



U3A Vall del Pop News4U

No. 34
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Dear Members,

I can't believe that the Christmas Season will soon be upon us. The weather has certainly got colder and maybe this should have been an indicator.

We have a Special Christmas General Meeting for you on Thursday 13th December , at the Multi Uso , Alcalali, where a number of groups will display what they have been working on during the year.

We have a special appearance from the newly formed guitar group, Casual Choir, reading group, play reading group, and of course we hope that Father Christmas will stop off to wish us all a merry Christmas. Places at this meeting at the Multi Uso , are limited so please arrive early to secure your seat and join in with the Christmas carols and songs. Don't forget your festive hats, well tuned voices and lots of Christmas spirit.

I am sure that you have all seen the Travel Booking Procedure which has been recently put together by our hard-working TCP group. The intention is to have a common **procedure that's fair, and tries to cover member's circumstances. I'm sure that it will** make things easier and clearer for us all.

I'd like to thank all the members who attended the Gala Dinner Dance, at the Solymar Hotel, which was a fantastic conclusion to our 5th Year Celebrations.

Planning is now taking place for the 10th Anniversary - any suggestions!

Best wishes , Bob.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY VAL !

A little Annie-bird has told us that her friend, Val Blakeman, a very active member of the TCP, was 70 years old on November 10th! Congratulations from us all at the U3A..

WHO OR WHAT IS THE TCP ??

TCP stands for TRAVEL AND CULTURE PEOPLE!

Annie Hawker (Group Leader), Mike Hawker (who doubles as Membership Secretary), Sandra Welham (also our Almoner), John and Val Blakeman, Angela Woodhouse, Terry and Irene Turvey, Anne and Derek Martyr.

These inspired 10 people have formed themselves into a group with the sole purpose of arranging fun things for U3A members to do!

You have seen them at the General Meetings, sitting at their tables outside the meeting room, with all manner of temptations to offer you. Trips, Quizzes, plays, social events ...

Wherever you pay your money and take your choice, somewhere behind the event is a member of the TCP.. Each event can take hours of work to organize, but the members do it with such a smile, sometimes we have to pinch ourselves to remember how lucky we are that someone will think of a plan, make the arrangements, book coaches, arrange translators, buy tickets, advertise, collect money, and after that, actually PAY to go on to the event themselves!

Everything they have on offer is on the webpage - look at the events guide, click on it for more information, if you want to book, come along to the general meeting, or otherwise any places left can be booked by email or telephone after the meeting.

If you have any ideas which might work as a U3A event, please put suggestions in the box provided At the General Meeting



Anyone for Bridge?

The Bridge Group is a small but enthusiastic bunch of players of mixed ability. We range from almost-beginners to players with years of experience, and we like to play with a sense of fun and tolerance, learning from each other, and all enjoying the game and the company. We play on in Jalon on Wednesday afternoons, 3.30 till 6pm, and we'd like a few more people to join us, so if you fancy giving us a try, please come along! Contact the group leader Sue Mueller for more information or directions to the venue, on 96 597 3286.



We have had a very evocative description of the recent Madrid trip from Angela and Jim Scottow - here is just a brief taster! The complete version can be found on the website, under "Features". Well worth a look! See also next page.

Madrid and Much More!!!

90 of us gathered on Monday 22nd in Jalon, and 90 of us returned on Friday 26th, travel weary but all present and correct.

Monday - The initial drive to Madrid took us through Castilla-**la Mancha and part of the 'meseta', and** views of wonderful castles along the route. In Madrid we were dropped off outside the Palacio Real to wander, then taken to our hotel - our base for 4 nights. We did our best to outdo the Spanish for the level of noise created at meal times.

Tuesday - Segovia! Truly beautiful with its amazing Roman viaduct dominating the old town. The Gothic Cathedral is impressive and the Alcazar is like something out of Disneyland. On our return trip we stopped off at La Granja de San Ildefonso, a royal hunting lodge with magnificent gardens.

