

Ravenshead U3A Magazine



*The Science and Technology group pictured on their recent visit to
Bombardier near Derby. See article on page 14.*

Issue No 10: Spring 2016

Charity Number : 1154123

Website : www.u3asites.org.uk/ravenshead

Freephone :0300 030 2990

Welcome from the editor

I hope you enjoy our spring issue of the magazine. This time we are shining the spotlight on two of our groups representing the arts. The painting and pastels groups and the creative writing group introduce themselves inside!

The sciences are not forgotten as we read about the science and technology group's visit to Bombardier. Individual members continue to inform and entertain us with their articles and once again I have enjoyed putting the magazine together.

Please remember that as soon as one magazine goes to print we are looking for contributions for the next. We are looking as usual for a range of articles representing the many talents of our members! Please submit your articles, preferably in word processed form to the editor at jumooore36@hotmail.com.

Terry and I will be visiting Tokyo again this August to catch up with James, Tamara and the twins. Consequently we want to make sure that the August magazine is "done and dusted" before we leave, so please note the earlier submission date!

Deadline date for the next edition: 20th June 2016

**Judith Moore (editor) Philip Jones, David Morton (proof readers)
Terry Moore (desktop publishing)**

Ravenshead U3A Committee

Judith Moore	Chair
Lesley Green	Vice-Chair
Keith Adams	Treasurer
Maria Gabrielczyk	Business Secretary
Ivan McNulty	Membership Secretary
Phil Asquith	Groups Coordinator
Kate Asquith	Speaker Finder
Sue Owen	Minutes Secretary; Welfare Officer
Alan Walker	Visits Coordinator
Alan Wilson	Committee Member
Mike Salmon	Committee Member
Paul Craddock	Co-opted Member

By invitation: Val Ford, Groups; Terry Moore, Publications; Alan Paul, Web Editor.

Contact Ravenshead U3A committee members via the CONTACT page of our website.

Freephone: 0300 030 2990

Thoughts from the Chair



Spring is almost upon us and hopefully we will be enjoying some fine weather and a chance to get out and about, perhaps as part of our U3A activities and visits. Looking through the contributions in this issue of the magazine I am once again reminded how lucky we are to have the magnificent Newstead Abbey practically on our doorstep! Philip Jones' description of the gardens and David Morton's essay on Byron's poetry illustrate just two aspects of its history. Terry and I have also recently visited the Abbey grounds with our three year old granddaughters and have enjoyed the beautiful display of snowdrops in the Monks' Garden while they have been fascinated by the "hairy trees" and the swans who obligingly "stick their bottoms in the air" causing general amusement.

Time passes quickly and June and the AGM will very soon be here. As before we will see changes in the committee with some members stepping down and, hopefully, others stepping in to take their place. Some key vacancies this year will be treasurer, membership secretary, speaker finder and visits coordinator, and if you feel that you would enjoy taking on one of these roles you can read the roles and responsibilities document on the committee page of our website. Why not apply to join us as a Ravenshead U3A committee member and have your say as to how our U3A is run? We look forward to welcoming new committee members at our meetings on the third Tuesday of each month.

Following a suggestion from Judy Walker and Pat Van Grondelle the committee decided, at our last meeting, to use some of the excess money in the social account to present a cheque for £100 to Richard and Jayne Manger at the Sherwood Ranger as a token of our appreciation for their continuing support over several years in allowing our members to park in their car park when setting out on trips and visits. This money has accumulated over time and represents maybe a few pence per person on a trip but can now be used to purchase some play equipment for the outdoor area at the Ranger.

Judith Moore, Ravenshead U3A chair

Further details about the AGM can be found on the next page.



RAVENSHEAD U3A

Registered charity - registration number 1154123

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday 14 June 2016 at 10 a.m. at St Peter's Church, Ravenshead

AGENDA

1. Welcome
2. Apologies for absence
3. Minutes of the AGM on 9 June 2015
4. Matters arising
5. Chairman's Report on behalf of the Trustees
6. To receive the annual accounts for 2015
7. To approve the appointment of an Independent Examiner – proposal that Page Kirk, Nottingham, be re-appointed
8. To consider amending the purposes (objects) in Clause 3 of the constitution to bring it in line with the current Third Age Trust model constitution by:
 - deleting the words "[see attached map]"
 - deleting the attached map
 - deleting Clause 3(ii)

The purposes (objects) in Clause 3 as amended to read:

CHARITABLE PURPOSES

The charitable purposes of The U3A are:

to advance education and in particular the education of people not in full time gainful employment who are in their Third Age (being the period of time after the first age of childhood dependence and the second age of full time employment and/or parental responsibility) residing in Ravenshead and its surrounding locality

In this constitution "people in their Third Age" has the meaning set out above.

