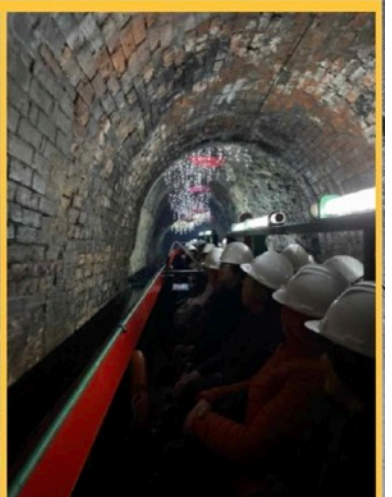
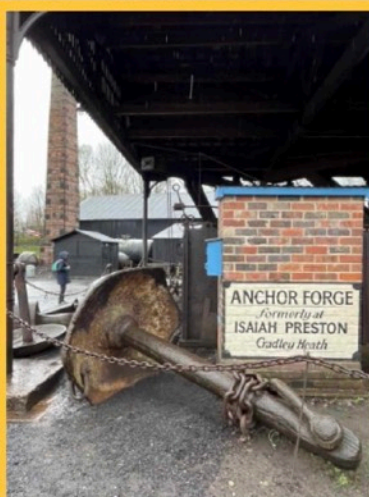


# u3a

The Bulletin May 2023  
Cam, Dursley & District



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 Branch News
 

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Chair Terry Pascoe bowed out at the April monthly meeting. He received a farewell gift from fellow committee members and a huge “thank you” for his work for our u3a. Terry has been a stalwart of several community organisations and Dursley’s loss will be Dorset’s gain. Myrtle Moreton-Cox will act as Chair until the AGM and elections for next year’s committee in June.

This is your chance to contribute, and nomination forms for officers and other rolls will be in your inbox or through your letterbox shortly. Here’s the details of the AGM, which will be held before the talk “Blasts from the Past” by Bob Sinfield, a comedy lecture on some historic figures.

We have a supply issue with the lanyards used to display membership cards. Their use is now optional, so if you have a u3a lanyard that’s no longer required please return it at the AGM or a future monthly meeting.

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN OF THE 9<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
OF CAM, DURSLEY AND DISTRICT U3A  
in Dursley Methodist Hall on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2023 at 10am  
AGENDA**

- 1) Apologies for absence
- 2) Appointment of tellers
- 3) Amendments to AGM minutes dated 16<sup>th</sup> June 2022
- 4) Acceptance of AGM minutes dated 16<sup>th</sup> June 2022
- 5) Chair’s report
- 6) Treasurer’s report and acceptance of examined accounts 2022/2023
- 7) Appointment of independent examiner of accounts for year ending 2023/24
- 8) Any proposals/propositions
- 9) Election of officers for the coming year
- 10) Election of committee members for the coming year.
- 11) Next AGM to be held at 10.00 am on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2024

***Please note: Proposals/propositions and nomination forms for officers and committee members must be returned to the Secretary by 1<sup>st</sup> June 2023. Either post to : Karen Morris, 125 Parklands, Wotton-under-Edge, GL12 7NR or email [secretary@camanddursleyu3a.org.uk](mailto:secretary@camanddursleyu3a.org.uk)***

**My tenure as your editor will cease after the AGM. This is the perfect moment for a new editor, who can of course do things their way, to step forward.**

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## Group News

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Pam Davis reports that Modern Greek, Concert, the Foodie Supper Club, Doll's Houses, and Psychology in Practice are now defunct and off the website. Archaeology is leaderless and cannot go ahead at present. Ronnie Harding's Easy Walk Group may be revived in the near future.

Groups booking Dursley Methodist Church should be aware of the new access arrangements via a key code. Leaders must fill in the church's official form.

We need volunteers from the membership to help set up and later clear the church for the monthly meetings.

Elinor Padfield is re-writing the Risk Assessment guidance for Group Leaders. She has researched the latest information from National Office and is in the process of producing simplified and up to date checklists

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## Group Reports

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### Historic Places - *Sally Beynon*

Despite raining all day, there was a lot to explore and see both outdoors and under cover during our trip to the Black Country Living Museum, Dudley. An old bus was running to take visitors to and from the far end of the site.



