

# Ravenshead U3A Magazine



Ravenshead U3A 'Thursday' Walking Group pictured at Vicar Water, February 2014

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## Welcome from the editor.

### Welcome to the spring edition of the Ravenshead U3A magazine.

Putting together this edition of our magazine I can see what a diverse and busy U3A we have! Accounts of group activities, visits ( and looking at the weather conditions what an intrepid lot we are!) and social events as well as members' personal interests make for an interesting and informative read. The notice board is being used and hopefully will generate other opportunities for people to get together to pursue their interests.

Once again thanks to Terry for formatting and preparing the magazine for the printers, David Morton and Philip Jones for proofreading and of course to all the contributors of articles and photographs.

If you think you can produce an article for publishing in the next edition please submit it (preferably in a word processed format) to the editor, Judith Moore, by email or contact by phone (number below).

Deadline date for the next edition : **June 17<sup>th</sup> 2014**

**Judith Moore (editor)**

## Ravenshead U3A Committee Contacts

Bob Ford	Chairman	
Peter York	Treasurer	
Paul Craddock	Business Secretary	
Chris Dean	Membership Secretary	
Margaret Craddock	Minutes Secretary	
Rona McCann	Speaker Finder	
Judith Moore	Groups Coordinator	
Alan Paul	Web Editor	
Alan Walker	Visits Coordinator	
Kate Asquith	Committee Member	
Brenda Sharratt	Committee Member	
Ivan McNulty	Committee Member	

### Co-opted members:

Sue Owen, Welfare  
Val Ford, Groups  
David Morton, Coffee and Conversation  
Terry Moore, Publications



## Thoughts from the Chair!

Hi Everybody. It only seems like yesterday when Judith and Terry suggested to the Committee that they would like to produce a Magazine for our U3A to be published three times a year. The Magazine has proved to be very popular with you all and this is now Issue 4. I would like to say a big thank you to Judith and Terry for all their hard work.

If you have not already picked up your membership cards for 2014 please remember to do so. The Group Leaders of each individual interest group are required to check that people in their Group are still members. People without membership cards could potentially be turned away, but more importantly this could invalidate our insurance cover should an accident occur. Membership cards will be available at monthly meetings and Coffee and Conversation. Please contact Chris Dean the Membership Secretary if there is a problem with this.

The year is already flying by and our AGM in June is fast approaching. You have all put up with me as Chairman for the past two years and I think it is time for a change. As you are reading this perhaps you would like to consider joining us on the Committee and helping to take Ravenshead U3A forward. When we first started most of us had little idea of what we were taking on but it has been a great experience. I am sure there are lots of you out there who might think about it so why not come and talk to us?

The days are growing longer and we don't know what the weather has in store for us but we have to make the best of whatever comes. If we can laugh and smile and enjoy the company of others then hopefully we will help to do our bit to make the world a better place to live in.

I wish everyone all the best in the coming months.

### **Bob Ford, Ravenshead U3A Chair**

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#### **Think outside the box!**

1. Two men each play six games of draughts and both win the same amount of games but do not tie. Why?
2. A woman had seven children. Half were boys. How is this possible?
3. A cowboy rides into town on Friday. He stays for three nights and leaves on Friday. How can he do this?
4. The 60th and 62nd British Prime Ministers had the same mother and father but were not brothers. How do you account for this?
5. If you have two coins totalling 11p and one of the coins is not a penny what are the two coins?

**Answers on page 19**

## Flog It!

What are we doing standing in a long, cold, wet, queue on a January morning outside the Minster? But there is an air of excitement and anticipation and everyone is holding parcels of indeterminate shapes and sizes. Flog it are in town!

Some of the programme experts are working the queue with a film team, peering into boxes and baskets, looking for items to film later. We enter the Minster, which is marginally warmer and file our way onto chairs. This human rope will wend its way through the nave throughout the day inching forward until the final moment arrives – the interview at the table.

We are in a melange of cameras, lights, cables and the Great Paul Martin, showhost, rehearsing and filming his introductions, again and again. – Oh Dear, fluffed it, do it again! Oh Look! – there's whatsisname from East Midlands today.

We recognise other friends and U3A members in the crowd and chat with our neighbours about the items we've brought. Mine is a large print by Bernard Buffet, an unlovely lump, and source of amusement as to its value in our house. Sara has some old childrens' educational magazines and sets of railway uniform buttons.

