

MESSAGE FROM CHRIS NIVEN, CHAIR OF THE NOTTS NETWORK

Dear all,

I am very excited to announce that our 2024 conference is now well on the way to the launch. We have a venue, a keynote speaker, workshop facilitators and refreshments arranged.

The workshops include: Line Dancing, Chair Yoga, Safe Driving, Creative Writing, Scamming and Fraud and a Guided Walk around the Arboretum. You will be able to choose two workshops, one in the morning and one in the afternoon.

We want to showcase some of the groups that are flourishing in the Network. We are also in the process of compiling a list of all the groups that are available in our area.

Our poster is displayed overleaf and gives more details. The box office is officially open and you are able to purchase tickets. The event is open to all u3a members, and we hope that as many of you as possible will be able to join us on the day.

I would ask that u3a committee members please forward Newsbites to all your members. This will give everyone a flavour of what is happening in the Nottinghamshire Network and will especially highlight major events such as our conference.

Many thanks

Chris Niven



Nottinghamshire Network Conference Saturday 21st September

Open to all Nottinghamshire u3a members
To be held at the Girls High School, Squires Performing Art Centre
9:30am – 3:30pm,
9:30am – 10:00am refreshments and registration

Keynote Speaker

Chris French, Professor Emeritus of Psychology at Goldsmiths College, University of London specialising in the psychology of paranormal beliefs and anomalous experiences.
The talk will be entitled:

The Science of Weird Sh**

Why our Minds Conjure the Paranormal

Admission £30

plus booking fee

Includes refreshments during the day and buffet lunch supplied by Delilah's
Use link below to register and choose workshops

<https://www.trybooking.com/uk/DOTV>

Break Out Workshops

- Guided walk around the Arboretum
- Line Dancing
- Chair Yoga
- Safe Driving
- Creative writing
- Scamming and Fraud

There will be break out workshops in the morning and afternoon enabling members to attend two groups. More detailed descriptions of each workshop will be available when you register where we ask you to choose three options.

To book your place please copy and paste this link into your url/address bar:

<https://www.trybooking.com/uk/DOTV>

u3a learn,
laugh,
live



IS SUMMER YCUMEN IN? LHUDE SING CUCU!

Despite record temperatures in May and record rainfall in June, it sure is a bumper season for anniversaries, Open Days, Festivals and other frolics. Read more and see the pics in members' websites and newsletters.

Standout events:

★ **March**

West Wolds' 25th

★ **April**

Thrapston Open Day

★ **May**

Sleaford Open Day

★ **June**

Mansfield 25th

Lincoln Open Day

Warsop Open Day

Still to come:

★ **July**

National Festival, York University

★ **September**

Nottinghamshire Network Conference

Chesterfield 30th

LEARN, LAUGH, LIVE!

John

NEWS FROM THE THIRD AGE TRUST

FIT FOR THE FUTURE – WHAT'S THE INSIDE STORY?

The results of the FFTF consultation phase are now in. Following feedback from the many presentations held throughout the movement and the comments received, the vast majority of u3as think that the concept of changing the Trust's governance arrangements is a good thing.

Of course, the devil is often in the detail, and in the last few weeks the scribes have been beavering away and numerous papers are now available on the website to clarify and add more detail and information – much of this extra information is a direct response to questions and comments raised by u3as. As time goes on there will be further additions, so keep your eye on the Fit For The Future webpage on the national website. The aim has always been to ensure that if and when u3as are asked to vote at the October AGM, they have all the information at their fingertips to help them make a decision.

The next steps are crucial. At the Board meeting on 19 June, the Board will make a decision about presenting a resolution to the AGM on 16 October. They will look at the shape of a resolution, the need for changes to the Articles of Association (the governing document of the u3a movement), the need for standing orders that might govern the way in which a future u3a Council might operate, and the wording of any Board statement that might guide u3as in making their decision.

If the Board decides to go ahead, then the resolution and supporting documents will be issued to u3as at the beginning of July and u3as will have around three months to decide how to vote.

As the resolution is likely to involve a change to the Articles of Association, it will need a positive vote from 75% of those u3as voting at the AGM. So it's important that if u3as want this change to happen, they must firstly register to vote and second, exercise their right to vote at the AGM. Remember, it's only u3as that vote, not individual members, and u3as not able or wishing to vote at the time can provide a proxy vote either to the Trust's Company Secretary or to another u3a. This just means that the alternative will vote on their behalf.

