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NEWSLETTER – AUGUST 2025

From the Chair: our big August event, which many of you have been involved with planning, is about to hit the Memorial Hall. Even if you don't usually come to the monthly general meeting, do make time to visit and see what everyone is doing. There are stands with information, some demonstrations and time to talk to other group members, both about the groups and, as importantly, to chat. If you think any of your friends, neighbours or relatives would be interested, do encourage them to come along too.

There's even cake! The meeting runs 2.00 – 4.00 as usual and refreshments, including the aforementioned cake, will be served in the Mayfield Room from 2.45. Don't worry if you find stairs a problem as there will be some chairs at a table in the main hall and someone fit to run between rooms to deliver your request directly to you. These seats will be limited, so please only use them if really necessary, but equally, don't stress that you'll miss out on the all-important refreshments.

Thank you to all the Group Leaders who have replied to my emails and have sent pictures for the rolling presentation – do take some time to look at all the photos. As they'll keep appearing at intervals, you can dip in and out for a glimpse into various group activities.

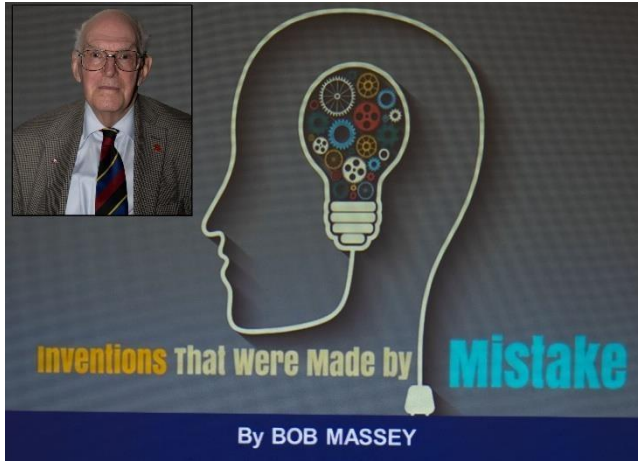
We look forward to seeing you, members, friends and relatives at the August Showcase, Chris

General Meetings

July - Inventions that were made by Mistake by Bob Massey.

Is a coincidence the same as by accident? Or is an accident a coincidence waiting to happen? I ask this because I found this talk by accident or was it a coincidence?

Discovery however is said to be an accident meeting a prepared mind. Therefore, I now think I have my answer.



So many of the everyday items we take for granted came about this way. The list is exhaustive. From matches, potato crisps, Coca Cola, chocolate chip biscuits, cornflakes, ice cream cones and tea bags to microwave ovens and medical discoveries like implantable pacemakers, antibiotics, penicillin and x-rays.

We learnt also about ink jet printers and post it notes to various toys, gunpowder, dynamite and Velcro. Not forgetting superglue, Teflon, safety glass, vulcanised rubber, plastics and cellophane. There's probably lots more we haven't covered but there's plenty to be going on with. dp

Speakers Corner

August 27th u3a Members Showcase

An opportunity for all our groups to show the rest of us what they get up to.

September 24th The History of Nottingham Pubs

A pub crawl without the crawl. Find out which is the oldest pub in Nottingham and it isn't the one that says it is. Discover folklore, the history and archaeology of the Holy Trinity – The Trip, The Salutation and The Bell.

Presented by Dr James Wright

October 22nd Oprah Winfrey Touched My Elbow

Ex show-biz journalist Graham has been interviewing celebrities for over thirty years. Oprah included.

Why was Sir David Attenborough making eyes at him? What made Jimmy Tarbuck such a pain – and why did Oprah touch his elbow?

Presented by Graham Keal

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

Coming Soon

The Curious Case of Olde Time Punishments

Going Underground: An Exploration of Nottinghamshire's Subterranean Spaces

Many thanks for all the suggestions and contributions regarding Speakers. 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 appreciated. 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>

Short course available (*new to Collingham u3a*)

Computing for Beginners

If anyone is interested-please contact either Lesley or Ivor.

When? How long? Time? venue? To be decided.

Get in touch!

Weekenders

August has been a busy time for Weekenders with a visit to Southwell Minster to listen to an Abba Tribute band and a visit to Tolethorpe to see an Agatha Christie play.