9. Election of the Committee for 2016/17

VOTING
REFRESHMENTS
PRESENTATIONS

10. Election results

11. Date of next AGM

Tuesday 13 June 2017 at 10 a.m.

**All nominations for the Committee to be with the Business Secretary by
Friday 20th May 2016**

Discovering Somersby: Tennyson's Birthplace

The early years of Alfred, Lord Tennyson, in Somersby, Lincolnshire are off the literary tourist trail for most people. But they are well worth seeking out. Somersby, a hamlet of 11 houses, lies between the neighbouring hamlets of Bag Enderby and Ashby Puerorum. If you have forgotten your Latin grammar the latter translates as “Ashby of the boys”.



St. Margaret's Church Somersby
Photo by Stephen Horncastle.

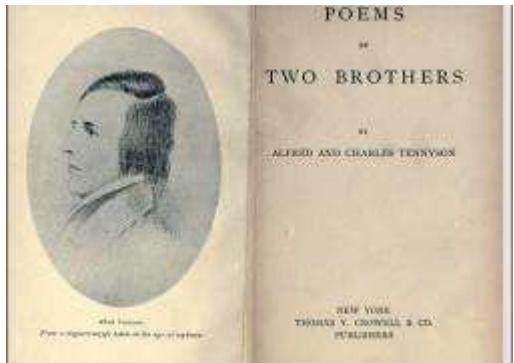
My grandfather was the gardener at Tennyson's birthplace-the old rectory-or rather the gardener/handyman for his duties included maintaining regular supplies of both water and electricity. I had just started at Spilsby Grammar School and used to spend every weekend with my grandparents. The old rectory was kept like a small stately home with its walled garden, its asparagus beds and other vegetables and fruit which would be selected, washed and presented to the lady of the house at the end of each day.

There was a potting shed with its terracotta pots all clean and ready to stock the numerous borders around the huge lawn that was looked on from Alfred's father's extensive library said to number 2500 books. These were obviously put to good use when Alfred, having spent several very unhappy years at Louth Grammar School, was thereafter educated back in Somersby by his father.

Alfred had his first work “Poems by Two Brothers” published two years later in 1827, earning himself and his elder brother Charles the considerable sum of £20. The poems were published by Jacksons, a printer in Market Place, Louth. The Tennyson brothers celebrated their publishing success with a trip to the seaside resort of Mablethorpe, where they declaimed their poems to the waves.

Patrick Ellis,

Ravenshead U3A member



Byron.....his poetry

By day Lord Byron lived his adventurous, much travelled and sometimes scandalous life; by night he wrote poetry or, as he sometimes described it, scribbled his verses. He never doubted which was the most important activity: life lived to the full. Poetry was the poor relation to the facts of real life. He did not seek to escape through his verse into a romantic vision of how life might or ideally should be. At times this approach to his genius made him a reluctant writer and critical of both his own and other writers' work. The heat and thunder of travel, toil and loving often seemed to him a better way to spend his waking hours than putting pen to paper.

There was, however, no escape from the promptings of his poetic genius; but by ensuring that his verses were rooted in what was probable, life-like and plausible he always tried to make art subservient to life. Like a journalist or maker of documentaries he had a nose for a good story. Events are presented to the reader in sharp, carefully observed detail and the feelings of the people involved are drawn out powerfully. So, for example, on the eve of the Battle of Waterloo (1815) he starts with a real social occasion, a ball given by the Duchess of Richmond in Brussels for the officers and their ladies:

**There was a sound of revelry by night,
And Belgium's capital had gathered then
Her Beauty and her Chivalry, and bright
The lamps shone o'er fair women and brave men;
A thousand hearts beat happily; and when
Music arose with its voluptuous swell,
Soft eyes look'd love to eyes which spake again,
And all went merry as a marriage-bell;
But hush! Hark! A deep sound strikes like a rising knell!**

**Did ye not hear it? No; 'twas but the wind,
Or the car rattling o'er the stony street;
On with the dance! Let joy be unconfined;
No sleep till morn, when Youth and Pleasure meet
To chase the glowing hours with flying feet –
But, hark!- that heavy sound breaks in once more,
As if the clouds its echo would repeat;
And nearer, clearer, deadlier than before!
Arm! Arm! And out – it's the cannon's opening roar!**

Byron's cousin, Major Howard, was killed in the ensuing action. Byron himself visited the site of battle less than a year afterwards.



