



UP2DATE



NEWSLETTER OCTOBER 2022

Nationally the u3a is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year and in this edition, there is an article about "The 40th Anniversary quilt" which has been on display at Whitworth Art Gallery. As usual there has been a variety of articles about a number of different subjects many of which have come with their own illustrations. Keep up the good work.

Many thanks to everyone who has contributed to this magazine, as usual the variety of articles makes it a pleasure to put the magazine together.

Deadline for the next issue is 31st December 2022 to the below addresses. However, because it is December the earlier you can get pieces to me the better.

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NEW MEMBERS

We would like to welcome these members who have joined us since May this year.

Gwen Ardern

David King

Andrew Dean

Sheila Lemoine Abrams

Gill Edge

Ann Newbould

David Elliott

Olwen Smith

Anne Frazer

Shirley Sturmy

Christine Grimshaw

Sylvia Worth

Marion Jones

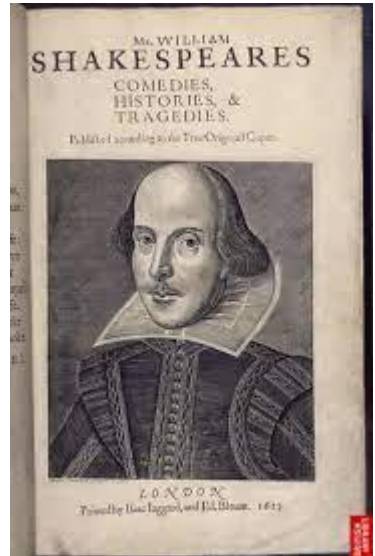
Judith Yapp

We look forward to getting to know you over the next few months.



My Shakespeare Tingle Factors

I was pleased to read Andy Dugdale's account of his trip to Stratford on Avon. I, too, like visiting this town though have only done so twice. I was saddened though, that Andy reported difficulties in appreciating the output of the great man. Granted many of the plays are historical or political or both and can present a challenge and I have by no means managed the whole cannon. But others have simpler stories which are often complimented by the most beautiful prose and poetry.



Many years ago, there was a radio programme on Radio 3 called the Tingle Factor presented by Robin Ray. It was similar to Desert Island Discs, but the guests were asked to choose music that gave them a great tingle each time they heard it. I have found this works with other things as well as music and I would like to share some of my Shakespeare Tingles to encourage Andy to take some small steps to discover his own tingles in the beauty of the Bard. He may find a new enthusiasm which may perhaps last longer than the pattern on the souvenir tea towel.

There are many larger, well-known speeches and soliloquies which I enjoy in their entirety but find it is the smaller speeches often given to minor characters that create the tingles. Still top of my list is from Richard 11, possibly the most straightforward storywise of the historical plays.

The story considers the rise, fall and death of King Richard 11 summed up in their famous book of exam script howlers *1066 and All That* by Sellar and Yeatman which states that though he was a boy when he became king, Richard ascended the throne at the age of 21 *and tried first being a Good King and then being a Bad King, without enjoying either very much*



The play contains the famous speech given by John of Gaunt (Act11 Sc1) which includes, *this scepter'd isle ... this precious stone set in a silver sea ...* a whole collection of mini tingles especially when performed by Simon Russell Beale. However top of my tingles parade is in (Act111 sc4) a scene in the Queen's garden when a gardener accidentally informs the Queen that her husband has been taken to prison by his would-be usurpers. The queen berates the gardener for being the messenger, *for telling me this news of woe, I*

would the plants thou graft'st may never grow. (Exeunt) To which the gardener responds thinking aloud:

Poor Queen! So that thy state might be no worse, I would my skill were subject to thy curse.-

*Here did she fall a tear; here in this place,
I'll set a bank of rue, sour herb of grace:
Rue even for ruth, here shortly shall be seen,
In the remembrance of a weeping Queen*

There are many others; try *The Merchant of Venice* (Act V sc 1) and *Romeo and Juliet* (Act 111 Sc11) where Juliet is anxious for Romeo to appear to consummate their legal marriage which took place in Friar Laurence's cell earlier that day. It begins *Gallop a pace ye Fiery footed steed...* and the tingle

*Give me my Romeo; and when he shall die, take him and cut him out in little stars,
And he will make the face of heaven so fine
That all the world will be in love with night,*
I can also recommend *King Lear* and *Macbeth* in the tragedies.

