

NEWSBITES!

FEBRUARY 2022

Sharing ideas across 34 u3as in Nottinghamshire

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF NOTTS NETWORK

I do hope you are all managing to keep your spirits up despite the constant pressure of decision making as new information comes out regarding covid strains. We can all be very proud that we have successfully worked our way through the last nearly two years. There seems to be light at the end of the tunnel and the good news is that new members are coming forward to sign up to be part of our u3as.

January 26th saw our Notts Network meeting held again on zoom and we were delighted with the turn out. I do suggest you ask one of your members to attend each of our meetings so that we can have representation from all the 33 u3as in Nottinghamshire.

At the meeting we introduced a document "Nottinghamshire Network of u3as Organisation, Purpose and Structure" which outlines who we are, what we do and how we do it. Very useful for any newcomers to the u3a. Each Network representative was sent this document with the papers for the January meeting. It can also be found on the Notts Network website.

We were very pleased to welcome Liz Thackray, the Chair of the Third Age Trust, to talk to us at the meeting. She answered two questions:

- What are your plans and aspirations for the u3a Movement?
- What is the u3a going to do for us in supporting these plans?

She emphasised the importance of Raising the Profile of the u3a Movement by developing our public presence and that in this 40th Anniversary Year we all can take part in celebrations which do just that. Later on, you can see an article about our planned Notts Network Grand Event for u3a week. This is a real opportunity for us to make a big splash.

Liz also emphasised the importance of us remaining agile and able to adapt and change. We need to demonstrate our relevance to recruit new members but ensure that we keep to the fore the principles on which our movement is founded.

Each u3a in the Network has been sent the PowerPoint on which Liz based her talk.

Do take advantage of all that our Notts Network has to offer and if you have ideas for activities that we could engage with please let us know.

Rosie Allen

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

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

Articles/photos please to
jane.newsbits@gmail.com

QUOTE FOR THE MONTH

"Student: Dr. Einstein, aren't these the same questions as last year's [physics] final exam?"

Dr. Einstein: Yes, but this year the answers are different."
– *Albert Einstein*

u3a DAY/WEEK SEPTEMBER 2022 GRAND NETWORK EVENT

This planned Network Event is to be held during u3a Week, September 19th to 25th.

The very draft outline of the proposal is to involve each u3a in the Network probably throughout the week. This might involve different u3as putting forward an Interest Group to highlight and to carry a beacon/banner to the next u3a who would take over. At each point there would hopefully be interviews with interesting individuals/dignitaries which would point out the benefits of the Interest Group and u3a in general to a person's well being.

The week would culminate in an event in the centre of Nottingham to which celebrity/ies would be invited and members from u3as across the county would amass.

The aim is to plan this far enough ahead to enable us to attract national/county media attention.

The Publicity Peer Support Group would be grateful if you would consider this very draft proposal and

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

The Publicity Peer Support Group is to meet on the 23rd February to begin the planning of the event and we urge you to send someone to the zoom meeting. Contact chrisniven1@yahoo.co.uk for the zoom link.

Rosie Allen, Network Chair

THOUGHTS FROM u3a OFFICE

HAVE YOU

. signed up for the u3a National Newsletter which comes directly to your inbox free each month from Sam Mauger, the Chief Executive Officer? It contains articles and photographs submitted by other u3as, news from the Third Age Trust, and much more. It is easy to sign up. Just scroll down to the bottom of the u3a Home page and fill in the section that indicates 'Sign up to our national newsletter'. It is as simple as that.

. looked at the Events section on the national website? Details of the 'Online Learning Events' are shown and you can easily sign up for them. Some are one-off events and some are courses lasting a few weeks. They are free and delivered by u3a members. The list is regularly updated and covers a wide variety of subjects.

Recruiting new Committee Members

Many u3as are reporting increasing difficulty in replacing committee members as places become vacant. The good news is that u3a office has just published a new tool in the u3a [Recruitment and retention toolkit](#). Over 30 u3as have pooled their experiences and success stories in ***Making your committee bigger and better***. This short guide can be downloaded [here](#), or you can find it by searching for Recruitment Toolkit on the u3a national website. Probably quickest of all, if you just google *u3a recruit*, that should take you to the right part of the website. If you want to look before you download, you can also find the guide in the on line Sources Blog, by clicking on this [link](#), or searching as above.