Gradually, however, Byron came to accept that the words created by the poet were themselves real; they existed just as much as the events they recorded. The better the words the longer and brighter lived the event. So Byron came to a synthesis of art and life; both were real and both mattered. During the years of self-imposed exile in Europe in which he loved and schemed and worked with underground political organisations for the cause of freedom from despotic governments he wrote a great deal, sending his poems to John Murray to be published. Finally he embarked on what he regarded as his greatest work, the long, unfinished epic of *Don Juan*. It is a picaresque verse novel that describes a series of more or less plausible (if requiring some suspension of disbelief) adventures of a Spanish youth, on the run after a ludicrous sexual escapade; there is a ship-wreck from which he is the only survivor; he is then rescued from a desert island in the eastern Mediterranean before adventuring through a Turkish harem (in female disguise); this is followed by a journey into the Balkans where Juan witnesses at close quarters the real life, brutal Russian attack on the Ottoman fortress at Ismail on the Danube from which he narrowly escapes before making his way to England. The action is full of pace and meticulous detail, but the real centre of interest for the reader is the story-teller, Byron himself who maintains a humorous and gently satirical tone as he reflects on the manners and foibles of the world. The poem is in effect thinly disguised autobiography. Byron tells the reader how the world now appears to him. For example:

**Well – well, the world must turn upon its axis,
And all mankind turn with it, heads or tails,
And live and die, make love and pay our taxes,
And as the veering wind shifts, shift our sails;
The king commands us, and the doctor quacks us
The priest instructs, and so our life exhales
A little breath, love, wine, ambition, fame,
Fighting, devotion, dust, - perhaps a name.**

Some critics carped at the levity, his publisher John Murray refused to publish all of it, Byron thought this was his best and most natural voice and the reading public loved it.

David Morton, Ravenshead U3A member



SPOTLIGHT ON 'Painting and Pastels groups'

Ravenshead U3A Painting Group

This friendly, leisurely group meets on the second Monday of each month at the Centre at St Peters at 1.30-4pm. We paint in any medium: watercolour, acrylic, oils or pastels. Our idea is to enjoy painting. A buzz of activity fills the room as we chat about everything. Some more experienced painters enjoy explaining techniques to novices. We pay a contribution to the cost of the venue and refreshments (usually £6) once every five or six months when we run out of funds. We have been given a small library of painting books which are available to borrow.

Anyone is welcome to come and visit us to see our creations and join in the fun.

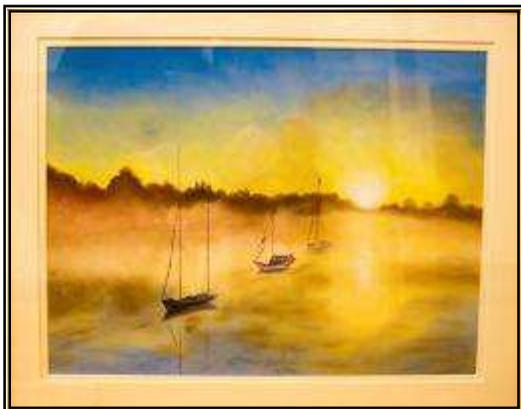
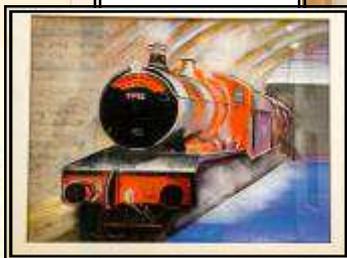
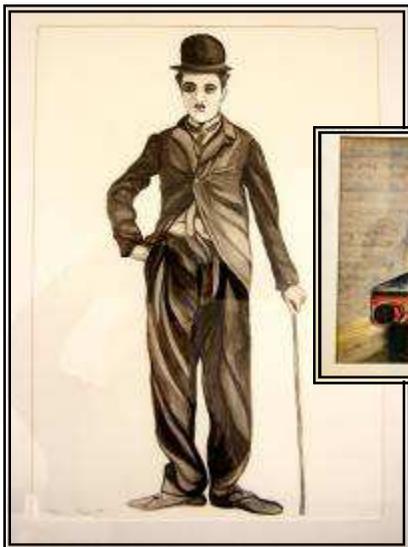
Pastels Group

Four of us meet in Wanda Parker's studio at her house on Wednesday or Friday mornings. This intriguing room is lined with art books and Wanda's latest paintings. She is a very experienced artist who enjoys passing on her knowledge of pastels whilst listening to our chatter and enjoying our company. Her husband Alan makes the most delicious filter coffee for us which we really enjoy.

