

A warm welcome to you all, especially to our new Chairman – Peter Leeson – and the new members who have joined our committee. And, of course, a big thank you to our outgoing Chairman – Steve – and Jeanette and Ted who have also stepped down.

(The new committee is shown at the end of the newsletter).

## Message from the Chair:

Hello all

So, here I am, writing my first item for Chatterbox as the new person in the chair. I still don't quite know what I am doing here or why, but I'll try to figure things out as we progress.

I first need to thank the retiring committee, particularly Steve, Ted and Jeanette (retiring from the committee), for their excellent work over the past years. Rest assured, I will not allow the three of them to go too far; they can expect to be called upon for active duty at the slightest provocation.

Of course, I also need to thank the new committee, whether they are joining or remaining, and I hope we can do good work together.

I want to try to increase the level of dialogue over the coming few months. I know some of you have frustrations and desires, and I would like to hear about those people. If you would like to change something about the current organisation, propose a new group or activity, suggest something we should stop doing, start doing, or change how we are doing it, please never hesitate to contact me. I want to listen; it has been many years since someone has offended me by pointing out what I am doing wrong, so feel free to tell me too how to improve. I cannot promise that all your suggestions will be taken on or that we can solve all your issues, but if you don't speak up, the committee and I cannot help.

Previously, I have worked with organisations worldwide (all continents except South America and Antarctica). I sought to help them with culture and quality issues. By identifying how to make individuals happier in their work environment, we could motivate them to produce better quality and stay within the organisation. This led me to frequently have to "speak truth to power", meaning that I considered it my job to tell senior managers what their staff were not allowed or able to say. Hopefully, some of that professional experience will help me guide U3A Chatteris in the future.

Also, I hope to visit small groups as they are the lifeblood of the U3A. We have over twenty groups currently running, so I doubt I will manage all of them in the short term, but I really want to hear from the group members and find out what they are thinking.

Perhaps by the next issue, I will have something more interesting to share with you.



**At last month's** open meeting we were treated to an entertaining and inspiring talk by Flt.Lt. Sally Cox, about her career in the RAF as a fighter aircraft controller and later as the first female to undertake the Fast Jet Combat Flight Training course.

See next page for this month's talk.

On Friday 19<sup>th</sup> May we have:

### **Museum of Armed Policing**

Mark Williams

Mark is a retired member of our armed police and as well as having set up the Police Firearms Officers Association they had the vision to create and be responsible for the Museum of Armed Policing in Chatteris. The Police Firearms Officers Association (PFOA) provides supports for the 10,500 firearms officers nationally and is managed by serving and retired police officers with years of experience offering support for officers and their families.

The museum is located next to these offices and is used to educate and inform us, the public, about the police use of firearms and the history of armed policing from the 1600s to the present day. We can expect an exciting and rewarding talk which may well bring a new respect for the police officers who undertake this work and keep our street safe.



### **Group News**

#### **Living Well With Arthritis** Lesley Pomfrett

We began this month's meeting talking about the benefits of orange coloured food. Carrots, orange peppers, sweet potatoes and turmeric for example all contain carotenoids which are anti inflammatory in the body.

Lesley spoke about adding turmeric powder and black pepper, which helps the witchcraft, to food such as tinned tomatoes and baked beans to help joint movement. Buyer beware turmeric and black pepper capsules, they can have a laxative effect in some people.

Caroline Hopper spoke about pharmaceuticals and living with pain and invisible illness. I'm sure we all learnt at least a couple of things about what's in everyday medication and how, when and why is the best time to take your medication.

After tea we were joined by Sandra from PosAbility for our exercise session.

Our next meeting will be Friday 26th May, 2.00 at the King Edward Centre. There will be two speakers from PosAbility talking about Eating Healthily With Arthritis.

Please come and join us you will be most welcome.

#### **WALKING HERE (Group B)– Brian Windsor** April

For yet another month we walked under blue skies and in bright sunshine although it did start off rather cool. We walked for just over 3 miles and stopped at the three fire station sites in the town dating from 1798 to 2023 and noting how each in their turn was larger than the previous fire station. We stopped to discuss the work being done on the old Travis Perkins site on London Road before finishing the days walk.

