

Cotgrave & District



Quarterly Gazette

No 8

Winter 2017



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.

Congratulations to our own



June Odell on her “Cotgrave Citizenship 2017 Award” for all the good work she does for the Cotgrave community, U3A, Salvation Army, Royal Star and Garter Homes, Red Cross, British Legion and NHS Retirement and Nurses Fellowship Group...
to name just a few

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*

Reflection of the editor



I remember when I first got involved with the U3A committee, it all started over a quiet pint or two with the then chairman Michael O'Conner after an enjoyable morning of playing bridge in the Manvers. Michael persuaded me to go along as an observer to the next committee meeting and that's where my involvement with the organisation the Cotgrave U3A began. I can't remember where being an observer changed to becoming a committee member but at least by being co-opted onto the committee I could join in the discussions and have a vote, but once you become a committee member jobs and roles are quickly found. Cotgrave U3A was fairly young at this stage and in an attempt to get more members a Publicity sub committee was formed, led by David

Drakes with me as his right hand man. As most U3As have some sort of website it was thought a good idea that Cotgrave U3A should have one, so with some initial help from the Keyworth U3A web expert, I started the web site. Initially setting up the site was a lot of work, deciding on layout, content and getting the text correct. I still maintain the website to reflect the changes in the Groups, speakers etc. and also upload items of interest. Also every month the Monthly Newsletter and the Diary provided by Malcolm and Maureen respectively are added to the website.

I think someone thought that I had little to do as the website 'must run itself' and decided to mention that other U3A's had nice publications to keep the members informed of what is happening so this task fell on the shoulders of the person not quick enough to take a pace backwards.

So the Gazette was born, I have two main roles in the production of the Gazette... role one is to get the reports in from the various Groups by gently persuading the Group leaders and other contributors that they really want to send me bits to tell the members about what happened in the last 3 months. If gentle persuasion does not work then I find constant nagging, which according to some, no, many people I am particularly good at (is that true Barbara?). Having got all the articles in it is then a simple job of putting it all together, adding some pictures, altering the formatting, introducing some colour and borders for interest and including a couple of jokes (at least I think they are funny). Then it all goes off to be examined by the wielder of the red pen, David Drakes who is an excellent and exacting proof-reader.

As I say many times, the Gazette could not happen without the input of so many people, so I thank you all.

John.

Group News

ART GROUP

Eleven members of the Art Group spent a very enjoyable 3 hours tuition with Lynne Whitfield on 9th November painting with watercolours.

Our subject was a flamingo, which we all drew, then painted under the creative direction of Lynne. The inspiration came from a BBC programme earlier this year when artists were invited to paint flamingos in a local park. Their results were disappointing (according to the experts) I think our paintings are really impressive!



WALKING GROUP



Starting this quarter's short walks, we re-visited Nottingham Arboretum. This urban walk visited the site of some of Nottingham's well known sites of the 60s/70s, the ABC Carlton (later Nottingham) Cinema. The Co-operative Department Store on Parliament Street, the Heart of the Midlands night club, now Rock City and the Empire Theatre now the site of the Royal Concert Hall, before proceeding to what was once Nottingham's smallest public house located on North Sherwood Street 'The Hole in the Wall'. The walk continued to the Arboretum to view the impressive dahlia floral beds awash with its colourful blooms and acknowledged as one of the top displays of dahlias in the country.



Our second walk was to Wollaton Park where the walk covered Lime Tree Avenue and the Golf Course with sight of the park's deer, the Derby Road entrance and a walk around the lake before making our way to the Hall and an enjoyable cup of coffee in the stable yards.



The final walk this quarter was to Newark, starting with a visit to the Queens Sconce, an earthwork fortification used to defend Newark during the Civil War. The visit then followed the river Devon to the point it entered the river Trent before visiting the Town Lock and the view across the river of Newark Castle. We then made our way to the Market Place passing the Charles 1st Coffee House, where the site was once used by Queen Henrietta Marie, wife of Charles 1st, when she visited Newark and the Café Amore, once a merchant's house, and a billet for soldiers during the Civil War conflicts.



Group News

Film Club

The Long Clawson film night, opened after its August break with 'Their Finest', a tale set in 1940s London that told the story of an untried screenwriter and makeshift crew who were tasked with producing a film to lift the nations flagging spirits and to inspire the Americans to join the war.



