



Chat from the chair

Watch out: Scammers about!

Hello, and welcome to the latest edition of your fabulous Newsletter. National Office has asked your Committee to make you all aware of potential phone and email scams which unfortunately appear to be on the increase.

Two of the most common scams look as if they are from Royal Mail and Hermes and claim there's an outstanding delivery charge on a parcel. Rest assured, Royal Mail and Hermes would never send a text or email claiming that such a delivery charge is due.

There has also been an increase in scam attempts by telephone; to landlines or mobiles. The caller claims to be from your bank. Please do not divulge any sensitive password information to anyone over the phone, by email or by text.

The DVLA is another establishment that scammers are imitating to gain access to our personal information so please be vigilant and do not get caught out by unscrupulous scammers.

At the time of writing this article we have still not managed to recruit a

new Business Secretary despite countless appeals. There have been a few expressions of interest which, sadly, have not come to fruition.

The recruitment of a Business Secretary will have great bearing on the continuation of your u3a; please give this matter some serious thought, you might just prevent FT & D u3a from being dissolved.

Linda Shutt



Previously Forest Town & District u3a has organised an annual holiday to Potters, the popular resort hotel in Norfolk, every June. Unfortunately Potters is fully booked for 2021, probably due to their 5 star service and because the resort has become all-inclusive and now claims to be the only all-inclusive resort hotel in the country.

To ensure we can resume the Potters holiday in 2022 I have reserved rooms for four nights from 13 June 2022.

Thursford payments due

Please can all members coming on the Thursford holiday post a cheque for the balance that's £239 each (made payable to Skills Holidays) to my home address Denise Whitsed, 28 Farmcroft Road, Mansfield Woodhouse, Notts NG19 8QT to arrive by 5 September.

There are two tickets left for the Thursford holiday. Twin or double room at £289 per person. To book, please contact me Mon-Fri 9.00am to 4.00pm 07791 941502 or email: deewhits@aol.com

Denise Whitsed

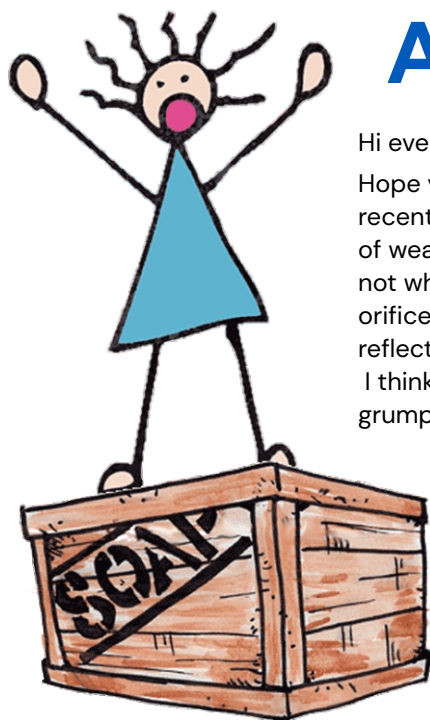
The price will be approx £469/£489 with many types of upgrades available. Please note that if I book this through a travel agent it would be at least another £30. As in previous years I will sort out the rooms, book a bus separately and will pass on the discount to members booking the holiday.

Normally we would have paid a deposit for the 2022 visit a month after taking the 2021 holiday. Therefore I need to know ASAP who is interested in the 2022 break and, to secure the rooms, I also need your £50 deposits.

Please ring or email me to check if the room type you require is available. Room types are Bungalow, Bungalow Plus, Hotel Premier, Hotel Deluxe, Hotel Suite and Hotel Penthouse. This holiday includes four meals a day plus all drinks and 5 star West End-style shows together with a full daytime programme, pool and spa.

I can be contacted Mon to Fri 9.00 am to 4.00pm on 07791 941502 or by email: deewhits@aol.com

Denise Whitsed



A funny thing happened...

