



WSPu3a Newsletter

July/August
2023



In Step at the 40s Weekend

Photo by Geoff Noel

The Committee's Briefs

Contact the Committee

You can use this link to send a message to any of our Committee:

<https://u3asites.org.uk/woodhall-spa/contact>

Chairman's Chat

I was at a u3a Neighbourhood meeting the other day, which John Lewis (yes, *the* John Lewis) attended. John is our regional trustee. He explained the current thinking at national u3a. Three memorable things came out of the meeting:

The first was that the u3a belongs to us all. Its principle is: *for the members by the members*.

Malcolm Capps – Chairman

Secondly, as you know, anyone who is not in full time employment is eligible to join the u3a. *There is no age limit.*

Thirdly, the u3a is about learning and enjoyment. We take part in *learning* activities because we enjoy them.

John puts these principles into practice. He is the Group Leader of his local u3a Beer and Cider appreciation group.

Groups News

We have three potential new groups. A [6 Mile Walking Group](#) already has some names, and if you like a longer trek then please sign up for this so we can get you out walking.

[Cribbage](#) – Card games seem to be popular with our membership, and so you might be interested in joining this group.

[Photography](#) – Another new group. Please see Ced Shurben's article in this Newsletter on this one.

The sheets will be on the table at our monthly meeting so please add your name, and maybe look at the other sheets. We might have another group to interest you.

Please bear in mind that to attend any of our groups you do *need to have signed up*. Many groups are limited to numbers for various reasons, and in many cases there is a waiting list. If you belong to a group and would like to bring a friend, perhaps for a 'taster' session, then you must first speak to the Group Leader to see if this is possible.

Val Shurben – Groups' Coordinator
[Groups List](#)

You can use this link to find a current list of the groups we support, and how to join up:
<https://u3asites.org.uk/woodhall-spa/groups>

Online u3a

Find out more:

You can use these links to search for ways of furthering your interest in specific subjects, or even take part in some competitions:

Our own website

<https://u3asites.org.uk/woodhall-spa/welcome>

u3a – Online Learning Events

<https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events>

Send a letter to your younger self

[u3a – Write a Letter to Your Younger Self](#)

Writing a letter to your younger self can be a cathartic and extremely thought provoking experience. Do you have wisdom now that you wish you had back then?

Interest Groups Online

[u3a – Interest Groups Online](#)

This is an online u3a community that gives you the opportunity to join groups, talks and courses from the comfort of your home.

It costs £12 to join for the year

Coming Soon

Upcoming Events list

You can use this link to find more details on all the events in our diary:

<https://u3asites.org.uk/woodhall-spa/events>

Monthly Meetings

August 3rd

2:30pm to 4pm
Coronation Hall

Dave Moylan

Funny Turns. A celebration of entertainment as it used to be

September 7th

2:30pm to 4pm
Coronation Hall

Sharon Hall, Lincolnshire Police.

How to spot and avoid internet scams and fraud

Outings

Tolethorpe "Lady in the Van" Saturday 12th August.

A reminder for those booked on this trip that the coach will leave at 9am from Stixwoud Road. After the 11.30 performance there will be free time in Stamford until we return for home at 5pm.

Brigg Garden Centre and Afternoon Tea – Tuesday 26th September. 10.30 am

There is still time to book your place for this outing. Join us for a leisurely coach drive through the Wolds to one of the biggest garden centres in the country. We will take Afternoon Tea together in the Gardener's Retreat restaurant during which the group organisers will be asking for your suggestions for next year's outings. The cost is £28 and payment is now due and by the 3rd August at the latest.

Our final outing of the year will be a trip to the lovely city of York where you will be free to visit the Railway Museum, the Minster and the Christmas Market. The proposed date is 30th November and further details will be available soon.

Contact the group organisers at the monthly meetings or by using the "Contact button" on the Outings page of the website (see below).

