

CALDICOT & DISTRICT



Newsletter September 2020

www.u3asites.org.uk/caldicot/home

Reg Charity No. 1071447

CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

LOOKING BACK BUT MOVING ON

Hello everyone my name is Rob Harry and I have just taken over the Chair of *our* U3A. I say this because I am of a firm belief that the success of any U3A is down to its members and you will see that it is inherently built into all of the elements that I want to take forward into what is an uncertain future.

Looking back..... etc has been a phrase that has been important to me for most of my 70 plus years, both in my personal and professional lives. So let's start by looking back. Firstly I and the whole of this U3A owe a huge debt of gratitude to Pam Caines whose dedication and hard work for many years has at times kept the whole thing going, many thanks Pam. Another person who I also need to thank is Anne Duke who has been our Speakers Secretary for years but this year decided to step down. Our Monthly meetings would not have been so successful if it was not for those two people.

So how did I get to the lofty perch of Chair? I will start with another strong belief "Never forget where you came from" In my case I am the son of a miner and wonderful mother or Mam if you were brought up in Crosskeys, so a valley boy. Back then there was not much money but loads of love and encouragement. I have been married for 53 years to Judi and we have two daughters Louise and Caroline and 4 Grandchildren between the ages of 23 and 14. Family is the most important thing in my life. We moved to Caldicot in 1970 prompted by my employment at Llanwern where I worked in various posts from labouring to Shift Foreman for over 20 years. Looking forward was significant for me then, because I studied in my spare time via the Open University and gained a Degree. I was looking for opportunities to change my career. I chose to become a Probation Officer and to gain the relevant experience I became a volunteer with the Gwent Probation Service, a youth leader in Caldicot and Portskewett and ran a Drop in Centre for unemployed young people. So the working with people bug got me. I was then successful in gaining a place at Bristol University to train as a Probation Officer. I worked in various officer and management posts in the Probation Service for over 25 years and loved it. The roles and responsibility certainly put life into perspective. After a tough day it was so good to come home and take in the tranquillity of the Castle Grounds on a walk with Judi. This really is a great area in which we live. When I eventually retired, I joined the U3A Strollers Walking Group, mostly because Judi had described the delicious lunches that followed walks. I am still with the Strollers 12 years on and the Convenor for a number of years. Great times with a great group of people, always brings a smile to my face.

So how did I get to the Chair? I simply went to a Convenors and Committee meeting and then soon after, the U3A Open Day. The enthusiasm of the Convenors and the display of the work of Interest Groups work evidenced the potential of the U3A to be an important part of people's lives. There was a buzz of enthusiasm from people who looked forward to the company of others and being involved in all manner of interests. I then joined the Committee and have had a range of roles and responsibilities. All of them have been informative and educational for me personally and the experience I have gained has been helpful in anticipating being Chair. The planning for

this year's 25th Celebrations was the catalyst for me in confirming that the people bug was still strong. I was lucky to be involved with members of the interest groups who put together the development plans for our celebrations. The buzz was still there. So despite Covid / Lockdown or whatever else comes our way, I personally and the Committee will do our damndest to deliver the Celebrations in 2021. So having looked back, it is now time to move on. So please read the Committee News section in this and future editions of the Newsletter or why not join us on the Committee where you can then play a part in keeping this U3A alive, in what will be challenging times. You would be made most welcome.

Regards and please keep safe everyone

Rob Harry
Chairman

TREASURER'S CORNER

I explained the need for our, now ongoing, collection of the membership annual subscription in the last Newsletter. Appreciate that activity groups, currently suspended, are financed independently by their members and the cost of the monthly meeting represents the only saving to central funds at the present time.

If, like many, you will be paying your dues to a group convenor please do so in a manner that requires no change to be given. A cheque or note in an envelope with your name on it represents the safest means of payment.

Rates of subscriptions will be reviewed, if necessary, and presented before the membership at the next AGM, which is now unlikely to be before the New Year.

