



Chairman's message

August can be a busy month for many of us, with time spent away from home or meeting up with friends and family, but while some of our Interest Groups may take a break this month, there is still plenty going on. One thing that *all* Group Leaders will be thinking about is our Open Day on the 22nd which takes the place of the usual Monthly Meeting.

This is an ideal opportunity for you to renew your interests or, maybe look around and see what else you fancy? The Leaders, and their members, work hard to showcase what is available, so I invite you all to come along, support our u3a and – if possible, bring someone along with you? I am constantly amazed at the number of people in Somerton and the surrounding area, who haven't heard of us! With the 'one off offer' of £9 membership for the coming year, there has never been a better time to give it a go.

Another part of the Open Day is, of course, re-enrolling. Can I take this opportunity to point out that while you *can* re-enrol on the day – it's not absolutely necessary. Fran and her helpers will be very busy with new members, so you can always pay online and, if you are worried about picking up your membership card, why not collect it at the next meeting?

Our Open/Enrolment day is also a good chance to think about the u3a movement as a whole. Somerton is just one of *over 1000 u3a's Nation-wide!* If you have joined more recently, or perhaps want to refresh your knowledge, can I suggest you look at the Third Age Trust website and find out what else is available to you? There are some great ideas, suggestions for activities and Groups, and also Interest Groups that you can join online. Get involved with an activity from the comfort of your own armchair! Most importantly however, join in and have fun!

Steve Davis.

Contents

- 1 Chairman's Message
- 2 Monthly meetings...Open Day.
- 3 Local History Group... Cleeve Abbey.
- 4 Scottish Dancing, Craft, Art for Fun groups.
- 5 Short Mat Bowls, Skittle groups.
- 6 Quiz Group, including short quiz!
- 7 German Speaking Group.
- 8 Sunday Roasties and Amblers groups.
- 9 Ukelele Group and US Bike trip.
- 10 Steve's photosBirds and Butterflies.
- 11 Chris Cox Honour.
- 12 Poem and contact information.

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.

Friday 22nd August

Open/Enrolment Day

Time 10am - 12am

Our Open Day, which this year will be held at the Edgar Hall, is an opportunity for members to re-enrol, for the Groups to display what they do, and to recruit new members.

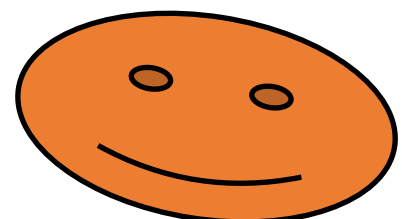
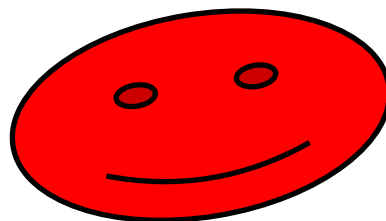
Refreshments will be served throughout the morning and is an opportunity for friends to gather together, enjoy the atmosphere and bring along guests who may want to find out what we are all about.

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

NOTE FOR YOUR DIARY

OPEN DAY

Friday 22nd August, 10am at Edgar Hall, Somerton



Group News

Local History Group

Cleeve Abbey was well worth visiting, especially with the guides who gave us an insight into the history of both it's origins and it's various stages of preservation. Different generations have different ideas of how best to look after historic buildings.

Photos don't do it justice because you can't feel the cobbles underfoot where the livestock walked, or the steep stone stairs worn by many footsteps. Looking up at the walls you see where joists once supported a roof, or where a doorway once was.

We enjoyed a sunny 2nd July morning, with just a slight breeze to keep us comfortable, before heading to the White Horse for refreshment and lunch before heading home.

Thank you to Judi and Kay!

Sarah



Scottish Country Dancing Group

Group News

please see below two photos from our last Scottish Country Dancing class (July) before we recommence in September. We had a lovely afternoon ending with a delicious cream tea.

