

Newsletter u3a

aka The LestFest

JUL 23

Reluctant Editor: Colin Lester 🙄

Replacement solicited

Contact

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*



Is this object a free-floating hairy bloodshot eyeball, or one of those UFOs/UAPs there's been renewed fuss about recently, or an artist's impression of one of the many planets from other solar systems that have been discovered since the Webb Telescope went into orbit, or...?

Answer on final page

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Chairman's Page

❖ **Welcome to our July newsletter.**

Thank you once again to Colin Lester for producing this.

- ❖ At our monthly meeting on the **19th July** – Hanson's Memorabilia auctioneer and valuer **Claire Howell** will be joining us to tell of many interesting and entertaining stories including that of auctioning a lock of Elvis Presley's hair! **Please bring along Memorabilia for valuation** 😊



At our August monthly meeting on the 16th our speaker will be Ruth Lowe who will be telling us all about Mary Quant's career through the late 1950s up to the 1970s.

Please join us for what we expect to be an interesting and enjoyable time together.

- ❖ Two updates on Outings planned for the next few months:

Bridgewater Garden visit on Sunday the 9th of July; Meet at Newbold Verdon Sports & Social Club at **8:30am prompt.**

The International Gilbert & Sullivan Festival at Buxton – The Pirates of Penzance. Tickets now all booked. Further details will be provided for the July monthly meeting.

- ❖ **We now have a provisional programme for outings that goes up to May 2024.** This will be varied and should be great fun.

Updates on Outings and Interest Groups will be distributed in the middle of July and updated further at our next monthly meeting.



- ❖ Your u3a committee will be **changing at the AGM in October.** We have some people who are standing down or needing to change roles. **We need volunteers to join the committee.**

Thank you to the people who have already volunteered to join the committee including someone to be Chair.



We still need additional committee members including someone to become Vice-Chair and to look after publicity. **Please consider whether you can help here; It really can be fun** 😊

Notes on our June Meeting

Your Editor has again forgotten who he asked to report on this, and as (being at the back of the hall to take photos) he couldn't make out most of what the speaker was saying about swimming with Newfoundlands, he's reduced to using pictures and captions



Chairman Andy Elton contemplating the speaker's display boards before the Meeting began



As last month, a group of about 50 Members attended the Meeting, making a decent-sized and appreciative audience



Speaker Pete Lewin guiding the Newfoundland hound Bob down to the front of the room. Pete became quite emotional when speaking of Bob, who he told us has cancer – as does Pete's daughter



Despite his initial sombre mood, Pete gave a lively and at times humorous talk, here apparently joking about the cost of the dogs' lifejackets



Pete's slides included photos of the noble-looking heads of his Newfoundlands

QUIZ 1

Sports – Answers on final page

1. Who was almost 40 when playing in the 1974 Wimbledon final?
2. In which sport did Anna Hemmings win five world titles?
3. Which racehorse with two Gold Cup and five King George VI Chase wins retired in 2012?
4. Who led the consortium that saved Middlesbrough from financial ruin in 1996?
5. Since WWII, which rugby union captain led England to 3 Grand Slams?
6. The Olympic women's heptathlon was formed from the pentathlon and which other events?
7. In 2003-4, who held the record for highest cricket test score though for barely a year?
8. In 2010, who was the first British player to win the US Open in 40 years?
9. When was *Match of the Day* first broadcast?
10. Who reached 174.88mph on 3 Feb 1928?

NEW GROUP Pickleball

The new Pickleball group is up and running, quite literally! We play outdoors in the MUGA (multi-user games area) at Sport in Desford (SiD) which means we're away from the main activity area and even have our own car park. The court is quite a lot smaller than a tennis court and is identical to a badminton court, although we play over a tennis net (minus 2 inches in the middle). Look for the red line markings in the photos. The ball is a hollow plastic ball with 40 small holes. The bats (correct name, paddles) are like large table tennis bats. It's great fun and a great way to keep moving around.

To find out more call Roger on 07984 400605.



TOPICAL MATTERS 1 – Scams

Will you be going on holiday this Summer? If heading abroad, pay particular attention when drawing cash from ATMs. A NordVPN study recently found that 164,000 UK payment cards are for sale on the Dark Web. Over half of all such illegal offers include home addresses, and 40% have email addresses to boot.

The most usual form of the data-capture that provides this information to scammers is 'skimming', where a small device is attached to ATMs to record the card number, expiration date, and account holder's name when the card is used there. This information can be sold raw on the Dark Web, or used for making fraudulent purchases which are then charged to the cardholder, or even to create a clone of the card itself. More advice on avoiding this scam is provided on the *Which?* website (see 'Sources').

