

NEWSLETTER - November 2023

Welcome to November's newsletter. As the nights are inexorably drawing in and the sun rises later and later, we need some cheer for those days that are not bright and sunny. Our November general meeting seems set to do that with Steve King talking about songs that I am sure we will all be familiar with. Do try to join us to take maximum advantage of your membership of u3a.

You may have listened to Michael Moseley on Just One Thing recently (available from BBC Sounds if you aren't already an aficionado of Radio 4). The last one that I heard should be one that we could easily follow up: having a good belly laugh is really good for your health – the clips used within September's talk on the NHS provide a good example how old comedy programmes as well as newer ones can supply this. Worth searching for suitable programmes if you feel in need of cheering up and you now have an extra reason for doing so.

I'm sure that many of us also find that coming along to group meetings gives us an opportunity to socialise and laugh too, so u3a is really good value for money: enjoyable and health giving! I would have finished this with a joke, but not really knowing any, I'll leave you to supply your own.

Good cheer,

Chris

General Meetings

So that's where it is?

October's talk was about the locations used for filming popular television shows. Such shows were Inspector Morse, Doc Martin, Call the Midwife and Poldark.

The audience were taken on a journey through the United Kingdom. Right from Cornwall up to the North East across to Ireland and even Lincoln Castle.

The audience was told that television and film companies will often travel around looking for locations and sometimes unusual ones too. Once a location has been found (and if it happens to be your property) apparently this can be quite a lucrative event. The art of good television and/or film, is to draw the audience in and the location can help to create this. Did you know that on cold frosty days when filming outside, actors will suck on an ice cube for a short while, so that when they speak any breath of air will not be seen. Particularly useful when filming a summer barbecue scene!

The talk was very entertaining, informative and amusing. It was very well attended considering the recent weather.

Finally, just to complete the illusion television creates, who'd of thought that Slade prison doors from the programme Porridge, would actually be St Albans registry office front doors!

Richard



Our October speaker Celia Lord

Next Speaker Wednesday 21st November 2 p.m.

'Steve King presents 'The Story Behind The Song'

The inspirational, surprising and sometimes tragic stories behind some of the world's best known songs. "Save The Last Dance For Me" was recorded by The Drifters in 1960, but what single event in the life of the song's lyricist inspired it? What is the truth behind The Beatles song "Lucy In The Sky With Diamonds"? And who is Whitney Houston's biggest hit really about? Steve will answer these questions and more as he reveals the real stories behind the songs.

2024

January 24th – The Real Queen Mother

A talk about the life of the Queen Mother. Her family, her youth, her marriage and her image. The result often comes as a surprise.

You are 'corgially' invited.

Presented by Jean Townsend

February 28th - The Titanic - What Happened Next?

We all know that the Titanic sunk on its maiden voyage, but the story of "what happened next" is not generally known.

This presentation will take us on that strange, shocking and somewhat unsettling journey into the class prejudices of the day and the poignant story of one little boys shoes. Beware though, there will be two quizzes and lots of tea and (hopefully) cake – just to assist us in our journey into the unknown.

Part of this this talk was previously presented to the u3a history group (without the tea and cake) and further information has since been added and new revelations highlighted.

Presented by Lesley Piper

March 27th – Victorian Medicine: Challenges, Champions and Charlatans

Presented by Em. Professor Robert Wilcox

April 24th – Commonwealth War Graves Foundation

Presented by Sarah Moody

Groups

Contacting group leaders

A full list of groups can be found on our website. <https://u3asites.org.uk/collingham/groups>.

To contact one of the group leaders by email please use the contact link on the specific group page.

New group

Absolute Beginner Ukelele Group

Hello everyone

The current ukelele group, which meets every Tuesday afternoon, is now far from their beginner status, and will be known as Improvers from January 24.

I intend, therefore to offer a new beginners group to members who wish to learn. Ukelele is an easy instrument for learners. It doesn't require you to read music as it's simply chord based.

What you do need is enthusiasm to practise and to enjoy singing along.

If this is of interest, please get in touch , and a mutually agreed time and day will be arranged to meet. You do not need to buy an instrument initially as we have spares which you can borrow.

So come and give it a try, it's super easy and great fun.

