



## 'MIKES MUSINGS'

**MEMBERSHIP** For the last couple of months I have been advising you that we were approaching the maximum that we can accommodate at St Albans based on our total membership.

We were pleased to welcome more new members at our September meeting and as I announced at that meeting with a total membership now of 245 we have reached that maximum figure.

We will keep our membership constantly under review but for the present we cannot accept any new members, however we are establishing a 'Potential Membership List' for those visitors who would like the opportunity to join us when vacancies occur.

It is encouraging that as we approach only our second anniversary that we have gained so many members. I hope that you all continue to enjoy your U3A by coming to the monthly meetings and taking part in the various Interest Groups that have been established by you the members. Talking of which if you have any ideas for additional groups please either see Ann Stanford, Jane Atkins or any committee members or put your ideas in the 'suggestion book'.

**MONTHLY MEETINGS** I am aware that occasionally some members have to leave the monthly meetings early because of other commitments, (often 'grandparent duties'!). To overcome this, we are, from the January 2018 meeting, going to run a trial for 3 months with amended times and format.

We will start the meetings at 1:15pm, have all notices at the start of the meeting followed by the coffee break and anticipate the visiting speaker starting their presentation at about 2:00pm, which should allow for the meeting to close no later than 3:15pm. We would welcome your comments on this proposal both before and during the trial period.

**COFFEE MORNING** We have arranged a coffee morning for Monday 9<sup>th</sup> October at the Forest Town Arena. This is open to all members but new members would be especially welcome as it is a good opportunity to meet other members in a very informal setting for a chat. Tickets are available from Ann Stafford at £1 to cover our costs with any surplus raised going to the 'projector fund'.

**WEBSITE EDITOR** Bob Hunt has done a terrific job in establishing our website and keeping it constantly up to date. However, we are conscious that while we have cover for most duties we haven't anyone to deputise for Bob if necessary. If there is any member who has knowledge of websites or has a working knowledge of computers and is willing to learn about websites, please contact Bob.

*Mike King, Chairman.*

## OCTOBER MEETING

**Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> October in St Alban's Church**

- Please sign in.

**1.45pm Welcome by Susan  
our Vice Chairman**

**Followed by our guest speaker**

**Chris Vasper**

who will share his experiences of running the Marathon de Sables, a 100 mile footrace across the Moroccan Sahara desert. Carrying all the food and equipment needed to survive for 7 days as he runs across an unforgiving terrain and with temperatures that can reach 50 degrees, Chris will also tell of the inspirational people he has encountered.

Chris ran for 'Walking with the Wounded' raising funds for the charity that supports servicemen and women who have suffered serious injury and struggle with recovery, rebuilding their lives and returning to work.

He will be running the Marathon de Sables again in 2018

- Tea/coffee break
- Look at the Display Boards
- Book on trips/outings
- Chairman's and other notices

**ENJOY THE MEETING**

**Please say hello to anyone you think may be new to our meeting.**

## LOOKING BACK TO OUR SEPTEMBER MEETING

The talk by Richard Howard of Fidler and Pepper Solicitors was well received. As he spoke on Wills, Powers of Attorney and Care Home Fees, he was asked many questions.

Then in the tea break afterwards people were queuing up to speak to him and his colleague, as the picture shows.

It was a talk that I suggest left many people thinking about the future and what they should do to protect themselves, their families and their homes.



## OUTINGS AND EVENTS

### The Llangollen Trip - September 6<sup>th</sup>

Forty eight of us left the Arena at 8.30 a.m. and were treated to the scenic route to Wales by our driver, Mick, which enabled us to visit Bridgemere Garden World en route. This was impressive in itself with a lovely café serving homemade delights plus several well known shops to browse around, including Lakeland and Edinburgh Woollen Mill. The Farm Shop on site stocked everything and the size of the sausage rolls had to be seen to be believed, there must've been half a pig tucked in each one!

