

Hello Everyone,

Firstly, “New” for the Newsletter a quiz, which you will find at the end.

The theme is – famous people who share their surnames with English counties, towns or cities. Find the surnames!

No cheating and looking at the answers before you have attempted to tackle the questions.

I have received a communication from Dr Mathew Hill from the University of Leicester, School of Psychology & Vision Sciences, who is conducting research on concern about falling in older adults.

The committee decided that this would be of valuable information for you, and for it to be included in this month’s newsletter.

The study aims to understand whether witnessing or hearing about other people falling (e.g., friends, family members, or others) influences individuals’ own concerns about falling, whilst also studying fall prevention strategies.

If you are interested in learning more about this important research and perhaps also taking part, the following link will provide you with further information

<https://app.onlinesurveys.jisc.ac.uk/s/leicester/how-seeing-or-hearing-others-falling-affects-older-adults-worri> .

Here is a further link for those of you who would like to take part in the study
<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0?ui=2&ik=73f9114f66&attid=0.1&permmsgid=msg-f:1864422775013610115&th=19dfc2a2bfd59283&view=att&zw&disp=safe>

For ongoing meetings the hall manager Bob will bring out 100 chairs in columns of 8, stacks of 5, so that the most anyone would have to do is lift a chair from a stack of 5. At the end, please stack the chairs in 5 then he will put them in the cupboard. Therefore, at the end of each meeting, could everyone who is able, please stack their chair in fives at the side of the hall. This would help immensely.

A reminder that articles for the newsletter must be received by 23rd of each month. Group news items for the newsletter should be sent via the Group Coordinators in plenty of time.

Thank You and Kind Regards.

Francetta Bridle - newslettereditor@sidmouthu3a.org

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

RETIREMENT - is the third in my selection of words that conjure up different thoughts. Most members of the Sidmouth u3a are already into their retirement and must be used to a different life from a working one.

What do you enjoy about your retirement? Are you pleased that there are so many activities to fill your day? Has retirement come up to your expectations? If you feel so inclined, do send in some thoughts about your retirement.

Most people can enjoy a good standard of life; we are the lucky ones but our children and grandchildren may find it more of a hardship.

As with volunteering, you can spend all your time enjoying yourself, but perhaps you like to learn something new, or volunteer with an organisation..... there is scope for that in our u3a!!!

Whatever, I hope your retirement is giving you the enjoyment you wished for, after working hard at your job.

Retirement is wonderful!

Gail Richmond - chairman@sidmouthu3a.org

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Open Meeting - 9th June 2026: Mary Smith - 'A Schoolgirls War'. If you would like to read more about Mary's talk, please see the link below.

[Schoolgirls war.pdf](#)

Stowford Rise Community Centre from 1.30-3.30pm. Refreshments served until 2pm

Open Meeting - July 14th 2026: Graham Hurley - A well known, Devonian prolific author, whose fictional characters and storylines are based on extensive factual research.

Stowford Rise Community Centre from 1.30-3.30pm. Refreshments served until 2pm

A Reminder that there is No August Meeting or Newsletter.

SOCIAL EVENTS

If you would like to join the social committee please contact Jackie on social.jackie@sidmouthu3a.org

Evening Social - A Drink & Chat at The Blue Ball, Sidford.7-9pm, 3rd Tuesday of the month. Any queries contact secretary@sidmouthu3a.org

IMPORTANT.

Please email the **relevant** Group Leader for any of the groups you are interested in and not via the Coordinators. Thank You.

The full groups list (with group leaders' details) can be accessed here - at tinyurl.com/ytjpu4p or full details of all groups, with group leader contact details, can be found on our website: sidmouth.u3asite.uk/groups

New Group - Knit and Natter/Craft and Chat

Location in Sidmouth on the 1st Monday afternoon of the month. Bring your own work that can be done without a table. Tea/coffee/cake provided for £1.00. Please contact Alison Daniel - alisondaniel@hotmail.com.

