

Ravenshead U3A Magazine



The Country & Folk Dance group enjoyed a festive finale before their Christmas break!

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Welcome from the Editor

Welcome to our winter issue of Ravenshead U3A magazine. You may notice that we have had to add extra pages this time owing to the number of articles submitted. Several of these describe various trips and visits undertaken by our members over the last few months. We shine the spotlight on two of our groups, the Art group and the newly formed Belly Dancing group. There is also a chance to join a Russian group and enjoy some of the proven benefits of studying a new language. Many of us have taken advantage of the free first aid sessions offered by the Red Cross (read more on page 5). Alan Kirkham from the creative writing group has submitted a short story, and, as our cover photo shows, our Folk Dancing group enjoyed a festive celebration. In addition to all this member Trevor Smith shares his account of a journey through Namibia, perhaps a less well known holiday destination in Africa. What a busy lot we are!

On a more administrative note, check out the agenda for the A.G.M. on page 4 and the information on Beacon on page 21.

Our next issue is planned for May 2019 so please send any contributions (preferably in word processed form) to myself at xxxxxxxxxx or phone me on xxxxx xxxxxx. The closing date is Monday, 15th April.

Judith Moore (editor) Barbara Jukes, David Morton (proof readers),
Terry Moore (desktop publishing).

Ravenshead U3A Committee

Lesley Green	Chair
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Sue Owen	Membership Secretary, Assistant Treasurer
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Margaret Craddock	Groups Coordinator
Alan Walker	Assistant Treasurer
Alan Paul	Web Editor
Terry Moore	Beacon Admin, Publications and cloud storage
Ian Harrison	Committee member
Trevor Smith	Assistant Business Secretary

Contact Ravenshead U3A committee members via the CONTACT page of our website .

Or Freephone: 0300 030 2990

Thoughts from the Chair



As I sit here writing to you surrounded by Christmas cards I am trying to finish, presents waiting to be wrapped and menus to plan perhaps it is a good time for some reflection. A lot of us still have families we can visit and celebrate with but many haven't, and it can be a very lonely time not just now at Christmas but all year round. This is why I think U3As can help and be a great support, as well as finding new friends along the way. Here I would like to mention our Weekenders Group which I personally think is one of the most successful groups for people on their own. Every weekend they meet at the Centre and have tea or coffee and discuss what their programme will be next; this I find has been so beneficial to people who live on their own, but it is open to anyone in our U3A. Well done to those who organise this group and keep it going so well. Our own U3A continues to grow with more new members and group activities: the two latest groups are Belly Dancing and Russian. I have just returned from my second visit with our U3A to Thursford in Norfolk to see the Christmas spectacular show and it didn't disappoint, absolutely wonderful.

Next year we hope to have many more trips and visits, as we are going to have a small group of around four people to organise trips rather than one committee member on their own. Any suggestions would be welcome, so watch this space

I do wish you all a very happy and peaceful New Year and much living, learning and laughing in 2019.

Lesley Green, Ravenshead U3A Chair

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. Contact the editor.

A new Russian group is proposed. If interested please contact Margaret Craddock, Groups Coordinator

See short article on page 23



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE



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Charity registration 1154123

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT THE
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
OF THE RAVENSHEAD U3A
WILL TAKE PLACE ON
Tuesday 9 April 2019 at 10 a.m.
at St Peter's Church, Ravenshead**

AGENDA

1. Welcome
2. Apologies for absence
3. Minutes of the AGM on 12 June 2018
4. Matters arising
5. Chairman's Report on behalf of the Trustees
6. To receive and adopt the annual accounts for 2018 (*1 January to 31 December 2018*)
7. To approve the appointment of an Independent Examiner – proposal that local member Ralph Chapman (Principal HMRC ret'd) be appointed
8. Motions (*to be lodged with Business Secretary by 15 March 2019*)
10. Election of the Committee for 2019/20 (*Voting - by secret ballot – will only be necessary if the number of nominations exceeds the number of places on the committee*)

REFRESHMENTS

SPEAKER

11. Election results
12. Date of next AGM - Tuesday 14 April 2020 at 10 a.m. (*to be confirmed in due course*)

First Aid

When I saw the slide for a Red Cross First Aid Course, I thought – not for me. Then I noticed it was not necessary to be a First Aider but just to help someone who had fallen and needed help. Would I know what to do? The answer is a definite – No. So I then thought – why not ? I see a car accident and immediately dial 999 and leave it to the experts and I will probably still do that but, if I see someone in the street or supermarket who has fallen, I believe I have the confidence to help NOW. This is what the course is about, putting them into recovery position if appropriate or sitting them up. Very simple but helpful stuff.

