



FROM OUR CHAIRMAN

Hi Everyone

Well, the nights are starting to draw in to remind us that summer is coming to an end.

Our next members meeting on Wednesday 10th September Melody Flyte will be talking about 1960s British Divas.

On that day I have a bit of a problem that I hope you can help me with. Both John and Jenny who make our teas and coffees for us are unavailable. It would be much appreciated if you can help us by volunteering to help on the day.

If you can help either email me on sadu3achair@gmail.com or call me on 07546 189872

Clive

WE WANT TO LET YOU KNOW

IT'S MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS TIME

By the time you read this, a membership renewal email may well have already landed in your inbox, or be in the post if you don't use email. These are scheduled to go out on 1st September, if you are reading this and haven't seen an email, please check your junk/spam boxes. Sometimes email providers redirect them there – something we can't prevent. Our membership year runs from 1st October, so you have a month's notice to renew.

Whilst it was decided that due to increased bank charges the u3a would have to ask members paying by cheque to cover those charges (50p). You can pay at a monthly general meeting using your card with our card reader at no extra cost. If you use online banking, you can also pay without any additional charge.

The renewal email explains the renewal process, but if you have any queries, do contact our membership secretary Chris Gale email: sadu3amembers@gmail.com

GROUP NEWS

NEW GROUP IDEAS

If you have any ideas for a new group, please contact Barbara Sargeant our groups co-ordinator sadu3agroups@gmail.com or speak to her at one of our monthly general meetings. Alternatively contact her assistant Angie Baker email sadu3agroupsasst@gmail.com Acting as a group organiser doesn't have to be onerous, it doesn't have to be down to just one person, and it doesn't mean you have to organise everything the group does.

Is the group you want to join currently full? How about starting a second group? Barbara and Angie are happy to provide support and guidance on how to get going.

POSSIBLE GROUP REVIVAL – LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

Some of you may recall that our Local History Group has been dormant for a while. In recent months, a couple of people expressed interest in becoming the Group Organiser, but those offers haven't come to fruition — so I'm now stepping in to try and get things moving again.

I wasn't a member of the previous group myself, as it was full at the time, and I only have limited knowledge of how it operated — though I understand there were some outings and talks. That said, any revival doesn't need to follow the same format. Personally, I wouldn't be able to organise outings, but if there's an interest in getting out and about, and if someone else is keen to handle that aspect, I'd be very happy to collaborate.

If you were part of the original group, I'd really appreciate hearing what topics were covered previously — it would be helpful to build on what's already been explored. Equally, I'd love to know what areas of local history people would be interested in discussing going forward.

If you'd be interested in attending a preliminary meeting to explore the possibilities and shape how the group might look, please get in touch by email at sadu3aed@gmail.com or call 0116 2609012 (do note I have call screening, so you'll need to announce who you are when calling).

If enough people express interest, I'll happily take things forward.

UPDATE – I have had some interest, but not yet enough to make the group viable. Please do let me know if you are interested.

Julie Johnson

PROPOSED NEW CROSS STITCH GROUP



Proposed New Group



Cross Stitch

Starting in November

If you are interested please contact Barbara
Sadu3agroups@gmail.com

As you can see, we are hoping to start a cross-stitch group in November.

Gwyn is a talented cross stitcher who would love to share her skill and knowledge with others.

She is hoping to start her group on **FRIDAY 7th NOVEMBER 10am** at the Syston Community Centre.

If you would like to join her, please email me and we can set it up.

ALL ABILITIES WELCOME.

Once we have enough interest Gwyn will be in touch nearer the time.

sadu3agroups@gmail.com

UKELELE GROUP



It's been a busy month for the Ukulele group, with amongst others, a fund-raising gig at The Bell, Frisby Community Pub, in support of the local cricket club. Live music all day, with Paella and burgers being served (free to our players). We helped raise over £1500 for the event and a great time was had there. Thanks to Clive and Sara for Their help in organising this event.

