

DEVIZES & DISTRICT U3A



Established 1996
Charity Number 1076852
www.devizesu3a.org.uk



NEWSLETTER

August, September and October 2026

u3a

EVENTS AND VISITS

Details in main body of the newsletter.

22nd Sept	Monthly Meeting - Iceland, Land of Ice and Fire
25th Sept	Coffee Morning
13th Oct	Visit to Hughenden Manor
23rd Oct	Coffee Morning
27th Oct	Monthly Meeting - Guide Dogs Talk
26th Nov	Visit to Cardiff Christmas Market

WANTED - ARTICLES

The Editor needs short stories and articles of local interest for the newsletter. They should be between 300 and 750 words long. Please send to newsletter@devizesu3a.org.uk.

DONATIONS

The committee has resolved to place a donation tin on the communal table during our meetings. Donations are entirely optional; any funds received will be utilised to support our gatherings.

FACEBOOK

Devizes U3A has its own Facebook page, Devizes and District U3A. It is growing from strength to strength with more than 60 followers. Facebook is a fantastic way for us to share with each other the good things we've been doing and also to show others, who may not have heard about us, what we do.

Please spread the word and post the good things you've been doing and show everyone how fantastic we are. If you would like anything added to the Facebook page, please send to social@devizesu3a.org.uk. It would be great if some of your group pictures could be posted.

Cover Photo: Our U3A Panel for the Big Banner Project by Kathryn Gregory.
See article on page 15.

CHAIRMAN'S CORNER

A year since I became your chairperson, and I want to express my gratitude to each and every one of you, especially our active team of committee members and group leaders.

I started my term with great enthusiasm. However, as Robert Burns famously said in 1785, “the best laid plans of mice and men...go awry”. A freak accident in December 2025 changed things. My daughter was badly injured, and I found myself needed to support and organise my young grandsons on the days my son-in-law had to go into work. Driving to and fro for school pick-ups, football, scouts, etc. has been a joyful experience, tinged with tears and worries. Something I am sure other U3A grandparents have experienced. I was worried about my commitment to you all, however...

In true U3A spirit, members stepped up. Our meetings, clubs, and events continued as scheduled, with only one needing a date change. Thank you for this. I really appreciate how supportive members are.

This spirit was apparent on the 27th March, when we successfully celebrated our 30th Anniversary. Our celebratory lunch saw the cake being cut by Wendy, a founding member, plus many historic photos being displayed for members to recapture past events. Flags and decorations festooned the room thanks to the committee and members preparing everything.

When some key members had to relinquish their roles, which could have posed a problem, true U3A spirit saw members step in to ensure everything ran smoothly as before.

We now look forward to a busy and exciting future, with ideas for new groups and increased community involvement on the horizon. Every idea is valuable, so please send them to our Committee or Group Leader Coordinator (glc@devizesu3a.org.uk). These actions will ensure we continue for another 30 years.

I look forward to talking to you at our meetings.

Kathryn

Trivia Question. An American actor appeared in many films and TV shows. He wore the same coat in every one. Who was he? See page 31 for the answer.

DEVIZES U3A GROUPS

Group	Day	Week	Time	Leader	Phone
Acrylic Painting	Tues	2nd	2:00	Jenny Otridge	01380 739433
Art Appreciation	Mon	4th	10:15	Bernie Maltby	01380 502358
Aviation Studies	Wed	1st	10:00	Martin Houghton	01380 723180
Belleplates	Tues	1st & 3rd	10:00	Catharine Sharples	01380 721038
Bridge	Wed	Every	2:00	David Cobley Bronwen Morris	07780 997576 07719 275827
Canasta	Mon	Every	1:30	Pauline Sarjeant	07971 672705
Coffee and Cake	Thur	Last	11:00	Carol Sainsbury	07920 402612
Coffee and Pint	Thur	3rd	11:00	Trevor Brimmer	07493 553010
Colour, Draw and Natter	Thur	2nd	10:00	Vin Parsons Karen Townley	07944 290576 07305 589825
Creative Writing	Tues	2nd	2:00	Geoff West	01380 870425
Cribbage	Fri	Every	2:00	Bert Iles	07512 960859
Cycling	Tues	Every	9:30	John Surowiec	07730 953423
Debating	Tues	1st	2:00	Peter Dibben	01380 850471
Devizes Doodlers	Thur	2nd	10:00	Wendy Johnson	01380 720620
Discussion 1	Tues	3rd	10:00	Nina Woolrych	07766 537577
Discussion 2	Thur	3rd	2:00	Jo Wright	01380 722330
Dog Walking	Mon	1st & 3rd	9:30	Diane Coleman	01380 738004
Economics and Finance Discussion	Wed	3rd	2:00	Kevin Walmsley	07880 601963
Evening Dining Out	Wed	2nd	A/R	Dee Tod	07762 874001

DEVIZES U3A GROUPS

Group	Day	Week	Time	Leader	Phone
French Conversation 1	Fri	2nd	2:00	Richard Trendall	01380 501708
French Conversation 2	Fri	4th	10:00	Brian Batchelor	01380 722012
French Conversation 4	Mon	1st & 3rd	2:30	Richard Cole	01380 699278
French Conversation 5	Thur	1st & 3rd	2.30	Andrew Yeandle	01380 730451
Friday Walkers	Fri	Every	9:20	Gillian Burton	07517 643510
Geology	Tues	1st	10:00	Joyce McMurray	01380 726715
German Conversation	Mon	2nd	2:00	Brian Batchelor	01380 722012
History	Mon	3rd	9:45	Liz Thompson	01225 706854
iPad User Group	Tues	2nd	10:00	John Weller	07976 393631
Italian	Mon	2nd	2:30	Andy Geddes	01380 721358
Italian for Beginners	Mon	1st & 3rd	2:30	Andy Geddes	01380 721358
Jazz	Tues	1st & 3rd	2:30	Peter Brearley	07956 147152
Jigsaw Exchange	Mon	3rd	2:00	Anne Schwodler	07753 797762
Kitchen Bridge	Thur	Every	1:00	Madeleine Lestrangle	01380 727146
Local History	Mon	2nd	10:00	Wendy Johnson	01380 720620
Luncheon Club	Wed	4th	12:30	Felicia Holley	01380 816253
Mah Jong	Tues	Every	10:00	Diana Slater	01380 729883
Music Appreciation	Anytime			Tony Brewer	07415 409156
Nature Walks	Mon	1st	10:30	Marlene Prangnell	01380 725906

