

## Newsletter July 2023

### Interest Groups Timetable for July 2023

Please note that this timetable could be subject to change at any time. Please check the website for latest news.

Group	Date	Time	Venue
Monthly Meeting	Tue 25 <sup>th</sup>	2 pm	Congregational Church, Ashby. Our AGM followed by Dave Andrews and "100 years of the BBC"
Arts and Crafts	Thu 6 <sup>th</sup>	10 am	Packington Village Hall
Bridge	Mon 10 <sup>th</sup>	7-9 pm	Ivanhoe Social Club
	Mon 24 <sup>th</sup>	7-9 pm	
Calligraphy	Tue 11 <sup>th</sup>	10 am	At Anne's. "Pot Pourri" using all 4 previous fonts
Calligraphy 2	Wed 5 <sup>th</sup>	10 am	148 Woodside, Ashby.
Coffee and Chat	Wed 12 <sup>th</sup>	10 am	Upstairs at La Zouch Coffee House, Kilwardby St
Computer	Wed 5 <sup>th</sup>	2 pm	16 Winchester Way
	Mon 17 <sup>th</sup>	2 pm	
Croquet			Not meeting in July. Two meetings in August
Digital Photography	Thu 6 <sup>th</sup>	10 am	Meet at 16 Winchester Way to drive to Elford Hall, Church Rd, Elford, Tamworth B79 9DA
Drawing and painting	Wed 19 <sup>th</sup>	10 am	Location Sue's garden. Theme "The Seaside"
Family History	Wed 12 <sup>th</sup>	2 pm	2 Marlborough Way
French	Mon 10 <sup>th</sup>	11 am	Ivanhoe Club, Wilfred Place, Ashby
	Mon 24 <sup>th</sup>	11 am	
Gardening	Thu 20 <sup>th</sup>	2 pm	Self drive to The Dower House, Church Square, Melbourne DE73 8JH A guided tour with the Head Gardener, £6, no refreshments. There are tea rooms opposite in Melbourne Hall Courtyard
History	Thu 27 <sup>th</sup>	2.15 pm	Packington Village Hall. Dr A Featherstone - 'Victorian Melodramas'
Industrial Heritage	Wed 26 <sup>th</sup>	10.30 am	Snibston Colliery, Coalville
Literature	Tue 11 <sup>th</sup>	1:30 pm	At Sandra's house

Group	Date	Time	Venue
Lunch	Thu 13 <sup>th</sup>	11.45 for 12 pm	The Otter, London Rd, Kegworth, DE74 2EY. <b>Note the earlier time.</b>
Medium Walks	Mon 10 <sup>th</sup>	9.45 for 10am start	Meet at The New Lount Nature Reserve car park on Melbourne Rd, Newbold Coleorton LE67 8JH.
Music Appreciation	Wed 5 <sup>th</sup>	10 am	Neil's at 40 Willesley Gardens
Reading	Wed 19 <sup>th</sup>	2 pm	Annie's house
Recorder	Thu 6 <sup>th</sup>	10 am	St Matthew's Community Hall, Overseal
	Thu 20 <sup>th</sup>	10 am	
Science & Technology	Tue 11 <sup>th</sup>	2 pm	Packington Village Hall. Tim Sexton "A Year at Rutland Water"
Scrabble	Mon 5 <sup>th</sup>	-	No meeting this week due to holidays etc
	Mon 17 <sup>th</sup>	10.30 am	The Bulls Head, Ashby
Short Walks	Fri 21 <sup>st</sup>	10 am	Meet at Beacon Hill lower car park
Social Events	Fri 28 <sup>th</sup>	6 pm	Bowls Evening at Ashby Bowls Club.
Supper Club	Thu 27 <sup>th</sup>	7 for 7.30 pm	The Quorndon Fox, 46 High St, Quorn LE12 8DT
Walking	Tue 4 <sup>th</sup>	<b>9.00 for 9.15 am start</b>	The Globe, Snarestone DE12 7DB
	Tues 20 <sup>th</sup>	9.45 for 10 am start	Izaak Walton Hotel, Dovedale, Ashbourne DE6 2AY
Wine Appreciation	Wed 19 <sup>th</sup>	7:00 pm	Annie's house

