

PARK NOTTINGHAM u3a

NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2023

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

As the optimism I expressed about the weather in my column last month was misplaced, I shall refrain from meteorological comment this time. Suffice it to say 'welcome to Spring - eventually'.

The newsletter this month contains the usual record of activities you may have engaged with (or missed) and those we can look forward to over the coming month or so.

Firstly, the monthly meeting and the talk by Bethan McElroy was particularly well attended. We heard all about the demands of growing for a Michelin-starred kitchen. We were able to taste and smell some produce and got advice on what we should grow for our own kitchens. A great talk. Thank you, Sarah, for organising it.

Rod Mitchel has returned with more travel anecdotes and advice. Also, with his Photography hat on, he has some useful experience on using just a mobile phone - no need for a big expensive camera. D..n!

The English Language Group has also found much literary and literal debate on subjects ranging from contradictory states to Schrödinger's Cat, the tomato shortage to industrial disputes.

Members of the Book Club, Fine Dining Group, MahJong, Canasta, Local History etc. have all been having a fine old time over the last few weeks and are not afraid to tell us all about it.

Looking forward, there are trips out for Fine Dining (in May), and Local History; walks of various lengths, Plants and Picnics activities etc. We can also look forward to joining in with the NPRA Coronation event, and our own Summer Party on July 4th.

The newsletter also includes a note from Jane Ellis, our Groups Coordinator, giving an overview of Group Activity.

I should perhaps politely remind those of you who have not yet renewed your membership to please do so soon. Your current subscription expires at the end of March, and will terminate in the next few weeks. To carry on enjoying our groups and this newsletter, please let Ian have your form and payment asap.

Lastly, I must again thank Ravi, who, despite being on the other side of the world, has assembled this newsletter for us.

On behalf of all the contributors, I do hope you enjoy reading it.

Graham Edwards – Chair

March Monthly Meeting – Sarah Waites

The March Monthly talk on **Tuesday, 21st March**, “**Growing for a Michelin chef – tips, tricks and getting flavour into your gardens**” was by **Bethan MacIlroy**.

Bethan, Park dweller and head gardener in Sat Bains for a year, arrived with boxes of plants, seeds, cuttings and bottled fruit. She ran through some of the most fascinating, familiar and exotic plants and herbs that she grew in the Sat Bains garden and in her allotment in Nottingham, revealing her background as a biologist. The meat of the talk was plants, which she flavoured with anecdotes from the day to day, season to season gardening. Who knew that Nottingham firemen now own the huge Closed Loop Mechanical Composter from the garden?



When she applied for the job, she was asked to list the top ten plants she would grow there. They were: Anise Hyssop, Garlic Chives, Winter Savoury, Alpine strawberries, Artichokes (Jerusalem and Globe), Agastache-Sunset, Basil (Lemon, Lime, Purple,



Cinnamon, Thai, Crinkle leaved, Oca, Mashua, Perilla/Shisho) – a list that impressed both Sat Bains – who gave her the job – and our audience.

The Sat Bains philosophy includes *seasons having to rule the kitchen and the role in life for cooks being to extract flavour*. Bethan had to deliver the different plants each season – no ordinary gardening job. The pressure must have been immense in growing, foraging, and trialling different tastes, some so exotic that it must have been hard sometimes to persuade the chefs to use them.

The gardens consisted of 90 raised beds and 2 greenhouses. The chef's greenhouse had artificial grass and was kept in such a picturesque way that it became incorporated into the Sat Bains dining experience.

Bethan's tips for us included: use only the best compost – Fertile Fibre Seed compost; and the best seeds – CN Seeds from Norfolk; that everyone should grow lemon verberna; mulch and water our gardens in the summer; take cuttings in autumn, and so much more. She passed round 'electric daisies' to taste which fizzed in the mouth, offered salted gooseberries and many leaves to squeeze and smell. It was altogether a sensory rich and successful u3a talk.

u3a Talk Tuesday, 18th April 2023

This will be by either Professor Mark Gillott, professor of Sustainable Building Design from the Department of Architecture and the Built Environment or his wife, Professor Lucelia Rodrigues, professor of Sustainable and Resilient Cities in the Faculty of engineering, talking to us about their cutting-edge research.

