

# NEWSBITES!

**December 2021**

*Sharing ideas across 34 u3as in Nottinghamshire*

## Best Wishes for Christmas and 2022



Chill December  
brings the sleet,  
Blazing fire and  
Christmas treat.

### MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF NOTTS NETWORK

I am writing this with only 11 days to go until the big day. I do hope everyone is able to enjoy the Christmas festivities and still able to meet up with family and friends.

At our committee meeting this morning we agreed, very reluctantly, not to hold our January main meeting, which would have been on the 4<sup>th</sup>, as there are so many question marks hanging around as to rules and regulations. It is so sad after relatively recently opening up but we can only do our very best for our members. I hope all of you are navigating the muddy waters successfully but do remember to make use of the Notts Network Peer Support Groups if you would like to gather the views of other u3as as to a particular question. If you are not a member of the Chairs PSG just email me on [rosieallen21@outlook.com](mailto:rosieallen21@outlook.com) and I will add you to the group to enable you to see what everyone is writing.

A reminder to you all to add the u3a Day/Week September 2022 Grand Network Event to your agenda for your next committee meeting. An email was sent out with an outline proposal and the Publicity PSG would be grateful if you would consider the very draft proposal and:

- Let us know whether or not your u3a would be prepared to be involved.
- Give us the names of individuals prepared to work on the planning of this event which will involve a variety of tasks.

I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

*Rosie Allen*

## DID YOU KNOW THERE IS A MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT?

This document can be downloaded from the u3a website and u3as put in the name of their own u3a in place of the dots. It is possible that many u3as incorporate this, or part of it, into their membership application forms.

u3a members are expected to conduct themselves in line with the Movement's Guiding Principles. They are also expected to treat each other with dignity and respect. Specifically:

- Members are expected to know, follow and promote the Principles of the u3a Movement at every opportunity.
- Members must always act in the best interests of ..... u3a and the u3a Movement, strive to uphold its reputation and never do anything which could bring their own, another u3a or the u3a Movement into disrepute or expose it to undue risk.
- Members are expected to use ..... u3a's resources responsibly and only to further its stated charitable objects/purposes.
- Members are expected to reflect the current organisational policy of ..... u3a, regardless of whether it conflicts with their personal views.
- Members are expected to abide by ..... u3a's procedures and practices.
- Members are expected to treat each other with dignity and respect at all times.

### A MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Thank you to all the u3as who have sent in contributions during the last year. I have enjoyed reading them and including them in Newsbites for other u3as to read and hope they have found them inspirational and informative.

During 2022 I would like to expand the scope of Newsbites and include items about u3as in the Network. When and how did your u3a come into existence? How has it grown? Are there any unusual interest groups? How is your u3a getting back on its feet after lockdowns? There are 34 u3as in the Network, some of you must have interesting stories to tell.

Another item I would like to include is for members to tell their own story of how and why they joined the u3a, how it might have changed their lives, the interest groups they have joined— everyone has a story to tell, so please don't be shy.

With best wishes for Christmas and a happy and successful 2022.

*Jane Parrier*

**The deadline for articles and photographs for the next issue of Newsbites! is 15th January 2022**

Any u3a member can send in items, not just committee members.

Please submit your articles using font Arial 10pt if possible

Articles/photos please to [jane.newsbits@gmail.com](mailto:jane.newsbits@gmail.com)

### QUOTE FOR THE MONTH

“The trouble with having an open mind, of course, is that people will insist on coming along and trying to put things in it.”

— Terry Pratchett, *Diggers*

# THE LIFE OF A NOTTINGHAMSHIRE u3a

## THE FORMING OF MANSFIELD & DISTRICT U3A

In 1999 a small group of members from Ollerton u3a realised that Mansfield would benefit from its own u3a. Leaflets were distributed around town, and the local Newspaper and Radio Mansfield were persuaded to advertise the meeting. The Friends Meeting House was booked for the event. The first meeting was held on the third Tuesday in May. About 38 people turned up and were quickly welcomed by Edith Senior, who explained what the u3a was all about as very few there had heard of this organisation. A discussion led to setting up three trial groups - Walking, Art and Music.

A month later at the next meeting numbers had doubled as word spread. Several members had been on their first walk. The Third Age Trust had been contacted about borrowing videos for a Music Group and Rita Turner had got the Council to let the Art Group have a small Community Centre free for six months.

