



# u3a

## Shepton Mallet News

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August 2023

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cover – Ashton windmill, Wedmore



*U3a is a UK wide collection of over 1000 charities that provide the opportunity for those no longer in full-time work to come together and learn for fun. Explore new ideas, skills and interests with your local Shepton Mallet u3a.*

## FROM THE CHAIR

Hello everyone,

August already! I hope you're managing to enjoy at least some of the many summer events taking place, such as Wimbledon, the Proms, village fêtes, folk festivals, cricket matches, agricultural shows, open gardens....we're really very lucky to have so much going on.



I recently took part in a Carers' Day at Dillington House near Ilminster. These occasional free events are offered by social services as a break for people who give unpaid care to a family member, beyond what a mother, father, child or spouse normally does. It was a lovely day with activities such as Tai Chi, massage, relaxation, walking, willow weaving, singing...you get the idea, plus a very good lunch, tea and coffee.

The day started with a short talk from a young man called Nick Fraser, who is a carer himself, about the hobby he took up which became a thriving business. He turns pieces of scrap metal into sculptures. You can see the huge difference between his first effort and the sort of thing he makes now – amazing! I thought it was a wonderful example of starting something new, learning new skills and becoming good at it.



Some people don't like the name "carer", feeling that they are only doing what they should as a spouse, mother, son etc. But looking after someone with physical or mental health problems can be very lonely and draining, so it is a shame not to take advantage of the help which is on offer in our area. This website: [www.somersetcarers.org](http://www.somersetcarers.org) is a good start. There are also leaflets available at the doctors' surgeries.

In the first week of August we have the Skittles Lunch at the Horseshoe Inn, Bowlish, on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, and our Speaker Meeting on the 3<sup>rd</sup>. Activity groups are running as usual of course. I'd like to give you advance notice that membership renewal takes place in September and we will be holding a Renewals Day until 4 pm, after the speaker meeting on Thursday the 7<sup>th</sup>, at the Salvation Army Hall. Free tea and coffee will be available! You can of course renew online. However, the committee has reluctantly decided to increase the annual subscription to £14 per person, to cope with the rising cost of everything. This is still less than many u3a groups charge. Our AGM will be on Thursday, 5<sup>th</sup> October, before the Speaker Meeting.

Best wishes,  
Janet Sherwin

PS our tree in the park is looking fairly healthy, despite a few brown leaves. Apparently, pear blossom is a sign of friendship – very appropriate for u3a!

## WHAT'S ON

### Shepton Mallet u3a Speaker Meetings

**From 10.00am til 12.00 at the Salvation Army Hall.** A cuppa, friendly company and an hour or so of discovery. Entrance is £2 members, £3 non-members, including refreshments. Other Thursdays SMu3a coffee morning – from 10:30am in Dobbies Café.



*Coffee at Dobbies*

### **Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> August** – Lavender, the forgotten herb

How it is grown, the different varieties, its properties and uses. Based on Baz and his wife's experiences creating and running a lavender farm in Somerset.

### **Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> September** –Stothert &Pitt Crane Restoration Project

Come along and hear firsthand about the group of enthusiasts that have restored and returned an historic crane that was once used in a Wiltshire stone quarry to the city where it was first built nearly 160 years ago. The Stothert & Pitt Crane Restoration Group have completely re-assembled the six-tonne hand crane on the site in Bath where it was originally made. The crane was made circa 1864 and is thought to be the oldest surviving crane built by Stothert & Pitt in the world.

## 2023 Speaker events are:

7 <sup>th</sup> September – S&P Crane Restoration Project	5 <sup>th</sup> October – Darshill and Bowlish Conservation Society
2 <sup>nd</sup> November – Life on the International Space	December –Christmas Themed Quiz

Please ask if you need a lift to get to groups and events and any willing driver's please make your offers of lifts known to group leaders and fellow members!



*Lottie was the guest Speaker in July. She completed (not much choice once you've left the aircraft) over 1200 skydives.*

## Outings

**Skittles and Lunch** is back in another new venue!

Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> August at The Horseshoe Inn

(Forum Lane) Bowlish, Shepton Mallet BA4 5JG

12noon til 2.45pm.

