

DONCASTER

u3a

Registered Charity No. 1074577



December 2021 - January 2022

From the Chair



By the time you read this the clocks will have gone back and the nights will be closing in again. Hallowe'en will have been and gone and for those of us who remember to remember, so will the fifth of November.

The recovery from the pandemic has been something of a trying time for all of us. Many of the things we took for granted before no longer apply.

One of the difficulties the committee have struggled with is finding a venue for our monthly meetings. I have just heard that the concert room in the Frenchgate Centre will now be available at a reasonable cost, and that the Grand Theatre may also be available for our meetings very soon. For the time being, we are thankful to use the Priory Place Methodist Church, though, in common with many churches today, a dwindling congregation has led to the building being no longer used for regular Sunday Worship. Our Christmas meeting in December will be held there, but where we will be in January is still to be decided. I will let members know as soon as I can by email and I will ask our secretary, Diane, to put the information on our Facebook page. If you know members who do not have access to email or Facebook then I would be grateful if you would pass the information on to them. I am confident we will be able to let members know at the Christmas meeting on December 20th.

I am very pleased to say that we continue to attract new members. We are gradually getting the membership back to where it was before the pandemic. If you have any friends who you feel would benefit from joining us, please don't hesitate to either bring them along to one of our meetings, or simply refer them to our membership secretary, Christine Curtis.

Along with the rest of the country, we expect to see our costs continue to rise, and I think it likely that our membership fee will rise next year, though this has not yet been decided.

Finally, for those of you who wonder what we on the committee get up to, why not come along to one of our meetings as an observer. We are a jolly bunch (most of the time) and would be delighted to see you. Just give me a call and I will arrange it.

At this point I suppose I might be tempted to say "Happy Hallowe'en" or even "Happy Guy Fawkes" but the word "Happy" seems a bit incongruous when you think about the original meaning behind the two celebrations.

Still, as this is the December/January newsletter, I will take this opportunity to wish you all "Merry Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous New Year", though I hope to see many of you before the New Year so I can say it to you in person.

Best wishes

Chris Woolven





WELCOME



A warm welcome to our new members

**Janet Armitage, William Hawksworth,
Anne Lindsay, Eileen Marchant, Ann Oates,
Mark Scrivener, Brian Sellors,
Jeanette Tindling, Alan Toft, Julia Toft, Iain Wittwer
Christine Wright.**



Hi everyone,

We would like to thank those who sent good wishes and cards following our recent wedding.

We had a perfect day. The ceremony was at the charming, tiny and very old church of St Mary in Kirk Bramwith. The vicar was fun loving and made the event happy and a bit quirky with Cat Stevens and Brian Adams providing some of the music. We had a fabulous lunch at The Earl of Doncaster. We topped it with a sunny week in St. Ives with the surfers.

As we gradually return to our various groups it has been lovely to have the



congratulations of the friends and members.

Once again thank-you to all.

Mike and Jane Bowser

February - March 2022 Newsletter

Articles for the February - March newsletter need to be received by **Wednesday 29th December.**

Please send news of group activities, articles, photographs, etc. to **bthompsonu3a@btinternet.com**



Cover photo: Valmenier in the French Alps by Diane Woolven
Digital Photography Group

GROUPS - UPDATES / NOTICES

GENERAL MEETINGS

15th November 2021

'Great Houses and Halls of South Yorkshire' Speaker: Pat McLaughlin

Venue: Priory Place Methodist Church.

Doors open at 1.00 for a 1.30 p.m. start. Note - if you arrive after 1.30 p.m. the doors may be closed. There is a doorbell at the left side door. Please use it if you need to. Entry will be £4 a head and will include a ticket for the prize draw.

20th December 2021

See page 6 for details

17th January 2022 'The art of the Monologue' Speaker: David Skillen

Venue - to be decided

INTEREST GROUPS

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

COFFEE QUIZ

Members please note that my coffee quiz group is now full. Anyone interested in joining the group will need to contact me to be put on a waiting list before attending a meeting.

Jane Bowser

BRASS BAND

The Brass Band section is open to new players. Whether you've played brass before or are a complete beginner you will be welcome. All we ask is that you read music to a basic level.

The band meets every Wednesday at Markham Main Colliery Band Room in Armthorpe, 13:00 to 15:00 with a break. Instruments are provided by Markham Main Colliery Band.

If anyone wants to give it a try please email me. Click on the blue bird on the Brass Band page on the website (<https://u3asites.org.uk/doncaster>) and leave your name and contact details. Email is the preferred method of initial contact but if you do not have email you can phone me (contact details on page 22).