We have also been out for an early evening meal, visited the Materials Recycling Centre at Mansfield, and Bomber Command at Lincoln

The planned visit to Vine House Farm in Lincolnshire had to be abandoned as the hot weather had brought on the sunflowers much earlier. Altogether a good month.

Local History

This month's meeting was unusual as we had a guest speaker organised and introduced by Ivor who had arranged for Mr Les Reid to come and talk to us. The subject was about his past life in the discipline of engineering and history related to aspects of life as a barge owner on the river Trent.

As reported last month Les is the owner and skipper of the museum barge, the Leicester Trader, currently moored opposite the castle. He gave an insightful talk on the River Trent covering many changes both to the river itself and those who earned their living upon it. He covered the generations of people involved, the types of boats, the sort of cargoes carried and how these influenced boat designs. All this interspersed with anecdotes about the people involved.



Les was a mine of information and knowledge about life afloat. A particularly fascinating aspect was that barge skippers needed an encyclopaedic understanding of the effect of tides on the daily river water level as the moon waxed and waned over a month. The Trent is tidal and this knowledge is vital for the safe and successful passage of boats to avoid grounding with heavy loads, or the ability to move off after an overnight mooring.

Les described loading of boats from the commodity docks at Hull then switching cargoes to smaller boats as they made their gradually shallowing journey upriver to, say, Nottingham. All in all, an eye-opening talk.

David

Breakfast at Downtown

8 hungry Breakfasters had a truly superb meal at the garden cafe at Downtown, Grantham. No complaints from me about this one.

We chatted, laughed (a lot) and even learnt a bit, especially about some new, and heavily rumoured details about rules for older drivers. That was probably because members of this group are in the “So you think you can drive” group!

Here’s a few snippets from our conversations....

“Do you all know that you now have to have a pair of sun glasses in your car, in case of glare when you are facing other drivers head lights?”.

“It was mentioned that you really need to keep your wits about you when paying by phone for parking. One of our group accidentally paid for the car that was still in his garage at home!”

“If you’ve had any kind of ‘advisory note’ put onto your MOT certificate you need to get that sorted out asap or it may invalidate your insurance if you do have a mishap.”

“And just one more delight from a group member who told us all that he’d originally asked his girlfriend, (and now his beloved wife of many years) to go out with him as he knew she’d look stunning on the back of his scooter!” Those were the days! She still is stunning of course.

“Also—Thailand has a u3a - seen on a billboard by 2 intrepid travellers recently” I wonder how many other countries have u3as as well?

The only trouble with garden centre cafes is the temptation to spend, spend, spend—mostly on things that only seemed like a good idea at the time, like liquid seaweed and a handy cleaning device! Will we ever use either of these?

No meeting in August so next Meeting Monday 22nd September. Venue t.b.c.

This is a lovely, happy group who enjoy good food, splendid conversation and each other’s company. Why not join us?

Lesley

Family History

The first week of August was a busy time for Family History Group members. As well as our usual meeting at the YCC we had also arranged a visit to the Framework Knitters Museum at Ruddington near Nottingham,

At our usual Tuesday meeting we researched some missing pieces from members family stories. Ann had been looking for the marriage record of a man with the surname Weatherhogg, but whose Christian name she didn't know. So we came at the problem from a different angle. Knowing approximately when he died, we found a death record and then a probate record giving his name as James. With this additional information we were then able to find a marriage record.

We then looked at an ancestor of Ivor's. Born Robert Makepeace, He reinvented himself as Robert Makepeace Steele in 1901. Then in 1911 he was Robert Makepeace Carter and in 1921 Robert Makepeace Carter Steel! You can imagine the difficulty of tracing records for this elusive character.

In previous meetings we had heard about Pat's ancestors who were framework knitters. To learn more about the lives of people thus employed we visited an excellent museum. It is housed in 'Parkers Yard', a group of buildings including a workers' cottage, managers cottage and workshops housing a dozen knitting frames.



Framework Knitters MUSEUM
400 YEARS OF CRAFT & GRAFT

Award Winning Museum

Step back 180 years to a Framework Knitter's Yard to experience the home, work, family & faith of a group of 1892 knitters. In the days when framework knitting was one of Nottinghamshire's chief industries.

Framework Knitting transformed Ruddington from an agricultural to industrial community, with half the village's male population working as knitters in 1776. By 1844 there were 330 frames in the village and, in its heyday, 100 people would have been employed in this facility. In 1971 the site was acquired by Ruddington Framework Knitters Shops Preservation Trust with the aim of preserving both the buildings and the craft.

