

Newsletter June 2026

u3a
Ruddington & District

learn, laugh, live

Issue 89



What a wonderful village and district we live in. Ruddington has so much to offer at this time of year.

Many of you took the opportunity to see the Flying Scotsman and Tornado steam trains and sent in your photographs - thank you. Ruddfest was as popular as ever and we have the Open Gardens and fundraising walk in the Country Park to look forward to. Many members are involved in organising and taking part in these last two events.

I want to thank Jae Marriott for running what has been a very enjoyable, interesting and successful theatre group. Jae introduced us to productions that we may never have considered and provided the opportunity for us to see National Theatre Live productions, in the comfort of her home. A big thank you to Jae for sharing her wide knowledge of stage and screen.

Membership renewals have gone very well; thank you for your continued support for the coming year. We urgently require a Membership Secretary to replace Di Brown who is stepping down next month and also a new Vice Chair.

Best wishes
Liz McAdam (Chair)

Falls prevention and tai chi

On Monday 20th April our monthly Speaker was Helen Caldwell, a highly qualified local physiotherapist from Home Physio Care, you may have heard her speak.

Tai Chi convenor Judy Hason wrote this at the time but space in the last edition precluded its use.

It was an excellent, comprehensive presentation of all the risk factors causing falls and included an A-Z of Falls Prevention. The aim being to help the older adult to stay mobile, confident and independent at home.

After the speech Helen and I had a conversation about our joint ambitions. As mentioned in her speech she is a staunch advocate of Tai Chi. Tai Chi ticked all her priority boxes.

The 5 principles of Tai Chi for Health are;

1. Body alignment. An upright posture strengthening the deep stabiliser muscles.
2. Controlled, slow, smooth and continuous movements against resistance to strengthen muscles.
3. Mindful transfer of weight to improve balance.
4. Relaxation, expansion and widening of joints to relieve tension and discomfort. (Known as “song”).
5. Focusing the mind for gentle quietness and meditation. (Known as “jing”).

Take care and stay safe.

Regards Judy Hasson.



Interest group news

Wine Tasting Group

May meeting

Q What do “Dream Bird” and “Royal Maiden” have in common?

A They are both Romanian white wines.



We met at Barbara and Ken's house. The topic was wines from eastern Europe. There was some difficulty finding wines from the usual sources. Our geographical knowledge was tested as wines from Romania, Hungary, Armenia, Macedonia and Moldova plus a Maltese white were provided. We were very pleasantly surprised at the quality of the wines found, particularly the whites and they were good value.

Unusual grapes included Fetasca Regala, or Royal Maiden, from Romania, Tokaji Fermont from Hungary which was not the same as Tokay the well known rich, sweet wine. There was a Kogun and Viognier blend from Armenia, and a Macedonian pinot noir. A merlot cabernet sauvignon blend from Chateau Vartely, was reported to be one of the five top wines of Moldova. It was another successful, well attended, very sociable meeting which also managed to increase our knowledge of lesser-known wines.

Tai Chi for Health.

I am sure everyone is relieved that the extremely hot weather we have had recently has passed and that the temperatures have settled to a more comfortable level.

Tai Chi is a gentle exercise and classes continued through the heat-



wave while we tried to keep the heat out and the cooler air inside the village hall. The hall does own an extremely large fan. (See the accompanying photograph.) It is certainly powerful and capable of blasting cool air through the room. However there is a problem. When the fan is turned on, it sounds like an airbus 380 firing up for takeoff and it is so loud that any communica-

tion is impossible !Seated Tai Chi can be helpful in extremely warm conditions. In the photograph our New Beginners group, together with the giant fan demonstrate seated Tai Chi.

Best wishes to all and to those of us who are taking part in the Charity walk on the 14th June in Rushcliffe Park to raise funds for the Lincs and Notts Air Ambulance Service. Judy Hasson.

Photography group

At our May meeting, photographed we enjoyed a presentation by



Photo Sarah Thomas

Martin Basson on many aspects of wildlife photography. We learned about equipment, camera settings and some details of processing images. In addition to such technical aspects, we heard about the importance of a knowledge of animal behaviour; being patient; and some of the ethical issues involved. Martin had brought along some beautifully mounted prints to illustrate the experiences he described, and we were able to admire and examine these images in detail.to improve our own photography, We'll find out if we are progressing at our June meeting! Looking ahead, our meeting on 8th July the theme of 'Time'

Photography Group photos of the Flying Scotsman

Newsletter editor Ian Robinson invited photo group members to submit their photos of the Flying Scotsman. In addition to Bryan Brownes front page image, here are a few more received



Travellers' Tales



At our June meeting, Trevor Smith from Ravenshead u3a's Armchair Travellers' group, spoke about his visits to Taiwan, which no one from our group had visited.

More details will be given next month.

Gardening Group



Although only 4 members attended our visit to Rasell's Nurseries at Little Bytham, we all enjoyed excellent refreshments at The Teahouse, the opportunity to view the gardens and to purchase some of the plants on sale.



Clipsham Yew Tree avenue was the stop on the way home for a short, peaceful walk to see more than 137 beautiful, clipped trees, each more than 200 years old, that were planted alongside the carriage driveway of Clipsham Hall, the house sadly demolished many years ago.

Mike Davey

A u3a National outlook by Peter Davison



U3a is a national organisation founded in 1982. There are now branches all over the UK including 34 in Nottinghamshire. National membership over a quarter of a million. Ours is one of the smaller ones, others have over 1000 members.

In Ruddington we focus almost entirely on our own activities and are not generally aware of the wider u3a network and information available.

When joining or renewing your membership you can opt to receive a free monthly magazine U3a matters which is produced by the national office. It is posted to all members who request it.

Because it is free I've always requested

it but, in truth, have hardly looked at it. Recently, and unusually, I had a quiet afternoon grandchild sitting, so looked through it. I was surprised and a bit impressed by what I read, so I thought I'd share it with you.

The magazine is supported by lots of advertising targeted at u3a's demographic.

There were over 20 travel companies advertising. They included the well known Saga and Hurtigruten who offered a 5% discount for u3a members and friends plus a 10% contribution to the Third Age Trust for an Antarctic booking, Riviera who also offered a 10% contribution to the local u3a and Viking cruises offering a free drinks package. Many smaller or less well known companies had a wide range of offers. Several specialised in holidays for solos. Others offered small groups, cultural tours, city breaks, rediscovering England, self guided walking holidays and more.

In addition to the magazine the national u3a offers a comprehensive on line programme of diverse and informative talks. There are even online interest groups. So logging on to the u3a website could offer you the chance to widen your horizons in the spirit of u3a learning, living and laughing.

Monthly speaker meetings.

Monday 15th June 2:00 pm Jim Campbell Forensic Talk.



With modern analytical equipment we can now detect a substance at a level of one part in one million millionth, and we can analyse DNA from just one molecule. Although these techniques were developed with criminal forensics in mind, we use these principles in our laboratory to solve problems, identify species at risk, and track everything from foreign substances in food through to rare animals

being poached and smuggled around the world. Using real examples from case history, we explore the application of forensic techniques applied to everyday assignments encountered in the laboratory and look at the latest analytical techniques and how we can apply them.

Monday 20th July 2:00 pm. Pat Hall



I started a volunteer charity in 1997 to make a free daily telephone call to elderly people living on their own in Derbyshire and I used to promote it to various groups.

I began to add funny bits to make people listen. The Derbyshire Lord Lieutenant heard me and advised me to do stand-up comedy if I left the charity, and I did!

The charity is still going and has increased greatly in size.