

Charity No.



1083274

Leicester Newsletter

February 2023



Dusk in Victoria Park
Picture Irene Ault

<https://u3asites.org.uk/leicester/home>

If this link does not open, just copy and paste it into your browser.

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For news from the Third Age Trust, you can sign up for your own Trust newsletter at:

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/news/newsletter#signup>

Membership Information:

Membership at the end of January stood at 402. It is now 343. 55 members have still to make contact, or are away and unable to renew until they return to this country. Sadly, their membership lapsed at the end of January, and they are no longer able to attend any u3a activities. If you know someone who has slipped through our net but wishes to continue, please put them in touch with me as soon as possible. The beginning of a new membership year always shows a significant reduction in membership, but we normally recoup and exceed this as the year progresses. The current membership stands at 337.

There have been 27 resignations. The majority because of age or frailty, and this includes some of our honorary members who are down from six to two. They have been with us since the beginning, and we send them our best wishes and thank them for their loyalty over so many years. Others have moved out of the area. A handful has become otherwise committed and a few did not find activities to suit them at times they could attend.

There have also been three deaths. Margaret Reichenbach in the autumn of 2022, and Richard Thompson and Colin Crossley earlier this month. Colin was one of our honorary and founder members. We offered our condolences to their friends and families.

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR - Tony Davison

As this is my penultimate message as Chair, I would like to encourage other members to consider doing a term on the committee. I am sure there are many of you out there who have the talents and fresh ideas. Please consider whether this could be you. You never know you may even have fun.

PROGRAMME

General meetings are held on the 2nd Tuesday of the month and start at 2:30 p.m. The doors open to members at 2:00 p.m.

NOVEMBER & JANUARY MEETING REPORTS: Neil Taylor - Groups Co-ordinator

No worse than a blunt razor!

When Keith Pyne, our Speaker Finder, asked Jonathan Goddard, Consultant Urological Surgeon at Leicester General Hospital to speak Jonathan asked, "do you want the talk to be very gory, medium gory...or just gory?" It is not clear what Keith said in reply, but one thing can be certain; Jonathan sent us all skipping away to Christmas with a wonderful talk on, as he said, our "waterworks".

Members shifted noticeably in their seats as he described what is our oldest surgical operation, the first elective one, dating from between 440 and 370 BC, the one quoted in the Hippocratic Oath: "I shall not cut for the stone (the bladder stone) but leave it to a practitioner of the craft"

When Jonathan, standing on one leg, the other kicking out in front of him, made a prising gesture with both hands forcing two sides of a cut apart, lots of clearing of throats was heard amongst the courageous audience. The process was the following: Hold Down – Press – Cut (with a knife) – Scoop. "Grease two fingers with olive oil, stretch, and pull straight out"

There was good news apparently in the 16th Century though when the Marianus Method came into being when surgeons used, ahem, apparatus. "If one cut into the perineum, one could miss out the penis" With much miming and gestures Jonathan demonstrated exactly "Pushing in and pulling down. Push into the hole and flick out" To stretch/tear and pull stones out had been the method for several hundred years but now a knife into the perineum was the way. Anaesthetic? That would come much, much later...

And the patient? One Jonathan Douglas cried, plaintively, in 1721: "I was unaware that amongst all diseases which mankind is afflicted with, none is more terrible than...A Stone in the Bladder"

There was no meeting, as usual, in December and the January meeting was a chance for members who hadn't yet done so to renew their subscription and enjoy refreshments with a picture quiz kindly provided by Veronica Matthew.

FEBRUARY MEETING: Tuesday 14th February 2023

The speaker will be Harold Parmer talking about medical dogs.

MARCH MEETING: Tuesday 14th March 2023

**ADVANCE NOTICE – The March meeting will be our AGM.
LEICESTER U3A NEEDS YOU**

IMPORTANT - You should by now have received the official notification and documents for the AGM. If you have not done so please check your Spam folder as they were sent to everyone who has an email by that method. If you haven't, contact the membership secretary without delay and she will forward you a set. Notices have been sent under the constitution as usual, but meanwhile please consider if you can offer your services to your u3a. A number of committee members are standing down and we will be looking for members to step up. Have you any admin or committee skills in a previous life? Are you one of those enthusiastic organisers? Please speak to the current committee to find out what it's all about. Without an enthusiastic and cooperative Committee your u3a cannot flourish.



WE NEED YOU

We also need people to join the audio-visual team to help with setting up the laptop, microphone & projector; and, a press officer to liaise with local media, to advertise the u3a, report on events etc. This will chiefly be the local newspapers but may extend to local radio, the Third Age Trust and (you never know) it may possibly even make East Midlands today.