Sue Pollitt – Group Co-Leader

Find out more:

Use this link for booking and payment details:

[Woodhall Spa u3a: Outings \(u3asites.org.uk\)](https://u3asites.org.uk/woodhall-spa/u3a-outings)

Walking Cricket

Members of the Woodhall Spa u3a are invited to join some taster Walking Cricket sessions organised by Branston u3a. The group play at [Nocton Cricket Club](#) and I have three more sessions booked for this season: Wednesdays 9th August, 30th August and 20th September, from 1.30pm.

We play as a mixed group and if anyone is interested could they email me at jane.haresign@sky.com and I will send them details of how the game is played.

C/o Malcolm Capps

Group Noticeboard

Science



We are a group of like minded people with an interest and curiosity in all aspects of science, a subject and a field that continues to have a significant impact on our understanding of the human body, the environment, our daily lives, the world, and the universe. In current times, science has taken on the role of responding to global challenges and societal needs. Science in all its forms is a subject that is just as challenging as it is fascinating!!

"There are in fact two things, science and opinion; the former begets knowledge, the latter ignorance."
Hippocrates

We are open to looking at, researching and discussing a wide range of topics with a scientific bent. Our group consists of members from diverse backgrounds, we do not delve too deeply into the technical nitty gritty of topics but enough to give an overview and understanding of it and I hope stimulate curiosity to explore further, so everyone can participate at a level they feel comfortable with.

We meet the 4th Monday of the month, 2 pm. at the Parish Council Offices, Stanhope Avenue. Woodhall Spa. Members sometimes research and present a topic of interest to them and through contributions from other members on the subject other topics of interest have emerged.

If you are interested in joining us and stimulating your "little grey cells" I am sure you'll enjoy yourself, learn something new on the way and have a few laughs, living up-to the u3a motto.....

learn, laugh, live

You can sign up at the full WSPu3a monthly meeting on the interest sheet or for further information and program of topics, go on the WSPu3a web site:

[Woodhall Spa u3a: Science \(u3asites.org.uk\)](http://u3asites.org.uk)

Helen Sawyer – Locum Group Leader

Photography – New Group

At our u3a meeting this month I put out a group sheet for those who are interested in photography. This really is a wide ranging subject. Starting with basic photographic principles, like 'get to know your camera'. What do the settings all mean as in 'f' stops and shutter speeds, and how do they make a difference to your photos? Through to ending up with an image that is a masterpiece that you or others would like to hang on the wall.



There are many who take photographs just to record an event in the here and now, either to share with others or create a memory like Granny with the newest member of the family in her arms, or little Archie wearing his newly won football medal.

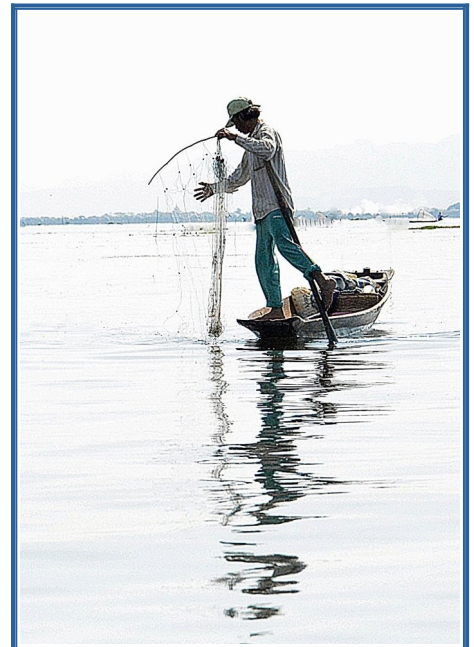


Or others who try as in art to capture an object or scene or grab the moment that the Sun's rays shine through the trees onto a patch of bluebells. So photography can either be a very personal activity just for your records, or one that is only limited by what you see with your creative imagination.



Although we may try to get that perfect image from the moment we press the shutter, seeing the result is sometimes not quite as you had hoped. We are very lucky today to be able to sit at our computer and tweak or enhance our image to our satisfaction. This is where your creativity can come into play.