We started the course by introducing ourselves and what experience we had. We did have people who had done the relevant course but many years ago, the retired professionals, Terry who had done his First Aid Badge in Scouts and learned how to tie a triangle bandage, I think it was Pat who had done her First Aid Badge in Guides, I was Cub Leader, Akela, for many years and never learned any First Aid and don't remember any of my Cubs doing the badge. Sorry Thunder Pack!

We talked about scalds, cuts, concussion. Did you know that if you get a scald you run it under the tap for minimum of 10 minutes (running water is the key) so if you have a scald on your body then go under the shower.

I am not giving any more information – if you are interested then ask Maria if they will run another course. We paid £1 which was to cover the hire of the room. The training is free. The Red Cross did a survey to find out how many people die from their injuries and could have been saved just by using some very basic First Aid knowledge. **Sue Owen , RU3A committee member**

Hello Maria,

Thank you and U3A for organising the Red Cross First Aid course. I thought it was really well presented, at the right level for us, and a good recap on how to approach possible situations. Jill Bewick

Red Cross First Aid App.

The Red Cross have a free application to download for your mobile phone. It has crucial information within the app itself meaning no internet connection is needed, making it fast and easy to use. Five sections including 'Emergency' make it well worth downloading.



CONTACT MARIA GABRIELCZYK OR ANY COMMITTEE MEMBER IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN TAKING PART IN A FUTURE FIRST AID COURSE.

IN HIS ELEMENT

Sitting at his computer wearing his faded green dressing gown, comfortable old slippers and yesterday's beard, he is feeling rather pleased with himself. Smug. No other word for it. Smug.

He has just finished checking how much tax he and his wife should have paid in each of the last two years, against what they had actually paid. It's a job he had been putting off for far too long. The only reason he had done it today was the weather. It was wet, very wet. Seemingly endless, soaking, stair-rod-ding, sodding wet water falling from the skies like a personal vendetta. *Oh well, every cloud has a silver lining*, he grumpily concluded, as he launched reluctantly into the much deferred chore.

But he is positively glowing with self-congratulation now, at a dreaded job well and truly done. This in spite of the fact that his calculations, which have taken him the best part of a day, have revealed nothing significant. If his figures are correct, he has underpaid slightly over each of the two years, while his wife has overpaid slightly. His underpayment and her overpayment are near enough equal, slightly to the advantage of the ever-grasping taxman but not worth the bother of claiming back. He fears that to do so might risk receiving those fearsome tax forms to fill in each year, which, despite the irritating voice of Adam Hart-Davis echoing round his head telling him that "Tax doesn't have to be taxing", is a prospect not to be risked for so small a potential gain.

The job would have been much quicker and easier if he'd had a better filing system. All the necessary P60s, tax credit vouchers, old tax forms and miscellaneous bumph have been kept in a variety of poorly organised second-hand envelopes and folders. He is now surrounded by a depressing floorscape of paper, covering most of the study carpet in precarious piles arranged in rough chronological disorder. It looks like an exhibit from Tate Modern. His self-satisfaction rapidly metamorphoses into despondent irritation. What the heck is he going to do with all this paper? He can't just dump it. He doesn't possess a shredder - doesn't trust them - the strips can be reassembled by a sufficiently determined person. He's seen Tinker do it on 'Lovejoy'. Fire, that's the answer, that satisfyingly elemental force would not only do the job properly, but would give him immense pleasure as it consumed those incomprehensible PAYE Coding Notices.

Revenge of the downtrodden taxpayer.

To burn or not to burn? That is the question. For how long do you need to keep records? Five years? Seven years? Looking out of the window he sees that the rain has stopped. Although the sky still looks heavy the sun is making a half-hearted attempt to lighten the darkness, like a half-sucked lemon drop stuck to a dirty grey blanket. He quickly changes into a worn check shirt and tracksuit bottoms, rams all the more than five-year-old papers into three plastic bags and grabs a brand new box of matches from the over-stuffed kitchen drawer. Then, after putting on his battered felt gardening hat, he strides happily out to play.

