



Great Glen Newsletter

December 2016

Registered Charity No. 1099411

www.greatglenu3a.co.uk



A very warm welcome to our latest new members: Ian and Cath McKelvey

Chairman's Chat

All the seats for our Christmas Entertainment on Tuesday 13th December have been sold out, and we look forward to a full turnout at the Village Hall. (There might still be a few late returns, if anyone wishes to contact me.) The proceeds will be donated to LOROS, the Leicestershire hospice. The event, organised by our Music & Good Company Group, again features a children's choir from St Cuthbert's Primary School and includes readings by members and pieces from our Ukulele Group. On Tuesday 20th December at 2.00 p.m. in the Methodist Hall we shall hold our "Sing Along" accompanied by Jenny Hawley at the piano. There will be a mix of traditional carols and Christmas songs. We all had a great time last year. Just pay the usual £1 donation at the door.

May I take this opportunity to wish you all a very happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

Patricia Mansfield chairman@greatglenu3a.co.uk

270 8284

Forthcoming Events

For a reminder about our December events, please refer to the Chair's Chat above. Our speaker on 10th January is Roy Mitchell. His subject is Stoneywell, the National Trust Property in Ulverscroft. The house is a unique example of Arts and Crafts design set in four acres of stunning gardens.

Committee News

Finding a workable way of providing help to members with hearing loss is proving more complicated than hoped. The Committee is still considering this matter. **Following various recent changes there is now at least one vacancy on the Committee. Without an active Trustee Committee Great Glen U3A would be unable to continue. Patricia would be most interested to receive expressions of interest from members who might be willing to take on a leadership or administrative role, ideally with some previous committee / trustee experience.**

Robert Mansfield newsletter@greatglenu3a.co.uk

270 8284

The next Monthly Meetings

13 December 2016 *Christmas Entertainment*

Music and Good Company Group

10 January 2017 *Stoneywell Cottage NT* Roy Mitchell

14 February 2017 *A Leicestershire Saint* Douglas Clinton

Meetings are held in the Village Hall on the second Tuesday of each month. Doors open 10.00 a.m. for tea and coffee, speaker 10.30 a.m. **Coffee rota – see below.**

Coffee Rota

Coffee, tea and sugar are provided. Please bring milk (2 litres).

13 December – History

10 January 2017 – Line Dancing

14 February – Military History

Life on the Canals

(November monthly meeting)

A modest and unassuming lady garbed in the traditional attire of a dweller on a working narrowboat stood before us with a fascinating array of the possessions needed for life in cramped quarters. Mary Matts held her audience spellbound for the next hour as she shared her astonishing knowledge of life on the

canals. She began with a reprise of their development. Propelled by the industrial revolution the canals became the motorways of their day. The success of the Bridgewater Canal led eventually to the creation of a network of more than 4,000 miles of waterways linking the ports of Liverpool, Hull, Bristol and London and many other places. The canals carried heavy goods (building materials, coal and such), food, beer, animals and manufactured products, and eventually passengers, faster, more safely and more reliably than was possible by road. Then of course came competition from the railways and from an improving network of roads.

The boats that plied the canals were mostly built to standard dimensions – 70 feet long by 7 feet wide (half the width of a coastal barge) – in order to be able to pass through the locks, bridges and tunnels of the canal system. These were the narrow boats. The canal owners levied tolls on cargoes as a means of raising revenue. As competition from the railways intensified, the canal owners were forced to cut their tolls. As the tolls fell so did the wages of the men employed on the canals.

Canals were constructed by the ‘navvies’, many of them former farm labourers attracted by higher wages. As the canals were completed many of these men in turn became operators of the narrow boats. Most canal journeys were initially quite short. The boatmen would have cottages near the canal bank to which they

would return at night to their families. But as wages fell families were progressively forced to make their homes on the narrowboats.

This was the backdrop to a wonderful account of working and family life on the canals that ranged from their industrial heyday to the present time. We learned about compact utensils, the treatment of horses, food and foraging, the expression of pride in the home through cleanliness, order and décor, best dress and workaday clothes, roses and castles and much else besides. Of course after slow decline it nearly all came to a dead end in the 1960s, but, as we learned, mercifully there has been a rebirth driven by tourism, and conservation and even the construction of new canals continues apace today. A truly enlightening talk drawn from a deep well of personal knowledge and experience, a real delight!

