

Tiverton u3a Newsletter

learn, laugh, live

Volume 11 Issue 7

July /
August
2026



GENERAL MEETING

Thursday 23 July - 10 for 10.30am

JANET EAST

Trials and Tribulations of running a small rural farm and guest house

Janet will be bringing some of her Jacob sheep items and apple juice made on her farm

Tea coffee and biscuits as usual

Moorhayes Community Centre, Lea Road, Tiverton EX16 6SU

And for our next meeting.....

On Thursday 27th August

TODD GRAY

Devon's Home Front Diaries, 1937 to 1945

Chairman	Tony Jackson	Tivertonu3achair@gmail.com
Vice Chairman	Annie Foot	Tivertonu3avicechair@gmail.com
Treasurer	Sue Robbins	Tivertonu3atreasurer@gmail.com
Secretary	Jan Proud	Tivertonu3asecretary@gmail.com
Membership	Richard Truman	Tivertonu3amembership@gmail.com
Webmaster	Alan Lawson	Tivertonu3awebmaster@gmail.com
Social Media	Angie Cheshire	Tivertonu3asocialmed@gmail.com
Technical	Fergus McGilp	Tivertonu3atech@gmail.com
Newsletter Editor	Nigel Blandford	Tivertonu3aeditor@gmail.com
Meetings Secretary	Wendy Bond	Tivertonu3ameetings@gmail.com
Groups Coordinator	Maggie Roberts	Tivertonu3agroupleaders@gmail.com

Website <https://tivertonu3a.u3asite.uk>

Facebook <https://facebook.com/tivertonu3a>

Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/tivertonu3>

Tiverton u3a welcomes two new members this month

Steve and Kay Wise.

FROM THE COMMITTEE

June General Meeting

At June's monthly meeting we welcomed Tim Dyke. Tim spent 30 years teaching English at Blundells. He is also a member of Exe Valley u3a and an associate of our own u3a.

Tim's talk was entitled 'Nooky at Number 10' and he explained that his talk is inspired by the discovery of how many of our elected leaders have indulged in nefarious affairs. So much of it is salacious and sometimes just alleged. He encouraged the audience to guess who did what to whom and when.

Tim certainly researched the subject well which helped to elucidate that it was not just politics going on behind the door of No10 at times.

Regrettably, there was no recording of this meeting

Hospitality Day at Newton Abbot Races

I have been asked by Dee McVey of South-West region to share the following with our members. If you are interested, please contact Dee directly:-

I've agreed another Hospitality day for **Wednesday 28th October ... £40pp** reduced from £95.

We'll have a room with balconies overlooking the finish line, tea and coffee all day. Finger buffet followed by cream tea mid afternoon. A member of the Tote will come in to take your bets and/or you can go outside to place your bets with the Bookies.

If you'd like to come please email me directly at dee@swreventsu3a.org.uk with your name, phone number and u3a you're with. I'll then send details of how to pay the £10pp non-refundable deposit, balance due nearer the time.

Dee McVey, Okehampton u3a

dee@swreventsu3a.org.uk

U3A Online Learning Events

Several members have recommended u3a Online Learning Events. They're free via Zoom and cover a wide range of subjects. <https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events#Events>

Local Farm Visit

We have been given the opportunity to join some Exe Valley members on a visit to a local farm on Tuesday 11th August at 2pm.

An organisation called Connecting People and Landscapes have provided access to Fire Beacon Farm, Tiverton EX16 7QP, off the old Bampton Road, Chettiscombe, up behind Knightshayes.

The most accurate directions are found on the What Three Words flames.brush.prospers.

The invitation is to a short talk in an open barn and a tour of the farm (lasting approximately an hour).

