

Cotgrave & District



Quarterly Gazette No 10 Summer 2018



Welcome to the latest edition of the Quarterly Gazette of Cotgrave & District U3A. We cover news from the Groups, forthcoming events and other interesting items happening in our U3A. If you want any items included in future issues please let the Editor know.

Welcome to new Committee members:
John Orton - Speaker Finder,
Stuart Ellis - Secretary
and the new Vice Chair - Peter Shreyhane

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*

Reflections of the Chair of the Cotgrave & District U3A 2018



My plan was always to join a U3A when I retired so that I could join in activities that I never had time for when I was in full-time employment. I had a job in my last eight years of working that took me all over the country which was very enjoyable and fulfilling but left me little time to spare. So when a leaflet fluttered through the letterbox saying the Central Head Office of the U3A was considering setting up a U3A in Cotgrave Tony and I decided to attend the meeting at The Welfare to find out more. The initial meeting was held in December 2013. We went along to the meeting which was run by Michaela Moody, Vice-chair from the National U3A Office and Jean Hogg from Southwell U3A. We were told in no uncertain terms that if we wanted our own

Cotgrave U3A we would have to set-up a committee of our own to establish and run our branch. Various jobs had to be filled such as Chairman, Vice-chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Secretary, Group Coordinator etc. and a post I had never heard of known as Greeter, Speaker Finder. Our first real Cotgrave U3A meeting was held at The Welfare in January 2014 run by Jean Hogg with Joe Rhodes as Chairman, Michael O'Connor as Vice-chair, Peter Binder as Secretary, Chris Soar as Treasurer, June Odell as the magical Greeter, Speaker Finder, myself as the Group Coordinator and a few others who now have sadly fallen by the wayside. Our Committee has now expanded. We now have, in addition to those already stated, a Webmaster and Gazette producer, a Membership Secretary, someone dealing with Technical Support and the Events Diary, a Newsletter Writer, a Publicity Person and Link Coordinator.

I greatly enjoyed setting up the Activity Groups and working with the Group Leaders who are always the backbone of any U3A. Pat Baxter now does that job extremely well although finding new Group Leaders is sometimes difficult with our limited membership.

So a year ago now I become the Chairman which has presented challenges and rewards. My task is now to keep the Executive Committee working well together to produce an ever improving U3A which responds to its members' needs. It is also a role that tries to keep in step with the National Office and Nottinghamshire's U3A Network where possible. I am a people's person and I greatly enjoy meeting our members and chatting to them individually as much as possible so that the Committee can keep in step with the wishes of its members. Ours is a small U3A so that is just possible. Many members have commented on how friendly and accessible our Cotgrave U3A is compared to our much larger neighbours.

Thoughts for 2018/19 and our U3A. Well, we would like a few more members. We are really trying to make our U3A accessible and inclusive to all, responding to some of our members' special needs such as hearing loss, impaired vision, and mobility problems and in a small way help our members to remain engaged with others within our community. I love it now that I know so many people in Cotgrave through our U3A when previously I lived here for ten years without knowing many. Our trip to Rouen this year was a great success. The Committee is fully aware that many of you would like more day trips out but so far no one has volunteered to take on the task of organising such trips. Would you be prepared to run a trip to a Flower Festival or to the Coast or any other place of interest? It could be a one off or on a regular basis. I look forward to hearing from anyone who would be interested in taking on this task. Please feel free to ring or email anytime with your ideas and constructive suggestions. Finally, I would like to thank the extremely hardworking Executive Committee, the Group Leaders and all our Members for their support over the past year and I assure you that I will keep doing my best for our Cotgrave & District U3A.

Barbara Bullin

Your 2018 Committee



David Drakes
Publicity



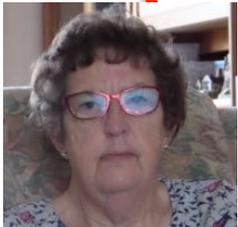
Malcolm Baxter
Technical Support



John Haskell
Webmaster



Barbara Bullin
Chair



Pat Baxter
Groups Co-ordinator



Chris Soar
Treasurer



Stuart Ellis
Secretary



Maureen Johnson
Newsletter Editor



Peter Shreyhane
Vice Chair & Minutes Secretary



John Orton
Speaker Finder



Sue Childs
Membership Secretary



Michael O'Connor
Link Co-ordinator

Group News

Luncheon Group

Twenty one of us ate at the Plough at Hickling in March, the Luncheon Club had eaten here some years ago and we had been informed that it was under new management, sadly not for the better.

