ASHBOURNE & DISTRICT u3a

Registered charity no. 1190748

It may become necessary to update some of the information that follows.

Please check the Ashbourne & District website to contact a group leader or to see whether changes have been made to dates, times and meeting places.

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Message from the Chair

Hi everyone, isn't it great that all our 58 groups are now in full swing? I hope you are all enjoying the wide range of activities available with Ashbourne u3a. I'm currently 'lying in a darkened room' from a memorable trip to Cambridge with the Travel Group. Definitely the embodiment of *Learn, laugh, live!*

Do please keep checking what is happening online as new activities and dates are always being added. We already have a really wide range of groups enjoying their weekly, fortnightly, monthly or occasional meetings. We are hoping to open up some second groups soon where existing groups have a waiting list. This has been very successful recently in Bridge and Chess, with a second Book Group imminent.

We have also had suggestions for new groups and are hoping to soon have enough players to re-start a Mahjong Group. We first organised this about 15 years ago (my Mother attended, she loved it, and this was how I first became aware of Ashbourne u3a). Our Tabletop Games Group recently trialled Mahjong and really enjoyed it.

We are also very pleased that a Theatregoers Group is about to recommence. Jill is in the process of finalising arrangements for visits to two venues, including to see *Cats* at Buxton Opera House in January.

We've had a suggestion to start a 'Cooking for one' Group. This would include not only demonstrations and individually making the meal, but eating it together as a group. We have a venue for this but need a leader. If you have a Food Hygiene qualification, we'd love to hear from you please.

Remember everyone, do check out the website for further info on all our lovely groups.

Cheers Sue

Monthly Meeting

On **6th November** at 2.30pm in Elim Church, Waterside, the subject will be the *Mercy Ships*. The hospital ships, Africa Mercy and Global Mercy, are a pioneering international health charity. They bring free life-changing surgeries to men, women and children across Sub-Saharan Africa. The talk will be followed by tea/coffee and biscuits and the cost is £2 each.

Art Appreciation Group



Our September meeting began with a most enjoyable Arty quiz. The photo shows the efforts of members to recall the names and nationalities of the artists represented. Then Gina contributed a short talk about her own unusual arty experience. Do you remember back to the summer of 2009? *One & Other* was the famous public art project conceived by British sculptor Antony Gormley where 2,400 members of the public successively occupied the empty Fourth Plinth in Trafalgar Square, London, for one hour each over 100

consecutive days and nights. Gina was one of those selected to occupy the Fourth Plinth and her allotted hour ran from 1.00 to 2.00am. She chose to read poetry and invited members of the Ashbourne community to contribute pieces.

The subject of our next meeting at 2pm on **Wednesday 28th October**, will be *The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood*, postponed from August.

Sue Cooke, Co-Leader

Badminton Group

The Badminton Group meets every Tuesday; 09.00 – 11.00 at The Leisure Centre and its only £5 for up to two-hours. We are a friendly bunch and welcome new members. If you don't have a racquet, the Leisure Centre should have a few free of charge. You don't need to attend every week or stay for the full 2 hours. Why not give it a try? You will be made very welcome.

Kevin Barclay

Beer Appreciation Group

Many of our BAG members have been on late summer / autumn holidays, touring foreign destinations and sampling local beers. It was good to hear from holidaying members about their beer drinking. The enthusiasm and dedication shown by them is applauded given they were on holiday and keeping in touch.

Below is a montage of those foreign beers to guess the countries. The first u3a member who emails the BAG leader with four correct countries will win a pint of beer. NB this competition is not open to BAG members!



Next meetings:

Thursdays: **22nd October, November 5th and November 19th**.

All 5pm to 7pm at the Hug and Heave, unless otherwise notified. Guest are always welcome at BAG.

That's all from me and good beer drinking,

Chris Robson

Beginners' Bridge Group

We currently meet in the Library on a Monday from 1.30 - 3.30 pm. As we are restricted in the number of tables we can have there, it means that, at the moment, the class is nearly full. However things can change, so if you have not played bridge before and would like to learn, then please contact me via the u3a website as space may become available. Thank you.

