

System and District

u3a

learn, laugh, live

JULY
2022

Vitality!

Official newsletter of the System and District u3a

CHARITY No 1180152

FROM OUR CHAIRMAN

I hope everyone is well and enjoying this beautiful summer weather.

At the June General Meeting we held our AGM which was followed by Juke Box Jury. The audience participation really made for a lively atmosphere and weren't our jury fantastic really getting into the spirit of it.

The new committee have had their first meeting and we have some exciting events to tell you about in the next months. On 9th July the u3a will be having a table at the 'Help is at Hand' event, organised by the Syston Volunteer Bureau. The event will be held on Syston Central Park and if you have a spare hour or two to help between 10am and 4 am please drop me a line on sadu3achair@gmail.com.

We still have the position of Secretary to fill, whilst it would be great if we could fill the post as it stands, the committee agreed that, in the absence of a taker, we should look to split the post between 2 people. Please see details of what the secretary does and how the post could be split in the next section of the newsletter.

Clive

CHANGE OF HEADER

You may, or may not, have noticed slight changes to the header for this month's edition. This is because the Executive Committee decided to switch to using the Third Age Trust version of the u3a "branding" at its June meeting. The change is modest, from U3A to u3a. You will also see this on our website and our new facebook group – more of that in this newsletter.

We will continue to use the existing banner that we bring out at GMs, Open Days and the like, as it is still in good condition.

WE WANT TO LET YOU KNOW

Can You Help....?

We need a bit of a hand with keeping the u3a going, so we need your help. We need someone who can *take the notes at our Committee meetings*, which happen once a month. They're not mind blowing events, it's not difficult, and it's not rocket science. You'd need to make notes of what's decided, who's going to do it, and then send the notes to the Committee after the meeting. You don't need to know all about how the u3a works, or be an "Expert" in taking Minutes.

Do you have experience of taking notes at meetings? Could you help out once a month? We'll provide support to help you get going, and bed you in gently...! Honest...!

And a bit of a hand with this would be useful...

We also need someone who can be our contact with "the outside world". This means receiving and dealing with a small number of emails from our parent body the Third Age Trust, and the local county Network. What's involved...? A couple of emails a month from the Trust, which need forwarding to relevant people in the u3a, and a couple of emails a month from the Network, which again need forwarding on. It's not time consuming, it doesn't need loads of previous experience, just a willingness to be our point of contact. Again, we'd bed you in gently...!

Interested in helping out? For more information contact Clive Iliffe at sadu3achair@gmail.com or Brian King at sadu3avicechair@gmail.com or sadu3asecretary@gmail.com or anyone else you know on the Committee.

Thanks, we look forward to hearing from you.

Brian

2022 AGM REPORT

Our AGM was short and sweet, but still a very necessary event. The Acting Chairman's and Treasurer's reports were accepted, with no questions raised.

There being no posts where there were more nominations than vacancies, all nominees were voted onto the Executive Committee en bloc.

No motions had been proposed for discussion, so the AGM was over and done in about 10 minutes flat.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2022/23

Clive Iliffe	Chair
Brian King	Vice Chair
Christine Ringrose	Treasurer
Vacant	Secretary
Jill Kempton-Hayes	Publicity Lead
Margaret King	Membership Secretary
Shelia Driver	Groups Coordinator
Tracy Freeman	Committee Member
Christine Gale	Committee Member
Norma Grimes	Committee Member
Julie Johnson	Committee Member
Barbara Sargeant	Committee Member

Committee members contact details are currently being set up or transferred as needed. The website will no doubt be updated when all this is in place. In the meantime postholders who haven't changed their role can be contacted via the website.

Following discussions over the last few months the make up of the committee now has key specific roles as named above, plus general committee members who will assist where needed in the coming months.

The posts of Speaker Finder (Steve Kenney), Newsletter Editor (Julie Johnson), Webmaster (John Winter), Meet and Greet leader (Dottie Clarke) and Access and Inclusion (Susan Alexander), have all been moved to support team roles over recent months and are no longer elected posts.

Let's communicate with each other!

At a recent executive committee meeting, we looked at using Facebook as a method for all of us to keep more in touch. Both Vitality! and the website do a great job in informing us about events past and forthcoming, but are not 'immediate'.

Therefore the decision has been taken to create a private, closed group for Syston and District u3a. The main concern, (quite rightly) was that of privacy, and not allowing all and sundry to see items that you post in the group. This only happens when your Facebook account has not been set up properly, therefore see below for my notes on how you can achieve this.

When you request to join the group, you will be asked to enter your U3A membership number which will then be checked, for security. Once the request has been approved, you will be able to post items of interest on there (NB NOT a photo of your dog etc. etc. , or that you are just going out shopping !).

There also exists, via a Messenger App (Smartphone or Tablet), a way to send a private message to another member, much easier than texting or emailing. If using Facebook on a computer, this is built into Facebook automatically.

We envisage that events will be posted if we find out something that is imminent, and too late if we wait for Vitality.

This Facebook group can easily be used on your smart phone or tablet, or even on a laptop (but the screen layout is slightly more haphazard here). This is slightly different to private group for just your own activity group, and here it is up to that group organizer to set up a similar private group just for their members if that is required.

Anyway, have a go, read my instruction sheet, if you are not sure. You can text me or email me if you have any questions.

Still worried about privacy? I have attached a couple of 'Facebook set-up Website' links should you wish to read more before starting.

To create a Facebook account:

1. Once on the Internet, go to '<https://en-gb.facebook.com/reg>'
2. Enter the name you go by in everyday life.
3. Enter your email or mobile phone number.
4. Select your gender and date of birth, and choose a password.
5. Tap Sign Up.
6. To finish creating your account, you need to confirm your email or mobile phone number.

If you want to use Facebook on your smart phone or Tablet, you will need to download the Facebook App. and then log in.

