



Village Strollers exploring footpaths near Inkberrow

**Newsletter Issue 84 June 2023**

Registered Charity Number 1101530

## Committee Members

Chair	Deborah Andrews
Vice-Chair	Chris Wolstencroft
Charity Commission Liaison & Publicity	
Secretary & Beacon Administrator	Alison Williams
Treasurer	David Keeling
Membership Secretary	John Boon
Programme Secretary	Nicky Neill
Committee Member	Ros Gowers

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Website Manager & Third Age Trust Volunteer	Alun Edwards	
Technical Support	Richard Hunt	
Newsletter Editor	Bärbel Wolstencroft	
Cotswold Link	Deborah Andrews	
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Pastoral Care	Joyce Davey	
All Group Coordinators	see the Group List for contact details	
General Enquiries	John Boon	07811243543

*The above can be reached by email from the website Contact page*

*<https://u3asites.org.uk/evesham/contact>*

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## Welcome...



...to the Summer issue of our Newsletter, end to end packed with interesting news, images and art work from our groups and wider afield.

**Don't miss this year's AGM scheduled for 5 July**, details on pages 4 & 5. Art lovers may want to take note of the Cotswold Link Special

Interest Day on 29 June. The Evesham Festival of words feature on page 7 offers much entertainment and culture on your doorstep, while information on a Nationwide Campaign searching for WW2 family memories on page 8 may appeal to the history buffs among our members. And don't miss the chance to win a new poetry book by taking part in the competition on page 10 while enjoying the sample poems.

Our groups have not been idle and there is a good roundup of activities. Fancy playing skittles during the summer months? Then look no further than Summer Skittles 3 on page 19. Some amusing intricacies of the Spanish and English languages are highlighted on page 29 and the Quiz on page 27 tests your knowledge with a 'Walk on the Wild side'.

Enjoy the read! Please make a note of the deadline for the September issue, which is on **Tuesday 1 August 2023**.

Bärbel Wolstencroft

**The photo on the title page** was taken by Terry Woodfield and shows members of the Village Strolls Group exploring the landscape near Inkberrow. See article on page 33.

## From the Chair



Dear members

After a fairly wet and miserable Spring, I hope we are all basking in some warm sunshine by the time you read this. Please don't blame me if it's still raining!

I would like to make a little plea to our members. As you know, u3a branches all over the country are run by their local committees. Without the committees there would be no u3a. Here in Evesham, we are currently working with quite a small committee and some of our committee members are carrying out more than one role. This year, two of our committee members will be standing down, so we are hoping that somewhere out there are the people who would be able to replace them. In particular, we are looking for a treasurer. If you feel that you would like to become part of our merry band and especially if you know you have the skills and expertise to take on the role of treasurer, I would be delighted to hear from you. If you think that becoming a trustee is a step too far but would like to support the work of the committee, for example helping with the organisation of Open Day or assisting officers of the committee, please get in touch with me or any member of the committee – contact details are on the website and in this newsletter.

Finally, **our AGM will be held on Wednesday 5 July at the Methodist Church at 2.00 pm** – slightly later than usual, but still within the required fifteen months, as we are, at the point of writing, still waiting for some group account balances so that the treasurer can get the accounts to the auditor. Tea, coffee and cake will be served afterwards. This is always a lovely opportunity to chat to friends old and new. I hope we will see you there.

Deborah

# Monthly Meetings

<https://u3asites.org.uk/evesham/events>



I think we must all be having a very good time as members of Evesham and District u3a because the year is certainly flying by! By the time you read this, we will be almost halfway through it and I am already booking speakers for 2024.

I am pleased to be seeing more of you at our monthly meetings and I hope you are enjoying the speakers and the socialising afterwards. As usual, there is a reminder below about upcoming speakers and their topics. Details are always on the website and on our Facebook page.

As you have probably read elsewhere, we have **postponed our AGM from June to July** and we have decided not to have a speaker but just to focus on the business of the meeting, with the promise of tea, coffee and homemade bakes afterwards! I hope this will tempt you to come along and be involved. You will be warmly welcomed!

Nicky Neill

**7 June 2023**

## **Gill Pawson – The Evesham Civic Society**

Gill is an active member of our u3a and will tell us about the purpose and activities of the Society, which celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2022.

**Refreshments** – Birdwatching

**5 July 2023**

## **AGM – with tea, coffee, cake and socialising afterwards**

**Refreshments** – Board Games

**2 August 2023**

**Ian Raven – The Vale of Berkeley Railway**

The VoBR is a new heritage railway created from the old branch line running from Sharpness Docks on the River Severn to Berkeley Road on the main Bristol Birmingham line. The line was closed in 1964 and a team of enthusiasts are restoring it ready to run trains again. The talk covers how the line came to be closed and how they are going about restoring it.

**Refreshments – Book Club**

**6 September 2023**

**Peter Gill – Private Godfrey's Real War**

To the legions of fans of 'Dad's Army', Private Charles Godfrey was the wonderfully endearing, kind and gentle retired tailor who lived with his two spinster sisters in Cherry Tree Cottage, Walmington-on-Sea. However, the Great War experiences of William Arnold Ridley, who played Godfrey, as a combatant in the front line trenches of the Western Front, would leave him both physically and mentally scarred for life.

**Refreshments – Bookends**

## **Cotswold Link**

### **Special Interest Day on Thursday 29 June 2023**

The Pavilion, Hatherley Lane, Cheltenham, GL51 6PN, 10.30 – 15.30

Four talks on the theme

#### **Art & Patronage**

For more details and an application form go to

[www.u3asites.org.uk/cotswold-link](http://www.u3asites.org.uk/cotswold-link)

# Special Features

## Evesham Festival of Words 2023

A cracking good year of events

By Sue Ablett

2022 was a good year for Evesham Festival of Words and 2023 is set to be even better. With over 35 events planned throughout the year, there really is something for everyone in this year's programme. The main Festival weekend starts on Thursday 29 June and has a fantastic series of events right through to the evening of Sunday 2 July. However, events run all through the year.

We started the year in March with a joint event at Holland House, 'No Man is an Island' – The Life and Poetry of John Donne. By total contrast, the last event of the year in December is 'A Christmas Carol', a joint event with The Henrician. But there is so much in between.

