Derby u3a News December 2026

It's membership renewal time!

We hope you have enjoyed your membership of Derby u3a during 2026, and that you will renew for 2027. Renewals are due by January 1st 2027.
We will be sending out a separate email shortly with renewal forms attached. (These are enclosed for those receiving this newsletter by post).
At the Special General Meeting in July the membership fees were reduced and are now as follows:

- £10 per person per annum for Full Members
- £6 per person for Associate Members.

NB - If you have joined in the past week, ie since 19th November, there is no need to renew, as your fee also covers you for 2027.

If you pay by **standing order** please amend the fee details in plenty of time to avoid extra work for our treasurer.



Christmas Buffet Lunch – Thursday November 26th
St Mary's Church Hall, Darley Lane DE1 3AU – Just a few places left! MEMBERS ONLY

* Hall open from 12.15 to receive your food donations
* Meal to start at 1.00 pm
* 80 places available

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A message from Colin Avison – our new trips organiser: Suggestions for our 2027 trips programme

In 2027, we are hoping to run a full programme of Derby U3A trips to a variety of interesting places. To help us decide where to go, I'd like to invite you all to share your suggestions and comments. Please let us know about any places of interest, destinations, events or activities you would like to see included. Your ideas and preferences will be considered when we put together next year's programme.
Please send your suggestions **before Christmas**.

"Cloud Storage and Digital Organization"



Thanks again to Milan Gurung, who runs our Digital Skills group. This time he has produced a very useful document about how cloud storage work, and the different types. The article has been attached to the email with this newsletter and is enclosed for those who receive a postal copy. It is also available on a new section on the Derby u3a website at https://derby.u3asite.uk/tech-skills/

Monthly Meetings – November 2026 - January 2027

Monthly meetings take place on the last Thursday of the month at 1.30 pm at St Mary's Church Hall, Darley Lane DE1 3AX. Free entry. All welcome! Next meetings:

- **November 26th – Christmas Buffet Lunch**
- **December – No meeting**
- **January 28th – Becoming an Artist and over 260 years of the Orrery.** Speaker Bob Moulder. Bob is an illustrator and has worked on around 300 publications. He studied Fine Art in Belfast but turned to illustration initially as a wannabe comic strip artist. In recent years he has returned to that first love, resulting in his recent graphic novel, The Orrery, about Joseph Wright's famous painting.



Craft and Chat





The Craft and Chat group meet from 10.15 – 12.00 on the 3rd Monday of each month at Artcore in Osnabruck Square. We are very lucky to have the use of these premises, which are so ideally situated, just a short walk from the bus station. It is a lovely, relaxing session, working on your own craft while chatting and having a cuppa. We would love to welcome some new members. The photos show a sample of the types of project we are working on:









Some groups are not meeting in December, whilst others are having a Christmas fuddle or treats. Please check the Groups Round-Up later in this newsletter for details for each individual group.



Dad's Xmas Present 1961 – a nostalgic poem by Colin Barron (Writing for Pleasure Group)

The old Christmas tree lights winked in the green living room
And through the window they cheered up the shivering privet bush
Dad wrestled with the cardboard box
He brought it in and placed it on the coffee table
Centre stage

Returning from busy boring school
We burst through the front door like Buffaloes
There was the inevitable squabble
Who would have the privilege of opening the box?
Eventually Mum intervened and wielded the Stanley knife in her pink rubber hands

There it stood in its magnificence
A shiny virgin Red & Grey Dansette Record Player
It possessed a wonderful plastic aroma
We stroked the interchange arm
Massaged the playing arm
Sniffed the new plastic coated fabric

Sister Olive shot upstairs
She sprinted down clutching her only Shadows LP
Brother Clive plugged in the wonderful apparatus
We sat on the old three seater leather settee chewing Wrigleys
Soon the Sheffield steel needle stroked the vinyl
Tony Meehan's tribal beat fused with Hank Marvin's magic plectrum and "Apache" flooded the room
Aural bliss!

