

MESSAGE FROM CHRIS NIVEN, CHAIR OF THE NOTTS NETWORK

Dear Members,

A question: glass half full or glass half empty?

Thinking about the items on the news at the moment it would be easy to say glass half empty. Wars, fires, floods, heatwaves, it doesn't make for easy listening. But we shouldn't ignore the wider social issues because engagement keeps our minds active, and we should also think about the positives.



Closer to home we have a thriving u3a community.

Since lockdown we have picked ourselves up, brushed ourselves down and got on with it. Our interest groups are functioning again, trips are being organised, friendships have been rekindled and our community is back.

16th – 24th September is our annual celebration, u3a week. Hopefully, some of you will already be planning events to highlight the u3a in your local community. There is also a programme of online events available on the Third Age Trust website.

So, let us try to be glass half full and be thankful for the positives we have in our lives.

Best wishes

Chris Niven

Chair Nottinghamshire Network of u3as

DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE OF NEWSBITES

Please send your articles (keep to a maximum 300-word count
and remember those all-important photos)

by 7th October 2023 to maria.newsbitess@gmail.com

WORKSOP AND DISTRICT u3a

Members enjoy a River Cruise on the Trent

On a sunny Tuesday in May, over 40 members of the Worksop & District u3a had a thoroughly enjoyable day in Nottingham, cruising down the River Trent. Arranged by the Travel Group, the day started when the members travelled by coach to the River Lodge mooring, a few miles outside the city centre, and boarded the Nottingham Princess.



The three hour cruise included a delicious two course meal and an interesting commentary by Captain Simon as the cruiser sailed to Wilford then back to Colwick before returning to River Lodge.

One of the members, Shirley, was celebrating her birthday and after a raucous chorus of 'Happy Birthday' she was given a special treat when the captain let her take the wheel and steer the boat.

Despite ducks and swans racing for cover and several members looking for life jackets, Shirley managed to keep the boat (almost) on course and the cruise ended safely, in time for the members to board the coach for the return journey to Worksop.



Roger Hancocks
Chair

BEESTON u3a

King Richard III outing



Beeston u3a members visited the King Richard III visitor centre in Leicester for our first outing in a long while.

Very informative displays but the talk by their resident historian Joe brought it all to life superbly well.

A good trip out...first of many we hope!





Beeston u3a Open Meetings

There's always a warm welcome for all our members at our monthly Beeston u3a Open Meetings.

These take place on the first Thursday of the month at Beeston Methodist Church, Chilwell Road.

Start at 10am for refreshments and 10.30am for the talk.

Karen Attwood
Publicity Officer



ASHFIELD u3a

Kent Castles and Gardens u3a holiday July 2023

It was a fine morning as our coach picked up 44 members from Ashfield, Hucknall and Ravenshead u3as on our bespoke tour. A smooth cruise down to Kent for our arrival at 4pm at the King Charles Hotel Gillingham where we settled in and enjoyed a good evening meal.

Tuesday - Chartwell

The estate which originated in 1382 was purchased by Churchill around 1922 for £5,000. The house has a very homely feel and the visitor can easily imagine the young Churchills running through corridors, up and down its staircases playing hide and seek. A separate building used as a studio houses many of Churchill's art work.



FAMILY DINING ROOM
CHARTWELL



The gardens are a mix of hidden ponds and walkways with a lake that is home to the striking red beaked black swan.

Wednesday - Leeds Castle

Originally a wooden structure and later re-built as a Norman stronghold, in 1278 the castle was bought by Edward for his Queen Eleanor. In 1519 Henry VIII transformed it for Catherine of Aragon. Fast forward to 1926 when its last private owner Olive Lady Ballie bought the castle for £180,000. She redecorated the interior and added 16th century features. The apartments ooze glamour, wealth and opulence. Leeds Castle became the place to be and invitations for a 'weekend retreat' were much coveted.



LEEDS CASTLE



THE MAZE AT LEEDS CASTLE

Thursday – Penshurst Place and Gardens

Built in the style of a defended manor house, this is one of England's oldest family homes. Completed in 1341, much of it remains in its original state with two wings joined by a magnificent central hall that would have been hard to surpass for size and splendour. The walled gardens, 600 years old and amongst the oldest in private ownership, are divided into secret and intimate gardens through arches and tunnels cascading with sweet blossom of roses and clematis. Penshurst was used in the BBC filming of Wolf Hall.



