

MAY  
2022

# Vitality!

Official newsletter of the Syston and District U3A CHARITY No 1180152

## FROM OUR ACTING CHAIRMAN

I hope everyone enjoyed the recent Easter holiday. The weather was very kind to us and allowed us to get out and appreciate our beautiful countryside.



I have just spent a very pleasant Saturday morning at St. Michael Church in Thurmaston, listening to our excellent u3a singing group. They were entertaining the congregation with a selection of popular songs at the church coffee and cake morning to raise funds for the Christian Aid Ukraine Appeal. The event raised an impressive £300.00.

It should be a very interesting talk on May 11<sup>th</sup> when Neil Harrison will be talking about the Inn and out at the Top where he was landlord of Britain's highest inn. I wonder if there are any free samples.

We are getting very close to our AGM where several of our committee members will be leaving their posts. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for all their hard work and dedication to our successful u3a. It has been my pleasure to work with you all. Clive

## WE WANT TO LET YOU KNOW

### AGM? WHAT AGM...?

All U3A Members should by now have received either an email or hard copy letter, posted on Friday April 15<sup>th</sup>, about this year's Annual General Meeting.

"What? When is it?" I hear you ask - it's on Wednesday June 8<sup>th</sup> at 10.30 a.m.

"Isn't that the day of the monthly talk?" - yes, it is, the AGM is immediately before the talk.

“Where is it?” - where we now have the talks, at Syston Community Centre.

If you don't think you've received the email, please check your Junk / Spam inbox as quite often Gmail mailings are diverted there. Failing that, you can find information on our website [here](#).

More information, an Agenda, and relevant papers will be made available in May. The AGM will include electing U3A Members to the Executive Committee and there are vacancies for: Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Groups Coordinator, Publicity Person, and 5 Committee Members.

If you would like to volunteer for the Committee, please complete **Part A** of the Nomination form, and if you would like to suggest a particular item of business to be discussed at the AGM please complete **Part B** of the Nomination form.

Please return the whole form by email to [sadu3asecretary@gmail.com](mailto:sadu3asecretary@gmail.com) or by post to The Secretary, c/o 28 Allington Drive, Birstall, Leics, LE4 4FA to arrive by May 9th at the latest.

Thank you,

Brian King  
Secretary

## FROM OUR GROUPS CO-ORDINATORS

Although a couple of our proposed activities had to be cancelled due to lack of numbers, we continue to work hard to find new and interesting things to offer our members. If you have an idea for a new group, let us know and we will do our best to help and support you.

A new group aimed at Meditation and Mindfulness has attracted lots of attention. Each session will include a short meditation in different styles followed by a variety of different options aimed to regain or improve health and wellbeing. If you are interested in this group and want to know more, let us know and we will add your name to the list.

We were asked if we have an Art Appreciation group. At the moment the answer is no, but we have a couple of people who would like to join if we can make it happen. So, if this is of interest to you then please let us know and hopefully we can get a group started.

This year the U3A is celebrating its 40<sup>th</sup> year (across the country) and it would be good if our SADU3A could take part in one way or another. We had a group leaders meeting where all group leaders were informed of this. They may be asking all members within their group to come up with ideas. If you have any ideas how we can take part in this, please speak to your group and leader and let's see what we come up with. Please check our SADU3A web page to see any new events coming up and for any other information you need.

Barbara and Sheila

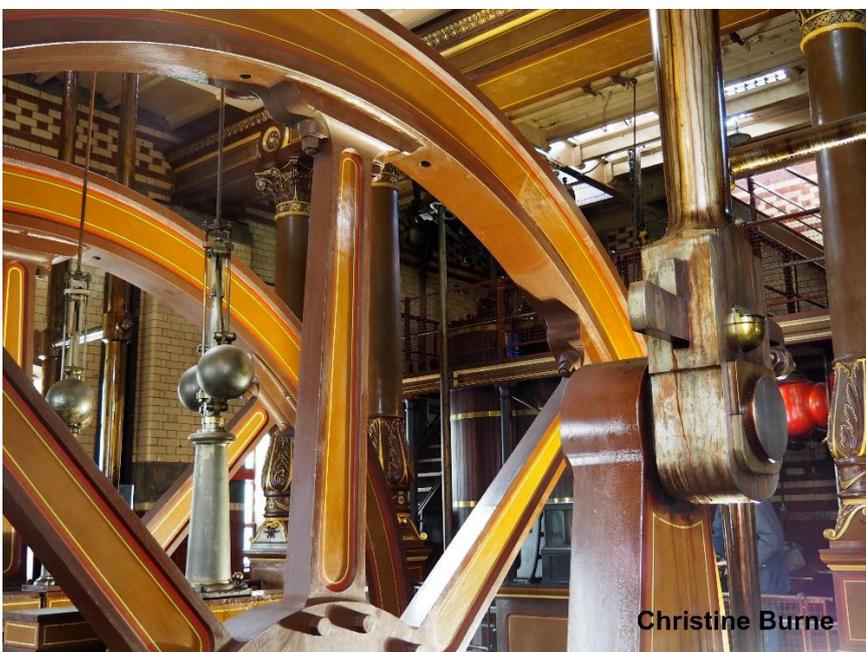
# GROUP NEWS

## PHOTOGRAPY GROUP

In March, due to poor weather, the Photogroup visited an indoor location – the Abbey Pumping Station – where the theme was ‘round objects’ and anything else that members found interesting.

After we spent time there, we moved onto the Asda café, just up the road for a cuppa and a natter.

Next meeting in April will be at the Outwoods, looking for Bluebells (weather permitting).







## ART GROUP

I joined the art group at the new members coffee morning where I met David. I have always had an interest in art so was keen to find out what the group was all about. It didn't take long to find it was an open friendly group of all abilities. My interest was to find out more about watercolour painting. Dave is very knowledgeable and is keen to help and guide us to improve. I really look forward to our meetings and I'm pleased to say I have learnt a lot thanks to Dave and the other members in the group.

John Sargeant.

## LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

### Visit to 'Grace Dieu' Priory

April 20<sup>th</sup> the first of our 'Summer outings' we visited North West Leicestershire and edge of the Charnwood Forest (near to Thringstone). We explored the ruins of what was "Gratia Dei" Grace Dieu Priory, and what turned out to be the extensive grounds surrounding it. **Friends of Grace Dieu Priory** Paula

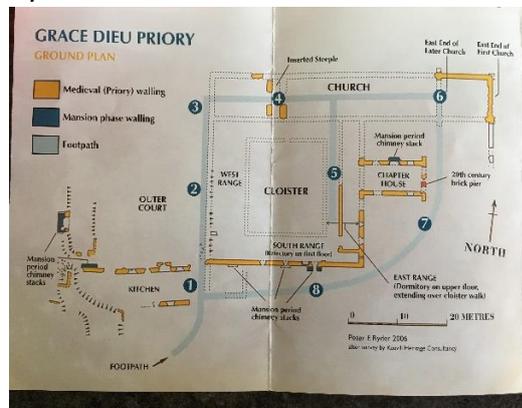
Goodson and Ann Petty were our guides for the morning. As it was, the morning turned out to be just perfect for a trip to what is a beautiful part of the County. Ann Petty’s father had been Gardener at Grace Dieu for over 70 years; so along with many of the historical facts we were to hear, we heard of her childhood growing up in the grounds of the ancient Priory and subsequent Manor House. The ladies took advantage of the lovely weather and took us a route through the woods towards the Priory along what was an ancient pathway along Grace Dieu brook side.



Not too apparent in the first picture was that as we walked through the woods we saw blue bells, Wood Anemone and wild garlic growing by the brook. Grace Dieu brook originates in Thringstone, flows on into Shephed and on to the River Soar at Loughborough. We learned of the strong Catholic faith of the occupants of both the Priory and Manor at Grace Dieu; and how the brook was a path used to ‘process’ along during festivals to mark events in the Catholic church year. As we entered the wood, I asked Paula if they intended planting a tree to commemorate the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee; sadly, she remarked they do have problems with vandalism. They feared a tree would be damaged, so they planned to have a recently ‘fallen tree’ carved into a bench instead. The Friends of Grace Dieu rely on visitor funding and donations to maintain pathways, mend fences and preserve the site. The two ladies had an obvious ‘pride’ in their links with the site and were great company.

**History of Grace Dieu Priory**

We approach Grace Dieu and learn of it’s history and layout.



The area around Grace Dieu has historical connections dating back to the Romans. However, the Priory was founded around 1235 -1241 by Roesia de Verdun. Widowed twice she had extensive land in Ireland and famously had a Castle built at Dundalk to protect her interests. So, as Ann pointed out a formidable young woman. She was determined not to have to marry again, and on returning to England and inheriting

her father's wealth, land and title; Roesia petitioned the King not to have to marry again as was the custom. Instead, she paid taxes to Henry III and invested in the Priory.

"Gratia Dei" was a house for Augustinian canonesses, which was dedicated 'to God, the Holy Trinity and St Mary'. Originally there were 14 nuns and a Prioress; they wore a White Habit. Although Roesia de Verdun founded the Priory, in **1242** being very religious herself, she joined the order (again to avoid an arranged marriage). She died in **1247** and is buried at the Church in the Market Town of Belton.

**1254** Ann told us there was a Law suit, which the occupants of Grace Dieu won. Many rich landowning Farmers tried to 'guarantee' their place in heaven by donating land to the Church (in this instance the Priory). And land at Long Whatton had been donated to the Priory; the Priory attracted many intellectuals who knew the Law and the dispute with the Crown was settled over ownership of the land in favour of the Priory.

Paula Goodson told us of Belton a nearby Market Town who were granted a charter for a market in **1292**. So, the Priory had an outlet for their produce; fish from their pond and game from the woods and any other goods produced by them. Buying and selling at Market was vital for this community.

Ann said there is much archaeological evidence to show that the community was a thriving one. The Priory had a precinct wall; there was probably more than one gate (F of GD suggest one likely to the West, with a footbridge over the stream). A church with nave, nun's choir (side aisle), presbytery (site for the altar), and steeple (later date). Then the main building with cloister, around which are a chapter house (best preserved), dormitory range and refectory (upper floor). Records show there was a school and an Infirmary. An account book for Grace Dieu dated 1414 – 1418 is in the Public Records Office Leicester. This suggests, by 1377 the priory had 16 nuns, with a hospital for 12 poor people.

**1538** Ann said there was evidence of a Brew House, ale house, laundry, salt house, Malt Kiln house. And a Smiths forge with stables near to the Priory.

Sadly in October 1538 Grace Dieu was dissolved.

### 1536 – 1540 Dissolution of the Monasteries

Henry VIII aided by Thomas Cromwell saw the riches of the monasteries and their land in England as a source of revenue for the Crown. Most of the monastic lands ended up in the hands of the aristocracy, with a new class of country gentlemen. The great abbey churches were plundered for building materials; and sadly, from this point on Grace Dieu is 'converted' into a Tudor Mansion House and altered many times over the next century by the Beaumonts.

### The Beaumonts

In **1540** the Priory and land was granted to Sir Humphrey Foster, who immediately conveys it to John Beaumont who made it his residence.



Ann had lots of pictures and pointed out features which highlighted the many alterations the Beaumont's had made to Grace Dieu. The intention was to 'fashion' a Tudor Manor House; the picture left shows chimney stacks in the Priory outer wall, a Tudor fireplace, and an arched stone removed from the church to create a grand entrance to a room used by the Beaumonts which was previously the chapter house.

### The Beaumont's were both infamous and famous.

In 1550 the first John Beaumont who was Recorder for Leicester and 'Master of the Rolls'. Was Judge of the Court of 'wards and liveries' (set up by Henry VIII) and was found guilty of 'stealing' 'royal revenues' of over £20,000. He gave up his office and repaid the King with his manor, lands, and goods. By either oversight or 'intentional act of grace' his wife was not made a party to the fine. And on Beaumont's death the estate of Grace Dieu passed to her.

**1598** Sir Francis Beaumont their son was Member of Parliament for Aldborough.

Then **1626** Sir John Beaumont was made **1st Baronet of Grace Dieu**. Ann told us he was the famous Poet and friend of William Wordsworth. Beaumont's best-known poem is 'Bosworth Field' where he describes the scene of the battle. His younger brother was the dramatist, Francis Beaumont.

**William Wordsworth** stayed with his patron (Beaumont) at nearby Coleorton Hall where he wrote: -

"Beneath yon eastern ridge, the craggy bound,  
Rugged ad high, of Charnwood's Forest ground,  
Stand yet, but, Stranger, hidden from thy view  
The ivied ruins of forlorn **Grace Dieu**,  
Erst a religious House, which day and night  
With hymns resounded and the chanted rite".

**Born 1607** Sir John Beaumont 2nd Baronet and was a colonel in the king's army. A Royalist he died at The Siege of Gloucester in 1644.

**Born 1620** Sir Thomas Beaumont was 3<sup>rd</sup> Baronet and lived at Grace Dieu. He died July 1686 and is buried at Belton. He had 8 daughters and so the title became extinct.

### The Phillips

We then learnt that the estate was purchased by **Sir Ambrose Phillips**, of Garendon Abbey and Kings Sergeant. He demolished most of the Priory church in 1696, using the stone at Garendon Hall. He died in 1706 and the site went to his son William, followed by Samuel his grandson.