So, will they, won't they? It's a bit of a cliff-hanger, but all will be revealed end June/beginning of July.

Allan Walmsley
Vice Chair
The Third Age Trust

Read more on the Third Age Trust website in the "Members Area" under "Fit For The Future".

SOUTHWELL u3a

GROUP LEADER ROGER BENNETT HONOURED BY NOTTINGHAM'S ROYAL CENTRE

Southwell u3a's former Chairman, Roger Bennett, and his wife, Chris, have been honoured by Nottingham's Royal Centre in recognition of their outstanding achievements over the past ten years.

Roger and Chris have been attending concerts at the venue since 1994. Some ten seasons ago, in 2013, the management of the Royal Centre was seeking volunteers to operate coach schemes. At the same time, Roger recognised a need for Southwell u3a members who wanted to attend concerts, but didn't like driving at night into Nottingham. Roger formed an interest group to solve this issue, and the rest is history!

As those on coach trips receive a healthy ticket discount, for the normal cost of a seat, members can effectively benefit from free travel to and from Southwell too. As well as providing a great deal of pleasure for many, Roger's work has made a major contribution to the Royal Centre's revenue. In fact, over £200,000 worth of seat sales have been generated from just two coach schemes, of which Roger's is one.

The Royal Centre recently provided Roger and Chris with named plaques for their regular seats, together with certificates noting their achievement.



BINGHAM u3a

ANTIQUES QUIZ 30 APRIL 2024

After an introductory welcome from Chair Veronica Perry, James Lewis ('Bargain Hunt' and Bamfords Auctioneers) hosted a fascinating and highly informative Antiques Quiz in Bingham on 30 April. In a packed Methodist Church Hall those present - in tables of up to 10 - were presented one by one with a variety of objects (10 in all), which they had to quickly attempt to identify, date, decide on country of origin, and the value.

James then gave detailed answers, with some interesting facts and amusing anecdotes about each object, followed by an auction for each item, with their actual



values ranging between £10 and £2000. The objects included a snuff grinder once used by Oliver Cromwell, a wooden railway engine used as a tea caddy, a Roman gladiator's metal thumb protector, and a currency piece from the 1645 siege of Newark. A prize was given to the table closest to James's answers.

The event was covered by local radio station, 103FM The Eye.

A highly entertaining and enjoyable evening was had by all (as can be seen from the photographs).



The newly formed Beer and Cider Group had an excellent afternoon/evening at the Newark beer and cider festival on Friday 24 May. The festival took place in the Castle grounds - an iconic venue - and over 120 different beers and ciders were on offer, enough choice for everyone! There was also some great food and music to accompany the drinks - no doubt we will be back next year.



John Perry
Publicity Officer

SCIENCE GROUP

On Friday April 19th members of the Science Group together with a few colleagues from the National Trust and History Groups made an all day visit to Oxford. Oxford is an interesting city with impressive buildings, the Oxford Colleges and several museums.

The main aim was to make group visits to the Natural History and Pitt Rivers museums which were pre-booked for the afternoon. On arrival outside the Ashmolean Museum, following a photo opportunity the group dispersed to explore. Many found their way to the History of Science Museum, the Ashmolean, and the Radcliffe Camera, the Open Bus Tour, cafes and a Wetherspoons named The Four Candles.

It is an eye-catching building, next door but one, to Oxford University's history faculty. It was originally the city's High School for Boys, which opened in 1881. The comic actor Ronnie Barker was a former pupil and later one of the Two Ronnies. Probably their best-known sketch was 'Four Candles'. Barker walks into a hardware store and asks for and gets 'four candles'. However, he really wanted fork handles – 'andles for forks'.

Impressively everyone managed to navigate the city and met up on time for the pre-booked group visits.

David Rose



Thespian visit

Hucknall U3A Grumpy Old Men have recently ventured out again, this time with a theatrical theme, when they trod the boards at the Lace Market Theatre, in Nottingham City Centre.



