



Dec/Jan 2026
Charity Reg No. 1038544



CAMELOT AREA
Newsletter

Who's Who in Camelot

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**The copy date for all articles to be included in the
February issue is **14 January 2026****

Cover Picture Joan Williams

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Notes from the Vice Chair

As Christmas is approaching with many plans for festivities, it can be a welcome break to enjoy our stress-free activities. To think of nothing else but sharing a few hours on a much-loved hobby with new and old friends, it can be just what is required at this time of the year. For example, wrapped up well for a glorious walk with a warming pub lunch, sounds perfect and we have walking groups to cater for all interests and abilities. If you fancy a walk on a Wednesday, Friday, a short or seasonal walk, go to our website to see dates and times.



Book clubs and board games are particularly cosy activities in these winter months. Again, all details are on our website or group leader contact details are included in this newsletter. If you like quizzes and puzzles, the National u3a website has some good ones that will make you think. Go to the National u3a site, then select 'Learn', then 'Learning Activities', then 'Logic Puzzles'. They will fill in any spare time, with answers available - thankfully.

Although our wonderful 'Wine Appreciation Society' is full, perhaps we can take inspiration from them and hold our own Christmas group celebrations? A glass of mulled wine, the traditional mince pie, what is not to love? The festive period can be peaceful and quiet, noisy or chaotic, but however you find yourself spending the holidays, please know that you are sincerely wished a very happy time from your Camelot Area u3a committee. Enjoy - have a wonderful Christmas and a peaceful, happy New Year - see you in 2026!

Kind regards,

Stella Fairbairn – Vice Chair.

Camelot Monthly Meetings

Caryford Community Hall

Friday 28th November 2025 at 2.30 p.m

Name of Speaker Jude Coram

Las Vegas, the Apollo, the London Palladium, comedy magician Jude Coram has heard of them all. Ever since his first magic set as a kid, Jude has been in love with the art of deception and magic. It took a few years of practice before finally going pro in 2023 and ever since, he has entertained, enthralled and excited audiences all over the South West. It's not just card tricks....there are predictions, surprises and lots of laughs thrown in for good measure. He might only be in his 20s but his comedy and magic heroes include Tommy Cooper, Paul Daniels and the Two Ronnies



Friday 30th January 2026 at 2.30 p.m

Name of Speaker Susie Simmons

The South West Heritage Trust and its museums (The Museum of Somerset, Somerset Rural Life Museum, Brick and Tile Museum and Avalon Archaeology)

This talk will look briefly at each of the four sites, consider what makes them special, and include a few fascinating facts and stories. Susie will also share a little about her work and some of the surprising aspects of her role!

Susie Simmons has worked for the South West Heritage Trust for 17 years, and has over 30 years of experience of working in the Heritage Sector. Her role as Museum Operations Manager is all about opening the sites to the public, and organising events and activities, for all to enjoy, rather than the care of the museums collections.



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

November	Play Reading	Chris Martin
January	Wednesday Walking	Ron Cossins

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 26 Nov **The Ballad of Wallis Island (2025)(12)**

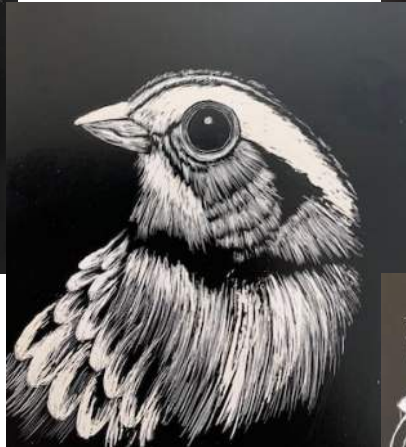
With Carey Mulligan, Tom Basden, Tim Key Charles (Tim Key), an eccentric lottery winner who lives alone on a remote island, dreams of getting his favourite musical duo, Mortimer-McGwyer (Carey Mulligan and Tom Basden), back together. His fantasy quickly turns into reality when the bandmates and former 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.



Monday Art

Yesterday Monday 20th of October we had another go at Scraper board. We had a workshop last February and everyone liked it so much we were keen to do more and the results speak for themselves.

