

# Countesthorpe U3A Newsletter

June 2018

Issue 2018/1

## CHAIRPERSON'S LETTER

Hello Everyone

Ah! You've caught me while in a reflective mood. I was musing about a recent article I'd read which revealed that many children, having been told that they're very special from an early age, still consider themselves to be 'extraordinary' (and crave to be recognised as such) well into their 20s and 30s. This youthfulness, both of mind and attitude, might explain some of the regrettable behaviour and ill-conceived impetuosity that the rest of us are only too aware of – in areas such as finance and politics, to name but two.



But most of this 'specialness' is squashed out of us by the time we're in our 70s. It seems, according to this poll, that only 5% still think they are not 'ordinary' people at this advanced stage of their lives. Perhaps this explains why 95% of older people are much more content with their lot and are at peace with their world – i.e. with how they view it; and with how others view them; that they are special to both their family and friends, and that this is all good ...very good.

Mind you, I am finding that, at my age, everything is now starting to click for me; ...my knees, my elbows, my neck...

I must get back to reality. Thanks to all who attended and contributed to our recent AGM. This event is such an important part of our calendar where significant issues, resolutions and business can be tabled and discussed, and the new committee membership established. I am delighted to give a very warm welcome our newly elected committee members.

Do enjoy your summer. If your group is temporarily suspended during July and August, come back with renewed enthusiasm in September - willing to make that extra contribution whenever you can!

With very best wishes

Peter Bradbury  
Chairperson

(TEL 01455 273604)

# Chairman's Report to the 2018 AGM of Countesthorpe U3A

8 May 2018

It is difficult to believe that 12 months has almost passed since I became your Chairman. Since our last AGM I have enjoyed wonderful day trips out to places of interest covering history, the arts, science and technology – including a most enjoyable stay, over three nights, in Durham. These short holidays are so well organised. The recent trips to Weymouth and the Isle of Wight were much enjoyed by those who took part; with future short breaks to Llangollen and a European cruise already planned.

One memorable day visit included 'tasting' at the Cotswold Distillery. The main attraction of this experience was that you 'retain' each sample you taste - unlike proper wine tasting where you are obliged not to swallow. So, purely in the interests of serious analytical research it was gratifying (in no small measure!) to sample the extensive range of products. Furthermore, I'm delighted to say, the range became increasingly extensive as each new bottle appeared from under the counter. Back on the coach, a feeling of much peace and contentment ensued.

Our range of activity groups continues to grow with Classical Music and Line Dancing now running - with a Luncheon Club and Crafts as future additions. If anyone has suggestions for other groups please make contact with any committee member for help and support in making your ideas become a reality.

I must make mention of all those who have served on the committee over the past 12 months and to record, on behalf of everyone associated with our U3A, my sincere thanks for their invaluable contributions, which ensure our continuing success. It is now essential that more volunteers put themselves forward.

We are living in uncertain times. Relations between nations seem to be getting ever cooler, resorting to tit-for-tat exchanges both in diplomacy and trade. Nevertheless, whatever happens on the global stage here, in Countesthorpe, we look forward to enjoying the continuation of a full and varied U3A programme this coming year.



If anyone has ideas to improve our Newsletter, then I would be very pleased to hear from you – just contact me by phone on 277 6330 or by email at *[jhawkins45@talktalk.net](mailto:jhawkins45@talktalk.net)*

## CLARIFICATION OF OUR 'MEMBERSHIP YEAR'

Our membership year runs from 1 April until 31 March the following year. If any new member joins after our two 'renewal opportunity' meetings in April and May, they still pay the full amount, but their full or associate membership runs only until following 31 March. So, even if somebody joins, say, in November or January, they will still pay the full annual fee (it's currently only £13, after all!) and will be required to renew after 1 April alongside existing members.

This may seem a little hard on anyone joining late in 'our year' but we still have to pay the annual expenses, such as capitation to the Third Age Trust.

We hope that this helps to explain and clarify the situation.

