

# **DONCASTER**

**u3a**

Registered Charity No. 1074577

**April - May 2021**

# From the Chair



It has been a year now since the Covid 19 Pandemic arrived and caused havoc to our “normal” ways of life. It has been a tough time for everyone, but particularly for older people who have been the most likely to suffer badly from the effects of the virus.

I miss the camaraderie that we always get from our various meetings through the week, and I am certain that most of us feel the same. Thank goodness we have a great team of group leaders and a brilliant committee who have done their best to keep everyone in touch and organise the excellent meetings that have been offered online.

I wonder how many of our online meetings will continue after we can all start meeting again face to face. In any event, I am sure that all the old groups will be up and running as soon as possible. I suspect not many will be needed, and certainly none of them will replace the joy of our usual face to face meetings.

I expect the first of such meetings to begin after March 29th when the government have proposed that “Organised Sports” will be able to start up again. This almost coincides with the start of the cricket season and I certainly cannot wait to get back to our Walking Cricket group. Other outdoor groups, such as Crown Green Bowling, Love of Nature, Strollers and Stretchers should also be able to start up very soon.

In July, if all goes well, we may be in a position to start all the groups again, along with our general meetings. We will also be able to have a proper AGM, rather than the online AGM we had been planning for May.

We have had some great talks on Zoom too. Our talk in April is to be offered by Alan Swann, the chairman of Barnsley U3A who will be delivering a talk about “Memory” which should be of great interest to all of us in the U3A.

It is time to think about renewing our memberships. At £14 I must say I think we offer excellent value and I hope that all of you who read this will continue to support us. We are a non-profit, charitable organisation, operated entirely by our own volunteer members.

I sent an email out a short while back, asking if any members would be willing to join a list of potential helpers. I had a good response but I was unable to reach those members who are not on email, so if anybody else is interested in joining the list please let me know. There are also places on the committee which still need to be filled, to replace some current members who will be standing down.

Finally I must thank all of you in advance for your continued support of our wonderful organisation.

I look forward to a busy and exciting U3A year ahead.

*Chris Woolven*

# Doncaster Council: Updates

Dr Rupert Suckling is the Director of Public Health in Doncaster. You can subscribe to his coronavirus updates from Doncaster Council. Go to:

<https://www.doncaster.gov.uk/services/health-wellbeing/covid-19-weekly-data-report>

or go to: <https://www.doncaster.gov.uk> and type in 'Dr Rupert Suckling updates' in the search box.

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ALSO: Keep up to date by subscribing to Doncaster Council and partners email newsletter by visiting

[www.doncaster/emailsSignup](http://www.doncaster/emailsSignup)

REMINDER

## MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL: 2021-2022

My thanks to those people who have renewed their DU3A Membership. Most people have now renewed but for the few who still need to renew, and perhaps are struggling to find details, I thought it may be helpful to give a reminder here. The fee for the year is £14 for an individual and £24 for a joint membership. If you require the newsletter to be posted it is an additional £4 for both individual and joint subscriptions.

Monies can be paid into the DU3A account by bank transfer using the sort code and account number shown on [page 22](#). Please use your name as a reference to enable the payment to be tracked.

Alternatively, a cheque payable to the DU3A can be forwarded to the Membership Secretary - address on [page 22](#).

If you wish your card to be posted to you **please enclose a stamped addressed envelope.**

Thank you

*Christine Curtis*

Your membership number will be the same for as long as you remain a DU3A member.



Cover photo: by John Coe - Digital Photography Group

Old railway viaduct over the River Don between Sprotbrough and Conisbrough - part of the Trans Pennine Trail route.

# GROUPS - UPDATES / NOTICES

## INTEREST GROUPS

Contact group leaders to find out if alternative arrangements have been made for meetings.

NB: Please be aware of any new Government guidelines/rules. If any group leader is considering a restart after the current lockdown they must contact the Groups Co-ordinator for advice before doing so.

## GENERAL MEETINGS

Please check your emails as some Virtual General Meetings may be arranged via the web.

March meeting: "Sex, Secrets, Scandals and Salacious Gossip of the Royal Court 1660 to 1830" by Sarah, a guide at Hampton Court Palace.

April meeting: a talk about memory by Alan Swann, chair of Barnsley U3A.

## NEW ZOOM GROUPS

Discussion: 2nd and 4th Tuesday of month a.m. - contact Vanessa Whaley

Quiz: 2nd and 4th Friday of month a.m. - contact Jane Page

Scattergories: weekly Thursdays p.m. contact Anona Hermes (email address on page 22)

## ZOOM MEETINGS

Art Group • Basic French • Digital Photography • Discussion • Easier French • Family History • French 2 • Gardening • German • History • Literature • Love of Nature • Philosophy • Play Reading • Quiz • Scattergories • Committee meetings • General meetings

**BASIC FRENCH, EASIER FRENCH, PHILOSOPHY and PLAYREADING** are all now available, all of them every 2 weeks. Anyone interested, do give me a call - we have already fitted in 3 new members in last 2 weeks.

*Geoff Tagg*

## FAMILY HISTORY

The RootsTech Connect 2021: Family Search website is still up and running and will be until the next conference in 2022. There are numerous YouTube talks covering many areas of family history research. Go to:

<https://www.familysearch.org/rootstech/rtc2021>

Date for your diary: FHF REALLY USEFUL Family History Show: Next online event: Saturday 10th April 2021 10.00 - 18.00 Cost £10.00

Organizer: Family History Federation <https://www.fhf-reallyuseful.com>

## CROWN GREEN BOWLS

Towards the end of March I hope to receive a communication from HPCBC saying we can use the green. They in turn will be awaiting confirmation from Doncaster Council and the British CRBA that they can resume their administration of Haslam Park. I am optimistically looking forward to an estimated April 1st start, but I will contact all our registered bowlers with an update of how we are told to proceed, under the banner of the "Rule of 6".