Robert Mansfield

REMEMBERING

Several years ago my husband won a weekend in a country cottage for four people! Great! We booked for October in a country retreat near Ludlow and took my sister in law and her husband.

All went well until the Saturday evening. We had had a great day out but hurried back as storm clouds began to gather and the wind picked up and started to howl round the remote cottage. We quickly built up the log

fire and hoped for a quiet evening, but the storm began in earnest, hurling rain at the rather elderly windows which began to leak and water ran down onto the sills and down the walls. Overhead the lightning crackled and thunder rumbled across the fields.

We hunkered down by the log fire and tried to enjoy our supper. Then, suddenly, the lights went out and we were plunged into darkness. Where could we find a candle? We scrabbled around, bumping into each other in the unfamiliar kitchen whilst the rain came down in torrents and the thunder crashed around us. I felt quite nervous of the howling storm and the darkness and we began to speculate about the rising river nearby and whether we were safe from flooding. We huddled together over the remnants of the log fire and worried about getting ready for bed in the dark.

Suddenly there came a knock at the door ! We clutched each other in shock and trepidation. Who could it be ? We knew no-one and it was late evening. Perhaps an escaped convict or a passing tramp needing shelter. Who would dare to go to the door? We sent Mike – the biggest and tallest and, we thought, the bravest. He gingerly opened the door a crack and peered out into the blackness.

‘Would you like to buy a poppy?’, the young lady said.....

Stella Orbell

A Penny for Your Thoughts ...

If you have a memory, 'thought piece' or anecdote you are willing to share with other members please do send it in to me. The cut-off date for the next Newsletter is noon on **Wednesday 4th January 2017**.

Robert Mansfield robertrmansfield@btinternet.com

270 8284

Kilworth House Theatre Outing

Next year's summer show will be 'Kiss Me Kate', music by Cole Porter. Tickets have been booked for the matinée on SATURDAY 10th JUNE 2017 at this ever popular venue. The coach will depart from Great Glen Village Hall at 1.00 p.m. (No picnic this year as the performance starts at 2.30 p.m.)

"Kiss me Kate" with music and lyrics by Cole Porter is based on "The Taming of the Shrew", and includes such show stoppers as 'Another op'nin', another shrew', 'Always true to you in my fashion' and 'Too darn hot' to name but a few.

The cost will be £39 (£34 for the theatre ticket and £5 for the coach). Bookings and payments will be taken at the December and January monthly meetings – the theatre requires payment by the end of January 2017. Any queries, please call me after 6.00 p.m. Thank you for your continued support.

Pat Tate

259 1001

LEARN SOMETHING NEW!

ABSOLUTE BEGINNERS – LEARN A LANGUAGE

SPANISH – 3 sessions on Wednesdays 1st, 8th and 15th February 2017 – 2.30 to 4:30 p.m. at the Methodist Hall

This is the first language we are going to have a go at. Others will follow later. We shall be using on-line course material that is freely available on the internet to watch and then practise together. If you have an internet connection at home you can continue to practise using the same source material. If you previously signed up for Spanish then you should have been contacted already, but if you now think you would be interested then contact me by phone or email.

There will be a maximum of 16 places available. The suggested donation for these sessions is £2.

Sue Russell sue@suerussell.co.uk 271 0889

TIPS ON SOLVING CRYPTIC CROSSWORDS

Friday 27th January, 2.00 to 4.00 p.m.

We have run a similar session very successfully in the past and thought you might like to have another opportunity to try it. Come along to find out more about the types of clues that crop up in cryptic crosswords, how to recognise them and how to solve them. We will be using examples from the Times Quick Cryptic Crossword. Places will be limited so please get your name on the list if you are interested. The suggested donation for this session is £2.

Sue Russell sue@suerussell.co.uk 271 0889

GROUP NEWS

Art Group

The next meeting will be on 5th January. The subject will be 'A Winter Scene' in any medium. New members will be made very welcome. Just come along to the Ruth Warner Room in the Methodist building at 2 o'clock.

Rachel Snashall rsnashall@hotmail.com 259 2830

Book Group

Book Group will not be meeting on 19th December.

