

Shepton Mallet u3a

Newsletter

March-April 2026



Rainbow by Barbara Holmes



Our pear tree
in the park



Houses of Parliament by
Beverley Prestidge



Binegar walk



Woolgathering

u3a learn,
laugh,
live

Photos by
various
members

Yeo Valley Organic
Garden



Come inside.....

Registered Charity Number 1158730

u3a Shepton Mallet Newsletter March - April 2026 1 of 24

Editor's Notes

Hello Everyone!

I am delighted to be the new Editor of Shepton Mallet u3a newsletter. Jim Morrison has very kindly offered to continue helping with the technical side and we hope to go on producing one every two months.

Our aim is that you will find it informative, fun, useful and interesting!

Of course, plenty of input from you is vital to achieving that aim, so please send me your contributions! The next deadline is 20th April 2026.

Janet Sherwin

Useful Links

The Shepton Mallet u3a website can be accessed with this link, <https://sheptonmalletu3a.org.uk/> or with this QR Code >.....>



Past and current newsletters are available on the u3a webpage under SMu3aNews and can be accessed with this link,

<https://sheptonmalletu3a.org.uk/newsletters/> or with this QR Code



Note: Printed copies of the Newsletter are also available to purchase at Speaker meetings or from the Chair.

Shepton Mallet u3a Committee

| POSITION | NAME | EMAIL | |
|---------------------------------|----------------|--|---|
| Chair | Tina King | harribest@yahoo.com |  |
| Vice-Chair Newsletter Editor | Janet Sherwin | sherwinj@outlook.com |  |
| Treasurer | Denise Bailey | denise.bailey@mbzonline.net | £££ |
| Groups Coordinator | Clare Champion | clarepuss@hotmail.com |  |
| Groups Coordinator | Sue Lord | susanlord@me.com |  |
| Health & Safety Officer | Paul Roberts | paulroberts@gmx.us |  |
| Secretary | Jenny Short | jennyshort@inspir-ed.net |  |
| Membership Secretary | Josh Hartley | joshhartley08@gmail.com |  |
| Trustee | Tony Warner | seldomseen35@icloud.com |  |
| | | | |

I tried sniffing Coke once but the ice cubes got stuck up my nose.

From the Chair

A new year, a new newsletter and a new job for me...exciting times. I am delighted to take on the role of Chair this year and I am acutely aware that Janet Sherwin is a very hard act to follow. Her organisational skills, charisma and passion for Shepton Mallet u3a impressed me from the moment I joined the group. I think I will need all the help I can get!



The groups have started well and I am grateful to all the leaders. Their interest and enthusiasm is vital. The u3a is all about being together, trying out new things and knowing you always have a friend.

It was lovely to see the success of the name tags at the last Speaker Meeting. I don't know about you, but my memory seems to deteriorate on a daily basis and I am hoping these name labels will help. Don't worry if you haven't got yours yet, it's on its way! Of course, it's not compulsory to use them. The Creations group have had a fun time making them.

What has become clear during this process is the number of members who do not belong to any group. If there's nothing that suits, send in your ideas and we'll see what we can do.

Enjoy the scope of your u3a and have fun.

Tina King



I painted this using a sponge!

Why were the teacher's eyes crossed? She couldn't control her pupils!

Keeping you in the loop...

Report on the AGM 27th November 2025

There was a good attendance of nearly 60 members at the AGM, plus our two regional Council representatives and the Chair and Vice-Chair of Street & Glastonbury u3a, who kindly came to help with counting votes.

All members of the Committee stood down, as required by the constitution.

Janet Sherwin, outgoing Chair, read a statement of thanks to each of these people—Jane Burman, Barbie Bradbury, Sue Dickerson, Liz Nash, Jane Morrison, and Carole Mullender plus Keith Taylor and Jim Morrison, two non-committee members who have helped significantly with the running of our u3a. Janet was presented with flowers and a Dobbies gift card in recognition of her work as Chair for the last three years.

Tina King was the sole nominee for the position of Chair and was duly voted in.

There were no nominations for Vice-Chair, Secretary or Treasurer.

Clare Champion, Sue Lord, Josh Hartley and Paul Roberts were elected as Committee members.

A proposal that a summary of minutes of Committee meetings be published on the website once they are agreed, and that members be allowed to attend Committee meetings, subject to certain conditions, was passed.

A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL THOSE WHO ATTENDED!



New shoots

Photo by Barbara Voules

UPDATE

At the Committee meeting of 16th January 2026, Jenny Short was co-opted onto the Committee in the role of Secretary, Janet Sherwin became Vice-Chair and newsletter editor, Clare Champion and Sue Lord were confirmed as sharing Groups Coordination and Paul Roberts became temporary Treasurer. Tony Warner was also co-opted on to the Committee.

On 13th February, Denise Bailey was co-opted on to the Committee as Treasurer, with Paul stepping down from his temporary role.

Jane Morrison will continue to organise skittles lunches, and our Speaker Meetings on the first Thursday of the month. Jim Morrison continues to offer technical support along with Keith Taylor. We are grateful to them all!

Sincere thanks also to all our group leaders, who give up valuable spare time to organise the activities we enjoy so much. Without them there is no u3a!

Why are there 5 syllables in “monosyllabic”?

