



I sit here under blue skies and a gentle breeze delighting in the late summer and looking over a lawn that resembles nothing more than a bare patch of bad heathland. A re-think is required. Shrubs and perennials that have been partially starved of water and had shut down are now reshooting and in a couple of cases flowering as if it were spring! And it's with a spring (ouch!) in our steps that we find the new academic year in full swing in Farnham u3a so...

Welcome to the October edition of the newsletter!

The Editor's part



At the AGM last week there were some changes: Lynda Robinson has now formally taken over as Chair. Let me thank her and the committee for the outstanding work they all did whilst I was out of circulation for the last few months. I'll continue helping out as Vice Chair and occasional editor of the newsletter. You can read the Annual Report and a summary of our Finances here: <https://farnhamu3a.org.uk/meeting-minutes/>. The meeting attracted a record attendance, doubtless to hear Lauren Wayland, the Manager of the Museum of Farnham talk entertainingly about the trials of restoring



a Grade 1 listed building and their plans for the coming year. The two pictures show the beautiful Garden Gallery which is available for private and business hire and the rear of the main museum before the scaffolding covered that too!

At the AGM I was able to announce that membership was up to record levels as were revenues, and so our reserves have increased allowing us to hold membership fees at £50. I also drew attention to the study carried out by the u3a Trust amongst 10,000 members showing that in round figures 95% state that u3a has improved their life in some way; 90% report having opportunities to keep learning and stay curious; 79% feel their social connections have expanded; 77% notice an improved sense of wellbeing since joining; 66% note it has helped them stay mentally and physically active and 45% say being involved has reduced feelings of loneliness or isolation. Not bad! In addition it's clear that those who volunteer to help in some way get even more satisfaction

and even further improvements in wellbeing. What's stopping you? There are well over 200 of your friends and fellow members already helping to run the show, why not join them?

Unusually at the AGM we made two Unsung Hero Awards this year, one to Alan Freeland for his work both behind the scenes and front of house (he runs our local, very popular, AI group and is now the very active national lead on the subject) and one to Annette Katz. Annette's award was unusual in that we had never made an award to a committee member before, but as the organiser of our groups schedule (130 groups in the Maltings and half a dozen other venues) and with oversight of our database and web presence) she makes an amazing, and time critical contribution to the smooth running of our organisation.

I would just like to highlight one event I attended this month. Christopher Marino, a Farnham u3a member, was late for work at Cantor Fitzgerald in New York on September 11th 2001 as he had been on a delayed flight. He was on his way into the North Tower of the World Trade Centre at 8:30 am on September 11th 2001 when the first plane struck it. He worked on the 103rd floor and on 18th September 2001 he delivered a spellbinding Theme Meeting talk about what happened to him on that and subsequent days as the decimated firm fought to recover. It reinforced for me the extraordinary breadth and depth of the talent and experience within our u3a and the opportunity it gives us all to share our own stories and experiences.

An update on Ringo: I have been asked to point out 1) that if you are unsure how long you will stay you can pay on the app before you leave (but not after you leave) - I leave a duster on my steering wheel to remind me and 2) that if you use Ringo then the £1 fee for after 6:30 is in the 'How long would you like to park for' list but it's right at the bottom !

Important dates for your diary

Monthly Meetings Monday afternoons at 2 pm



26th October Hilary Roberts: Manipulated Reality: The Camera at War

Hilary presents a new perspective on the role of image manipulation in war photography over the past 170 years, exploring the consequences for our understanding of historic and contemporary conflicts.

23rd November Jonathan Jones: Memory Tricks and Techniques

In this informative and amusing talk, Jonathan will let us into the tricks and techniques used by participants in the World Memory Championships to accomplish seemingly impossible feats. Their memories are not superior to ours, but they do spend many hours honing these skills.

Theme Meetings Friday mornings 10:30 am



23rd October: Peter Tomlinson: A Towering Achievement

A look at the history and expansion of Heathrow Airport and the building of the essential Control Tower. Discover how it was conceived and completed with all the ensuing challenges, right in the middle of one of the world's busiest airports. An insider view from the man who used to run this tower.



20th November: David Simpson: Ada Lovelace (1815-52)

The daughter of Lord Byron, Lovelace (shown here aged 17) was a pioneering mathematician whose insight led her to write what is now considered the first computer program. Blending logic with imagination, she envisioned computing's vast potential and became a foundational figure in the history of technology.



The Social Scene

From: Jane Moberly, Membership Engagement

Quizzes:

After the last, very well attended, quiz we noticed that the scores were a little lower than normal so we will be making appropriate adjustments to the questions in future. So here we go again! Get your thinking caps on and your places booked for the next two quizzes, which are on **Thursday, 22nd October** and **Thursday, 17th December**, both starting at 6:30pm in the Barley Room. Doors open at 6pm.

Cuppa and a Chat:

You may already have planned to come along on **Friday, 16 October** or perhaps **Friday, 27th November** would suit you better. Either way, do come and join me in the Reception Café of The Maltings between 10 am and midday. I cannot guarantee sunshine but there will be a warm welcome and interesting chat. I hope to see you there!