Our sideboard quickly filled with cheap Juke Box singles
"Woolly Bully" Sam the Sham & The Pharoes
"The Clapping Song" by Shirley Ellis
"Telstar" by the Tornadoes

Along came our city's Mersey Beat
The Beatles, Gerry & The Pacemakers & The Searchers
We remembered by heart all the scratches on the precious vinyl
We coveted the LP sleeves
Bob Dylan's Triumph Tee Shirt on "Highway 61 Revisited"
The Beatles "Revolver" and the Art Nouveau portraits
The freaky pink lady lurking in Frank Zappa's "Hot Rats"

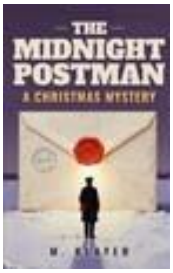
By the time the last one had left and packed their rucksack for University
The poor Dansette looked battered and needed A&E
The arthritic arm had two half crowns sellotaped to the playing head to hold it down
The table was live and gave off the occasional electric shock
It was still magnificent!

LOCAL NEWS

Albatross Coaches X6 Chatsworth Christmas Market bus service

This seasonal service connects Derby, Belper, Matlock, Bakewell and Chatsworth House. With the Chatsworth Christmas Market attracting visitors from across the area, Albatross aim to provide a convenient and stress-free alternative to driving. Passengers can sit back, relax and enjoy the journey without worrying about busy roads, finding parking or the additional costs and hassle that come with driving during the busy Christmas period. It's also a fantastic opportunity for people who don't have access to their own transport to enjoy a festive day out and visit Chatsworth, or

one of the towns along the way. The service operates from Tuesday to Saturday until December 12th. A timetable and bus fares is attached.
Note: Bus passes are not accepted on this service but Derby u3a members can claim 10% discount on Albatross taxi fares during this period.



THE MIDNIGHT POSTMAN, by M. Klayer — a Christmas mystery for ages 9-12 – FREE Copy to download
We have been contacted by the author of this children's book who has very kindly offered members of Derby u3a a free pdf download of the book.
"Strasbourg, France, December 1958. On the top floor of the Central Post Office, eleven thousand letters to Santa Claus are due to be pulped on December 24. Yet every night, someone answers them. Eleven-year-old Odile, who keeps a book of postmarks, sets out to find out who. Young readers solve the case with her: the 48 exhibits (envelopes, stamps, cancellations, a floor plan, a train timetable) are reproduced in the book, along with 12 puzzles, one of them based on the old "language of stamps". Its 36 short chapters follow the story day by day, from December 1 to Christmas morning. (298 pages)

As this is a large file, we are not attaching it to this newsletter, but if you would like a copy to download and read/play with your grandchildren or family friends, please email us at derbyu3a@gmail.com

NATIONAL U3A



Take part in the u3a Short Story Competition
The theme for this year's u3a Short Story Competition is '**Out of the Ordinary**.' Entry is free and open to all u3a members, and the deadline for submission **12 noon on Friday 22 January 2027.**
Sara Grant, *Bloomsbury* author and competition judge, is hosting a free online workshop for members with practical tips on refining your story before submission on Thursday 26 November. Sign up.
Go to https://www.u3a.org.uk/what-we-do/learning/learning-activities/short-story-competition-2026-7 to see the competition rules and how to enter.

GROUPS NEWS

NEW GROUP! Tai Chi
The Tai Chi course at Springwood Leisure Centre, Oakwood was a great success and we have now set up a Tai Chi group. Contact the group leader via the Derby u3a website groups page to hear about the regular weekly sessions that we hope to start in January.