The Monthly Meeting and talk will be at the **Castle Lawn Tennis Club** on Tennis Drive once again. We will meet at 10.30am for coffee, with the speaker at 11.00am.

Computer Help! – from Graham Edwards

Some members may feel that their computer skills are not sufficient to do all the things they want to on their laptops, tablets etc. Age UK is offering FREE local Digital Skill Training on a one-to-one basis. Full details are available on the website, under their Digital Inclusion Programme. Alternatively, you can contact them by phone (0115 841 4470) or email digitalinclusion@ageuknotts.org.uk.

For those of you who have a specific problem with your technology (computers, tablets, emails, WhatsApp, etc.), or know a member who does, we may be able to help internally. Please contact Graham Edwards at chair3.parknottinghamu3a@gmail.com in the first instance, and we will try to help.

Travel Notes: by Rod Mitchell

There was something of a Twitter storm recently about giving tips in restaurants. This



emanated from the USA where a 20% tip is almost obligatory, and woe betide anybody who gives less than that. I have never travelled to the USA and have no desire to do so. I have learnt that in most states, the minimum wage level is based on the assumption that catering industry workers will receive a set amount in tips (about \$5–6 an hour), a scandalous state of affairs in my view. I am personally opposed to tipping on the grounds it is demeaning and

supports out-dated and oppressive employment practices. I recognise this may be a minority view and will defer to the majority when dining out with friends, unless of course we all agree the service was ****.

I gather tipping your cabin steward has to be factored into the cost of any sea or river cruise, which is why I have avoided this type of holiday. My first few rail tours were with Great Rail Journeys, but I always ignored their request to tip the tour manager. My objection was based on the fact that the tour price included the services of a tour manager. I was further exasperated when some tour managers had less knowledge than me of the tour's destinations. Eventually I switched to the Railway Touring Company, who organise rail tours in the UK, Ireland and Europe, as well as their popular steam-hauled day excursions. Joining instructions included a request not to organise whip-rounds for the tour manager, tour guides or coach drivers as their services were included in the tour price. On my recent tours with RTC this was not spelt out, but I assumed the policy remained the same. The most recent tour ('Railways and World War Two History in Italy') was a new venture for them, and many of the tour group were RTC newbies, including some u3a members from Hucknall and Retford. The tour manager, whom I'd met on a previous tour, was excellent. In Rome and for the Italian Campaign visits to Monte Cassino, Anzio, the war cemeteries and memorials we had a tour guide, Daniela, whose knowledge of the campaign was encyclopaedic. Nonetheless, at the end of the tour I was a little surprised when somebody organised collections for the tour manager and tour guide. Along with a couple of others, I declined to contribute, sticking to the line we had already paid for their services as detailed in the tour invoice. Once I got home, I emailed RTC to seek some clarification on this issue. In their reply they stated there was no policy on tips and gratuities, and that it was a matter of individual conscience. I stated my opinion and

pointed out that, whilst no ill feeling had arisen on this occasion, the issue was potentially divisive and whip rounds ought to be discouraged unless the group was unanimous.

A tour with a World War Two theme can involve visits to places associated with war crimes, giving rise to emotional distress for some. In Rome the tour group visited the Mausoleo Fossa Ardeatine. The **Ardeatine massacre**, or **Fosse Ardeatine massacre** was a mass killing of 335 civilians and political prisoners carried out in Rome on 24th March 1944 by German occupation troops during the World War Two as a reprisal for the Via Rasella attack in central Rome against an SS police regiment the previous day. The site was subsequently declared a memorial cemetery and National Monument and is now open to the public. Our tour guide Daniella gave a full account of the massacre before we went in. This convinced me it would be highly disrespectful to take photographs and I put my camera away. Several others agreed with me and had a similar emotional response. Others made a different choice (the wrong one I believe) and snapped away with their mobiles in a place where innocent people were shot to death. Was I right? Let me know what you think.