Staff were dressed in 1930s costumes including the very friendly local policeman, schoolteacher, cinema owner, pub owners, blacksmith and local shopkeepers. Cottages, shops and other buildings had been moved

to the museum site from surrounding areas. There were several furnished from the past, including an example of back-to-back houses. Shops included a grocer with many items reminiscent of my childhood; a ham slicer on the counter and a tin box of broken biscuits on the shelf. The hardware store had a good stock of galvanised steel baths. A 1930s gentleman's outfitters featured a cutting table, cabinets with glass fronted drawers, clothes, ties and a knitted swimming costume. In the radio store were an old wireless and LP records. The chippy sold fish and chips fried in beef dripping, which tasted better than any bought in present day shops and even tempted a vegetarian to buy them! One of the two pubs had sawdust on the floor and the other had various rooms including a public bar and a snug.



Our leader Carol sampled the local brew

We had a long talk with the teacher in the school. Industry included a builders yard and offices, lime kiln, brew house, steel trap works, carters yard and stables. There was a paddock for the horses, a pig pen, a chicken coop and vegetable and herb gardens. Finally, there was the canal arm and basin, boat dock and boat collection.

***Thanks are due to photographers Alan Keith and Graham Powell who provided the pictures on the cover and in this article. To learn more about the museum you can also listen to a two-part audio podcast about the visit prepared for the Cotswold Vale Talking Newspaper by Brian and Jean Gornall. Just visit the Bulletin page of the website and click on the links to hear interviews with some of the staff and what life for the locals was really like in the not too distant past.***

### Science and Engineering – Tony Wooldridge



Our March tour of Gloucester Cathedral concentrated on how the architecture of the building developed, and some of the engineering challenges that had to be overcome in its construction. We soon realised just how fortunate we are that this medieval masterpiece has survived to the present day.

The original structure was built on the site of an Anglo-Saxon minster, over a period of about 30 years between 1089 and 1121. Much of that Norman

structure remains today and is most obvious in the massive circular pillars and semi-circular arches of the nave as well as in the crypt. However, over several centuries, some very ambitious architectural changes were made with additions in every style of Gothic architecture. The original Norman structure was ingeniously modified as new styles developed. The Treasury screen is a beautiful example of Early English Gothic, with pointed arches, lancet windows, and 'pastry cutter' tracery. The south aisle is Decorated English Gothic with elaborate decoration (eg ball flowers) both inside and outside the building. The south transept is regarded as the birthplace of Perpendicular Gothic with its large traceried windows and upright straight lines. In the choir, the walls and arches of the Normans are draped in delicate lace like Gothic stonework. The intricate fan vaulted ceilings in the cloisters are a style which was first designed here, and they remain the earliest surviving example of such architecture.



Our visit started in the crypt, where we learnt that subsidence during construction had required most of the arches to be reinforced, and additional arches added. The cathedral is built on river deposits of sand and clay and subsidence was a serious headache for the medieval masons. We were later shown where additional buttressing had been required both internally and externally when the central tower began to move.

Another constant worry was fire. The nave roof collapsed when a fire destroyed much of Gloucester in 1122. The pillars in the nave are stained pink where the burning timbers scorched the limestone.

And if engineering challenges were not enough, there was a serious risk that the abbey church could have been destroyed during the dissolution of the monasteries under Henry VIII. Fortunately, the murdered King Edward II is buried here, and Henry felt obliged to honour his ancestor. Another serious challenge occurred during the Civil War when Oliver Cromwell's troops occupied the building and destroyed many of the artworks, including the window of the Lady Chapel.

