



Newsletter October 2022

Interest Groups Timetable for November 2022

Please note that this timetable could be subject to change at any time.

Group	Date	Time	Venue
Monthly Meeting	Tue 22nd	2 pm	Congregational Church, Ashby. Julie Ede "Marilyn Monroe"
Arts and Crafts	Thu 3rd	10 am	2 Marlborough Way
Bridge	Mon 7th	7 pm	Ivanhoe Club
	Mon 21st	7 pm	Ivanhoe Club
Calligraphy	Tue 8th	10 am	At Di's. Word of the month is Book
Computers	Wed 2nd	2 pm	16 Winchester Way
	Mon 21st	2 pm	16 Winchester Way
Digital Photography	Thu 3rd	10 am	16 Winchester Way
Drawing and painting	Wed 16th	10 am	2 Marlborough Way Theme "Getting ready for Christmas"
Family History	Wed 9th	2 pm	2 Marlborough Way
Gardening	Thu 17th	2.15 pm	Packington Village Hall. Talk by historian Danny Wells on 'The English and Gardening'. £3
History	Thu 24th	2:15 pm	Packington Village Hall. Roger 'Bis' Bisgrove - 'Trouble and Strife, the challenge of finding a wife (marriage law!)
Industrial Heritage	Wed 23rd	TBA	Hack Green Secret Nuclear Bunker, Nantwich
Literature	Tue 8th	1:30 pm	Meeting at Sandra's house
Lunch	Thu 10th	12 for 12.30 pm	The Mill Wheel, Ticknall Rd, Hartshorne DE11 7AS
Medium Walks	Mon 14th	9.45 for 10am start	Meet at Staunton Harold Reservoir CP, Calke Rd, Melbourne DE73 8DL
Music Appreciation	Wed 2nd	10 am	At Brenda's, 36 Willesley Gdns

Interest Groups Timetable for November 2022 cont.

Group	Date	Time	Venue
Recorder	Thu 3rd	10 am	St Matthew's Community Hall, Overseal
	Thu 17th	10 am	
Science & Technology	Mon 14th	2 pm	Ashby Alliance Evangelical Church. Phil Richardson - The Social Challenge of Nuclear Waste
Short Walks	Fri 18th	10 am	Meet at Ticknall car park
Supper Club	Thu 24th	7.30 for 8 pm	The Bull and Lion, Packington
Walking	Tue 1st	9.45 for 10 am start	Newdigate Arms, West Hallam DE7 6HW
	Tue 15th	9.30 for 10.15 start	10 Rydal Gardens LE65 1FJ Gather for cobs at Kevin's house before the walk
Wine Appreciation	Wed 16th	7 pm	Annie's house

Interest Groups Timetable for early December

Group	Date	Time	Venue
Recorder	Thu 1st	10 am	St Matthew's Community Hall, Overseal,
Digital Photography	Thu 1st	10 am	16 Winchester Way
Arts and Crafts	Thu 1st	10 am	2 Marlborough Way.
Bridge	Mon 5th	2 pm	Ivanhoe Social Club
Walking	Tue 6th	9.45 for 10 am start	TBA
Music Appreciation	Wed 7th	10 am	Sallie's at Woodside Cottage, 61, Melbourne Road, Newbold. LE67 8JH
Computer	Wed 7th	2 pm	16 Winchester Way
Social Events	Thu 8th	12.30 for 1 pm	Willesley Park Golf Club. Christmas lunch

HELP & WELFARE

Covid

We remind you that we cannot guarantee that all members or other participants at u3a meetings or gatherings will have been vaccinated nor that they are virus-free and that it is up to individuals to decide whether or not they are comfortable with the risks of mixing in groups when the virus is still very much at large. Especially as the new variant seems to be much more transmissible.

