

COUNTESTHORPE U3A

UPDATE AND CURFEW CHRONICLE No 17

Dear Member

Well, here is (hopefully) the penultimate Chronicle! But, it is a good sign that things are returning to normal, and we can begin to take up our U3A activities once again.

As usual, my thanks to all the contributors! I hope you will enjoy the selection for this month. If there are any contributions to come in, they will be especially welcome, as they seem to have rather 'dried up'!

The good news is that we plan to restart a number of the groups in the very near future (see last three pages as a kind of 'What's On) and the first general meeting will be 2 pm on **Tuesday, 13 July**, all being well of course! Doors open at 1.30 pm as usual. The speaker will be Brenda Wilford from LOROS. We look forward to seeing you there.

Also, the Christmas lunch is now booked for Friday, 3 December at the Leicester College's Taste Restaurant! Booking forms will be available as soon as I receive details of the menu selections – so watch out for them!

Good wishes to you all.

June Hawkins

Information and Publicity Officer

*Chronicle contributions not later than 24 June, please,
to me by email at: jhawkins45@talktalk.net
or by post to 28 Mulberry Court, Enderby Rd, Blaby. LE8 4BU*



WHEAT EARS

Ramrod straight, they stand in rows
Inspected by the passing crows;
They bow their heads to blazing sun
And now the harvest time has come.

IMPORTANT NOTICE ABOUT MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Please note that renewals ARE OVERDUE!

- The cost is **only £5** (full and associate members) for 2021/22
- No form is required, just send (with your name and membership number if known – see previous membership card) to Barry Hillyard at 35 Station Road, Countesthorpe, Leicester LE8 5TA.
- 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 (£8 for Associate).
- Forms are available to download from the website, or contact Barry on 0116 277 4187 or barry@bhillyard.plus.com
- **Cheques** are preferred, please, payable to "Countesthorpe U3A".
- **PLEASE DO NOT SEND CASH UNLESS ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL!**
- **Bank transfers** can be accepted for membership payments ONLY:
A/c: The Countesthorpe U3A Sort Code: 40-12-35 A/c No: 01402889 Ref: Your 3-digit **membership number** + **surname**, or as much of it as can be entered in the available space. (*If you can't find your membership number from a previous membership card then please call Barry on 277 4187 or June on 277 6330*)
- A quick email or call to Barry to say when you have paid by bank transfer would be appreciated, if possible, please.
- Please note that membership cards will no longer be issued.
- Programme cards will be made available to all members once our main meeting activities resume and we have details of speakers/dates/topics.

**PLEASE SEND IN YOUR RENEWALS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE
(IF YOU HAVE NOT ALREADY DONE SO).
THANK YOU TO THOSE WHO HAVE ALREADY RENEWED!**

DESPERATE FOR A HOLIDAY AMONGST FRIENDS AS WE GRADUALLY RETURN TO SOME SENSE OF NORMALITY?

Why not join us for our U3A holiday in County Durham in August. Our main attractions are outdoors, as safety reassurance is our priority. The highlight is "Kynren" – a spectacular outdoor performance, plus a day at Beamish Open Air Museum and a visit to Barnard Castle and/or a National Trust property (TBA).

A few twin rooms are still available. Full details and booking form are on the U3A website. Contact Jill on 07946 517139

Talking about coach trips – some of you will remember this incident which actually happened as we were about to return home from a theatre visit to Milton Keynes. This was ten years ago, but it's still a salutary lesson – especially when there are TWO coach companies called Robinson's!

THE COACH TRIP

“Driver!” she called out as we all filed back.
“Have *you* moved my things from their place in the rack?”
“Only my sandwiches, ma'am,” he replied.
The rest of us listened; our eyes opened wide.

Who was this lady in such a fine state?
It wasn't our Mary or Annie or Kate.
Here on our coach she seemed like a stranger.
The driver - *he* felt in imminent danger.

I scanned the fifty-odd names on my list.
Was this a new member who I might have missed?
I don't know them all, but this one for sure
Was just not familiar. Oh dear, what a bore!

I'll have to react, but can't think quite how.
It's all turning into a bit of a row.
“Where are you going?” she stridently cried.
“To Countesthorpe”, Bill, our driver replied.

The lady, she reddened and stammered “Oh dear!
I'm on the wrong coach and I shouldn't be here!”
She hurriedly made her way off our bus
A little embarrassed at all of the fuss.

Hemel Hempstead was where this lady was bound.
What a shock, when on the wrong coach she was found!
It's easily done, so do please remember -
Get on the right coach, good U3A member!

