

Burton u3a

Autumn 2024 Newsletter



Registered Charity Number 1146122

CONTENTS

Contact Information.....	Inside Front Cover (<i>Below</i>)
From The Chair.....	3
Dodgy Dave's Corner.....	4
Indoor Carpet Bowls / Crown Green Bowls Fridays.....	6
Bowls Report 2024.....	6
Line Dance Group Taster Session.....	7
Bridge Group.....	8
Luncheon Group.....	8
Painting For Beginners.....	9
Badminton Groups.....	9
Autumn Quiz Winners.....	10
Historic Churches.....	10
Calligraphy Group.....	12
Social Activities Reports.....	13
Forthcoming Social Activities.....	14
For 'sale'.....	15
Gardening Group.....	15
History Group.....	15
Wine Appreciation Group.....	17
Events for Your Diary.....	17
What a Surprise!.....	18
Ukulele Group.....	19
Antiquarian Group.....	20
The New Burton on Trent u3a Website.....	21
Missing Letters.....	23
List of Groups.....	24
Humour & Sudoku.....	26
The Committee.....	Inside Back Cover

There are lots of ways for you to contact your u3a: all of the *Committee members* have email addresses which are listed on the **Inside Back Cover**. You can also email the various *Group Leaders* by clicking on one of their email links on the page for the particular group, using the **Burton u3a website** at <https://burton-on-trent.u3asite.uk/> — in fact, you can find out everything you need at this very useful website, so make sure you have it saved as a *Favourite website* or *Bookmark*!

If you use **X** (formerly *Twitter*), to follow us please use **@burtonu3a**
If you need to speak to someone, please ring mobile **07512 468591**

From The Chair

I hope you all had a good Summer and managed to find the elusive sunshine and avoid the rain. I know that now we're retired, we can take our holidays off peak but even then we've needed to be lucky to find some warm sunshine.

Burton u3a is pressing ahead towards the 1000 member mark (*884 at the time of writing*). Many new members are joining 'online'. We have added a number of new groups to our repertoire: *Pickleball* is one of the latest. My thanks to all of the Group Leaders for the work they do in making this possible.

Are many of you followers of *Facebook*? The committee have considered whether Burton u3a should get involved. Some u3as have reported it as a very good method of attracting new members. It would be interesting to hear your views. You can contact me using chair@botu3a.org – is anyone an expert Facebooker to help us?

It's just about 24 days to Christmas – can you believe it? – so a chance to remind you about our party. A few tickets remain so if you intend to come, make sure to get them soon.

You will notice a new look to our website, as we have migrated to a different platform – along with most other u3as. Read about it on page 21.

May I wish all of our members a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Best wishes,

Mike



----- PLEASE NOTE: -----

The deadline for Spring 2025 contributions is **31st January 2025!**



Dodgy Dave's Corner

'Don't mess with the old folk!'

'As I write this letter to send my love to you' the sky is grey and overcast, the rain is falling, and it is cold. You've got it! It is Winter! Every shop you go into is playing the same old cobbles of Christmas songs you've heard for the last sixty years or more. All are supposed

to make you feel jolly and happy, when actually you are stressed out, cold, a bit damp and dying to get home for a good cuppa! Personally, I can't help getting the feeling that when people wish me "*Merry Christmas*" they have mistaken my frozen cold red nose and cheeks for a few too many at the pub instead of the freezing cold!

Talking about what people think of you, I am sure you have noticed how all the young folk take us for doddering old fools, "the wrinkles" and so on? Well, this brings me to another story, told to me by one of our lovely ladies, no name no pack drill, but very smart. We were discussing the issue of how through the colder months we have the problem of condensation on the windows and the need to wipe them in the morning.

"Oh," she said, "the year before last, I was quite in despair: mine were so bad, and I was getting that terrible moisture between the panes, I really did not know what to do. Then one morning a bright young man appeared at my door and told me he could easily solve the problem. Ever such a nice young man he was.

"Well over a cup of tea he quickly arranged to have all my old windows replaced with new ones. How wonderful!

"True to his word, a month later along came a crew of men who very quickly and efficiently changed all my windows and a very good job they made of it too. What nice men they were. What a pleasure! So last Winter was ever so much better."

"Funny though," she went on, "A month or so back, a chap phoned claiming to be the manager of the company that had carried out the work, and he asked me how the windows were, and did I like them? To which I was very happy to tell him how pleased I was and what a good job his men had done. That is when his tone changed, and he said did I know it was over a year since the work had been done and why had I not paid them?"

"Well, obviously I asked him why he was contacting me as his smart young salesman had told me that the windows would pay for themselves

