

NEWSLETTER

THE ARCHER

FEBRUARY 2026



u3a
Romsey Archway

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN



Dear u3a Members,

I hope you've all managed to stay safe and dry despite the recent heavy rain and local flooding—we certainly saw quite a downpour!

I'd like to extend a big thank you to David Wealleans for stepping up as our new Speaker Coordinator, which has really helped lighten the load. If you have any suggestions for future speakers, please do let David know—we're always looking for fresh ideas! Thanks also to Ed Slattery who has

taken on responsibilities for Beacon Administration.

On another note, I'm very concerned that we haven't had any volunteers yet to take over as Chairman. I encourage you to consider giving it a try; it's a truly rewarding and enjoyable way to give back to our wonderful community. If the thought of stepping into the unknown is holding you back, I'd be more than happy to "tag team" the role and support you during your first few months.

I hope you can join us for our next speaker meeting, where Dr. Sohail Husain will be returning to share part two of his story. Many of you will remember how much we enjoyed the first part nearly a year ago. If you missed his previous talk, don't worry, he'll start with a brief recap before diving into his latest presentation on February 12th.

Looking forward to seeing you there!

Warm regards,

Dave Green - Chair



SPEAKER MEETINGS

THIS MONTHS SPEAKER MEETING

Monthly Meeting will be at 2.30 on Thursday February 12th at Crosfield Hall. Doors open at 2.00pm.

Beyond Beliefs: One Family's Incredible Story (Part 2)

Dr Sohail Husain, a return visit for this speaker whose first presentation was extremely well received, and this is Part 2 of that Story

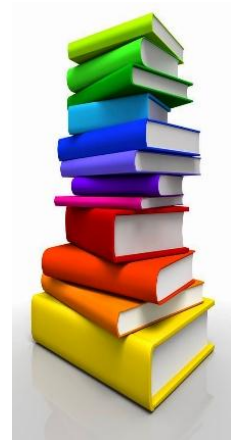


BOOK SWAP STALL

FROM RICHARD AND LUCY CROWDER

The book swap stall will be open for business at the next speaker's meeting. The organisers would like to remind everyone that it is a book swap - so one in - one out. This helps to stop the number of books held becoming excessive.

Currently we have far more books available than can be displayed at an individual meeting.



CLUB WIDE SOCIAL EVENTS

FROM JANET ROBINSON SOCIAL SECRETARY

UPCOMING EVENTS

We are pleased to invite you to participate in a guided tour of the Solent Sky Museum (Home of the Spitfire) on Friday, 27 March 2026, at 10:30 a.m. The tour will last approximately 1 to 1.5 hours and is limited to 20 participants; however, should demand exceed capacity, an additional group may be accommodated. The cost for each member is £11.50. Entry will be by prepaid booking only. Limited numbers so book early.



If you are interested, please reach out to me Janet Robinson, Social Secretary, by emailing socialsecretaryarchway@hotmail.com. You will then receive additional information.

GROUP NEWS

From Margaret and Marion, the Groups Coordinators



METAQUEST GROUP



One of our members, Philip, who is recovering from a knee operation has started using Metaquest technology after testing its use at the Dali Experience in Bruges.

So, what is it?

'Meta Quest is a virtual reality headset that lets people step into immersive digital worlds from the comfort of their own home, using simple hand controllers and motion tracking.

For older adults with mobility challenges, its appeal lies in offering experiences that might otherwise be difficult or impossible—such as gentle fitness and balance games, guided meditation, virtual travel to famous places, or social activities with friends and family by using their computer and a headset.'

If you think this may interest, you then get in touch with the Activities Group Coordinators and we will put you in touch with Philip for more information.

BOOK GROUP 1

We have had another year of interesting reading. We have read mainly fiction, but did read a fascinating autobiography by Rory Kellan-Jones, previously the BBC science



correspondent. We also had an outing in August, to visit Jane Austen's house in Winchester, where she spent the last months of her life before dying there. To celebrate the 250 year anniversary of her birth, Winchester College, who own the house opened it up, so that we were able to see the two rooms that she and Cassandra lived in, along with the rest of the house and garden. A very enjoyable trip on the 66 bus!

At our December meeting, we attempted to choose our Book of the Year, which was by no means straightforward this year! In the end David Nicholls' book "You are Here" got 3 votes, but Mary Lawson's "A Town called Solace" got 2 votes, as did the Rory Kellan-Jones autobiography, so all very close!

We are looking forward to our reading in 2026, which we are starting with 'The Safekeep' by Yaelvander Woud.

Just a reminder, that we have one space in our book group, and would welcome a new member if anyone would like to join us. Please get in touch via the website.

BUS PASS EXPLORERS

This newly formed group had a planning meeting at Josie's cafe in Romsey and decided on the following visit for its first outing.

Wednesday 18th March taking the Number 66 bus to Hursley for a pub lunch and a walk around the village.

If you would like to join the group contact the Activity Groups Coordinators via the website.





PHOTOGRAPHY



The group met recently to have a practice session in a members house on this month's theme of 'Still Life'.

