



UP2DATE



NEWSLETTER JUNE 2025

Welcome back to the Newsletter, out first for nearly twelve months. During this time, we have found out how lucky we were to have the magazines printed by a local school as understandably the cost from a printer is much, much more. Only three people have asked to have a printed copy of the newsletter for which we would have had to charge. From now on it will be produced three times a year, online only, February, June and October. This means that, as during Covid, the length of the newsletter can be more flexible as I am no longer having to fill the fixed parameters of a printed copy. This edition includes articles which have been sent me over the last twelve months, and as you will see is slightly longer than usual to include these. I am now accepting articles for the next edition due out in October, I will need any pieces by 12th September so that I can produce the newsletter and have it proof-read. All contributions gratefully received.

We now have two new members to welcome onto the Committee, Veronica Bland and Les Scholes.

Your committee for the next year until March 2026 is as follows:

Joan Davies (Chairman),

Gill Cameron (Treasurer),

Pauline Hadfield (Membership Secretary),

Millie Gillespie (Secretary, Speakers and Room Bookings),

Ken Jones (Web Master)

Alex Drysdale (Hall Management)

And Margaret Minns, Barbara Marriott, Veronica Bland and Les Scholes.

(BUT THERE IS STILL ROOM FOR MORE VOLUNTEERS.)



EXPLORING LINCONSHIRE 9TH-11TH JUNE 2024

Led by Judith Curry and ably assisted by Ann Daniels, this year's holiday organised in conjunction with Roy McCarthy coaches took us to Lincolnshire based at the Barn hotel in Marston

Our first stop was to Dobbies near Chesterfield for refreshments before travelling on to Lincoln. Some of the group visited the magnificent cathedral, first built in 1072 and rebuilt in the Gothic style in 1192. It held the record for the tallest building for over two centuries. Another option was to visit the castle built by William the Conqueror where copies of the 1215 Magna Carta and Charter of the Forest are housed. There was plenty of choice for lunch and a variety of small shops to visit especially for those who had the stamina to go down Steep Hill- no explanation needed.

The RSPB had set up binoculars trained on the resident peregrine falcons who live on the cathedral walls -one fledgling was left to spread its wings.

We were welcomed to our hotel and enjoyed dinner and a relaxing evening in comfortable rooms.

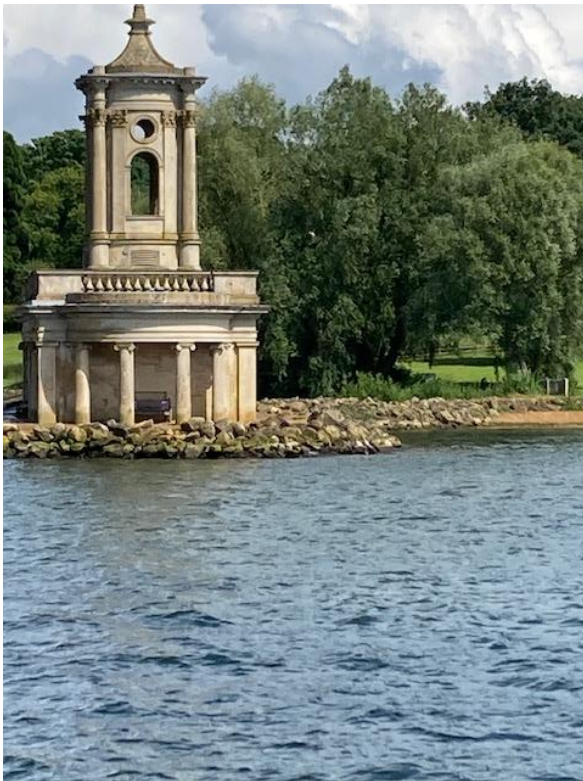
After breakfast we travelled to Stamford where we were met by an excellent guide for a part coach and part walking tour of the town and its surrounding area. We drove out to look at the exterior of Burghley House built by William Cecil on land gifted by Queen Elizabeth 1st. (Apparently, she was still asking him for



advice when he was on his death bed). The House is still lived in by the Cecil Family, but it is now in a Trust to ensure financial security for the future.

