

**From the Chair, Mark Ballard:**

Thank you firstly to Niall Clifford for a fascinating insight into the workings of Governing Prisons at our June meeting. In particular thank you Niall for stepping in at short notice. Whilst our Members continue to be active across the various groups within the u3a, somehow several of them also find time for other activities, including both writing plays and performing. Trudy and I thoroughly enjoyed the recent performance of "The Rehearsal" by the Stoke Performing Arts Group, featuring several of our members. Very funny and a great evening.

It is quite remarkable when you look at the cross section of events and activities that are taking place across our villages and hamlets, there really is something for everyone. We have been struck by how welcoming and inclusive all of the activities that we have attended have been. It is also great to see so many initiatives to support mental health and wellbeing in all it's guises, both at the voluntary level, parish councils and the healthcare professionals. It was also lovely to hear of the recent thank you event for a number of the local volunteers. Volunteers play such a big part in our society and it's good to say thank you, we recognise what you do you.

Our next meeting will be on Wednesday 8 July, so please arrive from 2.15 as usual, for a 2.30 start. Our speaker is going to be Brian Wright and the topic is intriguingly called 'Humpty Dumpty Sat On The Wall'. I look forward to seeing many of you there. This will be our last meeting for a while, as there is no meeting in August.

**July 2026 Meeting on Wednesday 8 July, 2.15 for 2.30 start**  
**Brian Wright 'Humpty Dumpty Sat On The Wall — Nursery Rhymes,  
a Hidden History'**

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

Future Meetings currently arranged

***No meeting in August***

9 September — Jeannette Hampstead 'The Hazelbury Bryan Hedgehog Rescue Centre'

14 October — Annual General Meeting, Quiz and Prize Draw

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

9 December — Christmas Party

13 January 2027 — Brimsmore 'Gardening Folklore, part 2'

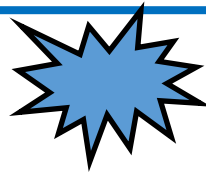
***Please contact the Publicity & Events Secretary if you have ideas for Speakers  
on [pubmaru3a@gmail.com](mailto:pubmaru3a@gmail.com)***



**Welcome to our new members:**

Tony Chant, Jill Hill, Caroline Bevan,  
Dorinda Haynes, Anita Appleby,  
Darren Warner, Deb Warner

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



**Celebration Corner**  
**Happy Birthday to:**

July: Martin Bradbrooke, Katie Guyton, Miles  
Perkins, Lorna Wood, Liz Thompson, Stuart  
Crowther, Julia O'Dowd, Phil Stringer, Jacky Fowler,  
Barry Allen, Kathleen Mountjoy, Paul Reilly, Pat  
Trunkfield, Anita Appleby

August: Mona Mace, Elaine Payne, Trudy Ballard,  
Diane Kingston, Greg Atkins, Jan Hawes, Valerie  
Wheadon, Geoffrey Mountjoy, Susan Rumsey,

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

**Dates for Your July Diary (August Diary on page 4)**

- Tuesday 7 July** 9.50am, Lighthouse Café, Stoke-sub-Hamdon — Stoke Long Health Walk (Ring Sue on 07792 311736 for details)
- Wed 8 July** 2.15pm for 2.30pm start, Martock Parish Hall — Martock & District u3a monthly meeting
- Saturday 11 July** 10.00am-1.00pm, Moorlands Shopping Centre, Martock — Farmer's Market
- Monday 13 July** 9.30am, Lighthouse Café — Montacute/ Stoke Short Health Walk, as above. 9.50am — Medium Walk, as above
- Tuesday 14 July** 10.30am, Martock Recreation Ground — Martock Health Walk (1 mile round recreation ground at gentle pace)
- Friday 24 July** Meet at 10.30am, Moorlands Shopping Centre — Martock Health Walk (30-45 mins. level walking)
- Monday 27 July** Montacute/Stoke Health Short Walk, as above
- Friday 31 July** 10.00am-12.00pm, Martock Parish Hall — Come for Coffee

**Martock & District Accounts Update**

The final figures for May 2026 show Income of £408.40, Expenditure of £58.69 with a total balance of £2,778.89. If you would like more detail about the accounts, please email the Treasurer, Adrian Sutton, on [treasmaru3@gmail.com](mailto:treasmaru3@gmail.com)

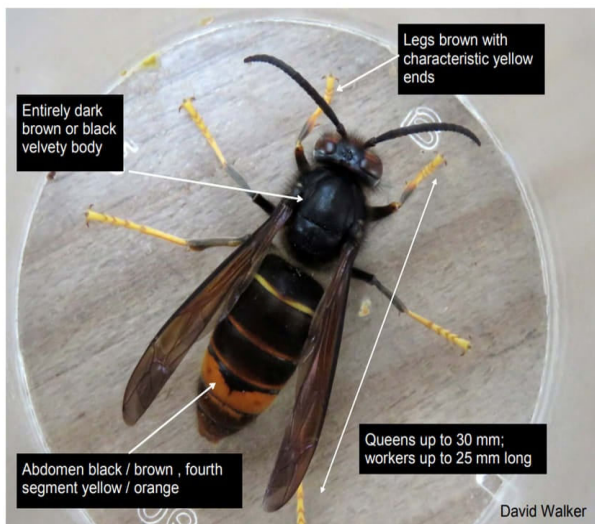
## An Introduction to Brian Wright the speaker on 8 July

Brian is qualified as an archaeologist, but now works primarily as a historian, and until recently ran courses and day workshops on 'West Country Folklore', 'British Mythology' and 'Archaeology' at various colleges and centres in Somerset and Devon, as well as running courses for the Workers Educational Association (WEA). He now gives talks to a wide variety of organisations such as the WI, Probus, Active Living Groups, History Societies, u3a, Social groups, and many other local organisations. For ten years he worked at Fyne Court in the Somerset Quantocks as an Information Warden at weekends, giving guided tours.