As he attempts to close the door behind him one of the plastic bags slips from his fingers. Making a vain attempt to catch it he drops the matchbox. The box

collapses and the matches spill out. With their rigid thin stalks and red caps they remind him of the hated military police from his national service days. He utters a few choice words, which are not fit for your delicate ears dear reader, then, having collected everything up, he chooses a patch of earth behind the potting shed to have his fire, a few feet away from a still dripping laburnum tree, its pendulous golden sprays brilliantly illuminating the dark sky like hundreds of yellow Chinese lanterns. With his bare hands he fashions a volcano-like crater in the clinging wet loam then wipes his hands on his tracksuit bottoms. Next he grabs a tax form from one of the plastic bags, muttering curses as several others fall onto the soggy soil. He crunches them all up and lays them in the hole like crushed eggshells which instantly spread out and threaten to blow away in the light breeze. He holds them in place with his left foot while, from the wreck of the matchbox, he takes one of the matches and strikes it. The soldier's red hat falls off. He takes a second. This time the soldier's body breaks in two. He picks up the short half with the head on and strikes it. The instant it lights it burns his fingers. He drops it and, miraculously, it lands on the pile of papers where it flares briefly before dying. After two more failed attempts he has an idea. Credit card slips would light more easily. He has a pile in the study, ready to be scissored into narrow uneven strips that would frustrate even the determined Tinker. He hurries back into the house.

Wearing an old blue button-through overall and a pink bath hat that looks one size too big, his wife is standing at the top of the shiny, recently purchased new aluminium steps. He'd insisted they have them in an attempt to dissuade his wife from using a kitchen stool to stand on. Dangerous that. Nice to know that worked then.

"Come and look what I've been doing" she says.

Not really wanting to be interrupted in what he's doing but concluding it's quicker to comply than argue, he goes to look. She has a toothbrush in one hand and a tin of white shoe polish in the other. "See?" she says again.

"What am I supposed to be looking at?"

"I'm whitening the sealant round the window frames. What do you think?"

Remembering the mould that used to accumulate on his gardening shoes in the damp atmosphere of the outhouse where they were kept, he thinks that shoe polish is probably a good medium for the mould to grow in, but settles for what he hopes is a satisfactory, if somewhat ambiguous, "Hmm" delivered with an modulating inflection.

"Look at your trousers", she says, "I've only just washed those."

"Just mud", he says "It'll brush off."

Retreating quickly, he fetches the credit card slips and escapes back outside.

The credit card slips retain their crushed-eggshell form better but the matches still refuse to cooperate. With growing frustration and Cleese-like fury he snatches yet another one from the box and then, with exaggerated care, he strikes it, guards it with cupped hand against capricious breezes and with bated breath successfully lights, not just one but both of the paper eggs. Reflected glow from the burning papers and delight out of all proportion to his modest achievement light up

his face as the pale yellow flames spread slowly over the paper like spilt treacle on a kitchen carpet.

He adds more papers and can feel the heat now; a surprising amount of heat. Suddenly he realizes that his nearby newly-planted bean row is in danger of scorching. He grabs an old shower bath pan, which he nowadays uses for mixing concrete, and leans it up against the nearest beanpole. Almost instantly he is subjected to the unpleasant smell of hot fibreglass. He puts his hand on the pan and finds it alarmingly warm. Then he sees that one of the open papers, half burnt, is zigzagging upwards towards next-door's fence. Panic! He doesn't want them to find out his financial secrets. But just before its rocking, rising motion takes it over the top, it burns out and the wispy black paper skeleton floats gracefully back to earth.

Meanwhile a nearby heap of conifer prunings has caught light and crackles like distant machine gun fire. A light plume of grey smoke rises from them like some ambiguous message from a papal election ritual. He quickly fills a watering can from the nearby water butt and pours it on the rapidly spreading flames, wetting some of his dry papers in the process. Cursing again, he puts one or two of the wet papers on the flames to dampen them down. Instantly clouds of steam rise from the paper. Inconsequentially he remembers his old thermodynamics teacher saying: "That's not steam young man! Steam is invisible. What you see coming from a kettle, or a steam engine for that matter, is not steam but water vapour."

Pedantic old fool. Still he got me through the exam with flying colours.

He sits on the rough concrete block wall of the raised vegetable plot, which he built last year at his wife's request and continues to feed the flames more slowly now to avoid the fire becoming too fierce. He can't really see the point of raised beds himself but recognizes that they seem to be all the rage at present. He's convinced it's a passing fad and that in a few years' time sunken beds will probably be the in thing.

The burning of the rest of the papers continues without further incident, as he sits and watches the hypnotic flames consume the papers one by one, leaving their fragile black ghost shapes behind briefly, before they shrink, turn white and then evaporate into grey smoke. He gets up stiffly from the dwarf wall, stretches and then pokes about in the ashes with a stick to ensure all has been consumed. Amazing how that large pile of papers has been reduced to almost nothing by a chemical transformation resulting in ash, smoke and water vapour. *How much of the ozone layer have I destroyed?* he wonders.