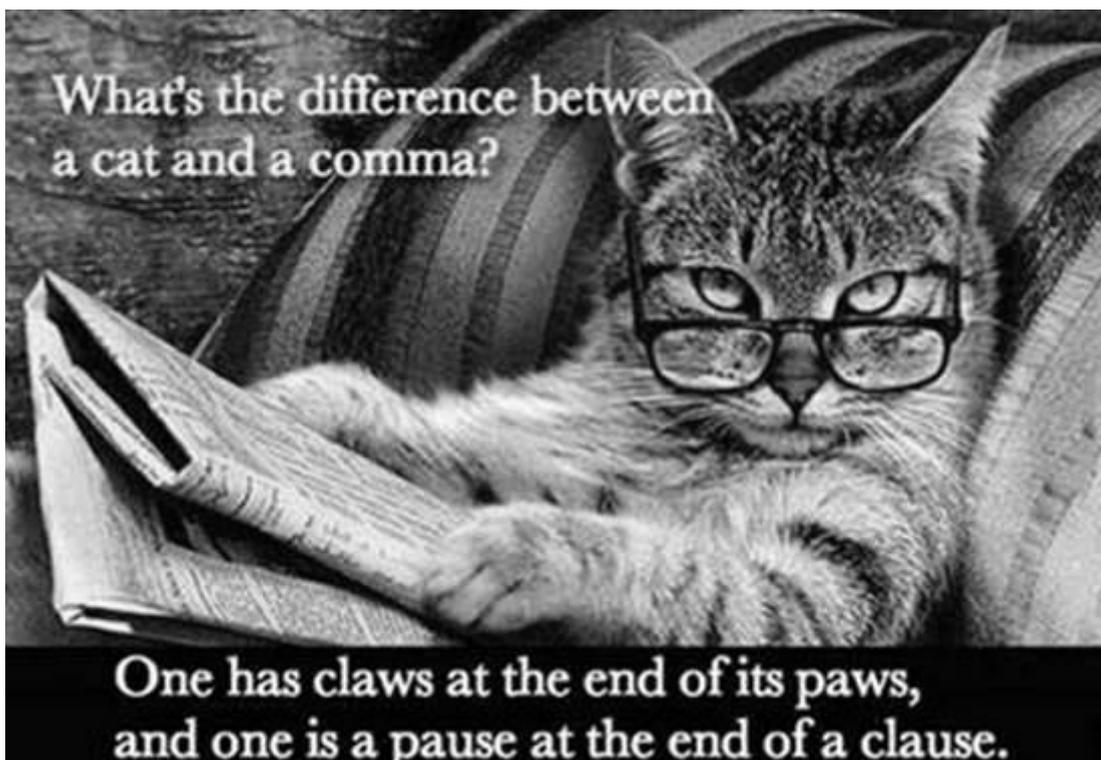
So, as our coach trips resume (hopefully!) – remember this tale, or you might end up on an unwanted mystery tour!

June Hawkins

PLURALS

We'll begin with box, the plural is boxes;
But the plural of ox is oxen, not oxes.
One is a goose, but two are called geese,
Yet the plural of mouse can never be meese!
You could find one mouse in a whole nest of mice,
But the plural of house is houses, not hice.
If the plural of man is men
Why shouldn't the plural of pan be pen?
If I speak of a foot and you show me two feet
If I give you a boot would the pair be called beet?
If one is a tooth and the whole set are teeth,
Why can't the plural of booth be beeth?
If the singular is this and the plural is these,
Should the plural of kiss be keese?
We speak of a brother and also of brethren
But though we say mother, we never say methren.
Then the masculine pronouns are He, His and Him
But imagine the feminine – She, Shis or Shim.

Sent in by Ann Owen



PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP NOTICE

Regretfully, John Thacker has had to make the difficult decision to stand down as Group Leader for Photography after many years. So, this group is now looking for a new leader. If you are interested in photography, and/or perhaps are an existing member of this group, please think about stepping up to take over from John. He would be very pleased to provide support and information to anyone willing to become the new Group Leader. Call John on 278 1877.



OUTINGS GROUP NOTICE

Unfortunately, Christine Baxter (who leads the Outings group along with David Hebblewhite) is currently unable to be involved for health reasons. Whilst David is happy to carry out the administrative and financial side of things, we are seeking somebody to work alongside him to plan the outings and then to lead them on the day. Alternatively, if anyone would be interested in leading a single outing – planning and then leading on the day, with David doing all the administrative and financial aspects - then this would be great for our U3A. This is a great opportunity to get involved in a much valued group, but without having the entire responsibility for it. If interested, please call David on 0116 479 0945. We hope people will step up here, to avoid outings having to cease.



