

# Cotgrave & District



Quarterly Gazette

No 17

Spring 2020



Welcome to the latest edition of the Cotgrave & District U3A Gazette, covering news from the Groups, forthcoming events and other interesting items relevant to our U3A.

**Don't forget the AGM on May 12<sup>th</sup>**

**Your Committee needs You**

If you have any items for inclusion or comments please send them to  
The Editor at [cotgraveu3a@hotmail.com](mailto: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*

This brand new for 2020 article is designed to help you to get to know your fellow members just a little better.

Each quarter your Roving Reporter will invite a ~~victim~~ participant (!) to be interviewed from a selection of pre-determined questions. If you find the article interesting, do please, feel free to let the editor know, as well as perhaps chatting through any points of mutual interest with the interviewee.

### **SPOTLIGHT ON.....YVONNE HARRISS**

Q) Where were you born?

A) I was born in Nottingham and lived first in West Bridgford and then Wollaton. I attended NGHS.

Q) How long have you lived in Cotgrave/what brought you here?

A) 46 years. We came because of the old TV programme The Good Life. We fancied being self sufficient and keeping hens and pigs. We have had hens in the past but the foxes were a nuisance - even attacking our cats! We do hope to have more hens again soon.

Q) What is your first childhood memory?

A) Being tied to the school railings by other children when I was 5. When the bell went they all went inside and I had to be rescued by a passer-by.

Q) Did you have a favourite toy/do you still have it?

A) Yes, a French doll - my grand-father was Swiss. And, yes, I still have it.

Q) Give me a brief summary of your working life.

A) After training and working briefly as a bi-lingual secretary, I then qualified as a teacher which I loved. I worked in various locations in and around Nottingham and taught a few different subjects including French, PE, Art and Typing/Office practice.

Q) What have been your main hobbies/interests?

A) I was involved with the Guiding movement for many years, first in Wollaton and then, from 1984 to 2000, in Cotgrave. Many of the people I know in Cotgrave came from my time with the Guides.

Q) Have you taken on anything new recently?

A) Yes, I joined the U3A Chess Group as a complete beginner a few months ago but now I think I've made quite good progress.

Q) You mentioned the Chess Group - what other groups are you involved with?

A) I lead the French Conversation Group and also attend the film nights at Long Clawson.

Q) And what do you enjoy most about being a member of our U3A?

A) It's been great getting re-acquainted with people I'd lost contact with over the years.

Q) Where is your favourite holiday destination?

A) New Zealand, without question. (The Roving Reporter heartily agrees!) I love everything about New Zealand but it's just so far away. More locally, I really like the Isles of Scilly and Guernsey.

Q) What is your best achievement?

A) Undoubtedly converting my Cert Ed qualification to a degree at the age of 48. It took me two years part time.

Q) And finally...here's a question out of left field...would you eat a teaspoonful of mustard in one go for £50? If not, how much would it take?

A) Never, never, never - not at any price!

Thanks, Yvonne. I will now seek out my next ~~victim~~ participant in readiness for the next Gazette.

### Lunch



The **Unicorns Head** was the Christmas Lunch venue. 19 of us went, two had the Xmas menu the rest opted for the set price lunch menu. Starters were average, although one person loves garlic dough balls which were well received. The mains were OK, my steak was not cooked as per order but was acceptable, and others thought that they were not up to last years standard. Desserts were average; hopefully standards will improve before our next visit.



January's lunch meeting was at the **Goose at Gamston**. 20 members attended. This was likely to be Anna and Brian's last time with us before their move to Macclesfield.

The Goose is owned by Greene King and as such serves "pub grub".

Most of our choices were from the "Lunch Classics" menu.

Whilst the portions weren't large, they were adequate and the reasonable prices meant it was possible to have a starter for £2.50, a main course for as little as £5.00 and a dessert for £2.50.

Staff were pleasant and friendly and worked hard.



Most people seemed very eager for our February meal at the **Plough at Normanton** by arriving early. We all sat at one long table; the pub was busy, bustling and noisy.

