

CVu3a UPDATE

Edition: Seventy-One— Nov/Dec 2025

Editor: John Hayston.

Contact: Johnhayston1@gmail.com

A very warm welcome to those new members who have joined us since the last newsletter was sent out.

November Meeting

We had a real treat this time thanks to Mary Kings absorbing presentation. One of Great Britain's most celebrated event riders, renowned for her outstanding achievements and remarkable career in the equestrian world. Born in 1961 in England, Mary's passion for horses began at a young age, and she quickly developed her skills, working her way up from humble beginnings. Determined and persistent, she started by training local ponies and eventually established herself as a formidable competitor in eventing, a sport that combines dressage, cross-country, and show jumping.

Mary King's career took off in the late 1980s, and she has since represented Great Britain at six Olympic Games, earning both team silver and bronze medals. Her Olympic successes include a team silver in Athens 2004 and a team bronze in London 2012. Beyond the Olympics, she has competed in numerous World Equestrian Games and European Championships, collecting a host of medals and contributing to the British team's consistent top rankings.

Perhaps most inspiring is Mary's resilience and longevity in the sport. She has won the prestigious Badminton Horse Trials and the Burghley Horse Trials, some of the world's top eventing competitions. Throughout her career, she has been known for her skill, sportsmanship, and her ability to form strong partnerships with a variety of horses. Mary King remains a role model for many aspiring riders, demonstrating that dedication and hard work can lead to a lifetime of achievement in equestrian sports.

Mary also holds the title; Deputy Lieutenant of Devon which is an honorary position appointed to assist the Lord-Lieutenant, who is the King's representative in the county. Deputy Lieutenants support civic, voluntary, and social activities across Devon, representing the Lord-Lieutenant at official events when required. Their duties may include attending ceremonies, presenting awards, supporting local charities, and promoting community spirit throughout the county. The position is a mark of recognition for individuals who have made significant contributions to public life in Devon.

December Meeting Christmas Fun!

In the words of those consummate entertainers those of our generation will be so familiar with and now for something completely different.....

As Christmas is rapidly approaching and we want to add some festivity to our monthly meeting, we will be entertained on **Thursday 4 December by Jude Coram, Comedy Stage Magician**. Basically, if all the tricks work that's the magic, but if they fail spectacularly, that's the comedy. So, whatever happens on the afternoon I think we can expect some fun.

We look forward to seeing you at our last meeting of the year when besides teas and coffees we will treat you to mulled wine (alcoholic and non-alcoholic) or maybe a glass of a seasonal fizz,

accompanied by a few nibbles (don't forgo your lunch though!) and for the early birds, one of Jane's homemade mince pies.



Quilters donation cheque handover to Hospiscare

Hospiscare sent their lovely representative, Ben, to collect the cheque of the funds we raised in the Autumn quilt raffle, in September. Ben gave a short chat about the importance of fundraising and how every donation makes a difference to the charity.

Our quilt winner, Jenny, also came along with her quilt, to be pictured, along with the group of quilt makers, on the handing over of the cheque. One of our CVU3A Photographers, Greta Edwards, kindly came along too, to do the honours of taking the photographs.

Our special thanks go to Ben, Jenny and Greta for their support. Homemade cakes and fancy biscuits from France were provided by a couple of the quilters, to go with our teas and coffees, which we all enjoyed with our guests. Thank you, ladies!



What happened to the rabbit hand puppets?

Naturally, they multiplied.

This is a special thank you to all our members who knitted and crocheted the rabbit hand puppets and hats. These beautifully made items, came in a spectrum of colours. Hopefully, they will make a child smile. They have been taken to Joan and David, local organisers of the appeal, at the Willand Methodist Church. They aim to send out at least 150 Christmas shoeboxes, transported to Ukraine, Moldova and other eastern European countries. They should be on their way very soon.

What happened to the used stamps?

Thank you for responding to our appeal for used stamps. We were surprised and very grateful for the response from u3a members. Keith and I spent many hours trimming them, to meet the required specification. They have been boxed up and sent to the Royal institute for the Blind. The Box weighed 2.3kg, - that's a lot of stamps! We would ask you to save your Christmas stamps, so we can help the RNIB again.



Psssst ... have you heard?

The new Introduction to Painting Course has started at the Walronds, where Sue Hooper-Lawrie is teaching three separate groups of CVU3A fortnightly. Where does she find the energy?

The only thing I remember from school days is that blue and yellow make green. That was the limit of my knowledge of mixing paint.

So far, and we have only been at it for two sessions, we have learnt that every imaginable colour or to be correct, HUE, can be mixed from the three primary colours which our quiz brainboxes will know are RED, BLUE and YELLOW. Mixing pairs of the primary colours gives us the three secondary colours of Violet, Green and Orange; and mixing a primary and a secondary colour reveals the six tertiary colours of red-orange or amber; yellow-orange or vermillion, yellow-



green or chartreuse; blue-green or teal; blue-violet and red-violet. Leaping ahead, I supposed you could achieve greater variety by using darker or lighter shades of the 3 primary colours.

