



NOT SO IDLE TIMES

Retford U3A Newsletter - NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2023

CHATTER "FROM THE CHAIR"



Welcome to the November issue of the Not So Idle Times, and just to remind you that this is the last one for this year as there is no General Meeting in December.

I would like to thank you all - long-standing members and the newer members for your loyal support of Retford U3a and for me personally as I stepped into the role as Chair last April. My special thanks must go to all the Committee members, Group leaders, Andrew Young Webmaster and Christine Cook who produces this newsletter each month. They all help in different ways to make our U3a run so well to fulfil the U3a strapline Learn Laugh Live. I am privileged to work with them in such a vibrant organisation. The Interest Groups are the life blood of our organisation, and it is so good to see the number of groups increasing in recent months. Do check the web site for further details. It feels as though we have really picked up this year following the pandemic. Our membership has increased and is now 520 and the attendance at the October General meeting was 108. You are all part of a learning organisation, to share as volunteers, your skills and knowledge whatever they may be.

This week I learnt an interesting fact about the term 'Box Office' and I thought I would share it. The term comes from Elizabethan and Shakespearean times. The payment for attending a show in a theatre was put into a sealed box, or earthen ware pot. When full it was taken to a safe room or office where the boxes were forced open to get at the cash. Thus the room was known as the Box Office, and of course the term continues to this day. I had never questioned why the box office was so called, but I really like knowing where some words or phrases come from. The next time you go to the Majestic Theatre (or maybe Retford Little Theatre) to

purchase tickets you can think on the origins of the 'Box Office.' Apologies to those who already knew this fact.

I'm sure there will be plenty more interesting information at the General meeting when our invited speaker, David Skillen, delivers his talk Pilots and Petticoats, Women Masters of the Sky. It's about the determined women who made their own places in aviation history. David has been an excellent speaker for the Retford U3a in the past and I look forward to hearing his new talk.

It seems rather premature to be wishing you a Happy Christmas but I hope you all have a healthy time with safe travels to or by friends and family. There will still be some of the groups running in December of course and I look forward to seeing you at the next General Meeting on Thursday January 25th 2024 if not before then. The speaker is one of our members Betty Merrick, and her talk is The Italian Armistice 80 years on. Betty will relate some stories of escapes by Allied prisoners of war following the Armistice in September 1943, and of the bravery of Italian peasant folk who sheltered them in German-occupied Italy. On behalf of Retford U3a I wish you all a Happy New Year.
Pippa Ramsay Chair@retford-u3a.org.uk
01777 704550

LOST PROPERTY

A dark blue fleece jacket was left on the back of a chair, near the front of the central seating section at the Well, after the October General meeting. The Well took it into their lost property and as far as I know it has not been reclaimed. If this is your jacket please arrange to collect it or it may go into a charity bag. The Well's phone number is 01777 702344

SPEAKER PROGRAM

Nov 23rd	Pilots and Petticoats - Masters of the Sky	David Skillen
----------	--	---------------

INTEREST GROUP NEWS

FUN WITH FLOWERS

This month a small group produced miscellaneous arrangements.



The theme for December is going to be a Christmas song or hymn. I did a posy arrangement with white roses and baby's breath (gypsophila) Raffia made my manger in the centre with nativity figures. And a few stars.

'Away in a manger'
Sally



RECORDER GROUP

We are busy working on our Christmas repertoire and we're looking forward to playing at the Christmas Tree festival in St Swithuns Church in Retford at 11am on Saturday 25th November. Please come and support us! We are also performing, together with Newark U3A, at Newark Parish Church on Thursday 7th December at 11am and 2pm. Finally, a few of us will be playing in a concert with the Worksop Community Band at St Paulinus Church, Ollerton on Saturday 9th December at 7pm. Support for any of these performances would be most welcome.

Carol Woodward

GARDENING GROUP

List of dates for our meetings and visits.

