

News & Views


 Newsletter

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Our Website

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

Welcome

...to the August 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 in September: Handbell Ringing



See page 2 for details

View from the Chair



It was hard to write my usual up-beat View from the Chair this time. You'll see that we have three obituaries in this month's newsletter. Two of the members I knew well because they were both active members of my group, but it is always sad to hear that members have died. Most of us in the u3a are retired, so we must expect to hear from time to time that people we have got to know well are no longer with us. Nevertheless, it can come as a shock, even when someone has been ill for some time.

It made me think about the importance of friendship in the u3a. The 30th of July was the United Nation's International Day of Friendship. Their definition of friendship says it all, I think:

'Whoever they are, however we met them, there is a special connection based on a shared history and interests, enjoying doing things together or simply talking and understanding each other.'

Like many of our members, I joined the u3a originally because I wanted to pursue an interest (in my case, learning Spanish). My language skills have definitely improved, but being a member has brought me so much more along the way in terms of friendship and support. Indeed, it was a positive lifeline during Covid. My time spent as a group leader and, later, a committee member, has strengthened these bonds even further.

'Carpe Diem' is a familiar cliché, but, like so many sayings, it has a basis in truth. I'm sure those friends who are no longer with us would tell us the same: 'Seize the day; if you want to do something, do it.' The u3a offers so many opportunities to pursue new interests and to make new friends. Do you have an idea for a new group? Perhaps you have tried to join a group and found that it is full. Could you join forces with other members to start another one? Would you consider joining the committee – I'd love to hear from you.

As usual in August, there's no members meeting this month, but hoping to see you in September.

All the best

Pam

chair@charnwoodu3a.org.uk

Our Monthly Meetings

Following last month's enjoyable meeting at Emmanuel, featuring a very entertaining and informative talk by Mick Gregory on the history and development of the ambulance service (with lots of humour amongst the facts!) we are now taking our summer break which means there is

NO MONTHLY MEETING OF CHARNWOOD U3A IN AUGUST.

We will recommence these meetings in **Emmanuel Church**, Forest Road, Loughborough on **Wednesday 10th September**, when we will have a talk about handbell ringing and a performance by a small local group.

Thereafter there will be a meeting every **second Wednesday afternoon of each month, all at 2.15 for 2.30 pm.**

A summary of our programme up to the end of 2025 can be found on page 2 of the July issue of *News & Views*. For more information on each meeting, see the **Monthly Meetings** page under the 'Our Events' menu on our website <https://www.charnwoodu3a.org.uk> (login needed to see details beyond title/speaker). More details will be provided each month in future issues of *News & Views*.



Would you like some help in doing presentations?

As you know, lots of our groups have speakers in to give talks and lots also encourage their members to give talks or short presentations. The u3a is run by and for our members, so it's great to have as much participation from our group members as possible.

Your committee have been wondering how we can support you to become more involved in doing presentations in your groups and beyond. We know it can be intimidating to speak in public (even among u3a friends!) and to deal with the techie stuff of a presentation. So we're offering sessions to help members to feel more able to research a short talk, put together images and text so they're easy to read for everyone, and overcome their worries about speaking to a group.

Char March has decades of experience training people in how to enjoy speaking in public. And Garry Rigby can help with the techie stuff of preparing a presentation. Char would also be happy to work with members on how to actually enjoy (!!) giving a presentation.

As a group leader myself, I've tried a few PowerPoint presentations. And those of you who came to the last group leaders meeting will know that my own skills certainly need improvement, so I'll definitely be signing up!

Do let me know as soon as you can if this is something you would be interested in. Once I have an idea of numbers I can book a room.

All the best

Pam Upton

chair@charnwoodu3a.org.uk

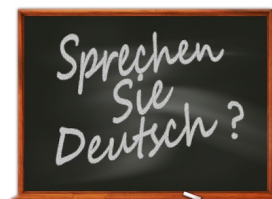
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Group News

German RTC

The German RTC (Reading, Translation and Conversation) Group currently has vacancies for new members. We operate via Zoom and meet twice per month, on the first and third Friday starting at 10 am; there are two 40 minute sessions in each meeting with a 10 minute break between them. There is always a set book that we read and discuss during the first session and a topic for discussion during the second.



