



## WSPu3a Newsletter

February/March  
2024



St Andrews

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:

[Woodhall Spa u3a Committee and Contacts Web Page](#)

#### Chairman's Chat

A friend gave me an interesting book about trees, but it also branches out into other topics. For instance, [Loewenstein's](#) Theory of Curiosity.

A very interesting man, do look him up. He suggests curiosity is an itch. Knowing something makes us more curious than knowing nothing.

We increase our curiosity by learning about something. It fills the gaps in our knowledge. Knowing the names of a few spring flowers has spurred me on to know the names of ones I can't identify.

Where's *your* information gap?  
What are *you* curious to learn?

Malcolm Capps – Chairman

## Groups News

The new layout of the groups' details seemed to work very well, with lots of members finding a new interest and signing to join the group. Remember that all the groups initially started because a member had an interest they thought might be shared by others, so if you have a hobby or interest not shown then please speak to me, or just complete the slip on the table. If you are interested in craft, then a new [Craft Group](#) might be just for you. It will not focus on any particular craft, but you'd be able to go along to 'do your own thing' and maybe show another member just how it's done. Please signup and we'll have a meeting to decide when and where to meet, etc.

A group is on the point of folding as out of a membership of 12, the average number actually attending the meetings was 7.

This is very frustrating for the Group Leader who has very often spent time preparing for their group's meeting, and even more so if the absent members haven't even bothered to let the leader know that they can't get to group.

The [French Group](#) are now meeting with abilities ranging from beginners to fluent.

If you'd like to brush up on your 'rusty' French, then why not join them?

If you have any questions about groups, then I'm usually to be found near the groups' table. Do come and have a chat.

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:

[Woodhall Spa u3a Groups and Activities Web Page](#)

## 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	<a href="#">Woodhall Spa u3a website</a>	
u3a – Online Learning Events	<a href="#">u3a Online Learning</a>	
u3a Radio Podcast February 2024	<a href="#">u3a Radio February 2024</a>	
In this episode, Jo Watson, a former sports journalist, talks about her favourite Olympic stories; hear from Lute player David about his passion for the instrument; poet Christopher Reid talks about the conversation he had with Ted Hughes that made him pick up his pen again.		
Artificial Intelligence News	<a href="#">Book your place here</a>	
Are you interested in learning about AI? Join other like minded members discovering the world of AI. We will be reviewing recent news headlines about AI. A presentation or a guest panel will discuss a topic. There will be opportunity for members to 'show and tell' what they have been doing with AI.		

## Coming Soon

### Upcoming Events list

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

[Woodhall Spa u3a Events Web Page](#)

## Monthly Meetings

**Mar 7<sup>th</sup>**

2:30pm to 4pm  
Coronation Hall

**Dr Livingstone I Presume?**

*Fran Sandham is an adventurer and author who walked solo across Africa from coast to coast.*

**Apr 4<sup>th</sup>**

2:30pm to 4pm  
Coronation Hall

**The Mystery of Richard the Third**

*Dave Andrews is currently Deputy Lieutenant of Leicestershire.*

## Group Noticeboard

### Outings

#### Kings Lynn

*Our next outing is to the historic town of Kings Lynn on April 16th with an optional guided tour. The coach leaves at 9am and returns at 4.15pm.*

*Payment is now due and will be collected at the March meeting.*

*This trip is now fully booked but names will be taken for a reserve list.*

#### A Midsummer Night's Dream

*There are still a few places available for our trip to Toilethorpe to see A Midsummer Night's Dream on Saturday 27th July. The coach will leave at 9am giving plenty of time for coffee/snack before the 11.30am performance. At the end of the play (approx 2pm) the coach will take us to nearby Stamford where we will have free time until we return home at 5pm.*

*The price is £35.50 and will be collected at the March and April meetings.*

[Sue Pollitt – Group Co-Leader](#)

### 5 Mile Walking

*After a most enjoyable start to the year with the January walk poor weather regrettably stopped play in February. However, with the longer days and improving conditions the 5 milers will be reconvening on **March 14th leaving from Mareham Le Fen Community Centre** at the usual time of 10am.*

*Leaders are David and Elizabeth Leech and all are welcome.*

*Onward and upward!*

[Steve Parry – Group Leader](#)

## Around the Groups in 30 days

### Science

#### PAT Testing

Ten members attended the February science group meeting for a presentation on 'PAT Testing' by group member David Swan who worked for British Telecom and also an auction house carrying out regular testing of electrical equipment and appliances to comply with legal requirements and health and safety on a regular basis.

