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April 2024

### Chairman's Message

Despite what seems to be endless rain, a few sunny days – even (dare I say it) warm days – heralds Spring's much-yearned arrival. Where I live in Manthorpe there is blossom a-plenty to be seen on the morning dog walk and it's a welcome, cheerful sight.

As you may know, the Committee has been looking at the possibility of organising a Summer Picnic to be held on the day of the August monthly meeting. We put out a survey recently to see which of a few options members would like to participate in, or indeed if they would prefer no event at all. The result of this poll was that, of the (approx.) 40% of the membership that responded, 48% favoured a catered picnic at The Garden Yard (in Union Street next to Lidl), 5% wanted a bring-your-own picnic in Wyndham Park, and 11% expressed an interest in a tour of Farmer Barnes's Dairy in Melton Mowbray. Accordingly, at April's committee meeting, it was agreed we would arrange the event in The Garden Yard. Our intention is to offer the event to members free. It only remains for us to take a poll nearer the date to request (for catering purposes) the numbers of those who will attend on Tuesday August 20<sup>th</sup> from 3pm. We may take up the Dairy Visit on a different basis on another occasion.

As I mentioned last month, and indeed was stressed at the AGM, our Treasurer (Tony Hine) is due to retire from this role on the Committee at the year's end. It is imperative that we find a replacement for him. Please do not hesitate to write to me ([chair.granthamu3a@gmail.com](mailto:chair.granthamu3a@gmail.com)) if you have any suggestions of whom we may ask or if you would like to take on the role yourself. It really is a lot less complicated than its title implies and all financial transactions have been simplified and organised so well by the current post holder that anyone with elementary experience with accounts or bookkeeping should find it easy. Training is provided!

On Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> May, Grantham College is hosting a 'Culture in the Community' event in the College. The u3a is going to participate as we offer 'culture' in its many and varied forms through our 50 or so Interest Groups. Our stall will serve to make the greater community aware of the existence of the u3a in Grantham. If anyone would like to volunteer an hour of their time to help man the stall, (I know that sounds unnecessarily gendered, but you know what I mean!) please let me know.

**John Foulkes-Jones, Chair**

### **Beat the scammers**

Over the past few months, we have talked about the many areas where we need to protect ourselves. One thing we haven't covered yet is our car. The costliest tricks are where scammer sell us a fake car (or other valuable items). They often ask for a bank transfer payment to reserve the item for us, sometimes even before we have seen it. Banks generally don't guarantee these transfers.

Scammers also set up fake websites for things like Road Tax Subscription often using very similar website names to the government.

Another common scam is where false QR codes are put on parking payment machines. Scammers stick, in front of the original QR code, a false one which sends our payment and bank details directly to them.

- **Tip 1:** When buying a car (or valuable item), always go and see it first. Ask to see the car ownership document, i.e. the log book (V5C). Also, when selling a car, make sure you have received the money in your bank before signing the car over to the new owner.
- **Tip 2:** QR codes have become a common way to get us to complete a financial transaction. Never accept a QR code which has been sent to you personally and look out for QR codes labels which may cover the original QR code. **Jacob**

## Membership News

We are pleased to welcome the following new members:

Colin Richards, David Tibbett, David Frost, Elaine Harrison, Florence Whitaker, Jennie Hudson, John Whitaker, Karen Kowzan, Marguerite Tibbett, Pam Frost, and Teresa Richards.

Welcome to you all and please let me know if there is anything I can help you with. If you have not already done it, please make sure you create your own password to be able to access our Beacon membership system.

**Angela Rose Membership secretary**

## Pastoral Care

Please let Janet Hine know if you become aware of a member who is ill and would appreciate a message of support, or if a member has died. Her contact details are: **The Old Parsonage, The Drift, Syston, Grantham, NG32 2BY. 01400 250984**

[care.granthamu3a@gmail.com](mailto:care.granthamu3a@gmail.com)

It is with sadness we announce that Celia Wright, who ran our Keep Fit group for many years, has passed away. She had had dementia for some time and was in Newton House. Our thoughts and prayers go out to Ian and family at this time. Celia's funeral will be on April 26th 12.30 at Grantham Crematorium followed by the wake afterwards in the Guildhall ballroom.

## Monthly Meetings

Here is the programme for the next few months:

**Tuesday 16 April 2024:** Nancy Appleyard is Language and Literacy writer and author. Her talk is entitled "It's English, innit!"

