

**JUNE
2022**

Vitality!

Official newsletter of the Syston and District U3A

CHARITY No 1180152

FROM OUR ACTING CHAIRMAN

With the AGM fast approaching it is with sadness that we are saying goodbye to one of the founding committee members but also welcoming several new faces.

I am really looking forward to our Juke Box Jury Presentation as this will be our first live event since the end of lockdown. Please note there will be no zoom facility for this meeting. We will need 4 jurors preferably 2 ladies and 2 men to vote on each record. No musical knowledge is required and if you like to be controversial and have a good sense of humour that would be great. Interested, then please contact me at sadu3avicechair@gmail.com and I can send you more information. Audience participation is mandatory and should be a great laugh.

In July we will be at the Help is at Hand event organised by the Syston Volunteer Bureau but I will let you know more about that later.

See you all at our next meeting on June 8th.
Clive

WE WANT TO LET YOU KNOW

AGM 8th June 10.30am

I know those three little letters AGM may not spark excitement amongst you, but all organisations, especially those who have charity status, must have them. Members deserve to gain assurance that all is well and to have a chance to question those involved in running our U3A. Our AGM's are not lengthy affairs with numerous reports to be pondered over and people picking over minutiae (and yes, I have been to AGMs for other organisations that were). So, please do consider coming along.

GROUP NEWS

PHOTOGRAPY GROUP

For the April outing, 6 members of the Photogroup met at the Outwoods, near Loughborough, with the theme of Bluebells and Bugs.

It was a very cold morning, but we found a good display of bluebells, but not many bugs!

After a walk around the woods, we all met up at the new café there and had a hot drink, cakes and a good natter about photography.

The Outwoods is a fabulous wooded area, ideal for short or long walks and is highly recommended at only £1 to park for the entire day!





FAMILY HISTORY

The group had a presentation on how a members family history research began, some of the problems faced, and how some of them were resolved. Whilst many people, other than those who have adoption or similar situations in their immediate family, know who their parents and grandparents were, not all can name a complete set of great grandparents. Even fewer know where and when these ancestors were born, married and died. A few snippets of information may have filtered down through the family, but these cannot always be relied on as accurate.

The first problem in this case was a great grandmother without a name. In theory looking for the birth registrations of the children of a couple, leads to the mother's maiden name. One problem here was that most of the children turned out to have been known by their second or even third forename. Finding their births was helped by having a good idea which area they were born in. But were these the right births? The fact that the mother's maiden name was not consistent cast some doubt on matters. There were two distinct names, and a third that was perhaps just a slight misspelling of one of them. A combination of 19th and early 20th century census documents, marriage and birth certificates eventually solved the matter. Great grandmother was born illegitimate, but her mother married a few weeks later, she had taken on the surname of the man her mother married. When her children's births were registered, she or her husband had sometimes used her birth surname and sometimes that of her father. (Several years down the line DNA evidence proved that he was indeed her biological father. He had obviously been a bit slow in doing what would have been regarded as the "right thing".)

The second problem also involved illegitimacy. A great grandfather was born to a married woman, whom it transpired was separated from her husband. Searching for birth registrations and census entries for her and her children proved difficult. This turned out to be because she and her children were sometimes recorded under her maiden name, sometimes under her married name. Added to that, some children adopted one surname as adults, some the other, and not always the one they had been registered with at birth. It wasn't until the release of the 1911 census that the situation became clearer. The great grandfather had his mother's 2 youngest children living with him, they were his half-siblings and had been orphaned 5 years earlier. His own marriage certificate had a father's name stated, a man whose parents lived a few doors down the road from his mother. To complicate matters further, an older brother of this man was living with the 2x great grandmother in 1901, and is named as father of one of the half-siblings when she married. (DNA evidence again later helped and points to at least one child being fathered by each brother. The jury is out on who fathered the other 6.)

Whilst large parts of someone's family will fit the norm of husband, wife and children, illegitimacy, separation of couples, cohabitation outside marriage, and even bigamy, were not that uncommon. People did not always use or keep to the names they were given at birth, or varied which they used. Anyone researching their family tree should bear this in mind.

FEELING CRAFTY GROUP

The "Feeling Crafty" group decided to commemorate the 40th Anniversary of the start of the U3A by making a mosaic plaque.

We used a piece of wood for the backing and drew on the design. We gathered an assortment of mosaic tiles and broken pottery, glued these on to the wood and then grouted it. Sounds simple? Well, it wasn't! We had a few cut fingers and a bit of swearing along the way but all turned out well and was great fun. The participants were Elaine, Irene, Leonora, Sue, Carol, Liz and Helen.



If any Syston U3A events or meetings would like to use the plaque you are very welcome just contact me helendidley105@msn.com

UKELELE GROUP

Len Abraham tells me that The Syston U3A Happy Ukulele Band for their village jubilee celebrations on Saturday June 4th, we will be playing at East Goscote on the green next to the pub at 3pm. Followed by a performance on Queniborough park at 5pm.

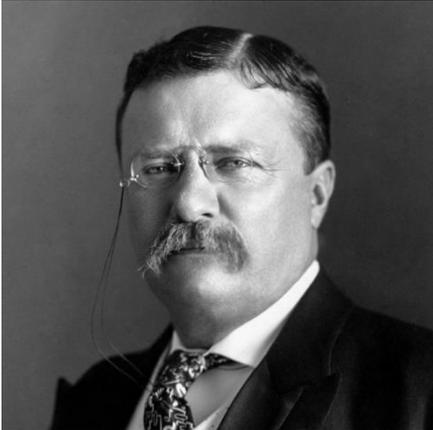
By the time you see this the band will have also played at the Cossington Open Gardens event on 29th May.