Volunteers were on hand to tell us about the history of this cottage industry and to demonstrate how these machines transformed stocking making in the 19th century.

Everyone agreed that this was a fascinating insight into ancestors' lives.

Charlie

Threads



Come and see a selection of our handcraft work at the August Showcase meeting.

Threads craft group first met in October last year and has continued at Beyond Coffee at 2 pm on the first Thursday in the month. A variety of projects have been started/ retrieved from the “WIP drawer!” and completed with help from each other where necessary. We all knit but some members also sew, crochet and bead as the mood takes us!

Barbara

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!

For your diary the dates going forward are as follows:

Thursday August 28th from 10:00 to 11:00 am

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

Thursday September 18th from 10:00 to 11:00 am – out of sequence due to availability of the hall

October 2025 9th and 23rd for 1 hour from 10:00 to 11:00 am

November 2025 13th and 27th for 1 hour from 10:00 to 11:00 am

December 2025 11th for 1 hour from 10:00 to 11:00 am

Peter

Strollers

This month 13 Strollers took a 2-mile circular route around Farndon. The weather on the day was 30 degrees, so we decided to meet up early to be finished before it got too hot.



We started at the Boathouse pub Farndon from where some of us took the anti-clockwise route through the woods then retraced their steps for a linear shorter walk and so staying in the shade. The rest of us took the clockwise route following the river to Staythorpe Power Station, then we turned inland onto a gravel path, then turned again onto the public footpath and enjoyed the cool of the shady woods, finally retracing our steps back along the river to the pub for lunch and a chat.



Strollers meet the second Wednesday of every month for a leisurely paced walk of around 2 miles with no stiles and a cafe or pub at the end.

Margaret

Quiz Group

Paul set us a challenging quiz in August that had most of us racking our brains but the quiz master had the final word when we tried to bargain for the points! Nelson simply wouldn't do as the answer...it had to be Horatio Nelson!

Three of the quiz questions:

- i. What was the last word spoken by Citizen Kane in the film?
- ii. Who wrote the books on which the Forsyte Saga TV series was based?
- iii. Which British territory gained independence in 1948 and what is it called now?

His Numbers and Letters puzzle was great entertainment, too, but even some of the obvious answers had us scratching our heads to begin with!

Try these:

- a. 7 D of the W
- b. 90 D in a RA
- c. 13 L in a BD

Peter has agreed to be quiz master for our next meeting on Friday 19th September. Why not come along to Girton Village Hall at 10 o'clock to exercise your little grey cells and join in the fun?

In the meantime, do have a go at some of the quizzes and puzzles on our table at the August Showcase event on Wednesday. No prizes, just the satisfaction of knowing that you can beat our Quiz Masters at their own games!

Pat pp John

Sunday Lunchers

For our August's Sunday Lunch, a smaller number of members were able to attend, but The Generous Briton, at Brant Broughton, was happy to accommodate 11 of us with their usual superb food and friendliness.

My photograph, on the day, failed, but here is the outside view:



Margaret

Drawing She didn't move a muscle!

At our Drawing session Elaine not only lent us some items of knitting, as well as lots of balls of wool-incredibly difficult to draw(!), she also posed for us for at least 45 minutes -without moving a muscle. What a star! please can you come again.



We had our usual chatty, sociable artists around 2 tables in my sitting room. We exchanged ideas, and simply enjoyed each other's company, as well as very silently, from time to time, concentrating on our art work. And believe me, it really can be very hard work!



Gill Bass was unable to join us to take photos so Sue Brauer stepped up and took them-we hope you like them all.

At the next session of the u3a general meeting we hope to be showcasing lots of our work and also drawing in situ - come along and have a chat with us.

Lesley

Bowls

We are now coming to the end of a great season of outdoor Green Bowls at Collingham with two more sessions, Monday 18th 2-4 and finally a friendly match against Collingham on September 1st 2-4

I would like to say a huge thank you to Nina and all at Collingham who have made us so welcome this summer and look forward to next year.