Paul Martinez (Chair, u3a Recruitment Working Group)

... AND A GOOD TIME WAS HAD BY ALL AT THE CHINESE NEW YEAR



The Dragon menacing Southwell u3a

On the 31st of January a Network event took place at the Springwater Cantonese Restaurant in Calverton, Nottinghamshire.

The event was to celebrate the start of 2022 Year of the Tiger. Two hundred and twenty six u3a members attended, representing 11 of the 33 u3as in Nottinghamshire.

During the evening members enjoyed an eat-all-you-can banquet, with an intermission for a demonstration of Chinese Dragon dancing performed by members of a local Kung Fu club, followed by a free prize draw. The evening was rounded off with a spectacular firework display.

The event was enjoyed by all and as a result a booking was made for next year.

Terry Hardman



THE LIFE OF u3as IN NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

KEYWORTH & DISTRICT u3a

Keyworth & District u3a has been welcoming members for 13 years. The launch meeting was held on the 27th January 2009 with the encouragement and support of members of West Bridgford u3a. After the launch we were also helped by Nottingham u3a and Mansfield u3a. The launch meeting was hugely successful, Keyworth Methodist Church was packed with over 200 attendees. A full committee was formed, and 14 interest group leaders put themselves forward. The inaugural meeting was held on 24th February. By coincidence 2009 was also the year in which the first meeting of the Nottinghamshire Network of u3as was held, and at that time there were around 13 u3as.

Keyworth Methodist Church had a traditional church interior with rows of pews. In January 2010 the church building closed for extensive refurbishment and the u3a Open Meetings were moved to the Village Hall. In September 2010 we were able to move back to the church for our meetings. The interior of the church had been transformed with flexible, comfortable seating, attractive décor and best of all an inbuilt audio-visual system with the ability to transmit services from the church to the hall at the back of the building. This meant that we had an overflow area when Open Meeting attendances were over the church seating capacity of 120. Membership has for some time stabilised at around 500 with pre-covid meeting attendances in the range 80 to 150.

We are fortunate to have the British Geological Survey (BGS) within Keyworth. There are several retired BGS employee members who have given talks or who have contacts willing to give talks on topics such as Earth-

quakes (2013), Volcanoes (2014), Fracking (2015). The talk on Fracking attracted some unwelcome hecklers from outside the area and we subsequently stopped using the term Open Meeting in favour of Monthly Meeting.

During the first year a 'New Horizons' committee was formed taking upon itself the organisation of trips and events open to all members. This continued with a full programme right up to the start of the pandemic. It all began with a garden party at the home of the then team leader. From castles, museums, stately homes, libraries, and theatres to vintage cars and motorcycles, the space centre, wonderful exhibitions, river cruises and Greyhound racing. Travel was always a significant factor using local buses, car share, community buses and luxury coaches. Many celebratory events have been organised over the years not least of which have been many Christmas parties attended on occasions by over 100 members.

We are fortunate to have had enthusiastic newsletter editors throughout our existence with 37 quarterly paper newsletters up to 2018 and 45 monthly electronic newsletters thereafter. Committee Meetings and Monthly Meetings have continued throughout the pandemic using Zoom and both are now being held in-person again. An in-person AGM was held in September 2021 with 142 members attending. As we emerge from lockdown there are a few groups which have opted not to continue but currently there are an encouraging 36 groups operating.

Peter Edge, Webmaster

RAINWORTH & DISTRICT u3a

Rainworth & District u3a has been in existence since December 2013, so relatively new. We are still small with membership around 130+ pre-covid but we regularly had attendances at our monthly meetings of 80+. We meet in Rainworth Village Hall which is in the heart of the village and can accommodate many more. There is a meeting every month with no break and all have a speaker or entertainer. Since our debut we have had a full committee of 10-12 and, yes, there were some glitches at the beginning, but these were overcome thanks to our mentor/Trust advisor.

