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Chairman's February Message

February has already rolled around and found us wanting, still putting off tasks that were supposed to be done by the New Year.



A couple of business items to highlight for everyone. The Annual General Meeting of this u3a will be in May, but we need to be thinking now of who is to do what?

The COMMITTEE consists of up to twelve people who freely give their time, as do the Group Leaders to ensure that YOUR u3a works and is legal.

The Third Age Trust is our umbrella organisation that provides advice, insurance and models of policies that this charity must have by law.

By our constitution members can serve a maximum of nine years as a Trustee, BUT roles should change every three years, this is to ensure that we turn over the roles to widen experience and draw in fresh ideas. We are reaching a point where our Treasurer must move on to possibly a new role, and at a maximum I may only serve one more year as your Chair before standing down and leaving the Committee.

Your U3A needs new committee members to enable it to function, keep us legal and within the spirit of u3a.

Plaza Meetings are up and running again with some excellent speakers thanks to Paul Ollett, our brilliant Speaker Seeker, but because not everyone comes to these meetings, we have had to reintroduce the £1 entry charge. This is paying for the speaker's fee and a tiny contribution to your coffee/ tea and biscuits. The refreshments and chairs are prepared or put out by two other groups of u3a members who give up their time to assist in the running of our u3a, thank you all.

Ask not what your u3a can do for me but what can I do for MY u3a?

Ian Byrnes



18th February 2022 & 18th March 2022 Monthly Meetings

at The Plaza in Thrapston

Doors open at 10:00 a.m,



Speaker Eric Franklin –18 February 2022

'Tales of Thrapston and the County over Two Hundred Years'

For my latest local history presentation to Thrapston & District U3A I will be looking into the last 200 years of news stories from both this area and the wider county. Places mentioned will be illustrated using my extensive archive of local items.

Amongst the topics I will be covering, you will discover:

- where to find red milk
- essential information about expected behaviour and suggestions as to reprisals at the Cardigan Arms in Deenethorpe
- a sad tale about the result of over exertion
- the Woodford steeplechase held in 1840 with a closely fought race, except for the enthusiastic but hapless George Abbot
- rumours of free turnips in Little Houghton and the vicar's response to local people collecting them
- and three stained glass windows in a village church which may raise a few questions, to which I have no answers.

Plus many other news items and plenty of old pictures, most of which I have not shown before



Speaker Phil Theefoot - 18th March 2022

Goa – "An Indian Adventure"

Phil Theefoot is an adventurer who has a wide spectrum of interests and is always up for a new adventure. Twice married, with two children and four grandchildren he still shows no sign of settling down to the fireside chair and the TV.

Born and raised in Essex he has travelled widely in the UK, Europe and to many countries across the world. These include exciting expeditions to Australia where he swam on the Great Barrier Reef, New Zealand, Singapore, Thailand, and China where he walked on the Great Wall, the USA and the Canadian Rockies and three trips to the Indian sub-continent.

Phil lists motorcycling among his interests and he was recently able to combine this with his love of travel when he made a motorcycle tour in the Indian state of Goa and it is an illustrated presentation on this recent adventure that he brings to the Plaza 18th March 2022.





Review of 21 January 22 Plaza Presentation “The Ceremony of the Keys – Tower of London” by David Sweeney”

There is a saying “It’s not what you know, but who you know” spoken to indicate that advancement in a career or into certain establishments is not necessarily all about your qualifications. It is a saying that David believes to be true and he says that he was able to access the Tower of London through contacts he had made visiting areas that are not available to the general public including the Yeoman Warders social club.

The construction of the famous Tower of London began in 1068 two years after the Norman invasion of England. The first part, The White Tower was completed in 1350. The building was extended and further fortifications were added as it served as a Royal Palace for a succession of Monarchs but during the reign of Queen Victoria it underwent considerable restoration work to reverse the ravages of time. The Tower was inscribed on to the list as a world heritage site in 1988.

David gave an illuminating talk of different aspects of the historic buildings that are to be found within the Towers imposing walls. The Jewel House holds the nations collections of treasurers of incalculable value. A collection that was enhanced through the efforts of King Henry VIII whom we are aware had a reputation for collecting pretty things! Perhaps not so well known was the Zoo which was a repository for wild animal such as Lions and Tigers given to the reigning Monarch by foreign notables. The Zoo was eventually relocated to Regent’s Park where it remains today.

Ravens kept within the Tower grounds are currently nine in number but sometimes there are as few as six although never less than this. It is said that if the Ravens left the Tower then the Kingdom and the Tower would fall. The original Ravens were bred in Wales, now there is a program to breed them at the Tower to ensure their continuity and the security of the Tower and the realm.