Amy and the family are trying regenerative farming techniques with agroforestry and cattle and sheep. It would be a chance to discuss new ideas and how wildlife are supported alongside farming. They do have bat walks and will be opening more to the public as they develop, but this an opportunity to visit is free of charge and just for u3a members on this occasion. If you are interested, please email Anne Bush directly on aelizbush@aol.com. I will be going so maybe see you there,

Maggie Roberts



Hi Mum. Yes, the university room is just fine. But there's something wrong with the towels. They just stay where they are

GROUP REPORTS

Unless they have specifically requested otherwise, group coordinators contact details have been omitted on the newsletter page of the website, as this is a public document. However, they can be found in the "members only" section of the website, which needs a password, already provided to members. - *Nigel*



Always Write
Coordinator:
Nickie Haynes

Despite the heat, we met for our monthly Always Write session in June. Our topics for contributions resulted in a poem about a house in the woods, abandoned but full of potential,, to the theme of Moving house. The writings were original and witty - a family conundrum of what could be seen as elderly interference in living arrangements to fear of current politics resulting in a readiness to move if things, especially in London,

deteriorated further, and a tale with a twist (which we have come to expect now from one contributor) who took "moving house" quite literally - an old fashioned gypsy-style way of life of continual moving and a rather spooky "Doll's House".

We managed our 10minute challenge - a quick piece of writing without the comfort zone of too much thought and construction. A very useful exercise produced writings on the theme of "Lost Property": "A Blue Glass Eye", "A Lord Mayor's Chain" being among the titles. It truly concentrated the mind wonderfully!

We also continued our play on words, thinking of "prequels and sequels" - titles of books, films and plays that might have had a prequel (1983, by George Orwell, for example) or a sequel (The Magnificent Eight film). Not as easy as it sounds, the play on words caused much amusement.

We intend to meet throughout the summer, rather than taking a break, and will continue to amuse ourselves and each other with our "scribbles".

As ever - come and join in the fun if you have a mind to try it. We live up to the u3a model of "Learn, Laugh, Live" - it's a monthly highlight!
- *Nickie*



Croquet
Coordinator:
Jean Brown

Despite the wide variety of weather we have had a hardy core of members have turned up when weather permitted to enjoy several rounds of croquet with a well-earned break for tea/coffee and biscuits. A reminder to members and other U3A members who might enjoy an afternoon trying croquet.

Do come and join us at 2.p.m. on Tuesdays for a relaxing, social outdoor activity. You can Contact Jean.07949520504 or email jeanmbrown14@gmail.com for further information. *Jean*



Cryptic Crosswords
Coordinator:
Graeme Cozens

I'd love to hear from you if you have a go at the monthly crossword - whether you like it, how you get on with it Do drop me an email.

Here's your next opportunity: the cryptic crossword and the solution are included at end of the newsletter, as usual. Hope you have fun cracking those clues. *Graeme.* (cozensg@yahoo.co.uk)



Economics

Coordinator:
Mike Barlow

Tony gave us an interesting analysis of the state of "Hospitality in the SW". It employs 12% of the workers and is the 2nd largest employer in our region. The latest figures confirmed that pub numbers have reduced but surprisingly the number of restaurants and pop-up food stalls has increased.

Our next meeting will be on Wed 5th August, and we'll discuss the differences between "Work versus Benefits" which is a very topical subject - contact me if you'd like to join us.

mikeandsue.barlow@gmail.com

~Mike B



Folk Dancing

Coordinators:
John & Hazel Ridd

We dance jigs, reels and a waltz, in different formations, and different eras from 17th century to more modern dances. All dances are explained, and the movements are taught, and the fun is fitting the moves to the music.

We always welcome new members, so if you fancy coming along and joining in we will be delighted to see you, (you don't need to bring a partner) -- *John*



Gardens

Coordinator:
Margaret Chumbley

Two quite different gardens recently visited by the Group.

The garden at Elworthy is a real "cottage garden" lovingly created by the present owner over a period of fifty years. The many flower and shrub beds are interspersed with immaculately edged lawns, with a well-managed fruit

and vegetable area. The owner also has an area devoted to plants for sale; so it was worth a visit just for a few takeaways. We enjoyed it very much. - *Nigel and Carol*.



