

# News & Views


 Newsletter

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

View from the Chair	1
Monthly Meetings	2
Group News	3-4
Sustain Planet visit	3
Local History	3
Recorder group	3
Painting group	4
Roving Reporters	5
10+ Walking	5
EDI	5
Meetings Calendar	6
Simple Membership	7
Trustee Appeal	7
University Research	8
Local Events	9-10
LU Choir Concert	9
Showtime!	9
Emmanuel Concert	9
Xmas Tree Festival	9
Charnwood Orch	9
Xmas in the Wood	10
Gardeners Fair	10
Obituary	10-11
Nigel Leicester	10
Jim Horne	11
National u3a News	12
Items for Newsletter	12
Contact Info	12

## Our Website

Check out our website at: [www.charnwoodu3a.org.uk](http://www.charnwoodu3a.org.uk) for lots of information about Charnwood u3a, including details of our meetings, trips, all our Groups and much more.

## Welcome

...to the December 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 on the last page.



## Our Next Monthly Meeting: The Ratcliffe Chorale



See page 2  
for details.

## View from the Chair



Winter has definitely arrived in our house, when windscreen de-icer heads the shopping list and the cat stations herself in front of the fire and glares at everyone until it's lit. Those first frosts bring the annual temptation to curl up on the sofa with a mince pie and a glass of something warming. The Scots had a word for it in the 19th century: 'hurtle-durkling', which meant 'lounging about long after it's time to get moving'.

But move we all must – because (in case you hadn't noticed) Christmas is coming! Lovely when it finally arrives, but in the meantime those perennial questions: How many are coming for dinner? Can I give Auntie Muriel a potted hyacinth again? Or the new ones: Is my wrapping paper bio-degradable and how much will I be able to cram into the air fryer?

Of course Christmas is all about giving. In last month's newsletter from the national u3a, Liz Thackray, Chair of the Third Age Trust, mentioned a popular misconception - that the u3a is for retired/elderly people. She said that as long as the activities we undertake are educational (in the broadest sense) there is no actual restriction on those who can join. While I can't honestly see myself inviting my granddaughters to join (I can imagine their faces if I sent them a 'Join the U3a' gift token for Christmas! ), we do certainly need younger members, to bring in new ideas and new groups.

More important for me, is what Liz says about us, as members: that the u3a is a self-help, mutual aid organisation, where we should all try to contribute. And once again, I am asking you to think about giving – to Charnwood u3a. Early in the New Year, the Cu3a Committee will need to start planning our AGM and we will need nominations for Committee members. If you would like to help keep our wonderful organisation going, please get in touch.

This month our own newsletter brings the sad news that Nigel Leicester has died (*page 10*). Nigel was the first Chair of our u3a and I'm sure you will all join me in offering our condolences to his family and friends.

Finally, a 'plug' for our Christmas Concert with the wonderful Ratcliffe Chorale. Do come along on 13th December - a little bird tells me there will be mince pies! Along with the rest of the Committee, I wish you all a happy and peaceful Christmas.

Pam  
[chair@charnwoodu3a.org.uk](mailto: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. The main car park for the church is accessed via Ingle Pingle, 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 think you'll need any assistance at the meeting, please contact our Chair in advance on [chair@charnwoodu3a.org.uk](mailto:chair@charnwoodu3a.org.uk).

Last month we welcomed Dr David Maidment, a senior lecturer in Psychology in the School of Sport, Exercise and Health Sciences at Loughborough University, who gave a very interesting talk entitled '*Healthy hearing is healthy ageing*' about his research into how hearing loss can impact on other aspects of our health as we get older, such as social interaction, physical activity and cognitive health.

### Our Next Meeting Wednesday 13th December

### Christmas Concert The Ratcliffe Chorale



For nearly 30 years, members of the Ratcliffe Chorale, based in Syston, have enjoyed singing together whilst helping to raise money for various charities. They sing a variety of music - songs from popular musicals, gospel tunes, sacred music, pop songs and Christmas carols.

Their Musical Director, Simon Lubkowski, is an accomplished choral director, coaching choirs, quartets, groups and choruses around the UK. He formed The Lancaster Community Choir (now The Knighton Community Choir) when he took over as Head of Music at Lancaster Boys School, after the Gareth Malone TV show 'The Choir – Boys Don't Sing' had been filmed there. He has also formed an award winning School Choir at Lutterworth College, is a founding member of the 2018 UK National Champion Barbershop Quartet 'The Locksmiths', and is the founder of the worldwide virtual choir "The Collective", which has had more than 3000 singers from over 50 countries take part since the Covid pandemic.

