

# Newsletter u3a

*aka The LestFest*

## APR 23

*Reluctant Editor: Colin Lester* ☹️

*Replacement solicited*

Contact

[colin@clester.plus.com](mailto:colin@clester.plus.com)

*and for the time being use that email address to submit  
pictures, quizzes, funnies, reports  
and any other materials for inclusion  
in future issues (if any) of this publication*



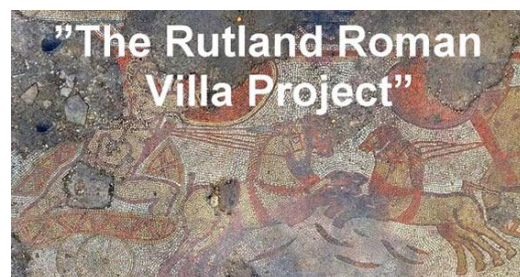
What is this odd creature, seen by your Editor in a field last summer, and why does it seem to be looking backward and upward?

*Answers on final page*

❖ **Welcome to our April newsletter.**

Thank you once again to Colin Lester for producing this.

- ❖ We have our next **monthly meeting on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> April at 2pm.** We will be joined by **Peter Liddle MBE**, a former County Archaeologist for Leicester, now a freelance lecturer and writer. Peter will be telling us about the exciting recent discoveries in Rutland. **Please join us for what we expect to be an interesting and enjoyable time together.**



At our monthly meeting on the **17<sup>th</sup> May** professional storyteller **Colin King** will be joining us to tell us about **Grace O'Malley**, the Irish Pirate Queen.

❖ **Your help is needed.**

Your u3a committee will be changing at the AGM in September; **we need volunteers to join the committee.**

We cannot continue as a u3a beyond Sept. without key roles (e.g. chairman) being filled. **Please consider whether you can help here.** This can be fun and enjoyable ☺

If you want to know more then please speak to one of your current committee (names / contact details are on the last page of this newsletter).



❖ **'Grand Outings'**

We have the following outings planned for the next two months:

<b>Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> April 09:15 – approx 17:15</b>	<b>Batsford Arboretum</b> via coach Board the coach at NVSSC at 9.15  <b>Cost £18.50</b>	<b>** only one place left **</b> <b>Let Margaret know if you have not signed up and want to go.</b>  Contact: Margaret Proctor
<b>Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> May @ 11.00</b>	<b>Space Centre</b> tour  <b>Cost £14.95</b> (assuming 15 people or more). £3 pp deposit is required & balance paid on the day.	<b>Names and £3 deposit to Sue.</b>  Contact: Sue Hough
<b>Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> June 2pm</b>	<b>The Dower House Garden at Melbourne</b>  <b>Cost £6</b>	<b>Names to Margaret at the April monthly meeting</b>  Contact: Margaret Proctor

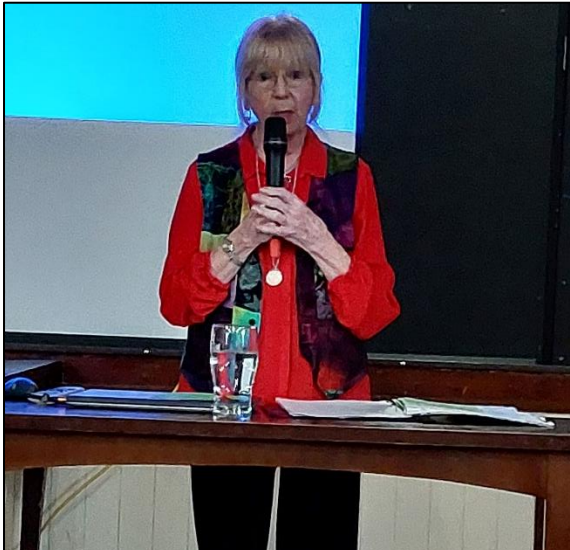
If you have any suggestions or ideas for other outings or trips, then please let Paul Bannister know (peban@hotmail.co.uk)



# Notes on our March Meeting

*From Gary & Angela Roberts, with the Editor's thanks*

It was a wet Wednesday afternoon when a good number of Members assembled to be diverted and entertained by the diminutive and cheeky Pat Hall, while on TV the Chancellor was delivering a much less entertaining budget speech which was not referred to once during the meeting.



