



## Chat from the chair

## Normal service is resuming

Hello and welcome to the November edition of our fabulous Newsletter. As you are all aware we are now back to face-to-face meetings and it has been wonderful to see so many of you in person once again. I would like to extend a very warm welcome to our new members too; now we have a larger venue we can increase our membership and this is growing steadily.

The October meeting presented us with a problem with the sound system in the Arena although, thankfully, our entertainers, Penny Bunn very kindly stepped in to let us borrow their microphone so we were able to make our usual announcements.

It is important to your Committee that all members attending can hear and so enjoy our meetings. If, at any time, you are unable to hear anything at a meeting, please raise your hand and tell us, then we can do our best to get things put right.

I am delighted to be able to share the news that refreshments are now being served during general meetings. The Arena is supplying the tea, coffee, milk and sugar and our wonderful team of *Refreshment Volunteers* will be serving your drinks during the interval. With that in mind, can I ask you all, when you are queuing for a drink or moving around inside the Arena that you are mindful of others and allow one another some space.

Finally, I would like to extend a huge vote of thanks to our Group Leaders; whether your Group has been active for some time, has recently started up again or plans to start up very soon, your commitment to this u3a is very much appreciated! Well done to you all! **Linda Shutt.**

### 5 Nov meeting

The speaker for November is Mike Hodkins, a retired Fireman. His talk is entitled *Life as a Firefighter*, a fitting subject for our meeting on Friday 5 November. Mike will talk about his years as a firefighter with anecdotes and stories from his career. Don't miss the November general meeting, 10.30am at the Forest Town Arena.

**Kathryn Cope**



Kath and Geoff Deighton, pictured far right, and known as Penny Bunn, entertained us at the October general meeting by taking us back in time on a nostalgic trip to *The London Palladium* with stories, songs and poetry.

**Bob Hunt**





# Christmas is coming

We are making the general meeting on 3 December something special. Put your Christmas jumper on and get down to the Forest Town Arena on 3 December! We have organised a festive Christmas get together with live entertainment from our sixties group 'Turn Back Time', a raffle, bingo, quiz and light refreshments. There will also be a Secret Santa (max of £2) for everyone. Please bring your gift on the day and mark them if they are for a man.

The tickets are £1 and can be paid on the door but please call Chris on 01623 825621 to let her know you are intending to attend so we know accurately how many people we are catering for and if you have any food allergies we need to know about.

**Kathryn Cope & Chris Ward**

## Music group play on...

Our music group is now called *Turn Back Time*. They will play 50s, 60s & 70s music at the Forest Town Arena on every second Friday of the month from 2pm to 4pm.

Depending on numbers attending, the performance will be in either the small lounge or the concert room.

If anyone would like to put together a music quiz, or a profile of a group or singer to read to the group, Win and Irene would really appreciate this.

Report by Music Group leaders:  
**Win Wall & Irene Brooks**  
Meet on 2nd Fridays

## Cryptic crossword puzzle solvers

We had a good first session, with cobwebs duly brushed off and clues solved in our usual fashion. Tea, coffee and cake and some general chat and a few laughs, as always. One new lady welcomed, and she did very well. Our new venue provided plenty of space to spread out our work and books. Parking spaces too.

Next meeting: 25 November, Sherwood Centre, Stuart Avenue.

On an unrelated matter, I'd like to mention the cheerful yarnbombing that has appeared outside the chemist's shop in Forest Town. The top of the post box has been adorned with crocheted figures of Sooty and Sweep sitting on a green base. Makes me smile every time I go past!

Also, I would like to congratulate Pauline and Jenny on their "A - Z of Forest Town History", a copy of which I bought at the last General Meeting. This is an excellent piece of research and contains fascinating local information, with lots of interesting photos. Well done.

Report by Cryptic Crosswords  
Group leader: **Kay Toy**  
Meet on 4th Thursdays

For Group Leader contact details please email Group Coordinator Anita Adlard: [a.adlard@ntlworld.com](mailto:a.adlard@ntlworld.com)

## Strollers visit Pleasley Park

On Friday 15 October the Strollers group met up at Pleasley Pit Country Park on a lovely autumnal morning, sunshine but with a nip in the air.

