

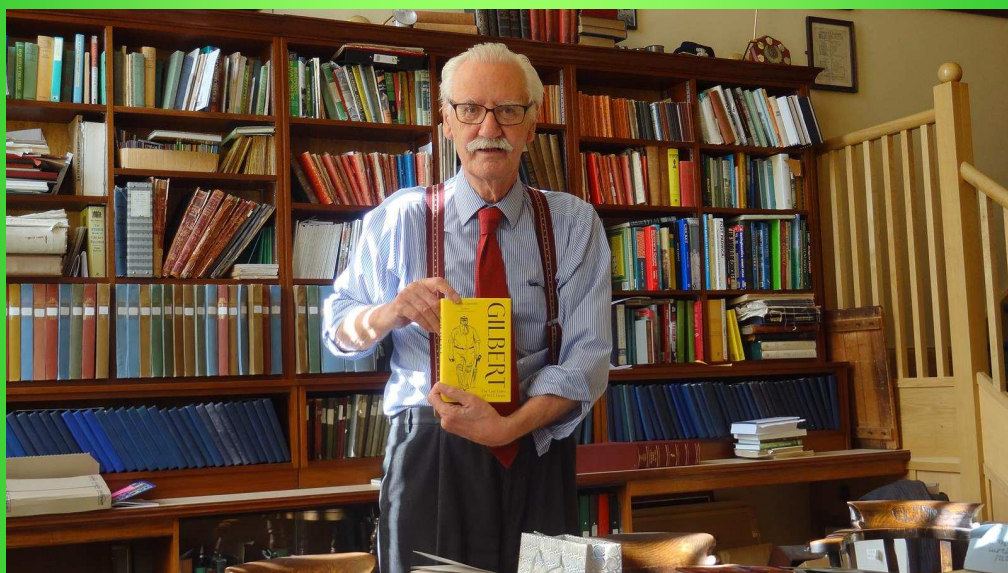
Ravenshead U3A Magazine



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE



Ravenshead



Peter Wynne-Thomas, pictured in the library of Trent Bridge cricket ground during a tour of the ground and library by the Ravenshead U3A reading group.

Issue No 11: Summer 2016

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Welcome from the editor

The contributions for this issue reflect the number and variety of visits which our members have had a chance to participate in. Whether they are organised by groups or are open to the full membership it is obvious that they are enjoyed and appreciated by all. Elsewhere the spotlight is on the Garden Group, Philip Jones continues his history of Newstead Abbey gardens and we learn why Wanda Parker is passionate about pastels.

As you receive this magazine at the August meeting Terry and I will be in Tokyo visiting our son and his family including two very lively identical twin boys who are almost three years old.

On our return we will be beginning our search for content for the winter magazine! We are looking as usual for a range of articles representing the many talents of our members! Please submit your articles, preferably in word processed form to the editor at xxxxxxxxxxxx

Deadline date for the next edition: 31st October 2016

Judith Moore (editor) Philip Jones, David Morton (proof readers)

Terry Moore (desktop publishing)

Ravenshead U3A Committee

Judith Moore	Chair
Lesley Green	Vice-Chair
Alan Wilson	Treasurer
Maria Gabrielczyk	Business Secretary
Sue Owen	Membership Secretary
Phil Asquith	Groups Coordinator
Val Ford,	Committee Member
Diane Rumsey	Committee Member
Ken White	Committee Member
Steve Hargreaves	Committee Member
Alan Paul	Committee Member and Web Editor.
Terry Moore	Committee Member, Publications and cloud storage

Contact Ravenshead U3A committee members via the [CONTACT](#) page of our website .

Or Freephone: 0300 030 2990

Thoughts from the Chair

On June 14th our A.G.M. was attended by 135 members. I was pleased to give the Trustees' Report, the main points of which are summarised below.

- Our membership now stands at 388 including associate members who attend other local U3As. We have now formally removed our catchment boundaries and welcome members from around the region.
- Our financial situation is healthy and as announced at last year's A.G.M. we have been able to lower the subscription charge for year 2016-17 to £15.
- U3A member Ralph Chapman was approved as an independent examiner for the accounts.
- This year sees the retirement of five committee members plus one co-opted member: Keith Adams, who retires as Treasurer, Ivan McNulty as Membership Secretary, Kate Asquith, Speaker Finder, Alan Walker, Visits Coordinator, Mike Salmon, Committee member and Paul Craddock, co-opted member. Four new members join the committee and Val Ford and Alan Paul return. (A full list of committee members can be seen on the opposite page.)
- We continue to add to our list of group activities as several new groups have been proposed and started this year.
- Thanks were given to all who help to make sure our monthly meetings run smoothly alongside a plea for additional volunteers.



