

## MOTO: Members On Their Own

On Friday, 20th March, we will be visiting Chippenham Park gardens, meeting in the café area at 12.00. Admission £10 – cash payments only (also applies to the café) - RHS members free admission to gardens.

*Rosemary Foreman*

## WINGS, WHEELS & WATER

Our meetings start at 10.30 am, on the second Monday of the month, in the Racing Centre.

**9 March.** David Soanes presents us with “The Mosquito”: the aircraft design that defied logic and had a huge effect on the course of WWII.

**13 April.** John Wallace returns with a fascinating presentation on “The Small Gauge Railways of WWI”.

**11 May.** Alistair Nobbs, a new member of our group presents his first talk. Topic to be confirmed.

**8 June.** Clive Davies, another member of our group, makes his first presentation on “The Dennis Fire Engine”: its origin, advancement over the years and the Guildford Factory.

**13 July.** Tim Young wraps up the U3A year with a talk suggested by John Wallace, based around the book “Wing Leader” written by Group Captain J E Johnson, D.S.O. D.F.C. in 1956.



*I have been in touch with staff at the new RAF Witchford Exhibition which is due to open in May 2026. The building work is on time at present. They will let me know full details in due course so that we can arrange the visit I mentioned previously. Tim*

*David Soanes, Tim Young*

# u3a NEWMARKET & DISTRICT

**E-NEWS FOR APRIL  
& MAY 2026**

## *From the Chair*

Dear Members

Spring is finally here! I am hoping that by now we should be enjoying some much needed sunshine.

Our U3A is only as good as the sum of its parts and it is thanks to all the volunteers that we can offer this valuable service to our ever growing membership (35 new members so far this year!).

It is inevitable though that eventually some of our group leaders decide to retire - some after many years of loyal service to Newmarket U3A.

This year we will be losing Anna from Art Appreciation, Richard from Music Appreciation, Niddy from History and Rosemary Foreman from Walking. On behalf of all the members who have benefitted from their organisation and enthusiasm over the years they served as Group Leaders, I thank them for all the work they have done and their great contributions to the success of Newmarket U3A. I am sure that the groups concerned will find worthy successors so that the groups may continue and the ‘retirees’ will enjoy their chosen topics in a more relaxed manner without all the hard work involved in running a successful group in Newmarket U3A.

Thank you for your support.

*Geraldine Cornwell, Chair*

**SAVE THE DATE!**

**OPEN COFFEE MORNING - SEPTEMBER 15**

**Newmarket Memorial Hall**

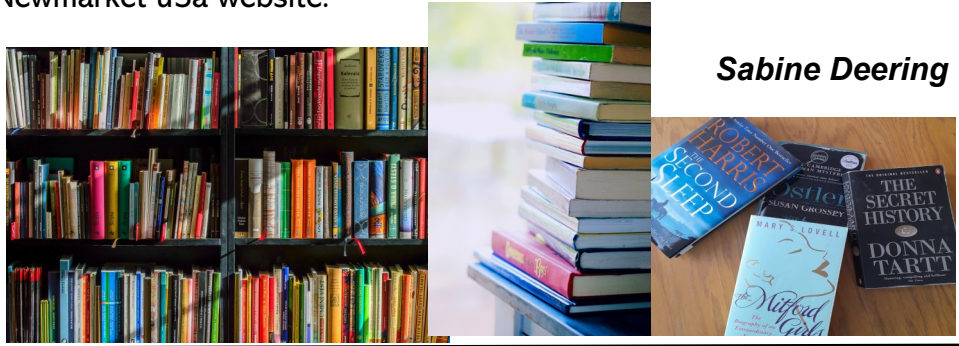
## REALM OF BOOKS

### 2026, The Year of Reading

Our members love reading. Our reading experience comes to life when we review books, share our points of views, ideas and experiences at our lively monthly meetings, at 2.30 pm on the 4th Friday of each month.

*New members are always welcome.*

For any query, the group leader's contact details can be found on the Newmarket u3a website.



*Sabine Deering*

## MAHJONG

*Message from Geraldine Cornwell: Chair*

I am very pleased to let you know that Susan Stallman has kindly volunteered to restart the Mahjong group.

The meetings will be held at the Racing centre on the **third Wednesday of the month from 10am until 12:30 and the first meeting will be on Wednesday 15th April.** No previous knowledge of the game is required, as training will be given but experienced players are also welcome to attend.

