

# Stratford-upon-avon u3a Newsletter

July 2025

[Stratford-upon-Avon u3a: Home \(u3asites.org.uk\)](http://Stratford-upon-Avon u3a: Home (u3asites.org.uk))

Founded 2000—

Celebrating 25 years, were you there at the beginning?

Deadline for copy for this newsletter is 17th of the month, it never varies, except December when we don't publish a newsletter. Please send items to me at this address: [newsed@stratfordu3a.org.uk](mailto:newsed@stratfordu3a.org.uk)

## This Month

**Wednesday July 30 2025**

2 p.m. at the

Methodist Church

**Mike Luck** will be talking about

Tools with a Mission

A scheme which refurbishes old tools and sends them places in the world in need of them.



Members and Visitors welcome, join us for a cuppa afterwards.

Do join the Chatting table if you are new, on you own or just fancy a chat.

We look forward to seeing you.

## Next month

**Wednesday 27 August**

2 p.m. at the Methodist Church

**Sarais Crawshaw** will be talking about her work as a wildlife artist (an award winning one), the picture on the left is one of hers



## Stratford u3a monthly meeting report – Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup>. June 2025:

### David Wornham – Tuneful Tubes – A History of Worldwide Musical Wind Instruments

Members were entertained with an informative and humorous demonstration, with stories, of 40 different wind instruments. A straw poll indicated that a few members have played, and some still play, a wind instrument, mainly clarinet or recorder. The sound is caused by the vibration of air audible to the hearer. This declines with age!!!

In the Stone Age, people created instruments from feathers/quills, bones and reeds. Tablets with musical notation in Cuneiform wedges have been discovered in Syria from about 1400 BC. Membranophones – instruments made from stretched membranes, like skin, have been around for a long time. David showed us how to make a simple instrument from a tin can, a balloon and a plastic bottle! Fun for children!

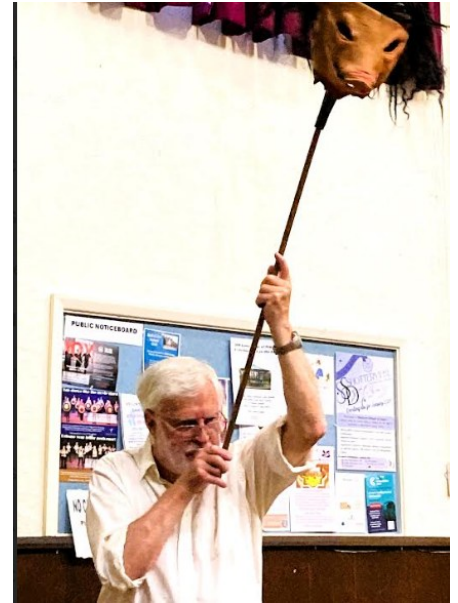
David became interested in playing a cornet at the age of 10, and his collecting interest soon came from the TV series “Robin Hood” in the 1950s, in which a cow’s horn was used for signalling. (At this point the audience broke out spontaneously into singing the theme tune!) David played a real cow’s horn, boiled and cleaned.

Other examples of early instruments were the so-called Peruvian skull, which was an Aztec death whistle. Horns developed into bugles – David played “Reveille” and “Come to the Cookhouse Door, Boys” – from the army. The Triton shell comes from the Pacific Islands, and the Didgeridoo comes from Australia. He played a curly version, which is easier for travelling. Circular breathing is needed to best play this instrument. David also has a mini-Bugle, with an extra coil for cyclist Buglers. The Japanese army has a bugle with a lower tone.

David showed us 4 tubes bound together – this is a train horn. We were shown a beautiful horn from Africa made from a Scimitar Oryx. It plays 4 notes. By contrast, we were shown a modern version of an instrument used by Boudicca’s army against the Romans - a scary looking pig’s head on a long tube. Another scary tube, a sort of flute, is the Putorino from New Zealand. Also, a Chinese pipe made from a small gourd.

Horns are common in most places – from Wales, a 10<sup>th</sup>. century hornpipe, and also from Spain – very reedy and high. The Gemshorn duct flute’s name comes from the Dutch for chamois goat horn, and it is played at the thick end, with a sweet sound. The DooD is a beginner’s clarinet/recorder.

*Continued on the next page*





We heard a Tibetan temple horn, which can be short or long. They are possibly made for meditation. There was also a horn found in Tutankhamun's tomb, but it was broken a British army trumpeter! The Post or coach horn is a yard of tin and its aim was to clear the road for the Mail coach. We were also treated to an Indian double reeded oboe, which tempted a "snake" to rise from its container!!! Also, a Vuvuzela, from South Africa, which is very loud, was demonstrated. As with all "brass" instruments or "labrosones", it is played by producing "raspberries" through the lips. It is used at football matches and became internationally famous and unpopular at the 2010 World Cup.