Anthony Gordon has taken a couple of rare books and some Royal Opera House ephemera from the Bookwise shop, where he volunteers. Pauline Corby has a marine chronometer in a wooden box– but back to Pauline later. Philip Jones has a 1960's oil painting, bought by his parents for £11; a silver loving cup awarded by the Turton Agricultural Society in Lancashire and his boyhood coin collection.



**BBC Flog It!**



We are entertained by the plethora of activity, at certain points on our chair trail, we are close to items being assessed or filmed - a beautiful large embossed silver mirror; a Chinese plate with a chip in it, a small silver item, that Mark Stacey gets very excited about and a magnificent large pot with three handles. We watch them roll out a very early Subbuteo game and carefully set up all the players. We take part in the great Suthell (sic) vs Southwell



Debate with Paul Martin, who wants to know how we pronounce it. Later Sara and I are filmed as he listens to why I hate my painting and expresses a certain appreciation of it. Not that he can see much through the bubblewrap!



Finally, after six hours, it's our turn!

Expert Aaron Dean tells us it's his first Flog it – ours too. He is interested in Sara's magazines, circa 1960, and more interested in her buttons, which are slightly more valuable.

Anthony's books are worth sending to auction for the charity, but his signed programmes etc, rather more difficult to sell.

Philip's painting and coin collection were not valuable and he was advised to donate his trophy to a museum.



But what about Pauline, I hear you ask. Her marine chronometer was much admired and she was taken away for filming with Michael Baggott. Sara and I, on our way out, could see her on the crew monitor. She went off to auction and we must all wait till the Autumn for the programme and the results.

And my own unloved masterpiece? lugged around the Minster, the butt of a few jokes and I certainly should have taken something smaller! – was exactly as I thought – thirty quid on E-Bay, if I'm lucky. But it was a fun day out for a record thirteen hundred of us and cost absolutely nothing!

**Carol Wright U3A member**

## Guitar Group.

The Guitar Group was almost the first Group to start after the formation of Ravenshead U3A, our first session being in January 2012. The Group has around twelve members and meets for two hours on the first and third Thursday mornings of each month in St Peter's Church Lounge.



Some of the guitar group practising carols

We try to keep the pure theory to a minimum and certainly don't do horrible things like scales! Most of the sessions are 'song-based' and members are learning the techniques of accompanying songs by use of chords. We have introduced different styles for this such as strumming and fingerpicking. Everything we do is based on the 'acoustic guitar' i.e. no electrics or amplifiers. The exception is that one of our members, Geoff Tootell, who has played for many years in different bands, brings his equipment along and gives us a rendition each session of a solo piece, often from The Shadows.

We cover a wide range of popular/folk music with songs, for example, from The Beatles, Tom Paxton, Simon and Garfunkel, Bob Dylan, Donovan, U2, the Drifters, Eric Clapton as well as some traditional songs and carols. The thing about learning something like guitar is that there is a horrible bit called 'practice' involved.

It's also a challenge for older, stiffer fingers and wrists. Oh to be young again! I would be rich if I had 50p for every cry of 'no way!', or 'I'll never do that' (and some muttering with more choice words included!). But, step by step members get there; some steps are just a bit steeper.

One of the Group members, Charles Clarkson, says "For years I have listened to the radio, seen groups performing on TV and I have a large music collection. I've always wanted to play and be part of the magic that I have enjoyed so much. The U3A Guitar Group has enabled me to do this, although those that hear me play may not fully agree! There's no better fun out there than our Thursday morning sessions".

A nice development in the Group is that activities are not now just restricted to the fortnightly sessions. Many members now meet on the Thursdays 'in-between' for an informal 'jam' session at someone's house. We have also had various members going to local folk clubs and more formal concerts at Newark and Chesterfield. We even had two members giving a public performance at a carol concert just before Christmas! A recent new member, Sean Farrell, says "The lessons with the Group are key to improving my guitar playing skills. There is good friendship in what we are doing together which makes for a pleasant atmosphere." The Group thinks however that Britain's Got Talent is still a bit far away.

## **John Bewick Guitar Group leader**

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### **CHESS AND BACKGAMMON**

The chess and backgammon group meets at 10am on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday each month at the home of Jan and Alex Fraser at 37 Chapel Lane or The House of Fraser as the sign on the door says.