Contact Sue Fleet: 01636 893458



Art Appreciation

In October Jannet gave a presentation on the work of Gwen John (1876 – 1939).

This self-portrait was completed in 1899 just after Gwen finished studying at the Slade School of Art. It can be seen in the National Portrait Gallery. While at the Slade she won 2 prizes, a certificate for figure drawing and, in her final year, the prestigious Melville Nettleship prize for Figure Composition.



Gwen John spent most of her life working in Paris. She painted landscapes, interiors and animals but she was particularly interested in painting portraits of women. The subjects of her portraits were often seated with their hands in their laps. Gwen was part of an active group of artists, which included her brother, Augustus John and Rodin with whom she had a relationship.

There was a period after her death in 1939 when her work was less valued. Although only 158 of her paintings survived many more of her drawings are available to us. An indication of how highly her work is now valued is reflected in the sale of 'Portrait of a Lady Reclining' at Christie's in March 2023. The estimated price was £15-25,000 but the painting sold for £56,700. There is further evidence of a growing recognition of her work in an exhibition entitled: 'Gwen John: Art and Life in London and Paris' which is at the The Holburne Museum, Bath until April 14th 2024.

Jannet

Bridge

We continue to meet on Friday afternoons at the Royal Oak, all of our members also play some club or social bridge with Bassingham Bridge Club.

Chris

Family History

At our November meeting we opened with a presentation about a Collingham family, the Bacons. Several generations lived here from at least the 1860s to the 1920s , if not longer. Charlie had first become interested when recording a gravestone at All Saints church. Seeing that a husband and wife had died within six months of each other in 1880 /1 and at the young ages of 46 and 47 he wondered whether there were children and what had happened to them. Six of them were found in the 1881 census in Claypole workhouse and further research found that these youngsters aged 9 down to a few months had six elder siblings.

Expanding the family tree the wider family were involved in notable events of the 19th and 20th centuries. A family member died in the Charge of The Light Brigade whilst two brothers died in the first world war, one in France and one in Belgium.

After this presentation Carole showed us some old family documents and told the stories behind them.

We welcomed two new prospective members to the group and introduced them to the techniques of researching their family and constructing a family tree.

Our meeting in December on the 5th will include our usual Christmas buffet and game/quiz with a family history theme. 10am at the YCC.

Charlie

History

At our October meeting, we did something a little different .

We each chose some era, event or historic person we would have liked to experience. It proved to be an extremely interesting fun morning. From the Georgian era as depicted by Jane Austen, Ancient Greece, Durham Lead mining families in the 19th century to the court of Henry VII, at the appearance of Perkin Warbeck to Victorian prisons and workhouses. Lots of comment, speculation and laughter.

Our November meeting will be on the 24th at 10 at the YCC.

Ann

Gardening

The group met at Jan's in May and October to see her garden before and after its complete makeover. The designer's plan and the rationale behind the design were very informative and provided a lot to talk about.

Jan



Jan's garden



Our visit to Sutton



Belton gardens

Italian

The Italian Group meets on the second and fourth Monday of each month at 2pm.

At our first meeting in November we were pleased to welcome a new member to our Group. As this session was our Speaking and Listening meeting, we spent time listening to a couple of recordings of people introducing themselves.

With our cup of tea we enjoyed 'sbrisoline/ sbrisolona'. This is a crumbly biscuit type cake which had been sent to us by Lydia, who visited the Group in August. We all enjoyed it and had fun composing a 'thank you' card in Italian to Lydia.

Having been refreshed we tackled the use of colours and the grammatical complexities associated with the use of some of them. Your tip from this Newsletter is that the word for 'beige' in Italian is 'beige'!

Jannet and Mary

Literature

We have been reading 'A Kestrel for a Knave' by Barry Hines. It is set in the 1960s, and portrays a young Yorkshire lad named Billy Casper who finds solace from a bleak life of bullying and neglect by rearing a wild kestrel he calls Kes. With spring in full bloom, Hines's descriptions throughout highlight Bill's love of the natural world and the contrasting harshness of his home life.

Pushed by an enlightened teacher to talk about his kestrel, Billy proves himself both passionate and knowledgeable. The book he uses to train Kes may have been stolen, but this is a shining example of untapped potential being brought to the fore by imagination and reading.