Welfare

Our Welfare person is Sharon Woodland. Sharon can be contacted at welfare@ashbyu3a.co.uk

If you know of any member who is unwell or isolating or has a family member who is unwell, please contact Sharon or any other committee member and we can see if there is anything we can do to help, whether it is collecting shopping or prescriptions, having a chat or just sending a card.

REMEMBER WE HAVE A NEW BANK ACCOUNT

As some of you may know we have been trying for ages to get internet banking to reduce bank charges and to make life easier for Val, our Treasurer, and we have had to change bank from HSBC to the Co-op in order to do so. The new account is now active and so bank transfers can now be made to:

Co-operative Bank. Sort code 08-92-99 Acc. no. 67259878.

Cheques will still be accepted. Make any cheques payable to "Ashby u3a" as before.

BURNS SUPPER

BURNS SUPPER at Willesley Park Golf Club on Thurs 26th Jan. 2023, 7 for 7.30 pm

There will be Traditional Fayre consisting of:

Soup - Haggis, neeps and tatties - Cranachan.

Meat and vegetarian options will be available for non-haggis eating Sassenachs.

The Programme will consist of:

Piping in of the Haggis

Address to the Haggis

Toast the Haggis

The Selkirk Grace

Address to the Lassies

Entertainment

Auld Lang Syne

£28.50 inc. wine & a wee dram for toasting the Haggis

Tickets are on sale now from Bill and Avril at socials@ashbyu3a.co.uk or 01530 413182 or at the monthly meetings.

Payment can be by bank transfer to Ashby u3a, Sort Code 08-92-99 Acc No. 67259878, marked Burns Supper or by cheque payable to Ashby u3a sent to Avril Wilson, 8 Rotherwood Drive, Ashby LE65 2JD

CHRISTMAS LUNCH

We are having our Christmas lunch at Willesley Park Golf Club on 8th Dec. 2022, 12.30 for 1 pm

If you wish to join us please contact Avril at socials@ashbyu3a.co.uk or 01530 413182 and send her your name and menu choices (just the number or letter of each course i.e. 1, A, X) from the menu below plus any dietary requirements (most can be catered for).

Payment can be by bank transfer to Ashby u3a, Sort Code 08-92-99 Acc No. 67259878, marked Xmas or by cheque payable to Ashby u3a sent to Avril Wilson, 8 Rotherwood Drive, Ashby LE65 2JD

Avril will also be taking orders and collecting monies at the next monthly meeting on Tues 25th Oct

Menu

- 1** Roast Parsnip & Apple Soup – Pancetta Croutons (VO)
- 2** Duck Parfait – Bramley Puree – Brioche – Picked Blackberries
- 3** Beetroot & Gin Smoked Salmon – Sourdough & Lemon Butter - Cucumber & Dill Crème Fraiche
- 4** Glazed Red Onion Tart Tatin, Goats Cheese, Rocket & Toasted Pine Nuts (V)

- A.** Roasted & Butter Basted Turkey – Pigs in Blankets & Chestnut Stuffing – Thyme Roast Potatoes
- B.** Glazed Braised Belly of Pork – Buttered Roast Potatoes – Caramelised Onions – Cider Gravy – Crackling – Pork Stuffing
- C.** Oven Roasted Sea Bass, Herb Crumb – Olive Oil & Samphire Crushed New Potatoes – Prawn & White Wine Butter Sauce
- D.** Walnut & Butternut Squash Roast – Creamed Juniper Savoy Cabbage – Sautéed Potato – Red Wine Reduction (V)

(All Served with Seasonal vegetables)

- W.** Egg Nogg Crème Brulée – Mulled Berries – Butter Biscuits
- X.** Traditional Christmas Pudding – Brandy Custard- Spruced Fruit & Nuts
- Y.** Dark Chocolate Torte – Cherry Ice Cream – Kraken Rum Caramel
- Z.** Selection of Cheese – Cranberry Chutney – Celery & Nuts

Coffee & Mints

VO = vegetarian option. All choices can be provided in GF and/or DF

3 courses £26

LAST MONTH'S MEETING

"Leicestershire Industrialists and their legacies" by Roger 'Bis' Bisgrove.

