

Newsline Extra

Southwell U3A
July 2020 - No 7

From the chair

Marjorie Bramhill

If anyone is having IT problems during these difficult times which friends and family cannot solve, I have had a glowing recommendation, from one of our members, for Andy Mac, who lives in Southwell and who will come to your home in mask and gloves!! He can cope with most systems including Apple Mac. He lives in Southwell and his phone number is 07468 603130.

The committee is continuing to meet online each week and Tony Key, the Treasurer, has reported that our finances are OK for the moment, but that late payers are being contacted. Chris Bentley has booked a speaker for January 2021 – so, fingers crossed, we will be meeting up in person again. We are having a look through about 25 reports from U3As across the country which talk about how they run their U3As and have some ideas for us to try, The survey was carried out by Paul Martinez, who is also our Notts Network Support Officer as well as being the national Chair, U3A Supporting Growth Working Group.

The fishman is back on the market on Saturday morning, but he is continuing with home deliveries – Steve Owen 07768 416041. Southwell shops are open for business, but town isn't like it used to be and the market has shrunk. I believe Southwell library will be opening on 13th July but there are some changes. You can see these on a helpful video on www.inspireculture.org.uk. Libraries in other areas are listed on their website. It will be possible to return books – and renewals are due before 17th August. All returned books will be quarantined before going back on the shelves. They have also introduced 'Click and Collect' which you can access on their website, fill in a form and then collect at the library. I hope you are all keeping in touch with each other. I'm sure some of you will have had time to spend in the garden – even if only to have a few friends round out there.

If you have subscribed for the National Newsletter you will see that the rest of the U3A movement is shown in a new You tube video – and it really is inspiring watching it. Do have a look.

Marjorie Bramhill chairmansu3a@gmail.com

Newsline Extra is produced by the Newsline team and we welcome contributions from members, discretion will be used by editors as to suitability and of course space. The idea for the newsheet originally was for fortnightly double sided paper in Word however we soon expanded this to include more including puzzles and quizzes and photos. Thank you for all your positive comments and we hope that you continue to enjoy the production although it will be coming out at slightly longer intervals, look out for the email alert in your account.

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The topic for the next edition hasn't been decided so if you have a topic that would be of interest to members please do be in touch.

Committee Profiles



BRIAN PLATTS

Brian comes from Sheffield and remains a long-suffering Sheffield Wednesday season ticket holder (not that its much use at the moment!). He graduated from Manchester University as a doctor in 1975, going on to train in General Practice, before changing to Occupational Medicine early in his career. He worked for many years as a Consultant in Occupational Medicine with various companies and organisations, including the NHS, Health and Safety Executive, British Steel, British Gas and E.ON, before starting his own company later in his career. Brian is married to Steph and they have 3 adult children, 2 of whom live in Australia. They've recently become grandparents for the first time. They normally enjoy travelling but all that is on hold at the moment. They have lived in Southwell since 1984, originally in the old Station House opposite the Final Whistle and they now live near to the Minster School. Brian is a member of Nottingham's Major Oak Chorus of barbershop singers and recently joined Southwell tennis club. He chairs the Southwell U3A Social Events committee and leads the Come Dine with Men group. He is also a member of the Bucketeers Group and is currently running our lockdown Zoom quiz. He is keen for us to take the best ideas from other local U3A groups and keep up our recruitment to Southwell U3A.

Gardens

Sadly the open gardens scheme has been virtually wiped out this year with every village event cancelled except at the moment Thorpe Salvin on 18th /19th July which is still up on the opengardens.co.uk website. However, the National Garden Scheme does indicate gardens are opening though booking is recommended ngs.org.uk, you need to check since they are releasing information on a fortnightly basis.

The Royal Horticultural Society have on Youtube many videos covering the Chelsea Flower Show and some "How to" films ideas for example at the moment might be "How to keep your petunias full and flowering" or ". Fantastic foxgloves.



Orchid—photograph by Geoff Padmore

Anne Stanford

This is my garden which I have designed and developed over the last 15 years. It has formal and informal areas. I have grown 35 shaped box in pots and four box hedges. The borders contain small trees including Cornus Kousa, Eucyphia Milliganii, Cytisus Battandiera and three Olives. Also shrubs, Alliums, perennials and tulips. I also have a 'third hand' greenhouse which is full of self-grown tomato plants. Due to coronavirus I have been self-isolating but my garden has been my savior. I couldn't have coped without it.