For comic relief we were also entertained by the playing of a watering can, and a hose pipe with a funnel. David also has a "small" portable Alpine horn, made of carbon fibre, which extends to 12 feet. In Switzerland they are 12 feet long, made of wood, and very heavy! This has about 16 separate notes. David played Happy Birthday on a Nose flute, which has a very high note. An unusual version of pan pipes, called a Khaen, comes from Thailand, but the blow hole is in the middle and it sounds a bit like a harmonica/mouth organ. David played Lily Marlene on request on the European harmonica.

We also saw more modern instruments which played more notes and semi-tones compared with the basic bugle, a trumpet. He played an antique slide trombone and finally, David's favourite instrument – the Euphonium. Our Greek expert confirmed that the name is derived from the Greek Euphos for sweet sound. For the finale, we heard the Teddy Bears' Picnic, with the audience singing along, and Auld Lang Syne, with Euphonium accompaniment.

We were truly "blown away" by David's knowledge and musical acumen.

Helen Elliott (Speaker Secretary)

Here is this month's selection of jokes (??):

**Why are astronauts so clean?** They take meteor showers

**Why are ghosts bad liars?** They're totally see through

**How do poets say hello?** Haven't we metaphor?

**RIP to boiling water...** You will be mist

I do not have an inexhaustible supply of one liners or jokes. Please feel free to send me your own jokes. Some of you have been kind enough to send them before, please do continue. Many thanks

Anne [newsed@stratfordu3a.org.uk](mailto:newsed@stratfordu3a.org.uk)



## REPORTS FROM OUR INTEREST GROUPS

### Brush up your German

We tried something different last month: everyone's contributions were to contain a lie (think WILTY on TV or Radio 4's Unbelievable Truth) which we had to discover by asking questions. Tales included an unexpected happening while skiing, the authorship of publications, a theatrical rehearsal, dinner with a University Vice Chancellor, abandonment on Frankfurt railway station and drinks in Los Angeles with Clint Eastwood. The truth was sometimes as unbelievable as the lies, and there was plenty of new vocabulary to share.

### French for the Terrified

We have spent some time asking for directions and understanding likely replies, including checking the spelling of unfamiliar words and understanding the spelling in French! So last time we listened to some amusing conversations on YouTube to help with this. Then we looked at a couple of popular French songs to revise some common reflexive verbs and the use of "on".



### Improve your French

Most of our meetings consist of contributions from group members - often tales of holidays at the moment. These always include new and sometimes unusual vocabulary. We then go over any tricky grammar points which have arisen from what has been said. We recently stumbled upon the subjunctive, so learned why and when it might be found and, more importantly, how to avoid using it if possible.

### Latin



We finally reached the conclusion of the tale of Daedalus and Icarus. We are still lost in admiration for Ovid's skill in story telling, particularly in the detail of the preparations for the first ever human flight and the choice of seemingly innocent words hinting at disaster. The father's emotion sensing his son's imminent danger was really moving. Despite the complexity of Ovid's language we are hooked and ready for more, so next time we'll begin reading his account of the transformation of Arachne into a spider.

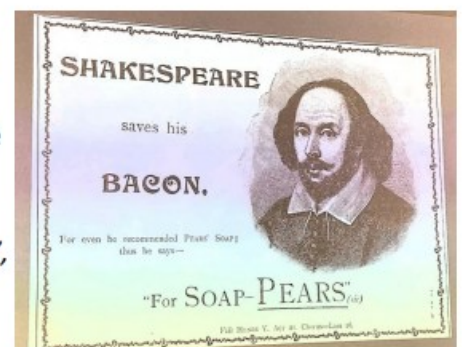
### Piano Group

July's meeting brought us Bach, Beethoven, Handel and the always popular Diabelli duets. It also came up with some surprises, including a tango by Albeniz and 'Lullaby' by Jelena Poulickova, a prize-winning Czech composer new to us all. Percy Grainger's 'Colonial Song', written for his mother, was a tremendous discovery, though far too advanced for most of us to attempt. We know each other pretty well by now, but we all still find it difficult to play in front of others. However, everyone remains very keen. The best comment from one member this time was that the Piano Group has changed her life. That was so rewarding! No-one could wish for better.

### Stratford History Group

Lindsay MacDonald of the Stratford Society gave the group a most informative and entertaining presentation on **Images of Shakespeare**, of which there are actually very few.

The 1816 bust in Holy Trinity has been depicted by a number of artists; two show his hands on a woolsack with no quill; an engraving shows him with a droopy moustache. The most iconic image is the 1623 portrait in the First Folio, which has its oddities too. Believed to be the most accurate is the Chandos portrait (of about 1610) in the National Portrait Gallery. Like the other image, this has been a gift to cartoonists and advertisers who have used it for their own ends. Words from Henry V, '*for so appears*', were purloined by the Pears Soap company and ingeniously used as a recommendation from the bard himself: *For SOAP - PEARS!* Brilliant.





