

THE THIRD AGE TRUST



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

Mansfield and District U3A Newsletter



Established 1999

AGM Edition: September 2011

Website: www.mansfield-u3a.org.uk

Noticeboard: <http://mansfieldu3a.blogspot.com>

Farewell and thanks from your chairman

AS YOU READ this newsletter, you will probably be at our Annual General Meeting that marks the end of one year, and the beginning of the next.

We all look forward to the coming year, and the many activities that our interest groups provide. There is something to suit everybody, so please, join in and don't be bored!

A new interest group, Local History, will be having its inaugural meeting at 10.00 am on Friday the 23rd of September at the Rushley Inn on Nottingham Road, so please come along if you are interested. There is bound to be something interesting for everybody.

Looking back over the past year, we have had a successful programme of holidays, days out, and other activities, as well as our normal interest group meetings, and I hope that we have all enjoyed ourselves and benefited from our membership.

On a personal note, I would like to thank all the members of the committee, who have worked with good humour and enthusiasm for the past year, and have made my year as chairman a very pleasurable experience. In particular, I wish our vice-chairman, Mike Allen, who will become chairman at the AGM, as easy and pleasant a year as the one that I have just enjoyed.

The committee exists to serve the U3A in general, but it is the group leaders who do the real work in organising their various groups. You have only to look back at all the activities of the past year to realise what a tremendous amount of work they have done. Well done and thanks to them all. Keep up the good work!

And so, as my year as chairman ends, I thank you all for your friendship, and wish the Mansfield U3A and its members every happiness in the coming year.

Max Clarke

SUBSCRIPTIONS

OUR FINANCIAL YEAR ended on 31st July and annual subscriptions are due TODAY. Once again, subscriptions for next year will be at the reduced rate of only £12.50 per member (including associate members, I.E. those who are also full members of another U3A).

You will need a new password from the Treasurer or Membership secretary if you want to read Committee minutes on-line after 1st October as these are only available to members.

Online banking: Members who use internet banking may prefer to pay online this year – full details available on request. Thanks!

Pauline Boucher, Treasurer (01623 644798 or paulineboucher15@yahoo.co.uk)

Dates for your diary (*Check the website for more information and updates.*)

Fri. 23rd Sept: LOCAL HISTORY GROUP INAUGURAL MEETING. The Rushley Inn. 10am.

Sat. 15th Oct: AUTUMN HANDICAP RACE NIGHT. Queen Elizabeth's School 7.00pm - 10.00pm. £7 including supper (please bring your own drinks and glasses). Tickets from Teresa Wells (620637) or Carole Justice (491809).

Mon. 5th Dec: CHRISTMAS LUNCH. Oakham Suite. (NB Change of date.) Details from Norma Shillinglaw (466934).

AGM Agenda

- 1) **Welcome**
- 2) **Apologies**
- 3) **Approval of Minutes from 2010 AGM**
- 4) **Chairman's Report**
- 5) **Treasurer's Report**
- 6) **Group Co-ordinator's Report**
- 7) **Nominations for committee**
- 8) **Election of new committee**
- 9) **A.O.B.**

Date of next AGM: **18th Sept 2012**

Chairman's Report

MEMBERS of Mansfield U3A continue to enjoy their friendship together, and have taken part in a variety of activities during the past year. We trust that the new members who have joined since the last AGM are participating, joining our interest groups, and enjoying their membership.

During the past year, there have been numerous activities and events, so there has been no shortage of things to do.

Apart from the holidays to Thoresby, the Isle of Man and the Loire Valley, we have had many shorter visits organised by the various group leaders. These include three days out by the Sci-Tech group to Bletchley Park, RAF Scampton and Staythorpe Power Station, various visits by the Theatre Group, various garden visits and a joint visit by the gardeners and the art appreciation group to Upton House. (Reports of these and some photographs have appeared in the monthly newsletter, but our editor and webmaster, David Ling, has put many more photos on our website so that everyone can see what we got up to and order professional prints on-line. Thanks David!)

The hikers, walkers and strollers have collectively travelled hundreds of miles, whilst the Tai Chi group has done its bit in keeping us fit.

We mustn't forget the less physical groups; to name but a few: the chat and stitch group, the music groups, the luncheon club, the wine groups, the whist and scrabble groups, the reading groups, the photographers and the family historians. I'm sure all these stimulate the brain, and we all need that, to a greater or lesser extent!

We all extend a hearty "thank you" to the group leaders who devote so much time to their groups.

