

NEWSLETTER - November 2020

Welcome to the November Newsletter

Did you notice in last month's Newsletter the changes to the presentation? This change in branding is a result of the Third Age Trust Development Plan and Liz Ball with the Newsletter and Harry Constantine with the Fleet article have been quick to take on board these changes. The most significant visual impact of these branding changes can be seen on the national website www.u3a.org.uk

Since our last Newsletter our Business Secretary has attended an online East Midlands seminar for Committee members. It was called "Going Forward Together". At this event there were speakers who encouraged a focus on positive ageing and the need to consider external relations. Considerable thought is being given as to how u3a could become more visible online and how platforms such as Zoom can help with this. All u3a Committees are being encouraged to identify different ways to contact individuals and organisations with shared interests.

When we discussed these points at our last Executive Committee Meeting we agreed that while there is room for development, Collingham & District u3a has made a good start in these areas. During the last eight months we have used a variety of such platforms to continue with some of our Groups as well as for Executive Committee meetings and our AGM. In the village we already have good links with some other organizations. We hope these links will continue and strengthen when life returns to some semblance of normality.

At the East Midlands seminar it was recommended that Executive Committees should have a member who takes the lead on Diversity and Inclusion. Guidelines for this role will be made available soon on the National website. This is something we will be thinking about as your Executive Committee. If anyone is interested in joining the Committee to take on this role, please do make contact with me or any member of the Committee.

One of the seminar speakers highlighted that out of a total u3a membership of 450,000 it is estimated that only 7% are under 65. This does emphasize the need to let people know that there is no age restriction for membership. Membership of u3a is open to all those who are not in full-time employment and who want to learn with other people. So, if you know anyone who is no longer working full-time and who would be interested in joining us, then do encourage them to look on the Collingham & District u3a website and contact Group Leaders and the Membership Secretary.

You will see included in this Newsletter information about a Regional based role to promote u3a. Our Regional Trustee, Jean Hogg asked us to circulate this information to all members and the Newsletter is the ideal way to let you all know about this.

Best wishes,
Jannet Wright, Chair, Executive Committee

A new role with the U3A

The U3A are looking for volunteers with knowledge and experience of working in a PR or marketing capacity. Volunteers will be part of the Regional Support Team but will work closely with Liz Drury, Third Age Trust Communications Officer. Initially they are looking for one volunteer per Region.

The role is to act as a PR adviser to U3As and Networks in their home Region or Country as part of the Trust's strategic project of raising the profile of the U3A movement. You will be part of a UK wide team of other PR Advisers working closely with Liz Drury.

The role is home based but travel around the Region or Country, as necessary. Occasional team meetings in London will be required, but no more than twice a year. Expenses will be paid under the Expense Policy of the Trust.

If you would like the full text of the job description please contact me via the Collingham U3A email address and I will forward it.

Zoom, Whatsapp and other ways of staying in touch digitally

As Jannet says in her welcome we have already made progress using a variety of digital platforms to stay in touch. If you are unsure of how to use them here is a link that might help from our national U3A website, they offer guidance and run support sessions..

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/advice/technology-help>

Age UK also produce helpful guidance on their website, search for technology internet video calling and you will find a link to keeping in touch using a video call.

Liz Ball

Groups

Art Appreciation

Lead: Chris Stothard, Telephone: 01636 894241
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This month the art appreciation group has started on a world tour. Having felt that up until now we had been very Eurocentric and focussed on painting, we moved almost as far away as it is possible to be and commenced a tour of world architecture. We started with pagodas in Japan and China. The point of this tour is not to learn about the religious and symbolic nature of these building, just to admire their aesthetics.

It didn't prove entirely possible to leave out the West, as one of the pagodas we considered was the one at Kew Gardens – the photo used is out of date, as eagle eyed readers will see if they have recently visited the gardens.



It can be seen that Japanese and Chinese pagodas are quite different, at least to untutored eyes.



A Japanese pagoda built of wood.

A Chinese pagoda built of stone.



The next leg of our tour saw us a bit nearer home in India, Myanmar, Laos and Thailand looking at the many and various shapes, though with an underlying uniform concept, of stupas, focussing on how this mainstay of Buddhist temples has evolved through time and space. The building materials of the Temple of the Million Bottles in Thailand are particularly interesting: the green is Heineken bottles and the brown is Chang bottles, whilst their caps have been used to form mosaics.



