Publicity Officer

publicity@purbeckU3A.org.uk



News from the Groups

The Latest News & Updates

For details of venues and times, Group Leaders, etc., see the separate Groups List or go to www.purbecku3a.org.uk and click on the Activities tab. If you are unable to access the Internet, please phone the Group Coordinator on mobile 07564 937871

French Group

The French Group meets weekly on Wednesdays at 1030 at Harman's Cross Village Hall. The group aims to improve the spoken French of its members by a mixture of conversation, written work, grammar work and reading aloud. Members take turns to research and present a topic as a springboard for conversation exercises and an expedition to Normandy has been proposed to capitalise on the progress made over the last two terms. Susan Sides

History Group

During this term members have learnt about, the Anglo Saxon Invasion, local history of Charborough Park and the S.O.E at Anderson House. We discovered the colourful life of Jennie Jerome, mother of Winston Churchill, and the actor ancestor of a member in the group.

Our forthcoming term spans the Russian steps, to the peaks of Everest. A local character and a wartime leader in more peaceful times.

Summer Meetings U3A History Group:

Meetings on Fridays, fortnightly in Methodist Church, North St, Wareham 10:00 – 11:30am.

2nd May	Peter the Great	Janette Nourse
16th May	Charlborough Park	George Ward
30th May	Baronet of Bladen	Ann King (Guest speaker)
6th June	Churchill Later years	Maxine Humphries
20th June	Final Years Eleanor of Aquitaine	Myrna Gomes Maria
4th July	Everest & its climbers	Ian Platt

Philosophy Group

Hello everyone, my name is Denise and I run the Purbeck U3A Philosophy Group – allegedly! This was a bit of an accident – or was it - I throw that open to discussion!

Our leader left at short notice after the start of term, due to moving. I was asked to take over the Group and I did so willingly, knowing probably less than other members of our group!

We meet fortnightly, are working through various books on various philosophers through the ages and are all learning together. Our discussions are lively and we accept that we all have different opinions. We hope to meet up with the Poole Philosophy Group soon, as they have been going for many years, and I'm sure we can learn a lot from them.

So you don't have to be an expert to run a U3A Group. If you have like-minded people wishing to pursue a common aim, you can work together, learn together, and have fun on the road you travel! Just think what you could offer!

Denise Broadbent

Science & Technology Group

3rd Wednesday in the month at Wareham Parish Hall 10am - noon (prompt start, please).

21st May

Colour Science on the High Street by Chris Sargeant

The science that puts the colour into your M&S trousers or skirt.

18th June

Is the Moon a Balloon? by Ian Platt.

What the Moon is really made of, and how did it get there?

16th July

Growing Food. How do we feed the World? by Stephen Irving.

A growing problem that needs science and technology to solve it.

Full details at: www.technology.purbecku3a.org.uk

Short Tennis Group

"I'm glad I came after all – I nearly didn't!"

As we all get older sometimes it's an effort to turn out and this is the sentiment of many of us who belong to this group.

However, once we get there and meet up and have so many laughs we agree that that feeling evaporates as soon as we join in a fast and furious (we wish) game. It's so much fun and keeps us literally on our toes and we have wonderful rallies as well as amazing shots that somehow just fall short of our intention.

We enjoy each other's company and play for pure enjoyment - winning is an unexpected bonus!

I'd say that you are welcome to join the fun but I believe we have our 'quota' at present – sorry!

Valerie Moass

Walking Group

At long last the weather has improved and ground conditions are returning for the time of a normal year and particularly for walking. We had a nice hike in March with 16 members and one guest turning up. It was a lovely day with birds beginning to call out to find their mates, primroses in some hedgerows and the snowdrops all but over.

I shall stand down as leader of the walks group in the summer, but I am pleased to announce that John Kirwin (tel 01929 481000; email john.kirwin@gmail.com) and Barry Dyke (tel 01929 405671 email dykehomesp@gmail.com) have offered to take over as joint leaders/deputies in September and I look forward to joining them on at least some of their walks.

I shall be unable to lead the walk on **12th May** and John Kirwin has kindly agreed to lead it. Please be at the Knoll Beach National trust Car Park on Ferry road, Studland at 9.50am.

Usual rules apply. NT members please remember to bring your membership cards with you or you will be expected to pay.

See you on **9th June** at Worth Village car park (fee payable) at the usual time of 9.50am. Worth village car park is at the edge of the village, when approaching from Corfe and Kingston or from Swanage take turning on right just beyond the "Square and Compass" Pub. Car Park is on left.

One of our members asked why I wanted to give up as leader.

The reason is that I have been leading walks in various parts for over 65 years so I think it is time to let someone else have a go.

David Gerry

**Welcome
New Members**

Bere Regis: Ron Margretts, Susan Stone

Lulworth: Dennis Jones

Sandford:

Jane Ashworth, Carl Justin-Davies, Annette & Peter Joyce, Ros Woollin

Stoborough: Barbara Bissell

Swanage:

Ann Stukins, Cindy & Ken Cooper, Vicki Fawke, Sue Galise, Ruth Jordan,
David Willis

Wareham:

Chris Bonanni, Brenda Botterill, Andrew Fern, Margaret & Dennis Jeskins,
Lyn McGivern, Michael Rodgers, Susan Stuart

The Purbeck U3A Committee 2013/14

Name	Position & Duties	Contact Details
Julie Seidel	Chairman; Group Co-ordinator	Julieu3a@hotmail.com
Charles Miller	Vice Chairman	cam@pampru.org
Ann Churchill	Business Secretary	churchillannp@gmail.com
Patrick Webb	Treasurer	purbecktreasurer@aol.com
Clive Bacon	Membership Secretary	memsec@purbecku3a.org.uk
John Hale	Newsletter Editor; Web liaison	u3a@greenacre.info
Norma Foster	Minute Secretary	normafoster@live.co.uk
Brandon Broadbent	Meeting Points organiser	brandon@broadbent.biz

Publicity: David Knott - Email: publicity@purbecku3a.org.uk

Membership enquiries: Email: memsec@purbecku3a.org.uk

General enquiries: Phone mobile 07564 937871

Newsletter Deadlines and Publication Dates

Copy to: newsletter@purbecku3a.org.uk Please ask for a copy of *Guidelines for Contributors*

Publication Date	Copy submitted by
Early February	15 th January
Early May	15 th April
Early August	15 th July
Mid November	31 st October

Please note that no guarantee can be given that submitted material will be included in a particular issue nor that issues will be published exactly at the times indicated above.

Purbeck U3A Website: www.purbecku3a.org.uk