

NOT SO IDLE TIMES

Retford U3A Newsletter - MAY 2023

CHATTER "FROM THE CHAIR"

As I write this 'From the Chair' for the first time I reflect on what a strange title I now have. Chairman, didn't appeal nor Chair Person so I have opted for Chair, a piece of furniture, but I hope it will be a comfortable one for me.

When I retired and joined the U3a 10 years ago I wanted to meet more local people as my work colleagues were not Retford based. It has certainly met that need. I have developed new interests, made new friends and been to lots of new places by coach, car, bike and on foot. I enjoyed the different roles I took on with the Gardening group and on the committee.

I count my blessings to be part of this international, national and local organisation and for its values. I have accepted the opportunity to become the chair of Retford

U3a and with the support of the committee I will do my best to continue the development of our group and to meet the 'strap line' Learn, Laugh and Live.

It has been an even stranger May than usual I think. 2 Bank Holidays so far, a Coronation and another Bank Holiday still to come. I'm sure like many of you I am desperate for the weather to make up it's mind and give us some nice spring warmth and with more consistency. It's still hard to know how many layers to put on in the morning!

I look forward to seeing you at the General meeting when our speaker is Bonney Baggaley who will be telling us about the work that is carried out at the Bassetlaw Hospice, Retford Hospital.

Pippa Ramsay chair@retford-u3a.org.uk

UPDATE ON COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------|
| * Chair | Pippa Ramsay |
| * Vice Chair | Bryan Gladstone |
| * Secretary | Pamela Mann |
| * Treasurer | Patricia Everitt |
| * Interest Group Leaders | Caroline Marsh |
| * | Carol Knowles |
| * Membership Secretary | Pat Lockett |
| * Speaker Finder | Angela Grant |
| Also but not on the committee | |
| * Webmaster | Andrew Young |
| * Newsletter | Chrissie Cook |
| * U3a Merchandise | Roger Stenson |

NEWSLETTER CONTACT

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Due to holiday commitments items for inclusion in the June edition to be received no later than Thursday 15th June 2023

SPEAKER PROGRAM

May	25th	Bonney Baggaley	Bassetlaw Hospice
Jun	22nd	Mr Straw's House, Worksop	National Trust member
Jul	27th	Citizens Advice Bureau	Karen Whitlam
Aug	24th	Safe and Well at home	Daniel Corr Fire and Rescue Service
Sep	28th	Bee Keeping	Bob Lamb
Oct	26th	Sloswick Organisation - Almshouse Charity	Tim Shuldham
Nov	23rd	Pilots and Petticoats - Masters of the Sky	David Skillen

THE NOT SO IDLE TIMES

INTEREST GROUP NEWS

PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP

Here are the April Photos of the Month from the Photo Group. The theme was "A Special Place"

Pictured below are the Photos of the Month from our May meeting, the theme being "Curves"



Bamburg Castle & Beach - Marie Thompson



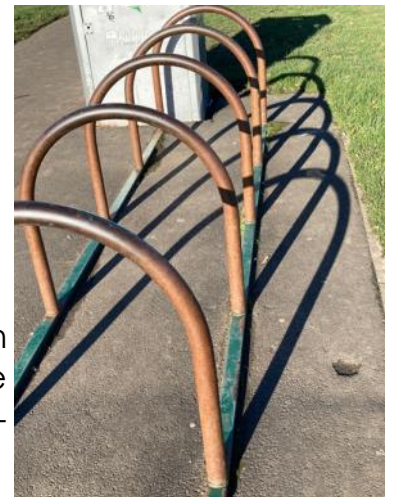
The Chesterfield Canal - Sally Telfer



Switzerland - The Lion of Lucerne - Andy Paul



Curved tram front at Crich Tramway Museum - Adrian Hetherington



Cycle Rack with shadows at The Angel of the North - Marie Thompson

WINE APPRECIATION GROUP

The group enjoying a Coronation Celebration drink or two at the home of Lesley & Adrian Sumner.



