

Learn, Laugh, Live.

No: 87. September 2025



As I start to write this piece my computer is trying to “help” me with AI. It suggests I could “*Create a vacation blog about hiking in Yellowstone National Park*” or “*Write an email to invite parents to the school summer bake sale*” or “*Write a newsletter about successful camping during the rainy season*”. All it achieves by this is making me shout at it even more than usual but on the positive side, also feel somewhat happier that Big Brother obviously has no idea at all what I am doing or where I live which is quite comforting.

So I will stick to Swanland u3a matters as I don’t think there will be many of our members hiking in Yellowstone or camping in the rainy season this summer. A lot of our activities take a break in August so by the time you read this I hope you will be suitably refreshed and eagerly looking forward to another year following interests and activities with fellow members.

This brings me to the matters we discussed at the Thursday afternoon social meeting back in July. There are some challenges facing us in the coming year: at the 2026 AGM we will lose 4 members of the committee, all of whom hold vital roles: Chair, Secretary, Meetings Secretary and Groups Co-ordinator. We have also lost a few groups over the past year, not from a lack of members but from a lack of members willing to take on or share the role of convener. The blunt truth is that if you want your u3a to continue then members have to play their part in running it – that is the core basis of the u3a – that we share and volunteer.

If you think you might be interested in joining the committee or being a group convener then please do speak to one of us. You would be very welcome to observe a committee meeting or shadow one of us. We are hoping to put together some accessible role descriptions but there is lots of information on the website, along with committee minutes etc.

The meeting on 17th July also came up with some interesting ideas on recruitment and finance. After Covid our membership was drastically reduced which has had a big effect on finances. Numbers are slowly going up, but again, we all have a part to play in recruiting and making new members feel welcome and involved. Your committee will look at how we can use some of the suggestions when it meets in September.

And speaking of finance, just a reminder that if you are booking a holiday with Riviera Travel and mention at the time of booking that you are a Swanland u3a member, a donation is made to our funds from Riviera. We have just had a payment of almost £500 from them – a real help to support us.

Finally, we have begun to firm up arrangements for the event day next year to celebrate the 30th Anniversary of Swanland u3a. It will take place at Lazaats, Cottingham on 7th May so please get that date firmly written in your diary. Details of the theme, speakers, tickets etc. will be available much nearer the time and it really is something to look forward to.

Alison Peck

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“I want AI to do the laundry and the dishes so I can do art and writing, not for AI to do art and writing so I can do the laundry and dishes.”



By Joanna Maciejewska



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QUIZ TIME

Who is this?	
What connects:	Bean, Flag, May, Tad?
Name this Place	
True or False:	When the two numbers on opposite sides of a dice are added together it always equals 7.
<u>Answers on page 19</u>	

THURSDAY PRESENTATIONS

Date	Subject	Speaker
4 th Sept	The Pavement that Walked <i>A tale of archaeological discovery, unbelievable theft and mystery.</i>	Michele Lewis has taught students from four year olds up to University graduates, and made forays into film, broadcasting and print.
18 th Sept	Geometry in Art and Ornament	Kevin Byron , spoke to us last year on “What Inspires Art” he returns by popular demand.
2 nd Oct	Yorkshire’s Vanishing Coastline	Malcolm Brooke was a teacher and Head Teacher with the MoD and a regular speaker for u3a’s.
16 th Oct	Thrilling Novels set in the East Riding	Chris Speck - author who bases his stories in Hull and the East Riding.
6 th Nov	The Humber Estuary	John Wilson is a well-known member of Swanland u3a and has presented a number of interesting and entertaining talks to our Thursday meetings.
20 th Nov	Introduction to the Institute of Advanced Motoring	Neil Bowerman is a Fellow of the Institute of Advanced Motorists. He is a Local Observer, coaching and training Associate Members to pass the test and qualified as a National Observer.
4 th Dec	How Astronomers Control Your Life	Professor Brad Gibson . Having given an inspirational talk on “Will we ever live on Mars” Brad has agreed to return.
18 th Dec	Carol Concert	
1 Jan 2026	No Meeting	
15 th Jan	A Musical Entertainment	Nigel Willoughby & Accompanist
St Barnabas Church, Main Street, Swanland 2pm to 3pm followed by tea and coffee		

A Skeleton in the Cupboard?

