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From the Editor

Thrapston and District U3a is blooming with new groups starting. Make the most of your opportunities and join in. Autumn is certainly with us once more, and November the precursor of winter is its usual dark, damp, dank and, for me anyway, depressing norm. The sparkle and joy of Winterfest and a new year are only a short while away and with it the promise of the spring.

Christmas Branch Meeting

The Christmas Branch Meeting was erroneously stated in the last newsletter as being on 17 December. It is, as pointed out by many of you, on **19 December**. Branch meetings are **always** on a Friday.

Thrapston & District
U3A

Barn Dance

The Plaza
Friday 12 December
2-5 p.m.

Tickets £5 including light refreshments
licensed bar guests welcome

Tickets on sale at U3A meetings and from Glyn hill
glynishill06@aol.com 01832 735797

Forthcoming Events

Branch meetings start at 10.30am on the third Friday of each month at the Thrapston Plaza unless stated otherwise. Doors open at 10.00am when tea/coffee and biscuits are served.

- 21 November **Branch meeting** - N Busby and E Franklin. Family and Local History Roadshow. Our own Neil with fellow Thrapston historian Eric Franklin helping us understand our backgrounds.
- 27 November **Calamity Jane** - the coach will be at the Co-op car park at 11.00am
- 28 November **Greyhound Racing**. Payment must be made by 21 November at the Branch meeting. Silver package (three courses and a hot drink) £25
Bronze package (two course) £20. Roy's minibus will collect us at the Co-op Car Park at 5.00pm. If you have any difficulty please phone Irene (01832 732948) to see what alternatives may be arranged.
- 12 December **Barn Dance at the Plaza** from 2.00pm to 5.00pm. Tickets, £5 with refreshments, will be on sale at the November meeting or email glynishillo6@aol.com
- 19 December Special Christmas meeting** - a festive occasion with mulled wine and mince pies to socialise and learn more about our many group activities. Guests will be particularly welcome.

2015

- 16 January Steve Dimmer, Walt Disney (The Struggles of a Legend) The personal story of Disney, a commentary with films.
- 21 January Wednesday at 2.30pm, **The Full Monty** at Milton Keynes. All seats have been taken and there is a waiting list.
- 20 February Susan Copperwheat, Spires Saints and Martyrs Stories relating to churches in our area.
- 20 March Adrian Perkins, The Ghost Detective. Stories of the paranormal with explanations, by a mystery writer and a psychological back up.
- 26 March Thursday at 2.15 **The Secret Diary of Adrian Mole** at The Curve, Leicester. This is the world premier and hopefully will transfer to the West End. Cost £32. Tickets available for this show and payment should be made either at the November or December meeting.
- 17 April Charles Bezzina, In search of Ice made in Heaven. A Journey into the Arctic, with film and stories of the lives of the Inuit tribes.

For **Theatre Trips** you will be able to add your name to the lists at the branch Meetings. As many of you are aware, to obtain group booking discounts the seats have to be paid for approximately two months before the show and as The Secret Diary of Adrian Mole is in March but I shall need the full payment →

before the end of this year. If you cannot get to the meetings I can take bookings by telephone. Pauline Dennison Tel: 01832 723723

The U3A holds several national events which may be of interest to you. Please check the U3A website (www.u3a.org.uk) at the events and competitions page of the Members' Area Homepage.

Barn Dance

The social committee is pleased to announce that the Barn Dance is planned for **Friday 12 December at the Plaza from 2-5 pm**. Tickets at £5, with refreshments provided, will be on sale at the November meeting or email glynishillo6@aol.com

Being a Group Leader is not so scary!

Earlier this year when I first looked at Thrapston U3A's website, I was impressed by the variety of groups on offer for such a young organisation. However, I did not find the one group that I really wanted. Disappointed, I decided to go to the next monthly meeting and check out the groups anyway. In the days leading up to the meeting I began thinking (can you hear my family laughing!) the thing I wanted to do most was to play the ukulele and sing along with other people. But there was no ukulele group. The light dawned; I would have to set up and lead the group myself. Problem solved – but hang on – I am not an expert nor am I a teacher but, ever the optimist, I decided to go ahead anyway.

A few months later we have a thriving group of ukulele players. We learn from the internet and books, but mostly from each other. All I have to do as group leader is co-ordinate the members and share my enthusiasm and limited knowledge. Each week we learn new things about music and constantly surprise ourselves with our abilities! Above all we have fun.

So come on. If you have a pet subject or enthusiasm – step up and set it up. There is plenty of support within the U3A so you never need feel out on a limb. I am sure you won't regret. I don't.