Tony Hodson-Hirst
Treasurer

COPY FOR THE NEWSLETTER

We welcome reports from all groups for inclusion in the Newsletter or forwarding to our website. Word doc is preferred and should be sent to:

leechpool@talktalk.net or tel. 01291 424997 by midday on the 28th SEPTEMBER 2020

Typed or handwritten notes should be submitted a few days earlier if possible.

Angela Hodson-Hirst, Editor.

MEMBERSHIP

Should you change your address, telephone number or email address please let me know so that our records are up to date. Contact details: tel: 01291 424997 email: leechpool@talktalk.net

Angela Hodson-Hirst
Membership Secretary

LINK SECRETARY

I would ask that if you hear of any member(s) who reach their 80th, 90th, 100th birthdays, Golden, Diamond, Platinum Wedding Anniversaries or even Marriages between members to please contact me so that I can send a Congratulatory card.

Also, if you hear of any member, in your group, or their family who are in hospital, sick or any other reason I would be grateful if you would please inform me. bettybun55@gmail.com

Tel: 01291 421484

Betty Waite

LINK

In August cards were sent to:

Barbara Harrison and Mary Richards.... “A little support at a difficult time”

John Jukes who we wish a speedy recovery after his stay in hospital.

BIRTHDAY CONGRATULATIONS

Best wishes to Neil Price, who celebrated his 80th in August, and Derek Watson who celebrates his 90th Birthday this month.

MESSAGE TO CONVENORS

Following changes to Covid-19 restrictions and adhering to the guidelines from the Welsh Government and Third Age Trust, it has been a pleasure to be able to hold al fresco meetings with some of you and hear your views and any forward planning which is so difficult to do in these uncertain times. We had hoped to have been able to meet you all before the publication of this Newsletter. However I now look forward to meeting the rest of the Convenors and any representatives of your groups shortly.

I sincerely hope you and all your members are taking care and keeping safe and hope that we can meet again before too long.

Glenice Dallow

Convenor's Co-ordinator

UKULELE GROUP

Our ukulele group had a practice Wednesday 26th where 8 met outside in a member's garden. It had to be postponed for a day due to the bad weather on Tuesday when I think more would have come.

One of the hazards of meeting outside!

Chris Spiller



CALDICOT AND DISTRICT U3A

COMMITTEE NEWS

Your intrepid Committee met again last week, outside, social distancing in very inclement weather. We discussed many items and came to agreement on some.

WALKING GROUPS

Some of the Committee met with the Convenors of the Walking Groups several weeks ago and as a result of our discussions, on 18th August some of the Walking Groups restarted. Risk Assessment forms have to be filled out and Track and Trace Registers completed, social distancing kept and unfortunately no lunches however, those groups that have restarted are very pleased to be in the company of other members of their groups and have thoroughly enjoyed walking together again.

RE-STARTING

Some of the Committee will be meeting with the Convenors of all interest groups by the end of September, to gather data and check the attitudes and opportunities for re-starting of the interest groups. Rob Harry has spoken to some of the venues that we use. Once we have spoken to all the convenors, the Committee will analyse the data we have gathered and if relevant, will be setting up meetings with the venues to discuss what has been put in place for Covid 19, the Risk Assessments undertaken, any extra costs involved and to develop written contracts with each venue. Having done all of the above we will then assess the viability of some groups re-starting. We will look at alternative venues, if necessary, and different methods of delivering sessions and utilising Member ideas.

Once all of the above has been accomplished, we will write to each Member with a small questionnaire to ascertain their thoughts about re-start and how the Committee can help with this.

MEMBERSHIP AND SUBSCRIPTIONS

We will be asking Members to pay their £10 subscription in order to ensure that the U3A continues into next year, when, hopefully we will be able to meet together again.

At the present time subscriptions are coming in slowly and we would request that if you have any questions please contact your convenor. Membership Renewal Forms will be delivered to the Convenors at the meetings mentioned above. Payment should be made by cheque, made out to Caldicot and District U3A, or £10/£20 note in an envelope with your name on the front.

25TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

A group from the 25th Anniversary sub-committee will be meeting with the committee of the Portskewett Cornfield project to discuss where the bench, planters and trees to be donated by the Caldicot and District U3A will be placed. We are, of course, hoping to hold our "Picnic in the Park" celebrations next year.