New Group - Proposed, New Play Reading Group

Play sets can be ordered from Exeter Library on a monthly basis for only £3.00 but renewals can be made for a further £3.00 per month. Some groups like to give two choices when they make a request, in case one is already on loan. If you are interested in joining please contact - deirdre.dee@outlook.com

New Group - Film Club

I would be interested in forming a Film Club with U3A members. The concept would be to meet once a month, or every two weeks, to discuss films that we have loved in the past. My interest is English films from the 50s onwards. I love the old British black and white films, but I equally enjoy newer films. I thought maybe members could watch a nominated film separately during a specified timeframe that is available on Sky, Prime or Netflix or even Talking Pictures (by taping it). Each member would draw up their favourite film list of perhaps 10 films. Once a film has been nominated, we all watch it separately and then meet to discuss. I am happy to host the first group meeting.

This idea is just a starting point and could change as we evolve. We could even just chat about films in general if that would be a better idea.

If anyone is interested in this idea, please contact bcockett@hotmail.co.uk by the end of April.

Regards, Brenda and Robin Cockett.

Introduction to Bridge - Would you like to learn how to play Bridge? A new group is being formed on a Wednesday afternoon. Please contact John Howton at howtonj37@gmail.com

Organic Gardening - now has vacancies. Contact Chris Gaine at christinegaine@gmail.com

Cook and Share - now has a vacancy. Please contact - Chris Gaine at christinegaine@gmail.com

A Good Read - This group now has a vacancy. We meet on the afternoon of the 3rd Thursday of the month. Please contact Eileen Conn - eileenconn1@yahoo.co.uk

LIFE STORIES GROUP - The Life Stories group had a particularly entertaining session recently. The topic was 'What we wore', and some of us were inspired to bring photos of our youth when in pursuit of the latest fashion!

One of us told of getting a Saturday job at half-a-crown a week to save enough to buy an outfit for 39s11d. Another produced a wedding picture of the bride wearing black.

Someone else, who admitted to 'never being any good at buying clothes' and so had no photos to show, read out the Wikipedia history of the liberty bodice (also known as the emancipation bodice, apparently).

Another group member had had the good fortune of working in the fashion trade and able to get trendy clothes for free. He used to wear wide trousers, platform shoes, and had a moustache and long hair (but not now!)

The group works by members taking turns to suggest a theme for the following meeting. Some recent themes have been, the kindness of strangers, an embarrassing moment, a memorable meeting, and a grand occasion.

If you would like to share a life story with us, the next meeting is on 25 June with the theme of 'food from your childhood,' then please contact Maureen Hawkrige: mshandmeh@gmail.com

Short Tennis - The short tennis group has vacancies. We play in Sidford Social Hall on Thursdays 2pm to 3pm. It is played on a badminton court with short racquets and a soft ball. Members contribute toward the cost of the hall on a term basis. Come along to a **Free taster session**.

Thanks, Sharon Young - syoung5727@gmail.com

Events

Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm Museum and National Trust Lytes Cary Manor.

Friday, June 26th 2026. Full-Day Trip. **Prices:** National Trust Members £36. Non National Trust Members. £50.00.

Leave Sidmouth Triangle at 9am and arrive at RNFAAM.10.15. Leave 1.45pm and arrive NT Lytes Cary at 14.00, leave at 16.00 returns approximately 5.30pm.

Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm Museum - With four exhibition halls, over ninety aircraft, more than 2 million records, and 30 thousand artefacts, the Museum is Europe's largest naval aviation museum.

It is also home to the first British Concorde, the immersive Aircraft Carrier Experience and Barracuda Live: The Big Rebuild. Explore our collection, showing the evolution of the Fleet Air Arm from inception to modern day. Enjoy exhilarating days out and experience life at full throttle'

Explore the world of naval aviation, inside and out! Board real aircraft in our

collection, including the legendary Concorde 002 (on loan from the Science Museum), and see life at sea with the Carrier Experience. With an expansive interior, flight observation area, on-site café, and the gift shop - the sky's the limit at the Fleet Air Arm Museum.

National Trust Lytes Cary Manor

A medieval manor house originally the home of Henry Lyte. Restored by Sir Walter Jenner in the early 20th century. Completed in 1348, the chapel predates the manor house.

Clustered around the manor house are stables, a milking parlour and cattle houses where barn owls roost.

An Arts and Crafts-inspired garden with a collection of topiary, herbaceous borders, croquet lawn and orchard.