We have secured an introductory offer of **just £2 per person!** This includes Skittles and a lunch of quiches, salad and chips. (Buy drinks at the bar.)

Payment on the day but I **do need to know that you are coming** so please let me know **by Monday 24<sup>th</sup> July**. Maximum of 15 spaces.

There is no car park but on street parking is available around the pub. Have a look on Google maps.

*Jane M*

Hello all,

As a few people were disappointed not to be included on the last occasion, I have provisionally booked another visit to the Earth Science Centre at Stoke St Michael, for Tuesday 24th October. This includes a visit to one of the quarries, in their minibus. Own transport to the Centre, £10 donation requested.

Please let me know if you'd like to come on this trip.

Best wishes,

**Janet**

### **New Outings**

**5th September** – Avalon Archaeology "The Past Reconstructed" at the Avalon Marshes Centre, Shapwick Rd., Westhay near Glastonbury.

See reconstructions of buildings from different time periods, complemented by an array of furniture and art giving rich insight into life in the past. There is a Saxon longhall, a Roman villa dining room, a full-scale replica of a Viking trading vessel, an Iron Age roundhouse (under construction) and the world's oldest excavation hut – now a mini-cinema. More information on the website: [www.avalonarchaeology.org.uk](http://www.avalonarchaeology.org.uk)

We have booked a guided tour at 10.30 am and the cost is £4.50 each. No minibus, please ask if you would like to go but need a lift. You can of course also visit the nature reserve, and there is a cafe.

### **24th October**

Earth Science Centre, Stoke St Michael. A talk about the geology of the area plus a visit to one of the local quarries - fascinating! The Centre requests a £10 donation each. See [www.earthsciencecentre.org.uk](http://www.earthsciencecentre.org.uk)

Contact Janet Sherwin if you would like to join either or both of these visits.

*Janet S*

## GROUP ACTIVITIES

The table below represents the usual meeting dates for groups. The actual dates may vary. Coffee mornings every Thursday at Dobbies, except when there is a Speaker Meeting on the first Thursday of the month.

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
<b>Monday</b>	Walking	Discussion 10.30am Art 2-4pm	Walking Woolcraft 2pm	Art 2-4pm
<b>Tuesday</b>	Book Group 10.30am Photography 2pm Bridge 2pm Table Tennis 2pm	Collectables 10.30am Table Tennis 2pm Bridge 2pm Needlecraft 2pm	Bridge 2pm Table Tennis 2pm	Table Tennis 2pm Bridge 2pm Needlecraft 2pm
<b>Wednesday</b>	French conversation 10am Short Tennis 4-5pm	Play-reading 10.00am  Short Tennis 4-5pm	French conversation 10am Short Tennis 4-5pm	Short Tennis 4-5pm
<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	Table Tennis 2pm	Munch Club Table Tennis 2pm	Singing for Pleasure 10.30-12 Table Tennis 2pm

### Insurance reminder

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.



**Contact group leaders** below for more information and confirmation of dates.

<b>Art</b>	Jane Burman Graham Cooper
<b>Book group</b>	Janis Thomson, Liz Nash
<b>Bridge</b>	Joan Bennett
<b>Classic Car Appreciation</b>	Jonathan Fowle
<b>Collectables</b>	Liz Nash
<b>Cricket</b>	Jonathan
<b>Appreciation</b>	Fowle
<b>Discussion</b>	Harry Thomson
<b>French</b>	Jane
<b>Conversation</b>	Burman
<b>Munch Club</b>	Maggie Hardy
<b>Needlecraft</b>	Liz Weeks
<b>Outings</b>	Janet Sherwin
<b>Photography</b>	John Law
<b>Play-reading</b>	Janet Sherwin
<b>Scrabble, Cards/Board Games</b>	Joan Bennett
<b>Singing for Pleasure</b>	Val Sherring Jane Burman
<b>Shorter Walks</b>	Jenny Wehrfritz
<b>Short Tennis</b>	Eric Wehrfritz
<b>Solos</b>	Janet Murray
<b>Strollers</b>	Josh Hartley
<b>Table Tennis</b>	Mike Burr
<b>1 and 2</b>	
<b>Walking</b>	Liz Weeks
<b>Woolcraft</b>	Pam Mitchell



## GROUP NEWS

### Book Group

### Art Group



The Art Club had a visitor on 10<sup>th</sup> July. Local acrylic artist Robin Gray led our meeting, demonstrating techniques and materials while explaining his methods. His lively session was interspersed with anecdotes from a lifelong career in art and ended with two impressive paintings, abstract and landscape to inspire us.

