

## NEWSLETTER - January 2024

Welcome to the first newsletter of 2024. Whilst this is the start of this year, the u3a has two other starts within 2024. The subscription year starts in March, so we will soon be asking you to renew your membership and the AGM will be held in June, marking the start of yet another new year and a momentous one, as we will also be celebrating 10 years of Collingham and District u3a. More news at a later date on how we will celebrate this.

This is a much longer column than I usually write. I do hope that you will all take to time to read it, even though it's not as interesting looking as the rest of this newsletter – can't think of a way to jazz it up, so it'll just have to be lots of words. Sorry. . . do keep reading.

When our u3a started the subs were set at £20 and from March that is the level they will return to. I'm sure you will all feel that this is very good value for money, especially as room hire fees and speaker fees have risen quite a bit since July 2014. We've all felt the rise in energy prices and those hiring out rooms or travelling to Collingham are no exception.

So, what goes into running your u3a? We have a committee to take care of all the behind the scenes things that you take for granted. We meet once a month, the second Friday in the morning at the YCC (I'm sure many of you have met there for your own meetings), so joining us would need you to be able to come to a majority of those meetings. Your treasurer keeps our books up to date, so we always know how much money we have – at the beginning of the financial year we obviously have plenty of money but as new memberships then fall off, we need to make sure we aren't running a deficit by the year end. That's why we need to plan carefully and ask members to vote on increases in subs so long in advance.



I chair the meetings and run the general meetings but when I can't do that for whatever reason your vice-chair, Richard, is there to step in. Charlie, your membership secretary is someone you may have had contact with outside of paying for renewals as he keeps in touch with you if you've managed somehow to overlook such payments! And of course if you were thinking about joining us and contacted him.

Two committee members you've certainly met at any general meeting are Rosie and Denise who have been in charge of refreshments. Do remember to introduce yourself to them at a meeting and offer help with washing up or whatever – the more hands there are, the better (though should they be lucky enough to be inundated with offers at any one meeting do turn up to help at the next).

Mary is the group coordinator, so group leaders will have met her. This is a vital role, more of which next month. She also runs the book stall with Sue and they will be grateful for any new offerings as all the old stock has been donated to other charities to make way for you to buy fresh new ones in the coming months. So look out those books you enjoyed but know you won't read again, or those you were less keen on (perhaps don't advertise that fact, though someone else is sure to like the look of it).

Liz has successfully steered the newsletter through covid and beyond, but now feels that it's time for someone else to bring a fresh eye to it – since group leaders supply the content, editorial skills are the key here. Please approach one of us at a general meeting or contact us through the website if this sounds like something you could do – full training given! This newsletter is one of the ways in which your committee can keep in touch with you, the members, so it's important to us. I hope that you feel the same way.

Our general meetings owe everything to David as he organises your speakers, resulting in a varied and interesting programme with something that should appeal to everyone – even if you're not sure that a particular topic does sound that wonderful, David tries his best to find speakers who are actually interesting whatever they're talking about and you'll find that you learnt something despite yourself.

Because we have other committee members as well as those (lucky enough?) to be named here, everyone is starting to have an idea of what is needed for these named roles and so if you join our wonderful band you won't be thrust into something without knowing anything about it.

Now that you're all inspired to offer something to the whole membership as well as enjoying as many groups and meetings as you can fit in, do contact me about coming to a committee meeting to see what's what before we really start looking for new talent as the AGM approaches. Without the members there is no u3a but those members don't have a u3a without a committee.

Chris

---

# General Meetings



Our Christmas party meeting on December 13th



## **Next Speaker Wednesday 24th January 2024**

### **January 24th –**

We were originally going to hear Jean Townsend on “The real Queen Mother” but unfortunately she is ill so therefore as a late replacement, Horace Liberty will present an illustrated talk about the sometimes funny stories behind well known public sculptures in London.

You are still cordially invited.

Horace has previously spoken to the group when he presented a talk on John Betjeman.

### **February 28<sup>th</sup> - 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 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 27<sup>th</sup> – Victorian Medicine: Challenges, Champions and Charlatans**

Presented by Em. Professor Robert Wilcox

### **April 24<sup>th</sup> – Commonwealth War Graves Foundation**

Presented by Sarah Moody

David

---

# 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

### QUIZ GROUP

The first meeting of this group is set for the first Wednesday in Feb. which is the 7th day of the month.

The venue is The Allotment Coffee shop/veggie bar.

Start time is 2 pm till 4 pm.

For this first meeting, I thought it would be a good start if everyone brought along 5 questions & of course the answers for a bit of a taster. The main point of this meeting, will be to work out how we as a group, would like to work it. This venue is for this meeting only! I will contact you all before the next meeting which will again be on the 1st Wed. of March as to where it is to be held.

Any problems, please contact me.

John

---

# Art Appreciation

The Group is looking forward to 2024 and already has several topics planned.

At our first meeting of the year on Tuesday 23rd January at 2pm we will be doing a quiz drawing on presentations from 2023. We will talk about the session in February which is entitled **Desert Island Art** where group members will identify a piece of art which they would like to have with them on a Desert Island.

In March there will be a talk about **Native American Art of the Southwest** and in April we will be looking at **Marginalia**. A different type of art will be considered in May when we explore the work of **Olive Edis**, a British photographer

We welcome new members to this friendly and stimulating group. We meet at the Youth and Community Centre on the fourth Tuesday of each month.

