



Melbourne Area Derby

NEWSLETTER SPRING 2025

INTEREST GROUPS

A big part of what we do is run interest groups, and with over 20 interest groups, madu3a is certainly having a busy time and has provided welcome opportunities for meeting socially over the long winter, but now Spring is around the corner and there is plenty to look forward to.

BOOK GROUPS

These are always popular, but currently full, so if anyone would like to be in a group we can give advice on how to start one of your own – it really couldn't be simpler. Please speak to Sue Kerr, Groups coordinator.

The Friday book group reads a range of literature, the last 2 books being *The Phone Box at the Edge of the World*, all about loss, grieving and hope, and *Chums* by Simon Kuper, which gives a fascinating insight into the role that Oxford University plays in preparing our political leaders.

MOTO

Members on Their Own. Immediately popular, members contact each other via WhatsApp to suggest social activities and have already arranged a short break to a Warners' Hotel in October; some meet regularly for Soup and Pudding Club on alternate Wednesdays, while others have made visits to the cinema, met for a coffee and a chat and been to a classical concert. Why not join us? You can be either permanently or temporarily on your own!

POETRY APPRECIATION GROUP 1

We meet in a member's home once a month on a Monday afternoon. Either a member leads a discussion on a chosen poet with each member contributing at least one poem, or a topic is chosen. All this leads to members trawling through their memories, library books or their own bookshelves (or the internet) to provide a contribution to discussion. Much new is learnt and the enquiring mind satisfied. Poets and their poetry range over many centuries, cultures and continents. From the poetry of the Middle Ages to Romanticism and modern pop and folk culture.

WALKING

There are two groups, one specifically for short, easy walks once a month, and another for slightly longer or more challenging walks. They are mainly local and usually involve a cafe along the way!



Here are members on a recent walk through Dimmingsdale to see the snowdrops and to have coffee (and cake) at the Ferrers Centre

REFLECTIONS OF OUR TIME

We have now held a couple of meetings starting to explore from the end of World War two. The second meeting we looked at what it must have felt like for the soldiers and evacuees returning to home life. We could only imagine what impact this had on families. Also how did the women feel having to return to being a housewife after keeping the UK in production doing the jobs of men. They had experienced independence, a life outside of the home.

FAMILY HISTORY

We still continue to trace our ancestors helping each other when brick walls arise.

Most of the ancestors that we find are labours with very large families however they still have a story to tell without them we would not be here. Meetings are on the second Wednesday afternoon of the month at The Royal British Legion.

PHOTOGRAPHY STEP BY STEP

After a wet few months, we managed to have a dry day in February photographing the Snowdrops at Calke Abbey - followed of course by the customary cake and a cuppa. In March the sun shone for us for a trip to Moira Furnace and a walk along the canal.



If you have any ideas for local spots you have come across and which would provide somewhere to take photos, we would welcome your suggestions for next year's programme.

QUIZ

The u3a team won their heat in the first 2 rounds of the annual Village Quiz, reaching the quarter finals. which was a great achievement. The Quiz Group will meet at the Assembly Rooms on Thursday 27 March, 7 for 7.30. Come on your own, as a pair, a 3 or a full team of 4 – we can arrange to put you in a team on the night. Lots of fun to be had and everyone is welcome. £2 entry covers a hot drink and biscuit.

MEMBERSHIP

Are you making the most of your membership?

FRIENDS NEWSLETTER

Why not sign up to the u3a Friends Newsletter which is delivered every month to your email inbox? It tells you about what's happening across the movement and upcoming online events and learning opportunities.

There are also in-person summer schools across the country. Offers include discounts on travel insurance, English Heritage memberships and National Trust gift cards (which you can use yourself). Details are in the latest magazine.

THIRD AGE MATTERS MAGAZINE

If you opt to receive the magazine when you renew your membership you will find all sorts of offers and opportunities.

SPEAKERS

We are fortunate to be able to engage some brilliant speakers for the monthly meetings, most recently having a talk on women in aviation and a talk on how to avoid scams. Please see the posters on: Facebook, or our website [MADu3a website](#) and read our regular email updates to make sure you know what's coming next.

NEXT MONTHLY MEETING

The next monthly meeting will be at the Assembly Rooms when we will be having our annual Showcase, a chance to see what our groups do and also find out a bit more about the national u3a organisation.

U3A ON YOUTUBE

In the meantime, there are lots of videos and podcasts to find out more on the u3a Youtube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/user/TheU3a/videos>