

# Countesthorpe U3A Newsletter

Aug-Sept 2015

Issue 2015/4

## CHAIRPERSON'S LETTER

(TEL: 247 8043)



Hello Everyone!

As I write, I have just heard the news that we have lost two major figures. The first, Cilla Black, who sadly died at her home in Spain. Much has been said about her common touch and humanity, but I suspect that there are a large number of people of my age who remember and associate her with the social revolution that took place in the 1960s as we shook off the dowdiness of the post-war era. Unlike many in the public eye, Cilla built and cherished the relationship she had with her public, never took it for granted.

For me personally, it was also a salutary reminder - we were born in the same year!

The other icon we have lost is Les Munro. Les Munro - who was he? Les Munro was a New Zealander and the last surviving pilot of the Dam Busters. Les was 96 when he died. I grew up learning of the exploits of that daring raid and, like many people, have watched countless films and TV programmes about the events leading up to and during that iconic action. By all accounts a quiet and unassuming man, he lived in his native land as an ordinary man who was involved in extraordinary events, yet living an ordinary life.

Two people, then, who had a great influence on our lives in Britain and that are remembered for very different reasons but both thought of with a considerable degree of affection and regard.

Now we should get on and enjoy the summer with U3A, there's so much more to do . . .

From

Graham Surman  
Chairperson

Countesthorpe



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

## SOME KEY DIARY DATES: Aug-Sept 2015

Date	Group	Activity	Venue/time
16 Aug	Solo Lunch	The Dovecote, Narboro' Rd	Noon for 12.30 pm
17 Aug	Creative Writing	Open Doors	2 - 4 pm Brook Court
18 Aug	SWANS	Alison's Acre/Bouskell Park	10.30 am, Oakfield Park, Hospital Lane, Blaby
19 Aug	Literature	Individual summer reading	2 – 3.30 pm Brook Court
25 June	Cribbage		2.30 pm, 25 Westview Av
21 Aug	CHEWS Main meeting + weigh-in		9.15 am Marlene's home
24 Aug	Country Dancing		2 – 3.30 pm Village Hall
27 Aug	Walking (CARE)	5 miles from the Fox, Hallaton + optional pub lunch	9.15 am from Village Hall
28 Aug	Discussion	Hot News	10.00 am at Judith's home (10 Archery Close)
31 Aug	Jazz Appreciation		7.30 pm, 17 Linden Avenue
1 Sept	SWANS	Foston Church to Peatling	10.30 am at Foston Church
2 Sept	Scrabble	Also Upwords and Rummikub	2 – 4.30 pm, Brook Court
2 Sept	Singing for Fun <i>(resuming after summer break)</i>		7 – 8.30 pm Methodist Ch
8 Sept	Monthly Meeting	The History of Numbers <i>by David Siddons</i>	Doors open 1.30 pm Speaker at 2.00/2.15 pm
13 Sept	Solo Lunch	Venue TBA	Noon for 12.30 pm
14 Sept	Science and Technology		12.30 pm Axe & Square
14 Sept	Country Dancing		2.00 – 3.30 pm Village Hall
15 Sept	SWANS	Mkt Harboro Millennium walk	10.30 am Sainsbury's main entrance
16 Sept	Literature	Any biography/autobiography	2 – 4 pm Brook Court
21 Sept	Creative Writing	Theme TBA	2 - 4 pm Brook Court
25 Sept	Discussion	Horoscopes	10.00 am at June's home (30 Marston Crescent)
28 Sept	Country Dancing		2.00 – 3.30 pm Village Hall

## HISTORY GROUP VISITS LUTTERWORTH AND COTESBACH

On Monday, 3rd August a band of History Group members had a fairly local day out. In the morning our own Sybil Gamble (a retired Blue Badge guider) talked us round historical Lutterworth from St Mary's Church of 14th century Wycliffe fame to Sir Frank Whittle's 20th century jet power. And we now know where the cellars are for felons to be incarcerated! *(We wish Sybil, who shortly will be leaving Countesthorpe to be nearer her family, a happy second retirement. We will miss her very much.)*

The group then divided for a lunch break, some staying in Lutterworth, others going to Cotesbach to the Stables Cafe situated in a charming, slowly-developing *(or that might be slowly crumbling – depending on your perspective!)* old courtyard. The food there was excellent, though. The shop had organically grown produce for sale, from the walled garden. A blacksmith could also be seen at work.

