

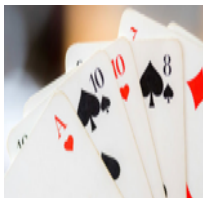
Last call for signing up for the talk on Chocolate.

The talk will be held at 2.30pm on 21st September in the West Room if we have sufficient numbers. Cost £10. I will be at the meeting or contact me on 07717 077070. Berly



Bridge Group

This group meets on the second Wednesday of each month from 10.30 to 12.30.



If you are interested in joining, please contact the group convenor: Berly Brown at bkb@tinyworld.co.uk or 01491 613251

Lunch group

As you will be aware the recent lunch at the Black Horse in Thame was cancelled due to high temperatures on the day. We are proposing, as part of 'Try something new' for national u3a week 19th-27th September, to go to Bijan's Restaurant in Henley-on-Thames (Persian food) on Wednesday 23rd September. Please register your interest at the upcoming speaker meetings or by email to froggattellen@gmail.com

Film and Theatre Group.

Our proposed next visit is to Agatha Christie's 'The Mousetrap' at the

Theatre Royal Windsor on 15th October at 2.30pm, seats start at £29.50. Please register your interest at the next speaker meetings or email peterdollman52@hotmail.com



Christmas Lunch

As you are all aware we will be going to Badgemore Park on the 2nd December this year for our festive Christmas lunch. All further details can be found on our notice board.

Please sign up if you are interested in joining us and indicate your menu choices on the sign-up sheet. A non-refundable deposit of £10 per person is required on sign-up as we have to pay a non-refundable deposit to Badgemore Park to secure the booking.

Editor, Peter Dollman,

Articles for the Newsletter need to be sent to peterdollman52@hotmail.com by the 2nd Wednesday of the month

Please visit our website for news of Ridgeway u3a and TVN events

<http://ridgeway.u3asite.uk>

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Ridgeway u3a

Newsletter August 2026

Issue No 202

Coffee and Catch-up

We have tables booked at the Spire & Spoke, Hill Road, Watlington, for Friday 28 August, from 11am.



We look forward to seeing you there.

Monday Book Club

This month we have been reading 'Lost and Never Found' by Simon Mason. Although everyone had found the book OK to read, the view was that all the characters were completely unbelievable except for DI Wilkins' little son, who waited every night for him to read him a story but he never got home in time. We didn't believe the police force would have employed him, and Chester Lynch (the black female Deputy Chief Constable from the wrong side of the tracks). was especially unlikely. We all enjoyed



the setting in Oxford which was accurate but it was very much an Inspector Morse type of story. We agreed we might read another in the series if we found it in a holiday home and were at a loose end but wouldn't go out of our way to seek one out.

Ann Sibly

Red Lion Book Group The Housemaid Freida McFadden

This was a Marmite book. Everyone either loved it or hated it. No neutral reaction. Sorry so brief!

Claire Parsons



Tuesday Book Club Wintering by Katherine May

In the light of her experience Katherine May explores how we cope with life's winters or the difficult times in our lives. Within it she compares and



examines other societies and animals in their preparation for seasonal living. Some of us felt it was a self indulgent book and an introspective reflection on her life. Others found it very interesting and sensitive. We noted it was written during the time of COVID and therefore lent itself well to experiences of this time.

Jane Kilroy

Local History Group

In July it was fascinating to go inside Shirburn church, next to the castle, a virtually unused and neglected old building (1 service a year) which is a great habitat for bats (abundance of droppings). There were many interesting brasses, carvings and monuments but it was quite difficult to find out about them from the limited information available (in small print).

On Wednesday 26 August we will have a guided visit to Waterperry House near Wheatley, starting at 2pm. The cost will be £5.50, payable at the ticket office. The small museum, the gallery and the garden centre will also be open, and we can have tea afterwards in the cafe. Please let Sue know if you would like to come and if you require (or can give) a lift.

Advance notice: on Wednesday 16 September there will be a tour of the



Trenchard Museum, RAF Halton, organised by Sally Prentice. Security is tight, and visitors must provide full address, telephone number, and vehicle registration 7 days before the visit and show photo ID to enter. So, if you intend to come, please give Sally your details by 8 September (she can also help arrange lifts), her email is lindasprentice@gmail.com or phone 01494 484148.

Last Speaker Meeting Oxfordshire's Children in WWII

Ridgeway u3a were delighted to welcome Liz Woolley, a freelance local



Child evacuees during WWII

historian, to our monthly speaker meeting recently. Liz, an experienced speaker, broadcaster, guide, tutor, researcher and writer, specialises in aspects of the history of Oxford and Oxfordshire. One of her particular interests is in the everyday lives of people across the county and she enjoys helping individuals and groups to find out about the history of their local area.

Her talk to Ridgeway u3a members explored the ways in which Oxfordshire's children, and evacuees to the area, experienced life during the Second World War. Children's response to the start of the war,

changes to landscape, disruptions to home and school life and the impact of evacuees and other incomers to the Oxfordshire area were the main topics covered by Liz during her talk. The impact of these changes was vividly illustrated throughout with images of child evacuees, children watching air-raid shelters being built at Headington, inspecting stock piles of munitions on Oxfordshire's roads, being fitted with gas masks, and taking part in air-raid drills at school; many children found the special children's gas mask more frightening than the adult version.

A salvage, repair and maintenance unit for aircraft at Cowley, clinical trials on penicillin at the Radcliffe Infirmary and training and rest & relaxation facilities for troops, meant a significant increase in incomers to the area in addition to the many child evacuees and all were subject to the constant noise of RAF aircraft as the number of planes in Oxfordshire trebled to around 1250 at some 27 airfields.

As Liz explained, it was not just the absence of their fathers which impacted children but, for many, their mothers would also have been involved in war work either at factories such as de Havilland in Witney, or as postwomen, bus drivers and other occupations. Various creches were provided in the county for workers' children and some children would have been at school before the age of 5. By 1943, some 50,000 children were also employed in agriculture such as potato picking at Cuddesdon and schools including New Hinksey rented ground locally so children could grow vegetables.

Many of Oxfordshire's children were bewildered by the sudden influx of evacuees and other incomers and some households struggled to cope with badly-behaved children they were expected to house. Many schools evacuated children to Oxfordshire which resulted in some local schools having to teach local children in the morning and evacuees in the afternoon.

These, and many other fascinating details of children's lives in Oxfordshire during WWII, were vividly captured by Liz and her talk was greatly appreciated by members, a few of whom were able to recount their own experiences of childhood during and just after the war.

Join us at St Leonard's Church, Watlington at 2.30pm on Tuesday 15 September when **David Allen** will be taking a romp through the 'rags to riches' life story of one of the world's greatest storytellers '**The Amazing Mr Dickens!**'.

Non-members (£4 fee) and members (free) are welcome. Refreshments will be served following the talk.

Ellen Froggatt

<http://ridgeway.u3asite>

WRITING FOR FUN

Our topic this month is 'A Total Wipe Out.' One of our members has just returned from a holiday in France, where the very hot weather was occasionally accompanied by spectacular thunderstorms and torrential rain. Apparently there were no total wipe outs. I'm looking forward to hearing about the real or imagined ones at our imminent meeting.

Carol Nall, carolmarynall@gmail.com