Following the formal proceedings we enjoyed a presentation by the photography group before we adjourned to the Centre for refreshments and a chance to see displays and activities organised by some more of our groups.

We can now look forward to another successful year for Ravenshead U3A.

Meet your new committee members on the following page.

Judith Moore, Ravenshead U3A chair

Steve Hargreaves

I was born in Heanor Derbyshire in 1949. I came from a traditional mining family, under no circumstances did my father want me going anywhere near a coal mine.

After leaving secondary school at age 15 I continued my further education at the S.E Derbyshire College of Further Education in Ilkeston where I passed my O levels. I signed on as a Merchant Navy Officer Cadet 1967-1969 and studied for an OND at the South Shields Marine and Tech College. Results didn't quite go to plan and I resigned as an officer cadet and left South Shields to begin work as a junior draughtsman at the Beeston Boiler Company. My interest in engineering and my family background of mining combined in 1970 and opened up an engineering career for me at British Coal North Staffordshire. I graduated at Stafford Polytechnic with a BSC Mech Eng in 1973. 1975 saw me take a promotion opportunity to transfer to North Nottinghamshire where I was promoted to Deputy Production Engineer at Welbeck Colliery.

I served as Parent Governor of Bilsthorpe Infants and Junior school whilst my two sons were students, I enjoy helping to run things. I set up an after school Computer club at my son's junior school, I have been involved in running many clubs e.g. Tenpin Bowling, After School performing arts and charity fund raising events.

I'm the current Group Leader of the Ravenshead Hikers which is now well into its second year. My wife and I are active members of a few of the Ravenshead U3A groups and we've both been made very welcome by a very friendly community.



Ken White

I was born in Nottingham in 1947. After leaving school I took up an apprenticeship in the drawing office at Manlove Alliott and Co. Ltd. in Nottingham. After my education and appropriate experience was complete I moved in 1974 to North Yorkshire with my family to begin a career as a lecturer in Engineering Design. In 1979 I took up a new position in the northwest of England to continue my lecturing work and shortly afterwards formed a Limited Company providing consultancy, training and support in Computer Aided Design, Computerised Management Systems Development and Computer Graphics. I was also a visiting lecturer at the Universities of Manchester, Liverpool, Salford and Central Lancashire. I also took up the position of Northwest Chairman of the Modern Pentathlon Association of GB where the team became one of the strongest in the UK. I was previously a member of the Preston, Lancashire U3A and am currently an active member of both the Ravenshead and Dukeries U3As.



Diane Rumsey

I was born in Hornchurch, Essex, in 1943 and attended Heath Park Secondary Girls' School. All my achievements were in sport and I represented both the school and county in various sports.

On leaving school I worked for May and Baker Pharmaceuticals in Dagenham before I married and had two children, now in their fifties.

I took up fencing in my late twenties and was one of a team of three ladies who won the Essex Open Championship once and took second place for about three years. I have fenced in France, Germany, Holland and, in my fifties, in Austria with the British Veterans.

My career has mostly been in the retail trade as a manager of shoe shops and department stores and as area manager for a London Milliner. Later I changed direction and became a postie which I did for thirteen years until I retired.

I lived for twenty two years in Hartley Wintney in Hampshire where I ran a Wednesday Club for older people. I moved to Ravenshead in 2015 and was introduced to the U3A by my neighbour, David Morton. I have since joined the U3A craft, gardening and weekenders groups. So here I am, jack of all trades and master of none but pleased to help.

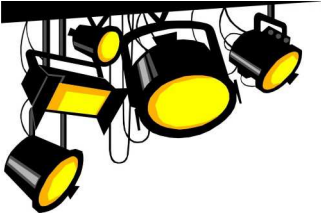


Terry Moore

Born in Wolverhampton, West Midlands in 1951, I eventually moved to London to train as a primary school teacher. This was where I met Judith and after teaching in London for a few years, the cost of living drove us to move to the Mansfield area where Judith's family lived. I taught in primary and middle schools in the area until I took early retirement in 2008. I have been involved in male voice choirs since arriving in Mansfield both as a singer and as a musical director, having finally retired this year.



We moved to Ravenshead in 1985 and our children attended the local schools. I joined the Ravenshead U3A at its inception and have been involved with production of the magazine and other aspects of U3A publicity, attending committee meetings as an invited member. I am a member of the Photography group, Folk and Country Dancing Group and the newly formed Table Tennis group. I also enjoy playing bowls as a fairly new member of the Blidworth Bowls club and spending time with our young grandchildren, two of whom live close in Ravenshead and two far away in Tokyo!