Service was by one person, hence rather slow, no checks on those that had the soup, had the relevant spoons. We had to ask for condiments. Many of us had fish cakes for starters which were home made, crispy with little fish. Main meals were acceptable, home made lamb pie looked a bit flat but tasted quit nice. Some meals were a bit slow being served.

We gave up on the coffee as it took so long getting to us. One good point from the beer drinkers was that the beer was good. It is unlikely we will be returning to the Plough.

April's Luncheon Group met at Nottingham Knight in West Bridgford which has recently been refurbished and is part of the same chain at The Goose at Gamston.

We were in a private room which was a nice size for our group, the heating was poor but soon warmed up once we started eating and imbibing.

The value for money was very good and most of us enjoyed our meals, only disappointment was the fish was a little dry. Service was good and the staff attentive.



May saw us gathering at 'The Salutation' in Keyworth, an establishment taken over and refurbished by the Heineken chain.

It was a lovely sunny day, the light streaming onto our nice long table giving ample room for us all. The menu was typical pub food, some of which had been overcooked and hence a little dry but still tasty, service was good and very friendly.

Overall not a bad choice with good atmosphere.



Comedy Slot

Thanks for explaining the meaning of 'many' to me It means a lot

History Group



March meeting – The group visited Nottingham Council house and were treated to a guided tour of the building with all of its pomp and pageantry memorabilia. The building today is used for wedding ceremonies and court proceedings.

We were entertained ‘enroute’ by some members ‘posing’ for photographs dressed in the Mayor’s robes and others resplendent against various artefacts of social and historical interest relating to Nottingham’s past. Everyone agreed that it had been an extremely interesting visit.

April meeting – Members were given a presentation of the proposed Cotgrave history website which although far from being finished at least gave an insight of the breadth and depth of some of the material gathered to date. Street names and buildings were highlighted with explanation of their origins and changes.

Census material compiled principally by John Orton and Steve Cockbill are available on the website covering the entire records from 1841 onwards and give a fascinating picture of the demographic changes to Cotgrave’s fortunes.

Carole Pimblett commented on the amount of research already conducted by previous ‘historians’ and herself and invited members to consider how they might add to the website.



In May we were treated to another presentation by our good friend Dr Colin Groves who gave an illustrated talk on Hardwick halls and their former prominent owner, Bess of Hardwick. Colin catalogued the four marriages of Bess and of her resultant accumulating wealth which allowed her to become such a prolific investor in new houses (or should I say mansions/castles/estates etc.) and hence leaving our countryside with these wonderful buildings for us all to enjoy.

June we are going to the King Richard the third exhibition in Leicester.

Film Club

This quarter's films at Long Clawson started with a re-make of the Agatha Christie classic 'Murder on the Orient Express' with many well-known actors, such as Kenneth Branagh, Michelle Pfeiffer and Jonny Depp taking the title roles. The second film was 'Paddington 2', a tale of the theft of an antique book, resulting in the popular bear spending time in prison whilst trying to recover the item. The final film of this period was 'Victoria and Abdul' with Judi Dench and Ali Fazal playing the leading roles and based in the latter years of Victoria's reign and her meeting with a young clerk sent by the Indian Government to celebrate her Golden Jubilee.



The presentations shown at the Broadway Cinema during the spring period have included 4 films in the documentary genre, 'Mountain' a film exploring our fascination with mountains narrated by William Defoe with the commentary accompanied by music of world famous chamber orchestras, 'Bombshell – The Hedy Lamarr Story', the story of this most beautiful woman who besides being an actress was an ingenious inventor where her pioneering work helped revolutionise modern communications, 'My Generation' telling the story of the birth of the 1960's pop culture in London narrated by Michael Caine and 'Westwood: Punk, Icon, Activist, the story of Vivienne Westwood's life.



There were 2 films with English subtitles, 'The Divine Order' a Swiss film telling the story of a 1971 housewife who campaigns for female emancipation in her Alpine village and 'I Got Life' a French film where a middle-aged woman, newly unemployed and separated from her husband, sees her life change when she bumps into the great love of her youth. The film 'Isle of Dogs' an animated film set in future Japan, sees all dogs quarantined after a canine flu epidemic to a remote island where a young 12 year-old boy arrives to find his beloved pet.



