

September 2026 News

Our Monthly Meeting in St Peter's Church Wellesbourne CV35 9LS

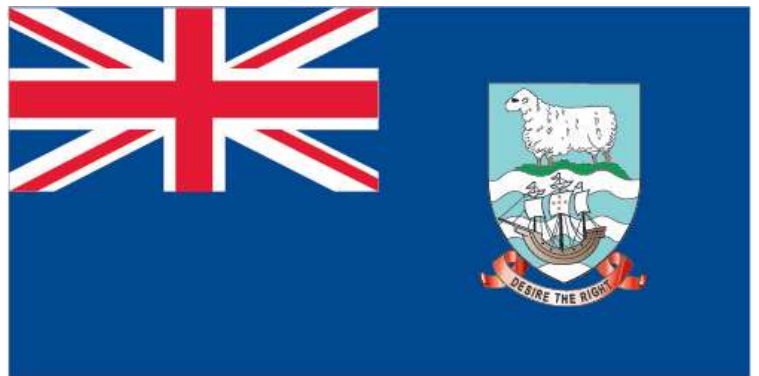
is at 2pm for 2.30pm on Tuesday 8th September.

We'll start with our **AGM**, when we'll be presenting reports and electing a new Committee. We'd love to have some new Committee members. Would you like to serve?

Subscriptions: the Subscription year now runs from 1 October to 30 September, so they'll be due on 1 October. They remain at £12 for the year (subject to confirmation at the AGM), payable by BACS, cheque or cash. See <https://denevalley.u3asite.uk/join-us/> for details.

The Falkland Islands – Defence and life after the conflict.

The presentation, by **Joe Marsden**, will include a short history of the Falklands and how life has developed in the Islands since the conflict of 1982. Joe looks mainly at the changes for the military but will include the ways this has impacted on the local population. He will also cover some of the abundant wildlife and how this has resulted in an influx of tourists.



Getaway with u3a!

The Third Age Trust has recently launched **u3a getaways** in partnership with **The UK Holiday Group**. Each break offers a unique opportunity to laugh, learn, and enjoy shared experiences on a range of individually designed holidays created exclusively for u3a members and their friends.

u3a getaway breaks are designed for independent travellers, but we know that many u3a branches prefer coach inclusive breaks for their members. Our *justforgroups!* brand organises bespoke group holidays, including coach travel, for more than 50 u3a branches throughout the country. We can replicate u3a getaways with transport from your local branch, for groups of 20 or more, or create entirely new holidays based on the interests of the local u3a group.

We would love to hear from you the next time you are considering a holiday for your u3a branch. Not only are we the u3a holiday specialist, but the Third Age Trust also benefits from the partnership we have with them. We look forward to hearing from you.

The just for groups! Team

Group Sales: 01603 886 740 <http://www.justforgroups.com> / enquiries@u3agetaways.com

Join u3a members from around the country on a range of bespoke holidays exclusive to u3a members and their friends. This exciting partnership opens a new chapter in discovery, fun and shared experience. Look forward to a continually evolving collection of unique itineraries - simply click on <https://www.theukholidaygroup.com/u3agetaways/> to discover more exclusive experiences:

Yorkshire Festive Treats 18 Nov 2026 2 nights;
Going Wild in Dartmoor 9 Apr 2027 2 nights;

Aviation Heritage 19 Mar 2027 3 nights;
Wine Lovers Unite 23 May 2027 3 nights...

Our Groups

We have a wide range of activities in our groups. Visit our web page <https://denevalley.u3asite.uk/groups/> to see what you can do.

This month we have quite a few new opportunities for you to register an interest with, across a variety of potentially new groups. If there are any other groups you think we should be running then please let me know.

Bread Making Group

After 12 years of successfully running the Bread Making group Roger Goodman has decided to step back from running the group. We are therefore looking for someone to take on running the Monthly sessions from September (3rd Tuesday of the Month 1-4pm at the Village Hall). If you are interested in helping lead this group Roger is willing to share his knowledge and assist in getting you up and running. Please contact me for more info dave.hoult@btinternet.com

Croquet Golf (variant of croquet, video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zAJtK-ySmfE>) Following a session of Croquet Golf at Kenilworth, one of our members is keen to understand if anyone else would be interested in playing. It has been established that Walton Hall has a croquet lawn so investigations are underway to see if our u3a group would be able to play there. If you are interested in having a go, please register your interest with dave.hoult@btinternet.com

Guitar Group

If you are a guitar player looking to join up with like minded people then please register an interest as I have a member keen to start a group. dave.hoult@btinternet.com

Indoor Bowls

The indoor bowls group will be starting again on the **5th October** at the Avon Vale Indoor Bowls. The sessions are every Monday from 2-4pm. The costs this year will be £5 per session with a one off fee of £2.50 for non members to cover insurance. If you are interested in playing please contact the Group Leader Margaret Taylor and register your interest. Margaret can be contacted at taylor.mgt@outlook.com.

