



November 2024

Charity Reg No. 1038544



**CAMELOT AREA
Newsletter**

Who's Who in Camelot

Officers

Chairman:	Vacant	<i>To contact any of the Committee Members go to the contacts page of the website, and send a message</i>
Vice Chair:	Stella Fairbairn	
Hon. Treasurer:	Peter Kennedy	
Hon. Secretary:	Catriona Cole	

Committee Members

Membership Secretary	Caroline Reeves
Speaker Secretary	Gill Bagnall
Newsletter Editor	Sandie Docherty
Publicity	Vacant
Beacon Admin	Robert Reeves
Website Assistant	Peter Townley
Groups Co-Ordinator	Vacant

Non Committee Members

Website Editor	Alan Gibbons
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Website: <https://camelot-area.u3asite.uk>

Contents

Who's Who in Camelot	02
Notes from the Vice Chair	04
Notes from the Editor	05
Camelot Area Monthly Meetings	06
Monthly Meeting Tea Rota 2024	07
New Website	08
French, Short Walks? Quiz	09
Cinema	10/11
Monday Art	12
Writing for Fun	14
Groups	16/17
Nature Walks	16
Travel Group	18/19
Digital Group	20/21
Good Tradesman Guide	22/23
Dates for your Diary	24

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December 2024 issue is 10th November 2024**

Cover Photo: by Barbara Voules

Website www.camelot-area.u3asite.uk

Web Editor: Alan Gibbons

Notes from the Vice Chair

As Autumn is now well upon us and the darker nights established, we can value our u3a activities even more. With extra time available as our garden duties have dwindled and lazing in the sun has been rudely removed, we can enjoy our groups with a different approach and feeling.

Crisp, hearty walks on a Wednesday, Thursday or Friday are a good way to keep fit and appreciate our stunning Somerset scenery. The photography group are sure to be making the most of the change in season too. Reading, writing, languages, history, music, cards, board games, and poetry groups all seem cosier at this time of year, and of course, the warmth of the wine society is a definite winner.

We must also mention our creative art activities and there are still places available for Tuesday's group. If you would like to try your hand at drawing, watercolours, pastel, oils or whatever you fancy, please contact **Di Stickland** on **07866173511** or on her email, found on the group leader's page. It is an informal group that would be very pleased to welcome you, whatever your experience.

The committee are still trying to recruit a publicity officer and minutes secretary, plus the post of chairman is still vacant. If you would like to know what is involved in any of these positions, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Appreciation goes to Sandie Docherty for her excellent work in producing our u3a newsletter and a massive thanks to Patsy Diamond and Hilary Dunford and the other volunteers for continuing to deliver them. It is an ever-expanding area to cover so it is a relief to see many of you take up the offer of using the internet to receive your copy. Many who have their issues posted have also made the most of this facility, so reducing u3a costs – many thanks to you. In the past I have always sworn by a paper copy but must admit that I am coping very well with the e-version. Life in the old dog yet!

Until next month.

Stella Fairbairn – Vice Chair.

Notes from the Editor

The **AGM** was held immediately before the Camelot monthly meeting. Eighteen committee members and group leaders attended with a very good turn out of our members. All the business was concluded in time before additional members arrived for the talk on "**Pirates**" The origins and the truth, explained to us very succinctly by **Richard Hutly**, a retired high ranking policeman. He managed to precis his talk from his usual 2 hours to 1 hour especially for us. In that time he managed to cover the history of pirates starting with smugglers who were a part of life throughout British history. Heavy taxation prompting many people to turn to crime. He then expanded his talk to the rest of the world and famous male and female pirates throughout the ages.



Interestingly, he also explained the differences, albeit subtle sometimes between Privateers, Corsairs and Buccaneers. A very interesting meeting with the added bonus of "award" winning cakes and a raffle.



After having walked my dogs, I came across more excellent cakes and beverages. This time it was at the Market Hall, Castle Cary, a Coffee morning held by the Macmillan Cancer Support.

There are so many things going on locally to look out for. For example, in November look out for coffee mornings held by: The Royal British Legion 02/11, The Scouts 09/11 and

Carys Christmas Cracker 23/11. All good causes.

Sun 10 11 2024 All Saints' Church and War Memorial, Remembrance Day service and wreath laying.