Steve Follows

FILM GROUP

U3A Film Group now has a home! The group will meet on the first Wednesday in each month, 10.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. in the Ivanhoe Room at DGLAM (Doncaster Gallery Library and Museum) where facilities are excellent especially the cafe!

Sue Levan

LIVING HISTORY:

We now have a new group leader. Yvonne Aspinall has kindly volunteered to take on the role of group leader with Diane Woolven helping as administrator.

The group will be meeting in Prego on the first Wednesday of the month starting at 10.30 a.m. Please contact Diane **before** attending a meeting for the first time.

TENPIN BOWLING: Next Session: Tuesday 18th January

WALKING CRICKET:

From now until April we will be playing in the Dome. Dates booked are:

November 18th: 1.00 p.m. - 3.00 p.m.

December not available.

January 6th and 20th: 1.00 p.m. - 3.00 p.m.

February 3rd and 17th: 1.00 p.m. - 3.00 p.m.

March 3rd and 17th: 1.00 p.m. - 3.00 p.m.

FAMILY HISTORY

The Family History group had it's first face-to-face meeting last month and was well attended along with 2 new members. We didn't have a subject, as such, but kept it very much a catch up with friends and discussed new discoveries, brick walls in research broken down and what we did during lockdown. Our focus for 2022 is very much on the 1921 Census which is said to be released in the early part of the year. For family historians this is a very important census because with the 1931 census being destroyed and no census taken during 1941, it will be 30 years before the next one is released for 1951. So if you have a family historian in the family don't be surprised if the phrase 'sorry I can't I'm very busy' becomes the norm and if you are looking for the perfect Christmas present for them, a subscription to Find My Past will be much appreciated as they have sole rights to the census release.

We are also exploring venues for visits with the Wilderspin School in Barton upon Humber and The British Library in Boston Spa high on the agenda closely followed by trips to a cotton mill and workhouse.

Glæd Gēol Eallum! (Happy Christmas in Anglo-Saxon)

Dawn Jarvis



Found in Sweetheart Abbey churchyard, Dumfries And Galloway

GENERAL MEETINGS



For our October meeting in Priory Place Methodist Church, we had a change from our usual format. Instead of a speaker we were entertained by the folk duo 'Fools' Gold'. The duo, Carol and Steve Robson, gave a brilliant performance with anecdotes related to the history of the various songs. With a variety of instruments at their disposal along with a bit of audience participation, we were treated to a

delightful and informative 40 minutes. In conversations afterwards, the general feeling among our members was that we would like to see them again next year. As a result, we have booked them to come back to our December meeting in 2022 where they will be performing with a Christmas theme.

Our Christmas General Meeting this year will be a ticket only affair, due to limited seating capacity and the usual provision of mince pies / sausage rolls etc. There will be a talk by Margaret Herbert and Bob Ashton, from Friends of the Grand Theatre, about the past, present and future of the Grand. I am hoping we can manage to fit in a few carols as well.



Tickets for the meeting on 20th December, will be available at £5 a head from the date of the November General Meeting.

Chris Woolven

FILM GROUP



The Film Group's first meeting this year was held on 6th October in the Flying Scotsman Room at DGLAM (Danum Gallery, Library and Museum). Twelve people were there which is the maximum number allowed for that room, a lovely, well equipped room on the 2nd floor. Sadly we were unable to take advantage of the large screen and the Wi-Fi projector because of technical problems, despite our best efforts and those of the extremely helpful DGLAM staff.

By the meeting on 3rd November the group leader's technical problems had been overcome and a 1938 Screwball comedy 'Bringing up Baby' was watched by an enthusiastic full house audience. Looking forward to the next one .

Sue Levan

Friendly Flowers

This summer I was invited to tea and cakes in the gardens of three fellow members of the U3A. The invitations were made at different times over this summer, and quite independently of each other. Apart from wanting to thank these wonderful gardeners, the reason I write this is to let them know how their invitation helped me get through a very difficult summer.

The day before I went as an out patient for a simple cataract operation, I planted some sweet peas. Without dwelling on the finer details, instead of being home to attach them to canes the next day, I was detained in hospital, followed by recuperation away from home.

On my return, about six weeks later, the first thing I did was to check on those poor neglected sweet peas. They had survived, by the way. A bit bent, but otherwise healthy, just like me. That walk around the garden on my return home was heaven. It made me realise how lucky I was to have a garden. Fortunate also to receive invitations to spend time in the gardens of friends, with transport provided. Those invitations made this summer memorable, with truly wonderful memories to sustain me over the coming winter months.

As an additional bonus, I found out how to care for the iris that has not flowered very well this year. It is now dug up, split and re-planted, not very deep, as instructed. Something to look forward to next year, seeing if they flower?

