

Mansfield & District



Learn, laugh, live

NEWSLETTER



NOVEMBER 2020

Website: www.u3asites.org.uk/mansfield/home

Flickr: www.flickr.com/photos/mu3a2016

Facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/349190408987691/

Words from Madam Chair - Amanda Kingswell

Well, just as we thought it was safe to start easing Covid restrictions and perhaps get a little more normality...it's all tightening up again, albeit not in Nottinghamshire, but is it just a matter of time? I sincerely hope not but it does remind us all that we need to stay vigilant to stay safe.

As I've mentioned before, our daughter started University in September and has settled in well but the current restrictions have meant that most of her lectures are taking place on-line, she has hardly set foot on campus!! I'm sure that many of you have family members in the same situation...what strange times!!

Our son has a Rugby fixture at school this Saturday and the current guidelines say that they have to sanitise their hands every time they touch the ball.... that match is going to go on for a long while...(I'M KIDDING 😊😊).

Well, that's just about all from me this time so in the words of the programme Hill Street Blues...." let's be careful out there!".

Amanda x

Words from the Editor Bill Harrison

So here we are yet again, into the month of November asking ourselves, where has that year gone. And what a year this has been and still is. Whilst the confusion with recent Government decisions leaves our members needing contact with the outside world even more than ever.

We emphasise the importance of staying in touch with your loved ones, friends and families.

The Newsletter is one way of letting our members know that your Group Leaders and Committee at the U3A, strive to keep that bond on-going. **We cannot stress enough the importance of updating your contact details, so if you have changed your address, email address/ telephone numbers, please contact the Membership Secretary Jean Hatton on jean.hatton3@btinternet.com to update your details.**

I thank the Group Leaders/members for the contributions sent to me, without your input this cannot work.

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(Cover photo Martin Fish in the new "Potting Shed" studio)

IMPORTANT NOTIFICATION FROM YVONNE KENNISON

NEW AND EXCITING NEWS FOR MANSFIELD & DISTRICT U3A

First of all, here's hoping that everyone is keeping safe and well. If anyone is struggling or needing any help in any way, please don't hesitate to let me or any of the Committee know. We will do our best to help in any way we can.

Email treasurer.mansfieldu3a@gmail.com or businesssec.mansfieldu3a@gmail.com

The GOOD NEWS is that at a virtual meeting the Committee held on 16 October it was decided that for all those who have paid their membership fees for this year August 2020 to August 2021, their membership for the year 2021 to 2022 will be FREE OF CHARGE. In other words, your £12 subscription for this year will cover you until August 2022.

Therefore, if any of you have not yet paid your £12 for this year's membership, you will be exempt from the free year. Also, we must remind all those that haven't paid, (there are about 70) that you will no longer be a member and eligible to join in with your groups' activities should they be virtual or actual and you will be taken off our Facebook page as it is for members only. In order for you to take advantage of this offer, we have decided to extend the cut-off date to the end of November. Anyone paying after that date will be treated as a new member if you decide to renew and will have to pay the full membership fee and will miss out on the free year 2021/22. We don't want to lose any members due to this awful pandemic and we are trying our best to keep the group together.

We do appreciate that you haven't had much benefit from being a member of the U3A this year but we are hopeful that we can begin some virtual get-togethers starting with a QUIZ NIGHT ON 7 NOVEMBER AT 7.00pm. We have bought a licence for ZOOM which will allow up to 100 people to join in. We would therefore ask if you are a couple to share the screen. Philip, our Speaker Finder, is trying to arrange a speaker to join us on 17 November and 15 December for our Monthly Meetings which will resume virtually.

We are hoping to kickstart our ZOOM meetings on the 7 November when Pauline Boucher is putting together a quiz to test that our brain cells haven't disappeared altogether (I am seriously worried about mine!) Make it a date in your diary. "Comb hair and log onto computer at 6.45pm, engage brain and meet up with friends." No prizes but we will want to record who wins.

Details on how to log onto ZOOM meetings are shown below and the link for the Quiz Night and for the Monthly Meeting will be emailed beforehand. Anyone who has internet will be able to join in.

I will keep you informed about the Christmas Lunch as soon as we know whether we will be able to go ahead with it. We have around 28 members who wish to meet up which is

really good – fingers crossed that by December 4 we will have been released from these local restrictions and tables of six will be re-instated.

HOW TO JOIN A ZOOM MEETING

You will need a computer with audio and camera attached.

You will receive an email giving you a link starting https etc. inviting you to join the meeting at the given date and time. Click on the link.

Zoom page appears. At the bottom of the page click on “download & run Zoom”. In the bottom left-hand corner, a small box opens – click on “open file”. Zoom will be installed automatically. Your face will appear. Click on “join with video and audio” OK any boxes that appear.

If you want a trial run, please let me know.

COMMITTEE UPDATE

If anyone wishes to speak at the November Members’ meeting can they please contact Amanda Kingswell by email on: amandakings@virginmedia.com to arrange.

Details of any changes in Groups to be sent in the first instance to Lynne Payne, Groups Co-ordinator on: lynne.payne1@ntlworld.com

Walkers Group – please note the new Group Leaders are Val Hart and Ken White who are taking over from Joy and Nick Crowe

The Committee had agreed that a December Newsletter can be produced so can any items be sent to Bill Harrison via email on bill20newsletter@gmail.com by November 2020

The groups below currently have no Group Leaders, so if we can encourage anyone to take them over we would be very grateful. Help is available to anyone wishing to do so.

Current Affairs

Family History

Scrabble

Art & Art Appreciation

Cinema

Local History

Luncheon Club

U3A CHIEF EXEC SAM MAUGER IN MEDIA FOR DISCUSSING AGEIST LANGUAGE

Published: 09 October 2020

U3A Chief Exec has been in the media talking about research we carried out about language used towards older adults.

Following a survey completed by over 2,000 U3A members and the general public. Sam Mauger, CEO of The Third Age Trust, has been talking about the effect that language about age can have. People submitted the most demeaning terms they have had directed at them, revealing that sayings like 'old dear', 'codger' and 'fogey' are still used to this day.