We are a group who enjoy sharing our knowledge of Chatteris and its history during these gentle strolls around the town and if this appeals to you come and join us on our walks to explore Chatteris, its buildings and its history. During the winter months we will always be walking on firm paths within the town.

We meet in the morning of the second Tuesday of the month





## WALKING THERE – John Parry/Brian Windsor

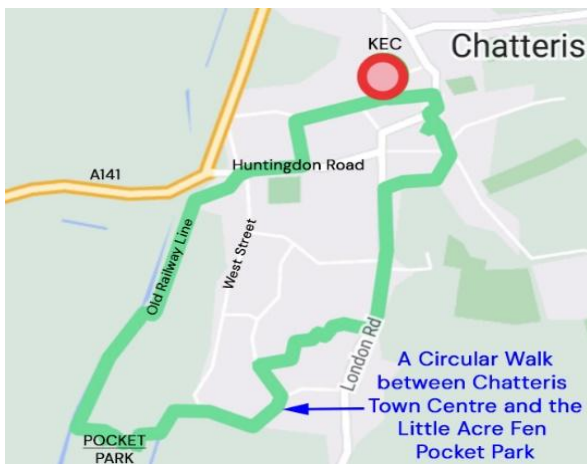
April 2023

For April we did a shorter walk of 4.5 miles around Grafham Water and Grafham village. Our starting point was the Grafham Water car park and we followed the reservoir for a mile before heading away from it then returning to it for a second time. We immediately left it again to circle around on farm tracks and field edges, alongside a wood and past a caravan site to come out onto a road leading into Grafham village. From here we made our way back towards the reservoir and the car park. The walk was in overcast but pleasant conditions and warm enough to tempt one of us into shorts. It finished with a welcome coffee in the Visitors Centre before the drive back to Chatteris.



## Walking Here (A) – Phil Green

Eleven Adventurous April Amblers sallied forth from the KEC on a circular three mile route that included a visit to the Little Acre Fen Pocket Park. We headed eastwards to join up with Huntingdon Road before eventually turning south into the countryside along the Old Railway line.



When we reached the Pocket Park, we stopped for a while beside Fryer's Pond and said "Hello" to the Fen Tiger.

Also, we noticed for the first time in several years that the pond actually contained some water!

Now it was time to begin our journey homewards and before too long we reached London Road which would take us back towards the town. We rewarded ourselves for our efforts by stopping off for a cup of coffee and a biscuit at the Emmanuel Drop In Café.



We are approaching the end of the cycle for the book group in its present format. From July, we will take turns recommending a book to the group each month. Hopefully, this will allow us to continue to be challenged by discoveries we might choose to read ourselves.

**April: The Call of the Wild** (Jack London)

This wonderful tale tells the story of a dog, Buck, born in comfort and peace, which gets stolen and used as a sledge dog in the Yukon gold rush. The fact that it is a story of a dog, narrated by the dog, may have led some to believe this was for children, but it most certainly isn't, considering the graphic detail of cruelty to the dogs by successive owners.

Generally, we all enjoyed the book and gave it an overall score of 8.12/10. Some of the comments made included:

"Magnificent book, Brilliant writing."

"An uplifting story but not for the faint-hearted"

"The relationship between Thornton & Buck is so wonderfully described"

"A really good tale to inspire the imagination"

"Interesting historical document"

One particular comment sticks in mind, and that is how this could be seen as a parable for life, with the various stages of Buck's life relating to childhood, schooling, first jobs, working life, and retirement.

**11<sup>th</sup> May: The Kite Runner** (Khaled Hosseini)

Published in 2003, the Kite Runner tells the story of Afghanistan from independence through Russian occupation to the Taliban dictatorship through the memories of Amir and his friendship with Hassan, a servant of the same age. It received the South African Booker Prize in 2004 and "Reading Group Book of the Year" in 2006 and 2007.

The Kite Runner has been on the American Library Association's top ten lists of most challenged books for offensive language, sexually explicit material, religious viewpoints, depictions of homosexuality, and violence. In 2017 it was banned for fear that it would inspire terrorism and "promote Islam."

Some readers of Afghani descent have expressed discomfort with the portrayal of the Hazara as an oppressed minority. In an interview, Hosseini responded to this criticism by saying, "They never say I am speaking about things that are untrue. Their beef is, 'Why do you have to talk about these things and embarrass us? Don't you love your country?'"