It is possible to play Tingle Factor with anything. Perhaps other members may like to share their tingles through future editions of the magazine.

References: *The Complete Works of Shakespeare* Spring Books 1066 and *All That* W.C Sellar and R.J. Yeatman Penguin Books. Veronica Bland.

u3a Research and Shared Learning Conference

Some of you may have noticed that I was missing from my usual register duty at the August Open Meeting. This is because I was attending the above conference at Preston County Hall. It was really easy to get there as there is a through train that stops at Heaton Chapel, my local station.



I decided to attend the conference as I have been taking part in the u3a-Coram Foundling Hospital Project. The project began in November 2021, with u3a members from all over the country taking part. We were given images of a selection of letters from Foundling mothers to transcribe and research. They dated from 1841 to 1849 and came from the archive record series *Petitions Admitted*. These letters show mothers petitioning for their children to be taken into the Foundling Hospital, and each letter conveys a whole story about the mother and her circumstances. The stories in the letters were a starting point for finding out more about the women in them. As a keen family historian, I have found this research absolutely fascinating and so far, I have produced 13 research reports.



The u3a-Coram Foundling Hospital Project was only one of several shared learning projects showcased at the conference and it was really interesting and inspiring to hear about some of the other projects. The conference was an interactive hybrid event, with some people joining via Zoom and with 2 of the presentations taking place remotely via Zoom. I was really glad that I managed to attend in person as there were numerous technical problems and it was fortunate that technicians were on call to attend to them.

This article would be too long if I wrote about all the presentations, so I will just mention a few. Members of Burnham on Crouch u3a Archaeology Group appeared in medieval costume to talk about a dig near to Southminster Hall, which they began after an interesting crop mark was



spotted on a Google Earth image. Once they began revealing the stone foundations of an early medieval building, historic buildings expert David Andrews was invited onsite for his opinion. He advised members to seek funding to continue the excavation more professionally. They were fortunate enough to receive over £11,000 in grants from the Essex Community Foundation which enabled them to pay Archaeology South East to supply the group with the services of senior archaeologist Ellen Heppell who taught them how to excavate and record properly, together with the equipment needed to do the job professionally. The group's finds have ranged from flint tempered prehistoric pottery – late Bronze/early Iron Age, to Saxon, to medieval and later. They also found Roman brick and tile, and large amounts of animal bones. There is a display of the excavation at Burnham Museum.



North Down and Ards u3a did not attend the conference in person but did their presentation remotely. They started a film making group with equipment funded by the Heritage Lottery from an earlier Shared Learning Project with North Down Museum in Bangor, County Down. We were shown a very impressive promotional film of their u3a's activities. The purpose of this is to accompany grant applications, for inducting members and for publicising u3a through film presentations in the locality. They also feel that showing evidence on film to local government and their Health Trust of u3a's contribution to the mental health of its 1200 members in North Down and Ards, is a priority.

In April 2020, subject advisers for Living History, Jo Livingston and Jennifer Simpson, began gathering diary entries from u3a members around the UK. This 'Diary Project' resulted in a book, "u3a in the Time of Corona", drawn from members' contributions describing what turned out to be the first lockdown in 2020. It chronicles our reactions to coronavirus and isolation, as well as how to get a supermarket delivery, how to cut your own hair and what to do with all that free time. Some people sent drawings, photographs and poems, which

have been included. The book is A4, 120 pages long, colour printed and costs £9.32 including postage.



The other presentations included *Pushback Ageism*, *Beyond the High Street*, *1901 Postal Pensioners* and *The 1820 Rising*. They were all just as fascinating and provided much food for thought. In Stockport and the surrounding area we have a wealth of educational establishments, museums, art galleries, theatres, and stately homes. Maybe, after reading this article, you will think of some possible shared learning projects that Stockport u3a could undertake.

