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March 2024

### Chairman's Message

I would like to thank all those who attended our Annual General Meeting on 20 February. As Steve Potts pointed out, this annual event is a legal requirement for charities like ours and moreover the numbers who attend are indicative of the energy and enthusiasm of Grantham u3a as a whole. The Chair's Report gave an overview of some of the outstanding activities during the year and of the burgeoning numbers of members and of interest groups that our u3a can boast. The Treasurer, Tony Hine, explained our financial position which continues to meet the requirements of the Charity Commission and functions efficiently to provide the resources necessary for our organisation to run and at a price that continues without any increase despite these inflationary times in which we live. The AGM business concluded after 25 minutes and in time-honoured fashion the Guitar Group entertained us to dance tunes which soon got enthusiastic feet tapping and jiving.

As most members know, February and the AGM usually marks the moment when members of the Committee who have served the time limit of their office stand down, to be replaced by other volunteers (for all who give their time and expertise to any u3a do so without remuneration of any kind). We said a fond farewell to Steve Potts who brought experience, wisdom and humour to the leadership of the Committee and to Grantham u3a as a whole. We are grateful for his dedicated service to the organisation and his commitment to Grantham u3a and its members. He will continue as Leader of the Philosophy Group and participant in several other interest groups. He will be a hard act to follow as Chair.

But I will do my best!

**Your committee now looks like the following:**

Chair	John Foulkes-Jones
Vice Chair. Research Coordinator	Linda Daniel
Treasurer	Tony Hine
Secretary	Nelson Porter
Groups Coordinator	Janet Hine
Minutes Secretary	Fiona Robbins
Beacon Administrator	Andrew Weston
Membership Secretary	Angela Rose
Meetings Coordinator	Maggie Ambrose
Webpage Coordinator	Carole Troops
Member	Jenny Lewis
Member	Angela Summers
Newsletter. Coffee Mornings	Di Hale (ex-officio)
Publicity	Caroline Bowman (ex-officio)

The composition and roles filled are not set in stone at this moment nor throughout the year: the committee is empowered to co-opt new members up to a maximum of fifteen if they wish to bring specific expertise on board. Moreover, some roles are vacant at the moment but may be filled at our first meeting. New responsibilities may be created. The committee is always anxious to welcome new talent! Currently, we are looking for someone with financial, accountancy or actuarial experience who can be trained up to take on the role of Treasurer in 2025.

**Chair, John Foulkes-Jones**

**Beat the scammers**

Do you also get that feeling that we are not getting any younger? I certainly do even when I am only in my early sixties. Hence I have put a few things in place to make sure that the right decisions are being made for me when I am not able to make these decisions myself. Again, this is an area where we see more activity by the scammers who know that we are becoming easier targets when we are most vulnerable and need help.

**Tip 1:** When the time is there that we can't take the right decisions for ourselves, would it not be great to already have a contingency in place. To set up Lasting Power of Attorney ([www.gov.uk/power-of-attorney](http://www.gov.uk/power-of-attorney)) is something most of us can do ourselves, maybe with a little bit of help. There are two types which we are likely to need:

1. Property and financial affairs - This LPA covers our money and property.

2. Health and welfare – This one covers our health care and personal welfare.

**Tip 2:** And yes when the final inevitable day is there, having a Will in place will make sure our money goes to the people we want it to go to and probably need it most. Not having a Will in place makes it much easier for the “Scammers” to get a share of it (and the Government too!).

**Jacob**

### **Membership News**

We are pleased to welcome the following new members:

Cynthia Wood, David Valerio, Dave Burrows, Gill Broadbent, Hilary Woodman, Jayne Chivers, Julie Topley, Marilyn Cattell, Mike Andrews, Stephen Diggines, Steve Topley.

Group leaders are now finding Beacon very useful for easily contacting their members as members' records continue to improve with email and phone records.

**Angela Rose, Membership Secretary**

### **Beacon Administration**

After a successful renewal session, I am concentrating on finishing off all our records to the best of our joint ability. I am encouraged that so far, 493 of our 556 current members have correctly set their Beacon password. There only remain 6 members who have not managed to correctly confirm their password. This is easily overcome.

We now only have 15 members apparently without email. I would still urge these members to get one of their own even if a friend managed it for them. This can work.

Surprisingly there are more than 80 member records that do not contain a mobile number. I know this is not correct so I urge everybody to check their own record and update this field, please. At the same time, please check your emergency contact details which should be of the form - Name, Mobile number and relationship to you. One thing you can check when looking at your record is whether you are correctly registered in any group to which you believe you belong. You can see all your groups at the bottom of your record. Please make your group leader aware if you do not appear to belong to a particular group. Being properly registered in a

group makes it easy for the Group Leader to contact you by phone or email. All of the above should only need to be done once for everything to work smoothly.

**Andrew Weston, Beacon Administrator**

### **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)

### **Monthly Meetings**

Here is the programme for the next few months:

**Tuesday March 19 2024:** Bernard Bale is a journalist and broadcaster who will present a talk entitled "You must remember this!"