Please allow me to share a few of my favourite photographs with you.



Ced Shurben – Group Leader

Country Dancing

The Group will not be meeting in August but we look forward to recommencing our dancing on the 20th of September

Margaret Cole – Group Leader

Canasta

Our first term ended at the end of June and we shall not meet in the months of July and August. We shall resume meeting on the 2nd Thursday in September and every 2nd and 4th Thursdays in September, October and November. No meetings in December.

The subscription will remain at £20 per term provided the membership stays at Eleven. I should add that of the current membership of Eleven no less than 6 come from Gibson Court!! There must be others keen to join, no experience is necessary, – tuition is free!! Please email me if you are interested jawpgm1@aol.com

Alan Wright – Group Leader

Around the Groups in 30 days

Woodhall Wanderers

High winds, rain, cold weather have been the signature of July 2023. However, the 26th of July dawned and the intrepid Wanderers set off for Ancaster in brilliant sunshine. Somewhat deceived by a 'Road Closed' sign, and a slight diversion, on the way we arrived in Ancaster and parked near the railway station. Setting off up a byway we then crossed a road and were out into countryside with fields of maize on either side. The path was slightly muddy but nothing really considering the amount of rain we have had recently. Passing through a gap in the hedge we met a byway and turned downhill towards Sudbrook. Strangely in the middle of nowhere our Restricted Byway changed to a Public Byway, why?? Being about halfway it was tea break!

On through the village of Sudbrooke not only had Val organized the sunny weather for the walk but also a train for us to view as it passed the level crossing. Off the road now and into a leek field in the midst of being harvested where we noticed that there were quite a lot of wild flowers in the hedgerow as well as teasels. Very nice to see the wide variety of colourful flowers. We also stopped for a chat with a couple of ladies out walking who belonged to Grantham u3a and tried to con them into believing that we had walked from Woodhall Spa. We continued on passing a couple of small holdings and negotiating the lakes on their access track and out into a small cul-de-sac, back to the main road and up to where we had parked our cars. Exhausted at having to walk in the brilliant sunshine at midday, but it was less than 4 miles!

John Cotton – Group Leader

Walking Cricket

A large crowd gathered at the Woodhall Spa Cricket Club to witness the inaugural Walking Cricket Group take to the field. Smartly dressed in our whites we lost the toss and were put into bat.

The game is played by four pairs of batsmen who all face four overs (24 balls) before retiring and letting the next pair in. Fielders rotate around the pitch and everyone gets a chance to bowl. No one is out but 5 runs are deducted for each dismissal. The greatest difficulty was remembering not to run. Those of us who had played cricket tried to recall the skills of our youth and those new to the game suddenly found the glorious thrill of taking a wicket or hitting a four.



The niceties of cricket were not forgotten. Sixes and fours and catches were enthusiastically applauded. Tea and cakes were provided at the interval. At the end of the match we retired to the bar. Cricket matches do not just happen and our thanks to Ced Shurben for umpiring, Joan Willard for the delicious cakes and tea, and to Jean and Peter Ellis for scoring.

The result of the Woodhall Spa Varsity Cricket match, Woodhall Spa versus Horncastle?
WE WON.

"We don't like cricket, we love it" Dreadlock Holiday by 10cc

Malcolm Capps – Group Captain

Gardening

Heckington

July's visit took the group to a village garden in Heckington. The weather forecast was poor for the afternoon and sadly it was correct with it raining before we left Woodhall Spa. There was a warm welcome when we arrived and taken on a guided tour of the garden.



A relatively small plot but filled with many different plants and seven ponds of varying sizes. Wildlife consideration was very much part of the garden design. Unfortunately, the rain never ceased and came down quite heavy at times.