Jane Moberly
Membership Engagement

As always, details of all of these events are on the u3a website. You can find them here <https://farnhamu3a.org.uk/social-events/>. You can reach me at membereng@farnhamu3a.org.uk

How to Avoid Scams!

There will be a talk, open to all members, on avoiding scams of all sorts on **Monday, 19th October** at 2:30pm. Location and details of how to book (numbers will be limited) will follow soon in an all-members email.

Farnham Lantern Festival 2026



Display in St Andrew's Church of last year's lanterns.

Following the success of last year's event, Farnham's third Lantern Festival will be held on **Thursday, 29th October 2026**. The inspiration for the event comes from Samhain, the Celtic celebration that marks the end of the harvest season and the beginning of winter. It is a time to reflect on the past and look forward to the future.

This year's festival aims to be bigger and better than ever and will include an even longer procession. This is your opportunity to get creative, make a lantern and join others in the community to light up the autumn evening.

The Festival starts in Gostrey Meadow and Farnham u3a will be gathering at the benches near the playground. Come and join us with your lanterns and family and enjoy live music while taking in the sights of everyone's creations. This is a wonderful way to mark the end of October Craft Month. At 6.30pm we will walk, with lanterns lit, to St Andrew's Church where they will be placed on display. As you can see, the effect last year was quite something. Let's see if we can make it even better this year!

Lantern kits are available from Farnham Town Hall (open 10am-4.30pm, Monday to Friday) on South Street for £6 each. They are very easy to make and full instructions are included.

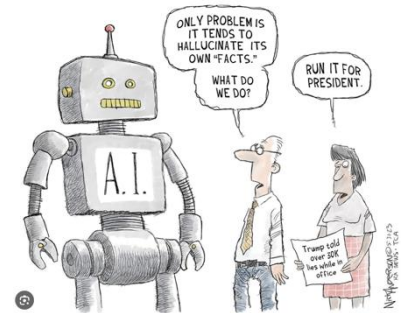
And remember to send in a photo of your lantern for us all to admire in the next newsletter! Email to social@farnhamu3a.org.uk

News from the groups

Artificial Intelligence:

This group goes from strength to strength but even if you are not a member you can access the national AI information database here <https://u3acommunities.org/interest-groups/computing/ai-for-everyone/>

There is everything you might need there for beginners and for those already immersed in the topic. Worried about AI and all the doom mongering? You can listen to Alan's somewhat more measured and positive thoughts here: <https://padlet.com/u3alearning/breakout-room/Arng4Mko7MaJqK6p-QlgRvwwGjDO2vK9q>.



News from the u3a Trust

Revisit *u3a Festival 26* with the *u3a Radio Podcast*

Each month, the *u3a Radio Podcast* features interesting stories all about u3a and learning, all created by our team of members. For the latest episode, roving reporter Maggie Dee travelled to *u3a Festival 26*. Interviews include event-opener Johnny Ball, a u3a steel band musician, and a member who switched careers from being a builder to a shoe designer. Listen now on podcasting platforms - just search *u3a Radio Podcast* - or on our website.

Member Offers

Details of all these lovely member-only offers are on our website.

Other dates of interest

From the Maltings' own programme: Tickets for all events are on the Maltings website

Lady Maisery: Thursday, 1 October, 8pm

"Adventurous and beautiful" Mark Radcliffe, BBC Radio 2

The combined vocal and multi-instrumental talents of Rowan Rheingans, Hazel Askew and Hannah James make up the uniquely captivating band Lady Maisery who have for well over a decade enraptured audiences throughout the UK and Europe.

Individually three multi award-winning artists, Lady Maisery form a unified voice, carrying stories of sisterhood, human struggle, the joy of living and the vitality of song.



Diana: The Untold and Untrue Story: Monday, 5th/Tuesday, 6th October, 7.30pm

★★★★★ *"A masterclass"* The Skinny

★★★★★ *"Perfectly imagined and brought to life"* The National

★★★★★ *"Preeningly perfect... very funny"* The Scotsman

Join Diana in heaven as she shares the untold and untrue tale of her extraordinary life in this multi-award-winning hit show from Edinburgh Fringe.

Twelve Hours: Thursday, 8 October, 7.30pm

"Funny, pithy, lucid, witty and very moving" Dame Emma Thompson

It's December 1802. Jane Austen is now twenty six and back from Bath, visiting friends in her home county of Hampshire, when she receives a surprise proposal from their brother Harris.

One proposal. Twelve Hours. Jane Austen must make the biggest decision of her life.



Festival of Crafts: 30th anniversary edition: Saturday, 10 & Sunday, 11 October, 10am-4pm

Celebrating its 30th anniversary, Festival of Crafts is a vibrant showcase of the UK's best contemporary craft and design, bringing together over 90 talented makers from across the country.

Browse the curated marketplace, enjoy an exciting line up of demonstrations of endangered heritage crafts, and learn a new skill in one of our bookable workshops.

Shed Stories: Friday, 16 October, 7pm

Uniquely blending theatre, movement and documentary, Shed Stories is a heart-warming performance that brings to life the world of 'Men's Sheds'; community groups where people can come together to make, repair and repurpose as well as improve their wellbeing and mental health.

