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### *Chairman's Message*

I hope that all members are able to remain safe and free from the virus. In a fit of optimism just recently your Committee had been discussing how to encourage all of our members to be active and try to get some of the interest groups meeting again.

Then the goal posts were moved again with a fresh lockdown. In our Committee's forward planning we have scrapped any concept of physical meetings in the Plaza and have asked our excellent Speaker Seeker Paul Ollett to plan for online 'Zoom' member meetings in place of the Plaza meetings until the end of the current financial year.

We have now had two online meetings with really excellent speakers. Could I please encourage more people to join us online to experience these meetings. They are brilliant and experienced from your favourite armchair, so no warming the car up on a cold winter morning.

I look forward to "seeing" more of you online next week.

Ian Byrnes

Chairman





## Jenny Mallin – Zoom talk 16<sup>th</sup> October 2020

### A Grandmother's Legacy—Travels in Indian

Those who tuned in to watch and listen to the talk by Jenny Mallin were well rewarded with a presentation which grasped one's attention and held it firmly for an hour as we were taken on a well-illustrated journey to many parts of the Indian sub-continent.

Jenny's father was born an Indian national in 1925 and she still has relatives who still live there, most notably her Aunt who lives in Poona in the heritage house where her father once lived. Jenny described the scene she enjoyed from the veranda at the house with the fragrances of the flowers and the chiming of the temple bell.

Her Aunt prepared a pic-nic for the family to take on a visit to the Wester Ghats Mountains, an area of astonishing natural beauty with magnificent waterfalls, deep canyons and everywhere the verdant forest. Such things do not happen in a dry climate and it is not unusual for there to be up to 7 metres of rainfall in a two month period.

During this expedition the family were awoken early by peddlers calling at the house selling such things as sandals but one trader specialised in foot massages and proceeded to practice his art on Jenny which was almost violent in its application until Auntie intervened to stop this painful experience.

On one occasion Jenny's travels took her to Udaipur but due to the Gulf War almost all internal flights were cancelled but with some luck a flight was arranged to Ahmedabad although this still left a 200 mile journey to be completed by taxi on roads which were more pot holes than proper surface. Finally they arrived at their magnificent hotel on the huge lake in Udaipur at 2.00am.

Jenny has visited Goa, which became a popular tourist destination in the 1990s due to its wonderful beaches and low prices. These times saw other dramatic changes with an influx of migrant labourers. A time of social change when many succumbed to drug addiction and alcohol abuse leading to the abandonment of children left to make their own way on the streets.

A child rescue centre called El Shaddai was set up in Goa by a lady named Anita Edgar following a chance meeting with a local church minister in 1996. The establishment takes in many of the street children and cares for them until they can become properly independent having learned a craft or trained in the catering industry to serve the tourist trade. Jenny has been a regular supporter of El Shaddai including working there as a volunteer

India has called Jenny back many times and she gave a powerful insight with her photographs and anecdotes on attitudes and superstitions. She also hinted at alternative medicines when her husband Stewart was afflicted with a mysterious illness which was treated by Grandmother who effected a remedy with the application of chilli into the creases of his skin at elbows and behind the knees "to expel evil spirits".

Her last visit to India was a working trip giving lectures on a Fred Olsen cruise liner early in 2020.

Jenny is certainly a very able speaker as well as an accomplished authoress of a prestigious award for 'Best Cook Book of the Year' 2017. A fitting reward to have recognition for a book that she had written and published herself.

She is a wonderfully engaging lady to listen to and has many different talks in her repertoire, she is inspirational and would be a very welcome guest for a future talk.

*Paul Ollett*  
*Speaker Seeker*





## Forthcoming Speaker Attractions at Your U3A – Two events not to be missed.

As it is still not possible for personal presentations and big meetings at the Plaza, the Speakers who would normally have made personal appearances are doing presentations by Zoom. These zoom presentations are brilliant and if you have not yet experienced them it is time to get yourself connected

Don't be frightened off by the use of the technology and never be afraid to ask for help in finding your way through modern electronic routes to information. Keep these morning free and put a note in your diary.

Our speaker for 16<sup>th</sup> October was Jenny Mallin and you can get a flavour of her enthusiastic delivery as shown on page 2 in this newsletter.



### **This Month—20<sup>th</sup> November 2020 – Speaker Jane Barnes More Tales from a Dairy Farmers Wife**

This will be the second time that Jane has brought her informative and humorous talk to Thrapston U3A and if the last visit in June 2018 is anything to go by we are in for a real treat. For obvious reasons she is unable to bring along the excellent

Stilton cheese that is produced on the farm.

