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### CHAIR'S WELCOME

Welcome to February and our latest Newsletter.

I know many of you enjoy reading about the activities and events being planned. It will be a pity if May is the last edition and we no longer have a Newsletter to keep us all up to date. The present editor, Wendy, has done a brilliant job over three years but must step down in May. If we do not find someone else willing to collect and collate articles so that they can be put together and circulated, we will no longer have a Newsletter to read. I think that would be a great shame and loss to our U3A ...so if you think you could make your contribution to your U3A by doing this.... we do need you!

To finish, can I just remind you that Ian Byrnes, our Business Secretary, will be hosting the Plaza meeting in February. All notices and questions should be directed to Ian via his email, which is

[secretarythrapstonu3a@gmail.com](mailto:secretarythrapstonu3a@gmail.com).

Please remember that the doors will not open until 9.50am and visitors will only be admitted after 10.15, if space is available.

I look forward to seeing you there.

**Sheila**

[www.chairmanthrapstonu3a@gmail.com](http://www.chairmanthrapstonu3a@gmail.com)



## Tom Way – Photographer - Tigers & Exotic Wildlife – 17<sup>th</sup> January 2020

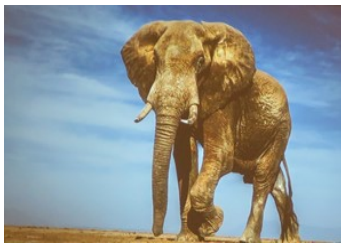
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At the January meeting, we welcomed Tom Way back to the rejuvenated Plaza, for his second visit to Thrapston U3A. How quickly nearly two years had passed since his first visit in March 2018, when he first engaged our audience with his presentation of photographs entitled 'Britain Through the Seasons'.



In the ensuing months, Tom had been very busy indeed and had travelled soon after his first visit here to India to photograph Tigers in their natural environment, but his journey did not finish there and he continued to the continent of Africa and beyond, where interesting species are still to be found in their natural habitat.

Tom began his presentation by telling us of his earlier years at university, studying sport, and his first occupation as a Personal Trainer, but his destiny was changed when he travelled to Australia and New Zealand and discovered that his true passion was for travel and photography. This is a vocation he has pursued now for eight years and it has taken him to many parts of the world.

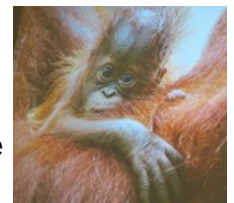


Passion is the word I think that best defines Tom's approach to his work, and it was self-evident in his talk. The audience were rewarded with some stunning examples of his work and his first displayed image of a huge Bull Elephant was a photograph that so many of us would have been proud to have taken, but it did not meet Tom's very exacting standards and he went on to tell that by lying on the ground he was able to get an even better picture, that gave a degree of scale not present in the first picture.

His collection of images contained some enchanting pictures and perhaps none better touched the hearts of the audience than an infant Orangutan clasped to its mother's breast, which drew an instant "Ah!" from the membership.

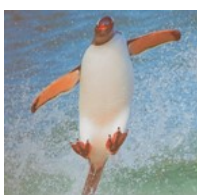
There were many diverse subjects that had found their way into his view finder and Tom informed us that by far the most difficult to capture was the Zebra, as the animal is shy, and in 8 years of trying, he had only managed to take one photograph that met his approval, although he had a collection of photographs showing the rears of retreating Zebras.

In Uganda, Tom had photographed mountain Gorillas, where regulations restrict one from approaching these powerful animals no closer than seven metres but no-one appears to have informed the Gorillas of this and it is therefore important to study their body language to be safe and if necessary adopt a submissive pose. It must take a fair degree of courage.



Tom said that by far his favourite animals to picture are the big cats. He had some amazing images of Leopards, an animal of beauty and power with intricate camouflaging of their coats, and their smaller, slimmer but faster cousins, the Cheetahs. The power and majesty of the Lion makes it a true royal in the world of the big cats.

In addition to the land animals Tom had captured a spectacular picture of a diving Blue Whale after waiting seemingly endlessly for the prime moment when the tale flukes were shedding a cascade of water as this huge mammal submerged.



Tom admitted that he is not a Bear Grylls type, roughing it in jungle camps, but instead, he likes the comforts of good hotels with a clean bed and wholesome food, while he is travelling. In this manner he can stay focused on his photography and 'feed' his passion, to bring us such wonderful pictures and a very entertaining presentation.