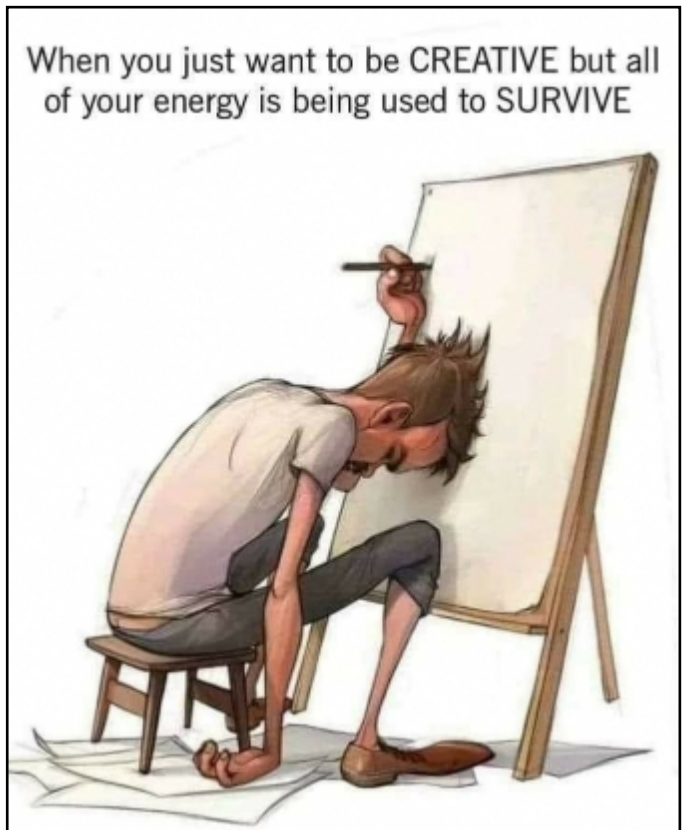
in a year: why else would I have taken them?"

"That is when the line went dead, and I have never heard from him since. Do you think he was a con man?"

Well, I hope you all have a lovely Christmas and holiday and do not let the cold and wet get to you. I find some time with the Grandchildren always helps.

Very Best Wishes and Compliments of the Season to you all,

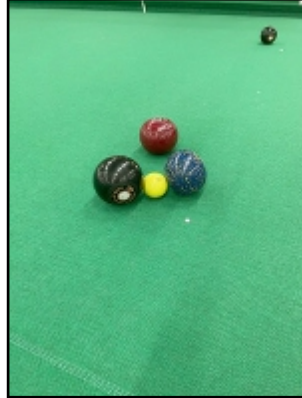
Dodgy Dave



Indoor Carpet Bowls

Here are a couple of photos of the Indoor Bowls Group enjoying playing. Gloria, Lizzie and Carol enjoying their last Summer roll up at *Church Gresley Indoor Bowls Club*. Their skill levels vastly improved over the Summer with final ends like this.

Malcolm Williams, *Group Leader*



Crown Green Bowls Fridays

The season started in April with some old and new faces. We had a total of 18 for our first game and as the season progressed, we averaged around 14. It was always fun and laughter, and the tea and biscuits went down a treat during the season. We only missed a few games due to the weather and we continued until the end of September for our last game. I took the group to the *Tower Brewery* for a well-deserved drink as we had such a fun time bowling and they all can't wait till next year. *Keeeeeep bowling!*

Dave Gascoigne, *Group Leader*

Bowls Report 2024

One, Two, Three, Four – yes, we now have four bowls groups!

Stapenhill Tuesday morning and afternoon, Stretton Anglesey Friday afternoon **AND** now Tuesday indoors at Meadowside... this is pretty good I think.

The Tuesday morning and afternoon groups and Friday afternoon are all outdoor crown green groups usually playing anytime from the end of March to the beginning of October. They are dependent not only on the weather but the green keepers who work so hard to maintain the greens: playing in wet weather can damage the surface. This year has been

challenging for everyone but the groups have all maintained their membership levels and have also welcomed new and novice bowlers.

The Tuesday groups are run by *Terry & Rosemary Marsden* and Friday by *Dave Gascoigne*. They do run slightly differently but all play crown green, that is they have some *raised areas* so the bowls are supposed to curve around these to reach the jack. We all have great fun and enjoy being outside especially on lovely sunny days – we missed a few of those this year and spent quite a lot of time in wet weather gear, although when checking the registers it would appear that on a number of occasions if the morning was wet, the afternoon proved playable and vice versa and so we've enjoyed some social chat over tea or coffee depending on the group.

Our *BIG NEWS* is that due to costs, a number of people who have played at *Gresley* indoors over the previous Winters felt it was too expensive to join the club for such short time, so feelers were put out for another option and *Meadowside* were able to accommodate us for what we thought was short mat bowls on Tuesday afternoons. Everything was in place, we even had a *short mat bowls mini expert* come to help us get started!! 18 people arrived with bowls, indoors and outdoors for the first week. Well can you imagine the mats were put out – much to our surprise they were huge – not short mat bowls – no block or mat (*don't ask!!*); it was somewhat chaotic and *Meadowside* said the mats hadn't been out since pre-Covid and none of the staff really knew anything about bowls!!! They do however have 6 sets of bowls and jacks we can use which is very helpful. Everyone finally got sorted out and we had a fun afternoon. From now on, we will be playing a version of indoor bowls, but importantly we will have fun.

If you are interested in the *Indoor Bowls Meadowside Winter* group, please go through the website – we are running a reserve list, so if people are away, we should be able to accommodate a game and we also have u3a bowls we can loan as long as we know in advance.

Rosemary Marsden, *Group Leader*

Line Dance Group Taster Session

The *Taster Session* was held on the 25th September and 16 dancers attended. They learnt five line dances and even though they were novices they learnt them quickly and loved them! Some of them have since joined the group! All in all, it was a great success. If you would like to join us, we would be happy to see you!

Janet Brown, *Group Leader*

Bridge Group

The group is slowly growing with 21 recorded members, of whom about 16 are active, but hopefully more will swell our ranks.

Let me address a common assumption: *Bridge is too serious.*

Initially I will give you two testimonials from members who started playing in July this year:

From *Dave Weldon*: Over time I have learned to play many card games, and joined u3a to play *Cribbage* and *Whist*. I saw the Bridge group advertised and went along and had a chat and decided to “*give it a go!*” I have progressed from a beginner with the help of the experienced members, and now enjoy the different challenges from each hand, especially as the group is friendly and not too serious. The game has grabbed me and pulled me in!

