

**University of the Third Age**  
**Newsletter January 2019**  
[sheptonmalletu3a.org.uk](http://sheptonmalletu3a.org.uk)



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**1. Chat from the Chair**

A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO YOU ALL

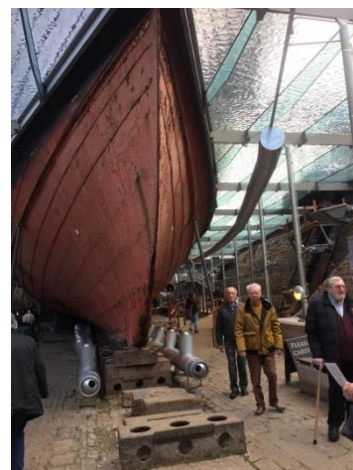
If we can be sure of anything in these uncertain times, it is that the coming 365 days of 2019 will provide lots of good news and some not so positive. We will all have another birthday, remember anniversaries of special days, enjoy celebrations, look forward to holidays and hear that word Brexit many, many times!

Also, we will do our best to ensure that all of our members continue to enjoy their chosen activities and pastimes within U3A. Make 2019 the year that you look again at the organised groups and perhaps sample something new. There will be a new look to our Third Age Matters magazine in February, when the Sources supplement will become a dedicated section within TAM, with themes of an educational nature. Also, there are plans by National Office to update the Beacon system, but we have to wait until April 2020 for this to be implemented.

The new green shoots of spring bulbs have already appeared in my garden, so whatever the weather has in store in the next couple of months, we can be sure that Nature knows the New Year has arrived.

I hope yours will be a very happy one.

**Liz**



**What is it with boys  
and boats?**

Outing to SS Great Britain  
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**2. What's On**

**SPEAKER MEETING**

**Speaker Meetings are held on the first Thursday of the month from 10.00 until 11.45 in the Council Chamber, Mendip District Council Offices.**

FREE tea and coffee available at every meeting

Entrance fee £1.50 for U3A members, £2.50 for guests. To avoid delays at the door, please have the correct money ready for collection, thank you.

### 3 January

**Richard Raynsford:** A History of Somerset Churches.

### 7 February

**Tony Griffith:** The Art of Magic: An exploration of the magician's art including some "tricks of the trade"

### 7 March

**Barry Edwards:** The History of Penguin Books

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#### **December Speaker Meeting** by Derek Hiller

The speaker at our December meeting was Jeff Curtis, Chairman of the Shepton Mallet United Charities, incorporating the Almshouse Charity of George and William Strode of 1627, supplemented by Edward Strode in 1699, Elizabeth Strode in 1712 and Mary Anne Wickham in 1864.

Jeff gave us an informative talk about the work and history of the charity, an organisation that has been serving the local community for nearly 400 years.

**"Ordinary people looking after ordinary people"**, is the phrase adopted by the

trustees of the United Charities to describe what they do and who they are and indeed their

history is full of human resource as well as human failure. This was not how it was seen by the trustees in days gone by when it was given that you should be a person of standing or, at least, a gentleman.

The first mention of Alms people in Shepton is in 1619 when the will of Thomas White, a cordwainer (shoe maker), required that the rents from four houses in Shoe Lane, London be applied to poor persons in Shepton Mallet. Some years later, on 4 May (Ascension Day) 1627, the Strode family who were important West Country landowners, set up the School and Almshouses Charity. The Almshouses in Shepton Mallet are the Strode Almshouses, in Church Lane on the south side of the church, the Wickham Almshouses on the north side of the church and three properties at Milliner Court. Shepton Mallet Almshouses has an historic link to its surrounding villages, from Emborough in the north to Lydford in the south and from Croscombe to Batcombe, an area that the Shepton Mallet District covered until 1974. With limited space available in this newsletter it is difficult to include all of the 400 years of information in the talk so, for those who are interested in reading more about the work of the United Charities and their trustees please do visit the website, [www.alms1627.org.uk](http://www.alms1627.org.uk) for more details.



**The Wickham Almshouses built in 1868**

## Outings

**January      Wednesday 16      Wells Cathedral Tour**  
12.30 at Cathedral Cafe or 1.45 at Donation Desk if not having lunch. Cost £6.60

**February      Wednesday 13      Brothers Drinks, Shepton Mallet** List now closed  
For forms and details see Janet's emails. Please contact Janet if you have any ideas for future outings.

### Outing to Brunel's SS Great Britain

We all enjoyed our visit to see Brunel's SS Great Britain, there were seventeen of us, fourteen in the minibus and three in a car. A good journey there and even better coming back to Shepton as it was half term, so no school runs to hold us up. Seeing the ship and learning about the history of Brunel from the new museum they have built was very interesting. We went on deck which was amazing, but declined the offer of climbing the rigging! Lunch was enjoyed outside on the dockside, where the river was at high tide with lots of activity to watch on the water.