I'm cautiously optimistic that the UK rail strikes will have ended before Spring, though I have been wrong about this before. However, French workers are engaged in a big fight with President Macron about the retirement age, resulting in disruption to air and rail travel. Eurostar services to Paris are largely unaffected, but onward travel to other parts of France and neighbouring countries may be difficult, despite minimum service levels being in place. I am therefore planning itineraries which miss out France. I've watched some nice videos about the Brittany Ferries service from Portsmouth to Santander, which gets you to Spain in a leisurely way. The main snag is the long hack to Portsmouth via London. From Santander there are regular trains to Madrid, or a series of slow trains can get you to Vigo and then down to Porto and ultimately Lisbon. Believe it or not there is no direct train service between Madrid and Lisbon, which now has the dubious accolade of being Europe's top 'party' destination. Oh well, forget 'flight shame' then and bookmark the airlines websites.

Next month; Switzerland's secret WW II forts and toasted cheese; Wi-fi on trains and buses; Scams, pickpockets and other perils of travel. Let me know your experiences.

roderic.mitchell56@gmail.com.

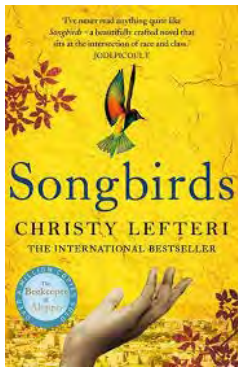
NEWS FROM THE INTEREST GROUPS

Book Club – Convenor, Liz Gilder

The Book Club's recent read was **Sorrow and Bliss** by **Meg Mason**. Everyone tells Martha she is clever and beautiful, a brilliant writer who has been loved every day of her adult life by one man, her husband Patrick. So why is everything broken? Maybe Martha is just someone who finds it harder to be alive than most people, or maybe – as she has long believed – there is something wrong with her. Forced to return to her childhood home to live with her dysfunctional, bohemian parents (but without the help of her devoted, foul-mouthed sister Ingrid), Martha has one last chance to find out whether a life is ever too broken to fix – or whether, maybe, by starting over, she will get to write a better ending for herself. Views at the book club were very mixed with some hating the main character of the book and some admiring the writing style of the author!!



Our next read is **Songbirds** by **Christy Lefteri**. Nisha has crossed oceans to give her child a future. By day she cares for Petra's daughter; at night she mothers her own little girl by the light of a phone. One day, Nisha vanishes. No one cares about the disappearance of a domestic worker, except Petra, and Nisha's lover, Yiannis. As they set out to search for her, they realise how little they knew about Nisha. What they uncover will change them both forever. Set in her native Cyprus, Christy Lefteri has crafted a triumphant follow up to *The Bee Keeper of Aleppo*, which illuminates the power of the human spirit, and the enduring love of a mother for her child. We will be meeting with a slight change to the date on **Monday, 24th April at 4.00 p.m.** at a member's house.



To join the Book Club, contact egilder@peoplemarketing.co.uk.

Canasta Club – Convenor, Jane Ellis

Since the last update in December, the Canasta players have played fortnightly – totalling six games up until the end of March. Our rota of meeting at players' homes is working well – particularly during the colder darker months when our surroundings have been made even more homely with tea and cakes on several occasions. Thank you to those that have hosted and provided refreshments.



Originally the group planned to hold afternoon games twice a month in the winter and drop down to once a month in the summer months. However, as we are really getting the hang of 'Hand and Foot' now and enjoying the opportunity to play, we have decided to meet fortnightly as a matter of course. This does not mean that every meeting is compulsory, just that if we have fortnightly opportunities to play, those that want to play more frequently can. It also means that if someone is away or unable to make a particular date, then there will only be a two week wait to play. Our rota is going to change a little from April 2023 – with games being arranged on the first and third Thursdays in the month (see below).

We have planned our next three months play. Here are our dates for meetings in early 2023, with all games played between **3.00pm – 5.30pm**.

