

Cheddar Valley **News**

u3a

Dec 2022 / Jan 2023

Volume 28 Issue 6

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www.u3a.org.uk



<https://u3asites.org.uk/cheddar-valley>

Facebook Page: @cheddarvalleyu3a



Wendy Booth-Boyd and the Patchwork Group being presented with
a brochure of the National U3A 40th Anniversary Quilt
by Marion Clements and Christine Barker

Thanks to Sue Coates and Chris Barker for the photograph.



Chairmans' Chat

The countdown to Christmas is now well under way, and amid all the worries about inflation, rising fuel prices and other bad news we can report that Cheddar Valley U3A continues to flourish. More than 50 new members have joined since we resumed normal activities, and the



organisation still represents great value for money, with the joining fee pegged at £10 a year.

Our Facebook page is expanding to join up with other local groups, and is seen by an ever-widening group of people. A link to the page is at <https://www.facebook.com/Cheddar-Valley-u3a-394545867399119>, or search for @cheddarvalleyu3a on Facebook.

We are also reinstating our contact point at Cheddar Library. This was a regular feature in the past, and came to an end when the world shut down due to Covid. If you want any information about our local U3A a committee member will be upstairs at Cheddar Library every Monday morning from 10.30 am till 12 noon. They will have application forms to join, can receive subscriptions when they fall due (not until next April), and can answer any queries you may have about the local branch.

We have a sparkling group of speakers lined up for our entertainment in the New Year. Auctioneer Rachael Catherine Boothroyd will be sharing her knowledge of jewellery and gems in January, and in February Jo Richardson, in a talk titled *Don't Look Up*, will tell us about the sun and the amazing properties that our nearest star possesses. The talk will be illustrated with fantastic astrophotography images taken by her husband Pete. Non-members of U3A are welcome to attend Speaker Meetings, which are advertised quite widely in the community. We will be resuming our old practice of recording people who attend those meetings, so we can gauge the level of interest of our speakers to people who aren't already members.

We will be hosting additional Coffee Mornings early in 2023 aimed specifically at new members, to explain the aims and workings of the U3A and our branch's place in the wider national organisation. Invitations with details of dates and venues will be sent out in January 2023.

A reminder that we will be looking for a new secretary and a newsletter editor from next May, when the present office-holders are stepping down. We only hold six committee meetings a year, and there are six editions of the newsletter each year. Help and guidance will be given to anyone interested in joining the team. Do contact any member of the committee listed at the back of this document for further information.

In the meantime we wish all of you the compliments of the season, and pray for a Happy and Peaceful New Year.

Helen Batt and Christine Barker

Joint Chair CVU3A

Speaker Meetings Refreshment Rota

We have a rota system of groups to serve tea, coffee and biscuits and afterwards, clear cups etc. and wash up.



Thursday 1st December 2022 at 1.30 pm

Boules Group

Thursday 5th January 2023 at 2.00 pm

Scrabble Group

Thursday 2nd February 2023 at 2.00 pm

Scottish Dancing
Group

Monthly Meetings with Speakers

A programme of varied, informative and enjoyable talks is arranged from September to June. The meetings are held on the first Thursday afternoons of most months, usually at Cheddar Village Hall, but check the venue for each talk in the newsletter. Meetings start at 2.00 pm when tea and coffee will be served, followed by the talk, which will begin at 2.30 pm. There is no charge and visitors and guests are welcome.

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### **Thursday 1st December at Cheddar Village Hall**

#### **Christmas Revue**

Commences at **2.00 pm** (Doors open at 1.30 pm)

**\*\*\* Admission is £2.00 by ticket only. \*\*\***

(These were available at Coffee Mornings and Speaker Meetings.)

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Thursday 5th January at 2.00 pm for 2.30 pm at Cheddar Village Hall

"A Brief History of Gemstones"

Rachael Boothroyd DIA GD

In this talk Rachael will tell us about the formation of gemstones and their cultural importance with a short introduction to gemstone testing and identification. Rachael says, "I have worked in the jewellery industry since leaving school, and in auction houses for the last seven of those years. Gemstones are my passion, I love the intricacies and variety of them. The history of them is also fascinating, even the mistakes we have made about them along the way! As well as being a jewellery specialist I am also a general valuer with a particular interest in textiles; and an auctioneer."

**Thursday 2nd February at 2.00 pm for 2.30 pm
at Cheddar Village Hall**

"Don't look up"

Jo Richardson

In this talk Jo Richardson will take you into the centre of the Sun and highlight the amazing properties that our nearest star possesses. We will investigate how it came to be, how its immense gravitational field controls all around it, some of its mysteries and what will happen to it (and us!) when it reaches its eventual demise. The talk will conclude with some fantastic astrophotography images of the Sun taken by Pete Richardson from right here in Somerset.

Jo Richardson is the owner and founder of the South West based company "Space Detectives," which has for ten years been inspiring children and adults alike in Space Science and Exploration. Jo is a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society as well as the designated Astronomer for Exmoor National Park's Dark Skies Reserve. In addition to this Jo works on contract for Spaceport Cornwall and the European Space Education Resource Office as one of the current six UK Ambassadors. She lives at her home observatory in Somerset with her internationally acclaimed astrophotographer husband Pete.

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**Thursday 2nd March at 2.00 pm for 2.30 pm  
at Cheddar Village Hall**

**Musical Memories**

**James Vincent**

James Vincent provided this description of his background and experience and how he will provide an afternoon of Musical Memories:

"I started as a Blue Coat in a holiday camp entertaining the holiday makers with games during the day and dancing of an evening. Then I turned professional, as a Vocal Organist, which took me onto Cruises

visiting the Canaries and Spain, and I played in Bavaria at skiing resorts, also for summer seasons in many holiday camps including hotels on Jersey and in Blackpool. I came to Weston in 1980 and moved from playing the organ to the keyboard. Then I played all over the south west including at the Winter Gardens in Weston. I now run my own dance evening in Henton on a Friday and play at many dance clubs. I enjoy meeting different groups and telling a few stories as well as playing some good old standards."

## **Welcome**

|                   |                 |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| Jennifer Body     | Penny Hambly    |
| Nikki Bowkett     | Sally Heslop    |
| Elizabeth Branch  | Jayne Hunter    |
| Caroline Butcher  | Susan Jackson   |
| Susan Coates      | Nora Mallett    |
| Peter Collins     | Angela Miller   |
| Janet Coombs      | Jeff Monks      |
| June Douce        | Pat Prangnell   |
| Margaret Evans    | Anne Roper      |
| Patricia Fleet    | David Taylor    |
| Lyn Froud         | Rebecca Taylor  |
| Pamela Gasgoine   | Marie Williams  |
| Robin Gray        | Pamela Williams |
| Christopher Green | Eileen Wotton   |
| Judith Gwyer      |                 |

**We wish all these new members  
a very warm welcome to our U3A**

## Membership News

After the drop in numbers during the course of lockdown and the ensuing recovery, membership now continues to grow apace with the 500th member joining last month. Since the last newsletter we have welcomed 29 new members.