He has written many articles, several books and a television series, 'Weird West', for HTV. Books range from *Insurance Office Fire Brigades* to *Somerset Dragons*, and a biography of Andrew Crosse, an early electrical scientist who lived at Broomfield in the Quantock Hills.

One of his books (*Brigid: Goddess, Druidess and Saint*) was used as the basis for a TV programme made by RTE, the Irish broadcasting company, which was broadcast in 2023, and Brian was employed as programme consultant and wrote some of the advisory script. This was to mark the fact that the Irish Government have now introduced an annual holiday in honour of St. Brigid.

### Asian Hornets — also known as Yellow Legged Hornets



**These are an invasive species that are predators of honeybees. Please report any sightings of these hornets or their nests**

- On the phone recording app Asian Hornet Watch
  - Online at [nonnativespecies.org/asianhornet](https://nonnativespecies.org/asianhornet)
    - By email to [alertnonnative@ceh.ac.uk](mailto:alertnonnative@ceh.ac.uk)
- Use binoculars from a safe distance to identify the hornets or their nests and be very careful to avoid being stung, these hornets are dangerous**

### **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.

## **Can You Help Your u3a?**

We now have members willing to be elected as Treasurer, Membership Secretary and Website Manager at the October AGM.

However, we still need a member to take on the Publicity and Events role in October. Most of next year's speakers have been arranged, so the member taking on this role in October will have time to learn without pressure.

***Are you willing to come onto the Committee as Publicity and Events Secretary? To learn more about the role contact the Chair or email the current role holder (email addresses on page 6)***

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

## **Dates for Your August Diary**

- Tuesday 4 August )** See details on July's calendar for Long Health Walk  
**Monday 10 August )** and 2 Short Walks in Stoke-sub-Hamdon  
**Monday 24 August )**
- Saturday 8 August** 10.00am-1.00pm, Moorlands Shopping Centre, Martock — Farmer's Market
- Tuesday 11 August** 10.30am, Martock Recreation Ground — Martock Health Walk (1 mile round recreation ground at gentle pace)
- No u3a monthly meeting in August***
- Saturday 15 August** Martock Fete — Recreation Ground
- Friday 28 August** 10.00am-12.00pm, Martock Parish Hall — Come for Coffee
- Friday 28 August** Meet at 10.30am, Moorlands Shopping Centre — Martock Health Walk (30-45 mins. level walking)

## **ART NEWS**



***Are you interested in the Art Group?***

***If there is sufficient interest, Chris Atkins is willing to hold a preliminary meeting to discuss whether the Group is continuing. With summer coming, En Plein Air class could be arranged if enough people are interested.***

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

The Memory Café at All Saints Church, Martock is on Tuesday 7 July 10-11.30.

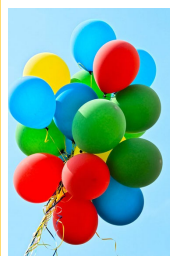
This a place for people with dementia and their carers to meet in a relaxed and friendly setting.

**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 Qigong Tai Chi — 1st</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



#### **Martock Fete on Saturday 15 August 2.00-5.00 pm**

If you were unable to come to our u3a Open Afternoon, come to our stall and find out more about the u3a and our Groups

Family-friendly event, bring your relatives and friends and find out more about Martock & District u3a — the place for Those Who Have Time For Themselves (not just those who are retired!)

#### **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](mailto:martocku3achair24@gmail.com) to discuss your donation*



## 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 – [pubmaru3a@gmail.com](mailto:pubmaru3a@gmail.com)

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.***

### **July Facts and Legends ...**

July is named after the Roman Emperor Julius Caesar, who was born in July. The Anglo-Saxons called July “maed monath” (flowering of meadows month) or “hey monath” (hay month).



*The birthstone is the ruby. The birth flowers are the water lily and larkspur.*

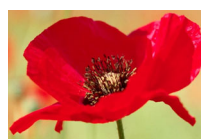


July events include—

- On 4 July 1776 Congress accepted the Declaration of Independence written by Thomas Jefferson, formally ending American links with Britain.
- King Henry VIII watched his newly refitted flagship the *Mary Rose* sink in the Solent on 19 July 1545, with the loss of 700 lives.
- More than a year after the end of World War Two, on 22 July 1946 bread was rationed in Britain. The shortage was blamed upon a poor harvest and drought.
- On 26 July 1978, The world’s first test-tube baby was born in Oldham General Hospital. Gynaecologist Patrick Steptoe and physiologist Dr Robert Edwards are credited with this pioneering work.

### **August Facts and Legends ...**

In 8BCE, August was renamed, in honour of Roman Emperor Augustus. The Anglo-Saxons called August “woed monath”, as weeds & other plants grow the fastest this month.



*The primary birthstone is the peridot. The birth flowers are gladiolus and poppy.*



August events include —

- On 2 August 1990, the Iraqi army invaded Kuwait. This resulted in a massive Allied military build-up, Desert Shield, & a 100-hour battle, Desert Storm.
- The Berlin Wall came into existence on 13 August 1961. Initially barbed wire, it was replaced by a 12 foot-high concrete wall eventually extending 103 miles around the perimeter of West Berlin.
- On 24 August 79 AD, Vesuvius, an active volcano in southern Italy, erupted and destroyed the cities of Pompeii, Stabiae and Herculaneum.
- In one of the worst maritime disasters, on 29 August 1792, 900 men drowned on the British battleship Royal George. As the ship was being repaired, a gust of wind allowed water to flood into open gun ports. The ship sank within minutes.