Before we got there Marlene handed out the quiz based on initials. She gave us the first answer, 16 O in a P (16 ounces in a pound) to start us off and then left us to figure out the other 32 ourselves. I thought I'd done well to get 13, but some brain boxes got the whole lot, who knows that 22 = B on a ST means 22 Balls on a Snooker Table? Not me! By the time we got the answers our brains were melting and we were screaming for caffeine, or something stronger!

On arriving in Trevor we had chance to wander up and down the canal side before boarding our narrow boat, there was a café and very small museum attached for anyone who was interested. The firm operating the tours was called 'Jones the Boats' very appropriate for Wales. She was called Eirlys, which means Snowdrop in Welsh and was 6ft 10ins wide, hence the term 'narrow boat', and 72ft long.



The crew had prepared a Welsh Tea for us, scone, jam and cream, plus a slice of Bara Brith, (Welsh fruit cake), we have enough 'fruit cakes' of our own on board thank you very much, but it was delicious. Seating could be better, but she is a narrow boat after all, so having more than one cheek on a seat was a luxury and negotiating the delivery of tea and coffee was an art in itself.

The first part of the Llangollen canal ride took us on a tour of the canal which ran along the hillside high above the Dee Valley, with crew pointing out the main features, including a large, red brick Georgian house of which there are very few examples in Wales.

We returned to our starting point and then turned right, or starboard, to be treated to the highlight of the day, crossing the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct, not once, but twice! No escape whichever side you were on! The aqueduct stands 126 feet 8 inches above the Dee Valley floor and has 19 arches that span 1007 feet in total.

The Llangollen canal was designed and built by Thomas Telford and William Jessop, and was an outstanding feat in civil engineering for its time, cutting through rugged terrain and crossing two valleys, with the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct alone taking more than 10 years to complete, the final stone being laid in 1805. The term 'gliding through the air' is not a misnomer, on the side not provided with a tow path the boat is prevented from the sheer drop to the valley floor by a mere 12 inches of iron trough, but the view is fantastic, look down if you dare! It is fed by the nearby Horseshoe Falls and holds an incredible 1.5 million litres of water.

After surviving our trip over the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct we boarded our coach for the run home, this time by a quicker route, the journey was broken up by having a raffle to raise money for the Projector Fund. 60s (and before) music was on the sound system with most of us singing along and before we knew it we were back home.

Our thanks go to Denise for another great day out.

*Jenny Wright*



## ---- OUTINGS 2018 ----

**All holiday bookings only taken with a deposit.**  
***To avoid disappointment please remember to bring your diary, cash or cheque book to the meetings to pay a deposit and book your place***

**8<sup>th</sup> April 2018 Keukenhof & Amsterdam**  
**5 days from £420 - single supp. £120 deposit**

Staying at the 4-star Golden Tulip West-Ende Hotel Helmond, which is housed in an elegant 19<sup>th</sup> century building in a prime location in the heart of Helmond city centre. It offers a cosy bar and an elegantly decorated restaurant. All bedrooms offer a range of comfortable rooms and suites, equipped with en suite facilities, free Wi-Fi and tea-coffee making facilities.

### **Spaces still available**

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A holiday at POTTERS, a holiday resort in Norfolk - is the **11<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> June** and is already nearly full.

**Please call Denise on 07791941502**  
**or email [deewhits@aol.com](mailto:deewhits@aol.com)**  
**for more information on both these trips**

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**FOREST TOWN & DIST U3A**  
**CHRISTMAS DINNER 2017**  
**15<sup>th</sup> December Friday, 1:00 pm £16. 50**

**South Forest Complex, Robin Hood Crossroads,  
Clipstone Road, Edwinstowe, Notts. NG22 9JF.**

**Choice of 3 starters,  
Choice of turkey, beef, fish, & veg option,  
Choice of 3 desserts. Menu to be confirmed**

**FOOD TO BE ORDERED ON THE DAY**  
**unless you require**  
**either fruit salad or cheese and biscuits.**

**More details from Marlene Mee 01623-409072**  
**e.mail [marlene.mee1@virginmedia.com](mailto:marlene.mee1@virginmedia.com)**