The above is an example of how my membership of the U3A has made my life richer. Thank-you Doncaster U3A. And an extra thank you to those kind members who sustained me with the gift of their friendship.

Betty Alexander



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

This is the page where you will find many ideas to keep learning during these times - a mixture of suggestions from members and quizzes, challenges and projects from our subject advisers, members and other Trust Volunteers. Some are one-off events and others ongoing over a period a time. All of which are supported by members like yourself. Get involved!

Currently available:

- Battle of Britain and the Blitz
- BirdTrack
- Cuisines of the World - Cookery Challenge
- Extreme Crochet and Knitting
- Learn, Laugh and Move
- Maths Challenge
- Paint or Draw
- Pets of 'The Furred Age'
- Run for the World
- Slow Ways
- Speaker Swap
- u3a Radio Podcast
- Upcycle your Wardrobe



The Walkers' Prayer



Lord bless all walkers that we may live long and healthy lives, especially bless our leaders for they are all powerful and lead us through the wilderness.

Yea though they lead us down the valleys and over the hills, we shall feel no pain for our hearts, minds and muscles are numb.

Let them know their north from their south and their east from their west.

Let the sun shine so that we may have a faint idea in which direction we are heading.

Grant O Lord that they curb their tongues and not tell us that we have walked 7 miles when we know that we have walked 10.

Also let them know the difference between a gentle slope and a steep cliff.

Give them the ability to count, so that they know the number of walkers, so that none shall go astray.

Make them prevent the leaders from starting to walk the minute everyone has caught up.

Curse those walkers who overtake the leader, let their sticks break, their laces come undone and their flasks leak.

Curse also those who disappear into the woods without telling the back marker.

Grant, O Lord sunshine at all times, but not too hot, cooling breezes, but not strong winds, shade needed and incomparable views when we are resting.

Spare us from brambles, nettles and other obstructions.

Lead us not down the wrong paths.

Finally Lord let us arrive back at our cars safe and sound for we are children of the wilderness, the blind being led by the blind, and we are shattered.

Give us strength to turn up for the next walk, for we are of the tribe stupid and know no better.

We ask all this with tongue in cheek, ever conscious that many a true word is spoken in jest.

Author Unknown

Submitted by Carolyn Richardson

Why did no one bid for Rudolph and Blitzen on eBay?

..... Because they were two deer

What carol is heard in the desert? 'O camel ye faithful'

What's every elf's favourite type of music? Wrap

ART GROUP

The first meeting of the art group was held at Priory Place Methodist Chapel on the first Tuesday in October. Eight people came along to experience acrylic paint. We used a limited palette to create a background ranging from deep to pale blue. On this we built up three layers of tree trunks to create a woodland scene, showing depth of field. To this we added tiny details of leaves and twigs. The members of the group were all very motivated and concentrated very hard on their creation!

At the next meeting we will build on this experience to create an acrylic picture showing hills disappearing into the distance.

Our third experience of acrylics will be to create a wild animal picture developing what we have learned in the previous two sessions with a twist!

The group is almost full but there are a couple of spaces left if you would like to join us, please contact me as soon as you can, to be sure of a place.

We meet on the first and third Tuesday of each month, 1.00 p.m. 'til 3.00 p.m.

Paula Harmer



FACEBOOK

facebook

Du3a has a Facebook page. It is a private group which means it is only accessible to our members! It is a very good way of keeping in touch with other members of the organisation. We have 66 members so far but numbers are rising. Will you join us?

To join you will need to have a personal Facebook account. Go to www.facebook.com/r.php. Enter your name, email, phone number, d.o.b., and gender. Add a password. Click sign up. Confirm email and phone number.

Once you have an account, type DoncasterU3A into the search bar and it should take you to our page. If you have any problems contact me (contact number inside the back page).

Diane Woolven



LOVE OF NATURE

7th September – Potteric Carr, Doncaster

We were back on home turf in September, for a guided walk around our local reserve Potteric Carr by Andy Dalton, Yorkshire Wildlife Trust's 'Gateway Manager'. Andy led us around trails that were familiar to most of us but, however much you know a place, there's always something new to learn.

Like so much of the area, Potteric Carr has a dirty industrial past that, over time, cleaned up its act to become a haven for wildlife. The 1950s coal seams from Rossington Colliery penetrated under the area until progressive subsidence forced mining to cease, and fen conditions were allowed to return.

The area is still criss-crossed by railway lines originally used to transport coal and other heavy goods. Some tracks remain in use, and the unprepared can be startled for a few seconds by the incongruous sight and sound of a freight train passing through the reserve. Other rails are long gone, leaving behind footpaths along the tops of embankments that wind through the woods.