Wednesday- Salamanca. A beautiful city with many of its buildings built from golden coloured stone. Our return journey was broken with a visit to Avila, with its 12th century medieval walls stretching for over two kms, recognised as the best preserved in Europe.

Thursday - Toledo. A beautiful, medieval city. We spent our time there wandering around the narrow cobbled streets, at times getting thoroughly lost .

Friday - Madrid. Up early, cases on board and off to another area of Madrid before heading for home.... via the famous museums and galleries of Madrid.

We really enjoyed our trip which has left us with an overview of this area of Spain. Many thanks from all us for the hard work of the organisers who managed to put together a thoroughly comprehensive trip at a very reasonable cost.

Jim and Angela Scottow

200 years ago this week ; uproar in Spain!

What a treat it was this week to have such a speaker with such knowledge and enthusiasm for a bit of Spanish history that most of us were completely unaware of!

Dr Trevor Thomas gave us a detailed, month-by-month account of the 1812 Spanish War of Independence, otherwise known to most British as the Peninsular War.

Causes of this war? Simplistically - general unrest in Europe; revolutions such as the French one; the changing face of warfare allowing Napoleon to deploy huge cannon power; the existence in Europe of many small kingdoms and many dissatisfied mobs; and of course the personality of Napoleon himself, who wanted desperately to conquer Europe and the British Isles and saw the subduing of Spain as a key factor in his plan to do this.

The Duke of Wellington was our most well-known war leader, making full use of our allegiance with Portugal. What a great surprise to hear that at one stage the French border was pushed down as far as **Valencia, and in October of 1812 there were 61,000 of Napoleon's troops amassed around our area here** before marching off to Madrid.

Dr Thomas painted a vivid, if dismal, picture of army life, soldiers only capable of marching 15 miles a day and desperate for food in a country denied a harvest the previous year. A million troops died in Europe in 1812, many from starvation.



MADRID CONTINUED

Summary & Photo's of The Four Days Coach Tour to:
Madrid City & Madrid Museums/Royal Gardens, Segovia & La Granja Royal Palace Gardens,
Salamanca, Abila & Toledo. October 2012.
by Michael Broadley



Segovia

The visits were well worth the coach journeys with plenty to visit and photograph.

Each day was to a different adventure.

We set off from the very comfortable hotel at about 9.30 each day and arrived safely at our destination for about 5

hours site seeing. One needed good walking shoes.



Madrid. Parque de Retiro

It's difficult to write about every visit. Therefore, let the photo's do it.



La Granja

Thanks again to Angela (and Alan) for organizing **this "excellent value"** trip and to our coach drivers and tour guides.



Madrid Centre



Janet Davey has taken some marvellous photos of our U3A group in the dining room on the last evening of the trip.



All Michael's & Janet's photos, and more, can be found in the Gallery on the U3A website.

TWO VIEWS ON THE DAY TRIP TO COCENTAINA

Friday 2nd November and on a fine sunny morning two coaches left Jalon with 100 members of the U3A Vall del Pop aboard and head for Cocentaina to its' Annual Medieval Festival.

This Fiesta is actually called the Fira de Sants and is held for 4 days from the 1st - 4th November each year.

There were many sectors to view including the Medieval Market, Horse Fair, Arab Market and Jewish Quarter, Craftsmanship, Peddlers, Machinery and Automobile Industry and of course Children's Attractions.

In the Main Square and in several other places there were huge round barbeques where they were cooking wonderful food.

We went into the Museum, where there was a fantastic display of all the different Spanish Costumes of the area worn in previous Moors and Christian Festivals. That was on the first floor and on the second floor there was a fine display of Swords, Daggers and Knives. The time absolutely flew by and 5.00pm came all too soon.

Cocentaina is a beautiful town with many extremely old and interesting edifices to inspect. It is certainly a place to revisit to view all these old buildings and Castle.

Mary Justin-Briggs.