At the start we had 12 Interest Groups, which have now swollen to 17, and amongst these mention must be given to our singing group "The Ringtones" who perform at our social events. They have an excellent musical director who accompanies on various instruments. At our recent Christmas party, we sang along to Christmas songs and finished with "The Hallelujah Chorus", admittedly with a recording featuring orchestra and choir! Magnificent!! Our Social Programme for the year includes six or seven events which are very popular.

During Lockdown we had regular updates and amusing articles sent out to keep us all together but it was so good to meet in person at our first casual meeting last August.

Pam Berry, Publicity Officer

NEWS FROM u3as IN NOTTINGHAMSHIRE



YOUR u3a NEEDS YOU AND YOUR NETWORK NEEDS YOU

There are four people named Everybody, Somebody, Anybody and Nobody.

There was an important job to be done and Everybody was sure Somebody would do it.

Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did.

Somebody got angry about that, because it was Everybody's job.

Everybody thought Anybody could do it but Nobody realised that Everybody wouldn't do it.

It ended up that Everybody blamed Somebody when Nobody did what Anybody could have done.

COTGRAVE & DISTRICT u3a

Twelve members of Cotgrave & District u3a joined in with the celebration of the Chinese New Year organised by Terry Hardman (Network Treasurer) held at The Springwater Cantonese Restaurant, Calverton. Fireworks, a spectacular Lion Dance, copious amounts of great food, fortune cookies, dancing and, of course, fun and laughter around our table made the evening a huge success. Our whole party, along with about 200 other u3a members had a tremendously good time and we are already looking forward to repeating the event next year.

Sue Hillyard

DUKERIES u3a



Dukeries u3a members enjoyed the postponed Christmas party which took place in February - renamed as the 'Missedmas' party! A fun evening was had by all, starting with entertainment by the Ukulele Group.



Monthly meetings and activity groups continue including the first meeting of the re-started Wine Appreciation group. It is hoped that Day Trips will start again soon. The Ramblers walked the Rufford Poacher trail, which is a seven-mile circular route from Limes Cafe through Rufford Pines. Their next walk was the eight-mile Southwell Trail, taking in Farnsfield and Edingley. Both routes are of interest to military history followers as they include the crash site of a Wellington bomber and the Halifax Bomber memorial.

At the postponed January meeting members heard Lisa Dean, Pet Detective, give a most interesting talk about her charity, 'Beauty's Legacy'. It was a delight to meet a rescued dog and owner who had recently been reunited. Dukeries u3a were happy to welcome five new members at this meeting. February's guest speaker will be Geoff Harris who will reveal 'The London No-One Tells You About'. March's speaker will be Simon Cork who will tell members about the great philanthropist, Andrew Carnegie.

Now it is becoming safer to meet socially, there is a Race Night planned for 4 March at Jubilee Hall. Meanwhile Leslye's Zoom quizzes and social evenings are continuing in February and March. As part of their commitment to engage in the local community, Dukeries u3a members joined with other groups and local businesses to take part in the RSPB Sherwood Forest's Heart Trail in February. Members sewed, knitted and crafted hearts which were displayed around Edwinstowe village leading up to the RSPB Visitor Centre. Dukeries u3a were grateful that RSPB gave permission for them to give information about the group to visitors during the event. Dukeries u3a members follow the u3a motto 'Learn, Laugh, Live' and believe that 'Now is the time to make the most of your life'. Our u3a now has over 140 members drawn from Ollerton, Edwinstowe and the surrounding villages. A get-together event is planned soon for new members to come and meet each other and the committee so they can find out more about Dukeries u3a.



Ann Street, Publicity Officer

'THE CLIMATE CRISIS - AND SOME SOLUTIONS'

On 23rd March, Brenda Ainsley (Cotgrave and District u3a) will present her 3rd National Talk: 'The Climate Crisis - and Some Solutions'.

The third in our series of talks aimed at raising awareness and understanding about the climate emergency.

In 2021, Brenda Ainsley twice presented this popular talk explaining the science behind the climate emergency and outlining ways in which we can all 'make a difference' for future generations.

Brenda will briefly summarise the scientific background to climate change and look at examples, in the UK and worldwide, of how it is impacting people's lives.