Hi everyone,
Hope you've all coped with the recent heat wave. Not my type of weather. I like the sun but not when you leak from every orifice whenever you move. On reflection I think I'm turning into a grumpy old woman. I don't like it when it's too hot/cold/wet or windy and as British weather is usually one, or the other, with only small windows when none of these apply I've usually got something to grumble about.

How are you all feeling now 'Freedom Day' is finally here? As far as I'm concerned nothing much has changed. Within my social circle everyone intends to keep their masks and social distancing. In fact one of my friends said that she's got no intention of getting rid of her mask and described it as having a 'bra for your face' as it lifts her double chin. Well, that's a first; I've heard them called many things since we started wearing them, but never that.

Since restrictions have been lifted I've noticed that in shops many people have now ditched the masks, including staff, although the advice is still to wear them and maintain social distancing in crowded places. Covid didn't magically go away on 19 July. Although the number of cases in Nottinghamshire has dropped a little, it's still high and, don't forget, it's still possible to catch covid even if you've been double jabbed. You could also go on to develop long covid, which is extremely debilitating and can last for months. Therefore, why would you want to stop taking simple precautions? I'll be keeping mine on as I consider it's the polite and public spirited thing to do, however it seems like to many people 'Freedom Day' means exercising their right to choose and common sense has gone out of the window. Well that's my rant over, so I'll just climb down from my soapbox now.

My boiler recently broke down and while I don't really need it at the moment I thought it was best to get it fixed before things hot up (excuse the pun) as winter approaches. After delving into its innards my usual plumber advised that I get the engineer out for my particular make of boiler and left me with a number to call. I should've double checked on t'internet first that it was the correct one. The number he'd given me was for a company called Boiler Guide who first tried to sell me a new one and then said they'd contact local firms to give me a quote for a repair, not exactly what I wanted. Two hours of phone calls later I had lost the will to live long ago and the gin bottle definitely had my name on it, but I had finally arranged for the specialist engineer to come and fix it, although I now also had a six month care and repair

plan in place that I hadn't expected. I could've gone for a one off repair but as that worked out at the same price as the six month plan, which also had other benefits, it was a no brainer. The boiler's now up and running again and the next job on the list is to get the guttering repaired so please wish me luck.

When not engaged in tackling home repairs I've been dividing my spare time between the garden and family history. The garden is proving to be a bit of a challenge this year, half of my runner beans didn't come up at all and the ones that did are very poor specimens. I think I'll be lucky to get anything off them, which is disappointing. On the other hand the tomatoes, which are a different variety to the ones I usually grow, have gone mad. It's got to the point where the inside of the tomato house resembles something out of Little Shop of Horrors and I'm expecting to be pulled in and devoured at any time! I can just imagine the after dinner conversations, 'Mm, Long Pig delicious, very juicy!' So if I disappear without trace, please check the tomatoes, that's not fish, blood and bone meal in there!

On the family history front, I've unearthed a bit more scandal involving one of my maternal great aunts, although I'm relieved to say she was the injured party for a change. Gladys had waited a long time for Mr Right to come along, marrying Amos Rose when she was 30 years old. However there was some confusion from the family historian's point of view as she seemed to have also married a Percy Miles a few years after, there was no record of Amos' death and Gladys was still described as a spinster at the time of her second marriage, so what was going on? A search of the newspapers revealed all; she had married a double bigamist!

Amos had originally married Bessie Toogood when he was serving in the Army. At the end of World War 1 he was demobbed but joined up again a year later and was posted to Northern Ireland. Unbeknown to Bessie, who was waiting patiently back home, while there he met and married another young lady, name unknown, and he did it in style, marrying in St. Anne's Cathedral, Belfast. This bigamous marriage came to light when he was demobbed for the second time and he was sent back to Belfast for trial, receiving 9 months imprisonment. On his release, he didn't return home to Bessie, but took up residence in Frome where he met and married my great aunt Gladys only for Bessie to appear out of the woodwork several years later looking for her husband and the marriage to Gladys was annulled. On this occasion he got off with a slap on the wrist as he claimed that he thought Bessie was dead and the judge considered he was of 'low intelligence' and had already served time, although I'm sure this was of little consolation to Gladys. I do hope she had more luck with her second marriage to Percy and that it was a happy one.

