

u3a learn,
laugh,
live
25th Anniversary

Evesham & District



Fun Time among the Costumes at Hartlebury Castle Museum

Newsletter Issue 96 – June 2026

Registered Charity Number 1101530

Committee Members

Chair & Safeguarding Officer	Ros Gowers	
Vice Chair	Catherine Cox	
Treasurer	Diane Nicholls	email from website
Assistant Treasurer	Claire Henderson	
Secretary & Charity Commission Liaison	Alan Chambers	
Membership Secretary	Helen Hutt	
Groups Coordinator	vacant	email from website
Programme Coordinator	Lorna Slaughter	email from website
Accessibility Officer	David Daniels	email from website

Non-Committee Volunteers

Minute Secretary	Graham Smith	email from website
Website Manager,	Alun Edwards	
Beacon Administrator & Third Age Trust Volunteer		
Website Team	Frances Kilburn	email from website
Technical Support	David Williams, Alun Edwards, A Chambers	
Newsletter Editor	Bärbel Wolstencroft	
Cotswold Link	Ros Gowers & Alan Chambers	
Shared Learning Project	Chris Wolstencroft	
Welfare Officer	Joyce Davey	
Group Mentors & all Group Coordinators		see the Group List for contact details

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

<https://evesham.u3asite.uk/contact>

Welcome...



...to the June 2026 Newsletter. Summer is fast approaching and our Silver Jubilee Celebrations are gaining momentum! Don't miss the **Picnic in the Park** with entertainment on 3 June (pages 7 & 12). Why not have a go at the competitions (pages 7 & 8) or consider asking for free technology support with AbiltyNet (page 9)? Members are planning special events with their groups, with some of them open to all members, see page 10.

Another important date to note is **1 July 2026**, when we are holding our **AGM**. Full details from the Committee are on pages 4 & 5. To share the load, they would really welcome fresh faces amongst their midst! Working with a good bunch of folk can be very satisfying, so please think about contributing to the running of our u3a.

A good number of photos and write-ups from groups complete the picture and don't overlook the Quiz on page 17! Please note the deadline of 2 August 2026 for the September Newsletter.

Bärbel Wolstencroft

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The photo on the front cover was submitted by the Archaeology & Heritage Group and shows Brian and Terry having fun in the hands-on costume exhibition at Hartlebury Castle Museum. For more news of the group please see page 26.

Notes from the Committee



There are now only two committee meetings left before the **AGM on Wednesday 1 July 2026** and we have started the preparations for the handover to the new committee, who will take over at the July meeting. Although most of our current committee have agreed to continue, we are going to lose our Secretary, Alan Chambers, (who apparently wants to spend more time birdwatching –

can't blame him!) and both the Treasurer Diane Nicholls and the Chair Ros Gowers will be relinquishing those roles this time. Alan will be missed – he has kept us on course so efficiently and will be a hard act to follow. We do, though, hope to have a couple of new members joining us and, as usual, all the key roles will be decided at the July meeting and details published on our website immediately afterwards, as well as in the September newsletter.

Please remember, we do need to be quorate at a minimum of 10% of the membership for the AGM, (that's currently 119 members) for the meeting to go ahead, and if this number is not reached, a second meeting will be called the following Wednesday. The last two AGMs have been well attended, so we hope that won't be necessary, but the room is booked just in case!

Letters will be coming out soon with formal notification of the AGM and requests for motions from members. Only motions submitted in advance will be accepted on the day, but there will, as always, be an opportunity to ask the outgoing committee questions. And after the AGM there will be a great speaker, so even more reason to come!

In the meantime, we have the **Silver Jubilee Picnic in the Park on 3 June** to look forward to and our walking groups have organised a **mass celebratory walk all together for 25 June**, which should be a great sight to see! Our **photography competition** and **short story competition** are both open and we are really looking forward to seeing the entries come in. The response to our Silver Jubilee call-out for

founding members to come forward has been very positive and the event to include them is being planned for November.

Are any other groups planning special 25 years celebrations?

Please do let the committee know and submit photos for our website and social media. We really want to use this year as a way of celebrating all the great work that our group leaders do and the benefits of u3a membership that we all enjoy and publicising these things to the wider public. One of the local papers is following everything we do this year, so we are expecting increased visibility in our community, which can only be a good thing.

Finally, we hope you all received the information about the new way of getting your discount at Evesham Garden Centre. See details below or on the website – <https://evesham.u3asite.uk/news/> Apologies for the difficulties some of you experienced in the changeover period. Hopefully this will now settle down and next year, we will aim to introduce digital membership cards for the majority of members who can access such things but continue with the letter of confirmation option for those who are unable to do so.

For all information on our Silver Jubilee, keep an eye on <https://evesham.u3asite.uk/25-years/>

**See you in the Park on 3 June – let's all do a dance
for good weather!**

Ros Gowers

From the Membership Secretary

Evesham Garden Centre

Sadly, as a result of misuse of the code (Fuchsia), Evesham Garden Centre at The Valley now requires evidence of Evesham u3a membership in order to qualify for the 10% discount.

All members have been sent an email or letter to show at the checkout as proof of your membership. When you renew next year,

we will email you a membership card which can be printed out or saved on your phone. Unfortunately, the Beacon system only allows this to be done when a new member joins or an existing member renews. New members joining during the year will receive one. We will work out a way of dealing with this for members who do not have an email address.