AMERICAN HISTORY GROUP

We explored three interesting topics in May as we got to know The Wright Brothers, Teddy Roosevelt and the position of Cuba in US history. We also considered the constitutional questions raised by the 14th amendment and how they apply to the continuing debate on Roe v Wade.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT

THE 26TH PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES



The presidency of Theodore Roosevelt, often referred to as Teddy, or his initials T.R., started on September 14, 1901, when he became the 26th President of the United States on the assassination of President William McKinley, and ended on March 4, 1909. Roosevelt had been the Vice President for only 194 days when he succeeded to the Presidency. A Republican, he ran for, and won by a landslide, a four-year term as President.

Theodore Roosevelt, not quite 43, became the youngest President in the Nation's history. He brought new excitement and power to the Presidency, as he vigorously led Congress and the American public towards progressive reforms and a strong foreign policy.

He took the view that the President, as a "steward of the people" should take whatever action necessary for the public good unless expressly forbidden by law or the Constitution. "I did not usurp power," he wrote, "but I did greatly broaden the use of executive power."

Two weeks after taking office, President Roosevelt directed his cabinet to begin an intensive study into a canal that would link the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. The canal was to be constructed somewhere in Central America. For years Roosevelt had believed a canal was necessary to American security as well as to its economic development. In 1902, Congress gave Roosevelt permission to accept the French offer to purchase the rights to a canal through Panama, giving the United States permanent use of the canal.

The United States recognised the Republic of Panama and the dream of an isthmian canal became a reality. In 1906, Roosevelt became the first President to travel outside of the United States while in office. He journeyed to Panama to inspect the progress and even worked a steam shovel to dig part of the canal. The official opening of the canal occurred on August 15, 1914, over five years after he had left office.

On October 14, 1912, while arriving at a campaign event in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Roosevelt was shot from seven feet away in front of the Gilpatrick Hotel by a delusional saloon-keeper named John Flammang Schrank, who believed that the ghost of assassinated president William McKinley had directed him to kill Roosevelt. The bullet lodged in his chest after penetrating his steel eyeglass case and passing through a 50-page-thick single-folded copy of the speech titled "Progressive Cause Greater Than Any Individual", which he was carrying in his jacket. Schrank was immediately disarmed, captured, and might have been lynched had Roosevelt not shouted for him to remain unharmed.

"Ladies and gentlemen, I don't know whether you fully understand that I have just been shot, but it takes more than that to kill a Bull Moose." Only after finishing his address did he accept medical attention.

Roosevelt was a great personality, a great activist, a great preacher of the moralities, a great controversialist, a great showman. He dominated his era as he dominated conversations. The masses loved him; he proved to be a great popular idol and a great vote-getter. His image stands alongside George Washington, Thomas Jefferson and Abraham Lincoln on Mount Rushmore. Although Roosevelt has been criticised by some for his imperialistic stance, he is often ranked by historians among the top-five greatest U.S. Presidents of all time.

THE WRIGHT BROTHERS (a potted history)

Wilbur and Orville Wright were two of seven children born to Milton Wright (1828–1917), of English and Dutch ancestry, and Susan Catherine Koerner (1831–1889), of German and Swiss ancestry Milton Wright's mother, Catherine Reeder, was descended from the progenitor of the Vanderbilt family and the Huguenot Gano family of New Rochelle, New York. Wilbur was born near Millville, Indiana, in 1867; Orville in Dayton, Ohio, in 1871. The brothers never married.

Their father was a Bishop in the 'Brethren of Christ church', resulting in numerous house moves and a disjointed education.

Neither one was very academic in fact Orville was once expelled.

In 1889 Orville started a printing business and was joined by Wilbur who helped to design their own press. They then started printing newspapers but started commercial printing after 4 months.

In 1892 they capitalised on the new craze for bicycles, initially selling and repairing, and in 1896, manufacturing their own brand that became very profitable allowing them to fund their new passion for flight.

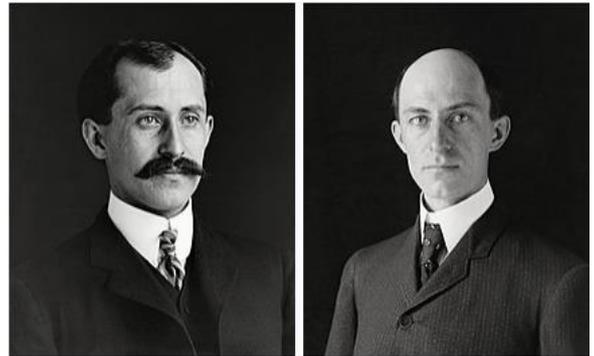
Initially focusing on gliders and it was here they designed the steerage system (joystick type) that has been the basis for modern planes.

They were not alone, many others were developing gliders at the time however, the brothers first employed use of a basic wind tunnel, using a bicycle wheel, to improve their design.



After being successful with gliders they moved to powered flight and overcame the weight problem of early engines by using an aluminium one, built by their bicycle shop mechanic Charlie Taylor

Their first flight 17th Dec 1903 flew 120 feet.



Orville (left) and Wilbur Wright in 1905

CREATIVE WRITING GROUP

Syston Library will be closed for refurbishment between Monday 14th and Friday 24th June. As a result, the group cannot meet there on the 23rd. We may meet on Thurs 30th instead, group members are being consulted on this. Anyone wishing to confirm the position please contact me on the newsletter editor address notifying you about the newsletter. Julie Johnson

WHAT'S ON NEXT

GENERAL MEETINGS

Wed June 9th in the Brookside Room

June's General Meeting is a little different. Most of us are from the "Swinging 60's" and in June we are taking you back to then with an interactive reminder of "**Juke Box Jury**".

David Jacobs became famous as the presenter for the BBC. Sadly, he died in 2013 but we have booked Roger Prescott to bring us his version of this iconic program.

4 members of the audience will act as the voting panel. We will hear some familiar (maybe forgotten) songs from the 60's. The panel will give their comments and vote HIT or MISS (no cheating by remembering what actually happened). If the vote is a tie, then the rest of the members listening will give the "studio audience" vote to decide.