As before, we will be keeping you informed on what is happening with Caldicot and District U3A.

Stay safe and well.

Caldicot and District U3A Trustees

NOTES LEFT FOR THE MILKMAN – Submitted by John Mills

Dear milkman

I've just had a baby, please leave another one.

Please leave an extra pint of paralysed milk.

Cancel one pint after the day after tomorrow.

Please don't leave any more milk. All they do is drink it.

Milkman, please close the gate behind you, because the birds keep pecking the tops off the milk.

Milkman, please could I have a loaf but not bread today.

Pease cancel milk, as I have nothing coming into the house but two sons on the dole.

Sorry not to have paid your bill before, but my wife had a baby and I've been carrying it around in my pocket for weeks.

Sorry about yesterday's note. I didn't mean one egg and a dozen pints, but the other way around.

When you leave my milk, please knock on my bedroom window and wake me because I want you to give me a hand to turn the mattress"

Please knock. My TV's broken down and I missed last night's Coronation Street, if you saw it, will you tell me what happened over a cup of tea.

My daughter says she wants a milkshake. Do you do it before you deliver or do I have to shake the bottle.

Please send me a form for cheap milk for I have a baby two months old and did not know about it until a neighbour told.

Please send me details about cheap milk because I am stagnant.

Milk is needed for the baby father is unable to supply it"

From now on please leave two pints every other day and one pint on the day in between, except Wednesdays and Saturdays when I don't want any milk.

My back door is open, please put milk in 'fridge" get money out of cup in drawer and leave change on kitchen table in pennies because we want to play bingo tonight.

Please leave no milk today, when I say today, I mean tomorrow, for I wrote this note yesterday.

Milkman, please put the coal on the boiler, let dog out and put newspaper inside the door. P.S don't leave any milk"

No milk today. Please do not leave milk at no.14 either as she is dead until further notice.

THE DRAGON WALK

Part 1 – The Prologue

The first reference to the term Dragon Walk, that is walking round Wales via Offa's Dyke and the Wales Coast Path, was in 2012 by Arry Beresford-Webb. She started in Cardiff on 24 March and returned on 5 May, the day the Wales Coast Path opened, having run the equivalent of 39 consecutive marathons. On her arrival in Cardiff she handed over the baton to Dave Quarrell who then walked round Wales in 11 weeks and 5 days. Since then many people have completed the Dragon Walk in both directions. This is our story.

Dorothy and I have been walking with the U3A Strollers for about 2 years and I'm sure that we have bored you sick about our walking round Wales. So I thought I would try and entertain you with our exploits while we undertook this mammoth enterprise.

Before we started walking with the Strollers we were, and still are, members of the Lower Wye Ramblers Group. We joined when we were much younger and fitter in 1994 and thought nothing of doing a strenuous 14 mile walk.

In 1998 Ray Wensley organised a series of linear walks along the Gloucestershire Way from Chepstow to Tewkesbury. We started in July 1998 and completed the trail on 5 March 2000.

As this was very popular Ray suggested we next attempt the Wye Valley Walk, but not content just doing this he called the walk The River Wye from Source to Severn with the intention of walking the River Wye from its source to the confluence with the River Severn.

On 7 and 8 September 2001 we had a weekend away staying in Rhayader. Our first challenge was to find the source of the River Wye. This meant we had to climb Plinlimon on the north side to find the spring from which the Wye emerged on the south side. We all found different springs but I thought mine was the correct source because it was the furthest up the hill in a direct line with the stream lower down. By the end of the weekend we were in Rhayader.

A second weekend was held in April 2002 which got us as far as Builth Wells with a further weekend planned for June. Sadly, between these dates, Ray was taken ill and died six weeks later. This was a big loss to me. I considered Ray to be one of my few friends as we had many similar interests and ideas. He would have loved to be around today with all the electronic devices available.

In spite of this setback we still intended to carry on with the Source to Severn Walk and over the following 3 years various leaders took us as far as Chepstow Castle.