DRESSY DUCKS

I was sitting on a park bench by the duck pond yesterday
When a pair of ducks came into view, waddling my way,
I idly watched their progress as up the path they came
And then the odd thing struck me—they were not dressed the same
The first one had a blazer on and just one dark brown boot
The second wore a bowler hat and a yellow dinner suit.

As the ducks got closer I distinctly heard one say
“That fellow sitting over there has watched us all the way
I’m not sure that I trust him though I can’t imagine why
Perhaps because his dark blue suit doesn’t match his pale pink tie
The duck said to his brother “he sure does look a mess
I think that we should show him the proper way to dress”

So up they came to where I’m sat and then they said to me
“We think Bermuda shorts are nice and wellingtons are twee”
So I took the ducks’ advice and dressed as they had said
I even added to my dress-- a bandana on my head.
I think that I look rather nice, my imagination boggles,
The white silk scarf is ‘just the job’, not sure about the goggles.



© By Barry Holmes

Have you heard that new Welsh pop group, Band of Rain? There’s a lot of drumming.

Meet your Committee!



Tina is a retired teacher of English, Drama and Performing Arts, mother of two boys, very proud Nanna of Tal and Lyra and distracted owner of Georgie the dog. Likes music, chocolate, friends, eating out, chocolate, sunshine and the u3a! Dislikes unkindness and brussels sprouts.

Janet was born in Portsmouth but has lived in the wild west for 50 years. She worked as a modern languages teacher in various schools, has three daughters and three grandchildren, plus a greedy ginger cat. She joined u3a in 2013, for the walking group. Her interests include cinema, photography, music, history and reading.



Josh was born in Norfolk but grew up in several countries as his father was in the Army. Josh became a metallurgist and worked in gold and diamond mines. He moved into business and IT before becoming a private hire driver until Covid changed the world! He enjoys photography, walking and family history.

Jenny grew up in Dorset and became a PE and science teacher. She spent four years in the US in the 70s, where she developed her interest in photography before returning to the UK and bringing up a family. She has been an educational adviser and inspector, and has served on several committees.



Clare is from Bristol originally and has a background in fashion and modelling. She was an air stewardess in the 1970s and represented the airline worldwide. She has 2 daughters and 3 grandsons. She is widowed and moved to Shepton 2 years ago with her dog, Bear., joining u3a after meeting Tina in the park.

Sue is an unconventional lady who left school at 13. However, this did not prevent her from obtaining several degrees. She is fascinated by the criminal mind and human psychology in general. She has written crime fiction and several children's books, creating their illustrations as well. She has six grandchildren.



Paul is originally from Hampshire and has worked in aeronautics and the Merchant Navy, as well as running an electronics company in Cornwall where he lived for 30 years before moving to Weston-super-Mare. He was introduced to u3a there and moved to Croscombe in 2021.

Denise trained as a librarian before going on to study economics. She then trained and worked as an accountant in Shepton Mallet for 22 years. Her passion is photography—she belongs to four u3a photography groups! She has been treasurer of several organisations and we are lucky to have her as our new treasurer.

Tony, Man of Mystery!
He could not tell me anything about himself.



Did you hear about the restaurant on the moon? Great food but no atmosphere.

NEWS AND VIEWS

It's All in the Genes!

A regular group of Family History detectives building family trees and finding stories and tales. February's meeting discussed the use of artificial intelligence to help find missing links and build a story around our ancestors. AI can help pinpoint where to look for information and save time in dead (excuse the pun!) ends.

We found a 22 year old World War 2 hero and the story of why he was where he was, and the battles that he was involved in at the time of his death. His niece was then inspired to look for another uncle who had sadly not come home, and unearthed an unknown marriage. She is now on the trail of any possible cousins!

Another AI search helped to piece together a journey taken by a prisoner of war from Crete to Germany in 1941/2.



Collaborative research, sharing tips, knowledge and skills - helping each other to build Family Trees.

Between us we have helped each other to:

- ◆ get online and sign up to relevant websites.
- ◆ check out DNA connections
- ◆ search for family stories whilst on holiday in various parts of the UK

Get in touch if you are interested.

Group coordinator—Jane Morrison

Earth is the lunatic asylum for the universe.

NEWS AND VIEWS

Christmas Lunch at the Natterjack Inn, 19th December

Tony, Gill, Sue and Una
Before they started
banging on the table...



Eric, Jenny, Jon and Mary practising their origami.



Why are we waiting? Anne, Linda, Bren and Val have rumbly tums!



**27 MEMBERS
ENJOYED A
SMASHING LUNCH!**

Barry, Mary, Clare, Barbara and Tina find the photographer very amusing after a couple of drinks.

Computers are not intelligent. They only think they are.

A poem about Pork

Oh yer don't get many pimples on a pahnd of pickled pork
Yer don't get many pimples on a pahnd of pickled pork
Wevver it comes from China, Japan or Carolina
It can come from Mexico or even from New York
But yer don't get many pimples on a pahnd of pickled pork!

Anyone remember pounds, shillings, stones, rods, poles and perches???
How many yards in a furlong then?
Editor



A poem about buttons

I can't do my bally bottom button up
Can't do my bally bottom button up
It's not fair, its not right,
Cannot do it up because it's just too tight
I can't do my bally bottom button up
It really is no fun
For what's the point of buttoning the
Other bally buttons
When the bally bottom button's
Undone!

