

Newsline Extra

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December 2022 No 36

The monthly news from Southwell U3A

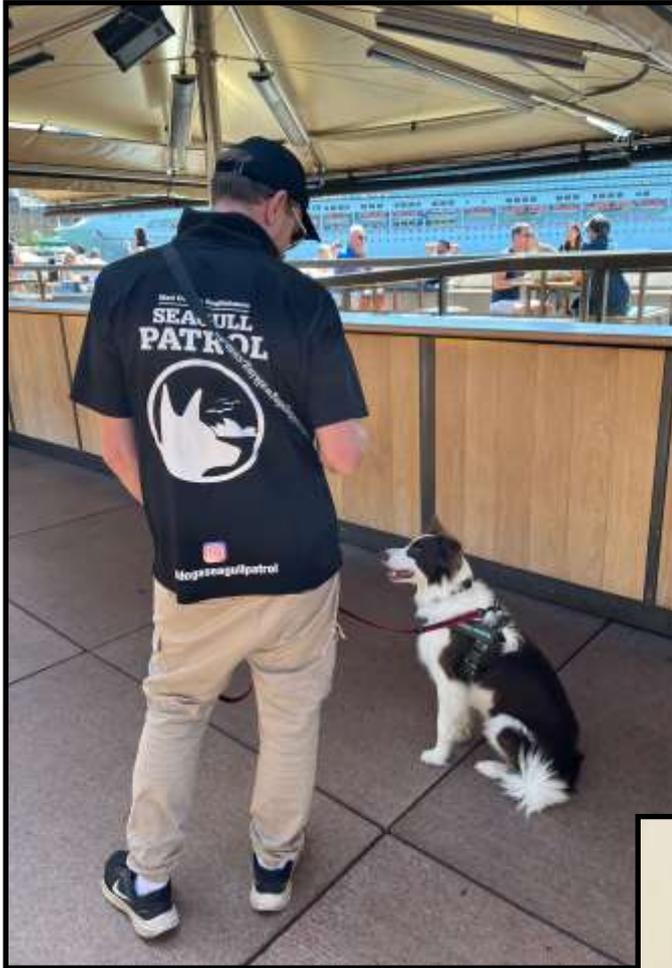


**Wishing all Southwell u3a Members
A Merry Christmas
and A Happy New Year**

Postcard From Australia

Brian Platts

A change from my usual piece this month, as Steph and I are in Australia for our daughter Laura's wedding in Sydney. I must say it's been good to take a break from all the bad news of the world for a few weeks!



Life is certainly a little different here. For example, we always try to start our trips to Sydney with a celebratory glass of fizz in the large open-air Opera Bar. It has fantastic views, being right next to Sydney Opera House and facing across the harbour to the iconic harbour bridge. It may sound pretty idyllic but our daughter ordered a plate of raw fish sashimi and no sooner had it arrived than a seagull swooped down over her shoulder and flew off with five pieces from her plate! Moments later a very apologetic man from the Mad Dogs and Englishmen "Seagull Patrol" (see photo) rushed up, saying that he had been momentarily distracted and so had failed in his daily mission to keep seagulls away from all the tables. Might have been best just to stick to the fizz was the takeaway message!

The u3a is a little different here too. It certainly seems very popular, with large groups in all the towns and cities and I made it my mission

to seek at least one of them out. Canberra u3a has over 5,000 members, distributed between three hubs. Two of the hubs have staffed offices in community centres and I called in at one to have a chat with their Office Manager, Rhona (see photo of the two of us). Rhona told me that they run lots of courses, all lasting several weeks or months, rather than having all the permanent interest groups that we do. 50+ years old and no longer in full time work are their membership criteria and they have similar annual fees to our own. One of our sons lives in Australia too and I was pleased to hear that his Canberra girlfriend's parents are both fully paid-up and committed u3a members!

I'm sure that our return to Southwell will come as a bit of a shock to the system, at least as far as the weather is concerned. However, I'm looking forward to our next monthly meeting on Tuesday 6th Decem-



ber, which will be our Christmas party. Do have a look at the related article later in this edition of Newsline and I hope that we will see you there for our bit of festive fun.

In the meantime, I must of course finish with a suitably Australian 'Joke of the Month'.