A small exhibition of our paintings is displayed on the corridor wall in the Centre at St Peters (as illustrated opposite).

Mary Abbott, U3A member and Painting Group Leader.





RAVENSHED U3A – INTEREST GROUPS

Group Name	Leader	Phone	Meeting Day and Time	Location	Full
Angling	Lionel Castle	468102	Please ring for details		No
Art (Watercolour)	Mary Abbott	409534	2nd Monday 1.30 – 4.00	The Centre	No
Art Gallery/Museum	Antony Gordon	794530	Various visits arranged	Please contact for details	No
Bird watching	Peter York	408157	Usually once a month	Please contact for details	No
Canasta	Enid Thomas	305721	2 nd and 4 th Tues 2 – 4pm	Brammer Room	No
Chess and Backgammon	Jan Fraser	473078	1 st & 3 rd Mon 10 -12	Home	No
Computing Beginners	Alan Paul	793087	Every Wednesday 2pm	Alan Paul's House	No
Computing Beginners	Alan Paul	793087	To be advised	Alan Paul's House	No
Craft workshops	Kate Asquith	456047	Thursday 10.00-12.00	Please ring for details	No
Creative Writing	Villia Bullock	650792	Friday following U3A monthly meeting 2.00-4.00	Members' Homes	No
Current Affairs	Carol Wright	794740	3 rd Wednesday 2 -3.30	Brammer Room	No
Family History	Barbara Jukes	798890	4 th Tuesday 10-12	Brammer Room	Full
Folk Dancing	Mike, Mary Adams	402197	2 nd & 4 th Mon 2 - 4pm	Ravenshead Village Hall	No
French Conversation	Brian Machin	797606	1 st & 3 rd Mon 10.00-11.30.	Please telephone for details	Full
French Conversation 2	Anick Spence	796020	1 st & 3 rd Mon 2 – 4pm	Anick's house	No
Gardening	Elizabeth Clarkson	796803	Please ring for details	Brammer Room	No
Guitar	John Bewick	796497	1 st & 3 rd Thur 10.00 - 12.00	Ravenshead Church Lounge	No
Hikers (5-8 miles)	Steve Hargreaves	870719	1 st & 3rd Wednesday	Please ring for details	No
Knitting and Crochet	Anne Lovegrove Liz Corner	792058 795987	2pm – 4pm 1 st and 3rd Friday	Brammer Room, Village Hall	No
Local History	Philip Jones	793453	2pm – 4pm 2 nd Tuesday	Kighill Farm	No
Luncheon Club	Chris Dean	792004		Please ring for details	No
Mah Jong	Anne Eldridge Jennifer Philby	793533 799138	1 st & 3 rd Tuesday 1.30-3.30	Brammer Room, Village Hall	No
Music Appreciation 1	Joan Harvey	793371	2 nd Tuesday 2.00 – 4.00	Members' Homes	Full
Music Appreciation 3	David Turner	793039	3 rd Tuesday 1.30 – 3.00	Members' Homes	No
Occasional Visits	Various			Please see website, U3A4U or info at monthly meeting	
Pastels	Wanda Parker	488683	Gp 1 Wed.10.00 – 12.00 Gp 2 Fri. 10.00 – 12.00	Please ring for details	Full No
Photography	Dennis Harvey Glynn Payze	793371 798102	Last Wed at 2pm	Brammer Room	Full
Play Reading Group	Alan Kirkham	797438	Wednesday after U3A monthly meeting	Please ring for details	No
Reading Group 1	Carol Payze	798102	3 rd Tuesday 2pm	Carol's house	No
Reading Group 2	Pat Brown	794501	3 rd Tuesday 2.30pm	Members' Home	Full