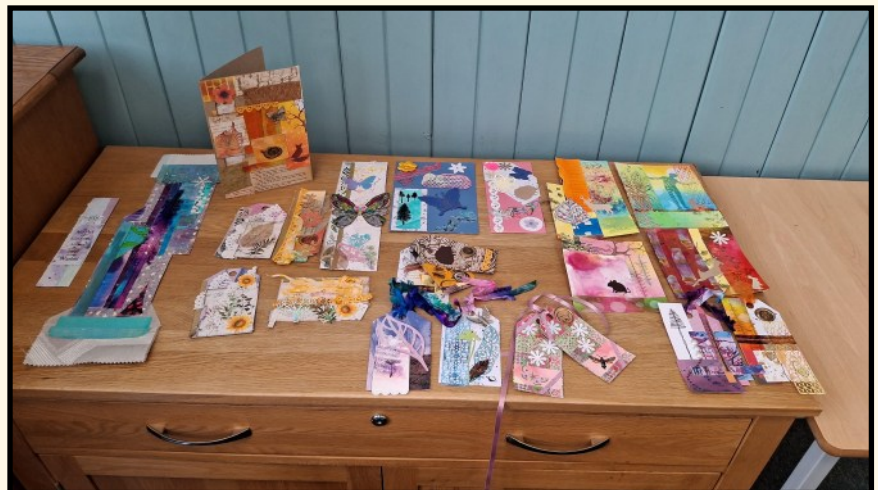
Liz Beckinsal



Craft Group

In July Julie showed us how to use all our leftover bits and pieces to make Snippets

Ann Hunt



Art for Fun Group

A photo of Art for Fun afternoon tea outing to Corks at Langport Garden Centre.

Linda Worth

Group News

Celebrating birthdays at Short Mat Bowls



It gave us great pleasure to celebrate the 98th birthday of Pauline Riocreux at our Short Mat Bowls meeting in June. Pauline, with a little help from her daughter Susan, arrived with cakes which we all enjoyed during the coffee break.

Pauline was even doing her best to chivvy everyone to start playing. So she is very much "on the ball" literally as well as mentally as she played some really good shots. Susan said that it is a mark of the success of the u3a that Pauline is doing so well. Pauline has been a u3a member for many decades, having been heavily involved in the Wokingham group with her late husband since it started in

1990 – it's what keeps her young! She is a member of 3 u3as at the moment and still involved with Wokingham Science group via Zoom.

By the time this reaches the Newsletter another member, Gerry Tembe will have celebrated her 90th birthday. The Short Mat Group was started over 10 years ago with the aim of providing people of all ages and abilities the opportunity of playing and having fun. I think the group has achieved its aim.

Congratulations to Pauline & Gerry.

Val Frazer

Skittles was well attended Tuesday 8th July with 13 people keen to practice their skills.

Harry Kretz was the highest scoring gentleman with a spectacular 16 spare.

Viv Winterburn was the highest scoring lady, and went on to win the game of killer as well.

Tea and lemon drizzle cake kept everyone refreshed between games. Our next meeting will be on the 12th August.

Annette Sparks



SPO				
NAME	HOME TEAM			T
Paul	8	5	6	19/8 27
Chris	7	6	6	19/6 25
Sally	7	4	5	16/8 24
Viv	8	6	8	20/6 28 L
Karen	8	7	6	21/3 24
Harry	5	5	16	29/8 34 M
Jane	2	6	7	15/8 25
Annette	7	6	6	19/7 26
Tony	9	9	7	25/7 32
Bill	3	7	5	15/1 16
Sarah	3	5	6	14/3 22
Dave	6	2	4	12/3 15
Kirn	7	X	3	10/6 16

Group News

Quiz Group

July's Quiz Group meeting was well attended at the West Street Church Hall. I could hear the cogs whirring as questions were asked by the 2 Quiz Masters.

The questions are asked in sets of 10 under different subjects. For example, Literature, Music, The letter "Z", Flora & Fauna, etc. Here are a few examples:

1. How many species of snake are native to the UK?
2. By what stage name is Stuart Leslie Goddard, born in 1954, better known?

3. Author of the "Jack Reacher" novels, what nationality is Lee Child?

4. The Californian grape, Primitivo, is also known by what name?

This is an informal, friendly Group that meets monthly on the 3rd Monday and the leader Valerie, can be contacted on email vallesaledo@gmail.com.

Sarah

The answers will be in next month's Newsletter!



?



Group News

Fame at last

Our **German Speaking Group's** meeting usually starts with each member speaking for about 5 minutes on a subject of his/her choice with the others commenting or asking questions. At the last meeting one member, Tim Rowntree, told us that the German Speaking Group was mentioned in the March edition of the prestigious glossy magazine of the Triumph Owners' Motor Cycle Club.