From *Jacky Allen*: I never thought about playing Bridge as I thought it would be dull and boring, but after joining u3a tried it as one of my activities. It is fascinating and a long way from dull and boring! It is good fun and we spend so much time laughing. I am well and truly hooked and attend two sessions a week and have even joined an online club.

As with most games, Bridge can be serious – they have county players and even internationals, but equally as with most games “*the amateur*” can be more relaxed, and enjoy it for the fun that it is! Does it really matter if you make a mistake – hopefully not, as we all make them! The game can be as involved as you wish – not everyone will push forward to higher and higher skills, but it makes no difference, as everyone can join in.

The Bridge group will welcome everyone – you can be a returning player or a complete newcomer – there will be group lessons and even private lessons without charge.

The main point about u3a Bridge is the fun element, and the idea is for everyone to come away with a smile on their face, and we seem to be achieving that!

Neil Anokhina, Group Leader

Luncheon Group

The Luncheon Group *Christmas Lunch* is at *Dovecliff Hall Hotel*, the 3 course festive meal costs £36. The menu has been put together with the Head Chef and Hotel Manager, just for our group. *This is our 4th year of having our Christmas Lunch there.*

Barry Appleby, Group Leader

Painting For Beginners

Painting for Beginners is going very well and on the 13th November, I started a Painting for Beginners class at Derby u3a: this came from my classes at the u3a festival in York.

Barry Appleby, Group Leader

Badminton Groups

Everyone, if you are worried about being pushed too hard at Badminton, this should, I hope, ease your concerns! Several of us usually meet for drinks afterwards and enjoy the relaxation!

We've just been to Tim's u3a Quiz (*see overleaf!*), where we had 3 teams who put up a good fight (but congratulations to those teams who really know their stuff!). In December, a group of around 25 of us are going for a Christmas curry.

We now have 3 badminton groups:

1. Mondays 10:00–11:00
2. Mondays 11:00–12:00
3. Fridays 10:00–11:00

There are places available but currently not at the same time and day for 4 sessions in the month. This may change in December, so please do enquire using the website email links on the Badminton Group page. By the way... how many players are sitting around the table below? It's not 9: it's 10.

Hugh Rodger, Group Leader



Autumn Quiz Winners 24th October 2024

Today's quiz winners were "TAPS" – they won by half a point, scoring 87 and a half out of 100. It was also Mrs Towey's birthday!

We also had a record number of people who attended the quiz today – 80 people. The next quiz will be the *Spring Quiz* in *April 2025* if you'd like to see how you get on!

Tim Salmon, Quiz Organiser



Historic Churches

Since our last newsletter report, we have again been welcoming new members to the group, and have visited three lovely, interesting churches. We visited *All Saints' Church, Findern*, in August. This was a small church, in a beautiful spot, and we enjoyed the introductory talk and look around.

Melbourne Parish Church, St Michael with St Mary, was our venue in September. This was a very interesting church, and situated next to Melbourne Hall, so many of us made good use of the Hall Tea Room for coffee and cake following the church visit!

In October a large group visited *St Peter's Church, Marchington*, a church I personally had often passed by but never visited. We again enjoyed our talk and wandering around, and were made very welcome on a lovely sunny day.

If you've not been on a Historic Churches visit, do consider it. Most of the people who give the talks are volunteers who have a passion for their own church. We learn some interesting facts and frequently a quirk that many would not notice or be aware of. It is fascinating spending time inside a building that we possibly have passed regularly. Visits are on the 3rd Thursday of the month and we usually pay £1.50, with a donation for refreshments.

If you think you'd like to join us or if you'd like more information about the group, please get in touch with us via the email links on our website page.

Sue Fraser and Helen Barnett,
Group Leaders



Left: All Saints' Church, Findern



Above: Melbourne Parish Church, St Michael with St Mary

Below: St Peter's Church, Marchington



Calligraphy Group

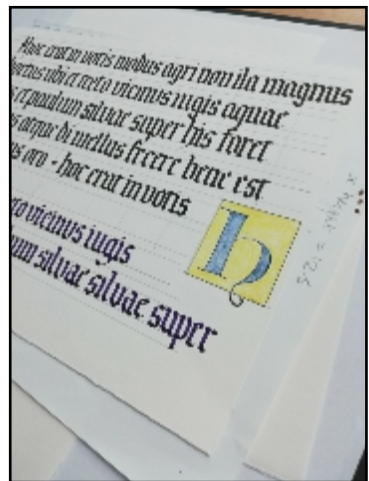
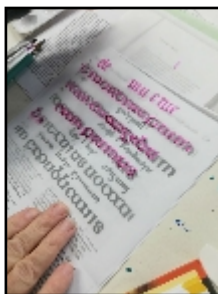
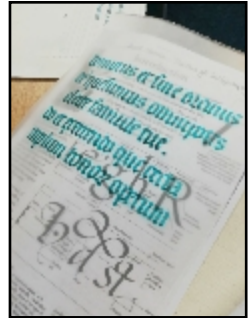
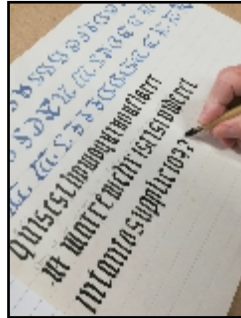
In the Summer, following our two terms learning basic *Roundhand*, some of the group entered the Calligraphy Section at the *Rolleston Village Fair Show*, which had been especially created for us. And that included prizes and first prize. Well done to *Sue*, in the photo showing us her prize-winning Rainbow Calligram!