Roger, or Bis as he is known to all, stepped in at short notice when our planned speaker had to withdraw due to family health issues.

Bis told us of various industrialists through the centuries who had not just made large fortunes here in Leicestershire but had given, donated or funded different legacies to the people of the county.

He started with William Wyggeston, 1467 to 1536 who was a wool merchant. He made a fortune from wool which was a major industry in the 15th and 16th centuries. He founded a hospital in 1513 to give accommodation to 24 poor people. Wyggeston's Hospital is still going today and has three premises in the city providing sheltered accommodation and residential care for many local people. Much of its funding comes from the land, over 3500 acres, which he also donated to the hospital. The hospital's trustees went on to found a school for 300 pupils in 1876 which became Wyggeston Grammar.

Joseph Wilkes, 1733 - 1805, owned many collieries in the area and was one of the first to use Newcomen steam engines to pump water out of the mines to allow them to be dug deeper yet stay dry. He owned cotton mills in Measham and Ashby and many coaching inns. He founded the Burton Boat Co and was a shareholder in the Ashby Canal. Wilkes owned a brickmaking company and was one of those who, when the government imposed a brick tax, made double sized bricks, called Gob bricks to halve his tax bill. They can still be seen in some buildings in Measham. He was one of the founders of Smithfield Market in London. He was also one of the rectors of Higham Church and his great, great grandson became headmaster of Repton School before becoming Archbishop of Canterbury in 1944. Wilkes also teamed up with Robert Peel to set up a number of banks in the area including one in Ashby. Robert Peel's son, also Robert, was MP for Tamworth and helped found the Tory Party and also famously founded the Metropolitan Police.

Sir George Beaumont inherited a dilapidated building in Coleorton which he had rebuilt into Coleorton Hall. A good amateur artist himself, he hosted many artists, writers and poets at the Hall and was the major influencer of taste in the arts. He had a large collection of paintings many of which he donated to the government of the day on condition that they also bought the collection of John Julius Angerstein and housed both in a suitable building. Hence was founded the National Gallery. Among Beaumont's guests were Wordsworth, Constable, Walter Scott (who wrote Ivanhoe whilst staying at the Hall) and Josuah Reynolds. On Reynold's death, Beaumont erected a memorial to him in the grounds of the Hall. It bears an inscription by Wordsworth and was painted by Constable.

Charles Bennion was a manufacturer of shoe-making machines. When the Grey family (descendants of Lady Jane Grey) offered to sell Bradgate Park to Leicester city Council in the 1920s, they refused it, so Bennion bought it and gave it to the people of Leicestershire in perpetuity. It now has 900,000 visitors annually.

More recently, David Wilson joined his father's joinery business in 1960 and gradually moved it into house building. In 1970 they erected 150 houses. By 2000s they were building over 5000 homes a year. In 2007 Wilson sold the business to Barratt's for £2.2bn, just before the housing recession in 2008. In 1995 he created the David Wilson Foundation which he and his family personally fund and which is focused upon advancing the health of the community, especially younger members. He also donated £2m to Leicester University towards the rebuilding of their library which now bears his name.

Bis also told us of many more industrialists, too many to mention here, who have not only made their fortunes here in Leicestershire, but have given much of it back to the county and the nation.

GROUP REPORTS

Arts & Crafts

October 6th

We had to muddle along this month without Sharon, but 5 regular ladies and two welcome visitors came along and we continued with the clay flowers, and the macramé projects.

Next month Sharon will be back, and we will all meet at 10am on Thursday 3rd November at 2MW.

(report by Christine)

Bridge

Numbers attending the afternoon sessions have been slowly declining, so it has been decided that in future the Bridge group will now meet fortnightly on Mondays at the Ivanhoe Social Club from 7 to 9pm. Free parking is still available.