SEWER

A man lay down by a sewer
And by that sewer he died
And at the coroners inquest-----
They called it sewercide.

© By Barry Holmes

Being overweight is something that just snacks up on you.

Meet The People

Paul Roberts



Paul spent most of his early life in Hampshire with his younger sister Sarah. He started an apprenticeship at 16 with an aeronautics company, first as a mechanical engineer and later switching to electronics as the digital age dawned.

He got a bit restless at the start of his twenties and ran away to sea, joining the Merchant Navy in Liverpool. He eventually got himself involved in a shipping line, moving goods between the USA, Japan and Australia, and did about 8 trips around the world. Oh happy days!

Containerisation eventually totally ruined the job, with the turnaround in port down to only hours instead of what used to be 7 or 10 days.

Paul lived in Cornwall for the next 30 years and loved the beaches, the coast paths and the scuba diving. He started his own electronics company, installing large TV satellite, phone and data systems in hotels, hospitals and holiday sites. He managed to retire early in 2012 and moved to Weston super Mare.



It was here that a neighbour introduced him to u3a. He had become a keen walker and hiker, so the several walking groups in that branch gave him an opportunity to explore our wonderful county of Somerset. He moved to Croscombe in 2021 and joined the Shepton Mallet U3A where he is the Safety Officer on the Committee and runs our small railways group .

Like everyone our age, Paul can remember the arrival of the first Indian and Chinese takeaways. He always enjoys a good curry. He is very much a morning person.



Free AI generated image

His favourite films are Dances with Wolves and One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest, and his favourite book is Brave New World by Aldous Huxley.

After having been numerous times round the world it can only be the moon or Mars next for Paul!

As for music, Paul likes solo albums by singer songwriters from the past sixty years.

I asked the librarian if they had any books on amplifiers.
She said "Yes, what volume would you like?"

January Speaker Meeting

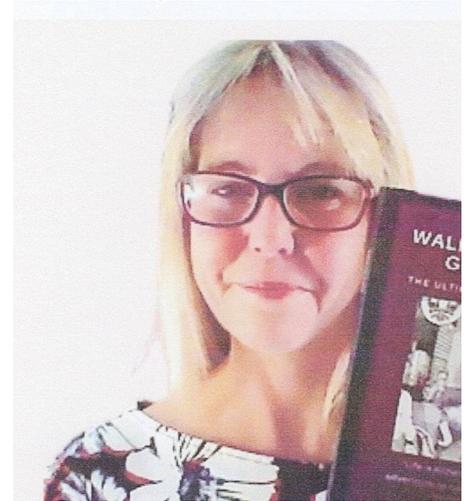
For our first speaker coffee morning of 2026, we were lucky to find **Dawn Denton**, a local author who is from Johannesburg, South Africa.

She gave us a fascinating and well illustrated talk about growing up under the apartheid system, which was designed to keep black and white people separate in every way, to the great detriment of the indigenous black population. The white people took the land and had all the power.

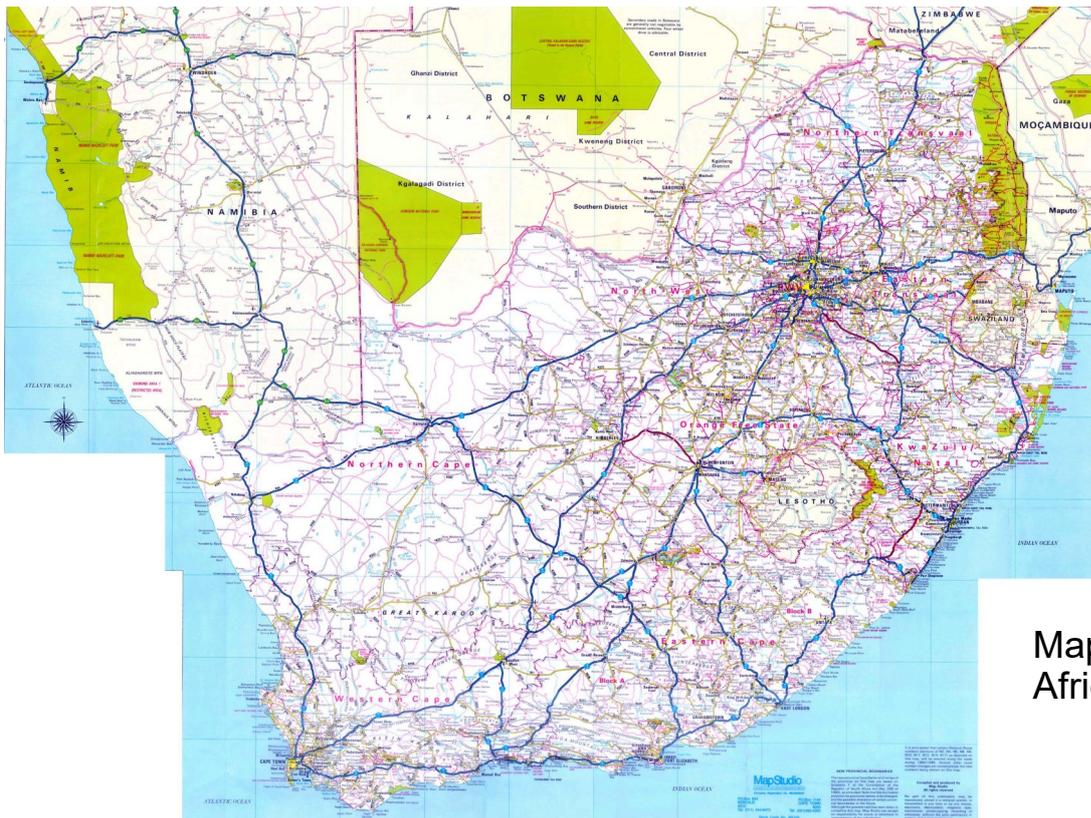
However, although public toilets, for example, were rigidly separate, white people were happy to have black people as servants in their houses and raise their children.