**Tuesday 21 May 2024:** Geoff Harris will speak on the subject of Entertainment Folklore, Folk Tales and Funny Folk.

**Tuesday 18 June 2024:** Jason Middleton - Gemstones and Jewellery. As always the meetings will commence at 2pm at the Guildhall Arts Centre.

As a reminder, the municipal car park in Welham Street, (just 3 minutes' walk away) is a reasonable price of £1.20 for up to three hours, however we have had the following notification:

**Welham Street car park in Grantham, operated by South Kesteven District Council, will see levels three, four, five and six inaccessible from Sunday, February 11, for approximately 12 weeks. The closure is necessary for repairs to the car park surface and maintenance of some drains.**

**Members may wish to allow more time for parking if attending meetings, other events, appointments, etc as available space will be limited (Morrisons offers 2 hrs free parking, Asda offers 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>hrs free parking and all other SKDC operated sites will be available but no doubt all areas will be busy over the next few months!).**

### **The Anniversary Tree**

Some of you have noticed that our Anniversary Tree in Dysart Park has not been looking very well. Initially, it was suffering from wind-burn but the weather has not been kind to it. Throughout the winter it has been totally waterlogged but now it is trying to grow. However, with its roots sodden, it is not getting a chance. There is some debate on whether the water problem is a new spring or a crumbling water main. We have liaised with SKDC, who currently do not employ a park keeper, but have agreed to move the tree to higher ground, near the Bandstand. They will move its plaque too. If any members happen to be tree experts, perhaps they could get in touch with the committee and give their advice?

**Fiona Robbins**

### **Coffee Mornings**

Coffee Mornings are held in St Wulfram's Church, Grantham, 10.00am - 11.30am on fourth Tuesday of the month and are open to all members. The next meetings are:

**Tuesday 23 April**

**Tuesday 28 May**

**Tuesday 25 June**

## Group News

### Wildlife Group

Kerry Brazil

Our March meeting was at Belton House. As we were gathering, a heron flew over. They nest in the trees on Belton Park golf course. We walked into the gardens towards the lakes. There were a lot of different flowers out, including snowdrops, hellebores, anemones, scilla, summer snowflakes, forsythia, mahonia, primroses and cowslips. The wild daffodils were also in flower, but many had come up blind (no flowers) this year. So the golden carpet was very patchy. Due to the recent flood damage, only the first lake, boathouse pond, was open. Tar Lane pond remains closed. There were 2 swans on the lake, also mallards, coots, and a Canada goose. A green woodpecker was heard, but not seen. The only animal evidence we saw were fresh mole hills!

The walk around the gardens was cut short due to rain, so we went to the Stables café for refreshments.





## **Beginners and Improvers Guitar Group**

**Fiona Robbins**

We now meet at Sandon Close from 1.30 to 3pm, Monday afternoons. We have been finding things a little easier and have started to push ourselves harder, so we thought it was time we stopped thinking of ourselves as beginners. Having made considerable progress through the basics, we want now to become more proficient. The tunes we choose to play hold different challenges so we still have to knuckle down and put in some hours of practice....

The way we run our session means that we can still take beginners, as we always start with a bit of basic practice and simple warm-up. If you are new to guitar playing, it will take some time for your fingertips to “harden”, so we won’t expect you to play for long in the early stages! Being quite a social group, we are happy to take time out and help you along. Now is actually quite a good time to start as we have devised our new routine and we have also just changed venue, so all will be quite new for us all.

We have also given some thought to helping others along, so if you would like to join us for help with a similar instrument, eg banjo, come and find us – or you may simply want to join a group to play for fun.

## **Local History**

**Anne Rudderham**

We had another good turnout in March when we welcomed Adrian Gray with his talk on the *Scandals of the Lincolnshire Gentry*. We'll now be out and about until autumn and our first visit will be in April when we head to Tolethorpe Hall which is currently the home of the Stamford Shakespeare Company and the Rutland Open Air Theatre.

## **Current Affairs**

**Jean Pritchard**

I am delighted that with the arrival of another new member we have reached our maximum which can be comfortably accommodated in a sitting room. If you have been thinking of joining us but haven't got around to it, please ask to be put onto the waiting list as circumstances do change and there may well be a slot later in the year.

Subjects that were aired at our last meeting included:  
Rubbish on the A1. Whose responsibility is it to clear it?  
A poster of Lord Balfour at Oxford University was defaced.  
Is the flying of Palestinian flags causing offence?  
Religious symbols are not allowed in public in France.  
With China building up their navy should more be spend on UK maritime defence?  
With the UK state pension at a basic £11,500 per annum, is it enough? Should a more progressive pension be introduced?  
There are four million people at risk of never working again.