Potteric Carr with Andy Dalton



Rail bridge over Mother Drain

Since being declared a nature reserve in 1968, the original 13 hectares (just over 32 acres) has grown to more than 235 hectares, with 8km of paths, 5km of which are wheelchair friendly. Facilities for visitors have developed into a wonderful, accessible place to spend quality time – and the wildlife quite likes it there, too.

The landscape we see today is largely due to active management over the years by the Trust's staff and its dedicated volunteers, a number of whom we met along the way hard at work thinning undergrowth next to the trail.

At the end of our walk with Andy, we adjourned to the reserve café for refreshments, and to discuss where we would like to go next. It turns out we have many wonderful places to explore, some familiar and some new to the group. One significant area of

agreement was that Potteric Carr's chips are the best in the area! Apart from that, the following decisions were made, setting us up for the next few months.

5th October – A walk from the Humber Bridge viewing area to Far Ings nature reserve with lunch at the Old Tile Works coffee shop/restaurant on the return leg (see the next report for how that went).

2nd November – A visit to Sherwood Forest with its ancient trees, autumn leaves and fungi.

7th December - A trip to the Donna Nook grey seal colony on the Lincolnshire coast, for the annual spectacle of thousands of seal cows giving birth and nurturing their pups for the first, vital few weeks of their lives. Last year, 2,214 pup births were recorded!

4th January – We plan to enjoy a post-Christmas meal, following some appropriately seasonal activity. I can't give you any more detail than that, as we haven't worked them out yet!



Railway bridges with Andy Dalton



Viking Way from under the Humber Bridge

5th October The Humber Bridge viewing area to Far Ings nature reserve and back.

The forecast in the week leading up to our walk was grim, and hadn't improved by the day we were due to meet up. There was a very real chance that we would be heavily rained upon and, being on the exposed banks of the

Humber, we may also be blown onto the mudflats by gusting winds. However, without exception, the vote was to come out, dress sensibly, and take whatever weather was thrown at us. You just can't keep some people down.

We were delighted, therefore, that it was actually dry and mild when we arrived, so we set off with happy optimism. Heading west along the raised embankment under the thundering Humber Bridge, we soon found ourselves on the wide, tranquil and pleasant Viking Way.

First on our left was the Old Tile Works, established in 1840, and still producing fired clay roof tiles and other terracotta stock. Recent diversifications on the site include a super coffee shop/restaurant, but more on that later.

The route then took us past the grounds of the old Humber Bridge Hotel, which closed earlier this year as a result of financial difficulties and land disputes. An application submitted prior to closure for 'Planning permission to erect 19 lodges, new access



Far Ings - a view from a hide

road and associated hardstanding' was withdrawn after generating a massive 824 almost entirely negative public comments. This made it one of the most-objected to planning applications in North Lincolnshire's history.

Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust led the campaign against the hotel owners' plans, citing the harmful disturbance that would be caused to 'an incredibly special place'. Far lngs is home to a number of rare and threatened species that are found in very few places across the UK. As such, it has been recognised as one of Europe's most important sites for biodiversity and designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). So, developers 0, nature 1.

Past the hotel site, we took a gate into the nature reserve itself. Well-maintained paths led through woods and across fields, with viewing hides and screens well placed to offer views over the various water-filled pits and scrapes. Across the site, we encountered the usual wood pigeon, blackbird, dunnock, robin and various wee birds of the tit and finch families. We also heard the ridiculously loud voices of wrens and Cetti's warblers but, as is often the way with these secretive little characters, we didn't clap eyes on either of them.

From the various hides, sightings included: cormorant, grey heron, little egret, great crested grebe, little grebe, coot, moorhen, mallard, gadwall, tufted duck, teal, shoveler, black-headed gull, greylag goose and mute swan. No sign of the snipe, though, that I'd seen on a previous visit.



Walls made from terracotta roof tiles!

Tummies were rumbling by this point, so we left the reserve and looped back along the Viking Way. Some almost broke into a sprint to reach our lunch venue, but others dallied long enough to check out the hedgerows. These were rich with different-coloured berries, some of which we recognised and others we had to look up. God bless Google, eh?