To personalise your account, you can **edit your Profile**

1. Upload a photo of yourself so people can recognize you
(i.e. lots of John Smiths !)
2. Optional background information – Schools/Employment etc.
3. Town or Village where you live
4. Contact information – Tel. No. and/or email address

Setting up your Privacy settings

Choose **Profile Settings**

1. Select '**Follow Settings**' to decide who you want to see your Posts
e.g. Public or just your Friends (recommend use just Friends)
2. Decide who can see the People, Pages, and Lists that you follow
e.g. Public, Friends or just you.
3. Decide who can comment on your Public Posts
e.g. Public, Friends or Friends of Friends

To join the **Syston U3A group**

- 1 Click on 'Groups'
2. Click on the search icon (Usually a magnifying glass)
3. Type in 'Syston U3A' and then tap 'Search'
4. When the group shows, tap on 'Join'
5. On the pop-up, you will be asked to enter your U3A membership number.

Once your request has been approved by the Group Administrator, you will be notified that you are now a member of the group, and can post or just view.

NB There are several websites on the internet that give you more guidelines on creating a safe Facebook account should you want to read more, here are a couple.

1. <https://www.seniortechclub.com/tech-recipe/getting-started-with-facebook/>
2. <https://edu.gcfglobal.org/en/facebook101/>

(Hold down the Ctrl key and click on the link above to open the webpage)

Dave Palmer
07710 448253
dpalmer192@btinternet.com

Exciting Samba Drumming Workshop



Samba drumming
..for your **team events**

Have you ever heard a **samba band** playing in the street?

The unmistakable Brazilian beats that shape this energetic & joyful street percussion connect with many people at a deep level. **Yet the rudiments can be taught in under an hour** – even to someone with no prior percussion or musical experience.

Although the full sound of **samba** is rich, dense and complex, the individual parts are simple and are mostly built from short repeating patterns and so can be picked-up quickly. It's designed as a street art, to be **learned quickly** and **performed enthusiastically**.

we are..

sambando

a UK-based community band that has been performing samba for over 20 years. One of our great pleasures is seeing the sense of well-being, excitement and connection that comes when people play samba together - especially for the first time.

We have run workshops for our new members for many years and now offer them as standalone experiences to help with energising, team-building and with overall well-being.

And for those who are bitten by the samba bug, there may even be opportunities for them to perform with us.

Our workshops typically run for two hours including breaks, and cater for **groups of 6-20** people. We provide the instruments and the tutors, you provide a room and the budding sambistas! We have a minimum age of 14, and no upper age limit!

We thought we'd have a go at gauging interest for a different style of activity ! Please let me know via email (through the website) or sheiladriver@hotmail.com if you think you'd be interested !

When ? September or October
Where ? Syston Community Centre
Timing? Approx. 3 hours
Cost ? Approx. £30

All drums and equipment provided and coffee/tea breaks

No musical experience/knowledge necessary

All ages ! Just bring your enthusiasm and sense of fun !

GROUP NEWS

PHOTOGRAPY GROUP

For our June meet up, we decided to have a walk around Leicester University Botanical Gardens. We had been here before last year, but thought it worthwhile having another look, now we are in the Spring months. The volunteer gardeners were out in force when we visited and are always looking for more volunteers, should you be interested in helping.

Although the weather was a little dull, we found lots to photograph and try out different techniques, particularly close up shots of the flowers.

After spending around 2 hours here, we shared transport and drove up into Oadby and (as usual on our trips) visited a café for a cuppa, cake and a natter!