*George Kirk*

# DONCASTER U3A

## NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The AGM of Doncaster U3A will take place on 19th July 2021 at 2.00 p.m. in Doncaster\*

The venue is yet to be decided, but further information will be available in due course.

\*NB The date of the meeting is subject to the ongoing government regulations and may be changed as necessary.

*Chris Woolven*

## WELCOME

A warm welcome to our new members

**Sarah Brown, Denise King, Michael White**

🤔🤔 Have you had your jab yet? 🤔🤔

We're still battling 🦠 COVID-19 🦠 and the next thing is here already 🦠🤔🦠

The \*NILE Virus, type C\*

Virologists have identified a new Nile virus - type C.

It appears to target those who were born between 1940 & 1970

Symptoms:

1. Causes you to send the same message twice.
2. Causes you to send a blank message
3. Causes you to send a message to the wrong person.
4. Causes you to send it back to the person who sent it to you.
5. Causes you to forget to attach the attachment.
6. Causes you to hit SEND before you've finished.
7. Causes you to hit DELETE instead of SEND.
8. Causes you to SEND when you should DELETE.

It is called the \*C-NILE\* virus!

And if you can't admit to doing the above, you've obviously caught the mutated strain -

🦠 The \*D-NILE\* virus 🦠

*Submitted by Wendy Hattrell*

## June - July 2021 Newsletter

Articles for the June / July newsletter need to be received by

**Wednesday 28th April.**

Please send news of group activities, articles, photographs, etc. to

**du3newsletterbmt@btinternet.com**

## ENJOYING POETRY



I am still sending out regular batches of poetry each month and several members get back to me, often with suggestions of poems they would like to share. Interestingly, the group has grown because the U3A Literary group, of which I am a member, asked if they could have the poems emailed to them as well. This month featured poems by Sir John Betjeman, John Clare, the English poet, U. A. Fanthorpe and the Welsh poet Gillian Clarke.



John Clare is a particularly fascinating writer as he was born in grinding poverty near Peterborough in 1793, which then was in Northamptonshire. His memorial calls him "The Northamptonshire Peasant Poet". He did attend school until he was 12 but was an agricultural labourer, gardener, a traveller with Romany people and moved to Rutland in 1817 as a lime burner before returning home. Malnutrition stemming from childhood may have been the main factor behind his five-foot stature and may have contributed to his poor physical health in later life. He began writing poems in 1820 and continued to publish all his life. He was very successful and highly praised as a poet in his lifetime though found earning a living to care for his wife and seven children difficult. Inevitably, he was patronised by the aristocracy and the literary world who bought and praised his work but found him a curiosity. Torn between the two worlds of high society and rural peasantry he became depressed and suffered severe mental health issues. He was eventually committed to an asylum in Essex and latterly Northampton, where he died. His poetry, in which he used many dialect words and scant punctuation, underwent major re-evaluation in the late 20th century and he is now often seen as a major 19th-century poet. His nature poetry is marvellous.

*David Harmer*

**YAHR Summer Learning Break:** Unfortunately due to continuing Covid restrictions the planned event scheduled for 26th to 29th July 2021 at Hawkhill is cancelled. It is being planned for July 2022.

### **U3A Life in Lockdown**

A national film has been produced. It celebrates the wonderful things U3A members up and down the country have been doing in these difficult times. Duration is approximately 7 minutes. (video: June 17 2020)

Go to: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aBSfUGiszz0taht>

**National u3a Day** is planned to take place on Wednesday 2nd June 2021. The purpose of the day is for all local u3a groups to publicise who the u3a are and what they do. (This event was originally scheduled for June 2020.)

## ART GROUP

We have a new art group! The “art on zoom” group meets fortnightly, on the first and third Sunday of each month at 2.00 p.m. There is a shared focus and often a starting point of a video on a topic. The range of experience matches the number of people in the group ..... many are absolute beginners. I make a really serious point from the outset that no one has to show their work if they don't want to, no one will be put on the spot and everyone will feel safe to embrace their failures as well as their successes - we do, after all, learn from those failures.

So far, at the time of writing, there have been three meetings, where people worked using their own choice of medium, to create a pair of red cherries and a shiny red pepper. We then joined to study gesture drawing, all using pencil or pen, to look at capturing gesture in human forms in more than twenty very quick sketches, taking 20 and 40 seconds, then 2 and 5 minutes. A pencil sharpener proved an essential bit of kit here!

People are using a range of materials, including assorted types of pencils, pastels and watercolours. They are moving from absolutely not sharing their work to being rather brave and showing their work on the U3A Facebook page - you HAVE signed into that, haven't you??

We go from strength to strength in skill AND confidence.

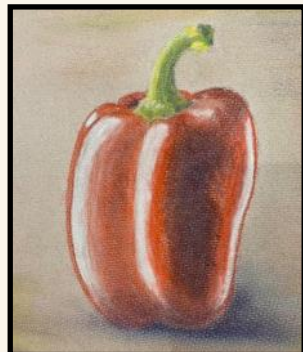
It is my hope that we will be able to continue as a group when we are ever allowed to meet in person again, though the day will have to change ... Would you like to join us? Do you like the idea of forgetting everything and concentrating on drawing or painting for two hours?

