



# THE CRYER!

**u3a** learn,  
laugh  
live

The voice of Dronfield and District u3a

Issue 123 February 2024

## EDITORIAL

Morning and welcome to issue 123 of the Dronfield u3a newsletter. Valentine's Day on the 14th is always the day of note in February. It has its origins way back in ancient Rome. It is not alone in this. The nomadic Shrove Tuesday (Pancake Day) which has settled on Tuesday 13th this year, also has a very long history. The recipe for pancakes came from the Romans and first appeared in "Apicius" a Roman recipe book back in the first century and featured in an English cookery book in 1439. Pancakes have been used since Anglo-Saxon times as a way to use up rich foods such as milk and eggs before the arrival of Lent. (It is estimated 52 million eggs will be used this year, in Britain alone.) The traditional pancake race is said to have originated in Olney Bucks in 1445 when a local woman making pancakes heard the church bells ring for mass and ran to the church frying pan in hand. She arrived in time. Read on and enjoy. (Jd) (Editor)

## DO YOU FANCY A WALK?

The Strollers continue to brave the winter rain and cold and 10 members walked on the Thornhill Trail in Bamford on Wednesday 10th January. It was a new walk for most of the Strollers and we took a leisurely stroll

along the trail overlooked by Bamford Edge. We passed the old Water Board property at the end of Water Lane



which is now a thriving Quaker Community. After two miles of walking we repaired to the Riverside Garden Centre on the Hope Road where hot drinks, bacon rolls and a warm fire enabled our socialising to continue. Thanks, once more, to Dougie and Cheryl for coordinating the group and the numerous members who continue to take their turn at leading walks.

Sue Horn

## INTERNATIONAL DANCE

A member of our International Folk Group achieved the honourable name of 'nonagenarian' in January. Yvonne Chilton, who has been a member of our dance group for several years, celebrated her 90th birthday on 20th January. Everyone gathered to celebrate this special day with flowers, cake



and a card signed with best wishes.

Yvonne also celebrated a lunch with family and friends gathered at the Olde House, Newbold on Saturday and friends took her out midweek.

Gill Middleton

## PHOTO OF THE MONTH

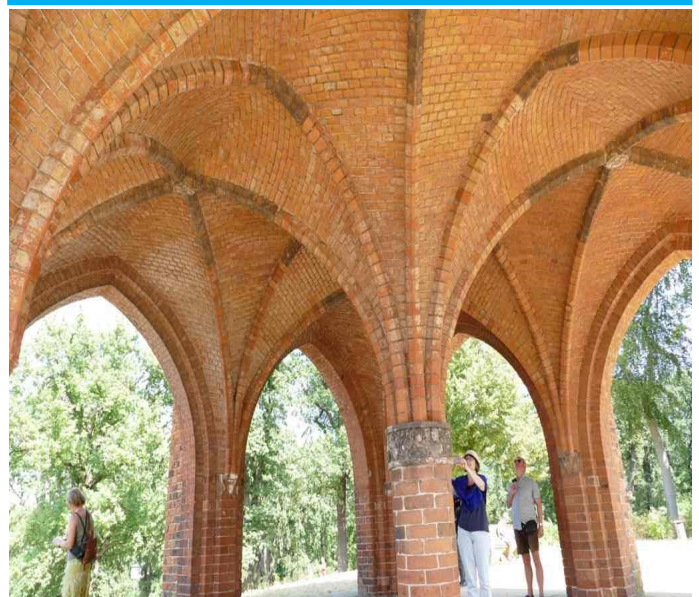


Photo supplied by Ipsa Bianca

## 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 - 14th FEBRUARY (10 - 12)

The speaker will be

Larry Richardson

High tech in ancient times

Early Civilisations achieved astonishing advances in technology and science, some of which have yet to be reproduced today.



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

The speaker will be

Dave Berry

My Life in Music

Born David Holgate Grundy in Beighton, Sheffield in 1941 he started out singing in Yorkshire clubs. He changed his surname to Berry in 1963 when he signed with Decca Records. This is his story.



## FROM THE COMMITTEE.

All members, especially if you haven't been for a while are warmly invited to join us for our February Monthly Meeting on the 14th February, in the Civic Hall, Dronfield. It will also be a great opportunity to invite any friends who are not members, as we will be having an extra New Members/Visitors Meeting.