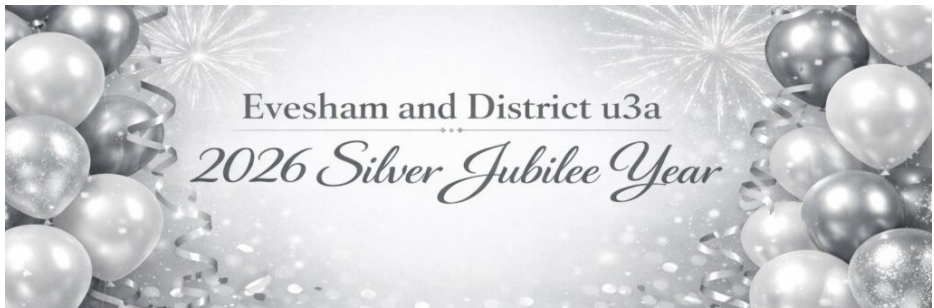
Just to remind you, the 10% discount applies to all plants, home (everything from cards to cushions), fashion, gardening items (from compost to tools), bird care and even garden furniture, where the discount could be worth hundreds of £'s. You get 10% off in the food department but it does not apply to gift vouchers, gas (fuel) or the Applebarn restaurant.

We are sorry for any inconvenience this may cause you but hope you will understand that we need to take action in order to retain this valuable benefit for all our members. Please let us know if you encounter any problems.

Helen Hutt

Silver Jubilee Celebrations

What's On?



**After several months of organization, our first celebratory event is finally here! Please come along with your u3a friends and enjoy!
We are looking forward to a good turnout!**

Picnic in the Park

**Wednesday 3 June 2026 in Evesham's Abbey Park
12.00 to 3.00 pm – with music and entertainment**

Bring your chairs, rugs and picnics and join the fun! Parking on Crown Meadow. It would be great to have as many groups as possible represented and maybe identify themselves in some unique way.

Make sure you don't miss out on our two competitions!

Submit your entries from now until Friday 18 September 2026.

Have you heard of AbilityNet, a charity that offers free Tech Support?

Check the following pages and our website for full details.

<https://evesham.u3asite.uk/25-years/>

Short Story Competition



This competition is open to all Evesham u3a members. Even if you have not written a story since you left school, pick up your pen and have a go! There is no entry fee – and you may even win a prize or discover a new talent!

**The theme is: Silver
The word count is: 250**

I will be judging the competition – so please send your entry to me by **Friday 18 September 2026** email sue.r.johnson@outlook.com

A small prize will be awarded to the first three entries at the u3a Monthly Meeting on **Wednesday 4 November 2026**. The winning entries will be

published in the December Newsletter which will be the Special Jubilee issue.

I look forward to receiving your entries. You can submit more than one!

Image supplied by Sue Johnson

Sue Johnson

Photography Competition

The Photography Competition '**The u3a in Evesham**' is now open! To mark its 25th Anniversary, our u3a is celebrating **positive images of retired people** in Evesham & District by running a photography competition. The deadline for entries is **Friday 18 September 2026**.

At the Monthly Meeting on **7 October 2026**, attending members will have the chance to choose a winning photograph in a public vote. This coincides with the 'United Nations International Day of Older Persons'. The winners of the Photography Competition will be announced during the u3a Monthly Meeting on **Wednesday 4 November 2026**. The full details are on the website.

<https://evesham.u3asite.uk/25-years/photography-competition-the-u3a-in-evesham/>



The competition is for photographers to capture u3a members being active in Evesham. Please consider allowing your u3a group to welcome the visit of a photographer.

Ally Edwards

Image credit: The Centre for Ageing Better: Age Without Limits, licensed CC-0.

Free Tech Support with AbilityNet

For our 25th Anniversary year, Evesham & District u3a has partnered with the AbilityNet charity to help you find free technology support and information, and training on specific digital skills. Full details can be found on the website: AbilityNet and u3a <https://evesham.u3asite.uk/members-info/abilitynet-and-u3a/>

Free 1:1 support by phone and in-person

Please ring AbilityNet's helpline to get independent advice from a technology expert: 0300 180 0028. You can also call AbilityNet to request free technology support at home from one of their friendly, expert technology volunteers based in Worcestershire. Also see the poster on page 36.

Free digital training

In addition, we have planned four AbilityNet training sessions this year. These will be very restricted to ensure that the u3a members who attend get the most out of this training.

The first session:

Title: I have a new smartphone! Now, how do I use it?

1. Touching the screen, e.g. swipe, scroll, tap, zoom, pinch, drag, drop, hold.
2. Clearing the clutter to make useful stuff obvious, e.g. organise your home screen and storage.
3. Checking performance, e.g. restart your phone, close or uninstall apps that misbehave, and turn off Bluetooth etc, when not needed

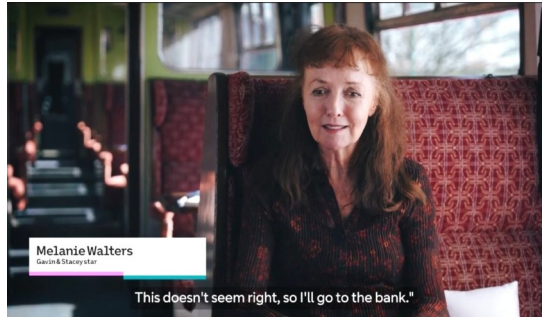
Date: Wednesday, 2 September 2026

Time: 12.30–1.30 pm

Venue: Evesham Methodist Church.