Although strictly speaking it isn't an interest group, we mustn't forget to thank the organisers of the book stall, who every month carry an enormous weight of books into and out of the hall, helping to keep our subscriptions down by their efforts.

In addition, there have been other events organised by members or ex-members of the committee. These include the Christmas Lunch (which, in spite of the snow, was a great success), the New Year Social, the Fun Quiz night, the Third Age Prom, the Annual Coffee Morning, the Picnic in the Park, and the Annual Picnic at Queen Elizabeth's School.

We also have members who represent us in the wider U3A movement. These include the North Notts Neighbourhood Group, the Nottinghamshire Network of U3As, and the East Midlands Association of U3As.

I've tried to avoid thanking a long list of people by name, otherwise it would be rather boring and occupy the whole newsletter, but to everybody who makes the Mansfield U3A so pleasurable and friendly – **"Thank You"**

Having said that, however, there is one name that I must mention, that of our new chairman, Mike Allen. He has been our speaker finder for the last year, a not inconsiderable job, and we wish him every success in the coming year as chairman.

Max Clarke

Treasurer's Report: Financial Year 1st August 2010 – 31st July 2011

ONCE AGAIN the Committee has decided to subsidise members' subscriptions by paying the annual capitation fees to The Third Age Trust. This has been made possible by members' continued generosity and support for our fund-raising events.

Without this support subscriptions would need to increase to cover our running costs. However this year your support has exceeded all previous records! Income from the bookstall, coffee morning, raffles and social events has all increased – thank you everyone. Keep up the good work.

This year we made a one-off purchase of a new projector, amplifier and mobile-broadband dongle, which has made the accumulated funds drop slightly. However, there is still a very comfortable cushion of reserves.

Last year the banking industry announced its decision to abolish cheques – this year they have reversed that decision and cheques are here to stay!

The committee thanks you all once again for your support over the year.

Below is a brief summary of our accounts for the year. A full detailed financial report will be given at the AGM and copies of the full accounts are available from the Treasurer.

Abbreviated Income and Expense Account		
1st August 2010 - 31st July 2011		
INCOME		
Members subscriptions	£3,062.00	
Fund raising and other income	<u>£1,764.27</u>	
EXPENSE		
Room hire and speakers		£2,106.00
Capitation Fees		£833.00
U3A News - direct mailing		£241.60
New Projector and amplifier		£401.00
Other expenses		<u>£2,010.31</u>
TOTALS	£4,826.27	£5,591.91
Balance brought forward	£4,838.39	
1st August 2010		
(accumulated funds)		
Balance carried forward		£4,072.75
31st July 2011		
	<u>£9,664.66</u>	<u>£9,664.66</u>

Pauline Boucher, Treasurer

Group Co-ordinator's Report

HAVING HELD the position for one year now, I am pleased to report that Mansfield U3A still retains over 30 diverse interest groups.

Of particular note is that a lot of interest has been shown in starting a new Local History Group, with 31 persons putting their name to it. To this end the Inaugural Meeting is due to take place on Friday, 23rd September 2011, when it is hoped a Group Leader(s) will emerge and take it forward into the forthcoming U3A year.

Should any member have suggestions for further new groups, please highlight this to a member of the Committee or to myself.

The new annual Membership Card, which is going to print at the end of September, highlights all the groups, giving the names and telephone numbers of the Group Leaders. It has been brought to my attention whilst undertaking the work on this that some members are finding it difficult to access the group(s) they wish to join.

I do know that some of them are full, with waiting lists, but the leaders will be delighted to help you and other like-minded people start another. (Others are really keen to have new people joining them and a telephone call to the relevant Group Leader will tell you the position within their group.)

The website, managed by David Ling, gives comprehensive information on the groups, as well as full details of future and past social events. As you will be aware, these are also printed in the membership card and discussed at monthly meetings for those of us who have no internet access!

Over my 2 years with Mansfield U3A, which have passed very quickly, I have enjoyed the social events tremendously and made new friends. The last weeks have been extremely busy in preparation for the coming year and I hope you all thoroughly enjoy whatever the rest of 2011 and 2012 have to offer. For those new members, who probably like myself were amazed to find such a full house at the monthly meetings, you can enjoy as much or as little as you wish – so, take care and good luck!

Glenis Carr, Groups Co-ordinator

Speaker Finder Report

THIS YEAR has ended on such a high note (literally!) with Gabriela that I hardly dare think about next year.