We have joined up with Holland House for three more events: 'Gloucestershire Observed', 'Richard III – From Car Park to Reburial', and 'SS Suevic – a Tale of Shipwreck and Survival'. Partnerships are an important part of the Festival. We join up with Raphael's to support their Easter Charity Weekend – a lovely afternoon tea with a talk celebrating 80 years of Desert Island Discs, and Raphael's is also the venue for our usual Festival Quiz Night. We are linking with the Evesham Walking Festival to bring a Literary Links walk, focusing on the villages of Dumbleton and Alderton; and with Cycle Evesham Vale for our first ever Bikes and Books event – a cycle ride with a literary theme.

There is so much else on offer: a two-course supper at Cornmill Yard with a talk about Producing the Antiques Roadshow, a Poetry Evening/Open Mic, a guided walk round the village of Slad 'in the footsteps of Laurie Lee', a concert by Evesham Operatic and Dramatic Society (EODS), a repeat of last year's very successful evening with Colin Pitts and John Raphael, more from the family tree, a talk from exotic 18<sup>th</sup> century Mughal India to Europe,

confessions of a book blurb writer, a talk on Sherlock Holmes, Ladies of Blenheim 'Lust and Laudanum', two creative writing workshops – and that is just up to the main Festival weekend!

We are thrilled to have some really big names this year: Turi King, who will be familiar to many from the TV show 'DNA Family Secrets', Sophie Hannah, best-selling author of psychological suspense, and Joanna Cannon, another best-selling author (The Trouble with Goats and Sheep). The concluding event of our main Festival weekend sees Festival Patron, Alistair McGowan, talking about his love of poetry.

Later in the year we mark the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of 'The Great Train Robbery', welcome Mikron Theatre Company back with their performance of 'Twitchers', celebrating the RSPB; and a one-woman play with Liz Grand 'Mrs Churchill – My Life with Winston'.

Details of all Festival events can be found on our website [www.eveshamfestivalofwords.org](http://www.eveshamfestivalofwords.org) The Festival Brochure is now widely available. For further information or with any queries, please contact Festival Chair, Sue Ablett [info@eveshamfestivalofwords.org](mailto:info@eveshamfestivalofwords.org) or phone 0787 1285606.

## **A Nationwide Campaign**

### **Their Finest Hour**

Share Your Family Memories of WW2

By Ally Edwards

'Their Finest Hour' is a Heritage Lottery funded nationwide campaign organised by Dr Stuart D. Lee of the University of Oxford, who presented a talk about JRR Tolkien at our monthly meeting in October 2022. This project could provide opportunities for a range of u3a groups to get involved, such as creative writing, family research, history, photography and more.

You don't need to have been there, but maybe your family talked about the war? Perhaps you have snapshots, objects or stories that have significance in your family. Your family memories may be from military life or based on home or working life, but all are valued. As well as artefacts from the front, do you know about the experiences of those at home, including women and children? As these personal stories are fast fading from living memory, preserving them and the wartime objects that often accompany them is vital.



Individuals or groups could also bring their stories to a 'Digital Collection Day' or volunteer. They are being run at a host of museums, libraries, services charities, and schools across the country, including one on 16 June in Worcester and on 7 October in Leamington Spa. On 10 March, I joined u3a members to volunteer at one of the first in Oxford and

found that it's like 'Antiques Roadshow' without the valuation! There is so much you can do, from meet and greet to what I enjoyed the most, showing someone their husband's war record online, helping them understand more about their family story. He flew Lancasters. To see examples, please visit <https://theirfinesthour.english.ox.ac.uk> and upload Second World War related stories.

**Photo top:** Three children waiting outside the wreckage of their home. Author: New Times Paris Bureau Collection, September 1940. (USIA) NARA FILE #: 306-NT-3163V WAR and CONFLICT BOOK #. Licensed CC BY-SA 2.0, Sue Wallace via Wikimedia Commons.

**Photo bottom:** u3a volunteers interview a member of the public. Credit: Their Finest Hour, licensed by CC BY-NC 4.0.

## How I can offer my support



As I am uniquely placed as a member of u3a and was once part of Oxford University, I have prepared training for u3a groups to run a collection over several meetings. In this way, you can help to record for posterity those memories of life during and after the events of 1939–1945 handed down in families. If you want to take part with your u3a group, please contact Ally Edwards, Website team

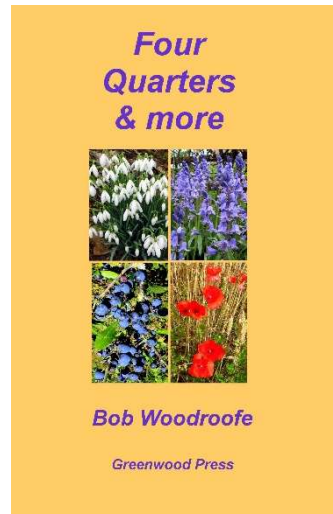
<https://u3asites.org.uk/evesham/ mailing/c:38858>

I have attempted to involve the u3a in this project on a national level, which led me into the bureaucracy of the national organisation. I have enlisted as a Third Age Trust Volunteer, organised online events, set up a u3a email list, and written articles for the national email newsletter and the 'Third Age Matters' magazine. The u3a leaders of research and learning have been a great help.

Ally Edwards, Website Manager

## Four Quarters & more Poetry from around the year

Never sitting idle, Bob Woodroffe, member of the Poetry, Natural History and Archaeology & Heritage Groups, has produced a new poetry collection. Based on the ever turning wheel of the year, Bob's latest collection includes poems touching on the changing seasons, the beauty of nature and the elements, together with life and love, things that inspire and those that give enjoyment and amusement.



The 72 page paperback book, containing 60 poems, was published on 1 May 2023 and is priced at £5. Bob is offering our readers the opportunity to win a free copy. So why not try to enter the competition below? You never know your luck! If on the other hand you would like to purchase a copy, please go to Bob's website [www.greenwoodpress.co.uk](http://www.greenwoodpress.co.uk) , contact him via email [bob.woodroofe@outlook.com](mailto:bob.woodroofe@outlook.com) or phone 01386 446477.

**Competition** – How to win a copy of Bob's latest poetry collection

**Four Quarters & more**

Name all of the **Quarter Days** and the **Cross-Quarter days!**

Send your entry via email to [bob.woodroofe@outlook.com](mailto:bob.woodroofe@outlook.com) or enter by post to Bob Woodroofe, 38 Birch Avenue, Evesham, WR11 1YJ. The first all correct entry received will win a copy of the book.