## GUITAR FOR "BEGINNERS"

For a few years now we have had a group called 'Guitar for Beginners'.



The current situation is that we have up to 9 people coming to our home at 10.30 am on a Monday morning and, quite frankly, we do not have much more space or more chairs available. It would not be unreasonable to explain how and why this has come about.

A number of years ago (almost 50 years!) it was possible to run a night school class with the local education authority on the basis of an 'economic group'. The rules have changed but back in those days it was possible to run a group without any formal qualifications and without charting aims or progress provided the group paid for itself. I taught on this basis for some years.

While we call ourselves a group for beginners, some of those 'beginners' have been playing and practicing for years and probably should not be named as such. We do not have much capacity for new members but if you play (or have) a guitar, enjoy it and perhaps also sing please get in touch and come and see us.

*David Wild on 277 5881*



## MEET THE COMMITTEE FOR 2018-19

**PETER BRADBURY (Chairperson)** was born in Leicester and moved to Countesthorpe in 1968 with his wife Winifred. In 1978 the family moved to Sapcote, though an affinity with Countesthorpe has always remained. After teaching in Wigston schools for 36 years, Peter fully retired from his management and consultancy posts in 2007. He enjoys spending as much time as possible with family and especially his nine grandchildren. Peter joined the U3A in 2010 and participates in hand bells, art, history, bird-watching, travel and groups. He enjoys DIY, reading, classical music and history, as well as voluntary work within Sapcote.



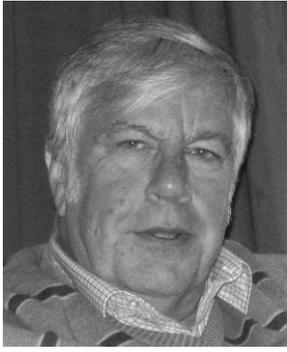
**DAVID FAGG (Treasurer w/e from 1 July)** moved to Countesthorpe from Eastbourne in August 2017 with his wife, Gloria, and they joined Countesthorpe U3A a month later; now enjoying SWANS, Flower Arranging, Classical Music, Travel, History and Crafts and other groups to follow. They moved to Countesthorpe on the advice of friends and family in the area. David has a knowledge of the Midlands from attending the City of Coventry Boarding School in Cleobury Mortimer, and working for National Westminster in the Field based in Kegworth. Although they lived in Eastbourne for 19 years, they have lived and worked in various places in Kent, Hong Kong (15 years) and the Middle East (4 years) and Central Europe. David has a background in Banking Operations and project management, and since returning to the UK (having re-engineered himself out of a job four times) has held various jobs in Insurance, Retail Fashion Outlets, Personal Shopper with Tesco, Bus Driver, and Father Christmas for M&S and Matalan! They have three girls and one son.

*(Sorry, but no picture available at the moment!)*

**CHRIS CLARICOATES (Secretary)** was born on the Isle of Wight and lived there for 14 years before her move to Countesthorpe. Married to Tony, they have three children who all attended local schools. Chris taught at Leysland High school for 25 years before her retirement and she now enjoys participating in the U3A History, Theatre, Fit for Life, Country Dancing and Birdwatching groups.



**DAVID WILD (Membership Secretary)** is married to Ursula. He is not native to this area but was soon hooked on village life after buying a house in Countesthorpe in 1978. He retired in February 2008 from a database-design career in insurance and quickly found that the U3A offered a very warm welcome. He enjoys a rewarding time with History Group trips, Sci/Tech meetings, Pilates, walks and the warm buzz of the committee meetings. He also runs the Guitar group.



**JUNE HAWKINS (Publicity and Information)** lived in Countesthorpe since 1979 before moving to Blaby in 2017. She has been a U3A member since 2004. Since retirement from her senior management post in 2008, and also running a small business she now enjoys U3A Travel, Creative Writing, Literature, Discussion, Nordic Walking and SWANS groups, and is Group Leader for Theatre and History. She maintains the website and produces the What's On, Newsletter, activity group leaflets and the monthly slide presentation. She has also edited the 'Creative Writing Miscellanies' and volunteers at the foodbank and the library.



