

Official newsletter of the Syston and District u3a

**CHARITY No 1180152** 

## FROM OUR CHAIRMAN

Hi Everyone

Well, hasn't the weather changed, but at least my grass is green again.

I really enjoyed our talk at the last Members Meeting about the Paris Morgue and it really surprised me how many people visited it.

We have 2 fetes to attend in August and if you could spare some time to help us it would be much appreciated. The dates are Saturday 16th at Rearsby and Saturday 30th at Syston. If you would like to volunteer, you can email me at sadu3achair@gmail.com or speak to me at the next members meeting on Wednesday 13th August.

I have been given a projector screen by the Gardening Club, which has now disbanded, so is available to any group who would like to use it.

I hope to see you all soon.

Clive

## WE WANT TO LET YOU KNOW

## **NEW CHARGE FOR CHEQUES.**

It was decided by the committee and passed at the AGM that a charge of 50p is to be added to any cheques we receive.

This will apply to cheques for new membership, renewals or payments for events and is to cover the cost of the bank charges we incur.



We are charged for every cheque we pay into the bank regardless of the amount. If possible, please pay by bank transfer otherwise please add an extra 50p to any cheque you are sending to Syston and District u3a.

If you are not into online banking, you can still avoid the 50p charge by paying using your card and our card reader at a Monthly General Meeting.

## **GROUP NEWS**

## **NEW GROUP IDEAS**

If you have any ideas for a new group, please contact Barbara Sargeant our groups coordinator <a href="mailto:sadu3agroups@gmail.com">sadu3agroups@gmail.com</a> or speak to her at one of our monthly general meetings. Alternatively contact her assistant Angie Baker email <a href="mailto:sadu3agroupsasst@gmail.com">sadu3agroupsasst@gmail.com</a> Acting as a group organiser doesn't have to be onerous, it doesn't have to be down to just one person, and it doesn't mean you have to organise everything the group does.

Is the group you want to join currently full? How about starting a second group? Barbara and Angie are happy to provide support and guidance on how to get going.

## POSSIBLE GROUP REVIVAL – LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

Some of you may recall that our Local History Group has been dormant for a while. In recent months, a couple of people expressed interest in becoming the Group Organiser, but those offers haven't come to fruition — so I'm now stepping in to try and get things moving again.

I wasn't a member of the previous group myself, as it was full at the time, and I only have limited knowledge of how it operated — though I understand there were some outings and talks. That said, any revival doesn't need to follow the same format. Personally, I wouldn't be able to organise outings, but if there's an interest in getting out and about, and if someone else is keen to handle that aspect, I'd be very happy to collaborate.

If you were part of the original group, I'd really appreciate hearing what topics were covered previously — it would be helpful to build on what's already been explored. Equally, I'd love to know what areas of local history people would be interested in discussing going forward.

If you'd be interested in attending a preliminary meeting to explore the possibilities and shape how the group might look, please get in touch by email at <a href="mailto:sadu3aed@gmail.com">sadu3aed@gmail.com</a> or call 0116 2609012 (do note I have call screening, so you'll need to announce who you are when calling).

If enough people express interest, I'll happily take things forward.

Julie Johnson

## **DARTS GROUP**



The darts group is now up and running. They will have had three sessions by the time this photo goes to print.

There are still spaces available.

The group is now meeting every two weeks instead of once a month from 2-4pm on Thursdays @ The Grosvenor.

Contact Colin Baker - Email:

colinbaker549@gmail.com

## **FEELING CRAFTY GROUP**

Feeling Crafty Craft Group decorated some large 3D cardboard letters with collaging. We used old music scores, serviettes, and pictures. The letters are some initials but spell out seek....Seeking our creativity!



## PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP

On the last Thursday of June, 9 members of the group visited the 1620s house at Donington le Heath. Although we had been last year, it's always an interesting place to visit and the café has a good selection of snacks and drinks.

Tickets are valid for 12 months, so we'll no doubt visit again in the autumn.

Here's a small selection of the images taken – the theme was shadows and shapes.

