

News & Views


 Newsletter

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Chair's Message	1
Monthly Meetings	2
Group News	3-5
Outdoor Bowls	3
Scottish Dancing	3
Current Affairs	3
ETHEL	3
Days of Interest	4
Gardening	5
Walking the Dog	5
EDI Afternoon Tea	5
Meetings Calendar	6
An Early Memory	7
Earliest Memory Pt.2	8
Trips Calendar	9
Rutland Ospreys	9
LU Lecture	9
Network Quiz result	9
Poetry Corner	10
Quiz	11
Readers' Comments	11
Obituary	12-13
Mike Gillingham	12
Mike Batten	13
Items for Newsletter	13
Contact Information	13
National u3a News	14
u3a web addresses	14

Interest Groups

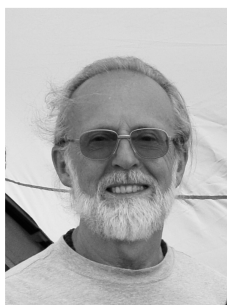
Details of Groups can be found on the Charnwood u3a website:
www.charnwoodu3a.org.uk
 under 'Our Groups' menu.

Welcome

...to the April edition of News & Views, the newsletter of Charnwood u3a. We hope you'll find it both entertaining and informative. The content is written by members, and details for sending contributions can be found at the end of this newsletter.



A View from the Chair



March brought us a week of warm sunny weather, so I was able to spend a few days 'blitzing' the garden, and making it look almost presentable – those bits, that is, that we can see from the lounge windows! Now, as we approach the end of the month, much cooler conditions are back in charge. We may have passed the Spring Equinox and, yes, we are now back into 'Summer' time – but try telling that to Mother Nature. Hopefully we will soon be past this blip, and enjoying better conditions again. Certainly we will want it to be warm and dry in early June when, if all goes

to plan, we will be engaging in a joint celebration – Our Queen's Platinum Jubilee and 40 years of the u3a Movement in the United Kingdom.

As many of you will be aware, in the years BC (before Covid) there has been an annual event, held in Queen's Park, called Picnic in the Park. This year it has been retitled **The Queen's Birthday Lunch** and we, Charnwood u3a (Cu3a), have been invited to take part. In addition to marking these two auspicious milestones, we can use this occasion to show what Cu3a are all about,

so I invite all Cu3a members and Interest Groups to take part.

A small working party has been set up to begin planning for the event. Initial thoughts: performances/demonstrations/displays by Singing for Pleasure, Scottish Dancing, Making Music, Tai Chi, Line Dancing, Yoga (all standing, so no mat required), Pilates, Chess, etc, etc. - the more the merrier. The important thing is that we all have fun!

Perhaps we could have a local celebrity on board – do you have the ear of anyone? Or how about a Town Crier? I am not sure that Loughborough still has one, but a suitably attired Cu3a Member (male or female) could fit the bill.

We want to get ALL Cu3a members involved – by joining the working party, submitting thoughts and ideas, and/or taking part on the day. So, if you have anything to offer, please let me now.

Hopefully, you are all now thinking "I must put this event in my diary, but when is it?" Good question – We will be celebrating the

**Queen's 70th and the u3a's 40th Anniversaries
 in Queen's Park, Loughborough on Sunday 5th June.**

Timing is yet to be confirmed, but previous 'Picnics' have been from 12 noon to 5pm.

It promises to be a great day, and I hope to see many of you there.

Mike Hood, Chair, Charnwood u3a
chair@charnwoodu3a.org.uk

Our Monthly Meetings

The monthly meetings of Charnwood u3a are on the **second Wednesday afternoon, 2.15 for 2.30 pm in Emmanuel Church**, Forest Road in Loughborough. There is ample parking space in the car park to the west of the church. Our monthly meetings are free to all, and we welcome prospective new members attending a meeting as a 'taster'. If you will need any assistance at the meeting, please contact our Chair in advance on chair@charnwoodu3a.org.uk.

Last month, we had our AGM. For details of proceedings, please see the draft minutes at: https://www.charnwoodu3a.org.uk/siteb/pdfdocsMain/2022_AGM_Minutes_draft.pdf



Following the AGM, we enjoyed a superb presentation by Char March (a Cu3a member) in which she told us about her career as a writer and treated us to recitals of some of her poems, all done in appropriate accents. She also showed us an impressive banner (pictured left) featuring some of her work. A truly enjoyable talk; a pity that problems with the sound system prevented those attending via Zoom from hearing it!

Our Next Meeting Wednesday 13th April

'The Laughter Makers' with Mike Storr

We are pleased to welcome Mike Storr to our monthly meeting on 13th April. Mike has spoken to many other u3as and other voluntary organisations in the past. His talk will be about how funny people make us laugh. See <https://www.publicspeakerscorner.co.uk/mike-storr/>



To attend this 'hybrid' meeting:

If you wish to attend the meeting in person, no pre-booking is required - just turn up on the day, with your Cu3a membership card. **Please do not arrive before 2 pm.** Risk Assessment guidance is at: https://www.charnwoodu3a.org.uk/siteb/pdfdocsPrint/Risk_Assessment_monthly_meeting.pdf



Alternatively, if you wish to attend via Zoom, you will need to pre-register by **Monday 11th April** by completing the registration form on our website at: <https://www.charnwoodu3a.org.uk/MonthlyMeetingRegistration.html>

- please do not do this if you intend joining in person.