Although they haven't quite experienced the political chaos that we've been going through, Australians do tend to have a healthy skepticism regarding their politicians' promises. The Canberra girlfriend's father told me this story:

A politician visits a small town in the outback, eager to get as many votes as possible in the forthcoming election:

"Tell me the two things the government can do for you here?" he asks the townspeople. "Well firstly, we have a medical centre but no doctor" they reply.

The politician pulls out his mobile phone, dials a number and, after a short conversation, says "Done! A doctor will start here next week. What's the second thing you need?". The townspeople reply "We have no mobile reception in our town!".

See you again soon.

Brian

Have Your Say About the Future of the u3a!

Brian Platts

The Third Age Trust (TAT) would like to hear from as many members as possible regarding their proposals for the future structure and aims of TAT and the u3a nationally. As part of these new "Fit for the Future" proposals, Liz Thackray (Chair of TAT) has also put forward a new model for a board of governors.

This may all sound a bit remote and technical but how the u3a functions nationally has an impact on all u3as up and down the country. It's worth then having a look at two recent user-friendly presentations about all the new aims and proposals by just clicking on <https://www.u3a.org.uk/news/fit-for-the-future>. If moved to do so, you can then have your own say by emailing any comments regarding the governance proposals to governance@u3a.org.uk or about the strategic aims to strategy@u3a.org.uk.

Here's your chance then to let TAT know what you think about how the u3a should be run!

Website Outages

Many of you noticed our website www.southwellu3a.com was down for a few days last month: It is now restored, through updates are taking longer than usual, so please be patient! If you have a "change request" for your group page.

However, although we are unaffected, many other u3a group websites across the UK are currently down due to a rather more serious and widespread difficulty with the company that hosts their websites, so if you are searching for u3a websites elsewhere in Nottinghamshire or beyond and see an "Error 404" or "Site not recognised", please do not think the u3a in that area has folded! I understand it could take days or weeks for these other groups to restore their websites.

Rik Ludlow, Webmaster

CHRISTMAS QUIZ

u3a



MONDAY 12th DECEMBER 2022
REGISTRATION NOW OPEN



Open to all u3a
members in the
East Midlands

Singles – Couples
& teams of up to 4

No limit on the numbers from
each u3a

Handicap system so
fair for all



To Register send:
Your name
Your email address
Name of your u3a
Team name (if any)
to:

u3achristmasquiz@outlook.com

You'll receive confirmation
within a couple
of days

The quiz will start promptly at 7:00pm – login from 6:45pm

We aim to finish around by 9.00pm

There will be a 10-minute comfort/drinks top-up break after Round 4

Answers will be given after Rounds 4 and 8

merry CHRISTMAS



u3a learn,
laugh,
live
East Midlands Region



How Do You Feel Southwell u3a is Doing?

Marjorie Bramhill

Are we one of the biggest u3a organisations in the Nottinghamshire Network - Yes.

Do we have a great selection of activities for our members - yes.

Do we have entertaining and informative speakers - yes.

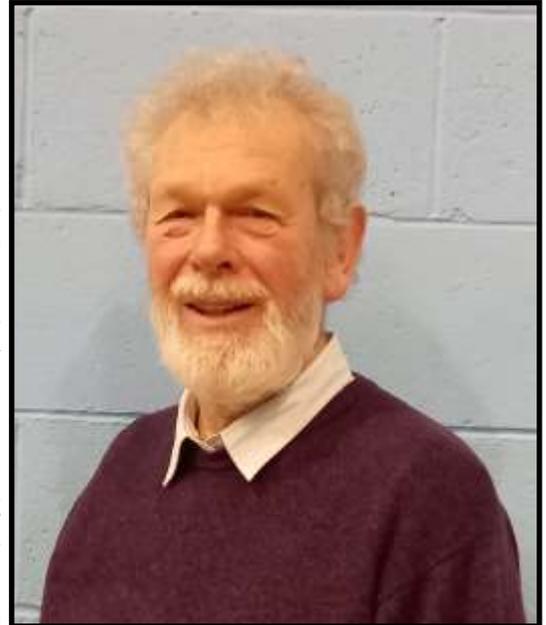
Well, we seem to be ticking the right boxes. Do you feel you can contribute to the smooth running of our u3a? Yes??? The committee meets once a month to decide what needs doing to keep our members engaged. It's an important job and we cooperate to find the right solutions to some challenging situations. Do you want to give something back to this great organisation? Can you bring new ideas to the table? It is important that we have enough enthusiastic committee members (and, inevitably, some of us find advancing years quite a challenge too, and must hand over to others). So - be brave - it's not rocket science here, nobody is qualified to do this job - but, together, we don't make a bad job of it, do we? Take up my challenge - get in touch and have a chat with me - Marjorie Bramhill, Vice Chair.