PROPOSED NEW GROUP: Padel
Padel is an exciting racquet sport. If you are interested in joining or want more information about a u3a Padel group, please contact Andy Timms (details below)

PROPOSED NEW GROUP: Chess
Always wanted to learn chess or improve your game? A new group has been proposed to run a class for anyone from a complete beginner to those wanting to learn some strategies. If you are interested, please contact Andy Timms, Groups Coordinator (details below)

PROPOSED NEW GROUP: Short Walks 2
As the existing Short Walks group is currently full, a second group is now proposed which will also welcome well-behaved dogs on leads. If you are interested, please contact Andy Timms, Groups Coordinator (details below)

PROPOSED NEW GROUP: **Art and Craft for Pleasure Group.**
The new Painting for Pleasure group has been broadened to Art & Craft for Pleasure with the idea that members will bring their own projects and materials. We have enough interest to start the group but are still seeking a venue to meet on Monday afternoons. Explore your creativity, learn new techniques, and enjoy the company of like-minded people. There is no pressure, just a chance to paint, chat, and have fun. We also take time to have a tea or coffee together, making it a wonderful way to socialise as well as create. Those who have expressed interest will hear from Andy Timms when all is finalised.

GROUPS ROUND-UP

To contact any of the groups on the next pages, visit https://derby.u3asite.uk/groups/ and click on the group which interests you to be taken to their group page. Click on the Group email link to send a message to that group's organiser. Or email Andy Timms, Groups Coordinator on andytimmsu3a@gmail.com

Subject and I.T. Groups

Archaeology and History: The Archaeology and History group will be meeting at the CURC on 11 December at 10.30. We shall be having a presentation on Alfred the Great and a Christmas fuddle.

Architecture: There will be no meeting during December; we pick up again on Thursday 21st January at C.U.R.C.

Current Affairs: Meets once a month in the CURC on Green Lane (3 Dec at 10.15) and at an alternative venue in town, currently at the Cozy Club (17 Dec at 10.15). It is a group which discusses and debates topical issues without an agenda. Nothing is off limits. **We are now actively looking for new members for this group.**

Everyone is welcome. We look forward to seeing you soon. Please contact the group leader for further details.

Digital skills with confidence: Our next meeting is on Friday 4th December at the Central United Reform Church, Green Lane, Derby, DE1 1RS at 2pm. We will be looking at email confidence: from inbox to attachments. This will be the last meeting of the group, and our thanks go to Milan Gurung for helping us get the most out of our smartphones and laptops. Next Year Milan is going to concentrate on one-off presentations, which we are waiting to hear about.

Discussion Group: The Discussion group only has one meeting in December and that is on Thursday 10th at 10.15am. We will be meeting in CURC on Green Lane and the topic is; Is happiness the ultimate goal in life? Why or why not? Our next meeting is on January 14th.

Family and Social History: In November we shared some information about our families' and local community experiences in WWI and WW2. In December we will look at what we know about extreme weather e,g. winter 1947 and earlier affected the lives of our family. Also, documented extreme weather episodes in history. The group is now at full capacity but will respond to enquiries.

French Conversation: The French Conversation Group will be meeting on Tuesday December 15th from 1.00-3.00pm for the end of term Christmas Fuddle. There will be a pantomime, festive food and drink and we will end with some traditional French songs.

Geology and Physical Geography: Meeting at the CURC Stuart House, Tuesday 1 December at 1.30pm. We will be having a presentation on 'The Tertiary' continuing our work on the Geological Column.

German: The German group is meeting every 2 weeks for an hour at 10.30 on Thursdays. In December our meetings will be on the 3rd and 17th, venue to be confirmed. We meet informally for a drink and to participate in some German conversation, splitting into smaller groups to practice and discuss specific topics. All abilities are welcomed! For more information and to request to join the group please contact the group organiser on the German Group page of the Derby U3A website.

Local History: Meeting at the CURC Stuart House, Monday 14 December at 2.00pm. We will be having the first of a two-part presentation titled 'The Rise and fall of Coal Mining in Derbyshire - Part 1 The Rise.

Myths and Legends: Our next meeting is on Tuesday 8th December at 2 pm at the Central United Reformed Church on Green Lane when we will have a discussion, facilitated by Moy, on "Concerning our Earliest Memorable Myths and Legends". Home-made mince pies will be on offer!

Natural History: Please note that there is NO December meeting, due to the proximity to Christmas. Our first meeting in the New Year will be on 18th January.

