



Ashby de la Zouch



U3A

Newsletter July 2017

Ashby U3A Social Evening on Friday 8th September

We will again be holding a social evening from 7.30 to 11.00 pm at Blackfordby Village Hall.

Music and entertainment by the band "Flashback".

Licensed bar – Fish and chip supper (other food choices are available) – Raffle

Tickets £3 inc. supper and raffle. Buy your tickets at the next monthly meeting, or speak to any committee member.

Last Monthly Meeting: 25th July

The meeting started with our AGM. The meeting was chaired by our retiring Chairman John Howlett assisted by Colin Ellis as minutes secretary. John gave a report on the year's activities and his term as Chairman, Tony Smith managed to inject some life and humour into his Treasurer's report and James Bloor reported on the activities and growth of the various Groups.

Those committee members standing for re-election and Peter Clement, standing for the first time, were all unanimously elected.

Sheila Dean made a short speech and a presentation to John Howlett thanking him on behalf of the committee and all the members for his hard work as Chairman and his many years' service on the committee. John is not leaving U3A, merely stepping down from the committee. Margaret Howlett was presented with a bunch of flowers for her tireless work (along with John) in opening up the church for every meeting.

New committee

Your new committee will consist of:

James Bloor, Dorothy Chapman, Peter Clement, Sheila Dean, Anne Donegan, Colin Ellis, Isobel Salt, Tony Smith, Mike Stow. Posts within the committee, including our new chairman, will be decided at the next committee meeting on Aug 8th.

Group Reports David Oakley reported on the Music Appreciation Group and Malcolm Bird talked about the Quiz Group

Speaker: "Derbyshire, Leicester and Rutland Air Ambulance" A talk by John Bown

Despite being somewhat hindered by unexpected bright sunlight shining on his slide show, John explained that Derbyshire, Leicester and Rutland Air Ambulance (DLRAA) in conjunction with Warwickshire & Northamptonshire Air Ambulance (WNAA) fly two local air ambulances services, serving a total of five counties.

Based at East Midlands and Coventry airports, their two helicopters provide a rapid response to trauma and medical emergencies over an area of 3850 square miles. They cover many of the UK's major road networks including the M1, M6, M69 and M42. With an average response of just 13 minutes, between them they attend on average six missions a day. They also operate the Children's Air Ambulance which conveys critically ill children nationally from one hospital to another for specialist care.

The Air Ambulance does not receive any government funding. It is financed entirely by public donation. The service started in 2003 with WNAA, and DLRAA in 2008. In less than a year DLRAA flew its 1000th mission. Between them they have now flown over 28,000 missions.

The pilots, many ex-military, are provided with the helicopters as part of a leasing package.

The paramedics are trained as critical care paramedics meaning they are able to administer a wider range of drugs and undertake certain surgical procedures. After missions they refuel the helicopters and they are also trained as blue-light drivers of the night cars which operate at night when the 'copters can't fly.

The doctors are on loan from the NHS, often working on their days off, and are all Consultants or Registrars in emergency medicine.

John told us the story of Jamie who was run over by a dumper truck on a construction site. His lower half was crushed including pelvis fractures and multiple leg breaks and a lot of skin loss. Due to massive blood loss he was taken to Kettering Hospital for transfusions before being flown to Coventry Hospital for immediate major surgery. Despite being put into a week-long induced coma, he was able to go home just 5 months later.

A single flight can cost £1700 and at 6 flights a day the costs soon mount up. If you wish to help the Air Ambulance, they have a charity shop in Market Street where they would be glad to take your unwanted clothes and bric-a-brac, sell something back to you, or even take a donation from you.

It is a very worthwhile lifesaving service which we all hope we will never need to use. Thank you John for telling us all about it.

Next Monthly Meeting: 22nd August

There is no speaker in August, but this meeting will be our Cream Tea Event. A free cream tea served by the committee. Hopefully in the garden, weather permitting!