The town escaped the ravages of war both by Oliver Cromwell and later the bombing raids of World War 2 and so many fine Medieval, Regency and Georgian buildings remain. There are also five medieval churches. One notable building was Browne's hospital, built by Merchant William Browne as alms houses in 1475 and mostly rebuilt in 1870. There is a war memorial attached to the hospital built by public subscription in 1919/20

There was time for lunch and to explore some of the cobbled streets with its small independent shops before we rejoined our coach for the short drive to Rutland Water, built as a reservoir in the 1970s and by surface area the largest reservoir in England.



The reservoir is a popular sports centre not only for water sports but also cycling, walking, and birdwatching. We were booked on the Rutland Belle for a three quarter of an hour cruise with commentary.

Unfortunately, the cold wind kept all but a hardy few in the cabin rather than on the upper deck, but it was an enjoyable interlude none the less, before returning to the hotel after another busy day.



Tuesday saw an early start as we headed north with a coffee stop at the Edwinstowe craft centre in Sherwood Forest before travelling on to Hardwick Hall where we visited the House and gardens independently. The Hall was built in the 1590s for the formidable Bess of Hardwick. Her first of four husbands was William Cavendish, and they set up their family home at Chatsworth but after he died, she rebuilt Hardwick Hall and moved there. Through her husband her wealth increased still further. The Hall was given to the National Trust in 1960 by the Cavendish family who still live at nearby Chatsworth and is particularly famous for the tapestries which line the walls and other sumptuous furnishings and furniture.

We then headed for home- with one more surprise - a cream tea in Calver at The Eating House.

Many thanks once again to Judith and Ann for a most enjoyable holiday, with discussion already started as to where to go next year!

Louanne Collins Article

Photos Andy Dugdale

HISTORY SELF DRIVE TO TABLEY HOUSE 3RD SEPTEMBER 2024



Twenty-seven of us ventured out into deepest Cheshire to visit the state rooms in Tabley House, a beautiful Palladian mansion completed in 1767 by the York architect, John Carr, for Sir Peter Byrne Leicester, the then Lord of the Manor of Tabley. There had been a much earlier house, built about 1380 by a Leicester ancestor, on a man-made island on Tabley Mere. A later Leicester installed an ornate fireplace in the Hall in 1619. The latter's son, Sir Peter, the 1st baronet, replaced the chapel on the island with a new one between 1675 and 1678. Our guide, Caroline, once we were inside the house, told us that from the front windows, we could possibly see the Tower on the island, which, with the ruins of the Old Hall, were all that remained, as the chapel was brought, stone by stone, from the island to be rebuilt to the west of the Palladian manor house in 1927. The Palladian Manor House and the Chapel are Grade I listed, whereas other buildings within the Estate, such as the ruins of the Old Hall and the Tower are all Grade II listed.

We did look out to see if we could find the tower, but to no avail – too many trees in summer! However, we had beautiful views across the Cheshire countryside.





The church of St Peter is where we met our guide who gave us a brief history of the family and of the changes that had taken place on the estate over the centuries. On the death of the last of the direct line in 1975, the estate had been in the same family for 700 years.

The interior of St. Peter's church is Seventeenth Century, completed in 1678 for Sir Peter Leicester and has oak pews, altar, pulpit and gallery. The Hall is licensed for civil weddings, and the Chapel was apparently a perfect place for the BBC to film the wedding scenes in "Peaky Blinders".



We entered the "state rooms", or "piano nobile" of Tabley house via the curved steps at the front of the house, which brought us into the entrance hall. Here we saw some of the Chippendale and Gillow furniture and the wonderful plasterwork that graced the walls and ceilings in the rooms that

were open to visitors. The House has been open to visitors since 1990 and is managed by the Tabley House Collection Trust, supported by The Friends of Tabley, together with a group of volunteers. The “piano nobile” exists as an exhibition showcase for the University of Manchester, who came into possession of the estate under the terms of the will of the last member of the family, Lt. Col. John Byrne Leicester Warren in 1975. He wished originally for the National Trust to take on the estate, but they declined, and it thus passed into the care of the University of Manchester. In 1988 a 125-year lease on the house, stables and other buildings was sold to Cygnet Health Care, on the proviso that the first floor of the house, together with its contents be preserved. In 2007 the university sold the Estate – but not the House – to the Crown Estate for about £35m.