Our chosen book for December is 'Lucy by the Sea' by Elizabeth Strout;

'A superbly gifted storyteller and a craftswoman in a league of her own,'
Hilary Mantel

~~~~~  
A Kestrel for a Knave

'An Eagle for an Emperor, a Gyrfalcon for a King; a  
Peregrine for a Prince, a Saker for a Knight, a Merlin  
For a Lady; a Goshawk for a Yeoman, a Sparrowhawk  
For a Priest, a Musket for a Holy water Clerk, a  
Kestrel for a Knave.

Selected from the Boke of St Albans, 1486,  
And a Harleian manuscript.

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Sheelah

Music Makers



No, you needn't cancel that appointment at Specsavers. That bloke in the middle at the back is our newest member - and, at long last our prayers have been answered, he is a drummer! He brings with him his highly sophisticated digital drum kit, which has given the group a whole new impetus. Hopefully you will have the chance to hear the new Seven Shades of Grey line-up at the Christmas meeting.

Phil

Photography

Our theme this month was "Abstract". The images below show the creativity of the group members and I hope you will enjoy them.

There will be no theme set for December. In January our theme will be "Trees with no Leaves". The amount of fallen leaves currently in my garden suggest there will be no difficulty in finding images to photograph.

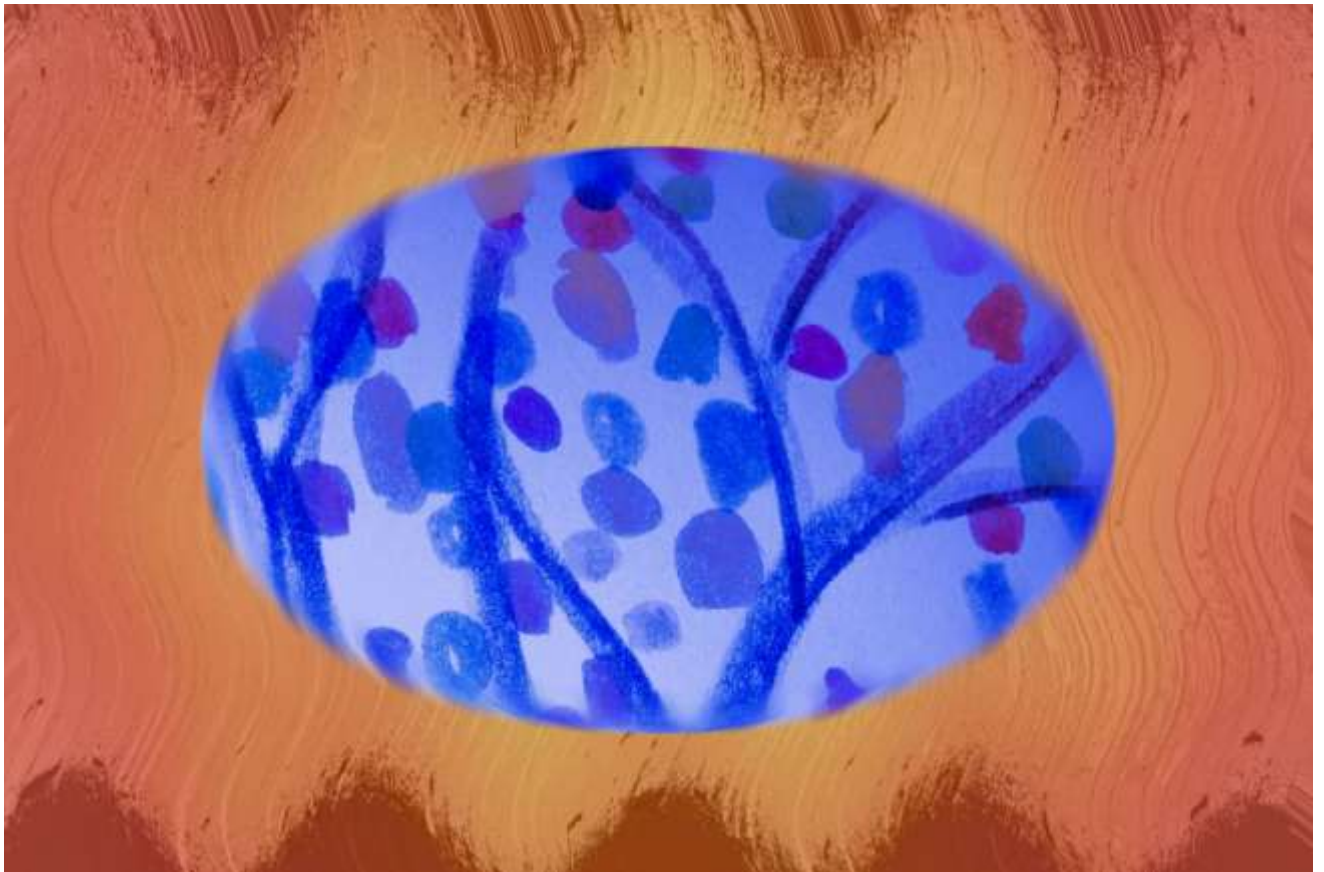
Paul



Ice by John Geeson



Books by Jenny Macpherson



Floating Elipse by Paul Bass



Carpet pattern by John Geeson



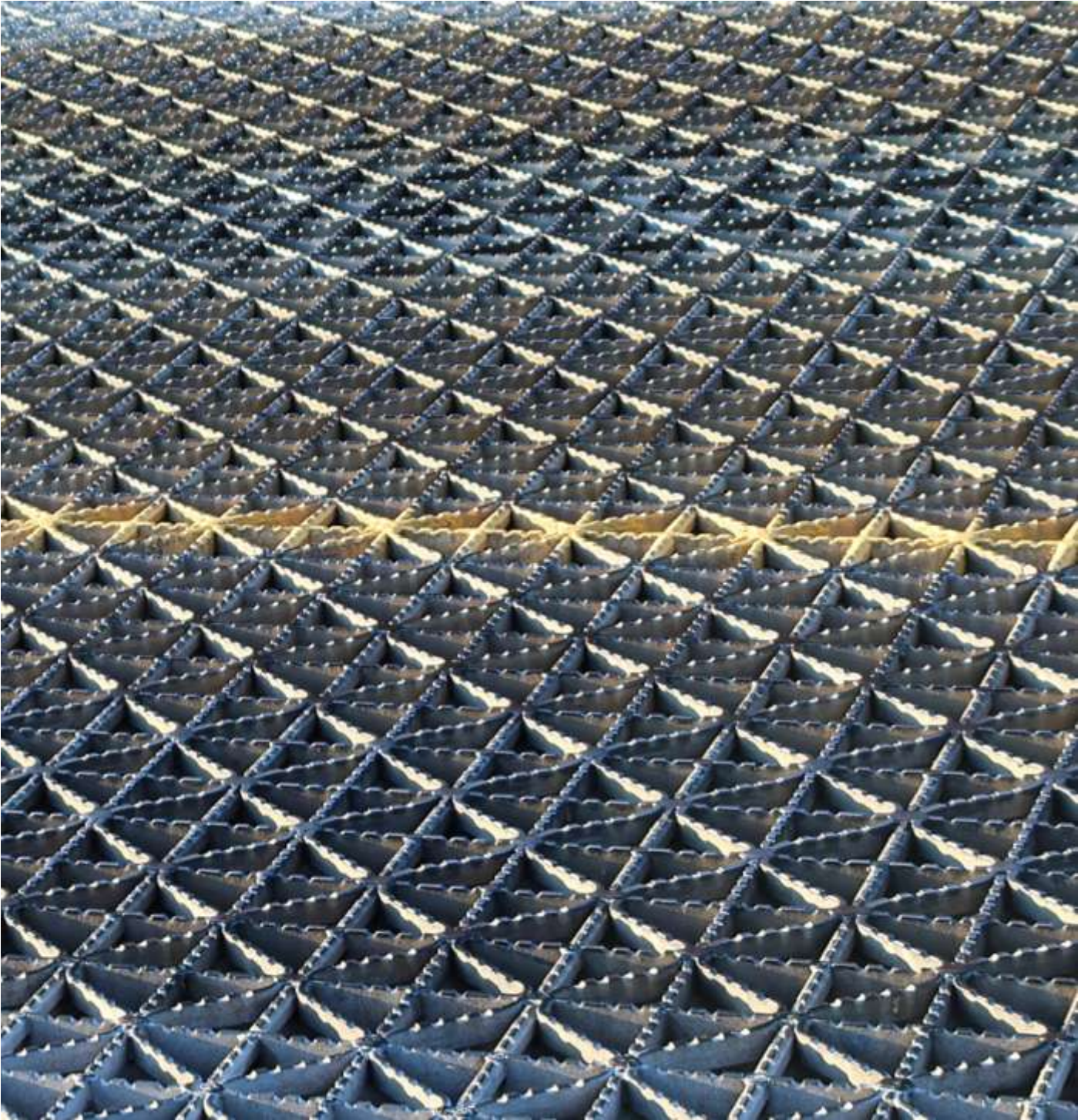
Intentional Camera Movement by Paul Bass



Lichen by Jannet Wright



Solarised Dahlia by Gill Bass



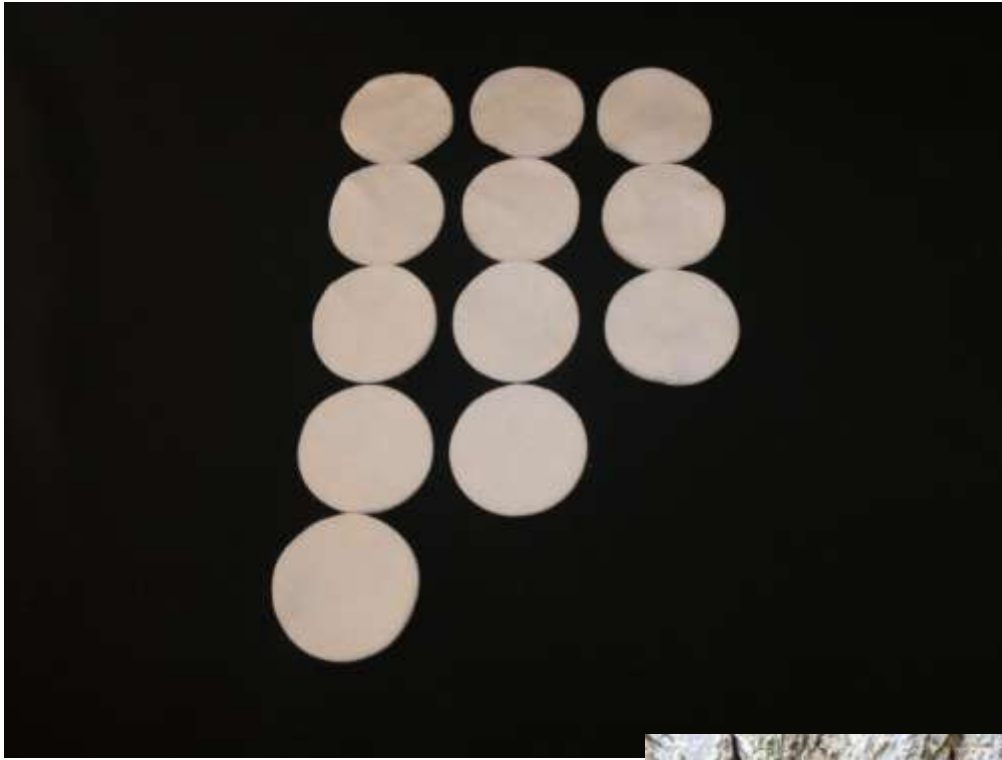
Road Reinforcement by Jannet Wright



Tree Bark No 1 by Colin Smith

Swirled Chrysan-
themum by Gill
Bass





White on Black by Jenny Macpherson

Tree Bark No 2 by Colin Smith



Play Reading

We next meet on Tuesday, November 21st at 10-12 in the YCC, with a one act play titled “Absolute Discretion” by Stewart Auty, a comedy.

Sue

Strollers

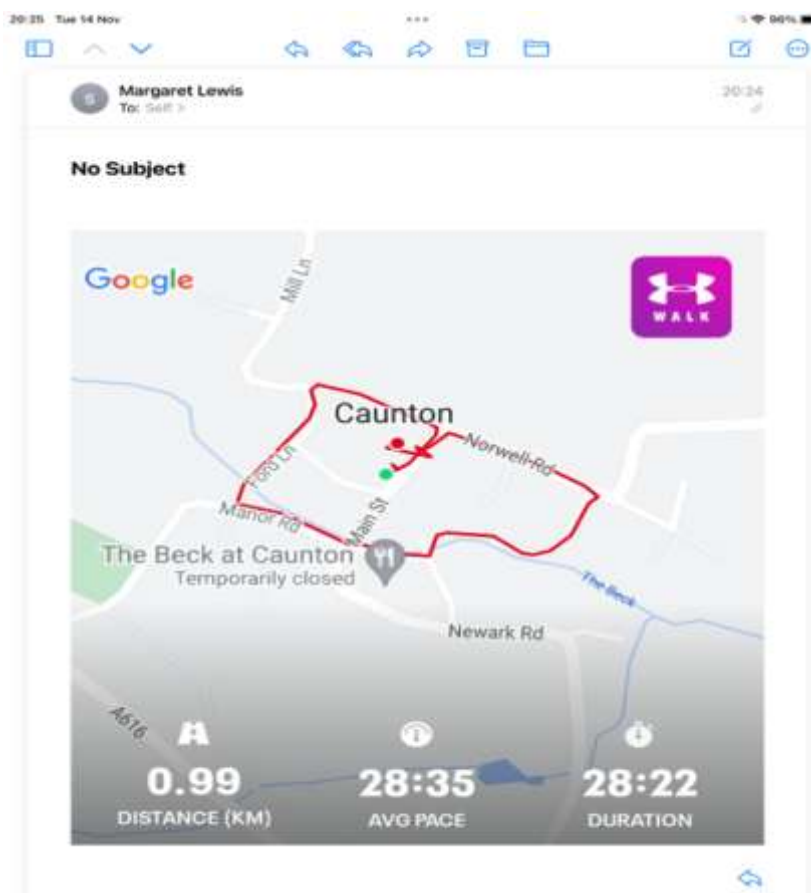
Despite the storms in the previous week we decided to go ahead with our planned shorter 3/4 mile walk around Caunton. Considering the forecasted weather we had a very good turn out of fifteen, all dressed appropriately for the conditions.