2017	Tea and Coffee Rota	Meeters and Greeters	Reporting Groups
August	The Committee	Mike Stow, Tony Smith	No reports this month

Interest Groups Timetable: August 2017

Interest group	Meeting date and time	Venue
Arts & Crafts	9th Aug	Shirley's house
Bird Watching	No meeting this month	
Bridge	7th & 21st Aug at 7-9 pm 14th & 28th Aug at 2-4 pm	Ivanhoe Social Club, front lounge. Hood Park Leisure Centre, 1st floor function room. Note the new venues
Calligraphy	No meeting this month	
Computer	Wed 2nd Aug at 2 pm Mon 21st Aug at 2 pm	16 Winchester Way
Digital Photography	3rd Aug at 10 am	16 Winchester Way
Drawing and painting	16th Aug at 10 am	16 Winchester Way
Family History	19th Aug at 2 pm	2 Marlborough Way
Gardening	17th Aug at 2 pm	Self-drive outing to Meynall Langley Gardens and The Burrows Garden nr Brailsford
History	24th Aug at 2 pm	Packington Village Hall. A talk by John Whitehead on Ernest Shackleton.
Industrial Heritage	23rd Aug Car share. Dep. Ashby 9 am	Forge Mill Needle Museum, Redditch
Italian	No meeting this month	
Literature	12th Aug at 1.30 pm	28 Willesley Gdns
Lunch	10th Aug at 12 noon for 12.30	The Black Horse, Market Bosworth
Medium Walks	14th Aug at 9.45 for 10 am	Meet outside the Globe, Snarestone for a 6M walk
Music Appreciation	2nd Aug at 10 am	43 Cambrian Way
Quiz	16th Aug at 2.30 pm	Bull and Lion, Packington
Recorder	3rd Aug	TBA
Short Walks	18th Aug at 10 am	Meet at CP at Oakthorpe Picnic site
Trips and Outings		No trips planned
Walking	1st Aug dep. Meet Featherbed Lane by 9am to car share.	Tom O' The Wood, Finwood Road, Rowington, Warwickshire, CV35 7DH

Early September

Interest group	Meeting date and time	Venue
Bridge	4th Sept at 7-9 pm	Ivanhoe Social Club, front lounge
Computer	6th Sept at 2 pm	16 Winchester Way
Digital Photography	7th Sept at 10 am	16 Winchester Way
Music Appreciation	6th Sept at 10 am	43 Cambrian Way
Recorder	TBA	TBA
Walking	5th Sept at 9.45 for 10 am	Ye Olde Red Lion, Market Bosworth

*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

Arts and Crafts

6th July The group are still working their Teddy bears and will meet again on 9th August to continue with the project.

Bird Watching – Leader Anne Donegan - birdwatch@ashbyu3a.co.uk 01283 760348

The group visited Drakelow Nature Reserve on the 31st July, just too late to get a report into the newsletter, but I have heard that they saw a Kingfisher for which greatly pleased everyone.

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.

The group no longer meets at the Royal Hotel and now has a new home, or more correctly 2 homes. They now meet at the Hood Park Leisure Centre in the 1st floor function room for afternoon sessions and at Ivanhoe Social Club in the front lounge for the evening sessions. Free car parking is available at both venues, but must be signed in at Hood Park.

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

Calligraphy – Leader Jenny Slawson 01283 229718

A small but friendly group, we enjoy extending our calligraphy skills through a more experimental and creative approach to writing texts. We focus mainly on italic and uncial scripts and have produced some very imaginative pieces both at home and during our monthly meetings. We usually meet on the second Tuesday of each month at 10am.

11th July The meeting this month was held at Sue's. Five of our regular members plus Jenny's equally talented sister, Pat, attempted to design a selection of greeting cards. We used a variety of background paper, different colour inks and our own choice of fonts. It was a very interesting task with lots of concentration from everyone and we were all pleased with the results.

The next meeting, in September, will see us attempting to master one font so that we don't need crib sheets!!! Then we intend to produce one long piece of written text without any mistakes!

A challenge for us all. Note there is no meeting in August

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.

17th July We were seven today. Welcome Margaret, a complete beginner! John H took her under his wing and guided her through the essential first questions we all have to ask before taking the plunge: What do you want a computer to do? What style of usage? Where would you use it? etc. Steve sat down with Dave to see if they could get his Wi-Fi printer to talk to his laptop. It seemed at the end as if Dave would have to restart at home and download the drivers afresh.

Colin was struggling with getting a photo of a train he used for a video to show full screen without the top and bottom banners. Eventually it was as simple as clicking on the 'Play video' button in the middle of the bottom banner while in slide view mode!

