

Syston and District

u3a

learn, laugh, live

**AUG
2024**

Vitality!

Official newsletter of the Syston and District u3a

CHARITY No 1180152

FROM OUR CHAIRMAN

Hi All

On Monday 19th August our friend and former Chair Colin Grimes passed away. He was a lovely man and was always ready to help or give advice when he was asked, and we will greatly miss him. Colin was instrumental in both the forming and the continuing success of our u3a today. As well as being our first Chair, Colin was also involved with the Syston Volunteer Centre and Syston Bowls Club. In 2019 he was recognised for his hard work by Syston Town Council with the Services to the Community Award. Below is a tribute to Colin by his close friends Michael & Pat Wherton

Clive

It is with deep sadness that we share the news of the passing of our beloved friend, Colin Grimes, on Monday, August 19th, 2024. Colin's loss is a profound one for all of us, but his legacy will continue to inspire and guide us for years to come.

Many of you may not be aware of the pivotal role Colin played in the founding of our u3a. Colin was, in fact, our very first Chairman—a position he took on with dedication, wisdom, and a spirit of service that set the tone for everything that followed.

We first met Colin on October 7th, 2015, during a meeting where we were exploring the possibility of establishing a u3a for Syston and District. Encouraged by Norma, Colin joined us that day, and it quickly became clear that his wealth of experience and deep commitment to our community would be invaluable. I remember writing down my thoughts at the time, reflecting on how fortunate we were to have someone of Colin's calibre on board:

"Eventually, we were ready to float the idea, and had arranged an initial meeting at the Malthouse Suite of the Conservative Club on the morning of Wednesday, October 7th, 2015. We were delighted at the calibre of the volunteers and all that they could bring, and especially so that Colin Grimes, with his expertise in charity set up and processes, local knowledge, and contacts, was willing to be our Steering Committee Chairman."

Colin's leadership during those early days was extraordinary. He arranged for our early meetings to be held at the Bowling Club, free of charge—no small gesture, as we had no funds at the time. With his steady hand at the helm, he guided us through to our first AGM in May 2016. Colin then served as our chairman for the next three years, steering us through the challenges of our formative years. His wisdom and experience were crucial as we tackled issues for the first time and established the policies that have allowed us to grow into the thriving organization we are today.

The progress and success we've achieved over these past nine years stand as a testament to Colin's vision and leadership. He was more than just a leader; he was an active participant in several u3a groups and was well-known as the provider of the quiz questions that kept us all on our toes.

Working alongside Colin was an honour and a privilege. His integrity, kindness, and unwavering commitment to our community left an indelible mark on all who had the pleasure of knowing him.

Farewell, dear friend. You will be deeply missed, but your spirit will continue to be felt in everything we do.

Michael and Pat Wherton

COLIN'S FUNERAL DETAILS

The funeral is at Great Glen Crematorium LE8 9DJ on Monday 2nd September at 12.30pm and afterwards at Syston Bowls Club.

The man is a success who has lived well, laughed often, and loved much; who has gained the respect of intelligent men and the love of children; who has filled his niche and accomplished his task; who leaves the world better than he found it, whether by an improved poppy, a perfect poem, or a rescued soul; who never lacked appreciation of earth's beauty or failed to express it; who looked for the best in others and gave the best he had.

Robert Louis Stevenson

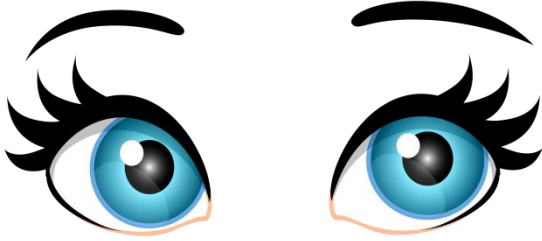
WE WANT TO LET YOU KNOW

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Emails with membership renewal reminder letters have just been sent out to members for whom we hold an email address. Please check your junk mail/ spam if you haven't seen the email.

Preferably you can pay by BACS/Bank transfer, but you can pay by card before the monthly meeting starts at Syston Community Centre on September 11th or by sending a cheque (with your membership number on the back).

Existing members do not need to fill in a membership form, simply quote your membership number when you make payment by BACS/Bank transfer. If you pay using our card reader before the September monthly meeting, it would be helpful if you have your membership number to hand.



Syston and District U3A need your eyes and ears.

