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Chairman's November Message

Firstly, an apology as in my message last month I erroneously mentioned we had passed the vernal equinox which I suppose was correct but in fact that was over six months ago and I should have referred to the event as being the Autumnal equinox that took place at 13.44hrs on 22nd September, and I'm happy to set the record straight.

We are really fortunate to enjoy a steady stream of excellent speakers and October was no exception with Buzena Kuncewicz and her intriguing account of the Polish displaced persons re-settlement camp at Husbands Bosworth. Our good fortune in this area is due to the untiring efforts of our Speaker Seeker Frank, who finds these fascinating people for us.

It also occurred to me at the recent Plaza meeting that the success of these gatherings is not only down to the Speaker as good as they are but in fact there are a host of our u3a members who industriously pitch in to make it all run smoothly. Our dedicated group in the kitchen serving a seemingly endless stream of refreshments, those who put in a shift at the 'Box Office'. The welcoming personnel in the foyer and the technical people who hook up the computers and sort out the audio. Then there are the membership people and the special events people not to mention publicity. It is a real team effort. So well done everyone, you lubricate the machine to run smoothly.

Talking of special events and with the Christmas social looming there has been a high demand for tickets to the event. I believe that around two thirds of the tickets were sold at the October Plaza meeting alone. This demand stands testimony to just how well run and popular this annual event has become. Just be aware that the Christmas Social is on 13th December which is the second Friday in the month.

Stay safe and keep warm. *Paul*



Monthly Meeting

15th November 2024

Doors open @ 10:00 am.— Presentation starts @ 10:30 am



*Thrapston's lakes and the Nene Valley,
through the seasons.*

15 November 2024: Speaker Collin Bloor.

Collin is one of our own u3a members and an outstanding photographer. In his talk, Collin will share with us images of nature and the landscape of Thrapston's lakes and of the Thrapston area of the Nene Valley, through the seasons.



The Christmas Event 2024

13th December at the Plaza, Thrapston

Doors open at 10.30

The few remaining tickets will be on sale at the NOVEMBER meeting,
The cost is £10.00 and includes some light entertainment and our excellent raffle.
There will be a welcome drink, a light lunch with tea or coffee and maybe a quiz.

'Join in the fun and wear your Christmas Jumper or Santa Hat'





*Polish Resettlement Camp
Husband Bosworth/Sulby 1948 – 1958
18th October 2024: Speaker Bozena Kuncewicz*

In selecting talks for our monthly meetings, I try to alternate between entertaining and informing the audience. This was certainly informative and I personally learned more about the history of Poland in an hour than in my previous 72 years. Whilst Bozena was not in a camp herself, her extensive research and testimonies from those who were, (including her husband) brought their experiences to life and made the listeners feel a part of it all.

Before Bozena talked about the camps, it was important to understand the history and culture of Poland, which was originally a massive country incorporating Ukraine and other neighbouring Eastern-European states. Unfortunately, it was also very difficult to defend and was regularly attacked by Russia, Austria, Germany and the Ottoman Empire, who carved it up for themselves. By 1795, the independent state of Poland no longer existed, until it was re-established in 1919. Culturally: music, song, dancing, national dress and folk art were very important to people, along with their deep Catholic faith.

As dawn broke on September 1, 1939, German forces launched a surprise attack on Poland, bringing Britain and France into the war. And in a secret deal between Hitler and Stalin, the Red Army crossed the Polish border from the east on September 17th. Warsaw and a few garrisons continued to hold out briefly but eventually surrendered. Poland was divided between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union.

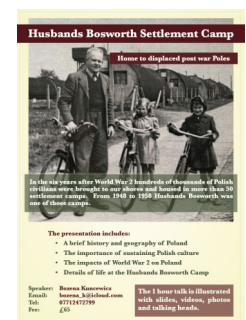
Twenty thousand soldiers, government officials and their families fled across Europe to England, where they established a Polish Army in exile – wearing British uniforms - to fight along the Allies.

Back in Poland, Hitler took the young people back to Germany to work as slaves in factories, quarries and on farms, whilst Stalin deported 2 million to Russia in converted cattle trucks. All military officers and intelligencia (ruling elite) were killed - this was the dogma of the Red (peasant) Army. Those left in Poland were women, children and the elderly of which 11 million died. Eventually, Churchill persuaded Stalin to release the deported Poles, who fled Russia.