We will have refreshments on arrival and a chance to socialise. There will be an opportunity for any members wishing to go on the first of our trips to Hull and Beverley on Tues 16th April to be able to sign up and pay. (Please note you need to be a paid-up member to take part in these trips.)

At 10.30am we will have Larry Richardson speak to us in person, on 'Hi-Tech in Ancient Times'. After the talk, anyone who has not been to a New Members/Visitors Meeting is warmly invited to go along to an informal session hosted by our Welcome Team, to learn more about u3a, meet members of the Committee and ask any questions. This will take place in the Council Chamber, a room just off the vestibule where you came in. Everyone else is welcome to carry on chatting in the hall, until 12noon.

**Badge Amnesty** - If you accidentally took your Name Badge home after the January Monthly Meeting, please be sure to bring it in for this month's meeting. We don't have an inexhaustible supply. Many thanks.

*Julia Harris (Chair)*

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Please note these dates in your diaries..



Wednesday 10th April

Groups Fair / Renewals Meeting

Wednesday 8th May

Speaker Danny Wells on

'Joseph Paxton - the busiest man in England'

Wednesday 12th June

Beetle Drive & Plant Sale

Wednesday 10th July

Speaker Lois Pittman

'The origins of Tie-Dye'

Saturday 10th August

DDu3a 10th Birthday Celebrations

Coal Aston Village Hall, 2 - 5pm

Please put this very special date in your diaries now. You will be hearing a lot about it in the next few months.

## NEW DDU3a WEBSITE

You may have gathered that we will be losing access to our current website, possibly quite imminently. The upside of this, is that we have a great opportunity to 'start again'. The downside is that this is going to take a lot of work.



A Working Group has been set up to start making decisions about what we want our new website to look like, what will be included and how it might be portrayed, but we need **YOUR** input. The more minds we have on this the better. We won't want to hear 'they should have thought of this/that and the other' once it's been set up. NOW is the time for you to contribute your ideas.

We would particularly like to hear from anyone who has some expertise in website management (although we are not in a position to pay for this) so that we can really make the best of this clean slate.

Please email [chair@dronfieldu3a.org.uk](mailto:chair@dronfieldu3a.org.uk) or see me at February's Meeting or phone 01246 900201. Thank you.

*Julia Harris (Chair)*



## DDu3a Members Portal

Do You Need A Members Portal Account?  
The answer is no, if you don't have an email address or never want to do anything DDu3a related online. If that's the case, you can stop reading now.



However, you will need a Portal account if you ever want to do any of the following:

- Renew online each year, rather than having to fill in a paper form.
- Update your contact details if they change, without having to contact the Membership Secretary.
- Join or leave groups online; book places at special events like parties and celebrations without having to contact the organiser.

If you are likely to want to do any of these, and you haven't yet created your Portal account, please read on.

You used to be able to log into the Members Portal using your name, email address, membership number and postcode. All that changed in April last year, basically to comply with data protection regulations. Now, the login procedure uses your email address and a password of your choice, just like most other online accounts. To begin with, you have to register for, or create, an account. You start by entering your membership details, your email address and a password of your choice. You are then sent an email asking you to verify your details. The email is important – if you don't respond to it within an hour you will have to start again. Once you've verified your details you will be able to login to the Portal using just your email address and the password you set when creating your account.

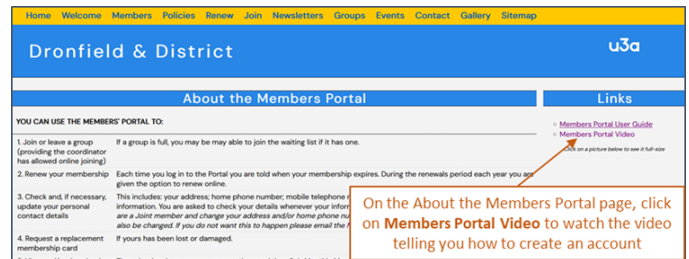
To create a Portal account, go the Portal login screen:

[Members Portal Login \(https://u3abeacon.org.uk/u3aportal.php?u3a=32&sc=IOHE\)](https://u3abeacon.org.uk/u3aportal.php?u3a=32&sc=IOHE) .

For help visit the [About the Members Portal](#) page of the website -

(<https://u3asites.org.uk/dronfield/page/82562>).

It tells you what the Portal does and how to create an account. There's a video you can watch that explains exactly what you need to do.



If you get stuck email me, Marion Clyde, at [beacon@dronfield.org.uk](mailto:beacon@dronfield.org.uk)

Or telephone Phine Wright, our Membership Secretary, on 01246 900201.