DEVIZES U3A GROUPS

Group	Day	Week	Time	Leader	Phone
Papercraft	Thur	1st and 3rd	10:00	Linda Walters	07896 543385
Photography for Fun	Thur	2nd	1:30	Janet Rutter	01380 738048
Play Reading 2	Wed	4th	10:00	Catharine Sharples	01380 721038
Potterne Painters	Tues	1st & 3rd	2:00	Sandra Palmer	07534 779239
Pub Lunch Sunday	Sun	3rd	1:00	Jackie Hopkins Joy Smith	07854 964432 07989 909902
Reading 1	Fri	1st	10:30	Jenny Warren Catharine Sharples	01380 729529 01380 721038
Reading 3	Thur	4th	2:00	Jacky Garven	07803 161042
Reading 4	Thur	1st	2:00	Chris Cutting	01380 726104
Rummikub	Sat	Every	10:00 & 2:00	Chris Cutting	01380 726104
Rusty Racquets	Mon	Every	4:00	Jenny Campbell	01380 827095
Scrabble	Tues	Every	10:00	Judy Huntley	01380 502545
Sketching for Pleasure	Wed	1st & 3rd	10:00	Nigel Featherstone Barbara Bailey	01380 724112 01380 699142
Skittles	Fri	4th	3:00	Kathryn Gregory	07860 195009
Smart Phone & Tablet Users	Tues	3rd	9:45	Terence Tovey	01380 729832
Sole Survivors	Mon Tues	2nd 4th	11:00	Alan Smith Jane Hogg	07780 941919 07866 705044

Mirror, mirror on the wall – what the hell happened?

DEVIZES U3A GROUPS

Group	Day	Week	Time	Leader	Phone
Spanish	Mon	Alternate	10:00	Declan McSweeney	07904 125495
Stitch and Bitch	Wed	1st 3rd	2.00	Chrissi Geddes	07976 500944
Strength & Stretch for Men	Wed	Every	10:30	Gloria Droy	07821 615156
Table Tennis	Wed	Every	4:00	Gill Burton	07517 643510
Textile Arts	Thur	4th	2:30	Wendy Weller Barbara Bailey	01380 723235 01380 699142
Thursday Walkers	Thur	Every	9:20	Stella Jales	01225 759324
Traduction Littéraire	Fri	3rd	2:00	Richard Trendall	01380 501708
Trail Walking Group	Tues	2nd	Varies	Steve Phelps	07736 391080
Wednesday Walkers	Wed	Every	Varies	Carolyn Knowles	07510 389646

EXERCISE FOR THE OVER SIXTIES

Yve Griffiths runs an exercise class aimed at the over sixties. It is a friendly class with standing and seated exercises. Sessions are every Tuesday (except for the 4th in the month) from 2.00 pm until 2.45 pm in the Conservative Club. There is a discounted charge of £4 per session for U3A members.

For more information please contact Yve on 01380 723086 or at yveg54@gmail.com.

*In filling out an application, where it says, "In case of an emergency, notify..."
I answered "a doctor."*

TRIPS AND VISITS

Tuesday 13th October Hughenden Manor

Hughenden was the country home of Victorian statesman Benjamin Disraeli and provided a backdrop for political drama, royal visits plus an enduring love story. It was also the base for a top-secret operation during World War 2.

There are extensive grounds with formal gardens, an apple orchard and a walled garden, as well as an exhibition of Britain's 1875 Arctic expedition, marking its 150th anniversary, so lots to see.

See the website hughenden@nationaltrust.org.uk for more details.

The cost will be £22 for National Trust members and £39.10 for non-members. We will leave from the Station Road car park at 9.00 am and leave Hughenden to return at 4.00 pm.

Thursday 26th November Cardiff Christmas Market

The Christmas Market in Cardiff is reputed to be one of the best in the country. There are also lots of other things to visit in central Cardiff.

The cost will be £22. We will leave the Station Road car park at 9.00 am and leave Cardiff to return at 4.00 pm.

If you are interested in any of these trips please contact Jan Barber to book a place on 07533 880704 or at visits@devizesu3a.org.uk. When your booking is confirmed you will be sent details of how to pay. Please don't pay for visits until Jan has requested you to do so, the cost of trips is subject to change.

When paying by bank transfer please make sure it is into the correct account (i.e. not the subscription account).

Please note that payments cannot be refunded unless a replacement can be found.

When a kid says "Daddy, I want mommy," that's the kid's version of "I'd like to speak to your supervisor."

COFFEE MORNINGS

The coffee mornings start at 10.30 am in the Conservative Club on Long Street.

No coffee morning in August

25th September

23rd October



Group Leaders - The Coffee Mornings are a good forum for groups new members to showcase their activities - and, if full, to encourage new Group Leaders to come forward.

MONTHLY MEETINGS

All Meetings at The Wyvern Club at 2.00 pm

(Church Walk opposite The Crammer SN10 3AA)

Tuesday 22nd September

Iceland, Land of Ice and Fire

David Head

A talk covering the geographical and geophysical aspects of Iceland and its history from the very earliest settlements of the Vikings.

Tuesday 27th October

Ian Farmer

Everyone loves a good story

Ian Farmer is a speaker for 'Guide Dogs'. He will tell us how the charity supports people living with sight loss to live the life they choose. There will be some amazing and heartwarming stories to entertain and inspire us.

No talk in August

Refreshments will be provided by volunteers from the audience.

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

This will be my last edition (I seem to have heard that before). Andy Burton, our webmaster is taking over. He has promised to retain the traditional format.

GROUPS

Tea Dance

Kathryn Gregory is starting a Tea Dance Group in early Autumn, Details will be sent out in the Monthly Update email as soon as they are available,

Music Appreciation

Anytime

brewer.ac@gmail.com

TONY BREWER 07415 409156

Meetings will be held in leader's home and will be arranged to suit members.

The group meets once a month in Worton and has access to the Berlin Philharmonic Digital Concert Hall with access to over 800 concerts in the archive.

Group members decide on the pieces to watch. We spend time socialising and could accommodate another two or three members. For more details contact Tony.

Rummikub

Saturday 10.00 am and 2.00 pm

chriscutting@outlook.com

CHRIS CUTTING 01380 726104

Every Saturday in the leader's home.

Rummikub is a board game similar to Rummy and Mahjong, although easier to play than Mahjong. It is quick to learn the basic rules but then practice will improve your skills, we have members who can provide tuition. There are places available in the afternoon group. If you wish to join, please contact the group leader. The best way to do this is via email in the first instance.

Pub Lunch Sunday

Sunday 1.00 pm

jhopkins495@btinternet.com

JACKIE HOPKINS 07854 964432

joysmith3001@gmail.com

JOY SMITH 07989 909902

3rd Sunday.

We are a friendly, lively group who meet for lunch at various venues on the 3rd Sunday of each month. Currently our membership list is closed to new members however we do have a waiting list; contact Jackie or Joy for details.

I thought growing old would take longer.

Art Appreciation

Monday 10.15 am

bernie.maltby45@gmail.com

BERNIE MALTBY 01380 502358

4th Monday in the Assembly Rooms at the Town Hall.

