

## News & Views

Newsletter

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**New!** Click on the item in the index above to take you straight to that page.

### Our Website

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

## Welcome

...to the May 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: Made in Leicester



See page 2 for details

## View from the Chair

Happy May Day!



What is your perfect day? Home or away? A family party or blissful solitude? According to research by Canadian scientists, the perfect day involves six hours of family time, two hours with friends, one hour eating and drinking and two hours of exercise. It sounds exhausting! In fact, last Saturday I used four times my 'time with friends' allocation on a Days of Interest trip to Bletchley Park, the home of the brilliant codebreakers who did so much to secure victory in the 2nd World War. It was definitely a perfect day!

The exhibits at Bletchley give a fascinating insight into the lives of the men and women doing such valuable work, but I'm ready to admit that I would have been bottom of the list for recruitment to the service: I can't count. This mathematical incompetence was laid bare after our AGM. I was convinced that we had one remaining vacancy on the Committee. Then I counted again and we had ten Trustees, which means that we currently have TWO vacancies. Good news, though: our Constitution allows us to co-opt three more members, so there's plenty of room around the table at John Storer House, 10 am every 2nd Wednesday of the month. Anyone can come along and see what we get up to - just call me or drop me an email. We'd love to see you!

May Day means that spring has definitely arrived. It's the time of year for new shoots and fresh starts (and hoary old clichés of course!). As usual, there are lots of great things to see and do in this edition of *News & Views*. And how about checking the list of activities on our website and trying something new? If nothing inspires, or the activity you were considering is full, why not start a new group? There's lots of help available – just contact me or Bev, our Groups Coordinator.

Now I'm off to see if that old saying is true: that washing your face in the morning dew on the first of May, will ensure beauty, youth and good fortune – frankly I don't hold out much hope. Now if it endowed mathematical prowess....

Enjoy the sunshine!  
Pam  
[chair@charnwoodu3a.org.uk](mailto:chair@charnwoodu3a.org.uk)  
07974 946007

## 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, 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'. New members are invited to arrive at 2 pm to meet other members before the main meeting. 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 had a thoroughly enjoyable and enlightening talk on the history and work of the YMCA by its past World President Peter Posner (*pictured right*). I think we all learned a lot we didn't know about the worthwhile work of this organisation.

If you missed this meeting, you can catch up with it for a few more days via the YouTube link sent by our Chair on 7th April.



## Our Next Meeting: Wednesday 14th May

### Made in Leicester with Brian Johnson

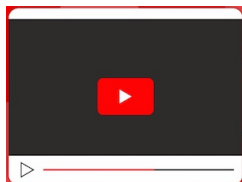
Brian Johnson is a local historian with a wide range of interests, who has lived in Wigston for many years. In this talk, he will tell the stories of those businesses which began locally from humble origins and have since become household names.

Learn about the "big" named shops, like Currys, Wilkinsons, Dunelm, Halfords, that originated just a short drive down the road in Leicester.



### 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. **If you are a new member, or attending a monthly meeting for the first time, you are invited to arrive at 2 pm.** Otherwise, please aim to arrive about 2:15 for a prompt start at 2:30 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 beforehand in a reminder email from the Chair.

### Looking Ahead:

Next month, on **11th June**, we welcome Adrian Allsop who will tell us about the **Glenfield Secret Garden**, a 19th century walled garden in the grounds of Glenfield Hospital, which has been restored by volunteers for the benefit of patients and staff. Then in **July**, we will hear a brief **History of the Ambulance Service**. For a summary of meetings up to and including October, see page 3 of April's edition of *News & Views*.

More information on upcoming meetings will appear in future issues of News & Views and also on the **Monthly Meetings** page under the 'Events' menu on our website <https://www.charnwoodu3a.org.uk> (login needed to see details beyond title/speaker).

## Group News

### Art Appreciation Group

#### Right on our doorstep, Loughborough's own sculpture park

Did you know that here in Loughborough we have a collection that is home to over 40 sculptures dating from the 1950s to the 2020s, and is free to visit at any time of year?

The Art Appreciation group recently learnt all about the works in a fascinating illustrated talk by David Bell of LU Arts, curator of the University's art collection. He took us on a virtual guided walk around the campus, looking at some highlights, and explaining how the sculptures came to be there and how they are cared for.

The university campus features works by world renowned artists such as Lynn Chadwick, Atta Kwami, Ron Arad and Bernard Schottlander, alongside works by current and former staff and students.

