

# Bournemouth



Autumn 2023



**Happy Campers at the Annual Picnic on Southbourne Beach**





## Shake and Stir Fishermans Walk *See page 10*

**The Occasional Walkers** enjoyed a sunny walk, meeting at The Cartwheel Inn, Whitsbury, near Fordingbridge. We walked around the old Hill Fort of Whitsbury Castle, home to a racing stud farm, spotting some magnificent young race horses. We then crossed onto Breamore Down, visiting Breamore Miz-Maze, a quartered circular labyrinth thought to have been cut in to the turf in the Middle Ages. Descending through Breamore Wood, we had a short 'snack break' at the Elizabethan Breamore House before continuing through the pretty village. This was followed by a much welcomed lunch at the Cartwheel. Thank you Alastair for a most enjoyable walk and lunch venue.

*At the time of going to press, this group (no.23) still has a few vacancies.*





## Notes from the Vice Chair

Hello everyone, I hope you're all keeping well and have enjoyed your Summer break despite the unpredictable weather!

The Committee really enjoyed seeing so many members return to the first Gala held for over 4 years since Covid. It was great to see so many attendees there enabling over 200 members to meet and socialise with each other face-to-face. Many thanks again to all the Group Leaders and members who agreed to participate, without you there simply wouldn't be a Gala.

Other activities held over the Summer included a very successful weekend event held at the "Shake & Stir Festival" in Fisherman's Walk on 24/25th June. We received a lot of interest in joining our local u3a and hope to welcome many new members soon.

Volunteer members continue to work during the Summer months processing the 2023/24 membership applications and updating the new membership database known as 'Beacon' that is a GDPR compliant system and also used by over 500 other u3a charities. The Committee expect to update members later in the Autumn so that everyone who wants access to the system can:-

- See information about Groups
- Update your personal details in our records
- Where appropriate, renew your membership online

For those members who prefer to speak to someone to update their personal details, membership renewal and Groups the Office can be contacted as detailed as detailed below.

The latest 2023/24 Bournemouth u3a Program includes over 100 Groups and I hope you are looking forward to the new Autumn term to re-commence your chosen u3a activities and social events.

**Stephanie Gardiner (Vice-Chair)**

### Office and Lunch Club Contact Details

Office Phone: 01202 420700 Weekdays 10am – 12 noon

Email [info@bournemouthu3a.org.uk](mailto:info@bournemouthu3a.org.uk)

Lunch Club – Bob Hucklesby Email: [bobhucklesby@btinternet.com](mailto:bobhucklesby@btinternet.com)

## News From the Groups

### Group No. No.49 The Enlightenment or the Age of Reason

Wednesdays, 10.30 – 12.00, MCC

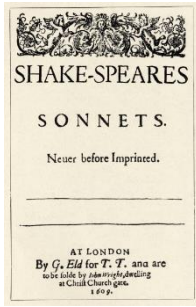
“Enlightenment is the period of European thought characterised by the emphasis on experience and reason, mistrust of religion and traditional authority, and a gradual emergence of the ideals of liberal, secular, democratic societies.” Most of its representatives lived in the 18th century: Voltaire, Hume, Rousseau, Mendelssohn, Jefferson, Paine, Wollstonecroft, Kant, etc. They were philosophers, politicians, economists, lawyers, writers, Encyclopédistes, activists, even kings and presidents. They started a new way of looking at our world. Their way of thinking and the subjects of their thinking have influenced the centuries after them. Over the time of the course we shall hopefully find out why we are thinking what we are thinking today.

Each of the sessions will feature one or more personalities and the matter they were concerned about, e.g. tolerance, independence, human rights, education, etc.; they will be connected like a network, but each session is a unit on its own.

The first session on 27 September will be an introduction and overview. It will be an opportunity to start discussing a number of questions. If you are still looking for a course, you are very welcome! Esther

#### **Face Mask** by Deirdre Foster

From dressing in a black sack  
she stepped out in a spring suit  
The discarded facemasks  
on rain soaked pavements  
are not face covering  
they are seabirds waiting to fly  
fast and away  
to catch the wind.  
She created this new story  
and was pleased to see  
some abandoned scaffolding  
now not gloomy and sad  
but a stairway to climb to the stars.....



