



NOT SO IDLE TIMES

Retford U3A Newsletter - SEPTEMBER 2023

CHATTER "FROM THE CHAIR"

Welcome to the September edition of Not So Idle Times and big thanks must go to Christine Cook who produces it so well. It is full of information and news from the interest groups.

August brought more weather records. Highest temperatures over consecutive days. I think we had a brief Indian Summer (that I really enjoyed) but all too soon October and the Autumn will be with us.

National u3a week took place 16th -23rd September. The aim was to raise the profile of the U3a and increase membership nationally. In order to meet this aim an Open Afternoon was planned for Friday 22nd to showcase what goes on in our u3a. It was held in Retford Library. Group leaders arranged for information to be available and some were present to answer questions. The previous weekend some members were in Retford Market Square wearing their blue sashes, to hand out leaflets promoting the event and to chat to the public. Some people didn't know about the u3a but showed an interest in attending the event. We saw quite a few local friends and u3a members too.

An amazingly high percentage of people who were approached were not from Retford. They had travelled from other distant towns as they love coming to friendly Retford on Saturdays.

It was heartening to hear how much Retford means to visitors. Despite that they couldn't be tempted to come back on a Friday, even for a free cuppa and biscuit!

On the day itself there were current members and plenty of visitors. 5 people became new members and others took information packs away. In total about 100 people came and went. Overall, it was a very successful afternoon. Hopefully more people in the

Retford area know more about our great u3a.

Thanks must go to all the group leaders who came or provided display material and to your committee who organised it.

I look forward to seeing you at the next General Meeting on Thursday 28th September. The Speaker will be Bonney Baggaley from the Bassetlaw Hospice

Pippa Ramsay Chair Retford u3a
email - chair@retford-u3a.org.uk

FOLLOW UP FROM AUGUST GENERAL MEETING

At the August General meeting our speakers were 3 firemen from the Notts Fire service. They provided an interactive session providing relevant information on fire safety in the home followed by question and answers. Most pertinent was the new dangers around Lithium batteries overheating and bursting into flames. These are found in e-bikes, scooters, and mobile phones. They also offer the opportunity to book a home visit to check if there is anything to increase safety in the home eg functional smoke alarms.

We did get a considerable amount of interest which we will follow up, to conduct Safe & Well Visits, over the coming weeks. I would like to ask that if we've missed anyone, please signpost them to the link below

[Make a Safe and Well referral - NFRS \(notts-fire.gov.uk\)](https://notts-fire.gov.uk)

I hope that helps but please feel free to contact me if I can help any further.

kindest Regards,
Jazz Hayer
ILM Accredited Coach
and Mentor



INTEREST GROUP NEWS

WATERCOLOUR GROUP

For our August session we explored the use of dry brush work, examples below. On Thursday, 28th September our topic will be "Water on leaves and flowers". If you are interested in joining us please contact Andrew Young using the link on the group page or by calling 01623 863327.



NEW POLICIES ADOPTED BY RETFORD U3A

To make sure we are compliant with national u3a guidance and bring ourselves up to date, our committee has recently agreed policies to cover Safeguarding to protect all members, and Diversity, Equality and Inclusion, as well as a Member's Code of Conduct. We invite you to take time to read these and you can find them on our website [here](#):

DINNER AND QUIZ - REMINDER

Come and join us for a social night out – two course meal and quiz (with a cash prize). Bar available for you to buy your own drinks. I am still awaiting confirmation on menu choices

To book a place please contact Sue Paul – 01777 705008 or social@retford-u3a.org.uk



PATCHWORK AND QUILTING GROUP

Retford u3a Patchwork and Quilting Group had a wonderful display of their work at Retford Heritage Day on September 9th in the Town Hall. The theme for Heritage Day was Creativity Unlocked, and this group certainly showed what they could do with their crafty and creative skills. They had samples of both hand and machine quilting and patchwork ranging from the traditional patterns to more contemporary free form designs. Real examples of how "Beautiful things come together one stitch at a time."

