



**July – December 2023**

## **CHAIRPERSON'S LETTER**

Greetings to all our Members

Summer is now well and truly here and if the weather forecasts are correct, we can anticipate another heatwave after a scorching June with temperatures at an all-time high. With the schools ready to close, we are entering the popular holiday period. Some of us may be preparing to go away to a holiday destination while some of us may well be staying at home and looking to enjoy what is available around us.



It is of course that time of year many when many organised activities do tend to slow down or have a summer break. As a **u3a**, we are committed to keeping the show on the road as it were as it is important that we can continue to have the opportunity to meet together, spend time with others and enjoy doing interesting things.

Whilst some of our activity groups may have agreed to take a break, some will continue to meet over the summer and our Monthly Meets with speakers will of course continue. There will also be special activities to join in with – theatre trips, a group outing and other events. Don't forget too to look at the next Hotel Break Holiday in Llandudno that is being planned for September.

Look out too for the opportunity to take part in taster sessions for a new Pickleball Group. This is a new fun kind of keep-fit activity for our members to enjoy. If you want to know more about this then check out the article later in this Newsletter or our website for further details and who to contact if you are interested.

In the meantime, whatever you are planning on doing over the summer, enjoy yourselves and keep safe!

David Hebblewhite  
Chairperson (Tel: 0116 479 0945)

## HAVE YOU EVER HEARD OF PICKLEBALL?

*“Pickleball is a fun sport that combines elements of badminton, tennis, and table tennis. Played both indoors or outdoors on a badminton-sized court with a slightly modified tennis net. Two or four players use solid paddles made of wood or composite materials to hit a perforated polymer ball, over a net.”*

Sheila Pennington has taken the initiative on this and has arranged two taster sessions – details on our website (though by the time you actually read this Newsletter both may have already taken place.) The second one is on Sunday, 16 July 2-3 pm at the College. £2. Comfy clothes and trainers or similar are all you need. Why not give it a try?

Further information from the Pickleball England website explains: *“The ball is served underhand from the right side of the court and is played diagonally across to the other service court. The defending side has to let the ball bounce first before it can be returned and, subsequently, the serving side also has to let the ball bounce. It is only on the third ball that the ball can be returned immediately. Either you can play a volley or you can let the ball bounce first.*

*“Points can only be scored by the serving side. You win a point if the defending side does not manage to return the ball, hits the ball out, does not let the serve ball bounce, volleys in the non-volley zone, or is hit by the ball. The game ends when one of the parties gets 11 points, with a 2-point lead.”*



This is a brief outline of the game, and more information on the scoring, and serving rules can be found on the Pickleball England website at <https://www.pickleballengland.org/rules/>

**For details contact Sheila on 07703 290886, or:  
sheepe53@gmail.com**

## Dare I mention the “C” word?

Well, I will anyway! Christmas lunch forms will be available from the small lounge at monthly meetings or on the website from early July. The date is Friday, 1 December 2023 and as ever the price includes your meal, entry into the prize draw and gratuities. Just £23 if you make your own way, or £28.50 if you would like one of the 49 coach seats on offer with the usual convenient pick-up places! First come, first served for the coach!



Only fully completed forms, with your cheque payable to Countesthorpe u3a (or cash if you really must) can be accepted, and the closing date is 1 November.

*(If you think this is early, you might like to know that our date for 2024 has been reserved as 6 December. Nothing like a bit of forward planning!)*

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## SPORTING COMMENTATORS' LIVE BLOOPERS

“Jose Mourinho has got the Midas touch right now – everything he touches turns to silver” (*Richard Keys, Sky Sports*)

“I thought we started very brightly, but then the Achilles heel which has bitten us in the backside all year has stood out like a sore thumb” (*Andy King*)

“A brain scan revealed that Andrew Caddick is not suffering from stress fracture of the shin” (*Jo Sheldon, Sky News*)

“History, as John Bond would agree, is all about today's and not about yesterday's” (*Brian Moore, Sports Commentator*)

*and two from the all-time Kings of Bloopers . . .*

“And here's Moses Kiptanu – the nineteen-year old Kenyan, who turned twenty a few weeks ago” (*David Coleman*)

“We now have exactly the same situation as we had at the start of the race, only exactly the opposite” (*Murray Walker*)

*(From The Book of Senior Moments by Shelley Klein)*

## A G M – 13 June 2023

# CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

It does not seem one year since we had our last AGM. I hope that we have all valued the time that we have spent over the last year, attending our monthly meets and listening to some extraordinary speakers, supporting and going to the many various group activities that are available to us.

