

2019 "CITIZEN OF THE YEAR" AWARD GOES TO COLIN GRIMES

At a Civic Reception held on Friday 5th April, Syston Town Council played host to over 100 representatives of local voluntary organisations whose work helps to improve the life of residents of Syston and surrounding communities.

The 2019 award of "Citizen of the Year" was presented to our Chairman Colin Grimes for his long-standing commitment to our U3A, the Syston Volunteer Centre, Syston Bowling Club, and Syston - and previously Wreake Valley – Lions.

The annual Award is presented to an individual who in the opinion of the Council is actively involved in community work which has had a real and positive impact on the local community. The recipient is also judged to have demonstrated personal attributes that serve to encourage others to become involved.

Colin's contribution to improving the lives of Syston residents is outstanding and has not been achieved without selfless dedication, application, and commitment.

Colin is currently Chairman of the Syston and District U3A, Secretary Trustee of Syston and District Volunteer Centre, and Development Director of Syston Bowling Club.

Our congratulations, best wishes and thanks go to Colin in recognition of his contribution to leading and encouraging the setting up and growth of the U3A in Syston.



CONGRATULATIONS

Above: Guest of Honour, Deputy Lord Lieutenant Colonel Murray Colville, and Chairman of Syston Town Council, Councillor Paul Henry, presenting the award to Colin.

News from April

CLARIFICATION FROM OUR CHAIR, COLIN GRIMES: AGM CALLING NOTICE – CORRECTION

Please note that the recently distributed calling notice and nomination form for the upcoming AGM is inaccurate in respect of the nomination processes. Contrary to what is stated, **ALL** currently serving members of the Executive Committee must retire this year creating vacancies in all 18 positions.

All but five currently serving members have completed their constitutional maximum of three years' service and are not therefore eligible, on this occasion, to offer themselves for re-election **to the same posts**.

Four postholders - *Diversity Officer, Newsletter Editor, Meet and Greet Leader, and Assistant Speaker Host* - have not served for three years and are therefore eligible to offer themselves for re-election to these positions. In addition, our Treasurer, who is permitted to serve for a maximum of six years, is therefore free to seek re-election to that post.

Serving members of the Executive Committee who have been in the same post for three years, are eligible for nomination to serve in different posts.

If any U3A Member would be interested in serving on the Executive Committee **in any of the established posts on the Executive Committee**, nominations will be warmly welcomed and gratefully received.

Please note the closing date for receipt of nominations is **Tuesday 14th May**. Please accept my apologies for any confusion or inconvenience caused by the lack of clarity in the original notice.

COLIN GRIMES

The current posts are:

Chair	Vice Chair
Secretary	Assistant Secretary
Treasurer	Assistant Treasurer
Membership Secretary	Assistant Membership Secretary
Group Co-ordinators	Diversity Officer
Newsletter Editor	Public Relations Officer
Speaker Co-ordinator	Assistant Speaker Co-ordinator
Webmaster	Catering Manager
Meeter and Greeter	Committee members (1 vacancy)

Please contact any of the committee members on the website at <https://u3asites.org.uk/syston/welcome>

Membership

A big thank you to those of you who have renewed your membership so promptly. A small proportion of people have not, please ACT NOW if you want to continue your membership, you have until 1st May to get your request to Norma. After that, anyone who has not renewed will be deleted from the membership list.

A GENTLE REMINDER from Norma Grimes, membership secretary

Thank you if you have already renewed your membership for the year to 31st March 2020, and are in possession of a new, blue, membership card, please skip this bit and move on to the next item.

But to others - you know who you are - may I remind you that I must send a list of non-renewals to all Group Leaders at the end of April. By the beginning of May you should be able to show your new membership card at any group you attend as well as at the Main meetings.

We do not want to lose you. I am sure this is simply an oversight on your behalf, as you are just so busy, but do please let us know if you do intend to renew for another year.

Another reminder: if you intend to renew soon by cheque or bank transfer, we would ask you to send a sae to receive your membership card to Chris Ringrose at 45 Broad Street, Syston, Leicester LE7 1GH

Attendance

166 members attended the April monthly meeting, a record attendance and close to full capacity. Please keep coming, its good to see so many people interested in the talks. If you have any ideas for a speaker, please contact Pat Wherton, tel. 01162 602995

News

April Monthly Meeting

“Greenspace and How to Attract Wildlife into your Garden”



Oh you'd have loved this, with your green fingers. A talk by Steve Lovell, award winning horticulturalist, environmentalist, and wildlife supporter, on how to attract wildlife into the garden. We're not talking "wild" as in elephants, wildebeest, or eagles. No, this was about native species and being ecology friendly.