This term, the group have been learning *Gothic script*, using inks, and later playing with pencils to add a more modern take. We haven't any finished pieces to show you yet, but watch this space!

Also, the group have been indulging in script analysis, using rulers, protractors, and tracing paper. It gives an analytical insight into how a script works, and feeds into your own practice to improve the outcome.

New members to the group are very welcome. It's a continuing series of sessions, each one building on the one before, and it's a steady learning curve. We meet on Fridays 10–2 at the *Priory Centre* in Stretton. Please email if you're intending to come using either of the email links on our webpage.

Cherry Burston, Group Leader



Social Activities Reports

In the middle of August, a group of us headed to the North East for an epic weekend. Our first stop was *York* where the tourist bus was waiting to give us a guided tour. Later, we continued to our hotel in *Sunderland* where we were delighted that nearly everyone had a sea view (*and what a view*). On Saturday after a morning exploring *Newcastle*, we had early dinner before heading to **Kynren** for the highlight of the weekend, the spectacle portraying 2000 years of history. A full day at *Beamish* on Sunday left us exhausted so we were thrilled to be revived with *Bucks Fizz* and *cheese straws* at the *Angel of the North*. Leaving the hotel after breakfast on Monday we visited *Thirsk* where we very much enjoyed the *James Herriot Museum* (see photos). We arrived back in Burton around teatime after a very busy but tiring holiday.

I don't think any of our group had the energy to join the *Day Trip* to *Llandudno* the next day, but I gather those who went had a very enjoyable, though tiring, day.



Dianne Brewster, Group Leader



In October, a small group of 20 members headed off to the *Lake District*. Stopping briefly at *Crosby Beach* we did manage to see *Anthony Gormley's* installation "*Another Place*" although with the tide in, most of the statues were underwater. Arriving at our hotel in *Kendal*, we eventually got our room keys and enjoyed a tasty dinner. After breakfast on Monday, we took a short drive to *Bowness* with time to explore, before being taken to *Haverthwaite* for the steam train to *Lakeside* and then the boat back to *Bowness* and home. Tuesday we had a day of leisure in *Kendal*, then on Wednesday, after a morning visiting the impressive *Cartmel Priory* and village, we moved on to *Holker Hall* to explore the house and gardens. Leaving the hotel after breakfast on Thursday, it was decided to head straight back to Burton due to a member of the group being unwell. We arrived in Burton around lunchtime and returned home from a very enjoyable holiday.

In October we had a *Day Trip* to *Leicester*. Here we enjoyed learning about Richard III, at both the Visitor Centre and the Cathedral. We then had free time for lunch, shopping and exploring Leicester. The Guildhall was a particular delight.

Dianne Brewster, Group Leader

Forthcoming Social Activities

We have 2 holidays planned for 2025.

The first is to **Devon** for 3 nights, 22nd – 25th June. More details will follow.

The second is to **Kent**, again for 3 nights, 10th –13th October. We are hoping to visit *Canterbury* and *Chatham Historic Dockyard* as well as a couple of other places. Again, more details will follow.

Both holidays will be with *Avalon Tours* who ran excellent holidays this year to Cardiff and Kynren. They also organised the December Thursford trip.

In the New Year the Social Activities Group will be changing their name to **Away Days** and will continue to arrange the following:

Short break holidays

Coach trips

Cultural visits

The group has some exciting plans for the New Year including the following:

A visit to a *fire station*

Shopping trip to the *Meadowhall Centre* in *Sheffield*

A Nottingham *river cruise*

Theatre trip to see *Ghost the Musical*

This is just a taster, so watch out for further details.

For 'sale' to a good home!

If anyone would like a *Calligraphy set* or a *Ukulele*, I'm giving them away, but, if you would like to give a small donation, it will go to a *breast cancer charity*. Thank you. Please get in touch with me on 01283 517527.

Jane Hance

Gardening Group

Since the last newsletter we've had two meetings, back at Rolleston Club. We again had a '*Harvest Festival*' Coffee Morning in September, with members bringing along surplus fruit and vegetables to be sold on the *Sales Table*. There was also the opportunity to create small garden ornaments from willow, with instruction from *Nita Rao*. It was a very busy, happy meeting!

In October we welcomed one of our members, *Karin Kay*, who gave a lovely talk and showed lots of photos of the '*Spread Eagle Island*' garden, which is behind the bus shelter in Rolleston. Karin had created the garden some years ago and told us about all of her changes over time which keep it looking so lovely all the year round.

As Sue is stepping back from helping to lead the group at the end of 2024, we have now created a new '*team*' of willing volunteers to join *Hazel* and lead the group into the future. I'm sure they will be introducing themselves as they '*grow*' into their roles, and there will be an exciting programme of speakers, activities and outings to look forward to in 2025, starting with our now traditional annual lunch in January!

Sue would like to thank the members for all their help and support during her time as one of the leaders, and sends her best wishes to all of the new team.

**Sue Fraser and Hazel Powl,
Group Leaders**

History Group

"History – you would be surprised how much it is a part of you"

By the time you read this our meetings for 2024 will be over but no worries, we have a smashing line up for 2025 with your favourite, well-known speakers, talking about a range of subjects from transport on the River Trent to the deserts of North Africa and the River Nile, from

the stories of local river and canal crossings to the history of Germany. I am sure there will be something to interest you.