To be honest, I am finding this colour-mixing so intriguing, I could continue happily discovering more and more hues without ever concerning myself with producing an actual painting. In between sessions I am spending hours mixing and playing with paint while the housework waits. I am having such fun.

And loving words, I find the names of the colours enticing: Ceruleum Blue, Alizarin, French Ultramarine, Yellow Ochre, Cadmium Red. Never did I dream I would be enjoying a u3a Course so much. So here, with appreciation, is a limerick written for Sue.

Tints, Shades and Hues

We know a young lady called Sue
Who loves every shade, tint and Hue
She paints every day
And helps u3a
To believe they are artistic too.
So many sign up for her sessions
She spends many hours planning lessons
We mix and we splodge
And a few of us bodge
But our Sue smiles at all our confessions.
We stand in a queue, while we wait for a brew
To refresh us and keep us from fainting
But one eye's on Sue
For she stresses anew
When her tutees don't finish their painting.
We're learning so much
With an artistic touch
Using brushes and paper and HUES
We're cheered on and praised
And our spirits are raised
So, to Sue Hooper-Lawrie, Thank YOU!
Linda J.R McMillan – October 2025



News from Interest Groups

French Conversation #2

The group now meets on the 1st Monday of each month at The Steamer, Cullompton from 15:00-16:30

Creative Writers

The word we were working on was CHANGES. Chris, our new member, wrote about an exciting life change when she retired from teaching and set off for Scotland in an old camper van. On her way she stayed on the outskirts of several Cathedral cities. Her aim was to settle in a community sharing the work and worship.

Iona was the lucky recipient of her skills. There she stayed for three years before taking a job in Edinburgh. What a marvellous thing to do! Such an interesting experience for Chris and we were captivated by her story. (If I were the talks organiser, I would be pestering Chris to speak at one of our monthly meetings). We were left wanting more.



Linda brought us back to Willand with her piece about the changes in banking over the past few decades. She remembered her time working in the city, where the accounts were written up by hand in huge ledgers, held together with brass screws. Fewer people had bank accounts then; cheque books lacked the printed name of the customer and clerks had to decipher the signatures in order to complete their work. Now, of course, we can do our banking from our armchairs, so all those laborious jobs have become obsolete.

Hazel took us on a trip down memory lane, to a time before 1971 when we were using pounds, shillings, and pence. One large penny was equal to two halfpennies or four farthings, and she remembered being able to buy a chew for one farthing. I think those chews, square, individually wrapped chewy sweets were called 'fruit salads'. They were similar to opal fruits. Hazel's writing rang several bells in our heads. The only thing we had no knowledge of was ISINGLASS which covered the eggs collected from the free-range chickens. We all remembered the old telephone boxes where you inserted four pennies. When the call was answered you would press button A so you could speak. If there was no answer, you would press button B and your money would be returned to you. Bread was delivered in baskets fresh from the baker and milk was delivered in quart bottles. How times have changed since those days; it's a different world.

We all felt rather nostalgic for past times but with a jolt, Sue spiced it all up with her piece about Saffy's dad who was a bit of a thug. He had disappeared off to America for ten years to save up and organise a sex change. His reappearance as Doreen was a bit of a shock. Here is Sue's description of Saffy's new dad/mum.

The woman stood in the middle of the living room, straw-like long blond hair could not disguise her chunky figure. Her make up was like a cheap stripper's and her clothes only contributed to that conclusion: a low-cut blouse where impossibly large and perky bosoms peeped out, and a leather skirt with fish net tights.

Trust Sue to liven things up. The tattoos on Doreen's knuckles, M.U.V.E.R on one hand and D.E.A.T.H on the other confirmed the identity of Saffy's dad.

Paula has finished writing our first shared short story:

Sue left us last month assuming that Dave was stroking his nipple like some sort of pervert. Zoe reacted to this by hitting him in the face with her bag and fleeing. Dave caught up with her and Paula continues:

Revealing a small circular medical device taped to his chest, he said: 'It's a heart monitor' breathless, he continued, 'I've got an irregular heartbeat. I wasn't ... I wasn't doing anything weird. It started beeping and I panicked.'

Zoe froze, her breath catching as she glanced down. A small plastic disc was taped to Dave's chest, wires trailing beneath his shirt. 'It's a heart monitor' he said quickly, his voice shaky but earnest. 'It was slipping. I was trying to fix it.'

Her pulse hammered in her ears as the truth dawned. The crimson on his nose, the shock in his eyes, it wasn't deceit or lust, but pain and embarrassment. Shame surged through her, followed swiftly by something softer: relief.

'Oh God, Dave, I'm so sorry,' she whispered, fumbling for tissues from her bag. He took one, pressing it to his nose, then managed to make a wry smile. 'Well,' he said, 'at least I know you can look after yourself.'

Zoe gave a nervous laugh, the tension breaking. She realised how tightly she'd been wound; how quick she was to expect danger.

'Maybe' she said quietly, 'we should start again, without any surprises this time.'

Dave nodded, his eyes kind despite the swelling nose. 'I'd like that.'