The theatre is housed in a very old listed building, tucked away just off Fletcher Gate. The building started life as a chapel, but by 1970, after a variety of uses, the building was nearly derelict, and there has since been a major restoration programme. It is now owned by the Theatre, which is a charity run entirely by volunteers, without grants or sponsorship.

We heard that they put on a new production on average once a month, and have three weeks to build each new set and rehearse the next production. They also have a youth group, to provide opportunities for young people to get into the world of theatre, film or television.

The sets are constructed on the premises, and the photo shows our group standing in front of the partly-built set for 'Strangers on a Train'.

This was a very interesting visit to a unique venue and is recommended for u3a visits.

John Tedstone
Group Leader

COTGRAVE & DISTRICT u3a

A party of 31 excited travellers set off to Hampshire on a four-day trip organised by our Elaine in partnership with Sharpes Coaches of Nottingham. The coach party went down to Portsmouth stopping at Winchester Cathedral before a three day stay with accommodation at the wonderful Solent Hotel & spa.

The second day was taken up with a three-event pass to a selection of attractions including the Mary Rose, HMS Victory, HMS Warrior and two naval Museums. The Mary Rose was clearly a firm favourite with the party with its fabulous array of artefacts, the rebuilt hull illuminated with 'holograms' and video shows.



HMS Victory despite the outer body of the ship being covered with plastic sheeting was fascinating with its numerous decks, gun emplacements and tight height restrictions causing a lot of 'head bangs' but left us feeling considerable empathy for those who were onboard.

HMS Warrior showed us the 'might of the British' navy as it was at the time the largest Warship in the world with its steel frame and timber structure. The sight of it on the seas must have been a frightening prospect! The evening rest at the hotel was warmly welcomed, certainly by our feet!



Day three was a visit to Beaulieu house and estate with its motor history museum containing a wonderful collection of classic saloon and racing cars plus numerous motorcycles all of which took a considerable amount of time to navigate around. In addition, the house and gardens were a delight to behold.

After our final evening at the Solent to which everyone expressed their delight

we set off back to Stonehenge via Salisbury Cathedral before arriving back home in the early evening.

Our thanks go to Elaine for a superbly organised and memorable trip.

Paul Childs
Vice Chairman



RAINWORTH & DISTRICT u3a

Rainworth and District u3a members have enjoyed many activities in recent months, all groups have been active.

An evening of music and dancing was enjoyed by many members with Gary Haynes providing the music.

The Luncheon group have made visits to Ciao Bella in Mansfield and the Hardwick Inn.

The Quiz group continues to meet on the 3rd Thursday of the month at the Oak Tree on Southwell Road although sadly we have not been able to repeat our win of a few months ago.

The National Trust group visited Calke Abbey and the Garden group visited Burnby Gardens near York, a gem of a place! The visit coincided with the Tulip Festival which was fabulous, 18,000 bulbs set in beds and each one labelled.

The Strollers have strolled around Sutton Reservoir and Brierley Park experiencing inclement weather both times. Undeterred and suitably dressed we carried on so looking forward to coffee and bacon or sausage cobs at the finishing point!

The Odeon group enjoyed the opera Carmen and a ballet from Shakespeare of The Winter's Tale which had amazing choreography.

A visit to Cannon Hall Farm was enjoyed by our members. The farm features regularly on TV and many of the newborns shown the previous week were there for us to see. It was very busy awaiting the arrival of more lambs, piglets and a horse! The night before our visit saw the arrival of a baby alpaca but we only saw its head as mum was shielding it.

Activities are provided on a daily basis. Some of us were lucky enough to meet the brothers who run the farm and we have photographic evidence to prove it! It's well worth a visit whatever your age.

Our u3a group have welcomed new members during the last few months: long may it continue.



Our three coffee bar volunteers all called David



Strollers at Kings Mill reservoir



Sheep racing at Cannon Hall



Our members with the brothers who run the sheep racing

Jackie and Colin Massey

BEESTON u3a

PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

The results are in for our first 2024 Beeston u3a photography competition. The challenge was to submit a photograph which depicted 'Beeston u3a'.

The entries varied in breadth from action shots of Open Meetings, dancing, walking, games playing, lecturing and dressing up!

All the photos were on display at the June Open Meeting and were admired by all.

We thank acclaimed local photographer, Philippa Dytham-Double, of Double Image Photography (www.doubleimagephotography.co.uk) for taking the time to judge the entries.