You can email me for the login details and as long as you are familiar with Zoom, or able to download it to your machine, you will have no trouble at all accessing the group. The ninety minute session is divided into two forty minute spots with a ten minute break between, to capitalise on the free Zoom of forty minutes. So we work, break for P and T (work it out!) then sign back in for forty minutes more.

Here are a few of our members early works, showing the same subject in three different media ....

Join us! Or email me if you want to ask a question, no matter how small.

*Paula Harmer*



## BRASS BAND

Doncaster U3A has a Brass Band, we think it's one of the few, if not the only, pure Brass band in the country so we should be very proud of this. Running in conjunction with Markham Main Colliery Band which is based in Armthorpe a few total novices got together in October 2019 and by Christmas had learnt enough to put on a small concert for their friends and family. The players, assisted by members of the main band were making great leaps in ability until the dreaded C-Word arrived to such devastating effect!



It's looking like we will be able to play again later this year. I'm sure that everyone in the band has been practicing diligently, (he says tongue firmly in cheek, which isn't a good technique!) so before we start again there is some maintenance required on the instruments that people have borrowed (see below).

If anyone fancies having a go at learning brass, watch this space!

As soon as we can start again we will let you know, all we ask is that you can read music and are prepared to try!

*Gwyn Rees*  
*Member of the Brass Band group*

*For further information about the group contact Stephen Follows—details inside the back page.*

FAO: DU3A Brass Band Group members

### MAINTENANCE OF INSTRUMENTS:

Take the instrument out of the case and see if the valves go up and down easily. If not: it's a good idea to gently take them out, one at a time and wash them in warm soapy water, rinse well and if you're not going to play for a while put back in but don't screw them up. If you are going to play put them in but check the alignment, if you have put it in correctly, you should be able to blow through the instrument with no resistance, if you feel resistance it's not gone in correctly (that's part of the reasoning behind doing them one at a time, you know which one is wrong!)

- My bank recently called me to let me know I had an outstanding balance. I replied "Thank you, I used to do gymnastics" and hung up the phone. That was nice of them to say.
- An old lady walked into the bank and asked me to help check her balance. So I pushed her and she fell over. Not so good then.
- How did the priest get a negative balance in his checking account? Clerical error.

*Submitted by Wendy Hattrell*



## HISTORY

The Zoom history group have spent the last four months researching various themes linked to the Romans. James Ashe, David Penfold and Chris Woolven have researched the amazing lives of three Roman emperors Caligula, Claudius and Nero. Their lives were both dramatic and infamous, each in their own way. John Wheeldon also gave an interesting talk about Hadrian's Wall.

Other members have been looking at what was happening in Britain at this time. Diane Woolven did a presentation on life in Iron Age Britain including druids, bog bodies and chariots. Julia Jackson did an interesting talk on Cartimandua, the female leader of the Brigantes, who liaised with the Romans to avoid conflict and the death of her tribesmen. On the other hand Caratacus, researched by Chris Woolven, was an iron age Briton who was determined that the Romans were not going to succeed with their invasion.

Our future talks include Roman York by David Newland, and social life under the Romans by Diane Woolven.

*Diane Woolven*



Augustus Caesar -  
first Roman emperor

## WALKING CRICKET

We are planning to start up our Walking Cricket group as soon as possible. The season starts in April and we have every intention of getting out and knocking a ball around when we are allowed. I hope by then we will all be confident enough to come along to play.

If you are not yet a member of our group, then please consider joining us. We have all levels of experience among our ranks, and the game is designed for all, even those who have never played cricket in their lives. There are as many ladies playing as men, but we all play together. We are a jolly bunch, and much fun is had by all.



If you are interested in coming along to join us, please let me know and I will add you to the list.

My contact details are given at the back of this newsletter.

*Chis Woolven, Group Leader.*

## What's happened to our General Meetings?

As a relatively new member to U3A, in my third or fourth year, one of which has been in lockdown, I have not been to many general meetings .... but those I have been to have been splendid events! Although I did not know many people at all, I enjoyed seeing people greeting each other, sharing news and coffee, taking pleasure in each other's company. There really have been some splendid talks ..... I particularly fondly remember the man who had spent his life being a butler to all sorts of people and the beans he spilled about them! And who remembers the chap who had been head boy alongside Jimmy Edwards in Whacko?

And then the world was hit by this dreadful thing.....

But fear not! Talks at our general meeting are still happening on the internet through a company called Mirthy and on Zoom. If the talk is through Mirthy we just click a link that is sent, which allows us to register, then another link is sent that you click ten minutes before the talk begins. Simple! If the talk is through Zoom, you have to first download Zoom, which is very, very easy. Then you receive a number and password to enter when prompted to gain access to the talk. It isn't quite the same as being together with a live speaker - but it allows us to share an experience and we now hang on afterwards to talk about what we have just seen.

In February, we were able to hear about mayhem, murder and scandal as evidenced in English churches, through the carvings, stained glass and misericords. That one carried a warning to look away if easily offended .... I think we have been around long enough to cope with that!

Now, in March we will see a talk entitled "Sex, Secrets, Scandals and Salacious Gossip of the Royal Court 1660 to 1830" by Sarah, a guide at Hampton Court Palace for the last twelve years as guide lecturer, tour guide and state apartment warder. Sarah will conduct her talk wearing one of her beautiful costumes and she will talk about all the bits you were never taught at school! The presentation will discuss royal mistresses, prostitution, sex toys, sexual diseases of the time, and methods to prevent diseases and pregnancies. Sarah issues a warning that this talk is not for those with a delicate disposition! In her words "it's fun but rude".

