

Countesthorpe U3A Newsletter



Feb – Mar 2014

Issue 2014/1

Chairperson's Letter

(Tel: 277 4187)

Dear Friends

As I write this at 10 o'clock in the morning it is dull, miserable and sleetily snowing. At least the gas leak excavations directly opposite my drive have gone – I can get in and out more easily.

I ought to be doing things in the garden but it is so sodden that walking on it would do more harm than good. Last month I had to tie the grandchildren's Plastic House to the apple tree after it rolled down the lawn in the winds!

At last our taster sessions in physical activities (funded by Blaby District Council) are getting under way which may give us the start of some new groups – though often we find with getting a new group running that the problem is finding someone prepared to take on the leadership/organisation of the group. Several groups now operate with a single co-ordinator (responsible for notifying members of what is going on) and then several members organising events in turn and passing the details to the co-ordinator for dissemination. That way no individual has the unenviable task of organising all the events for the group.

The ladies among us should think with gratitude of this day in 1852 when the first public ladies' toilets were opened in Britain. Also, in 1531, Henry VIII was recognised as the supreme head of the Church of England.

Finally – back to the weather – in 1878 the first weekly weather report was published in the U.K.

Enjoy yourselves!

From

Barry Hillyard
Chairperson

Countesthorpe



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

DIARY DATES: Feb-Mar 2014

Date	Group	Activity	Venue/time
16 Feb	Solo Lunch	Lutterworth Golf Club	Noon for 12.30 pm
17 Feb	Creative Writing	Theme: "The Seven Deadly Sins" (<i>one or more!</i>)	2 – 4 pm at Brook Court
18 Feb	SWANS	Bede & Castle Parks combo	9.45-ish bus from C'thorpe
19 Feb	Literature	The Two Brothers - <i>Ben Elton</i>	2 – 4 pm at Brook Court
21 Feb	CHEWS	Main meeting + weigh-in	Marlene's home, between 9.15 and 10.15 am
24 Feb	Folk Dancing		2.00 – 3.30 pm Village Hall
27 Feb	Walking CARE	5 miles from Aspect, Enderby	9.30 am from Village Hall
28 Feb	Discussion	"A minimum price for alcohol – a good strategy?"	10.00 am at Jackie's home (4 The Plantation)
4 Mar	SWANS	Market Harborough Millennium Mile	10.30 am at usual car park
6 Mar	Travel	Cheapside Hoard, London	8.30 am from Village Hall
10 Mar	Folk Dancing		2.00 – 3.30 pm Village Hall
11 Mar	Monthly Meeting	Life Under the Hammer <i>Spker: Trevor Vennett-Smith</i>	Doors open 1.30 pm Speaker from 2.00/2.15 pm
12 Mar	Flower Arranging		2 – 4 pm Small Lounge
13 Mar	History	Royal Armouries, Leeds	9 am – VH, 9.05 am - SQ
16 Mar	Solo Lunch	Venue TBA	Noon for 12.30 pm
17 Mar	Creative Writing	Theme TBA	2 – 4 pm at Brook Court
18 Mar	SWANS	Thornton Reservoir	10.30 am at TR car park
19 Mar	Literature	Any 'Jackson Brodie' novel by Kate Atkinson	2 – 4 pm at Brook Court
21 Mar	CHEWS	Main meeting + weigh-in	Venue TBA , between 9.15 and 10.15 am
24 Mar	Folk Dancing		2.00 – 3.30 pm Village Hall
27 Mar	Walking CARE	See website/March What's On	9.15/9.30 from Village Hall
28 Mar	Discussion	Justice for Victims"	12 Queen's Close

COUNTRY DANCING



Our next sessions of country dancing will be on 24 February, then 10 and 24 March – all Monday afternoons in Countesthorpe Village Hall between 2 and 3.30 pm. Please come in comfortable clothing and shoes to join in the various dances, which may well include Whalebones, Cumberland Square Eight, Tripping in Trios and Super Twelve to name but a few. Everyone is welcome.

Details from Patsy Paterson on 277 6259

FIT FOR LIFE is NOW OPEN TO ALL MEMBERS!