Remember – creating a Portal account is optional. The u3a will always offer ways of doing things manually if you are not comfortable using online tools. The choice is yours.

*Marion Clyde (Beacon System Administrator)*

## NATIONAL u3a LEARNING EVENTS

### Free Online Events this month



*Tuesday 6th Feb 10am:*

#### **Flight Inspirations**

significance of the Apollo Missions 11 & 13

*Tuesday 6th Feb 2pm:*

#### **Future Lives - Housing options in later life:**

The role of Retirement Housing

*Thursday 8 Feb 11.30am:*

#### **Introduction to the Air Fryer**

a live demo

*Wednesday 14th Feb 2pm:*

#### **Safe bind, safe find**

A history of Locks and Keys

*Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> Feb 2pm*

#### **David Hockney and the Theatre**

Why not sign up for free Zoom talks this month. Visit -

[www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events](https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events)

to register for these and more events.

*Steve Pyke*

## RIDDLE-ME-REE

A) Rearrange these letters to make a single word.- DRAGON LEWIS.

B) I turn once, what is out will not get in. I turn again, what is in will not get out. What am I?

C) What three numbers, none of which is zero, give the same result whether they are added or multiplied?

D) Susan and Lisa decided to play tennis against each other. They bet £1 on each game they played. Susan won three bets and Lisa won £5. How many games did they play?

E) Four people (Alex, Brook, Chris and Dusty) want to cross a river in a boat that can only carry 100kg. Alex weighs 90kg, Brook weighs 80kg, Chris weighs 60kg and Dusty weighs 40kg, and they have 20kg of supplies. How do they get across?



## TRIP DETAILS

The departure time for all trips will be 9.00am from outside Dronfield Sports Centre and there will be 49 places available for each trip. I would like to remind members of the terms and conditions of our booking process :-

1. Places are booked on a first come first served basis.
2. Places must be paid for in person at the time of booking. Payment by cheque is preferred and the cheque (payable to Dronfield and District U3A) should be placed in an envelope with your name and membership number and the trip you are paying for clearly written. If you are paying by cash please try to have the correct money.
- 3) A member may book and or pay on behalf of another member.
- 4) We do not have a waiting list.
- 5) No refunds are given.
- 6) Any member may personally organise the exchange of their place on a trip with another DDU3A member but they must inform the organisers immediately and no later than 24 hours before the date of travel.

7) Travellers must update and provide emergency contact details and mobile phone numbers for use on day of travel if necessary.

8) If a member wishes to book a trip but cannot attend the meeting please contact the Trips and Visits co-ordinator by e-mail. The address is **[trips@dronfieldu3a.org.uk](mailto:trips@dronfieldu3a.org.uk)**

9) If a member has to cancel their place on a trip please let the Trips and Visits co-ordinator know as soon as possible via e-mail or telephone.

If you know someone who is a DDU3A member and they haven't got e-mail please let them know about the trips. The trips and visits group can only continue if we get enough members to book places on the coach visits we have arranged so I hope you will continue to support us and I'm sure you will have enjoyable days out.

Kind Regards

*Glenys Sharman (Trips and Visits coordinator)*

## TRIPS & VISITS

We have arranged a programme of 6 day trips for 2024. Details are as follows:-



### TUESDAY 16th APRIL

Day trip to BEVERLEY and HULL  
COST £14.00

Booking from February U3A meeting.



### WEDNESDAY 15th MAY

Day trip to CHESTER  
COST £14.50

Booking from March U3A meeting.



### FRIDAY 21st JUNE

KNARESBOROUGH and HARROGATE  
COST £14.00

Booking from April U3A meeting.



### THURSDAY 18th JULY

NATIONAL ARBORETUM and LICHFIELD  
COST £14.50

Booking from May U3A meeting.



### FRIDAY 20th SEPTEMBER

SALTAIRE and SKIPTON  
COST £14.50

Booking from June U3A meeting.



### WEDNESDAY 23rd OCTOBER

NOTTINGHAM  
COST £12.00

Booking from July U3A meeting.



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## QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"Don't worry about the World coming to an end today. It's already tomorrow in Australia."