Come along and enjoy one of Leicestershire's best choirs with accompanist Ron Berry.

### To attend this meeting:

If you wish to attend the meeting in person, no prebooking is required - just turn up on the day, with your Cu3a membership card, if you have one. **Please do not arrive before 2 pm.**



If you are unable to attend in person and would like to follow the meeting online (via YouTube), again no prebooking is required. All members who have supplied an email address will be sent a link to the live stream a few days before the meeting in a reminder email from the Chair.

### Looking Ahead:

For our **January** meeting, we welcome **Annette Taylor** who will talk of her 30 years' experience as a cruise director and travel manager of ocean and river cruises in her presentation '**All At Sea**'.

And on **14th February** we have a special treat for St Valentine's Day, when singer **Holly Reynolds** will entertain us with love songs from the 50s and 60s with information about the origin of Valentine's Day.

For more information, see the **Monthly Meetings** page under the 'Events' menu on our website.

## Group News

### Sustaining the Planet Group visits CasePak

CasePak are based on the edge of Leicester near the M1. They receive and sort the recyclable waste collected by most borough councils in Leicestershire, including Charnwood. There is more information about CasePak at <https://www.lesswaste.org.uk>.



*The Group modelling the latest fashions in PPE with our guides*

Our Group were welcomed to the factory and escorted through the working site. We were initially shown how the waste is accepted or rejected due to contamination. Rejected loads can be traced back to the originating collection round – be warned! We then followed through the various processes that separate it into categories such as paper, metals, plastics etc. Separation is a combination of gravity, air blowing, mechanical sorting by light reflection and, as a last resort, by hand. The final products are baled up and sent on to other businesses where they are further processed into new products. Rejected material usually goes for incineration.

There are quality standards for the recycled products and in the discussion that followed we were told about the importance of avoiding contamination by food or other waste that is not meant to be there. We all learned a lot about what

can and can't be recycled and, importantly, how to deposit waste in bins. Cardboard boxes and plastic bottles (caps on) should not be flattened, for example, as it makes separation easier. CasePak don't welcome plastic film as it can clog up the machinery whereas Charnwood BC are encouraging us to recycle it in their latest advice: [https://www.charnwood.gov.uk/news/2023/10/16/right\\_stuff\\_right\\_binr\\_campaign\\_to\\_help\\_residents\\_recycle\\_with\\_confidence](https://www.charnwood.gov.uk/news/2023/10/16/right_stuff_right_binr_campaign_to_help_residents_recycle_with_confidence). This demonstrates the importance of getting common approaches to guidance across the country and has been the subject of recent public consultation. The same consultation that confused the Prime Minister recently!

A big thankyou to Nicole, Jason and the staff for their help.

Brian Waters

### Local History

After 10 years of leading the Local History group, Anne Speight has announced that she is now stepping down from that role. I'm sure other members will join me in sending our very warm thanks to Anne for running the group so well and organising such an interesting programme of meetings over the years.

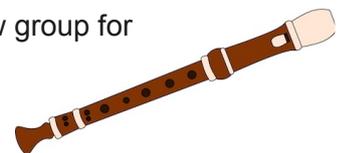
If the group is to continue, new leaders will be needed to put together a programme for 2024. Bearing in mind the u3a philosophy that we should all do our bit in enabling groups to flourish, hopefully others will be prepared to step up to help keep this popular group running.

Helen Reid

### New Recorder Group

Would you like to join a new group for Recorder Players?

If so, contact Arthur at [gould3@btinternet.com](mailto:gould3@btinternet.com) (not suitable for beginners, nor experts)



### News of Your Group

Do you have news from your group to share with other Charnwood u3a members? All contributions are very welcome, preferably by email to [newsletter@charnwoodu3a.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@charnwoodu3a.org.uk). Photos are always welcome - though not compulsory! Please remember to send in your contribution ahead of the deadline given on the last page.

