



Cotgrave & District

Gazette No 20

Summer 2022 Edition



If you have any items for inclusion or comments, please send them to
The Editor at cotgraveu3a@hotmail.com

*This Gazette is produced by Cotgrave & District U3A.
Views expressed are not necessarily those of the U3A, the Committee or of the Editor*

Spotlight on The Treasurer

My name is Heather Watnall and I recently took on the role of Cotgrave U3A Treasurer. I pointed out on a U3A Treasurer's Zoom Meeting that "I don't have any specific qualifications for being Treasurer". Unlike many Treasurers, I am not a retired Accountant. I was, in fact, a Probation Officer so I am hoping my skills and experience from that role won't be required!

I took on the role mainly because no one else wanted it! One of the principles of the U3A is that "members should do all they can to ensure that people wanting to join a U3A can do so". Without a Committee and Committee Members we cannot fulfil this principle. I have benefitted greatly from Cotgrave U3A since I joined a few years ago and I wanted to play my part in sustaining and growing our brilliant organisation. It was a huge upheaval for me when I moved to Cotgrave from

Manchester several years ago. I moved here to be with my partner, now husband. I was happy that we were together in one place after over ten years of "commuting" between the two cities. However, I found being away from my roots in Manchester very difficult. Initially I went to the library to ask if they had a Book Club. I was informed that there was a U3A Book Group which met at the library once a month. I went along to the Group and found everyone very welcoming and friendly. From there I went to the Open Meeting and became a member of Cotgrave U3A. Soon I joined the Creative Writing Group which has been brilliant and kept me going through the pandemic; we even had meetings outside in the rain when we were not allowed to meet indoors! The Book Group has reignited my love of reading and I have enjoyed reading and discussing a wide range of books. I have now taken on the challenge of setting up a second Book Group as the first Group is full. Being a member of the U3A in Cotgrave has played a significant role in me feeling much more settled here. As our Chairman, Peter, often says "it's great to see other members when I am out in the Village".. a 10-minute errand can sometimes take an hour when I bump into a fellow member and end up having a chat! It really helps me feel part of the Community.



Group News

Walking – Peter Shreyhane

The Walking Group now meet on the 4th Friday morning of the month. Since the last Gazette was published, the Group has gone on the following walks: In December around Cotgrave Country Park on a very misty morning and in January, because of the very wet weather, we stuck to firm ground and walked from Trent Bridge along the river to Wilford. Gedling Country Park was the venue for our March walk, followed in April by a circular walk from Screveton starting and finishing at the Café Velo Verde.



Our May walk started from Beeston Lock and took in the eastern part of Attenborough Nature Reserve. At the risk of tempting fate, apart from the Cotgrave walk, the Sun, if not always at its hottest, has smiled on us!

All these walks have been between 3 and 4 miles long and we always try to end with coffee! We are now aiming to start a second “Strollers” Group in July. This would be for those who prefer a shorter walk and would allow the 4th Friday Group to be a little more adventurous! Finally a little advice from the Rockies “Always hike with someone in worse shape than you. The bears out there will know!”

Creative Writing – Chris Tomblin

The creative writing group are enjoying meeting monthly and the creative juices are continuing to flow (well most of the time).

March 2022. This was a piece titled ‘Your bag is heavier than when you left it under the desk’ As usual it was interesting to note how different, our interpretation of the same subject actually is.

April 2022 This month we based our piece on three words chosen blind and at random. The piece had to include ‘Ghost’ at the beginning ‘Arrow’ in the middle and ‘Computer screen’ at the end. The pieces ranged from Internet dating, a haunted Historic building, the protection of Queen Elizabeth 1st from ambush and a three year old helping the ghost get home.

May 2022 This month’s title was ‘A deserted island’. Roy Plomley’s Desert Island Discs immediately sprang to mind and one member wrote her own choice as if on the program. All very interesting.

We have decided though for the rest of the summer we will have a rest from assignments and concentrate on writing solely during the meeting. This takes fifteen minutes and is great fun whilst allowing for plenty of chat and gives us more time to enjoy the summer.

Group News

Art – Sue Tunnicliffe

On one Wednesday the Art Group was treated to a morning of instruction from local artist Lynne Whitfield. We were shown how to use salt, bleach and other artistic tricks to enhance watercolour paintings.

