

COUNTESTHORPE U3A

UPDATE AND CURFEW CHRONICLE No 14

Dear Member

Well, at last we have a 'roadmap' which (hopefully) will help extricate us from our current surreal situation. I think we have almost begun to forget what a normal, sociable life is like but we look forward to gradual easing of the restrictions, as well as to the improving weather. I always feel it is easier to be positive and cheerful when there's a bit of sunshine and some flowers to enjoy.

As usual, my thanks to all the contributors! I hope you will enjoy the selection for this month. Please do keep them coming in, as I think there will be a few more issues of the Chronicle yet!

Your committee will be considering the impact of the 'roadmap' and then liaising with our various venues and also with those of you who are Group Leaders, to try and plan for resuming our U3A activities. This will obviously be a gradual process, reliant on external factors way beyond our control!

Good wishes to you all.

June Hawkins

Information and Publicity Officer

*Chronicle contributions not later than 25 March, please,
to me by email at: jhawkins45@talktalk.net
or by post to 28 Mulberry Court, Enderby Rd, Blaby. LE8 4BU*

IMPORTANT NOTICE ABOUT MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Please note that renewals will cost **only £5** (full and associate members) for 2021/22 – no form is required, just send (with your name) to Barry Hillyard at 35 Station Road, Countesthorpe, Leicester LE8 5TA. **BUT PLEASE DO NOT SEND BEFORE 1 APRIL!** All new or lapsed (*check with Barry if you're unsure!*) members will need to complete the usual form and pay the full price of £15. Cheques are preferred, please, payable to "Countesthorpe U3A". Forms are available to download from the website, or contact Barry on 0116 277 4187. Please note that membership cards will no longer be issued, as little use has been made of them and this will save a little money! Programme cards will be made available to all members once our main meeting activities resume and we have details of speakers/dates/topics.

ON WE WALKED

The sunlight shone upon your face, we stopped the clocks and ceased all
haste,
By the lake we sat and talked, about our lives, then on we walked.

As waters rippled in the breeze and daffodils in brightness please,
Amongst the reeds the duck and drake, their timeless courtship rituals make.

Sometimes there is no need to speak, no need for happiness to seek,
Just walk the path we've walked before, where the lakeside meets the shore.

The morning sky of brightest blue, a lovely day to be with you,
Couples stroll and say hello, as we watch songbirds swooping low

The hedgerows now are bursting green and summer soon will be the scene,
But here and now by springtime flowers, let's just enjoy these precious hours.

All life is here before us now and nature never questions how,
We cannot know what life may bring, for now let us rejoice in spring.

Written by Adrian Dobey



- Whoever decided that an off-licence is more essential than a hair salon must be a bald-headed alcoholic!
- “Lead me not into Temptation.” Oh, who am I kidding? Follow me, I know a shortcut!

- An elderly couple are sitting in their two armchairs. She says, “I know I don’t say it often enough, but I really appreciate the way you’ve supported and comforted me over the years.” He replies, “You’re welcome!” She says, “I was talking to the chair.”
- Yesterday my husband thought he saw a cockroach in the kitchen. He immediately took out the rubbish and then sprayed everything down and cleaned thoroughly. Today I am putting the cockroach in the bathroom!
- An elderly couple are in church. Wife turns to her husband and says “I’ve just done a silent fart – what should I do?” He replies, “Put new batteries in your hearing aid!”
- A little silver-haired lady calls her neighbour and says, “Please come over here and help me. I have a killer jigsaw puzzle, and I can’t figure out how to get started.” Her neighbour asks. “What is it supposed to be when it’s finished?” The little silver-haired lady says, “According to the picture on the box, it’s a rooster.” Her neighbour decides to go over and help with the puzzle. She lets him in and shows him where she has the puzzle spread all over the table. He studies the pieces for a moment, then looks at the box, then turns to her and says, “First of all, no matter what we do, we’re not going to be able to assemble these pieces into anything resembling a rooster.” He takes her hand and says, “Secondly, I want you to relax. Let’s have a nice cup of tea, and then,” he said with a deep sigh, “Let’s put all the cornflakes back in the box!”



And next comes the second part of Stewart Fergusson's . . .

