

# u3a Dart Valley December 2024 / January 2025 Newsletter

## Next General Meeting & Monthly Talk

**When and where: December 12<sup>th</sup> at 10:30am The Flavel Auditorium**

### A Biologist in Antarctica

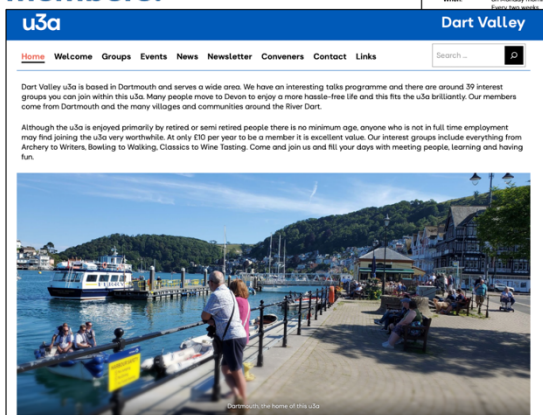
What it is like to live and work in Antarctica, the wildlife that influences your daily life, and why the question “what direction is the wind coming from?” is more important than “how cold is it?”

Presented by **Professor John Spicer**, an eminent scientist whose work has contributed to over 180 research papers, books, and influenced international policymakers.



## News

### Dart Valley u3a new website is now live for members!



The national u3a is closing our current Site-builder website in December and we are moving our site onto a new platform.

Tim Freeman, Wiz Tehel and Peter Avis have been working with the Committee and group coordinators to do this and we have developed a first version here

<https://dartvalley.u3asite.uk>.

Please see if the link above works for you! If not, please email one of us at [peteravis1@gmail.com](mailto:peteravis1@gmail.com), [timfreeman61@googlemail.com](mailto:timfreeman61@googlemail.com), or [wiz@tehel.net](mailto:wiz@tehel.net).

## From the Chair

As the year draws to a close it seems a good moment to reflect on the past 12 months. Our u3a has much to celebrate - a year of outstanding monthly speakers, new groups have taken off, and, with our freshly designed newsletter and website - we are in fine fettle for 2025.

I do hope you will come to the last talk of the year, with mince pies and drinks immediately afterwards. In the meantime, on behalf of all the committee, we thank you for your support and hope you enjoy the festive season. A very happy Christmas to you all.

Julia



## What's on in December & January

As we are approaching Christmas and New Year festive period, several groups will be having a short break. Please **always** check with the convenor as details may change after the issue of this newsletter.

Summary of events on this month, further details are in the Groups and Events section below in this newsletter.

AM/ PM	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
AM		Walking	Bridge Crafts Club	Sports Morning	Classics	Mahjong	
PM		Wine Group		Book Group 2 iPad 4 Beginners Medau		Italian Conversation	
	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
AM		Art Group Walking	Bridge Crafts Club	Sports Morning	<b>Monthly Talk</b>		
PM	Sunday Lunch		Pub Lunch (C)	French Conversation Geology Medau	Wine Group – Noble Rotters	Scrabble Garden Group 1 Italian Conversation	
	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
AM		Art Group Walking	Bridge Crafts Club Cryptic Crosswords	Book group 3 Sports Morning	German Conversation	Mahjong	
PM				Medau			
	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
	29	30	31	<b>January 1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
AM						Mahjong	
PM							
	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
AM		Art Group Walking	Bridge Crafts Club				
PM		Wine Group		Book Group 2 Geology iPad 4 Beginners Medau		iPad Graduates Scrabble Italian Conversation	
	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
AM		Spanish Walking	Bridge Crafts Club	Book group 3 Sports Morning	<b>Monthly Talk</b>	Mahjong	
PM	Sunday Lunch		Pub Lunch (C)	Medau		Garden Group 1 Italian Conversation	
	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
AM		Art Group Walking	Bridge Crafts Club Cryptic Crosswords	Pub Lunch (A) Sports Morning	Architecture German Conversation		
PM		Book Group 1		French Conversation iPad 4 Beginners Medau	Wine Group – Noble Rotters	Scrabble Italian Conversation	
	26	27	28	29	30	31	
AM		Spanish Walking	Bridge Crafts Club	Sports Morning			
PM		Writers Group		Medau	Pub Lunch (B)		

## Groups and Events

**GROUPS AND NEWSLETTER** Wiz Tehel 07770912100 [newsletter@dartvalleyu3a.org](mailto:newsletter@dartvalleyu3a.org)

If you wish to start a new group or want to have an entry in this newsletter then contact me. For starting new groups, your committee can support with advertising, publicity, advice and reasonable financial assistance.

