CHARNWOOD U3A
UPDATE EXTRA
JANUARY 2017



Welcome to the January edition of Charnwood U3A Update Extra, a bumper issue of news, views and information which we hope you will find interesting and entertaining. The content of Update Extra is written by the members, and details for sending contributions can be found at the end of this newsletter.

A very warm welcome to our **new members**. We hope you will soon be involved in U3A activities and making new friends. To access the members' area of **our website www.charnwoodu3a.org.uk** the user name and password can be found bottom left and bottom right on the back of your membership card.

Monthly Meetings

At our December meeting in Emmanuel Church we were taken back in time by Felicity Austin and reminded of Christmases we once knew and advised as to from where some of our traditions emanate.



The first monthly meeting of the New Year is on **Wednesday 11th January** at Charnwood College when we will have Sital Dhillon on "Human rights and counter-terrorism". Sital is Head of the Department for Law and Criminology at Sheffield Hallam University and a Barrister and former British Diplomat, with extensive experience of working for The British Council and other International Organisations, including the UN, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and the Department of International Development.

His work has included assignments in Brazil, India, Afghanistan and Uganda. His project experience includes working on human rights programmes on behalf of Nelson Mandela and in managing international police and prison reform programmes across the world.

Our February meeting has had a change of speaker – in fact we have had to do quite a bit of shuffling in 2017 - all due to events beyond our control. Professor Campbell has moved to April, the Lord Lieutenant has moved to September and we have lost Geoff Smith from 2017 altogether.



Bel Grierson

New to the programme on **Wednesday 8th February** we have Bel Grierson who will talk on "My life as a garden designer and plantswoman". Bel is an experienced plantswoman, having honed her horticultural knowledge and skills as a nurserywoman and market gardener over the last 17 years. Bel's expertise enables her to design, create and rejuvenate gardens for clients across the East Midlands. You may recognise Bel from her gardening column in the local Community Eye magazines and when not busy gardening, designing or writing Bel lectures in all things horticultural for Nottingham Trent University and local gardening groups. Bel is also the co-founder of Botanica Garden School.

All members, and potential members, are eligible to attend our monthly meetings which start at 3.15 and end with tea and biscuits just after 4.00 pm. We would love to see you there.
Neil Rowbotham, Programme Secretary

There is plenty of parking available at the college including overflow parking sign-posted at the rear of the Sports Hall. However, Charnwood College remind members not to arrive for meetings before 2.30 pm.

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN



May I wish all of our members a very Happy New Year! It was good to see so many at our monthly meeting in December where we found ourselves again at Emmanuel Church, a good venue for us with comfortable seating and excellent facilities. Our December meeting usually has a Christmas theme and this was no exception with a real trip down memory lane and a bit of festive fun.

Looking ahead we have our Annual General Meeting once again in March and there are opportunities for new faces to join the committee. Details of the meeting will be mailed out in due course but if any member feels that they might be able to make a contribution to the work of the committee, where a range of different skills and abilities are needed, then please make contact with either me, as chairman, or with the secretary using the usual email contacts available on the CU3A website. We look forward to hearing from anyone with an interest, and it doesn't matter whether you are a new member or have been a member for some time. All are welcome.

Elsewhere in this edition of Update you can read about some of the different things that have been going on in our groups. It never ceases to impress me just how much is going on and how many people give of their time and energy to make things happen. As long as we have a steady stream of people joining our U3A who want to make a positive contribution, then we shall continue to grow and enjoy more of our unique learning opportunities.

I would like to thank all of the group leaders and the many others who give so much. This is the time of year when giving presents is such a feature and we express our appreciation for the kindness of others. In U3A the giving goes on all year round and it's good to say thank you and let others know how much we appreciate what they do for us.

Have a really good 2017.
John Lamb

Another Referendum! Well almost.