TWO OTHER GROUP LEADERS STILL NEEDED!

As reported last month, the **Garden Appreciation** and **Theatre** groups are both looking for new leaders. Can you help? It would be sad if these groups were to fold up as they have brought a lot of pleasure to so many, but Ruth and June have carried the group leaderships for many years and it is time for new blood – new ideas, etc! Both Ruth (Garden Appreciation) and June (Theatre) would be very willing to assist anyone who comes forward, so that they have some help in the early days. Call Ruth on 0116 277 1533 or June on 0116 277 6330 if you would be interested. Please don't let these groups be lost!



I haven't lost my mind.

One half of it wandered off and the other half just went looking for it!

Growing old is hard work – the Mind says “Yes”,
but the Body says “What are you thinking?”

OUR HOME

This house rang loud with children's voices many moons ago.
IT was ebb and flow of their banter, passing to and fro.
There were variations of music always in the air
As they each played an instrument with their own inimitable flair.

Time saw them all develop characters of their own.
The house appeared smaller – or have they all grown?
It is those teenage years with the emotions that that brings
Yes, my beloved young people now have the wind beneath their wings.

As each of them flew the nest to make their own lives
Our apprehension and concerns were all too rife.
We will be here for each of them, and give our support
Hoping they have taken note of the lessons we have taught.

Now we have space to move around the house;
Can listen to music like Lanza or Strauss.
We can talk to each other on things that we choose
And when we lose things – there's no-one to accuse.

Our lives are our own now to use as we please.
To garden, paint or read or walk through the trees.
I do still miss my children being all around
But not for long as our seven grandchildren abound!

(But now, at 85 years old with nine great-grandchildren, I am so lucky!)

Written by Margaret Woolley



My doctor recently told me that jogging could add years to my life. I think he was right – I feel ten years older already!

Whenever I get the urge to exercise, I lie down until the feeling passes.

The doctor asked me if I ever became breathless during exercise. I said no, because I never exercise.

I exercise every morning without fail. Up, down, up down. Now the other eyelid!

TWO WORD SEARCHES TO KEEP YOU BUSY!

TURN...

All these words can follow TURN.

A BLIND EYE	PALE
A DEAF EAR	RIGHT
A PROFIT	ROUND
AWAY FROM	SOUR
BAD	TAIL
FORTY	THE CORNER
HEADS	THE PAGE
INTO	THE STOMACH
KEYS	THE TABLES
LEFT	THE TIDE
LOOSE	TO DRINK
ON YOUR HEEL	TURTLE



... TABLE

This puzzle is all about tables.

BEDSIDE	GARDEN
BILLIARDS	GATELEG
BIRD	KITCHEN
BOARD	PASTRY
CARD	PICNIC
CHESS	POOL
COFFEE	ROUND
CONSOLE	SNOOKER
FOLDING	TRESTLE
GAMING	WRITING

THE LIGHT OF DAY

My fronds unfurl lazily in the light of the summer day. I feel the warmth caressing my greenery as I stretch upwards and outwards to the sun, straining to reach its light with the tips of my being. Now fully grown, yet tiny still, I savour both the sunshine and the dappled shade of the trees under which I rise from the moist earth to display my delicate green tracery to the world.

Snap! I lie helpless now - just a broken frond, detached from my mother plant by a passing animal, though green and perfect still. What will be my fate?

Winds blow gently, covering me with particles so fine that they do not crush my delicate form. Water washes gently over me; warm, seductive – I can sleep for ever. The wind and water continue their work and I nestle softly into my bed of warm, dark silt. Peace descends. I can no longer move but I am content in the stillness.

Slowly, imperceptibly, the weight bears down and smothers me - though with sweet calm - as layer upon layer entombs me deeper in my resting place. Time ceases to exist – no light penetrates and I feel a change coming over me. An inevitable, creeping, awful change that I cannot comprehend or stall. I feel my very structures begin to stiffen; my lifeblood leaches into, and colours, the surrounding silt. Yet still I keep my shape and form over millennia, whilst hardening slowly, inevitably to rock.

In a trance-like state I lie metamorphosed, immovable, immured, finally immutable - waiting. Waiting for I know not what to release me from this torpid state.

Vibrations, noise, clamour, awaken me at last. How long since last I saw the light of day? Three hundred and fifty million years since the sun's warmth caressed my fronds. Splitting, shattering, fracturing, breaking; in all directions rock fragments fly, releasing me from my incalculable sleep as man's machines ravage the earth for coal.