April 6th and 20th

May 4th and 18th

June 8th and 22nd

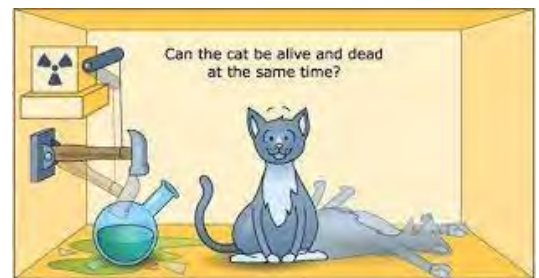
If anyone would like to join the group and learn the ropes, we would be delighted to see you – please get in touch with Jane Ellis ellisjane215@gmail.com.

English Language Group – *Convenor, Margaret Wiedemann*

The grammatical month lurched into life with a photo of a dumpster, or skip in UK English, bearing the stencilled legend "Empty when full". Captioned "Schrödinger's Dumpster", it ushered in a fascinating train of speculation about contradictory states via the unlikely route of trendy Functional Fitness Theory. In case there are readers unfamiliar with Functional Fitness, it's exercise intended to strengthen core muscles for everyday tasks, whereas if you're lifting weights in order to improve your beach body, as many of us no doubt are, it doesn't count as "functional".



So if a "functional" dog is one that encourages you to stay healthy by needing to be taken for walks, is there any sense in which a cat that goes out alone on the tiles could convincingly be described as "non-functional"? Applying metaphysics to the conundrum, ELG members asked whether the cat in question could be said to exist at all if you don't know where it is and can't hear its raucous miaow. Which brought us full circle back to Schrödinger's Cat, the entity that does and doesn't exist simultaneously if you have no means of telling which is true.



Moving hastily on to the stressful weeks of tomato shortage, how would we re-hyphenate the headline "Always-available veg recipes you can rely on through shortages"? Surely what we're looking for here is available veg rather than available recipes, so shouldn't it be "always-available-veg"? A suggestion that it could be rephrased as "recipes for vegetable shortages" was quickly shot down as possibly implying that you're trying to create shortages rather than alleviate them, as in "recipes for disaster".

The headline "Teachers agree to government talks as junior doctors urged to sit down" was probably meant to evoke the give and take of a round-table negotiation, but for the ex-teachers in the English Language Group it suggested an industrial dispute being settled by the accusatory finger and hard stare of an old-fashioned classroom battleaxe. There's a thought. If you too are a keen scrutineer of the pitfalls and pratfalls of the daily press, join us by emailing mjwh57@gmail.com.

Film Group – Convenor, Ian Henderson

March's film was from South Korea, which is increasingly providing us with intriguing work whilst giving insights into Korean life. **'Broker'** concerned a poor unmarried young woman who leaves her new-born at a 'baby box' for unwanted babies but, on changing her mind, finds that a young couple with a side-line in sourcing babies for wealthy childless couples had whisked it away to be illegally adopted. She finds, and joins forces with, them to find worthy adoptive parents for her baby. It did well at the 2022 Cannes Film Festival with the lead male, Song Kang-Ho, winning Best Actor.



On paper it sounds morally dubious, potentially sentimental and hardly a bundle of laughs, but in the hands of an exceptional director it proved to be a fascinating and humorous story. The concept of a baby box is known in other countries but, in reality, there is only one in South Korea (the film does not suggest that it is portraying that one, though, which is in a different city to where the story is set).

The script shines a light on Korean attitudes to contraception, abortion (illegal until 2019) and adoption (legal but socially frowned upon) without labouring the points. In doing so its moral basis becomes less problematic. Excellent performances (particularly the lead actor and a 7-year-old boy) explored what a 'family' means and how misfits can find support in the absence of traditional models.

We had a very interesting discussion on the merits of the film and the issues it threw up, and we helped each other to clarify points that we struggled with in the action.

Interestingly, the group disagreed on what happened to the baby at the end (one of those "three years later" scenarios) with several different outcomes posited. After much discussion on the reasons for individual views we were no further on and agreed to continue to amicably disagree. We all felt it was an enjoyable film and gave it an average score of 7.8/10.