Science and Technology	Alan Paul Janet Castle	793087 468102	1 st Friday in month	The Centre	No
Scrabble, Rumikubs and Cribbage	Susanne Smith	793430	3 rd Tuesday 10am	Brammer Room	No
	Leslie & Rhoda Newey	452420	1 st Tuesday 7.30pm-9.30pm		
Singing for Fun	Graham Jukes	798890	Last Thursday in the month 10.00 -11.30	Members' homes	No
Thursday Walks	Paul and Margaret Craddock	467704	2 nd & 4 th Thursday - 1.30 prompt start.	Details on the website or contact Paul and Margaret	No
Weekenders	Sue Owen	409743	Various events and visits	Please ring for information	No
	Pat Van Grondelle	401207			
	Chris Munton	490868			
Wine Group 1	Lionel Castle	468102	3 rd Friday	Members' homes	Full
Wine Group 2	Brenda Beale	0115 8493149	3rd Tuesday	Members' homes	Full
Wine Group 3	Michael Neville	490310	2 nd Monday	Members' homes	Full
Wine Group 4	Judy Vaughan	623827	3 rd Tuesday	Members' homes	Full
Wine Group 5	Sue Tidbury	793020	1 st Wednesday	Members' homes	Full
Yoga Group 2	Bob Ford	797449	Wkly 2.00-3.30 Tuesday	The Centre at St Peters	No
Yoga Group 3	Bob Ford	797449	Wkly 9.30-11.00 Friday	The Centre at St Peters	No

If you are interested in joining any of the above Groups but they are showing as full, please contact the Group Leader to ask to be put on a waiting list. You will then be contacted once a place becomes available or there are enough people to form a further Group.

Notice Board



Do you have an interest that you would like to share with other members? You can use this notice board to post messages.

We are always looking for new ideas in order to expand our range of groups to cater for members' interests. Suggestions made at the last meeting included:

Table Tennis; Grumpy Old Men; Beginners' Spanish; Beginners' French; Latin; Strollers; 60's and 70's; Theatre visits.

We are just looking for interest at this time, so get in touch with Phil Asquith or Val Ford if you are interested in belonging to, or leading any of these groups.

To post a message contact the Editor!



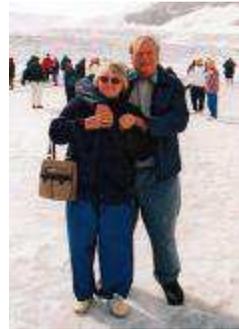
friendship force
INTERNATIONAL



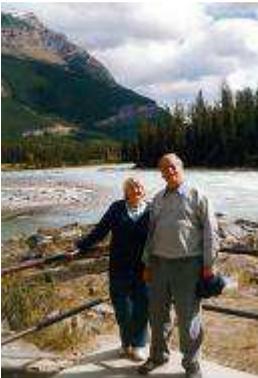
In our last issue John Rollinson wrote about his involvement with Friendship Force over a number of years and described the many rewards and benefits of living in private homes while visiting other parts of the world. John and Joan were privileged to visit a dozen countries in four continents and enjoyed hosting new found friends in reciprocal visits to their own home. Although they have now “retired” from the group they have a wealth of memories of experiences they will never forget. These photographs from Germany and Canada represent just a few and give a glimpse of what could be in store on any visit!



The welcome party at Hamburg. The two groups, Hamburg and Derbyshire, are gathered together at the very beginning of a fabulous visit.



The two of us trying to stay upright on the Athabasca glacier, Alberta, Canada..



Isn't Canada a big place?



I hope I never forget the view from our hotel in the bottom right of this post card. This was a large Bavarian style hotel which we employed on a private trip tacked onto the end of a visit to Calgary.

John Rollinson, Ravenshead U3A member



SPOTLIGHT ON 'Creative Writing Group'

The Creative Writing Group meets on the third Friday of each month. It has a few members who meet in each other's homes to read what they have been working on or are planning to write about. Short stories, articles, poetry and topical essays form the bulk of their interests.

There is room for a few more members in the group and we believe that there may be some of you in our U3A who might be interested in sharing their ideas and efforts with like-minded souls. If so why not consider joining us, even on a trial basis, by contacting Villia Bullock, our Group Organiser, on 01623 650792?

If you want to test out your imagination and ability as a creative writer, take a look at the three excerpts below. There are three ideas for the start of a short story. Each finishes at a point where anyone could take up the idea and continue writing the story. Even if you are not interested in joining us you could try your hand at home.

