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CHAIR'S WELCOME



I would like to take this opportunity to update you on some of the changes that will happen due to our U3A now being registered with the Charity Commission and having an external auditor.

Firstly, we will have to provide a more comprehensive paper trail of our income and expenditure.

Your committee is still reading all the fine print, but the first requirement will be that any activity that has money passing through our bank account will have to provide a record of their income and expenditure.

Some Group Leaders will need your support in this and we all need to support our Treasurer and other Trustees to see that we meet the requirements.

Secondly, the terms of our insurance cover, provided by the Third Age Trust, have also been tightened up. This means that we can now only have ten "packages" organised in a calendar year. (A package is any activity where money collected covers any two of the following: transport, tickets or accommodation). We have already had ten this year. Your committee is recommending that next year we have two theatre trips, two visits, two trips to the Greyhounds, one Christmas outing and that the other three possible packages are left available for Groups or special events. The other slight change is that these will have to be members-only events. We can no longer allow non-members to join us even on a sampling basis or filling a sudden vacancy. We can allow members of other U3As to come, if we want to invite them.

The details of these changes are on the national website and we are working towards adopting the Finance policy we are required to have. This is a "work in progress", and I will keep you updated.

If you have any questions, please do get in touch and we will try to answer them.

Sheila

www.chairmanthrapstonu3a@gmail.com



Charles Dickens - Author and Conjuror by Ian Keable

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Ian gave us an amusing and entertaining talk highlighting some little-known facts about the life and work of Charles Dickens.

We discovered that Dickens launched himself into all sorts of different activities that interested him at the time. Not only did he write an abundance of letters and, of course, his famous stories, but tried acting, play reading and public speaking. He also took an interest in hypnotism and in contacting the spirit world.



Ian, being a professional conjuror or magician, as is the term used in modern parlance, was fascinated by Dickens' magic-art activities and set to work researching this aspect of his life.

He explained that Dickens was born in 1812 and performed his magic as an amateur for 7 years spanning 1842 to 1849. Ian at this point, then challenged the audience to identify the only one of Dickens books that had a magician in its text. As Ian said they were good answers, but wrong! Eventually someone in the audience gave the right answer-The Old Curiosity Shop.



It was a Viennese magician, Ludwig Dobler, whom he saw in 1842 at a London Theatre, that sparked Dickens' interest in the subject. His mind made up, he wrote to his good friend Cornelius Felton, a professor at Harvard University and told him he was going to put on magic shows.

His first show was performed for his eldest son Charley. It was at Charley's birthday party on the 6th. January 1843. He continued his free performances for family and friends. From various recorded letters and diaries, it is known that he gave 9 performances, with word of mouth leading to his next show. Jane Carlyle, a leading literary figure of the time, wrote to her cousin, saying that Charles was the best conjuror she had ever seen.

In the summer of 1849, at a village called Bonchurch, on the Isle of Wight, he gave his most well-known show. Because the advertising billboard itemised the list of effects he was going to perform in great detail, today's magicians have gained some insight as to how the tricks were done, based on the props available at the time. The billboard was reproduced by Dickens' agent, friend and biographer John Forster.

Dickens modelled his show on an act by Kia Khan Khruse, a Portuguese magician who dressed as an Indian. The playbill listed the 6 tricks, all with hyped up descriptions, and each described as a 'Wonder' of some sort.

Having read out the list, Ian said that he would perform 3 of the tricks. He then proceeded to perform The Travelling Doll Wonder, which is rarely seen today and was published in 1634 in a book called Hocus Pocus Junior. This was followed by a modern take on The Leaping Card Wonder and finally, The Pyramid Wonder, in which Ian's version used a nest of boxes together with a ladies' borrowed ring.



Our thanks to Ian for providing a unique insight into this relatively little-known world of Charles Dickens. An amazing morning of magic to remember for all our U3A members.

Terry Robinson

Speaker Seeker.

Calendar of Events 2019

10th October	Calendar Girls - see page 6
18th October	Hunters in the Sky - by Jennifer Anderson - see below
25th October	Local History Walk - see page 4
8th November	Greyhound Racing - see page 6
15th November	Behind the call of duty - Chief Supt. Bob Thoroughgood - see below

Monthly Plaza Meetings

When? 3rd Friday of each month
Where? The Plaza in Thrapston
When? from 10.30 to 12 noon



Please note that doors open at 10.00 a.m.

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

This Month

Friday October 18th

Hunters in the Sky

by

Jennifer Anderson



Next Month

Friday November 15th

Behind the Call of Duty

by

Chief Supt. Bob Thoroughgood



News from the Groups

LOCAL HISTORY WALK - Friday 25th October

"During the 19th century Thrapston had many industries providing most of the employment".

This walk, along pavements, will start at 1.30 p.m. outside Scotts on Bridge Street, led by Neil Busby of Thrapston Heritage and taking about 90 minutes.

There is a limit of 20 people so booking is essential.



Either sign up at the October meeting or telephone Brenda on 730 225.

Walking Group



The Walking Group, which meets on the last Thursday morning of the month has been led by Pauline Dennison for some time.

She has recently announced that she will be stepping down as Leader of the group, but Neil Hallam has agreed to be her successor.

Sincere thanks to Pauline for raising the fitness levels of a fair number of our members!

Vacancies

The following **language** groups now have vacancies, which may be of interest.



