

WANTED

NEW INTEREST GROUPS

If you have an idea for a group, please let anybody on the committee know. Just because you think of something, it doesn't mean to say you have to be the group leader (but it would help!).

Qualifications not required.

The committee will help to get it set up and advertise to all members about your group. To comply with the u3a mantra - Learn, Laugh, Live – there needs to be an aspect of learning something...

**You are a star bursting with knowledge
This is your year to sparkle**



Tuesday 5th March

Henstridge Village Hall

10th Annual General Meeting

**Followed by
a talk from**

Julia Holman

**Lock'em Up or Let Them Out
How the Parole Board works**



Lock 'em Up or Let 'em Out

A talk by Julia Holman on the parole board



Julia was, by profession, a criminal lawyer and spent a number of years working on the parole board. In this talk she explains some of the sentencing and how / when people become eligible to have their case heard by a parole board. She also gives us some insight into how the parole board works, the volume of paperwork required and an understanding as to how difficult decisions about whether or not to allow parole are made.

The talk includes some real examples of cases Julia was involved with. A serious, but very entertaining and engaging, talk.



Group Coordinator's Report

Please see list of group leaders at the back of this newsletter for contact details.

Backgammon: a new backgammon group has started. It meets on an ad hoc basis. Please contact the Groups Co-ordinator, Hilary Smith, if you would like to play or learn to play.

Boules: this group started in 2023, but has ceased for the winter. It will resume in April or May when the days are lighter and the weather is warmer. Please contact Hilary Smith, if you are interested in joining this group or if you would be able to be a group leader or assist.

Bridge: meets on 2nd and 4th Monday in the Lounge of Henstridge Village Hall at 14:15 ready to start playing at 14:30 (there is a small charge to cover the cost of the hall hire). The group leader is Howard Warden.

Croquet: now suspended for the winter, but will resume in the spring / early summer. Group leader is Jean Lindley.

Garden Visits: led by Jan Nast, assisted by Brita Wood. Meets on the first Monday of each month at 11:00 at Thyme after Time, near Stalbridge when the group decides which gardens to visit during the month.

Lunch / Pudding Club: led by Jean Lindley. The group offers visits to a local pub / restaurant for lunch on a bi-monthly basis, alternating with the starters / pudding club which meets at Jean's house. Members take either a starter or dessert to share.

Photography: led by David Foster. It meets on the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 19:30 at a group member's house when arrangements will be made to have trips out to take photographs and share knowledge with other members. Anyone who is interested in improving their photography skills is welcome to join. So far, the group has visited Wells, Ninesprings in Yeovil, Sturminster Mill and Shaftesbury. The theme for the winter is indoor photography. The next meeting will be in March (normally the 3rd Tuesday of each month).

Reading: led by Jean Lindley. There are two groups: One group meets in the Tippling Philosopher, Milborne Port at 10:30 on the 2nd Friday of each month and the other meets at the Virginia Ash, Henstridge at 15:00 on the 4th Friday of the month. Each group reads a book which is discussed when the group meets.

Walking Groups: both groups are led by Richard Kidd, assisted by Hilary Smith. There is a different walk each month and the meeting place and time are determined by where the walk starts and how long it will take. Afterwards, refreshments are normally taken at a local hostelry. Both the Tuesday and the Wednesday walking groups will do the same walk with a single recce with at least 2 people from each group.

- **Tuesday:** They walk on the last Tuesday of the month.
- **Wednesday:** They walk on the third Wednesday of the month.

Hilary Smith



If anybody would like to set up a bird watching group, I would like to join. I don't have enough knowledge to start it myself. *Judy Penfold*

GARDEN VISITS GROUP



This year has started really well for the Garden Group and our Annual Meal earlier in January went very well with 25 members attending a lovely lunch at The Virginia Ash local pub in Henstridge.

Our first coffee morning of the year was at the beginning of this month, at the usual venue of 'Thyme After Time' was also very well attended with 21 members, which is a record!

We discussed the next trips (for both February & March) and Brita will be leading the trip to Kingston Lacey later this month, as I'm on holiday until mid-March. A few members have already signed up for this trip, which is primarily to see the lovely 'Snowdrop Valley' there, which is usually very impressive. We also have another trip (which will be two RHS gardens) later in March, full details of which will be given at the next coffee morning on: Mon 4th March, which Brita will also be organising, in my absence.



Several other suggestions for future trips were also put forward by some members, which we have made a note of and look forward to planning some of those over the next few months. We are still at our capacity of 30, so are unable to accept any additional members at this time, unfortunately.

Jan



Group Leaders report from Jean Lindley

Lunch Club is always happy to welcome new members for our Bi-monthly Pub Lunches or our Bring & Share lunches which are a feast of good food and company. Just let me know if you would like to attend.

Croquet We have played little during the last year, mainly due to weather conditions. We hope it will be better this year.

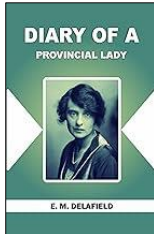
Reading Groups There are 13 members divided into two groups. We meet once a month in a pub and have a new book to read each month. We would be happy to welcome new members. We read all types of books.



READING GROUPS

We had some lighter reading to see us over the Christmas period.