An invitation to join the Zoom meeting will then be emailed before the meeting to all those who have pre-registered for this.

Monthly Meetings May - Oct 2022

- **May 11th:** 'Stilton cheese' - Kim Kettle, Joint MD of a local cheese creamery
- **Jun 8th:** 'What is Islam?' - Farooq Murad, CEO, The Islamic Foundation
- **Jul 13th:** NO MONTHLY MEETING
- **Aug 10th:** 'Sir Malcolm Sargent' - Sam Dobson, Leicester Symphony Orch.
- **Sep 14th:** 'Scottish Dancing' - Sue Ronald, Charnwood u3a member
- **Oct 12th:** 'Bee Keeping' - Dave Bonner, Master Beekeeper

Group News

Outdoor Bowls

As announced last month, after the winter break, the Outdoor Bowls Group will start again on **14th April** and run through the summer, until 15th September. The Group meets weekly on a **Thursday at 2 o'clock** for a two hour session at the **Brush Bowls Club green on Watermead Lane** (off Nanpantan Road).



New members will be very welcome to come along and join us for a fun afternoon of gentle exercise with tuition and guidance provided. No previous experience is necessary and coaching will be available. Please contact Dave Saunders on 01509 261268 or email BowlsOutdoor@charnwoodu3a.org.uk for further information.

If any u3a member has or knows of bowls that they no longer need and would like to lend or donate them to the Group, please let Dave know using the same contact details.

Scottish Dancing

The Scottish Dancing group (10:00 am - 12:00 pm, 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month) has now had our first two sessions. We have sixteen enthusiastic new dancers. Below is a short article about a similar group that began a few years ago in Grantham. If you are interested in being part of this new group please contact ScottishDancing@charnwoodu3a.org.uk



“My love of Scottish Country Dancing

I have always loved Scottish music and enjoy Ceilidh dancing, so when at the U3A AGM of February 2016, there was a demonstration of Scottish Country Dancing by the U3A group, I just wanted to join. Of course, you have got to learn the steps, the terminology, the formations and counting the bars of the music. It is not only good for your body physically, keeping you on your toes with different moves but for your mental health too. Your mind is learning and remembering and trying not to go wrong in a dance. With practice and time and our group leader's excellent teaching you improve and enjoy the dance, the friendly group and the enthusiasm.

Scottish Country Dancing is very different from Ceilidh Dancing. It is a lot gentler and more disciplined. It is taught and learnt, whereas for Ceilidh Dancing you don't necessarily need formal teaching. We have a lovely group of dancers who are very lucky to be able to follow the U3A motto learn, laugh, live, while doing something so enjoyable.”

Amber Porter, Grantham u3a member

Current Affairs

Cu3a members Chris and Sue Ronald are interested in starting an informal Current Affairs group. Monthly meetings will be held at their house in Quorn and the number of group members will be strictly limited.

If you are interested in participating, please contact sjr280@gmail.com



Ethel Goes All Silly

Ethel was looking forward with great dissipation to last month's meeting, where the topic was ***Humour in the English Language***. Members fulfilled her expectations to the full, preferring desperate examples of conical annunciations, including puns, spoonerisms and double intenders, but most pacifically, merryploisims, made famous by a chatterer in Sherry Richardson's play *The Trivials* (1755). The jugularity grew excrementally, and after a thoroughly congenial afternoon, members went home with severe braising of the ribs. Being glutens for punishment, they agreed to consecrate next time on the more pretentious topic of ***Political Correctness***. As usual, Ethel would be playing devil's avocado, but hoped it would not fester excess dysentery.

More Group News

Days of Interest

Our first trip in 2022 was to **Longcliffe Golf Club**, for our now traditional February lunch. The turnout was excellent with over 60 of us enjoying both the meal and the company of friends (*see photos below*). Many of us had not met up since our last meal at Longcliffe in February 2020. (I think you can probably guess as to why.) So this made the event feel something like a celebration. I think we all had a great afternoon.



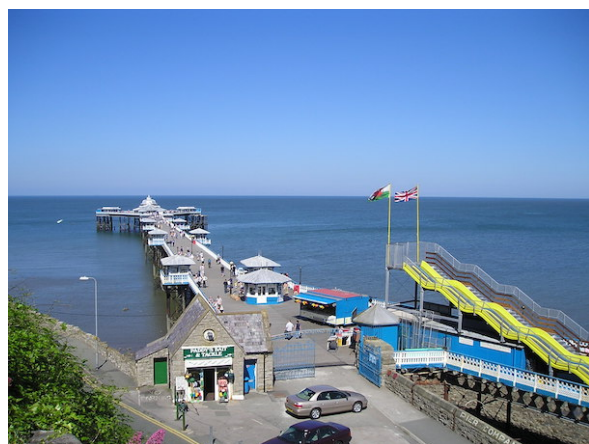
We have some spare places on our May & June trips - now open to all u3a members

In May we are going to Haworth for their annual 1940s weekend. In 'Bronte Country', we can step back in time and enjoy a nostalgic wartime theme, with characters dressed in the costume of the era. There will be 1940s singing and dancing, military vehicle and living history displays and a fly past - weather permitting. Haworth hosts one of the biggest and best 1940s events in the UK. The village is transformed with decorations, stalls, dances and re-enactments along Main Street and the park.