In the afternoon we all joined again in Cotesbach at the lottery-funded Educational Trust and a knowledgeable lady, Sophy, showed us her large family home (Cotesbach Hall dating from 1703), garden, walled garden and the outbuildings, including a refurbished schoolhouse, which she is trying, together with the Educational Trust, to maintain and develop. It is a gargantuan task, but with the incredibly unusual number of very old family sermons and family records, it could become a valuable insight into local history. Her archives, of which she spoke enthusiastically, are gradually coming on line and items are maintained in a state-of-the-art environmentally-controlled location, and are being digitally captured. Cotesbach is well worth a visit, physically or electronically.

The morning and the afternoon proved that we have real history to see, right on our doorsteps.

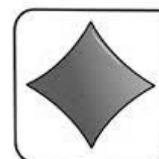
*(Thanks must go to Sybil and Ruth for organising a fascinating day, introducing us to some hidden gems that we have doubtless overlooked thus far – June)*

**More information at [www.cotesbachschoolhouse.org.uk](http://www.cotesbachschoolhouse.org.uk)**

## BRIDGE

We meet every Monday from 2.00 pm to 4.30 pm in the Methodist Church Room, Wigston Street. We are a very friendly group and, if you play Basic ACOL, you will fit right in. We would welcome new members to swell our ranks!

Your £1.50 will include tea and biscuits.



*For more details, please contact Alan Rooks on 277 2484*

## COUNTRY DANCING



Our Folk Dancing Group continues on the second and fourth Monday afternoons (except Bank Holidays) in Countesthorpe Village Hall from 2 until 3.30 pm with a wide variety of folk dance styles and plenty of laughter – and, we should say, much improved dancing over the years! Everyone welcome - we are always looking for more dancers so do come and give us a try.

Upcoming dates are 24 August, then 14 and 28

September and we recommend that you come in comfortable shoes, as do our regular dancers.

*Details from Patsy Paterson on 277 6259*

## TRAVEL GROUP

Our **Planning and Social Evening** will be held on Tuesday, 27 October from 7.30 pm in the Cornerstone Centre, Countesthorpe. All your ideas for days out and holidays will be most welcome – and your offers of help, too!

It would be helpful if you could indicate your anticipated attendance at the Travel Desk, or call Jill Clayton on 277 7154.



## SINGING FOR FUN

Our sessions will recommence after the summer break on Wednesday evening, 2nd September 7.00 – 8.30 pm at the Methodist Church in Countesthorpe.

We are looking for new members, so why not come along and join us? We not only aim to learn, but to enjoy ourselves at the same time. No need to read music. Our pianist, David, also brings along his guitar and this adds to the variety.

We have found that numbers tend to drop away in the winter months, and we would be glad of any thoughts or ideas you may have to reschedule our meeting.

Why not come along and try it on Wednesday, 2 September!

*Call Pat McMahon on 223 4660*

## HISTORY GROUP

**Mon, 28 Sept – Thurs, 1 Oct:** Three night break in **Salisbury** (DBB at AA 4\* hotel). Includes visits to Stonehenge, Old Sarum, Basildon Park, Mottisfont Abbey and Hughenden Manor, plus time to explore Cathedral and a city walk. FULL

**Thurs, 15 Oct:** Planning Meeting, 9.45 am – 11.00 am Methodist Room. Please bring your ideas (and offers of help if possible) for next year's programme!