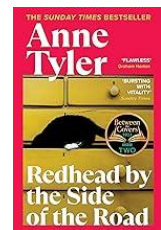
The Diary of a Provincial Lady
E.M. Delafield



This book is actually four books published in one cover. Most of it was written as a series to appear in *Time and Tide*, *Punch* or other publications. The four books were written in the 1930s and possibly may have seen a little old fashioned to some. However it has retained its humour over the years. Our groups were equally divided between those who loved it and those who hated it. Many of us saw the way we think reflected in the pages.

Redhead by the side of the Road
Ann Tyler

Ann Tyler has written many books and this slender novel was long listed for the Booker Prize in 2020. It is a short, character-driven novel, charming and wry, with endearing characters whose quirks are relatable but not overdone. It is a gentle everyday story but the writing is such that it draws you in. The majority of us enjoyed it although there were those who found it boring.



We are currently reading *Managing Expectations* by Minnie Driver, and *The Fell* by Sarah Moss.

We have two Reading Groups that meet monthly, one at 10.30 on the second Friday of the month at The Tippling Philosopher and the other at 3pm on the fourth Friday of the month at The Virginia Ash.

Please come and join us, there is plenty of interesting conversation



LUNCH CLUB

We had an excellent Lunch at Home in January. Eleven of us were present and what a spread! I think no-one went home hungry and I would like to thank you all for coming.

A Pub Lunch will be held at The Green Man in King Stag in February after this newsletter has gone to press.

In March we will be holding our next Lunch at Home probably in the week 11th – 15th March. If you think you would like to come, please let me know as soon as possible which are the best dates for you, and whether you will be bringing a savoury or sweet dish. I hope to see lots of you here.

Jean Lindley



WALKING GROUPS

No report this month. It was raining.

Richard Kidd and Hilary Smith

richardakidd64@gmail.com.



PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP

The group didn't meet in December, the feeling being that our meeting date was too close to the Christmas period.

December and January bring with them long nights and very short daylight hours when the light is not really conducive to outdoor photography so the group agreed to carry out some indoor photography to bring along to our next meeting. It will be interesting to see the results.

I'm very hopeful that in the coming year the group will be able to organise more days out with the camera. We are fortunate in that there are so many places of interest and so much beautiful landscape available to us. As usual visitors are always welcome to join us at these events

David Foster



A message from Dorset Diggers (of Stalbridge House dig fame)

Chris Tripp from Dorset Diggers is very kindly leading a walk in Thorncombe Woods (Hardy's Cottage site) on Sunday 10th March. We are meeting in the National Trust car park at 10.15am. This walk will take in the Roman road and two Bronze Age burial mounds. This is a short but varied walk through woods along tracks that lead out to expansive views. The National Trust cafe will offer a chance for drinks and snacks. Donations for DDCAG funds would be appreciated.

This walk will be weather dependent.

Please email Chris Tripp on tripp.chris@gmail.com if you wish to join the walk.

Kind regards

Carole Caple

Secretary

Dorset Diggers



History Tour



How well do we know the area in which we live? Well in 2024 there is an opportunity to find out more.

On Saturday May 18th – All day event.

Stalbridge is the smallest town in Dorset, beginning in around AD 860 as Stapulbridge. It began to grow in AD 860.

The original top of the market cross, that is used as a symbol on the membership card, blew off in 1950.

To delve deep into the Stalbridge history trail, join a walk led by a guide from The Stalbridge History Group.

Meeting at Dykes time TBA

Future events

(CAN BE SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

May 7th

David Boag, photographer

The Secret Wood

A 365-Day Journey in the British Countryside

Saturday May 18th

MEMBERS ONLY

Historical Walk, Stalbridge

July 2nd

MEMBERS ONLY

14.30 Michael Malagan, scriptwriter

Focusing on the funny side

Followed by

15.30 Anniversary Cream Tea

September 3rd

Open Day – no speaker

Friday September 27th

MEMBERS ONLY

Historical Walk, Milborne Port

November 5th

Brita Wood

Blackmore Vale Stationmasters

Highlighted events consist of our 10th Anniversary celebrations. Regrettably, due to limited numbers allowed, these have to be restricted to members of Blackmore Vale u3a only.



Your Committee

Chair Vice Chair	Susan Kidd Gill Westall	skiddsbvu3a@gmail.com
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Committee Member	VACANT	

Group contacts

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Walking Group, Wednesday		
Reading Groups	Jean Lindley	ejlbyre@btinternet.com
Croquet / Lunch Club	Jean Lindley	ejlbyre@btinternet.com
Bridge	Howard Warden	Warden444@btinternet.com
Garden Visits	Jan Nast	Janice.nast@gmail.com
Photography	David Foster	davidfoster1625@gmail.com

GENERAL MEETINGS

Are usually held in Henstridge Village Hall from 2.15pm on the first Tuesday of alternate months.

Members £2.00 Visitors 3.00

All our general meetings are publicised in the online Blackmore Vale magazine, local Facebook pages, websites and magazines. Posters are circulated to public places in Stalbridge, Henstridge, Wincanton, Templecombe and Milborne Port.

Venue hire

Please remember when making bookings that each group is self-funding, therefore, if there are any costs involved, a suitable fee should be charged to attendees to cover these costs. **Also, a copy of the invoice and receipt is required to be sent to the Treasurer each month to be entered into the main accounts.**

Privacy Policy

Please be assured that we will never pass on your details to third parties without explicit consent from you and that we will never share your details with any company or charity for marketing purposes.

The contents of this newsletter are provided by the members for the members and is produced at no cost to the members.