I attended **Dr Hilary Perkins' Shakespeare group**, last year, in the FMH and particularly enjoyed the way she deconstructed the plays, providing a historical perspective to the plots, and offering a deeper insight into the meaning of the text.

I wrote the following sonnet in the style of William Shakespeare, having studied those to the "Fair Youth" and a smaller group to the "Dark Lady". *Robert Wingate*

*Alas, 'tis true I have been here and there,  
Jumping through hoops to win my rightful share  
And sold that most dear to hide my painful lack.*

*So now I confess, the errors of my ways.  
There was no need to win, when all was freely given.  
The Universal Mind supports me day by day,  
And Undivided Love reaches out to Earth from Heaven.*

*Take all God's love, Yea I must take it all  
Then, what have I now that I hadst not before?  
Not love, for this was mine to call,  
I had it all, so how could I have more?*

*The scales have dropped, clear eyes direct my mission.  
I see the best of thee. No beam obscures my vision.*

This was based on the love sonnets by Shakespeare

### **Summer Haiku** by Deirdre Foster

Water waves spraying  
foam  
woman traveller  
retreats from cool beach  
back to the cityscape  
where lingers the smell of summer ending  
and Autumn mist





**Colin Luff** sadly passed away in early July after a long struggle with symptoms associated with Covid. He caught the virus very early on before we were even in 'lockdown', with a high temperature and breathing problems. Over the two years he developed Rheumatoid Arthritis and Pulmonary Fibrosis which slowly made breathing exhausting. He was taken into hospital with pneumonia and passed away very quickly. Colin's association with U3A has stretched over at least sixteen years where he loved Tai Chi classes with Ian Peters

and dancing, both Sequence and Line dancing. He took over both the Monday and Wednesday Social dancing groups after other leaders one by one found it hard to continue. He had a passion for good music, which he collected and recorded and eventually put onto his computer. It was a huge job which took up hours, weeks and months of his time, but it was his hobby and he loved every minute spent on it. Colin and I met at a dance of course! He was a better dancer than me and had a great interest in learning more complicated dances like the Paso Doble and Argentine Tango so he inspired me to take the lessons too. We often went on cruises just to dance morning, noon and night! He will be sorely missed for his kindness and smiley face.

He was a very happy contented person until his health failed. Pat Luff



### *For Your DONATIONS*

A sincere Thank You to all our members who have included donations with their membership renewals. Having introduced a new initiative this year, it has been particularly pleasing to see the number of members who 'rounded up' their payment to £70, some £80. As the saying goes 'Every Little Helps' and all donations are much appreciated. We have again received a very generous donation of £1,000. Times are difficult for many people, not everyone is able to donate. We value and are grateful to all our members who have renewed and welcome our new members. Your Committee is working hard to ensure that we can continue to offer an eclectic mix of over 100 groups, most of which are weekly.

*Please spread the Word!*

## FOR THE GRANDFATHER I NEVER MET



I wrote this on the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle of the Somme in 1916. The Black Watch Museum in Perth published it in the special edition of their magazine.

**Cabaret Rouge, British Cemetery, 7 miles north of Arras. Plot 4, Row D.**

*Three months had passed since that momentous day,  
When guns disturbed the silence of the Somme.  
The stench of flesh and sweet the blood mud clay,  
Assailed my mind and Hell was stoked by man.*

*I know you not, but you are in my seed.  
From son to son my Lion is now in you.  
In Black Watch cloth I fell with stripe on sleeve,  
But look not here 'midst rows in Cab'ret Rouge.*

*Where am I now - a thought by kith and kin?  
Your tears, long dry, were never felt for me.  
The loss stirred doubts of "self", there lies your pain,  
And death's grave grip holds all and none are free.*

*When guns go quiet, and war's no more a thought,  
In Heav'n we'll meet, how peace is dearly bought.*

Written by:

Robert Wingate, son of Robert Wingate and grandson of lance-corporal Robert Wingate of the 8th Battalion of the Black Watch, who was killed in action on the Somme on 14th September 1916 and who lives on in fading memory. The poem is dedicated to him.