'How come', you may well ask.

It all started with a quite an amazing coincidence. Tim is a keen motorcyclist and during a discussion with Sally, another member of our group, the subject of bikes came up. Tim mentioned that ever since his student days in 1979 when he had read that Triumph had just secured an export order of 1305 Triumph Tiger 750s for the Nigerian Army, he had wanted to own a Tiger 750. Sally mentioned that for years they had had an old motorcycle in their barn which she thought was a Tiger something or other and, to cut the story short, Tim bought the bike off Sally. It turned out to be one of the very bikes sold to Nigeria.

Once home it became clear to Tim that, although the bike was basically complete, it needed more than a little TLC. He decided on a complete strip down and rebuild. He

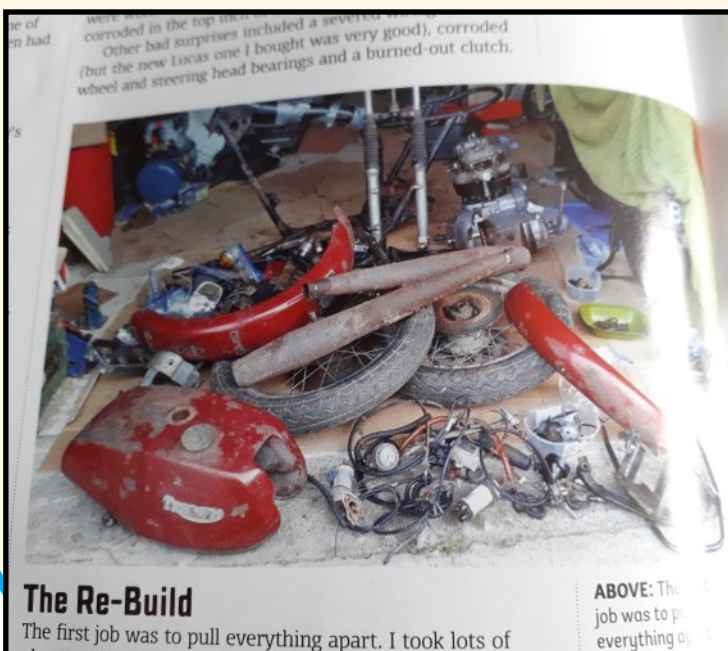
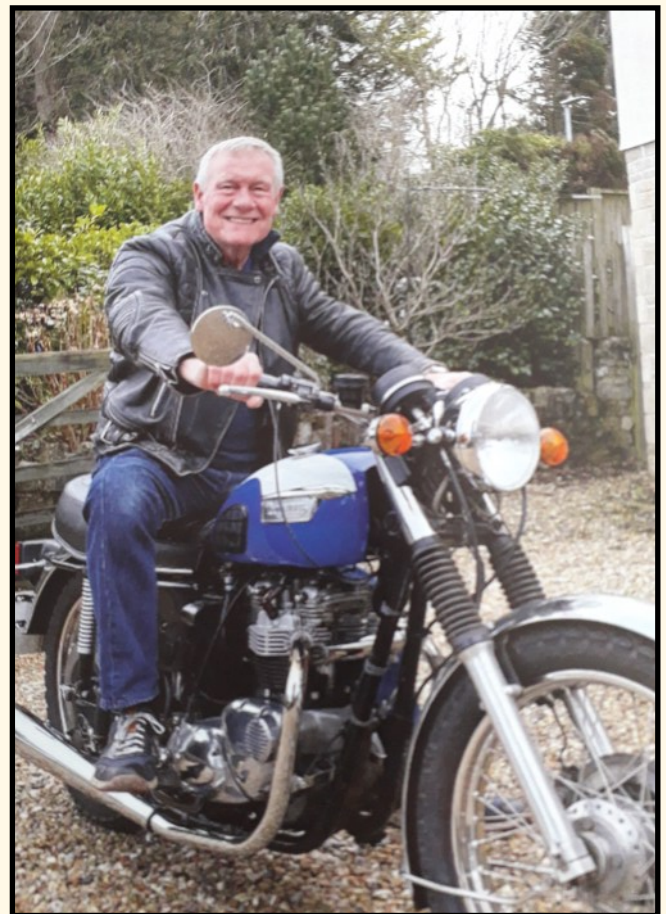
worked on it every single day for about 5 months, even if just wire brushing or painting a small part when time was short, or looking at workshop manuals and the internet when away from home. Luckily Sally had kept the Customs and Excise form showing the bike had been re-imported into the UK in 1995, so he was able to re-register it.