Information about our U3A is passed on via friends and relatives, neighbours, publicity in local magazines, newsletters, or in Cheddar Library.

The meeting point for potential new members to learn more about our U3A is being reinstated in Cheddar Library, upstairs, on a Monday morning between 10.30 am and 12.00 noon. It gives the opportunity to meet potential members, talk to them and give information about our U3A, and invite them to join there and then if they wish to. (There is usually a game of Rummikub going on as well.)

We are looking for one or two members to join the rota to greet potential members at this session. U3A Information packs to hand out will be given to you. The library staff are very good at "sending new people upstairs". If you are interested, please contact either of the joint temporary Membership Secretaries:

**Margaret Farnie** or **Margaret Woodliffe** or chat to us at the Coffee Mornings or Speaker Meetings.

### ***PLEASE NOTE:***

There is a new email address for membership matters:

**membership@cheddarvalleyu3a.org.uk**

Any enquiries to this email will be redirected to whoever is handling membership enquiries at the time.

## Coffee Mornings

Our **November** Coffee Morning and Craft Fayre was a great success, attended by at least 70 persons. Thanks go to individual members and groups who provided us with such a variety of choice, and especially to Jan Hillman for organising the event so efficiently.

The **December** Coffee Morning will see the welcome return of our Mystery Raffle and the Singing for Pleasure Group, who will entertain us with a few Christmas songs and a carol.

Here's wishing you all a Very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

**Barry Coppard**      Coffee Morning Co-ordinator







## Craft Fayre Creativity

*Thanks to Christine Barker  
for the photographs.*



## **Craft Fayre**

Just to say a big thank you to all stall holders and our members for supporting the Craft Fayre. What a plethora of talent we have within our U3A!

**Jan Hillman**



Sandra Hale ran a stall raising funds directly for Macmillan Cancer Support Charity, and Barbara Wilkins baked some delicious cakes to sell for the same charity.

## Poetry in Print

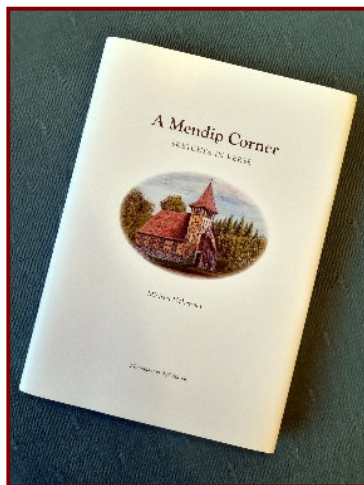
For those of you who remember our series of U3A Poetry YouTube videos produced in lockdown (YouTube link to Session 2 part 1 <https://youtu.be/Cuqe-UloLOM>), you might remember the poem *Music of the Trees* written by Mike McLennan.

Mike has now published a beautiful hard backed illustrated book of his poems called *A Mendip Corner - Sketches in Verse*. It is based on the Mendip area around Rickford and Burrington, and several signed copies were sold at our Craft Fayre.

Copies of the book can be obtained directly from Mike tel or email.

They can also be obtained from New Manor Farm Shop, Bishop Sutton and Hartley's Kitchen, Binegar.

All proceeds will be donated to the Children's Hospice South West and Holy Trinity Church, Burrington.



## Geoff Farnie

Mike McLennan  
signing his new book  
at our Craft Fayre

*Thanks to Geoff Farnie  
for the photographs*



## *Dates for Your Diary*

Thursday December 1st - Christmas Revue (ticketed event) at Cheddar Village Hall, 2.00pm to 4.00pm. (doors open 1.30pm).

Thursday December 15th - Coffee Morning at Cheddar Village Hall from 10.00 am to 11.30 am.

Thursday January 5th - Speaker Meeting at Cheddar Village Hall, 2.00 pm for 2.30 pm See page 4.

Thursday January 19th - Coffee Morning at Cheddar Village Hall from 10.00 am to 11.30 am.

Thursday February 2nd - Speaker Meeting at Cheddar Village Hall, 2.00 pm for 2.30 pm. See page 5.

Saturday February 11th - Rock Band Valentines Concert.  
Further details on page 13.

Thursday February 16th - Coffee Morning at Cheddar Village Hall from 10.00 am to 11.30 am

## **Submission of material for our next issue**

Submissions for the February 2023 / March 2023 edition should be sent to the Newsletter Editor:

**Sue Bathe,**

**cheddar.u3anews@yahoo.co.uk**

**DEADLINE: Friday 13th January 2023**

***PLEASE read the further information on page 50.***



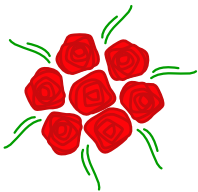
U3A ROCK BAND



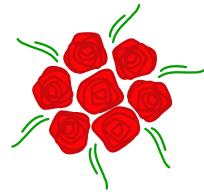
# Valentine Concert

Cheddar Village Hall

Saturday 11th February 2023



Starting at 7.30pm



Entry by Ticket

(Tickets are available at Coffee Mornings,  
Speaker Meetings & from some Group Leaders)

Bring your own refreshment

A voluntary exit collection will be made  
in aid of the Cheddar Lions

## **Group Liaison**

So here we are fast approaching the Festive Season and a bright New Year 2023. It seems only a few weeks ago that we held our Group Leaders Thank You Lunch and it was lovely to see so many of the Leaders come together to chat, exchange ideas and generally air any issues. We had a delicious lunch and then commenced our introduction and presentation. I was delighted that there didn't seem to be any problems with the Groups and would just like to thank all those who completed the Questionnaire, and returned their Data Protection Forms and Expense Returns for the Treasurer over the autumn period – a busy time in our calendar I know regarding our U3A administration.

### **Singing for Pleasure:**

There are still places available in this lovely friendly Group, with bookings this year to sing “Carols at Christmas” in the U3A Revue on the 1st December and also at the next Coffee Morning on the 15th December. This is not a formal group but great fun, singing songs that we all know and love. NO AUDITIONS NECESSARY! Please contact either myself or Barbara Herring detailed in the Timetable section.

### **New Dining Club:**

We are still hoping that members will come forward to sign up to this new Group in 2023. Such a great idea to socialise in a “yummy food and drink” setting i.e. local pubs, eateries and restaurants – it gets my vote! Someone else can do the cooking and washing up. The only requirement is that bookings are done on a rota basis which would be fair to everyone.

### **Songwriting:**

An idea for a new Group for those who wish to collaborate to write original songs.

The aim and approach is for lyricists and musicians to engage in performing and producing songs the Group have written. It is not a “discussion-type” Group but the accent is on action.

