

**From the Chair, Mark Ballard:**

Well, that was a fascinating talk at our last meeting by Adrian Dening on Spy Radios. It was thought provoking as to how ingenious people were with such limited technology and of course of the bravery of some individuals under such adversity.

It was great to see several of you at the Brimsmore Garden event, thank you to Elizabeth Kirtley for organising that. Great inspiration for those of us fortunate enough to have a garden and very timely, as of course this time of year the village & district is awash with colour. The blooms showing as you walk or drive through the district certainly compliment the traditional Hamstone of many local houses, that itself has such a warm glow at this time of year. My compliments to the many gardeners whose efforts are being well rewarded.

Our May meeting is intriguing titled 'Till Death Do Us Part' and the speaker is Caroline Newark. The meeting will be on Wednesday 13 May, 2.15 for a 2.30 start and I look forward to seeing many of you there.

**May 2026 Meeting on Wednesday 13 May, 2.15 for 2.30 start**

**Caroline Newark 'Till Death Do Us Part'**

(See page 3 for information about the speaker and parking)

Future Meetings currently arranged

10 June — David Webb 'The UK Wild Otter Trust'

8 July — Brian Wright 'Humpty Dumpty Sat On The Wall'

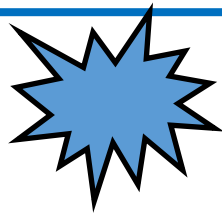
*No meeting in August*

9 September — Niall Clifford 'Governing Prisons'

14 October — Annual General Meeting, Quiz and Prize Draw

11 November — Larry Jeram-Croft 'The Story of a Royal Navy Battle of Britain Pilot'

***Please contact the Publicity & Events Secretary if you have ideas for Speakers  
on [pubmaru3a@gmail.com](mailto:pubmaru3a@gmail.com)***



## Celebration Corner Happy Birthday to:

### Welcome to our new members:

Julie Williams, Paul Hanley, Richard and Pam Davey, Pam Guest

*We look forward to speaking to you at a meeting, please make yourself known to a committee member when you attend.*

Pauline Warren, Robert Miller, Patrick Palmer, Paull Robathan, Judith Lewis, Ian Davidson, Derek Mace, Michael Greatwich, Gaynor Talley, Sean McCormick, Ann Everitt, Tim Woodcock, Philip Tilson, Janet Gould, Mark Ballard

*If you would like your name mentioned, please let the Membership Secretary know your birth month (contact details on last page)*

### Dates for Your May Diary

- Tuesday 5 May** 9.50am, Lighthouse Café, Stoke-sub-Hamdon — Stoke Long Health Walk (Ring Sue on 07792 311736 for details)
- Saturday 9 May** 10.00am-1.00pm, Moorlands Shopping Centre, Martock — Farmer's Market
- Monday 11 May** 9.30am, Lighthouse Café — Montacute/ Stoke Short Health Walk, as above. 9.50am — Medium Walk, as above
- Tuesday 12 May** 10.30am, Martock Recreation Ground — Martock Health Walk (1 mile round recreation ground at gentle pace)
- Wednesday 13 May** 2.15pm for 2.30pm start, Martock Parish Hall — Martock & District u3a monthly meeting
- Monday 26 May** Montacute/Stoke Health Walks, as above
- Friday 29 May** 10.00am-12.00pm, Martock Parish Hall — Come for Coffee
- Sunday 31 May** 10.30am-12.30pm, The David Hall, South Petherton — Jazz Café

### Martock & District Accounts Update

The final figures for March 2026 show Income of £484.59, Expenditure of £403.32, with a total balance of £3,899.96. If you would like more detail about the accounts, please email the Treasurer, Adrian Sutton, on [treasmaru3@gmail.com](mailto:treasmaru3@gmail.com)

## **An Introduction to Caroline Newark**

### **the speaker on 13 May**

As a child Caroline wanted to be a farmer's wife, have twelve children and live in a house with roses round the door. Her parents wanted her to be somebody's wife, preferably a respectable, well-heeled, professional somebody, and her headmistress thought she should be a scientist. It never occurred to her that one day she would become a writer, yet here she is — writing.

However, she did become a farmer as well as a farmer's wife and she does live in a house with roses climbing over trees and pergolas, just outside the door; but she has 2 children (not 12) and now five grandchildren.