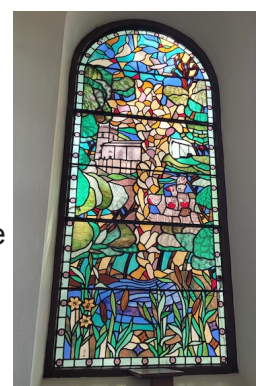
So, if you are happy speaking and reading German - be assured we are NOT fluent speakers - then contact Mike Buckley by emailing GermanRTC@charnwoodu3a.org.uk in the first instance, and we can arrange for you to join us, initially for a taster session if that is what you would prefer. We are currently taking a summer break and will resume regular sessions on September 19th but you can contact me at any time.

Mike Buckley

English Parish Churches

On Tuesday 8th July, over 20 members of Roger Willson's EPC group ventured 'over the border' to visit five churches in Nottinghamshire.

The day began at All Saints, Rempstone, a delightful Georgian church built in 1771 to replace an earlier building which stood about a mile away. The 'new' church, built in a classical style, used many of the materials from the previous church. This church is rare as many Georgian architectural features survive. It has a pretty apse with a beautiful modern memorial window (1990) by Michael Stokes (*pictured right*) recording the history of Rempstone.



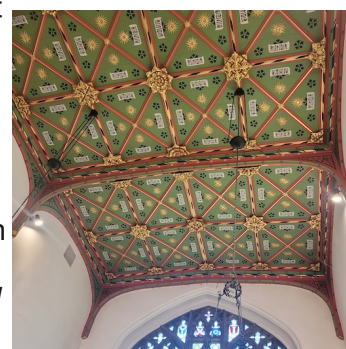
Our next stop was St Mary the Virgin, Bunny. This mainly 14th century 'English Decorated' style building is the largest church in South Nottinghamshire and is sometimes referred to as the 'Cathedral of the Wolds'. It is famed for its rather unusual memorial to Sir Thomas Parkyns (1662 - 1741) who was known as the 'Wrestling Baronet' (*pictured left*).

After coffee, we travelled to St Edmunds, Holme Pierrepont. The church has an idyllic setting next to Holme Pierrepont Hall (a private residence and wedding venue). Dating back to the 13th century, this medieval church has 'Early English' features. However, it was much extended in 1666 to include a new south aisle with interesting mock gothic window tracery. Inside there is an array of monuments to members of the Pierrepont family including Sir Henry Pierrepont in full armour (1499) and Sir Henry Pierrepont (1615), the latter being noted as one of the best alabaster monuments of its kind in the country. We were interested to see the war memorial on the lychgate which not only listed those killed during WW1 but also those who returned.



Inside Holy Trinity, Tythby

After lunch at The Griffin Inn, Plumtree we visited St Mary's church. This beautifully decorated and restored church can trace its origins back to Saxon times. Evidence of a Norman arch can also still be seen between the nave and tower. (*The decorated ceiling of St Mary's is shown on the right*).



Our final stop was at Holy Trinity, Tythby (Nr Cropwell Butler) where we were greeted with tea. This tiny church is a medieval gem with various later additions including a 19th century brick built tower. Inside there are lovely Georgian furnishings including a pulpit with reader's desk, altar rails, high box pews, a singing loft (1742) and hat pegs.

