

u3a learn, laugh, live

Shepton Mallet

Newsletter

April 2022

sheptonmalletu3a.org.uk



From the Chair

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From the Chair

Hello everyone! The daffs are out, the sky is (occasionally) blue and our u3a group is really getting going again!

NSA meeting

One very wet Friday I attended the AGM of the North Somerset Association of u3a groups, in Burnham-on-Sea. This turned out to be very interesting and reassuring, because it emerged that all the local groups have lost members over the last couple of years, and all are finding it difficult to persuade people to get involved again. On the other hand, membership is now starting to creep up as many people are keen to join something sociable. Another common problem is that so few members are willing to help with running the group. It's worth remembering that u3a is a volunteer organisation and the more people who take an active part, the better. As President JFK almost said: "Ask not what your u3a can do for you, but rather what you can do for your u3a!" Currently the Flower Arranging, Short Tennis and Creative Writing groups need more members, and we would like to increase the range of activities on offer so PLEASE consider starting a group yourself.

Anniversary

This September is the 40th anniversary of the founding of the national u3a, and the 21st is u3a Day. We would like to hold a celebration of some sort which would double as a publicity drive, so I am asking for a few members to form a working party to

organise this. If you can help please contact me or any committee member. We have been in contact with the Shrubbery Hotel with a view to holding a tea party with music, or something similar, but this is not settled.

Outings

The April outing on the 22nd is to Roman Caerleon and Chepstow Castle. Places are still available on this trip. Please let me know asap if you would like to come. We will visit Caerleon in the morning then go on to Chepstow for lunch and the castle or looking round the town. If you have never been to Chepstow Castle, it really is stunning. Full details see below.

For May, I am considering Abbotsbury Swannery (to see the cygnets!) and the lovely Botanical Garden. A joint ticket for these costs £18 and transport will be about £17 each. Details to follow.

Best wishes,
Janet

What's On

Speaker Meetings

Thursday 7 April **Salvation Army Hall** **History of Gem Stones by Rachel Boothroyd**

Thursday 5 May **Salvation Army Hall** **Chris Copson talking about Sparkford Motor Museum**

£2 for members, £3 non-members, free tea or coffee
Due to covid regulations we can only admit 40 to the Salvation Army Hall.
Please let Jane Morrison know if you intend to come along

Outings

Tuesday 29 March **Cribbs Causeway and afternoon enjoying Clevedon**
£15

Friday 22 April **Over the bridge to Roman Caerleon and the dramatic Chepstow Castle**
£19 for transport, plus entry to Caerleon (about £4) and/or £8.60 Chepstow Castle (free to English Heritage members)

Please contact Outings organiser, Janet Sherwin if you would like an application form or require more details.

Members' Corner

Our first Speaker Meeting since February 2020 was a great success!

Packaging – Friend or Foe by Jonathan Fowle

SMu3a member Jonathan stepped into the breach (again) when our arranged speaker was unable to attend. He gave an updated version of his previous talk in October 2018 on plastics and packaging discussing the 4Ps–Pack, Preserve, Present, Promote. Without good packaging food would deteriorate quickly. Shelf life, to keep products in optimal condition, is governed by combining appropriate food and packaging technology. UK packaging waste collection, sorting and recovery policies by local authorities are variable. Households are also often unsure what is recoverable. The pandemic has increased single use plastic for PPE, testing kits, medicinal packaging and other disposable products. No other product gives the security necessary for pharmaceutical packaging.



A good turnout for our first speaker Jonathan Fowle

How green are you? Do you have some recycling tips to pass on? Let us know how you do your bit to save on packaging and waste.

TIP: Tesco now has a container by the entrance to recycle soft plastics such as the clear film used to wrap meat and fish, crisp packets, sweet wrappers, bread bags, salad and veg bags. (Soft plastics are NOT plastic bottles, tubs, pots, trays and caps. They go in your blue bag.)



Presentation of flowers and tokens to Liz Nash and Maggie Hardy

As we are now ex Chair Liz and ex Secretary Maggie, we want to thank everyone for our beautiful flowers and gift tokens which we received at the Speaker Meeting in March.

It was totally unexpected, but your generosity was greatly appreciated by us both. We are anticipating many outings to book shops and garden centres to browse before wisely spending our tokens.

Maggie and I joined forces after the AGM in 2018 and it was a case of learning as we went along. We endeavoured to do our best to stick to the principles and rules as best we could, so as you can imagine, we enjoyed some tasks much more than others!

As always though with SMu3a, it is the friends and social connections made and developed that have given us the greatest pleasure.