We learnt about the policies of racial separation which lasted from 1948 until 1994, when Nelson Mandela was elected President.

Unfortunately, South Africa is still one of the most unequal countries in the world, with black people much poorer than whites. Many in the audience have been to South Africa on holiday, as it is a very beautiful and interesting place.



Article by Janet Sherwin



Map of South Africa



Despite the cost of living, have you noticed how popular it remains?

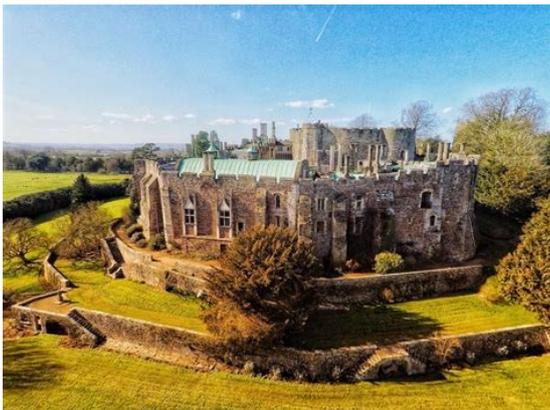
Proposed outing - Trip To Berkeley Castle Tuesday 12th May

Berkeley Castle

The Berkeley family welcome you to Berkeley Castle, their ancient fortress home where they have lived since the late 12th Century.

The most remarkable thing about the Castle is that for nine centuries, the building, the Berkeley family, the archives (which go back to the 12th Century), the contents, the estate and the town have all survived together.

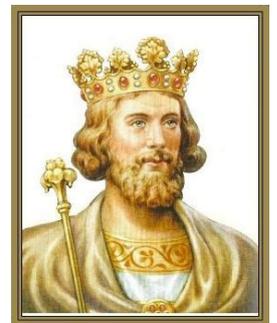
Its place in history is significant, not just because it is still intact, but because the Berkeley family and their home have played an important part in the power struggles of so many centuries. Edward II was murdered there in 1327.



The castle is now a favourite location for historical films. Recent productions include the famous Five, Poldark, Wolf Hall and The other Boleyn Girl.

There is a lovely terraced garden and a restaurant.

King Edward II



Our trip

We will leave from Dobbies' car park (far end, free parking) at 9.30 am and return about 6 pm, using the Mendip Community Transport minibus. It takes about an hour and a half to get there. The cost will be £45 each.

It would also be possible to visit Dr Jenner's House near the castle. This contains a museum dedicated to Edward Jenner, pioneer of vaccination. It costs £10 for an annual pass.

PLEASE LET ME KNOW BY 13TH MARCH IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO JOIN THIS TRIP

Janet Sherwin

Edward Jenner



My friend Jack can communicate with vegetables. Jack and the beans talk!

February speaker meeting - Great Bow Wharf, Langport



Janet Seaton of the **Langport & District History Society** gave us a fascinating talk about Great Bow Wharf in Langport. Situated in Langport, on the eastern bank of the River Parrett, Great Bow Wharf is a Grade II listed building, restored and reopened in 2007. It is an example of Victorian industrial architecture.

The Warehouse was built in the late 18th century of English bond red brick, with Flemish bond extensions. It has clay plain tile roofs with hipped ends. It was built by the Parrett Navigation Company, a trading Company owned by Vincent

Stuckey and Walter Bagehot, on the banks of the River Parrett. When the river became unnavigable the buildings and was eventually abandoned.

The present warehouse was built in the early 1800s to serve the Parrett Navigation Company for trading salt and corn. However there has clearly been a wharf here for centuries before that; Langport is mentioned in the Domesday Book by the name of 'Lanporth' - thought to mean the 'long port' by some, or the 'long marketplace' by others.

Restored from 2003 using sustainable techniques and local, natural materials, The Warehouse at Great Bow Wharf, on the bank of the River Parrett, now serves as a thriving centre for social enterprise, with the Kitchen café, exhibition space and well equipped conference facilities.



A lovely place to visit! (*from the Great Bow website*)

LEFTOVERS - a poem by Una McKillen

Bright, bejewelled berry-shaded baubles, beads and balloons;
Bronzed, beautiful, beguiling loved ones bedecked with seasonal apparel;
Believers beloved in their belief, carolling brightly, bursting with love for us all;
Bountiful food – berries, bronzed meats, balsamic, breads of every kind;
All this colours our dreams in the months leading up to Christmas.



