



NEWSLETTER

... from the horse's mouth

June 2026

Issue No.73

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Chair's message:

Dear Members,

I hope you coped better than I did with the heatwave at the end of May. I spent much of that week behind closed curtains trying to keep cool! No sooner had the warm weather arrived than it disappeared again, replaced by chilly winds and now what seems like constant heavy showers.

Of course, we do need the rain, but it would be nice if it could save itself for the night-time and leave us some pleasant evenings to enjoy. As I write this, I'm hoping the weather settles into

something a little more predictable—warm enough to enjoy, but not much above 25 degrees.

One thing that has kept me entertained recently is a motion-activated camera that was installed following a break-in. Watching the footage has become surprisingly addictive. I've discovered that my garden is a regular meeting place for badgers and foxes, who seem to be having great fun exploring every corner. It's wonderful to see so much wildlife right on the doorstep.

Let's hope the coming weeks bring us some sunshine, lighter evenings, and plenty of opportunities to get out and about.

Best wishes,

Carol, MIU3A Chair

Carol wrote this before our latest very hot weather! Sitting here compiling in the heat! *Ed:*

Many thanks to Pam Paszkowska for editing and compiling the Newsletter for the past several editions. She's putting down her pen, and this will be her last Newsletter. Enjoy the read.

Carol

Following on from the above we now need a Newsletter Editor! Basic use of Word and getting everybody to make contributions needed. Somebody else then compiles it and sends it out. Only 4 editions a year! Could always share with another member. If you could help, let Carol (Chair) know

We also need a Business Secretary to join the Committee. This mainly involves ensuring that we keep all the paperwork together, receive notices from the u3a National Office and undertake returns both to the National Office and the Charity Commission. None of these are very onerous! Again, if you can help, let Carol (Chair) know.

AGM – New Committee

Following the AGM in May, we now have a new committee. You can contact them via the "Contact" button on the website <http://www.miu3a.org.uk>.

Wish List

- The very hot weather does not cause any trouble
- We have an excellent World Cup
- Wimbledon is as great as it usually is

TV

- Sport does not take over all the schedules

Working together with the Community

Community Arts Hub



Units 2-4 Granada House
Gabriel's Hill
Maidstone
Kent ME15 6JR
☎ 01622 602204

There is a new arts hub that has been set up in Maidstone, and it offers meeting spaces to book that may be helpful for some of our groups.

They can be contacted via their web page at creativemaidstone.com

Park and Ride

There is a free park & ride service to Maidstone Hospital which is a short walk to our meeting hall. It runs Monday to Friday every half hour.

The postcode for it is ME16 0XP and it can be found behind the big DFS store just off Beaver Road.

Thank You

Having just retired from the mui3a Committee after 9 years in roles of both Chair and Vice-Chair, I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has helped and supported me over this period; fellow committee members, past and present, not forgetting the wider membership of our organisation.

My involvement with mui3a has, in many ways, been a major part of my life over the years and has been an experience I would not have wanted to miss. I often wonder just how I ended up doing what I did as I certainly had no agenda in those early days. When I first joined mui3 I could never ever have imagined becoming a member of the Committee.

Having moved to Maidstone from the West Midlands some 12 years ago, my partner, Mary, insisted I find something useful to do and not spend my time getting under her feet (she actually found rather more colourful words with which to express this).

Mary was, and still is, a member of Maidstone u3a and she made it clear that I should not join Maidstone myself. Her view was that I needed to develop my own friendship circle and so I joined Invicta. I often joke that her real concern was that I might embarrass her in front of her friends at Maidstone. That, of course, is not actually true – although I suspect many of you will understand the sentiment.

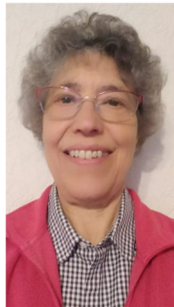
Whatever the reason, joining mui3a, together with participating in committee work, proved to be one of the best decisions I could have made and I am grateful for the valued friendships, support and encouragement over the years.

As I move on, I do so with the confidence that under Carol's leadership your new Committee brings together an excellent mix of experience, energy and talent, and I am sure they will continue to build a strong and successful future for Maidstone Invicta u3a.

Thank You and Good Luck

David Holmes

Interest Groups Team



Sue and Anne

“We are your Interest Groups Team Leaders and we are here to help you”

- If you have any concerns about the groups you co-ordinate
- Need help attracting more members to your group
- If your group is full with a waiting list, we can help with starting a second group
- If members are looking for a specific group that isn't currently on the Interest groups list, please let us know and we'll do our best to help with starting a relevant group.
- Do you have a skill you'd like to share with others?
- New members, if you need help finding the right group

Please email us at groups@maidstoneinvictau3a.org.uk if you want to get in touch. Alternatively, we'll be available at the monthly meetings so come and have a chat with us”.

Group Activities

Village visits 3 Farningham church of St Peter & Paul

We had a really lovely visit to this charming Village, that lies in the valley of the river Darent, 17 miles from London.



The Parish Church midway between to ends of the village. The Church was built between 1225 and 1245 on the site where it is thought to have been an early Saxon Church.

We were given an excellent talk on the church and guided around the village. As always time runs away and I for one would like to visit again to seek out what we missed.

All this topped off with a lovely lunch in good company.



Thanks to Pat Edwards who stepped in to lead the Group.

Carol Gupwell

Creative Writing Group

Have you ever considered writing short stories ?