She will also reflect on the 2021 COP26 UN Climate talks in Glasgow and explain some of the outcomes. The session will conclude with taking a further look at what we can all do. There will then be time for Q&A.

Helpful documents relating to further actions can be found here on the Trust u3a Countdown to COP website: [What can we do?](#)

Biography:

Brenda Ainsley from Cotgrave & District u3a has trained with the Climate Reality Leadership Programme and regularly makes presentations to members of Trust u3a and to members of u3as throughout the country.

This event is for **u3a members only** and will be held online via **Zoom**. To join: [The Climate Crisis - and Some Solutions Tickets Wednesday 23rd March 2022 at 10:30 AM | Eventbrite](#)

BEESTON u3a

Publicity in Unexpected Places



Here in Beeston we are very lucky to live in a thriving and diverse community. There are new shops and restaurants opening, plenty of musical and artistic events, a new cinema and even, this year – our own Light Night! The Beeston u3a reflects this lively neighbourhood, with over 900 members and more than 80 active u3a groups.

We know that a lot of our new members find us through word of mouth, mainly via existing members - but we have set out to attract an even wider age range, and ensure recruitment for the future. That is why we chose to approach The Garage Chilwell, who for the last decade have been hosting amazing events in the Barton Transport Limited bus garage, on Chilwell Road. The garage was built in 1913 and went on to be the home the largest independent bus operator in Western Europe for many years.

The Sunday morning food markets at the Garage have built a fantastic reputation over the last couple of years, with The Independent and The Telegraph both naming it one of the top Farmers' Markets in the UK. The Market organisers were very happy to support the u3a when we explained the community benefits. They gave us a small stand for no charge at their first 2022 market in early February.



We put our banners up and hoped to give out a few leaflets and answer a few queries – but we were overwhelmed by the response for the full four hours the market was open. Even before the doors had opened an artisan cider supplier on a nearby stand offered to come and organise a cider tasting event for our u3a! We spoke to many existing members, making sure they knew about our Group Fair coming up in March. We prompted several people who had been meaning to get round to looking into joining into action. We had lots of enquiries on behalf of neighbours and family members. And we planted a few seeds in the fertile minds of people who are approaching retirement in the next few years.



Being associated with the Garage broadened our publicity appeal. We even tagged them (and hence their 8500+ audience) into our 'thank you' Facebook post.

As well as meeting up with some of our own friends and neighbours who were visiting the market, we left with some high quality hummus, olives, cakes, pastries and fudge from the irresistible stalls!

Karen Attwood, Publicity Officer

MANSFIELD & DISTRICT u3a

Mansfield & District u3a will be holding their first face-to-face Members' Meeting of 2022 on Tuesday 15 February. The Speaker's presentation is on the Kennedys.

We are holding a Games Night on Saturday 26 February with a fish and chip supper.

Also we are all meeting up for a live Quiz and refreshments on Friday 29 April. Future events are also being planned.

SOUTHWELL u3a

Southwell u3a Meeting with Minster School Students Again.

At their February monthly meeting Southwell u3a heard a presentation, albeit this time by Zoom, from students from the Minster School's Head Team, Head Boy and Head Girl and Deputies. This arrangement started five years ago and now it is an event firmly in both the u3a diary and the School's, giving the opportunity for the students to have a dialogue with older people on topics which most concern them.



Minster School students Zooming with Southwell u3a

In the past the students have talked about issues such as student debt, environmental degradation, social media, the housing ladder and mental health. This time it was Covid and how young people have fared under lockdown, how Covid is affecting career development, problems related to maintaining personal relationships, the importance of modern technology and how life as we have known it may not ever be the same again.

Again this year, it was another very confident and mature presentation by the students and we wish them all great success in their chosen career paths. It is very refreshing to hear from the young people at the start of their adult lives and Southwell u3a hope that other joint ventures with the School may be possible in the future. And our message to other u3as is to suggest that they contact their local schools to explore whether similar connections could be developed.

Chris Bentley

SMILE OF THE MONTH

I'm not arguing. I'm just explaining why I am right.

LEARN, LAUGH, LIVE