I do hope that you have enjoyed the variety of speakers and topics, and that you will find next year equally as stimulating.

Mike Allen

Newsletter Report

CONTRIBUTIONS from members enabled our newsletter to maintain 12 pages for every issue last year – apart from the special AGM edition of 16 pages in September that was so well-received as a cost-effective and convenient way of handling the necessary formalities that the format is being repeated – and the 4-page Christmas issue.

I must express thanks, both personally and on behalf of all our readers, to all our contributors over the last year. Without varied news of events they have attended, future interest group plans and their humorous/helpful/cautionary tales this newsletter would not exist in its present form. Thank you everyone.

David Ling, Editor

Website Report

OUR WEBSITE continued to grow as an important service to more members last year as the Internet continued to grow in importance to everyone as a communications, time-saving, entertainment, educational and cost-saving tool – helped by falling equipment and connection costs. I hope this will continue and will welcome suggestions for further content you'd like to see.

With over 90 pages, our site is now the largest U3A website in the area, attracting 4000 page views every month. We try to make it simple to use from a £250-laptop, the library or from modern mobile phones, as well as from any family computer. The content ranges from links for on-line shopping, which official statistics say should save everyone at least £500 a year, to details of every interest groups' programme and photographs you can order of all our events. Downloadable versions of this newsletter and holiday details are there too – and much more.

David Ling, Webmaster

Nominations for committee

THE FOLLOWING have accepted nomination for election for the positions indicated until September 2013:

Chairman:	Mike Allen
Vice Chairman and Groups Co-ordinator:	Glenis Carr
Secretary (Minutes):	Carole Justice
Secretary (Business):	Jean Dalton
Treasurer:	Pauline Boucher
Assistant Treasurer:	John Troop
Membership Secretary:	Avril McGee
Newsletter and Website:	David Ling
Speakers Secretary:	Teresa Wells
	Jean Hinds
	George Powell

Incoming Chairman

I DO APOLOGISE most sincerely for missing the AGM, but the holiday with my family was booked before I became Vice-Chairman. I hope that you will forgive me for this glitch!

I must say that I am looking forward to becoming Chairman, even though following Sylvia and Max will be a difficult task. What I have learned from them will stand me in good stead, however, and I trust that I will be as successful a Chairman as they were.

I would like to thank Max for his 'reign' – he has been calm and considerate, unfailingly polite and thoughtful of others, an exemplary Chairman to follow. Thank you, Max.

You will also be electing the Committee, and I commend them to you. They are all tried and tested members who have worked hard for you in the past, and will continue to do so.

The strength of a U3A lies in its groups, and I am excited by the latest group to be formed – the Local History Group. Glenis Carr and Carole Justice are working hard to set it up successfully, and we must thank them for their efforts. Remember the Group has its first meeting soon!

Mike Allen



Key to Meetings details:

THIS TABLE SHOWS THE DAY of the month, time and frequency using the first two letters of the day, followed by numbers 1 - 5 to represent the week number. The final letter M (or F or W) indicates that the group meets monthly, fortnightly or weekly.

So “**Tu2. 2.30 M**” would mean a group meeting on the **2nd Tuesday** at **2.30 pm** monthly.

The main Mansfield and District U3A meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month (except for August and December) at the Oakham Suite, Nottingham Road, Mansfield from 10 am - 12.30 pm.

Interest Group	Meetings	Meeting Places	Leader/Contact
Art Appreciation	Mo1, 2.00 - 4.00 M	Baptist Church, Rosemary St.	Pauline Boucher 01623 644798
Next Meeting: 3rd October – John Constable; 7th November – Female Artists			
Beginners' Bridge (With Ashfield U3A)	Mo, various dates, 6.30 - 9.00	Enviro Centre, Derby Rd College, Mansfield	Maxine Rose / Edith Senior 01623 654022
Next Meetings: 26th September; 10th & 31st October; 14th & 28th November (Also Acol sessions at the Mechanics Institute – Th, 10 - 12.30 W)			
Chat and Stitch	Mo3, 2.00 - 4.00 M	St John's Centre, Mansfield	Marion Owens 01623 634408
Next Meetings: 17th October; 21st November			
Current Affairs *	Tu2, 2.00 M	Oakham Suite, Nottingham Rd.	Norma Shillinglaw 01623 466934
Next Meetings: October 11th; November 8th			
Digital World	Fri2&4, 2.00 M	Stanton Hill Baptist Church, Skegby	David Ling 01623 822994
Next Meetings: Sept. 23rd; Oct. 14th & 28th; Nov. 11th & 25th; Dec. 9th. Topics: 'Reflections' – <i>by Sept. 23rd please</i> ; 'Streetwise' – <i>by Oct. 23rd</i>			
English Country Dancing *	Sa3, 2.00 M (except as below)	South Forest Leisure Centre	Jean Kirk 01623 480207
Next Meeting: 24th September			

