



Ashby de la Zouch



Newsletter October 2016

General Meetings are held on the last Tuesday of each month from 2:00p.m to 4:00p.m. at the Congregational Church, Kilwardby Street, Ashby de la Zouch

Last General Meeting: 24th October

Margaret Brown gave us a very interesting talk on the founding, history and present day workings of the St Giles Hospice from its humble beginnings with just nine beds in the vicarage at Whittington to now providing care both in the home and at its three centres in Whittington, Sutton Coldfield and Walsall for over 6000 people in 2014. It now has more than 450 staff and 1500 volunteers and spends over £9m a year on care. Margaret was keen to stress that despite rumours to the contrary, it does provide services to the people of Ashby. They provide both in-patient and out-patient services as well as in-home services to those who have life-limiting illnesses and to their families. She was also at pains to point out that entering a hospice is not necessarily a final act. Many come for just a few days to get their symptoms controlled and their condition stabilised before returning home. Some just attend one day a week to receive specialist care or to meet others with similar conditions. They also offer Hospice at Home services to those who prefer to remain in their own homes and the Community Team of Specialist Nurses visit people at home for treatment and advice. The care is provided free of charge, irrespective of personal circumstances.

Margaret also taught us about the necessity of not just making a will but also telling others about (or at least writing down) your final wishes in case you suddenly become incapable of stating them after illness or accident.

All in all the story was one of hope and care, and much appreciated by all who listened.

New Groups

Four new groups have been proposed: Play Reading, Poetry, Ladies Golf and Arts & Crafts. If anyone is interested in any of these please contact James Bloor at interestg@ashbyu3a.co.uk

Next General Meeting: 25th October

Speaker: Margaret Brown **Subject:** St Giles Hospice

2016	Tea and Coffee Rota	Meeters and Greeters	Reporting Group
November	Sandra Fox, Cynthia Wells, Cath Baker, Jane Barnett		Bird Watching Bridge
December	The Committee		none
January '17			Calligraphy Family History
February			

Christmas Lunch – Thursday 8th December

This year's Christmas lunch will be at Willesley Park Golf Club, Measham Road, Ashby

The menu is listed below, so please make your selection. As places are limited, a £10 deposit, paid as soon as possible, will secure your place.

The balance along with your choice from the menu must be paid by November 17th.

Deposits will be collected at the General Meeting, or contact Ann Thompson on 01530 452078.
Cheques should be made payable to Ashby de la Zouch U3A.

The Golf Club have stated no trainers or jeans (as if we would!)

MENU

Starters

Melon with raspberry coulis
Chicken liver paté with onion relish

Main Courses

Roast Turkey, stuffing, pigs in blanket, cranberry sauce
Poached Salmon with a creamy dill sauce
Chestnut, parsnip & mushroom Nut Roast

Desserts

Christmas pudding with brandy sauce
Chocolate Roulade

Cheese & Biscuits

to be followed by
Coffee and Chocolate truffles

£23

Interest Groups Timetable: November

Interest group	Meeting date and time	Venue
Bird Watching	3rd Nov at 10.30 am-3 pm	Rutland Water, Oakham
Bridge	7th & 21st Nov at 7-9 pm 14th & 28th Nov at 2-4 pm	Royal Hotel, Ashby.
Calligraphy	8th Nov at 10 am	Jenny's house
Computer	Wed 2nd Nov at 2 pm Mon 21st Nov at 2 pm	16 Winchester Way
Digital Photography	3rd Nov at 10 am.	16 Winchester Way.
Drawing and painting	16th Nov at 10 am	2 Marlborough Way
Family History	9th Nov at 2 pm	2 Marlborough Way
Gardening	17th Nov at 2-4 pm	Packington Village Hall - Japanese Gardens talk
History	24th Nov at 2 pm	Packington Hall for talk on 'U3A Family History Group' by John Dogherty
Industrial Heritage	23rd Nov at 10 am	Donington Collection of Grand Prix and military vehicles, Castle Donington
Italian	7th Nov at 10 am	2 Marlborough Way
Literature	8th Nov at 1.30 pm	28 Willesley Gardens
Lunch	10th Nov at 12 noon	The George Inn, Coleorton
Medium Walks	14th Nov at 9.45 for 10 am start	Meet North Street Carpark to walk to a nearby village, eg Packington, Smisby etc
Music Appreciation	2nd Nov at 10 am	43 Cambrian Way, Ashby
Quiz	16th Nov at 2.30 pm	Bull and Lion Packington
Recorder	3rd Nov at 10 am 17th Nov at 10 am	65 Gresley Wood Rd, Church Gresley, DE11 9QP
Short Walks	18th Nov at 10 am	Meet at the round car park overlooking Staunton Harold reservoir to walk to Calke Abbey this is a hilly walk.
Trips and Outings	23rd Nov at 12.30 pm for coach	Coach at Royal Hotel, for Nottingham Theatre Royal 'A Tale of Two Cities'
Walking	1st Nov at 9:45 for 10 am start 15th Nov at 9.45 for 10 am start	The Swan Inn, Milton, DE65 6EF The Bulls Head, Wilson, DE73 8AE