**To register your interest please ring or email Helen Hutt,
membership secretary, mobile 07935698137
membership.eveshamu3a@gmail.com**

'Gavin & Stacey' actress Melanie Walters is backing AbilityNet's free digital skills sessions, which help you build confidence and stay safer online with tips to help you beware of scams. Image credit: AbilityNet, via YouTube



Christmas shopping

The second session on Wednesday 7 October 2026 will look at 'Black Friday', and other issues around shopping online.

Training for u3a group leaders

The final session on Wednesday 2 December 2026 will help group leaders use WhatsApp Communities.

Outdoor training for one u3a group

AbilityNet will help the members of one u3a group use some of the digital resources that could help their activities out and about.

For more information about anything to do with AbilityNet including receiving training for your outdoor group, email Ally Edwards beacon.eveshamu3a@gmail.com - Ally has been volunteering to support AbilityNet to train u3a members around Worcestershire.

Ally Edwards

Silver Jubilee Group Events

Exploring Evesham's Archaeology - a discovery walk open to all members

On Tuesday **23 June 2026**, as part of the 25th Anniversary celebrations, I am leading an **Evesham Heritage Walk**, starting at the Almonry Museum. This event is open to all Evesham u3a members, but booking is essential due to the limitation on numbers. There will be two identical walks starting at 10.30am or 1.30pm. You can book

with me via email from the Archaeology or the 25 Years webpage for the walk of your choice.

Chris Wolstencroft

A Walking Jamboree – open to all members

As part of the Evesham u3a Silver Jubilee celebrations, an afternoon **Walking Jamboree** will be organized, open to all Evesham u3a members. This walk is scheduled for Thursday **25 June 2026**. The 1.5 miles walk will start from **Oat Street car park at 2.15 pm**. The route leads along the east side of Vine Street, around Merstow Green, down Boat Lane and along the river bank to Abbey Park, where the event will finish with ice creams. We are planning to identify walkers with rosettes or ribbons and are hoping for publicity in the local press.

If you are a member of a walking group, please tell your group leader that you wish to attend. Any other members please email me via the 'Walks over 4 Miles' webpage so I know to expect you.

John Alexander-Head

Singing for Pleasure

The choir, also known as 'Singing for Pleasure', looks back on 21 years, an excellent reason to organise **a bit of a do** for their members on **6 July 2026**.

25 Years of German Classes!

We will be marking this achievement with a traditional **German Garden Party**. Our members are busy preparing for a special celebratory Silver Anniversary event on Thursday **9 July 2026**. We are looking forward to a day full of fun, sunshine and German specialities in gratitude to all who were and still are members now.

**How would we ever have met if it had not been for the u3a.
Long may it last!!!**

Sophie Dodds

Monthly Meetings

The venue for Monthly Meetings is Evesham Methodist Church, starting at 2 pm.

3 June 2026

Picnic in the Park



To help us all celebrate our Silver Jubilee together, we are planning to hold a Picnic in Evesham's Abbey Park from 12.00 to 3.00 pm.

If possible, we would like all groups to be represented and maybe identify themselves in some unique way - we know you will be full of ideas! Bring your chairs, rugs, picnics and join in the fun! We hope to also have some musical entertainment on the bandstand. Let's hope the great British Summer is kind to us!

Lorna Slaughter

1 July 2026

The meeting will start at 2pm with our AGM. This is an important meeting in our u3a calendar, when members get the opportunity to hear about the work of the committee over the last year and vote in the coming year's committee members. We need about **120 members** to be present in order for the meeting **to be quorate** so please attend if at all possible.

After our short AGM our speaker John Kinory will entertain us with his presentation.

John Kinory – My Life and Times as a Film Extra



John takes part in films, TV dramas and commercials as a supporting artist or 'extra'. His talk is illustrated with many examples of his work. If you have ever wondered what happens when an actor arrives in the morning to wardrobe, hair and make up departments – now is your opportunity to discover what it is like. And we will all want to know if he has ever met any famous actors! It should prove to be a really interesting afternoon.

Image supplied by John Kinory

Refreshments – Painting for Pleasure

There will be no Monthly Meeting in August

2 September 2026

Mark Jackson – My first and last tours in Northern Ireland, 1972/1994; a comparison

Mark Jackson is a member of Evesham & District u3a. He spent more than four years on short and long tours of Northern Ireland in the 70s, 80s and 90s. He will compare the differences between arriving in Londonderry shortly after Bloody Sunday in 1972 and being in South Armagh in 1994 when peace finally came to the province. He will explain the way that the Army operated and how professional it became in supporting the police and setting the scene for the political solution that eventually was reached.



Image supplied by Mark Jackson

Refreshments – Patchwork & Quilting 1



A year-long Festival – now in its 10th year!

The main Festival weekend is from 26 – 28 June 2026.

For full information of all events go to

<https://www.eveshamfestivalofwords.org/>

Group News

● Military History



The Military History Group has seen a fantastic first half to the year with talks ranging from the Korean War through to the real 'Dad's Army' – it is amazing how rooted in reality the show was! The second half of the year sees us exploring the Irish Civil War, the English Civil War, two of

World War I's major events and the famous World War II Battle for Kohima, which halted the Japanese Army's invasion of India. In April, we enjoyed an accompanied visit to Edge Hill Battlefield.

Our group has grown to 30 regular attendees, which is great, although it is putting a strain on the size of our room at Crothorne Village Hall. We are therefore mindful of taking on new members at the moment. However, if you are interested in joining us, then do get in touch.