David gave an outline of Portable Appliance Testing (PAT), consisting of a visual and electrical inspection of a portable device. Businesses and Charities, eg. u3a, are required by law to maintain electrical items in a safe working condition to protect both staff and public from harm.

#### Classes

There are 3 classes of appliances dictated by the danger they pose to the user:

**Class 1** (most dangerous) having limited insulation and requires an earth for protection of appliance and user. eg. Freezers, irons, photocopiers and microwaves.

**Class 2** appliances don't require an earth due to more insulation making them safer. eg. Lawn mowers, TVs, lamps and drills.

**Class 3** (least dangerous) have a low voltage and are low risk to the user, however Laptop, mobile phone and camera chargers and cables may need testing.

#### Types of Faults

David showed examples of faulty appliances, cables, plug tops and sockets, eg. a circular saw with taped-over cuts to the plastic cable coating; a light bulb socket with a plug attached; a faulty food mixer; a wrongly wired plug socket, and a selection of damaged and illegal plugs.



David with selection of failed electrical equipment

Continued

### *PAT Testing – Continued* **Plugs and Fuses**

The British Standard (BS 1363) 13 amp, 3 pin plug came out in 1947. The pins are Live, Neutral, and Earth. Protective shrouding on the pins became mandatory in 1984 and from 1994 it became mandatory that most domestic appliances had a fixed plug fitted by the manufacturer with appropriate fuse for the appliance.

These days, most appliance plugs contain fuses that are normally rated at 3, 5 or 13 amp, depending on the wattage of the appliance and the rating of its power lead. Some manufacturers put a sticker on the plug stating the amperage of the fuse, mostly 3A or 13A. Some TVs have a 5 amp fuse.

### **Testing Appliances**



PAT testing a group member's kettle

David tested items from each classification eg. a kettle, shaver, accounting machine, computer cable and phone charger, and an extension flex, starting with the socket nearest the power cable first.

He also tested a range of small appliances brought in by group members e.g. an iron, 2 kettles, 2 toasters, an electric drill and curling tongs. All passed.

*A member of the group, who was unable to attend, had sent in a very old copper electric kettle, which did not have a safety plug or an on/off switch. It was tested and, needless to say, it failed.*

Helen Sawyer – Locum Group Leader  
Photos by Helen Sawyer



PAT testing unit showing positive result on group member's kettle

### **Find out more:**

You can use [this link](#) to learn more about the Science Group:  
[Science Group Web Page](#)

## Outings

### Pretty Woman, the Musical

We were glad we didn't go any further afield than Hull for our first outing of the year as the weather was appalling. But, as ever, our coach driver Steve got us there and back safely. I think we all agreed the journey to see Pretty Woman the Musical at Hull New Theatre was worth it. It certainly cheered us up on a dreary February day.

A reminder that you do not need to sign up to join the Outings Group as all members may participate in any of the outings organised by the Group Leaders who will always be available to welcome you at their table at the monthly meetings

Sue Pollitt – Group Co-Leader

### Find out more:

*You can use this link to ask the Outings team a question:*

[Outings Group Web Page](#)

## Dog Walking

The members of the Dog Walking Group met outside The Cottage Museum on Saturday 3rd November. The weather was very kind to us; the sun was shining and there was a gentle breeze. We walked along the Viking Way and headed back when everyone was ready. The dogs really enjoyed themselves and so did the adults! It was good to meet again and enjoy each others company. We had a good turn out this month and are looking forward to a new, very young member next month. We can't wait to meet him!