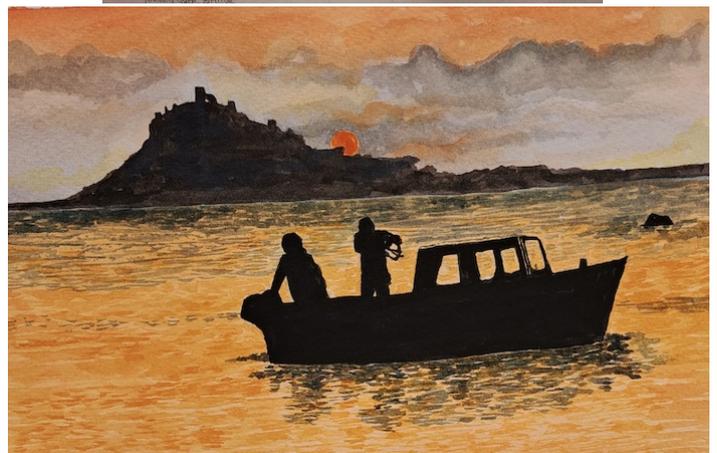
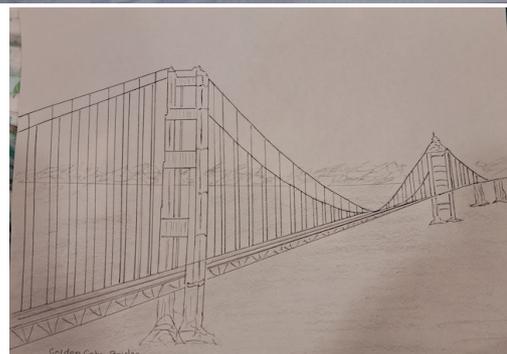
## More Group News

### Painting Group

Our painting group is now full. If anyone wishes to join the group please contact me and I can add you to the waiting list. Please send email to [painting@charnwoodu3a.org.uk](mailto:painting@charnwoodu3a.org.uk). If there are enough interested we may be able to start a new group.

Here are some pictures of our wonderful group and the amazing artwork they have created.

Angela Cantrill



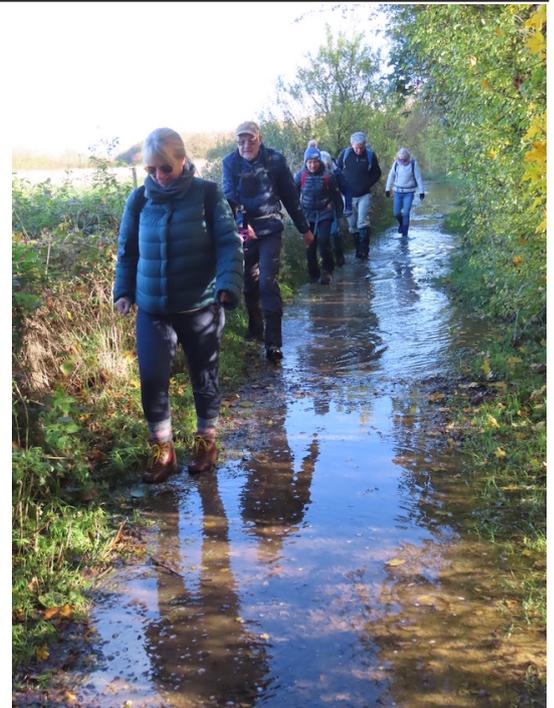
## Roving Reporters

### 10+ Walking

The Tuesday November 7th walk started from St Chad's Nature Reserve car park. Our leader Elizabeth and 11 members set off towards Breaston to find a coffin stone. However the footpath was under water (as pictured on the right) and after a short paddle we retraced our steps back to follow the road to Breaston. We then rejoined the original route through Risley to Stanton by Dale for a lunch at the Stanhope Arms. The return route awarded us great views across the Trent valley and plenty of muddy paths. The photo bottom right shows St Chad's Water, Church Wilne.

New members are very welcome. Make a New Year's resolution by joining our monthly walking group and enjoy some winter sunshine and the odd bit of mud.

Contact Mike Hill on [Walk10plus@charnwoodu3a.org.uk](mailto:Walk10plus@charnwoodu3a.org.uk)



## Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

At the EDI team meeting on 13th November, the following points were discussed:

- Where possible, programmes offered by groups should cover diverse topics and cultures, e.g. restaurants of various cuisines are enjoyed by the Supper Club.
- Lack of English language proficiency is not a bar to joining activity groups such as sports and dancing, as has been shown in the Scottish Dancing group.
- To raise awareness of u3a amongst the newly retired, we could send leaflets to local companies to distribute to staff about to retire.
- Future Group Leaders' meetings could include a 'Celebration of EDI' with examples of good practice.
- Team members to fill gaps in the accessibility audit and collate the potential venues list.