Neil Hoy

Image: A train which was derailed by the anti-Treaty IRA at Killurin, Co. Wexford on the 15th of August 1922 during the Irish Civil War. Licensed CC-0 via Wikimedia Commons

On 1 July 2026, the Military History group presents author and broadcaster **Phil Craig**, speaking about his book **1945: The Reckoning: War, Empire and the Struggle for a New World**.

General Kodandera Subayya Thimayya DSO, who was the only Indian to command an Infantry brigade in battle during the Second World War and is regarded as the most distinguished combat officer the Indian Army has produced.

Image: licensed under the Government Open Data License - India, via Wikimedia Commons



Ally Edwards

● Classic Cinema

Wanted: Teams for a Movie Quiz preceding the screening on 5 June!

Anybody can enter in teams of one to four members. Please contact Ally Edwards to book your place on this occasion. Please note that booking for Classic Cinema is normally not required. You can find the full programme of films on our webpage.



What were you doing in 1977? Were you celebrating at a street party? Sticking up two fingers to the Queen? Or did both pass you by?

Image: Licensed for non-commercial use via The Archives for Education, screengrab from Monitor - Punk Rock (1977) © BBC Archive.

Classic Cinema continues to celebrate the u3a's 25th anniversary with the screening of the documentary **25 Years: Impressions** (UK, 1977). Filmed for the most part during the hottest summer in living memory, **25 Years** is a celebration of not only the Silver Jubilee of Britain's (then) second-longest-reigning monarch, but also Britain itself and the massive social and developmental changes it had gone through during that quarter of a century. The original listing reads *'There will be many seeing this film who will readily remember the Coronation in 1953, coupled with the conquest of Everest announced on that day, but who may have some difficulty in recalling that food rationing was still in force at the time. There will be those who [in 1977] have lived in no other reign but the Queen's and to whom television, Concorde and space exploration are almost taken for granted.'*

Of interest to our film buffs is the life of the German-born filmmaker, Peter Morley, who wrote and directed **25 Years**. As a child, he fled Nazi Germany to the UK, where he lived until he died in 2016. He made several documentaries about women in the Holocaust, winning several awards, another about the work of members of the London Symphony Orchestra, and, in 1964, a documentary about racially mixed marriages, a very controversial subject at the time. He went on to direct the BAFTA-winning television coverage of the state funeral of Sir Winston Churchill and the 'monumental' television series *The Life and Times of Lord Mountbatten*.

Please don't mistake this Classic Cinema screening for a Monarchy bunfight! When it was released to cinemas, **25 Years** was poorly reviewed and a flop. The film edits together disparate footage to make a single point – that though enormous changes occurred, Elizabeth II was a constant fixture. There is no counter-argument. It doesn't reflect industrial disputes, Europe, tensions over immigration and a nascent Republicanism, soon to be spurred by the release of the Sex Pistols' *God Save the Queen* single (a rather more commercially successful enterprise than **25 Years**). With **25 Years**, we look back to even earlier times than 1977, when coverage of the Royal family was detached. A recent balanced review suggests the 'respectful deference and understated defence of the Institution might cause a grudging respect and empathy in the heart of all but the staunchest Republican'. We'll see on 5 June at Classic Cinema!

Ally Edwards

● Quiz



This month's theme is 'General Knowledge'.

Questions

1. What is the longest running play in the West End?
2. In what year was the Easter uprising in Dublin?
3. What is the DLR in London?
- 4a. How many plays did William Shakespeare write?
- 4b. How many comedies did he write?
5. How long does the Royal Standard Flag fly at half-mast when a Sovereign dies?
6. What is a George Cave?
7. In Roman numerals what is 'one thousand five hundred eighty four'?
8. What did the H W stand for in George H W Bush?
9. On a statue of a horse and rider what does it mean if the horse has two front legs in the air?
10. What do the initials NDCS stand for?

Neil Berry

Please see page 31 for the answers.