All members are invited to contact the relevant Group Leader if they would like to participate in any interest group or attend an event. **NB: * indicates a waiting list.**

It's never too late to have a happy childhood. But the second one is up to you and no one else.
Frame every so-called disaster with these words: *'In five years, will this matter?'*
No one is in charge of your happiness but you.

Interest Group	Meetings	Meeting Places	Leader/Contact
Family History	Tu4, 10.00 M	St John's Centre, Mansfield	Pat Blackwell 01623 481745
Next Meetings: Sept. 27th – Great grandparents; Oct. 25th – Talk by Peter Hammond			
Film Studies *	We1, 1.30 M	Joy's home	Joy Crowe 01623 645400
Next Meetings: 5th October; 2nd November; 5th December			
Garden Visits	During the Summer	Various	Marion Thornton 01623 651528
Next Visits: TBA			
Gardening *	Tu1, 10.00 M	St Peter's Centre, Mansfield	Avril McGee / Freda Cooper - 01623 452688 / 01623 621173
Next Meeting: October 4th – Winter Hanging Baskets			
Holidays (Home & Abroad)	Various	TBA	Margaret Burlinson 01623 632538
Next holidays: 7th - 9th December – <i>Thursford Spectacular</i> ; 23rd - 27th January 2012 – <i>Thoresby</i> (See Terry Whitehead); 10th - 14th April 2012 – <i>Rhine Cruise</i>			
Introduction to Internet use	Various	Stanton Hill Baptist Church	Terry Whitehead 01623 626991
Next Meeting: Contact Terry			
Local History (New group)	TBA	TBA	TBA
Inaugural meeting: September 23rd: The Rushley Inn; 10am - 12 noon.			
Luncheon Club	Th after 3rd Tu, 12.30 M	Various	David Ling 01623 822994
Next Meetings: September 22nd – Caunton Beck Christmas special: December 15th – Fine dining at Launay's (£16 for 2 courses.)			
<u>Music Groups</u>			
Classical Music 1 *	Th2, 2.00 - 4.00 M	Members' homes	Alan & Marlene Radford 01623 427934
Next Meetings: 13th Oct – Gershwin with Eric; 10th Nov – The String Quartet with Peter			

Interest Group	Meetings	Meeting Places	Leader/Contact
Classical Music 2	Mo4, 2.00 - 4.00 M	Members' homes	Peter Hart 01623 620940
Next Meetings: 26th Sept – Brahms at Peter H's; 24th Oct – Woodwind at Mike's			
Music 2 *	Mo4, 2.00 - 4.30 M	Members' homes	Eric Prescott 01623 631160
Next Meetings: 26th September – Rivers at Eric's; 24th October			
Popular Music Appreciation	Tu4, 2.00 - 4.00 M	St John's School, Mansfield	Peter Haynes 01623 451053
Next Meetings: 27th September; 25th October; 28th November Next Concert Visit: TBA			
Pudding Club *	Tu1, 4.00 M	Members' homes	Sylvia Slack 01623 633981
Next Meetings: October 4th at Sylvia's; November 1st at Janet's			
Reading 1 *	Th3, 2.00 - 4.00 M	Peter Dawson's home	Peter Dawson 01623 882191
Next Meetings: 20th October; 17th November			
Reading 2	Tu3, 2.00 - 4.00 M	Ravenshead Library	Joan Hufton 01623 511713
Next Meetings: 18th October; 15th November			
Science & Technical	Tu1, 1.30 - 3.30 M	Stanton Hill Baptist Church, Albert St. Skegby	Ian Boucher 01623 644798
Next Meetings: 4th October – <i>Stories of Sutton Mines</i> , by David Amos; 1st November Next visit: TBA			
Scrabble	Mo2, 2.00 - 4 .00 M	Brenda Thurkettle's home	Brenda Thurkettle 01623 628136
Next Meetings: 10th October; 14th November			
Singing for Fun	Th2&4, 6.30 - 8.00 F	Brunts School, Mansfield	June Fell 01623 623547
Next Meetings: 22nd September; 6th October Next Performance: TBA			
Tai Chi	Mo, 9.30 - 10.30 W	St John's Centre Mansfield	Cliff Laycock 01623 481985
Next Meetings: Sept. 26th; Oct. 3rd, 10th, 17th, 23rd & 31st; Nov. 7th, 14th, 21st & 28th			

