

# NEWSLETTER

## THE ARCHER



**u3a**  
Romsey Archway

MAY 2025 EDITION

### MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Many thanks to all of you that turned up to the April speaker meeting that was combined with our Annual General Meeting, it was a really good attendance. For the record the following members were approved by the membership to form the committee for this 2025/26 year:-



- Dave Green – Chair
- John Roe – Deputy Chair and Governance
- Andrew Nicol – Treasurer
- Heather Trim – Business Secretary
- Janet Robinson – Social Secretary
- Richard Crowder – Website Administrator.

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*And so we start our new 2025-26 year*

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Margaret and Andrew Bealing, Anita Barry, and Sue Keith have retired from the Committee this year. Their support and contribution to the committee and the wider u3a community have been significant. Our thanks to all of them. (Whilst no longer on Committee Margaret has kindly agreed to continue as a Groups Coordinator together with Marion Slattery.)

Volunteers like these are essential in enabling us to support all Romsey Archway members in pursuing their interests and participating in groups. We always need more volunteers, so please consider how you might support your u3a in some form of volunteering role.

Thank you for voting me in as your chair for this year (albeit I was the only one willing to stand!)

I look forward to another year of chairmanship of our u3a and helping us all to follow the u3a mantra of “learn laugh live”.



Whether we can achieve these goals with a smaller committee remains to be seen, but my aspirations for the coming year are as follows:

- Increase the number of interest groups.
- Maintain steady growth in membership numbers.
- Enable and encourage more people to volunteer in roles at all levels to support our u3a. As a charity and organization that relies fundamentally on volunteers for success and continued development, volunteer participation is essential. Without it, we cannot succeed.

## SPEAKER MEETINGS

### FROM DAVE GREEN - CHAIR



Last month's speaker meeting was by Alan Jones talking on the subject of **"Some Body Like You."** A journey of discovery around your body.



Bones stronger than concrete, nerve signals faster than a racing car, muscles that blink an eye, why colour is only skin deep. What was a fascinating presentation was "enhanced?" by yours truly being "press ganged" into being a presentation dummy for the speaker!!

### THIS MONTHS SPEAKER MEETING

Monthly Meeting at Crosfield Hall Doors open at 2.00pm speaker starts at 2.30pm. This month's presentation is **"Titanic – a night of ice"** which will be provided by Steve Herra, a former purser on the QE2.

- *What did the ship builders claim Titanic to be?*
- *Why did John Coffey leave the ship at Queenstown?*
- *Why was John Jacob Astor IV the subject of a scandal in the U.S.?*
- *Why did Michel Navratil sail under an assumed name?*
- *Who were the "Titanic Orphans"?*
- *Who was Henry Morley accompanying whilst his wife was in the U.K.*
- *Why did the Californian captain ignore the distress rockets?*
- *Which ship went to the rescue?*



## **FUTURE SPEAKER MEETINGS**

You will see from the “Dates for the Diary Section” at the end of the newsletter that we now have booked speakers for the rest of the year that I hope will provide a wide variation of subject matter and presentation style.

We are still happy to look at alternative styles of monthly meetings and if a small group of you wanted to get together to explore alternatives for consideration you would be more than welcome. Please contact our Chair if it’s something you’d like to take part in.

I am sure that you, like me, recognise that whilst we try to, it is simply not possible to please all the people all the time!

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## **BOOK SWAP STALL**

**FROM RICHARD AND LUCY CROWDER**

As usual the book swap stall will be open for business at the next speaker meeting. The organisers would like to emphasize that it is a book swap – so one in – one out. This will stop the number of books held becoming excessive. Currently we have far more books available than can be displayed at an individual meeting. While initially we appreciated members bringing more books that they took away, this situation is becoming unsustainable due to the space taken to store them.



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## **CLUB WIDE SOCIAL EVENTS**

**FROM JANET ROBINSON SOCIAL SECRETARY**

### **HELP WOULD BE APPRECIATED**

If you would like to join a small working group to brainstorm ideas for future social events, please contact Janet Robinson, who is seeking contributions and assistance in organising events or trips. Janet has had some volunteers already but there is always room for more. As summer approaches it would be good to





have some trips in planning to make use of the good forthcoming weather (FINGERS  
CROSSED!).