The trip departs from Tesco Extra car park, Park Road, on Saturday 21st May at 8:30 am. We leave Haworth at 4:30 pm. The cost of the trip is £16 per person.



Photo from the Telegraph & Argus (Bradford), 19th May 2019



Llandudno Pier. Photo: Noel Walley at en.wikipedia, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons.

In June we are off to the seaside. We are visiting Llandudno which is the largest seaside resort in Wales, and as early as 1861 was being called 'the Queen of the Welsh Watering Places'. The seaside attractions include the longest pier in Wales, which besides the view hosts plenty of opportunities to buy ice-cream and freshly made doughnuts. For most of the length of Llandudno's North Shore there is a wide curving Victorian promenade – with lots of seats. From the prom you can also admire the scenic headlands of the Great and Little Orme. As well as the beach attractions the town itself has shops and lots of places to eat.

The trip departs from Tesco Extra car park on Saturday 18th June at 8:00 am. We leave Llandudno at 5:00 pm. The cost of the trip is £19 per person.

If you are interested in joining us on either trip, please contact Pauline May at ppc.wat@ntlworld.com 01509 552834 or 07455 167929 for details.

Further Group News

Gardening Group - Trip to Malvern Spring Show

The Gardening Group are running a trip to the Malvern Spring Show, on **FRIDAY 6th MAY**. The show is held on the Three Counties Show Ground, Malvern. There are some places available, on a first come, first served basis, to any Charnwood u3a member. The cost is £45.40 (includes cheques deposit fee for the bank). This includes the RHS entrance ticket and coach fare. The coach leaves Tesco Extra car park, Park Road, at 9.15 am. It is a full day's excursion.

Could any members wanting to join the trip please respond and pay by **Wednesday 6th April**, by contacting me on allotden@icloud.com so that a form can be emailed to you. Cheques payable to Charnwood U3A. I will give my address to members when they email for a form. Apologies for the tight deadline. This is because Malvern show ground require payment for the entrance tickets.

Hazel Richardson, Membership Secretary - Gardening Group

Walking the Dog...

Last July, my partner and I became novice dog owners of a Border Terrier puppy! The last 7 months have been interesting, to say the least! Having a dog certainly forces you out of the house, and we have spoken to all sorts of folk on our walks, with the dogs being the common denominator. So, it got me thinking.....

- Are there u3a members out there who would like to get together with others to walk their dogs?
- Are some members feeling isolated and are fed up with the same old dog routes?
- Would members' dogs benefit from socialising with others? I know ours would and hopefully she will learn doggy manners!



I'm not suggesting a pack of dogs meet, just a couple or so, for a sociable walk. Perhaps share their walks in areas not known to others? You might find there are members who 'live around the corner' and your paths have never crossed.

I know I appreciate walking the puppy with my partner or friend. It is so much easier when there are two of us, to 'take care of business'. A coffee and cake at the end of a walk is a great incentive! Perhaps members had dogs previously, and no longer have one, but miss the company of 4 paws, and would like to get a doggy fix, so would like to accompany a dog walker?

So what do members think about the idea of getting together with other dog owners to share walks, conversation, and a cuppa? If you like the idea, you can email me. I would appreciate any suggestions on how to organise it, so members can make contact with each other. The making of a new group is possibly the next stage? Have a think, and let me know..... polite answers please.

Hazel Richardson and Jon Ivins, email : allotden@icloud.com

EDI Afternoon Tea



On Tuesday 29th March, we held a meeting of Cu3a members at Gorse Covert Community Centre to discuss ways of implementing our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy.

In a wide-ranging discussion, a number of important issues were raised, including practical measures to improve accessibility and raise awareness. Unconscious bias needs to be tackled, as well as recognising the difference between equality and equity.

The group plans to meet again in June on a date to be decided. If you are interested in joining us, please contact Pam Upton at secretary@charnwoodu3a.org.uk or 07974 946 007.