SPOTLIGHT ON 'Garden Group'

I have to confess to you that we members of the Garden Group do not actually get our hands dirty at our meetings and outings! Instead, we are a sociable group, interested in anything horticultural (and the delicious lunches, cakes, coffee etc which usually accompany our get togethers.)

Our designated meeting day in the U3A calendar, is the third Wednesday morning in the month, but we often deviate from this to fit in various outings and events which occur at other times, so please keep an eye on our web site.

During the winter months of 2016, we enjoyed discussion mornings talking about aspects of our gardens, future plans for visits, and having a go at garden themed quizzes.

During February, we visited Hollybeck Nurseries to hear a very interesting Clematis talk (followed by plant shopping and lunch, of course).

Later in the month, we joined the Weekenders Group on a trip to Hodsock Priory to view the magnificent Snowdrop Woods and the plant stall and tea room!





In April, we managed to choose the sunniest day of the month to visit Felley Priory's magnificent daffodil display, beautiful topiary, Spring shrub and bulb borders and the delightful tea rooms for coffee and lunch where we ate outside.

In May, Michael demonstrated container planting and passed on some handy tips which proved very useful to those of us who had been planting containers for years and sometimes hadn't quite been totally successful!



Towards the end of June, we are visiting Stuart Dixon (broadcaster, lecturer and all round expert) at Stoke Bardolph, to view his reputedly magnificent garden (with tea and cakes!)

In mid July, we are booked into the Clumber Walled Garden to see the vegetable, fruits and herbaceous borders followed by lunch at the adjacent Tea House.

In early August, we are joining Ravenshead Flower Arranging Club to visit Wentworth Gardens, and our plans for the rest of that month include coffee and informal viewing of a member's garden, as well as an open garden visit.



From September onwards, we aim to include a garden visit, a quiz evening at Hollybeck Nurseries, and indoor meetings, ending the year with a Christmas outing.

Please get in touch if you would like to join us at any time.

Elizabeth Clarkson, Ravenshead U3A Garden Group Leader

Reading Group visit to Trent Bridge Library.

It was just a chance conversation at reading group among the cricket enthusiasts about the World 20/20 tournament that led us to the home of Nottinghamshire Cricket at Trent Bridge and its world renowned library.



Commencing with a brief tour of the pavilion and the ground, we were able to view some of the Club's collection of cricket bats and photographs of former players. We rang the bell for the start of play and were given an overview of the recent and proposed improvements to the ground.

The library is housed in a converted squash court behind the pavilion, on shelving donated by Boots from its former shops and last year was renamed the Wynne-Thomas Library in honour of the Nottinghamshire Cricket Club's longest serving historian, Peter Wynne-Thomas. Peter is also currently the Club President.

Boasting 16,000 books and in excess of 10,000 other items, including letters, photographs, trophies, and clothing, the library is the second largest of its kind in the world. Started from a collection of books, donated to the club in the 1970s, Peter explained that he had invented his own system of categorising the statistical records, biographies and other works.

Without reference to a single note, he gave us an outline of the history of cricket, both nationally and in Nottinghamshire, from the first written reference in 1598 through to the first Notts. match against Sheffield in 1771. He catalogued the rise of Championship Cricket through the 1800s and the rise of international cricket to the present day, showing us the latest edition of Wisden for 2015.

Peter is also a successful author in his own right, having penned 50 books. Interspersed with the history were anecdotes and viewings of some of the library's oldest books, as well as the work book that is used for school visits to the library during the winter.

The group thanked Peter with the donation of a recent book about W.G. Grace by Charlie Connelly, boosting the library's W.G Grace collection to 17.

Carol Wright, Ravenshead U3A Reading Group Two

(also see photo on front cover. Ed.)

RAVENSHEAD U3A VISIT TO JCB

On Monday 4th April 2016, members of Ravenshead U3A visited the JCB factory in Uttoxeter. Two village buses had been booked for this trip and we left Ravenshead at 10.30 to arrive at JCB in time for lunch. A two course lunch was included in our package and this was served in the VIP visitors centre.



Following our lunch we were taken to their in-house cinema to see a film about the beginnings of JCB and then into their exhibition area that displayed the history of JCB from its inception to the present day. The display included most of JCB products, the original office of Mr JCB (Jack Bamford) and the JCB Dieselmax car which broke the diesel land speed record.



We then visited the shop floor to see how a JCB backhoe loader machine is made. This followed the production from the very beginning to a new machine rolling off the production line. It takes two days to produce a JCB backhoe loader.



JCB is still a family owned and run business and the production facility at Uttoxeter is their global headquarters. All machines are made to order and they can only be purchased through JCB dealers around the world. They employ approx 23,000 people worldwide.

