

u3a Of Highbridge
learn,
laugh,
live



U3A of Highbridge Magazine

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Issue 140

Jan/Feb 2026

Your Committee

<u>Position</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Tel</u>
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Deputy Chairman	Allen Owen	01278 784500
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Treasurer	Carol Marriott	01278 795773
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Group & Events Coordinator	Denise Godby	01278 238526
Committee Member	Diane Scott	07484 869011
Committee Member	Peter Manning	01278 780203
Committee Member	Paul Parkin	07563 164620

Other non-committee roles

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Next Magazine Deadline:	<u>Wednesday February 18th 2026</u>

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Chairman's Message

Happy New Year to you all.

I Hope you all had a wonderful Christmas.

Welcome to a brand new year. Please come along and join the fun and laughter we share here at Highbridge U3A.

Bring your friends along too.



Bye for now

Adele



Club and Group News

Christmas Party

We all had a wonderful time at the Christmas Party.

We were entertained by Burnham Ukulele Band and Cafe Aroma
Kept us fed and watered.

£230 was raised on the Hamper Raffle





Members Contributions

Churches Group

Following a short hiatus when no-one was available to organise church visits, Keith, having liaised with Bernie, arranged for us to visit three churches on 31st of October.

St Mary's, Hutton where we were greeted by the sight of the path being energetically swept by Dave, the verger, who introduced himself and explained that if the sticky Yew Tree berries are not swept up, they get trodden in onto the carpets in the church. He then gave us an interesting and informative tour.

Before the Norman Conquest the parish belonged to the Abbey of Glastonbury. There is no known evidence of a place of worship in Hutton at that time, but one was probably provided.

The references to a church in Hutton come from the late 13th century when a deed (circa 1275) mentions the land "of the Rector of the Church of Hutton" and assessment for Papal taxation (1291). The first named Rector of Hutton was John de Ameneye, succeeded in 1311 by Roger de Langelonde. The church of that period was probably built by the Waleys or Walsh family, lords of the manor from at least 1243 to 1426. In 1404, Roger Walsh, bequeathed his "body to be buried in the Church of the Blessed Mary of Hotton". His will provides the earliest surviving evidence of the dedication of this church to the Virgin Mary. No identifiable trace of this early building has yet been found, but the odd alignment of the foundation stones at the northwest corner of the present building may indicate that the same site was then used.

During the late 15th century, the earlier church was entirely rebuilt. The tower of the present building, the roof and north wall of its nave,



its chancel arch and the small battlemented turret projecting northwards near the junction of the nave and the chancel are the main parts of the 15th century building which remain virtually unaltered. Its finest ornament is the finely chiselled 15th century pulpit of Douling stone standing high on a slender shaft, partly set in the north wall, access being by means of a recessed staircase.

In 1849 considerable alterations were made by a Bristol architect, Samuel Charles Fripp, apparently related to an occupier of Hutton Court at that time. The gallery and south porch were removed, the south wall of the nave was replaced by an arcade of three bays and a south aisle; the chancel was increased in height and provided with an additional window, and a small vestry was added on its north side. Fortunately, by the extensive use of old material and skilful imitation of the original style, a harmonious effect was achieved. The pews with roman numbers were made in 1785 of "Oak Sleepers and Good Red Deal". The deeply and skilfully carved reredos was erected in 1858.

Following an inspection in 2006 it was decided to re-hang the bells. Work commenced in September 2009 with the removal of the clock by J B Joyce, followed by the bells in October by the Bell Engineer Matthew Higby. A reclaimed treble, which with the five original bells, were tuned together at Whitechapel foundry and are now a harmonious ring of six. They and the auto wound clock were returned to the tower in October 2010. The bells were dedicated on January 23rd 2011.