Camelot Monthly Meetings

**Caryford Community Hall
Maggs Lane Ansford BA77JJ**

Friday 29th November 2024 at 2.30pm

Name of speaker Kenneth Fowler

Race To Scotland

The Story Of Sailing a "Bath Tub sized" dinghy from Lands End to John O Groats. Full of lots of on board video footage, photos and unusual happenings, this is a story of human endeavour and the ups and downs of an epic adventure.



Friday 24th January 2025 at 2.30pm

Name of speaker Dr C Southgate

Poetry and Science

Synopsis:

Here Christopher examines points of commonality between poetry and science, by giving illustrations of each one. To do it, he uses poets such as Gerard Manley Hopkins and R.S. Thomas, plus some of his own work (which in turn draws on his first career as a research biochemist).

Your Speaker - Christopher Southgate:

Christopher trained as a research biochemist at Cambridge University and in the U.S. He has subsequently been both a University Chaplain and part-time hospital lay chaplain specialising in mental health chaplaincy. He is author of eight poetry collections. Christopher currently works at the University of Exeter, where he recently finished a project on the science of the origin of life.



Friday 28th February 2025 at 2.30 p.m

Name of speakers Brian and Jacqueline Sutton

It was the best of times. It was the worst of times
- the Charles Dickens story.

Brief resume of talk: The life of the great author and social campaigner; his books and stories; his wisdom, characters and humour, his controversial love life including 'The Invisible Woman'.

Brian and Jacqueline have been married for 25 years. Both are retired, Brian having worked as a Property Manager and Theatre Manager, Jacqueline as an English teacher.



Monthly Meeting Tea Rota 2024

The Tea and Coffee for the Monthly Meetings will be organised by the nominated Group below. The nominated Group for that month will liaise with the group from the month before to bring the box of tea coffee etc. Please also bring fresh milk, teas and biscuits if necessary.

The Group should arrive early enough to set out the cups before the meeting and stay to serve the teas and to make sure the washing up has been done afterwards and the kitchen left clean.

With meetings only eight times a year and currently twenty four Groups, each Group will be asked to do this only once every three years or so.

2024/2025

November	History	Bruce Bower
January	Literature	Sue Kewish
February	Recorder	Gill Bagnall
March	Garden Group	Caroline Reeves

The Group Leaders are invited to use the Tea Rota as a guide to also mount a small display or information about what happens in their Group.

New Website

Our new Camelot Area SiteWorks website is now operational. As mentioned previously, it is the replacement of the old SiteBuilder version. Both are u3a products. The difference being in the platform that the website is built upon. In the case of SiteBuilder, it used a custom made product created internally by members of the u3a. Support for it is soon to be withdrawn. Whereas, SiteWorks is developed on an established WordPress product with the addition of u3a plugin's tailored to the needs of Local u3a's.

What does it mean for you, our membership? Well, I think you'll agree that having viewed it for the first time, the new website has a fresher, cleaner look, is easier to use and offers a greater depth of information (aided by greater use of imaging). It doesn't matter whether you view it on laptop, iPad (or equivalent) or mobile phone, it displays data equally well.

I am conscious that many of us don't bother with our website. Believing it to be just a promotional tool and having no relevance to them on a day to day basis, or perhaps, in a few cases, being reluctant to use the internet. Firstly, let me reassure everyone, the website is just a data platform and extremely secure. Its purpose is to provide useful information of interest to all, such as Notices, details on Events, Group Information and News, Contacts, Documentation, etc. on a 24 hour/7 days a week/52 weeks a year basis.

In conclusion, I respectfully ask you the membership to take a look at our website. It is quite new and as such, I would appreciate members letting me know if there is anything needing to be corrected, or any suggestions or comments to make the viewing experience better.

Do take a look. Hopefully, you'll be pleasantly surprised. You'll find us at:

www.camelot-area.u3asite.uk

Alan Gibbons

French

La Rentrée

In France the return to school in September after the long summer holidays is a much trumpeted moment. It is accorded rather less significance here, however it was with great pleasure that our French groups met again after our summer break. We eagerly swapped news, talked about visits to France and welcomed new members, all in French of course. Both groups are currently full again, but I do operate a waiting list!



Susan Keen

Short Walks

Are there any erstwhile keen walkers out there who find it difficult to manage the longer walks nowadays? Would you be interested in joining/organising a group doing less demanding monthly walks, followed by a pub lunch? I propose the second Friday of the month to avoid a clash with other walking groups.

Contact **Susan keen**

Calling all Quizzers!

Castle Cary and Ansford Twinning Association is holding a Quiz Night at Caryford Hall

Saturday 16th November. Doors open at 7.00 for 7.15pm start.