Our small Creative Writing group meets the third Wednesday of the month from 10-12.30. in a member's house usually at Grove Green or Barming. One month we spend our time reading our work to each other and giving feedback. This is a great way to communicate with clarity to others. In the second month we each provide a short writing exercise for the group which we complete at the session. This improves our writing knowledge and experience.

Writing relieves stress and helps you gain awareness of your surroundings and feelings. By producing a story and working on the exercises you'll feel productive which can help with life in general.

We laugh, discuss and learn from each other's perspectives. We all have preferred genres and different writing styles and life experiences. There's an option to write a short story six times a year of 500-1500 words or thereabouts.

If you have always wondered if you can write and not sure if it's for you, do try us, you'll be welcome.

Viv Fuller Group member

Quilting Group

Our Quilting Group has been working over the past year on the quilt pictured which we have now completed.



This all came about as a friend of mine who, due to her present situation, was no longer able to carry on quilting. She still had a pack of coordinating fabrics in her possession and generously donated this to our group. We decided this was a golden opportunity to make a quilt which we would give to a worthy charity. Those who weren't

working on their own projects took up the challenge. We worked from an American Sampler Book, and each chose a design we fancied having a go at. We found names like City Scape, Rose of Sharon, Drunkards Path, Spider's Web and Tumbling Blocks to name a few. This was a good introduction to those who have never made a quilt before and an opportunity to try some new designs for those in the group who were more experienced.

We have now donated our quilt to the charity Project Linus UK.

Gill Sands Quilting Group Facilitator

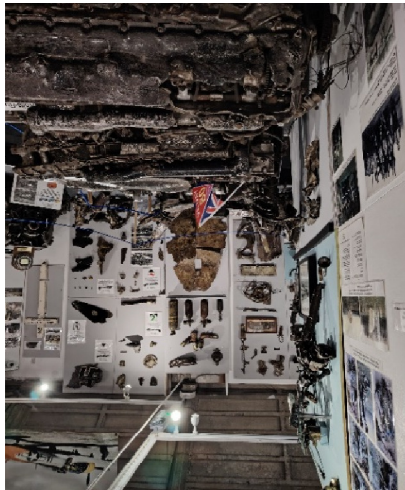
Grumpy Old Men

Grumpy Old Men have confirmed that they will not be submitting an entry in this year's Red Bull Soap Box Race. This follows a decision last year to abandon plans to enter the Maidstone River Festival Raft Race.

Speaking exclusively to the Maidstone Invicta u3a Newsletter, a spokesman for Grumpy Old Men said, "sadly this decision was inevitable given the advancing age of our members, but it will allow us time to focus on our core activities: eating and drinking."

KBO David Holmes

Village Visits Group 2 – April to June



Lashenden Air Warfare Museum at Headcorn Aerodrome was the venue for our April visit, organised by Anne and Denis Chapman. Eleven of us attended what was a very interesting visit with lots to see and learn about. Our guides, one of whom was Melvyn,

met us on arrival at the Museum, and were also on hand to answer any questions that were asked of them.

Following our tour of the Museum, as an added bonus we were then taken across to see inside one of the hangars. We all found this very interesting and felt quite privileged for this unexpected extra.



Melvyn gave us a brief introductory talk about the history of the Museum and explained just how much it has developed over the years from its first inception.

The museum collection was started by members of the Maidstone branch of Royal

Air Forces Association in the late 1960's.

The museum itself came into being when the owner of Headcorn Aerodrome, Mr Freeman, offered the Maidstone branch of the Royal Air Forces Association a building for use as a museum in early 1970.



The museum opened to the public Easter 1970 taking on the name of Lashenden Air Warfare Museum (Lashenden being the wartime name of Headcorn Aerodrome). Feel free to check out their website where there can be found a huge amount of

information, far too much to share here, although I've included a few photos as a taster.

After thanking Melvyn and his team we provided them with a donation before making our way to The Plough at Langley for a most enjoyable lunch. The service was good, chatter lively and the food very tasty.

In May, a group of us were led on this occasion by David and Mary on a visit to Teston Village.



Our visit began in St Peter & St Paul Church where we were given a short talk, with slides, on the history of the Church and the village, presented by members of the Church and their History Society. This covered the background to important buildings including Barham Court, Tutsham Cake Mill and the Alfred Reader Cricket Ball factory. The roles of significant former residents were also covered.

The Church were holding their regular Tuesday get together including tea, coffee and cake and we were generously invited to participate in

their refreshments, being mindful to not eat too much cake as we were having lunch later. Donations were made in this respect.



We explored some notable graves in the Churchyard, and had a short walk in the village, taking in the former Alfred reader Cricket Ball factory, following which we had a very enjoyable lunch at the Redstart Inn where we were very well looked after by the staff.

With so many of our group members having holidays or other commitments in June, no visit was planned. However, plans are now in place for a visit to Wateringbury in July, which has been organised by Tracey and Molly.

Linda Taylor

Art Group

The art group continues every month - June was a summer theme which gave some very varied results. My contribution was a preliminary cartoon of my son bringing me some necessary items for an unexpected 6 day stay in Hospital.

I asked for clean underwear, toothbrush and a nightie. He brought me in some items ready for my holiday i.e. swimsuit, goggles and flippers!!! Not exactly suitable for Maidstone Hospital.

We do have room for one new member to our group if anyone is interested - 3rd Tuesday of the month in Tarragon Road

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