That's all we require of you. Nothing difficult which demands time and effort as we all are members to have fun (and learn a bit too).

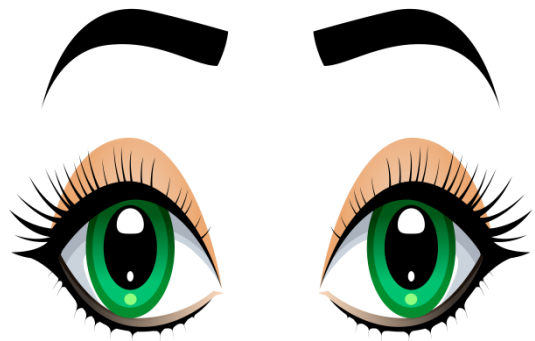
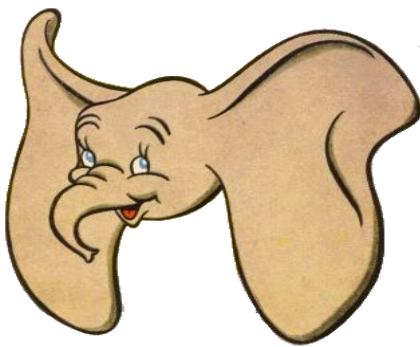
To maintain and extend the large variety of Group activities, we have to promote our aims and objectives to all those who live **outside** Syston as well. We are 'Syston **AND** District'. **If you see or hear of a Fete, Fair or any local Public gathering where we could be present, please contact me directly by Email to sadu3apublicity@gmail.com or give details either to Barbara Sargeant or Angie Baker to pass on to me.**

Your support really does make a difference and ensures we continue to offer opportunities to others who will benefit and (possibly) have new groups forming.

Thank you in advance for your help.

Jill

Publicity.



EMAIL CHANGE

Some members have not had our u3a emails delivered to their main inbox. In order to try and counteract this, the email address used "behind the scenes" to send out messages to members has been changed. I won't bore you with the technical details. This is not something that will be visible to you, but it will hopefully lead to some of you receiving messages that were going astray. That said whether your email provider diverts messages to your bulk/spam/junk mail boxes is outside our control. We are aware of a few issues when some people reply to one of our messages, the reasons for this are being explored with the email providers concerned. Please be aware that your reply may not reach the intended person straightaway, but it will be forwarded to them.

HAVE A QUERY? WANT TO SPEAK TO SOMEONE?

Occasionally, some members (or potential members) may prefer to speak to someone about an aspect of our u3a, rather than locating an email address or looking on our website.

So, we now have a contact number for Syston & District u3a, which is:



0300 102 1381

At the moment, this number goes through to Steve Kenney's (Webmaster) mobile phone, and if he is unable to answer the query, then he can advise who to contact.

GROUP NEWS

NEW LITTER PICKING GROUP

I am pleased to say that this group will be getting started. You can still add your name to the participants by contacting our Groups Co-ordinator sadu3agroups@gmail.com

POSSIBLE BADMINTON AND/OR TABLE TENNIS GROUP

Do you enjoy a game of Badminton or Table Tennis ? We have been given information about the availability of using the kit for either at the Methodist Hall in Syston.

If you fancy it, we can give you all the information you need to start this as a new group.

Please email if you want more details. sadu3agroups@gmail.com

Many thanks to Jan who has given us the heads up on this.

NEW GROUP IDEAS

If you have any ideas for a new group please contact Barbara Sargenatour groups organiser at the above email address, or speak to her at one of our monthly general meetings.

Alternatively contact her assistant Angie Baker email sadu3agroupsasst@gmail.com

CRAFT GROUP

You may recall from previous newsletters, that the group have been knitting and crocheting poppies for a Remembrance Day display. These are now being attached to netting. Pat Glover asks "If anyone has any poppies for the display that have not yet been handed in, please do so asap. They can be left at the Community Centre."

YOGA GROUP

Just to let you know -
The group will not be meeting in September.
The next session will be on Wednesday 30th October

DINING GROUP

Buona sera,
Thanks to Liz Henfrey who organised for the Dining Group to have their September meal at
Bistro Oggi in Syston.
A good evening was had by all.



ART GROUP 2



Some members of the Art Group 2 made a visit to the Leicester University Botanical Gardens on Saturday 3rd August. We had been told by David Clarke (from Art Group 1 and a member of the Leicester Society of Artists) that members of the LSA would be there painting various scenes in the garden and would be happy to talk to the public about their work.