Early December

Interest group	Meeting date and time	Venue
Bird Watching	8th Dec full day	RSPB Frampton Marsh, Boston by minibus
Bridge	5th Dec at 7-9 pm	Royal Hotel, Ashby.
Computer	7th Dec at 2 pm	16 Winchester Way
Digital Photography	1st Dec at 10 am	16 Winchester Way
Music Appreciation	7th Dec at 10 am	TBA
Recorder	1st Dec at 10 am	65 Gresley Wood Rd, Church Gresley
Walking	6th Dec at 9.45 for 10am	TBA

*For trips, outings, walks and other events which meet away from the usual venues, see further details in the relevant Group Reports below, or on our website www.ashbyu3a.co.uk

Group Reports

Bird Watching – Leader James Bloor birdwatch@ashbyu3a.co.uk

6th October. Cossington Meadows

Three members of the Birding Group met at the LRWT Reserve at Cossington on a fine morning with occasional sun. We made our way to Tern Pool to find good numbers of regular wildfowl, including c30 Wigeon, with some of the drakes coming out of their post-breeding eclipse plumage and showing some gold on the crown, five or six Teal, including drakes in breeding plumage, several pairs of Shoveler, again with the drakes coming out of eclipse, at least one pair of Gadwall and another of Tufted Ducks. c50 Black-headed Gulls on the mud or in the shallows, all in winter plumage. A pair of Little Grebes were diving regularly in front of the reeds near a Cormorant standing on a post in typical wing-drying pose.

We moved on to Upper Marsh, seeing more gulls and ducks from the viewing point but excitement rose when we found a Glossy Ibis on the far bank. An exotic bird, which, although no longer a rarity in this country, is scarce in Leicestershire. We watched it for several minutes, sharing telescopes with passing dog-walkers.

Green Woodpecker, Grey Heron and Buzzard were noted in flight. Four or five Common Snipe were resting on the bank or feeding at the water's edge, giving good open views, with Lapwings.

Next, we walked on to Hobley Lake, seeing a Grey Heron on the near island, three Lesser Black-back Gulls on the water and more Snipe. A pair of Egyptian Geese flew in but then remained hidden behind the island, one showing its head occasionally and reluctantly. Six Cormorants were counted on the telephone wires. We followed the path to the river and checked Tern Pool from the other side, getting closer views of a female Pochard diving.

Packed lunches were taken while watching a Kestrel hunting and four Goldfinches flew over singing. After lunch, we returned to Upper Marsh for a last look at the Glossy Ibis and found our first, and only, Little Egret of the day and now counted up to 15 Common Snipe.

There were small red dragonflies around, with a couple of blue-green-bodied larger ones. Thanks to Jim Frost who was able to ID the former as Common Darter and the latter as Migrant Hawker, both the greener female and the bluer-bodied male. These two species are probably the only common species likely to be seen on the wing in October. Red Admiral butterflies were also seen.

A good way to end a pleasant morning, with the Glossy Ibis as the obvious highlight.

Bridge – Leader Neil Roberts 01530 455957

This is Bridge for players of all levels playing friendly Contract Bridge with some chatter.

Several of our number are "beginners" or "returners" and we have experienced players who are happy to help others improve their game. We now have about 20 active players.

We meet weekly on Mondays at the Royal Hotel, Ashby and at present we alternate afternoons and evenings.

The agreement with the Royal is that we pay for refreshments. Currently when we play we pay £2.50 per week. The Royal provide Car Parking Permits free to our group when playing Bridge.

If you would like to know more contact Neil on 01530 455957 or Pat Ford on 01827 830672

Calligraphy – Leader Jenny Slawson 01283 229718

After a long break for the summer, our meeting this month involved quite a lot of discussion about the format of our meetings and the members present decided that they would like to continue with the same approach to calligraphy as we have done in the past but would like to try holding the meetings in the morning rather than the afternoon. As we only have one more meeting before our

Christmas meal (I can't believe I have just written that!) it was decided to try it so it will still be on Tuesday November 8th but it will be from 10am until 12am. The group will then decide if they want it at this time permanently and the website will be changed in January to reflect this.