VISIT TO JORDAN: CROSSROADS OF THE MIDDLE EAST

The King's Highway - Moses, Mosaics, Romans and Crusaders.

From Petra we headed north along the King's

s Highway to the Dead Sea, that shrinking saline soup 1500 feet below sea level. The Dead Sea is shrinking because of the siphoning of water from the Jordan River and aquifers and springs to support the farming, and burgeoning towns and cities of this, the most populous, region of Jordan. This is an environmental issue that needs attention if the Dead Sea is not to go the way of the Aral Sea in Central Asia. To reach our last hotel our coach descended nearly 4000 feet in short order our ears popping as if we were descending in a plane. The Dead Sea Holiday Inn was a modern complex with terraces of swimming pools stepping down to the hot and humid seashore. It was a resort hotel that offered an opportunity to put your feet up, cool off in the pools or float in the Dead Sea. But for us the hotel was principally a comfortable base for more exploration of a markedly different part of Jordan. Over the final two days of our trip we criss-crossed this part of Jordan, a region of spectacular hills overlooking the Jordan Valley into Israel, the rolling countryside of farmland that is Jordan's food-basket and the burgeoning towns that cluster around Amman. In these two days we explored another important piece of the jigsaw that is Jordan's complex heritage, the often-violent cross-currents of the history of the world's great monotheistic religions and the *Pax Romana* that wasn't always so peaceful for the Jews and early Christians.

On the way to the Dead Sea we stopped off at Shobak one of the Crusading Castles built in the early 12th century by Baldwin the 'King' of the Kingdom of Jerusalem formed after the first Crusade. The Crusades and the new Kingdom of Jerusalem was an ambitious attempt by militant and missionary Christianity to bring the places of the Holy Land under western Christian control. By a mixture of shock tactics, missionary zeal and ladles of luck they established a precarious kingdom secured on the west by the Mediterranean and the east by a necklace of castles and forts. These forts stretched from Margat and Krak des Chevalier (the best preserved and most famous) in modern Syria, to Beaufort in Lebanon, Belvoir near the Sea of Galilee in Israel, and Kerak, Shobak and Petra in Jordan. Shobak was part of the Lordship of Oultrejordain one of the four seigneuries of Baldwin's Kingdom centred on Kerak made famous in the film *Kingdom of Heaven* with its vicious overlord Raynald de Chatillon energetically and eccentrically depicted by Brendan Gleeson. The atmosphere of these lonely outposts of the Crusader Kingdom can still be felt at Shobak. Its stark ruins stand isolated atop a prominent hill. It is a well-chosen site overlooking the fertile plain of Edom and astride the important trade and pilgrimage routes from Egypt and the Red Sea to Syria. Raynaud used the castle as a base for raids on caravans in defiance of a truce negotiated between the King of Jerusalem and the Muslims. This provoked the anger of the great Kurdish warlord Salah ad-Din who having recovered Jerusalem in 1187 from the Crusaders spent two years besieging this almost impregnable castle. Mamluk troops - a slave based elite military caste - were a key part of Salah ad-Din's forces and in the mid-13th century they overthrew his Ayyubid dynasty and created the

Mamluk Sultanate. Shobak was one of their important garrison towns and much of the remains of Shobak date from this period. The approach to the castle along the Kings Highway, and views from the parapets, give a real sense of its impregnability. Inside there are all the features of a secure fortress. Curtain walls, watch towers, secret passages, a thirty metre tunnel to a well cut deep in the rock of the prominent hill on which Shobak stands and a small room filled with stone catapult balls. There are also the remains of a settled community with a cluster of dwellings, the remains of a chapel and an Ayyubid palace with its reception hall and baths. More recently the castle has been a resource for local villagers with its stones used for local houses and the remains of a village school inside the castle walls. The pale yellow stone ramparts and ruins evoke one of the most contentious and violent episodes in the fraught relations between Muslims and Christians, and also between different dynasties of Muslim rulers, that are part of the history of modern Jordan. Shobak is now a centre for historical re-enactments - in this case the clash between Muslims and crusaders. The *Jordan Heritage Revival Company* is developing a range of historical tours and re-enactments to celebrate the historical roots of Jordan's rich culture. We did not witness one of these entertainments, but local army veterans dressed in Mamluk armour stood guard in the castle.