Although one person got missed off the list given to the chef, an extra setting and table was soon arranged and starters, varying from brie, pate, beetroot salad, soup and crab cakes soon arrived. The starters were promptly followed by 'mains', most of us had "light"

portions that proved ample. The Steak & ale pies had plenty of meat topped with good pastry, scampi was large pieces and steaks well cooked. The mains were enjoyed by all.

The puds took a while to come as the Apple and Fig Tart Tatin was cook fresh and took about 15 minutes, other desserts enjoyed were chocolate brownies, crumble, sticky toffee pudding. Overall the service was prompt, any extra requests were dealt with rapidly and the staff very cheerful.

Overall a very enjoyable experience.

## Eco-Group

We are approaching our group's first Birthday in March and we continue to go from strength to strength, with a waiting list!

There have been several highlights and points of discussion so far, including: supermarket plastics; Terracycle; the purchase, care of and disposal of textiles; home cleaning materials; cosmetics and personal care; production of and avoidance of palm oil; a low-impact Christmas; reducing the impact of travel and the dreadful bush fires in Australia. We have visited the Veolia waste processing plant, the Hockerton Housing Project and the Cafe Roya in Beeston for a vegan/veggie Christmas meal. At our February meeting, we calculated our Carbon Footprints, to see how close we all were to the ideal 'Ten Tonne Lifestyle'. You can find an easy-to-use calculator on the WWF website.

It is hard to plan the programme in advance, as we try to keep to topical areas for discussion, but in the coming months, it is likely that we will have some interesting discussions and tips about gardening and more on travel/holidays.

### The Zero Waste Lifestyle – in this order!

**Refuse** – learn to say 'No' to freebies, giveaways, circulars, paper copies of promotions and magazines\*.

**Reduce** – buy less 'stuff'.

**Refill** – keep your empty jars and containers and refill them at one of the 'Zero waste' shops that we now have. One of our nearest is 'The Good Weigh' in Lady Bay.

**Re-use** – can you get extra life from something, in another way?

**Rot** – dispose of organic materials in your home compost bin.

**Recycle** – this is the *last resort*, for anything you haven't dealt with, above.

\*You may have noticed on the address sheet of U3A magazine that you can ask Sue Childs to contact HQ and change to an emailed update, to reduce your carbon footprint



In conjunction with The Welfare and with much support from the BGS at Keyworth, our crisp packet recycling is going well; another 10kg consignment was sent off on 17<sup>th</sup> February. Thank you to all of you who have contributed! We have now sent off over 7,596 packets to TerraCycle. Their crisp packet recycling scheme (this actually includes all brands of crisps but was initially set up with Walkers) provides a way to deal with these otherwise difficult-to-recycle packets – and makes money for Ash Lea School into the bargain. So far, we have raised a total of over £77.

Please collect as many crisp packets as you can and bring them to our monthly meetings. Crisp packets only, please – no popcorn, pretzel or peanut bags. It really helps us if you can flatten them and make sure they are empty. No fancy triangles either! We send the packets off to Terracycle, where they are separated by plastic type, cleaned, and extruded into plastic pellets to make new recycled products.



### Book Club

The book club over the last three months has read some very different books which have produced lots of positive feed back, points of view and productive comments.



The first book was *The Little Stranger* by Sarah Waters, this has been made into a film recently. It is set post 2W.W. in Warwickshire at a crumbling Georgian Hall, it's gardens choked with overgrown weeds, it's owners mother, son and daughter who were struggling to keep pace with everything. The Ayreses are haunted by something more sinister than a dying way of life. When a local G.P. is asked to attend the story seems to increase in intensity, resulting in mental health problems - is there really a ghost? Very atmospheric and tragic. We were not sure of the meaning behind the title, and who it referred to. Lots of discussion and opinions. Scored 7.