BARONS HALL, PENS HurST



And so our week was at its end, new friendships forged, old acquaintances re-kindled, evenings in the lounge chatting, exchanges stories and arranging meet ups.

Caroline Rhoades
Ashfield u3a Holidays

BINGHAM u3a

Bingham Knit and Natter Group

The Group took part in the Inspire libraries' project to make Brave Bears for charities supporting children in need. Altogether 11 bears were created, each one with a different personality. The group meets weekly in the library, and enjoyed being involved with the project.

Ann Lewis
Secretary, Bingham u3a



RETFORD u3a



Twenty members from the Retford u3a wine appreciation groups enjoyed an evening of "Food and wine pairings" at Refined, West Notts College with excellent food cooked by the students matched with wines supplied by Weavers independent wine merchants.
Andrew Young
Webmaster



FOREST TOWN & DISTRICT u3a

Forest Town & District u3a held their first Summer Ball 22nd July

The Ravenshead Swing Band entertained our members and guests from Dukeries, Mansfield and Warsop u3a's.

Complimentary drinks were served on arrival followed by an excellent buffet later in the evening. We danced through the night with nearly everyone on the dance floor at the end of the evening shouting for more!!

There was a photo booth to capture the occasion.

The question that many people asked was, are we doing this again next year?





HUCKNALL AND DISTRICT u3a

NOT SO GRUMPY OLD MEN

On Thursday 20th July, 14 of the Not So Grumpy Old Men met up at Ramsdale Golf Club to try their hand at the renown Pirate Crazy Golf.

Names out of a hat and we split into 2 teams of 4 and 2 teams of 3, issued with our putter, ball and score sheets, we set off to see if any of us would be spotted for the Master's Championship.



The course consisted of 18 holes of varying complexity and with our basic lack of ability, soon proved to be harder than expected.

The rules stated no more than 7 shots per hole were allowed, which was in honesty a Godsend for quite a few of us. Having said that 2 grumpies managed to score three holes in one and one team actually scored 3 holes in one on the same hole, one after the other, such skill!



After negotiating, hills, dips, hollows, ramps, rough, alligators, water features (several plonks), cannons etc., totting up the scores, which varied from 44 (excellent and below par) to 80 (all promised not to tell his wife). Congrats to Bob Payne for winning, and scoring 3 holes in one - Bob becoming NSGOM Crazy Golf champion 2023. The other 3 holes in one, were our chairman, who was almost sent off for trying to use his crutch instead of the provided club!

Off to the club house (the 19th hole) for a well-earned pint and a wonderful Pie, Peas, Chips and Gravy lunch.

Many thanks to Paul Haigh for organising the activity

Melvyn Francis
Chair

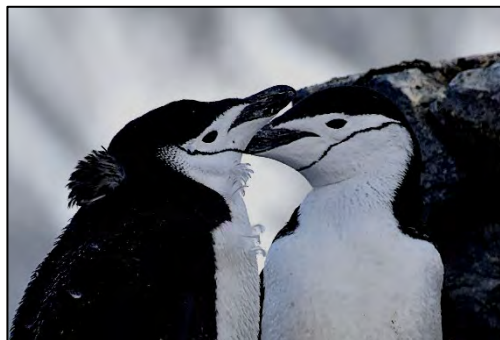
RAVENSHEAD u3a

At the Ravenshead u3a AGM in June, John Butler took over as the new Chair from Maria Gabrielczyk, who stepped down after 4 years in the role.

Following our AGM, members were treated to presentations from 3 of our Interest Groups. Firstly, there was a performance by our Belly Dancing Group.



Secondly, Photography for Fun! Group member Andy Bebbington gave an illustrated presentation of his trip to Antarctica and the Falkland Islands.



Finally, Bob & Val Ford, leaders our Yoga & Chair Yoga Groups, led us through a seated stretching and relaxation session.



New Interest and Activity Groups are being formed all the time. So far this year, the following new groups have been started and are now fully active:

Writing for Fun!, Holiday Spanish, Pétanque, Salsa, Happy to Share! (an online side-shoot of the existing Garden Group offering an on-line opportunity for members to share cuttings and excess plants)



We are thrilled to announce that Gilly Hagen, the leader of our Cinema & Theatre Visits Group, was awarded the British Empire Medal in the King's Birthday Honours List for services to the Community, including voluntary service in the Redesign of Cancer Pathway Services, Patient Representation & 'Blidworth on the Move'.