We had a lovely time walking round the lovely gardens, had a cake and tea in the old house and chatted to the various artists as they painted. It was quite an eye opener for us talking to some very talented artists and getting a lot of inspiration. I know I went home and immediately ordered some very vibrant watercolour paints to try.

The LSA will be there again on Saturday 7th September. It's open from 11-4 (weather permitting) Free admission, children welcome and they will be given a sketch pad and crayons to have a go.

Photo is of Lenorah next to a very large very old tree (I think it may be an American Giant Redwood)

FAMILY HISTORY GROUP

The group met on zoom again this month. We looked at using wills to further our family history. Until 1858 the probate system was under the control of the Church of England, wills were proved in the church courts. As there were a number of different places they could have been proved, finding old wills isn't straightforward, but doing so can be vital where other records haven't survived. A classic example being where church baptisms, marriages and burials registers have been lost. Of course, not everyone was a member of the Church of England, so if you have "chapel" ancestors, their baptisms in particular won't form part of those registers.

From 1858 the probate system came under national control. If an ancestor made a will and it was proved from 1858 onwards, you can find the probate entry and obtain a copy of the will, for the princely sum of £1.50! But beware, especially more recently, not all wills need to go to probate. Only if there are assets in the sole name of the deceased, and they exceed certain amounts, is probate needed. The threshold could be as low as £5,000, or as much as £50,000, it depends. Different banks and other financial bodies can set a threshold anywhere in this range.

In addition to the names of sons, wills often tell us the married names of daughters, and the names of grandchildren. They may mention previous wives who died, and clarify which children were born to which wife. Widows of deceased sons may be included in bequests. These are just a few things that can help piece a family together.

You may find that someone appears to have been left out of a will. That poses the question why? You might be able to find out. Older sons may have already had monies or goods settled on them before their father died. In some areas of the country it was common for the youngest son, not the oldest, to inherit the bulk of an estate. The East Midlands is one such area. A father might acknowledge an illegitimate child or refer to an “adopted” child even before formal adoption existed.

Prior to census records, you may have no idea what your ancestor did for a living. A will is likely to tell you. It might also give information about land, property and other possessions. My ancestor weren't rich enough to leave a will you might say, not necessarily correct. Even labourers, small tradesmen and soldiers, sometimes left wills. Going back in time, wills were more often made when someone became ill or frail and thought their days were numbered. So if a rich ancestor died suddenly, they may not have made one.

If you are lucky you may find an old will has been scanned and is available online. This is true of a number of Leicestershire wills. Some wills have survived for hundreds of years, whilst others have been lost, but the search may well reap valuable information.

FEELING CRAFTY GROUP

We have recently been making some glasses and scissors cases from felt. Very attractive easy to make and useful too.

At our next meeting we are going to try some more needle felting.

Also thanks for various donations of craft materials. It's always good to do a bit of recycling.



EVENTS – PAST, PRESENT & PLANNED



IMPORTANT PLEASE NOTE !



DUE TO HIGH DEMAND TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS EVENT AND ROOM SPACE REQUIRED TO ENJOY COMFORTABLY, I AM CLOSING THE LIST FOR TAI CHI EVENT EARLIER THAN PREVIOUSLY ADVERTISED. APOLOGIES TO THOSE OF YOU WHO REMAIN UNDECIDED.

FOR EVERYONE WHO HAS ALREADY NOTIFIED ME OF THEIR INTEREST IN THIS TAI CHI EVENT TO BE HELD AT SYSTON COMMUNITY CENTRE ON

WEDNESDAY 30TH OCTOBER 2024 AND 10 – 11.30 AM.

PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF FINISH TIME.

COST PER PERSON IS DEPENDENT ON NUMBER OF THOSE ATTENDING BUT, IN TRUE 'USA' TRADITION, WILL BE REASONABLY PRICED.

ANYONE ALREADY ON MY LIST IS REQUESTED TO ADVISE ME ON SADUS&PUBLICITY@GMAIL.COM SHOULD FUTURE CIRCUMSTANCES PREVENT THEM FROM ATTENDING THIS EVENT. FINAL EVENT DETAILS WILL BE NOTIFIED NEXT MONTH.

THOSE ATTENDING OUR MONTHLY MEETINGS CAN ALSO GIVE BARBARA SARGENT OR ANGIE BAKER THEIR APOLOGIES TO PASS ON TO ME SHOULD THEY BE UNABLE TO ATTEND.

THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT OF FUN AND LEARNING.
JILL KEMPTON-HAYES

FREE GUIDED WALK AROUND WHARF STREET AREA OF LEICESTER

Free Guided walk of the Wharf Street area of Leicester Thursday 24th October
Including Ice Cream, Sid James, The Elephant Man and much else!

Starting from outside Curve, Joe Orton Square, the walk will take in Wharf Street and the surrounding area and finish at Leicester Wharf near Leicester College.

Along the way you will find out many interesting facts about the area which for most of us is now a little bit 'off the beaten track'.

Start time 10.30am.

Walk time approximately 2 hours.

20-25 places available with the possibility of a second session if interest is high.

If you wish to take part please message Barbara sadu3agroups@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

Sept 11th, 2024



Mary's Meals charity - our presentation tells the story of our charity's humble beginnings in a shed in Dalmally Scotland to being a global charity feeding over 2.4 million children in some of the world's poorest countries.

Our talks are free and there is no expectation to make a donation.

Oct 9th, 2024

Paul Reynolds (ex fire-fighter) - A second visit from Paul Reynolds.

A talk about my fire service experiences (incidents, humour etc).



Nov 13th, 2024



Peter Barratt, otherwise known as Professor Diamond, will give a fascinating talk about how he got into being a Punch & Judy performer. He'll let us into some of his secrets inside 'the theatre' and finishes with a short performance starring Mr Punch, Judy, the Baby and the Crocodile.

NATIONAL U3A ITEMS

u3a TALKS



Mods Versus Rockers: A 1960s 'Moral Panic'?

In the early 1960s, most young people defined themselves as either 'mods' or 'rockers'. This talk charts the development of this phenomenon.

Thursday 12 September at 2pm

Free – online via Zoom

Book [here](#)



u3a Week – Barnsdale

Join Nick Hamilton for an informative and entertaining talk about continued development of Barnsdale Gardens over the last 28 years.

Tuesday 24 September at 2pm

Free – Online via Zoom

Book [here](#)



u3a week – The Secret Lives of Bees

Join award winning writer and author Jean Vernon for a talk on the wild bees in your garden?

Thursday 26 September at 2pm

Free – online via Zoom

Book [here](#)

ALL OUR YESTERDAYS

At this crucial time in our nation's history, the Learning team, working with Trust Volunteer Carole Chapman, are planning a new initiative to collect memories from members for a series of stories to share online. Following successful programmes such as [Battle of Britain & the Blitz](#) and [Kindertransport](#) we would now like to gather stories of the 1950s and 60s that stand out in your memory.

This was an eventful time in history with far reaching events such as the building of the Berlin Wall, the Cuban Missile Crisis, the assassination of President Kennedy and the birth of pop culture. Of course, these are the well-known events we have all heard of, but you may have more personal recollections that didn't make the headlines.

We hope that u3a members from across the UK will be inspired to contribute experiences to this collection of material.

WHAT WE ARE ASKING:

Do you have memories from the 1950s and 60s?

Is there a family history that has been preserved, perhaps in documents or photographs?

If so, and you would like to share this, please either fill out our [online form](#) or contact Trust Volunteer [Carole Chapman](#)

FROM NEIGHBOURING u3as



The poster for the Nottinghamshire Network Conference features the u3a logo (learn, laugh, live) in blue. The title 'Nottinghamshire Network Conference' is in blue, followed by the date 'Saturday 21st September'. It states the event is open to all East Midlands u3a members and will be held at the Girls High School, Squire Performing Art Centre, Arboretum St, Nottingham NG1 4JB, from 9:30am to 3:00pm, with refreshments and registration from 9:30am to 10:00am. A yellow decorative shape is on the right. The keynote speaker is Chris French, Professor Emeritus of Psychology at Goldsmiths College, University of London, with a talk titled 'The Science of Weird Sh** Why our Minds Conjure the Paranormal'. A central box lists admission as £30 plus booking fee, including refreshments and lunch, with a registration link: <https://www.trybooking.com/uk/DOTV>. Break out workshops include Guided walk around the Arboretum, Line Dancing, Chair Yoga, Safe Driving, Creative writing, and Scamming and Fraud. A blue triangle is at the bottom left.

u3a learn, laugh, live

Nottinghamshire Network Conference
Saturday 21st September
Open to all East Midlands u3a members
To be held at the Girls High School, Squire Performing Art Centre
Arboretum St, Nottingham NG1 4JB
9:30am – 3:00pm,
9:30am – 10:00am refreshments and registration