Two in five (43 per cent) have been on the receiving end of patronising language in relation to their age and a quarter (28 per cent) say certain terms used about them are outdated.

Almost two in five (37 per cent) have been addressed with names they say are ageist.

As well as from the general public (63%), respondents to the survey say these terms are commonplace in TV programmes (65%), social media (33%) and are even used regularly by members of their family (21%).

Sam Mauger said, "Our members are vibrant, young at heart and have much to offer. They are not the stereotypes represented by these words.

We want to challenge the preconceptions around ageing. Our members want to achieve in life, be active and keep experiencing new things".

This is just the beginning of a larger project in which we combat some misconceptions about ageing.

Become a part of this amazing movement here. <http://wwwq.u3a.org.ukfind>

WRITING FOR PLEASURE GROUP Hillary Miller / Sue Ford

Homework Title: " Across the River a Light Flickered "

Write a short story or poem

Across the River a Light Flickered by Mike Allen

Palmyra, Syria - May 2010

Hamad looked carefully at the tourists climbing from the bus, wondering which one would be the best to approach. He saw the older man limp slowly towards the restaurant and walked towards him. Aged fourteen, Hamad earned his pocket money by begging from the tourists, always wary lest the police catch him.

He caught the man's eye, rubbed his stomach and pretended to eat a non-existent piece of bread in a pantomime of hunger which made the man smile as Hamad was red-cheeked and thoroughly healthy, but he pulled out some Syrian notes and handed them to the boy, rewarding his play-acting and they both laughed as Hamad said, in English 'Thank you'. The boy turned away; the money would go towards a new football shirt, he thought.

Aleppo, Syria - May 2015

The barrel bombs fell from the helicopter above and a building further down the road collapsed with a roar and a pall of dust as the bomb exploded. A sudden silence, then cries of pain and fear and Hamad ran towards the rubble which had been his home, his family's refuge for a year.

They had fled there, his mother and the three children after ISIS had swept through Palmyra in 2014, to 'liberate' oil and them from the terrible Assad regime. But then they, the 'liberators' had blown up the old Roman city, had imposed new laws on them, had tortured and killed those who had served Assad, even his father who had been a restaurant waiter in the good days. He had been betrayed by a 'friend' and had been shot.

So, the family had fled one night before any more blood had been spilt to Aleppo where Hamad had worked as a builder, had gone to college and had protested against both the regime and ISIS until both had combined to attack and destroy this most ancient and beautiful city.

Nothing remained of the building, not even the cellar where they had sheltered while he went for food. His family had died and tears were of no value for more barrels we're falling and others needed help.

Edirne Turkey / Bulgaria border - May 2016

The nameless man in the warm clothes took his money, the dollars he had fled Aleppo with, had earned and had stolen on his flight from the border to this squalid lorry park in a city that had no name. Hamad climbed into the trailer with the seven others, hid himself behind the crates, and shivered in the cold for there had been snow that day, even in May.

The door slammed. He was on his way to a new life or a new death – he did not know, and almost did not care which for at 22, he had lost hope, as he had lost home and family. This was the last chance. He had nothing save the cheap phone he had bought in Istanbul, a packet of bread, a water bottle and the thin clothes he wrapped around his body, the red cheeks and solid frame of adolescence but a memory now.

Děčín, Czech Republic / German border June 2016

The door opened and a voice echoed through the night. 'Out', it shouted. 'Out, now, you must go before the police catch you.' In the darkness of the lorry, Hamad rose, not understanding all the words and threat that followed, tripped over the other figures, one of whom at least would not continue the journey.

Now hot, he staggered to the door and jumped down, the exercise cramping his limbs so he fell at the man's feet. 'Get up, fool and go there...' He pointed to the woods that surrounded the lay-by. Hamad could hear the traffic on the motorway, but turned away as he had been told to the darkness, to where the river lay between this country and the haven of Germany where they had welcomed people like him for the past few months. At 23, he could work, he could, would, do anything.

He stumbled into the woods towards the river. At the water's edge, he waited for the signal and the boat that would carry him across. Tears stung his eyes as he remembered his father's execution and the body being dragged away by screaming fanatics to a mass grave; the building in Aleppo and the crushed remains of his mother and sisters, blood drying on their faces as he pulled them from the rubble; the misery of the flight to Turkey, the snow, the beatings of the police, the fear and despair.

Across the river, a light flickered and, for the first time in three years, hope flickered within him...

Across the River a Light Flickered by Yvonne Kennison

Across the river a light flickered. I was barely conscious. I turned my head towards the light, but the pain in my head was so strong I had to close my eyes. I could hear the sound of the water flowing beside me. "Water. light, - where am I – remember, remember." I tried to force myself to sit up, but the pain in my head made me nauseous, I realised I couldn't move my legs, panic set in. I looked towards the light across the river again, and it was getting nearer. A boat, someone was rowing a boat towards me. "Where am I - remember, remember." I closed my eyes again and let the nausea pass – Julian popped into my head – he was walking by the river and laughing. "Oh, dear God, please let me remember." I shivered; the grass was damp under my body. I couldn't move my limbs.

"You stupid woman – you don't know what you are saying" – Julian's voice came back to me "of course I am not having an affair. You get some strange ideas."

I could see his smirking face – he was laughing at me. I hated it when he laughed at me. He was always quick to laugh at me. "Remember, remember for crying out loud. Why did I think he was having an affair?"

The noise of the boat was getting louder. I could hear the oars splashing – someone had a torch – voices. I was fighting to stay conscious. We had moored our boat near the little island and were having a walk beside the river – I was going to confront him.

Why did I think my husband was seeing someone else? I tried to force myself to remember. Something about his phone. I couldn't remember. The pain was getting worse in my head, the pain in my heart was almost as bad. His face, smirking – I hated it when he laughed at me. The pressure on my legs was getting worse. I was cold and damp. I drifted in and out of consciousness. The slap, I remembered the slap and the pressure as he pushed me. He was always quick with his fists. I ran, I remembered I ran, but then what?

