

Spire u3a

Newsletter 56 August 2025



August monthly meeting

Monday 11 August

10 for 10.30am

Harnham Memorial Hall

See page 8

Chairman's Message

Tidying up in our house is a frequently abandoned task; after seven years we have still not quite found a place for everything. Trying to establish some order in one of our

bookcases recently I came across a small volume that I had forgotten I had. It is a collection of sayings by well known people aimed at third agers.

We can't turn back the clock but we can wind it up again, is one suggestion. We should be proud that we have learnt from experience and that that experience shows in our faces. Life is still there to be lived and so on.

This newsletter has reports of how some members have been enriching their lives through u3a, information on opportunities to come and a challenge from me that you are all invited to have a go at. It is not winning the prize, or the recognition, that matters, it is responding to the challenge that counts. So, taking the advice of those who have gone before, let's keep winding the clock; celebrating the wrinkles, making use of our experience, living our lives to the full and taking up every challenge.

Maureen

Our Meeting in July

The Heritage Collections of Salisbury Cathedral

The Cathedral from which our local u3a takes its name was the subject of the Spire u3a monthly meeting in July. Archivist Emily Naish treated us all, packed into the Memorial Hall, to the premiere of this new presentation.

We heard not just about ancient charters on parchment but how all sorts of items - archive documents, the accumulated library and all manner of objects (some predating the present cathedral) comprise the 'stuff' that tells the detailed story of this massive building in our midst.

That story ranged from the original ambitious project to build, through the many changes prompted by the religious landscape over the centuries and the contemporary challenges of preserving the irreplaceable.

The talk referred to internal fixtures, fittings and decoration, small archaeological finds, embroidery from *opus anglicanum* to the 1980s and medieval inventories. Study of these things reveals how much has been lost - jewels, the Skidmore screen and vast numbers of relics.

Emily took her theme, 'let us count our stock', from a Stoppard drama. And that sums up her task very well; properly understanding what is there, what can be learnt from it and how it fits in to the modern context of a fully functioning visitor attraction and place of worship.

Thank you, Emily.

Visiting the Cathedral Library & Archives

Having heard Emily many members indicated that they would appreciate the chance to see some of the Library and Archive. Chris Hayman has kindly been investigating the possibility of Spire members following up Emily's talk with a visit. Specialist tours of the library alone normally cost £25. For a group of 8 we have been offered the chance to see something of both the library and archive for £22.50 per person.

Because of other activity in the cathedral the dates available are not likely to be until the new year. Meanwhile, to secure a place, Chris is collecting names of those interested. Please email her.

(Mary Robson will be collecting money nearer the time.)

<https://www.salisburycathedral.org.uk/discover/library-and-archive/>

OR

Coinciding nicely with u3a Week 2025

there is an exhibition in the library celebrating 800 years since the completion of the East End of the cathedral.

In September 1225, the East End of Salisbury Cathedral was finished – the beginning of a medieval masterpiece. At the first service, Bishop Richard Poore dedicated three altars with the Archbishop of Canterbury Stephen Langton and King Henry III later joining the celebrations. Saint Osmund's shrine was built here in the 15th century, although later destroyed in the Reformation, and in 1980, the spectacular Prisoners of Conscience Window was installed, designed by Gabriel Loire and unveiled by violinist Yehudi Menuhin. This mini exhibition held in the Cathedral Library includes ancient documents and other treasures from the Cathedral's archive, library and historic objects collections from the medieval period to more recent times.

22-28 September 2025

Mon-Sat 10:30-12:30 and 14:00-16:00, Sun 13:30-15:30

This exhibition is included with a general admission ticket to Salisbury Cathedral at no additional cost but you may need to book first through the cathedral website and join a queue to negotiate the 37 step stone spiral staircase, if the cathedral is busy.

<https://www.salisburycathedral.org.uk/arrangements/salisbury-cathedral-a-new-beginning-exhibition/>



A Light in August - novel by William Faulkner published in 1932.

RIP

Jill Tilley, at the end of July, shortly before her 88th birthday.

Jill passed away after a very short stay in hospital.

Following cremation, during the morning, there will be a service at St George's Parish Church, Harnham at 2pm on **Monday 11 August** and a wake at Riverside.