**Later...**

We will continue to meet every 2nd Thursday of the month until June to discuss further banned books. Our current proposed list is:

11th May	"The Kite Runner" Khaled Hosseini
8th June	"Brave New World" by Aldous Huxley.

This list may change if participants suggest different books.

**Memberships** will be renewed at our next meeting (Friday 19<sup>th</sup> May) which no doubt will be very busy. Staff will be on hand early in Room 2 (on your left as you enter the KEC), ready to take your money (£20 each please) by cash, cheque or credit card. If you wish to continue receiving the u3a magazine that will be an extra £3.60 per household. Please leave plenty of time to get booked in and renewed. Thank you.

## Interest Groups



Hobbies and Pastimes change as life constantly changes, however, certain Interest Groups are thriving at the moment. The **Quiz** Evening has over 30 people attending, therefore, be prepared for a cosy experience as you huddle in a team and stretch your mind for answers. The **Arthritis** Group has approximately 20 attending where the first hour is listening to a related talk and the latter part of the meeting is where exercises are employed specifically designed for arthritic joints. **Family History**, **Crafts** and **Jewellery** have become well established steady meetings where people enjoy and explore the topics accordingly.



The **Sign Language** Group appears to be oversubscribed, therefore, a waiting list has been generated. In response to this popularity a meeting at the King Edward Centre (KEC) is being considered in order to accommodate the numbers wishing to investigate this subject. Could it be a test that people can be outside looking through a window and still be able to communicate!

The '**Banned Books**' and '**Scramble**' Interest Groups are exciting and newly formed meetings. They will give a warm welcome to anyone wishing to stimulate their minds with these areas of fun.

Now Spring is upon us, there could be renewed interest in a **Gardening** Group. There has also been a lot of comments toward starting a **Card Games** Group. Both these topics require someone to organise a meeting time, date and place... then, hurray, we have some more Interest Groups for members to enjoy.



To check the meeting times and dates of the Interest Groups please check the Chatteris u3a website, contact the Group Leader and/or speak with Georgina Plumb at the Open Meeting.

### Visits:

We now have new dates available for the visits to the Museum of Armed Policing in Chatteris - these will be offered to the people who already had their names down for the cancelled visits but will have a waiting list for any spare places. I have also requested some more dates so if you don't get a place this time there will be more available in August.

**CANCELLED - Bekonscot Model Village** and Railway has been cancelled due to not enough people wishing to go.



### **Day trip to the seaside – Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> August.**

Would you like a paddle and ice cream by the sea, if so we are offering a trip to Wells-next-the-Sea, to give it its full name, leaving Furrowfields Car Park at 10.00am, returning about 4.00pm at a cost of £24.00 per person, signup sheet available at the May meeting.

**NOW FULL \*\*\* Princess River Cruise \*\*\* NOW FULL** - We can offer a waiting list if interested. Please speak to one of the trips team if you want any more details

**Wimbledon Tennis Tour** - Wednesday 11th October - Cost per person approx £55.00 may be a bit more due to coach costs.

If you have any questions about any of the above please contact Jan

### **DISH now offers Disability Benefit Advice Service in Fenland**

I am contacting Chatteris U3A group to introduce a new free service that has been launched recently in Fenland from DISH. If you have any members who would like to apply for either Personal Independence Payment (PIP) and Attendance Allowance and they would like support in completing the application process, then we are here to help them with the completion of the forms.

Please note that we can only accept cases that we have actioned from the beginning of the process but will then support clients on-going should they require a Mandatory Reconsideration/Appeal.

Our website has a referral form for completion after which we will then allocate a case worker to the client.

You can find a link to the forms here <http://dish.org.uk/contact>

Please do contact me if you require any further information about our service.

Kind regards,

**Karen Barwell**

**Fenland Case Worker**

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### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

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Secretary:	Jan Fieldhouse	Membership	Terry Bosworth	Publicity:	Jan Bradford
Treasurer:	Lesley Gibbs	Groups:	Georgina Plumb	w/o Portfolio:	Gabbi Leeson
Webmaster:	Phil Green	Speakers:	Brian Windsor	John Parry	Caroline Hopper

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