



MARTOCK AND DISTRICT U3A NEWSLETTER NO 52, NOVEMBER 2022

From the Chair:

In this Newsletter we feature a letter from a member, together with my reply. I hope such letters will become a regular feature from now on. Be as critical, forthright and frank as you like, whilst remaining polite. It would be nice though, if as well as negative criticism, we received constructive criticism in the form of how we might improve our performance. Comments occasionally on what we are doing right would also be very welcome.

You may also of course write in confidence to the Chair or any other committee member, but bear in mind that, especially if personal comments are made, the comments may have to be divulged under the Freedom of Information Act.

Monthly meetings:

The next meeting on 14th December is our Christmas event featuring Jan's Christmas Jamboree.

Jan McNeill is a professional entertainer of 37 yrs working as support for Roy Castle, Michael Barrymore, Cannon and Ball and Joe Longthorne. Her Christmas Jamboree includes old Christmas songs, Christmas carols, some funny poems and stories and finishes with all the dance floor Christmas favourites.

We will also feature a retro quiz on events and personalities of the sixties and seventies, which we hope will test your memories and make you smile. Mulled wine and homemade mince pies will be served at this event.

Then on 11th January our monthly meeting will feature a talk by Lisa Bartlett on Iyengar Yoga. This will be a talk about BKS Iyengar and his development of yoga props, creating a yoga practice accessible for all stages of life.

Looking further ahead and with no more pandemic restrictions, we would also welcome suggestions for trips we might organise, and volunteers to organise

such trips. If you have an idea and would like to organise it, get in touch with Mal, our Events Secretary.

Other talks:

Members of the Avalon group of u3as also hold talks at monthly meetings, and other events, which may be of interest to our members. A list of websites of member u3as may be found here on the nascent Avalon website. Hopefully this website will soon be developed further.

<https://u3asites.org.uk/south-west/page/28956>

u3a online learning opportunities:

As well as our own interest groups, and those available in the Avalon Network, u3a offers a number of online interest groups which are run on a national network basis. This is done by joining a special online u3a branch, at a cost of £5 if you are a member of another u3a. Usually group meetings are conducted using Zoom. The aim of such groups is twofold: to cater for members who are isolated through disability or other factors, or to cater for obscure subjects which would appeal only to a small minority.

More information on the groups available and when they are held can be obtained here:

<https://u3asites.org.uk/trustu3a/groups>

Ilminster Literary Festival:

We have received the following from Chard and Ilminster u3a.

Look out forIlminster Literary Festival *For Book and Arts lovers everywhere!*

If you enjoy books and the arts generally then Ilminster Literary Festival (ILF) is for you. Travel no further than to venues such as Monks Yard, The Warehouse Theatre and Ilminster Arts Centre to dip into a week of talks and events which offer something for everyone. Past speakers have included authors, journalists, politicians, figures from across the arts, TV personalities and both local and national speakers.

Planning for the next year's festival, the seventh since ILF began in 2016, is under way. It will run from June 1 to June 8 2023 so please make a note of those dates now and look out for full programme information in the spring, including details of how to book tickets. Regular updates to tickle your fancy will also be given in these U3A newsletters. **To receive our free electronic newsletter, published 4 times a year, please e mail the Festival office – ilminsterlitfest@gmail.com – with a request to go on the ILF mailing list.**

New groups?

A walking football group has been suggested and we are wondering if there is sufficient interest to make it viable. If you are interested in joining such a group contact Mary.

Pauline and Sigurd Reimers facilitate the Climate Change Group for Taunton u3a. During their recent talk here they offered their help and experience to anyone in Martock u3a who is thinking of establishing a similar group here. For their contact details message Greg Atkins.

Use of The George:

The George coffee shop has function rooms with audiovisual facilities available and will offer the u3a a discount for regular bookings. There is a large room which houses up to 60 people, two smaller rooms housing 10 to 12 people, a craft room seating 10 and a lounge with more comfortable seating for 6 people. The discounted rates are £10.50 /hour for the large room and £10 /hour for the smaller rooms. In all cases tea and coffee are provided and included in the price. All u3a subjects can be catered for, and if you want to make a booking contact Naomi (mcfoffice@martockchristianfellowship.org).

Science group:

Following our recent successful trips to “We the Curious” in Bristol and the Etches (fossil) Collection in Kimmeridge, we are planning another trip, this time to Bath Royal Literary and Scientific Institution. The tentative date at present is March 22nd, and if we can get twenty or more members going, it is possible that a talk could be arranged. Such a trip was planned for Yeovil u3a Science Group just before the pandemic, but it had to be cancelled. Then they were going to arrange a talk by a Professor from Bristol University on the Geology of Somerset. This trip will be open to all members, so if interested please contact Greg Atkins.

New Website:

We are creating a new, improved website to replace the current version. We are employing Teapot Creative as website designers, and at present we are planning for it to be active from next January. As well as information about our u3a, it will incorporate an online subscription, membership renewal and payment system using PayPal.

Are you computer literate?



Please pass this on to any members or potential members who may benefit.