The walks were memorable in many ways and not just for the stunning scenery. We were almost blown off Plynlimon, argued about the true source of the Wye, lost rucksacks down steep valleys and walked in water up to our knees; and that was just on the first day! The highlight, or maybe the lowlight, was a hotel we stayed in near Hereford. The owners were new and didn't have much interest in the hotel. We ended up preparing and serving our own breakfasts! The experience was all made worse by the transport the hotel owner provided to take us to and from the walks – it was a Transit van. On the first day we all sat on mattresses in the back but on the second day he provided dining room chairs which were in 4 lines. I'm sure this wasn't legal.

I was insistent that we carry out Ray's wishes to walk the Wye from Source to Severn and on Sunday 14 August 2005 we walked the 4 miles from Chepstow Castle to the confluence of the Rivers Wye and Severn at Beachley Point followed by a celebratory lunch at the Old Ferry Inn.

So, two long distance trails completed, we needed another challenge and this came about 2 years later when another of the Lower Wye members offered to organise a walk along Offa's Dyke. Little did he realise what he had started!

But first, a bit of history.

King Offa of Mercia and his Dyke

Offa was King of Mercia, a kingdom of Anglo-Saxon England, from 757 until his death in July 796. The son of Thingfrith and a descendant of Eowa, Offa came to the throne after a period of civil war following the assassination of Æthelbald.

Offa was frequently in conflict with the various Welsh kingdoms. There was a battle between the Mercians and the Welsh at Hereford in 760, and Offa is recorded as campaigning against the Welsh in 778, 784 and 796.



The Dyke, which was up to 65 feet (20 m) wide (including its flanking ditch) and 8 feet (2.4 m) high, traversed low ground, hills and rivers. Today the earthwork is protected as a scheduled monument. Some of its route is followed by the Offa's Dyke Path; a 176 mile (283 km) long-distance footpath that runs between Prestatyn in the north and the Sedbury Cliffs in the south.

Maurice Turner

Next – Walking Offa's Dyke

FRIENDS AND THEIR WIVES

Three friends married women from different parts of the world. The first married a Greek girl and told her that she was to do the dishes and cleaning. It took a couple of days, but on the third day he came home to see a clean house.

The second man married a Thai girl and gave her the same orders, to do all the cleaning and cooking. The first day he didn't see any results but by the third his house was clean and dinner was on the table.

The third man married a Welsh girl. He ordered her to keep the house clean, dishes washed, lawn mowed and dinner ready by 6pm. For the first two days he didn't see anything, but by the third day, some of the swelling had gone down and he could see a little out of his left eye!

Due to Coronavirus, this years Love Island will be filmed in Newport 🤔🤔



JULY ZOOM DIGITAL COMPETITION

THEME - Vehicles

1st Jim Jenkins

Very Old Car on the
London to Brighton run



2nd Chris Carey

A Power Glider in Lyme Regis



3rd Roy Langfield

'TukTuk' taken on a far Eastern
holiday



GARDENING

Hello Everyone.

Hope you are all well and not blown away with these recent storms we have had in August. Unfortunately, Andrew's small greenhouse was a casualty of the high winds, but we managed to put it back together the next day and rescued the plants, so much for our British weather.

A Convenors' meeting was held, socially distanced outside, at which we were advised to contact our group members regarding the payment of U3A Annual Subscription of £10.00 per person.

With this in mind, I will be available to receive garden group members' payment by cheque or £10.00 note in an envelope with your name on – cheque made payable to Caldicot & District U3A.

For anyone wishing to do so, I will be at the George 5th Playing Field, Caldicot at the main entrance by the exercise machines at 2.00 p.m. on Wednesday, 9th September to receive your payments.

Pauline Marx



TV PROGRAMMES ANAGRAMS

Work out the TV programme from the anagram. No cheating by pulling up the TV listings and matching a programme to an anagram rather than the other way round. Try to do it without resorting to such a devious tactic!

