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Welcome from the Chair

Welcome to August.

I have to say I spent the last part of July hoping for rain and a little cooler weather and then on the day it decided to rain we were at an open air event where we wished it would stop raining ! I am hoping it will be dry for our Summer Social event and look forward to meeting you there.

I also attended a meeting about the Thrapston Arts Festival recently. It was great to see how many U3A groups were represented and wanted to be part of the event. If you have not already done so, you may like to put June 1st to June 8th 2019 in your diary. The provisional plans involve a launch event on June 1st and a closing event on June 8th with a week of different activities at a variety of venues in the town. I am sure it will be really good! If you would like to be involved but have not yet completed a form to register your interest, you need to do so by September 17th. Roger and I have copies of the form and they are also available from the Town Council Office. If you are taking part, could you please make sure that Roger knows of your interest, as we are trying to keep an overview of the contribution we are hoping to make. It will also enable us to keep you up to date with any information we receive.

I hope you enjoy the rest of the summer and look forward to seeing you all soon.

Sheila



Welcome to our New Members



Coffee Morning for new members held on Monday July 16th



Mr Nick Barratt – Genealogy

It was something of a ‘nail biter’ in getting Nick Barratt to the Plaza in time for the July meeting, as he had agreed to travel from his home in South West London by train, to be met at Kettering station. Unfortunately, the train was delayed, but all turned out satisfactorily and he was welcomed in with just a few minutes to spare.

To many of the audience Nick Barratt was already a familiar figure, mainly from the TV show “Who do you think you are?” of which he was a primary presenter. Apart from this, he has many other accomplishments to his name, including being an author and historian. He is currently the President of the Federation of Family History Societies and sits on the Executive Committee of the Community Archives and Heritage Group.

Nick imparted much information relating to the TV show, for which he is perhaps most widely known and advised that the programme had in part been modelled around the lives of well-known personalities including soprano Lesley Garrett CBE, wild life specialist and former ‘Goodie’, Bill Oddie, Jeremy Clarkson, Ian Hislop and Jeremy Paxman. Each edition of the programme cost approximately £140K and took up to 6 months to complete.

The original concept for the TV show was based on similar lines to another successful programme, Time Team, where, within the format, a layman asks questions of the experts as the information available is discovered and analysed. “Who Do You Think You Are?” regularly had 3 to 4 million viewers, many just fascinated to learn more of the lives of the celebrities involved. The subjects of each programme were accustomed to working in front of the camera in an environment that may have overawed those not accustomed to being in the public eye.



For those wishing to investigate their own heritage Nick illustrated how quickly, and in the space of just a few generations, important information could be lost by posing the question to the audience: how many could name all eight of their great grandparents? He continued with suggestions where family information could be researched, including modern websites, explaining that local libraries frequently allow free access to some sites. The National Archives at Kew also provide free access to records that go back centuries, from parish records and land sales among other important documents.

There is public access to the census records going back from 1911 to 1841 and military service records are a treasure trove of useful information. The next national census in the UK, which occurs every ten years, will be in 2021 .

Nick gave a thought-provoking moment to the audience when he asked who owned the personal data which individuals may put on to social media sites, when it is known that some organisations ‘harvest’ information to be used for their own purposes. It appears that such data, when placed on the internet, may not belong to the individual anymore.

Nick’s style of delivery is very relaxed and he made his presentation apparently without reference to notes. At the end of the presentation he was open to questions and many in the audience took advantage of the time to ask some of Nick’s past and it was divulged that his ancestors came to England as Huguenot refugees in the 18th century. As for ‘skeletons in the closet’, Nick’s latest book ‘The Forgotten Spy’ tells the story of his great uncle, who was Russian Premier Stalin’s first ‘mole’ in Whitehall!