Characterless, joyless, lacklustre, lackadaisical, January days
Landscape grey, flat and featureless, lashed with endless rain, hail and snow;
Lethargic, lonely, listening and waiting for spring; lamps lit early and early to bed.
Fatless, flavourless, caffeineless, low calorie, leftover food.;
Much of this is to be endured in the months that follow Christmas.
Dark January/February days; the most lethal, left-over time of the year.



But here they are - snowdrops - heralding Spring's lighter, brighter days!

Photo ©Albert Bridge, Creative Commons

Old people shouldn't eat "health foods"—they need all the preservatives they can get

The Lost Villages - a story by Betty Craig

Rose smiled as Michael drove out of Sheffield into the Derbyshire Dales. "I used to love this journey" Michael and Rose had come a long way since growing up in one of the villages nestling along the valley of the River Derwent. They had emigrated after the war as £10 Poms and, while many ex-pats had returned home, Michael and Rose had loved the life down under and had happily raised their family there. Now retired they had returned for their first holiday in the Dales since they had left all those years ago.

It was a beautiful Spring morning, the countryside green and fresh. Just as they remembered. They couldn't have wished for a better 'home-coming'. "There it is", Rose said as the Ashopton Viaduct came into view, dark against the bright blue sky, its seven arches gleaming in the sunshine. "The last time I saw that viaduct it really frightened me as it grew over the village all those years ago and deep down it has haunted me ever since". "But it all worked out well in the end", Michael replied. "It gave us opportunities we never would have had without it."

Michael and Rose had been childhood sweethearts, raised in the small village of Ashopton. Michael's parents had lived in a white-washed cottage just off the main street, his father working on a local farm, while Rose's mother, her father having been killed in an accident when Rose was a baby, had run the village shop. Both childhoods had been happy. They had both attended the small village school, spending their spare time exploring and fishing with their friends in the local Wyoming Brook. When old enough Michael had helped on the farm and Rose in the village shop.

Times had often been hard in the villages and rural wages low, but there had been a community spirit where people really helped and cared for one another. Michael and Rose had both grown up imbued with this strong sense of community and knowing the difference between right and wrong. Every Sunday they had attended Sunday School at the Methodist Church, later marrying there. That wedding had been a great day for both families and a great occasion for the whole village. The reception had been at the Ashopton Inn, bedecked with balloons and bunting, with a pig roast, the whole village turning out in their Sunday Best. Michael had been working part-time on the farm with his father and as an Odd-job Man, earning enough money to rent a small cottage. After the honeymoon he had carried Rose over the threshold to begin their new life together.

However, storm clouds had been gathering over the village for some time. There had been two reservoirs already existing in the valley but talk had begun of the need for more water for nearby Sheffield and other towns. Extending down the valley had clearly been the logical answer but this had represented a real threat to Michael and Rose's village and the neighbouring village of Derwent. When the inevitable happened, the authorities had come and said they were sorry, explaining that the villagers would all be re-housed. The reservoir was to be called Ladybower Reservoir. "A pretty name like the roses round our cottage", Rose reflected, but it was one that had spelt death to all their homes. A final service had been held in the Methodist Church on 29th September 1939.

Now, all these years later, Rose looked at Michael, as they stood on the viaduct, looking down at the water, "Do you remember the last hymn, how moving it was?"

Day is dying in the west;
Heav'n is touching earth with rest;
Wait and worship while the night
Sets her evening lamps alight
Through all the sky.

"Yes", Michael replied but now it's time to meet up with the friends we left behind and hear their stories." With one last look at the viaduct, Michael and Rose got into their car and drove away, just as they had all those years ago.

Betty Craig - 17/07/2025

Skittles Lunches at The Horseshoe Inn

UPCOMING....

The Horseshoe Inn, Bowlish, Shepton Mallet BA4 5JG

Open to all Shepton u3a Members. The Horseshoe Inn opens especially for us to play and have a light bite lunch for only £6.

It is very sociable with no particular skill needed just enthusiasm and a sense of fun. Come and have a go!

Look out for the invitation email at the beginning of the month and then book your place!
(Places are limited to 18 maximum)



QUIZZERS

Monthly, on the 1st Friday, our Quizzing group meets at the Shrubbery for a couple of hours of fun.

The quiz is very light hearted as we do not take ourselves too seriously!

We laugh a lot and usually go away knowing some new snippet of information .

Do come along and join us for only £3 to include refreshments.

Coordinator Barbie Bradbury

PICTURE PUZZLE—WHERE CAN YOU SEE THIS SPLENDID LIGHT FITTING?



Answer on page 21.

J Sherwin

How do you make an idiot say “how”? I don’t know, how?

Photography Group

The photography group are pleased to share some of their members' recent photos with you.



Stonehenge sunset—Ruth Forbes



Village in the mist—Josh Hartley



Wells by night—Denise Bailey



Bishop's Palace gatehouse—Donald Branch



Leaf—Jenny Short

When you've seen one shopping centre, you've seen a mall.

Longer walk 2nd February

This was our second attempt at this particular walk led by Pet and John Smith. The previous one was cancelled due to the appalling weather encountered on the 1st December!

