



'MIKES MUSINGS'

IMPORTANT NOTICE!!

We will NOT be changing our starting time for the January Meeting

Monthly Meeting Following feedback from members we have decided to keep our monthly meetings time as it has been since we started; i.e. we will start at 1:45, and the meeting will be the format as previously. Thank you to all those members who provided us with comments from which it was becoming clear to your committee that the change, even as a 'pilot, was not something that was wanted. Just to confirm we will **not** be carrying out the 'pilot scheme' that we had previously notified you about. Please let any of your friends who might not receive the Newsletter know about this.

At our December meeting we will have a Xmas theme and be welcoming as our speaker Richard Westcott with his confessions of a Pantomime Dame. We also will be offering you mince pies to enjoy with your tea/coffee. Do come along and have an early Xmas celebration with your U3A friends.

Skills Voucher Skills have generously given us a £40 voucher that can either be used on the trips that Denise organises or on any other Skills trips/tours. We will hold a 'raffle' at the January meeting with the voucher as the prize. Tickets will be 50p each available at that January meeting.

Warsop & District U3A I had the pleasure of attending Warsop & District U3A's inaugural meeting. There was a very good attendance and 91 people signed up as members which was a terrific result. They also established four Interest Groups at the meeting; the early indications are that they will be a very successful U3A. Our own Pauline Marples will be speaking at their January meeting.

Newsletter Please remember that due to the extended Xmas/New Year break, (and to give Pauline and Malcolm Marples a break), there will be no newsletter in January but please keep sending in your articles to Pauline.

Suggestion Book Please make use of the Suggestion Book which is on the table with the general notice board that is adjacent to the signing in table. Your suggestions are always welcome and the committee discuss these at their monthly meetings, it doesn't of course stop you talking to committee members with any ideas/views you have - we always welcome the opportunity to get your views on a 'one to one' basis.

Christmas is coming! As I write this it is still not the end of November, but this is my last chance, other than at the December meeting, to wish you all the very best for Xmas and the New Year.

Mike King, Chairman.



OUR DECEMBER MEETING **Thursday 7th December in St Alban's Church**

- Please sign in.

1.45pm Welcome by Mike our Chairman
Followed by our guest speaker

Richard Westcott

on

CONFESSIONS OF A PANTOMIME DAME

Richard will take us behind the scenes and into the Dame's Dressing Room to show you the Trials, Tribulations, Fun and Frocks of Life as his particular Pantomime Dame.

Tea/coffee break with mince pies.

See the Display Boards - Book on trips
Chairman's and other notices

ENJOY THE MEETING

Remember the U3A is about
Learning, laughing and living

LOOKING BACK TO OUR NOVEMBER MEETING

When George Buchanan gave a fascinating talk about

"Growing up at Hodsock Priory".

George gave us a brief history of Hodsock Priory which is not really a priory, that is just a name it was given by Ann Mellish in 1829. Nine generations of the Mellish and Buchanan family have lived at Hodsock for over 250 years.

Today it is George, Kat his wife and their four children who enjoy living there, and they were included in many of the photos. They share their family home with the thousands of visitors who visit in the spring to see the wonderful array of snowdrops Hodsock is famous for. Additionally they now open for people to come and see the bluebells at the end of April - beginning of May.



I think we were all surprised to hear of the connection to Hodsock and cricket bats - yes they grow trees to make cricket bats. At first just 30 were planted and now there are 1100 and the bats produced from them are test match grade.

In WW2 Land Girls resided at Hodsock living in the attic - 42 teenage girls and Georges aunt said it was like St Trinians! POWs from Blythe also worked at Hodsock.

George was enthusiastic about documents and artefacts he has found around the house, many of which have now been deposited in the Nottinghamshire Archives.

He brought along an old suitcase with his grandfathers name on it. This contained an outfit that was made in 1897 for a costume ball held at Buckingham Palace in celebration of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, or was it for the ball held by the Duchess of Devonshire at Devonshire House that same year?