**Peter Liddle's talks** on The Romans in Leicestershire will recommence at the Methodist Chapel, Wigston Street. 10 am – 12.15 pm. £3 on the door, to include refreshments. No booking required – just turn up on the day.

**a) Thurs, 12 Nov:** Roman Countryside

**b) Thurs, 10 Dec:** Roman Religion and Burial

**c) Thurs, 14 Jan:** The End of Roman Leicestershire and Rutland

*For details see the **History Table**, the website, or contact June on [jhawkins45@talktalk.net](mailto:jhawkins45@talktalk.net) or telephone 0116 277 6330*

## FREE LEGAL ADVICE FOR U3A MEMBERS

Advice available 24 hours a day, on any legal issues (not just U3A-related ones). Call FirstAssist on 01455 251500 and quote: "The Third Age Trust. Number 70494"

## CHRISTMAS LUNCH

**Friday, 27 November at Tastes Restaurant, Leicester College**

Please reserve the date in your diary! As soon as the College returns from the summer break and has identified the menu options, the usual booking forms will be made available in the small lounge and on the website. Limited to 100 places and, as in previous years, there will be a choice of making your own way or travelling by coach. Costs will include coach (where selected), three course meal with coffee/tea, all tips, plus a prize draw entry.

**If you have changed your address, or phone number,** please let Sue Wyllie (our Treasurer) know (284 9959) so that we have your current details on file in case we need to contact you.

**THIS IS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT FOR TRIPS/HOLIDAYS!**

*If you have an email address, that would be helpful, too, please!*

## **WE'LL GET BY WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM OUR FRIENDS!**

As you are well aware, the U3A is run BY its members FOR its members. But how many of you actually stop to think about all that goes on behind the scenes to make our U3A tick over?

At monthly meetings, for instance, there is a huge amount of work to be done in order to ensure that speakers are arranged, prepared for, then welcomed and thanked. All the chairs have to be set out and then put away again, as no help is available from Village Hall staff. Then there is the rearranging of furniture in the small lounge to set out the various stations where you book up for trips or new groups, etc. Not to mention putting out the printed What's On and Newsletters on each chair – which have all been prepared beforehand, of course. Then there is the slide show, the display board and all the leaflets. What about the post-speaker cuppa? This has to be shopped for, prepared and cleared away by a small band of members. Then there is the audio-visual equipment to organise to ensure that the speaker is heard, and slides are shown.

In addition, we try to ensure that any new members are made to feel welcome, and need existing members to offer to 'show them the ropes' and make sure that they enjoy their initial U3A experience.

These things don't just happen – and we desperately need some more members to offer to help out with just a small element of the monthly meeting tasks.

Without contributions, however, small, from its members, there will be NO U3A – to the detriment of very many people. Please don't let this happen – just try putting a little in, and you will be warmly welcomed! It is not reasonable to leave everything to the same band of (so far) willing volunteers – all of us are getting older and we sincerely hope that some of the younger members will feel able to offer to help out a little. This need not be a regular commitment – every little helps!

If you feel that you could help with setting out chairs, distributing papers, refreshments, welcoming new members, or any other jobs, then PLEASE do speak to any member of the committee, or add your name to the list in the small lounge, or phone our Chairman, Graham, on 0116 247 8043 for a chat about how YOU can get involved. Thank you!

## **POSSIBLE NEW GROUP:**

### **ARE YOU INTERESTED IN GARDENS?**

If so, then this could be the very group for you! It is intended to be a forum for discussing anything and everything to do with gardens, with the occasional speaker, DVD or visit. No actual gardening will be required – just an interest in all things ‘garden’!

The plan is to hold a meeting with interested people, initially to make plans to establish this new group.

If you are interested to know more, then add your name and contact details to the list in the small lounge, or telephone Ruth on 277 1533.

## **BIRDWATCHING**

During the summer, our indoor meetings on the first Thursday of the month have been replaced with outdoor visits to various bird reserves. We use car-sharing and usually leave the Village Hall at 9.30 am.

