



**DONCASTER**

**u3a**

Registered Charity No. 1074577

**April - May 2022**

# From the Chair



This may be the penultimate time that I write this address to you all.

It has been a strange two years for us on the committee with all the trials and tribulations that are associated with the pandemic. I am pleased to say that, in spite of such difficulties, we are now continuing to increase our membership again.

Our Annual General Meeting is to be held on Monday 16th May. The details are given in a notice in this newsletter. Please try to attend if you possibly can.

You will all be aware that, to keep the Doncaster U3A going, we need to fill the officer roles, Treasurer, Secretary and Chair. The term of office for these roles is a maximum of 2 years. Treasurer and Secretary may be re-elected if they are willing. The chair can normally only serve for one term.

We currently have no prospective candidates for the Chair or Secretary roles so I am hoping that members will step up and help to stop our U3A from having to close down.

Please take this message very seriously. We are a registered charity in our own right and, as such, we are governed by the rules laid down by the Charity Commission as well as the requirements of the Third Age Trust. The requirements of the roles are not arduous, but we do need some new blood. If required, I am willing to continue as a co-opted committee member to assist and advise for a period if you are willing to step up.

If you would like to find out more, please don't hesitate to contact me. My contact details are at the back of this newsletter.

It is getting towards the end of our financial year and many members have been paying their subs for 2022/23.

There has been no increase in our subs this year but we have calculated that the postage charge for our newsletter needs to increase from £4 to £6.

I look forward to hearing from those of you who are willing to stand for membership of the committee in May.

Best wishes

*Chris Woolven*

# WELCOME

A warm welcome to our new members

Edwin Barber, Christine Bradley, Andrea Crawford,  
Lynn George, Jennifer Gosling, Linda Hudson,  
Michael Jackson, Jonathan Law, Sheila Mason,  
Elizabeth McKittrick, David Millard, Jennifer Mundin,  
Andrew Murray, Gail Parker, Marjory Stringer,  
Janet Sullivan, Ray Sullivan, Peter Thomas,  
Martin Vincent, Carol Waddington, Lesley Diane Walker,  
Paul Walker.

## MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL: 2022-2023

REMINDER

My thanks to those people who have already renewed their DU3A Membership. 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 (two members sharing the same address). If you require the newsletter to be posted it is an additional £6 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.

*Christine Curtis*

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



## June - July 2022 Newsletter

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

**Wednesday 27th April.**

Please send news of group activities, articles, photographs, etc. to  
[bthompsonu3a@btinternet.com](mailto:bthompsonu3a@btinternet.com)

Cover photos: by David Bryan Digital Photography Group

# Obituaries

## PETER GOSPEL



Peter was a well-known and respected member of Doncaster U3A, mostly remembered for his leadership of the Criminology group and as a valued committee member.

He was no shrinking violet. A family man, he had an engaging personality with an ability to command a room, particularly during his criminology sessions. We marvelled at his knowledge of the heinous crimes that occurred throughout history. His meticulous attention to detail and his ability to present the subject demonstrated a thorough and professional knowledge of his subject.

Sessions would be peppered with anecdotes of his time in the force and one might suspect no villain would choose to get on the wrong side of him. On occasions, however, he would let slip a softer, compassionate side to his policing, particularly when dealing with the misunderstood, abused and less fortunate members of society.

In addition to his professional career Peter gave many hours to supporting teenagers with their Duke of Edinburgh Awards and encouraging sports activities. He strongly believed in inspiring the younger generation to greater things and that maintaining busy minds and hands reduced mischief.

Lasting memories of Peter will be of a person that loved life, doted on his family, was passionate about his professional career and loved a good laugh.

He will be missed

## EILEEN JOHNSTON

Eileen joined the U3A a few years ago when she became a member of the Love of Nature group, in which she quickly became known as a knowledgeable and valued member.

She also attended our Digital Photography group and was always willing to contribute to our meetings and make useful suggestions to other less experienced members.

Many of us will remember her from her participation in the 'Oldilocks' pantomime where she gave a memorable performance as the 'Spirit of the Wood'.