After many months and not a few hiccups, Kath Orsman welcomed members into her home for the inaugural meeting of the CRAFT GROUP. Kath is a very experienced crafter and teacher; the plan is that we shall try lots of different skills and teach each other along to way, u3a fashion. The photos are from the first meeting where we learned quilling. An excellent morning, which we plan to continue once a month. There have been a lot of people enquiring about this group, please contact the membership secretary if you would like to know more.



# Silver Jubilee

## Stratford-upon-Avon u3a will be 25 this year

Thank you to everyone who has been in touch with their stories and offers to share memorabilia. So far I have heard about 4 people who were there at the beginning, and are still active members. Are you another one?

Our Christmas meeting will also be our silver jubilee celebration, watch this space, as they say, more information coming soon. Please get in touch [newsed@stratfordu3a.org.uk](mailto:newsed@stratfordu3a.org.uk)



### STRATFORD-UPON-AVON u3a - SPEAKERS FOR 2025

Our monthly meetings are on the last Wednesday of the month, except in December when the meeting is earlier to avoid the Christmas rush. We have an interesting and varied programme of talks and entertainment for you. Please come along, and tell your friends!

DATE	NAME/ ORGANISATION	SUBJECT
30 July 2025	Mike Luck– TWAM	Tools with a Mission – tools refurbishment charity project
27 August 2025	Sarais Crawshaw	Life as a Wildlife Artist and demonstration
25 September 2025	Jo Worthy-Jones	Gardening with Wildlife in Mind
29 October 2025	David Fry	Early Photographers in Warwickshire
26 November 2025	Richard Churchley	English Countryside in Poetry and Song
10 December 2025	Entertainment to be confirmed	No outside speaker



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DATE	NAME/ ORGANISATION	SUBJECT
29 January 2025	Ryan Goode – Cancer Research UK	Cancer Research
26 February 2025	Merleen Watson – Hearing Dogs for Deaf people	Hearing Dogs, including 2 assistance dogs
26 March 2025	AGM + Marie-Claire Barker – West Midlands Community Connection Co-ordinator, RNIB	Sight Loss, including guide dog
30 April 2025	Elizabeth Rose – In 2 Cultures	African textiles
28 May 2025	Rebecca Finney	Cats Protection and its work
25 June 2025	David <del>Worham</del>	“Tuneful Tubes” – demonstrated history of wind instruments
30 July 2025	– TWAM	Tools with a Mission – tools refurbishment charity project
27 August 2025	<del>Sarah</del> Crawshaw	Life as a Wildlife Artist and demonstration
24 September 2025	Jo Worthy-Jones	Gardening with Wildlife in Mind
29 October 2025	David Fry	Early Photographers in Warwickshire
26 November 2025	Richard <del>Churchley</del>	English Countryside in Poetry and Song
10 December 2025	Silver Christmas – 25 <sup>th</sup> . Anniversary party.	No outside speaker

**Helen Elliott – Speaker Secretary.**



# COFFEE MORNING

You are invited to join our members' regular  
coffee morning chit-chats

2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of the month 10 till 12

The Town House Hotel, Church St



No coffee morning in August  
Next get together 13 September



As the holiday season is upon us there will be no coffee morning in August,  
we will be there again on **Saturday 13 September**.

There is a room behind the bar at the back of the ground floor where  
we gather.

All are welcome, it would be lovely to see you.



# TEA ROTA

Please make sure you know what to do when it is your turn. The task is not onerous. Put out the mugs and biscuits, pour the tea and coffee. Oh and of course wash up. Everything is provided.

You are always welcome to join us after meetings for a drink and a natter. We value your voluntary contributions, towards the cost of the refreshments. Thanks.

## **MONTH**

June

July

August

September

## **GROUP**

Keep Fit

Current Affairs 2

French for the Terrified

Friendly French conversation

## **Vacancy**

We are looking for a member to take on the role of 'Catering Manager' aka Tea Lady/Man. If you could sort out a rota of groups to do the teas each month, and give them a gentle reminder; as well as keeping us stocked up with tea and coffee then please do come and help. Send me an email at: [newsed@stratfordu3a.org.uk](mailto:newsed@stratfordu3a.org.uk) or talk to a committee member. Please don't be shy.

Here is the tea rota for the next year. Please make sure you know when it is your group's turn and come to help if you can.



<b>Stratford-Upon-Avon U3A Tea Rota October 25 to September 26</b>	
MONTH	GROUP
October 25	Italian Improvers
November	Piano Group
December	Committee
January 2026	Playreading
February	Refresh your German
March	AGM
April	<del>Rummikub Club</del>
May	Spanish Intermediate
June	Stratford History Group
July	Sunday Morning Walkers
August	Tai Chi Yoga
September	Wine Appreciation



That is all for this month. Thank you for all your contributions. This newsletter aims to reflect all the activities of our u3a, so please do send your contributions to me.

Your editor,

Anne Foster [newsed@stratfordu3a.org.uk](mailto:newsed@stratfordu3a.org.uk)