If you have any comments on the above or on any other EDI matters, or if you might be interested in joining the EDI team (who normally meet once every 2 months) please email [newsletter@charnwoodu3a.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@charnwoodu3a.org.uk).

## December 2023 Meetings

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
<p>Please note: Whilst every effort has been made to show the dates/times of these meetings as accurately as possible, errors and changes may occur, so you should check with group leaders for confirmation. Please send any amendments for future issues to : <a href="mailto:newsletter@charnwoodu3a.org.uk">newsletter@charnwoodu3a.org.uk</a></p>				<b>1 Dec</b> 09.00 Badminton 10.00 German: RTC 10.00 Knit & Natter 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
<b>4 Dec</b> 09.30 Yoga 10.00 Craft+Self Help 10.00 Latin 11.00 Table Tennis 1 13.30 Canasta 2 14.00 Chess 15.00 Current Affairs	<b>5 Dec</b> 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 Canasta1Quorn 14.00 Sing4Pleasure 15.30 Pickleball	<b>6 Dec</b> 09.30 Golf 10.00 Classical Greek 10.00 German 10.00 JigsawBookEx 10.00 Mini Tennis 10.00 Scottish Dance 10.30 Papercraft 11.00 Laughter Club 11.00 Table Tennis 3 13.30 Scrabble 2 14.00 Cribbage 2 14.00 French Improve 14.00 Reading Group 14.00 Sustain Planet	<b>7 Dec</b> 10.00 CC Walks 10.00 Sci & Tech 10.00 Spanish Conv 11.00 Table Tennis 4 14.00 Bowls Indoor 14.00 French Conv 19.00 Canasta 3	<b>8 Dec</b> 09.00 Badminton 10.00 Classical Civ 10.00 Line Dance 10.00 Mah Jong 10.00 Needlecraft 1 10.00 Scrabble 1 10.00 Table Tennis 7 10.30 Tai Chi 11.00 Table Tennis 5 12.00 Table Tennis 6 13.30 Pilates 1
<b>11 Dec</b> 09.30 Yoga 10.00 Craft+Self Help 10.00 Poetry 1 11.00 Table Tennis 1 13.00 Quiz group 14.00 Archaeology 14.00 Digital Imaging	<b>12 Dec</b> 09.30 Pilates 2 10.00 Scrabble 3 11.00 Table Tennis 2 11.15 Pilates 3 14.00 Canasta 1 14.00 Eng Parish Ch 15.30 Pickleball	<b>13 Dec</b> 09.30 Golf 10.00 Committee 10.00 Mini Tennis 10.30 History 11.00 Table Tennis 3 14.30 Monthly Meet 19.00 Canasta2Quorn	<b>14 Dec</b> 10.00 Thurs 6 Milers 11.00 Table Tennis 4 14.00 Bowls Indoor 18.30 Supper Club 2	<b>15 Dec</b> 09.00 Badminton 10.00 German: RTC 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 13.00 Art Apprec'n 13.30 Pilates 1 15.00 Mac Users
<b>18 Dec</b> 09.30 Yoga 10.00 Craft+Self Help 11.00 Table Tennis 1 13.30 Canasta 2 14.00 Chess	<b>19 Dec</b> 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 15.30 Pickleball	<b>20 Dec</b> 09.30 Golf 10.00 Mini Tennis 10.00 Poetry 2 11.00 Table Tennis 3 12.00 Scrabble 2 14.00 Classical Music 14.00 Cribbage 2 14.00 French Improve	<b>21 Dec</b> 11.00 Table Tennis 4 14.00 Bowls Indoor 14.15 Scrabble 4	<b>22 Dec</b> 09.00 Badminton 10.00 Mah Jong 10.00 Scrabble 1 10.00 Table Tennis 7 12.00 Table Tennis 6
<b>25 Dec</b>	<b>26 Dec</b>	<b>27 Dec</b> 09.30 Golf 10.00 Mini Tennis	<b>28 Dec</b> 14.00 Bowls Indoor	<b>29 Dec</b> 09.00 Badminton 10.00 Mah Jong 10.00 Table Tennis 7

### PLUS at Weekends:

Days of Interest (2nd Dec); Sunday Lunch Club (10th Dec).