Well that's all for this month, enjoy your 'freedom' but stay safe.

Jenny Wright

Table tennis returns

It seems that our monthly games can resume from September 7th and every first Tuesday onwards. I was hoping to get it going earlier but Oak Tree Leisure Centre have been using 'our space' for extra spinning classes.

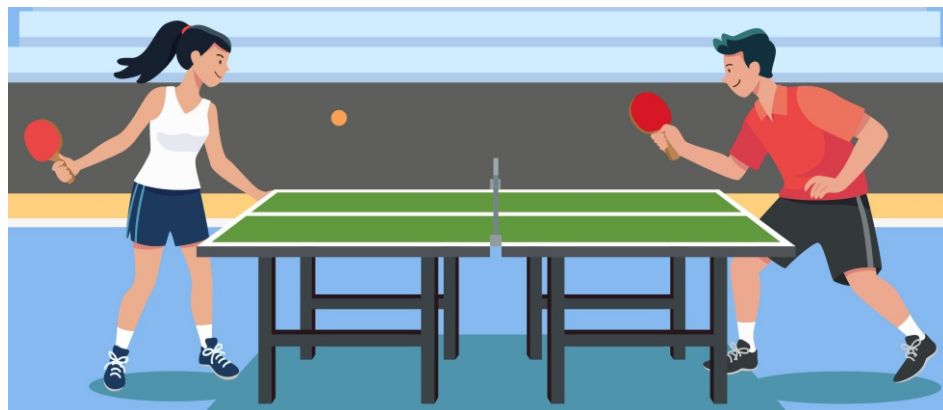
We had around 8 regular members before Covid with varying levels of ability.

I would like to encourage new players to the group and absolute beginners are welcome. It is a fun way to keep fit.

Please feel free to message me to register interest.

Marilyn Redfern

Table Tennis Group leader: Marilyn Redfern
Contact Marilyn Redfern: 01623 646547
Email mjrfern@gmail.com



Up hill and down dale

Our first walk in July explored the hillsides either side of the River Derwent between Rowsley and Chatsworth. Our route took us through shaded woodland paths, open pastureland with magnificent views and through estate parkland with sightings of the deer herd in Chatsworth grounds. Setting out from Rowsley by the river, we had to earn those views with long uphill climbs before descending back to the river, crossing it near Carlton Lees before repeating the process on the other side of the river. Lunch was taken high up with long views over Chatsworth's Russian Cottage and hunting tower to the hills far beyond. Luckily we completed the walk before a torrential downpour turned roads into rivers on our drive home.

Despite the heat wave, a few brave souls set out on our next walk from Grindleford Station to climb Higger Tor. The initial steep climb was sheltered from the sun by beautiful oak woodland until we emerged at Surprise View to see the Hope Valley laid out before us. A refreshing breeze tempered the scorching sunshine as we ascended open moorland with heather coming into bloom to reach the huge boulders on top of Higger Tor. Circling back via the ridge of Burbage Rocks, we continued to enjoy big views until we finally dropped

down into Padley Gorge, following the babbling Burbage Brook into cool, shady woodland for the final leg of our walk.

Our next rambles:

4 August: Litton via Tideswell Dale, Millers Dale and Cressbrook Dale (7.7 miles),
18 August: Peak Forest (8.0 miles). **New members welcome.**



Andy Riby

Book Group: new readers always welcome

Our August/
September book
is **Cartes**

Postales from

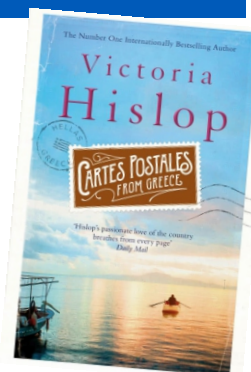
Greece by

Victoria Hislop.