Mr and Mrs Donnison, our hosts had been to some trouble to keep us dry while we had tea however a big gust of wind resulted in one of the members getting soaked when a canopy emptied its contents on her! The hosts did much to help her dry out and she was extremely good humoured about the incident.

[Continued](#)

Heckington – continued

We had a wonderful selection of homemade cakes and buns for tea and instead of us leaving with plants for our gardens we left with yummy cakes for our tummies!!



An eventful visit but nice to see yet another type of garden and see what can be achieved on a small site.

Next month's outing will be to Aubourn Hall's Garden, definitely not a small garden.

Elizabeth Leech – Group Leader

Photographs by Heather Colebrook L.V.O.

Visiting Churches

St Oswald's Blankney

In July the group planned to visit St Wilfrid's church in Metherringham and St Oswald's in Blankney. Unfortunately, we didn't make it to St Wilfred's because the keyholder didn't turn up as promised but, nothing daunted, the 12 group members headed for Blankney where they were delighted with the Grade 11 listed building.

Connor provided the background to this estate church and brought a range of interesting photos with him. The group spent some time exploring the church before repairing to Blankney Golf club where it was difficult to resist the tempting cakes in the bar!

Next month's visit on Tuesday 8 August will see the Woodhall Spa Visiting Churches group at the abbey ruins in Bardney and also at St Lawrence's church which has close associations with the abbey, originally a Benedictine monastery founded in 697 by king Ethelred of Mercia.

Michaela Moody – Group Leader

Five Mile Walkers

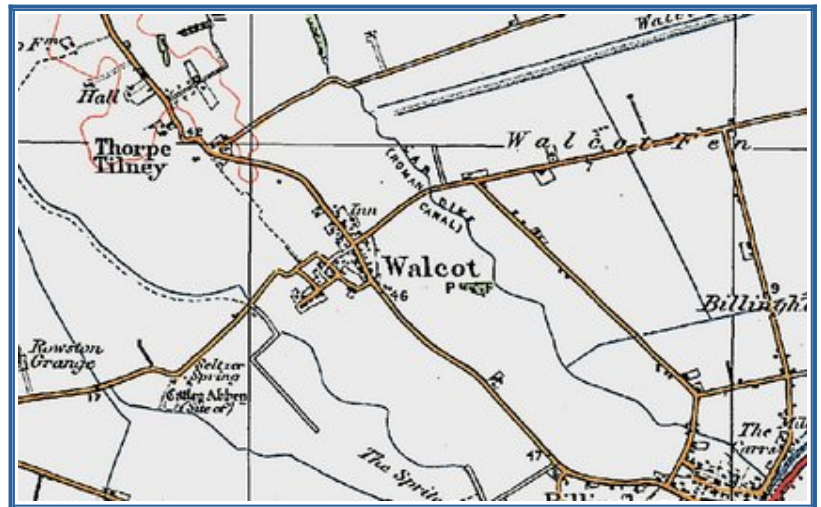
Billinghay and Walcot

Billingham did not seem one of the most inviting of starting points for the July Five Mile walk but it was more enjoyable than we at first thought. A Gilbertine abbey, a seltzer factory and an island are all there.

We started off down Park Lane and across the fields to the back road to South Kyme. These fields have been sown to encourage wildlife and there were several species of butterflies and hares to be seen.

Back into the village we were soon walking westwards down Sprite Lane. The sunny clear day meant that the fen was spread before us and we were soon picking out features in the landscape. The route followed the water course, which is the boundary between the ridge on which Billingham and Walcot sit and the fen.

We walked on to Catley Island, which would have been in an area of marsh, lakes, fen and reeds in 1154 when the Gilbertine monks and nuns arrived. The priory survived until 1538. In the late 1880s a natural spring of mineral water was found and the The Catley Abbey



Natural Seltzer Water Company was established. It ceased production in 1937. More butterflies abounded on the path and it was apparent by the deep cracks that we were in need of rain.

We rested at Walcot church and admired the poster of Queen Victoria drinking the mineral water (Did she really?) Returning by road towards Billingham, we then crossed the fields to the back of the village.

