



<https://collingham.u3asite.uk>

NEWSLETTER – OCTOBER 2025

From the Chair: welcome to October's newsletter.

The u3a has recently published a report entitled Learn to Live. It's an important document but if you need something to send you to sleep, this would likely be suitable! Its key message is that a major thing that helps people to live longer, healthier lives is non-formal learning. Does this sound like something you are doing already as a u3a member? Our whole raison d'être is to provide opportunities to learn informally from one another, i.e. in a social situation. So we're already helping ourselves to lead longer, healthier lives.

The u3a study is by no means an isolated study into what makes us happiest (and being happy leads to a longer, healthier life): study after study shows that focusing on others boosts our own happiness and gives us a sense of purpose. Volunteering is a particularly important way to do this within our u3a – take on a small role and get even more enjoyment from belonging to a group of likeminded people.

Volunteer to join the refreshment team at general meetings, take on part of the responsibility of running one of the groups you belong to, join the committee and feel great because you are making your life and other people's richer.

Take the plunge and volunteer today! Contact me or someone else relevant through our website at <https://collingham.u3asite.uk> and feel brilliant. Remember: many hands make light work. Chris

General Meetings

September:



So how do we determine whether a pub has existed as long as the claims make out? It's based on Archival Research, Archaeological Analysis and Dendrochronology. In the case of the three Nottingham pubs highlighted in the talk we learned which one was built first, which one was previously a domestic dwelling and which one has an invented story courtesy of a previous landlord.

The Trip to Jerusalem, Ye Olde Salutation and The Bell were featured and their timelines dissected.

According to Dr Wright, never believe what a tour guide says or what you might read in books or online, the evidence is in the architecture and if you know what to look for then a more definitive date can be determined. So, the youngest ale house was the Trip to Jerusalem (1670), the older ones being The Olde Salutation (1440) and The Bell (1370).

Other establishments were also featured including The Flying Horse in Nottingham, The Saracen's Head in Southwell and The Old White Hart in Newark. The latter used to be a pub and if it had remained so it would then qualify as one of, if not the oldest, pub in the county.

We also learned the difference between an Ale House, a Tavern and an Inn. Quite simply an Ale House looked like a domestic house and brewed its ale on site. A Tavern was frequented by 'posher' people and found in urban locations and an Inn was more like an hotel that served both food and drink and more importantly had to have a gate portal. *

No beer was available on this particular pub crawl but was no less an intoxicating subject.

* An archway leading to a rear courtyard

dp

Speakers Corner

November 26th Tales from a Dairy Farmers' Wife

Let's pretend we are going to the countryside for a day on the farm and meet the cows who produce milk for local Stilton Cheese.

Presented by Jane Barnes

December 10th u3a Christmas event with special guests **The Weston Community Singers**

As part of our Christmas festivities, entertainment will be provided by the Weston Community Singers who will sing popular songs and seasonal delights.



The community singers originally started in 2015 and includes members from many of the villages surrounding Weston including Newark. The songs they perform span many genres from traditional to popular music of the day. Performances also include instrumental pieces played by Musical Director Linda on the clarinet and saxophone.

Coming Soon

The Curious Case of Olde Time Punishments

Going Underground: An Exploration of Nottinghamshire's Subterranean Spaces

Nottinghamshire Puddings: Fact or Fiction

Many thanks for all the suggestions and contributions regarding Speakers. When making suggestions please supply a current email contact. We try to promote a varied programme and we know not all subjects will be appreciated. However, your attendance and feedback on recent events is welcomed.

dp

Groups

Contacting Group Leaders

If you need get in touch with Lesley, our Groups Co-ordinator, or with any group leader, please use the contact page on our website:

<https://collingham.u3asite.uk>

Strollers



On 8 October in lovely sunny weather 18 of the Strollers did a walk around Coddington.

Our walk was a 1.9 mile circular route starting from The Inn on the Green, then through elephant grass crop fields, a wooded area, through horse paddocks, the remains of an old airfield and finally the old part of Coddington passing All Saints Church to The Inn on The Green for our lunch.

The pub served our large party very well, the pre ordered food came out hot and on time so a good time was had by all.

