



## Lots still to learn

When our u3a was first started it was all about widening knowledge and learning from each other. Group leaders with an interest in a particular subject or hobby would share their knowledge and teach us.

I know the activities we do and the trips we love are a great bonus, but we need to get back to the teaching side of things. So, this year, we are focusing on our group activities. What can we do to get more of our members to participate in our groups? How can we get more interest groups up and running? If you have a special hobby that you are passionate about and would like to share your knowledge with others, you could be a group leader.

Getting involved in a group is a great way to meet new people and you can share your thoughts with the rest of the group. This year we have two new groups started up, the bus pass group and the young men's breakfast group. Both are doing extremely well. We publish a full list of all the groups at your disposal in this newsletter every month, see page 6.

Bob Hunt is putting together a slide show for members to show just what your u3a has to offer.

Marilyn Redfern is our group coordinator. She works hard allocating the days and the rooms so they don't clash with other activities although sometimes that is unavoidable. My apologies.

Members can join these groups for free, so please take advantage of them.

*Irene Brooks*

## March speaker promises roller coaster ride

**Friday 1 March 2024** Ian Morgan – Footpads, Kings and Highwaymen

Ian is a writer, historian and public speaker. From an early age he became captivated by the intrigues and history of England's colourful past. In this talk Ian will take us on a journey along the Nottinghamshire stretch of what is now the A1. This renowned route from London to Edinburgh has changed its path and even its name many times over the years, yet, as the travellers pass on their way, do they know just how fortunate they are? In that short 34-mile stretch of the old Great North Road, we shall see the scenes of horrific battles, the haunts of highwaymen, the sites of murder and much, much more... Get ready for a roller coaster ride of horror and humour as the stories of this ancient highway unfold.



## Great Slave Lake trek

Despite technical difficulties (namely a missing lead to the projector) our February speaker Barry Harper painted an incredible verbal picture of his winter trek across the Great Slave Lake in Canada in 2003. He was part of a police team raising money for the NSPCC. The Lake is 219 miles long, 209 feet deep and colder than the North Pole. Things started badly when at Heathrow the sledges were too heavy and food had to be transferred to the team's personal luggage. Unfortunately, at Calgary customs, all the food in the rucksacks was confiscated. The next disaster was the hired ski equipment. Downhill instead of cross-country skis had been provided. The stiff boots led to terrible sores as the trek progressed. It was so cold it hurt to breath, down to minus 55 at times but the main problem was the shifting ice caused by strong currents in the lake. This causes massive pressure ridges which had to be climbed with the sledges. Barry related how he ended up with severe gashes in his shins which began to smell! On the last day but one everyone was too tired to pitch the tents, but in the distance were the lights of Yellowknife and a party of Mounties who came out with food and beer and to help the team pitch camp allowing them to complete the challenge the following day.

# Everyone has a story to tell

The Trace Your Family Tree Group meeting in February went ahead despite Julie recently having had a knee operation. It was good to have her at the meeting even if she was hobbling along and it was also good to see Sheila back with us after many months of health treatment.

The article in the latest TAM (*Third Age Matters*) magazine: 'Everyone Has A Story To Tell' provided a good discussion point, especially as most of us had already started to write up our own personal stories. Once you start doing this it is interesting to think about events in history that are in the background of your life. For example, at least three of us were born in the early years of WW2 and in the days before the National Health Service when health care had to be paid for.

One of the group recalled moving with her mother to the country to live with her grandparents in the vicinity of an American Army camp. She used to swing on the garden gate and the soldiers would give her sweets. This set Andy looking on his computer for evidence of the American Army Camp. Malcolm told us a few scary things about being an apprentice electrician before the days of Health and Safety. Can you imagine having to row across a flooded cellar in a tin bath to get to the electricity meter! We spoke of shops we worked at such as C & A and British Home Stores; brands that are already unknown to today's younger generation. For those of us who worked in an office, who today would know what a Roneo Duplicating machine was, or even a Sumlock Comptometer?

## Breakfast club grows

The Young Lads Breakfast is increasing in numbers. Thirteen of our 'Young Lads' attended the last breakfast at Rumbles, Vicar Water on 30 January. Once again there was good food, good company and plenty of 'gentlemen' chat. The next breakfast will be at Forever Green, Ransom Wood, on 27 February at 10.00.

Breakfast Club Group Leader: **Kevin Cope**  
Meet 4th Tuesdays Contact Kevin on 07902 579299



Tracing back your ancestors is rewarding but so is writing about yourself and leaving your children and grandchildren with fascinating information about your life.

Report by **Pauline Marples**

Trace Your Family Tree Group Leaders:

**Andrew & Julie Rowbottom** Meet 3rd Tuesdays

## Flowerpot men!

At our February meeting the tables at the Sherwood Centre were busy with flowerpots being transformed into 'people', by means of glue, paint and varnish. A lengthy process that not everyone completed. But there was concentration and nattering and laughter. And tea and biscuits.