The views to the east included Tattershall Castle and Belmont in the distance. Again the height was apparent and we came across an old triangulation point. We emerged on Fen Lane at the site of the old Lafford school.

Malcolm Capps – Group Leader

Poetry

The Poetry Group are taking a summer break, but in the meantime, I thought I'd share some poems from our recent meetings: the first is a meditation on the pain of separation; there's a short one employing the playfulness of our language; and for those of you suffering as a result of the recent Ashes Test match, a reminder of happier times.

When We Are Apart	Ending – (England v Australia 2019)
<p><i>When we are apart Silence enshrouds me I speak and other people Hear me but That's another world. I breathe and I awake After sleeping but It's all an illusion – Only my dreams are real When we are apart.</i></p> <p><i>And now you've gone For ever my love. Soul has flown and Life is suspended. My world is a silent one Now we are apart.</i></p>	<p><i>One of the greatest endings seen. Cricket – England versus Australia Third Test – Headingley 2019 Ben Stokes, Jack Leach, heroes of the play</i></p> <p><i>The Aussies, with one wicket to get, Thought the game was surely theirs But Jack Leach, No. 11 in specs And partner Ben had other ideas!</i></p> <p><i>Stokes peppered the boundary fence With fours and sixes around the ground Whilst Leach, at the other end, was tense But dogged resistance he found.</i></p> <p><i>Ben's every boundary was cheered By adoring crowds in the stands. Every dot ball from Jack was cheered And the Aussies' fury was fanned.</i></p> <p><i>When Jack got a single, the crowds went wild – You'd have thought he'd got a ton, Whilst from Ben the runs still piled And English hopes rose like the sun.</i></p> <p><i>And, suddenly, it was all over – WE'D WON THE ASHES were coming home once more! Stokes – 135: Jack Leach – his precious !! Their incredible partnership, the winning score.</i></p> <p><i>The most exciting ending To an Ashes match ever seen But is there more pending This year – better than there's ever been?</i></p>
© Lewis Coles 2023	
Hobby	
<p><i>As a foreign girl married to the English man Then people would ask me How is your Hubbie (husband)? But one day somebody said What is your hobby? I was confused! What does he mean, what is my hobby? So I said, looking after my Hubbie!</i></p>	
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Tom Sefton – Group Co-Leader

Read more:

Use this link to see what else the group has written to date:

[Woodhall Spa u3a: Poetry Group \(u3asites.org.uk\)](http://u3asites.org.uk)

Home Computing for Fun

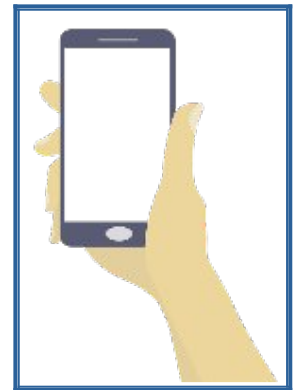
Choosing a Mobile Phone Network

Part 2 – Choosing a Provider

So once you have checked the network that works best in your area, you will have a short list of providers that use that network.

That's when the options get a bit confusing.

A lot of providers offer packages that will give you TV, broadband, phone and mobile over a contract period of a minimum of 12 months. These depend on you wanting all of the services on offer and shopping around to find the best deal. Providers include, but are not limited to, Sky, BT and Virgin. There are similar options without TV.



Then there are a variety of mobile contracts:

Pay Monthly

The term 'pay monthly phone' refers to a phone bought on a contract, which you pay off in monthly instalments. As well as the handset itself, the contract will also include a monthly data allowance, as well as calls and texts. There may be a small upfront cost and a credit check is usually required.

Typically, a pay monthly phone contract lasts two years. At the end of the contract term, you own the phone outright. These contracts do show you the total amount that you pay over the contract. It is always worth comparing this to the cost of buying the phone outright yourself with a SIM only option.