The schedule may change occasionally so please check the website. The next meeting will be on Mon 7th Nov.

Calligraphy

October 11th

5 members of Ashby's U3A calligraphy group met at Diane's house in Blackfordby.

Until Christmas we are taking a relaxed and creative approach with a different theme each month. This month's theme was COFFEE which we could interpret using different fonts and styles. We all worked away stopping briefly, and appropriately, for coffee and will finish off our work at home.

We will meet next month when the new word will be BOOK.

Computer Group

The Computer Group is still able to help people with their computer, tablet or smartphone problems. Obviously we can't do repairs, but if you have software problems or other difficulties email help.computer@ashbyu3a.co.uk or phone John Howlett on 01530 461774 and someone will have a look at your problem and get back to you. Or you can come along to one of our meetings in person.

17th October

There were only six of us today, including Pauline, a new member and only one real issue: to get Pauline's laptop up and running.

It seemed to be fine, so we loaded a copy of Family Tree Maker 2005. That loaded very slowly but successfully. A short demo of how to use it followed. However, the laptop ran into problems and stalled on a Windows Repair routine.

Pauline switched off and tried again. No change. Later, at home, she managed to do a System Restore and her laptop now runs well.

Digital Photography

5th October

We had six today, including a new recruit.

It was decided that as the autumn is still not well enough advanced for all the colours to come out, we would stay in for the session. We will, however, get out during the month and take some autumn colours photos for a critique session next time.

We instead discussed the history of film, from daguerreotypes, through glass plates to paper film, with an interesting diversion into movie film. This also prompted a discussion into the 'optics' of moving film and what the eye sees and does not see.

It was also decided that Steve would take a look at the photos used for the Open Day as part of a talk about Composition but that would have to wait for another time as he will be away next month.

We next meet on Thursday 3rd November at No 16.

Drawing and painting

October 19th

The October Meeting was well supported, and we welcomed Sue who joined us for the morning. The theme was 'Harvest' which resulted in some colourful interpretations.



Megan's mushrooms

For other paintings and drawings see the Group's webpage for their Gallery.

The next meeting will be 10 am November 17th at 2 Marlborough Way. The theme will be 'Getting ready for Christmas'

Gardening

20th October

Today we had a very successful meeting. We started with a demonstration given by Tina from the Toolbox shop on Market St, on making an autumn wreath using foliage she had collected this morning. At the end she revealed a large wreath which she had also made today and donated it to us to raffle off alongside our free plant raffle. We then had soup that had been made by some of our gardening group members.

I announced that we will be doing a coach trip in June to Michael Heseltine's garden and arboretum with a stop off at Leamington Spa for 2.5 hrs on the way. This will have to be booked by our next meeting in November as this garden is rarely open to the public and will have a limited number of tickets

Lunch

13th October

For October's lunch we returned to the Greyhound at Boundary which we last visited in February. A goodly turnout of 19 members attended, even though we were without Colin and Sharon who were still away. The pub is best known for its carvery for which most people opted, but 2 or 3 chose from the extensive menu of pizzas and other tasty-looking homemade food. Service was very good and swift, some of those ordering off the menu receiving their food before many had returned from the carvery counter. Despite the generous portion sizes, many were still able to find room for pudding which I understand were equally delicious.

Everyone seemed to enjoy the meal and the company.

Next month we shall be eating at the Mill Wheel at Hartshorne. Colin and Sharon are due back very soon and should be joining us next month. The sign-up list will be with them once they return, so contact them if you wish to come along.

Supper club

27th October

Due to holidays, half term commitments and other clashes of people's calendars, only 7 were able to make it to the Royal Oak at Long Whatton. The others missed a treat! We had prebooked our food via an app that the pub sent us, so that individuals could view the menu and make their choices online.