*photo by Roger Prescott, with the Editor's thanks*

Our Chairman Andy welcomed us all to the Meeting, and introduced the speaker.

Having begun at the age of five with a performance at her Sunday School anniversary, Pat clearly enjoys delivering her amusing performances. As soon she was introduced, she had us laughing with a mock curtsy.

Starting with unusual extracts from old newspaper articles she went on to anecdotes from other talks, such as the time she was setting up when a raffle ticket seller shouted out: "Come on ladies, buy your raffle tickets so we can afford better speakers", setting a tone for the afternoon.

As well as recounting amusing stories she told several jokes without swearing once (a comedy first in 2023 we suspect). Pat also read some of her poetry – 'Tarzan' and 'Getting Older' were both clever and funny. She went on to

offer us some handy tips which may have proved useful, but I suspect not many will be taken up by u3a members at home!



*Andy thanks speaker Pat Hall, to applause from the audience*

So, grateful thanks to Pat who will always be remembered as a *"golden girl and never a cheap concession"*.

Her talk was followed by an update on the various groups and forthcoming trips including 'Pirates of Penzance' at the Buxton Opera House later this year, various garden visits (see the listings on

p.2), and the canal trips which will be starting again in April. For further information on all the interest groups refer to Andy's email.

Each table in the hall held an anagram quiz paper where we were challenged to identify various cities. The results were read out and managed to solicit further amusement. This is likely to be a regular part of the gathering. The Meeting closed at 15:30.



All these items on the left were made at the March meeting of the Arts & Crafts Group. You too could have made one, so if you'd like to try your hand at some crafty arty piece like this, get in touch with Audrey at [grzyb584@btinternet.com](mailto:grzyb584@btinternet.com) or Jean at [willowcott@hotmail.com](mailto:willowcott@hotmail.com).

## THAT BAND



WLu3a's own rock group rehearses 'Apache' for a gig at Lutterworth u3a. Did their hosts love it or hate it? Well... "what a great performance we have just enjoyed at [the] 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Lunch from That Band! I am sure that if any u3a is thinking of having an event where they would like some entertainment, they could not go wrong," was one comment. Great!

## TOPICAL MATTERS 1 – Your Editor Targeted

Have you ordered items from the catalogue merchants EasyLife recently? If so, watch out for a call from an 0333 number (i.e. a non-geographical number, probably a landline) saying that as you've bought from EasyLife in the past they want to send you some money-off vouchers and need to confirm your address. Your editor's response on 29 March was 'not interested' and he rang off.

Later that day a text message came onto the same mobile phone purporting to be from his bank, asking for a Y or N reply to show if he confirmed (or not) a recent request for a £4,500 transfer from his credit card account. Responding N brought a quick second message saying they needed to speak to him quickly and he should phone an 0333 number – the same one that the 'EasyLife' call had come from. Foolish f-f-f phisher!

Both the bank and EasyLife were informed of this attempt, and as the number continued to call him your Editor blocked it. On 31 March, however, a bank message told him that his credit card had been debited £4,500; checking his online account confirmed it. About two hours of calls to three phone numbers later, the bank finally accepted that the debit (a transfer to another credit card account) was fraud and deleted it, cancelled the credit card and arranged for him to change his online account login details. Phew! (EasyLife have yet to respond to his notification of the scam).

Reports of other phone, text, and email scams are again coming in, with particular focus on energy firms and regulators, as well as one offering £750 worth of Lego for £3 (if it sounds too good to be true....) There's good advice, too, about buying or selling a car safely on <https://www.getsafeonline.org/vehiclefraud/>. Take care!