Many group members supported the display over the course of the day, and they were able to show members of the public work they were doing on the stand as well as finished items. In the picture we have Group Leader, Dawn Madine, (centre) with group members Pat Trotter (left) and Sue Ross (right). Dawn had completed the colourful quilt at the back of the stand over several months, and it really is quite stunning. Dawn says she finds quilting very relaxing and a wonderful outlet for her creativity. Much of her and other member's work supports charitable causes such as the Linus Project in making quilts for hospitals, hospices and other children's organisations.



Date	Friday 20th October 2023
Time	7.00 pm for 7.30 pm
Cost	£20
Venue	Retford Golf Club, Ordsall

INTEREST GROUP NEWS

MILITARY HISTORY GROUP

Last month I told you that we were taking 40 or so members to Bletchley Park. We ran this trip on 13th September and it was the fourth trip the Military History Group have run this year. All of those members who went were given a free entry ticket valued for twelve months and we decided as a group we would try to organize a return trip next July. It is inevitable that some who went yesterday will not bother going again and there will be vacancies for next year's trip, Keep your eyes pinned to these pages to see more information in the New Year.



Enigma Code-Breaker



Alan Turing



Bletchley Park

We are already considering next year's trips and suggestions have been made that we return to Bletchley Park, as well as going to The Lincolnshire Aviation Heritage Centre at the old RAF East Kirkby site. Trips are also being

looked at to the National Memorial Arboretum and the Lancers and Yeomanry Museum at Thoresby. Following our latest meeting and a show of hands we are looking at arranging a three day trip to the RAF Museum Hendon, The Royal Naval Dockyard at Chatham and returning via the National Army Museum at Chelsea. We aim to stay in the Medway Towns area, but all this will need costing and arranging before it is offered to the membership.

Our first free autumn presentation attracted six ex-Local History group members and hopefully they were made to feel most welcome. Should any of you reading this want more information on your Military History Group please contact me on : roy.clarborough@gmail.com

Our meeting in August covered the 80th anniversary of the Dambusters Raid. We had 30 members see the live presentation then a further 40 members joined us for 2 Zoom presentations. On the second of these we were joined by 7 members of Malvern u3a from Worcestershire. This was the first time they had joined us.

Over the four trips we have run this year over 80 different members have come on at least one trip and over the last five months we have had representatives from 16 different u3a groups join us as well for our presentations. If you want to join in with our group please contact me by email. **Continued on page 5**

Roy Evans

SHORT MAT BOWLS

Retford Bowling Green invite Retford U3a members to their club for an afternoon of short mat bowls. These indoor sessions take place on a Friday afternoon and have been offered to our members in previous years during the Autumn and Winter months.

Chris Black will be at the General meeting on 28th September to introduce himself and to answer any questions you might have.

Please contact Chris Black on 07837 330534 for further information if you are unable to attend the meeting.

NEW PROCEDURE

Please be aware that all members attending the General Meetings will be asked to **sign in on arrival**. There will also be a **sign out sheet should you leave the meeting early**.

Heaven forbid that there will be a fire incident during the meeting, but we do need to know who had been in the building. We wouldn't want a fire crew to be searching for someone who actually left early.



SINGING GROUP

We sing just for enjoyment and you don't need to read music – we have the words of the songs but learn the tunes by ear. We sing some songs in unison but like to have a bit of harmony when we can. Our latest song is a great arrangement of 'All through the night'.

We start with a vocal 'warm-up' which is always a lot of fun, then probably sing a round or two before we work on the latest song we are learning. Lots of people hesitate to join a singing group because they haven't sung for a long time, or more likely, although they would like to sing,



think they can't sing, but find that, when supported by other people, they CAN!

We meet every 2nd and 4th Friday at Hallcroft Community Centre on Randall Way, from 10.30 until

about 12.15. Cost is just £1.50 a session which pays for the hall hire and tea/coffee and biscuits.