INTERESTED IN WHIST ?

Wondering if anyone would be interested in a game of whist, day and time to be arranged In Retford for 4-8 people in Gay's house.

For further information please contact Gay Mathews Tel no 01777 860684

INTEREST GROUP NEWS

MILITARY HISTORY GROUP

I would like to thank the 22 people who joined us on Zoom, along with the 35 who saw Bob Blatchford's presentation on the British Merchant Fleet 'live' this last month. We now consistently have more than 50 people attend our sessions each month and I know they are appreciated. Our thanks should go out to our speakers, who this year have done such a superb job. We were again joined by a number of u3a members from other groups in Surry, Sussex, Gloucester and Evesham.

Looking on the Retford u3a website you can find our speaker programme along with planned trips right up until January 2024. Just search for Retford u3a and click on Events on the top information bar and scroll down to see our programme. Anyone can join in to our Zoom presentations for free without being a member of the u3a, but you do need to be a member if you want to come to a live meeting. I do allow a non-member to come to one meeting as a guest, but after that you will be asked to join Retford's u3a.

We do not bother with a group membership list and there are no restrictions to coming to any meeting if you are already a member of a u3a (not necessarily Retford u3a). Our 4 meetings this September, October, November and December will all be free to see live. We are trying to support those members who used to go to the Local History Group, by running four talks on the Ranskill Ordnance Factory, Nottinghamshire in the Civil War, The History of RAF Gamston and RAF Worksop and the work carried on at the Marshals and Roses factories in Gainsborough during the Second World War. These talks will all take place on the second Thursday morning of each month at Hallcroft Community centre at 10.00am.

Just a quick reminder we are now taking money for the Eden Camp Trip. We currently have around 5 spare seats. The trip is on July 19th and the cost is £15 for the bus and £12 entrance fee (£27 per head). We currently have 35 people who have put their names down for the Bletchley Park trip on 13th September and will be collecting money for that trip in June.

Roy Evans

BICYCLES WANTED

Bicycles of any size or shape you no longer need. **WHY?** For the asylum seekers and refugees who are currently housed in an unused hotel near Doncaster airport (as was). Donated bicycles help to reduce their isolation and can make all the difference to their quality of life. eg for volunteering, socialising and for integrating within

MEMBERS SECRETARY - THANK YOU



I would just like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to the committee for supporting me throughout my tenure as Membership Secretary and for the beautiful flowers they gave me at the last committee

meeting. I would also like to say thank you to Pat Lockett who has been elected to take over the role Membership Secretary, I hope you enjoy your time as much as I have done.

When I took on the role 3 years ago we were just starting to deal with the nightmare of Covid and how that affected both us as individuals and the U3A as an organisation. It is so good to be the other side of the pandemic (although I am only too well aware of how it has changed us and it still hasn't gone away) but am very aware that for some large gatherings still make you nervous.

I would also like to say thank you to all the members I met /had contact with, whether it be face to face, telephone or email. There were just so many positive interactions over the years, they helped to make a busy job such a joy and I have made so many new friends over the period.

I would especially like to thank those who assisted me at General Meetings when queues at the desks seem to snake on down to the Market Place!!!!

I am not intending to disappear but intend to carry on as a Trustee and organising the 'Celebration Dinner/Quiz' at the Golf Club. I am sure I will catch up with you over the next few months. Thank you Sue Paul

the community. **HOW TO DONATE?** and for further information Contact Kathy Cowbrough - a U3a member 01777 706880, 07745811172 or kathy.cowbrough@gmail.com Other helpful items: footballs, laptops (cleared of all personal data) or playing cards - to relieve the boredom of their enforced isolation

INTEREST GROUP NEWS

PAINTING GROUP

Here is a selection of "work in progress" in the Painting group. As you can see, we work independently and with a variety of subjects so the sessions are always very interesting.