George proudly told us of his father Sir Andrew Buchanan who in 1991, was appointed Lord Lieutenant for Nottinghamshire, meaning he was the Queen's personal representative for the County. And in the 2011 New Year's Honours List, Sir Andrew was awarded the Knight Commander of the Victorian Order (KCVO). He attended Buckingham Palace and was knighted by Her Majesty the Queen.

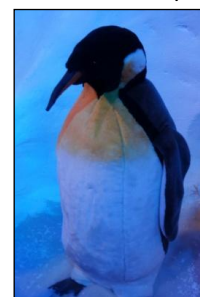
Discover more about Hodsock priory at <http://www.hodsockpriory.com/a-history-of-hodsock/>

OUR VISIT TO THE THURSFORD CHRISTMAS SPECTACULAR



Among the coach load of U3A members setting off for the Thursford Christmas show on Tuesday 28th November there were many who were not sure just what to expect. However the magic began for those who first went round 'Santa's magical Journey into Christmas.' It was a

winter wonderland of snowmen, elves, polar bears, penguins etc. (photos were allowed in this area).



It was finally time for the Christmas show (no photography or recording of the performance was allowed so we cannot give you a taste of what it was like). However, the applause throughout said it all. Below are some of the comments from our members.

'Absolutely Fabulous' - 'Loved it'

'It was spectacular' - 'F for fabulous' - 'I'll give it ten!'

'It was an unexpected pleasure'

'It was so colourful' - 'Wonderful music'

'I have been going to go for years and it was well worth waiting for'

'They are all so talented' - 'E for Excellent'

At the end of the show Doves were released and they flew across the theatre landing on a Dove Cote, this was so meaningful and everyone loved it.

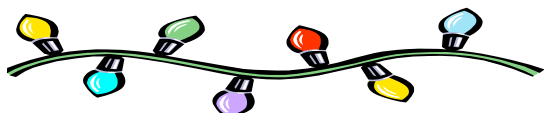
Additional to the show we had a smashing coach driver (Tim), the hotel was great and we all said another big **Thank You** to Denise for giving up her time and organising the trip.

LOOKING AHEAD



December 15th - CHRISTMAS DINNER 2017 at the South Forest Complex

Please contact Marlene Mee 01623 409072
email <marlene.mee1@virginmedia.com>



Our Main Meetings

Held in St Alban's Church - these will all start at

1.45pm

the time is NOT changing

Dec 7th - Richard Westcott

Confessions Of A Pantomime Dame

2018

Jan 4th Julian Onions - Galaxies - One Gigayear at a time

Feb 1st James Pinder - Vision Aid Overseas

Mar 1st Andy Gaunt - Sherwood Forest Archaeology & History/Kings Clipstone

HOLIDAYS & OUTINGS 2018



All 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.

Cheques payable to SKILLS

April 8th - Keukenhof & Amsterdam

5 days from £420 - single supp. £120 deposit
Staying at the 4-star Golden Tulip West-Ende Hotel Helmonde, x 4 nights half board. **A few places left**

May 21st - Chavanage House and cream tea at Bourton on the Water a 16th century manor house with Civil War associations, also where Poldark was filmed **£34.**

June 11th 5 day POTTERS, a holiday resort Hopton on Sea, Norfolk , price approx. £350. **FULL**

July - Carlisle & Settle two day **£109**

August - Edinburgh Tattoo 4 days **£385**

Southport Flower Show

September - 3 hour Princess River Cruise with lunch and 60's entertainment. **£36**

For more information on outings and holidays , see the Holiday Notice Board at the main meetings or contact Denise on 07791941502

or email deewhits@aol.com

PROJECTOR FUND

Carried over from last year	900.00
Small donations and monies raised by raffles etc.	386.90
Commitment from Local Councillors	1200.00
Commitment from Fidler & Pepper	200.00
Commitment from Mansfield B/Soc. (subject to raising the remainder of funds required).	500.00
Total	3186.90

SUGGESTION BOOK

Suggestion Book This can be found on the table in front of the U3A Notice Board near the signing in table. These members are looking at it!



