



Great Glen Newsletter

March 2017

Registered Charity No. 1099411

www.greatglenu3a.co.uk



A very warm welcome to our new members: Marie-Christine Grenham, Jackie Moore, Claire Morton, Rosemary Nightingale, Sheila Stokes and Jan Varman

Chairman's Chat

As previously announced our AGM will take place on Tuesday 9 May. After the formal business Toni Smith will show some of her films and we are hoping that the recently formed Ukulele Group will entertain us again, following requests for an 'encore' from those who enjoyed hearing them perform at last December's Christmas Entertainment. All credit to Sue and Peter Russell for their hard work with Learn Something New, which is proving a real hothouse for new developments. Beginners Spanish is starting next week, and in the pipeline are Beginners French and, if there is sufficient support, a Cycling Group.

A reminder that the Group Leaders' Meeting takes place at 12.30 p.m. on Friday 7th April in the Methodist

Hall. Group Leaders are asked to confirm their attendance to me if they have not already done so.

Patricia Mansfield chairman@greatglenu3a.co.uk

270 8284

Monthly Meetings

Our speaker on 14th March is John Martin. His subject is 'The Life and Works of Agatha Christie'. John has spoken to us previously about 'Crime Fiction'.

11 April 2017 *Medical Detection Dogs* Wendy Coley

9 May 2017 *Annual General Meeting and Films*

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).

14 March – Music and Good Company

11 April – Needles and Pins

9 May – Papercraft

A 9th Century Leicester Saint: his life, death and afterlife.

(February monthly meeting)

This was an interesting, comprehensive talk, with some humour, about local Saint Wistan who died in 840 AD. Saints' lives became the object of tradition and superstition and cult. Wistan or Wigstan was the son of Wigmund and Elfaeda, daughter of the elderly King Ceolwulf of Mercia. Wistan grew up during the reign of his grandfather, King Wiglaf of Mercia. Unfortunately Wistan's father pre-deceased him and the young lad succeeded Wiglaf to the Mercian throne in 840 AD. The young king however preferred religious life, chose to be a monk and asked his widowed mother to act as regent.

Meanwhile Bertwulf, supposedly Wistan's brother, wished to marry his son to Wistan's mother. Wistan was opposed to this as they were closely related, so Bertwulf claimed the throne. On 1st June 840 Betric (Bertwulf's son) visited Wistan probably at Wistow, Leicester. When they kissed Betric struck Wistan on the head with the shaft of his dagger and his servant "ran him through" with his sword. His body was found under a shaft of light from heaven. He had been murdered and found in a Christ-like manner. Hence the path to Sainthood, less strict than it subsequently became.

The talk was the story of the murder of a 9th century royal king, who was buried at Repton, and his sanctification. His body was then moved to Evesham (where the building collapsed). After this as he was a local saint his arm was returned and buried at Repton Royal Monastery, a mausoleum which (if open to tours) would be a most interesting place to visit with its stunning columns and superb Anglo-saxon crypt.

Great Glen is an early British church with a bilge around it, which forced the Roman road to skirt it. One piece of unique Anglo-saxon carving remains, which is an early depiction of Christ with a wand and Lazarus.

Joanna Green

From our own Archives ...

EASOM, Robert Percival Personal Story from Family

In 2014/15 the Family History group of our U3A decided to commemorate the 100 years from the start of WW1. At the time it was a huge task, bringing together the whole group. In all we found 152 soldiers that were born or had connections with Great Glen. These were names from the War Memorial, Absent

Voters List, Commonwealth War Graves and from various sites on the internet.

Everyone in the group was involved in some way, and we managed to get some information on all but three men.

Whilst I was on holiday in January, I had an email, through the Leicestershire and Rutland Family History Society, from Richard Dagleish who lives in Perth Australia' telling me he had seen the 'book' I had made on the LRFHS web site and wanted to tell me about his grandfather who was born in Great Glen but hadn't been included in the document. His story was an interesting one, and has now been added to the document. Most information gained from Richard and I have done more research and added to the story myself.

Robert Percival Easom (everyone called him Percy) was born on 26 September 1889 in Great Glen. By 1891 he lived at Overton Cottage in Main Street, Burton Overy, with his father Thomas (known as Stouty) who was listed as a joiner and publican, and his mother Eleanor, listed as Ellen. He had an older sister, Maggie, who sadly died young. Thomas was variously a carpenter, wheelwright and undertaker as well as running a pub from that house.