## Our Thanks and Appreciation

go to the following people:

**Office Manager, June Arthur**, will be stepping down at the AGM from that position. June has been in this important role for 10 years and she has done an amazing job. Our grateful thanks and best wishes go to June. She will continue to be a part of Bournemouth u3a and stay as an office volunteer. June can now concentrate on her passion for painting. She is a member of Wednesday's Art for Fun group, as well as Conversational Spanish and will be joining the Rummikub group in September.

**Rod Jackson** and his wife Mavis joined Bournemouth u3a in 2014. He started a Mah-Jong group and later joined the Committee in 2015. **He is relinquishing his role as Treasurer** which he's done for 7 years and our finances have been in very good hands all that time, for which we are very grateful. Rod will continue to run his Zoom group "Your All Time Favourites" and he's joining "Make Believe". Rod says he will continue to support the Committee / new Treasurer as an advisor.

We will also be seeking a **Newsletter Editor since Keith Pitman** has recently announced he will not be seeking re-election at the AGM due to health reasons. Keith has given many years of service to the u3a with enthusiasm and commitment. He joined the Philosophy group when he retired 16 years ago. Keith has used his skills on our Committee, first as minutes secretary, and then went on to edit our newsletters. He will continue to be a member and enjoy his groups.

**Maggie Brown** has reluctantly stepped down as **Chair** due to unexpected family commitments. We thank her for stepping up in our time of need.

**We now URGENTLY need more "TEAM PLAYERS" to join us, not only on Committee but also behind the scenes.** The people who do volunteer enjoy their roles and feel a part of something very worthwhile – Bournemouth u3a!

**Please consider putting your name forward.** We would be happy to talk to you in a relaxed setting. You will find it very rewarding.

*The Committee*



# Succession Planning

All successful businesses and charitable organisations need to have plans in place for when certain key members leave, for whatever reason.



Your u3a Committee wants several volunteers who are ready and willing to step in, when needed, allowing the smooth running of Bournemouth u3a to continue.

A couple of Committee (trustee) positions will be coming available at the AGM but we also need people for non-committee roles.

## **With this in mind we are seeking:**

People with IT/computer/social media/office skills

People with an accounting/auditing background

People who are happy to talk on the phone and help new/existing members with their queries (this would mean only 2 hours a week in the office)

Training and any necessary help will be given for all positions. You can shadow a role until you feel comfortable. And your friendly committee members are always available for support. If you think you would like to join us, or chat things over in person first, please contact Julie at:

[publicity@bournemouthu3a.org.uk](mailto:publicity@bournemouthu3a.org.uk)

*Thank you, The Committee*

**Your u3a cannot function without these important roles.**

## Publicity - Shake & Stir 2023

“Bumper crowds at Shake & Stir” was the headline in the Bournemouth Echo on Monday 26th June. We certainly derived considerable benefit from the throng strolling through Fishermans Walk Park over the weekend. Everyone seemed upbeat and energised by the live music and dancing, interesting artisan stalls and the delicious food on offer. The weather was fabulous. Our new Gazebo (bought with grants from two charities, Dorset Community Foundation and the National Lottery Community Fund) drew lots of attention. To advertise and show our appreciation for their donations, special bunting with the Charities’ logos was draped around the top of the gazebo. We were positioned just far enough away from the music emanating from a local pub’s area that we were able to chat to our visitors and let them know, if they didn’t already, about Bournemouth u3a and the benefits of membership. We heard from several people on the verge of retiring and looking for something to occupy their time. We found others delighted to see us there and eager to get a brochure to read through when they returned home. The volunteers talked about their own experiences with Bournemouth u3a, the groups they attend and how much fun they have joining in with our social events. **Huge thanks to our wonderful volunteers.** It’s definitely a date for next summer.