The 'Hidden Figures' told a true story of 3 African American female mathematicians and engineers having to fight not only racist bigotry but also anti-female colleagues in the aerospace industry whilst trying to put an astronaut into space.



The third film 'Viceroy's House' is set in 1947 New Delhi, where the last Viceroy of India, Lord Louis Mountbatten, has been appointed by Clement Attlee to oversee the transfer of power from the British to a new independent India.



The Silver Screen presentations started the autumn period with 'The Graduate' to celebrate the 50 years since its first release. Two foreign language films have been shown: 'Hotel Salvation' an Indian film telling the story of a 77 year old gentleman who persuades his son to accompany him to the holy city of Varanasi where he can achieve salvation in his final days...however the trip seems to re-invigorate the gentleman by making new friends with the other dying residents and 'Call Me By Your Name' in French, Italian and German is the story of a 17-year-old young man enjoying his summer holidays with his family when he meets a 20-year-old associate of his father and the effect that has on his feelings. 'Victoria and Abdul' is the story of the relationship that develops between Queen Victoria and a young clerk, Abdul, who travels from India to participate in the Queens Golden Jubilee, whilst 'Film Stars Don't Die In Liverpool' is where British actor Peter Turner has a vibrant affair with Hollywood star Gloria Grahame during the latter years of her life. 'Breathe' follows the despair and determination of Diana Cavendish and her husband Robin, who is paralysed by polio, to overcome their difficulties and lead as normal a life as possible.

'Battle Of The Sexes' recalls the events leading up to the famous tennis match between Billie Jean King and Bobby Riggs. 'The Party', hosted by Janet to celebrate her promotion to Shadow Health Minister causes chaos amongst her family and friends with 'The Death of Stalin', found dead on his office floor following a stroke, causing hijinks, plotting and jostling for power by a group of his comrades. 'Wind River' is set in Wyoming where the discovery of a Native American woman sees the local wildlife officer seconded to assist the rookie FBI agent, Jane Banner, to solve the case. A glimpse of the relationship author A.A Milne had with his son and whose stuffed toys inspired the magical world of Winnie the Pooh is revealed in 'Goodbye Christopher Robin.'

'Blade Runner 2049' shows the tale of LAPD Officer K's search to find Rick Dickard the former LAPD blade runner from the original film who has been missing for 30 years. 'Murder On The Orient Express' is a remake based on the book by Agatha Christie. Kenneth Branagh the film's director, plays detective Hercule Poirot in his race against time to solve the riddle.

History Group



The October meeting was an illustrated talk by Dr. Colin Groves, a local lecturer and a good friend to our Group and the former Local History Society.

His presentation was all about Wiverton Hall (not Whyverton as some would pronounce) and its 'rise and fall' as a wealthy house.

Colin explained the chronology and changes that the house endured and showed photographs of the immediate 'post occupancy' by Hells's Angels and their abuse of the premises.

Travellers passing by the building will now only see the former outer Gatehouse of the once expansive house as the gardens and original house have long since disappeared. Colin as usual treated members to many little anecdotes and stories surrounding the house.

November's meeting was a talk given by Ron Murphy on the development and subsequent decline of coal mining in Cotgrave. A former miner relocated from the North East along with his family in the early 1960s, Ron gave members a colourful insight into the operation of the colliery as well as the social 'integration' of miners' family lives adjusting to life in a different part of England.



Ron then opened the meeting to a Q & A session when members and guests 'bombarded' Ron with numerous comments and enquiries.



The December meeting was a reflection of Cotgrave's past with facts and photos partially covering the recent Cotgrave walk around part of the village presented by Malcolm and Paul.

A final review of the proposed 2018 calendar of events will also be discussed including visit costs and arrangements, Cotgrave history project research and speaker subject matter.

Luncheon Group

September we went to the Unicorn's Head this was our second visit since its reopening, as we had been so impressed the first time and were not disappointed. The Tuesday-Friday lunch deal of two courses for £9.95, in a pleasant decor with excellent service, represents value for money. The wild garlic mushrooms were particularly popular as a starter. Then many people opted for pie: Steak & Stout, Chicken Ham and Stilton or Fish Pie, all served with proper chips and mushy peas or seasonal vegetables and gravy. There were a number of other choices, so we were not limited. The lemon posset dessert was delicious, small but rich and very lemony.