### Interest Groups Timetable for early August 2023

Group	Date	Time	Venue
Walking	Tue 1 <sup>st</sup>	9.45 for 10 am start	The Tap House, Burton Rd, Ashby <b>NOTE change of start point</b>
Calligraphy 2	Wed 2 <sup>nd</sup>	10 am	148 Woodside, Ashby
Music Appreciation	Wed 2 <sup>nd</sup>	10 am	Sallie's at Woodside Cottage, 61, Melbourne Road, Newbold. LE67 8JH
Computer	Wed 2 <sup>nd</sup>	2 pm	16 Winchester Way
Arts and Crafts	Thu 3 <sup>rd</sup>	10 am	Packington Village Hall
Digital Photography	Thu 3 <sup>rd</sup>	10 am	Meet at 16 Winchester Way to drive to Donington Park Race Circuit, DE74 2RP
Recorder	Thu 3 <sup>rd</sup>	10 am	St Matthew's Community Hall, Overseal
French	Mon 7 <sup>th</sup>	10.30 am	Ivanhoe Club, Wilfred Place, Ashby

## **NOTICE OF AGM – 25<sup>TH</sup> JULY**

This year we shall be holding our Annual General Meeting immediately before the July 25<sup>th</sup> Monthly Meeting as usual.

The formal notice along with the Chairman's report, Treasurer's report, last years accounts and details of committee members standing for (re)election were emailed out to all members earlier this month.

## **CALL FOR COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

In the mean time we are looking for members willing to join the Committee. The job is not onerous; we meet once a month to discuss matters arising and to plan for the future. New committee members are not expected to take on any of the major posts such as Chairman, Treasurer or Membership Sec (unless they wish to!) but will take part in discussions and vote on any proposals. If you would like to join the Committee you can download the application form from our website under the Committee tab, or contact any committee member.

## **HELP & WELFARE**

### **Welfare**

Sharon Woodland, our Welfare person, can be contacted at [welfare@ashbyu3a.co.uk](mailto:welfare@ashbyu3a.co.uk) or 01530 413867

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.

## **BOWLS NIGHT**

We are holding our annual Bowls Evening at Ashby Bowls Club on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> July at 6 pm. Come along for a fun evening and try your hand at bowls for free. Bar open afterwards. The club can accommodate up to 20 people.

Contact Bill or Avril Wilson on [socials@ashbyu3a.co.uk](mailto:socials@ashbyu3a.co.uk) or 01530 413182 to put your name on the list.

## **NEW COFFEE AND CHAT GROUP HAS STARTED UP**

The Coffee and Chat Group had its first meeting this month. The intention is to do just what its name says, to meet up in the morning at a suitable coffee shop for a tea or coffee (and probably cake!) and have a chat about anything and everything. Nothing formal. Just come along, but please warn the group leader first so that they and the venue have an idea of numbers. See their first report:

### **28<sup>th</sup> June**

The Coffee and Chat group finally got under way on 28 June with an inaugural meeting at the La Zouch on Kilwardby Street. Six people got together and enjoyed tea and coffee and an indulgent slice of cake or pie.

Conversation flowed well and many and varied topics were covered. Each shared how they came to be in Ashby and a little about themselves. The two hours seemed to fly by.

The next meeting is scheduled for 12 July at the La Zouch in the "upper Room" at 10am

## JUNE'S MONTHLY MEETING

### 27th June. Rebecca Gregory - "Layers of Leicestershire - Uncovering the past through place names"

This month we had Rebecca Gregory from Nottingham University come along to talk about the history of English placenames, in particular those of Leicestershire. Rebecca is Assistant Professor in Historical Linguistics and Onomastics and co-editor of the Journal of the English Place-Name Society amongst other posts, so well able to explain how and why places got their names.

She started out by telling us that most place names are well over a 1000 years old but were usually not written down until the Domesday Book of 1086. Only places important to nobles or the church would be mentioned in any previous records. So place names got handed down verbally through the generations with slow changes in pronunciation as language changed.

As people rarely moved around very far, place names evolved from local descriptions of the place in the local dialect. As Britain has been invaded or settled by various races and tribes over the centuries, the names of places often reflect the language of the people who first settled in a particular spot.

The earliest known language in Britain is Brittonic (or Celtic) from around 450 BCE, followed by Roman Latin, Old English (Anglo-Saxon), Old Norse (Viking), Norman and then Middle English. It seems however that the Romans had little effect on local place names as their occupation was mostly administrative and so they were only interested in large towns and garrisons to which they gave Latin names. These names were likely not used by the local populace and would have disappeared when the Romans left in the early 5thC, although the suffix 'cester' or 'chester' from the Latin 'castrum' or 'fort' survived in many city names.

The Normans seem to have mostly put suffixes on existing names to denote their new land owners. Ashby de la Zouch being the obvious example. Alan la Zouche became owner of this manor through marriage during Henry III's reign.

Ashby is an Anglo-Danish word meaning ash tree farm. The -by part being a common Norse word for settlement. Hence Derby, Groby, Whitby etc.