There are sculptures in stone, steel, aluminium, bronze, concrete and one made partly from mycelium - the root-like structure of fungus - and many need a considerable amount of attention after up to 50 years of being on site, so conservation is a major issue.

Many of the works were purchased by Leicestershire Education Authority under the auspices of Stewart Mason, the county's Director of Education from 1947 to 1971. A progressive educator with a keen interest in contemporary art, he oversaw the purchase or commissioning of works to accompany new building projects. He believed that challenging, experimental art should be taken out of the gallery to the places where 'people daily congregate'.



So you too can take yourself out of the gallery and go on a self-guided tour of the campus to explore the collection – everyone is welcome. Sculptures can be located using the Google Maps Sculpture Trail, which includes a suggested step-free walking route. This cuts through the heart of the campus to take in many of the key works. It's around 3 km long, and has bus stops at either end. See:

[www.lboro.ac.uk/arts/arts-collection/sculpture-trail/](http://www.lboro.ac.uk/arts/arts-collection/sculpture-trail/)

At Art Appreciation meetings, we look at all kinds of art forms, from ancient to modern times and from around the world, and aim to discover more about the subject in a relaxed, enjoyable fashion. You don't need to be an expert to join us; everyone's ideas and opinions about art are valued and welcome. We have a full programme planned for the rest of the year, but here are just a few of the topics we will be covering:

- Snapshot of a Decade: 1490 – 1500: what was happening in the world of art at this time? How did it vary from country to country?
- Land Art: members will find examples of artists who use the natural environment to inspire their work to share with the group.
- Today's young and aspiring artists: will their work stand the test of time?
- The life and art of Sofonisba Anguissola, the Italian Renaissance painter, first female artist to achieve international recognition.

We meet on the the third Friday of the month at Quorn Church Rooms, starting at 2.00 pm. Parking is available at the Quorndon Fox, if you register your car at the pub; there is also a bus stop right outside.

We have spaces for new members, so if you are interested in finding out more, please contact Sue Palmer or Pauline May at

[ArtAppreciation@charnwoodu3a.org.uk](mailto:ArtAppreciation@charnwoodu3a.org.uk)

Sue Palmer & Penny Bryce

### Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

At our recent EDI team meeting on 14 April, we discussed the presentation of our draft revised EDI Policy at the Group Leaders meeting on 30 April, when group leaders would be invited to make comments and ask questions.

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



Helen Reid



## More Group News

### Beastly ETHEL

For April's ETHEL meeting, group members were each assigned a different animal and tasked with researching the many ways their creature's name is used in English. Below is Colin's offering on the pig:

#### When Pigs Might Fly

Porker and Piglet rooted round the piggery piggishly. "Dont pig yourself," advised Porker. "You'll get porky too quickly."

Piglet eyed the pignuts, the pigswash and the pigweed. "OK then, don't hog it all," relented Porker.

All too aware of his fate, he was anything but the proverbial pig in a poke.

Making rather a pig's ear of it, Piglet gave a muddy pigjump. "You pigsconce! Enjoy it: Don't be pigheaded."

Pigeyed, pigfaced, he had sow much to learn. Porker could be boaring sometimes.

"Piggyback me over that waterfilled pigiron: that container, that piggin over there."

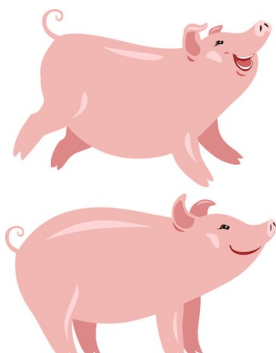
"In a pig's eye," grumbled Porker, adding in a pig's whisper, "Pigs might fly."

He was known for his piggishness, but rasher than usual he trottered up to Piglet.

However, you can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear.

This whole pigsty is going to pigs and whistles, he thought, before slipping in the mud; the pigmentation of his pigtail and pigskin becoming a lovely shade of piggery brown.

He was no longer 'on the pig's back' as they used to say (apparently).