Our next meeting will be held on 28th September when we restart after the summer break. You do not need to be good at art to enjoy our sessions. We learn about a variety of arts and crafts and often feature local artists in our programme. The September meeting will be free entry and new members are welcome as there is plenty of room.

Doors open at 9.45 am when free coffee is served in the bar. The session starts at 10.15 am and finishes at around 11.30 am. (Usual entry fee is £5.)

Canasta

Monday 1.30 pm

sarjeantp@live.co.uk

PAULINE SARJEANT 07971672705

Every Monday in the Pelican in the Marketplace.

We have beginners and advanced players (as in skiing)! The game takes about 4 hours to learn and 4 weeks to become proficient.

Dog Walking

Monday 9.30 am

dianecoleman1@tiscali.co.uk

DIANE COLEMAN 01380 738004

1st and 3rd Mondays.

We walk for one hour in Drews Pond area 1st and 3rd Mondays of the month, we have a policy of one walker and one dog - this is for obvious safety reasons, unfortunately we are not able to accommodate walkers without dogs. This is a friendly group, we enjoy a chat and the dogs enjoy each other's company. Currently the group is at full capacity, but I am happy to take names on a waiting list, or to help somebody start another group - perhaps a different day.

French Conversation 4

Monday 2.30 pm

richardcoleltd@hotmail.com

RICHARD COLE 01380 699278

1st and 3rd Mondays in leader's home at 2.30 pm.

We are continuing our French conversation by enjoying unravelling the intriguing prose of the contemporary French poet Philippe Delerm and articles in the magazine *La Vie Outre Manche*. This group is now full.

German Conversation

Monday 2.00 pm

batchelor33@hotmail.co.uk

BRIAN BATCHELOR 01380 722012

2nd Monday in the New Society café in the Market Place.

We have room for one more participant, but he/she needs to be able to speak the language reasonably well as we each relate what we have done during the previous 4 weeks.

History

Monday 9.45 am

history@devizesu3a.org.uk

LIZ THOMPSON 01225 706854

3rd Monday at the White Horse Room, Devizes Library

21st September The Map that Changed the World

19th October 'Empire' by David Olusoga

Please contact Liz if you are interested in visiting the group for a taster session. Unfortunately we cannot accommodate casual callers due to limits on the number of attendees.

Italian

Monday 2.30 pm

andy_hamilton_geddes@hotmail.com

ANDY GEDDES 01380 721358

2nd Monday in the leader's home.

The group is now very active. We have space for a few new members. Please contact the group leader for further information.

Italian For Beginners

Monday 2.30 pm

andy_hamilton_geddes@hotmail.com

ANDY GEDDES 01380 721358

1st & 3rd Mondays in the leader's home.

The group has space for a few new members. For further details please contact the group leader.

Jigsaw Exchange

Monday 2.00 pm

jigsaw@devizesu3a.org.uk

ANNE SCHWODLER 07753 797762

3rd Monday at the leader's home.

The Jigsaw Exchange works as an informal jigsaw lending library. There are over 50 jigsaws that members can borrow or exchange. The jigsaws are available on display at the leader's home between September and May.

Everybody is welcome (no need to officially join the group), just turn up on the day anytime between 2.00 pm and 4.00 pm, choose one or more jigsaws to take home and join us for refreshments if you would like to do so. There is no charge for the group. Sessions on **21st September 19th October**. No Jigsaw session in **August**. For more information contact the email address above.

Local History

Monday 10.00 am

wendyannjohnson@hotmail.com

WENDY JOHNSON 01380 720620

2nd Monday in the Conservative Club, Long Street.

We research the local history of Devizes and other Wiltshire towns with presentations by members, occasional videos and invited speakers. All are welcome so if you think you might enjoy finding out a little more about our history do contact the leader for more information.

Programme for Autumn (we are taking a break in August):

14th September Simon Burrell – The Road to Bath

12th October GWR Swindon

9th November Geoff Palmer - Potterne's Forgotten Heroes

Nature Walks

Monday 10.30 am

prangnellmea@gmail.com

MARLENE PRANGNELL 01380 725906

1st Monday.

As the name implies, Nature Walks has an emphasis on observing nature, allowing time to share our knowledge, take photos and admire the view.

The walks are more of a stroll, usually no more than 2 miles, and details of terrain are given in advance for those who find hills or stiles difficult. We meet on the first Monday throughout the year, "Rain or Shine", in varied locations, from nature reserves to local parks. Members are sent a programme by email and those with a particular interest can lead some of the walks (including a night time bat outing!) Car sharing encouraged.

The beauty of nature lies in the unexpected. I often do a recce and note what might be of interest on the walk proper only for the plants to have been eaten, or a river to have overflowed, or none of the birds to appear on the day! So, nature does its own thing and we approach each walk with an open mind.

I didn't say it was your fault, I said I was blaming you.

Rusty Racquets

jennycampbell60@hotmail.com
Every Monday.

Monday 4.00 pm

JENNY CAMPBELL 0776 1823910

The "Rusty Racquets" group is for U3A members who enjoyed playing tennis in their youth, but who may be a tad rusty.

The group continues to play short indoor tennis at Devizes Leisure Centre for one hour starting at 4 pm on Monday afternoons, for which there is £2 charge. There is a complimentary first session for anyone interested in joining us.

Sole Survivors

smiths.flightsrest@sky.com

janehogguk@yahoo.co.uk

2nd Monday and 4th Tuesday in the Castle Hotel, New Park Street.

Monday and Tuesday 11.00 am

ALAN SMITH 07780 941919

JANE HOGG 07866 705044

This group is a drop-in social meeting where all members feeling the effects of bereavement from a partner or spouse are welcome. It's a space to meet and talk with others who may be experiencing similar thoughts and feelings in an informal and supportive setting, with no embarrassment felt. The aim is to further socialise and meet in addition to the monthly meeting.

Spanish

dec.mcsweeney@gmail.com

Alternate Mondays.

Monday 10.15 am

DECLAN MCSWEENEY 07904 125495

The Spanish group continues via virtual meetings every other Monday. Our activities normally include tackling a simple Spanish crossword, reading a comic strip, also an article of current interest from a Spanish newspaper or magazine and ends with random chat among ourselves with the aim of building confidence in the use of the spoken word. We are usually joined by Maria, a native Spanish speaker who assists us with our pronunciation and listening skills. We also meet in person about once a fortnight for coffee with Pili, a Devizes-based Spanish speaker.

We could accommodate a few more members at present. Anyone wishing to make contact can do so via the leader or any of the existing members.

Just sold my homing pigeon on eBay for the 22nd time.

Acrylic Painting

jenny.otridge@hotmail.co.uk

2nd Tuesday in Nursted Centre.

Tuesday 2.00 pm

JENNY OTRIDGE 01380 739433

We are a friendly group of painters with a variety of previous experience including members who have never tried acrylics before and are enjoying a new medium and learning from others. We have a theme for each meeting but are free to choose our own. We welcome new members and help is available if needed. All equipment will be provided for the first session if required. Please email or speak to Jenny if you need more information.