April 2022 Meetings

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
				1 Apr 09.00 Badminton 10.00 German Adv 10.00 Line Dance 10.00 Mah Jong 10.00 Table Tennis 7 10.30 Photography 10.30 Tai Chi 11.00 Table Tennis 5 12.00 Lunch Club 1 12.00 Table Tennis 6 13.30 Pilates 1 14.00 Book Group 2
4 Apr 09.30 Yoga 10.00 Latin 11.00 Table Tennis 1	5 Apr 09.30 Pilates 2 10.00 10+ Walks 10.00 Spanish 11.00 Table Tennis 2 11.15 Pilates 3 14.00 Canasta 1 14.00 Sing4Pleasure	6 Apr 10.00 Classical Greek 10.00 German 10.00 Golf 10.00 JigsawBookEx 10.00 Mini Tennis 10.00 Scottish Dance 11.00 Table Tennis 3 14.00 Sustain Planet	7 Apr 10.00 Sci Tech 1&2 10.00 Spanish Conv 10.30 Amble/Strollers 11.00 Table Tennis 4 14.00 Bowls Indoor 14.00 French Conv	8 Apr 09.00 Badminton 10.00 Classical Civ 10.00 Line Dance 10.00 Mah Jong 10.00 Needlecraft 1 10.00 Table Tennis 7 10.30 Tai Chi 11.00 Table Tennis 5 12.00 Table Tennis 6 13.30 Pilates 1
11 Apr 10.00 Poetry 1 11.00 Table Tennis 1 14.00 Archaeology 14.00 Chess	12 Apr 09.30 Pilates 2 10.00 EngParCh Zoom 11.00 Table Tennis 2 11.15 Pilates 3 14.00 Canasta 1 14.00 EngParCh F2F	13 Apr 10.00 Committee 10.00 Golf 10.00 Mini Tennis 11.00 Table Tennis 3 14.30 Monthly Meet	14 Apr 10.00 Les Sportives 10.00 Thurs 6 Milers 10.30 Amble/Strollers 11.00 Table Tennis 4 14.00 Bowls Outdoor 14.00 Making Music	15 Apr 09.00 Badminton 10.00 German Adv 10.00 Line Dance 10.00 Mah Jong 10.00 Table Tennis 7 10.30 Photography 10.30 Tai Chi 11.00 Table Tennis 5 12.00 Table Tennis 6 13.30 Pilates 1 14.00 Art Apprec'n 15.00 Mac Users
18 Apr 09.30 Yoga 11.00 Table Tennis 1 13.00 Quiz group 14.00 Gardening	19 Apr 09.30 Pilates 2 10.00 6+ Walks 10.00 Spanish 11.00 Table Tennis 2 11.15 Pilates 3 14.00 Canasta 1 14.00 Philosophy 2 14.00 Sing4Pleasure	20 Apr 10.00 German 10.00 Golf 10.00 Mini Tennis 10.00 Poetry 2 10.00 Scottish Dance 11.00 Table Tennis 3 14.00 Family History 14.00 Italian Conv	21 Apr 10.00 Parish Walks 11.00 Table Tennis 4 13.00 French Conv 14.00 Bowls Outdoor 14.15 Scrabble 4 18.30 Supper Club 2	22 Apr 09.00 Badminton 10.00 Line Dance 10.00 Mah Jong 10.00 Needlecraft 1 10.00 Table Tennis 7 10.30 Tai Chi 11.00 Table Tennis 5 12.00 Table Tennis 6 13.30 Pilates 1 19.30 Wine Apprec'n
25 Apr 09.30 Yoga 11.00 Table Tennis 1 14.00 Chess 14.00 Local History	26 Apr 09.30 Pilates 2 10.00 Needlecraft 2 11.00 Table Tennis 2 11.15 Pilates 3 13.30 ETHEL 14.00 Canasta 1 14.00 Philosophy 1	27 Apr 10.00 Golf 10.00 History 3 10.00 Mini Tennis 11.00 Table Tennis 3 14.00 Classical Music	28 Apr 10.00 Les Sportives 10.00 Thurs 6 Milers 10.30 Amble/Strollers 11.00 Table Tennis 4 14.00 Bowls Outdoor 14.00 Making Music	29 Apr 09.00 Badminton 10.00 Line Dance 10.00 Mah Jong 10.00 Table Tennis 7 10.30 Tai Chi 11.00 Table Tennis 5 12.00 Table Tennis 6 13.30 Pilates 1

PLUS on Saturdays: Saturday Walks; Days of Interest trip to Kidderminster (9th April)

For more information, visit our **website** (<https://www.charnwoodu3a.org.uk>) for the interactive calendar. Please send any amendments for future calendars to the Editor at newsletter@charnwoodu3a.org.uk

Members' Stories

This month, we have 'Early Memory' recollections from two members, who each describe a particularly memorable day from their early childhood. On the next page is the concluding part of last month's article about attending the Coronation parade. And below, a vivid recollection from the latter part of World War II. Further contributions from members describing their early memories are very welcome for publication in future issues of News & Views (email newsletter@charnwoodu3a.org.uk).

An Early Memory

I grew up in rural Kent, midway between the Channel Ports and London. World War II had started a few months after I was born so convoys of army lorries, barrage balloons, searchlights and air raid sirens etc. were part of my version of 'normal'.

But in the summer of 1944, around the time of my fifth birthday, a new menace appeared in the sky..... 'doodlebugs'..... 'buzz bombs', or to be more correct, V1 flying bombs. These were small pilotless aeroplanes filled with high explosive and launched in our direction from various sites close to the French and Dutch coast. They were powered by a rudimentary jet engine (pulsejet) with a sophisticated cut-off valve in the fuel-line to ensure engine failure somewhere in the target area. They made a peculiarly mechanical noise or 'buzz' - hence the name - and everyone had been warned to run for cover when this suddenly stopped.

It was a bright sunny day when I was 'helping' my mother hang the washing on the clothes-line that crossed the garden. A deep rumbling sound approached from the south and quickly got louder until it became that awful crackling buzz, but louder than I had ever heard it before.... then it was there, menacingly black and belching flames and smoke from its exhaust. It was so low that I feared for our chimney pots but with the benefit of hindsight I guess it must have been about a hundred feet above us..... and suddenly... silence! Just a faint whistle as it passed through the air.