We would appreciate your comments on the monthly meetings of 2016. Please go onto our website www.charnwoodu3a.org.uk and click on the page "Contact Details". Then email the Programme Secretary - with 5 letters depicting your 5 choices.
All we ask you to send is your opinion of the 5 **best** monthly meetings this year – for example, B,H,A,D,C – in your order of preference. If you don't think there were 5 good ones then simply stop at 3 or 4 – B,H,A.
You don't need to add any message or sign it – it is just a vote and we don't want to put you to any more trouble but this is your chance to influence the future programme. Voting closes at Midnight on Saturday 21st January.

The meetings were:
A – January – My Life in Music – Andy Smith
B – February – An incitement to Early Marriage – Twigs Way
C – March – Rice Farming in Laos – John Lamb
D – April – Managing a Country Park – Peter Tyldesley
E – May - SMILE please, say cheese – Ian Rogerson
F – July - The Police and Crime Commissioner – Lord Willy Bach
G – August - Andes to Amazon – Kate Moore
H – September - The Life of Ernest Gimson – Alan Tyler
I – October – So you think you are British, do you? – John B Taylor
J – November – Bred for it – Jane Barnes
K – December – An Old-Fashioned Christmas – Felicity Austin

All Members' Coffee Morning



At the last Tesco Coffee morning several people said they enjoyed meeting up, so the next one is planned for Tuesday, 17th January, starting at 10 am. Any members interested in having a chat, finding out about different groups or generally just keen to put the world to rights, please join us!

New Members'/Group Leaders' Meeting

The next New Members'/Group Leaders' meeting will take place at Charnwood College on 14 February 2017.
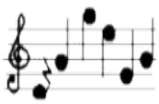
Reminder for Group Leaders

A reminder that all groups should forward their End of Year Financial Returns to Pauline May, CU3A Treasurer, no later than 20 January. Any queries please contact Pauline on [redacted]

Activity List

A copy of the current Activities List is available in the Members' Area of our website: www.charnwoodu3a.org.uk.

GROUP NEWS



Classical Music Enjoyment Group: meets this month on Wednesday 25th January 2017 from 2pm to 4pm at Loughborough Lawn Tennis Club, Ingle Pingle, off Forest Road, Loughborough, when the programme will be given by John Lamb and is entitled "Back in the U.S.S.R.".

Please address any enquiries concerning the Group to Group Leader, Martin Jones [redacted]

Dance Groups



Have you made a New Year Resolution to improve your fitness level? Then these dance groups are the ideal way to do this because not only do they exercise both the body and mind – they are fun!!

Group 1

Group 1 is a happy group who are most welcoming to new members, with both couples & single people of both sexes fitting in equally well. No dance knowledge or expertise is required: we have excellent leaders and no-one worries about making mistakes. It is of 2-hours' duration, but members sit or dance as they feel able. The types of dance in which we join are English & Scottish Folk Dance; Line dance & Modern Sequence: so quite a varied choice. We have a break for free refreshments – tea/coffee & biscuits - approximately halfway through; and the volume of the talking can drown out the music!! This get-together is as much a social gathering as a dance group!

We continue to meet at the Polish Club in Frederick Street, Loughborough on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month. Unfortunately, the hall is not available to us on the 28th February, so the dates for next term are:

10th & 24th January; 14th Feb; 14th & 28th March.

We do have room for new members: it is a large hall and there is free parking alongside it. The cost is £1 per session, payable in one payment, at the beginning of the term. i.e. £5 up to Easter. However, new members are welcome to come along to their first session free of charge.

Group 2

This group, of ladies & gentlemen, meets every Friday morning in the Tesco Community Room at the Park Road store; which means that there is no charge for this group. We have brought forward the start time to 9am for the Basic Ballroom session as the beginners have improved and are able to participate for longer. We are now tackling the basic steps for the Waltz; Cha-cha; Jive; Line-dance and Old-Time. However, I would stress that this is still at a very basic level and is still suitable for anyone who has never danced before. (I have yet to meet anyone who really **does** have two left feet!!)

