

COUNTSTHORPE U3A

Minutes of the Group Leaders' Meeting on Thursday, 24th April 2014

Present: Menna Carr, Allen Donkin, June Hawkins, Barry Hillyard, Sheila Holmes, Liz Lockwood-Jones, Jenny Mills, David Wild, Ursula Wild, Mikki Wilde, Patsy Paterson, Tony Claricoates, Neil Barker

Apologies: Pat McMahon, Patsy Paterson, Ruth Westley, Pam Runacres, Lesley Woodward, Marlene Robinson, Dorothy Wells, Jane Gray, Lana Fox, John Thacker, Pat McMahon

Minutes of the last meeting: Approved.

Matters arising: Menna reported that taster sessions had been successfully completed with Pilates replacing Chinese Wands. Low attendance at Kettlebells meant that this *may* be re-scheduled. Pilates is being run for six sessions to try and establish a permanent group, but the timing is not ideal. Barry stated that he was proposing to establish a Nordic Walking group as a follow-on, meeting 9.30 – 11.00 am on second and fourth Tuesdays. Thanks were recorded to Barry for his success in obtaining funding from Blaby DC, and to Menna who had put in a huge amount of work organising the taster sessions.

Mikki reported that the visit from four members of Leicester Creative Writers had been successful, and may be repeated in the future.

History talks from Peter Liddle had been well-attended (40 each)

Tony Claricoates is now facilitating the new Bird Watching group, which has met to identify an outline programme for the forthcoming few months. Details will be on the website and in What's On. Initially, 30 names were on the list as being interested, but very small numbers actually attend. More would be good! Thanks were extended to Anne Tester for hosting a garden 'bird watch', and to Joan Burn for her initial work on this new group. The group may become involved in a survey of wildlife to support the development of the Country Park.

Barry Hillyard urged groups to send someone along to learn how to operate the overhead projector and laptop facility, to avoid either he or John Thacker being the only ones able to use the equipment.

Parking for Trips: June advised the meeting that we are allowed parking facilities at the Village Hall (when we have not actually booked the hall/lounge) on sufferance. Prior permission should always be sought from the Parish Council Clerk (Alix Bates), and users **MUST** park considerately, and at the rear **ONLY**. Some U3A members are still abusing this, in spite of exhortations not to do this. June will strengthen the message on the rolling PowerPoint presentation at meetings, and all trip organisers are asked to be vigilant and request that cars be moved if they have infringed the requirements.

Media: Use of the website appears to be increasing, and Group Leaders were asked to contribute information for this, the Newsletter and What's On to enable our members to be kept as fully informed as possible. Thanks were extended to those Group Leaders who consistently provide information. Thanks were extended to June for the routine updating of the website.

Tony Claricoates expressed approval at the 'logo' for the Bird Watching group. June said that some of the 'brand images' used on the website may be updated, as they were rather bland and unrepresentative of some specific group activities.

Maintaining an Accurate Activity List: The current list was circulated for checking. Tony requested the addition of Bird Watching. Jazz and Classical Music are to be suspended for the foreseeable future. With Margaret Woolley's impending departure, Gail Appleby had agreed to take over the Hand Bell Ringing, and Maureen Thacker the Art group. Patsy agreed to ask Ian whether anyone had been named to take over Kurling.

The list will be re-issued in May or June at the General Meeting.

News from the groups:

- SWANS: Liz Lockwood-Jones is now part of the team of three, with Shirley Wilding and Pamela Runacres, who will lead the group.
- Discussion: continues to thrive, with one new member, though conclusions are seldom reached!
- Bridge: There has been a gradual reduction in numbers. Discussion followed about possible ways to cater for beginners and then integrate them into the main group. Neil will investigate possible ways forward. It takes 10-20 hours to deliver beginner training.
- Singing for Fun and Guitar: David reported that the Guitar group has expanded due to players from Kibworth. Three players now routinely join with the Singing for Fun group, which means that the repertoire has extended to different types of music.
- Hand Bell Ringing: A beginners' group meets after the main group, at 3.30 pm each week. Pat Allsop, Jenny Mills and Chris Harvey provided a clearly structured introduction, and there is support from a number of established players, meaning that progress has been good. Gail Appleby will become the Group Leader, following Margaret Woolley's move to Devon next month.
- Art: Maureen Thacker will take over from Margaret Woolley.
- Kurling: Numbers have fallen off recently. Patsy will ask Ian who is to become the point of contact as Margaret leaves next month. Ian may also write a short piece for the Newsletter in an attempt to attract more players.
- History: Following the success of Peter Liddle's talks, a different series is planned for the coming winter. Thanks were extended to Marlene, who takes the bookings and payments at monthly meetings. 'Volunteers' had been forthcoming to organise some events. A document had been produced setting out the respective responsibilities of the volunteers and June/Marlene who deal with the bookings and financial aspects.
- Travel: A similar document is in use when 'volunteers' organise day trips for the group.
- Solo Sunday Lunch: This proves very popular with an average of 21 attendees. It is difficult to find volunteers to organise a venue – mainly due to a reluctance to deal with the monetary side, which can be confusing at some of the restaurants.
- Folk Dancing: Average attendance is about 20, which allows scope for a wider range of dances. Margaret Royle is now making the drinks, which is very helpful.
- Carpet Bowls: Average attendance is about 18, and 4 new woods have been purchased to increase the number of players active at the same time.
- Walking (CARE): Walks continue to be popular, with 19 enjoying the Saddington walk earlier in the day. Allen was thanked for the regularity of his monthly contributions – details of the next month's walk, and a report and picture from the previous month, which is posted on the website.

The meeting closed at 4 pm

Next meeting: 23 October, 2014 at 3 pm, in the small lounge at the Village Hall.