L. Jackson

August 2025 Calendar

| MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI |
|--|--|--|--|---|
| <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: newsletter@charnwoodu3a.org.uk</i></p> | | | | 1 Aug 09.00 Badminton 10.00 Line Dance 10.00 Mahjong 1 10.00 Table Tennis 7 10.30 Tai Chi 11.00 Table Tennis 5 12.00 Lunch Club 12.00 Table Tennis 6 |
| 4 Aug 09.30 Yoga 10.00 Craft+Self Help 11.00 Table Tennis 1 13.30 Canasta 2 14.00 Chess | 5 Aug 09.30 Pilates 2 10.00 10+ Walks 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 Canasta1Quorn 15.30 Pickleball | 6 Aug 10.00 Drama 10.00 German 10.00 Golf 10.00 JigsawBookEx 10.30 Papercraft 11.00 Table Tennis 3 14.00 Cribbage 2 14.00 French Improve 14.00 Reading Group | 7 Aug 10.00 Line Dance 2 10.00 Parish Walks 10.00 Spanish Conv 11.00 Table Tennis 4 14.00 Bowls Outdoor 19.00 Canasta 3 | 8 Aug 09.00 Badminton 10.00 Line Dance 10.00 Mahjong 1 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 |
| 11 Aug 09.30 Yoga 10.00 Craft+Self Help 10.00 Poetry 1 11.00 Table Tennis 1 14.00 Digital Imaging 14.00 EDI meeting 14.00 Mahjong 2 14.00 Quiz group | 12 Aug 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 15.30 Pickleball | 13 Aug 10.00 Committee 10.00 Golf 10.00 Mini Tennis 11.00 Table Tennis 3 19.00 Canasta2Quorn | 14 Aug 10.00 Line Dance 2 11.00 Table Tennis 4 14.00 Bowls Outdoor | 15 Aug 09.00 Badminton 10.00 Line Dance 10.00 Mahjong 1 10.00 Table Tennis 7 10.30 Photography 10.30 Tai Chi 11.00 Table Tennis 5 12.00 Table Tennis 6 14.00 Art Apprec'n |
| 18 Aug 09.30 Yoga 10.00 Craft+Self Help 11.00 Table Tennis 1 13.30 Canasta 2 14.00 Chess 14.00 Gardening 14.00 Painting | 19 Aug 10.00 6+ Walks 10.00 Recorder 10.00 Spanish 10.30 Fix I.T. Clinic 11.00 Table Tennis 2 14.00 Canasta 1 15.30 Pickleball | 20 Aug 10.00 German 10.00 Golf 10.00 Mini Tennis 10.00 Poetry 2 11.00 Table Tennis 3 14.00 Cribbage 2 14.00 French Improve 14.00 Italian Conv | 21 Aug 09.45 CC Walks 10.00 Line Dance 2 11.00 Table Tennis 4 14.00 Bowls Outdoor 14.15 Scrabble 4 | 22 Aug 09.00 Badminton 10.00 Line Dance 10.00 Mahjong 1 10.00 Scrabble 1 10.00 Table Tennis 7 10.30 Tai Chi 11.00 Table Tennis 5 12.00 Table Tennis 6 |
| 25 Aug 09.30 Yoga 10.00 Craft+Self Help 11.00 Table Tennis 1 14.00 Mahjong 2 | 26 Aug 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 | 27 Aug 10.00 Golf 10.00 Mini Tennis 10.30 History visit 11.00 Table Tennis 3 14.00 Classical Music 18.30 Supper Club | 28 Aug 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 | 29 Aug 09.00 Badminton 10.00 Line Dance 10.00 Mahjong 1 10.00 Table Tennis 7 10.30 Tai Chi 11.00 Table Tennis 5 12.00 Table Tennis 6 19.30 Wine Apprec'n |

PLUS at Weekends:

Days of Interest trip to Dunham Massey and Trentham Gardens Shopping Village (16th August);

Sunday Lunch Club (10th Aug)

Robert's Recommended Reads

As 2025 is the 80th anniversary of the end of WWII, Robert has selected for August two novels which address the attitude towards and treatment of Jewish people during the war.

The Gustav Sonata by Rose Tremain

published in 2016

The Gustav Sonata is a beautiful, poignant book, set in neutral Switzerland during the Second World War. Little Gustav lives with his widowed mother who is struggling with financial hardship. One day at his kindergarten, Gustav is asked to 'look after' the newly arrived Anton, a timid, tearful boy. Gustav and Anton develop a close relationship and are destined to become lifelong friends.