Diane Grocock



Karen Garner



Christine Burne



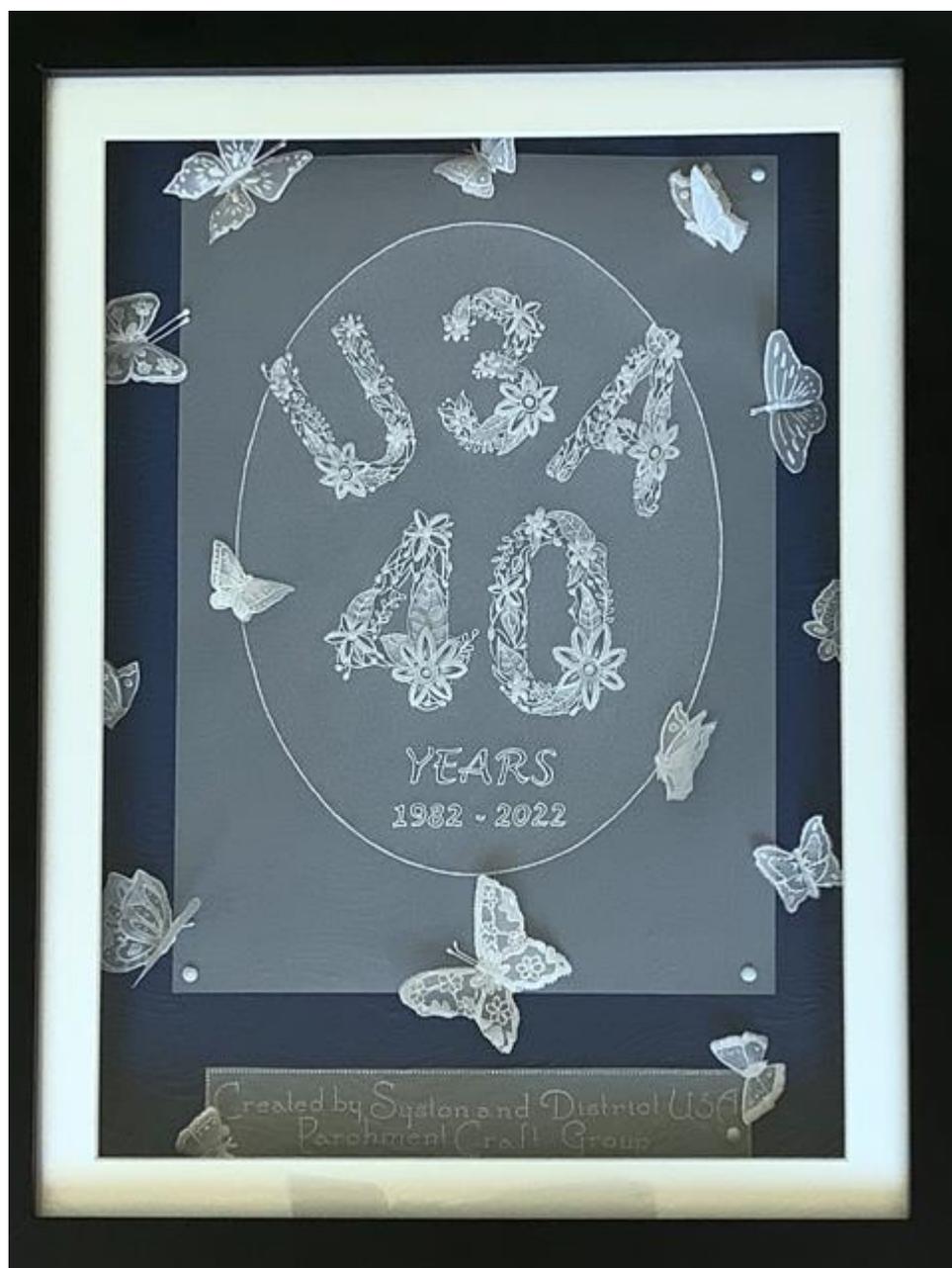
Steve Kenney



Patrick Langan

PARCHMENT CRAFT GROUP

The Parchment Craft Group have created a picture to commemorate the 40th Anniversary of the U3A. The picture features an oval plaque embossed with letters and numbers in a floral font. This is embellished with 3D butterflies, one made by each member of the group.



UKELELE GROUP

It's been a busy time for the Syston U3A Happy Ukulele Band recently!

Firstly, we played to the passers-by at the Cossington Gardens Open Day on Sunday May 29th and received a good reception (despite being close to the passing traffic!). Afterwards we went for a drink and some cakes at one of the open gardens along Main Street.

Then on Saturday June 4th, at 3pm, we played on the Green at East Goscote and managed to bring a few smiles to the audience, despite the dull, windy weather with a few spots of rain. Having finished at around 4.15pm, we then dashed over to Queniborough Park to play on the main stage, properly sound-checked by the stage crew and then played to thousands (well, perhaps hundreds!) of people celebrating the Jubilee on the park. It was quite daunting to play to so many people, but all went well, with many people clapping and dancing along.

Finally, on Friday, June 24th, instead of our usual meet up at Syston Brookside Club, a narrowboat trip had been organised. We arrived at Peter Le Merchant Trust for our trip at 10am. We travelled up the canal to Normanton on Soar and had a stop there for lunch, with some of us having a meal and drink in the Plough pub. Then we made our way back to base, arriving at around 3pm. We played all the way there and back, getting many walkers dancing and clapping to us as we sailed by. All in all, a great way to spend a day out with friends.

Many thanks to Len and Dave our leaders.





AMERICAN HISTORY GROUP

This month the group covered some widely different topics. From prohibition to the girl scout movement, via transcontinental travel, the US entry to WWI and the Ludlow Coal Massacre. Here is just a flavour of 3 of the topics.

PROHIBITION

In 1919 the Volstead Act clarified the 18th amendment, liquors over 0.5% alcohol content were declared illegal, as was owning any equipment to make alcoholic beverages. It was ratified in 1920, although by 1916 over half the States already had laws prohibiting alcohol. However, the fallout from this act was immense, organised crime was onto the scene very early, and working men were resentful that they couldn't have a beer with workmates after the factory whistle blew.

Of course where there is demand and limited supply, it creates many opportunities for the enterprising and less scrupulous individuals to profit. The gangster element either ran (the Rumrunners) rum in from the Caribbean, stole or possibly obtained more legally (unlikely) whiskey in Canada and smuggled it across the border. Various names of notorious bootleggers and gangsters who profited from prohibition included Salvatore (Frank) Capone, Al's lesser known brother. The stills of the Appalachians and other areas came into their own, providing their wares more widely than their former local markets.

AMERICAN GIRL SCOUTS



Girl Scouting in the United States began on March 12, 1912, when Juliette "Daisy" Gordon Low organised the first Girl Guide troop meeting of 18 girls in Savannah, Georgia. Low, who had met Baden-Powell in London while she was living in the United Kingdom, dreamed of giving the United States and the world "something for all the girls." She envisioned an organisation that would bring girls out of their homes to serve their communities, experience the out-of-doors, and have the opportunity to develop "self-reliance and resourcefulness."

Having started with 18 members, within months, members were hiking through the woods in knee-length blue uniforms, playing basketball, and going on camping trips.

In 1913 Girl Guides of America changed its name to Girl Scouts of the United States and moved its headquarters to Washington D.C. In 1915 the organisation was incorporated and the national headquarters was moved to New York City. By 1920, there were nearly 70,000 members. By 1923 the organisation had branches in every State in the Union, Alaska, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico, and a total membership of 125,738. In 1930 it had over 200,000. The name reached its current form, Girl Scouts of the United States of America (GSUSA) in 1947.

In 2013 there were over 3.2 million Girl Scouts: 2.3 million girl members and 890,000 adult members in the United States. More than 50 million American women have participated in Girl Scouts.

TRANSCONTINENTAL AIR TRAVEL

Airmail and airline travel in the United States was slow in developing compared to the situation in Europe. Airmail flights were started by the Army, and taken over by the Post Office in July, 1918. Starting on the East Coast and slowly adding westward routes, airmail reached as far west as Omaha, Nebraska, in September, 1920. That month, the Post Office announced the beginning of transcontinental airmail service, but it was actually a combination of train and airplane travel with the planes flying in daylight hours and the mail transferred to trains at night. It was, in reality, no faster than train mail but it enabled the construction of a transcontinental route of airports and lighting aids.

By 1926, a coast-to-coast string of airports with flashing beacons lighting the route had been built. Radio and weather stations were scattered along the route to make possible twenty-four-hour flight operations. This allowed the Post Office to begin contracting the mail to private operators, many of which later grew into major airlines.

