

Abbey Together

The newsletter of Amesbury Abbey Group

May 2026



Magnificent in May

What a wonderful month May has been! With plenty of sunshine and lots of activities taking place across both Amesbury Abbey & Sutton Manor sites, there has been much to enjoy. From getting back to nature and raising money for good causes to enjoying musical performances and our memorable VE celebrations; we've been delighted to share these together as a community. Here are some of the highlights from the past month.



Naam



Making the Most of the Sunshine

Everyone is enjoying the sunshine, and some even a wee dip in the Avon! Thanks to caretaker James Brixey for snapping this happy little family in action.

Robert Keable – Rogue & Writer

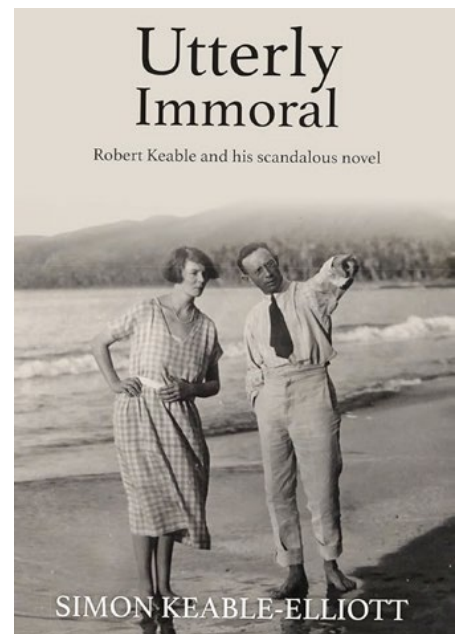
This month's Richmond Arts Society lecture was: Robert Keable – Utterly Immoral WWI Chaplain & Writer?

Robert Keable was a famous novelist in the 1920s who is virtually unknown today. His first novel, *Simon Called Peter*, about a WWI chaplain's affair with a nurse, shocked many, was name-checked in *The Great Gatsby*, and became a huge international bestseller. What no one knew at the time was that it was semi-autobiographical.

His grandson, Simon, tells the extraordinary story of the book and of the author's life. Robert Keable was a Cambridge-educated priest who served as a missionary in Africa before becoming chaplain to ill-treated Black labourers in France. After the war, he left the church and his wife and ran away to Tahiti with his mistress, where he lived for a year in Paul Gauguin's house.

He stayed in Tahiti, built his own house, continued writing, and married a Tahitian princess.

Such a fascinating lecture, which was enjoyed by all.





VE Day Celebrations at Sutton Manor

Sutton residents enjoyed a really fantastic day of celebrations for VE Day. The brilliant 40s singer, Debbie Corbett, charmed us all before a magnificent lunch in the dining room, which had been transformed into a street party!

The staff really did put so much effort into the day, and it was clear how much the residents appreciated and enjoyed it.







VE Day Celebrations at Amesbury Abbey

Amesbury Abbey always does such a great job of celebrating special occasions, and this VE Day was no different. Residents enjoyed a very energetic performance from the Barrack Room Boys, who sang and danced their hearts out for us. Then, in the afternoon, festivities shifted outside to a lovely tea party on the lawn with wonderful themed cake boxes, both gorgeous to look at and, of course, delicious to eat!

Thanks so much to Nona and the kitchen for all their efforts to make the day so special.





Green Fingered Pursuits

It's been a brilliant few weeks for the botanically inclined. The Sutton Good Life Allotment is coming along in leaps and bounds now and really going gangbusters.

Meanwhile, at the Abbey, Commander Brown has taken the herb garden to task and given it a much-needed refresh. So nice to be outside in the fresh air, communing with Mother Nature!





Relaxing by the River

We are indebted to Salisbury District Angling Club for keeping our riverbanks in good order, and it's always a pleasure to host their annual get-together at the Abbey. What a fun event for all ages. It was great to have some keen junior anglers out in force and wonderful to see several of our Abbey residents getting involved too. A very happy day messing about on the river.







Jamie Sings

Sutton Manor continued its trend of musical mornings in the Drawing Room with a fantastic show from Jamie Golding, who spent 30 years singing in the West End in a whole host of productions.

What a voice! The residents absolutely loved his programme, which included lots of the classics as well as some lovely lesser-known numbers. A real treat.





Chocks Away!

What a brilliant day out. Boscombe Aviation Collection in Old Sarum did not disappoint. Run by knowledgeable ex-engineers and pilots, it's a wonderful collection of 28 different fast-jet aircraft cockpits that you can sit in, along with a wealth of local RAF history. A really engaging & informative afternoon.





Sutton Summer Lunch

The annual summer lunches are fast approaching, with Sutton Manors being held first, on the 18th June. We are looking at a record turnout this year, so fingers crossed for pleasant weather; not too hot and no rain, please! Looking forward to seeing everyone together, starting with a glass of fizz and a canape on the lawn.

We'll keep you guessing as to what this year's entertainment and menu will be, but in the meantime, here are a few of our favourite pics from last year!



Supporting Ukraine

We've been delighted to support one of our residents' children, who has been doing amazing work driving a truck in a convoy to transport precious donated equipment and supplies to Ukraine through the Northamptonshire Group of Convoy4Ukraine.com.

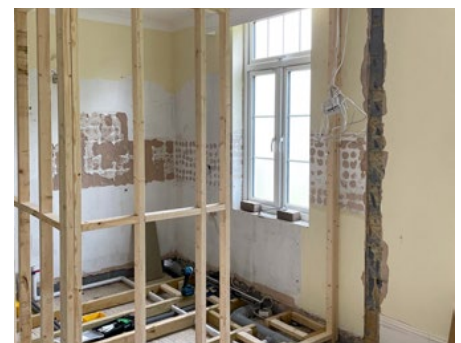
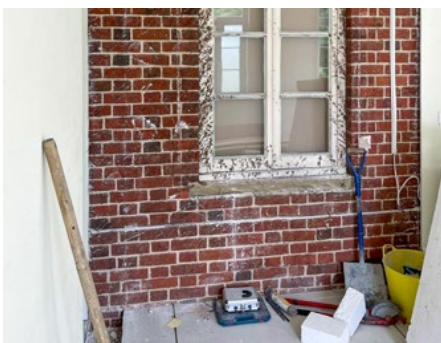
As a company, we have provided rollators, walking frames, walking sticks, wheelchairs and crutches, all to support direct and indirect casualties of the Ukraine war. It's such a worthy cause, doing incredible things, so please do get in touch if you have anything you feel you can donate. The next convoy heads out in June.



New Beginnings

A very exciting project at Sutton Manor kicked off this month. The creation of 3 new nursing home rooms got underway; all being crafted from the former independent living property, the East Wing, on the first floor. The new rooms will be a fantastic addition to the Home's offering, and all will feature wet-room bathrooms. One will even have a wonderful private balcony to sit out on and enjoy, what bliss! However, no pain, no gain, as they say.

Thanks to all for bearing with a bit of banging and crashing this month. Knocking down walls is a noisy business! We thought you might like a sneak peek at the construction site... We're very much looking forward to updating you along the way as the rooms near completion and are ready for their first new residents at the end of the Summer.





Durrington All Saints Infant School

We were absolutely thrilled to welcome Durrington All Saints Infant School for a social in the Snug this month. The children and the residents very much enjoyed talking to each other and hearing about the books the children had been reading. What confident communicators the children were, and how quickly they engaged in conversations with the residents. We were so impressed!

It was lovely to see the intergenerational mix bringing such happiness to both young and old alike. We're hoping we can make this a regular fixture.