The time that we invest in our **u3a** benefits not just ourselves in terms of our own individual enjoyment, learning, growth and the friendships that we have enjoyed, but also in what we have given to fellow members alongside us. Being in the **u3a** is about sharing our time, our life experience, our wisdom and our gifts with each other. In all, the investment we each potentially make to the **u3a** in Countesthorpe has, I hope, proved to be a very worthwhile investment and long may that continue.

Of course, like many **u3as** our membership has been affected with the events of COVID, and with the natural events of life and getting older. However, it has been very encouraging to see new members coming to us through the monthly meet and also joining the activity groups. Whilst some groups have ceased for various reasons, the good news is that new groups and events are being suggested and planned which will emerge over the coming year.

I have to report that as a Committee, due to increasing running costs, we have had to look at our subscription fees. As the AGM 2023 had to be deferred, this did not allow time for the following motion to be accepted before the 2023/2024 subscriptions were due. Therefore, before the May 2023 General Meeting started, an EGM was held. At this EGM a motion was submitted that: *“The subscription fees for Countesthorpe **u3a** for the year 2023/2024 will be £20 per full member and £10 per associate member with no extra payment for cash or cheques.”* I have to say, where else would you get so much value for money!

We are growing once more and this does rely on us talking to others about what we offer as a **u3a** and inviting people to join us. This is crucial to our growth and sustainability.

We have also been raising our public profile through involvement in community events and projects, such as at Christmas time and especially just recently with the King's Coronation. As a Committee we hope to continue to use these opportunities as they arise and let people know all about us.

For this reason, too, the Committee will be looking at our vision as a **u3a** and working on how we can continue to raise our public profile and also link

in with those organisations promoting social health and wellbeing in our area. If you would like to help us as a Committee in this valuable task then please do get in touch with me or any Committee Member.

As a Committee, all our current members are willing to continue to serve us for the forthcoming year, but we do have one vacancy for someone to join us. Being a Committee member is to enjoy a valuable role in the smooth running of our **u3a** and helping us to move forward in all that we are doing. Please do consider whether you would like to offer yourself for election to the Committee and play a positive role beyond what you might be taking part in already.

I would especially like personally thank those Committee Officers who make my job as Chairperson so much easier: David Hetterley as our Treasurer, Janine Tibbles as our Secretary, June Hawkins as Groups Co-ordinator, Publicity/Information Officer and Website Manager, and Barry Hillyard as Membership Secretary and Beacon Administrator. Also fellow Committee Members Jill Clayton, Beryl Lishman, Dorothy Ivatt, Gill Brown and David Norris. They are all willing to continue in their roles so please do take the opportunity to thank them yourselves when you meet them around and about.

Many thanks, too, to those who serve on Welcoming Team at our monthly meet and to the hardworking team in the kitchen who provide us with tea, coffee and biscuits - and I have to include pulled out all the stops with the wonderful Coronation Afternoon Tea!

We have much to look forward to in the coming year and please do continue to support all that we do together.

David Hebblewhite  
Chairperson

### ***ADDENDUM***

*The motion submitted at the EGM was “The subscription fees for Countesthorpe **u3a** for the year 2023/24 will be increased to £20 per full member and £10 per associate member with no extra payment for cash or cheque.”*

*Proposer: Gillian Brown*

*Seconder: Peter Bradbury*

*Vote: FOR – unanimous; AGAINST – 0; ABSTENTIONS – 0*

*The motion was therefore carried unanimously.*

## **MONEY MAKES THE WORLD GO ROUND**

However, with banks closing all around us, paying in coins is becoming a bit of a problem. Small denominations are particularly difficult, as the Treasurer has to hoard them until such time as sufficient are available to fill the requisite banking bag.