Garden at Elworthy

Then more locally we visited Backswood Farm.

The garden group had an enjoyable hot Sunday afternoon at Backswood Farm, Bickleigh. Originally a field on the farm it has been transformed into a curious garden with wildlife in mind.

There are a number of rooms that include hand-built water features and many bird feeders, with plants chosen that the wildlife can feed from all year. And very importantly to members lovely tea and cake in the barn.

Joy.



**German
Conversation**
Coordinator:
John Smith.

We have met on two occasions since my last report. We have continued to share our experiences over the intervening two weeks and to search for our “word of the week”. The winner (both in terms of length and amusement) was “Schnuckiputzihasimausierdbeertörtchen” - a term of endearment meaning “sweetie cutie bunny mouse little strawberry tart”. See if you can break the word

into its 6 different parts. It can be used to your child on Mother’s Day when thanking him/her for their thoughtful gift (or perhaps for remembering that it is Mother’s Day).

On a more serious note, we have talked about tax and the various types in Germany - not too different either in type or rate from the UK. We have discussed the recent topic of "shortages" and the reasons and effect of them here. The only new word we learnt was "der Rübe" (turnip) as we thought it might be important as the Government were advising us to eat them.

A new game was trialled called "Wer/was bin ich?". This was much enjoyed as each thought of an object or person and the others had to guess "Who/what am I?" by asking questions which could only elicit yes/no answers. The game will have a few more outings. - John

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Going Places

Coordinators:

John O'Connor

Tony Lowe, Chris Steele

A trip to the Somerset Earth Science Centre and Whatley Quarry

We have arranged a visit to the Somerset Earth Science Centre and nearby Whatley Quarry on Tuesday 28th July. The Somerset Earth Science Centre (SESC) near Radstock is an

award-winning, purpose-built educational facility, which serves as a hub for learning about the geology, geography, and ecology of the Mendip Hills.

Whatley Quarry is a major limestone extraction site located near Frome in Somerset. As one of the UK's largest quarries covering 173 hectares, it produces approximately 6 million tonnes of aggregate annually.

Our programme for the day will include:

- ☐ A presentation on Mendip Geology & Quarrying
- ☐ A minibus tour of Whatley Limestone Quarry with an option to view blasting, if time permits
- ☐ Viewing the centre's mineral and fossil collections

The charge for the visit will be £15 per person and numbers are strictly limited.

Please note – this is a car-share event, so members will need to make their own travel arrangements.

Due to last minute cancellations, I have a few spaces left. If you're interested, please get in touch – Tony (lowe.tony@yahoo.co.uk).

An "Onwards and Upwards" tour of Exeter Cathedral

This fascinating tour will take place on Tuesday 1 st September and appeal to those who want an in- depth introduction to the Cathedral. Firstly, we'll explore the Cathedral floor where we see the best of the medieval building in all its splendour before heading up to the roof to see the space that was never meant for the public. We'll climb high above the Nave, walking along the vaulted ceiling and see the 'racking' that could have resulted in the complete destruction of the roof; we'll also see the lead room, where smelting took place, before moving to the bell-ringing chamber. Stepping through a Norman window into the flag room we may ascend, weather permitting, the Romanesque North Tower which has some of the best views over Exeter and beyond.

The roof tour requires ascent of at least 150 narrow steps, so is not suitable for anyone with mobility issues. Consequently, there will be a 'ground floor' option for those who prefer to stay on terra firma. The cost of the full tour is £20 pp, whilst the 'ground floor' option is £6pp. Numbers are strictly limited and will be allocated on a 'first come, first served' basis. You will need to make your own way to the cathedral.

If you'd like to join us on this trip, please let me know with your preferred tour option – Tony lowe.tony@yahoo.co.uk

A visit with tour and lunch at Treguddick Spirit Distillery

Details to be confirmed.