The boat was close by now, someone shouted out to me not to move. As if I could. I couldn't move my legs and this pain in my head. I lifted my head slightly – there was something lying across my legs I couldn't make it out in the dark – "it's all right love – we'll have this tree off you in a sec –" the men from the boat were already lifting a weight off me "bloody hell, there's another body just here and he's in a worse state" one of them said. I tried to lift my head – the pain was terrible. "All the recent rain must have weakened the roots" I heard one man say, "been a bit of a land slide by the looks of it."

"You'll be all right in a bit love" a blanket was placed over me and I welcomed the sudden comfort. I lay back and let my rescuers do their work. No need to worry now. "looks like you had a lucky escape" the man said, "sorry about your friend though." Strangely a really calm feeling came over me, I wondered if Julian had had the smirk wiped off his face.

Across the River a light Flickered Poem by Susan Bell

(Loosely based on true events, apart from the last 3 lines!!!)

Across the river a light flickered above the hotel porch
A welcome sign could just be seen as Malcolm shone his torch
In pouring rain, we stood to wait for the ferry to appear
We were at the end of a week-long trek, that had been hard, I fear.

But Malcolm he had had enough, I'm cold and wet he said
I want to cross this river and find a nice warm bed!
I begged and pleaded don't give up, tonight is our last night
But Malcolm he stood 6-foot-tall and shook with all his might.

"I've shared a tent all week with you and all you do is snore
I've hardly slept a wink at all and now it's just a bore
Don't you dare stand in my way as on this ferry I'm going
Although the river's rising swell will make it hard a `rowing.

The ferryman was nervous the weather was turning bad
Again, I said to Malcolm "to try and cross you're mad"
But he whispered to the ferryman "I'll give you extra cash"
The ferryman accepted though he knew he was being rash.

The river was in a frenzy whipped up by wind and gale
I had a dreadful feeling this crossing was going to fail
Halfway across and Malcolm stood up and called to me
"I no longer want these walking boots just you watch and see".

He tied the laces together and tossed them overboard
The ferryman he panicked "sit down you fool" he roared
It was too late; the boat was rocked then it just flipped over
And Malcom and the ferryman were both washed up at Dover!!

Across the River a Light Flickered Poem by Eileen Bell

Across the river a light flickered in the dark indigo sky,
It was a moonless night, the colour of denim jeans dye.
The water lapped quietly against the side of the boat,
It was cold and damp and he had forgotten his coat.
Shivering with shock, heart racing, he started to cry,
His persistent inner voice saying she shouldn't have lied.

Suddenly the dark was replaced with flashing blue light,
The shrill sound of alarms piercing the stillness of night.
The advancing commotion bringing him back to reality,
Flashbacks to harsh words, a struggle, the knife and fatality.
Having started he realised he couldn't stop the pointless fight,
That no amount of excuses or explaining would put things right.

More bright lights and more noise, they were getting too near,
He couldn't stand up, his legs buckled, muscles frozen with fear.
But he was glad it was over as the boat gave a violent lurch,
Heavy boots and loud voices demanding a thorough search.
Come quietly now, hold out your hands, as I wiped away a tear,
Realising she's gone and I'm alone, I'm guilty and I'm here.

Across the River a Light Flickered by Sue Ford

Across the river a light flickered. Deep in darkness a girl stood and waited, silently counting to ten then searching again for the flickering light. It was the signal. She made her way down the river bank, being careful not to slip or make any noise. At the bottom she looked around but could see no-one. The light flickered again. She heard the splash of oars as a small boat left the concealment of the river bank and started to move towards her, across the water. It was time.

She looked back but could see nothing. Everyone she loved, her home, her family, the small village she grew up in, left behind. Her elderly parents were in poor health and would not leave but begged her to go and had scraped together the money needed to start her on her journey to freedom. Free to continue her education halted by the fighting. Free to dress how she wanted, listen to music and read books of her choice. Free to marry someone she loved and not a forced marriage. All she had to do was get in the boat.

Messages had been received occasionally from others who had left. Some from Germany, others from different European countries and a few had made it to England which was her choice. All she had to do was get in the boat. Alone and frightened in the darkness, not just of crossing the river but of the journey away from the country of her birth, not knowing where she would end up and what she might have to endure to get there. She stepped forward. All she had to do was get in the boat.

Small part of my family history: ANDREA THOMPSON

The Old Manor House, Healing, Lincolnshire:

Places I lived as a child were very many indeed...eleven at least (and even more on the schools count). One of the more interesting places came about thanks to my Mum's family connections somehow (I know not how), but it ended up with my stepfather, Ronald Haig Hutchinson (my 'daddy' since I was 7 years old, when sister Rosemary was about 2 years) - getting a job as under-butler in the employment of Lady Dorothy - Viscountess Portman. A more unlikely candidate for a butler you could not imagine! Daddy was a very down to earth Derbyshire man, who called a spade, a shovel - and was not averse to adding a few expletives too. Ronald had been an Army Commando during the WW11 - and had wartime 'souvenirs' of bits of shrapnel embedded in his legs...although I never heard him complain - he would often sit and scratch his war wounds, peeling out some shrapnel - much to the annoyance of Mummy!

Mum herself had been disabled since falling down the spiral stone staircase of the Nottingham Council Office steps - thereafter walking with a pronounced limp. She was carrying my younger sister, Rosemary, a babe in arms - who escaped unscathed. Mum's limp went undiagnosed at the time...only many years later when they emigrated to Australia in 1960, did she eventually get two hip replacements.

Rosemary was about 10 years old, and Valerie Ann, my 'baby sister' would have been about 5 years, when we moved from our boarding house in Mablethorpe to the Old Manor House on Stallingborough Road, Healing, Lincolnshire. The rather grand 'Old Manor House' title must have come about as a result of a more modern Manor House being built just across the paddock field from our abode...which was where Lady Portman lived, with plenty of staff to help cater for her every need. Lady Dorothy Portman was confined to a motorised wheelchair, in which she took herself around the estate. I understand that Lady Dorothy had sustained a bad injury whilst out horse riding. But this never put her off her beloved horses. We could see the latest addition to her stables, a young foal, when we attended church each Sunday...the foal would be frolicking in the paddock at the side of the estate church. Mum christened him Ripple - as his muscles rippled as he ran from one end of his paddock to the other to greet us. I don't know what his official name was - but we were all disappointed when he went off to be trained as a racehorse.

