



Newsletter

NESTON U3A**Spring 2020**

Welcome to the first newsletter which I have had the pleasure of compiling. I have enjoyed putting it together and would welcome feedback from members to ensure that these newsletters are truly for the members. Please continue to send in articles for future editions. Julie Davies

Chairman's Musings



Greetings and a Happy and Healthy New Year to you all. This is the first edition of the newsletter under our new editor, Julie Davies, who I am sure will do a great job. I wish her well. I also want to express my appreciation to Ann Roochove for the excellent work she and husband Allen did as editors over the last few years. This will presumably be my last epistle for the newsletter as the next edition may not appear until June. By that time I will have come to the end of my permitted term of service on the Executive Committee and a new Chairman will be in place.

On reflecting back over the last three years or more I am surprised, personally, that I ever found myself in this post because I am the least likely character for it. Apart from being of retiring disposition my experience of committees, when employed by commercial outfits, led me to the view that the bigger they are, the less actually gets done; conversely, in my own business it was a relief to take decisions and get moving quickly. We have to have a fairly large committee at Neston U3A in order to spread

the workload amongst the volunteers but I have to say the people on the committee and their regular helpers have been excellent – friendly, helpful, co-operative, conscientious and generally cheerful – a pleasure to work with. Apart from that it has introduced me to many people with whom I would not otherwise have come into contact; for a newcomer to the area that is of immense benefit, so the experience has been rewarding in many ways.

I am pleased to see that there have been at least twelve new groups formed since Liz Marrs took the job over from me. That is a remarkable achievement, much better than my performance in the job and is deserving of our wholehearted recognition. It reinforces my comment above about the conscientious attitude of the committee members; my grateful thanks to all of you. Three of the original groups have expired in the same period which is unfortunate, particularly as each one was well-attended, but nobody was in a position to take over leadership when the original leaders had to give up because of ill-health.

Now I come to an old chestnut – the need for volunteers to assist with the running of Neston U3A. We are currently looking for two categories of volunteer, those who can help with occasional duties, such as taking names and collecting monies at the monthly meetings or similar; then we also need one or two who are able to commit a bit more time to committee work, particularly if they have some relevant experience. An appeal at the January meeting for occasional volunteers elicited some response for which we are very grateful but we would be relieved if we had some further names we could call on. The whole ethos of the movement is one of self-help and volunteering is a great way for new members to get to know people.

The attendance at our last three meetings has considerably improved, which is reassuring – perhaps we have to thank the excellent speakers. The Christmas social was apparently successful, judging by the feedback we have had but attendance at the lunch was below normal, which is a shame because the venue is so good. The committee have decided to give it another try this year.

Best wishes to you all as I return to ordinary membership and add my name to some of the Interest Group waiting lists.

Geoff Gibson

Neston U3A Notices

Urgent – Committee Vacancies

Under our Constitution we cannot operate Neston U3A without a Committee in place, including specific officers: Chairperson, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer.

By the AGM in April, **we need to appoint a new Chairperson.** In addition, we need at least one member willing to take on the role of Membership Secretary.

Committee meetings are friendly and the members support each other to ensure that workloads do not get out of hand.

Responsibilities of The Chair

1. Plan and chair all Committee meetings including the AGM
2. Introduce monthly Open Meetings and ensure that someone is able to deputise in the event of absence
3. Arrange adequate liaison with the local U3A Network, as required
4. Take the initiative, in conjunction with the Committee, to:
 - Promote and encourage new ventures and ideas
 - Ensure new Committee members are recruited as required
5. Take note of advisory communications from the U3A Trust, taking action if necessary
6. Supervise the compliance with Charity Commission Regulations

If you would like to discuss the post of Chair, please contact Geoff Gibson, via email, on businesssecretary@nestonu3a.org.uk

Responsibilities of the Membership Secretary

1. To maintain an up-to-date membership list using the U3A Beacon System
2. To receive and process applications from new members
3. To notify the Group Coordinator of new members' interests
4. To manage the annual membership renewal process

For further information about the post of Membership Secretary, please feel free to contact Anne Farrall on membershipsecretary@nestonu3a.org.uk

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting will be held on April 30th 2020, at 2.00pm
at the beginning of the monthly meeting
In Neston Civic Hall, Hinderton Road, Neston

All members are invited to attend, and we would welcome a good turnout.

Membership Renewals

All subscriptions are due for renewal on 1st April. The amount will remain at £10 for the coming year. A **coffee morning** has been arranged on 10th March 2020 at Neston and Parkgate United Reform Church Hall between 10.00am and 12.00 Noon to enable you to **renew your subscriptions** and socialise with other members. Refreshments will be available.