We tried out taking photos of various objects and groups of objects, fruit, vegetables, flowers, glass beads, watches, any inanimate object we wanted to use. We also explored backgrounds and lighting. We had great fun and learnt tips from one another

See some of the results under the 'Albums' tab on the Romsey Archway Facebook page.

CONFESSIONS OF A GROUP LEADER



Each month we bring you a short interview with one of our Archway group leaders. This month we hear from Richard Barry leader of the Wednesday afternoon Guitar Strummers group.

How did you become the group leader?

I already had past involvement in running another established guitar group but became aware that many people in the u3a owned an instrument for a long time that they wanted to play but it rarely, if ever, got out of its case. I started this group to give them an opportunity to learn.



What do you like about the role?

Being part of a large social group of people who I probably would not have otherwise met and who I now regard as friends. It is great to see the progress we have gradually made together over the past few years. I have even had to change the name of the group from Beginners to Strummers to reflect what we have all achieved!



What are the challenges?

We meet weekly and this requires some preparation for sessions to introduce new material and ideas. Being a large group I cannot give a lot of individual attention but the members do rally round to help each other. Members have their own musical preferences but I need to ensure a wide variety to maintain everybody's interest. However I occasionally introduce songs to push at the boundaries!

What does the future hold?

Many group members have overcome the natural fear of first playing in front of an audience, so we may look at the possibility of further workshops and performances. The group is large and currently full but a new beginners group has been created to keep up the good work.

SUGGESTIONS FOR NEW GROUPS

The development of new groups depends entirely on the talents and creativity of Romsey Archway u3a members. We welcome ideas for new groups and will help you research them to see if there is a core of interest amongst our members.



MEMBERSHIP

FROM HEATHER TRIM BUSINESS SECRETARY AND MEMBERSHIP



A warm welcome to 12 new members this month: Tony B, Jane H, Brian C, Frances R, Gillian B, Valerie S, Cecily T, Jean C, Derek and Chiarina H, Christopher W and Jane E.

COMMITTEE MATTERS

COMMITTEE ROLES THAT ARE CURRENTLY VACANT

We are still very keen to get members to volunteer for the following roles:-

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



OTHER VACANT VOLUNTEER POSITIONS

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

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

After 18 months, it is time to update our front page. To help move forward I am looking for a number of photographs that represent our groups. So photographs of members enjoying one of the following would be most helpful: Arts and Craft, Food and Drink, Games, History, Languages, Literature, Music, Natural History, Sport and Walking would be most helpful. If your pictures have members in frame, please ensure you have informed them that the images are for the Website and they agree to the use of the image online.

We encourage you to take photographs of the our u3a events and activities that you get up to so that we can publish them on the website and also in this newsletter. This will promote us and share what we do and what we are about.





DATES FOR THE DIARY



2026	
Thursday 12th February	<p>Monthly Meeting Crosfield Hall 2.00pm for 2.30pm</p> <p>Beyond Beliefs: One Family's Incredible Story (Part 2)</p> <p>Dr Sohail Husain, a return visit for this speaker whose first presentation was extremely well received, and this is Part 2 of that Story</p>
Thursday 12th March	<p>Monthly Meeting Crosfield Hall 2.00pm for 2.30pm</p> <p>Ministering Angel. Meet Nursing Superintendent Shaw, good friend and colleague of Florence Nightingale and discover why she left Netley Hospital in disgrace. Speaker is an actress who dresses and acts the part</p>
Friday 27th March	<p>Friday, 27 March 2026, at 10:30 a.m</p> <p>Guided tour of Solent Sky Museum (Home of the Spitfire)</p> <p>By prepaid booking only Limited numbers so book early</p>
Thursday 9th April	<p>Monthly Meeting Crosfield Hall 2.00pm for 2.30pm</p> <p>Annual General Meeting</p> <p>Followed by Neil Nixon giving an entertaining, surprising and occasionally funny talk looking at ten of the world's best known songs and sharing the amazing back stories of their creators, their true meanings and the often accidental routes they found to becoming best-sellers. Including the kindergarten teachers who wrote the most valuable song in history, the wheelchair bound lyricist who wrote a classic song about dancing and the unique promotional campaign that turned Bohemian Rhapsody into chart gold.</p>
Thursday 14th May	<p>Monthly Meeting Crosfield Hall 2.00pm for 2.30pm</p> <p>"Knocking on Shackleton's Door ". It's about a recent Expedition Cruise to the Ross Sea, Antarctica to visit Scott's and Shackleton's Huts.</p>



Thursday 11th June	Monthly Meeting Crosfield Hall 2.00pm for 2.30pm The work, animals and photographic activity of the wildlife and bird of prey sanctuary in Winchester. Including live owls.
Thursday 9th July	Monthly Meeting Crosfield Hall 2.00pm for 2.30pm Billy the Kid and Other Bad Eggs. Stories of villains and anti-heroes from the American West
Thursday 13th August	Monthly Meeting Crosfield Hall 2.00pm for 2.30pm Details to be confirmed
Thursday 10th September	Monthly Meeting Crosfield Hall 2.00pm for 2.30pm It was the best of times it was the worst of times. The private life of Charles Dickens

NB

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

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>