**Don't forget if you wish to try something new there are still vacancies in most of the Groups in our U3A – not forgetting if you have a cracking idea for leading a new Group please get in touch and between us we shall “cook something up”.**

You can always contact me direct (see the back of the Newsletter) on any of the above subjects.

***Finally I would like to wish all our members a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy Healthy New Year 2023.***

**Lynne Hamlyn**    Group Liaison Officer

Email:

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Day Trippers' Group

Day Trippers Outing to Windsor

On Wednesday 12th October on a fine autumn morning 34 U3A members set off for a day out in Windsor. We had a pleasant drive up, thanks to Martin the Baker Dolphin driver, with just a quick stop at a service station, arriving in Windsor at 12.30 – just in time to grab some lunch before setting off to see the sights.

There were lovely walks to be had and it was very poignant to be on the Long Walk looking towards the Castle and being able to visualise the car carrying the coffin of our Queen on its way to St George's Chapel. Another walk took us towards Eton, and here many young men in the distinctive Eton uniform were walking around after lessons had finished.

A very large population of swans could be seen on the River Thames, congregating where people were feeding them with bags of food available from the local shops. The swans were obviously used to this happening and knew just where to go.

Everyone agreed it was a very successful day, and it only rained when we were on the coach coming home, stopping again when it was time for us to disembark and make our way home.



Thank you to Sylvia Hall for these photographs of Windsor

By the time this magazine is printed we will hopefully have had a trip to Exeter on 23rd November.

The committee are considering trips for 2023 and have provisionally discussed Stratford-upon-Avon in April, Plymouth in June and Salisbury in November. Should anyone have any ideas of destinations they would particularly be interested in visiting, please contact one of the committee.

Details of the Residential Holiday to Kent in May 2023 are included in the magazine on pages 17 and 18.

On behalf of the Day Trippers Committee we would like to thank everyone who has supported us during the year, and hope you will continue to join our trips in the future.

We wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Sylvia Hall for the Day Trippers Committee

Cheddar U3A

Kent



Sunday 14th May 2023 / 5 days

HOLIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

Lovely hotel in Canterbury

Visit to Chatham Dockyard

Visit to Leeds Castle

Visit to Chartwell*

CHOSEN HOTEL

Set within landscaped gardens around 10-15 minutes' walk from Canterbury city centre, the **Best Western Abbots Barton Hotel** dates back to 1830. The



53 bedrooms are all unique in shape, size and décor, but all are equipped with a TV, hairdryer and tea/coffee making facilities. The restaurant serves modern British cuisine using fresh, seasonal ingredients sourced locally. The bar area has many original features including beautiful gothic windows while the adjoining Garden Room and Library offer comfortable surroundings to enjoy a relaxing drink. There is also a pleasant garden terrace. Porterage is included.

The hotel offers a 3 menu with 3 choices per course with choices made at dinner with tea/coffee and a full breakfast with hot and cold dishes.

Provisional Itinerary

Sunday – Travel to Canterbury via Windsor for lunch and free time

Monday - Chatham Dockyard

The Dockyard was once the country's largest and most important industrial site. Today its surviving Slips, big enough to protect mighty warships; and magnificent Mast Houses, long enough to store ships masts as tall as 90ft, mean there is no shortage of space and fresh air around our 80-acre heritage estate.

Tuesday – Visit to Faversham in the morning followed by free time in Canterbury

Wednesday – Visit to Leeds Castle. Known by some to be "The loveliest Castle in the World" 5 miles southeast of Maidstone. It is built on islands in a lake formed by the River Len to the east of the village of Leeds. A castle has existed on the site since 1119,

Thursday – Return Home via Chartwell (Former Home of Churchill)
(*National Trust entrance payable if non-member) on the way home.

Price

£565

Single Room supplement £75 for the duration.



Issued 9/6/2022

OPPORTUNITIES TO HELP CHEDDAR VALLEY U3A

At the next AGM the current Secretary and Newsletter Editor will relinquish their posts, so we are seeking volunteers to replace them. The Secretary is a committee post, while the Newsletter Editor has a non-committee role, but usually attends Committee Meetings.

Details of the Newsletter Editor were printed in the previous newsletter (Oct/Nov 2022), and below is information about the Secretary's role.

CVU3A SECRETARY JOB DESCRIPTION

- Book venues for Coffee Mornings, Speaker Meetings, AGM and Committee Meetings
- Every two months - Prepare the Agenda and take Minutes at the Committee Meetings - most Committee members write a report prior to the meeting so it's mostly amending these according to what is agreed at the meeting
- Annually give notice in the Newsletter of the AGM, prepare the Agenda and take the Minutes
- Prepare and keep completed Nomination forms for the Committee and Eligibility to be a Trustee
- Send each Trustee a current Constitution and Code of Conduct
- Annually download the Insurance certificate arranged by the Third Age Trust
- Annually complete the Annual Return received from the Third Age Trust
- Distribute to the Committee documents received from the Third Age Trust
- Distribute to the Committee any local items of relevance
- Requirements: Ability to type, laptop or similar

EDITOR NEEDED

The editor of this newsletter will be stepping down after seven years at our AGM next May, and the U3A committee is looking for someone to take the job on.

This newsletter comes out six times a year, and is written by the members - mainly group leaders, who contribute brief articles and often photographs to keep other members informed of the activities on offer.

The editor's job is to pull the pieces together, get the assembled document proofread (checked for errors - there are volunteers who do that), then email the finished newsletter to the Membership Secretary and to the printers in Wells. The hard copies have always been collected from Wells by the editor, but any committee member would collect them if necessary.

The job calls for some computer literacy, but full training in desk-top publishing will be given by the current editor, Sue Bathe, in Cheddar.

If we are unable to find a replacement in time, it is likely that this publication will have to reduce to one or two pages of A4 paper, to be collected at Coffee Mornings!

If you think you'd like to have a closer look at what the job entails, please contact any member of the committee. Full contact details are on the last page of this newsletter.

Helen Batt

National Acclaim for CVU3A Patchwork Group

The photo on the front cover shows Marion Clements and Christine Barker presenting Wendy Booth-Boyd with the brochure for the National U3A 40th Anniversary Patchwork Quilt. Forty patchwork squares were completed by U3A members from all over the UK and one of the chosen squares was made by Wendy. Our congratulations go to her for this honour.

Marion Clements



The National U3A 40th Anniversary Quilt

The path to this started in June 2021 when a competition was announced to make a 10" square to be included in the National U3A 40th Anniversary Quilt. The theme was **Positive Ageing** through the U3A strapline "**Learn Laugh Live**". From the many squares submitted 40 were to be chosen to be assembled into the Quilt.

By December 2021 the CVU3A Patchwork Group had prepared and sent a patchwork and appliqué block, shown here. At the time Wendy Booth-Boyd, Leader of the Patchwork Group wrote:

The photograph shows the 10"x10" patchwork and appliqué block that has been entered into the 40th anniversary quilt competition - representing the Cheddar Valley U3A group.



