

From the Chair, Chris Atkins:

It's been another good month for our u3a. At our April meeting, Ian Munro gave a poignant talk on Berlin where he spent time as a young man. I think most of us remember the partitioning of East and West by the Wall and also seeing pictures of those in the East trying desperately to get to the West on grainy images on our small screen televisions. We donated almost £40 for Ian's chosen charities & I thank you all for supporting our raffle. We also signed up five new members which is a lovely thing to be able to do.

The Garden Group visit to Westonbirt in the Autumn is already being subscribed to and deposits are being taken. I haven't been since I was a teenager, so I am especially looking forward to seeing the trees covered in their Autumn glory and we all owe a debt of thanks to Elizabeth Kirtley for organising what we all hope will be a both vibrant and visual delight. If you think you might like to go on this trip or require more information please email Elizabeth on eak1208@yahoo.co.uk and see page 5 for more details.

I have a long sturdy black umbrella in my possession which was given to me at the end of the last meeting. I haven't heard who it belongs to so I will keep it safe until the May meeting when I hope it will be claimed, if not before. As always, suggestion for groups or any other thoughts concerning our u3a are always welcome. Thanks to all for your continued support, it is so valued and keeps us moving forward.

May Meeting on Wednesday 8 May, 2.15 for 2.30 start

Caroline Brown, Retired Psychologist and Lecturer 'Our Divided Brain, insight into the way our brains work'

(See page 4 for an introduction to Caroline Brown and important information about parking)

Future Meetings currently arranged

12 June — Joe Bleasdale 'Keep Bees Without Fuss or Chemicals. 45 years of experience beekeeping in Hampshire and Somerset'

10 July — Claire Wainwright, Cancer Research UK 'Breast and Prostate Cancer'

11 September — Fergus Dowding 'The History of Martock'

9 October — Greg Atkins 'How To Catch Flu'

13 November — David Sutcliffe 'Cecil Sharp, folk music collector, his life and work'

11 December — Christmas Party

Please contact the Publicity & Events Secretary if you have ideas for Speakers

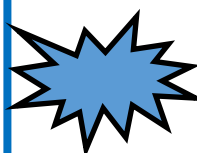


Welcome to our new members: Alyson and Barry Allen, Jenny Coman, Anthea Davidson, Keith Bunkin, Kathleen and Geoffrey Mountjoy, Christine and Geoff Page, Rebecca Tracey, Peter Brunton, Carol White, Sylvia Seal, John and Vivien Alexander

We look forward to speaking to you at a meeting, please make yourself known to a

The George Coffee Shop, Martock

Wednesday 9am — 1.30pm;
Thursday and Friday 10am — 4.30pm;
Saturday 9.30am — 1pm



**Celebration Corner
Happy Birthday to:**

Pauline Warren, Jenny Chapman, Robert Miller, Poli Benstead, Ian Davidson, Derek Mace, Elizabeth Glaisher, Jorja Hael, Alice Ledger, Jo Greatwich, Michael Greatwich, Gaynor Talley, Stephen Fox-Collins, Joanna Culliford, Ann Everitt, Carol Pembury, Tim Woodcock, Newton Jones, Geoff Page

If you would like your name mentioned, please let the Membership Secretary know your birth month if you haven't done so already (phone 07555 033027 or email martocku3amembership@gmail.com) Do you have a special birthday or anniversary coming up? Please let the Membership Secretary know so we can give you good wishes.

Dates for Your May Diary

- Friday 3 May** 10.30am-12.30pm, All Saints' Church, Martock — Make Every Cuppa Count in aid of Guide Dogs — Refreshments, raffle, dogs on leads welcome & can be blessed if you wish
- Wednesday 8 May** 2.15pm for 2.30pm start, Martock Parish Hall — Martock & District u3a monthly meeting
- Saturday 11 May** 10.00am-1.00pm, Moorlands Shopping Centre, Martock — Farmer's Market
- Thursday 16 May** 6.00pm, Brimsmore Carden Centre — Gold Club Discount Event for our u3a, refreshments provided — **All u3a Members & Guests Welcome**
- Friday 17 May** Meet at 9.30am, Moorlands Shopping Centre — Martock Health Walk
- Friday 31 May** 10.00am-12.00pm, Martock Parish Hall — Come4Coffee

EMERGENCY CONTACT FORMS

Please help us to help you in an emergency by completing an Emergency Contact Form, if you have not already done so. Thank you. The Membership Secretary has forms at the monthly meetings, or contact her for a form by email martocku3amembership@gmail.com or phone 07555033027

Introducing your Committee members

Hi, I am Pat Brett, Secretary of Martock and District u3a.

I am a Lancashire Lass but eventually moved to Tunbridge Wells where I met my husband, David and taught Maths and Science at Tunbridge Wells Girls Grammar School. We were married in the 70's and have 2 sons and 2 grandsons.