Come along and join us in the Village Hall each Monday between 11.30 am and 12.30 pm. Aerobic movement to music, along with exercises to strengthen the muscles and improve flexibility – all tailored to our needs by our great instructor, Karen Bent. £3 on the day. Wear loose clothing and appropriate shoes.

Details from Marlene Robinson on 277 9162

NEW HANDBELL RINGING GROUP

We are hoping to start a new group of ringers for those with little or no knowledge of handbell ringing. It is not necessary to be able to read music or to have experience of ringing, as instruction will be given on basic timing and ringing techniques. The venue, date and time has not been settled, but will be arranged (as far as possible) to fit in with those joining the new group.

Do come and have a go – it is great fun and very satisfying when something goes well! The original group has been ringing for around 6 years and many of the original players still ring regularly – confirmation of the enjoyment gained by group members. The original group will continue to ring at the Methodist Church on Wednesday afternoons and members of the original group will help the new group to set up.

Please add your name to the list in the small lounge if you are interested and you will be contacted to make arrangements for the first meeting.



HISTORY GROUP

Thursday, 13 March: The Royal Armouries, Leeds. Leave Village Hall at 9.00 am and depart Leeds at 4.00 pm. Restaurant, coffee shop and indoor picnic area. £15. *(Arranged by Barry Hillyard for the group)*

Tuesday, 1 April: 78 Derngate (the Mackintosh House) and Northampton Museum and Art Gallery Shared transport, leaving Village Hall at 9 am for guided tour then time to see the Museum – about 200 yards away. Limited to 40. £6, plus driver contribution. Sign up on booking list and indicate if you need, or can provide, transport. *(Arranged by Shirley Taylor and Mikki Wilde for the Group)*

Wednesday, 4 June: Visit Pugin's lovely church at Cheadle, then enjoy entry to Trentham Gardens. Leave VH at 9.am, SQ at 9.05 am. £24 *(Arranged by Chris Claricoates for the Group)*

Thursday, 17 July: Visit to Stafford town and castle. Depart Village Hall at 8.50 am or The Square at 9.00, and arrive in Stafford approx 10.30 am. Meet at 11.30 am for guided walk (approx 50 mins), then time for lunch and to visit the Ancient House and St Chad's Church, before re-joining the coach at 2.45 pm to visit Stafford's Norman castle, Visitor Centre and herb garden. Depart Castle approx 4.15 pm. £18 *(Arranged by Joan Burn and Sue Wyllie for the Group)*

Mon 29 Sept – Thurs 2 Oct: 3-night break in Portsmouth for the Historic Dockyard (Victory, Warrior, new Mary Rose Museum), plus the National Museum of the Royal Navy, Harbour Tour, Spinnaker Tower, Gunwharf Quays, Old Portsmouth and the cathedral, etc



Coach transport to and from Portsmouth – whilst there all time is free to use as you please. £220 per person (standard room) or £250 in an upgraded room. Cost includes accommodation on a dinner, bed and breakfast basis at the Royal Maritime Club (100 yards from Dockyard), Dockyard ticket, driver and hotel gratuities, plus a group visit on the return day to the D-Day Museum and the Overlord Embroidery. *(Arranged by June Hawkins for the group)*

*For details and to book see the **History** Table, the website or contact June on jhawkins45@talktalk.net or telephone 0116 277 6330.*

If you have changed your address, or phone number, please let Sue Wyllie (our Treasurer) know (284 9959) so that we have your current details in case we need to contact you!

TASTER COURSES

As you probably already know, we have some funding from Blaby District Council with which to provide taster programmes of activities aligned to promoting health and wellbeing. As a result, a set of five different activities have been offered to all our members.

The **Pilates** taster took place on Friday, 7 February in the Village Hall and attracted about 20 people. The activity was led by Karen Bent, who some of you will know from our Monday morning Fit for Life sessions.