17 people attended including 2 new group members. It's always nice to see new members!

We set off to stroll about a mile and a half, some of us did a longer route then we all met up again to amble down to the cafe for coffee and a bacon cob. Delicious as always.

Our next meeting is at Brierley Park, Huthwaite end car park at 10.30 on Friday 19 November.

Report by Jen Lowe  
Strollers Group leader: **Denise Doud**  
Meet on 3rd Fridays

## Gardeners get together again

We enjoyed our first meeting of the Gardening Group; and how pleasant it was to get together once more! A good turnout, and eleven of us painted small wooden medallions with acrylic paints and added little craft pieces, such as ladybirds and flowers, to create garden scenes. The photo shows the beautiful results (however, we'll draw a veil over the efforts of the writer of this piece!).

Refreshments kept us going and we were treated to chocolate biscuits and Angelina's splendid lemon-drizzle cake. There was a plant swap and we discussed our future programme. For our next meeting (Tues 9th Nov) we'll be making decorative wreaths, so if you are able to, please bring a basic circle for the wreath, wire or otherwise, something to cover it with, and decorative pieces.

Report by: **Kay Toy**  
Gardening Group Leader:  
**Angelina Taylor**  
Meet on 2nd Tuesdays



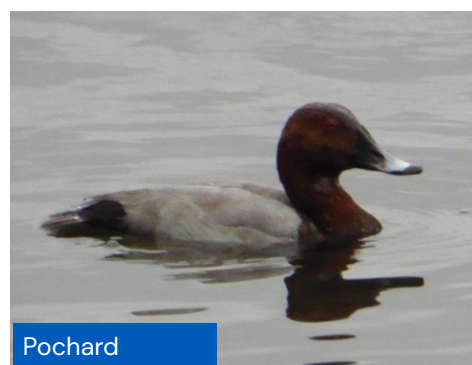
# Birdwatchers take off

I am pleased to be able to report that the Birdwatching Group has actually taken off again and got off to a very good start. 14 members met at Sutton Reservoir for our first outing in October. Any body of water is a good place to see some birds. Although we didn't get to see anything rare or unusual we did spot about 20 different species including Pochard, Little Grebe, Cormorant, Lapwing and, of course, Grey Heron due to the Heronry adjacent to the lake.

Thank you to Malcolm for his photos and his patience taking a shot of a Pochard just to prove to the rest of the group that we had seen one when we caught up with them (incidentally, the others had also spotted Pochard.) I got the impression that everyone just enjoyed the chance to meet up and catch up and spend time in each other's company again after such a long layoff. Coffee at the visitors centre was enjoyed by most before going our own way.

One of our members missed out entirely though. As she was coming to meet us she had a fall which turned out to be serious – she broke her shoulder and had to be helped to the hospital by two of our burly 'knights in shining armour'. I am glad to say that she is recovering now. Best wishes to you Pauline from all members of the group.

Report by Bird Watching Group leader:  
**Lynne Cooper**  
Meet on 2nd Thursdays



Pochard



Lapwing

## Current Affairs group re-convenes

How fantastic to meet up with the members of the group after about two years! There have been some changes in that we now meet at the Flint Avenue Community Centre, rather than at the home of Desley O'Leary. Since the inception of the group, which Desley set up, she provided wonderful hospitality (supported by John) and at today's meeting though Desley wasn't able to attend, everyone expressed their thanks to her.

The meeting was attended by eight members with the usual format of each member submitting a couple of subjects for discussion and a coffee break half way through.

As usual, the subjects provided were wide ranging with twelve topics discussed and a range of views expressed.

**A few examples were:**

**Should pharmacists be used to prescribe drugs instead of doctors?**

Generally members felt there was some scope for using pharmacists but recognising that they were also under pressure.