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

## It's time to renew your membership

Your committee has agreed the annual fee for membership will remain at £19 for the 2024/25 year. Associate membership, for those who are already a member at another u3a, is £15.00. There are three ways of paying your membership fee:

- ◆ **Bank transfer.** Account name FOREST TOWN & DISTRICT U3A, sort code 30-90-89, account number 53978960. This is classed as a business bank account. **Note, it is a different bank account to the one you pay your trip money into. PLEASE PUT YOUR NAME AND/OR MEMBERSHIP NUMBER AS THE REFERENCE.**
- ◆ **Cheque.** These should be made out to **FOREST TOWN & DISTRICT U3A**, with **your membership number on the reverse**. Bring your cheque along to the meeting in March or post to Kathryn Cope, 97 Lingforest Road, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, NG18 3NQ.
- ◆ If you are unable to pay by bank transfer or cheque then **you can pay in cash** at the monthly meeting on Friday 1st March 2024 **PLEASE AVOID CASH PAYMENTS IF YOU CAN.**

**Kathryn Cope**

# National Trust visits 2024

The programme for 2024 is almost complete. Here's the up-to-date list.

## ◆ Nostell, West Yorkshire

Saturday 18 May 2024. The bus is booked, with 33 seats at £16 each. Just three places left. John Stapleton will be at the March meeting to take any deposits.

If you have already paid the £5 deposit then £11 will be due at the April main meeting.

## ◆ East Riddlesden Hall & Hardcastle Craggs, North Yorkshire

Saturday 8 June. Price £18.50.

East Riddlesden Hall is an historic manor house with a cottage-garden.

Hardcastle Craggs is a picturesque valley with a 1 mile easy walk by the river leading to Gibson Mill, a former cotton mill and cafe. There are more challenging footpaths leading to the mill. Accessible only by minibus. 14 seats available.

## ◆ Wentworth Castle Gardens, South Yorkshire

Booking made for Thursday 4 July. Price £17.

32 seats available. 500 acres of parkland created in 1695 to be the 'finest garden in England'. Formal gardens, monuments and a folly to explore.

## ◆ Upton House, Warwickshire and Canons Ashby, Northamptonshire

Thursday 19 September. Price £21.

Upton House, Warwickshire, is a country house with a significant art collection dating from 14th century. Natural landscape gardens with seasonal borders dropping to the Mirror Pool.

Canons Ashby, Northamptonshire. 18 miles from Upton House. The home of the Dryden family 450 years ago. Formal 18th century gardens, ancient parkland and paddock.

## ◆ Woolsthorpe Manor and Belton House

October. Details to follow.

£5 deposit taken for all trips from April main meeting



National  
Trust

National Trust Group Leader: **Ann Stanford**. Contact Ann on: 01623 641864 Email: [annstanford1@sky.com](mailto:annstanford1@sky.com)

## New lunch group leaders

The lunch group has new leaders. Yan Kerr and Olive Moore have taken over from Irene Brooks. *Editor's Note: Group members, I feel sure, will want to thank Irene for running the group in the past.*

Luncheon Club Group Leaders:  
Yan Kerr and Olive Moore

## Music lovers date change

Please note in March the music group will be playing a week later than usual on 15 March NOT 8 March.

Music Group Leaders: **Win Wall & Irene Brooks**  
Meet on 2nd Fridays

## Poppy Day calling

Forest Town Community Crafters are already knitting/crocheting red poppies in preparation for bigger and better displays in Forest Town next November.

If any u3a members would like to help we would love the u3a to be part of this project, so just get knitting etc., You are also welcome to come along to this group on a Thursday morning in St Alban's Church 10-12noon. more details from [heritage.forestown@ntlworld.com](mailto:heritage.forestown@ntlworld.com)

## A Valentine rose

We had another good Snap & Chat meeting in February with rather more chat this month than photography but we still ran our monthly competition.

This month's subject was *Valentine's Day*.

All the photos presented had a different approach but Cindy Bentley's was selected as the outright winner.

For March our subject will be *Portraits*. This subject will be a good test for all our members as there are many ways that you can take a portrait photo.

As soon as the weather starts to pick up we have decided to have an outdoor photography trip. The destination has yet to be decided.

We still have room for more members so if anyone is interested, please come and see us at the March meeting.



Report by: **Steve Edis** Photography Group Leader:  
**Alan Taylor** Meet 2nd Tuesdays



# Mud, glorious mud, and rain to boot

Our first outing in February, led by Steve, started from Langold Country Park, five miles north of Worksop.