Then a cousin **Thomas March Phillips** esq. inherited the estate. He adopted the surname Phillips (patronymic – from his ancestor)

**By 1730** the buildings were in ruins.

**In 1833** Ambrose **Lisle March Phillips** was given the estate by his father. With the Priory in ruins; Ambrose built a new Tudor house some 300 yards from the Priory site. A converted Catholic Ambrose had the

London architect William Railton to design and build the new house with a chapel attached. He later commissioned a larger Chapel, East wing and stable court gateway all to Pugin's design.

Ann then told us of various buildings he had commissioned in the grounds of the Priory. In **1842** he added another chapel a mile or so from the house and set up a cross, 17' tall on a rock he called the Calvary. Between this chapel and the cross was a series of fourteen shrines, each depicting a scene from Christ's passion. Again, Ann said that the shrines (and brook) would have featured prominently in religious processions around the site. There was a village school built at the foot of the rock.

**In 1886** the manor house was rented by **Charles Booth** and his family. Charles was a British ship owner, social researcher and reformer. Famous for his 'Poverty maps' of London. He died in 1916 but his daughter Mary Booth oversaw a lot of restoration work carried out at Grace Dieu. Despite the fact that they were only renting the property.

**In 1939** Mary Booth died. The Booth family had taken great care of Grace Dieu.

**The Charnwood Forest Railway** was opened in 1883. Known as the 'Bluebell Line' as it passed through the Grace Dieu woods which was a sea of blue bells in Spring. Ann asked us to note that the 'brick built' viaduct was stone clad; funded by the Booth's who would no doubt have visitors coming up from London, who they wanted to impress. The route from Thringstone Station would pass under the viaduct. We noted that the path at this point was asphalt, and as Mary died in 1939 no doubt some of the first motor cars would have passed that way on route to the House. In 1885 the Railway went bankrupt, regular passenger trains ended in 1931, the last goods trains in 1955 and the line finally closed in 1963 (Beeching cuts).



**The Charnwood Forest Canal** opened in 1794 and the route cut across the Priory precinct. The main reservoir burst its banks in 1799 flooding the area. Ann told us of the dreadful scenes with homes flooded and animals killed. Never profitable the project for the canal was short lived. Derelict by 1804 the canal bed was allowed to silt up. The railway embankment followed much of the canal's route.

The **March Phillips de Lisle family** still owned the House until **1933**. At one point they moved back into Grace Dieu but sold the house which became a Catholic school.

The **Grace Dieu Manor School** was an independent Catholic preparatory school, founded in May 1933 by the Rosminians as a prep school for Ratcliffe College. The school occupied the 19th century Manor house and 120 acres of grounds. The school closed in 2020.

We didn't see the Manor House. Ann told us fondly though of learning to swim in its outdoor swimming pool and that her brother was Altar boy at the Chapel pictured on the left of the picture. The building is Grade II listed and recently purchased by a Football Academy.

## **Archaeology 2022**

Between the old Priory and the Manor House is a field which Ann took us to. It seems according to the Pamphlet on Grace Dieu and Ann. That the many 'humps and bumps' in this field suggest there are many

more archaeological finds to be made. Exploratory work is going to be carried out this July and it's hoped to discover more about the layout of the Priory.

In fact this turned out to be a thoroughly fascinating step back in time. We were given a lot of information taking us back over the centuries. That when writing up my notes on this trip I admit to referencing the excellent pamphlet on Grace Dieu Priory. I visited [www.gracedieupriory.org.uk](http://www.gracedieupriory.org.uk) and used Wikipedia to clarify the info on the Beaumonts.

See the local events section for more information about events at Grace Dieu.

## FAMILY HISTORY

Group member Jane Simms gave us a presentation about her family history book, due to be published shortly, it is titled –

### *Defining the Dash*

On nearly every headstone, no matter how plain or ornate, is carved one universal symbol. It's a simple horizontal line—a dash—separating two significant dates. The first marks the day one precious soul entered this mortal life. The second marks his or her inevitable journey onward.

A well-known poem by Linda Ellis, "The Dash," speaks of this symbol:

"For that dash represents all the time that they spent alive on earth. And now only those who loved them know what that little line is worth."

The book brings together the stories of various members of her Oliver and Windle ancestors, but also includes information about where they lived and the jobs they did. In addition, there are links to famous people and places. She explained how the book has been compiled, some of the techniques she had used and gave us a sneak preview of some of the pages.

Whilst the book is personal to Jane's family, it contains historical information of general interest. If any member would like more information or would like to purchase a copy (likely cost £10) I will gladly put you in touch with Jane. Just send a message to my editor email address [sadu3aed@gmail.com](mailto:sadu3aed@gmail.com)

Julie Johnson

## AMERICAN HISTORY GROUP

**Family History** came to the fore in the group, with Pat Wherton covering the career of her 5<sup>th</sup> cousin 5 times removed, here is part of her article -

**William McKinley**, (born January 29, 1843, Niles, Ohio, U.S.—died September 14, 1901, Buffalo, New York), 25th president of the United States (1897–1901). Under McKinley's leadership, the United States went to war against Spain in 1898 and thereby acquired a global empire, which included Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines.

McKinley was the son of William McKinley, a manager of a charcoal furnace and a small-scale iron founder, and Nancy Allison. Eighteen years old at the start of the Civil War, McKinley enlisted in an Ohio regiment under the command of Rutherford B. Hayes, later the 19th president of the

United States (1877–81). Promoted second lieutenant for his bravery in the Battle of Antietam (1862), he was discharged a brevet major in 1865. Returning to Ohio, he studied law, was admitted to the bar in 1867, and opened a law office in Canton, where he resided—except for his years in Washington, D.C.—for the rest of his life.

The issue with which McKinley became most closely identified during his congressional years was the protective tariff, a high tax on imported goods which served to protect American manufacturers from foreign competition. While it was only natural for a Republican from a rapidly industrializing state to favour protection, McKinley's support reflected more than his party's pro-business bias. A genuinely compassionate man, McKinley cared about the well-being of American workers, and he always insisted that a high tariff was necessary to assuring high wages. As chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, he was the principal sponsor of the McKinley Tariff of 1890, which raised duties higher than they had been at any previous time. Yet by the end of his presidency McKinley had become a convert to commercial reciprocity among nations, recognizing that Americans must buy products from other countries in order to sustain the sale of American goods abroad.

His loss in 1890 brought an end to McKinley's career in the House of Representatives, but, with the help of wealthy Ohio industrialist Mark Hanna, McKinley won two terms as governor of his home state (1892–96). During those years Hanna, a powerful figure in the Republican Party, laid plans to gain the party's presidential nomination for his good friend in 1896. McKinley went on to win the nomination easily.