And for the first time in years, Zoe allowed herself to believe she might be safe.

oOoOoOo

So glad we arrived at a hopeful and happy ending. Sue was persuaded not to murder anyone in our first story but who knows what she will do in our next. We had fun creating a story together writing about 200 words each so 1,000 or so words in total. Still no title but we did flesh it out as we went along, not knowing quite where we were going. And we've decided to do have another go. This time we do have a title and we'll share the first section of our new story in the next newsletter.

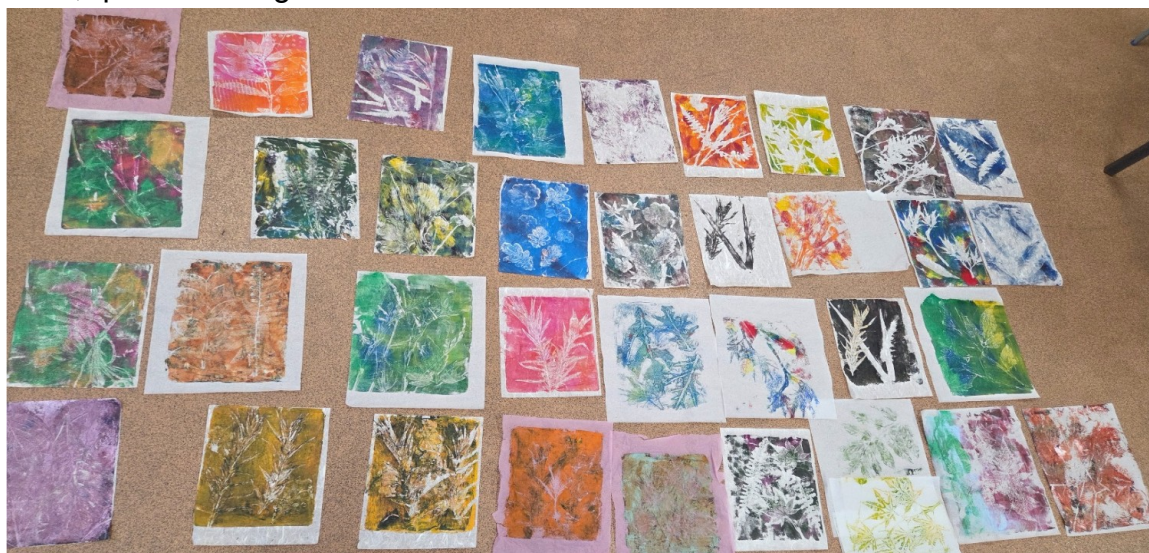
Bye for now,

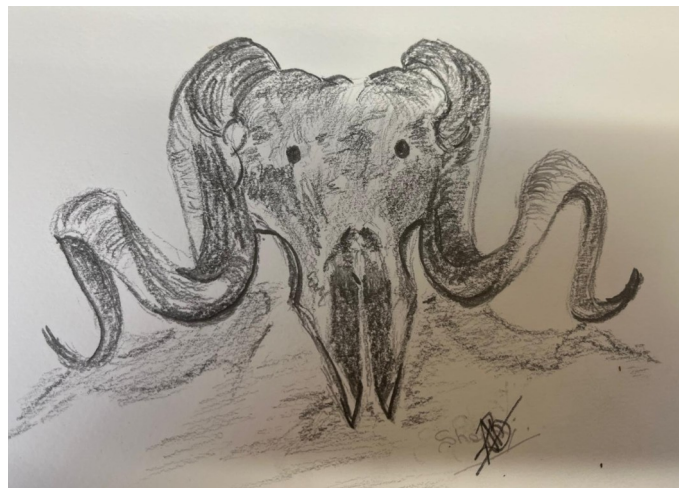
The Scribe – LJRM

Art in Action

We have been busy again this month, we painted a Still-Life of a sheep skull. Sue Worthington instructed us on how to use a gelli plate to print, and the results were very impressive.

Some of us went along to the Van Gogh immersive exhibition at Westpoint, we thoroughly enjoyed the experience, quite amazing.







Behind The Scenes

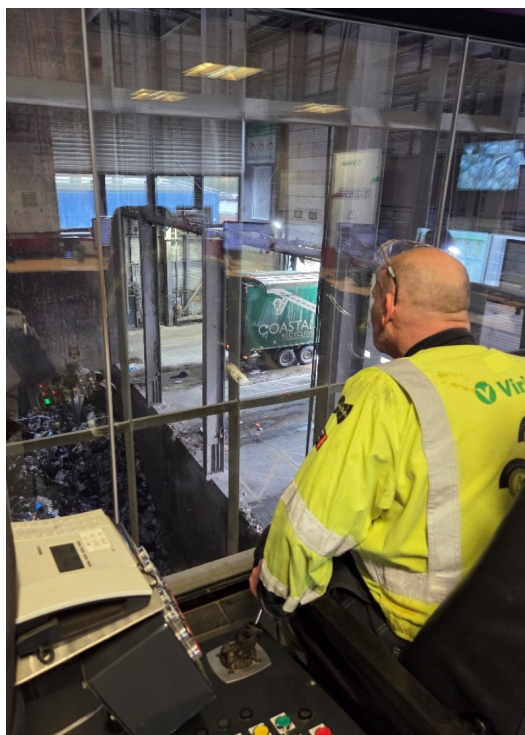
16 Culm Valley u3a members visited the Energy Recovery Facility (ERF) at Marsh Barton industrial Estate, Exeter, on 4th November 2025 lasting three hours. We were offered Tea & Coffee on arrival and guided through the history of waste management in East Devon which has become what we have today.