Judy Binks – Group Leader

## Jazz, Blues, Big Band Sounds

### Barney Kessel

Do you know the Beach Boys' song, '[Wouldn't it be nice?](#)'? It's the opening track for their hugely popular, ground-breaking 1966 album, '*Pet Sounds*', and those famous opening measures, played on a small twelve string guitar, sounding a bit like a distant ice cream van, are played by the session guitarist-of-the-day, [Barney Kessel](#).



Photo courtesy of [BBC Jazz Library](#)

Now, whilst that may not sound like an outstanding endorsement for a musician, it does illustrate what many jazz musicians of the 40s and 50s were doing to make a living in the 60s. Consider also that Mr Kessel had been consistently voted the *#1 Jazz Guitarist in the World* by *Esquire* and *Playboy* magazines from 1947 to 1960, and even had guitar manufacturers Kay and Gibson produce their own *Barney Kessel* signature models in '57 and '61 respectively.

### Early Days

Born into a Jewish family in Oklahoma, 1923, he picked up his first guitar at the age of twelve and was given free lessons for three months via a Federal Music Project.

At sixteen he met his idol, jazz guitarist [Charlie Christian](#), and jammed with him, becoming a lifelong devotee in the process.

### Band Work

After moving to California he landed the guitar slot in Chico Marx's Orchestra in '43, and soon became a familiar face in various big bands along the west coast, including playing for Artie Shaw, Charlie Barnett, Hal McIntyre, and recording with Charlie Parker (so many Charlies) in '47. He joined up with the hugely talented Canadian pianist, Oscar Peterson, in '52.

### Recording Work

From '52, Barney made dozens of albums, both as a soloist and band leader, and also sitting in with many of the big jazz stars of the 50s, including Billie Holliday, Ella Fitzgerald, Peggy Lee, Woody Herman, and notably, Julie London, on her 1955 album '*Julie is Her Name*', which featured the million-selling single, '*Cry Me a River*' (see Legacy below)

In the 60s, Barney was a regular member of a group of LA-based session musicians, informally known as 'The Wrecking Crew', thus appearing on Pop songs by artists such as The Monkees, Sonny and Cher, The Beach Boys, Ike and Tine Turner, The Righteous Brothers, and many, many more.

[Continued](#)

*Barney Kessel – Continued*

### Returning to Jazz

Around '69, he ventured back to playing, recording, and touring as a jazz guitarist with super-group 'Great Guitars', also with [Oscar Peterson](#) again, and recording with the great Stephane Grappelli. He continued until a stroke curtailed his ability to play in '92.

### Legacy

Whenever I hear Barney Kessel interviewed he seems such a nice guy, full of love for the guitar, which he promoted with tutoring books and videos. His much-copied style of playing became known as 'Chordal Melody' and his sound is the classic jazz guitar, velvety sound, which I'm sure you recognise. When we were learning about him in our JBBBS Group, we watched a piece of film

featuring Julie London singing 'Cry Me a River', from the feature film, '[The Girl Can't Help it](#)'. We absolutely loved it, so I would sincerely recommend you click on that link and spend three and a half minutes watching the beautiful Julie (with a budget-busting wardrobe), and listening to her gorgeous voice, accompanied by the super-smooth, velvety tones of Barney's guitar.

Tom Sefton

## Woodhall Wanderers

### Dunston Fen

Wide Lincolnshire skies, a glimmer of sunshine, a fly-past from the Red Arrows and several March hares (albeit a couple of days early) were some of the sights that greeted the Woodhall Wanderers on our walk around Dunston Fen on February 28th. The expected mud was not too much of an obstacle and we had a pleasant four mile walk over the flat countryside. The sugar beet harvest was underway, with trailers full of beet ready to be transported to Newark for processing. Some of us will remember that not so many years ago this would have involved a much shorter journey to Bardney, and we could see the former sugar beet factory as we walked. Our next walk will be on March 27th.