We will then be going indoors at Grantham Indoor Bowls Centre, dates and times to come soon, but hopefully will be the first and third Mondays of the Month 12 till 2pm

Clive

Thursday Talking Shop

At the July meeting our topic was 'Altruism'. After agreeing the definition, we talked about how such behaviour may have influenced evolutionary, political and philosophical issues and beliefs. For example: acts of altruism have been found to activate reward centres in the brain; so benefiting both the giver and receiver. We also discussed how altruism may have deep roots because it could have promoted the survival of our species. On the other hand, Nietzsche criticized selflessness and altruistic deeds as often being a display of weakness and decay. The debate moved on to implications for politics, mental health and the role of religion as well as instances of altruism in the animal kingdom.

There will be no meeting in August but on September 25th we will tackle a new question: 'What Do We Mean by Progress?'.
Anita

Sing-Along Group

With reference to the Collingham and Sing-a-long meetings.

I would now like to take this opportunity, to focus on the type of songs we do. These songs are the ones most enjoyed by every single group member.

We don't just sing these; they are mixed amongst all the other songs we do!
Louis

You are my sunshine.

Signing in the rain.

Island in the sun.

When I'm sixty-four.

Scoop John B

Sweet Caroline.

Nature Walks

Our morning walk on Friday 1st August was to the Besthorpe Nature Reserve where we spent time in the hides overlooking the Mons Pool. The highlights were a glimpse of a kingfisher, our first sand martins and green sandpipers, as well as 2 spoonbills, 15 little and 2 great egrets. There were good numbers of lapwing and plenty of moulting wildfowl, making identification tricky, but with perseverance, we got there in the end!



We added several plants to our lists, noting that there are increasing numbers of daisy family plants as the year goes on.



We noticed lots of ripe fruits and berries in the hedgerows and added several waterside plants to our species lists.

We found several broken mussel shells along the footpath between the hides but it was not until we spotted a crow feeding at the water's edge that we realised that the hard ground had been used to help the birds to break open the tough shells to feed on the mollusc inside.



Some of us visited Langford Lowfields for our Tuesday afternoon walk on another overcast day. Geese far outnumbered other species of waterfowl, (here swimming in procession), but the highlight was spotting a bittern flying down into the reed bed.

Literature Group

Our chosen book for this month was 'Memory of Departure' by Abdulrazak Gurnah, which we all agreed could not be recommended as a good read; only three of us persisted to the last page.

However, our get together in The Lord Nelson at Winthorpe was very enjoyable, and we are looking forward to our next novel 'Violeta' by Isabel Allende.

Sheelah

Play Reading

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times". So says Charles Dickens at the start of "A Tale of Two Cities," which is set in 1775 between London and Paris at the time of the French Revolution. And we did have a good time reading Act 1 of Terence Rattigan and John Gielgud's stage adaptation of the novel.

Dicken's novel was published in 1859 and the play was ready for the stage in 1935, but for various reasons only first performed in London in 2013, the centenary of Rattigan's birth.

As is typical with a Dickens story, there are plenty of good characters and therefore parts to go round. The story concentrates on these individual characters and how the confusion and brutality of the times affects them.

We will be reading the concluding act next time: Tuesday, September 16th, 10-12 in the YCC.

Sue

Quiz Group - answers

- i. Rosebud
- ii. John Galsworthy
- iii. Ceylon now Sri Lanka

Numbers and Letters solutions:

- a. 7 Days of the Week
 - b. 90 Degrees in a Right Angle
 - c. 13 Loaves in a Baker's Dozen
-

Art Appreciation

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

In July the Art Appreciation Group turned its collective mind to 'Food.'

Group members identified paintings where food was a significant feature. We started the session with a video clip from 2020 in which Philip Mould, art historian and dealer, introduced 'Makings of a Souffle' (1953) by David Hill. This painting was shown in the series 'Art in Isolation'.

Then various members of the Group spoke about the paintings they had selected in advance. These images were shown on the screen. Some were well known while others were more unusual. Here are some examples:

Supper at Emmaus 1601 Caravaggio



The Lustre Bowl with Green Peas 1911 William Nicholson

The Art Appreciation group is not meeting in August. Our next session will be on 23rd September when we will learn about Mosaics. Jannet

Italian

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

In our most recent grammar session, we revised the Imperfect tense or Passato Prossimo in Italian.

We used some adverbs of time to speak about the past. For example: Sometimes, when I was a child, we used to go for a walk on the beach.

A volte (sometimes), quando ero una bambina, andavamo (we used to go) a fare una passeggiata sulla spiaggia.