Line Dancing

Coordinator:
Mich Bowers

We made it successfully through the heatwaves, without missing a single shuffle, coaster step or vine. Thanks to all the loyal and enthusiastic participants who kept going. Due to circumstances the dancing on 27th July has been CANCELLED. apologies!

The next sessions are 14th and 28th

SEPTEMBER, when, no doubt, it will be much cooler. - *Mich*



Local Theatre

Coordinator:
Betty Thrall

Our next block booking is for Tiverton Amateur Operatic Society Production of "We Will Rock You" in the New Hall Tiverton on Thursday September 17th at 7-30 pm. Tickets £12.

SYNOPSIS

Set in a dystopian future where live music and individuality have been outlawed, We Will Rock You follows two young outsiders on a thrilling journey to rediscover the power of rock music. The world is controlled by the sinister Globalsoft Corporation, led by the ruthless Killer Queen, who ensures everyone dresses, thinks, ensures and acts the same. Musical Instruments are banned, original songs are forgotten, and the population is fed manufactured pop music and digital conformity. When misfit dreamer Galileo and rebellious outsider Scaramouche meet a group of Bohemians determined to bring back freedom and rock'n'roll, they embark on an adventure filled with danger, laughter and legendary Queen anthems. Together, they must uncover the secrets of the past, defeat the forces of conformity, and prove that music has the power to unite generations and inspire change.

A list will be available at the July & August meetings to put your names on and I will require payment at the August 27th meeting, at the latest, or get in touch by phone or email to support this talented local group

Betty Thrall 01884 242998



Mahjong

Coordinator:
Celia Hicks

Would any members like to learn or renew their love of mahjong?

We play on alternate Friday afternoons local to Tiverton. Please contact me

celiahicks13@gmail.com to learn more



Photography

Coordinator:
Roger Gunn

The group will take its summer recess and meet again in September. - *Roger*



Railway Group

Coordinator:
Jose Kimber

Due to low attendance resulting from holidays and illness we had to cancel the June meeting. I have therefore decided that the group will take a break for July and August and will restart in September if there is sufficient interest.

There has been little interest in the possibility of one or more group outings, so just Jim and I have done a couple of visits on our own, to the Lynton and Barnstaple Railway, to a model show at Steventon, during which we also visited Pendon museum, and one last weekend to the Exe Model Railway Show at Matford, which was unfortunately rather too hot.

We are also planning a visit to the Launceston Steam Railway on Tuesday 21 July, and will probably visit at least one more preserved line during July and August, provided it is not too hot. If anyone is interested in joining us (you don't have to be a member of the group) please contact me via Beacon with your contact details and I will let you know of any visits planned.

On Monday 31 August, it is the Light Railway Gala at Westonzoyland Pumping station. There will be trains running, model railways, and the museum will be in full steam. I intend to go and if anyone would like to join me on a visit, please let me know. - *Jose*



Ramblers

Coordinator:
Jenny Bedford

Seven of us met at Oakford Village car park, half expecting to be "fried alive" if temperatures stay in the 30s. But we were lucky ; though hot, a cooling breeze was blowing. The views across the valley of Iron Mill Stream(a tributary of the Exe) were stunning. Continuing downhill through fields for a mile, we crossed bridges over small streams. Eventually we walked up a slight gradient through lovely shady

woodland. Andrea has not yet decided who to blame for the unintentional diversion which the group now took.



We managed to find the only muddy path in the vicinity which was enjoyed by all, especially those with pristine Sketcher's trainers. Away from mud we descended into a deep valley followed by a steep incline through woodland where we met the walk's less adventurous route at the top of the hill.

The ramble continued eventually reaching the charming garden of Combe Barton where the friendly owner paused her gardening to greet us.

After a walk along the road we arrived back at our cars and Andrea was pleased to note that the 7 had all enjoyed this ramble and were none the worse for wear.

Thanks go to Phil who got us out of a sticky situation (that's the mud) and got us safely back with the help of satnav on his phone. - *Andrea*

The August Ramble will be led by Jan, on 11th August, starting from Petton Cross bus shelter, EX16 9BE, but as parking is very limited, we shall meet at Station Rd car park, Bampton, EX16 9NG, (Donations please,) at 9.45 and drive up in a few cars.