The second book called *Help* by Kathryn Stockett, also made into a film. This is set in Mississippi, the author was born and raised there. It is set in the 60's and tells the story of African-American maids working in white households. Many had Grandmothers who were slaves and the working conditions, attitudes to them and their rights had not changed with the passage of time. These woman were underpaid, undervalued and were trusted to do everything in the house, including total care to the children from birth to adulthood, however couldn't be trusted with the silver. A white girl decided to interview 12 maids about their experiences and a book was published. The nascent civil rights and feminist movements threatened the southern status quo. A very powerful, stimulating, true novel, well worth reading and resulted in many "foods for thought" This scored 9+ by all.



The last book is *All By Myself* by Mary Higgins Clark. The author is a writer of many suspense novels. This story is set on a cruise liner on her maiden voyage from America. The main character, Celia, is escaping her planned wedding. She is a gems and jewellery expert and hopes to escape from public attention by lecturing on a brand new ship. Three days out at sea there is a murder and jewellery goes missing. Celia sets out to find the killer not realising that she has put herself in mortal danger before the ship reaches it's final destination. Should be lots to talk about at the next meeting on March 16th.

The above novels are a taster of the various books we read, many of them we would probably not choose if left to do so. They widen our horizons, give us food for thought and challenge our opinions, also giving us the chance to discuss with the other members their differing interpretations / views of the books.

## Group News

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### Writing Group

We have had two meetings of the writing group since the last Gazette. The subject for the January meeting was 'Starting over' and we had a mixture of poetry and prose, some based on members own lives and some completely fictional. February's subject was 'Chance Encounter' No poetry this month but it was fascinating to hear people's different take on the same subject. For March we are going to write a mystery.

We have welcomed three new members to the group but would love even more so if anybody out there is thinking of joining us we would love to see you. Feel free to come along and see what we do, no need to bring any writing the first time. It will now be on the third Wednesday of the month at 14, Risegate.

### Chess

Chess 2020 commenced on 8 January with the seven members who had ended 2019. Good news was that a new member Charles Steele joined the following week bringing us up to eight. Charles in his first match promptly beat Group Leader Bernie Besnard!

The eight should provide interesting matches with the improvement shown by everyone in the year the group has existed.

Further members are to be searched for.

Just to confirm Chess is held every Wednesday morning from 10.00am in the Welfare Social Club, Woodview, Candleby Lane, Cotgrave. Weekly cost is £1.00 for tea and coffee and 60p for heating when needed.

You do not need to know how to play as we will teach you.

For more information please contact Group Leader Bernie Besnard, 1 Poplar Close, Cotgrave NG12 3SN

Land line 0115 9899845 mobile 07903178424

Bernie Besnard

Group Leader

Cotgrave U3A Member 193

### Comedy Corner

I used to have a job in a calendar factory but I got the sack because I took a couple of days off.

### Comedy Corner

My obese parrot just died  
*It was a weight off my shoulders*

Why did the physics teacher break up with the biology teacher?  
*There was no chemistry*

### Jazz and Musicals



Our December meeting 2019 was hugely favoured by a visit from Roger Browne who drove all the way from Salford to Cotgrave, in pouring rain, starting at 5-30 am. We owe him a heartfelt thank you – we could scarcely have been better entertained. He brought with him his electronic piano on which he was able to demonstrate an ability as a jazz pianist of no small order. Examples of his own versions of jazz classics, such as those of George Gershwin, *The End of a Beautiful Friendship*, *Oh What a Friend We Have in Jesus* and *Tea for Two* were interspersed with personal reminiscences of a long life spent in show-biz. We also learned of an unlikely antagonism between Disley and

Macclesfield and the hazards of an upbringing in the environment of one of the ultimate antagonisms, that between the two Manchesters - United and City. Altogether this was an absolute delight and surely one of the best meetings ever.