Jog a few memories? Interested? Come along and join in.

By the way there will be a short AGM for a few minutes just before the fun but we think it will be worth coming to relive our youth.

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!

LET'S GO TO THE DOGS!

GREYHOUND RACING IN NOTTINGHAM

A date for your diary.

Monday 7th November

pick up 5pm return 10pm

We are organising a trip to the greyhound stadium in Nottingham where we will be served a three-course meal overlooking the race track. We will be given a race card where, for as little as £1 we can place a bet. This is all done from your table.

We will provide transport from Syston and Queniborough.

The cost per person for this event including food and transport will be between £37 and £46 according to how many people wish to go.

If you are interested, please let us know. barbarassargeant@hotmail.com

Once we have a definite number, we can give you more information.

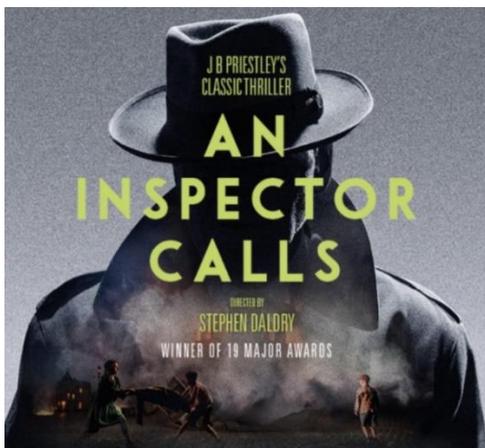
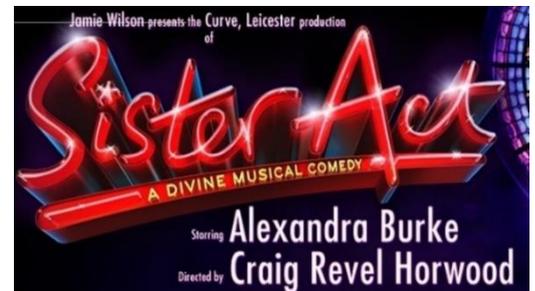
THEATRE TRIPS

Sister Act Saturday matinee 22 October 2022.

There may still be a few tickets for this - please let me have your names U3A number and email or phone number.

Payment for the tickets £33.50 not required until August's U3A meeting.

For those wishing to pay early for your seats for Sister Act Elaine will be at the AGM at the community centre.



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.

Elaine email: elaineyarwood@outlook.com

NATIONAL U3A ITEMS

U3A TALKS



Jun 24

'What will it really take to deal with climate change?' - Mike Berners-Lee

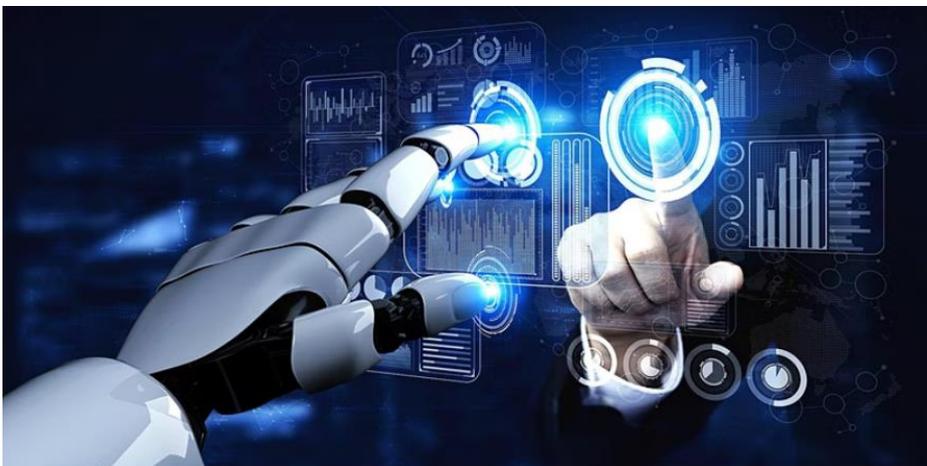
by The Third Age Trust

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Jul 01

Artificial Intelligence

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Jul 08

Derek Jarman's Garden

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SPRING LEARNING PROGRAM

You can now get involved in our new u3a Spring Learning Programme. It is packed with member-led initiatives from across the movement, sharing skills, talents - so there's a lot of new things to learn.

As a member of u3a, you can get involved with the u3a Book Group Forum, Logic Puzzles for Fun, Extreme Crochet and Paper Craft, to name a few.

Alison May, Head of Member Services, says "We're so excited to launch the new Spring Learning Programme. We've been working with members across the movement to showcase their talents and share with colleagues and friends in the u3a who want to learn something new. Our initiatives are always popular so don't miss out; sign up to try a new challenge."

Our Book Group Subject Adviser Richard is leading on the u3a Book Forum, Logic Puzzles for Fun are led by Norwich u3a member Gordon, Extreme Crochet is led by Trust u3a member and crochet enthusiast Chris, Kirigami by Forest Town & District u3a member Bob.

Take part on [our learning pages now](#).

If you would like to help us with the running of any of these initiatives, [please get in touch](#).

LEICESTER AND RUTLAND NETWORK NEWS ITEMS



Leicester Musical Memory Box is an independent, not for profit organisation delivering fun and interactive sessions. We use singing, music and gentle seated exercises to help improve health and wellbeing whilst reducing loneliness and social isolation.

We believe that music is an essential part of life and whilst we initially began working with people living with dementia and memory loss along with their carers, we are now able to open the sessions up to anyone who feels they may benefit.

Our sessions are led by Kyle Newman along with Christina Birkby and a team of wonderful volunteers. We are very proud to now have our Geet Sangeet groups for the South Asian community led by Beena Masand.