**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

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 –£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!).**

## 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 26 March**

**Tuesday 23 April**

**Tuesday 28 May**

## Group News

### Wildlife Group

**Kerry Brazil**

The weather forecast was high winds and heavy rain, possibly improving by the afternoon. Fortunately it did improve, and 14 members of the group had a walk around the lakes at Woodland waters.

We saw mallard and mandarin ducks, moorhens, swans, Canada and greylag geese. The snowdrops were almost over, and the daffodils were coming into flower. There were also clumps of bluebell leaves ready for the next show of colour.

Several of us proved that sticky buds (horse chestnut ) are really sticky! The elder was coming into leaf, and the blackthorn flower buds were showing. Light refreshments were enjoyed after the walk.





## Local History

Anne Rudderham

We had another great turn out in February when we welcomed Tom Lane, formerly Senior Archaeologist at Heritage Lincolnshire and the folk voice of BBC Radio Lincolnshire and, accompanied by Nigel Creasey and Teri Clark, we were entertained with some delightful folk singing along with Tom's amusing accounts of *Lincolnshire Customs and Traditions*.

March's meeting will be another new speaker for us, this time Adrian Gray on the Scandals of the Lincolnshire Gentry. Adrian is a Cambridge History graduate and the author of around 30 books on aspects of local and national history. He is historical adviser to Bassetlaw Christian Heritage and Pilgrims and Prophets Christian Heritage Tours, both of which are community groups working to develop heritage tourism in Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire and is also a member of the Nottinghamshire Local History Association Committee.

**Any u3a members who are not part of the Local History Group are also welcome to attend** but please let me know if you wish me to reserve you a place either by leaving a message on 07754 702919 or email [annerudderham23@gmail.com](mailto:annerudderham23@gmail.com). **Grantham Museum on Weds 13th March, 2pm start.** The fee (to cover venue/speaker costs) will be £3pp - payable on the door (correct change would be helpful please) - and do allow time to sign in and pay so that we can start on time. NB Car parking at Welham Street multi-storey will still be limited due to ongoing maintenance works.

## Singing For Fun

Janet Hine

This group continues to do what it says on the label!

We have an extensive and varied repertoire which we hope to add to in the near future. We currently have a few spaces for new members. Our SKDC venue recently suffered from water-damage, but fortunately a suitable alternative was speedily found. Sessions always begin with physical and vocal warm-ups, followed by some traditional Rounds, which are great fun, and satisfying to get right. We have even, on occasion, reached the dizzy heights of 4- parts! There is no pressure to be perfect, which allows members to sing up lustily. Accompanist/MC Judy is of course, a treasure! The Fun aspect is very strong and the atmosphere friendly and relaxed. Our "catering -team" provides welcome drinks and biscuits, too. All this for one little pound!

Here are some of us both socialising and singing.





### **More Crime Detection**

**Steve Potts**

We've now been meeting as a group for 10 months and we're still finding plenty of "new" authors to read. About the only conclusion you can draw from our discussions is that you can't please all of the people all of the time. There was just one book that we all agreed was really good and that was *Dissolution* by CJ Sansom. It's the first of a series about a disabled lawyer called Matthew Shardlake who provides legal and investigation services to Thomas Cromwell in Henry the Eighth's England. We can all recommend that one.

We've just chosen our books for April to June which are: *Closer than you know* by Brad Parks, *The Noble Path* by Peter May, *The Heron's Cry* by Anne Cleeves.

We meet at the Downtown Garden Centre Cafe's Community Area on the afternoon of the second Thursday of the month. We have one or two places in the group if you'd be interested in joining us. Contact information is on the website.



## **The Googling Group**

**Andrew Weston**

The Googling Group is just about to commence its 7th session with another half a dozen members and has continued to be refined as we go along. There is a waiting list that you can put yourself on by accessing the Beacon Members Portal [by Clicking Here](#) if you would like to be on the 8th session.

Alternatively, call me - Andrew - on 07836 250972

Usually, the group runs for about 8 sessions at two week intervals from 10:00 - 11.30 on a Wednesday.

## **Recorder Group**

**Cora Townson**

We're now meeting twice a month on Friday mornings at Cora's home in Barkston. Players of all abilities would be most welcome to swell our ranks.

At present, we are all playing Descant recorders, but if you play Treble or Tenor, we can also accommodate you.

Please ring Cora on 01400 250780.

## **Current Affairs**

**Jean Pritchard**

My thanks to Audrey for hosting the February meeting of the Current Affairs Group.

As usual the subjects under discussion were wide ranging and included: The knock-on effects on Students with their possible problems arising from lockdown and their lack of formal education during important A level study time. The rise in price of almost everything makes day-to-day living and after study activities, both social and 'educational' (theatre, music, discussions etc), more expensive which impinges on their inevitable debt liability post university.

Increased checks on school truancy.

The difficulty in criticising the State of Israel without risking being accused of anti-semitism.

Are blood tests, to identify early evidence of dementia, a good idea?

**Thank you to all contributors this month. Please send your contributions for the April Newsletter to [ed.granthamu3a@gmail.com](mailto:ed.granthamu3a@gmail.com) by Friday 5 April.**