

Newsletter April 2026

u3a
Ruddington & District

learn, laugh, live

Issue 87



Spring is here and has brought with it the most extreme changes in weather that we have experienced in a long while. Alongside some of the hottest days ever in April we are still being battered by days of heavy rain and hailstones. It all makes for the contrast of being on Planet Earth as we watch the amazing sights captured by the astronauts in outer space!

Many thanks to those of you who have renewed your membership for the coming year. This will be important for the AGM, on the 18th May 2026, as it will enable you to vote at the meeting.

A reminder that the AGM is for you to approve the annual report and the accounts.

We are still looking to recruit new committee members and hope you will seriously consider joining us to secure our future.

Best Wishes
Liz McAdam (Chair)

Drive on– an older drivers’ workshop

Via East Midlands Road Safety Team in partnership with *Nottinghamshire County Council* have developed a workshop for the older driver.

Driving is an activity that as with many things changes with age and circumstances; this FREE session aims to be warm and light–hearted approaching this sensitive subject in a friendly and open way, with encouraging ways to prolong and enhance driving.

Expressions of interest for a potential workshop can be booked by either speaking to Barbara Breakwell at the Monthly Meeting or by emailing her, bitsandbabs@ntlworld.com

U3a membership card collection

Di Brown writes:

I have arranged two sessions for membership card collection, one at the library for the 21st April between 10.30a.m.-12.30 p.m. and a further one at St Peters rooms on 23rd April between 12 noon -2.00 p.m.

Anyone who has sent their renewal form back and paid, will be able to collect their card at either session, (unless they have brought their form to the general meeting on the 20th in which case their card may not be ready for 21st).

Committee news

1. The AGM is before the monthly meeting on the 18th May and not as stated in the last newsletter.

The aim of the AGM is to approve the Annual Report and the Accounts.

Ahead of the meeting all members will receive information on how to submit nominations for committee positions and how to propose resolutions.

2. We are still looking for new Committee members to fill vacant positions.

3. Members can access the Notts Network Newsletter on the u3a website.

Interest group news

Photography Group



As would be expected, our photos on the theme of wheels included common forms of transport, but also play vehicles, a water wheel, large 'fairground' wheels in city centres and a variety of very heavy and often vintage vehicles.



This month, instead of our usual meeting, some of us visited Highfields Park where we were rewarded with warm, sunny weather, ideal for photographing the lake and its surroundings as everything comes to life in the spring. It was a particularly good opportunity to photograph the very active birds looking good in their spring plumage, and there were even a few youngsters already on show. Even in such good conditions it can be challenging to capture exactly the image you hoped for when the subjects don't stay still for long.

Our next meeting is on Wednesday, May 13, when we look forward to a visit from local wildlife photographer, Martin Basson. Looking further ahead, on June 10 we will look at our own pictures on the subject of 'Animals'.

TAI CHI FOR HEALTH

Since the March Newsletter the world has undergone a seismic shift towards imbalance and uncertainty, causing raised tension and anxiety levels. Alternatively, we have seen the inspirational launch and journey of Artemis 2. An amazing achievement and success. (Despite the toilet dysfunction)!

In Tai Chi for Health we strive to maintain and improve balance and to focus the mind for gentle quietness and meditation. An oasis of calm each week.

There were no Tai Chi classes on 19th March when I attended two workshops with Master Trainers and Senior Trainers for confirmation of my Tai Chi practice and to gain new qualifications.



In my absence the Improvers Group came together to perform Tai Chi in a garden in glorious sunshine.



On April 2nd we enjoyed Easter Bonnet Tai Chi Day. The essentials for the day are a decorated Easter table with chocolate eggs and Easter cakes, beautiful hats, some poses and of course Tai Chi.

The next big day on the April calendar is World Tai Chi and Qigong

Day on Saturday 25th April. We will gather in Ruddington Village Hall. Tai Chi will start at exactly 10:00 am when we join the world to celebrate the benefits and enjoyment of performing Tai Chi.

At 11:30am we will sit down to Brunch at The Country Cottage Hotel.

PLEASE NOTE. There will be NO CLASSES on THURSDAY 14th MAY.

Best wishes to everyone. Judy Hasson.

Wine Tasting group



On 16th March a record 23 people gathered to taste fine wines costing up to £20 per bottle. With 12 bottles available the sample size was reduced, to about 35ml, just enough to form an opinion of each wine and keep us sober!