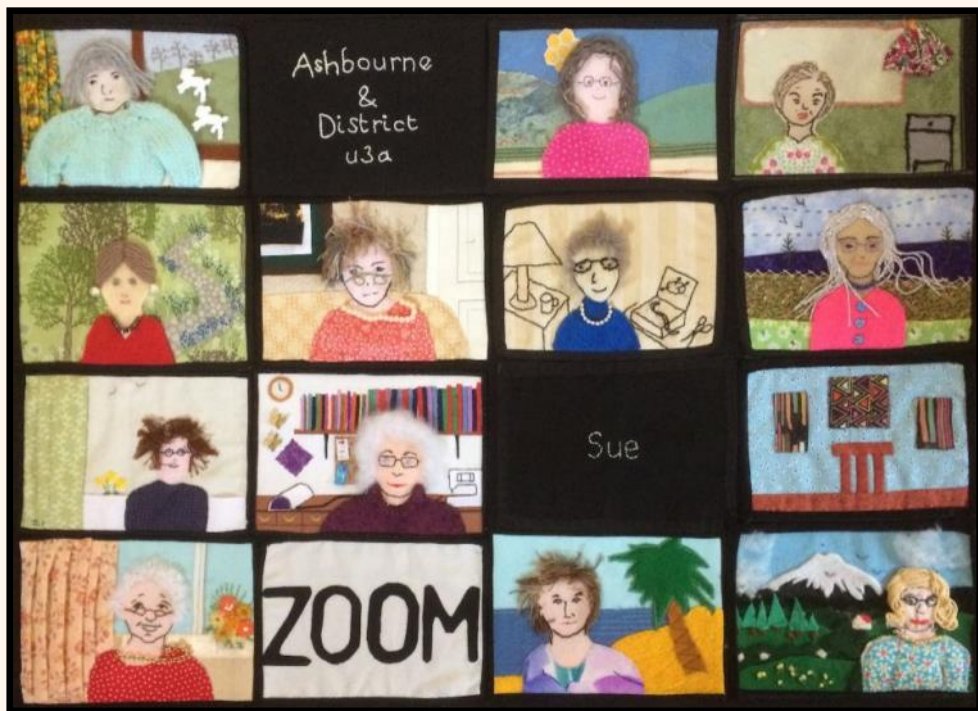
After some time gazing at and poking a large, brown mushroom we couldn't identify, we caught up with our hungry friends, who had arrived back at the Old Tile Works restaurant and were already enjoying a rather good lunch. Afterwards, there was time to explore the rest of the site, which included a number of artisan craft units, plants for sale, and a garden shop. We were also very taken by some ingenious landscaping, where terracotta roof tiles had been used to construct extensive stretches of walls around the site (see image).

And the weather? For our entire walk, it stayed dry and with barely a breath of wind. It wasn't until we were all in the restaurant that we noticed it was raining outside, and by then we didn't care, because we'd had a really lovely morning and the food was great. We were just thankful for our uncannily good timing, and so pleased we hadn't chickened out and stayed at home.

Lesley Bassett

Ashbourne & District U3A created a quilt based on their Zoom meetings, with squares many u3a members will recognise - the empty chair belonging to the member who dashed off to answer the doorbell, the blank screen due to poor internet connection, and members with fantasy backgrounds.

Submitted by Wendy Hattrell



What do elves do after school? Their gnome work

What do you call an old snowman? Water

What does Santa use to bake cakes? Elf-raising flour

What is white and minty? A polo bear

Who hides in the bakery at Christmas? A mince spy

What do snowmen wear on their heads? Ice caps

What's green, covered in tinsel and goes ribbet ribbet? A mistle-toad

How did Mary and Joseph know Jesus' weight when he was born?
 They had a weigh in a manger

Why did Mary and Joseph have to travel to Bethlehem?
 Because they couldn't book a home delivery

STRETCHERS

September

It's always a joy to go to Clumber Park. Stretchers met along the Lime Tree Avenue and headed South through a wooded area to join a cycle track, quickly leaving it again to cross a meadow. It was September and the weather was a bit cool – but not raining!

It wasn't long before the familiar bridge came into view and we crossed to continue our walk on the far side. There is a sheltered spot in a short distance where there is usually a pair of swans on the lake – this time there were cygnets as well. We stopped to admire the family. We soon branched onto another cycle track which kept us away from the lake shore and the busy areas, re-joining just before the bridge over the weir.



Oooh the toilets! Was the cry as half the party disappeared and the other half queued for coffee. Such a lovely spot looking down the length of the lake to pause and drink a good cup of coffee. We continued on the familiar route across the causeway but headed up the hill and along to the cricket ground turning left to walk alongside the cedar avenue and head into the pleasure gardens. We couldn't resist a visit to the church before we continued to the café and a welcome lunch.

It was a short walk over the 'mound' to find a cycle track, then the gate through the woods and back to the cars. We are lucky to have Clumber Park so near to us to enjoy, not just the walk round the lake, but also some of the less well known areas.