Interest Group	Meetings	Meeting Places	Leader/Contact
Theatre Visits	Various	Various	Mike Allen 01623 653345
Next visit: Sept 30th and Oct 2nd – Oddsocks <i>'The Merry Wives of Windsor'</i> at Thoresby Riding Hall			
<u>Walking Groups</u>			
Hikers <i>(all-day, 6 - 8 miles)</i>	Th1 & Mo3, 9.30 F	Tesco car park, off Oak Tree Lane	Peter Thurkettle 01623 628136
Next Meetings: 6th October – Taddington Deep Dale; 17th October – High Peak Trail			
Strollers <i>(a leisurely 2 miles)</i>	We2, 10.30 M	Various	Barbara Massey / Marion Thornton 01623 628357 / 01623 651528
Next Meetings: 12th Oct – Sherwood Forest; 9th Nov – Quarry Lane Nature Reserve			
Walkers <i>(an easy 4 - 5 miles)</i>	We4, 10.30 M	Various	Sylvia Slack 01623 633981
Next Meetings: 28th Sept – Kings Clipstone; 26th Oct – Hardwick; 23rd Nov			
Whist	Various Sa, 7.30 M	Chatsworth Drive, Mansfield	Edith Senior 01623 654022
Next Meetings: September 26th; October 22nd; November 26th			
Wine Appreciation 2 *	We3, 7.30 M	Members' homes	Mike Allen 01623 653345
Next Meetings: Sept 28th – Torrontes with Ken & Norma; Oct 19th – Supermarket Chianti with Mike & Hilary; Nov 16th – Chardonnay with George & Mavis			
Wine Appreciation 3 *	Tu4, 7.30 M	Members' homes	Graham Allin 01623 473662
Next Meetings: Sept 27th – Southern France with Ian and Pauline; Oct 25th – Wine Society Exhibition Wines with Barrie and Lynne; Nov 22nd – Sherry with Jill			

BOOK TABLE REPORT

I MUST thank everyone for their continuing support as you all helped takings to grow by a very-satisfying 20% to a record £463.53 last year – equivalent to a subscription of almost £2 from every member. (The odd total is thanks to the many who pay with handfuls of change!)

Dare I set that as a target to beat?

Thanks again to all who bought 40p-books or 20p-magazines, all who brought them to sell and all who helped.

Lilian Whitehead.

Holiday Notices

Thursford Christmas Spectacular (7th, 8th & 9th December)

FOR THOSE going to this, please remember to pay today (cheques payable to Sherwood U3A). £129 for those sharing & £148 for single rooms.

Rhine Cruise with excursions to the Floriade Expo and Keukenhof bulb fields (10th - 14th April 2012). Just three twin cabins left!

THERE MUST be some of you out there who would like to take these cabins (no singles left, though)!

Come and collect a detailed holiday itinerary from my table to help you decide. The cost is: Promenade deck £419; Main deck £399 – with full board.

Deposits of £50 pp will now be due in November (payable to Sherwood U3A) and the single supplement for those five lucky members having a cabin to themselves has been cut to £55 instead of £100! For those who will need insurance the director has also reduced the cost of a no age limit insurance to £19 pp – especially for us! (If we can fill the last three cabins there will be 68 of us. This means we will have the MV Diana to ourselves, which will be ideal).

Cotswolds (6th - 10th July 2012)

PLACES for this holiday based at the Holiday Inn in Gloucester, have all been taken, but as usual I am opening a waiting list for anyone still interested. (From past experience, because of our age group, there will probably be cancellations nearer to the date of travel due to hospital appointment dates or operations, which will obviously be a priority!)

Cost without gardens will be £206 sharing & £254 for singles (this is for coach & hotel and also includes driver's gratuity and portage). We expect the gardens to be approximately £30 when announced by the Mansfield Garden Visits group in February, after the new prices come out. (Deposits are not needed until December).

Margaret Burlinson

Warner's Thoresby Hall (23rd January 2012 to 27th January 2012)

PLEASE contact me if you want to go on the waiting list, preferably via email.

