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Musing from the Chairman

March was a busy month, with an East Midlands Regional meeting in Leicester (Derbyshire, East Lincolnshire & Rutland, Lincoln, Northamptonshire and Nottingham) and a Northants Network meeting (12 Northants u3as) in Scaldwell. The great value of these meetings is finding out how other u3as operate and run and to pick their brains. There's no such thing as a unique problem.

Three of us went to Leicester to a well organised and inspiring day. It was also an eye-opener! We were left amazed at the eclectic eccentric ways in which some u3a are run. "But we're all the same", I hear you shout. Oh no we're not. As they say Up North, "There's nowt so queer as folk" and we met a few of them.

We came away with an assessment of how well Thrapston does compares with other u3as: what we excel at and what we could do better. Whilst totally biased, I'm glad to report we excel at most things and are committed and working hard to improve those things we can. But none of this happens by accident. We are incredibly lucky to have so many dedicated volunteers who make our u3a the great community it is. Whether they serve you tea in the Plaza, organise and run our social events, lead an activity group or serve on the committee, they are all priceless. Without them our u3a would not exist. Please remember to say thank you, as it's the only and most important payment they receive.

On that subject of volunteers, our AGM is on the May monthly meeting, where, some committee members will stand down, some will join and others will swap places. It's a bit like musical chairs. If you would like to join us there are application forms on the website or from the Business Secretary – Viv Tunstall. A better group of people, you will not find. We are fortunate to have all positions filled, but we never turn away, skills, knowledge and experience and will always find a place for you.

We had a New Members' coffee morning. Despite the name, these are open to everyone, including those thinking of joining, though the emphasis is making new members welcome and giving them the chance to meet the Group Leaders and chat about their activities. Once again, it was a splendid morning and some of our enquirers subsequently joined at the monthly meeting. Welcome to our community, I look forward to getting to know you all.....Frank



Monthly Meetings

17 April & 15th May Presentations

Doors open at 10:00 am



What did the Romans do for us? ...

17th April – Speaker Chris Carr

With a twist, this talk from Chris Carr will focus on Roman history from the point of view of the home kitchen! The Roman invasion changed what we eat and how we cooked. As part of the talk there is a chance to taste one of the dishes They the Romans made.



A Musical Morning

15th May - Speaker Andy Smith

We last saw Andy in 2024, and he promises to entertain us with another fabulous musical morning.

Andy as given his 'music talks' to lots of U3A's, Rotary Clubs WI's, Lodges and sundry events and likes to think that he offers something a little bit different. He is a song-writing multi instrumentalist (guitar, mandolin, ukulele, banjo, tenor guitar, sitar, piano) and singer.





Sweet FA

20th March - Peter Fairweather
Will Adams & Julia Burgess:



Sweet FA are one of Northampton's most delightfully irreverent live acts — blending sharp comedy with catchy, tongue-in-cheek songs that stick in your head long after the show ends.

Known for their witty lyrics and playful stage presence, Sweet FA take everyday observations, local quirks, and the absurdities of modern life and turn them into laugh-out-loud musical moments. Their performances feel relaxed and spontaneous, often drawing the audience in with a mix of cheeky humour and singalong choruses.

Rooted firmly in the Northampton scene, we listened to such songs as I'm not keen on Milton Keynes, Full English, The Rhythm Method and The Road to the Sea.

Sweet FA delivered big laughs with sharp writing, good timing, and a willingness to have a bit of fun at their own expense.



Review by Helen Dawson



Thrapston & District U3A Annual General Meeting

May 15th 2026

The Plaza, Thrapston

To commence at 10.15. Doors will open at 9.45.

AGENDA

- 1. Apologies for Absence**
- 2. Minutes of the 2025 AGM**
- 3. Chairman's Report**
- 4. Group Co-ordinator's Report**
- 5. Treasurer's Report**
- 6. Approval of the examined accounts**
- 7. Approve appointment of the Examiner of Accounts**
- 8. Election of the Committee for 2026/27 - Chairman, Vice Chairman, Treasurer and Business Secretary, (the Executive Members), and a committee of 8 other members.**

* Please note all written nominations must be received no later than 10:00 am on the 30th April 2026

Nomination forms are available from Committee members and on the website www.thrapstonu3a.co.uk