Pat Dixon

Bridge Improvers' Group



We are currently working our way through The English Bridge Education & Development's 20 lesson course which handles a different theme each time (Take Out X, Slam bidding etc). The sessions are made up of a few slides covering the basics, then 6 hands played in line with the learning and a chance to discuss, review and replay the hands on line after the session.

We also have weeks when we just play Bridge.

Everyone is making great progress and several people who play on a Thursday with the main club also now attend. If your Bridge is a bit rusty and you fancy playing again, then please get in touch via the u3a Website and arrange to come for a taster session.

Yowie Roberts

Bridge Group



During October, we had our first AGM with 26 members attending from across our three Bridge Groups. Tom Doggett, Chairman, presented an informative account on the development, growth and activity of the club and it is most pleasing to see the membership continue to grow with new members, as well as former players, returning to the game of Bridge. The transition of the club into the u3a has been a great success and Bridge members can now enjoy membership across multiple u3a groups within Ashbourne and the surrounding area. The presentation can be seen on the Ashbourne u3a bridge web: https://www.bridgewebs.com/ashbourneu3a/home.html

Note for your Calender: Bridge Club Christmas Fuddle on **December 17th** at Kedleston Golf Club. Details to follow.

Bridge benefit: Bridge provides continuous challenges to exercise the mind with 53 octillion combinations of cards and quadrillions of possible deals in the deck. The consequence is that no two hands are the same and you'll never tire of what the game will throw at you. So please join us!

Geoff Glover

Book Group

At our October meeting, we discussed *The Names*, a debut novel by British author Florence Knapp. This is a 'sliding doors' novel that explores how a single choice can branch into three completely different timelines. Mum, Cora, goes to register her newborn son's birth. She is in an abusive marriage with her domineering husband Gordon, who expects her to name the baby after him in a long standing family tradition.

At the Registry office, Cora hesitates and must choose between 3 names. Gordon (as demanded by her husband), Julian (meaning sky father, her own choice,) and Bear (the choice of her 9 year old daughter).

The story splits into 3 parallel trajectories, exploring how the boy's life, identity and relationships unfold in each scenario. The novel examines nature versus nurture, coercive control and how subconscious associations with a name can act as a self-fulfilling prophecy. It may sound heavy, but was in fact a page turner for most of us. It led to a lively discussion about the importance of one's given name, as well as the changing fashions in names.

Liz Hoof

Chatter Group

Our next meeting will be on **Thursday 12th November** when we invite you to join us for lunch at 12 noon at The Coach and Horses, Fenny Bentley.

New members are always welcome. Come along and enjoy either a hot meal or just a light lunch in

the company of friends. Please let me know if you would like to join us.

Sheila Allen

Chess Groups

Chess Group has another meeting this month, on **27 October,** and the November sessions take place on **10th** and **24th**. Our annual competitions are nearing their final stages.

Beginner Chess Group is continuing to develop well and has another session this month on **26 October**. The November sessions are then on **9th** and **23rd.**

If you are interested in playing chess, then please contact me for further guidance about our groups.

Duncan Meikle

Choir

We are having great fun with our Christmas songs. The *Cowboy Carol* is a simple arrangement, which gives our men the opportunity to show off on the 'Pink a ping pang pong' sections, and the sopranos are enjoying the 'Yoi Yippee' glissando effect. *Winter Lights* is turning out to be a favourite; a gently flowing piece in which the sopranos are often an echo of the alto part. Most people recognised *The Parade of the Wooden Soldiers* and Alan's kazoo adds to the jollity.

Sleigh Bells, a light, bouncy Ukranian folk tune, is our most challenging piece this year, because it is difficult to keep the timing together between the two parts. Try reading the words as fast as you can: Jing-a-ling-a-ling-a-ling-a-ling-jing-a-ring-jing, Jing, jing-a-ring-a-ling-a-ling. We've decided the audience won't notice if we get them in the wrong order!

Next meetings: **Thursdays October 22nd, November 5th and 19th**, all at Wyaston Village Hall, 2pm – 4pm. New members welcome; we promise you will go home smiling.
Janet Bunting

Craft Group

For our meeting on **Friday 20th November** at Wyaston Village Hall, from 2 – 4pm, we will be making the next item from the 12 days of Christmas - 5 gold rings. I shall be able to bring the necessary materials if members can bring their own sewing equipment and threads. Or just bring your own work and enjoy a chat, a cuppa and a mince pie as this will be our last meeting before Christmas.

