

SOMERTON u3a

Newsletter 43

November 2023



Chairman's message

With the nights drawing in, the clocks going back and a very noticeable change in the weather, it can, at times, seem a bit gloomy, but hopefully not within our u3a. Some of the Groups have been very busy, not only the Holiday Group with their trip to Northumbria, but also the Local History Group out on visits and the Photography Group braving rather inclement conditions photographing autumn colours. The birdwatchers were out as well – but they're a hardy lot. If your Group has been up to something out of the ordinary, why not send a report and photo to our Newsletter Editor? Alternatively, why not put an entry on our Facebook Page? Let's not keep our activities a mystery, we would all like to know what you are up to.

On the 18th October I was invited to attend the Martock u3a Open Day. Their Chairman, Greg Atkins, runs a German Conversation Group for members of Avalon u3as, which meets at the Edgar Hall, Somerton, and he had joined us at ours. It may be worth reminding members that we have a reciprocal

arrangement with most of the u3as in the Avalon Network, where – under certain conditions, we can join their Interest Groups and vice versa. I think it is important to maintain these links as we can help, support, and learn from each other in many ways. It was a very pleasant afternoon and meeting Group Leaders, the Committee, and other members, was a delight – as was the cake! You are always welcome at their Monthly Meetings so feel free to check their website and see if there is a speaker that interests you. If you do go, don't forget your Su3a membership card!

Behind the scenes, preparations are well under way for the Christmas Lunch, details of which can be found further on. It promises to be a fabulous occasion and I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible there.

Have fun everyone.

Steve

u3a

u3a is a UK-wide movement of locally-run interest groups that provide a wide range of opportunities to come together to learn for fun. Members explore new ideas, skills and activities together.

There are 1,035 u3as with nearly 400,000 members; membership costs less than £20 on average per year and is open to everyone who's not working full-time.

u3a has members who draw upon their knowledge and experience to teach and learn from each other but there are no qualifications to pass – it is just for pleasure. Learning is its own reward.

It's all voluntary; a typical u3a will be home to many activity groups covering hundreds of different subjects - from Art to Zoology and everything in between.

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/about>



Christmas lunchFri 8th December

£20 for two courses or £25 for three courses by cheque or bank transfer only.

Account name: Somerton U3A

Sort code: 30-18-16

Account number: 00958442

Payment and meal choices are required by **Monday 13th November please.**

If you pay by bank transfer please email Liz Short at... treasurer@somertonu3a.uk

....to tell her what you have chosen to eat.

If you pay by cheque please write your food choice on the envelope and send to Liz at.... 8 Wheeler Barton, Somerton TA11 6FE.

Names to be checked off at the door (i.e. no tickets to be issued)

There is also the option of fruit salad and vegan ice cream

If gluten or dairy free items are required we need to know when you place your meal choice with us, please. On the menu, gf or vg **indicates that these options are available if requested in advance.**

Doors open at 12.00 noon. Food served at 12.30pm

Musical entertainment by Su3a members after lunch!

Amanda Hooper



Long Sutton Golf Club Christmas Party Menu

Starter

Spicy parsnip soup with a door step of Granary bread. (VG/Vt).

Pate with red onion marmalade and crostini.

Deep fried wedge of Brie with mixed leaves and Cranberry sauce. (GF/VG).

Main

Roast turkey, Pig in Blanket, pork & Cranberry stuffing, crispy roast potatoes & seasonal vegetables. (GF).

Roast beef, homemade Yorkshire pudding, roast potatoes & seasonal vegetables. (GF).

Moroccan nut roast, new potatoes and roasted seasonal vegetables. (VG/Vt)

Dessert

Traditional Christmas pudding with custard. (GF/VG).

Spiced apple and berry crumble with custard. (GF).

Chocolate Yule log with cream.

Followed by coffee and Mince pies. (GF).

Vt—Vegetarian

VG—Vegan

GF—Gluten free on request

Monthly meetings and talks

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

We are open from 9.30am 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 known 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.

Don't forget to bring your stamps and coins for the Dorset & Somerset Air Ambulance

Fri 24th November

Mr. John Higham
'Antarctica'



Friday 23rd February 2024

Wayne Spilsbury

'The Origins Of Modern Art'

This talk explores the critical and contextual elements of the fundamental shifts in Art from the early 19th to the early 20th centuries.

About the speaker

"I am a professional contemporary artist working in a range of genres and media. I am based in Bruton and have exhibited around the country

as well as participating in Somerset Open Studios.

Most notably I have enjoyed a highly successful career in art education for over 40 years, running secondary school art and art history departments; tutoring to students and adults in colleges; participating in teacher training with UWE and examining. I have organised numerous art visits to galleries in the UK and around the world. I retired from teaching recently but am still an examiner with two boards."

Fri 8th December

Christmas lunch

.....see p2 for details

Friday 26th January 2024

Kay Townsend

'Fairgrounds at war 1939 to 1945'

.....further details to follow.