Belleplates

csharples@oakforduk.com

1st and 3rd Tuesday at leader's house in Devizes.

Tuesday 10.00 am

CATHARINE SHARPLES 01380 721038

Make music. It's good for the brain and fun!

We use belleplates which are cheaper, lighter to play and easier to transport than traditional handbells. Following our very successful recruitment drive in Autumn 2024 we now have a group of enthusiastic and supportive ringers. We have a lot of fun and laughs as well as getting down to the serious business of playing the right note at the right time! We are now concentrating on improving our technique so we can widen our repertoire. Those of you who are observant will notice that we have changed the name of our group to Belleplates and when we perform we are the Devizes Clangers!!

DEVIZES BIG BANNER

Devizes Big Banner is a community project. All Devizes organisations were invited to make a panel for the banner, the aim being to celebrate what goes on in our town. The project was the idea of our mayor, Vanessa Tanner. In all 171 panels were made.

Our U3A was asked to contribute and Robina Orchard agreed to design and produce a panel for the U3A.

The banner is on display in Devizes Library.

More details at <https://www.devizesvenues.co.uk/event/the-devizes-big-banner/>.

Creative Writing

g.west3@pobroadband.co.uk

2nd Tuesday at leader's home.

Tuesday 2.00 pm

GEOFF WEST 01380 870425

We are a small group who meet to enjoy listening to one another's creative story lines over an approximate time span of 2 hours. We cover a variety of topics that include writing a small piece based around a theme offered by one of the members on the day. We also have literary games, anagrams and word posers, nothing very taxing, just enough to spark the brain and create a little amusement. We set a title for a written piece that we take away and write about prior to the next meeting when we read them out. We don't criticise or appraise, just listen to one another and amaze at the varied interpretations of the set theme.

We currently have several vacancies and would welcome new comers. So, if you fancy joining us please come along and listen in to see if this would suit you. We look forward to hearing from you.

Cycling - The U3A Roulers

cycling@devizesu3a.org.uk

Every Tuesday.

Tuesday 9.30 am

JOHN SUROWIEC 07730 953423

We are a very sociable group with lots of interesting conversation both as we ride and as we sup our coffee. We ride from March to the end of November starting at 9:30 am expecting to be back by 1.00 pm. Rides start in Devizes in the car park outside the Shambles north entrance. There will always be a halfway stop for coffee, cake and some good social chat.

Rides are normally no more than 25 miles and on quiet roads with little traffic and no off-road other than for short stretches where this cannot be avoided. Our destination is always a cafe.

If you would like to join us or think you need some bike advice before joining us, give John a call. All are welcome, electric bikes, road bikes, hybrid bikes. It's you, your enjoyment, good health and safety and not the bike or how fast you can ride it that matters.

*Just taking a moment to remember all the people I've lost over the years,
and why I no longer work as a tour guide.*

Debating

Tuesday 2.00 pm

peter@dibben40.plus.com PETER DIBBEN 01380 850471 or 07586 464939
1st Tuesday in Rowde Village Hall.

We are a small group and would like to invite any member who might be interested to visit one of our meetings. We don't expect anyone to be a debater, just to see how we work. Obviously, we welcome comments regarding the topic being debated. Should anyone wish to join the group they will be most welcome.

The hall has a large car park and we can accommodate over twenty people. If you are interested please contact the leader.

Discussion 1

Tuesday 10.00 am

nina@woolrych.co.uk

NINA WOOLRYCH 07766 537577

3rd Tuesday in the leader's home.

August 18th: The greatest threat to peace is pacificism.

September 15th: Subject not yet chosen,

October 20th: Subject not yet chosen,

This group is full and we rarely have vacancies, but we can give advice about how to set up a new group.

Geology

Tuesday 10.00 am

geology@devizesu3a.org.uk

JOYCE MCMURRAY 01380 726715

1st Tuesday in the Conservative Club.

Our meetings cover all aspects of Geology, including presentations and videos, with a refreshment break half way through. Each meeting has a £1.50 charge.

Curiosity is all you need, no prior knowledge of geology is required. We also produce a weekly newsletter to keep up with events and information, and have an extensive library of books, maps and CD/DVDs. We welcome new members, so either ring or email me if you would like more information, or just turn up. If you would like to hear one of our talks, but not commit, you are welcome to join us.

Our program is very varied, and may change if something Geological happens in the world; The Strait of Hormuz, a case in point. We have also looked at "Volcanos Around the World" and "Understanding Crude Oil".

iPad & iPhone User Group

Tuesday 10.30 am

ipad@devizesu3a.org.uk.

JOHN WELLER 07976 393631

2nd Tuesday in the New Society Cafe, Market Place

The first meeting of the iPad group in our new venue will be on 8th Sept. If you are interested in joining us please contact the leader for further details.

Jazz

Tuesday 2.30 pm

peterbrearley@hotmail.co.uk

PETER BREARLEY 07956 147152

1st and 3rd Tuesday in members' homes.

We listen to and discuss all forms of Jazz in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere. New members are welcome, please contact the leader for more details.

Mah Jong

Tuesday 10.00 am

devizesdiana@gmail.com

DIANA SLATER 01380 729883

Every Tuesday.

We are a happy group meeting in four different homes. This game is always entertaining as there is the basic game with many other hands to absorb and plenty of time to go at one's own speed. We do not sit in pairs but play individually so poor play does not affect others. Everyone is kind and patient so new players can relax until they feel confident.

When we meet at homes away from Devizes we meet outside Ma Cuisine in the Market Place at 9.30 am so that car drivers can take the foot passengers.

Please ring me for dates and venues and to join my mailing list.

Potterne Painters

Tuesday 2.00pm

sandrapalmer2608@gmail.com

SANDRA PALMER 07534 779239

kirwanmargaret761@gmail.com

MARGARET KIRWAN 01380 840663

nigelfeath@gmail.com

NIGEL FEATHERSTONE 01380 724112

1st and 3rd Tuesday in Potterne Village Hall.

The group meets to paint, draw and socialise. We follow a suggested theme or do our own thing. We would like to welcome new members, there is plenty of room. Lifts from Devizes could be arranged.

We are taking a break in August but will meet again on 1st September.



Devizes Doodlers - June is Busting Out All Over by Wendy Johnson



Hardy Souls Braving the Heat at the June Coffee Morning by John Weller



U3A Roulers after completing the 260 mile Royal Chilterns Way
by John Surowiec (See website report for details)



Friday Walkers in West Wods by Pat Trigg



Skittles Group in Action by Kathryn Gregory



Table Tennis Group by Geoff Edwards



Thursday Walkers near Stert by Steven Phelps



Acrylics Group by Jenny Otridge

Scrabble

judy.huntley@outlook.com

gaburge@aol.com

Every Tuesday at Needham House, Victoria Road.