Then on Sunday, 17th August, we were the main act at Buns and Roses, the cafe at Church View Nursery, Barkby. It was a beautiful, sunny afternoon and lots of people visited to listen to us and have something to eat and drink there.

We are collecting for LOROS this year, and a sum of over £150 was raised during the afternoon (thanks to Dallas going around with the collection bucket).

Many thanks to Len and Joy, our leaders of the group.



YOGA & MEDITATION GROUP

The August Yoga and Meditation session was very well attended.

The next dates for the group are: -
Wed 17th Sept and
Wed 15th Oct

Thanks for the information Pushpa.

FEELING CRAFTY GROUP

The 'Feeling Crafty' group had a go at decorating recycled glass jars with fabric and string. They turned out really well. You can put tea lights inside.



PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP

On Thursday July 31st, some members of the photo group visited the Beacon Hill Sculpture Trail. This trail is circular, 2.5km long and has various sculptures throughout the trail.

Free to all and open until Sept 21st 2025 (access from upper car park).



SINGING GROUP

Our u3a Singing Group sang a variety of songs at St Peters and St Pauls Church. We were supporting the church raising funds for their heating fund. Our efforts that afternoon raised over £424. We were so pleased to help a good cause.



WALKING GROUP

This month 14 of us met at Sutton Cheney Wharf, which is located on the Ashby de la Zouch Canal and maintained by the Canal and River Trust.

I had arranged with the staff that we would arrive around 9:45 and order our lunches, then go walking, and return around 12:30 to eat etc.

We passed through Ambion Wood, and by the Bosworth Battlefield Visitor Centre. On across the fields to Sutton Cheney village, where both Richard III and Henry VII had set up camp in 1485, prior to the Battle. The village's history dates back to Roman times and is named in the Domesday book as 'Sutone'

When Henry was victorious, it was the last battle of the War of the Roses, and it ended the Middle Ages in England and ushered in the start of the Tudor Period. (Richard went off to look for a car park in Leicester !!)

The village's vicar from 1960 until his death in 1986, the Rev. E. R. "Teddy" Boston, was notable as a traction engine and light railway enthusiast and engineer who constructed the now-dismantled Cadeby Light Railway. He was immortalised in his friend Rev. Wilbert Awdry's The Railway Series books (more commonly known as the 'Thomas the Tank Engine' books) as "the Fat Clergyman".

Our walk then continued over the fields towards Dadlington, where, once again, we reached the Canal. As we gently strode back to the wharf, the sun came out to end a very pleasant walk and allowed me to snap a photo of the Wharf, before sitting in the café for our lunches.

Dave Palmer



SUNDAYS FOR SOLOS GROUP



The "Sundays for Solos" group had a great day out when we visited the Rutland Flower Show. Here we are, posing for a photo, under the flower arch.

EVENTS – PAST, PRESENT & PLANNED

Do you have an idea for an event?

If you can think of an event that our members may like to do, please tell Angie Baker, our new Events Coordinator at sadu3aevents@gmail.com

Perhaps you may even be willing to organize it? In which case the Coordinator can help you with everything you need to know.

Once the Coordinator has created the Event on our Computer System (Simple Membership). It will be easy for you to email all those interested, as all the relevant information is already recorded on the system.

Please just give it some thought, and let's make our u3a fun for everyone.

SMILE PLEASE

Summer is fading away and signs of autumn are here with chilly mornings and evenings, Plum and Blackberry picking is in full swing and of course SADU3A still continues to be seen around and about at Fetes and Fairs. For those of you who visited Rearsby show this year you will recognise these faces.

All of those who helped on our stand thought it was warm! Personally, I took my jacket off when sun did emerge for 5 minutes and quickly put it on again. No photo of me here as I took the opportunity to walk past the Birstall Firemen very **slowly** on my way into the Village Hall to enjoy a warming drink and some delicious (hard choice people) homemade chocolate cake – delish. I also perused the entries for the various categories for judging (not competitive at all) for jams and chutneys, longest and biggest whatever (but we won't go into that) and more cakes!