As always, we welcome all members of our own Burton u3a as well as members from neighbouring u3as to come along and join us. Just have a look at our programme of talks on the website and if there is one you would like to hear, just come along. You do not have to become a regular member, just pick the talks that you think you might like and come along.

We meet on the second Thursday of every month between 10:00 and 12:00 in the room at the rear of the *Riverside Church* on the High Street, almost opposite the entrance to *Meadowside*. Just follow the little footpath down the left hand side of the Church to the door at the end of the path and come in. Entry is still £2 per member, after that all you need is your membership card. We stop around half time for a tea/coffee and biscuit break, and it is only 20p, the best value you will get anywhere! And the company is also great. *Most of all, if you think you have a story to tell, please contact us: we start work on the 2026 programme soon and we need more u3a members as speakers.*

Here is our programme for 2025:

9th January – *Richard Stone* – “The Growth of Leisure and Entertainment in Edwardian England”

13th February – **Martyn Hall* – “The History of Germany”

13th March – *David Skillen* – “Overview of the War of the Roses”

10th April – *Richard Stone* – “Edwardian England and the Approach of War”

8th May – *Shirley Horton* – “Crossing Places Part 2: All about canals, and river crossings”

12th June – *Malcolm Goode* – “The Finale” last part of series on WW2

10th July – **John Parry* – “Burton’s 18th Century Navigation” the true start of inland waterway carrying, well before the Duke of Bridgewater’s canal

14th August – **Dave Sutcliffe* – “The Return to Khartoum 1896 to 1898: The Kitchener Expedition”

11th September – *Shirley Horton* – “Transportation to Australia, local stories about people who were transported”

9th October – *David Skillen* – “The Battle of Towton, 29th March 1461, possibly the bloodiest battle in the War of the Roses”

13th November – **Martyn Hall* – “The History of France”

*Denotes a u3a speaker

See you there,

Dave (Sutcliffe) and Dave (Barker), Group Leaders

Wine Appreciation Group

Since the previous newsletter, we've had three monthly meetings, and sampled some lovely wines.

In August, *Keith* tested our ability to recognise the difference between 'New World' and 'Old World' wines, in another very enjoyable blind tasting quiz. The 'Old World' wines all came from France, including a Riesling from Alsace, on the German border, a Chenin Blanc from the Loire Valley and a Cabernet Franc. The 'New World' Riesling was from Australia, the Chenin Blanc from South Africa, and the Cabernet Franc from Argentina. As usual, we also scored each wine out of ten, and the Cabernet Franc wines scored the highest.

Ken presented the wines in September. He'd described them as 'one blind white and a red selection', which turned out to be a Viognier, from Aldi, which was described on the label as '*adorably refreshing*'(!), a Merlot from Aldi, and three reds from Laithwaites – a Grenache, a Grenache blend and a Castelao blend (*which was the highest scorer of the evening*).



In October, *Ken* brought along Spanish Reds, which all scored quite highly, but the winner this time was the wonderful Marqués de Riscal Reserva Rioja from Tesco.

Thanks again to all the '*wine-presenters*' who continue to surprise and delight us with their selections.

We currently have a waiting list of members wishing to join our group. If you would like to be added to this, or you have any other queries, please get in touch via the bluebird on the Burton u3a website.

Sue Fraser, Group Leader

Events for Your Diary

Thursday 5th December 1pm – Burton on Trent u3a **Christmas Party** at the *Pirelli Stadium* – Music will be provided by **The Imposters**. There is also a Raffle with exciting prizes! Event ends at 4pm.

Thursday 6th March 2025 2pm – **Talk & Tea** – *The Code Breakers at Bletchley Park*. Ken Kelly, a popular Midlands narrator, will provide a fascinating insight into how the code breakers operated during World War 2 at Bletchley Park.



What a Surprise!

Those of us who attended the *Autumn Talk & Tea* were promised a surprise.

Ann Moorhouse told us about her work with “*Guide Dogs for the Blind*” before she introduced *Janis Burton* and her guide dog.

Janice was to tell us her “life story” working with guide dogs for over 40 years and how the dogs have enabled her to have a fulfilling life.

Some of us no doubt speculated as to what that surprise may be, but surely no one had known what that surprise might be!

Janice lost the sight of one of her eyes at an early age and then lost her second eye at the age of 18, becoming totally blind. She had been quite athletic in her teens and she did not want to let her blindness put a stop to the athletics which she enjoyed. She continued running with a guide. However her first love was swimming and that’s where her story becomes quite amazing.

Standing before us was an amazing Paralympic swimming champion

She won a total of 23 Paralympic medals during a career that spanned four Games. She was the most decorated British Paralympian until she recently lost that title to her good friend, cyclist and former swimmer *Dame Sarah Storey*, and is most decorated British Paralympian in a single sport.

In the individual events, she won five gold medals with three coming in the 1992 Games in Barcelona. As well as achieving Paralympic success she also triumphed in European and World competitions, being crowned champion a total of 15 times.

She was appointed a *Member of the Order of the British Empire* (MBE) in the 1999 New Year Honours list “*for services to Sport, especially Swimming, for Visually Impaired People*”. She has also taken part in the display events at the Horse of the Year Show. Her sporting retirement coincided with a dedication to further physical challenges despite her disability; at 40 years of age she learned to water ski, at 50 she learned to snow ski, and at 60 took up zip wiring.