Sylvia Mottram



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

Walk into Nature 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

Digital Photography News

Our October meeting was held in

Hadden Wood, where we hoped to find interesting colours, wildlife and reflections



in the lake! Unfortunately the weather was gloomy, the wildlife was hiding (except for a few bees) and it was too soon for the interesting colours. Despite this, we did have

a sociable time, drinking coffee in the Rugby Club and testing our ingenuity, managing to produce many lovely photographs which were shown at the November meeting.

The November topics for consideration proved rather easier, Speed, Yellow and Letters. Yellow provided some beautiful blooms, and speed was interpreted and both fast and slow as well as stop, when a pigeon crashed into a window leaving this imprint!)

An interesting quiz was viewed over the tea break where the word for letters was shown in different languages...the challenge was to decipher which ones.

A selection of photos is shown.

Anne Wood.



Tuesday Art

The Tuesday Art group meet at 10.15 am each week except the third Tuesday of the month. A subject is suggested but members are free to paint what ever they would like to do including spending as much time as needed over a period of weeks to complete their painting. A selection of paintings are shown below



Dayella Ruetsche

Writing for Fun

**I saw it in the window of a charity shop. A little black dress.
Scoop neck, clingy. It spoke of cigarettes and Martinis.**



My grand daughter Emily called in unexpectedly. "I'm just on my way to Justin's Granny, and I thought, 'Well, I've got time to have a cup of tea with Granny before I drive there,' so here I am!"

"Well that's splendid!" I exclaimed with enthusiasm. I always like being with Emily. She's such good fun, and she's good to me – very good in fact.

We settled in the comfy chairs. Emily had brought a carrier bag with her. She lifted it onto her lap looking conspiratorial. With a big grin on her face, she announced, "Well, I've bought this! I think it is just right for the 'do' that Justin and I have been invited to. See what you think! I saw it in the window of a charity shop. A little black dress. Scoop neck, clingy. It spoke of cigarettes and Martinis."

"Oh! Does it smell of cigarettes?"

"No Granny, that was just my imagination, wondering where its original owner might have been going when she wore it – hopefully somewhere romantic ..."

"You and your romanticism! But it does look very special. Have you tried it on?"

"Yes, in the charity shop. They allowed me to go in the sorting room amongst all the boxes and coat hangers and goodness knows what else. I had to come out to look in a mirror that was propped up against a chair; and Emma – the one who'd said I could go in the sorting room, exclaimed with what seemed to me genuine approval." She paused, "Granny, can I try it on here, and see what you think?"

"Yes!" I quickly agreed, wondering what I would say if I didn't like it. I needn't have worried, "Wow! That does look good," I told her, "it really suits you and it's a perfect fit."

"You really think so?"

"Absolutely! Justin won't be able to resist you!"

"That's the general idea," she said, her eyes aglow. And I wasn't pretending. It looked terrific on her.

Emily chattered away, bringing me up to date with all her news and what she thought about all manner of things. Then she did a little check on herself. "Sorry Granny, I've been rabbiting away. What about you?"

"Well, on Saturday I went to see 'Downton Abbey – the Finale' with Sandra. It was surprising once or twice and we enjoyed it, though Lord Crawley and Cora weren't old enough to retire of course, but that was necessary for the story. Then we talked about how we must keep up our night driving."

"Justin's aunt gave up driving at night because her husband always did it but then he suddenly died and her life changed dramatically. She regrets that decision now."

At that moment, my landline rang.

"I'll go Granny as soon as I've changed back, and I'll let you know what Justin thinks of the dress." I nodded to her and we blew a kiss to each other. The door closed on her company and my enjoyment. I concentrated hard on the phone call to distract myself.

A couple of months later, Emily rang me in great excitement. "Granny what do you think! Justin and I went to the party last night, and he said I looked fantastic in that dress and we had such a great time, and on the way back, he asked me to marry him! I was stunned, but I did manage to say yes. He said he couldn't resist me in the dress, so I burst out laughing and had to explain that that was what you had said."

I joined in her laughter. "Congratulations Emily! That's wonderful news! I'm glad the dress worked its magic. I'm sure Justin would have asked you anyway."

"Yes but maybe not last night! Anyway we're thrilled and I might just wear the dress to another function - when I want something special ..."

Pauline Lewis.