## **EDISON and WESTINGHOUSE (AC & DC) (Alternating and Direct current)**

The great rivalry between Edison and Westinghouse was a seriously bitter business competition indeed. However, much of the story borders on the ludicrous. But there were very cruel and unusual aspects to the story.

### **Thomas Alva Edison**

To prove that AC was unsafe Edison "executed" an elephant called Topsy by electrocution because Edison was firmly wedded to the idea of direct current‡ and was trying to prove that AC was lethal, other animals were also subjected to electrocution including a pony. The irony is that a sufficiently powerful DC current is also lethal.

The murderer William Kimmeler was sentenced to death by a New York Court and chosen to be the first man to be executed in the electric chair, although he would have preferred a fine. It was a gruesome affair with current having to be switched on again to finish him off. This took some time because the generator had to be allowed time to build up current, when the current was eventually put through Kimmeler via the chair the back of his coat caught fire. The effect of this spectacle on the witnesses was something most did not want to repeat, some fainted, some were physically sick and it was said there will never be another judicial execution by this method.

Edison recognised the limitation of DC and engaged a brilliant Serbian mathematician and engineer Nikolai Tesla† to find a solution to this problem. Tesla found that the solution was to scrap the idea that DC could ever be suitable for power transmission over distance and recommended. Edison changed his mind on the matter. Of which Edison said that while Tesla's ideas were splendid, they were utterly impractical and Edison didn't pay him fairly for the work he had put in. Tesla had a hard time for a while labouring, sometimes trench digging for a company laying cable for the Edison system. But he was eventually able to

form a company and patent his system. Eventually George Westinghouse bought some of his patents so Tesla made some money at last.

The positive creations of Edison's career include the invention (or perfection) of electric power generation, mass communication, sound recording, and motion pictures.

## George Westinghouse

He was an American entrepreneur and engineer based in Pennsylvania who created the railway air brake which is also used on HGV's and was a pioneer of the electrical industry, receiving his first patent at the age of 19. Westinghouse saw the potential of using alternating current for electric power distribution in the early 1880s and put all his resources into developing and marketing it.

This put Westinghouse's business in direct competition with Thomas Edison, who marketed direct current for electric power distribution. Westinghouse became aware of the new European alternating current systems in 1885 when he read about them in the UK technical journal *Engineering*. One other great advantage of an alternating current is that it can be transmitted at a much higher voltage (which is a more efficient method) and then stepped down to a lower voltage for household use which is also safer.

In 1911 Westinghouse received the American Institute of Electrical Engineers (AIEE) Edison Medal "For meritorious achievement in connection with the development of the alternating current system."

## WHAT'S ON NEXT

### GENERAL MEETINGS

As Covid regulations in England relating to meetings have effectively been withdrawn, there is no requirement to wear face masks. However, Government guidance is that it is prudent to wear them in places where people congregate, who do not normally mix with each other. Covid has not gone away. It is also not sensible to attend such events F2F if you have any signs of infectious illness, covid restrictions have reduced our immunity to these.

**You do not need to book a seat for future talks; therefore, I will not be sending out separate emails for everyone. The April and May talks will be zoomed into the Community Centre. You can also log into the talks using zoom.**

If you have any questions, please email me on [sadu3amembers@gmail.com](mailto:sadu3amembers@gmail.com)

**Wed 11th May** by Zoom at the Brookside Room or watch at home.

**“Inn and Out at the Top”** with speaker Neil Hanson

Neil Hanson tells us about his time as the landlord of Britain's highest inn, so high above sea level that it had its own climate. Cut off by snow in the winter for weeks on end and subject to winds that could rip a car door from its hinges. Its next-door neighbour was 4

miles away. Customers could be tight-fisted farmers, eccentric characters even naturists. There were “lates and lock-ins” with police raids by appointment. You may have seen the Inn on TV as it was the venue for the shooting of a famous double-glazing advert. So come and hear the stories from a man who lived through it all.

**Wed June 9<sup>th</sup>** in the Brookside Room

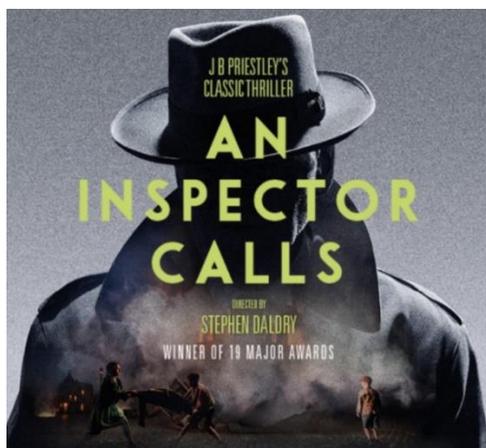
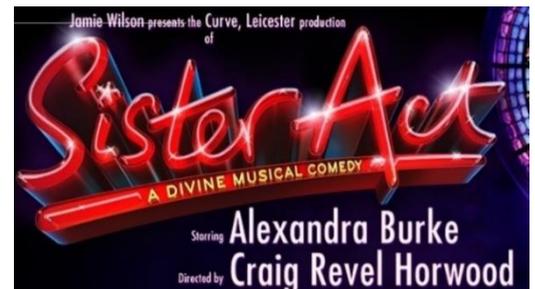
June’s General Meeting is a little different. Most of us are from the “Swinging 60’s” and in June we are taking you back to then with an interactive reminder of **“Juke Box Jury”**. David Jacobs became famous as the presenter for the BBC. Sadly, he died in 2013 but we have booked Roger Prescott to bring 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.

## **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.



**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](mailto:elaineyarwood@outlook.com)

## NATIONAL U3A ITEMS

### WOODLAND CAMPAIGN



u3a members from across the UK have shown their commitment to protecting wildlife and the environment for future generations by contributing 8,200 trees planted in the u3a woodland in just 6 months.

This smashed through the original target of planting 5,000 trees by March 2022.

And this huge contribution doesn't stop now – as u3a members and others can keep contributing – helping us plan ahead for the next planting season which starts in November. The campaign

is now aiming to reach 10,000 trees by the end of 2022.

Trustee and u3a member Neil Stevenson who has been leading the campaign said, “Our woodland campaign has shown the power of the movement’s combined voice - coming together to protect the environment and climate for future generations.

“The energy and enthusiasm of members is inspiring - please keep contributing and help us reach our new target of 10,000 trees planted by the end of this year”

[Make a contribution](#)

The u3a Woodland is situated on the England/Wales border in the Brecon Beacons National Park and marks the movement’s 40th anniversary in 2022.

### THE POSITIVE IMPACT OF THE U3A

A new film campaign showcasing how members’ lives have been changed for the better by u3a has launched on the u3a YouTube channel.