Finally, there was extensive restoration during the Victorian period. Some of the building materials used were completely unsuitable and the need to maintain the breathable nature of the building was not properly



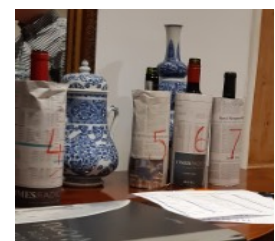
*Tea in the Parliament Room*

understood. The introduction of a concrete floor in the crypt led to flooding. This concrete was removed in the 1930s and replaced with sand. Cement mortar had been used for repairs to the fan vaulting in the crypt and this is now being replaced with the original lime mortar. We benefited from having a very knowledgeable guide, who persuaded us that a return visit to climb the tower and visit the Tribune Gallery would be very worthwhile. Watch this space.

### [Wotton Wine Appreciation Group - Claire Haines](#)

Nine members met at Sean's house for a blind tasting of seven wines. We had to guess, and let's be honest it was a guess sometimes, the country, the grape variety, hints of taste, alcohol by volume and price. Sean had created a chart so we could check our progress, and more importantly, check our scores. One point for a correct answer, but minus points were awarded for incorrect taste hints. Adding up the scores proved a bit tricky towards the end of the evening, but we coped. It seemed that the white wines were easier to get right, but surprisingly the local white wine from a Cotswold vineyard was declared horrible. Celia, as overall winner, won a bottle of Prosecco, and Jacky, the loser, a box of chocolates.

The choice of countries for the reds were South Africa, Spain, Australia and France, with prices ranging from £7.75 to £22 a bottle. Tasting hints included bramble, cherry, chocolate, oak, tangerine, blackcurrant, plum,, bayleaf, gooseberry, and even leather. No wonder some of us ended up with very few points overall.



As ever, discussion was wide ranging and I can only briefly mention some of the subjects: potato famine, wind farms, Boom radio and Greta Thunberg v Malala Yousafza. Some other subjects up for discussion remain around Sean's table, but Harry and Megan are people who quite often turn up in a rant.

Peter and Nigel elected to walk back to Wotton across the fields. They decided this at the previous month's meeting when the evening air was

balmy and calm. Think they may have made a mistake. The rest of us climbed into the taxi for a warm and cosy ride home. Thanks, Sean, it was a great evening.

### Cycling group – Paul Lewington

With the continuing poor weather this Spring, the numbers who have brought their bikes out of winter hibernation have remained relatively low. A few of us have however been out regularly, usually on a Thursday. We managed to combine a shorter route for self-declared “softies” with longer routes for those who ride 30 or so miles. Over the past couple months we have been to Bisley & Miserden, Chavenage & Badminton, and Cromhall & Hillesley, as well as the more regular route round Berkeley & Stone. When we turned up at the Glasshouse Café at Miserden, someone on a neighbouring table remarked that it was good to see people riding on traditional bikes – the three of us just happened to have older, or retro-style, bikes on that occasion.



*Not u3a members, but an interesting eBike and perhaps a potential route for the group someday, taking in the Kennet & Avon Canal.*

Now is surely the time to get on your bikes and join us as the lovely long summer days approach. We aim to meet on Thursday mornings at various locations but there is some flexibility about day-of-the-week, start times, locations and ride lengths. We use WhatsApp and email to arrange leaders, dates/times, starting points and routes.

If you are interested in trying out your bike in a small group, please contact the leader, Paul Lewington, using the Bluebird on the Groups page of the website.

### Bookworms – Sue Dunn

‘The Enchanted April’ by Elizabeth Von Arnim, was written in 1922, just four years after the end of the First World War.

An advertisement was put in a London newspaper for a holiday for a month in a castle by the sea in Italy. It was spotted by a young wife who became excited at the prospect, and persuaded a lady she knew only slightly to go with her. They both realised that it would not cost as much if more ladies came, so two more were found. The disparate quartet arrived

at the castle, all with their own reasons for being there, and not knowing the others. This caused friction in the organisation of duties, accommodation and day to day encounters.

The beauty of the place begins to have an effect on the interactions and dynamics of the four ladies. Their characters are carefully drawn by the author, and the reader feels like they are getting to know them. The story unfolds slowly as the characters learn more about themselves and their companions.

The descriptions of the gardens, sea and skies are so vivid, the reader can almost see and smell and hear them. The descriptive writing is so enjoyable.