READING FOR FUN 2ND BOOK GROUP

The group recently read *Brideshead Revisited* by Evelyn Waugh. It is widely regarded as his finest work. It was originally written in 1944 and we read the re-edited version of 1959. It was a contrast to recent books we have chosen to read as they have been more modern.

The book was made into a TV series in 1981 which we all remembered and enjoyed. It is a depiction of the decadent privileged aristocracy prior to the second world war. Based on a gentleman by the name of Charles Ryder and his days of being a student at Oxford University and his relationship with in particular Lord Sebastian Flyte and his extremely wealthy and outrageous catholic family The Marchmain family and their home Brideshead Castle.

It was a mixed review some enjoyed more than others. Comments included that it was a style that is now out of date, well written, description wonderful and the use of vocabulary and characterisation were superb. One of our members was an Oxford student other members also did Latin so they had a better understanding of parts of the book as it was lost on some of the others mainly me .

Carol Knowles - Group co-ordinator

FUN WITH FLOWERS GROUP

Our theme for May was a curved arrangement. We had a nice selection of domed designs and the traditional Hogarth curve. Sally



SOCIAL NIGHT OUT - REMINDER

We still have a few places for the next social night out

Bar available for you to buy your own drinks.

- Date: SATURDAY 1st July 2023
- Time: 7.00pm for 7.30pm
- Venue: Retford Golf Club, Ordsall



I am still awaiting confirmation re the price and the menu.

To book a place please contact Sue Paul – 01777 705008

STRIDERS WALKING GROUP

For the first time this year the Striders ventured further afield to the Peak District and a group of 15 met up at the public car park in Hathersage to take on the challenge of Stanage Edge. Fortunately we were blessed by the weather and the walk took place predominantly in sunshine and a lovely cooling breeze. Even along the edge, where strong winds can be regularly encountered, the breeze was very restrained and allowed us some excellent panoramic views of the surrounding area without attempting to tip us over. The distance of the walk was just about 7.5 miles and we ascended just over 1350 feet. The pace was nice and leisurely coming in around 40 minutes a mile and we took every opportunity to stop, rest, and take in the interesting features and wonderful surroundings.

The route proceeded gently uphill from Hathersage, slightly steep in parts, over a distance of 2.3 miles to the top of Stanage Edge. On the way we passed North Lees Hall which is reputed to be the inspiration for Thornfield Hall, the home of Mr Rochester in Charlotte Bronte's Jane Eyre. I'm inclined to believe anything but for any doubters here's a link that provides a few more details: <https://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/visiting/places-to-visit/stanage-and-north-lees/north-lees-hall>

On reaching the top of the edge we proceeded carefully along in a south easterly direction to the car park at the top of Ringinglow Road. The route wasn't easy being boulder strewn with the moorlands gently dropping away to our left and the fabulous views being maintained to our right. Along the edge we encountered many other walkers as well as climbers. Sadly for myself and a few others the fabled ice cream van wasn't present at the Ringinglow road car park - perhaps it's only evident at weekends!

The following section of the walk took us uphill again to the summit of Higger Tor. After a rest we circled the summit to take in the views to the south and the Iron Age hill fort of Carl Wark before heading off on a track downhill

and back to Hathersage. Several of the group took the opportunity to stop at the Scotsmans Pack country inn on the way back into Hathersage for some food and drink. A great place that welcomes walkers, boots, rucksacks and all.

Many thanks to all who attended and contributed to a great days walking. Special thanks to Brian for leading the walk and to Harry for acting as back marker. Fortunately all 15 of us returned with no one getting lost or suffering injury on what was a very pleasant, enjoyable, but quite challenging walk.

See page 6 for details of the walking groups coach trip



OBITUARY

We are sorry to announce the recent death of Richard Lyon, a long standing member of the U3a. Over the years he had been an active member of the Walking and Gardening groups. The U3a sends condolences to his wife Beryl 'Bee' and their family and friends for their loss.