My mother knew what to do. She dropped everything and, grasping my hand, ran towards a low retaining wall near the house, where she threw herself on to the ground, pulling me down with her.

We waited, breathless, for what seemed an age.... and then the inevitable explosion that shook the ground beneath us and everything around. We crouched there for a few more seconds in case of flying shrapnel and then warily emerged and entered the house to catch our breath.

Our three-hundred-and-fifty-year-old, half-timbered cottage had been shaken like never before; dust from every crack and crevice hung in the air to such an extent that it was impossible to see from one side of the room to the other! Because of a temporary school closure my older sister was sitting an exam in the dining room. Mother brushed as much dust as possible from the paper but felt obliged to append a note to the examiner

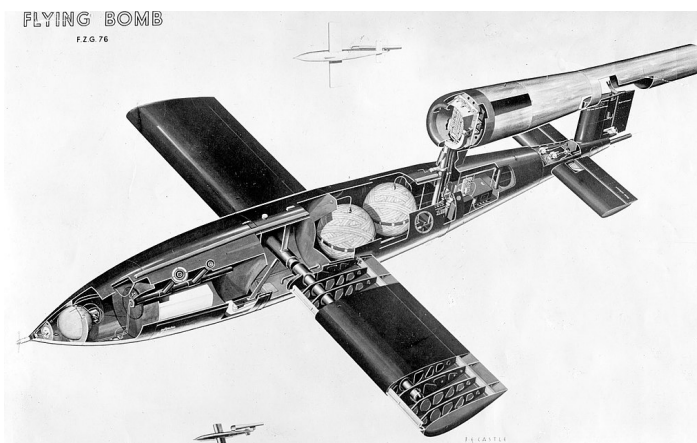
apologising for the dirty paper 'due to enemy action'.

When my father returned from work that evening, we told him what had happened and he set off to find the spot where the 'doodlebug' had come down. He didn't have to go far; just across a small field, near a copse, he found the crater and the remains of the 'bug'. He

returned with a few 'souvenirs' including a short length of exhaust pipe, about four inches in diameter.

The following weekend my father was able to complete the building of an old 'copper' into the above-mentioned retaining wall, in which to stew up feed for our chickens. You can guess what was used for the chimney, and forever after, the device was known as the 'buzz-bomb-boiler'.

John Evans



Earliest Memory - Part 2

Continuing last month's story about a very special day in June 1953, by an eye witness to a historic event...

Eventually the sounds got louder, a lot louder and more coherent...

I believe it was the Grenadier Guards first; they were in red uniform with two foot high black hats. Apparently all the bands had been positioned so the crowd of many thousands could only hear one band at a time. It did not always work!

Things started to happen quite quickly. We next had a group of 'natives' in grass skirts walking backwards almost as much as forwards. The girl with whom I was on 'name' terms by then told me they were from Kenya. How did she know when she had not 'done' the Empire at school, I thought. There was a small band, I was told from Gibraltar, but playing bagpipes! Why bagpipes? I assumed they were for the exclusive use of the Scots. Horses, so many horses. One deviated on seeing/smelling a sandwich being eaten in the crowd; it did not get a mouthful!

Eventually we saw a whole series of coaches - not those with wheels but pulled by horses. Perhaps those in the coaches were the Queen's staff on their works outing! Plenty of mutual waving and the rain eased; even the sun made valiant attempts to put in an appearance. I was getting on very well with the girl by now. She lived in Stoke Poges, wherever that was, but a pity we weren't a decade older! I now know it is North West of London; we were South East.



June 1953: Coronation portrait of Queen Elizabeth II with her husband Philip, Duke of Edinburgh.

Eventually and well back in the long procession, with a good gap in front, was the gold carriage carrying Her Majesty with the Duke. She waved almost continually; her arm must have ached and she must have been tired toward the end of a long, tense day. The cheering from the crowd was deafening and drowned out any bands.

There were many miscellaneous bands and marching troops from Australia, South Africa, Canada etc. afterwards; they were really a coda to what had preceded over some two hours. Quite

some time afterwards came a lorry, some men armed with shovels collecting you know what from the road. Some bowed in response to cheering from the crowd as they went on their way.....much amusement.

Strictly speaking, that is not my earliest memory.....the return of Princess Elizabeth, now Queen Elizabeth the Second, from Kenya in February 1952 is no more than a very vague image. An image of the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition and the Liberal leader in a line at Heathrow on a cold, dark February night. They greeted a sad Elizabeth as she descended the aircraft steps.

As a 'postlude', I returned to school to tell my class all about

it, prompted by our teacher, since no other child had actually seen the Coronation. The memory of that wet day in June remains in my mind, vivid and unforgettable. I did not mind being woken at four in the morning, in retrospect, but I never saw the girl from Stoke Poges again.

Graham Cooper

Friends of Charnwood Museum

On **Thursday 14 April at 7:30 pm**, there is a talk at Charnwood Museum by **Ned Newitt** on **The Slums of Leicester**. Book for this at: <https://www.charnwoodmuseum.co.uk/events/2022/04/the-slums-of-leicester> Tickets are £3 per person (no members discount).