**HELEN BULL (Speaker Finder)** Helen has lived in Blaby for 50 years. On retirement from her post at Brockington College she sought a social/interest group to fill her anticipated spare time and has found companionship through involvement in the U3A, enjoying many aspects, including the monthly meetings and the Theatre, Literature, History and Walking groups. Outside the U3A, Helen's interests include frequent visits to her 3 children and 6 grandchildren, gardening, yoga and knitting.



**BARRY HILLYARD (Technical Support Officer)** has been a member since 2006, a year before his retirement from teaching mathematics and IT. Married to Pat, he has lived in Countesthorpe for 40 years, and has been involved with the Methodist Church and the Scouts. His hobbies include computers and photography. He runs the U3A Carpet Bowls, Computer, Nordic Walking and Beginners' Photography groups, and participates in Photography, History, Walking and Travel.



**JENNY MILLS (Groups Co-ordinator)** has been a member since 2001 and has previously served on the committee. Born in Blaby, she lived in Countesthorpe for 40 years before her recent move back to Blaby. After retiring from her post as Lecturer at South Wigston College she ran our U3A Travel group very successfully for more than 12 years – introducing short breaks and the much-loved holidays to Wengen in addition to the outings. She now enjoys Discussion, Bridge, Handbell Ringing, History, Theatre, and Travel.



**BERYL LISHMAN** has lived in Countesthorpe for over 25 years. She has two, now grown-up, girls who attended the local schools and college and is a retired primary school teacher who joined the U3A in 2014 when working part-time. She attends the Literature group, and the Tuesday meetings when possible and has been on several theatre trips. Apart from the U3A, she sings in the South Wigston Sing4fun choir and is a member of the Leicester Footpaths Association, as well as spending one day a week caring for her latest granddaughter. She has welcomed the chance for more U3A involvement by serving on the committee.



**GRAHAM COX** has been a member since 2008, having taken early retirement in 2002 from Insurance Broking. Married to Jane, they set up home in Countesthorpe in 1969 before moving to Narborough in 1978. He has been an active member of the Scout Association, holding both Leader and Commissioner Warrants. His hobbies include carpet bowls, walking, horology including restoration of mechanical clocks, book collecting, gardening and decorating. However, unfortunately, with effect from the end of June, Graham will be resigning from his U3A role as Treasurer, due to health issues.



**PAULA WOLLASTON** and husband, Len, have lived in Countesthorpe for 25 years. They have family in Norfolk and Whetstone, with grand-daughters at Leicester University and a local school, plus a grandson who is a rock guitarist. Since retiring from her post with the Home Office 15 years ago Paula has enjoyed volunteering with De Montfort Hall Publicity Department and the A&E Department of the LRI, and is currently secretary and helper at the Senior Citizens' Luncheon Club in the village. Her interests include travel, historical houses and gardens, theatre, cookery and dining out.



**JOAN BERRY**, originally from South Wales, has lived in Countesthorpe since 1989, apart from a four-year spell in Rutland. She is a fairly new U3A member, attends the monthly meetings, is currently exploring some of the groups, and has so far participated in some History event. Before retirement she worked for the County Council as a Volunteer Organizer, and latterly managed the Volunteer Bureaux in Blaby and Market Harborough. She enjoys travel, reading, cooking and the cinema.



## **LOST!**

Anne Tester lost her dark grey fleece on the journey home from the Isle of Wight. If anyone has found it, or has any information, Anne would be very grateful if could they please contact her on 277 3840.

## **IMPORTANT NOTICE**

In common with every other organisation, Countesthorpe U3A is having to comply with the new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). No doubt you will have had this notification from several other organisations as everyone gears up to the new requirements. So that we can continue to contact you just the same as we do now in connection with your chosen U3A activities, we will have to formally ask your permission to continue doing so.