Wendy Hattrell

October

The Stretchers started their October walk in the historic town of Hatfield. The settlement is of Saxon origin. Here in 633 AD, King Edwin of Northumberland was killed in the Battle of Hatfield Chase by Penda, King of Mercia and notable visitors have included John of Gaunt and Geoffrey Chaucer.

However, we saw no famous faces as we parked up in the Hatfield pub and began our walk. Although the grey sky looked foreboding, we were lucky to get away with just a spot of drizzle. The paths were generally dry and flat taking us through Quarry Park where we enjoyed the woodland paths through this nature reserve.



The walk seemed to take no time at all. Engrossed in our conversations, the five miles vanished beneath our feet and before we knew it we were back at the pub. The rather long wait for our food was tempered by our continued chat until we were fully refreshed, revitalized, and ready for home.

Diane Woolven

STROLLERS

The Strollers met at 10 a.m. on Thursday 23rd September 2021 in the Harvey Arms car park in the pretty little village of Finningley. Kevin the chef kindly opened the pub early so that we could all pre-order and pay for our lunch.

Seventeen members met for the walk and it was on a bright sunny morning. We left the Harvey Arms at 10.30 a.m. and headed through the grounds of St Oswald's Church, which is a Grade 1 listed building. We then made a stop at the Commonwealth War Graves which is just behind the church. A member of the group was interested to see if she could locate an Australian war grave which she found and photographed. We proceeded along the lane and then



up the main road towards Blaxton going over the level crossing. Turning left we went down Back Lane crossing the main road and then across the fields, seeing some alpacas on the way. We walked through an ancient wood which had been the site of a motte and bailey castle. Out of the wood, we walked down the side of a maize field and then over the main road into a small housing estate before crossing the road which led to Westwoodside. We continued into another small wood before arriving at the bulb field which we walked around.

We then arrived back at Finningley in time for a very enjoyable lunch which was waiting for us at the Harvey Arms. Seventeen people stayed for lunch. As the walk was so varied it was suggested by some members that we could do the walk again in the future. It was a very enjoyable morning.

Sue, Sue & Joy



Diane Woolven took these photos during the Digital Photography group walk at Sandal Beat wood.



The Language of fans

Oh dear! Whilst researching this subject I am disappointed to find - and in turn to disappoint you, dear Reader, - that what I have always believed to be a fascinating and extensive language of hidden gestures conveying sometimes saucy intentions and invitations, is, in fact, not true.

But read on, because fans do hold an interesting history anyway and are well worth some attention.

Although they became immeasurably fashionable items in the 18th and 19th centuries, the thing EVERY woman must carry, they started long before that. Fans were originally developed in Ancient Egypt, China and India a few thousand years ago, fulfilling both a ceremonial function and as a method for cooling oneself (or The Master) and keeping away insects. When Tutankhamun's tomb was opened two beautiful fans were found, one made of carved ivory, encrusted with precious jewels and the other plumes of ostrich feathers on a golden stick, encrusted with jewels. Three thousand year old drawings show Chinese ladies with fans. When the Japanese devised a way to fold fans, they became popular in the west made of silk, feathers, paper or other lightweight materials as a means to cool oneself.

In the 17th century China imported huge quantities of fans to Europe for wealthy women, initially to stop face tanning which they believed made them look like lower class workers, which would never do! For the same reason, they were also used to protect the face from the fire.

From this point fans gained notoriety for flirting. Later on, fans were also used as commemorating special or historic events, such as weddings and coronations, the first hot air balloon flight of the De Montgolfière brothers in 1783 or for the French Revolution, though heavens alone knows what the pictures depicting THAT event would be! Georgian fans in the 18th century represented exquisite, hand crafted objects. They developed a particular place in masquerade balls as part of the ritual of flirting, which is where the myth of the language of the fan grew.

By 1865 they were indispensable fashion accessories for the emergent middle classes and fashion soon dictated that absolutely all women had a fan. The type, however, was dictated by social status - was yours bought from a street vendor or was yours a hand painted, mother of pearl or ivory fan, inlaid with gold or jewels? This led to extraordinary snobbery about the fan and they were purchased or given as gifts at great cost to those who could afford it.

Now to address this notion of a secret language

Nowadays, it is widely believed that in Victorian times fans, gloves and parasols were used for relaying secret messages. Drawing the fan across the cheek supposedly meant 'I love you', while twirling it in the left hand signalled 'We are watched' and dropping it was a suggestion to just be friends.

If such a language did exist, imagine the enormous capacity for misunderstanding! You accidentally drop your fan and find yourself agreeing to meet in the park at midnight!