*in a pig's eye*: emphatic disbelief, incredulity, cf Fr l'oeil d'un cochon  
*on the pig's back*: well off/in luck, Irish C18/19

*pigs and whistles*: rack and ruin  
*pigsconce*: a pigheaded fellow  
*piggin*: small pail of staves and hoops

*pigweed*: cowparsnip or plant eaten by pigs

*pig's whisper*: low whisper or short space of time

### Local History Boat Trip

**Monday 28th July**  
**Canal/River trip with**  
**Peter le Marchant Trust**

**There are some places available on this trip which is now open to all Cu3a members.**

This 'all-day' boat trip (10 am – 3 pm) will take us along the Canal and River Soar from Loughborough to Mountsorrel and back, including a stop for a pub lunch (or you can take a picnic if you prefer).

Cost – excluding lunch which is paid for individually on the day – is £20 per person.

Further info at <https://www.plmt.org.uk/day-trips>

If you are interested in joining this trip, please email [LocalHistory@charnwoodu3a.org.uk](mailto:LocalHistory@charnwoodu3a.org.uk)



### Sustaining the Planet

**Visit to Boothby Wildland**  
**near Grantham**  
**Wed 4th June, 10.30 am - 12.30 pm**

Loss of biodiversity is one of the big challenges for the future health of the planet. We have arranged a visit to this farm which is being rewilded; details can be found at:

<https://www.nattergal.com/boothby-wildland>

It will cost £5 per person and consist of a 20-minute introduction to the project in the modern reception centre (with teas, coffees, biscuits). Then about a one hour gentle walk, with stops if needed. Make your own way there but we are trying to arrange some car sharing.

There are a few places left and if any u3a member is interested in joining us, please contact Brian Waters at

[SustainPlanet@charnwoodu3a.org.uk](mailto:SustainPlanet@charnwoodu3a.org.uk)

## Travel Group Trip to Sicily

“Oh, to be in England, Now that April’s there.” Okay Bob, April in England ain’t bad but on your Italian travels you clearly did not get to Sicily in April. The Sicily that we found in April was green from its mountain slopes to its plains and with fields full of wild flowers amongst olive and citrus groves. And swifts, dozens at a time, squealing as they played high speed follow my leader through clear blue skies.

We will not bore you with an exhaustive list of places visited; if you have watched the Godfather films you would have seen the mountain village of Forza d’ Agro and if you are an Inspector Montalbano fan you will be familiar with the town of Scicli where, amongst other filming locations, the Inspector’s office can be visited in the Town Hall.

We will mention what were for us the highlights: the Valley of the Temples at Agrigento; the Greek theatre at Taormina and the still active volcano, Mount Etna.



The Temple of Concord is one of twenty something Greek temples that served the colony of Akragas and is the most complete of those that survived the various bust-ups of the ancient world. If you have visited the temple of Athena in Athens you will have an idea of just how much has survived. The fallen Icarus statue in front of the temple (*pictured left*) seems to be of more of interest to visiting teenage groups who wanted to have their photo taken with part of him.

The other two locations that we will mention both had challenges for our coach driver Orazio. We had to admire his skill in taking a full sized coach along corkscrew mountain roads with a sheer drop on each side, or down narrow village streets where we wouldn’t have felt comfortable taking a car.

The theatre at Taormina is still occasionally used as such; they were installing a stage during our visit. On an elevated site, the view must have been a distraction for theatre goers; it certainly provided an excellent photo opportunity for most of us (*as shown on the right*).

We first saw Etna shortly after leaving our hotel in Acireale; the word ‘gobsmacked’ comes to mind. For the photographers amongst us, Etna’s cloud cover seemed to be synchronised to appear whenever a chance to photograph the mountain presented itself. Our guide Giovanni suggested we change the time of our visit, it being clearer in the morning. We got some good views of the snow-capped peak with its plume of volcanic steam and the journey up the mountainside was witness to the devastation of past eruptions including partly covered buildings.



For the second part of our visit, the guide Giovanni was replaced by his nephew Angelo. ‘I must not be intoxicated by the exuberance of my own verbosity’ is a lesson that Angelo has yet to learn and, although clearly knowledgeable, he failed to appreciate that we wanted to study Italian lunchtime cuisine rather than hear about yet another Baroque church.

We soon learnt that the Sicilian lunch was not to be rushed and that Italian food courses come in only two sizes: large and Pavarotti. We ordered a Caesar salad; it arrived on a square board the size of a tea tray and contained a whole iceberg lettuce. The croutons on that salad would not have disgraced the fried bread section of a full Ulster fry from a Belfast transport café.