The present site was opened in October 2014 to incinerate all residual (black bag) waste collected from households in the East Devon County Council area, amounting to 60,000 tons per year.

Glass, metal, paper/cardboard, kitchen & garden waste, wood, electricals & aggregates are being recycled.

Plymouth has a similar plant but is nearly three times bigger. The group were shown the control room and the furnace (bought from France), also the boiler which produces the steam used to drive a turbine to produce electricity, enough to supply 6500 homes yearly. Gases produced are cleaned to safe levels using Urea and filters before entering the atmosphere via the very tall chimney.

The two guides, Lucy Motram & Bobby Hughes, gave a very interesting presentation on waste management with a Q&A segment. The consensus is Reduce, Reuse, Recycle. We need 2.5 earth's ATM to cope with the rate we are using up the earth's resources



Behind the Scenes in future

All good things must come to an end and the triumvirate of Gill, Moira and Paula, who have brought you an annual programme of visits to places of interest for several years is no more as Gill and Moira are taking time out. Paula is very willing to continue to organise a new programme for 2026 if anyone else will offer to help her and share the responsibility. It's very rewarding (and greatly appreciated by our members) to run the trips but like many worthwhile tasks, much more fun and less lonely with a small team. So please contact paulajlongden@outlook.com

Please note: Behind The Scenes is now to be called Discovery Days

Quilting

The build up to Christmas begins



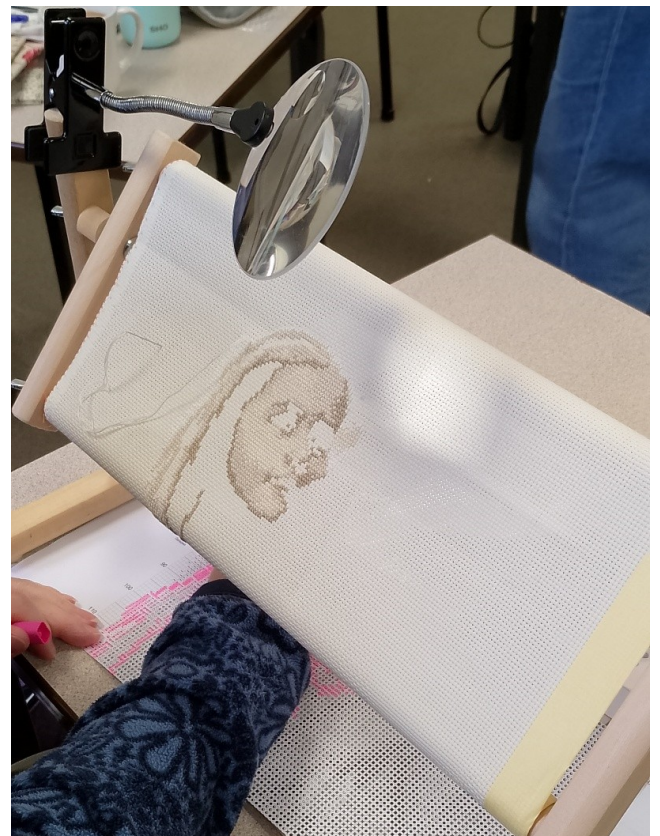


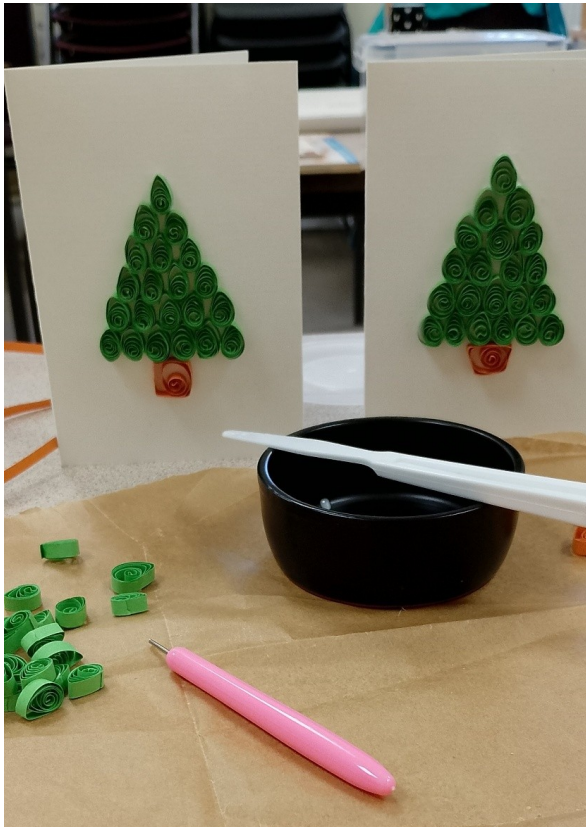
Crafting

Another meeting of continuing with our own projects which was great as it opened discussions which may lead to new ideas for the coming year. With the addition of our three new crafters, it is clear there is a breadth of knowledge on all things crafty within the group, which is brilliant.