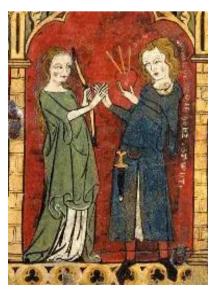












## **ART APPRECIATION GROUP**

Art is such a broad and all-encompassing subject that there are always things to learn about and discuss. Discovering artists new to us or styles we have never come across makes the subject infinitely interesting. There are no limits to the scope of what to cover and everyone's taste is different.



We meet on the first Wednesday of the month at 2pm in the Syston Community centre to look at and discuss Art in all its multitude of forms.

We have covered such varied genres as Pop Art, Post Impressionism, Baroque, Bauhaus, and Medieval Art and considered different Artists and the impact of Art in advertising and design.

At our last meeting we took the topic of Sky and each chose examples that interested us to talk about. There are no experts here and it is not highbrow at all. Anyone with a particular interest can present a piece but there is no obligation to do so.



If you are interested in joining us, please contact Chris Gale via the website.

## **EVENTS – PAST, PRESENT & PLANNED**

Do you have an idea for an event?

If you can think of an event that our members may like to do, please tell Angie Baker, our new Events Coordinator at <a href="mailto:saduaevents@gmail.com">saduaevents@gmail.com</a>

Perhaps you may even be willing to organize it? In which case the Coordinator can help you with everything you need to know.

Once the Coordinator has created the Event on our Computer System (Simple Membership). It will be easy for you to email all those interested, as all the relevant information is already recorded on the system.

Please just give it some thought, and let's make our u3a fun for everyone.





# One Off Event Bollywood Dance Session

Friday 5th September - 11am to 12am Old school Room

## Led by a professional dancer from The Jayna Dance Acadamy

Name and Membership number to sadu3agroups@gmail.com





# Do You Fancy another Free Swim at The Charnwood Leisure



## Date Tuesday 2nd September

30 people maximum, 9.15am until 10.15am

email Angie Baker - sadu3groupsasst@gmail.com

## **WHAT'S ON NEXT**

## **GENERAL MEETINGS**

In the Brookside Room at the Community Centre – talks usually start 10.30am Tea/coffee and mingling from 10.00am

August 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025 The History of Silk



Clive Garner, our speaker, traces the history of silk from its origins in China to the silk weaving industry in Britain, explaining how silk has become a global commodity.

**September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025** British Divas of the 60's

Melody Flyte returns with a look at the lives and music achievements of some of our biggest British divas of the 1960s, including Petula Clark, Shirley Bassey and Dusty Springfield, and considering the cultural backdrop of that decade, with songs to illustrate.



## October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025 Acupuncture Event



Come along and find out all about what Caroline Challender & Sandra Linnett from Syston Acupuncture can offer - they are licensed acupuncturists, having undergone a 3-year training programme.

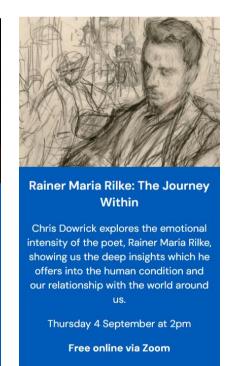
Alongside offering acupuncture treatments, they also offer a 30-minute Qi Gong class. Qi Gong has similar roots to Tai Chi and is a gentle, low impact exercise involving breathwork, flowing movements & standing postures.

## **NATIONAL U3A ITEMS**

## u3a TALKS







Book <u>here</u> Book <u>here</u> Book <u>here</u>

If none of the trio of talks on the previous page appeals, you can find other options here

## The winner of the u3a essay writing competition is...

The results of u3a's first ever national essay writing competition have been announced.

The competition was open to all u3a members and asked for essays which celebrating a person, policy, invention, or idea that has had a positive impact on society. It followed on from the success of the national u3a short story and poetry competitions. The submitted essays explored a wide range of topics that have impacted society demonstrating the breadth and depth of knowledge possessed by u3a members.

The event was opened by Susannah, Head of Learning and Volunteering at u3a, who said, 'u3a is all about learning and sharing and trying new things. This competition embodies that."