Tuesday 10.00 am

JUDY HUNTLEY 01380 502545

GINA BURGE 07585 353083

We welcome new members. Please contact one of the leaders for details.

Smart Phone & Tablets User Group

toveytj@lineone.net

3rd Tuesday.

Tuesday 10.00 am

TERENCE TOVEY 01380 729832

Anybody looking to learn more about using their phone as a camera? We are thinking of having a special session on using a camera phone and anybody interested should contact me or just turn up to a meeting.

We have hybrid meetings every month. The meeting is both by Zoom or those that prefer can come to the leader's home starting at 10 am and running to 10.40 am. The meetings tend to be a coffee get together rather than a full-blown smart phone session.

Please try it, initially by coming to me, after that it is up to you whether you Zoom or come here. For the great majority Zoom is one click or touch and you are on, whether it is a phone, tablet or computer. I look forward to seeing you in person or on Zoom.

Please note we do not cover iPhones and iPads.

CHANGE OF PERSONAL DETAILS

Please inform the membership secretary if you change your name, postal or email address, or telephone number. This will ensure that our records remain accurate. Contact: membsec@devizesu3a.org.uk,

GROUP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Every group is self-financing. Money collected by group leaders goes towards refreshments, photocopying, telephone calls and venue hire where applicable. Groups do not aim to make a profit.

Trail Walker Group

longdistancetrail@devizesu3a.org.uk

2nd Tuesday (variable).

Tuesday

STEVE PHELPS 07736 391080

A lot of us enjoy walking but lack the confidence or means to attempt trail walking routes alone. If you are tempted to try long distance trails in bite size chunks, then our trail walking group is for you. New members are really welcome to join our small friendly and supportive group as we ramble along England's finest public footpaths, sometimes rounding off the day's efforts with a refreshing debrief in a local hostelry or cafe. We take particular care to walk at a comfortable pace for everyone with regular breaks so that we all enjoy the trail walking experience.

The Trail Walker group, usually meets every second Tuesday of the month, aiming to complete long distance trails in sections of approximately 10 miles. There is some flexibility with timing to ensure as many people as possible can experience the sense of achievement in completing a full trail walk. Members share transport so there is no need to retrace our steps.

On the 16 June 2026 we commenced walking the Wysis Way. From Kemble Station the Wysis Way crosses the Cotswolds and Forest of Dean before finishing in Monmouth. A distance of approximately 52 miles. Contact the leader for details of our schedule.

We look forward to welcoming you on our next trail adventure.

Aviation Studies

aviation@devizesu3a.org.uk

1st Wednesday at the Conservative Club.

Wednesday 10.00 am

MARTIN HOUGHTON 01380 723180

Our meetings are held in the Seminar Room and are well attended. We meet live, and occasionally via Zoom, and enjoy some excellent speakers, both members and visitors. The talks are designed to appeal to both a non-technical audience and our members with aviation experiences.

Future speakers and programme topics are:

5th August Nicolas Jones - clips from his film 'Whittle the Jet Pioneer', including Whittle's own words.

2nd September Rod Dean - the North American Mustang

7th October Steve Lilley - Retired Air Commodore involved with

Blackbuck 1 bombing raid on Stanley.

We urgently need a volunteer to support arrangements for speakers for the 2026 programme of meetings. Lots of support available from the group and former organiser of the speakers' programme.

Monthly emails will confirm dates and speakers. The group is open to new members.

Bridge (Chicago)

mail@davidcoble.com

bronwenclarke@hotmail.co.uk

Every Wednesday at Rowde Village Hall.

Wednesday 2.00 pm

DAVID COBLEY 07780 997576

BRONWEN MORRIS 07719 275827

"Bridge is recognized for its intellectual and social benefits, including its role in delaying dementia and fostering cross-generational community engagement. It relies on logic, memory and strategic planning rather than the luck of the deal." Well, that's the serious stuff out of the way. It's also a lot of fun.

Games start at 1.30 pm, with a break for tea and biscuits around halfway. We change partners every four hands and finish at 4.30 pm. Whether you are new to the game or have been playing all your life, you're very welcome to join us. Still just £2 a week! If you are interested please contact one of the leaders, details above.

Economics and Finance Discussion

Wednesday 2.00 pm

finance.economics@devizesu3a.org.uk

KEVIN WALMSLEY 07880 601963

3rd Wednesday - contact leader for venue

A discussion group focussing solely on economics and finance. Topics to include how inflation works, the role of central banks, basics of investing, the future of money in a digital world to name just a few.

Evening Dining Out

dee_tod@hotmail.com

2nd Wednesday

Wednesday Evening

DEE TOD 07762 874001

A group for those who like to dine out in good company but, perhaps, have more evening availability than day times. We meet once a month at a different venue for an evening meal. The group is full.

Luncheon Club

luncheon@devizesu3a.org.uk
4th Wednesday.

Wednesday 12.30 pm

FELICIA HOLLEY 01380 816253

The leader will contact members with details of the next meetings. We have space for one or two new members.

Play Reading Two

csharples@oakforduk.com

4th Wednesday in a member's home.

Wednesday 10.00 am

CATHARINE SHARPLES 01380 721038

We have read a variety of light-hearted plays and are currently reading a rather saucy play called 'Nell Gwynne' by Jessica Swale. It is based on the true life story of Eleanor "Nell" Gwynn, a real-life 17th-century orange seller who became one of England's first professional female actors and the famous mistress of King Charles II. It has a number of embellishments to make it more fun for today's audience.

Our group is full but we can give help to anyone wanting to start another group.

Sketching For Pleasure

sketch@devizesu3a.org.uk

1st and 3rd Wednesday at Sheep Street Baptist Church.

Wednesday 10.00 am

NIGEL FEATHERSTONE 01380 724112

BARBARA BAILEY 01380 699142

This friendly and informal group is for anyone, from beginner to expert, who would like to improve or refresh their drawing skills, or just enjoy practising in the company of like-minded people. We aim to have a varied programme, suggesting topics or different techniques and materials to try, and we have a small library for members to refer to. We currently have room for new members.

There is no meeting in August.

Stitch and Bitch

stitchandbitch@devizesu3a.org.uk

1st and 3rd Wednesday at group leader's home.

Wednesday 2.00 pm

CHRISSI GEDDES 07976 500944

A group for those who knit, crochet or do some needlework. A chance to share your hobby with others whilst having a cuppa and chat. We have a couple of spaces for anyone wishing to join the group.

Strength and Stretch for Men

glodroy@googlemail.com
lizwood116@btinternet.com

Every Wednesday in the Scout Hall, 29 Southbroom Road, Devizes.

We exercise for an hour, to maintain and improve strength and flexibility, then relax for 30 minutes with chat, coffee and biscuits. We have spaces for one or two more gentlemen.