Maureen Moscrop

## Military History and Aviation

It's pleasing to report that the Group continues to thrive and now has 25 Members, including three Associate Members from the Horncastle u3a, which has no equivalent Group. Our February Group meeting welcomed Michael Credland BEM as its visiting speaker. Mike has spoken to us several times before and his talks are always full of local detail, often illustrated by militaria from his museum in Martin. This time he spoke about 'Wartime Aviation Connections to Lincolnshire' and, as usual, the audience was engrossed as he focused on several local 'lads', their backgrounds and their wartime aviation achievements in their (often short) lifetimes.

Mike has written books on Lincolnshire War Memorials so as one would expect he showed us the last resting places of many of his subjects.

Of particular local interest was Gilbert Insall, VC, MC who won his VC in France on 7th/8th November 1915 when a 2nd Lieutenant in the Royal Flying Corps. The story of how he won his VC, his later capture, his three escapes from captivity and his eventual 9 day, 150 mile walk to freedom through Germany to Holland, which resulted in the award of the MC, would make an epic film.

However, and rather shamefully, Mike eventually discovered the overgrown and neglected grave of this gallant man, who died in 1972 as an RAF Group Captain, in an obscure corner of Nocton Churchyard.

Mike also took us through the setting up of what we now know as RAF Cranwell, which was originally a Royal Naval Air Service base before the formation of the RAF in April 1918. His descriptions of the airships which were based there and the later incident of the deaths of two RAF Officers, while riding in a horse-drawn gig back from Sleaford to Cranwell along what is now the A17, brought home the perils of the training that took place



[Lieutenant Gilbert Insall 1916-17](#)

there. The Officers were hit by a very low-flying DH9 bomber, flown by a student pilot at Cranwell, who was subsequently arrested for murder.

History is what it is, it cannot be un-made and we should not forget it. We salute in our own ways the achievements of our ancestors and the price many of them paid.

*The Group does not glorify war, but we do Remember Them.*

Malcolm Perks – Group Leader

## Home Computing for Fun

### Search Engines

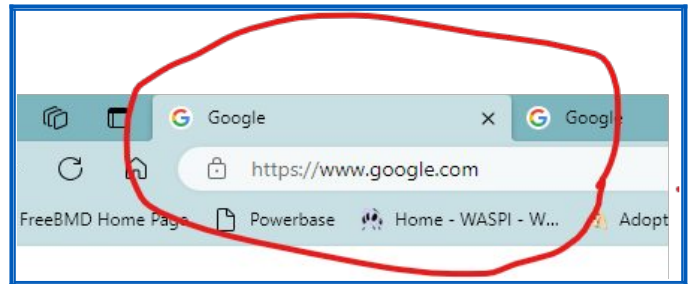
A Search Engine is a software system that allows you to search for things on the internet. They operate within a browser. You will have heard people say that they are going to 'Google' something to find out about it. Google is probably the best known Search Engine, but it is by no means the only one.

Others include:

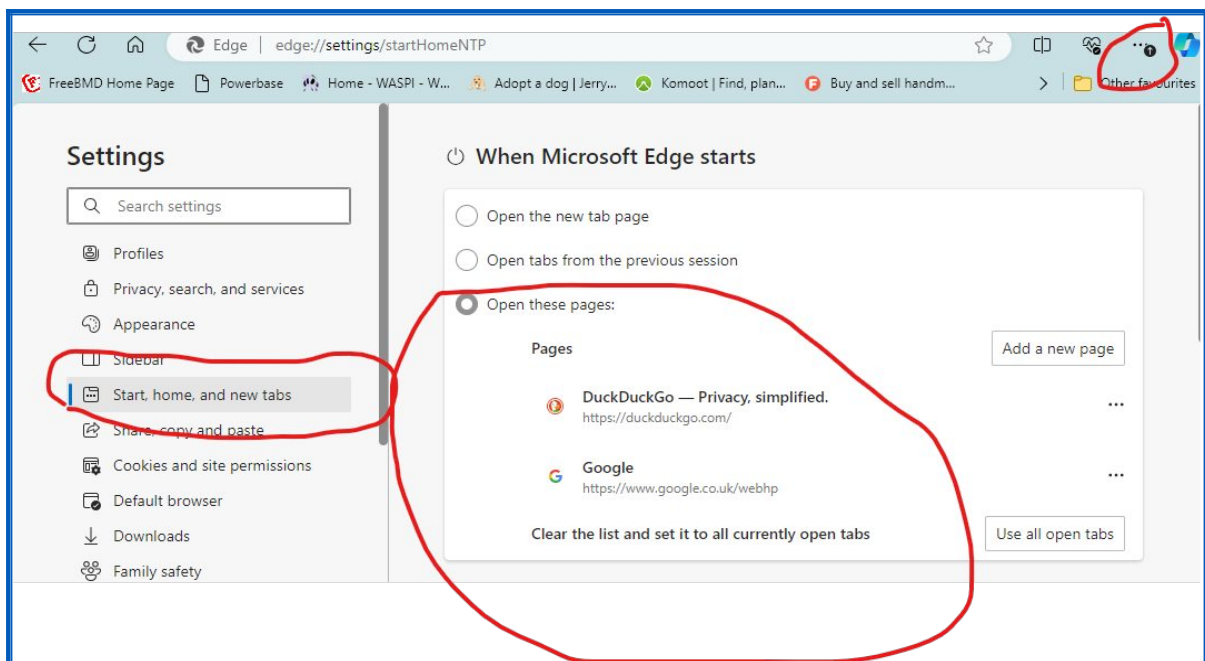
Bing	Yahoo	Ask.com
Brave	DuckDuckGo	



You can use whatever Search Engine you want. You can either access it from your browser by putting the URL in the address bar



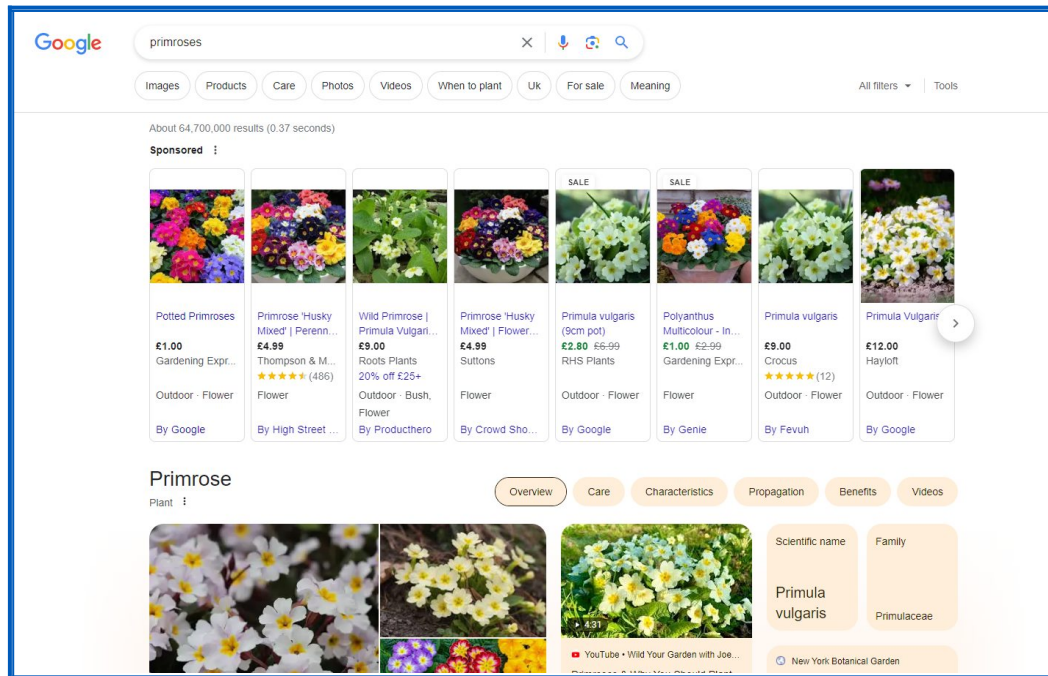
Or you can go into the Settings of your browser to select the search Engine page you want to open when you start up your browser. Click on the three dots on the top right of your browser and page down to Settings. Choose Start, Home and New tabs from the menu, and add the Search Engine you want, in When Microsoft Edge starts.