SIM Only

This is an option if you already have an unlocked phone (one that isn't tied to a network) or you have seen one that you want to buy. Most providers offer a monthly contract so that you can cancel or change your plan. This option is useful if you have changing requirements for data at certain times of the year.

SIM Only Pay As You Go (PAYG)

There are still a few providers who offer a SIM only deal with no contract so you can just top up when you need to. This is particularly useful for people who only need a mobile for calls as texts and use very little data, and is the cheapest option. However, these providers generally stipulate a minimum top up or usage period and will close the account if these are not adhered to. Also, the costs per call or text are generally higher than other contract options. If you use data this option is not for you.

Other things to consider:

Roaming

If you like to travel abroad you need to factor this in to your mobile contract. Roaming charges can be high but some providers do cover them up to a limit in their contracts.

Type of Use

If you are buying a new phone it is a good idea to ask yourself what you will actually use it for. There is always a lot of hype for new models but the earlier models or even refurbished ones can be great if purchased from a reputable supplier.

[Continued](#)

Other things to consider – Continued

Customer Support

Unfortunately a lot of the providers don't get good reviews when it comes to Customer Support. If this is something that matters to you, use the comparison websites to check Customer Service scores.

Conclusion

This is where the internet is really useful. A bit of research goes a long way and may save you cash and grief in the future. In my experience people do pay over the odds for all communication technology, often because the options can be confusing, or they forget when their existing contract is ending.

Here are some links to comparison sites. Why not take a look....?

- [Compare Mobile Phone Deals July 2023 | MoneySuperMarket](#)
- [Mobile Phones – MoneySavingExpert](#)
- [Our best mobile phone deals in July 2023 – Uswitch](#)

Please contact me by clicking on the bird on the Home Computing for Fun page on the Woodhall Spa U3A website:

<https://u3asites.org.uk/woodhall-spa/page/115109>

Your monthly guide to what it means....

Power Bank

A power bank is a device that you can charge that will provide you with power for your devices when you don't have access to a power socket. They are available in various sizes and outputs. The compact ones can be purchased for around £20 and will normally have USB A and USB C connections to charge most devices, often several at once.



These would be particularly useful in a power cut in the future when we lose our landlines. Keeping one charged would mean that you could keep your mobile fully charged in case of emergencies. It can also be used for iPhones, iPads, laptops and tablets. I don't normally recommend particular products but I have been impressed with a recent purchase of a Belkin one of these, which was invaluable on a recent spell in hospital. I was able to charge my mobile three times before the charge ran out. Please note it is available from other retailers but JL give a 2 year guarantee. See link below:

- [Belkin 10K 3-Port Portable Power Bank, Black \(johnlewis.com\)](#)

Heather Maslen – Group Leader

Find out more

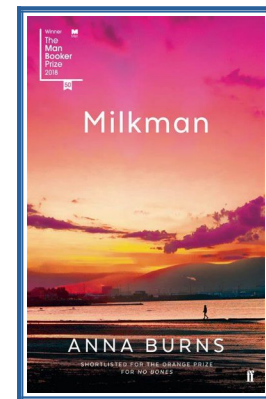
If you have any questions about these articles, **or have topics you would like me to cover**, please contact me by clicking on the bird on the Home Computing for Fun page on the Woodhall Spa U3A website:

<https://u3asites.org.uk/woodhall-spa/page/115109>

Reading

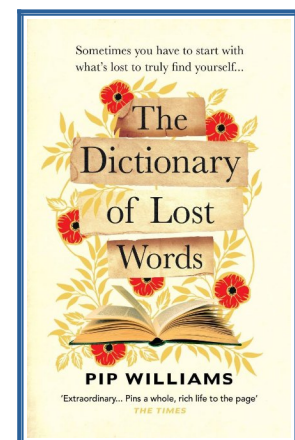
Since our last Newsletter article, the Reading Group has met three times.