Eileen showed great enthusiasm for all she did and was always ready to share her insights and experience of a life well lived.

It has been a privilege to know her.

She will be missed...We'll never forget her smile.



## BARBARA PLUMB

It is with great sadness that I have to inform members of the passing away of Barbara Plumb who died on Monday 18th February. Barbara was a long standing Honorary member of DU3A and played a huge part in many areas.

*Jill Laming*

### UKRAINE HUMANITARIAN APPEAL

If you wish to make any donations you may find these contacts useful:

#### **Ukrainian Centre, Doncaster:**

48 Beckett Road, Wheatley, DN2 4AD Tel: 07803 904766

#### **British Red Cross**

<https://donate.redcross.org.uk/appeal/ukraine-crisis-appeal>

#### **DEC (Disasters Emergency Committee)**

<https://www.dec.org.uk/appeal/ukraine-humanitarian-appeal>

There are many more organisations including:

<https://www.unicef.org.uk/donate/donate-now-to-protect-children-in-ukraine>

<https://www.savethechildren.org.uk/how-you-can-help/emergencies/ukraine-appeal>

<https://www.oxfam.org.uk/oxfam-in-action/current-emergencies/ukraine-crisis-appeal>



### DONCASTER U3A



### NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The AGM of the Doncaster U3A will take place on **Monday 16th May 2022** at 1.45 p.m. at the Frenchgate Forum Business Centre Third Floor (previously called Trades Club).

All members are entitled to attend and there will be no charge for entry.

Doors will be open from 1.00 p.m.

Nomination forms for proposed new committee members are available from the secretary. Please return completed forms by 30th April.

### What's on in Doncaster

The Cast:	<a href="https://castindoncaster.com">https://castindoncaster.com</a>
Doncaster Little Theatre:	<a href="https://doncasterlittletheatre.co.uk/whats-on">https://doncasterlittletheatre.co.uk/whats-on</a>
Danum Gallery-Library-Museum:	<a href="https://www.dglam.org.uk/whats-on">https://www.dglam.org.uk/whats-on</a>
Mansion House:	<a href="https://doncastermansionhouse.co.uk">https://doncastermansionhouse.co.uk</a>
Heritage Doncaster:	<a href="https://www.heritagedoncaster.org.uk">https://www.heritagedoncaster.org.uk</a>
The Dome:	<a href="https://www.dclt.co.uk/whats-on">https://www.dclt.co.uk/whats-on</a>
The Leopard:	<a href="https://leopard-doncaster.co.uk">https://leopard-doncaster.co.uk</a> (Live music)
Visit Doncaster	<a href="https://www.visitdoncaster.com">https://www.visitdoncaster.com</a>



# GROUPS - UPDATES / NOTICES

## GENERAL MEETINGS

The meetings listed below may change if new Covid restrictions are introduced. Keep an eye open for emails informing you of any changes. Would members with email please let those without email know what is happening.

**21st March 2022** 'The Curious works of Old Time Punishments'

Speaker: Ian Morgan

Venue: Frenchgate Forum Business Centre Third Floor  
(previously called Trades Club).

**18th April 2022** 'History of the Northerners' Speaker: Brian Groom

Venue: Frenchgate Forum Business Centre Third Floor

**16th May 2022** AGM: Venue: Frenchgate Forum Business Centre Third Floor

## INTEREST GROUPS

Please contact group leaders **before** attending a meeting for the first time. There may be limits on the group size.

### **DINING OUT**

The next meeting of the Dining Out group will be held on Tuesday April 12th at Turkuaz Restaurant on Nether Hall Road at 6.30 for 7.00 p.m. If you wish to attend please let me have your order accompanied by a cheque for the correct amount made out to DU3A by Saturday April 2nd. If sending by post please send first class as 2nd class postage can take six days to arrive. The menu is available online or if you wish to see me I will be in attendance at Wetherspoons Gatehouse pub on Wednesdays from 11 a.m. -1 p.m. with a copy of the menu.

*Joan Condron*

### **PHILOSOPHY**

This group has been suspended until the autumn.

### **ZOOM HISTORY**

Zoom History is no longer running.