Under Herbert Hoover's presidential administration, the Post Office established new rules for airmail contractors, strongly encouraging the use of larger, passenger-carrying airplanes on longer routes. Three transcontinental routes were established, leading to the beginnings of a nationwide airline structure, with TWA, American Airlines, and United Air Lines each serving one of the cross-country routes. TWA, then known as Trans-continental Air Transport (TAT), had the first coast-to-coast service with a combination of airplane and rail travel.

WHAT'S ON NEXT

GENERAL MEETINGS

Wed July 13th in the Brookside Room

The Baldwin Trust is a volunteer run, Leicestershire charity, which has been operating for 39 years and provides adapted narrowboat cruises on local waterways, operating from Barrow upon Soar and Thurmaston.

The Trust has 2 narrowboats, suitable for wheelchair and walking frame users, with ramps and lifts to access the boats (so no stairs) and a spacious cabin, toilet and a kitchen with fridge and hot water for passenger use/drinks. Heating for cooler weather and tables and comfy chairs with large windows at seated height, to allow good visibility out of.

We look forward to introducing you to the history of the Trust, the type of groups we entertain, volunteering with the Trust, our narrowboats and facilities, our Mascot, Baldwin Bear and our vision and plans for the future.

One of the Trustees, Richard Jayes, is your speaker. He may know some of you, as he attended Roundhill High School, and knows Syston well.

Wed Aug 10th in the Brookside Room

Hear all about Jane Barnes' life as a Dairy Farmer's Wife. Farmer Barnes' Dairy at Somerby, is a proud working British Dairy Farm and is committed to teaching people about modern dairy farming, producing milk for the award-winning Blue Stilton Cheese. Jane will bring along some of her delicious Blue Stilton for sale after the talk!

Wed Sept 14th

Chris Garfield will be telling us about Dove Cottage Hospice, which is a local day-care hospice that provides care services. Guests usually come for one day each week. They offer a full range of services, including nursing support and advice, friendship, activities and crafts, relaxation and complementary therapies. Services are free.

THEATRE TRIPS

Sister Act Saturday matinee 22 October 2022.

There may still be a ticket for this if someone has to pull out - please let me have your name U3A number and email or phone number to go on the back up list.

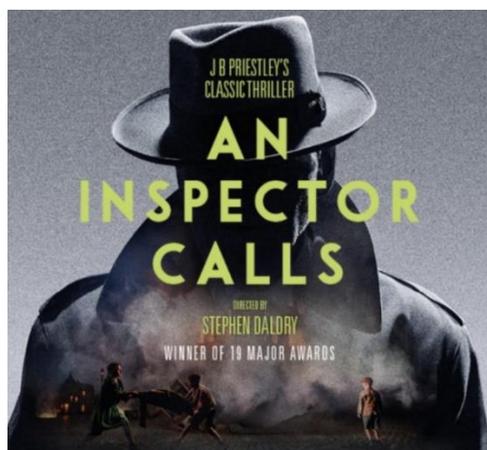
Update from Elaine -

I am away for July's meeting please can people pay for their tickets at August's meeting on August 10th. I will need cheques made payable to Syston U3A for £33.50.

If you will be away for August's meeting please email me and I can let you have my home address so you can let me have your cheque. Your membership no and name should appear on the back of the cheque.

Thankyou Elaine Yarwood

elaineyarwood@outlook.com



Stephen Daldry's multi award-winning **National Theatre** production of **JB Priestley's** classic thriller returns.

Winner of 19 major awards and hailed as the theatrical event of its generation, *An Inspector Calls* has thrilled more than 5 million theatregoers worldwide.

I have booked 20 seats for Saturday 25 March 2023 matinee performance at Curve Leicester, payment not due till January. Yes, I know it's an early booking but it's very popular. Let me know if you are interested.

Our trip to see Lord of the Dance was recently. The dancing, female singer and the violinists were great. I am looking for other interesting shows etc. If you have any suggestions, please contact me.

LET'S GO TO THE DOGS!

Monday November 7th 2022 - An evening at the Races Nottingham Greyhound Racecourse. Watch the evening races while enjoying a 3 course meal (waiter service) in the restaurant there overlooking the race track.

Cost £38 per person which includes the meal and coach travel to and from Nottingham from Syston or Queniborough.



We have a 29 seater coach booked with 2 spaces still available. If you are interested in this evening contact Barbara Sargeant on barbarassargeant@hotmail.com We will keep the names of members over the 29 number capacity on a waiting list in case anyone has to drop out.

TREASURE HUNT TIME APPROACHES !!

Lyn & I have put together a treasure hunt for you to walk round and hopefully enjoy.

Once again this year, it will be on a Sunday afternoon following an OPTIONAL Sunday Carvery Lunch (Veg & Gluten Free options)

For those who have not done one of our hunts before, you are given sheets of cryptic clues which you use to find answers for, as you walk round a local village.



We will need names/numbers by Friday August 12th please. Max number of 28 for lunch.

Date - August 21st

Times - Lunch 12:00, T. Hunt 2pm

Cost - £2 per head (towards prizes)

- Lunch (main course) is under £10

Please indicate when booking whether lunch is required.

Details of where you need to go will be supplied nearer the time !!!