**ARCHERY** Colin Payne 07919 933891 [colinpayne43@hotmail.com](mailto:colinpayne43@hotmail.com) (Tues am S F Cricket Ground).

There will be no regular Archery meetings through Winter, but ad hoc shoots may be arranged mutually for existing group members.

**ARCHITECTURE** Mike Trevorrow 01803 752928 / 07470 484858 [mike.d.trevorrow@gmail.com](mailto:mike.d.trevorrow@gmail.com)

(4th Thurs, 11.15 for 11.30am start, Flavel Studio – all welcome)

There will be no talk in December but we'll continue in January with some south Spanish heat. Let's banish winter!

**ART GROUP** Pat White 07929 271658 [lespatwhite@icloud.com](mailto:lespatwhite@icloud.com) (Monday 10am Townstal Hall).

During November we have continued to explore experimental effects with watercolours and cling-film to create atmospheric and textural qualities, this can create an inspiring background to a painting which often needs just a few details to create a complete scene. We will continue with these effects through our two December meetings on the 9th & 16th as it can be particularly effective for winter scenes, then we resume again next year on January 6th.

**BOOK GROUP 1** Lindsay Charlesworth 01803 834592 [lindsay@jpcharlesworth.plus.com](mailto:lindsay@jpcharlesworth.plus.com)

(10.30am – 3rd Monday Stoke Fleming)

We shall not be meeting in December. Our next meeting will be on 20th January 2025 when we shall be discussing *Wild Swans* by Jung Chang. This is a change from our original January choice of *The Wren* by Ann Enright which will be discussed on 17th February 2025. The change entirely due to Jung Chang's fascinating talk to Dart Valley u3a in November - we had to read or re-read *Wild Swans* and talk about it some more.

**BOOK GROUP 2** Valerie Church 01803 834280 [churchval2@aol.com](mailto:churchval2@aol.com) (1st Weds 2.30pm - 4.00pm)

Book Group 2 is currently reading *The Word is Murder* by Anthony Horowitz for discussion in December. Previously we had read *The Postscript Murders* by Elly Griffiths which was much enjoyed by the group. Our next book for discussion in January will be *The Private Patient* by P D James.

**BOOK GROUP 3** Sarah Nottrodt 0777 8547064 [sarah\\_nottrodt@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:sarah_nottrodt@hotmail.co.uk) (2nd Weds 10am)

Next meetings are 18th December and 15th January.

**BOWLING** Tim Freeman 01803 832663/07792 620176 [timfreeman61@googlemail.com](mailto:timfreeman61@googlemail.com) (2nd Tuesday 3pm).

Bowling is fast asleep for now but will wake in the spring.

**BRIDGE** Judi Cotes 01803 834802 / 07870897108 [judigrovecotes7@gmail.com](mailto:judigrovecotes7@gmail.com)

(Flavel Studio Tues 10am – 12 noon) No stress bridge. Every Tuesday 10-12. £4. To include tea/coffee and biscuits.

A partner will be found if you come on your own.

**CLASSICS** Wiz Tehel 07770 912100 [classics@dartvalleyu3a.org](mailto:classics@dartvalleyu3a.org) (1st Thurs 10.30am Flavel Auditorium, £4).

**5th December- A History of Greek Art in 10 Favourites** Presented by Peter Ireland

A selection of Greek artworks, all personal favourites, some very familiar, from the 6th to the 2nd Centuries BC, which demonstrate the virtuosity of ancient craftsmen and artists.

**January 2025 – No talk**

**6th February 2025 – The Hanging Gardens of Babylon**, presented by Wiz Tehel. The Gardens are the most enigmatic and elusive of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. What is actually known about the gardens and where are they located?