On arriving the place was pretty busy, but service was efficient, prompt and friendly. Drinks were served and our first courses arrived quite soon after without the long delays we have often experienced elsewhere. The food was delicious and well presented. Main courses were even better with nobody having any complaints or quibbles about anything. When it came to desserts, even those who hadn't pre-ordered a pud relented and ordered something. Again delicious food well presented.

Splitting the bill is often a problem, but here our waiter had a tablet on which he noted what each of us had ordered including drinks and coffees and within a few seconds he was back with a printed, itemised bill for each of us which we could pay individually by card or cash at the table.

A very enjoyable experience both of the food and the service. We shall be back again, both individually and as Supper Club.

Science & Technology

10th October - 40 years a geologist by Bob Onions

Bob described his career as a professional geologist. He began by talking about his education and a trip made while at University in the late '60's to Arctic Norway. He followed this covering his time working on graduation as a Mine and Bush geologist in Botswana. He then spent some time talking about the Dinorwig Pump storage power station in North Wales where he spent some time as an Engineering Geologist. Following an MSc he covered the remainder of his career with Hanson as a Geotechnical Specialist in the quarry industry. He now is an occasional Geotechnical trainer for the MPQC the training and awarding arm affiliated to the UK quarry industry.

Bob showed several photos, and told many interesting anecdotes, about his times in foreign lands, especially when living in the bush in Botswana and after a brief wrestle with a recalcitrant projector, managed to show us an interesting video of Dinorwig power station.

Family History

12th October

An excellent day with ten present, including a new member, Pauline. We all mostly had a very productive day, with much interactive help.

John D has been working on his own project to trace the occupants of his son's 'new' early 19th century house through the Registers, Censuses, and maps, back to the time the house was built as part of a farm.

He worked with Pauline inducting her and identifying her requirements. She has done a lot of work in the past but has let it lapse; now she wants to get up to date. We managed to find what seems to be the death of an ancestor but as he might have died at sea there may be no Certificate to find. We discussed her programme to get back up to speed, and how to revive her Tree work. She has an old laptop, which we will look over in the Computer Group to see if she can press it into service. Offline John D identified additional documentation about her ancestor's Navy service and emailed it on to her.

We also briefly discussed with Richard adding data and photos to her iPad.

Jane has received her DNA results from Ancestry so was looking at some matches. She discovered that her Gran had another half-sister who moved to Australia. She has emailed a distant cousin with whom she is matched, who filled her in on how her gran's half-sister ended up in Australia.

Heather was able to find information about her maternal grandfather's grandparents, and additional information about her late husband's family.

Carolyn has learnt how to amend the data in Ancestry 'Life Story,' and is researching her great, great, great and great, great grandparents in Monks Bretton, Yorkshire

Ana was helped by Eileen in identifying DNA results attributable to individual parents: in the course of which it seems as if she may have Viking blood!

Richard worked on his admin, cross checking records and confirming information for ancestors in and around Bolton. Boring some would say, but essential to good record keeping!

Eileen is making good progress with her DNA results. She is getting to grips with the way Ancestry displays the contribution to one's genes from one's parents. Also made progress with Parish Records on her mother's side.

Dora is still ploughing through the Scottish records way back in the 17th century. She has downloaded her grandfather's will from 1891, but may need help deciphering the writing

Sylvia Dearing is steadily working through the 'ThruLines' feature of Ancestry to see if there are any unknowns to add.

We looked briefly at the clues which might suggest fruitful avenues of research, such as the number of genetic 'centimorgans' shared with the 'target'.

We next meet on November 9th.

History

27th October. Victorian Values and Enlightenment by Yogi Godwin

Our ever popular 'Yogi' Godwin delivered a very interesting talk to 40 members on Victorian Society in general and the Workhouse system in particular.

He reminisced about his early life, and that his parents threatened him with the Workhouse if he didn't pull his socks up at school. The mother-in-law of another member used to say very much the same thing if she misbehaved. It didn't seem to stop her!