There are, though, a number of other ways for criminals to get hold of such data at ATMs. A false keyboard may be installed on top of the ATM's own one, to record the information keyed in by the cardholder, or a small camera hidden in the panel above the keyboard can capture that data or all of the card's visible details. You'll need to check carefully by running fingers over the surfaces of the ATM to detect any unevenness which would indicate it's been tampered with.

Watch out, too, for anyone else near you at the ATM who might be a 'shoulder surfer' and mentally note your pin numbers as you enter them, or could be a thief who tries to snatch the card itself from you as you withdraw it after the transaction.

Finally, be aware of 'Lebanese loops'. These are illegal modifications to the machine which trap your card inside it so that the scammer can later get it out when you've got fed up with trying to retrieve it yourself and have gone away. If an ATM won't disgorge your card it's important to phone your card provider straight away to cancel it, and you should also make a careful note of the time of your call and the name of the person you've spoken to, in case there's any query as to liability for subsequent use of the card by the scammer. For this reason, always carry your provider's emergency or scam line phone number with you.

And have a happy, trouble-free holiday with no worries!

Sources: *Which?* free scam alert service info@act.which.co.uk

and website pages [https://www.which.co.uk/news/article/holidaymakers-warned-about-the-dangers-posed-by-atm-scammers-aAXBx7k2oeQp?utm_medium=email&utm_source=engagingnetworks&utm_campaign=Supporters&utm_content=Scam+alert+22+06+23+\(people+who+didn%27t+receive+it\)+--+Core](https://www.which.co.uk/news/article/holidaymakers-warned-about-the-dangers-posed-by-atm-scammers-aAXBx7k2oeQp?utm_medium=email&utm_source=engagingnetworks&utm_campaign=Supporters&utm_content=Scam+alert+22+06+23+(people+who+didn%27t+receive+it)+--+Core)

NEW GROUP? 1 Update

There were absolutely no responses to the enquiry in the May issue for those interested in a possible new group on science, technology, the environment, climate change, *et al.* That proposed group is therefore being offered to the Tropical Bird Centre in Desford as a new species – 'the Dead Duck'.

QUIZ 2

(with thanks to Jean Johnson)

General

Answers on final page

1. Who played the wife of Sid James in *Bless this House* on TV?
2. Is a glaive a weapon, an extra-sugary grape, or an obscure kitchen utensil?
3. Who coined the phrase 'Gnomes of Zurich' to mean international financiers?
4. Is grape sugar glucose, lactose, or gluten?
5. In TV's 1987 *Tutti Frutti* series, what was the ageing rock band called?
6. Who was the designer of the Coventry Cathedral tapestry hanging behind the altar?
7. What is the term for a line that joins any two points on a curve?
8. Which 1993 film won Oscars for both Best Actress and Best Supporting Actress?
9. Which group's Top Ten hits were *Lullaby*, *High*, and *The Love Cats*?
10. Who was in *Chariots of Fire*, *The Whistle Blower*, and *Empire of the Sun*?

West Leicestershire u3a Wine Appreciation Group

28 June meeting *text by John Dexter, photos by & © Roger Prescott, with the Editor's thanks to both*

I know we are not, as a charity, supposed to advertise but there is a widespread belief in our group that every home should have a Kärcher Window Vac (other window vacs are available). It is a game changing product! On a less specific subject Roger avers that, when growing tomatoes, one should pinch out the side shoots and sow them in compost. The resultant crop is better than the parent plant! Who knew?

Joyce warned us of an impending increase in duty on wines in August. Duty is based on the strength of the wines. In order to keep prices 'down' producers are reducing the strength of some of their wares. You have been warned – perhaps time to stock up on full strength product before the deadline?



On the subject of lighter wines, the Bordeaux region is experiencing a glut so producers are seeking ways to boost sales. The perceived wisdom is that their red wines should be served at 'room temperature'. However the product, particularly the lighter, fruitier wines, often benefits from chilling to 14-16° – try it! Remember the age-old wisdom is based on average 'room temperature', in the good old days about 16° rather than the more current 21°. Hence PR men advocating a spell in the fridge for some of their wines – obviously not the true vintage ones though.

The increase in duty on wines sparked a more general conversation about the iniquities of taxation and government decision-making and spending – HS2 anyone? It was evident confidence in the body politic, local, national, indeed international, is at a very low ebb. Many examples of perceived incompetence were cited, usually from direct experience rather than culled from an apparently biased Press. It will all be dealt with when I rule the world, possibly with help and advice from the rest of our wine group, a task which would get easier as the evening wears on.

Our subject this month was 'Your favourite wine'. We were not disappointed, the standard being universally excellent – one of our members, who sampled each offering (and by no means do we all take one for the team like this), stated all were very good. The back stories varied from "This is my favourite wine..... today" to "I really liked the bottle" – the Pinot Grigio blush it contained was actually very good. Our first sample was a rather nice Chablis, especially when a freshly picked raspberry – thank you Maureen – was added.