Rosie and Marg



Singalong

The sing a long group, continues to develop and deliver progress, this is from every given aspect. We are still in the very early stages, of looking at, musicals and other well-known songs. By the end of October, moving forward, into November I will most definitely, be able to give you, a much more detailed clearer idea as to what these specific songs will be.

People within our group, are extremely helpful with things like making the refreshments, tidying up, helping me sort all the music sheets, paper work and any necessary correspondence. Everyone does their part and the friendships, continue to grow well. I will update you further, next month.

Louis

Table Tennis

Our friendly table tennis group **usually** meets on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month at the Winthorpe Community Centre for 1 hour from 10 – 11 am. Afterwards many of us enjoy a cup of coffee and the occasional cake at the Lord Nelson in Winthorpe. We do provide bats and balls and new members are always welcome.

Do come and give it a try!

Peter

For your diary the dates going forward are as follows:

Thursday October 23rd from 10:00 to 11:00 am

Thursday November 13th from 10:00 to 11:00 am

Thursday November 20th from 10:00 to 11:00 am – out of sequence due to hall not available on the regular date

Thursday December 11th from 10:00 to 11:00 am

Family History

Group members had suggested two people to find out about so the October meeting was based on these family members.

Pat's great grandmother Eunice Riley was married to Thomas Smedley, the lace designer who had been the subject of a presentation to the group previously. Eunice died at the age of just 25 and we found her death certificate and the cause of death which Pat with her medical knowledge could explain to us. Next, her marriage certificate gave her father's name and we found census records for him showing he was a lace draughtsman so Eunice may have met Thomas through this connection.

Our second person to research was John's grandfather Albert Ellis. He was killed in WW1 and John had previously told us of his military record and how his family survived his loss. Now we looked at his parents Richard and Sarah. John had been told by an elderly relative that Sarah's maiden name was Fusedale. We did find a Sarah Fusedale living in the same village in North Yorkshire as Richard. However, the only marriage record we could find for a Richard Ellis was to a Sarah Smith. On her marriage certificate Sarah Smith hadn't given a father's name which made us consider that she may have been Sarah Fusedale but for some reason had not given her correct name.

These possibly incorrect records certainly make research interesting!

Charlie

Threads

Our name “Threads” reflects the materials used for most of the projects and also the conversations that flow between us.



Our work on individual projects will continue at Beyond Coffee at 2 p.m. on Thursday, 6th November. Join us with a clean, hand-held craft. The photos show a knitted jumper and a crocheted throw.

Barbara

Breakfasters

Another superb breakfast at The Barn Bakery, Farndon.

9 of us chatted, laughed and enjoyed our time together.

We are changing our meeting day next month to a Wednesday as the venue we've chosen doesn't open on a Monday, so the next meeting is.....

Wed 29th October at The Courtyard Cafe, (1133/A57 junction) 9.30am. If you'd like to join us then please let me know as I will need to book us all in.

Lesley

Bridge

The Bridge group continues to meet monthly at Beyond Coffee on Fridays 2-4pm

Chis D

Thursday Talking Shop

At the September meeting the Group asked: What Do We Mean by Progress? After agreeing the standard definition: 'development towards an improved or more advanced condition', we moved on to discuss diverse views including those who believe that progress has produced huge collateral damage, unlike commentators such as Steven Pinker who insist that conditions only improve. It's generally agreed that the concept of progress is a child of 'The Enlightenment' which put the lives of humans into their own hands, unlike the past when God had that role. It was in that period that ideas of improving the status of women and the abolition of slavery emerged.

In October we moved on to a new subject: Ethics. This again, opened up a plethora of views, questions and ideas. There was substantial discussion about the relationship between ethics and morality and the source of these rules and guidelines. We agreed that ethics has been important since the dawn of human civilization to keep human conduct in check and to preserve the peace of society. But, needless to say, ethical norms have to be seen in the context of culture, religion and politics. What is ethical in one country is not in another.

The next meeting on 27th November will be devoted to - 'Anarchism'.

Anita

Creative Writing

Just 2 of us (at the moment) are continuing with this lovely informal group. We met, we chatted and we set out a very loose format for our future meetings. We read our own historic work to each other and set ourselves a writing task to do immediately. This is going to be a truly superb group which will be mutually supportive in the best possible way - I have very high hopes for us.