The 19th century saw huge changes in society. There was significant immigration from Europe which was seeing great upheavals after the Napoleonic Wars, and the rapid application of new machinery to farms displaced many into the new cities. These in turn were being transformed by the burgeoning Industrial Revolution. At the start the balance was about 20/80 in favour of the country. At the end that ratio had reversed. This unfortunately led to severe overcrowding as the building of housing could not keep pace. Sanitation fell even further behind.

A significant factor in investment was the Slavery Act in 1838. This allowed for the Slave owners to be paid to release their slaves, but put huge sums into their hands to invest in the new industries and things like railways. The changes were marked in different ways, all of them with profound implications for society.

At the start of the century the fastest means of communication was the stagecoach, progressing at possibly 5 miles an hour (although improving rapidly to about 12 miles an hour as the road system was improved.) By the end there were trains that could reach 100 mile an hour at times, and the telephone.

New technology, such as the Bessemer Converter for making steel, also affected the fundamental processes of industry allowing a rapid growth in manufacturing and similarly rapid progress was made in medicine, sanitation and education.

But underlying much of society were the so-called 'Victorian Values' of hard work and self-reliance. These were actually a continuation of a mindset stemming back to the Middle Ages, which seemed to suggest that sickness and misfortune stemmed from some inner character failure or 'sin'. Out of this came the philosophy of 'Laissez Faire' or let society control itself without State interference.

People worked very hard, and life expectancy was short for the poorest and most manual of workers. Bad sanitation, poor safety at work, pollution of all kinds and no easily accessible medicine wrought a horrendous death toll. Yet the belief in discipline and one's place in life was so deeply entrenched that people found it very hard to break out.

Gradually the State started to roll back Laissez Faire as it became obvious that the work force could not deliver its best. Unions and clear-sighted entrepreneurs alike pushed for better safety and education.

The place of religion in all this is mixed, but as an example, in Leeds in 1840 there were about 200,000 people, with 2 churches and 39 chapels. But 451 taverns, and 98 brothels.

The 1841 Census revealed for the first time the actual distribution of different types of people in the population, and the range of jobs and occupations that existed. In particular it highlighted the huge imbalance between the poor and the well off. A typical poor labourer's wage might be 90d to 100d per week, but calculations suggest that 120d (10 shillings, or 50 pence today) would be the minimum for any sort of decent life.

Running parallel to all this, the changes in the Poor Law and Workhouse Systems were having to change to accommodate the changes in society. Between 1795 and 1815 expenditure on poor relief quadrupled, partly as a result of the Wars, and partly as a result of the disruptions to society of the changes mentioned above.

Conditions in the workhouse were set to be worse than those outside for even the worst employment. Penal in style, the discipline was absolute, and similar to that in the jails. Men and women were segregated as were the children. Tasks include picking oakum; punishments were such as breaking rocks. Running away was punished the most severely, and flogging was common. Although it was not supposed to be used on children below 14, Charles Dickens (who visited several workhouses) suggested that it was common for much younger children. Florence Nightingale did a great deal to bring the conditions inside Work houses to the notice of the authorities, but the fundamentally Public School/Military background of the politicians was very hard to break down.

But a sea change came when first, old age pensions were introduced in 1909, and then the Welfare State in 1947. These essentially rendered the Workhouse redundant. Paradoxically, the Infirmary system run by the Workhouses became the foundation of the public hospitals we have today, as many of the abandoned Workhouses were suitable for conversion into hospitals.

Yogi mentioned several people who rose to fame after being in the Workhouse including Charlie Chaplin and journalist and explorer Henry Morgan Stanley (he of 'Dr Livingstone, I presume' fame).

Altogether a fascinating look at the complex changes and currents influencing Victorian Society, and still at work today.

Industrial Heritage

26th October. Jodrell Bank radio telescope

Four full cars made their way across to Stoke and up the M6 to Jodrell Bank all arriving within a few minutes of each other. The weather was warm and bright despite it being the last week of October.