Photos of Anne Stanford's Garden

The Reluctant Gardener

Terry Gill

I don't have a large garden for which fact I am quite grateful. Don't get me wrong, I like gardens, other peoples' gardens that is, but generally I find that keeping mine in some semblance of order is trying, to say the least. At the moment, everything seems to be growing rapidly and with great determination. The lawns, such as they are, produce grass at an alarming rate even though one of them slopes gently and is eighty percent moss. I bought a fly-mower some years ago which, I am now told, encourages the growth of moss. However, even though not much of a lawn, the amount of cut grass produced is amazing so, thanks to lock down and the nearest recycling centre being about fifty miles away, I am faced with storing bags of gently rotting cut grass which becomes home to many spiders and other mini-beasts, most of which will de-camp, when I do manage to take the stinking, rotting mass to the tip, and then take up residence in my car. Before lock-down, while driving my granddaughters back from hockey, I was alarmed by a piercing shriek from the back seat- a large spider was lowering itself slowly down from the roof just in front of granddaughter number two who, I now know, cannot stand spiders!

The problem I find with gardens is that whatever you try to grow, nature has evolved some type of disease, fungus or insect to attack it, so you spend pounds on an arsenal of chemical weapons which then you find are very bad for the environment. Not only that but the plants which do flourish are the ones classed as 'weeds'. I like weeds, they are often very pretty to look at, feed lots of insects and birds and generally look after themselves very well. But for some reason they are not welcomed by gardeners. To get round this I suggested to my wife that we turn part of the garden into a sort of eco-friendly home for nature, ie, leave it alone and let it do what it wants. This was partially successful, particularly as one of my daughters had given my wife some wild flower seeds for her birthday, so we dug holes all over part of the garden, inserted the pellets as per instructions and waited. Nothing. I suppose flowers may appear at some time but I don't hold out much hope!

However, there is one side of gardening which does appeal to me. Tools! I love tools and will spend hours in DIY shops admiring them. I have a range of mowers, cutters, choppers and things for making holes; I think they are called spades. I have inherited my lack of skill in the garden from my father, who during the war, tried to grow vegetables for the family. The result left the rear garden where we lived looking like the Somme on a bad day, but at least the elderflower tree flourished, enabling my mother to make elderflower wine – also rhubarb wine and beetroot port, all of which I was not allowed to touch, being only about five at the time. My conclusions about gardening are that they are great if someone else is working them but they are a never ending source of worry, expense and potential disaster. At least I don't have to compete with the expert gardeners in the area who open their amazing works to the public and content myself with the thinking of the many gardeners who are slaving away to produce beautiful creations for other people, myself included, to enjoy without having to damage their backs or their bank balances!



“Marilyn Medusa” to be found in the garden of Stephanie Platts.

Jobs to do in the garden

Cut woody herbs to keep compact if flowering has finished, tie the trimmings and hang to dry for a kitchen supply, examples of which are rosemary and bay. Keep the deadheading so that flowers keep producing a display through the summer. Continue to sow vegetables if you want a continuous supply especially the salad veg like lettuce, spring onions and radish; also turnips, carrots and French beans.

Wildlife protection in the garden carries on until August for the birds who may be nesting still raising second broods so delay trimming hedges or doing tree work until later, also baby frogs may be in any areas of long grass so care should be taken when cutting or strimming. Hedgehogs are reputed to have had a better spring this year due to the reduced traffic on the roads so leaving out a dish of water is very helpful to them as is putting some meat based, ie not fish, dog or cat food for them although you may need to be ingenious with ensuring the local felines don't take it first

Local gardens to visit

A recent discovery is an unusual meditation garden in North Nottinghamshire, Pure Land Meditation Centre and Japanese Garden with a traditional Japanese style garden with koi carp. It is in North Clifton nr Newark. Learn more about it on <https://www.visit-nottinghamshire.co.uk/things-to-do/pure-land-japanese-garden-and-meditation-centre-p351761>

Felley Priory is a lovely setting with the beautiful 16th Century house, plant centre and tea room the latter which is currently closed of course www.felleypriory.co.uk. Doddington Hall near Lincoln has a large kitchen garden if you are interested in growing your own produce www.doddingtonhall.com. Slightly further away down the A1 is Easton Walled gardens again in a beautiful setting with 12 acres of gardens to explore www.visiteaston.co.uk.