Alternatively, you can renew your membership at the February, March or April monthly meetings, by cash or cheque.

Payment by post should be sent to:

Hilary Eaude, 1 Heron Court, Parkgate, Neston, CH64 6TB.

Please make cheque payable to Neston U3A, enclosing a stamped, self-addressed envelope to receive your membership card.

Monthly meetings



The Neston U3A monthly meeting in January proved to be very successful and was well attended. The speaker, Fran Sandham, spoke of his "Solo Walk across Africa from Namibia's Skeleton Coast to the Indian Ocean near Zanzibar."

Feedback from members who attended suggests that this was an enjoyable talk by an interesting and humorous speaker.

Further information about forthcoming monthly meetings can be found on the Neston U3A website: www.nestonu3a.org.uk

Marianne Pearce organizes our Lunch Club – she will be taking bookings at each open meeting or you can contact her on 07930 432319 or email her on marianne4swimming@gmail.com

Recent Group Activities

The **Medium Walking Group** met in Chester on 7th January for a 4.5mile circular walk.

"We started out along the City wall from the Clock towards Chester Racecourse. From the Racecourse we followed the bank of the River Dee round to the Weir. We then crossed the river by the footbridge and walked along the riverbank to the Meadow before circling back and re-crossing the river.

We made our way through Grosvenor Gardens and on to the Canal.

Our walk ended at a coffee stop before we headed off in various directions to find our way home."

Hilary Eaude



"Members of the **Singing for Fun group** entered into the spirit of Christmas when they were invited to participate in the festive service being held at the United Reformed Church on Parkgate Road on Sunday December 8th. Our involvement came about as the group holds its Friday meetings in the church hall. We had rehearsed our numbers for several weeks with the church organist Tony Davies and our final performance was well received by a packed congregation.

Our next outing was an all-male affair as six male voices had volunteered to put on a show at the Christmas party on December 19th. After a couple of rehearsals organised by Ken Sumner, the sextet took to the stage as a grand finale to the party: Ken, Geoff Gibson, Keith Purcell, Michael Gaskell, Alan Green and myself, again accompanied by Tony Davies. Our performance ended with a rousing rock 'n roll solo from Alan with his guitar. The reception we received was most encouraging.

We might do it again!"



Michael Grumett

"Our newly-formed **Quiz Group** continues to thrive. We have moved from our original venue at the Glegg Arms, Gayton to the Wheatsheaf, Ness which is more convenient for most members and has a better facility. Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month commencing at 2-30pm and last for about 1 ½ hrs. Each member brings 5 questions to be read out by a quizmaster and teams are made up of 2, 3 or 4 members. It is not competitive and there are no prizes to be won.

Since forming we have entered a team in the Willaston and South Wirral Rotary Club Quiz and will be taking part in their next one on March 28th."

Phil Cartright

"On Tuesday 21st January, the **French Group** had their Christmas lunch at the Red Fox. A most convivial time was had by all who attended.

Christmas lunch in January has become a tradition for the group as December is just too hectic and it is something to look forward to after all the goings on over Christmas and the New Year. Venues also tend to be less frantic and more relaxing."

Liz Marrs

French Group 2 is looking for new members to join the group. The group meets twice a month on a Tuesday morning. If you are interested in joining this group or would like further information, please contact:

Jill McLeod (jillmc30@gamil.com) or Linda Briggs (0151 336n4883)

"Members of **Gardening Group 2** enjoyed a tour of the World Museum's Herbarium on 21st January. Wendy Atkinson explained how the Herbarium came to be held at the Museum and what was included. She had several exhibits to show us from among the 400,000 botanical specimens and associated items, including prints, models and archives. The collections are particularly rich in material from some of the pioneer explorations of the world's flora, including one of Cook's voyages. The Herbarium has just begun a project to digitise the collections, though this will take several years to complete. Everyone agreed it had been a very interesting visit".

Hilary Eaude

Visit to Hack Green Nuclear Bunker

"The November outing was to the Nuclear Bunker at Hack Green, near Nantwich. It proved to be an interesting, informative and rather disturbing experience.



Originally a decoy site to protect the railway centre of Crewe at the start of WW2, the bunker was converted first to an RAF station before becoming a radar station, for which the heavy concrete semi-underground structure was built and finally a top-secret nuclear bunker during the 'cold war' period. It comprises an above-ground building housing the canteen, leading to the sub-surface structure with the main part of the display. Entry is through heavy blast doors but a direct hit from a nuclear weapon would undoubtedly have destroyed the whole place. The total area is about 35000 ft², with artefacts from each part of its history, including the largest display of nuclear weapons in Europe. Following declassification in 1993 the complex was purchased by the Siebert family and opened as a museum.