Enjoying the bird song as we walked through the woods there, we eventually caught sight of a spotted woodpecker, one of four drumming away in the trees. The weather turned out to be much sunnier and without the wind chill that was forecast; a welcome bonus.

Overnight rain however meant the walk was muddier than expected. After ploughing through a quagmire near Wallingwells, Steve assured us that would be the last of the mud. Ten minutes later, we were sliding around in an even deeper quagmire!

We had our lunch break with Hodsock Priory in the background. Sadly, Hodsock's garden, famed for its snowdrops, is no longer open to the public, but we still saw plenty of snowdrops on this walk.



Our second walk took us to within a mile of Derby town centre. In pouring rain, Georganne led us from Little Eaton through flooded fields by the side of a swollen River Derwent to Darley Abbey Mills, a collection of historic mill buildings dating back to the late 1700s.

Crossing the swollen Derwent by a salmon leap, we entered the picturesque Georgian mill village of Darley Abbey.

Crossing back over the river we entered the old Roman town of Derventio, now known as Little Chester, Derby's oldest suburb, before passing through the very desirable village of Breadsall on our way back to the cars.

This was an unusual walk for our group, much of it in an urban environment on a dull wet day. Georganne, acting as our tour guide, gave us a potted history of what we came across, making our ordeal with the elements worthwhile.

**Our next rambles:** 6 March: Bolsover, Ault Hucknall, Glapwell and Palterton (8.5 miles). 20 March: East Bridgford,

Ramblers Group Leader:

**Andrew Riby.**

Rambles from 7 miles up to 9 miles.

Meet 1st and 3rd Wednesdays.

Contact Andrew on: 01623 656958

Mobile: 07833 543705 Email:

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



Serious mud on the Langold walk



Full waterproofs for the Darley Abbey walk but it didn't rain all day!

## At a Glance Event Diary

### March

#### GENERAL MEETING

**Friday 1 March 10.30,**

**Forest Town Arena**

Ian Morgan

*Footpads, Kings & Highwaymen*

#### KINKY BOOTS

**Saturday 9 or Sunday 10 March**

**Mansfield Palace Theatre**

Tickets £19

#### MURDER MYSTERY

**17 & 18 March NB incorrect dates  
published last month**

**The Old Barn Hotel, Marston in**

**Lincolnshire Pick up at Forest Town**

**Arena 13.00 SOLD OUT**

#### EASTER EGGSTRAVAGANZA

**Friday 22 March 10.00 to 12.00**

**Forest Town Arena**

### April

#### GENERAL MEETING

**Friday 5 April 10.30,**

**Forest Town Arena**

Vince Eager

*Life in the Entertainment Business*

#### NIGHT AT THE DOGS

**Monday 15 April 17.30 to 10.30**

**Nottingham**

£36 per person including transport,  
race card and meal

#### CALENDAR GIRLS

**Saturday 20 April 14.30**

**Mansfield Palace Theatre**

£18.50

### May

#### GENERAL MEETING

**Friday 3 May 10.30,**

**Forest Town Arena**

Mark Barron. *Carrara marble –  
Michelangelo's greatest love*

#### RHINE IN FLAMES

**Thursday 2 to Wednesday 8 May**

Holiday to the Rhine in Flames

Festival **SOLD OUT**

#### NATIONAL TRUST NOSTELL

**Saturday 18 May**

Price £16 Just three places left

## Easter Eggstravaganza

Friday 22nd March 10.00 – 12.00

We will be having an Easter Eggstravaganza at the Forest Town Arena on Friday 22 March.

Come along and be entertained by a local talented young man, Oliver Ward, who will be singing a range of songs from Nat King Cole, Dean Martin, Michael Bublé and Neil Diamond, to name but a few!

There will be an Easter Bonnet Parade and a cream tea during the interval.

Tickets for this event will be on sale at the March meeting and cost just £1. Once again, for health and safety reasons, there is a limit of 144 places for this event.

Any dietary requirements please mention when purchasing your ticket.

*Kathryn Cope*



## Turkey & Tinsel in Tenby

Monday 4 to Friday 8 November,  
Clarence House Hotel, Tenby. Half  
Board, £425pp

It seems rather early to be planning Christmas but bookings are now being taken for this festive break to Tenby. Included in the itinerary are:

**Monday 'Christmas Eve'** – on arrival sherry and mince pies will be served.

**Tuesday 'Christmas Day'** – after breakfast we take the scenic route to Picton Castle with a guided tour. Festive punch will be served in the Seagull Lounge followed by Christmas dinner, with a visit from Santa.

**Wednesday 'New Year's Eve'** – after breakfast we visit Carmarthen market. Dinner is served at 18.30.

**Thursday 'New Year's Day'** – we have a day at leisure to explore the beautiful town of Tenby. Afternoon cream tea will be served at 15.00, along with some fun.