## SURVEY



Many thanks for the responses that we have received, relating to the questionnaire of social events / trips emails sent on 17 and 27 April 2025. If you have not completed this, then you still have time to respond by the deadline date of Friday 9 May 2025. After this date, the new social group will meet, and plan ahead, and then we will inform you of future events.

## QUIZ NIGHT

We have a quiz night being planned for the **12th of November** so please put a marker in your Diaries for what will if previous quizzes or anything to go by proved to be a popular event. Apologies if there has been any confusion with go on to the actual date for this event but we've had to change things to suit room bookings at Crosfield hall.



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## GROUP NEWS

### FROM MARGARET AND MARION, THE GROUPS COORDINATORS

We are always looking for fresh ideas for new groups.

Do you have an idea? Then why not consider starting your own group? It's a lot easier than you think!

Please contact us and we will be happy to help you to collect names and set up a new group.





## GROUPS LOOKING FOR NEW MEMBERS

### SPANISH BEGINNERS

We have a number of members who would love to learn some Spanish but we are in need of someone willing to lead this group. If you have the Spanish skills and would be willing to help, please do get in touch.

### SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIETY GROUP

This group has been reformed, and will start meeting shortly. The objective is to consider the impact of the development in science and technology on our lives. Some forthcoming subjects will be energy resilience's, climate change and robotic surgery. If you would like to join, please contact the group leader via the web site.

## NEWS FROM AROUND THE GROUPS

### WALKING GROUP

The 3-6 mile walking group met at the 12th century St John's Church, Farley Chamberlayne and after a look inside enjoyed a walk through country lanes and footpaths to see the bluebells in Parnholt Wood.





## NATURAL HISTORY GROUP

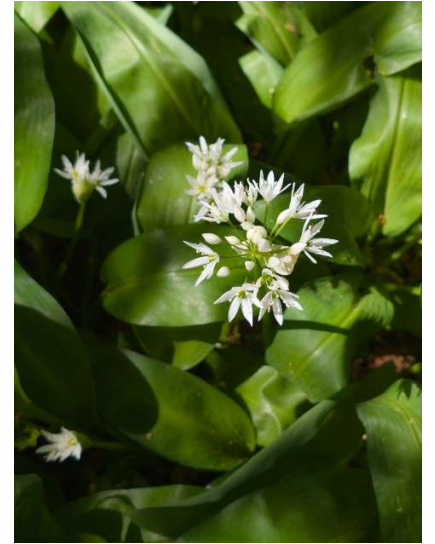
For its April meeting the group visited Mean Woods near Whiteparish in search of bluebells and wild garlic amongst other things. An interesting walk followed by very welcomed refreshments provided by Jenny.



*Bluebells*



*Click Beetle*



*Wild Garlic*

## ARCHWAY BIRDERS AT KEYHAVEN IN MARCH



Archway birders assembling in the car park at Keyhaven always feel a tingle of anticipation for the birds that the morning may bring and, on this occasion, we were not disappointed!

Our visit to the hide over Avon Water yielded an obliging water rail visiting the base of the bird feeder and some snipe moving around on the scrape. Avocet, redshank,



greenshank and approx. 60 black tailed godwits were also roosting or feeding.

Moving along the seawall towards the lagoons a beautiful red breasted merganser was spotted. He continued to play 'duck and dive' for ten minutes as we all tried to get on him through the telescope. Further along a Dartford warbler called and played hide and seek in the gorse, giving us some good views.



At the redshank pools we had the challenge of trying to differentiate meadow pipit from water pipit, both of which were hopping up on the tussocks around the pools. The water pipit appeared larger than the meadow pipit. It was also much paler than a rock pipit, which we saw later on the water's edge.

At Keyhaven lagoon three spoonbill were present along with shoveler, teal and pintail ducks. Checking the gulls, we picked up a lonely kittiwake and we marveled yet again at the amazing camouflage of a group of

turnstones feeding on the shoreline.