We were taken through the other 5 rooms which comprise the “piano nobile”, all full of furniture, paintings, china, plasterwork and other memorabilia, which were original to the house and belonged to the Leicester family over the centuries. The collection of paintings included works by Peter Lely, John Opie, Thomas Lawrence, Joshua Reynolds and J.M.W. Turner. The last room we saw, the Gallery, was originally 3 adjacent rooms and had been altered and opened into one, in the early 1800s in order to create what has been called “one of the great rooms of Cheshire”. It contains some of the best furniture, paintings and objects from the house, including mirrors from the workshop of Chippendale and 2 virginals brought from the Old Hall. One from

1761 and one, possibly Italian, from the late 1600s. Both are still in working order and quite beautiful to look at.



The visit was completed by a light lunch in the Old Hall Room, which is now the Tea Shop. Here we find the chimney piece which was originally installed in the Old Hall in 1619. This photo is just a part of the fireplace and copied from the internet.

I highly recommend a visit to Tabley House, a truly amazing and interesting place, which even though I have lived in Cheshire all my life, I had never visited but shall certainly visit again. It is open to the General Public from April to October, Thursday to Sunday + Bank holiday Mondays 1pm to 5pm. The Tea Room and Chapel are open from 12pm to 5.30pm on the same days as the collection.

Isabella Collinson Article and photos

MUSIC MAKING GROUP AT THE u3a FESTIVAL, YORK, 18-20 JULY 2024



Most of you will be aware that the first ever u3a Festival took place last July. Seven months earlier, in December 2023, there was a call for music groups interested in taking part, so I immediately thought of our own Music Making Group. I spoke to our group at our next rehearsal to see how many would be interested. Unfortunately, a number of people had other commitments but we did have 7 people who were keen to attend.

The next step was to contact the Festival organising committee who sent a form to be filled in outlining what we were offering and which days we would be available. We decided that with only 7 of us we would not offer a performance, but instead, offer workshop sessions where we could be joined by musicians from other u3as.

The organising committee was swamped with offers, not only from music groups, but from u3a members all over the country offering sporting activities, walks, talks and workshops on a wide variety of subjects. Not surprisingly, the deadline for producing a programme was constantly changed. There was eventually a facility to book tickets for the Festival itself, but not the workshops. We had made it clear from the outset that we would need contact details for all Music Making workshop participants in plenty of time so that we could arrange for them to have the necessary music. As the date for the Festival became ever closer, we were beginning to panic! In the end, we decided that even if our workshops didn't take place we were going to go along and enjoy the rest of the activities.

There was a flurry of activity towards the end of June when we were allocated 2 workshop sessions which were available to book online. Here is the listing for one of the sessions:

Music Making

5.30 - 7pm

Brass, Woodwind, string and percussions players of all standards getting together to play simple music together led by the Stockport u3a Music Making Group. Music will be provided.

Unfortunately, we were not sent any details of those who had booked! I contacted the organising committee and was asked to compose a letter to participants to be forwarded on my behalf, asking the participants to contact me with details of their instrument, so I could either send them a link to download their music or arrange to print it for them. I was then very busy replying to all the emails!

Despite all the earlier hiccups, the workshops went very well and were thoroughly enjoyable. Several people had just booked for 1 day, but asked to come to the 2nd session as well. One lady said our workshops were the highlight of the Festival for her!

Another lady who lives in Rochdale has now joined our Music Making Group on a permanent basis. There was an official photographer at the Festival and this is a photo taken at one of our workshops. Lots of us are out of view but Roger (our conductor and co-leader) can be seen in the centre of the group.