Philosophy and Ethics: Philosophy & Ethics next meets at 10:30am Thursday, 21st January. There is no December meeting.

Psychology Group: a reminder there is no meeting this month. Thank you to all who have presented topics this year and to those who have already offered topics for next year. We should have an interesting and varied programme. Our first meeting in 2027 is Monday 26th January. Our topic is Avoidance Psychology. There will be a reminder in the January newsletter. New members welcome. Please send a message via the Psychology group page if you are interested. In the meantime, Christmas Greetings & Happy 2027 to you all.

Spanish Conversation: Wednesday December 2nd. Meeting presented by Penny at FMH. Wednesday December 16th - Meeting presented by Donna at FMH. We welcome new members. A small knowledge of Spanish would be an advantage.

Tomorrow's World: Musk's Master Plan. On Monday 7 December, 2.30pm, upstairs at the Carnero Lounge. Love him or loathe him, Elon Musk has a plan to change our near future like no one else can. We'll look at what he's promising, and whether it is visionary, fanciful or just very worrying. Whatever your view, come along and have your say.

Arts, Crafts, Literature and Music Groups

Art Appreciation: We will be holding our Christmas fuddle and quiz on Friday 18th December. Please join us at 10:30, Friends Meeting House 56 St. Helens Street Derby DE1 3GY If your surname begins A-M, would you please bring something savoury. Surname beginning N-Z, something sweet.

Book Group: At our December meeting we will be discussing local author Jon Dixon's book 'The Improbable We Can Do Today' - 'A collection of cosy fantasy mystery stories about resilience, ingenuity, love, belonging and gentle justice'. The group remains full to capacity.

Bookworms: Bookworms will be discussing the novel 'A Christmas Carol' by Charles Dickens at their December meeting. This is the classic tale about how a selfish miser transforms into a generous and kind hearted man after being visited by a ghost and three Christmas spirits on Christmas Eve. The group is at full capacity at the moment but please get in touch via the u3a website if you would like to be added to the waiting list. The group meets on the third Friday of the month at 2pm at Friends Meeting House

Classic Rock: Our December meeting will be on Thursday 10th December, 2pm at Friends Meeting House. The meeting will be a review of 2026 meetings and topics - playing tracks that didn't make it onto the playlist for some of them. We will also be considering topics for the start of 2027 and maybe having a 'Christmas Quiz'! New members are always welcome - even if it's only for a topic or band you are interested in. Email the group organiser or just turn up on the day.



Creative Crafts: Last month we worked on our Christmas projects, (see photo). In December we meet for our traditional Fuddle and then break until the New Year.

Creative Lettering: Our December meeting will take place on Wednesday 9th December in the Deakin Room, Darley Abbey Village Hall 1:30 -3:00 p.m. where we will be celebrating everything Christmas. You will be decorating baubles and making cards and gift tags with your calligraphy writing, along with using ready prepared lino prints, watercolour paints and even adding some gold foil embossing. Spaces still available where a warm welcome awaits.

Music Appreciation: We continue to enjoy varied programmes of classical music chosen by members. Choices are wide ranging from baroque to contemporary, opera to films. We meet fortnightly but will miss December 29th. New members welcome. No experience of expertise necessary.

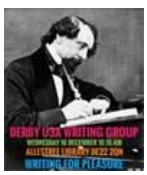
Painting for Beginners: At the beginning of December we will be painting Christmas Cards. We have been looking at views in and round Derby to paint over the last few months. We know that snow is not white but has a hint of blue in it. I am sure the class will produce some good work. Join us at Chester Green Community Centre, on every 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month at 13.00 till 15.00

Play Reading Group: The Derby U3A Play Reading Group will be meeting at the United Reform Church on Thursday 3rd December at 2.00 p.m. to read the play version of Treasure Island. New members welcome.

Sketching and Painting: On Fri Dec 11th 11.30 We are meeting in Weatherspoons Standing Order for some drawing of people and interior and social time looking at books about sketching etc..