Contact details: Via southwellu3a@gmail.com or in www.southwellu3a.com members' area

Bob Reed, Our November Speaker

Well, Bob's title for his talk rather gave the game away and any u3a member coming to the monthly meeting who was not expecting to hear about toilets (and related issues) should have read my note in the previous Newsliner!

Bob Reed, academic at Loughborough University and hands on civil engineer specialising in sanitation provision and emergency relief in third world countries, started his talk with the amazing fact that more than 2 billion humans, one in four of us, have no access to toilets and 500 million have to resort to doing their business out in the open. This has huge implications for the spread of diseases and early death, particularly infant death, in many poor countries. Yet health is not the primary motivation when toilets are proposed with issues like privacy and status taking precedence. And provision of sanitation is often hampered by other issues, particularly the fact that human waste is a taboo subject in many societies resulting in a lack of political will to do anything and an associated lack of prestige for anyone involved in promoting better sanitation.



Who would have thought that provision of toilets would have been such an interesting topic but it was and Bob's talk brought it home to us that even if we (rightly) complain about multiple sewerage discharges into our water courses and onto beaches we are still living in a very fortunate part of the world. No scorpions or snakes in our toilets, but we have toilets, safe, comfortable toilets, a fact we could reflect on when we get those Christmas appeal letters this year. And just consider that it costs only about £150 to provide rudimentary but effective sanitation for a whole community which will provide 10-15 years' worth of safe waste and vastly improved health and life prospects for hundreds of poor people.

Coffee Mornings

The fortnightly coffee mornings held at Southwell Garden Centre, Fiskerton Road, Southwell are still going ahead. If you fancy a chat and a coffee come along at 10.30am on the 2nd and 4th Thursday morning of the month.

This month's meetings are the 8th and 22nd of December.

Open to all members. Hope to see you there.



Speaker Programme 2023

Chris Bentley

We have a full year of speakers booked up to the end of next year. We have several talks on historical topics starting in January with an account of the bloodiest battle of the War of the Roses at Towton near Tadcaster in Yorkshire.

Other historical talks will be by speakers in costume include one about a medieval “Cunning Woman”, (folk healer, soothsayer and all round wise woman), another featuring tales from the Workhouse, and one about lady drivers and pre-war motoring.

We’ll have more stories about Russia (tempered by current events), a talk about British eccentrics, life on a dairy farm, creating a spectacular garden from a patch of wasteland in Derbyshire, humorous tales from India, and the creation of an observatory and science discovery centre in Sutton-in-Ashfield.

We’ll also welcome students from the Minster School again and of course have our end of year party and concert in December.

It promises to be another entertaining and informative year, but I would say that, wouldn’t I, as I’ve booked all the speakers!

Here's the schedule: *in costume

3 Jan	David Skillen	Battle of Towton 1461
7 Feb	Minster School	TBA
7 March	Jane Barnes	Tales from a Dairy Farmer’s Wife
4 April	*Elaine Mein (aka Cunning Woman)	Concealed Objects and Written Charms
2 May	Alan Clements	From Jungle to Paradise
6 June	Ian Maber	The Jewel in the Crown
4 July	*Paula Cornwell (as the Hon. Mrs Victor Bruce)	Mind Your Motoring Manners
1 Aug	Steve Wallace	Sherwood Observatory and Science Discovery Centre
5 Sept	*Workhouse Storytellers	Workhouse Stories
3 Oct	Cathy McAteer	Topic related to Russia
7 Nov	Geoff Harris	The Great British Eccentric
5 Dec	End of Year Party and Christmas Concert	

MEMBERSHIP

Richmond Kingsbury

I am holding £15 paid by a Mr. G. Buckley but with no membership form to go with it. Neither can I find a member with this name on Beacon. If anyone knows this gentleman, please could they contact the Membership secretary.