The pub coped well with our group that now numbers nearly thirty. However, we did notice a party of four who had turned up for lunch on spec and who had to wait quite a while before being served. If you decide to go back to the Unicorn's Head with friends, it is popular, so it would be advisable to book in advance.

Our October outing was to The Goose at Gamston, a chain pub serving a fairly extensive menu at a reasonable price. The service was very good as was the quality of the food. Some of the Group even found room to squeeze in a pudding..



November's venue for the luncheon Group was at the newly re-furbished 'Apple Tree' in Compton Acres. It has a homely décor with separate areas for coffee, food and drinking. We were seated in a nice raised section slightly separated from the other diners. The menu was typical of chain pub food but we were pleasantly surprised by the quality and the size of the portions and enjoyed by all.



Bridge Group

I have found it difficult to write a regular news update on the Group. Then a light came on! Ask the members why they came, what they liked and disliked! So here it is.

For my part it beats the old fashioned washday, and a good start to the working week.

A good sociable game that stretches the brain.

I like the game and this is a non-threatening environment to play in.

Really enjoy Mondays...I can meet the challenge without the stress.

It's fun, very sociable and totally addictive.

My wife tells me to go to bridge!! It's sociable.

Good company and laughs but serious.

Great to meet friends and exercise the brain at the same time.

The best game I play, so sociable but challenging my brain.. This is the reason I wish to play.

Enjoy the company and no pressure on winners/losers.

The social side of the Bridge Group starts whilst queuing outside the Manvers, as they don't unlock till 10, a lovely group of people, smiling and chatting. It's a long time since I have queued waiting for a pub to open.

Very quickly the tables get laid, cards out and away we go, coffee is at 11:00 and if we are lucky someone brings biscuits

We pack up at 12ish and ask who is coming to the Tuesday evening session also at the Manvers.

Thanks to Phil and Staff for hosting us..

Group News

Theatre Group

The Theatre Group aims to go to about one show a month. We do not always manage this...in September our proposed trip to *The Kite Runner* at the Nottingham Playhouse was cancelled through lack of interest...but since then we have had a full programme.

In October there were two theatre visits. The first was to the Theatre Royal for *My Fair Lady*, performed by the Nottingham Operatic. This was an excellent production, very much modelled on the film starring Audrey Hepburn, with identical costumes. The singing was faultless and, apart from some rather wooden acting from a couple of players (and it's a tall order to both sing and act well) we thought the production could easily have been professional.



Opinions were divided over our next experience, *The History Boys* at the Lace Market Theatre. Many people had seen and loved the film. The script of the play was very similar and the acting was of a high standard, including that of the youths who had never been on stage before. They were totally natural and made you feel you were in the classroom with them.

It is a strange play, of a minor public school writ large, sometimes utterly fantastic, at others totally familiar. Not everyone enjoyed it, but most of us did.

Blood Brothers in November was at the Theatre Royal. It is a classic; a number of us had seen it at least once before. If anyone doesn't know, it is the story of two twins who are separated at birth and though one is adopted by a rich family and the other left in poverty, are drawn to each other. When their fortunes polarise, there is a tragic ending. However, throughout there is a lot of scouse humour and the show is a lot lighter than it sounds at first, although giving much to think about concerning our divided society. There were no criticisms of this performance that made you both laugh and cry.



We look forward to the following:

February 15th *Wonderland* by Beth Steel.

February 24th *Fiddler on the Roof*

April 11th *This House* by James Graham

May 16th *The Jersey Boys*

Group News

Card and Board Games

Our Group hasn't missed a single monthly meeting since we started over 15 months ago and we have now grown to 12 core members, with another 4 members sitting on a 'reserve' list. As leader, I would like to express my personal thanks to everyone in the Group for making it successful and, what's more, for making it FUN!

As I write, despite our format being basically the same every time we meet, plans are afoot for a more 'Christmas party' atmosphere for December, so those attending should expect things to be a little different from the norm!

To continue with the Christmas theme, you might be interested in the following...

In a little Yorkshire village, 6 year old Charlie Hepplethwaite had just arrived home from school. He ate up his slice of bread and dripping and then skipped down the road to see his granddad, Amos. He found Amos sitting on his back step whittling a stick.