Researching one's family history can be a fascinating activity. It can also be addictive. And sometimes it can throw up some hidden, murky stories from the past. This happened to me whilst I was undertaking my own family history. Yes, it was quite a surprise to find evidence of criminality and infamy in my family. A black sheep, a bad egg, a notorious reprobate - any of these phrases could accurately describe my great-great-great-great-great Auntie who was born in Beverley in 1797. This is her story.

Ann Sutton married at the age of 17 but was a widow before she reached 20 years old. Even at this early age, Ann developed an unusual career - she became the leader of a body-snatching gang based in Beverley.

"Bodies used to be unearthed and conveyed to the garden known as Rattle Garth at the south-eastern corner of Jack Taylor's Lane in Beckside, Beverley. A shed which stands just by Jack Taylor's Lane and another shed at the bottom of the garden where the sights were horrible, the cutting up of bodies by this gang."

Apparently there were a few men in Ann's gang who were involved in this enterprise, one of whom was known locally as "Edinburgh Bill" (you couldn't make it up!)

Before too long, the law caught up with them. A dead body, stolen from a churchyard in Cottingham was cut up and placed in a box to be posted to a hospital in Edinburgh - (the place where the infamous Burke and Hare were associated). The box was somehow intercepted by local constables and before long a number of arrests were made. Ann managed to escape on this occasion, but soon afterwards she was caught stealing some surgical instruments from a doctor's surgery in Sculcoates, Hull. No prizes for guessing what she needed these surgical instruments for! At her trial she tried to pin all blame on Edinburgh Bill but to no avail. She was found guilty and sentenced to seven years' transportation to Van Diemen's Land (now known as Tasmania).

For a time Ann was held at York Castle before being delivered to Woolwich for embarkation on a convict ship. The “William Bryan” set sail in 1833 on the long voyage. Ann was one of 130 female convicts on board, but seven of them died on the voyage before the arrival in Hobart.



The register of all these convicts reveals some interesting facts about Ann - *“she is 5 feet 9 inches tall, with dark complexion, brown hair, light-hazel eyes, a medium-sized dimpled chin, and a mole on her left cheek. She has been once tried and acquitted of Felony; imprisoned several times for misdemeanours, has been connected with a number of disorderly and bad characters”.*

The seven years that she had to spend in Tasmania might have been an ideal opportunity for Ann to consider her past crimes and to reform her character. Not a chance. There is scant evidence of her time spent there, but what is known suggests that her behaviour continued to be less than desirable. Soon after landing in Hobart she was “assigned” to a local employer (the usual practice for convicts) but absconded, was caught and imprisoned in the Cascades Female Factory for a month. Later she became involved with a forger and fraudster, and the two of them were arrested for theft of clothing from a house where they had been invited to spend Christmas with the kindly owners.

It is not known what happened to Ann after the expiry of her sentence. According to a Beverley diarist who was writing at the time, she did secure a passage back to England (having been granted a Certificate of Freedom) but *“she was returning by ship to her old home probably coming from some south port to Hull, when the ship was wrecked and she was drowned, or otherwise she died on ship.”* If this is true then a rather sad turn of events.

And so, all these revelations came as something of a shock and surprise. The lesson to be learned: if you start researching and meddling with the past, be prepared to discover facts that can be embarrassing and damaging to one’s reputation! To be descended from someone with dubious morals and with a notorious criminal background is no joke!

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

New Groups

We have had some really interesting suggestions for the formation of new groups and it would be super if most of these could attract enough members to be able to get them started.

Ideas include various games such as chess, bridge, board and card games. Some of these could probably be combined.

A craft group has been suggested. An article in the last TAM magazine about a group of stitchers in Bakewell showed what could be achieved. They used their skills to produce panels to illustrate the history of Bakewell which were then displayed in the town. Perhaps members could start with a less ambitious project and just enjoy sharing their skills.

Other suggestions include cycling, family history and flower arranging. We have enough people interested in both Tai Chi and Yoga to start new groups but we do need people who could act as instructors for these. Do you know anyone who could help?

If any of these ideas appeal to you then please get in touch with Joyce newgroups@swanlandu3a.org.uk 07732977707.