After the war there were 2 million Poles scattered around the world and they were warned not to return. In response, Britain set up 50 camps for Polish civilians in vacated military camps. Husband Bosworth was one of those camps. These became secure homes for marooned Poles who came from Europe, Africa and Italy. Whilst they were safe, life in corrugated metal Nissen huts was hardly comfortable. Being metal, they were freezing in winter and unbearably hot in summer. However, the people made the best of the situation, setting up schools, teaching Polish culture and language in the hope that someday the children would be able to return to their homeland. They grew their own food and kept livestock and became as independent as possible, whilst interacting with the locals. Most importantly, they were free, safe and in some cases, reunited with family and friends. Men took jobs and over time, they bought cars and houses and became Anglicised. Inter-marriages between the 2 communities took place and gradually the Polish people became independent of the camps. Finally, in 1958, all the camps were closed.

This was a talk about the worst and best of our human qualities. The horrors of war and the resolve, fortitude and determination of a downtrodden people to rebuild their lives and maintain their culture against all odds. It also underlined their current national response in supporting Ukraine, following Russia's invasion.

Frank Boydell
Speaker Seeker.





This month's story Angela Gyves

Born in Leeds , brought up in Preston (my Lancastrian father couldn't get me over The Pennines quickly enough !) my life followed a conventional route (school , GCE's A'Levels and Teacher Training College) until in 1967. Whilst on holiday at the end of my first year of college , I met 'The Gardener'. Well at least that's what he told me - that he was , a council gardener working in Victoria Park , Bethnal Green , East London .



Regardless , I was hooked !

Turns out he was actually a shoe designer , 14 years my senior and one of 'The Swinging Sixties' luvvies , mixing with the rich and famous of that era . He was making shoes for the Biba Store , Sandie Shaw (ironically the singer who sang in bare feet !) , Princess Margaret et al and had been to Hollywood to design the shoes for the film 'Goldfinger'. The one true note was that he was indeed from Bethnal Green !

For those of a certain age who shopped for shoes in Dolcis , Saxone and Lilley and Skinner in the 60's and 70's 'my gardener' worked under the name 'Roland Cartier'.

Eventually at the end of my course I moved to London to teach in East Ham and lived with a colleague in sight of West Ham football ground .

Two years later we were married and moved out to the borders of Essex and suddenly I was a corporate wife (though still teaching). Corporate entertaining was at its height and we regularly dined at The Ritz , The Savoy , The Playboy Club and on occasions The George V in Paris , entertaining buyers from Britain, Europe and U.S.A. , thankfully on expenses!

Unfortunately for me , entertaining at home was also part of the job and I was regularly phoned , having just come in from school to be told that my husband was bringing home two or three buyers for dinner that night ! Thank goodness ,that (much to my displeasure) my Mum had insisted I took Domestic Science for O' Level instead of Art !

It was a scary time but I did grow to love it .

Things changed when I had my sons and corporate entertaining on that scale became a thing of the past . By the late 70's early 80's things were very different .

And then my husband decided to move his London factories to Corby . It was a culture shock for all of us but gradually we began to love our new life .

We had four wonderful decades together here , embracing the rural life and making wonderful friends until 'my gardener 'died in 2021 .

Grieving , I decided to return to my roots in Lancashire in 2022 but after 18 months the pull of Thrapston became too much and I came 'home ' in May this year .

Couldn't be happier !



Me in a pair of boot made by my husband at a fancy dress party

Science and Technology Group

In September thirteen members of the S&T group went on a visit to Tooleys Historic Boatyard in Banbury. Tooleys has been a continuously working inland waterways boatyard since 1778 and some of the equipment they have on display (and some they still use) date from the early days. The yard has a busy drydock for building, repairing and painting narrowboats. They specialise in the repair and restoration of old wooden working boats as well as working on the latest boats. Their aim is to retain and develop some of the old skills so that they don't get lost. As part of their support for heritage and history they still have the old blacksmiths forge and the carpenters workshop in addition to a collection of tools, engines and other technologies from yesteryear. The yard is currently restoring Hardy, the last wooden boat built by Nurser Brothers of Braunston in 1940 which carried 25 tons of bulk goods, mainly coal. She was rescued from her sunken state in 2018 and is being restored by a group of enthusiastic volunteers and generous donors.

This visit was one of several undertaken by the S&T group every year, interspersed with interesting talks held at the Baptist Church by members of the group (3rd Monday of the month from 2 until 4pm). The group would welcome new members and to whet the appetite of any potential members our proposed programme for 2024/2025 is:

November : Cryogenics and More

December : Social / Visit to shoe exhibition at Northampton Museum

January: HMS Cumberland

February : Silk

March: Leonardo da Vinci Exhibitions in Milan

April : No meeting as it is Easter

May : : Visit to Loughborough Bell Foundry

June: Photographic Chemistry Through the Ages

July : Energy

August: Visit to Woolsthorpe (NT)

September: Visit to Jeyes in Earls Barton

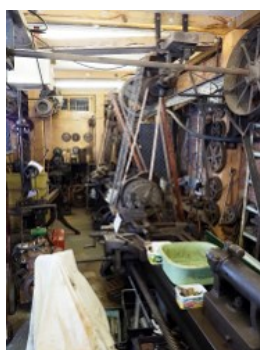
October: Antarctica

November: Moons

December : Social/Visit to Lamport Railway

If this group is of interest to you please contact:

Phil Cox – Email: gphilipcox@gmail.com or Sheila Underwood – Email: nandsu@hotmail.com



Butterfly & Birdwatching October outing

The weather for the walk on Wednesday morning around Barnwell country park was cloudy and damp. The path around the lakes was muddy with lots of puddles. The river had gone down but the lakes were at the top of their banks due the recent floods.