Ashby's spelling has changed many times but was recorded in the Domesday Book as Ascebi, a name you may have seen on the doctor's surgery in Burton Rd – Ascebi House.

Interestingly 'thorpe' is a Saxon word which seems to mean a small settlement that expanded out from a larger one and was probably still dependant on it. Hence Oakthorpe and Donisthorpe.

Breedon on the hill is another interesting name. Bree is Saxon for hill, and 'dun' is Norse for hill. When the Vikings arrived they possibly didn't know 'bree' meant hill in Saxon. It was just a name. So they called it Bree's hill – Breedon, or Hill Hill! The Georgians or Victorians gave it the doubly tautological appendage, Breedon On The Hill.

Rebecca told us of far more derivations of names than I can possibly recount here, including some fascinating details of how field names can tell us the names of locals or what was grown on that land many years ago.

Altogether a fascinating story of our ancient past.

## GROUP REPORTS

### Arts and Crafts

#### 1st June

The ladies met on the 1st June eager to begin our next project. By popular demand we went back to Crystal Art which they find very relaxing. This time we have embarked on a large project which should take us through the entire summer.

Our numbers were down a bit from usual as it was half-term and grandchild minding was needed.

Our next meeting will be 6th July at the small back room of Packington Village Hall at 10 am.

### Calligraphy

#### 13<sup>th</sup> June

6 members met at Sue's to compare work on the topic of 'June'. This time the font was 'modern calligraphy' and once again we all commented on how difficult it can be, considering it looks such a flowing, easy font.

We finished off our work and continued to practise, in between coffee and biscuits!

Our final meeting of the summer is on July 11th and this time the subject is 'Pot Pourri' and is being left to everyone's choice of interpretation. Should be interesting!

### Calligraphy 2

#### 7<sup>th</sup> June

We are making progress with our venture into calligraphy. Our next meeting will be on Wed 5th July, 10am to 12.

### Computers

#### 19<sup>th</sup> June

Before the meeting the Help Desk had made a home visit to help a member whose laptop wouldn't power up. On inspection it was deduced that the laptop would have to be opened up to see what was wrong, so the member was given a trusted professional repairer to contact.

We discussed the systems which allow others to access your computer and effect repairs or other work. Definitely not to be advised unless you absolutely trust someone but can be a good way of solving problems when personal access is impossible.

Carolyn had a few things requiring advice. She was worried about a message about her Photostream being shut down. As she did not know what this was, it was possible to allay her fears. It is an app which if not used for a long time will be stopped. It is a Cloud system for photos to prevent a mobile device from being overloaded.

We discussed in general such Cloud systems, of which there are a few, including Dropbox, iCloud and Microsoft One Drive.

JD and MS resolved a minor problem in getting emails on an iPad marked as read. Up until the meeting it had proved impossible to do this, as the option was greyed out for some reason. On finding that the Virgin Email servers were down all over the country, the reason became obvious.

Carolyn also needed assistance getting her emails to show on her laptop, and also with a conflict between Windows Defender and the ASK toolbar. The ASK toolbar was removed. She was also shown how to stop unwanted apps loading on startup.

## **Croquet**

30<sup>th</sup> June

We had an enthusiastic group of eight this month - ideal to make up four doubles teams. Skill levels have shown a marked improvement since we began and the games are increasingly competitive.

However, there is plenty of room for expansion, as the lawns can take up to 24 players - why not give it a try?

Please note that there is no meeting in July, BUT two in August, on the Fridays of 4<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> August.

## **Digital Photography Group**

1<sup>st</sup> June

Seven of us travelled to Hick's Lodge 'on safari'. Intending to join in with their "Welcome" walk, but this turned out to be just being told to walk around by oneself. There was little doing at the Lodge itself, so we wandered off into the woods on the other side of the road.

The woods are in full late spring raiment, but the birds kept a low profile, so not a lot to see.