In 1982 we began life abroad, living on Sugar Estates all over the world. My husband is a Sugar Technologist. This is when I started to play Golf and MahJong.



In 1998 we retired to Wellington, South Africa, where we lived until 2010, then

coming back to the UK to be near to our family. We found a house in Martock. Never having been to Somerset before, it was a pleasant surprise.

After settling down to village life, I eventually joined u3a and last year became the group leader for MahJong. I also belong to the Martock Historical Society and Gardening Society, help with Come4Coffee, volunteer at Montacute House and run a Book Club. In my spare time I like to paint.

The proudest moment of my life was when we went to Buckingham Palace to see our eldest son, a Lieutenant Colonel in the Royal Artillery, receive the MBE for services to the Army, from the then Prince Charles.

From a Member

Greg Atkins writing about Berlin

Ian Munro's talk at the April monthly meeting reminded me of two experiences I had as a young man in Germany, firstly when the country was still divided and then when the Berlin Wall fell in 1989. In 1971, I visited the then Karl Marx Stadt (now Chemnitz) in the former DDR (Deutsche Demokratische Republik, East Germany) for a scientific conference. I remember the East German scientists there were always accompanied by English speaking Stasi (Secret Police) members when they talked to foreigners and only being allowed to talk about work. Outside our hotel, we could only go out in groups accompanied by a Stasi member. I also went to Berlin for a conference in 1989 when the Wall fell. I went through a hole in the Wall with a colleague and walked around East Berlin. My memory is of the smell of sewerage in the streets (although I didn't see any) and seeing Trabi cars everywhere. Occasionally you would see a Mercedes, obviously belonging to a Communist Party official. I met East German scientists from Humboldt University in East Berlin at the conference, on their first visit to the West and remember them sitting huddled in a group in the bar, counting their West German currency to see if they had enough to buy a beer.

There was still some nostalgia in East Germany among older people for the simple living in the DDR.

For example, there was only one kind of shampoo people and for most people only one kind of car. There was also an all-encompassing social welfare system, no unemployment, all medical needs were met and if they toed the party line, workers were given expenses paid holidays in Spas or resorts on the Baltic Coast.

The former East German Communist party (now Links Partei) still got 28 seats in the Bundestag at the last election, all from the former DDR area. If you are interested in learning more, I would recommend two German films (streamed or downloaded versions have English subtitles): "Das Leben der Anderen" (The Life of Others) and "Goodbye Lenin" (the original film was in German, but the title is English). For those who can read German or who have Kindle translators, I suggest "Zonenkinder" by Jana Hensel, which describes a happy childhood in Leipzig in the former DDR.



The photo of me at the Wall was taken in 1989, just after its fall; I bought the hat from a former East German border guard, now unemployed & selling unused uniforms to tourists by the Wall to make a living.

Have you got any useful hints, information or experiences you think members will be interested in? Please send your ideas to Chris Atkins.

Martock & District Accounts Update

The Accounts for March 2024 show income of £302, Expenditure of £158.19, with a total balance of £2,733.83. An accounts update, based on the last completed month eg. March figures in May Newsletter, is given to inform members of the ongoing situation. Please email the Treasurer on treasmaru3@gmail.com if you would like more detail about the accounts. The raffle at the March monthly meeting raised £45. This was donated by the speaker to Smile Train.

Martock & District Groups Update

If you wish to be or are a member of a Martock & District Group, **please note the following:**

1. To comply with the u3a Insurance Policy which covers Martock & District u3a, **all members must be allocated to a Group by the Groups Secretary.** Please do not approach a Group Leader directly; and
2. The u3a insurance does not provide personal accident cover and physically active group activities are undertaken at members' own risk.

To join a Group, contact the Groups Secretary on martocku3agroupssec1@gmail.com or ring the Chair on 07572 647523

More information on Groups is shown on the following page.

Parking in The George Car Park for u3a Monthly Meetings

We are allowed to use this carpark without charge for most meetings. But please put your u3a Membership Card on your dashboard when parking for these meetings. Thank you.

An Introduction to Caroline Brown

— the speaker at the meeting on 8 May

Caroline started her BSc in psychology in 1993, aged 32, at Bristol University. The subject was so absorbing and interesting that, despite only having low grade A levels she achieved a 1st class mark! She started her PhD in 1997, investigating the high frequency electrical activity marking a form of attention.

Gaining her PhD in 2001, Caroline's first postdoctoral research was at Oxford University, followed by research at Warwick and Bristol universities. In 2004, Caroline was appointed Senior Lecturer at the University of the West of England, where she remained until retirement in 2021.

Currently Caroline's focus is on developing an environmental project on Barrington, along with her small dog Bramble, and enjoying grandparent duties whenever possible.