Our next meeting will be on 5th November. 10.30-12.30 at a member's home.

Lesley

So, you think you can drive

As Lesley and David were on holiday the session for September was cancelled.

The next session will be Wednesday 19th November at Lesley's house, 4-6pm.

Drawing

This group continues to grow and grow. We usually meet at Lesley's house and tackle any one of several still life tableaux. For the second hour we attempt figure drawing - very difficult!



This is not an Art Class, just a few like-minded people who love to draw, and are very supportive of each other. Loads of compliments flow from one artist to another.

The next session on November 4th, 10-12, will be at Penny's house. I'm looking forward to it already. I wonder what she has in store for us?

Lesley

Photography

This month's theme for images is "Iron or Steel". I hope you enjoy them and the wide range of interpretations.

Next month the theme is "Autumn Glory". The idea is for our members to capture what Autumn means to us.

Paul Bass



Conservatory by Colin Smith



'Exterminate' by Colin Smith



Pins and Needles by Pat Morgan



Along the Promenade by Gill Bass



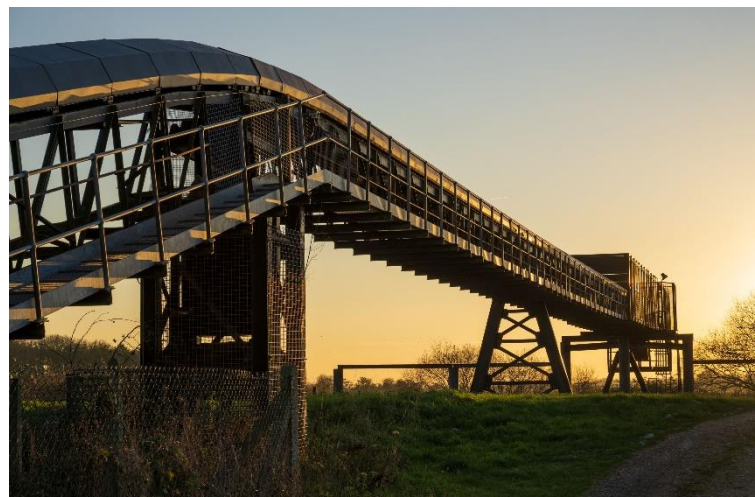
Lancaster Statue by Paul Bass

Joint Work by Jannet Wright



Tornado by Andrew Roberts

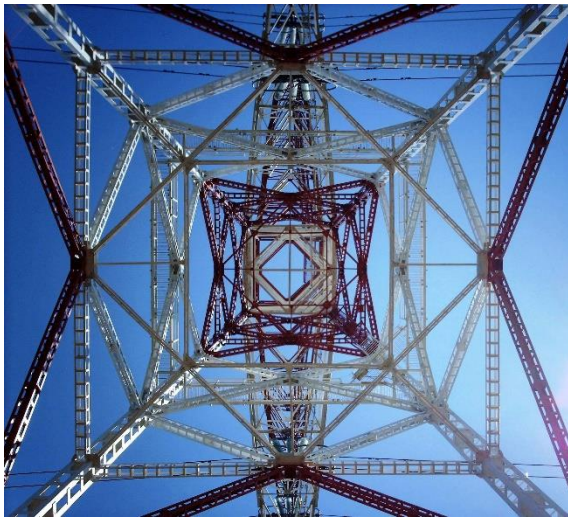
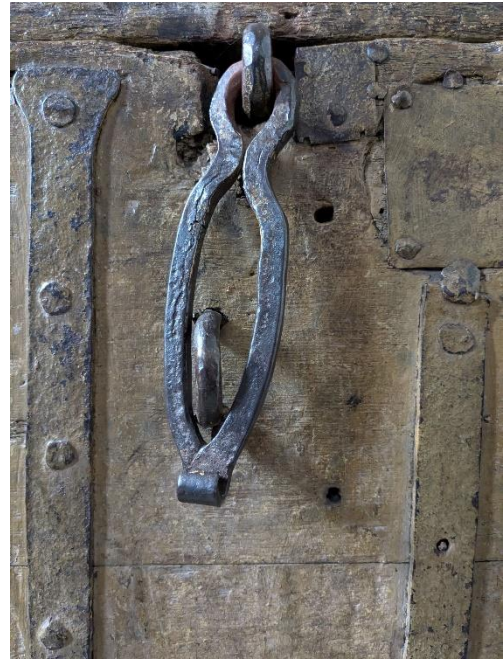
No longer used conveyor by Paul Bass





Better Use for Oil Drums by Jannet Wright

Parish Chest Fastening Forged by the Blacksmith
by Pat Morgan



Pylon by Andrew Roberts

Sea View by Gill Bass



Play Reading

We met on the 21st and enjoyed reading something a bit different in “Play It Again, Sam” by Woody Allen, which of course starred him on stage and screen.