The dog show outside attracted diverse entries for a range of categories, and we heard a lot from one winner which barked the most. Say no more! Stalls were outdoors too and there was a good variety to see ranging from Raffles, games of skill getting Beanbags through angled holes, wet sponges being thrown (and I can think of some contestants for that one), ping pong balls in jars. There were plants and fruit to buy which I made the most of, plus tasty treats and handmade gifts. Lots of hilarity and good fun was evident throughout the day. We even had a couple of Raffle winners amongst our stand volunteers (ok, their arm may have been up their back, but a girl has to do what a girl has to do).



Some other familiar faces do it all again at Syston Fayre on 30th August. We return after a year's absence to continue to ensure everyone in Syston and around about who work less than full time or are retired (and there are those still asking ('what's u3a about?') gain knowledge of what we offer. Most of you reading this enjoy some part of u3a membership which is wonderful to know and, I trust you continue to benefit and share with anyone you may meet details of how to find out more through our

website systonu3a.org.uk , free phone 0300 102 1381, YouTube video or at one of our social monthly meetings. Lots of choice, so let's get sharing.
Oh, by the way no major erection problem at Rearsby although we almost had windows at the front and back instead of doors (who mentioned that).Tee hee.

Thanks for reading this. Jill

WHAT'S ON NEXT

GENERAL MEETINGS

In the Brookside Room at the Community Centre – talks usually start 10.30am
Tea/coffee and mingling from 10.00am

September 19th, 2025

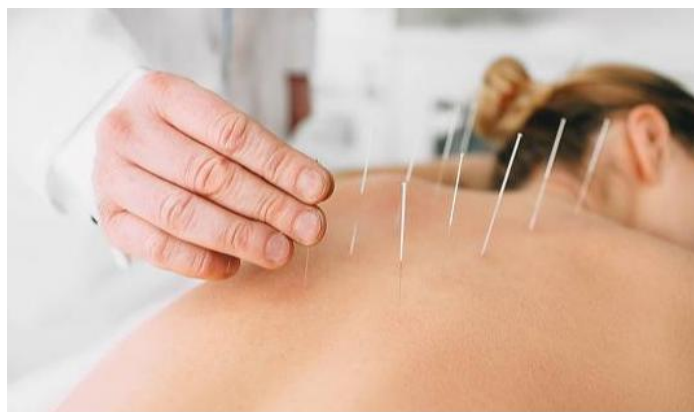
British Divas of the 60's

Melody Flyte returns with a look at the lives and music achievements of some of our biggest British divas of the 1960s, including Petula Clark, Shirley Bassey and Dusty Springfield, and considering the cultural backdrop of that decade, with songs to illustrate.



October 9th, 2025

Acupuncture Event



Come along and find out all about what Caroline Challender & Sandra Linnett from Syston Acupuncture can offer - they are licensed acupuncturists, having undergone a 3-year training programme.

Alongside offering acupuncture treatments, they also offer a 30-minute Qi Gong class. Qi Gong has similar roots to Tai Chi and is a gentle, low impact exercise involving breathwork, flowing movements & standing postures.

November 12th, 2025

The Magic of Plants

Joanna Richart returns with "A journey into the magical and medicinal world of wild plants and fungi."

Explore the dual nature of plants and mushrooms rooted in folklore and Druid traditions. We'll look at species with both healing and mind-altering properties—some poisonous in part, yet edible in others. Expect mentions of psychedelic fungi used by the Incas, plants linked to witches' spells, and curious names like witch's butter, witch's broom, and witch's hair. Open your mind—we're stepping into a world of traditional beliefs, spell-craft, and the blurred lines between remedy and poison.



NATIONAL U3A ITEMS

u3a TALKS



Railway History at the National Archive

In celebration of 200 years of passengers on trains, Dr. Jessamy Carlson will discuss the wide variety of records relating to railways in the care of The National Archives.