*Charles Schulz*

## MADEIRA

"Winter, Spring, Summer or Fall, Madeira has it all" (thank you, Glynis) appears to be true. June led our adventure this month and others in the group offered insights into their trips, which covered the whole year. This beautiful and generally lush volcanic island 320 miles west of Morocco in the Atlantic has plenty to offer at any time of year. It enjoys a lot of sunshine, is warm all year round, but rarely too hot (2023 was an exception), although you can escape to the mountains if needed.

Personally, I'm not sure what Madeira has to offer children, although there are a fair few native ones...perhaps they all play football as this is the homeland of Cristiano Ronaldo. The beaches are volcanic rock....albeit pretty stunning. One word of warning....the island doesn't really favour folk who don't like walking or struggle to walk. If you think Dronfield is hilly....June, however, had a whale of a time.

With a population of c.250K, half of whom live in the capital, Funchal which was named after the fennel which grows on the island. Madeira was claimed by the Portuguese in 1419. They settled, chopped down forests, and built levadas. The



levadas are channels, cut into the hillside rock to carry the rainwater, mainly from the north and the mountains, to the dryer south. They extend over the island for 1350 miles and now also provide hydro-electric power. Along the levadas are paths to enable any necessary diversion or maintenance. When tourism took off in about 1850, these paths attracted walkers from all over the world, and provide a lovely way to see Madeira and engage with nature. Then, as now, most hotels are British or German.

Walking through Old Town you discover its quaint alleys and colourful buildings. Perhaps visit Blandys, the wine makers (for the last 200 years), or stroll around the flower and fish markets....both commodities being abundant in Madeira. Down in the harbour you can watch the cruise ships arriving. You'd be wise to use their arrival to plan your day's activities. With up to 6000 people descending from ships into Funchal in any one day,

the cable car and toboggan run soon get very crowded. Some 'cruisers' just go to visit the CR7 museum, which is dedicated to the Portuguese footballer Ronaldo who was born in Funchal. This evidently didn't appeal to June. The cable trip offers superb views and takes you up into the mountains, to Monte, the church of Our Lady on the Mount, and the botanical gardens, well worth visiting. Slightly braver individuals may wish to go on the famous toboggan run, which I



recommend as I believe they gear it according to their clients. Our trip seemed slightly more genteel than the following toboggan containing 3 young ladies, possible hen-partiers.

Camara de Lobos, popular with Sir Winston Churchill, no less, is an old fishing village a few miles west of Funchal, walkable for some, with a stunning coastline en route. If you feel brave (and a head for heights is useful) try the glass viewing platform with its glass floor extending over the cliff...it's worthwhile. Also, Porto Santo island ("Blessed Harbour"), a 2.5 hour ferry ride away, is perfect for doing absolutely nothing. If you're a



get-up-and-goer, one day here is more than sufficient. This is the only island in the Madeiran archipelago with beige

sand. It was specially imported from the Sahara. It is barren with no rivers or trees but it does have a Christopher Columbus /maritime history museum.

June's enthusiasm was inspiring...we shared stories and others who haven't already visited are now keen to go. Thanks, June...fabulous

*Jan Bradbury*

## DID YOU KNOW?

Before postcodes were introduced into Britain in 1965, postal staff had to deal with some odd letter destinations. One example was - "To my sister Jean. Up the Cannon Gate. Down a Close. In Edinburgh. She has a wooden leg".





## Monday Book Group Review 2023



Our Group continues to thrive and to try unfamiliar writers and genres. We also insert different forms of writing, and this year was no exception as we included a play.

### January

A Legacy of Spies/Silverview (John Le Carre.)  
A positive response to a novelist we have all enjoyed at some time. Silverview was his last book and we all agreed probably not his best. Likened to a blended whiskey rather than a single malt!

### February

Hamnet/This Must Be the Place (Maggie O'Farrell.)  
A very good modern writer. Hamnet reimagines the life of Shakespeare's son whilst Claudine and ex film star quits the world to live on a remote Irish farm.

### March

DH Lawrence selection.  
This covered everything from Lady Chatterley's Lover to The Rainbow.

### April

The Voyage of the Scotia (R.N. Rudmose)  
Always interesting we had everything from country churches, Orkney, George Washington, and a true story of one member's relative.

### May

A poem of choice.  
We always enjoy the range of poetry selected and this was no exception. Gerard Manley-Hopkins, Edward Thomas, Robert Browning, Rupert Brooke, John Masefield and Roger Stevens featured.

### June

A History of Wolves (Emily Friedland.)  
A rather bleak story about the death of a child. Some excellent descriptive scene setting but too much jumping about in time for our liking.