There are still 6 sessions left up to the end of the year, October 13th and 27th, November 10th and 24th, December 8th and 22nd. We're a friendly group. Why not come and give us a try? Pat Barnett 01777 704154 or 07810521879
Email: patricia.barnett@talk21.com

FUN WITH FLOWERS

This month we went back to basics by producing a posy arrangement. Some chose to add bamboo tubes with flowers added extra interest. Sally



NEWSLETTER CONTACT

Design, Production & Printing Christine Cook
Contact:- newsletters@retford-u3a.org.uk
Contact 07939 476676.

Last date for receiving articles for October edition is Friday 20th October

SCAM ALERT

We have been contacted by a u3a who experienced a scam in which they received an email, allegedly from one of their committee members, saying that they needed to be sent money in order to send an invoice. This was quite sophisticated and appeared to have come from another committee member.

If you receive an email like this, check the email address of the sender to make sure it is their normal email address. Also phone the person directly to check. This may not affect you as a member of Retford U3a but something similar may come into your 'in box'.

Never send any money, without personally checking with the individual who has requested it.

GARDENING GROUP

This is rather a 'bumper bundle' of news as we've been a bit remiss at reporting our activities – but we have been busy!

I think we did tell you about our April and May visits to Coton Manor and Kelmash Hall, both in Northamptonshire, and Sledmere Hall in North Yorkshire, so I won't dwell on those.

Our aim was to go a bit further afield this year, after being more cautious last year, after covid. So, June saw us heading up to Thornton Hall gardens near Darlington. This is a private garden which only opens on a few days in June and July, and we were very lucky to have a special opening just for us. This really was a stunning garden, created from farmland, and we saw it on a perfect summers' day when it was at its peak, filled with roses, peonies, clematis and much, much more!



We enjoyed a simple salad lunch served in the barn and the undivided attention of the owner, who was so eager to share her love of gardening with us.

Continued on page 6

THE NOT SO IDLE TIMES

MILITARY HISTORY GROUP 3 DAY OUTING

Continued from page 3

As you know I have been putting together a programme for a three day Army, Navy and Air Force trip for next May 2024.



Friday May
11th drive
from
Kettlewells to
the RAF
Museum
Hendon.

Saturday 12th
visit the
Historic
Dockyard at
Chatham.



Dockyard at Chatham

Sunday 13th May visit the National Army Museum at Chelsea, beside Chelsea Hospital, the home of the Chelsea Pensioners) then return back to Retford.



The intention is to stay two nights at the three star 'King Charles Hotel' in Gillingham. This hotel is about a mile away from Chatham Dockyard. It is also our intention to offer an old fashioned formal 'Afternoon Tea' on the Saturday afternoon after we return from the dockyard.

We shall be staying at the bed and breakfast rate. Kettlewells have reserved KET 007 (the bus we went to Bletchley Park and a few years ago to France and Holland) This is a 48 seater coach, but we intend to put a maximum limit of 40 people on this trip. It has been costed out for only taking 30 people so if we get more than that the final price will be cheaper than that shown.

I won't bother giving you the breakdown of the costs, but we are looking at £250 per person (If we can get 40 people to go the cost will fall to £225 per person. This price includes the bus, the trip around the Historic Dockyard at Chatham and the two nights at the hotel, including the Afternoon Tea on Saturday afternoon. Another massive bonus is that there are NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENTS.

At this stage I am taking names of members who want to go. Please if you do want to come as a couple we have 15 rooms at our disposal, but I need to know if you want a twin or double room. We have 10 single lets available (which may be in a double/twin room). Please as soon as you can let me know if you want to come.



Friday 10th &
Saturday 11th
*** King Charles
Hotel
Gillingham

We have three General Meetings and two Hallcroft meetings before the end of November. We are committed to pay a £50 deposit to both the hotel and Kettlewells before the end of November, (incidentally Kettlewells will be looking after all the costs including the hotel for their driver). We will be collecting £100 deposit per person to pay Kettlewells after the November General Meeting, with the balance (when we finally know what it is) by the end of March.