Tuesday 9 September at 10am

Free – online via Zoom



Age Without Limits: Celebrate Ageing

Join the talk from the Centre for Ageing Better who will explore how they are working to combat ageism and drive change through its Age Without Limits campaign.

Monday 22 September at 10am

Free – online via Zoom



My gardening life: decades on the plot, page, screen and airwaves

Join Barbara Segall, garden writer, broadcaster and the voice behind The Garden Post as she reflects on her life spent among plants, growers and gardeners.

Thursday 25 September at 3pm

Free – online via Zoom

Book [here](#)

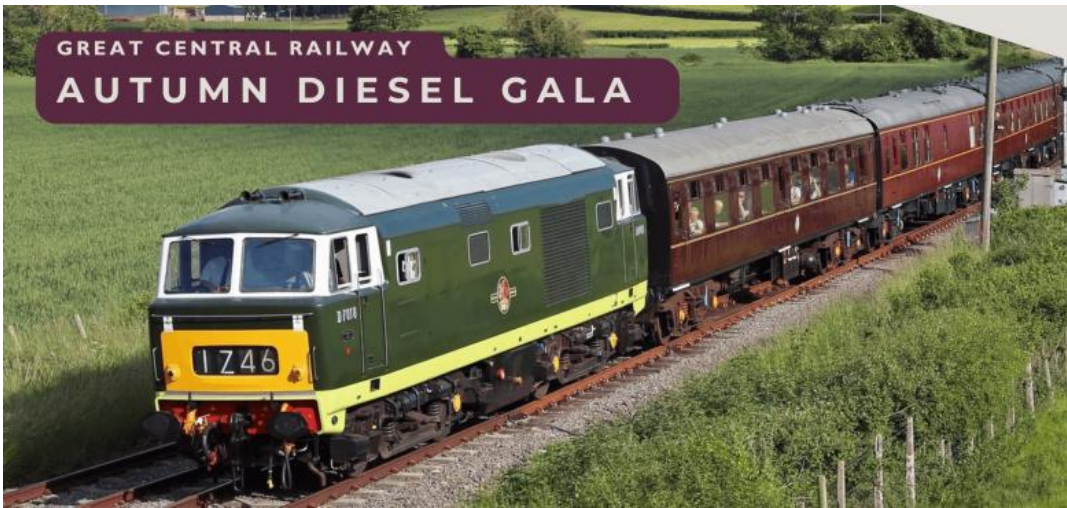
Book [here](#)

Book [here](#)

If none of the trio of talks on the previous page appeals, you can find other options [here](#)

NOT u3a BUT YOU MIGHT BE INTERESTED

GCR Autumn Diesel Gala



Date: Thu, 4th Sep
2025 - Sat, 6th Sep 2025

Venue: Loughborough
Central Station, Quorn
and Woodhouse
Station, Rothley
Station, Leicester
North Station

Gear up for an action-packed weekend at our annual Autumn Diesel Gala!

Our home fleet, including relaunched Class 27 27056, will be joined by three amazing visiting guest locomotives, offering the chance to ride behind an impressive range of traction.

This event is a highlight in any diesel enthusiasts' calendar and a great day out for families, as we start off the new season with a weekend of diesel traction.

More information: https://tickets.gcrailway.co.uk/events/124881#new_tab

Apple Day @ Melton Country Park

September 27 @ 11:00 am - 3:00 pm

Melton Mowbray's Apple Day is on the 27th September!

- Apple Pressing
- Morris Dancing
- Craft Displays
- Children's Activities

Don't forget to bring apples & empty bottles for taking apple juice away.

The Elephants' Big Day Out – Farewell Weekend

4th October - 5th October

LOROS Hospice, Groby Road, Leicester, LE3 9QE



[Book now](#)

In a very special Big Day Out mashup, you'll also have the very last chance to say farewell to the 40 giant Elephants and 82 Baby Elephants from the Stomp Round Leicester trail, all gathered together for one final time.