Use of computers or tablets is becoming a necessity of modern life. Kay Durrant has offered to help those with low computer proficiency or none at all. She will teach you basic computer skills such as using email or using the Internet, with a laptop or tablet which she will provide. You can therefore decide later whether you wish to purchase your own device, and she will also give advice on such a purchase. You can phone her to arrange such sessions on 07769901061, or if you can already use email at:

durrant.kc42@gmail.com

Kay has also offered to try to help those who have problems or glitches with their device. Please contact her if you need such help.

Merry Martock:

The following has been received from Caroline Bennett of Martock Parish Council and may be of interest to our members:

Merry Martock is a valuable community event hosted free to Martock parish residents to address isolation and loneliness which is often increased during the festive period, much of this due to closure of groups and changes to support networks, family, friends and professional help. I feel this year with the additional financial pressures the need will be ever greater and that Merry Martock will enable a safe place to offer much comfort and joy.

Merry Martock – FREE community event

Thursday 29th December, 12 – 3pm

Martock Parish Hall

2 course hot meal – either meat or plant based option

Fun raffle

Accessible transport – limited numbers

All ages welcome

Attendees must live within the Parish of Martock – Coat, Stapleton, Martock, Hurst, Bower Hinton

To book your place contact:

Caroline Bennett

Seniors Support Coordinator / Martock Community Services Team

[07946 121 612](tel:07946121612) or email caroline.bennett@martock-pc.gov.uk

Usual working days - Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday

Brimsmore Gold Club vouchers:

Discount vouchers for Brimsmore Gold Club and forms for the special bulk purchase of compost will be available at the next monthly meeting, which is the Christmas event,

Help with subscriptions:

Please pass this on to anyone you feel may benefit:

It has come to our attention that a few people on a state pension only or on disability benefit may have difficulty affording our subscription. If this applies to you, please do not allow this to prevent you from joining. A letter or message

should be sent in confidence to the Chair detailing your situation. The committee will then make a decision as to whether your subscription fee can be waved. Your name will be divulged only to committee members directly involved in making a decision.

Reminders:

Please do not pay your subscription by cash unless it is absolutely necessary. We accept payments by credit transfer, cheque, and soon online using PayPal. Also, the preferred method of delivery of this Newsletter is by email. It will soon be possible also to download current and previous issues from our new website. Please do not order a paper copy by post unless this is absolutely necessary. If you are doing so at present, please consider discontinuing this practice at your next renewal and accepting electronic delivery.

We are charged for members receiving copies of Third Age Matters Magazine. If you are currently receiving it and do not wish to, or are not interested in it, please let us know so that we are not charged for unnecessary copies.

Birthdays:

The following had birthdays this month or last, according to information supplied by themselves to us. We wish everyone a very happy birthday:

Birthdays in October:

Margaret Davidson, Laurie Hawes, Joy Moy, Ros Chinn, Susie Stakes, Peggy Horwood, Gordon Richings.

Birthdays in November:

Sue Seeley, Sheila Maybury, Pam Miller, Vivienne Fletcher, Trish Port, Jenny Becker, Geoffrey Hael, Jacqueline Martin, Ann Campbell, Kay Durrant

Correspondence:

The following message has been received from Julie Williams. It is reproduced here with Julie's permission::

Subject: Reply to u3a October Newsletter

"I have waited a while to respond to the newsletter as I wished to collect views of others from u3a to ensure my views /interpretation of your letter is not mistaken, it appears not to be the case.

I am upset and agitated. It appears patronising to women members specifically implying that women are not capable of intellectually demanding groups.

I hope your views are not to be taken this way, u3a may well want more male members but I am sure you could have found a better way of wording it and this letter has had the impact of losing members, a number of us are thinking about it already.

Equally, no one objects to helping out re donation but to imply that the details will not be divulged is against accountability and transparency, it should be declared even if the name is anomolised.

I look forward to the next newsletter.”

Hi Julie

Thank you for your considered reply. It was certainly not my intention to cause offence and I apologise if I did.

Of course I did not mean to imply that women members are less intellectually capable than men. Our u3a branch is continually growing and all members are equally valued, regardless of gender, preference or ability.

I agree with you that we should always be transparent, but I feel you may have misunderstood the proposed grant to disabled members. In the interests of privacy we would not divulge the names of the people who applied. The amount of the grant made recently was not recorded in the last Newsletter as it is not yet known, but a maximum of £100 has been set.

Best wishes,
Greg.

Note from the Chair: it is clear to me now that I did not express myself clearly enough in the October Newsletter and that may have created misunderstanding; my thanks to Julie for pointing this out. I apologise for this.

Finally, if you have any interesting news or views, and would like to publish an item in our Newsletter, please contact Greg Atkins, Chair.

Committee members:

Chair: Greg Atkins; chairmaru3a@gmail.com
Vice Chair: Chris Atkins; vicemaru3a1@gmail.com
Treasurer: Sue Roberts; treasmaru3@gmail.com
Secretary: Penny Whitehouse; secmaru3a@gmail.com
Membership Secretary: Susie Stakes; martocku3amembership@gmail.com
Events Secretary: Mal Nelson Hedge; martocku3aevents1@gmail.com
Groups Secretary: Mary Marshall; martocku3agroupssec1@gmail.com
Web Manager: Alison Bleasdale; webmaru3a@gmail.com
Publicity Secretary: Mona Mace; pubmaru3a@gmail.com

Committee Member: Pat Brett; commaru3a@gmail.com
Honorary President: Sue MacLean