If you are interested please email me to let me know as places are limited and will be allocated on a first come – first served basis.

*Geraldine Cornwall*

## MUSIC APPRECIATION

**March 20,** I will present “**The Music of Scandinavia**” – mainly Grieg and Sibelius.

**April 17, Jacqueline Du Pré and Elgar** - a presentation about this famous cellist followed by a performance of Elgar's cello concerto.

**May 15,** Music from the **BBC Promenade Concerts**

*Please keep an eye on the Newmarket U3A website for any change*

All U3A members are welcome to join us at the Racing Centre.

*Richard Unwin*

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## GARDEN GROUP: details of visit on 17 June

On leaving Newmarket, we travel to our first garden, Markshall Estate. The Honynood family had owned the 2,000 acre estate for 300 years before it was bought in 1897 by Thomas Philips Price. At the time, the estate was famous for the splendour of the Jacobean House, gardens and oak trees. Philips Price left the estate to the nation, in particular to Kew Gardens. He also left a life interest in the estate to his third wife. By the time she died in 1966, part of the estate had been turned into an airfield, the house had been demolished and many of its oak trees cut down.

However, Kew has risen to the challenge and a new arboretum is taking shape. One of the highlights of the 200 acre site is the sculpture trail. The walled garden that once supplied the family with fruit, vegetables and flowers, now combines traditional and contemporary planting through five gardens. One of the highlights of the walled garden is the longest double herbaceous border in Essex! Having explored the estate, we suggest visiting Mrs Salisbury's Famous Tea Rooms for lunch

Then we travel to Green Island Gardens in Ardleigh, a much smaller garden of 20 acres featuring many unusual plants, and designed for year round interest. The nursery here has a wide variety of plants for sale. The café sells light refreshments and tea and coffee.

Following our visit we return to the coach for our journey back to Newmarket.

*Margaret & Richard Webb*

# U3A SUMMER COACH TRIP KING'S LYNN

**Coach price will be £15 per person**

With a pre-bookable, guided walking tour at £5 per person for those wishing to delve deeper into the history of the town.

For members who wish to strike out on their own, a map will be provided. There will be ample time for lunch and some retail therapy in the independent shops and familiar High Street stores.

Booking forms available now and printed copies at Speaker Meetings

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## GARDEN GROUP COACH VISIT TWO AMAZING GARDENS IN ONE DAY: MARKSHALL ESTATE

200 acres of arboretum and gardens, now  
in the ownership of Kew Gardens

And

## GREEN ISLAND GARDENS

RHS Partner-Garden Winner 2024

### BOOKING:

The visit is being organised by the Garden Group but welcomes all U3A members interested in joining us.

**DATE: WEDNESDAY 17 JUNE. COST £38.00**

*See further details elsewhere in this E-News and on our webpage*

## HISTORY

Following her accident last summer and a lengthy period of convalescence, Niddy has sadly decided to relinquish her role as Group Leader. However, she will be returning to present her final talk on **Historic Bridges on Friday 1 May**. There will be no meeting in April as it coincides with Good Friday.

*Denise Brighton & Di Angus-Smith & Tim Young*

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## FLOWER ARRANGING



Thank you to everyone who expressed an interest in joining in with some informal flower arranging sessions at Brampton Manor Care Home.

The first session will take place at 2.00pm on Thursday April 30th, starting at 2.00pm

There has been no indication of cost at present but if you are interested, put the date in your diary. Look out for an email with further details as soon as I have received them.

*Kath Gifkins*

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## GARDEN GROUP

The next meeting of the garden group will be held on **Wednesday, 18th March** at 2.30 in the Racing Centre. Our speaker will be Helen Hillier who will talk about the design and construction of an herbaceous border and will also give a demonstration on propagation - certainly a presentation not to be missed.

See further details of our Garden Group visit in June, in this E-News.

*Margaret & Richard Webb*

## CREATIVE WRITING

We have welcomed quite a few new members in the last few months, and we now have a total of fifteen members in the group.

This is great as not everyone can come every month, but I'm pleased to say, attendance has been very good recently.

One of our prompts at the end of last year was 'Murder'. After a lot of head scratching, our writers all went off and produced a variety of works on the gruesome subject, from dark humour to a fictional crime and I've included an article on a local, true murder by Rosemary Foreman for the newsletter, so I hope you will find it interesting and enjoy reading it.