We are going out to lunch after our next November gathering, then there is just one more session in the year. The year has gone so fast, again!

Lorna





Quizzing

In the first of our October quizzes Jane and Carol tested our knowledge on such topics as household items and gems: did you know that the microwave oven was invented in the 1940s? Or that the 400 pieces of Elizabethan and Jacobean jewellery discovered by workmen in 1912 is known as the 'Cheapside Hoard'?

Our second quiz saw John and Julie asking us about Summer-related things (date of release of the Cliff Richard film Summer Holiday - it was 1963) and some topical Halloween knowledge (what does Poltergeist mean? - it's a knocking spirit).

Thanks to all four-question master's for some fun and challenging questions.

October also saw two Culm Valley teams taking part in the annual inter-U3A quiz which this year was hosted by Sidmouth as the winners in 2024. One of our teams, the Cully Cryptics, achieved a decent 4th placed finish behind Honiton, who will host in 2026.



Walkers

We went on a veritable nature trail last month, meeting at the E Devon village of Newton Poppleford and enjoying the delights of Aylesbeare and Harpford Commons and the Hawkerland Valley. Autumn fruitfulness was at its very best on this walk, delivering an abundance of beautiful fungi and berries and some very big skies as we looked to the distant coastline. Our customary lunch afterwards, this time at the Hidden Oak Cafe on the Sidmouth Road, was as welcoming to our two and four-legged walkers and can definitely be recommended if you're passing that way.