It is easy to find – it is the last house on the left as you come up from Main Road or alternatively the first house on the right if you come up from the Sherwood Ranger.

I was rather apprehensive as I had not played chess since leaving school a few years ago (well it only seems like a few years!).

I need not have worried as, apart from Alex, all the other players are in the same situation. I have been going regularly for about a year and have had some cracking games.

I have only ever played backgammon a few times many years ago but I have been learning how to play the against the computer and will try that out in the near future.

**Gordon Cleugh U3A member (new members welcome!)**





## Lord Byron..... His Life

*I came to live in Ravenshead in 2006 in retirement after a life time spent mainly in teaching and lecturing. Realising that I knew very little about Newstead Abbey, Lord Byron or his poetry I thought it would be courteous to my new neighbours to find out more. What began out of curiosity and a sense of obligation soon became a source of literary and historical delight. DJM*

"Mad, bad and dangerous to know" was the famously dismissive verdict on Byron's life made by one of his multiple mistresses, Lady Caroline Lamb. What she thought about his poetry has not been recorded. It is a legacy that has persisted for much of two centuries: a wicked life and neglected poet. The purpose of this short article is not to defend the self-indulgence of Lord Byron or, to give him his full name and title, Lord George Gordon Byron 6th Baron of Newstead and Rochdale, but to offer a more balanced summary of a complex and adventurous life, which began in humble circumstances in a lodging house in London on 22nd January 1788 and ended thirty six years later on 19th April 1824 while fighting for the cause of Greek independence. To avoid undue chronology I have selected just a few of the principal threads of which that life was woven. Thus, there was Byron the social celebrity who after unexpectedly inheriting a baronetcy from his grand-uncle at the age of ten and after education at Harrow School followed by Cambridge University began to live the life of a young aristocrat in pursuit of pleasure. By his early twenties he was a familiar presence in the Regency salons of London and the great houses of rural England. Good looking, witty, charming and a lord of the realm with the prospect of a glittering career that might reach to the peak of government he was on the guest list of many hostesses, especially those of a Whig political persuasion. At the age of 24 he took his seat in the House of Lords where he made two powerful speeches, the first in 1812 attacking a government bill which sought to impose the death penalty on rioting frame-breakers in Nottinghamshire and the second in April of the same year in defence of the civil rights of Roman Catholics. These two speeches confirmed his position on the liberal side of the political spectrum. However, in spite of this promising start, Byron decided against pursuing a career within the British Parliament. His political life moved to Europe, where his passionate commitment to the cause of freedom from despotic government, whether by monarchs, emperors or Ottoman sultans, brought him actively into the liberation movements then gathering pace after the defeat of Napoleon. Among these radicals he became an icon of agitation for change. From 1821-24 he put his money (having sold Newstead Abbey at a good price) and his life on the line to support the Greek War of

Independence from 300 years of Ottoman rule. There at Missolonghi in western Greece while training a force of mercenaries preparing to attack a Turkish stronghold he died, sadly not on the field of battle but as the result of a fever which neither his personal doctor nor his own strong constitution could overcome. Though he did not survive to see the victory which came in 1827 when the Turkish navy was cornered and destroyed in the Battle of Navarino Bay, his status as a hero of Greek freedom was firmly established and continues to this day.

Behind the public face Byron led a convoluted personal life. Fond of pretty boys, particularly in social contexts where this was not frowned upon, he was even more fond of pretty women, preferably married. The social status of his mistresses mattered not a jot to him: they ranged from English countesses to a baker's wife in Venice. He also experienced disastrous failure in his only marriage (1815-16). His wife Anabella Millbanke left him after one year, taking their five weeks old daughter Ada with her. The reasons for their separation were never made public, but there was much bitterness. Byron accepted a large share of responsibility, the doors of good society began to close and he went into voluntary exile in Europe, never to return alive. He also had a close relationship with his half-sister, Augusta Leigh ; they shared the same father, a profligate army captain who married twice and left both wives in dire financial straits. In several poems Byron's feelings for Augusta are set out in passionate and tender terms. It is clear that when he felt obliged to leave England he missed her deeply. Eventually, however, he found his only enduring relationship with the young Italian Contessa Theresa Guiccioli, already married to a man twice her age and daughter of the revolutionary leader Count Gamba.