INTEREST GROUPS & LATEST REPORTS

GROUP MEETINGS AT A GLANCE

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

Bird Watching

Group Leader: Lynne Cooper

Meet 2nd Thursday of the month

Contact 01623 652430

Email lynnecooper@notts@hotmail.co.uk



On Thursday 9th November the group visited King's Mill reservoir. We welcomed three new members bringing our total bird watching membership to fourteen! It was an extremely cold and damp day but our enthusiasm was in no way diminished! We managed to observe a good variety of birds including Gadwells, Lapwings, Shovellers, Little grebes, a Snipe as well as Teals. We also spotted several herons in the trees close to the water.



After a couple of hours we decided to make our way to the café for a chat and a welcome hot drink to

warm us all up! A successful bird watching session enjoyed by us all.

Pauline S

Book Club

Group Leader: Ann Stanford

**Meet 3rd Tuesday of the month
2.05pm - 3.05pm at Forest Town
Library.**

Contact 01623 641864

Email annstanford1@sky.com



Bridge Group For All Abilities

Group Leader: Steve Evans

**Meet 2nd & 4th Friday of the month
10 am - 12 noon at the Flint Avenue Centre.**

Contact 01623 470282

Email steve.jackie84@ntlworld.com

This is a friendly group who as the heading implies are at various stages of playing Bridge, and they help each other to learn and make progress. New members are welcome.

Computer and IT Skills

Group Leader: Bob Hunt -Email bukw90@gmail.com

Please contact Bob re meeting

Craft

Group Leader: Jane Freeman

2nd Monday 2pm - 4pm Meet Forest Town Arena

Contact 01623 624003

Email jam.freeman@btinternet.com

"The usual suspects" formed our group this month many ladies having been stuck down with lurgies and traffic-lag trust they will be up and raring to go next month.

There was a variety of activities being worked on this time including knitted scarves, cable mittens, a child's jacket, crocheted animal pin- cushions, a crocheted

knitting bag, Tunisian crochet, (which is a mix of knitting and crochet on one long hooked needle, a technique few of us had seen before,) water colour Christmas cards, counted thread work Christmas trees, and patchwork Christmas stockings.



All of this work was supplemented by 'The usual banter' which included wondering why The Odeon cinema website was so difficult to navigate; the still unanswered question of Ella's cafe transformation (How much more soil needs to be excavated from such a small space?); who will be left in Theresa May's cabinet by the end of the month; why it is so hard for Doctor's receptionist to return promised phone calls; and the eternal question of what can be done to regenerate Mansfield's fortunes (the promise of 2 new hotels may be a start, But, what comes next???)

The Tea Order arrived very speedily this month, so much so that we doubted its authenticity! We had our fears realised when we took a sip it was tepid!! We discovered that it had been made with the water in the coffee/chocolate machine, because either the kettle or teapot, or both, hadn't been found.

Maybe the New Year will bring a new approach???



Early Christmas wishes to one and all.

Jane

Current Affairs

Group Leader: Desley O'Leary

2nd Wednesday 10am -12 noon

Contact 01623 421642

At our November group meeting a wide range of topics were again discussed. Each person brings along two subjects which are put in 'a hat' and pulled out at random.

This month one very current topic was 'in light of recent incidents (fireworks through letter boxes) should fireworks be banned from public sale'. There was general agreement (on this occasion!) that it was far safer to have organised events which in any case were usually much more spectacular. However, there was some nostalgia for our own childhoods when there would be a bonfire with potatoes in the fire and roast chestnuts, but fireworks were much less powerful then.

'Should Boris Johnson be sacked' was another interesting discussion. Though it was agreed that he does drop 'clangers' from time to time and his latest indiscretion could result in Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe having an extended prison sentence in Iran, it was thought that the Prime Minister was not in a strong enough position to get rid of him.



Amongst the other 10 or so subjects we talked about was 'should the voting age be lowered to 16'. In general, we agreed that it should remain at 18 but we were encouraged that young people do seem to be taking an increasing interest in politics.

Another lively two hours, superbly hosted as always by Desley and again cakes with our tea or coffee.

Mike King

NEW VENUE

Gardening

Group Leaders: Angelina Taylor & Molly Bramley.