The winner is Claudette, a member of Porthcawl and Bridgend u3as. The winning essay, *The Spark Behind the Sizzle*, focussed on inventor Albert Marsh who created nichrome power, which since its invention has powered many modern inventions, from the toaster to the hairdryer.

The two runners-up are Diana of Guildford u3a, with *The Revolutionary Road Traffic Act of 1934*, and Liz of Chester u3a, with *Let's Cut To The Chase!* Diana's essay was inspired by her journeys taking her granddaughter into school where she wondered about the safety measures that keep her, and other road users, safe. Meanwhile Liz's essay explores the invention of scissors, which have a place in almost everyone's home.

Read all twenty shortlisted essays on the learning pages.

## NOT u3a BUT YOU MIGHT BE INTERESTED



## LEICESTER VJ DAY CELEBRATIONS

15th August

Town Hall Square, Leicester, LE1 9BG

More information here



## **SUMMER FAMILY FUN**

DAY

17th Augus

Abbey Pumping Station Museum, Corporation Road, Leicester, LE<sub>4</sub> 5PX

Book now

## More details here



# ELMER AND FRIENDS: THE COLOURFUL WORLD OF DAVID MCKEE

27th July - 9th November

Leicester Museum & Art Gallery, 53 New Walk, Leicester, LE1 7EA

More information and booking here

SATURDAY 16TH AUGUST 2025, 2PM - 4PM.

THE U3A SINGING GROUP WILL BE PERFORMING A VARIETY OF SONGS. YOU WILL BE WELCOME TO SING ALONG TOO.

ALSO THERE WILL BE A 'VJ EXHIBITION' FOR YOU TO VIEW AROUND THE CHURCH.

CREAM TEAS AVAILABLE FOR £5 EACH.

PLEASE BRING YOUR FAMILY, FRIENDS AND GIVE YOUR SUPPORT TO THE CHURCH HEATING FUND AND THE U3A SINGING GROUP.





The Victory Show

29th August - 31st August

The Victory Show, Foxlands Farm, , Cosby, Leicestershire, LE9 1SG

Visit website

**Book now** 



## Frisby Village Hall Water Lane, Frisby on the Wreake LE14 2NP

Fri 12th & Sat 13th September 2025 Doors open 7pm - curtain rises 7.30pm

TICKETS £10.00 - available from Tony Bird 07971472762 School children FREE Payment can be made by bank transfer or cash

## **FROM OUR MEMBERS**

## ROUND UP OF VACCINATION SITUATION

As we head into the colder months, it's worth checking whether you're eligible for any of the NHS's seasonal and age-related vaccinations. These help protect against illnesses that can be more serious in later life — and most are free for those who qualify.

Here's a roundup of what's on offer this autumn:

### **COVID-19 (Autumn Booster)**

- Who's eligible:
  - o Adults aged 75 and over
  - Residents in care homes for older adults
  - Individuals aged 6 months and over who are immunosuppressed
- Programme dates:
  - Runs from 1 October 2025 to 31 January 2026
  - Most vaccinations expected to be completed by 19 December 2025
- Booking:
- Appointments available via the National Booking Service from 1 September 2025

### Flu Vaccine

- Who's eligible:
  - Adults aged 65 and over
  - Adults aged 18–64 in clinical risk groups
  - Residents in long-stay care homes
  - Carers and close contacts of immunocompromised individuals
  - Frontline health and social care workers
- Programme dates:
- Begins 1 October 2025 for adults
- Runs until 31 March 2026, with most jabs completed by end of November

## Shingles Vaccine (Shingrix)

- Who's eligible:
  - Adults turning 65 on or after 1 September 2023
  - Adults aged 70–79 who haven't yet been vaccinated
  - Adults aged 50 and over with a severely weakened immune system
- Dosage:
  - Two doses, given 6–12 months apart
- Booking:
- Your GP should contact you, or you can enquire directly

### **Pneumococcal Vaccine**

- Who's eligible:
  - Adults aged 65 and over
  - o Adults and children with certain long-term health conditions

- Some metal workers and welders exposed to fumes
- Dosage:
  - Usually one dose for long-term protection
- Booking:
- Offered via your GP surgery

## **RSV Vaccine (Respiratory Syncytial Virus)**

- Who's eligible:
  - Adults aged 75–79 (catch-up cohort)
  - o Adults turning 75 between 1 September 2024 and 31 August 2025
- Programme ends:
  - o 31 August 2025 for catch-up cohort
- Coverage so far:
- Uptake is around 60% nationally, with regional variation

### **How to Book**

- Most vaccinations can be booked via your GP surgery or the National Booking Service (for COVID and flu).
- If you think you're eligible but haven't been contacted, it's worth checking with your GP.