From the Crusades we journeyed back in time 3000 years to remote biblical history and myth on a visit to Mount Nebo. Part of a high ridge above the Dead Sea, it marks the birth of post Mosaic Judaism. According to the Bible it was on Mount Nebo that Moses, a mythical biblical figure perhaps based on a Moses like figure amongst the ancient tribes of this region of the Middle East or, as one scholar has described him 'a figure of memory but not of history', was granted a view of the 'Promised Land' but, according to the Bible, God had the hump over Moses' presumptuous striking of the rock near Petra to bring forth water for his thirsty followers and so took his revenge by denying him entry into Canaan. According to Christian and some Islamic tradition it is also the burial place of Moses. Like the search for Noah's Ark this is a biblical story and location much disputed by those intent on reducing a good founding myth to some kind of banal and unknowable historical truth. What cannot be denied are the spectacular views from this vantage point across the Jordan Valley to Jericho and, on a good day, Jerusalem. Today it is a pilgrimage site and a well laid out museum centred on the fourth century CE remains of a small monastery built by Egyptian monks and a fifth century Byzantine basilica. The basilica houses spectacular mosaics of, surprisingly, the secular life of Byzantine Jordan, notably winemaking and hunting. A prominent nod to the modern pilgrim is a preoccupation with the jubilee pilgrimage to the Holy Land of Pope John Paul II in March 2000, a classic example of the astute marketing of that conservative and controversial wearer of the papal mitre.

We continued the mosaic and biblical strand of our tour with a visit to Madaba one of the centres of Jordanian Orthodox Christianity. Madaba encapsulates historic and modern Jordan. It is mentioned in the Old Testament as having been conquered by the Israelites. The Moabs won it back. It then changed hands from Greeks, to Jews to Nabateans to Romans and then the Mamluks. At some point in the 9th century CE, during the Mamluk period, it was abandoned possibly as a result of an earthquake. In the 19th century Catholic and Orthodox Christians re-settled the site following clashes with Muslims. Today it is still a centre for Jordan's Christians who make up the vast majority of the population in the city centre, although Muslim families dominate the suburbs and outskirts. The Byzantine heart of this ancient settlement has been

meticulously excavated and forms the remarkable *Madaba Archaeological Park* with its Roman pavement, palaces, the Hippolytus Hall and a number of early Christian churches. The late 6th century CE witnessed an extraordinary burst of ecclesiastical building by Bishop Sergius, one of those energetic Byzantine churchmen who shaped the style and culture of early Orthodox Christianity. The distinctive features of his building boom are the wonderful surviving mosaics. For good reason Madaba is called the mosaic capital of Jordan with its own *Institute for Mosaic Art and Restoration*. The Institute trains Jordanian artists in the production and restoration of mosaics, spreads awareness of mosaics in Jordan and actively preserves mosaics throughout the country.

In our all too brief visit we headed for the 19th century St George's Church built on the site of a much larger Byzantine church where can be found a mosaic map of the Holy Land. The mosaic, of which only a remnant survives, was a vast and detailed map of the Levant from Lebanon to the Nile and the Mediterranean to the desert. It was a Pilgrims A-Z of the Holy Land guiding them to the sites associated with the Bible. It depicts Nablus, Jericho and Bethlehem; the River Jordan and the Sea of Galilee; the site of the baptism of Jesus, the 'field of Blood' bought with Judas's thirty pieces of silver and the sacred tree of Abraham near Hebron. There is a particularly remarkable plan of Jerusalem. This is one of the most important historical sources informing us about the size and topography of 6th century Jerusalem. It depicts the six Byzantine gates, the street plan, the important churches and, in a damaged portion, the site of the garden of Gethsemane. It is an evocative and remarkable artistic masterpiece. To conclude our short visit we went to a traditional Jordanian restaurant and feasted on a Maqluba. This is casserole made of layers of rice, vegetables and meat. After cooking, the pot is flipped upside-down onto the plate when served, hence the name Maqluba which translates literally as "upside-down". An appropriate end to our visit to this pleasant and historic market town.

The final part of Stuart's Jordan journey will appear next month.