After queuing for ages to pay to get in due to their card reader machines working slow (I did suggest that they could do with a satellite link!) we walked through some nicely landscaped grounds to the brand new pavilion which opened in April this year. It looks a bit like a giant Hobbit house in being a shallow dome grassed over. The dome apparently is the same shape and size as the dish on the telescope.

Inside the displays about the origins of radio astronomy and how they are based on the work Bernard Lovell did on radar during the war were very cleverly and interestingly laid out. The large hi-res screens, video projections and sound effects are all state of the art.

We had hoped to visit the planetarium too, but it was half term for Cheshire and the place was quite busy. The planetarium had been fully booked. We did get to listen to a talk on Dark Matter and Dark Energy and how scientists are trying to find out if they exist and how to detect them if they do. All very interesting, but I think even in it's most dummed-down form, it still mostly went over our heads!

Some of us then took a walk around the big dish to take a few photos in the sunshine before heading back to Ashby.



Music Appreciation

5th October

The meeting at Neil's house was rather small this month due to several members being unable to attend due various other commitments. And as Dorothy had not expected to be able to make it, she hadn't prepared any tunes to bring. So it was down to three of us to provide the music.

Mike started with Eva Cassidy's poignant and beautiful rendition of "Over the rainbow".

It happened to be the exact 60th anniversary of the release of the Beatles first hit "Love me do" and so that was Mike's next choice.

Brenda's first choice was Nina Simone and "Nobody knows you when you're down and out". A lovely version of an old blues classic.

Neil had a Randy Newman theme this month and so started with Peter Gabriel and the Black Dyke Mills Band and "That'll do" from the film "Babe: Pig in the city" written by Randy. Another poignant song and a bit of a tearjerker.

Brenda returned with some jazz. This was Duke Ellington and "Take the A train" which dates from 1940 and became Ellington's signature tune. Her next choice was Gene Pitney and "Just one smile" Interestingly this too was written by Randy Newman. A very talented song writer and singer who often writes sad, satirical or ironic songs.

Mike's next choice was Ray Charles with "Georgia on my mind". Ray's version is one of the most popular but it was written and first performed by Hoagy Carmichael in 1930.

Brenda's then played us "On Broadway" by the Drifters. Just which version of the Drifters this was we are not sure as the line-up has changed many, many times. Over 40 people have been in the group at one time or another!

Neil had two more tracks to play us. Tom Jones and the Stereophonics with "Mama told me not to come" which was a big hit originally for The Three Dog Night in 1970 which was again written by Randy Newman and Neil followed this up with Randy himself singing "I miss you" a sad and somewhat embarrassing song to his ex-wife of 20 years previous!

As Neil had to be away, we finished early and closed with Mike's last choice "I feel free" by Cream, which is currently being used in a banking advert where it came to his attention.

Wine Appreciation

October 19th

As last month's blind tasting of red wines was a success, if not our ability to recognise many of the wines, Annie decided to repeat the exercise but this time with white wines.

From a blind choice of eight wines carefully disguised in sacking bags and chilling down in the fridge, five of us, including two new members, Tanya and Chris, managed to work our way through five different wines. We didn't finish them all off you understand, but neither did we spit any out!

From a NZ Pinot Gris to an Austrian Gruner Veltliner, via Rioja, Cote du Rhone Blanc and Rhine Reisling, we looked, sniffed, tasted and swallowed and between us managed to guess most of them wrongly again! We obviously need more practise at this blind tasting lark. However despite not recognising much of what we were tasting, we did mostly like what we tasted and were generally surprised at the value offered by Aldi, as this was the source for all the wines.

I, for one, was down there the next day to buy some of those we had tried that night.

Short Walks

21st October. Walk in Willesley Woods

Six people met at Oakthorpe picnic area, but unfortunately this did not include the leader who had forgotten he was leading a walk. This was soon remedied with a phone call from the group and the walk started about 5 minutes late.