Paul Ollett

Speaker Seeker

## Calendar of Events for 2020

21st February	Kinky Boots Story - Steve Pateman - see below
20th March	Ukulele, Music and Comedy - Mark Walsh - see below
8th April	Beautiful - Carole King musical - see page 6
21st April	Gervase Phinn - Northants Network Event - see below

### Monthly Plaza Meetings



The monthly meetings take place on the 3rd Friday of each month at The Plaza in Thrapston, from 10.30 to 12 noon.

Please note that the doors will not be open before 9.50 a.m. to allow time for us to set up the room.

We welcome visitors **BUT**, unfortunately, we are unable to allow them access before 10.15 am and only then if there is seating available. Fire regulations restrict the numbers permitted in the hall and it is important that priority is given to members. The cost for each visitor is £2.

Individuals may attend 2 Plaza meetings as visitors, before joining Thrapston & District U3A

#### *This Month*

*Friday February 21st*

*The Kinky Boots Story*

*by Steve Pateman*



#### *Next Month*

*Friday March 20th*

*Ukulele, Music and Comedy*

*by Mark Walsh*



### **NORTHAMPTONSHIRE NETWORK OF U3AS**

*invite you to an afternoon with*

## **GERVASE PHINN**



Gervase is one of Yorkshire's most popular raconteurs and will keep you entertained with his hilarious stories of his time as a teacher and schools' inspector. This promises to be an afternoon to remember.

When 23rd April 2020 at 1.30 p.m.

Where United Reform Church, High Street, Wellingborough, NN8 4HW

Tickets cost £5 per person, to include refreshments.

To book your seat, email: [u3anorthantsnetwork@hotmail.com](mailto:u3anorthantsnetwork@hotmail.com) OR phone 01832 735440

## News for February

### NEW GROUP



### SING TO FEEL GOOD!

Studies have shown that singing with a group of other people may be of benefit to both physical and mental health and can promote good sleep – now who doesn't want to be a part of that!

I have a lot of ideas for how we could work this group, depending on numbers etc but I will say, right from the start, that an ability to sing is **NOT** going to be a pre-requisite. The group is intended to concentrate on the **feel-good factors not talent!** The group will, most likely, meet on a Monday, Tuesday or Friday afternoon and the venue will depend on numbers and availability.

Anyone interested should contact me or the Groups Co-ordinator and I will organise an initial discussion meeting after the February U3A monthly meeting at the Plaza.

Contact Marion Healey - 720 262 or email Roger ; [groupsthrapstonu3a@gmail.com](mailto:groupsthrapstonu3a@gmail.com)

### \*\* Volunteers wanted \*\*

#### Business Chair

There will be a vacancy on the committee of Thrapston & District U3A in May 2020 for a new Business Chair. This role does not include acting as MC at the Plaza meetings. Our U3A cannot function if we do not have a Chair. Could you support your U3A in this role? There would be plenty of opportunity to shadow the current chairman. Speak to a member of the committee to find out more, or email [chairmanthrapstonu3a@gmail.com](mailto:chairmanthrapstonu3a@gmail.com)



#### Newsletter Editor

The Editor will have to stand down in May, after three years in the post. The job involves collecting articles and information to pass on to the membership. Our website manager is available to do the computer work, if required. Speak to a member of the committee to find out more, Or email [editorthrapstonu3a@gmail.com](mailto:editorthrapstonu3a@gmail.com)

#### Outings

We have had some excellent trips over the past few years, but since Jenni Hall "retired" we have no one to organise them and you can see from the calendar on page 3, that there are none planned for this year. If you feel you could arrange one such trip, or could work with a group of friends to do so, then please email [groupsthrapstonu3a@gmail.com](mailto:groupsthrapstonu3a@gmail.com)

### Monthly Lunches - Some Good News

Jean Mole, one of our members, has very kindly offered to organise our Monthly Lunches group. Jean invites all those who are interested to a meeting on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 at 10.30am at the Bridge Hotel, Thrapston. Jean has ideas to share with you and would also appreciate hearing your views and ideas. Let's hope that her initiative and energy will lead to a welcome succession of good food and good company in pleasant surroundings.

If you will be unavailable to go to the meeting, please let me know and I shall pass on your name to Jean – email: Roger (Groups Co-ordinator) [groupsthrapstonu3a@gmail.com](mailto:groupsthrapstonu3a@gmail.com) or telephone R 623 047



## **BRAIN, BEHAVIOUR AND BEYOND**



The University of Leicester would like to invite our members to a free evening of neuroscience talks and demonstrations on **Wednesday, 18th March 2020**.

Brain Awareness Week (BAW) is the global campaign to increase public awareness of the progress and benefits of brain research. The University of Leicester are delighted to partner with the DANA Foundation to celebrate Brain Awareness Week.

This free event is open to anyone who wants to know more about how the brain works and ongoing research into neuroscience, biology, genetics, health sciences, medicine and psychology.

