



MARTOCK AND DISTRICT U3A
NEWSLETTER NO 56, MARCH 2023

Website: <http://www.martocku3a.org.uk/>

From the Chair:

In this Newsletter, we feature an article from the the Writer's Group, which is facilitated by Larry Jeram-Croft. In the next Newsletter we will feature short articles by the facilitators of the Mah Jong and Scrabble groups describing the activities of their groups, as well as a proposal for a Modern Board Gaming Group.

Monthly meetings:

Our next monthly meeting on 8th March will be a practical one. Linda Fisher of Will Management Services will talk about setting up a Will and Lasting Power of Attorney.

Then on 12th April our member John Highnam will talk about his visits to Antarctica when he lived in New Zealand, and his view of the continent.

Day trip:

We are organising a day trip on the West Somerset Railway which runs from Bishops Lydeard near Taunton to Minehead. The date has now been changed to Wednesday 31st May because 29th May is a Bank Holiday. We are fortunate in that on this new date only steam trains are running. The full adult fare is £30, but we can get a reduction to a group rate if 16 or more people go. To this should be added £10 petrol cost if we use cars, and the cost of lunch. If a large number of people are going we could think about hiring a coach. So if you want to go inform Greg Atkins as soon as possible, so we can negotiate a group rate and transport. We are not looking for firm commitments at this stage, just intentions. More information about the West Somerset Railway can be obtained from their website:

<https://www.west-somerset-railway.co.uk/>



Science Group:

We are arranging a trip to Bath Royal Literary and Scientific Institution on March 22nd. The cost is likely to be around £15 plus lunch. This is open to all members, so let Greg Atkins know if you are interested.

French Group:

We still have no volunteers to be facilitator of an intermediate French Group, although there does appear to be support. If you are interested in volunteering contact Mary.

Modeling Group:

There has been a proposal to form a new Modeling Group. This would be a forum for people to discuss their projects, which would include model boats, model train layouts, airplanes, radio controlled cars etc. If interested contact Mary.

Reminder:

The committee will consider applications from group facilitators for financial support for reasonable activity, including the purchase of equipment and consumables. Any equipment purchased will become the property of Martock and District u3a. If interested please contact a committee member.

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.

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

Laser Printer:

We have purchased an HP Colour LaserJet Pro M255dw printer. This is available to all u3a members to print u3a material free of charge; we currently have just A4 paper available but could get in other sizes. It is also available to u3a members for private printing, at a small charge to cover toner and paper. You can print from a PC, tablet or smartphone by WiFi or by using a usb2 cable. If you wish to use it contact Greg Atkins.

Card Reader:

We now have a card reader for payment of subscriptions and renewals at monthly meetings using a debit or credit card. Although we will still accept cash, we prefer you to use a card if you possibly can.

New website:

We have a problem at present in that a Google search is still bringing up the old website. We are trying to rectify this by deleting the old website. To get the new website, you need to use the appropriate URL:

<http://www.martocku3a.org.uk/>

Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra Cake Concert - Friday 10th March, Westlands, Yeovil



Mail 6:29 pm Thu 16 Feb

5085_A4_top_Participate Cake Yeovil AW NO BLEED PDF

70%

bourneouth symphony orchestra

£6.50 Admission including cake!

Cake Concert

A concert of classical favourites and light music by a trio of BSO musicians, with refreshments. Dementia-Friendly.

Westlands Entertainment Venue, Yeovil, BA20 2DD

Friday 10 March 2023, 11.30am – 1pm (Doors 11am)

£6.50 (including levy) including refreshments

westlandsyeovil.co.uk or 01935 422 884

LOTTERY FUNDED ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

WESTLANDS

Wincanton's first History Day: March 4th 2023

John Baxter, our member from Wincanton, has sent this information which is relevant to the monthly meeting on October 11th, when he will give a talk entitled "Alberto Bioletti, Soldier of Napoleon and Clockmaker of Wincanton". If

you want to whet your appetites for this, he has published a book on this subject. It is available from Amazon:

<https://amzn.eu/d/2kZZWim>

Bioletti is being commemorated with a blue plaque whose unveiling will be



carried out during Wincanton's History Day. During this event I understand that John is going to dress up as Bioletti! John has sent:

This event has been made possible thanks to **generous support** from **South Somerset District Council** and from **Wincanton Town Council**.

Things are scheduled to get started at **11.00 am** with the opening of the **new Wincanton History Society Museum** at 5 High Street, the former Parish

Office building next to what was Clementina. We are delighted that **Richard Price**, a clock expert, who is well known from the BBC's Antiques Roadshow, has agreed to perform the opening.

Next **Unveiling the Blue Plaque** to commemorate **Alberto Bioletti**, former soldier of Napoleon who settled in Wincanton to live at 71 High Street. He worked as a clockmaker and barometer maker and lived here with his family for 45 years. Richard has consented to do this too.

