



Cannock Chase u3a Spring Newsletter March 2023



Thoughts from the Chair: Dianne Hooper

Firstly, I would like to extend a warm welcome to our new members as well of course to all of our existing members who have remained with us throughout the pandemic . It's been so good to see so many of you over the last few months, at the speaker meetings and group gatherings. Hope you are all remaining fit and well now that we are pretty much back to normal. I look forward to seeing you at the next speaker meeting on March 14th, when we have an adviser coming to answer all your questions about tax, pensions and other financial issues in later life. There will be time afterwards for a biscuit and cuppa, so that members will be able to have a chat with old and new friends. I hope to see you there. Tickets will be on sale at the meeting for the King's Coronation celebration which will replace the normal speaker meeting on May 9th. This will be another subsidised event for members only. Please see Valma or Maureen for tickets. There will also be another social event in July to mark our 30 year anniversary. This actually happened last year, but we decided better late than never! This promises to be an exciting event so watch out for future announcements. These last few months have not been without their difficulties. Some of our group leaders have had to step back for various reasons and it has been very difficult to find replacements. U3A is run by its members, so any help you can give would be much appreciated. We are always looking for new committee members too, who may bring fresh ideas. Please see me or any of the other committee members if you feel you can help. Dianne

Boules :Carole Howard

Boules is a French recreational sport! This group only started last year and we will re start as soon as the weather picks up usually April to September. We meet on the 2nd Thursday of the month at 2pm on the lawn at the rear of Slitting Mill Village Hall. If the weather is not so good, we can join the Kurling/ games group that meet at the same time. We have several sets of boules available for people to borrow. The game is similar to bowls played on lawn green but the surface we play on has many lumps and bumps.! We do follow the rules of the game! We have so much fun and lots of laughter We have refreshments too and new members are very welcome. For further information contact Carole [0797016500](tel:0797016500)

Craft group - Christine Travers Brookes



The Craft group meets monthly at Etchingill Church hall alongside the art group. We have worked on a range of projects and participants have demonstrated their creativity through many different activities. The sessions are fun and offer members the chance to try a technique they may not have had the opportunity to work with previously. This year our work has included block printing, painting silk scarves, making Dorset buttons, covering notebooks with fabric backed paper, making bags from paper, card making, sewing lavender bags, and making Christmas decorations. Future planned work will include felt making, simple batik and discharge block printing. There is no requirement to be artistic in this group as everything is simply relaxing fun and achievable by people of all levels of ability. An

additional charge is made to cover the costs of items used in some sessions eg if silk scarves need to be bought in advance. Pre booking a month in advance may be required for these sessions to ensure everyone has the equipment they need. If Pre booking is not advertised then anyone can turn up on the day. For further information or to book into a class please feel free to ring Chris on 07792814607.

Advanced French Group: Maggie Causer

We continue to meet on ZOOM on the 1st and 3rd Friday of the month from 2pm-4pm and are an established group of 11 but of course new members with some experience of the language are always welcome to join us. When the New Year arrived we thought it would be better to look forward rather than look back so it seemed the ideal time to talk about future plans. This of course means learning the appropriate grammar rules for regular and irregular verbs which the group are managing to master due to their dedication and ability to learn by heart. Yes it's challenging but so important for us all to keep the grey matter alive. We are therefore talking about future events such as summer holidays and of course the King's Coronation Celebrations.

Si vous serez intéressé à nous rejoindre contactez: maggiecauser@hotmail.com

Beginners French group : Christine Travers Brookes

The beginners French group continues to meet twice a month on a Friday at the Rugeley Community Church premises where we are fortunate to have the room without charge. Since starting we have covered a range of topics related to having a holiday in France, telling the time, booking hotels, maps, getting round, arriving and leaving and transport. We are currently working on body parts and saying how we feel. Most sessions are focused on conversation although we have looked at related grammar which is not such a popular subject with many of the participants! Our sessions include individual and group work, listening, speaking and viewing relevant items on the internet to support learning. Individuals work at their own pace as for some everything is new and for others this is revision. Our topics lined up for the next few months include food items, buying things, using money and eating out.

The Jewellery Group: Maureen Leeson

We meet in the warm and welcoming atmosphere of Hednesford Library where there is plenty of parking and is on a bus route. The meetings are held on last Wednesday of the month from 11am-1pm. Leading up to Christmas time we made an array of different items from napkin rings,

Christmas tree decorations and even our own Christmas earrings to wear at the Christmas Cheese and Wine Social. Glynis always comes up with lots of ideas for us, but if you have your own ideas, that can be done too. Several of us have made necklaces to go with a specific dress.