*Source: Ofgem communications team 25.3.23 via Nextdoor email 29.3.23; & Nextdoor email, date forgotten*

## QUIZ 1

### Sports – Answers on final page

1. In 1977 which then well-known US businessman, sailing 'Courageous', won the America's Cup?
2. The 1968 Olympic high jump gold was won with a new style by whom?
3. The first Winter Olympics were held in which French resort: Chamonix, Aveyron, or Val d'Isere?
4. This team failed to get past the Heineken Cup group stage in 2013 having won in 2011 & 2012.
5. You should always take your bat when you go out to bat, but which English captain forgot his?
6. What are the five international boxing award-making bodies?
7. Who has so far been the oldest captain of a World Cup winning team, and at what age?
8. From 1946 to 1973 only two countries won the Davis Cup – which ones?
9. Who was the first Asian male golfer to win a Major tournament?
10. Who was the first cricketer to take 8 wickets and score 100 in a test match?

## West Leicestershire u3a Wine Appreciation Group

22 March meeting *by John Dexter, to whom many thanks*

Okay, time for the big change – our issues with being unable to communicate from one end of the table to the other were over – or were they? I guess having 16 or so members all in one conversation is a bit optimistic. We reformatted the table layout which helped a bit but certainly demonstrated why we have to limit numbers. Maybe, as mentioned at the last monthly meeting, another group could be set up – a red wine group and a white wine group perhaps? Is anyone up for organising it?



Oh well, back to our *raison d'être* – Our Favourite Wine. We did manage a level of total communication by insisting each member presenting a wine for approval explained why it was their favourite. Perhaps we should gloss over the aphrodisiac properties of the Rioja or the libidinous memories of the Chardonnay? Some were more precise and reportable such as 'It's a clear white wine, I don't like yellow wine' or 'It is relaxing, the second glass is more relaxing and the third....' No one can accuse us of a careless interpretation of 'Wine Appreciation'.

Not all of us managed true favouritism – 'I like it, but not as much as Prosecco', or 'It was the strongest I could find', 'It is certified and carbon neutral, but it's my second favourite but was on offer!' On the other hand, the Gewürztraminer and its memories of a holiday with a family in the Alsace did tug the heartstrings. We were brought up short by a limited-edition, crowd-funded, Sicilian Passamonte: truly outstanding, possibly everyone's favourite (except those who only like clear wines).

Having spent so much time with enforced discussion of our wines – and Joyce's Tazmanian Pepperberry and Lemon (pink water) – the secondary conversations seemed limited to 'My most embarrassing moment' which included a camel loaded with clinking, empty, wine bottles going through an Islamic town in North Africa. Our children seemed to loom large in the embarrassment stakes, although several incidents were deemed unreportable!

Our next meeting will be a Coronation Special featuring 'Celebration Wines' on Wednesday 26 April, 7.30 at Alan's Way.

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### *TOPICAL MATTERS 2 – How Much Energy Do You Use?*

– not you as a human body & mind, that is, but the appliances in your home. With some, it will make little difference to your choice of model: among the *Which?* Best Buy television sets, for instance, the energy part of running costs varies from £25.64 to £62.77 per year. Others, though, show sufficient variation to make you think twice about a purchase (if you do check on their energy use, that is).

*Which?* now includes 'at-a-glance running cost data for some of the products' they test, particularly useful at this time of high energy costs for anyone wanting to update an appliance or make a new purchase. Apart from TVs, the items include fridge-freezers, dishwashers, washing machines, tumble driers, built-in ovens, kettles, and the new kids on the block, air fryers.

Your choice of purchase of any of these products affects not just your running costs of course, but also the amount of energy you're using and therefore your carbon footprint. If you care about either of those, you might be glad to know that the difference in annual energy costs in Best Buy fridge-freezers is between £48.17 for the most economical brand & model, to £170.10 for the most energy-greedy.