The octagonal font, of simple Perpendicular style, is of unknown date. The top of the near window in the north wall contains the few surviving fragments of late 15th or early 16th century stained glass,

including the arms of various members of the Payne and Oldmixon families. Most of the windows are Victorian and memorial. The plastered wagon roof, with its dark oak ribs, richly carved bosses and foliated cornices, is a fine specimen of 15th century Somerset craftsmanship.

The organ was replaced in 1998, as the old one needed major restoration. Some of the existing pipework, still blown to produce notes, along with much of the original oak case was moved to the east end of the south aisle. It is now linked to a computerised console and produces a fine sound.

We moved on to St Augustine's Locking where we were met by Simon who had prepared a slide show for a previous U3A visit and had set it up to show us.

Locking church is sited on the church that the monks of Woodspring Priory dedicated in 1217.

The unique carved stone font has been in use for over 800 years. The



carving and inter-twined serpents in the panels are characteristic of 11th century Celtic art. However, the figures at the corners are dressed in Richard I (1189 - 1199) style armour. It was suggested that their costume is characteristic of Henry V (1413 - 1422) because the head-dresses of the figures are those which were worn at that time. These head-

dresses were cut off during alterations in the last century, when the rim of the font was reduced in height to make it level. But it is possible that the changes were made on the figures to keep costumes up to date with the styles of the time. The Church built in 1380 might have replaced an earlier Church built in either the 11th or

late 12th Century.

The 15th century pulpit is one of the finest in Somerset. Since there are five other octagonal stone pulpits in other churches in the local vicinity it is likely that they are the work of one school of craftsmen. Beneath the Victorian paint, traces of what may be original colouring can be seen, and the pulpit may have been gaily painted with vegetable dye when first carved in about 1480. It was repainted in the 1970s.



Stained Glass Windows. The church has some fine stained glass windows, including three dedicated to the Law family. Bishop George Henry Law d.1845 was Bishop of Bath & Wells and noted for promoting Banwell Caves near Locking where he built a garden, tower and grotto as an allegory to Noah's Flood; a window dedicated to his daughter-in-law Lady Henrietta Charlotte Law d.1866 who was the daughter of 6th Earl of Stamford and Warrington from Dunham Massey in Cheshire; and another to her son Rev George Henry Law, Vicar of Locking 1857 - 1875, who died in Locking and is buried in the church graveyard

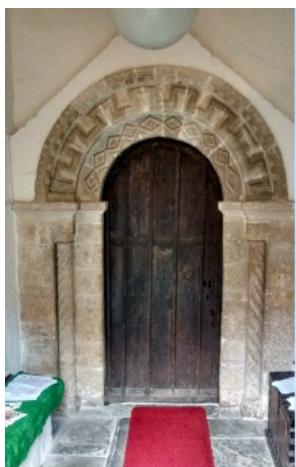
The tower was built in 1380; the trefoil parapet was partly restored in 1965. During restoration in 2018 it was re-rendered. There are now 6 bells, originally only 4, the 5th added in 1921 and the 6th 1946. The 4th bell was cast in Bristol in the 14th century and is one of the oldest bells still in use in the country. The bells were re-hung in 1904 and refurbished in 2019.

Lychgate

At the entrance to the churchyard is a fine wooden lychgate commemorating Rev Alexander John Woodforde (1839-1909) who was Vicar of St Augustine's Locking for 15 years 1894-1909. He is buried in the churchyard.

Our next Church was St Paul's at Kewstoke. Here we were left to explore alone.

Woodspring Priory, viewed across the fields from St Paul's, was founded by William de Courtenay, grandson of Richard fitz Urse, one of the four knight assassins of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury. As penitence William chose St Thomas as one of the patron saints of the Priory. During 1849 restoration work a wooden cup was found, stained with what is thought to be Thomas Becket's blood. (I can find no details of how that was established). It is now in Taunton Museum.



The oldest part of the church, a Grade 1 listed building, is the deep porch with the interior door surmounted by a Norman arch, dated between 1125 and 1150. The door displays a sanctuary knocker with five nail holes representing Christ's five crucifixion wounds.

