



# THE CRYER!

u3a learn,  
laugh  
live

The voice of Dronfield and District u3a

Issue 120 November 2023

## EDITORIAL

Morning and welcome to issue 120 of the Dronfield u3a newsletter. November is a month with well known special days. The fifth is obviously *Bonfire Night* and the eleventh *Remembrance Day* but there are other days that should be taken into consideration. The eighteenth is *Mickey Mouse Day* and it's also Minnie Mouse's birthday. The nineteenth is *Play Monopoly Day* while the twenty third is *Dr Who Day*. (It was on Saturday November twenty-third that the Doctor, in the form of William Hartnell first appeared on our screens.) In America the twenty-third is *Thanksgiving* which is their start to Christmas but it also marks the start of *Blue Christmas*. This runs right the way through to December 31<sup>st</sup>. It runs parallel to the normal celebrations with a focus on the emergency workers and medical staff who work on through out the festive season. It is a reminder to say 'Thank you' on any available opportunity. Read on and enjoy. (Jd) (Editor)

## PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP

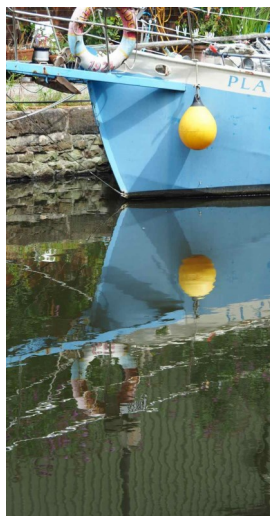
The Photography group have had a busy year. In May we had our first field trip of the year to Whinfell Quarry Gardens. This is a small garden created within a derelict flagstone quarry in the early 20th century. It houses an unusual collection of trees and shrubs. Unfortunately, it was a beautiful warm sunny day which isn't the best condition for photography but we did our best.

For our next trip in June, we went to the Victoria Quays. This a large canal basin close to Sheffield city centre. It was a calm day, and very good for taking photographs of the reflections in the waters of the basin. Besides the canal barges there were interesting views all along the towpath.

July saw us visit Abbeydale Industrial Hamlet where once agricultural tools of many types were produced. Besides the old forges and workshops there is a manager's house and workers cottages all of which provided so many articles to see and photograph we were spoilt for choice.

For our last field trip, in September, we went to Sheffield General Cemetery.

This is situated in the district of Sharrow, Sheffield. It was opened in 1836 and the last burial was in 1978. Today it is listed as a Landscape Grade II



on the English Heritage National Register of Historic Parks and Gardens. Here we had a diverse collection of buildings, many Victorian monuments, carved headstones and local wildlife to capture with our cameras.

October found us back in the Peel Centre discussing our field trips and sharing some of the photographs we had taken through the summer and planning a future programme.



At the November meeting we intend to look at a few more of our photos from the field trips. In December we will view some of the photos in the 'London Salon' Photographic Exhibition. Both these meetings will be in the Peel Centre. As from January 2024 we will be meeting in the Council Chambers, where we hope to have a technical slot, practical session and time to share our photos. In summer months when, the weather permits, we will arrange field trips.

We welcomed two new members into the group this month. Anyone wishing to join us, give us a try! All meetings are held on the 3rd Thursday of the month 10.00 -12.00 with a £10 subscription for the year to cover room hire.

Contact [photography@dronfieldu3a.org.uk](mailto:photography@dronfieldu3a.org.uk) for more information.

Gill Middleton

## MONTHLY MEETINGS



*Don't forget that details of all the monthly meetings from now until next March are available on the [Members](#) page of the website on -*

*(<https://u3asites.org.uk/dronfield/pages/69472>).*

## MEETING NOVEMBER (10 - 12)

The Speaker will be  
Jenny Mallin

"My Great Aunt Constance and  
the Civilian Burma Trek in 1942."



The Japanese invasion of Burma in 1942 forced thousands of people to trek, for the first time, across some of the world's most dangerous terrain.