"Aye up, granddad," said Charlie, squeezing in beside Amos.

"Aye up, lad," said granddad.

They sat quietly for a minute or two.

"What's tha learnt at school today?" asked granddad.

"Now't much," said Charlie, his foot playing with the wood shavings which were piling up on the floor.

"Tha' must a dun summat," said granddad, giving Charlie an encouraging little push with his elbow.

"Well, granddad, we're all gerrin' ready for Christmas and I did learn summat I din't know affore."

"What's that, lad?" asked granddad.

"Well, granddad, did tha' know that them three wise men that visited Jesus when he was a babby came from Yorkshire?"

Amos stopped whittling and looked down at Charlie. "Nay, lad, I din't know that! Are tha' sure that's rate?"

"Aye! T'teacher said so, so it must be rate! It wa' when we wa' all practicing t'play. She told us that Jesus wa born in an old shed and that sum shepherds came and then t'three wise men came from t'East Riding!On camels!"

Granddad took his flat cap off and scratched his head.

"Well, I'll go t'foot of our stairs," he said. "Ah know there's sum bright blokes in Yorkshire, but a din't know we 'ad camels 'ere two thousand years ago!"

HAPPY CHRISTMAS EVERYONE!

Travel Discussion Group

This Group could, I suppose, be thought of an "all-talk-no-action" group, and, as a Group, maybe that is what it is, but, so far as the Group members are concerned, they are anything but!

A different geographical location is agreed as a topic each month and this year's topics have been pretty varied...America & Canada; Ireland; European Cities, India & Sri Lanka; Portugal; Scandinavia....

The format is that the meeting is commenced with a "report" of the experiences from members who have been to the topic destination, and their personal views and "tips for survival", usually accompanied by maps and brochures...always interesting and helpful.

What it is not is "Come round and see our holiday slides" sort of format.

All members are invited to come if there is a topic of interest to them...you don't have to be on the "Group Members List"...just let me, or the host, know...Maureen's monthly Newsletter gives all the details.

Group News

Computer Club

“Here to Help”

Let's face it, most of us have spent many a frustrating day or so trying to understand the weird and wonderful ways of our laptop/tablet/smartphone.

Like as not the wonders of Google or YouTube can help out.

But so, too, can The Computer Club.

We come together once a month to try to help out, as best we can, by sharing experiences in a workshop environment.

Some of our members are more computer literate than others . . . it doesn't matter . . . we're all there to help, to chuck in our two penneth.

So just come along and air your problems . . . someone else will no doubt have encountered some or all of them themselves, may well have solved them and be happy to share their experience with you.

Areas we've covered recently include using **SKYPE** to keep in touch with friends and relatives overseas without breaking the bank . . . experiences of social media, for better or worse! . . . use of **DROPBOX** to keep your data secure and shared with a closed group of friends and acquaintances.

So, do come along . . . take the mystique out of computing . . . we're here to help take some of the demons out of computing.

Real Ale Group

The R.A.G. continues to be a faithfully intellectual study and judgment of ales to be found and consumed in West Bridgford and Nottingham.

The (usually) 5 half pints of ale are judged and awarded points out of 10 and a 6 is the “I could drink a full pint, and perhaps another” score, although, as with all panels of judges we have our Craig!

At our last meeting of the year we tasted and tested a spiced pumpkin beer, very unusual, which received a “neel pwan!” from Craig, though another, less traditional member, gave it an 8!

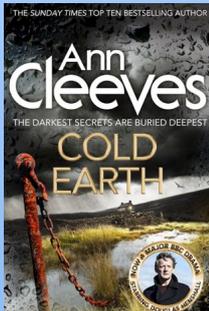
This month's selection included an Adnams Sloe Storm, an Abstract Jungle Brewery Sturdy, and a Cotleigh Barn Owl, so, you see, we're not your run of the mill boring brew imbibers – we take our task seriously, well, nearly, anyway.

Comedy Corner

I had an argument with one of the seven dwarfs

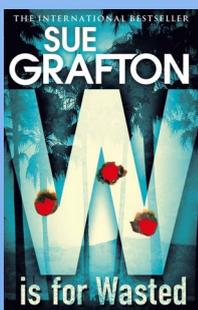
He was not Happy.