The 1932 horror film 'The Old Dark House' starred the master of horror films, Boris Karloff whilst the recently released 'Finding Your Feet' featured the current well-known Imelda Staunton, Joanna Lumley, Celia Imrie and Timothy Spall with Lily James taking the lead in 'The Guernsey Literary And Potato Peel Pie Society' as a writer who forms an unexpected bond with the inhabitants of the Isle of Guernsey in the aftermath of World War II.

Two films tell the story of young people, 'Lean on Pete' recalls the story of a young 15-year-old brought up by an undependable single father, who when taking a summer job forms a strong attachment to an old race horse and 'Wonderstruck' the story of 2 deaf 12-year-olds brought up in Michigan and New Jersey who find themselves drawn together in New York City in search of their own identities.

The first and last films in this period starred the same actress, Saoirse Ronan: 'Lady Bird' tells the tale of a young woman fighting the pressures and constraints of Catholic school life and 'On Chesil Beach', the story of a young couple terrified by the upcoming consummation of their marriage.

Group News

Theatre Group

The Theatre Group aims to go to one show a month. One projected outing, to *This House* at the Theatre Royal, had to be cancelled, as it was just before the Travel Group's trip to France. However, reviews follow of the shows we saw and enjoyed.

The Jersey Boys, Royal Concert Hall Nottingham



A number of U3A theatre group members attended a matinee performance of the Jersey Boys on Wednesday 16 May.

The Jersey Boys is a musical celebrating the lives and times of the Four Seasons and their lead singer Frankie Valli. The performance was well attended and the hall about 75 percent full, including a front row of mature ladies who seemed determined to remember the sixties and fond memories of a more passionate affection towards the singers.

The stage setting was thoroughly modern and the sound system overwhelming. I was happy to remove my deaf aid. A very mobile drum kit and percussionist distracted the eye during scene changes and four microphones slid on and off as if by magic. The leader of the Four Seasons Tommy Devito (not related to the actor of the same name) effectively narrated the story of how he created the group under a number of different names all without much success. Frankie Valli met a college boy song writer and introduced him to the band as a possible way to fame, his name Bob Gaudio, the writer of the majority of the songs along with producer Bob Crewe that became top twenty hits.

Valli and Gaudi set up a business partnership that excluded Devito who was profligate and mismanaged the bands finances. He eventually was bailed out by Valli and Gaudi and departed to Las Vegas. The fourth founder member of the Seasons, the base player and singer Nick Massi, decided that all the travelling around America was too much for him and he returned to his family. The Four Seasons were elected to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and were one of the few groups to be successful both in the pre and post Beatles era with 13 Top Twenty hits 1962-67

The performance of the actors and actresses playing all parts was carried out with astonishing verve and musicality. When you consider that they are on a nationwide tour with this show and performing nearly every day the professionalism of the cast is excellent. The audience were applauded and gave standing ovations after a number of the famous songs, most notably "Oh What a Night". Frankie Valli part played by Michael Watson, Tommy Devito played by Simon Bailey, Bob Gaudio played by Declan Egan and Nick Massi played by Lewis Griffiths.

If you ever get a chance to attend "The Jersey Boys" take it, I can thoroughly recommend excellent entertainment.

[Theatre Group continued on next page](#)

Group News

Theatre Group (continued)

Oh La La!



Cropwell Bishop village hall transformed itself into Le Cafe des Sports in the sleepy Dordogne village of Récolte-d'Evêque for one evening last month. The talented Parisian Fifi la Mer entertained us very well indeed with her mix of 1960s (and older) French and Anglo songs.

Fifi, singing enchantedly with her slight Scots brogue, not only brought us classic melodies from a France regrettably now disappeared, but also amazed us with her skill on the accordion. Now, that looked really difficult. The teenager on our table turned out to be learning that instrument and dashed over during the interval for a quick consultation with the glamorous Fifi.

The band consisted of three: Fifi plus a rather good jazz guitarist, and Nigel on double bass. There was some carefully managed audience participation in one song, and the audience of prosperous looking Rosbifs dutifully let their hair down and had a go at a limited range of French vocab.

Anyway, a jolly good time was had by all, including demolishing what looked like a mountain of all-inclusive brie and saucissons over the course of the evening.

Short Walking

Our short walk programme was reduced to two walks during this period, the first being cancelled due to the adverse weather.



Our April walk took us to the 'Island Site' off London Road, and visited the sites of the Nottingham Low and High Level stations. We

went on to visit the site of the old cattle market before passing the oldest Football League football club. Visiting the site of the old leather tanning factory on Trent Bridge we then joined the canal footpath and made of our way back to the Midland Station.