After catching up and decision making we got our pens out to brush up on our skills with a 'Medley of Styles' using the 'A quick brown fox' sentence to make sure we covered every letter in each font we chose. Our freedom of approach is now much more obvious with the words being arranged in a variety of ways using a mixture of sizes and colour. Everyone agreed that the writing proved to be very relaxing and coupled with lively discussion made the meeting a very pleasant one. It was nice to be back!

Computers – Leader John Howlett 01530 461774

We meet twice monthly to try to solve anyone's computer problems and to better learn how to use them whether they are PCs, Macs, iPads or Android Tablets. All are welcome. No experience necessary.

5th October 2016

A good, productive day today, with eight in the house.

John D wanted to see if it was possible to partition the hard drive of a PC running Windows 7 64 Bit operating software, to enable Windows XP 32 bit OS to be loaded and run older programmes. Much discussion ensued and work is needed to check this out. First up is to see if some of these old programmes are 16 bit . John H lent John D a laptop to experiment on. An parallel experiment was mooted to load up an XP emulator and see if the works.

Mike and Dave set to try and get round a peculiar response on Dave's laptop which seemed to centre on a missing DLL. It seems there was a 'ghost' file blocking execution. They managed a work around via the registry to delete the programme trying to access the missing file. Job done. DO NOT try this at home!

Steve and Brian worked on similar tasks deleting unwanted programmes.

Digital Photography – Leader John Howlett 01530 461774

We meet to try to understand how to get the best out of our digital cameras whether they are simple compact cameras or full-blooded DSLRs and how to edit or modify the pictures afterwards. We try to get out and practice every other month. We do not as yet enter competitions.

6th October 2016

4 photographers met at Staunton Harold car park at 10:15. We agreed to meet at the cafe in the Ferrers centre for coffee at 11:30 and went on our separate ways photographing anything of interest. No topic was agreed but there was just the start of the autumn colouring in the trees.

At coffee we agreed to look at each photographers results at the next meeting with an upper limit of 10 photographs per person.

Drawing and Painting – Contact Chris Dogherty 01530 411148

October 19th 2016

A "gin" clear morning at Foremark reservoir was the ideal location for an outdoor sketching exercise. Boats, water, foreshore and landscape provided plenty of inspiration, whilst hot coffee and biscuits in the boat house completed the morning, thanks to John H.

Family History – Leader John Dogherty 01530 411148

Wednesday 12th October 2016

Five historians, including a welcome visitor Bob Baxendale, gathered today.

John H is finalising his piece on the Irish Civil War; Lesley showed us a very professional folder for her piece on how she came to study FH, with her sources properly organised into folders, and text ready to go. Audrey showed us a beautifully bound 'Blurred' book she has created with copies of a long series of 19th century letters between two of her ancestors. The correspondence is preceded by a carefully worded text, interlaced with photos, to explain the circumstances of the correspondence. Bob came looking for help to trace an ancestor who 'went missing' in the records. Listed in the Censuses up until 1911, Bob could find no later trace, but his 98 year old mum really wants to know what happened to her sibling. We eventually found him on a Short Service engagement during WWI, and later off-line; his marriage in 1928 and death by 1933.

A really good result of teamwork, I think! One surprise was the information that there were two additional children, born alive but dead by 1911, and never appearing in any of the previous Censuses.

John D showed the letter in 1905 from his great grandfather to his father when the latter was 7, explaining how such a banal document can yield important clues in building the Family History. The team seem to be in good order for the Presentation to the History Group. It should be a very interesting day!

Gardening - Leader Paul Dean 01283 295987

The Gardening Group is one of the largest interest groups. The committee try hard to provide a selection of activities suitable for all, including talks on various topics, trips out to well-known gardens and social events where plants are swapped and garden problems are solved! There is always food and drink at the end of each meeting and occasionally prizes to be won! Please come along and meet us and give the gardening club a try.

20th October

The group held their annual Harvest Lunch at Packington Village Hall where everyone brought along some food to share.

History – Leader Dorothy Chapman 01530 413042

27th October – The Terracotta Army

Clive Caulfield gave a talk on the Terracotta Army. A full report will appear on the website shortly. We're looking forward to welcoming John Dogherty for a talk about the Family History group for our next meeting on November 24th.