(Perhaps we can publish your story in the next edition. Ed.)

“WHAT NEXT?”

His mind fully focussed on where he was heading when he opened the front door, he realised several things. He'd forgotten to switch off the hall light; snow was falling and he would need a coat. Leaving the door ajar, he fetched his anorak from the hook in the hall, flicked the light switch and turned back to set the alarm.....

“You can't expect your guardian angel to be on the lookout for you all of the time”, Lisa muttered to herself, as the pedestrian lights changed from green to amber. Trying to shorten her stride, and will her new knee to stop complaining, get on with it and function, only made her realise she hadn't yet practised such speedy gymnastics with her recently acquired stick.....

She couldn't concentrate, seated at her desk, the minutes crawled by towards her lunch break. By 12.30 she was already on her feet, arms shrugging into her coat sleeves. Making sure her handbag was securely fastened, and ignoring the startled glances and comments from her office colleagues she was almost running for the door.....

Still interested? Good. Give Villia a call and we'll look forward to seeing you at a meeting sometime soon.

Submitted by Dennis Harvey and the Creative Writing Group

Science and Technology Group

Visit to Bombardier, a train maker – A grandchild's dream.

A party of 14 eager retirees travelled to Derby to see trains being made. For most of us, had it been 60 odd years ago, we would have been very excited. As it was we weren't disappointed.

We were met by Kathryn, our tour guide for the morning, who gave us a brief description of the company and conducted us very competently around some of the many production buildings.



Joseph-Armand Bombardier's first attempt at a snowmobile.

Bombardier is a Canadian Company, with headquarters in Montreal, and is the world's leading manufacturer of both planes and trains. Their Transportation product range includes trains, trams, people movers, rail equipment and control solutions for all market segments. The company was established following a tragic story. Joseph-Armand Bombardier (April 16, 1907 – February 18, 1964) was a French Canadian inventor and businessman,

and was the founder of Bombardier. His most famous invention was the snow mobile. Born in Valcourt, Quebec, Joseph-Armand Bombardier dabbled in mechanics from an early age. He acquired experience by reading, taking notes and repairing what he found until he opened his own garage at age 19, where he would repair cars and sell gasoline in the summertime. During wintertime, he worked on developing a vehicle able to travel on snow. At that time, the Quebec government didn't clear snow from secondary roads, so residents of these areas stored their cars for the winter season. The idea to build a winter vehicle came to Bombardier after a blizzard in which his young son fell ill and died because he couldn't be brought to hospital.

The manufacturing base at Derby has been there since 1876 under the ownership of several organisations, prior to being purchased by Bombardier. They currently manufacture and maintain trains for many regional and national routes in the UK, as well as South Africa. They have just completed a huge contract for 1,395 cars for London's Sub-Surface lines (Circle, District, Hammersmith & City and Metropolitan) and are currently making trains for London's new Crossrail line. We were told that one of their fleet of trains for London Underground's Victoria Line currently holds the world record for the distance travelled without a delaying fault



A completed carriage being lifted through the workshop and placed on two sets of wheels.



A finished District Line underground train ready for dispatch

in service. (A distance equal to twice around the world).

We were first taken to the Industrial Design department, full of personnel seated at computers displaying complex Computer Aided Design (CAD) images. The process of translating from verbal description of requirements to a visual image is fundamental to the manufacture of the finished product, with many scale models made in the process. Next we were shown the construction

process for their passenger carriages. The floor is assembled from long lengths of aluminium extrusions which are welded to form a rigid base. The roof is assembled upside down to enable attachment of ducting, insulation, ceiling panels and the lighting system, before being rotated 180 degrees for the air conditioning and pantograph units to be installed. The car body is then lowered to the ground for the doors to be fitted and a water test to take place. Eventually the whole structure is placed up onto 6 foot stands for a team to work beneath the car fixing heavy equipment whilst a team works inside fitting remaining interior panels, grab rails, luggage racks, etc. Once the car has been lowered

and connected to the bogies (wheels) the seats are fitted before testing commences. The whole carriage assembly was described as a large “meccano set”; however on completion, there was not a hole to be seen, only carefully crafted smooth surfaces.

We also had a sneak preview of the assembly lines for the new Crossrail system: a nine-car set with three sets of doors on either side per car and wide walk-through gangways between carriages, inward facing seats and lots of standing room.