Image from Pixabay

Group Timetable

To join any group you must be a member of u3a

	First Week	Second Week	Third Week
Mon am	Architecture Welsh Language	Art Appreciation Questions of Belief Welsh Language	Welsh Language
Mon pm	Badminton 1 Concert Band Mah-jong/Rummikub Shakespeare Singing for Pleasure	Badminton 1 Concert Band Mah-jong/Rummikub Spanish-Elementary	Badminton 1 Concert Band Mah-jong/Rummikub Shakespeare Singing for Pleasure
Tue am	Creative Writing 2 Cycling for Pleasure Latin 1 Spanish Intermediate Urban Sketchers	Golf for Fun Listening to Music 2 Social Saunters Village Strolls 1	Bookends Photography 2 Spanish Intermediate Urban Sketchers Walks over 4 m
Tue pm	Card Games Creative Writing 1 Latin Reading Model Railways	Exploring Language Jam Session Patchwork/Quilting 1 Pétanque	Archaeology Card Games Latin Reading Model Railways
Wed am	Pickleball 3 Skittles 1, Oct-May Table Tennis Tai Chi	Pickleball 3, Tai Chi 2 French Conversation Painting for Pleasure Skittles 2, Oct-May Skittles 3, June-Sept	Pickleball 3 Skittles 1, Oct-May Table Tennis Tai Chi Village Ambles Camera
Wed pm	Monthly Meeting @2 Methodist Church Yoga 3 (term time)	Latin 3 Sea Shanties Yoga 3 (term time)	Philosophy Yoga 3 (term time)
Thu am	Pickleball 1 Yoga 2 (term time)	Aspects of Modern History; German Needlecraft Pickleball 1 Short Mat Bowls 1 Walks under 4 miles 1 Yoga 2 (term time)	Pickleball 1 Village Strolls 3 Yoga 2 (term time)
Thu pm	Modern Greek 1 Dressmaking	China: The Country Latin 2 Modern Greek 1 Needlecraft Short Mat Bowls 2	Modern Greek 1 Dressmaking
Fri am	Classic Cinema Country Dancing Modern Greek 2 Pickleball 2 Welsh Language	Computers & Digital Italian; Modern Greek2 Pickleball 2, Play Reading, Welsh	Book Friends Classic Cinema Country Dancing Modern Greek 2 Pickleball 2 / Welsh
Fri pm	Badminton 2 Bridge; Board Games Family Research	Badminton 2 Bridge	Badminton 2 Bridge; Board Games Family Research
Sun am	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 Welsh Language	Welsh Language	<p>Patchwork and Quilting 2 alternate Wednesdays – Linda Dunbar</p> <p>Concert Group – David Daniels</p> <p>Website Editors – meet as required – Alun Edwards</p> <p style="color: red; font-weight: bold; text-align: center;">Group leaders can be contacted by email from the group's webpage.</p>	Mon am
Badminton 1 Concert Band Mah-jong/Rummikub Spanish-Elementary	Badminton 1 Concert Band Mah-jong/Rummikub		Mon pm
Golf for Fun Photography 1 Village Strolls 2	Urban Sketchers Spanish Intermediate		Tue am
Jam Session Patchwork/Quilting 1 Pétanque Quiz Group			Tue pm
French Conversation Painting for Pleasure Pickleball 3, Tai Chi 2 Skittles 2, Oct-May Skittles 3, June-Sept	Military History Pickleball 3 Table Tennis		Wed am
Latin 3 Sea Shanties Yoga 3 (term time)	Poetry Yoga 3 (term time)		Wed pm
Aspects of Modern History; German Needlecraft Pickleball 1 Short Mat Bowls 1 Walks under 4 miles 2 Yoga 2 (term time)	Pickleball 1 Yoga 2 (term time)		Thu am
Book Club; German Modern Greek 1 Needlecraft Short Mat Bowls 2 Wine Tasting	Modern Greek 1		Thu pm
Birdwatching Italian Post- Beginners Modern Greek 2 Pickleball 2 / Welsh	Modern Greek 2 Pickleball 2 Science & Engineering Welsh Language		Fri am
Badminton 2 Bridge	Badminton 2 Bridge		Fri pm
	Brunch Bunch	Sun am	

● Village Ambles with Camera



The group at Bretforton Grange Theatrebarn in April

Image by Daniel Westbury, Site Manager, submitted by Chas Bryer

● Pétanque

The Pétanque Group usually meets in Workman Gardens in the afternoon of the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month. Members meet throughout the year and in the past, on a least one occasion, determined players cleared snow from the boules terrain before a game could proceed.

In recent years, Workman Gardens seems to have been affected by flooding more often than in the past. The council closes the park as soon as the river path is covered by water and only opens it again after cleaning has been completed. It may not be the only factor, but with the amount of sewage that has been discharged into the river in recent years from the Broadway Brook sewage works and other sources in times of heavy rain, it is not surprising that the safety of residents has required the park's closure. But it has been frustrating on a bright winter's afternoon to see the boules terrain in Workman Gardens looking like this:



Last winter, when Workman Gardens was unavailable, a small group of players braved the elements to play at Honeybourne Sports Field, after Bob Lewington arranged its use with the

parish council. It is a pleasant spot, with facilities to make playing the game on a cold day comfortable and a terrain just big enough for the largest number of players turning up.

After leading the group for more than fifteen years, Paul Griffin decided that it was time to step down. All members past and present owe him thanks for keeping the group going all these years throughout the four seasons – and in numerous car parks when the park couldn't be used! Some of us will also remember joint sessions with Droitwich u3a and a trip to play with clubs on Jersey, which coincided with the island's celebration of Liberation Day.

Bob Lewington and Paul Ribchester have taken over as joint group leaders. No doubt the group's success will continue! We are currently back in Workman Gardens and are likely to continue playing there until the next time the river floods. If you want to give it a go, please get in touch with one of the leaders so they know to expect you.

Graham Smith

● Jam Session

As part of our 25th Anniversary celebrations, Robin Tomkins, one of our members, had the idea of asking players to perform in small groups instead of playing as part of the full group, as we usually do. This meant getting up on stage to perform in front of an 'audience'. Some were already experienced but, for others, this was new and indeed quite a daunting prospect. However, most members gave it a

go and can be proud of their achievements. We hope to do the same again later in the year. There was still time at the end of the afternoon to have a jam as usual, hence the large number of people on stage.

Grahame Percival



Image by Dave Cowell – more images on pages 34 & 35

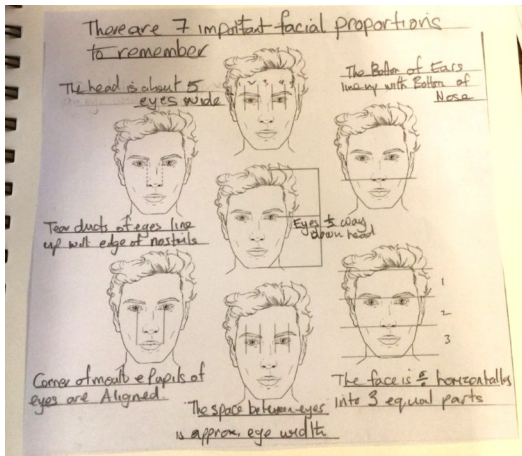
● Painting for Pleasure

Portraits were our focus in March and we were lucky enough to have Mike Bagshaw to demonstrate his technique using acrylics. He explained the importance of a tonal sketch, which he does in charcoal, then demonstrated how to build up colour and shadow to shape the face. It was fascinating to watch the likeness develop and the finished work was a striking portrait.