To conclude her talk she produced one of the Olympic gold medals for us all to see. Apparently they are solid silver but gold plated!

Those who were there were amazed!

Our next *Talk & Tea* is on **6th March 2025** “*The Code Breakers of Bletchley Park*”

Mike Payne

Ukulele Group

This year we added a lot more songs to our diverse songbook and learned some new strumming patterns and playing techniques. We are currently working on a chord melody project for Christmas. Songs are mainly sourced by the group leader but members of the group are encouraged to request songs they'd like to play, the aim being to accommodate everyone's musical taste and level of ability.

We were delighted to be invited back to play at *Claymills Pumping Station* this year. It really is an interesting venue and well worth a visit generally, with various attractions and activities. We played during both the September and October steaming weekends. We provided books of song lyrics, put together by one of our members, to encourage the audiences to sing along with us. It was lovely to hear and see them enjoying the music.



The Ukulele Group was originally set up for people who wanted to learn to play and to play with others just for fun, with no intention to perform. Our experience and positive feedback from Claymills visitors led to a discussion about performances. A few of our members decided they would like to perform for care home residents, so this will be our direction and main focus for the coming year.

We welcome new members and cater for all levels of ability. You don't need to read music and there is no pressure to be part of the performance group. We have experienced players available to mentor beginners and spare ukes to lend if anyone wants to try the group but doesn't yet have their own.

Below is a link to some videos of our core performance group playing

at Claymills this year.

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLqxKitS4smwIhftT8hIAHz-7wQyjsmVn2>



Sandra Dewsberry, Group Leader

Antiquarian Group

The Antiquarian Group has completed another very successful year, packed with excellent speakers, both inside and outside of our u3a family. All of the speakers since I have been the Group Leader have been booked by **Julia Carpenter**. She has done an astonishing job, and the success of the group is in no small part thanks to her dedication and efficiency. Julia has decided to step down from booking the speakers – but she has already booked the entire programme for 2025! *Thank you so much Julia for doing an incredible job – you are going to be a very hard act to follow!*

Gill Jangra, Group Leader

Programme of Meetings for 2025

22nd January – *Shelagh Wain*: “Food Through The Ages” Part 2

26th February – *Arnold Burston*: “The Life & Times of Athelstan (*The first King of England*)”

26th March – *David Templeman*: “Lady Arbella – The Queen That Never Was”

23rd April – *Richard Stone*: “Our Precious Past” – unearthing buried treasure & the stories it tells Part 6

28th May – *Peter Stubbs*: “The Great Escape”

25th June – *Dr Cathy McAteer*: To be confirmed

23rd July – *Dr Charlotte Ball*: “Hero & The House of Fire – How we almost lost Beowulf”

27th August – *Martyn Hall*: “The Middle Ages” Part 1

24th September – *Martyn Hall*: “The Middle Ages” Part 2

22nd October – *Gareth Howell*: “The Gunpowder Treason: Terrorist Plot or Government Conspiracy?”

26th November – *Richard Stone*: “The Story of Map Making”

The New Burton on Trent u3a Website

Ever since I joined Burton u3a, the website was managed using some software called *Site Builder* – this was how the website was originally created when Burton u3a began, and it has continued in that form ever since... until now!

Site Builder had been getting a bit long in the tooth compared to more modern website software, so it was decided by u3a national that a new website platform would be introduced, to allow all u3as to have more modern and powerful websites. They decided to base the new platform on a popular website management tool called *WordPress*, which was launched in 2003. It has been gaining in popularity ever since, and has been extended and developed to become more and more versatile.

Not surprisingly, u3a national have customised *WordPress*, adding several elements which make it easier to handle Groups and other u3a-specific facilities. They have christened this u3a-specific version *SiteWorks*.

So, the scene was set for some changes. Basically, all u3as have to decide what they want to do by the middle of December 2024 – because the old *Site Builder* servers are going to be switched off then. The choices available were to migrate an existing site to the new *SiteWorks*, or to set up a new website independently (*a choice which usually incurs ongoing expenses*) of the u3a, or a u3a could decide to have no web presence at all. This is not a recommended option given the importance of the Internet these days! Your committee made the decision to go for the migration, after getting me to consider what was involved and then reporting back. As the Website Coordinator, it was my job to oversee the migration, and put the finishing touches to everything on the new, improved website – once

I'd completed my training for using *SiteWorks*, which involved a training guide 190 pages long with plenty of exercises to get people up to speed!

So, after all of this, what is the end result?

Well, the new website has far greater functionality than the old website. For example, when entering text on the pages, you can see what the final page will look like immediately (*it is a WYSIWYG platform – What You See Is What You Get!*), so you can design your pages with a lot of control over the final appearance. It is easier to include photos on your pages. You can add coloured blocks to enhance the appearance – you could put a blue block behind some text, which you can make white so that it stands out well. There are loads of possibilities. I will be providing training for all Group Leaders of course, but I think once people see the process, they will appreciate that it is actually quicker and easier to use.

It is better from a management point of view as well. For example, the software stores a complete list of every venue we use for our meetings, so if a new group starts up and is using one of those venues, I can just configure the group to use that venue. It also means that you can display all of the group information sorted according to venue. There are lots of similar improvements, but for now, the best thing to do is to have a look at the website. The website address is <https://burton-on-trent.u3asite.uk> so you can have a look for yourself. Until the training has been provided, if any Group Leader needs their group page updating or changing, please email me and I'll get it done for you as quickly as I can.