Percy became a carpenter himself and, as the family legend goes, he helped his father in every aspect of the undertaking business from a young age. He emigrated to Perth, Australia on the *Orama* which set sail from

Gravesend on 6 July 1912. He was 22 years old and his occupation was a joiner. He disembarked at Fremantle, the port for Perth, on 7 August 1912.

He immediately gained employment as a carpenter but it was only a few years later that the war broke out so Percy enlisted in Perth on 26 July 15. The British Empire forces, including the Australians, had suffered terrible losses at Gallipoli from April 1915, so it was surmised that Percy enlisted in response to the call for soldiers.

His enlistment papers show him as being 23 years and 10 months old in July 1915 but that does not seem right. He joined the Australian Army 11th Battalion (which had been at Gallipoli) and was first sent to Egypt where the Battalion was resting. He was one of many reinforcements.

The 11th Battalion was an Australian Army battalion that was among the first infantry units raised during World War I for the First Australian Imperial Force. It was the first battalion recruited in Western Australia, and following a brief training period in Perth, the battalion sailed to Egypt where it undertook four months of intensive training. In April 1915 it took part in the invasion of the Gallipoli Peninsula, landing at Anzac Cove. In August 1915 the battalion was in action in the Battle of Lone Pine.

Following the withdrawal from Gallipoli, the battalion returned to Egypt where it was split to help form

the 51st Battalion. In March 1916, the battalion was deployed to the Western Front in France and Belgium where it took part in trench warfare until the end of the war in November 1918. The Battalion, including Percy, then went to France and saw action on the Western Front through to the end of the war. Percy was hospitalised for a while with a bullet wound and was also subjected to gassing from which he suffered for the rest of his life. Percy was hospitalised in England where he met Margery Dolman Hardy from Croft. They married in Oadby Church on 18 Sept 1918, by licence. His occupation on the wedding certificate is 'Soldier on Active Service'.

He returned to Australia, arriving on 2 August 1919 and was discharged from the army. Percy was awarded the Star, British War Medal and the Victory Medal. He and his wife settled in Perth. Here they had four children. Percy worked as a successful builder. He built a church in the country town of Beverley, about 140km from Perth. There is a plaque on the church bearing his name as builder.

Margery returned twice to England – in 1927, when the purpose was to bring Percy's mother Eleanor to Australia, and again in 1948, to visit her own family in Oadby. They lived at The New Inn on the London Road. Eleanor died in Perth in August 1929. Percy died on 5 April 1959. Margery died in Perth in 1980 aged 86 years. She is buried in Karrakatta Cemetery in Inglewood, a suburb of Perth.

The full document can be seen on the LRFHS website at: -

<http://lrfhs.org.uk/Great%20Glen%20Soldiers.pdf>

Toni Smith

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 5th April 2017**.

Robert Mansfield robertrmansfield@btinternet.com

270 8284

An Offer from the ‘Master of Monologue’

If any Group would like to set aside 20 to 30 minutes for something a little different, John Parrington would be happy to provide a monologue or two. Group Leaders interested in pursuing this are invited to **text not telephone** John on 07817 137139.

LEARN SOMETHING NEW

Tips on Solving Cryptic Crosswords – Appreciation

I went to this course with some trepidation, not having done a crossword for years. Initially I found the tips

confusing, there appeared to be a lot of steps to follow through to get an end-result. (I am naturally speedy when possible). I was delighted to find after a few examples I began to get the “swing” of it. I could probably do with a follow-up course but thoroughly enjoyed the topic, conversation and company. All of which have spurred me on to buy *The Times* and attempt to do this week’s Cryptic Crossword. Well done Sue.

Joanna Green

GROUP NEWS

As from this month’s edition the newsletter will try to minimise repeating information already printed on the programme card. The newsletter will carry details of amendments and additions to the published programme plus news of particular interest about group events.

Art Group

The subject for our March meetings is "Baby Spring Animals" in any medium. New members welcomed.
Rachel Snashall rsnashall@hotmail.com 259 2830

English Country Dancing

By Easter the group will have been meeting for almost two years. In that time we have danced well-over 100 different dances, to music based on classical (Handel,

Purcell, Mozart, Bach, Strauss all wrote tunes suitable for dancing) and modern compositions, traditional English folk tunes and even jazz. Several members now also regularly attend local folk dance clubs and public dances where they enjoy meeting and mixing with dancers from further afield - there is a whole world of dancing activity out there that membership of the ECD group can introduce you to!

Recently members of the group attended a New Year Tea Dance at the nearby Burton Overy club, where the dances were "called" by the national Caller, Mr Roy Garrington, to live music from the band "Narrow Escape".