I have searched on Libby but, unfortunately, there were no matches. The book can be collected from Forest Town Library after the Zoom meeting which is on Monday August 9 at 10:30am. Details will be sent to anyone wishing to join us. Just get in touch!

Ann Stanford

Book Group leader: Ann Stanford
Contact Ann Stanford by email:
annstanford1@sky.com



Ramblers Group Leader: Andrew Riby
Rambles from 7 miles up to 9 miles
Meet on 1st and 3rd Wednesday
Contact Andrew Riby: 01623 656958
Mobile: 07833 543705
Email: ribya@imcgroup.co.uk

Diary of a haven't a clue where I am kid part 12

A few days ago, the peace and quiet was shattered just as I had settled down on the front patio seat with a book and a beverage – a very rare occurrence! Normally, as soon as I sit on an outdoor seat, I immediately spot a job that requires urgent attention and the drink and book are forgotten. The dulcet tones of an extremely worn-out version of 'Any Old Iron' was being relayed. This needed investigation. It transpired that the folks at a house opposite (the one that has been undergoing lots of restoration over the past few months) had decided to have a mega metal clear out. And how! Cue louder and louder clattering, clanging, clanking and banging; all still accompanied by that tune.

Then, another competing tune was heard coming nearer and nearer from the opposite direction. This was being relayed from the back of a smaller truck; obviously reinforcements had been called for. The cacophony of conflicting noises was getting 'interesting', to say the least.

At this juncture, the din had reached the ears of quite a few neighbours who appeared leant over their respective gates, only to vanish a moment later and return, triumphantly brandishing an assortment of metal items, which were deposited on the pavement. A good haul for Steptoe and Son, methinks.

On another day, just as I was on my daily walk – it is so ingrained now, it has become a habit, which is not a bad thing – I was met by a fire engine hurtling down the main road, lights flashing, sirens on. I imagined it to be en route to an emergency; however, an hour and a half later, on my return from aforesaid walk, the appliance was still halfway down the drive, apparently merely checking the fire hydrants. So, why the haste and the sirens?

Glass recycling day

I have discovered the 'early morning' wake-up call extends over two hours, as the crashing and clattering can be heard way past the few moments it is outside our gate. No peace for anyone on those days. Best to have an extensive 'to do' list ready to benefit from the enforced early start. This has been a bonus during the recent sultry days of summer, since outdoor chores can be completed well before breakfast, thus earning a few hours extra grace for book reading, if only I knew where it had been put!

Sport on TV

As a non-sporty person, I was resigned to lots of catching up with programmes on the record box BUT, I had hoped that, after the tennis and that other game had ended, things might return to normal. No such luck. When I perused the latest copy of my TV guide, horror of horrors – athletics, golf (to paraphrase Harry Leon Wilson writing in 1904: "golf has too much walking to be a good game, and just enough game to spoil a good walk.") and women's cricket have appeared in the programme lists, plus, we now have The Olympics. Time to turn out a few cupboards, perhaps?

The most recent neighbours to move in are in full swing

with their renovations. There is a lot going on at the rear of the property to which none of us are privy, however what looked like a perfectly acceptable sun

lounge at the front had been demolished and a much smaller replacement is in the final stages of construction. This work is being closely supervised by the new owners, who have removed the sun loungers from the former building and have repositioned them in the front garden, so they can observe all that is going on whilst lurking behind newspapers and drinking steaming beverages.

Speaking of which, I have failed dismally of late in that quiz on the radio. Either the questions are getting progressively more challenging, or I have lost concentration – I am usually trying to complete a crossword in-between contestants. I need to pull my socks up next week, as I have converted one of my younger relatives to that particular programme and he is now an avid participant in the quiz, so much so that I am sent texts with his scores on a regular basis. I have much to live up to, I fear.