The play is set in New York and the Woody Allen character is typically neurotic, agonising over his recent divorce and lack of success in finding a new love; in the process inappropriately falling in love with his best friend’s wife, played by Diane Keaton, which only adds to his angst. Along the way he is aided and abetted by the spirit of Humphrey Bogart.

Our readers did a fantastic job bringing life and humour to the parts. It was a thoroughly enjoyable morning.

We next meet on Tuesday, November 18th and in December we will instead be going out for a Christmas lunch.

Sue

History

Last month in September, we were pleased to hear a presentation from Elaine on the subject of Empress Wu. I must admit my complete ignorance of this powerful woman. A woman in a man’s world, but equally powerful and ruthless as any man of her time! Thank you, Elaine for introducing us to her world.

Our next meeting is on 24th October at 10.00 in the YCC, when Louis will talk about Iceland, both as it is today and its place in history.

Ann

Weekenders

Weekenders meet on the 4th Saturday of the month at the Lord Nelson, Winthorpe, 10.30 am

We have had another busy month with cinema, theatre, and musical evening visits. Several Weekenders manned the stand at Collingham Show, where we spoke to many interested people, hopefully encouraging new members.

Chris D

Art Appreciation

We meet at the Youth and Community Centre on Low Street on the fourth Tuesday of the month at 2pm.

At our meeting in September Chris Stoddard talked about Mosaics.



She showed us images from the basilica of Sant' Apollinare in Classe which was first built in the 540s. Classe is an ancient port near Ravenna, Italy founded by Emperor Augustus in 27BCE.

Chris also spoke about the Justinian (and Maximian) mosaic in the basilica of San Vitale, Ravenna. The mosaics in this 6th Century church are some of the most-studied works in Byzantine art.



Chris drew our attention to the religious iconography seen in the mosaics to enhance our understanding of their purpose and message to the people of the time. She also introduced us to the detailed work by many crafts people involved in producing this great and beautiful art form.

Jannet

Local History

In discussion for future local history projects and subjects that members can individually undertake, Lesley suggested we could study and write up the stories of some of the interesting old buildings in the Newark area, of which there was no shortage! Say 15 minutes on each. To get the ball rolling Pat suggested the Governors House in the town centre and Charlie thought Newark Castle was a good topic. The idea was adopted to pursue at later meetings.

Ivor then brought the meeting up to date on his interaction with Les Reid the skipper of the museum barge, the Leicester Trader moored opposite the castle. This boat was the last steel hull barge to be built and was specifically designed for work on the Trent. Ivor's interviews with Les were recorded and these had now been transcribed into his life story of several pages with two main headings: 'Why I stayed in Newark' and 'How I got into boats'. These documents will be archived and kept in the History Centre in the Newson family files. However, there was more to learn about life as a bargeman as Ivor had obtained a copy of 'A Day in the Life' written by an ex-barge skipper (now deceased) which was full of interesting anecdotes. Ivor proposed to read this for us at the next meeting.

Barry had brought to the meeting a copy of a small book on the history of Laxton village and its ancient open fields. The book featured a map which neatly summarised the extent and location of its strips. With Pat's help this could lead to two 15-minute talks. One about Barry's own family links to Laxton and the other on the operation of Laxton's open field system.

Since the last meeting David had continued with his transcription of 18th century court documents concerning Collingham. These were witness statements and as such had to state name, age and abode of those giving evidence. An example was one Susannah Chantry who was from somewhere called 'the Clotts'. Disbelieving that this could be a place in Nottinghamshire he investigated and found there was indeed such a place. It turned out to be the site of a well-known ancient medieval deserted village, the remnants of which are now called 'Thorpe in the Glebe' with only 22 inhabitants in the last census. Which just shows you never know what will turn up when researching local history!