It was a fine autumn day with the trees in various colours of green, yellow, orange and red. We kept to the better paths and we were soon into Willesley woods. The path led down to the lake where among the ducks and swans we saw a grey heron.

Further along the path we found a large number of newly planted trees with a sign saying one tree for every soldier killed in Afghanistan. This was close to the rock war memorial so we diverted through the trees to the rock but we took the better path back to the main circuit. We kept to this path for a while but took a grassy track out to the edge of the wood to spot where Oakthorpe colliery used to be. Apart from the roads that were obviously inherited from the pit there are two small concrete pyramids marking the sites of the two shafts.

We followed the road back to the picnic area car park. We discussed where to go for a hot drink and it was suggested the jungle madness cafe and the old miners welfare. As these are the same place, we stopped there for refreshments.

Medium walks

12th September. Carlton, led by Alison

Fortunately the weatherman (or woman) was wrong, again, it was a beautiful day with lots of sunshine and the predicted rain did not materialise until right at the end of the walk. Eight of us set off from Main Street, Carlton and our group included 2 new members to our select band of ramblers, and we hope we see them again in the future. The walk was across farm land to Shackerstone Railway Station and the leader thought mud might be an issue, but like the weather forecast, she was wrong. From the station we joined the Ashby canal at bridge 52 and came off at bridge 44, then across the railway line and back to the start point. The walk was 5.5 miles and took just under 2.5 hours.

Longer Walks

18th October. Rosliston, led by Mike G

On a beautiful sunny day, 14 turned up at the Bull's Head, Rosliston, for a 6.5 mile stroll through the South Derbyshire countryside, a variation on a walk last undertaken in August 2016. As before, our route took us out of the south-west corner of the village, through tree plantations and fields to Catton Lane, then on past Lads Grave (reputedly where a Civil War deserter was hanged and buried).

Continuing south-west, we headed over fields and along farm tracks past Overfields Farm before turning east to the edge of Raddle Farm Wood and on to Coton-in-the-Elms. We ambled through the village and headed south-east through Coton Wood and past Church Flatts Farm (the furthest point from the sea in the UK, according to the Ordnance Survey), then veered north-east to Park Farm, where we encountered a groin-stretching group of 6 stiles within ~200 yards! We subsequently headed north-west along the National Forest Way, past Botany Bay, along the edge of Penguin Wood, before turning off towards Rosliston just short of Calves Croft Farm.

Back at the Bull's Head, we enjoyed an excellent lunch, washed down by drinks courtesy of walk leader Mike Gibson, who was trying to forget that he had reached three-quarters of a century the previous day.

IF YOU WANT TO GET IN TOUCH, OUR COMMITTEE ARE:

Tony Smith	Chairman	chairman@ashbyu3a.co.uk	01530 831822
Anne Donegan	Business Secretary	secretary@ashbyu3a.co.uk	01283 760348
Val Reed	Treasurer	treasurer@ashbyu3a.co.uk	01530 564279
Iain Banns	Membership Secretary	members@ashbyu3a.co.uk	01530 416697
Colin Woodland	Groups Co-ordinator	interestg@ashbyu3a.co.uk	01530 413867
Peter Clement	Minutes Secretary	minutes@ashbyu3a.co.uk	01530 560894
Sharon Woodland	Welfare	welfare@ashbyu3a.co.uk	01530 413867
Bill Wilson	Speaker Organiser	speakers@ashbyu3a.co.uk	01530 413182
Mike Stow	Communications	webmaster@ashbyu3a.co.uk	01530 469152
Avril Wilson	Social Secretary	socials@ashbyu3a.co.uk	01530 413182
Colin Ellis	Member	membercolin@ashbyu3a.co.uk	01530 272592
John Pilgrim	Member	memberjohn@ashbyu3a.co.uk	-