Psychotherapy for Seniors

- Sit in your parked car with sunglasses on, point a hair dryer at passing cars and watch them slow down!
- On your cheque stubs, write: "For sexual favours"
- Skip down the street and see how many funny looks you get!
- With a serious face, order a diet water whenever you go out to eat.
- Sing along at the opera
- When the money comes out of the ATM, scream "I won! I won!"

Sent in by John Beaney

PUZZLE PAGE

12	9	13	13	8	17		3	9	7	7	4	6	A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z	1	14
4		8		18		23		17		9		10		2	15
26	10	5	5	10	21	2		13	4	12	9	24		3	16
4		12		23		10		10		23		9		4	17
	20	8	23	13		5	9	23	23	8	1	17		5	18
13		23				12		9				11		6	19
9	16	13	19	8	5		10	16	11	4	4	17		7	20
7				14		9				5		25		8	21
L														9	22
10	16	23	13	8	9	11		11	17	10	12			10	23
I														I	S
23		22		21		4		8		13		7		11	24
S														12	25
5	4	1	16	13		12	4	1	7	13	17	25	13	26	
9		10		8		13		21		8		17			
16	4	15	4	11	25		12	8	11	11	7	8			

1		2		3		4		5
6						7		
8	9			10				11
				12				
13				14		15		
16								

ACROSS

- 1 Large spotted dog (9)
- 6 South American mountains (5)
- 7 Was ahead (3)
- 8 Moonlight ____, sudden escape (4)
- 10 List of duties (4)
- 13 Irish ____, dance (3)
- 14 Window-pane material (5)
- 16 Full of holes (4-5)

DOWN

- 1 Miniature (5)
- 2 Teapot top (3)
- 3 As well (4)
- 4 House made from snow (5)
- 5 Head movement (3)
- 9 Block of gold (5)
- 11 Crime of fire-raising (5)
- 12 Frightening giant (4)
- 13 Traffic gridlock (3)
- 15 Part of a play (3)

PANCAKE DAY

By the time you read this, Pancake Day will have been and gone (I hope you had yours!). But this interesting piece on the Olney Pancake Race was sent in by Florence Drage, who used to live in that Buckinghamshire village.

History and Tradition

No-one is quite certain how the world famous Pancake Race at Olney originated. One story tells of a harassed housewife, hearing the shroving bell, dashing to the Church still clutching her frying pan containing a pancake. Another tells that the gift of pancakes may have been a form of bribe to the Ringer or Sexton that he might ring the bell sooner; for ringing the bell signalled the beginning of the day's holiday and enjoyment, no less than to summon the people to the service at which they would be shriven of their sins before the long Lenten fast.

Tradition declares that the race was first run in 1445; pancakes at the time being a popular dish, receiving royal favour. It was run on Shrove Tuesday, the day before Lent, and the whole day was given over to a festival of celebration, pranks and pastimes.

The race continued through the centuries, and while many other local customs died, and the race itself may have lapsed many times, such lapses never caused the race to be entirely forgotten by the womenfolk of Olney. It is known to have taken place during the troublesome times of The War of the Roses.

The Custom Revived

After a lapse during the Second World War, it was revived again in 1948 by the Vicar of Olney, the Reverend Canon Ronald Collins. In clearing out a cupboard he came across some old photographs, which had obviously been taken in the 1920s and 30s, of women running with frying pans. Filled with enthusiasm to revive the ancient custom, he called for volunteers, and in response 13 runners appeared on Shrove Tuesday that year. The race immediately caught the popular imagination, and the people of Olney set out to enjoy this simple and colourful link with their rich past, a day of festivities.



The Link with Liberal

In 1950 the race became an international event! A challenge was received from the town of Liberal in Kansas, USA, where they had, after seeing the press photographs of the race at Olney, conceived the idea of setting up a similar custom. Olney readily accepted the challenge, and in a spirit of international goodwill and friendship, the two towns now compete annually and prizes are exchanged. The race is run on a timed basis.

The winner is declared after times are compared through a transatlantic web link between Liberal and Olney. Representatives from Liberal visit Olney for the race day. Visitors from Olney to Liberal find it a much larger celebration spanning four days with many dignitaries attending the race day.

Rules for Competitors

There are not many rules, but all those racing must be women of 18+ years and have lived in the town of Olney for at least 3 months immediately prior to the event, or if living away, have their permanent home in the town. For the race they must wear the traditional costume of the housewife, including a skirt, an apron and head covering, though they need not be married.