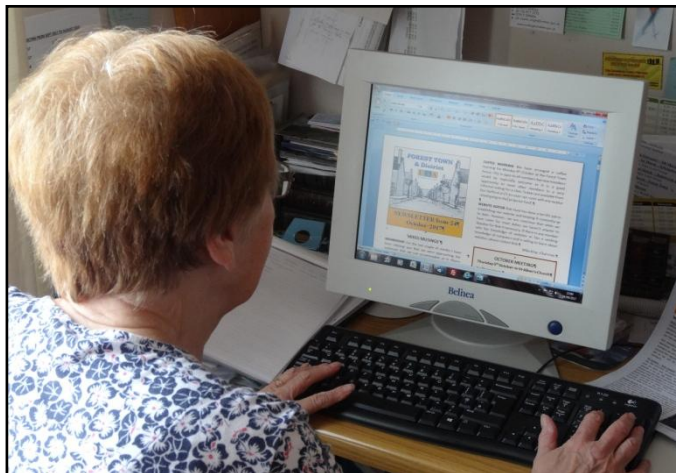
**!!Very few spaces left!!**  
**Payment must be made when booking**  
**cheques payable to Forest Town & Dist U3A**

***We are having a bottle raffle, donations of bottles and bottle bags gratefully accepted***

We are aware  
that some of our members are not too well  
at the moment and we wish you all a

**Speedy Recovery**

## YOUR NEWSLETTER



Producing a newsletter has many trial and tribulations, and involves working round deadlines. Time has to be allowed for it to go to two proof readers, and being corrected before it is ready to send to the printers.

While newsletter is sent to the printers as a PDF by email we have to allow time for them to print it, being aware that they work a 5 day week. Once ready the newsletter has to be collected from Portland Print, at Portland College on Nottingham Road, Mansfield.

Sending out the newsletter by email is slightly easier in as much as at the same time I send a PDF to the printer's, I send one to Kath the membership secretary and it is over to her to email you all.

Additional to all this, both producing the newsletter and the deadlines these have to be worked round our own personal life such as going on holiday or having family to stay.

Before all this of course I am dependant on information coming in from the committee, group leaders, and members to produce what I hope is an informative and interesting newsletter.

Chatting to some members the other day I learnt they like to read Group Reports as it gives an insight in to what the groups do in case you want to join another group. It was suggested it would be good if more groups did this.

The reports/articles do not have to be long but should be informative. I am grateful to the group leaders/member and those who send in regular reports as another newsletter editor recently said to me 'our job is not to write the reports and articles but to edit them.'

And to give advance warning, there will be **no Newsletter in January** it is not possible to work the deadlines round home life, Christmas and New Year.

*Pauline*  
*[pauline@mp-marples.co.uk](mailto:pauline@mp-marples.co.uk)*  
*01623 431783*

# INTEREST GROUPS & LATEST REPORTS

## GROUP MEETINGS AT A GLANCE

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1 <sup>st</sup>		Table tennis	Rambling	<b>MAIN MEETING</b>	Music - 60s Appreciation
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Craft	Gardening	Current Affairs	Bird Watching Ten Pin Bowling	Bridge for Beginners
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Scrabble & Rummikub Family History	Book Club	Rambling Lunch Club	Local History	Strollers
4 <sup>th</sup>		Play Reading	Petanque	Painting & Drawing	Bridge for Beginners

### Bird Watching

**Group Leader: Lynne Cooper**

**Meet 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month**

**Contact 01623 652430**

**Email [lynnecoopernotts@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:lynnecoopernotts@hotmail.co.uk)**

Ten members met at Pauline & Malcolm's home for an indoor bird watching session. No we were not staring out of the window with binoculars at the sparrows on the bird feeder, we were watching a DVD on identifying birds.

Keith led the session and enlarged on the information given on the DVD This helped us to understand and identify some of the more common birds that can be seen in our gardens and the country side.