As you can see we all produced our own versions of a water landscape.

We are hoping to get Lynne back in the autumn to pass on some more skills.

The Art Group is thriving and we are now at capacity. I will start a waiting list for anyone wanting to join us in the future.



Group News

Art (continued)

The Art Group delighted us with an exhibition of their efforts at the April monthly meeting.



Group News

Lunch Club – John & Desna Haskell and Peter Binder



Over 40 of us dined at the Apple Tree on Compton Acres, West Bridgford. We were seated on tables for between 2 and 6 people spread over a big area, taking over a lot of their dining area.

Despite the large numbers, the food was served fairly promptly and efficiently although those waiting for the chicken dishes had a longer wait. Most enjoyed their meals of typical pub food of gammon, fish and chips, pie (rather large with plenty of meat filling) The rib & chicken had plenty

of meat on the ribs. Some had starters and some even found room for a pudding.

With the large numbers some people had almost finished their main course before other had started. It is obvious that many places cannot cope with the large numbers, so it was decided to split the group in two and have a trial for 3 months of running two Lunch Clubs on successive Tuesdays at the same venue.

The Plough, Cropwell Butler - Lunch Club 1

Nice village setting with typical country atmosphere. The starters came promptly, the stilton mushrooms were rather mushy with little taste of stilton or garlic, the best bit being the bread.



The mains service was extremely slow, the pastry on the pies was a bit hard, but filling OK. The fish & chips we served in groups of two about 30 minutes later, we think there was limited capacity in the kitchen. The last of the main courses was served about an hour after the first (sorry Paul).



A few had puddings which were OK and a couple had cappuccino coffees, rated very poor. The person serving coped well, a shame the chef took a long time to send the meals out.

Overall rather disappointing, not a venue to try again unless things change dramatically.

The Plough, Cropwell Butler - Lunch Club 2

We had 13 turned up all as organised with the 4 cancellations. The barmaid/waitress was very individual in her service. She had not heard of lime and lemon, took the money for our food before we received it, the service from the Kitchen was intermittent and slow. We all got on well and formed two groups of chatters and the conversation was entertaining. The ham & eggs were not good and I complained but as the dish had been mostly eaten, no refund was forthcoming. All in all a curates egg! The better part being ourselves.

Group News

Lunch Club (continued)

Ferry Inn, Wilford. Lunch Club 1

This was our 2nd outing of two Lunch Club outings to the same place on following Tuesdays. We had a group of 20, sitting on an L shaped table in a room away from the main dining area. Food was served on time with a few having starters - baked Camembert, sharing board, all large portions. Mains were the normal “pub grub”, steak pie was ‘huge’, somehow it was all eaten along with nice fresh veg. The chicken was a bit on the dry side, curries were all eaten so I assume they were fine. A few had puddings, mainly a small cheesecake with ice cream. Overall, the service and food were good. This is a venue that we may return to at a later date, unlike the previous venue.

Ferry Inn, Wilford. Lunch Club 2

On this occasion we met at the Ferry Inn in Wilford village, an old pub beside the River Trent based on a farmhouse from the 14th. century and, curiously, adjacent to the very 21st. century Tram stop at the point where the track crosses the river on it's way into Nottingham City. I thought it interesting also that close by were some very 20th. century houses called (Douglas ?) Bader Road.



When we arrived at the pub we found our tables neatly arranged and set out in a corner of the dining area with staff standing by to welcome us. Orders were taken for drinks and we settled down to await our food which was well presented in proper sequence and enjoyed by it's recipients. All-in-all I found it a very pleasant event, and thought it a venue we might well use again. Sadly, however, the afternoon was slightly soured by the fact that when almost all of us had left Management claimed that 4 drinks served to our tables had not been paid for. No-one in our party has admitted to having had them so perhaps we might be cautious about returning to Wilford's pleasant Ferry Inn. What a pity!

Comedy Corner

I took my 8-year old girl to the office with me on, "Take Your Kid to Work Day."

As we walked around the office, she started crying, so I asked what was wrong with her.

As my colleagues gathered round, she sobbed:

“But daddy where are all the clowns you said you worked with?”

Group News

Singing – Mic Robins & Sue Childs



Tra laaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa!



