



## Newsletter October 2026

### Interest Groups Timetable for October

Please note that this timetable could change at short notice. Please check the website or with the Group Leaders for the latest news.

| Group                | Date                                                                                        | Time                           | Venue                                                                                             |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Monthly Meeting      | Tue 27 <sup>th</sup>                                                                        | 2 pm                           | Congregational Church, Ashby.<br>'Sweeney Todd' by Ann Featherstone                               |
| Activities           | Wed 7 <sup>th</sup><br>Fri 16 <sup>th</sup>                                                 | 1-3 pm<br>2-4 pm               | Ashby Leisure Centre                                                                              |
| Arts and Crafts      | Thu 1 <sup>st</sup>                                                                         | 9.45 am                        | Packington Village Hall.                                                                          |
| Breakfast            | Thu 15 <sup>th</sup>                                                                        | 10 am                          | Swarkestone Garden Centre, Lowes Lane,<br>Swarkestone DE73 7GQ                                    |
| Bridge               | Mon 5 <sup>th</sup><br>Mon 12 <sup>th</sup><br>Mon 19 <sup>th</sup><br>Mon 26 <sup>th</sup> | 11am<br>7-9pm<br>11am<br>7-9pm | Ivanhoe Social Club.                                                                              |
| Calligraphy          | Tues 13 <sup>th</sup>                                                                       | 10 am                          | At Gill's                                                                                         |
| Coffee and Chat      | Wed 14 <sup>th</sup>                                                                        | 10 am                          | The Barn, Church Lane, Whitwick LE67 5DL                                                          |
| Computer             | Wed 7 <sup>th</sup><br>Mon 19 <sup>th</sup>                                                 | 2 pm<br>2 pm                   | 91 Woodside<br>16 Winchester Way                                                                  |
| Croquet              | Fri 23 <sup>rd</sup>                                                                        | 10 am                          | Moira Miners' Welfare Club, Moira DE12 6BP                                                        |
| Digital Photography  | Thu 1 <sup>st</sup>                                                                         | 10 am                          | 16 Winchester Way                                                                                 |
| Drawing and painting | Wed 21 <sup>st</sup>                                                                        | 10 am                          | Susan's house                                                                                     |
| Family History       | Wed 14 <sup>th</sup>                                                                        | 2 pm                           | 2 Marlborough Way                                                                                 |
| Food from Afar       | Thu 1 <sup>st</sup>                                                                         | 6 pm                           | Slice of India, Mansfield Rd, Derby DE21 4AW                                                      |
| French               | Mon 12 <sup>th</sup><br>Mon 26 <sup>th</sup>                                                | 11 am                          | Ivanhoe Social Club.                                                                              |
| Gardening            | Thu 15 <sup>th</sup>                                                                        | 2.10 pm                        | Packington Village Hall. Harvest Social Event.                                                    |
| History              | Thu 22 <sup>nd</sup>                                                                        | 2.15 pm                        | Packington Village Hall.<br>Bill Devitt - 'Ashby's transport problems and how they were overcome' |

| Group                | Date                                                                                   | Time                           | Venue                                                                          |
|----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Industrial Heritage  | Wed 28 <sup>th</sup>                                                                   | TBA                            | ACME Whistles factory tour, 244 Barr Street, Birmingham B19 3AH                |
| Leisurely Walking    | Tue 6 <sup>th</sup>                                                                    | 10.15 for 10.30 start          | Meet at Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Wood, Heather Lane LE67 2TH            |
| Literature           | Tue 13 <sup>th</sup>                                                                   | 1.30 pm                        | At Sandra's house                                                              |
| Lunch                | Thu 8 <sup>th</sup>                                                                    | 12 noon                        | Cherry Tree Farm - Farmhouse Inns, Etwall Rd Derby DE65 6DX                    |
| Medium Walks         | Mon 12 <sup>th</sup>                                                                   | 9.45 for 10am start            | Meet on Main St., Sutton Cheney near to The Hercules restaurant                |
| Music Appreciation   | Wed 7 <sup>th</sup>                                                                    | 10 am                          | At Neil's                                                                      |
| Open Water Swim      | Fri 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 16 <sup>th</sup><br>Tue 6 <sup>th</sup> ,<br>Thu 8 <sup>th</sup> | 2 pm<br>10 am<br>10 am         | TBA                                                                            |
| Poetry Reading       | Thu 15 <sup>th</sup>                                                                   | 2.30 pm                        | 42 Avenue Rd, Ashby                                                            |
| Recorder             | Thu 1 <sup>st</sup><br>Thu 15 <sup>th</sup>                                            | 10 am                          | St Matthew's Community Hall, Overseal                                          |
| Rummikub             | Tue 13 <sup>th</sup><br>Tue 27 <sup>th</sup>                                           | 11 am                          | Ivanhoe Social Club.                                                           |
| Science & Technology | Tue 13 <sup>th</sup>                                                                   | 2 pm                           | Packington Village Hall. 'Projects that went nowhere' a talk by Adrian Hickson |
| Scrabble             | Mondays<br>5 <sup>th</sup> 12 <sup>th</sup> 19 <sup>th</sup><br>26 <sup>th</sup>       | 10.30 am                       | Ivanhoe Social Club.                                                           |
| Short Walks          | Fri 16 <sup>th</sup>                                                                   | 10 am                          | Meet at Bulls Head, Whitwick LE61 8LR                                          |
| Social Events        | Oct 1 <sup>st</sup>                                                                    | 6 pm                           | Fish Supper at The Beeches, Burton Rd, