

NEWSLETTER

May 2026

Meetings are held in
The Corn Exchange, Bourne.
Third Monday of the month
Next meeting 18 May 2026

BOURNE u3a

Learn, Laugh, Live

WEBSITE: <https://www.bourneu3a.org.uk>
REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1100094

The Chair's Chat

Hello everyone

Well this is my last Chair Chat (I know I have said that before) but I promise you that this time it really is.

Gavin Jeffery has kindly agreed to stand as Chairman and you will meet him at our AGM on Monday 18th May 2026. I promise you that you will be in very good hands and I extend a big thank you and welcome to Gavin.

My other task that of Group Coordinator is being taken on by Steph Winter and Steph will certainly be bringing energy and enthusiasm to the role. Thank you Steph and I know you will enjoy this task.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank a few of the people who have helped me to enjoy my time as Chairperson and Group Coordinator.

First of all your committee who work hard behind the scenes to ensure that Bourne u3a not only thrives but improves. It is easy to take for granted that venues, such as the Corn Exchange each month, are booked, speakers are found, our finances are very well looked after, all our members are registered correctly and GDPR and Charity requirements are in place. These are just some of the tasks that the committee take care of on our behalf. So a big thank you on behalf of all our members.

Our Group Leaders. I really cannot thank them enough. Without them we would not have groups and without groups we wouldn't have a Bourne u3a for us all to enjoy.

Well I think that is enough from me except to say thank you to all our members for your support and please come to the AGM on the 18th May and vote your new committee in (it is the only way I can escape).

Lots of good wishes.

Pat

Welcome, New Members!

Nicola and Norman Boyd, Jonathan Greatorex, Eileen Hosier and Karen Lusty

Speakers for 2026

Date	Subject	Speaker
18 May	AGM plus—What they didn't teach you in School History: A thought provoking view of the past	Stuart Orme
15 June	The Water Babies	Michael Burton
20 July	I'll polish him off: The Curious history of Sweeney Todd	Dr Ann Featherstone
17 August	The Wildlife of Florida	Gill Walsh
21 September	My Solo Walk across Africa	Fran Sandham

All meetings start at 2.15pm sharp.

Our Speaker for May is:

Stuart Orme,

What they didn't teach you in School History:
A thought provoking view of the past.



Group Vacancies May 2026				
Group	Meets	Start	End	Venue
Abbey Church Garden Group	Last Tuesday each month	14.00	16.00	Church Walk, Bourne
Antiques & Collectables	2nd Monday afternoon every month	14.00	15.45	Wake House
Art History 1	2nd Wednesday morning every month	10.00	12.00	At Members Homes
Art History 2	1st Wednesday morning every month	10.30	12.00	At Members Homes
Bowls Outdoors Lawn	Every Tuesday & Thursday	10.00	12.00	Bourne Town Bowls
Church Visiting	4th Thursday morning Monthly	10.30	~	As Notified By GL
Creative Writing 2	3rd Wednesday of every month	14.30	16.30	At Members Homes
Dining	3rd Thursday lunch time of every month	12.00	14.00	As Notified By GL
Discussion Group	3rd Thursday of each month	10.00	12.00	At Members Homes
Drama Workshop	2nd Wednesday every month	14.00	~	Thurlby Methodist Church Hall
Drawing and Painting	Every Tuesday morning	10.00	12.00	Abbey Church Hall
Friday Ramblers	1st Friday of the month	10.00	12.00	As Notified By GL
Friday Striders	Friday mornings twice a month	10.00	~	As Notified By GL
Garden Group	1st Tuesday afternoon every month	14.00	16.00	As Notified By GL
Handicrafts	Every Tuesday afternoon	14.00	16.00	Abbey Church Hall
Litter Picking Group	3rd Friday morning	10.00	12.00	As Notified By GL
Local History	First Monday each month	14.00	16.00	Wake House
New Members	As required	~	~	Wake House
Nosh and Natter	1st Wednesday lunch time of each month	12.30	~	As Notified By GL
Railway	First Wednesday of each month at 14.00Hrs	14.00	16.00	Thurlby Methodist Church Hall
Science and Technology	1st Tuesday morning every month	10.00	12.00	Edenham Village Hall
Singing for Pleasure	2nd Wednesday afternoon every month	14.00	15.30	Bourne Methodist Church Hall
Snooker (2)	Tuesdays 1.30pm - 4.00pm	13.30	16.00	Snooker Hall
Table Tennis	Every Tuesday and Friday Afternoon	14.00	16.00	Harveys Gym
Ten pin Bowling	Every Wednesday Morning	9.55	12.30	As Notified By GL
Theatre and	2nd Monday afternoon every month/not Dec or Jan.	14.00	15.00	Wake House
Wine Appreciation 2	4th Monday afternoon every month except	13.00	15.30	At Members Homes
Wine Appreciation 3	2nd Friday of each month	19.00	21.00	At Members Homes
For enquiries contact the	Group Coordinator; groups@bourneu3a.co.uk			

Theatre and Entertainment Group

There is one spare ticket to see "Carlos Acosta's Ballet Celebrations" at the New Broadway Theatre Peterborough on Friday May 29th at a cost of £21.25. This is a Matinee Performance starting at 2.30pm. We will travel on the Bus using our Bus Passes. There are 9 people going so plenty of company. Please contact Janet Burton 01778 426462. N.B. We are on Call Guardian so please follow the instructions and I will answer you or if you leave a message I will return your call. Looking forward to hearing from you. Best wishes Janet.

Bourne Brushstrokes

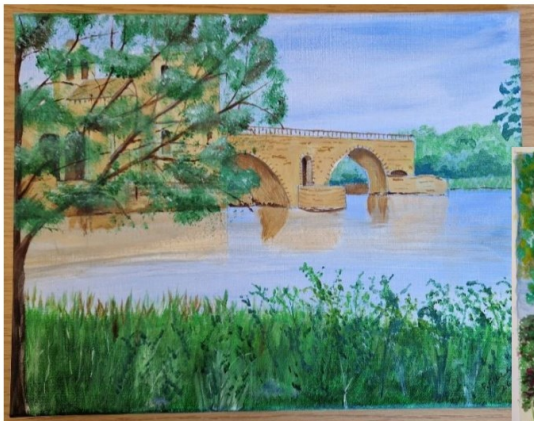
April 2026

The Group continued working in the Church Hall during April, (although we are planning outside trips when the weather becomes more reliable!). We had a 'watercolour workshop' given by our tutor Keith Talbot who encouraged us to create movement by working quickly using a limited palette. A small selection of recent work.



Rider in the Woods by Ann Wakeford

Scenic Village by Brenda Greatwood



Tranquil Bridge Scene by Pete Gillatt

Home Farm Ryhall by Janet Dowse



Local History Group Meeting 27 April 2026

Mark Bamford from Sleaford Museum entertained the group with his informative and amusing talk about Sleaford Castle.

He began by explaining why Sleaford had such a building. Sleaford at the time of the Conquest was a wealthy area. This wealth and its position on low lying ground on the Fen Edge made it a prime location for a Norman 'statement' castle.

The castle was built by Alexander, Bishop of Lincoln, known as Alexander the Magnificent, in about 1130. It existed for about 400-500 years. During this time, it was mostly in the hands of the Bishops of Lincoln. However, it did change hands intermittently during these centuries. Whenever Lincoln bishops disagreed with the King, the castle was confiscated. When the King died or was defeated, ownership returned to Lincoln. After nearly half a millennium, it was sold to Sir Robert Carre and progressively dismantled.

The castle site remains but the only piece of fabric is a block of masonry. Earthworks are clearly visible suggesting a moat, a bailey, a long rectangular building and possibly a dovecot. Extensive optical archaeology has taken place, including lidar and magnetometry which confirms the earthwork evidence. On the other hand, shallow digging revealed little apart from some rubble and medieval pottery.

What of today? Archaeological investigations have sparked more interest in the castle. An interpretation board has been provided and a new pathway built.

What of the future? Further, perhaps deeper, digging may reveal parts of the structure: this would require permission from Historic England. Soil brought up by an augur could be subjected to metallurgical or biological analysis. A new bridge from Nag's Head Passage would increase access to the site.

Further details are here: [The Sleaford Castle Project – Sleaford and District Civic Trust](#)

The next meeting of the group is not on the first Monday (that's a Bank Holiday). It's an evening meeting at 7.30pm on 13 May at Wake House. Chris Carr will present new evidence about the Romans in the Fens.



Anytime Out Group

Romans, Saints and Sinners.

48 of us travelled to St Albans for our April trip. The weather forecast had suggested lots of rain but fortunately the weather did not read the forecast and put on a lovely sunny day.

We started in the market area right beside the town's museum and gallery. Tea/ coffee and a quick snack. The building holds a court room - which is now part of the cafe, prison cells - some converted to toilets, an impressive function hall and galleries which hold the story of St Albans town and its people.



One wall holds an impressive collection of photos and drawings of famous people with local contacts - St Albans himself, John Ball (peasants revolt), Eric Morcambe, Prof Stephen Hawking and many others. The shop had some particularly nice (if somewhat expensive) candles.



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Anytime Out Group—continued

The Cathedral is spectacular. One of the oldest, biggest and best decorated in England. The Guided Tour provided extra information about the history, building and artifacts. It contains not only the longest nave in Britain, but medieval wall paintings and the shrines of St Alban (Britain's first saint) & St Amphibalus, an unnamed Christian priest who was martyred by the Romans. The name was given to him when his remains were discovered - I believe it means 'cloak' in Greek, from the clothes found with his remains.

Finally the Romans. St Albans was one of the top 3 Roman cities in England. It was built on sloping ground leading down to the river. The new (13 century) St Albans was built on the other side of the river so little damage was done to the area of the Roman city. Some of us walked, some took the coach to the Roman Museum. The building is made to look like a Roman Temple.



Here we found spectacularly well-preserved mosaics, items found in excavations including knives, cooking pots and glass ware.

The afternoon was rounded off with more tea/coffee and cakes at the nearby Inn on The Park cafe before we all boarded the coach for the return journey.

The next Wake House meeting is on 7th May. The next trip is on 21st May is to Forty Hall and Myddleton House Gardens, the home of the Parker Bowles Family.

See below and right.



Church Visiting Group

Church of St. Mary, Swinstead

Members of the church visiting group had a short 15 minute drive to the village of Swinstead with its many architecturally interesting cottages. The village was mentioned in the doomsday book of 1086, although no church was mentioned. It is likely there was once a timber church on the site of the present day church.

We were made very welcome by two of the church wardens, Louise and Isabel and Nick who also lives in the village. He gave us a very informative talk about church and the history of the village and of course its name; Swine (Pig) and stead (place).



Although much work was carried out during the Victorian restoration this is still a very interesting church and we may ask ourselves why has it taken this group some 14 years to drive this short distance. The tower is short and clearly built in two stages, each corner is decorated with a Grotesque of high quality. The nave is short with clerestory which has a steeply pitched roof making the windows not visible from outside. There are four bells, two having been cast by the Thomas Norris bell foundry of Stamford in 1628 and 1704. Close to the altar on the south wall is a double piscina and a triple sedilia all at the same level which our member David pointed out to

me is rare as they are usually at different levels to show the importance of each serving priest. So perhaps three priests of equal importance once served this church situated close to the Grimsthorpe Estate and Vaudey Abbey founded in 1147. There is no altar at the east end of the south aisle but there is a piscina against the south wall suggesting that there once was an altar. There is squint cut into the east wall allowing the onlooker to see the altar in the chancel.

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Church Visiting Group—continued

The north arcade dates to c1200 with the south dated to the 14th century. The piers to the north are circular and painting is clearly in evidence on the eastern most pier of a coat of arms. At the western end of the nave is an effigy of a knight with his legs crossed wearing chain mail, with one arm over his shield.

We enjoyed cake and tea served by the two ladies in what is clearly a very well cared for church and although some of the stained glass in the northern aisle is very dark in colour the church is light and spotlessly clean.

An interesting church in a lovely village.

Our next visit on the 28th May is the much larger church at Frampton.



Friday Striders

A warm sunny April morning saw 17 walkers meet on the old Lincoln Road near Northborough, walking alongside fields to the Peakirk Road. After a short stretch along the road the group turned towards the River Welland. Followed the river admiring the gardens and wildlife before a short break at the lock near Scouts Island.

Continued along the river towards Deeping Gate and after passing several houses walk continued to follow the river until Lincoln road before turning left and returning to the cars.

Group Leader: Janet Cartwright



Science and Technology Meeting

This month's meeting **Subject: - The Flora and Fauna of New Zealand**

This month's presentation was given by U3a member Gerry Blacoe from his experiences of visiting New Zealand. Gerry started by pointing out that the islands of New Zealand are the largest exposed land mass of a largely submerged Continent (subject to confirmation) called Zealandia and as it has been broken away from other continents for many millions of years it has developed its own flora and fauna that until the visits by Man from other parts of the World was unknown outside the islands themselves.