The font immediately inside is of early English style (late 13th or early 14th Century) and the bowl could be earlier than the base it sits upon. The nave also dates from the 13th Century but with many later additions, including two windows on the north wall and, higher up, six 15th Century clerestory windows which are unusual in such a small church of this period. The pulpit is a beautiful example of 15th Century stonework and is said to be carved by a travelling band

of masons from stone quarried in Caen, Normandy. The chancel arch, from the same period, is fronted by the modern rood screen erected in 1938. It is the work of Herbert Read of Exeter, who was also responsible for the smaller screen on the south-side chapel and the wonderful carved reredos in the sanctuary.

The Rose window, high above, depicts the Crucifixion and the lancet windows below, the Annunciation. Near the altar, an ambry, a locked recess to hold communion vessels, can be seen and opposite, a piscina.

The imposing church tower is dated from the 15th Century and features a pierced parapet and higher stair-turret with spirelet. It contains six bells bearing the inscriptions (1) AD 1637, (2) Mr Joseph Sheppard 1748, (3) 1734 T.B, (4) AD 1637, (5) AD 1637 recast 1906 and (6) Modern 1906.

There is a lot of historical data on the 3 churches' web sites; I have tried to pick out interesting bits. Paula.



Photo in St Augustine's taken by Simon.

We then retired to the Manor Inn to keep up our strength and give our brains a rest.



Tax his land, Tax his bed,
Tax the table, At which he's fed.
Tax his tractor, Tax his mule,
and teach him taxes are the rule.
Tax his work, Tax his pay,
He works for peanuts anyway!
Tax his cow, Tax his goat, Tax his pants, Tax his coat.
Tax his ties, Tax his shirt, Tax his work, Tax his dirt.
Tax his tobacco, Tax his drink, Tax him if he tries to think.
Tax his cigars, Tax his beers, if he cries Tax his tears.
Tax his car, Tax his gas, Find any way to tax his ass!
Tax him all he has, then let him know
that you won't be done till he has no dough.
When he screams and when he hollers;
Then tax him more, take all his dollars
Then tax his coffin, Tax his grave,
Tax the sod in Which he's laid...
Put these words Upon his tomb:
'Taxes drove me to my doom...'
When he's gone, Do not relax,
It's time to apply Inheritance Tax!

Why I Gave Up Drinking

I had ...twenty ... Bottles of mature wine,
for special occasions, you understand

but I was told to "pour them down the sink, or else" !!!
I said I would, and proceeded with the unpleasant task

I withdrew the cork from the first bottle and poured the contents
down the sink, with the exception of one glass which I drank

I extracted the cork from the second bottle and did likewise with it ,
with the exception of one glass ... which I drank

..... The third and fourth bottles met the same fate

I withdrew the cork from the fifth bottle,..... as I remember
and poured the bottle down the sink which I drank

I pulled the cork from the sixth bottle in the sink and poured
the bottle down the glass which I drank

I pulled the bottle from the cork of the next and drank
all but one glass of it which I threw down the sink

Then I pulled the sink from the glass and poured the cork down the bottle ...
I then corked the sink with the glass, bottled the drink and drank

..... something ?....

When I had everything emptied, I steadied the house with one hand,
counted the glasses, corks, sinks and the bottles with the other,
which were29

as the house came by I counted them again and finally had
them all in the bottlewhich I drank

I am not under the affluence of inkerhol as some tinkle peep I am
and .. I'm not half as strunk as you might tink I am ..