Caroline qualified as a teacher and after a career in teaching, took a law degree at Southampton University. She taught science and sewing (!) in Ghana and law at Aberystwyth University, opened a nursery school in Southampton and, together with her husband, milked Jersey cows in West Wales. In 2001 they moved the cows to Somerset and for several years made award-winning artisan cheese on their farm near Bruton.

Retirement merely heralded a change of direction and Caroline began writing books about the lives of the women in her mother's family tree: twenty-one women means twenty-one books — the mothers, the daughters and the daughters-in-law, all with husbands and families and stories to tell. The first book "The Pearl of France" is about Marguerite of France who, in 1299, married Edward I as his second wife. The last book will be about Caroline's mother, Kathleen Bainbridge who married Francis Newark, in 1934. Some of the stories will break one's heart, others will make one smile. Many of these women faced unimaginable hardship, danger and loss, while others schemed and plotted to get what they wanted. There were forced marriages and torrid love affairs, women who were betrayed by their husbands and others with long and happy marriages.

Today Caroline lives in Somerset, in her house with roses just outside the door, together with her husband, Richard. In her spare time she likes walking, reading, doing crosswords and eating mint chocolate.

### **Parking in The George Car Park for u3a Monthly Meetings**

**We are allowed to use this carpark without charge for most meetings. But please put your u3a Membership Card on your dashboard when parking for these meetings. Please car share as much as possible as there is limited space in the car park. Thank you.**

**Charity Status** — Our Registered Charity Number is 1217106 and we can be found on The Charity Commission website <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission>

**New Website** — The new site is <https://martock.u3asite.uk/>. If you go to the old website, you will be redirected. Please email the Chair at [martocku3achair24@gmail.com](mailto:martocku3achair24@gmail.com) with any comments, suggestions or ideas for items in the Notices section.

## New Committee Members

Members can only be on the Committee for 3 consecutive years. They then have to stand down for a year before standing for another 3 years if they wish.

Therefore succession planning for committee members is very important. The following committee roles have to be filled at the AGMs over the next few years.

October 2026 — Treasurer, Vice Chair, Membership Secretary. Also Publicity & Events Secretary & Web Manager if these 2 currently vacant roles have not been filled beforehand

October 2027 — Groups Secretary, Outreach Co-ordinator

October 2028 — Chair, Secretary, Committee Member

Please consider if you can join the Committee. You can attend a Committee Meeting to see what happens (though you cannot vote). Please contact the Chair or the relevant Committee Member for more information about the role.

***Our u3a cannot continue unless we have committee members — please consider volunteering for the Committee***

## **How To Help Your Group Co-ordinator**

All Group Co-ordinators are volunteers, members of our u3a who are willing to manage a Group. It is very disheartening for Co-ordinators if they don't get a response to emails/phone calls they send out to the Group about a meeting. This non-response can even lead to a Group Co-ordinator deciding they don't wish to carry on—to the detriment of both Group members and the u3a!

So please be a polite, responsible Group member and answer emails/calls from your Group Co-ordinator — even if it is just to say 'no thanks' . Thank you.

## **ART GROUP**



***Would anyone like to take over leading the Art Group? Either on your own or jointly with another member of the Group.***

***If you are interested, please get in touch with the Groups Secretary on [martocku3agroupssec1@gmail.com](mailto:martocku3agroupssec1@gmail.com)***

The Memory Café at All Saints Church, Martock will be on  
Tuesday 5 May 10-11.30.

This a place for people with dementia and their carers to meet in a relaxed  
and friendly setting.

## **Raffle Prizes**

*Do you have something nice that you could donate as a small raffle prize?*

*Or maybe you have produce from your garden?*

*Please bring items to a monthly meeting or email the Chair on  
martocku3achair24@gmail.com to discuss your donation*

**For all Group matters, whether to arrange a taster session or to join a Group,  
please email Felicity Renshaw on [martocku3agroupssec1@gmail.com](mailto:martocku3agroupssec1@gmail.com)**