Our next film is **'God's Creatures'** an Irish family drama with Emma Watson and Paul Mescal. We meet on **Friday, 7th April @4pm** to share views. If you are not part of our WhatsApp group and want to join us let me know at ianhenderson73@gmail.com You are very welcome to come and see how we operate even if you haven't seen the film.

Fine Dining Group – Convenor, Adrienne Lee

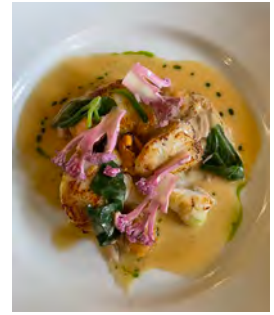


We visited **The Olive Branch** in March, a gastro-pub with rooms in Clipsham, Rutland. Fourteen keen diners were divided in their opinion of this well-reviewed spot. It serves Modern British food and we chose from the short 'Lunch for Less' menu, with only two choices per course, at £29.50 for two courses and £7.50 for a third. There was a separate vegetarian menu on demand.

We had the attractive Barn room to ourselves which always makes a difference to our sense of occasion when we can manage it.

Bread was plentiful and self-serve from whole loaves, and the cheddar soup was roundly praised. The other starter of homemade black pudding with spirals of apple, curried pickle onion and crispy pork was fine but lacked 'oomph' – a little bland.

The mains caused the division in the group. Cod Cheeks (*pictured right*) got high marks, but the pork tenderloin did not. Although mine was tender enough, others reported 'chewy' and 'tough' and marked it down as a result. The vegetarian main of veg ragout was also deemed underwhelming.



Those who had dessert (rhubarb with pistachio and meringue, and dark chocolate torte with beer ice cream) seemed well satisfied. Service was slow (possibly due to trying to serve our large group simultaneously?) but not everyone minded that as it gave time to chat in a very pleasant environment. It did affect the scoring of some, though.

Overall, it was a very convivial occasion but with scores ranging from 4 to 9/10 we were never going to agree on the food value. An average score of 6/10.

Next, we are at **Iberico**, Nottingham's long-standing tapas restaurant on **Tuesday, 28th March** (already fully booked) and **Perkins** at Plumtree on **Wednesday, 3rd May**.

If you want to join us, contact Adrienne at adriennesuperade@gmail.com

Report by Ian Henderson

Local History Group – *Convenor, Stephen Hyde*



Read all about the History Group's visit to **Lincoln City** on **Friday, 31st March** in the May newsletter. The group will be taking in spots of historical interest in and around Lincoln Cathedral under the tutelage of an experienced guide.

If you are interested in the activities of this group, please reach out on stephen@hydemail.co.uk or 01159415598.

MahJong Group – *Convenor Graham Edwards*

Despite some members being unable to attend because of illness, the MahJong group managed to field enough players to have an afternoon of games on **Monday 6th March**.



Our next meeting is on **Monday 3rd April at 3.30 pm**. We will be meeting at a member's house (with refreshments!). Members on the MahJong mailing list will receive an email nearer the time, detailing the arrangements for the meeting.

If you are interested in joining us, and have not added your name to the list, please drop me a note at grahamedwards542@gmail.com. Previous experience is not necessary.

Photography Group – Convenor, Rod Mitchell

Photography Group members are currently engaged in creating images with the theme of “Bridge”. The results of their efforts will appear in the May Newsletter. This gives me the opportunity to share some thoughts and suggestions on mobile phone photography.

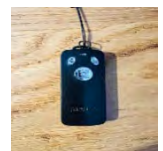


It's the early 1980s and a sweaty, sold-out Boomtown Rats gig at Rock City. Lots of people have their arms aloft, and lead singer Bob Geldof steps to the front of the stage. He pulls out a cheap camera and takes a photo of the audience, as he has done at every gig on the tour when the band play “Having My Picture Taken”, a track from their latest LP.