Table Tennis

dgrburton14@gmail.com

Every Wednesday in the Community Hall at Market Lavington.

We are a thriving friendly group and have had some very enjoyable times playing and enjoying an excellent social gathering. We have four tables and all equipment necessary to play.

Cost of £2 includes half time cup of tea and biscuits. We look forward to seeing you.

Wednesday Walkers

wedswalkers@devizesu3a.org.uk

Every Wednesday, start times dependent on route.

Our walks are usually around 4 miles and generally flat. The more challenging walks in the programme are clearly marked as there will be the odd longer walk scheduled. We often finish a walk near to a venue for lunch. New members are welcome.

Coffee and Cake

carol44sainsbury@hotmail.com

Last Thursday of the month in the New Society, Market Place.

The Coffee and Cake group is a lively and social group, new members are always welcome. We all keep in touch via WhatsApp and members are encouraged to suggest outings and get together in between the fixed monthly meetings.

For more details please contact Carol.

Wednesday 10.30am

GLORIA DROY 07821 615156
LIZ WOOD 07562725805

Wednesday 4.00 pm

GILL BURTON 07517 643510

Wednesday

CAROLYN KNOWLES 07510 389646

Thursday 11.00 am

CAROL SAINSBURY 07920 402612

Coffee and Pint

social@devizesu3a.org.uk

3rd Thursday in the Castle Hotel, New Park Street.

Thursday 11.00 am

TREVOR BRIMMER 07493 553010

A group for those members who'd like to meet for a drink in a quiet venue in town, without having to negotiate stairs or a difficult entrance. This is also an ideal venue for those who'd like to stay for lunch.

Colour, Draw and Natter

cdn@devizesu3a.org.uk

Thursday 10.00 am

VINCENZA PARSONS 07944 290576

KAREN TOWNLEY 07305 589825

2nd Thursday in the Conservative Club.

Do you love colouring or drawing and would like to do this informally with a group of like minded people? If so, then we are the group for you. Cost: £3 session. For further information, please contact one of the leaders.

Devizes Doodlers

wendyannjohnson@hotmail.com

2nd Thursday in the Conservative Club.

Thursday 10.00 am

WENDY JOHNSON 01380 720620

Devizes Doodlers is for those who like to have a bit of fun mainly with pencil, pen and ink, and the occasional splash of watercolour. Suggestions from the group are always welcome. If you think you might enjoy a little Doodling contact the leader for more information. Doodlers will be taking a break in August

Discussion 2

jowright22@btinternet.com

3rd Thursday in the leader's home.

Thursday 2.00 pm

JO WRIGHT 01380 722330

Meetings are held on the first floor in the leader's home. We are full at the moment but please contact me if you would like to be first on the waiting list.

The topics are:

20th August "Is it time to quit net zero?"

17th September Holiday - no meeting

15th October "What are the advantages and disadvantages of spending up to 40 billion pounds on renovating Westminster or should the government be housed in another building or in a new purpose built building?"

French Conversation 5

yeandleja@gmail.com

1st & 3rd Thursdays in the leader's home.

Thursday 2:30 pm

ANDREW YEANDLE 01380 730451

Our numbers vary but if there are more than six we tend to have two groups. We are indebted to our French animatrice Viviane who tries to keep us all on some sort of decent French. Subject matter is general - France, French things, recent activities or stories of some interest for us all.

Kitchen Bridge

mlestrange07@aol.com

Every Thursday in the Conservative Club.

Thursday 1.00 pm

MADELEINE LESTRANGE 01380 727146

We are a small and very friendly group toddling along playing a form of bridge that doesn't have a formal name really. The chat is lively and very good humoured. There are no tears before bedtime over mistakes! We have two tables in play every week now. We can always make room for more members.

Paper Craft

papercraft@devizesu3a.org.uk

1st and 3rd Thursday in leader's home.

Thursday 10.00 am

LINDA WALTERS 07896 543385

We are a small group of friendly crafters exploring all creations made from paper and card. Learn new skills including quilling, origami, iris folding, card making and upcycling with a different project each month. If you would like to join us please email the above address.

WEBSITE

Contributions from U3A members and particularly Group Leaders to our web site are always welcome but are subject to editing by the webmaster if necessary.

When providing the Webmaster with changes he would appreciate that the Group name is included in the request and also that out-of-date details or pictures should be identified for removal. Contributions by email to webster@devizesu3a.org.uk.

Photography For Fun

janetrutter@btinternet.com

2nd Thursday at Nursteed Centre.

Thursday 1.30 pm

JANET RUTTER 01380 738048

We are friendly and welcoming and all share an interest in photography. We do not take ourselves seriously. We share our images and have fun and are not competitive. New members are always welcome. Come and try us out! Our group is not full.

We have a break in **August**, but we meet in the Nursteed Centre in **September** when we will review our images from our Summer break topic. In **October** we will look at topics from the month, and hope to have a presentation from one of our members. We look forward to welcoming new as well as our existing members. Only £4.00 per session. Please contact the leader if you are interested.

Reading Three

jackygarven@hotmail.co.uk

4th Thursday in members' homes.

Thursday 2.00 pm

JACKY GARVEN 07803 161042

We are a small group of eight members who meet monthly to discuss books we are reading over a cup of tea or coffee. Each member proposes a book of their choice which they have read and would recommend and we endeavour to agree the titles in advance to allow time to obtain the books. This produces a real variety of genres for us to read and lots of discussion. We have room for new members.

Reading Four

chriscutting@outlook.com

1st Thursday in leader's home.

Thursday 2.00 pm

CHRIS CUTTING 01380 726104

We discuss each book with particular emphasis on how it affects us and how we can use our own experiences to engage with the book. We need new members and would provide a warm welcome. The best way to contact me in the first instant is by email.

August "The Book Thief" by Markus Zusak

September "The Whalebone Theatre" by Joanna Quinn

October "Mendel's Dwarf" by Simon Mawer

Textile Arts

textileart@devizesu3a.org.uk

Thursday 2.30 pm

WENDY WELLER 01380 723235

BARBARA BAILEY 01380 699142

4th Thursday of the month at the Southbroom Centre, Victoria Rd.

This group is for all those interested in textiles of any form and wanting to try out different techniques. If you are interested please contact one of the leaders or email the address above.

Thursday Walkers

thursdaywalkers@devizesu3a.org.uk

Thursday 9.20 am

MICHAEL GIBBONS 07843102823

STEVEN PHELPS 07736391080

Every Thursday.

We are a friendly and welcoming group of walkers who walk every Thursday throughout the year. Our walks are generally circular, between 6 and 8 miles long and within 30-45 minute's drive of Devizes. All walks are led by group members. Everyone is encouraged to lead a walk once they feel comfortable to do so, with more experienced leaders always keen to support novice leaders.