1. MARE LED ME (9)	
2. STAB FAKER (9)	
3. I ECHO VET (3, 5)	
4. STOP FOR EQUATIONS (1,8,2,5)	
5. WRECK TINS (3,6)	
6. HE AND I PAID RATES (5,2,8)	
7. LINE SPOTS (9)	
8. A HOT FACED MYTH (5,2,3,3)	
9. HE SHONE TWO (3,3,4)	
10. HEAVENS OUR GOOFY WIT (4,1,3,4,3,3)	
11. SOW A HARD QUESTION (8,8)	
12. NEAT NEWTS (4,2,3)	
13. NOD TO NEW BABY (7,5)	
14. RID SOME DRUMMERS (8,7)	
15. LAY AS CUT (8)	
16. HE GOT RASH NORTH WOMAN (3,6,6,4)	
17. ANT IN A BURGH (7,4)	
18. CREW I MATCH (10)	
19. IS ONE ROTTEN ACTOR (10,6)	
20. SEWN THING (9)	
21. NOTES I'M QUIET (8,4)	
22. SOLVED NAIL (4,6)	
23. TIDY ON FLUE (4,2,4)	
24. OUR BIG HENS (10)	
25. RIPE CHEAP TENT (3, 10)	
26. NODS DANGER (7, 3)	

27. FOIL CENTURY (11)	
28. HIT COFFEE (3,6)	
29. BETTER BEAT OFF A HIGH RISK (3,5,7,4,3)	
30. HE SPINS MOST (3, 8)	

DID YOU KNOW? – THIRD INSTALLMENT

AND THEN THERE WERE TWO

We married in July. I was nineteen. Our honeymoon was to be spent travelling from St. Louis, Missouri to Blaine, Washington State a distance of some 2,200 miles. We set off on 20th July, carrying all of our worldly possessions in a U-Haul trailer behind us. We had to make Washington State by 1st August, including finding somewhere to live, as Skip had to report at his new station on 1st August.

Kansas was unbearably hot, 100 degrees plus. At every service area we came to, we soaked ourselves with a hose and by the time we reached the next service area we were bone dry again.

We next went into Nebraska without incident and then into Wyoming. We stayed in a log cabin within sight of “Old Faithful” a hot spring geyser in Yellowstone National Park which erupted every hour. What a beautiful place with so much to see.

Carrying on into Wyoming we run out of petrol and Skip left me on the side of the road, miles from anywhere so that I could look after the car and trailer. I paced up and down the side of the road until I spied a “snake!” When Skip got back I was locked in the car, shaking like a leaf. What’s up? “There’s a snake over there” Skip walked to where I pointed and came back with a snakeskin. No snake just its skin.

Leaving Wyoming we next entered Idaho where, unfortunately we had a flat tire. This ended up as an extra overnight stay we had not planned on. Finally we reached Washington State. We found a little four room house, sparsely furnished, and promptly rented it. We settled into married life. Our Landlady, Sally, was brilliant and was a second Mum to us. Both far away from home and our families.

We were sat one night, watching TV on our 6 inch portable TV when there was a loud crack. One of the legs on the sofa had broken. Skip decided to saw part of the other three legs to match the first one. We went to sit down and our knees were under our chin. No good we had to contact Sally. As luck would have it she had a park home right next to the air force station and offered it to us. It was a palace compared to the little four room house.

