



**October 2025**  
**Charity Reg No. 1038544**



**CAMELOT AREA**  
**Newsletter**

## Who's Who in Camelot

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**Cover Picture**     **Denise Bailey**

**Website**   [www.camelot-area.u3asite.uk](http://www.camelot-area.u3asite.uk)  
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## Notes from the Vice Chair

Firstly, I would like to thank the committee for all their hard work this year and of course, your ever enthusiastic group leaders. They have provided us with another year of memorable activities and much shared laughter. Long may it continue.

So this year we have held two coffee mornings, one for new members and the other for our group leaders. Our Open Day was well attended and the new changes, suggested by your feedback, were approved by many. We represented our u3a at the Market Place for two events – 'Volunteers in the Community' and the 'Cary In Bloom' exhibition. Both were well received and highlighted our organisation well.

A few new changes for this past year include our excellent new website. Up to date, easy to use and visually stimulating, a big thanks to Alan Gibbons for making this happen. Alan and Peter Townley continue to maintain the website, updating and presenting new material. An additional thanks is also needed to Peter for stepping up to be our new minutes officer, anyone who can logically record our committee meetings is OK with me.

Our monthly talks have continued to be extremely varied, with some of the best attendance figures recorded this year. Our new look newsletter has been much appreciated and includes more information and articles from you and your activity groups than ever before. Publicity has been increased for all our events with over 20 posters regularly displayed in the local area. Our monthly talks are advertised in free local papers and articles are included in all editions of 'The Dove' magazine and the 'Castle Cary & Ansford Newsletter', plus during the year, a one-off feature in 'The Spark' magazine.

Contact has resumed after a break, with the Avalon Network, which allows us to work with other local u3as – a chance to witness good practice and to share our achievements. Thank you to Robert Reeves and Peter Kennedy for attending these meetings.

A massive 'thank you' must go to Caroline Reeves, who is sadly standing down as our membership secretary. Caroline has successfully overseen the new membership online application procedure, which has greatly reduced admin. She will be greatly missed.

It is also a good time to mention that we are enjoying the third year of our membership subscriptions remaining at the same fee. Please look at Peter Kennedy's Treasurer's Report to see the healthy position we are in financially.

So, to conclude, please continue to enjoy your u3a for this year, we hope you enjoy another period of sharing great experiences with good friends, making new ones, learning new ideas and completing exciting projects.

**Stella Fairbairn** – Vice Chair.

## **U3a reading group**

Castle Cary library here.

Your books have arrived, 8 of them, all hardback and 700 pages long. You might want to drive here to collect them" Not a book for reading in bed! I wondered how the group members would react but as the saying goes, never judge a book by its cover. Abraham Verghese's "The Covenant of Water" is far from a "heavy" read. Set in Kerala, Southern India, the characters from two narratives converge and separate like the waters of the rivers, lakes and the monsoons.

In 1900 a twelve year old girl leaves her home to marry an older man in the village of Parambil. His family suffer from a curse; one member in each generation drowns. In 1933 Digby ,a young doctor arrives in Madras, disillusioned by the violence of his native Glasgow and discrimination by his superiors because of his accent. During her long life the girl witnesses huge national, political,medical and social changes. It is a life of personal joys, deep sorrows, love, hardship and loss across 77 years of three generations.

P.s. Thank you Castle Cary library volunteers, you're doing a wonderful job.

## Camelot Monthly Meetings

**Caryford Community Hall  
Maggs Lane Ansford BA77JJ**

**Friday 26th September 2025 at 2.30 p.m**

**Name of Speaker    Jeremy Prescott**



The story of how the Poppy has become the flower and symbol of remembrance. From John McCrae's iconic poem "In Flanders Fields", to America and how Moina Michael gave the poppy the name "The Miracle Flower" and initiated the poppy appeal in support of the sentiment expressed in that poem. The rich history of the poppy includes Anna



Guerin, Major George Howson, the influence of the opium poppy in the recent war in Afghanistan and the uplifting project "Blood Swept Lands and Seas of Red" at the Tower of London. The presentation concludes with a look at how remembrance may be conducted in the future.

Jeremy Prescott served for 26 years as an Army Officer. After retiring he was a CEO of a charity before developing this project.

**Friday 30th October 2025 at 2.30 p.m**

**Name of Speaker    Kyle Gallagher**

Children's Hospice South West (CHSW) exist to make the most of the short and precious lives of children living with a life-limiting or life-threatening illness and their whole family. The care offered at each of their three hospices is not simply about medical and nursing care for sick children, but about enriching the lives of children and their families.