French Revivers has one vacancy. They meet on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday afternoons in the month, at a member's house. **Contact Roger Davies - R 623 047**

French Encore has a few vacancies. They meet on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday mornings in the month at the Town Council Offices. **Contact Jan Pacey - 07803 250 406**

Latin has a few vacancies. They meet on the 3rd Tuesday afternoon in the month at a member's house. **Contact Robert Dickinson - 733 066**

Italian has a few vacancies. They meet on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday afternoons in the month, at a member's house. **Contact Marion Healey - 720 262**

English 2 has one vacancy. They meet on the 3rd Thursday afternoon in the month at a member's house. **Contact Glyn James - 733 792**

Some researchers have suggested that learning a foreign language might help delay the onset of dementia.

Science and Technology visit

Amey Waterbeach Waste Management Centre, Cambridge

A small but keen group of waste management enthusiasts visited the Amey Waterbeach Waste Management Centre to find out more about the environmental process of dealing with the collection of our ever-increasing waste. We were shown how various materials can either be reused, recycled or turned into energy by incineration. One of our initial activities was to sort labelled bean bags into different categories of recycling; black bin, blue bin or green bin? The frustrating point was made of how different counties across the UK have inconsistencies as to what can and cannot be recycled!

After a couple of short films showing the process, within the centre, of how waste is sorted, we donned our PPE (ie hard hats and high vis jackets) and were taken on a minibus tour around the huge waste management site. We encountered large scale stacks of compacted bundles of materials, a hill-sized landfill and a rather large rat! Back inside the plant, we were shown the large scale process of sorting refuse, which was handled by mechanical sorting in conjunction with human input.

We came away with much to ponder about, and the thought that our post-war generation's attitude of 'make do and mend' provided sustainability at a very low cost.

Here are a few recycling tips:

Rinse and flatten plastic containers first

Only clean tin foil should be recycled, but not cling wrap

Old clothes should go to large textile containers

Small electrical items should go to recycling centres

(although some schemes will now collect these)



Here the group pose in front of a huge hand, made entirely from recycled metal tins,

Moira Newton.

The group meets once a month on the 3rd Monday, at the Baptist Church. There are currently no vacancies, but do contact Glyn Hill, the group leader, on 735 797, if you would like to add your name to a waiting list.

Theatre and Outings



Theatre Trips



Our recent theatre trip to Leicester city centre provided a good amount of entertainment, shopping opportunities and historical interest, with attractions such as the Richard III visitor centre. Owing to the availability of a slightly larger coach, we were able to offer a small number of comfortable return seats to Leicester for non-theatre goers to enjoy the sights and sounds for a small charge.

Grease the musical provided us with a gritty and glamorous production of life in the 50's within Ry-dell High school. Its fast pace and well-known score had the audience humming and tapping along, with a finale which had us collectively dancing and singing, aptly led by the one and only Peter Andre!

We're looking forward to *CALENDAR GIRLS* on Thursday 10th October, at the Royal and Derngate, Northampton, which is now fully booked.



Please remember, tickets are non-refundable.

For all our theatre trips, the coach leaves Thrapston Co-op at 10:30am and returns approximately by 6pm. Please make sure you arrive at the Co-op in plenty of time, especially if you have a mobility aid which will need to be stored on the coach.

Please note: From next year, our theatre visits will be restricted to two trips per year, one in spring and the other in autumn.

To this end, these following shows have been suggested;

“Beautiful” (The Carole King story),

“Riverdance”,

“Phantom of the Opera”,

“Sister Act”

“Priscilla Queen of the Desert”.

If you are keen to see any one of these shows next spring, please text your choice to the number below;

Contact : Moira 07960 640161



GREYHOUND RACING AT PETERBOROUGH

Irene's next trip to Peterborough Greyhound Racing Stadium on Friday 8th November.

The cost is £27, which includes

Entry to the Stadium

Travel to and from Thrapston plus a tip for the driver

Two-course meal in the trackside restaurant.

If you wish to place bets on the races, staff will come to your table to serve drinks or take your bets – and bring you your winnings!



Contact Irene on 732 948

Short Courses Update

A number of members are keen to learn something about *Calligraphy*. If you have a skill in this area which you would be willing to share with others, please contact Tricia (see below).

John Mc Gill is happy to run the *Cryptic Crosswords* short course again. He has a number of people interested but would welcome a couple more.



A number of people are interested in another *First Aid* course. For this to be viable another couple of members are required.

If any of these are of interest, contact Tricia at coursesthrapstonu3a@yahoo.com

** Christmas Event **

Friday December 20th 2019

Doors open at 9.45 a.m. for a 10 a.m. start.



All those in the ballot have been allocated tickets for the Christmas event. The tickets should be collected and paid for at the October Plaza meeting. (*You will need to have your membership card with you*). If you are unable to collect them at the Plaza and cannot arrange for someone to do so on your behalf, then please contact Polly (R 625 181) **after the meeting**.

There is a limited number of tickets still available and these will be allocated by a second ballot. Details will be sent by email and the **closing date will be 28th October**.

Please note: if you are unable to use your tickets, please return them so that they may be passed to other members on the waiting list.

This year, we will be entertained by Eugene Matthias, the magician who kept us enthralled at our January meeting, (held in the Parish Church).

Music will be provided by our talented Makin' Music and Ukulele Groups.

PARKING

The manager of the Bridge Hotel has kindly agreed to reintroduce parking for blue badge holders on Friday mornings during the monthly meeting. Please call into reception and give your registration number. It costs £1 for two hours and £2 for up to four hours and there is a refund for Blue badge holders and customers.

Parking continues to be available in the cattle market car park in Market road opposite the old Methodist church.

SASHES

Look out for our helpers wearing welcome sashes. They are there for anyone who needs help for access or otherwise.

Please feel free to contact me if you need access advice.

Glyn 735 797 accessthrapstonu3a@gmail.com





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, such as the Christmas Event.



Thrapston and District U3A Committee 2019/20

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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