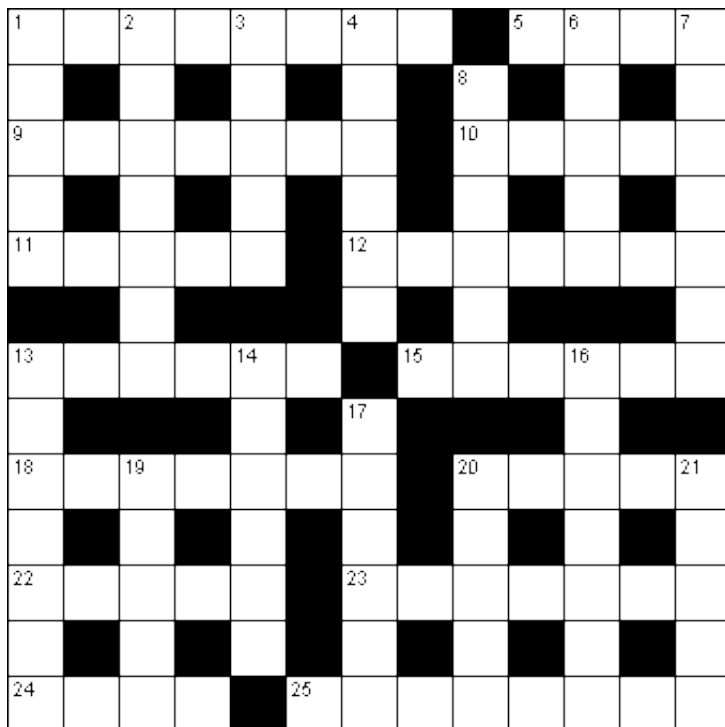
For Skip’s 21st I decided to make a cake in the shape of a sailing boat. One sail had his name and the other the number 21. After dinner that night I started to walk to the kitchen to get the cake. There was a horrendous bang and when I got to the kitchen the cake was upside down on the floor. I scooped the cake into one pile on the floor and stuck a candle in it. Skip came to find me and found me sitting on the floor next to the “cake” laughing hysterically.

We were in Washington State for 3 years and really enjoyed our time there. I learnt how to Ten Pin Bowl, joined the Wives Club and the Ex Pats group and made many friends. We also survived an earthquake.

We returned to the UK where we were sent to RAF Chicksands in Bedfordshire. I remember.....

Linda Stewart

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD



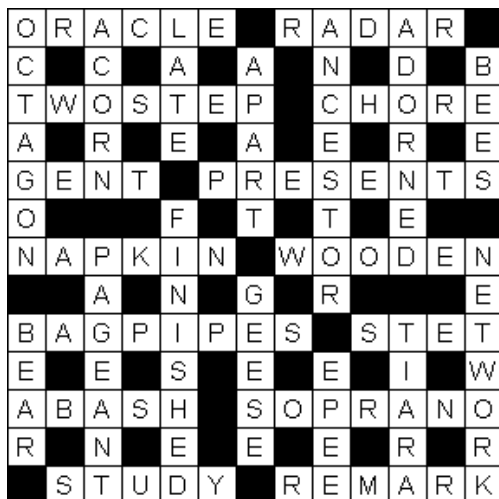
ACROSS

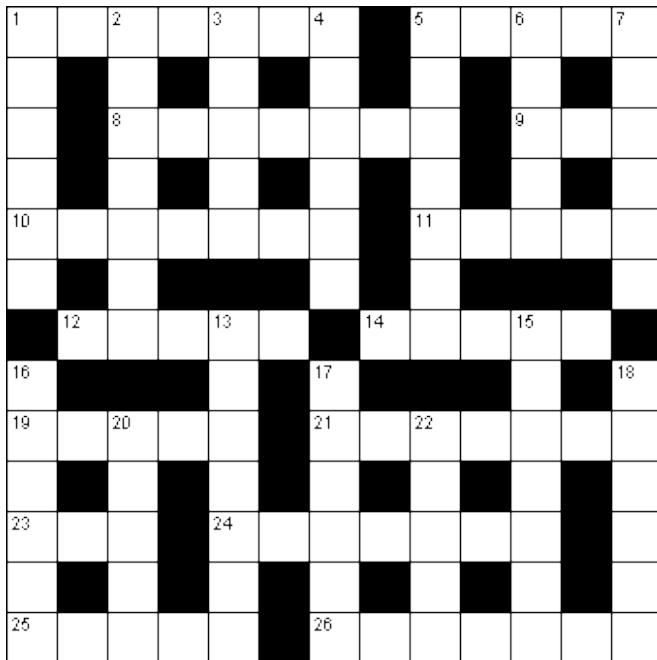
- 1. Sounds like precipitation and expensive animal (8)
- 5. Three involved in street riot (4)
- 9. Young tree is a confusing alp sign (7)
- 10. A relatively high volume permitted (5)
- 11. Observes what they grab, by the sound of it (5)
- 12. Found contract ordered farm vehicle (7)
- 13. Play around with an instrument (6)
- 15. Made mandatory request essential (6)
- 18. Run around, swindle for each one (7)
- 20. Arch seen to occur vertically (5)
- 22. Found seaside always perfect (5)
- 23. Forcibly displaces our spot (7)
- 24. Style inherent in jewel antique (4)
- 25. Owned up to being allowed in (8)

