



## HINCKLEY U3A Newsletter

March 2019

The February meeting at the Mary Forryan Centre was an illustrated talk by Steve Lovell from Lincolnshire, a keen bird watcher and all round naturalist. Steve spoke with great enthusiasm and clarity about British birds of prey with a voice that could be clearly heard all over the room. A real bonus! Steve showed us photos on the projector screen of many different birds of prey such as the Golden Eagle which can live up to 25 to 30 years. He pointed out that the numerous images of nest sites were courtesy of the RSPB. One interesting fact Steve mentioned was that in the Middle Ages ladies would go out walking with a Merlin (a small falcon) bird on their gloved hand. Finishing the talk the barn owl was shown in flight and we heard that there are more of these kept in captivity than there are in the wild. A very enjoyable afternoon.

For those that were interested Steve had numerous leaflets about day trips, tours, talks and courses which were enthusiastically picked up by some members.

The next meeting at the Mary Forryan Centre on March the 19<sup>th</sup> is a talk by Ian Rogerson titled 'Smile ,Just Say Cheese' commencing at 2 o'clock.

### Dates to note in March

Margaret Pickering is taking a party of U3A members, on Saturday 9th March, to the Hippodrome in Birmingham to the Magic Flute Opera.

Margaret has found this interesting article written by David Bloodworth about a U3A trip to London.....

### **The Outing**

On February 9<sup>th</sup> some 24 or so members, myself included, went on the Hinckley U3A coach trip to London to see 'When We Are Married' at the Garrick Theatre -and we had a far more memorable day than any of us could possibly imagine.

Things didn't start well for Christine and me, for just minutes into our journey to Barwell to join the coach we got caught up in tailbacks caused by a section of the A5 having been closed off. This in turn delayed the coach's departure by 15 minutes. Once underway, we all quickly settled into our journey and were making good progress. There was to be one 'comfort and coffee' stop on the M1. Expecting it to be at Toddington Services, we were mildly surprised as we drove past - but no problem, London Gateway Services was only 30 minutes further on. In fact, however, just 2 miles on we made an unplanned and very long stop when the coach broke down as the radiator overheated.

There is long term road widening work on that section of the M1 and we'd broken down in a contraflow section, so we were blocking one of the two open southbound lanes. That probably didn't endear us to the vehicles behind but very soon we became far, far less popular when a wide load simply couldn't get past. us and hence blocked the other southbound lane!

The workmen, who had already fetched water for the driver, again came up trumps by letting the driver edge the coach forward a short way and pull on to the closed off hard shoulder. They also gave us access to their Portakabin washroom (which really impressed Waiter because of the hot water on tap). After being stuck there for quite a while, a recovery truck appeared at the coach, complete with passengers and driver, was hauled up on to the back. The truck then proceeded at a very gentle pace to Junction 9 where we literally dropped off (albeit gently) at a truck stop and were told that a replacement coach was only 15 minutes drive away. After the long traffic queues, a queue of the human kind ensued. As with most U3A activities, the women in the coach ca.-ty outnumbered the men by about 5 to one. but the Gents loos at the 'greasy spoon'\* outnumbered the -sees by a similar ratio!

Looking back, that was probably the low point, for although the prevailing mood remained light-hearted, hardly anyone believed that the replacement coach would be on time (if only because of the tailbacks we had caused!! or that we would reach the theatre on time. But we were wrong, the coach did soon arrive and got us to the theatre about 50 minutes before 'curtain up', and so the luxury of getting a meal before we went in.

Despite its rave reviews, the play still surpassed expectations and the 5 hour morning trip to perspective. It was definitely more than we had bargained for, but principally we had had quite an adventure. in short we all had had a memorable day's outing.

### **Post script**

After the lecture at February's General Meeting, I was reminiscing happily about the coach trip with several fellow passengers. Since I had just floated a potential new Group, they suggested that I should also set up an Adventure group whose inaugural meeting had been that coach trip.

Anyone for a Clock Tower bungee jump ?

*David Bloodworth*

## **Group Leaders Meeting**

A meeting for group leaders will be held on 25<sup>th</sup> March at 10.00 to 12.00 in the David Herbert Room at the George Ward Centre. This follows on from last October's website workshop, when group leaders expressed interest in meeting again in March. Please can I respectfully encourage all group leaders to attend.

This time, we'll be discussing the development of the website (led by Chris Stone), General Data Protection Regulation for group leaders (led by Janice Strand), new electronic membership cards (led by Samantha Ridgway), new group leader's handbook (led by Anne Deakin), and U3A property (led by Stan Maxey). Plus anything that's on your mind!

An RSVP would be appreciated to make sure there are enough materials to hand out to everyone. If you haven't already done so, please RSVP to Anne. You'll find her contact details in the annual programme.

## **TRIP TO CROMFORD**

Cromford is a lovely village in Derbyshire, close to Matlock, and, in 1771 was the place where Richard Arkwright built the world's first water-powered cotton spinning mill. The mill and village are now a UNESCO World Heritage Site, along with the Taj Mahal and the Great Wall of China.

Janice Strand is organising a coach trip to Cromford on Monday 13 May. The trip will include a tour of the mill and village plus other optional tours and local walks. If the coach is full, the cost will be about £20.

Please book early if interested. Janice's phone number is in your annual programme.

It is hoped there is a kind U3A member, who is knowledgeable enough, to be able to repair our mobile loudspeaker.

Also if there is a graphic designer amongst our 400 members, we are looking for someone to design a poster, to advertise our local group.

Please contact Tom Berrie if you are able to help in either of the above requests.

If you are a trained First Aider or are willing to be trained, so that we have cover for our monthly meetings on a rota system, please get in touch with any committee member.