Wednesday Walking Group

Walks we enjoyed through the year 2025 :

Castle Cary is central for a vast number of walks through open countryside. Indeed two long distance trails have been exploited in our search for variety and interest. Open meadows, woodland and water- whether river or wetland- all have played their part. Just as each walk has had a unique flavour so have the lunch venues. Generally a pub, walk leaders have sought anywhere offering excellent food, from which to start a circular route. " Such a friendly crowd " has been stated more than once on our visits and I believe we are good ambassadors for u3a, albeit a little noisy at times.



Ron Cossins

Nature Walks Group

The Nature Walks group have experienced a number of wildlife events during the past year. Bird activity in the Spring, early Summer flowers and butterflies, fungi and leaf colour from trees in the Autumn. Winter will produce its own delights of nature.



The countryside around Castle Cary has provided an excellent source of nature boosted by access to countless nature reserves and opportunities. Ham Wall, Sparkford Wood, Babcary Meadows, Moldrams Ground and a wildlife river trip on the River Parret- all have delighted us with their variety of habitats.



Ron Cossins



Wine Appreciation Group

For our December meeting, rather than focussing on Christmas Dinner wine pairings, we thought we would take a closer look at what wines to enjoy for Christmas and New Year celebrations, which often includes wines with fizz and bubbles (frizzante - gentle bubbles/spumante - lively bubbles) produced in different styles from all over the world and includes white, rosé and even red, with the most famous and arguably most prestigious fizz being Champagne which can come with a hefty price tag.

An alternative French fizz, you might like to consider is Crémant (crémeux - meaning creamy) produced in the same way as Champagne, usually from Pinot Noir, Pinot Gris and Chardonnay grapes. It is produced in various regions of France - Crémant de Bourgogne, Crémant d'Alsace, and Crémant de Loire (where they use a Chenin Blanc, Cabernet Franc blend). Crémant has a similar depth of flavour as Champagne, but at a much lower price point.

A popular fizzy favourite is Prosecco, an Italian wine, generally lighter and fruitier, which is produced differently (by the Charmat method, where the wines undergo a second process of fermentation in large, pressurised tanks). It is named after the village of Prosecco in Trieste in north-eastern Italy) and is often dry to off dry. It is produced from the Glera grape.

Another Italian sparkling and inexpensive alternative to a Prosecco is Asti Spumante. It is sweeter, with higher residual sugar and lower alcohol level, making it a palatable option for cocktails. Its production

is focussed on the towns of Asti and Alba in the Piedmont region in north-west Italy.

Spain also has its own sparkling wine in Cava, which is mostly produced in the north-eastern region of Catalonia, usually from Macabeo, Parellada and Xarel·lo grapes. By law, Cava is produced in the same way as Crémant and Champagne, which all have a more complex flavour profile than that of a Prosecco.

Australia has been crafting sparkling wines since the 1800's and today is one of the top sparkling wine producers, with most wines being made from Pinot Noir, Pinot Meunier and Chardonnay grapes, made in a variety of styles, and even includes a sparkling red Shiraz as well as sparkling rosé wines. If you are mindful of alcohol levels for your Christmas/New Year celebrations, here is a rough guide:

<u>Wine</u>	<u>Typical ABV</u>
Asti Spumante	7-9% ABV
Prosecco	10.5-12.5% ABV
Crémant	11-13% ABV
Cava	10.5-12.5% ABV
Champagne	12-12.5% ABV (some can reach 14%)



The committee wish all of our members a
Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

Up and Coming

Coffee Mornings at the Market House at 10am

Sat 06.12.25 Lovington School

Sat 13.12.25 Cary Cares

Sat 20.12.25 Crib Service

Special Event

Sat 29.11.25 10.00 Caryford Hall Christmas Craft Market

Sat 11.12.25 17.00 Carys Christmas in the town

Sat 19.12.25 17.00 Christmas Concert Methodist Church

Sat 11.01.26 10.00 Pantomime Caryford Hall

Sat 30.01.26 10.00 u3a Talk Caryford Hall

Markets

Every Tuesday 08.30 to midday Town market

Regular events

Every Tuesday	13.45	Up-reading Classes. The Market House
1st & 3rd Weds	10.00.	Memory Cafe Methodist Church
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	Talking Cafe 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 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.

Please e-mail 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

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