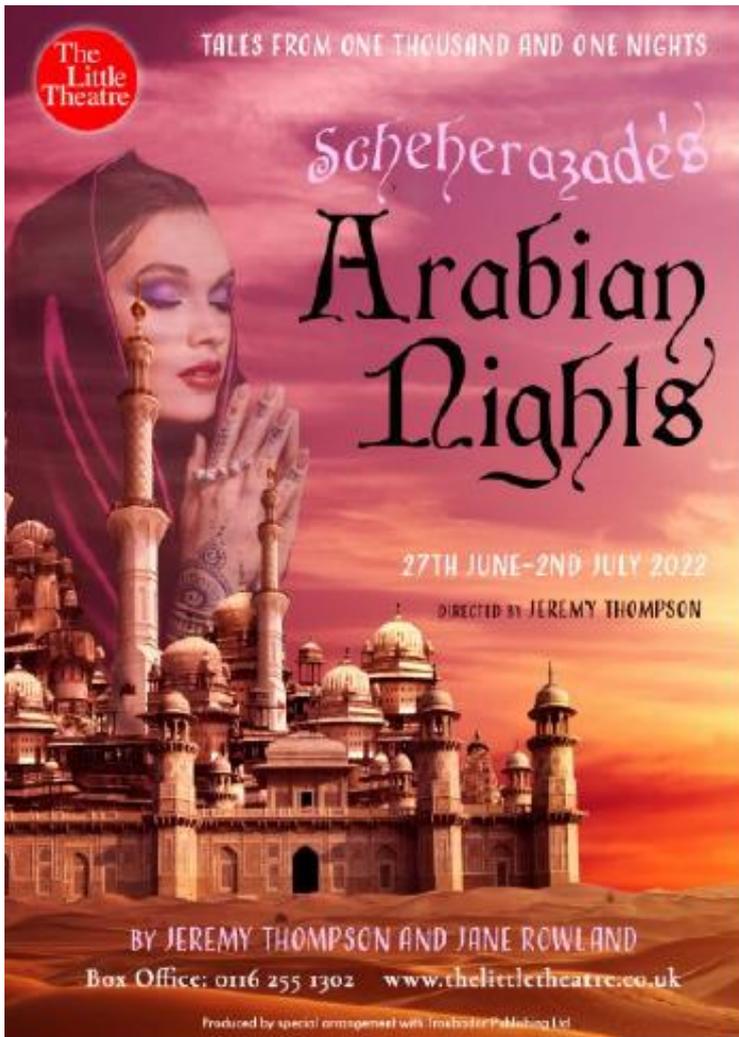
We also have a [YouTube channel](#) to help people familiarise themselves with some of the songs we sing in these sessions.

Please [do contact us](#) if you would like any further information.

Fundraising Buffet Night on Monday 27th June – details in the PDF below. Any member interested should contact either Christina or Kyle directly – details on the poster.



A4 Fundraising buffet
2022 - Google Docs.1



The Little Theatre – Arabian Nights

From 27th June to 2nd July Leicester's Little Theatre will be presenting very special performances of Scheherazade's Arabian Nights.

What makes it even more special is that, for this production only, u3a members can get a 20% discount on tickets.

Booking can be online or by phone, make sure you enter/quote the discount code: **BIGDEAL**.

Booking details can be found [here](#)

NOT U3A BUT YOU MIGHT BE INTERESTED

OPENING OF LOUGHBOROUGH CARILLION

Thu 2nd June, 2022 @ 10:00 - 14:00
Repeats every week until Thu 29th September, 2022

Loughborough Carillon & War Memorial Museum after a long closure is now open to the public each Thursday.

Visit the museum and climb the 138 steps to the balcony. Entrance is free children under the age of 17 must be accompanied by a responsible adult.

<http://www.carillontower.org.uk>





Thurmaston Celebrates

THURSDAY 2nd JUNE
2pm

TREASURE HUNT

Everyone, adults and children alike, are invited to take part in a free treasure hunt across Thurmaston on Thursday, 2nd June. The treasure hunt will start at 2pm, at Elizabeth Park and will cover both sides of the bypass. Teams will set off in intervals with the Treasure Hunt expected to take about an hour from the start. We can't give away the end point but there will be refreshments available.



FRIDAY 3rd JUNE
7.30pm - late



RIGHT ROYAL BASH

On Friday, 3rd June there will be an evening 'do' at Elizabeth Park. There will be a cold buffet, a casino and plenty of dancing. Contact Wendy to make a reservation as tickets will be limited to ten tables (each seats eight people). Tickets cost £12 per person.



SUNDAY 5th JUNE
12noon - 4pm
PARTY TIME

Sunday, 5th June is our 'street' party! The party will take place from 12noon-4.00pm at the field behind the Memorial Hall. Bring your own food and drinks. Don't forget your picnic blanket or camping table. There will be a limited number of tables available on the day - first come, first served.

There will be a stage to keep us all entertained with music, dance and much more.

Bring your own food and drinks. There will also be a pop-up bar.

CHURCH ACTIVITIES

St Michael's, Thurmaston

Thursday 2nd June, 10am-2pm - Coffee Time / Church Open Day, with crafts and activities for children.

Friday 3rd June, 11am - Service of Thanksgiving for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, followed by tea / coffee / cake in church.

Sunday 5th June, 7pm - Pentecost Songs of Praise, followed by tea, coffee and cake in church.

All welcome!

COMPETITIONS

Are you decorating your house for the Jubilee weekend? Send in your photos to the Thurmaston Times to be in with a chance of winning 'best dressed' house. The winner will be announced at the street party.

Join in our princess and queen competition in honour of Her Majesty. Not just limited to women and girls, everyone is invited to join in. Use your imagination, we're looking forward to seeing your ideas.

Best corgi - ok, there aren't many corgis in Thurmaston but enter your dog (any breed) to win this competition.

Are you shy? You still have a chance to win something as there will be a raffle on the day.