Continued

*Search Engines – Continued*

Often searches that you do will bring up a written response, but also explanatory videos which can be very helpful. Once your search results appear you often have the option to narrow them by choosing Shopping, Images, Videos, etc.



Search Engines, like Google, track and retain your data and can use it to bombard you with ads that it thinks would interest you. If you prefer to use a Search Engine that doesn't keep your data you can use DuckDuckGo or Brave.

Although most people will only use a Search Engine by entering one or two words, the best results can be obtained by actually asking a question. For example:

- *How can I edit my photos?*
- *Are there any reviews for the retailer xxxxxxxx?*
- *What is the best price for a xxxxxxxx?*
- *Where is my nearest Chiropodist?*
- *What is 2lb in grams?*
- *Where are my downloads on my iPhone?*

It can be particularly useful to find genuine independent reviews on products or services as often reviews on retailers' sites are written by the retailers themselves.

So the next time you want to know something, Try a Search Engine!

Heather Maslen – Group Leader

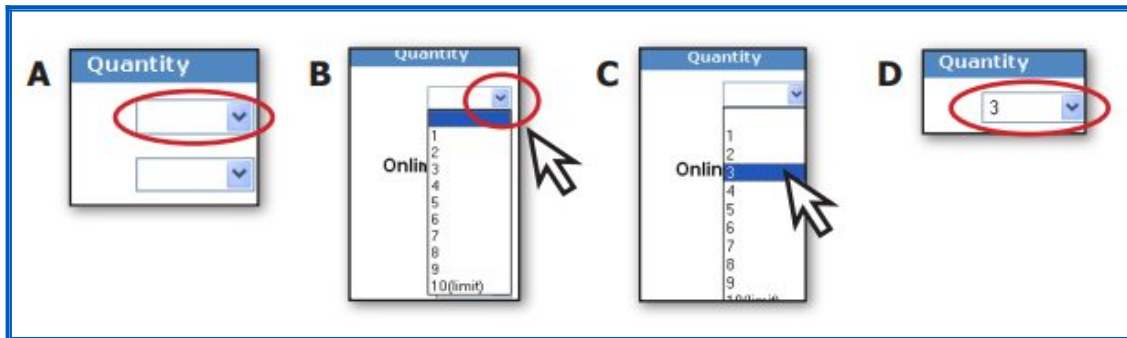
## Home Computing for Fun – Continued

Your monthly guide to what it means....

### Drop Down List

A list of items from which you can make selections.

- A) When you first see a box containing a drop down list, the box will be empty or may display only a single item.
- B) To see a list of choices, left click on the arrow in the box and hold. The list of choices will display above or below the box.
- C) Keeping your left index finger pressed on the mouse, move the cursor to the desired choice (In this case, a quantity of 3 booklets).
- D) Release your left index finger from the mouse, and your selection will appear in the box. The full list of choices will disappear.



### Home Page

The first thing you see when you come to a website, or the opening page of a website. It provides information about the site and directs you to other pages on the site.

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:

[Home Computing for Fun Web Page](#)

## Classic Cars

The joint Woodhall Spa and Horncastle Classic Car Group held its second meeting at Kirkby on Bain in February to discuss forthcoming events (see table below).

Definitions of Classic Cars vary greatly but typically they tend to be over 20 or 25 years old. However, we are more lenient and welcome anyone with an interest in older cars and motoring.



Classic Car Group members at the inaugural January Meeting

Group members' cars include Saabs, Morris 1000s, MGs (RV8 and B), Range Rovers, Mercedes, although classic ownership is not a requirement and interests cover other marques such as Scimitar, Triumph and Lomax to name a few.

Restoration is also part of our interest, although seniority does impose certain limitations, along with history (museum or factory visits), using classics (runs or track visits), spares back up (supplier visits), etc. We are always open to suggestions for future events, visits etc.

