

# SOMERTON u3a

## Newsletter 38

June 2023



## Chairman's message

*Hello and welcome to the June Newsletter.*

I would like to thank everyone who was able to attend the AGM last month. It was an opportunity for members to meet the committee and to show your support for them. The committee work terribly hard, often behind the scenes, to ensure the smooth running of our u3a; from setting up and organising Groups, booking speakers, dealing with membership, liaising with the Third Age Trust, Charity Commission and keeping us 'legal', producing our Newsletters and other communications, and looking after our finances, to ensure that your money is properly accounted for, and that the next year is correctly planned and budgeted. I think it was well received at the AGM that we were able to announce that there will be no increase in the membership fee for 2023/24! We have said 'goodbye' to Marilyn, our Membership Secretary, and I would like to thank her again for the great job she has done. Marilyn reached her personal goal - by signing up our 400th member! Let us also welcome our new Committee members - thank you for volunteering and we all look forward to working with you.

Of course, there are others who help make our u3a run smoothly. Those people who help set up, serve drinks, clear away, lead Groups, plan events within their Interest Groups - all of you make a difference and we couldn't do it without you.

We have some good events planned ahead, exciting speakers to hear and, hopefully, will be attracting more members because it is the members that make it a success so, thank you all and keep on joining in and having fun!

*Steve*

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# Monthly meetings and talks

*Monthly meetings are held on the 4th. Friday of the month at the Edgar Community Hall, Somerton.*

*We open at 10am for refreshments and the chance for members to meet and chat.*

*The refreshments will finish at 10.20 in order to clear away before the meeting.*

*The meeting starts at 10.30 with notices, announcements and any other business and will be followed by our guest speaker.*

*The meeting closes at 12 noon.*

*Please join us. Visitors are always welcome at our meetings for a small charge of £2 so please come along and see who we are and what we are about. If you are visiting for the first time then please just make yourself know to one of our Committee members or 'Welcomers' who will be happy to tell you a little bit about us and help you feel at home.*

## Fri Jun 23rd

### **David Boag - wildlife photographer**

#### **ICELAND, A WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHERS VIEW**

There is such a wild, remoteness to most of Iceland that it is a photographers dream. So much space, so much air, so much rain! Lush vegetation clothes great sweeps of mountainside right down to the beaches of black, volcanic sand. A multitude of birds, many of which are British rarities, choose Iceland as a perfect nest location where they can safely raise their young. Comparatively few land mammals are found on Iceland but they have unique wild horses that have that are part of their Viking heritage. The landscape is awesome with some of the most magnificent waterfalls I have ever seen.

*David has been to our u3a on 2 previous occasions and is a very popular speaker with outstanding photographs.*

## Fri Jul 28th

Author, Brian Wright

*"The Dragons of Somerset."*

An illustrated Talk

In Somerset traditional stories about dragons date back 1,000 years in some cases. We will explore the origins of dragons, their symbolism, and look at some of the many images of these fabulous creatures to be found in this

county from the Saxon period onwards, as well as hearing some of the traditional local stories about them.

#### **About the Speaker**

#### **Brian Wright.**

Brian is qualified as an archaeologist, and worked on a number of excavations in London and Surrey, as well as at the Roman city of Wroxeter in Shropshire. He specialised in the microscopic examination of pottery, but is now primarily an historian. His experience in archaeology, science and historic research enables him to present subjects in what, he feels, is a unique way. He has run courses on Archaeology, Folklore, British Mythology and Antiques for a number of colleges. He has written a number of books on both folklore and other historic subjects, as well as many articles. At present, he gives individual talks to a wide range of groups

## Fri Aug 25th

### **Enrolment Day**

Enrolment Day will revert to it's old spot in the Su3a calendar this year.

It will be an opportunity for Groups to showcase their activities, for members to sign on and to meet with friends.

This is an event that is open to all

## Aviation Group

Mon 12th June Speaker Brian Fernley

The Battle of Britain Outside London (RAF Exeter's role in this conflict)



# Coronation

“Photos of the Craft entries and 2D crowns produced by Su3a members to mark the Coronation.

Amanda



SUBS



**Somerton u3a Facebook**

<https://m.facebook.com/people/Somerton-u3a/100070538943417/>

# Local History Group visit to Mells.

# Group News

**“ There is something about Mells. It’s a village that whispers to you: quiet place with colossal stories to tell”. These are the words of Luke Sherlock who we met in the church of St Andrews when the Local History Group visited Mells.**

It was a glorious sunny day, we met at the community cafe for coffee before setting off for a guided tour of the village lead by Kay. A second group made their way to the Walled Garden, I like to call it a “secret garden” just to sit and enjoy and listen to the silence. Both groups visited the church and were delighted to learn so much history of the village from Luke.



We then returned to the cafe for a very enjoyable lunch and spent time sharing stories of the day and other adventures !

.....  
This stunning piece, a memorial tablet to Laura Tennant, it is 8th high. When the multicoloured light filters through the stained glass window crosses the surface of the peacock it is stunning.  
.....



More information about Mells can be found at [lukesherlock.com](http://lukesherlock.com)

*Judi*

## Email Security tip

Noting the latest scam alert, may I suggest a reminder (or advice) to members to add an extra level of protection to themselves and others by using bcc in place of listing multiple addresses in 'To' or 'cc' when sending emails to those who are outside their normal close circle of friends and relatives. In 'To' the sender should put only their own address.

The reason is that if any of the email addresses quoted have already been or become compromised then the way can be opened to 'harvest' a host of addresses - allowing the scammer to go on a scamming spree.