#thurmastoncelebrates

Supported by:

Thurmaston Parish Council

Parkers Service Centre

Thurmaston Design and Print Centre

Thurmaston Times

All money raised will be donated to a local charity

**Contact Wendy Hirst on 07921 528 400 for more details
or to make reservations for the Right Royal Bash**

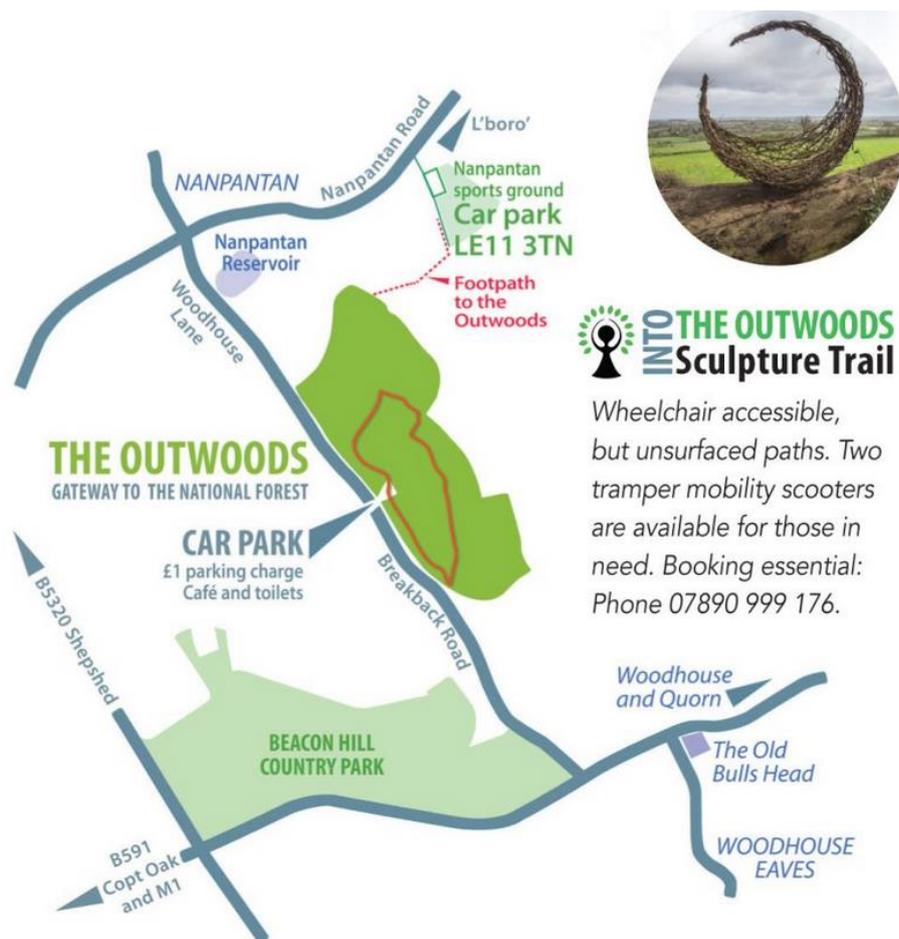
The Life and Times of her Majesty the Queen

U3A member Felicity Austin has worked with some friends to put together an exhibition in the Parish Church of events national and local during Queen Elizabeth's lifetime. Visitors will have a chance to see many photographic displays covering nine decades as well as what Syston did for the Coronation and Silver Jubilee celebrations, plus a few surprise exhibits.

The **exhibition will be open on 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th June from 2.30pm to 4.30pm, entrance free.**

Visitors will also have a chance to see once more the Syston knitted sculptures of the Queen and her corgis and the life-sized WW1 soldier, as well as a knitted Coronation crown which has been made specially for this exhibition. Copies of Book2 of 'Syston in the 20th Century' will also be on sale at the event.

Entrance is free and refreshments will be available. All welcome.



IF YOU MISSED THE MAY GM TALK (or even if your didn't)

TAN HILL INN

Our May GM talk had Neil Hanson telling us about his time as first manager/landlord, then owner/landlord of the highest pub in the country (1732 ft above sea level). I felt I wanted to know more about its past. I'm sharing with you some of what I found, along with some of what Neil recounted.



The current building dates back some 400 years, but there is a record of an earlier pub in 1586, on or near Tan Hill. Whilst it now sits in splendid isolation in Swaledale in the Yorkshire Dales, it was once part of a small mining community with miners' cottages around it. Both coal and lead were mined. Mining in the immediate area is believed to date back even further, possibly as far as Roman times, but certainly to the 12th century. The pub's life as a hostelry serving miners, farmers and their workers would have been very different from what it is now. There were also drovers and pedlars passing through. It still serves the scattered

farming community, but tourists, especially hikers, campers and walkers taking advantage of the nearby Pennine Way, mean that despite its isolation, it is a commercially viable operation. Were it not for the invention of the motor car and the efforts of those who fought for the right to freely walk places like the Dales, the inn may not have survived. Mining ceased in the 1920's and the cottages around the inn were demolished in the 1930's.

At various times in its history, the building has fallen into disrepair. This was certainly the case when Neil and his wife Sue managed the inn in the late 1970's and even more so when they took the plunge and became owners in the 1980's. The main boost in terms of their renovations came with the now famous Everest Double Glazing advert, which featured Ted Moul. Neil's approach to the company turned out to be inspired. It gained the inn a complete set of new windows, although initially Everest only offered to do the front windows. Neil told us that the weather on the first day of filming was unusually clement, but on the second day the crew learned just how ferocious the wind could be, their refreshment van was blown over! The local authority planning officers were however not impressed. The building was grade II listed and the new windows did not have the required permission. The council itself quickly resolved the matter, recognising the financial benefits the advert and windows had brought to the area.