**To whet your appetite, here are two poems from the book**

***Into the light***

*A curlew bubbles awake.*

*Silently, from far out*

*at sea, the tide flows*

*afresh to the land.*

*A red sail drifts in,*

*a dinghy skims behind.*

*Wave flickered light*

*glistens everywhere,*

*heightened by a breeze*

*that plays, lifts the birds*

*that skim the wavelets,*

*as the ring of waders*

*tighten around her*

*diminishing shore.*

**Have you heard**  
*about the lost words,  
no longer spoken, never heard.  
they've been removed, they are deceased,  
taken away by the word police.  
Acorn, Bluebell, Conker, Dandelion  
what will children do, they haven't a clue,  
they'll catch a view, but can't describe the hue,  
of that startling blue, of the bird that flew.  
They won't know its name, but they're not to blame.  
Starling, Heron, Raven, Kingfisher.*

## Walking Cricket

A cooperation between Worcestershire Cricket and Evesham u3a

Evesham Walking Cricket team won the first Worcestershire Cricket indoor festival! Eight teams had entered the tournament which took place in Malvern. Walking Cricket is organised by Worcestershire Cricket and therefore open to all. The Evesham team includes many local u3a members.



**Image** by Worcestershire Cricket – pictured top left are Ally, Dave, and Steve.

We exhibit Walking Cricket on the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of every 4-day County



Championship home game, and we receive a free ticket (worth £16!) to the Worcestershire CCC game that day.

The sessions in the gym at Wallace House every Tuesday afternoon at 2.00 pm are regularly attended by many of our u3a members. The group includes men and women in equal numbers. The teams for tournaments are also mixed. All are

welcome! During the summer months, we will be playing outdoors, getting ready for the Outdoor Walking Cricket festivals when we will play against teams from around the County and further afield, including other u3a teams. Everyone is very friendly and supportive, but there is also a competitive edge. Evesham u3a members hope to be selected to represent Worcestershire in a tournament held in Yorkshire, the birthplace of u3a Walking Cricket. The Evesham Walking Cricket group features in an English Cricket Board article about u3a member Ally, highlighting the benefits of the sports. Read more at <https://www.ecb.co.uk/news/309221/its-turned-a-corner-for-me-reaping-the-rewards-of-worcestershires-walking-cricket-initiative>. Image by Ally Edwards

David Williams



Walks Under 4 Miles 2 – coffee break at St Peter’s Church, Hinton-on-the-Green by Sue Dean

# Group News

## ❖ Patchwork 1



We have been busy with our own projects this term. For July, we have booked a tutor to introduce us to some new ideas. As a group, we have assembled squares into quilts which we will donate to the Nelson Trust in Stroud. They provide refuge for women and children as well as temporary accommodation for those discharged from drug rehabilitation. A huge variety of squares have been made and we hope to continue this project through the summer term. We currently have a waiting list but if you are interested in joining our group we are happy to add you to it.

Fran Battin

## ❖ Concert Group

We have a catchy motto in the Concert Group – ‘Familiarity Enhances Enjoyment’. We do know, of course, that it really isn’t ‘catchy’. ‘Cumbersome’ might be a better adjective, but it makes the point that if one of our concert programmes includes an item that is less than mainstream, unfamiliar even, our members may be able to find a version on YouTube and so ‘get to know’ the music a bit in advance.

So arriving at the concert, they meet up with an old musical friend rather than with a total stranger. And most of us feel more comfortable among

friends, don't we? That's true of music too. A recent example was the Khatachurian Violin Concerto, played at our February Concert. In fact, one of our members confessed to having watched it on YouTube about a dozen times before the performance – and enjoyed it all the more for that. Familiarity actually enhanced the enjoyment!

And the point of this story? Well, to illustrate that it matters to us that everyone gets as much pleasure as possible out of the music we hear. We like to lift spirits; to create lasting happy memories of great music played by excellent musicians in the best of good company (well, we are u3a members, after all! 'Nuff said about that, surely!) in one of the greatest of Concert Halls, our world-renowned Birmingham Symphony Hall.

Add to that the completely hassle-free booking and travel arrangements, and you've got an unstoppable combination of the musical best of everything! So why not come and join us? We are now regularly taking 50+ on our concert trips, but we have room for you! Come on, you know you want to! We will shortly be releasing details of our concert programme for 2023/24, so this is the perfect time for you to join our mailing list and you will be up there among the first to get the news. We would love to hear from you. Please contact David Daniels.

## ❖ Village Ambles with Camera

We meet on the 4th Monday of the month at 10.00 am for a leisurely stroll around a picturesque village, before retiring to a local pub for a pre-ordered lunch at midday. Using your camera is not obligatory, but friendly chatter with your fellow ambles is!

Each month, different members of the group volunteer to choose a village and lead the Amble. Our first visit of this year was to Pebworth, where



the graveyard was overflowing with a beautiful display of spring bulbs. Afterwards, we drove to the nearby village of Honeybourne for a delicious lunch at the Thatched Tavern.



Future plans will hopefully include the villages of Guiting Power, Cropthorne, Cleeve Prior, Beckford and Alderton. We have room for one or two new members, so please phone Sheila Ryder, the group leader, if you wish to join us. Her contact number is on the Group List at the end of this Newsletter.

Sheila Ryder

**Photos:** the group at Pebworth and spring in the graveyard by Sheila Ryder

## ❖ Local History

The Local History group enjoy getting out and about. Following a talk to the group by a member of the Great Western Steam Railway in March, they went for a return ride on a steam train from Broadway to Toddington for their April meeting. There was a lot to see at Toddington



and some of the group went off in high-vis jackets for a tour of the sheds where repairs and maintenance tasks are carried out on the steam trains and carriages.



We are planning a tour of the Evesham Abbey Site in May and a trip to Worcester Cathedral in June. If you would like to join us, please contact Alison Williams, u3a Secretary and temporary leader of the group. We would particularly like to welcome anybody who has an interest in Local History and would be

willing to help lead this really friendly group. We meet on the first Tuesday afternoon of each month, except in January and August, with a mix of invited speakers and visits, so the programme is quite easy to manage.

Alison Williams

Photos: the group at Toddington by David Williams

## ❖ Gardens & Country

In March and April the group enjoyed two in-person talks on the subjects of Witley Court and Hanbury Hall respectively. Ray Sturdy gave a detailed account of the history of Witley Court and its inhabitants. This impressive house underwent many modifications over the years before being largely destroyed by fire in 1937. It has not been lived in since the fire, and is now known as a 'romantic ruin'. The house is set in large gardens which English Heritage have redesigned and developed over the last two decades.