Month	Day/date	Event
March	Wed 13/03 @ 2.00	Bubble Car Museum
April	?	Talk from founder of BCCC*
May	Wed 08/05 @ 2.00	Drive & Afternoon Tea
June	Sat 15/06	VSCC** Cadwell Park
July	Wed 10/07 @ 2.00 ?	Treasure Hunt
August	Sun 11/08	BCCC* Show
September	Sun 08/09	Minting Classic Motor Show
Oct or Nov	Sun/Tue/Thu ?	Lincs Road Transport Museum

\*BCCC = Boston Classic Car Club

\*\*VSCC = Vintage Sports Car Club

If you have an interest in Classic Cars, why not come and join us?

Peter Ellis – Group Leader

## Poetry

The theme for our February meeting was 'Friendship', which, as usual, revealed itself in different ways to our membership. Examples are shown here, courtesy of our Group Co-Leaders.

### Friendship

*Poems and thoughts about Friendship are a great reminder  
About what is really important in our life.*

*So strong a bond between friends that we have known and loved over many years  
These become our surrogate families.*

*When your family flies your home and takes up a new life  
Those friends we have shared hobbies, holidays, memories with  
are so supportive and continue  
To give a basis for our new more curtailed life  
and so we are blessed.*

*Ah then the pain of Best Friendship,  
Starry friendship rejected, replaced and even  
Shunned the hurt, the unconsolable pain.  
From this, as everything else you learn who is a friend,  
And who is false.*

*Our dear friends are our confidants, to share experiences and console.  
Lifetime friendships, reflect the best of our soul*

*Exciting new friendships may come and go, but we move on  
Content to try to be good friends with  
Those we meet who wish to reciprocate.*

© Irene Derwent 2024

### The Constant Friend

*How many ways have i known you, forever the same, one, friend?  
Though i have seen your pattern in divers 'stations  
The first when we were small boys, riding on our small bikes  
Later, in our teens, you were a girl, awkward in your fashion  
More than once a school friend, a colleague, and even animal in nature*

*And god, when we laughed and cried, the tears that grew in our eyes  
Then again, those times we simply held hands in private collusion  
Because we just knew what it meant*

*Too often, the time we were granted would suffer some premature conclusion  
Though, just as salt water has its mark, our communion holds the promise of a sacrament*

*This universe, some say, is composed of such small vibrations  
I have missed you, my noumenous, constant friend  
Are you there, shrouded in some future's folds?  
Is there still time for us to resonate once again?  
And, if so, i'll see you and know you, however you present*

© thom Sefton 2024

Tom Sefton – Group Co-leader

Read more:

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

[Poetry Group Web Page](#)

## Sew and Sew

It might seem either slightly late or exceedingly early to start with a Christmas Sampler, but due to illness and our venue being whatever the cricket equivalent of "out of bounds" is, we were unable to see Katherine's finished Christmas sampler at the appropriate time of year. She has already nearly finished her next cross-stitch project, which is inspired by a Lowry painting. Not many photos this month as most of the projects are works in progress. Val is *piecing* and Judy is *binding* their respective quilts for the Linus project. Joan is quilting her latest project, which will be a match for Poppy's quilt shown previously. Barbara is working on a medallion quilt using William Morris fabrics from her stash.



Katherine's Advent Sampler



© Dave Whamond 2009

At the time of typing, I am full of a cold courtesy of my husband. As I don't wish to use my quilt blocks as handkerchiefs, I have temporarily abandoned my sewing machine. It gives me the opportunity to collect my wayward pins, which have a habit of lying in wait for my husband's soft-soled slippered feet. Maybe I should make myself a pin-cushion.....