Lyn & Dave Palmer

dpalmer192@btinternet.com

07710 448253

NATIONAL U3A ITEMS

U3A TALKS



Jul 15

Paulette Szklarz: Young Survivor

by The Third Age Trust

3485 followers [Follow](#)

Free

Book [here](#)



Jul 21

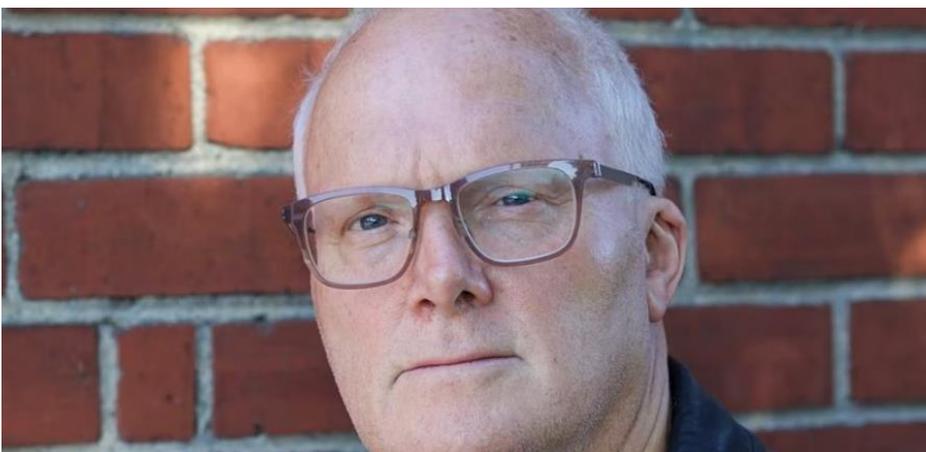
Live Cookery Demonstration - summer recipes

by The Third Age Trust

3485 followers [Follow](#)

Free

Book [here](#)



Jul 14

Secret History

by The Third Age Trust

3485 followers [Follow](#)

Free

Book [here](#)

UNVEILING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY QUILT



The 40th Anniversary Quilt has been unveiled at the Whitworth Art Gallery in Manchester

The quilt was created from the winning 40 blocks submitted from u3as across the UK. It reflects the skills, experience and contribution of u3a members.

Trustee for the North West Neil Stevenson unveiled the quilt and said, "It was a privilege to unveil the finished quilt in a ceremony at the Whitworth Gallery. Around 70 people turned up for the unveiling and listen to talks on quilting including from members who contributed, from a professional quilter and experts from the Whitworth gallery.

“The quilt is beautiful and is testimony to the talent, skills and energy of all the members. Thank you to them and to the Whitworth for hosting this event.

“We are looking forward to the next 40 years of learning, activity, connection and fun in the u3a movement”

The quilt will now travel to Oxford where it will be displayed at the Witney Blanket Hall from 10 August.

NOT U3A BUT YOU MIGHT BE INTERESTED

COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES ON DISPLAY



BBC TV Presenter, Anne Davies who will open the exhibition.

Our U3A will be one of over 30 local community support organisations participating in the **“Help is at Hand!”** exhibition being held on Central Park on Saturday 9th July. The event is intended to demonstrate to the residents of Syston and neighbouring communities that whatever the problem, there is likely to be local support and assistance readily available.

In common with the u3a, many of the organisation involved operate “under the radar” with a great deal of work being put in by small but dedicated groups of volunteers to help support all sections of our local communities. With limited resources, they are normally unable to afford to promote themselves effectively in order to promote their services, attract members, recruit volunteers or generate adequate funding.

At the same time, too many local residents “suffer in silence”, experiencing great inconvenience, distress and loneliness simply through ignorance of what support is locally available.

“Help is at Hand!”, organised by the Syston and District Volunteer Centre, is intended to address these deficiencies.

The event will be officially opened at 10.00 a.m. by BBC “East Midlands Today” TV presenter, Anne Davies. Syston U3A Ukulele and Singing Groups together with Syston Town Band and Watermead Singers will each perform during the day.

So, come along to the Park between 10.00 a.m. and 4.30 p.m. not only to support your U3A but to discover for yourself a range of local organisations which offer all ages, in Syston and neighbouring communities, wide-ranging support services - easing difficulties, opening up opportunities to get involved and improving the quality of life for those in need.

Further information is available from U3A Member and Event Organiser, Colin Grimes, in his role as Trustee Secretary of the SAD Volunteer Centre. (sadvc@btinternet.com)

THE GOLDEN YEARS

OF THE GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAYS LONDON EXTENSION 1899-1957

An Exhibition at Loughborough Library
30th June 2022 to the 23rd September 2022.



Looking at the best years of this line when operated by the GCR, LNER and the Eastern Region of British Railways. The Exhibition contains Period Photographs, Artefacts, Models, Station Plans, Maps and much more.

Loughborough Library Local Studies Volunteer Group are staging an exhibition on the GCR London Extension, for details see the poster on the left.

Please note it is not available in smart hours only when the library is staffed.

	Smart	Staffed	Smart
Monday	8am-10am	10am-1pm	1pm-7pm
Tuesday	8am-10am	10am-5pm	5pm-7pm
Wednesday	8am-7pm - Smart access all day		
Thursday	8am-10am	10am-5pm	5pm-7pm
Friday	8am-10am	10am-5pm	5pm-7pm
Saturday	8am-10am	10am-2pm	2pm-6pm

Probably the best show in Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire, this well-established event returns after Covid Shutdown with everything for a wonderful family day out. Working Steam Engines, Vintage Cars, American trucks, Motorcycles, Tractors and vintage machinery, Military equipment, Fairground organs, Crafts, Traditional Fairground, Children's Entertainment, Wildlife and Conservation, Trader's Market, hundreds of exhibits.

On Saturday there will be a Dog Agility competition and Sunday a Fun Dog Show open to all comers. The Steaming Man Bar will be there with live music and real ales, not to mention a fine range of gins and wines. Good Food is available from Fish and Chips to Thai takeaway in the catering area and we welcome back The Old Forge Restaurant and teashop all serving throughout the day and into the evening.

Arena Events all day including: Jousting Knights, Falconry, Parades of vehicles.

Gates open at 9.00am and ring events close at 5.00pm each day.

Saturday the bar and food are open until late with entertainment.

The Great Rempstone Steam & Country Show
9th - 10th July 2022
A GREAT DAY OUT FOR ALL THE FAMILY
Free for Children!
Cash only gate
£15 Adult, Children (Under 16) free, Free Parking
Turn Post Farm, Wymeswold LE12 6ST
Weekend Caravan & Camping Available: 07583 678459
www.rempstonsteam.org
Raising funds for local and national charities

NETWORK NEWS ITEMS



Are You Ready? Are You Ready For This?