### **LOVE OF NATURE**

The Love of Nature Group is open to new members. The group continues to meet on the first Tuesday of each month at 10.00 a.m. The venue for the moment is Potteric Carr unless the group has made arrangements to explore further afield. An email will be sent out to members of the group if a visit elsewhere is planned. If you would like to join the group please contact me.

*Diane Williams*

### **WRITERS**

There will be no Writers' Group meetings in the immediate future due to not being able to find a suitable venue.

### **BRIDGE**

The Bridge group is currently not running.

## LIVING HISTORY

At the last meeting we had a lively discussion on innovations that have improved our lives since our childhood. Mike Bowser was our chair for the meeting and did a very good job of ensuring that everyone had their say.

At our next meeting we will be remembering how we travelled. This could mean long, long walks to school, bikes, cars, trains and trams. This could be a personal view of getting around as a child, using buses or the family's first car, or a description of early cars and other vehicles. Do you remember coach trips to the coast?

If you would like to become a member of the Living History group and share memories of a time gone by please contact Diane Woolven (See contacts page)

I look forward to another dynamic meeting in April.

*Diane Woolven*

## DINING OUT

The first meeting of the Dining Out group in 2022 was at the Zest restaurant on Hallgate. There were only 12 people in our group but we got a warm welcome from the young staff and the food and service were impeccable. One of our members thought it was better as a smaller group as it made it easier to speak to everyone and it was certainly a very enjoyable evening. Nevertheless, I look forward to seeing more familiar faces at my next outing and of course any new members who wish to attend would be very welcome.

*Joan Condron*

## SKITTLES

An inaugural meeting of the new DU3A skittles group took place in February. It was well attended but unfortunately, they couldn't have a practice at knocking down the skittles as the skittles alley had been flooded by recent bad weather. However, Pauline, the group leader, gave a run down on the rules and produced a small impressive statuette that would be presented to the winner on an annual basis.

The group will be held on the second and fourth Mondays of the month at 13.30 at Parklands Social Club on Wheatley Hall Road.

Please bring some small change with you as a 5p fine will be imposed on those not knocking down any skittles with their three balls! The money collected will go to charity at the end of the year.

For more information please contact Pauline Harrison the group leader. See contact page for details.

*Diane Woolven*



## General Meetings: January

### The Gretna Girls and the Devil's Porridge



Our January meeting was held on Zoom and David Skillen presented us with a very informative, illustrated talk about the women munition workers who prepared 'The Devil's Porridge'. He explained why and how the munitions factory came to be built in response to the demands of the British generals

of the western front for more shells to hasten the end of the First World War.

It was estimated that at least 10,000 navvies began work in the autumn of 1915 on the nine miles long and two miles wide munitions factory that would eventually straddle the border from Dornock by the Solway in Dumfriesshire to Longtown in Cumberland. The Ministry of Munitions, under the guidance of Kenneth Bingham Quinan, not only organised the construction of a factory, but also built two new townships to house a migrant workforce which was drawn from all parts of the United Kingdom and Ireland. One of these was Timber Town. It offered its 20,000 workers purpose-built schools, shops, cookhouse, bakery, public halls, churches, a hospital and cinema to name but a few. In practice, the workers were kept under surveillance and Timber Town was enclosed by barbed wire.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, the author of Sherlock Holmes is credited with the creation of the term 'Devil's Porridge' for the mixture of gun cotton and nitro-glycerine that was used to produce cordite as a shell propellant. The procedures involved in the production were extremely hazardous. Nitro-glycerine production was so dangerous that no machinery could be involved and it was moved around site along lead channels under the influence of gravity alone! The female workers were often known as canary girls because their skin would turn yellow if it came into contact with sulphur.

A problem arose with regards to drunkenness and the government's response was to institute the Carlisle Experiment, also known as the State Management Scheme – the nationalisation of public houses in and around Carlisle. This lasted until the 1970s, when Edward Heath's government brought it to an end.

When the war ended, much of HM Factory Gretna was dismantled.

In recognition of their role in the Great War, the munitions workers were given 'On War Service' badges. Each badge had its own unique identification number on it which means that every single badge is different.