SOS... For a member with experience setting up/updating websites using WordPress

**Would you be able to help the Committee to enhance
the Martock & District u3a website?**

Please contact Chris Atkins on martocku3achair24@gmail.com or 07572 647523

Current and Proposed Groups

Various members are interested in setting up Groups to consider **Lecan's Development of Freud's Thinking, Cribbage** and **Family History**. Are you interested in joining any of these Groups? Please contact the Groups Secretary on martocku3agroupssec1@gmail.com or contact a member of the Committee (see page 6) if you are.

The current Groups are shown below. The relevant monthly date is given if relevant — eg. 3rd is 3rd week in month on that day.

If you wish to join a Group, please contact the Groups Secretary by email or ring the Chair on 07572 647523.

Monday am	Tuesday am	Wednesday am	Thursday am	Friday am
Scrabble — every week	Art — 1st and 3rd Sewing — 2nd Art Appreciation — 4th Cycling — monthly	Philosophy — 1st Science — 4th	Beginners' Bridge — 2nd and 4th	Bridge — every week
Monday pm	Tuesday pm	Wednesday pm	Thursday pm	Friday pm
Dance Group — 2nd and 4th Spanish — alternate weeks MahJong — 2nd Play Reading Drama — 4th	Recorders — 1st and 3rd Recorder Consort — alternate weeks Recorded Music— 1st Modellers — 2nd Flower Arranging — 3rd Modern Board Games — monthly Ukelele —alternate Tuesday and Wednesday	Writing — 2nd Ukelele —alternate Tuesday and Wednesday Paper Crafting — 4th	German Beginners — every week German Improvers — alternate weeks French Conversation— 1st French Improvers — 2nd, 3rd and 4th Book Group— 4th	

Other Groups that meet at times and venue agreed by the Members: Lunch Club; Theatre Club; Try A Craft; Mindfulness; Garden Visiting



RED LEAF HUNTING TRIP TO WESTONBIRT ARBORETUM WEDNESDAY 23 OCTOBER



Coach — departs 08.30 from Martock, returns 18.00.

Cost — £32 per person, includes coach and entrance to Arboretum

For more details, email Elizabeth Kirtley on eak1208@yahoo.co.uk

£10 deposit required to book a place — non-refundable unless trip cancelled, medical reason or agreement from Committee. Final date to sign-up — 18 September when full payment is required. Open to all members and accompanying guests



Martock & District u3a 2023-24 Committee

Chair – Chris Atkins martocku3achair24@gmail.com **Please note new email address**

Vice Chair –

Treasurer – Sue Roberts treasmaru3a@gmail.com

Secretary – Pat Brett commaru3a@gmail.com

Web Manager – Alison Bleasdale webmaru3a@gmail.com

Groups Secretary – Mary Marshall martocku3agroupssec1@gmail.com

Membership Secretary – Alison Sutton martocku3amembership@gmail.com or for information about membership please ring 07555 033027

Publicity & Events Secretary – Adrian Sutton pubmaru3a@gmail.com

Committee Member – Carol Youngson comm4maru3a@gmail.com

Committee Member – Philip Booth comm5maru3a@gmail.com

President — Sue MacLean martocku3agroupssec2@gmail.com

STOP PRESS

**TICKETS FOR u3a FESTIVAL 18-20 JULY NOW AVAILABLE — selling fast!
GO TO <https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/festival-2024> TO BOOK YOUR PLACE**

May Facts and Legends ...

May is named after the Greek goddess Maia, who is the Greek goddess of fertility and



was the mother of Hermes .
May's birthstone is the emerald which is



emblematic of love and success.

The birth flower for May is Lily of the Valley.

In Medieval times, 1st May began to emerge as a day of feasting and dancing in towns and villages across the British Isles. Beltane or 'the fire of Bel', had particular significance to the Celts as it represented the first day of summer and was celebrated with bonfires to welcome in the new season. Still celebrated today, we perhaps know Beltane better as 1 May or May Day.

Although the May Day Bank Holiday is now on the first Monday in May in the UK, it often falls on 1

May, which is celebrated with maypole dancing. Children, especially girls, often dance around a tall pole which is decorated with long, colourful, flowing ribbons.

Among the many superstitions associated with May Day was the belief that washing the face with dew on the morning of 1 May would beautify the skin and bring good luck. So you can go outside and sprinkle your face with morning dew or snow!

Other events for May include:

- The Eurovision Song Contest — last won by the UK in 1997
- The Empire State Building was opened on 1 May 1931
- Florence Nightingale was born in Florence on 12 May 1820
- The summit of Everest was first reached on 29 May 1953, by New Zealander Edmund Hillary, and the Nepalese Sherpa Tenzing Norgay. Since then, almost 12,000 people have climbed to the summit.