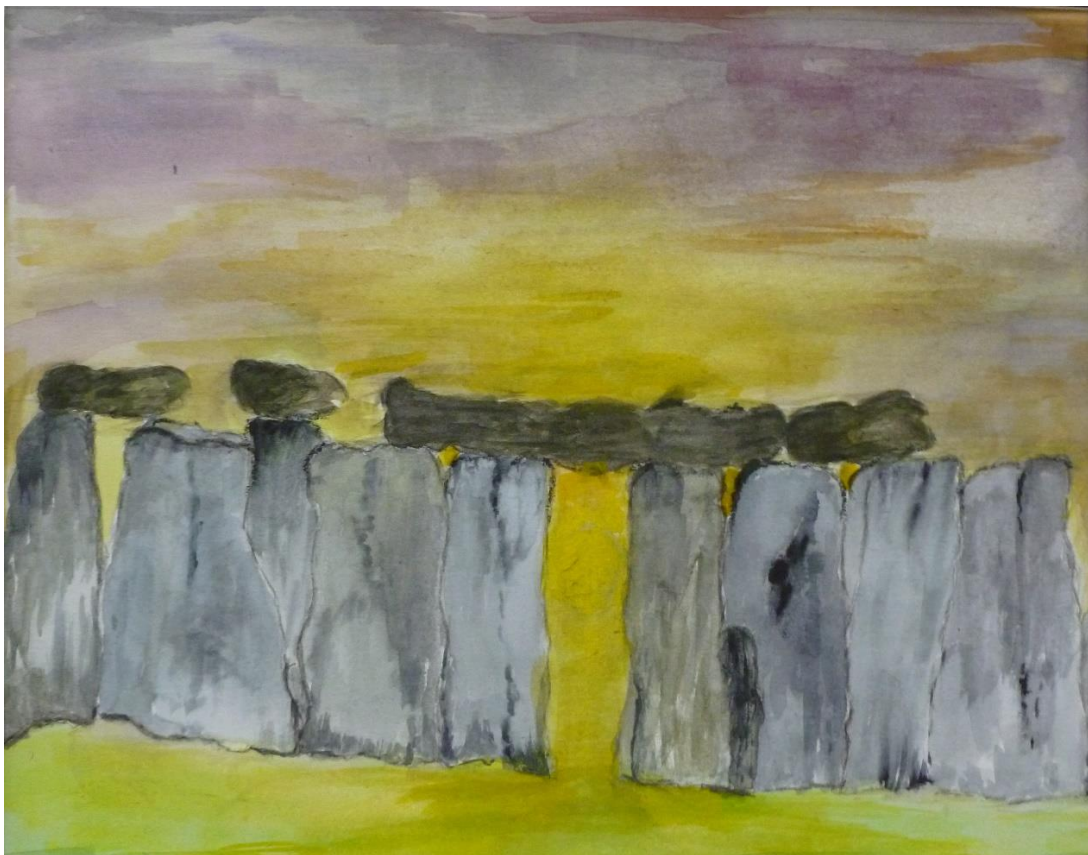
After about 2.5 miles and a very pleasant stroll, we all repaired to the café for coffee and cakes.

We next meet on 6<sup>th</sup> July at 16 Winchester Way to travel to Elford Hall.

## **Drawing and Painting**

21<sup>st</sup> June

It was a warm sunny morning to enjoy an "en plein air" art session in Lesley's beautiful garden. Appropriately the theme was "Here comes Summer".



Stonehenge at the Solstice by Christine

Next month, 10am, July 19<sup>th</sup>, we meet in Sue's garden, and the suggested topic is "The seaside".

## **The Family History Group**

### **14<sup>th</sup> June**

On a lovely warm day 6 turned out with one visitor: Linda, introduced by Mary, making 7 all told at table.

Dora is starting on research into her Dutch relatives on her mother's side. She has access to the Dutch site WieWasWie and has high hopes of this very useful site.

Jane is chasing down an anomaly with her great, great grandfather's date of birth and liaising with a second cousin.

Ana is trying to confirm several ancestors with the same first and surname. Two seem genuine, and may be two generations in the same family, but the third is a puzzle. We couldn't find her anywhere except on the 1939 Register. Seemingly correctly spelt, the only one we can find in other records that fits the life story is spelt Ann. More work to be done to sort this out!

Carolyn wanted to discuss DNA, but unfortunately we didn't have time. We will deal with this next time.

Eileen has made phenomenal progress back to around 1503. She has found an ancestor born then but will need to check this. Also, she is looking for missing spouses, but I think these were not usually mentioned in the early Parish Records, but we live in hopes!

Linda was a member of the now defunct Family History group in the Whitwick branch. She has many notes, culled from sessions in the local library, but wants to establish more permanent records. We discussed the various ways people do this, from establishing Trees on such sites as Ancestry, and setting up digital files on a PC, to the various established ways of creating paper trees, and Reports.

I lent her a CD with a copy of Family Tree Maker 2005 to get her started on her own PC. We looked at various ways she could make copies for transfer to a laptop and arrange a gedcom.

Next time we will progress this, with Linda herself working at setting up things the way she would like them to be.

## **Gardening**

### **15<sup>th</sup> June - Trip to Michael Heseltine's gardens at Thenford Arboretum**

We started our day with a stop at Stratford on Avon where we had approximately 2 hours to meander, shop or take in lunch. We returned to the coach and made our way to Thenford where we were greeted by Rupert Heseltine. We could roam freely around an extensive arboretum, sculpture park, walled garden with an amazing fountain, herbaceous borders and lake. There was a member of staff driving around on a buggy giving free chilled water to anyone who wanted it. This was very welcome as it was extremely hot weather. The facilities were absolutely top notch and the light refreshments were tasty and reasonably priced. Very well worth a visit.