We are very recent members of the Travel Group and did not know quite what to expect. However, the other members of the group very much added to our enjoyment of the trip. In particular we would like to thank the group leader, Ann Maddocks. The ‘Head Girl’ must have got pretty close to deducting house points from some of us and I bet she’s even good at herding cats.



MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
<b>May 2025 Calendar</b>				
<p><b>PLUS at Weekends:</b> Sunday Lunch Club (11th May); Days of Interest trip to York (17th May)</p> <p><i>Please note: Whilst every effort has been made to show the dates/times of 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></i></p>				
<p>5 May</p> <p>09.30 Yoga 10.00 Craft+Self Help 11.00 Table Tennis 1 14.00 Current Affairs</p>	<p>6 May</p> <p>09.30 Pilates 2 10.00 10+ Walks 10.00 Spanish 10.45 Fix I.T. Clinic 10.45 Pilates 3 11.00 Table Tennis 2 12.00 Pilates 4 14.00 Canasta 1 14.00 Canasta1Quorn 14.00 Sing4Pleasure 15.30 Pickleball</p>	<p>7 May</p> <p>10.00 Drama 10.00 German 10.00 Golf 10.00 JigsawBookEx 10.00 Scottish Dance 10.30 Papercraft 11.00 Table Tennis 3 14.00 Cribbage 2 14.00 French Improve 14.00 Reading Group 14.00 Scrabble 2 14.00 Sustain Planet</p>	<p>1 May</p> <p>10.00 Parish Walks 10.00 Spanish Conv 11.00 Table Tennis 4 14.00 Bowls Outdoor 19.00 Canasta 3</p>	<p>2 May</p> <p>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 Lunch Club 12.00 Table Tennis 6 13.30 Pilates 1</p>
<p>12 May</p> <p>09.30 Yoga 10.00 Craft+Self Help 10.00 Poetry 1 11.00 Table Tennis 1 14.00 Archaeology 14.00 Chess 14.00 Digital Imaging 14.00 Quiz group</p>	<p>13 May</p> <p>09.30 Pilates 2 10.00 Scrabble 3 10.30 Fix I.T. Clinic 10.45 Pilates 3 11.00 Table Tennis 2 12.00 Pilates 4 14.00 Canasta 1 14.00 Eng Parish Ch 15.30 Pickleball</p>	<p>14 May</p> <p>10.00 Committee 10.00 Golf 10.00 Mini Tennis 11.00 Table Tennis 3 14.30 Monthly Meet 19.00 Canasta2Quorn</p>	<p>8 May</p> <p>10.00 Line Dance 2 10.00 Sci &amp; Tech 11.00 Table Tennis 4 14.00 Bowls Outdoor</p>	<p>9 May</p> <p>09.00 Badminton 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</p>
<p>19 May</p> <p>09.00 Gardening trip 09.30 Yoga 10.00 Craft+Self Help 10.00 Enjoy I.T. talk 11.00 Table Tennis 1 13.30 Canasta 2 14.00 Painting</p>	<p>20 May</p> <p>09.30 Pilates 2 10.00 6+ Walks 10.00 Recorder 10.00 Spanish 10.30 Fix I.T. Clinic 10.45 Pilates 3 11.00 Table Tennis 2 12.00 Pilates 4 14.00 Canasta 1 14.00 Sing4Pleasure 15.30 Pickleball</p>	<p>21 May</p> <p>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 Cribbage 2 14.00 Family History 14.00 French Improve 14.00 Italian Conv 14.00 Scrabble 2</p>	<p>15 May</p> <p>09.45 CC Walks 10.00 Line Dance 2 11.00 Table Tennis 4 14.00 Bowls Outdoor 14.00 French Conv 14.15 Scrabble 4</p>	<p>16 May</p> <p>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 13.30 Pilates 1 14.00 Art Apprec'n</p>
<p>26 May</p> <p>09.30 Yoga 10.00 Craft+Self Help 11.00 Table Tennis 1 14.00 Chess</p>	<p>27 May</p> <p>09.30 Pilates 2 10.00 ETHEL 10.00 Scrabble 3 10.30 Fix I.T. Clinic 10.45 Pilates 3 11.00 Table Tennis 2 12.00 Pilates 4 14.00 Canasta 1 14.00 Philosophy 1 15.30 Pickleball</p>	<p>28 May</p> <p>10.00 Golf 10.00 History 10.00 Mini Tennis 11.00 Table Tennis 3 14.00 Classical Music 14.00 Travel Group 18.30 Supper Club</p>	<p>22 May</p> <p>10.00 Line Dance 2 10.00 Philosophy 2 10.00 Thurs 6 Milers 11.00 Table Tennis 4 14.00 Architecture 14.00 Bowls Outdoor</p>	<p>23 May</p> <p>09.00 Badminton 10.00 Line Dance 10.00 Mah Jong 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</p>
			<p>29 May</p> <p>10.00 Line Dance 2 11.00 Table Tennis 4 14.00 Bowls Outdoor</p>	<p>30 May</p> <p>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 19.30 Wine Apprec'n</p>

