



Chat from the chair

No need to be alone

Hello, and welcome to the November edition of our fabulous Newsletter! I hope you are all keeping well but, more importantly, I hope you are all keeping occupied and in touch with one another!

There really is no reason to be alone in all this you know, we have the Reach-Out contact scheme and the Reach-Out walks too; both projects are aimed at getting people talking.

The Reach-Out walks scheme is simply just that, a local walk and a chance to have a chat to someone else, all at a safe social distance too!

First walk went well

On Wednesday October 14, a couple of us ventured out on our very first Reach-Out walk. It was a wonderful opportunity to chat with someone different and appreciate the great outdoors. We came across the lovely floral specimen pictured right and wondered if any of our keen gardeners could put a name to it? I am sure I do not need to remind you

all that this month brings us Remembrance Day. The 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month is a time for us all to quietly reflect and remember those who have paid the ultimate price in conflict for the freedom of others. We will remember them.

Although we are not having our regular meetings and usual Groups activities your U3A continues to function in the background bringing you the Newsletter, regular Welfare contact and more besides so rest assured, your subscription hasn't been a waste of money!

Making toys

Aside from U3A matters and my volunteer work with a First Aid Charity I have been making toys for Christmas presents. My latest project is a rag doll with a range of different garments and shoes. She doesn't have a name yet, I think I will let my Granddaughter decide on what to call her! I would love to hear all about the items that our other crafting



Can you identify this flower? Do get in touch and let us know what it is

enthusiasts have been making so please, do share!

Stay safe, stay in contact, keep talking, we might be isolating but we are not alone!

Linda Shutt

The phantom diarist (A few more snippets)

Household:

The iron gave up the ghost! As shopping in the town is not on my agenda, a new iron was sourced online. Oh, the joys! In the meantime, clothes were piling up and options (for getting dressed) were narrowing down. The iron arrived just in time to prevent me from looking like a 'bag lady'!

Technology:

Couldn't access the internet for an afternoon and evening. Goes to illustrate how dependent we are. The Nice Young Man at Sky Customer

Services seemed to think I had too many electronics plugged in close together.

What is one to do? Technology is taking over, and I am sinking under it...

Long emails exchanged with distant friends. A morale boost

Medical:

Joined the queue for the flu jab. We trooped in and trooped out at great speed!



Where is that picture?

How many of you recognise this picture? It is a road that I am sure many of you will have travelled on at some time in your life. It is on the front cover of our A-Z of Forest Town History book and has had many people guessing (it does tell them inside).

The picture is of Pump Hollow Road and is how it looked in the early 1900s when it was little more than a country lane. At that time there would have been very little traffic and people would have been able to wander across the road with hardly a care in the world.

Today, the cottages where in 1911 Joseph Crookes and Thomas Stubbins lived with their families, have been replaced by many houses, and the wood known as Crookies Wood has gone.

The allotments can just be seen on the right and were there for many years but today they are being replaced by an estate of four bedroom houses with a brick wall shielding them from the road.

Traffic lights are where the road dips, needed because these days the road is much wider and full of speeding vehicles – cars, vans, lorries of every size and description. Without the



traffic lights at both the top and bottom of Pump Hollow Road you would cross the road at your peril!

As previously said the picture is on the cover of the A-Z book, and is also under the letter P for Pump Hollow with information.

The book itself is the work of our U3A local history members and others. It has been well received, not just by individual people but also by schools, libraries, Nottingham archives and Nottingham University. It is jogging peoples' memories, which in turn expands the information we have as new details arrive by email and phone

calls. We have also had people call round for extra copies, which is very pleasing. One thing that has people curious is what information we have for X,Y & ,Z. Can YOU guess?

The A-Z only costs £4.00 or 3 copies for £10. To obtain your copy call round to see me Pauline at 15 Elmhurst Road, Forest Town NG19 0EU (Tel: 01623 431783). Or to get a copy by post send a cheque for £6.50 payable to Forest Town Heritage Group to that same address.

Pauline Marples

Community news

Pauline Marples tells us that Forest Town's Community Council Meeting on October 20 was a bit of a Zoom marathon – over 2½ hours long. The following points are extracted from the five pages of minutes that resulted:

- Of particular concern were the activities of a **rogue trader** who has been trying (and succeeding on at least one occasion) to extract cash for poor gutter soffits and fascia work. Trading standards are onto it and the Police are aware. But should a grey transit reg number SK69 LVV, appear near you, sporting the company name **Grays Roofing/Home Improvements**, beware.
- Nottinghamshire Police reported that they recognise that antisocial behaviour is an important issue to individuals and communities. Anti-social behaviour is defined as any intimidating or threatening activity that scares a person or damages their quality of life. such as using loud foul language, making threats to neighbours, drunken or rowdy behaviour, vandalism, graffiti and fly-posting, dealing or buying drugs on the street, damage to property. 101 is the number to call

to report anti-social behaviour. Incidents will be assessed and allocated to an officer to attend.