Line Dance begins at approximately 10am – depending how many are enjoying a free drink and biscuit – and again is suitable for both beginners and those with some experience. This is followed, at approximately 11am, by Tap: with some members who have tapped in recent years and some who have never tried before.

Please feel free to come along and try these dance groups: one, two or all three. I will not be offended if you decide it is not for you. So far, I have only had one person who has not decided to stay. I think this is mainly because this group is one of the happiest and friendliest of groups that I have encountered.

If you would like to try any of these groups you can simply turn up or contact me for further information. My email [redacted] my phone number [redacted]. *Bev Gillman*

History Group 2



Wednesday January 25th. Talk by Jim Miller "Henry VII – the Forgotten King" at 10am in the Lecture Theatre at Charnwood College. New members welcome.

Painting Group



The Painting Group meets just once a month at Gorse Covert Community Centre (next to Morrisons) and warmly welcomes new members. We have a lively programme chosen by the members and as a self-help group give each other friendly advice and tips to improve our own works of art.

Funds permitting we hire a tutor once a year and in this year once more look forward to another stimulating visit from Doreen Hunt. Why not come and join us on the second Monday each month from 2 - 4pm. Enquiries to Frances Mill [redacted]

Pilates Group 1 and 2



A few places are available in Pilates Groups 1 and 2, and new members are very welcome. The groups meet every Monday at Nanpantan Bowls Club and are led by a professional tutor, Annette Holliday. Group 1 meets from 11.55am to 12.55pm and Group 2 meets from 1.00 to 2.00 pm. The groups meet throughout the year and we will have a new term running from Monday 9th January until Monday 10th April 2017.

For more details please contact me by telephone [redacted] or e-mail [redacted]. *Ros Fleming U3A Pilates Group Leader*

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Details of the Walking Groups are overleaf

WALKING GROUPS

Walking Groups Co-ordinator Elizabeth Steel [redacted] telephone [redacted]. Please contact Elizabeth in the first instance.



Strollers and Amble Groups
Details of next walks will be sent out on e-mail. Chris Brown, [redacted]

Tuesday 6 Plus Walking Group
17th January 2017 - Watermead Park, King Lear's Lake car park. £2.50 parking charge. Ref SK606106. Leader Gordon.
Enquiries to Mike Pearson [redacted]

Saturday 5+ miles
7th January - Foremark Reservoir car park. Leader Joan.
4th February - The Bradgate car park (far end), Newtown Linford. Leader Rob.
Enquiries to Sue Griffiths [redacted]

Les Sportives
Thursday 12th January 2017 - Walk Cancelled.
Thursday 26th January 2017 - Meet at The Griffin, 174 Main Street, Swithland, LE12 8TJ. Hugh and Elisabeth to lead.
Enquiries to Janet Butlin [redacted]

Ten+ Miles Walking Group
7th February - Leader: Mike Pearson. Details of this walk will be forwarded to members by email. Enquiries to Peter Mill tel [redacted] We suggest any new members make contact prior to joining the walk.

Little Xtras
January 12th - "Down by the Waterside". Meet at The Waterside Inn, Mountsorrel, LE12 7BB. Grid Ref SK582152. Leader - Chris Rimbault.
January 26th - "Elvaston, oh Elvaston…" Meet at the Harrington Arms, Thulston, SK409320. Leader - Mike Pearson.
The Little Extras Group meets on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month and start promptly at 10.00 at the meeting point indicated. Any questions - please contact Group Coordinator Malcolm Otter of [redacted]

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ROVING REPORTERS

Walking Groups



Charnwood U3A walking groups don't just walk in the summer – they enjoy seeing how the seasons change throughout the year. Winter can be really great, when the leaves are off the tress and the views really splendid. December 2016 was no exception, and mulled wine and mince pies were enjoyed on many of the walks. Just look what glorious weather we had in the last week before Christmas in Calke Abbey and Bradgate Park, for example. There are walks to suit all abilities, so do join us. If you would like to find out which group might be suitable for you, just contact the Walking Groups Co-ordinator. Elizabeth Steel – [redacted] Telephone [redacted]

Days of Interest Group

Our last three visits of the year were to Attingham Park in Shropshire, Salford Keys and Chatsworth.