Strong and fearless physically, though hampered in movement by a deformity of the right foot, he was an experienced horseman, an accomplished boxer and an outstanding swimmer who swam across the river Tagus at Lisbon, across the Bosphorus at Istanbul and won several swimming races in Venice. After his death his body was brought back to England and, being denied burial in Westminster Abbey in spite of the fame his poetry had by then attained, he was laid to rest in the family vault in Hucknall Parish Church.

Against this background of personal and public achievement and vicissitude Byron had developed the one great aptitude for which he most deserves still to be celebrated -- his poetry, often written late at night after a day of activity and with remarkable fluency. He put so much of himself into it that some knowledge of his life and times is a desirable prelude to reading and enjoying it.

**David Morton U3A member**

RAVENSHEAD U3A – INTEREST GROUPS

Group Name	Leader	Phone	Meeting Day and Time	Location	Full
Angling	Lionel Castle		Please ring for details		No
Art (Watercolour)	Audrey Leech		3 <sup>rd</sup> Monday 9.30 – 12.00	St. Peter's Church Lounge	No
Art Gallery/Museum	Anthony Gordon		Various visits arranged	Please contact for details	No
Bird watching	Peter York		Usually once a month	Please contact for details	No
Bridge	Cicely James		Not running at present	Please contact for details	No
Chess and Backgammon	Jan Fraser		1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Mon 10.00-12.00	Home	No
Computing (Beginners)	Alan Paul Chris Dean		Wednesday 10.00	Alan Paul's House	No
Computing (Intermediate)	Alan Paul Chris Dean		Monday 10.00	Alan Paul's House	No
Craft workshops	Kate Asquith		1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Wed 10.00-12.00 start again in September	Brammer Room	No
Current Affairs	Carol Wright		3 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesday 2.00 -3.30	Brammer Room	No
Family History	Barbara Jukes Phillip Jones		Postponed until September	For more information - see website	No
Folk Dancing	Mike and Mary Adams		2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Mon 2pm - 4pm	Ravenshead Village Hall	No
French Beginners	Jill Rogers		Wednesday 10.00 – 12.00	Please telephone for details	No
French Conversation	Brian Machin		1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Mon 10.00-11.30.	Please telephone for details	Full
French Conversation 2	Anick Spence		1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Mon 14.00–16.00	Anick's house	No
Guitar	John Bewick		1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Thur 10.15 -11.45	Ravenshead Church Lounge	No
Knitting and Crochet	Anne Lovegrove Liz Corner		2pm – 4pm Friday. Please ring for dates	Brammer Room, Village Hall	No
Local History	Phillip Jones		2pm – 4pm 2 <sup>nd</sup> Tuesday	Kighill Farm	No
Luncheon Club	Chris Dean Sue Owen			Please ring for details	No
Mah Jong	Judy Bragg		1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesday 1.30-3.30	Brammer Room, Village Hall	No

Peter York									
Music Appreciation 1	Joan Harvey		2 <sup>nd</sup> Tuesday 2.00 – 4.00	Members' Homes	Full				
Music Appreciation 2			Not running at present						
Music Appreciation 3	Fay Garrison		3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesday 1.30 – 3.00	Members' Homes	No				
Occasional Visits	Various			Please see website, U3A4U or info at monthly meeting					
Pastels	Wanda Parker		Weekly	Please ring for details	No				
Photography	Dennis Harvey Glynn Payze		Last Wed at 2pm	Brammer Room	No				
Play Reading Group	Chris Dean		2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday 2pm	Please ring for details	No				
Reading Group 1	Carol Payze		3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesday 2pm	Carol's house	Full				
Reading Group 2	Pat Brown		3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesday 2.30pm	Members' Home	Full				
Scrabble, Rumikubs and Cribbage	Susanne Smith Leslie & Rhoda Newey		3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesday 10am and 1 <sup>st</sup> Tuesday 7.30-9.30	Brammer Room, Village Hall	No				
Strollers	John West		Postponed until Spring	For more info see website	No				
Thursday Walks	Paul and Margaret Craddock		2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Thursday - 1.30 prompt start.	Details on the website or contact Paul and Margaret	No				
Wine Group 1	Lionel Castle		3 <sup>rd</sup> Friday	Members' homes	Full				
Wine Group 2	Brenda Beale		1 <sup>st</sup> Tuesday	Members' homes	Full				
Wine Group 3	Michael Neville		2 <sup>nd</sup> Monday	Members' homes	Full				
Wine Group 4	Judy Vaughan		3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesday	Members' homes	Full				
Wine Group 5	Sue Tidbury		1 <sup>st</sup> Wednesday	Members' homes	Full				
Yoga 1 (Beginners)	Jean Cooke		Wkly 1.30-3.00 Wed	Village Hall	Full				
Yoga 2	Bob Ford		Wkly 2.00-3.30 Tuesday	Village Hall	No				
Yoga Group 3	Bob Ford		Wkly 10.00-11.30 Friday.	Village Hall	No				