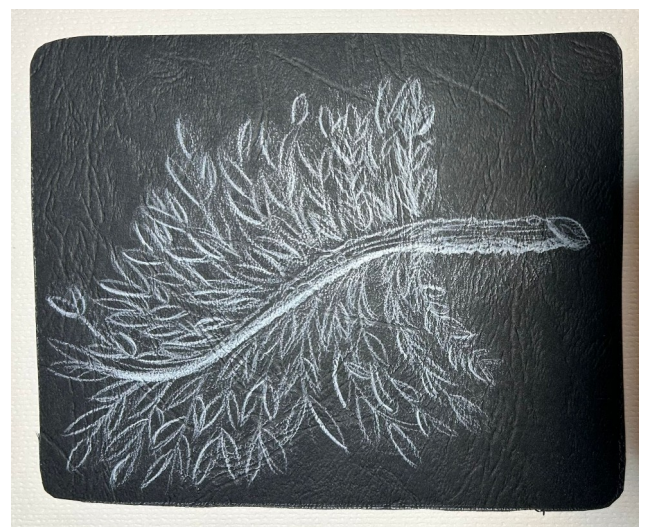
November

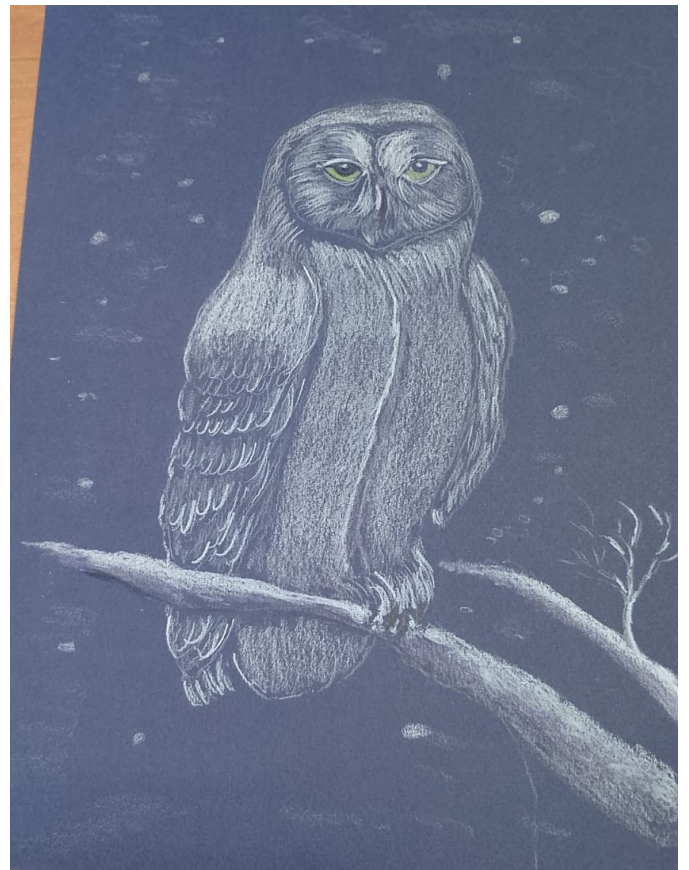
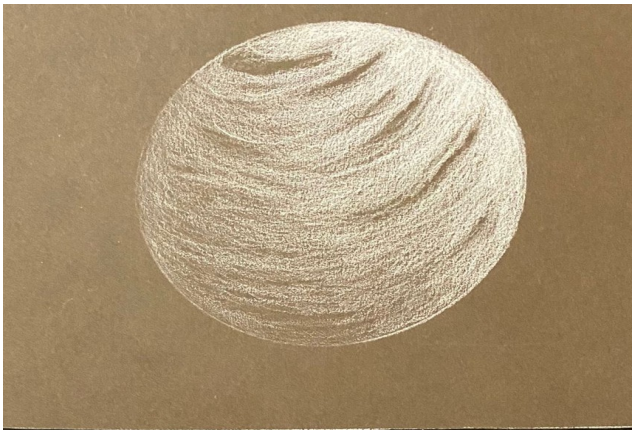
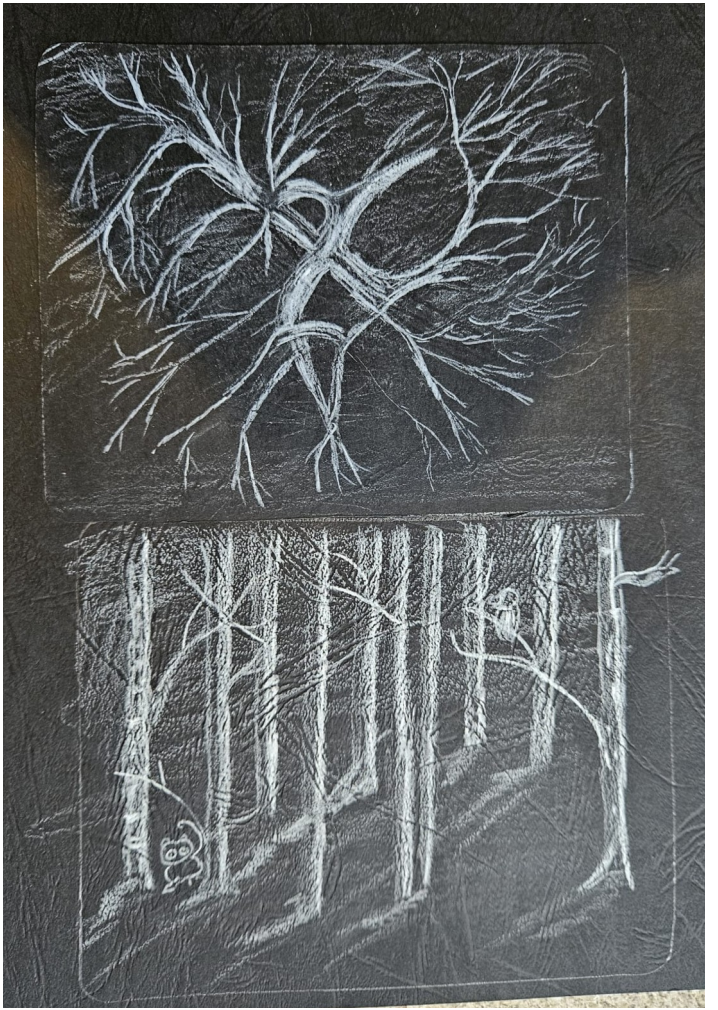
Our next walk is at Mamhead, through mixed woodland in forestry commission land off the A380. The walk is under 5 miles and does contain some uphill work but nothing too taxing for seasoned walkers. **Meet at Mamhead Forest Car Park EX6 8 HG at 10.00am** . Refreshments afterwards at the Brightside Diner on Haldon Hill

Contact gill.sole@yahoo.com to add your name to the list.

Colour Pencils

Recent session on using a white pencil, with some also trying out pastel colours on a dark background.







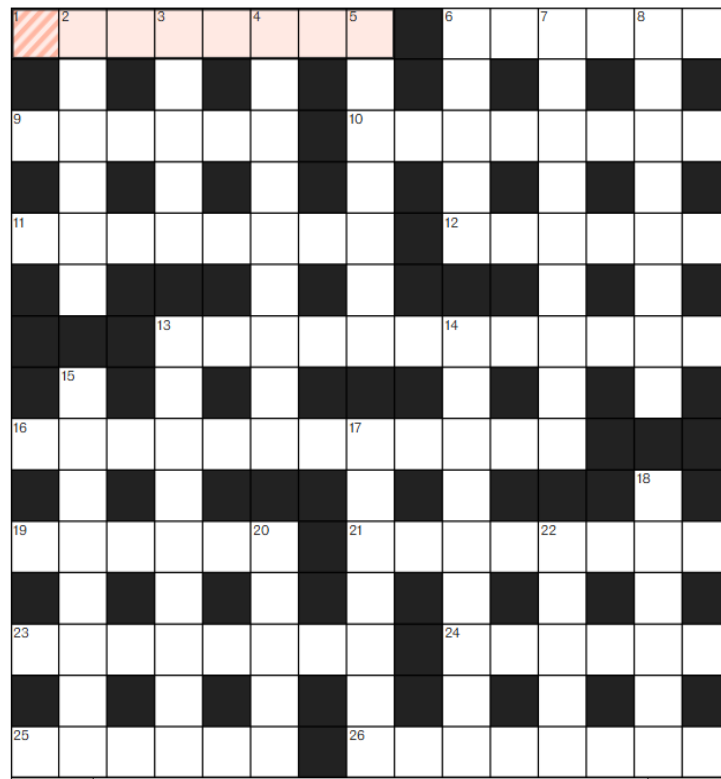
Please note: Theatre, Cinema and Music Group has been closed down. Thank you to Daphne Dowsing and Carole Eden for the time, energy and effort you put into running this group.