*Which?* is not the only organisation you might want to consult: the Energy Saving Trust gives generic advice (not specific to particular models), as do Electrical Safety First and several business websites: search for 'cost of running appliances' to find them. Finally, don't be fooled by the energy rating on an older appliance, as the ratings changed in March 2021 – see <https://www.techadvisor.com/article/743099/new-energy-rating-system-for-major-appliances-what-you-need-to-know.html>

Source: [info@mail.which.co.uk](mailto:info@mail.which.co.uk) email 18.3.23



## QUIZ 2

(with thanks to Jean Johnson)

### General

Answers on final page

1. What is it called when you owe more on your mortgage than the property is worth?
2. What is the name of the bit of cartilage that stops food getting down your windpipe?
3. Which country's crown was Queen Christina made to give up in 1654 having reigned from 1632?
4. Is a jargonelle a pear, a songbird, or a type of language?
5. Who is the widow of the late Sir John (Johnny) Dankworth?
6. Garibaldi's Expedition of The Thousand to release Sicily from Bourbon rule in 1850: yes or no?
7. Archie Rice is a character in which play by 'Angry Young Man' John Osborne?
8. What type of cross did The Iron Cross represent?
9. Does thlipsis affect the blood vessels, the joints, or the vocal cords?
10. Who was Hitler's personal secretary, who disappeared at the end of WWII?

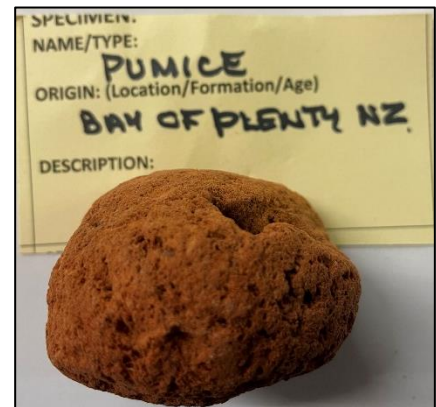
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### *Geology Group Studies Rock ...*



...and various other materials during a recent meeting in comfortable and colourful surroundings

The  
rock  
had  
seen a  
bit of  
the  
world  
...



...and was a reminder that New Zealand is a volcanic country

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### *TOPICAL MATTERS 3 – Community Speedwatch*

More UK people are killed in traffic than from all other crimes combined: driving at 40 in a 30mph area limits pedestrian survival rates by 90% statistically, and concomitantly in other increments. To try and reduce the 1,500 avoidable road deaths a year, volunteer groups in Community Speedwatch use detection devices to record speedsters' details. The organisation works on behalf of and in contact with the police, and covers the whole nation.

The main aim is to educate, so first response is an explanatory letter, with only repeats leading to police visits and ultimately prosecution. In rural areas fatalities are four times likelier than in urban settings, so it's in all our interests to take heed, keep to speed limits (which show maximum speeds in ideal circumstances, not targets to be met whatever the weather, state of road, and other road users), and support these volunteers when we see them – perhaps a wave or a thumbs up rather than the scowl they too frequently evoke.

Speeding can harm anyone and so is everyone's concern. Anybody who might like to volunteer to join a Community Speedwatch team can help to make roads safer by finding out more on the organisation's website [communityspeedwatch.org](http://communityspeedwatch.org).

Source: Neighbourhood Watch 'Our News' email March '23 p.8

# March Outing – King Richard III Visitor Centre

by Jackie Timson, with the Editor's thanks

Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> March saw a group of 17 Members gather at the King Richard III Visitor Centre in St Martins, Leicester. On entering we were given attractive and informative tickets with plans of the two floors.



*A video of Richard's childhood and youth was seen in the Throne Room*

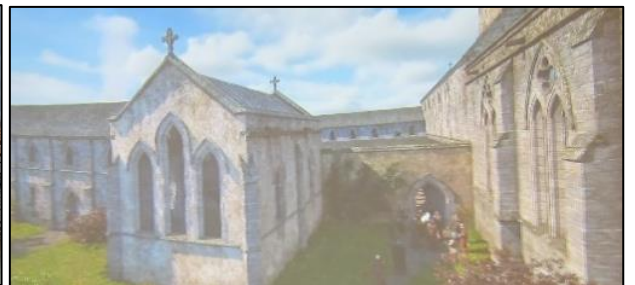
Near the entrance was a large visual exhibition setting the scene of Richard's early life and his route to becoming king. Many of the displays in the Centre have videos to illustrate the points being made, and several are interactive.