We children were all informed on how to behave whenever we saw lady Portman: curtsy first, and don't speak until spoken to... Somehow, I could never imagine Daddy bowing and scraping to her Ladyship - but he must have done to have kept his job! If they were short of cooks at the Manor - Mum would also be called on to help out...one of the new to us recipes being delicious: our home-grown new potatoes, cooked and then buttered with a sprinkling of chopped, fresh mint. The Butler Daddy worked under was a Mr Toogood - what a lovely name (Dad said he was a lovely man too). He lived in one of the semi-detached estate houses that staff live in further along Stallingboro' Road. The Machins lived in the other one. I was to meet up with their son, Roland, many, many years later.

Our home in the Old Manor House consisted of one side of the original building - the front door opened into a large entrance hall, - an entrance shared with a friendly, small, sprightly, slender, elderly lady, Mrs Wright, who lived in the middle part of our building. Mr & Mrs Baker lived in the last part of the building - which had separate entrances...and also a high brick wall down the back yards - with a tall interconnecting gate. Clear demarcation lines drawn. In the front of the house there was a large fish

pond - with a huge weeping willow tree hanging at an angle over it from the Bakers side of the front gardens - divided this time by a mere flimsy fence. An upturned rowing boat was slowly disintegrating, rotting at the side of this pond.

Some menfolk would often come to fish in the pond...often sitting quietly on their camp stools for hours on end.

On entering our home from the front door, we turned left into a very large lounge, which had a large 1950s style tiled fireplace in the middle of the side wall, a small side window and larger window overlooking the fish pond. The Georgian windows were all deeply set in thick walls, with the interesting addition of inner folding shutters; I had never seen such high skirting boards before - think they were over twelve inches, with a moulded top part! Near the side window the heavy panelled door opened into the kitchen. It had a huge old fashioned - black-leaded, cooking range fireplace, with a large oven to the left side, with warming oven under that...over the fire a hanging hook (for kettle and pans etc.) and a water tank to the right. Thankfully we had a more modern cooker installed for our use. This old cook's range/fireplace was quickly hidden from view by Daddy building a corrugated hard-board cover - with cleverly made half-round ends to it...the whole large kitchen was then painted in cream and dark green on the bottom half of the walls.

Hanging from the high ceiling, in front of the old fireplace, was a clothes rack, with a rope pulley attached to a cleat at the side wall. We did use that sometimes, to dry clothes off in bad weather. Our dining table sat in the middle of this room with chairs around it. The large flat kitchen window let in plenty of light, though often shaded by the old trees that grew alongside the side paddock and dusty drive/road to the front pond area. The drive had a five-bar metal gate, before turning off to the right across the field to enter the new Manor House stables and grounds. We could see across this side paddock, across to the church. The kitchen sink was an old fashioned 'Butler' type, with a small draining-board to its side. We had our pots and pans, stored in the double door cupboard, built-in on the left of the fireplace, as well as our own other furnishings.

On the far wall, opposite the window, there was a door leading into Mrs Wright's quarters, kept locked, which no one was allowed to use. I think this door may have originally led into a pantry of some sort ... (I only ever went into Mrs Wright's front room and scullery). The far side of the fireplace there was another door which led into a small lobby, on the right was our back door, on the left was the return staircase leading up to two interconnecting bedrooms at the back of the property. Then on the left, a door led into a tiny sitting room, with its own small fireplace. I think these would have been servants' quarters in earlier times. Behind this room was a smaller whitewashed room, with storage shelves around three walls, and I think there were some hooks in the ceiling (where ham would have been hung to cure.) I was designated the last back bedroom as my own, it had a small window looking out over the dividing wall, across Mrs Baker's backyard (I could see/hear she kept chickens there).

My two younger sisters had the bedroom above the kitchen, whilst mum and Dad had the large front bedroom. The bathroom, such as it was, was at the top of the wide staircase leading up from the front door. Mrs Wright had a small scullery type kitchen tucked partly under the stairs, with a kitchen sink and gas rings to cook on and only a small window looking onto the back yard. Her own back door was next - between the doorway to a back room. She had a cosy front room as her lounge, all lovingly decorated with old fashioned (to me) china ornaments and heavy plush table covers and curtains, even a curtain for the door. Also, she got me interested in the bowls of tiny succulents/cacti she planted up in gravellike miniature gardens, in old shallow casserole dishes. This room overlooked

the front gardens, fish pond and Willow tree, and paddock around it and across the other side. Her bedroom was over her front lounge.

Mrs Wright's granddaughter, Barbara, invited me to join her on a long walk across the fields one sunny day - to see the bluebells at Bradley Wood. She insisted it wouldn't take us long - as we could cut straight across the Farmer's fields - as the crow flies. I seem to recall it did take us some time - the best part of a day, but well worth the effort - to get to the Wood, see the bluebells and return home. Barbara also took me for walks thru' Lady Portman's estate - although' we kept well away from her Manor House - we could see the front had a nice outlook - over the very fields we walked over. Not far in there was a small wooded area, inside the circle of trees. Barbara showed me where there were some wild orchids growing, so delicately beautiful.

Talking of 'as the crow flies' reminds me of the time Mrs Wright kindly invited me to join her for the meal she cooked of Rook stew...I was none too keen on trying this delicacy, but she was most insistent - and I have to admit it was quite tasty, just not like any other stew I had tasted before! Apparently, the estate Gamekeeper would go out to shoot the rooks/crows that pestered /damaged their crops etc, and would give a couple to Mrs Wright - who was brought up in country ways.