Two full coaches left Jalon bound for the Fira de Tots Sants at Cocentaina. The 2nd bus however, was not at all well. The driver struggled with an overheating engine and we limped up the hills at a paltry 40kph, with a couple of stops at the side of the road for both of them to cool off. When we arrived, there was a mad dash for the nearest café - **caffeine urgently required....but only one loo and a long queue formed!**



The Fira takes up the north east part of the town, with wonderful local arts and crafts, general produce, 'a gourmet section', and attractive squares full of tables surrounded by different food stalls. The food on offer was rather grim for a non-meat eater!.....suckling pigs skewered on the braziers, sausages, feet, heads and offal.

The gourmet food stalls were packed with people - you could sample anything you liked, but it seemed to be mostly cheese and meats. I thought I might find some nice parmesan...but the sample I tasted was from the 15th century and hadn't travelled at all well. In one area they had a number of animals penned or tied up. Sadly, I think the living animals were too close to their relatives on the braziers for comfort.....

An absolute must-go-to for Xmas shopping next year, I could have spent a **fortune....on everything but the food.**

Lorraine Barker

Lorraine's full description and evocative photographs can be seen on the Features page of the website. Well worth a click!



Vall del Pop v Moraira - VICTORY FOR US !

On October 9th, a crack team of 8 chess players from our U3A met the best from Moraira at the Alleluya Bar in Jalon, for what turned out to be an afternoon of challenge, conviviality and success for the home team! It was a real test of concentration, for on a lovely sunny Bank Holiday, the Bar (which of course we must now call the "Bar Cup de Bernia", it's original name!) was teeming with groups of happy diners. Over two hours, the team was supported by Group Leader Rod and a valuable spectator and group member, Arthur, whilst using all their skills to fight their more experienced opponents.

It was a happy social occasion too, and the team were pleased to meet and play host to fellow chess-enthusiasts. As the first games were finished early (Harry in fact coming in after 20 minutes!) there was a chance to enjoy a few friendly matches too. Not for no 1 player Danni, however, who finished victorious in the last minute of the 2-hour limit!

Congratulations Team Vall del Pop on the first victory so far in their short career, and thanks, Arthur for sticking out the whole 2 hours and bringing us luck!

Rod Waspe.



The home team; Danni Pontfont, Martin Winmill, Harry Roskoss, Rod Waspe (non-playing captain), Barry Acton, Karen Gerard, Michael Stephenson, Maurice Hood, Clive Kay, Arthur Hurst-Frost (seated - supporter).



The Quiet Corner of a noisy Alleluya Bar.

Two Charity fund-raisers for Benigembla School

Co-operative Hall, Alcalalí. 22nd November. Quiz Night €5 per person. Good prizes to win!
(Two fibreglass boats have been donated for sale; best offers will secure.... a 3m dinghy and a 5m Skipper – both include sails and outboard engine.)

El Cid 14th December. Items for auction urgently needed, Keith will collect.

For all details of both events call Keith on 965 581 472.

FOR SALE
1

✚ A Dell Inspiron Mini 10" PC - Atom 1.66Gz Processor 134 GB Hard Drive
1 GB RAM Windows 7 Starter €110

An ASUS EEE 10" PC—Atom 1.66Gz Processor 80 GB Hard Drive
1 GB RAM Windows XP Home €95

LG 22" Flat Screen Monitor—VGA Connection only €100

2 x Logitech Cordless English Keyboard & Separate Mouse €25 each

For further Information contact either
Roy 966 482 719 or Ken 965 581 457 U3A IT dept.

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✚ Singer steam ironing press.
Hardly used. (RRP £300 new) 100€ OVNO.
Brill for sheets etc!



✚ 6 M&S dining seat tie-cushions, cream
with faint beige stripe. As new. €20
the set. (cost £12 ea, new)

965 577 480



___ ***** ___

✚ **NEW AMAZON KINDLE.....in original packing.**
65€. Buyer collects from me in Jalon

Roger on 649 805 156.