The whole Festival was a wonderful experience. It was based at York University with beautiful surroundings and we had wall-to-wall sunshine for the whole 3 days. On arrival, we were directed to where we had to register and were given a u3a lanyard which we had to wear all the time we were on campus. The colour of the card attached to the lanyard indicated whether people were officials or attendees. For attendees, the colour also indicated whether people had booked for a single day or for the entire 3 days. We were also given a Festival programme, a u3a bag and a u3a pen.



The programme was absolutely packed with activities making it really hard to choose which ones to go to. Here is the programme just for Friday afternoon and evening. It does not include sporting activities and musical performances which were in a different section of the programme.

- 1.30 pm Richard the Northern King
In the Footsteps of the Georgians – a walk from the City Centre
AI in the back garden
-
- 2.00 pm Floral Crown Workshop
Games room re-opens after lunch
Play Reading
Egyptology a lecture from Joanne Fletcher
Hatha/Kunadlini yoga
-
- 2.30 pm Summing up the 19th Century
Knit and Natter drop in with 1 to 1 tatting – bring your projects
-
- 3.00 pm Yoga
York's Brushstrokes with History
-
- 3.15 pm Music Making with Stockport u3a
-
- 4.00 pm Plato et al
-
- 4.30 pm Art Aviation and languages research using AI
Juke Box Jury – remember that?
-
- 5.00 pm Poetry Greats
Laughter Yoga
-
- 5.30 pm Life Drawing
-
- 7.30 pm Games room reopens
-
- 8.00 pm Christopher Marlowe – a talk
Open Mic – come and join the audience
-
- 10.00 pm The Night Sky – stargazing on the 22 Acres
(indoors at 9.00 pm if cloudy/rainy)

We understand that a similar Festival is to take place at York in the summer of 2026. I can't wait!

Sheila Fleming Article and photographs.



MY JOURNEY TO TAI CHI

When I was in my late 20's I became interested in the Martial Arts, it was during the time of Bruce Lee and Jackie Chan, and Kung Fu starring David Carradine was on the television. I decided to look further into the Martial Arts, so I went to Moss Side and joined a Shotokai karate class where I found out that I really enjoyed it.

When I took my orange belt my sensei asked me to go into a competition, and I was doing alright until I was put up against a black belt, his first kick was a front kick to the stomach which took the wind out of me, and I could hardly breathe. It didn't put me off and eventually I joined a karate club in Marple because it was nearer to home. I found Bujinkai very similar to Shotokai and I soon adapted to my new style. A few years later I was sparring with my sensei and he kicked me and broke two of my ribs, it certainly isn't a gentle art. It wasn't until I was due to retire that I realised that all this punishment to my wrists, elbows and shoulders was going to affect my mobility.

My wife Sheila had already retired and had joined the u3a where she practised Tai Chi for Arthritis. When I retired, I joined the class which was

being taught by Sylvia Hill and enjoyed it so much that I joined another Tai Chi class which enabled me to practice three times a week.

When Sylvia retired, we had another teacher, Andrea Ward, who taught us something completely different and much more varied and interesting.

Andrea was a student of Tai Chi like me and liked trying different options.

Eventually Andrea announced to the class that her “path lay in a different direction” and said that she was going to retire. This left us with no leader and the prospect of having to close the class. It was at this point that I asked the class if they would like me to take over from Andrea and continue with Tai Chi.

I have named my class “Tai Chi for Health” because it enables me to borrow parts from other Tai Chi styles which I think they may enjoy. At the same time, I asked Ann Daniels if she would assist me and her help has been invaluable.

We Teach Qi Gung and a form based in the Yang style. My greatest pleasure is when a novice student joins us, and I can see how they improve over the following weeks. I have introduced breath work and relaxation to the class, and they all enjoy the sessions.

I would like to thank all the students for their continued support.