Our route through the lovely village of Caunton took us over the ford and alongside the fast flowing beck where we saw a number of flooded houses, evidenced by carpets and furniture in gardens and driveways and water marks high up house walls. We were told by a local that over thirty houses had been affected.

At the end of the walk we had a look around the village church which is always left open to welcome visitors.

We finished up with a lunch at The Plough Inn where we very well looked after and catered for.

Marg



Sunday Lunchers

For our November's u3a Sunday Lunch, 14 members enjoyed a delicious meal at The Green Man, Norton Disney.

Margaret



Table Tennis

Our friendly table tennis group usually meets on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month at the Winthorpe Community Centre for 1 hour from 10 – 11 am. Afterwards many of us enjoy a cup of coffee and the occasional cake at the Lord Nelson in Winthorpe. We do provide bats and balls and new members are always welcome.

Do come and give it a try!

The dates going forward are as follows:

December 14th and 28th

January 11th and 25th

February 8th and 22nd

March 14th and 28th

Peter

Thursday Talking Shop

The subject for our next meeting on 23rd November will be 'Philanthropy'; how we define it and looking at its varied forms such as the donation of time or money, sponsorship or social action.

Anita

Weekenders

This month we seem to have morphed into a Cinema group. We have seen October and November's films at the Methodist Church, The Unlikely Pilgrimage of Harold Fry and Summerland, We have also seen The Great Escaper at the Lincoln Everyman and the Killers of the Flower Moon again at the Everyman. All highly recommended

Next month we have our Christmas lunch at the Generous Briton, Carols in Lincoln Cathedral and a coach trip to see the Christmas decorations at Castle Howard.

Welcome to our new members Tricia and Viv.

We meet monthly at Pennels on a Saturday morning, generally the 3rd Saturday but contact me for details if you are interested. The next meeting will be in January.

Liz