Dates for the remaining courses are shown below, and it's not too late to sign up to try out these new activities, so see Menna Carr in the small lounge or call her on 01455 283862

Fencing: Friday, 7 March, 2.30 – 3.30/4 pm in the upstairs room at the Methodist Chapel on Wigston Street. £5 for 'vest' hire. (Let Barry Hillyard know your size so that a suitable 'vest' can be brought along)

T'ai Chi: Friday, 21 February, 2 – 3 pm in the Village Hall

Kettlebells: Thursday, 3 April, 3 – 4 pm in the Village Hall (please wear exercise clothing and shoes)

Nordic Walking: Tuesday, 8 April 11 am – noon. Initially in the Glen Parva Memorial Hall, Dorothy Avenue, then outside in nearby park

After these taster events, we will gauge the level of interest from members to see if it is viable to establish permanent groups for any (or all!) of these activities. We're doing our bit to help you all get fitter, stronger and feel healthier – so come along and join in the fun. You don't have to be athletic or particularly fit to participate – everything is tailored to the ability of those who attend.

Thanks go to Menna who has worked so hard to make all this happen!

LEARNING TO DRAW

Starting on 26 February 2014, a second six-week course has been arranged. It will be held on Wednesday mornings 9.50 am – noon in the Residents' Lounge at Brook Court. The cost is £45 due in full at (or before) the first meeting. Payment to June - cheques preferred, payable to 'Countesthorpe U3A' please.



Our tutor will be Heather Wharam, an experienced artist and qualified teacher, who will bring an enthusiastic and lively approach to teaching basic drawing techniques.

Names from the 'interested' list have been contacted to confirm places and an information sheet with details of materials required has been provided. It is hoped to run further courses later in 2014 on a different weekday.

Details from June Hawkins on 277 6330 or jhawkins45@talktalk.net

THE BIRDS OF WILLOUGHBY WATERLEYS

A further meeting of this fledgling (*sorry!*) group will take place on Thursday, 20 February between 7 – 8 pm in the small lounge at Countesthorpe Village Hall, where Joan Burn will show a DVD entitled "The Birds of Willoughby Waterleys"

A leader is still being sought to enable this new group to become firmly established! This is not an onerous role, and there is plenty of support. You don't have to be an expert on birds, or bird watching – all that is required is a willingness to facilitate the meetings for the enjoyment of like-minded U3A friends.

More information from Menna Carr in small lounge, or call her on 01455 283862



COUNTESTHORPE – VILLAGE OR TOWN?

Please note that the wording of this short piece in the last Newsletter was taken from the Countesthorpe Community Action Group's own website in order to raise awareness of its existence. By including it in its Newsletter the U3A should not be seen as commenting on issues raised by this item. The reference to 'lack of opposition' does not infer that the Parish Council has been inactive in opposing developments; much has been done within the legal framework under which the council is required to operate. (Editor)

THAT'S LIFE!

(contributed by a member)

Another year has passed
And we're all a little older.
Last summer felt hotter
And winter seems much colder.

There was a time not long ago
When life was quite a blast.
Now I fully understand
About 'Living in the Past'

We used to go to weddings,
Football games and lunches.
Now we go to funeral homes
And after-funeral brunches.

We used to have hangovers,
From parties that were gay.
Now we suffer body aches
And while the night away.

We used to go out dining,
And couldn't get our fill.
Now we ask for doggie bags,
Come home and take a pill.

We used to often travel
To places near and far.
Now we get sore asses
From riding in the car.

We used to go to nightclubs
And drink a little booze.
Now we stay home at night
And watch the evening news.

That, my friend is how life is,
And now my tale is told.
So, enjoy each day and live it up...
Before you're too damned old!

TIMEBANKING IN LEICESTERSHIRE

A system that can help you get jobs done without money!?! Individuals can share skills, make friends and build communities.

Examples of things you could exchange include:

Playing a sport or game	Listening
Cooking	Offering lifts
Dog walking	Clothes alterations
Filling in forms	DIY
Playing an instrument	Administration
How to buy on the internet	Plant watering
How to use Facebook or Twitter	Companionship
Gardening	The list is endless!

How does it work?

- Step 1: Give details of skills, talents or facilities you can share
- Step 2: Give details of something you would like to receive
- Step 3: You are then matched with someone who is either offering a skill that you require or the Timebank staff can put you in touch with someone who would like to receive what you are offering
- Step 4: The Timebroker will explain the system to you and your match as well as taking references and DRB checks
- Step 5: Receive your request/provide your offer.

This is run by **Leicestershire County Council**, and we felt that it may be of interest to many of our members.