Julie Williams, Publicity

## The Office

Our dedicated team of Volunteers – *We Thank you!*

Monday	Rosa Milton, Dorothee Merton
Tuesday	June Arthur, John Oram Rob Ellis (Reserve)
Wednesday	Jennie Pudney, Sue Godwin, Paul Tunnicliffe
Thursday	Mary Laphish, Angela Heasman
Friday	Graham Maughan Chris Moran , Dorothee Merton (alternate weeks)



**BOURNEMOUTH  
UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE**

c/o St James Institute  
33a Stourfield Road  
Bournemouth  
BH5 2AR

Tel: 01202 420700

**NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**Thursday 19th October 2023**

**commencing 2pm**

**at Friends Meeting House**

Wharnccliffe Road, Boscombe, BH5 1AH

(arrangements overleaf)

Registered Charity No. 800397

**Pull out Annual General Meeting Supplement**

## NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of  
Bournemouth u3a will be held

on

**Thursday, 19th October 2023, commencing at 2pm,**

in the Main (George Fox) Hall of  
Friends Meeting House

to conduct the business set out in the Agenda below.

### AGENDA

- 1 Welcome by the Vice Chair, Stephanie Gardiner
- 2 Apologies for absence
- 3 Approval of the minutes of the last AGM [17 October 2022]
- 4 Vice Chair's Annual Report
- 5 Treasurer's Annual Report
- 6 Election of Committee members for 2023/2024
- 7 Any Other Business

Any member who wishes to raise a matter under AOB should notify the Secretary by e-mail [secretary@bournemouthu3a.org.uk] before  
**Thursday, 12 October 2023.**

Matters raised under AOB on the day will be taken at the discretion of the Vice Chair.

[All Groups which do not finish by 1pm on AGM day will be cancelled.  
Please note that the Office may close early that day as well.]

## AGM ARRANGEMENTS

- Please write the date of this year's AGM, Thursday 19 October, in your diaries.
- There is some parking at or near Friends Meeting House, but it is also a short walk from the main Christchurch Road bus route.
- The Committee would like as many members as possible to attend, as we need a good attendance to hold a valid AGM.
- This year's Committee is listed overleaf. By the provisions of our Constitution, the entire Committee stands down each year at the AGM and a new Committee (maximum 12) is elected for the coming year.
- Nominations for the 2023/24 Committee from members are invited. Written nominations, which need to be seconded (with both names clearly printed), should be sent [envelope marked 'AGM election nomination'] to the Office to arrive no later than **Thursday, 5 October 2023**.
- We have a vacancy for a TREASURER that we need to fill for 2023/24

## Committee Members 2022/23

(Vacancy)	Chair
<b>Stephanie Gardiner</b>	Vice Chair Beacon
<b>Rod Jackson</b>	Treasurer
<b>Dorothee Merton</b>	Secretary  Programme & Venue Coordinator (co-opted)
<b>Jennie Pudney</b>	Programme & Venue Coordinator  SJI Representative
<b>Julie Williams</b>	Publicity
<b>June Arthur</b>	Office Manager
<b>John Oram</b>	Social Events
<b>Pat Ley</b>	IT Manager
<b>Keith Pitman</b>	Newsletter





## LUNCHING AROUND THE WORLD with Bob Hucklesby

Now in our third year, we're very much looking forward to welcoming diners old and new to u3a Lunching Around The World.

Our leisurely lunches take place every month between October and June and we aim to try out a variety of cuisines from around the globe.

We vary the flavours, locations and days of the week.

**2023-2024** sees a return to some of our favourite haunts – The Real Greek, Kala Thai and Cote Brasserie plus eagerly anticipated visits to The Wonderful Kitchen, Finezza and Chef Carlos (venues recommended by our group members).

Information about each meal is sent to all members via e-mail approximately 3 weeks in advance.

Places **must be pre-booked** and some restaurants will require meal choices in advance.

Our group meals are a very pleasant way of making new friends and enjoying some interesting conversations around the table.

So, if you don't know your BAO from your BAKLAVA, PIEROGI from PAVLOVA - why not come and join us?