*Sarah McManus*



### *The Murder of Rachel Parsons*

*a true story*

*By Rosemary Foreman*

I first became aware of the concept of murder when I was fourteen and my mother and aunt were talking in hushed voices about a lady called Rachel Parsons.

Rachel was born in 1885 in Yorkshire and her interest and aptitude for engineering and science were fostered from a young age – her father invented the steam turbine and developed a successful international engineering businesses. She studied Mechanical Sciences at Newnham College but, like all women until 1948, could not graduate with a degree. During the First World War, she replaced her brother as a director of the Heaton Works of C A Parsons & Co in Newcastle, overseeing the recruitment and training of women to replace the men who had left to join the armed forces. She became a leading member of the National Council of Women and campaigned for equal access for all to technical schools and colleges, regardless of gender.

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## SPEAKER MEETINGS:

**APRIL: Liz Houghton - "The Parky Charter"**



Liz Houghton talks about her poetry and her life, which has been dominated by her Parkinson's Disease, and the "Parky Charter". Liz is a writer and performer of rhymes which have been described as sharp, observational poems, often on a whim, with humour and wry wit thrown in, as she campaigns for a better life despite her Parkinson's.



**MAY: Paul Barwick - "Eddie Chapman; The Life and Crimes of Agent Zigzag".**

Paul talks about Eddie Chapman, who hated authority as far back as he could remember. In return, authority detested him back and from an early age he was always in trouble with the law. On the run from Scotland Yard, he was imprisoned for burglary in Jersey just before the German forces invaded in June 1940.

Rather than spend the entire war in prison, he offered the Third Reich his services as a German secret agent. Highly trained in spy-craft and espionage, he was sent back to Britain on a mission to derail British aircraft manufacturing. However, he had other ideas. Turning himself in to MI5, he became a double agent for the Allies, working to defeat the Nazis. Decorated by the Germans, his story is an amazing episode in the history of British espionage.

## WALKING GROUP

Having organised the walks for many years, I have decided it is time to “retire” at the end of July. I hope that someone will come forward to take over this group - it could be one person or two or three people perhaps, to plan walks in rotation. If you are willing and able to help, please let me know as soon as possible.

**1 April:** Cheryl will lead a walk round Burwell, meeting in the Burwell Ex-Service & Social Club at 10.30 am. Lunch to be advised.

There will be no walk in May as many of the group will be away.

*Rosemary Foreman*

### MESSAGE FOR U3A MEMBERS FROM NEWMARKET CRICKET CLUB

I am writing from Newmarket Cricket Club. We are currently looking for a cricket scorer for the upcoming 2026 season, and I wondered if this might be of interest to any members of the University of the Third Age in Newmarket. The role would involve scoring our Saturday matches using the Play-Cricket Scorer app between late April and the end of August (around 19 Saturdays in total). Previous experience would be helpful but is certainly not essential, as we would be very happy to provide full training and support.

We are a very friendly and welcoming club, and the scorer becomes a valued part of the matchday team. It can be a really enjoyable way to stay involved in cricket and spend a summer afternoon at the ground.

The role does include a small match payment to cover time and expenses, and we would also provide a club top and endless cups of tea and cake, so they feel a real part of the team.

Anyone interested would be very welcome to get in touch with us to find out more.

**Mark: Newmarket Cricket Club**

**Contact: Mobile, 07921933222**

**Email: [info@newmarketcricketclub.co.uk](mailto:info@newmarketcricketclub.co.uk)**

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Her interest in horse racing led her to buy the 2,600-acre Branches Park estate near Cowlinge, where she had built up a large stud farm as well as in 1954 purchasing the Lansdowne House racing stable in Newmarket.

Rachel had been found dead on 2nd July 1956 and a stableman, Dennis Pratt, a former employee who lived in Portland Road, Newmarket, was charged with her murder. He had killed Rachel with an iron bar over the non-payment of two weeks holiday pay and he was found guilty of manslaughter on the grounds of provocation and sentenced to 10 years imprisonment after being caught trying to sell stolen goods from Lansdowne House and then confessing to the crime.