For those already booked and still owing a balance, I hope to get to the October meeting to collect the rest of the money (cheques payable to Mansfield & District U3A, dated 1st November please). I also have registration forms to hand out (these have to be handed in when you check in at the Hall so just keep them until I tell you how to fill them in).

Terry Whitehead (01623 626991, email to thoresby2012@yahoo.co.uk)

Further details of all holidays are on the website ...

Recent Events

Annual Summer Picnic

UNSETTLED weather was not allowed to dampen the spirits of members who attended the annual summer picnic, which was held for the second year at Queen Elizabeth's school on 16th August.

The event was simply moved indoors and an enjoyable time was had by all.

Once again, by bringing "food to share", we had a substantial and delicious lunch in excellent company.



Two members, Sandra Evans and Ian Shillinglaw celebrated their birthdays and were given a hearty rendition of 'Happy Birthday' by everyone present; and 2 lucky ladies, Sylvia Atkinson and Brenda Brandham, won star prizes in the raffle – a full year's subscription to Mansfield U3A to 31 July 2012.

Our resident photographer, David Ling (a.k.a David Bailey) set up a screen and projected photos of past U3A outings and holidays for everyone to see. It was fun to spot ourselves enjoying past events, some of which had been long-forgotten and that brought back many happy memories.

Thanks go to all committee members who helped on the day and a big thank you to members who came along, brought food, sang, enjoyed themselves and gave so generously to the raffle that made a fantastic £106. This is an excellent boost to our funds at the start of our new financial year – thanks again!

Pauline Boucher

Gardening Group at Barnsdale

I HONESTLY didn't know what to expect on this visit on 2nd August – an estate with different large gardens, similar to Wisley, perhaps. In fact, I thought that we'd be going North; 'Barnsdale' sounds as though it's in Yorkshire, doesn't it?

But we ended up in rural, pastoral Rutland, near the Water, travelling through golden-stone villages to reach Geoff Hamilton's marvellous creation – a set of different small gardens set amongst trees.

Thirty-eight of us set out – and yet we hardly saw each other in the hours that we were there. Some looked in every garden, others sat in rustic seats absorbing the view. I hope the photos on the website show something of the colour, structure and variety of the gardens – there were over 20 of them, covering cottage gardens to Japanese gardens. Then there were the allotments and the orchard. And after that, the nursery, with more hostas than I knew existed, more clematis, more this and that – all at a price!



It was a day of pleasure, as you can see from the photos, and we came home filled with ideas (and plants, for some people), thanking the Gardening Group organisers for such simple enjoyment.

Mike Allen

Born in '44

SIX MEMBERS of the 'Born in '44 group' met for an afternoon of eating, drinking and laughing. We had taken along pictures of ourselves from childhood and upwards wearing swimsuits, or 'bathing costumes' as we called them then. It was very amusing to see how things have changed over the years, particularly the styles and fashions; some hilarious and some very glamorous, especially in the 1960's, when we were in our prime. (It may be hard to believe, but we didn't always look as we do now!)

Once we got started we discussed many subjects, flitting from one to the other, everyone sharing their happy memories.

One member brought-up Bonfire Night; how we got to that subject I don't know, we laughed about how boys used to throw jumping jacks when they were least expected, scaring us girls and making us squeal. There were no organised firework displays and community bonfires as there are now, we made our own fun, with Mums doing the cooking making parkin and toffee apples, whilst Dads kept the fire stoked and let off the fireworks. Most of the neighbours joined in bringing along jacket potatoes and crumpets, plus bonfire and cinder toffee. We enjoyed ourselves whilst the poor dog was sat on a blanket with the radio on at full blast.

I had taken along some pictures from magazines of the time – of shoes and handbags, the most incredible, almost unbelievable styles – we didn't have so much choice when we were teenagers; the heels certainly weren't so high, although I do remember wearing 4" stilletos to jive in.

This sparked us off on to another memory so we decided that next time we meet we will try and bring along pictures of ourselves wearing the fashions of our 'heyday'.

Our get-togethers are of course in keeping with the U3A's 'learning' policy, we are learning how to remember what we did when we were young, carefree and single, and how to laugh out loud; a very important part of these group meetings is laughter, it certainly lifts the spirits.
Sandra Evans

Wine Group 3

MEMBERS of Wine Appreciation Group 3 enjoyed a two-day break at the end of August when they visited the Three Choirs Vineyard in Gloucestershire.

After a tour of the vineyard and winery members sampled five very different wines produced by this well-known English vineyard.