Kathryn proved to be an excellent tour guide, who gave us a clear explanation of the processes we were viewing, enabling us to understand what was happening in large buildings where technicians were quietly assembling the largest “meccano sets” I had ever seen, each costing one to two million pounds,

We enjoyed a very pleasant meal on completion of our thoroughly enjoyable visit.

Alan Paul, Science and Technology group leader.

The Gardens of Newstead Abbey

The formal gardens at Newstead Abbey were probably laid out in the early 1700s and consisted of a rectangular pond surrounded by broad terraced banks. This sheet of water reflected the house like the plate of an immense looking-glass, of which the terraces formed the frame, and became known as the Mirror Pond (later the Eagle Pond). A painting by Peter Tillemans, dated to about 1724, which hangs in the West Gallery of the Abbey, clearly shows this pond with its terraces and statues.

By the time the poet, George Gordon Noel, the 6th Lord Byron, inherited Newstead Abbey in 1798 the gardens were in a pretty poor state. He described in his poem 'On leaving Newstead Abbey' written in 1803, how in the '*once smiling garden, the hemlock and thistle have choked up the rose.*' Cattle from the neighbouring farms roamed over the gardens and had even been allowed into some of the rooms of the house. This sorry state of affairs was due mainly to his great-uncle William, the so-called 'wicked' 5th Lord Byron, who had sold most of the contents of the house in 1778 and deliberately allowed some parts of the buildings to fall into ruin. He had felled and sold the timber until the park stood nearly bare of trees and had allowed the lake to silt up. The poet took very little interest in the house or gardens; he only spent six years of his life at Newstead.

He made an attempt to rectify the lack of trees by planting an oak tree (later known as Byron's Oak) on the south lawn. Even this struggled to survive and appeared to be in a state of decay on his visit to the estate in 1807. It did however flourish throughout the remainder of the 19th century, but succumbed in the 1920s when it was cut down leaving the present-day stump.

In 1817 Thomas Wildman, who had been an old school friend of the poet's at Harrow, purchased the estate. Wildman had served as aide-de-camp to Lord Uxbridge at the Battle of Waterloo and was afterwards equerry to the Duke of Sussex. He was much more interested in restoring the house and gardens. At the beginning of 1819, the local newspapers reported that he was employing upwards of 100 men in repairing and improving the estate. By 1828 he had established a kitchen garden covering three acres, and a wilderness garden, lawn and shrubbery covering about twelve acres. In 1829 Wildman was invited to be one of the vice-presidents of the Nottingham Floral and Horticultural Society, and in 1837 he became president of the Mansfield Floral and Horticultural Society (founded in

1836). From the 1840s onwards, flowers, fruit and vegetables grown at Newstead Abbey by the head gardener, Thomas Parr, were regularly being exhibited at shows around the county. Prizes were won for roses, pears, strawberries, plums, cherries and currants, as well as broad beans, lettuces, cauliflowers, carrots, onions and artichokes.



About 1840 Thomas Wildman created a French garden in the style of Louis XIV for his wife Louisa, to be her own private garden. This was a parterre garden, the beds of which were edged with box and the paths in between filled with red and white sand. This garden was largely grassed over some years ago and is now used for wedding receptions.



Philip Jones guides Ravenshead U3A members around the gardens of Newstead Abbey.

Wildman is reputed to have spent £100,000 on restoring Newstead Abbey and its gardens. Much of his wealth had been acquired from sugar plantations in the West Indies, but he incurred severe losses there after the abolition of slavery. By the time of his death in September 1859, aged 72, he was relatively badly off. His marriage had been childless and his executors were therefore forced to sell the estate. In 1860 William Frederick Webb, a wealthy landowner from Cowton in Yorkshire, acquired

the estate and, together with his daughters, he set about making further improvements to the house and gardens.

To be continued.....

I will be running free garden history tours for the public most Sunday afternoons at Newstead Abbey this year. If you or your group would like a tour on another day, please contact me via the local history web page.

Philip E. Jones, Local History Group Leader

'A Man of Many Talents'.

At the U3A meeting 12.1.2016 the speaker John Whitfield gave a talk on Peter Scott 1909-89.

Naval officer Peter Scott was born in London, the only child of explorer Robert Falcon Scott of the Antarctic and sculptor Kathleen Bruce. His father's expedition on the ship 'Terra Nova' reached the South Pole but because of poor organisation and judgement the expedition was unsuccessful. After walking 1,800 miles with sledges he starved and died on the ice. Peter was only two years old when his father died. Robert Scott, in a last letter to his wife, advised her to "make the boy interested in natural history if you can; it is better than games."