John D reported a problem his wife had with internet connections. Despite all systems insisting that there was connection...there wasn't! However, number two grandson fixed it by investigating on Google and delving into the hairy depths of the 'C' prompt and Winsock.

The problem reported at Family History when trying to download a GEDCOM file from Ancestry, when right click is not available, seemed mysteriously to go away when tried on a different machine also without right click function. We must go back to the source! John H and Peter worked on obtaining a free Family History software and exploring its features. Steve helped along the way and worked on his photo library.

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 July Despite a confusing location, five would-be photographers turned up to a very pleasant spot, consisting of a small, but perfectly formed cafe beside a small and equally perfectly formed lake. The whole set in the midst of about 60 acres of woodland. We spent a very restful hour wandering around in the sun, taking shots of fish, fishermen, dragonflies and butterflies. There was even the occasional sighting of the elusive and very shy lesser-hatted U3A Photographer. This was followed by an equally pleasant hour in the cafe, speaking of many things.

At our next meeting we will look over our images.

Drawing and Painting – Contact Chris Dogherty 01530 411148

19th July The session was spent capturing 'Scenes of Summer'. Two hours went very quickly and fortified by Megan's coffee and biscuits we reviewed our efforts: Boats, Beaches and Seabirds. At the next meeting the topic will be: "Fruits of Summer"

Family History – Leader John Dogherty 01530 411148

12th July 6 find-outers gathered today.

John H has made excellent progress, pushing his Irish lineage back to 1800, with the help of a constantly improving Roots Ireland website. His technique for crosschecking records, and maintaining notes etc. is a model for us all to follow

Eileen has built up her Tree, penetrating back well into the 18th century. We looked at how to export her Tree as a GEDCOM file, but at the last were defeated by the lack of an easy way to simulate the 'right-click' function on her iPad. She will try again on her main PC at home. Then we will see about importing the Tree into her own Ancestry account.

Peter has started his research well, assembling key information about his immediate antecedents. We used the facilities on Ancestry to work through examples of Census, Birth Marriage and Death records to find the records of these antecedents. We then printed off some as a permanent record and starting point for his own research. We discussed the merits of different sites, such as Ancestry, FindMyPast and others, and looked at subscription options. He will go away and make a decision about which will be his main search site.

Bob Blood arrived and we looked at some entries he has found on Google about himself! he has had a difficult time recently, having his computer high jacked by ransomware cowboys. Fortunately he was able to reconstruct the last two years of files and updated his existing backups. Moral: Don't leave your back up external hard drive connected to your computer when not actually in use.

Mary worked quietly away on her Tree, not requiring help today.

Finally, John D used an example from his daughter in law's research to point out how even apparently kosher records, such as the 1911 Census and official copies of Wills, must be scrutinised for errors of all kinds. Every record should be supported if at all possible by another different record. Even then, care should be taken to check for 'false friends'.

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 July. Strawberry Tea We were worried that the weather would be poor for our July gardening meeting, which was held in Lesley's garden. We had a strawberry tea, plant swap and fuchsia judging by Mr Brian Storer. However the weather was kind to us and we had a lovely afternoon chatting, drinking prosecco and fruit punch, eating lovely scones with strawberries and cream and lemon drizzle cake. We asked members to donate to the Air ambulance charity with a suggested £4 donation. The food and drinks were paid for by saving any small amounts of profit made over the year from trips etc. and was open to all our gardening group members. We had a brilliant turnout of 32 members who seemed to enjoy themselves very much.

History – Leader Dorothy Chapman 01530 413042

27th July. TG Green Pottery

Iain Hamblin, the Archivist for TG Green pottery, began his interest in TG Green when, whilst working in London, he found a Cornishware egg cup. Being from Cornwall he decided he'd collect more pieces, not realising for a while its real place of origin.

Iain took us through the history of the family of Thomas Goodwin Green, and of the pottery taken over by Thomas in 1864. Thomas and his wife, Mary, had met its previous owner, Henry Wileman, whilst they were on honeymoon in Scarborough.

Although the blue and white Cornishware is synonymous with the name TG Green, we were surprised to find that, particularly in the early 1900s, the pottery became finer and more colourful, with designs similar to Clarice Cliff and art nouveau. All the pottery has always been backstamped with a church – St George and St Mary in Church Gresley – beneath the name and range name.

