



Newsletter: May 2026 Issue 135

learn, laugh, live!

Registered Charity number: 1164900

Programme

May 22 nd	William Avonell	Weather Lore
June 26 th	Keith Batchelor	Selsey Pavilion update
July 24 th	Sophie Duffy	An Author's inspirations
August	No meeting	Alternative event TBD
September 25 th	Selsey u3a Interest Groups	A chance to hear about what goes on!
October 23 rd	TBA	
November 27 th	Jane Glennie	Ministering Angels – Nursing in The Crimea
December 16 th	No meeting	Christmas Lunch at Chichester College 16 th December

May

What a month! Nothing says, 'British Summer' like eating an ice-cream in a coat, while insisting, 'It's lovely once you are out of the wind!' Some people have donned their shorts and packed away their trousers till October. (And that's not just the postal workers!) Talking of shorts, Tens of thousands ran 26.2 miles in The London Marathon, while spectators watched from the comfort of an armchair or stood behind barriers, shouting, 'You're doing great, not far now.' Five miles from the start. London was heaving and transport from one vantage point to another, was of course, awful. Many spectators were exhausted, not benefitting from the free bananas and jelly babies being handed to runners. We diligently took our IDs to voting stations and now wonder whether our X will make any difference. Down at East Beach pond, the cygnets have hatched! Mum and Dad are proudly showing them off, visiting local properties. Question is, will they still be allowed to cross the Fontwell Road green, now that it has been bought for £50, by an unknown buyer?

Just a short reminder that the Care Shop and their volunteers are there for all of us should we need them. Their help includes a range of welfare and safeguarding issues, including car sharing, plus help with all sorts of technology, banking, tax assessment, writing letters etc. If you have a problem, The Care Shop, is there for you!

Membership Fees

Membership renewal was due by the end of March. If you haven't renewed yet, it's not too late. We are keeping fees at £15.00 (£11.00 for dual members) for another year. Please note, the dual membership reduction applies for members of other u3as. We do not offer joint membership for couples. Janet will be available to collect cash or cheques in an envelope, with your name and membership number at Open meetings. Alternatively, envelopes can be deposited at Selsey Town Hall. If you would prefer to pay by bank transfer, the details are:

Selsey u3a
Sort Code 60 - 05 - 24
Account number 21669201

Open Meetings

Please note that doors open for admittance at 1.30 pm.

Why not bring along friends who are not yet members of Selsey u3a.? Who knows? They might like to join. Guest entrance is £4 in May, a bargain and this month, you'll get new biscuits and a talk from William Avonell, entitled, 'Weather Lore.' We thank our members for welcoming visitors. Please note only volunteers can reserve tables. Talking of tables, to avoid chaos and accidents, please can we remain seated at the end of meetings until asked to fold up and stack our chairs?

VOLUNTEERS WANTED FOR TEA DUTY FOR FUTURE OPEN MEETINGS!

Please don't be shy. Volunteer to help with the teas to ensure refreshments are available.

Please have a chat with Val Wright. Remember, you will get in for free and have the first pick of the biscuits!

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Our Usual Polite Request

Please can attendees of our open meetings, continue to remain respectful when speakers are addressing the audience and refrain from individual conversations. Thank-You.

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Committee Request.

Hopefully all members will have updated their contact details when renewing their membership. There are other ways of providing accurate information regarding medical issues and contacts. Lions Club International, 'Message in a bottle' is a scheme where medical details and contacts are kept in a tube in the fridge, so emergency services can quickly find relevant information. These tubes are available at The Care Shop. There is an ICE App, (in Case of Emergency) available for mobile phones. Details of both schemes will be spoken about at the May Open Meeting on Friday 22nd May. Please let Janet Topping know if your details have recently changed. Janet's email address is: jmtopping@aol.com

Thank-you

Future Trips and Events

The committee is always looking at how we can engage our members in interesting ventures. We have investigated two possible trips and as always, we aim to gauge the interest of members before finalising booking transport and calculating costs.

17 people have shown an interest in a trip to Poole. This has been booked for October 14th. A tour of The Lifeboat museum has been arranged for a maximum of 12 people. Cost: £10 per person. Places will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. Others can wander around the harbour, browse the shops and enjoy a leisurely lunch.

The British Museum is planning to display The Bayeux Tapestry from September 2026 to July 2027. We are considering a trip for early May 2027 (Trip and costings to be decided based on interest.) Please let Chris Rainer know if you are interested in joining this trip.