As we don't have a meeting in December, it would be helpful to get membership completed (£10) for those who haven't yet paid, so that we can concentrate on taking money for visits in January.

As usual we will have our plant share table, and 'a stem from your garden' vases.

Dec NO MEETING

Jan 18th Martin Fish

MY LIFE IN GARDENING SO FAR

Martin is passionate about all things gardening. He trained locally and has had a long and varied career in horticulture including writing, broadcasting and as an RHS judge.

Feb 15th Visit to a winter garden
To be confirmed

March 21st Colin Ward – HOSTAS.

Colin and his wife Karen run Swines Meadow Nursery in Market Deeping, Peterborough, and specialise in care and exotic plants and shrubs....and Hostas.

April 18th Ray Creek

INDOOR ORCHIDS AND HOW TO
MAKE THE BLOOMING THINGS GROW.

Ray has been involved in the plant world since leaving school and now presents talks to many garden organisations and clubs.

VISIT DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

May 22nd WEDNESDAY The Old Vicarage, Rutland. Please note change of day and week!

June 20th Floral Media – Caunton, Nr Newark

July 18th/Aug 15th To be arranged

Sept 19th Wollerton Old Hall

More details about visits at our January meeting. You can contact me on Retford 707109 or retfordu3agardeners@outlook.com

Irene & Co

NEWSLETTER CONTACT

Design, Production & Printing Christine Cook

Contact:- newsletters@retford-u3a.org.uk

Contact 07939 476676.



There will not be a newsletter in December so the last date for receiving articles for January edition is Friday 19th January 2024

INTEREST GROUP NEWS

PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP

Two Photos of the Month from the November meeting of the Photography Group.

The month's theme was Circular / Spherical



HOMES NEEDED

There are a couple of bi-fold display boards no longer required.

If you can use a display board or know of an organisation who could make good use of one please contact Caroline Marsh Group Coordinator. Co-groups@retford-u3a.org.uk

BIG NIGHT ROLL OVER 2024

Its all aboard for our first Big Night Out of 2024 on Friday, 12th January at Retford Golf Club. It's a big one because Sue Paul's devilishly clever Table Quiz Bingo at the October Big Night Out stumped everyone. The best table managed only 15 correct answers out of 25 (I blush to mention which table that was), but no table managed to get a line. That means the prize pot carries over to January. The winning table could be splitting £80!

What better way to lighten your mid-winter blues? A lovely two course meal with friends, a bar and a quiz with a big prize on offer. When you add in the secure gated car park, it's a perfect night out. Make sure that you contact Sue Paul to book your January place. 01777 705008 or social@retford-u3a.org.uk. The October do was sold out (though the floods kept some away on the night).



2024 SPEAKERS - More details in January

Date	Speaker	Title of Talk
January 25 th	Betty Merrick	The Italian Armistice 80 years on.
February 22 nd	Bob Blatchford	A Justice in the Arctic
March 28 th	Georgina Lancaster	Arts and heritage officer Bassetlaw Museum
April 25 th	AGM	Talk by Bryan Gladstone subject TBC
May 23 rd	Admin Dinah Wilcox	Story and Songs
June 27 th	Lucy Kennedy Fraud & Cyber Protect Officer	How to avoid the fraudsters
July 25 th	Sam Millard	Rogues, Vagabonds - or Heroes?

WATERCOLOUR GROUP

Thanks to all the members who provided their painting for our display of work at the October general meeting. Pictured opposite.

For the 2024 our topics are planned to be: -

- 25th January Unstructured Flowers
- 22nd February Abstraction
- 28th March Animals

All are at Maypole Court Community Centre Wellow from 9.30. If you would like to come along please contact Andrew Young by the link on the group's web page or on 01623 863327.



NEW INTEREST GROUPS

There is a lot going on to establish even more new groups for our u3a.