A short drive took us to our hotel in Cheltenham, where we had a very enjoyable evening meal with lots more wine! The following day was spent in Gloucester and we dined at a local hostelry before our journey home. And a good time was had by all!

Pauline Boucher

Groups' News

Theatre Visits

ODDSOCKS are coming back to Thoresby! Another hilarious romp through a Shakespeare play, this time *'The Merry Wives of Windsor'*. It is already a comedy, and contains Falstaff, his gang of layabouts from 'Henry IV' and Mistresses Ford, Page and Quickly. It should be good so book-up now for pre-Christmas fun! It's not on their website yet, so details of cost and booking are sketchy.

Dates: Wednesday November 30th to Saturday December 3rd. Time: 7.30pm (no matinees this year). Cost: £13.50 (I think).

Gaynor Thorne has offered to take names as I'm away, so see her in 'my' chair next to the books at the AGM. Two dates on offer – Wednesday Nov. 30th and Friday Dec. 2nd – choose either or both; the-most heavily selected will be chosen. If you're unsure today, slip a note through my door at 20 Lichfield Avenue. I'll book at the start of October and report at the October meeting.

If you put your name down, you pay for a ticket!

Mike Allen

Holidays

CROATIA - THE ISTRIAN PENINSULA 30TH SEPTEMBER - 7TH OCTOBER 2012

The date is now fixed but I need another 10 people to get the quoted price of £719 (add £65 for the single supplement) for this holiday on the beautiful Istrian Peninsula in the north of Croatia.

Five or six superb excursions have been included – one an absolutely magnificent trip to Lake Bled in Slovenia. This is a bonus – the company are doing me a favour.

We have been offered the Allegro hotel in Rabac but as it has a steep hill on its approach that I want to avoid, I am in the process of looking for another.

We shall be flying from Birmingham to Trieste (in Italy, but only just over the border) and all transfer costs are included in the price! Other quotes are well over £800 and include only three excursions – and we would still have to pay for transfer costs!

The company's optional insurance costs £46.

Margaret Burlinson

Luncheon Club

OUR NEXT lunch, on September 22nd, will be at Reg and Barbara Dixon's choice of **Caunton Beck** that excelled last time we visited and may be in the running as a possible Lunch Club pub of the year.

BOOK NOW FOR CHRISTMAS!

Don't forget to reserve your place for the highlight of our gastronomic year – *Joyeux Noel*, or Happy Christmas in the French style, at Launay's in Edwinstowe – on Thursday December 15th. There'll be four fine-dining courses to choose from for those with good appetites and exploratory tastes with costs from just £16 for two. A non-returnable deposit of £10 will be needed by the October meeting to confirm your place.

Details of both are on the Lunch Club table.

David Ling

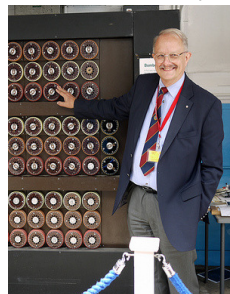
A visit to 'Station X'

DURING World War Two, Bletchley Park, located south of Milton Keynes in Buckinghamshire, was given the cover name of '*Station X*' because of its code-breaking activities and it was here that the Sci-Tech group and fellow members (totalling 45) went by coach on Friday 24th June. After a coffee on arrival we were led into the library where we were introduced to our guide for the day, Nick Hill, who proved to be an excellent speaker and a man of infinite knowledge about the history of this establishment.

In late August 1938, a small team from MI6 decided that Bletchley Park was an ideal location to relocate the Government Code and Cipher School to provide a safer home for the secret team of scholars turned code-breakers as they had been previously based in London. It was this site that was to become one of Britain's best-kept secrets during the second world-war.

Over the next 6 years there were many codes and ciphers to be broken but the most famous and long-remembered success of the team was mastering the codes transmitted by the Germans using a device called the *Enigma* machine. You will appreciate the complexity of this machine when you understand that it was capable of creating chances of one in 150 million, million, million, to locate the correct character of a message. And when you couple this with the fact that these codes were changed at least once a day it was indeed a gigantic challenge to the code-breakers.

Also the speed of breaking the code was most important so that you could read the messages quickly – a message several days old was of no use to be acted upon. It was therefore necessary to speed up the decoding operation and to this end a machine called the '*Bombe*' was built. This was an electro-mechanical machine of clattering code wheels that greatly reduced the odds and thereby the time required to break the ever-changing keys.



As the workload at Station 'X' increased, additional Bombe units were sited at other locations in the area and by 1944 there were at least 200 machines in use.