Deciding to stop for 'provisions' at Fishtail lagoon we poured out coffee and opened our snacks. Putting down binoculars to do this, without fail, causes something exciting to happen... and we weren't disappointed. A large bird was starting to rise on the thermals and as we got the bins up we realised it was very big indeed! A white-tailed eagle was lazily circling, necessitating some of us to lie flat on our backs to see it recede further and further upwards. The legendary 'set of flying barn doors'. What a bird!

### APRIL WALK IN THE NEW FOREST

A group of 12 assembled in Millyford Bridge car park, where one of us made an early sighting of a firecrest flitting in an alder tree. Sunny weather with little breeze made our saunter through the conifer woodlands a very pleasant one. Much birdsong was heard echoing through the forest





glades, including chiffchaff, song thrush, wren and robin. At the reptile centre we took a break to view the reptile tanks and spot house sparrows, blackcap and blue tits while enjoying a coffee in the sunshine.

Setting off again Derek spotted a redstart a little way from the path, moving around the branches of an oak tree. With a bit of maneuvering, we all managed to get on it and saw the red colouring as it flicked its tail.

Just before we came to the bridge, a great spotted woodpecker yipped and was then seen investigating the trunk of a holly tree. On our return we crossed the open expanse of Whitemoor and admired a soaring buzzard in close view. Crossing the stream, we were surprised by a small adder rearing up and then slowly moving away across the dry grass. A lovely, unexpected sight.

Moving back towards the carpark Ed spotted a male and female mandarin duck in rank, boggy woodland near the road. Were they looking for a suitable nesting tree, or just passing through on the way to Eyeworth?

In total we saw 19 species. Perhaps a future visit could be a little later for more birds but the weather was good, we had a lovely walk and enjoyed being with birding friends!



This group is currently full but there are spaces for members in the Fishlake Meadows Birdwatching Group. Contact Margaret via the group page if you are interested.

### **FISHLAKE MEADOWS BIRDWATCHING GROUP**

32 bird species and 2 butterfly species were recorded by the group on their April walk at the reserve. Of great interest was the long-tailed tit pair who are still constructing their canal bank nest. The nest resembles a springy sock, held together by spider's web and camouflaged by lichen. Incubation and fledging should take 15 and 16





days respectively, so fingers crossed that we see some youngsters on our May visit.

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## MEMBERSHIP

### FROM HEATHER TRIM BUSINESS SECRETARY AND MEMBERSHIP

We welcome 13 new members this month bringing our membership to 480. We hope Martin C, Denise K, Elizabeth H, Shirley K, Jane H, Anthony B, Gillian C, Dale H, Elizabeth G, Margaret D, Christina B, Robert M and Wendy H enjoy being active members.



A final reminder will be sent this month to the small number of members that haven't renewed their membership yet. The final deadline for membership renewal on 26th May is fast approaching; we do hope you will renew but if you have decided not to, please drop an email to the membership secretary ([memarchwayu3a@gmail.com](mailto:memarchwayu3a@gmail.com)).

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## COMMITTEE MATTERS

### COMMITTEE ROLES THAT ARE CURRENTLY VACANT

Whilst we are able to operate as a committee, just! We are still very keen to get members to volunteer for the following roles:-

- Groups Co-ordinator
- Business Secretary
- Committee Members generally



### OTHER VACANT VOLUNTEER POSITIONS

- Speaker Co-ordinator. –Non committee role
- Content Creator—To work on creating web and social media content.
- Facebook Admin—Non committee role
- Newsletter Editor—Non committee role





- Beacon Admin—Non committee role
- Help for Social Events Team — Non committee roles. We are very keen for this group to be established and work together to share the workload of organising events etc.

Please contact Dave Green or any committee member if you would like any more information about any of the above.

## SUGGESTION BOX

A reminder that we have a “suggestion box” on our website that is there for you to give us any feedback on events and speakers etc and also any thoughts or ideas you might have about how we may develop our u3a or better support you as members.

<https://romseyarchway.u3asite.uk/contact/>

## SOCIAL MEDIA

FROM RICHARD CROWDER – WEB ADMIN

Just a reminder to encourage you to take some photographs of the various u3a events and activities that you get up to so that we can publish them on the website and also in this newsletter. This is just to promote and share what we do and what we are about.