Industrial Heritage – Leader Mike Stow 01530 469152

26th October – Black Country Living Museum

Despite having to negotiate the M6 and M5 in the rush-hour, all 18 managed to get to the museum before it opened, allowing time for a quick coffee. Our costumed guide, having introduced himself, led us briefly around the exhibition area and showed us a 5 min film about the Black Country before walking us down to the drift mine where we were kitted out with hard hats, plus torches for some of us, before our second guide led us into the mine. The hard hats were immediately useful as the walkway was only 5ft high in parts, although in one area the coal seam was 30ft thick and had all

been excavated so it was like standing in a cavern. Apparently only the very best miners were used to bring the roof down so that no-one was hurt as it collapsed.

When the torches were turned off, the darkness was total. You wouldn't want to be down there without a light. In fact most of us agreed you wouldn't want to be down there at all for very long! Certainly not to work down there. But many did, and the life expectancy of a miner in the 1880's was about 35 years!

On emerging into the light, we all went our separate ways to enjoy the rest of the site. With houses and shops to visit complete with costumed characters ready to explain what went on in the various premises, buses, trolleybuses and canal barges to ride on, a small transport museum to visit, and a pub, cafes and 2 fish and chip shops to sustain us, there was plenty to do. The only set-back was that as it was half-term it was quite crowded and the queue for fish and chips was reportedly over half an hour long. I hope they lived up to their award-winning reputation. Many of us settled for a pie and a pint in the pub.

The different car-loads left in their own time but I think most were away by about 3pm to avoid the rush hour, but the traffic was again light and the journey back took less than an hour.

A very good day out, and yet again we were lucky with the weather considering it was the end of October.

Italian Group – Leader Lynda Hall 01530 415922

After a long summer break, the Group are due to meet again on the 7th November at 2 Marlborough Way

Literature Group - Leader Sandra Harris 01530 416653

The Group were due to read "The museum of you" by Carys Bray in October. This month's book is "The Invisible Woman" by Claire Tomalin

Luncheon Group – Leader Ray Bentley 01530 412505

We are a group of men and ladies who enjoy a meal together, we take it in turn to choose a venue and organise it. Everyone is welcome, all we ask is that you sign the notice board in the coffee room at the monthly meeting prior to the lunch, so we can book the relevant number of seats. If you cannot make the monthly meeting please use the contact email or phone number.

Music Appreciation – Leader David Oakley 01530 563409

Just four of us at this month's get-together, with a few apologies for absence. We had a delightful range of musical choices and it's always nice to hear something new.

David kicked off with the Gary Barlow and Andrew Lloyd Webber song 'Sing', written to celebrate the Queens Diamond Jubilee and performed by a large number of people from around the Commonwealth. The song is said to be on the Queen's top ten list.

This was followed by Tom Jones singing 'Till My Back Ain't Got No Bone' from his 'Long Lost Suitcase' album.

Wendy then chose two keyboard pieces. The first being the 'Toccatina from Symphony No 5', by the French composer Charles-Marie Widor. It's the organ piece one often hears being played at the end of a service, as we are all leaving. Her second choice was a piano piece 'Souvenirs of Andalusia' by an

American composer, Louis Moreau Gottschalk, played by Warren Mailley-Smith.

Clare came next with two songs from a musical none of us had heard of before. This was 'Yanomamo' a ninety minute work for chorus, soloist, narrator and stage band. It's 'The Song of the Forest' and tells of the Amazon rain forest, its people, flora and fauna and the way it's being destroyed.

Last but not least our hostess Ann had selected two tracks. The first was the distinctive sound of Bert Kaempfert's orchestra with 'Strangers in the Night', for which he wrote the music. Secondly 'Waltz 2' from Shostakovich's 'Jazz Suite No 2'. Written during the war the written score was lost but was recently reconstructed with several movements being premiered at the Proms in 2000.

Quiz group - Leader Malcolm Bird 01530 563872

The group meet at the Bull and Lion, Packington. The Start time is 2.30 and involves tables of four. You do not need to arrange a team of four before the meeting as teams can be organised on the day. This enables single individuals to take part - and to make new friends by joining an ad hoc team. Tea and coffee are served. Total cost £1.20 of which 20p goes to a kitty for prizes.