Hitler and his generals used an even more highly sophisticated cipher machine named 'Lorenz' that gave chances of one in 183 million, million, million, million – change that once a day and what chance have you got of decoding anything? Not to be put off, the Bletchley team devised another machine they called 'Heath Robinson' that gave partial success but had practical drawbacks.

Then came another machine, this one given the name 'Colossus' – but this time it was an electronic machine needing 2,500 valves and an electrical power consumption of 8½ kilowatts. Indeed, it has been said that the inventors Messrs. Turin, Newman and Flowers are now credited as fathers of the modern computer. If you also take into account that 'Colossus' had a processing speed as fast as a Pentium II in a modern computer you can appreciate how advanced this machine was for its time.

Recognition for the contribution made at Bletchley has been given by the American Institute for Electrical and Electronics Engineers by dedicating a citation to Bletchley Park, home of the world's first electronic code-breaking enterprise.

There is no doubt that the code-breaking successes achieved at Bletchley Park helped to save countless lives by shortening World War Two by around two years.

In the Stable yard at Bletchley is a Polish Memorial commemorating the achievements of the Polish code-breakers, three brilliant mathematicians, who made a considerable contribution by their work in breaking Enigma in 1932, when the encoding machine was undergoing trials with the German Army. The cipher at that time was only changing once every few months but with the advent of war the cipher changed at least once a day and so the Poles were then unable to break Enigma and so they decided to inform the British in July 1939.

Station 'X' became almost a production line to cope with the tremendous amount of data to be processed and at its peak around 3,000 people worked on the site and so the various sections were moved into large pre-fabricated huts set up on the lawns of the Park. For security reasons the various sections were known only by their hut numbers, of which only five still survive.

During the day our members were able to get a lunch, hot or cold, at a café in Hut 4. Whether you snatched time for a lunch or not there is such a lot of detail to see, to take in and certainly too much to report in this Newsletter but everybody said how they'd enjoyed the day as we left at 4.30 pm.

If you are interested in recent history and particularly that of the wartime period then ask for Nick Hill as your guide at Bletchley and you won't be disappointed.

Peter Thurkettle

This report had to be held over from the July issue due to pressure on space.

Will Aid

A WILL AID scheme will be operating in Mansfield in November.

If you want your will writing, certain local solicitors will waive their normal fee for writing a basic will and instead ask for a donation to one of nine charities including AgeUK, British Red Cross and NSPCC. You are asked to make suggested donation of £85 for a single will, £125 for mirror or matching wills or £40 for a codicil but you pick which charity to support.

For further information check the web site www.willaid.org.uk or telephone 0300 0300 013 (same as dialling 01 or 02). Do it sooner rather than later as you need to book a session with your chosen solicitor. If you do not have a will then make one, the only people who make money out of self written or non-existent wills are lawyers and the tax man. (Even if you do have one it might be worth looking to see what it said when you wrote it and see if you still agree with what you said then.)

Not to be too pessimistic, but everyone dies sometime and you cannot take your money where you are going; you will not need it.

Terry Whitehead (I donated my will money to SightSavers).

New Carpark Threat

YOU WALK across the carpark, unlock your car and get inside. You start the engine and put it into reverse. When you look into the rear-view mirror to back out of your space, you notice a piece of paper stuck to the window. So, you stop and jump out of your car to remove that paper (or whatever it is) that is obstructing your view.

When you reach the back of your car, that is when the car-jackers appear out of nowhere, jump into your car and take off. They practically run you over as they speed off in your car.

And guess what, ladies? I bet your purse is still in the car. So now the car-jacker has your car, your home address, your money, your keys and probably your sat-nav, ready to direct the thief to your home.

Your home and your whole identity are now compromised so, if you see a piece of paper stuck to your back window, lock your doors and just drive away.

Remove the paper later. And be thankful that you read this as your purse or handbag/wallet contains all kinds of personal information and identification documents that you certainly do NOT want to fall into the wrong hands.

Contribution from a serving Police Officer

Disclaimer

THE VIEWS expressed here are those of the contributors, only, and do not necessarily reflect those of the editor, the committee of Mansfield U3A or the Third Age Trust. Nor can any responsibility be accepted for errors that may occur.

Next Issue

PLEASE SEND CONTRIBUTIONS for the October issue by email to mansfieldu3a@aol.com, or in typescript to the editor, as soon as you can and by 1st October at the latest. Thanks!

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