___ ***** ___

✚ Philips Hostess trolley - Excellent condition hardly used...
warming oven/cupboard... 4 pyrex dishes with lids €95.

magsmagge@yahoo.co.uk

___ ***** ___

✚ Arabic door coffee table. Antique ornate door encased in a solid wood
frame covered in plate glass. Measures 153cm by 93cm and stands 50 cm
tall. €500 ovno



Indian decorative wooden carved room divider. €100 ovno



Webbs Dutch Dresser. €800 ovno



Contact Richard on
millington19@yahoo.com
for full details and photos

FOR
SALE
2

Indesit Freezer TZA1. 3 Drawer.
W-55 cm. D-58 cm. H- 85 cm. - White. Four months old.
€115,00

Zanussi Refrigerator ZRG3161
-55 cm D-61 cm. H- 85 cm. - White . Two years old,
used for summer drinks only. €98,00

Exercise Bicycle. Romester K180.
Time, Kilometres, Speed, Pulse, etc, etc, recorded and displayed. Numerous programs
e.g Rolling, Valley, Mountain, User profile etc, etc. €60,00.

Shiatsu Back Massage Cushion. €30,00.

PHONE 966 482 340. Or nevljudy@gmail.com

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VAUXHALL OMEGA 2.5 - V6 AUTOMATIC
COLOUR SILVER, RHD. Top SpeC.
HEATED FRONT SEATS, WIDE TREAD TYRES V.G.C THROUGHOUT.
ROAD LIGHTING AND PLATES CONVERTED FOR SPAIN
TAXED AND INSURED -JANUARY 29TH 2013
CAN BE VIEWED CLOSE TO THE VAL DE POP RESTAURANT
Price 850 Euro Email for any enquiries

dotandpeter@msn.com

WANTED

Two leather chairs or a three seater leather sofa.

rozzi62@hotmail.co.uk

___- ***** ___-

Upright fridge freezer
please contact Julie at

julesthomas2@yahoo.com

Quotes of the month

Only two things are infinite, the universe and
human stupidity, and I'm not sure about the
former - Albert Einstein

I am not young enough to know everything -
Oscar Wilde

Did you know?

The most common name in the world is
Mohammed.

An ostrich's eye is bigger than its brain.

A female ferret will die if it goes into heat
and cannot find a mate.

I have refrained from comments on the
above to avoid offence—Alan

QUIZZES

Most U3A quiz fans will already be aware that there is a Christmas quiz on December 7th at Bar Nou. All those attending are encouraged to dress appropriately since there will be prizes for the best male and female outfits! Be as original and outlandish as you wish...Juan and Rosario have now seen it all after 3 years of our antics.

We shall continue to do bi-monthly quizzes at Bar Nou as normal but there will be an increase of one euro per person from New Year 2013. This is because Bar Nou have had to increase the price of each meal by 1 euro. However, I am sure that no one will mind - the meals are always delicious and fantastic value. By increasing the entry fee accordingly we can keep prizes as attractive as before.

In January we are introducing a one-off quiz to see how it is received. This will be at Los Amigos Restaurant in Alcalá. It is called **QUIZINGO** and is a combination of a quiz and bingo. Possibly a recipe for a chaotic and fun evening? Come and find out! It's on **FRI DAY 25TH JANUARY 7.30 pm**, 11 Euros per person to include a meal with wine/water/beer. There will be prizes, naturally!

If you are interested in or have any queries about any of the quizzes call us on 96 648 1069 (AFTER 5 pm) or email on themartyrs103@gmail.com

A PLEA

I have a request for all members who went on the recent trip to Salamanca.

Does any member have any photo's of the lettering that was on the walls around the university, or the street signs that used the same lettering, which appears to be specific to Salamanca? Despite web searches I cannot find an example of the whole alphabet, so please if they have, would they mind sharing them? Please email me copies to sunnypotter@btinternet.com. I would like to use the lettering in my art work and I do not yet have enough examples to recreate an alphabet.

