

Countesthorpe U3A Newsletter

Dec 2015 – Jan 2016

Issue 2015/6

CHAIRPERSON'S LETTER

(TEL: 247 8043)



Hello Everyone!

When I was reminded I had write a piece for the Christmas and New Year newsletter, I thought it would be an easy one to write. But recent events in Paris have cast a dark and long shadow over the run up to Christmas and the New Year. However, the generous British spirit and one small boy have shown the way.

The first and most surprising and moving perhaps was the sight (and sound) of British football fans singing the Marseillaise. It showed a sense of solidarity from one of our most nationalistic institutions.

The second was the conversation between a small boy and his father in the days following the attack. The small boy expressed his fear and his father reassured him "that they would be protected because they had flowers and candles". The little boy smiled and was reassured by his father's words. Life must go on.

We will all celebrate the holiday with our friends and families and head into 2016 resolved to make it another significant year. There is lots to forward to - trips to Northern Ireland, Wengen, and the Dutch Bulbfields, visits to RAF Museum at Hendon, Bletchley Park, Eltham Palace, Ely and Ironbridge Gorge in addition to our usual group activities. And don't forget that if you have an idea for a new group or activity, please contact a committee member as we are keen to support new activities. After all we only continue to grow and thrive if we are meeting members' interests.

I wish you all a merry Christmas and a happy, active New Year in the U3A.

Graham Surman
Chairperson

Countesthorpe



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

SOME KEY DIARY DATES: Dec 2015 – Jan 2016

Please see next page for details of changes to regular group meetings over Christmas and New Year period, as notified by Group Leaders.

Date	Group	Activity	Venue/time
14 Dec	Ten Pin Bowling	1.00 pm at Hollywood Bowl, Meridian Leisure Park	
14 Dec	Country Dancing		2 – 3.30 pm Village Hall
15 Dec	SWANS	New Walk and Victoria Park	10.30 am Town Hall Sq
16 Dec	Literature	Any book by Stella Rimington	2 – 3.30 pm Brook Court
18 Dec	Discussion (<i>Week earlier</i>)	Boredom – Good or Bad?	10 – noon at June's home (30 Marston Crescent)
21 Dec	Fit for Life		11.30 am – 12.30 pm VH
21 Dec	Creative Writing	Theme: "Dreams/Dreaming"	2 - 4 pm Brook Court
5 Jan	SWANS	Thornton Reservoir	10.30 am reservoir car park
6 Jan	Scrabble	Also Upwords & Rummikub	2 – 4.30 pm, Brook Court
11 Jan	Fit for Life	Weekly meetings resume	11.30 am – 12.30 pm VH
11 Jan	Science and Technology		12.30 pm Axe & Square
11 Jan	Country Dancing		2.00 – 3.30 pm Village Hall
12 Jan	Monthly Meeting	Bark, Berry and Leaf; Texture in the Garden <i>by Steve Lovell</i>	Doors open 1.30 pm Speaker at 2.00/2.15 pm
17 Jan	Solo Lunch	Ullesthorpe Court	Noon for 12.30 pm
18 Jan	Creative Writing	Theme TBA	2 - 4 pm Brook Court
19 Jan	SWANS	Castle Gardens/Bede Park	10.30 am Bonners Lane
20 Jan	Literature	The Martian by Andy Weir	2 - 4 pm Brook Court
22 Jan	Discussion	The Free Movement of People and its Implications	10.00 am at Jenny's home (16 Gillam Butts)
25 Jan	Country Dancing		2.00 – 3.30 pm Village Hall
28 Jan	Walking (CARE)	Details to follow	9.15/30 am Village Hall

ALTERATIONS TO USUAL GROUP MEETINGS OVER CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR PERIOD

Please note that this list may not be comprehensive, but includes all changes notified to the Newsletter Editor by Group Leaders by the copy date. Please check before attending your groups!