We had lovely weather for our September trip to Attingham Park, a National Trust property with a wonderful House and Garden. We were welcomed by the second Baron Berwick, who looked remarkably well considering he died in 1832. He told us tales of reckless expenditure which resulted in his bankruptcy. Luckily future generations were more prudent and the house is now a beautiful place to visit.

In October we visited Salford Quays. Besides looking around the Quays there was an opportunity to visit the Imperial War Museum, the Lowry Art Gallery and for a bit of retail therapy there was the Lowry Outlet Mall. However the highlight of the trip was the BBC Media City tour. It started off with a visit to the news rooms, which looked much smaller in real life than they do on the television. We were shown how the weather forecast was presented, and some of our group took a turn! The tour of the studios included a look into the set for Citizen Khan. On the way out we saw Tim Peake, back from space and visiting the Blue Peter Garden.



In the News Room

The weather was again kind to us on our November visit to Chatsworth. The Christmas Market was crammed with stalls selling Christmas decorations and presents, clothes and lots of different kinds of food. The hot drinks were welcome too. In the afternoon we visited the House decorated for Christmas. This year the theme was 'The Nut Cracker', so there were lots of mice and toy soldiers hidden around the Christmas trees. We were also treated to dancing by the 'Sugar Plum Fairy'.

If you are interested in joining the Days of Interest Group please contact Pauline May by email on [redacted] or by telephone on [redacted]

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BITS AND BOBS

Christmas Tree Festival

Charnwood U3A's entry to the Loughborough Christmas Tree Festival in November was beautifully decorated and had been allocated a prime spot so that it could be fully appreciated. Very many thanks to the volunteers who took the time to make this happen.



"Life Below Stairs in Country Houses"
Leicestershire and Rutland Network of U3As Calke Abbey Study Days

The Leicestershire and Rutland Network of U3As have just hosted two study days entitled "Life Below Stairs in Country Houses" using Calke Abbey in Derbyshire as an example. The event was set up with the intention of detailing what to look for in the stately houses we visit, especially in the relationship above and below stairs, and how owners sought to increase the comfort and convenience of their houses. Forty people took part in each day, both of which were oversubscribed, and were led by Professor Marilyn Palmer, the national U3A Subject Advisor in Archaeology, also of Charnwood and Glenfield U3As and Leicester University.



Calke Abbey

After a brief introduction there was a detailed tour of the house with Marilyn and National Trustee volunteers. Calke Abbey has the fascinating sub-title of "the unstately home", which added to the attraction of the day! The house had belonged to the Harpur family for over 300 years before £8 million of death duties in the 1980's resulted in it being passed to the National Trust in 1985. Historically various members of the family were by nature reclusive and in the 1920's, coupled to social and financial issues, parts of the house were closed down and the staff numbers cut drastically. An illustration of its history is that it did not have mains electricity until 1962. Set in the midst of a landscaped park, it is presented by the National Trust as an illustration of the English country house in decline. A massive amount of remedial work (i.e. conservation) but no restoration has been done and interiors are almost as they were found in 1985, so the decay of the building and its interiors has been halted but not reversed. Before the National Trust's work virtually everything had remained untouched since the 1880s.

After the tour there was a well-earned and tasty lunch of soup and sandwiches provided by the Trust's kitchen. Once the audience was refreshed Marilyn took over for the afternoon sessions covering firstly the role of water supply and sanitation followed by food preparation and delivery to the dining table. Both of these had tremendous implications on the under stairs staff.

Country house owners invested much time and effort in bringing water supplies to their homes. However, their main motivation was to enhance the looks of the houses and grounds with the addition of ponds and lakes which was a priority in enhancing their social standing. Sanitation was covered by the servants answering any needs by the activation of a bell that was part of a strategically position system for obtaining back stairs attention.