**facebook**

Also, and on a similar vein it would be good if people could use our members Facebook page more to publicise and promote to other members information on activities, events and group information.



## DATES FOR THE DIARY



<p><b>Thursday 8th May</b></p>	<p>Monthly Meeting Crosfield Hall 2.00 for 2.30pm</p> <p><b>“Titanic – a night of ice”</b> will be provided by Steve Herra</p> <p>Steve will provide answers to questions such as • What did the ship builders claim Titanic to be? • Why did John Coffey leave the ship at Queenstown? • Why was John Jacob Astor IV the subject of a scandal in the U.S.? • Why did Michel Navratil sail under an assumed name? • Who were the “Titanic Orphans”? and many more</p>
<p><b>Thursday 12th June</b></p>	<p>Monthly Meeting Crosfield Hall 2.00 for 2.30pm</p> <p>Captain Robert FitzRoy, <b>Charles Darwin and the Voyage of HMS Beagle</b> by James Taylor. 2026 is the 200th anniversary of the first voyage of HMS Beagle when Fitzroy became Captain. This led to the second and famous expedition in 1831. This was the global voyage on which Charles Darwin sailed as naturalist and began collecting evidence for his publication 'The Origin of Species'. Also on board were two artists Earle and Martens who painted the people and places encountered.</p>
<p><b>Thursday 10th July</b></p>	<p>Monthly Meeting Crosfield Hall 2.00 for 2.30pm</p> <p><b>A SOLO WALK ACROSS AFRICA</b> by critically acclaimed author and public speaker Fran Sandham who took on the challenge of a lifetime, by walking across Africa from Namibia's Skeleton Coast on the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean near Zanzibar – completely alone!</p>
<p><b>Thursday 14th August</b></p>	<p>Monthly Meeting Crosfield Hall 2.00 for 2.30pm</p> <p><b>The Secret Saboteurs of WW2.</b> The amazing role of Special Operations Executive in WW2. A fascinating and secret unit tasked by Winston Churchill to “Set Europe Ablaze”</p>
<p><b>Thursday 11th September</b></p>	<p>Monthly Meeting Crosfield Hall 2.00 for 2.30pm</p> <p>A <b>special performance</b> by members of one of our groups. More details will follow</p>



<b>Thursday 9th October</b>	Monthly Meeting Crosfield Hall 2.00 for 2.30pm Presentation on <b>Op Overlord</b> Jeremy Prescott
<b>Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> November</b>	<b>Quiz Night</b> Crosfield Hall 7.00pm
<b>Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> November</b>	Monthly Meeting Crosfield Hall 2.00 for 2.30pm <b>The Mary Rose.</b> A presentation by Dawn Perrier , one of the divers on the Mary Rose from the Mary Rose Trust.
<b>Thursday 11th December</b>	<b>Christmas Event</b> and Monthly Meeting Crosfield Hall 2.00 for 2.30pm Details to be confirmed
<b>2026</b>	
<b>Thursday 8th January</b>	Monthly Meeting Crosfield Hall 2.00 for 2.30pm Jackie Dimmock an ex policewoman will tell the story of a life as a police woman that was <b>Good, Bad and Downright Funny</b> . Her story is told with the aid of Tapestries!
<b>Thursday 12th February</b>	Monthly Meeting Crosfield Hall 2.00 for 2.30pm <b>Beyond Beliefs: One Family's Incredible Story (Part 2)</b> Dr Sohail Husain, a return visit for this speaker whose first presentation was extremely well received, and this is Part 2 of that Story
<b>Thursday 12th March</b>	Monthly Meeting Crosfield Hall 2.00 for 2.30pm Details to be confirmed

NB

**For Regular Monthly Speaker Meetings: Doors Open 2.00pm for Tea and Coffee,  
Speaker Commences 2.30m**

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## USEFUL INFORMATION

There is a lot of useful information about u3a that can be found on the National U3A Website at <https://www.u3a.org.uk>



Our Romsey and Archway u3a Website is <https://romseyarchway.u3asite.uk>

You can contact us at <https://romseyarchway.u3asite.uk/contact/>

Please join our Romsey Archway Facebook at –  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/443593039767427>