If you have difficulty using this booking system then please telephone the museum on 01509 233754 during their opening hours, currently Wednesday to Saturday, 10 am – 3 pm. They will take the information from you to book on your behalf. Please don't leave it until the last minute to book, as the museum will close bookings to allow the staff reasonable time to set up for the numbers expected. Please use the Granby Street entrance when attending.

Charnwood u3a Trips Calendar

Charnwood u3a groups are once again organising trips for the benefit of our members. Together with a couple of organisers of such trips, we have devised a **Trips Calendar** (as shown below) on our website. This is designed to allow trip organisers to avoid clashes where possible and to advertise vacancies to our members. Places will initially be offered to group members but then, if vacancies still exist, they will be offered to all members of Charnwood u3a.

Start Date	End Date	Group	Destination	Vacancies
Sat 9th Apr 2022	Sat 9th Apr 2022	Days of Interest	Kidderminster and Severn Valley Railway	Yes - Any u3a Members
Sun 24th Apr 2022	Fri 29th Apr 2022	Travel Group	Jurassic Coast, Dorset	No - Full
Fri 6th May 2022	Fri 6th May 2022	Gardening	Malvern Spring Show	Yes - Charnwood u3a Members
Sat 21st May 2022	Sat 21st May 2022	Days of Interest	Haworth - 1940's weekend	Yes - Charnwood u3a Members
Sat 21st May 2022	Thu 26th May 2022	Travel Group	Puglia, Italy	No - Full

The link to the web page is <https://www.charnwoodu3a.org.uk/siteb/TripsCalendar.html>

Trip organisers can inform Tony, the web manager, by using the on-line form on our website. We hope you find this both easy to use and useful.

Rutland Ospreys



The Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust (LRWT) have told us that their star osprey pair - Maya and 33(11) - have returned to Rutland Water and their web cameras showing the nesting ospreys are now up and running. You can see the live action via two streams, including sound, at:

<https://www.lrwt.org.uk/rutlandospreys>

The ospreys are certainly there and are nest building at the moment. Apparently, this pair have bred together since 2015 and have raised 20 chicks during that time. We can look forward to seeing this year's chicks in due course.

Loughborough University Public Lecture:

Improving physical activity in older adults with hearing loss

This public lecture will be delivered by Dr David Maidment, Lecturer in Psychology at Loughborough University. Taking place online on 5th May during hearing loss awareness week, the talk will discuss improving physical activity in older adults with hearing loss.

See <https://www.lboro.ac.uk/news-events/events/public-lecture-improving-physical-activity/> for further details and booking information.

A list of further events can be found at: <https://www.lboro.ac.uk/news-events/events/>

Network Spring Quiz Goes International

The organisers of the Network Spring Quiz send a massive thank you to all members who took part in the Quiz held via Zoom on 21st March. Around 100 members took part from across the East Midlands and beyond – Scotland, Austria & Dubai. The winning duo from Oundle u3a, Northants scored 73 out of a possible 85. Congratulations to them.

Poetry Corner

This month, we have a contribution from Cu3a member **Martin Litherland**. It's a poem he wrote during his six-month geological exploration in South America whilst working for the British Geological Survey. The poem is set in the legendary Lost World, a Devon-sized tableland on the Bolivia/Brazil border, discovered by Percy Fawcett and immortalized by Arthur Conan Doyle.

In the Forest of the Night *(with apologies to William Blake)*



Serrania Huanchaca: we had to map 'Tiger' creek on foot because it was unnavigable by canoe.

¹Tiger, Tiger burning bright
In the forest of the night,
Scorching eyes in torchlight glare,
Curdled blood and needled hair.

Never smelled a man before,
Never known the need to roar.
In the Lost World's sanctuary:
Violated territory.

Up the creek we follow her.
Droppings every day appear.
Light the fire, a place to stay:
Winding down another day.

Now with torches do we seek,
In the stillness by the creek,
Epicure's aristocrat:
Jungle feast of ²Branick's Rat.

But she's waiting for the same:
Roars into the torch's flame.
'Do not shoot,' I whisper first:
'Wounded tiger is the worst.'

Night is cooled by ³polar air;
Boys have only clothes they wear:
Sling their hammocks by the fire:
Nice and warm when they retire.

Sleeping bag I have today:
Slung my hammock far away;
No mosquito net required:
Cool and cosy, warm and tired.

Woke up by her mighty roar;
Round the forest she does paw.
Circling round the camp by night:
Scenting blood, provoking fright.

What am I supposed to do?
Play ⁴Lord Roxton born anew?
Grip the shotgun! Do not speak!
Do not let them think you're weak!

After half an hour of this;
In a numbed paralysis:
Loose the hammock from the tree:
Courting death is not for me.

Sling it up beside the fire,
Add more fuel and then retire.
Boys just mutter drowsy deep.
Tiger roars me off to sleep.