■ Royal British Legion Update

Sadly there will be no Remembrance Sunday parade nor a full wreath laying service this year. There is a possibility that 30 ticket holders will be allowed into the churchyard to mark the occasion.

■ Christmas Lights

Again, because of coronavirus restrictions, there will be no lights switch on this year. The Council will install the Christmas lights as last year but these will be switched on without any ceremony.

Not got your Poppy yet!

Don't panic – you can donate online just visit:
www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-involved/ways-to-give/donate



Diary of a Lockdown Kid (part 4)

The new wildlife camera is in full use recording dozens of nocturnal visits from a select group, three hedgehogs plus Tim the Terrible Tabby, who has now taken a dislike to the camera, and pushes it over whenever he takes his evening stroll.

The hedgehogs have been named: Large Limpy – sadly his nearside rear foot has been cut off by a strimmer – Tiny and Spotty. Spotty has a paler splotch on his right haunch. All three now have a gourmet menu, with bowls of calci worms – never feed mealworms, as they cause bone loss – fresh water and very expensive hedgehog nibbles, protected from the cats and birds under an upturned washing up bowl that has a small door cut into it. It is amusing when three hedgehogs all attempt to get into and out of the washing up bowl at the same time. This involves lots of nudging, shoving and reversing.

Terrible Tim has also been up to his usual tricks of launching himself at the heavy stone bird table, sending it thudding to the ground with a flurry of newly-replenished seeds. He doesn't seem to learn that this particular activity merely disperses any birds in the vicinity for the next hour or so.

E.D. seems a bit brighter as she has worked out our routines and mysteriously 'appears' a few moments after the back door has been opened. When I wasn't there to attend to her needs immediately a few days ago, she came to find me in the greenhouse, loudly protesting.

One day, it was breakfast and afternoon tea, if you please. I have now been 'trained' in my duties and have her mat, bowl, packet of cat food and bag of nibbles all waiting on the freezer. I put a bowl of water down the other day, for it to be sniffed suspiciously, her nose dipped in, sneezed at and a baleful glare turned in my direction, as if to say: "What is that?"

She and Tiny Tim had an altercation last week, both circling round the birdbath with that nonchalance only cats seem to have: "I am merely walking this way for my own amusement, not because I am retreating gracefully backwards." She has got a new rip in her left ear, so claws must have been exchanged at some point.

The human visitors wanting number 16 also continue with undiminished regularity, despite what I thought was a 'Cunning Plan'. Last week, I walked down the road and 'had a little chat' with number 16. All very pleasant, with the

lady in question assuring me she wasn't a new resident, but had lived there for over 10 years. My opening ploy had been: "I wonder if you can help me with a small problem with wrongly delivered packages. You may not be aware of the very odd numbering in the road, so could you be really specific when giving directions to anybody wanting to find your house?" She assured me she did give very detailed instructions, but it obviously doesn't sink in!

This morning, there was a lady at our door at 9.30am, clutching an insulated bag and jabbing at her phone. She was very apologetic, saying she hadn't been informed of the whereabouts of aforementioned house. Once again I had to point a delivery person in the right direction. This was followed in quick succession by a police car drawing up just opposite, an officer getting out, rummaging in the boot and then being intercepted by The Village Pump, who 'just happened' to be out mowing his strip of grass (in the rain, as you do). Cue lots of arm-waving and gesticulating, after which the officer walked a few yards down the road, did an about turn and promptly drove off up the road (quite possibly looking for number 16.)

A couple of weeks ago, a Parcel Force van pulled up. It had been spotted driving up and down a few times, so we were primed with the redirecting instructions. Being a very large vehicle, it had to be driven right round the block, as there was nowhere to execute a 3-point-turn.

Another day, a huge curtain-sided truck from a well-known courier paused at the gate, the driver hanging out of his cab, enquiring about a certain house number. Luckily, he was pointing in the right direction.

Oh, just for a change, a lady who was returning a dog tag that she had discovered in the woods and now looking for number 68, called in for directions. That's another story, as it is equally hard to locate.

On that note, I will away to move the box of spring bulbs from the garage to the greenhouse. The weather has scuppered my planting plans once again. Still, it's a bit of progress nearer the soil! And I have a new 'fiendish device' for assisting in the planting, an auger to fix to a drill I have been 'allowed' to use. I will report back as to its efficacy. Until next time, **AnonyMouse**

PS: readers will note there has been no mention of Popmaster. You are allowed to draw your own conclusions from the omission.

COVID OCCUPATIONS by the Phantom Diarist

We have had time on our hands.
What should we do?
Fulfil all those plans?
Well, maybe a few...

There is that cupboard to turn out
And the oven to clean.
All good ideas, no doubt,
But, honestly, I'm not all that keen.