## Our Simple Membership Implementation Continues Apace



The switch-over, at the beginning of November, which makes our Simple Membership pages what anyone sees when they do a web search for Charnwood u3a, was a major milestone in our implementation programme. If you haven't yet looked at these pages please do so, and also share any thoughts on how you think that they can be improved. They contain information about our various groups and activities, along with policy and practice documents related to the functions of our u3a.

Note: If you need to refer to our former web pages, they can be accessed in the 'More' option in the Menu bar of our web site.

An issue that a very few members have encountered is receiving emails from groups they do not belong to, or not getting mails from their groups. Invariably this is because the wrong email address is in the system and, once reported, can readily be changed. So please shout if you are getting unexpected emails – or not getting emails at all!

Because of where we are with our phased implementation, this month's update is more geared to Group Leaders. It may however have wider interest in helping understand what Simple Membership can do and its importance to our u3a. Questions from all our members about our new system are welcomed and will be answered in future updates.

Firstly, a Group Leader reminder: Beacon has not been updated since September and will be turned off early in 2024. If (apart from Finance - see below) you are using Beacon to mail your group it is now necessary for you to switch over to Simple Membership. Please ask if you are unsure about our new system, or would like some reminders.

A major Simple Membership component, though one out of sight to most members (other than it logs their membership payments), is the Finance System. To get us familiar with this part of the system we are uploading 2023 transactions, many

of which relate to centralised banking covering group spending and receipts. This is currently going well, and any group leaders with banked money can now see their current year transactions (for much of 2023) by selecting the £ icon at the top right of their group page. If it applies to your group, please look at these and share your reactions. Note – this is being done alongside updating data from Beacon with a full set of 2023 transactions.

For 2024 we will just be using Simple Membership as our finance system and using its group reporting form for communicating monetary matters to our treasurer. Initial information on the new arrangements will be shared with the leaders of groups who have banked money during December. This will be followed by further information exchanges, and/or workshops in early January. But do ask if you lead a group that doesn't currently 'bank' but would like to use our new system to monitor the cash you locally hold (as Simple Membership has this capability).

Further into 2024 we will be starting to make use of the Event functionality which should benefit those groups who organise outings and trips. Whilst we are not yet finished with our integrated web system implementation we are, at the end of 2023, well on our journey.

This ongoing series is aimed at helping you get the most out of our new web based system. If it prompts questions contact Martyn Speight - by email at [martyn.sm@charnwoodu3a.org.uk](mailto:martyn.sm@charnwoodu3a.org.uk) or by phoning 01509 213137.

---

### ***Do you have just 6 hours to spare in 2024?***

The Dawson & Fowler Foundation has for over 400 years offered financial assistance to low-income families living within Loughborough. Help is available with education costs, such as clothing, equipment, field trips, music tuition etc. Trustees meet six times a year and are responsible for allocating funds.

If you would like to join with other Trustees and play a vital role in helping families cope with rising education costs in these difficult times, or would like more information, please contact Ann Maddocks ([ann.maddocks2@gmail.com](mailto:ann.maddocks2@gmail.com)).



## University Research Projects



Loughborough PhD student Jiayin Guan (Joey) is still looking for a few more participants to join a 10-week physical activity programme, as advertised in October's *News & Views* (p.8).



Below, Cu3a member **Char March** shares her experiences of taking part in the programme.

Participants need to be aged 60 - 85, with basic functional capabilities e.g. able to walk 100 metres unaided, and in good health. If you are interested in this study, please email [j.guan4@lboro.ac.uk](mailto:j.guan4@lboro.ac.uk).

### What is all this about 'physical activity'?

Whenever I hear about us older people being encouraged to do more 'physical activity', I am sceptical that it is A Good Thing. This is because too often the images used are of people doing energetic sport – which is well beyond an awful lot of us, and, let's face it, if we did try it, we'd probably end up injured! So, I was delighted when I went to the initial interview with Jiayin (Joey) who is a student NOT in our University's Sports Science Dept, but in its School of Design and Creative Arts.

He is a delightful young man with excellent English who has designed a really simple – and very effective – 10-week calendar to help you track (and hopefully gradually increase) your physical activity. I've found it really useful and easy to use. None of it is on your phone – it's all paper and pen, and he gives you different colours of stars to stick on when you do particular types of activity:

-  • **Strength and Resistance** – e.g. using those lovely coloured elastic bands to pull against;
-  • **Aerobic** – e.g. gardening, brisk walking, swimming, etc.;
-  • **Balance and co-ordination** – e.g. Tai Chi, dancing, balancing.