We wish our new Chair Janet and our new Secretary Carole every success in the future and we are sure their enthusiasm and ideas supported by a strong committee will ensure SMu3a continues to grow and thrive.

With our best wishes and thanks again,
Liz and Maggie



Answers to March Quiz

1. Who was the Greek Goddess of Love and Beauty?
Aphrodite
2. In which state of the USA is the Grand Canyon? **Arizona**
3. What does an Agronomist do? **Advises on crop production**
4. Who was the wife of King Edward VII? **Alexandra of Denmark**
5. By what is the plant Saintpaulia better known? **African Violet**
6. By what other name is Alligator Pear known? **Avocado**
7. Who wrote 'Brave New World'? **Aldous Huxley**

8. Who was the original host of 'Have I got News for You?'? **Angus Deaton**
9. What is the largest Spanish-speaking country in the world?
Argentina
10. Who was the first man to reach the South Pole? **Amundson in 1911.**

More quizzing from Maggie next month.

Shepton Library Proposed Shared Reading Group every Friday at 11am

Would you like to try the Shared Reading Group at Shepton library?

Who is it for? Everyone! Shared reading is a great way to connect with different people and talk about stories and poems in a small, informal group setting.

How does it work? A group of people, one of them a trained reader leader, reads part of a great novel, short story or poem aloud. The group gets involved with the piece and shares their thoughts, ideas and feelings about what has been read.

When is it? The group is running weekly for one hour on a drop-in basis every **Friday at 11am**

Puzzling tree

Any solutions to the tree conundrum in last month's newsletter?

Barry and Barbara have suggested this poem for Shepton Mallet u3a walkers...perhaps

Sprightly as young ramblers we stride across the moor,
doing the Pennine Way footpath as many have done before.
We started to walk a week ago, already we've done ten miles-
only two hundred and forty to go and one hundred and ninety six stiles.

So on with the rucksacks and on with the boots then we'll just climb this
mountain of scree...

Hey hang on a minute I've had an idea, we'll just have a nice cup of tea.

We're now fairly tired young ramblers as we walk across the glen,
We've just had to climb up a mountain, and then had to climb down again.
The view from the top was magnificent, you couldn't see 'owt for the fog,
and when we got down from the big mountain top - we found ourselves deep in
a bog.

So out with the compass and out with the map, let's find out just where we
should be...

Hey hang on a minute I've had an idea, we'll just have a nice cup of tea.

Slowly us weary old ramblers we trudge across the fell,
swearing with really choice swearwords that rambling can now go to He**
but when we get round the next corner and manage to climb the next stile
the view that was out there before us made us forget all our cares for a while.

So out with the cameras, plenty of snaps, in total we took ninety three...
Hey hang on a minute I've had an idea, we'll just have a nice cup of tea.

We really are tired old ramblers but we've got to the end of the walk,
we're tired, we're shattered, we're really done in and we don't have the strength
to talk.

We take off our boots, we've holes in our socks and blisters all over our feet
but after a really hot shower or bath we'll make ourselves something to eat.

Then out with the maps of the Coast to Coast walk, we'll do that next year just
you see...

Hey hang on a minute I've just had a thought, we're drinking our last cup of tea!!

And thanks for this B&B...

**Are you sweating
whilst putting
petrol in your car?
Feeling sick when
paying for it?
You have got the
carownervirus**

Group News

Shorter Walks

A big "Hello" from the Shorter Walk Group on a sunny day in March just outside Frome. Thanks to Chris and Margaret who led this month's walk from the town centre north to Spring Gardens and back via the freight railway line that we crossed with care. Super cake and coffee at the Cheese and Grain followed.



Woolcraft

The Woolcraft group were asked to knit and crochet snowdrops for the Shepton Mallet Snowdrop Festival. We were given the patterns and some yarns and between us we made about sixty which were taken to the Community Bookshop in time for them to be attached to key rings. Pam Mitchell



Classic Cars

More than 300 classic cars were on show at an event at Downside Abbey on Sunday 20 March. Photos courtesy of SMu3a member, Jim Morrison