National Trust gardens are open but must be booked in advance to stagger arrivals.

Interesting facts

The next time you are washing your hands and complain because the water temperature isn't just how you like it, think about how things used to be.

Here are some facts about the 1500s

Most people got married in June because they took their yearly bath in May, and still smelled pretty good by June. However, they were starting to smell, so brides carried a bouquet of flowers to hide the body odour. Hence the custom today of carrying a bouquet when getting married. Baths consisted of a big tub filled with hot water. The man, of the house had the privilege of the nice clean water, then all the other sons and men, then the women and finally the children. Last of all the babies. By then the water was so dirty you could actually lose someone in it. Hence the saying, "Don't throw the baby out with the bath water."

Houses had thatched roofs - thick straw-piled high, with no wood underneath. It was the only place for animals to get warm, so all the cats and other small animals (mice, bugs) lived in the roof. When it rained it became slippery and sometimes the animals would slip off the roof. Hence the saying "It's raining cats and dogs."

There was nothing to stop things from falling into the house. This posed a real problem in the bedroom where bugs and other droppings could mess up your nice clean bed. Hence, a bed with big posts and a sheet hung over the top afforded some protection. That's how canopy beds came into existence.

The floor was dirt. Only the wealthy had something other than dirt. Hence the saying "dirt poor." The wealthy had slate floors that would get slippery in the winter when wet, so they spread thresh (straw) on the floor to help keep the good footing. As the winter wore on, they added more thresh until when you opened the door it would all start slipping outside. A piece of wood was placed in the entrance-way. Hence the saying a "thresh hold"

(Getting quite an education, aren't you?)

In those old days, they cooked in the kitchen with a big kettle that always hung over the fire. Every day they lit the fire and added things to the pot. They ate mostly vegetables and did not get much meat. They would eat the stew for dinner, leaving leftovers in the pot to get cold overnight and then start over the next day. Sometimes the stew had food in it that had been there for quite a while. Hence the rhyme, "Peas porridge hot, peas porridge cold, peas porridge in the pot nine days old." Sometimes they could obtain pork, which made them feel quite special. When visitors came over, they would hang up their bacon to show off. It was a sign of wealth that a man could "bring home the bacon." They would cut off a little to share with guests and would all sit around and "chew the fat".

Those with money had plates made of pewter. Food with high acid content caused some of them to lead to leach onto the food, causing lead poisoning death. This happened most often with tomatoes, so for the next 400 years or so, tomatoes were considered poisonous. Bread was divided according to status. Workers got the burnt bottom of the loaf, the family got the middle, and guests got the top, or "upper crust"

Lead cups were used to drink ale or whisky. The combination would sometimes knock the imbibers out for a couple of days. Someone walking along the road would take them for dead and prepare them for burial. They were laid out on the kitchen table for a couple of days and the family would gather around and eat and drink and wait and see if they would wake up. Hence the custom of holding a "wake".

England's old and small and the local folks started running out of places to bury people. So, they would dig up coffins and would take the bones to a "bone-house" and reuse the grave. When reopening these coffins, 1 out of 25 coffins were found to have scratch marks on the inside and they realized they had been burying people alive. So, they would tie a string on the wrist of the corpse, lead it through the coffin and up through the ground and tie it to a bell. Someone would have to sit out in the graveyard all night (the "graveyard shift") to listen for the bell; thus, someone could be "saved by the bell" or was considered a "dead ringer".

And that's the truth ... Now, whoever said that History was boring !!!