60s Quiz Night – October 13th. For the first time our monthly quiz night will have a theme rather than general questions. We hope a 60's night will be of interest to you all, especially those of you who have not been to the quiz before. The questions will relate to different events and people, and you DONT need to dress up! Please join us for a fun night at the North Ferriby Social Club at 7:30 pm.

The **Croquet** group is pleased to announce they have now started playing at Springhead Golf Club. It's the same time and day as before, Friday's 2-4pm. There are 4 lawns so enough capacity for us to have new people if anyone is interested in having a try.

Italian Group - Do you enjoy your holidays in Italy but feel that being able to understand or speak a little of the language would enhance this? Alternatively would you just like to learn a little for its own sake?

The present Italian group is full and we have a number of people who would like to form a second group. We are looking for others to join them to make this viable. To help set up the group we also need someone who is either already fairly proficient in Italian or someone who is a beginner, but willing to coordinate the group. Beginners or relative beginners working through a course book together could also work well.

Learning a language has been proven to keep brain cells active and so why not give it a go?

Photography Group - Would you like to make more use of your photographs, improve your technique or just find out what to do with all the various buttons and controls? A small group of enthusiasts have got together to form a new photography group and they would like others to join them. They would welcome those who are already confident in using their camera or smartphone as well as those struggling to master the basics. They plan on meeting once a month.

Badminton Group - Why not come and join our Friday afternoon Badminton group, even if it's a case of "I haven't played for ages". We're a friendly bunch and would welcome some new members. Come when you can, we know that you may not be able to play every week but that's OK.

We meet each Friday throughout the year at the Badminton Centre on Chanterlands Avenue. You need to be a member of a u3a and also of the Hull and East Riding Sports Club - their membership fee is £15 for the year. Play is from about 2pm until 3.30. The facilities are good, with food and drink available if you wish to make use of that at reasonable prices.

We do not have teams, but play in turn as and when a group finishes a game, and are a mixed group playing doubles. Come along for a couple of weeks to play or watch before you decide whether to join us. There is a large free car park on site.

Luncheon Club meets on the 2nd Tuesday in the month at various locations at 12 for 12.30 pm. New members are welcome to attend.

Canasta players meet at various homes at 10am until 12 o'clock starting with tea/coffee and biscuits. New members are welcome.

The **Day Trips** group has added details of their planned trips on our website. You can see them here: <https://www.swanlandu3a.org.uk/u3a-daytrips.html>

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Visit to the Lincoln Bomber Command Centre, Thursday 10th July 2025



The Centre is situated to the south east of Lincoln, with wonderful views of the city and its cathedral. Volunteer guide Roger Burke took us round the exhibition, consisting mainly of remarkable photomontages plus explanatory text and memorabilia from the conflict. The texts have striven to be fair to both sides in the air battles that became increasingly fierce as the war proceeded. A party of young schoolchildren ahead of us were totally absorbed in their task of completing a quiz based on the exhibition.



After lunch in the attractive restaurant, some of us went with Roger along the avenue leading to the iron memorial column, surrounded by many metal panels with the names of the 55,000 RAF casualties. Roger located my father's name and Lyn took a photo.

In 1982 I discovered the War Cemetery near Munich with 5,000 allied airmen and soldiers, including my father's crew from their bomber that crashed in 1943 outside a village near Heilbronn in SW Germany. In 2019, we located the village, and were welcomed there by the parish chairman, and others including a past chairman who had witnessed the crash in his teens. We missed the subsequent service of reconciliation in the parish church because of Covid.

We thank John for this fascinating and well-organised visit.

Peter Ayling

COMMUNITY AND WIDER U3A NEWS

Dates for your Diary

Friday 12th September - Sunday 21st September 2025

Heritage Open Days 2025

Swanland Heritage Centre will be open additional dates for this annual event:

Saturday 13th September - 10am - noon & 2pm - 4pm

Sunday 14th September 2pm - 4pm

Saturday 20th September - 10am - noon & 2pm - 4pm

SHC will be offering Heritage Walks starting from the Centre at 2.30pm on both Saturdays (Weather permitting)

13th October u3a 60's Quiz Night

Please join us for a fun night at the North Ferriby Social Club at 7:30 pm.