### July

The Institution (Helen Fields.)  
A psychological thriller set in a maximum-security hospital. A page turner but rather violent.

### August

Joking Apart (A play by Alan Ayckbourn.)  
A good storyline with interesting characters but we agreed that it wasn't the most successful of our ventures.

### September

A Gentleman of Moscow (Amor Towles.)  
We love this author and this story set in The Metropole Hotel tells the story of a Russian count trapped in Communist USSR. It is a gentle easy read, lovely characters, plenty of humour. Probably our book of the year.

### October

Books by Daphne Du Maurier.  
We really enjoy different books by the same author. Many of us had read her books in the past and it really refreshed our thinking. As a newcomer to her work, I was hooked from start to finish. We had amongst others Rebecca, My Cousin Rachel, Jamaica Inn, and a collection of short stories.

### November

A Keeper (Graham Norton.)  
It is safe to say that no member of the group had high expectations of this book coming from a celebrity-host turned author. However, we were pleasantly surprised by the storyline which caused a lengthy discussion and the descriptive setting of the west of Ireland.

We are looking forward to another great year of reading and discussions.

Sue Horn

## GARDEN VISITS GROUP

Members of our group met recently and we decided on locations for our garden visits for each month of this year. Our earliest trip will be to view the massed Snowdrops at Hopton Hall, near Carsington Water.

Two months later we hope to see the Bluebells in full show at Renishaw Hall and in June we have planned to visit the RHS Gardens at Harlow Carr, near Harrogate - this is about as far as we travel but we are always rewarded by an amazing show of varied plants and trees.



In October, with most flowering plants on the wane, we will visit Clumber Park where there is an interesting walled garden and greenhouses. New members would be made very welcome so if you are tempted do get in touch.

Ramsey Hertzog  
( Tel. 01246 414746)

or email [ramseyhertzog@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:ramseyhertzog@hotmail.co.uk)

## LEARNING ON LINE

For anyone who enjoys learning and participating in groups but in the comfort of their own home, the u3a offers occasional free talks on Zoom.

Some recent ones I've enjoyed include -

“Trees, woods and nature”,

“Hidden histories:

Tales of cycling, invention and rebellion”  
and a series on

“Secrets of the human brain.”

For future talks see

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

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Did you know there is also a u3a called

‘Interest Groups Online’ (IGO)?

For £12 a year it's possible to access about 100 different groups on Zoom, many of which are quite specialised and probably would not attract enough interest to run as a local group. Groups such as

“Armchair archaeology”,

“British Cemeteries”,

“Cryptic crosswords”,

“Philosophy” and “Psychology.”

There are also social groups such as

“Coffee and conversation.”

For more information see

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/interest-groups-online>

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Another organisation I belong to is ‘Rest Less’ (terrible name!), which started life as ‘Mirthy’ during the Covid lockdown. For £4.99 a month you can access a very wide range of events, from regular exercise, language and craft sessions, to social events, technology support, cookery and concerts to one-off talks on travel, art and history.

They are pitched at all levels from beginners to very academic, so there really is something for everyone, and they are all recorded so that you can watch them for up to 7 days afterwards at a time to suit you.

<https://events.restless.co.uk/event-calendar/>

Give them a try. They are well be worth a look.

Sheila Pyke

## WALKING GROUPS AGM.

Every year the Walking Group has a meeting for all its members. It gives everyone a chance to chat about the three different walking sub-groups and consider how things should move forward. We gathered in the distinctly chilly Edward Lucas room

at the Peel Centre in coats and chunky jumpers as the heating had packed up.

Dougie Wynn, the leader of the **Strollers** showed just how keen he is about steady, slow walking.

The strollers have gone from strength to strength since the group started last June. It is a smallish group, regularly getting eight to ten participants but throughout the autumn and winter it has attracted more recruits in addition to the band of walkers that constantly try to meet up.



They always attempt to stop for coffee either side of a slow amble around the Derbyshire countryside taking in its magnificent beauty. Dougie leads the activities and keeps the walkers always on the right track. He mentioned at the meeting that a big part of the group's purpose is to socialise and chat with each other as they walk along. The group meets on different days of the week and that helps get everyone involved at some point, even if they can't attend every time the group goes on a relaxed outing.



Janice Heathcote talked with passion about the **Monday** walks. They are always well attended and sometimes get twenty-five taking part. Janice leads them with Kath Hatt and Joan Cohen working alongside to maintain a consistently good programme with walks around four to five miles. Janice made it clear that more walk leaders are needed. The same few people tend to be the ones that take on the role of leading the walks.