Keynote Speaker
Chris French, Professor Emeritus of Psychology at Goldsmiths College, University of London specialising in the psychology of paranormal beliefs and anomalous experiences.
The talk will be entitled:
The Science of Weird Sh**
Why our Minds Conjure the Paranormal

Admission £30
plus booking fee
Includes refreshments during the day and buffet lunch supplied by Delilah's
Use link below to register and choose workshops
<https://www.trybooking.com/uk/DOTV>

Break Out Workshops

- Guided walk around the Arboretum
- Line Dancing
- Chair Yoga
- Safe Driving
- Creative writing
- Scamming and Fraud

There will be break out workshops in the morning and afternoon enabling members to attend two groups. More detailed descriptions of each workshop will be available when you register where we ask you to choose three options.

[The programme for the Notts Network Conference, 21 September](#)

To book your place please copy and paste this link into your url/address bar:

<https://www.trybooking.com/uk/DOTV>

NOT u3a BUT YOU MIGHT BE INTERESTED

SYSTON LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

MEETINGS ON THE 3RD MONDAY OF THE MONTH AT THE METHODIST CHURCH CENTRE
HIGH STREET SYSTON

We meet at 7.30pm Members subscription £10 Visitor £2

September 16th The streets of Leicester speaker Richard Warren

Contact President Tim Garner 0116 2609154

LOUGHBOROUGH HERITAGE OPEN WEEKEND



Date: Sat, 14th Sep 2024 - Sun, 15th Sep 2024

Venue: Twelve venues across Loughborough

Visitors will be able to explore places that give an insight and experience of Loughborough's history and heritage. Local enthusiasts and volunteers will be on hand to guide and inform at each of the sites.

The venues are: All Saints with Holy Trinity Parish Church, Fearon Hall, Carillon Museum, Military Memorabilia Roadshow, Charnwood Museum, Garendon Park, Generator Loughborough, Loughborough Central Station (Great Central Railway), Loughborough Grammar School, Loughborough Library Local Studies Volunteer Group (guided walks), Old Rectory Museum, Taylor's Bellfoundry, Unity House
To find out more, visit www.heritageopendays.org.uk and search for Loughborough Heritage Open Weekend

Please be aware that some of the sites need to be pre-booked.

More information: <https://www.heritageopendays.org.uk/whats-on/search-2024-events.html?view=list&searchQuery=Loughborough&locationQuery=&distance=&startDate=&endDate=>

FORAGING COURSE IN CHARNWOOD - SEP 14TH 2024



Date: Sat, 14th Sep 2024, 09:30 - 12:30

Venue: Charnwood

Indulge in an exhilarating outdoor escapade with us as we delve into the enchanting woodlands and meadows of Charnwood, unveiling the finest autumn edibles! Traverse through scenic landscapes, tackling moderate hills, and immersing yourself in nature's splendor.

Embark on a culinary journey to uncover a plethora of autumn treasures, from earthy mushrooms to vibrant leaves and seasonal fruits. While the exact delights may vary due to nature's whims, each discovery promises a delightful surprise.

Stay tuned for the unveiling of our secret location a few days before the event, ensuring an element of anticipation and thrill. Join fellow nature enthusiasts, outdoor aficionados, and vegan food connoisseurs for an unforgettable experience brimming with exploration, discovery, and the delectable flavors of autumn!

Please note: This event is tailored for adults and grown up children.

More information: <https://charnwoodforaging.co.uk/event/spring-hunt/>

Leicester Photographic Archive Pop Up Exhibition

This year's exhibition will be exploring the themes of Work life and Leisure.

Come and explore some of the highlights of the Council's Photographic Archive, see the themed exhibitions created by the volunteers.

Speak to some of the volunteers who work on the Archive and see if you can help us identify some of our mystery pictures and share your memories.

Free Exhibition

The Guildhall, Guildhall Lane, Leicester, LE1 5FQ 11.00am – 16.30pm 8th & 9th September

Tel: 0116 253 2569



Roses and Castles: Myths, Misconceptions, and the Legacy of Canal Art

Join us as we explore these questions and more at the Roses and Castles: Myths, Misconceptions, and the Legacy of Canal Art exhibition. Dive deep into the history, traditions, and enduring charm of this unique art form.