All who made the trip to the farm after Jane's earlier visit will be familiar with some of the farming activities Jane is a strong character, passionate about life on the farm she shares with her husband at Somerby, near Melton Mowbray. Some details of the activities on this working farm, including educational visits for schools can be seen along with a host of other interesting facets of the life of a farmer's wife on her Facebook page Farmer Barnes Dairy.



Unfortunately there is not a Thrapston U3A Christmas Party this year for obvious reasons. In its place we have arranged a Zoom presentation given by Dr James Taylor

### **Next Month—18<sup>th</sup> December 2020 – Speaker Dr James Taylor A History of the British Postcard**

We have all sent postcards of course when we had our annual holidays just to let the folks back home that we are getting along just fine (usually in spite of the weather)!! Perhaps not so many cards sent these days what with the rise in mobile phone ownership but how and where did it all start? James's enlightening talk on brilliant British humour in the forgotten art of the picture postcard 1840 – 1950 will bring back memories of what may at times have been considered risqué in past times.

## To watch these presentations please see the guidelines below

Go to our website, [www.thrapstonu3a.co.uk](http://www.thrapstonu3a.co.uk), and click the link on the **HOME PAGE** to order your ticket.

Each member can order one ticket for one device only. There are 92 tickets available and you will be able to join the meeting from **10.10 am**.

A link for the meeting will be sent by email the evening before the meeting.

Guidance on using zoom can be found on the event page by clicking the ticket link on the website.

## Virtual lectures via zoom by Patricia Gentry

These lectures have been prepared by Patricia Gentry who is a registered Blue Badge Guide UK. She is a member of the Institute of Tourist Guiding, APTG and the Guild of Britain's Best Guides, and has 20 years experience in conducting art and history tours and talks

### The History & Highlights of Kew Gardens

\*Surprising stories from the greatest botanic gardens in the world.

*Meet me on Zoom to hear fascinating stories of suffragette arson, giant waterlilies, and the world's smallest Royal Palace. Meet "the loneliest bachelor in the world," plants that save people from illness, and get useful advice on what not to miss on your next visit to the Gardens.*



### St. Paul's Cathedral

\*Learn about Sir Christopher Wren's masterpiece and its treasures.

*On Ludgate Hill, the highest point of the City of London stands St. Paul's Cathedral, London's largest Anglican church and the seat of the Bishop of London. Hear how this baroque cathedral came to be after 35 years of shaping and what happened to it during World War II. Let me show you some of its best artworks. Listen to its 17th cent organ and virtually descend to the crypt to see the tombs of some important historic people buried there.*



### Peter Paul Rubens and Van Dyck in London

\*Baroque masters of the turbulent English Stuart times.

*Learn why the two most famous 17th century Flemish baroque masters came to England to work for the British royal family, and what political climate they encountered not long before the outbreak of the civil war. Learn what their perceptions were of the English aristocracy from archived correspondence. See some of their most important works such as the famous Whitehall Palace ceiling paintings by Rubens, the propaganda paintings of king Charles I by Van Dyck and some significant paintings from the National Gallery.*



### The history of English Gardens

\*A look at the ever-changing fashions in English Gardens throughout the last 500 years.

*From structured Tudor Gardens to French and Italy influenced Stuart gardens to the birth of the magnificent English landscape garden in the 18C. From fashionable Victorian gardens with intricate designs, the first flower beds and greenhouses full of exotic colours to some of England's famous 20 C garden designs. Join me on a journey through England's most beautiful gardens.*

### 17C Masters of Golden Age of the Low Countries: Rubens, Van Dyck, Teniers and Rembrandt.

Interesting stories of the lives of 4 major 17C artists with focus on some beautiful paintings on display at the National Gallery in London.

*Why did these contemporaries become so famous? What did they have in common with each other? What was fashionable in painting in the 17C Low Countries and how did some of these paintings end up in England? Focus on the great Flemish and Dutch Masters.*

If you are interested in any of these lectures or would like more information please send an email to Patricia at [patricia@officiallondonguides.com](mailto:patricia@officiallondonguides.com)

## Third Age Trust Latest News - New Winter Learning Programme

The Third Age Trust has launched a New Winter Learning programme which all events are free and via Zoom. If you would like to get involved in any of the events go to [www.u3a.org.uk](http://www.u3a.org.uk) and click on the New Winter Learning Programme tab. Alternatively just copy and past the following link: <https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/national-programmes> to take you to the list of events. Or to simply book any of the events that are listed below copy and paste the following link <https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events>.

For those of you who are not familiar with using Zoom you can also find online tutorials on how to use Zoom from beginners to how to host large meetings.