You can of course send me a deposit for £100 per person now by post. Please make you cheque payable to Retford u3a and send it to Kate Evans at:- Rowans, Church Lane, Retford. DN22 9NQ. Let's hope we have a lot of interest in this trip. Don't forget to drop me an email if you are interested. Cheers for now. roy.clarborough@gmail.com

STRIDERS WALKING GROUP

Hi Everyone - a group of 9 Striders met on a lovely sunny day at the Cote Green car park adjacent to the Trans Pennine Trail near Wortley and proceeded on a demanding but lovely walk in the Wortley and Thurgoland area - a few miles to the north of Sheffield. The walk was lead by Steve who guided us along a section of the Trans Pennine Trail before heading off across field to Thurgoland - where we rested for a while and pondered the origin of the villages name. Subsequently checking on Wikipedia the following information came to light - 'The name is of Old Norse origin and may mean 'Cultivated land of a man called Thorgeirr'. Other sources claim derivation from the Saxon 'The fee farm in the Ga of Thor' - meaning a rented farm in honour of the god Thor'. The Thurgoland local history group claim is was first mentioned in the Domesday survey as Turgesland after a Saxon. All of which fits quite closely with our speculation of it being of Norse or Saxon origin concerning someone called Thurgo. From this point we proceeded through very lovely countryside with

great views northwards and eastwards with West Burton power station spotted on the far horizon and a good view of Wortley Hall to our right as we walked towards the village of Wortley. Sadly in places the route was quite overgrown with several stiles and pathways through hedges made difficult by rampant hawthorn and at one point we had to negotiate our way through a maize crop several feet high. It all added to the fun!

The walk ended up being 10 miles in length and we ascended for over 1000 feet along the route. It took us just over 5 hours which sadly meant we didn't have time to call in for a drink and snack at Wortley Hall. Maybe next time!

Many thanks to Steve for leading the walk and to all who came along and contributed to a great days walking in an area we haven't previously visited.

Best wishes Rod

To access photos as my image resizer is not working - <https://1drv.ms/f/s!AiXkD4DEyF4kgd5QJToboAbk7Dm2vw?e=EG3ymk>

GARDENING GROUP

Continued from page 4

July was our long adventure to NT Hidcote Gardens in Gloucestershire, and Kiftsgate Gardens, just 5 minutes down the road. These are two very well know gardens, often featuring in Magazines and on TV – and each unique in their own way. In



the afternoon, as the clouds gathered over Kiftsgate, and having seen the gardens, we were lucky to be able to retreat to their lovely tea room, and with the coach waiting at the front door – set off for home feeling very blessed another lovely day.

In August we stayed local, visiting a garden in Sutton on Trent which opens for the National Garden Scheme, but especially for us on August 3rd. Again the weather was good and we were warmly welcomed by the owners. Many of us enjoyed walking around the garden, meeting friends and enjoying tea and cake in beautiful surroundings – as well as picking up gardening ideas and tips.

Trentham Gardens near Stoke on Trent was our final outing, last Thursday. After terrible weather on

the Wednesday we crossed our fingers for the Thursday – and were very lucky. Trentham is a large estate with a lake, acres of parkland and walks, and a fairly newly restored Italian garden. A lot of the summer colour had gone but there was still plenty of structure to see, and seeing what would emerge in the spring on the woodland walks. There was also a shopping village, so plenty of retail therapy too!

The Gardening Group 'new season' starts with our AGM on 19th October at 2pm at The Well, where members new and

returning are warmly invited to pay their membership fee, to reflect on the past year whilst watching Leslie's film presentation of photos from our visits, and to hear about our plans for the new one.

We have already got speakers booked, and would welcome any suggestions of places to visit.

Irene and the team!



Contact details are

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or 01777 707109