As Gustav grows, the dichotomy between his mother's poverty and the prosperity of Anton's parents forms a central thread to the story.

Gradually, the mystery of Gustav's father's departure from his senior position with the local police force is disclosed. We learn that his father's downfall resulted from helping dispossessed Jews, fleeing the horror of Nazi policies, to settle in Switzerland. The great irony of the storyline is that Anton's parents are 'legal' Jewish immigrants, well established in the banking world and enjoying the freedom from persecution which Gustav's father assisted other Jewish families to achieve.

We follow Gustav and Anton into adulthood and later life, learning more about their careers and relationships.

The book ends with a perfect concluding comment from Anton.



*Rose Tremain, pictured
in The Guardian,
23 Apr 2022
Photo: Aleksandra
Raluca Dragoi*

The Periodic Table by Primo Levi

published in 1975

In this extraordinary book, Primo Levi recounts periods of his life by reference to the chemical element he associates with each of those periods, taking the reader on a fascinating journey through twenty one episodes and elements.

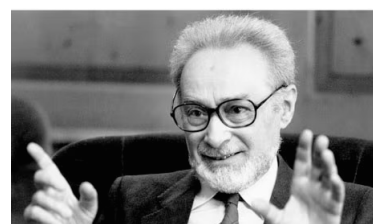
Primo Levi was born into a Jewish family in Turin in 1919. He studied Chemistry at Turin University and, despite the anti-Semitic laws introduced by Mussolini, graduated with a degree in Chemistry in 1941.

Inevitably, as a Jew, Levi was incarcerated by the fascist regime. He was eventually transported to the infamous Auschwitz death camp. His captors, recognising his skills as a chemist would be useful to their activities, assigned him to work in the nearby rubber and chemical research plant. The chapters/elements of the book dealing with Levi's time in Auschwitz are both fascinating and disturbing. His sensitive, powerful accounts of the physical and psychological horror of the camp are deeply impactful.

I was particularly taken with the chapter entitled *Cerium*. Here Levi tells of his discovery in the laboratory of an unlabelled box of small metallic rods. He steals the rods and eventually identifies them as ferrocenium alloy, used to make lighter flints. Manufacturing cigarette lighters was one of the many secret activities in Auschwitz. Risking immediate execution if they are discovered, Levi and his associate, working during the night in their bunks, reshape and resize the cerium rods into a quantity of lighter flints. One flint buys one slice of bread, which equals one more day of survival.

The Periodic Table is a semi-autobiographical masterpiece, reminding the reader of the inhumanity of the darkest period of the twentieth century. To quote Saul Bellow: "The book it is necessary to read next".

*Primo Levi, from
The Guardian,
14 Oct 2006.
Photo: Martin Argles*



What Has I.T. Ever Done For Us?

Technology delivers information to us in so many ways...

- * For example, we use mapping apps:
 - to locate properties and local services;
 - to get route maps for a variety of purposes;
 - to find all kinds of destinations, e.g. holidays, restaurants, cinemas, parks, etc.

OK, apart from maps, local services, places to go...

*** What Has I.T. Ever Done For Us?

- * Also, we use comparison websites for car and house insurance, utilities, etc;
 - and online shopping for food, clothes, furniture...
 - and we track the location of special keys that we lose occasionally

OK, so apart from: tracker keys, best price insurance, shopping, local services, route maps, travel guides...

*** What Has I.T. Ever Done For Us?

- * What about our Smartphones / Tablets:
 - acting as digital camcorders for family photos
 - access to all kinds of music & radio programmes
 - portable library so we can read books anywhere
 - and what about pictures of a bump in a car park - with exchanges of insurance details!

OK, so apart from: tracker keys, best price insurance, shopping, local services, route maps, travel guides, smartphone camera and sounds, etc...

*** What Has I.T. Ever Done For Us?

- and Zoom / Teams / WhatsApp technology means we can keep in touch with relatives and friends anywhere in the world - for free;
- and security markings to trace stolen property.