Shed Stories shines a light on community, connection and the little things that keep us going - friendship, laughter and a nice cup of tea.



Alasdair Beckett-King: King of Crumbs : Wednesday, 21 October, 8pm

★★★★★ “An absolute treasure trove” Chortle

The multi-award-winning ABK has performed on *8 out of 10 Cats*, *Mock the Week*, *Comedy Central Live* and Radio 4's *The News Quiz*.

Come vagabonds, come mountebanks, come coney-catchers and cutpurses and meet the King of Crumbs!

From RNLI

The local Farnham and District Branch of the RNLI is running a fundraiser which is an opportunity to hear from one of those crazy men who race around the world, single-handed, in the sailing boats. The main speaker, Mike Golding, famously once returned to rescue a fellow yachtsman whilst leading a race in the Southern Ocean. It will be held in the wonderful Medici Theatre at Weydon School on **Friday, 23rd of October** at 7:30pm (doors open at 7pm.)

Tickets are available here <https://tinyurl.com/5tj69ves>

A fundraising poster for the RNLI. At the top, it says 'Farnham & District Branch' and 'The local fundraising group for Farnham, Fleet, Aldershot, Farnborough & villages'. Below that, it says 'Lifeboats' and 'presents Ocean Adventures with Mike Golding OBE'. A blue starburst graphic says 'DON'T MISS IT!'. The text continues: 'Hear from the RNLI about its changing rescue challenges. Then be inspired by one of the world's most accomplished ocean sailors and hear about the daring rescue of a fellow competitor whose yacht was sinking in a storm in the Southern Ocean'. The event details are: 'FRIDAY 23RD OCTOBER 7.30pm Doors open 7pm', 'Medici Theatre, Weydon School, Farnham, GU10 7AA', 'Tickets £17.50, under 18's £7.50'. It also says 'Pay Bar & free finger food during interval'. There is a QR code and a 'BUY TICKETS DIRECT here' button. At the bottom, it says 'Tickets go to https://tinyurl.com/5tj69ves' and 'The RNLI is the charity that saves lives at sea'. There is also a small logo for 'FR' and 'REGULATOR'.

News from the Committee

At the most recent committee meeting we discussed the upcoming AGM and New Members meetings, and we reviewed and agreed updates to the trip guidelines regarding the safety of those involved. We agreed to look for an

additional volunteer to work with Charlotte and Pam for dealing with non-Maltings venues which we are making increasing use of. We agreed on our vote for a new national trustee candidate and looked at the status of membership renewals. The Treasurer gave us a reassuring update on Gift Aid. We agreed, for various logistical reasons, that the next Open Morning will be held on **Monday, 19th July 2027**.

...and finally

This month we have more wisdom from the famous, and the not so famous, with thanks to Jenny Bray:

We cannot change the past but we can ruin the present by worrying about the future	- Oscar Wilde
It took me twenty years to become an overnight success.	- Val Doonican
Courage is going from one failure to another without losing enthusiasm.	- Churchill
I've been unhappy when I've been rich and I've been unhappy when I've been poor - and I know which I prefer.	- Michael Caine
Blessed are the young for they shall inherit The National Debt.	- Anon

And then a few short stories:

The memory

An elderly couple, Tom and his wife, are having dinner at a friend's house. After dinner, the wives head into the kitchen to clear the dishes, leaving the husbands to chat in the living room.

"We went to this brilliant new restaurant last night," Tom says. "The food was fantastic, the service was impeccable, and the prices were incredibly reasonable."

His friend looks interested. "Sounds wonderful. What was the name of the place?"

Tom frowns, scratching his head. "Oh, let me think... What's the name of that red flower? You know, the one with the thorns on the stem? It smells lovely and people give it to each other on Valentine's Day?"

"A rose?" his friend suggests.

"Yes, that's it!" Tom turns towards the kitchen and shouts, "Hey, Rose! What was the name of that restaurant we went to last night?"

The Golfer

Tim decided to tie the knot with his long-time girlfriend. One evening, after the honeymoon, he was organising his golfing equipment. His wife was standing nearby watching him. After a long period of silence, she finally speaks:

"Tim, I've been thinking, now that we're married maybe it's time you quit golfing. You spend so much time on the course. You could probably get a good price for your clubs." Tim gets a horrified look on his face. She says, "Darling, what's wrong?" "For a minute there you were beginning to sound like my ex-wife." "Ex-wife!" she screams, "I didn't know you were married before!" "I wasn't," he replied.

The penguins

A man was driving down the road when a policeman stopped him. The officer looked in the back of the man's van and said, "Why are these penguins in your van?" The man replied, "These are my penguins. They belong to me." "You need to take them to the zoo," the policeman said. The next day, the officer saw the same man driving down

the road. He pulled him over again. He saw the penguins were still in the van, but they were wearing sunglasses this time. "I thought I told you to take these penguins to the zoo!", the officer said. "I did," the man replied. "And today I'm taking them to the beach."

Enjoy the shorter days!

Philip