Vaccination helps reduce the risk of serious illness, hospitalisation, and complications — especially during winter when respiratory infections are more common. Many vaccines can be given together, so you may be offered flu and COVID jabs at the same appointment.

## **DECLUTTER DEN**

Are you determined to declutter and get rid of things that you haven't used in an age this year? Look no further than Declutter Den.



If you have something that you are prepared to give away – **strictly no items for sale!** Let me know and I'll put it in declutter den and hopefully we can help each other free up some space, whilst giving others something they have a use for, even if we don't.

Email: sadu3aed@gmail.com

## **FAST FOOD AND THE FIFTIES (and other things)**

Some lad asked me the other day, "What was your favourite fast food growing up?"

"We didn't have fast food," I told him. "All the food was slow."

"C'mon, seriously... Where did you eat?"

"At a place called 'home'," I explained. "Mum cooked every day, and when Dad got home, we all sat down together at the dining table. And if I didn't like what was on my plate—I was allowed to sit there until I did."

By this time, the lad was laughing so hard I thought he might burst something, so I skipped the part about needing permission to leave the table.

Still, I'd have told him more if I'd thought his system could handle it...

Most parents NEVER owned their own house, wore jeans, set foot on a golf course, travelled out of the country or had a credit card.

My parents never drove me to school... I walked, although I had a bicycle that weighed probably 50 pounds and only had one speed (slow).

We didn't have a television in our house until I was 10. It was, of course, black and white, and the station went off the air at 10 PM after playing the national anthem and an epilogue. It came back on at about 6 AM—usually with a locally produced news and farm show featuring local people...

Pizzas were not delivered to our home... but milk was.

All newspapers were delivered by boys—and all boys delivered newspapers. My brother delivered a newspaper seven days a week. He had to get up at 6 AM every morning.

Film stars kissed with their mouths shut. At least they did in the films. There were no movie ratings, because all movies were responsibly produced for everyone to enjoy viewing—without profanity, violence or almost anything offensive.

If you grew up in a generation before there was fast food, you may want to share some of these memories with your children or grandchildren.

Just don't blame me if they bust a gut laughing.

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We don't know when the storyteller was 10, but, by the mid-1950s, the telly had begun its march into working-class living rooms — no longer a novelty, but a new hearth around which families gathered. Can anyone remember the weekly diary for pre-schoolers in the mid-50's? If that's not quite your era, what kid's programs do you remember? ED



## "Metering Up" - Could a Water Meter Save You Money?

With water bills climbing and many of us looking for ways to trim household costs, switching from water rates to a water meter could be a smart move—especially for smaller households.

How Water Charges Work

There are two main ways households are billed:

- Rateable Value (Unmetered): Based on your home's size and historic rental value—not how much water you actually use.
- Metered Billing: You pay only for the water you use, measured by a meter.
- Who Might Save?

A good rule of thumb:

👉 If there are more bedrooms than people in your home, a meter could save you money.

This is especially true for:

- Single occupants or couples in family-sized homes.
- Households that use water carefully (e.g. short showers, full loads in the washing machine).
- Properties with high rateable values.

Some households have reported significant savings after switching.

How to Check Before You Switch

Use the Consumer Council for Water's calculator to estimate your potential savings. It asks about your household size and water habits, then compares your current bill to a metered estimate.

- K Getting a Meter Installed
  - It's usually free to have one fitted.
  - Your water company should install it within 3 months of your request.
  - If it's not possible to fit one (e.g. due to plumbing layout), you may be offered an assessed charge a lower fixed rate based on estimated usage.