We walked along the path by Mill lake where we fed a pair of swans and lots of mallards, Paul had arrived a bit earlier and saw a Kingfisher in flight by the lake, we carried on to the bird hide but due to recent reports of rats the rangers had not been putting out bird food and consequently we only saw one Robin.

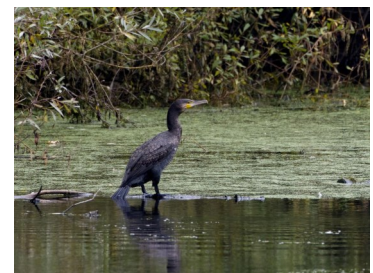


We carried on along the path and apart from a few Crows and also couple of Cormorants sitting in the trees drying their wings all was quiet. We stopped at the small bridge over the lake hoping to see some Mandarin ducks but they were nowhere to be seen, only another pair of swans and plenty of mallards waiting to be fed.

On to the Kingfisher hide where more ducks and a cormorant were on the water then at last a Kingfisher appeared landing on a bush on an island, although it was 30 yards away it was great to see and we managed to get a few photos before it flew off after about 10 minutes.



Although Barnwell was a bit quiet we still had a lovely walk and the Kingfisher made our day. Many thanks to Colin for some of the photos.



Our next outing is on Wednesday 6th November meet at 10.00am at Thrapston Co-op car park with duration of about 2 hours.

If you would like to join us please contact simpson.robert@sky.com or text me on 07904 377258

Notes & Facts on November

No warmth , no cheerfulness, no healthful ease ,

No comfortable feel in any member .

No shade , no shine , no butterflies , no bees

No fruits , no flowers , no leaves, no birds .

No vember !

‘ No’ by Thomas Head



November

the eleventh month of the year was the ninth month of the Roman calendar and its name is derived from the latin novem’ meaning nine.

Birthstone – Topaz , Citrine

Flower -Chrysanthemum

Star signs -Scorpio and Saggittarius

Notable November dates

5 th November -Bonfire Night

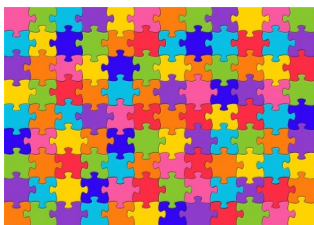
9 th November Berlin Wall came down

11 th November Armistice Day

22 November Assassination of John F. Kennedy

30 th November St. Andrews Day

Angela Gyves



JIGSAW SALE

When the evenings draw in and the weather outside is too miserable to go for a walk, what is nicer than to pass the time with a good jigsaw? At the next Plaza meeting on 15th November, we will be selling jigsaws at only £2 each. So, it will be our pleasure to see you there and to sell you one or two jigsaws to keep you going over the winter months

Kelly



Keeping Yourself Safe On Line

These days we are more and more dependent in using emails for communicating information and it is really surprising how dependent we have become; it is oh so easy not to mention how speedy as a means to exchange information.

For the most part people are trustworthy and there is not a problem but when things don't go smoothly the consequences are dire.

When you send an email you are actually giving out information about yourself, this is not a problem if the message is going to a known and trusted person or organisation. Unfortunately, these days we tend to hear a lot about identity theft and the rascally activities of those who are out to do us down.

It is quite possible you may receive an email, apparently from a friend or someone who appears to have knowledge of you, that you could be conned into believing it was genuine. It is also possible that the email identity you see at the heading on the message has been stolen and for whatever reason the message is a fraud.

If you send emails around to a group of friends, for example as a group leader, make sure you follow the safest procedure. As bizarre as it may sound, address the email to yourself and on the right-hand side of the email 'on screen', form left click on the BCC icon and put the email addresses of all the message recipients into this box. You can then send the message having ensured that all of the individual email addresses are kept hidden from everyone else in that particular mailing list.

Be Careful!! And stay safe out there.

Paul



COFFEE MORNING

There will be a coffee morning on 29th November
at

WHITCO Cottingham Way, Thrapston
at 10-30 am

This is open to all members of Thrapston u3a but particularly those who have joined recently and want to meet other members in an informal environment.

It is hoped that a number of group leaders will also be there

We would love to see you all !





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

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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.

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

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