Chris Bentley

Remember March? Just before the lockdown when we were still discussing if and when we might have to close down U3A face to face activities? Does it seem like a lost age or only five minutes ago? Strangely it seems both to me as each day merges into the next and weeks go by, Groundhog Day after Groundhog Day. But in March and before March we had normality, a time we could go where we liked, see who we liked, do things when we liked, like popping out for a coffee with friends, Silver Screen showings at the Broadway Cinema, booking holidays, even, dare I say it, enjoying trips to the supermarket to do the weekly shopping! And then there was the Library, a place to pop in, browse the shelves, see U3A members, find a couple of books to read and look at the What's On notices. I miss the Library. Maybe it'll be open again soon but it won't be normal, a one way system in place, limits on how many people can enter, social distancing, not to mention all those plastic covered books, harbouring who knows what on their covers! Still, not having the Library has had one benefit. Back at home we've got lots of books, many of them have been on our shelves for decades, some have been stored in boxes in the loft. We really ought to get rid of them, if anyone would want them, that is. So it's been a joy to find out what we've got copies of in the house, just the impetus needed to actually take them off the shelf and start reading, or in several cases re-reading. So I started with Pickwick Papers that's been on the Must Read One Day List for years. Quite a romp and I enjoyed it, unlike other Dickens' books I was forced to read at school! Then Journal of the Plague Year by Daniel Defoe which I've already reviewed a few weeks ago. Since then I've read The Vicar of Wakefield (Goldsmith), Cranford (Mrs Gaskell) and The Lost World (Conan Doyle). All great reads though not totally PC, especially that last one. And then I discovered a box of old paperbacks in the loft. Remember those old green Penguins, the crime novels? And orange ones for novels, light blue for non-fiction, magenta for travel, mauve for essays, dark blue for biographies. And I've started reading them. Well, if there are any benefits of older age one is that you can't remember something you read 60 or so years ago, at least I can't so now I'm reading a murder mystery that I do remember enjoying way back. I can't remember the plot, so I can enjoy trying to work out who's done it, but I have to admit it's not as good as I had thought it was! All those Scandic Noir books I've been reading recently are so much better! But let's look on the bright side, if the lockdown, self imposed or otherwise, continues for some months to come, I've still got lots more books to read. And we can all look forward to the Library opening again sometime, and an end to this weird world we're living through right now. Keep Calm and Keep Reading!

ChangeWord No. 2

The object of this Puzzle is to find five words from the clues given. Each word has four letters and differs by one letter from the previous one in the sequence. See the following example:

Eg Clues: *Young Animal - 50% - Stop - Lobby - Collapse*

Eg Answers: *CALF - HALF - HALT - HALL - FALL*

Clues:

1. Crude Weapon – Helpful Evidence – Chimney – Change – Textile Plant
2. Royal Person – Cattle – Drink – Eat – Really Bad
3. Lost Child - Tarry - Lure – Surety – Painful Spot
4. Winged Creature – Poet – Fat – Aristocrat – Folk Wisdom
5. Impudent/Saucy - Animal Fur – Weal - Direction – Underwear
6. Not Bad – Treed Area – Blue Dye – Highway – Animal Noise
7. Sympathy – Urban Area – Refer to – Flying Toy – Girl's Name
8. Cry – Headwear – Trendy - Textile – Dog Noise
9. Time Period – Fruit – Lord – Drink – Vegetable
10. Bird – South Coast Town – Insect Nest – Reside – Similar to

[Answers on Back Page]

NHS Test and Trace scams:

The NHS Test and Trace service plays an important role in the fight against coronavirus and it's vital the public have confidence and trust in the service. However, we understand the concerns people have about the opportunity for criminals to commit scams.

What you need to know:

Contact tracers will **only call you from the number 0300 013 5000**. Anyone who does not wish to talk over the phone can request the NHS Test and Trace service to send an email or text instead, inviting them to log into the web-based service.

All text or emails sent by NHS Test and Trace will ask people to sign into the contact tracing website and will provide you with a unique reference number. We would advise people to **type the web address <https://contact-tracing.phe.gov.uk> directly into their browser**, followed by the unique reference number given to you, rather than clicking on any link provided in the message.

The NHS Test and Trace service will never:

- ask you to dial a premium rate number to speak to them (for example, those starting 09 or 087)
- ask you to make any form of payment or purchase a product or any kind
- ask for any details about your bank account
- ask for your social media identities or login details, or those of your contacts
- ask you for any passwords or PINs, or ask you to set up any passwords or PINs over the phone
- ask you to download any software to your PC or ask you to hand over control of your PC, smartphone or tablet to anyone else
- ask you to access any website that does not belong to the government or NHS

If you think you have been a victim of fraud, please report it to Action Fraud at <https://www.actionfraud.police.uk> or by calling 0300 123 2040.