The Ceremony of the Keys dates back in history to the time of Edward III and is believed to be the oldest continuous military ceremony of its kind in the world. The ceremony continues to this very day on a nightly basis even during the bombing of London during the Second World War. At its inception it was introduced to ensure that the Monarch was safe and securely locked in the Tower at the time when it was still a Royal Palace.

The same format is followed meticulously with the Tower keys being collected from the Chief Warders office next to the main entrance at Bywards Gate at exactly 9.53 pm and carried along Water Lane to the ‘Bloody Tower’. The Keys party is made up from a Yeoman Warder, a Sergeant, two Soldiers and a Bugler their footsteps echo in the darkness until a sentry steps out and challenges with the words “Halt! Who comes there”? The Yeoman Warder replies, “The Keys”! To which the sentry demands “Whose keys”? With the response “Queen Elizabeth’s keys” Finally from the sentry, “Pass then, all’s well”.

It is possible to obtain tickets on-line to see the ceremony which takes place at 10.00pm every night by pre-booking on line through the Historic Royal Palaces website and they are free but a £1.00 transaction fee is levied. Between 1st April and 31 October there can be up to 6 in a group and from 1st November to 31st March up to 15 individuals in a group is permissible.



Pictures taken by Paul Ollett during the 21 January Plaza Presentation



Charity of the month

“No Gain—No Pain UK”

No Gain—No Pain UK is a non-profit making charity who are on a mission is to raise money for syringe drivers for our local communities.

What is a syringe driver?

A syringe driver is a small portable battery-operated pump that administers drugs subcutaneously by continuous infusion. It is not something that is used by every patient in palliative care, but it can be very useful. Syringe drivers are used when other routes become inappropriate or difficult.



The photo is of the Choc orange covers which they sell for Christmas They accept donations of the chocolate oranges & knitters are always in demand. Donations from these alone last year made over £3000 ...a lot of oranges at £4.00 each.

There will be a stand at the 18th February 2022 meeting if you would like to show your support for this worthy cause. If you would like to find out more or get involved copy and paste the following link in your browser.- <https://ngnpuk.weebly.com>

A New Nature Park for Thrapston

An exciting new project in Thrapston is calling on volunteers to help create a new nature park from wasteland, woodland and green space in the town.

The Thrapston Nene Valley Park Project aims to build a space of peace and tranquillity, where friends and families can meet, nature can thrive, and adventure can begin

The 30-acre area alongside the River Nene and the lakes off Meadow Lane is owned by Thrapston Town Council. A volunteer management team has been granted permission to lead the creation of the nature park with the community.

Find out more, and contact the team, at thrapstonnenevalleypark.org (or contact Sheila at a Plaza meeting or by the following email at vicechair2thraptonu3a@gmail.com)



ACCESS MATTERS



A recap for those members with mobility issues:

The Plaza

Although the main access to the Plaza is via steps to the front, there is an accessible ramp to the right of the building which brings you into the hall near the stage. It's a good slope, so it can be used by mobility scooters, rollators and frames. From here you can use the specially reserved seats at the front.

Parking

There is one designated parking space for people with disabilities to the right of the Plaza entrance next to the ramp and this is on a first come, first parks basis.

We also have an agreement the manager of the Bridge that those with blue badges may park free of charge, you just need to key in your registration number at the reception desk. It's also worth knowing that for £2 you may park for up to three hour or £5 all day using the machine to the left of the main entrance. This is reimbursed if you become a customer.

The reserved seats at the front of the Plaza for any member with mobility, visual or hearing problems. There are two spaces each so that you don't have to sit alone.

If you have any issues with accessing your U3A, either for the monthly or group meetings, please let me know and I'll endeavour to help.

Glyn Hill accessthrapstonu3a@gmail.com Tel: 01832 735797

FLOWER BUNCH

We meet at 10.30 on the last Friday each month at Cole Court, Raunds.
We are a small group and would love a few more members to join us. We are not "experts" and just love flowers. We challenge ourselves with a theme each month and share ideas and help each other along and of course drink tea/coffee and chat! We share equipment and foliage and occasionally have a trip to a garden or show.
January theme was "Just three blooms" see the results in Photo!
February theme is St Davids Day Daffodils and leeks and dragons ???



More info contact Linda on 01933 380244



THRAPSTON BRIDGE GROUP

The Thrapston Bridge group will recommence on 10th February. We have a core collection of players who meet for a two hour session on the 2nd Thursday of the month. New members; either experienced players or those wishing to learn, please contact Gordon Campbell. Mobile: 07846 611748, or email: gordon.cruachan@gmail.com

Notice of Important change to your Newsletter Items

Please note that the deadline for items to be included in the newsletter has changed.