Then, if you need something a little more sober, the talk in April will be by the chair of Barnsley U3A, who will talk about memory.....appropriately enough, I have completely forgotten his name!

Well in advance of each meeting, you will receive a reminder from Chris Woolven, giving you joining information.

I do hope you will join us for these general meetings. It is quite entertaining to sit and watch a talk with your cup of whatever-you-choose and a biscuit or hunk of cake, knowing quite a number of the people you would expect to see at a meeting are also watching the same thing.

And by the way, the speaker for April is called Alan Swann.

*Paula Harmer*

## General Meeting - January 2021

### Mad as a Hatter: Origins & Meanings of Sayings

Sandy Leong is an historian, passionate about bringing history to life and is a lively and entertaining speaker. In her words:



“Some people could say that I’m as mad as a hatter because I’m fascinated by the origins of the sayings we use in everyday conversation. There are more sayings than you can shake a stick at. For any doubting Thomas’ out there I’ll let the cat out of the bag and pull out all the stops to entertain you, with stories of how the sayings we use all the time, came about”.

Sandy went on to explain the origin of many sayings. Who knew that ‘a Frog in the Throat’ came from drinking water from streams and ponds where it was feared that a person might swallow frog spawn and a frog would then come out of their mouth! ‘Off the Cuff’ related to people, who wanted to give a speech and look important, read notes on their detachable cuffs. ‘Mad as a Hatter’ referred to the unpredictable behaviour of hat makers due to mercuric nitrate using to bind felt fibres. ‘A load of Codswallop’ was a derogatory term for weak beer in bottles. Hiram Codd made the first ‘marble in the neck’ bottle and ‘wallop’ was a slang name for beer. Thus codswallop meant that something was nonsense or rubbish. ‘Pull the wool over your eyes’ derived from street robbers working in twos where one robber pulled the wig over their victim’s eyes while the other robber stole things out of their pockets. ‘Getting hold of the wrong end of the stick’ referred to short sticks with sponges on one end that were used in communal toilets in Roman times. I need say no more!

A very interesting and amusing talk. I was disappointed when the talk finished as I could have listened to a lot more.

*B Thompson*

## General Meeting - February 2021

### Murder, Sex and Mayhem in English Churches

John Vigar’s specialist subject is ecclesiology – the study of church architecture and associated topics. He has visited over 12,000 of our parish churches. He illustrated his talk with images from a thousand years of history that represented stories of untimely deaths and sexual shenanigans. He talked about medieval murals and stained glass depicting the martyrdom of saints from home and abroad, and the grisliest of dooms. At a lower level were misericords showing whippings, wife beatings, and brawls.



He brought historic buildings to life through his presentation. I am sure we will never see history as a dull and dry subject again and will be looking into more nooks and crannies when visiting churches!

*B Thompson*

## HOLIDAYS ON MY AUNT'S FARM

I spent quite a bit of time at my Aunt Laura's farm. I was probably about 7 when I first went there. I spent a summer week there for several years in a row during the summer holidays. I never questioned the reason why I went there, and I always spent the week alone. My brother Brian didn't accompany me. I suspect the week coincided with Brian's scout camp and it gave mum and dad a respite from the incessant demands of parenthood. Whatever the reason though, I have fond memories of most of that time.

Aunt Laura was posh by our standards. I never knew exactly what our relationship with her was as a family, but she was certainly unlike any of my other aunts. I think she was nearer my grandparents' age and she lived with her grown up son Roy who ran the farm. She moved very slowly around the house and was always immaculately dressed and disgustingly perfumed. I tried never to get too close to her and on the occasions I had to hug her or kiss her goodnight I always tried to hold my breath. She was a very kind lady with a heavily powdered face and loose rubbery skin which wobbled as she spoke. The most noticeable thing about her was her goitre. I am uncertain whether it was the first time I met her as an infant, or later when I was about five or six that I noticed it. At first it terrified me. It made her look like some kind of monster to my young eyes. Indeed, I can recall staring at her, transfixed by this disfigurement that, to my young eyes gave her the appearance of a giant frog. It took a bit of getting used to but her incessant kindness and generosity quickly reassured me so that I stopped noticing it after a very short while. The things I remember most were the teas.

Aunt Laura had one of the local women come in to help her with cooking and cleaning. I don't remember much about her, except that because of her, things just seemed to happen. At teatime we would go into the dining room and sit at an enormous table, where tea had just seemingly appeared. On the first occasion I was placed upon a velvet seated dining chair so that the level of my eyes was only a couple of inches above the tabletop. The table setting before me was something I had never experienced before. Cakes of every sort were arranged at several levels on a sparkling glass and silver stand. There was an amazing array of crockery and cutlery in front of me and I was rendered speechless. I didn't know what to do or say. My mum was with me on that first occasion and she must have taken charge. A cushion was found for me and my view of the glistening feast became clearer. I was invited to help myself as the grown-ups were poured tea into little fancy cups, but of course I couldn't reach anything. Mum helped out and put something like a buttered crumpet in front of me which I dutifully ate as I knew I had to before I could expect cake.

Once mum had gone home and left me there, a new, less posh, teatime protocol was introduced, whereby I was allowed to lean forward, part standing on my chair, and help myself to whatever I wanted. At Aunt Laura's suggestion I never told mum about that.