In **May** our book was [Milkman by Anna Burns](#), which has won many awards, including the Man Booker Prize, the Orwell prize for Political Fiction and the International Dublin Literary Award. It is an intriguing historical psychological fiction novel set in a nameless city (clearly Belfast) during 'The Troubles' in Northern Ireland. The story follows an unnamed 18-year-old girl who is harassed by an older married man known simply as Milkman.



The book is described somewhere as a 'stream of consciousness' and that's what it is. And it's a clever author who somehow or other weaves a great narrative into a series of seemingly random thoughts that in fact aren't random at all. Milkman is a tale of gossip and hearsay, silence & pretend ignorance, kindness & violence, fear & threat, amusement & understanding. It is also a story where inaction has enormous consequences. In the narrative there are many, many contrasts and conflicts picked out of everyday life in a violent and lawless society, where rumour becomes fact and causes murders, and where the paramilitary make and enforce the rules. This book provoked animated discussion with just about a 50/50 split between those who loved it and hated it in equal measure. A book well worth reading.

In **June** we read a complete contrast in [The Dictionary of Lost Words by Pip Williams](#). Full of interesting, well-described characters, this is a fictional novel wrapped around the historical truth of the compilation of the Oxford English Dictionary and other pertinent historical events. All the historical details, including some of the main characters that are involved with the dictionary in some ways are real. Many of these are men who have verified biographies and the author has used these biographies and fleshed out the character in her novel. However, many of the women who worked and contributed to the dictionary have little biographical information about them so the author has had to portray them as she feels they would be.



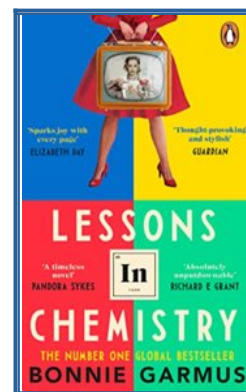
The fictional part of the novel relates the life of Esme, her love of words and her involvement with the Scriptorium and the O.E.D. It follows her life through childhood, her first love affair, an unexpected child, her marriage, and the death of her beloved father. Esme also flirts with the Women's suffrage movement and experiences the loss of her husband in the trenches of the First World War. Events are told with a backdrop of words, some of which are included in the dictionary and some that are not. Many not included words are women's words, spoken by women, relating to women, and these are the words that Esme is so interested in. In general, the members of the group loved this book and would recommend it wholeheartedly as a good read.

[Continued](#)

Reading – Continued

Our **July** book was *Lessons in Chemistry* by Bonnie Garmus. – a very different prospect from either of our other two recent reads, and, although opinions differed on many aspects, it was universally enjoyed.

Elizabeth Zott is a strong independent woman, very singled minded who takes a scientific attitude to all aspects of life, she reduces everything to Chemistry including her love for Calvin Evans, her daughter, the technique of rowing and cooking demonstrations.



She is uncompromising even after setbacks as she becomes unemployed, a single mother and a belittled scientist. All the characters in the story have their place, I particularly loved her daughter Madeleine, a gifted, precocious child; Six Thirty, the faithful super-dog who provides humour and insights into human behaviour; Harriet, a neighbour who becomes child minder, Elizabeth's friend and develops the strength to change her life.

Bonnie Garmus includes the darker side of life too with sexism, misogyny, and suicide, also giving a science versus religion slant.

A well written, thoughtful book with a feminist undertone portraying strong characters, both male and female, and laugh out loud incidents. Well recommended!

Barbara Michaelides – Group Leader

The Final Word

Feedback

You can use this link to view past issues of the Newsletter, or to send a note to the Editor:

<https://u3asites.org.uk/woodhall-spa/page/113917>

If you have any suggestions or comments about the Newsletter I'd be happy to read them. You can email them to me via newsletter@woodhallspa-u3a.org.uk, or use the link above.

I am indebted, as always, to all those who have taken time to contribute to this edition. Many thanks.

Tom Sefton – Editor

u3a
learn, laugh, live