The final walk this period was a visit to the newly formed Gedling Country Park with a walk criss-crossing the site.

Longer Walking

For the longer walks we sometimes had to contend with the thoroughly soggy weather and muddy



conditions. A few of us struggled with the Lowdham Dumbles circuit, which is a great walk of around 5 miles, but ideally in better weather I think.

The next walk is nearer to home taking in Cropwell Bishop, Colston Bassett and including the ruined church there.

Tony's Summer quiz

1. A Vespiary is home to which insect?
2. China took over Macao from which country?
3. Who did Neil Kinnock beat in the 1983 Labour leadership contest?
4. If you are 'Agliophobic' what are you afraid of?
5. What does the name Fitzroy mean?
6. What navigational instrument measures longitude and latitude?
7. What was the former capital of Spain? (Prior to Madrid)
8. Who wrote the patriotic song 'Keep The Home Fires Burning'?
9. In which village was Dr Finlay a GP?
10. Use the letters given below to complete the square so that three other words can be read downwards and across.

A A I N N Q U U Y

What are the words?

F	A	R	M
A			
R			
M			

Answers on Page 15

Comedy corner

Why should not eat pasta alone?

It will make you feel Cannelloni

Group News

Science Group

The Science Group has relied very largely on its own talent to fashion interesting meetings on a wide variety of subjects. While the Group Leader, himself, has given talks on such diverse topics as Boyle's Law and the kinetic theory of gases, the nature of light, optical refraction, Planck's theory of Black Body Radiation, Einstein's theory of Special Relativity, the history of electricity (and, by special request, how to wire an electric plug), the physics of the MRI Scanner, the first satellite communication experiments, fibre optics and the development of photo-voltaic devices for solar panels, we have also had talks by Keith Lindsell on Earth Science and by John Ainsley on the Periodic Table of the Elements. This latter session was noteworthy by being the first (and only!) meeting at which we were given homework! We have, however, had two invited speakers. Mike Seymour gave a fascinating talk on the design and manufacture of pipelines for North Sea oilrigs and (at our last meeting) Brian Tuck described the work of Michael Faraday at the Royal Institution which led to the development of the electric generator, the electric motor and the all-important transformer. Brian had done his PhD degree in the RI in a laboratory immediately adjacent to Faraday's lab and therefore knew, at first hand, just what the great man's working space looked like. Future meetings will include another talk by Keith on Prospecting for Oil and yet another Group Leader presentation on the scientific work of a remarkable eighteenth century aristocrat, Henry Cavendish, a descendent of the somewhat better-known Bess of Hardwick.

I should emphasise that all this has been presented at a level appropriate to intelligent non-scientists (which is what most Group members are!) and we would be happy to welcome one or two new members. Please do not be frightened by the high-flown sound of these topics – we really do aim to make science understandable and questions are welcomed, no matter how basic.

Computer Club

“Got a problem . . . let's try and fix it together”

That was the theme we adopted last summer following the unexpected departure of our guest IT “guru” . . . and, so far, it's proven to be a success with our Computer Club members.

To recap . . . we discuss simple computing problems encountered by our members and explore ways in which other members may conceivably have experienced and possibly solved them . . . in essence, very much a “Workshop” session.

We've explored the worlds of SKYPE and DROPBOX, looked at the mysteries of recording, playing back and storing of thousands of music tracks.

More recently we've shared our experiences of “Scammers”, how to recognise and deal with them.

It doesn't matter how seemingly trivial your problem/experience might be . . . we're all “amateurs” trying to help each other.

So, do come along with your laptop, tablet or smartphone . . . we'll try to sort out whatever problem you've encountered.

Group News

Ukulele.

It's just one year this June since we started the Ukulele Group, Strum and Sing, and in that time we've got through a wide variety of songs mainly down loaded from the net and I hope everyone enjoyed it has much as I have.

The Ukulele is a musical instrument that doesn't cost much to get started although some brands can be very expensive so it depends on the individual.

The Uke is a instrument that by learning a couple of Chords can get you strumming & singing a handful of songs in no time at all, and people don't seem to be afraid of it as much as they would with other instruments costing much much more; like Joe Brown said, you can't play it without smiling, can be very therapeutic and you should be able to get them on prescription (nice thought).

George Harrison although known for his great guitar playing really loved the Uke and always seemed to have one close at hand.

If you care to have a look on YouTube, you'll find some brilliant Ukulele players, the likes of Jake Shimabukuro and Herb Orta etc..