We were impressed by an Australian rosé by Jam Shed which was, the label stated, not just Carbon Neutral Certified but in a bottle of recycled glass, doesn't get much better than that surely? When considering serving temperature Paul's Côtes du Rhône was slightly over room temperature as he had been cuddling it lovingly so unwilling was he to see it opened. It really was special when we eventually wrestled it from him. Joyce brought in a South African William Robertson Shiraz which she has been promising for some time now – very special, we could see why it was her favourite. Roger brought the evening to a close with an Appassimento he had purchased specially. Excellent but he assured us this was from the very last case of it, shame.

Our conversations continued throughout the evening: I did hear football, weather, embarrassing things kids say, trade unions, Port, state of the roads, although when Morris Dancing was mentioned I did rather switch off. However, Joyce announced she was going to try an activity possibly suitable as a Grand Outing – she is going to the Penrhyn Quarry in Snowdonia to sample their zip wire! Remember to ask her about it.



A note about the photos of our meeting – by no means were any of the bottles on display empty by the end of the evening – quite a scramble at the end to match corks to bottles so they could be taken home!

*Next meeting **Wednesday 26 July** at Alan's Way. Subject 'Spanish Wines'*

TOPICAL MATTERS 2 – Used Clothing

Making textiles has the fourth largest deleterious impact on the environment (housing, transport, and food being the first three). To make its proper contribution to achieving the 1.5°C global warming goal, textile production needs to halve its carbon footprint. But production isn't the only problem.

About 336,000 tonnes of used clothing is discarded in the UK every year. If we all used our clothes for nine months longer than we currently do, it would reduce their carbon, water, and waste-disposal footprints by 20-30%. Here in Leicestershire many people put used clothing into their recycling bins, leading to them getting contaminated and/or snarling sorting equipment at the recycling centre.

Used clothes can be donated to charity shops, helping both the charity concerned and those who shop there for affordable clothing or to help the charity raise money in this way. There are also clothing donation collection bins in some places like Newbold Verdon Co-op and Sports & Social Club forecourts. Another way is through 'Swishing' or clothes-swapping: <https://www.lesswaste.org.uk/reuse/love-your-clothes/> has advice on getting involved. Stalls at fairs & fêtes, eBay, Freecycle etc are other ways of ensuring your used clothing doesn't end up in landfill, but whatever you do to get shot of it – not in the blue bin please!

Sources: LCC Newsfeed via Nextdoor email 15.2.23, and the [lesswaste.org](https://www.lesswaste.org) website

NEW GROUP? 2 Update

There were absolutely no responses to the enquiry in the May issue for those interested in a possible new group on fine arts. That proposed group is therefore being offered to the Tropical Bird Centre in Desford as a new species – 'the Other Dead Duck'.

A Curiosity

How often have you heard a mother talking to her baby, using a higher pitch to her voice than she does in normal conversation? Why do you think that happens – is it inadvertent, or is there some conscious or unconscious reason that mothers (in particular) speak like that to their very young offspring?

Maybe some answers to that question can be found elsewhere: it's recently been discovered that common bottlenose dolphins (*Tursiops truncatus*) do something very similar. Researchers posited that the tendency to use a special voice-pitch may help bonding between the mother and baby. It might help their vocal learning too, as the bonding effect would teach the youngster to concentrate more on what the mother was saying than when some other adult speaks.

During the first months of life, these dolphins develop their own unique whistle or tune, which acts like their signature. Dolphins will call out their signature tune through the water, probably to keep in touch with others, but a mother will modify her signature when accompanying her calf. Her whistles will then have a wider pitch range, being higher than normal at most times and sometimes lower than normal too. This is just what human mothers (and some others) do too.

The researchers recorded mother dolphins' whistles both when their calves were present and absent – you can hear the comparison on https://www.sciencenews.org/article/bottlenose-dolphin-mom-calf-baby-talk-whistle?utm_source=Nature+Briefing&utm_campaign=d478a88dab-briefing-dy-20230627&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_c9dfd39373-d478a88dab-44342389 .

Ain't Nature wonderful?

Source: *Nature Briefing* email 27.6.23



Memories of an Outing *The Dower House, Melbourne, 7th June*

Despite the Download traffic delaying our arrival we had a lovely afternoon strolling around the Dower House garden waiting for others to arrive. Melbourne was an oasis of calm amidst the traffic chaos which took 45 mins to cover 1.5 miles.

Gizelda showed us around the highlights of her 20-year project on the south-facing shore onto the lake. A hot sun amplified the sights and smells of an abundance of colourful plants, trees and shrubs.