Book Club



The first book was *Cold Earth* by Ann Cleeves, a prolific and accomplished writer of the Vera series. We all thoroughly enjoyed this well-rounded novel. Set in a Shetland winter, very descriptive and occupying a space somewhere between cosy and noir drizzly might be a good description. When during a sudden storm a landslide exposes a woman's body in an isolated cottage. The nearby families are drawn into the murder investigation and many skeletons come out of the closets, lives are permanently changed in this isolated rural community with many relatable characters...who is the murderer? The Group

had an in depth meaty discussion regarding this solidly plotted whodunit for procedural and traditional mystery readers. We are going to read a Vera series later.



The second book is also a crime thriller, *W for Wasted* by Sue Grafton. This was an over long book with many aspects of unrelated descriptive padding which distracted from the story relating to two seemingly separate deaths... comments were too long, lost the plot at times and not her best book in this series. Gave a rating of 3-5 out of 10. We will not re-visit this author but it was good to compare the two books for style, depth and flow.



The third book currently being read is *The Light Between Oceans* by M.E. Stedman. Set in Australia in 1918 post W.W.1. would you accept a chance of happiness even if it wasn't yours to have? This is a story about a lighthouse keeper and his new wife, who live on a lonely island with only seagulls, stars and buffeting winds for company. It's a story of right and wrong and how they sometimes look the same.

This emotionally complex story with lush descriptions, savage landscapes and vivid characters that profoundly mature in this book, this has been made into a recent film.

We meet monthly on the 3rd Monday at 2.15p.m.

Books are available in large print and spoken word and all welcome...we have two vacancies.

Singing for Pleasure

I don't quite know how to start writing this final (for 2017) article for our super U3A Gazette.

Looking back over the year we have had a) masses of singing, b) lots of laughter, c) a few moments of sheer bewilderment and d) a few new songs to learn. One song in particular involves us starting very, very, very slowly and then building up to break-neck-can-hardly-get-the-words-out-quickly-enough ultrasonic speed! Can you guess what it might be? It is, of course, the Cancan, but with our own purpose written tongue-twisting words. If you want to hear it you will have to come along one Wednesday evening!

More new songs are planned for 2018, some of which I have pinched from the Ukulele Group that was formed earlier this year. There is a natural affinity between our two Groups as both involve singing and fun! You know, so many people say to me, "Oh, no, I can't sing at all," but do you know what? We don't mind! All both Groups hope for is that our members come along with an open mind and a willingness to get stuck in....the rest all follows.



This was clearly evident at our two recent 'performances'. On 1st December some of us gathered in the shopping precinct and sang when the lights were switched on. The following night we were delighted to perform once again at our wonderful U3A Christmas Party. Not only did the choir perform outstandingly, but also our audience sang with gusto and made the evening a huge success. The appearance of Father Christmas went down particularly well!

On a more serious note, one of two of our members haven't been well recently and we really do hope that everyone returns to full health very soon...we look forward to having you back with us in 2018. Several of us are planning a day out at The Ruddington Big Sing in the spring which will give us all a challenge I am sure!

My final word is to say a huge, huge **THANK YOU** to every member of our Group. I simply love to sing and I cannot believe how lucky I am that you all come along and contribute so enthusiastically to making my Wednesday evenings such a pleasure. You all genuinely enhance my life and I appreciate all that you do. Thank you, Merry Christmas and a happy and healthy 2018! Tra laaaaa!

Tony's Quiz

- 1 Who became leader of the Conservative Party in Sept. 2001?
- 2 What was the UEFA Cup formerly called?
- 3 Which item of headgear takes its name from a 19th century battle?
- 4 In which year did George V come to the throne?
- 5 What is 'Just William's' surname?
- 6 Which playwright was a convicted member of the IRA?
- 7 Which Far Eastern presidential wife had an extraordinary collection of shoes? She was also known as the 'Iron Butterfly'.
- 8 In which city is South Africa's parliament?
- 9 When was Nottingham Castle re-opened as the Castle Museum?
Was it a) 1878 b) 1901) c) 1911 ?
- 10 Who carried out the official opening?