Jill was a regular member of Lunch Bunch and the Sunday Lunch Club but best known for her enthusiasm for the Scrabble Group that she set up.

One Spire member observed that she was full of fun and life: "I shall miss the saucy and delightful exchanges we shared over coffee and chat mornings - her exotic personality will be sorely missed."

August, the border between summer and autumn.

Please Remember

.....to provide us with your date of birth and 'in case of emergency' contact details. We explained why in the last newsletter.

Email or write down your Name, DOB & ICE and hand to Pauline at a monthly meeting.

Thank you to those of you who have already made this information available or told us that you do not wish to share.



August is a Wicked Month - novel by Edna O'Brien published in 1965.

Chairman's Challenge

This is for everyone to have a go at. Settle down with something to write with and something to write on and write what comes into your mind. Think about December, shorter days, the coming of winter and Christmas time; the little details, the memories and old stories.

Organise your thoughts into a poem of 16 lines or less, four four-line verses or another arrangement. Give a thought to how well it reads. Does it need rhythm or rhyme?

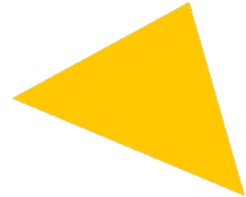
When you are happy with what you have written please email it to me and I will forward it to an independent judge.

maureenefrost@icloud.com

We are looking for original, unpublished work and no more than 16 lines.

The winner will be announced at our December meeting.

Last date for submission: **Monday November 17** - midnight.



Interest Groups



u3a Choir

Monday December 8 will see the return of u3a Choir to the Memorial Hall. They will entertain us, as they did so well last year, and help to get us in the mood for the festive season.

Salisbury u3a choir is open to members of all Salisbury's u3as. It meets from September to April at 2pm on Mondays at Wilton Community Centre, singing everything from medieval music to songs from the shows. There are no auditions!

• If you are interested, please ring the conductor, David Davies on 01722 [714440](tel:01722714440).

Crossword clue - time of slow news during high summer (3,5,6)

OBC

Sticking to the West Country theme, we meet next on **Tuesday 12 August** at 3.30pm to share what we have been reading: *Wessex Tales*, *The Withered Arm*, *The Wild Silence*, *Giants Bread* etc.

Scrabble

Future meetings will be on the fourth Wednesday of the month.

The next one will be on **27 August** at 12 Middle Street, by kind invitation of Jackie Hankinson.

Continuing the Scrabble Group is the best memorial to Jill Tilley that there could be. [scrabble@gmail.com](mailto:scrabble@jilltilley.com)



Wednesday Book Club

On Wednesday 23 July, we met at Salisbury Library to discuss our latest read, *The Smallest Man*, by Frances Quinn. Briefly it was based on a true story, told in the first person. It documented the life of a boy who was sold by his father as a child, because he had dwarfism. The time period was the 1600s, when he became the trusted confidant of the wife of King Charles 1. It was generally enjoyed as a light read, but we felt that it lacked depth, historical fact and character development. Our next read will be a readers choice, the subject, crime.

Joan Nichols

Art & Craft

Apart from the X3 being delayed, due to an accident at Nunton, and Mary's confrontation with a hedge, our summer outing to the Russell Cotes Museum in Bournemouth went without incident. There was lots to enjoy: the bus ride, a tasty lunch, the story of the building, the family that lived there, gorgeous views of the sea and all in good company.

We admired the fine work of May Morris (1862-1938) in the special exhibition - Art & Advocacy - which shone a light on her individual talent in both craft and design and her achievements in enabling female artists and crafts makers to fully engage in the artistic community.... giving her the recognition she richly deserves.

We meet next on **August 26** at 2pm to discuss Scarecrow and Christmas Tree matters.



Marilyn and Doreen at the Russell Cotes Museum and Gallery

IGO

Interest Groups Online has over 120 different learning groups where you can share your passions with like-minded members. If we don't offer what you want locally you might find it with the online community: you could *Find Fun and Joy in Poetry*, where members read aloud and chat about amusing and uplifting poems; discuss crime novels in *Anyone but Agatha*; or discover new recipes and phrases in *Spanish - Buen Provecho*. All groups are run by enthusiastic u3a members. Annual membership is £12
<https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/interest-groups-online>

Learn, Laugh, Live

Coming Up... Three chances for Spire u3a to get noticed!