## Robert's Recommended Reads

This month, Robert recommends two classic but very different novels of the twentieth century.

### *The Maltese Falcon* by Dashiell Hammett

published in 1929

Born in Maryland, USA in 1894, Dashiell Hammett became an operative of the Pinkerton Detectives Agency. His personal experiences as a private detective in the 1920s laid the foundation for his writing career.

Sam Spade, who made his first appearance in *The Maltese Falcon*, is Hammett's most celebrated fictional character. The book opens with Spade being hired by the beautiful Miss Wonderly to track down her missing sister. However, things are not as they seem. When Spade's partner, Miles Archer, is shot and killed whilst tailing an associate of Miss Wonderly, Spade uncovers a catalogue of lies, misdirection and deception. He soon finds himself both hunter and hunted as he tries to track down 'The Falcon'.

A cast of intriguing characters, delicious prose, crackling dialogue and a gripping plot make this a must read detective story. Further plot details, or even revealing what 'The Falcon' is, would spoil this elegantly crafted, groundbreaking book. Instead, I'll say a few words about the iconic 1941 film version. John Houston's directorial debut became one of the most critically acclaimed films of the twentieth century. Humphrey Bogart, in his first major film role, was peerless as Sam Spade. This classic film has achieved global and lasting popularity across eighty years and I have no doubt that *The Maltese Falcon* is much more widely recognised as a film than as a novel. But, brilliant as the film is, the book is better!



*Photo portrait of American author Dashiell Hammett used for the first-edition dust jacket of his fifth and final novel, The Thin Man.*

*Above reviews written by Robert Jackson.*

**Next month:** *Wilkie Collins and Harriet Beecher Stowe*

### *Catch 22* by Joseph Heller

published in 1961

Heller's wonderfully satirical portrayal of war took eight years to complete. *Catch 22* is complex in that it employs third person narrative, from the point of view of several different characters. In addition, the storylines are not chronological.

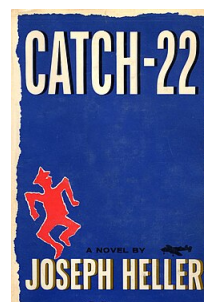
Set during the latter years of World War Two, most of the events take place on a fictional U.S. army air squadron base on the Italian island of Pianosa in the Mediterranean.

Madcap, bonkers and utterly compelling, *Catch 22* follows the exploits of Yossarian, a bomber pilot, attempting to retain his sanity amidst the absurdity of war. Heller's many memorable characters define the novel. Brilliant depictions of inflated egos and obsessive, neurotic officers offer genuine laugh out loud moments throughout the book.

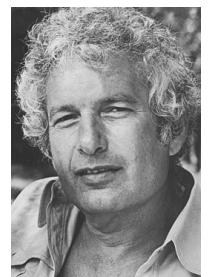
Heller's intriguing, now famous logic constructs are superb:

*"He would be crazy to fly more missions and sane if he didn't, but if he was sane he had to fly them. If he flew them he was crazy and didn't have to: if he didn't want to he was sane and had to."*

However, *Catch 22* has a darker side. It is a deeply thought provoking anti war novel with some genuinely disturbing episodes, serving as counterpoints to the sharply observed comedy. The book's parody of war is embittered, often outrageous but also moving and unsettling. The title has, of course, become widely used in everyday language. *Catch 22* is deservedly present in any list of the most important novels of the twentieth century.



*Dust jacket of the 1st edition of Catch-22 by Joseph Heller.*



*Joseph Heller, ca. 1979.  
Photo: Thomas R. Koeniges*



## Why laurel became barley and horses became spiders!

Since moving to Leicestershire six years ago, my partner and I have become fascinated by the sheer volume of archaeological finds over the county. We regularly go to archaeology lectures, walks and events. So we soon learnt about The Hallaton Hoard. This is a huge haul of over 5000 silver and gold Iron Age coins that were deposited in small bags around a sacred hilltop site near Hallaton village. Lots of other artefacts were found too. But I've always been fascinated by the designs on the coins.