*Pauline*

### Book Club

**Group Leader: Ann Stanford**

**Meet 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month**

**2.05pm - 3.05pm at Forest Town**

**Library.**

**Contact 01623 641864**

**Email [annstanford1@sky.com](mailto:annstanford1@sky.com)**



### Bridge for Beginners

**Group Leader: Steve Evans**

**Meet 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Friday of the month**

**10 am - 12 noon at the Flint Avenue Centre.**

**Contact 01623 470282**

**Email [steve.jackie84@ntlworld.com](mailto:steve.jackie84@ntlworld.com)**

### Computer and IT Skills

**Group Leader: Bob Hunt**

*No Group meetings for the time being.*

**Email [robert\\_hunt7@sky.com](mailto:robert_hunt7@sky.com)**

### Craft

**Group Leader: Jane Freeman**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Monday 2pm - 4pm Meet Forest Town Arena**

**Contact 01623 624003**

**Email [jam.freeman@btinternet.com](mailto:jam.freeman@btinternet.com)**

This month began with a flurry of excitement and activity in the form of a lady who came to take the long-awaited photos for our poppy knit-athon. Tables and ladies were hastily rearranged to accommodate said poppies, and all those who wished came to pose, hold and then throw them in the air. We await the results "soon" in the Chad, so by the time this newsletter is published, no doubt we will have had our **five minutes of fame** in print. No autograph requests, please, I don't think we could stand the attention!

*(Well the ladies certainly had their moment of fame for not one but three photographs and a good write up appeared in the Chad n the 20<sup>th</sup> September. This also gave good publicity to Forest Town & District U3A - well done ladies. Ed)*

Two more ladies had requested to join the group, one of whom attended today. We have plenty of spaces left!

We are continuing our individual projects this month, which consist of various knitted items, (jackets, booties and soft toys), pillow lace, table cloth embroidery and a new, intriguing one velvet "bead - boards"; these are pieces of postcard- sized cardboard, covered in velvet, for use with bead work, to keep the very small beads and gold thread safely to hand whilst working on the actual piece. The texture of the velvet prevents the tiny beads from rolling around ingenious!

One of several subjects under discussion whilst hard at work, included the difficulty in obtaining Any sort of trustworthy, reliable plumber or other handyman, who would

1. Turn up on time,
2. Stay on task until its completion.
3. Refrain from taking calls for new work whilst on the job in question.
4. Not "disappear" halfway through to look at these new jobs.
5. Tidy up completely.

Oh, and the **ever present question** will we get our cuppa??? yes, eventually. Today's "reason" why we nearly didn't was that a funeral wake was in progress in another room, so the tea urn **and** our specially purchased teapot were both required. One of our ladies made a sensible suggestion that a tray, complete with required number of mugs, could be taken over to aforesaid urn, and filled from it. QED??? Complete lack of activity on this front for at least 25 minutes, and then, to our surprise, teas arrived in new flowery mugs, complete with their own tea-bags, just when we had begun clearing up. Next month, we have decided to place our drinks orders as soon as we arrive, in the hopes of a half time break actually at half time! **Watch this space.**

The Christmas meal list was passed round (I know, it is far too early, but as we only meet once a month, it needs sorting and provisionally booking, sorry!) and most ladies were keen to put their name on it.

Last chance at the next meeting in October, where we also hope to learn the genteel art of quilling.

So, can I make a plea anyone not at today's meeting if you are interested in the meal, please turn up next month, or email me so I can add your name to it that would be fantastic.

