



Chat from the chair

Let's make 2022 a year to celebrate

Hello, and welcome to the February edition of your fabulous Newsletter which, as usual, is packed full of news and information about your u3a.

The Christmas Get Together seems so far away now, doesn't it? But I am sure you will all agree, having missed out on Christmas 2020, it was just what we needed. Turn to page 3 for a reminder of the day.

We all know that in February we celebrate Valentine's Day but the history of the day itself is something of a mystery. There are pagan, Christian and ancient Roman versions of its origin and although it is celebrated around the world there are some countries where it is not recognised at all.

Not only is this year the 40th Anniversary of the launch of u3a but it is also our Queen's Platinum Jubilee and the Committee feel that we should celebrate both occasions. However, whilst the Committee might have ideas of their own we welcome ideas and suggestions from the members too. So, get your thinking caps on and let us know how you want to celebrate!

Linda Shutt



Oprah Winfrey touched my elbow



Showbiz journalist Graham Keal entertained members with amusing anecdotes and celebrity encounters at the General Meeting on 7 January.

Some rare & unusual sightings

On Thursday 13 January a group of 15, including a new member of the Birdwatching Group, met at Rufford Park, where other birdwatchers were gathered by the tall trees in the car park to hopefully see a Hawfinch. We didn't see one but we carried on round the lake where we saw Blue Tits, Great Tits, Long-tailed Tits and a small Coal Tit along with Chaffinch, Willow Warbler, Nuthatch, Song Thrush, Redwing, Jackdaw, Robin and Blackbird.



A Little Egret, an unusual sight in a tree at close quarters

At quite close quarters, Tree Creepers entertained us and a Goldcrest hovered directly above us in the yew trees.

At the edge of the lake stood a large Heron and a Little Egret was perched in the branches above.

...continued on page 2

From Russia With Love



At our February meeting Dr Cathy McAteer's will whet your appetite and introduce you to all things Russian! She will give a whistle stop gallop around the nuts and bolts of Russian history, the people, culture, geography, customs and traditions; and add some of her personal exploits and observations from living, travelling and working in Russia and the former Soviet Union.

Some rare & unusual sightings continued...

There was lots of activity on the lake, all the usual water birds, including some Goosanders, enjoying the glorious sunshine.

The highlight of the morning was definitely the sighting of a Kingfisher. It was perched in dogwood bushes overhanging the water and its bright turquoise and orange plumage contrasted wonderfully with the red cornus stems. We all had a good view of it before it flew off across the lake. After that the rest of the birds we saw seemed to literally pale into insignificance!

December birds

In December the group had the opportunity to visit a local RSPB reserve called Langford Lowfields, near Newark. It is a site that is the result of a project between RSPB and Tarmac with a variety of habitats which are ideal to encourage bird life as well as other wildlife.

There are large lagoons and reed beds created in areas of excavation of former sand and gravel workings. The most interesting sightings were of the Great Northern Diver and Peregrine Falcon. There were lots of varieties of ducks including Teal, Wigeon and Gadwall. We were also pleased to see a pair of Green Finches as they are rare these days. The site is beautiful but it lacks any facilities. Group leader Lynne Cooper was shocked to see the projected forecast for the likelihood of a visitor centre was 2070 – she explained: "It hit me that I definitely won't be around to see that!!!"



A stunning Kingfisher was seen



Winter visitors, Goosander Geese



At Langford Lowfields, near Newark

A good read?

Need a suggestion for something to read? Why not join us in the Book Group? We meet monthly at Forest Town library at 10.30am on the first Monday of the month. The library provides a set of books which we take home to read and then discuss the following month. There are usually about 10 of us. We don't always agree on the books, so come along and air your opinion on February 7.

The book for this month is *How to Stop Time* by Matt Haig. Contact Anita Adlard (groups coordinator) or Sue Harkin on 01632 479110 for more information or just turn up.



Report by Group member **Sue Harkin**
Book Group Leader: **Ann Stanford**
Meet 1st Mondays

Reports by **Olive Moore** (January) and **Lynne Cooper** (December).
Bird Watching Group Leader: **Lynne Cooper** Meet on 2nd Thursdays

Strollers turn out en masse

Friday 21 January saw an amazing turnout of 25 people for our first Strollers session of 2022 at Vicar Water Country Park.

The weather was nice and dry but a bit chilly and, even though a lot of puddles were still frozen, our pathway was mostly ok, muddy instead of ice.

Lots of ducks etc on the water near the car park although parts of the pond were frozen; some of the ducks were skating not swimming!

A lot of us had a lovely coffee after the walk and we were lucky enough to be able to sit outside.

Our next walk is at The Kingsmill Reservoir, Sutton-in-

Ashfield, on Friday 18 February at 10.30.

Report by Group member, **Jen Lowe**
Strollers Group Leader: **Denise Doud**
Meet on 3rd Fridays

Learning the ropes!!