A small group of committee members will be looking at the most efficient way to achieve this in the near future. Most likely we will ask you simply to fill in a slightly revised membership form. This will be useful as we can use the opportunity to check that we have the correct contact details for you, and it also will give you a chance (if you are a UK tax player) to Gift Aid your subscription. *(This just means that we can claim back a sum equal to a quarter of your subscription, which can then go back into our funds for everybody's ultimate benefit – such as helping to keep our costs down.)*

So, watch out for more information in the near future and please do respond so that we can keep in touch – we don't want you to lose out on information from your U3A!

# ISLE OF WIGHT HOLIDAY

A merry band of intrepid U3A 'Travellers' set off by coach and ferry for the Isle of Wight in April. Staying at the lovely Warner's resort at Bembridge, we were able to relax in the peaceful surroundings, with the Solent lapping at the shore a few yards away, manicured grounds set with beautiful mature trees and a delightful Italian garden to enjoy – not to mention the first class food on offer.



Our first morning on the Island saw us exploring Carisbrooke Castle which has been by turns an Elizabethan artillery fortress, a prison for Charles I before his trial, and a royal summer residence. We enjoyed meeting the loveable donkeys and seeing them work, as well as spending time in a fascinating museum and exploring the Castle's Edwardian style garden.

Princess Beatrice Garden was a delight, with formality giving way to a wonderful display of wild spring flowers. And for the energetic amongst us, there were fantastic panoramic views from the keep and the high castle walls.

From Carisbrooke we moved on to Godshill with its wonderful model village. Like giants we strode around the manicured miniature village, towering over homes and churches, rivers and railways, marvelling at the intricacy of the superbly maintained structures. After a welcome cup of tea we returned to Bembridge.



Day two saw us exploring the delightful Whippingham Church in the company of a fascinating guide. Its close connection with Queen Victoria is reflected in the many memorials in the church and the churchyard which commemorate members of the Royal Family and the Royal Household. A side chapel is dedicated to the Battenberg/Mountbatten family. Princess Beatrice is also buried there.

We then moved on to Osborne House, arriving in heavy rain, which fortunately abated sufficiently in the afternoon for us to walk to the beach and enjoy an ice cream in brilliant sunshine. *"It is impossible to imagine a prettier spot"* said Queen Victoria and I think that we all agreed with her as we explored the house and grounds and learned of the importance placed by the Royal Family on leading as normal a life as possible. Osborne reflects Queen Victoria and Prince Albert's passions, tastes and style. Ornafe furnishings and artefacts from The Royal Collection fill rooms and corridors where Victoria entertained heads of state, inventors, princess and princesses and ruled the vast British Empire.



Shanklin was our morning visit on the last full day of our stay. This charming village has many pretty tearooms, antique shops and best of all – lovely walks down the chine or through beautiful gardens. Then there was the choice to return to Bembridge to enjoy the peace and quiet of the lovely grounds, walk along the shore to the lifeboat station or visit the nearby Roman villa.

Recently refurbished, there is an excellent visitor centre where the glorious floor mosaics and a wide range of artefacts found on site or nearby can be browsed in comfort, with a good café, too!

Finally, we made our way back, with a very smooth ferry crossing and a good trip home, with lots of pictures and memories of another successful U3A outing.



Many thanks to Jill and her supporters for organising this holiday for everyone!

# NEWS FROM SOME OF THE GROUPS

*Full details can be found on our website ([www.countesthorpeu3a.co.uk](http://www.countesthorpeu3a.co.uk)), or on the coloured Activity Groups List, the monthly 'What's On', or in the leaflets in the display racks at monthly meetings in the Village Hall foyer*

## **ART**

*Maureen Thacker on 278 1877*

You may have admired some of our group members' work at the Countesthorpe Art Exhibition held annually at the College. The group meets at the Methodist Church Hall between 2.00 and 4.00 pm on Thursday afternoon each week, although we close after 28 June and reopen on 6 September. If you have paints, watercolour or acrylics, paper and a pencil, please come along and join us. We do not have a tutor but everyone provides support for each other and we will be happy to guide you. Some materials, videos and books are available to borrow. The cost is just £2.00, including tea and biscuits.