Everest returned in 2008 to film a new advert and provide another set of windows, along with solar panels. The latter were a welcome addition to generator provided power. The inn was visited by James May and Oz Clarke in Oz and James Drink to Britain, first broadcast in 2009. In late 2017, the inn again featured in a TV ad, for Waitrose supermarkets' Christmas campaign. In May 2019, scenes for ITV show Vera were filmed, for an episode aired in January 2020. The pub has also featured in The Inspector Lindley Mysteries, Murder in Mind, Top Gear, The Fast Show, Wish You Were Here, All Creatures Great and Small, and Jude the Obscure.

Susan Peacock was a famous early 20th century landlady. She and first husband Richard Parrington took over at Tan Hill in 1903. Richard was previously landlord at another pub in the area, the Cat Hole Inn. Tan Hill was in a poor state when they arrived. Despite the fact that mining in the area was already declining, the couple made a success of the business. Sadly, Richard died, leaving Susan with 3 daughters. She married again, to the owner of the Tan Hill Pits, Michael Peacock. However, in seems she was very much at the helm at the inn. Wireless was installed in 1930 and Susan became involved with radio broadcasts from the inn. This turned out to be an inspired choice, with hundreds from outside the immediate area visiting to see the life she described on air for themselves.

Another famous landlord, Lew Hamilton, was responsible for starting an annual sheep fair in 1951. Sheep fairs were a feature in the Swaledale area prior to the depression of the 1930's. The Tan Hill Fair, held on the last Thursday in May, became a fixture in the local calendar. Foot and mouth outbreaks interrupted this event and sent it "online" during the covid pandemic. There was some talk of extending the facilities to include a tourist centre during his tenure, but there were concerns about the winter weather, which to this day causes the inn to be cut off on occasion. In the event, expansion didn't happen until many years later.

A different event was rather less successful. The Naturist Society came one cold, very windy weekend, not weather conducive to being in the altogether! As Neil commented "shrinkage was a problem".

The opening of the Pennine Way in the mid 1960's led to many more customers. It was ideally situated to take advantage of a surge in hikers and walkers. The later Coast to Coast path also passes quite close to the inn. 1988 saw relaxation of regulations regarding opening hours, these had been in place since WWI. Neil recounted that visits by the local constabulary to check on adherence to the old restrictions were made "by appointment". On finding the inn quiet and in darkness, they went away, conveniently ignoring the fact that there were cars in the car park. (I recall my late husband telling similar tales of his youth in mid-Wales). Another change in legislation gave the inn another string to its bow. In 1995 it became the first pub to be granted a license to hold weddings.

The weather is the key feature in the life of Tan Hill. In 2009/10 New Year celebrations did not end at the usual time. Those present were snowed in for 3 days. Although the inn invested in a special snow vehicle to avoid a repeat, it did not prevent the 2021 Storm Arwen, with its heavy snow, marooning customers over the weekend.



Tan Hill Inn after Storm Arwen



This shows how remote and isolated the Inn is

The current landlords have more recently looked to take advantage of its position, where lack of light pollution, means that the Northern Lights can be viewed from the inn. Clear domes, or pods, allow visitors to view this phenomenon, or indeed do some more general stargazing, in a little more comfort.

On paper, in its isolated spot, with poor weather, Tan Hill Inn should not have survived or thrived. However, it appears to be a place where many of those involved with its running have been imaginative enough to recognise and seize new opportunities.

FROM OUR MEMBERS

CARL LINNAEUS

By Pierre Castille



Carl Linnaeus (1707 – 1778) in Sami costume

Linnaeus was born in Sweden. He grew up and flourished in a period of history we now know as **the age of enlightenment**: an intellectual and philosophical movement that dominated Europe in the 17th and 18th centuries. The English largely ignored this, perhaps why it was not taught to you in history at school. If you are Scottish, I apologise, the Scots were part of **the enlightenment**.

His contemporaries would include **Benjamin Franklin**, **Leonhard Euler**, widely regarded as the most prolific mathematician of all time, the philosopher **Voltaire**, composer **Johann Sebastian Bach** artists **Canaletto** and **Thomas Gainsborough**, and explorer **James Cook**.

At school, young Linnaeus developed an interest in Botany and learnt Latin, both important in what followed. He was encouraged to go to

study Botany at Lund University before transferring to University of Uppsala, so that he could study medicine as well as botany and zoology.

In 1729 he published a thesis on sexual reproduction in plants that was so impressive he was invited to give lectures at the university, even though he was a second-year student. When he graduated, he had the idea to explore northern Sweden, a huge area we call Lapland, home to a nomadic people known as **Sami**. Such was his reputation that the University offered him a grant, and off he went on a 1,200-mile journey of exploration lasting six months. He collected botanical and geological specimens and studied the habits of the Sami people. On his return, he published a description of all the plants he had found on his expedition



Frontispiece of *Flora Lapponica* (1737)

This book described 534 species of plants from Lapland including 100 new to science. It set the standard for describing plants from that day forward.

Whilst exploring Lapland he had a revolutionary idea that shaped biological studies to this present day.

Linnaeus's Big Idea

Why not write a book that describes every plant and every animal that exists?

The general idea at the time was that there were not that many plants and animals to describe, perhaps as many as ten thousand plants and a similar number of animals.

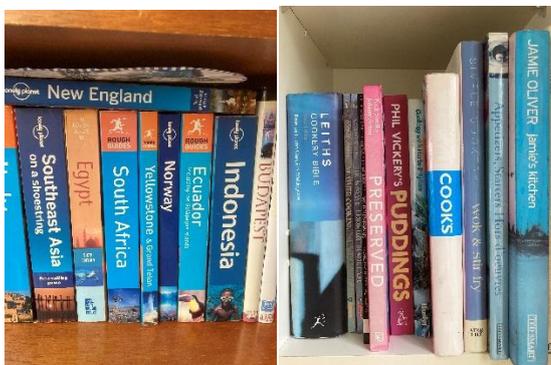
It was also believed that when life was created, the animals and plants were the same as they are today. The concept of evolution had not been developed and knowledge of previous lifeforms did not exist.