### My Musical History Show



Steve Allen entertained our January meeting in musical fashion, while giving us all a subtle education in the pros and cons of the Industrial Revolution. Whilst showing us an amazing collection of photographs and videos of the nineteenth century industrial scene, he sang, with guitar accompaniment, a range of songs from yesteryear. No doubt, we all have our favourites - mine was 'Auntie Maggie's Remedy', which I remember as a George Formby special from the 1941 film 'Turned Out Nice Again'. It struck many of us just how suitable

Steve's performance would be in teaching school children some important English (and Scottish) history but, sadly, his efforts to interest schools had all proved unsuccessful. I suspect that even us 'oldies' learned something new, be it about Richard Arkwright, Boulton and Watt, the Luddites, Lord Shaftsbury, Old Grog, the Duke of Bridgewater, Irish navvies or Florence Nightingale. They were all there, as well as the homeless wretches who shame our collective consciousnesses still today. As an example of just how to educate and entertain in the same breath, as it were, this was a wonderful success.

### Travels and Adventures of a Wildlife Artist



Paul Dyson came to speak to our General Meeting for a second time and was received with similar enthusiasm. He is a remarkable speaker with a vast array of beautiful and often exciting photographs, all of which he has taken himself. He began with a 'wildlife' visit to Botswana and showed an amazing collection of animal and bird shots, many at surprisingly close range. I, personally, lost count of the number of species he showed us – there were all the usual ones plus lots of the less obvious. Some of his sunrise and sunset scenes were almost unbelievable to anyone accustomed to our northerly clime. We were then treated to a fantastic collection of mountain experiences as he almost managed to reach the top of a

mountain over 20000ft. To the average hill-walker such as myself, who was happy with himself on reaching two thousand feet, one can only goggle at the concept of reaching twenty thousand! Just imagine going up and down a couple of thousand feet in order to acclimatise, which is apparently standard practice for the real mountaineer. Finally, he showed us some lovely shots of the local inhabitants, taken with an obvious love of humanity. We were fortunate, indeed, to be privileged to see all this. As before, he also brought along a lovely collection of his animal drawings, many in the form of greetings cards.

## Information.

### Forthcoming Speakers.

<b>Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> March</b>	<b>Roger Clifford – “<i>History of the Willoughby Family</i>”</b>
<b>Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> April</b>	<b>Martin Lloyd - “<i>Passports, Assassins, Traitors and Spies</i>”</b>
<b>Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> May</b>	<b>Nigel Lowey - “<i>The Transformation of St Pancras</i>”</b>
<b>Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> June</b>	<b>Paul Stafford - “<i>A Visit to North Korea</i>”</b>
<b>Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> July</b>	<b>Lesley Stafford (Veolia) - “<i>Talking Rubbish</i>”</b>

### Facebook



One of the many advantages of belonging to the U3A is the social interaction with other members. As you probably know, we now have a presence on the Social Media Platform ‘Facebook’. This is a ‘closed’ group, with details visible only to members of the Cotgrave & District U3A.

We are really pleased at how well this has taken off! At present, nearly 40 members have signed up and are in receipt of regular reminders about meetings and events, national developments and any changes to dates and times of meetings.

To find the group, search for **Cotgrave & District U3A** in the blue search bar at the top of your own Facebook page.

### Plastic Free Cotgrave

A group of residents are working hard to achieve recognition for Cotgrave as a ‘Plastic Free’ community. There are over 650 of these in the country, including Ruddington and Bingham. In reality, it means that steps are being taken by small businesses, the council and local schools/organisations to reduce their use of single use plastics. A number of U3A Eco Group members are involved with this, although it is not a U3A venture in any way.

There’s an Open Meeting on 14th March in the library and there will be a small steering group, involving members of the community, especially families and young people. A Facebook page has been set up and is generating interest.

The group will be looking for volunteers, to develop the work that is already underway in Cotgrave, including:

- Our own Crisp Packet Collection scheme
- The pen collection in the library
- Dove Cottage Hospice’s collection of plastic bottle tops (these can be washed and dropped off at the shop). They also collect used printer cartridges, and old foreign coins.



## And Finally

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

Sandra Seymour, Mike Somerfield, Allan Adams,  
Nikki Storey and Charles Steel

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, Malcolm Baxter 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 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020*