Using the different coloured stars, you can see at a glance if you're just doing one type of activity or have a good spread across all three. Then, if you've met some simple targets, you award yourself a Gold Star at the end of the week – great fun! 

(Joey gives you all the sheets and an explanatory booklet in nice large print).

But fear not, if all that seems too much, simple things can *really* help. I've already improved my balance a lot by standing on one leg while I clean my teeth – and hanging onto the washbasin if necessary! Also, I no longer sit for hours doing paperwork or watching telly – I set my timer for 30 mins, then get up and go make a cuppa, or go outside for a breath of air for a couple of min's. Doing this 30mins-then-a-break has definitely helped me feel a lot less stiff. And my partner has realised the benefits, and taken it up too, so we're no longer making awful groaning and wheezing sounds when we try to get up off the sofa! :-)

Looking at my week's activities on one big sheet has definitely brought things into focus, and has encouraged me to keep myself on track and even to try new things. I hate swimming – all the noise in the pool and not being able to see a thing without my glasses! – but I've found out when local pools have their quietest times and plan to go along with my glasses on to try strengthening my legs simply walking in the water.

So, please do get in touch with Joey and give it a try. It's actually really good fun and I already feel I am developing good habits that will – hopefully – stay with me long after the 10 week programme. Ke-e-e-e-p moving! :-)

### Investigating age differences in the brain during silent reading



This research is part of a PhD project being undertaken in the Neuroscience, Psychology and Behaviour Department at the University of Leicester. Your eye movements and brain activity will be recorded simultaneously whilst you read approx. 200 to 300 sentences on a computer screen and answer some questions. The entire session will last about 2 hours and you will be compensated for your time.

Those eligible to take part are adults 60+ years old with normal or corrected-to-normal vision, who are English native speakers, right-handed, have no known reading disability (e.g. dyslexia) or neurological disorders (e.g. epilepsy), and are educated to secondary education level or above.

To take part or ask any questions, contact Rapuli Limachya, by email at: [rxl025@student.bham.ac.uk](mailto:rxl025@student.bham.ac.uk).

## Upcoming Local Events

### Loughborough University Choir: A Crafted Christmas Concert

Wednesday 6th December, 7:30 - 9:30 pm  
Cope Auditorium

A festive evening of music from our University Choir plus musicians from LSU Classical.

The concert will feature:

- Handel's 'Messiah (Part One)'
- Britten's 'A Ceremony of Carols'
- Elgar's 'The Snow'.



Tickets £7 / LU students and Under 16s £5.  
Advance booking is recommended.

Visitors must register their vehicle and pay to park on campus, including outside Cope Auditorium. There is a flat evening rate of £1 after 6pm.

For more details, see: <https://www.lboro.ac.uk/arts/whats-on/university-choir-crafted-christmas-concert/>

### Lunchtime Concert at Emmanuel

Thursday 21st December, 12:45 - 1:30 pm

They're back! **The8** are delighted to perform yet another Christmas Celebration Concert. Arrive early to ensure that you get a seat! There will be stunning organ music too, played by Kerry Beaumont.

The concert starts at 12.45 pm but for this concert food is served from 11.30.

**A free event, but donations are most welcome.**

For more information, see:

<https://www.facebook.com/emmanuelconcerts>

### Showtime! History of the Theatre at Loughborough Town Hall

23rd November - 26th January  
Loughborough Library

An exhibition hosted by the Loughborough Library Local Studies Volunteer Group at Loughborough Library, 'Showtime' is a history of the theatre at Loughborough Town Hall.

There will be a display of programmes, flyers, handbills and posters of productions at the Town Hall theatre over the years.

Admission free during usual library opening hours.

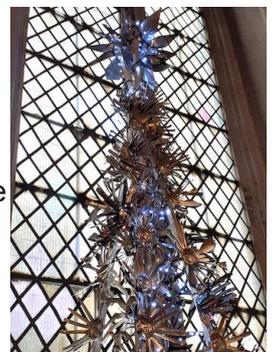


### Christmas Tree Festival 2023

1st - 21st December  
Thursdays & Saturdays 10 am - 4 pm  
All Saints with Holy Trinity  
(Loughborough Parish Church)  
Free Entry

For details of the Festival, see:  
[allsaintsloughborough.org.uk/christmas-tree-festival-2023](http://allsaintsloughborough.org.uk/christmas-tree-festival-2023)

The photo to the right shows the tree made for the festival out of aluminium cans by Cu3a member Char March.