The entry form was sombre and technical and there were lots of rules but we fulfilled them all and were glad to submit our entry.

We had to give the quilt block a title so, it's called:
"Patchwork and the U3A bring us together".

There was a blurb to write, to explain what the block represented (in less than 200 words) - the rules stated it had to incorporate the idea of Positive Ageing and the "meaning" of the U3A strapline of "Learn Laugh Live" - so, we said (with a bit of poetic licence!):

"The wall-hanging quilt at the centre of the appliquéd photo was made by all the members of the Cheddar Valley Patchwork Group during 2019. The quilt depicts the wide variety of groups available in the Cheddar Valley U3A.

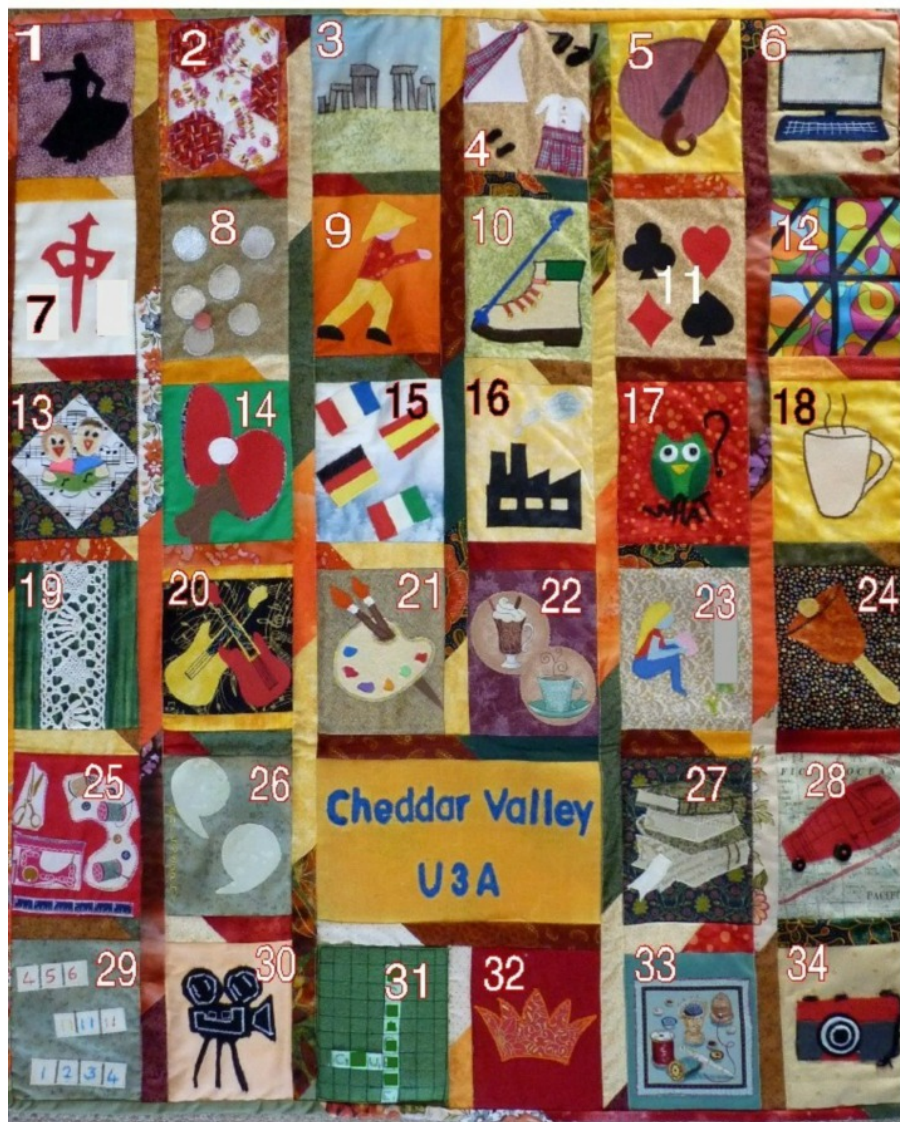
The photo-collage at the centre of the block shows the wall hanging surrounded by our group members. It is "sublimation" printed on poly-cotton. The collage is made up of happy, "youthful", action shots of our group members, at our first post-Covid meeting this summer. It encapsulates us as a patchwork of people with diverse interests and lives being brought together by the U3A to learn, laugh and live, in equal measure.

The wide array of fabric styles in the "frame" shows off our diversity and differences, and yet it is made of similar sized, two and a half inch squares from our joint stashes; the patchwork is holding us altogether as a group. It is patchwork that brings us all together to enjoy our shared passion and pastime."

By February 2022 Wendy was able to announce that, to their delight, their group's block was one of the 40 to be chosen, in the national competition, to be part of the 40th Anniversary quilt.

In August Wendy told us that the grand unveiling of the quilt was in The Whitworth Art Gallery in Manchester in June. "All the blocks look wonderful together with the unifying sashing and borders. It looks great as a representation of U3A endeavours across the country. Our block is on the second row from the top, second from the right. The most colourful of them all!?"

On the next page is a reminder of the wall hanging from 2019. How good are your memories from 3 years ago? On page 25 I have repeated the Quiz to identify the various Interest Groups featured on the wall hanging. (Editor)



The wall-hanging quilt made by all the members of the Cheddar Valley Patchwork Group during 2019. The quilt depicts the wide variety of groups available in the Cheddar Valley U3A.

Thanks to Wendy Booth-Boyd for the photographs

U3A Quilt Quiz

Can you work out which activity is represented by each of the squares in this quilt made by the Patchwork Group started just before lockdown? Not all groups are individually identified as some are put together under one activity, and some may be in more than once, to fill a space!

The answers are on page 44.

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. | 18. |
| 2. | 19. |
| 3. | 20. |
| 4. | 21. |
| 5. | 22. |
| 6. | 23. |
| 7. | 24. |
| 8. | 25. |
| 9. | 26. |
| 10. | 27. |
| 11. | 28. |
| 12. | 29. |
| 13. | 30. |
| 14. | 31. |
| 15. | 32. |
| 16. | 33. |
| 17. | 34. |

Medical Detection Dogs

The speaker, Joan Harrington, arrived with a small dog which she quickly explained was her own pet, not a Medical Detection Dog.

The charity Medical Detection Dogs has its headquarters in Milton Keynes. Medical detection dogs are able to recognise the changes in the odour of a person when different medical conditions are present, such as cancer, Parkinson's Disease, malaria and bacterial infection. For over 20 years dogs have been trained to sniff out disease, almost starting by accident when a friend's dog sniffing at a patch on the leg of Dr Claire Guest, founder and CEO, led to a diagnosis of melanoma at an early stage. Another pet dog alerted its owner to breast cancer, also at a sufficiently early stage to be treated successfully. Dogs are trained to recognise particular odours in urine samples or on clothing, and to indicate which sample has a positive smell, which is much less invasive than biopsy sampling.