¹Locals use the word *tigre* (*teegrey*) for panther

²A tasty, giant rat, like a huge, hopping rabbit

³Cool air from the South, a *surazo*

⁴Indiana Jones character in the *Lost World* novel

Quiz Time: (answers in next month's News & Views)

- 1) Which is the longest month of the year?
- 2) Where was the 1922 FA Cup Final played?
- 3) In the Periodic Table, which element is atomic number 2?
- 4) In which year did Cliff Richard represent the UK with *Congratulations*?
- 5) Which parliamentary office was held by Disraeli, Gladstone, Churchill and Gaitskill?
- 6) Who wrote the *Nimrod*?
- 7) By what name is *The Town of Pitipu* better known?
- 8) Who won the 2020 Grand National?
- 9) To which island was Napoleon exiled in 1815?
- 10) In which famous painting by John Constable of 1821 does Willie Lotts' house appear?
- 11) Which author describes a famous joust in Ashby after seeing the castle from Smisby?
- 12) Which English writer, philosopher, art critic and polymath of the Victorian era lived at Brantwood, Coniston?
- 13) Who wrote the *Dam Busters March*?
- 14) Which is the highest mountain in England?
- 15) Which is the third book of the Bible?
- 16) How long is a marathon race?
- 17) Who was Prime Minister in 1972?
- 18) Where is the 'notional centre of London'?
- 19) Which Loughborough road is named after the first mayor of the Borough in 1888?
- 20) In which film do we learn that "A kiss is still a kiss"?



Readers' Comments

Members will recall the motion at the recent AGM, that Charnwood u3a should sponsor a copse of trees in the u3a 40th anniversary wood in the Brecon Beacons. A number of members spoke in favour of this proposal and though the motion was defeated, it was suggested that members might like to contribute to a collection for this later in the year. One member, whilst describing the motion as an excellent idea in principle, gave 4 reasons why they voted against:

- Whilst the trees to be planted are species native to the UK, the trees themselves may be imported, either grown overseas from seed originating in the UK, or grown in the UK from imported seeds, which may pose a risk from importing new pests and diseases.
- Rather than planting lots of trees, a better idea may be to create a woodland by just protecting a piece of land from grazing by herbivores (i.e. fence it) and leave it to develop naturally into woodland, which will eventually consist of native species local to its area at very little effort and cost.
- It is very important to ensure that any land selected for tree planting is assessed for wildlife value before transformation to woodland. Care needs to be taken not to destroy one sort of wildlife to create another! The area selected in the Brecon Beacons is 'low grade agricultural land' – but how did it rate for wildlife, and wildlife potential? Much low-grade agricultural land is the best land for wildlife.
- Far more could be done to look after the trees and woods we already have. More support could go to protecting and managing our precious and irreplaceable ancient woodlands. New tree planting is a good thing, but may be of limited benefit if at the same time, through lack of care, we are depleting or even destroying our heritage of existing woodlands with their unique woodland habitats.



Editor's note: The above comments represent one member's point of view. The newsletter takes no particular stance on this issue and welcomes alternative views for publication in a future newsletter.

Obituary

Mike Gillingham

Mike Gillingham, a valued friend to many Charnwood u3a members, passed away in hospital on Wednesday 23 March. Mike had fought against cancer for many years with characteristic vigour and determination and never let it get in the way of his passion for life. We knew him as a member of the Photography, Science & Technology, English Parish Churches and Local History groups.

He had a life-long passion for sailing and the sea and frequently sailed his boat moored on the Isle of Wight. Mike's interest and knowledge were remarkable. They included local history, wartime industrial history and the geology and stories of the Jurassic Coast to name a few. Mike was always keen to share his passions with anyone who cared to listen - and many did. He gave many presentations to local groups and was frequently employed as a presenter on cruises.



Malcolm Coulson, leader of the Photography group, of which Mike was a member for several years, remembers Mike as being very interested in all aspects of photography; he was also a member of Shepshed & District Camera Club. However, Malcolm's abiding memory of Mike will be his enthusiasm for his boat and the sailing trips he took. Last year he gave a Zoom talk to the Travel Group entitled "A Cruise along the Jurassic Coast – 185 million years in 95 miles" (see the [April 2021 issue of News & Views](#), p.3, for a report of this talk together with a selection of Mike's photographs, including one of his boat, the Dawn Run). This inspired the inclusion of a Jurassic Coast boat trip during the forthcoming Travel Group holiday in Dorset.

Earlier this year he asked if the Photography Group would provide him with some specific local pictures for a lecture he was planning, Sadly Malcolm never learnt what the lecture was about or indeed what he wanted pictures of, but it illustrates that he was planning to entertain and inform people with more of his talks right up to the end. We will miss his email greeting "Ahoy there"; he was a well liked and very interesting man to talk with, a great story teller.

Janet Butlin, leader of the Science & Technology 1 group, writes "He and Sue had been members of our Sci Tech group for a number of years and he always gave at least one talk per year to us before Covid. Any donation given was always to the Cancer Trust. Some of his topics included PLUTO (*Pipelines under the Ocean*), 1000 years of shipbuilding, and science & technology in world wars. He and my husband exchanged books on topics such as WWII and the Mulberry Harbours. He was a very interesting man and a sad loss."

Anne Speight, leader of the Local History group, remembers that Mike bore his health problems very stoically. He always wanted a chat and was full of useful and fascinating information. In February 2021 he gave a superb talk about Charnwood Forest Canal to the u3a Local History group and friends. It was on Zoom with almost 100 people listening. His enthusiasm about the subject was evident and he received many questions which he handled brilliantly. (*Editor: I remember this talk vividly, and how it inspired me to walk the footpath along the banks of the now dried-up canal, which was just as he'd described*).