Mahjong Group

If you are interested in playing or learning Mahjong I have a member who is keen to start a group. Please let me know if you are interested dave.hoult@btinternet.com

BEGINNERS UKULELE COURSE

If you want to start learning or get back to learning the ukulele, this new 6 week course, starting in September, could be just what you are looking for. We'll cover all the basics and develop good techniques for making chords and strumming whilst having a lot of fun. You don't need to have played an instrument before or to be able to read music. The teaching will be free but



room hire and refreshments make the course cost £25. Yes, you will need a ukulele and be able to print out song sheets (or see them on a tablet), but you'll get advice before we start of how not to spend a fortune! If you want to continue after the course there's the opportunity to join our existing ukulele group on Thursday mornings.

N.B. I have paid a licence fee to use this picture.

When: starting 17th September

How long: 2 hours a week for 6 weeks (with a break for tea!)

Day & Time: Thursday 1-3pm

Where: Wellesbourne Bowls Club

What to do next: email Cheryl Hunnisett if you are interested at beginnersukes@swift-mail.com

Dave Houlton, Groups Coordinator dave.houlton@btinternet.com 07713 137336

Further Spanish

We are a small, friendly group of five who can all speak a bit of Spanish, and for an hour and a half, twice a month, we chat in Spanish as much as possible. We talk about what we have done and what has caught our eye in the news. We usually have a topic -- the last being stages of the Franco's life with each person presenting one part. We have a Spanish book we are reading and studying. Most importantly, we all get on well and try to find new things to talk about, along with a few amusing items to chat about, and generally help each other along.

We would welcome anyone for a session to see if it matches your requirements, and hopefully to continue with the team.

¡Hasta luego!

Steve Desborough 07779797384. erandshdesborough@hotmail.co.uk

Narrowboating

Our next trip will be in **September**, on a date or dates between the 22nd and 30th chosen by members of my mailing list. Fare around £20; Lunch at a waterside pub. Contact me if you'd like to come along. See my Report on the second of two July trips.

Peter Davies [07973 908249](tel:07973908249) , dvu3anews@gmail.com

Chairman: Alison Edwards [01295 688247](tel:01295688247) alison.mallalieu@btinternet.com

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Groups Coordinator: David Houlton [07713 137336](tel:07713137336) dave.houlton@btinternet.com

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Copy for next month to Peter by the 15th please. Registered **Charity** Number 1183747

Web: <https://denevalley.u3asite.uk/> **Facebook:** <http://www.facebook.com/denevalleyu3a>

Reports

Computing Plus: quarterly meeting in August

Creative Writing: "What ...are you proud of?" and "...perspective of another species".

England's Heritage: July Visit to Eastnor Castle

Narrowboating: a second trip on the River Avon from Bidford to Luddington

Trains, Planes and Autos: visit to Duxford Museum

Computing Plus: The Computing Plus group held its quarterly meeting in August where a wide range of technical topics were discussed which are summarised below. A full report from the meeting is available from John Hargis at john.hargis@btinternet.com. If anyone wishes to join this group then please contact John.



Simplifying Parking Apps
Latest on Network Provider Performance
Booking.com Data Breach
End of Kindle Support
Introduction of Freely TV
Google Maps with AI Support

Avoiding Roaming Charges
Cancelled Card Renewal Fraud
The Cost of RAM
Tips to Speed up Your PC
VPN options

Creative Writing: The Group continues to flourish with good attendances and enthusiastic contributions. The suggested themes for the past 3 meetings have been “Gardens”, “The Truth” and a choice between:

- “What have you done in life, recently or in the past, that you are proud of”; and
- “Write from the perspective of another species”.

Members shared and enjoyed hearing the usual rich variety of interpretations and structures, together with pieces on other topics chosen individually.

This first example, in verse, describes something of which the writer is proud:

Afraid of heights by Anne Ridgway

Portugal.

Searing heat.
Barren scrubland reaching up, up
Into sheer drop hill ranges.
Earth shadows sharp.
Open wooden steps
A swaying, rope bridge
And vertical drops.
With a fierce fear of heights,
And a sunbaked body dysfunctioning,
I am too embarrassed to fall foul here.
This important tourist attraction
Proudly displayed by friends.
Slowly, slowly, counting and breathing,
I make two journeys here,
One physical, one mental.
I did it.