OK, if we take advantage of

- many of the products and services;
- just some of the online shopping, entertainment, and society memberships;
- having a video camera always on hand;
- let alone buying tickets for shows, travel, etc. ... all using I.T.

[Many interests & ideas] + [I.T.] = FUN!

Peter Reid

***Inspired by "What have the Romans ever done for us?" - John Cleese in film *Life of Brian*, 1979.



Making the Most of Your I.T.

To help our members make full use of their I.T. equipment, whether it is a smartphone, tablet, iPad, laptop or computer, Help Desk support is available, where help is given on a voluntary basis by other Cu3a members who are experienced users of I.T. A number of our members have now used this service and share their comments on how helpful they have found the support they have received:

"I have really benefitted from being able to meet up and get assistance at John Storer House. Also being patiently guided through the computerization minefield means I know more than I did before!"

"I cannot say other than how lucky we are to have people in our u3a who gave their time and expertise so generously when I had a problem."

"It's great to have someone to refer to for help. I'm sure I will be contacting the Help Desk again."

"I am a reluctant user of modern technology but it is difficult to avoid in our lives now. So, it is good to know that I can get help when I am uncertain which option to select when questions pop up on my phone or computer."

To contact our I.T. Help Desk, either email helpdesk@charnwoodu3a.org.uk, phone 07855 702302 or look in the Help and I.T. Support Section of our website at https://charnwoodu3a.org.uk/Help_Support for more information.

Seeing the World from a Different Perspective

In response to the Editor's request for contributions to News & Views, Anne and Martyn Speight have provided this article on something they are passionate about.



This spring the 80th anniversary of VE Day was celebrated but less recognised is the 80 years since churches in Britain came together to help refugees after the Second World War. From these beginnings, what is now Christian Aid started. As a charity, they are committed to address the root causes of global poverty and to focus on long-term development. Christian Aid's ethos is to work in partnership with local communities and organisations, regardless of religious affiliation, and to campaign for policy changes to tackle issues like climate change and tax avoidance.



As local supporters, we have been privileged to visit Zambia. Here we saw some contrasting examples of Christian Aid's work. Our first visit was to a silica mine in the northern copper belt region, silica being used in refining copper. Local partner Future – Preneurs, led by charismatic director Martin, had been working with some 500 miners who were being forced off land they had been mining. They were also having to sell through 'middle men' who were controlling prices. Their small scale open cast mining used very basic tools and was clearly hard work (see photo, left).

With help and support, they were now in a better place, and this showed in their faces. Their land ownership had been legally recognised along with their mining rights. Having formed a cooperative, they were now collaborating together and had been equipped with safety equipment. They had also secured much better prices for their silica. The photo on the right shows Martyn meeting a silica miner.



We then moved on to a farming community in central Zambia. Here the challenges were different. Having seen roadside stalls all trying to sell tomatoes, we could see why assistance was needed to grow different crops and to hold back sales when the market was flooded.

Here we met Henry, the project leader for CHAZ, who was working with a number of villages. Central to this project was a prepared field where each pilot village had an area. A borehole to aid irrigation had also been sunk. Whilst there was an element of cross village competition, the emphasis was on learning from each other and experimenting with different crops. A later stage of the project was to provide a cold store so produce can be held back to be sold later.



Integral to villagers helping themselves, a Credit Union had been set up. This was being used by families to invest in seeds or fertiliser and, more widely, to fund the improvements each village identifies as necessary. In Shikombo, the village we visited, they had great pride in talking us through what their Credit Union was already doing and showing us their records (see photo on left of Treasurer Showing Anne their books). We then saw what they were now growing (see photo, above). Their cheerfulness and confidence spoke for itself!

This is just a brief flavour of how we have seen that Christian Aid can change lives and give hope and optimism. Do get in touch with us if you would like to know more.