Heritage Open Days 2025

12th September - 21st September

Heritage Open Days are the perfect opportunity to explore Leicester's most fascinating attractions. This September you can step inside historic gems such as Leicester Cathedral, the medieval Guildhall, or marvel at the restored beam engines at Abbey Pumping Station. Many sites not normally open to the public – from hidden courtyards to places of worship – will also be welcoming visitors free of charge.

[Visit website](#)

Mary Linwood: Art, Stitch and Life

13th September - 22nd February

Leicester Museum & Art Gallery, 53 New Walk, Leicester, LE1 7EA

A retrospective of the Leicester textile artist Mary Linwood.

Leicester's Mary Linwood was a celebrity artist in the early 1800s but has since been largely forgotten.

[Visit website](#)



The Archaeology of Medieval Leicestershire & Rutland

2nd October - 13th November

The Guildhall, Guildhall Lane, Leicester, LE1 5FQ

A series of 6 lectures on the archaeology of the medieval period locally by Peter Liddle MBE – former County Archaeologist for Leicestershire.

[Book now](#)

FROM OUR MEMBERS

Scams Through the Ages – A Timeline of Trickery

Fraud isn't a modern invention. From ancient empires to Victorian London, scammers have always found ways to exploit trust, confusion, and ambition. Here's a chronological tour of some of history's most audacious scams—several with strong UK connections.

300 BC – *The Bottomry Scam (Ancient Greece)*

A merchant named Hegestratos took out a loan secured against his ship and cargo. He planned to sink the ship, keep the cargo, and pocket the loan. His crew caught him mid-sabotage—he drowned trying to escape.

Echo today: Insurance fraud and staged accidents.

1720 – *The South Sea Bubble (UK)*

The South Sea Company promised vast profits from trade with South America. British investors—including MPs and aristocrats—poured in money. But the company had little real trade, and when confidence collapsed, fortunes were lost overnight.

Echo today: Investment hype, misleading returns, and insider manipulation.

1800s – *The Resurrection Men (UK)*

Before the Anatomy Act of 1832, medical schools needed cadavers—and some enterprising criminals supplied them by grave-robbing. Burke and Hare took it further, murdering victims to sell their bodies.

Echo today: Exploiting loopholes in demand-driven systems.

Late 1800s – *Snake Oil Salesmen (USA, but echoed in UK)*

Travelling salesmen peddled miracle cures, often with no medicinal value. The UK had its own versions—tonics, elixirs, and “electric belts” promising vitality.

Echo today: Misleading health products and miracle cure scams.

1920 – *The Ponzi Scheme (Global, including UK victims)*

Charles Ponzi promised huge returns via international postal coupons. Early investors were paid with new investors' money. The scheme collapsed, but the term “Ponzi scheme” lives on.

Echo today: Pyramid schemes and fake investment platforms.

1950s – *Selling London Bridge (USA/UK)*

In 1968, London Bridge was genuinely sold to an American entrepreneur and relocated to Arizona. But before that, con artists had tried to sell famous landmarks—including Big Ben and Buckingham Palace—to gullible buyers.

Echo today: Fake property sales and fraudulent auctions.

1990s – *Timeshare Scams (UK & Europe)*

British holidaymakers were lured into buying timeshares with promises of luxury and exclusivity. Many found themselves locked into costly contracts with little recourse. Legal firms still help victims seek

redress.

Echo today: High-pressure sales tactics and misleading contracts.

2000s–Present – Online & Phone Scams (UK)

From fake HMRC calls to phishing texts, UK residents face a barrage of digital scams. The Metropolitan Police's *Little Book of Big Scams* outlines dozens—from romance fraud to courier cons.

Echo today: All of the above—just with faster tech and wider reach.

Lessons Across Time

- Scammers adapt to the tools of the age—but their tactics remain familiar.
- Trust, urgency, and confusion are their favourite ingredients.
- Whether it's a Roman throne or a dodgy email, scepticism is your best defence.

