

2004~2024

**Battle & District u3a
20th Anniversary
Souvenir Publication**



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE



BATTLE & DISTRICT U3A

Charity No 1110399

Beginnings

2004 ~ 2024

The u3a movement is a unique and exciting organisation which provides, through its u3a's, life-enhancing and life-changing opportunities. Retired and semi-retired people come together and learn together, not for qualifications but for its own reward: the sheer joy of discovery!

The Launch Meeting of the proposed U3A Battle group was held at the Battle Memorial Hall on 22 June 2004, and as it was both well attended and enthusiastically supported, membership forms were distributed to the attendees. This was followed by the inaugural meeting at the hall on October 4 that year.

Since then Battle u3a membership has increased to 270 members with 24 interest groups. Back in 2004 the cost of annual membership was £12.00 and it is presently just £15.00 for full membership which includes the 'u3a matters' magazine that is distributed by head office five times a year.

After a few years at the Memorial Hall it was decided to move the monthly meetings to the more suitable venue of The Emmanuel Centre in Harrier Lane. Meetings are held on every first Monday of the month (unless it is a Bank Holiday when the meeting is moved to the second Monday of the month). These meetings are well attended and start at 10 am with the opportunity to enjoy tea or coffee and biscuits before going upstairs to the main hall for 10.30. Here any group notices are given out before a pre-booked speaker gives a talk on his or her chosen subject. We have enjoyed a great variety of speakers over the years with topics ranging from Weather Forecasting to the History of Ragtime which was enhanced by the speaker's piano accompaniment.

Meetings

2004 ~ 2024



Battle u3a has a wide range of interest groups and visitors can attend two Monthly Meetings before having to take official membership. Where groups appear to be full then there is the option to join a waiting list or, with help, start a new group.

Covid: In 2020 with Covid restrictions prohibiting gatherings it was a worrying time for u3a's. However thanks to our Battle u3a Chair Diane Wilson, along with the help of the committee, zoom meetings were quickly established for those fortunate enough to be able to receive them. This gave many members the much needed opportunity to reconnect with their groups and to also be able to enjoy the monthly speaker meetings, albeit online. Another feature that was much appreciated at this time were the online quizzes that the committee included, all of which helped combat the feelings of isolation endured by many.

Coming out of Covid, it was noticed that for some the reluctance to venture out still prevailed, so numbers at the monthly in-person meetings were initially lower than they had previously been. Over time the numbers have steadily increased and now in 2024, Battle and District u3a in its 20th year, flourishes once more as we continue to 'learn, laugh, live'!

Groups

Help is always at hand to
join, set up a group
or an additional one

Groups 2004

Art Appreciation
Cookery Hints
Family History
French
Gardening
Literature
(inc Poetry)
Music for Pleasure
Topical Issues
Scrabble
Theatre Visits
Walking 1
Walking 2
(shorter walks)
Water Colour Painting

Groups 2024

Art
Bowls
Art Appreciation
Book Clubs 1, 2 and 3
Canasta
Chess
Country Dancing
Crafts
Current Affairs 1 and 2
Family History
Film
French Conversation
Gardening
History
Meal Group
Out and About
Pétanque 1, 2 and 3
Scrabble
Shakespeare
Short Tennis
Singing for Fun
Ukulele
Walking: long,
medium & short walks
Wine appreciation

Possible Future Groups

Pub Lunch Group
Monthly Book
German

10th ANNIVERSARY

2004 ~ 2014

A reminder of our 10th Anniversary Celebrations
for those who were there and our newer members.



FOUNDER MEMBERS ~ 2014

Valerie Bailey ~ Prof. John Stringer ~
with TV Presenter & Weather Forecaster Kaddy Lee Preston
Pat Moss ~ Pat Tooke - Terry Austen - Mavis Crowe

6 October 2014
Battle & District U3A celebrated their 10th Anniversary with a meeting at the Emmanuel Centre in Battle last Monday morning, 6 October 2014. More than 100 members attended when Professor John Stringer, Life President and founder member, spoke of his experiences leading up to his joining and later becoming chairman of the fledgling group. This was followed by a most entertaining and informative presentation from Kaddy Lee Preston, the well known meteorologist and television presenter. Kaddy talked about her early life and career path which inspired numerous questions from the audience. After the meeting Kaddy, John, chair for the meeting and Angela Reid, Acting Chairman, cut a celebration cake with a toast to the Battle & District U3A, followed by a buffet lunch catered for by the centre. A splendid morning was had by all.

Of those Founder Members celebrating in 2014
Pat Tooke and Valerie Bailey are still members.
Unfortunately we have lost Prof. John Stringer, Terry Austen
and Pat Moss. Mavis Crowe is no longer a member.

Battle & District u3a ~ 20th Anniversary

Groups

Not only our first Honorary Life Member (2016) but also a Founder Member, **Terry Austen** here presenting his Woodworking Group's achievements. At the U3A Festival, Burgess Hill 2010



Barn Dance 2017
 Caller &
 Organiser
 Janice Bolton



Sussex U3A Network
 Arts & Crafts
 Exhibition
 Shirley Miller
 presenting her
 Patchwork
 achievements

Groups

Walking Group
Seaford Head 2017



Gill Sutherland's
Beetle Drive 2017

Pickleball Group
2018



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Pictures by
Gill Sutherland

You can see many more
pictures by Gill at our
20th Celebration Days in
October

Battle & District u3a ~ 20th Anniversary

Founder Members

2004 ~ 2024

PAT TOOKE

Battle u3a – now celebrating 20 years, and I now have 20 years of memories. My membership number is '9'. I think I was the first member not to be on the committee. My friend Mary Napier was member secretary, Kath Worley was group co-ordinator. They both urged me to join them but I said no - committees are not for me - however I did much later give in and even spent a very short time as deputy chair – but only to keep us legal! When I was asked to be President I was truly honoured but those were large shoes to fill. To raise funds in those early days – for example, we needed a projector – Jo Halfhide and I hosted cream strawberry teas / coffee mornings. For many years I had a bookstall at the back of the hall – it was never a big earner but – more importantly – it got members mingling.

The first group to start I believe was the Scrabble group – still going strong 20 years later, on only its second leader.

The Out & About group that I have been coordinating for 15 years is unusual in that no-one is expected to join all outings – just the ones that appeal to them. The following year's programme is compiled at the annual planning meeting. I also coordinate the Lunch Group, and years ago I ran a theatre group.

This for me is how u3a is unique. Whatever your interests are there is a possibility for you to find like minded members and hopefully form a group together.

If you are interested in ANY topic – art, history, gardens, music, crafts etc etc, there are associations catering for that topic BUT if you join a u3a all these interests can be addressed – just contact a Committee member and make a proposal for a new group.

Battle U3A has been fortunate in the members who have given their time and energy to make this U3A the U3A we are celebrating 20 successful years with, this October, and which, I am told, is punching above its weight in groups per capita members.

Existing Founder Members

Valerie Bailey

Sheila Clements

Bernard Kearnes

(Patricia Kearnes)

Susan Smith

Gill Sutherland

Pat Tooke