For safety's sake, he pours water on the nearby still-smouldering pile of tree clippings which give off a curious hot-wet smell and more water vapour. *Water vapour! Sod all Pedantics. Steam sounds so much better* he thinks to himself and goes back inside.

"Hello Smokey Joe! Has you been enjoying yourself?" His wife asks ungrammatically. Once more he replies with a non-committal "Hmm", but this time with a deprecating falling inflection.

Alan Kirkham, member of the RU3A Creative Writing group



SPOTLIGHT ON THE Painting Group



If you would like to paint in any medium, watercolour, acrylic, oils or pastels this friendly group meets on the second Monday of each month at 1.30-3.30 p.m. in the Centre at St. Peter's where some of our work is displayed.

We have a small library of painting books which are available to borrow.

Anyone is welcome to visit us and experience the enjoyment of painting with us.

Mary Abbott, Group Leader

Some photographs of the group's work are shown here. The originals are often displayed along the corridor at the Centre.



Visit to Rock Cemetery

Nineteen members of the U3A Local History group met with Kevin Powell on Tuesday 10th July 2018 at the gates of Rock Cemetery, on a very hot day. We were given talks on some 30 graves all over the site, which covers 13 acres of a densely populated graveyard where anyone from paupers to very influential well known people mostly from Nottingham are buried



Firstly we were told about the state of the Cemetery and reasons for this; the council cannot afford the upkeep any more. It has been decided that most of it will be left wild as it's too difficult to mow around the closely packed graves. It looked neglected, but nevertheless still very interesting. The cemetery was opened in 1856. Edwin Patchitt, a solicitor (who is buried here) designed the cemetery in 1851 on an old sand mine.



Kevin told us the story of Clara Green who lived at Green's Windmill, and was the granddaughter of George Green, a well known scientist. She was buried on the site of a moveable windmill, one of three in this part of the cemetery. Altogether originally there were 13 windmills here. Green's Mill has now been renovated and receives many visitors in Sneinton.

A stone's throw from Clara Green's grave is that of a young person named 2nd Lieutenant S. H. Wright of the Royal Air Force who was killed on 7th December 1918 aged 19. His



monument was one of the first in the country to bear the emblem of the Royal Air Force. Also buried here is Marriott Ogle Tabotton who, in 1859 aged 24, took up the position of Borough Engineer in Nottingham, and worked to create a modern, more sanitary city. He created the city's sewer system and also built the Trent Bridge. He helped to move housing out of the slum areas, and prevented more diseases. We were shown the grave of Watson Fothergill who trained as an architect and was the designer of more than 100 buildings in the city. Also buried here are James Shipstone of Shipstone's Brewery and the Raleigh family of bicycle fame.

What made the biggest impression on me were the paupers' graves in the sand quarry, some 20 names on each stone, mostly babies and small children. Buried in mass graves were the victims of smallpox and cholera outbreaks. We walked down a long ramped walkway through a locked iron gate to get there. It all was very peaceful. One grave was noticeable by a new stone courtesy of the War Graves Commission to a young soldier who died after the war but ended in the paupers' graveyard. Many new stones have been placed on soldiers' graves from all three services to recognise their service in the Great Wars.



After nearly three hours Kevin ended his talk with a prayer. He said he could go on all day talking but I think we were ready to go home for much needed drinks. Barrie Whittingham gave a few words of thanks.

Judy Walker, Local History Group Leader

My Favourite Things

Pictured at the December monthly meeting, the committee and friends, under the direction of Graham Jukes, performed the RU3A version of My Favourite Things with audience participation. If you missed it, here are the words (with apologies to Julie Andrews!)



1. Gavison, nose drops and needles and knitting, Walkers and handrails and new dental fittings, Bundles of magazines tied up with strings, These are a few of my favourite things.
2. Pacemakers, cataracts, hearing aids and glasses, Village bus takes us to U3A classes, Wheelchairs and scooters and fractures and slings, These are a few of my favourite things.

Chorus: When the pipes leak, when the bones creak, when the knees go bad,
I simply remember my favourite things, And then I don't feel so bad.

3. Hot tea and crumpets and corn pads and bunions, No spicy hot food or food cooked with onions, Bathrobes and heat pads and hot meals they bring, These are a few of my favourite things.
4. Back pain, confused brains and no fear of sinning, Thin bones and fractures and hair that is thinning, And we won't mention our shortening frames, When we remember our favourite things.

Chorus: When the joints ache, when the hips break, when the eyes go dim,
Then I remember the great life I've had, And then I don't feel so bad!

Cruising behind a Springbok.

A road trip to cherish.

When we said we were going to have a fly-drive holiday in Namibia half our friends could not say where it was. In fact it is South West Africa, a country bigger than France and Germany combined and with a population of only 2.5million.