Answers on Page 15

Comedy Corner

I keep dreaming that I am falling through theatre doors. But my Doctor told me not to worry its just a stage I'm going through

Comedy Corner

How do you know carrots are good for your eyesight?
Have you ever seen a rabbit wearing glasses?

For the Bird Watchers

Keep a look out in your area for this handsome winter visitor from the North.



The Bohemian Waxwing is a starling sized bird easily recognised by its unique soft peach plumage, large crest, black mask and throat, yellow tail bar and red ‘wax-drops’ on its wings.

It is a native of the coniferous forests of Northern Europe, Russia and Scandinavia where it breeds and feeds almost exclusively on a diet of berries from plants in the genus Sorbus, in particular Rowan and from Cotoneasters and Hawthorn.

In normal years, relatively small numbers of birds migrate to the UK arriving on the East Coast of Scotland and England where they feed in small flocks of 10/20 birds, stripping the berries locally before moving on to fresh supplies.

Last winter 2016/17 was an exceptional year in that unusually high numbers of birds arrived and dispersed as far as the Welsh Borders and Dorset and Devon in the South. It is thought this influx was triggered by a prolific breeding season followed by an inadequate berry crop to sustain the population in their homeland. Birds were seen locally in Nottingham parks and hedgerows and in streets and gardens containing berry bearing plants as close as Clifton and West Bridgford where they were seen by members of our U3A ‘Birding Group’.

Who knows if this winter will bring such numbers as last year but keep a watch for these handsome charmers and be aware that they are fickle guests and once our berries have been consumed and the urge to breed strengthens they will return home without a backward glance.

Speakers Corner (1) - Red Herrings and White Elephants

The September meeting was not quite so well attended as usual, many members being on holiday, but we enjoyed a lively presentation by Peter Hammond, from West Bridgford, on the subject of odd phrases and their equally odd origins. In the course of his discourse we also learned some interesting snippets of English history, such as the fact that in Tudor England marriages were commonly held in June because people were in the habit of taking their annual bath in May. The bride would therefore be at her sweetest and would, in any case, wear a hat decorated with flowers to hide any lingering malodours. While thinking of baths, we also learned the origin of the phrase “don’t throw out the baby with the bath water”. This dates to the Victorian age of the tin bath in front of the fire, when each member of the family would, in turn, use the same bath water, starting with the dominant male, followed by the females, the children and finally the baby (who, one feels, may well have ended up slightly dirtier for the experience!). Going back to the Tudors, we were reminded that house floors were made of dirt and covered in straw which tended to house a variety of unpleasant creatures, so it was found advisable to use a wooden board on which to sleep, thus giving rise to the phrases “bed and board” and “board and lodging”.



Being a maritime nation, many of our common phrases have a naval origin. Being “three sheets in the wind”, for example, comes from the fact that it was important to use four sails in cohesion to sail a ship efficiently, whereas the use of three led to a degree of chaos such as might be characteristic of someone slightly disordered, perhaps under the influence of alcohol. “Battening down the hatches” is an obvious reference to the advisability of keeping water out of the lower decks in bad weather and “a loose cannon” is a danger to everyone on the gun deck during a naval engagement. One term which was new to me concerned the use of the ‘knot’ to measure a ship’s speed through the water – it was measured with a length of rope, having knots tied at regular intervals along its length. “Being at a loose end”, also has maritime association, apparently. When seamen found themselves with nothing to do, their Captain would get them to check the ends of the ship’s ropes to make sure they were all properly fastened. Then, finally, the phrase “there wasn’t room to swing a cat round” refers to the problem of punishing an errant sailor below decks, using a cat o’ nine tails. Those of us with a love of the feline species were relieved to hear that it did not involve swinging one’s pet moggy by the tail in order to gain an estimate of the size of a room.



Needless to say, there were many references to toilet function but one new to me was “going to Scarborough” – Scarborough is, of course, a watering place. Say no more. Changing the subject, though, I was intrigued to learn that “going back to square one” originated in the early days of radio commentary on football matches. The commentators would notionally divide the pitch into numbered squares so that they could give the listener a rapid impression of where the action was, so “going back to square one” meant returning to the starting configuration after a goal or at the beginning of the second half. “Lock, stock and barrel” takes its meaning from the taking apart of a musket in order to satisfy a safety order...it was clearly necessary to keep all the bits together in order that the gun could later be reassembled. “Big wigs” were, of course, owned by those wealthy enough to afford them and, by implication, important enough to be wealthy.