*Bridget Thompson*



Further information can be found at numerous websites including the following:

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2015/jan/06/girls-stirred-devils-porridge-first-world-war-remember-munitions-workers>

<https://www.historic-uk.com/HistoryUK/HistoryofBritain/Devils-Porridge>

<https://www.devilsporrige.org.uk>

<https://bitaboutbritain.com/the-devils-porridge>



## February

Our February General Meeting returned to the old Trades Club. Unfortunately, the new owners at the Frenchgate Centre have yet to return it to its former glory. It was lovely to meet people face-to-face even though we could not provide tea and coffee on this occasion. We had a speaker who entertained us with a few amusing anecdotes and jokes.

The concert room is not available for all our meetings. In March we will be using the other room on the third floor which hopefully will meet our needs. We will keep you informed of any changes.

*Diane Woolven*



## WALKING CRICKET

In November the weather finally got the better of us and we retreated to the shelter of the Dome to play walking cricket.

Numbers are growing so we are able to set up some good matches between the reds and the blues. I think we all find the lighting and the number of lines on the floor distracting. But such is the pull of 'the game' we keep turning up!

We are all waiting for better weather so we can move back to the astro at Goals once again but meanwhile if you would like to join us do come along - no previous experience necessary.

*Wendy Hattrell*



## Doncaster Council

News: <https://www.doncaster.gov.uk/news>

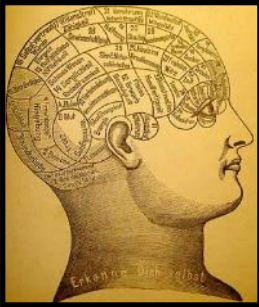
Updates: <https://www.doncaster.gov.uk/emailsignup>

Covid update: <https://www.doncaster.gov.uk/services/health-wellbeing>

## ENJOYING POETRY

The group is now back at Café Prégio and enjoying the face-to-face meetings once again. As ever, there is a great variety of excellent poetry on offer. Our last meeting began with extracts from Beowulf and ended with Pam Ayres! Fantastic! With new members joining, the discussion and laughter around the table is even more lively and stimulating than ever.

*David Harmer*



### Has the pandemic affected your brain?

Memory loss, fatigue and trouble concentrating can be symptoms of having had coronavirus. But scientists think people who haven't had Covid are also suffering increased tiredness, impaired decision-making and a lack of focus due to the pandemic.

Experts believe Covid uncertainty and disruption to routines have led to a phenomenon known as 'pandemic brain'. A leading behavioural neuroscientist is now calling for more research into it.

"People form habits so we see friends on a particular day or enjoy a sport on a particular evening - and that lack of regularity can be quite challenging," said Dr Emma Yhnell.

"Uncertainty influences the biology of our brains - and generally we can cope with a certain amount of uncertainty but the longer we have it, generally the worse it is for our brain".

"Lots of research has looked at the effect of Covid infection on the brain but actually we know that living in a pandemic more generally really has had impacts on our brain function and brain health".

This article has been copied from the BBC website (see link below).

Doncaster u3a is here to help you rediscover your former activities and try new ones. To 'get you going again'.

*Wendy Hattrell*

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-60558431>

### RON CLARK 1931 - 2022

I would like to thank all mine and Ron's friends from the U3A. Your friendship to Ron was something he always appreciated and spoke about. Your kindness and support to me and his family, now he has gone, is getting us through this difficult time. Without the U3A we would not have met. We had six wonderful years companionship together.

I look forward to seeing everyone as things get back to normal.

*Sonia Levoir*



# ART GROUP

Hurray! We have a splendid new venue at Parklands Sports and Social Club off Wheatley Hall Road behind the big garage at the lights. We have now got a lovely light, airy, big room for three pounds per person per session.

Our new way of working is that everyone brings their own choice of materials but we share a common theme. In addition I always bring pencils, charcoal and pastels so people can try those if they prefer. This allows some exploration of new materials without any financial outlay.

Our theme for March is animal portraits, followed by landscapes in April and people in May.