Paul Ollett

Speaker Seeker



Calendar of Events 2018

- 17 August **Summer Event** - see page 5
- 20 September **Warhorse** - **Milton Keynes**
- 21 September **An Unfinished Dream—Lyveden** - Susan Lees
- 27 September **Bure Valley Steam Railway and Norfolk Broads** - see page 7
- 19 October **Brief history of drinking, inns and public houses** - Eric Franklin
- 26 October **Peterborough Greyhounds** - see Irene Gandy
- 13 December **Canons Ashby and Nottingham Christmas Market** - see page 7
- 9 January **White Christmas** - **Leicester** see page 7

Branch Meetings

- When? 3rd Friday of each month
Where? The Plaza in Thrapston
When? from 10.30 to 12,
 (Doors open at 10am.)

Visitors are also welcome to join us for a small charge of £2



Please note that this month's meeting is the Social Event at Thrapston Sailing Club and that entry is for members and by ticket only See further details on page 5

Next Month — Friday September 20th

Susan Lees An Unfinished Dream — Lyveden

The talk covers the development of the gardens at Lyveden, which are one of the few surviving 17th century gardens in the UK. They are not only an historic monument but a Grade 1 listed park – so a very special place. Susan will also look at how Sir Thomas Tresham's beliefs informed his work and the effect of the Gunpowder Plot on the family.



The National Trust acquired the site in 1922 and its fortunes since then have seen many changes, including employing a 'Hermit' to look after the site in the 1950s!



Since retiring, Susan has been Secretary and Chairman of the local (East Northants) National Trust Association and subsequently part of a team of five 'wrinkly job-sharers' running the Visitor Centre every day from March to November each year.

Focus on Monday Groups

Time on your hands on Mondays? Perhaps something here will be of interest

Science and Technology Group



The group is open to anyone who is interested in and curious about all aspects of science, technology and mathematics.

We now have twenty members and have room for four more.

We meet on the third Monday afternoon of each month from 2 until 4.

Our venue is the Baptist Church in Sackville Street, Thrapston and we each pay £4 each quarter which covers the hall hire and coffee or tea and biscuits. Our programme cycle comprises two member's talks and one visit repeated throughout the year. This year we've had talks on Humour and Happiness, Cognitive-perceptual senses, Women in Science and Bees; future talks include Humphrey Davy and Pigmentation. We have visited Peterborough Energy Recovery Facility, the Shuttleworth collection and Church's Shoe Factory. Our next visit is to the Mini Factory, Oxford in November. Last year we visited Bletchley Park, the Whipple Museum and The British Transport Museum.

We also attend Cambridge Society for the Application of Research lectures at Churchill College www.csar.org.uk. They're usually monthly on Monday evenings from October to June at 7.30 and we leave Thrapston at about 6.30, sharing cars. They are free but a donation of £5 is encouraged, or you may become a member at £35 or less. Usually about six or seven of us attend these.

Members of the group are encouraged to run one of our sessions; it's not compulsory and you may opt to organise a visit instead. The main thing is that you enjoy coming to the group and contribute as little or as much as you feel happy with.

If you're interested in joining us, please ring or email me,
Glyn Hill 01832 735797 glynishill06@aol.com

Editor's note ; for photos of the group "at work" see the article on page 6

Cycling Group

(Here is an extract from last month's newsletter about the cycling group.)

We meet on the second and fourth Mondays of every month for a moderate ride of typically 15 miles. It sounds a lot, but that's just two halves of 45 minute with a 30-minute break in the middle. By popular demand, we have now introduced a longer ride of around 25 miles on the third Monday. This is a really sociable group: we enjoy the ride, the chat, the countryside and the refreshment break.



The group meets by the Co-op at 10am and are usually back by 12:30. We are not racers and Lycra is looked upon with suspicion. Rides are on either quiet back roads or off-road hard tracks and occasionally, we do away-rides to other areas. We are a mix of both sexes, though we would welcome more ladies to keep the men out of trouble. The eagle-eyed amongst you may have spotted that some of our members ride electric bikes. All are welcome.

Interested?