No meetings in December for these monthly groups:

- CARE Walking
- Solo Sunday Lunch
- Play Reading
- Garden Appreciation
- Jazz Appreciation

Changes to routine pattern of meetings:

Bridge:	No meeting 28 December, resume 4 January
Carpet Bowls:	No meetings 23 or 30 December, resume 6 January
Country Dancing:	No meeting 28 December
Discussion:	December meeting one week earlier on 18th
Fit for Life:	No meetings 28 December and 4 January
Kurling:	No meetings 23 or 30 December, resume 6 January
Model Aircraft Flying:	No meetings in December, resume 9 January
Nordic Walking:	No meeting 22 December, resume 12 January
Pilates:	No meetings 22, 29 December, resume 5 January
Singing for Fun:	No meetings 16, 30 December and 6 January
Ten Pin Bowling:	No meeting 28 December, resume 11 January

CHRISTMAS LUNCH PRIZE DRAW AND NEXT YEAR'S DATE

This took place at the end of our Christmas Lunch at Taste Restaurant, Leicester College on Friday, 27 November. The lucky winners from our 98 diners were:

First prize (£20 M&S giftcard):	Pat Whittaker
Second prize (£15 M&S giftcard):	Jenny Mills
Third prize (£10 M&S giftcard):	Valeen Blanchard

The date for our next Christmas Lunch is

Friday, 2 December 2016
at Taste Restaurant, Leicester College



COUNTRY DANCING



Our Folk Dancing Group continues on the second and fourth Monday afternoons (except 28 December) in Countesthorpe Village Hall from 2 until 3.30 pm. The next dates for our Monday afternoon sessions are 11 and 25 January 2016.

Please come comfortably dressed and ready to laugh if and when we get into a tangle!

Details from Patsy Paterson on 277 6259

TRAVEL GROUP

From the blaze of colour which is the Dutch bulbfields at tulip time, to the emerald green of Northern Ireland's gardens and stately homes to the snow-capped giants of the Swiss Alps! Where, but in our great U3A, can you experience such variety with such convenience - all within your grasp?

Some places still remain for the above short breaks in Holland and Northern Ireland, and the week's holiday in Wengen. Don't delay – book today, or add your name to the waiting lists, as cancellations often occur.

And then there are the day outings as well – with a great range of ideas being submitted by our members, who are also helping to organise the days.

In March, we have a return visit to the WWII codebreakers' centre at Bletchley Park – bookings now open. In June, take this opportunity to enjoy a day at the races – more details to follow! July sees us visiting the fascinating Art Deco home of the Courtauld family – Eltham Palace. In August there is a visit to Ely with its cathedral, stained glass museum, river, town trail and Oliver Cromwell's home. Booking opens for both of these last two trips in January. In September, there's a visit to Wansford Railway Station (HQ of Nene Valley Railway) and Peterborough cathedral, with an opportunity to do some Christmas shopping (for 2016!) in London with a day trip early in November.

So, lots to look forward to and plan for in the New Year! Watch out for full details in What's On, future Newsletters and, of course, on the website.

Jill Clayton is happy to answer queries and take bookings, so contact her at the Travel desk (in the small lounge), or call on 277 7154 or email her at jillclayton1@talktalk.net

THEY LOVE TO GO A WANDERIN' WALKING (C.A.R.E)*

Chris Harvey and Pat Allsop led the November walk, (which was the last of 2015), from 'The White Horse' at Broughton Astley. Twenty one members were present. We made our way through one of the older housing estates to the bypass, which we carefully crossed. This brought us onto the track that led across the fields to Cosby. Opposite the golf club we turned left, negotiating a very muddy gateway before stopping for our break.

The route back over the fields joined the metalled road by Sutton Fields Farm, bringing us to the allotments and the bypass near Sutton in the Elms. After crossing the road, we entered a different housing estate where we wove our way through to Frolesworth Road. From here it was a short distance via the church back to the pub and our well-anticipated lunch!