All items must be received no later than the last day of the proceeding month. This change takes effect from 1 March which means that your item(s) for the March Newsletter must be received by 28 February. Any items not received on time may not be included in that months Newsletter.



The Lunch Club

Please note that with effect from March our lunches will be on the third Wednesday of each month. I have booked the Chequered Skipper for Wednesday 16th March, and I will send out the menu via e-mail as, unfortunately, I cannot be at the February meeting. If you are not already a member of the New Lunch Club, just drop me an e-mail at peterandjeanmole@btinternet.com and I will add you to the list of members who, once a month, meet up to have an enjoyable lunch at various venues with pleasant company.

Jean Mole

Tel: 01933 626 608



CYCLING GROUP

The Cycling Group meets every Monday at 10am outside the Co-op car park on Sackville Street. We are a social cycling group who's objectives are to enjoy good company, beautiful countryside and incidentally enjoy some gentle exercise. Every ride has a cafe stop half way round where we put the world to rights and discuss the topics of the day.

I know many of you reading this article will have spent much of the last 2 years stuck indoors feeling generally depressed about the restrictions on our lifestyles. Getting out in our beautiful surroundings lifts the soul and is far better medicine than any you can get from the chemist. As you will see from the Rogues' Gallery below, we have a mix of manual and electric bikes and both men and women cyclists, so come and give it a try.

If you haven't dug your bike out from the back of the shed for a few years, I'll will happily give it a check out and make any adjustments to get it roadworthy.

Interested? Call Frank on 01832 735797 or 07928 747840



NEW ! Playford Dance Group NEW !

Playford-style dances began way back in 1651 at a time when country dances were regarded as light relief from "Real Dancing" with its formal and sometimes complicated forms and sets. Think of the dances in period Jane Austen dramas.

The leaders do say that the classes will not demand a high level of energy and focus on letting members have fun in a safe, friendly environment.

The group will meet on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday afternoons from 1.30 to 3.30. The first meeting will take place on Wednesday February 9th.

For more information, contact Jeannie Byron Williams on 07403639642.

Carrot Cake



Cake ingredients

175g dark brown soft sugar
2 large eggs
150ml sunflower oil
200g wholemeal self-raising flour
3 level teaspoons mixed spice
1 level teaspoon bicarbonate of soda
200g carrots, peeled and coarsely grated
Grated zest of 1 orange
110g sultanas
50g desiccated coconut
50g toasted pecan nuts (see below) chopped

For the cinnamon icing

2 x 250g tubs mascarpone
1 heaped teaspoon ground cinnamon
2 tablespoons milk (or orange juice)
1 rounded tablespoon golden caster sugar
50g chopped toasted pecan nuts (to finish)

For the syrup glaze

75g dark brown sugar
juice of 1 small orange
1 tablespoon lemon juice
two 20cm by 4cm sponge tins with the bases lined

- ◆ Place the sugar, eggs and oil in a bowl and whisk them together for 2-3 minutes until the sugar has dissolved.
- ◆ Sift the flour, spice and bicarbonate of soda into the bowl—the bits of bran left can be tipped in at the end.
- ◆ Fold all this in gently. Then add the rest of the cake ingredients.
- ◆ Divide the mixture evenly between the prepared tins and level them off with the back of a tablespoon.
- ◆ Bake near the centre of the oven for 30 minutes until they are springy and firm in the centre.
- ◆ While the cakes are cooking make the icing by simply whisking the mascarpone, cinnamon, milk or orange juice and sugar in a bowl until smooth and fluffy. Then cover the bowl and chill until needed.
- ◆ For the syrup glaze, whisk together the sugar and fruit juices in another bowl and as soon as the cakes are cooked stab them all over with a skewer and then spoon the syrup evenly over the hot cakes.
- ◆ Leave cakes to cook in the tins in order to soak up all of the syrup.
- ◆ As soon as the cakes are cold remove from the tins.
- ◆ Place one of the cakes on a serving plate, spread one third of the icing all over then place the other cake on top. Finally cover the top and sides with the remaining mixture.
- ◆ If you are not going to serve it straight away cover and chill until needed.
- ◆ Don't forget to decorate with the nuts before serving.

Recipe by Viv Tunstall



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 2021/22

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A note from the Editor

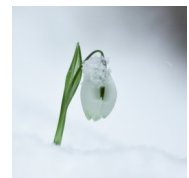
This newsletter is published on behalf of the committee of the Thrapston and District U3A.
The opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Editor, or of the committee of the Thrapston and District U3A, or of the U3A Trust.

Please note that items for inclusion in the next newsletter should reach the Editor by the last day of the proceeding 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**



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