Next meeting Monday 9<sup>th</sup> October, 2.00pm/4.00pm  
Jane

### Current Affairs

**Group Leader: Desley O'Leary**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday 10am -12noon**  
**Contact 01623 421642**

### Gardening

**Group Leaders: Angelina Taylor & Molly Bramley.**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday 10-12noon - Forest Town Arena**  
**Contact Angleina 01623 622871**  
**Molly 01623 635051**

### Local History

**Group Leader: Pauline Marples .**  
**-3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday 2.15pm - Flint Avenue Centre**  
**Contact 01623 431783**  
**Email [pauline.mp-marples.co.uk](mailto:pauline.mp-marples.co.uk)**

Our local history topic this month was hospitals in and around the Mansfield area. I think some of you would be surprised how many there have been since 1858. (see the list at the end) We considered some of the differences from before and after 1948 when the it became the National Health Service, and some of the sources where information can be found Some of these such as early Annual Hospital Reports and photographs were available to look at.

1858	Broom House (Lunatic)
1867	Mansfield Hospital?
1886	Two cottages in Mansfield Woodhouse
1877	Hospital Mansfield Woodhouse (Fourways)
1882	A hospital on Union Street Mansfield
1887	Mansfield Hospital
1888	Smallpox Hospital Mansfield
1890	General Hospital, West Hill Drive, Mansfield
1893	Forest Fever Hospital
1898	Victoria Hospital (formerly the Workhouse)
1861	Ransom Sanatorium
1927	Harlow Wood Orthopaedic
1942	Kings Mill Military Hospital
1951	Kings Mill Hospital

*Next month we will look at the History of Harlow Wood Orthopaedic Hospital.*

*Pauline*

### Lunch Club

**Group Leader: Denise Whitsed**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday**  
**Contact [deewhits@aol.com](mailto:deewhits@aol.com)**

### Music - 60's Appreciation

**Group Leader: Keith Bancroft**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Friday Meet Forest Town Arena 2-4pm**  
**Contact 01623 618099**  
**Email [keithbcroft@gmail.com](mailto:keithbcroft@gmail.com)**

This month the first Friday of the month fell on the 1<sup>st</sup> September which was the week before the U3A meeting so we thought that there would be a poor attendance. It seems that the majority of members had remembered and we had another good attendance.

The music was provided by Keith and John as Chris was not available. It was an acoustic session split into two sessions. First we did a few skiffle songs with John on washboard which went down well with everyone joining in and we later did another acoustic set consisting mainly of ballads.

John compiled the quiz which was a bit easier than his normal ones and one team even got every question right which was a first.

We also agreed that we would donate £60 from our kitty to the U3A projector fund.

*Keith*

### Painting and Drawing

**Group Leader: Christine Cawthorne .**  
**4<sup>th</sup> Thursday 2-4pm - Sherwood Centre, Stuart Ave.**  
**Contact 01623 658171**



### Petanque

**Group Leader: Steve Evans**

**4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month**

**11am - 3pm Carr Bank**

**Contact 01623 470282 or 07806697754**

**Email [steve.jackie84@ntlworld.com](mailto:steve.jackie84@ntlworld.com)**

### **POETRY AND PLAY READING GROUP**

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

**Come and experience something new.**

The Group will be informal and friendly. An opportunity to share favourite poems and introduce poems that you may have written. Learn more about the poets and their lives.

Read Plays that you may have seen yourself or always wanted to read. Comedy, Crime, Serious Plays. Nothing to memorize, no tests, just a lot of laughter and fun.

Lets make this a lively and interesting Group.

**Contact Kath Wolstenholm Telephone 01623 617194  
or e-mail [ftanddu3amembership@hotmail.com](mailto:ftanddu3amembership@hotmail.com)**

**The Venue and time will be decided when at least  
5 people are interested**

### Rambling

**Group Leader: Andrew Riby**

**Rambles from 7 miles up to 9 miles on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>  
Wednesday of each month.**

**Contact Andrew Riby 01623 656958  
mobile 07833 543705**

**Email [ribya@imcgroup.co.uk](mailto:ribya@imcgroup.co.uk)**

Steve Evans led our walk on the first Wednesday in September from the NE Derbyshire village of Holmesfield. The weather was bright and fresh as we headed south across farmland enjoying wide clear views across the valley to Beeley Moor and East Moor.

