

u3a

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SHOTTERY u3a

NEWSLETTER: March 2026

Tuesday, April 7th

**The Art and Science of Orthopaedic
Surgery**

Peter Craig

DESK AND REFRESHMENT ROTA:

April - Local History

May – Play Reading

Duties include checking members in at the entrance desk and serving tea and coffee and washing up afterwards (dishwasher available). Generally 4 members are required. Where groups have difficulty in raising the necessary 4 members, please get in touch with Jan Grant– Group Coordinator. (01789 417721)

Please note that as I don't have a current rota pattern I have gone back to the 2023 list I have. Apologies if you find your group listed above and have recently already done the duty. Kate

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS:

May 5th – Guide Dog Training -Rod Arthur

June – Warwickshire Search and Rescue – Nick Cole

New Series – Your input needed!

Have you had your 15 minutes of fame? If so, would you share it with us all in the newsletter? Many people have had an encounter with someone famous, done something noteworthy which gave them 'fame' (or notoriety!). It doesn't have to be major, even a smidgeon of 'fame' would be interesting. We'd love you to write a short piece for inclusion in the newsletter (with photos if appropriate). Send it to:

shotteryu3a@gmail.com

National News

Find out more about Interest Groups Online..

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/what-we-do/learning/interest-groups-online>

Johnny Ball headlines *u3a Festival 26*

We are delighted to announce that iconic TV legend, Johnny Ball, will be opening *u3a Festival 26*. Known for his fun approach to learning, Johnny's opening event will set the scene for three days of joyful skill sharing.

With over 35 activities a day, u3a Festival 26 promises to encapsulate the creativity, innovation and excitement of the u3a movement. Be part of the fun - [book your tickets now.](#)

INTEREST GROUPS

We are always interested in expanding the number and range of interest groups that are on offer. If you would be interested in developing a new group, please get in touch with the Secretary via the website group

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

SHAKESPEARE ONLY ACHIEVED GREATNESS THANKS TO GOOD FRIENDS!

With the anniversary next month of Shakespeare's official birthday on the 23rd April 1564 it is interesting to reflect that he might never have become famous as a playwright if it hadn't been for two friends and fellow actors, John Hemings and Henry Condell.

Seven years after Shakespeare's death they had the foresight to collect together 36 of his plays and have them published in a reliable format for the first time. Otherwise, Shakespeare's plays in their entirety might have been lost to us for ever and Stratford-upon-Avon might have become known as just another small midlands town.

In contrast, unlike his plays, Shakespeare in his lifetime was determined to see his two long narrative poems as well as his stunning cycle of 154 sonnets through the printing press.

Even today there is much debate about who the subjects of the sonnets are, popularly known as the 'young man' and the 'dark lady', but in reality the sonnets tell us much more about Shakespeare himself. Try re-reading his most famous sonnet, 'Shall I compare thee to a summer's day', changing the last rhyme from 'thee' to 'me'!

If this interests you at all and you would like to explore in company some of Shakespeare's poetry along with the works of other great poets, past and living, then you are warmly invited to the first meeting the new cross-u3a group, **POETRY MATTERS!** on **Monday 30th March at 1.30 pm in Stratford**. All u3a members are very welcome, to join the meeting, without commitment, to find out more.

For further details please get in touch with Jonathan Baker at jonobaker@hotmail.com

Group Reports

Gardening Group

Our first outing of 2026 took place in early March to Upton House. The weather was sunny but with a brisk wind so in the more sheltered part of the garden it was very pleasant. Although early in the season there was plenty to see. In particular the daffodils were in abundance but we also saw tulips coming into flower, snowflakes, primroses, violets and wallflowers.

Particularly fascinating was the large number of ladybirds emerging from their winter diapause on the comfrey. Nick

Ambling Group

Due to wet conditions we changed plans and did a Amble in Leamington Spa. Ten of us did the walk of three miles taking us through Victoria Park and into Jephson Gardens. It was lovely to see all the Spring flowers. Lots of beds of Hyacinths, in different colours, daffodils, etc. We even went in the Tropical Glasshouse! Refreshments at Charlecote Nursery.



Lovely photo of our Amblers – looking as colourful as the flowers they were seeing!