Sheila Fleming

MUSIC MAKING

On the 12th July the Music Making group under the leadership of Roger Wyatt and Sheila Fleming invited members of Stockport u3a to their rehearsal. The afternoon was in aid of the charity “Music for All” and light refreshments were included. They raised the grand total of £150 for the charity.



“Music for All” is dedicated to changing lives across the UK by improving access to music making. We are a passionate, focused and ambitious UK charity helping disadvantaged music makers experience the joys and far-reaching benefits of making music.”

www.u3asites.org.uk/stockport

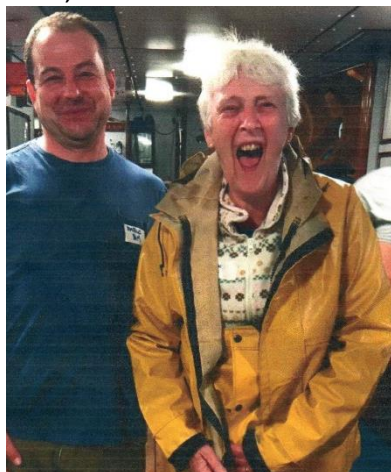
Don't forget you can always check out activities and keep up to date if you use our website.

07/06/2022 to 13/06/2022	Tenacious No: 903529, GRT:586	Portsmouth to Portsmouth. Via: Stokes Bay ⚓ St Helens ⚓, Alderney ⚓, Portland. (Crew) Max Wind: F6	6	307 Tidal	12	<i>John O'Brien</i>
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TALL SHIPS AND ME

Five weeks ago, I was talking to some bowling friends over coffee. One of them was going on a tall ship for the 10th time. I said it sounded fun and how lucky to have a holiday like that. She invited me to go as crew. I've never stepped on a yacht in my life. She gave me 24 hours to decide as there were only ten days to get the crew they needed. I agreed that evening and then realised the implications of being a 78-year-old with a gammy knee. There were to be fifty plus crew, some in wheelchairs. I spent an afternoon trying to get insurance and did get it for a reasonable £75 eventually. I asked about sleeping accommodation and was told I could have a bottom bunk because of my age, in a cabin with bunks for fourteen females. I enquired about wardrobe space, which was interpreted as "Janet wants to bring cocktail dresses". I have been on many cruises, with en-suite facilities. This was not quite the same. I had a cupboard, well two as I had the empty one next to my official one.

We set off in pleasant sunshine and went on deck to learn about setting sails and how to fix a life jacket. (I never did learn the names of the sails). We had to pull on the ropes to the "tune" 2-6-heave. I was kitted out in a becoming outfit of yellow oil skins and wellies, by a lovely professor from Madrid University who was part of the official crew for the week. I did galley duty on the first day at sea. Someone shook me awake at 6-30 a.m. to set tables and serve food after a lecture on hygiene from the cook. We had groups who did watch together, and you escaped this in the galley for one day.



My "Watch" were Aft Port, seven of us I think, two in wheelchairs called wheelies. We did not have a destination and for four days went

where the sails took us. We anchored outside Alderney and thought we may go ashore. Then there was a booming noise, and a tsunami size wave broke on the breakwater. Several enormous waves missed the breakwater



and lifted us into the air and dropped us into a trough. "All hands on deck" was the cry and we hauled on sails, plus the engine until we were back in calmer waters. The next day, I think, we anchored off Portland not far from Weymouth and most of us went ashore for a meal.

Water was scarce so we were told to be careful using it for washes. I had four showers, maximum of four minutes. Getting dressed was an art I never mastered. From a dark cupboard I put on anything to hand, preferably bright coloured, in case I fell overboard, and I lurched into every garment.