Looking ahead, to celebrate Selsey u3a's 15th anniversary, we are considering having a Hog Roast in August 2027. Hopefully this summer gathering will bring members together for delicious food, good company and a memorable afternoon. Further details of venue, date, timings and costs will follow.

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Current Interest Groups

Amblers	9.30 Weekly, Wednesdays	Music appreciation	2.00 pm 2nd Monday of the month
Bus Explorers	10.00 a. m. 2 nd Tuesday of the month.	NB With regret, this group is not suitable for those with mobility issues and/or need to use “walkers” to enable them to walk.	
Computer	By arrangement	Sunday Lunch	12.30 1 st Sunday of the month
Family History	By arrangement	Topical discussion	10.00 a.m. 4 th Monday of the month
Stage and Screen	10.30a.m. 3 rd Tuesday of the month	World cuisine:	12.30 p.m. 3 rd Thursday of the month.
History	10a.m. 4 th Tuesday of the month	True Crime	2.00 p.m. 1 st Monday of the month

Whilst members continue to enjoy the current interest groups on offer, It would be greatly appreciated if any of you would consider creating new groups. Remember, you do not have to be an expert to start a group, just enthusiastic. There are plenty of interest group examples in The Third Age Matters magazine. If you're interested in something, chances are someone else is, too. If a specific group is “full” that is, no additional members can be accommodated in a leader's home etc, then interested members can begin a second group. Members will then be emailed and a notice placed in the newsletter to inform others of new groups.

Anyone wishing to start up or join an interest group must first contact Chris Rainer, the Group Coordinator, who will be only too happy to assist.

(Chris Rainer) 07580197648 email christinerainer914@gmail.com

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Music Appreciation

For more information, contact Chris Rainer 07580 197648 or christinerainer914@gmail.com

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World Cuisine

Six members of the group will meet to enjoy lunch at an Italian restaurant in Chichester. Members take turns to choose a different restaurant each month. Fortunately, Chichester has varied choices available which include Thai, Indian, Turkish, Greek etc. some of which have become favourites over several years.

True Crime Interest Group

The Case of the poisoned Partridge

Hubert Chevis was a British Army lieutenant whose death became one of Britain's most famous unsolved poisoning cases. In June 1931, Chevis and his wife Frances were eating dinner at their bungalow near Blackdown Camp in Surrey. The meal included two Manchurian partridges. After taking a bite of the larger bird, Chevis reportedly said the bird tasted terrible. Soon afterward, he suffered violent cramps and convulsions. His wife also, allegedly, became ill after tasting a small amount of her husband's bird. Chevis died the next morning in hospital. Frances survived, discharged herself and went with the chauffeur and children's nanny to the family flat in Knightsbridge. The chauffeur and nanny returned to clean the bungalow and bring Frances' possessions to London. An examination found that the partridge and cooking sauce had been poisoned with strychnine.

The case became even more mysterious when Chevis's father received anonymous telegrams from Dublin signed “J. Hartigan,” including one that read: “Hooray, hooray, hooray!” sent before the death had been publicly announced. Police investigated several suspects, including Frances and her former husband, but

no evidence was strong enough to charge anyone. Investigators could not determine how the poison got into the birds, and the coroner eventually returned an open verdict. The poisoning remains officially unsolved and is often referred to as “The Case of the Poisoned Partridge.”

Us sleuthers raised many questions, eg, ‘How did the partridge get poisoned?’ ‘Did Frances feign her illness? and ‘Did the butler do it?’ to name a few. It was a very interesting afternoon. Thanks Simon for this perplexing presentation. JA

Stage and Screen Group

Plans are afoot for the group to see, 'My Fair Lady' at the Chichester Festival Theatre in August.

Amblers

We assembled earlier than usual at a different bus stop to ensure we made a good connection in Chichester for a Witterings bus. Good job we did, as traffic on the A27 was at a standstill. Arriving at West Wittering, our first stop was for refreshments in the café. Once revived, we set off along the sandy beach towards East Wittering. It was a glorious day and it soon became clear that many of us had chosen the wrong apparel. We marvelled at views, house renovations and admired various floral displays. Arriving at East Wittering we settled on The Shore Inn for lunch. We were impressed by their new menu and enjoyed very tasty meals. We had a great day. Thanks Vicky for the photos.