Windows Update Woes: August's Tech Trip-Up

If your computer's been acting oddly since the latest Windows update, you're not imagining it. August's patch was supposed to improve things—but for many, it caused more trouble than it fixed.

Sluggish or Stuck?

Some members found their machines freezing, crashing, or refusing to restart properly. Others couldn't reset their PCs at all—a feature many rely on when things go wrong. Microsoft rushed out a fix, but not before plenty of us had a few choice words with our screens.

Vanishing Drives

One of the nastier surprises? Some solid-state drives (SSDs)—the bits that store your files—started disappearing. Literally. After the update, they stopped showing up on the computer, as if someone had pulled them out. In some cases, they came back after a reboot. In others, they didn't. Your editor had a scare with this, and was not alone.

It turns out that if your drive was nearly full and you tried to move or update a large chunk of data (like a big game or archive), Windows might have panicked and lost sight of the drive entirely. Microsoft and its partners are now investigating, but there's no official fix yet.

What You Can Do

- Hold off on big updates if your PC is working fine.
- Avoid moving huge files all at once—break them into smaller batches.
- Back up your important stuff regularly, just in case your drive decides to play hide-and-seek.

This update was a reminder that even the cleverest tech can trip over its own shoelaces. If your computer's been misbehaving, you're in good company—and we're keeping an eye on fixes as they roll out.

The issue with hard drives left me with an external SSD that had hardly been used and is now useless, needless to say I am not happy - Ed

DECLUTTER DEN

Are you determined to declutter and get rid of things that you haven't used in an age this year? Look no further than Declutter Den.

I have a small George Foreman grill if anyone would like it. It's as new. If interested email me on annvbarkley@gmail.com to arrange delivery/collection.

Calling all crafters, creators, and curious dabblers! I've got some synthetic stuffing from used duvets and pillows—ideal for soft toys, cushions, pet beds, door snakes, and other squishy projects.

Whether you're part of a craft group or just enjoy making things quietly at home, this stuff is yours for the taking. Let's keep it out of landfill and in the hands of makers.

Interested? Email: juliedjohnson@yahoo.com



If you have something that you are prepared to give away – **strictly no items for sale!** Let me know and I'll put it in declutter den and hopefully we can help each other free up some space, whilst giving others something they have a use for, even if we don't.

Email: sadu3aed@gmail.com

The History and Tradition of Corn Dollies

Corn dollies are intricately woven figures made from the last sheaf of harvested grain. Their origins stretch back thousands of years and reflect deep-rooted beliefs about nature, fertility, and seasonal cycles.

Ancient Origins

- **Pre-Christian Europe:** Farmers believed the spirit of the corn lived in the crop. To preserve this spirit after harvest, they crafted figures from the final sheaf and kept them through winter.
- **Symbolic Role:** These figures were often buried in the first furrow of spring planting to bless the new crop, symbolising continuity and renewal.

- **Global Parallels:** Similar traditions existed in ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome, where grain spirits were honoured through ritual and craft.



Regional Styles in the UK

- **Cambridgeshire Bell:** A bell-shaped dolly symbolising protection and abundance.
- **Suffolk Horseshoe:** Hung in homes or barns to bring luck and ward off misfortune.
- **Essex Terret:** Inspired by horse brasses, often circular and decorative.
- **Herefordshire Mordiford:** Heart-shaped, associated with love and community.

Each design carried local meaning and was often exchanged as a token of affection or displayed during harvest festivals.



Evolution Through Time

- **Harvest Home Celebrations:** By the 17th century, corn dollies became central to rural festivities, often paraded or placed in barns.
- **Craft Revival:** Though mechanisation reduced the availability of suitable straw, heritage wheat varieties are now grown specifically for dolly-making. The craft has seen a quiet revival among heritage groups and folk artists.