Marion

Social Committee News

The Annual Barn Dance will take place on Friday 12 December at 2.00 in the Plaza. Tickets will be £5 with refreshments provided. George Hearnden is in charge of the music and has arranged a live band. Tickets will be on sale at the November meeting or book by telephoning Glyn on 01832 735797.

The committee has decided that the Barbecue will take place next year and have agreed a date of Friday 21 August – a date for your new calendars!

Group Leader's Reports November 2014

There was a very useful Group Leaders' meeting at the end of October with many group leaders in attendance. It was good to welcome Roger, Marion, Margaret and Frank as new leaders of French Revivers, Ukulele, Photography and Cycling. All are going really well and I thoroughly enjoyed a photography photo opportunity in St James's Church, it was so good that there is a proposal that a selection of our shots be displayed there. I also understand that the cycling group strayed a little from their route and ended up on the zip wire at Stanwick Lakes!

Suggestions for new groups were made at the meeting and so I will have sign-up lists for Food appreciation (Rachel Thompson) and Play Live Music (Frank Boydell) for those who wish to take their instruments along to play. The actual format will of course be decided by the group. If you're not able to be at the meetings let me know if you'd like to join these or any other groups

Other great news is that Linda Vickerman has volunteered to re-launch Jazz as well as found a new Flower Arranging group; and Maddie Fisher, our membership secretary has agreed to run Outings and Days out. My thanks to them and to all the other Group Leaders who, I'm sure you all agree, do a fantastic job, completely unpaid. The U3A would not run without them.

As well as new groups, we have a number of vacancies in our established groups and I've listed those below. Terry is particularly keen to recruit to Magic which I've heard on good authority is great fun.

Pauline, our leader of Theatre Trips has requested that members let her know what they would like in the way of outings.

Any ideas for new groups please feel free to contact me and I can arrange for an Expressions of Interest list to be available at a meeting, and of course we need Group Leaders!

All groups are listed on the website with a newly formatted table of the groups including when they are running and by who with a contact email address. If you are a new member, or are looking for new ventures, then please ring me on 01832 735797 or make email contact via the website.

Current Group Vacancies:

For new members or those established members who are looking to take on something new; we have spaces within groups and these include:

- French Revivers
- Photography
- Antiques and Collectables

- Magic
- Walks 2
- Ten Pin Bowling
- Country Dancing
- Papercraft
- Cycling
- Books
- Sewing
- Lunches
- Advanced motoring
- Live music
- Latin (new group awaiting leader)
- Line Dancing (new group awaiting leader)

Jazz - At the Courtyard Hotel, West Street, Stanwick. NN9 6QY Sunday 14 December. Christmas Jazz Party with Richard Exall's Dambusters! The latest incarnation of the old Shooting Stars hits the road with some new swinging arrangements and some good old jump-jive! Doors open at 7pm. Music starts at 8pm. £7 entry plus raffle. All members are invited. If anyone is interested in reforming the group please contact Linda by email.

Advanced Motoring - The Institute of Advanced Motorists (IAM) magazine has reported this month, 'Breaking news about the IAM's work with U3A. Corby and District Group of IAM has been working hard with Thrapston and District U3A for a number of months, showing the benefits of being connected to the IAM. U3A provides opportunities for retired and semi-retired people to come together and learn new skills (and develop new interests – Ed). Corby group has been giving presentations, demonstration drives and inviting members to join their social meetings. All their initiatives have been well received and resulted in a number of U3A members signing up for Skills for Life.'

(Of whom one is your editor, who has completed the course, and is now doing a few observed drives, before applying to take his advanced driving test. A very useful course and I thoroughly recommend it to all drivers. In addition, successful passing of the test can mean a substantial reduction in car insurance costs. – Ed)

Our next driving group meeting is at 7.30pm, on 26 November at 10 Meadow Close, Ringstead, NN14 4TZ. We are having a talk from a HGV driver trainer from the perspective of HGVs on the road. I am happy to open this up to some Thrapston U3A members who are not Driving Group members, but may be interested in this talk. There will be a small cost to pay the speakers expenses.

I need to know numbers for our Christmas meal on 17 December as I have

provisionally reserved a table at the Axe and Compass.

U3A Cycling Group - The cycling group continues to grow – at least until the snow arrives. Once again the sun gods shone down on our last outing; a ride down the old railway track from Thrapston to Stanwick and back.

In the spirit of U3A, a short diversion was made on the return trip to allow members to get back in touch with their childhood and take a trip down the zip wire. After some initial hesitation, everyone had a good laugh and no one fell off. Now that's going to impress your grandchildren! We ride on the morning of the third Monday of every month, so come and join us for fun and exercise.