This isn't quite what you might think! "Major Incident" is a band formed by members of West Leicestershire and Leicester u3as who are now willing to perform at your u3a. Their repertoire includes songs from the 60s, 70s and beyond and consist of guitars, bass, drums and vocals. If you have a smallish hall for your meetings you may wish to select their acoustic option. Full details are on the PDF flyer just click on the icon below. For more information call Gary on 07890 218581.



Major Incident A4
Flyer.pdf

THE LATE-SUMMER QUIZ

u3a By Zoom

MONDAY 19th SEPTEMBER 2022

All u3a members in the East Midlands can take part:
 Singles ☺
 Couples ☺☺
 Teams (up to 4) ☺☺☺☺ 🚫☺

A handicap system makes it fair for all
 No limit on the numbers from each u3a

To Register send:
 Your name & email address
 Name of your u3a
 Team name (if any)

To: u3alatesummerquiz@gmail.com

You'll receive a confirmation email within a couple of days and Zoom details on Sept. 16th

REGISTER NOW – PLACES ARE LIMITED!

The quiz will start promptly at 7:00pm – login from 6:45pm
 We aim to finish around 8:45-9.00pm
 There will be a 10-minute comfort/drinks top-up break after Round 4
 Answers will be given after Rounds 4 and 8



IF YOU MISSED THE JUNE GM (or even if you didn't)

HISTORY OF JUKE BOX JURY

Our June GM did not feature a talk, instead we were treated to a version of Juke Box Jury in which 4 of our members were the “jury”, supplemented by the whole of the audience giving a casting vote if the jury was equally split. This was at variants with the TV series, which had just 3 audience members voting when needed. Roger Prescott, our local u3a network co-ordinator took the role filled by David Jacobs in the original BBC series.

Roger gave us a brief history of the program, which piqued my interest to find out more. This article is my attempt to put a bit more flesh on the bones of what Roger provided. The original concept was a radio program that aired in the LA area in the US. It gained national TV coverage in the early 1950's, with more panellists, interviews, and live performances.

It wasn't until 1959 that a pilot edition was aired in the UK. The BBC negotiated permission to stray away from the US format, in an era when TV programs that crossed the pond usually replicated the original. As a result, the UK version simply played each record, there were no live performances, no interviews, and for the most part only 4 jury members. There was an exception to this when all 5 of the Rolling Stones appeared on 4th July 1964. The show almost failed to go on air, so disruptive were the group. Brian Jones eventually brought them to order by saying “Look, we're messing up Mr Jacobs programme for him. We must behave.”



It was initially given a slot on Monday evenings at 7.30, starting 1st June, but its' popularity led to a move to a prime slot on Saturday evenings at 6.10 by September. The hope was that the audience would be snagged for the entertainment programs that followed it. It ran for 422 episodes without a break, except for Christmas. The final episode of that run was on 27th

December 1967. There were a couple of brief resurrections, with one series in 1979, and two in 1989/90. Noel Edmunds was the 1979 presenter, with Jools Holland taking that role in 1989/90.

The BBC policy of overwriting recordings of programmes led to only 2 episodes remaining intact, although a direct recording from the TV broadcast was found for another. Listings do exist of who appeared as jury members for each, and which records were voted on, with the outcome. The first jury consisted of Alma Cogan, Gary Miller, Pete Murray and Susan Stranks. Susan was there to represent a “typical” teenager. Jury members changed, with a variety of celebrities from music, TV and film, being drafted in. Some appeared quite frequently, Eric Sykes and Katie Boyle among them. The era's top DJ's were regularly represented, with Jimmy Saville, Simon Dee and Alan Freeman the most frequent to join Pete Murray. There were some unusual jurors e.g. Alfred Hitchcock.

The Beatles appeared as the jury in 1963, with the Seekers and the Batchelors also appearing together as jurors on other episodes. In the later stages of the 1960's series the panel regularly became 4 DJ's, with each song being discussed in more detail.



1967 created some controversy, records with drug references were included, “It can’t happen here” by Frank Zappa’s Mothers of Invention, led to the News of the World castigating David Jacobs. A bit rich considering that particular newspapers regular content! Viewing audiences were declining from the 12 million regulars the programme had enjoyed. This led to a shift from the prime Saturday slot to Wednesday evenings.

The two attempts to revive the programme failed to muster the level of support Juke Box Jury had enjoyed in its heyday. The format that had found favour in the 1960’s was perhaps too “old fashioned” to create more than just nostalgic support. That said, there are those who express surprise that the pared down version of the US original became as popular as it did.

FROM OUR MEMBERS

BONE DENSITY PROJECT

You may remember in the May edition of Vitality a request for volunteers to take part in a study on improving bone and joint health through exercise. I was interested and duly signed up to see if I would be suitable.

Following a hiccup with my blood pressure appearing to be high on the first visit I was initially told I couldn’t continue. However, I have now been for two further visits. On the first of these I completed questionnaires about my health and any medication I had taken in the past, or was currently taking, including any supplements like vitamins. I had DEXA (bone density) scans on my legs and hips and was then introduced to the piece of equipment they are using for the exercises. It was adjusted for my height and I was asked to test several weights while doing squats. All these measurements were recorded so the machine can be set up ready before you go for the exercise session.

The following week I went for blood and urine tests. I jokingly asked if they had taken blood before and was told ‘its my first day’! Luckily, I was the eighth person that day so it all went well – felt rather glad I wasn’t the first! The 24 hours prior to this I had to record everything I ate and drank in grams and drink 500 ml of water in the 2 hours before the session. This will be replicated in 4 months and again in 8 months’ time for comparison. Then I had an MRI (soft tissue) Scan on my legs and hips. This was a lengthy process over 40 minutes and a very very noisy one. I must confess I did come home with a headache. Another short session on the exercise machine to practise the squats and then home. The research staff and radiographers are all very friendly and we have quite a laugh.