If you are interested e-mail: committee@leicesteru3a.org.uk for more information.

ALL MEMBERS COFFEE MORNINGS: Sandra Barker – Hospitality and Wellbeing

Coffee mornings continue to be well attended and enjoyable. They are held on the 3rd Tuesday of the month from 10.00 am onwards at the Quaker Meeting House, Queen's Road. Why not join us for refreshments, friendship and chat.

WELFARE

Just a reminder that if you know of a member who is ill or bereaved to let Elizabeth Hassall know at: cards@leicesteru3a.org.uk

NEWS FROM THE GROUPS COORDINATOR NEIL TAYLOR

Hello everybody. Thank you for signing up to and suggesting new groups and activities. All have been noted and will be advertised at the monthly meetings, the coffee mornings, in the newsletter, and at every opportunity. Also do get in touch with me at any time at groups@leicesteru3a.org.uk to put your name down and, of course, with new ideas.

Two new groups:

1. Duplicate Bridge, played on Zoom, still wants members after a successful beginning. Contact Convenor Chris Brain at dupbridge@leicesteru3a.org.uk

2. Recently announced, the Digital Pop-Up Group, will meet quarterly on Zoom and in members' homes. The initial topic of discussion will be Just William, Jennings, Derbyshire and other great children's literature. The group is ready to start. Contact Convenor Henry Paulinski on 20cpopculture@leicesteru3a.org.uk

Groups ready to start:

I will be contacting members who have signed up to these to invite them to an initial meeting to decide the date, time, venue and Convenor.

1. Current Affairs 3
2. Social History

Possible New Groups:

- Welsh Beginners
- Guitar Starters
- Bowls: near to starting
- Creative Writing
- Ukulele
- German: near to starting.
- Italian
- Whist
- Tai Chi: I am looking into the possibility of several sessions for members to book. There is quite a bit of interest and the more members we have the more inexpensive the sessions become.

Social Events groups

- Real Ale (And Wine) Club
- Afternoon Tea

Groups Wanting New Members

- Backgammon,
- Cryptic Crosswords 1,
- Cryptic Crosswords 2,
- Gardening,
- Orienteering,

- Discovering Architecture and
- Ten Pin Bowling

Looking forward to you signing up to any of these groups.

u3a ISLAND DISCS (Formerly alright pop pickers?)

We have changed the title of this article for the purpose of diversification. Any member is invited to share their top three playlist, together with background stories. As well as **pop** and **rock** it would be interesting to get some **classical music, hymns, arias, country, folk, jazz, punk or any other genre.**

This Month Judith Paulinska shares her favourite three pop songs:

I told a friend 20 years my junior my choices and she told me: "I don't think these are pop songs". "It depends on one's age" I told her.

1. "Bridge Over Troubled Water" and only the original version, sung beautifully by Paul Simon with the voice of an angel and written by Art Garfunkle in 1970. Garfunkle said when he wrote it that he knew it was something special. He was inspired by a gospel song by the Swan Silverstones with the phrase "I'll be a bridge over deep waters, if you trust in my name." I was 13 when I first heard it and it has always been a comfort to me; a reminder of beauty in music in good and bad times.
2. "Let it be Me" by the Everly Brothers. The harmony of those two brothers was stunning. Voices genetically designed to be more than the sum of the two. The beauty stopped me in my tracks when I first heard it. The lyric "I blessed the day I met you" is MY love song for the love of my life.
3. Finally continuing with my romantic ballad theme is The Hollies "The Air That I Breath". This is an uncomplicated song written by Albert Hammond. It smacks of contentment and peace for me.

All three of these songs were instantly mind blowing and memorable for their lyrics, melodies and harmonies.

Many thanks, Judith. I am sure these will feature in lots of members' favourites. If anyone would like to share your top three with fellow members please email: newsletter@leicesteru3a.org.uk

REPORTS FROM THE GROUPS AND INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

Luncheon Club – is the second Sunday of each month. Numbers are limited so book early. Contact Ros Devine on: lunch@leicesteru3a.org.uk

Rambling – Gabi Garland Member

The Rambling Group spent a fabulous morning on Tuesday 24th January walking along the canal towpath from Aylestone Meadows to Abbey Park. We had lunch at the Loros Peppercorns Cafe in the park before returning along the towpath and then picking up the Great Central Railway Trail for our return.



Polish up your Rusty Latin – Convenor Bob Holness

We have reached a point where we are considering what we do as a group. As our name suggests, we aim for members who have done some Latin and would like to refresh and extend their knowledge. Our aim is to read original texts: but our remit also includes all aspects of classical civilizations, responding to the interests of our members. An example would be traces of the empire we can see locally. There is a wide range of subjects we can touch upon, ranging from Ancient Astronomy to Modern Linguistics. If you are interested in joining us, please contact the convenor:-
latin@leicesteru3a.org.uk

Singing for Pleasure - Margaret Potter, deputy convenor.