Many thanks to those members who have led and/or participated in the walks, in what has been another successful and enjoyable year. Whilst we already have some volunteers to organise and lead walks in 2016, we still require cover for June, July and August. Please contact either Malcolm Skerritt on 277 2599 or Allen Donkin on 2773665 if you would like to volunteer.

Our next walk will be on Thursday, 28 January – with full details to follow.

*NB: *C.A.R.E = Countryside Ambles, Refreshments Essential!*

HISTORY GROUP

Peter Liddle's talks on The Romans in Leicestershire continue at the Methodist Chapel, Wigston Street. 10 am – 12.15 pm. £3 on the door, to include refreshments. No booking required – just turn up on the day.

- **Thurs, 10 Dec:** Roman Religion and Burial
- **Thurs: 14 Jan:** The End of Roman Leicestershire and Rutland

Thurs, 18 Feb: RAF Museum, Hendon. Leave Village Hall at 9.00 am, Hendon at 4.00 pm. £20 payable by 12 January

Mon, 26 – Thurs, 29 Sept 2016: Short break to Ironbridge Gorge area. This will include a visit to the Museum of Carpet, a 16-mile ride on the Severn Valley Railway, Annual Passport covering all 10 Ironbridge Gorge museums/sites, plus a visit to Much Wenlock (*home of the Olympic Games – remember 'Wenlock' and 'Mandeville' logos for the Olympics in 2012?*), and then Shipton Hall. Half-board at the 3* Best Western Valley Hotel + coach travel, etc. £300 pp (shared) or £345 (single room). A deposit of £20 per person asap secures your place.

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

CHRISTMAS IS A COMIN' . . . BUT WHAT THEN?

Well, the shortest day is nearly here, then it will be the 'big day' itself, followed by that dreamy hiatus before New Year. Then, it's soon all over for another year, with the decorations down, pine needles vacuumed up, cards re-cycled, etc. Time which can stretch off into the future, with perhaps not too much to look forward to, or much in the way of motivation to make anything happen. Sound familiar? Yes?

Then, what are you waiting for – you're a U3A member and there is simply no excuse for not finding something to make a difference in 2016. With three dozen groups, there's something for everyone, and everyone gets a warm welcome, too.

So, if you feel like a little light exercise to drop those Christmas pounds, choose from Carpet Bowls, Country Dancing, Fit for Life, Kurling, Nordic Walking, Pilates, SWANS, Ten-pin Bowling, or Walking (CARE). Then, monitor your progress with CHEWS!

Or if you feel a little brain-dead or 'couch potato-ish' from all that TV, challenge yourself with something new. There's lots on offer, including Bridge, British Sign Language, Computing, Creative Writing, Cribbage, Cryptic Crosswords, Discussion, Literature, Play Reading, Science and Technology, or Scrabble.

Or simply relax and sample groups such as Art, Flower Arranging, Garden Appreciation, Guitar, Handbell Ringing, History, Jazz Appreciation, Photography, and Singing for Fun. Or, perhaps an outing with the Solo Sunday 'Lunchers' or the Travel or Theatre groups?

It's all waiting to be explored in Countesthorpe U3A – so why not make (and keep!) a New Year's Resolution to try something new? You won't regret it, as all our members agree.

GARDEN APPRECIATION – our newest group!

The Garden Appreciation Group regular meetings, from March onwards, will be changing to the **third** Thursday of every month, though dates for outings may vary from this. The two outings detailed below remain unchanged.

- **Thurs, 28 Jan:** Meeting at Glebe Gardens at 10.30 am where Bernard will talk about pruning. No charge, but it would be good if attendees purchased a drink and perhaps a scone/cake?
- **Thurs, 25 Feb:** Visit to **Hodsock Hall** to see the snowdrops. £22.50
Some details remain to be finalised, but bookings are open.