**So, it would help greatly if ALL MEMBERS WHO PAY BY CASH – whether at Activity Groups or for membership fees – would please pay ONLY in notes, £2, £1 or 50p coins.**

## **A TALK NOT TO BE MISSED! September 2023 at the General Meeting**

Jackie Barker, one of our members, recounts her very personal experience during the 1947 partition of India and Pakistan. *“During the bloody violence that followed the partition of India and Pakistan, my family - parents, sisters and me - seemed to have been forgotten by the British Army. Finally, being ordered to report to Karachi, without papers or money, we set off to make the 1000 mile journey across the divided and disturbed Punjab. This is our story.”*

## **THE ‘EASTBOURNE HOLIDAY’ – A REPORT**

The aim of the U3A is to encourage older people to share their knowledge and interests, so with this in mind Jill, with Sue’s and Anne’s help, kindly organised an educational five days in the south east of England, based in Eastbourne. It was not a seaside holiday, you understand!

As we gathered together before departing, we discussed Meteorology, and to cover the lousy weather forecast for the next five days, we’d all got a myriad of waterproofs and raincoats which we loaded onto our coach, but it was dry, although cool as we set off. Next, Geography. “Are we there yet?” was answered by “No, it’s Saffron Walden”. This was for a long lunch break, or do I mean investigation of a rural market town with a “new” town plan dating from the 1140s and loads of mediaeval buildings? To extend our History knowledge, Sue insisted we all have a town trail, which was great but didn’t include cafés and jewellers, and anyway, due to an unexpected Bank Holiday Monday, a lot of Saffron Walden was shut. So, no “little something in diamonds” suitable for my imminent birthday. My husband said he was

upset. Luckily, many eateries were to be found open and although the Art Gallery was closed, just beyond it, the Bridge End Garden (winner of a UK Heritage Award) was a delight, with one of the garden designers on site who was happy to chat. That covered some Horticulture and Botany questions. Between us all, I'm sure we covered all the buildings on the trail including the gothic church and the pubs (well, one of them was Grade 1 listed]. Most intriguing was the building with the wall plaque that said "In 1832 on this spot nothing happened". Makes you wonder what occurred in all the other years? Discuss later?

So, onto the seafront, Trip Advisor 4\*, East Beach Hotel in Eastbourne. It had obviously been totally newly refurbished and huge ornate mirrors were everywhere, as were crystal chandeliers (although not in our shower room, a missed opportunity, I felt). Later, over dinner, room fittings were compared and Interior Design was explored. Domestic Science was an ongoing daily discussion for several groups at a variety of tables in the dining room, as menu choices were thoroughly examined.

Tuesday, saw a visit to Brighton for the majority of us. We all carted macs around but it was a dry day, warmer than Monday. There was the Art Gallery and Museum to add to our knowledge of modern paintings, although the former art teacher amongst us wondered who'd be the first to say "What, call that art?" It was a close run thing who won that competition. Luckily there were many other interesting exhibits to make the visit well worthwhile. The Royal Pavilion was stunning, the East Beach Hotel had nothing on the

magnificent, heavyweight, immense, extremely colourful and ornate chandeliers. The incredibly large, new carpets in public rooms warranted careful study of their own exhibition upstairs explaining the Technology and Engineering of their very specialized manufacture. I'm sure those who visited the Sea Life Centre would be only too happy to discuss the life cycle of a



seahorse or whatever if asked, or any other Zoology question pertaining to fishy things. Brighton's famous Lanes provided valuable lessons in Economics otherwise known as retail therapy. Everyone seemed to have enjoyed their day in their various pursuits of learning.

Waterproofs at the ready, on Wednesday we set off for Chartwell, Winston Churchill's home from 1924 until his death in 1965. It was mainly displayed as it was in the 1930's, with the exception of the secretaries' room, which covered the war years. There was a fascinating collection of his own

personal possessions accumulated over his lifetime, including gifts from all over the world. I was drawn to the solid gold, curved dagger, not sure why, but perhaps the three rather large diamonds set into the sheath might have had something to do with it. The National Trust guide pointed out that the display case was alarmed. Shame. Moving on and the uniform room gave us a small insight into Fashion and Costume, as it included Winston's ordinary clothes and accessories as well as uniforms from 1895, including those from the Boer War and World War 1, as well as the famous "siren" suit and the Robes of the Order of the Garter. Venturing outside, the house is set on a hillside with a lot to see and a lot of steps! But plenty of seating areas to enjoy the bursts of warm sunshine whilst enjoying the far reaching views. You could visit Winston's studio, the Golden Orfe pond, the rose garden (yet to bloom) and the vegetable garden, to name some of the nearest places. Further afield the estate also boasted a swimming pool, lakes, a tree house, Donkey Jack's caravan, among other attractions, as well as a bomb crater, a garden feature that not many of us can boast of, or wish for, come to think of it. As we reluctantly left, the skies quickly became overcast and the heavens began to open, at last raincoat carrying seemed justified but they were not needed as we'd already scrambled back onto the coach and, to add insult to injury, the downpour soon stopped as we drove. Nevertheless, there'd been enough moisture to create a mist over the cliffs, so our coach driver Geoff's planned drive via Beachy Head did not give the views promised. Actually, at that point there were no views at all!