This was a very interesting visit and the whole visitor experience was undertaken in a very professional manner. Our thanks to JCB for making us feel so welcome.

Jackie Salmon, Ravenshead 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	Mary Abbott		2nd Monday 1.30 – 4.00	The Centre	No
Art Gallery/Museum	David Turner		Various visits to be arranged	Please contact for details	No
Bird watching	Peter York		Usually once a month	Please contact for details	No
Canasta	Enid Thomas		2 nd and 4 th Tues 2 – 4pm	Brammer Room	No
Chess and Backgammon	Jan Fraser		1 st & 3 rd Mon 10 -12	Home	No
Computing Beginners	Alan Paul		Closed for the Summer		No
Craft workshops	Kate Asquith		Thursday 10.00-12.00	Please ring for details	No
Creative Writing	Villia Bullock		Friday of the week after the week of the U3A monthly meeting	Members' Homes	No
Current Affairs	Carol Wright		3 rd Wednesday 2 -3.30	Brammer Room	No
Family History	Barbara Jukes		4 th Tuesday 10-12	Brammer Room	Full
Folk Dancing	Mike, Mary Adams		2 nd & 4 th Mon 2 - 4pm	Ravenshead Village Hall	No
French Conversation	Brian Machin		1 st & 3 rd Mon 10.00-11.30.	Please telephone for details	Full
French Conversation 2	Anick Spence		1 st & 3 rd Mon 2 – 4pm	Anick's house	No
Gardening	Elizabeth Clarkson		Please ring for details		No
Grumpy Old Men	Geoff Rogers		Meeting once a month	Please ring for information	No
Guitar	John Bewick		1 st & 3 rd Thursday 10.00 -12.00	Ravenshead Church Lounge	Full
Hikers (5-8 miles)	Steve Hargreaves		1 st & 3rd Wednesday	Please ring for details	No
Knitting and Crochet	Anne Lovegrove Liz Corner		2pm – 4pm 3rd Friday June to August	Brammer Room, Village Hall	No
Latin	David Morton		2 nd & 4 th Wed 9.30 to 12.00	The Centre	Full
Local History	Philip Jones		2pm – 4pm 2 nd Tuesday	Kighill Farm	No
Luncheon Club	Chris Dean			Please ring for details	No
Mah Jong	Anne Eldridge Jennifer Philby		1 st & 3 rd Tuesday 1.30-3.30	Brammer Room, Village Hall	No
Music Appreciation 1	Joan Harvey		2 nd Tuesday 2.00 – 4.00	Members' Homes	Full
Music Appreciation 3	David Turner		3 rd Tuesday 1.30 – 3.00	Members' Homes	No
Occasional Visits	Various			Please see website, U3A4U or info at monthly meeting	
Pastels	Wanda Parker		Gp 1 Wed.10.00 – 12.00 Gp 2 Fri. 10.00 – 12.00	Please ring for details	Full No
Photography	Dennis Harvey Glynne Payze		Last Wed at 2pm	Brammer Room	Full
Play Reading Group	Alan Kirkham		Wednesday after U3A monthly meeting	Please ring for details	Full
Reading Group 1	Carol Payze		3 rd Tuesday 2pm	Carol's house	No

Reading Group 2	Pat Brown		3 rd Tuesday 2.30pm	Members' Home	Full
Science and Technology	Alan Paul Janet Castle		1 st Friday in month	The Centre	No
Scrabble, Rumikubs and Cribbage	Susanne Smith Leslie & Rhoda Newey		3 rd Tuesday 10am 1 st Tuesday 7.30pm-9.30pm	Brammer Room	No
Singing for Fun	Graham Jukes		Last Thursday in the month 10.00 -11.30	Members' homes	No
Spanish	Joyce Capps		2 nd and 4 th Mondays at 11am	Starting September during school terms – venue to be advised	No
Table Tennis	John Clay		2pm-3pm 1 st & 3 rd Monday	Cornwater Leisure Centre	Full
Thursday Walks	Paul and Margaret Craddock		2 nd & 4 th Thursday - 1.30 prompt start.	Details on the website or contact Paul and Margaret	No
Weekenders	Sue Owen Pat Van Grondelle Chris Munton		Various events and visits	Please ring for information	No
Wine Group 1	Lionel Castle		3 rd Friday	Members' homes	Full
Wine Group 2	Brenda Beale		3rd Tuesday	Members' homes	Full
Wine Group 3	Michael Neville		2 nd Monday	Members' homes	Full
Wine Group 4	Judy Vaughan		3 rd Tuesday	Members' homes	Full
Wine Group 5	Sue Tidbury		1 st Wednesday	Members' homes	Full
Yoga Group 2	Bob Ford		Wkly 2.00–3.30 Tuesday	The Centre at St Peters	No
Yoga Group 3	Bob Ford		Wkly 10.00–11.30 Friday.	The Centre at St Peters	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.