**Should Cressida Dick resign?**

A mixture of views with some thinking she should take ultimate responsibility for the shortcomings of the Metropolitan Police, with others querying who would replace her and make a better job. All agreed that there is work to do to renew people's faith in the police though acknowledging that the vast majority of police officers are reliable and trustworthy.

**Is the Government right to cut the £20 enhanced Universal Credit payment that was intended to be only temporary?**

Though it was clearly intended as temporary the majority of members felt that with inflation rising, in particular

energy and food, that people on the benefit would be hit hard with more resorting to foodbanks and making difficult decisions between heat and food. We also wondered to what extent millionaire government ministers understood the privations of living on Universal Credit.

**Should the Government reverse its decision to ban fracking?**

The vast majority of members thought that the government was correct and that consideration of the environment was more important than any concerns regarding the pressure on the sources of energy. More effort should be put into renewable energy and nuclear, accepting that it would take time to build up the nuclear industry in particular.

**What can the Labour Party do to increase its standing in the polls and become a credible opposition in the next general election?**

Appoint a new leader! It was felt that Keir Starmer lacked vitality and charisma, though who that new leader might be was debatable; maybe Andy Burnham 'King of the North'. It was also expressed that Angela Raynor had done the party harm in calling Tories 'scum'. Several members thought also that the Labour Party had no clear policies at present.

So another good session with all members saying how much they had enjoyed getting together and how easy it had been to pick up the threads of the group again.

Our next meeting will be on Wednesday 10 November, same time, same venue.

Report by Current Affairs Group Leader: **Mike King**  
Meet on 2nd Wednesdays

# Write it down now

One of the most repeated comments from people researching their family history is: 'I wish I had asked', or: 'I wish I had listened'. They are usually referring to family members that have passed away. To help future generations, we should all try to write about ourselves. In doing so I believe you will be surprised at what interesting lives you have led.

To give you an example I decided to look at five years of my (our) life and share it with you. We moved from Yorkshire to Narborough, Leicester early in 1972. Our new home was a lovely old semi-detached property, a former quarry manager's house with a small front garden and a really long back garden that was ideal for our 5 year old twins. It was situated on the junction of Forest Road that led into the countryside and Stewart Avenue, the road into Enderby village.

Across from us were iron railings, wonderful old trees and a grassed areas that looked like a country park. In fact it was the grounds of Carlton Hayes Psychiatric Hospital which had been built in 1905. This was where Malcolm, my husband, worked as a hospital engineer. Our house was one of around 90 that the hospital owned.

At first, I was a bit worried about living so near to this type of hospital, but soon learnt there was nothing to fear. There was only one locked ward and patients could be seen out and about. Some even had day jobs. We regularly saw one lady walking for miles around the country lanes in her red slippers

so we nicknamed her 'Mrs Red Slippers'.

There were many social events at the hospital and 'Fred', another patient, was always there collecting the empty glasses. It must be said that many of these elderly patients had been in that hospital for years, admitted for what we would now call minor issues.

The early months of 1972 were not a good time as there was a coal strike and we had awful problems getting coal for our fire. Another problem was the fire was always going out, something to do with the chimney being damp as the house had been empty for some time.

Our twins started at the infants school in Enderby and later moved to the junior school on a different site. These schools played a big part in our lives as I was a dinner lady at the infants' school and a teacher's help at the junior school. As a dinner lady you were allotted to a specific class. For my class, dinner was served in the classroom. The teachers and children were lovely and referred to me as Mrs Marbles!

The twins and I went to Narborough Congregational Church, which was in the Robjohns Hall in the village. It is now a Grade 2 Listed Building. The Minister was Graham Adams who, it turned out, had lived in the village of Swinton where we had just moved from. Andrea, Graham's wife, ran the church's Children's Club and one day said that she could do with some

help. I offered only to find that I was actually running it. I also became a Sunday School teacher, but gave it up after my mum died. The twins also went to Pilots, a non-uniformed youth group at the church.