Email: memsecsu3a@u3abeacon.org.uk

Information Sources for u3a Members

Jane Zdanowski

- Our own website, <https://www.southwellu3a.com> is your “go-to” place for the monthly calendar overview, details of our groups and their leaders, and which groups have vacancies. Contact southwellu3a@gmail.com if you have lost your password for the “members only” section
- Third Age Trust, National u3a, <https://www.u3a.org.uk>, <https://www.facebook.com/u3auk>
- The National u3a now has a Radio Podcast, accessible from the home page of our website and this link: <https://www.u3a.org.uk/news/u3a-radio-podcast>.
- Southwell Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/groups/southwellu3a>

GROUP NEWS

Church Visiting Group (CVG):

Chris Bentley

2022 Annual Report

The CVG visited 27 churches this year with seven trips in four counties with average turnout around 18 members. We have now shut down until March as days are short and weather often inclement. So where did we go and what were the highlights?

Oldest church: Three of the churches visited had Saxon parts, Repton, Stow Minster and Hough-on-the-Hill but Repton with its substantially complete Saxon crypt probably the oldest.

Coldest church: Without doubt Stow Minster, even on a sunny day!

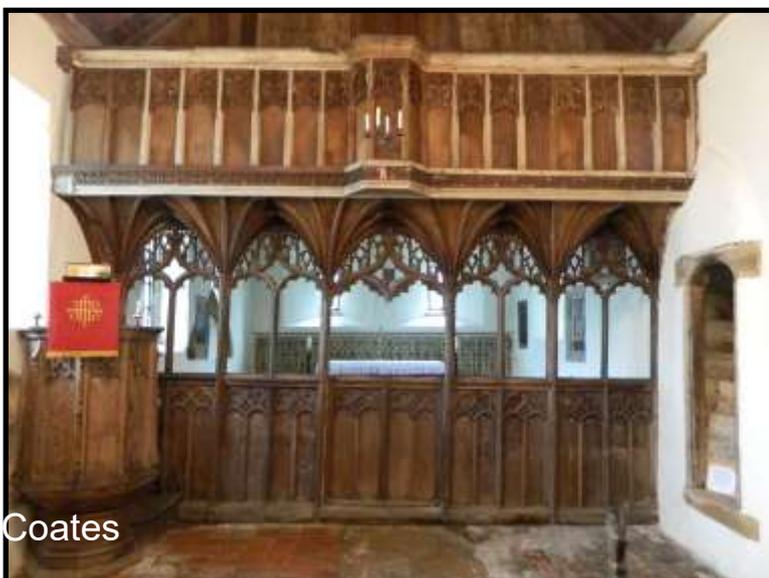
Most interesting church: Depends what you're interested in but for me it was Withcote Chapel with its setting and its medieval stained-glass windows.

Most remote church: Again Withcote, in a field well off the road network accessed from a rough track with no neighbours except the Hall, currently being renovated and an empty cottage. Unfortunately, this makes it easy for thieves and one window has recently been stolen.

Most unexpected church: Probably Coates, a tiny church in a tiny hamlet but possessing a very rare complete C14 rood screen and gallery.

Most monuments: Two candidates, Exton and Bottesford, both full of dead aristocrats, all immortalised in marble.

Best lunch: Probably at Launde Abbey, accompanied by a heavy thunder-



Coates



Bottesford

Aston on Trent, Weston on Trent, Swarkestone, Repton and Foremark.

Leicestershire:

Wymondham, Edmondthorpe, Bottesford, Owston, Launde Abbey, Withcote Chapel and Somerby.

Lincolnshire:

Caythorpe, Hough-on-the-Hill, Marston, Hougham, Sedgbrook, Allington, Coates, Stow Minster and Torksey.

Rutland:

Hambleton, Egleton, Burley, Exton, Ashwell and Teigh.

If anyone would like to join us or just wants more information please contact Group Leaders Chris or Daniel Giugno

Contact details: Via southwellu3a@gmail.com or in www.southwellu3a.com members' area

storm.

And finally which church would be great to join for a carol service? My vote goes to Owston Church, a remnant of a former priory church in a remote hamlet but with great atmosphere.

Full list of churches visited in 2022:

Derbyshire:



Repton



Stow

Stow



Owston



Withcote



Christmas Party Tuesday 6th December

We will be holding a Christmas party instead of our usual monthly meeting in the Leisure Centre on 6th December. It will commence promptly at **10.00am** and last about 2 hours. It will take the form of a Christmas variety show and there has been a great response from members volunteering to perform.

We will have musical performances from the **Folk, Ukulele and Recorder groups**, **spoken word performances from members of the Literature, Poetry and History of Art groups**, **seasonal photos from the Photography Group** and **several pieces from individual members**. We also plan to have a **Christmas Quiz** and we'll finish with some **sing-along with the Singing for Fun Group**.