## **French**

### **12<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> June**

The French group continues instruction this past month on the subjects of dates, time, and naming of body parts with revision of some of the earlier topics..

## **Industrial Heritage**

### **28<sup>th</sup> June – Liverpool Docks**

Unfortunately this trip had to be cancelled. I think the intention to travel by train put some people off, worried about possible strikes, whilst several others were on holiday and some had been there recently. So, there were not enough numbers to make the trip worthwhile. Maybe another time.

## History

### 22<sup>nd</sup> June. 'You're in the Army now!' by Jane Harris

Today, our very own Jane Harris told us of life as an Army child. 27 of us gathered to hear a fascinating tale of travelling all over the world and being involved in many of the events which have framed our modern world.

First, she showed her family tree, showing Army connections back to the early 19th century. Her ancestors were in the military in Bangalore then and thus involved in the heyday of the British Raj. A sibling of one of her direct ancestors was in fact born at sea on HMS Wellington as the family was enroute back to Britain.

With many photos she took us down the years. Her great-grandfather, John Gould Joyce, was in a Military band, as was his brother Henry Arthur Joyce, but things started to get personal with her grandfather Arthur Mills. He was in the 2nd Dragoon Guards, The Queen's Bays and held the prestigious ranks of Farrier Quarter Master Sergeant and Farrier Sergeant Major. Which meant he had overall charge of the horses in the Regiment. She showed us a splendid tablecloth embroidered with the badge of the Bays in the centre, with his name, and the badges of the Royal Navy, Royal Air Force, the Royal Army Ordnance Corps and the Crest of George V.

His history was extensive, fighting in WWI, and being sent to the US to obtain more horses. It has been estimated that some eight million horses and donkeys died in the War.

All his children were born abroad, which made it tough on his wife, as it was for all Army wives. We saw a glimpse of the realities of foreign service in his medical card. Several references to Diarrhoea, Enteric Fever, Ague (!) and two of Gonorrhoea. Which tells its own tale.

Jane's father was called up in 1939 and served all through the War, with Jane being born in 1946. Like many children of Army officers and diplomats, her brother was sent off to boarding school when only 7. The picture of the school resembled Colditz, and her brother never forgot or forgave his parents for sending him away at that early age.

The family spent a long time in Greece, in Piraeus in what seems to have been a really nice home. Jane tells of a visit to the American Embassy and many parties for the children of the English community. Her brother brought home two schoolmates who they only knew by their nicknames. They found out later that one was the son of the US Ambassador, the other was no less than Crown Prince Constantine!

On return to England the family fetched up in Colchester, before being posted to Germany and billeted in a house previously owned by a high ranking German official, with a German servant. There were lots of stories of Germany just after the War, with pictures of war damage. It seems the lady escaped from East Germany before the Wall made this a very dangerous thing to attempt. The impression Jane got was that anything was preferable to the Russians.

Then it was Jane's turn to be packed off to Boarding School. The way she tells it, it sounded like St Trinian's! This was a Catholic convent school in Loughborough, and the regime was strict. She did get to have lessons in horse riding and music, with a splendid photo of her class all sawing and blowing away in the orchestra.

Jane regaled us with extracts from the book of guidance for young ladies called 'Towards Maturity' This was very reminiscent of the stories told to your reporter by his sisters who attended a Catholic convent day school. Boys, it seems, think differently from girls about personal relationships. The unspoken message being 'Do not trust them'! Your reporter remembers being more at risk from the convent girls of his day than the reverse...

A truly enlightening canter through the life of an Army girl. Many thanks Jane!



## Recorder

1<sup>st</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup> June

This month, the group took advantage of the larger than usual number of Thursdays to have 3 meetings. All the members were asked to suggest their favourite music to play for the third meeting on 29th June. Two members shared their requests, and I added a couple. The list of music made it clear that there are similarities in the names of some pieces, which led to some confusion over which piece of music was meant! We have "Cuckoo Waltz", "The Cuckoo and the Nightingale", and "The Nightingale in Silent Night", which had me perplexed! I think I've got them sorted now. We are getting more music now, and organising it is getting more challenging! We also learnt a bit of Italian: many instructions in dynamics and navigation are written in Italian, and it's easy to go the wrong way if you don't understand the directions. Some music is written in a space-saving way, initially to save time, and the efforts of copyists, but also to save paper and ink.