The talk on the Grade 1 listed National Trust property Hanbury Hall was given by the current Gardens and Outdoors Manager, Neil Cook. Neil has lived and worked for the NT at Hanbury Hall for 35 years, having previously worked at Waddesdon Manor. Over the last three decades he has been

instrumental in restoring and developing the gardens which had been lost over time. Having given the historical background to the Hall and the original grounds, Neil described the process of re-establishing the dual forecourt, the parterre garden, the parkland views, the summerhouses and Orangery – all on a realistic budget. Many photographs were used to document the changes, with the aerial drone photos taken by the previous Head of Gardens, Mike Calnan, giving a unique perspective of the work achieved. The entertaining talk concluded with a brief description of a Dutch parterre garden, which was on a grand scale. This talk concluded the winter programme. All the talks were well attended, with an average of 30 members at each event, and were much appreciated.



**Photos:** Audience attending by Chas Bryer. Aerial view of the whole estate of Hanbury Hall (top) and Aerial view of the parterre garden at Hanbury Hall (bottom) by Mike Calnan, NT, provided by Neil Cook, NT.

The summer garden visit programme began in May at the Alpine Society Garden and Pershore College. The garden visit programme continues until September and will be described in the next newsletter, which will be my final one. **Please note that the September visit to Admington Hall is open to all u3a members.** Anyone wishing to attend should contact me as soon as possible via the group's webpage. This garden was featured on the cover of the magazine 'Country Life' and was also reviewed favourably in 'Gardens Illustrated' in 2022. An introductory talk will be given by either the owner or the Head Gardener. There will be full access to the ten acre garden. A small garden booklet to include some information on the house is available. Tea, coffee, homemade cordial and a wide selection of homemade cakes and bakes are included. There are restrictions on the minimum and maximum number of people that can attend so please contact me as soon as possible if you are interested. Thanks again to the many people who have helped the group continue this year. If you would be prepared to run this group next year as part of a team, please contact me. Enjoy your garden this summer and best wishes for the rest of the year.  
<https://u3asites.org.uk/evesham/page/30614>

Chas Bryer

### ❖ Summer Skittles 3

We first tried Summer Skittles in 2022. The sessions running from June to September were enjoyed by an average of 16 players per meeting. Arrangements have now been made with the Ambassador Club to play again this year on the second and fourth Wednesdays at 10.15 am. The dates are as follows:

- 14 and 28 June
- 12 and 26 July
- 9 and 23 August
- 13 and 27 September

Come and enjoy! Enquiries to Ken Pearce. For contact mobile number please see the Group List.

## Group Timetable

***To join any group you must be a member of u3a***

	First Week	Second Week	Third Week
<b>Mon am</b>	Architecture Natural History Welsh Language	Art Appreciation Questions of Belief & Doubt (term time) Welsh Language	Welsh Language
<b>Mon pm</b>	Badminton 1 Concert Band Mah-jong & Rummikub Shakespeare – Zoom Singing for Pleasure	Badminton 1 Concert Band Mah-jong & Rummikub Travellers' Tales	Badminton 1 Concert Band Mah-jong & Rummikub Shakespeare – live Singing for Pleasure
<b>Tue am</b>	Creative Writing 2 Cycling for Pleasure Latin 1 Spanish Improvers Urban Sketchers Walks over 4 m	Golf for Fun Listening to Music 2 Social Saunters Spanish Improvers Village Strolls 1	Bookends Photography 2 Spanish Improvers Urban Sketchers Walks over 4 m
<b>Tue pm</b>	Creative Writing 1 Local History Latin Reading	Exploring Language Jam Session Patchwork & Quilting 1 Pétanque	Archaeology & Heritage Latin Reading
<b>Wed am</b>	Skittles 1 Table Tennis Tai Chi	French Conversation Painting for Pleasure Skittles 2 Skittles 3, June – Sept	Skittles 1 Table Tennis Tai Chi
<b>Wed pm</b>	<b>Monthly Meeting 2 pm</b> <b>Methodist Church</b> Yoga 3 (term time)	Gardens & Country Yoga 3 (term time)	Philosophy Yoga 3 (term time)
<b>Thu am</b>	Media Yoga 2 (term time)	Aspects of Modern History German Short Mat Bowls 1 Walks under 4 miles 1 Yoga 2 (term time)	Media Yoga 2 (term time)
<b>Thu pm</b>	Croquet Modern Greek 1	China: The Country Latin 2 Modern Greek 1 Needlecraft Short Mat Bowls 2	Croquet Modern Greek 1
<b>Fri am</b>	Classic Cinema Country Dancing Modern Greek 2	Computers & Digital Italian Post-Beginners Military History Modern Greek 2 Play Reading	Book Friends Classic Cinema Country Dancing Modern Greek 2
<b>Fri pm</b>	Badminton 2 Bridge for Fun Family Research	Badminton 2 Board Games Bridge for Fun	Badminton 2 Bridge for Fun Family Research
<b>Sun am</b>	Brunch Bunch		Brunch Bunch

## Group Timetable

**To join any group you must be a member of u3a**

Fourth Week	Final Week	Ad - Hoc	
Questions of Belief & Doubt / Village Ambles with Camera Welsh Language	Welsh Language	<p><b>Patchwork and Quilting 2</b> alternate Wednesdays - Linda Dunbar</p> <p><b>Concert Group</b> - David Daniels</p> <p><b>Website Editors</b> - meet as required - Alun Edwards</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>To contact group leaders by email from the group's webpage, click on the envelope and a page will come up to write your message.</b></p> 	<b>Mon am</b>
Badminton 1 Concert Band Mah-jong & Rummikub	Badminton 1 Concert Band Mah-jong & Rummikub		<b>Mon pm</b>
Golf for Fun Photography 1 Spanish Improvers Village Strolls 2			<b>Tue am</b>
Jam Session Patchwork & Quilting 1 Pétanque Quiz Group			<b>Tue pm</b>
French Conversation Painting for Pleasure Skittles 2 Skittles 3, June - Sept			<b>Wed am</b>
Yoga 3 (term time)	Poetry Yoga 3 (term time)		<b>Wed pm</b>
Aspects of Modern History German Short Mat Bowls 1 Walks under 4 miles 2 Yoga 2 (term time)	Yoga 2 (term time)		<b>Thu am</b>
Book Club German advanced Modern Greek 1 Needlecraft Short Mat Bowls 2 Wine Tasting	Modern Greek 1		<b>Thu pm</b>
Birdwatching Computers & Digital Italian Post-Beginners Modern Greek 2	Modern Greek 2 Science & Engineering		<b>Fri am</b>
Badminton 2 Board Games Bridge for Fun	Badminton 2 Bridge for Fun		<b>Fri pm</b>
	Brunch Bunch	<b>Sun am</b>	