Keep on strumming

Croquet



This year, so far, we have been fortunate, with all three meetings played in sunshine.

We have also had a good turnout – 13, 13, and 14 members playing on the respective days, with 20 different members showing up.

Perhaps the other 25 who have evinced interest might like to give it a try (or re-try, as the case may be!).

Because our very much simplified game takes only 20 minutes or so, with 4 players a round, (the proper game takes over 3 hours),

everyone has at least 3, and sometimes 4, games.

Though members improve in their game, the improvement is not such that they cannot be beaten by a new player – it's a very levelling system!

We always have room, and a welcome, for anyone who'd like to have a go, or just to come, drink coffee (or tea!) and laugh at the mistakes of the players – all in good humour – so why not try it?

Spectatorship seems to be more popular than a game of boule, which is also available.

Group News

Snooker



The new Group for Snooker has been running successfully for a while now. We have decided to meet every two weeks on a Thursday and to date have met three times. From the original 14 who showed an interest we have a dedicated band of 6. We meet in Cotgrave Welfare at 1.00 and stay until about 3.00. The Welfare has two excellent full tables with all the equipment provided. Our standard varies but we have a great time. We have discussed whether we can offer darts as an activity but this may have to take place in the Manvers. Although the Welfare actually bought a dartboard for us a few years ago, it has been covered by a gaming machine. We are also considering dominoes and crib as the Welfare has equipment for these as well. So, if you are interested...come and join us for a fun afternoon.

Yoga

The Yoga group is held every Tuesday (except the second Tuesday in the month when there is the General Meeting). We meet in the Scout Hall from 10.30 to 11.30. At the moment we have 15 members and usually 10-12 people attend each session. Led by our qualified yoga teacher Jane, we concentrate on gentle postures which are designed to help with flexibility, strength and balance. Some of us are complete beginners, and the class is suitable for all abilities and levels of fitness. Everyone agrees they feel better after the class. There is room for more, and you will be made very welcome if you decide join us!



Singing for Pleasure at a weekly meeting



The Art Group goes March Hare Mad after instructions from Lynne Whitfield

Group News

Real Ale Group

That hotbed of erudition, known as the Cotgrave U3A Real Ale Group (R.A.G.), usually meets with a full turn out of members (now 10, which is probably the maximum for a full-on meeting, with all joining in), so enjoyable is it.

The April and May Ale Imbibing Sessions took place at The Head of Steam, and Malt Cross (both in Nottingham).



The former is the latest outlet of a small up-market chain owned by Cameron Breweries, and is on High Pavement. Our team of Inspectors gave it a good review for its ambience, food, staff efficiency, and (all important, of course) range of ales, the favourite of which was Cameron's Achropolis (Brewers are very fond of puns!).



In May we visited (again) The Malt Cross. This is a lovely, listed building, with an interesting history, and which is run as a charity. Again the service was excellent and everything else satisfactory. The favourite ale was the quirkily named Abstract Jungle by Solo Brewery, closely followed by Adnams' Ghost Ship (which, actually, is available at the local Golf Club!).

We plod on in the name of science, philosophy (I drink, therefore I am!), and A.I., to The Poppy & Pint on 1st June

Travel Discussing Group

The chosen topic for May's meeting of the TDG was Brief Breaks in Britain.

A list of UK's Best Towns & Cities, as chosen by members of WHICH Travel Magazine, was handed round and briefly discussed; and a trip to Stowe House (National Trust) and surrounding area was described and recommended; as was a day trip to the Thursford (Norfolk)



"Christmas Spectacular", which combines a show with a Winter Market; and also Birmingham and the National Arboretum at Alrewas.



However, the meeting also discussed next year's holiday and a change in direction for the Group to include organizing Day Trips & Outings.

Although various suggestions had been made for next year's trip abroad, which included, inter alia, Southern Ireland, Berlin and Wroclaw, no decision had been made. It was decided, therefore, that the next meeting would be Decision Time, but also include the organisation of bus trips, and days out, in the UK (and, indeed, a trip to Thursford could be one of them).

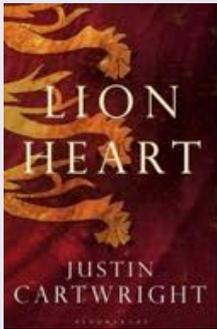
Comedy Corner II

The next song is about subtraction

Take it away boys!