Thursday provided a day of free choice. A lovely warm sunny day with clear blue skies. We took the macs anyway, after all, we are British. Some went by bus to Hastings, apparently watching fishing nets dry. On further investigation that was in the Fisherman's Museum, so they were gaining knowledge after all. A few got windswept on the local open-topped bus. In Eastbourne there was a museum to visit, the pier, and a lifeboat station with a museum. Many took advantage of the beautiful weather and just sat on benches along the promenade (obviously revising the Theory of Evolution ready for tomorrow's excursion) and others, like myself, ambled into town; it didn't look far but felt like several miles. Speaking of which, one brave soul, not to be short-changed, yomped with suitable gear and backpack all the way up to Beachy Head and back. She reported upon helpful locals and the magnificent views. So one of our number got that covered!





Our departure on Friday was another fine day, so throwing caution to the winds, I packed our rain gear in the suitcases and we began the journey home via Down House for sustenance and a detailed study of Darwin's life and his scientific discoveries – or whatever it was Jill said we had to learn. Geoff had great fun (?) negotiating the narrow country lanes as we neared Darwin's home, the rest of us all breathed in and shut our eyes as we scraped past the odd oncoming vehicle. We only had to reverse once. As we pulled into the car park, yes, you've guessed it, the rain came down and kept coming. Luckily, it was only a quick dash into the building. And what a fascinating place it is. All of Darwin's life was covered, from his childhood, his education and his failed studies to be a doctor and then a parson (he wasn't interested enough in either), then a 5 year trip of the exploration of South America on HMS Beagle. You'll have to Google his journey and discoveries, far too many to mention here, as are the experiments, research and scientific theories he continued with and published later in his life. He worked hard, despite bad health, but luckily, throughout his life he was supported by his rich society doctor and financier father and also by Josiah Wedgwood, who was his uncle and father-in-law (Darwin married his first cousin, Josiah's daughter Emma}. After the birth of his first two children made his London home too cramped, his father made him a loan to buy Down House. Just as well, as he and Emma went on to have eight more children! Everything was well displayed and there was a lot to see. I highly recommend a visit. As the rain had conveniently stopped, there was just enough time to quickly explore the gardens and glass-houses where experiments had taken place. Just like Chartwell, everywhere was immaculately maintained by an army of volunteers. I'm thinking of giving our semi to the National Trust – gardening, cleaning and restoration sorted – we'll live in and show the coach parties round!

Our final investigation was simple Mathematics. We tried to calculate how many yards per hour the coach was crawling as we approached the Dartford Tunnel, as we had plenty of time to do so, Geoff gave us extra time as we hit the gridlock (rush hour) on the M25 to try to convert this into kilometres (calculators not allowed). As there were no prizes, no answers were forthcoming. Nevertheless, we arrived home early evening, after a convenient motorway service station stop where I bought two M&S, microwavable, ready meals for later. Jill thinks of everything.

Thanks to her and everyone who made it a memorable holiday. Obviously, apart from those named (they worked hard enough) the others of our party are only too willing to answer questions on their newly gained knowledge, if only Jill hadn't lost the list of who they are. Oh well, maybe next time!

*Report by Tricia Brown*

## ALL ABOUT MEMBERSHIP – HOW TO JOIN OR RENEW

To join as a NEW member, please either click on the attachment and download the form from our website OR ask the Membership Secretary at a monthly meeting. All instructions are on the form. Subscriptions as below:



To RENEW your membership for 2023/24, subscriptions are:

**Full Membership: £20** (pay by BACS, cash or cheque)

**Associate membership** (with proof of full membership of another **u3a**) costs **£10** (pay by BACS, cash or cheque)

1. There is no need to complete another membership application form
2. **BY BANK TRANSFER:** Payee: The Countesthorpe **u3a**. Sort Code: 40-12-35 A/c no: 01402889 It is **IMPORTANT** that you use your **u3a** membership number as the reference, FOLLOWED by your name. If you do not know your number, call Barry or June who will help you.
3. **BY CHEQUE:** payable to "**COUNTESTHORPE u3a** " to our Membership Secretary, Mr B Hillyard, 35 Station Rd, Countesthorpe, Leicester LE8 5TA. You can also use the **u3a** deposit box at the Library/Parish Office.
4. **BY CASH:** (*Least preferred!*) To our Membership Secretary, Mr B Hillyard, 35 Station Rd, Countesthorpe, Leicester LE8 5TA.