Archaeologists don't think coins in Iron Age Britain were used in anything like the same way as we use them today. They were symbolic, ritual and simply indicators of wealth, not of specific value. Hence them being used as offerings to the gods at this sacred site.



Coins as definite different values that could be used to buy goods and services didn't start in Britain - they think - until after the Romans introduced their own coins after the invasion. However, the various British tribes did have their own designs of coins, and sometimes named their kings or queens on them. What I'm fascinated by is the way they had clearly seen some Greek coins long before the Roman invasion, and how they created their own coins with some semblance of what they thought was stamped on the Greek coins.

Greek coins have the head of a king wearing a laurel wreath on one side and a charioteer with multiple horses on the reverse. But remember, these coins would have been scarce, would have been in circulation for quite a long time before they got to remote Britain, and they were made of relatively soft metals – silver and gold – so would have lost definition/ worn smooth much faster than our modern coins. Also, they were copied by various peoples as they moved up through countries North of Greece, then eventually to Britain.

This is where my love of the Iron Age designs comes in, because clearly what they often saw in these faded designs was some semblance of a head (maybe) and what they thought was an ear of corn or barley (presumably laurel wreaths weren't a Big Thing in Iron Age Britain so they reinterpreted what they saw as something they knew about) so laurel wreaths became ears of wheat and barley. And the horses became amazing Picasso-esque abstract and beautiful representations of horses - some of which ended up looking more like spiders!

I hope you enjoy having a look at these actual coins. Sorry the quality of the photos isn't brilliant - the coins are tiny and behind glass, so some are of blown-up display photos in the Market Harborough Museum exhibition, which I saw on a recent u3a History group visit.

Do go along and see the exhibition there – it's superb, and there are vg explanations of how the coin hoards, etc. were all discovered by local people – and kept completely secret while Leicester University archaeologists (with masses of local volunteers) did a full excavation. It's a fascinating story.

Char March



## Old John opening to the public



One of Leicestershire's best known landmarks is to be opened up to the public for one day a week. Old John, in Bradgate Park near Newtown Linford, is locked up for most of the year but volunteers will now be opening the tower to visitors **each Thursday from 11 am to 3 pm until the end of October.**

The 18th Century monument, built in 1784 to resemble a beer mug, has undergone a series of external repairs. Some internal restoration work is planned for the tower but that will take place outside the hours it is open to the public.



## Upcoming Local Events



8th May 2025 marks the 80th anniversary of Victory in Europe (VE) Day, the day celebrating the formal acceptance by the Allies of World War II of Germany's unconditional surrender of its armed forces on Tuesday, 8 May 1945; it marked the official end of World War II in Europe.

### Quorn VE Day events

**Sunday, 4th May - Saturday 10th May**  
**Various venues around Quorn**

For details of VE Day celebration events in Quorn, see: <https://quorndon.com/calendar/>

For information about events across Charnwood borough to commemorate the 80th anniversary of VE Day, see: [www.charnwood.gov.uk/ve80\\_events](http://www.charnwood.gov.uk/ve80_events)

### The Geological Treasures of Shepshed - Free Guided Walk

**Friday 16th May, 2 pm - 5:30 pm**  
**Morley Quarry Car Park, Shepshed**

Join the Charnwood Forest Geopark team for a guided hike through the amazing 600 million year old history of the Shepshed area. Discover some of the oldest rocks in England, and travel back in time to when Leicestershire lay at the centre of a giant sandy desert!

This walk is free, but booking is essential.

4 miles, 3.5 hours, 2 stiles

This walk is provided as part of the National Forest Walking Festival. The work of Charnwood Forest Geopark is supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

More information and booking link:

<https://www.charnwoodforest.org/event/guided-walk-geological-treasures-of-shepshed-2/>

**For other local events events, see:**

<https://www.discovercharnwood.co.uk/events>

### VE Day 80th Anniversary Beacon Lighting

**Thursday 8th May, 8 pm - 10 pm**  
**Queen's Park, Loughborough**

Charnwood will mark 80 years since VE Day with a special beacon lighting event at Queen's Park in Loughborough on Thursday, 8 May, with information stalls and activities taking place from 8.30 pm, and the lighting of the beacon around 9.30 pm.