Wednesday 25th January was Burns Night, so, in a departure from our usual free choice meeting the singing for pleasure group, who met that day, sang traditional Scottish songs from our extensive repertoire. Interspersed with readings from Burns by our music maestro Vicky it made for a lively session. We also welcomed a new member into the group. The more the merrier. You can come along once for free to see if you enjoy it after which we make a charge to cover the room rental. If you are interested in joining us, please speak to Muriel or Margaret at singing@leicesteru3a.leicester.org.uk or on numbers in your contact list. There is no audition, and ALL voices are welcome.



Digital Photography



Then why not come and join us in the

Digital Photography Group



An example from our recent theme of 'Sky'

Meetings take place at 2.15 on the 2nd Thursday of each month at
Christ Church, Clarendon Park Road
For more information contact the group convener at
photography@leicesteru3a.org.uk

Bus Pass Tours – Convenor Denise Buchan

The BPT group is looking forward to a year of exploration and visiting new places. Although not yet while the weather is still so cold and dreary. Sightseeing and window shopping are not much fun in the pouring rain.

Our first trip of the year will therefore be on Wednesday, 29th March. No suggestions have been made yet about where the destination will be, so details will be sent to members when that has been decided. Come on folks, we need your ideas.

This year, instead of setting dates of trips a month or two ahead, I am setting firm dates which may help members plan their diaries more easily. These are:

March 29th (Wednesday)

April 14th (Friday)

May 26th (Friday)

June 7th (Wednesday)

July 27th (Thursday)

August 14th (Monday)

September 13th (Wednesday)

October 6th (Friday)

There is a provisional date booked for November 8th (Wednesday) depending on the weather and members' views. After that we will take our winter break unless we find a suitable indoor-ish type of seasonal visit to make.

I have had a suggestion that the group might like to go to Uppingham on one of our Wednesday trips to hear a lunchtime concert but there isn't a programme for that yet available. Please let me know if you would be interested in doing this.

Happy motoring, Bus Passers.

contact: email: buspass@leicesteru3a.co.uk or see your contact sheet for telephone number.

CONSERVATION, WILDLIFE & NATURAL HISTORY

The Not So Furtive Visitor – Member Tony Locke

I haven't seen a fox in my garden for ages, but yesterday (17th February) one strolled nonchalantly across the lawn.

In past years, foxes have been regular visitors. One used to nap under the roses by a path, so I and cats passed within 50cm of it. Quiet, wary eyes watched one another. There were the occasional standoffs when the cat and foxes faced one another mid lawn. Bristling fur and hisses forced the fox to back down, who, characteristically, foxily, slinked away, but with a hint of a self-respecting swagger.



I'm not a mowing maniac, so the lawn has become, at times, a Pampas. A pair of foxes and their cub would take a daily siesta in the shade of the grass. I tried not to disturb them, so they accepted my respectful distance, and we shared the garden for relaxation.

What will this summer bring? Will yesterday's visitor have found a mate, bring a cub, so the mower is put to out to grass again?

Our Garden – Member Karen Closs

I find we regularly have foxes in our garden and, intermittently, hedgehogs and a badger. The latter is very destructive but an absolute joy to watch. We also have a (very small) pond, more a large deep puddle, so every year we watch the frogs spawn appear in large quantities, hatch into tiny tadpoles which grow quite



quickly and ultimately become baby frogs. We try to encourage wildlife so a couple of years ago I bought a hive for solitary bees and to our delight we have had bees using it for two consecutive years. I try to encourage more wildlife by planting native wildflowers and observing no mow May although often come home to find the other half trying to sneak in a cut! Finally, I have an insect log close by my father's grave at Scraftoft Natural Burial Ground. Despite the significance of the place, it is very calm, teeming with native flowers, insects and birds and a very peaceful place to go for a walk.

Footnote – Tony Lock & Karen Closs

The frogs ignore my little ponds and I'd be astonished if a badger turned up. My daughter in London has parakeets flying by, so I would like to lure some to my garden. By the time this goes to print the RSPB will have held its garden bird count week.

Tony and I were wondering if other members make similar little attempts at conservation? Please do let us know. Also, whether any of our friends in the Natural History or Gardening groups can give us any tips on what we can do to encourage wildlife? It would be great to get a conversation going about how we can do our little bit with what space we have be those gardens, window boxes or simply steps to take when out and about. Please do share any tips you have. Tony would be delighted to know how he can avoid algae in his pond.