**IF YOUR MEMBERSHIP HAS LAPSED**, then please follow the instructions for new members as above. Fees are as shown. If you are unsure whether your membership lapsed, then please contact Barry on 277 4187.



**MEMBERSHIP CARDS** will not be issued, as little use is made of them. Proof of membership can be provided on request to Barry, if this is required.



**KEEPING OUR RECORDS UP-TO-DATE:** If you have changed your phone number(s), address or email, please advise Barry or June to enable us to update our system and thus keep in touch with you.

## BEWARE THE POWER OF THE u3a!

This is the cautionary tale of two members of the Countesthorpe **u3a**. One was a recently bereaved man who was living alone in the family home, but realised that life is for living and that he must get out and be active. So he joined a number of **u3a** groups, such as Walking, Discussion, History, Literature, Cryptic Crosswords and the previously attended Science group. For anonymity we will call him Dee.

His first outing with the History group was to visit a museum in West London, and Dee knew this involved a two-hour coach ride each way, which he did not fancy doing on his own and talking to no one. So when he paid for the trip he asked the lady on the History desk to introduce him to another lone traveller, so that they could sit together, natter and keep each other company. In the event, the group leader (again for reasons of anonymity we will call her Jay) took on the responsibility herself. Well, Jay and Dee got on very well and they kept each other company for the whole day.

They became more like friends than acquaintances, and this was particularly true when Jay's planned holiday with a friend was put in jeopardy by unforeseen events. Now, Jay's friend was a member of the Cryptic Crossword group, as also was Dee. So a resolution for the holiday was that Dee would take the holiday place, and accompany Jay. Matters moved gently on. And now, twelve months on, Dee has sold the family home, put all that money into a Trust Fund for his six grandchildren, disposed of his car and almost all his possessions (excepting a food mixer and a wok!) and moved in with Jay – previously a contented singleton for some 40+ years.

They will be married at 3 pm on 19 August at All Saints' Church, Blaby, and would be pleased to see any **u3a** friends who would like to be there. They are both extremely happy, and have a joyous future to anticipate. So, embrace the power of the **u3a**!

*Editor's note: We hope you will forgive this bit of self-indulgent publicity. We wanted to share our considerable and unexpected happiness with all our **u3a** friends!*



If anyone has any ideas to improve our Newsletter, or any contributions for the next issue, 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)

## **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**. The current Associate subscription is £10 whether paying by BACS, cheque or cash (*least preferred*).

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 Barry Hillyard (Membership Secretary) on 0116 277 4187 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.

## **A WORD ABOUT u3a MATTERS**

As most of you know, each individual local u3a is a charity in its own right, operating according to the model constitution and under the auspices of the Third Age Trust. To further this sense of belonging to a national organisation, the magazine u3a Matters is available to every full member.

The system set up by the Third Age Trust assumes that every member who is registered with their local u3a, and therefore for whom we pay a capitation fee, will receive the magazine.

On occasion, some members have chosen not to receive this and accordingly, our membership secretary informs Third Age Trust of this, and in due course (systems are slow!), they are removed from the mailing list.

This does NOT affect the individual's membership, or the capitation fee we pay to Third Age Trust per member. Also, we do not pass on any mailing list to any other organisation.