Alex Drysdale Article and photograph

Stockport u3a’s website. Don’t forget the website contains all the information you need about our meetings and special events.

www.stockport.u3asite.uk

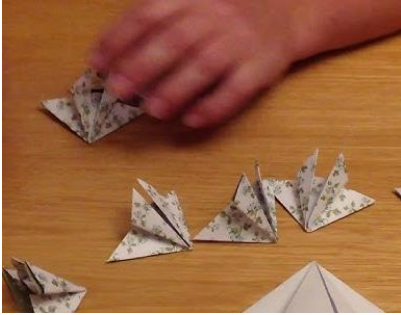
HANDY CRAFTERS

Note our new name. The u3a is here for you to experience new pastimes, hence the name the University of the Third Age. The Handy Crafters meet every second and fourth Thursday of the month at Dialstone Methodist Church.

We can supply teach -ins for all the following subjects: -

KNITTING CROCHET EMBROIDERY





CARD MAKING in different mediums including: - TEA BAG FOLDING IRIS DECOUPAGE PIN CARD EMBROIDERY.

If colouring or painting is for you, we have members using the colouring books for adults. The Works have the best selection

of adult books, they also have crayons, paint, coloured pencils, paper and card blanks at very reasonable prices.

If you have a project on the go you can bring it the class. Since Christmas we have had a member bring a Lego flower kit of chrysanthemums in a pot only eight inches high.

Come along and talk to us, tell us your interests and we will try and help.

CONTACTS: - BERNICE DAVIS and JOYCE GOODWIN

Article Joyce Godwin Pictures Google



And we are not exactly quiet while we craft, this is a poem written by one of our past members.

IT'S A WONDERFUL NOISE

Ladies meeting, conversation flowing
Barely a whisper at first
Decibels rise and go unchecked
Totally unrehearsed.
Women's ability to speak as one
On any subject matter
A cacophony of sounds
Amidst all the clatter
Where cups and saucers
Encircle the platter
Throats become dry
With the increased chatter.
It's time for coffee
And time for cakes
Add to the sounds cutlery makes.
With skilful hands
And all its complexity
They master their crafts
With wonderful dexterity.
Is nothing beyond them
I hear you ask
For women still win
Regardless the task.
Mixing the crafting
With incessant chatter
Men watch and praise
Attempts made to flatter.
The women stare back
And the men quickly scatter.

Roy White.

NEW MEMBERS

We would like to welcome the fifty people who have become members in the last year.



Rita Akehurs
Theresa Ashton
Caroline Barlow
Julie Barnett
Cynthia Bowden
Monica Brinkman
Anne Butterworth
Jaci Chesworth
Yu Lung Chiu
Susan Cliff
Eddie Clift
Angela Coulthard
Sylvia Craven
Ian Crawford
Sheila Darcy
Stephen Doyle
Peter Flaig
Barbara Grenfell
Karen Hall
Ian Harley
Peter Harrop
Pippa Jennings
Paul Johnson
Patricia Jones

Brigitte Lechner
John Ling
Susan Lomas
Gaynor McConnell
Clair McEwen
Pat Megram
Gail Morgan
Nancy Philbin
Alan Phillips
Pauline Potter
Ian Price
Janice Price
Adrian Quayle
Rona Ralph
Patricia Rapley
Warick Ream
Marion Ridgeway
Gillian Sherlock
Jacques Shunshion
Christine Soutter
Jeanette Stewart
Jan Sykes
Sarah Vassie
Andy Wedderburn

Diana Whatmough
Gill Wright

NEWSLETTER -OCTOBER

I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to this newsletter. I am now collecting items for the edition due out later this year in October. Please send your contributions as soon as you can.

These contributions can be u3a based, a trip or holiday you have been on, or just some information about a group you belong to. But they do not have to be u3a based, maybe you have been on an interesting holiday and would like to write a short piece about it. Maybe you've ticked something off your bucket list and would like to share it. Maybe you've written a poem, drawn a picture or finished a piece of craft work, I can accept photographs as well as written pieces. Please keep your contributions coming.

As I said earlier, I would like them by the 12th September so I can put the newsletter together for October. You can send them to any of these addresses: -

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