Gardening

Lead: Ingrid Wiggins, Telephone 07805 975456
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Collingham garden club continues to send photos to one another. Autumn leaves are currently being cleaned up and bulbs have been planted. Tender plants have been stowed away in greenhouses and we are all set now for those winter months ahead.



Ann's Pyracantha





Virginia creeper beginning to lose it's leaves and a Cotoneaster in a pot

Anyone know what this one is, let Ingrid know if you do.



History

Lead: Anita Maunsell, Telephone: 01636 892928

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Peter Brauer, p.brauer@btinternet.com

A contribution from Sheelah Reynolds.

BOUND FOR BOTANY BAY: THE FIRST FLEET 1787-8

PART ONE - THE CONVICT VOYAGE WHICH FOUNDED AUSTRALIA

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Before the American War of Independence, the British Empire used North America as a penal colony through a system of indentured service. The defeat of the British forces in Sept. 1783 by the North American colonies, who declared themselves the Independent United States of America, brought an end to the use of the territory for transported convicts.

In the same year, William Pitt the Younger, aged 24, became Prime Minister. Being opposed to hanging, a common criminal penalty, he ordered the establishment of a large new penal colony on the other side of the world in the vast wilderness of what was to become New South Wales in Australia.

Captain James Cook, aboard HMS Endeavour had first landed there in 1770 and not a single ship had visited since. His anchorage was at first called Stingray Bay, but soon this was changed to BOTANY BAY, because of the interesting flora on its shores.

This was the destination (without any reconnaissance or knowledge except for what had been passed on from Cook's fleeting visit ) of what we call THE FIRST FLEET which set sail from Portsmouth 17 years later in May 1787. The perilous journey was to result in the founding of the Australian nation and is one of the greatest adventure stories of mankind. Thirteen hundred and fifty people - 759 of them convicts - crammed into eleven tiny ships, sailed halfway round the world to transplant European civilisation. Two of the ships were naval vessels - HMS Sirius and HMS Supply, six were transports for convicts, and a further three were ships packed with stores for the journey and the intended first settlement. Extraordinarily, on a voyage that was to take 8 months, only 48 people died, many of whom were sick before the fleet left. It was an epic achievement of navigation, use of the wind, ocean currents and organisation, yet it is a story little known within, or outside, Australia.

The information here is largely based on a book by Jonathan King, a descendant of Philip Gidley King, 2nd Lieutenant on the voyage, eventually to become a Governor of New South Wales. Those on board serving as navel and marine officers, surgeons, ship's masters and private soldiers were men of their time. This was the age of King George 111, the mad farmer, as he came to be known after his first derangement, which ironically occurred the year he authorised the sailing of the first fleet. At this time of revolutionary change when the old order seemed frightening fragile, the men of the first fleet believed they were transporting the best of the old order to the new world and ARTHUR PHILLIP, Commander in Chief of the fleet and first Governor, tried to re-establish the same values and teach European ways to the Aborigines.

Consequently the men of the first feet embody this contrast between two worlds and it is reflected in their journals - the refined Reverend Richard Johnson will not stoop to preaching to the convicts, and the aloof Surgeon Smith looks down his nose at the rum-sodden wretches from the



streets of London who before the voyage he only saw as his carriage passed by.

There were many different kinds of people on the fleet, and many European nationalities were represented, plus four or five from the West Indies, in addition to the English. Many of the convicts had first been transported to America for their crimes but had now to be sent to a new penal colony following the American War of Independence. Yet despite their crimes and past, the convicts as it turned out behaved better than the marines on this first fleet. The records that survive are chance ones as conditions were difficult for writing diaries at sea. In addition, it was hard to know what was happening; only Phillip really knew what all the eleven ships were doing and why, and information was only gained by the others days or weeks later and then sometimes they got the story wrong anyway.

We will follow on in Part Two by looking at some of the key people who set sail in the First Fleet and left their written accounts.