## ❖ Painting for Pleasure



Painting for Pleasure continues to meet at Hampton Scout & Guide Hall on the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month. Our suggested theme in March was 'Portrait' – a love it or hate it topic, so not embraced by everyone. Those who chose portraits, generally drew pictures of friends or family and produced some excellent likenesses. In April, our theme was spring flowers. Tulips were popular and it was good to see such a wide range of styles and approaches to the subject. If you are tempted to be creative, do come along and have a go without obligation. We are a friendly group and beginners are always welcome.

Mary Simpson





**Paintings:** Tulips on easel by Jenny Allcock; single tulip by Elizabeth O'Brien; vase with tulips by Mick Price. Nature study by Antonia Lord.

## ❖ Walks Under 4 Miles



I am pleased to say that, since the Open Day last November, Group 2 has grown by quite a few new walkers. Consequently, both Groups 1 and 2 now have equal numbers and cannot accommodate any more members for the time being, so anyone wishing to join will be added to a waiting list. If vacancies arise in

either group we will be in touch. This is unfortunate for anyone wishing to walk, but too many walkers in a group are difficult to manage, especially if walkers space out or there are stiles to negotiate! Maybe someone would like to think of starting another walking group, perhaps 3 miles and under?

Judy Smith

**Photo:** Group 2 at Aston Somerville Village Hall by Clive Williams. See also photo on page 13.

## ❖ Travellers' Tales

Our early 2023 meetings commenced with 'Chile from Top to Bottom', an illustrated talk by John Boon. This was followed by David Keeling entertaining us with tales of his life working abroad, the title of the talk being 'From Mkushi to Madrid'. Finally, in March, Alison and David Williams told us all about their exciting month-long trip to





South East Asia in their talk 'Four Weeks Adventure in the Far East'. We were not able to hold meetings in April or May due to those dates coinciding with the Easter and Coronation Bank Holidays. We are always looking for people to share their travel experiences with us, so if you have a tale to tell, do please contact John Boon.

Photos: El Yeso p 24 and Lauaca, Chile p 25 by John Boon

## ❖ Birdwatching

This year we have once again been to the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (WWT) Slimbridge. It has become an annual pilgrimage as there is nowhere else within easy reach that provides the same wildfowl spectacle with wintering populations of Bewick's Swans and Greater White-fronted Geese, as well as many species of duck. There were also wading birds with the highlight being a large mixed flock of Lapwing and Golden Plover.



In February, we travelled to the Forest of Dean. At the New Fancy Viewpoint we saw Bullfinches in the car park and at the viewpoint itself Buzzard, a distant Goshawk and, best of all, great views of Crossbills. Later we drove the short distance to Cannop Ponds. This is a great spot for Mandarin Ducks in winter and we counted over fifty with some very close indeed. There were

also Little Grebes, Wigeon and Tufted Ducks, while in the woodland there were Marsh Tits, Siskin and Goldcrest.

There are meetings throughout the year. Full details can be found on the group webpage. We welcome both experienced birders and beginners. Just contact John Boon.

**Photos:** Bewick's Swans and Mandarin Ducks by Steve Cockbill.

## ❖ Natural History



Our first meeting of the year was to the Knapp and Papermill, a Worcestershire Wildlife Trust reserve to the west of Worcester. The Knapp is a mix of meadow and woodland with the Leigh Brook cutting its way through the reserve. We stayed beside the river for our walk and although it was early spring there were plants aplenty with Lady's Smock, Dog's Mercury, Wood Anemone and Butterbur all in flower as was the wonderfully named Opposite-leaved Golden Saxifrage. There were also banks of Wild Garlic and Bluebells which would be a real picture later in the spring. The first migrant birds had arrived with both Chiffchaffs and Blackcaps singing. Anyone interested in joining our monthly nature rambles should contact John Boon.

**Photos:** Butterbur by John Boon (left); Opposite-leaved Golden Saxifrage by Bob Woodroffe (right).

## Quiz



The quiz group meets once a month at Wallace House for relaxed, fun, non-competitive (mostly) quizzing. All are welcome. Please contact John Boon.

How is your nature knowledge? Check it out with a quick 'Walk on the Wild Side' quiz:

1. What creature is called 'ermine' in its winter coat?
2. What are the names for a male and female swan?
3. By what common name is the plant *Atropa belladonna* better known?
4. Which animals could be described as lupine?
5. Which fruit comes from Blackthorn?
6. What species was 'Ratty' in 'Wind in the Willows'?
7. What is the common name for insects belonging to the genus *Apis*?
8. What type of creature was the now extinct Quagga?
9. What are the only birds that can fly backwards?
10. Into whose garden did Peter Rabbit sneak?

Please see page 37 for the answers.

Birdwatching, Natural History, Travellers' Tales and Quiz by John Boon,  
Membership Secretary

## ❖ Poetry

The Poetry Group continues to meet monthly, except in December, from 1.30 till 3.30 pm at Wallace House in Oat Street, opposite the Library, on the last Wednesday of the month. We are now up to twelve members which is a good number for the working of the group, though some of the new members are still in the process of trying us out so we can't be complacent!

We have a theme each month, suggested by a group member, and choose our contributions – self-penned or culled from published collections or anthologies or found on the internet. The round table format allows for a good bit of theme-linked conversation after each contribution and this is a valued part of the whole experience.

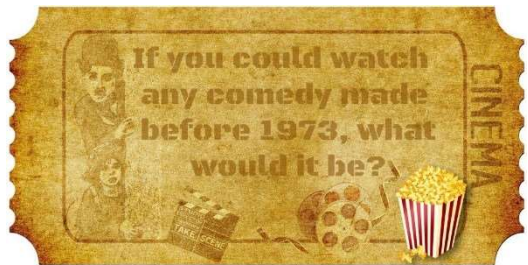
During Covid lockdown we met on Zoom which was successful in that it kept the group ticking over, though the consensus was for dropping Zoom now that 'live and in person' meetings can be resumed. There is a sense of camaraderie, which is generally valued, and working towards the theme helps structure the month between meetings for each of us. This year has thrown up a particularly interesting and challenging set of themes. Going well so far and here's to the future!