The winner was Jenny Langran with her photograph u3a walk Sawley. Philippa said "This image jumped out of the set of entries because of the soft colours and angles used in the composition. I really liked the square crop because I think it works very well with this image. The light is lovely and the reflections on the water are beautiful. Congratulations!"

Jenny was awarded with her prize of £30 at the June Open meeting.
Thanks to everyone who took part.

WELCOME to the Group Coordinator team – Noel, Susan and Mary!

They have volunteered to work alongside Brendan to coordinate the increasing work brought about by 100+ groups and a growing membership.

Over the next few months the new team will be working with and coordinating with our group facilitators.

THANKS to Celia and Kathy

Two wonderful Beeston u3a assets stepped down from the Committee at the April AGM. Huge thanks to Kathy Shipway, Groups Coordinator and Celia Bilau, Communications Officer, who were both in their roles for 6 years.

Many thanks for all the hard work!

We are delighted to report that both will be active participants of the Beeston u3a groups and events they enjoy – so we will still see them around!

Karen Attwood
Publicity Officer

WORKSOP & DISTRICT u3a

SEWING GROUPS NEW PROJECT

Our Sewing groups have been very busy making 'twiddle mats' for people with autism or dementia. So far almost 40 have been made and given to Bassetlaw Hospital, care homes and individuals in Worksop.



Twiddle mats

TRAVEL GROUP

Despite torrential rain and heavy traffic, the u3a Travel Group had a great day out to Salts Mill and Saltaire Village in Shipley. The former textile mill is now an art gallery, shopping centre and restaurant complex.

The fourth floor is home to Bradford born artist, David Hockney's 'A Year in Normandie' which is his biggest work at 90.75 metres long and depicts the changing seasons of his French garden. A short film shows how the giant frieze was created. An amazing feat.

Whilst some enjoyed the arts others browsed the antique shop or gazed at the handmade jewellery or the book shop and I'm sure that at some point everyone enjoyed a welcome cup of tea or coffee in one of the restaurants.

Sheila Massey

EASTWOOD u3a

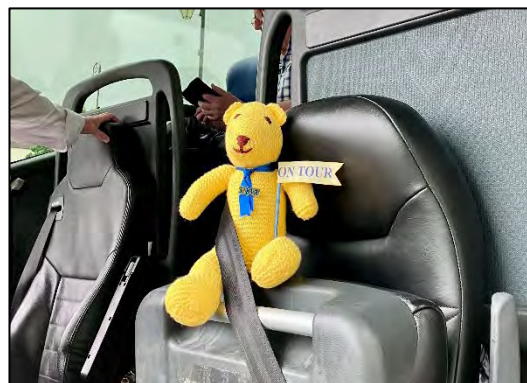
The U3A Eastwood has a new member! He doesn't have a name yet and will be named at our 10th Anniversary/AGM on Wednesday 5th June.

He has been very busy and has been seen sitting on the desk of our Treasurer – he does have a lot of responsibility now.

For his leisure time he could be found on a day out with the National Trust group. He had a front seat view of the journey to Bodnant Gardens, Wales leaving the rain behind.

He is determined to promote our U3A.

A topper was seen in the town and it was a bit puzzling as there appeared to be three other bears sitting on the top. The hunt is now on for mummy bear.



Anne Steel

"EARLY BIRDS" DINING GROUP

What could be better than enjoying a lovely early evening meal out? Why, the chance to share it with friends of course! Which is why our monthly "Early Birds" dining group has proved so popular.

Thanks to Group Leader Eileen Kenny we have been able to sample meals at a wonderful variety of restaurants and pubs throughout the district. This year alone we've enjoyed the best of Indian cuisine, a fabulous Thai restaurant and most recently, visited an incredible Italian restaurant. We've also enjoyed some fabulous typically English cuisine in a range of delightful country pubs dotted throughout the area.

For those members who live alone, the chance to dine with friends makes it a welcome change whilst the 6.00 p.m. start affords an ideal option when driving during those dark winter nights. It also means everyone in the group is able to meet up and share the dining experience with like-minded people. Not to mention the opportunity to sample restaurants and menus which they otherwise might not have come across before.