Fast forward to 2019 and David Byrne's “American Utopia” show has come to the Ice Arena. I have a seat in the second row, but my view is obscured by people with their arms aloft. Except they're not applauding, but clutching their mobiles and filming the show, or filming themselves! One of the best rock or pop shows I have ever seen, “American Utopia” had already been filmed and is currently still available to stream, so I am bewildered that anybody would want to make an amateur video of this or any other live gig. I use my iPhone for a good portion of my photography (including the odd selfie) and the occasional bit of video, as well as to scan menus, notices, timetables, and other useful information. Were I inclined to join the ranks of YouTube vloggers, I would learn the skills needed to turn my footage into something acceptable for public viewing.

In some situations, the camera phone has some advantages over a DSLR camera. As one YouTuber pointed out recently, it can be used in places where photography or filming is banned. He cited the example of St. Paul's Cathedral where signs prohibiting cameras and filming are posted outside, but inside hordes of tourists are waving their mobiles in the air! My recent tour to Italy included a visit to the National Railway Museum near Naples. Those of us with “proper” cameras were required to sign a release form confirming any photos taken would be for private use only. A camera phone is also handy for street photography, but it's important to be streetwise and scout any location. Here's a few things I have found useful:

- A Bluetooth remote control. You can pick up one of these for about a tenner on Amazon. Pick one with a replaceable battery and an on/off switch. Attach a wrist strap or put it on your keyring. Switch it on and pair it with your phone.
- A wrist strap or a lanyard attached to your phone's case (to prevent your phone being snatched).



- A small tripod which can double as a selfie stick or camera grip. Some are small enough to fit in a pocket or handbag. Equipped with this and the remote you can set up a selfie using the back camera lens; take a photo from ankle or knee height; or do shots of a church ceiling.



Before firing up your phone's camera, have a look round your location. Early in March I was in



Milan and having a wander round the piazza in front the Duomo, adjacent to which is the Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II. I have my phone in my right hand, looking like I'm checking my messages. My left hand is in my pocket, finger on button, and, hey! here come some very well-dressed security guards! At most tourist hotspots in Italy there's a strong police presence, but it's always advisable to check around before taking a selfie. At the Spanish Steps in Rome, I made sure I stood near the two police officers patrolling the crowds. A couple of unpleasant incidents on a previous visit to Italy had reinforced the need to be aware of who is in the vicinity, but also to be more discrete, hence the use of a remote control.

Plants and Picnics – *Convenor, Marion Martin*

This month has been one of those rare occasions where the fates conspired, and we were unable to meet up in person, so rather less to report.

However, our WhatsApp group has been busy, with considerable discussion around how to deter squirrels from eating your bulbs (Tabasco? Chilli flakes? Spiky protection? Or maybe just feed them something more tasty?), and how to test your soil quality by planting cotton underpants (I'm not kidding!)



We're enjoying the spring display, we've had the Equinox, and the forecast is for a bumper year for blossom. We're all fired up with lots of enthusiasm. If you have a garden though, just stop and look and listen, and enjoy the moment as it is all poised ready to burst into life again. Magical!

If you're interested in joining this group, please contact Marion Martin at PNu3aPandP@gmail.com.

Walking Groups

Short Walks – *Convenor, Andrew Martin*

A week earlier than usual (the first Tuesday instead of the second), our March Short Walk was a 4-mile circular tour of historical sites near to The Park. A group of six walkers met outside the Squash Club and headed for the Park Tunnel, passing the Gladstone Memorial on the way. At the top of Derby Road, we paused to look at the development of **Canning Circus**, still an important entry point to the city. This meeting of six roads was once the burial site for murderers and those who died by suicide. It was thought that their troubled souls would be confused by the many roads and not be able to find their way out.