[Continued on next page](#)

Speakers Corner (2) - Red Herrings and White Elephants (cont.)

“Getting the sack” did literally involve being given a sack in which to take all one’s professional equipment home when leaving one’s employment for the last time. “Being on tenterhooks”, as a state of extreme tension originated from the stretching of material between an array of hooks while it dried after dyeing. “Spilling the beans” is interesting in that it goes back to ancient Greek election practices, the beans representing votes and spilling them implied telling the world who voted for whom. There were also a number of gruesome phrases connected with the hanging of criminals...“hangers-on” were friends of the victim who helped to speed his demise by pulling down on his legs, once the bucket had been kicked from beneath his feet. A “red letter day” originated from the Catholic Church’s practice of using red ink to emphasise a special Saint’s Day and there were dozens more which your poor scribe found too rapidly presented to comprehend. I hope I have, nevertheless, given a worthwhile representation of the temper of the occasion. “Red Herrings and White Elephants”, by the way, is the title of a book which expands on this subject at much greater length. If you find this summary less than adequate, I can only refer you to it!

Answers to Tony's Quiz

1	Iain Duncan Smith
2	The Inter-Cities Fairs Cup
3	Balaclava
4	1910
5	Brown
6	Brendan Behan
7	Imelda Marcos (Philippines)
8	Cape Town (Even though the seat of government is in Pretoria)
9	1878
10	The Prince of Wales (Later King Edward VII)

Speakers Corner (2) - The Disneys of Norton Disney

The programmed talk for our October meeting fell by the wayside as a result of some unfortunate failure of communication so what should have been “Slowly up the Ganges” deteriorated into something like “Slowly up the Trent – without a paddle!” John Orton kindly undertook to stand in at short notice and entertain the meeting with an account of the Disney family who inhabited the village of Norton Disney, in the wilds of Lincolnshire, some few miles north of Lincoln. It was a talk he had originally given to the History Group roughly three years earlier, relying on the assumption that members of the Group would, by now, have forgotten all about it. However, as John pointed out, he too had forgotten most of it so progress was, indeed, a trifle slow, the U3A boat zig-zagging from bank to bank, rather than proceeding in an organised manner in mid-stream.

John’s contact with the Disney’s came about as a result of a pub lunch in the village, during which he discovered that Walt Disney, himself, had visited the local church in 1949 to trace his ancestry. The name ‘Disney’ originated from the fact that certain members of William-the-Conqueror’s entourage came from a Normandy village called ‘Isigny-sur-Mer’. A gentleman called Lambert-d’ Isigny is recorded as living in Nortune (which means ‘Northern Farmhouse’) at the time of the Domesday Book and ‘d’Isigny’ gradually turned into ‘Disney’, while ‘Nortune’ turned into ‘Norton’. The Disney family became well established in the village by the end of the thirteenth century, a moated Manor House being in existence by 1300. They made several ‘good’ marriages and acquired both prestige and wealth, as evidenced by the existence of marble effigies in Norton church and in the nearby village of Kingerby. Noteworthy is the fact that most of these were emblazoned with ‘Amundeville’ shields, rather than the Disney ‘Fleur de Lys’, the Amundeville family (into which the Disneys had married) being much superior in status.

In Tudor times William Disney was Sheriff of Lincoln and helped found Grantham School where Isaac Newton received his early education. Norton Church also has an interesting ‘Disney Brass’ circa 1580 which commemorates the marriage of William Disney with Margaret Joiner and it includes a ‘Testimonial’ to the good character of two of their sons, William and Richard. The need for this is thought to be that they might have been implicated in the ‘Lincolnshire Rebellion’ against the despoliation of the monasteries, while they wished to keep their names clean in the hope of acquiring land from Henry VIII. They did!

It was the Civil War that spoiled the fortunes of the Disneys. They supported Cromwell and were obliged to help fund his armies, while being subject to raids from the Royalist garrison in Newark, which also cost them ‘safety money’. Molineux Disney was also fined for supporting Monkton’s insurrection against Cromwell’s heavy-handed governance. Finally, young William Disney was involved in the Monmouth Rebellion against James II and was duly executed for his pains. However, it was also the Civil War that led to some members of the family moving to live in Ireland. Cromwell rewarded his supporters with land in Ireland and at least one member of the Disney family took advantage of the opportunity. This eventually led to Walt Disney’s grandfather’s emigrating to Canada, then moving to Chicago where Walt himself was born. The rest, as they say, is history.