Group News

Book Group

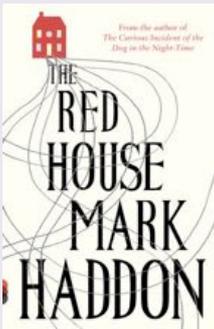


The first book, *Lion Heart* by Justin Cartwright, was set in medieval times and present day Jerusalem. This was a deeply involved quest tale about an Oxford Graduate called Ritchie Cathar finding his way in life using his drug addicted late father's book about Richard the Lionheart' Third Crusade trying to find the True Cross!! Ritchie struggles to find peace and happiness especially with the many females in his life. A challenging book, which some members couldn't get to grips with so didn't finish. However it did improve and had several twists and turns, some quite sad ones. This book didn't really gel so only scored 4/5, and comments that Dan Brown was a better writer of this style.

The second book, *The Tea Planter's Wife* by Dinah Jefferies, transported us to Ceylon. Gwen, who is 19 yrs. old, meets and marries a widower in London and follows him to his plantation, his care-free character changes immediately and Gwen is left emotionally isolated in this strange country. There is a dominant white supremacy with increasing strong political Tamil And Sinhalese racist overtones



The mesmerizing descriptions of the countryside contrasting with the poverty and lives of the workers in the 1920's brought lots of discussion and personal reflections by the members regarding socioeconomic factors. Gwen and many of the others in this book were affected deeply by the events that take place and life there is ever changing. There was better feedback and group discussion and it scored 6/7.



The final book, *The Red House*, by Mark Haddon who is a well known writer is set in Wales. This is the story of two dysfunctional families brought together, after the brother and sister have been apart for 20years, for 7 days in one house, after the mother's death. Seems like a recipe for trouble!! In the quiet, stillness of the valley ghosts begin to rise up. This is an astute and bittersweet comic novel, and should promote a healthy discussion etc. at the next meeting on 18th. June.

As you can see by the above the books the topics are varied and are not always what one would normally pick but variety is the spice of life and good for the brain cells. We meet at Cotgrave library on the 3rd. Monday of each month and are a very friendly group who enjoy a good read and natter!!



The recently formed Table Tennis Group is proving very popular. The Group meets on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays at the Cotgrave Leisure Centre, if you are interested in playing please contact Malcolm Baxter

Speakers Corner (1) - 'Excuse me Madam, but...'

The Speaker at our General Meeting of 13 March 2018 was Richard Papworth whose talk was entitled 'Excuse me Madam, but...'

Richard is a gentleman of some 83 years, born in Cambridgeshire in 1935.



He started work as a 15 year old boy Engine Cleaner with British Rail at Huntingdon loco depot. When old enough he joined the Police Force as a Cadet, was called to National Service where he was a Red Cap (Military Policeman) and then after a short time in the Police Force, progressed to Store Detective at Lewis' in Birmingham with a spell in the Prison Service before retirement.

His talk comprised anecdotes and reminiscences mainly from his career as a Store Detective, recalling some of his experiences and some of the characters who crossed his path over the years. This gives a clue to the origin of the title of his talk.

Some noted points of interest from Richard's talk were;-

He was told very early in his career to never get too friendly with staff members. Apparently, for every £100 stolen by shoplifters, £180 is lifted by staff members. A sobering thought.



One from the 60's...Keep a close eye on staff on the tills smoking 'Black Russian Cigarettes'. They don't earn enough to sustain that expense. In other words watch for extravagant spending habits.

Watch for someone obviously acting suspiciously to attract your attention. He told of one case where a gentleman was keeping his attention whilst his partner/wife was thieving in another part of the store. Fortunately they had come across this ruse previously.

Richard's fees from his talks are commendably donated to 'The Rainbows Charity' for whom he has raised £17000 to date. His ambition is to increase this to £20000. We wish him good luck in this ambition.

Answers to Tony's Summer Quiz

1. Wasp
2. Portugal
3. Roy Hattersley
4. Pain
5. Son of King
6. Sextant
7. Toledo
8. Ivor Novello
9. Tannochbrae
10. AQUA, RUIN and MANY

Speakers Corner (2) - The Clergyman the Widow and the Milkman

Mo Cooper had, at one time, done an MA dissertation on Edwardian housing in Nottingham and our April meeting was graced by an up-dated version, complete with a wealth of statistics concerning the identity of the landlords (and landladies) of what we now call 'slum' properties in three distinct areas of the city.