A big fat book describing 20,000 different plants and animals would be tedious to write, and quite useless, no one would buy it, let alone read it.

Unless...

You came up with a brilliant idea of sorting the life forms into groups.

Sorting things into groups is something that comes naturally to us, because we have grown up with the idea. We sort our laundry into colours and whites, and when we put it away, we separate it into socks, underwear, shirts etc. We sort our crockery and cutlery when we put it in the dishwasher and when we put the clean stuff in cupboards and drawers. In the time of Linnaeus people didn't own enough stuff that could be sorted.

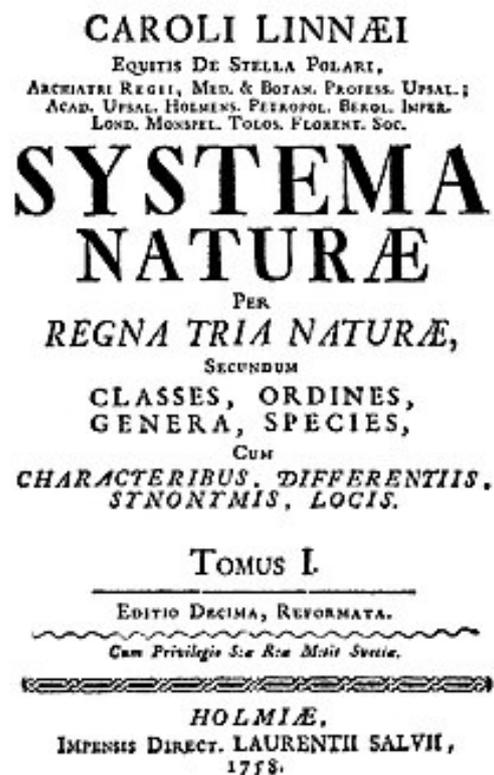


If you own lots of books you have to sort them to store them in a useful way. At the time of Linnaeus books were expensive and you would have to be very wealthy to own more than a single shelf full.

Linnaeus's solution was to start off with everything found on Earth then dividing them into three groups, that we call **animals**, **vegetables**, and **minerals**. We will call each group a **Kingdom**.

Take all the animals, then sort them into smaller groups.

One group was composed of animals that had backbones. This group would be called vertebrates (animals with backbones). Other groups would include worms, things with shells (molluscs) and animals that had several legs (arthropods – insects, spiders, lobsters etc.)



He published his findings in a book called Systema Naturae.

The first edition, published in 1735 attracted interest and criticism. Linnaeus aimed for a really simple way of putting animals into groups, as simple as counting their number of legs, or number of teeth.

He defined **Quadrupeds** as vertebrates that had four legs and were covered in hair. This was to distinguish the group from other vertebrates without any legs (fish), or four legs and a dry scaly skin (lizards etc.) or four legs and a thin non-scaly skin, such as frogs.

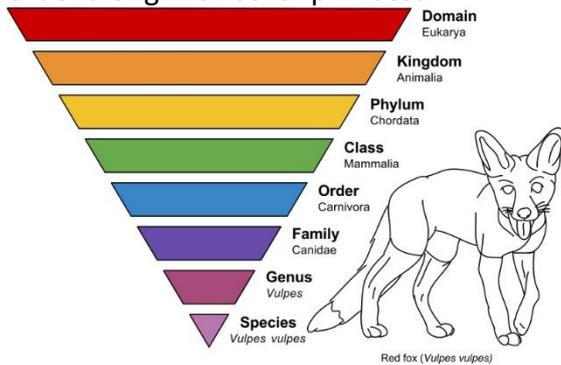
There was a huge flaw in this classification scheme. Linnaeus's rule of thumb classified Whales and Dolphins as fish! – Oops!

To give him credit, he listened to his critics, realised his error and got to work on the 2nd edition of his work.

I previously mentioned his study of the Sami People on his expedition to Lapland. He observed that all Sami mothers breastfed their babies, unlike the wealthy and highborn mothers of Sweden (and other European countries) who employed other women to breastfeed their babies. He noticed Sami babies were a lot healthier and more content than babies that were wet-nursed in Sweden and campaigned against the practice which quickly became unfashionable.

He corrected his mistake renaming quadrupeds as mammals. Animals whose females produce milk for their young.

Linnaeus continually revised his work, adding new information and correcting mistakes. It was a revolutionary work. It included Humans in the classification, showing man's place in the natural order along with other primates.



Classification – putting things into nesting groups

Putting things into groups doesn't just keep things tidy, it helps us solve a wide range of problems and puts order into chaos.

Dealing with groups is so useful that we give it a special name, taxonomy. Linnaean ideas are used every day to solve all sorts of problems.

Doctors use taxonomy of symptoms to identify your illness.

Detectives use taxonomy of fingerprints to identify burglars

Everything that is complicated benefits from the use of taxonomy.

Recognition

Carl Linnaeus became a well-known figure in European centres of learning. He travelled to the Netherland, Germany, France and England. Swedish King Adolf Frederick granted Linnaeus nobility in 1757, he took the name Carl von Linné (Latinised as Carolus a Linné)

Two for the Price of One

Besides inventing classification, he *accidentally* invented a type of naming shorthand. Linnaeus described living things in Latin, ***Plantago foliis ovato-lanceolatus pubescentibus, spica cylindrica, scapo terete*** was the name of a fairly common weed of footpaths. To save time, he would write ***Plantago media*** to distinguish it from ***Plantago lanceolata***. This two-name shortcut was rapidly adopted, called **binomial nomenclature** and is still in use today.

Every living organism has a two-part name. The first part refers to its Genus and always starts with a capitalised letter, and the second part is its species name, almost always starting with a lower-case letter.



Erithacus rubecula (European robin)

There is a huge advantage in using Latin to name living things rather than a *native language* such as English.



An English bluebell, *Hyacinthoides non-scripta*

In Scotland, if you asked a local to show you a bluebell, they would show you.