Of course, it also means there is no cooking or clearing up to be done afterwards. Which certainly guarantees that the "Early Birds" dining group remains popular with many of our members.

Maggie George
Chairman



RAVENSHEAD u3a

Now we are into the summer season, the outdoor activities are certainly more appealing and one of those thriving in less muddy conditions is our Dog Friends Group where the members meet regularly at local secure paddocks to socialise their pooches and let them safely run free.

Group Leaders Katy & Eric Roberts are also volunteers for the Canine Partners dog assistance charity, and on Sunday 19th May they were manning a stand at the Portland College Spring Fair at Harlow Wood.

One of the highlights of the fair was the Portland College Dog Show, and several of the group's members showed up for the day with their dogs to support Katy & Eric, and then decided to enter the competition.

Cavapoo pup "Bailey" and owner Sue Martin walked off with a 1st place rosette in "The Dog the Judges Would Like to Take Home" Category, whilst 11 year old Labrador "Boris" and owner John Butler came 3rd in the "Golden Oldies" category, in a competition sponsored and judged by Ravenshead's Vet practice, Animal Doctor.

Another group that has been proclaimed a success is our re-formed Family History Group that had previously closed during the Covid pandemic.



At their early June meeting a number of experienced members were helping the newbies with their research using licensed versions of both the Ancestry and FindMyPast apps on their laptops and tablets, using the wi-fi available at the venue.

One newbie member still has a mystery to solve. She had traced a great-great-grandparent who was born in 1865, died in 1900, and worked as a flour miller, like his father before him. In the

1891 census he was found to be living with his family in a water mill in a village called Congresbury on the River Yeo in Somerset, but there was no trace of him or his father in the 1871 and 1881 censuses. Her research continues.

John Butler
Chair

ARNOLD u3a

NOT JUST SOUNDING FAMOUS – NOW HE IS FAMOUS!

Brian Cluff, a member of Arnold u3a, has been awarded a Fellowship of the Royal Astronomical Society. This proves what we all know – that great heights can be achieved at any age in life – as Brian has now been honoured in this way, in his 90s. In choosing the topic of Dark Matter to investigate and discuss with Arnold u3a Astronomy group, little did Brian dream where his research would lead. Dark Matter is still a mystery to astronomers and physicists, although everyone accepts that it exists because of its effect on the universe.

Brian's in-depth research resulted in him coming up with a new hypothesis which he wrote up, sharing it with Martin Whillock, the u3a National Astronomical Convenor. Martin was so impressed with the work that he persuaded Brian to present it as a thesis to the Royal Astronomical Society. After appropriate scrutiny by members, the Society accepted his hypothesis was viable and has recently invited him to become a Fellow, one of its highest awards.

Brian has said that this would never have happened if he had not been a member of the u3a. The initial preparation for a presentation to his group encouraged him to do the in-depth research. He also appreciated Martin's encouragement. The end result is Brian Cluff FRAS, an accolade that was applauded at the last main meeting of Arnold u3a.

Ged Clarke
Business Secretary



FOREST TOWN & DISTRICT u3a

Early one morning in May (5.30 a.m. to be precise), 47 members from Forest Town u3a boarded a coach for Kamp-Bornhoffen a hamlet set on the Rhine river in Germany, for the Rhine in Flames Festival.

Although we had thunder and lightning storms on our way in Germany our trusty coach driver Phil battled on to reach our hotel that evening.

During our holiday we visited some beautiful towns and villages set along the Rhine and saw many castles (did you know there are 25,000 castles in Germany, and boy did we see a few!!).

We had mixed weather but looking back it rained on the right days. On rainy days we all went to Braubach for coffee and cake, in Cochem we enjoyed a ride on the land train around town and visited a local winery to sample the wines from the Moselle Valley. But on sunny days we had a morning cruise down the Rhine, rode on a chairlift, devoured ice cream sundaes in Boppard, boarded the cable car in Rudesheim to see the breath-taking view across the valley.



When back in town we sampled the local Asbach Brandy special coffee at an outside cafe and watched the world go by.

Have to say we definitely followed the u3a motto, we Learnt new things, we had plenty of Laughs and certainly Lived life to the full.