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.

If you are interested in joining a wood carving group contact Peter Baker on xxxxxxxx

Peter is also organising a visit to Bakewell to the National Bird Carving Championship (see back cover)

To post a message contact the Editor!

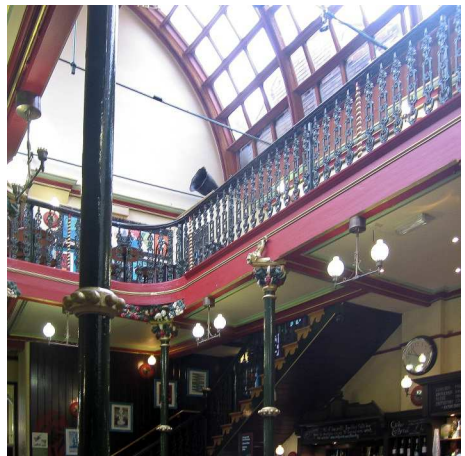
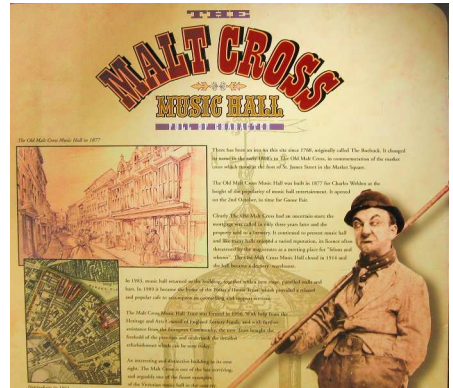
The Malt Cross.

The visit to the Malt Cross by the Local History Group on the 22nd March was organised by Gordon Cleugh, one of our U3A members. Malt Cross is situated on St. James Street, Nottingham. We'd decided to travel to Nottingham by public transport because of parking restrictions in the city centre. Our arranged meeting time was 10.50 for a tour starting at 11am.

We were met by two very knowledgeable guides who gave us a run down on the history of the building, its uses and current status.

The building was formerly an inn called The Roebuck [now the name of the pub opposite]. It was bought by Mr Charles Weldon in 1877, with borrowed money. A music hall was its intended use with grand plans for a skating rink. A music hall could sell alcohol and smoking was permitted, whereas this was prohibited in a theatre. Edwin Hill was employed as architect and he completed alterations in six months, in preparation for the start of Goose Fair, which was then held in Market Square. Plans had been submitted and rejected numerous times before the go-ahead. Malt Cross got its name from a monument originally in the Market Square, which was a meeting place where various preachers expounded their teachings. In 1806 the site of the original monument and a pump was cleared.

The Malt Cross was opened on 2nd October 1877. It has a beautiful glazed arched roof, built of laminated timber instead of cast iron and has stood the test of time. Charles Weldon only managed the



music hall until 1880 when the mortgage of £5,500 was foreclosed. It then had frequent changes of management. In 1911 the management was taken over by a Sam Torr, who was originally from Beeston. He had a very popular act prior to this where he used a dummy as a prop and it seemed as if the dummy was carrying him



around, as he sang and danced. "Daddy-O" was his signature song. There's a placard detailing his history at the top of the stairs leading down to the basement and caves underneath the music hall. Unfortunately the standards slipped, and the establishment was shut by magistrates in 1914, because it had become "a den of felons and whores".



It passed to drapers Chapman and Watson in 1918, and was used as a warehouse until the late 1970s. It was bought by Purdy and Klein in 1981 to use as a music hall and opened in 1983. The basement was let to Trattoria Conti, an Italian Restaurant. In 1989 the lease was purchased by The Potter's House Trust, a charity who renamed it "Potter's House", and changed it into a coffee shop and a place to provide aid and counselling to needy people. They succeeded in getting funding in 1997 and in 1998 it reopened as a variety venue with live music, theatre and comedy.

In 2003 the Malt Cross was set up by a consortium of city centre churches, St John's College and University Chaplains. The Street Pastors and Safe Space Projects have been here since 2010. Lottery funding has helped in restoration of this old establishment along with volunteers. The original staircase was uncovered during restoration, the old basement has been opened up, with original cast iron columns from the ground floor. A Victorian safe has been found, original flooring, and much more. It was reopened on 29th October 2014, offering reasonably priced guided tours of the whole building, basement and cave.

Ivan McNulty, Ravenshead U3A member

Passionate about Pastels

I have loved drawing and painting all my life. Drawing came easily and naturally to me and I was the one who would draw on the classroom blackboard for various events and topics, painting murals in coloured chalks to illustrate school projects.