As we normally taste wines at up to £10 per bottle, one of our aims was to find out whether the extra cost resulted in an appreciably better wine. The consensus was that the fine wines were consistently better but not necessarily twice as good. The favourite white wine was a New Zealand Cloudy Bay Sauvignon Blanc, generally regarded as as one of New Zealand's finest. With Sancerre and Chablis as runners up. The choice of favourite red had several contenders with the Chateauneuf-du-Pape (the pope's new palace) edging out an Amaronone. An interesting and lively meeting was enjoyed by all. Photos by Janice Abrahamson.

One in one group.

This month's meeting will be on Thursday April 23rd and will feature just two venues, within a stone's throw of each other, in Lenton and Dunkirk. The first venue at 2:00pm is The Boat Inn at 9, Priory St. Lenton. This is just off Abbey St and the easiest way of getting there is by tram. Get off at the Gregory St tram stop, which is the stop before the QMC. The Boat Inn is then just a four minute walk around the corner onto Abbey St and then left onto Priory St.. We'll spend about an hour and a half there and then a two minute walk to The Johnson Arms for 3:30. We'll get the tram back into Nottingham and for those who wish to have a bite to eat, we'll find somewhere in town. All existing group members are welcome to attend and any new members will be made especially welcome. Pete Wakelin.

Travellers' Tales

In April group members were invited to talk about “the hottest place they had been”.

There was a lively discussion and sharing of experiences. These included visits to Uluru - Ayres rock- with heat and myriad small flies which got everywhere and red back poisonous spiders in toilets.



The difficulty of being restricted to school summer holidays and the build up of heat in Paris was a very uncomfortable memory. The heat-wave and stifling humidity, with temperatures over 40 degrees celsius, resulted in many deaths. A family visit to Death Valley in California when the thermometer showed 117 fahrenheit (45c) was very memorable although the dry heat was more bearable.



A visit to the Sossusvlei salt pans in the Namibia desert involving a 1.5km walk in temperatures of over 40c and no shade was very challenging.

The scariest story came from Liz McAdam who had been on Evia, a Greek island, when a wildfire swept from the hills towards her hotel which was next to the beach. Taking refuge in the sea, holding a few possessions the heat, wind and noise were terrifying. Fortunately, the wind changed direction, and she survived although part of the hotel did not.

Lunch Club

The next lunch club meal is at The Ferry, Wilford Village on the 7th May at 1:30 p.m. Everyone is welcome. Contact Margaret Marshall for more information.

French for beginners.

A new French class for beginners is being offered. Classes will be an hour long and will take place at the home of Angela Sell, on three consecutive Wednesdays at 1:30 pm, followed by a week off. There are currently three spaces available. For details contact Angela Sell on angibill@gmail.com

Painting and Drawing group

In March the Painting and Drawing Group enjoyed having Debs Webster with us once again for a tuition session in using oil paints. Debs is a local artist and she provided all of the required materials including the subject that was a landscape of a cut field featuring hay bales. Debs took us through each stage of the picture and we all added our own interpretation as you can see in the picture!



It was good to have Debs back with us and learn more about a medium that we do not often use. Some of us are going to attend other sessions that Debs runs locally on the weeks when we cannot access our usual venue.

Monthly speaker meetings.

Monday 20th April 2:00 p.m. Helen Caldwell

“The A-Z of Falls Prevention.”



One in three people over 65 will experience a fall each year - but many of these falls can be prevented. In this talk, local physiotherapist Helen Caldwell from Home Physio Care will share an A-Z of Falls Prevention, drawing on her experience supporting older adults across Nottingham to stay mobile, confident and independent at home.

Helen will explain the key factors that influence falls risk - from balance and strength to footwear, home hazards and everyday habits; and highlight the simple steps that can significantly

reduce the risk of falling.

**Monday 18th May 2:00 p.m. u3a Annual General meeting
followed by Martin Grant - REMAP Making Things Possible**



REMAP's mission is to improve the quality of life for people who experience short or long-term disability through infirmity, illness, or ageing.

Martin will talk about this national charity which designs and makes custom made devices, in order to enhance the independence of people with disabilities. All the members are volunteers with organisational or practical skills, in areas such as woodwork, metalwork, electronics, plastics and fabrics. They work from home by making and adapting equipment to meet the unique needs of individuals. All the devices they produce are free of charge.