Charnwood Borough Council has run a competition to find a local resident with a military background or a connection to VE Day, and the selected entrant will have the honour of lighting the beacon.

The Queen's Park beacon will be one of thousands up and down the country lit to mark 80 years since the end of the Second World War in Europe.

The Granby Street gate to the park will remain open throughout the event to allow people to exit following the beacon lighting.

For more information about the beacon lighting event, see: <https://tinyurl.com/yeymvn59>

### University Choir Spring Concert

**Wednesday 21st May, 7.30 pm - 9 pm**  
**Cope Auditorium (Edward Barnsley)**

This year's Spring Concert has a nature theme and will open with a performance of Twelve Trees, with music by Katy Lavinia Cooper and words by Catriona Downie. Inspired by trees native to Britain, the twelve pieces that make up this work delve into the history, folklore and traditional music of this land. It is full of folk inspired tunes so, while being new, it's also very attractive to listen to. The second half of the programme picks up on the theme of the natural world, with music by Bob Chilcott and Vaughan Williams, arrangements of familiar folk songs and solo performances from members of the choir.

Cost: £7 / £5 Students and Under 16s

More information and booking link at:

<https://www.lboro.ac.uk/news-events/events/university-spring-choir-concert/>

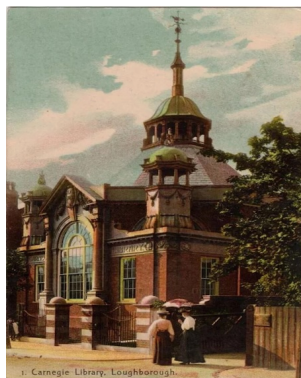
The University Choir is made up of students, staff, alumni and members of the local community. They rehearse on Monday evenings during term time and welcome new members.

## **120 Years of Loughborough Library and 100 years of Leicestershire Library Service Exhibition**

**Friday 9th May - Saturday 28th June on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays at Loughborough Library, Local and Family History Centre**

This year it is the 120th anniversary of the Carnegie Library being built in Loughborough. The Leicestershire Library Service is also 100 years old this year.

The Loughborough Library Local Studies Volunteers present this free exhibition detailing the history of both libraries.



## **Queen's Park Summer Bandstand Concerts**

Queen's Park in Loughborough will host a variety of free Sunday concerts for residents and visitors to attend this summer.

The schedule for 2025 commences on **11 May** with the Loughborough Student Union (LSU) Classical Concert Band, and then there are regular concerts from Sunday 1 June, through to mid-September. Details of the first 3 concerts are shown below and a listing of further concerts will appear in next month's *News & Views*.

The popular bandstand concerts have been well-attended in recent years, and residents of all ages are invited to come down and enjoy an afternoon of music.

11 May - LSU Classical Concert Band  
1 June - Charnwood Concert Band  
8 June - Junkyard Cats Jazz Band

## **Friends of Charnwood Museum Robert Bakewell's life and work: a talk by Janet Spavold**

**Wednesday 14th May, 7:30 - 9:30 pm**

It is 300 years since the birth of Robert Bakewell so join Janet Spavold, a retired university lecturer and author, for her illustrated talk discussing a number of aspects of Bakewell's life and work at Dishley Grange Farm. The talk draws on Bakewell's extensive correspondence to tell the story of his family, travels and innovative farming methods and life as a Unitarian.



Please use the evening entrance to the museum on Granby Street on the night. Members £3 and Guests £5. Booking essential - call the museum on 01509-233754 or call in to book. <https://www.charnwoodmuseum.co.uk>

## **Wymeswold Waddle and Duck Races**

**Sunday 4th May 10 am - 4 pm  
Brook Street, Wymeswold**

The day starts at 10.30am with the Wymeswold Waddle 5-mile road race on closed roads to Six Hills and return. Following the Waddle there's the one-mile Fun Run for all the family.

Then from lunchtime onwards the Wymeswold Duck Races get under way with a series of races along the River Mantle. There's also a BBMF Spitfire flypast, stalls, live entertainment, children's rides, the 'Tough Ducker' challenges on the Hall Field plus food, drink & much more.