Pakistan.

Searing heat.
The car edges into a fenced off wasteland,
The driver, a guide.
Strange, strange land,
Noisy with colours.
Fierce white light bounces off tiled floors
And the men chant.
I stand back, head covered, but they beckon me in.
We wait while the driver prays, then,
Unexpectedly, we are allowed
Up, up to the top of the mosque
Barred to visitors,
But a gift to us. Their gift to us.
And the steps are crumbling
And the rails rusting and gaping.
And we go up and up and up.
There is no wall at the top.
I flatten myself against the tower,
Gaze over the rooftops and down to the faithful,
Hearing their voices rise, rise and flutter
Amongst the pigeons.

This second example, written from the perspective of another species, is an innovative experiment in combining poetry and prose:

My Homely Place by Graeme Bassett

I'm curled up here in the sun.
My usual place, it's pleasant,
After my garden stalking is done.
On occasions, I'm joined by a caring face.
Whilst we while away time,
Life assumes a declining pace.

Now, guided towards me,
She, with a blanket over her knee,
Looks troubled and a little down.
She is tense and wearing a frown.
We stare blankly at the lawn,
Our many thoughts forlorn.
Iridescent drops blur the pane
As rain masks the view again.

I move closer to her, and she looks lovingly at me with her grey blue eyes, full of life's experiences. Soon the irrepressible smile creeps across her face. She is warm, so I embrace this moment to cuddle closer, as she strokes and tickles. I nestle down on her blanket, poddling and pawing the softness, to settle in my cushion-like form on her lap.

With pleasure, I purr.
Tingling throughout my fur
Radiates an affection
That's consoling, perfection.

I stretch in all directions, and she holds me with endearment, and we sleep whilst others pass by, saying "Lovely, so peaceful!" I protect her with my ownership and she shields me with her gentleness. Silence surrounds us and she whispers, "Good girl, lie still".

But I'm wary in my home. This is my territory on the ground floor from here to the small lounge. I protect my known patch. No others dare to enter. This is recognised clearly by the long hair dishevelled, green-eyed resident of some other part.

In the sunshine from my soft bed, protected by my mauve and pink guardian, I see a black fur ball approaching, hesitantly. I watch motionless as this phantom moves closer until I twitch my tail. This alerts my arch-enemy, who freezes to the spot, fixing me with those green sorrowful eyes. All innocent. I stand raking my back, disturbing my defender, and leaving the comfort of my world constructed in the hollow of her lap.

I attack.
Movements forward,
Sideways, back.
Eyes penetrating.
Claws sharpening.
Low growls, hissing.
Heart-rending
Squeals and shrieks,
Squalls and caterwauls.
Advancing, threatening, expressions complete,
Green eyes slyly in retreat.

She, once asleep,
From her dreams, so deep
Moves, awakened,
Now rested, but unshaken.
I nuzzle alongside her,
Confident to always deter
The green-eyed frowzled black fur.



Lastly, an extract from a conversation between 2 sheep:

BAARBARA: Talking of nuisances, that sheepdog's a bit of a trial, isn't he? All that posing and showing off, pretending to pursue some noble, altruistic vocation, but he can't pull the wool over our eyes. We all know his primary motivation is the next treat from the farmer's trouser pocket.

MAARGARET: What really gets my goat is that supercilious air with which he rides around on the farmer's quad bike, as though he's lord and master of all he surveys. And when he wants us to go somewhere different, he only needs to ask politely. All that silly prancing about, driving us this way and that, it's so confusing. I don't understand why he can't occupy himself following scents and fetching sticks like a normal dog.

Leader of the Creative Writing Group: Anne Ridgway aridgway28@btinternet.com 07871 854694

England's Heritage - July Visit



Built between 1810 and 1824, **Eastnor Castle** is not what it seems at first glance. It is not a medieval fortress! It is what every 19th century rich Victorian industrialist would aspire to. It is something built to impress visitors, particularly wealthy ones.

This type of building was very fashionable in the early 19th Century. It was intended to inspire admiration, impeccable taste, and the impression that your family line was long and noble.... so perhaps envy as well?

The ancestors of the current owners were the Cocks family, who bought the estate in the late 1600's. There was a former Anglo-Saxon castle here which was too small for the new owners. So the old castle was demolished and its ruins now lie beneath the large lake. Wise marriages with other families allowed the estate to become very wealthy. In the 1800's one of the 5th family became Lord Chancellor.

Eastnor has been featured in many films and these days featured in even more weddings..... but I guess you would need parents with deep pockets!