We made lovely bookmarks to be used when you borrow books from the Library. We would love you to come and join us but as there is a limited number for each session it would be helpful to book your place for each one.

Garden Group: Valma Cooper



The Garden Group is resuming its programme of garden visits after our Winter break. I've planned interesting venues throughout the year covering a range of different types of gardens. These range from private gardens in the National Garden Scheme, the revamped Trial Garden near Ashbourne, a return visit to the amazing Woolerton Old Hall Garden near Market Drayton, a Georgian Walled Gardens and once the colder weather returns in Autumn I've organised a demonstration at SMVH.

Everyone is welcome to attend, you don't have to be expert gardener to enjoy our days out to inspiring places. A full 2023 schedule is available from Valma so why not contact me and join our friendly group. Royval@ntlworld.com

The Kurling group : Dianne Hooper

Our group has progressed in leaps and bounds since we returned after lockdown, and we regularly have 8 - 12 players each month. It's all for fun and we enjoy a good laugh whilst we play. For anyone who has never tried it, why not come and have a go. There are no physical limitations as the "stones" can be pushed with a pusher stick, great for those with bad backs and physical limitations. We meet every 2nd Thursday of the month at Slitting Mill [at 2pm](#).

Luncheon Club

For many years this group has been successfully run by David Clissold and members have enjoyed meals in a range of settings. Irene Bohannan has now got the group up and running again and will be looking out for new pubs and restaurants for us all to enjoy. She hopes to circulate details of our first venue of the year which we be on May 25th

The Science group: Barry James

We meet the first Thursday of the month at Slitting Mill Village Hall at [2pm](#). We explore any kind of engineering achievements, how things work, scientist pioneers of the past, and upcoming future technologies that may impact us. As examples, we have been shown how the Channel Tunnel project was completed, the risks with Tailings Dams, Human light and colour perception, how BIG grid generators are made, and British Aeronautics achievements of the past, all in the last few months alone. No technical or academic background is required to understand these topics, as most are of general interest to everyone, so everyone is most welcome to come along and join us

A few topics planned for 2023 are: 6th April RAF Radar of the 1950s.

[1st June](#) Heatpumps - How do they stack up?

[6th July](#) Technology through the Eyes of an Artist

Contact: barrykjames@yahoo.com

Tai Chi with Exercise: Ann Round



This well established group meets every Monday at 10.30 am (except bank holidays) at EHVH. We start with half an hour of gentle exercise and stretches to help us warm up for Tai Chi. These exercises help with coordination and balance and help keep joints mobilised and muscles stretched, to keep us active . This is followed by half an hour of Tai Chi which is a form of exercise of which there are many types, ours is Yang Chen .It's very relaxing and helps to keep us supple and fit ,and is also mindful and calming .We finish off with a coffee and biscuits and a chance to socialise. We are a very very friendly lot so just turn up if you fancy trying it out.

Tai Chi for beginners with Maureen

We meet every Thursday morning from 10.30am to 11.30am at Slitting Mill Victory Hall. TAI CHI is perfect for older adults who are looking for a low impact exercise that improves their health. Tai chi has been around for many centuries, it involves a series of movements in a slow rhythmic and focused manner combined with deep breathing and not only that, we have a great laugh and it's a lot of fun.

We are the latest group to form and have gone from strength to strength, which means that we must be doing something right. So if you would like to give it a go, we can always find room for one more. Just wear something warm and comfy.

The Theatre Group : Pam Ratcliffe

We meet the first Friday of the month at The Hen House in Hednesford at 12noon. It has been a little quiet lately as there are no shows to interest us at the moment.

We did manage our Christmas show at the Vic which was absolutely brilliant as usual. We also went to see Calendar Girls, for an amateur group, they put on a superb show. Looking forward to seeing what pops up in the coming months to entertain us. New members always welcome to our friendly group.

Walking Group: Angela Allison



We meet on the last Tuesday of the month to walk between 4 and 5 miles. Our numbers vary between 3 and 15 walkers. We meet at various locations around Cannock Chase choosing lesser known tracks. All members are welcome to join the group. Walk details are distributed via email the week before. We meet at 10.15 for a 10.30 start. We have been lucky with the weather and have only

had to cancel when Cannock Chase was closed due to adverse weather conditions. We walk regardless of the rain. We share a love of being outdoors, enjoying the fresh air and there is plenty of chat, laughter and sharing of stories. Thank you to everyone who supports this group.