Subsequently, I was accepted to go to Mansfield School of Art, but my headmaster, bless him, had other ideas. I did the sciences and ended up with a career in nursing in the operating theatres. Don't get me wrong, I loved every minute of it and never regretted it, but alongside this there was always my art. I am proud to say that I had a lot of support from my colleagues, doctors and surgeons that I worked with. I sold a lot of paintings of wives, children, pets, houses and landscapes and a lot of these have gone to far flung places in the world. The coffee room *cum* rest room was my gallery and I feel privileged that I was allowed to use it .

I have been a member of the Mansfield Society of Artists for the past 20 years, although nowadays I am not able to participate fully in the Saturday morning workshops or summer sketching venues due to a disability which necessitates my being confined to a wheelchair. However, I am still an active member and submit paintings for exhibition.

The wheelchair has not stopped me painting, Renoir did it, so if it was good enough for him, it's good enough for me. Seven months in a hospital bed and then learning to adapt to a life in a wheelchair for the last eight years has not dampened my enthusiasm, in fact it has enhanced it.

With the help from my wonderful husband, we set up a room and facilities at home and now, since joining the U3A, I am happy to say that I have found some lovely members who are willing to share my passion and the art room.

From the outset of the U3A in Spring 2013 we have had a core membership of 7, a small number, but it is only limited due to the space available which is the art room. We have two sessions per week on Wednesday and Friday from 10 am to noon. We can accommodate 4 per session and due to the members' other activities, very often there is a space, so any members wishing to "have a go" just give me a call .

The present pastel group members are so enthusiastic, they are inspirational to me and each other which shows in their work. Some cracking paintings have emerged and now

you can view the latest in an ongoing gallery in the corridor of the Centre at St. Peter's. Mary Abbott is the "hanging officer" and she cajoles us into showing them off. I paint in all mediums and all subjects but love pastels the most.

As all artists, amateur and professional, we like to experiment, try new things, push boundaries and feed our need in our search for knowledge.

In the art world there are so many different mediums, papers, colours and ways of application, each to suit whatever talent and capability we have within us.

One day whilst on holiday in Keilder Forest, Northumberland, we called at the Unison pastel factory for a "nosey". We were welcomed and shown round. The rooms were packed with fat fingers of pastel of every conceivable hue. I was mesmerised. Pure intense pigments and I was hooked on pastel. So next came experimenting with different papers and I found that my style of application of the pastel suits a fine grain sandpaper. I bought marble dust and made my own for a while but then artist, Tim Fisher, came to do a demonstration at the Mansfield Society of Artists and introduced us to the Fisher 400 art paper. That was the one for me. It will take water colour, coloured inks, pen and ink, acrylic and it will still take several layers of pastel.

Pastels are immediate; no drying time, nothing between me and the canvas and no brushes. Colours do not fade, nor do they darken. The Dégas' pastels are as rich now as the day they were created. Pastels can be blended to a smooth effect or provide texture, the colours are vibrant, paintings glow and mistakes can be rectified.

Tips to remember when starting a pastel painting.

Prepare the background colour as the tone / colour will set the mood of your painting.

Work out the composition and focal point.

Transfer your image to the paper.

Think! Colour contrast, complementary colour, cool against warm and light against dark.

Don't fail to plan because you do not plan to fail.

Avoid over blending and rubbing the pastel as this will lose freshness and lead to a dull painting.

Use light pressure and build up layers slowly.

The way you place your strokes of pastel provides texture, shows depth and volume, outlines contours and establishes detail.

Keep the pastel pencils sharp as redrawing is almost always necessary and finally, don't search the box for the right colour, think tone. Every colour has tone and value, light, medium and dark.

Wanda Parker, Ravenshead U3A Pastel Group leader

The Gardens of Newstead Abbey

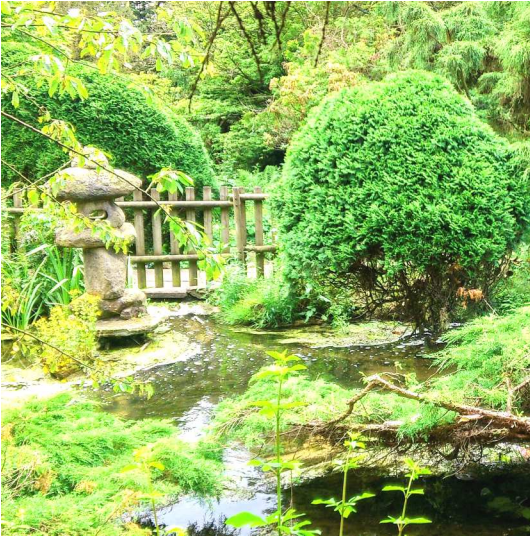
(continued from Issue No. 10)

One of the first garden projects that the Webb family undertook on moving into the Abbey was the establishment of a fernery or fern garden. This was laid out about 1864 by the head gardener, John Anderson, under the supervision of Mrs. Emilia Webb. It was planted with over 400 species of fern (including the royal fern which still survives today) at a time when there was a craze for growing ferns in England. A wall was constructed containing terracotta Watsonian Patent Fern Bricks in which the choicest ferns were displayed. At one end of the fern garden a grotto was constructed using stone from the Abbey ruins coated in cement and lined with Derbyshire tufa.