## **BRIDGE**

*Alan Rooks on 277 2484*

This friendly group meets every Monday at the Methodist Church Hall playing from 2.00 to 4.30 pm. The group is currently seeking new members. You do not need a partner; we draw cards for that! Each session costs just £2 with tea and biscuits provided. Further details are available, so please do phone if you are interested in coming along – we would be pleased to welcome you.

## **SCRABBLE**

*Shirley Frost on 01455 285217*

A regular attendance of 10-14 keeps this group prospering. As well as the usual Scrabble, a vertical variety called Upwords is also available. Rummikubs, a simple number tile game loosely based on the card game of rummy, provides further variety. New members are always welcomed, and help to learn any of the games is available.

## **BIRDWATCHING**

*Janet Easey on 277 2544*

Meetings attract a steady 12 – 16 people, though there are many more names on the list. There was a visit to Slimbridge in January, followed by Brandon Marsh in February, though the severe weather caused the Middleton Hall outing which was planned for March to be cancelled. John Barrett gave an excellent talk on 'My Life Birdwatching' in April, and there are outings planned to Croft Hill and Brandon Marsh.

## **GUITAR**

*David Wild on 277 5881*

The group remains static with up to 9 members attending weekly to play a variety of music styles and also sing on occasion. Members have their own music and guitars.

## **CARPET BOWLS**

*Barry Hillyard on 277 4187*

This continues to thrive with 16-18 regular players throughout the winter, though this tends to reduce over the summer as outdoor bowling takes over. A replacement carpet has been purchased.

## **TRAVEL**

*Jill Clayton on 277 7154*

The group put on a successful combined planning and social evening in October at the Cornerstone. The recent holiday to Weymouth had proved very successful, and 42 people will shortly be going on a four-night break to Bembridge on the Isle of Wight. In October a short cruise, which is a new initiative, will call at Amsterdam, Antwerp and Hamburg. Day outings planned will see members visiting Windsor Castle and the Savill Gardens in July, the Eglantine Vineyard in August, Kedleston Hall in Derbyshire in September followed by the ever-popular Christmas at Chatsworth in November (which was fully booked the first month it was advertised.)

## **CHEWS**

*Ruth Westley on 277 1533*

This small group is still going well, but with a diminished membership (members rather than waistlines, here!) We meet four times a month at various places – our homes and the coffee shop to discuss eating (of course) and wider world topical issues. Success is achieved through our own, individually chosen, efforts.

## **GARDEN APPRECIATION**

*Ruth Westley on 277 1533*

This year's activities have included a talk at Palmer's on pruning shrubs, a guided walk around Leicester's Botanic Garden, a day out in Derbyshire where Hopton Hall's snowdrops were whitely drifting under the woodland's bare tree canopy. We also enjoyed an outing to Evenly Wood in Northamptonshire, looking at the scillas' blue "stream" by the woodland path (and having tea and cake in the café!). The outing to Ryton Organic Garden in May had to be cancelled due to lack of support (probably because of a clash with another outing, unfortunately). There are visits to members' own gardens, three of which are in Glen Parva, planned for later in the season.

## **COMPUTERS**

*Barry Hillyard on 277 4187*

This is not really a formal group, but a facility to assist members with any IT difficulties. It is offered on the first Monday of the month, on demand. Barry has had to convince one enquirer that he does not repair laptops, but if you are having difficulties with your PC or tablet, call him to discuss how he can help you to overcome these and get the most out of your equipment.

## **HANDBELLS**

*Pat Hillyard on 277 4187*

Eight to 9 is the average attendance and so new members are now being sought as 9 are needed to operate properly. There is no need to be able to read music, but you must be able to count! The group meets weekly on Wednesdays in the Methodist Church between 2 and 4 pm. Music and bells are provided, as are refreshments. Call Pat for information, or just come along and give it a try.