Singing Group: We meet at All Saints Church Hall, Mickleover, DE3 0DL. All are welcome and no experience necessary. We meet fortnightly on a Friday afternoon 1.30pm to 3.00pm, our meetings in December are the 4th and 18th (the 18th will not be a normal meeting as we will be having a fuddle along with some music). We will be returning on 8 January 2027. For more information, please contact Janet via the u3a website.

Ukulele for Pleasure: There are two meetings in December; Tuesday the 1st and 15th.



Writing for Pleasure: The Writing for Pleasure group meets at Allestree Library on the third Wednesday of each month from 10.15 am to 11.30am. No previous writing experience required. If you would like to check out this friendly and welcoming group please contact the group leader via the website. Our next meeting will be on Wednesday 16 December 2026 from 10.15 am to 11.30am.

Leisure and Social Groups

Amusing Quiz: This month, we will be quizzing on the 2nd and 16th of December. Quizzes are held at the CURC, Stuart House, Green Lane on the first and third Wednesdays of each month from 2 to 4 p.m. At each meeting we quiz in different randomly selected teams and questions are on a wide variety of themes as well as General Knowledge. Our November quizzes included the questions: What name is given to the residents of Sunderland? How is a 'Grandfather Clock' more correctly known? and Harris Tweed can only be produced in which island chain?

Bridge: The U3A bridge club continues to meet fortnightly. New players are always welcome regardless of playing experience, so come and join us. Please contact us via the u3a webpage

Canasta: The canasta group will meet November 27th at the FMH at 1.30, but there will be no meeting in December as the meeting date is Christmas day

Cinema Group: The cinema group meet on the 4th Wednesday of the month at the Derby Museum Cafe at 2 pm where we chat about films we have seen and make plans to go as a group to see something that interests us. New members always welcome.

Dining Out: The Lunch group has had a name change to "Dining Out". On Wed Dec 30th, we are lunching at the Engine House restaurant, pre orders are needed by Dec 1st.

Evening Pubs Group: The Evening Pubs group meets from 7 to 9 pm in a Derby city centre pub on the fourth Tuesday of the month. Our November meeting was at the Five Lamps pub on 24th November. In December we will be having a festive meeting at the Royal Standard on the 22nd. Please contact the group organisers on the Evening Pubs Group page of the Derby U3A website for more information about our meetings and to express an interest in joining the group.



Gardens Group: In November the gardens group visited Derby Arboretum for a guided tour. The autumn colours were lovely. On 4th December we shall be meeting at the CURC to review our visits during 2026 and planning our visits for 2027. Please let me know via the Gardens Group webpage if you would like to join us.

MOTO (Members On Their Own) Group: This is a group for members who are on their own and would like to participate in activities with other u3a members, this could include, lunch, coffee, a day out, a walk, a visit to cinema/theatre etc. We have a Whats App group where members post messages there suggesting an event they would like to find someone to accompany them on and other members can respond. Contact the group leader on the website.

Real Ale: The Real Ale group meets on the second Thursday of the month from 3 to 5pm. We met as a group of 11 on 12th November at the Smithfield Inn. Our next meeting will be a return visit the Alexandra Tavern on 10th December. For more details of future

events and to express an interest in joining the group please contact the group organisers on the Real Ale Group page.

Social group – Allestree: The Allestree Social Group meets at 10.30am on the 2nd Friday of the month at The Markeaton pub on Kedleston Road in Allestree. It is an informal group where members meet for a chat and a catch up. Refreshments are available at the bar. The current contact is Jean, who can be contacted via the email on the website.

Table Top Games: Table Top Games will meet on the 7th December inside the Premier Inn on Full St, diagonal to the Quad. We start at 11am for approx 2 hours and hopefully hot drinks will be available to purchase this time. There is no charge for the venue.