I am still collecting knitted or crocheted angels for the Methodist Church if anyone would like to make any.

Jill Smith

Creative Writing Group

We have three meetings this month which means a lot of writing, but members of this group always come up with very different takes on the suggested subjects. Recent subjects were 1. Time to Prepare For…. 2. It Was at the Seaside….. 3. What a Sight! One member wrote of Autumn being the harbinger of winter – oh no, go away! I am looking forward to reading the results of the next meeting on **29th October** when the subjects will be 1. Upon a Time …. 2. The Toy I Did Not

Get…. 3. The Slip of Paper Fell Out of the Book…. We will also be meeting on **12th** and **26th** **November**.
These are suggestions only; if a member does not fancy any of them, they can write anything that they like.
Pat Hall

Crown Green Bowling Group

We have now completed our Summer program of CGB. The greens get extra care during the Winter so that they are in top condition to resume play in April. However, if you are having withdrawal symptoms, check out the Indoor Bowls webpage as they commence Monday morning sessions from October to April, at The Venue at Ashbourne Bowls Club on Wyaston Road.

Sue Hall

Cycling Group

In October, nine cyclists went on a less strenuous ride than normal, on the Monsal Trail, starting from Hassop Station and travelling to the far end near Buxton before returning to Hassop for lunch, with a stop for coffee at Millers Dale cafe on the way.

On **5th November**, we will be cycling on the Tissington Trail from Ashbourne to Alsop Station and returning to Ashbourne via lunch at Herbert's Tea Rooms, Tissington.

On **10th December,** we will be having our Christmas Lunch at the Royal Oak.

Details of all our rides are on the website.

Doug Billings

Disco Dancing and Social

We're back from our summer break and looking forward to our next Disco Evening on Friday, **October 23rd**! It's at St John's Church Hall at 7.00 – 9.30 pm and still only £5.00 per person. Everyone is welcome, whether you're one of our regulars or fancy coming along to see what we're all about! Please remember to bring your own refreshments.

You may need your residents' parking pass to park in the car park opposite the hall. If you don't have one, the charge is just £1.00 for the evening.

I hope to see lots of our regular dancers there, as well as plenty of new faces!

If you have any questions, please contact me via the Ashbourne u3a website. The full list of dates for 2026 is also available on the website. Please note that the **November** date has changed to **27th**. Looking forward to seeing you on the dance floor!

Tricia Barclay

Family History Group

We met in October at our new venue at Cubley Village Hall and had a very good turnout, including several new members. It was a bit of a trial and error session in our new premises, working out how best to set out the room to use the projector and screen. But the signs are positive, so this will now be our new home. At the meeting everyone got to say what their interests and specialities were, and we were able to give a few tips to two of the new members, who have promised to

report back with their progress next month!

The next meeting will be on **Thursday 12th November** at 2.30pm at Cubley Village Hall. New members are always welcome.

Vivien Tiano

French Group

The French Group started up again in October and we had a massive turnout for our first session, including 2 new members to the group.

We meet on alternate Mondays at Mayfield Memorial Hall at 2pm. Our November meetings will be on **2nd, 16th and 30th**. It's difficult to say what is a normal session because I try to vary activities. But there is always some vocabulary to revise/discover prior to the meeting, and there is usually a period where members get to talk in French, either to the whole group or to a partner. A refreshments break is a must, and we try to finish by reading together a few pages of the play *Marius*.

Anyone wishing to come for a taster session would be well advised to contact me, via the group page on the website, ahead of a particular meeting, to know what we will be doing then, as I am sure they will feel more comfortable if they have done a little preparation.

Vivien Tiano

Gardens Group

In October, we had a very interesting and informative talk on *Colour in the Winter Garden* from local horticultural expert, Jeff Bates. This was followed by homemade refreshments.

Our planning meeting for next year will be held at Wyaston Village Hall at 2:30 pm on Tuesday **November 10th.** Please email Mary or Sandra now with your ideas for next year's visits.