The first film focuses on Upholland u3a member Geoffrey in his Musicians group. He says, “u3a and being part of this group has given me an excuse to play guitar more. I play guitar everyday now for a few hours at least. I had no incentive to do that before. This band gives me that incentive.”

The series spotlights u3a members and the impact that u3a has had on their lives. Using members featured in the Do Something Brilliant Today film, it goes into each members' story in more detail. Films will be released weekly on the u3a YouTube channel.

[Watch the video on our YouTube channel now.](#)

## U3A TALKS



May 11

### How to reduce your carbon footprint - and your energy bills

by The Third Age Trust

3365 followers

[Follow](#)

Free

Book [here](#)



May 05

### Pre-War Blues

by The Third Age Trust

3365 followers

[Follow](#)

Free

Book [here](#)



May 13

### The Stories of the Willow Pattern Plate

by The Third Age Trust

3365 followers

[Follow](#)

Free

Book [here](#)

Details of the wide and varied programme available on Eventbrite can be found [here](#)

## NOT U3A BUT YOU MIGHT BE INTERESTED



**Past to Present Archaeology** are getting together with the **Friends of Grace Dieu**. For **'Medieval Mysteries of Leicestershire'** 18th – 29th July 2022 to fully investigate the site bordering the Priory. They are offering experience packages for various activities planned that week.  
[Please see poster attachment below for details.](#)

If you are interested and would like to visit the site. There are guided walks by the Friends of Grace Dieu by arrangement.

### [Guided walks for National Forest Walking Festival](#)

Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> May start 3pm

Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> May start 10am

Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> May start 6pm

### [Walks for Festival of Archaeology](#)

Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> July start 3pm

Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> July start 6pm

Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> July start 10am

These walks include The Field School excavations in the adjoining field.

**All walks meet at The Bull's Head, Thringstone car park.**

**Cost £3 per person**

Or make your own way on the A512 Loughborough to Ashby Road to the Bull's Head Car Park (LE67 8LR). Visitors to the Priory **can park on** the Bull's Head car park with kind permission of the management. Then follow the signs to the Priory [www.gracedieupriory.org.uk](http://www.gracedieupriory.org.uk)



Grace Dieu Priory  
Field-School\_Poster.p

Please click on the above to see a poster for these events.

## BBC STAR PRESENTER TO OPEN SYSTON EXHIBITION



BBC “*East Midlands Today*” solo presenter, Anne Davies, has accepted the invitation to formally open the “**Help is at Hand**” exhibition being organised in Central Park on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> July. It is hoped that, as a popular TV personality, Anne’s presence will attract additional visitors to the event.

Invitations have already been issued to over 150 local organisations which offer social, cultural, sporting, educational, recreational, financial, medical, spiritual and/or emotional support to people of all ages, thereby easing problems and enhancing the quality of life. In a heavily subsidised event, all of these organisations are offered low-cost opportunity to promote their services, recruit more members, attract volunteer support and raise funds. - all with the minimum of organisational effort on their part.

Chairman of Trustees, Paul Lomas, says: “*The Volunteer Centre is happy to curate and organise this event, aimed at helping everyone within our local communities to realise just what a wealth of local support services are available to them in all areas of life while, offering the organisations involved a timely opportunity to promote themselves with the minimum of cost and organisational effort.*”

*We are grateful for the significant donation we received from the sale of calendars featuring the Syston Knitting Banksy displays at the local Post Office and War Memorial, which has enabled us to offer this financial support through subsidising the event.*

Any relevant organisation that has not received an invitation but which would like to be involved should contact Colin Grimes: [sadvc@btinternet.com](mailto:sadvc@btinternet.com) for further details.

### **Art exhibition at Nanpantan Hall, Loughborough**

Fri 13th May, 2022 @ 10:00 - 16:00  
Repeats daily until Sun 15th May, 2022

Arts Coordinator and Curator, Jacqui Gallon, has been working with the Paget Charitable Trust for the past few years. Jacqui has an interest in combining the arts and heritage. This exhibition presents a range of creative practices including poetry, performance, sculpture, film, drawing, collage and photography which reimagine the lives of workers once employed at Nanpantan Hall.

In addition to the exhibition in the Hall, the lovely wooded grounds and original walled Edwardian garden will be open to visitors.

To order tickets, please open the publicity flyer below and follow the instructions.



Nanpantan Hall and  
The Paget Family - Lal



Set in the Medieval centre of Loughborough, The Old Rectory building represents a rare survival of a stone-built 13th century manor house. Today it stands in its own grounds on Rectory Place on the edge of the modern town centre.

The building was home to the Rectors of All Saints Parish Church for most of its life and probably represents one of the oldest Rectories in the country.

The Old Rectory now houses a museum run by the Loughborough Archaeological and Historical Society.

[I received these just as I was completing the newsletter -](#)

### **Women needed for new study on improving bone and joint health through exercise.**

Participants are needed for a new Loughborough University study that will look at how exercise may help prevent conditions such as osteoporosis and osteoarthritis.

Supported by the Centre for Sport, Exercise and Osteoarthritis Research Versus Arthritis, the REPROOF (resistance exercise programme on risk of osteoporosis and osteoarthritis in females) project will be led by Dr Katherine Brooke-Wavell and Professor Jonathan Folland from the University's School of Sport, Exercise and Health Sciences.

The study will build on previous research which found that brief hopping exercises improved bone strength at the hip. REPROOF will investigate the possible benefits of resistance exercise on bone and joint

health and physical function, and for this the team needs to recruit healthy women aged 50-70 who are willing to take up regular exercise.

Volunteers will be invited to visit the University's National Centre for Sport and Exercise Medicine for a DXA scan of bone density, MRI scans of the joints, and other measurements of muscle function and bone health.

Most women will be asked to come to the campus twice a week for eight months to carry out supervised exercise, using resistance training machines and body weight. Some women in a control group will carry on as usual. The measurements will be repeated at the middle and end of the study to discover the effects of the exercise programme.

Speaking about the research, Dr Katherine Brooke-Wavell said: Our previous study found that brief hopping exercises improved bone strength at the hip, and so may reduce the risk of hip fracture. We now want to find out the best way to increase bone density at the spine as well as the hip. We also want to strengthen the muscles and joints of the leg and so improve physical function. This research will help improve understanding of how exercise may help prevent conditions such as osteoporosis and osteoarthritis.

Postdoctoral researcher Dr Elisa Marques added: Whilst we know that exercise is generally good for joints, bones and muscles, this study will compare two different types of exercise to help us better recommend exercise in future.

Physiotherapy doctoral researcher, Ogulcan Caliskan said: The exercise sessions each last less than an hour and will be with a small group of other women in a specialist facility, supervised carefully by researchers.