*If you are interested in joining any of the above Groups but they are showing as full, please contact the Group Leader to ask to be put on a waiting list. You will then be contacted once a place becomes available or there are enough people to form a further Group.*

# Ravenshead U3A trip to Chatsworth.

## 5th December 2013

What a hardy band of travellers we were, setting off in the coach despite dire warnings of freezing temperatures, gales and foul weather to discover the magic of Narnia at Chatsworth. Though the familiar journey seemed long and a little tiresome, the sight of the beautiful house drawing nearer and nearer was, as always, quite breathtaking. Our coach was ushered into a specially prepared area right outside the house entrance, cordoned off from the hoi polloi by white plastic fencing, and we were kindly greeted by a member of staff telling us we had a little time to explore the exterior before our group would be allowed admittance into the house.

It was evident from my very first foot outside the coach that the promised gale, indeed hurricane, was beginning to gain momentum, but unperturbed (and as is my custom), I decided to inspect the nearest ladies lavatory to see that all was in order. I was transported back to my rural childhood when in order to get to the toilet I had to wade knee deep in swirling leaves that seemed as determined as I was to get inside the building.

I linked arms with my husband, romantic of course, but totally necessary too as I would have blown over if not, and we decided the best course of action was to go with the wind – uphill – to the Carriage House restaurant in The Stables. We weren't on our own, as that unruly coach load of leaves also decided to swoosh uphill and rather impolitely overtook us to get there first. There were men in suits (may have been anoraks) looking nervously around and moving moveable furniture and flying objects to safe havens. They then decided that access through the front gates of the Stable Block was dangerous, and that particular wind facing entrance was closed.

At the appointed time our group started our magical journey into the house. Suitcases and train stations have always conjured up excitement and anticipation and it was through this scene, accompanied by music from the era playing somewhere on a wireless, we entered the North Entrance Hall. We stepped



through wardrobe doors, surrounded by furs to enter the icy Narnian forest – then in complete contrast, into the lovely cosiness of Mr. Tumnus’s house (the Oak Room) where I could have happily stayed and had a cup of tea. The tide of sparkly eyed visitors pushed us ever forward to the Painted Hall - sorry, I mean the Palace of the White Queen – which had been stunningly decorated with a forest of snowy fir trees, laden with thousands of baubles in ice blue and white. The White Queen herself haughtily ascended the grand staircase. Finally, we found Aslan, tied with ropes, his breathing laboured (yes, he really was breathing). The cameras were clicking all around us and we took several ourselves. It was magnificent, quite magnificent.

We were then probably one of the last couples to be able to go out into the garden as it was deemed too dangerous due to the terrible weather conditions, and the men in suits “closed” it. We saw branches breaking off trees, glass falling from the greenhouses, and something I’ve never seen before – the 300 year old cascade was flowing UPWARDS. The gravity fed Emperor Fountain tried valiantly to remain vertical, but kept shooting off at 90 degrees to wet the unwary. Common sense prevailed, and we were all back at the coach corral around half an hour early, though by this time the white plastic fencing was quite exhausted and lay strewn all around. All in all we’d had a fantastic day out packed with nostalgia, magic and wonder at the creative talent that had produced such a very special experience.

**Angela Senior**

**Ravenshead U3A member**

Photos by Angela Senior and Terry Moore



John and Angela crowned King and Queen of Narnia (for the afternoon!)