Repeated sections are played twice or more, but printed only once. One piece had a complicated pattern of repeated sections, which had us scratching our heads: have I played this bit already? Where do I go now?

On our first meeting of the month, we had 10 players: all 9 members plus a visitor. 8 members attended the second meeting, and, due to holidays starting, 6 on the 29th. We still had enough players to play "Fun Folk", which has 6 parts: 2 descants, treble, 2 tenors and bass.

We played some music which we haven't played for a while: some by Purcell, variations on Greensleeves, "The Entertainer", "Tiptoe through the Tulips", a few other pieces, and a new venture: a work by Bruckner: "Offertorium", arranged for recorder quartet. It's the first time we've played one of his works.

During July and August, we'll need to keep an eye on numbers, to decide whether there will be enough of us to make it sensible to use the hall. However, we hope to continue making music over the summer. If you are thinking of joining us, keep an eye on the website.

## Lunch

8<sup>th</sup> June - Wolferstan Arms in Shuttington

The Lunch club met at the Wolferstan Arms in Shuttington this month and enjoyed the view across the valley while eating tasty food, well presented and efficiently served by very friendly, well-motivated staff.

The next lunch is planned for 13 July at the Otter, Kegworth. Anyone wishing to attend must get in touch with [luncheon@ashbyu3a.co.uk](mailto:luncheon@ashbyu3a.co.uk) to make their choices for the meal as the restaurant requires pre-orders. **Please note that they want us seated by 12 noon.**

## Scrabble

5<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> June

Although holidays tend to intervene at this time of year, we did have two tables at our last meeting of the Scrabble group, one of four and another of three, and both tables had two games. Because of holidays and appointments the meeting on Monday 3rd July has had to be cancelled. We shall have to see what the 17th of July brings in terms of who is available. Although we decided against a recess, it does mean that members must look out for the WhatsApp message each fortnight.

## **Reading**

21<sup>st</sup> June

This month we read 'Ordinary Thunderstorms' by William Boyd, 'A compelling fugitive chase through the dark side of modern-day London' (according to the front cover). The protagonist, Adam Kindred, a USA college professor, has a very brief ill-fated liaison with one of his students that starts a rapid and absolute decline as his life spirals out of control catapulting him from a successful academic career to homelessness on the streets of London via a series of unfortunate events following a stroke of really bad luck. Despite everything, he survives, reinventing himself in response to further disasters and changing circumstances. The characters and locations were detailed and well-drawn.

Everybody agreed the book started really well but some members thought it petered out towards the end and although one person didn't finish, it was generally thought to be a good, though flawed, read. Kudos to those who couldn't make the meeting but sent in reports so their voices could still be heard.

Having critiqued the book, our discussions moved on to include the nature of security in life and does it have a gender bias; ethics and morals in different populations; Big Pharma, and the difficulty of reading in bed when you are very tired and your new glasses don't seem to work properly.

We are looking forward to welcoming two new members on July 19th when we will be discussing 'The Radleys' by Matt Haig.

## **Wine Appreciation**

21<sup>st</sup> June

This month Ken brought along a selection of 4 wines, all from Aldi. The prices rose in £1 steps from 6.99 to 9.99, and in alcohol from 13% to 14.5% in ½% steps, but the price and alcohol rises did not coincide. The reds wines all had a degree of spiciness.

The first was the only white wine of the night, an unusual blend of Viognier and Grenache Blanc from Cote de Bezier in France. We all enjoyed this as it has a very distinct flavour of apricots. Ideal for this hot weather.

The next was, unusually, from Bekaa Valley in the Lebanon. Bekaa is/was famous for very good quality red wines until the war in Lebanon destroyed the vineyards, and much of Lebanon. From the restored vineyards came this red wine blend which was quite tannic, in a good way, with flavours of cherry and clove. A good, serious, wine which we decided it would be great with roast lamb.

Third was from Pézenas close to Beziers and just inland from the Med. This blended wine was very different to the last. Smooth, no tannin, very fruity. A wine that we thought quite dangerous as, despite its 14% abv, it slipped down far too easily!

Lastly came the most alcoholic wine at 14.5%. This was from Basilicata in southern Italy and made from 100% Aglianico grapes. No we'd not heard of them either. This, like the 2nd wine was quite tannic but not so much, but heavier, darker and tasted of blackberries. Very nice again, but the French wine was voted our favourite of the night.

A good selection of wines with not a duff one amongst them.

Next month it is Kurt's turn to provide the wines. He has yet to decide on which ones.

## Music Appreciation

### 7<sup>th</sup> June at Nev's

We were back at Nev's house this month after Steve, who was due to host, realised that he would be on holiday. Other than Steve, and Margaret, we were at full strength with 10 members present.