Whilst it seems reasonable (and there are many contemporary accounts to support the idea) that a Victorian woman could have used her fan not only as an accessory, but also as a tool to attract additional attention, it is doubtful that her male counterpart could have mastered this extensive secret language, said to have consisted of about three dozen different moves or gestures. And that also supposed young women could

memorise it all ... or perhaps they should have crib sheets with them, tucked into their corsets? So who do you think would benefit from promoting his idea? It can, of course, be traced to a fan maker called Duvelleroy, in Paris in 1827 ... and the reason WHY he published a leaflet 'explaining' the language behind the uses of the fan is obvious. In reality, the less romantic truth is, of course, that it was invented to boost the sale of fans in the 19th century, after they had fallen out of fashion following the French Revolution. The leaflet proved a great success and Duvelleroy became a supplier for Queen Victoria, having opened a boutique on London's fashionable New Bond Street. The myth of this secret language is certainly a persistent one, prominently referred to in many later works of fiction, including Oscar Wilde's 1892 play 'Lady Windermere's Fan'.

The 'language of fans' as such did not exist, but was rather an exaggeration of the fact that a society lady in the 18th century was expected to know how to elegantly handle a fan, allowing observers to differentiate between different social statuses. It was a highly successful snobbish affectation! Women in a much more rigidly controlled society discovered it was a way to say yes, no or maybe.

Fans survived into the 20th century but the unspoken mystique fell away, except in postcards. They made a last hurrah during the height of the postcard era and then became souvenirs, decoration and gifts, as they still are. Our daughter, Harriet, had many as a teenager, draped about the place hmmmmmm, I wonder if we still have any tucked away somewhere? David how's your memory these days?

Paula Harmer,
Culture Page

The Language of the Fan

Carrying in the right hand in front of face ...	Follow me
Carrying in left hand in front of face	Desirous of acquaintance
Placing it on left ear	I wish to get rid of you
Drawing across forehead	You have changed
Twirling in the left hand	We are watched
Carrying in the right hand	You are too willing
Drawing through the hand	I hate you
Twirling in the right hand	I love another
Drawing across the cheek	I love you
Presented shut	Do you love me?
Drawing across the eyes	I am sorry
Touching tip with finger	I wish to speak to you
Letting it rest on right cheek	Yes
Letting it rest on left cheek	No
Open and shut	You are cruel
Dropping it	We will be friends
Fanning slowly	I am married
Fanning quickly	I am engaged
With handle to lips	Kiss me
Open wide	Wait for me
Carrying in left hand, open	Come and talk to me
Placed behind head	Don't forget me
With little finger extended	Good-bye



PUZZLE PAGE



Christmas Anagrams

Rearrange the letters in the anagrams to make festive phrases. The numbers in brackets after each anagram indicate the number of words in the festive phrase.

- 1 **Travel and dance** (2)
- 2 **Rich star meets** (2)
- 3 **Smashing tricks cost** (2)
- 4 **Wean again Mary** (4)
- 5 **Vicars themes** (2)
- 6 **The magic swiftness heart-throb** (5)
- 7 **Spice in 'em** (2)
- 8 **Modestly switch after-shave** (5)
- 9 **He's fat, smart, rich** (2)
- 10 **Scathing mud drips** (2)
- 11 **Red Ernie** (1)
- 12 **Let in things** (2)



Target Number Puzzles

As in 'Countdown' on TV - use the numbers on the left to make the number on the right. Not all the numbers have to be used but each number can only be used *once*.



1	5	3	5	8	6	25	make	827
2	2	3	7	7	50	10	make	795
3	1	2	6	7	75	100	make	585
4	100	6	6	7	8	9	make	234
5	3	3	8	8	9	100	make	602
6	2	7	8	8	9	25	make	639
7	3	5	5	7	9	9	make	684
8	75	50	25	7	8	9	make	622
9	8	9	9	10	10	100	make	812
10	1	1	3	7	9	25	make	648



Solutions to October-November puzzles

Girl's name 1:

Jeannie: Jasmine-Bernice-Meaghan-Shannon-Delaney-Caitlin-Suzanne

Girl's name 2:

Melanie: Meaghan-Bernice-Delaney-Suzanne-Shannon-Caitlin-Jasmine

Actor: Robert De Niro

Rabbit Object Bucket Escort Regret Tyrant Decent Expect Nougat Insect Report Oddest

Singer/songwriter: Stevie Wonder

Salmon Tavern Eleven Violin Inborn Enjoin Warden Orphan Notion Damson Ensign Raisin

Jigsaw

ANDREW:	Bottom right	3rd
HELEN:	Top left	2nd
JENNY:	Top right	4th
SIMON:	Bottom left	1st



Going to the Seaside

It's not possible. Since the distance to Seaport is 50 miles, half of that distance is 25 miles. You are driving at 25 mph and you have spent an hour driving when you reach the half-way point. Therefore, it is no longer possible to reach Seaport on time, no matter how fast you drive.