Most of you will know Sue Hillyard, Executive Committee member and multiple group leader. The first group she took over was the Singing Group. This was meant to be a short-term stop-gap until someone more suitable came along, this was almost 8 years ago. In the pre covid years we sang every week in Sue's dining room and the group grew from 4-5 members up to 20. Wednesday evenings were full of enthusiastic singing, fun and laughter and we all went home feeling uplifted for the week ahead.

At every U3A Christmas party the entertainment has been created by Sue's talent and hard work to ensure that we all had great time and knew that Christmas was on its way. The group have also entertained outside the U3A for example at the dementia café and a group of us had the privilege of singing with the Halle Orchestra at the Royal Concert Hall as part of the Drive time Choir. This was an experience of a life-time.

We cannot thank Sue enough for her talent, enthusiasm and hard work over the last 8 years, however, time has moved on and Sue felt that that the singing group needed to move on to a new era and try something new.

Our member, Mic Robins, has agreed to take the group on to its next phase. His super guitar playing makes a huge difference to our sessions, and he will be leading in his own style, with some old and new and different songs for us all to learn and sing along to. Sue will still be coming and joining in with the singing with everyone else, but Mic Robins and Sue Childs (0115 9892145) will be joint leaders from now on.

The Singers will still be meeting on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday afternoon each month at the Scout and Guide Hall starting at 2.00 until 3.30. We have lots of space at the hall so why not give us a try. You don't have to be a fantastic singer, no auditions or solo singing, you just need to enjoy singing out loud, and not just in the bath. It's guaranteed, by us and backed by the science, that you will go home feeling energized and full of that feel good factor.



Tra laaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa!



Group News

History Group – Michael Oconnor

The history group had a talk by Dave Southern in the Manvers on Monday 14th February, it was a discussion with illustration and artefacts on mining in Cotgrave. Over 30 attended and it was an informative afternoon. We plan to meet every second Monday of each month in the Manvers at 3.00. All are welcome.

In March we heard a talk by John Orton on the history of weighing the earth. In April we visited the library to assist with sorting the resources held there. After much discussion with the organisers of the Ruddington Framework Museum, we enjoyed an excellent visit as our May meeting. Our Group was extremely well looked after, there being no one else there.

Under discussion is The Holocaust Museum in North Notts or Laxton three field system. We will then have a 3 month cycle of a talk, a local piece of work and a visit. We are also looking to do some historical walks around Cotgrave.

Once again...all are welcome to attend this Cotgrave group.

For more information please contact Michael Oconnor.



Framework Knitters Museum

We were entertained at the Monthly meeting in March by Steve Allen who's presentation 'My Musical History show II' was very well received. This was the second time Steve had attended one of our monthly meetings. He took us through the history of the Industrial Revolution, focussing on the horrendous conditions miners in particular worked under. He also spoke about the advent of photography, the achievements of Brunel and the expansion of the railways. His talk moved on to the development of flight, the fight for women's suffrage and improvements and advances in the 20th century.

Steve narrated the history in the guise of Eli in a light-hearted but informative way interspersed with a variety of appropriate songs. Overall his presentation was well received and we look forward to him coming to our meeting in the future.

Our speaker for April was Barbara Meyer and her talk was on 'Seals in Lincolnshire and Norfolk.' She illustrated her talk with attractive and interesting photographs and videos of the seals to be found around our coastline. Her talk was very informative, and we learned a lot about her work with the protection and rehabilitation of seals, caused by human disturbance and pollution chiefly from plastics.

Barbara's talk was well received, and members gave generously to her collection for the wildlife trust.

Every Body tells a story was the talk by David Sweeney in May

A good turnout of members was thoroughly entertained by this speaker. He told us about his earlier life as a young policeman, rising through the ranks to the role of a forensic officer. His talk referenced some well-known murder cases and the forensic procedures which helped to solve them. He referred to the use of poisons in many murders, often the weapon of choice for women and, in recent times, of Russia. David went on to regale us with several stories from his time in the police service, all of them delivered with much humour. He has many more stories in his repertoire, and no one would have been disappointed if he had carried on. David appreciated the responsive audience, and he will donate his fee to the care of rescued donkeys a cause close to his heart. He will be returning with more of his tales in the future. The thank you was given by John Orton.

