

Newsletter

October 2026

Issue 114

u3a Olton & District

Website
oltonanddistrict.u3asite.uk

Hi everyone and welcome to the October Newsletter. Autumn seems rather slow to develop this year and we have had unusually warm days, allowing plants that struggled through our exceptionally hot, dry summer to put on a burst of growth. A white rhododendron in my garden is in full flower. Autumn is my favourite season when we tidy gardens and plant bulbs which will delight us in the Spring. It never ceases to amaze me that, whatever the weather or the season, our u3a is so wonderfully active and, as you read through this newsletter, you will see that so much has taken place already this season and there is much more to come!

News from our Committee

Information from our Speaker Secretary

Firstly, I would like to send a big thank you to Viv for agreeing to take on the Speaker Secretary role on a temporary basis.

In September we had an interesting talk from David Williams entitled 'Mind the Gap' which was all about the London Underground. We heard what life in London was like before the tubes with approximately 300,000 horses. Miners from Cornwall and Ireland took a week just to dig 12 feet of tunnel. In 1863 there were 7 stations from Paddington to Farringdon.

The October talk is about the ship Carpathia that went to the rescue of the Titanic.

November will be about Wilfred Owen.

News from our Facilitators

Trips Group

Buxton and Bakewell Trip

"A large group of members recently visited two popular towns in the Peak District. After the recent dry summer, the rain decided to fall but, as luck would have it, they were rewarded with some dry spells in the towns. In Buxton many visited the wonderfully manicured gardens whilst in Bakewell many treated themselves to the special puddings and tarts. Some members visited the museum and enjoyed going back in time!" (Pat C. Facilitator.)



Bakewell.



Buxton.







After our museum visit, we had time to look around the Wandering Threads exhibition, which gave us plenty of inspiration.

A very enjoyable day!
Our next meeting is Thursday 22nd October." (From Jan B. Facilitator.)

Craft & Chat

Outing to Forge Mill Needle Museum



"We had a fascinating look into the history and craftsmanship behind needle making, discovering how a simple piece of wire is transformed into a finished needle. We learned about each stage of the process, from working the wire, right through to creating the eye and carefully pointing the needle.

Garden Lovers

(From Rob C., Facilitator.)
"Our final coach trip of the year will take place on Friday 16th October to Hergest gardens (pictured) and National Trust site at Croft castle. Traditionally trees are at their most colourful in mid to late October.



There are still a few seats remaining for this and the cost is £30 for members of

the National Trust or £47 for those not in the National Trust." We also have a meeting in November – buffet lunch at the Twisted Boot, costing £25 per person . Currently there are 45 people booked and paid, but there are a few spaces left for this." (Rob C. Facilitator.)

Rob sent a photograph for all garden lovers from the gardens in the Muckross estate on the West coast of Ireland.



GREAT YARMOUTH HOLIDAY- SEPTEMBER 2026



"On a bright sunny morning in September our u3a met for a five day adventure to Great Yarmouth organised by Joy and aided by Janice, and we were on our way with a really friendly and helpful driver.

Arriving at the Palm Court Hotel we peeled off to settle in before dinner followed by a pleasant evening of entertainment.

Day 2 - After breakfast we departed for a day in the historic cathedral city of Norwich with its rich history. From medieval to industrial times Norwich was one of the largest and most prosperous towns in England, second only to London. It was designated as England's first UNESCO City of Literature in recent years. There is much to see in Norwich, including the Norman castle and the 900 year old cathedral with its 315 foot spire.



It is here that Edith Cavell is buried. She is remembered for treating wounded soldiers from both sides in World War I and for helping some 200 Allied soldiers escape from German occupied Belgium. Norwich is also known for its cobbled streets and ancient crooked timber framed buildings at Elm Hill and, not forgetting the large market buzzing with shoppers. Then back to the hotel to enjoy dinner and the rest of the evening.