Lunch Group - The December venue is the Bridge Hotel in Thrapston for a hot three course Christmas buffet, including tea/coffee and mince pies, on 18 December at noon for 12.30pm. Cost £12.99 (subject to confirmation). If I have not had your name to include on my list will you please let me know asap. The Bridge Hotel can accommodate up to 60 people so no worries there. Please just let me have your names in good time.

I am busy looking for new venues for 2015, so please pass on any pubs/ restaurants/tea rooms etc. that you might know are suitable for our needs.

Many thanks for all your support over the past year and I look forward to seeing you all at the Bridge for our Christmas Lunch. Iris Squires

Magic Circle Group - **'All of us need some magic in our lives'** - Having started in May this year and meeting on the 3rd Tuesday of the month, members have had effects demonstrated with coins, cups, ropes, cards, hankies and matches.

Video performances and tutorials of working professionals together with hints and tips have been discussed. Also, word has it, that at least one member has given performances for others outside of the group!

The most fun and entertaining aspect of our meetings, has been the active involvement and performances of the members themselves. I have enjoyed every minute of it. Anyone who would like to join the group please contact me on 01832 720750 or email <osmec@btinternet.com>

Group Leader Terry Robinson

Military History - Our last meeting of 2014 was on Tuesday 11 November at 10am at Julian Brown's home. His topic was the Burma Campaign of WW2.

The next meeting of this Group is in January 2015. If you wish to join, contact Gerry Martin at <gerry.crawford@me.com>

Ten Pin Bowling - This group meets on the second Friday of each month at 10.30am at the Wellingborough Bowling (near Tesco and Halfords). Newcomers are always welcome. There has been a 25p rise in the cost to £6.20 for two games, shoe hire and a cup of tea or coffee. Contact Irene on 01832 732948 for further information.

Ukulele Group - Since our last report we have given ourselves a name – wait for it – The Thrapston U3leles. Cheesy or what! The group continues to thrive and we are almost at capacity. Most have started as absolute beginners but we have one or two more experienced players now, which is great for everyone. True to the U3A ethos we share our knowledge and ideas with each other and learn something every week. Our repertoire is growing and we are currently rehearsing a little performance for the Christmas meeting. It is all good fun and like all good children we go home tired but happy at the end of the day! Marion Healey – Tel: 01832 720262 <marion_healey@msn.com>

Glyn Hill, Group Co-ordinator

I recently received a letter from a Zimbabwean friend, in which he related the following tale. 'Yesterday I had only \$20 in my pocket. After some careful consideration, I decided to dress for Meikles Hotel. I sat myself down at a beautifully laid table in La Fontaine Restaurant and ordered the seven-course dinner, starting with an exquisite bottle of Moët and Chandon French Champagne 1985. The fillet mignon were simply delightful when accompanied by a 1975 South African Shiraz!

Anyway, at the end of the evening when my bill came, I casually informed my waiter that I had no money what-so-ever.

To cut a long story short, the hotel manger was called and I was handed me over to a constable of Harare Central police station. On my way to the station I handed the constable \$10 (who was genuinely impressed) and I was set free. In Zimbabwe, we call this prudent fiscal management.

'Well,' snarled the tough old Navy master-at-arms to the bewildered Seaman, 'I suppose after you get discharged from the Navy, you'll just be waiting for me to die so you can come and spit on my grave.'

'Not me, sir!' the sailor replied, 'Once I get out of the Navy, I'm never going to stand in a queue again'.

October Group Meeting

The Thrapston and District U3A Group Meeting for October was held on Friday 17th. The two Glyns made a few points about their activities and those of the Branch, before Richard introduced our guest, Andy Smith, who was under the influence. Andy is, of course, well known to many members having provided the Branch with a selection of his music and songs (played on a variety of stringed instruments). Andy is, as previously mentioned, under the influence - of music, and entertained us all with his ability and humour. He let slip that he has written some songs which are more suited to a rugby club dressing room, and many of those present would have been delighted to have received a rendition of those as well as his more traditional songs.



Following his performance, Andy took the opportunity to sell some of his displayed CDs. We look forward to a repeat performance, possibly with the inclusion of some of his more earthy compositions.

Have you noticed since everyone has a mobile phone these days no one talks about seeing flying saucers like they used to?

Thrapston and District U3A Committee

Chair:	Glyn James	Vice-Chair:	Glyn Hill
Treasurer:	Tricia James	Secretary:	Michelle Owen
Group Co-ordinator:	Glyn Hill	Membership:	Maddie Godden
Publicity:	Rachel Thompson	Speaker Seeker:	Richard Swindall
Website:	Neil Busby	Editor:	Parry Jones
Member:	Michelle Collison	Member:	Anne Carter

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

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