Bimal Jangra, *Editor and Website Coordinator*





Missing Letters



Reasons to Party

B_R_H_A_

C_R_S_M_S

E_G_G_M_N_

B_R_I_Z_A_

N_W_E_R_E_E

C_R_S_E_I_G

W_D_I_G

G_A_U_T_O_

H_U_E_A_M_N_

N_W_O_N

R_T_R_M_N_

A_N_V_R_A_Y

See if you can work out the words with **Missing Letters** above – remember that some answers are more than one word (*and one is three words*). The answers will be in the Spring issue if you get stuck!

Thanks to **Jane Hance** for providing this fun puzzle!

List of Groups

The information is listed showing the **group**, **where** the group meets, **when** they meet, **who** to contact and **how** (*mobile or email*). These pieces of information are separated by forward slashes, for example:

Antiquarian / Rolleston / 4th Wed am / Gill - email only

I hope that this is easy enough to follow.

Group / Where / When / Name & Contact

Antiquarian / Rolleston / 4th Wed am / Gill - email only

Art 1 / Stretton / Wed pm / Mark - email only

Art 2 / Rolleston / Mon pm / Robert - 07517 316382

Art Appreciation / Anslow / 3rd Thurs am / Christina - 07940 712416

Badminton / Meadowside / Mon am + Fri am / Hugh - email only

Ballroom Dancing / Stretton / Fri pm / Dianne - 01283 540056

Books / Stapenhill / 1st Tues pm / Jenny - 07812 104186

Bridge / Burton / Fri am / Neil - email only

Calligraphy / Stretton / Fri pm / Cherry - email only

Canasta / Stapenhill / Fri pm / Pauline - email only

Computers / Online Help on Webpage / Bimal - email only

Craft / Burton / 1st Wed pm / Joan - email only

Cribbage / Stapenhill / 2nd & 4th Wed pm / Mary - 01283 543836

Crown Green Bowls / Stapenhill / Tues am+pm / Rosemary - 01283 561959

Crown Green Bowls / Stretton / Fri pm / Dave - email only

Cycling / Various / 1st & 3rd Wed am / Peter - 07709 713191

Cycling 2 / Various / 2nd Wed am / Jane - email only

Folk Group / Stretton / 2nd & 4th Thurs pm / Iris - email only

French Advanced / Rolleston / Mon pm / Margaret - 01283 752314

French Beginners / Stapenhill / Tues am / Kyran - 01283 701069

French Intermediate / Newton Solney / Thurs pm / Lynne - 01283 704002

French Intermediate / Various / Mon pm / Colin - email only

Gardening / Various / 2nd Wed am / Sue - 07751 240918

German / Tutbury / Wed pm / Ruth - 01283 815866

Historic Churches / Various / 3rd Thurs am / Sue - 07751 240918

- History / Burton / 2nd Thurs am / Dave - email only**
- Indoor Bowls Winter / Meadowsides / Tue pm / Rosemary - 01283 561959**
- Indoor Carpet Bowls / Church Gresley / Tue pm / Malcolm - email only**
- Jazz / Rolleston / Tues pm / Sandra - 07513 989930**
- Line Dancing / Burton / Mon pm / Janet - 01283 541708**
- Lunches / Various / Monthly / Barry - 07974 203429**
- Music Appreciation / Stretton / 3rd Fri am / Mark - 01283 538591**
- Painting for Beginners / Stretton / Mon am / Barry - 07974 203429**
- Photography 1 / Various / 1st & 3rd Wed am / Vic - 01283 542910**
- Rummikub / Stapenhill / Mon pm / Jean - email only**
- Singing / Stretton / Mon pm / Margaret - 01283 520385**
- Social Activities / Various / / Dianne - 07510 327156**
- Spanish 2 / Burton / Mon am / Paul - email only**
- Sunday Lunch / Various / 2nd Sunday / Glynis - email only**
- Table Tennis / Burton / Tues pm / Chrys - email only**
- Tennis / Burton / Wed am / Malcolm - 01283 331375**
- The Bible's 3 Rs / Church Gresley / 3rd Thurs pm / David - email only**
- Ukulele / Stretton / 1st & 3rd Thurs pm / Sandra - 07513 989930**
- Walking Football / Meadowsides / Thurs pm / Chris - email only**
- Walks Challenging / Various / Last Thurs am / Herb - email only**
- Walks Long / Various / 2nd Fri am / Herb - email only**
- Walks Short / Various / 1st Fri am / Sue - email only**
- Whist / Stapenhill / 1st & 3rd Wed pm / Janet - 01283 566284**
- Wine Appreciation / Stretton / Last Tues Eve / Sue - 07751 240918**
- Wine Not? / Horninglow / 2nd Mon Eve / Chris - email only**

REMEMBER... For the most up-to-date information, contact the *Group Leader* via the *Burton u3a website*, using either of the *email links* on the page for the group you're interested in. Please contact the *Group Leader* before attending any group for first time...

<https://burton-on-trent.u3asite.uk/groups/>

RIGHT BEFORE THE CLOCK
STRIKES MIDNIGHT ON
DECEMBER 31...



MAKE SURE YOU RAISE
YOUR **LEFT LEG**. THAT WAY
YOU WILL START THE YEAR
OFF ON THE **RIGHT FOOT**.



"What's the difference
between ignorance and
apathy? I don't know
and I don't care"

Sudoku Puzzle

To challenge those grey (*and not so grey*) cells – the answer will again be in the next edition!