Taken from a Facebook entry of the Photography Group...such a lovely picture in Swell Wood posted by Tony Benning



Group News

Photography Group

Abbotsbury Swannery

Having joined the Photography Group in August, I have yet to get to a meeting! This has not been entirely my fault, as the September meeting clashed with a u3a committee meeting and on the day of the October meeting, at very short notice, I had the opportunity to take part in the annual cygnet release at Abbotsbury Swannery.

With around 22 staff and volunteers, we rounded up 186 cygnets and swans to be ringed, weighed, checked over and released onto the Fleet lagoon. I think I got wetter than the Photography Group out in Swell Wood that day!

Steve Davis



...and from Facebook

Swell Wood outing

Theme - Autumn Colours

The Photography Group braved the grim looking weather and ventured out to Swell Wood at the RSPB Reserve. The task was to gain images in autumnal colours, no mean feat as our seasons are not as well defined as they used to be!

Tony Benning



Group News

The **Sunday Roasties** met at The Firehouse, Curry Rivel on 1st October. The food was great and the venue spectacular. I'm afraid that the photos don't do the 'crypt' justice with the beautiful stonework. Who would have thought that was below the pub! ?? Roast beef was the popular choice followed by ice cream and coffee. Pole dancing was optional.

Sarah Terry



The u3a story

Founded in 1982, the UK u3a movement (based loosely on the French model) aims to encourage groups of people no longer in full-time work to come together and continue their enjoyment of learning subjects of interest to them.

From the start, the guiding principles were to promote non-formal learning through self-help interest groups covering a wide range of topics and activities as chosen by their members. There is no minimum age, but a focus on people who are no longer in full-time employment or raising a family. Our founders envisaged a collaborative approach with peers learning from each other. The u3a

movement was to be self-funded, with members not working towards qualifications but learning purely for pleasure. There would be no distinction between the learners and the teachers – everyone could take a turn at being both if they wished.

The movement grew very quickly and by the early 1990s, a u3a was opening every fortnight. u3as started in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and in 2008 membership was increasing by 11% every year. 2010 saw our membership hitting the quarter million mark. 2022 saw the 40th Anniversary of the movement in the UK and was marked with a year-long programme of events and celebrations.

Group News

Art For Fun Group

We meet on the first Tuesday afternoon of the month in the Pinney Room.

We are a fun and friendly group of amateur artists who share ideas, experiences and techniques to produce our 'works of art' using a variety of topics and choice of media such as watercolour, acrylic, coloured pens and pencils, pastels, crayons etc.

All over tea and biscuits and a chat.

Linda Worth



Geology group

First of all I apologise for my "radio silence" for what I now realise has been over a year. No excuses – but thanks to Clive Baker's phenomenal recruiting skills on Enrolment Day (on which I had another commitment), the Geology Group has more than doubled its membership and I now feel duty bound to report more often.

Much of our recent activity has focussed on re-discovering the landscape of Somerset as it was between about 300 and 200 million years ago. This was a time of high mountains and deserts, evidence of which can still be seen in Taunton's building stones, the landscape of the Quantocks and the limestone gorges of the Mendips. Our regular trips out were all related to these themes and included a tour of the Taunton Rock Trail, Cothelstone Hill and Ash Priors and an exploration of Burrington Combe – where over 30 million years of Geology can be examined in an afternoon's walk.

The Geology Group meets on the first Thursday of the month either in the Edgar Hall or on a visit or field trip – please contact me for more details.

Trevor Ryder



Members of the group exploring Burrington Combe; Dennis Brown, Paul Hand, Robert Maxwell, Mark Allen, Martin Roper, Liz Maxwell, Barbara Clift, John Rix

Group News

On a chilly wet autumn morning the Somerton **Local History group** received a warm welcome from the Guide at the Bridgwater brick and tile Museum. After enjoying a cup of coffee, we were treated to an informative talk about the history of brick and tile making in Bridgwater from the mid 19 to the mid 20th century. This included the sourcing of the clay, sand and other materials locally; the preparation, and making of a variety of products. The Guide showed us the drying racks and kiln on display at the premises, and also demonstrated tile making. The labour force worked 12 hour shifts, and the kilns were productive 7 days a week, but on a seasonal basis, as during the winter the cold and wet made drying the products difficult. Some of the mixing of clay was done by children. The visit was thought-provoking and enlightening.

Following our morning visit, we enjoyed a very nice lunch at the Levels Country Kitchen in Middlezoy. Another well organised day out by Judi and Kay. Thank you.

Alison Finch



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

Autumn Carol L. Riser,

"When the trees their summer splendor
Change to raiment red and gold,
When the summer moon turns mellow,
And the nights are getting cold;
When the squirrels hide their acorns,
And the woodchucks disappear;
Then we know that it is autumn,
Loveliest season of the year."



Don't forget to renew your Membership if you haven't already
...details on Website (address below) under the Welcome tab

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.

Website: <https://u3asites.org.uk/somerton/home>

***Thank you for your articles....but please tell
me how YOUR group is doing....with
pictures !!! ...editor***

Please send all articles for the Newsletter to the editor

mike.davis@silchester.org

Deadline for the December edition...20th November

Pictures welcome, but keep script brief

Minimum formatting please.