Our Christmas outing on Sunday **December 6th**, is to Arley Hall for a day of Christmas delights, including a proper Christmas dinner with all the trimmings. This visit is now full.

The autumn tidy of the park beds will take place on **October 21st** and if anyone would like to join in, please let Lynne Wood know. Mulching will take place on **October 28th**.

Sandra Holmes and Mary Marshall

Give it a go Group



Seven members took a leap of faith (literally) at Millers Dale as we completed our bridge abseils. Our fearless group leader was the first to climb through the safety fence and lean into the harness. With a deep breath and a smile to the camera phones, she stepped backwards and calmly walked the first tentative steps down towards the banks of the River Wye below. Following this successful descent, the other members each took it in turns learning to control the free rappel. The support the members gave each other was fantastic and a small group of strangers quickly became friends. Following a second trickier rappel, there were smiles and a huge sense of achievement all round, and much talk of "what's next?"

Bellringing: **Wednesday 18th Nov** 6.30 - 8pm, St Oswalds Church Ashbourne. Free (donations to the tower fund accepted).

Christmas Wreath Making: **Wednesday 2nd Dec** 10am – 12 in Mayfield Memorial Hall, £16pp.

See the website for full details and activities list. Clare Hamilton

Guitar Group



Each year, a festival is held in Ellastone where musicians and singers can perform on a professional sound stage to a live audience. This is the third year our guitar group has performed there, improving every time. We played 10 songs which were recorded by the sound engineers for us to listen to later. This is an excellent experience for us and enjoyable.

Another regular gig for the group is at the Mayfield Friday Club. We played two half hour sets of songs from the 50s and 60s. Copies of the lyrics were handed out to the audience and they all enjoyed singing along with much gusto. It was a very enjoyable afternoon, helped by cups of tea and some delicious cakes.

Alan Hall

Hiking Group

At the beginning of October, the hikers enjoyed a really beautiful day for their walk from Hathersage. We set off along the Derwent Valley Heritage Way as far as Grindleford, where we began our ascent of very beautiful Padley Gorge, with dappled sunshine peeping through the autumnal trees. We by-passed the tea room at Longshaw and took a gently ascending path below Burbage Edge, before the stiffer climb up to White Park Moss, the trig point and Ethel at the southern end of Stanage Edge, where we had lunch. From there, it was 'downhill all the way', first along Stanage Edge for a couple of miles or so, then down past North Lees and Hathersage church to the village and a large mug of tea at "Outside".

On **November 3rd**, we will be tackling the second leg of the Hope Pilgrimage, catching the train from Bamford Station to Hope, then following the pilgrimage route through Hope and across Win Hill back to the cars. For more details please contact Judy via the website.

Judy Harrison

Intermediate German Group

We are now in full swing and making more great and impressive progress. Everyone is enjoying developing speaking and listening skills with a dash of grammar revision and vocabulary acquisition thrown in. We split into small groups for conversation which gives everyone a chance to speak and develop confidence. We enjoy coffee and a chat before reading our book of short stories. All information is on the website.

Rhona Hunt

Landscape and Heritage Group

On **Friday 23rd October**, we will be visiting Coventry where we will have guided tours of both St Mary's Guildhall and the Cathedral which will be followed by a cream tea. One place has become available. Please contact me for further information.

Our winter programme of monthly speaker meetings commences in Mayfield Memorial Hall at 10.15 on **Friday 20th November** when Gerald Price will speak on *The History of Woodland*. £3 each.

The following meeting is at 10.15 on **Friday 18th December** when the subject is *A Tudor Christmas*. This will be followed by Christmas lunch at the Royal Oak, Mayfield.

Pamela Boura https://ashbourne.u3asite.uk/u3agroups/landscape-heritage/

Line Dancing Group

We dance mostly beginner level dances, with the occasional improver, to a variety of styles of music. In October, we learned *Easy Come, Easy Go*, a dance choreographed in 1998, and chose to dance it to *Any Man of Mine* by Shania Twain. Details of all the dances we have tried over the years are available on our page of the website.

New members are always welcome. We meet at Yeldersley Hall on Monday evenings. Contact me via the website if you are interested.