## **BEGINNERS' PHOTOGRAPHY**

*Barry Hillyard on 277 4187*

Again, not an ongoing group, but a facility that is available when there are a few members wishing to develop their skills in digital photography or come to terms with a new camera. This short course may be offered later in the year.

## **NORDIC WALKING**

*Barry Hillyard on 277 4187*

This continues with only 2 regulars plus occasional additional walkers. Walking with poles helps relieve pressure on knees and hips, as well as giving the upper body a gentle workout. You burn more calories per mile, so that has to be good if you are trying to lose a little weight. We do not 'do mud' or stiles, and so swing along pleasantly on quiet local roads and tracks. Why not turn up and see for yourself. It is not difficult – if you swing your arms as you walk, you can do it, and there are usually spare poles you can use. Meet at 9.30 am at Willoughby Road Playing Fields car park on the second and third Tuesday of the month.

## **SWANS (Short Walks And No Stiles)**

*Pauline Woodward on 277 9338*

There is a new leader in Pauline Woodward who has taken over from Liz Lockwood-Jones. From a total membership list of about 40 people, each walk attracts anything between 12 and 20 people. A list of Spring and Summer walks has been published, and includes city, countryside and canal strolls all planned with the likely weather in mind. It's a great way to gently exercise in good company and very pleasant surroundings. Our walks are on the first and third Tuesdays and start from various points at 10.30 am, and usually end up in a coffee shop! Details always appear in What's On and on the website.

## **CRAFT CIRCLE**

*Teresa Morgan on 0788 2604263*

This is a new group which is being established by a relatively new member, and will offer a range of crafts following demonstrations and examples from Teresa. This may include card-making, lavender bags, scrapbooking (creative photo albums), patchwork and memory boxes, with perhaps visiting speakers.

The meetings are held on consecutive Mondays and Tuesdays, twice a month between 10 am and noon at Teresa's home, for the nominal fee of £1 plus the cost of any materials used. Initial interest appears to be on scrapbooking and photo albums with lots of ideas to get members' interest.

## **BRIDGE**

*Alan Rooks on 277 2484*

This friendly group meets weekly between 2 and 4.30 pm in the Methodist Church, and is now seeking more members. You do not need a partner, as cards are drawn for this, though you do need to be able to play the game.. £2 to include refreshments. Call for more information, or just come along.

## **DISCUSSION**

*Liz Lockwood-Jones on 240 2296*

The group continues with its habit of not reaching any conclusion, although the discussion along the way is interesting and far-reaching (ie it may stray a little from the prescribed topic!) Recent topics have included "Should Children be Allowed to Choose Their Gender?", "Should the NHS Always be Free at the Point of Delivery?", and "Donald Trump". Whilst most meetings are in members' homes, the Christmas meeting was held at Mulberry Court when the group discussed Hot News, and again in March (as the planned venue was unavailable) to discuss "Should ISIS Fighters be Allowed to Return to the UK?"

## **LINE DANCING**

*Tricia Cornforth on 277 5135*

This is another new group, being led jointly by Tricia Cornforth and Maud Greasley, and it takes place every Friday in the Village Hall. The caller, Doug, is excellent and very patient. Everyone has a lot of fun and, whilst exhausting, it is also good for keeping the brain exercised! Currently around 25-30 people attend and this success has enabled the fee to be reduced to just £3 per session, or £20 for 8 sessions if paid in advance. There are plans for a more social event to be held one evening in the future.

## **SOLO SUNDAY LUNCH**

*Sheila Holmes on 277 2131*

This is a lovely group of single ladies who live alone (solo gentlemen are more than welcome to join us!). So far this year has been rather mixed with prices increasing, people being unwell, etc. The price of coffee has been the main stumbling block, but this has now been resolved! The Beast from the East did us no favours either, causing us to cancel for the first time ever, so we hope that doesn't happen very often in future. The numbers have stabilized between 18 and 25 which is more manageable. Mostly we are happy and enjoy this time together.