Richard Taylor

## ❖ Classic Cinema

Every session, one of us delivers a brief introduction to the film we are going to watch and leads a very short discussion afterwards. This year Ann, Noel, Pat, Phil, Richard and Ally have introduced movies. For July, we will be choosing a comedy to watch by voting.

If you could choose any comedy from over 50 years ago, what would it be? A 'Carry-On'? An Ealing classic? What about 'The Apartment' (1960, Jack Lemmon) or 'A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum' (1966), with a huge ensemble cast including Buster Keaton in his final performance? We already watched 'Some Like It Hot' this year, but an ironic choice might be 'The Rise and Rise of Michael Rimmer' (1970), because Peter Cook plays a fresh-faced young opinion-pollster! Please send your ideas to Pat Ansell.



Here are our next screenings:

- Friday, 2 June: **Nosferatu: Symphony of Horror** (Germany, FW Murnau, 1922)
- Friday, 16 June: **I Know Where I'm Going** (UK, Powell and Pressburger, 1945)
- Friday, 7 July: **The Taking of Pelham 123** (US, Joseph Sargent, 1974)
- Friday, 21 July: **A comedy to be chosen by popular vote.**

From this list, you can see what an eclectic range of films we watch, many are superb movies, some disappointing, some utterly surprising. All are worth seeing. Please come along and try Classic Cinema for a few films and see if you enjoy our company. We meet every 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday morning at 10:00 am in the Evesham Methodist Church basement. The cost is £3 each to cover room charges. Biscuits, tea, and coffee are served during the intermission.

Please see our webpage: <https://u3asites.org.uk/evesham/page/30525>

Pat Ansell, Neal Cartwright, Phil Logan and Ally Edwards

## ❖ Spanish Improvers

We have recently been exploring Spanish idioms, challenging each other to work out the English equivalent. Here are a few examples:

'*Cuesta un ojo de la cara*' – literal translation: 'It costs an eye from the face'. This is the Spanish version of 'It costs an arm and a leg'.

'Let me sleep on it' is '*Déjame consultarlo con la almohada*' – lit. 'Let me consult with the pillow'.

'Like two peas in a pod' is '*Como dos gotas de agua*' – lit. 'Like two drops of water'.

And whilst 'Silence is golden' in Britain, in Spain 'Flies don't enter a closed mouth' – '*En boca cerrada, no entran moscas*'.

Most in keeping with the u3a ethos is the little rhyme '*Nunca te acostarás, sin saber una cosa más*' – 'You learn something new every day' – lit. 'You will never go to bed without knowing one more thing'.

Please get in touch if you would be interested in joining or helping to establish a second Spanish group as we now have a waiting list for this one.

Leighton Jones

## ❖ Board Games



We are a growing group, equally made up of male and female players. On Friday afternoons, we meet fortnightly in a member's house to play strategy games of different genres, styles, themes, and settings, dice games, card games, tile-laying games, and dexterity games. No formality, no experience required – we just play, socialise, and have fun. We tried something different in February by holding one of our meetings at the Wyvern Tabletop Games Club in Bishampton. It was great to play different games with new people. Check out the group's webpage to find out more about our next meetings: <https://u3asites.org.uk/evesham/page/100683>

Peter Aggett

Image by Wyvern Tabletop Games Club, with u3a members in the background.

## ❖ Concert Band

It has been a great opportunity and privilege for me to have had the responsibility of directing the Concert Band as successor to Roger Wyatt. I have also had much support from Denise Tandy and Christine Holyhead from Shipston u3a who have covered for me when I have been away or out of action. I would like to thank the members of the group for committed regular and enthusiastic attendance at rehearsal, without which no band can operate effectively.

The fortuitous availability of the Lifford Hall as we came out of lockdown has given us a much better practice venue. We have expanded our repertoire to include transcriptions of choral classics, New Orleans jazz and ragtime, so we are almost always playing some fresh music.

The main purpose of the group, as I see it, is to provide members with the opportunity to enjoy playing together and making a great collective sound. Anyone who can play an instrument can attend, whatever their level. The other purpose is to share our pleasure in playing together with the wider membership and the public, when we can, in concerts and other events which include music.

For the last couple of years, we have played for our u3a December meeting and for two Fridays at Broadway late night shopping. Apart from that, we performed at the Stow Motor Show last summer, and would have been playing in Abbey Park in the summer, had it not been for matters outside everyone's control. This year, we played eight hymns and four other pieces for 'Songs of Praise' for 'Churches Together in Evesham and District' on 22 January. This was very well received.

We would like to invite all u3a members to come and hear us at three engagements this year: on **15 July** we will be giving a concert between 2.00 and 4.00 p.m. as part of the **Harvington Festival at Ellenden Farm Shop**, Harvington. We will be in Harvington again at 6.00 p.m. on **23 July for 'Songs**

**of Praise' in St James Church.** Lastly, we have taken the plunge and joined **'Bands in the Park'**. We will be playing in the bandstand at Abbey Park, weather permitting, on **Sunday 27 August**, the last concert in the series for this year.

Please come and support us at these events. Based on our experience you will enjoy it. If you know of an event being held which could benefit from live music, please let me know and we will do our best to contribute what is or should be an essential part of any public celebration!

Peter Scott

## ❖ Shakespeare

Who would have thought it? Many of us recall hot summer afternoons in stuffy school classrooms, being forced to read almost incomprehensible English, written by this Shakespeare fellow, as we forced ourselves to stay awake! Or perhaps you were one of the lucky ones, who had an inspiring, vibrant teacher who opened up untold linguistic treasures for you and lines that have remained with you to this day. I'm afraid my own was the rather gruesome 'As flies to wanton boys are we to the gods. They kill us for their sport' (Gloucester in King Lear).

And the point is? Well, coming back to the plays at our time of life is opening up new horizons for us. Many of us have never seen, or even read, the plays we are now visiting. At the time of writing we are just about to start 'The Merry Wives of Windsor'. I think all of us would say that it's just great fun, thoroughly enjoyable, and, by the way, we just **don't do** meetings that have no laughter in them somewhere.