Perhaps an outing in the Spring for a river trip!  
Janet Murray

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## Thursday Coffee Mornings

**Dobbies Restaurant, Shepton Mallet 10.30-12**

All members and non-members are welcome every Thursday morning, except on the first Thursday when we have a Speaker Meeting. Join in for a coffee and friendly chat on **January 10, 17, 24 and 31.**

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## 3. Members' Corner

If you would like to contribute to Members' Corner please send your items of interest, articles, reminiscences, local history, photographs etc to the editor by 20th of the month.

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## 4. U3A Regional and National News

**Regional**

No notifications

**National**

4 February

Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts and Book Art

11 March

Royal Institution

21 March  
24-27 June

British Art from Hogarth to Turner  
South East Summer School

Full listings and details of all national events see What's On in Third Age Matters magazine, visit the website [www.u3a.org.uk](http://www.u3a.org.uk) or sign up to the email newsletter.

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## **5. Group News**

### **Music Appreciation**

For our December meeting the theme was for music associated with Christmas.

We started with the popular Christmas song When a Child is Born performed by Johnny Mathis; the original melody was Soleado, a tune from 1974 by Ciro Dammico. The English language lyrics were written a few years later by Fred Jay. This was followed by Carol of the Bells, a popular Christmas song based on a Ukrainian folk chant and featured in the film Home Alone. We then listened to Stanchester Quire from Montacute in Somerset singing Behold What News We Bring from their album Westcountry Christmas and then A Ceremony of Carols, a choral piece by Benjamin Britten written for Christmas in 1942 and performed by the Kings College Choir conducted by David Willcocks. Two Christmas classic songs came next as we listened to Irving Berlin's White Christmas sung by Bing Crosby and Sleigh Ride, the popular light orchestra standard composed by Leroy Anderson and sung by Johnny Mathis. The mood changed as we listened to the ever-popular Fantasia on Christmas Carols, a 1912 work for baritone, chorus, and orchestra by the English composer Ralph Vaughan Williams. It was first performed in 1912 at the Three Choirs Festival in Hereford Cathedral. We then enjoyed the lovely carol Christmas Lullaby, a sacred choral composition by John Rutter, composed in 1989 as a commission for the Bach Choir to celebrate the 70th birthday of their conductor David Willcocks. The final two pieces were Do You Hear What I Hear, a song written in October 1962, with lyrics by Noël Regney, music by Gloria Shayne Baker and performed by the Choir Boys with Hayley Westenra, the English Chamber Orchestra and conducted by Martin Neary and In Dulci Jubilo composed by English composer Robert Lucas Pearsall and performed by the London Baroque Soloists and BBC singers conducted by Steven Cleobury.

The next Music Appreciation group meeting is at 2.00pm on Wednesday 9 January when we will have music with a connection to J for January.

### **Singing for Pleasure Christmas Event**

Our annual Christmas celebration on Friday 14 December shook the rafters of the Salvation Army hall with joyful singing and laughter despite the cold wet weather outside. Many visitors duly wore festive attire adding to the Christmas spirit. The programme, a mixture of old favourite carols and songs was punctuated with a couple of sessions of prizes for cracker jokes. The jokes were up (or down??) to the usual corny standard which only added to the fun. Coffee, stollen, gingerbread and shortbread were served afterwards.

It was good to see new faces and old friends. Thank you to everyone who came along and helped make our seventh Christmas Music a really happy event.

Please feel free to join us again in 2019. Our next meeting is Friday 11 January, 10.30 to 11.30. Catherine Wylie

### **Saturday Bus Pass Trippers**

Saturday 8 December, saw seven of our new group enjoying a visit to Wells. We caught the 10.41am bus from the Cenotaph to Wells. The morning weather was good, so we enjoyed a



wander around the market, where there were lots of bargains to be had. We then went into the Liberty Cafe Bar for a coffee and cake. Refreshed, we wandered down through the town to the bus station, ready to catch the 1.05pm bus back to Shepton.

It's been decided to fix a day in the month to enjoy our bus trips; it's to be the first Saturday in each month. Our next day is **Saturday 5 January**.

Anyone wishing to join us please let me know and I can then let you know details of our next day out. Janet Murray

### **Solo**

Solo Group shared a delicious Christmas meal at the Shepton Brasserie on 16 December. The meal was served by the, as always, efficient staff. We were at the dessert stage here, so slowing down a bit! Our thanks go to Jan and Richard for their attention to detail. Looking forward to the next time! Anyone on their own and would like to join the Solo Group, please get in touch via the U3A website, use contact form please. Janet



### **Strollers-A Walk In The Park?**

Lyn has suggested that some of the Strollers Group might like a stroll during the winter months, if the weather is not too inclement. Perhaps a stroll around Collett Park and a cup of tea at the Brasserie? Please let Lyn know if you would like to be included in an impromptu stroll.