Vivien Tunstall Business Secretary 2nd April, 2026

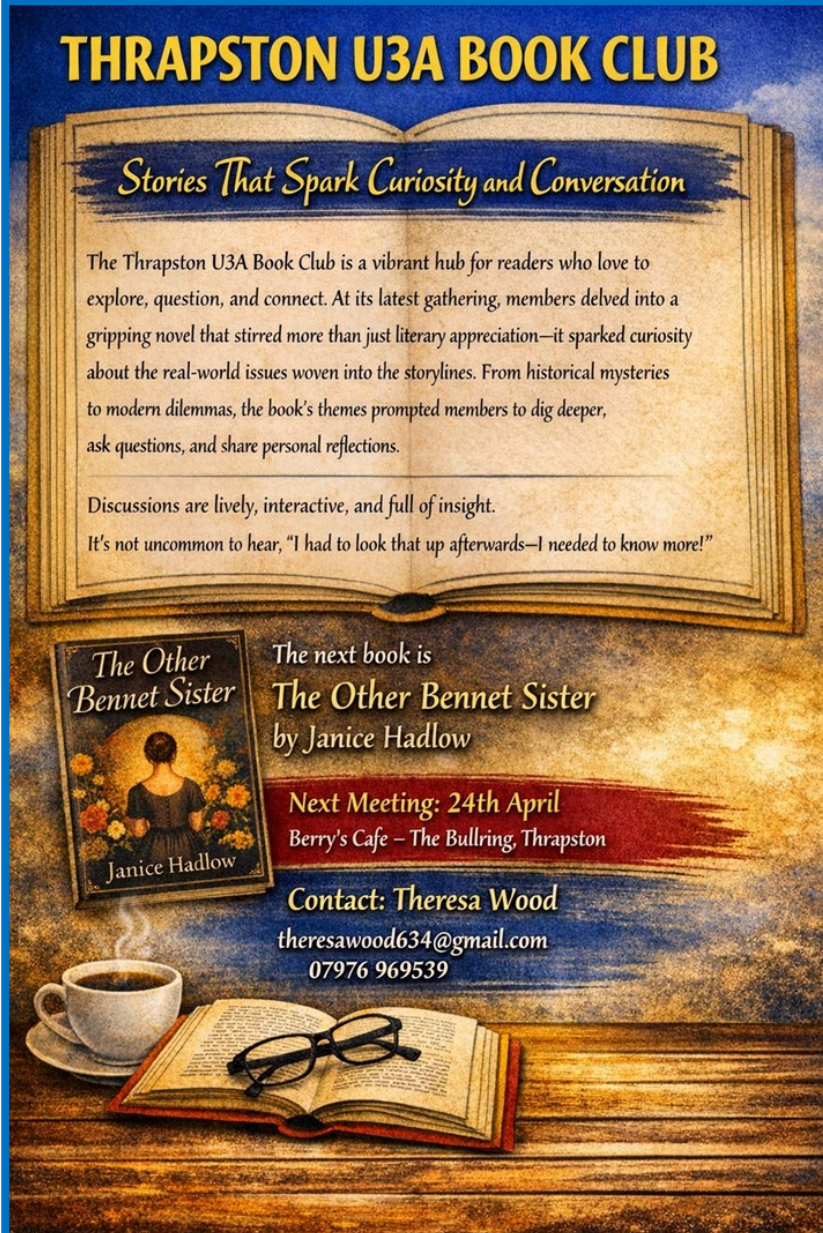
The Third Age Trust

To find out about more about the Third Age Trust click on the following two links
You will find a wealth of information such as online learning opportunities, online interest groups, events and online workshops and so much more,.

[u3a - Welcome to u3a](#)

The u3a Friends newsletter shares news, learning opportunities and member stories from across the u3a movement.

[Your u3a Bitesize Friends Newsletter March 2026.](#)

A promotional graphic for the Thrapston U3A Book Club. At the top, the title 'THRAPSTON U3A BOOK CLUB' is written in bold yellow letters against a blue sky background. Below this, an open book is shown with the text 'Stories That Spark Curiosity and Conversation' written in a cursive font across its pages. The main text describes the club as a vibrant hub for readers who love to explore, question, and connect. It mentions a recent gathering where members delved into a gripping novel that sparked curiosity about real-world issues. The text also notes that discussions are lively and full of insight, and that it's not uncommon to hear members say, 'I had to look that up afterwards—I needed to know more!'. In the bottom left corner, there is a small image of the book cover for 'The Other Bennet Sister' by Janice Hadlow, which features a woman in a blue dress standing in a field of yellow flowers. To the right of the book cover, the text reads 'The next book is The Other Bennet Sister by Janice Hadlow'. Below this, the next meeting is scheduled for '24th April' at 'Berry's Cafe - The Bullring, Thrapston'. Contact information for Theresa Wood is provided: 'theresawood634@gmail.com' and '07976 969539'. At the bottom of the graphic, there is a white cup of coffee on a saucer, a pair of glasses, and an open book resting on a wooden surface.