Modern Relevance

Today, corn dollies are appreciated as folk art and cultural heritage. They appear in museums, craft fairs, and seasonal workshops, often tied to Lammas and harvest festivals. Their symbolism—of continuity, protection, and gratitude—still resonates.

Lammas and Lughnasadh: Pagan Roots Beneath the Loaf

- **Lammas** (from *hlaf-mas*, meaning “loaf mass”) was celebrated on August 1st and marked the first wheat harvest. Anglo-Saxon communities would bake bread from the new grain and bring it to church for blessing—a practice that later became part of Christian liturgy.
- This coincides with **Lughnasadh**, a Celtic festival honouring the god Lugh and the first fruits of the harvest. It involved communal feasting, games, and offerings to deities, especially in memory of Lugh’s foster mother Tailtiu, who was said to have died clearing land for agriculture.

Christian Adaptation: Blessing the Loaves

- As Christianity spread, it often **repurposed existing festivals** to ease conversion and maintain continuity. Lammas became a Christian observance where the first loaves were blessed and placed in barn corners for protection—a symbolic echo of earlier fertility and abundance rites.
- The Church’s harvest thanksgiving services, especially those seen in rural England, retained the **seasonal gratitude** and communal spirit of pagan harvest rites, but reframed them around divine providence and Christian stewardship.

1950’S KIDS TV

Following last month’s mention of children’s TV in the 1950’s – do you recall any of these?

- **Andy Pandy** – A gentle puppet show featuring Andy, Teddy, and Looby Loo. Part of *Watch with Mother*.
- **The Flower Pot Men** – Bill and Ben spoke in their own playful language, with Weed keeping order in the garden.
- **Muffin the Mule** – A pioneering puppet who danced on a piano and had a cast of animal friends.
- **The Woodentops** – A wooden puppet family with stories about everyday life. Also, part of *Watch with Mother*.
- **Crackerjack!** – A lively mix of comedy, games, and music. Though it became more famous in later decades, it began in the '50s.

- **Captain Pugwash** – Nautical adventures with cut-out animation and a bumbling but lovable captain.
- **Billy Bunter of Greyfriars School** – Based on the comic schoolboy from the *Magnet* stories—greedy, lazy, and always scheming.
- **Noggin the Nog** – A Viking tale with simple animation and rich narration.
- **Picture Book** – Encouraged creativity and craft-making, often with a calm, instructional tone.
- **Children of the New Forest** – A dramatic adaptation of the 1847 novel, set during the English Civil War.
- **The Silver Sword** – A gripping post-war drama about children surviving in Nazi-occupied.

POETRY CORNER

The Promise of Bread

by C. L. Edson

Out on the frozen uplands, underneath the snow and sleet,
 In the bosom of the plowland sleeps the Promise of the Wheat;
 With the ice for head-and-footstone, and a snowy shroud outspread
 In the frost-locked tomb of winter sleeps the Miracle of Bread.
 With its hundred thousand reapers and its hundred thousand men,
 And the click of guard and sickle and the flails that turn again,
 And drover's shout, and snap of whips and creak of horses' tugs,
 And a thin red line o' gingham girls that carry water jugs;
 And yellow stalks and dagger beards that stab thro' cotton clothes,
 And farmer boys a-shocking wheat in long and crooked rows,
 And dust-veiled men on mountain stacks, whose pitchforks flash and gleam;
 And threshing engines shrieking songs in syllables of steam,
 And elevators painted red that lift their giant arms
 And beckon to the Harvest God above the brooding farms,
 And loaded trains that hasten forth, a hungry world to fill—
 All sleeping just beneath the snow, out yonder on the hill.

The Pumpkins in the Corn

by Sir Charles George Douglas Roberts

Amber and blue, the smoke behind the hill,
 Where in the glow fades out the morning star,
 Curtains the autumn cornfield, sloped afar,
 And strikes an acrid savour on the chill.
 The hilltop fence shines saffron o'er the still
 Unbending ranks of bunched and bleaching corn,
 And every pallid stalk is crisp with morn,
 Crisp with the silver autumn morns distil.
 Purple the narrowing alleys stretched between
 The spectral shocks, a purple harsh and cold,
 But spotted, where the gadding pumpkins run,
 With bursts of blaze that startle the serene
 Like sudden voices,—globes of orange bold,
 Elate to mimic the unrisen sun.