Kathryn Cope
Membership Secretary



ASHFIELD u3a

Once again it has been all go at Ashfield u3a. We have been going to the theatre, on walks and outings, making all sorts of lovely things, including beautiful handmade cards. We have listened to good speakers at our monthly meetings, held an AGM and elected several new committee members including a new Chair – Sue Taylor. We wish Sue and all our committee well in their endeavours to keep us on an even keel and steer our u3a to even greater heights in the future.

A good number of our members attended a St. George's Day Ploughman's Supper

held in April when members dressed in red and white and some dressed up as Crusader Knights. The evening was greatly enhanced by the high quality music provided by the Newstead Brass Band under the leadership of their new musical director. The programme appealed to everyone, culminating in a mini 'Last Night at the Proms' with our members singing their hearts out and enthusiastically waving Union Jack flags. The room was beautifully decorated and food was plentiful and fabulous. All credit to our Committee who organised the evening and to everyone who helped out on the night.

Our Miscellany Group took a trip out to the Black Country Living Museum in May. Members explored the High Street and saw how daily home life changed from Victorian times through to the 1960s which brought back memories as they viewed old familiar items on display. Some members took the opportunity to go down a drift mine to take a peek at life as an 1850s coal miner.

There is always something interesting being planned at Ashfield u3a, we certainly know how to learn, laugh, live.

Val Scott

MANSFIELD & DISTRICT u3a

Time flies when you are having fun! The members of Mansfield & District U3A certainly had fun with a wonderful afternoon on Thursday 6th June celebrating 25 years, a far cry from the founding members sitting in Edith Senior's home in June, 1999. It was lovely that seven of the original members were able to celebrate with us. We were also joined by John Lewis, the Regional Trustee for the East Midlands.

The event began with Elaine Huckerby, the current Chair welcoming everyone; after which 90 members had a shared lunch. The tables groaned with the abundance of delicious food that everyone had brought. A table top quiz based on 1999 – 2024 challenged the brains at the same time.

After dessert, we were entertained by Philip Tucker, our Speaker Finder, who sang a wide repertoire of songs. His performance was excellent starting with Elvis' version of 'Can't Help Falling in Love with You', followed by Verdi, Mozart, Rodgers and Hammerstein, Cole Porter and Handel. The final song of 'Oh What a Beautiful Morning' from Oklahoma included audience participation showing U3A members in fine voice alongside Philip. The tremendous applause at the end was well-deserved.

A beautiful celebration cake baked by Marilyn Jones was cut up at the end of the afternoon. A fitting end to a glorious celebration afternoon. Here's to the next 25 years.

If your u3a is organising a trip, holiday or other event which you would like to open up to other u3a members please send promotional details for inclusion in this special section of Newsbites.

u3a
North Notts Neighbourhood Group

INVITE YOU TO A PICNIC IN THE FOREST

WEDNESDAY 26th JUNE

**AT SHERWOOD FOREST VISITOR CENTRE
EDWINSTOWE, MANSFIELD NG21 9RN**

This is a FREE EVENT from 11 – 3
ALL DAY CAR PARKING £5

all welcome to join us for a Fun Day of
Activities Musical Entertainment Prizes
Games Cafe On Site Walks

Bring your own tables, chairs, blankets & picnic



More information available in newsletter

Made with PosterMyWall.com

GUIDELINES FOR ARTICLES TO NEWSBITES

We will be particularly pleased to receive articles about any unusual or exceptional event that your u3a may have organised or any new activity that your u3a is running. u3as learn from each other and it is very useful for their members to read about new events or activities that they haven't come across before.

- Please send your text in Word format and keep to a maximum 300-word count.
- Please submit photos as separate attachments in formats JPG, JPEG, PNG or similar (not pdf). They must be of good quality and a minimum of 1MB. No collages please.
- Please ensure that all who feature in your photos have expressed their consent for the photos to appear in Newsbites and also for those photos to be posted on u3a and Network websites.
- Please let me have the name of the author of your article and his/her status e.g. member, group leader, chair etc. I do look on your websites but don't always manage to find a full name or status.

Many thanks

Maria Gabrielczyk – Editor

maria.newsbytes@gmail.com

DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE OF NEWSBITES

Please send your articles (keep to a maximum 300-word count)
and good quality photos (as attachments please)
by 7th August 2024 to maria.newsbytes@gmail.com