By mid-morning we were sheltering from drizzle in Smeekey Wood for our drink stop, while the climb up to the purple heather clad Totley Moor was made in a prolonged heavy shower. Luckily the weather cleared for our lunch break high on the moor.

The steep descent down Brown Edge gave us distant views of Sheffield, before a steep uphill section to the historic Fanshawe Gate Hall and finally back to Holmesfield.



Our Ramble on 20<sup>th</sup> September was led by myself and Carol Green starting from Starkholmes. The weather was fine. We enjoyed very pleasant views of Cromford as we walked towards Lea Bridge. We stopped for lunch at St John The Baptist Church at Dethick and the views of the surrounding countryside were spectacular. We then continued to Riber and we passed Riber Castle, we then descended back to Starkholmes. We enjoyed the view of Matlock on our way back.



### **Our next rambles:**

4<sup>th</sup> October: Lower Hartshay, Heage, Wingfield Park, Pentrich. (8 miles).

18<sup>th</sup> October: Middleton-by-Youlgreave, Kenslow Wood, Elton and Robin Hood's Stride. (9.2 miles).

Meet at the Arena car park to arrange lift sharing, departing at 08:40 am. New members always welcome.

*Andy & Steve*

### Scrabble & Rummikub

**Group Leader: Celia Tassle**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Monday 2pm Forest Town Arena**

**Contact 01623 627905**

### Strollers

**Group Leader: Denise Doud**

**Meet 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday 10am**

**Contact 01623 619856**

**Email [dmdoud52@gmail.com](mailto:dmdoud52@gmail.com)**

15th September - What a smashing introduction to the Stroller group. We met in the car park of Rufford Abbey on a not very decisive weather morning, and started our stroll.

We strolled along at a pleasant pace, no pressures, just meandering and enjoying the views, stopping to admire the birds on the lake and trying to catch sight of other wildlife. The sun also came out for a look.

The stroll was about 2.6km (I was told exactly but a senior moment has occurred). We ended our morning with coffee and a chat.

Denise was heartened by the 9 new members and looks forward to seeing everyone at Pleasley Pit Country Park in the car park 10.30am-20<sup>th</sup> October.

### Table Tennis

**Group Leader: Marilyn Redfern**

**Meet - At leaders home 1st Tuesday 10:30 - 12:30**

**Contact 01623 646547**

**Email [mjrfern@gmail.com](mailto:mjrfern@gmail.com)**

### Ten Pin Bowling

**Group Leader: Gordon Chapman**

**Meet 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday 2pm**

**Mansfield Superbowl 2000.**

**Contact 01623 620012**

**Email [mary@chapman7586.fslife.co.uk](mailto:mary@chapman7586.fslife.co.uk)**

### Trace Your Family History

**Group Leader: Malcolm Marples**

**Meet 2.30pm 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday - Flint Avenue Centre**

**Contact 01623 431783**

**Email [malcolm@mp-marples.co.uk](mailto:malcolm@mp-marples.co.uk)**

The group spent time discussing the recent television programme 'Who Do You Think You Are', our likes and dislikes and how it does not really compare to how ordinary people have to research their family history.

We had discussions on some of the web sites that can be researched some that are free and others that have to be subscribed to, and those which members found helpful.

After a tea/coffee break we then watched an interesting DVD on 'Exploring the Archives' produced by Family Tree Magazine. This gave valuable information on planning a trip to the National Archives, and some of what can be found there.

The DVD continued with information on the Society of Genealogists and an insight into the many records they hold. Time ran out on us and we agreed to continue watching this DVD at our next meeting.

Pauline

**LEARN LAUGH AND LIVE  
WITH THE U3A**

**NEXT NEWSETTER DEADLINE  
18TH OCTOBER  
SEND TO  
[pauline@mp-marples.co.uk](mailto:pauline@mp-marples.co.uk)**

**Visit Our Web Site**

**<https://u3asites.org.uk/forest-town/home>**

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## LOOKING BACK ON TWO YEARS OF OUR U3A