We meet on the first and third Tuesday of every month. If you'd like to join us please contact me. You do not need any experience, just an interest in having a go or perhaps developing further in a particular medium.

It's a very pleasant, supportive group!

*Paula Harmer*



## Membership renewal 2022/23

Full Name/s:

Address:

Please tick the appropriate box:

Single membership: £14.00

Single membership with posted Newsletter: £20.00

For couples living at the same address:

Joint membership: £24.00

Joint membership with posted Newsletter: £30.00

Please make cheques payable to: Doncaster U3A.

This slip should be returned with your payment to: The DU3A Membership Secretary, (see page 22 for the address) or handed over at a General Meeting. If posted please remember to include an SAE for the return of your Membership card.

Membership Renewal slip: see previous page

(New members - please contact the Membership Secretary  
for a New Members form)

The logo for u3a, consisting of the lowercase letters 'u3a' in a bold, white, sans-serif font, centered within a solid black rectangular box.

## National site

Below are some topics you may be interested in: go to

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/national-programmes>

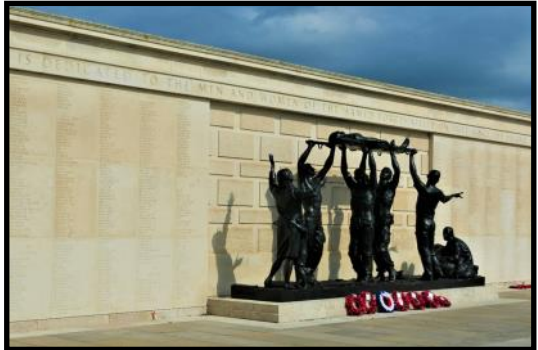
- ◆ Battle of Britain and the Blitz
- ◆ BirdTrack
- ◆ Cuisines of the World
- ◆ Extreme Knitting and Crochet
- ◆ Kindertransport Memories
- ◆ Learn, Laugh, Move
- ◆ Maths Challenge
- ◆ Paint or Draw
- ◆ Pets of the Furred Age
- ◆ u3a Eye (see page 20)
- ◆ u3a Radio Podcast
- ◆ Creative Writing Competition 2021 winners

### 2020 Programmes

Though these are now closed, you can still find information on these programmes and the many wonderful contributions from across the u3a movement.

The logo for u3a, consisting of the lowercase letters 'u3a' in a bold, white, sans-serif font, centered within a solid black rectangular box.

# Out and about with my camera



Photographs by Peter Chubb  
Digital Photography group



## What is this about us being Scots?

I came across something that rather surprised me, concerning a quite recent petition submitted from the citizens of Doncaster .....

'Allow the population of Doncaster a choice of nationality/dual nationality and therefore a choice in passport.'

WHAT?

This deserved closer investigation.

On further research, I found that there are coins from the time of King David in our museum, which were unearthed in Doncaster, suggesting some sort of link.

It seems Doncaster was given to Scotland in the twelfth century and it has never been reclaimed by England! This does seem to mean that the area is legally still a part of Scotland.

So the petition was formed to try to capitalise on this strange anomaly, to bring tourism to the town and make it more attractive to businesses. It was hoped that this would in turn increase the local economy, leading to more investment, and so on.

The petition was rejected on the grounds that it did not make clear what it wanted from the Government or Parliament., as a petition of this magnitude needs to do. It also rejected the idea of Doncastrians choosing a passport because citizens of both England and Scotland have the same passport.

The answer to the petition did however say this

"We could accept a petition calling on the UK Government to hold a referendum on whether Doncaster wishes to become part of Scotland, although taking over responsibility for Doncaster would also require the consent of the Scottish Government."

But this isn't our first foray into Scottishness! In 2012 our civic leaders claimed we should have a vote in the referendum for Scottish independence, when Alex Salmond was the leader, as we were legally a part of Scotland. It didn't happen, of course.

So how strong is this link between us and Scotland?

Lets go back 900 years ..... King David 1 of Scotland was on a conquering spree across the north of England. To calm hostilities, the Treaty of Durham was drawn up in 1136, followed three years later by a further treaty that confirmed Scottish ownership of our town. Historians from our area have found nothing to suggest Doncaster was ever handed back to England.