Thomas Green began his time at the pottery saying it would be '3rd class pottery for 3rd class people', but, by 1937, Harrods had decided to sell TG Green pottery. A change of status! During the 2nd World war the familiar colours had to be put to one side, as the government insisted on plain pottery to help the war effort.

Iain brought a whole range of examples of the pottery, including a teapot and bowl in a dark blue and white seagull design, produced as a wedding gift each time someone married within TG Green's. Another example of the family feeling of the company was a photo of Clara Davis, who worked for Green's from 1897 to 1965, in which time she had made 15,500,000 cups. She was presented with the British Empire Medal before she died in 1969.

The company closed in 2007, mainly because of imports from China, and the site is going to rack and ruin, but Iain and others with a great interest in it, keep the memory alive in the Archives in Church Gresley.

Industrial Heritage – Leader Mike Stow 01530 469152

26th July. National Mining Museum, Wakefield 16 intrepid members ventured up to Caphouse Colliery near Wakefield to descend 140 metres (460 ft) underground for a fascinating conducted tour of a real coal mine. After handing over all flammables and anything containing a battery (even quartz watches), being kitted out with a hard-hat, battery and miners lamp and getting a thorough safety briefing we packed into the lift cage for the descent below. Our ex-miner guide said that the deepest pit he worked in had a 3000 ft descent!! We started looking at how coal was extracted by hand, pick and shovel in the late 18th Century. We were shown how the Safety lamp worked along with canaries to safely detect methane gas without igniting it. Women and children worked down there until an 1842 act of parliament banned them from working underground. Ponies then became more common but this spawned a whole new breed of jobs from stablemen and farriers to men to lead

the ponies. The ponies stayed below all their lives except for two weeks a year when the mines closed for annual holidays. In 1913 there were 70,000 ponies underground. The last pit pony was still working in Wales in 1999. Mechanisation such as rope-hauled trucks and conveyors gradually phased them out once it became cheaper to do so. We moved on to the more mechanised modern areas where the machines became steadily larger and the workforce was reduced. When the mines were nationalised working practises became better but once reprivatized cost-cutting returned and standards of safety worsened. After 90 mins we returned to the surface glad that it was only a visit and not a full time job. Our guide had explained everything enthusiastically and in great detail albeit with a strong local accent, but it is difficult to remember it all. After an excellent lunch in their café, we explored the various museum buildings around the site before driving home in heavy rain.

Italian Group – Leader Lynda Hall 01530 415922

5th June Four students and Lynda today. This one was tricky. Still on getting about, we needed to answer quizzes on the methods of getting about town, why we would use them and under what conditions, such as rain, distance or speed. This was followed by assigning priorities to methods of transportation, according to our own particular needs. Another quiz was on traffic signs and what we should, should not or were merely advised to do. In all these quizzes we were expected to form proper coherent sentences with the correct person for the verb (usually an irregular verb!) and agreements for nouns and adjectives.

Literature Group - Leader Sandra Harris 01530 416653

The Group were due to read “Lonely” by Andrew Michael Hurley this month, before meeting on the 26th July to discuss the book. They are not meeting in August but will meet on 12th September to discuss “What Milo Saw” by Virginia McGregor

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.

The July meal was held at The Rising Sun, Shackerstone, where we ate upstairs in the minstrels gallery, although we didn't have to sing for our supper (or lunch). The food, beer and service were very good.

Music Appreciation – Leader David Oakley 01530 563409

5th July Five of us attended, and several of the contributions celebrated the warm weather spell. The session kicked off with Lesley Thomas's choice of some Cool Jazz - Opus 1 by Anita Day & Gene Krupa - and was followed by the Kinks' Sunny Afternoon and Too Darned Hot by Ella Fitzgerald, although Nev Bray pointed out that he recently heard it performed at an outdoor performance of Kiss Me Kate when it was rather chilly, which caused a laugh. Hostess Tricia then played Andrea Bocelli's version of Nessun Dorma, which we all agreed was as good as any other we had heard. Mike Stow told us a little of the history of Bluegrass Music and played a couple of fine examples - Man of Constant Sorrow from O Brother Where Art Thou? and Jailer, Jailer by Peter Rowan. Tricia then introduced us all to the Tip Kliphuis Trio & Sextet, a Dutch swing ensemble she & Paul had seen perform at Thringstone Community Centre recently. Honeysuckle Rose in the style of Stephan Grappelli was very well received by all present. Neil Roberts then spoke a little about Beautiful South and played a selection of their lesser known songs, including Woman in the Wall, an upbeat song Paul Heaton had written after reading about a man who killed his wife and buried her in a wall. Not one that you are likely to have heard on the radio ! Lesley noticed the track Hoedown for the Common Man on one of the Tip Kliphuis albums and we thought it was worth a listen. Hopefully they will come back to this area, as they are well worth seeing.