A gentle 5 mile jaunt in damp and windy conditions led us south from Priddy Village across open fields and pasture land heading towards the northern edge of the Cooks Field Nature reserve. Our group of 13 walkers, undaunted by the numerous Mendip stone stiles which are so common in this area, soon arrived at the newly renovated Deer Leap car park and picnic area. The uninterrupted views southwards to the flooded lands around Glastonbury, Meare and Westhay made it all worthwhile!

Following the old drove roads back to Priddy we were rewarded by the sight of seven deer bounding across the open fields. Otherwise the wildlife was restricted to damp sheep and bewildered heifers!

Thankfully the threatening rain held off and we arrived back at the village ready for lunch at the Queen Victoria pub.



It could have been a lovely view but this scruffy lot were in the way...



Are you lookin' at me??

.Photos by Jim Morrison

Why do we say "after dark" when it's really "after light"?

Longer walk 16th February



Having braved road closures and diversions, 9 intrepid walkers enjoyed a bright, sunny, blustery walk in the Wedmore area.

We followed a mixture of lanes, tracks and paths across sodden fields, waded through "lakes", slipped and slid



through mud baths and clambered over stiles. We rested at the ancient wayside cross at Stoughton, as have centuries of travellers before us, in the warm sunshine, surrounded by snowdrops and budding daffodils.

All our efforts were worthwhile as beautiful views of the Mendip ridge, bathed in sunlight, came into view as we followed the path along the edge of the hillside. We then faced the possibility of flying golf balls as we crossed the Isle of Wedmore golf course and made our way back to the car park on the outskirts of Wedmore.

Those of us eating then drove to the Ring o'Bells pub in Wookey for lunch. Again, road closures and diversions made this far from straightforward.

Thanks to all those who shared the great pleasure of a dry walk in this record-breaking wet spell of weather.

Pete & Gill

What's round and bad-tempered?
A vicious circle!

A CHILDHOOD WORLD
FEATURING OUR GROCER,

“THE INTERNATIONAL STORES MAN”



Una

There is a song I listen to from time to time called “Grocer Jack”. It is about the death of a kindly, elderly grocer. It is a touch sentimental with its chorus of children asking why he won’t be coming back but it is a sweet song and does conjure up for me quite vividly the home and street I lived in from the age of 2 to the age of 13.

When I was 13 we moved to a larger home a street away. That first house in Great Ganett (we moved to Little Ganett) had a perfectly respectable front door but the bell rarely rang. People preferred to come to the “back door”, i.e. walk into a small passageway with an outside loo to the right, a coal shed straight ahead and a door to the kitchen to the left. The kitchen door was often open but, if closed, they would knock on it.

Back then people you might actually want to see and talk to came to that kitchen door. There was the man from the farm bringing newly-laid eggs, neighbours who usually wanted to borrow sugar, milk or bread but might want to pop in for a cup of tea and one of mum’s legendary scones or jam tarts, other children from the street wanting one or other of us to come out to play, friends of my dad and last, but not least, “the International Stores man”.

The last did not need to knock during the school holidays, however, as on Thursday mornings my 4 siblings and I would be waiting at the top of the next street alongside a rowdy gaggle of children from equally large families whose cupboards were equally bare. As soon as the van pulled up, the waiting family members would be ready to pounce and haul their box of groceries into the kitchen.. If we were last in the queue or, more accurately, the pack, the delivery man would stop for a cup of tea and if anything had been left over in the cupboard for baking by Wednesday, he enjoyed a slice of apple pie.

The “International Stores Man” was no Grocer Jack, of course. I only remember his first name, Pete, but I do remember how kind and tolerant he was towards the marauding hordes and he was a fixture in the “community”, which back then meant about half a street. Maybe he was taken for granted in the way Grocer Jack was but I would like to think he was missed, once retired, and remembered with affection. I certainly remember him with affection.

I remember two other stand-out things about that childhood world. The first is we lived near a bus terminus and mum would often prepare a tray of tea and biscuits or cakes and send me out with the tray to offer the goodies to the bus crew. It embarrassed the hell out of me as I had to sit and chat with the driver and conductor as they had their tea. However, to mum it was simple. They were working men (and yes, they were all men) and they needed their tea. The second thing was the number of impromptu street parties there were. We found any excuse.

Mum was shy but she liked and trusted people enough to leave the door open and that trust was never abused. She believed that if someone came to the door, they should be offered hospitality even if the cupboard was practically bare. One unlikely recipient of this generosity was “the insurance man”. That did change as the years went by and when we moved to the larger house just a street away, that guileless, uncomplicated world vanished completely. I did not mourn its passing at the time as so much was happening and I was young and looking ahead. In later years, however, I have mourned the loss of a way of life and a more innocent time and place.

Una Mckillen

Did you hear about the man who parked his car by a board saying
“Fine for Parking”?

Shorter Walks Group

The December and January walks had to be cancelled owing to the awful weather, but the 19th February was a rather lovely morning and 11 members turned out. Janet S led the walk from the Wookey Hole Caves car park, up to the top of Milton Lane then back down via Reservoir Lane and the old quarry, to the stream at the bottom of the hill for boot-washing, and back to the car park. We adjourned to the Caves restaurant for coffee, chat and (the weaker-willed amongst us) cake.