Programme of free talks delivered by members that are confirmed to date:

- Mayan civilization,
- How to write your living history
- Yoga (booking not yet released)
- Bridge tutorials for beginners and improvers (booking not yet released)
- Crown green bowling (booking not yet released)
- Philosophy (booking not yet released)
- Cryptic crosswords (booking not yet released)
- Japan (booking not yet released)
- Other TBC.

The following events are already up and running.

- Made it! Make it! gets a Christmas update.
- U3A Maths Week (“Don’t retire from maths – count yourself in!”)
- U3A Radio Podcast – Second programme to be released w/b 16th November
- Friday Watercolour Painters - A series of five workshops led by a U3A members
- Programme of ‘external’ talks, including an upcoming event with the National Gallery.

These are many more events planned such as Poetry reading sessions, Winter Watch, A Photographic Challenge to submit your wintery photos. Paint or Draw (POD), a monthly Art Challenge and a Christmas Carol Choir Group led by a U3A member

**u3a**

### **Information about the Red Cross On-line Digital Classrooms For Tackling Loneliness Digitally**



Their new Loneliness Digital Classroom is now open for booking, where participants can explore how it might feel to be lonely or isolated and learn skills to help others who may be experiencing loneliness. There are two sessions available, one for children and young people aged 10-19 and one for adults aged 19+.

Sessions can be booked by emailing [RedCrossEducation@redcross.org.uk](mailto:RedCrossEducation@redcross.org.uk) or by calling 0344 412 2734.

They also have hard copy wellbeing packs available to those who cannot access online resources,.

If you would like some packs to distribute please contact the Red Cross using the above details.



Our Red Poppy is a symbol of both Remembrance and hope for a peaceful future.

But what is the inspiration and history behind the poppy becoming a symbol of Remembrance?

## The Western Front

During WW1, much of the fighting took place in Western Europe. The countryside was blasted, bombed and fought over repeatedly. Previously beautiful landscapes turned to mud; bleak and barren scenes where little or nothing could grow.

## Fields of Poppies

There was a notable and striking exception to the bleakness - the bright red Flanders Poppies. These resilient flowers flourished in the middle of so much chaos and destruction, growing in the thousands upon thousands.

## In the Spring of 1915

Shortly after losing a friend in Ypres, a Canadian doctor, Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae was moved by the sight of these poppies and that inspiration led him to write the now famous poem 'In Flanders Fields'.

In Flanders' fields the poppies blow  
Between the crosses, row on row,  
That mark our place: and in the sky  
The larks, still bravely singing, fly  
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the dead. Short days ago  
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,  
Loved and were loved, and now we lie  
In Flanders' fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe;  
To you from failing hands we throw  
The torch; be yours to hold it high,  
If ye break faith with us who die  
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow  
In Flanders' Fields.



There is no 'correct' way to wear a Poppy and Poppies weren't always sold with leaves.

Like the natural flower, the original version of the Poppy did not feature a leaf. A leaf was first introduced in the 1960s as it was the practice to make Poppy Sprays, (an alternative to a Poppy Wreath), which were made up of 5 Silk Poppies attached to 7 pieces of green fern.

Leaves slowly became an optional extra and by 1984 demand for them had grown to 12 million a year, although they were still issued separately to the Poppy. In 1995 Poppies with leaves included were made available for the first time.

*The results of the vote for the Summer Competition are as follows.*

Photographic Group Entries:

Sky category – Colin Boor  
Garden Category – Colin Bloor & Pat Trede  
Poem Category – Isolation - Leslie Baden  
Creative Writing Category – Lockdown - David Green  
Pets Category – Pat Trede

*And the  
Winners  
are...*

Thrapston & District U3A Members Entries

Sky Category – Glyn Hill  
Garden Category – Mandy Dawkins

Thank you to all who entered the competition.  
The winning entries will be on the website from November 15<sup>th</sup>.

*Now for our latest Competition*



The categories this time are:-

Photography

"Tricks of the Light"  
"Animals!"

Written Poetry or Prose

"Festive Season"

Entries to be sent to [competitionsthrapstonu3a@gmail.com](mailto:competitionsthrapstonu3a@gmail.com)

Closing date is the 8th January 2021



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**You got to be in it to win it so don't forget to send in those entries**



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

### ***Thrapston and District U3A Committee 2020/21***

Chair: Ian Byrnes	<a href="mailto:chairmanthrapstonu3a@gmail.com">chairmanthrapstonu3a@gmail.com</a>
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#### ***Off Committee Roles 2020/2021***

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<i>Social Committee Liaison: Sheila Underwood</i>	
<i>Zoom "Plaza" Meeting Host: Neil Mathieson</i>	

### **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.**

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