## Some thoughts about retirement !!!

**Question:** How many days in a week?

**Answer:** 6 Saturdays, 1 Sunday

**Question:** When is a retired person's bedtime?

**Answer:** Three hours after he falls asleep on the couch.

**Question:** How many retired people does it take to change a light bulb?

**Answer:** Only one, but it might take all day.



**Question:** Among retired men what is considered formal attire?

**Answer:** Tied shoes.

**Question:** Why do retired people count pennies?

**Answer:** They are the only ones who have the time.

**Question:** What is the common term for a senior who still works and refuses to retire?

**Answer:** Nuts

**Question:** Why are retired people so slow to clean out the attic or garage?

**Answer:** They know that as soon as they do, one of their adult kids will want to store stuff there. Or move back in there . . .

**Question:** What does a retired person call a long lunch?

**Answer:** Normal.

**Question:** What's the biggest advantage of going back to school after retirement?

**Answer:** If you cut classes, no one calls your parents.

**Question:** What do retired people do all week?

**Answer:** Monday through Friday, NOTHING..... Saturday and Sunday, rest.

**Submitted by Chris Dean, Ravenshead U3A membership secretary**

*(Though if you're in the U3A I guess the answer to the last question might be "Have loads of new interests and opportunities to meet and make new friends", prompting the oft-quoted sentence "I don't know how I ever had the time to go to work!" Editor.)*



# My introduction to Folk Dancing



(Author unknown -  
with a few altera-  
tions by JM)



Our resident band the " Jolly Beggars"

I went in very slowly feeling shy and oh so small  
The room was full of strangers and they all seemed ten feet tall

So I sat down rather coyly on a chair beside the door  
But they said "You'll have to dance, you know, that's what you've come here for"

So, I said I didn't know it, but they said they'd pull me through  
And then the music started - and my troubles started too  
They pushed me and they pulled me and they whispered "Right-hand star"  
Then they said, "Change with your partners", then hissed "Stay where you are !"

I listened to the music but I couldn't get the beat  
(My mother should have told me I was born with two left feet)  
And they spoke a foreign language which I found awful strange  
Things like – up a double, siding and hey and cast and change.

And then the man in charge of us (whose name I just forget)  
Seemed to think that I was drunk and shouted "Reel across the set"  
Well - I've always been teetotal so I didn't like it quite  
Still - the other ladies did it, so it must have been alright.

And talking about ladies, well some of them just then  
Put these blue bands around them which apparently makes them men!  
They change their sex from dance to dance, my corners always alter  
It's really not surprising I occasionally falter.

And then the man beside me - in the middle of the dance  
Said "You ought to be improper" Well, I froze him with a glance  
There wasn't time to answer, though I could have said a lot  
For I may not know the dances, but I hope I know what's what

Then they said "Don't look so worried, cheer up, relax, let's go  
So I danced with gay abandon - right on my partner's toe  
But they prodded me and swung me and hauled me back in line  
Though they smiled on me quite kindly and said "You're doing fine"

Well, I'd laddered both my nylons and my right leg had gone lame  
Still, I gave a ghastly smile and said "I'm awfully glad I came  
They said "This keeps you fit, you know and you'll soon be right as rain"  
And do you know, it was such fun I'll be folk dancing again!

### **Submitted by Vicky Devlin U3A member**

(The folk group meets 2.p.m. 2nd and 4th Mondays in the Village Hall)

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## **Visit to Hodsock Priory – February 2014**



On a rather grey morning 13 intrepid members plus the mini bus driver and his wife (Mike and Jackie Salmon) set off for Hodsock Priory. The further north we got the more it rained and it was pretty wet when we arrived.

We were greeted by George Buchanan (the son of the current owner) and escorted to a lovely heated marquee where coffee awaited. Some of us succumbed to the smell of bacon rolls, no names mentioned! The staff were really welcoming and helpful and supplied us with big umbrellas even though we had all gone prepared in wet weather gear and boots/wellies.

We walked through the wood where there was a good display of snowdrops and the rain did stop so that by the time we reached the gardens we could take the time to look at them in detail. There were aconites, snowdrops, hellebores, tiny frilly narcissi, some wonderful tiny irises and much more. We then all met up back at the marquee for lunch before wandering round the gift area and plant sales where quite a few purchases were made. Our driver left us to warm the bus before we all got back on and we were back in Ravenshead with everyone delivered to their doors by mid afternoon. All in all not a bad day out despite the weather!