Spring has Sprung!

The Silver Wheelers

The grass is ris, I wonder where the birdies is? Well, something like that anyway and March had arrived, in like a Lion and out like a Lamb or so they say.

The first showings of improving weather are all that's needed for those poor souls who have been over wintering their motor bikes to brush off the dust and take to the open road at every opportunity. A prime example of this is the u3a 'Silver Wheelers' group but instead of the customary second Friday this time we met at 10.00am on Thursday 12th March at Thrapston Coop.

Small is beautiful with just the four of us, Dave, Colin, Paul and our guest Kevin on his shiny new Triumph with less than 100miles on the clock.

Many will know that I have been collecting chocolate Easter Eggs for a charity event run by the Northants Triumph Owners Motor Cycle Club due on 21st March delivering the 'spoils' to Welford House Children's Home. I am amazed at the generosity of all those who sponsored the event with donations of eggs and the young recipients will be delighted. So many of my friends and acquaintances are big hearted so there is really no reason at all why I should be surprised.

This 'Silver Wheelers' run gave me an opportunity to check out the route to be taken for the charity event only two weeks into the future. As I am leading that run, I decided to follow the route I will take on the day just to ensure that there are no impending road closures. It is very embarrassing if one is being followed by 30 others on bikes all who think you know where you are going and the route is blocked or worse, you get lost!!

We bimbled along through some charming villages in our beloved county, Orlingbury, Broughton, Great Cransley, Loddington, Lamport and a plethora of others of equal merit on a circuitous anticlockwise route of thirty miles or thereabouts heading for Kingsthorpe on the Northern edge of Northampton. All at a gentle pace with only minimal traffic, ever mindful of the speed limits (and the pot holes).

Weather wise we were lucky as the forecasters gave portents of doom with rain due at mid-day but fortunately it didn't materialize although there was a bit of buffeting from strong gusts of wind. So, we kept dry and finished our ride out at Smiths, Brampton Lane farm shop, café and who knows what else they do there, for a chinwag over coffee before dispersing to make our own routes home.

Let's hope the weather continues with the gentleness we attribute to Spring lambs and we can enjoy many other such sociable excursions in the coming months. If you own a motorcycle and are the holder of a full licence do come and join us, you will be made very welcome.

Paul Ollett (The Silver Wheelers)

SUDOKU

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9				8			7	6		6			9		5	3		
7			1			8		5			3				8	5	6	
	2		6	7				1		1	5						7	9
	6	5			1			9				9		6	7			3
1	8	7	9							7		3		9				5
5		4	7					6		5		7	1					6
	7				8	9					1	6	3			9		
	9				6	5					9			5				8



Please Welcome our New Members !

Diana Norton
 Valerie Henderson
 Kathy Scriven
 Margaret Shawl
 Kenneth Barber

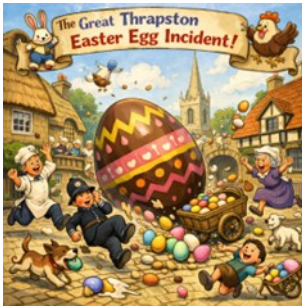
Julie Kaley
 Raymond Twelvetree
 Maxine Clark
 Joyce Crawley
 Peter Crawley

NEW GROUP - HISTORY WALKS

- ◆ Our first walk will be a tour of Islip and will be led by Eric on Wednesday 29th April at 2 pm. We'll meet at the Woolpack. It will be just over two miles and last about two hours. Most of you will know of Eric as the historian who writes each month in Thrapston Life. He's a great guide and I know we'll enjoy this first outing.
- ◆ THE WALKS ARE OPEN TO ALL THRAPSTON U3a members. Please would you email me to book a place. Numbers are restricted to 20.
- ◆ Our plan is to have a walk once a month on the 4th Wednesday or 4th Thursday afternoon from April to October. We shall be asking local historians to lead the walks and we will ask each participant to donate £3 or £4 to the host's History groups as a thank you. There's no cost for the Islip walk.
- ◆ We plan to organise car sharing for walks a distance away.
We have a tour guide system for those with hearing or mobility issues
- ◆ The draft list of walks are at present: Wadenhoe, Kimbolton, Titchmarsh, Higham Ferrers, Collyweston and finally Thrapston (October treasure hunt and cafe visit)
Our reserve/2027 list includes Apethorpe Palace, Denford, Finedon, Burton Latimer, The Cranfords, Ringstead, Rushden and Oundle.
- ◆ We ran history walks for about five years until 2018 and they were really enjoyable. I was amazed at how much history we have on our doorstep. So I hope you'll enjoy them just as much, if not more.