The following week, two group members, Lesley and Toby, each gave us useful guidelines on the structure



and proportions of the face. So we are currently trying our hands (brushes) at portraiture. However it is never easy to get a good likeness, especially of a familiar face such as those of family or friends.



There has been a lot of discussion within the group of how best to celebrate 25 years of Evesham u3a. We have decided on a 'Painting Picnic' in August and we hope to put on an exhibition of our work when a suitable venue can be found.

Mary Simpson

Images by Mary Simpson

🔵 Welsh Language

We were delighted to welcome some new members following the Open Day in February and I would like to thank Kevin and Gareth who manned our stand.

The photo of our stand features some of the books we have been reading. The one at the front, 'Agor y Drws' (Open the Door), is the book we have begun to read occasionally during our Monday Zoom meetings. Once a month, we are reading a chapter from a Welsh language book for learners, which we have found very engaging whatever our ability in Welsh. We also enjoy working



together to solve quizzes in Welsh, translate together a conversation in video, audio or written format, and more.

We continue to meet regularly in-person over coffee at Clive's of Cropthorne from 10.00 am every Friday morning. Currently, we have plans for Welsh Scrabble (junior version!) on the occasional Friday morning in the summer months.

New members are very welcome. If you are interested in finding out a bit more about us, you are welcome to drop in on a Friday morning. Alternatively, you can get in touch with me via the link on the website.

Steve Bate

● Birdwatching

It was with great sadness that we learnt of the untimely death of Geoff Bryant earlier this year. Geoff was a great supporter of the group, helping with bird lists, providing photographs and doing the initial organising for our weekend away. Our thoughts are with his family and friends. RIP Geoff.



Goosander and Mandarin Ducks by Geoff Bryant

Our February meeting was in the Forest of Dean. We were hoping for dippers, hawfinch and goshawks. We gathered at Parkend to look for the hawfinches. To start with, the main activity was greenfinches and the occasional nuthatch. Eventually a single bird appeared, posed for a few seconds and then disappeared into a yew tree. Unfortunately, that was the last we saw of it. We then had a rather muddy walk along the brook looking for dippers, but river levels had risen after the overnight rain and there were few perching points for the birds. We did spot two grey wagtails.

The weather didn't help us at the next stop, New Fancy View raptor viewpoint. Low cloud and damp conditions meant birds of prey were not soaring or displaying. Despite the lack of birds, much was to be enjoyed with the views across the Forest. We moved on to Cannop Ponds where we had good views of at least twelve mandarin ducks amongst the trees at the water's edge and male and female goosanders.



In March, a small party of us braved a very unfavourable forecast and made the trip to Middleton. The rain held off until, as with our November visit, we reached the only hide on the site. There was plenty of evidence of spring. We were lucky enough to hear the bittern booming and had

charming views of both wren and long-tailed tit nest building. Herons and little egrets were sitting on the nests in the trees and early returning (or perhaps overwintering) warblers such as blackcap and chiffchaff were singing. Avocets, oystercatchers, redshanks and little ringed plovers were back to their breeding grounds. Also, at the last screen, an early swallow flew past. However, there were still signs of winter with good numbers of wigeon and teal about and we had great views of male and female goldeneye.

In April we had our weekend away to Pembrokeshire. We were treated to glorious sunshine throughout the trip. We travelled down via WWT Llanelli where the best star birds were an adult breeding plumage Mediterranean and adult little gull. We stayed overnight in Haverfordwest and the next day went on a pre-booked boat trip to Skomer Island. Here we saw many thousands of puffins, guillemots and razorbills with kittiwakes, fulmars and gannets. We also had outstanding views of a short-eared owl. Some of us went on an evening boat trip out into St Bride's Bay where we saw a raft of many hundreds of Manx shearwaters waiting for darkness before they returned to their burrows. We were then treated to a glorious sunset!



On Sunday we returned to England via RSPB Newport Wetlands where we had great views of many species of warblers, heard a cuckoo and spotted a peregrine falcon perching on an old industrial building. The weekend ended with views of a spotted flycatcher during our lunch before setting off for home.

Alan Chambers

Images: page 25 – the group at WWT Llanelli; page 26 – Puffin on Skomer and Razorbills by Steve Cockburn

● Archaeology & Heritage

It has certainly been a busy time since mid-January. On 7 February, courtesy of South Worcestershire Archaeology Group (SWAG), we were updated by the Worcester Cathedral Archaeologist, Fiona Keith-Lucas on recent archaeological discoveries at the cathedral. This was followed on 18 February with a talk on Roman Leicester by Mathew Morris, University of Leicester, courtesy of Alcester Centurions.

14 March found us back at SWAG with a talk by Tim Cornah, Worcestershire archaeologist, who provided us with a talk on archaeological investigations at Hartlebury Castle. On 17 March, members of the group enjoyed an excursion to Redditch Forge Mill Needle Museum followed by a tour of the remains of Bordesley Abbey, which are next to the museum.

We found ourselves back at Alcester Centurions on 18 March, for a talk by Roger White, University of Birmingham, on excavations at Wroxeter. We continued the Roman theme on 15 April at Alcester, with a talk by Glenn Manning on his discovery of two Roman swords at Willersley. This was featured on a recent edition of Digging for Britain on BBC2.