While many other castles we visit have more history, there are few that have the quality of Eastnor's contents. It is a collector's dream with top quality everywhere. It must also have one of England's best collections of armour and weapons. Other, older castles usually have more reproductions than original pieces.

Eastnor is just the opposite, with originals everywhere including a fine collection of armour made in Milan.







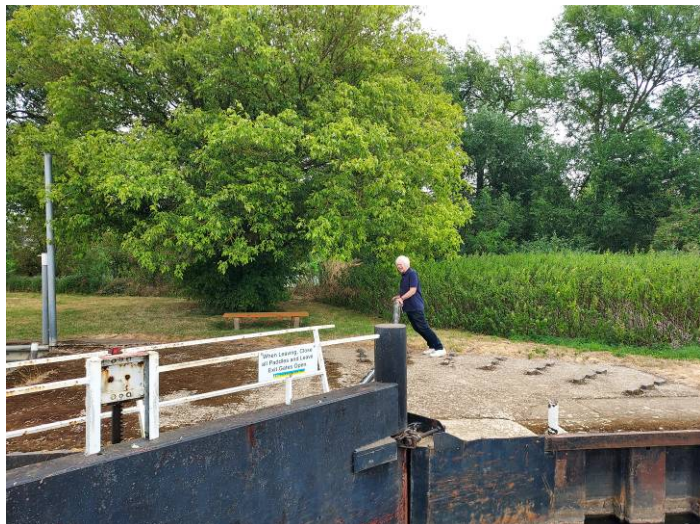
Trevor Shaw trevor.shaw5@icloud.com

Narrowboating: 28 July trip on the River Avon from Bidford to Luddington

This trip was so popular we ran it a second time, with a different but equally enthusiastic crew. No problem with weed, but lost footing at the 4 Alls resulted in a heavy crew member knocking me for six and my glasses flying into the river. They ended up close to the shore and easily recoverable with the boathook, unlike last time when someone's glasses fell out of a top pocket near a lock and could not be retrieved. Said crew member was a little bruised but otherwise none the worse for wear. Pictures are largely of one of the locks.



Tranquil water



Peter R and a lock gate



Mallard and Sue in a lock



Peter R, Sheila, David W and Maureen



Peter D tying up



a lock



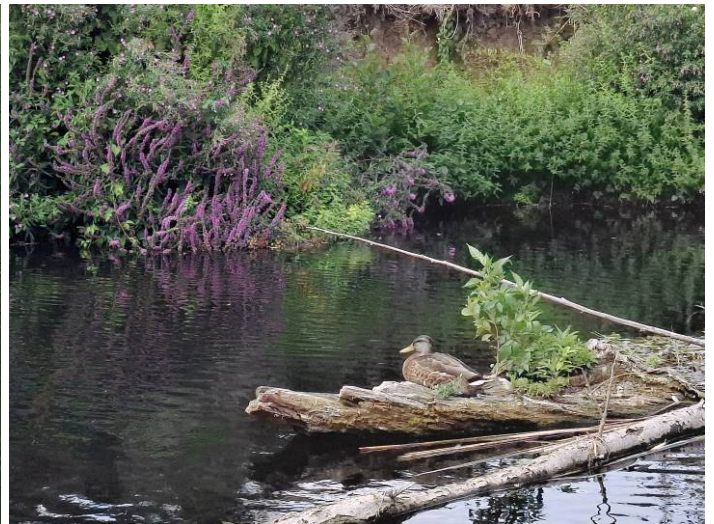
Turning the boat around, Sue and volunteers



Anthony steering



Wildlife as always



At the last lock some volunteers were doing maintenance and offered to help us, but again we had the expertise to turn the boat around.

Peter Davies [07973 908249](tel:07973908249) , dvu3anews@gmail.com

TRAINS, PLANES AND AUTOS The group's July outing was to the **Imperial War Museum** site at Duxford Airfield near Cambridge. This was a welcome return visit after several year to see the huge collection of fighter and bomber aircraft on display spanning the period from the 1st World War through to recent years. The exhibits are spread over 5 huge hangars, with the last being devoted to American aircraft dominated by a B52 bomber.

In addition to the military aircraft, there are many examples of British commercial aircraft including Concorde and a Comet which were, respectively, the first and only supersonic passenger aircraft and the very first passenger jet liner.



This was a magnificent aircraft which was cancelled due to costs in favour of purchasing American alternatives.

A great day was had by all!

One poignant exhibit was of the cancelled TSR2 aircraft which was destined to take over from the V-bombers as Britain's deterrent in a low- level bomber role during the "cold war".



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