The first time I was put to bed in the old farmhouse is a vivid memory to me. There was a bowl of cold water on a washstand in my bedroom and a chamber pot under the bed. I don't think I had ever used a chamber pot in my life until that point. I knew they existed and I remember the uncomfortable feeling of urinating into it

while I was in the bedroom. It just seemed wrong, dirty somehow! The washstand was not a problem, and I quickly got used to it. There was a bathroom off the landing with a giant bath in it and pipes everywhere. I must have used it at some point but that memory has gone. All I know is that the bathroom contained only a bath and a washstand. There were no indoor toilets, a fact which I still find odd, for such a classy house, to this day.

Getting into the old feather bed for the first time, was quite an experience for me. I was used to my bed at home which had a mattress that I slept on. Climbing on to the feather bed in the old farmhouse was a completely different experience. As I lay down, I sank into the mattress so that I was lying inches below the top of the mattress. It was weird, but wonderful and possibly the most comfortable bed I ever slept on either before or since, even to this day. This was a mattress you slept in not on!

The house was enormous and there were spare rooms all over the place. There was a huge, spacious "Box Room" as she called it, which was probably twice the size of the floor area of our whole house. It had obviously been well used in the past, judging by the fancy plasterwork around the doors, windows and walls. In one corner there was a collection of white sheeted furniture, while in another corner there was, unsurprisingly perhaps, a stack of boxes. There were crates and containers of all sorts and sizes there, piled high almost to the ceiling.

Opposite the door was a huge window with wooden shutters which had to be opened by some sort of winding handle, while in the bay of the window was a raised floor that created a sort of stage. Apparently, the shuttered window area had previously been designed to serve as a shop counter. It had opened onto the main road into the village of Mereworth and the villagers and passers-by would go there to buy groceries and of course eggs and poultry which were produced on the farm before the war. I believe that Aunt Laura's husband had been killed in the war, though she seemed very old to me and I suppose it could have been the first war. During my stays this box room became my indoor domain, my playroom. I was allowed to have my toys in there including a scooter and later my roller skates. The wooden floorboards seemed to amplify any noise I made, but nobody seemed to care. The only thing missing was a playmate. Each time I went there I became an only child for a week.

During the fine summer days, I was able to go out on the farm. The men who worked there were very kind as they kept a watchful eye on me, finding little things for me to do, collecting eggs from the chickens and turkeys, filling up the feed troughs and generally helping out. There was a little dog too, whose name has left me now but I spent a lot of time with him, taking him for walks around the cobnut orchards and throwing a ball for him to fetch. I am not sure what breed he was but thinking back, in my mind, he was similar to the old "His Master's Voice" dog Nipper. There were pigs too. They were kept in brick-built pigsties next to the orchard. A job I remember well was collecting a bucket of scraps from the kitchen and taking them down to the pigsties and feeding them to the pigs. I was quite scared of them as my uncle Roy had warned me that, if I fell down in front of them, they would probably eat me.

Roy was Aunt Laura's son. It became apparent at some point that nobody except

his mother liked him. I overheard conversations between the farm hands which clearly indicated that they despised him. He certainly had a sadistic streak in him. He took pleasure in catching birds in a trap and on more than one occasion, showing me how to break their necks. He also had a gun with which he would shoot birds and rabbits. Most of the time I tried, quite successfully, to avoid him. I don't think he had much time for me either and I certainly had no desire to be with him. I was always so much happier helping out the men who worked for him.

I have sometimes wondered what became of them. Roy could, I suppose, still be around, but I think it unlikely. He was probably in his 20s or even 30s in those days, which would make him at least 15 or 16 years older than I, so he would be at least 86 today, perhaps much older. I am sure my parents would have lost touch with him after Aunt Laura died, and to this day I have no idea exactly how we were related, if indeed we were.

*Chris Woolven - November 2020 - Living History Group*

## QUIZ

Several times I resisted suggestions to start up a Zoom Quiz group before I finally gave in about a month ago. "There wouldn't be enough interest" I thought. "I'm not running a group for half a dozen people". Well how wrong I was, we now have almost 40 members registered for the group with the first two quizzes joined by about 30.



Although hardly any of the `Prego` Quiz group are Zoom members, we already have an amiable, chatty crowd with a chorus of Happy Birthday at our last quiz. So with Mike twiddling on the valves and knobs on the Interweb machine, we are flying! But don't tell anyone – they will all want to join.

Meanwhile, how would you do with these TV howlers. They are from recent Quiz shows and the crazy answers they gave.



- Which biblical character did the dance of the seven veils - JESUS
- Who painted the Sistine Chapel Ceiling - BANKSY
- Who were the characters who entertained royal courts in Medieval Times - LEPERS
- Who was shot in Dallas in 1963 – J.R. EWING
- Dundonians are from which Scottish city - CARDIFF
- How many years does it take for the Earth to orbit the Sun – 365.

*Jane Page*

## LOVE OF NATURE

The first March Zoom meeting was presented by Nora Boyle. She put together an excellent, informative PowerPoint presentation on insects. The different groupings of insects were explained and examples were given. Nora's own outstanding photographs were used to illustrate the talk.

We were interested to learn that, in this country, there are 94 species of cranefly (daddy long-legs), 2,500 species of moths and 59 species of butterflies. We were informed that butterflies have taste sensors on their feet to help them find plants on which their caterpillars would feed.