For more details visit: www.timebankleicestershire.co.uk
or call James O'Flynn on 0116 305 9212
or Lyne Brydon-Graham on 0116 305 7558
or email: timebank@leics.gov.uk

Please remember to take copies of What's On and the Newsletter for your group/s or people who you know cannot attend meetings.

HOW DO THEY DO THAT?

We normally associate ice shows with large, often purpose-built arenas or rinks. But this is not always the case. Robin Cousins, the Olympic figure skating champion, has just launched ICE – a skating extravaganza which will tour the UK, and possibly internationally afterwards. The show takes place in regional theatres, and had its world premier at the Mayflower Theatre, Southampton on 16 January. So, how does this mobile ice rink work?

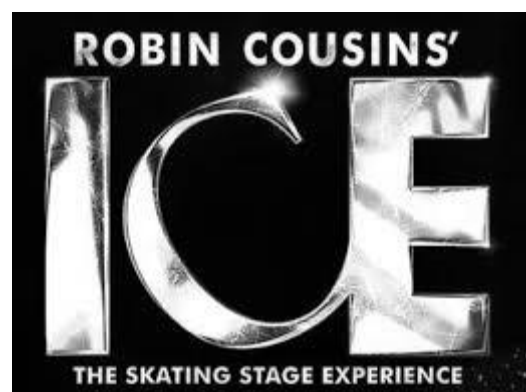
Special refrigeration units are transported and stored on an articulated lorry. The first job when arriving at a venue is to create a waterproof basin on the theatre stage. A matrix pipework system, rather like under-floor heating, is then rolled out. ICE uses a rubber mat system in 7 x 2 metre sections. Each section has rubber ribbons measuring 16 metres long that create the depth of the ice from back to front of the stage. This means that there are over 15 kilometres (about 9 miles!) of pipework under the ice. The system is made up of small rubber pipes each with 14 rubber ribbons; these are connected to larger header pipes, which in turn are bolted together to cover the stage.

Once bolted together, the system is connected to the refrigeration unit and the system is filled with anti-freeze which is pumped around the system. Testing for leaks is completed; then the refrigeration unit is set to -10° C. Water is sprayed onto the pipe matrix to create the ice. This is carried out over a non-stop, 24-hour period.

After the performance, the refrigeration unit is switched to 'heat', melting the ice, which is pumped away. On completion, the system is drained, disconnected, and packed onto the articulated lorry to make its way to the next venue.

Why not join us to enjoy ICE on Wednesday, 9 April at Milton Keynes? The staging and costumes are amazing, and the skill of the skaters is such that it's hard to believe that they can complete such expansive routines in the confines of a theatre stage. Not to be missed!

June Hawkins



SHOPPING AT MILTON KEYNES!



In a new venture, it has been decided to offer spare coach seats on theatre trips to Milton Keynes to shoppers.

The coach leaves the Village Hall at 12.30 pm, and takes about an hour to arrive at the Theatre, which is directly opposite to the John Lewis store in the Milton Keynes shopping centre.

Take time for a leisurely lunch before hitting the shops for a little retail therapy, and then rejoin the coach at

approximately 5.30 pm (exact time on the day, depending on show's end time) for the return trip to Countesthorpe, arriving about 6.30/6.45 pm.

First dates available are Wednesdays, 20 March and 28 May 2014

Just £10 – less than the cost by car and no parking worries!

See June at the Theatre Table, or call 0116 277 6330 or email jhawkins45@talktalk.net

Priority will be given to theatre-goers; otherwise first come, first served.

CHEWS NEWS

The self-help slimming group has had some success recently and some people have left. We meet briefly every Friday morning between 9.00 and 9.30 am for a weigh-in, and every third Friday of the month, 9.15 am to 10.15 am for a longer session, where we discuss different eating regimes and our progress within them. Everyone is free to adopt whatever diet suits them best. The New Year and spring are good times to start and we are looking for new members to come and join us.



Details from Ruth on 277 1533

TRAVEL GROUP

In addition to the day trip to see the Cheapside Hoard at the Museum of London on 6 March, the holiday in June to Minehead and the late summer visit to Wengen, other day trips are being organised, some with help from volunteer U3A members.