A few years later a rock garden was established next to the fern garden. This garden was the inspiration of one of the Webb daughters, Geraldine, who based it on the description of a wild garden in the novel *Venetia*, written by Benjamin Disraeli in 1837. Hence it is sometimes known as Venetia's Garden. Again the stones used included many odd fragments from the Abbey ruins. Unfortunately many of the most valuable rock plants that were originally planted were stolen in 1933 by plant hunters coming out by car from Nottingham!

The main herbaceous border, 720 feet long and 15 feet wide, was created alongside the terrace walk on the north side of the Eagle Pond sometime before 1874. It was remodelled about 1876, when it was filled with hardy plants such as kniphofias, delphiniums, Michaelmas daisies, phlox, daylilies and Spanish and English bulbs. About halfway along the terrace there is a semi-circular opening in the wall, from which one originally caught a glimpse of the Forest Pond beyond (this was drained in the 20th century).

Closer to the house is the Spanish Garden designed by Geraldine Webb in 1896. The garden is believed to be on the site of the monastic burial ground and a number of skeletons were found whilst the garden was under construction. The garden is basically a French-style parterre garden with flower beds edged with box, and paths in between originally covered with red gravel. The garden gets its name from a well-head in the centre, which some authorities believe came from Spain, but which was probably made by a local stonemason in Nottingham.



The last and probably the largest of the Webbs' projects was the construction of the Japanese Garden between 1899 and 1914. The intention of the garden was to reproduce in miniature the main features of a Japanese landscape with a waterfall, small ponds, stepping stones, stone lanterns and a tea house. An article in *Country Life* magazine, November 1917, states that the garden was designed for Ethel Webb by a Japanese horticulturalist brought over from Japan. It is more likely that the

garden was designed by Ethel Webb based on the book *Landscape Gardening in Japan* by Josiah Conder, published in 1893. Many of her sketches taken from this book have survived and are in the archives at Newstead Abbey. Most of the plants and probably the stone lanterns were originally imported from Japan.

Space does not permit a detailed description of the kitchen gardens at Newstead – to find out more you will need to come on a garden tour with me! Suffice to say, the kitchen gardens covered about 2.5 acres and contained glasshouses (demolished in 1965) where peaches, grapes, figs, melons and cucumbers were grown, as well as plants to decorate the tables and corridors of the Abbey. The produce from the gardens was regularly entered at local horticultural shows where many top prizes were won.

The Webb family had a long association with the Mansfield Horticultural Society during their occupancy of the Abbey. William Frederick Webb was President of the Society from 1865 until his death in 1899, when he was succeeded in turn by his daughters Geraldine and Ethel. Members of the committee of the Society were frequently invited to visit and have tea at the Abbey, and William Webb usually provided a brace of pheasants and a brace of partridges for the annual supper held for the members of the Society.

Philip E. Jones, Ravenshead U3A Local History Group Leader

Visit to The National Physical Laboratory

I must confess at the outset that physics was never my forte at school, although I do recall being thrilled by the 'Ball and Ring' experiment: so I faced the visit to N.P.L. in Teddington with an open mind mixed with a certain doubt that I would be able to engage with it.

In the event I needn't have worried, although going into the Video and Archive Section was a disappointing way to start: in a grainy old film some old chap was name-checking all the luminaries who had been associated with the Laboratory during the early years. After hearing 'Alan Turing' I glazed over, so moved on.

The Graphene Module was far more interesting, although the only application for it commercially so far seemed to be bendy, unbreakable 'phone screens. The minute bits of the substance on view though did trigger the imagination: something two hundred times stronger than steel and sixty times lighter. What's more, it can be stretched out by an extra quarter of its length, even though it's the stiffest material known! (How do they do that.....?)

I'll skip the Femtosecond Combs, not having understood a word. (I wonder what the Femtofirst Comb looked like?) Things immediately improved in the Microwave Anechoic Chamber and the SMART Antenna Range, both out-of-this-world, large 'sci-fi', soundproof chambers, with huge spikes sticking out everywhere to deaden sound. Wouldn't that be just ideal for a James Bond torture scene? "No-one will hear your screams, Mr Bond!"