### Charnwood Orchestra

Charnwood Orchestra's New Year concert is on **Saturday 13th January at 7:30 pm at Humphrey Perkins Community Centre, Cotes Road, Barrow.**

- **Offenbach** Orpheus in the Underworld Overture
- **Tchaikovsky** Nutcracker Suite (Chinese Dance, Arabian Dance, Trepak & Waltz)
- **Berlioz** Dance of the Sylphides (from The Damnation of Faust)
- **Delibes** Mazurka from Coppelia
- **Ponchielli** Dance of the Hours

Plus Viennese favourites from the Strauss family including The Blue Danube, Thunder and Lightning Polka, waltzes and the Radetzky March.

More details and ticket information can be found at <https://www.charnwoodorchestra.org.uk>

50th Anniversary Concert Season

**the Charnwood Orchestra**  
Music Director Nic Fallowfield  
Patron Thomas Bowes

**A New Year Celebration**

**Saturday 13th January 2024 7:30pm**

**Humphrey Perkins Community Centre, Cotes Road, Barrow upon Soar LE12 8JU**

**Conductor Nic Fallowfield**

## More Upcoming Local Events

### Christmas in the Wood

Burleigh Wood, Wed 13 Dec, 2 pm - 3:30 pm



This free Loughborough University wellbeing event will begin at the gates of Burleigh Wood. Following a short introduction, the group will take a walk through the woods experiencing poetry, singing, music and history. It will then finish with a short reflection on the meaning of Christmas.

Mince pies and mulled apple juice will be provided. The walk will last approximately one hour.

For more details and booking information, see <https://www.lboro.ac.uk/news-events/events/christmasinthewood/>

Details of other University events are at: <https://www.lboro.ac.uk/news-events/events/>

### Gardeners Fair Christmas Special

Loughborough Market Place  
Sun 10 Dec, 10 am - 4 pm

The Loughborough Gardeners Fair brings the pleasure of visiting a Garden Centre into the heart of Loughborough town centre. Free to all visitors, the Gardeners Fair brings you an array of flowers and plants, alongside gardening tools and supplies, makers crafts and artisan foods.



This Christmas Special will also showcase wreaths, seasonal foods and festive decorations. For details, see <https://gardenersfair.co.uk/>

Discover Charnwood has other local events at: <https://www.discovercharnwood.co.uk/events>

## Obituary

### Nigel Leicester



It was with great sadness that we recently received the news that longstanding Cu3a member Nigel Leicester had passed away peacefully in hospital in New Zealand on 12th November at the age of 90.

Nigel was a founder member of our organisation when it was formed in 1997 as Charnwood U3A. He was a member of the original steering committee and was our first ever Chairman. He was also Membership Secretary in the early days. In recognition of his long service, he was made an Honorary member in 2019 and remained such after moving to New Zealand earlier this year to be near his son Mark, following the death, in 2021, of his wife Melitta, whom he had previously helped with her German and Painting groups.

Mark commented that his father spoke very fondly of his years with Charnwood u3a and was very pleased to stay in touch by reading our newsletter after his move to New Zealand. Indeed, you may remember that Nigel contributed a very interesting illustrated article about the retirement village he had chosen as his new home, which was published in the July 2023 issue of *News & Views* (page 7: 'A Retirement Home with a Difference'). It is such a pity that he died before he really had time to enjoy his retirement down under.

*Avril Wilkinson of the Architecture Appreciation group has sent the following tribute:*

I first met Nigel in the autumn of 2011 at the initial meeting to set up the original Architecture group. I was designated Group leader. After the first 2 or 3 meetings, the numbers joining the group increased significantly and it became apparent that I would need some help in running the group. Nigel, along with 2 others, volunteered to form a small committee. He remained a loyal member for the next 11 years.

Nigel was the source of many ideas for group meetings and did a lot of presentations himself. These were always meticulously planned and enjoyed by the members. After the death of his wife, Melitta, he emigrated to New Zealand in April this year to live near to his son. Sadly he became ill soon after arriving and he died on November 12th - one month short of his 91st birthday.

Our condolences go out to his family and friends, who will surely miss him very much.

## Obituary

### Jim Horne



We were shocked and saddened to learn of the death of Jim Horne, on 27th October in hospital after a short illness. He will be missed by many within our u3a, having belonged to Art Appreciation, Canasta 1, Classical Civilisation, History, Jigsaw/Book Exchange, Philosophy, Parish Walks and Science & Technology groups.