Finally on my next visit I will find out if I am on the exercise programme or in the control sample. If you are assigned to the exercise you go twice a week for a session in the gym and if you are in the control group you carry on as normal and just go back after 4 and 8 months for the comparison scans and tests. Watch this space:...

Ann Barkley

TIME & DATE, CLOCKS & CALENDARS from Pierre Castille

Days

The most familiar unit of time is the day. We know that days follow each other so progressing from yesterday, to today and later tomorrow. When does the change take place?

In the ancient world of the people of Sumer, the day ended as the sunset, which is when the new day started.

The day was divided into the twelve hours of night, followed by the twelve hours of daylight.



A modern sundial – you are the gnomon

How do you know what hour it is if the clock hasn't been invented yet? Step outside and look for the sun. During the day it moves across the sky. You don't have to look directly at the sun, just look at the direction at which shadows are cast. That's how a sun dial works.

Sumerians, and civilisations following them divided each day into twelve hours. This works quite well in tropical regions because days are more or less of the same length but if you travel northwards you would find winter hours are shorter than summer hours.

What about telling the time at night? Do what the Sumerians did, follow the passage of stars across the night sky.

You can tell the time by following the sun and you can tell the time from following the stars. Our Sumerian friends did both.

If you use the sun, we talk about the length of a **solar day** (24 hours). It would be the time from one sunset to the next.

If we use a star to measure the length of a day we use the term **sidereal day**. The time it takes the sky to spin around 360 degrees, a complete circle.

Is the day measured using the stars the same length as the day using the sun?

NO! – The sidereal day is 4 minutes shorter. Something that the Sumerians knew that you probably didn't. Clever people Sumerians.

Weeks

We will quickly move on to save embarrassment, and consider another division of time, the week.

How many days in a week? – Thanks to the Sumerians, we have seven. (Some other civilisations had more).

The Sumerians chose seven because of the seven bright lights in the sky: Sun, Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus and Saturn. Each day dedicated to a bright light in the heavens that probably belonged to some god or other because they move across the sky independently from all the other less bright lights.

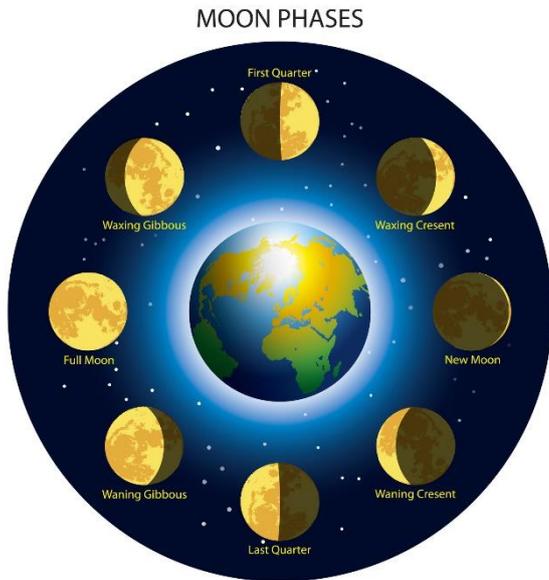
French speakers have retained all Sumerian described names whereas we Anglophones have only conserved three of them: Sunday, Monday and Saturday. (Blame the Vikings and other invaders!)

Months

Our Sumerian friends like the idea of twelve months in a year (12 being a good number) with each month made up of 30 days (another good number) giving a year of 360 days (a very good number) – I am confident that you are smart enough to realise this is going to create a problem.

Other ancient cultures, who were less able to use fancy numbers, measured months using the moon.

A month started when a new moon was seen at sunset. This method is still used today in the Islamic and Judaic calendars.

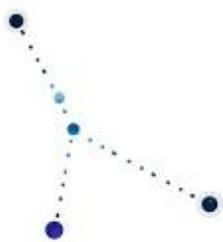


In this diagram, the sun would be on the right side of the page.

The time from one new moon to the next varies slightly but averages 29 days, 12 hours and 44 minutes.

The Zodiac

Our ancient friends notice that at the **new moon** the background stars to the moon were different each lunar month. A group of stars is called a constellation (from the Latin) and different cultures gave the constellations different names.



Cancer, the crab – Zodiac constellation of new moon, 28th June 2022

Someone familiar with the different constellations of the night sky could identify the month of the year by observing the new moon's surroundings.

The sun is in the same direction as the new moon, so we can say that on 28th June the sun will be in Cancer.

The problem with Lunar Months

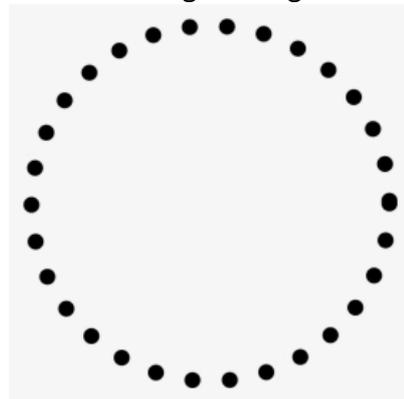
Cultures that base their calendar on the Lunar Cycle will find that their year is only 354 days long. Their new year will be 11 or 12 days sooner each year compared to the 'normal' calendar. Not surprisingly, attempts to keep any lunar calendar in sync with the solar calendar involves complicated rules.

Our friends, the Sumerians realised they had a similar problem with their 30 day month, giving only 360 days a year. They were sensible people, and realising that their calendar differed from the normal growing season of the crops they relied upon, invented an ingenious solution. The leap month! Every so often (6 years or so) they would catch up by adding a whole month to the calendar.

How long is a year?