DINING OUT

The final meeting of the Dining Out group for 2021 took place on October 12th at La Rustica restaurant on Nether Hall Road.

There were 16 of us in our party and this included 4 new members. It is lovely to see that people are happy to venture out again after so long staying at home due to Covid restrictions.

The restaurant was busy in spite of it being midweek with several birthday parties taking place. We enjoyed a varied selection of starters, mains and desserts served by the pleasant and friendly staff which made for a convivial atmosphere. I look forward to seeing everyone in 2022 and wish you all a happy and healthy Christmas and New Year.

Joan Condron



U3A Online Learning

Free Online via Zoom

Crochet workshop: How to Crochet a Christmas Tree

led by *Chris Winner*, Groups Coordinator for U3A Trust
Tuesday November 16, 2021 1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Why Did the Spanish Armada Fail? - Part 1

led by *Catherine Stevenson*, Chair of Newcastle U3A
Tuesday November 30, 2021 10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Geology of Sedimentary Rocks Part 3: Limestones, Coals, Oil & Evaporites

led by *Martin Eales* Sutton U3A
Thursday December 2, 2021 2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Astronomy - What's Out There?

led by *Martin Whillock*, U3A Subject Adviser for Astronomy
Tuesday December 7, 2021 2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Live Cookery Demonstration - Vegetarian Christmas Special

led by roving Chef *Alex* from 'Vegetarian for Life'
Monday December 13, 2021 10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

For more information go to:

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events>

Why is it getting harder to buy Advent calendars? Their days are numbered

What do you get if you eat Christmas decorations? Tinsillitis

What's the most popular Christmas wine?

..... 'But I don't like Brussels sprouts'

Why are Christmas trees so bad at sewing?

..... They always drop their needles



DECEMBER

December was a month of celebration even before Christendom. In Roman times, the mid-winter festival of Saturn was celebrated – the Saturnalia. It was a time of feasting and merry-making. Even slaves and their masters switched places for a while. The Saturnalia culminated with the winter solstice, which fell on December 25 in the Roman calendar.

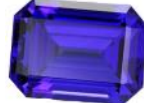
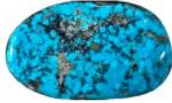
In the old Roman calendar, December was called mensis december, the tenth month, because the Roman calendar started in March. December initially had 29 days. In 154 BC, a rebellion forced the Roman senate to change the beginning of the civil year from March to





January 1. With this reform, December officially became the twelfth month in the year 153 BC. In the year 46 BC, Julius Caesar introduced a new calendar system - the Julian calendar. He added ten days to the year and introduced the leap day. In the new Julian calendar, December was expanded to 31 days.

According to tradition, the birth flowers for December are the holly and the narcissus and the birthstones are the turquoise, the zircon, and the tanzanite.



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

JANUARY

The old Roman calendar had only ten months. January and February did not exist, so the year started in March. Around the year 700 BC, the Roman king Numa Pompilius is said to have added the two winter months.

January was called mensis ianuaris, the month of Ianus, the ancient Roman god of beginnings, of passage, and time itself. January initially had 29 days and came after December, but the Roman year still started in March. In 154 BC, a rebellion forced the Roman senate to change the beginning of the civil year from March to January 1. With this reform, January officially became the first month in the year 153 BC.



In the year 46 BCE, Julius Caesar introduced the Julian calendar. January was expanded to 31 days.

Historical event:

When the Portuguese expedition under Gaspar de Lemos landed at Guanabara Bay on the coast of South America in 1502, the calendar showed January 1. This is why the Portuguese named the place Rio de Janeiro (River of January).

According to tradition, the birthstone for January is the garnet, representing constancy. Its birth flowers are the cottage pink (*Dianthus caryophyllus*) and the snowdrop (*Galanthus nivalis*).

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



Tickhill Music Society have a concert on 19 November 7.00 p.m. in St Mary's Primary School, Tickhill.

Charlotte Saluste-Bridoux violinist is playing:

MOZART: Violin Sonata No. 24 in F, KV 376; JANACEK: Violin Sonata (1914); Interval; BRAHMS: Violin Sonata No.1 in G, Op.78.

Accompanied by Thomas Kelly on the piano.

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

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

Activity Groups & Other: Contacts

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

Newsletter Editor & Website Manager	Bridget Thompson	bthompsonu3a@btinternet.com
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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 February- March 2022 newsletter need to be received by

Wednesday 29th December

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

*Wishing all DU3A members and their families
a very Merry Christmas
and
a Happy New Year*