John Butler
Chair
Ravenshead u3a

CALVERTON AND DISTRICT u3a

Amongst the many walking groups of the Calverton & District u3a, one, The Strollers, added a visit to The Gaia Installation in Southwell Minster at the beginning of the month. And what an eye opener it was; so many visitors were just exclaiming, "Wow". Photographs don't really do it justice. I heartily recommend anyone who hasn't yet been to find out where it is and look in.

In Greek mythology Gaia is the personification of the Earth.

<https://my-earth.org/about/>



Ken Jones

RUDDINGTON AND DISTRICT u3a

Despite the “summer” weather members have been out and about on a variety of visits including to National Garden Scheme gardens, Ruddington’s village museum, and a guided historical tour of the village.

One member has successfully established a CAMEO (Come And Meet Each Other) group. It is aimed at single people who may not want to go out alone and who would appreciate someone else’s company. So far, in 2s or 3s, they have visited the theatre or cinema or, simply met up for a coffee in the village. During one chat they realised that producing a full roast dinner for one was a bit of a waste so a Sunday pub lunch with others from the group was a good idea.

A very successful visit was to the Jubilee Campus of Nottingham University to the GSK carbon neutral laboratory for sustainable chemistry. Don’t be deterred by the chemistry, the main feature was a tour of the multi award winning building. Designed to be carbon neutral it has an impressive number of environmental features which make it possibly the most advanced of its type in the world. An interesting and informative visit which cost £5 for the university’s parking charges!



One side of the roof is green, the other is solar panels. The curved “chimneys” are part of the ventilation system.

Another very interesting visit was to the Aeropark next to East Midlands airport. It is both an aviation museum and a viewing area where you can study the preserved planes of yesteryear or watch the modern airliners of today taking-off and landing. It has a collection of 27 complete air frames on external display within the park with another 5 aircraft under complete restoration and 4 aircraft sections some of which were open. By arrangement we visited on a Tuesday when it was not open to the general public. Divided into groups of 6 or 7 we were taken inside 3 planes and a helicopter.

The very knowledgeable guides explained the controls on the flight deck and some were able to sit in the pilot’s seat. Particularly impressive/ frightening was the Vulcan designed to deliver Nuclear bombs and the only surviving original Nimrod, a spy plane. A sea King helicopter which had a role in the Falklands war had patched bullet holes. This trip cost £5 per head and is highly recommended to u3as as very interesting and good value for money visit. Guided tours are only available on Tuesdays when the park is not open to the general public.



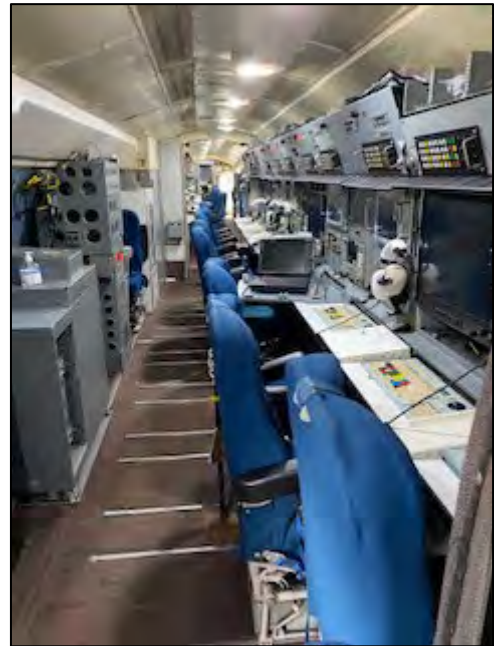
Vulcan Bomber



The Aeropark from the air



VC10 flight deck



Nimrod (electronic surveillance)

Peter Davison
Business Secretary and Newsletter Editor

RADCLIFFE ON TRENT u3a

A Group of 48 set off from Radcliffe to Liverpool on May 25th, and the journey went well with no hold ups, arriving at 10.45 a.m. The coach dropped us off by the Albert Dock, the centre for Liverpool's regeneration of the city starting in the 60's. We were greeted by a blue sky and warm weather that showed the city of at its best. As the trip was on a freestyle basis the group quickly split up and members went their own ways, all looking to visit the attractions that interested them.