On into the **General Cemetery**, we considered the proliferation of war graves dotted around. Across the road, in **The Arboretum**, we passed a couple of interesting statues before reaching the Chinese Pagoda with its Crimean cannons and Chinese bell. All around us were signs that Spring is on its way. Our next stop was at the **Church (Rock) Cemetery**. We visited the remains of the sand quarries that give the cemetery its local name, including the caves in St Ann's Valley. We were given special access to this area (usually locked) so that we could see the Paupers' Graves where many children were interred in mass graves following the



Diphtheria and Whooping Cough epidemics before the First World War and the flu epidemic just after the war. On our way out, we found the grave of Watson Fothergill. It's not a very grand monument, so is easy to miss. After a break for coffee and cake at the delightful Homemade Café in The Forest, we weaved our way back to The Park through Waterloo Crescent and Waterloo Promenade.

The next Short Walk will be on **Tuesday, 11th April**. We will travel by bus to **Edwalton** and explore green spaces there before finding the southern end of **The Green Line** through West Bridgford. This is the former Midland railway line that was closed in 1969 and became a designated Local Wildlife Site in 1989. Our walk will follow the Green Line to its northern end in the centre of West Bridgford. The walk is mainly flat, and the total length is under 3 miles. Full details will be sent out to those on the Walks email list about a week in advance.

Long Walks – *Convenor, Graham Edwards*

Long Walk Wednesday, 1st March 2023: Sandiacre to Ilkeston

This was the February walk, delayed for domestic reasons, and thus too late to appear in the March newsletter.

The temporary change of walk day to Wednesday was not an unmitigated success, from an attendance point of view, as it meant a clash with other u3a events.

Nevertheless, four of us set off on a cold dull, but mostly dry day from Sandiacre on a fairly simple, mostly flat route. The route initially followed the Erewash Canal northwards, through a semi-urban landscape.



The Erewash Valley hosts a lot of evidence of historical and more recent industrial and transport activity, including two canals, the railway and a short section of the M1, as well as mills and factories.

We then climbed up to the path which follows the route of the Nottingham Canal. This canal is less well preserved, and in places is now sadly merely a ditch. However, the elevation gave us better views as we walked on to the outskirts of Ilkeston, to the station.

The environs of Ilkeston Station house a traditional cafe. However, faced with a choice of the cafe and a later train, or snacks from our rucksacks and an imminent train home, the earlier train won out. Thus, we were back in Nottingham in time for a late lunch.

Overall, a pleasant social walk of about 6 miles on good flat paths not far from the city.

Long Walk Tuesday, 28th March: Bestwood

The Long Walk in March was not until 28th and was thus too late for the review to meet copy deadline. There will be a full review in the next edition of this newsletter.

Long Walk Tuesday, 25th April

The next Long Walk is scheduled for **Tuesday, 25th April**.

I am assuming that the weather will be Springlike and we can happily embark on an outing into the countryside. I will be devising a suitable outing by car or public transport, with a walk of about 6 miles, and hopefully lunch at a cafe or pub (although this is not always possible). I will send details to all those on the Long Walk mailing list.

If you are not on the list and would like to join, please let me know at:

grahamedwards542@gmail.com.

Longer Walks – *Convenor, Andrew Martin*

There will be a Longer Walk on **Monday, 3rd April** when we will attempt a 14-mile route starting and finishing in **Blidworth Woods**. We will walk through Blidworth and Papplewick before returning through Burnt Stump Country Park. Travel will be by car.

A second Longer Walk will take place on **Friday, 28th April**. This will follow a circular route around **Ashover** in Derbyshire and is just over 10 miles in length. Travel will be by car and full details will be sent out to those on the email contact list about a week beforehand.

If you would like to be added to the email contact list for Short or Longer Walks, please email u3aparkwalks@gmail.com

PARK NOTTINGHAM u3a GROUPS UPDATE: *Coordinator, Jane Ellis*

For the last three months, we have seen a growing interest from new members, swelling our numbers to 100+. One of our routes to joining is the monthly meeting and talk – providing an excellent opportunity to meet and socialise in the new surroundings at Castle Tennis Club. At these events new members can meet others and find out more about the various group activities.

At present we still have 12 active groups, with memberships from 5 to 43 in each group. Interest for a further Music Appreciation Group is being scoped, and this will offer further opportunities for specific interests to be pursued with friends. Please do get in touch with the Group Co-Ordinators if you are interested in this new activity.