Dogs are donated by or purchased from breeders of assistance or guide dogs, or are rescue dogs, or even pet dogs who show an aptitude for the job with their owners. They need to be good tempered and people orientated. It takes between twelve months and two years to train a detection dog at the charity headquarters. During this time they stay with volunteers, and when working the dogs are at the laboratory during the day but have evenings "at home" being normal pets.

Medical Alert Assistance Dogs are also trained by the charity, and live full time with their "patients". The dog is able to smell changes in body odour which indicate a medical emergency is about to happen, and give the person a warning. The most common conditions the dog is trained to recognise are diabetes, Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome (Pots), Addison's Disease, severe allergies, other endocrine disorders and episodes of sudden health deterioration. Pots is an uncommon

disorder where the person suddenly collapses and loses consciousness, without warning, which is obviously very limiting. The dog can give sufficient warning of an event to allow the person to lie down, instead of falling wherever they may be. This can enable someone affected to live an independent life rather than relying on a carer.

Dogs have a sense of smell far in excess of what humans have, and are trained to recognise the smell of a particular disease in urine samples or clothing. For example malaria can be detected in socks worn by children in Africa and sent to Britain for sampling. There were plenty of fascinating facts and figures in Joan Harrington's talk, and videos of people with alert dogs talking about the effect the dog has had on their life.

There were items on sale to raise funds, and with donations and her fee, Joan told us later that her visit to CVU3A had raised £170.22 in total, for which the charity is very grateful.

Chris Barker

COMMUNITY NEWS

This Community News section of the Newsletter includes short specific items of local interest or about people and places which are indirectly linked to the Cheddar Valley U3A.

Cheddar Folk Banners

Artists Liz Bath and Ness Robinson collaborate on community arts projects and workshops as InkJam. InkJam has been commissioned by Seed Sedgemoor to deliver the "Cheddar Folk Banners" project to the community of Cheddar. The project will be collecting and celebrating Cheddar's legends and stories at our Cheddar Folk Tales drop in coffee mornings, held at the Arts Quarter in Cheddar, giving the opportunity to gather in a warm space while sharing local memories and myths.

These stories will then be shared and illustrated by the Children of Cheddar and the community. The illustrations will then be developed into Print and Stitch, during ten free open access workshops where the community will collaboratively produce a series of flag banners that will be exhibited in and around the village.

Please come along to one of our free coffee mornings, every Monday from 10.30 am to 12 noon, starting on the 21st November 2022 at The Arts Quarter, Cheddar. You can follow the project on Facebook InkJam20 and join the Cheddar Folk Banners group. You can also email us at .

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### **Prickles Charity**

The Prickles Hedgehog Rescue Charity needs old newspapers again. Please do not leave any at the charity shop but take them to 3A Wessex Court, Wessex Business Park, Cheddar, BS23EJ.

Also the Prickles Charity Shop in Cheddar is asking for donations (no electricals) and limiting donations to two bags or boxes per person at a time.

**Jan Hillman**



*Come and Sing  
with*

# *Cheddar Male Choir*

*Fun, company, exercise, and above all*

# *SINGING*

*(some of us go to the pub afterwards)*

*We meet at 7.30 pm, every Tuesday, in Draycott Memorial,  
beginners welcome, even if you just want to watch for a start.*

*07888 717536 or [cheddarmvchoir.co.uk](http://cheddarmvchoir.co.uk)*

## **Cheddar Warm Space**

Cheddar Warm Space is available at Hannah More Cottage in Lower North Street, Cheddar, every Tuesday morning throughout the winter from 10 am to 12 noon. The amazing volunteers from Cheddar Vale Lions Club and Cheddar Valley Churches will be on hand with a hot drink and a biscuit, courtesy of Tesco Express, Cheddar.

If you are in need of somewhere to get warm, stay warm, enjoy a little company and some refreshments, please come along.

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Cheddar Festive Night Friday 2nd December

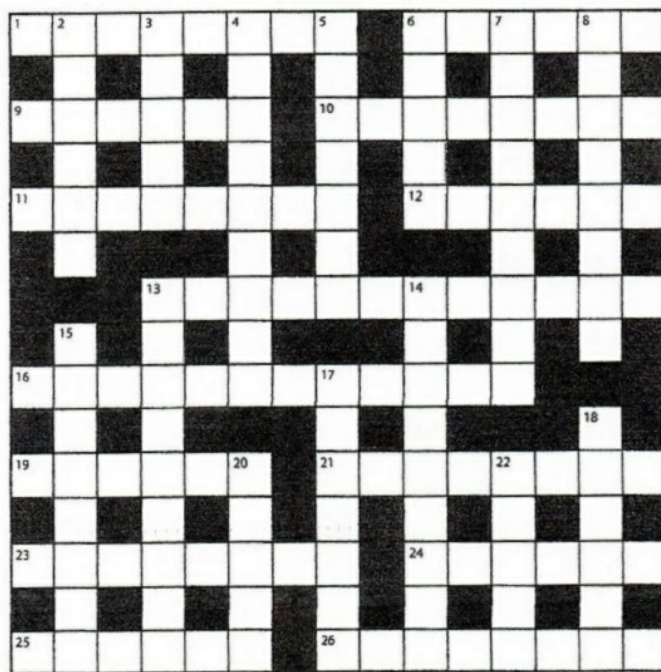
The U3A Rock Band are performing Christmas songs from 7.30 pm for approximately half an hour at Cheddar Methodist Church in Cliff Street. Please come and support us and sing along.

There is other entertainment from 6.00 pm, and mince pies and non-alcoholic punch will be served.

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## **Tree of Life**

Cheddar Vale Lions are holding their Annual Service on Wednesday 7th December at 5.00 pm outside the Bath Arms to remember past loved ones. If you want a form to put the name of your loved one on the tree and give a donation telephone .



## ACROSS

1. Rough (8)
6. Pressure (6)
9. Electronic device (6)
10. Mainstay (8)
11. Objections (8)
12. Boxlike (6)
13. Ah! This red bra (anag) (12)
16. A real tin vest (anag) (12)
19. Rejections (6)
21. Sprays (8)
23. Germs (8)
24. Equipped (6)
25. Defeated (6)
26. Absorbed (8)

## DOWN

2. Country (6)
3. Reference book type (5)
4. Target (5 & 4)
5. Takes on (7)
6. Relating to sound (5)
7. Large liquid containers (9)
8. Commence (8)
13. Medical device (9)
14. Stunning (9)
15. Estrange (8)
17. Container for liquid (7)
18. Liquid hydrocarbon (6)
20. Alarm (5)
22. Blasts (5)

*Thanks to Barry Ede for creating  
this crossword.*

Solution is on page 45.