What more could you ask for? Well I guess those of you who were at last year's Covid-restricted show might say heating! Rest assured that you will not lapse into hypothermia this year and we will be providing tea, coffee and mince pies to keep you warm inside as well as out.

It would be great if you could come along wearing suitably festive clothing – **Xmas jumpers and/or a Santa hat** would be marvellous, if you have them. Please also try to bring a pen for the Christmas Quiz and a re-usable cup for your drink.

The performers put a great deal of time and effort into rehearsing and perfecting their pieces and so let's have a big turnout again to show our appreciation of their efforts. Hope to see you there!



A Letter From Sri Lanka

Noble Jayasuriya

Dear All,

Hope you all are keeping well. I see that U3a is all geared up for the Christmas party on 6th Dec. Wish you all a great Christmas celebration and a day full of fun.

I hear that the temperature is dropping as expected and I am glad that I am away from the winter but I will definitely miss the Christmas party.

I am sending you some photos from Sri Lanka, taken from the recreation area in the housing complex that we live in.

Best regards

Noble



Medium Walks Group

Mike Ashbery

Our recent walk in Blidworth Woods on November 23rd.



Music Lovers Group

John Tebbs

Just a reminder that Music Lovers won't be meeting on our normal day, Wednesday 7th December, but will meet before Christmas on Wednesday 21st December: The usual time and place: Roman Catholic Hall, Wolsey Close, 1.30pm to 3.30pm. There is plenty of room for newcomers. Just turn up or phone.

Something different for Christmas music.

This YouTube playlist contains four Christmas concerts by Frankfurt Radio Big Band. Superb jazz band and vocals. Enjoy!

<https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLmDmlmWrUvVpsV3RkQXoJ9QmKTbda1BPu>

John Tebbs

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Peak Walking Group

Peter Somerville

Here is a photo of members of the Peak Walking Group doing a walk around Eyam, encompassing Eyam, Offerton and Abney Moors earlier in November.



Photography Group

John Mason

During November we went out on location to Sherwood Forest, looking for Autumn Action, which was our latest project. We came back with some stunning images, some of which we will be sharing with you at the December U3A Christmas meeting on December 6th. We'll also be showing some of our best work from the last year. Our new project is 'Webs' – in the broadest possible sense. It will be interesting to see what our members come up with.



We meet at Southwell Library on the second Tuesday of the month from 2.00pm until 4.00pm. Our next meeting will be on December 13th.



We are always looking for more members, if you've got a phone, you're a photographer! If you are interested contact our group leader, Graeme

Contact details: Via southwellu3a@gmail.com or in www.southwellu3a.com members' area



Last vestiges of Autumn by Jane Zdanowski



Recorder Group

Ian Boothroyd

On Sunday 23rd October the Recorder Group held its second "Family and Friends Concert" in Edingley. (Our first was in March 2020, just before Covid.)

We were pleased to welcome about 40 guests, including the Chair and Vice Chair of the u3a, and ten people from Ukraine and Afghanistan who are living amongst us because of the turmoil in their countries.

Fourteen members of the group played eighteen musical items, dating from the 16th century to a new piece composed for us this year by our own Liz Garrod. There were also several individual items, including some musical variety provided by Rik Ludlow and Lorna Mellor with violin, voice and piano, and two poems by Phil Dunn.



Nine of the group items were arranged or adapted by members of the group. One of them was our version of the State Anthem of Ukraine, and our guests from that nation asked us to play it again whilst they sang the words to us. We received several

donations which were sent to the DEC's humanitarian appeal for Ukraine.



The Recorder Group thanks all our guests, and also everyone who contributed to the music and the refreshments.





Singing for Fun!

Southwell u3a Next Meeting Tuesday 24 January 2023

This Group meets at Edingley Old Schoolroom (postcode NG22 8BB) on the 4th Tuesday every month at 10am.

There is no necessity to be able to sing - we are NOT a choir. The selection of songs includes those we remember - the ones that stick in your mind. You can be sure that no one else is going to mark your singing out of 10.

We stop for a coffee break and chat. It's a sociable, friendly group - everyone joins in. There is a small charge of 20p for refreshments. Room Hire is modest, and we contribute towards this from time to time.

Contact details: Via southwellu3a@gmail.com or in www.southwellu3a.com members' area

Southwell u3a Concert Coaches
Royal Concert Hall, Nottingham.