The starter will order competitors "Toss your pancakes. Are you ready?" and give the start signal ringing the bell. At the finish, the winner is required to toss her pancake before being declared the winner and being greeted with the Kiss of Peace with the words "The Peace of the Lord be always with you" spoken by the Rector, and the traditional prize of a kiss from the Verger. All who finish the course are expected to attend the Shrivng Service during which the official Olney and Liberal prizes are presented.

Pancake Race Day 2019

A sample programme from 2019 shows an 8 am start with Breakfast with a Celebrity Chef. From 9 am – 1 pm light refreshments (including pancakes) are served in the Church Hall. Meanwhile, there are children's races and a "Cook it, Eat it" session with the celebrity chef in the Market Place marquee, plus stalls, side shows, entertainment and food stalls. At 11.55 am the pancake race starts from the Market place to the Church – a distance of 415 yards. The Shrivng service follows at 12.15 and includes presentation of the official Olney and Liberal prizes. The day concludes with an evening party, with a live video web link to Liberal in Kansas. (Olney has won 30 times, and Liberal 37 times.)

All funds raised go towards the fabric fund of the church of St Peter and St Paul to help maintain this historic building. Unfortunately, due to Covid-19 restrictions, the 2021 race had to be cancelled. Next race is 1 March 2022!

And continuing the nostalgia theme . . .

EATING IN THE FIFTIES

- Pasta had not been invented – it was either macaroni or spaghetti
- Curry was a surname
- A take-away was a mathematical problem
- Pizza? Sounds like a leaning tower somewhere
- Bananas and oranges only appeared at Christmas time
- All crisps were plain
- Oil was for lubricating; fat was for cooking
- Tea was made in a teapot using tea leaves, and was never green
- Cubed sugar was regarded as posh
- Chickens and fish didn't have fingers in those days
- None of us had ever heard of yoghurt
- Healthy food consisted of anything edible
- Cooking outside was called camping
- Seaweed was not a recognised food
- "Kebab" was not even a word – never mind a food
- Sugar enjoyed a good press in those days, being regarded as white gold
- Prunes were medicinal
- Surprisingly, muesli was readily available; it was called cattle feed
- Pineapples came in chunks in a tin; we had only seen a picture of a real one
- Water came out of the tap. If someone had suggested bottling it and charging more than petrol for it, they would have become a laughing stock
- The only things that we never, ever had on or at our table in the fifties were *elbows, hats or mobile phones.*

SOLUTION TO QUICK CROSSWORD

ACROSS	DOWN
1 Dalmation	1 Dwarf
6 Andes	2 Lid
7 Led	3 Also
8 Flit	5 Nod
10 Rota	9 Ingot
13 Jig	11 Arson
14 Glass	12 Ogre
16 Motheaten	13 Jam
	15 Act

WHAT I REALLY, REALLY WANT

I would like to go to my daughter's house
And knock upon the door.

I would like to go to my daughter's house
And not stand outside any more.

I would like to go to my daughter's house
And have a cup of tea

I would like to check on my grandchildren
And hug them one, two three!

Roll on the spring, roll on the cure,
Begone arm's length, it's just too far
Begone the masks and wary hovering.

We need to jump and stamp and sing!
And Grandpa and Grandma need
A gin and tonic as well!



I would like to go to my son's house,
He lives beyond the pale.

I would like to go to my son's house,
It feels like they're in jail.

They have a little daughter now
And Ruby is her name.

She's twelve months old and very sweet,
It really is a shame

That Grandma here and Grandad
Have only seen her smile

Upon a screen, upon a phone
For such an awful while.

We'd like to hear her rattle things
And bang about the floor

She'll only be this little once
Let's show Covid the door!



Written by Linda Webster

(PS The photo used is NOT of Ruby, but is an anonymous copyright-free pic!)

THE LEGAL SIDE OF FUN

ATTORNEY: What was the first thing your husband said to you that morning?

WITNESS: He said, 'Where am I, Cathy?'

ATTORNEY: And why did that upset you?

WITNESS: My name is Susan!

ATTORNEY: How old is your son, the one living with you?

WITNESS: Thirty-eight or thirty-five, I can't remember which.