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# Italian for Beginners

Lead: Mary Hughes & Jannet Wright Telephone: 01636 892415

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## Tanti auguri a te

While extending our knowledge of Italian prepositions over several meetings we learnt to sing 'Tanti auguri a te' which is the Italian version of 'Happy Birthday to you'. We did this on a special occasion when we found we had two members with birthdays on the day of our Zoom meeting and that the son of another member also had a birthday on that day.

We have been reminding ourselves of the ordinal numbers – first, second, third etc. and combining these in creative ways with sentences that include prepositions. It is not as easy as it sounds.

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# Literature

Lead: Sheelah Reynolds, Telephone: 01636 892348,  
email: sheelahreynolds@btinternet.com

We have been reading 'Things Fall Apart' the debut novel by Nigerian author Chinua Achebe, first published in England in 1962. This wonderful novel is regarded as a milestone in African literature. It follows the life of Okonkwo, an Igbo man, and is split into three parts. The first and main section comprises fascinating descriptions of his family, personal history, and the customs and society of the Igbo. The second and third parts introduce the influence of European colonialism and Christian missionaries on Okonkwo, his family and the wider Igbo community.

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A extract from Maya Angelou's poem 'Still I Rise'

Just like moons and like suns,
With the certainty of tides,
Just like hopes springing high,
Still I rise

Did you want to see me broken
Bowed head and lowered eyes?
Shoulders falling down like teardrops,
Weakened by my soulful cries?

Does my haughtiness offend you?
Don't you take it awful hard
'Cause I laugh like I've got gold mines
Diggin' in my backyard.

You may shoot me with your words,
You may cut me with your eyes,
You may kill me with your hatefulness
But still, like air, I rise.

Does my sexiness upset you?
Does it come as a surprise
That I dance like I've got diamonds
At the meeting of my thighs?

Out of the huts of history's shame
I rise
Up from a past that's rooted in pain
I rise
I'm a black ocean, leaping and wide,
Welling and swelling I bear in the tide.

Local History Research

Lead: Pat Smedley, Telephone: 01636 892292
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From October our Local History Research Group has held Zoom meetings to discuss our posters for the proposed exhibition over the May Day bank holiday weekend at All Saints Church. Zoom works quite well for this purpose since it is possible to focus on one poster after the next, presented on power point. On the screen therefore, ones sees the large image of the power point slide – with the view of participants in their Zoom boxes looking on as it were on the side of the computer screen. This way they can all contribute to the discussion. In both sessions we have covered many topics which will, we hope, enrich the exhibition content.

Poster content seen and discussed to date:

- The Royal Observer Corps
- Second world war film adverts
- Evacuation of children
- Home front : Transport during the war
- Home front : Utilities : gas, electricity, water
- Home front : Sickness and Health : where do you go when you are sick?
- Home front : Housing
- Quiz
- Home front : Shopping
- Home front : Life at home : make do and mend
- Home front : Entertainment
- Home front : Communications
- Education Act 1944 : School Health Service
- The effect of the Education Act in Collingham
- Reverend Robert Pridmore of North Collingham
- Ransome and Marles Bombing 1942
- Work and lives of the Womens Land Army in Collingham
- Photos and art from Billy Akrill
- Poppy embroidered art

From January we will review the remainder of the posters, then we have time to all fine tune our contributions ready to start assembling in April. We hope of course by this time that we will be able to meet in our usual venue in the Mayfield Room.

Photography

Lead: Paul Bass, Telephone: 01636 892057
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The Photography Group continues to meet via video conferencing. We use Google Meet, since it has no charges or time restrictions. The theme for November was "Triangles".

For next month the theme for images will be "Circles". The intention is that images for this theme can be found locally and avoids unnecessary travel.