*Bridget Thompson*



14 spotted ladybird



Plume moth



Gall wasp—*Andricus Quercuscalicis*



Batman hoverfly



Female banded demoiselle

### INSECT GROUPS (ORDERS) included in presentation

Coleoptera:	Beetles
Diptera:	True flies
Lepidoptera:	Moths and Butterflies
Hymenoptera:	Bees, wasps, ants and sawflies
Hemiptera:	True bugs
Odonata:	Dragonflies and Damselflies

Out and about with my camera



*Photos by Bill Dixon - Digital Photography group*



## FAMILY HISTORY

Like many others the Family History Group has been 'confined to barracks', but that hasn't stopped us from getting together on Zoom every fortnight. The subjects discussed have ranged from parish registers to the transportation of criminals to faraway places.....oh to be there now! This year we are trying something new through Zoom and that is watching the original series of 'Who Do You Think You Are' then discussing the whys, wherefores and hows of the research and the subject of the episode and have so far had varying degrees of success, but like all good family historians we are not giving up. We are open to new members or anyone who is just thinking about it. We may enjoy 'digging up the dead' but we are harmless really.

*Dawn Jarvis*



## Cleaning silver

Anona wanted to share this tip with members.

### Items needed:

A4 size piece of aluminium foil  
Bicarbonate of Soda 1 tbsp  
Small bowl  
Boiling water



### Method:

1. Place crunched up foil into the bowl;
2. Place item(s) of silver on top of the foil;
3. Add boiling water, enough to cover the foil;
4. Sprinkle the bicarbonate onto the silver and watch the magic happen;
5. Leave until the water has cooled;
6. Enjoy your shiny, like new, silver.

*Anona Hermes*

*Additional information can be found on the internet. I found this on <https://www.everbritecoatings.com/how-to-clean-silver>*

*The usual tarnish on silver is the black sulphide. This method uses electrolytic action instead of chemical-polish abrasion and removes the tarnish from oxidized silver without removing any of the underlying metal.*

*Tip: Do not wear rubber gloves when working with your silver as rubber is corrosive to silver.*

*Another article 'How to Polish Silver: 13 Weird Tricks That Really Work' by Reader's Digest can be found at <https://www.rd.com/list/how-to-clean-silver> Interesting!*

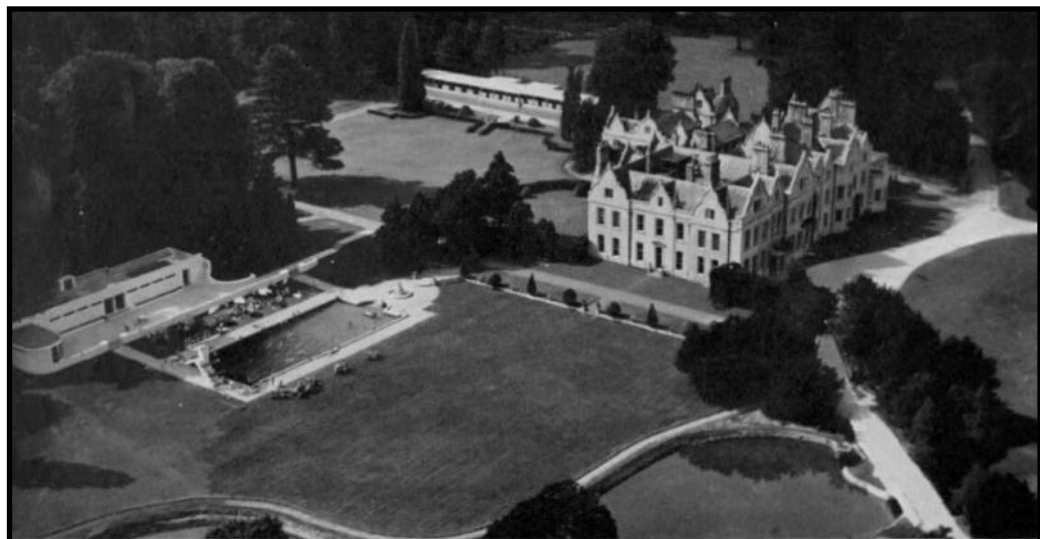
*B Thompson*

## Firbeck Hall Resurrected

Some of you may remember a presentation at a General Meeting 2 or 3 years ago by Julia Colver and Valerie Oxley when they told us about the history of Firbeck Hall and how the future was uncertain. Things have improved since that date as you can see if you read on.

Firbeck Hall can be found just to the North of the village of Firbeck and not far from Roche Abbey. The hall was built in 1594 by William West a lawyer of Moorgate Hall, Rotherham and Steward to the 5th Earl of Shrewsbury and the Manor of Sheffield at the time of Mary Queen of Scots' imprisonment. It was inherited 4 years later by his son. It passed through many generations either by inheritance or by sale until the beginning of the 20th Century.

In 1909 it was put up for sale and there were no buyers found. In 1914 it housed Belgium refugees until in 1919 it was let to Mr A Peech of Steel, Peech and Tozer. In November 1924 the house suffered a serious fire. Mr Peech awoke to find flames coming from the servants' quarters. Valuable oil paintings and furniture in the Hall were removed outside. Fire engines came from Rotherham, Doncaster and Worksop but the central portion of the hall was gutted. Most of the roof collapsed bringing with it a shower of molten lead.



An Aerial View of

### **FIRBECK HALL CLUB**

**Nr. WORKSOP, YORKS**

Situated in the celebrated Dukeries district just off the Great North Road at Baraby Moor

**AERODROME.**—An Aerodrome of fifty acres has been laid out under the advice of Capt. T. Campbell-Black, the joint-winner of the Mildenhall-Melbourne Air Race. The entrance to the Aerodrome is quite close to the Club, and practically any type of Aircraft can be landed with safety.

18-Hole GOLF COURSE

SWIMMING POOL

SQUASH RACKETS

TENNIS

RIDING

*Particulars of Membership on Application to Hon. Secretary.*

Telephone and Telegrams: Maltby 77.