I am pleased to say that attendance at the monthly talks has been growing with 25 – 35 people attending the three excellent speakers. This represents an average of 29% of our total membership coming to the talks. This is well up on the first quarter of last year when we were experiencing between 20 – 28 attendees, or averaging 26%.

These trends are encouraging, and I think it shows that we have very definitely emerged from the pandemic and lockdown in a very active state. This hasn't been the picture for many community and social groups over this last year – but thanks to your support and varied interests, Park Nottingham u3a will be engaging members in many events planned for the new membership year.

IS ANYONE INTERESTED IN STARTING A MUSIC ENJOYMENT GROUP?

It seems sad to me that our u3a does not do anything relating to music, so I wonder if anything can be done about this? I know there are many talented musicians in The Park, and also those who simply enjoy listening to music. It should be possible to come up with some ideas of how we could develop a group in which we could work together to share, spread and enhance the pleasure of music. My main interest is classical music, but it would not need to be restricted to this.

I think there are many things which such a group could encompass. Possibilities include listening and studying a piece of music and then attending a performance of it, comparing recordings of pieces, arranging recitals, a member presenting a favourite composition, etc, etc.

I would really like to be involved in such a group, but do not feel able to tackle this alone. Would anyone be interested in taking this further? If so, please contact me by phone or email and we could discuss whether there would be any future in this.

Jacky Fisher

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Park Nottingham u3a Calendar for April 2023

One way to contact group leaders is to visit our u3a website (link at the top of this newsletter) and clicking on the bluebird at the top of the relevant group page. You can then type a message that will go straight to the inbox of the convenor.

Date and Time	Event	"Venue"	Contact
Monday, 3 rd April	Longer Walk	Blidworth Woods	Andrew Martin
Monday 3 rd April at 3.30 pm	MahJong Group	Member's Home	Graham Edwards
Wednesday 5 th April	Plants and Picnics	Member's Garden	Marion Martin
Thursday, 6 th and 20 th April	Canasta Club	Member's home	Jane Ellis
Friday, 7 th April	Film Club	'God's Creatures'	Ian Henderson
Monday, 10 th April	Committee Meeting	Nottingham Castle Lawn Tennis Club, 35 Tennis Drive (not NSRC)	Graham Edwards
Tuesday, 11 th April	Short Walk	Edwalton – Green Line	Andrew Martin
Tuesday 18 th April	Monthly Coffee Morning and Talk	Nottingham Castle Lawn Tennis Club, 35 Tennis Drive (not NSRC)	Sarah Waites
Monday, 24 th April 4PM	Book Club	Member's home	Liz Gilder
Monday, 24 th April	Newsletter Deadline	parku3anewsletter@gmail.com	Ravi Sankaran
Tuesday, 25 th April	Long Walk	TBA	Graham Edwards
Friday, 28 th April	Longer Walk	Ashover	Andrew Martin
Wednesday, 3 rd May	Fine Dining	Perkins at Plumtree	Adrienne Lee

In addition to these meetings, the following groups are also "meeting" on-line:

Group	Activity	Contact
English Language Group	Discussion using WhatsApp	Margaret Wiedemann
Film Club	Discussion using WhatsApp	Ian Henderson
Photography Group	Discussion using WhatsApp	Rod Mitchell
Plants and Picnics	Discussion using WhatsApp plus visits and picnics	Marion Martin

USEFUL EMAIL ADDRESSES

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Ravi Sankaran, Newsletter Editor:

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Editor's note: If you are reading the newsletter on your computer, tablet or phone, you will find that all email addresses in blue *italics* are live and can be clicked to send a message. For example, the email addresses above are live, but the one in the box below is not. Similarly, where a link to an internet web page is offered, the blue italics indicate that this is a live link and will take you straight to the page.

Contributions for the **May Newsletter** should be sent to the editor,
Ravi Sankaran, by **Monday, 24th April**, preferably by email to:

parku3anewsletter@gmail.com