To mark the 80th anniversary, a local celebration is being held at Charnwood Water on Saturday 27th September with walkers, in teams, doing 80 laps of Charnwood Water. If you are passing we're sure they would appreciate support.

Anne and Martyn Speight – email [FWCmartyn@outlook.com](mailto:FwCmartyn@outlook.com) or phone 01509 213137

Request for Volunteers for the 2025 Santa Express

The following request comes from John Clayton of Melton Mowbray u3a, who is also a volunteer at the Great Central Railway, involved in organising volunteers for the upcoming 2025 Santa Express.

The magic of Christmas awaits for the Great Central Railway Santa Express at Loughborough



Santa + Train. Photo: Leicester Mercury, 1 Dec 2024.

Several of our u3a colleagues already report how much they enjoy volunteering at Christmas on the Santa Express. Can you volunteer and help be part of it?

Santa is already getting his presents ready to distribute on the Santa Express departing Loughborough every weekend from 22nd November.

His volunteers need extra help on and off the train, welcoming guests, stewarding, preparing Santa gift bags etc. Santa and Mrs Claus also need help (2 separate trains are running 3 journeys each day. Costumes provided).

The joy in the faces of the children as their journey progresses is heart-warming to experience.

If you feel you can help at this busy time with some days at the railway, please e-mail your name to santa.rostering@gcrailway.co.uk and you will be sent more information.

Volunteers who have helped on 6 days are eligible for a much-reduced cost for 'Working Membership' status at the railway which enables them to visit throughout the year at no cost for most events.

Letter to the Editor

Thanks to **Char March** for the following contribution:

Bothered by Student Rubbish?

I've been on at the Uni, and local Cllrs, for these last 6 years to do more to tackle the vast amount of re-usable stuff that students chuck out year after year that could be used by future students and/or local charities.

The Uni has at last got itself organised, and, although the scheme can never be perfect (our students next door still throw away stuff that could easily be re-used), this year the Uni collected over 5 tonnes of re-usables from students and are distributing it to charities.

Here's their webpage that tells students what to do:
<https://www.lboro.ac.uk/internal/news/2025/may/donate-your-unwanted-items-with-give-n-go/>

If student accommodation (on campus, or off) is left in a mess with rubbish not sorted, they even take away the invitation to those students' graduations, which I think is excellent!

Have students living near you left rubbish spilling out of their bins? Then contact:
Jenny Ardley at j.ardley@lboro.ac.uk

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

Our next EDI team meeting will be held at **Gorse Covert Community Centre on Monday 11th August, 2 - 4 pm**, with a break for (free) tea/coffee and biscuits halfway through.

Any Charnwood u3a member is very welcome to come along and join in the discussion.

Or if you can't come to the meeting but have any comments or ideas relating to EDI issues that you'd like us to discuss, please email newsletter@charnwoodu3a.org.uk as we'd love to hear your views.

If you might be interested in joining the EDI team - who normally meet once every two months at Gorse Covert - please let us know. You'd be very welcome.

Helen Reid



Upcoming Local Events

Free Guided Walks in Loughborough Town Centre

Thursday, 7th August

11 am – 12:30 pm and 2 pm - 3:30 pm

11:00 walk: Explore Art Deco Loughborough with a qualified guide, to discover Loughborough's hidden gems and iconic landmarks, and immerse yourself in the art deco history of the town.

14:00 walk: Explore the history of Loughborough through its buildings with a qualified guide and learn about the rich history and culture of the town.

Pre-booking is essential. Details regarding starting point will be sent to you once you have booked.

For further details and a booking link go to:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/cc/free-guided-walks-in-loughborough-4448813>

Summer Organ Recitals

Sundays in August at 6 pm

All Saints Parish Church, Loughborough

3rd August: Simon Headley, All Saints own organist and Director of Music.

10th August: Ivan Linford with Geoffrey Carter. Ivan is a freelance organist & pianist. He has held posts at Leicester Cathedral & Oakham School.

17th August: Keith Hearnshaw, a concert organist previously at Lincoln and Liverpool cathedrals.