But I am simply worthless siltstone now; no longer a delicate fern frond reaching out to the sun from my dappled bed, nor even good coal to service mankind's needs. What next for me, then?

A gnarled hand sweeps me from the mine waste. Blinking in the weak, yellow beam of his helmet lamp, a miner exclaims, "Why, this fossil fern will make a keepsake for my grand-daughter – I'll tell her how it formed."

Today, that is how my story stands, back once again in the light of day, lying on the desk of that old miner's grand-daughter as a fond reminder of a gentle, loving man. What now for me, then? My future lies as a much-loved paperweight.

OUT OF THE BLUE

Out of the blue the flood waters came,
A natural disaster – no-one to blame.
Threatening roads, fields, gardens and crops
Houses, businesses, pubs and shops.
Out of utter confusion, there's much to reclaim

Out of the blue, the tsunami came,
A natural disaster – no-one to blame.
Bringing chaos, destruction, turmoil and death,
Long before anyone stopped to draw breath.
Where is normality – an impossible aim?

Out of the blue, the earthquake came,
A natural disaster – no-one to blame.
Causing misery, slaughter, major upheaval.
So hard to move on from this terrible evil.
It's a difficult menace to tame.

Out of the blue assistance came.
Not for money, reward, honour or fame.
Friends, neighbours, strangers
Ignored all the dangers
To bring help without any acclaim.

Out of the blue humanity came.
Age, colour and creed all being the same
When help was needed
All threats went unheeded.
A spark was turned into a flame.

Then . . .

Out of the blue, the virus came
No respecter of persons, old or lame.
Distance, isolate, shield and mask
For many a really difficult task.
To end this grim nightmare is everyone's aim
. . . but, we are winning!

Written by Shirley Wilding



FANCY A VERY GENTLE STROLL?

For a number of members, even the SWANS (Short Walks And No Stiles) walks can be a little too much – in terms of pace and distance. There is an idea being floated to start a further group (suggested name Silver Strollers) to take short, very local walks – not forgetting the essential coffee at the end, of course! The idea would be to meet at a local point – perhaps Bouskell Park, and to walk for a maximum of two miles at a very gentle pace, before ending up in a local coffee shop.

The proposed group would ideally remain fairly small, though if sufficient interest results a second group could also be formed. An inaugural walk and meeting has been suggested, starting at 10.15 am on Tuesday 27th July at Bouskell Park car park and finishing at Jenno's in Blaby. At that point, the group of members, can decide on the way forward, and then perhaps put out a three-month programme to see how things work out. Nothing is yet 'cast in concrete' – it is very much at the initial idea stage, and the way in which any such group would function would be decided by the participants, of course.

If this idea interests you, then telephone Pamela Runacres (between 9 am and 5 pm ONLY, please) on 07955418398 for a chat.

REMEMBER WHEN . . .

I remember the cheese of my childhood,
And the bread that we cut with a knife,
When the children helped with the housework
And the men went to work, not the wife.

The cheese never needed a fridge,
And the bread was so crusty and hot.
The children were seldom unhappy
And the wife was content with her lot.

I remember the milk from the bottle,
With the yummy cream on the top.
Our dinner came hot from the oven
And not from the fridge in the shop.

The kids were a lot more contented;
They didn't need money for kicks.
Just a game with their mates in the road
And sometimes the Saturday flicks.

I remember the shop on the corner
Where a pen'orth of sweet was sold.
Do you think I'm a bit too nostalgic?
Or is it . . . I'm getting old?

I remember when the 'loo' was the 'lav'
And the bogey man came in the night.
It wasn't the least bit funny
Going 'out back' with no light.

The interesting items we perused
From the newspapers cut into squares
And hung on a peg in the loo.
It took little to keep us amused.

The clothes were boiled in the copper
With plenty of rich foamy suds.
But the ironing seemed never ending
As Mum pressed everyone's 'duds'.

I remember the slap on my backside
And the taste of soap if I swore.
Anorexia and diets weren't heard of,
And we hadn't much choice what we wore.

So you think that bruised our ego?
Or our initiative was destroyed?
We ate what was put on the table
And I think life was better enjoyed.

Author unknown – sent in by Ann Owen

ACTIVITY GROUP INFORMATION RESTARTING OUR U3A

All information is subject to change/cancellation resulting from government announcements and/or revisions to venue regulations. Below is an alphabetical list of start dates/notes for each group (where known), correct at time of publication.