Autumn 2024 Solution

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

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

The Committee

Chairman: Mike Payne — chair@botu3a.org

Vice Chair: Neil Davenport — vchair@botu3a.org

Secretary: Hugh Rodger — secretary@botu3a.org

Treasurer: Kathy Hines — treasurer@botu3a.org

Accessibility Officer: Hugh Rodger — access@botu3a.org

Beacon Coordinator: Jane Kent — beacon@botu3a.org

Committee Member: Barry Appleby — bazappleby@btinternet.com

Communications: Christine Davenport — comms@botu3a.org

Events Secretary: Valerie Bentinck — events@botu3a.org

Financial Assistant: Alan Poore — finance@botu3a.org

Hospitality Team Leader: Glynis Lewis — hospitality@botu3a.org

Interest Group Coordinator: Michael Bartlett — groups@botu3a.org

Magazine Distribution: Linda Walker — magdist@botu3a.org

Membership Secretary: Linda Walker — membership@botu3a.org

Minutes Secretary: Beverley Bhaskare — minutes@botu3a.org

Publicity Officer: Jane Hance — publicity@botu3a.org

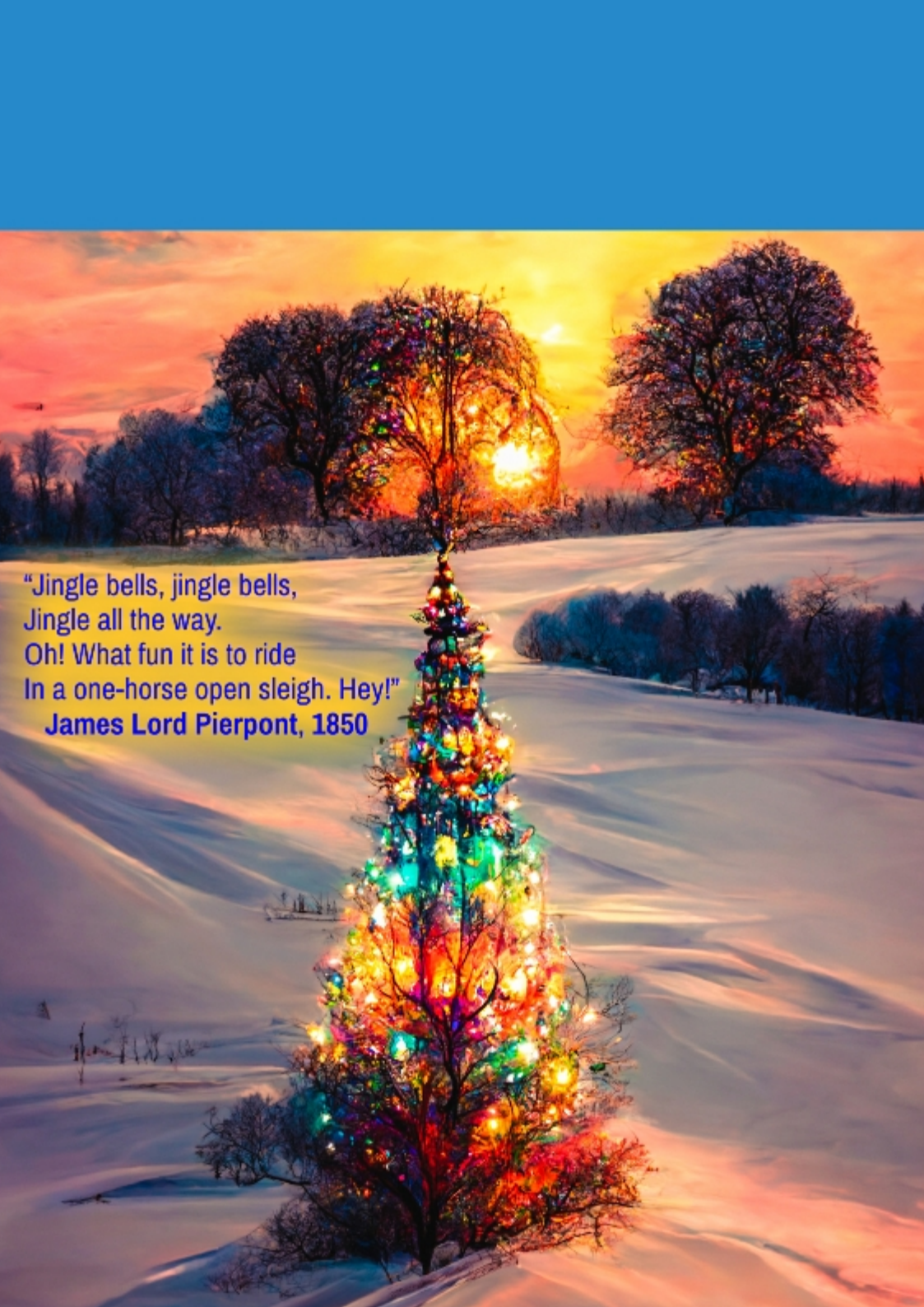
Welfare Officer: [Mike Payne](#)

Non-Committee Roles

Coffee Morning Meeter & Greeter: Peter Wildsmith

Newsletter Editor: Bimal Jangra — news@botu3a.org

Website Coordinator: Bimal Jangra — web@botu3a.org



“Jingle bells, jingle bells,
Jingle all the way.
Oh! What fun it is to ride
In a one-horse open sleigh. Hey!”
James Lord Pierpont, 1850