Our adventure started with our flights, not because of excitement, but because we, being pensioners, like our comfort so wanted to go business class, and being thrifty pensioners wanted the cheapest tickets. So we went from Birmingham to Amsterdam connecting to London and then Johannesburg before arriving at Windhoek. the capital of Namibia. Whilst this took 28 hours travelling we were in a relatively comfortable state and felt smug because we had saved a significant sum of money by taking the convoluted route.

Next morning we were shown a safety video on driving in Namibia: big beasts roared, crocodiles snapped and rhinoceroses charged, and whilst these may be dangerous, the biggest danger was from speed! Although Namibia does have some good tarmac roads, much of their road system is on gravel roads and even though they are well maintained you must avoid the edges of the roads where, at speed, the gravel can fall away and cars can easily tip over. You are also instructed on how to change the wheels as there is a high probability of punctures, and so the car carried two spare wheels!. I say the car, but it was in fact a big 4x4 twin cabbed pick up truck. Now this is where it gets more personal. How does a 5ft 3in lady with a replacement hip and wonky knees climb into the elevated cab? With determination, of course. The other instruction was to put our luggage on the back seat of the cabin because the rear cabin was not sealed and so sand will inevitably get in as you traverse the dirt roads and the desert. Finally remember to keep filling up the fuel tank as petrol stations can be 100km apart and are in the villages rather than the arterial roads and can easily be missed.

So off we went on our adventure to tour the South of Namibia complete with detailed directions. However I quickly came to realise these were written by a woman (I know this is sexist) but we had instructions such as 4 kilometres before you get to this village turn left, and take the C13, which is actually marked D1224.

Having said this we managed without too many problems, other than the driver asking for instructions when his wife has difficulty in reading a map! (I know I am being sexist again-- it must be an age thing). Once you are off the main tarmac roads it is time to decide if you need a 4 x 4 wheel drive. For most roads you do not, but when going on what are best described as farm tracks with a sand base all wheel drive comes in useful.

Distance and loneliness are things you need to get used to in Namibia. You can drive for 40km without seeing a bend (other than the ups and downs on the road) and in this time you may not have seen a single vehicle. You are more likely to see monkeys, warthogs, springbok, eland, wildebeest, and mongoose near the road. Whilst travelling on one farm track we came across a springbok who was happy to run at 60kph in front of the car for some distance before bouncing over a wire fence at the side of the road, and on another road we had to stop to let a herd of 30 springbok saunter across the road, oblivious to the traffic.

Our trip took us to a game ranch just outside Mariental - well 30km outside, but in this land of open space that is nothing. Creature comforts at the ranch abound and we climbed the sand dune to our chalet on top overlooking the desert. We had been allocated the honeymoon suite (no, I do not know why), which came complete with outdoor Jacuzzi. This had to be tested although the water was cold. We were told that as the ambient temperature was over 30°C, people like to have a cooling bath - but not if you are old and from the cold northern hemisphere! Time to book a quick safari and see what was on this 13000 hectare ranch apart from sand and sparse vegetation. There were plenty of animals including giraffes and lots of big birds: ostriches, vultures, kori bustards, and weaver birds. We even disturbed an ostrich to look at her clutch of eggs. Racing over sand dunes and salt flats to see what came next was great fun, well worth the pummelled derriere and, of course, the trip was properly finished with a sundowner or two. There were plenty of ostriches around and on one occasion, when we were coming from a path with wicker fencing on either side, my wife spotted an ostrich sitting down in the open about 3m in front of her. However she did not see the very large ostrich standing by the end of the fence looking very curiously down at her. I knew she should have gone to Specsavers!. On a second occasion, as I was trying to eat my full English breakfast on the patio, one ostrich became rather interested in what was on my

plate and the staff had to rush and wave their serviettes to move the bird away.

The next part of our adventure came as we drove further south and after two hours of being on good tarmac roads we now went on to gravel for 85km driving through wonderful scenery around mountains and through desert areas, never seeing a single person, before turning off to go another 20km along a rough and rocky narrow farm track to eventually arrive at our lodge which was perched on the very edge of the second

largest canyon in the world. It may not be as deep or as long but at 27km, it is wider than the Grand Canyon, and in the bottom there is, in parts, a small trickle of water (it was the dry season) which was the Fish River. The views were breath-taking. Some people venture on foot down into the canyon which takes three hours



Fish River Canyon with a Quiver tree and swimming pool right on the edge

each way. Alternatively you can take a safari vehicle down but this goes 27km to reach the bottom and it takes seven hours to complete the round trip. This was not for two old codgers, but we were able to walk the 2km each way to the north and to the south viewing points to get a different perspective and absorb the sense of colours in the canyon as the sun slowly moved across during the day. Sundowners on the rim and sitting by the infinity pool made the journey well worth while. Incidentally, this lodge is the only place we have stayed at where you are issued with ear plugs. Apparently the wind coming up from the canyon can be very noisy at night. Fortunately we slept very well with all that fresh air plus the sundowners.