Theatre Group: The following plays are available to book:



- The Other Side of Murder on Saturday 30 January 2027 at 2.30pm at Derby Theatre. The cost is £32.50 and payment is due by 27 November 2026.
- Punch 2027 on Saturday 6 February 2027 at 2.30pm at Nottingham Playhouse. The cost is £21.50 and payment is due by 11 December 2026.
- The Turn of the Screw on Saturday 20 February 2027 at 2.30pm at Derby Theatre. The cost is £32.50 and payment is due by 11 December 2026.
- Romeo and Juliet on Saturday 13 March 2027 at 2.30pm at Derby Theatre. The cost is £32.50 and payment is due by 9 January 2027.

If anyone is interested see Richard Sherratt at the Monthly Meeting or send him an email via the Theatre group page on our website.

Wine Appreciation: The Wine group tasted some of their most preferred wines from 2026 at the meeting held in November. All the wines scored around the 8 mark, so at least we were consistent in our enjoyment. The winner was Zinfandel from Morrisons The Best range. Available at around £9.50 / £10.00. We shall not be having a meeting in December as we are having a Christmas Lunch. We shall return in January with a theme of 'What the Papers Say'. If you wish to join the group please contact the Group Leader via the Groups page. Meanwhile enjoy whatever wine you prefer over the festive period, Merry Christmas.

Walking Groups

Tuesday Trampers: As the crisp autumn days give way to our month of festive spirit, we have a fantastic run of walks lined up to take us through to the end of the year: Crich Stand, Okeover & Thorpe, Christmas Lunch in Mugginton, Christmas Walk in Staunton Harold & Calke Abbey, and rounding the year off along the Cromford Canal. More details here: https://derby.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/tuesday-trampers/

Walks - Short: 3 December – Walk in Duffield, followed by lunch for those who have booked.



Walks by Public Transport: Friday 27th November – meet at bus station for the 10.20 am Ilkeston Flyer to Cotmanhay for a walk along Erewash Canal and valley. Please ensure you wear rambling boots or shoes, waterproofs, and bring food and drink. No walk in December. Next walk date 29th January 2027.

Wednesday Friendly Walks: We've been taking in recent walks at Alstonefield and Ilam Hall - both very picturesque walks! More great walks are coming during December and January…. and lots more fun. The walks average normally around 8 miles but we are only walking at just over 2 miles an hour. We are a very friendly group and you'll be made very welcome when you give us a try. If Wednesdays don't work for you, please check out some of the other wonderful walking groups Derby U3a offers. Remember, walk and be happy, walk and be healthy!

Wednesday Wanderers: Over the last four week we visited Swarkestone on the 28th November and Calke Estate on the 11th. We are walking in the Brailsford area on the 25th November, Repton environs on the 9th December and in and around Elvaston Castle estate on the 23 December. Happy walking in 2027.

Sports Groups

Badminton: We continue to meet weekly on Friday at the Springwood Leisure Centre, Oakwood, from 10-11am. Last session in December is on Fri 18th.

Bowls: The Bowls group is now playing INDOOR bowls at Springwood Leisure Centre on Friday Mornings from 10.00-12.00.

Pickleball: We continue to have a steady flow of new players in our Monday, Wednesday and Friday groups. Inductions will continue until Monday 14 December and then recommence on 4 January. Please make contact via the Derby u3a Pickleball page if you want to book a new player induction now to avoid the New Year rush! Our sessions (except for Christmas Day and New Year's Day) will continue as normal over the festive period.

Table Tennis: Table Tennis continues on Mondays and Wednesdays at 12 noon at Springwood Leisure Centre. We are primarily a social group - playing strictly for fun! If you don't currently play, have never played or want to try it again, come and join in. We can usually lend you a bat (also available 'for hire' from reception). New members are welcome but it might be worth messaging the group organiser to check how full sessions are currently.

Walking Football: The walking football group meet fortnightly on a Wednesday at Willows sports centre in Derby, where we play on the indoor pitch. We play on a 'no contact' basis, with the focus on enjoyment and moderate exercise rather than it being overly competitive. We play as a mixed gender group. No experience needed.

Next games are Wednesday 2, 16 & 30 December. Please get in touch via the Derby U3A website group link if interested in trying Walking Football.

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