Mike will be greatly missed by his many friends and we send our condolences to his widow, Sue, and the family.

Mike Batten: A Tribute

Following the sad passing of Mike Batten in February, Martin Jones has sent this tribute:

I have known Mike Batten since 2003/4, as the Classical Music group which he led was one of the first groups in Charnwood u3a that I joined after moving up to Birstall in 2003. Mike was a wonderfully enthusiastic person about anything that he did and no more so than about classical music. I also soon discovered he had another musical enthusiasm which was for jazz. With classical music he particularly liked big romantic music played by large orchestras, and rather similarly with jazz, he liked big bands (all the usual American ones but he had a soft spot for Ted Heath).

As well as music, his other enthusiasms included SciTec 1; as Janet Butlin said in her tribute last month he was always full of ideas and thinking and planning ahead. He was also adept at making his own sound equipment, and he had produced the amplifier and several sets of speakers for the Music Group and also the sound equipment used for PA at the monthly u3a meetings. When I joined the music group it had over 30 members, indicating the popularity of his programmes. My pleasure in classical music has been enhanced by listening to Mike's choice of music and his enthusiastic presentation of his programmes.

After Mike asked me to stand in for him as he became ill, I have always tried to follow his great love of music and the wide range of his tastes in my leadership of the group. He was someone who was larger than life and always brought pleasure to all those he met with. Our thoughts are with Dorothy and the family at this time. He leaves a large gap in our lives yet will remain in our memories forever.

Items for News & Views

Do you have an announcement, story, poem - or even a short comment - to share with your fellow Cu3a members? All contributions are very welcome, and we can preserve your anonymity if you prefer that your name does not appear in the newsletter.

There is a limit of around 500 words per item, and photos are very welcome.

To enable the newsletter to be compiled in time for delivery to members at the start of each month, the deadline for receiving items will normally be the last day but one of the previous month. The deadline for the **May issue of News & Views** will be **Friday 29th April (12 noon)**.



Please send your contributions to the Newsletter Editor at: newsletter@charnwoodu3a.org.uk

Please make sure you include your contact details with your item, and try not to leave it until the last minute if at all possible.

The Editor reserves full editorial rights as to length and suitability and the Editor's decision is final.

News & Views is sent to all Charnwood u3a members by email link (or, for those without email, by post) before the monthly meeting. It is also available to read on the Charnwood u3a website each month at <https://www.charnwoodu3a.org.uk> under the News menu.

Thank You!

Helen Reid
Newsletter Editor
Charnwood u3a



Contact Details for Committee and Group Leaders

Names and photographs of the Committee and their generic email addresses ending @charnwoodu3a.org.uk are available on our website under Contact Us - Committee Contacts.



The names and generic email addresses of Group Leaders for each group can be found on that group's dedicated website page, accessed via Our Groups - Groups Listed...

Telephone numbers of Group Leaders can be accessed from the Members area of the website, using login details previously supplied.

Note: Where personal contact details appear in News & Views, these are included with permission.

News from the National u3a



Launch of the New Spring Programme

The new u3a spring learning programme has been launched and is said to be packed with member-led initiatives from across the movement, sharing skills and talents to provide lots of new things to do and learn. These include new monthly logic puzzles, a new u3a Book Groups Forum, a monthly challenge for crocheters or knitters and each month a new craft form will be celebrated - this month Kirigami.

See <https://u3a.org.uk/learning/national-programmes> for details. As well as the new spring learning programme, this page also has links to established 'favourite initiatives', such as the Maths Challenges and the themed monthly online art galleries.

Free On-Line Events this Month include:

- **Introduction to Evidence Based Medicine** with Rebecca Gould: Friday 8th April 2 pm.
- **From Olympics to Now** with Roger Black, GB Olympian: Tuesday 12th April, 2 pm.
- **Book Groups Discussion Forum** with Richard Peoples, Subject Advisor: Friday 22nd April, 2 pm.

For details of these and other upcoming free on-line events offered by the National u3a, including how to book, go to: <https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events>

u3a Radio Podcast

In the March episode of the u3a radio podcast, the team hear about the **Specsavers partnership** with u3a, talk to u3a members who contributed to the **40th anniversary quilt** and learn about the many **usages of seaweed**. Watch the subtitled video on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gQDuPk8ZxR4>

You can access previous radio podcasts and other videos, e.g. the '*Do Something Brilliant Today*' video, from the u3a YouTube channel at: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCrqc8qYDZ4U24Iq0J4qx0fQ>

National u3a Newsletter and More:

To register to receive the National u3a newsletter regularly, go to: <https://www.u3a.org.uk/newsletter> where you will find a link to recent issues (also see our Cu3a website under 'News' - National u3a Newsletters...).

As well as the u3a National programmes page of learning initiatives mentioned above, the u3a learning blog **Sources** has more articles you may find of interest at <https://sources.u3a.org.uk>.

Some other useful u3a web addresses:

National u3a: <https://www.u3a.org.uk>

The Association of East Midlands u3as: www.eastmidlandsu3as.org.uk

Leicestershire and Rutland Network: www.landru3a.org.uk

Beacon system: <https://beacon.u3a.org.uk>