The book is a continuous story, and to say more about it, would spoil it for other readers. We felt it was cleverly written, and produced much discussion.

### *Craft and Textiles – Pauline Chidlaw*

Over the last few months we have been exploring two types of traditional Japanese stitching, Boro and Shasiko, which have become very popular in recent years.

**Boro** is type of patchwork which was traditionally used as a way of recycling and reusing precious fabric when country people were too poor to buy new. Old fabrics were patched and layered up and quilted by simple running stitches to create strong and warm pieces to wear or use in the home. Most were in shades of indigo as homespun fabric was invariably dyed with indigo as it was cheap and readily available. Old pieces of Boro are now highly regarded and displayed in museums and it has become an art form, also often used in the fashion industry.





**Shasiko** was also traditionally worked mainly with running stitches and the same indigo dyed fabrics. However the stitching evolved into complex patterns, often repeating geometric patterns worked on a grid or more curving and flowing designs based on stylised aspects of the natural world. Rather than follow traditional designs we have been using Shasiko as an inspiration for our own designs. Work in progress so far, but nothing to do with hand stitching is done in a short time.

### Boules Championship Final - Terry Pascoe

On Good Friday afternoon Angela and David Carter played Karen and Terry Pascoes on the Dursley War Memorial and Recreation Field. It was a beautiful sunny day amidst a string of wet and windy offerings which helped make the occasion enjoyable for us all.



The competition has been admirably organised in his own style throughout the previous year by Luke Wilson. Despite a number of close and challenging encounters both teams had yet to lose a match, so we started out full of hope and expectation.

It quickly became clear that the Carters were the more determined competitors and they took the first set easily 13-4.. The Pascoes dug in to pose a true test but a lucky final boule on the deciding end sealed their fate. They were to leave the area as runners-up! How David found that lucky shot, which nestled between Terry's two touching balls of steel remains a mystery, but it was a master stroke and both he and Angela were worthy Champions at the close of play.



All was gently soothed in The Old Spot afterwards and we reflected on a truly fun u3a event which gave so many of us such enjoyment throughout the summer months. Our thanks to Luke for making it work in such a friendly and relaxed way and to all who took part and became such good friends afterwards. We wish you all well for next season but you will have to be good to beat the Carter Family!

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## Coming Up

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Date	Group	Event
Fri 5 May all day	Historic Places	Witley Court and Gardens Details from Carol Tipper
Mon 15 May 10.30	Intermediate French	Dursley Methodist Church Wesley Room
Thurs 18 May 10.30	Branch Meeting	Dursley Methodist Church Talk 'The Novels of Jane Austin' by Keith Hooper
Fri 2 June all day	Historic Places	Avoncroft Village, Bromsgrove Details from Carol Tipper
Tues 6 June all day	Garden Visits	David Austen Roses Fully Booked
Thurs 16 June 10.00	Branch Meeting	Dursley Methodist Church Annual General Meeting followed by talk 'Blasts from the Past' by Bob Sinfield
Fri 23 June all day	Garden Visits	Blenheim Palace Flower Show Details from Danielle Ellis
Fri 7 July All Day	Historic Places	Bowood House and Gardens Details from Carol Tipper
Thurs 20 July 10.30	Branch Meeting	Dursley Methodist Church Talk "The Bayeux Tapestry" by Andrew Bluett
Fri 4 August all day	Historic Places	Oakham Treasures Details from Carol Tipper
Thur 10 August 10.30	Branch Meeting	Dursley Methodist Church Talk "Deaf Awareness" by Vanessa Sprague
Fri 1 Sept all day	Historic Places	Hartlebury Castle, Worcestershire Details from Carol Tipper

**Full details of these events, and many more to come, as well as email links to group leaders or committee members, are available on our website**

[u3asites.org.uk/cam-dursley/home](http://u3asites.org.uk/cam-dursley/home)

**where you will also find links to read or download previous editions of the Bulletin**

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**ALL CONTRIBUTIONS MAY BE EDITED FOR PUBLICATION.**