### **Walking**

Our first December walk at Chew Stoke, on the third, was wet-even the ford we drove through to get to the start was in full spate. After a mince pie provided by Janis and coffee we set off through beautiful countryside and the rain mostly held off. A few of us had an extended walk as chatting at the back Harry missed the turning.



Photos of 17 December circular walk from Doultong to Shepton and return with beautiful sunshine and a lunch at the Poachers Pocket organised by Margaret and Christopher. As usual we were grateful to Frank for cattle control!



### Shorter Walking Group



When asked, by the Shorter Walking Group, the way back to Oakhill, the local gave a confusing answer.

## Monthly Activities

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
<b>Monday</b>	Walking French Intermediate 2-3pm Beginners 3-4pm	Discussion 10.30am Bowls 11am Art 2-4pm	Walking French Intermediate 2-3pm Beginners 3-4pm Woolcraft 2.30pm	Bowls 11am Art 2-4pm
<b>Tuesday</b>	Book Group 10.15am Bridge 2pm Table Tennis 2pm Flower Club 2pm	Collectables 11am Table Tennis 2pm Bridge 2pm Needlecraft 2pm Recorder Playing 2pm	Family History 1 10.30am Bridge 2pm Table Tennis 2pm	Family History 2 10.30 Table Tennis 2pm Bridge 2pm Needlecraft 2pm Recorder Playing 2pm
<b>Wednesday</b>		Music Appreciation 2pm		
<b>Thursday</b>	Speaker Meeting 10.30am	Coffee 10.30am Scrabble 2pm	Shorter Walks Coffee 10.30am Strollers 1.30pm	Coffee 10.30am Scrabble 2pm
<b>Friday</b>	Table Tennis 2pm	Singing 10.30am Table Tennis 2pm	Munch Club Table Tennis 2pm	Singing 10.30am Table Tennis 2pm

The table above represents the usual meeting dates for groups. The actual dates may vary. Writing for Pleasure meets fortnightly at 2pm on a Thursday. They do not appear on the above chart. Bus Pass Trippers travel on Saturdays. You should contact group leaders for confirmation of dates. For more information on any of our groups visit the website [www.sheptonmalletu3a.org.uk](http://www.sheptonmalletu3a.org.uk) or contact the individual group leader below.

### Group Contacts

<b>Art</b>	Gill Davies
<b>Books</b>	Sue Dunne
<b>Bowls</b>	Frank Booth
<b>Bridge</b>	Graham McCartney
<b>Bus Pass Trippers</b>	Janet Murray
<b>Collectables</b>	Liz Nash
<b>Discussion</b>	Malcolm Weeks
<b>Family History</b>	Keith Taylor
<b>Flowers</b>	Freda Briars
<b>French</b>	Valerie Delaittre-Smith
<b>Munch Club</b>	Maggie Fowle
<b>Music</b>	Derek Hiller
<b>Appreciation</b>	
<b>Needlecraft</b>	Di Gommo Liz Weeks
<b>Recorders</b>	Sandra Morris Julie Newman
<b>Scrabble</b>	Di Gommo
<b>Singing for</b>	Alison Howells
<b>Pleasure</b>	Catherine Wylie



<b>Shorter Walks</b>	Jenny Wehrfritz
<b>Solos</b>	Janet Murray
<b>Strollers</b>	Lyn Hook
<b>Table Tennis</b>	Pam Mitchell
<b>1 and 2</b>	Peter Howell
<b>Walking</b>	Liz Weeks
<b>Woolcraft</b>	Pam Mitchell
<b>Writing for Pleasure</b>	Catherine Wylie

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## 6. Committee Members

<b>Chair</b>	Liz Nash
<b>Vice Chair and Publicity</b>	Derek Hiller
<b>Secretary</b>	Maggie Hardy
<b>Treasurer</b>	Jane Burman
<b>Groups Co-ordinator</b>	Sue Dunne
<b>Membership Secretary</b>	Maggie Fowle
<b>Newsletter</b>	Julia Goddard
<b>Outings</b>	Janet Murray
<b>Speakers</b>	Pete Norman
<b>Website</b>	Keith Taylor

I'd like to send a big **THANK YOU** to **Maggie Hardy** for producing the Christmas edition while I was away and thanks you to all our contributors this month. Please send all your items for inclusion in the next newsletter by 20<sup>th</sup> of the month.