**COFFEE CUPS** Gwendolyn Alker 01803 833270 [jsgmalker@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:jsgmalker@yahoo.co.uk)

We are always looking for helpers to serve tea and coffee before the monthly talks. There is a list of dates by the serving hatch so please sign up and arrive at 9.45am on the day. Volunteers serving coffee at the meeting have free entry to the talk. Remember to bring your mug.

**CRAFTS CLUB** Joan Buscombe 01803 832662 c/o [vcbest@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:vcbest@hotmail.co.uk) (Tues 10am -12 noon ring first)

We would welcome more people to come and join us and share their knowledge with ours, or if a complete beginner for us to share our knowledge with you. Do come forward if you enjoy creative stitching.

**CRYPTIC CROSSWORDS** Gwendolyn Alker 01803 833270 [jsgmalker@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:jsgmalker@yahoo.co.uk) (3rd Tues)

Although we are full at present if you would like to be on a waiting list to join please contact Gwendolyn.

**FRENCH CONVERSATION** Steve Stevenson [steelboatsteve2@btinternet.com](mailto:steelboatsteve2@btinternet.com)

(2:30pm 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month, at Brown's Hotel, Bar & Bistro, Victoria Road.)

Are you interested in maintaining/improving your level of spoken French? If you would like to join us, please contact me, Steve Stevenson, via the email address above, so that I can gauge the number of people who are interested. Any suggestions as to how we might structure the afternoons will also be welcome. *Venez nombreux, nous allons nous amuser, et il est gratuit - sauf pour l'achat d'une boisson! Vous serez les bienvenus. Merci et à bientôt*

**FRENCH READING** Anne Goody [anne@goody.org.uk](mailto:anne@goody.org.uk)

The French Reading group is continuing to meet. For next year we will expand to be French Culture – including music, cinema, books, news, food and wine. Contact Anne for more details for next meeting.

**GARDENING GROUPS 1 & 2** Clare Ball [ceball@live.co.uk](mailto:ceball@live.co.uk) (11am 3rd Friday)

Please note that Garden Groups 1 & 2 are now amalgamated and meet 11AM 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of the month,

**GARDEN GROUP 3** Julia Churchley 07900 321681 [julia.churchley@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:julia.churchley@hotmail.co.uk) (Irregular meetings)

We will reconvene in the New Year. Please contact Julia if you have any ideas for winter visits.

**GEOLOGY** Tim Freeman 01803 832663 [timfreeman61@googlemail.com](mailto:timfreeman61@googlemail.com) (Irregular Weds 2.30pm Flavel Studio, £2)

**Wednesday 11th December** - *The Vanishing Mediterranean Sea*.

Going .... going ..... gone! We no, not quite that fast. Tim Freeman will however show that there will one day be no sea where we currently have so many of our holidays. It has vanished before, and quite suddenly in the past. It is a very curious story that ends up with a rabbit in Ripon of all places. You will just have to come along and see how sense is made of this confusion. All welcome. Mulled wine will be provided ..... kept warm by some hot rocks.

**Wednesday 8th January** - *Geology of Chile*

A blast from the past. Whilst Tim Freeman is in sunnier climes group founder John Alker who ran the geology group for 8 years makes a return to the hot seat to report on his recent visit to Chile. The most classic of the subduction zones on the planet Chile has a sobering record of earthquakes. It was in its hills that Charles Darwin found fossils high up at the tops of mountains. While there he experienced an earthquake where the land finished six feet higher in a couple of minutes, exposing sea creatures above the tide line to dry out and perish. Could the fossils in the hills have got there by this process.

**GERMAN CONVERSATION** Ingrid Sidell 01803 770870 [ingsid23@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:ingsid23@yahoo.co.uk) mob 07818208721 (for texts)

We generally meet monthly on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursdays 10.00am in Strete, but may vary depending on members availability.

**HISTORY OF ART** Julia Churchley 07900 321681 [julia.churchley@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:julia.churchley@hotmail.co.uk) (1st Fri 2pm Studio, Flavel)

No December meeting but I encourage group members to attend the Classics talk which is on Greek Art on 5th December 10:30am Flavel.