Trevor Smith, RU3A member.

Follow our intrepid explorers as they continue their epic journey Read the next part of the story in the next issue of the magazine.

THURSFORD CHRISTMAS SPECTACULAR

28 NOVEMBER 2018

Forty three members of our U3A travelled to Thursford to see this year's Christmas spectacular. As usual it was a wonderful and very professional show.

It is very difficult to explain to those who have never been to this show what exactly it is like. There is a complete range of music and songs to meet every taste – this year the highlight for me was the entire company singing Nessun Dorma. All the music and songs are performed live with a complete orchestra. Many of these are sung whilst standing amongst the audience. This year the show included show girls, jazz numbers, Irish dancing and ballet, to name but a few. There was also a very funny comedian!

The show started its life in 1977 as a carol concert on the last Sunday before Christmas. It has now grown to a show that starts at the beginning of November and runs until December 23rd. Each year it attracts over 200,000 visitors from all over the country. There are over 140 people in the cast and auditions for parts begin in the middle of each year in London with about 400 people attending.

John Cushing, whose father started the Thursford collection, is the main driving force for the show. He spends the early part of the year planning the show before the work starts with choreographers, wardrobe people, lighting and sound.

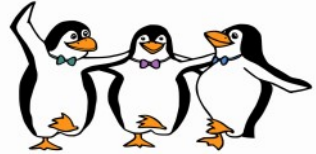


If you have never been and you get a chance to go – GO. It really is something unique.

Jackie Salmon RU3A member.



SPOTLIGHT ON THE NEW Belly Dancing Group



Thirteen (female) members met on a Thursday afternoon for a taster session learning some moves and dances. Sue, who is leading us, said one hour would be enough and, in my case, she was right.

She knew we were shaking our hips when it should have been other parts of our bodies as the bells round our waist gave the game away.

We all had a great laugh and fun exercise with everybody leaving with big smiles although I will probably ache tomorrow as I found muscles I'd forgotten about.

We all agreed to continue as a group meeting twice a month on the 1st and 3rd Thursday, starting on 17th January 2019 in term time.

Our February meeting will be on 5th February and by then we expect to be perfect, in great demand and ready to perform at the London Palladium.

Thank you Sue and Kim!

Margaret Craddock RU3A Groups Co-ordinator



U3A Visit to Bletchley Park June 6th 2018

A group of 55 members arrived at the Ranger to board the coach to Bletchley Park in bright sunshine and warm weather. Mike and Jackie Salmon very kindly agreed to go in their own car as there were two more people than places on the bus!



On arrival the whole group was admitted and some went for coffee whilst others decided to go straight into the park. The park gave out free audio equipment to help people enjoy the whole experience, or the members could choose to go on a conducted tour later in the day.



A really good time was had by all and thanks go to everyone for making the day so enjoyable.

Thanks to Sue Lord for some of the photos!

Kate Asquith
RU3A member (both articles)



Princes River Cruise excursion by the Weekenders Group of Ravenshead U3A



Sunday July 8th was another wonderful sunny day. Thirty members boarded the village buses to go to the river with the prospect of an enjoyable and peaceful day ahead. We arrived at their newer headquarters and had a short time to get a drink and sit and chat to each

other. Several were under the umbrellas provided to get as much shade as possible.

We boarded the boat, sat in the restaurant upstairs, and awaited the full Sunday lunch that had been booked. The choices of beef, chicken, vegetable lasagne, or stuffed peppers were all on the menu and the members had pre-booked their choice so there was no problem with the food. All this was followed by apple pie and custard with tea or coffee to finish off the meal.

The trip up the River Trent was different from the previous trip that we had made and we passed through the lock and returned to the landing stage. We returned to the buses and back to the Ranger or Village Hall in time for tea!



Visit to the Terracotta Warriors exhibition at the World Museum, Liverpool

On Tuesday 18th September forty eight members of our U3A travelled to the World Museum in Liverpool to see the Terracotta Warriors exhibition. We had a very pleasant journey despite the strong winds that were blowing across the M62. We arrived at the Museum at 12.00 for our timed entry of 1.00. This gave all members time to stretch their legs and have a bite to eat.

The exhibition was running at the Museum from February to October 2018 and by the time we visited there had been over 500,000 visitors.