While we are all becoming increasingly wise to abuse of

technology there are still more than enough folk who are susceptible to scams to justify the effort (which is almost none!) of those seeking to trap the vulnerable or careless.

For further information, help and advice, websites worth visiting include Citizens Advice and Ageuk. From the former: Every year, we run our Scams Awareness campaign. In 2023, this will take place over 2 weeks: (22-28 May) and 3-9 July. The campaign aims to create a network of confident, alert consumers who know what to do when they spot a scam.

*Brian Pearson*

# Group News

## Sunday Roasties

We were at The Crosskeys Inn, Lydford on 14th May efficiently organised by John Day.

Next month we are at Long Sutton Golf Club.

*Sarah Terry*



More pictures on flickr.....

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/u3asomerton/albums>

## "Oyez, Oyez, Oyez"

Here is a picture of the Ilminster Town Crier with his Seamstress and of course our very own Town Crier.

From last April Friday's meeting.

*Dave Slocombe*



## Walking the High Parts

## Group News

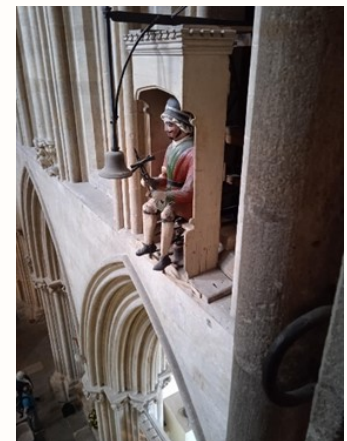
Judi, Jeff and I met at Wells Cathedral for our rescheduled Walk the High Parts tour. Our original booking was deferred due to it deciding to snow on the very morning that we had booked. I must admit to being somewhat anxious about taking on this tour. Between the concerns about vertigo, a heart attack and falling from a great height, we discovered that 'elf and safety was, as is often the case, much exaggerated.

We were treated to an hour and three quarters of interesting history and views of the Cathedral that only the tour can afford.



We were told the history of the astronomical clock; one of a group of famous 14th to 16th century astronomical clocks to be found in the West of England. The dial represents a model of the universe wherein everything revolves around the Earth! We were fortunate enough to be right next to the 'gubbins' of the clock as it struck 12 o'clock.

Above the clock and to the right is a figure, known as Jack Blandifers, or Blandiver, who hits a bell with a hammer held in his right hand and two bells hung beneath him with his heels. As you can see from this photo, we were able to get very close to Jack.



Another dial is mounted on the outside wall of the Cathedral, driven from the same mechanism as the internal clock. This was first installed in the 14th or 15th centuries, but has been restored a number of times. I must admit that I have taken friends and family to Wells on several occasions recently and never noticed it! It was very beautiful and well worth a look.



We ventured up into the roof space and were treated to the sight of huge oak timbers that supported the roof and explanations of struts, buttresses etc to hold it up or remedy areas where the Cathedral structure had shifted. We also saw templates for masonry repairs and replacements; some many centuries old and still used.

It was explained that the slits that I thought (in my ignorance!) were for arrows were actually for viewing people outside to give the signal for a choir on the upper floor to start singing; the sound being projected through portholes in the upper wall.

And finally, here is a photo of the Bishop's Palace taken especially for you to enjoy – although it could have been more to do with taking a breather on the way up (or was it down) the many steps.

It was well worth a visit and I am pleased to report that we were both physically and mentally unscathed by our experience.



*Liz Short*

*Local History Group*

# ***11th u3a Peak District Family History Conference***

**Saturday 16 September 2023 at the Palace Hotel in Buxton**



***Presents.....***

**Mary Evans – ‘Chasing those Brickwalls!’**

**Dave Annal – Death & Taxes**

**Jackie Depelle – “Digging into the Parish Chest”**

**Dr Penny Walters – “Why the Welsh left Wales”**

**Tickets:** £30. *Book early to avoid disappointment - it's always very popular.*  
Includes talks, refreshments & 2-course finger buffet lunch

**Parking:**

Blue Badge holders – may park or drop off at hotel

Others - use side streets or the pay & display car parks

For car parks in Buxton see: <https://en.parkopedia.co.uk/parking/buxton/>

**Exhibitors:**

Once again, about 15 exhibitors will be there – old friends & new:

We plan to offer delegates a free goody bag and a free prize draw again.

**To book** your place, please complete the booking form on this link:

<https://forms.gle/mXnsgpBhQpmafU6>

Please put your **surname and postcode** as a **reference** if paying by BAC  
*[So we can match your payment with your form.]*

***Tickets will be issued at our reception desk on the day, not posted.***



## Somerton u3a Committee Members 2023/2024

Chairman	Steve Davis
Vice Chairman	Jane Redgrove
Secretary	Annette Sparks
Treasurer	Liz Short
Fran Cook	Membership Secretary
Mike Davis	Newsletter Editor
Amanda Hooper	Events Co-ordinator
Laurence Reeves	Beacon Administrator
David Robins	Speaker Co-ordinator
Sarah Terry	Pending confirmation

“ Everyone in u3a should  
be an involved member, not  
a customer being served ”

### Somerton u3a website

If you require more information concerning entries in this newsletter or other points of interest,  
take a look at the Somerton u3a website, address below.

Web site: <https://u3asites.org.uk/somerton/home>

**Please send all articles for the Newsletter to the editor**

**mike.davis@silchester.org**

**Deadline for the July edition...20th June**

Pictures welcome, but keep script brief

Minimum formatting please.