The last night I was on midnight until 4.00am. I went to bed at 6.30pm to get some sleep

Aft Port	Middle Midnight to 4 am	Morning 4 am to 8 am	Forenoon 8 am to 12.30 pm	Afternoon 12.30 pm to 4 pm	First Dog 4 pm to 6 pm	Last Dog 6 pm to 8 pm	First 8 pm to Midnight
Day 1							
Day 2							
Day 3							
Day 4							
Day 5							
Day 6							
Day 7							
Day 8							
Day 9							
Day 10							

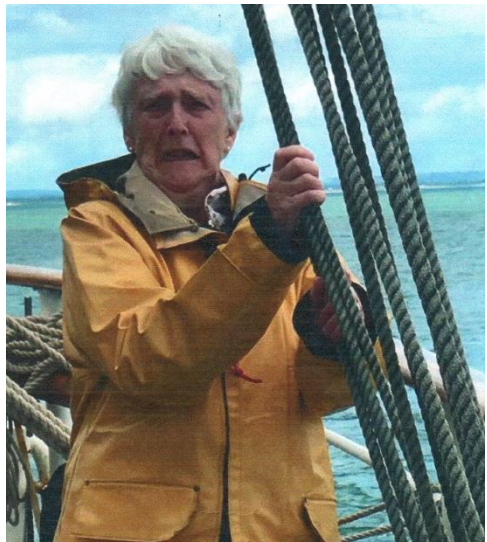
beforehand. At 8-30 we had "Hands on deck" and "2-6 heave". I then went back to bed, taking only my shoes and trousers off. At 10.00pm I was wakened again, got dressed and looked at my watch. Got back into bed to be wakened at 11-50 for Aft Port official watch. I dragged myself up to the top deck where my mate (who had

enlisted me) got my oilskins and dressed me for a hard night ahead. I refused the wheel as I thought I might be hypnotised by the dials and nod off, so I had to watch for anything around us. Two of our Watch had left the ship and the Wheelies did not have to do midnight watch so four of us plus a regular sailor had to keep our eyes open. At 2.30 a.m. our Watch leader decided I was useless so sent me to bed. I didn't refuse.

We anchored the next day, and I left the nicest, kindest, group of people I have ever met in my life after I had cleaned the "heads". The ship was sponsored by a software company but is run by a charity, "The Jubilee Sailing Trust". They are always looking for sponsors as most people go free either as helpers or are disabled.

I forgot to say that the able and disabled were helped to climb the masts if they chose, needless to say I didn't.

Janet Proctor Article and all illustrations.



CHARITY ENVELOPS

As you know we have recently started to give envelopes out at our main meetings for contributions for charity. The charity named on the envelope gives us a chance to support a variety of charities. The charities we have supported so far are:

WELL SPRING	£57-50
McMILLAN NURSES	£85-00
TRUSSELL TRUST	£62.11
ST. ANNE'S HOSPICE	£48-17



THE ANNIVERSARY QUILT

Chris Simons and I have enjoyed visits to The Whitworth Art Gallery on previous occasions. The day of the Great Reveal of the U3A 40th Anniversary Quilt seemed an opportune time for a revisit.

The day began with coffee in the Grand Hall – very welcome as Friday 17th June was a hot day. There were no familiar faces, but everyone was open and friendly.



Michaela Moody, the Vice Chairman, opened the meeting and explained that the idea of creating the quilt as a celebration of 40 years was inspired by the one created by Welsh U3A groups. The project was open to all members or groups who wished to contribute squares or boxes to depict some aspect the movement. Topics and forms were of free choice but there

were guidelines that had to be adhered to, including size, choice of materials and limitations on embellishment. The quilt needed to withstand machine washing without damage

Ruth Smith, a quilter of many years from Newcastle Emlyn, explained about the creation of the Welsh Quilt, and her part in the creation of the central medallion, and the amalgamation of the squares. It was her task to arrange a pattern of the submitted squares so that a balance of form and colour resulted. Her dining table was covered and out of use for some time.



There followed talks from three individuals or representatives of groups whose squares had been selected. They explained the ideas behind their topics, and details of construction.

Neil Stevenson, Trustee, North West, then enabled the great reveal, allowing



the covers to be dropped from the mounted quilt. It was as impressive as you would have seen in the June Newsletter online, but in reality, it is larger than expected and has a much more three-dimensional quality. The blue and yellow of the U3A Movement enhanced the forty varied and colourful blocks.