For over 2,000 years, the underground army of life-sized terracotta warriors secretly guarded the tomb of China's First Emperor, Qin Shi Huang, until a chance discovery in 1974 unlocked the mysteries of a vanished empire. The exhibition spans almost 1,000 years of Chinese history; from the conflicts and chaos of the Warring States period to the achievements and legacy of the Qin and Han dynasties.

The exhibition includes a number of objects that have never been on show in the UK before including material from museums and institutes from across Shaanxi Province, excavated over the last 40 years from the Imperial Mausoleum and selected tombs. These artefacts shed light on the Emperor's pursuit of immortality and show how he prepared for the afterlife.

In addition to the seven life-sized warriors there were over 180 other artefacts to view. Everyone was allowed enough time to wander through the exhibition at their own pace. Those people who had seen the exhibition when it visited London some years ago said there was more to see in Liverpool.

Some of our party also visited the Egyptian exhibition, the planetarium, the art gallery which was just nearby and some even took the open bus tour around Liverpool.

We arrived back in Ravenshead around 9.00 following a night time tour of Kirkby – those of you who went on this trip will know what I mean!!

Jackie Salmon RU3A member



Beacon News

Group Leaders

Group leaders have started to receive training to use Beacon which enables them to:

- easily change the description and meeting details of their group – shown on the **Beacon Groups** page
- monitor and adjust the members of the group when needed
- send emails to the whole group simply – and monitor who has received and opened them!
- add events to the **Beacon Calendar** easily one at a time or as a sequence of events in the future
- use a Group ledger to keep track of group finances easily and securely

We hope to be training more group leaders to use this facility over the coming months. If you are a group leader please get in touch to arrange a time and date.

New Beacon Page

In order to view various aspects of Beacon as a member of RU3A please go to the new Beacon Page on the website. Anyone can see a **public** version of the Beacon Groups and Beacon Calendar from the links at the bottom of the page.

Logging in to Beacon through the '**Members Portal**' link gives RU3A members more options. You will need to type in your membership details as a login shown below:

Please ensure that you use capital letters and spaces where you normally would such as in between the postcode NG15 9ZX and that you type your email address carefully!

When logged in you have the option to see the following pages:

- **Ravenshead U3A groups**
- **Calendar of meetings and events**
- **Update your personal details**

The Groups and Calendar page once logged in gives more options and detail than the public version. The option to **update your personal details** takes you to a page where you can see the data we hold securely on the system for you. Should you need to change anything you can, and it will send you an email with the changes. Please have a look at the Beacon pages and other items mentioned.

Terry Moore, Beacon Admin

RAVENSHEAD U3A – INTEREST GROUPS

Group Name	Leader	Phone	Meeting Day and Time	Location	Full
Angling	Lionel Castle		Please ring for details		No
Antiques	David Turner Maureen Smith		Monthly TBC	Members' Homes	No
Art Gallery/Museum	David Turner		Various visits to be arranged	Please contact for details	No
Belly Dancing	Sue Clipson		1 st and 3 rd Thursday 1.00 p.m.	The Centre	No
Birders	Graham Jukes Tony Wardell		Usually once a month	Please contact for details	No
Bridge for Beginners	Maria Gabrielczyk		Currently inactive.	At leaders' home	No
Canasta	Trevor Davy		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		On demand	Alan Paul's house	No
Craft workshops	Kate Asquith Irene Chapman		Thursday 10.00-12.00	Room 2 The Centre	No
Creative Writing	David Turner		Friday after the U3A monthly meeting.	Members' Homes	No
Cryptic Crossword	Frances Gilbert		Thursday 10.00 – 11.45	Members' Homes	No
Current Affairs	Carol Wright		3 rd Wednesday 2.00 -3.30	Brammer Room	No
Family History	Barbara Jukes		4 th Tuesday 10-12	Brammer Room	No
Folk Dancing	Alex Fraser		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	Full
Gardening	Elizabeth Clarkson		Various dates and locations	See group web page	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 & 3 rd Wednesday	See group web page	No
Knitting and Crochet	Anne Lovegrove Liz Corner		2pm – 4pm 1 st and 3 rd Friday	Brammer Room, Village Hall	No
Latin	David Morton		2 nd & 4 th Wed -9.30 - noon	Room 3 the Centre	Full
Local History	Judith Walker		2pm – 4pm 2 nd Tuesday	Room 3 The Centre and local visits	No
Luncheon Club	Chris Dean		Various locations monthly	See group web page	No
Mah Jong	Anne Eldridge Jennifer Philby		1 st & 3 rd Tuesday 2-4 pm	Brammer Room, Village Hall	No
Music Appreciation 1	Joan Harvey		2 nd Tuesday 2.00 – 4.00	Members' Homes	Full
Music Appreciation 2	David Turner		3 rd Tuesday 1.30 – 3.00	Members' Homes	No
Painting	Mary Abbott		2nd Monday 1.30 – 3.30	The Centre	No
Pastels	Wanda Parker		Gp 1 Wed.10.00 – 12.00 Gp 2 Fri. 10.00 – 12.00	Wanda's house	Full No
Photography	Dennis Harvey Glynn Payze		Last Wed in month 2pm	Brammer Room	No
Play Reading Group	Alan Kirkham		2.00pm on the day after U3A monthly meeting	Members' Homes	No
Reading Group 1	Pat Brown		3 rd Tuesday 2.30pm	Members' Homes	Full