Monthly Activities

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
Monday	Walking	Discussion 10.30am Bowls 11am Art 2-4pm	Walking Woolcraft 2pm	Bowls 11am Art 2-4pm
Tuesday	Book Group 10.15am French conversation 10am Photography 2pm Bridge 2pm Table Tennis 2pm Flower Club 2pm	Collectables 10.30am Table Tennis 2pm Bridge 2pm Needlecraft 2pm Recorder Playing 2pm	Flowers French conversation 10am Bridge 2pm Table Tennis 2pm	Table Tennis 2pm Bridge 2pm Needlecraft 2pm Recorder Playing 2pm
Wednesday	Short Tennis 4-5pm	Short Tennis 4-5pm	Short Tennis 4-5pm	Short Tennis 4-5pm
Thursday	Speaker Meeting 10.30am	Coffee 10.30am Scrabble 2pm	Shorter Walks Coffee 10.30am Strollers 1.30pm	Coffee 10.30am Scrabble 2pm
Friday	Table Tennis 2pm	Table Tennis 2pm	Munch Club Table Tennis 2pm	Singing for Pleasure 10.30-12 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 and Scrabble/Board Games day and venue are fluid. Coffee mornings meet every Thursday at Dobbies except when there is a Speaker Meeting on the first Thursday of the month. You should contact group leaders for confirmation of dates. For more information on any of our groups, visit the website www.sheptonmalletu3a.org.uk or contact the individual group leader below.

Group Contacts

Art	Jane Burman Graham Cooper
Books	Sue Dunne
Bowls	John Smith
Bridge	Joan Bennett
Classic Car Appreciation	Jonathan Fowle
Collectables	Liz Nash
Cricket	Jonathan Fowle
Appreciation Discussion	Malcolm Weeks
Flowers	Sylvia Ingham
French	Jane Burman
Conversation Munch Club	Maggie Hardy
Needlecraft	Liz Weeks
Outings	Janet Sherwin
Photography	John Law
Scrabble, Cards/Board Games	Joan Bennett
Singing for Pleasure	Val Sherring Sandra Freeborn
Shorter Walks	Jenny Wehrfritz
Short Tennis	Eric Wehrfritz
Solos	Janet Murray
Strollers	Lyn Hook
Table Tennis 1 and 2	Mike Burr
Walking	Liz Weeks
Woolcraft	Pam Mitchell
Writing for Pleasure	Kevin Hoole

Committee Members



From left Janet Sherwin, Janet Murray, Jane Morrison, Keith Taylor, Sue Dunne, Julia Goddard, Maggie Fowle, Liz Nash, Carole Mullender, Jane Burman and Hovis

We thought it would be a good idea to let you know a little more about us and what we do on the committee. Following on from last two month's committee members, here's long standing member, **Janet Murray**, **Keith Taylor** our **web and Beacon controller** and **new chair, Janet Sherwin**.

[Janet Murray](#)

I first joined Shepton U3A in 2011, and became a committee member around the same time. I'm still enjoying the job, even after all these years.

During the years I have had the pleasure of organising the Outings for the membership. A total of 117 outings over 9 years to various venues, including Parliament, Hinckly Point, and the Royal Mint, to name the most memorable. I've also had the pleasure of being group leader for the Solo Group. This is a group for single members to get out and about with friends. We enjoy a monthly coffee morning and a monthly Sunday lunch at various pubs or restaurants.

The Solo group has the maximum of 30 members, and a waiting list of some members wishing to join.

I also enjoy attending the weekly Bridge group, the monthly Collectables group and our weekly coffee mornings at Dobbies on a Thursday morning.

[Janet Sherwin](#)

I am originally from Portsmouth but have lived in the West Country for over 50

years now, the last 20 of them in Shepton Mallet. I used to be a teacher of Modern Languages. I love the countryside, reading, cinema and music. Shepton Mallet u3a is a recent interest which I am enjoying very much.

[Keith Taylor](#)

I am originally from the Surrey/Sussex border, but have lived in Somerset since the mid-seventies. I used to work as a software engineer in Wells and when I retired in 2013, I joined Shepton Mallet u3a. The committee at the time was looking for someone to build a website and it somehow fell to me! Since then, I have been maintaining it and keeping an eye on our Beacon membership system.

Chair	Janet Sherwin
Vice Chair	Jeanette Marsh
Secretary	Carole Mullender
Treasurer	Jane Burman
Groups Coordinator	Sue Dunne
Membership Secretary	Maggie Fowle
Newsletter	Julia Goddard
Outings	Janet Sherwin
Publicity	<i>Vacant</i>
Speaker Secretary	Jane Morrison
Website/Beacon	Keith Taylor
Committee Member	Janet Murray
Committee Member	Liz Nash

Thank you to all our contributors this month. Please send your items for the newsletter by 20th of the month to Julia Goddard, Editor

Insurance

Members of Shepton Mallet u3a are reminded that the Trust arranges Third Party Liability and Product Liability Insurance on behalf of the affiliated u3as. The cost of this is included in the annual subscription fee that SMu3a pays to the Trust. It should be noted that there is no personal accident insurance included in this arrangement. Members of SMu3a join in activities at their own risk and, should they feel they wish to be covered for personal accidents or personal property, it is necessary for them to make their own private arrangements.