So why are we in the dark about this Scottish ownership?

Well, in 1157, Henry II of England just snatched back all the areas lost to the Scots. Unfortunately, he did not seal the deal with any official documentation.

Apparently, the SNP found all this very amusing. They said, when asked about it, that the residents of Doncaster must be delighted to discover their unexpected Scottish heritage!

So, as things stand today, we STILL belong to Scotland. It might be time to invest in a Scots-English dictionary!

Come on, ya wee tumshies!

*Paula Harmer  
Culture page*

## STROLLERS

### Surviving Hail, Wind, Cold and Sun!

If the hail had started at 9 a.m. instead of 11a.m. my guess is the numbers on the Strollers walk at Sprotbrough would have been greatly reduced! About 30 of us met at the Newton and, ably led by Ken Bradbury, we set off to walk part of the Trans Pennine Way to Cusworth Park. It was cold and snow had been forecast. We didn't have snow, but instead we got hail – and it was hail that hurt!

Cusworth Hall was looking magnificent and the sun did come out, briefly. A friendly swan came to greet us as we congregated for the customary photo. We then retraced our steps back to the Newton. The pub were offering a carvery – beef, pork, gammon or a pie with all the trimmings of course. Well worth the £8.50 they charged. Jim Sambrooks was only having a small portion as he was eating out that evening – it was the largest small portion I've ever seen! How did you get on in the evening Jim? Thank you Ken for the organisation and the last minute rearrangement as the proposed walk along the river bank was off because of flooding – something for the summer months instead.

*Wendy Hattrell*



## U3A 40th Anniversary National Events

To celebrate the 40th Anniversary, the Third Age Trust will be co-ordinating a series of exciting events that you and your u3a can take part in.

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/40th-anniversary/40th-anniversary-national-events>

25th – 28th July 2022

Hawkhills, Easingwold, YO61 3EG

www.thehawkhills.com

Course Topics to choose from:

**An Introduction to Jewellery Making \*\***

**Four Philosophers of Four Centuries \*\***

**The Air we Breathe \*\***

**Greek Mythology \*\***

**Women artists from the Renaissance to the Present Day \*\***

**Researching Family History \*\***

**The Archaeology of Britain since the Romans \*\***

**Flower arranging for fun \*\***

**Casual Conversation in Spanish for beginners \*\***

**Portrait Drawing/Painting \*\***

For more details of the courses go to:

[http://yahru3a.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Summary-Courses\\_SS-2022\\_final\\_1701.pdf](http://yahru3a.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Summary-Courses_SS-2022_final_1701.pdf)

Costs for our 3-night top class residential Summer School

Full Board Delegate £380

Day Delegate (total) £190

\*\* We are pleased to offer this year's event at the same price as last time \*\*

For details of our 2022 Summer School including the courses and Application Form go to: <https://yahru3a.co.uk> then Summer School

The aim of our Summer School is to:

- Provide members with new learning opportunities;
- Enable our members to explore a topic your U3A may not be able to offer;
- Enable delegates, in a magnificent setting, to share time out with other U3A members from across the region and beyond.

## Live, laugh, learn

**HAWKHILLS:** Set off the A19 just south of Easingwold and set within a 240 acre estate, the venue boasts well appointed conference facilities and a modern accessible accommodation block providing comfortable, hotel style double en-suite bedrooms with all amenities. The Hawkhills owns a reputation for first class cuisine as well as providing a cosy bar, relaxing lounge and conservatory areas, and magnificent landscaped gardens opening out onto woodland with waymarked walks.

## The Arts Society, Dukeries

The Arts Society meet on the first Wednesday of each month at Carlton-in-Lindrick Civic Centre at 10.00 a.m. for 11.00 a.m. start. Guests are welcome at a cost of £7 per lecture and the lectures usually last an hour. Part of a national organisation that used to be known as NADFAS, the national association of decorative and fine arts societies.