### **Judy Walker U3A member**

## U3A visit to Thoresby Hall January 2014

A visit by Terry Whitehead at our November meeting sparked a note for Phil and me, and others from the Ravenshead U3A group, as it had always been on my bucket list to go to a Warner's, so a wish was about to come true, as it was to go to Thoresby Hall with the U3a for 4 days at the end of January. Our tallies paid and cases packed with probably more than was usually taken for a week's holiday, we duly set off up the A614 to Thoresby Hall. On arrival, along with 200+ other U3A members, we left our cases (duly labelled) with the porters and went off to explore.



The reception was overcrowded and noisy but coping well with the influx of visitors. In the meantime we found the Pavilion (very good for a snack and cup of tea). The Great Hall was full of history, the library had over 5000 books all of which were available to borrow during our stay, the Games Room, Blue Room restaurant, not to mention the Dining Room, Spa with swimming pool, stairs, twisting corridors and more beautiful rooms were all ours to explore.



The rooms were of a standard, deluxe, historical or suite persuasion all of which had been pre-booked. All of which were delightful with comfortable beds, well-appointed and serviced daily. Meal times were set between 8am and 10am for breakfast and 6-8pm for our evening meal. We sat with different people for every meal and met many U3A members from different groups. The food selection was varied and plentiful, and the service was excellent, not to mention the fact that we found out much about other U3A groups.



Daily activities included talks about the house and its family and restoration history, quizzes, archery, rifle shooting, walks, quiet areas, spa, swimming and of course the Courtyard for shopping and a coffee or soup. One member ran a Creative Writing morning and many others went by car to local towns or even into Nottingham.

The evening entertainment was, in our opinion, very good, although this was not always reflected in the comments by all the guests!! There was dancing, with many couples taking to the well-sprung floor, quizzes, and then a show by the resident entertainments team, or an imported act.

All in all we had a wonderful time in lovely surroundings, great value for money, and an excellent opportunity to meet like-minded U3A members from other groups.

## Kate and Phil Asquith U3A members

### Notice Board

Do you have an interest that you would like to share with other members? You can use this notice board to post messages.

- **Singing for Fun:** Graham Jukes is willing to organise this group but needs a pianist. Any volunteers?
- Is anyone interested in a **pottery/clay group**? I have a workshop but would need a kiln or access to one! Please

contact

*Contact the named person or Val Ford / Judith Moore*

## Think outside the box!

### Answers :

1. They were not playing each other.
2. The other half were boys as well (i.e. they were all boys).
3. His horse was called "Friday".
4. They were the same person. (Winston Churchill).
5. 10p and 1p ( Only one of them is **not** a penny the other one **is** a penny).

## Dates for Your Diary

(check website for latest information)

<b>Monthly Meetings</b>	(10.00 a.m. St. Peter's Church, Ravenshead)
Tue May 13th 2014	My Life with the Colonel. Speaker: Jennie Storr
Tue Jun 10th 2014	AGM Meeting
Tue Jul 8th 2014	'Death in the clouds' The mysterious disappearance of Glenn Miller. Speaker: Captain Geoff Dyer.
Tue Aug 12th 2014	'Oprah Winfrey touched my Elbow' Amusing tales from an ex showbiz journalist. Speaker: Graham Keal

<b>Social Events</b>	(Please note change of venue in June due to commencement of building works on the church hall)
Wed Apr 16th 2014	Coffee and Conversation, St Peter's Church Hall, commencing 10am.
Mon May 19th 2014	Coffee and Conversation, St Peter's Church Hall, commencing 10am.
Mon Jun 16th 2014	Coffee and Conversation, <b>The Church Lounge</b> , commencing 10am.
Mon Jul 21st 2014	Coffee and Conversation, <b>The Church Lounge</b> , commencing 10am.
Various dates	<b>Luncheon Club</b> ( see website for details.)

<b>Occasional Visits</b>	<i>Details on website occasional visits page.</i>
Tue Apr 29th — 1st May 2014	Visit to Brighton and Worthing
Tue May 20th 2014	National Physics Laboratory
Sat Jun 14th 2014	Good Food and Garden Show at the NEC
Mon Jun 30th 2014	York. Guided walking tour
	<b>advanced notice</b>
Thu Nov 27th 2014	Visit to Christmas Good Food show at the NEC
May (TBA) <b>2015</b>	Cruise on River Severn from Gloucester
Wed Jul 22nd <b>2015</b>	Highclere Castle