14th-18th October at Hull Truck Theatre



The John Godber Company presents 'Black Tie Ball'

It's the glitziest night of the year, and everyone wants to be there, from the great to the good. The Bentleys are parked, the Jazz Band has arrived, and the magician is magic; so pick up your invite for this fundraising frenzy.

28th November

Hessle Square, The Weir, and Prestongate. 4.30pm - 7.30pm



Hessle Christmas Lights Switch On

With staged performances, a Christmas market, rides and entertainment, there's something for the whole family to enjoy. Look out for Father Christmas as he joins Hessle Town Mayor to switch on the lights at 6.30pm.

7th May 2026 Swanland u3a 30th Anniversary Event

Lazaats, Cottingham. More details to follow.

Odes Of Remembrance

Remembrance is very much part of our culture both through formal events and personal reflection where we think of family members or friends who lost their lives.

In April I had the opportunity to see how Australia, New Zealand and the USA remembered their war dead by attending an ANZAC Remembrance Service and visiting the Pearl Harbour Memorial in Hawaii. The history and debates on remembrance being easily accessible either on line or at the library.

Some context: this came about as my wife and I 'cruised' from Sydney to Los Angeles. The focus was on entertainment which made both the preparations and conduct of the Anzac Day ceremony particularly striking. Partly as my father-in law had served in Australia during the Second World War and also out of respect we decided to attend.

The service began at 5.15am just as the sun was rising over the Pacific - the ANZAC soldiers would have seen a similar sun rise as they disembarked onto the Gallipoli peninsula. It illuminated a top deck that had been transformed into an open air church, a balcony and PA system. Within a matter of minutes the seats were filled, with latecomers having to stand, I estimated at least 2000 people, over half of the ship's passengers.



It was a full service led by an American Pastor featuring serving and retired military personnel from Australia and New Zealand plus poetry readings and music. The Cruise Director linked each part of the service with dignity and respect. There were two 'Odes Of Remembrance' one being a traditional Maori Poem read by a lady representing the Maori people in their language, reflecting the growing awareness of the role played in the ANZAC forces by the indigenous people which has not always been recognised. The service ended with the 'Last Post' after which the Captain cast a wreath on the sea.

The extra man-hours required to organise the service and the total cost of the cruise for the leaders was met by the cruise company simply because they deemed it the right thing to do.

The ship stopped at Honolulu where we visited the Pearl Harbour Memorial. There are two areas plus an operational Navy Base so access and photography is controlled.



Firstly we visited the USS 'Missouri' which was operational from 1944 until Operation Desert Storm in 1991. The Quarter Deck was the site of the formal surrender of the Empire of Japan (the golden plaque marks the spot) and our guide was not exaggerating when she said that the ship was one of the most honoured military sites in America due to its length of service. Notwithstanding, conditions for the crew were very cramped and each set of stairs very steep!

We then visited the Harbour and Museum area which contains artefacts both from the attack and from the lost ships. After watching a documentary film we boarded a US Navy Shuttle to the USS 'Arizona' Memorial Site which lies several hundred yards from shore. The 'Arizona' received a direct hit on its magazine section and sunk with the loss of 900 lives, including a father and son and three sets of brothers. The Memorial straddles the ship so visitors can see some of the structure including what remains of the gun turrets and contains a marble memorial tablet listing the names of all who were lost. Many survivors specified that after cremation their ashes were interred within the wreck; a wish fulfilled by the Navy.



It was a moving and impressive experience delivered without bitterness or triumphalism. Rather there was a measured account of the factors that brought America into the war and a hope that the sacrifice of so many mainly young lives would lead to a better future.

The Pearl Harbour site is administered by the National Park Service with assistance from USS Navy personnel. Staff are plentiful; incredibly helpful and knowledgeable and very conscious of their role as representatives of their country in a popular tourist site. All were in their early 20's or late teens, some with cadets even younger and all a splendid advertisement for the 'younger generation.'

John Munson

Tech Talk – WhatsApp Security

In 2022 I received a strange WhatsApp message from someone claiming to be my child. As I never had children I knew it wasn't right, but I didn't realise it was a scam until I did a bit of research.



Copy of my Facebook warning. I hid the phone number.

I blocked the number, warned my friends and family and then forgot about it.