Yogi started proceedings with Paul Robeson singing "It ain't necessarily so" and Janet followed with Mario Lanza and "Funiculi funiculá", the only song ever written about a funicular railway! Two great voices, one bass and one tenor.

Brenda's choice was non-vocal but none the worse for that, Glenn Miller playing "Rhapsody in blue".

Sid gave us the first 'modern' tune of the day, Roxette singing "Spending my time". Neil's choice was by the band with the longest name – Dan Levinson and his Canary Cottage Dance Orchestra! – chosen for their rendition of "I'm forever blowing bubbles" as it was the eve of West Ham playing (successfully as it turned out) in their first major final for almost 60 years. West Ham is Neil's home town, and "Bubbles" is the team's anthem.

Tina Turner, possibly one of the greatest female rock singers, died the previous week so Mike chose to show a video of her belting out "Simply the best" in tribute. Nev also showed a YouTube video, this time the guitarist John Williams accompanied by Cleo Laine singing "He was beautiful". A classic.

Sallie chose a 4-handed piano piece called "March Militaire" by Schubert, a tune we all recognised if not knowing what it was called, whilst Dorothy chose "Russians" by Sting, based on a tune by Prokofiev, as it seemed appropriate at this time.

Heather introduced us to country singer Darius Rucker and "You, me and my guitar". Well worth a listen. Yogi then reminded us what a great singer Susan Boyle is by playing "Bring him home" from Les Mis.

Janet offered Stevie Wonder and Bob Dylan's "How many roads". An excellent version, whilst Brenda took us back to the 50's with "Whole lotta shakin' goin' on" not by Jerry Lee Lewis but this time by Little Richard.

Sid then gave us Mike Oldfield's "Man in the rain" with vocals by Cara Dillon. This was released 25 years after Tubular Bells.

Neil switched back to classical with Luciano Pavarotti and "Nessun dorma" chosen for its football connotations!

Mike's second choice was a video of Cilla Black giving it her all on "Anyone who had a heart" which reminded us that she too was a great singer in her early days.

Nev had chosen Bill Wyman and his Rhythm Kings and "You never can tell". The Rhythm Kings are a great band of old timers from various 60s bands. All great musicians.

Sallie played us "Stranger on the shore" by Acker Bilk. This was originally named Jenny after Bilk's daughter but the name was changed when it was chosen as the title tune to a TV series.

Dorothy gave us a tune from the 1956 film "High Society" – Louis Armstrong and his band playing "High Society Calypso". Lovely

Heather closed the session with another country/bluegrass act new to us, Roy Hall and his Blue Ridge Entertainers with the old standard "Orange Blossom Special". This was the first ever recording of it in 1938 but for obscure reasons was not released until 1999!. A great way to finish the morning's listening.

## **Science & Technology**

13<sup>th</sup> June - 'Amazing Bats - what do we know about local species?' by Bill Cove

Despite the very warm and humid weather, there was a good attendance, including 4 new members, for our guest speaker, Bill Cove of Derbyshire Bat Conservation Group and his “Amazing Bats” talk.

Bill developed an interest in bats while working as a wildlife warden at Calke Abbey and kept his audience spellbound with a host of interesting facts and photos of bats which are found locally. Fourteen of the 18 UK species (of about 1300 worldwide) have been identified in Derbyshire, including our rarest – the grey long-eared bat – and new species are regularly being identified due to advances in science and DNA analysis of bat droppings. Bats can be found roosting in the tiniest of spaces and are very territorial and we learnt about their feeding, breeding and navigation by echo location.

There was such a high level of interest generated that Bill has kindly offered to provide bat detectors and accompany a group of us on an evening bat walk, probably in the area of Staunton Harold, on Friday 11 August. Any interested members who haven't already signed the sheet and would like to join us on the walk should email [science@ashbyu3a.co.uk](mailto:science@ashbyu3a.co.uk) to register their interest.

Tanya Dempster thanked Bill for a fascinating presentation and following this introduced us to the life and achievements of geneticist, Barbara McClintock, 1902 – 1992. The only woman to receive an unshared Nobel Prize for medicine or physiology, McClintock studied maize and discovered jumping genes, the ability for genes to change position on the chromosome. Her work was mocked by several male scientists who said “she did not understand the topic”.