## **CREATIVE WRITING**

*Mikki Wilde on 277 5509*

This mixed gender group attracts a regular membership of 13 or 14 people. Everyone is very amiable and supportive and the afternoon is enjoyed by those who attend, with discussion and often laughter as we read out our contributions each month. Themes covered recently include: Focus, Relief, Unpredictability, Christmas, the Environment, Water and Windows. For the next meeting we will try to write about Bags. In November we also had a workshop with writing exercises. For December we abandoned the usual format and brought along favourite readings, seasonal or otherwise, all shared over delicious nibbles.

A variety of written pieces continues to be produced whatever the subject matter. It is always stimulating to hear others' work, and their comments on our own pieces. Also, we are embarking on a fifth miscellany which will appear free of charge to members later in the year – entitled "Pot Pourri". We hope you will enjoy reading our efforts.

## **THEATRE**

*June Hawkins on 277 6330*

We've enjoyed some good performances at the Hinckley Concordia and Market Harborough theatres. Although these are local, amateur productions, the standard is extremely high, with great staging and costumes and very good performers. 'Gasping' by Ben Elton was a spoof on big business and was a very enjoyable January evening. In February we had a great time with the well-known story of Mack and Mabel. Listening to the music, many of us also called to mind the wonderful ice dance routine of the same name performed by Torvill and Dean all those years ago. Then back to Market Harborough for 'Ghost Train' – a thriller play about passengers stranded at a spooky railway station. The fun continued in May with 'Anything Goes' at the Concordia. Why not join us and enjoy a great theatre performance, with almost door to door transport, good seats, good company and support for local theatre productions!

## **HISTORY**

*June Hawkins on 277 6330*

Pete Liddle concluded his set of talks on the Anglo Saxons in December and January and in February we were treated to a superb talk by John Martin, local guide, who explained the fascinating geological history of Bradgate Park. March saw us exploring the Imperial War Museum at Duxford, and in April we visited Derby where we enjoyed the magnificent cathedral and Pickford's House, plus the small but excellent museum and art gallery. Cromford Mill (nr Matlock) followed in May, with a chance to explore the beginnings of the industrial revolution. Future visits include the newly re-furbished woolen merchant's Piece Hall near Halifax, Middleton Hall, Soho House and Aston Hall, and Ludlow. In addition, the end of September will see us travelling to Llangollen, with a visit to Attingham Park en route. We have a full programme of activities, including a steam train trip, visits to Chirk Castle and Erdigg House and a canal boat trip over the famous Pontcysllte aqueduct, before returning home with a stop at Boscobel House on the way.

## **ALLOTMENT GARDENING**

*Val and Andy Grant on 277 8848*

This has now been taken over by Val and Andy Grant, and they are keen to recruit a few helpers. They are currently keeping it simple by growing potatoes, beans, parsnips, carrots and some herbs but hope to become more adventurous as they learn. If you are interested in a little gardening, and a share in the produce, why not contact Val or Andy to see how you can get involved?

## **PILATES**

*Ursula Wild on 277 5881*

Pilates continues to thrive under the new instructor, Debbie Cooper. Costs are held at £5 per session or £20 in advance for 5 sessions – which need not be consecutive weeks. Chairs can be used as an alternative to floor exercises. A new initiative to keep up the continuity of the exercise is to meet for a short session (noon – 1 pm) immediately before the general meeting on the second Tuesday of the month. Otherwise it is Tuesdays between 2.30 and 3.30 pm.

## **CRYPTIC CROSSWORDS**

*Ursula Wild on 277 5881*

Members continue to improve slowly, though prefer to concentrate on the puzzles by specific compilers. A few new members have joined the group, but they are very good at the cryptic crosswords – certainly not beginners! The group now meets at Ursula's home – though this now means no cakes!