Mr & Mrs Baker's home I never went in any further than their kitchen - but it did have a similar front window plan as our 'half...without the 'servants' quarters though'. In our back yard was another interesting feature: a brick-built building that had a coal-shed store in one half, and the other half held our toilets. The door opened inwards to reveal a row of four - or was it five, different sized holes placed at intervals along one piece of thick bleached wood, the holes placed over receptacles used to catch all human waste (faeces & urine). Apparently, the holes were sized from large adult down to a tiny child. Thankfully there were also a couple of private cubicles, with doors; I say private but anyone so inclined could see underneath the large gap at the bottom of the doors which could be off-putting for any unsuspecting visitor!

There again - the gaps most probably were there for a good reason: to allow plenty of airflow throughout this building. The 'receptacles' full of our human waste were emptied very early every Monday morning, collected by the 'night soil' men with their noisy, rumbling cart. Needless to say, those horrible blue-bottle flies would be everywhere, and the stench in this outhouse during sunny summer weather was awful, but the door was kept shut in an attempt to keep out the flies.

Stark contrast to the mink lined toilet seat of her Ladyship!

Mrs Baker would often give Mum some of her chicken's eggs. Mum would put any, unwanted for immediate use, eggs into a large, brown glazed stoneware tub - full of Isinglass, (a sort of jelly substance, made from fish gills, that sealed the surface of eggs, thus stopping the contents inside from evaporating) ... which kept the eggs for a longer period of time? So, we always had eggs ready to use for baking etc. - although we always cracked eggs into cups before use as sometimes they did still go off.

Valerie, Rosemary and myself, all attended Healing Schools, Infants, Primary and Secondary Modern respectively, for the duration of our short stay in Healing. Although Val had to catch a school bus to be ferried to her school as it was joined with the small Great Coates Infants School, three miles away. Due to Mum's disability, it was always my job to start my sisters at any new school. Across the road from us on the corner practically, en route to school - was a semi-detached cottage that had the most

wonderfully scented wallflowers growing alongside the path to school, a pleasant start to our day. At this school I learnt how to make my own dress in the sewing class - in material with a green background plus white polka-dots, a Peter Pan collar and sleeveless, with a full skirt. Mrs Baker helped me do the biased binding to neck and armholes, so I could finish it before we moved - (yet again). I also learnt how to do the Western Roll when doing the high jump. I loved sports at this school.

Cookery lessons taught me how to bake a lemon meringue pie. Mum gave me praise (not often given) at how I had baked/ made a better lemon meringue pie than she could - so praise indeed. The evidence was swiftly eaten by us all - on the same day.

I recall my different schools by whatever book we were - either reading, or when younger having read to us. At this Healing school we read - Bulldog Drummond (one where Lakington is killed in an acid bath meant for Drummond) which really frightened me... Also in books - Mum asked me to get her the Kon-tiki Expedition - about taking a raft across oceans, from the library. There was a waiting list at that time, but we got it eventually. We were also shown a film - that was about the very different lives of Eskimos. And a newcomer to our class, all the way from Sau Paulo, Brazil, gave us a talk on how very different it is living over there to us here in Britain. We all listened intently - especially the girls - as he was a very handsome, ginger haired, young man, Colin Selby.

I also made friends with a young man whose home, converted from a long single decker bus, was parked on the waste land plot across the road from us, before the semi-detached cottages. He was a shy lad, think his name was Malcolm, but I was intrigued by his unusual home...some may say: I was bit nose! He had a marvellous fort too, with lots of miniature painted lead soldiers. He told me his family were travellers - and sure enough, they were soon on their way, travelling.

Rosemary made friends with one of the families who lived in the 'posher' area of this village - down Ford's Avenue. Their daughter invited Rosemary to a birthday party - where they had Chipolata sausages during the meal Mmmmm. The biggest novelty tho' was the fact that they had a swimming pool in their back garden...and they invited us to swim there too. I had missed the daily swim in the sea I had when we lived at Mablethorpe - so this swimming pool - albeit a one-off chance, was a great treat. Although my sister Val reminds me, she refused to paddle in the kiddie's shallow pool, as it was full of dead flies! Val also remembers getting a wasp sting on her chin - which Mum put a 'blue bag' on to reduce pain/swelling. (Blue bags were often used to whiten the white wash.)

The Post Office was on Station Road - which ran parallel with Fords Avenue. Station Road was longer, more undulating - and a good distance away from our home. One hot summer's day I was walking down to the Post Office when I overtook a lady - who turned out to be one of my teachers. She commented on what a quick walker I had been, embarrassing me to the level of bright red cheeks but I returned home at a slower pace! I was taking a parcel to post for Mum and had been instructed to make sure I 'catch the post'. The Post Office lady said it required some sealing wax on the string knots Mum had tied the parcel up with. This lady had some red sealing wax, and gave me a candle and matches to light in order to melt the wax onto the knots. I managed to do them alright until the last one - when some hot melted wax fell onto my fingers. Oh did that hurt - yes! And did the Post Office lady offer to help - NO! Instead she stood there with a wicked schadenfreude smirk across her face. I never did like going to that post office.

Just a bit further up from the Post Office was a large Grocery store - owned by the Donkersloots, their son was a bit younger than me, but every girl in my class swooned over his dark, handsome looks! I didn't mind going in that shop. Little did I know at the time that young man would end-up working with me many years later in the Diagnostic Assessment Unit for Special Needs children - when I was a Special Needs Nursery Nurse and he Head of Department.

I made friends with a girl in my class called Jennifer Canfield - she lived in a wooden bungalow further along our road. Her father went to sea - I think as a fisherman, so was away from home for long periods. Their home was called 'The Anchorage'. Her Mum made delicious egg mayonnaise sandwiches...which we took on one of our picnic outings. We walked and cycled for miles one day ending up at another friend, Janet's house, at a place called Pyewipe. (Outskirts of Grimsby). Phew - I don't know what they made in the factories nearby - but it sure smelt fishy! We went via the road that took us through Great Coates village.