Macramé part 1:

Fourteen of us spent a pleasant morning learning the ropes (so to speak!) with Kath, who talked us through the art of macramé (tying various types of knots in string or cord for decorative effect).

I was reminded of knot-tying in the Brownies, aged about eight!

Macramé part 2:

We'll resume our work next month (February 8), and hope to make a hanging basket holder for the house.



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

Christmas at Forest Town u3a

Forest Town U3A celebrated Christmas 2021 in style. During the morning 'Turn Back Time' provided live entertainment with a medley of Christmas songs and 60's and 70's music. Members had fun playing bingo and taking part in a festive quiz. There was a Secret Santa for those that wanted it and local councillors and long-time supporters of the u3a, Martyn Wright and Mick Barton drew the raffle.



Any old linen

With a eye on future Get Togethers Chris Ward wondered if any members had any flat white sheets they no longer need that could be made into tablecloths. These would be nicer and cheaper than buying paper ones. Bring them to any meeting or get in touch and Chris will arrange collection. Chris says she is happy to wash them after use and, unless someone loves ironing, get them ironed and store them. Please contact Chris on 01623 825621.

Always plenty to talk about at Current Affairs Group

At the December meeting we discussed eight topics which had appeared in the news of the week.

The first was **The Mansfield Master Plan**, which was in the *CHAD* that week. This plan is to re-invigorate the town by encouraging university accommodation and re-purposing some current buildings, such as Beales, to be a new, more central Civic Centre. The released land could be used for new houses. The plan includes making the market square into a memorial, green garden, and the old BHS building into an indoor market. These ideas gained positive group approval.

The **Number 10 Christmas Party in 2020** raised comments about 'double standards'. Some felt that this was 'no surprise'.

Should UK dignitaries follow those from the USA and boycott the 2022 Olympics over China's poor human rights record? Some members felt that we should follow USA AND it should include the athletes too.

Is it time for Boris to go?

A majority felt 'no' as a replacement of any merit, from any party, could

not be identified. The current Chancellor of the Exchequer-Rishi Sunak - was suggested as a possible replacement although he was regarded as doing a good job in his present position.

Forest Town on the 'Murder Map'.

A recent production of a drama on Sky TV all about a double murder in Forest Town in 2013, was generally welcomed and seen as a quality drama despite its gruesome subject matter.

Three topics involving The Royal Family were also discussed.

Outcomes:

- Camilla will be made Queen rather than Royal Consort;
- Prince Harry (worth \$10m apparently) who advised people who were unhappy with their job to 'quit' had 'no idea what it was like to be short of money';
- The Royal Family should follow the Queen's example, remain stoic and keep their personal thoughts to themselves.

Mixed views were shared by the group on **How Covid Statistics are**

Presented. Some queried whether the public needed these statistics published, repeatedly.

Finally, we were asked to name our favourite Christmas carol and explain our choice. A cheery note to finish on!

Thanks to Mike King for organising the meeting and to all those who brought refreshments.

The next meeting takes place at Flint Avenue on Wednesday 9 February.

Report by Group member,
Phil Wright
Current Affairs Group Leader:
Mike King
Meet on 2nd Wednesdays

Please collect your lifetime Membership cards

Membership Secretary Kelvin Foster reports that he still holds lifetime membership cards for 34 members. Some of these have been awaiting collection for more than two years.

The idea behind printing these is to make members' lives easier when attending General Meetings. Cards can be quickly scanned eliminating the need for everyone to queue to sign in.

Please collect your membership card as soon as possible or make some sort of arrangement for it to be collected on your behalf.

Kelvin Foster

Welfare Officer needed

Last November, our Welfare Officer Kelvin, announced that he will not be renewing his membership next April and will cease to be our Welfare Officer on 31 March. Will you provide a listening ear and offer support when the need arises? For further information or to step forward for this post, email lindashutt1806@outlook.com.

Linda Shutt

Photography Group gets going



The first meeting of the Photography group was attended by 12 members.

We discussed what we wanted from the group, pooling ideas and coming up with themes for future meetings, outings and photographing our local environment.

We decided we want photography to be fun and not taken too seriously and to learn from each other, novice or expert.

For the time being, due to the popularity of the group and the current Covid conditions the Photography Group is now full.

Report & Photo by members,
Anita Adlard & Bob Hunt
Photography Group Leaders:
Alan Taylor & Fran Smith
Meet on 2nd Tuesdays

Calling new Committee members

I appreciate that the next Annual General Meeting (AGM) is some time ahead but, along with several other Executive Committee Members, I will complete my three years term of office in June 2022. Our Constitution states that there must be at least five and no more than twelve members on the Committee.

The vacant posts will involve a range of roles and responsibilities for which no qualifications are required, just a genuine desire to keep the u3a open. All that is needed is for candidates to be able to work democratically as part of a team in the best interests of this u3a. It really is that simple!