DOWN

- 1. Flowers produce various sores (5)
- 2. Suggested gremlin fibbed (7)
- 3. Golf shot with ambition? (5)
- 4. Sleigh that contains fractionally less than one (6)
- 6. Kangaroo stampede reveals bird shelter (5)
- 7. Gave instructions for systematic arrangement (7)
- 8. May a primate be served as a starter? (6)
- 13. Five set for riotous fun on this occasion (7)
- 14. Crumpled jacket required for a spell (6)
- 16. A trip or land there for a change (7)
- 17. A regular route, roughly (6)
- 19. Aware nation hosts sporting venue (5)
- 20. Dog included in decor gimmick (5)
- 21. Found nausea sedative provided relief (5)

Last month's solution





ACROSS

1. Requested the presence of someone (7)
5. Prominent (5)
8. Closest (7)
9. Compete for something (3)
10. Expressed mirth (7)
11. Scope (5)
12. Started (5)
14. Mentally responsive (5)
19. Inexpensive (5)
21. Imaginary creature (7)
23. Pasture (3)
24. Bulwark (7)
25. Payout (5)
26. Proposition deducible from basic postulates (7)

DOWN

1. Models of excellence (6)
2. Speculation (7)
3. Impart skills or knowledge (5)
4. Is afraid of (6)
5. Actual (7)
6. Corvine bird (5)
7. Cricket team (6)
13. Had a lofty goal (7)
15. Adult male chicken (7)
16. Weighing machine (6)
17. Pinnacle (6)
18. Apprise (6)
20. Efface (5)
22. Visual representation (5)

August's solution

V	E	N	U	S		R	E	S	C	I	N	D
A				A		O		A		M		W
C	A	B	A	R	E	T		L	A	P	S	E
U		R		C		A		V				L
O	M	E	G	A		T	H	E	R	M	A	L
U		V		S		E				A		
S	T	I	G	M	A		R	A	N	C	I	D
			T			S		C		A		R
C	R	Y	P	T	I	C		C	O	B	R	A
H				E		H		O		R		S
A	L	B	U	M		O	P	U	L	E	N	T
N		A		P		O		N				I
T	U	R	M	O	I	L		T	O	N	I	C

LET'S DO SUDOKU!

August's Sudoku solution

	8	6		2		4	5	
	1						3	
	4	7		3		6	1	
		9		6		5		
6								7
			9		4			
			5		7			
1								6
		8		1		2		

6	3	5	1	7	9	4	8	2
8	4	1	3	5	2	6	9	7
9	7	2	4	8	6	1	3	5
4	9	7	2	3	8	5	1	6
2	1	8	6	4	5	9	7	3
5	6	3	7	9	1	8	2	4
7	8	6	5	1	3	2	4	9
3	2	9	8	6	4	7	5	1
1	5	4	9	2	7	3	6	8

Solutions next month

CALDICOT & DISTRICT U3A

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE & TRUSTEES

Chairman	Rob Harry	01291 421282
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Business Secretary	Linda Stewart	01291 420005
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Membership Secretary & Direct Mail	Angela Hodson-Hirst	01291 424997
Newsletter & Diary Editor	Angela Hodson-Hirst	01291 424997
Gift Aid Co-ordinator	Glenice Dallow	01291 422925
Group's Co-ordinator	Glenice Dallow	01291 422925
Speakers Secretary	Anne Duke	01291 408216
Link Secretary	Betty Waite	01291 421484
	Linda Howells	01291 423395
	Helen Wormald	01291 423765
	Pamela Caines	01291 420750

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Public Relations	Dave Edwards
Webmaster	Ann Taylor-Heard
Facilities Officer	John Duke