**IPADS 4 BEGINNERS** Suzie Dodsworth 01803 770134 [suziedwong@gmail.com](mailto:suziedwong@gmail.com)

(Stoke Fleming Village Hall, alternate Wednesdays 2:00 to 4:00pm)

The iPad group is well under way. The group has learned new skills and how to adapt their iPad to individual preferences. Changing wallpaper, adding Widgets, using the Dock and Lock Screen are a few of the new skills absorbed.

**IPADS Graduates** Alan Machin [alanmachin@aol.com](mailto:alanmachin@aol.com) (Monthly, 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday 2pm Stoke Fleming Village Hall)

iPad Graduates will not be meeting in December. For 2025, we hope to meet as often as possible on the **second** Friday afternoon in each month whenever the hall and Suzie are available. Our next session has been booked for Friday 10th January 2025.

**ITALIAN CONVERSATION** Tasha James 0795 750 9351 [nataliarh9@gmail.com](mailto:nataliarh9@gmail.com)

We meet on Fridays at 2 pm. Contact Tasha by email or telephone.

**MAHJONG** Elaine French 01803 832304 [frenchfamily1@live.co.uk](mailto:frenchfamily1@live.co.uk)

(1st & 3rd Fri 10am to 1pm Stoke Fleming Village Hall) New members always welcome.

We plan to meet on the 6<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> December and celebrate with Christmas Lunch at the Stoke Lodge Hotel after our last session of this year on the 20<sup>th</sup> December. The new term will start on the 3<sup>rd</sup> January.

**MEDAU** Yvonne Cottam 01803 835251 [ycottam@live.co.uk](mailto:ycottam@live.co.uk) (Weds 12.30pm-1.30pm, Townstal Hall)

Medau continues until 18<sup>th</sup> December. Dates for 2025 are January 8<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> February (5 week term) and 26<sup>th</sup> February - 9<sup>th</sup> April (7 week term)

**PITCH AND PUTT** Jennifer Wright 01803 445247 [jenniferm.wright@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:jenniferm.wright@hotmail.co.uk)

(Occasional, Cayman Golf, Churston)

There will be no group visits to Cayman Golf until early Spring 2025. However, anyone in the P&P group, or any other members of the u3a, may go along for a game. It would be advisable to ring prior to visiting 01803 845909 or 07969 053645 to check it is open. Parking is free. Any u3a members and friends/family joining pay £6 per person which includes clubs and balls. The cafe/restaurant in the garden centre next door is an enjoyable way to 'round off' the occasion!

**PUB LUNCHES GROUP (A)** Alan Cole 01803 752902 [alan5cole@icloud.com](mailto:alan5cole@icloud.com) (4<sup>th</sup> Weds monthly)

There will not be a Pub Lunch (A) meeting for December as that coincides with Christmas Day. Pub Lunch (A) will resume in January with details to be confirmed by email.

**PUB LUNCHES GROUP (B)** Alan Drew 01803 833219 [asdrew@btinternet.com](mailto:asdrew@btinternet.com) (last Thursday Monthly)

The group had lunch at the Royal Castle hotel in October. There were 8 of us, which is a comfortable number, and the food and service were both excellent. For November we are going to the Seven Stars in Dartmouth. Contact Alan for details.

**PUB LUNCH GROUP (C)** Mike Dodsworth 01803 770134 [mike1.dodsworth@btinternet.com](mailto:mike1.dodsworth@btinternet.com) (2nd Tues monthly)

Our final event of the season will be our Christmas lunch. We shall be returning to the venue of 2022, i.e. The Railway Inn at Churston, who looked after us so well then. Its great advantage is a choice from a "small appetite" menu (which they tactfully name Pensioner Christmas Menu) and a larger appetite one for those so equipped!

**SCRABBLE** Sue Manley Mobile 07840257045 [susanmanley2004@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:susanmanley2004@yahoo.co.uk)

The Scrabble group meets upstairs in The Studio in The Flavel. Meetings take place on the second and fourth Fridays of the month. 2-4 pm.