Scottish bluebell, *Campanula rotundifolia*

The English bluebell is not native to Scotland. By using the same Latin name everywhere in the World there is no confusion as to what species were are referring to.

Legacy

Linnaeus popularised biological expeditions to visit areas out of curiosity rather than to conquer or convert the local inhabitants. My travels to interesting places are part of this legacy.

Biological expeditions do not merely result in the collection of plants and animals. Biologists study the relationships of organisms in a particular place as a part of what we call field work. You might like to call it ecology.



The Linnean Society was founded in 1788 by botanist Sir James Edward Smith. It is active to this day.

It was the venue for the first public presentation of the theory of evolution by natural selection on 1 July 1858 when Charles Darwin and Alfred Russel Wallace presented a joint paper.

The Linnaean concept of grouping similar organisms together enabled the study of relationships between them, providing the evidence used by Darwin and Wallace to develop their theory.

Linnaeus's work **Systema Naturae** formed the basis of all subsequent textbooks of Botany and Zoology. My first-year undergraduate studies in Botany and Zoology nearly sixty years ago were modelled on Systema Naturae, brought up to date of course.

Without an organised form of classification and a universal naming system we would never have been able to count the number of plants and animals in the world. (Half a million and ten million respectively.)

And without the foundations of biological classification, and fieldwork we would not have natural history programmes on television. David Attenborough is a Fellow of the Linnean Society.

DECLUTTER DEN

Declutter Den is open again.

Do you have anything sitting in a cupboard, or on a shelf, that you no longer want? Might one of our groups be able to use it? Might one of your fellow members be able to use it?

We have a couple of people with items available this month.

I have some free spare tomato plants I grew from seed, as always far too many germinated for my own use.

If anyone still needs some give Elke Chambers a call on 0116 2673214.



1 x Size 11 gents green wellington boots complete with fur liner, hardly used, as new.

1 x Size 6 ladies dark blue wellington boots, hardly used, as new.

If interested contact Dave Steadman

Email: - dave.steadman@talktalk.net

Mobile: - 07517683663

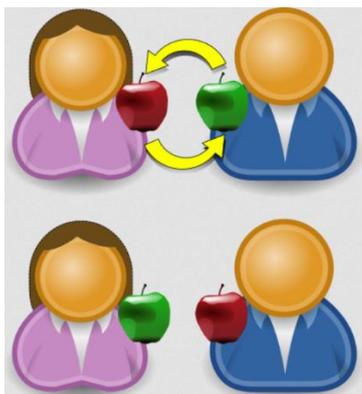
Landline: - 01162606733



If you have something that you are prepared to give away – **strictly no items for sale!** Let me know and I'll put it in declutter den and hopefully we can help each other free up some space, whilst giving others something they have a use for, even if we don't.

Email: sadu3aed@gmail.com

SWAP STOP



Maybe you don't have something you are willing to give away, but how about swapping it with something from another member?

Are you a jig-saw fan looking to exchange with another jig-saw fan and give both of you a new challenge?

Do you have books you've read and would like to swap some with another bookworm?

Gardeners, how about swapping your surplus plants for ones you don't have, but would like to have?

Let me have details of what you have and what you want and we'll try and connect you with another member who wants what you have, and has what you want. The usual email address applies.

POETRY CORNER

Our Queen

by Chrissie Saunders

Head of our Nation, Elizabeth our Queen,
Of steadfast composure with radiant smile,
So widely respected, regal, serene,
Honouring her duties all the while.

When adversity she is forced to face
Throughout many a long and trying day,
She accepts it with dignity and grace,
A quiet understanding as is her way.

Knowing of national and world affairs,
She accepted her role as was her fate
Showing those she meets just how much she cares;
So, her jubilee we commemorate.
Come now, let's join together hand in hand
To celebrate her reign across the land.



And finally.....

Lesser-known facts about Queen Elizabeth II

The Queen does not require a driving license. Although compulsory testing was brought in on 1 June 1935 for all drivers and riders who started driving on or after 1 April 1934, it does not apply to the monarch.

Another document not needed by her majesty is a passport. She is the most travelled member of the Royal family in history.

We all know that the corgi is the Queen's favourite breed of dog, but how many of them has she owned over the years? 30

She is credited with a new breed of dog – the dorgi. The dog was the result of a liaison between one of her corgis and one of Princess Margaret's dachshunds. It's unclear whether this was an accident or not.

Her Majesty has sat for a whopping 200 official portraits over her lifetime. The first one was in 1933, when she was just seven-years-old, by Anglo-Hungarian artist Philip Alexius de Laszlo.

The court jeweller had to be summoned shortly before her wedding to repair the diamond tiara she wore, it had broken, but it was successfully patched up in time for the ceremony.

Rationing was still in place when the Queen married, she saved up and used rationing coupons to buy the fabric for her wedding gown.

During her reign she has seen 14 different Prime Ministers and 14 US Presidents.

As early as the 12th century, the British monarchy laid claim to "all mute swans" in the country, according to the official royal family website. Back then, the birds were considered a delicacy. Today, the Queen doesn't eat those swans, but she technically still owns them. Every year, the Queen's Swan Marker (actual job title) leads a multi-day census called the Swan Upping to count the birds and check up on their health.

The Queen has her own private cash machine at Buckingham Palace, provided by the bank Coutts.

Maybe she's stony-faced in most photos, but the Queen really does have a fun side. One of her former security guards recalled a time when a group of tourists at Balmoral Estate didn't recognize the monarch, who was wearing a headscarf at the time. The group asked Elizabeth if they had ever met the Queen. "No," Elizabeth reportedly responded. Then she pointed to a nearby policeman and said, "But he has."

To celebrate the monarch's birthday and 70 years on the throne, Barbie have released a royal doll made in the image of Queen Elizabeth.

Someone plays the bagpipes outside her bedroom window at 9am every weekday — essentially acting as a human alarm clock.