These were Narrow Marsh (by the river Leen), St Annes and the Meadows. She recommended as excellent source material 'Lloyd George's Domesday Book' and suggested we might well find much of interest about Cotgrave's history in the appropriate volume (History Group please note). This was a record put together by the then Prime Minister in his efforts to raise tax money to provide funding for social services which were, at that time (1910), emerging from the slough of Victorian unconcern.

We were shown a good selection of photographs of typical houses and streets in these three areas of Nottingham, none of which, I suspect, appealed to members of our audience as desirable accommodation (and which, incidentally, had subsequently been demolished). However, the central theme of Mo's talk concerned the origins of the people who actually owned and let the houses in question. Perhaps surprisingly, they were built, not by Nottingham Council, but by private speculators who sold to a wide range of private owners. In later years the Council took over a degree of responsibility but, as Mo pointed out, the Council members were, themselves, of the 'owning' classes and therefore liable to a degree of bias when making important decisions concerning the lives of those unfortunate enough to be accommodated in the areas in question.



Returning, however, to the main theme, she divided the owners into three classes: class I being upper crust such as clergy and doctors, class II middle-ranking tradesmen, class III artisans (milkmen?). Commercial organisations and the newly-arrived railways owned a few of the houses but the majority were let by members of class II. It was significant that all of the houses *lived in* by these landlords were still standing today, unlike their rentals. An interesting statistic concerned the proportion of women owners (women had been allowed to own property since 1870). The ratio of women owners to men owners was roughly one to two, surprisingly high and probably represented elderly widows who had been left money and who needed to invest it in order to acquire a meagre livelihood. We were left to speculate how many such landlords ever saw the properties they were renting out or had any idea of the lives lived by their poorer tenants.

It was a thought-provoking lecture and question-time discussion suggested that lessons had not been adequately learned – we are still failing to achieve the right balance of investment in today's housing developments

Speakers Corner (3) - Derrick Watson - Life and times of a Victorian lawyer

The May meeting was addressed by Dr Derrick Watson from North Clifton (some ten miles or so north of Newark) on the subject of George Freeth, who was associated with the village of that name. George (1800 – 1882) was, indeed, a Victorian lawyer and a rather rich one, too. To emphasise the point, his will, which was proved in 1882, amounted to the equivalent of £61 million (in present-day terms). There was, however, a certain mystery concerning George's life towards the unravelling of which Derrick had devoted some considerable time and effort. His talk went into somewhat bewildering detail, not only of George's life but of those of the members of his near family. I shall attempt no more than a brief summary.

George is of special interest to Nottingham in so far as he was born and baptised in Edwalton and, indeed, is also buried there. Nevertheless, his life was largely lived elsewhere, principally in London and in Cornwall. In 1833 he was listed as being a partner in a firm of Solicitors registered in Lincoln's Inn Fields, a suitably prestigious legal address. Ten years later the firm's address was given as 'Lincoln's Inn Fields and Nottingham' and George had a house in Nottingham on Standard Hill which he had inherited from his father. His civic importance was illustrated by his appointment as 'Under Sheriff of Nottingham' in 1844.

A few years later the law firm had expanded and George's addresses were listed as Mayfair and Duporth, the latter being an impressive sea-side estate in Cornwall, near St Austell. It would appear that he acquired it as the result of his acting for its previous owner in the latter's bankruptcy proceedings, probably in defrayment of legal costs. Not only did he enjoy the delights of owning his own private beach but acquired local fame when appointed Deputy Steward of Cornwall by the Lord Warden, none other than HRH Prince Albert.



In 1852 George married Ellen Brocklehurst, a widowed lady and, in the marriage certificate described himself as 'bachelor'. He proceeded to build a new house in North Clifton where, according to various census returns, Ellen took up residence. Their marriage, however, was of somewhat unusual character in so far as George himself continued to inhabit his Cornish manor. What was even more noteworthy was the fact that George was apparently living with a daughter, Caroline Freeth (born in London about 1842). Derrick could find no earlier reference to her existence, nor was she the daughter of Ellen so one can only assume she was illegitimate. He was probably being unusually noble in supporting her in such an obvious manner, given the then social stigma attached to her background and it may well account for the fact that he only visited North Clifton, rather than actually living there.

In his will, George left the majority of his estate to his daughter, bequeathing to his wife, Ellen, no more than the *use* of the furniture in the Duporth house – and, for this generous gesture, she was asked to sign an acknowledgement! How could he possibly be so utterly mean, one wonders. But further research revealed that Ellen herself was extremely well off and had no need of George's money. She continued to live comfortably in North Clifton and both she and George made monetary contributions to the church of St George the Martyr, as can be seen today in the shape of stained glass and a painted reredos. Indeed, George apparently designed one of the church windows himself, having taken up glass painting as a late-life hobby. In fact, all was sweetness and light between the two of them – it was only between George and a new Vicar (with 'modern' ideas) that controversy broke loose and this little altercation only resulted in the Vicar's premature departure! George was never a man to be trifled with.