We tested our vocabulary skills further at the end of the session by beginning work on a new crossword book. We all enjoyed this very much.

Jannet and Mary

So, You Think You Can Drive?

This group continues to support older drivers in maintaining confidence, safety and independence behind the wheel. The format allowed for tailored advice, open discussion and hands on learning.

The key topics covered this time were;

Vision and Reaction Time:

Eye Health and DVLA Standards

Tips for managing slower reaction times safely

Modern Road Rules Refresher:

Updates on UK Highway Code

Roundabout etiquette

Common misconceptions and myth busting quiz

Confidence Building:

Role play scenarios - dealing with tailgaters, navigating busy junctions

Group discussion on driving anxiety and strategies to stay calm

Attendees have received an updated Highway Code official guide and an NHS Mature Drivers leaflet.

Next meeting Wednesday 15th October 4pm – 6pm at Lesley's

Garden Group



The last two meetings were spent planning and putting together our display for the groups showcase event next Wednesday. It's been a departure from the norm for us which has, I think, proved to be very interesting and satisfying. The initial ideas sparked off others and we had to remind ourselves that we only had one table! As group leader it's given me something to consider for how we might use some of the ideas in future meetings.

We look forward to welcoming you to our display and, who knows, some of you might like to give the Gardening Group a try.

Jan

Photography

Our theme this month is "Flora and Fauna". I hope you will enjoy the images. Next month the theme will be "Food". I am expecting there will be some food for thought on show.

Paul



Bumble Bee on Veronica by Jenny Macpherson



Cheeky Squirrel by Jenny Macpherson



Do You Mind by Paul Bass

Red Tipped Rose by Paul Bass





Flora and Fauna by Andrew Roberts

Snakes in the Grass by Andrew Roberts



Flowers in the Park by John Geeson

Peacock Butterfly by John Geeson





Hello! By Jannet Wright



Indoor Flora by Jannet Wright



Hanging in There by Gill Bass

Standing Tall by Gill Bass





The Leaves Have It by Colin Smith



The Wasps want the Jam by Colin Smith

Out and About

August has been a busy month for Out and About group members. 5 of the Out and About group took a guided tour of Stamford on a lovely sunny day. The tour group consisted of us, two women from France and another from South Carolina, so was very multinational – a suitable group to visit a town that has been both vibrant multicultural hub and sleepy backwater.



We learnt about the history of Saxon Stamford, that the historic centre on the north bank of the river follows the street pattern of the original Danish settlement, that Stamford was a rotten borough and one of the driving forces for the act of parliament that brought in conservation areas – because a beautiful medieval building was knocked down to be replaced by a Tesco supermarket!

Stamford has the second oldest theatre in the country outside of London and this is once more a theatre and community arts centre.

Many of the buildings were built by men to advertise their wealth: this was usually an imposing building but sometimes more humble buildings served the same purpose, such as the one with blue window surrounds: these would normally be



stone but here they are wooden as the first owner was a carpenter. The guide was knowledgeable and interesting and got us back to a suitable place for lunch at the time he said we'd finish. What could be better?



The guide – he obviously took sartorial inspiration from Michael Portillo!

The trip to the races took place on a rather less lovely day! 10 of us went to Ladies' Day at Southwell and spent an enjoyable day being amazed at the ability of so many women to stay on their feet in vertiginous heels without also succumbing to frost bite as there was neither a wrap nor a jacket to be seen, though at least one young woman was seen wrapped in her partner's jacket. Yellow was by far the most worn colour.

We were lucky to get tables and chairs near the parade ring and in front of a big screen, so we did see some horse flesh, though mostly watched the races themselves on the screen. This does not give a good indication of how huge the track is. They thunder



around at incredible speed, after which the horses need to be doused with water to cool them down. We were in no danger of needing that!



For details of the visit to Bomber Command see our page on the website.

Chris

From The Editor: I notice that several group leaders refer to the planning they have been doing to create informative displays for our Showcase event on Wednesday. I am a member of several groups but it will be interesting to see how other groups spend their time! Rosie and Denise are making a special effort to provide tea and a variety of cakes for the refreshments, so do come along and bring your friends!

I am planning to circulate the next newsletter on Monday 22nd September so I would be grateful if groups leaders could send me their contributions before 6p.m. on Friday 19th September, or at the very latest on Monday morning.

Pat M