It's free to attend and all proceeds from the races, BBQ and stalls are distributed to local charities. More information is at: <https://www.facebook.com/duckracewymeswold>



Loughborough University

## **Loughborough University Inaugural Lectures:**

**Wednesday 14th May, 5 pm, Edward Herbert Building, 110b**

### **What are the sources of complexities in fluid flows and how to simulate them?**

**Professor Joanna Szmelter**  
School of Mechanical, Electrical and Manufacturing Engineering

More Loughborough University events are at: <https://www.lboro.ac.uk/news-events/events/>

### **Emergent Photonics: How do ant colonies and crystals hold the key to seeing the invisible with Terahertz eyes?**

**Professor Marco Peccianti**  
Department of Physics

For details & booking form, see: <https://www.lboro.ac.uk/inaugural-lectures>



## Using I.T. Combats Cognitive Impairment

Are you worried that the younger generations spend too much time on their phone? Do you avoid smart devices because you think it will rot your brain? Well, you needn't be concerned because using smart devices is actually good for the brain, at least for the over 50s.

An [article](#) in a recent edition of *New Scientist* finds that, in this older age group, those who spend more time using smartphones, computers and the internet are less likely to have cognitive impairment – and more likely to have slower cognitive decline – than people who spend less time using these technologies.

So, what are you waiting for? Come to a *Fix I.T. Clinic* on a Tuesday morning (10:30 am - 12 noon, in the John Storer House café), sign up for a *Master I.T. Workshop* (at a time and place convenient to you), or come to one of our *Enjoy I.T. Talks* (on the third Monday of the month from 10 am to 12 noon in the Round Table Room at John Storer House) and give your little grey cells a gentle workout.

Phil Bass, your friendly mental fitness coach and joint leader of the *I.T. for Everyone* group. Email: [helpdesk@charnwoodu3a.org.uk](mailto:helpdesk@charnwoodu3a.org.uk)  
Phone: 01509 889338



## News from the National u3a



### New u3a Council's first meeting

The new u3a Council met for the first time in April. Read more about this at: <https://www.u3a.org.uk/latest-news/council-first-meeting>

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

- **Turner and Impressionism:** celebrating the 250th anniversary of Turner's birth, Thu 8 May at 10 am
- **Mass Extinctions: Causes and Consequences** with Peter Webb, Thu 22 May at 9.30 am
- **How going digital can save you money:** a guide for older people with the DWP, Tue 27 May at 2 pm

For details of these and lots of 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>

### More from the National u3a:

Register to receive the National u3a **Friends** newsletter regularly at <https://www.u3a.org.uk/newsletter>. This will also give you access to the **Friends Extra** website, with a range of discounts, offers and services. In addition to the u3a **Friends** newsletter, you can access the latest u3a news by going to: <https://www.u3a.org.uk/news>

You can find more learning initiatives covering a wide range of interests from challenges and projects to competitions at <https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/learning-activities>. The u3a learning blog **Sources**, containing posts by u3a members covering a wide range of topics, can be found at: <https://sources.u3a.org.uk>

## Obituary

### Thelma King

We were sad to learn that Thelma King has recently passed away.

A former member of Loughborough u3a, Thelma joined Charnwood u3a in 2022 and was a member of the Days of Interest group.

Our thoughts and condolences go out to all her family and friends.

### Hilda Taylor

I have to report that longstanding member Hilda Taylor sadly passed away on Easter Sunday. She was a very early member of Charnwood u3a, joining in 1998, and was a member of the Science and Technology group.

Our thoughts and condolences go out to her husband Russell, also a Cu3a member, and all her family and friends.

## 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 - but please ensure you have permission of anyone identifiable in the photos.

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 **June** issue of **News & Views** will be **Friday 30th May (12 noon)**.



Please send your contributions to the Newsletter Editor at: [newsletter@charnwoodu3a.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@charnwoodu3a.org.uk)  
I always acknowledge all emails received, so if you don't get a reply within a few days, please contact me again as some emails do go astray!

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 email links for all the current Committee members can be found on our website under Home -> Our Committee, along with details of our Support Teams. In the case of our Membership Secretary and Web Manager, 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.*



## Committee Meetings

Don't forget that members are always welcome to attend any of our Committee meetings on the **second Wednesday of the month** (10 am - noon) in John Storer House, by prior arrangement, as observers. If you would like to attend one of these meetings and see what we do, please contact our Chair on [chair@charnwoodu3a.org.uk](mailto:chair@charnwoodu3a.org.uk)

## Some other useful u3a web addresses:

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

The Association of East Midlands u3as: <https://www.eastmidlandsu3as.org.uk>