Over the door
by Phil Leckenby



Crown on top
by John Geeson



Norwich Cathedral
by Les Murray



The Sculpture by Jenny Macpherson



Blue Angles by Paul Bass



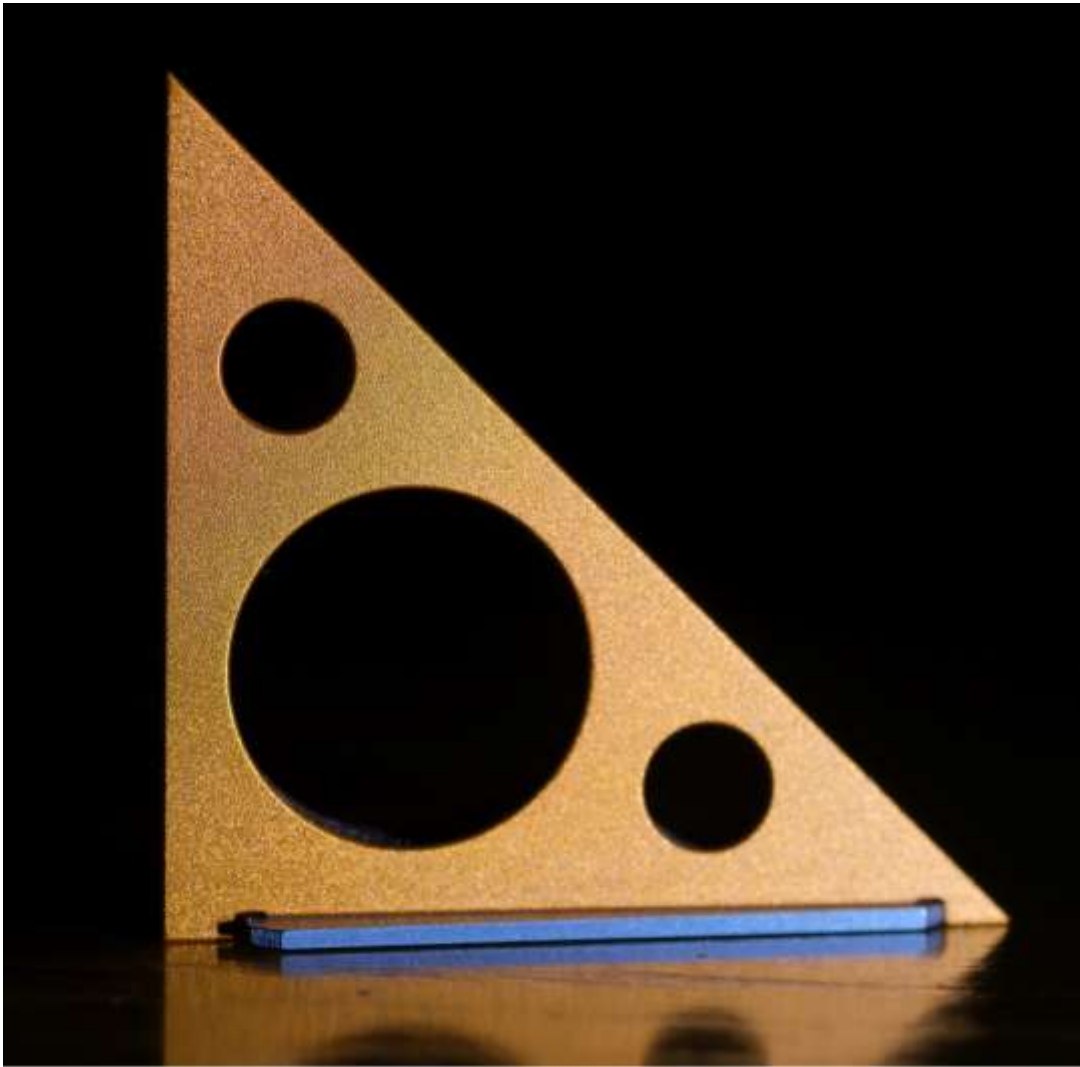
Bottoms up
By Colin Smith



Electric triangle
By Jannet Wright

Leaves of Gold
By Gillian Bass





Mini mitre square By Roger Davis

Scrabble

Lead: Margaret Orchiston, Telephone: 01636 894027
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Five of us are now playing weekly on a Thursday afternoon via Zoom.

if anyone else ,with their own Scrabble set, would like to join us they would be very welcome, either in a second group on Thursdays or any day to suit.

Walking group

Lead: Colin Smith, Telephone: 01636 701205
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Three days before the current lockdown and complying with current Covid regulations, four members of the walking group met at the Green on Low Street for a walk that took them down Westfield Lane to the River Trent. The plan was to walk the path around the outside of Langford Lowfields but they decided to return to Collingham through the RSPB reserve on what turned out to be a lovely sunny morning. We hope to have our next walk in December if lockdown is lifted and the restrictions at the time allow.