## Group News

*This section of the Newsletter brings you news of what our various groups have been doing recently. Not every group has an entry in every newsletter, but all established groups and group leaders are shown in the tables on pages 46 to 49.*

### Art Group

Now that we have moved into the cooler months we are back in the Scout Hut in Wedmore. This has plenty of space for cars outside and our various tables inside. We usually have a still life subject but some people bring their own ideas to work on and share. It is always interesting to see new equipment and ideas and hearing what our fellow artists think of them is more useful than an advertisement!

We are already thinking of where we might go when the warmer weather returns in 2023.

For our November meeting we were entertained by two magnificent cock pheasants parading on the grass in the sunshine outside. In spite of encouragement by Geoff we were not quick enough to sketch them and they did not stay to pose for us, so cameras were useful.

We share ideas and results but do not have a teacher. There is plenty of space for anyone who would like to join us once a month. Please contact Linda Mogford for more information.

**Linda Mogford**

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Classic Films Group

At our November meeting we watched *Rome: Open City*, a film made in 1945 which established Roberto Rossellini's reputation as a director. Set in Rome in 1944 when the country was subject to German occupation, aided by Italian fascists, the film dealt with the many ways in which war impacts on the lives of ordinary people going about their everyday activities. It was engrossing, but not uplifting. The universal feeling in the room after the film ended was that humanity has learned nothing from its experience of war, and that the film could have been set in Ukraine in the

present day.

On Monday 5th December we will be watching *Anatomy of a Murder*, a 1959 Otto Preminger courtroom drama which won Oscars for Best Screenplay and best Actor (for James Stewart). We meet at 2.00 pm in Hannah More Cottage, North Street, Cheddar. All U3A members are welcome to attend.

Helen Batt

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## **Great Lives Group**

The fourth Tuesday of the month wouldn't be the same without our regular Great Lives Group meeting. We get together in Cheddar Village Hall to discuss one of the many "Great Lives" who have featured on the Radio Four series. And we don't always agree with the programme's celebrity who made the proposal. For instance, whilst in September we couldn't help but be impressed by Benjamin Franklin, who was clearly a leading thinker, businessman, politician and socialist of his time, the same couldn't be said of Jessica Mitford who, whilst she undoubtedly had a social conscience and was a talented investigative journalist, failed to make the cut as far as we were concerned. That said, we have some difficulty deciding what makes someone a "Great Life" but we enjoy lively discussion whoever we're talking about.

Why not join us at our next meeting on 24th January when we will be discussing Robert "Bobby" Kennedy. You can listen to the programme here: [https:// www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00h6zs7](https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00h6zs7) or ring me for more information.

**John Morgan**

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History Group Report

We have begun our consideration of the 1950s decade and have had some lively discussions in our meetings. We began by summarising key events of the decade, such as the Festival of Britain, and gave a resume of the Prime Ministers. We then considered home life which included a discussion of housework (I think all of us are glad of our labour-saving

devices in the 21st century!). An interesting topic was that of food, meals of the time (a mention of spam fritters and tripe!) and shopping habits before the advent of supermarkets.

In December we hope to look at Christmas in the 1950s and Holidays and Festivals in general.

We are pleased to welcome two new members to the group which gives us a total of 13 to date.

Heather Davey

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## **Patchwork Group**

After a short summer break, we have reconvened with renewed sewing energy and two (soon to be three) new members in the group.

So that we can all practise new skills and revisit and refine old ones, we've undertaken to make a "black and white with a splash of colour" quilt, as a group. This will, when completed, be donated to the Project Linus charity. We reckon it might be a year in the making!



Each month we make one particular block using our collections of black and white fabrics but each of us inserts something of our own colour into our blocks as we sew. As you can see in this photograph October's blocks look stunning together. And there are plenty of perfect points as a result of shared tips and hints along the way. All from the same pattern and same instructions, but each one so different too.

*Thanks to Wendy Booth-Boyd  
for the photograph.*

We'll have a short break from the quilt whilst we make Christmas decorations in November and sew together and party in December, where we'll also swap our Secret Santa needle cases. January we'll start the quilt afresh with absolutely accurate curves and paper piecing. We can't wait!

## **Wendy Booth-Boyd**

On the front cover is the photograph of Wendy Booth-Boyd and the Patchwork Group being presented with a brochure of the National U3A 40th Anniversary Quilt by Marion Clements and Christine Barker.

The evolution of the winning block is described on pages 21 to 23.

## **Photography Group**

Meetings are more or less back to normal without Zoom. Subjects running at the moment include "autumn", "food and drink", and "juxtaposition", with which several members have had great fun. We all seem to have been very busy recently, with many of us at last being able to take holidays and see friends, so we also included "anything" as a subject.

We have also enjoyed being able to view PowerPoint talks given by presenters from Mill Hill U3A on Youtube. This has been a real stimulus to further our photographic knowledge and see what members of their group are producing. Without Covid this would not have happened. Our next meeting will even include a social lunch at the local Farm Café.

The date for the December meeting is yet to be decided.

New members, either experienced or novice photographers, are welcome, using whatever method they have to take images.

For more information, please contact **Liz Fosbury**.

Tel: or email:



Examples of “Juxtaposition” photographed by Gill Mullinar.

This subject was suggested by Clive Hall.



An atmospheric autumn shot of mist over the Somerset Levels  
by Lynda Bolton.

## Poetry Group

Our last two themes for 2022 were Home and Birds. Included in our selection of poems was *Home* by Warsan Shire, a Somalian. This was about why refugees leave their home country. It was quite a contrast to the other poems we read.

We were spoilt for choice with the subject of Birds. John Clare is possibly the most prolific writer of bird poems and his descriptions of bird eggs are so detailed. *The Windhover* by Gerard Manley Hopkins is very powerful. Very different to all the other poems we read was *Sympathy* by Paul Lawrence Dunbar. We also read *Caged Bird* by Maya Angelou who was inspired by the poem *Sympathy* to name her autobiography *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*.

**Glenys Runciman**

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Scottish Dancing

We continue to meet weekly at Axbridge Town Hall every Wednesday from 9.30 am to 11.30 am. With 20 names on our register we usually have around 15 people dancing each week. Among our current members we have many who were complete beginners when they joined the group including one who started about a year ago and one who only came along in September. So the message to all of you is “it’s never too late”.

If you want to see what we get up to, you will be very welcome, even if you subsequently decide it’s not for you. Scottish Dancing sharpens the mind exercises the body, and keeps you warm. At £2 a week, it’s cheaper than warming your house (possibly). If you want to know more ring John. Not sure what I’m talking about? Why not check out this video: <https://youtu.be/0dodM7GlnhQ>

John Morgan

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## Stained Glass

The group has now held at least three meetings in its new venue in the Studio in The Arts Quarter, Cheddar. It is proving to be a good change. There is ample space, with plenty of sockets and high tables and stools

to work at. It means we can either stand or sit according to what we are working on and we don't end up with stiff necks!