Peter's mother, Kathleen, was the 11th child of a vicar in Carlton, Nottinghamshire. She studied art at the Slade, became a sculptor and married a lord after losing her husband, the intrepid explorer. Through his mother Peter was 'well connected' and boarded at Oundle public school in Northamptonshire. He attended Trinity College, Cambridge, initially reading Natural Sciences but graduating in the History of Art in 1931. His interest in natural history and wildlife was the inspiration for his wonderful paintings later on. Initially Peter was torn between painting dogfish or a sunrise. His hobby in the Fens and Wash of Norfolk of beagling, shooting wild fowl, ducks, geese and snipe with a 12 bore shotgun, gave him first-hand knowledge for his art works.

In 1933 Scott bought a lighthouse and a folly which he converted into a house at Sutton Bridge. He painted at The Academy of Art in Munich, Germany, where he also became a competent ice skater. In the 1950s and '60s he exhibited his paintings of ducks and geese in the west end of London. On taking up sailing he became a designer of dinghies. During Hitler's 1936 Olympics, in Berlin, he befriended Jesse Owens, the runner. He got to know Ben Ainsley, the sailor, when he too represented England in the Prince of Wales' Cup winning a bronze medal. He served two years in the Navy on a destroyer and was promoted to Commander. In 1942 Scott married the novelist Elizabeth Jane Howard but the marriage ended in divorce.

In 1945 when the Conservatives were trounced by Atlee's Labour he stood for Wembley North but did not get in. In 1951 he married his second wife, Philippa, and settled at Slimbridge, Gloucester. In 1960, aged 51 years old, he joined a gliding

club and flew himself to Edinburgh. Peter Scott died in 1989 after a lifetime of achievements: first and foremost artist and conservationist, then sailor and war hero, pilot and politician.

Three signed Peter Scott prints were on display, much to our delight, to round off this most interesting of biographies.



Barnacles coming off the Merse at Caerlaverock
by Sir Peter Scott

Jayne Llewelyn, U3A member (and admirer of his art work).

Wiggly Bags



The Craft Group has been busy making the Wiggly Bags which are used for Hickman Lines. These are intravenous lines that stay in while a child has treatment and avoid the need for lots of needles to give chemotherapy, antibiotics and blood transfusions. It is important that the ends of the lines are kept clean to reduce the risk of infection and Wiggly Bags help to do this.

The Wiggly Bags are made of washable fabric attached to ribbons and are used by the children to keep the Hickman Lines from accidentally being tugged as well as keeping them clean. As there is a constant need for the bags we decided to make one hundred to send to the QMC for their children's oncology unit.

Members of the group have actually made one hundred and three bags which have now been sent on behalf of the Ravenshead U3A Craft Group.

Kate Asquith, Craft Group Leader

Dates for Your Diary

(Always check the website for the latest information!)

Monthly Meetings

(10.00 a.m. St. Peter's Church, Ravenshead)

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|---------------------------|---|
| Tue. April 12th | David Templeman:
Two Queens and a Countess |
| Tue. May 10th | Helen Philips:
My Work in the Himalayas |
| Tue. June 14th AGM | AGM and various group displays |
| Tue. July 12th | Jean Townsend:
Henry VIII Victim or Villain |
| Tue. August 9th | Andrew Hawkins:
Rude, Crude and Dirty Thames |

Social Events

Coffee and Conversation, commencing 10am.

Venue: Room 3, the Centre at St. Peter's

Dates: (MONDAYS) **Apr 18th; May 16th; Jun 20th; Jul 18th**

Summer Social Event: Date to be arranged. Visit website for news.

Occasional Visits

*Details on website **Occasional Visits** page.*

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|---------------------|---|
| Tue May 17th | Visit to the National Physical Laboratory at Teddington
Contact Alan and Judy on 01623 793895 |
| Wed Jun 8th | Kedleston Hall – Cost £10.80 (National Trust Members no charge).
Contact Alan and Judy on 01623 793895 |
| Wed Jun 22nd | MAMMA MIA 2pm Matinee Performance.
CLOSED |
| Thu Jul 21st | RHS Tatton Park Flower Show
Contact Alan and Judy on 01623 793895 |