Please see website for further details - <https://www.le.ac.uk/baw>

## **UKULELE GROUP - SPACES**

This is a friendly group whose main aim is FUN!

The ukulele is a very easy instrument to learn to play and no prior knowledge of music is needed at all, indeed, many of our group (me included) have started as complete music novices. It also has to be one of the least expensive instruments to play. A playable ukulele can be bought for as little as £18 but you can also pay thousands or anything in between. Lessons are also freely available from the internet and moi!



We play an eclectic mixture of music ranging from around 1900 to (almost) the present day! Above all we are non-competitive and always help one another learn and improve. Come along and try us out – I have a few spare “ukes” for you to borrow. You never know, it could open up a whole new world for you, as it has for me and many other members of the group, past and present.

We meet every Tuesday morning from 10am to noon at my home.

For more details contact: Marion Healey – 720 262 – [marion.u3aukuleles@gmail.com](mailto:marion.u3aukuleles@gmail.com)

## **ITALIAN CONVERSATION - SPACES**

The Italian Conversation group meets on the first and third Wednesday afternoons from 1.30 to 3.30. As the name implies, we concentrate more on the spoken word than we do grammar, although some basic grammar is, as you would expect, covered. We are very lucky to have a group member who is Italian by birth, and who is the most enormous help with our pronunciation and understanding. We work from videos, storybooks etc and cover most of the conversational topics that you may need when visiting Italy. We are not competitive and are very happy to accommodate and help members of all abilities.



If you are interested please contact: Marion Healey – 720 262

Or email Roger at [groupsthrapstonu3a@gmail.com](mailto:groupsthrapstonu3a@gmail.com)

## **Science and Technology Group**



Many thanks to Valerie Barnes who organised our visit to the extremely large Amazon warehouse, in Peterborough, the size of 7plus football pitches.

As we toured, our guide explained the system of moving goods from their arrival, unpacking, storing/shelving, packing and finally their distribution.

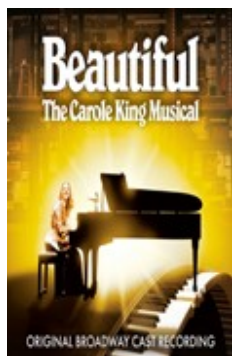


As you can imagine there were lots of long conveyor belts. The computerisation meant that every item could be traced to exactly where it was in the system at any one time.

A really good visit and we even received a gift of a metal drinks bottle as a souvenir.

Glyn Hill Group Leader

## Theatre and Outings



**Don't miss this fabulous opportunity to see the Carole King musical - 'Beautiful'**



We now have just **TWO** matinee seats remaining for the fantastic Carole King musical "Beautiful" on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> April at Milton Keynes.

The cost will be £48.00 per person, payable in advance, which includes return coach fare. Payment options;

1. Cash
2. Cheque made payable to "Thrapston and District U3A"
3. By BACS (bank transfer) Please include your membership number and reason for payment (e.g. 007; Beautiful)

**\*\*Please remember that trips are for members only and once a booking has been made and paid for, no refunds will be possible.\*\***

Our next theatre trip is scheduled for autumn 2020.

We are keen to hear from our members about your ideas and suggestions regarding what you might like to see and where. The more ideas we get, the merrier!



*For further details please email Moira - [theatrethrapstonU3A@gmail.com](mailto:theatrethrapstonU3A@gmail.com)*

## Tour Guide System

As part of our Access initiative, the committee are delighted to have receive a grant of £1250 from the Central England Co operative Community Fund to purchase a tour guide system. This will enable our members to have an even better experience of history walks, visits and talks in smaller premises.

The system has thirteen receivers and one transmitter which fit over the ear and so may be easily used by those with hearing aids.

Glyn will be taking the system to the group leaders meeting in March. Please feel free to contact her if you'd like to use it within your group.

Glyn Hill email ; [accessthrapstonu3a@gmail.com](mailto:accessthrapstonu3a@gmail.com)



*Editor: many thanks to Glyn for all her hard work in securing the grant that made this purchase possible.*



## Exciting New Musical Events for Thrapston.

From an original idea by Thrapston U3A member Tony Sands, members Frank Boydell, Neil Mathieson and James Read have formed **Thrapston Musical Events (TME)** a new not-for-profit organisation created to promote live music in Thrapston and provide a promotional platform for bands and solo artistes from the local area and beyond. Supported by Thrapston Town Council, TME aims to stage live musical events in the Thrapston Plaza on a Sunday evening once every two months, starting on **Sunday 23th February 2020 at 7:30 pm.**

Frank Boydell, TME Chairman, said “We wanted to provide a regular not-for-profit platform for local bands and musical artistes to promote themselves, as well as provide the Thrapston community with the opportunity to enjoy an eclectic mix of live acts and promote interest in both watching and playing music. As the idea developed, we approached Thrapston Town Council who were really keen to support us and have generously provided a grant to help fund the events.”