Tim had, at a previous meeting, told us about his quest to restore the bike, so it was interesting to know it is now fully restored and on the road, and to see his amazing story featured in the magazine.

And the moral of the story? Join a u3a group and talk to fellow members (in whatever language). You never know what it can lead to.

Helga Stiles

"Entschuldigung Sie Helga" ...should have been in April Newsletter ...editor



Group News

Sunday Roasties

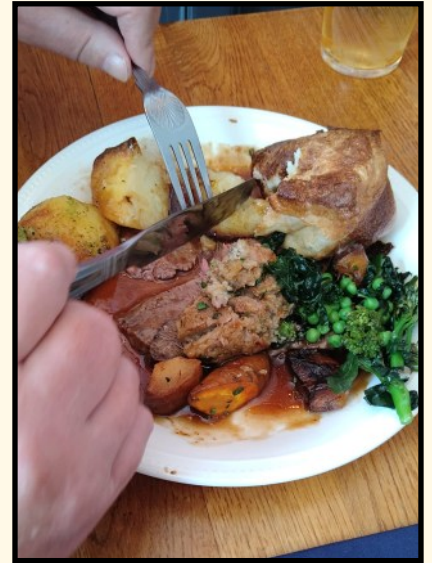
at the Unicorn.

We had various roasts of generous portions served efficiently by friendly staff. These were followed by delicious desserts. It was lovely to see The Unicorn busy again.

As always there was much banter and laughter. Thank you Bill for stepping in for Group Leader John.

Roasties next month are at The Cross Keys Inn, Lydford.

Sarah



Amblers

Walk to Ninesprings Country Park, 15th July.

We started our walk on an old railway track and headed towards the cafe. A little further on we passed a large pond with many ducklings and baby moorhens. This pond has water voles but we didn't see any.

The path meandered up a narrow wooded valley with many small waterfalls and small ponds. Sometimes kingfishers are spotted.

At the top we climbed a few steps and made our way along the top of the hill back to the cafe. Luckily the weather had cooled.

Amblers meet on the 3rd Tuesday of the month.

Tony Sparks



Group News

Ukulele Group's

92 year old Jean Scott has recently been on the back of a motor bike on "Route 66" (one of the Group's songs !) and so far raised over £800 for the Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance. She was well looked after by the other bikers and at the end of the journey was presented with a wonderful waistcoat with lots of motor bike emblems. She is now known as our "Biker Chick" !!

When Jean told the u3a what she was about to do she raised over £80 in a collection box for the Air Ambulance.

As this goes to print, on Friday 25th July Jean and her waistcoat are expected to be at the Edgar Hall monthly Coffee Morning, with the collection box for the Air Ambulance

Our Ukulele Group is usually given a donation for playing for care homes, lunch groups, dementia groups etc. which we send on to the Air Ambulance and, over the years, we have

raised just over £7,000. If you would like to see Jean she can be seen on Orange and Black Route 66 (<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=705441102451426>).

Sue Parry - Group Leader



From the biker website

It's never too late to take that life-changing trip - and this Spring, Orange & Black Motorcycle Tours supported 92-year-old Jean Scott to do just that. Jean got in touch with us in April with a dream of discovering the iconic Route 66 by motorcycle and experiencing a life-changing trip, not just for her, but for those in need of vital air ambulance services. Fast-forward to June, and Jean swapped her local Somerset coast for the California Coast, taking to the road with our legendary tour guide and Route 66 expert Gary "Bear" Fleshman on the back of his Harley-Davidson Road Glide for her bucket list adventure.

Gary says "We don't usually offer pillion only rides, but we're all for people finding their freedom through riding and we wanted to help Jean experience that after she got the bug in her youth. Next year Route 66, or the "Mother Road" as it's commonly known celebrates its centennial, so we thought it only fitting that Jean come along for the ride and get a jump on hitting her own centennial milestones."