Thank you! Gill

DISCOUNT FOR U3A MEMBERS

This month there are two new discounts on the website, an Optician and an Airport Car Parking Service. See the website for the full list of available discounts for members.

Direkt Optik Ctra. Moraira-Calpe, 122 (Moraira).

Situated on the same block as the farmacia, International Doctor and Colby's Café. They speak English. This optician is famous for its 3 for 1 offer, and they are offering U3A members a 10% discount off both varifocal and bifocal spectacles. There's 5% off single vision spectacles too. Once the order for glasses has been sent off, they cannot amend the details or refund money so you must present your current U3A membership card at the time of placing your order.

Tel. 96 574 5989

Pirjo at Royal Parking Alicante Airport is offering U3A (Jalon) Members a 10% discount on all parking services.

Their website is www.royalparking.es and email royalparkingalicante@hotmail.com anyone interested can find all the details they need and book online easily.

Sheila Skinner has used their company several times and has been very impressed with their service. Please present your Membership card when you are paying the bill, to ensure you benefit from this kind offer.

U3A Cinema in Parcent

Two Monday evenings a month

€2 (doors open 6:40pm)

For more details about the Cinema, look on the Cinema Group webpage.



Monday 19th November, 7.15pm** - *"The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel"*.

Judi Dench, Bill Nighy, Tom Wilkinson, Penelope Wilton and Maggie Smith are a motley selection of British retirees who, for very different reasons, take up residence at a newly restored hotel in an old palace in Jaipur. Predictably, the hotel is not quite as the brochure promised...and the heat and surroundings affect the group in different ways. Some wonderful one-liners and Maggie Smith shines even in this stellar cast.

118 minutes, cert 12, 2012.

CROWD CONTROL, AND A SONOROUS SOLUTION FROM SEGOVIA.

During our recent U3A visit to the Madrid area we stopped off at beautiful Segovia. After exploring the wonderful 'Sleeping Beauty' style Alcazar we wandered back to the square through the pretty, narrow, shop-lined streets.

Since we have a minimum of 48 people attending each quiz, it can get a bit rowdy and loud sometimes! It's great to hear people enjoying themselves but crowd control isn't always easy even with our trusty microphone system.

We found a great solution in one of these Segovian shops. Bells!!! The shopkeeper waited patiently while we tried out ALL of them. Starting with a modest little chap with a high voice we eventually clanged our way through the whole range of about 6 sizes. The one we chose is making its debut at the November 9th quiz at Los Amigos so mind your eardrums!

Anne and Derek Martyr.

Toll Warning for late night travellers on the AP7 - Benissa exit

Night staffing is minimal, so please make sure you have plenty of small change in euros for the exit machines, particularly if you are driving alone.

It may be important if you know of anyone coming up from the airport and unfamiliar with the toll road ticket and exit systems as Benissa may not be the only exit which has unhelpful staff and sticking ticket machines late at night.

We had some difficulties and I am very glad I wasn't alone trying to sort out the issues on my own so late at night.

Sheila Skinner

I believe the toll roads are suffering from the recession and are drastically reducing their staff which probably makes them less friendly. On a recent trip to Valencia there was only one manual (cash) booth open with a queue of 8/9 vehicles. Using a credit/debit card avoids contact with unfriendly staff — Alan

UPDATES FROM THE GENERAL MEETING LAST THURSDAY

RENEWAL TIME AGAIN!

Mike the Membership Secretary will be on hand to take 2013 membership subs at the next meeting on December 13th. The system had been streamline this year so that you will not have to fill in a renewal form as you make your 5€ payment. But please have a think - have your details changed at all since you last paid? Have you moved, changed your phone number, got a new email address, etc? If so, you will need to complete a Change of Details form, available from Mike. A big welcome to the five new members who joined us at the meeting.