So who indeed would have thought it? Reading the plays of Shakespeare actually **is** great fun! And the great news is that we have vacancies in the group at the moment. Do you have a couple of free Monday afternoons in the month? Then we would be beyond delighted to have your company. Our meetings are on Zoom on the first Monday afternoon of each month and

face-to-face on the third Monday afternoon. Our venue is the Rowing Club and tea or coffee are included. Please don't just think about it, do it! You honestly won't regret it! Contact David Daniels to join the Group.

David Daniels

## ❖ Village Strolls 1 & 2



We meet on the second and fourth Tuesday each month. We walk about 2.5 miles through the villages and



along surrounding footpaths. We enjoy looking at the older architecture and exploring the countryside. During our strolls we stop and chat about what we see. Every village has different styles of buildings and village green areas. We normally arrange a meal at a local pub at the end of the walk. These photos were taken in Inkberrow.

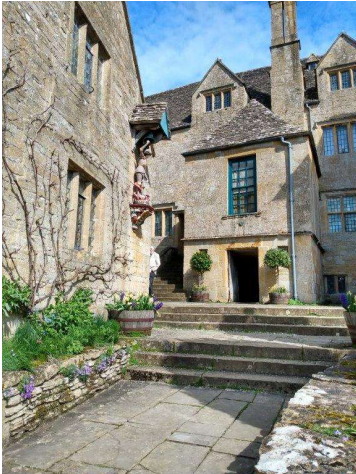
Terry and Sandra Woodfield

**Photos:** the Old Bull at Inkberrow and postbox by Terry Woodfield.

## ❖ Archaeology & Heritage

Due to a late cancellation by the speaker, we were unable to meet up in February. Hopefully, the presentation about a potential Roman site in Evesham can be re-arranged later in the year.

Our March meeting took place at Alcester Museum, a treasure trove of Roman artefacts and displays. Laurence Thatcher, who is heavily involved with the museum and takes great interest in Alcester and its environs, provided us with an interesting talk about the museum and the Roman connections to the town. The group members then had time to investigate the displays on offer.



In April we met up at Snowhill Manor, managed by the National Trust. Snowhill, to quote the National Trust, *is a place like no other, a world away from the ordinary; created by one man, Charles Wade*. Wade was an artist, architect, collector, craftsman and poet. His influence on the manor is reflected in the collections on display. The setting of the manor above Broadway and on the edge of Snowhill village provides excellent views of the Cotswold escarpment. The manor remains much as Wade intended, not a museum, but a series of rooms packed with his collection of unlabelled objects. In

1919 when Charles Wade purchased Snowhill Manor, the garden was little more than an overgrown farmyard. Working with architect Baillie Scott, Wade set about designing a series of outdoor rooms or courts. He created *'enticing vistas with a hint of something beyond'* and a garden filled with *'delights that will fetch the day about from sun to sun'* (National Trust 2023).

If you are interested in joining the group, please contact me via the email link on the group webpage.

Chris Wolstencroft



**Photos:** Snowhill Manor & Cotswold view by B Wolstencroft

## ❖ Book Club

Magic Carpets – looking back and looking forward. To travel in time and place and in other people's skins – that is the great pleasure, satisfaction and interest of book lovers everywhere. Just like the members of our u3a Book Club.

The beginning of this year's reading took us to Glasgow in the 1980's, on the magic carpet of the novel **Shuggie Bain**. Mercifully, very few members of the u3a in our own pleasant town will have ever had to cope with anything like the griefs of the young Shuggie. He and his mother Agnes are victims of de-industrialization, poverty and a dysfunctional family. She struggles with alcoholism and a benefits dependency from which escape is nearly impossible. For him, with enough to bear already, there is also a struggle to accept his homosexuality. Not the lightest read, and one that took author Douglas Stuart ten years to complete, but very much an eye-opener.

Our chosen book in the following month took us to civilian life in Germany during World War 2. In one of our occasional excursions into autobiography, we saw the war through the eyes of a British-born woman, mother of two, married to a German national. Christabel von Bielenberg had the advantages of being highly educated, socially privileged and well-off. Somehow, despite her husband's falling into the hands of the Gestapo for some months, all ended as well as could have been hoped for, but no-one would envy her experience.

The Book Club also ventures occasionally into the worlds of science fiction and fantasy. **Fahrenheit 451**, our read for April, is a classic of its genre. It takes the reader where it can only be hoped that no-one will ever go, into a future society where books are regarded as the ultimate evil. They and their owners are targets of a permanent state-organized programme of elimination of both. The author, Malcolm Bradbury, was American and wrote the book in the early 1950's. At the time, the suppression of literature that was thought to support communism was much in fashion in his home country. Roll on seventy years, and now we have public authorities in Florida

and elsewhere in the USA banning books from public and school libraries. The rights of minorities are a principal target of the advocates of banning and censorship now.

The Book Club will soon be visiting other times, places and social environments. Our horizons will be stretched in the summer months by novels set in Ethiopia, Texas and Australia.

Not all our reading is heavy. In the recent past we have shared enjoyment of Bill Bryson and P. G. Wodehouse. And in July we will read and discuss a novel described by a critic for the Observer as 'warm and quirky'. **If Cats Disappeared from the World** has sold over two million copies in Japan, the homeland of its author.

Our members continue to enjoy a rolling feast of immersion in other lives, lived at other times and in other places. Meeting together monthly to talk over our reactions, often quite varied ones, adds a further dimension to our reading experiences. For that, and for the continuing stream of introductions to books and to authors whose work we might otherwise never encounter, every Book Club member has a debt of gratitude.

John Sutton

## ❖ Photography 2



Photography 2 continues to meet on a regular basis, sometimes at Aston Somerville Village Hall and other times at an agreed external venue, depending on the theme for our next meeting. We met last month to show our photos on the subject of 'Abstract Photography'. We each showed a selection of photos on the subject, which some

of us found more challenging than others! This subject was chosen to encourage members to think 'outside the box' and explore ways of capturing images, focusing on shapes, patterns, textures and colours to create a visually intriguing and thought-provoking image for discussion and gentle critique. We shared our individual techniques for creating abstract photos, ranging from composition, exposure and, more especially, post-processing techniques. I think we all found the meeting informative and inspiring. Hopefully, it provided members with valuable tips to improve and develop their own photography skills.

The previous month's theme was 'Quirky/Unusual' which, again, challenged members to see things differently and push their creative boundaries. The selection of photos shown by members demonstrated a fascinating insight into the individual's creativity and technical skills and inspired a stimulating discussion on camera settings and techniques.