24th August: Martyn Noble, teacher of the organ at the Royal College of Music, previously at His Majesty's Chapel Royal, St. James's Palace.

About 45 minutes of music followed by refreshments. Admission is **free** with a collection box on exit.

Loughborough Model Railway Show

Saturday 16th August 2025 (10 am – 5 pm)
and Sunday 17th August (10 am – 4 pm)
at Loughborough Grammar School

Model railway exhibition with around 30 layouts, traders, demos & societies. Spread over 4 halls, this is the premier model railway exhibition of the East Midlands.

Admission: Adults £10, Children £5, Family (2 adults & up to 3 children) £25, including free exhibition guide.



Free car parking. Disabled friendly venue. Hot & cold refreshments.

More information: https://svmrc.co.uk/?page_id=401

VJ/VE Day Commemorations: 1940s themed Picnic in the Park

Sunday 17th August 12 pm - 5 pm
Glenmore Park, Shepshed

Matt Limb OBE will share wartime stories, and there'll be live performances and stalls. All welcome. More info at: <https://www.facebook.com/events/1015844683954865>

80th anniversary of VJ Day

Friday 15th August, 7 pm - 9 pm
(Beacon lighting at 8:30 pm)
Queen's Park, Loughborough

An evening of reflection, remembrance, and community spirit to celebrate the 80th anniversary of Victory over Japan Day (VJ Day) – commemorating the end of the Second World War and honouring those who served and sacrificed for our freedom.

A free programme of live music, featuring nostalgic wartime favourites, acoustic sets, and classic songs that bring the spirit of the era to life. Bring a picnic, take a seat on the grass, and enjoy the warm summer atmosphere.

See: <https://www.charnwood.gov.uk/VJ80>



For other local events, see:

<https://www.discovercharnwood.co.uk/events>
and <https://allevents.in/loughborough/august>

**MOUNTSORREL
REVIVAL**
An Old-Style Festival of Fun

**Sunday
10th August
2025
11am - 4.30pm**

National u3a News



On-Line Talks this month include:

- **Mindfulness and Compassion meets Poetry** – with Helen Potts, Mon 18 Aug at 2 pm
- **Climate Change and Artificial Intelligence** with Ian Hawker, Tue 26 Aug at 10 am
- **Secrets of the Human Brain: Touch and Pain** with Dr Bob Pullen, Thu 28 Aug at 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>

More from the National u3a:

Register to receive the National u3a **Friends** newsletter regularly at <https://www.u3a.org.uk/newsletter>
You can also access the latest u3a news at: <https://www.u3a.org.uk/news> and find more learning initiatives at <https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/learning-activities> The u3a learning blog **Sources**, with posts by u3a members covering a wide range of topics, is at: <https://sources.u3a.org.uk>

Obituary

Gwyn Jones R.I.P.



It was a great shock and with enormous sadness that I received the news of Gwyn's sudden death in mid-July. I am told that she died unexpectedly having not recovered from treatment on her oesophagus. She has been a loyal member of my English Parish Churches Group for many years; in fact it was entirely due to a conversation I had with her on a Chris Brown History Group trip to London that I decided to start a second EPC group which met in the afternoons [I amalgamated the two groups during Covid]. Gwyn was always greatly interested in the heritage which is all around us and took an active and inquisitive part both in meetings and in the many visits and coach outings the group has had over the years. She just loved learning and exploring. Not surprisingly, with her late husband John, she took a particular delight whenever anything Welsh was on the agenda and she was also keen when mention was made of Christopher Wren's church, St James's Piccadilly, and its connection with her own London schooldays.

I for one will greatly miss her, not only as a group member but also as someone who, through the u3a, became a great personal friend as well. We have probably all had a similar experience, and one of the great things about Charnwood u3a is not only that it keeps us active but that we get to know new people and to enjoy, for many of us, a new lease of life in retirement.