The **Air Fryer Group** has had a couple of meetings. They meet on the second Friday of the month at 10am, currently hosted by Sue Ross in Everton. They are sharing hints, tips, and recipes, and hope to get some occasional guest speakers. The group is looking for someone to take responsibility to lead it and potentially find a larger venue so more members can join. If you are interested in taking this on, please contact Sue – her email address is: rossko2004@hotmail.com. Group details will be on our website shortly.

The **Short Easy Walks Group** is getting underway, led by Kate Evans. Group details will be on our website shortly.

Calling all card game players!

We have some members interested in joining a Whist Group. Whilst we don't have a leader for this group yet, if you are interested in joining or leading this group please let us know and if there is sufficient interest we will get this going.

We are also looking to set up a **Beginner's Bridge Group**. This would be led by an experienced player from our long-standing Bridge Group and would take people through the basics of the game and help skill development. This is likely to meet twice a month. If you are interested in learning this fascinating and sociable game, please get in touch and when there are enough interested members, we will set up an initial meeting.

We are setting up a new **Book Group** and have an initial meeting on 29th November at 11.00 in Retford. There are still some places available for this group, so if you would like to join, please get in touch.

Unfortunately, the proposed arrangement with Worksop u3a to join their Tai Chi group is not going ahead. At the end of the day, members found this was too far and impractical for them. Some of the group members have joined a local non-u3a Tai Chi group as an alternative and if you would like details of this please contact Karen Woodcock. Her email address is: roygreen1@icloud.com

One of our members, Ruth Edwards, is interested in forming a **Local Historical Landscapes Group**. It would be great to have a group focusing on our locality, especially after the Local History Group could not continue. If you are interested in joining this group, please let us know and we will work with Ruth to get this going if there are enough people who want to take part.

We are also excited that there is potential for a new **Making Music Group**

To contact us about any interest group matters our email is: co-groups@retford-u3a.org.uk Carol and Caroline

MILITARY HISTORY GROUP

The trial we have been running over the last 3 months where our meetings have all had a local flavour and have been free of charge certainly seems to have worked. Some of you will remember we told you we were going to run a trial of free meetings to attract those members who used to go to the Local History Group which folded a while back. 30 members joined us 'live' in September and this increased to forty two in October. We had to scabble around for chairs this month as 49 members attended to see Adrian Sumner's talk about the ex RAF Worksop and Gamston.



Over the last 3 months 66 members have joined us for at

least one of our meetings and a further 14 have joined us on Zoom. We usually get between 30-40 members join us on Zoom from around the country and of course we should never forget the 4 family groups who join us on a regular basis from the United States and also from France. Usually we see representatives from 8 or 9 other u3a Groups and a regular is the Military History Group National Co-Ordinator, Mike Fox, who joins us from Banstead u3a in Surrey. He puts out a newsletter around 4 times a year. This goes out to all 40 or so Military History groups in the UK, so promoting our name. I usually forward this on to our M/H group. We run an 'open' group. In other words as a member of Retford u3a you can just turn up at our live meetings at Hallcroft Community Centre. You don't have to book. Have a look at the 'Events' section of u3a website and just scroll down. If any subject takes your fancy just come along.

Next month Mike Garrett, one of our members (and also the Chair of Gringley on the Hill History Club) is giving a talk on Marshalls and Rose Forgrove and the work both these Gainsborough companies did to help the 'War Effort' during WW2. This meeting is again free of charge, just come along on December 14th and enjoy a cup of coffee and a mince pie before Mike gives his talk. In January both our presentations will be on Zoom. We are concerned the weather may be against us so the dates to look out for are January 11th at 10.00am and the 22nd at 2.00pm. I am giving this talk with the subject being the '100 years War'. If you are interested and have not registered to go on our groups Zoom database, just drop me an email and I shall add you on. roy.clarborough@gmail.com Once again all members and speakers thank you for your support given over the year and we look forward to 2024's full programme of events. Roy