The easy 5-mile walk explores around the River Bathern and is fairly flat with only 1 stile, following lanes, fields and woodland paths. - *Jenny*



Snooker
Coordinator:
John Anderson

A small, social group catering for various levels of Snooker ability (up to, but not exceeding, "average"!).

The normal meeting dates at Halberton Village Hall are the 1st and 3rd Friday afternoon each month. Our start time is usually 3.30pm [but

check with John when messaging (see below)]. John is a keyholder for opening up, so give John a message [e- mail/text/whatsapp, or even phone!] beforehand if you would like to join in and have a game or two - *John*. Tel: 07947 000757



**WALK and
TALK**

Strollers and Twalkers

**Coordinator:
Chris Mumford**

TWALKERS - These walks are out in the countryside, generally within 10 miles of Tiverton. The maximum distance is no more than 3.6 miles and take no more than 90 minutes. The venue changes weekly.

STROLLERS - Venue changes monthly for a gentle walk lasting no more than 60 minutes

around the streets of Tiverton.

For more details and a programme, please contact Chris Mumford:
chris.mumford21@gmail.com



Short Tennis

**Coordinator
Diane Lewis**

Inspired by many hours watching how it's done at Wimbledon and Queens, the Short Tennis group continues to enjoy friendly competition and banter, plenty of exercise and lots of fun at Uplowman Village Hall every Friday from 10 to 11.30am. Playing indoors has also

ensured we haven't recently been plagued by the heat rule, though hydration breaks are compulsory!

Our latest photo might have been a product of AI since we all appear in it, including the photographer, but thanks to Roger's know-how we're not on that slippery slope just yet. If anyone would like further information, please contact Di Lewis on 07713 31161





Short Trek

Coordinator:
Phil Akers

The June Short Trek over Cosdon Beacon was postponed due to very hot weather. John Greenwood will be taking us there in September instead. Thank you to Dawn for allowing John to take over the September slot.

The Short Trek on **Friday 24th July** will start at 10am from Newton St Cyres parish Hall - free car park, West Town Rd. (EX 5 5BW).

The 7.5 mile walk starts with a long, steepish climb up Riscombe Hill then proceeds through fields and road into Whiptail Wood for approx 1.5 miles, then on through fields to Rohorne Road and Newton Wood. Finally, a long steep track leads down to Tinpit Hill and a left turn across fields leads back to Riscombe Hill and to the car park.

Bring a picnic lunch. The debrief, either Beer Engine EX5 5AX, which is not open till 3, or Hanlon's Brewery, Half Moon Village, EX5 5AE, open at 12. - *Phil*



Table Tennis

Coordinators:
Katherine Green
Lorne Loxterkamp

The group meets every Monday, except Bank Holidays, from 10am to 12 noon at Sunningmead Community Centre. We have four tables and generally play doubles to ensure that everyone gets as many games as possible. Currently new members are welcome, but spaces are limited. We endeavour to help those with less experience of the game, but unfortunately, we are unable to

accommodate complete beginners. Anyone interested in joining the group should contact *Katherine and Lorne*.



Thinking Allowed

Coordinator:
Eunice Hinds

We met to discuss intergenerational issues. We discussed a "The Rest is Politics" podcast and agreed that there are many Generation Z who don't fit the stereotype of disengaged youth. We discussed the fact that each generation had had its own challenges from war, reconstruction via banking crisis, austerity and COVID to climate change and mental health.

We agreed we were a lucky generation with free higher education, jobs for life and easier access to housing.

However, we felt we didn't really understand or appreciate the opportunities (gap year) and employment (influencers) that are available to the young.

We also touched on the idea that Generation Z is an American construct, and things are very different in the global south.

Our next meeting on 16th September will follow this by considering the narratives we tell and whether we still need books as well as screens.