Contact Frank on 01832 735797 or 07928 747840

Photographic Group



The Photographic Group meets in Thrapston Baptist Church coffee lounge, 10 – 12 noon, on the first Monday of the month. We all agreed to pay £6 quarterly to cover the hire of the venue. We enjoy a variety of activities and whilst the good weather is here, we have been on photoshoots, so at our next meeting in September (August is “Holiday time”), we will be viewing the pictures we took at Castle Ashby and Grafham Water and planning the activities for the next few months. We will also be thinking about the proposed Thrapston Arts Festival which is to be held 1st – 8th June 2019. We have already committed to “do something!”



At the moment we have a couple of vacancies so if you have an interest in photography and any functioning camera then come along to our next meeting, or if you would like to know more, give me a call on 01832737921. You will be most welcome.



You may well know where the pictures were taken ——

“Stormy” Saturday 28th July.....the nestlings were not happy.

Neil Underwood

Social Forestry

The group meet on Monday mornings at Oxlip Woods, Sudborough, where they have the chance to try all kinds of woodland tasks. Snipping brambles, coppicing hazel trees, learning woodland crafts and building campfires provide fun ways to connect with nature. Age, lack of fitness or disabilities are no barrier to joining the group. Contact Susan Colini (733 457) to arrange a visit to the wood if you are interested in joining the group.



Military History



The group meets on the 2nd Monday of the month, from 10 am, at a member’s house.

Each member gives a presentation on a military event of their choice – a battle, a conflict or a war, on land, sea or in the air, and from any period of history.

Contact Julian Brown on 734324 for further details.



** SUMMER EVENT **



Friday 17th August 2018

at the Thrapston Sailing Club.

Doors open at 10.45

If you have a ticket for the Summer Event and have **any dietary requirements**, please advise Viv Tunstall (vivotunstall@clara.co.uk) or telephone 01832 732791 before the 10th August.

There will be a typed list on the notice board at the Sailing Club of all ingredients used.

News from the Groups

Science and Technology – Visit to Church's Shoe Factory in Northampton

What an amazing visit! Fourteen of our members met at 1.30 in the Committee Room and left the factory shop at 5. In between we were guided enthusiastically and knowledgeable by every step of the 250 plus manual operations. This technique allows for refurbishment of the most worn pair will come back looking like new.... some models have been around for over a century' and we were shown shoes undergoing refurbishment that had been made in the 60s.



through the factory by two wonderfully experienced. They explained and showed us various techniques which take an average of eight weeks to produce a pair of the world-renowned Goodyear constructed shoes. and as their website states; 'even the



The story of Church's began in the late 1600s when a lone Northampton man called Stone Church began making shoes. The factory now employs over 300 people and it still has a real family feel. It's now owned by Prada who are clearly investing a huge amount into the company, with an enormous building expansion planned that will increase the manufacture of women's shoes and handbags (YES!!)

Our tour began in the leather store with crocodile, horse and calf skins, then progressed through the very noisy machine rooms into the sole crafting area that included the application of deconstructed cork and glue and stitching. The employees were incredibly skilled and friendly, happily answering our questions and demonstrating the various stages of the manufacture.

It was great to see that all Church's shoes are still designed and manufactured in this busy industrial corner of Northampton by expert shoemakers who have huge pride in their work and I felt it was a rare privilege to be welcomed into the factory. We were even each given a beautiful Church's apron as a souvenir - perfect for the barbecue!

Many, many thanks to Church's for a wonderful afternoon; we'll be back to the factory shop soon....



Canoeing

Would you like an adventure canoeing up the Nene from Thrapston to Wadenhoe?

At Wadenhoe, we will be able to partake of lunch at the pub or The Barn Tearoom, or you could bring a picnic.



This will probably be in late September or early October, if enough members are interested. The cost will be in the region of £20 per person depending on numbers, with 2 or 3 persons sharing a canoe.