A 350-acre estate with farmland, woodland copses, meadows and a stretch of the River Cary.

A small tea-room with indoor and outdoor seating that serves a range of hot and cold drinks, and light snacks.

Jacqueline Cox - social.jackie@sidmouthu3a.org

Prices - Prices include return coach for Royal Fleet Air Arm Museum and National Trust Lytes Cary Manor.

National Trust members £36. Non National Trust members £50.

Jacqueline Cox - social.jackie@sidmouthu3a.org

Forthcoming Events for your Diary - Full Details to Follow

Castle Drogo - 25th August

Longleat Park - 22nd September

Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra (BSO) Exeter TBC

Seaton Wetlands Trip - Following on from our member Carol Harper's excellent talk on Sealife in Sidmouth, Carol and her husband Glen recently agreed to lead us on a guided tour of the bird hides at Seaton Wetlands. Carol's informative and experienced knowledge enriched our understanding of the bird life in the wetlands.

We were fortunate to also meet the volunteer "ringers" who kindly explained the process of tracking the sand martins which further enhanced our understanding of the rich life of the wetlands. This Social Event was extremely over subscribed as it allows for only very small groups at a time: however Carol emphasised that Seaton Wetlands is an easily accessible free resource which is open to all and furthermore is likely to enhance our mental well being.

Due to its popularity a further trip (maximum of 16 people) will be organised in September so be ready to contact us by email as soon as it is on offer!

Our grateful thanks to both Carol and Glen for an extremely informative and well organised visit. Our thanks also to Carol for supplying these stunning photos (Instagram #cornish_sea_mermaid).



Carol & Glen



Swans and Signets



Baby Moorhen



Shelduck



Curlews



Canada Geese



Swans Landing at Seaton Wetlands



Little Egret

Kent's Cavern and The Marble Museum - May 2026

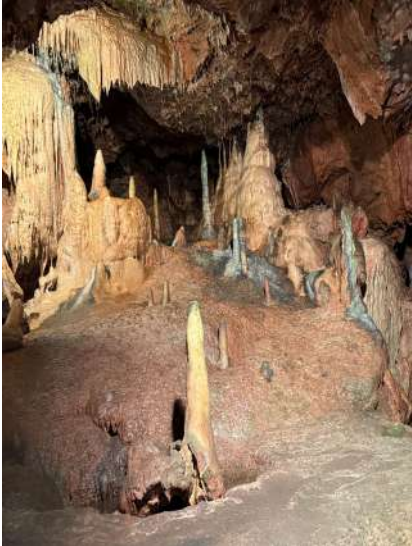
We embarked on a Social Events' coach trip to Kents Cavern (SSIS site of Special Scientific Interest) with optimism that the rain would stop and the sun would shine. It finally did.

Once inside the cave we were treated to an extremely informative guided tour following in the footsteps of the earliest cave dwellers from 50,000 years ago, 8th century medieval travellers and Roman soldiers who found "the face" (irregular rock formation) attributed to their Cave God Mithras. They left coin offerings and sandals.

Most famously Pengelly (1865-1880) also a friend of Darwin, invented a 3D grid mapping system to meticulously record his findings. This is still used in archaeological excavations.

My favourite? Graffiti through the ages – recorded today by specialists who found evidence of smoky shells used to make charcoal in early wall paintings. (Due to our wet weather no cave-paintings are likely to be discovered in the UK.)

Grateful thanks to the extremely friendly, professional staff both in the cave and in the café.



For light relief we stopped off at The Marble Museum where we tracked the famous marble run and observed glass-blowing in action as well as learning about the history of the humble glass marble. Staff were welcoming and helpful there too.



So, despite the inclement weather we had a super excursion with our ever kind driver Barry from Stamps Coaches. Marian Gadian and Jackie Cox

TECH CORNER WITH TONY WARREN

The Square Scruffy Boxes: A Guide to QR Codes



Have you noticed those strange, pixelated squares popping up everywhere lately? They look like a crossword puzzle that's had a bit too much cider at the Sidmouth Folk Festival. These are QR (Quick Response) Codes, and while they might look like digital chickenpox, they are actually quite clever—provided you know which ones to trust.