In its final official role, it was manned by about 250 staff to house the regional government following a nuclear strike. The Commissioner and his Principal Assistant were authorized to operate as the government and had private quarters, presumably because they infrequently left the premises, but other accommodation was in dormitory type rooms that could have served only for those on duty at the time of a strike. The various displays include detection equipment, communication equipment, air-conditioning and

water supply gear, nuclear weapons, even a BBC studio. There were many interesting photographs and documents of all sorts. Another room is set up to provide the sound and light effects one might expect to experience from a relatively close nuclear explosion, with many warnings concerning the reaction one might suffer from such effects. There is also a 45-minute video with graphic scenes of the aftermath of a nuclear bomb, including real-life shots following the attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, but I don't think any of our party managed to sit through more than a few minutes of it.

It was a relief to gather in the canteen for a coffee after completing the tour and we then adjourned to the Crown Hotel in Nantwich for a very pleasant lunch.

The experience might have been improved if there had been a guide to escort us round, explaining the various displays and putting it all into context. Some of the information in this report came from an internet search, rather than being gleaned on site. Nevertheless, it was another absorbing trip for which we have Doreen to thank once again."

Geoff Gibson

U3A National Event

We know the value of the U3A in our lives and the part each U3A plays in contributing to the quality of life of Third Agers within our communities. Let's help to draw attention to what is available to Third Agers across the country through the experience of U3A.

Wednesday 3rd June 2020 has been designated National U3A day. Events will be taking place around the country organised by regional groups, showcasing the variety of activities available and raising the awareness of U3A at regional and national level.

To help you to prepare for June 3rd, the national website has a dedicated section. To share your ideas and gain insight into what other U3As are planning you can join the dedicated closed Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/485363562065891/>)

Neston U3A is aiming to arrange activities on 3rd June to support this event.

If you have any suggestions for activities or would like to help with the organisation of events please email or speak to a member of the Committee.

You can also email enquiries to u3aday@u3a.org.uk

Further information will be available at the monthly meetings and on the Neston U3A website.

This is the opportunity for every U3A – individually or in groupings – to help deliver one of the objectives of the Third Age Trusts Development Plan to Raise the Profile of the U3A Movement (Regional Trustee Sue Stoke)

Do you NEED HELP using your computer, mobile smart phone, iPad or tablet?
Then pop into the
Neston Cyber Centre

The Methodist Church (opposite The Brewer's Arms) – and it's
totally free

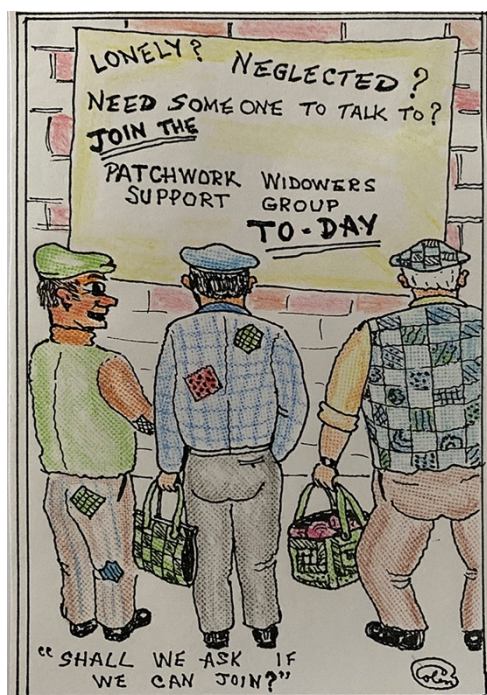
Monday 9.30 -12.00

Tuesday 9.30 -12, 14.30 – 19.00

Wednesday 9.30 -12, 14.30 -19.00

Thursday 9.30 – 12.00, 14.30 – 17.00, 19.00 – 21.00

Friday 10.00 -12.00



Coronavirus Advice from U3A Trust

Typical symptoms of coronavirus include fever and a cough which may progress to severe pneumonia causing shortness of breath and breathing difficulties.

The UK Chief Medical Officers are advising anyone who has travelled to the UK from mainland China, Thailand, Japan, Republic of Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia or Macau in the last 14 days and is experiencing cough, fever or shortness of breath, to stay indoors and call NHS 111, even if symptoms are mild.

More information can be found on

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-information-for-the-public>

Many thanks to Colin Spencer for sharing his original cartoons. You may see more of these in future copies of the Newsletter, together with regular snippets about the interesting life Colin has led, in the world of show business.