At 2 pm John Baxter, author of **Surviving Napoleon, the Clockmaker's Tale** will deliver in the Balsam Centre a fully illustrated talk on Bioletti's extraordinary life and that of the hundreds of French officer POWs who spent 7.5 years in Wincanton

There are several more events scheduled. A full description can be obtained from Greg Atkins.

Walking holidays in Crete:

Please reply to Active Crete <info@activecrete.gr>.

For the attention of your EASY WALKS group
Invitation to an Easy Walking Holiday in Crete (Walking distances 4-5km)
Dear Fellow Walkers,
ACTIVE CRETE would like to invite your group to visit us in Crete for an Easy Walking Holiday. Other Walking groups have been delighted with their Active Crete Holidays and they are coming back again and again.

The walks are rich in archaeological, historical, botanical and geological features; they are of no difficulty and last approximately 3-4 hours including the necessary breaks; the maximum length of the walks is 5km. Our area is part of the European Programme NATURA 2000 which aims to protect our natural heritage. You can explore and enjoy the rich botanical, historical, archaeological and cultural landscape with our knowledgeable help.

Writer's Group:

The following has been contributed by Larry Jeram-Croft, facilitator of the Writer's Group, and members of the group.

The group has now been meeting regularly apart from over Christmas when we all went down with various bugs. We've been doing various writing exercises which have been fun but now have another focus.

During a couple of recent meetings we have been discussing some ideas regarding a group project. We have decided to have a communal effort to write something. I say 'something' because it could be a short story, a novella or even a complete novel – it's early days. The idea is to write a humorous story about an archetypal British village; it will be set in the Somerset levels and involve local wildlife (and to say anything more on that subject would spoil things). We have been brainstorming characters and plot lines. Then the idea will be to produce a chapter for each meeting. I don't want to give too much away at this time (mainly because we are very much still developing ideas). However, as a taster one of our members has written a few paragraphs to illustrate where we might be heading. A misunderstanding of a local tradition:

Working Title: 'Blackwell Forloren'

The Well Dressing committee: The Vicars' Wife - Sally Fairweather
Old Mrs Thing - Mrs. Thingleton who
cleaned for the previous Vicar
Penelope Jones
Jontie Bullock - The Butchers Wife
Tollemina Clarke - Newly arrived in the
village with her mother.
Constance Grey-Williamson

After a request notice is put up for design ideas and materials for the annual 'Well Dressing', the committee are opening bags which contain hats, underwear, and an amazing assortment of clothes in all stages of wear and tear.

The committee are looking through all the clothes with astonishment.

Old Mrs Thing held up a peach satin John Paul Gaultier corset.

"I suppose we could use the suspenders to hang flowers and offerings from."

"That was Mum's when she was going through her Madonna stage," said Tollemina. "Before we moved to the village."

"There are a few old lady satin cotton corsets with steadfast suspenders left over from the last jumble sale," said Sally the Vicar's wife.

"We could do with more variety," announced Constance. "Maybe some black," she added.

"I may be able to find some," mumbled Sally

Everyone looked at her, she blushed and fluttered her hands ineffectually. "Well, we were all young once and besides it's surprising what turns up at jumble sales."

Old Mrs. Thing, who cleaned for the previous vicar said, "I found some patent leather boots in his wardrobe."

"Perhaps he played a horse guard in a Gilbert and Sullivan opera." Offered Penelope.

"What with stiletto heels and a whip?" replied Old Mrs Thing. They both looked at each other with raised eyebrows and pursed lips. The suspender horde was augmented by a no longer white, seen better days set, with only one pale blue mini bow remaining.

"I wonder", observed Penelope Jones. "If they used to be all pale blue?"

"I was wondering," mused young Tollemina. "What happened to the other bows?"

"I expect they'll be in the washing machine filter along with the hair clips and shredded tissues." said Constance. "They used to be Mum's," she added with a look of profound disgust.

"That's what happens when you mix your colours in a wash", sighed Jonti Bullock the butcher's wife, in a supportive sort of way.

Birthdays:

March is a popular month for birthdays, according to information supplied by themselves to us. We wish everyone a very happy birthday.

Beth Hill, Liz Stevens, Sheila Young, Carol Youngson, Louise Melbourne, Angela Hunt Cooke, Barbara Francis, Rosanne Crowther, Ruby Helyer, Eileen Cripps, Adrian Sutton

If you have any interesting news or views, or if you would like an item published in the Newsletter, contact Greg Atkins.

Committee members:

Chair: Greg Atkins; chairmaru3a@gmail.com

Vice Chair: Chris Atkins; vicemaru3a1@gmail.com

Treasurer: Sue Roberts; treasmaru3@gmail.com

Secretary: Pat Brett; commaru3a@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

Honorary President: Sue MacLean