So, it is your choice. You will automatically receive the magazine unless you choose to opt out by informing Barry Hillyard of this, by calling on 0116 277 4187 or by email: [barry@bhillyard.plus.com](mailto:barry@bhillyard.plus.com)

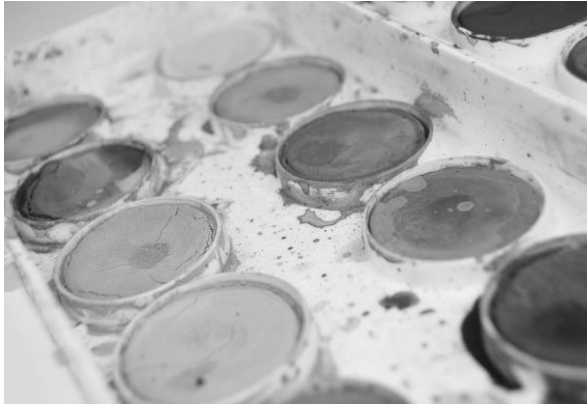
## NEWS FROM SOME OF THE GROUPS

*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*

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### ART

*Pam Whitehead on 277 8855 or Tricia Brown on 291 2241*



The art group is in a very happy place at the moment with 12 to 13 artists regularly attending most meetings. There is a friendly and close feeling of community within our group. A trip to the annual Patchings Craft Festival is planned for July and we are also hoping to get a silk painting workshop later in the year.

### BIRDWATCHING

*Janet Easey on 277 2544*

The Birdwatching Group has remained consistent, with around 20 stalwarts who venture about the surrounding area in search of interesting birds. We are getting better at identifications, and can now tell a Shoveler from a Shelduck and a Wigeon from a Pochard. The weather has been kind to us every month this year so far, and we are hoping that our luck holds for trips later on, including to Egleton and Brandon Marsh.



### SOLO SUNDAY LUNCH

*Hilary Natzel on 277 1176, or  
Carol Kenneth on 277 8999*



Solo lunches continue to be popular and we now have regular attendances of about 20+ diners. We continue to try out new venues and would like to see a few new members. So don't eat alone on a Sunday – this is a really good way to make new friends. Sign up and select your meal in the small lounge at monthly meetings, or call Hilary or Carol.

## **THEATRE**

*Janine Tibbles on 07970 648979 or Gill Brown on 07757 007025*

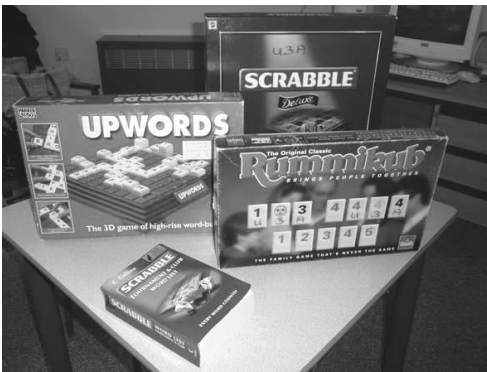


Gill and I would like to report that in our second year as Group Leaders, the Theatre Group continues to be well supported by members who have enjoyed the varied performances and venues visited. We have tried to book a selection of plays, musicals and pantomimes at different theatres to cater for different tastes.

Our forthcoming theatre visits will include free time and matinées in both Market Harborough and Northampton, and evening and afternoon performances at Curve and The Little Theatre. Our full programme of visits can be found on "What's On" and the website and both Gill and I would be happy to hear any suggestions from members for future theatre visits. Please join us whenever you can.

## **SCRABBLE**

*Carol Kenneth on 277 8999*



About a dozen members enjoy Scrabble, Upwords and Rummikub in Brook Court's Residents' Lounge on the first Wednesday of the month from 2 pm. New members are always welcomed, and help and guidance is available for those who would like to learn a new game.

## **HOLIDAYS**

*Jill Clayton on 277 7154*

This year saw a very enjoyable visit to Eastbourne. Tricia Brown has written an entertaining account of the holiday earlier in this newsletter. There is another holiday – this time to Llandudno - planned for September 2023. This will be in a seafront hotel, with a programme of visits included. Many of these will be to National Trust properties. At the time of writing, this is well-subscribed, but Jill is always willing to take names for a waiting list in case of last minute cancellations.



## **WALKING (CARE)**

*Allen Donkin on 277 3665*

Whilst we have lost some members for a variety of reasons (including simply ageing!), we usually find about 20-25 walkers turn up on the last Thursday of each month. We walk for about 4 or 5 miles, with members taking turns to lead walks. Very importantly, we conclude our walk with an optional pub lunch! We are always keen to see new walkers, and especially if they would offer to lead even just one walk a year. Reports and pictures of our the current six walks appear on the website – see the Activity Groups section.