## **Scottish Country Dancing**

**John Aitken**

The local Scottish Country Dancers were invited to Melton Mowbay's Mencap Music and Drama Group at the end of February to entertain their members and give them an opportunity to join in some easy dances. Many dancers were members of the Grantham u3a Scottish Dance Group.

We demonstrated a number of reels, jigs and strathspeys and these were mixed with dances for the Mencap members to try by partnering the experienced dancers. They joined in The Gay Gordons, a number of other dances and finishing with Mairi's Wedding when there was enthusiastic clapping in time to the familiar music.



The dancers with some of the Mencap members.

## Crafts

Tracy Stedman

The Crafts Group recently worked on a project for St Barnabas hospice using their skills to excellent (eggcellent?) effect!  
A copy of the letter of thanks from St Barnabas is below.



Dear Tracy and all at the U3A knitting group,

**Thank you for giving our patients hope during the most challenging year. Your precious donation will make a huge difference to the lives of our patients and their families, so please know how much it means to everyone at St Barnabas Hospice.**

By kindly donating Easter eggs, knitted items or wool to our knitted novelties fundraiser, you have given St Barnabas the ability to reach out to more vulnerable people across Lincolnshire in their hour of need. Please don't just take it from me; Carina is a doctor that works on the front line and has described what your support means to her patients.

**"I would like to personally thank you for the generous donation you have made to the Hospice. The people I care for often have very complex needs, so this money could help me to spend one-on-one time with a patient to work out a pain relief medication plan tailored to them."**



Thank you so much for your support in this kind way. If you are a knitter and wish to continue creating the novelties all year round, then please do drop any completed items to us as and when they are ready. We will then be able to sell even more next year!

With warmest wishes,

*Fiona Malloch-Rear*

Community and Events Fundraising Officer SOUTH  
Fundraising Office, 12 Cardinal Close, Lincoln, LN2 4SY  
Fiona.malloch-rear@@stbarnabashospice.co.uk  
01522 540300

### **Canasta PM Group**

**Josephine Hewitt**

Important information about upcoming meetings at Manners Street. There will **not** be a meeting on Thursday 2nd of May 2024 because the room is being used as a Voting Station all day.

Also, there will not be a meeting on Thursday 6th of June 2024 because the residents at the centre are having a WW2 Victory day Anniversary celebration party during the afternoon and early evening.

I will discuss with our members a possible alternative dates or cancellation for the above dates. Please make a note in your diary or calendar.

Josephine 01476 579905

### **Guitar Group**

**Graham Welham**

Now that the clocks have changed let's hope that the weather also changes for the better! The Guitar group continues to meet every Thursday afternoon at the Christian Fellowship Church, off Belton Lane, Grantham.

We still have a few places available for any budding guitarist, who would like to come along and find out what sort of music we play during our practice sessions.

Please be aware that we don't teach guitar, but we are only too pleased to give support and help to improve guitar skills.

Later this month in the afternoon of Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> April we are visiting Maple Lodge Care Home, to play a music session for their residents.

We are always open for invitations to come along and play music at events and occasions in and around Grantham. Please feel free to either call in on one of our regular practice sessions, or to contact us through the u3a website.

### **The Ukulele group**

**Christine Watkins**

The Ukulele group continues to meet every Thursday afternoon at Belton Avenue Community Centre and we welcome new members, beginners or experienced players, to come along and join us strumming and singing along a variety of songs. We are able to lend ukuleles if you do not have an instrument but wish to try before committing. Though we are not teachers members are always willing to pass on the benefit of their knowledge to complete beginners to help build up playing skills.

Over the coming months we have been booked to lead sing-a-longs for various community groups around Grantham (open to players of all levels).

If you are interested in joining the group or would like more information please feel free to make contact with me.

PS Why don't ukulele players play hide and seek?

(Because no one will look for them).

### **Additional information**

I have received the following email; if you want further details please visit the website given or respond to the email address given

*Hello, from The National Council of Women GB I wondered if you might be interested in promoting our forthcoming conference to your membership in Grantham on April 26th or having a stand to promote the U3A in Grantham <https://ncwgb.org/ncwgbs-2024-spring-conference> . A number of our members are U3A members around the country. Please contact me for more details*

[penny.bennett@talktalk.net](mailto:penny.bennett@talktalk.net)

**Thank you to all contributors this month. Please send your contributions for the May Newsletter to [ed.granthamu3a@gmail.com](mailto:ed.granthamu3a@gmail.com) by Friday 10 May.**