Ploughman's supper included. BYOB.

Make up a table with friends for a fun evening.

Tickets £10 Contact **Di Stickland** [REDACTED] or **Susan Keen**
[REDACTED]

Cinema in Caryford - Children's Film The Addams Family 2 (2021) (PG)

Morticia and Gomez are distraught that their children are growing up, skipping family dinners, and totally consumed with "scream time." To reclaim their bond they decide to cram Wednesday, Pugsley, Uncle Fester and the crew into their haunted camper and hit the road for one last miserable family vacation. Their adventure across America takes them out of their element and into hilarious run-ins with their iconic cousin, IT, as well as many new kooky characters. What could possibly go wrong?

Come in Halloween fancy dress

Thursday 31 October 2024

Doors 1:45pm Film 2:00pm

Tickets £2.50

Free drink and snack for children. Tea and coffee for donations.

<https://wegottickets.com/event/634006>

Photographic Exhibition in Shepton Mallet Library

The U3a Digital Photography Group are putting on an exhibition of some of their photographs of "The Natural World" in Shepton Mallet library from Monday 4th November, possibly for two weeks. This is to coincide with an event at the Library showcasing the Natural World and highlighting books on the subject.



Please go and have a look at this photographic collection, as it has had some additions to the display at the Open and Enrolment Day in June and all show the beauty and variety of Nature.

Anne Wood

Cinema in Caryford

Caryford Community Hall , Maggs Lane

Doors open 7.00pm Film starts 7.30pm All tickets £6.00. Available from the Market House Mon - Fri 9.30 - 12.30; Sat 10 - 12.

Wednesday 23 October **Back to Black (2024) (15)**

The film tells the story of the life and music of Amy Winehouse, through the journey of adolescence to adulthood and the creation of one of the best-selling albums of our time. Painting a vivid, vibrant picture of the Camden streets she called home and capturing the struggles of global fame, Back to Black honours Amy's artistry, wit, and honesty, as well as trying to understand her demons.



Wednesday 27 November **Dune: Part Two (2024) (12A)**

This big-screen epic continues the adaptation of Frank Herbert's acclaimed bestseller Dune exploring the mythic journey of Paul Atrides as he unites with Chani and the Fremen while on a path of revenge against the conspirators who destroyed his family. Facing a choice between the love of his life and the fate of the Known Universe, he endeavours to prevent a terrible future only he can foresee



Coffee Morning

The u3a Coffee Morning was held on 11 October at the Market Hall, Castle Cary. Several Group Leaders set up stalls with examples of their activities and this gave visitors an opportunity not only to see the variety of subjects that are offered but to speak to the group leaders as well.



Monday Art

We are four weeks into our Autumn/Winter term and we have all been happily painting some lovely work. First week it was flowers, second was cockerels, third was objects from home and last Monday was nudes. Two of our three new members haven't attempted art since school and already Alison has tried watercolour and painted some beautiful silver birches. Some people follow the suggestions and others have their own ideas. One member is painting his dog. All the paintings have been finished for our 2025 calendar and I took them over yesterday to our printer in Shaftesbury with a friend from our group so we are really early this year and excited as always.



Nude by Julian Cox Charcoal

Sylvia Mottram.



Watercolour by Trina Cole



*Watercolour by Alison Barlow,
new member.*



Nude by Angela Hurrell pastel



Watercolour by Joy Payne

Pastel. by Ann Jameson,



There are places available in two Groups

Tuesday Art and Play Reading have got space to welcome new members. If either of these are of interest to you, please contact:

Tuesday am ART **Dayella Stickland** [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Play Reading (pm 2nd Tuesday)
Chris Martin [REDACTED]

Writing For Fun

Taking The Plunge

It seemed a good idea at the time, but now I'm not so sure. In fact, I am seriously questioning my sanity. It was my friend and neighbour who persuaded me to join the gaggle of crazy women, collectively known as 'The Water Babes' who regularly take to wild water swimming. Sheila, being one of the ringleaders, convinced me that taking the plunge in an ice-cold lake would be good for my physical and mental health. For weeks I have found excuse after excuse as to why I couldn't make it. Hairdresser, dentist, taking the dog to the vet, wrong time of the month, I've used them all. Sheila is not one for taking no as an answer. She has persisted in instructing me on the principles of this type of exercise, taking me through all the prep of dealing with cold water shock. It was hardly the sort of detail to enthrall me, but today I've caved in.