## **OUTINGS**

*David Hebblewhite on 0116 479 0945*

After a long break, I am pleased to say that Outings have been taken to Gates Garden Centre and Oakham in April, the Black Country Museum in June, and Stratford-upon-Avon is due in August. Another



Outing is being planned for October and in December we will be paying a visit to the German Christmas Market in Birmingham. We do still need someone to help jointly organise Outings so that we can be more flexible in the dates that we offer and offer more trips. If you are able to help, then please contact David.

## **BRIDGE**

*Alan Rooks on 277 2484*

The Bridge Group is flourishing, having now recovered from an average of just 8 or 9 members last year, we are now seeing double that number!

Why not come along and join us. You don't need a partner, as this is drawn on the afternoon.



**FLOWER ARRANGING**     *Rosemarie Nash-Smith on 07787 916738  
or Linda Warner on 07951 717779*

This group is blooming, as all good flowers do, with full membership and a waiting list as well. We meet on the second Wednesday of the month.

Space is at a premium in the small lounge, but if you are interested, please contact Rosemarie or Linda.



**LUNCHEON CLUB**

*Sue Wyllie on 284 9959*

Our group started in May 2018 with seven members attending our first venue, the Axe and Compass at Wolvey. Since then we have visited thirty six different venues, some more than once, and our numbers average between sixteen and twenty two. The idea is for everyone to get to know different **u3a** members and, of course, enjoy a pleasant lunch too.



Everyone is welcome to join us on the fourth Tuesday of the month and you do not need to attend every month although it would be nice to see you regularly.

Information is in the What's On and on the website. Menus are available at the monthly meeting. The only requirement is to let Sue know by the preceding Friday if you are attending.

**DISCUSSION**

*Trevor Boiling on 01455 371587*

We discuss a wide range of topics, though seldom come to a conclusion – a long-established norm for this group! But we enjoy exchanging views and ideas, always followed by the usual refreshments. Join us at Brook Court at 10 am on the fourth Friday of each month. See What's On/website for the current topic.





## LIVING WELL

*David Hebblewhite on 0116 479 0945*

This short series of six monthly meetings is about to conclude. We looked at developing a positive attitude to ageing, the joys and the challenges, coping with loss, looking after yourself in later life, money matters and legal matters. Do please feel free to join us for any future sessions which will be held in the Lounge at the Village Hall. For further info contact David, or see What's On/website



## HISTORY

*June Hawkins on 277 6330*

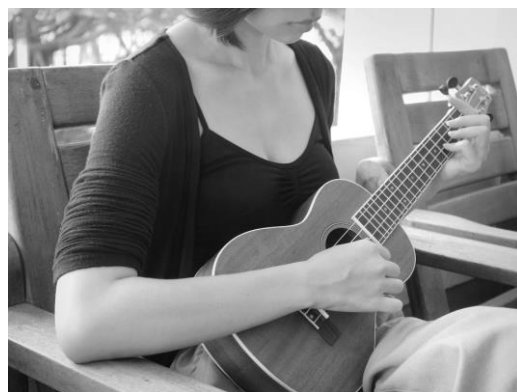


In January, Peter Liddle returned to give the final talk covering the Stuart period of our history. He returns again in November to update us on the local 'digs' which have been taking place fairly recently. We began the year with a visit to Canon's Ashby, followed by a trip to the cathedral city of Ely. Unfortunately we had to cancel a planned visit to the Shuttleworth Collection of vintage aircraft and vehicles and the Swiss Garden due to low numbers. In July we have a visit to the home of 'Bess of Hardwick' at Hardwick Hall in Derbyshire, and then to the newly-re-opened Nottingham Castle in September. Check out What's On and the website for details of future meetings, including Peter Liddle's talks resuming in October.

## UKULELE

*David Wild on 277 5881*

The group seems to be thriving at the moment. We have tried to avoid annoying the Parish Council team by keeping the door closed, but in spite of that we were invited to give a performance on the Paddock for the celebration on the day following the Coronation.



Last Christmas we gave several performances at Yuletide gatherings including the **u3a** monthly meeting. Fortunately we did not see anyone walking out as a protest!

## CRYPTIC CROSSWORDS

*Ursula Wild on 277 5881*

The Cryptic Crossword Group meet regularly on the first and third Mondays of the month at 2-4 pm at one member's home in Shetland Way and, though it's a bit of a squash and a squeeze, we manage very well! There's a wide range of expertise in the Group and, though half of us started with no ability whatsoever, the other half have been wrestling with cryptic crosswords most of their lives! It certainly keeps the brain more alert!