Cryptic Corner

The interest group doesn't officially exist yet, so here's an opportunity to see if wordplay is for you. Clue: Cancel my order for plant. (8) To be discussed at the May Open Meeting.

Bus Explorers

This month, six explorers visited Emsworth a small town lying at the top of a channel in Chichester Harbour. On arrival, the group fortified themselves with hot drinks and a cream tea for some at the Methodist Church in the town square before exploring the harbour and seashore. Fortunately, the tide was out so the group were able to walk along the sea wall admiring the varied houses on the way and choosing the ones they would buy if they could afford to!

The path around the harbour proved too much for some members of the group so all retraced their steps and arrived at a small street food place for lunch and a welcome rest. After an enjoyable lunch they made their weary way to the bus stop for the return journey and arrived home after a tiring and interesting day.



Emsworth has an interesting history which dates back to the early 13th century. It has a long fishing, sailing and boat building heritage but was most famous for producing oysters which were sent, by train each day, to the best hotels and restaurants in London.

However, in 1902 the oysters in Emsworth harbour, and others around the country, became infected with typhoid from untreated sewage draining into the sea. Because of this, local authorities became responsible for keeping waters and harbours clean and untreated sewage was not allowed to be discharged into the sea. The oyster industry never recovered.

Attempts were made to establish Emsworth as a rival to Brighton by Princess Caroline of Wales but these failed because Brighton attracted her husband, the Prince Regent. The building she established eventually became the home of the yacht club.



OPEN MEETING

Friday 24th April 2026 at 2.30 pm in the Selsey Centre

RECORD

Attendance: 38 members 3 visitors

1. Welcome:

Ronnie thanked everyone for coming and thanked Robert for waiting while our AGM took place.

2. Speaker:

Ronnie then introduced our speaker, Robert Smith, whose talk was entitled "London Slave Owners."

Recent events have focused on the slave trade in Bristol and Liverpool, but London also had slave owners. In 1833 with the Slavery Abolition Act Britain paid compensation to all owners but the slaves themselves received nothing. Slave trade really started back in 1554 when, due to wars with the Dutch, English traders lost their contacts in Antwerp and Ghent. Tried the Caribbean with the Spanish treasure ships but there was an element of risk, so they tried the coast of West Africa where there were rumours of gold. John Locke was the first adventurer to return with a stash of ivory and 5 black men. The Lord Mayor (Sir William Garrard) helped to sell the ivory and Dorney Court was purchased

on the proceeds. Queen Elizabeth 1 raised a Charter to allow John Hawkins to continue to trade goods and people, one of Drake's first voyages was on a slave run. The Royal African Company was founded trading in gold, ivory and people. It wasn't particularly successful but received a Charter from Charles II and his brother the Duke of York (later James II). Originally slaves were just shipped to the sugar plantations, but tobacco was increasingly popular, and the colonists couldn't harvest sufficient quantities. It was decided that convicts could be transported to work in the fields but then eventually slaves were imported. William Beckford, another Lord Mayor, was involved in the Royal African Company and gave a lot to London charities but is now in the same contentious area as Edward Colston who endowed a lot of Bristol. Statues of both these men are now stored in museums away from the public gaze. Much of the money from the plantations went into property, or art which now forms the foundations of collections in The National Gallery and other museums. John Angerstein used to buy art and set up a fund to help liberate slaves although all his wife's money came from plantations. Francis Baring set up his own bank with profits from his plantations and loaned money to the USA for the Louisiana Purchase.

Janet thanked Robert on behalf of us all for his informative talk.

3. Quiz answers:



Jo read the answers to London Slave Owners and an "Oscar" was presented to the winning table for a photo op.

4. Admission draw:

The prize of a £10 voucher from T&T Fruits was won by Val Wright.

5.Raffle draw: Tickets were drawn and all prizes were claimed.

6. Next Meeting:

Our next Meeting will be on 22nd May and our speaker will be William Avenell with a talk entitled "Weather Lore".

Ronnie thanked everyone for their attendance and invited them to pack up their chairs.

Meeting closed at 3.35pm

Contact Information

Selsey u3a Telephone number:	Membership:	Janet Topping	0778 304 0407
Groups Coordinator:		Chris Rainer	0758 0197 648
Newsletter:		Jo Azulay	joanneazulay195@aol.com