Forthcoming Events

Dates for your Diary

Neston U3A Walking Group Schedule 2020

Medium Walk Date	Leader and Location	Long Walk Date	Leader and Location
Tuesday 3 rd March	Anne Farrall		
Tuesday 7 th April	Chris Stone	Friday 17 th April	
Tuesday 5 th May	Gill & John Miles Bluebell Wood	Friday 15 th May	Ann Shakeshaft
Tuesday 2 nd June	Geoff Gibson Thurstaston & Royden Park	Friday 19 th June	Ann Taylor
Tuesday 7 th July	TBA	Friday 17 th July	Gill & John Miles
Tuesday 4 th August	TBA	Friday 21 st August	
Tuesday 1 st September	Gill & Keith Brown Heswall Dales & Fields	Friday 18 th September	Chris Stone
Tuesday 6 th October	TBA	Friday 16 th October	
Tuesday 3 rd November			
Tuesday 1 st December	Hilary or Rosemary		

Neston U3A Gardening Group 2 - 2020 Programme

Date	Venue/Topic	Host
Tuesday 21 st January	Liverpool Botanic Garden's Herbarium	Pat M
Tuesday 18 th February	Orchids: How to care for them/get them to re-flower	Ann
Tuesday 17 th March	Gardening Topic with letter 'G'	Sheila
Tuesday 21 st April	TBA	
Tuesday 19 th May	TBA	
Tuesday 16 th June	Conducted Tour of Ness Gardens	Judith
Tuesday 21 st July	Plant Swap	Pat D

Tuesday 18th August, 15th September, 20th October, 17th November - TBA

Neston U3A Have A Go Group Schedule 2020

Date	Event	Organiser
13 th February at 13:30	Indoor Crazy Golf Paradise Golf, Cheshire Oaks	Anne Roochove
March	Snooker	Ian Grainger
April	Visit to RSPB Burton	Hilary Eaude
May	Pond Dipping	Ron Bird
June or September	Liverpool Anglican Cathedral	Sue Evans
3 rd July at 11:00	Horse Riding	Liz Marrs
August	Bat Detecting	Liz Ledsham
September or June	Liverpool Anglican Cathedral	Sue Evans
October	TBA	
November	TBA	

Letter to the editor

Dear Julie

I have been a member of Neston U3A for the past two years. In that time I have enjoyed the monthly meetings and I am an avid member of the 'Singing For Fun' group. A fellow member of the singers persuaded me to give the 'Barn Dancing' group a try. They meet on alternate Friday afternoons. This I did for the first time last Friday.

Well I was made very welcome (as they are always short of men apparently and nothing to do with my magnetic personality, such is life)!

Our caller, Pat, promised some easier dances to get us started and I found that I could manage the first dance with help from my new partners. My muscles reminded me that I wasn't as fit as I thought I was and so I watched the second dance. I joined in again for the third dance and once again, the help of my partners got me through it without me feeling too foolish and stupid. By the break I was beginning to really enjoy myself and I also enjoyed chatting to my fellow Barn Dancers over a welcome drink of tea.

When we restarted dancing I was up and raring to go and I ignored my complaining muscles. I then attempted to sit out the second dance but I was encouraged onto the floor by one of the regular members. I was surprised to find the I could now manage to keep going and I enjoyed all of the remaining dances. I thoroughly enjoyed my first free visit. This was due largely to the other dancers, (mostly ladies), who made me so very welcome and helped me to do the right steps most of the time. I have promised to return and sign up for the season. I think that they are all very brave to accept me into the group as I am no light weight and I dance with enthusiasm.

If anyone is thinking of giving Barn Dancing a try, as I have done, then I would encourage them to wait no longer. Come and join in the fun and it will also help to keep you fit. My muscles complained for a reason, but I feel sure that it will give me much needed exercise in the best way possible.

Alan Green

Thank you for this letter Alan. It is really good to hear from members who have tried something new (and enjoyed it)!!

Let's hope that it encourages other members to have a go at something new.

Perhaps we could make this a feature of the newsletters in future. Please send me letters of your U3A experiences that we could share with others.

Information

Imperial War Museum at Salford Quays

A booking has been made to visit the Museum on 24th March 2020. Costs will be approximately £12.50 depending on numbers.

If you are interested please contact

Doreen Higgins 0151 336 5108 or Dorothy Blunt on 0151 336 2774.

Rummikub

The group would welcome new members. To find out more please contact Pat Mann
patmagmann2@gmail.com

Keep in touch

- If you know of any member who is unwell or in hospital
- If your contact details change

Please inform Sue Fletcher on 0151 336 2594

“Keep up to date”

Visit Our U3A Website

www.nestonu3a.org.uk