Details of future meetings: eunicehinds@gmail.com



Thursday Lunch

Coordinator:
Angie Cheshire

We had 16 members who attended the July Lunch at The Beambridge near Wellington. It was a scorching 30° that day with half of us wishing we had pre-

ordered salad! However (despite a slight hiccup at the beginning with one order) everyone agreed that their choice of meal was delicious, the portions were reasonably sized and the service excellent. What more could you ask for! ~ Ann



Our next outing is to The Stag's Head, Filleigh, EX32 0RN, on 13th August, organised by Julie and Peter. The Stag's Head is a family run concern, specialising in offering home-made food of the highest standard. Using fresh local produce where possible, their aim is to provide a varied choice of freshly cooked meals. Their food menu is supported by a good wine list and a wide range of well-known beers, ciders and cask ales, all drawn from their temperature-controlled cellar. There is a lake renowned for its natural beauty and a superb stock of roach and carp - and a dozen or so friendly ducks! An email will be sent to members with copies of the menus in due course. ~ Angie



Trekking

Coordinator:
Gordon Cleaver

July Long Trek – Witheridge and Two Moors Way

The July Trek was led by Tony K. and started from the central Square in Witheridge. The 15 Trekkers set out on for a 10.5 mile Trek which incorporated several miles of the "Two Moors Way" which is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year.

On an ideal walking day, sunny but not too hot and with a cooling breeze, we trekked across the miles of the quiet beautiful scenery which is typical of rural Mid Devon.



We had our Banana Break in the churchyard of the splendid Washford Pyne Church and then continued along the Two Moors Way to the outskirts of Black Dog. Lunch was taken on a hillside with a view near Cann's Mill. We trekked through barley fields, fields of friendly Cows, Sheep and Chickens and whilst we had no challenging hills, we had to cope with lots of high styles, gates and even had to perform vaults over locked gates. In all a lovely rustic walk. The trek was led without a hitch by Tony K, who was thanked at the debrief that was held in the splendid beer garden of the Mount Pleasant Inn

August Long Trek –Thursday 6 th August 2026 -10.00am Start Tarr Steps Car Park

The August Trek will be led by Kelvin. and starts from the National Park car park on the road down to Tarr Steps. A National Park fee is payable for parking Grid ref SS872 323, What3Words others.hammocks.correct. TA22 9QA

A familiar 10 mile circular trek around the Barle valley area.

**Please let me know if you are planning to come on this Trek.
Gordon- 01884 242563 grcleaver54@gmail.com**

If anyone is interested in joining the Trekking Group please get in touch with Gordon who will be very happy to give you any details/information that you need.



We had not been to the Oak Manor Golf Club as a group before but was recommended by one or two in our group as being very good, so we gave it a try on Wednesday 1st July. We initially had seventeen members booked to attend but had three cancellations for

various reasons prior to the day. However, on arrival we had sixteen turnup as two forgot to prebook, however it did not cause any concern as seating was available.

Being a larger venue, the seating assignment was very good overlooking the first tee showing up variations in golfing capabilities, however it's only a game but can be taken too seriously on occasions.