I fool so feelish, ... I don't know whose me

and the drunker I stand here the longer I getOh my heady blood.....
I strink I'd better get myself a dwink or somethink.....
.but I should I no I saidin't

PS I joined alcoholics anonymous ,
now I can still go out and get drunk but under a false name

Group Activities

Monday

<u>Week</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Group</u>	<u>Venue</u>	<u>Leader</u>	<u>Tel</u>
1 st , 3 rd & 5 th (excluding bank holidays)	2.00 to 4.00	Board Games	S.H.	Peter Manning Chris Murphy	01278 780203 07947 203046

Tuesday

<u>Week</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Group</u>	<u>Venue</u>	<u>Leader</u>	<u>Tel</u>
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Wednesday

<u>Week</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Group</u>	<u>Venue</u>	<u>Leader</u>	<u>Tel</u>
Every	10.00 to 12.00	Coffee Morning	C.H.	N/A	N/A
2 nd	12.00 onward	Luncheons	Varies	Adele Stevens	07486 909687

Thursday

<u>Week</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Group</u>	<u>Venue</u>	<u>Leader</u>	<u>Tel</u>
Every	2.00 to 4.00	Social Afternoon	C.H.	Janet Preddy Adele Stevens	07870 532257 07486 909687
Last	Varies	Classic Car Appreciation	Varies	Malcolm Manser	07932 734473

Group Activities

Friday

<u>Week</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Group</u>	<u>Venue</u>	<u>Leader</u>	<u>Tel</u>
1 st & 3 rd	1.30 to 3.00	Skittles	C.A.	Self-Regulating	01278 238526
1 st & 2 nd & 3 rd & 4 th	10.00 onward	Strollers	Varies	Self-Regulating	01278 238526
5 th	10.00 onward	Somerset Churches	Varies	Keith Kick	07715 676047

Occasional

<u>Weekdays</u>	<u>Activity</u>	<u>Contact</u>	<u>Tel</u>
Varies	Holidays	Christine Owen Diane Scott	01278 784500 07484 869011

Changes since last issue are highlighted in yellow.

Legend

S.H. Southwell House	C.A. Coopers Arms
P.H. Private House	C.H. Community Hall (Room Number)

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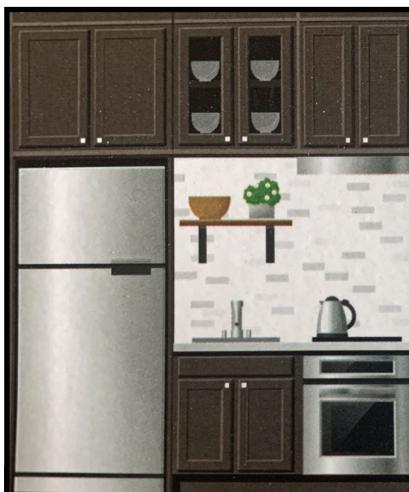
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I live in Burnham and cover from Weston to Bridgwater and to Cheddar area. I have never received anything lower than a 5* review on Google.

Quiz (answers on page 24)

1	How many points on a starfish?
2	Name the song title that gave different songs hits for Jennifer Rush and Frankie Goes to Hollywood
3	Who, reputedly, shouted Eureka whilst bathing?
4	What was the occupation of John Laurie's Dad's Army character?
5	What is the legal term for lying under oath?
6	On the banks of which river is York?
7	What is the F word that is added to water to prevent tooth decay?
8	Which book of the bible describes the creation?
9	Who created and presented the children's BBC news programme Newsround?
10	What is measured with a pedometer?
11	What is the main language spoken in Argentina?
12	What, in The Wizard of Oz, was the name of Dorothy's dog?
13	Who owns the Oval Cricket ground?
14	Who was assassinated at Ford's Theater?
15	What was the scarecrow in Wizard of Oz lacking?
16	Who provided the voice for Bugs Bunny?
17	Which British Glam-Rock star died in a car crash in 1977?
18	Which letter begins the fewest words in the English language?
19	What horse won the Grand National for the third time in 1977?
20	Which spirit is used to make a Singapore sling?