Starting in Chicago and ending in Santa Monica, Jean explored historic landmarks and sights including the Blue Whale of Catoosa, Route 66 Museum and Grand Canyon, covering 2700 miles, 13 days of riding, 8 states and battling all weathers. Jean can well and truly say that's one adventure ticked off her bucket list.

Jean says of her trip "The whole experience has been full of highlights. I think my favourite places to visit have been Kansas and Oklahoma as I've heard a lot about them but had never been before; and the Grand Canyon – that was breathtaking."

Jean's inspirational road trip of a lifetime has also made a mark on Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance, who she is currently raising money for. The registered charity provides vital services for the local community and is one of the UK's 21 air ambulance charities that form part of the fleet of 37 helicopters. Collectively, the charities make over 126 lifesaving missions a day and play a pivotal role in supporting emergency treatment of patients within their communities, not least motorcyclists.

Dave Marsh, Sales and Operations Manager at Orange & Black says, "We pride ourselves on helping customers create their dream trip and Jean is a great reminder that it's never too late to make those dreams a reality. It's brilliant to see that this trip has not only changed her life, but those of the people in both her local community, and the wider biking community."

Contributions to Dorset & Somerset Air Ambulance can be made via Jean's fundraising page www.gofundme.com/f/jeans-66-journey

Group News

Birdwatching Group

Another wonderful walk, led by Deon, through the meadows below Swell Wood for....*Steve Davis*



Silver-washed Fritillary



Silver-washed Fritillary



Brown Argos



Common Blue



Gatekeeper



March Tit



Speckled Wood



Nuthatch



Blue Tit

Birds and Butterflies!

'Thrilled' by honour

A British Red Cross volunteer who has spent almost three decades working with the charity has been recognized in the King's Birthday Honours List

Christopher Cox from Langport has been awarded a British Empire Medal (BEM)

The medal celebrates his work alleviating loneliness in the community and fundraising for the charity's work supporting people in crisis.

Christopher said "I am thrilled to be recognized in the King's Birthday Honours, for my work volunteering at the British Red Cross.

"Loneliness can have a huge impact on peoples mental and physical health

"I am proud to lead a dedicated team, which brings people in the community together to tackle this."

"We can see the difference it's making to people's lives and it's a privilege to be recognised for it."

After retiring from teaching, Christopher began his volunteering with the British Red Cross by tutoring First Aid and supporting at hundreds of local events.

Christopher went on to run the Langport Centre in the heart of rural Somerset.

It is open for six days a week, for anyone who might be at risk of experiencing loneliness to drop by and have a cup of tea and a chat.



Charity Theatre Trips

Chris Cox

Our trip to War Horse at Bristol Hippodrome in June was trip number 300 so we had a bit of a party on the coach. Where have the last twenty-one years gone?

Further ahead in 2026 we will be reserving seats for The Greatest Showman. Miss Saigon is also coming back. No doubt there will be a lot more to tempt you.

The best way to keep up to date is at www.charitytheatretrips.com where there are full details and a booking form but you can also phone Chris on 01458 273085.

Under Christopher's leadership, the centre is run entirely by 15 enterprising volunteers, who also organise theatre trips taking people to shows in Bath and Bristol.

Their 300th trip took place in February this year.

Remarkably for a town with a population of just 3,500 the centre regularly raises more than £20,000 per year for the British Red Cross, helping to provide vital services for people who have faced some of life's toughest challenges.

British Red Cross chief Executive Beatrice Butsana-Sita said: "Christopher is incredible ambassador for the British Red Cross and a fantastic example of the brilliant staff and volunteers that support our vital work.

"For almost 30 years he has been a huge figure in our Langport service, giving up his time to support people when they need it most.

"I am delighted to see Christopher rewarded for his work with a British Empire Medal in the King's Birthday Honours List and would like to congratulate him on this amazing achievement."

Thanks to Somerset County Gazette

Chris Cox with Claire Bertschinger and Jill Lock



August

Lazy summer afternoons,
Walks along the beach,
Balmy evenings, cloudless skies,
Stars just out of reach,
Sailing on a quiet lake,
Hammocks in the shade...
These are the simple treasures
Of which August days are made.

☺ *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.

<https://www.somerton.u3asite.uk/>

Please send articles for the Newsletter to the editor

mike.davis@silchester.org

Deadline for the September edition...20th August

Pictures welcome, but keep script brief

Minimum formatting please.