Comedy Corner

What do you get if you cross a
Beatle with an Australian dog?

Dingo Starr

Cotgrave U3A goes to France – eventually

On Thursday 21st April 14 of us set off from Nottingham Station to travel to St Pancras Station where we were joined by Anna and Brian Franks. We boarded the Eurostar to Paris where we were met by Keith the Riviera Travel representative who stayed with us for the remainder of the visit. We travelled onwards by coach incidentally driven by Anja who drove us a few years ago when we went with Riviera to Rouen.

The first night of the trip we stayed in a delightful hotel in Vernon a small historic town on the River Seine and from where we travelled to Giverny the following morning to see

Monet's garden. It was a delightfully place, the gardens were full of spring flowers mainly tulips, wallflowers, peonies and azaleas. The wisteria, growing over the famous green bridge spanning the lily lake was in bud, however we were a week too soon from seeing it as Monet would have painted it.

From here we travelled to Tours, our base for the next 4 nights. Tours is a historic town and centrally situated for all our excursions. The old town was very interesting and had



many timber framed old houses.

The remainder of the visit consisted of a variety of visits to chateaux, cathedrals and gardens. The most notable was Chenonceau, a beautiful chateau built over the river Cher. Villandry was a spectacular chateau noted for its amazing gardens. The flower beds were in fact



made up of vegetables consisting of several types of lettuce, cabbages, herbs and brassicas and were encased by box hedging.



We also visited Fontenay, an abbey where the remains of Henry 2 of England are interred alongside those of his wife Eleanor of Aquitaine, their son Richard the 1st (the Lion Heart) and one of their daughters. We were shown around here by a very amusing, flamboyant American guide. I felt she missed her calling and should have been on the stage. This was a very stark building, but it was interesting to see how the building had survived the revolution and various wars afterwards including its time used as a prison,

Cotgrave U3A goes to France – eventually (continued)

The other places we visited included the cathedral at Chartres, the Royal Fortress of Chinon and the Chateau Clos Luce, the final home of Leonardo du Vinci. Here we could see a number of replicas of his inventions in the house and the grounds. There was also the predicted tour of a winery to taste wines of the region, these were sparkling wines made in the champagne style - very palatable.

The final visit on the final morning was to the palace of Fontainebleau. This palace consisted of 1500 rooms and was set in fabulous grounds. The state rooms were magnificent but obviously we only got to see a small section of the palace, enough to stimulate the imagination as to how royalty lived there in the 16th/17th century.

From here we travelled back to the Gare du Nord and home. The whole experience was, I felt, very enjoyable with a good mixture of things to do. There was no pressure to do any of the visits and you could take things at your own pace. The weather was great, having only one hour over a lunch time of rain.

Riviera certainly packed lots into the visit, it was excellent value for money and definitely worth the three year wait to go. There were a few hiccups along the way but none that were not solvable.



The task now is to find a holiday that can surpass that one.

Comedy Corner

What do you call a dinosaur that has a great command of English

A Thesaurus

A Little light relief

For those going to the seaside this summer



and

FAMILY TREE OF VINCENT VAN GOGH

His dizzy aunt ----- Verti Gogh
The brother who ate prunes ----- Gotta Gogh
The brother who worked at a convenience store ----- Stop N Gogh
The grandfather from Yugoslavia ----- U Gogh
His magician uncle ----- Where-diddy Gogh
His Mexican cousin ----- A Mee Gogh
The Mexican cousin's American half-brother ----- Gring Gogh
The nephew who drove a stage coach ----- Wells-far Gogh
The constipated uncle ----- Can't Gogh
The ballroom dancing aunt ----- Tang Gogh
The bird lover uncle ----- Flamin Gogh
An aunt who taught positive thinking ----- Way-to-Gogh
The little bouncy nephew ----- Poe Gogh
A sister who loved disco ----- Go Gogh

The brother with low back pain ----- Lum Bay Gogh

And his niece who travels the country in an RV --- Winnie Bay Gogh

I saw you smiling . . . there ya Gogh

A Cautionary Tale

Most of us own a computer and we have come to rely on them for a great deal of our everyday activity. Even if we don't do internet banking, we surely use it in order to make purchases from Amazon and numerous other internet suppliers. All the more reason, then, that we should take care to ensure it remains free from viruses and other so-called malware. But just how easy is it to succumb to foolish temptation and lay ourselves open to serious fraudulent interference. I have to admit to just such a stupid act and thought it might help others if I were to explain how it happened.