So, here I am swathed in a duvet-like coat and ridiculous bobble hat, waiting anxiously to take the plunge along with the group of intrepid women of all ages, shapes and sizes. Two rather lardy ladies have stripped off their coats and are already gliding through the glassy water with only their bobble hats and tendrils of warm breath showing as they make their rhythmic strokes. Others wait in line at the water's edge, incongruously dressed in brightly coloured swimming costumes bearing images of tropical flowers, appearing at odds with the autumnal English countryside. They stand in a row chatting amiably as they prepare to enter the lake, looking for all the world like pale and plucked oven-ready chickens ready for basting.

"Come on!" Sheila pulls me up from my huddled position, and we pad over to the lake's edge where the chilled air has already caused goosebumps to rise. The other women have simply taken to the water

without showing any hesitation, whereas I find myself recoiling from its icy grip grabbing at my ankles as I cautiously inch my way in. My calf muscles cramp as I struggle to control my breathing; the air in my lungs feeling as though it is being squeezed from my ribs. Midriff, chest are now submerged, and I can almost feel my internal organs retract as though vacuum packed inside my shivering body.

“Start moving!” Sheila instructs. “Get those limbs going, and you’ll begin to relax, and you need to steady your breathing.” “Easier said than done,” I spit-out through chattering teeth. I’m frozen, feeling like an insect suspended in amber; trapped and immobilised, and I begin to feel irritated at Sheila’s pestering and angry with myself for giving in. How is this icy assault on my body supposed to be good for me?

I tentatively begin some steady strokes and eventually, my breathing regulates. The early morning sun rays dance on the rippling surface and I begin to relax. In the distance, I watch waterfowl preening as part of their morning ritual, while others join us on the lake to begin dipping and ducking in search of their breakfast. I can feel the caress of a soft breeze on my face, and I look up at the clouds as they scud across the autumn sky. Gold and crimson leaves flutter from the trees on the far shoreline. I hear birdsong, the rustling of trees and the gentle splashing from the wake of my movement. Heartbeat, swim-strokes and breath become synchronised, and a sense of grace and wellbeing stirs in my soul, and I feel at one with the earth. I can begin to see what makes the Water Babes tick.

Having put off taking the plunge for so long, I resolve to be brave enough to try it again.

Alison Gibbons

Group Leaders Variety is the spice of life!

Members would enjoy reading and seeing photos of your activities. If you or a nominated member of your group would like to send me some information or photos, please do. Thank you.

The Editor

Monday

Art (am Weekly)
Sylvia Mottram

Digital Photography (am 2nd Monday)
Anne Wood

History (pm 1st Monday of Month)
Bruce Bower

Literature (pm last Monday of Month)
Sue Kewish

Recorder (pm weekly)
Gill Bagnall

Garden Group (pm 3rd Monday)
Caroline Reeves

Tuesday

Art (am Weekly)
Dayella Stickland

Advanced French (alternate Tuesday pm)
Susan Keen

Mah Jong. (pm 2nd and 4th Tuesday)
Marion G Pace

Play Reading (pm 2nd Tuesday)
Chris Martin

Listening to Jazz (pm 2nd Tuesday)
Neil Houghton

Wednesday

Wednesday Walking (am alt Weeks)
Janet Ansell

Wednesday Poetry (am last Wednesday)
Jane Crozier

To check for spaces and other group details, contact the group leader by going to the groups page of the website, select your group from the list, then click on Group email: to send your message

Bridge. (pm Weekly)

Kate Mair

Wine Appreciation (Evenings 3rd Wednesday)

Alan & Alison Gibbons

Thursday

Book Group (pm 1st Thursday)

Jill Halford

Looking at Art (pm 2nd Thursday)

Jenny and Colin Bowen

Writing for Fun (9am 1st Thursday Monthly)

Helen Tracy

Thursday Poetry (am 2nd Thursday)

Ray Leary

Scrabble (pm 4th Thursday)

Karrie Barron

Reading (am 2nd Thursday)

Gill Bagnall

Friday

Friday Walking (am 1st & 3rd Friday)

John Stalley

Short Walks

Susan Keen

Non-Specific

Natures Walks Seasonal

Joan Williams (Group leader)

Vicky Taylor (Deputy leader)

Travel

Anne Wood

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Travel Group. Barging into Exeter in June

Those who went on the trip to the Tiverton canal last year, may have hoped for another toiling cob to heave us from Exmouth to Exeter harbour – but not this time. The Exeter Canal is an altogether different affair with a large steel-hull 'lighter' heading up the very historic watercourse. In its heyday, they bought cargoes through the mudflats of the Exe Estuary into the fine old city that was once a significant port onto the Atlantic.