2nd Tuesday 10-12noon - Stuart Avenue Centre

Contact Angelina 01623 622871

Molly 01623 635051

On Tuesday 14th November we met in the new venue at Stuart Avenue, 9 of us attended most making Christmas wreaths some of us for the first time helped by Angelina and Carol. I was a complete novice but thanks to Angelina who supplied the materials I needed I was able to learn another new craft. The next meeting Tuesday 12th December.



Marlene



Christmas wreath made at the gardening group

Local History

Group Leader: Pauline Marples .

3rd Thursday 2.15pm - Flint Avenue Centre

Contact 01623 431783

Email pauline.mp-marples.co.uk

This month Pauline gave us an illustrated talk about Clipstone Camp to tie in with the recent Remembrance Day. In the early days of WW1 soldiers were billeted in bell tents, examples on the Welbeck and Thoresby Estates were shown. Eventually hutted camps were erected such as the one at Clipstone, though at times soldiers were scattered around the area, some being at Sherwood Hall, Crown Farm and Walkers plantation in Forest Town.

When the first soldiers moved into Clipstone Camp conditions were still dire with very few comforts. The size of the camp took some getting our heads round, two long rows of huts, all with their own parade ground, started from what we now know as Newlands Avenue and continued all the way through to what is now Clipstone to approximately where the headstocks are.

Much of the talk centred on the human aspect of life in and around the Camp, the men who had been billeted at Clipstone and sent postcards home telling their families about this strange, mucky place they'd been sent to, and the locals who were initially wary of the troops, worried that there would be a lot of disruption and lack of moral standards. But as time went on they were incorporated into the life of Forest Town and Mansfield with many local business' benefiting financially from their presence, helping to build the Camp, providing transport or stocking items of uniform and other sundries needed by the troops.

Soon more 'home comforts' were added to the Camp, a YMCA, shop, several churches and mess huts for the various ranks, soldiers planted gardens in front of their huts and a military hospital was built. Ladies set up and staffed canteens, with the help of

Scout troops, and soldiers were included in Community events and sporting activities which all helped to make their stay more bearable. It was by no means one way traffic either with the Camp inviting locals to events held there.

The last troops left the Camp in 1920, the site of which is now commemorated by a stone which stands in the grounds of Clipstone Social Club.



After tea break we had chance to look at plans of the Camp and work out where it was, plus there were files containing postcards from the soldiers and photographs taken at the time, files on the military hospital and the nurses who worked there, to name but a few. It all generated a lot of discussion, not least about the possible taxi fare costing 6^d each way and how much that would be today.

Thanks Pauline for a thoroughly enjoyable meeting.

Jenny W

There is no meeting in December

Lunch Club

Group Leader: Denise Whitsed

3rd Wednesday

Contact deewhits@aol.com

We are at Ciao Bella for Christmas on the 6th Dec

Music - 60's Appreciation

Group Leader: Keith Bancroft

1st Friday Meet Forest Town Arena 2-4pm

Contact 01623 618099

Email keithbcroft@gmail.com



Our 3rd November meeting started with Chris playing guess the intro's and the members singing along. John then had us scratching our heads with his quiz questions half of which were related to Elvis and half to Cliff.



"I know the answer"

The December meeting is our Xmas Fuddle so we are having an extra hour and finishing at 5p.m. Hope you will be in good voice as there will be quite a bit of skiffle which everyone will know the words to.

Keith

Painting and Drawing

Group Leader: Christine Cawthorne .

4th Thursday 2-4pm - Sherwood Centre, Stuart Ave.

Contact 01623 658171

Petanque

Group Leader: Steve Evans

Contact 01623 470282 or 07806697754

Email steve.jackie84@ntlworld.com

No meetings until further notice, hopefully in the spring

Rambling

Group Leader: Andrew Riby

**Rambles from 7 miles up to 9 miles
1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month.**

Contact Andrew Riby 01623 656958

mobile 07833 543705

Email ribya@imcgroup.co.uk

We ventured into the Vale of Belvoir for our walk on 1st November. Starting in the village of Plungar, in the first hour we climbed 600 feet onto the ridge on which Belvoir Castle sits affording views right across the Vale. After walking along the ridge a while we descended to the beautiful village of Stathern where we looked round St Guthlac's church, named after a young nobleman and tearaway who later changed his ways and took on a monastic life. On the level now across the Vale, we visited Harby before reaching the Grantham canal which we followed back to Plungar. On the way we found a moving memorial to the crew of a battle-damaged Lancaster bomber which crashed in fog in 1943 having overshoot the runway at RAF Langar.