Recently, however, I received a WhatsApp request to join a Group from a number I did not know. It occurred to me then that anyone could receive these requests and be caught up in any number of scams. I decided to look into the security setting on WhatsApp to see if there was a way to stop these unknown (and unwanted) requests.

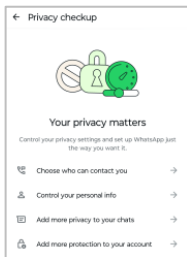
It is worth knowing, that apart from accessing your phone number from websites that have been hacked, or unscrupulous businesses who have sold your details to anyone who wishes to buy them (often marketing call centres), it is also perfectly feasible they have used number generator software on their computers to dial random numbers to see if any of them are legitimate phone numbers.

Although anyone who has your mobile phone number can contact you via WhatsApp, you can decide who is allowed to add you to groups, as well as choose a number of different security options.

By default, your privacy settings WhatsApp allow:

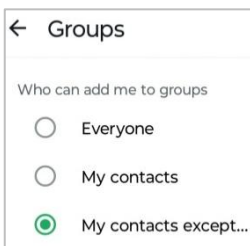
- **Any user** to see your profile photo, read receipts and when you're online.
- **All your contacts** can see your status updates, about and when you were last seen.
- **Any users** can add you to groups.
- **Anyone** can call you and for your phone to ring.

When you open WhatsApp you should see three dots (⋮) on the top right hand side of your screen. Tap on those then select, Settings, then Privacy.



On this page is a list of privacy/security issues you can change. Either work through them one by one, or scroll to the bottom and use the Privacy Checker. This is especially useful, if you have already set your privacy settings but are not aware of new ones that have been added since.

Tap the privacy setting you would like to change.



Select *Everyone*, *My Contacts*, *My Contacts except...*, or (in some cases) *Nobody*.

[I prefer to use *My Contacts except...* and select the tradesmen (none friends & family) in my list. You will need to remember to add any new exceptions when you add new WhatsApp contacts.]

Use this link for more information on WhatsApp Privacy Settings:

<https://faq.whatsapp.com/3307102709559968/>

A Life of Crime

Experiencing Hull in the early 1980s was akin to being adrift in a mythical kingdom, a looking glass world where things didn't happen in quite the normal way. My status as a mature student with a reasonable grant, on which I could survive, probably had something to do with this. Without having to earn a crust, I could appreciate the slow pace of the place at leisure. My world-view was coloured by coming from a job as a night shift taxi driver, where my televised cultural input consisted of afternoon programmes such as Camberwick Green, Trumpton and Cloppa Castle (work of genius), as I gradually worked my way from waking up to full consciousness, preparing to go to work when most people were coming home.

The chronicler of the new domain was the stalwart Hull Daily Mail, its finger firmly on the parochial pulse. To alleviate the routine gritty realism of shoplifting and benefit fraud, on one occasion it was able to run a front page spread highlighting an armed robbery at a bank. The bank was on Hessle Road I think, where the trawler fishing communities used to live, lots of parallel streets with terraced housing.

The perpetrator had entered the bank, drawn a pistol, and demanded cash. He was dressed in a boiler suit, rather than the standard issue uniform of leather jacket and stocking over the head. He had brought a bag with him, probably a plastic bag from a supermarket which I used to call a 'Hull briefcase'. It wasn't big enough to hold all the money, and the bank staff had to help him by finding a sturdy bin liner from the back room. He then escaped on a push bike, 'down the tenfoot'. This was my first encounter with the term 'tenfoot'. It referred to the alleyways behind and between the rows of terraced houses. Ten feet wide, naturally. He pedalled away down the tenfoot and was not seen again.

The front page of the Hull Daily Mail that evening featured a photo of a policeman mounted on a horse, looking forlornly into the distance. Presumably waiting for the other riders in the posse to join him. It was like the Lone Ranger, except that the horse stood on an urban wasteland where

terraced homes had earlier been razed to oblivion, rather than a picturesque boulder-strewn canyon somewhere above Los Angeles.

A number of years later a man, who lived alone with his mother in a council house in East Hull, was arrested after going out one day to buy a Maserati with cash. My theory is that it was the same guy. Fancy getting away with it for so long before cracking. You're not allowed to have a Maserati, living in a council house in East Hull. It doesn't compute, it's like a crack in the universe which has to be sealed.