Then Sylvia Grayson, an experienced quilter, explained the task of assembling all the component parts around the central medallion, and the over-quilting of the whole. The process was very time-consuming as the need for balance of so many varied squares was immense. All parts needed to be joined accurately to create perfect tessellation. First Sylvia's husband had to



create a wooden framework in an outbuilding. Eventually all components were joined in the chosen layout. The precision of this task was very impressive. The process of over quilting followed. So that the form of this overlaid pattern became apparent, Sylvia used a lighter blue thread so that

the lines could be seen clearly against the bright blue of the reverse of the quilt. This was particularly sharp on the reverse of the medallion.



After the morning session we enjoyed lunch amidst the trees in the café. It was a busy session and we were pleased to be joined by some U3A "strangers" all the way from Marple Bridge!

After lunch, furnished again with coffee and biscuits, we had a short opportunity to see the quilt close-up. With such a variety of designs it was impossible to fully absorb each one, but what a wealth of ideas and skills.

Ann French, Head of Collections, Care Manager and Conservator of Textiles (Whitworth) gave us an interesting talk on her work in her specialist field. She was keen that we understood clearly the difference between conservation and restoration. The work of the highly skilled artisans on the





Repair Shop was that of restoration. We learned much about how her team ensured textiles, including paper, were conserved. She extolled the virtue of storing delicate materials in rolled form – folding being highly damaging. Hanging vintage and antique garments, however padded the hanger will result in excess strain on fabrics and seams resulting in the breakdown of structure

and eventual collapse of the garment. The need for sufficient hanging space allowing free movement for all garments was emphasised, We learned the value of the prevention of activity of the larvae of moths and other pests. Eggs and larvae cannot survive very low temperature for long periods of time. A normal domestic freezer is in use there and our quilt had to spend the specified time in it prior to being displayed.

Then Maggie Simms, Research and Shared Learning spoke about the Cottonopolis Project. This is an attempt in the North West to create linked learning platforms across U3A groups. Such shared projects already exist here and she is keen to help facilitate more. She emphasised the use of Zoom, so much in use and well-practised during lockdown, in enabling learning links not just regionally but nationally.

The meeting was closed. We were given a souvenir brochure with much detail about all the squares. One of the “Friends of the Whitworth” then took us in small groups to tell us about the founder and his wife who had started “The Friends” and their work then, since and in the present. We had a short informative tour of two areas of the gallery.

What a day.

Lesley Williams Both the article and illustrations.





BRIDGE

Geoff joined u3a in 1998 and the first class he went to was Bridge. I was not able to join until the following year. My first class was to master tating, then painting, then Bridge.

It is sad to say we have had to call an end to the Bridge group. This is due to age related illnesses of some players and also lock down played a large part in people's lives. Back in October 2019 we had 23 players, this has reduced in 2022, this month June we had only 4. Hence the reason to close the group. I have looked into High Lane u3a and found they are taking members from four local u3a's into their Bridge groups, they play duplicate Bridge or Chicago. Anybody interested, they have a very good website you can visit. Last of all I would like to thank all the u3a members who have supported us over the last 13 years since I have run the group, and the years before. Without you we could not have lasted as long as we had.

Joyce Goodwin.

(Stop Press; The Beginners group has met with a lot of interest and will start soon, a venue has been found, so Bridge may not be finished at Stockport u3a.)

PORT SUNLIGHT

On 5th July the History Group went on a trip, led by Kay Jones, to Port Sunlight. We had a wonderful and varied day with the Lady Lever Art Gallery and a coach trip round the village with a very informative guide.

The weather was good and as you can see we enjoyed ourselves.

Photo;
Rodger Moss



AMBLE AROUND GORTON RESERVOIR



On 22nd June, a group of the Amblers went for an amble, led by Rodger Moss, around Gorton Reservoir. The weather was beautiful, and everyone enjoyed themselves.

Photo: Anita Woodcock