It was Jennifer who took me for a walk down the other side of the Toogoods' and Machin's' homes, where the road forks and leads on the left to another village, Kelby. She pointed out where one tree had lots of tiny ribbons - mostly white, tied onto its branches, and told me that was called the Healing wish tree. Where people came to pray/make a wish for healing and tie the ribbon tags onto its branches. I've not heard about this particular tree from anyone else at that time, nor since.

We used to have a man, a Mr Holmes I think his name was, call on us selling fresh and cooked meat - and pork pies etc. He and mum must have got talking things over, and very soon we were off onto our next challenge - sorry house move. This next move meant we would be living at Jacobs Pork Butchers shop in Hainton Avenue, Grimsby. Dad would work at Smethurst's frozen foods factory (later Birds Eye) in Ladysmith Road, and Mum would manage the Pork Butchers shop - where I would learn yet more skills! AND get confirmed. AND fall in love with a Lonnie Donegan fan.



The Old Manor House healing Lincolnshire (copyright Healing Manor Hotel)

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE OLD MANOR HOUSE HEALING LINCOLNSHIRE

The original medieval manor can be located in the cellar, where Flemish bricks can be seen. This building was transformed in the 1700s and this part of the house is where the recepti are located.

In the 1890s John Maunsell Richardson, a famous Victorian racehorse trainer moved to Healing Manor and had it extended for his new wife – the Dowager Countess of Yarborough. The house was done in the Queen Anne style and there is much evidence of the Arts and Crafts style on the porch. Richardson also had built the stable block and some tithe cottages on the main road for his tenants.

In 1902 the house and land were sold to Gerald Portman, whose family had significant land holdings in and around Dorset and London. The Portman name is perhaps better known for the eponymous Portman Square which dates back to 1674.

Healing Manor was the country estate for the Portman family for many years. When Viscount Portman died in 1948 his wife continued to live here until her death in 1964, when her daughter Penelope Bowlby inherited it. Viscount Portman and his wife are buried together in the churchyard that adjoins Healing Manor.

When daughter, Penelope Bowlby died the house was purchased by a local farming family, the Peasgoods. In 2006 it was then bought by a local businessman with plans for conversion into a hotel. Unfortunately, these plans never came to fruition and the property remained empty until purchased in February 2013 by the Brennan family who lived in Healing.

A continuing link with the Portman name is the use of a lily in the hotel's logo and literature. The Portman coat of arms is dominated by a Fleur de Lys, so the incorporation of a lily in much of the hotel's literature preserves the link to the Portman name and also to the Brennan family for whom a lily has special meaning.

As of March 2018, Healing Manor Hotel is now run by Steven Bennett and Charlotte Hay, along with a team of 49 staff.

Strollers Group: Sue Howlett

On Wednesday 14 October, 18 intrepid Strollers met at Edwinstowe, we obeyed the current Covid rules by splitting into 3 groups leaving at quarter hour intervals. The morning started bright and sunny and the autumnal colours were beautiful. By the end of the morning it wasn't quite as bright but some of the groups managed to enjoy refreshments outside in a sheltered courtyard.

We started from the RSPB Visitors Centre and took the green posted woodland walk. The paths are well marked and the terrain is easy, no hills or stiles. We did pass the Major Oak towards the end of the gentle stroll. Many of the group expressed the opinion that it doesn't matter if we do the same walk every month as it is just so good to meet up with other people and as there are several eating places with outdoor facilities this may be what we do.

I will contact everyone who walked in October when we have finalised the arrangements for the next walk which will be on November 11. If you did not walk in October but would like to walk in November please contact me so that I can arrange groups taking into account the Covid rules at the time.

Strollers Dib dib, oh bugger: Dave Drew

In the blistering heat of a mid-October morning intrepid U3A Strollers met to assault the north Face of The Eiger, or was it a wander round marked tracks in the Badlands of Edwinstowe? Having cross referenced the local weather and the shipping forecast we made due note of, 'gales Cromarty, Forth and Tyne. Snow showers later.

Ian, our intrepid leader made sure we were equipped to U3A national guidance that is, carrying Kendal Mint Cake, a blanket, torch, whistle, phone and compass plus a thermos of hot coffee. He also checked we were wearing the correct outdoor clothing. After making sure all our phones showed the same GPS settings, he was finally satisfied all was well, he took umbrage when I pulled on my gas mask and tin hat accusing me of overkill.

I noted that the area had been an infantry camp in 1943-45 and who knows what we might trip over. He grudgingly accepted my point but I had to take the mask off after causing a school party of infants to run away screaming.

Taking careful bearings on the RSPB shelter we headed towards the North Pole. That is until someone spoilt the day by noting that sans a team of irritable Huskies and a sled or two, we might struggle so we settled for a 2-mile amble round the green route.

No U3A member was hurt during this walk and Dave stood down RAF Search and Rescue including the Boeing P8 Poseidon on standby if someone fell in a pond.

Honestly, you couldn't make it up. Having as a lad been thrown out of the Scouts for some reason that now escapes me, I did my Mountain Leaders Course at the RAF Mountain Rescue School Llanrhooost in Snowdonia way back in the mists of time, I'm sure we never went to these lengths except for Duke of Edinburgh's Gold Award Expeditions in harsh terrain.

Someone please tell U3A HQ they've lost the plot.... possibly because they can't map read.

Tai Chi: Lorna Pye

I have agreed to take over running these classes. We have had no meeting since 2 March but our instructor Ken has agreed to doing ZOOM classes for those with an email address,

I am making arrangements for the classes to start again at St Johns Centre in the New Year. With the Covid virus still making things very difficult, nothing can be confirmed at the moment.

TAI CHI was originated in China by monks over 2000 years ago. Over the centuries, it has taken many forms including Martial Arts. More recently, a gentler form has been developed which is highly suited to Mansfield U3A members. It has been widely used in physiotherapy, is recommended by the NHS, the British Heart Foundation and in other health areas.

In another recent study, investigators found that Tai Chi helped people with Parkinson's disease, reducing the number of falls and improving their gait.