Our walk on 15th November from historic village of Tideswell took in six Derbyshire dales and provided some magnificent views and plenty of autumn colour on a thankfully clear and largely dry day. There was plenty of historic interest, with the lesser known Monks Dale referencing a long-disappeared monastery there, the Monsal Trail running along the track bed of a former Midland Railway line, and two imposing former textile mills. Both mills used pauper child labour, but while the Cressbrook mill had philanthropic owners, many of the paupers at Litton Mill sadly failed to survive to adulthood. We got through the frequently flooded Water-cum-Jolly Dale with dry feet and, after lunching in Cressbrook, began the climb back up to Tideswell taking in Tansley Dale and Litton Dale en route.



Our next rambles: 6th December: National Stone Centre, Bolehill and Cromford Moor (4 miles) followed by Christmas lunch.

20th December: Teversal Trail and Hardwick Hall. (7.5 miles). Meet at the Arena car park to arrange lift sharing, departing at 08:40 am. New members always welcome.

Andy

Scrabble & Rummikub

Group Leader: Celia Tassle

3rd Monday 2pm Forest Town Arena

Contact 01623 627905

Strollers/ Short Walks

Group Leader: Denise Doud

Meet 3rd Friday 10am

Contact 01623 619856

Email dmdoud52@gmail.com

The Strollers group met on a beautiful, cold but sunny morning at Thieves Wood on Friday 17th November. Eleven of us set off to stroll through the glorious autumn coloured trees, on our way to complete a 2½ mile walk. The scenery as we walked was truly breathtaking as the trees had shed lots of leaves making the floor look like a red carpet. We were lucky as there was not much wind, which enabled us to see the trees and floor covering at their very best.

At completion of our walk, we were able to have a hot drink with a choice of food. (Bacon cobs, yummy.)

As our next meeting is so close to the Christmas period, it was decided to give December a miss and so our next walk will be on January 19th at King's Mill Reservoir leaving at 10.30 am.

Best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a peaceful and healthy New year from the Strollers group

Jen Lowe

Table Tennis

Group Leader: Marilyn Redfern

Meet - 1st Tuesday 10:30 - 12:30 Meden & Oak Hill

Leisure Centre

Contact 01623 646547

Email mjrfern@gmail.com

Ten Pin Bowling

Group Leader: Gordon Chapman

Meet 2nd Thursday 2pm

Mansfield Superbowl 2000.

Contact 01623 620012

Email mary@chapman7586.fslife.co.uk

Trace Your Family History

Group Leader: Malcolm Marples

Meet 2.30pm 3rd Monday - Flint Avenue Centre

Contact 01623 431783

Email malcolm@mp-marples.co.uk

It was pleasing to welcome three new members to the group at our November meeting. We all spoke briefly about our interest in family history with David enlarging on how and why he began, what he has achieved and what he wants to discover next.

Malcolm gave advice to our new members on the first steps to take with their research.

It was suggested when we send out our Christmas cards we could include a note to family and friends asking what they know about our families.



Gill had brought along an extended family tree drawn on lining paper which fascinated everyone looking at this, and also giving them ideas of trying this out.

There is no meeting in December

Due to the Editor cooking and slaving over a hot stove, and entertaining family over the Christmas period there will be

NO NEWSLETTER IN JANUARY

**NEWSLETTER DEADLINE
FOR THE FEBRUARY ISSUE 20th January**

OUR NEXT COFFEE MORNING

**Monday 15th January in Forest Town Arena.
10. 30am**

Richard Howard from Fidler & Pepper has kindly offered to come along and hold a Question & Answer session for anyone who may want advice on legal matters.

**Keep up-to-date with events in our U3A by visiting
Our Web Site**

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

!!Seasons Greetings To You All!!



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