I know this not about the Amble Group but I thought it a good idea to share this with you all. Jan Jones and myself went to Dymock Woods to see the wild daffodils last Saturday Such an amazing sight. Dymock and it's surrounding woodlands in Gloucestershire/Herefordshire borders are famous for the golden triangle. There are many established walking routes. A must for a day out next year and take a picnic! Margaret

Rambling Group

The February Ramble took place on hard surfaces due to weather influences. Seven of us walked from Wellesbourne to Walton Hall Hotel and back in dry conditions. Five of us dined (slowly) at Charlecote Garden Centre (we had the slight misfortune of being served alongside a large group, i.e. a coach-load of pre-booked pensioners, and the kitchen struggled to keep up).

For March, our walking number swelled to 15, and again we took a dry route, that being along the Greenway from Milcote to Long Marston and back, with 12 dining in the Milcote Carriages Cafe. Another dry day, both above and underfoot.

Until next winter, I hope future Rambles can now venture back out onto footpaths and bridleways without the prospect of being ankle deep in mud.

I (Martin Young) will be unavailable for the April Ramble, so I believe it is proposed that The View at Wootton Wawen be booked for coffee at 09:30 on Tuesday 28th April, for a chat with the option to walk Austy Wood for the bluebells afterwards, should members attending so wish to self-guide.

This year's Rambles (locations to be decided) will be on;
April 28th, May 26th, June 23rd, July 28th, August 25th, September 22nd, October 27th and November 24th.

If you wish to join the group, please write to Martin Young at xh558@yahoo.co.uk.

Local History Group

The Group is in the process of finding a new meeting place and have settled an appropriate venue, the old Slaughter House in The Yard in Sheep Street, home to Escape Arts. We move there on the second Friday of the month from our May meeting 2.30 as usual.

On a number of occasions a question has arisen within the group as to why Alveston Manor is such a a long way from Alveston Church. That was where we began our deliberations in March. It took us deep into speculation to the extent that we hope to visit Alveston to get a sense of the possibilities. If anybody knows anything about the location of the Manor House we'd be delighted to hear from you. We know about the published material available from the Hotel.

Keep Fit

Our small friendly group consists of both males and females of mixed abilities. The class is designed for our age group, with standing and sitting exercises

We meet every Thursday morning from 10 -11am in the Parish Centre at St Andrews Church in Shotton. We have an excellent tutor and really enjoy the exercises and a chat.

At present there is a waiting list, but please contact me if you are interested in finding out more about the group and being added to the list.. Jan Jones

Lunch Club

The next lunch club meeting is **Thursday 16th April** meeting at 1pm.. Lunch club is at different venues. Signing-up lists are put on the table at the Tuesday monthly meeting.

Digital Photography

Contact Frances for information

Play Reading

This month we will start reading *Dangerous Corner* by J B Priestly. It was written in the early 1930's and reflects his obsession with Time.

A well written play that is fascinating-We plan to read half in March and the rest in April. We meet on the last Friday of every month in each other's homes starting at 2.15pm. We are a small but friendly group of 7 at the moment. If anyone would like to join us please contact me.

Lauri

Book Group

Our book for March was a very readable novel by Robert Harris called *The Second Sleep*. The title refers to the often common practice in the mediaeval times of having a first sleep until about 2 o'clock in the morning, getting up for an hour or two, and then going back for a second sleep about 4 o'clock. The group reckoned that the title also referred to what had happened to society and civilisation. It engendered some lively discussion.

The action took place in a far off future but we were all taken in at the beginning when we thought it was in the past! This was a mixture of mystery, romance, history, science fiction and overall a dystopian thriller.

It did produce some anxiety as the premise that a huge catastrophe or cataclysm had happened in 2025 and wiped out most of the population was a bit close for comfort. It didn't say what had happened but that electricity had been lost and the world as we know it had ended.

The theme of heresy was also woven all the way through it and how it appeared that society was governed and ruled by the Church. It put forward the idea that our present Society has broken all the rules set by the laws of religion and Judgement Day had arrived as a punishment. However, we all felt that the ending was insufficient to do justice to the huge scope of ideas in the book.

The group is currently full, but if anyone would like to start a second group, advice on how to do this is available – contact Kate

Please send items for inclusion in the newsletter or enquiries regarding interest groups or membership leaders via the email

shotteryu3a@gmail.com