The Force Machines seemed brutal beasts: large presses for testing the strength of chunks of metal, to ensure the designs are sound. I was told that a section of an Airbus wing was crushed until its rivets burst, and that bearings from U.K. bridges are subjected to enormous forces here, to ensure safety in use. This tied in neatly with Alan Paul's recent talk on the strength of structures. Join the U3A and fill in gaps in your schooling!

The Surface and Nanoanalysis Module showed, as an example of their work, various concrete panels with different surface treatments, for possible use in Crossrail. Each had deliberate faults, but the Lab's testing machines picked them up without fail; so only the strongest concrete with the best surface treatment would actually be used in the project. (That's a relief then.)

At the other end of the scale, even toothpaste featured! A well-known brand wanted to test its products, which it claims can reduce tooth sensitivity, by using one of the Scanning Electron Microscopes. They wanted to check that brushing with them really does insert the paste deep into the microscopic tubules inside the teeth, which lead straight down to the roots. Obviously, if it does successfully block

them up, you won't have painful roots when brushing: ergo, reduced sensitivity. 'Simples!'

Time was running out! Fifteen minutes left before departure, and I was really getting into this. Had I got time for one more visit? I rushed upstairs with an imaginary ball of string paid out behind me to help retrace my steps in a hurry. I just had to see the 3-D Printer; and suddenly there it was, chugging away building up a test-piece of a human face in plastic. I was told the Chinese are 3-D printing WHOLE concrete houses at once, and that NASA want to blast a 3-D printer onto the moon with the next lunar mission, then crush moon rock into powder and load it into the machine to print whole buildings for use as a Moon Base. 'Man....., you can NOT be serious!'.....Can you?

Four minutes to go - would I make the coach? I hurtled downstairs paying out the imaginary string: note to self - 'do not be late!'

Wow, what a humdinger of a visit! It stretched my mind.

Geoff Rogers, Ravenshead U3A Member

Groups Co-ordinator

Following suggestions from members at monthly meetings, eight new activity groups have been formed. These are Latin (yes, that's right!), Table Tennis, Theatre and Cinema visits, Learn Spanish, Grumpy Old Men (any nominations?), French for Beginners, 1960s and 70s and Strollers. The new groups follow on from the successful Science and Technology Group set up by Alan Paul some months earlier.

A lively meeting of around thirty interested members was held on 13th May to discuss the best way forward. The session benefitted from the experience of Val Ford and Judith Moore who set up our U3A's existing activity groups. Their advice was complemented by Maria Gabrielczyk's account of how the new Latin group, led by David Morton, was now not only up and running but full!

Several members volunteered to organise at least the first meetings of their interest group: John Clay (Table Tennis), Sue Butler (Theatre and Cinema Visits), Geoff Rodgers (Grumpy Old Men) and Joyce Capps (Learn Spanish). We still need someone to do the same for 1960s and 70s although Paul Craddock has kindly offered to help the Strollers and thanks to Anick Spence for her offer to give initial advice to the French for Beginners group.

So the new groups are off to a great start and thanks to everyone for their help and enthusiasm. Any members interested in joining the new or existing groups should sign up at the monthly meeting or contact me via the website.

Phil Asquith, Ravenshead U3A Groups Co-ordinator

Dates for Your Diary

(Always check the website for the latest information!)

Monthly Meetings (10.00 a.m. St. Peter's Church, Ravenshead)

Tue Sep 13th	Dr Ann Featherstone. Sydney Race's Nottingham;
Tue Oct 11th	Rev Chris Rattenberry: In a Previous Life
Tue Nov 8th	Andy Smith: (Singer songwriter)
Tue Dec 13th	Fran Sandham: A Solo Walk Across Africa

Social Events

Coffee and Conversation, commencing 10am.

Venue: Room 3, the Centre at St. Peter's

Dates: (MONDAYS) 15th Aug; 19th Sep; 17th Oct; 21st Nov

Occasional Visits

*Details on website **Occasional Visits** page.*

Sun Sep 11th	Visit to National Bird Carving Championship at Bakewell. Entry £1.50 + transport Contact Peter Baker on Tel. 01623 437834
Wed Oct 12th and 19th	THORNTONS visit.
Mon Nov 28th	Thursford Christmas Show. Contact: Jackie Salmon
Mon Feb 20th	Winter Break at Thoresby Contact: Mansfield U3A



The Country and Folk Dancing group at their final meeting before the summer break. Thanks were given to Mike Adams, who is retiring as caller, for leading the group since its inception at the start of Ravenshead U3A.