When I look back and compare the Carlton Hayes Hospital with the hospitals today it is hard to comprehend. It was a single hospital group with a social club for staff and patients in the grounds and a church where at harvest festival, an elaborate buffet was held. I personally did not believe that should have happened. There were dances where depending on your status in the hospital you got an invitation with different coloured edges, this depicted which buffet you went to at the dance. If it was gold edged you had to wear an evening dress or suit! I recall one of these occasions when, as we walked up the hospital drive, the hospital manager met us halfway, to tell Malcolm the Cricket Pavilion was on fire and that they had to go and meet the fire engines. I was told to go to the Board Room and not to breathe a word to the other wives. That was an experience for me being with the elite!

Something else that kept me occupied was volunteering with the hospital trolley shop and the tea bar. Some of my dinner lady colleagues used to say: "Aren't you scared working there?" The answer was NO as there was nothing to be scared of.

Our very first telephone was fitted for us by the hospital so that Malcolm could be on call. This could have helped us keep in touch with people back home in Yorkshire, but as none of the family had a phone, it did not.

There is so much more I could write about those five years in Leicester but I must now close this article for the U3A Newsletter by saying that any future family historians will find us hard to trace there as we lived in Leicester between the census years so won't appear in any parish registers.

And a final local history note is that the hospital was eventually closed and demolished in 1996. The site then became the Alliance and Leicester Building Society.

*Pauline Marples*



## Dancing away the afternoon

We've held our first country dancing session and would like to thank all members that supported us and danced the afternoon away! There were a few errors in the dates published in the last issue so here's the definitive list:

Next meeting is Tuesday 16 November and there is no meeting in December.

Dates for the first half of 2022 are: Tuesday 18 January; Tuesday 15 February; Tuesday 15 March; April – **NO** meeting; Tuesday 17 May; Tuesday 21 June (longest day!!).

**Pam Lander, Ann Stanford & caller Janice Holland**

Country Dancing Group leader:  
**Ann Stanford**  
Meet Tuesdays as detailed above

## Possible new discussion group

Which is more valuable, a young life or an older one, and should older people sacrifice our lives to save our economy for the next generation?

Thought "Young lives are easily replaced; older ones cannot be."

If you would like to discuss this or other controversial topics, contact Chris on 01623 825621 or email: [chris@christinejward.co.uk](mailto:chris@christinejward.co.uk)

**Chris Ward**

## Holiday update

### Garden of England National Trust Tour 9 - 13 May 2022

Tour costs £485 for National Trust members (£535 for non-members). Price includes private coach travel, dinner, bed & breakfast, hotel portorage and excursions. No single supplements.

### Potters 13-17 June 2022

Potters 5 star, all inclusive holiday  
Price approx £410 for a 'bungalow plus' twin or double. Upgrade to 'hotel deluxe' (supplements apply for hotel). Coach to the resort with Skills approx £30.

### More details

Please contact Denise on 07791 941502 (Mon to Friday 9am to 4.00pm) or email [deewhits@aol.com](mailto:deewhits@aol.com)

## Good weather for October's rambles

Our first ramble in October took place in the scenic Moss Valley, near Eckington on a beautifully warm and sunny day. Starting in the village of Ford, the route took us along quiet country lanes through pretty hamlets, paths through woods past disused mill ponds and farm tracks through rolling countryside. We took our morning break in the grounds of Troway Hall with glorious views over the valley where the owners chatted



Seldom Seen Engine House

to us about their home, bee keeping business and their Christmas tree plantation. The Moss Valley used to be a hive of industrial activity, specialising in the production of scythes and had two coal mines. Little evidence remains but we did come across the splendidly named "Seldom Seen Engine House", the only remaining relic of Plumley pit, hidden away deep in a wood.

Georganne led us out of Crich on our second walk in pouring rain with a forecast of worse to come. Within 10 minutes, the sun was out and we were sweltering in our waterproofs as we headed down to the Cromford canal and then along it to Whatstandwell. Thankfully we only had two short sharp showers during the rest of our walk which provided commanding views over the Derwent valley, woodland paths displaying autumn tints and several points of interest. We came across the 15th century village hall at Alderwasley (the oldest one in use in England), several grand residences of the Hurt family, lords of the manor of



Alderwasley since 1690 and Shining Cliff youth hostel, which can only be accessed via a walk up a half mile rough woodland path. Guests have to transport their luggage in wheelbarrows!