1934 saw a new owner Mr Cyril Nicholson, a stock broker from Sheffield, who purchased the whole of the 1,500 acre estate. In addition to the house there were six farms, 14 small holdings and a number of cottages. It was reported that he intended to retain the estate as it was but he had other ideas! The Hall was converted into a Club soon to be famous nationally and with its own grass airfield - later to become



RAF Firbeck. There was a golf course and heated swimming pool. The inside was completely changed, winning acclaim from Architecture Illustrated, which published pictures of the hall's zebra prints, sweeping plaster work and streamlined ocean liner-esque fittings.

*“Where once there were darkly-panelled rooms there are now dance halls with maple floors, cocktail bars with stainless steel furniture, dining rooms upholstered with its*

*latest Zebra pattern coverings, grill rooms and billiard rooms.”*

It didn't survive the war and in 1943 it was again put up for sale. 1945 saw it converted, this time to the South Yorkshire Miners Rehabilitation Centre until it was taken over in 1984 by the Trent Regional Health Authority as a Rehabilitation Centre for Industrial Injuries. It closed in 1990.

So now you have a grand building surrounded by countryside left to decline – helped on its way by vandals and thieves. The Hall steadily fell into a state of disrepair; parts of the buildings and grounds became overrun with invasive vegetation, protective lead was stolen from the roof and the interiors vandalised by occasional intruders.

A series of owners applied for planning permission to develop the site but because of the sensitivity of the site and the age of the buildings various difficulties were encountered. It wasn't until the proposals submitted by the present owners in 2019, David & Natalie Johnson & Jason Shrimpton, met with the agreement of the local authority planners that development work started on the site.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yIKjbyFq\\_Jw&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yIKjbyFq_Jw&feature=youtu.be)

The above link takes you to YouTube where there are several videos published by Footprint Photography who, together with the owners, have given permission for their photographs to be used. It gives a clear idea of the wonderful work that has been carried out.

The restoration work has continued throughout lockdown and amazing progress has been made. The roof is now complete, windows are now all installed. All interior floors are in place and they are making good all of the building's structure (rotten lintels etc) ready for its next 400 years! The aim is to get the properties within the Hall on the market very soon. There will then be further housing developed near the Hall to go on the market later this year.

*Wendy Hattrell*

*See also - the 'Friends of Firbeck Hall' website showing: photographs (historic and recent images), plans for Firbeck Hall and the Stable Block, proposed new-build houses, proposed walled garden dwelling and infrastructure.*

<http://www.firbeckhall.net/development.php>



# PUZZLE PAGES

Complete each of the ladders - changing only one letter at a time  
e.g. CAT → COT → DOT → DOG

## Set 1

- \_\_\_\_\_ Name of 12 Popes
- \_\_\_\_\_ Cherry stones
- \_\_\_\_\_ Compassion or sympathy
- \_\_\_\_\_ Urban population area
- \_\_\_\_\_ Fragrance company
- \_\_\_\_\_ Buffalo Bill \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ Concluding musical section
- \_\_\_\_\_ Profound unconscious state
- \_\_\_\_\_ 'Johnny \_\_\_\_\_ lately'
- \_\_\_\_\_ Large book
- \_\_\_\_\_ To carry around
- \_\_\_\_\_ A head, in Paris
- \_\_\_\_\_ The 9th Hebrew letter
- \_\_\_\_\_ The son of Adam and Eve
- \_\_\_\_\_ Ancient Order in Star Wars
- \_\_\_\_\_ Friends and neighbours
- \_\_\_\_\_ Predatory bird
- \_\_\_\_\_ Ceremonial practice of the church
- \_\_\_\_\_ Distance divided by time
- \_\_\_\_\_ A life partner
- \_\_\_\_\_ Unable to speak
- \_\_\_\_\_ A horse/donkey hybrid
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5280 feet
- \_\_\_\_\_ A liver fluid for digestion
- \_\_\_\_\_ A draft of a law
- \_\_\_\_\_ A formal dance
- \_\_\_\_\_ To remove water from a boat
- \_\_\_\_\_ Be unsuccessful
- \_\_\_\_\_ Thin cake of oatmeal
- \_\_\_\_\_ A friable earthy deposit

## Set 2

- \_\_\_\_\_ Wait somewhere secretly, unseen
- \_\_\_\_\_ A person from Ankara
- \_\_\_\_\_ An enlarged walrus tooth
- \_\_\_\_\_ 'From \_\_\_\_\_ 'till Dawn'
- \_\_\_\_\_ Tough elastic between vertebrae
- \_\_\_\_\_ Long bladed, thrusting dagger
- \_\_\_\_\_ Gossip
- \_\_\_\_\_ Pub projectile
- \_\_\_\_\_ Crazy
- \_\_\_\_\_ Dextrous
- \_\_\_\_\_ Disregard
- \_\_\_\_\_ French Fauvist painter Raoul
- \_\_\_\_\_ Useless or of poor quality
- \_\_\_\_\_ A type of volcanic rock
- \_\_\_\_\_ The grass on a sports field
- \_\_\_\_\_ Crashing waves
- \_\_\_\_\_ A medieval labourer
- \_\_\_\_\_ Me, myself or I
- \_\_\_\_\_ Offer for a price
- \_\_\_\_\_ A window ledge
- \_\_\_\_\_ A small brook
- \_\_\_\_\_ To make agitated or angry
- \_\_\_\_\_ Abnormal breathing sound
- \_\_\_\_\_ Tied up hay
- \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ eagle
- \_\_\_\_\_ The \_\_\_\_\_ of Avon, Shakespeare
- \_\_\_\_\_ e.g. Jack or joker
- \_\_\_\_\_ Twisted strands
- \_\_\_\_\_ 'Jimmy Crack \_\_\_\_\_'
- \_\_\_\_\_ Laboratory for Particle Physics