Sue Edmonds

Natural History Group

19th November will see us visiting RSPB Old Moor near Barnsley. On a previous trip there, we were treated to fabulous views of Bearded Reedlings / Tits.

https://www.rspb.org.uk/days-out/reserves/dearne-valley-old-moor/

New members always welcome, see the group's page of our website for more information.

https://ashbourne.u3asite.uk/u3a_events/rspb-old-moor/

Sheila Crawley

Padel Group

We're always looking for more members! Our current schedule is **Tuesdays** at 2pm, a 90 minute session. In addition we have a WhatsApp group which can be used to find partners any time you fancy playing.

Padel is a mix of tennis and squash, played in doubles with a padel on a small, enclosed court with walls. No equipment required except a good pair of trainers. Please consider your fitness level before taking part.

New members welcome, and as with all u3a groups, you're welcome to come along to watch and / or have a go before you commit.

Sheila Crawley https://ashbourne.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/padel/

Park Garden Volunteers

On **21st October**, we will be putting the beds to bed, so to speak, and we have room for some willing volunteers to help trim, tidy and a bit of pruning, edging and dividing, some of the more

enthusiastic of our planting such as Lamium, Heucheras, Japanese anemones etc. This is subject to weather. Please let us know via the Groups page if you would like to give us a hand. On **28th October** we intend, again subject to weather, to complete the process of bedding down by applying mulches which should also help to inhibit weed growth.

Lynne and Maria

Petanque Groups

All four Petanque groups have started to get out the warm coats, boots, gloves, woolly socks and hats as the weather starts to cool down. We're a pretty hardy bunch and try and play through the whole year, mainly to 'earn' our lunch at our playing venue, The Red Lion, Hognaston. Only continuous heavy rain sends us hiding indoors. The nice thing is though that we now have the alternative of going Kurling in Hognaston Village Hall if it's too inclement. Whilst some of our groups are pretty full throughout the year, we still have spaces in the Friday group, so if you are interested in playing, please contact Group Leader Beverley, via the website, for further details. Sue Hall

Photography Group

We meet on the first Thursday of every month at Mayfield Memorial Hall at 10:00.

The theme for October was *Village Life* which produced different aspects of the villages photographed by members. A photograph from each member can now be seen on the website.

Next month's meeting will be held at Mayfield Memorial Hall on Thursday **November 5th** at 10.00 when the theme will be *On the Farm.*

Please contact me via the website if you are interested in joining the group.

Helen Bluff

Pickleball Group

We have 3 sessions each week, Monday and Wednesday at 9 to 11am, and Thursday 11am to 1pm, all at Ashbourne Leisure Centre. No equipment required except a good pair of trainers. Please consider your fitness level before taking part.

New members welcome, and as with all u3a groups, you're welcome to come along to watch and / or have a go before you commit.

Sheila Crawley https://ashbourne.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/pickleball/

Quiz Group

Quizzes are on the 3rd Tuesday of each month from 2 to 4pm. October's will be on **Tuesday 20th,** and **November** is on **17th**.

Turn up on the day, no need to pre-book. Entry is £2 cash per person on the door. Cubley Village Hall is in charge of catering and provides interval drinks and cake at an additional cost of £1 per person per item (so £2 for a drink and cake).

The address is Cubley Village Hall, Derby Lane, Cubley, DE6 2EY. All the information for the group is on its page on the website.

Richard McLachlan https://ashbourne.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/quiz/

Science and Engineering Group

At our September meeting, Geof Cole presented *The Road to the Atomic Bomb (1896 to 1945)*, starting with the discovery of the electron and developments in early understanding of the internal structure of atoms. He then guided us through the subsequent studies of radiation and radioactivity leading to the suggestion that an atomic bomb was possible. Several types of bomb and fissile material were investigated, leading eventually to the Manhattan project in WW2, with enriched uranium used in the Little Boy bomb dropped on Hiroshima and plutonium used in the Fat Man bomb at Nagasaki.

At our next meeting on **29th October**, Ron Banks will present *The Concorde Noise Reduction Programme*, an overview of the work in the UK and France to reduce the noise of Concorde at the design stage, with personal reminiscences of the noise measurement programmes for the prototype and pre-production aircraft.

Steve Butler

Strollers

Two very pleasant walks for November:

DENFORD on **9th November**. Note that booking is required.