Numbers attending meetings quickly grew and the Friends Meeting House then the Baptist Centre became too small. The Oakham Suite on Nottingham Road proved ideal but as growth continued, a move to the present venue at the One Call Stadium was made in 2016.

Owing to the fact that more people were discovering the value of u3as, Mansfield & District u3a set up Steering Committees that helped Ashfield, Sherwood, Sutton-in-Ashfield, Rainworth and Forest Town to soon have their own thriving u3as. Mansfield u3a's interest groups increased as members came forward and we now have over fifty groups with many diverse subjects. Walking groups now have distances for all abilities from over seven miles down to the Shufflers for those with limited mobility.

Mansfield u3a has always managed to fund itself by fundraising and over the years have had many memorable social events, including two Big Band evenings and a Prom Ball with everyone in full evening dress with a professional photographer, live band and excellent meal to name a few. The Prom was held at the John Fretwell Centre and was organised after members became aware we had missed out when we left school on the excitement our grandchildren were having! We also enjoyed a wonderful Afternoon Tea at the John Fretwell Centre in 2019 to celebrate our 20-year anniversary. We always get together for a Christmas Meal and have an annual Quiz which is usually attended by over 100 members.

Holidays both in the UK and abroad have always been popular, from an early trip to the European Union Headquarters in Brussels to the 2010 Passion play at Oberamagau. A few Tai Chi members even managed a quick session in the Channel Tunnel on one trip!

Our Monthly Meetings have had interesting speakers on a variety of topics. Monthly meetings continued via Zoom during lock-down, encouraging members who had been reluctant to use a computer to grow into modern technology and keep in touch with family and friends.

Mansfield & District u3a has proved its value to senior members in and around the town and numbers continue to grow, although sadly, I am the only remaining member from the original 1999 meeting, most only leaving through health problems or moving nearer to family.

**Sylvia Slack**

# LEARN, LAUGH, LIVE

## MANSFIELD & DISTRICT u3a

Over 70 of our members went to the Hostess Restaurant on Friday 10 December for their Christmas lunch. It was lovely to get dressed up, meet up with friends and eat a delicious three-course meal. We had a Quiz, entertainment and dancing and a wonderful time was had by all. The photograph shows Table 7, the winners of the Quiz.

*Carole Harrison, Business Secretary*



## ARNOLD u3a

I went for an autumn walk in Rufford Park with friends.

So much colour to see at this time. The weather was mixed - we had sun and then rain. With sun, the colours exploded; the leaves already on the ground and the remaining leaves on the



trees. With rain, my companions scuttled quickly away to the cafe and hot coffee. They missed so much. I found bulbs attached to long lengths of cable in the trees - prepared I'm sure to put on a glorious light show of oranges,



yellows and greens - highlighting the leaves still to fall. Leaves piled against hedges in neat rows - how does that work? Swept by wind and tied to the hedges - maybe there is nowhere else for them to go. Shiny slabs reflect the Abbey. The balustrade pulls you towards the door. Windows once - now sky and rain are seen. Neat chestnut trees line up against a path. Huge leaves with veins and four fat fingers sit on benches. Time to go - protect my lens from the wetness. I find my companions with steaming drinks, sausage rolls, bacon cobs and smiles.



Anne Archer

## MANSFIELD & DISTRICT u3a



Members of the Committee set up our u3a Christmas tree and bunting at Mansfield Museum. The Museum is showcasing decorated Christmas trees from local businesses, schools and organisations during December. Members of the public are encouraged to vote online for their favourite. We have also included some leaflets for anyone to pick up who might be interested in joining our u3a.

*Carole Harrison, Business Secretary*

## HUCKNALL & DISTRICT u3a

Each year in December a 'Christmas Tree and Wreath Festival' is held in and around the church of St Mary Magdalene near Hucknall market place. (This is the church where both Lord Byron and his daughter Ada Lovelace are buried.)



Thirty trees were on show made by schools, local community groups and businesses. Hucknall u3a entered a tree and a wreath again this year.

The theme of our tree was 'Giving'. It was the idea of the science group and it was made from food tins with the intention of donating the tree and contents to the local food bank. They advised us on what variety of foodstuffs would be of most use and they were all donated by members of the science group.

Our wreath was designed and made by member Rose Ridley using her flower arranging skills.



The wreaths remain on show hung from the church railings until December 18<sup>th</sup>.