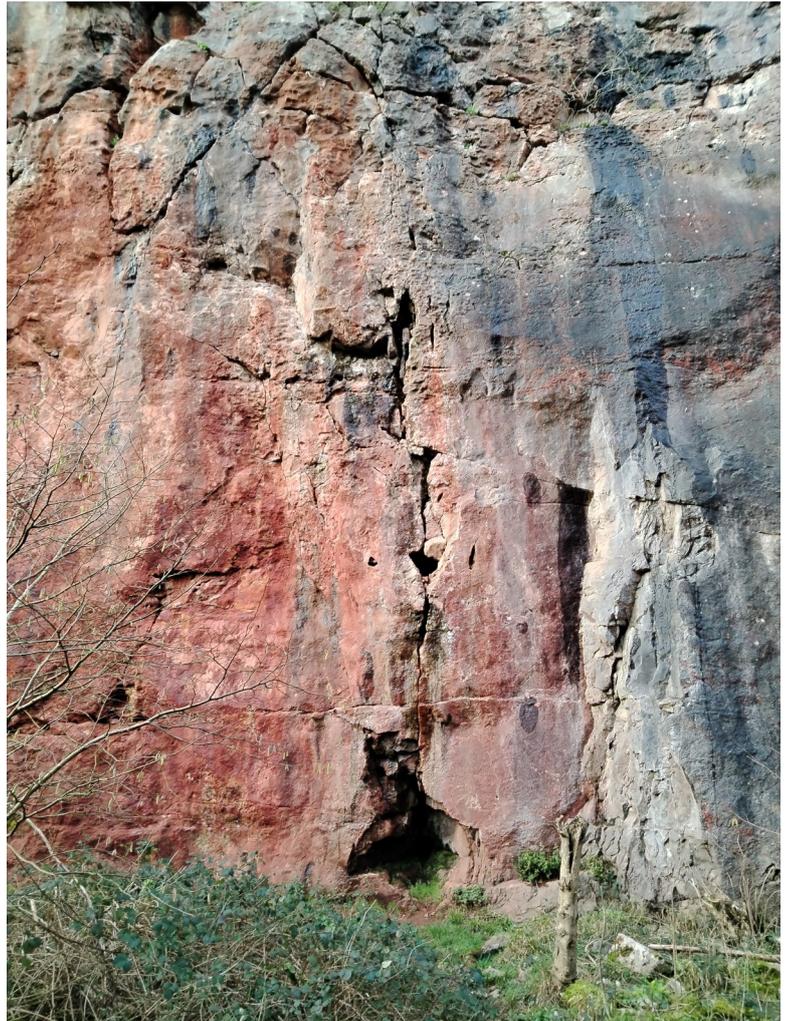
Milton Manor by Sue Aldred



Nearly at the top by Veronica



We just missed the camp fire! by Janet



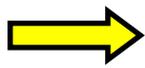
Stunning rock face in the quarry. by Janet S

If you want a job, try Search and Rescue—they're always looking for people!

U3a Speaker Meetings

First Thursday of each month at the Salvation Army Hall*, Shepton Mallet.
10 am till 12 noon.
£3 members and £4 non members

Why not come along to your u3a's monthly meeting for some fascinating presentations over the coming months. A good way to make a new friend or two! See you there!



5th March—Life Support CPR and Defibrillator Awareness Session.

Delivered by volunteers from Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance who are basic life support trained and provide training to community groups and organisations across our two counties. The sessions involve a demonstration of DRS-ABC, before participants are then given the opportunity to practice the recovery position, CPR and how to use a defibrillator.



2nd April - In house Easter Quiz. Come along, make up a team and have some fun!

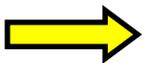


7th May - Garden and nature photography tips with Higgy.

The basic principles of garden based nature photography. The presentation starts with some basic principles of garden design to help encourage wildlife into your garden. We then move onto some of the basic principles of wildlife and nature photography, such as, how to approach wildlife, focus point, use of light and angles

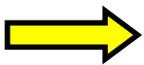


June TBC and July - Reiki - to be confirmed



6th August - Do Not Assault – DNA. John Sinclair Robson

This is a whistle-stop tour about DNA and its discovery. What are the sources of DNA? How is it used and what are its limitations? Its value in the examination of cold cases and proof of innocence is discussed as is the first case of mass DNA screening & the subsequent conviction based on the DNA evidence.



3rd September - Alan Jenkins (ex police inspector) - Policing Royal Visits.

I discuss the complex and at times frustrating planning behind policing a Royal Visit. I then discuss a visit I commanded and planned where everything that could go wrong did!! It's very funny.



1st October Found Poetry with Polly Hall

Jane Morrison

Shotgun wedding—a case of wife or death!

Picture puzzle answer:

Light fitting in East Cranmore station café.

A Reminder of The Three Principles of u3a

The Third Age Principle

- a) Membership of a U3A is open to all in their third age, which is defined not by a particular age but by a period in life in which full time employment has ceased.
- b) Members promote the values of lifelong learning and the positive attributes of belonging to a U3A.
- c) Members should do all they can to ensure that people wanting to join a U3A can do so.