In the coming months, we will hear more about health and well-being, self-care and be gently reminded that sitting about too long is bad for us and we should take more responsibility for improving our health.

The positive effects produced by Tai Chi are many. Study after study has shown that this practice produces profound health benefits. In the long term, it improves and sustains mobility, improves breathing and relaxation and helps with balance therefore reducing the risks in many areas.

Above all, within our group, you work amongst friends, within your own ability, standing, or sitting if needed, and feeling that you have gently exercised every part of your body (even internal bits that you cannot see). Ken really understands how our bodies work. Tai Chi, with its calm movements and focus on deep breathing, is known to reduce chronic stress and improve health and emotional well-being. With all these benefits, it comes to U3A highly recommended.

I will endeavour to keep everyone up to date

Contact: Lorna Pye

Phone: 01623 636060

Beading Group: Marilyn Jones

Sadly, we again have had to call a halt to our Beadwork Group meetings due to all being in the High Alert Group, and just as I finished and framed my Owl Bead Embroidery.

It is my interpretation based on an original drawing by Olka Kostenko.

Took only about 2 weeks to make. I hope to make another interesting embroidery soon as I have a matching frame.



The Transitions of Autumn

So, as we enter into the realms of Autumn, we see the transitions taking place in our gardens. Oh, how we wish those summer flowering bedding plants could bring us joy through the Autumn/Winter months.

So, we move on with the seasons and make the best of what we have.

Our little plot may be compact and bijoux, but it is filled with wonderful memories of visits to various Harrogate flower shows, Floriade festivals, trips to Holland and returning with bags of Tulip bulbs and numerous visits to local garden centres plus U3A garden trips, all of which have contributed to the joy that this garden bring to us and many.

These plants/bulbs all have a special place in our little garden sanctuary. We love the different colours of green that harmonise beautifully. We capture the beauty of the Acer with its vibrant Autumn colour of gold, sadly the last showing before we go on leaf duty.

We certainly hope this picture brings you a little bit of pleasure with the onset of winter and these dreary times we are experiencing.

It is a pleasure sharing it with you, and we would like to see how your gardens are coping with the transitions from Summer through Autumn and Winter.

Please Stay Safe everyone.

Kindest regards
Bill and Carole xx.



Gardening Group: Marilyn Dibble



Hello everyone,

We've certainly had a bit of a change in the weather over the past few weeks and it now feels very autumnal, especially with the nights starting to draw in! Fortunately, there is still plenty of interest in the garden to look forward to over the coming months.

This is the 7th gardening newsletter that I've sent out to clubs and societies since lockdown in March. My plan was to send out just a few until life got back to normal! However, it now looks like restrictions of group gatherings will be in place until spring, so I intend to carry on.

As I've mentioned before, zoom talks are becoming increasingly popular and with that in mind we've created a "Potting Shed" set in what used to be our stable tearoom! This means I can now give live talks and demonstrations on a range of gardening topics that you can enjoy from the comfort of your home! We use a HD video camera operated by Jill to give you high quality pictures & sound, plus close-up shots to show more detail.

As well as live demos, I can still offer PowerPoint presentations and Q&A sessions. We also have a Zoom Pro license, so if your club hasn't subscribed to Zoom, we can offer a complete package to suit your needs.



For more details of our Zoom talks and live demonstrations please feel free to contact Jill for more information on 01845 577157 or jill@martin-fish.com

Martin in the new "Potting Shed" studio!

Jobs for the garden with Martin Fish

October is often thought to be the end of the gardening year, but in fact it's the start of the autumn planting season. Trees, shrubs, roses, climbers, perennials and bulbs can all be planted now while the soil is still fairly warm to help their roots establish before winter.

Compost all green plant waste generated by clearing borders and the veg plot. Tough stems rot down faster if shredded first and never add the roots of perennial weeds to the compost heap. To seal heat into the heap, cover over with cardboard or a piece of old carpet.

Carry on planting bulbs into the garden and pots for a spring display. Tulips can wait until November to be planted when the soil is cooler.

Make sure main crop potatoes are dug out of the ground, dried and then stored in a cool, dark place. Paper sacks, hessian bags or a box with ventilation are all ideal, but never plastic containers.

Finish planting spring cabbage plants and overwintering onion s out into prepared soil in the garden. A cloche can be used to keep off heavy rain if you have one.

Harvest pumpkins, marrows and winter squashes when the skins have hardened and ripened.

Start cutting down herbaceous perennials to tidy through the borders. Any with attractive seeds heads or structural stems can be left over winter if you wish.

Plant autumn containers with a selection of hardy plants such as dwarf shrubs and evergreens, heathers, ornamental grasses and trailing ivy. Seasonal bedding can also be mixed in such as violas, pansies and primulas to give a splash of colour

There is still time to give your lawn an autumn MOT to help keep it in good condition through winter. A light scarify with a rake or electric scarifyer will remove old grass and dead plant material that has built up over summer. Any compacted areas of the lawn can be spiked with a garden fork to allow air to the roots and aid winter drainage. Finally, apply an autumn lawn feed (don't be tempted to use the last of the spring summer feed) that is low in Nitrogen and high in Phosphate and Potash, which will encourage a strong root system and induce winter hardiness and diseases resistance.

Check tree ties and make sure that climbers and plants growing up walls are firmly attached to prevent wind damage through autumn and winter.

For more weekly gardening tips and advice from Martin, visit "Pots & Trowels" on Facebook or subscribe on YouTube for free. You'll also find a selection of Jill's recipes on our website and details of our book, 'Gardening on the Menu'. www.martinfish.com

Happy gardening

Martin Fish.
www.martinfish.com

LEARN, LAUGH, LIVE

LEXOPHILES and TRUISMS sent in by ALAN MILLER

Lexophile" describes those that have a love for words, such as "you can tune a piano, but you can't tuna fish". "To write with a broken pencil is pointless."

An annual competition is held by the New York Times to see who can create the best original lexophile.

This year's submissions:

I changed my iPod's name to Titanic. It's syncing now.

England has no kidney bank, but it does have a Liverpool.