Attractions were all around, many within easy walking distance of the Albert Dock, within which were the Maritime Museum and the Tate Gallery of the North.



A short walk to the Pier Head was the Museum of Liverpool and the Mersey Ferry, a trip on which some members enjoyed. The Liverpool Museum is a modern one which shows the complete history of Liverpool, from when the council borrowed £7,000 to build the first dock, to the musical explosion of the 60's through to now when the city has been transformed.



Another popular attraction was the Open Topped Bus that visited many interesting places including the Beatles' homes.

Later, speaking to many of the members on their experience I was particularly pleased that they commented on the friendliness of my fellow 'Scousers'.

Indeed, many said that they would return for a longer visit as there was so much more to see and it could be that we may consider returning next year.



George Roberts



RAINWORTH AND DISTRICT u3a

Our u3a has enjoyed various events recently alongside the monthly meetings and interest group activities.

Some of our additional events have included attending the Edwinstowe Volunteer & Recruitment Fair organised by Newark & Sherwood CVS, where the Musical Director of our singing group "The Ringtones" entertained the visitors with his whistle. Robin Hood stopped by!

We were invited to promote our u3a at the open day at Blidworth Library following its extensive refurbishment. Our Book Group meets there and Betty Foster, Group Leader, met John Ogle, Chairman of Notts County Council who was interested in the benefits of joining the u3a.



Members of 'Garden Visits', 'National Trust Visits' and 'Trips and Visits' Groups have recently been to Kiftsgate Court Gardens, Gloucestershire, Tatton Park, Cheshire, the National Civil War Museum in Newark, the International Bomber Command Centre In Lincoln and Ramsdale Golf Club in Calverton for crazy golf and lunch.

A Barn Dance in June with the entertainers "Pig's Ear" was enjoyed by members and guests with plenty of exercise, fun and a spring in our step! This was the comment from one member:

"I have just read that two secrets to a happy, healthy and long life are social connections and physical activity. Well, there was plenty of that on offer at the Barn Dance Evening held at the Village Hall. Full marks to Pig's Ear, two genial gents, who gently marshalled us into a convincing group of Barn

Dancers thanks to their music and instruction. I speak as a nervous novice, who has the dancing skills of a marionette with two strings missing. At first, I feared public humiliation but actually found I was enjoying myself. The dances were more or less straightforward and the caller and musician were first rate. I gave my apologies to my partners whose bruises should heal quite soon!"

Great feedback on one of our social events.



Our "foodies" and "Strollers" have been out and about.

Mary Howarth
Chair

NEWARK AND DISTRICT u3a



When Newark & District u3a's art group was given the opportunity of creating an eye-catching design on a surfboard, they jumped at the challenge.

It came about through an invitation from Newark & Sherwood District Council for local charities and organisations to decorate one of several surfboards that would be displayed at the "Newark-on-Sea" summertime event, whereby the historic town's market square is transformed into a beach.

Group Leader Jacq Cartwright and her Art4All team came up with the overall design, and then members of the group each painted one item on the surfboard. The project took nearly four weeks to complete and the finished article is a tribute to the incredible talent and teamwork of the group.

Ian McGrath

ARNOLD u3a

ACTIVITIES GROUP

August 2012 saw the setting up of a new group at Arnold u3a. The idea was to organise a regular programme of 'activities' open to all members. Sign up sheets were available at each monthly meeting.

Over the years there has been a host of activities including regular quiz nights, petanque, indoor bowls, skittles, Ladies day at the races, visit to the Mansfield recycling centre, Segway at Clumber Park, Detectives walk around Nottingham and so many more. Here are some examples:

August 2013: Gliding: We took to the skies on a 'gliding experience' at Darlton Gliding Club. And what an experience! We were strapped into parachutes, had the controls explained and were whisked up into the skies above Tuxford at the end of a long cable that winches the glider (very quickly and steeply) into the air. Up there, it was exhilarating to see a patchwork of farmland in the Trent valley.



May 2014: British Gypsum: A visit to the underground mine and factory at Barrow-upon-Soar. We were driven deep into the mine, and then walked through a maze of tunnels to the face, it was equally fascinating to see what happens to the rock when it surfaces, and how it ends up in 25kg bags ready to be dispatched. Some impressive machinery involved there, both above and underground.

April 2015: Ibstock brickworks: A guided tour around the brickworks following the brick production from the clay through all the processes to the finished result. Most of us had no idea this was so close to Arnold and unaware of the scale of this production.