David

Sunday Lunchers

For our October's u3a Sunday Lunch, we travelled to The Duke William, at Askham, where 16 members enjoyed a very generous meal:



Our November Sunday Lunch is not until 16th, to avoid clashing with Remembrance Sunday on the 9th.

Margaret

Literature

At our recent meeting the group were divided on the merits of Shaun Bythell's 'The Diary of a Bookseller', and we enjoyed a very jolly discussion of the merits for and against this book. While quirky comedy is the prevailing mode of this diary, it is driven by serious concerns telling us more than just funny stories, the book's important message is to support your local bookshop, literary events and book towns.

Bythell's book shop is in the town of Wigtown, Newton Stewart, in southwest Scotland, and we all agreed, if we were in the region, a visit could not be resisted.

Sheelah

Quiz Group

Another great quiz presented by Elaine which ended with just one point between two of the teams. The team that came 2nd would have had a different result if they had listened to the group leader (they would have lost by a larger amount).

We welcomed 2 new members who will, hopefully come again. We now have 24 people signed up & there is always room for more. It is amazing how much knowledge is stored in our brains & how we can pull it out when a question is asked. Mind you, even if we don't know the answer, we have fun leading the other teams astray. We will have to find a new venue for next month because the village hall will be filled with material for making Christmas wreaths on the next day. As soon as something is sorted, I will let all quizzers know the details.

The only question I can remember was

What USA state has a Union Jack on its state flag? *

Here is the change of venue for our meeting on 21/11/25.

We will be meeting at the Lord Nelson pub, Winthorpe at the usual time of 10am. There will be no charge for using their facilities but they want people to buy drinks. I hope to keep the same format as normal. All members are welcome to come along & see how easy our quiz can be & how we have some fun at the same time.

*Answer: Hawaii

John A

Nature Walks

For various reasons, the nature walks group met at the beginning of October at Whisby. The forecast rain and actual mist and drizzle made the café an appealing option. Having fought the car park machines to pay and won, the group set off in damp but mild conditions.

The most striking thing about the first stop – the screen just past the visitor centre, was the lack of both black headed gulls and wintering wildfowl. Very few flowers are in evidence by this time of year, so we concentrated on listening for mixed tit flocks. As these are fast moving and were high up in the hedge the sounds were easier to detect than the sight.

We visited the three hides on Grebe Lake, at one of which we were treated to close up views of a moorhen creeping along the water's edge just below us. By the third hide the café was calling so, as the rain became heavier, we decamped to the café like most of the rest of the visitors.



Our second walk was on a lovely afternoon, better than forecast, and the sun felt warm as we sat at the south viewing platform at Mons Pool . There are fewer birds than before, all the summer visitors gone, winter visitors not yet arrived at Mons Pool (although a lot were on the Collingham Pit) and the residents were quiet and unobtrusive - only Robins still singing. Paul told me he'd seen Goldfinch and Pied Wagtail so they're on the bird list.



Self-Heal



Aspen



Canadian Fleabane



Common Toad Flax

Also on the plant list are the four new species, plus Black Nightshade - I realised later that the nightshade we saw with white and yellow flowers was that species.

If you would appreciate slow walks getting to know the Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust site at Besthorpe through the seasons, contact Robert through our website.



Italian

The group meets in the home of the group leaders on the second and fourth Monday of each month.

At our Speaking and Listening session in October we played around with dice! These are Story Cubes that have pictures on the sides and we have used them before but we did need to remind ourselves of the vocabulary.

We worked in pairs, taking turns to roll the dice (i dadi) and combining two images, made up stories in Italian. This gave us the opportunity to use our vocabulary, grammar and creativity. We all enjoyed it /ci siamo divertiti tutti.

Back to grammar at the next meeting.

Jannet and Mary

From the Editor: I am sorry the newsletter is a little later this month, but I am sure you will find plenty here to interest you! Several groups have mentioned changes to their regular arrangements so please don't forget to check information about future meetings!

The deadline for November's newsletter is 6pm on Friday 21st November so that it can be circulated before following Wednesday's general meeting!

Pat M