On Tuesday 21 April we followed on from Tim Cornah's talk with a group visit to Hartlebury Castle and Worcestershire County Museum. Our final event for April was a talk by Eric Stead at SWAG on how to build an Iron Age Roundhouse and a pottery kiln, both areas of experimental archaeology. The events and talks were well received by those who attended them and all the speakers were experts in their field.



On **Tuesday 23 June**, as part of the **Evesham u3a 25th Anniversary celebrations**, I am leading an 'Evesham Heritage Walk' starting at the Almonry Museum. **This event is open to all Evesham u3a members and booking is essential due to the limitation on numbers.** There will be two identical walks starting at 10.30am and 1.30pm. Please book your chosen walk by emailing me from the Archaeology or 25 Years webpage.

Chris Wolstencroft

Image: the Great Hall at Hartlebury Castle by B Wolstencroft

● German

Our second quarter started well with the enrolment of another enthusiast who wanted to join us on our German road.

We are now in our 25th year and are delighted to celebrate our **Silver Anniversary** – what an achievement! During that quarter of a century many ‘Silver Stars’ have come and gone. Every newcomer brings a wealth of experience and intellect to the group which is beneficial to all as we learn from each other. Alas, recently some members, Gordon Hartley-Bennett, Alan Mordey and John Sharpe have passed away. However, Peter Behrendt moved to pastures new and decided to make his home in North Yorkshire. All of them were long-standing members of our group and are sadly missed. We often speak of the ‘Silver Star’ contributions and stories they have made over many years.

We are now planning our **Summer Garden Party** at my home on 9 July, which this year is held in honour of **25 Wonderful Silver Years**. All four groups enjoy the twice monthly get-together and it is lovely to see their language improvement. We have become friends over the years. With hard work, sincerity and a sense of humour we have reached our **Silver Anniversary**. Whatever the future may bring, we will continue on the same road, encounter new avenues and be amazed at what we will find along the way. Would you like to join our adventure? For information please get in touch with me via our webpage.

Sophie Dodds

● Poetry

Our Poetry Group will make the big stage! We have been awarded the opening slot in the 25th Silver Jubilee celebrations at Evesham Methodist Church on 4 November 2026.

For many poetry lovers the bug starts with Nursery Rhymes and as Group Leader I plan to open proceedings with a self-penned nursery rhyme (Granny used to have a tea pot) from the 90s when I was old enough to know better. In the meantime the group has just tackled ‘Play/plays; Special moments; Star/stars’ for our April meeting and

the Rolling Stones rubbed shoulders with Philip Larkin and many others, with Robert Frost keeping the Special Relationship alive and Shakespeare's Henry V and Romeo and Juliet bringing Olivier and Judy Dench to the table.

This season, we are experimenting with multiple themes for each month and so far so good, with 'Creepers and crawlers; Travel; Lost' to look forward to in May. The group meets on the last Wednesday of each month, except in December, from 1.30 to 3.30 pm upstairs at Wallace House, Oat Street. We have an established bunch of regulars but new blood is always welcome! We sit around the table and take turns to read our selection, going round and round until the poetry or the time runs out! And there is plenty of opportunity for chat, banter and reflection.

Richard Taylor

● Country Dancing

Our Country Dancing group continues to be a joyful combination of gentle movement and moderate taxing of the brain, remembering the steps. We don't always manage to follow our caller perfectly, but everyone does their best and we enjoy our efforts and have great fun in trying. The atmosphere of the group is friendly and relaxed with a very welcome mid-session break for refreshments. No previous dancing experience is required. There is no barrier to coming on your own and members sometimes sit out a dance or swap partners.



Most weeks we have almost full membership, but we can occasionally offer a spare place or two and we also have a waiting list. We meet at Hampton Guide and Scout Hall on the first and third Fridays of the month from 10.00 am to 12.00 noon. The cost is £4 per session.



Free first session for Evesham or Cotswold Link u3a members!

If you consider joining our group or would like more information, please email Phil Morton or Jenny Law via our webpage.

Words and images by Phil Morton

● Concert Group

Our regular readers will know that we have a tendency to use superlatives in our quarterly reports. It isn't that such usage is not justified; it's just that the Concert Group organizing team are hugely enthusiastic about the wonderful music that we make available through our hassle-free trips to Symphony Hall in Birmingham six times a season.

But just sometimes, the most phlegmatic of our readers might accept that our eager style of writing is more than justified – like now! **Martha Argerich is coming to Symphony Hall!**

'Martha Who'? some might ask. Well, think Frank Sinatra or Luciano Pavarotti or – you get the point! Argentinian-born legendary veteran pianist superstar, Martha is one of the greatest concert performers

of all time – truly! And we have secured our usual block of tickets for the concert on 4 September. As usual, we are running a reservations list which is available for you to sign up to, so that you get first refusal on the tickets when they go on sale in June. You may not be on the Concert Group Mailing List (yet??) but we will be more than happy to sign you up for this, literally, once in a lifetime opportunity to see and hear a truly remarkable performer.

Meanwhile, at the time of writing, we are just back from our most recent concert trip which combined the beauty of Brahms with the dramatic power of Rachmaninoff (the Violin Concerto and the First Symphony respectively) and we are now looking forward to our final concert of this season on 27 June. This is a first for us – the performance of a complete opera. But what an opera! Puccini's Tosca with all the usual power and pathos of the great man's beautiful writing will feature another superstar in the imposing presence of Sir Bryn Terfel. Bookings for this one have closed but we are running a waiting list in case of cancellations, which always seem to arise due to illness or changing circumstances.