U3A goes to Rouen

On 12th April, 23 members of Cotgrave U3A, some accompanied by family and friends, visited Rouen in France. The trip was organised through Riviera Travel and, as the U3A is Riviera's chosen charity, resulted in a sizeable donation back into our funds. That is what is known as a Win-Win situation!



We departed early from Nottingham Station to St Pancras and then boarded the Eurostar to Paris where we were picked up by coach for our onward journey through to Rouen. Hannie, one of our U3A members and also, serendipitously, our Riviera Guide, introduced us to Anja, our very competent driver, who whisked us away to the 4 star Mercure Champs de Mar hotel where we stayed on a bed and breakfast basis.

Hannie very quickly took some of the group to reconnoitre the immediate area while others chose to relax and enjoy their evening meal in the hotel.



The following morning found us all eager to explore Rouen, and Hannie led us on a guided tour around this famous town which boasts many well preserved medieval buildings. We saw the cathedral which inspired Claude Monet, and wended our way through narrow streets to see the famous astronomical clock (The Gros Horloge) – the movement is over 600 years old and the facade dates to 1529. Several of us stopped for a much needed coffee in the square in which the modern church dedicated to Joan of Arc is located, and it was very moving to see the huge tall cross which is located in the exact place where she met her fate.



After lunch, several of the group went on the coach to visit the distillery of the famous Benedictine liqueur in Fencamp. Apparently all came back sober (or so they said)! A few others stayed behind at the hotel and enjoyed a game of Bridge – we can now say that Cotgrave U3A Bridge Group has played at an international venue!



Our next day was spent in glorious sunshine and we all headed for the seaside - in fact to the picturesque coastal town of Honfleur. Not only does Honfleur boast a super little folk museum, a wooden church, a great street market and other attractions (many excellent colourful harbour front restaurants for example), but it is famous for the beginnings of impressionism as it is the birthplace of Eugene Boudin who had Claude Monet as one of his pupils. A minor, but nevertheless significant, highlight of the day was sitting on the harbour wall in the heat of the day, watching the world go by, whilst eating ice cream. Small pleasures are quite often the most appreciated.

Continued on next page

U3A goes to Rouen (continued)



On Sunday we were taken to Bayeux where the majority of the group visited the museum and, of course, saw the famous Bayeux Tapestry. That trip resulted in a few ticks being placed on a few 'bucket lists'. Many thousands of feet have paraded past the ancient tapestry and it is definitely a sight worth seeing.



Our journey continued through to Arromanches – made famous on 6th June 1944 by the D-Day landings of the allied forces. We visited Gold Beach, explored a little and marvelled at the remains of Mulberry Harbour. We visited the excellent museum which had lots to see including models, memorabilia and films which enabled us to gain just a small insight into what had happened all those years ago.



Thanks to Hannie and Anja, our final day was made extra special. Instead of heading straight to the Gare du Nord in Paris (as had been expected), we had time to have a short bus tour along the banks of the Seine and then most of the group enjoyed a fabulous and very relaxing trip on the Seine on a Baton Mouche.



Most people practiced their French during the trip – some were 'Par Excellence', some were 'comme ci, comme ca', and others were ...well...oh la la! It was great fun and the company throughout the trip matched the weather – excellent and extremely enjoyable.

The journey back was relatively uneventful and we all returned home with photographs, sore feet and many happy memories – perfect!

On a personal level I would like to thank Hannie and Anja who looked after us all so well.

You might like to know that the Travel Group are already discussing next year's trip **so watch this space!**

MAUREEN JOHNSON

And Finally



Welcome to the new members who have joined since the Spring issue of the Gazette.

Rob Head, Victor Okrafo-Smart, Stef & Graham Bowman, Debbie Chambers, John & Kath Riddell and Rita Archer

If you are booking a holiday with Riviera Travel don't forget to mention your membership of Cotgrave & District U3A at the time, as they kindly donate 10% of the cost of the holiday to your U3A.

(Please also let the Treasurer, Chris Soar, know so he can claim the money back.)

Articles for inclusion in the next edition of the Gazette should be sent to

The Editor by 1st September 2018