If interested please contact Polly

Telephone: 01933 625181mail: or email psjohnson2710@gmail.com

Theatre and Outings



Outings



Bure Valley steam railway and Norfolk Broads trip 27 September 2018

This trip is fully booked, but if you already have a place and find you cannot attend please let me know asap, as I do have a reserve list.

Please meet in the Co-op car park at 7.50 am as the coach will depart at 8.00 am.

Christmas event Thursday 13 December 2018 - Canons Ashby and Nottingham Christmas market

A morning visit to Canons Ashby decorated for Christmas, with tea/coffee and a mince pie. In the afternoon we will travel north for free time at the Nottingham Christmas Market.

The approximate cost of this trip will be £28. If you intend to book this trip please notify me if you are a current National Trust member, as you will be entitled to free entry to the property.

If you would like to put your name down for this trip, please email Jenni on jennihall207@gmail.com



Farm visit and Garden Centre 9 May 2019

There is just 1 place left on the trip following a massive response at our last branch meeting. If you want this final place or would like to add your name to a waiting list please contact Jenni Hall on jennihall207@gmail.com

Theatre Trips

We are looking forward to our trip to Milton Keynes this September to see the much acclaimed 'Warhorse'. This trip is fully booked, but there's still time to add your name to the waiting list should someone need to cancel due to unforeseen circumstances.

WHITE CHRISTMAS now booked

Wednesday 9th January, (matinee) The Curve Theatre, Leicester
Cost £50-£60 incl coach travel

This is based on the heart-warming Christmas film where an ex-army turned showbiz double act try to save the fortunes of their former CO who has fallen on harder times. This show contains spectacular dance routines and music by Irving Berlin including 'Blue Skies', 'Sisters' and of course 'White Christmas'.

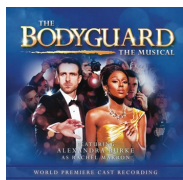


If you are interested in signing up for this spectacular Christmas show, please contact **Moira** on **07960 640161** or email: mo.beth@hotmail.co.uk

We are always interested in your suggestions for future 2019 theatre trips and so these are our suggestions;

THE BODYGUARD

March, Milton Keynes



This is a romantic thriller based on an international singer who is being stalked by a disturbed and dangerous individual. A bodyguard is summoned... The memorable songs include 'I Will Always Love You', 'Run To You' (duet) and 'Saving All My Love For You'

Continued on page 8

Theatre Trips continued.....

ANNIE

July, Milton Keynes

Direct from the West End, **Annie** returns in 2019! ... Set in 1930s New York during The Great Depression, brave young **Annie** is forced to live a life of misery at Miss Hannigan's orphanage.



Annie's luck soon changes when she's chosen to spend a fairytale Christmas with famous billionaire, Oliver Warbucks. With its Tony® award-winning book and score, the show includes unforgettable songs such as 'It's The Hard-Knock Life', 'Easy Street' and 'Tomorrow' – *this is a show not to be missed!*

Other shows being considered are Dr Dolittle, April, Northampton and Les Miserables, May, Milton Keynes.

Please remember, tickets are non-refundable.

Thrapston and District U3A Committee

Chair: Sheila Underwood

Vice Chair: Wendy Davies

Treasurer: Tricia James

Secretary: Ian Byrnes

Groups Co-ordinator: Roger Davies

Membership: Pauline Dennison

Publicity: Sue Campbell

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Access Officer: Glyn Hill

A note from the Editor

This newsletter is published on behalf of the committee of the Thrapston and District U3A. The opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Editor, or of the committee of the Thrapston and District U3A or of the U3A Trust.

Please note that items for inclusion in the next newsletter should reach the Editor by the first Friday in the month.

Editor and publisher : Wendy Davies - email: editorthrapstonu3a@gmail.com

Website : www.thrapstonu3a.co.uk where committee contact details may be found along with details of all the groups.

You can also join us on **Facebook** – **Thrapston and District U3A**