**SPANISH CONVERSATION** Yvonne Cottam 01803 835251 [ycottam@live.co.uk](mailto:ycottam@live.co.uk) (Mon 11.30am – 1.00pm)

The group will meet fortnightly from Monday 13th January 2025

**Sports Morning** Yvonne Cottam 01803 835251 [ycottam@live.co.uk](mailto:ycottam@live.co.uk) (Weds 10am Dart Leisure Centre)

Future dates are 4th, 11th, 18th December and 8th, 15th, 22nd, 29th January.

**SUNDAY LUNCH** Anne Taylor 01803 363257 [jonquil\\_shapley@hotmail.com](mailto:jonquil_shapley@hotmail.com) (2nd Sun month 12.30.pm)

We will be enjoying a very good roast and a very decent glass or two at The Tradesmen's Arms, Stokenham on Sunday, 8th December.

**WALKING** Hilary Cranmer 01803 835812 [hilarycranmer@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:hilarycranmer@hotmail.co.uk) (Mon 9.30am Ivatt Rd, Townstal)

Meeting at 10am throughout the autumn/winter, weather permitting.

**WINE GROUP-NOBLE ROTTERS** Anne Taylor 01803 363257 [jonquil\\_shapley@hotmail.com](mailto:jonquil_shapley@hotmail.com)

(4th Thurs, Royal Castle Hotel Library Room/members' homes/gardens weather permitting!)

The group is having its annual Christmas dinner on 12th December at the Dartmouth Marina. We will next meet for a tasting on 23rd January, 2025! 🍷

**Wine Tasting** Bill Riddell 01803 752049 [billriddell75@gmail.com](mailto:billriddell75@gmail.com) (1<sup>st</sup> Mon pm. Members' homes)

Many wines particularly those from Southern Europe are blends of 2 or more grape varieties. The partners are chosen to complement each other to produce greater complexity and balance. The theme of our November tasting was *Was it worth the effort? - A comparison of solo grape varieties and blends thereof*. Our hosts, Mike and Suzie Dodsworth, had selected 5 groups of wines from the Old and New World to address this question.

The whites were a Garganega and Garganega/ Pinot Grigio from the Italian province of Verona. This was followed by a Semillon from Chile, a Semillon/ Chardonnay from SE Australia and a classic Semillon/Sauvignon Blanc from Bordeaux.

The first couple of reds were a Cinsault from Chile and a Pinotage ( actually a Cinsault x Pinot Noir cross rather than a blend) from South Africa. The next grouping was an Argentinian Malbec, an unusual Argentinian Malbec/Cabernet Franc blend and a Malbec/ Syrah blend from the Pays D'Oc. Finally we compared a Monastrell (aka Mourvedre) from Murcia with a Grenache/Syrah/Mourvedre from Chateauneuf-du-Pape.

Whilst there was, as always, a wide variety of views the broad consensus was that of the wines we tasted the solo varieties were preferred. Particularly liked were the Semillon DO from the Apalta valley in Chile (Sainsbury's TTD Discovery Collection), the Vinalba Malbec Reserve (Lidl) and the Monastrell (M&S).

**Writers** Val Depledge 01803 834323 [valdepledge@hotmail.com](mailto:valdepledge@hotmail.com) (Mon pm. Members' homes)

Our last meeting for this year was on Monday 25th Nov with the topic of 'Falling', no meeting in December then we will re-start on Monday 27th January 2025 - the topic to be decided.

## Membership

**MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY** -Suzie Dodsworth 01803 770134 [membership@dartvalleyu3a.org](mailto:membership@dartvalleyu3a.org)

The annual membership fees are £10 for Individuals, £20 for Joint Memberships (i.e. couples at the same address) and £5 for Associates. For new members who have or intend to join during the year, the membership fee per person is £10 if you join between April and June, between July and Sept it is £7.50, between October and Dec £5 and the remaining three months £2.50. Membership forms are available on the u3a website or from me.

A reminder for those who have not renewed that your membership starts on **1st April** each year. Our bank details are as follows: Account Name: **Dart Valley U3A**, Account Number: **06170102**, Sort Code: **52 30 20**. Alternatively, write a cheque made out to Dart Valley U3A and post to Membership Secretary, Swallowfield House, School Road, Stoke Fleming, TQ6 0PR.