Instead we shall be meeting on **Monday 12th**

December in The Yews for our Christmas meal. The table is booked for **12.30**, so we can meet in the bar at 12.15 p.m. Our next Group meeting will be on 16th January at 2.00 p.m.

Liz Adams liza27@btinternet.com 271 6281

Crochet

Thank you to all who attended the crochet group which has now formally ceased. I plan to organise an occasional crochet afternoon so that anyone who wishes can come along for tips and help or just to enjoy the crochet time together. Look out for these occasions which I shall advertise in the Newsletter.

Stella Orbell stellamo@hotmail.co.uk 259 2095

Croquet

Indoor croquet has now returned to its usual pattern of sessions on Tuesday afternoons and Thursday mornings. If we had a few more members we could possibly start another session.

John Lawson jlawson123@btinternet.com 259 3421

Duplicate Bridge (Evenings)

U3A Evening Bridge is cancelled on Tuesdays 27th December and 3rd January but is REPLACED by

Charity Events which are open to all. Please see the notices and tell your friends.

John Lawson jlawson123@btinternet.com 259 3421

English Country Dancing

Wassail!

The group will meet for the last time before the Christmas/New Year break on Tuesday December 13 when, sustained by mince pies, we shall try some traditional seasonal dances including *In the Fields in Frost and Snow*, *Drive the Cold Winter Away* and *The Punchbowl*. Also we shall use the tunes of popular carols and Christmas music to dance some modern compositions – *Christmas Crackers*, *Mistletoe Kisses* and even *Jingle Bells*! As we go through the festive season there are several opportunities for members to attend Christmas and New Year party dances at local folk dance clubs; full details are available from Peter, the Group Leader. The group will resume its regular weekly dancing on Tuesday January 10th.

We are always pleased to welcome new members who would like to try this fun activity. Most of our dances are conducted at walking pace, with occasionally skipping so are not too vigorous. The dances are performed in specific formations of circles, squares and longways sets, and they span English Country, English Court (Playford), and American Square and Contra styles. Some dances date back to the Stuart and Georgian/Regency periods, or even earlier, while

others were written very recently. The music we use ranges from classical (Handel, Purcell, Mozart, Bach, Strauss all wrote dance tunes!) to modern compositions, sometimes even jazz; for the older country dances many of the tunes will be familiar to anybody who enjoys traditional English folk music. No previous experience is needed as all the dances are fully explained, the moves are walked through before setting them to music and the dances are called throughout. Also, no special clothing needed - just light-weight shoes or sandals and comfortable clothing suitable for gentle dancing. Nor do you need to come with a partner; singles of both sexes are welcomed, and we often change partners during the dances so that everybody is involved. The only requirement is to be prepared to join in, and enjoy yourself.

Peter Meacock petermeacock112@btinternet.com
279 3600

Family History

The next meeting on Wednesday 14th December will be our annual Christmas Lunch. The meeting will thus not begin until 11.00 a.m. in the Methodist Church Hall. There will be NO MEETING on 28th December!
Eric Orbell ericorbell332@btinternet.com 259 2095

Garden Visits

This month we shall not have our usual meeting on the third Friday but instead should have already enjoyed our Christmas lunch a little earlier in the month.

Therefore our next Group meeting is on Friday 20th January 2017 in the Methodist Church Hall at 2.00 p.m. There is an expected donation of £1 per person towards the cost of the hall, with a surprise garden video to be shown and tea and biscuits at half time. May I, along with my colleagues Ros, Pat, Joanna and Margaret, wish all U3A members a very happy and peaceful Christmas and New Year.

Linda Hobart lindahobart@outlook.com 319 8095

History

Many thanks to Eric for his talk about “Stagecoaches” and to Ros and Jenny for the Christmas History quiz. There is no meeting in January 2017 so the next meeting will be on Monday 6th February 2017 at 2.00 p.m. in the Methodist Hall. See the January newsletter for details.

Everyone welcome.

Peter Russell prussell@russellscott.co.uk 271 0889

History of Art

There will be no meeting in December. The next meeting will be on 18th January and details will be in the January Newsletter. All members are welcome.