Men Matters - **Tuesday September 16**, City Hall, 3-7pm

<https://www.experiencesalisbury.co.uk/whats-on/listing-entries/men-matters/>

Scarecrow Festival - **19 -20 September** URC

<https://www.experiencesalisbury.co.uk/whats-on/2025/september/scarecrow-festival/>

U3a Week

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/u3a-week>

All Interest Groups are encouraged to do something special this week: 20-28 September.



Jolly to Rockbourne Roman Villa

Friday 22 August

Pick up points

10.40am Millstream Coach Park, outside the Boathouse Restaurant.

10.55am All Saints, Church, Watersmeet

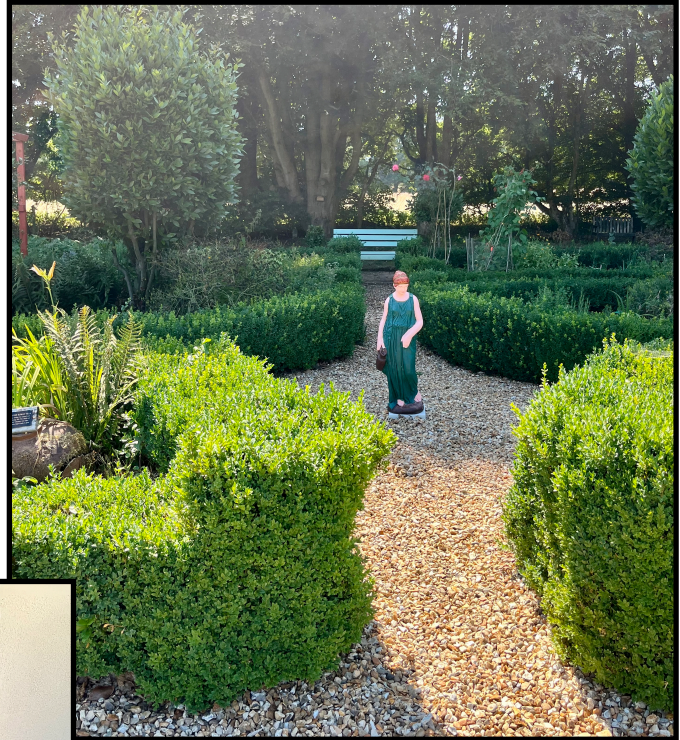
Road, Harnham.

11.05am Parish Hall, Lower Street,

Harnham.

- If you are going on the trip please let Pauline know which pick up point you will be waiting at.

And don't forget to bring your picnic lunch.



Online Learning with u3a

Art, Science, History, Poetry, Railways, Driving, Deep Purple
<https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events#Events>

u3a Week Lunch

Saturday 20 September at The Parish Hall, Lower Street.

Similar format as last year - Nibbles, Main course, Pudding - £15

Raffle; John Holt is collecting prizes.

Look out for the sign up sheet.

Pay Mary, the Treasurer, please but not until she asks.

On average, some of the hottest places to visit in August are Las Vegas (39.4°C) and Marrakech (37°C), according to the Met Office.

Tipple Time

Friday 15 August at 6pm for one hour of gentle conversation.

Biscuits - what is your favourite? How big should a digestive be?

Bath Oliver or Scottish Oatcake? <https://batholiver.com/>

Lemon meringue pie - shortcrust or biscuit crumb? Ever had a pet called Biscuit?

Moore's Biscuit Factory. Are Dorset Knobs even biscuits?

Monthly Meeting

John Craig, Retired Chief Fire Officer - Going to Blazes

Doors open for refreshments at 10am.

'In the August Sun' is a cocktail that resembles Pina Colada but isn't.

In future you will also be able to read newsletters on our website but

NB some details will be omitted in the online version to safeguard member's privacy.

If you need to contact someone or to request a zoom link, please use the form on the Contacts Page of the [upcoming] website.

From Wikipedia: In many languages, the silly season is called *cucumber time*.