Roger Bennett

I have now opened bookings for the following concert:

The Hallé Christmas Concert
Wednesday 14 December 7:30pm

Stephen Bell conductor
Katie Bray mezzo-soprano



Programme includes:

Humperdinck Overture: Hansel and Gretel;
Mozart Marriage of Figaro: Voi che sapete;
Rossini Barber of Seville: Una Voce Poco Va;
Saunders Fairytale Sleighride;
Handel Imeneo: Sorge nell'alma mia;
Bizet Carmen: Habanera and Orchestral Suites 1 and 2 (highlights);
Coleridge-Taylor Christmas Overture;
Hals Calling the Aurora;
Pann Slalom;
Loesser What Are You Doing New Year's Eve?

The coach whisks members from the Southwell Leisure Centre via Thurgarton and Lowdham pick-ups to drop members right outside the Royal Concert Hall. The return journey leaves close to the Concert Hall. If there is anyone new who would like to be informed of this scheme, please let me know.

Please send cheque (made out to Southwell u3a) plus booking form to me.

Seat plus coach prices are: Band A £35, Band B £31 and Band C £29 per person.

Roger Bennett

Contact details: Via southwellu3a@gmail.com or in www.southwellu3a.com members' area

Workshops

Jane Zdanowski and Lynne Cox

Reminiscence Course

In order to accommodate members who could not start until the New Year, the Reminiscence Course will now start on Wednesday 11th January '23 at 10.30am in the library, and will continue fortnightly until and including 05 April '23. This is not for members who have or think they may have dementia but for those who want to keep their memory healthy, and, possibly, improve it.

If you are interested in taking the course, please contact Jane or Lynne via southwellu3a@gmail.com or in www.southwellu3a.com members' area

Social and Trips

Jane Parker

Bletchley Park

Date for your diary,

Thursday 23 March 2023

Full day fascinating trip to include a guided tour to the extraordinary Bletchley Park, home of the World War Two Codebreakers.

Full details will be available in January New-line.



Doddington Hall

John Elkington

There are a few spaces left for our visit to Doddington Hall to see the Christmas Decorations on Thursday 15th December. Currently two time slots have been booked for us for group visits at 11.10am and 11.20am. We can have up to 16 people in each group. Tickets are £15.00 each and we will be using our own vehicles. If you would like a lift or are prepared to offer lifts, please let me know when booking.

It would be very helpful if members who wish to go could let me know asap as the time slots reserved for us will be released if they are not filled. Tickets held for us usually require paying for in order to get them reserved. Bookings can be made at the Monthly meeting or by contacting John Elkington: Contact details: Via southwellu3a@gmail.com or in www.southwellu3a.com members' area

Don't forget to look out for more trips and events from the Social and Trips Committee in Newline.

In last month's Newslines, our u3a Chair and CDWU Group Leader, Brian Platts, highlighted the fact that the group had maybe not followed the trend towards vegetarianism as quickly as some. So here goes with another veggie recipe, which we hope you will enjoy. We certainly enjoyed both cooking and eating it!

Sweet Potato and Peanut Curry – serves 4

Ingredients

1 tbsp vegetable oil
1 chopped onion
2 garlic cloves, grated
Thumb sized piece fresh ginger, grated
3 tbsp Thai red curry paste (or to taste)
1 tbsp smooth peanut butter
500g sweet potato (peeled and cut into chunks)
400ml coconut milk
200ml water
Juice of 1 lime
200g spinach
Cooked rice
Dry roasted peanuts to serve (optional)



Method

Place the vegetable oil in a saucepan over a medium heat and soften the onion for approx. 5 mins. Add grated garlic cloves and grated ginger and cook for 1 min, until the fragrance is released.

Stir in the Thai red curry paste, peanut butter and sweet potato chunks, then add 400ml coconut milk and 200ml water.

Bring to the boil, turn down the heat and simmer, uncovered for 25-30 mins or until the sweet potato is soft.

Add lime juice and spinach, stir through for 1 min. or so, and season well.

Serve with cooked rice and maybe sprinkle over a few dry roasted peanuts for added interest.

Enjoy!



**Wishing all Members a very Merry Christmas
and a Happy New Year!**

From everyone at Newsline



**Please send all items for inclusion in the January issue to:
su3anewsline@gmail.com BEFORE**

Thursday, 15th December (because it is so close to Christmas!)