The exercises start gently and build up gradually as your strength increases. The resistance machine exercises several muscle groups at the same time, whilst supporting the spine. We hope that you will feel stronger and more upright if you do the exercise, as well as finding out more about your health and helping improve knowledge in this area.

If you are interested in joining the study and would like some additional information, please get in touch with Ogulcan Caliskan (o.caliskan@lboro.ac.uk) or Dr Elisa Marques (e.marques@lboro.ac.uk), phone 07543302354 or see the study webpage [www.lboro.ac.uk/reproof](http://www.lboro.ac.uk/reproof).

## *Concert for Ukraine*

**Enclosed is a poster giving full details of the Concert for Ukraine to be held at De Montfort Hall on Sunday 8th May with 100% of the £20 ticket sales being donated to the DEC Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal.**

For more details click on the pdf below



UKRAINE CONCERT  
FLYER 14.4.22.pdf



**SOS** Charity Fashion Shows

*Fundraising*  
**FASHION SHOW**  
*& Shopping Event*

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MARKS & SPENCER WHITE STUFF WALLIS  
EVANS PLANET TOPSHOP NEXT MONSOON  
HOBBS BODEN WAREHOUSE & MANY MORE  
PLUS FRENCH & ITALIAN DESIGNER WEAR

**SIZES  
6 TO 30**

## FASHION SHOW IN AID OF SYSTON & DISTRICT VOLUNTEER CENTRE

**THURSDAY 19<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2022 7.00pm**

**BEEDLES LAKE GOLF CLUB**

**Entry by ticket – cost £5**

**Tickets available from the Golf Club or Syston & District Volunteer Centre**

**Enquiries contact Karen Bland 07767 872607**

### IF YOU MISSED THE APRIL GM TALK .....

*I had some difficulties with the GM talk on Frank Sinatra, as a result I have carried out some research of my own and put together this article. It includes some details covered by our speaker, but there is so much information about “ole blue eyes”, so some of this article was not covered during the presentation we heard from Howard Slater.*

Francis Albert Sinatra came into the world on 12 December 1915 in a tenement in Hoboken, New Jersey, to Italian immigrant parents Natalina “Dolly” Garwenta and Antonio Martino “Marty” Sinatra. His birth was difficult due the fact that he weighed in at 13 and half pounds, and his mother was a petite lady of only 5ft. Use of forceps caused damage to his hearing and scarring to his face and neck. His mother was a midwife, reputed to also offer illegal abortion services to local girls. His father was a boxer who fought as “Marty O’Brien”, but he went on to have a career in the local fire department. Although his parents were far from affluent, as an only child, his mother ensured he gained the reputation of the best dressed kid in the neighbourhood. There are some reports that she may have “knocked Frank about a bit”, but there is no proven evidence of this. She was certainly very critical of his musical aims, which perhaps made him more determined to become successful in the entertainment industry. Although she did aid his career in the early years.



Sinatra began singing as a teenager, although he couldn’t read music and never learned the skill. In fact, despite arranging performers for high school dances, he spent very little time attending and was expelled for “general rowdiness”. He spent time employed as a delivery boy for the Jersey Observer, before joining the shipyard as a riveter. Alongside these jobs, he sang in local clubs and on local radio. He found some initial success when he joined a trio of singers that became the Hoboken Four in 1935. They are pictured here with Major Bowes, whose radio show brought them some plaudits, along with a 6-month tour contract.

The contract did not lead directly to prolonged success and in 1938 Sinatra began working as a singing waiter at The Rustic Cabin. The venue had connections with the radio station WNEW in New York City. This led to some appearances on their "Dance Parade" show in 1939. It was these sessions that brought him to the notice of bandleader Harry James, who offered him a two-year contract with his band. However, Frank soon became disappointed with the lack of acclaim that this brought him. He left the band before the end of 1939 to join Tommy Dorsey. The next two years saw him achieve recording and chart success.

During this period, he met, and in 1939, married Nancy Barbato, with whom he had 3 children, Nancy, Frank jr and Tina. Despite his numerous well reported dalliances with other women, the couple remained together until 1950.



Sinatra in a 1949 family portrait with his first wife, Nancy Barbato, and their three children. 

Despite success with Dorsey, Frank wanted to go solo. Contractual obligations led to an acrimonious legal battle between the two. It was eventually settled in August 1942, with rumours that Frank's godfather Willie Moretti had a hand in exerting pressure on Dorsey, Moretti had mob connections.

In 1943 Sinatra signed with Columbia records and began a very successful recording spell. His injuries at birth included a perforated eardrum, this rendered him unsuitable for service in WW2, but he did become involved with entertaining the troops. This was not to last. By the time his divorce from Nancy had taken place, he was in financial trouble and his career was in decline. Part of the problem has been attributed to vocal problems caused by overuse, smoking and alcohol. Some claim he was supported by mob connections during this troubled period, but he borrowed \$200,000 from Columbia to pay back taxes. He bolstered his career for a time with residencies at venues in Las Vegas, but even those audiences declined and he lost his recording contracts in 1952. In 1951 he married Ava Gardner perhaps one of the few bright spots in the period. Although the marriage was relatively short and reputed to have been ill matched. They were already seeking divorce in 1954, but matters were not finalized until 1957. That said, the couple remained friends for life.



His revival in 1953 was connected with his film career and the release of "From Here to Eternity". Whilst this wasn't his first foray into the film world, it was the catalyst for the recovery of his voice and his music career. A 7-year contract with Capitol records led to a very successful collaboration with Nelson Riddle, in which Sinatra had some say in the arrangements. The period up to 1959 is regarded by some as a golden era, in which Sinatra produced his best music.

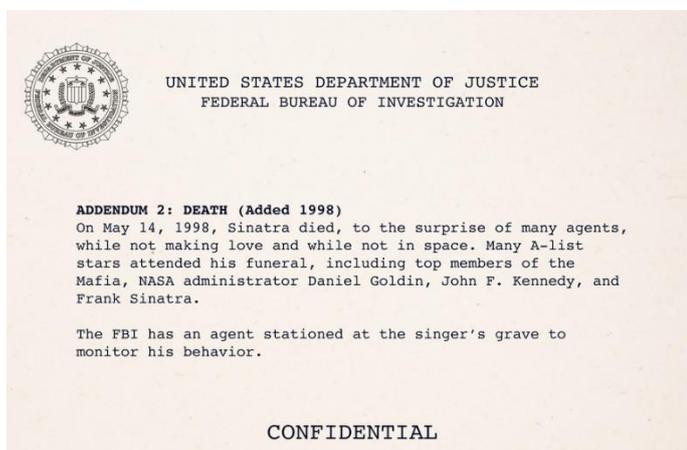
Frank became discontented with Capitol and looked to set up his own record label. After a failed attempt to acquire Verve records, the Reprise label was born. Sinatra worked with new arrangers. As

he was initially still under contract to Capitol, he had to record some material with them. The album Point of No Return is said to have been recorded over 2 days and completed his commitment. Reprise records set out to give its' artists creative control over their own work, including publishing rights, which set it apart from most other labels at that time. There are many who regard this period of the 1960's and 70's as being the golden era of his music.