For starters, what's *not* good for wildlife? Well, hard surfaces, paving and decking, all well and good, look nice, but they're unlikely to attract wildlife. Steve said it with a look and one raised eyebrow that said "*You knew that already didn't you?*" Plastic flowers in baskets might be alright with a once yearly going over with the Marigolds (gloves, not plants) and soapy water in the Spring, but they won't attract wildlife.

To do that and keep a good ecological balance go for "natural", not a manicured showpiece with ne'er a blade of grass out of place. All elegance but not natural. A "bowling green" lawn (oh for a bowling green finish, if only...) is no good for insects and blackbirds can't feed off it.

Crab Apple trees are good for winter fuel for birds, and Hawthorn is good for autumn berries. Moths feed on Honeysuckle, bees like Foxgloves, and Elderberry, well, when you've made the obvious just freeze any leftovers for winter feed for birds. Buddleias attract butterflies, but don't keep a goat as well as it'll eat it!

Create a mini meadow - wild grasses, flowers, Delphiniums, Globe Thistle, and Asters are friendly to hoverflies and butterflies. Ivy (oh no not Ivy...!) is good for birds nesting, over wintering butterflies, and berries provide winter fuel.

Did you know, a pair of nesting Bluetits will take 12,000 caterpillars in a season to feed their young? Now *there's* a business opportunity for somebody.... Bugs and crawly things? Ladybirds, wasps and hornets are good for the garden and spiders like munching aphids so don't kill them off.

Target a bird box to attract specific birds, no good nailing up any old box, and Housemartins don't need a box, they build their own under the eaves. Bird seed with wheat? Pigeons will love you but they'll dominate the garden and gorge on it. Maize and sunflower hearts are good for wild birds. And don't throw out that decaying tree trunk that's lying around, it'll make a home for insects and birds, make a log pile and leave the rest to them.

Hedgehogs, they're in serious decline, we'd 26 million of them a few years ago (not me personally), down to a million now. Create a space under old timber, leaf piles, leave a gap at the bottom of a fence so they can move around at night and they'll come for your slugs and snails. And a water feature will attract toads, newts, frogs, damsel flies, and dragonflies. And they'll eat your slugs too...!

Brian King (who else?)

For more information on Steve's work go to: www.stevelovellgreenspaces.co.uk

Play Reading

Our play reading group were invited to visit the Syston Q T Theatre group last week to see how they rehearse and put on productions.

We set off to Chapel Street in Syston hoping to find out more about what happens behind the scenes in a small theatre and what a lovely surprise we had.

We were made very welcome by Mark and Judith who told us the theatre group was established over 50 years ago and is still going strong today.

We were able to see their costume department, scenery department and they have a wonderful lighting set. We also watched them rehearsing their next play "Murder by Default " after which we were invited to read a small part ourselves which was a bit nerve wracking but good fun.

We had a lovely hour seeing how to play read with feeling.

If this article has whetted your appetite you can find out more from their web site.

It's amazing what springs from people hearing about different groups within the U3A.

Barbara Sargeant

Supper Group

Pam Green, who has been organising meetings since the U3A started, together will no longer be joining us. Thanks to Pam for all the hard work over the last few years. Chris Illiffe has stepped in and together we will be sorting out some new places to dine. Chris is a pleasure to work with and we have already tried somewhere different, our husbands are pleased to do any tasting with us.

We have a very friendly group and anyone wishing to join will be welcome. We keep our eating places close to Syston when the dark nights start but venture further in the Summer.

Val D'Arcy and Chris Illiffe

British History

April was another well attended meeting, with 24 of us gathered to learn more about the history of our country in the 19th century.

So what do we know now?

- We know that between 1827 and 1832 we had 5 different Prime Ministers, internal disagreements within the Parties, 3 general elections and involvement by the House of Lords and the new King, William the 4th. All this culminated in the 'Great Reform Act' of 1832 following the 'days of May'
- We know that not all MPs were corrupt, despite the prevailing culture, and that William Wilberforce fought for 40 years to see the Abolition of Slavery, the Act of Abolition was passed two days before he died in 1833.
- We saw the birth of Trades Unions, and the heavy price paid by the Tolpuddle Martyrs for organising protest against starvation wages, as they were shipped off to Australia before being pardoned three years later.
- We learned about the Workhouses and their role in welfare provision as the country experienced enormous wealth and dire poverty at the same time.
- We were introduced to Charles Babbage, a genius mathematician, and acknowledged as a visionary in the field of computer science – as well as a host of other inventions and ideas, and a 'delightful dinner companion'

In our 13th of May meeting we'll be moving on to the reign of Queen Victoria, with presentations from;

Ric – Roland Hill and the establishment of the Post Office between 1837-1840

Lynn – Afghanistan for the first of our wars there 1838-1842

Lena – why Britain went to war with China in 1839 over the opium trade

Norma – introducing us to Charles Dickens and his great characters of the times.