During the walk, we stop for coffee after about an hour and later have another stop to eat our packed lunches. Occasionally, after a walk we will stop for a drink or lunch at a convenient pub on the route back to Devizes, both are optional. You can also either drive straight to the start of a walk or arrange to carshare with other walkers who live near you.

Newcomers are always welcome to join the group. Recently, we have welcomed several new members to the group who now enjoy walking with us. If you wish to take part in any of the walks please contact Michael or Steve on the address above.

Cribbage

bertiles48@icloud.com

sarjeantp@live.co.uk

Friday 2.00 pm

BERT ILES 07512 960859

PAULINE SARJEANT

Every Friday in the Cavalier on Eastleigh Road, SN10 3EG

All are welcome, beginners and experienced players alike. For further information please contact the leader.

Answer to Trivia Question on page 3: Lassie

French Conversation – Un

h2eau@hotmail.co.uk

2nd Friday at a member's home.

Friday 2.00 pm

RICHARD TRENDALL 01380 501708

We are a fun group of Francophiles keen to progress from school-level to a useful conversational standard. We take it in turns to describe in French the highlights of our lives since the last meeting then progress to reading and translating a written article in the language sourced by each of us in turn from literature or the news media. The group is currently full but we do operate a waiting list.

French Conversation – Deux

batchelor33@hotmail.co.uk

4th Friday in leader's home.

Friday 10.00 am

BRIAN BATCHELOR 01380 722012

There is room for one more person who needs to be able to speak the language reasonably well.

Friday Walkers

fridaywalkers@devizesu3a.org.uk

Every Friday.

Friday 9.20 am

GILL BURTON 07517 643510

We currently meet every Friday at Byron Road around 9.20 am for a 9.30 start or car share where possible. Those members living near a particular walk can go there directly. Walks are between 4 and 6 miles long with a coffee break around half way and maybe a lunch stop on longer walks (we may even stop off for a pub lunch!).

Our recent walks have been around the Cherhill Monument, Old Wardour Castle, West Woods to see the bluebells, the St John's parish boundary walk and Hilperton to Whaddon.

Our latest programme is currently being produced and will be made available soon. New members are always welcome to join our friendly group, however, please note everyone is expected to lead a walk occasionally. One of our members, Peter, would be more than happy to help choose a walk.

If you would like to join us please contact the leader who will be pleased to give you more information.

Reading One

Friday 10.30 am

jen.warren28@icloud.com

JENNY WARREN 01380 729529

csharples@oakforduk.com

CATHARINE SHARPLES 01380 721038

1st Friday in members' homes.

We continue to enjoy a variety of modern and classic novels. Unfortunately we have no spaces at the moment, but please contact us if you would like to join us in the future.

Skittles

Friday 3.00 pm

skittles@devizesu3a.org.uk

KATHRYN GREGORY 07860 195009

4th Friday in the Wyvern Club

If you are interested in playing skittles please contact Kathryn.

Traduction Littéraire

Friday 2.00 pm

h2eau@hotmail.co.uk

RICHARD TRENDALL 01380 501708

3rd Friday at 2.00 pm.

We are a friendly group who meet informally at each other's homes to enjoy reading and translating small, accessible works of French fiction. We are currently enjoying 'Le Chapeau de Mitterrand' by Antoine Laurain, a droll hypothesis about the power of a hat to transform lives. There is no French conversation.

THE U3A

The Universities of the Third Age (U3A) in the UK are autonomous, self-help organisations run by the voluntary efforts of their members. Each U3A is a charity in its own right. Older people are encouraged to share their knowledge and experience. The U3A offers learning activities in a social atmosphere, with the widest possible range of interests for retired and semi-retired people. U3As neither require nor award qualifications.

Give a person a fish and you feed them for a day. Teach a person to use the Internet and they won't bother you for weeks, months, maybe they won't bother you for years.

THE BIRTH OF SCOUTING

Devizes Remarkable Place in its Story

The Boy Scouts movement began in Britain in the early twentieth century inspired by the experiences and ideas of Lieutenant-General Robert Stephenson Smyth Baden-Powell. In August 1907, Baden-Powell held an experimental camp for twenty boys on Brownsea Island in Dorset to test his ideas about character-building through outdoor adventure, self-reliance, teamwork and service. The success of this camp led directly to the publication of *Scouting for Boys* in 1908, a book that rapidly inspired boys across Britain and beyond to form Scout patrols of their own, often without any central organisation being in place. This spontaneous growth marked the birth of what soon became the worldwide Scouting movement.

Devizes occupies a unique and distinguished position in this remarkable story. The 1st Devizes Scout Group, founded in 1908, is widely recognised as the second oldest Scout Group in the world. Its formation is closely linked to the friendship between Baden-Powell and Lieutenant Colonel Kenneth Steele, a medical officer in the Wiltshire Regiment who had served under Baden-Powell during the Siege of Mafeking in the Boer War. Inspired by Baden-Powell's ideas, Col. Steele discussed setting up a group at a meeting in the quaint Tower Room at Hillworth Cottage owned by another local worthy, Captain Gundry. (Hillworth Cottage is still there near the junction of Hillworth Road with Long Street.) As a result of that meeting, it was agreed to set up the Scout troop and Captain Gundry donated a plot of land in Southbroom Road to build a Scout Hall.

Steele gathered local supporters in Devizes to establish a troop, laying foundations that have lasted for more than a century. The group quickly became a vibrant part of the town's life, with early camps held at Lockeridge and Savernake Forest, and visits from Baden-Powell himself shortly after its founding.

Devizes also played a pivotal role in the history of endurance canoeing through its strong Scouting traditions. In 1948, members of the 1st Devizes Scout Group, particularly Rover Scouts led by scoutmaster Olly Brown, sought a new challenge beyond paddling short stretches of the Kennet and Avon Canal. Their ambitious decision to canoe from Devizes to London, carrying all their food and equipment, resulted in a successful journey completed in just over 80 hours.

This pioneering expedition directly gave rise to what became the Devizes to Westminster Canoe Race, now one of the world's most demanding and iconic long-distance canoe events.

From the dawn of the Scouting movement to the creation of an extraordinary international sporting challenge, Devizes has made an enduring contribution to history — one rooted in adventure, resilience and community spirit.

Wendy Johnson

WHAT 3 WORDS

Imagine the situation – you (or your family) are out walking or riding off the beaten track when someone falls and is injured, or your car breaks down in the middle of nowhere. You need to get help, so you call the emergency services on your smartphone. One of the first questions they will ask is 'Where are you?' and, of course, you don't know exactly. Your phone has GPS (they almost all do) but how do you use it to find your exact location to tell the emergency services? The easiest way is to use the what3words app.

What is the what3words app? A group of friends found that arranging to meet at locations around the world was very frustrating due to poor addressing and using latitude and longitude too complex and error-prone, so they devised the 3 words system. The world is divided into 3m x 3m squares and each is allocated a unique combination of three words so by specifying those three words you can identify your position accurately.