David Brooke dnbrooke@fsmail.net 259 2520

Indoor (Winter) Bowls

Indoor bowls is again in full swing on Tuesday mornings at 10.00 a.m. in the Market Harborough

Leisure Centre. Anyone interested in joining should contact ...

Ann Spray spray194@btinternet.com 281 0324

Indoor Croquet

No Croquet on Tuesdays 27th December and 3rd January. For Thursday Croquet there will be no change to normal times.

John Lawson jlawson123@btinternet.com 259 3421

Line Dancing

Despite illness and accidents - not caused by line dancing, I must add - our regular dancers continue to improve and to learn new dances. Our last session before Christmas was on 5th December, and we will restart on 8th January at 1.30 p.m. Hopefully the New Year will see improvements in health, with all in the Group feeling bright eyed and bushy tailed, ready to continue dancing.

We are all still beginners, and of mixed ability, so if anyone would like to join us, please come along to the Sports Hall on Thursday 8th January at 1.30 p.m, and give it a try. You only need comfy shoes and a sense of humour - we laugh a lot!

Jackie Jordan jkj1506@btinternet.com 259 9199

Luncheon Club

After my invitation last month for new members to join us, the response has been excellent.

I have now opened a waiting list for anyone who may be interested in the future. We meet at the Bell, Burton Overy, on the fourth Tuesday of the month, 12 o'clock for 12.30 p.m. We alternate each month between starter plus main and main plus dessert courses. The food is of excellent quality and well presented. You will find me at the monthly meeting, on the left as you enter the Village Hall, with the menu for the next lunch. If you cannot attend the meeting, and live in the village, I will put a menu through your door. I have sample menus for you to look at. Do let me know if you are interested in joining us.

Joyce Davies mervjoycedavies@btinternet.com

259 3436

Military History

The next meeting will be on Wednesday 7th December when Liz Adams will be giving her talk on 'Animals in World War 1'. Everybody is invited for this one-off even if you are not a member of the Group.

Eric Orbell ericorbell332@btinternet.com 259 2095

Mini Bridge

U3A Mini-Bridge is cancelled on Tuesdays 27th December and 3rd January but is REPLACED by Charity Events which are open to all. Please see the notices and tell your friends.

John Lawson jlawson123@btinternet.com 259 3421

New-Age Kurling

Only one session in December on Friday 9th at 10.00 a.m. in the Sports Centre (next to the Village Hall).

There is no session on 23rd December. The next meeting is on 13th January 2017. Everyone welcome.
Peter Russell prussell@russellscott.co.uk 271 0889

Papercraft

There will be no papercraft meeting in December but I look forward to seeing you all on 16th January at 2.00 p.m. (**note time**) when we shall kick off the year with some interestingly shaped cards.

Stella Orbell stellamo@hotmail.co.uk 259 2095

Quiz Group

The next meeting is on 23rd January in the Main Hall of the Methodist Church.

Rachel Snashall rsnashall@hotmail.com 259 2830

Sunday Singles Lunch

We meet on the second Sunday of the month, single ladies and gentlemen, at 1.00 p.m. We can now accommodate a few more members and gentlemen would be particularly welcome! The next venues are:
11th December – The Leicestershire Golf Club, **8th January 2017** – The Queen's Head, Saddington.

Judith Measom

279 1509

Swimming

The last swim of the year will be on 14th December. There will be no swimming from 21st December to 4th January. The first swim in the New Year will therefore be on 11th January. New members welcome.

David Brooke dnbrooke@fsmail.net 259 2520

Table Top Games

By the time you read this our only December session will have taken place. We look forward to welcoming current group members and newcomers next year.

Sessions in 2017 will follow the usual pattern of meeting on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month at 1.55 for a 2.00 p.m. start in the Methodist Church Hall. The next meetings are on 12th and 26th January.

We have an assortment of board and card games to share or would always be interested in trying any favourites that you bring along. Newcomers please phone so we know to expect you.

Gillian Farrar 270 8375 *Helen Edwards* 212 7547

Table Tennis

We shall have a longer than usual Christmas break owing to Bank Holidays etc. So we'll play on just one Monday this month (12th December) and restart on 9th January.

Janet Freestone alan.freestone@mypostoffice.co.uk
259 2803

Tailpiece



... at least until the January edition!

Editor