The lower floor shows the history and character of Richard, illustrating both the good and controversial side of his character. Did you know he was a law maker, introducing impartial judges and jury reform, as well as promoting the English



*Some of Richard's undoubted good works described*

language? However: did he also initiate the killing of the two Princes in the Tower, or could it be that he enabled their escape from known murder plots? – the conclusion was that this question is still open to debate.



*The Editor's photo (l) from an upper floor glass-enclosed balcony, and an artist's idea (r) of the right-hand side of the same view as Richard's coffin was brought into Greyfriars Friary to be buried beneath the floor near the altar*

The upper floor covers the time-line in the search for the King's remains, and introduced us to the main people responsible for the find. Here were found digital displays covering, for example, the DNA trail, his injuries, and facial reconstruction (including one of the interactive exhibits).

We ended the morning looking down through glass at a later excavation trench showing the remains of steps and floor tiling, a guide pointing out that it was similar to the excavated grave in which Richard had been found.

After a light lunch the group retired to the King's Suite conference room – a large hall with timbered buttressing – for a talk by Rachel Ayrton, Learning and Information Manager of the Centre. This summarised all the information we had looked at, as well as adding further fascinating details about the dig, and at the end Rachel took several questions from the more knowledgeable members of our group.

The event gave us details of an extraordinary story and provided a very enjoyable visit.



*Rachel Ayrton talks to the group in the impressive King's Suite*



## Your WLU3A Committee

<b>Andy Elton</b> Chairman ( <a href="mailto:chairman@wlu3a.org.uk">chairman@wlu3a.org.uk</a> )	<b>Jane Smith</b> Treasurer ( <a href="mailto:treasurer@wlu3a.org.uk">treasurer@wlu3a.org.uk</a> )	<b>June Thompson</b> Secretary ( <a href="mailto:secretary@wlu3a.org.uk">secretary@wlu3a.org.uk</a> )
<b>Kathy Elton</b> Membership Secretary ( <a href="mailto:membership@wlu3a.org.uk">membership@wlu3a.org.uk</a> )	<b>Paul Bannister</b> Committee Member	<b>John Dexter</b> Committee Member
<b>Sue Meadows</b> Committee Member	<b>Pam Grice</b> Committee Member	<b>Margaret Proctor</b> Committee Member

TBC – Vice Chair

### **Quiz 2 answers:**

1. Negative Equity
2. Epiglottis
3. Sweden
4. A pear
5. Dame Cleo Laine (who'll be 96 in October)
6. No – it was in 1860
7. Look Back in Anger
8. A Maltese Cross
9. Blood vessels
10. Martin Bormann

### **Quiz 1 answers:**

1. Ted Turner
2. Dick Fosbury, with the 'Fosbury Flop'
3. Chamonix
4. Leinster
5. Bob Willis
6. WBC, WBO, WBA, IBF, and The Ring
7. Dino Zoff (1982, Italy) at 40yr 4mo 13d
8. Australia and the USA
9. Hideki Matsuyama (USPGA twice & Masters)
10. Ian Botham in 1978



*Enlargement shows how poorly focussed was the p.1 photo*

Your Editor regrettably missed the last August Monthly Meeting talk, having completely forgotten about the Meeting (someone needs to come down Arnolds Crescent with a big handbell on Monthly Meeting days). However, he did see an insect related to dragonflies during a walk round Ulverscroft Nature Reserve with his son on his birthday in late June, relishing the warm summer air on his newly-naked chin (it's been a different story recently).

This is almost certainly a Common *Blue Damselfly* *Enallagma cyathigerum*, (also known as the Common Bluet, or sometimes the Northern Bluet – presumably in the North) and almost certainly not the Azure Damselfly *Coenagrion puella* which looks similar until you inspect the abdominal markings more closely than possible on this poor photograph.

The 'eyes' on the top of the head are surely protective colouring, naturally selected to deter predators approaching from above. They seem to have worked in this case, though they didn't scare your intrepid reporter.