**Friday** – Depart after breakfast.

There will be entertainment each evening with a Happy Hour 20.00 to 21.00

If you are interested in this holiday, you can put your name down and pay your non-refundable £50.00 deposit at the next few monthly meetings. Alternatively you can ring Irene on 07765 970751.



## Tickets on sale for July river cruise

On offer at the March meeting will be tickets for our Trent river cruise on Wednesday 10 July. Price £37 each includes:

- ◆ Coach travel with pick up at the Arena at 16.30 in plenty of time for boarding at 18.15;
- ◆ A three-hour cruise 18.30 to 21.30;
- ◆ Two drinks tickets;
- ◆ Chicken skewers, potato wedges and coleslaw;
- ◆ Black forest gâteau with fresh cream;
- ◆ Followed by dancing with a DJ playing our favourite songs.

We only have 50 places, so book now.

*Irene Brooks*



# Which interest groups will you join?

Just pick up the phone or turn up on the day

Group	When	Where	Time	Leader
Book Club	1st Mondays	Forest Town Library	10.30–12.00	Ann Stanford 01623 641864
Breakfast Club	4th Tuesdays	various	10.00	Kevin Cope 07902 579299.
Bus Pass Group	Various	Various	As agreed	Christine Cawthorne
Card Craft	4th Mondays	Sherwood Centre	10.00–12.00	Sue Buchanan
Computers & IT	Any time	Member's home	By arrangement	Robert Hunt 07588 047885
Country Dancing	2nd Tuesdays	Flint Avenue Centre	14.00–16.00	Ann Stanford 01623 641864
Cryptic Crosswords	4th Thursdays	Sherwood Centre	10.00–12.00	Kay Toy 01623 652245
Current Affairs	2nd Wednesdays	Flint Ave Centre	10.00–12.00	Michael King 01623 470629
Days Out & Holidays	Advertised at general meetings 1st Fridays	Forest Town Arena	10.30 start	Angelina Taylor 01623 622871
Evening Dinner Out	4th Thursdays	Various	18.30	Marilyn Redfern 01623 845731
Garden & Crafts	2nd Tuesdays	Sherwood Centre	10.00–12.00	Angelina Taylor 01623 622871
German language	3rd Tuesdays	Forest Town Arena	16.30–17.30	Marilyn Redfern 01623 845731
Litter Pick	4th Tuesdays	Meet at Forest Town Arena	10.00	Mike Lyall 07752 878619
Luncheon club	Various	Various	Lunchtime	Irene Brooks 07765 970751
Music 50s, 60s & 70s	2nd Fridays	Forest Town Arena	14.00–16.00	Win Wall & Irene Brooks 07765 970751
National Trust	Various	Meet at Forest Town Arena	Various	Ann Stanford 01623 641864
Painting & Drawing	4th Thursdays	Sherwood Centre	14.00–16.00	Mike Lyall 07752 878619
Photos Snap & Chat	2nd Tuesdays	Sherwood Centre	14.00–16.00	Angelina Taylor 01623 622871
Rambling 7–9 miles	1st & 3rd Wednesdays	Various	Various	Andy Riby 01623 656958
Table Tennis	1st Tuesdays	Oak Tree Centre	11.30–13.30	Marilyn Redfern 01623 845731
Tabletop Games	4th Mondays	Flint Avenue	14.00–16.00	Jane Vernon 07947 958850
Trace Your Family Tree	3rd Tuesdays	Flint Avenue Centre	14.00–16.00	Andrew & Julie Rowbottom 01623 636223

All members are invited to General Meetings – first Friday in the month at Forest Town Arena 10.00 for 10.30 start.

## Your Committee contacts

Forest Town & District u3a relies on the hard work of its Executive Committee. Everyone gives their time freely. All members can be contacted via the website at <https://u3asites.org.uk/forest-town/contact>

### Current members of the Committee are:

Irene Brooks (Chair), Mike Lyall (Vice-Chair), Sue Robinson (Treasurer), Jenny Vernalls (Assistant Treasurer) Janis Bye & Kay Toy (joint Business Secretaries), Kathryn Cope (Membership Secretary), Halina Gaskell (Assistant Membership Secretary & joint Speaker Seeker), Marilyn Redfern (Groups' Coordinator), Sue Buchanan (Assistant Groups' Coordinator & joint Speaker Seeker) and Winston Wall. **Winston Wall** is the Welfare Officer. If you have any concerns then please call him on 01623 640037. Bob Hunt is the Website Editor, email: [webftu3a@gmail.com](mailto:webftu3a@gmail.com)

## 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 Sunday 24 March 2024.**

For latest news visit: <https://u3asites.org.uk/forest-town/>

Forest Town & District u3a is a Registered Charity Number 1186417