Burnham Mobile Foot Health Clinic

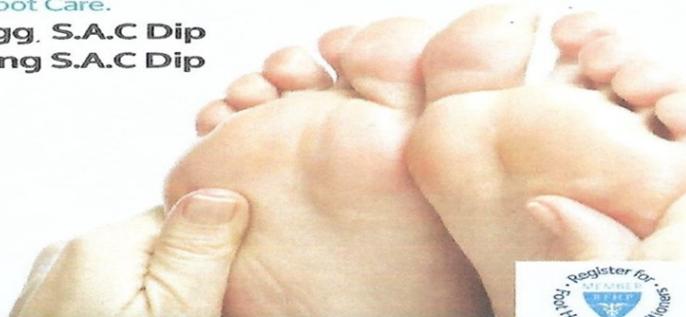
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NAPIT

Strollers Autumn 2025

The weather has decided to supply some much-needed rain so we ran for cover.

On the 17th October we went for breakfast at Fika café, Chilton Polden and looked around at the animals and other bits and pieces afterwards.



On the 24th we graced Monkton Elm Garden Centre with our company. Having looked around the plant area we stopped for coffee before gazing in amazement at all

the Christmas goods on display. We then decamped to the Compass Inn for lunch.



14th November and Storm Claudia had arrived from Spain, the rain was torrential. Eleven of us decided to have coffee at Cafe 33. We parked up and dashed, very slowly in my case, for the café. We arrive quite damp, but put our coats on the back of our chairs and settled in. This was OK but Denise sat on hers and ended up with a wet bum!



The Christmas decorations were being put up and very jolly they were. The picture shows a star over our table, as it should be. The rain continued to pelt down, dashing all hope of a stroll along Route 33.

Following the drink, we decided to have brunch thus extending our stay. A variety of dishes were chosen and were all declared good. Even Barry elected to eat, a rare event.

As the staff had made us very welcome and put tables together for us and as lunch time was nearly upon us, we decided we should leave and make room for other customers. A wet walk to the cars completed our morning.



Goodness what a change a week can bring! The 21st was very cold, and gloriously sunny with no discernible breeze. We were all bundled



up in warm clothing and we noted that Keith had new boots so someone suggested we went to a muddy track to break them in. This was out voted and we decided that Route 33, denied to us last week, was a good spot. We again parked at the café, Wendy asked if it

was alright to leave our cars while we strolled, which it was, and off we went. The sun rose higher and by the time we reached the River Axe was surprisingly strong, as you can tell by the fact we are all squinting in the picture. We clustered by a gate and Audrey took the photo, after which I elected to stay on a bench by the bird hide and the others walked on.

I was just thinking I should start back (I walk so slowly I guessed the “gang” would catch me) when Barry hove into view, he had been unable to join us at the start. The Axe was very low on the penned side of the sluice, whether because of the summer drought or to make room for drainage in heavy rain we did not know. Barry kindly elected to keep me company on my return trip adjusting his pace to mine. We had just reached the café when the main phalanx arrived. Drinks and snacks were ordered and we sat in the sun to enjoy them. Audrey, chief photographer, was again in action.



The last stroll in November was taken along the Strawberry Line towards Sandford. Quite a pleasant day for a walk and I managed to reach Shiphэм Road before I turned back leaving the others to go on to Sandford Station. I think Barry raised

his hat in celebration. Thanks to Audrey and Carole for the pictures. We went into the Woodborough Inn for lunch.

After a wet week and a deluge on Thursday, Friday dawned dry and sunny for our last stroll before Christmas. As everywhere was saturated we needed a firm footing, so decided on Bridgwater Canal path. We parked in Canalside and walked towards the Boat and Anchor Inn. On reaching the pub, I turned back but the others strolled on to the river. They found this dramatic sign "Trespassers will be Shot", where, I am not sure. Despite Barry's overacting they all returned safely to the Midas Café for coffee.

Photo by Audrey.