Maybe the guy was only blessed with deft bank robbing skills. A narrow skill set that couldn't be easily translated to more mainstream endeavours. So sad. If you can't do the time, don't do the crime, they say. Or at least don't go out with a bagful of cash to buy a Maserati.

Another who wound up with a bagful of cash was one of the guys I later worked with. His mate had worked out that an office bloke from an industrial company used the same route at the same time every Friday, returning on foot from the bank with the wages. My colleague was enrolled, and they waylaid the unimaginative clerk, with the briefcase duly changing hands. A proper briefcase rather than a plastic bag. The prising tool was the threat of a cosh rather than a replica pistol, but the effect was the same.

A couple of days went by, and they seemed to have got away with it. Then Steve (let's call him) got home from a shift, and his wife told him that the police had been round looking for him. The game seemed to be up. He contacted his mate, and they decided to spend the money before eventually facing the music. Decamping to London, they got through several thousands of pounds on a hotel, casinos, booze and women. When they got back, unburdened now by wealth, Steve asked his wife if the police had been round again.

"Yeah. It's only about a parking fine though."

At least they hadn't gone to the Maserati dealer.

An abridged extract from 'The Blunt End of the Known Universe'.

Dave Roberts

Do You Remember the 1960's?

I suppose it's safe to say that I have problems in keeping 'up to date'. I do not have a computer or a smart phone, I don't understand 'BitCoin', I think that music died with the Everly Brothers, and the Celebrity centred media leaves me cold.

That's not to say that I don't appreciate many of the things in today's world. My home is centrally heated, my car is comfortable and reliable, and should I wish to, I can fly to visit my family in Australia. The choice of cuisine now available in my local restaurants is varied and excellent. Perhaps most of all I appreciate the wonderful labour saving devices which we all take for granted.

But... do you remember the 1960's?



Man first set step on the moon. Concorde took flight. Christian Barnard carried out the first human heart transplant. England beat Germany to win the 1966 World Cup. Winston Churchill died, Marilyn Munroe was found dead in bed, J.F. Kennedy was killed in Dallas and Martin Luther had a dream.

The U.S. got involved in Vietnam and the world almost went to war in the Cuban crisis.

Here in Britain, London was the world's fashion centre, and our music was popular around the globe. Tyneside and Merseyside built ships, Grimsby and Hull landed fish, Bradford made cloth, Sheffield and Scunthorpe produced steel, and Barnsley mined coal. Britain was the workshop of the world.

In Hull, the City had a wide variety of Department Stores, local towns had busy shopping centres with not a security blind to be seen. Policemen were visible on their 'beats', antisocial behaviour was minimal, burglary was a serious crime, and the court system ran smoothly without long delays.

QUIZ ANSWERS

Who is this?		Peter Sellers. He was born on 8 Sept 1925 in Portsmouth.
What connects: Bean, Flag, May, Tad?		__ Pole
Name this Place	FERRARI	Redcar
True or False: When the two numbers on opposite sides of a dice are added together it always equals 7.		True
Do you enjoy quizzes? Then why not join our Quiz group on the 2nd Monday of the month at the North Ferriby Social Club. Everyone is welcome.		

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW TO KEEP IN TOUCH:

Executive Committee from 2025-26

Chair Alison Peck chair@swanlandu3a.org.uk	Vice Chair & Speaker Finder Paul Chambers vice-chair@swanlandu3a.org.uk
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Without portfolio: John Bailey, Patricia Simmons	
Details are on our website: https://www.swanlandu3a.org.uk/u3acontacts.htm .	

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<https://www.swanlandu3a.org.uk>

To access, update or add information please email:
webadmin@swanlandu3a.org.uk



Look / Join our FACEBOOK Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/swanlandu3a/>

Swanland u3a Contacts for Information and Help.

info@swanlandu3a.org.uk

chair@swanlandu3a.org.uk

memsec@swanlandu3a.org.uk or 01482 631497

Newsletter Deadline

The closing deadline for the submission of articles for the
January 2026 newsletter is:

1st December 2025

Send to: newseditor@swanlandu3a.org.uk

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