Seventeen members battled for supremacy at the October meeting and we were pleased to welcome some new members. There will be quizzes in November and December on the third Wednesday as usual. On 15th February next year we will be holding our winter lunch at the bull and Lion - followed by the quiz as usual at 2.30pm. February seems a long way off but it will soon come round so get your name down with Malcolm Bird or David Oakley if you want to attend. So far 19 people have chosen their preferred item from the menu and paid. (£10 for two courses plus coffee and mints).

Recorder group - Leader Joan Gibson - recorder@ashbyu3a.co.uk

The recorder group, meet twice a month, to make music in a relaxed, fun way. I would hope that we would be able to cater for a wide range of experience and skill.

We are now settling in to meeting on the 1st and 3rd Thursday mornings each month.

Trips and Outings Group - Contact Margaret Howlett 01530 461774

The Group's next visit will be to the matinee performance of "A Tale of Two Cities" at Nottingham Theatre Royal on November 23rd at 2 pm. A coach has been arranged to take everyone there. the cost will be £27.50 for reserved Dress Circle tickets and the coach is £14.75 maximum. This will reduce as more people join. Deposit of £10 pp is required asap with the balance by Sept 30th.

Cheques payable to Ashby de la Zouch U3A to:

Margaret Howlett, 16 Winchester Way, Ashby, LE65 2NR

Walking Group - Leader Bob Baxendale 01530 481435

The walking group usually does walks of between 7-8 miles, twice a month, and normally have a lunch stop at a pub near to, or at the end of, the walk.

The leader will be at the meeting place whatever the weather and will only cancel the walk in consultation with those who turn up on the day. All dogs must be kept under control at all times. Walking boots or strong shoes are recommended. Be prepared for bad weather by taking warm waterproof clothing. Leaders act in a voluntary capacity. All ramblers walk at their own risk.

18th October. Woodhouse Eaves around Bradgate Park

Our walk was a little over 7 miles as measured from my trusty OS map - I wasn't designed for all this modern technology! Starting from Woodhouse Eaves, we had an easy route over the fields past Rushey Fields Farm to Swithland. Despite recent rain, it was not very muddy although we did have a few stiles to scale. Walking through the woods we almost lost our vanguard, who seemed to find the leafy track more attractive than our intended route across the field. On arrival at the car park at the Cropston end of Bradgate Park, we paused for coffee and to use the facilities. Proceeding along the main track through the park as far as the cafe (which was open - this is a walk with every convenience!), we then faced the ascent of Old John. The climb is concealed by trees in the early stages to lull participants into a false sense of security but later becomes apparent. Having ascended over 400 feet in a mile, the group indulged in a collective collapse at the top! They were eventually persuaded to resume, some more reluctantly than others; at this point the rearguard took a while to appear. The initial descent is quite steep but the rest of the route was easy walking through the woods and across the golf course back to the pub at Woodhouse Eaves for an excellent lunch.

Medium walks – Leader Carole Harriman

The Medium Walk group do walks of up to 6 miles. Anyone interested please contact Carole. There was unfortunately no walk in October

Short walks Group – Leader John Howlett 01530 461774

The short walk group organises walks using well defined paths and routes without stiles. The maximum length is 3 miles. All are welcome.

21st October

6 people met on the Stapenhill side of the Trent near St Peter's Church. We took the path over the new bridge built in 1986, though Stapenhill Gardens down to the new bridge as the footbridge was closed for refurbishment. We went down to the Washlands and straight to the pumping station.

Having read all the information boards we went back to the river which we followed all the way to the library admiring the trees on the way. At the library we had drinks and cake and discussed many things including next year's walks. After an hour we went back to the Washlands and followed the townside paths. We stopped at the information sign which described the ferry and the building of the footway in 1889. At the footbridge a crowd was gathering for the official opening which we decided to miss and returned to the car park on the lower path under the new bridge.

Your Committee

Following the AGM on 26th July 2016, the members below were (re)elected to the Committee.

John Howlett	Chairman	chairman@ashbyu3a.co.uk
James Bloor	Groups Coordinator	interestg@ashbyu3a.co.uk
Dorothy Chapman	Membership Secretary	members@ashbyu3a.co.uk
Sheila Dean	Welfare	welfare@ashbyu3a.co.uk
Anne Donegan	Business Secretary	secretary@ashbyu3a.co.uk
Colin Ellis	Minutes Secretary	minutes@ashbyu3a.co.uk
Isobel Salt	Speaker seeker	speakers@ashbyu3a.co.uk
Tony Smith	Treasurer	treasurer@ashbyu3a.co.uk
Mike Stow	Communications	webmaster@ashbyu3a.co.uk