*Sue Griffiths of the Classical Civilisation group has provided the following tribute:*

Jim only joined the Classical Civ group last year, although some of us have known him for much longer through other u3a groups. He was a regular attendee at our meetings, and was last with us in June. It was only in April this year that he gave a lively and memorable talk entitled 'Why Sleep?' at the Wednesday monthly meeting at Emmanuel Church.

Jim was an internationally renowned Sleep Neuroscientist, and before his retirement was Professor of Psychophysiology and Director of the Sleep Research Centre at Loughborough University. He held an impressively long string of degrees and professional qualifications, and after his retirement he remained very active in the field of sleep research, giving talks and lectures on sleep in the UK, abroad, and on the radio. He published many research papers, articles in the popular press, and three books on the subject.

But you would never have guessed any of that from just meeting Jim and knowing him as a fellow u3a member and a friend. He wore his academic credentials and celebrity lightly, rarely displaying his own specialist expertise and always keen to listen to what other people had to say. He was a private person who didn't talk about himself, but if questioned he could sometimes be drawn into fascinating and often very funny accounts of his bee-keeping, his chickens, his activities on the local parish council and other unexpected activities.

He was modest, unassuming, sociable, kind, easy-going and good-humoured. He will be greatly missed.

*Pauline May provided the following words on behalf of the Philosophy group:*

All of us in the Philosophy Group have been very saddened by the news of Jim's death, especially as he has been a stalwart of the group for many years, cheerfully continuing even with the ups and downs of Zoom during the Covid pandemic.

Jim always listened with interest to the views of both the philosophers under discussion and to those of fellow members of the group. He was a thoughtful listener as well as a good contributor with his quick and wry sense of humour. Jim would often be the first to suggest that some of the philosophies discussed were, to say the least, impractical. He would also, when necessary, firmly correct us when we strayed into areas of science - always with patient good humour.

When we had more light hearted topics or the occasional social event Jim again added to enjoyment of the whole group, always joining in and at Christmas lunches delighted us all by bringing sherry and port. During such times we learned quite a bit about his chickens and their laying habits.

We will all miss Jim's presence and contributions to the group and we will remember him as a good friend to us all.

*Finally, the following paragraph from Jim Miller and Pauline May on behalf of the History group:*

History group members have learned with great sadness of the death of our colleague Jim Horne. It came as a great shock, as it seemed no time at all since he had been coming to our meetings and participating enthusiastically. Jim was a delightful and interesting man, who wore his academic laurels lightly. He was widely known in Loughborough University as the Professor of Sleep, and this was a genuine compliment as he was a world authority on aspects of sleep and human behaviour. The notices we see by our motorways advising drivers to take a break are largely down to him, and very recently he was a consultant and an expert witness in the various investigations into the Croydon tram disaster in 2016. He was very active in retirement (he kept bees and chickens!) and was a dynamic member of several Charnwood u3a groups.

RIP Jim.

## News from the National u3a



### Poetry Competition Open Now

The u3a national poetry competition has been launched for its fourth year, with the theme of 'What If'. Your poem should be a maximum of 16 lines and the deadline for submission is 12pm on Friday 26 January 2024. For details, see: <https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/poetry-competition>. This is just one of the learning initiatives you can get involved with. For more, see <https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/national-programmes>.

### Free On-Line Events this Month include:

- **Art & Literature meet at Christmastide** with Catherine Stevenson, Newcastle u3a, Tue 5 Dec at 10 am.
- **Exploring World Faiths: Christmas** with subject adviser Dr Peter Rookes, Mon 11 Dec at 10 am.
- **Climate Change and the Oceans** with Ian Hawker, East Suffolk u3a, Fri 15 Dec at 10 am.

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>.

### 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 Newsletters...). The u3a learning blog **Sources** has more articles you may find of interest at <https://sources.u3a.org.uk>.

## 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 **January** issue of **News & Views** will be **Saturday, 30th December (12 noon)**.



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



## Committee, Support Teams and Group Leaders' Details

Names, photos and generic email addresses ending @charnwoodu3a.org.uk of all the current Committee members can be found on our website under the Home menu under 'Contact', along with details of our Support Teams. In the case of our Membership Secretary and Site Administrator, phone numbers are also given, as are those of our IT Help Desk Team.

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



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