Day 3 - Our lovely driver gave up his day off to take us to Lowestoft, then on to Cromer. In the sunshine we explored the classic Victorian seaside town of Cromer

with its pier, where we could hear the brass band playing, its sandy beaches and dramatic cliff tops. Some of us went looking for a crab sandwich, and we were not disappointed. Then back to the hotel for our Sunday roast. The hotel and restaurant staff are really friendly and always pleased to accommodate our requests. Another evening of musical entertainment.



Day 4 - After a tasty breakfast we headed off for a trip on the Mississippi paddle boat, 'Southern Comfort'.



We travelled from Horning Village to Malthouse Broad and back on the River Bure. What a relaxing experience to sit back and enjoy the commentary by the skipper informing us about the multi-million pound houses along the river's edge with their boats in the moorings or boat houses and the nature and fauna along the river. We saw so many herons standing patiently until their dinner swam by. We then headed off to Beccles for a couple of hours to wander down to the quay, then through the town, before heading back to Great Yarmouth to chill out before dinner and enjoy more time with our u3a friends.

Day 5 - We headed for home, stopping at a garden centre on the way. We can certainly say what a great time we had, thanks to Joy, and we can definitely say we lived, laughed and learned."

(From Gill Nolan, Fellow Traveller on the Great Yarmouth holiday September 2026.)

Creative Writing

"At our September meeting, again everyone produced work of a very high standard on the subject of "Wedding dress for sale, never worn".

There were wonderful descriptions of exquisite wedding dresses. We had tales of love and marriage lost by betrayal, desertion, death and even by the stress and expense of the wedding itself. We time-travelled from WW2, through the 1980s to modern day, with stories told through letters, by messages from departed loved ones and also from a ghostly presence. Difficult, yet final, decisions were reached, and, in some cases, there was the promise of better to come.

The next meeting will be on November 11th at 2:15 in The Dwell inside The Core (Central Library)."

Information about the group from Gordon C. at gordon@gordoncresswell.co.uk.

You can read one of the stories from the Creative Writing Group on their page on the Website.

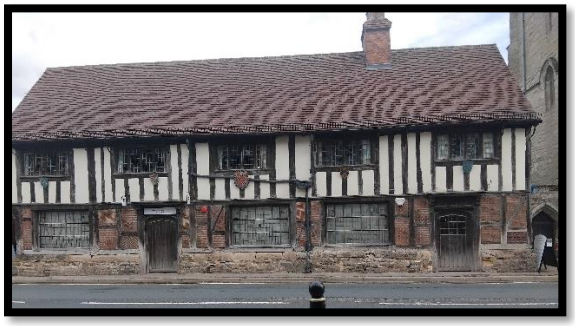
Local History Group

"On 4th September our Local History Group visited Henley in Arden Heritage

Centre and Guildhall. The Heritage Centre is full of wonderful interesting artefacts with several rooms to explore. After tea and cake, we went down the street to the Guildhall which was fascinating. Lots of historical information from our guide and very funny too. A great day out!"







(Pat K. Facilitator.)

The Quiz Group

"The theme of this month's quiz is "Why 4 letters?" From the brief description can you find a four-letter word to match the clue? They all end in 'y', e.g. Greasy = oily.

An extra clue – the answers are in alphabetical order.

1. It marches on its stomach!
2. A group, e.g. of quail
3. Can be shaped when wet
4. To say 'no'
5. Simple
6. An old fuddy-duddy
7. Bloody
8. Saintly
9. A flower, often white
10. Quite a few

Here are the answers to September's Afternoon Tea quiz.

1. Egg mayonnaise
2. Cream cheese
3. Coronation Chicken
4. Smoked salmon
5. Wholemeal bread
6. Victoria sponge
7. Buttermilk scones
8. Clotted cream
9. Pistachio delice
10. Iced coffee

The Quiz Group meets on the second Thursday of each month at 1.30pm at Olton Friary.

Our next meeting is on Thursday, October 8th. Carol and Hilary would be pleased to see you if you would like to join us."

Please send any contributions for the November Newsletter to oltonu3alynda@gmail.com