We haven't received the programme for next season yet, expected any day now, but we will circulate details as soon as we have settled on the remaining five concerts, the Martha Argerich concert with the Munich Philharmonic Orchestra being a one-off booking in advance. But if great music is your thing, do please contact me to sign up for the mailing list – no commitment, just information. And better still, sign up for one or more of our concerts next season. We would love to hear from you.

David Daniels

Answers to the Quiz on page 17

1. The Mousetrap
2. 1916
3. Dockland Light Railway
- 4a. 37
- 4b. 17
5. Never, as the sovereign never dies. The new monarch immediately succeeds his or her predecessor
6. An English apple
7. MD LXXX IV
8. Herbert Walker
9. The rider died during a battle
10. National Deaf Children's Society

Group Name	Coordinator	Fee
Archaeology & Heritage	Chris Wolstencroft	Varies
Architecture	Caroline Bagshaw	Varies
Art Appreciation	Caroline Bagshaw	£2.00
Aspects of Modern History	Sheila Himsworth	£1.00
Badminton 1	Cefn Blundell	£3-£4
Badminton 2	Teresa Green	£4.00
Birdwatching	Alan Chambers	Free
Board Games	Peter Aggett	Free
Book Club	Sue Griffiths	Varies
Bookends	Penny Hanes	Buy drink
Book Friends	Chris Spriggs	Varies
Bridge	Liz Rodway	£2.00
Brunch Bunch	Alun Edwards	Brunch
Card Games	Victoria Nelson	Buy drink
China: The Country	David Ralph	£3.00
Classic Cinema	Ally Edwards	£4.00
Computers & Digital Media	John Scotland	£1.00
Concert Band (playing)	Denise Tandy	£2.00
Concert Group	David Daniels	Varies
Country Dancing	P Morton/J Law	£4.00
Creative Writing 1 & 2	Sue Johnson	Buy drink
Cycling for Pleasure	Chris Davis	Free
Dressmaking	Denise Bailey	Varies
Exploring Language	Caroline Bagshaw	£5.00
Family Research	Diane Nicholls	£2.50
French Conversation	Lorna Slaughter	Free
German (3 groups)	Sophie Dodds	£2.00
Golf for Fun	John Goodwin	Green fee
Italian (post-beginners)	Sue Jerrard	Varies
Jam Session	Bob Davies	£2.00
Latin 1	Caroline Bagshaw	£5.00
Latin 2	Caroline Bagshaw	50 p
Latin 3, Beginners	David Battin	Buy drink
Latin Reading	David Battin	Free
Listening to Music	Frances Platman	£1.00

Mahjong/Rummikub	Carla Auger	£3.00
Military History	Neil Hoy	£3.00
Model Railways	John Gowers	Varies
Modern Greek 1	Mike Fraser	50 p
Modern Greek 2	Mike Fraser	50 p
Needlecraft	Helen Barlow	Free
Painting for Pleasure	Marjorie Arthurs	£3.00
Patchwork & Quilting 1	Fran Battin	£2.00
Patchwork & Quilting 2	Linda Dunbar	£2.00
Pétanque	Bob Lewington	Varies
Philosophy	Mike Bagshaw	£4.00
Photography 1	Mike Tittensor	£3.00
Photography 2	Sandra Woodfield	£2.00
Pickleball 1	Mark Round	£5.00
Pickleball 2	Andrew Rowles	£5.00
Pickleball 3	Lesley Roberts	£6.00
Play Reading	Margaret Fuller	£3.00
Poetry	Richard Taylor	£4.00
Questions of Belief&Doubt	Jane Couper	Free
Quiz	Neil Berry	£2.00
Rummikub/Mah-jong	Carla Auger	£3.00
Science & Engineering	Robert Hale	£2.00
Sea Shanties	Neil Berry	Buy drink
Shakespeare	Nicky Neill	£3.00
Short Mat Bowls 1	Jan Higgitt	£3.00
Short Mat Bowls 2	Pat Stephens	£3.00
Singing for Pleasure	Cath Cox	£2.00
Skittles 1, Oct - May	Olga Allen	Buy drink
Skittles 2, Oct - May	Paul Griffin	Free
Skittles 3, June to Sept	Paul Griffin	Free
Social Saunters	Richard Hunt	Free
Spanish-Elementary	David Keeling	Varies
Spanish Intermediate	Leighton Jones	Varies
Table Tennis	Gary Hewitt	£3.00
Tai Chi	Derek Arnold	£5.00
Tai Chi 2	Derek Arnold	Varies
Urban Sketchers	Mike Bagshaw	Free

Village Ambles & Camera	Christine Harvey	£1.00
Village Strolls 1	Terry Woodfield	£1.00
Village Strolls 2	Sandra Woodfield	£1.00
Village Strolls 3	G & J Cutter	£1.00
Walks Over 4 Miles	J Alexander-Head	£1.00
Walks Under 4 Miles 1	Ruth Webb	£1.00
Walks Under 4 Miles 2	Hazel Marshall	£1.00
Website Editors	Alun Edwards	Free
Welsh Language	Steve Bate	Varies
Wine Tasting	Grahame Percival	£7.50
Yoga 2	Lyn Heaney	Varies
Yoga 3	Alison Williams	Varies



Website

<https://evesham.u3asite.uk>

Facebook

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Public Group

Jam Session



Images on pages 34 and 35 by Iain Bonfield

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