The 1960's also saw Sinatra, Dean Martin and Sammy Davis Jnr become known as the Rat Pack, although some also include Joey Bishop and Peter Lawton in their ranks. Whilst some regard the group as the only Rat Pack, others point to earlier incarnations, in the 1940's and 50's. The common link between them all is Frank Sinatra. In 1963 Frank jnr was kidnapped, he was aged 19 at the time. He was released within 2 days with his father having paid a ransom of \$240,000. This period also saw Frank marry again, this time to Mia Farrow, who was half his age. The marriage only lasted two years, but they remained friends.

In 1970 Frank went into a retirement that lasted until 1973. He re-emerged to take up recording, live shows, television and film. He also married again, this time to Barbara Marx, former wife of Marx brother Zeppo, with whom he remained until his death. By the 1980's his voice had lost some of its power and range, but audiences still loved him. His final film performance was in 1980 starring opposite Faye Dunaway in The First Deadly Sin. He continued to record and perform into the 1990's. His last live concerts were in December 1994 in Japan.



Sinatra courted controversy with his mob connections. The extent of these links is the subject of much debate, but he was certainly seen in the company of several well-known mobsters. He played golf with some of them, and is reputed to have shared business dealings with others. He also appeared at the Mafia's Havana Conference in 1946. The FBI had a lengthy file on him and his "connections", which led to J F Kennedy cutting ties with him in 1962. This happened after Frank had spent a good deal of money on his home, in anticipation of Kennedy

staying there on a visit to Palm Springs. JFK stayed with Bob Hope instead. He was also the subject of criticism for appearing in Sun City when it was under international embargo. On the flip side, he was a supporter of both Jewish causes and equal rights for African-Americans.

He died on 14 May 1998 aged 82, in Los Angeles, having suffered ill health in the last few years of his life. He has been dubbed "the greatest singer of the twentieth century". He was certainly one of the most popular, selling over 150 million records worldwide

# FROM OUR MEMBERS

## CIRCULATION: GOING ROUND IN CIRCLES by Pierre Castille

### Trigger Warning!

*This story involves blood, dead bodies and dissection. You may wish to delay reading this until you have finished your meal. If of a squeamish nature you might settle your nerves with a stiff (domestic measure and some) whisky, or if identifying as a lady, gin.*

We will start our narrative in 1594 when our hero, whom we shall call William, enrolled as a student at Caius College, Cambridge.

To anchor the story in its contemporary history, Queen Elizabeth I reigned, Shakespeare's plays Titus Andronicus and Henry VI – part 2 were first performed and Galileo Galilei obtained a patent for a water pump to be used for a shipyard in the Republic of Venice.

William showed an interest in medicine, and after graduating was advised by his tutor to enrol as a medical student at the University of Padua (modern day Italy) where he qualified as a Doctor of Medicine at the age of twenty-four.

During his training he would have witnessed dissections of bodies (cadavers) where a skilled operator would expose different bodily features while a tutor read a description of what was on display from a text book (in Latin of course)



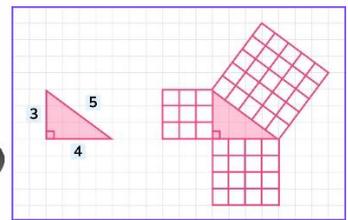
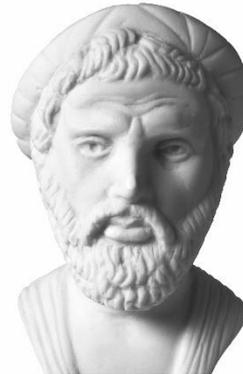
Rembrandt: The Anatomy Lesson of Dr Nicolaes Tulp

Should an observant student notice a disparity between a feature that was clearly visible and its written description the reader would inform them, in no uncertain terms, that the body was

'wrong' because the book was absolutely correct as it had been written by the most preeminent of all medical authors thirteen hundred years previously.

### IPSE DIXIT

A very short lesson in critical thinking.



### Pythagoras of Samos, Philosopher, 570 – 490 BC

Pythagoras was a hugely influential Greek philosopher. You learnt about him in mathematics classes but unless you studied philosophy you will be unaware of how much he influenced Western thought for more than two millennia. He attracted an enormous following, even for his rather weird beliefs. Noticing that broad beans cause what we politely call 'wind' he went on to say that the 'wind' could be the 'spirits of the dead' and so we must never eat beans!

The Roman writer Cicero coined the phrase *ipse dixit* to describe the behaviour of a Pythagorean disciples when asked questions, replied 'It must be true, he said it himself'.

Cicero made a habit of pointing out poor thinking, especially from political opponents, upsetting many in the process. In 43 BC he was murdered on the order of Mark Antony.

### THE PROBLEMATIC TEXT BOOK

I have previously written about Galen (129 to 216 AD), a Greek doctor who travelled the ancient world gathering medical information from other doctors. Some 50,000 pages of his work survive.

He dissected monkeys and pigs, rather than humans, causing some of the errors in his work.

### GALEN'S VIEW ON BLOOD

There is a blood vessel travelling from the intestine to the liver (hepatic portal vein) that carries the food you digest to your liver. ✓

The liver turns the food into blood. The job of the liver is to manufacture blood. ✗

A blood vessel (hepatic vein) carries the blood to the right side of the heart. ✓

The blood travels to the left side of the heart by passing through invisible pores in the (septum) that divides the heart. ✗

Blood travels to different parts of the body (through arteries). ✓

The blood is pushed along by the pulsing arteries to the different organs. ✗

When the blood reaches an organ, such as the brain or a muscle, the organ eats the blood. ✗

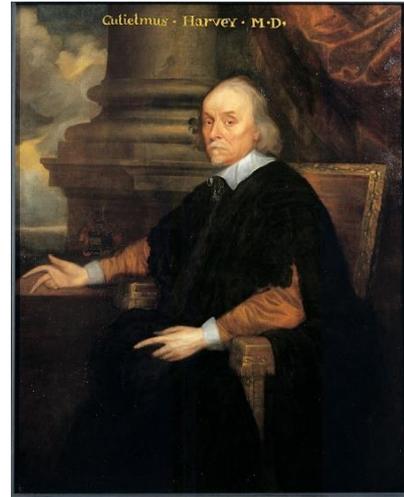
The heart is the centre of your emotions. Passion and fear cause the heart to beat faster. We use words like sweetheart and heart-broken to demonstrate this. ✗

I know you will appreciate that such erroneous views were a good 'first guess' but sticking to these ideas for thirteen hundred years stopped any advance in our understanding of the way our bodies work.