Cycling Group: Peter Harding



The increasing Cannock Chase U3A cycling group membership has been clocking up the miles both on and off road since its introduction 18 months ago. We began with routes along the many trails across Cannock Chase. Recently we progressed to easier rides on local quiet

lanes into our stunning local countryside from Hoar Cross cafe in the East to the ice cream farm at Haughton in the West. We may be slower than Tour de France riders but we enjoy the countryside views and the social stops for coffee, cake and chat. All welcome whether new to the sport or taking it up again after a few years away.



Future Exciting Events for your Diary.

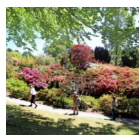
Tuesday 9th May 2023 at 2pm at Slitting Mill Village Hall.
KING CHARLES CORONATION CELEBRATION

To celebrate the Kings Coronation we are holding a party. The event will be ticket only at a subsidised amount of £6, (with a prize for the lucky ticket holder). There will be a boxed Afternoon Tea, an Entertainer, Raffle, Royal Quiz and of course a tipple to toast our new monarch. Tickets will be available from Maureen and Valma so don't delay get your ticket ASAP as they are limited.

Tuesday 11th July 2023 at Slitting Mill Village Hall
CANNOCK CHASE U3A 30th +1 ANNIVERSARY



It was our 30th Anniversary as a U3A last year but because of Covid we were unable to celebrate this land mark event. Therefore we are holding a party in July with a tasty buffet provided by outside caterers and entertainment by the amazing singer Lola Lamour. Full details closer to the time. This will be a ticket only event so be sure to get your tickets when they go on sale in May.



Wednesday 6th September 2023.

Full day trip by executive coach to NT BODNANT GARDEN with a short visit to BETWS-Y-COED.

Another future date to put in your diary! We are hoping to run a subsidised coach trip to the beautiful NT garden at Bodnant in North Wales with a short stopover in Betws-y-Coed to allow a look around the shops or have a cuppa. Full details to follow closer to the time. There may be another coach trip organised nearer Christmas but details are still being discussed. Watch this space!

2022 HIGHLIGHTS



After emerging from the horrors of the previous years when Covid and lockdown was still an issue, the Committee was determined to get Cannock Chase U3A up and running again. The ideal opportunity arose when we celebrated the Queens Jubilee in June. The team worked really hard, the weather was perfect for an outside garden party and everyone seems to enjoy their Pimms, afternoon tea and entertainment.

The Garden party was followed later that month by a coach trip to Kew Gardens. It was one of the hottest days of the year and I'm sure a few Members were flagging by the end of the day, dodging from shade to bench to shade again for a rest. I know I was. Everyone was in good spirits and appeared to have enjoyed their day at Kew. I hope they will be keen to go on another coach trip later this year.

We had some inspirational Speakers in 2022, too many to go into detail but a couple come to mind ranging from the life of bats to policing and of course the indomitable Lola Lamour who told us all about her life with Lord Lichfield at Shugborough.

We had several new groups start in 2022, for example the Beginners Tai Chi on a Thursday and a Jewellery Making Group meeting at Hednesford library, which has proved very popular. A 8 week Rural Craft Course was held in the Autumn and other newly established Groups like Craft continue to flourish. We are always keen to start new groups so if you have an interest then maybe others do too so get in touch.

Our annual Christmas lunch was held at Beaudesert Golf Club this year. Over 60 Members attended this event, looking very smart in their best dresses and suits. The setting was spectacular and it's hoped we can repeat the occasion this year.

As Christmas approached the committee became very busy organising the Cheese and Wine Social event held in December. This proved very popular! I'm not sure if it was the cheese, French bread or the wine! Either way we had very positive feedback, everyone enjoyed the singalong and left with smiles on their faces. It makes all the preparation and hard work worth while if everyone enjoyed themselves.

None of this can happen of course without your continual support and certainly without the hard work in the back ground of Committee Members and those who help with making tea and washing up etc. My special thanks go to you all.

Help us keep Cannock Chase U3A a friendly and thriving organisation in 2023.

Valma.

U3A Contact Details:

Email: cannockchaseu3a@gmail.com

Website: <https://u3asites.org.uk/cannock-chase/home>