Jannet

---

# Bowling

The Indoor / outdoor Bowling group continue to play at Grantham indoor Bowls Club on the first and third Monday of the month 12-2pm.

The New season outdoor Green bowling starts on Monday May the 6<sup>th</sup> 2-4pm.

Of course all U3A members are very welcome so please contact me if you wish to come along for any directions etc 07866116324.

Clive

---

# Family History

The January meeting got off to a bad start when we had problems with the laptop and projector but we went on without our usual display.

David entertained us with a story about an ancestor who had drowned in a river; a second such occurrence in his family. He needs to avoid riverbanks!

Ivor, one of our new members, introduced us to his recent family history, taking us back to a grandfather who was a coal miner in Wales. There should be lots of scope here to find out about the colliery where he worked and to probably look at the period in the 1920s when they suffered during the mining and general strikes.

Our next meeting is on Tuesday 6th February.

Charlie

---

# History

In December we had a happy pre-Christmas time together, nibbles provided by our members! Sue Brauer devised a very clever mixed Quiz for us, we always learn something new, don't we? Lesley will be giving a presentation on January 26th, talking about her research on the food provided to inmates of both workhouses and prisons in the past, was it as awful as it's portrayed in fiction? Come along and find out.

Ann

---

# Italian

The group meets the second and fourth Monday of each month.

At our first meeting in January which was our 'Speaking and Listening' session, each person in the Group spoke about their Christmas activities.

We took turns to read aloud a short article supplied by a group member about the origin of panettone. We translated the article as we went along.

We spoke about and shared with everyone information from the main u3a website about resources available, should we want to use them, for learning Italian.

Our second session in January is happening a week later than usual because of holiday arrangements. When we do meet we hope to be begin working on the future tense.

Mary and Jannet

---

# Literature

We have been reading 'A Long Petal of the Sea' by Isabel Allende. This is historical fiction at its best, covering the fascinating period from the Spanish Civil War through to the right wing take-over by Pinochet in Chile and after. It is also very much a family saga, and the characters are rich and memorable. Isabel Allende is an incredible storyteller.

Our choice for February is the 1997 Booker Prize winner 'The God of Small Things' by Arundhati Roy, and will be a welcome re-read for some of us.

~~~~~  
Best wishes.  
Sheelah

---

# Music Makers



'Blue Monday' isn't a new song we are doing; the third Monday of January, is reputed to be the most depressing day of the year. Casting that thought aside, the Music Makers took a break until the 23rd. Therefore, there is little or no activity to report this month but we are looking forward to getting to grips with some new material very soon. The new stuff includes songs by Hoagy Carmichael, Procol Harum, Creedence Clearwater Revival and even Cream. The repertoire is growing.

Phil





# Photography

This month our theme was “Trees with no Leaves”. The late Autumn made this a bit difficult but I think our images show that the leaves did fall eventually and being late did not affect us. Do you agree?

Our theme for next month is “Items that Time made Obsolete”. You may find these images bring back memories and in some cases are still in use.

Paul



Reach for the Sky by Colin Smith



Folly near Buxton by John Geeson



Getting ready for Spring by Colin Smith



Golden Light by Paul Bass



Low Street by John Geeson



Poplar versus the Flood by Paul Bass



Scarle Road Sunset by Gill Bass



Silhouettes by Jenny Macpherson



Snowy Road by Jenny Macpherson

---



Standing Proud by Gill Bass

---

# Play Reading

There were flurries of snow in the air when we settled down to read Alan Bennett's charming adaptation of "The Wind in the Willows" by Kenneth Grahame. Just the thing for a cold January morning.

We next meet on Tuesday February 20th.

Sue

---

## Strollers

On 10 January The Strollers did a sunny but cold 1.3 mile leisurely walk around Grebe lake at Whisby Nature Reserve. Considering the ground everywhere had been so waterlogged, the gritted paths at Whisby remained dry and very easy to walk on.

We followed our walk with 19 of our members having refreshments and a chat at the Whisby cafe, a good time was had by all.

Marg



# Table Tennis

Our friendly table tennis group usually meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> 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:**

**January**     25<sup>th</sup>  
**February**    8<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>  
**March**        14<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>

Peter

---

# Ukulele

This is a friendly and fun group for improvers and intermediate ukelele players. We have a very wide range of music which has been collected since we began in the winter of 2019, before Covid hit.

We meet at 1.30 pm and play until 3pm each Tuesday at the Mayfield Room within the Memorial Hall in the village.

The venue cost is £2 per week and new members are very welcome.

Please contact Sue Fleet via the website for more information.

Sue

---

# Bridge

The Bridge group had been meeting in Beyond Coffee while the Royal Oak is closed. It has proven to be a good venue, but we look forward to returning to the Royal Oak when it reopens. We welcomed a new member to our group this week.

Chris

---



# Weekenders

We had a busy December with Carols by Candlelight at Lincoln Cathedral, a Christmas lunch and a trip to Castle Howard.

January is no less busy, we've already seen the film One Life, enjoyed music at Coddington village hall last night, and are looking forward to a talk by Professor Van Tam tomorrow. We've even booked a couple of holidays for later in the year.

Liz

---