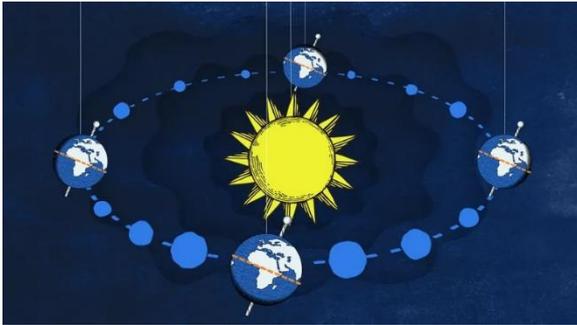
How would you set about measuring the number of days in a year? You already know the answer, but how did our ancestors find out in the first place?

How do you count things arranged in a circle?



How many dots in this circle?

Pick any start point and then count round to the start point – but don't count it twice. This works for anything that goes round in circles, including the days in a year. There are four different *dates* that we could start counting the number of days in a year.



The passage of the Earth around the Sun

Solstices

The Summer Solstice, 21 June 2022, is known as the *longest day of the year*. What sets it apart from all other days is that it is the highest point in the sky the sun reaches at midday.

The Winter Solstice (21 December 2022) is the lowest point in the sky the sun reaches at midday.

We could use either date as a starting point to count the 365 days in a normal year.

Equinoxes

In what direction does the sunrise and in what direction does it set?

If you answered East and West – bottom of the class!

The Sun only rises exactly in the east, everywhere on Earth on two days of the year. On that same day it sets exactly in the west, everywhere. These two days, 20th March and 23rd of September 2022 are known as the Spring Equinox and Autumn Equinox.

Most Calendars use the Spring Equinox as the first day of the year. The name equinox means equal night, the date at which the day and the night are of equal length.

I presume that the Spring Equinox was chosen because of its importance in agriculture.

Sumerians celebrated the New Year in March as did the Romans before 46 BC

Why is January 1st New Year's Day?

The Roman dictator, Julius Caesar is the person responsible. The Roman year started in March and was a time of great feasting, boozing and general debauchery. There was also a problem

with the number of days in a year, measured as three hundred and sixty five and a quarter days. Adding a few days to the calendar every so often didn't really work in keeping the agricultural year in sync with the calendar year. After consulting with clever observers of the heavens (astronomers) in Egypt (where he had an *assignation* with a well-known beauty, Cleopatra,) he solved both problems by proclaiming:

- The new calendar (Julian Calendar) starts on 1st January 45 BC. (BC had not been invented yet, the real year was 709 AUC, - years from the foundation of Rome.)
- Every fourth year would have an extra day, called a leap-day, added to the month of February.

Bonus Question

Which day in February is the leap day?

Julius Caesar's rule for adding the extra day to a leap year was *ante diem bis sextum kalendas martias* which means 6 days before the first day of March – so 24th February!

The Gregorian Calendar

Adding an extra day to the calendar every four years created a problem. So a new calendar was introduced in October 1582 by Pope Gregory XIII. The Julian calendar added too many leap days between 46BC and 1582 AD. The spring equinox should occur on 21st March but was now occurring in April.

This mattered because Easter Sunday, the most important holy day in the Christian calendar is calculated as the first Sunday following the first full moon after the spring equinox.

The Gregorian calendar solved the problem by jumping from 4th October to 15th October, missing out all the days in between.

Century years, such as 1700, 1800 and 1900 would not be leap years unless the whole year was divisible by 4, explaining why the year 2000 was a leap year.

The Roman Catholic world adopted the new calendar. The Orthodox Churches refused to, which explains why they celebrate Easter and

Christmas at a different time to the rest of the world.

Protestant countries did not follow suit immediately, (Catholic) Scotland used a different calendar to Protestant England.

The English Parliament brought our Calendar into line with the Gregorian calendar in 1752 by jumping from Wednesday 2nd September to Thursday 14th September removing eleven days to bring it in line with the rest of Europe.

Reports of civil unrest and demands of ‘give us back our eleven days’ are now regarded with scepticism by modern historians.

There was a serious objection to paying tax for days that did not exist. In Britain, the tax year ended on *Lady Day* the 25th March. The government responded by moving the end of the tax year to 6th April.

Chaotic Converts

Changeover from Julian to Gregorian calendars met opposition in several countries. Honours must go to Sweden for the most chaotic conversion.

Instead of chopping 11 days out of the calendar in one hit they planned to do it gradually, over a forty year period starting in 1700. Confusion with the rest of Europe was made worse by forgetting to cancel the leap days in 1704 and 1708 before

reverting back to the Julian calendar by adding back the extra day they had removed, creating the unique date 30th February 1712. Finally, many years later in 1753, removing the surplus days.

Some countries were very slow to convert. Russia converted after the revolution in 1918, Greece in 1923 and Saudi Arabia in 2016. Nepal, Ethiopia, Iran and Afghanistan have yet to convert.

When do Years end?

The end of a day, week, month or year are important for many reasons, in business particularly to ‘cashing up’ and settling debts.

A peculiarity of our measuring of time and date is that we count forward from when a day, month, or year started. Really, we want to know how much longer it is until the end of the day, month or year.

There are vestiges of backwards from the end in our timing system. *“Twenty minutes to five, time for a cuppa!”*

As long as they include the correct number of days they can end whenever is convenient. Ecclesiastical, Legal, Business, Academic years all start and end at different dates.

Are we nearly there yet?

AN ASIDE

As a family historian, some changes outlined by Pierre cause quite a few headaches in the way records are transcribed and dates are recorded. In addition to losing those days in September 1751, the 1751 Calendar Act changed the start of the year to 1st January as of 1752. So, 1751 was a short year, running from 25th March to 31st December. Parish Registers had always run from Lady Day (25th March) each year. Even following the parliamentary act, some churches continued to run on the “old” year. In transcripts, an infant might appear to have been baptised before the parents married, or burials might appear to have taken place before births or marriages. A recipe for confusion! To get around this, some transcripts and family trees record dates from 1st January to 24th March as a dual year e.g. 1st February 1724/25. *Ed*

And finally.....

There is nothing for Declutter Den, Rehoming Requests, or Swap Spot. This month’s content also means that Poetry Corner is relegated to the back burner. Hopefully they will return next month!