It also means we have space for a new member or two.

**Margaret Farnie**

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Original Walking Group Programme

Thursday 8th December

Leader: Martin. Starting Point: The Cross, Westbury-sub-Mendip. Grid ref: 500488. Time: 10.30 am. For further details contact Martin.

Please note this will be our Christmas Walk followed by lunch at the Westbury Inn, Westbury-sub-Mendip.

No walk over Christmas period

Tuesday 3rd January 2023

Leader: Martin. Starting Point: Oakhill Sports Ground car park top of Zion Hill – BA3 5AN. Grid ref: 636476. Time: 1.30 pm. For further details contact Martin.

Thursday 19th January

Leaders: Alan and Brenda. Starting Point: Parking bottom of Burrington Combe BS40 7AT B3134. Time: 1.30 pm. Grid Ref: 476590. Circular walk about 5 miles with hill. For further details contact Alan or Brenda.

Thursday 2nd February

Leaders: John and Karen. Starting Point: Winscombe Recreation Ground free car park (BS25 1AP). Time: 1.30 pm. Grid ref: 421566. Walk 4 to 5 miles around Winscombe and adapted to conditions on the day. For further details contact John or Karen.

Reading Group 1

"Odd Boy Out" by Gyles Brandreth (Autobiography)

Our general option was that this man must be possessed of a most enormous ego. Many of the group confessed to not managing to finish reading the book but for those of us who did, we were left wondering if there are any well-known people in London he hasn't met or shaken hands with (or, in his own words, "shaken hands with someone who has shaken their hands"). It appears that he has also kept every letter, theatre ticket or other memento that he acquired during his life. His archives must be vast.

Gyles Brandreth confesses to never having considered getting a "proper job" although he has written for the stage, has acted in his own productions and continues to.

More from his own writing: "I grew up in fantasy worlds and never quite escaped" and "As a boy I was insufferable, precocious, pretentious, conceited, egotistical..."

And yet there is always something likeable about him which has kept him employed throughout his life.

This was his third autobiography, I wonder if the fourth variation is even now in production.

Marion Clements

"Eye of the Needle" by Ken Follett

As a big change we decided this month to read a thriller.

Some members were very familiar with this author's historical fiction and his thrillers. I had certainly heard of him, but had not read any of his many books.

"The Needle", Faber, is based in England. He is a loner, yet attractive

and a ruthless, very clever German spy, who eliminates adversaries summarily with a stiletto knife taped unseen to his arm.

Although a thriller this novel is also historical and focusses on the preparations in 1944 for the D-Day Landings, eg will they be in Calais or maybe Brittany? Hitler knows of these preparations but desperately needs to know where the landings will take place and Faber, his favourite spy, is anxious to find this out and relay the information personally to him via a waiting U-Boat. The Allies are equally anxious to camouflage their intentions with a "mock" invasion force, bogus radio traffic, etc etc.

Follett is an excellent writer and expands this outline into a real thriller. He is also noted, as he does here, for making all his characters real and, if evil, convincing.

A readership of one hundred and sixty million gives more than a hint that his books are well worth your attention as we and I found with this one. As a group we thoroughly enjoyed it, but felt the ending was a tad far fetched.

Keith Herring

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## **Reading Group 2**

### **"Life Among the Savages" by Shirley Jackson**

Our book for September was *Life Among the Savages* by Shirley Jackson. It was not what was expected by the title! First published in 1953, it was supposedly a chronicle of every day family life raising children in a ramshackle house in Vermont USA.

Not one of our group enjoyed it, one didn't finish it and we all thought the children were awful, and did not find it amusing at all. Enough said!

Our poems for September were *The Lamplighter* by Robert Louis Stevenson and *Floral Tribute* by Simon Armitage.



## **"The Little Black Dress" by Deborah Moggach**

October's book was *The Little Black Dress* by Deborah Moggach, author of *The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel*, a good sign as we had all enjoyed the TV series. How wrong we were! Not many of us enjoyed this either!! More Chic Lit than literature.

It starts with Pru's husband after decades of marriage leaving her and going off to find himself, leaving her betrayed and lonely at the age of 70. She buys a little black dress in a charity shop and after mistakenly going to the wrong funeral, decides to carry on and go to others to find empathy and possibly another man!! She turns to her wacky best friend for comfort and ends up having an affair with her despite no previous signs!! Read on to find the twist at the end.

Our poem for October was *Heart to Heart* by George Dobson.

**Pat Panchaud**

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Reading Group 3

"Songbirds" by Christy Lefteri

After a series of books that were somewhat disappointing, *Songbirds* by Christy Lefteri provided the basis for a really good group discussion. We all found a great deal of merit in the writing and the subject of the novel based on the true story of the disappearance and murder of women migrants.

Set in Cyprus after the Turkish invasion it deals with several moral aspects: illegal bird trapping and the treatment of migrant domestic workers, their exploitation and the lack of value the host nation places on them to the point where they almost seem to be invisible. All the main characters were in some way trapped. Petra and her daughter Aliki who has been looked after since birth by Nisha, who when widowed is forced by poverty to leave her Sri Lankan home and daughter, and Yannis, Nisha's lover, who is unable to stop illegal trapping of birds for fear of violence from the gang controlling it.

Yet it is also a story of communities. The immigrants who come from many countries but bound together by their work, the local Taverna

where many seek solace, the street where Petra lives. These communities are faced with the sudden disappearance of women, including Nisha, who leave behind all their belongings including passports. The Police will not investigate, to them women are not worth bothering about. Petra and Yannis join forces and seek help from Tony, a Taverna owner. In the course of the search all experience a profound change in their lives, values and relationships. In some respects there was an almost mystical aura in parts of the story. The sighting of the Mouflon Ovis, a rare sheep-like creature with topaz eyes (like Nishas), by Yannis and Nisha when they first meet holds a significance for him throughout the story

As a group we all enjoyed the book and would read more of her work although one of us was not so keen.

Sheila Eastland

"The Cleaner of Chartres" by Salley Vickers

For November's group meeting we read *The Cleaner of Chartres* (2012) by Salley Vickers. The novel focuses on Chartres and Agnès Morel who works as a cleaner in the cathedral. Agnès is a mysterious character and the tragic events of her past are revealed in layers as time moves between the past and the present. This technique has a psychoanalytic approach and we noted that Salley Vickers had earlier trained and worked as a psychotherapist in the NHS.

As well as her evocative descriptions of Chartres cathedral and its surroundings, the author brings to life the characters drawn into the story. One of the most mentioned by our readers is Madame Beck, a spiteful gossip.