NHS guidance on Covid 19
NHS advice is on <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>.

Anyone who has symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) can get a free test to check if they have the virus, some people without symptoms can have the test too. This test is called the "antigen" or "swab" test. There is another type of test (antibody test) that checks if you have already had the virus but this is not widely available as yet.

For those who are clinically extremely vulnerable there is new advice about mixing with people. That you do not need to stay physically distanced from those people you live with, that you can meet with 1 other household if you are single, but not therefore if you are living as a couple, you can meet outside with people you do not live with, in groups up to 6 but still you need to remain 2 metres away from each other. No further guidance is expected for this group until 1st August.

U3A

On the national U3A website there is a link to subject advice for members who may consider organising a group locally. There is a network of over 70 national subject advisers, whose role is to provide advice on both the setting up of a group in their particular speciality and the sustainability of ones already in existence, which may benefit from new ideas or a different approach. Some subject advisers keep in touch with groups convenors through newsletters or blogs which is a useful way of sharing suggestions and good practice and some also organise study days. They cover a wide range of subjects from American Archaeology to Yoga with a real mix of academic, practical and leisure activities in between. <https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/subjects>

Local News

Southwell Library will not be hosting any live activities for the rest of this year in respect of the safety of all concerned, so no Jazz or other artists Sept to Dec.

However they have created a new link on their website to performances:

<https://www.inspireculture.org.uk/whats-on/jazz/jazz-steps-libraries-home/>

Southwell library will be re-opening on Monday 13th July mainly morning openings, Monday to Thursday 9am to 1pm, Friday 1pm to 5pm, Saturday 9am to 1pm, closed Sunday.

Southwell Town Council joined forces with volunteer group, Southwell Torpedos, to run a help-line for residents of Southwell during the pandemic. By ringing 01636 330005, local people can ask for prescriptions to be collected or for some shopping to be done, simply have a chat or ask for help with anything else that is tricky during lockdown. Although shops are opening and people are returning to work, many Southwell residents are still shielding or don't feel ready to go and about in public just yet. The phone line is still there to support you and will continue to be so for the foreseeable future. **Ring 01636 330005 between 9am and 5pm, 7 days a week.**

COME DINE WITH MEN RECIPE

Raspberries are on the market and in the supermarkets now and perhaps also soon to appear in your own garden. Those of you that were at the U3A Burns Night supper will no doubt remember this Scottish dessert and here's a version from one of our Come Dine With Men sessions. It's dead easy and takes only minutes to put together.

CRANACHAN

Serves 4

Ingredients:

2 tablespoons medium oatmeal
300g fresh British raspberries
350ml double cream
2 tablespoons honey
2 tablespoons whisky, to taste

Method:

1. To toast the oatmeal, spread it out on a dry frying pan and fry gently until it smells rich and nutty. It will not darken quickly, so use your sense of smell to tell you when it is nutty enough – it must not scorch. Cool the oatmeal.
2. Make a raspberry puree by crushing half the fruit. Sweeten this to taste with a little honey. Whisk the double cream until just set, and stir in the honey and whisky, trying not to over- whip the cream. Taste the mix and add more of either if you feel the need.
3. Stir in the oatmeal and whisk lightly until the mixture is just firm. Alternate layers of the cream with the remaining whole raspberries and the puree into 4 serving dishes. Allow to chill slightly before serving.
4. Enjoy!

ChangeWord No. 2 Answers:

1. CLUB – CLUE – FLUE – FLUX – FLAX
2. KING – KINE – WINE – DINE – DIRE
3. WAIF – WAIT – BAIT – BAIL – BOIL
4. BIRD – BARD – LARD – LORD – LORE
5. PERT - PELT - WELT - WEST – VEST
6. GOOD – WOOD – WOAD – ROAD – ROAR
7. PITY – CITY – CITE – KITE
8. HOWL – COWL – COOL – WOOL – WOOF
9. YEAR – PEAR – PEER – BEER – BEET