Children's Hospice South West was founded in 1991 by Eddie and Jill Farwell after they experienced for themselves the urgent need for hospice care in the South West. With the 3 hospices situated where they are, no family in the South West has further than a 90 minutes drive to reach their local hospice.

**More information on all meetings can be found on the website [www.camelot-area.u3asite.uk](http://www.camelot-area.u3asite.uk)**

## Friday 28th November 2025 at 2.30 p.m

### Name of Speaker **Andy Hamilton**

Andy Hamilton is an English writer of four books and is known for the foraging walks he leads in [Castle Park, Bristol](#) and in other parts of Britain. I fell in love with both plants and writing from an early age, at about 8 years old. "The first plant I fell in love with was chickweed, it had magically appeared on disturbed soil in our garden whilst we had been away. The way the dappled evening light hit it enhanced its beauty and I've been mesmerized by plants ever since. Soon after I found a recipe for nettle soup and served my family a really bad version of this delicious foraging staple! But it was to take a while before I found my way back to the wild world that I loved"



## Monthly Meeting Tea Rota 2025

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.

### 2025

October	Play Reading	Chris Martin
November	Listening to Jazz	Neil Houghton

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.

## **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 24 Sept [The Penguin Lessons \(2025\) \(PG\)](#)**

starring Steve Coogan and Johnathan Pryce.

Disillusioned teacher Tom Michell (Steve Coogan) gets a job teaching English and Rugby in a school for rich kids in Buenos Aires. It's 1976 and Argentina is controlled by a military dictatorship, but Tom is more interested in spending time on the beach than in either his pupils or the political situation. During a weekend trip to Uruguay he rescues an orphaned penguin and smuggles it back into the school, little suspecting that this is the beginning of a personal and political awakening.

#### **Wednesday 22 Oct [The Phoenician Scheme \(2025\) \(PG\)](#)**

Starring Benicio Del Toro and Mia Threapleton.

After surviving his sixth plane crash, wealthy magnate Zsa-zsa Korda (Benicio del Toro) appoints his only daughter Liesl (Mia Threapleton) as sole heir to his estate, although as a novice nun her moral principles are in stark contrast to his. As Korda embarks on a new enterprise to take over the economy of Phoenicia, by using exploitative slave labour and manipulating the agricultural market, they soon become the target of scheming tycoons, foreign terrorists and determined assassins.

#### **Wednesday 26 Nov [The Ballad of Wallis Island \(2025\)\(12\)](#)**

With Carey Mulligan, Tom Basden, Tim Key Charles (Tim Key), an eccentric lottery winner who lives alone on a remote island, dreams of getting his favourite musical duo, Mortimer-McGwyer (Carey Mulligan and Tom Basden), back together. His fantasy quickly turns into reality when the bandmates and former lovers accept his invitation to play a private show at his home on Wallis Island. Old tensions resurface as Charles tries desperately to salvage his dream gig.

## Digital Photography News

Not everyone goes on holiday in August! Consequently the Digital Photography Group met as usual in Galhampton Village Hall on the second Monday. We had a record number at the



Chris May

meeting and everyone was in good spirits with lots of banter and constructive comments.

The themes under consideration

were Diagonals, People from Behind and Swirls.

These were popular topics and a varied and very interesting selection were shown.



Vicky Packer



Jenny Short



Donald Branch

After a cup of tea (or coffee) a short video was

shown. The title "The Most Powerful Tool in Photography" by Nigel Danson. With lots of examples, mainly beautiful landscapes, he pointed out that using diagonals leads the viewer into the picture in a most subconscious way.

Very few open air landscapes were shown at our meeting so a second chance is offered at the September meeting to include one diagonal in a landscape as well as the other monthly topics.

**Anne Wood.**

## 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 alternate Weeks)

Ron Cossins

**Wednesday Poetry** (am last Wednesday)

Hazel Hudson

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

**Shorter Walks** (am 2nd Friday Monthly)

Susan Keen

## **Non-Specific**

**Natures Walks** Seasonal

Ron Cossins (Group leader)

Vicky Taylor (Deputy leader)

**Travel**

Anne Wood

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

## MONDAY ART

We are back! Monday 8th was the start of our new term and we exchanged our summer holidays adventures etc. and we're extremely happy to welcome back 2 ladies who had to take a year off. Also another



plus, we had a new lady join us. The subject was flowers and here are a few photos of the ones that were finished.

### Sylvia Mottram



## Wednesday Walking Group

A walk with panoramic views, historic remnants and a magical copse. Ten members of our group set out on Wednesday 6th of August to walk around the Harptrees in the Mendip Hills. Entering a copse that was mercifully untouched for decades, we emerged to open fields. Thence to dense woodland with signs of the lead mines that once covered the area. The return to our starting point was blessed by views over Chew Valley and Lake. The Ring O' Bells in Compton Martin provided an excellent lunch venue.