This book was enjoyed by our group for its use of language, multiplicity of characters and intertwined stories as well as beautifully descriptive writing. The only hesitations from a couple of readers were that it was a little sentimental, and there was no clearly defined timeline or plot. Overall though it was a good read and generally recommended.

Suzanne Green

Reading Group 5

"The Salt Path" by Raynor Winn

Imagine, you have built up a successful family farm, brought up a family, suddenly lose absolutely everything and as a couple are left with £30.00 a week to live on. This was the situation facing Raynor Winn and her husband when they decided to set out to walk the South West Coast Path, wild camping for all 600 miles of it.

After the walk Raynor discovered a latent talent as a writer and, following the success of this first book, has since written two more books chronicling the years since their epic walk.

The Salt Path is a very well written and inspiring book, with perhaps more interest for those who know the South West and a little too much repetition for others.

"The Seven Sisters" by Lucinda Riley

Having read *The Olive Tree* by Lucinda Riley we embarked on the first of her Seven Sisters series.

Pa Salt from his idyllic home on Lake Geneva set out to adopt six baby girls and name them after the stars of the Pleiades constellation. The girls are provided with the best possible upbringing and their stories start when Pa Salt dies. They are each given the opportunity to explore their roots. There are six books in the series, one for each of the girls, however there are 7 stars in the Pleiades and we are awaiting the seventh book which we hope will both explain that anomaly and give more details about the mysterious Pa Salt.

The story is told in terms of developing personal relationships and historical flash backs. In this first book we are taken to the building of the Christos Statue in Rio de Janeiro

In both cases these books were sufficiently interesting for several in the group to follow up these titles by reading more in their respective series.

Geoff Farnie

U3A QUILT QUIZ ANSWERS

- | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Ballroom Dancing | 18. Coffee Mornings |
| 2. Patchwork | 19. Lace Making |
| 3. History | 20. Rock Group |
| 4. Scottish Dancing | 21. Art |
| 5. Woodcarving | 22. Solos |
| 6. Computer Users | 23. Poetry |
| 7. Mah Jong | 24. Handbell Ringing |
| 8. Boules | 25. Crafts |
| 9. Tai Chi | 26. Philosophy |
| 10. Walking | 27. Reading Groups |
| 11. Card Playing / Canasta | 28. Travel Group |
| 12. Stained Glass | 29. Rummikub |
| 13. Singing for Pleasure | 30. Classical Film Group |
| 14. Table Tennis | 31. Scrabble |
| 15. Languages | 32. History |
| 16. Industrial History | 33. Sewing, Knitting and Crafts |
| 17. Quiz Group | 34. Photography |

CROSSWORD SOLUTION

ACROSS

1. Abrasive
6. Strain
9. Tablet
10. Lynch pin
11. Dissents
12. Cuboid
13. Hairsbreadth
16. Alternatives
19. Vetoes
21. Nosegays
23. Bacteria
24. Issued
25. Beaten
26. Digested

DOWN

2. Brazil
3. Atlas
4. Intention
5. Enlists
6. Sonic
7. Rehoboams
8. Initiate
13. Haemostat
14. Ravishing
15. Alienate
17. Tankard
18. Xylene
20. Siren
22. Gusts

Special Interest Groups

Art	Patchwork
Ballroom & Latin Dance	Philosophy
Boules	Photography
Bridge (Wednesday)	Poetry
Cardaholics (Greetings Cards)	Quiz Group
Canasta	Reading Group 1
Classic Films Group	Reading Group 2
Computer: Apple Devices Group	Reading Group 3
Computer: Computer Users	Reading Group 4
Day Trippers' Group	Reading Group 5
French: French Conversation	Rock Band
French: Cercle Français	Rummikub
German	Scottish Country Dancing
Great Lives	Scrabble
Greek	Singing for Pleasure
Handbell Ringing	Solos
History: History	Stained Glass
History: Industrial History	Table Tennis
Hola España (Spanish)	Tai Chi - Social
Jigsaw Exchange Group	Walking: Easy Walking
Lace-making	Walking: Original
Model Railway Group	Woodcarving

Group Meetings Timetable

Group	Week	Leader
MONDAY MORNING		
Computer Users	2nd	
Rummikub	Weekly	
Solos	1st	
MONDAY AFTERNOON		
Boules	Weekly	
Canasta	2nd & 4th	
Classic Films Group	1st	
Hola España	Fortnightly	
MONDAY EVENING		
Stained Glass	1st & 3rd	
TUESDAY MORNING		
French: Cercle Français	Weekly	
Greek	Fortnightly	
History	2nd	
Lace-making	Weekly	
Photography	3rd	
Reading Group 2	4th	
TUESDAY AFTERNOON		
Great Lives	4th	
Industrial History	3rd	
Singing for Pleasure	1st & 3rd	
Table Tennis	Weekly	

Group	Week	Leader
WEDNESDAY MORNING French: Conversation German Poetry Reading Group 1 Reading Group 4 Scottish Country Dancing Easy Walking WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON Bridge (Wednesday) Quiz Group	2nd & 4th Weekly 3rd 1st 4th Weekly 2nd Weekly 2nd	
THURSDAY MORNING Coffee Morning 10.00 am With Jigsaw Exchange Cardaholics Handbell Ringing Model Railway Group Philosophy	3rd 2nd & 4th 2nd & 4th Weekly (Phone first) 4th	At Cheddar Village Hall

Group	Week	Leader
THURSDAY AFTERNOON Speaker Meeting 2.00 pm Rock Band	1st 2nd, 3rd & 4th	At Cheddar Village Hall
FRIDAY MORNING Art Patchwork Reading Group 3 Social Tai Chi FRIDAY AFTERNOON Ballroom & Latin Dance Reading Group 5 Scrabble FRIDAY EVENING Woodcarving	4th 3rd 2nd Weekly Weekly Last Friday 2nd & 4th Weekly	
NO FIXED DAY Apple Devices Group Day Trippers' Group Walking: Original	By arrangement See page 15 See page 38	

Submission of material for our next issue

Submissions for our February / March 2023 edition
should be sent to the Newsletter Editor:

Sue Bathe,

cheddar.u3anews@yahoo.co.uk

DEADLINE: Friday 13th January 2023

I will acknowledge all e-mail communications.
If you do not receive an acknowledgement in a reasonable time,
you must assume it has not been received,
and use another method to contact me.



Please use identifying words in the subject line of your e-mail, and in the title of any attached files,
e.g. Group name and month of report,
such as "Drama Group November report",
and **not** just "Notes from November" or
"U3A Article".

If possible please send in your articles and reports by e-mail.

The information can be in the body of the e-mail itself,
or be as an attachment in a common format,
such as Word, Open Office, or as a pdf.

(Please do **not** send anything as **.pages**, I cannot open it.)

Photographs of your groups and group activities
are also always welcome (as jpgs please).

Please always state who took the photograph.