Canalside walk kindly led by Brian. Another pleasant 3 mile canalside walk with a junction where two canals cross. Refreshments at The Hollybush, Denford Road, Leek ST13 7JT following the walk.

Meet at The Range end of Waterside to car share and leave at 1pm prompt for Denford, Leek. Please let Karen know if you wish to join the walk.

HOGNASTON on **23rd November**. Note that booking is required.

3 mile walk from The Red Lion at Hognaston, kindly led by Sally, along a bridleway through woods and fields to Carsington Visitors Centre. Return to Hognaston along the Bridleway. At this time of year the path in the wood may be muddy. There is a gradient at the end of the walk. Meet at The Range end of Waterside to car share and leave at 1pm prompt for Hognaston. The Red Lion have kindly agreed that we can use their car park as they are closed on Monday. Do it ourselves refreshments in the Meeting Room in the church next to The Red Lion. Please let Karen know if you wish to join the walk.

Karen Tallent

Tabletop Games Group



The group will meet in Ashbourne library at 2pm on **Fridays 13th, 20th and 27th November.** New members and new games, are always welcome.

During October, we have played Mah Jong and we are hoping to find a leader willing to set up a separate group for this.

Sue Edmonds

Theatregoers Group

A new name and a new leader for our theatre loving group. Thank you, Peter and Pauline for all the years of organising the theatre excursions. A programme of visits for 2027 is making good progress and the first will be sent to members of the group shortly.

Jill Dudfield

Travel Group

Twenty of us have just had a memorable four days in Cambridgeshire, with so many fascinating places to explore.

Day 1's highlight was definitely The National Justice Museum in Nottingham. What an amazing place over 5 floors, including the caves, on the site of the former Nottingham Crown Court. Costumed characters brought to life the features of social justice through the centuries. Thought provoking and fascinating.

Day 2 included a coach tour of Cambridge with a local guide sharing lots of information. Our stop at the American Cemetery was so poignant. We then explored the city before moving onto the lovely Ely Cathedral. We particularly enjoyed the audio commentary and many of us were lucky to hear the final rehearsal for a concert that evening. The singing and acoustics making the hairs of the back of your neck stand up.

Day 3 part 1 was the visit to Imperial War Museum Duxford, still a working airfield, with hundreds of retired planes. Many were lucky to see two Spitfires roar along the runway and soar around the area with that unforgettable roar, plus a walk inside Concorde 101.

Day 3 part 2, the favourite activity for many of us, was punting on the River Cam, with the lovely Ed sharing so much of the history of the eight Colleges and bridges we floated by. Just great.

Day 4's highlight was sailing around Rutland Water on the Rutland Belle whilst eating a Cream Tea.

Now back home for a rest. Over and out!

Sue Hall

Weekend Lunch Group

October saw us at the White Hart in Duffield where, as well as their usual weekday menu, they have a carvery. This event was well attended and a good meal enjoyed by all. A venue for November has yet to be decided as a couple of 'possibles' have been ruled out as not up to our standard, so we may well visit one of our old favourites. As ever all members will be invited by email and anyone else wishing to join us can get in touch via the Group's web page.

Lynne Wood

Wine Appreciation Group

We would like to invite all members (and any friends that they would like to bring along with them) to our annual *Choosing Wines for the Festive Season* event which is to be held in St Oswald's Church Hall in Ashbourne on **Friday 20th November.** The evening will start at 7.30 pm and will include tasting six different wines. As usual, there will be a quiz and a table top quiz to accompany the event. Tickets are priced at £12.50 each and can be obtained from the Treasurer, Sue Edmonds, via the u3a website. We are looking forward to seeing you all.

https://ashbourne.u3asite.uk/u3a_events/choosing-wines-for-the-festive-season/ Jan Dodd

Yoga Group

We restart activity on **8th October** for a four week block of sessions. The Group remains full at the moment but numbers will be reassessed once the autumn term has started.

Sessions are held at Mayfield Memorial Hall on **Thursdays** at 3pm to 4.30pm. The class fee is £3 per session. To be placed on the waiting list, please contact me via the web site.

Sue Copson

Editor: Pamela Boura 18th October 2026