**Ron Cossins**

## Nature Walks Group

On the morning of the 5th of August, nine members gathered to explore a forgotten reserve in woodland south of Stourhead. Moldrams Ground is a small tranquil and dry woodland - an increasingly rare habitat. Flora and fungi enjoy the marshy conditions. Three types of fern were identified. Early berrying trees and shrubs offered a promise of Autumn. We completed an enjoyable morning by visiting St. Michael's Church in Penselwood Village.



**Ron Cossins**

## Friday Walking Group

As warm summer days pass and autumn draws closer and the leaves on the trees begin to develop their golden hues, we take the opportunity to look back on a few of our recent walks.



Barton St David

Over the last month or so we have covered some very varied terrains. From a gentle 'no stiles' walk through Longleat Forest and around the lake at Shearwater, high up on the Mendip Hills stopping at the

Deerleap viewpoint to admire sweeping views south across the flat land of the Somerset Levels, and more local strolls through the villages within the surrounding area. Whenever possible we take a short break at the halfway point to enjoy some refreshments before heading back to a local hostelry or cafe for a well-deserved lunch and stimulating conversations.

So, if you would like to discover more about our local villages and hamlets, admire the diversity of the Somerset countryside or just take a walk in the



Deerleap

fresh country air in the company of fellow u3a members, just visit the groups page on the Camelot Area u3a website where you can contact John Stalley, our group leader, and find out a bit more about our group.

**Robert Reeves**

## Short walks Group

We've had some interesting walks in beautiful weather through the spring and summer, round Mere, Holton, Henstridge and Galhampton, each followed by a very convivial pub lunch. Our July walk had to be cancelled due to the extreme heat. Our latest September walk was to visit the Wyndham Oak at Silton. Thought to be 1000 years old with a girth of 9.79 metres, it is said to have been a favourite place for a famous Silton resident to sit. Perhaps it aided Judge Wyndham to negotiate his way through the reigns of Charles 1st, Oliver Cromwell and Charles 2nd. We hope we may have gained some wisdom from our experience!



Thanks to all who have contributed itineraries!

**Susan Keen**

## Folding Lectern

The u3a can offer all of groups, the use of this folding lectern at your meetings or on special occasions.

Please contact the vice chairman on

[vice.chair@camelotareau3a.org](mailto:vice.chair@camelotareau3a.org)



## Tuesday Art

The Tuesday art group is a small friendly group of like minded folks who enjoy dabbling in some art. You do not have to be an expert to join us, merely enjoy sketching and colour. We meet every Tuesday at Caryford from 10.15 to 12.15. Join us for a chat and a cup of tea/coffee.

**Dayella  
Ruetsche**



## Up and Coming

### Coffee Mornings at the Market House at 10am

Sat 02.10.25	Cary Carers
Sat 04.10.25	Coffee morning and children's Carnival
Sat 11.10.25	Coffee morning and honey show
Sat 18.10.25	Coffee Morning in aid of Castle Cary Choir
Sat 25.10.25	Coffee Morning and Book Sale in aid of the Library

### Special Event

Sat 11.10.25	Castle Cary illuminated Carnival
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### Markets

Every Tuesday	08.30 to midday Town market
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### Regular events

Every Tuesday	13.45	Up-reading Classes. The Market House
1st & 3rd Weds	10.00.	Memory Cafe The Methodist Church
1st & 3rd Weds	14.30.	Memory Cafe Catherine Close Community Hall
2nd & 4th Weds	14.30.	Sing for fun The Market House
Last Weds of the month	19.30	Cinema Caryford Hall
First Thur of the month	10.00	The Market House
Last Thur of the month	19.30	Market House Acoustic evening all ages welcome
Fourth Thur monthly	10.00	Repair Cafe The Methodist Church by Eat Cary
Fourth Thur monthly	10.00	Live well with pain Catherine Close Community Hall
Last Fri of the month	14.00	u3a talk Caryford Hall
Every Friday	15.00.	Talking cafe The Market House

## **Good Tradesman Guide**

### **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.

#### **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 and Repairs**

PRM Domestic

Mob: 07977 802756

### **Chimney Sweep**

Tom Sweep

Mob: 07340 743366

## **Vehicles**

### **Car Body Maintenance**

SMB Body Repairs

Shaun Browney

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.**

Please e-mail [smutzdoc@gmail.com](mailto:smutzdoc@gmail.com)

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

## **Newsletter Distribution**

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