Doctor William Harvey came from a wealthy family and had good social connections. He enjoyed stag hunting with aristocracy and this gave him the opportunity to study the heart beat and circulation of injured animals.

He cut open a living but injured deer and measured its heartbeat rate. He then cut the main blood vessel leaving the heart and measured how much blood it pumped on each beat.

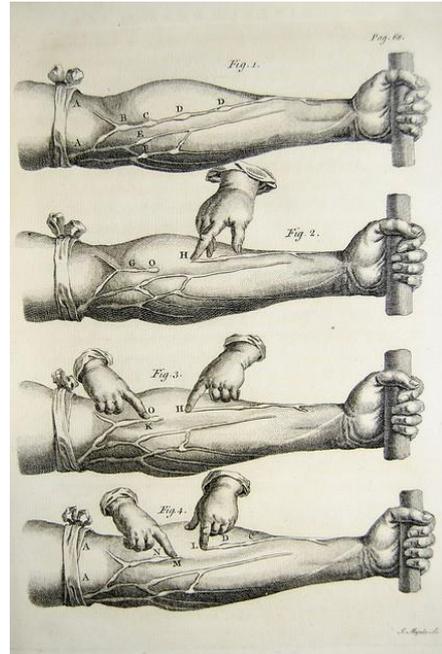
From this he was able to calculate how much blood the heart would pump in an hour, five times the bodyweight of the deer!



Dr William Harvey, aged 42

Harvey understood that it was impossible for the liver to make so much blood in such a short time. It must be the same blood going around in circles. We could call this **the circulation of blood by the pumping action of the heart.**

Having obtained evidence that blood circulates, one cannot rush into print saying that everything written by Galen is wrong. You need lots of evidence to support a revolutionary idea.



A page from Harvey's notebook. He is showing that blood only travels in one direction in a vein, it is stopped from flowing backwards by valves. Following the direction that blood flows, Harvey was able to show two blood circuits in the body. Blood circulates from the right side of the heart through to the lungs and returns to the left side of the heart to be pumped around the body.

There is a gap in Harvey's knowledge. How does the blood get from an artery to an organ such as a muscle across to the vein leaving that muscle. There must be very small connections, too small to see with the naked eye.

William Harvey's book **Exercitatio Anatomica de Motu Cordis et Sanguinis in Animalibus** (Latin, 'An Anatomical Exercise on the Motion of the Heart and Blood in Living Beings') published in 1628 is a sensation. It revolutionised an area of medicine and biology we call physiology – how living things work.

Marcello Malpighi discovered capillaries, the tiny blood vessels that connect arteries to veins in 1661 using a microscope, an instrument not available to Harvey.

If you ask knowledgeable people 'who discovered the double circulation of blood' they will tell you 'William Harvey'. However, he wasn't the first Ibn al-Nafis 1213 - 1288, an Arab physician and philosopher based in Damascus and Cairo set out to write a multi-volume encyclopaedia of medicine. His many books were of course written in Arabic and not understood in Europe. One of his books, that describes the double circulation of blood, was not translated into a European language until the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

## A SAD STORY



**Michael Servetus (1509 – 1553)**

Servetus, A Spanish physician and theologian was the first European to describe the circulation of blood. He published his ideas in a book of theology in 1553 whilst in France. His book was regarded as heretical, and being tipped off that the Catholic Inquisition wanted to *have a word* he skipped over the border into Protestant

Switzerland. This was an unfortunate mistake as Calvinists also thought he was a heretic and burnt him at the stake. All but three copies of his book were destroyed and the *circulation of blood* part was only discovered much later.

Another pioneer in the field was the Italian Doctor Realdo Columbo (1515 – 1559) who dissected hearts and observed them in living animals to learn that the heart contracted to push blood, rather than expanding to suck in blood. He also discovered the valves in the heart showing that blood would only flow in one direction in a circuit around the body. His single work, *De Re Anatomica* (About Anatomy) was published after his death.

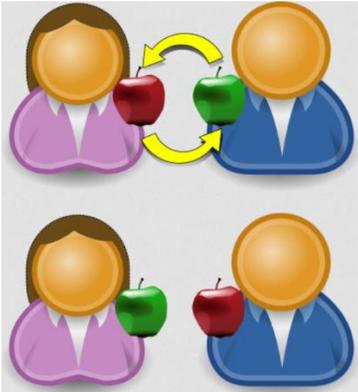
If Harvey wasn't the first to discover that blood circulates around the body, why does he get all the credit?

Though written in Latin, educated Europeans could read and understand his work and it changed the way that medical people understood how the body worked.

Those who made the same discoveries earlier made no impact on medical thought beyond their immediate neighbours. To make history you need to publish in the common language of medicine and science which would be Latin in Harvey's day and English today. Publishing your findings in an obscure journal hidden away in a small library doesn't cut the mustard.

Today, if you make a scientific or medical discovery, before announcing it to the World, you carry out a 'literature search' to see if someone else has made the same discovery before you. In 1900, three botanists working independently of each other made the same scientific discovery. Hugo de Vries (Dutch), Carls Correns (German) and Erich von Tschermak-Seysenegg (Austrian) were interested in the 'rules' governing the inheritance of different characteristics in hybridised plants. A literature search showed that three decades previously, a little-known catholic priest in a monastery in what is now modern day Czech Republic had made the same discovery. You will know his name, Gregor Mendel, the father of Genetics. – It's another story for another day.

## 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?



Like this one, which is currently in the

possession of Pat Wherton, contact her if you have a swap to offer email: [pat27wherton@gmail.com](mailto:pat27wherton@gmail.com) ,

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.

## And finally.....

### AGE IS JUST A NUMBER

"Age is just a number. It carries no weight. The real weight is in impacts. The truth is that you can do it at any age. Get up and be willing to leave a mark." — *Israelmore Ayivor*

"Wrinkles will only go where the smiles have been." -*Jimmy Buffet*

"Anyone who stops learning is old, whether at twenty or eighty. Anyone who keeps learning stays young. The greatest thing in life is to keep your mind young." -*Henry Ford*

"In the end, it's not the years in your life that count. It's the life in your years."-*Abraham Lincoln*

"You don't stop laughing when you grow old, you grow old when you stop laughing." -*George Bernard Shaw*

"No man is ever old enough to know better." - *Holbrook Jackson*

"You are as young as your faith, as old as your doubt; as young as your self-confidence, as old as your fear, as young as your hope, as old as your despair." -*Samuel Ullman*