After that, other murders seem to have passed me by – maybe because of lack of television and social media – until more recent years. Who can forget the murder of John Kennedy? Closer to home (indeed, almost next door) was the murder in 1994 of Alex Scott, who owned Glebe Stud at Cheveley. He had been shot in the chest and killed by stud groom William O'Brien, using a single barrel shotgun. O'Brien and Scott had become involved in a dispute that culminated with O'Brien telling the trainer he could 'stuff his job'. He reportedly disagreed with Scott's working methods, and the following day Scott sent O'Brien a letter asking for confirmation of his resignation. There was then a confrontation in a barn, resulting in the shooting. I can remember that night thinking a plane was going to crash on our house – it turned out to be a helicopter circling with searchlights on looking for O'Brien, who was hiding in trees on the stud at the bottom of our garden.

These two murders have a similarity – disputes over employment – and, while indefensible, understandable to a point. Many other murders have been for similar reasons, others motivated by greed, jealousy, sex, race, politics, religion – the list is endless. Murder can strike anywhere, anytime, even in the most unexpected places and it is often a case of being in the wrong place at the wrong time.

These days, killings are so common – knife crime in particular - and it's appalling that so many young people seem to carry knives in case they are attacked by another knife-user, a situation that seems self-fulfilling. Where will it all end? I wish I knew and fear for the future of my grandchildren in what seems to be an increasingly lawless society.

*Rosemary Foreman*

# APRIL 2026

## GROUP MEETINGS

DAY/DATE	TIME	GROUP	VENUE
Wednesday 1	10:30	Walking	See Website
	14:30	Antiques	The Racing Centre
Friday 3	-	History	No Meeting
Monday 6	-	Camera Group	No Meeting
Tuesday 7	14:30	Art Appreciation	The Racing Centre
Wednesday 8	12:00	Brunch Meeting	The Stable Cafe
Thursday 9	10:30	Carpet Bowls	The Racing Centre
Friday 10	10:30	Family History	The Racing Centre
Monday 13	10:30	Wings Wheels Water	The Racing Centre
	14:30	Scrabble	The Racing Centre
Tuesday 14	10:30	Model Making, Craft	The Racing Centre
	11:15	Coffee & Cook Off	The Racing Centre
	14:30	Discussion	The Racing Centre
Wednesday 15	10:00	Mahjong	The Racing Centre
	14:30	Garden Group	The Racing Centre
Friday 17	14:30	Music Appreciation	The Racing Centre
Monday 20	10:00	Executive Committee	-
Tuesday 21	14:00	Creative Writing	Brampton Manor Care Hm
Thursday 23	10:30	Carpet Bowls	The Racing Centre
Friday 24	14:30	Realm of Books	The Racing Centre
Monday 27	14:30	Speaker Meeting	Catholic Parish Hall
Tuesday 28	14:00	Portrait Group	Ashley Pavilion
	14:00	Rummikub	Brampton Manor Care Hm
-	MOTO Group - See Website		

# MAY 2026

## GROUP MEETINGS

DAY/DATE	TIME	GROUP	VENUE
Friday 1	14:30	History	The Racing Centre
Monday 4	-	Camera Group	No Meeting
Tuesday 5	14:30	Art Appreciation	The Racing Centre
Wednesday 6	10:30	Walking	No Meeting
	14:30	Antiques	The Racing Centre
Friday 8	10:30	Family History	The Racing Centre
Monday 11	10:30	Wings Wheels Water	The Racing Centre
	14:30	Scrabble	The Racing Centre
Tuesday 12	10:30	Model Making, Craft	The Racing Centre
	11:15	Coffee & Cook Off	The Racing Centre
	14:30	Discussion	The Racing Centre
Wednesday 13	12:00	Brunch Meeting	The Stable Cafe
Thursday 14	10:30	Carpet   Bowls	The Racing Centre
Friday 15	14:30	Music Appreciation	The Racing Centre
Monday 18	10:00	Executive Committee	-
	14:30	Speaker Meeting	Catholic Parish Hall
Tuesday 19	14:00	Creative Writing	Brampton Manor Care Hm
Wednesday 20	10:00	Mahjong	The Racing Centre
	14:30	Garden Group	The Racing Centre
Friday 22	14:30	Realm of Books	The Racing Centre
Tuesday 26	14:00	Portrait Group	Ashley Pavilion
	14:00	Rummikub	Brampton Manor Care Hm
Thursday 28	10:30	Carpet Bowls	The Racing Centre
-	MOTO Group - See Website		