To find your location using this system you need the what3words app on a smartphone or tablet, it is available for Android and Apple phones. Open the app and you will see a blue dot representing your position. Touch the location icon, an arrow, and three words will be displayed at the top of the screen, this is your three-word address. The emergency services and most breakdown services can use this address to locate you with a high degree of accuracy.

You can also use it to meet up with someone if they give you their three-word address; to send them your location press 'Share'. Type it into the bar at the top of the map and then touch 'Navigate'. You will be offered whatever mapping system you have on your phone such as Google Maps or Apple Maps. Select the one you want, and you will be given directions to where they are. You could try this with *language.hero.unicorns* which will take you to the Market Cross.

CANAL MANIA COMES TO DEVIZES

The Industrial Revolution of the 18th Century showed that an alternative form of transport to the roads was needed due to their parlous state; that need was to be met by the canal network. A waterway was needed to join Bristol and London to avoid the perils of the English Channel. There were all sorts of schemes, some sound, others less so. There was endless argument and intrigue over the actual routes the proposed canals should take, and which towns they should serve.

A meeting of nobility and gentry met in 1788 in Hungerford to appoint a committee to consider a Western Canal to link the ports of Bristol and London.

Six years later a group of local men met at the White Lion Inn in Bristol to try and organise a secret bid to take over the Western Canal project. One of its members, a Mr Bartley, placed an advertisement in a Salisbury paper to divert attention from their activities, announcing a meeting to be held in Devizes on December 12th 1792, to discuss the promotion of a canal from Bristol to Salisbury via Devizes. Whatever the reason for this ploy, perhaps it was to divert attention from the Bristol plot, there was a crazy rush of speculators to Devizes on that date, all intent on getting in on the scheme.

The advertisement had not specified a time or a place for the meeting, so Devizes was in chaos as visitors invaded the town. The Market Place was jammed with carriages, while their passengers ran from inn to inn trying to locate the non-existent meeting. All the beds in all the inns were taken, and a great many people spent an uncomfortable night in their carriages.

First thing next morning the Town Clerk felt that he should try to sort the matter out, and arranged a meeting in the Market Place - there were no rooms in Devizes large enough. The gathering agreed that a canal should be built from Bristol to Salisbury - but could do little more about it. They set off back home wondering what would come of it all. It was not long before the intrigues of the "White Lion Junta" of Bristol leaked out, and they reluctantly agreed to throw in their lot with the Committee of the Western Canal whose efforts eventually led to the creation of the Kennet & Avon Canal.

John Weller

I used to be indecisive, but now I'm not so sure

SHOOTING IN DEVIZES

Have you ever wondered what the tube is that you can see from the Seminar room in the Conservative Club, or what's behind the locked door in the corner of the room? It's actually a rifle range! It is used by the Devizes & District Miniature Rifle League, once part of a nationwide group of leagues but now probably the only survivor.

During the Boer War it was noticed that Boer recruits were better marksmen than the British recruits, probably because they were the sons of farmers used to handling a rifle from an early age. After the war it was felt that there should be a cadre of experienced marksmen to help with the defence of the realm. To this end a series of miniature rifle leagues was set up throughout the country based on pubs, similar to present-day darts leagues. It was laid down in their rules that no pub should be more than a half-hour's trap ride from any other in the league.

They used small-bore rifles firing .22" bullets down a concrete or iron tube. The distance to the target depended on the space available but was usually about 10 yards. The target itself was called a 'bell target', it was a sheet of steel with a quarter-inch hole in it. If some or all of the bullet went through it caused a bell to ring, hence the name.

The Devizes league was formed in 1906 by Staff Sgt Gregg of the RAMC. The league covered quite a wide area including the Antelope in Upavon, the New Inn in Coate and the Kings Arms in All Cannings as well as locations in Devizes.



*The Tube Range in the
Lamb Inn*

The leagues were very popular but over time their numbers dwindled until, it is believed, only the Devizes one remains. There are currently six teams in the league, two in the Lamb (behind the Town Hall) and one each in the Conservative Club, the George and Dragon in Potterne, Rowde in the village hall and Eastwell Rifle Club.

The teams operate under a section of the Firearms Act intended for fairground shooting galleries, so participants do not need their own rifle or a firearms certificate. They would welcome new members, if you are interested contact the league chairman, John Cox, john.cox999@btinternet.com.

John Weller

NEWSLETTER

The newsletter will be distributed every **3 months** and the **COPY DEADLINE** for the next issue is noon on **30 Sept 2026**. Please submit copy in **ARIAL NARROW FONT SIZE 12**. To help ensure delivery on time, please try to send in your inputs as early as possible and not right on the copy deadline.

Articles to the editor, Andy Burton, at newsletter@devizesu3a.org.uk.

The editor reserves the right to edit copy.

Thanks to Jane, Geoff and Catharine for proof reading and Wendy for help with editing the photos.

Electronic Newsletter. A digital copy in PDF format can be downloaded from the Members' Area of the website. Details of how to register for the Members' Area are on the website.

WILTSHIRE MUSEUM REDUCED ENTRY FEE

U3A members pay the discounted price shown below, 50% of the normal entry price. One non-U3A guest accompanying the member may benefit from the same discount. A current U3A membership card must be shown. Children under 18 may enter free.

Discounted Prices for 2026	Gift Aid	Non-Gift Aid
Concession (Over 60 years)	£4.25	£3.75

The benefit to the museum of paying the higher Gift Aid price is that HMRC then considers the whole amount as a donation and refunds the museum 25% of the entry fee.

PHOTOGRAPHS OF U3A MEMBERS

From time-to-time photographs may be taken of group activities and holidays which may then be used on the website, in the newsletter, on Facebook or in U3A publicity material. If you have any objections to your photograph being used in this way, please either ensure that you are not in the photograph or make it known to the photographer that your photograph must not be used.

DEVIZES & DISTRICT U3A COMMITTEE 2026-2027

KATHRYN GREGORY Chairman	07860 195009 chairman@devizesu3a.org.uk
JOHN WELLER Vice-Chairman Newsletter Editor	0797639631 vicechair@devizesu3a.org.uk newsletter@devizesu3a.org.uk
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SUZANNE GREEN Committee Member	07906 842563 suzg6@talktalk.net

LINDA WALTERS Membership Secretary	07896 543385 membsec@devizesu3a.org.uk
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Anna After her 53 mile Charity Ride by John Surowiec



Friday Walkers at Old Wardour Castle by Emma Besson



Friday Walkers on the Packhorse Bridge



More Hardy Souls Braving the Heat at the June Coffee Morning by John Weller



Thursday Walkers on Bratton Down by Pili Oakley



Wednesday Walkers at Cherhill White Horse by Andy Burton