Julie – why Robert Peel brought in peace time income tax in 1842

I'll throw in a bit about the split in the Church of Scotland in 1843

Pat Wherton

The Syston Happy Ukulele Band

The U3A Syston Happy Ukulele Band started about 16 months ago. Presently we have 50 members the latest being Penelope. The overwhelming majority had never played any musical instruments before they joined the band.

The band meets every Friday at The Brookside Club, next to the Brookside Café, near the blue bridge, otherwise known as the Millennium Bridge, Syston, at 1.45pm to commence at 2pm and finish at 3.30. Over the last year we have performed at numerous local venues, the most recent being for the Friendship Group, at Pork Pie Library Hall, Southfields, Leicester, on 25th April. The large audience joined in with great enthusiasm and merrily sang along to every song. They said that it was a really nice way to spend an afternoon and commented that the band created a lovely atmosphere.

We were told a talent spotter would be there, but it turned out the person was a train spotter.

Len, or Dave, offer personal one to one tuition in a member's home or elsewhere to enable brand new members to catch up.

If you would like to have an enjoyable weekly sing-along and lots of laughs why not pop in on a Friday afternoon. Any existing Syston U3A member is more than welcome to attend before they purchase a ukulele, as well as those that are considering becoming U3A members. No prior musical knowledge or prior musical ability whatsoever is required due to the innovative teaching methods used.

Len Abraham, Group Leader and Dave Houseman, Deputy Group Leader.

Discussion Group

Discussion Group meeting on Wednesday 17 April 2019

The meeting was opened by welcoming a new member, who took an active part in the discussions.

The topics included, the Local Elections on 2 May 2019 and the European Elections later that month. We discussed the Brexit Party; the Notre Dame fire (was it an act of God); legal aid to the ISIS bride; the drunk driver (third conviction) not sent to prison because she was female and Knife Crime - is there an answer?;

The Group meets at the Hub, on High Street, Syston at 2pm on the third Wednesday of each month, the next meeting being on 15 May 2019. If you would like more details, please contact Harold Betts on 0116 260 8671

Brian Austin

Ambling

This new group will meet on the morning of the second Thursday in each month for walks of between two and three miles followed by refreshments and a chance to socialise. We had our first meeting at the house of one of our members to discuss the types of walks, the logistics of meeting up and the social element of the walks. Ten members attended the meeting, with seven more joined up. There were plenty of suggestions for walks, e.g. Bradgate Park, Rutland Water and Cossington Meadows, the venue for our first walk on May 9th. The leaders are Kate Hill and Lesley Campton.

lesley.campton@gmail.com and katehill@btinternet.com

COMING UP

May Monthly Meeting

“Canal Life and Traditions” by Mary Matts

Refreshments are available from 10.00, the meeting starts at 10.30a.m
8th May, Syston Conservative Club.

Events

Warhorse

ONE SEAT LEFT

Please can those people wishing to go to Warhorse on 9 October 2019 matinee performance and have paid their deposit only, please pay the balance by cheque by 15th May. Please make cheques payable to Syston and District U3A and pay at the meeting in May or post the cheque to my home address 14 Plumtree Way Syston. The balance due is £24.

I do have one seat still available so if anyone wishes to go please let me know.

Elaine Yarwood phone 0116 2609194

Grease

JUST A FEW TICKETS LEFT for this popular musical at Curve on 11th September for only £34.

Contact Sheila Driver, tel. 0116260652

The booking form is at the end of this newsletter.

Member News

U3A Member is Featured Artist for May in Leicester Gallery.

U3A Syston member David Clarke has been elected as 'Featured Artist' by the Leicester School of Artists (LSA) and will be showing up to 20 pieces of his work at The Cank Street Gallery from 29 April to 1 June 2019.

David was honoured in 2018 with membership to the LSA and showed 3 pieces of work at their November Annual Show at the Leicester New Walk Museum. This included one piece being sold on the private viewing night even before the official show opened.

David has a very long history in art. During his MA studies in fine art David fell in love with printmaking, so he also took a Dip.A.D. In Graphic Design to learn more about print and as a result was seduced into the advertising industries. However, the pull of printmaking as a fine art form has never been too far from the surface.



David's formative years were influenced by the likes of Andy Warhol, Bridget Riley, Patrick Caulfield. "These were exciting times as art was crossing many traditional barriers. Andy Warhol designing Rolling Stone Album covers, Mary Quant using Bridget Riley optical art on dress designs, to name just two instances. Art, design, fashion and music were all in a melting pot of creativity." he recalls. Now, after nearly 40 years design experience as a Creative Director and Consultancy Partner, David could not ignore the pull of real art any longer so he has put the commercial world back in its box and now solely concentrates on creating art prints.