♦ Note: Water meters may be installed externally (in a ground box outside the property) or internally (typically under the kitchen sink or near the stop tap), depending on your property type and local water provider's approach.

## Can You Change Your Mind?

Yes! In most cases, you have up to 2 years to switch back to unmetered billing if the meter doesn't work out for you. (This doesn't apply if you've moved into a home that already has a meter or live in an area with compulsory metering.)

## Cther Benefits

- Leak detection: Meters can help spot hidden leaks early.
- Water awareness: You're more likely to use water wisely when you see what you're using.
- Environmental impact: Less water waste means a lighter footprint.



Once your meter is installed, keep an eye on your bills and check that actual readings (not estimates) are being used. Some meters are read remotely, but others may require manual checks.

## **POETRY CORNER**

## **Suitcases and Sand**

We packed too much, as always seems the case—

sun hats stacked like wedding cakes, maps that folded wrong, and the dog, who snuck in snacks between the shoes.

The car strained uphill toward promise: an old seaside town with teacups in the thrift shops,

and beach huts painted in colours no rainbow could name.

At night, the pier sang—its boards creaked stories

of fish suppers, first kisses, and fireworks seen from deckchairs wrapped in fleece. We were tired, happy, sun-sore, and glowing.

The days spilled like lemonade over the week—

sticky, sweet, fizzing with brief magic. And as we turned for home, our sand-covered shoes kept the rhythm of the tides.

## Holiday Mode Activated

No meetings, no emails, no "urgent" at all—just loungers that wobble and sunscreen that sprawls.

The Wi-Fi's too weak for a digital plea, but strong enough still to stream trash on TV.

We battle the buffet with wild-eyed delight, stacking our plates to impossible height. The sangria's fierce and the karaoke is worse—

but that off-key rendition was deeply rehearsed.

We lose all decorum the moment we land, forgetting all schedules, and washing, and plans.

The tan lines are tribal, the shorts oddly loud—

but we lounge like emperors under cloud.

And though we'll return to routine and reply, for now, we live boldly beneath a bright **sky**.

## A Garden in August

The sun leans longer on the lavender, its scent stirred by the wings of bees who hum in golden loops above parched petals.

The garden is a slow theatre—green curtains drawn aside for robins to rehearse, and foxgloves bow like prima donnas blushing in the light.

Children skip along the brittle grass, their laughter stitched to flip-flops and ice lollies, and somewhere behind it all, a hosepipe gurgles like distant thunder.

We let the days unfold unhurried not chasing sunsets, but letting them catch us at the fence with tea in hand and dreams of Devon.

## Coastal Clock

The sea keeps time in splash and sigh,
Marking hours with gulls on driftwood posts.
Children sculpt kingdoms of sand and shells,
Their voices tossed like kites across the wind.
Evening folds in soft linen light,
And the sun dips low—
A glowing coin spent on joy.

## Flip-Flop Sonnet

Upon the shore I tread with toes exposed, Each step a gritty crunch of carefree bliss. The sun bestows a freckle-lightened nose, While melting creams betray a choc'late kiss. The hotel fan sings like a mournful dove, Its blades half-hearted in their cooling feat. My suitcase yawns with socks I never wore—A testament to sun and sand and heat. Oh foreign buffet, brave in spice and hue, You test my stomach's strength and noble will. Yet still I toast the sky in ocean blue, And raise my glass to every poolside thrill. For holidays are made of mint and flame, And tan lines that forget your actual name.

## And finally......

Holiday One-Liners

"I came, I saw, I forgot my charger."

"My beach body is mostly snack-based."

"Booked a spa day. Got confused and ate three éclairs instead."

"Jet lag: because time zones hate optimism."

"I went abroad to find myself. I mostly found Wi-Fi."

"Sun, sand, and a suitcase packed by a hopeful lunatic."

"Tried snorkelling. Spent ten minutes yelling into a straw."

"Everything I know about foreign languages I learned from menus and desperation."

"Itinerary: Wake. Eat. Nap. Repeat until they make me leave"

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