Furry frisson

There was a furry frisson early one evening when Marvellous Mabel – she of the vertical leaping and bird table demolishing skills – and another tabby began having fisticuffs under the car that had been parked in full view on the drive, to 'remind' 'Im Indoors it required cleaning.

If you are a close observer of cats' behaviour, you are probably well aware of the preliminaries involved before such an encounter.

There's the nonchalant "I was just walking past" manoeuvre, the "Oh, I may have spotted a butterfly" feint to the side, the "Oops I hadn't notice you lurking there" start of surprise, closely followed by the vigorous synchronised tail swishing and creeping as low as possible to the ground in a "You ain't seen me" move, rapidly followed by the "blink-and-you-miss-it" deft swipe of the paw, accompanied by growling, hissing and spitting, and then, just like the Cheshire Cat himself, nothing left but a few wisps of fur delicately hanging in the air.

This was followed by another brief encounter on the back lawn early one morning when the culprits were GiGi and Marvellous Mabel who were having a real no-holds-barred engagement. The result, the lawn was covered in a lot of GiGi's luxurious thick grey fur. None of Marvellous Mabel's sleek tabby fur was to be seen.

On that note, I shall away to begin compiling a 'To Do' list in readiness for the next glass recycling alarm call.

AnonyMouse



Flying machines and pit tubs!

We sat in the garden this afternoon and a light aircraft flew over causing us to look up. We often see these and wonder if they come from Gamston Aerodrome.

Regularly on weekdays a helicopter flies over, possibly taking some well-to-do business person to work and then home. Other times there are vapour trails from planes on long-distant flights; although not as often these days. These are always fascinating to see. I am told that because today's planes are pressurised they can fly very high, and we cannot recognise what type they are.

Turn the clock back to our younger days when planes were not pressurised and, as they flew over, they were easily recognised, especially in the years of, and just after, the Second World War. Malcolm (my husband) recalls once when a plane flew over and his parents said "Don't worry, it's one of ours".

I recall going to an air display at Finningley Aerodrome, probably in the early 1970s. As we were in the long queue to get in to the show, a Vulcan plane took off and the noise was unbelievable. Always it has been the noise of flying machines that makes us look up to discover what it is that is flying overhead. Most have their own distinguishable sound, so we know we are looking for a plane, helicopter or, on occasions the Red Arrows!

I will turn the clock back again to July 1918 when communities were beginning to relax, just a little, in the final months of World War One. The people of Forest Town were no exception and end of war event planning was soon underway.

An athletic sports day in connection with Mansfield Colliery Boys Brigade was held at the Welfare Sports Ground on a Saturday early in July. It was hoped it would be one of the most successful events held and it seems the organisers; officials of the Boys Brigade, were not wrong. Over 2,000 people turned up for an

afternoon of sport and music. The music was performed by Mansfield Colliery Prize Band conducted by Harry Roulston.

The sports programme included flat races, a brass band race, a three-legged race, several Tug-of-War events between boys employed at the colliery as well as a Tug-of-War for men. There was a high jump, a sack race and Tilting the Bucket, (I am not sure what that was about!).

Additional to all of these were pony drivers races. These consisted of a track of pit rails, 130 yards in length that were laid across the cricket field, (I am not sure the cricket players would have been too happy about this). Pit ponies were brought up from underground and a pit tub was placed on the rails. At the start each competitor had to hitch up his pony to the tub and travel with the pony to a given point. Then they had to unhitch the pony and bring it round to the opposite end before hitching it back up to the tub and travelling back to the start point – a distance of 250 yards in all. The fact that 71 boys entered this race shows how much interest there was in it. Six boys were in the final competition. W Cutts was the winner with a time of 1 minute 6 seconds, H Wharmby 2nd (1 minute 9 seconds), R Purdy 3rd (1 minute 12 seconds).