Haunted French pancakes give me the crepes.

This girl today said she recognized me from the Vegetarians Club, but I'd swear I've never met herbivore.

I know a guy who's addicted to drinking brake fluid, but he says he can stop any time.

A thief who stole a calendar got twelve months.

When the smog lifts in Los Angeles U.C.L.A.

I got some batteries that were given out free of charge.

A dentist and a manicurist married. They fought tooth and nail.

A will is a dead giveaway.

With her marriage, she got a new name and a dress.

Police were summoned to a Day-care Centre where a three-year-old was resisting a rest.

Did you hear about the fellow whose entire left side was cut off? He's all right now.

A bicycle can't stand alone; it's just two tired.

The guy who fell onto an upholstery machine last week is now fully recovered.

He had a photographic memory but it was never fully developed.

When she saw her first strands of grey hair she thought she'd dye.

Acupuncture is a jab well done. That's the point of it.

I didn't like my beard at first. Then it grew on me.

Did you hear about the crossed-eyed teacher who lost her job because she couldn't control her pupils?

When you get a bladder infection, urine trouble.

When chemists die, they barium.

I stayed up all night to see where the sun went, and then it dawned on me.

I'm reading a book about anti-gravity. I just can't put it down.

Those who get too big for their pants will be totally exposed in the end

TRUISMS:

When one door closes and another door opens, you are probably in prison.

To me, "drink responsibly" means don't spill it.

Age 60 might be the new 40, but 9:00 pm is the new midnight.

It's the start of a brand-new day, and I'm off like a herd of turtles.

The older I get, the earlier it gets late.

When I say, "The other day," I could be referring to any time between yesterday and 15 years ago.

I remember being able to get up without making sound effects.

I had my patience tested. I'm negative

Remember, if you lose a sock in the dryer, it comes back as a Tupperware lid that doesn't fit any of your containers.

If you're sitting in public and a stranger takes the seat next to you, just stare straight ahead and say, "Did you bring the money?"

When you ask me what I am doing today, and I say "nothing," it does not mean I am available. It means I am doing nothing.

I finally got eight hours of sleep. It took me three days, but whatever.

I run like the winded.

I hate when a couple argues in public, and I missed the beginning and don't know whose side I'm on.

When someone asks what I did over the weekend, I squint and ask, "Why, what did you hear?"

When you do squats, are your knees supposed to sound like a goat chewing on an aluminium can stuffed with celery?

I don't mean to interrupt people. I just randomly remember things and get really excited.

When I ask for directions, please don't use words like "east."

Don't bother walking a mile in my shoes. That would be boring. Spend 30 seconds in my head. That'll freak you right out.

Sometimes, someone unexpected comes into your life out of nowhere, makes your heart race, and changes you forever. We call those people cops.

My luck is like a bald guy who just won a comb.

ADULT:

A person who has stopped growing at both ends and is now growing in the middle.

BEAUTY PARLOR:

A place where women curl up and dye.

CANNIBAL:

Someone who is fed up with people.

CHICKENS:

The only animals you eat before they are born and after they are dead.

COMMITTEE:

A body that keeps minutes and wastes hours.

DUST:

Mud with the juice squeezed out.

EGOTIST:

Someone who is usually me-deep in conversation

HANDKERCHIEF:

Cold storage.

INFLATION:

Cutting money in half without damaging the paper.

MOSQUITO:

An insect that makes you like flies better.

RAISIN:

Grape with a sunburn.

SECRET:

Something you tell to one person at a time.

SKELETON:

A bunch of bones with the person scraped off.

TOOTHACHE:

The pain that drives you to extraction.

TOMORROW:

One of the greatest labour-saving devices of today.

YAWN:

An honest opinion openly expressed.

And MY Personal Favourite!!

WRINKLES:

Something other people have, Similar to my character lines.

Editors signing off: Bill Harrison

Many thanks to all who have contributed to this War and Peace edition of the November Newsletter. Without your continued support and commitment, the Newsletter would not happen.

A BIG thank you to my wonderful band of proof readers, who do an amazing job.

So, as we close this chapter of the November Newsletter, I turn my thoughts and your contributions to the December edition of the Newsletter, (we don't do Bah Humbug) as I feel there is no better time to embrace Christmas and introduce ourselves.

Therefore, I would like your contributions with a Christmas theme sent to:
bill20newsletter@gmail.com

Kindest regards to you all

Bill Harrison

The GOOD NEWS is that at a virtual meeting of the Committee held on 16 October it was decided that for all those who have paid their membership fees for this year August 2020 to August 2021, BEFORE THE END OF NOVEMBER, their membership for the year 2021 to 2022 will be FREE OF CHARGE. In other words, your £12 subscription for this year will cover you until August 2022.

Subscriptions 2020/2021. Current members: £12 New members: £17. Associate members £8.50. Cheques payable to *Mansfield and District U3A*.

The **Membership Renewal Form** can be downloaded from the website or will be available from the Treasurer at the monthly meetings.

Please Note: All current members must complete all sections of the Membership Renewal Form to comply with Data Protection laws when paying their subscriptions. Thank you.

Online Banking is now available to members to pay their subscriptions online. As publishing details for this facility has compromised its security, members are asked to apply to the Treasurer.

Event and Visit Payments

Members are reminded that deposits and payments for events and visits organised by Mansfield U3A and its interest groups are non-refundable, but places may be offered to others. Please note: if you go on a trip/visit organised by a company, cheques for the event must be made out to the company, not Mansfield U3A.

Changes of Address, etc. Please contact the Membership Secretary, Jean Hatton on (0793 5707582) if you've changed your address, phone number or email recently so that she can update our records.

Disclaimer

The views expressed here are those of the contributors only, and do not necessarily reflect those of the editor, the Committee of Mansfield U3A or the Third Age Trust. Nor can any responsibility be accepted for members' announcements or any errors that may occur.

Please send contributions for the next issue to bill20newsletter@gmail.com or by hand to Bill Harrison as soon as you can and by the 1st of the month at the latest. Thanks!

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