Actually, the number of vacancies is immaterial because any u3a member can stand for election for any one of the twelve Committee posts. Nominations need to be submitted no later than 6 May 2022. Any interested u3a member is invited to come along to a Committee meeting to see what is involved. Just contact one of the Committee to set this up.

Failure will have dire consequences

Recruitment will be high on the agenda in the coming months but if we do not manage to recruit at least

enough replacement Committee members by the date of the AGM we will be unable to secure the future of your u3a.

Think how you can help

Please think very seriously about helping your u3a. Nomination for the Committee is open to new and long-standing members alike. With the move to Forest Town arena we have increased capacity for new members so perhaps you have a friend or relative that would be an ideal candidate for the Committee. Please encourage them to join your u3a.

The ideal Committee would consist of: Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Business Secretary, Membership Secretary, Assistant Membership Secretary, Groups Co-ordinator, Assistant Groups Co-ordinator, Speaker Seeker and two Committee members.

The work is not difficult so if you think you could take on any one of the Committee roles, please contact me for further details at

lindashutt1806@outlook.com

Your u3a needs you!

Linda Shutt



Tea & coffee rota

Sheila Johnson has been in touch with the tea/coffee rota for the next four meetings. She says please can volunteers **arrive 30 minutes before** the start of the meeting and if unable to attend call her on 07976 605544.

A big thank you to all who help in this vital role and also to Sheila for organising the rota.

4 February: Sandra Walker; Angelina Taylor; Irene Brooks

4 March: Sandra Spencer; Moira Slater; Olive Moore

1 April: Eilene Wass; Christine Wain; Irene Duncan

6 May: Mike Lyall; Lesley Lyall; James Parnham

Ramblers eat up the miles

Since the last report from our ramblers they have been eating up the miles – almost 30 of them – as well as their Christmas lunch (pictured right). The decision to have an early Christmas gathering on 1 December at the Bromley in Fiskerton, proved fortuitous as it preceded the omicron wave. The short 5 miler pre-lunch was led by Neil Baker.

The second walk in December also had a Christmas feel. Led by Steve Evans the 8 mile or so Hardwick Village, Bothamsall circular took us past the Houghton Park reindeer farm.

On 5 January Val Woolley and Carol Green took charge for a walk in fabulous weather that explored Bolsover, including the impressive castle and the equally impressive New Bolsover model village, before heading off to Palterton and back via Scarcliffe and Hillstown.

The walk on 19 January saw Georganne Barlow and Mary Harris lead the group back close to the river Trent for an 8 mile walk taking in Rolleston and Upton.



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

For Group Leader contact details please email our Group Coordinator Anita Adlard: a.adlard@ntlworld.com

March diary dates

◆ Friday 4 March 2022 *Driving Round the Bend*

Autumn Rose, Road Safety Officer from Via East Midlands will offer tips on how to prolong and enhance the driving experience for older drivers. She will include updates to the Highway Code and some of the simple adaptations available along with a friendly quiz.

◆ Saturday 12 March 2022 *Barn Dance*

Warsop & District u3a invite you to join this event For more information please contact Jennifer Thomson on 07762 476901 or email jennifer568@btinternet.com.

Kathryn Cope

What's on and when

Group	Day	Where	Time	Leader
Art Appreciation	3rd Fridays	Various	10.00 Arena car park	Jill Gascoyne
Bird Watching	2nd Thursdays	Various	10.00-12.00	Lynne Cooper
Book Club	1st Mondays	Forest Town Library	10.30-12.00	Ann Stanford
Computers & IT	Any time	Member's home	By arrangement	Robert Hunt
Country Dancing	3rd Tuesdays	Forest Town Methodist Church	14.00-16.00	Pamela Lander Ann Stanford
Cryptic Crosswords	4th Thursdays	Sherwood Centre	10.00-12.00	Kay Toy
Current Affairs	2nd Wednesdays	Flint Ave Centre	10.00-12.00	Michael King
Days Out & Holidays	Advertised at general meetings 1st Fridays	Forest Town Arena	10.30 start	Denise Whitsed
Evening Dinner Out	4th Thursdays	Various	18.30	Marilyn Redfern & Jane Atkins
Gardening	2nd Tuesdays	Sherwood Centre	10.00-12.00	Angelina Taylor & Irene Brooks
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
Photography	2nd Tuesdays	Sherwood Centre	14.00-16.00	Alan Taylor & Fran Smith
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
Trace Your Family Tree	3rd Tuesdays	Flint Ave Centre	14.00-16.00	Andrew & Julie Rowbottom

Your Executive Committee contacts

Forest Town & District U3A relies on the hard work of its Executive Committee. Everyone gives their time freely. All Executive Committee members can be contacted via the website at <https://u3asites.org.uk/forest-town/contact>

For members who don't use email and need help, please contact our Welfare Officer, **Kelvin Foster** by phone on **01623 422251**.

Current members of the Committee are:

Linda Shutt (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), Irene Brook 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 20 February 2022.**

For latest news visit:

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

Forest Town & District U3A is a Registered Charity Number 1186417