27 Aug 2024 to 2 Oct 2024

Where: Foxton Canal Museum & Inclined Planes Trust, Middle Lock Gumley Road, Market Harborough, LE16 7RA

Contact details: 0116 279 2657

Lecture Series: An introduction to Leicestershire and Rutland Archaeology with Peter Liddle

A series of 6 lectures on the archaeology of Leicestershire and Rutland from prehistory to the 17th century by Peter Liddle – former County Archaeologist for Leicestershire - on Thursdays from 2 – 4pm at Leicester's medieval Guildhall.

Prior booking is useful but not essential. Attend the whole course or come to individual lectures.

Series starts 12th September – more details [here](#)

FROM OUR MEMBERS

THE HISTORY OF THE PARALYMPICS

The opening of the Paralympic Games in Paris made me wonder about the history of the event, here is a summary of what I discovered ...

I was surprised to learn that sport for athletes with an impairment has existed for more than 100 years, and the first sport clubs for the deaf were already in existence in 1888 in Berlin.

That said, it was not until after World War II, that it was widely introduced. There were a large number of war veterans and civilians who had been injured during wartime. The idea was to assist them in their recovery. In 1944, at the request of the British Government, Dr. Ludwig Guttmann opened a spinal injuries centre at the Stoke Mandeville Hospital in Great Britain, and in time, rehabilitation sport evolved to recreational sport and from that to competitive sport.

On 29 July 1948, the day of the Opening Ceremony of the London 1948 Olympic Games, Dr. Guttmann organised the first competition for wheelchair athletes which he named the Stoke Mandeville Games. They involved 16 injured servicemen and women who took part in archery.

The Stoke Mandeville Games later became the Paralympic Games which first took place in Rome, Italy, in 1960 featuring 400 athletes from 23 countries. Since then they have taken place every four years. In 1976

the first Winter Games in Paralympics history were held in Sweden, and followed the same 4-year pattern. Since the Summer Games of Seoul, Korea in 1988 and the Winter Games in Albertville, France in 1992 the Games have also taken part in the same cities and venues as the Olympics due to an agreement between the IPC and IOC.

In 1960, under the aegis of the World Federation of ex-servicemen, an International Working Group on Sport for the Disabled was set up to study the problems of sport for persons with an impairment. It resulted in the creation, in 1964, of the International Sport Organisation for the Disabled (ISOD) who offered opportunities for those athletes who could not affiliate to the International Stoke Mandeville Games: vision impaired, amputees, persons with cerebral palsy and paraplegics.

At the start, 16 countries were affiliated to ISOD and the organisation pushed very hard to include blind and amputee athletes into the Toronto 1976 Paralympics and athletes with cerebral palsy in 1980 in Arnhem. Its aim was to include all impairments in the future and to act as a Co-coordinating Committee. Various other disability-orientated organisations were founded in the years that followed, such as the Cerebral Palsy International Sports and Recreation Association (CPISRA) and International Blind Sports Federation (IBSA), until the creation of the "International Co-coordinating Committee Sports for the Disabled in the World" (ICC) in 1982. Originally consisting of 4 organisations, others joined in the succeeding years.

Finally, on 22 September 1989, the International Paralympic Committee was founded as an international non-profit organisation in Dusseldorf, Germany, to act as the global governing body of the Paralympic Movement. The word "Paralympic" derives from the Greek preposition "para" (beside or alongside) and the word "Olympic". It highlights the concept that the Paralympics are the parallel Games to the Olympics and that the two movements exist side-by-side.

Since the Summer Games of Seoul, Korea in 1988 and the Winter Games in Albertville, France in 1992, the Games have also taken part in the same cities and venues as the Olympics due to an agreement between the IPC and IOC.

Today, as part of the co-operation agreement between the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the International Paralympic Committee (IPC), medals for both the Olympic and Paralympic Games have to be made of the same materials and be of similar design, in the past, it was up to the local Organising Committee of the Games to produce their own medals.

There are currently 28 official paralympic sports ranging from athletics to fencing, judo to volleyball and much more.



The symbol of the Paralympic Games is composed of three "crescents", coloured red, blue, and green, encircling a single point on a white field. The agito ("I move" in Latin) is a symbol of movement in the shape of an asymmetrical crescent. The colours of the agitos with the white background stand for the three colours that are most widely represented in national flags around the world.

WHEN DID FAMILY PORTRAITS START?

