

u3a

Shepton Mallet News

September 2023

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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,

When I was a teacher I used to hate seeing the "Back to School" signs in shop windows. I feel rather differently now, as I expect some of you do! Anyway, we've made it through the school holidays and another autumn is nearly here. It's a good time to try something new, so I'd like to remind you that you can take part in ONE activity at another u3a group, free, as a reciprocal member, if an agreement exists with that u3a.

Have a look at the websites of other u3as, check out the lists of interest groups and follow the contact instructions, saying that you are a member of Shepton Mallet u3a and would like free **reciprocal membership**.

Wells: <https://u3asites.org.uk/wells/home>

Street and Glastonbury: <https://streetu3a.org>

Midsomer Norton: <https://www.u3asites.org.uk/norrad/welcome>

Before that of course, do have another look at our own list of groups and see if something takes your fancy. If your particular interest is not yet catered for, please let Jeannette Marsh, our Groups Coordinator, know so that she can record your interest. If several people feel the same, we can help you get a new group going!

Our AGM is coming up, on 5th October. The current committee are willing to continue but we would REALLY appreciate it if a couple of you would step up to join us! We still need a publicity officer, and next year we may need a new treasurer. Also, our Secretary, Carole, is likely to be away quite a bit over the coming months so a temporary stand-in would be most welcome.

Upcoming events

26th August – 8th September Display in the Post Office window in the Market Place. Do have a look!

Tuesday 5th September Visit to Avalon Archaeology near Glastonbury – spaces available

Thursday 7th September FREE Coffee morning with a speaker, renewals in the afternoon, at the Salvation Army hall. Of course, you can renew online and pay

the £14 by BACS. If you would rather renew in person, we'd love to see you and take your cash. Please try to avoid cheques as it is so difficult to pay them in now, and we have to charge you 50p extra.

Thursday 5th October Speaker Meeting and AGM

Friday 13th October 2pm North Somerset Association Quiz in Burnham. Please speak up if you would like to take part! No cost to team members.

Tuesday 24th October Visit to Earth Science Centre, Stoke St Michael – spaces available, £10 donation per person.

Monday 30th October Visit to Westonbirt – minibus full, possible to go by car

Wednesday 13th December Christmas Lunch at Mendip Golf Club – menu tbc

Best wishes,

Janet S

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.

Thursday 7th September –Stothert & Pitt Crane Restoration Project

Come along and hear first hand 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 th September – S&P Crane Restoration Project	5 th October – Darshill and Bowlsh Conservation Society
2 nd 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!

August Speaker – Baz of Lavender & Co.



Lavender is one of the best-selling items at garden centres now and it's easy to see why once you appreciate the many uses and delights of this wonderful plant. Baz gave us a most interesting, well-illustrated talk, in the course of which we learned that

Cleopatra used it to seduce Mark Anthony, and Hildegard of Bingen swore by it for headaches!

The Mediterranean variety was brought here by the Romans (who else!) in 43 AD. They used it in baths and for laundry, and the name comes from Latin "lavare" – to wash. In the 12th century, monks used it for cooking and medicine, and we now mainly see the English variety which is better suited to our climate.



Bees love lavender but it repels slugs and harmful insects. It can be used to make biodegradable confetti, soap, hand cream, marmalade, jam, and cocktails with gin or vodka. It soothes burns and colds, and eases backache in a hot bath. It's also great for getting to sleep and for aromatherapy, but you must use natural lavender oil for this, not the synthetic stuff.

Outings

Skittles and Lunch

The next Skittles and Lunch will be at The Horseshoe Inn on **Thursday 13th September**. Look out for an email in the next few days to book your place!

New Outings

New Theatre and Film Group.

Do you enjoy Musicals, Films, Plays, Shows? There are theatres and cinemas in Street, Frome, Wells, Yeovil, Bristol, Bath and beyond. Some great performances. It's more fun to visit with someone else and share transport too.

If anyone is interested in a self-run group that could meet for coffee to plan their visits to some of these venues then please get in touch. Email below, or come along to Renewals on 7th September.

There are fellow members looking for you!

info@sheptonmalletu3a.org.uk.

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
Monday	Walking	Discussion 10.30am Art 2-4pm	Walking Woolcraft 2pm	Art 2-4pm
Tuesday	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
Wednesday	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
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

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.

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

GROUP NEWS

Shorter walk group

Our Shorter walk group met at Westhay Moor Nature Reserve on a dry and warm morning on August 17th. The 3.5 mile walk around the reserve was on level paths with no stiles or cow fields to negotiate. The old peat beds and wetlands provided sightings of swans, a heron and other bird species. The blackberries were ripening in the hedges and proved irresistible to several of us. We ended with a visit to Sweets Tearooms, an interesting find for refreshments if you have never been!



The Walking Group



U3a Assault Team take Dolebury Fort but forget to raise flag.

(Walking Group continued)

Sixteen of us joined the first walk in August around the old mining village of Rowberrow. Along side of a fast flowing stream, we followed the old 'Slaggers Path' once used by miners of calamine, a mineral used in the making of brass. Climbing to the edge of Black Down we arrived at Dolebury Camp, an Iron Age hill fort now owned by the National Trust. It is 600ft above sea level with superb 360 degree views of Somerset and across to Wales. After descending through remains of a medieval warren we arrived back at Rowberrow for refreshments at the Swan pub.

Julia G.



Standing behind depiction of The Legend of the Dinder Dragon.

The August 2nd walk of the month was an easy, scenic walk from Dinder to Wells and back, passing through woods, and open paths with the ubiquitous view of Glastonbury Tor. We took a quick look at some Tank traps along the way, and walked a quiet path alongside Wells Golf club, before entering Tor woods in Wells, crossing to walk along the back of the Palace moat, learning the mythical story of the dragon that was slain by Bishop Jocelyn. We then crossed the Palace fields, to cross over to a couple more fields back to Dinder. A good lunch was had at The George at Croscombe.

Maggie C.

Maggie's Quiz

1. Which Greek descended into the underworld to rescue his wife?
2. What is a stone pillar set up as a monument called?
3. What word relates to the sense of smell?
4. What is another name for a vessel flute?
5. Which piece of furniture has the same name as an ancient kingdom?

(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

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

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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

NATIONAL AND REGIONAL NEWS

Please see the National u3a Newsletter.

USEFUL LINKS

www.u3a.org.uk

Shepton Mallet u3a local website

www.sheptonmalletu3a.org.uk

Answers to Maggie's Quiz

1. Orpheus
2. Obelisk
3. Olfactory
4. Ocarina
5. Ottoman

If you think that u3a might be for you, please contact *Janet Sherwin* on 01749 344627, 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

Post office display window, town centre, Shepton Mallet.