I have been attending these meetings for a while now and can thoroughly recommend them. The next three topics are:-

- April 6      150 years of London Underground Design: Mark Ovenden – from his books 'London Underground by Design' and 'Underground Cities'
- May 4        The Art of the Cartoonist: Harry Venning - an award-winning cartoonist, illustrator and comedy writer. A regular contributor to The Guardian with the Clare In The Community strip which is now a Radio 4 programme too.
- June 1        Raphael: A God Amongst Painters: Chantal Brotherton-Ratcliffe - taught full-time at the Sotheby's Institute of Art for 29 years and is now a consultant lecturer.

*Wendy Hattrell*

## LOVE OF NATURE

The 'Love of Nature' Group used the March meeting to consider future visits to possible places of interest. This meeting was followed by a walk round Potteric Carr in glorious weather. Group members shared their knowledge of Potteric Carr and this was supplemented by jokes courtesy of a member. A very enjoyable morning had by all. The sun was dazzling and because of this the photo had to be taken from the reverse side of the wicker frame.

*Diane Williams*



## VIRTUAL U3A

The Virtual U3A or vU3A activities all take place on the internet. The vU3A is a secure, members only, workspace.

Members who would enjoy the wider contact with members from around the world and who belong to traditional U3As are welcome. There is no need to formally join any vU3A activity, you can visit, read and make contributions. Subscription is currently £8 per year.

For further information go to: <https://u3asites.org.uk/vu3a/welcome>



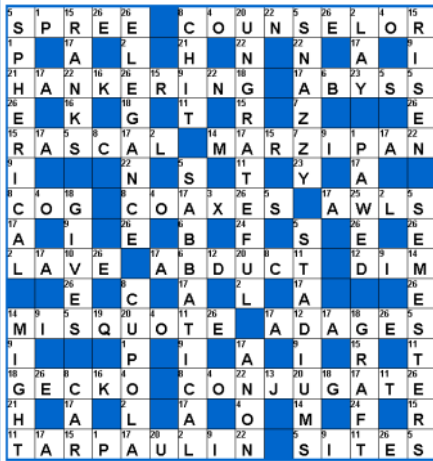






## Solutions to February - March puzzle

Code crossword



## Get involved in u3a Eye

Are you a budding photographer? Keen to learn a new skill or simply interested in the world around you and how it appears?

The National U3A run a rolling project to encourage members to take and submit pictures of their surroundings. Different themes are posted each fortnight and your photo can be submitted on that topic. It is not a competition. What is wanted are interesting photos, possibly different ways of viewing things, anything which has captured your imagination or caught your eye.

At the end of every deadline, 15 chosen photos are published on an online gallery for each theme. All you need to do is upload your photo.

For more information about submitting photos, the themes and the deadlines go to:

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/national-programmes/u3a-eye>

## APRIL



The meaning of April is not clear. Some historians believe that it comes from the Latin words aperire (to open) or apricus (sunny) because April is seen as the month of sun and growth in the Northern Hemisphere. Another explanation for the etymology of April goes back to Aphrodite, the Greek goddess of love, beauty, and procreation. The Etruscans knew her as Apru. Since the Romans inherited many Etruscan customs and myths, they celebrated the same goddess in April, Aprilis.



In the old Roman calendar, April initially had 30 days. When January was introduced into the calendar, April was cut down to 29 days. In the year 46 BCE, when Julius Caesar introduced the Julian calendar, he added ten days to the year and April was expanded to 30 days.



According to tradition, the birthstone for April is the diamond, representing innocence. Its birth flowers are the daisy (*Bellis perennis*) and the sweet pea (*Lathyrus odoratus*).

### April Fool's Day

On April 1, people in countries all over the world like to play pranks on other people. It is not clear when the tradition started, and there are countless theories.

One likely answer to why we play hoaxes on each other in April is because the winter is over: March and April end the long time of winter in the Northern Hemisphere and bring new life. In many cultures this was celebrated with colourful festivities, dancing, and making fun of each other.