*David Rose, Chairman*

## DUKERIES u3a

Our Ramblers and Whatsapp Walkers did not let inclement weather stop them from enjoying walks locally in our forest areas. The Photography group travelled to Newark at dusk to take photographs using special effects. Meanwhile our Sewing group had an instructive afternoon learning how to upcycle fabrics destined for landfill into useful articles. Our other indoor activity groups continue to thrive. Now winter nights are here, our Chairperson, Leslye, has re-started her Tuesday evening Zoom quizzes. She will hold Zoom help nights for those members who have not used this online platform before.

After the Christmas Party in December, the next monthly meeting where prospective members can come along will be on Monday 17 January 2022 when the speaker will be well-known local pet detective, Lisa Dean, who will tell us about her successes in reuniting lost pets with their owners. In February the speaker will be Geoff Harris, who will bring his talk about hidden London to Dukeries u3a.

As part of our commitment to engage with community partners, Dukeries u3a members were pleased to help Edwinstowe and Dukeries Lions when Santa Claus visited the Tesco store in Ollerton in December.

Dukeries u3a has been successful in receiving grants and are extremely grateful to the following for their support:

- Nottinghamshire & Community Foundation RTC Fund
- Newark & Sherwood Community Engagement
- Newark & Sherwood CVS
- The National Lottery Community Funding.

Their generosity has enabled Dukeries u3a to upgrade their computer equipment, associated equipment and publicity materials, allowing the committee to work more efficiently and to maintain a higher profile in the local area.

Despite the recent Covid restrictions we have been successful in increasing our membership and we are continuing to admit new members at our monthly meetings so that we now have 140 members drawn from Ollerton, Edwinstowe and the surrounding villages.

*Ann Street, Publicity Officer*



## SOUTHWELL u3a



Southwell u3a celebrated Christmas at their monthly meeting at Southwell Leisure Centre on 7<sup>th</sup> December with a party featuring music and seasonal readings all performed by u3a members. There were great performances by everyone, including the Ukulele and Recorder groups plus two singing groups, some solo musical items and a variety of winter and Christmas related readings, some specially written for the concert. The only downside was that in ensuring the hall was adequately ventilated as a Covid measure, all the fire doors were left open resulting in the temperature in the Hall being rather cold. That very few attendees left before the concert was over is a testament to the hardy nature of Southwell members!

*Chris Bentley*



## FOREST TOWN & DISTRICT u3a

This is taken from a press release sent out by the u3a

Forest Town u3a celebrated its first event since the Covid-19 affected everyone. It was a packed event in the Forest Town Arena, Forest Town. Martyn Wright and Mick Barton, local Councilors, were guests of the u3a and helped with the festivities. They have both been long-time supporters of the u3a and its work.

During the morning 'Turn Back Time' provided live entertainment with a medley of Christmas songs and 60's and 70's music. The u3a members played bingo, held a raffle, secret Santa, and a festive quiz all of which were great fun. Refreshments were served along with traditional mince pies.

Forest Town u3a now has 20 interest groups and are always looking for people to run new groups and group leaders. New members are always welcome. Why not come and visit, we meet on the first Friday of the month at the Forest Town Arena at 10.00am. You can meet our members, talk to our group leaders, and join our u3a if you like what you see. You can visit twice free before becoming a member.

During lockdown we introduced a 'Buddy' scheme when members volunteered to phone other members who were struggling with loneliness and isolation. It was a great success and lasting friendships were made.

u3a is a national movement which supports people in their third age to continue their learning and interests in an informal environment. Its ethos is "It's vital for people in their later years to keep their minds and bodies active".

2022 will be the u3a Movement's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary and we will be holding events celebrating this throughout the year. The u3a will be undertaking tree planting to celebrate this celebratory year.

Recent u3a national research – 'Learning Not Lonely' - demonstrated the impact of the u3a movement on wellbeing in later life in terms of confidence, combatting loneliness, feeling supported in new communities, learning new skills and perhaps, most important of all, feeling valued and enjoying life.

To find out more and how to join Forest Town u3a go to

<https://u3asites.org.uk/forest-town/home>

*Christine Ward, Business Secretary*



## SMILE OF THE MONTH

"Rumpole, you must move with the times."

"If I don't like the way the times are moving, I shall refuse to accompany them."

— John Mortimer, *The Anti Social Behaviour Of Horace Rumpole*