Potential new Interest Groups

Wine Appreciation – Interested in the subject and activity of drinking wine? Come along to the Discussion Meeting on 14th November at 10.30 in the Back Room of the Bakehouse in Cullompton.

Music – Do you play an instrument? Do you want to play music with others? Come along to the Discussion Meeting on Thursday 20th November at 2.30pm in the Back Room of the Bakehouse in Cullompton.

Cryptic Crossword Nov 2025



Across

- 1 The combat op trained new recruits (8)
- 6 Stately, as the emperor who named the month (6)
- 9 Numerous rings and stages are under canvas (3,3)
- 10 Pay Arab to hold a large rodent with some care (8)
- 11 Sounds as if that can is inflamed (8)
- 12 Dog-tooth (6)
- 13 Sid appointed, but turned out to fail to meet (12)
- 16 Where impossible ambitions may be realised (2,4,6)
- 19 Cruises are non-u in emergencies (6)
- 21 Not a king and not a wasp – but still comes out on top! (5,3)
- 23 Boat ages badly following deliberate damage (8)
- 24 Dough kneaded to a gallic sheen (6)
- 25 Choose part of course lecture (6)
- 26 At this rate ties to pacts will be negotiated (8)

Down

- 2 Maori ginseng contains root (6)
- 3 Very important in the field of anti-tannins (5)
- 4 Mash tripe & peas and have it before your meal (9)
- 5 She's had enough & puts the bags on high (5,2)
- 6 Jelly in a spicy sauce (5)
- 7 Leave the fruit and get excited! (2,7)
- 8 A rarer, briefer way to rage (8)
- 13 Forget the stone the English relished; in Scotland it sits better (4,5)
- 14 Ron averaged part of median (2,7)
- 15 Gain or rise in pay? (8)
- 17 Ask about the expedition (7)
- 18 The Roman philosopher Seneca got confused and tried to speak to spirits (6)
- 20 Clever but can hurt (5)
- 22 Confused thing after dark (5)

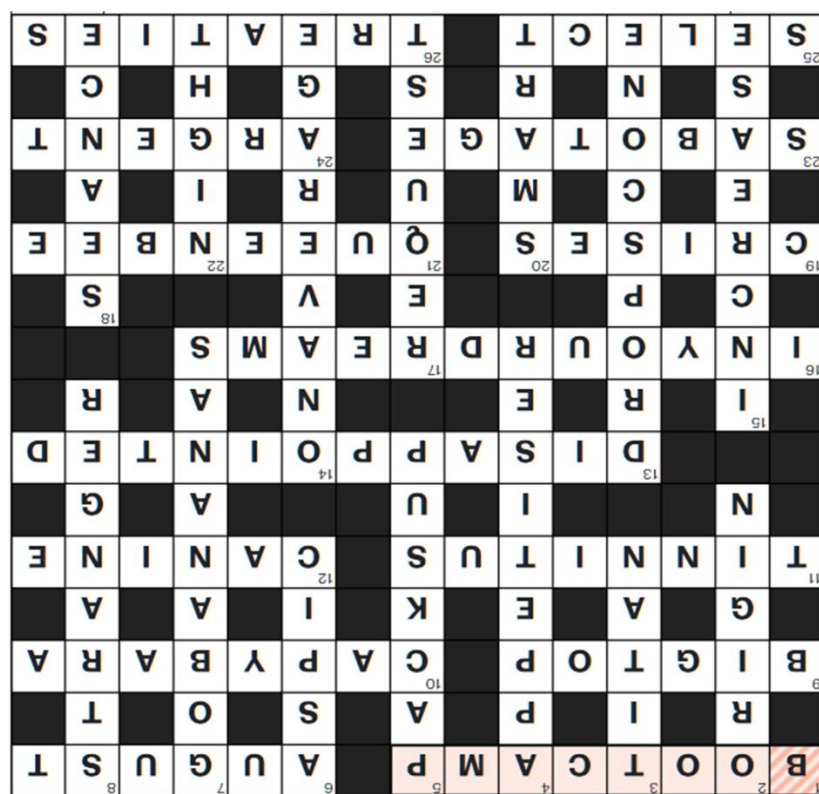
Interest Groups information

Group	Contact Please click on name to email	Venue, Day & Time
Art in Action	Rachel Kingdom	2 nd & 4 th Monday each month 13.30 – 16.30 Club Room, Willand Village Hall
Beginners Spanish	Josy Tidmarsh	Weekly at The Bakehouse, Cullompton
Beginners Jewellery	Julie Murphy	Contact Julie
Boules/Pétanque	Richard Taylor Mobile: 07816337456	Every Friday 11:00 and 14:00 Weather dependent
Bridge	Maggie Lambert	2 nd , 3 rd & 4 th Thurs of the month 14.00-16.00, Club room, WVH
Colour Pencils	Sue Hooper-Lawrie	1 st & 3 rd Monday each month 13.30 – 16.30 Club Room, Willand Village Hall
Craft	Linda Arnold	1 st & 3 rd Wednesday each month 9:30 to 12:30 Committee Room, Willand Village Hall
Creative Writing	Hazel Newman	3 rd Tuesday each month 14.00
Discovery Days	Paula Longdon <u>Sheila Mcleod</u>	Contact Paula or Sheila for information
Dog Walkers	John Hayston	Contact John for more information
French Conversation	Sally Graham	1 st Monday each month at 11:00
French Conversation #2	Julie Murphy	1 st Monday each month at Steamers from 15:00 to 16:30
Gaming	Jean Turner	1st Monday each month 10:30 to 12:30 Club Room, Willand Village Hall
Genealogy	Walter Longden	2 nd Wednesday each month 10:30 to 12:30