At the end of every week on a **Friday**, the longer walks take place; up to 7 miles. Progression is at a fairly leisurely, regular pace taking in the scenery, taking some photos and taking part. Martin Horn, the leader for the Friday walks and also the leader of the whole Walking Group explained that more walk leaders are needed and that occasionally walks are cancelled or postponed due to the poor weather we have all been experiencing. However a solid, well attended programme continues with walks that attract around fifteen to twenty u3a members.



Doug Emery noted that there are 111 members altogether and thanked the walk leaders and the three coordinators, Martin, Janice and Dougie. The assembled group showed their appreciation for all

that the leaders and coordinators do. Doug mentioned briefly about the plans by the u3a to have a new look website.



Marion Clyde went into more detail and Karen Grad asked for everyone's views on what should be included and anything that members may want to have on the site. David Ollerenshaw keeps the walking part of the u3a website up to date and it was emphasised that a lot of information is held on it. Martin mentioned that the site is often the first window that new recruits see when they are interested in joining our walking group.

Linda Jarman is the treasurer for the walking group and provided detail on the funds that are in the kitty. Not excessive, but enough to keep the group going. Many members paid their subscriptions for the year, only £1, and all are expected to pay a pound by the end of March.

The rest of the meeting was quizzes and socialising. By the end, we realised that the temperature in the room had risen from 14 to 16 degrees Celsius by the end of the gathering but it still felt cold.

Doug Emery

## VALENTINE'S DAY

In ancient Rome there was a fertility festival in mid February called Lupercalia. It was dedicated to the Gods of agriculture and being Roman it involved a lot of eating, drinking and debauchery over a period of several days. It was a pagan festival that, in the late fifth century, the Pope (Gelasius 1) decided to obliterate. He dedicated the day to one of two saints (no-one knows which one) who were conveniently executed by the Romans on the fourteenth of February a year apart.



For several centuries it was just Saint Valentine's Day. It was not until the Middle Ages that it became associated with love and romance. At that time there was no form of calendar. The Catholic Church had every day of the year dedicated to a saint and it was easy to identify the day according to the saint whose day it was. The fourteenth was also considered to be the first day of spring when birds begin their mating rituals. So when Geoffrey Chaucer wrote 'The Parliament of Fowls', which deals with the birds meeting to choose their mates, he naturally referred to St Valentines Day.



"For this was on Saint Valentine's day,  
When every fowl comes there his mate to take."  
Shakespeare reinforced the association in several of his plays and soon people began writing love



letters to each other to celebrate Saint Valentine's Day.

The mid 1800's saw Victorian ingenuity push the commercial side of St Valentine's Day out of sight. The men presented flowers to their ladies while Richard Cadbury created the first heart shaped box of chocolates. Meanwhile in America the New England Confectionary Company produced the first version of 'Love Hearts' and Esther Howland produced elaborate Valentine cards cheaply with her own innovative assembly line process. By 1910 an American Company that would, in time, become known as Hallmark, had begun producing its own brand of Valentine cards. To tie the day back to its Roman origins, somewhere along the way, Cupid, son of Venus the Roman Goddess of love and beauty was added to the mix. Known for shooting his arrows at both gods and humans to have them fall instantly in love he neatly ties the whole of the package back to its roots.

Finally, what is the most romantic gesture available in the modern world to pass on to your partner on this special day? The answer comes from America.

*"When you curl up with your special someone, you don't always have the right words but you can still give them goosebumps. Give your Valentine the gift that says your love is eternal. Name a Bronx Zoo Madagascar Hissing Cockroach after your sweetie."*



*You will receive a certificate authenticating your purchase. Your cockroach will live inside a hollow tree trunk in the Madagascar exhibit in your honour because cockroaches are forever.*

Enough said. Ed

## RIDDLE-ME-REE ANSWERS

- A) A single word
- B) A Key
- C) 1 - 2 - 3



D) Eleven. Lisa lost three games to Susan, who had lost £3 (£1 per game). She had to win back that £3 with three more games, then win another five games to win £5.

E) There may be a couple variations that will work, but here's one way: Chris and Dusty row across (combined 100kg), Dusty returns. Alex rows over, and Chris returns. Chris and Dusty row across again, Dusty returns. Brook rows across with the supplies (combined 100kg), and Chris returns. Chris and Dusty row across again.