ATTORNEY: How long has he lived with you?

WITNESS: Forty-five years.

ATTORNEY: So the date of conception (of the baby) was August 8th?

WITNESS: Yes.

ATTORNEY: And what were you doing at that time?

WITNESS: Getting laid

ATTORNEY: She had three children - right?

WITNESS: Yes.

ATTORNEY: How many were boys?

WITNESS: None.

ATTORNEY: Were there any girls?

WITNESS: Your Honour, I think I need a different attorney.

ATTORNEY: How was your first marriage terminated?

WITNESS: By death.

ATTORNEY: And by whose death was it terminated?

WITNESS: Take a guess.

ATTORNEY: Are you sexually active?

WITNESS: No, I just lie there.



WHO WANTS TO BE A MILLIONAIRE?

(Sorry, no 50/50, no phone a friend and no Googling or Wikipedia!)

Answer a, b, c, or d, and note your answers for later.

1. For £100. Which of these is an old name for the tomato?
a. Love apple b. Dream orange c. Darling cherry d. Saucy banana
2. For £200. Complete the proverb: Don't put all your eggs in one . . . ?
a. China cup b. Basket c. Bottom drawer d. Silver box
3. For £300. Which of these is a poetic name for Ireland?
a. Diamond Country b. Ruby Region c. Emerald Isle d. Pearl District
4. For £500. Which Soho Street was a centre of London fashion in the 1960's?
a. Dean Street b. Wardour Street c. Berwick Street d. Carnaby Street
5. For £1,000. A person who refrains from alcohol is said to be on the . . . ?
a. Train b. Wagon c. Bus d. Elephant
6. For £2,000. Which country had four kings called Malcolm?
a. France b. Greece c. England d. Scotland
7. For £4,000. Cathy Gale, Emma Peel and Tara King assisted John Steed in which TV series?
a. The Prisoner b. The Doctors c. The Brothers d. The Avengers
8. For £8,000. The Oval is the cricket ground for which county side?
a. Surrey b. Middlesex c. Sussex d. Gloucestershire
9. For £16,000. During which war was British Summer Time first introduced?
a. Crimean War b. Boer War c. World War I d. World War II
10. For £32,000. What was the surname of the Scottish outlaw Rob Roy?
a. MacGregor b. MacTavish c. MacNab d. MacDougall
11. For £64,000. Who did John F. Kennedy succeed as US president?
a. Harry S. Truman b. Dwight D. Eisenhower c. Franklin D. Roosevelt
d. Lyndon B. Johnson
12. For £125,000. Which architect designed the Marble Arch in London?
a. Inigo Jones b. Robert Adam c. Christopher Wren d. John Nash
13. For £250,000. What's the occupation of Miss Marple's nephew in Agatha Christie's novels?
a. Author b. Doctor c. Policeman d. Lawyer
14. For £500,000. Who has among his titles Earl of Merioneth and Baron Greenwich?
a. Duke of Edinburgh b. Prince of Wales c. Duke of York d. Prince William
15. For £1,000,000. Which New Mexico town has adopted the name of a radio quiz show?
a. 64,000 dollar question b. Truth or Consequences c. Twenty-One
d. Jeopardy

An updated version of the Twelve Days of Christmas which was inspired by the pigeons who disport themselves in the beech tree outside my lounge window. Try singing it!

Written by Shirley Wilding

In the 1st week of lockdown
My pleasure came from this

A pigeon in a beech tree

In the 2nd week of lockdown
My pleasure came from this

2 fam'ly zooms
and a pigeon in a beech tree

In the 3rd week of lockdown
My pleasure came from this

3 good books etc

In the 4th week of lockdown
My pleasure came from this

4 e-mails sent etc

In the 5th week of lockdown
My pleasure came from this

5 healthy walks etc

In the 6th week of lockdown
My pleasure came from this

6 meals for freezing etc

In the 7th week of lockdown
My pleasure came from this

7 hours with jigsaw etc

In the 8th week of lockdown
My pleasure came from this

8 sessions knitting etc

In the 9th week of lockdown
My pleasure came from this

9 times sudoking etc

In the 10th week of lockdown
My pleasure came from this

10 friends for phoning etc

In the 11th week of lockdown
My pleasure came from this

11 games of scrabbling etc

In the 12th week of lockdown
My pleasure came from this

12 T V quizzes etc

FOSTON CHURCH IN DIRE NEED OF HELP

Parts of Foston church were built in the 10th century and there have been many additions and renovations during the last thousand years. This historic church is loved by many. The annual Flower and Christmas Tree Festivals attract people from a wide area. Our U3A Handbell Ringers traditionally perform carols at the Christmas Tree Festival (*see picture below*), and for a number of years we also dressed a tree as well.