The presentation was based on travel in the North Island of New Zealand, starting from Auckland and then traveling south to Wellington where they would then be able to take a ferry to the South Island.

Some of the flora from New Zealand has become familiar to us as the horticulture industry import them for sale in garden centres, Hebes and tree ferns come to mind. Gerry was able to show, from his own photography these and many more plants in their natural environment including dianthus and aloe all growing naturally along, unfortunately with some introduced varieties.

New Zealand's fauna is equally diverse and fascinating, with a significant number of species that have evolved in isolation from other landmasses.

The country is particularly famous for its birds, many of which are flightless or have lost the ability to fly. The kiwi, that is perhaps the most iconic of these, but unfortunately Gerry did not come across any. There are also mammals including the sika deer. There were also pictures of observations of native reptiles hiding in the undergrowth.



Various non-native plants and mammals have been introduced in the 1860's because of colonisation.

Also, significant geographical locations were visited including Mount Tongariro which is an active volcano, having erupted last in 2012, and Lake Taupo, the largest lake in New Zealand. New Zealand has a long-standing native human population and while at Lake Taupo a trip was made to see some examples of Māori Rock Art, in this case the example was a full 14 meters high.

As the trip went further south towards the end of this part at Wellington and due to some delays with the ferry service to South Island Gerry was able to have time to visit the Zealandia Wildlife Sanctuary where work is ongoing to remove nonnative species and reintroduce native species.

This was a fascinating insight into the life on the nearest land mass to our antipode given by a presenter who has had the experience of travelling there.

Next Meeting will be Tuesday 2nd July titled, "Sounds Funny" and will be presented by U3a member Roy Pettitt

April Report of the U3A Rail Group

During the April meeting the group had a presentation on the visit to the London Termini and a lively and interesting talk on the on the historic locomotive, "Shannon." Also in April the group made a visit to the Churnet Valley Railway.

Shannon was built in 1857 and until recently was the oldest operational steam locomotive in the UK, when unfortunately it failed a boiler inspection. It is now preserved at the Didcot Railway Centre in Oxfordshire and leaves an historical legacy particularly in the Sandy and Potton area of Bedfordshire.

The scenic Churnet Valley Railway follows the path of the River Churnet and the Caldon Canal through the Staffordshire moorlands and a nature reserve. Originally serving the industries along its route, the preserved railway operated a steam-hauled service during the visit using an American locomotive built in 1945. Exported to China in January 1946, it spent the majority of its working life in the Chinese Coal Industry, before being withdrawn in the 1990s and brought to the UK in 1995.

Planned visits by the group:

Sunday 21st June: Lincolnshire Wolds Railway

July: Fawley Hill and Museum, Henley-on-Thames; the private railway of Sir William McAlpine by personal invitation of the current Lady McAlpine.

August: Appleby, Settle and Carlisle line.

Wednesday 9th September: North Norfolk Railway



BOURNE U3A COMMITTEE 2025—2026

Title and/or Role	Name	Email
Chair	Pat Howes	chairwoman@bourneu3a.org.uk
Vice Chair	Martin Adkins	vicechair@bourneu3a.org.uk
Secretary	Janice Lyon	secretary@bourneu3a.org.uk
Treasurer	Mike Alexander	treasurer@bourneu3a.org.uk
Membership Secretary	Alistair Tough	membership@bourneu3a.org.uk
Groups Co-ordinator	Pat Howes	groups@bourneu3a.org.uk
Speaker Finder	Peter Lofts/Gill Stoneman	speaker@bourneu3a.org.uk
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Webmaster	TBA	webmaster@bourneu3a.org.uk
Newsletter Editor	Martin Adkins	newseditor@bourneu3a.org.uk

I welcome reports of Group activities with photographs, if applicable.

Please limit your copy to one A4 page if possible.

The copy date for the next issue will be 9am on Monday 1st June.

NOTE: New regular date for copy—1st of each month to allow for holidays!!

Please e-mail your copy and pictures to: newseditor@bourneu3a.org.uk

or post to: Martin Adkins c/o Wake House, 41 North Street, Bourne, PE10 9AE

Please Note—All copy to be emailed using Microsoft Word or similar.

All photographs to be emailed separately as JPEG's.

PLEASE Do NOT embed photographs in your word document.

Quote of the Month

**"May is the month of expectation, the month of wishes, the month of hope." -
Emily Brontë**