Perhaps I should bake a cake,

The one I've always meant to.
It must be easy to make,
It's from the school I went to.

If I could make it at fourteen
years old,
And the family had it for tea,
I must, of course, be bold
Now that I'm *3!

Well, I cleaned the

conservatory roof,
Vertigo, never mind!
And I'm not in the first flush
of "yoof",
Though sprightly, I think you'll find.

The days are flying by
Under this funny regime.
And I can't think why,
But things aren't as bad as
they seem.

My family and other ne'er do wells

(part two)

On my husband's side (names have been changed to protect the innocent) his dad's family were always known as 'the ones you had as little to do with as possible' They were a bad lot!

Before I move onto them though I'll start with his maternal side. Sam's granddad and grandma, were taken to court on an assault charge brought against them by a neighbour following an altercation over a boundary fence in which they were accused of attacking the neighbour with one of the fence posts. The charges however were not proved and the case was dismissed.

'Try before you buy' side of the family

Apart from this one incident, the maternal side of his family appears to have been fairly law abiding, or at least to date I've not found anything to indicate otherwise. That said, they were a bit naughty on the more personal side and have been dubbed, by me, as the 'try before you buy' side of the family as the majority of the girls were at various stages of pregnancy by the time they finally made it to the altar.

The paternal side

Now for the paternal side! Sam's entire paternal line moved up from Staffordshire to Mansfield around 1915. During World War 2 his paternal grandparents, Bert and Nancy, were taken to court for breaking rationing regulations. It appears that they were estranged at the time and three of the children moved regularly between one house and the other. Their argument was that they didn't realise they were doing anything wrong in each of them applying for ration cards for the children as they were eating at both houses. The judge however thought differently and fined them £5 each, adding that he'd considered a gaol sentence but was lenient as Bert was an invalid and unable to work.

One of Sam's aunts was sacked from Raleigh for 'taking part in coarse talk and taking indecent photos at work'. The aunt and her friend sued for wrongful dismissal as no

photos could be produced, but they were unsuccessful and said aunt became a clippie on the buses instead.

Sam's great grandparents, Mick and May, were well known to the law before they moved to Mansfield. May and her sister were taken to court for attacking a neighbour who had complained about hammering through the wall while he was trying to sleep. They attacked him with the hammer, threw bricks at him and then May followed it up by grabbing his throat and attempting to bite and throttle him. The sisters were given fines for the attack but as they couldn't pay they ended up serving custodial sentences instead.

May might have been pitied as she didn't have an easy life. Husband Mick deserted her and five children on at least four occasions between 1893 and 1901, which resulted in them being taken in at the Workhouse. In fact in the 1901 census May referred to herself as 'widowed' although Mick had miraculously returned from the dead and was living in the family home by 1911.

Mick received two gaol sentences with hard labour for his desertions and was ordered to pay costs towards his family's keep in the Workhouse. On another occasion, while off on one of his jaunts he received a three month prison sentence for theft. Meanwhile, in the Workhouse, May was given seven days imprisonment with hard labour for pinning the Matron to the wall after she smacked one of the children on the arm. She received another seven days for absconding. Over the years, May also received other fines for drunk and disorderly conduct both in Staffordshire and Mansfield.

Once they'd moved to Mansfield squabbles within the family were not unknown resulting in more assault charges for Mick and May after a fight with one of Bert's brothers following a night out.

Nancy was in trouble again when her sister-in-law ended up with Nancy's fist in her mouth following an argument.

This is only a brief snapshot of Sam's side, but I hope you've enjoyed reading about the shadier activities of both our families. This is one of my favourite parts of Family History. Finding out about their exploits has given me hours of fun, the present family love it and I hope there is more to discover on both sides.

I'm sure there is!

Jenny Wright

Your Executive Committee contacts

Forest Town & District U3A couldn't run without the hard work of its Executive Committee. Everyone gives their time freely. Welfare Officer, **Kelvin Foster**, has been keeping in touch by email but for members who do not use email he's keen to emphasise that any member who needs help should contact him by phone on **01623 422251**. All Executive Committee members can be contacted via the website at <https://u3asites.org.uk/forest-town/contact>

Current members are: Linda Shutt (Chair), Allan Barham (Vice-Chair), Andrew Riby (Treasurer), Irene Duncan (Assistant Treasurer) Sue Harkin (Business Secretary), Anita Adlard (Groups' Coordinator), Steve Evans (Assistant Groups' Coordinator), Kelvin Foster (Membership Secretary & Welfare Officer), Kathryn Cope (Assistant Membership Secretary), Desley O'Leary (Speaker Seeker) and Bob Hunt (Website Editor).

Next issue

Please send articles or ideas for the next issue to Helen Riby by email ftu3anews@gmail.com or by post to: 5 Fal Paddock, Mansfield Woodhouse NG19 9RW **by midnight on Friday 21 November.**

Please visit our website for the latest news:

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

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