Recently I took the fateful decision to upgrade from Windows 10 to Windows 11, thinking that it would have to happen sometime or other because Windows 10 would eventually cease to be supported by Microsoft. Needless to say, it proved nothing but a frustration. So much that had become second nature to my ageing intellect no longer worked and had to be replaced by some ill-defined new



procedure which stretched my imagination to (and sometimes beyond!) its limit. As an example, the procedure to re-name a file which was originally labelled 'rename' is now to be found (if at all) under the heading of some totally meaningless hieroglyphic. It took weeks before I discovered it and still strains my failing memory to locate it when needed. Even more annoying was the later discovery that the scanning function on my HP printer no longer worked – my computer could no longer recognise the appropriate software on the printer. As I am accustomed to scanning in a variety of photographs for use as slides for U3A talks, this was a more serious difficulty and I had absolutely no idea how to rectify it.



The answer was, of course, to contact a local computer expert and this I did. Bob (not his real name) tried to be as helpful as possible but wanted to save me money by doing so by phone, rather than visiting my computer in person. It was during our remote discussion that an unrelated problem reared its unwanted head. I have for many years relied on McAfee for security protection but recently there had been a hiccup. I was under the impression that my subscription had automatically renewed but this was not the case because my credit card had expired! Of course, this was updated but McAfee were unaware – they didn't ask me about it and I had not thought to notify them! Never mind whose fault it was, it meant that my protection was temporally lacking and I started to receive threatening notices to the effect that my computer was seriously in danger. Indeed, in the middle of my conversation with Bob, my computer screen was filled with such files which I simply could not delete, try as I would! At this point Bob and I agreed to postpone our phone call and I was left to try to sort out the mess. What was needed was a calm, thoughtful approach – what I offered was a panic-stricken, thoughtless response. In fact, I took refuge in a new message which had appeared on my screen. It purported to come from Microsoft and assured me that they could solve all my problems if I just allowed them to take control of my computer screen. This, of course, is the last thing that one should ever do – nevertheless, fool that I was, I did it! It was at this point that Bob rang me back to find out how things were going, and, when I told him, he nearly hit the roof! "Microsoft never contact you like that – it must be a scam – the best thing you can do is shut the computer down!" I took his advice and unplugged it!

Continued overleaf

Some time later I had a phone call from the same Indian voice which had led me on the false trail in the first place so I left the phone off the hook for a while!

Daring, at last, to switch the poor thing back on, I was greeted with a black screen which persisted for some time – obviously a result of my previous foolishness? But, no – after a little while there came the familiar message that it was doing ‘updates’ (don’t turn your computer off!). Then, to my amazement, I discovered that the ‘scan’ function on my printer now worked – and still does! But where does all this leave me? I have a comforting e-mail from McAfee that my security programme has been turned back on but I am still bombarded with warnings that my computer is infected with viruses and I need to do a scan to get rid of them, some of which purport to come from McAfee! Needless to say, I am now too frightened to risk taking any of them at face value so I guess I may well have to contact Bob again with this new problem. However, in the meantime, my lovely computer seems to be working normally! It has, for example, helped me compose this article.

The point of writing it is simply to alert other computer-users to the dangers inherent in following unsolicited advice from strangers. Never, ever let anyone take control of your computer screen unless you are 110% sure you can trust them. Whether my failure to live by this edict will have any lasting ramifications remains, alas, to be seen!

John Orton

Finally.....

We would like to offer a warm welcome to all the new members who have joined since the last publication of The Gazette.



David Walton, Sally Copsey, Linda Young,
Christine Williams and Holly Chapman

The End

We hope you have enjoyed this edition of the Gazette.

If you would like to contribute any articles pictures or comments, please contact the Editor at Cotgraveu3a@hotmail.com

Also if you would like to help with putting together The Gazette or taking over as Editor please use the email address above.

The next edition of the gazette is due to be published mid-September; therefore deadline for any contributions, articles etc. to the Editor by August 31st.