[From Car Parts to Pub Menus](#) - Believe it or not, the QR code wasn't invented to help you order a panini. It was created in 1994 by Masahiro Hara from the Japanese company Denso Wave. He was tired of scanning individual barcodes on car parts. A standard barcode is like a one-way street; it only holds a tiny bit of data. A QR code is more like a multi-story car park—it stores data both horizontally and

vertically, allowing it to hold hundreds of times more information.

[The Weird and the Wonderful](#)

While we mostly use them for menus or "checking in," humans have found some truly eccentric uses for them:

- **Gravestones:** In some parts of the world, you can scan a headstone to see a video montage of the deceased. Talk about a "digital afterlife."
- **Giant Drones:** In China, 1,500 drones once formed a massive, scannable QR code in the night sky to advertise a video game.
- **The World's Largest:** A family in Canada once grew a QR code into a 7-acre corn maze. Hopefully, the satellites overhead were hungry for information!

[The "Quishing" Game: Stay Alert!](#)

Now, for the serious bit. Because QR codes are just "pictures" of links, criminals have started using them for "Quishing" (QR Phishing).

A common trick is the "Sticky Situation." Fraudsters print their own QR code onto a sticker and slap it right over a legitimate one—usually on parking meters or public charging stations.

You think you're paying for your parking at the seafront, but you're actually sending your credit card details to a villain in a swivel chair.

[Top Tips for the Tech-Savvy Senior](#)

To keep your data safe, follow these simple rules:

1. **The Finger Test:** Before scanning a code in a public place, give it a quick feel. If it's a sticker stuck over the top of a plastic sign, don't scan it.
2. **Check the Preview:** Most modern smartphones will show you a "preview" of the website address before you click it. If it looks like a jumble of nonsense (e.g., bit.ly/scammy-mcc-scamface), close it down.
3. **Avoid Financial Apps:** Never use a random QR code to download an app that handles your money. Go directly to the official App Store instead.

QR codes are wonderful tools for grabbing a bus timetable or reading a museum plaque. Just remember: if the square looks suspicious, keep your phone in your pocket!

Anthony Warren

NEW - QUIZ

The theme is – famous people who share their surnames with English counties, towns or cities. Find the surnames!

1. David, singer and actor whose films include “Stardust” and “Silver Dream Racer”.
2. Judith, lead singer of the 1960s Australian group The Seekers.
3. Felicity, actress in tv series including “The Good Life” and “Rosemary & Thyme”.
4. William, author of the book “The Death of a President” (1967).
5. Andrew, actor in tv series including “Teachers” and “The Walking Dead”.
6. Michael, American singer-songwriter of pop rock ballads, born in 1953.
7. Burt, actor in films such as “From Here To Eternity” and “Birdman of Alcatraz”.
8. Belinda, American singer and musician, co-founder of The Go-Go’s in 1978.
9. Michael, actor whose films include “Cabaret” and “The Three Musketeers”.
10. Dionne, singer for whom Burt Bacharach composed many hit songs.
11. Sarah, actress whose tv series include “Happy Valley” and “Last Tango In Halifax”.
12. Billy, boxer who struck the gong at the beginning of J. Arthur Rank films.
13. Eric, English comedian whose real name was Bartholomew.
14. Jean, English actress whose 1940s films included “Caravan” and “Trottie True”.
15. Rod, English comedian partnered by an aggressive emu.
16. Victoria, presenter of her eponymous BBCTV news programme since 2015.
17. Susan, actress who played Fleur in the tv series “The Forsyte Saga”.
18. George, comedy film actor and singer-songwriter known for his ukulele.
19. Leonard, highly decorated RAF pilot and group captain (1917-92).
20. Jack, American author of “The Call of the Wild” and “White Fang”.

Answers on the next page

ANSWERS

1. Essex
2. Durham
3. Kendal
4. Manchester
5. Lincoln
6. Bolton
7. Lancaster
8. Carlisle
9. York
10. Warwick
11. Lancashire
12. Wells
13. Morecambe
14. Kent
15. Hull
16. Derbyshire
17. Hampshire
18. Formby
19. Cheshire
20. London

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CONTACT DETAILS

Contact details for the main committee and social committee can be found on our website: sidmouth.u3asite.uk/contact