Foston church is a beautiful, peaceful place and is used on a daily basis by walkers and cyclists. However, the church is currently closed for safety reasons so no services are possible. The churchyard, though, remains open for us to enjoy the tranquillity and, at the moment, the lovely spring bulbs.

However, the church now needs major work to stop it falling down. The east wall is being forced away from the rest of the building by pressure from the arches. If this is not remedied, the results could be catastrophic. It is proposed to put two buttresses on the east wall and strengthen the arches. The estimated cost of repairs is £80,000. (*See crack in upper right corner of the photo below!*)

If you would like to donate anything, however small, then you can send your donation direct to the treasurer: Peter Holdridge, 25 Linden Avenue, Countesthorpe, Leicester LE8 5PG. Cheques should be payable to "Friends of St Bartholomew's". If you are a tax payer and would like to Gift Aid your donations, please contact the treasurer for a form - by email: peterholdridge@outlook.com or call 0116 277 1974. Bank transfers can be made to: Account Name: Friends of St Bartholomews Church Sort Code: 09-01-50 Account number: 04484347 Reference: your name.



Jenny, Pat, Chris, Linda, Maureen and Peter – Xmas 2019

NEW ELEMENT DISCOVERED!

Oxford University researchers have discovered the densest element yet known to science.

The new element, Governmentium (symbol=Gv), has one neutron, 25 assistant neutrons, 88 deputy neutrons and 198 assistant deputy neutrons, giving it an atomic mass of 312.

These 312 particles are held together by forces called morons, which are surrounded by vast quantities of lepton-like particles called pillocks.

Since Governmentium has no electrons, it is inert. However, it can be detected, because it impedes every reaction with which it comes into contact.

A tiny amount of Governmentium can cause a reaction that would normally take less than a second, to take from 4 days to 4 years to complete.

Governmentium has a normal half-life of 2 to 6 years.

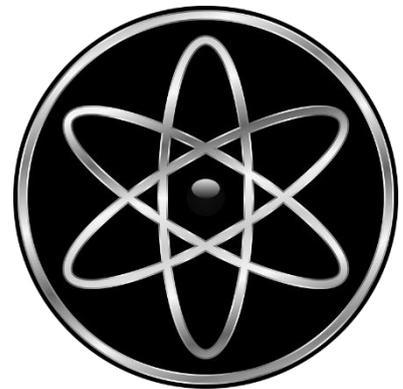
It does not decay, but instead undergoes a reorganisation in which a portion of the assistant neutrons and deputy neutrons exchange places.

In fact, Governmentium's mass will actually increase over time, since each reorganisation will cause more morons to become neutrons, forming isodopes.

This characteristic of moron promotion leads some scientists to believe that Governmentium is formed whenever morons reach a critical concentration.

This hypothetical quantity is referred to as a critical morass.

When catalysed with money, Governmentium becomes Administratium (symbol=Ad), an element that radiates just as much energy as Governmentium, since it has half as many pillocks but twice as many morons



Sent in by Tammy Dale

ANSWERS TO WHO WANTS TO BE A MILLIONAIRE QUIZ

1. a, 2. b, 3. c, . . . easy aren't they? You must all have won £300. **4. d, 5. b, 6. d, 7. d, 8. a, 9. c, . . .** getting harder! Do you have £16,000? Don't stop! **10. a, 11. b, 12. d, 13. a, . . .** £250,000, only two more to go! **14. a, . . .** can you get the last one and be a millionaire? Sorry, lost the answer! No, here it is, **15.** For one million pounds the answer is . . . b! Who knew? If you did and wish to claim your prize, June and I will be in the Andes tagging sheep!

Sent in by Tricia Brown

THAT'S ALL FOR NOW. SEE YOU NEXT MONTH!