\*\*\*\*\*

The meeting will be in the Civic Hall

Our speaker will be joining us via Zoom. For technical reasons we are unable to broadcast this meeting so members will not be able to join from home. Visitors are welcome.

\*\*\*\*

There will be a **New Members Meeting** after the speaker has finished

All new and prospective members are welcome to attend as are any visitors. It will be a chance to learn more about DDU3a.

## MEETING - 13th DECEMBER (10 - 12)

The DDU3a will again be holding a  
**Christmas Party in the Civic Centre on  
13<sup>th</sup> December, 10:00 – 12:00.**

There will be some 'Christmassy' food plus tea, coffee and soft drinks on offer.

The venue is restricted to 80 places, and we will send out an e-mail with a link for you to sign up, once arrangements are finalised.

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### A Call for Help

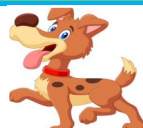
Regarding entertainment on the day!

We need some additional / new ideas from you. Perhaps you are able to create and deliver a short activity to add to the fun. Please get in touch with me with your suggestions on 07985 143942 by 20<sup>th</sup> November.

*Steve Bradbury*

## QUOTE OF THE MONTH

Next to a dog a book is man's best friend. Inside a dog it's too dark to read!  
Groucho Marcs



## SUBSCRIPTIONS 2024 - 2025

The executive committee has, after careful consideration, agreed that there will be no change in the annual subscription for next year.



It will therefore remain at £15 (for an individual not taking Third Age Matters).

If there is any increase in the postage charges for the magazine we will be informed, as usual, during early 2024.

We expect again to be able to reduce the fee for the last three months of the year.

*Phine Wright (membership secretary)*

## THIRD AGE TRUST AGM - 2023

Recently I attended this year's Third Age Trust (TAT) AGM at Milton Keynes. On arrival I spoke to other members, in



particular Ian Funnell from Surrey U3A. Over the years he has attended U3A groups in different countries. As we registered, we were handed a U3A bag holding our paperwork and also a complimentary beanie hat!

After looking at the merchandise stall we tramped into the main meeting room. I was surprised that only about forty seats were laid out. Zoom had taken over and the top table was facing a battery of cameras as the meeting was being filmed.

In the introduction it was mentioned that there is to be a U3A festival in York next year from 18<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> July. There followed the Chairman's report which consisted of three videos. These dealt with strategy proposals such as the setting up of various working groups to examine the use of social media and checking that due diligence was being properly exercised. Under the heading of 'Fit for the Future' steps were being taken to re-examine the governance of U3A and with an estimation of a total annual budget of about £3 million, expertise was required for properly skilled management.

There followed a report from the Treasurer who stated that the Charity Commission required that certain reserves had to be maintained and, you will be pleased to know, that the annual membership fee of £4 may not need to be increased for about two years hence. A comment was made that TAT

need to recruit more younger members - there is actually no age limit for members.

The first two Resolutions were then put to the meeting. The first one was to receive and approve the minutes for last year's AGM and the second Resolution was to re-appoint Auditors and to set their remuneration. Both were voted on and by a vast majority of votes both were carried. Some votes were cast in the room whilst most had already been cast before the meeting.

The third Resolution proved more controversial as it was proposed that because there were now in excess of one thousand U3A's, TAT be mandated to give greater status/input to smaller groups. A vote on this resolution was counted and it was rejected as most votes were against.

The final resolution dealt with proposals for TAT to adopt strategies to increase membership numbers and to provide national promotional activities and to report back on such work to the members. This resolution was carried as the majority of votes were in favour.

I mentioned that I had spoken to Ian Funnell and some days after the AGM he sent me a communication which outlined how U3A started. Following major civil unrest in France in 1968 legislation was passed to improve education in that country. A 'University de Trousierme Age' was established four years later. A short time after that U3As were started in several other countries and in 1983 academics at Cambridge University started a Third Age Trust in this country.