WATERCOLOUR GROUP

For our April session we explored Chinese-style bamboo painting. We used Chinese brushes and their very different brush-holding and moving techniques. Hard not to slip back to our muscle memory of European brush hold and style.

Our next session on Thursday 25th May at 9.30 is "Sunsets".

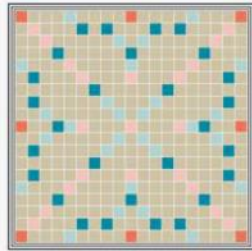


If you'd like to come along please contact Andrew Young on 01623 863327 or using the link on the group web page



POTENTIAL NEW GROUPS

Scrabble Margaret Montgomery, group leader for scrabble mentioned to me at the AGM she currently has one person on her waiting list (she has 9 currently in her group and cannot unfortunately accommodate anymore). If anyone would like to be added to the list for a second scrabble group or even lead the group please contact myself or Caroline and we can assist you with this our email address is: co-groups@retford-u3a.org.uk



Brush up your French

Sheena Harling is going to lead this group, hopefully starting in September. It's for anyone who has done a bit of French at school or beyond and wants to get a bit more conversational. More details to follow over the next few months, but if you are interested let us know: co-groups@retford-u3a.org.uk

Interest Groups for mind and body fitness

(Potential New Instructor Led activities)

As mentioned in April's newsletter by the Chairman, instructor-led groups such as Yoga, Tai Chi, and Mindfulness are popular with other u3a's. The u3a hires a qualified and insured instructor to lead the group, and group members pay for the session to cover the instructor costs. Are there any of our members who would be interested in joining these kinds of groups? If so please register your interests with the group coordinators - co-groups@retford-u3a.org.uk

If we have enough interest and we have members qualified and insured to lead a group, then this would be an alternative way of establishing a group. If that's you, then please get in touch. Thanks Caroline



SHORT STORY COMPETITION

The theme is "Decision(s)"
The deadline to enter is 12 noon on Monday 26th June
The story must be all your own work- 1500 words max
Entries must be made on line through the u3a website - Home / learn Short Story Competition 2023
Details have been sent to relevant group leaders. Contact Caroline Marsh Group coordinator for more information



INTRODUCTION

I have recently taken over the role of Membership Secretary for Retford U3A and I would like to take this opportunity to say hello and to introduce myself.

I look forward to meeting you at future meetings or events and want to assure you of my help and support should you need this in relation to membership matters.

My contact details are

memsec@retford-u3a.org.uk or Tel: 07385 244159

But please use email for preference.

Kind regards, Pat Lockett Retford U3A Membership Secretary

SEEKING RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

Jess Bowden is a PhD student from Heriot – Watt University living near Retford, who is currently seeking research participants for an upcoming workshop. She is planning a photography project that centres around the heritage, memories and experiences of people over 60 living in their local area (Retford and surrounding regions). The project would involve being asked to take a number of photographs of the local area, over a period of a couple of weeks, and then attending a small group interview where the photographs are shared and discussed. There will be a brief introduction/information session on May 26th at 1pm in St Saviours Community Centre, Retford in which the project will be explained in greater detail.

The small group interview is scheduled for June 23rd at 1.15pm – 2.45 pm in St Saviours Community Centre. If you would like to be involved please contact Jess so that she knows how many people to expect. Email:- jeb2000@hw.ac.uk

WALKING GROUP COACH TRIP

Our outing to Knaresborough is fast approaching and we still have seats available on the coach. We can now make these open to the full membership of Retford U3A. We want it to be clear that there is no need for members to take part in any of the walks. You can just enjoy a day out in a very nice town with much to see.



If you are interested in joining us the price is £12 a person. We will be leaving from Kettlewells, Grove Street, Retford at 8.30am Monday 3rd July and will leave Knaresborough to return to Retford at 4pm the same day. Please contact

David Snowdon

walking-moderate@retford-u3a.org.uk or

Rod Duckworth

walking-striders@retford-u3a.org.uk