Tuesday, 15 April – Visit to Calke Abbey

Leaving the Village Hall at 10.30 for an 11.30 am arrival at Calke, there will be ample time to visit the house (from 2 pm) and explore the grounds. Departing at 4 pm, we arrive back in Countesthorpe around 5 pm. Cost is just £5 if you are an NT member, or £14 if not.

Thursday, 15 May – Visit to Saltaire Village, Bradford

Leaving the Village Hall at 9 am, we arrive at Salt's Mill at about noon. At 2.30 pm there is an optional guided walk before we depart at 4.45 pm, arriving back home at about 7.45 pm. Enjoy this Italianate Victorian industrial village, and also some David Hockney paintings. £14.50 each, or just £18 with the guided walk. *(Allan and Rosemary Jordan are organising the day for the Group)*

Book/pay for these trips at the Travel Table in small lounge, via the website, or call Jenny on 0116 277 2041

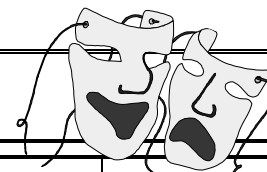
HELP US TO KEEP PROSPERING!

We have two vacancies arising on the committee from our AGM on 13 May, and we would very much welcome some 'new blood'. If you would like to join us, or know someone that might be persuaded, then call Barry Hillyard or any committee member for more details. In their first year new members simply 'shadow' an established member, with a view to taking over that responsibility in the second year. It is not at all onerous, but most rewarding to help our successful U3A go from strength to strength. Please do consider helping!

BREADMAKING COURSE

Menna has been working away to get this course off the ground, and we now have a date: Tuesday, 25 March 2014. The course will be run in the Atherstone area, and as this is so close, shared cars will be used. There is a maximum group size, as is to be expected for this type of programme. Menna is contacting all those who signed up as being interested in order to assemble the first cohort. The cost will be £15, with perhaps a small contribution to your driver on the day.

THEATRE PROGRAMME



Mon, 17 Feb	The Mikado	£16	Concordia, Hinckley	VH at 6.35 pm, Square 6.40 pm	10 Dec
Thurs, 20 Mar	Fallen Angels	£27	Milton Keynes	VH at 12.30 pm, Square 12.35 pm	14 Jan
Wed , 9 April	ICE (Robin Cousins)	£33	Milton Keynes	VH at 12.30 pm, Square 12.35 pm	11 Feb
Wed, 28 May	Pygmalion	£32	Milton Keynes	VH at 12.30 pm, Square 12.35 pm	11 Mar
Wed, 25 June	As You Like It (+ ev meal)	£28 (£22)	Tolethorpe	VH at 4.15 pm, Square 4.20 pm	8 Apr
Wed, 9 July	Singin' in the Rain	£35	Milton Keynes	VH at 12.30 pm, Square 12.35 pm	13 May
Mon, 1 Dec	The Sound of Music	£20	Curve	Leys at 6.10 pm, VH at 6.20 pm, and The Sq at 6.25 pm	8 July

THE MIKADO – enjoy this well-loved Gilbert and Sullivan operetta!

FALLEN ANGELS – Noël Coward's comedy classic

ICE – New skating extravaganza choreographed by Robin Cousins, and our first trip to an ice show. Superb, and not to be missed!

PYGMALION – George Bernard Shaw's popular play, famous as the storyline for 'My Fair Lady' – now see the stage version!

AS YOU LIKE IT – Shakespeare's classic comedy, played out in the open air theatre at Tolethorpe. Magic for a summer's evening!

SINGIN' IN THE RAIN – The story of Hollywood's first musical which gave the silver screen its voice and left silent movies behind.

SOUND OF MUSIC – our annual visit to enjoy Curve's usual Christmas hit musical – much better live on stage than seeing it on the 'telly'!

June Hawkins – tel: 277 6330 or email: jhawkins45@talktalk.net

SELECT YOUR CHOICE OF PICK-UP POINT WHEN BOOKING
AND THEN PLEASE HELP BY STICKING TO IT!

**PLEASE NOTE THAT SMALL REFUNDS WILL BE GIVEN ON
THE COACH WHERE NUMBERS ALLOW FOR THIS!**