Tanya then referred to several recent news items relating to genes and DNA research:

- The fertility regulator has confirmed that a baby has been born using three people's DNA for the first time in the UK.
- There is hope that there may be an effective treatment for Alzheimer's disease by 2040. Prof Julie Williams has studied Alzheimer's for 30 years and her team at Cardiff University has identified 92 genes that significantly increase the risk of having the progressive condition. They knew of just three genes when their research began in 2009.
- Researchers find oldest evidence of the plague in Britain.
- A pioneering study analysing the DNA of centuries-old skeletons found mutations that helped people survive the plague. But those same mutations are linked to auto-immune diseases afflicting people today. The problem is they have been linked to auto-immune diseases such as the inflammatory bowel disease Crohn's - what helped keep your ancestors alive 700 years ago could be damaging your health today.
- A blood test for more than 50 types of cancer has shown real promise in a major NHS trial, researchers say. The test correctly revealed two out of every three cancers among 5,000 people who had visited their GP with suspected symptoms, in England or Wales. In 85% of those positive cases, it also pinpointed the original site of cancer.
- Scientists have produced an updated map of all human DNA which could help to transform medical research.

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 11th July at 2pm in the Main Hall in Packington Village Hall, when wildlife photographer Tim Sexton will tell us about his first year working for Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust 'A year at Rutland Water'.

## **Supper Club**

### **22<sup>nd</sup> June - The Smisby Arms**

On a very warm evening 20 of us gathered at the Smisby Arms. Although we had pre-ordered, some people had not specified their choices of side-orders. our mistake. After some discussion with the manager, and pressure to make decisions for those who hadn't yet arrived, we seemed to get all that sorted out.

The starters duly arrived quite promptly for the few who had ordered them, and very tasty they were. When the main courses started to arrive things went a little awry. There seemed to be too many fish dishes and not enough chicken. Fortunately someone was prepared to swap. Side orders came out separately without the staff seeming to know which main they belonged with, and there were too few of some, too many of others. Some never arrived at all.

The food all tasted fine, and portions were generous. Desserts were fine with no problems. The waiting staff were friendly.

On settling the bill, two people who had had exactly the same meal got charged £4 different. On querying it with the manager, the money was eventually repaid but grudgingly and without any apology.

## **Longer Walking**

### **20<sup>th</sup> June. Dovedale circular, led by David and Lilian**

Dawn broke. At 7am we looked at the Met Office forecast for Ashbourne and discovered that it was the same as yesterday - heavy rain in the morning together with the chance of a thunderstorm.

We arrived just after 9.15 am at The Izaak Walton Hotel, Ilam and waited. At about 9.25am the cavalry arrived in a VW Golf - to our relief. We would not be having to cancel the walk or do a short walk on our own in the rain. The Lone Ranger also arrived in good time for the start of the walk. Seven Members started the walk in the dry but soon the Heavens opened and it carried on raining for the first two hours of the walk. We reached Milldale and found a stone built shelter and it was good to get into the dry and to have a relaxing cup of tea/coffee. An additional advantage was that there were free public toilets adjacent to the shelter.

We followed Milldale for about 300 yards and made an ascent up to the fields above Dovedale. It was not as hard as we remembered and reached the village of Stanshope and then returned to the Hotel via Ilam Moor skirting the village of Ilam itself.

The Hotel served our meals which we had ordered when we arrived and the food was of a good quality. We departed the Hotel having endured the rain along the walk but having enjoyed each other's company and looking forward to the next walk.

The numbers were less than normal because at least 7 regular walkers were on holiday..

### **6<sup>th</sup> June. Tideswell, led by Val and Trev**

Having been delayed on our journey, a determined group of 8 set off, 15minutes late, for our 6.5 mile walk. Having left the village we followed a stream down through Tideswell Dale, before reaching the River Wye. We then continued on to reach the delightfully named Water-cum-Jolly Dale for our drinks stop. On leaving the river we had a steady uphill road section, before entering Cressbrook Dale. We stopped for our lunch break at the bottom of Tansley Dale and then on towards the village of Litton before returning to Tideswell and the Horse and Jockey pub where much hilarity ensued over a well earned pint of beer.

## **Medium Walking**

12<sup>th</sup> June. Around Belton, led by Val and Trev

On a beautiful sunny morning our small group headed out of Belton via fields and paths towards Osgathorpe. On reaching the village we then had a section of road, before entering fields again and reaching the road at Low Woods. At that point we turned towards Belton Church spire in the distance. Arriving at Belton High Street we returned to our car having walked 4.5 miles.

## **Short Walking**

16<sup>th</sup> June. From the Moira Furnace car park for a walk to Donisthorpe and back.

Four intrepid walkers arrived at the car park and set off towards the Furnace looking at the top of the lime kilns before walking along the canal to the Woodland Centre at Donisthorpe returning via the old railway back to the lime kilns now viewed from the bottom. Thence we went to the cafe where we sat under the shelter away from the sun.

Some of our committee will be changing after the AGM on July 25<sup>th</sup> but for now:

### **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	-