The Self-help Learning Principle

- a) Members form interest groups covering as wide a range of topics and activities as they desire; by the members, for the members.
- b) No qualifications are sought or offered. Learning is for its own sake, with enjoyment being the prime motive, not qualifications or awards.
- c) There is no distinction between the learners and the teachers; they are all U3A members.

The Mutual Aid Principle

- a) Each U3A is a mutual aid organisation, operationally independent but a member of The Third Age Trust, which requires adherence to the guiding principles of the U3A Movement.
- b) No payments are made to members for services rendered to any U3A.
- c) Each U3A is self-funded with membership subscriptions and costs kept as low as possible.
- d) Outside financial assistance should only be sought if it does not imperil the integrity of the U3A movement



SHEPTON MALLET u3a TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP

All members **must**:

- Abide by the principles of the U3A movement.
- Act in the best interests of the U3A.
- Not behave in such a way as to bring the U3A into disrepute.
- Abide by the terms and conditions of the constitution of the U3A, and of the branch which they are joining.
- Treat fellow members with respect and courtesy.
- Comply with and support the decisions of the elected committee.
- Advise the Membership Secretary of any changes to their personal details.

““I can’t believe you’ve never heard of Armageddon!

“Relax! It’s not the end of the world!”

SHEPTON MALLET u3a MONTHLY ACTIVITIES TABLE 2026

| | 1 st Week | 2 nd Week | 3 rd Week | 4 th Week |
|-------------|--|---|---|--|
| Mon | <p>Walking -Various locations 10am – 1pm approx. Jon & Mary Boston</p> | <p>Art - Doultling Village Hall. 2 till 4pm Graham Cooper</p> | <p>Walking -Various locations 10am – 1pm approx. Jon & Mary Boston</p> <p>Woolcraft – Coordinator’s Home 2pm Pam Mitchell</p> | <p>Art - Doultling Village Hall. 2 till 4pm Graham Cooper</p> <p>Writing For Fun Una McKillen home 10.30 am</p> |
| Tues | <p>Bridge Doultling village hall 2 - 4:30pm Ian Jarmaine Linda Dytham</p> <p>Book Group 10.30am The Shrubbery Janis Thomson</p> <p>Photography Binegar Memorial Hall or Zoom. 14:00 John Law</p> <p>Creations craft projects 2pm Tina King’s house</p> | <p>Bridge Doultling village hall 2 - 4:30pm Ian Jarmaine Linda Dytham</p> <p>Needlecraft - 2pm Liz Weeks' home</p> <p>Collectables The Shrubbery 10.30 am Liz Nash</p> | <p>Bridge Doultling village hall 2 - 4:30pm Ian Jarmaine Linda Dytham</p> <p>Creations 2pm Tina’s House</p> | <p>Bridge Doultling village hall 2 – 4.30pm Ian Jarmaine Linda Dytham</p> <p>Needlecraft - 2pm Liz Weeks' home</p> |
| Wed | <p>Short Tennis Wells Leisure Centre 3.30 – 4.30 pm Eric Wehrfritz</p> | <p>Short Tennis Wells Leisure Centre 3.30 – 4.30 pm Eric Wehrfritz</p> <p>Play-reading 10-12 am Janet Sherwin's home</p> | <p>Short Tennis Wells Leisure Centre 3.30 – 4.30 pm Eric Wehrfritz</p> | <p>Short Tennis Wells Leisure Centre 3.30 – 4.30 pm Eric Wehrfritz</p> |
| Thur | <p>Coffee/Speaker Meeting - Salvation Army Hall10 till 12 Jane Morrison</p> <p>En Francais 2pm Jane Burman's home</p> | <p>Coffee at Dobbies 10.30 am</p> | <p>Coffee at Dobbies 10.30 am</p> <p>Shorter Walks – Various Jenny Wehrfritz</p> <p>Strollers – Various. Josh Hartley</p> <p>En Francais 2pm Jane Burman's home</p> | <p>Coffee at The Brasserie 10.30 am</p> |
| Fri | <p>Table Tennis 2pm Paul St Rooms Carole Mullender</p> <p>Quiz Group Barbie Bradbury</p> | <p>Table Tennis 2pm Paul St Rooms Carole Mullender</p> | <p>Table Tennis as before 2pm Carole Mullender</p> <p>Munch Club - Various Sue Dickerson</p> | <p>Table Tennis as before 2pm Carole Mullender</p> <p>Singing for Pleasure 10.30-12.00 Salvation Army Hall Tina King</p> |

Additional Groups/Events with variable timings/locations:-

- Railway Group** - Paul Roberts - various meetings and outings
- It's All In The Genes** - Jane Morrison - ancestry for all
- Skittles** - Jane Morrison - food and fun - look out for an email invitation
- Solos Group** - Janet Murray - events for those on their own.

All groups & activities are organised & run by Shepton Mallet u3a members.
Please see our website for details. www.sheptonmalletu3a.org.uk

and committee list on page 2

Why do bankruptcy lawyers expect to be paid?

u3a

learn, laugh, live



Shepton Mallet u3a gives you
the chance to make new friends,
develop your interests and enjoy yourself.

**No longer working full-time?
Now is the time to make
the most of life!**

**Find out more at
sheptonmalletu3a.org.uk**

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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.