On 18 June, the group enjoyed a trip to Lyndon Osprey reserve at Rutland Water where they were able to observe the newly-returned ospreys in the open. Also, a remote camera had been installed in their nest, enabling live and close-up viewing (from the Lyndon Centre building) of the parents returning with fish and the chicks being fed.

The visit to Brandon Marsh on 31 July was attended by 12 members, two of whom were new to the group. The day was warm and sunny and we had a good morning's spotting.

Some of us were fortunate enough to see a kingfisher flash by, and most of us noticed a hobby sitting for a long time on a dead tree. We also saw several herons, both on the ground and in flight, plus cormorants and many other water birds.



The next reserve visit date is 11 September – with the venue to be agreed in due course. There will be no reserve visits in August or October. Indoor activities resume on 5 November with a talk by Sue Wyllie on the “Birds of Botswana” in the small lounge at the Village Hall, 7.30 – 8.30 pm. Our ‘Group Social’ will be on 3 December, 7.30 – 9.00 pm in the small lounge.

From then on, our regular group meetings will be held on the first Thursday of the month from 7.30 pm in the small lounge at the Village Hall. For details, see What’s On, or our U3A website, or call Tony Claricoates on 277 5251.

# THEATRE PROGRAMME



Wed 28 Oct	Funny Money	£20	Market Harboro'	Leys at 6.40 pm VH at 6.45 pm Square at 6.50 pm	8 Sept
Wed 4 Nov	The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time	£28	Milton Keynes	VH at 12.30 pm, Square 12.35 pm	14 Apr
Mon 7 Dec	Oliver!	£30	Curve	VH at 6.20 pm, Square 6.25 pm	8 Sept
Tues 26 Jan	The Royal Baccarat Scandal	£20	Market Harboro'	Leys at 6.40 pm VH at 6.45 pm Square at 6.50 pm	8 Dec
Tues 16 Feb	Chess	£18	Concordia, Hinckley	Leys at 6.25 pm VH at 6.30 pm Square at 6.35pm	13 Oct
Wed 13 Apr	Betrayal	£20	Market Harboro'	Leys at 6.40 pm VH at 6.45 pm Square at 6.50 pm	8 Mar

**THE CURIOUS INCIDENT OF THE DOG IN THE NIGHT TIME** – The National Theatre's touring production of Mark Haddon's award-winning novel, adapted by Simon Stephens, which won 7 Olivier Awards including Best Play in 2013.

**FUNNY MONEY** – a comedy by Ray Cooney. Henry Perkins is a mild-mannered chap, who picks up the wrong briefcase, full of used £50 notes which he assumes is illicit cash. He decides to keep it – now he and his wife can go anywhere (until the doorbell rings as they are about to depart)!

**OLIVER!** Our Christmas musical event at Curve. Good stalls seats, with coach. Join us and enjoy this well-known and very popular production, based on Charles Dickens' novel, Oliver Twist.

**THE ROYAL BACCARAT SCANDAL** - based on the book of the same name, tell the story of the 1890 Victorian scandal in which Sir William Gordon Cumming (baronet and personal friend of the Prince of Wales) was accused by his mistress's husband of cheating at baccarat. When the news became public knowledge, Sir William felt obliged to sue for scandal . . .

**CHESS – THE MUSICAL.** By Tim Rice and the 'boys' from ABBA

**BETRAYAL** by Harold Pinter explores the effects of an adulterous affair on the spouses, their illicit lovers, their family and friends. Reputedly, the play is based on an actual love affair between the playwright and a BBC arts reporter

*June Hawkins – tel: 277 6330 or email: [jhawkins45@talktalk.net](mailto:jhawkins45@talktalk.net)*

**SELECT YOUR CHOICE OF PICK-UP POINT WHEN BOOKING  
AND THEN HELP US BY STICKING TO IT! THANKS!**