Speakers Corner (3) - Dove Cottage Day Hospice



It isn't often that we get the opportunity to hear from the founder of a very well-known charity exactly how it all began, developed and came to its present state of working but our November meeting was privileged to hear just this from Chris Gatfield, founder of Dove Cottage Day Hospice. No-one present could have failed to

be touched by her modest presentation of how the idea came to her to set up a day care centre for those facing terminal illness and the amazing manner in which she was able to raise the necessary finance. It was a truly Christian endeavour, inspired, originally, by an angry young woman who fiercely objected to the fact that she was soon to die of an inoperable brain tumour. Starting from the gift of a totally derelict farm building, Chris described how her simple idea grew to the multi-roomed complex which now caters for the varied needs of some eighty-a-week day-visitors, how each and every new development has satisfied the needs of its incomers, how new facilities were developed to meet their every interest but, perhaps more than anything, how the Hospice has given new life to those who would otherwise be stranded in isolated home surroundings, unable to meet with other human beings. Not only are they provided with a communal lunch, but also with the opportunity to enjoy a wide range of activities, such as art, games, discussion, etc. Then there are spiritual needs to be met and, at the same time purely physical ones such as having a bath! No doubt, many of us had never thought about it but someone too ill to clamber into a bath might go for literally years without having one. The Hospice has facilities for hoisting just about anyone into its multi-purpose bath – so far as Chris could remember, no-one has so far defeated their efforts to provide such a basic human need as this. We were shown many excellent photographs of happy people enjoying a game of, for example, dominoes, helped along (in this instance) with a bottle of sherry. Outside is also a lovely garden for the day visitors to enjoy. Then again, one thing led to another and carers, becoming grieverers, needed help to cope with their sad loss – the Hospice now provides this too.

Chris had absolutely no experience of running any such activity when she started out twenty years ago and there were numerous occasions when, faced with the question “how in the World are you going to find the money to do this or that?” her initial answer was “I haven't the remotest idea!” Nevertheless the money somehow contrived to materialise. Of course, this was largely in response to her outgoing and ‘never-say-die’ personality. In one instance she deliberately attended the Sunday service at Bottesford church and publicised a particular requirement for £50,000, only to have the money promised in the following week. Nor was it the only time such generosity was forthcoming. Having the confidence and sense of purpose to ask for ‘ridiculous’ amounts of money turned out to be more than half the battle. There can be no doubt that such appeals do touch the hearts (and wallets) of many members of the public and it is true that the Dove activity depends to a huge extent on the generosity of its many volunteers. Cooks, drivers, nurses, event organisers all contribute and the Hospice can still find work for new volunteers. Chris described one particularly touching example of a very ill woman who managed to ‘run’ a mile across Melton Park in order to raise funds...in fact, it was more of a ‘stagger’ but all the more heart-warming for that. As we know from our own example in Cotgrave (just alongside the Cotgrave filling station), the organisation runs a number of charity shops which depend on volunteer help and there is now a Tea-Room and Playground near the Hospice itself which is open to all of us for a cheerful afternoon out. It's just a couple of miles from Harby. Of course, people do all kinds of crazy things too to raise quite remarkable amounts of money and such support is likely to be ever more important as Government and Local Authority support is squeezed to the tightest of limits so none of us should feel inhibited about coming forward.

The Christmas Party

After another enjoyable Christmas Party thanks must go to June Odell for providing an excellent buffet and to Sue Tatum and members of the Singing for Pleasure Group for providing the entertainment and for all those who help to set up the hall and tidy away afterwards.



The Art Group goes Festive

At the December General Meeting the Art Group put on a display of their work, created with the festive season in mind.



And Finally



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

Stuart & Frances Ellis, June Taylor, Brian & Vicky Pike,
Mike & Elaine Gallagher, Lesley Sinclair and Chris Tomblin

If you are booking a holiday with Riviera Travel don't forget to mention your membership of Cotgrave 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 March 2018