*Ramsey Hertzog.*

## NEW LUNCHEON CLUB



As mentioned at the last monthly meeting I hope to set up a second lunch group in if there is sufficient interest.

The group meetings would start in January. The exact day has yet to be decided but the second Wednesday of the month or possibly a Friday have been suggested.

If you are interested please contact me by email on [tricia.whiting@dronfieldu3a.org.uk](mailto:tricia.whiting@dronfieldu3a.org.uk) or phone on 01246 900201.

There is no need to make contact if you have expressed an interest at the monthly meeting.

*Tricia Whiting*

## GROUP NEWS

The postponed 60's evening went ahead on 27 October, was a great success with some stunning period outfits (especially the ladies) and exuberant dancing.



The **Climate Matters** group will be considering whether climate pressure groups are effective when they meet on November 9th.

**Cycling** activities this month are on Monday 13 November with a route from Poolsbrook to Cresswell Crag via Clowne Greenway.

**Garden Visits** the group are off to the Notcutts Dukeries Garden centre at Welbeck, Worksop on 21st November.

The **Geography** group will be looking at the Isle of Mann when they meet on Tuesday 7th November. If you too are interested in this historic self-governing dependency then please register via the u3a website.

The **History** group are looking into the history of witches on the 22nd of this month.

**Line Dancing for Beginners** is now established and meets twice per month on Tuesday afternoons. Next session is on 14th November so why not join in the fun!

The **Social Studies** group have a lunch planned at the Jolly Farmer for when they next meet on 23 November.

Multiple **Short-mat bowls** and **Pickleball** groups are meeting weekly on both Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons (2:30pm) at Dronfield Sports Centre. New members always welcome. Contact the coordinators for each day via the website link for more details.

The **Ten Pin Bowling** group, the 'Lane Rangers', will be out bowling again on Monday the 6<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> if you want some social exercise.

If you have any ideas for new groups or suggestions for taster activities please get in touch with me at [groups-manager@dronfieldu3a.org.uk](mailto:groups-manager@dronfieldu3a.org.uk). For a full list of groups and events please visit our website.

*Terry Goodyear*

## RIDDLE-ME-REE

- 1) If two is company and three is a crowd what are four and five?
- 2) What must we break before you can make use of it?





## BORROWING EQUIPMENT

I am now in charge of the keeping of the Asset Register. Please let me know with an email whenever you pass on or receive any item belonging to Dronfield u3a. This will enable me to track items - and if someone is unsure who has a piece of equipment they wish to borrow I will be able to help.



I can be contacted on -

[steve.wood@dronfieldu3a.org.uk](mailto:steve.wood@dronfieldu3a.org.uk)

*Steve Wood*

## RECRUITING EVENT



Great Dronfield2Gether event  
October 29<sup>th</sup> 2023.

It rained! But we were inside, in a packed Baptist church with many other local and county-wide organisations, to show our wares.

True to form, the population emerged approaching 11 am and they kept coming. The DDU3a team was kept busy discussing and promoting our organisation. We gave away so much publicity material we had to go out and photocopy more.

Thank you to Shelley Hinson D2G coordinator (and to the kitchen staff, who kept us all going).

Thank you to Malcolm, Ramsey, Janet, Julia, John, Maureen and June, the DDU3a team on the day.

*Phine Wright*

## DDu3a's 10th Birthday



10 years ago last month a steering group of dedicated people formed themselves into an inaugural committee, in order to establish a branch of the u3a in our immediate area. Interest was instant and strong and in the weeks/months that followed over 200 people became members.

Dronfield & District u3a was born! We are looking to celebrate this 10 year milestone in the warmer weather, possibly at the June Monthly Meeting.

We'd love this to be a Member-driven occasion, so please get in touch with your ideas, either in person at the November Monthly Meeting, or by emailing

[chair@dronfieldu3a.org.uk](mailto:chair@dronfieldu3a.org.uk)

*Julia Harris (Chair)*

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

If a fly didn't have wings would it be called a walk?