Group	Contact Please click on name to email	Venue, Day & Time
		Hayridge Centre
History	Alison Waple	2 nd Thursday each month plus various other days
Jazz Appreciation	Richard Taylor 07816337456	Contact Richard
Mahjong	Jean Turner	2 nd and 4 th Monday each month 10:30 to 12:30 Club Room, Willand Village Hall
Mixed Media Art	Annie Forster	Kentisbeare Village Hall 2 nd and 4 th Wednesday each month. 9:30 to 12:30
Photography	Sue Childs 07398 686612	Last Monday each month
Quilting	Linda Arnold	1 st & 3 rd Tuesday each month 9.30 to 12.30 - Committee Room, Willand Village Hall.
Quizzing	Martin Newman	1 st and 3 rd Friday each month at 11:00 - Willand Village Hall
Reading	Sally Graham	3 rd Thursday each month, 14:30 upstairs at Cullompton Library
Sewists	Yvonne Doherty	Contact Yvonne for more information
Soloists (But not alone)	Jenny Day 01884 840786/ 07770 985840	Contact Jenny
Strollers 1 & 2	Elieen Turner & Jackie Sim	2 nd Tuesday each month @10:30 4 th Tuesday each month @10:00
Walkers (4-6 Miles)	Gill Sole	3 rd Thursday each month a/m

If you have an idea for an Interest Group, please get in touch with Groups Co-ordinator on email: cvu3agroupscoord@gmail.com

Cryptic Crossword November 2025



Contact Emails for current Executive Committee members:

Email	Current role holder
cvu3achair1@gmail.com	John Hayston
cvu3afinance@gmail.com	Judy Morris
cvu3abussec@gmail.com	Paula Rees
cvu3agroupscoord@gmail.com	Sue Hooper-Lawrie
cvu3amemsecretary@gmail.com	Alison Waple
cvu3abeacon@gmail.com	Marian Luck

Monthly Meetings:

Monthly Meetings are held on the FIRST THURSDAY of each month, except January. The meeting starts at 2pm, with members arriving any time after 1.15pm. We hold our meetings at

Willand Village Hall, Gables Road, Willand, EX15 2PL. Check monthly newsletter for more information about arrangements for upcoming meeting/s.

Suggested Venues for Group Meetings

John Tallack Youth & Community centre, Meadow Lane, Cullompton. Ex15 1LL.

Email: info@jtc.org.uk Website: www.johntallackcentre.org.uk

The Walronds, 6 Fore Street, Cullompton.

Email: Info@walronds.com Website: www.walronds.com

The Bakehouse, 3 High Street, Cullompton.

Email: enquiries@thebakehousecullompton.co.uk Website:

www.thebakehousecullompton.co.uk

Phone: 01884 35222

The Steamer, Five Bridges, Cullompton.

Email: hello@the-steamer.co.uk Phone: 01884 904960

Willand Village hall, Gables Road, Willand. Bookings contact: Frances Wilcox.

Email: bookings@willandvillagehall.org.uk

Willand Health & Community Centre, (opposite Village Hall) Bookings contact; F. Wilcox

Email: info@whacc.org.uk

Cullompton Library, (part of The Hayridge Centre). Contact; Rachel Kidd.

Email: Cullompton.library@librariesunlimited.org.uk. Phone; 01884 824555

Go to <https://www.devonlibraries.org.uk/web/arena> to pre book a computer time slot by using the iCAM booking system or directly. [https://lu.imil.uk/Account/LogOn?](https://lu.imil.uk/Account/LogOn?ReturnUrl=%2fbookings)

[ReturnUrl=%2fbookings](https://lu.imil.uk/Account/LogOn?ReturnUrl=%2fbookings)

Opening hours (Staffed): Monday-Friday – 09:00 – 17:00 Saturday – 09:00 – 13:00

Square Corner, The Square, Uffculme, Ex15 3AA: <https://www.squarecorner.org.uk/book-online>

Bridwell, Uffculme, are happy for large groups to meet there. If you are planning to hold a meeting in the Orangery for 8 or more people, please email cafe@bridwell.co.uk to book the group in and let them know numbers and if you are planning to eat or not.

Kentisbeare Village Hall, EX15 2AA Contact Melanie on email –

villagehall@kentisbeare.net the Booking Secretary.

If you know of any other suitable venues, please let us know.

Deadline for items for UPDATE is always the 10th of the month.

Please send to johnhayston1@gmail.com