Allotment Gardening has continued throughout. If interested, call Andy or Val Grant on 277 8848 or 07712 451126

Art – awaiting information from Methodist Church on a date to resume

Birdwatching resumes with visit to Brandon Marsh on Thurs 2 July, in shared cars, leaving Village Hall at 9.30 am. (Details – Janet on 277 2544)

Bridge will resume once all restrictions are lifted. Date to be confirmed.

British Sign Language restarts on Tuesday 8 June. Temporarily this will be held at Patsy's home (6 The Chestnuts). 10.45 am – noon. (Details - Patsy on 277 6259)

Carpet Bowls starts again on Wednesday 7 July from 2 pm, as usual. (Details - Barry on 277 4187)

Classical Music starts from 1 June at 7 pm. (Details – Barry on 277 4187)

Computing will be available from 7 June on demand (Call Barry on 277 4187)

Country Dancing will resume informally in small groups (weather permitting) in Patsy's garden (6 The Chestnuts) on 14 June 2-3.30 pm. The group will revert to the VH from 28 June. (Details - Patsy on 277 6259)

Craft Circle resumes from Tues, 22 June (Details -Teresa on 07882 604263)

Creative Writing restarts from Monday 19 July. No set theme – free choice. (Details – Mikki on 277 5509)

Cryptic Crosswords resumes 2 pm on Mon 28 June at David Norris's home. (Details – Ursula on 277 5881)

Discussion resumes from 23 July at 10 am. (Details – Liz On 240 2296)

Fit for Life has now restarted on each Monday at 11.30 am in the Village Hall. The cost will be £5 per session. (Details from Diana Lee on 277 9142)

Flower Arranging resumes on Wednesday, 14 July 2 – 4 pm. (Details - Pat Quinn on 277 2399)

Garden Appreciation – restart depends on finding new Group Leader

Guitar aims to restart not earlier than September, as singing is involved (Details - David on 277 5881)

Handbells will resume in Pat Hillyard's garden, only as weather permits, from 2 pm each Wednesday. Members will be contacted individually on a week-by-week basis. (Details - Pat on 277 4187)

History resumes with an outing to Grimsthorpe Castel (Lincs) on Thursday, 9 September. A further outing is planned for October, then Peter Liddle's talks will be on 11 Nov, 9 Dec and 11 Jan. More details follow. (June on 277 6330)

Holidays – see information on Kynren (details from Jill on 277 7154)

Jazz Appreciation – Resumes from Mon, 28 June. 7.30 pm at 17 Linden Avenue. (Details – Joan Burn on 277 5369)

Kurling will recommence weekly on Wednesdays 11 am – noon in the Village Hall from 7 July. (Details - Ian on 277 6259)

Line Dancing resumes from 11.30 am on 2 July (Details – Maud on 277 1946)

Literature resumes from Wednesday 21 July. “The Beekeeper of Aleppo” (Details – Mikki on 277 5509)

Luncheon Club is planning to restart on Tuesday, 20 July, with the venue to be arranged. (Details from Sue Wyllie on 284 9959)

Nordic Walking resumed from 25 May on second and fourth Tuesdays from 9.30 am at Willoughby Road Playing Fields or Bouskell Park. (Check website or details from Barry on 277 4187)

Outings – will resume as soon as possible – more details to follow.

Photography – restart depends on finding a new Group Leader

Pilates will not resume until Sept. (Details – Margaret Greany on 432 6361)

Scitech returns to the Bull’s Head from 12 July at 12.30 pm (though continues via Zoom until then). (Details - Mike Thompson on 277 0584)

Scrabble plans to restart in Aug or Sept. (Details – Shirley on 01455 285217)

Silver Strollers (*new group – see the earlier piece in this Chronicle*) The inaugural walk starts at 10.15 am on Tuesday 27 July from Bouskell Park CP, ending at Jenno’s coffee shop, Blaby. (Details – Pamela on 277 2653, between 9 am – 5pm only, please)

Slimming (CHEWS) – resumed from 9.00 am on Thursday, 20 May and then each first and third Thursday at Pamela’s. (Details – Ruth on 277 1533)

Solo Sunday Lunch resumes on 13 June at Ullesthorpe Court, noon for 12.30 pm. Due to government restrictions, this is limited to 12 places which are full at time of writing. Call Hilary Natzel on 277 1176 for information or waiting list.

SWANS resumes from Tuesday 15 June, meeting at 10.30 am at Oakfield Park, Hospital Lane, Blaby. (Details – Pauline 07936 555048)

Theatre – restart depends on finding a new Group Leader

Ukulele aims to restart not before September, as singing is involved! But group continues via Zoom in the meantime. (Details from David on 277 5881)

Walking (CARE) restarts on Thurs, 24 June. (Details from Allen on 277 3665)