Calke Abbey – Bells for summoning a servant

A bath filled with buckets-full of hot water in front of a fire was far more preferable to walking down a draughty corridor to the bathroom! By the Victorian era the culture was beginning to change as exemplified by Lord Armstrong at Cragside, who started to use innovative technical solutions to enhance the comforts of his life. By 1878 Cragside was the first house in the world to be lit using hydroelectric power. This desire for improvement became the standard for many of the home owners although it clearly by-passed the residents of Calke Abbey.

The kitchens in general were located on the north and east side of the houses as were the servants' quarters. This was an endeavour to keep them cool, as they also contained large open fires often with devices for spit roasting meat as well as various other cooking ranges.



Calke Abbey fire buckets

Marilyn showed many mechanisms for rotating spits that were used over the centuries, from the boy sat in the corner of the hearth turning the spit and roasting alongside the meat, dogs running in treadmills, turning mechanisms driven from chimney vanes and, with the advent of generators, more complex electrically driven systems. The necessity for these open fires significantly increased the potential for devastating fires that damaged and even destroyed many houses.

To reduce the risk investments were made in fire control, even to the extent of the kitchens being built in buildings some distance from the house. To aid the movement of food tunnels were constructed that would allow easy access to the dining room.

At the end, both days were characterised by enthusiastic and lengthy applause for an educational, entertaining and an excellent event. The team received a number of comments after the event:

'Thank you for the wonderful day we had at Calke Abbey….Professor Palmer was excellent and the whole day was so interesting.'

'We had a lovely day at Calke Abbey on Monday. The sun shone and the content was informative and, at times, fascinating. Marilyn is an excellent presenter.'

'Many thanks for the great study day at Calke last Monday. I really enjoyed having a different view point on stately homes and learned a lot of things that were quite new to me.'

Many thanks to both the Leicestershire & Rutland Network Working Party for their efforts in putting on this event and also to the National Trust at Calke Abbey for their help and support.

Useful website addresses

National U3A Organisation (Third Age Trust): www.u3a.org.uk
The Association of East Midlands U3As: www.eastmidlandsu3as.org.uk
Leicestershire and Rutland Network: www.landru3a.org.uk
Charnwood U3A: www.charnwoodu3a.org.uk



Committee contact details:

Chairman	John Lamb chairman@charnwoodu3a.org.uk	
Secretary	Phil Matthews secretary@charnwoodu3a.org.uk	
Treasurer	Pauline May treasurer@charnwoodu3a.org.uk	[redacted]
Programme Organiser	Neil Rowbotham programmesec@charnwoodu3a.org.uk	
Groups Co-ordinator	Dee Patterson groupscoordinator@charnwoodu3a.org.uk	[redacted]
Membership Secretary	Garry Rigby memsec@charnwoodu3a.org.uk	[redacted]
New Members Liaison	Brenda Feeney [redacted]	[redacted]
Catering	Janet Butlin [redacted]	[redacted]
Information	Chris Butlin [redacted]	[redacted]
Committee Member	Helen Davison [redacted]	[redacted]
Update Editor (Non-Committee role)	Linda Lawson newsletter@charnwoodu3a.org.uk	[redacted]

Items for Update

The deadline for publishing is the last day of the previous month. Please send your contributions for the February issue of Update to: **newsletter@charnwoodu3a.org.uk** or to Update Editor Linda Lawson, [redacted] , by **Tuesday 31st January**. 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 next issue of **Update Extra** will be published in April and the deadline for items is **Friday 31st March**. There is a limit of around 500 words per item, and photos are welcome. The Editor reserves full editorial rights as to length and suitability and the Editor's decision is final. Update Extra is published quarterly.

Update is sent to all Charnwood U3A members by e-mail or by post before the monthly meeting. It is also available to read on the Charnwood U3A website each month at **www.charnwoodu3a.org.uk** (you will need the new user name and password which are bottom left and bottom right on the back of your membership card. Thank you!