The garden is open to the public twice a year under the national garden scheme and was well worth the visit organised by Margaret.

We departed in a chilled state after visiting the pub over the road.



Memories of a Canalboat Trip *Market Harborough to Foxton Locks, 6th June*

A chilly 08:30 arrival saw the party assemble and depart at 9.00 for Foxton locks. The boat was cosy and the bacon sandwiches were delicious thanks to Tony. Gary was trusted with tiller and managed to miss the various obstacles en route.

Lunch at Foxton was welcome as was a walk to the top of the locks. Lots of boats passing through including one couple who had been on a round trip since March!

The return journey passed through the two swing bridges, which we had to open ourselves this time! As usual the day was very relaxing: gently cruising the canal, good company and plenty of chatter made for a very enjoyable day.

All text and pictures on this page by and photos © Gary Roberts with the Editor's thanks



Your WLU3A Committee

Andy Elton Chairman (chairman@wlu3a.org.uk)	Jane Smith Treasurer (treasurer@wlu3a.org.uk)	Kathy Elton Secretary (secretary@wlu3a.org.uk)
Kathy Elton Membership Secretary (membership@wlu3a.org.uk)	Paul Bannister Committee Member	John Dexter Committee Member
Sue Meadows Committee Member	Pam Grice Committee Member	Margaret Proctor Committee Member

TBC – Vice Chair

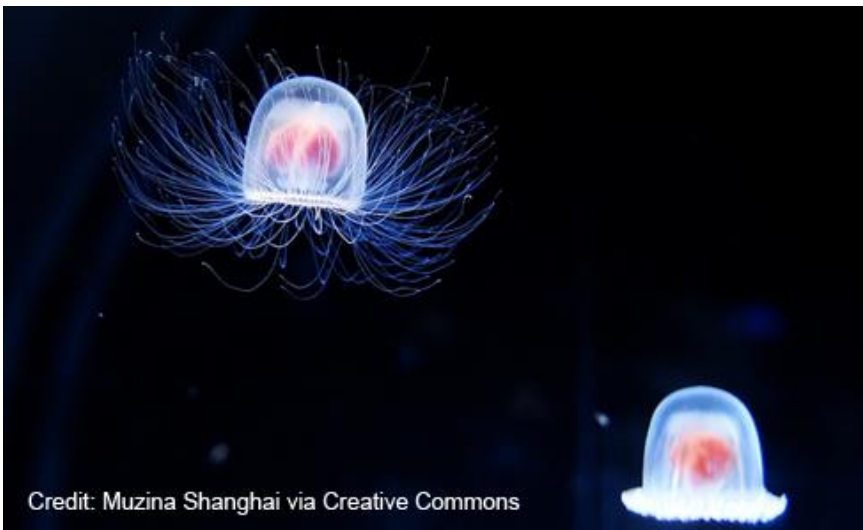
New Committee Members Needed, see p.2

Quiz 2 answers:

1. Diana Coupland
2. A soldier – a glaive is a weapon
3. Harold Wilson
4. Glucose
5. The Majestics
6. Graham Sutherland
7. A chord
8. *The Piano*
9. The Cure
10. Nigel Havers

Quiz 1 answers:

1. Ken Rosewall
2. Canoeing
3. Kauto Star
4. Steve Gibson
5. Will Carling
6. Javelin, and 800m track race
7. Matthew Hayden
8. Graeme McDowell
9. 1964
10. Malcolm Campbell in *Bluebird*



Credit: Muzina Shanghai via Creative Commons

As in June, p.1 shows a sea-creature this month: *Turritopsis dohrnii*, or the Sea Wasp. It is somewhat unusual in the Animal Kingdom, as each individual is, essentially, immortal.

The adult or medusa stage of the creature can reproduce sexually but, like mushrooms and other fungi, they also have an asexual reproduction function.

In sexual reproduction a mature medusa fertilises an egg to produce a capsule-like planula which falls to the sea floor where it develops into a polyp, growing until it detaches from the sea floor to become an immature medusa. If put under stress

such as attack by a predator, it shrinks into a clump of tissue, falls back to the sea floor, and becomes a polyp again. It can go through that regenerative process any number of times, meaning that unless it is destroyed by attack, natural disaster etc then in principle it will live for ever.

So if your aim in life is immortality, you should pray that reincarnation is real and that at your next death-life cycle you'll come back as a Sea Wasp. Don't expect to survive forever, though: recent increases in relatively rapid sea temperature rises due to global warming could mean the end of all these unusual animals.

Source: NatureBriefing email 14.9.22 and <https://thebiologist.rsb.org.uk/biologist-features/everlasting-life-the-immortal-jellyfish>

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