Glyn Hill and Eric Franklin
Joint group leaders
glynishill06@gmail.com





The Great Thrapston Easter Egg Incident

It began, as many memorable events in Thrapston do, with the very best of intentions.

The Thrapston and District U3A Easter Committee—consisting of Maggie (Chair, Vice-Chair, and self-appointed Head of Seasonal Cheer), Brian (Treasurer and reluctant carrier of folding tables), and Doris (who “just helps out” but in fact runs everything)—had planned what they confidently described as “a modest Easter gathering.”

By Tuesday, it had escalated into something closer to a village-wide operation involving 200 chocolate eggs, three raffle tables, a questionable inflatable bunny, and a spreadsheet that nobody but Doris understood.

The Egg Hunt

“Now remember,” Maggie announced on the morning of the event, clipboard in hand, “this is a gentle Easter egg hunt. No running. No pushing. And absolutely no competitive behaviour.”

At precisely 10:01am, someone shouted, “They’re off!”—despite nobody officially starting anything—and a surprising number of otherwise dignified members set off at what can only be described as a determined shuffle.

Brian was seen briskly cornering a shrub near the churchyard, muttering, “I’m sure I hid one here myself...”

Meanwhile, Doris, who had hidden most of the eggs, quietly retrieved three from her own handbag, declaring, “Contingency planning.”

The Inflatable Incident

No one is entirely sure who authorised the inflatable Easter bunny.

It arrived unannounced, seven feet tall, slightly lopsided, and with an expression that several members later described as “unsettling.”

Halfway through the morning, a gust of wind lifted it gently but decisively across the green, where it proceeded to drift into Mr. Wilkins’ carefully tended daffodils.

Maggie, maintaining admirable composure, remarked, “Well, it is seasonal.”



The Chocolate Crisis

At 11:30, a small but significant issue emerged: the chocolate eggs were melting.

“It’s the sun,” Brian said, staring suspiciously at the sky as though this were a personal affront.

“It’s April,” Doris replied. “It does that occasionally.”

A rapid redistribution effort ensued, during which several eggs were “temporarily safeguarded” in pockets, handbags, and—in one memorable case—a thermos flask.

The Great Thrapston Easter Egg Incident Contd

The Raffle

The raffle, always a highlight, featured prizes including:

A decorative Easter wreath, a box of assorted biscuits (slightly dented but “perfectly fine”) and a mystery prize described only as “Seasonal Surprise”

When drawn, the Seasonal Surprise turned out to be—somewhat confusingly—a small garden gnome wearing a Santa hat.

“No waste,” Doris explained firmly.

A Triumphant Conclusion

Despite the minor chaos, melted chocolate, and one inflatable-related horticultural incident, the day was widely declared a success.

Maggie concluded: “Well done, everyone. Same again next year—but perhaps fewer eggs, less wind, and absolutely no inflatables.”

There was a pause.

“Or,” added Brian, “we lean into it and get two bunnies.”

Doris simply made a note.

And so, as the last of the chocolate was salvaged and the final folding table reluctantly returned to storage, Thrapston once again proved that Easter is not just about eggs—it’s about community, good humour, and knowing exactly where Doris keeps the spare ones.



Sudoku Answers

8	4	1	5	6	7	3	9	2	4	8	5	6	3	2	1	9	7
9	5	2	3	8	4	1	7	6	6	7	1	9	4	5	3	2	8
7	3	6	1	2	9	8	4	5	9	3	2	7	1	8	5	6	4
3	2	9	6	7	5	4	8	1	1	5	8	4	2	3	6	7	9
4	6	5	8	3	1	7	2	9	2	4	9	5	6	7	8	1	3
1	8	7	9	4	2	6	5	3	7	6	3	8	9	1	2	4	5
5	1	4	7	9	3	2	6	8	5	2	7	1	8	9	4	3	6
6	7	3	2	5	8	9	1	4	8	1	6	3	7	4	9	5	2
2	9	8	4	1	6	5	3	7	3	9	4	2	5	6	7	8	1



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 2025/2026

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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 last day of the month.

Editor and publisher : Tina Jones - email: editorthrapstonu3a@gmail.com

Website : www.thrapstonu3a.co.uk where details of the committee and their roles can be found along with details of all the groups.

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

Thrapston & District U3A is a registered charity number 1179593