THE REAL GREEK                      Thursday 12th October – 12.30

WONDERFUL KITCHEN      Monday 30th October – 12.30

FINEZZA                                      Wednesday 15th November – 12.30

**To book, please contact:**      bobhucklesby@btinternet.com  
Tel: 01202 551401



## TEN PIN BOWLING with John Oram

Tuesday 19 September

Monday 4 December 2023

At Hollywood Bowl, (Bowlplex), Branksome

As usual please arrive promptly at 11.00 so that we can organise a group for each lane and all start together at 11.15. As our sessions will be in school term time I have been re-assured that we will get the concessionary rate.

We usually play 2 games finishing by about 1.00 – 1.30.

Bowling shoes are available for hire but ordinary footwear is perfectly acceptable. No need to book, just turn up and by all means bring a friend if you wish.

If you don't feel like playing just come along and watch and have a chat. Enjoy the fun and there is a coffee bar.

There is plenty of parking on site and of course many buses pass the door. Please note change from our usual day for our September session.

## COFFEE CLUB

Come and enjoy a beverage of your choice and meet other members of Bournemouth u3a.

All coffee club meetings 10.30 - 12.00

**Tuesday 10th October 2023** Host - Bob Hucklesby

Victoria Park Methodist Church, Welcome Inn Cafe  
23 Jameson Road, Winton, BH9 2QF

Buses 5/5A, 13, alight at either Winton Police Station or Winton Library





## **Wednesday 22nd November 2023**

Host - Bob Hucklesby

Parry's Cafe, St. Peter's Church, Hinton Road,  
central Bournemouth.

As well as coffee/tea there are cakes, biscuits, toasted tea cakes, sandwiches at reasonable prices. Plus, most Wednesdays there is a recital at 1pm if you want to stay on.

### **OUR NEXT QUIZ with Alan and Audrey Kneller**



We look forward to our next Quiz during the Christmas break.

**Wednesday 6 December 2023**, at 2.00pm, arrive from 1.30

At The Annunciation Church Hall, 218 Charminster Road, BH8 9RW.

Will group/team leaders please make up a table of a maximum of 6 members and notify the Office by phone or preferably email of your contact details and team name. A group can have more than one team.

If no one in your group wants to make up a team, contact the Office telling them of your interest and you will be linked with another group that cannot make a full team, or you could be linked with other individuals to make a new team.



Admission is £3 per person,  
to include refreshments,  
payable at your table please.

## CHRISTMAS LUNCH at THE CUMBERLAND HOTEL

27 East Overcliff Drive, BH1 3AF

Tuesday 12 December 2023

arrive by 12.30 for start at 1.00

£27.50 per person, incl. gratuities

There is limited parking at the hotel and metered parking on adjacent roads.

### MENU

STARTERS	Carrot and Sweet Potato <b>Soup</b> , fresh herbs, croutons (VG, GF no croutons) Duck & Orange <b>Liver Parfait</b> (GF available), apricot & cranberry chutney, sourdough toast, small salad Duo of Smoked Mackerel & Trout <b>Fish Rillettes</b> , seasonal leaves, cherry tomato, dill & lemon crème fraîche Middle Eastern <b>Chickpea Salad</b> (VG, GF), red onion, cucumber, cherry tomato, coriander & mint yogurt Pineapple <b>Carpaccio</b> (VG, GF) seasonal fruit, mango sorbet
MAINS	Traditional Roast <b>Turkey Breast</b> , (DF, GF available), pigs in blankets, sage and onion stuffing, Chef's pan gravy Roast Scottish Rib Eye of <b>Beef</b> (GF), rosemary & garlic jus Baked Vegetable <b>Ratatouille</b> (VG, DF, GF), roasted Mediterranean vegetables, Provencal tomato sauce Chef's Baked <b>Nut Roast</b> (VG), roasties, seasonal vegetables, cranberry & red currant jus  All served with Crispy Roasties and Seasonal Vegetables
DESSERTS	<b>Luxury Christmas Pudding</b> , (GF available) brandy & nutmeg sauce Salted Caramel <b>Chocolate Panna Cotta</b> (VG, GF), salted caramel sauce, toasted coconut, seasonal berries <b>Christmas pudding</b> (VG, GF), brandy & nutmeg sauce Lemon & Passion Fruit <b>Cheesecake</b> , Mango coulis Coffee & <b>Baileys Panna Cotta</b> (GF), vanilla cream, hazelnut Pear & <b>Date Pudding</b> (VG, GF), butterscotch sauce, pouring cream

NOTE - (GF) = Gluten Free (VG) = Vegan (DF) = Dairy Free

If you have any dietary requirements or need allergen advice, please contact the Cumberland Hotel before booking.