My friendship with Gwyn began with us planning several holidays together for the Travel Group over the years. Gwyn was a superb and efficient organiser, leaving no stone unturned to guarantee that trips were well-run and enjoyable, and they leave so many happy memories with so many of us. There was, for instance, the morning when we left Tesco's and drove to Dover after a heavy snow-fall for Bruges, wondering what on earth we were all doing but all went well; on one of the days there I led the group round the First World War battlefields at Ypres and we ended with a meal during which Gwyn celebrated her 70th birthday. There followed holidays to Spanish cities, London, Normandy, the Somme, Berlin just to mention a few, including for me a never to be forgotten one to my home territory of Kent back in 2008 which I insisted on being called a study-tour: after all, I thought, we are a university! Since news of Gwyn's death I have been looking back through the power-point presentations I made for many travel group holidays and so hard to believe that Gwyn and many others who I see enjoying themselves on them have gone from us.

Roger Willson

Gwyn is to have a **Celebration of Life service at Holy Trinity Church, Barrow upon Soar at 1 pm on Tuesday 19th August**. If you plan to attend, please email her daughter Nicola on nshipman@scsp.org.uk Also see <https://gwynethchristinejones.muchloved.com> - a tribute page with many lovely photos of Gwyn with her family and friends - where you'll also find a link to the live stream of the service at Holy Trinity for those unable to attend in person.

Malcolm Otter



An appreciation of Malcolm Otter - an adventurous, witty and warm Charnwood u3a member who died in July.

A world traveller, he walked in the foothills of the Himalayas and "bagged" every one of the 280+ Scottish Munros - mountains of more than 3,000 feet.

Leading Thursday's Little Extras walks, playing chess or Scrabble, Malcolm embraced life with energy and enthusiasm.

Two of our walking group members, Mike Pearson and Richard Wall, took part in the final Munro trek. Richard said: "Ben Challum was completed in the company of a large group, all of whom had climbed with Malcolm over the decades.

A piper accompanied us to the summit, and there were marvellous scenes of Malcolm and Mary dancing in the mist to the skirl of the bagpipes." (*Malcolm and piper are pictured above*).



L to R: Malcolm, Mike Pearson, Richard Wall

Richard also commented: "Many u3a walks were enlivened by his company and benefited from his group leadership. Malcolm cared about his friends. He often visited to check on me and my wife at a time when I was unable to join the group walks."

Former walking group leader Peter Mill said: "Malcolm was truly unique in developing valued friendships on a global scale with his intrepid travels."

Chess group leader Dave Watson said "Malcolm was a formidable and humorous opponent. I remember recruiting him to the group at a new members' meeting shortly after he retired. He was laughing because he felt he was in danger of joining too many groups that day. He will be sorely missed by all who knew him in u3a."

Malcolm's funeral will be at **Loughborough Crematorium on 5th August at 1.15 pm.**

John Evans



I was very sad to hear that John Evans has died after a long illness. John joined the u3a ten years ago and he was a member of the Travel group and Science and Technology, but I knew him best as a keen and supportive member of ETHEL (Exploring the English Language). Even after he became too ill to join us in person, he kept in touch with the help of his close friend, Gwyn Jones (See the lovely tribute from Roger Willson on the previous page). One particularly memorable contribution was John's response to a session on English dialects:

'It reminds me of a boatman I used to know who told me that on one occasion when entering Stoke Bruerne lock (where there are always a lot of gongoozlers or onlookers getting in the way) there was one man who insisted on leaning on the lock gate balance beam and was in danger of receiving some bruises when the boats nudged the gate. The steerer was on the back of his 'motor' (the towing boat) which was pulling a 'butty' on a long tow line. "Wachout" says he, in his broad West Midlands dialect, "me butty's coomin oop". The gongoozler was visibly shocked, apparently thinking that he was about to witness the reappearance of the boatman's lunch!'

John will be much missed by his friends in the u3a.

Pam Upton

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 **September** issue of **News & Views** will be **Saturday 30th August (12 noon)**.



Please send your contributions to the Newsletter Editor at: 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

Some other useful u3a web addresses:

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

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