His current work is contemporary and, as you would expect, graphic and often quite minimal. David says it's all about juggling balance, spatial awareness and the tension between the component parts. His current work explores subjects like 'Events,' 'Cast Shadows', 'Standing Stones', or issues such as 'Urban Chaos' and 'Unresolved Relationships'. This, David admits makes his work challenging and quite radical for someone of his mature years. "Hey, who said the young had sole rights to being radical." David comments.

Because David's work is printed to the highest archival quality using today's highly advanced print technology he limits all image reproductions to five only editions.

You can follow him at @davygoldenratio

Or see his page at <http://www.leicestersocietyofartists.co.uk/isa-artists/David-Clarke.php>

GREEN BOTTLE TOPS NEEDED

Do you remember when milk came in glass bottles and we collected foil milk bottle tops towards the purchase of a guide dog for a blind person? Well its been updated and we can now save the plastic green bottle tops for this and similar needs. Recently funds were raised to provide a young person with a specialised wheelchair. Take your green tops to the monthly meeting collection point on the membership desk where Norma will collect them.

Buses

How important are buses to you? Are they the only way you can get to U3A or out and about? The TAT Volunteer co-ordinator is looking for people to talk to about the importance of bus services to their lives. Her request is:

"I need three case studies (members personal stories) for Arriva Buses connecting communities campaign. The case studies are about how important transport is in terms of them getting to the things they love, which would obviously be U3A! Arriva are putting together a series of videos and U3A would be in the middle of them.

I wondered if there were a couple of members in your U3A – who love U3A and might use buses to get to their classes or just to take part in their community."

We already have one volunteer but if you would like to take part, please contact:
Cynthia Baker, tel. 01162 673773

A Musical Afternoon – Especially for You and Your Friends

This is an occasion which you really should not miss!!

Nicholas Martin is a local man who is a nationally recognised key-board and organ player. He is constantly in demand at concerts, dances and private functions; he even plays at the world-renowned Blackpool Tower, with its famous Wurlitzer Organ. He has also recorded many CDs and DVDs. Nick plays everything: modern pop: music from films and shows: country and western: classical music and jazz: folk music and much more. He plays music to suit everyone and just watching his 'flying fingers' is an entertainment in itself!

The good news is that Nicholas has agreed to put on an afternoon concert in aid of autistic children. This should be an afternoon of excellent music and good fun.

Date: Thursday 20th June 2019

Time: 2:00 – 4:00pm (doors open 1:45pm)

Venue: The Divine Infant of Prague Roman Catholic Church, Broad Street, Syston, Leicester, LE7 1GH - in the Parish Hall behind the Church.

Parking: There is a large car-park immediately outside the Hall.

Buses: Buses from Leicester to Syston stop on Melton Road near the top of Broad Street, just beyond the Railway Inn.

Refreshments: Tea and cake will be served during the interval at no extra charge.

Places are limited so please complete the booking form overleaf as soon as possible and return it, with your cheque, to Sylvia Cole. Remember to invite your friends as well.

CLOSING DATE: TUESDAY 14th May 2019

Judith Winter

TO BOOK PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING FORM.

EVENT: SELF-DRIVE TRIP: A MUSICAL AFTERNOON at SYSTON R.C. CHURCH PARISH HALL, BROAD STREET, SYSTON, LEICESTER LE7 1GH.

DATE: THURSDAY, 20th JUNE 2019

Your name: _____ Guest's name(s) _____

Your address: _____

_____ Postcode: _____

Mobile: _____ Landline: _____

E-mail address: _____

Please reserve _____ place(s) at a cost of **£10** per person.

Total cost _____

(Please make cheques payable to Leicestershire CC Retirement Association) (Write the name of each person, for whom you are paying, on the reverse of the cheque)

Do you have any difficulties with access or mobility?

Please send the completed form to:

SYLVIA COLE, 41 ANSTEY LANE, THURCASTON, LEICESTER LE7 7JB

Tel: **0116-2352873.**

CLOSING DATE: TUESDAY 14th MAY 2019

IF YOU REQUIRE A RECEIPT PLEASE COMPLETE THE SLIP BELOW AND ENCLOSE A SAE

Event Booked: Musical Afternoon, Syston R.C Church Parish Hall

Cost of trip per person **£: 10** _____ Places booked: _____

Value of cheque enclosed _____

I confirm that your booking and fee have been received.

Signed: _____ Event Organiser.