Another explanation focuses on the introduction of the Julian and the Gregorian calendar. From ancient times, people in some parts of Europe celebrated the New Year on or around the March Equinox. However, the new calendar systems defined

January 1 as the first day of the year. People who forgot about the change or observed the old rules for other reasons became victims of various jokes. For example, pranksters would discreetly stick paper fish to their backs. In France, the victims of this prank were called Poisson d'Avril, or April Fish.

Another belief about the April Fool's Day origin points to the biblical character Noah as the first 'April Fool'. It is said that on April 1, he mistakenly sent the dove out to find dry land before the waters subsided.

Another story suggests that the day commemorates when Jesus was sent from Pontius Pilate to Herod and back again. 'Sending a man from Pilate to Herod', is an old term for sending someone on a fool's errand.

According to Roman myth, the god Pluto abducted Proserpina to the underworld. Her mother Ceres only heard her daughter's voice echo and searched for her in vain. The fruitless search is believed by some to have inspired the tradition of 'fool's errands', practical jokes where people are asked to complete an impossible or imaginary task.

British folklore links April Fool's Day to the town of Gotham in Nottinghamshire. According to the legend, it was traditional in the 13th century for any road that the king placed his foot upon to become public property. So when Gotham's citizens heard that King John planned to travel through their town, they refused him entry, not wishing to lose their main road. When the king heard this, he sent soldiers to the town. But when the soldiers arrived in Gotham, they found the town full of fools engaged in foolish activities such as drowning fish. As a result, the king declared the town too foolish to warrant punishment.

<https://www.timeanddate.com/calendar/months/april.html>

## MAY

In the old Roman calendar, May was called mens maius, probably referring to the goddess Maia. She embodied the concept of growth, both in nature and in business. Others connect Maius with Maiores, the ancestors or 'the greater ones'. May was the third month because the year started in March. In the year 154 BCE, a rebellion forced the Roman senate to change the beginning of the civil year from March to January 1. With this reform, May officially became the fifth month in the year 153 BCE.

In May, the ancient Romans celebrated Floralia, a festival for fertility. Floralia lasted from April 27 to May 3 and included theatre plays, dancing, and banquets. The Romans sacrificed a pregnant sow to the earth goddess Terra for a fruitful harvest.

Since ancient times, the beginning of May has been celebrated as the coming of summer - from the Roman Floralia to the Walpurgisnacht (Night of St Walpurga), a Germanic celebration with bonfires on April 30 still celebrated today.

Many countries in Europe and North America celebrate May Day on May 1 with dances around a maypole, a high wooden pole adorned with colours and flowers.

According to tradition, the birthstone for May is the emerald, representing love and success. Its birth flowers are the lily of the valley (*Convallaria majalis*) and the common hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), also known as mayflower or maythorn.

<https://www.timeanddate.com/calendar/months/may.html>



**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> then click on the 'GROUP' tab. Go to the bottom of the group page to select the group that you require. Click on the blue bird in the top right-hand corner and a form will open for you to write your message.

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

## Contact Numbers

### DU3A Committee Members

<b>Chair</b>	Chris Woolven
<b>Secretary</b>	Diane Woolven
<b>Treasurer</b>	Derek Marriott
<b>Membership Secretary</b>	Christine Curtis
<b>Group Co-ordinator</b>	Diane Williams
<b>Publicity</b>	Jane Bowser
<b>Beacon Administrator</b>	Wendy Hattrell
<b>Welfare</b>	Jill Laming
<b>Committee</b>	Paula Harmer
<b>Committee</b>	David Bryan

### Activity Groups & Other: Contacts

<b>Contact Group leaders - see printed Newsletter for telephone numbers, or DU3A Website</b>		
<b>Newsletter Editor &amp; Website Manager</b>	Bridget Thompson	bthompsonu3a@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. Not only is the tea, coffee and food excellent, but the free use of the upstairs room for meetings has been a great help to many of our groups. If you haven't been there yet, give it a try!

## 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

## Deadline

Thank-you to all the members who have sent articles for this issue. Articles for the June - July 2022 newsletter need to be received by

**Wednesday 27th April**

Please send news of group activities, articles, photographs, etc. to  
[bthompsonu3a@btinternet.com](mailto:bthompsonu3a@btinternet.com)