Each week within the two hour Group meeting we normally try 5 or 6 different dances. We now regularly have 15 to 20 people dancing, but there is still space for a few more - especially men! So, to all you chaps out there - come and try this fun activity. There are no bells or white handkerchiefs, but just good exercise for body and brain! You will meet some lovely people and we guarantee you will laugh, a lot!

Peter Meacock petermeacock112@btinternet.com

279 3600

Garden Visits Group

Our next meeting is on Friday 17th March at 2.00 p.m. in the Methodist Church Hall. We will be having a talk by Angela from the Kibworth Garden Centre with ideas for Spring/Summer gardens. The cost will be £3 per person, to cover the usual contribution towards the

hire of the hall and, of course, payment to the speaker. Please come along (with shamrocks if desired!) and enjoy this talk along with tea and biscuits at half time. Linda Hobart. lindahobart@outlook.com 319 8095

History of Art

Our next meeting is on 15th March when we will be looking at the work of Fragonard an 18th century French painter. The meeting will be held in the Methodist Hall commencing at 10.00am. All members are welcome.

David Brooke dnbrooke@fsmail.net 259 2520

Luncheon Club

I have now opened a waiting list for anyone who may be interested in joining. 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

New-Age Kurling

The next three meetings are on Fridays 10th February, 24th February and 10th March at 10.00 a.m. at Great Glen Sports Centre. Everyone welcome.

Peter Russell prussell@russellscott.co.uk 271 0889

Papercraft

At our next meeting on 20th March at 2.00 p.m. we shall be personalising some readymade cards in our own styles. PLEASE NOTE THE APRIL MEETING WILL BE ON 10TH APRIL, instead of Easter Monday.

Stella Orbell stellamo@hotmail.co.uk 259 2095

Quiz Group

Peter Russell will be setting the questions at our next meeting, which will be on 27th March at 2.00 p.m. in the Main Hall of the Methodist Church.

Rachel Snashall rsnashall@hotmail.com 259 2830

Singing for Fun

The first session for this year is now scheduled for Wednesday 29th March at 2:00 p.m. at the Methodist Hall. We shall again be doing a mixture of old and not quite so old tunes with some rounds. All the words will be on the screen. Come along and have a jolly good time!

Peter Russell prussell@russellscott.co.uk 271 0889

Sunday Singles Lunch

We meet on the second Sunday of the month, single ladies and gentlemen, at 1.00 p.m. The next venues are: **12th March** – The Bell, Burton Overy, **9th April** – Leicestershire Golf Club, **14th May** – The Bell, East Langton, **11th June** – Queens Head, Saddington.

Judith Measom

279 1509

Swimming

Attendance over recent weeks has been good. I trust this will continue. Please note that there will be no swimming on 5th, 12th and 19th April due to the Easter holidays.

David Brooke dnbrooke@fsmail.net 259 2520

Most Groups are currently able to accommodate new members. Currently however there are no vacancies for Bridge (all groups), and waiting lists for Croquet and the Luncheon Club.

POSSIBLE NEW GROUPS

Spanish

We have now successfully completed the Learn Something New short course. If we can get sufficient numbers, we are hoping to start a new Spanish group for beginners, probably meeting on the 2nd and 4th

Mondays of the month. We have two Spanish speakers to help support the group. The first meeting is on **Monday 13 March at 10.30pm in the Ruth Warner Room at the Methodist Church.** If you are interested, please come along – it is for complete beginners and you will be very welcome.

Sue Russell sue@suerussell.co.uk 271 0889

French

A new member of our U3A is French and has offered to see if we can start a new French group for complete beginners. If we can come up with a plan then we shall arrange an initial meeting for all interested members, details of which will be published in the Newsletter. In the meantime, if this is something of interest to you, please do let me know by email or phone.

Peter Russell prussell@russellscott.co.uk 271 0889

Cycling

We have an offer from a member to lead an occasional cycling group for rides around Leicestershire, all beginning and ending in Great Glen covering distances of around 10km – so not too strenuous. If you would be interested in joining such a group then please contact me or look for the sign-up sheet at the monthly meeting.

Peter Russell prussell@russellscott.co.uk 271 0889

And in conclusion ...

Special offers for U3A Members

U3A Members can now purchase a 3-month National Art Pass for just £10.

Visit artfund.org/u3a for more information. You have until 20th March 2017 to take advantage of this offer.

Additionally, use the discount code U3A2017 for 10% off all services at my-history.co.uk.