Paula

Quiz Answers

1	Five	2	Power of love
3	Archimedes	4	Undertaker
5	Perjury	6	Ouse
7	Fluoride	8	Genesis
9	John Craven	10	Walking distance
11	Spanish	12	Toto
13	The Duchy of Cornwall	14	Abraham Lincoln
15	Brain	16	Mel Blanc
17	Mark Bolan	18	X
19	Red Rum	20	Gin



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👉 **The Highbridge U3A Hullabaloo!**
(at Highbridge Community Hall)

**It's Wednesday at ten — the moment we call,
 "To Highbridge U3A! Community Hall!"**
 From ten until twelve we laugh, sip, and chat,
 No one remembers what we're laughing at!

The helpers serve tea with milk and good grace,
 Though half of it ends up all over the place.

**The Fun Committee's scheming again,
 "What prank can we pull on the group this time, then?"**

There's books and there's puzzles for quiet delight,
 And board games on Mondays that last half the night.
"I'm winning!" "You're cheating!" "No, that was my go!"
 "Don't argue," says Doris, "we've ages to go!"

Then Wednesday returns — oh, the joy, oh the fun!
It's Lunch Club! More sandwiches? Just one more bun.
Adele's Free Raffle brings prizes galore —
A rubber duck, chocolate, or loo roll in store!

Thursdays are social from two until four,
 Where laughter and cake crumbs cover the floor.
 Fridays we walk — well, *some* of us do,
 The rest stay at home with a biscuit or two.

Fifth Fridays we visit the churches around,
 For hymns, cups of tea, and good gossip abound.
 Then **last Wednesday's market** is mad, loud, and grand,
"Come buy my old teapot — it's barely been canned!"
 There's raffle tickets flying — the prizes are weird,
 But winning a candle is so greatly cheered!

We've **days out and trips** — the coaches are full,
We sing on the motorway (drivers stay cool).

Holidays? Oh yes — it's Turkey and Tinsel!
Sequins and jumpers that sparkle and bristle!

At **Christmas we party** with Santa's loud cheer,
(He's borrowed that sleigh every blooming year!)

Any excuse for cake — we don't even blink,
"Who's birthday is it?" "No clue — but have a drink!"

Some love to save seats — "**That's Maureen's, okay?**"

"She's not been since April." "Still hers anyway!"

We miss those above — our dear friends and mates,
Who still join in spirit through heavenly gates.

New members keep joining — "What time does it start?"

"Ten o'clock sharp — bring biscuits and heart!"

At eleven we ring that loud bell of fame,

To write down the dates — though we'll forget all the same.

We send cards to those who are poorly or down,

Then cheer when they're back for more laughs in town.

And over the noise (you'll hear it quite stable),

Comes **chaos and cackles — the Noisy Members Table!**

So here's to **Highbridge U3A**,

The happiest chaos in Somerset, yay!

With laughter and kindness, and tea by the pot,

It's the best little club — give it all that you've got!

By Adele Stevens

Brummies Lament

by Ray Tennant

Doan yow reckon now ar kid
it's toim uzz Brummies med a bid
to purrar fymous dulcit townes
on the air an on the phownes
toim ter gew an tip the balance
show the wairld ar nytive talents
demonstrite with such clarity
az ar townes lack vulgarity
toim ter floi the flag fer Brum
toim ter mekya selfa tum
in the corridas uv fime
toim ter mekya selfa nime.

Extract from the book of brum,

by Ray Tennant

*Who says, "reed this book mite an yow'll
soonend up torkin loik a nytive" and "Yow'd
think boi now it wuz time the rest ov the
wairld spowk roit loik us, wudden cha"*

Calendar

<u>Date(s)</u>	<u>Details</u>	<u>Cost</u>
	2026	

Cheques to cover payments for all “Away Days”, Theatre trips and Holidays must be made payable to “U3A of Highbridge”

Please also add your name, address and phone number on the reverse of the cheque, this:-

- a) helps to identify you on the passenger list, and**
- b) If a trip is cancelled you can be notified quickly.**



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