## Interest Groups

<b>Monday am</b>	<b>Tuesday am</b>	<b>Wednesday am</b>	<b>Thursday am</b>	<b>Friday am</b>
<i>Scrabble — every week</i>	<i>Art — 1st and 3rd Art Appreciation — 4th Cycling — monthly Sewing — 2nd</i>	<i>Philosophy — 1st Science — 4th</i>	<i>Beginners' Bridge — 2nd and 4th</i>	<i>Bridge — every week</i>
<b>Monday pm</b>	<b>Tuesday pm</b>	<b>Wednesday pm</b>	<b>Thursday pm</b>	<b>Friday pm</b>
<i>Dance Group — 2nd and 4th MahJong — 2nd Play Reading Drama — 4th Spanish — alternate weeks Book Group 2 — 3rd</i>	<i>Flower Arranging — 3rd Modern Board Games — 1st and 3rd Recorders — 1st &amp; 3rd Recorder Consort — alternate weeks Recorded Music— 1st Writing — Tuesday or Wednesday</i>	<i>Paper Crafting — 4th Ukelele — alternate Wednesdays Writing — Tuesday or Wednesday</i>	<i>Book Group 1 — 4th German Improvers — alternate weeks</i>	

**Other Groups that meet at times and venue agreed by the Members:** Lunch Club; Theatre; Try A Craft; Garden Visiting; Rummikub

### **MahJong Group**

New members are welcome to join in and play this absorbing Chinese game. We meet at least once a month in a relaxed and sociable atmosphere. Even if you have no idea what MahJong is, do come along to discover a new and fascinating game.





## Martock & District u3a 2025-26 Committee

Registered Charity no. 1217106

Chair – Mark Ballard [martocku3achair24@gmail.com](mailto:martocku3achair24@gmail.com)

Vice Chair – Stewart Seery

Treasurer – Adrian Sutton [treasmaru3@gmail.com](mailto:treasmaru3@gmail.com)

Secretary – Mary Marshall [commaru3a@gmail.com](mailto:commaru3a@gmail.com)

Web Manager –

Groups Secretary – Felicity Renshaw [martocku3agroupssec1@gmail.com](mailto:martocku3agroupssec1@gmail.com)

Membership Secretary – Alison Sutton [martocku3amembership@gmail.com](mailto:martocku3amembership@gmail.com) or for information about membership please ring 07555 033027

Publicity & Events Secretary –

Outreach Co-ordinator — Cassy Treasure [martocku3aoutreach@gmail.com](mailto:martocku3aoutreach@gmail.com)

Committee member — Trudy Ballard [Martockdistrictu3acommittee@gmail.com](mailto:Martockdistrictu3acommittee@gmail.com)

**The Committee welcomes feedback from members, by email to the Chair or the Secretary or through your Group Leader**

### **DISCLAIMER:**

***The Committee reserves the right to edit submissions, if required.***

### **May Facts and Legends ...**

The name *May* is the modern-day English adaption of the Roman word *Maius*, which has origins going back to the time of the ancient Greeks. They named the month of May (or *Maius*) after the Greek goddess of growth. Alternatively, the name might have come from the Latin *maiores*, meaning elders.



*The May flowers are lily of the valley and hawthorn. In France, the tradition of gifting lily of the valley continues as a symbol of*



*good luck. The birthstone is emerald, symbolising renewal, love and wisdom.*

May was once considered an incredibly ill-omened time to get married. There's an adage which goes: "*Marry in May and you'll rue the day.*" It's not clear where exactly the saying comes from, but there must have been a pretty good reason not to get married in one of the most beautiful months of the year! On the other hand, it is said that those born in May have a greater chance of being more successful in life and experience more love.

*May is associated with Beltane on 1 May. It was traditionally celebrated to acknowledge the midpoint*

*between spring and summer, this period is recognized as a time of peak fertility. This is an incredibly joyful, festive time.*

May events include:

- On 1 May 1931, the Empire State Building opened its doors, the tallest building in the world at that time, it is now overtaken by many other buildings.
- Roger Bannister was the first man to run a mile in under 4 minutes, at the Iffley Road Sports Ground in Oxford on 6 May 1954.
- On 12 May 1937, George VI was crowned at Westminster Abbey in London, following the abdication of his brother, Edward VIII.
- Amelia Earhart became the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic on 20 May 1932.
- On 21 May 1894, the official opening of the Manchester Ship Canal by Queen Victoria took place.
- The Dunkirk evacuation began on 26 May 1940 to save the British Expeditionary Force trapped by advancing German armies on the northern coast of France, it was completed 2 June.
- On 30 May 1536, eleven days after he had his wife Anne Boleyn beheaded, King Henry VIII married Jane Seymour, former lady-in-waiting to Anne.
- The Boer War ended on 31 May 1902.