Our next rambles: 3 November: Whatstandwell, Wirksworth Moor & Bolehill (8.5 miles) 17 November: North Nottinghamshire churches walk. New members welcome.

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](mailto:ribya@imcgroup.co.uk)



Learning about Troway Hall

For Group Leader  
contact details please  
email Group  
Coordinator Anita  
Adlard:  
[a.adlard@ntlworld.com](mailto:a.adlard@ntlworld.com)

## Jan 2022 meeting

January general meeting is on Friday 7 January 2022 when our speaker will be Nick Blurton and his topic: *Confessions of a Coach Driver.* **Kathryn Cope**

## More diary dates

The **Forest Town Christmas Lights switch on** has been cancelled due to Covid concerns.

The **Remembrance Parade on Sunday 14 November** will start from the Arena at 10.30 finishing at the Cenotaph in St Alban's Churchyard. The full service will be held outside, not in church, once again due to concerns over Covid.

**From 20 October** there will be an area in the churchyard, near to the centenary garden, for people to place wooden poppy crosses in memory of anyone they would like to; not just military people.

# What's on and when

Group	Day	Where	Time	Leader
Art Appreciation	TBA	Various	10.00	Jill Gascoyne
Bird Watching	2nd Thursdays	Various	10.30-12.00	Lynne Cooper
Book Club	1st Mondays	Forest Town Library	10.30-12.00	Ann Stanford
Country Dancing	Various Tuesdays	Forest Town Methodist Church	14.00-16.00c	Pamela Lander
Computers & IT	Any time	Member's home	By arrangement	Robert Hunt
Current Affairs	2nd Wednesdays	Flint Ave Centre	10.00-12.00	Michael King
Cryptic Crosswords	4th Thursdays	Sherwood Centre	10.00-12.00	Kay Toy
Days Out	1st Fridays	General Meetings	Various	Denise Whitsed
Evening Dinner Out	4th Thursdays	Various	18.00/18.30	Marilyn Redfern/ Jane Atkins
Family History	3rd Tuesdays	Flint Ave Centre	14.00-16.00	
Gardening	2nd Tuesdays	Sherwood Centre	10.00-12.00	Angelina Taylor
Music 50s, 60s & 70s	2nd Fridays	Forest Town Arena	14.00-16.00	Win Wall/ Irene Brooks
National Trust	Some Saturdays	Meet Forest Town Arena	Various	Ann Stanford
Painting & Drawing	4th Thursdays	Sherwood Centre	14.00-16.00	Christine Cawthorne
Poetry & Play Reading	2nd Mondays	Sherwood Centre	10.00-12.00	Allan Barham
Rambling - 7-9 miles	1st & 3rd Wednesdays	Meet Forest Town Arena	08.40 departure	Andy Riby
Scrabble & Rummikub	3rd Mondays	Sherwood Centre	14.00-16.00	Celia Tassel
Strollers	3rd Fridays	Various	10.30 departure	Denise Doud
Table Tennis	1st Tuesdays	Oak Tree Centre	11.30-13.30	Marilyn Redfern

## 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), Christine Ward (Business Secretary), Anita Adlard (Groups' Coordinator), Marilyn Redfern (Assistant Groups' Coordinator), Kelvin Foster (Membership Secretary & Welfare Officer), Kathryn Cope (Speaker Seeker & Assistant Membership Secretary), Tina Shirt and Bob Hunt (Website Editor).

## Next issue

Please send articles or ideas for the next issue to Helen Riby by email [ftu3anews@gmail.com](mailto:ftu3anews@gmail.com) or by post to: 5 Fal Paddock, Mansfield Woodhouse NG19 9RW **by midnight on Saturday 20 November.**

Please visit your website for the latest news:

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

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