Food and Drink in Leicester – Henry Paulinski, member

Fed up with biased Trip Advisor recommendations, tired of Michelin guide reviews? Why not become a U3a guest food critic? Just nominate your favourite eating places with a brief note about them for the benefit of hungry Leicester U3a newsletter readers.

To get you started, here are some suggestions from Current Affairs 2's very own Henry Paulinski.

Favourite Indian Restaurants

When I first arrived in Leicester in 1976, most South Asian restaurants were based in the Melton Road and London Road areas, where venues like the Curry Pot and the Taj Mahal were very popular. Nowadays Indian cuisine can be found everywhere in the city. My top 3 South Asian eateries are Paddy's Marten Inn, where the black daal is excellent, Herb in Granby Street, great for vegans and vegetarians and the value for money Shivalli in Welford Road.

Lunchtime Food

Many restaurants offer "business" lunches, and my recommendations are Cafe Roma, a favourite venue for u3a Christmas lunches, the Salmon in Butts Lane for fans of a pie and a pint, and Chettinad in London Road, with great value vegetarian or meat dish options.

Evening Dining

Always dependable, The Case is an ideal place for family, friends or business colleagues to meet for a special meal, whilst lovers of Italian food will enjoy the superb cuisine of Oggi in London Road. The recently opened Sunrisa is a showcase of South American cuisine, and I can recommend the oxtail tagliatelle. Leicester's reputation as a venue for foodies is improving every year and we look forward to receiving your recommendations for future newsletters.

Has anyone been to the new Turkish restaurant at the former Saint Barnabas' Church?

Did You Know?

5th of February was British Yorkshire Pudding Day? How do you like yours? With roast beef? Toad in the hole? Or as a desert with jam? See Cartoon Corner for a giggle.

Neighbourhood Watch - Emergency Alerts System

Provided by Margaret Potter

NEW: Government Emergency Alerts system live soon

The UK government's new Emergency Alerts system will be live early this year, and you should expect to receive a test message. The system will enable people to be contacted via their mobile phone when lives are in danger.

It will be used to warn you in the event of emergencies, such as severe flooding. Emergency Alerts are sent to all compatible mobile phones within an area of risk. They don't track your location, need your phone number, or collect personal data.

Only the government and the emergency services will be able to send them. If you don't have a mobile phone, you'll still be kept informed through other channels.

If you get an Emergency Alert on your phone, you'll hear a loud, siren-like sound.

A message on your screen will tell you about the emergency and how best to respond. You'll be able to check an alert is genuine at gov.uk/alerts.

If you receive an alert, read the alert carefully and follow the instructions. You can opt out of receiving emergency alerts; for more information on how to opt out please go to gov.uk/alerts.

To find out more about Emergency Alerts, visit gov.uk/alerts.

PUZZLE CORNER - A Sudoku *(created by Cliff Ault – Member Cryptic Crossword Group)* Solution on page 19.

4				1		9		
				8				5
		6			9	1	7	
		3						
9		4						
			6				5	
2			3		4		9	
8				6		3		
			5			4		

CARTOON CORNER – MEMBER TONY LOCKE



ABOUT THE NEWSLETTER

Delivery

The newsletter is printed for those who prefer a hard copy. It is available on a first come first served basis at the monthly meeting and coffee morning. If you would like a hard copy but can't make these events the secretary is happy to send a copy by post to anyone who sends her a supply of stamps and their full address. It will, also, continue to be delivered to members by email as a pdf file before each monthly meeting.

Contributions

Thank you to all those who have submitted articles, please do keep them coming. Write and tell us about a group or activity that you have enjoyed. We would love to see more members contributing. If you prefer, we can publish it anonymously as "member". It doesn't matter whether it is a short paragraph or longer article, with or without photographs.

PHOTOS – Please remember to get permission from any people in your photos for us to publish them. This permission will be assumed if you send them to the editor.

The deadline for items to be included in the March newsletter is Friday 24th February 2023. Contributions should be sent to the Editor at: newsletter@leicesteru3a.org.uk

If you want to submit your entry as hard copy, please contact the Editor or Membership Secretary for the postal address.

Karen Closs – Newsletter Editor

SUDOKU SOLUTION

4	3	2	7	1	5	9	8	6
7	1	9	4	8	6	2	3	5
5	8	6	2	3	9	1	7	4
6	5	3	1	9	7	8	4	2
9	7	4	8	5	2	6	1	3
1	2	8	6	4	3	7	5	9
2	6	1	3	7	4	5	9	8
8	4	5	9	6	1	3	2	7
3	9	7	5	2	8	4	6	1