Carmel Sefton

## Photography

### Composition

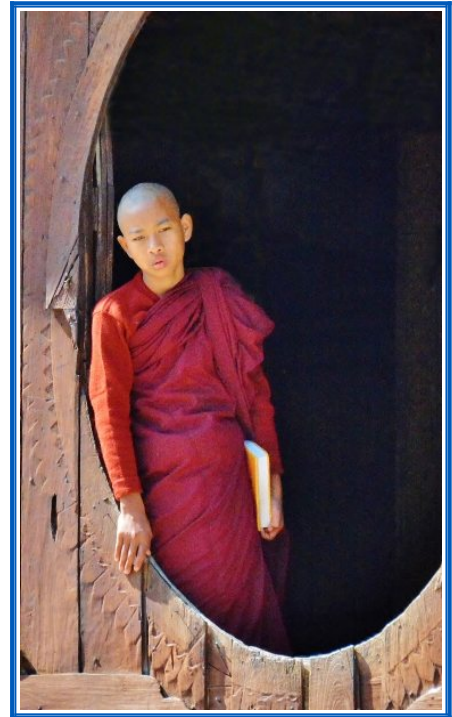
We were pleased to have 3 new members at our meeting this month who were able to add their photographic experience to the mix. Meeting as we do in the Parish Rooms we were able to view the results of our 'Composition' exercise on the big TV screen. Just 3 examples can be seen here.



Arrows – John Hart



The Snow Arch – Geoff Noel



Monk – Ced Shurben

Next month's project is Portraiture. Not an easy subject as there are so many elements to take into consideration; for example, your sitter, lighting, location, monochrome or colour. I will share some of the results with you next month.

Ced Shurben – Group Leader

## Play Reading

The Play Reading Group is now beginning rehearsals for our highly anticipated (I hope) performance after the AGM on 2nd May.

'Ask a Silly Question' is set at a parent-teacher association meeting led by the formidable and slightly unpredictable Lady Faux-Parr.



A variety of teachers and parents with completely opposing views plus the indomitable caretaker Mrs Ambidex ensure plenty of humour in this short play. Please add the date to your diary and come and support both the AGM and our performers, some of whom have never acted previously.

Rosemary Brown – Group Leader

## Art



February Gallery

Irene Derwent – Acting Group Leader

## Bird Watching and Wildlife

### Moor Farm Visit

On the morning of 23rd February six optimists arrived for a 10.00 a.m. start on a very dull, cool day. Those arriving slightly early were rewarded with the sighting of a Red Kite. The first of a number of small woodland birds at the start of our walk, a goldcrest, was very confiding and allowed good close-up views. Before long, however, it was clear that the Reserve more resembled The Everglades than a Lincolnshire moorland habitat.

Unfortunately the conditions had not been foreseen by all and the party had to disperse as the water level proved too high and resulted in wet feet and a curtailed walk for some members of the group. On a better day we would have expected to record more than the twenty-three species heard and/or sighted. Nevertheless, a brief snatch of Woodlark song, regarded by many as the most beautiful of any British bird, was detected. This is a scarce breeding species in Britain and we are fortunate that it occurs on our two local moorland reserves. It is also a very early arrival on its breeding grounds from its winter quarters further south.

An unexpected surprise was a grey wagtail on the drain which marks the eastern boundary of the site, though this species does occur in small numbers in and around Woodhall every winter.

Finally, a female sparrowhawk flashed past us at low level as we prepared to depart from the car park.

The list of species recorded follows in alphabetical order:

<i>Blackbird</i>	<i>Blue tit</i>	<i>Carrion crow</i>
<i>Chaffinch</i>	<i>Coal tit</i>	<i>Dunnock</i>
<i>Goldcrest</i>	<i>Goldfinch</i>	<i>Great spotted woodpecker</i>
<i>Great tit</i>	<i>Grey wagtail</i>	<i>Jackdaw</i>
<i>Long-tailed tit</i>	<i>Magpie</i>	<i>Mallard</i>
<i>Nuthatch</i>	<i>Red kite</i>	<i>Robin</i>
<i>Siskin</i>	<i>Sparrowhawk</i>	<i>Woodlark</i>
<i>Woodpigeon</i>	<i>Wren</i>	

John Watt

## The Final Word

### Feedback

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

[Newsletter Web Page](#)

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](mailto:newsletter@woodhallspa-u3a.org.uk), or use the link above.

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

Many thanks.

Tom Sefton – Editor