Five acoustic bands have been booked for the first event, which include:  
Thrapston’s baby-boomer covers acoustic folk-rock band *ReStrung*;  
*recently formed innovative multi-instrumental duo Double-Tonic (with U3A members Tony Sands and Dianne Strickland)*;  
*local pop, country and folk duo Oakleas Rise*;  
*Oundle music teacher Matt Carter’s contemporary originals acoustic folk duo CarterDolby*;  
*and folk trio, The Campbells.*

The evening promises some truly outstanding music in a relaxed, informal atmosphere, with a bar available for refreshment. Frank adds “Don’t miss the premier event at Thrapston Plaza. Your support guarantees further events throughout the year.” Tickets will be £2.00 on the door, with any profits being used to help fund future TME events.

After the **February 23<sup>rd</sup>** kick-off event, the next dates are:  
Sunday 26th April; Sunday 28th June; Sunday 23th August; Sunday 25th October (all start at 7:30pm)

TME’s Facebook page (Thrapston-Musical-Events), and the Town Council website, have further information and details on the artistes playing. Or contact:

Frank Boydell: email [boydellfrank@gmail.com](mailto:boydellfrank@gmail.com) OR Neil Mathieson: email [namathieson@gmail.com](mailto:namathieson@gmail.com)



### ***Did you know.....?***

***What3words*** is a simple way to talk about location. Every 3m square in the world has a unique 3 word address that will never change.

The scheme is used by an increasing number of organisations, including the Red Cross, UN, AA and our emergency services, to find an exact location. For example, the entrance at the Plaza, Thrapston is “thorax.jolly.eyelashes”

It would be useful if group leaders knew the code for the venue of their meetings, in case of emergency. Look for What3words on the internet (or get the app.) to get your code or ask a member of the committee if you don’t have computer access and they will be able to help.



Telephone numbers given in the newsletter are usually preceded by the Thrapston STD code—01832.  
Any Raunds numbers (indicated by R) need the STD code 01933

## Membership Cards

Please remember to carry your membership card with you when you attend meetings or outings. The reverse of the card has space for the contact details to be used in case of emergency. Your membership number is also required if you wish to book an outing or buy tickets for an event.



## ***Thrapston and District U3A Committee 2019/20***

Chair: Sheila Underwood	<a href="mailto:chairmanthrapstonu3a@gmail.com">chairmanthrapstonu3a@gmail.com</a>
Vice Chair: Wendy Davies	<a href="mailto:vicechairthrapstonu3a@gmail.com">vicechairthrapstonu3a@gmail.com</a>
Treasurer: Sue Campbell	<a href="mailto:treasurerthrapstonu3a@gmail.com">treasurerthrapstonu3a@gmail.com</a>
Secretary: Ian Byrnes	<a href="mailto:secretarythrapstonu3a@gmail.com">secretarythrapstonu3a@gmail.com</a>
Groups Co-ordinator: Roger Davies	<a href="mailto:groupsthrapstonu3a@gmail.com">groupsthrapstonu3a@gmail.com</a>
Membership: Pauline Dennison	<a href="mailto:membershipthrapstonu3a@gmail.com">membershipthrapstonu3a@gmail.com</a>
Short Course Co-ordinator: Tricia Eales	<a href="mailto:coursesthrapstonu3a@yahoo.com.uk">coursesthrapstonu3a@yahoo.com.uk</a>
Speaker Seeker: Paul Ollett	<a href="mailto:speakersthrapstonu3a@gmail.com">speakersthrapstonu3a@gmail.com</a>
Newsletter Editor: Wendy Davies	<a href="mailto:editorthrapstonu3a@gmail.com">editorthrapstonu3a@gmail.com</a>
Publicity: Sue Campbell	<a href="mailto:publicitythrapstonu3a@gmail.com">publicitythrapstonu3a@gmail.com</a>
IT Operations/Website Manager: Neil Busby	<a href="mailto:websitethrapstonu3a@gmail.com">websitethrapstonu3a@gmail.com</a>
Plaza Welcome Manager: Tina Jones	<a href="mailto:welcomethrapstonu3a@gmail.com">welcomethrapstonu3a@gmail.com</a>
Committee Member: Anna Bond	

## **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](mailto:editorthrapstonu3a@gmail.com)

Website : [www.thrapstonu3a.co.uk](http://www.thrapstonu3a.co.uk) where committee contact details may be found along with details