Anyone can join the group – we all use different cameras, be it a DSLR, mirrorless, compact camera or even mobile phones. All you need is the enthusiasm to share a passion for what

you see and feel around you and a willingness to share your efforts with like-minded members of the group, to assist in creating a discussion with an appreciative audience! We all learn from each other so why not come along and join us?  
Elaine Castleford, Group Member

**Photos:** Abstract Sunflower Twirl by Sheila Reed p36; Unusual by Elaine Castleford p 37.

Page 40 – Quirky by Elaine Castleford (top left), Unusual by Iain Bonfield (bottom left) & Terry Woodfield (right).

### Answers to the Quiz on page 27

1. Stoat 2. Cob and Pen 3. Deadly Nightshade 4. Wolves 5. Sloe 6. Water Vole 7. Bees 8. Zebra 9. Hummingbird 10. Mr McGregor

<b>Group Name</b>	<b>Coordinator</b>	<b>Fee</b>
<b>Archaeology &amp; Heritage</b>	Chris Wolstencroft	Varies
<b>Architecture</b>	Caroline Bagshaw	Varies
<b>Art Appreciation</b>	Caroline Bagshaw	£2.00
<b>Aspects of Modern History</b>	Sheila Himsworth	£1.00
<b>Badminton 1</b>	Cefn Blundell	£2.00
<b>Badminton 2</b>	Teresa Green	£2–£3
<b>Birdwatching</b>	John Boon	Free
<b>Board Games</b>	Peter Aggett	Free
<b>Book Club</b>	Sue Griffiths	Varies
<b>Bookends</b>	Barbara Tittensor	50 p
<b>Book Friends</b>	Chris Spriggs	Varies
<b>Bridge for Fun</b>	Liz Rodway	£2.00
<b>Brunch Bunch (Sundays)</b>	Sue Beneke	Brunch
<b>China: The Country</b>	David Ralph	£3.00
<b>Classic Cinema</b>	Pat Ansell	£3.00
<b>Computers &amp; Digital Media</b>	John Scotland	£3.00
<b>Concert Band (playing)</b>	Peter Scott	£2.00
<b>Concert Group</b>	David Daniels	Varies
<b>Country Dancing</b>	Brenda & Phil Morton	£4.00
<b>Creative Writing 1 &amp; 2</b>	Sue Johnson	Free+
<b>Croquet</b>	Paul Griffin	50 p
<b>Cycling for Pleasure</b>	Chris Davis	Free
<b>Exploring Language</b>	Caroline Bagshaw	Free
<b>Family Research</b>	Diane Nicholls	£2.50
<b>French Conversation</b>	Lorna Slaughter	Free
<b>Gardens &amp; Country</b>	Chas Bryer	Varies
<b>German (3 groups)</b>	Sophie Dodds	£2.00
<b>Golf for Fun</b>	David Bentley	Green fee
<b>Italian (post–beginners)</b>	Sue Jerrard	Varies
<b>Jam Sessions – Pop, Rock etc</b>	Bob Davies	£2.00
<b>Latin 1</b>	Caroline Bagshaw	£2.00
<b>Latin 2</b>	Caroline Bagshaw	50 p
<b>Latin Reading</b>	David Battin	Freev
<b>Listening to Music</b>	Frances Platman	£1.00

<b>Local History</b>	Alison Williams	£3.00
<b>Mah-jong</b>	Carla Auger	£3.50
<b>Military History</b>	Alun Edwards	TBC
<b>Modern Greek 1</b>	Mike Fraser	50 p
<b>Modern Greek 2</b>	Mike Fraser	50 p
<b>Natural History</b>	John Boon	Free
<b>Needlecraft</b>	Helen Barlow	Free
<b>Painting for Pleasure</b>	Mary Simpson	£2.00
<b>Patchwork &amp; Quilting 1</b>	Fran Battin	£2.00
<b>Patchwork &amp; Quilting 2</b>	Linda Dunbar	£2.00
<b>Pétanque</b>	Paul Griffin	£1.00
<b>Philosophy</b>	Mike Bagshaw	£3.00
<b>Photography 1</b>	Mike Tittensor	£3.00
<b>Photography 2</b>	Sandra Woodfield	£2.00
<b>Play Reading</b>	Margaret Fuller	£3.00
<b>Poetry</b>	Richard Taylor	£3.00
<b>Questions of Belief &amp; Doubt</b>	Jane Couper	Free
<b>Quiz</b>	John Boon	£2.00
<b>Rummikub</b>	Carla Auger	£3.50
<b>Science &amp; Engineering</b>	Alan Eames	£2.00
<b>Shakespeare</b>	David Daniels	£3.00
<b>Short Mat Bowls 1</b>	Fred/Sue Copestake	£3.00
<b>Short Mat Bowls 2</b>	Muriel Barnett	£3.00
<b>Singing for Pleasure</b>	Cath Cox	£2.00
<b>Skittles 1</b>	Mary Greenwood	Free
<b>Skittles 2</b>	Sue Beneke	Free
<b>Skittles 3, June to September</b>	Ken Pearce	Free
<b>Social Saunters</b>	Ken Pearce	Free
<b>Spanish Improvers</b>	Leighton Jones	Varies
<b>Table Tennis</b>	Ken Maden	£2.00
<b>Tai Chi</b>	Derek Arnold	£5.00
<b>Travellers' Tales</b>	John Boon	£2.00
<b>Urban Sketchers</b>	Mike Bagshaw	Free
<b>Village Ambles with Camera</b>	Sheila Ryder	£1.00
<b>Village Strolls 1</b>	Terry Woodfield	£1.00
<b>Village Strolls 2</b>	Sandra Woodfield	£1.00

<b>Walks Over 4 Miles</b>	J/M Alexander- Head	£1.00
<b>Walks Under 4 Miles 1</b>	Judy Smith	£1.00
<b>Walks Under 4 Miles 2</b>	Judy Smith	£1.00
<b>Website Editors</b>	Alun Edwards	Free
<b>Welsh Language</b>	David Daniels	Varies
<b>Wine Tasting</b>	Grahame Percival	£7.50
<b>Yoga 2</b>	Lyn Heaney	Varies
<b>Yoga 3</b>	Lesley Clarke	Varies



Website

<https://u3asites.org.uk/evesham/home>

Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/854443105078495>

Members only Group

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/eveshamu3a>

Public Group