## BRIDGEWATER GARDENS

What would be the best use of one hundred and fifty-four acres of land? This question arose after the death of the third Duke of Bridgewater in 1803. He was world famous for having financed the forty-six mile long Bridgewater canal in the 1760's which was used to convey coal. He had had a grand Gothic style country house built. In the 1980s this was demolished and the grounds were used as a large garden centre. In 2017 the Royal Horticultural Society took over the land with ambitions to create a world-class garden with estimated costs of about £160m.

This was the venue for our Garden Visits Group in October. On arrival we had a drink in the large 'Welcome Building' with its light and airy larch wood cladding.

The formal Kitchen Garden had some raised beds with many Gourds being grown and in one garden labelled as 'Meal in a Pot' there were cherry tomato plants as well as salads and pumpkins. Overlooking this garden was a fine Gothic style building which used to house the Duke's Head Gardener.



The Walled Garden, consisting of eleven acres, had strained wires fastened to the walls with various climbing plants attached. In the middle, they had made a feature of a square made up of espaliered trees attached to solid wooden structures surrounding a pool of water. There were masses of Mondo grasses in this area, and we found it soothing to run our hands



through the pampas like flower heads. To one side were the greenhouses in which we found grapes and peppers growing. These were once heated by coal fired boilers, but they have now been replaced by biomass sources utilising wood from the gardens. Opposite the Victorian greenhouses were the potting sheds containing many photos of how the gardens have developed.

At the far end of the Welcome Building was the Welcome Garden which consisted of a series of gardens dedicated to the local community. We found the Blue Peter Garden and next to it the Peel

Learning Garden where students from the local university were experimenting with plants suitable to arid or boggy lands. In yet another section was a plot of land containing experimental gooseberry plants. Here we met a gardener who told us that about thirty of them were employed but volunteers were welcomed.



Walking through the sinuous paths lined by more Pampas grasses we reached the Ellesmere Lake which the RHS had to completely re-line. The whole area was named the Chinese Stream side

Garden consisting of cascades amongst rock features and of course a Pagoda. There we saw many gardeners working with volunteers, planting masses of small blue and white Iris plants into areas already marked out with white chalk lines. When these bloom early next summer, they will be beautiful. The land here was being developed in a collaboration between the RHS and the city of Yangzhou, in China. The latter is famous both for its gardens and ancient shrines.



Overall we were amazed at the variations of many garden rooms, and we resolved to pay a return visit if only to see the progress of the Chinese Garden. The actual date will be arranged at our planning meeting, next January. Before leaving we returned to the café for lunch, but this was delayed when the fire alarms sounded, just as some had got their lunch and others were in the queue. So - an added excitement - as we had to evacuate for a short time before returning to enjoy our refreshments.

*Ramsey Hertzog*

## **FIFTEEN MINUTES OF FAME.**

The first recorded Beauty Contest was held in 1908. It was called the 'May Queen Contest'. It was not until 1928, however, that the first modern beauty pageant was held in the UK. It was called 'Miss United Kingdom'.

After WWII several seaside towns reintroduced the beauty contest. The first was in Morecombe in the summer of 1945 under the title of 'Bathing Beauty Queen.' In the pouring rain 4,300 people watched the final. The winner collected a cup, a swim suit

and seven guineas. The following year the prize was increased to £100 and it became the Miss Great Britain contest.

It soon became a feature of British life. The contests were televised. In 1958 Eric Morley revamped the contest and renamed it Miss United Kingdom. The winner was to represent Great Britain in the Miss World contest and the winner of the first Miss United Kingdom was Miss June Cooper from Kiveton Park.



June was a shop assistant in Sheffield. She worked at the Co-op at the back of the market. She lived with her parents in the Railway Cottages on the main road in Kiveton Park. When she returned home, on the wall outside her house in large white letters was the message 'Welcome Home Miss UK 1958'. Her best friend was not so welcoming. June had borrowed her swimsuit for the contest and she was jealous. They didn't speak again for over a week.