Details from Ruth on 277 1533 or see her at the general meeting.

If you have changed your address, or phone number,
It is **REALLY IMPORTANT** that you let Sue Wyllie (our Treasurer/Membership Secretary) know (on 284 9959) so that we have your current details on file in case we need to contact you.
THIS IS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT FOR TRIPS/HOLIDAYS!
If you have an email address, that would be helpful, too, please!

BIRDWATCHING

Fourteen members enjoyed the annual Planning and Christmas Social evening on 3 Dec. Our regular group meetings will continue on the first Thursday of the month from 7.30 pm in the small lounge at the Village Hall. Provisional outdoor visits, departing at 9.30 am from the Village Hall were agreed as follows:



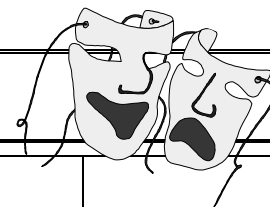
Fri, 7 April:	Coombe Abbey	Fri, 13 May:	Brandon Marsh
Mon, 6 June:	Rutland Water	Sept (date TBA):	Brandon Marsh
Oct:	Date and venue TBA.		

For more details nearer each date, please see What's On, or our U3A website, or call Tony Claricoates on 277 5251.

FREE LEGAL ADVICE FOR U3A MEMBERS

Advice available 24 hours a day, on any legal issues (not just U3A-related ones). Call FirstAssist on 01455 251500 and quote: "The Third Age Trust. Number 70494"

THEATRE PROGRAMME



Tues 26 Jan	The Royal Baccarat Scandal	£20	Market Harboro'	Leys at 6.40 pm VH at 6.45 pm Square at 6.50 pm	8 Dec
Tues 16 Feb	Chess	£18	Concordia, Hinckley	Leys at 6.25 pm VH at 6.30 pm Square at 6.35pm	13 Oct
Thurs 3 Mar	Goodnight, Mr Tom	£28	Milton Keynes	VH at 11.30 am Square - 11.35 am	12 Jan
Wed 13 Apr	Betrayal	£20	Market Harboro'	Leys at 6.40 pm VH at 6.45 pm Square at 6.50 pm	8 Mar
Wed 1 June	Annie	£33	Milton Keynes	VH at 12.30 pm Square - 12.35 pm	8 Mar

THE ROYAL BACCARAT SCANDAL - based on the book of the same name, tell the story of the 1890 Victorian scandal in which Sir William Gordon Cumming (baronet and personal friend of the Prince of Wales) was accused by his mistress's husband of cheating at baccarat. When the news became public knowledge, Sir William felt obliged to sue for scandal . . .

CHESS – THE MUSICAL. By Tim Rice and the 'boys' from ABBA. Fully booked.

GOODNIGHT, MR TOM - Set during the dangerous build up to the Second World War, Goodnight Mister Tom follows young William Beech, who is evacuated to the idyllic English countryside and forges a remarkable and heart-warming friendship with the elderly recluse, Tom Oakley. All is perfect until William is suddenly summoned by his mother back to London. **PLEASE NOTE EARLIER START.**

BETRAYAL by Harold Pinter explores the effects of an adulterous affair on the spouses, their illicit lovers, their family and friends. Reputedly, the play is based on an actual love affair between the playwright and a BBC arts reporter

ANNIE - Set in 1930s New York during The Great Depression, brave young Annie is forced to live a life of misery and torment at Miss Hannigan's orphanage. Determined to find her real parents, her luck changes when she is chosen to spend Christmas at the residence of famous billionaire, Oliver Warbucks. Spiteful Miss Hannigan has other ideas and hatches a plan to spoil Annie's search! Starring Lesley Joseph (of Birds of a Feather fame).

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

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

PLEASE ALSO NOTE THAT PARKING IS NOT ALWAYS AVAILABLE AT THE REAR OF THE VILLAGE HALL, SO CHECK!