Reading Group 2	Carol Payze	3 rd Tuesday 2pm	Carol's house	No
Science and Technology	Alan Paul	1 st Friday in month	The Centre	No
Scrabble Cribbage	Susanne Smith	1 st Tuesday 7.30pm-9.30pm	Brammer Room	No
Rummikub Groups 1/2		3 rd Tuesday 10am		
Spanish	Joyce Capps	Mondays various 10.30 am	Member's Homes	No
Table Tennis	John Clay	2pm-3pm 1 st & 3 rd Monday	Cornwater Leisure Centre	Full
Thursday Walks now Short Walks	Graham Munroe	1 st Wednesday of the month	Details on the website or contact Graham	No
Weekenders	Sue Owen Pat Van Grondelle Chris Munton	Various events and visits	For more information see the web site	No
Wine Group 1	Lionel Castle	3 rd Friday	Members' homes	Full
Wine Group 2	Brenda Beale	3 rd Tuesday	Members' homes	Full
Wine Group 3	Michael Neville	2 nd Monday	Members' homes	Full
Wine Group 4	Angela Senior	3 rd Tuesday	Members' homes	Full
Wine Group 5	Sue Tidbury	1 st Wednesday	Members' homes	Full
Yoga Group 1	Bob Ford	Wkly 2.00-3.30 Tuesday	The Centre at St Peters	No
Yoga Group 2	Bob Ford	Wkly 9.30-11.00 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.

Russian Group

As mentioned on the magazine notice board on page 3, we have the prospect of starting a Russian group to add to our Latin, Spanish and French groups. Did you know that we have a native Russian speaker in the U3A? Irina has volunteered to lead a study group in this fascinating language.

A quick search on the internet has brought up some interesting information.

Scientists have suspected for a long time that learning a second language is one of the best things that you can do for your brain. Now, thanks to recent studies, they are beginning to understand why. According to a Penn State University study, learning a second language revires your brain and may increase the efficiency with which information is transferred from one area to the next."

Where in the world is Russian spoken? *Russian is the official language of Russia, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, and it's considered an unofficial lingua franca in Ukraine and many former Soviet countries. These include Azerbaijan, Estonia, Georgia, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. There's also a notable contingent of Russian-speakers in Cyprus, Finland, Hungary, Mongolia, Poland, China, the U.S. and Israel. Essentially, if you're anywhere in Eastern Europe, you can probably wing it with some basic Russian in your back pocket.*

How Many People Speak Russian In The World? *As of 2010, there were roughly 166 million native Russian speakers in the world, placing it at number eight in the list of most widely spoken languages in the world. Among first languages, Russian accounts for 2.3% of the global population.*

If you are interested, contact Margaret Craddock, Groups Co-ordinator.

Dates for Your Diary

(Check the website for the latest information!)

Monthly Meetings	(10.00 a.m. St. Peter's Church, Ravenshead)
February 12th	Old Time Punishment – The Curious World of... Speaker Ian Morgan
March 12th	TBC
April 9th	1. AGM 2. Speaker - Martin Fish Talk - TBC
May 14th	Lady Arabella Stuart – The Queen that Never Was Speaker - David Templeman

Social Events

Coffee and Conversation, commencing 10am.

Venue: Room 3, the Centre at St. Peter's (3rd MONDAY of each Month) **Dates: Jan 21st, Feb 18th, Mar 18th, Apr 15th.**

Occasional Visits

Details on website 'TRIPS and VISITS' page.

Ravenshead U3A would like to form a subcommittee of members to help organise and plan a programme of Trips, Visits and other social events that can be enjoyed by the whole membership. If you would be prepared to attend an initial meeting, please contact any committee member or phone :

0300 030 2990. We need your help!!



U3Acoustics entertained the members at the Christmas lunch in December.