## **LITERATURE**

*Barbara Marsh on 277 1989*

One of the best things about the Literature group, apart from the lovely people, friendly atmosphere, tea and biscuits, is making us read books we'd never consider reading otherwise. Quite often one can come to the group with very fixed opinions after reading a book, which often other people reinforce and then suddenly someone will come out with a comment or criticism that makes you look at it in a totally different way, which you'd never have thought of even if you read the book 10 times over! Sometimes it spurs us to either finish it (if we had abandoned it halfway through) or even to re-read it. Fascinating! Our discussions on the actual book generally widen out quite considerably and are most enjoyable.

## **NOTES ON ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP AND GIFT AID FOR ALL MEMBERSHIPS**

Associate Membership is ONLY available to individuals who have proof of FULL membership of another U3A. Current Associate subscription is £7.

Please remember that when an individual has kindly 'gift aided' their subscription, they MUST be paying income tax to HRMC. Tax rules and especially thresholds change, and if anyone finds that they are no longer paying income tax it is THEIR RESPONSIBILITY to inform David Wild (Membership Secretary) on 0116 277 5881 so that their name can be removed from our Gift Aid claims. This is really important and we ask for your help in ensuring that we remain 'legal'! Please do continue to 'gift aid', though, as long as you are eligible. Thank you for your co-operation.

## **KEEPING EVERYBODY INFORMED!**

Our next Newsletter will be published in December 2018, and news from the Groups will be much appreciated, or short articles about holidays or outings or even new groups, etc.

**Copy deadline is 20 November 2018, please.**

In the meantime, our monthly printed "**What's On**" and the **website** will keep you all up-to-date with what is happening. Group Leaders can assist by letting me know of any events, visits, or changes to routine meeting patterns no later than the FIRST Tuesday of the month, to ensure inclusion in the next issue. Many thanks to all contributors this year!

*Contact me by email at: [jhawkins45@talktalk.net](mailto:jhawkins45@talktalk.net) or  
call on 277 6330*

## **A NOTE ON TRAVEL INSURANCE**

When participating in a U3A Group holiday you are responsible for taking out your own holiday/travel insurance. Your Organiser may ask you for details of your policy number, and perhaps a 'next of kin' contact so that these are available in the unlikely event of an emergency.

## MONTHLY MEETING DETAILS

Always held on the **SECOND Tuesday** of the month  
at Countesthorpe Village Hall

Doors open 1.30 pm; speaker at 2.00 pm followed by refreshments

Date	Title of Talk	Speaker
10 July	Welcome to My World: Butler to the Royal Family and Stars	William French
14 Aug	Life as a Garden Designer	Bel Grierson
11 Sept	Conservation of Species; the Work of Zoos	Stephen Woolard
9 Oct	Managing Bradgate Wildlife	Peter Tinsley
13 Nov	Masters of Mirth	Mike Storr
11 Dec	What Has Space Done For Us?	Prof Martin Barstow

### YOUR U3A COMMITTEE 2018-9

Chairman:	Peter Bradbury	01455 274604
Deputy Chair:	June Hawkins	277 6330
Secretary:	Christine Claricoates	277 5251
Treasurer: <i>(to 30 June)</i>	Graham Cox	284 1949
Treasurer: <i>(from 1 July)</i>	David Fagg	462 3993
Membership Secretary	David Wild	277 5881
Information & Publicity:	June Hawkins	277 6330
Speaker Secretary:	Helen Bull	223 8239
Groups Co-ordinator:	Jenny Mills	277 2041
Technical Officer:	Barry Hillyard	277 4187
Committee member:	Beryl Lishman	277 0405
Committee member:	Joan Berry	277 4623
Committee member:	Paula Wollaston	277 9385

Full details of all our groups, events, trips and holidays can be found on the monthly '**What's On**' bulletin, provided at the monthly meetings with copies in the Rainbow Shop and Library. Or, why not visit our website for listings of all that is happening, and full details of our various groups. And don't forget the important items in the **STOP PRESS** section of the **HOME PAGE!**

**[www.countesthorpeu3a.co.uk](http://www.countesthorpeu3a.co.uk)**