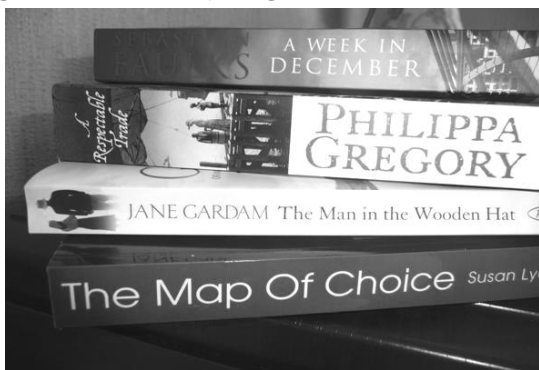


You are invited to come to a meeting to enjoy tea or coffee and cake and see what it's all about with no offence taken if you find it's not for you. Be brave! Be strong! Be foolish!

## LITERATURE

*June Hawkins on 277 6330*

We meet at Brook Court at 2 pm on the third Wednesday of the month to discuss a previously identified book. We are a very informal group, enjoying refreshments after our deliberations. Group



leadership rotates every six months. A report on the discussions on each of our book choices is displayed on the website for six months. If you enjoy reading and would like to chat informally with a friendly group about your reading, then you would be very welcome to join us!

## CREATIVE WRITING

*Mikki Wilde on 277 5509*

With a few new writers joining us, we are still enjoying the self-imposed task of writing to a monthly theme. Our reward is listening to the amazingly wide range of responses to what is often a single word. No writing expertise is needed, just a willingness to try, and to share your ideas.



## COUNTRY DANCING

*Patsy Paterson on 277 6259*



About a dozen dancers currently attend in the Village Hall from 2-3 pm on the second and fourth Mondays of the month. The session costs just £1.50. However, we are keen to see some more dancers, so why not come along – just bring comfy shoes and a sense of humour and give it a try! We enjoy a variety of dances; there is always help in getting the steps right!

## SWANS

*Pauline Woodward on 07936 555048*

Short Walks (And No Stiles) from 10.30 am on the first and third Tuesday morning ending with a sociable time in a handy café.

We would welcome new people on our gentle walks which include parks, villages, city, canal towpaths and the like. Details are on the website or the printed What's On.



## FIT FOR LIFE

*Diana Lee on 277 9142*



This class currently has about 10 to 12 regular members. However, we do need a few more members, so why not join us in the Village Hall each Monday (*not bank holidays*) between 11.30 am – 12.30 pm. In case you need persuading, here are a few of the members' comments! *"Friendly class,*

*fantastic tutor."* *"Good - just the right level."* *"Class is just right and instructor adapts exercise for people if required."* *"Really enjoyable keep fit session. Certainly keeps all our joints moving!"* So – what are you waiting for?

## 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
11 July	The Samaritans	
8 Aug	A Beginning, A Muddle and an End; where do novelists get their ideas from?	Bobbie Derbyshire
12 Sept	1947 partition of India and Pakistan – a personal reflection	Jackie Barker
10 Oct	Medical Dogs	
14 Nov	Miracle of Migration	Stephen Lovvell
12 Dec	Not Father O'Malley	Roger Browne

### YOUR u3a COMMITTEE 2023-24

Chairman:	David Hebblewhite	07480 852233
Deputy Chair:	Barry Hillyard	277 4187
Secretary:	Janine Tibbles	07970 648979
Treasurer:	David Hetterley	277 7703
Membership Secretary:	Barry Hillyard	277 4187
Information & Publicity:	June Hawkins	277 6330
Speaker Secretary:	Beryl Lishman	277 0405
Groups Co-ordinator:	June Hawkins	277 6330
Committee member:	Gill Brown	275 2525
Committee member:	Jill Clayton	277 7154
Committee member:	Dorothy Ivatt	07411 163396
Committee member:	David Norris	277 6330
Committee member:	Barbara Talbot	278 2821

## NEXT NEWSLETTER

Our next Newsletter will be published in December 2023, and news from the Groups will be much appreciated, or short articles about holidays or outings or any new or proposed groups, etc.

**Copy deadline is 28 November 2023, please.**

*Contact: [jhawkins45@talktalk.net](mailto:jhawkins45@talktalk.net) or 0116 277 6330*