Seating will be allocated, so if you have a preference to sit with a particular friend or group (8 - 10 per table), please indicate the name of your friend, the group or the lead person on your booking form. On the day, the seating plan will be prominently displayed in the bar area at the entrance to the restaurant.

**Send your booking to Dorothee Merton, Bournemouth U3A, 33a Stourfield Road, Bournemouth, BH5 2AR by 10 November 2023 at the very latest please.**  
Any queries to: [secretary@bournemouthu3a.org.uk](mailto:secretary@bournemouthu3a.org.uk)

**RAFFLE;** there will be up to 10 interesting prizes, so don't forget to buy raffle tickets!

*Looking forward to seeing you! Dorothee Merton*

**BOOKING FORM FOR CHRISTMAS LUNCH 12 DECEMBER 2023**

Please reserve me ..... place(s) at £27.50 per person

**PAYMENT**, either

(a) I have made an online payment to Bournemouth U3A number two account, ..... sort code 20 – 11 – 39, account no. 33729516, and enter reference as “Xmas/surname” (surname of person attending, the first person named if payment for more than one). Or

(b) I enclose my cheque for £..... made payable to Bournemouth U3A.

Please include me on the table with .....  
(name of friend, group or lead person, or leave blank if no preference). Note – Max 10 per table.

Please indicate your choices using only the **highlighted and underlined** words in the Menu.

\*\*\*\*\* **If GF requested for Soup, Liver Parfait, Turkey Breast and Luxury Christmas Pudding this needs to be stated on the order**

Name ..... Name .....

Starter ..... Starter .....

Main ..... Main .....

Dessert ..... Dessert .....

**Please enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope for your receipt**

**Telephone number in the event of any queries .....**

Back in covid days, when most weekly groups were in hibernation, our u3a was asked for volunteers to take part in a BU research project. The EU funded project wanted to hear our suggestions about our own anticipated homecare needs that would allow us to remain at home for as long as possible.

Those of us who took part had semi-structured interviews with Mavis Bengtsson, by Zoom, over a number of weeks. She then went away, transcribed our qualitative research interviews, and analysed our responses with appropriate academic methods.

At the beginning of August, I caught up with Mavis over coffee. She told me that the project was now completed, and she had passed the conclusions on to the person leading the Integrated Care Strategy for One Dorset. I congratulated Mavis on the award of her doctorate from BU for this research.

Her general conclusions were (i) that we sought wellbeing and dignity in our later years, and (ii) that we looked forward to proactive homecare delivered by trustworthy homecare providers. If anyone would like a one page digital pdf copy of an overview of the completed research, then just ask me for a copy in an e-mail to: [howardfincher@btinternet.com](mailto:howardfincher@btinternet.com)

Howard Fincher

We welcome feedback from anyone who has participated in a BU Research Project where u3a members have been invited.





## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Date	Event	Venue	Time
18 Sept	Coffee Morning	Boscombe Cliff Bowling Café	10.30
19 Sept	10 Pin Bowling	Bowlplex Branksome	11.00
20 Sept	Group Leaders' Meeting	FMH	1.00
25 Sept	Start of Autumn term		
10 Oct	Coffee Club	Victoria Park Methodist Church Jameson Rd, Winton	10.30
12 Oct	Lunching around the World	The Real Greek in BH2	12.30
30 Oct	Lunching around the World	Wonderful Kitchen (Chinese) 261 Charminster Road	12.30
15 Nov	Lunching around the World	Finezza 372 Poole Road Branksome	12.30
22 Nov	Coffee Club	Pennys Café St Peter's Church Hinton Road	10.30
1 Dec	End of Autumn term		
4 Dec	10 Pin Bowling	Bowlplex Branksome	11.00
6 Dec	Quiz	Annunciation Church Hall Charminster Road	2.00
12 Dec	Christmas Lunch	The Cumberland Hotel East Overcliffe Drive	12.30
2024			
<b>16 Dec</b>	<b>OFFICE CLOSURE</b>	<b>Re-open Tues 2 Jan</b>	
8 Jan	Start of Spring term		
July	Holiday in Tuscany	See page 24	