SIP CARDS

Elaine Horton explained the "Spanish National Health" requirement for a SIP card. Everyone who lives here in Spain needs one of these cards in order to claim free health treatments, and the cards are easy to get. If you are over 65 and have a residencia, then it's straightforward, if you are under 65, there are circumstances where you may be eligible - just ask at Casa d'Animo in Alcalá or contact Elaine via our secretary, Graham. This comes after one ex-pat had to deposit €40,000 with Denia Hospital before being given life-saving treatment.

Full up-to-date details about SIP cards can be seen on the features page on our website .

GROUPS NEWS

One of the **MOSAICS** groups has ceased, but could be revived under a new leader! The **equipment is there, so could YOU be that person?** The new choir, "VALLEY VOICES" is now 24 strong, but will welcome more members.

RUMI KUB? **It's an old game, using tiles but played like cards, and a new group is in the planning stage.**

BEGINNER'S COMPUTING is starting again next week

See the website - www.u3avalldelpop.com - for this and other news.

INTERCAMBIO - improve your Spanish.

Are you interested in joining a well-established scheme based in Denia, where English and Spanish speakers are matched one-to-one **for the purpose of improving the other's language?** You fill in a form to describe who you are and what you are interested in, the organisers match you with a Spanish person of similar tastes, you make contact and arrange to meet regularly to suit yourselves, and the two of you can join in social activities within the scheme as a whole if you wish. *It works! There are currently 150 Spanish people waiting for a partner!* Contact Neil on neilweatherall@movistar.es.

2013 CRUISE !

Exciting plans are being made for next year's cruise! See the website for updates .. but this expedition seems even better value than ever! Prices are low now - but won't stay that way, so hurry and contact Anne and Derek if you are interested.

All contact details for all events are available on the website.

What's On ?

Once again, this month, we are showing you the list you can see under "Upcoming events" on the home page of our website. When you pay the site a visit, simply hover the mouse over each event for more details. Click on the details to get even more.

Many events get fully booked at the General Meeting, so make sure you reserve your place by attending the next meeting on December 13th.

CARITAS

OUR COLLECTING BOX FOR ITEMS FOR LOCAL PEOPLE IN GREAT NEED WILL BE AT EVERY GENERAL MEETING. ANY ITEMS OF NON-PERISHABLE FOOD OR HOUSEHOLD ESSENTIALS WILL BE APPRECIATED BEYOND MEASURE.

EVENTS FROM THE WEBSITE

Fri 9/11/2012:	Quiz Night
Mon 19/11/2012:	FILM - 'The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel'
Fri 23/11/2012:	Day trip to Novelda
Sat 24/11/2012:	WHISPERS...a psychological thriller
Mon 3/12/2012:	FILM - 'A Separation'
Fri 7/12/2012:	Quiz Night
Tue 11/12/2012:	Christmas Dinner Dance
Mon 17/12/2012:	FILM - 'Vicky Cristina Barcelona'
Mon 14/1/2013:	FILM - Details to be announced
Thu 17/1/2013:	Mystery Tour.
Mon 28/1/2013:	FILM - Details to be announced
Sun 28/4/2013:	Andalucia, The Grand Tour. (With a Moroccan Twist !)

FUTURE U3A GENERAL MEETINGS

NEXT MONTH'S GENERAL MEETING.

On December 13th, the General Meeting will be held in the Multi-Use building in Alcalalí. Everything is being done to make this FUN! There's no speaker, but lots of Christmas entertainment, carols, Cava and Cake, displays by groups and the winning entries in the Photographic competition. PLUS a few surprises! Come along! Where else can you get all this - FREE!!

ITEMS OF INTEREST FOR THE NEWSLETTER ? THE NEWSLETTER TEAM



This newsletter is specially composed by a small team of Editor, Jazz: Assistant Editor Lorraine who is our reporter and collects items of interest: and Assistant Editor Alan who masterfully puts it together in this colourful and lively format. We hope you enjoy reading it and will continue to send us interesting items to include. Please try to keep below 200 words and get all articles to Lorraine before the 6th of any month. Email lorraineu3a@gmail.com.