Nev brought Ella back to treat us to Every Time We Say Goodbye, and Tricia pointed that she had a version by Sonny Rollins. Sonny put on a fine show, but we all agreed that Ella is hard to beat. We finished with Astrud Gilberto's upbeat version of Girl from Ipanema and all left wishing we were heading for a Brazilian beach !

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.

The July quiz was attended by 21 members including three very welcome newcomers. A somewhat noisy time was enjoyed by all. The next quiz will be on Wednesday August 16th at the usual time and place. Fabulous prizes will be competed for!

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 meet on the 1st and 3rd Thursday mornings each month. New members would be very welcome. Complete beginners would find it difficult to catch up, though.

20th July Just two members were at the last meeting at Barbara's house in Stretton. They played music already known to the group. School holidays can be bad for groups. We are hoping that the two prospective new members will join, but they may be put off by having to cross Burton and the river. Fingers crossed. I have bought some new music for recorder trios, which I hope to launch next time I can get to a meeting! Next meeting on 3rd August, but I don't yet know where. I'll ask Marion to let everyone know.

Trips and Outings Group - Contact Margaret Howlett 01530 461774

There were no trips this month.

Walks

The walk 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.

Walking Group - Leader Bob Baxendale 01530 481435

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

18th July After the disappointment of the weather forcing cancellation a few weeks ago, this walk finally went head in glorious sunshine. Nine walkers set off following an easy route clockwise around Foremark Reservoir, taking in Foremark Church and the Severn Trent picnic site where we stopped for re-hydration while enjoying views of the water. The route followed the tree-lined track along the eastern side of the reservoir to Carvers Rocks, a site used for rock climbing practice. There was then a short climb and a few stiles that led us to a bridle path from where we could glimpse the reservoir. We then climbed a small hill through crop to reach a summit overlooking the Trent valley, with Milton in the near distance, and the promise of lunch and refreshment...it was quite warm by that time! An easy downhill stroll led us to the village, The Swan and a well-earned beer, having completed 7.5 miles.

Medium walks – Leader Carole Harriman

The Medium Walk group do walks of up to 6 miles. Anyone interested please contact Carole.

10th July Eleven walkers gathered for the initial photograph outside Moira Furnace before setting off along the restored Ashby Canal to Donisthorpe. Here the canal comes to an abrupt end so we had to follow the road and pass through a housing estate before reaching the footpath on to Oakthorpe. Another short road section through the village enabled us to regain a field path to the edge of Measham and on to the old railway line which is now open to walkers, cyclists and horses. This led back to Donisthorpe, where the site of the old colliery and railway station is now completely reclaimed as woodland with no evidence of its former use. A further short section of old railway led to the path beside the woods back to Moira Furnace. As the going was mostly flat and very easy walking with few stiles and no unruly crops to navigate, we made excellent time, covering exactly five miles in about two hours.

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.

16th June The Washlands are the flood plains protecting Burton on Trent from flooding. They are full of wildlife and have good quality paths. 7 of us met at the car park and we set off after the regulation group photo. We started by taking the path near the road back towards the old bridge, this involved a slight climb. After viewing the grotto we took the path by the river back towards the car park where we picked up two late arrivals. We then continued by the river, admiring Stapenhill's grand flower display - who needs to get to Chelsea for a flower show. We crossed the river by the old foot bridge and dropped down onto the path by the river towards the library. We stayed on this path up to a bridge over the other part of the river and on to the coffee shop in the library. After coffee we admired the picture gallery in the library before returning to our walk. We crossed the other bridge over the alternative river route and went along the path between lines of trees and back to the old raised footpath back to the bridge over the Trent. Now we took the upper route back to the car park over the new road bridge.