## Highlights of Tuscany July 2023

Sunshine and sunflowers in glorious Tuscan countryside! U3A members spent two delightful weeks in the lovely spa town of *Montecatini Terme*. Its proximity to *Florence, Lucca, Prato, Pisa and Volterra* made it a splendid base for sightseeing, but with temperatures reaching 38 degrees we were glad to cool off afterwards in the hotel swimming pool before indulging in a four-course dinner.

Sightseeing highlights included the beautiful gardens of *Villa Marlia*, followed by lunch at the medieval hilltop village of *San Gennaro*. The parish church there is home to a terracotta statue attributed to Leonardo da Vinci.

*Collodi*, birthplace of the author of *Pinocchio*, provided a theme park and we upped the cultural ante with a visit to *Volterra*, well prepared beforehand by a lecture on the Etruscans from Dante, the hotel owner. We visited *San Gimignano*, with its fourteen 13<sup>th</sup> century stone towers, en route home.

Our understanding of Tuscan wine was enhanced in special wine tasting sessions run by Nicoletta, one of the hotel family members. Taking small groups of 8 people she took us through wine growing from vineyard to finished product. We sampled a white wine and two red wines, accompanied by the appropriate food over a leisurely lunch hour.

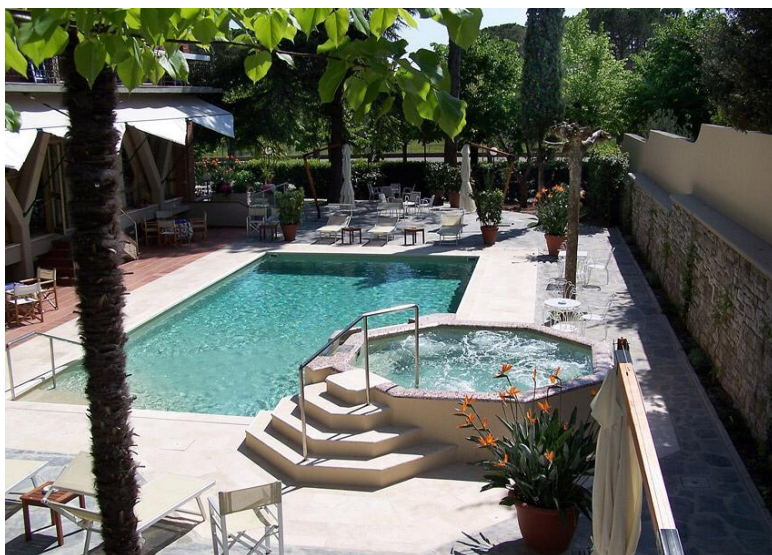
Musical opportunities included local concerts at *Terme Tettuccio* by visiting choirs and orchestras hailing from Australia and Cork; extracts from Puccini operas at *Lucca* and a full open-air performance of *La Boheme* at *Torre del Lago*. Still hot at midnight!

A truly magical fortnight with many thanks to Margaret Ronchetti for sharing her love of Tuscany with us and making it happen.

## Italian Holiday 2023



Hotel Torretta





Collodi Village

### **u3a Tuscany Delights Holiday 2024**

Following previous memorable trips to Tuscany, we shall again be returning to Hotel Torretta in Montecatini Terme from 2nd to 16th July 2024. Next year's programme will include visits to Renaissance gardens, Volterra, Sienna, Vinci, and time for trekking and opera in Lucca.

There will be plenty of free time to relax and explore nearby cities such as Viareggio, Florence, Pisa, Prato and Pistoia. Each day finishes with a delicious Tuscan dinner and good conversation.

If you would like to register your interest and find out more, please contact Margaret Ronchetti by email:  
[margaretronchetti@hotmail.com](mailto:margaretronchetti@hotmail.com)