Our party of 48 started the day with an abnormally exhilarating coach ride, squeezing down a residential street with 'nay but a fag-paper to spare'. Boarding the vessel we headed to Turf Lock and as rain flecked the breeze, we scuttled below for refreshments, hot or alcoholic. Bird-life rose-up from the banks and meadows and beyond the lush pastures a glimpse of Powderham Castle (which some of us recalled from a trip led by dear Margaret Dickinson 15 years ago).



Exeter dock is heralded by meadows giving way to warehouse-style buildings old and new, a throng of visitors and a plethora of watering-holes. Anne set our rendezvous and we all 'did our thing' as the saying goes. The strangely squat cathedral in its verdant park remains an attractive centre-piece and beyond are places of pilgrimage- apparently - like John Lewis.

We were whizzed-home more conventionally enjoying the great pleasures of a coach-trip – somebody else driving and the excellent views of the landscape from an elevated position. Another good trip Anne!

Dorian Wood.

Photos taken by
Anne Woods



Digital Photography News.

As well as taking photographs on a given theme and watching videos that show us new techniques, the group posts photographs on our own Facebook page. **Camelot U3A Photography Group** We have two topics per month and we post pictures taken from any place, holiday or time. These can be taken on cameras, phones or I pads...The results are sometimes astonishing!

Here are some photos posted under the titles

"Birds" "Shoes" and "Vegetables"

Please let me know if you would like to join the group and do come along to one of our meetings on the second Monday of the month at **10:30am in Galhampton Village Hall.**

It may be possible to arrange a lift – just contact me.

The next meeting will be on **Monday 11th November.**
Anne Wood [REDACTED]



Photo by Margaret Harding



Photo by Chris May

Photo by Joan Williams



Photo by Denise Bailey



Photo by Anne Wood

Home Improvements

Carpet Cleaning

Orchid Carpet Cleaning

Richard Payne

Tel: 01963 371284

Mob: 07599 789725

Roofer / Carpenter

Dave Whitehead

Mob: 07932 058681

General Builder

Andy Baker

Mob: 07510 943009

Painter / Decorator

Adrian Richardson

Mob: 07815 618465

Jonathan Ackland

Mob: 07759 882591

Tel: 01963 351316.

Roger Welton

Tel: 01963 440341

Plasterers

Colin John Caren

Mob: 07749890798

Plumbing and Heating Engineer Gas Safe Reg'd

Perkins Plumbing & Heating

Andrew Perkins

Mob: 07815 515671

Warm Welcome Heating Services Gas Safe Reg'd

Roger Welton

Tel: 01963 440341

Plumbing & Heating

Kevan Davis

Mob: 07976 741029

Electrical & Electronic

Computers - Technology and Software

Nigel Smith

Tel: 01963 220993

General Services

Domestic Appliances

Domestec

Washing machines /Dishwashers.

Tel: 01963 220366

Servicing & Repairs Servicing and Repairs

PRM Domestic

Mob: 07977 802756

Chimney Sweep

Tom Sweep

Mob: 07340 743366

Vehicles

Car Body Maintenance

SMB Body Repairs

Shaun Browncey

Tel: 01935 840301

Car Repairs.

Bayford Motors

Tel: 01963 33746

We have space in the Good Tradesman Guide if you know someone you would like to recommend for their
Products and Services.

All of the above businesses have been recommended by individual Camelot Area U3A members based on their own experience. Each of the businesses listed above have given their permission for their details to be included - last checked in January 2020. Disclaimer: Inclusion does not constitute endorsement by Camelot Area U3A. No liability is accepted by the Camelot Area u3a trustees

Dates for your Diary 2024

- Wed 27 Nov Cinema in Caryford: **Dune: Part Two** (2024)
(12A)
- Fri 29th Nov Monthly Meeting: **Race to Scotland:**
Kenneth Fowler
- Fri 31st Jan Monthly Meeting: **Poetry and Science.**
Dr C Southgate
- Fri 28 Feb Monthly Meeting: Brian and Jacqueline Sutton
(**TWOgether talks**) (**Dickens it was the best**)

Newsletter Distribution

Patsy Diamond & Hilary Dunford