**Set 3**

- \_\_\_\_\_ 10 pins in two balls
- \_\_\_\_\_ Black card suit
- \_\_\_\_\_ Ghost or colour
- \_\_\_\_\_ Rock that can contain oil
- \_\_\_\_\_ Largest mammal on earth
- \_\_\_\_\_ The entire thing
- \_\_\_\_\_ Pin that holds an oar
- \_\_\_\_\_ Plural of 'that'
- \_\_\_\_\_ Selected
- \_\_\_\_\_ Run after
- \_\_\_\_\_ Stage in a process
- \_\_\_\_\_ ' \_\_\_\_\_ Porridge Hot'
- \_\_\_\_\_ 'War and \_\_\_\_\_'
- \_\_\_\_\_ Fruit used in cobblers
- \_\_\_\_\_ Extend your hand to touch
- \_\_\_\_\_ Hard-to-kill kitchen pest
- \_\_\_\_\_ Samuel Jackson's Carter
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sofa's cousin
- \_\_\_\_\_ Tuberculosis symptom
- \_\_\_\_\_ Coarse
- \_\_\_\_\_ Baton \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ Overcharge or scoop out
- \_\_\_\_\_ An instrument for measuring
- \_\_\_\_\_ What a mummy is wrapped in

**Set 4**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Pass out cards
- \_\_\_\_\_ Small, secluded wooded hollow
- \_\_\_\_\_ e.g. Barbie
- \_\_\_\_\_ Roadway fee
- \_\_\_\_\_ Recounted
- \_\_\_\_\_ Darken a font
- \_\_\_\_\_ Harry Potter's blemish
- \_\_\_\_\_ Scow or skiff
- \_\_\_\_\_ Layer
- \_\_\_\_\_ Price
- \_\_\_\_\_ Eucharist bread
- \_\_\_\_\_ Nylons
- \_\_\_\_\_ Gap
- \_\_\_\_\_ A portion or allotment of money
- \_\_\_\_\_ Over hill and \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ - Bopp comet
- \_\_\_\_\_ Dislike intensely
- \_\_\_\_\_ Friend
- \_\_\_\_\_ After expected time
- \_\_\_\_\_ Wash
- \_\_\_\_\_ Large, overnight dance party
- \_\_\_\_\_ Natural void in the ground
- \_\_\_\_\_ South American rodent
- \_\_\_\_\_ Blue

**Solution for February - March puzzle****Cryptic Crossword**

**ACROSS:** 1. Quintet 5. Congeal 9. Autobiographers 10. Harm 11. Hives  
 12. Hide 15. Shadows 16. Sponges 17. Maracas 19. Monarch 21. Navy  
 22. Edits 23. Omen 26. Congratulations 27. Elected 28. Dungeon

**DOWN:** 1. Quashes 2. Internal Revenue 3. Tabs 4. Tropics 5. Curfews  
 6. Nape 7. Evening Primrose 8. Lessees 13. Porch 14. Wound  
 17. Monocle 18. Sedated 19. Mottled 20. Hands On 24. Drat 25. Stan

**Group Leaders** can be contacted by telephone (see below) or by clicking on the Blue Bird on their group page on the DU3A website. Go to: <https://u3asites.org.uk/doncaster>

**Committee members** can also be contacted via the DU3A website by opening the 'Contact' page and then selecting the appropriate member.

**Page 3 - Membership renewal: Go to website 'Contacts' page.**

**Page 4 - Scattergories:** Please go to website 'Contacts' page and email the Group Co-ordinator' for further details.

## Contact Numbers

### DU3A Committee Members

<b>Chair</b>	Chris Woolven
<b>Vice Chair</b>	Jane Page
<b>Secretary</b>	Diane Woolven
<b>Treasurer</b>	Derek Marriott
<b>Membership Secretary</b>	Christine Curtis
<b>Group Co-ordinator</b>	Vanessa Whaley
<b>Minutes Secretary</b>	Christine Curtis
<b>Publicity</b>	Jane Page
<b>Beacon Administrator</b>	Wendy Hattrell
<b>Committee</b>	Jill Laming
<b>Committee</b>	Diane Williams
<b>Committee</b>	John Wheeler
<b>Committee</b>	Paula Harmer

### Activity Groups & Other: Contacts

**Group leaders - see printed Newsletter for telephone numbers, or DU3A Website**

Newsletter Editor  
& Website Manager

Bridget Thompson

bthompsonu3a@btinternet.com

Help the environment and save money by receiving the email version of the DU3A newsletters.

## **Deadline**

Thank-you to all the members who have sent articles for this issue. Articles for the June / July newsletter need to be received by **Wednesday 28th April**

Please send news of group activities, articles, photographs, etc. to **du3anewsletterbmt@btinternet.com**

## **Monks Printers**

We are grateful to Monks the Printers for their help in printing and distributing this newsletter.

## **Prego Café**

We would like to thank our friends at the Prego Café for their help over the past years. We wish them the best during this difficult time and look forward to having our meetings there again in the future.

## **DU3A Website**

<https://u3asites.org.uk/doncaster>

Visit the DU3A website for information about all the current interest groups, latest news/notices, membership information, meetings, social events, monthly calendars and newsletters, help/advice links, links to regional and national u3a and more.....