Then Art Club meets twice monthly at Doultong Community Hall. There is normally no tuition and we just meet to enjoy painting. All styles and abilities welcome: come and have a go! For more details contact Shepton Mallet u3a (see page 12).

*Graham Cooper*

### The Walking Group

For our second walk of the month our group had an unexpectedly fine day for our walk in the Vale of Wedmore from Weare. Fine views of the Mendip Ridge cut by Cheddar Gorge were seen before we climbed up Brinscombe Hill and headed along the ridge before passing Ashton Windmill.

Onward past The Valley Smoke House and Orchardleigh Farm's fine cider apple trees and the Ad Astra Cider barn, unfortunately closed on Mondays! Downhill for the final stretch back to Weare where Frankie Howerd is buried in the churchyard.



- The windmill dates back to the 13th century and is now beautifully restored – see cover photo. A couple of members had to be restrained from hanging on to the sails and whizzing round!

### Maggie's Quiz

1. What is the capital city of Chad?
2. Who wrote 'Les Propheties'?
3. Which horse won the UK Triple Crown in 1970?
4. Who played Jack Torrance in Kubrick's 1980 film?
5. Who wrote 'Lolita'?

*(Answers on page 11)*

### Come and join us

No longer working full-time? Children grown up? Join your local **u3a** to meet new people and explore a wide variety of interests. Make the most of life for annual membership of only £12.

Contact **Janet Sherwin** 01749 344627

or email [info@sheptonmalletu3a.org.uk](mailto:info@sheptonmalletu3a.org.uk)

or just come along to this month's Speaker Meeting (see What's On section).

## COMMITTEE MEMBERS

<b>Chair</b>	Janet Sherwin
<b>Vice Chair</b>	Sue Dickerson
<b>Secretary</b>	Carole Mullender
<b>Treasurer</b>	Jane Burman
<b>Groups Coordinator</b>	Jeannette Marsh
<b>Membership Secretary</b>	Keith Taylor
<b>News Editor</b>	Kevin Hoole
<b>Outings</b>	Janet Sherwin
<b>Publicity</b>	<i>Vacant</i>
<b>Speaker Secretary</b>	Jane Morrison
<b>Website/Beacon</b>	Keith Taylor
<b>Committee Member</b>	Janet Murray
<b>Committee Member</b>	Liz Nash

## NATIONAL AND REGIONAL NEWS

Please see the National u3a Newsletter.

## USEFUL LINKS

[www.u3a.org.uk](http://www.u3a.org.uk)

Shepton Mallet u3a local website

[www.sheptonmalletu3a.org.uk](http://www.sheptonmalletu3a.org.uk)

Good morning Janet, as a member of SMU3A and also a volunteer with a local group, Spark IT, associated with Health Connections Somerset, I wondered if you could include some information about our services in the next newsletter.

Spark IT offers help and advice to those struggling with technology on their mobile phones, tablets and pcs i.e. email, apps, downloads etc.

Locally we have a FREE advice/help desk in Shepton Mallet library every Thursday 2-4 p.m.

Although open to all, the age group of U3A members is completely within our prime target market.

Regards, Christopher Robinson

## ***Answers to Maggie's Quiz***

1. N'Djamena
2. Nostradamus
3. Nijinsky
4. Jack Nicholson
5. Vladimir Nabokov



### Interested in u3a?

If you think that u3a might be for you, please contact **Janet Sherwin** on **01749 344627**, [sherwinj@outlook.com](mailto:sherwinj@outlook.com), or just come along to our monthly speaker meeting at the Salvation Army hall, Shepton Mallet.

*Thank you to all our contributors this month. Please send items for the next u3a News (by 20th) to the editor,*

[kevin.hoole@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:kevin.hoole@yahoo.co.uk)



Shady characters – if you recognise any of them...