At around 4.30pm a flying machine

could be seen out on the Nottingham Road coming towards Forest Town. As it neared the sports ground the engine was heard to slow. Then it circled the ground. 'After flying round the grounds it spiralled upwards over the village gardens, made another turn and nose dived straight for the ground. A thrill of excitement filled the hundreds of onlookers sitting on the banks of the field as downwards the airman came. Suddenly the engines throbbed again, the machine turned upwards and a mighty cheer, which must have reached Sg-Major Brown (the pilot), went up, for once again he turned his machine round, came over the grounds, cut the engine and made a final salute before heading homeward.'

It was obvious that this young airman was known to officials who had organised the day as he was a former member of the Forest Town Boys Brigade Cadets and was now in the Royal Air Force. I would love to have discovered him in the 1911 Census but all I have is his surname – Brown which does not help find him.

It is thanks to an article in an early Mansfield newspaper that I have discovered the information about the 1918 Forest Town event. While the photo below was not within the article, there is a strong possibility it was taken at that event.

Pauline Marples



The phantom diarist

Garden:

I continue to wage war against marauding molluscs. One wet evening, when I went out with a torch, there seemed to be a Slugs' Convention, 'tickets half-price; snails also invited'. My poor hostas!

A few weeks ago, I placed lots of comfrey leaves into a bucket filled with water. This concoction makes a valuable feed for tomatoes and other plants, but unfortunately results in a foul-smelling soup (must be watered down before use). Oh dear, farmyard smells wafting over the fence!

Ah, the dulcet tones of summer: a little yappy dog, barking its usual angst against the world; a burglar alarm going off; power tools operated by bored men (particularly during lockdown!).

Where have all the butterflies gone?! Hardly even a cabbage white to be seen in the garden (haven't used chemicals for many years).

Wings and Things:

Swifts (I think) can be seen from the garden, performing their aerobatics up high, wheeling, diving, swooping.

Covid Rules:

A friend in London writes via email that she was caught by the NHS app, telling her that she has to isolate for 6 days. She has missed out on all sorts of social activities, including a lunch with visiting friends from afar, whom she and her husband haven't

seen for some time. Hubby was able to go (he doesn't have a smartphone, so...?!). Apparently, people are deleting the app in annoyance. The double-jabbed (as they both are) won't be subject to this ruling from August 16 (my friend is gnashing her teeth).

I was waiting to be served in the M&S Food Hall the other day. A large woman hovered in my personal space (NB: I'm vertically challenged!) as I stood waiting, and then unloaded her basket at the same time as me on the moving belt. The poor lad serving thought we were together. So much for 'social distancing' (NB: this was about two weeks before the lifting of restrictions on July 19).

Local Matters:

On my way to the library, I stopped off at St Alban's Church to look at the centenary garden (tribute to Forest Town's War Memorial). Beautiful and well thought out – a fitting tribute.



New membership cards coming soon



We are awaiting guidance from the u3a National Office on when we can safely return to monthly meetings. Fingers crossed it will be soon. In the meantime I thought that I would let you all know about our new Membership Cards. These will be used when monthly meetings resume.

Each member will be provided with an individual plastic membership card which will remain valid for as long as they are Forest Town & District u3a members. Members will need to bring their cards with them to monthly meetings. The bar code on the card will be scanned in as members arrive so speeding up registration process. Cards had been produced ready for issuing in April 2021 but then the Covid-19 pandemic struck. As soon as we can meet again cards will be issued to members. Please note cards can only be used by the named individual. Lost membership cards can be replaced at a cost of £1.

The committee would like to thank Jane and Paul Atkins for their hard work in sourcing the card printer and the bar code readers and for the online training and database setup.

Kelvin Foster

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), Sue Harkin (Business Secretary), Anita Adlard (Groups' Coordinator), Steve Evans (Assistant Groups' Coordinator), Kelvin Foster (Membership Secretary & Welfare Officer), Kathryn Cope (Assistant Membership Secretary & 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 Sunday 22 August.

Please visit our website for the latest news:

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

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