Family portraits date back to the early 19th century. The first known photograph was taken by French inventor Joseph Nicéphore Niépce in the late 1820's. By around 1840, photographic skills and techniques had developed sufficiently for commercial studios to produce one-off photographs called daguerreotypes. These were expensive products in folding gilt frames, and beyond the means of most people of that time.

But throughout the 19th century, photography continued to evolve and become more accessible. As it did so, more families took the opportunity to have family portraits, in formats ranging from ambrotypes (glass plated images) and ferrotypes (iron plated images) to card-mounted images. By the 1860s family portraits had become quite popular. Everyone seemed to want one. But why?

It is always interesting to look back on a popular trend and see how it has developed and gathered momentum. There appear to be four key reasons for the explosion of interest in family portraits in the mid-19th century:

Affordability

Before the invention of photography, the only way to have a family portrait was to have one painted especially. This was not only time consuming, but very expensive. But with the evolution of photography making it more affordable – though still relatively expensive – many more families were now able to consider having a family portrait done.

Queen Victoria

Another important factor in the growth of the family portrait was the example of Queen Victoria. She became very enthusiastic about photography and began to use it to record many daily details of royal life. In this respect, she became a role model for the middle classes, who also wanted to embrace the trend and have their lives and families immortalised in a photograph.

Family history

One of the values of having a family portrait is that you will have special memories that will last forever. In the Victorian era, life expectancy was much lower than it is today. Sadly this also applied to children, some of whom did not survive into adulthood. Families began to realise that a family portrait would capture the family during the possibly limited time they were all together. Preserving that memory seemed worth making financial sacrifices to achieve.

How well photographs have survived seems to vary greatly. Some families have a wealth of old photos, others very few. With the current trend of taking pictures on smart phones and digital cameras, very few of which ever get printed, I wonder what legacy we will be leaving future generations?

DECLUTTER DEN

Do you have anything sitting in a cupboard, or on a shelf, that you no longer want? Might one of our members or groups be able to make use of it?



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

A number lock has 3 digit key. Hint of these three digits given, can you crack the code

6 8 2 One number is correct and well placed

6 1 4 One number is correct but wrong placed

2 0 6 Two numbers are correct but wrong placed

7 3 8 Nothing is correct

7 8 0 One number is correct but wrong placed

Dave Palmer posted this on our Facebook pages, I thought it deserved a wider audience. Answer to be included next month – or join our Facebook group if you want to find out sooner.

POETRY CORNER

Autumn

John Clare

I love the fitfull gusts that shakes
The casement all the day
And from the mossy elm tree takes
The faded leaf away
Twirling it by the window-pane
With thousand others down the lane
I love to see the shaking twig
Dance till the shut of eve
The sparrow on the cottage rig
Whose chirp would make believe
That spring was just now flirting by
In summers lap with flowers to lie
I love to see the cottage smoke
Curl upwards through the naked trees
The pigeons nestled round the coat
On dull November days like these
The cock upon the dung-hill crowing
The mill sails on the heath a-going
The feather from the ravens breast
Falls on the stubble lea
The acorns near the old crows nest
Fall pattering down the tree
The grunting pigs that wait for all
Scramble and hurry where they fall

Plums

Gillian Clarke

When their time comes they fall
without wind, without rain.
They seep through the trees' muslin
in a slow fermentation.
Daily the low sun warms them
in a late love that is sweeter
than summer. In bed at night
we hear heartbeat of fruitfall.
The secretive slugs crawl home
to the burst honeys, are found
in the morning mouth on mouth,
inseparable.
We spread patchwork counterpanes
for a clean catch. Baskets fill,
never before such harvest,
such a hunters' moon burning
the hawthorns, drunk on syrups
that are richer by night
when spiders pitch
tents in the wet grass.
This morning the red sun
is opening like a rose
on our white wall, prints there
the fishbone shadow of a fern.
The early blackbirds fly
guilty from a dawn haul
of fallen fruit. We too
breakfast on sweetnesses.
Soon plum trees will be bone,
grown delicate with frost's
formalities. Their black
angles will tear the snow.

And finally.....

Life isn't about finding yourself. Life is about creating yourself. *George Bernard Shaw*

Life is a succession of lessons which must be lived to be understood. *Helen Keller*

Don't let yesterday take up too much of today. *Will Rogers*

It does not matter how slowly you go, as long as you do not stop. *Confucius*

Life does not have to be perfect to be wonderful. *Annette Funicello*