Rosie Allen

July 2016: Adventure Day: A day of gorge walking and abseiling. What a day and something awesome to tell the grandkids! The photos say it all. A thoroughly recommended adventure.



Many thanks to all the Nottinghamshire members who have submitted articles about their u3as. This is your newsletter and it wouldn't exist without your many contributions.

Please submit your text in Word and your photographs as separate attachments in JPG, PNG or similar format.

Please keep within the 300-word count and do remember the photographs. A photograph always tells a good story!

And if your u3a is organising an event, trip or holiday which you would like to share with other Nottinghamshire u3a members or maybe you have a few places to fill or a few tickets to sell, then this is the place to promote them.

maria.newsbytes@gmail.com

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE NETWORK OF u3as

Running your u3a Trust Workshop

A date for your diaries!

Wednesday 1st November 2023, 10.00 a.m. – 12.15 p.m. on Zoom

Back in May we held a workshop for members of u3as in Nottinghamshire and it was so successful that we have organised another one on a different topic specifically for members from our u3as. The benefit of this is that participants can always follow matters up through our Peer Support Groups or just informally.

This time we have chosen the workshop “Running your u3a” which is for committee members and those who are interested in how a u3a as a charity should be run.

Who is it for? Committee Members, particularly those new in role and prospective Committee Members. Any member of a Nottinghamshire u3a is welcome to sign up.

What does it cover?

- It explores the guiding principles and terms of membership of the Third Age Trust
- It helps you understand your role as a Trustee (committee member) and good governance
- It identifies the support, advice and guidance available
- It enables the sharing of best practice and exchange of ideas

Further information and a link for registration for the workshop will be provided nearer the event.

Rosie Allen
Notts Network Support Officer

NEWS FROM THE THIRD AGE TRUST

u3a week

This is a reminder that u3a Week is just around the corner: 16 – 24 September. This is an annual event which offers u3as the opportunity to showcase their activities, learning and, above all, the fun and laughter which members experience.

For more information please visit the Third Age Trust website and look under “Events” – you must be logged in.

TRUST AGM 2023

The 40th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Third Age Trust will be held as a hybrid meeting allowing delegates to attend in person or online on Wednesday 18 October, commencing at 11.15am at Kents Hill Park, Milton Keynes. Details on how to access the meeting for both voting delegates and non-voting delegates who wish to attend online will be distributed to u3as in due course.

FREE ONLINE LEARNING EVENTS

Did you know that membership of your u3a entitles you to access free online talks, workshops and courses offered by The Third Age Trust? Just go to: www.u3a.org.uk You must be registered with the Trust and logged, a very easy and quick process. Once on the site look for these and other opportunities under 'Events'.

Most sessions are presented by members, sharing their knowledge or skills with others across the movement.

Here are just some of the exciting events coming up in the next few weeks – ALL FREE TO JOIN:



Electing the President in 2024 – A 3 Part Series

In November 2024 the US will elect its 47th President. u3a Subject Adviser for UK and US Politics Paul Carter shows us how it all works.

Tues 12, 19 and 26 Sept at 10am
Free – online via Zoom



Judith's Laughter Yoga for July-Dec 2023

Join Judith of Edinburgh u3a for monthly Laughter Yoga sessions

Next Session: Wed 13 Sept at 10am

Free – Online via Zoom



Platonic Activities: Maths Activities Day for All

A two part session of mathematical puzzling for all abilities, hosted by u3a Mathematics and Statistics Subject Adviser, David Martin

Thurs 14 Sept at 10am
Free – online via Zoom



u3a Week – Trees, woods, climate & nature – what's all the fuss about?

Join John Tucker from the Woodland Trust for a snapshot of how to get involved in supporting wildlife and the environment.

Wed 20 Sept at 10am

Free – Online via zoom



u3a Week – Bolder – How to Age Better, and Feel Better About Ageing

Join Carl Honoré award-winning writer, broadcaster and TED speaker for a talk on embracing ageing as both a privilege and an adventure. (Photo – Madeleine Alldis)

Thurs 21 Sept at 10am

Free – Online via zoom



History of the British Secret Intelligence Services

Moira of Guildford u3a presents a History of the British Secret Intelligence Services – as portrayed in the media

Fri 22 Sept at 2pm

Free – Online via Zoom