June's reign as Miss UK was short. It barely lasted a week. As Miss UK June was to represent her country in the Miss Europe contest in Turkey and in Miss Universe contest in California. According to some reports her mother did not want her daughter travelling to America so June resigned the title. In reality, she was only 16 years old. The competition small print stated contestants had to be 18 years old. June was awarded a special prize of £100 and Eileen Sheriden became Miss UK 1958.

June's fifteen minutes of fame hadn't quite come to an end. Her brief reign opened doors for her. She became a model. Her first job was demonstrating the new G.E.C. cooker with overhead grill in the company's showroom in London. There were several modelling jobs before a short career in films. The roles were 'incy tiny' and very much in the background. She was a harem girl in 'Carry on up the Khyber' and 'girl by the swimming pool' in 'Goldfinger' as well as a few other films.



In 1962 she married Peter Purkiss and they had a daughter called Nicola. They were still married in 2002. Not a bad CV for a lass from Railway Cottages Kiveton Park.

## **RIDDLE-ME-REE ANSWERS**

- 1) Four and five is nine!
- 2) An egg must be broken to make use of it.



## NEW PEAKY WALLERS

Whenever someone new joins a Group I've always wondered how they feel. Do they find it challenging to get on board and are their expectations and those of the Group they join met?



A few months ago two potential u3a members, Nicci Fowler and Tony Brown, asked if they could come along and see what the Peaky Wallers were "all about". They were already working as gardening

volunteers at Dronfield Hall Barn where I'd met them and weren't afraid of getting their hands dirty. This is, of course, a requirement for dry stone walling as well as dealing with our variable Derbyshire weather.

Tony had asked me for some advice on a small local wall repair which I was happy to give and Tony took to the practical side "like a duck " to water. The wall owner, a friend of Tony's, was happy with the outcome and we wallers will do anything for a cup of coffee and a custard cream! Word also got round and Tony and I were asked to do some wall repairs on two properties in "Studentsville" in Sheffield, this time for money, but not enough to change our lives in retirement.



Not to be outdone Nicci also wanted to know what it was all about and where her partner kept



disappearing to? Because of our relationship with the Peak District National Park they both soon struck a chord with our Area Ranger, Tom Lewis and he gladly welcomed their hard work and willingness to learn

and u3a secured 2 new members. I was also corralled by Tony into becoming a scorer at Holmesfield Cricket Club where he is Treasurer and Captain of the Ladies Team, so everyone's a winner.

As to the future, Tony and Nicci have continued to develop their skills and confidence and on their own, have tackled a particularly demanding piece of work involving a sloping wall that necessitates maintaining the integrity and line of the wall and at the same time ensuring the toppings (the coping stones) are pleasing to the eye.



All in all I'd say they've embraced the ethos of u3a completely Live, Laugh and Learn and I've managed to restore a BIT of my youth and brain power returning to cricket but I'm too far gone to return to playing thankfully when some of the players are in their teens!!

I'll keep my shorthand pad and camera at the ready as Tony and Nicci are joining us in Noyers in early November for some French walls so "watch this space"

*Mike Baker (u3a's Peaky Wallers)*

## THE PHANTOM BARBER



In 1942 the small coastal town of Pascagoula Mississippi USA, was haunted by a prowler. In ten known cases he broke into a house but did not rob, kill, or assault anyone. He just broke in in the dead of night, cut off a lock of his

victim's hair and then slipped back into the night. A local man was arrested and imprisoned for the crimes but later declared innocent and released. The "Phantom Barber of Pascagoula" was never positively identified.

## DID YOU KNOW?

An earthquake registered in Belgium in 1987 was later shown to be a loud concert given by the Irish band U2. The noise level exceeded 125 decibels..

## PHOTO OF THE MONTH



**A DIFFERENT POINT OF VIEW**  
Photography group