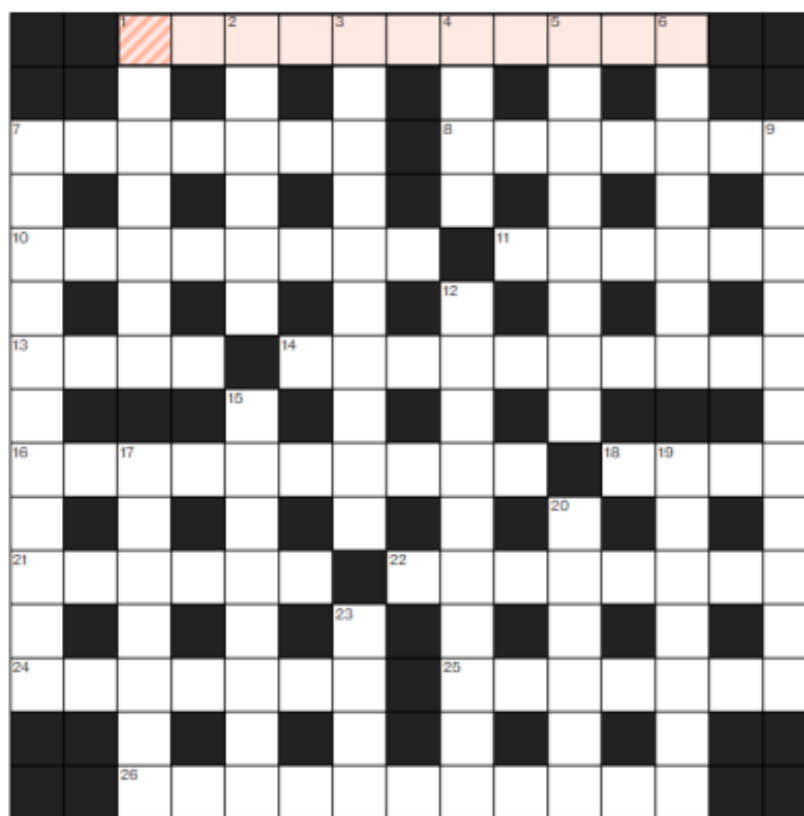
Now down to the meal, which was advertised as 'Oake Manor Siver Specials for pensioners 'which included a roast of the Day and a Desert, all for £17pp. Seeing it at this price you wonder what the quality might be like, but without question it was very good, in fact, excellent value for money. The Entree was either Lamb or Turkey plated to the table with terrines of vegetables; I can only answer for lamb which you do not normally get at a carvery but was excellent and melted in your mouth. Regarding the desserts, what a display to choose from, which all looked delicious. Some rounded off with coffee which concluded an excellent lunch. We shall be returning.

Our next venue is at
The London Inn
Morchard Bishop on
the 5th August. If you
did not previously put
your name down and
wish to attend, please
contact me ASAP.

- Trevor



Cryptic Crossword #59 July / August 2026 (Solution at end of newsletter)



Across

- 1 Religious assembly? (4,7)
- 7 Stage show in US I claim gets rewritten (7)
- 8 Tilted after initially mauled is wrecked (7)
- 10 Rant from tribe after backing aid (8)
- 11 River in 7 counties. Well, OK, 4 (6)
- 13 Behold! Leave a symbol (4)
- 14 Netta reversed ball - what presence (10)
- 16 On stage performers sprayed us with chlorine! (6,4)
- 18 Wet dandelion (4)
- 21 Fisherman sang Lerwick composition (6)
- 22 A bit of spleen and a bit of chatter makes a mess (8)
- 24 Clearly it marks time (7)
- 25 Controversially pay lout to win (7)
- 26 AA mirror organisation offers a tyre for general public here (3,4,4)

Down

- 1 Car must anger some (7)
- 2 Sure about European Court initially makes safe (6)
- 3 A casualty of Thatcher's snatching (4,6)
- 4 In the morning, I object turning to Austen's book (4)
- 5 Ian almost undone by indirect critical remarks (8)
- 6 Parasitic growth provides power for ship (7)
- 7 Not the brightest, nor the dumbest group – at Eton, perhaps? (6,5)
- 9 Neddy messed about and broke unknown amount in charity race (6,5)
- 12 Evidence that peaking in infancy is the way for some (10)
- 15 Mother better (8)
- 17 Natural instrument with one in charge initially (7)
- 19 No love from this fictional criminal's daughter (7)
- 20 Sacred utterance from the human train (6)
- 23 In addition they say he's ranked second (4)

Groups not reporting this month are shown below. Coordinators details can be found on the web page



Board Games

Coordinator:
Dawn Ferguson



Skittles

Coordinator:
Janet Loader



Photography 2

Coordinator:
Charlie Duke

Cryptic Crossword #59 July / August 2026