The Harvest Moon

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

It is the Harvest Moon! On gilded vanes
 And roofs of villages, on woodland crests
 And their aerial neighborhoods of nests
 Deserted, on the curtained window-panes
 Of rooms where children sleep, on country lanes
 And harvest-fields, its mystic splendor rests!
 Gone are the birds that were our summer guests,
 With the last sheaves return the laboring wains!
 All things are symbols: the external shows
 Of Nature have their image in the mind,
 As flowers and fruits and falling of the leaves;
 The song-birds leave us at the summer's close,
 Only the empty nests are left behind,
 And pipings of the quail among the sheaves.

Labyrinth of Gold

*In fields where whispers curl and sway,
Beneath the autumn's fading ray,
The corn mazes twist, a path divine,
To lure the hearts, like grape on vine.*

*Golden stalks leap, a playful dance,
Inviting each child's curious glance,
With every twist and turn we find,
A world of wonders, heart and mind.*

*Fingers brush the emerald leaves,
While laughter hangs like stitched-up weaves,
In this warm maze where dreams embark,
Each corner holds a secret spark.*

*As twilight drapes its gentle hand,
We ride the dusk, the harvest's strand,
In fields of corn, our spirits rise,
A labyrinth of gold beneath the skies.*

Amber Twilight

*As day concedes to evening's soft embrace,
The sun dips low, a burnished orb of
gold,
It bleeds into the sky, a tender trace,
Where shades of amber dance, vibrant and bold.*

*In fields adorned with bounty, rich and ripe,
The harvest sings a song of labor's grace,
While shadows stretch and whisper of delight,
The chill of dusk begins to slow our pace.*

*Each leaf that falls becomes a golden dream,
A tapestry of nature's grand design,
As twilight fades, the world begins to gleam,
And hearts are woven in a thread divine.*

*Embrace the fleeting hour, let time pause,
As sunsets paint their stories, just because.*

And finally.....

The Great Harvest Hijack

It was all going so well. The sun was out, the bunting was up, and Mrs Penfold's marrow had been polished to a shine that could blind a pigeon. The produce tent was a temple of horticultural pride—until the goat arrived.

Not *our* goat, mind you. This one belonged to the petting enclosure over by the bouncy castle. Name of Trevor. Escaped during a moment of distraction involving a dropped ice cream and a small child dressed as a carrot.

Trevor, it turns out, has a taste for competition. He trotted in like he owned the place, took one look at the vegetable section, and launched a full-scale assault on the root crops. Parsnips flew. A turnip rolled under the WI jam stall. Mrs Penfold shrieked and charged toward her prize marrow.

The judges and stewards gave chase, scattering in all directions. In their clumsy efforts, they upended three trestle tables and sent a cascade of root vegetables skittering across the tent floor. Mrs Penfold tripped over a fallen squash, her decorated straw hat sailing off her head like a frisbee.

Trevor, ever opportunistic, snatched the hat mid-stride and made his exit through the flap of the tent—hat in mouth, tail high, and utterly unrepentant. The crowd erupted. It was, according to one delighted spectator, “the most excitement we’ve had since the jam jar explosion of ’98.”

Mrs Penfold's marrow—though slightly bruised and emotionally shaken—was awarded a special commendation for resilience. Trevor, meanwhile, is now the unofficial mascot of the show and rumoured to be in talks for a children's book deal.

P.S. No goats were harmed in the making of this anecdote. Several parsnips were traumatised.

P.P.S. Mrs Penfold's claim for a replacement hat was politely but firmly declined by the committee, citing “acts of goat” as an exclusion.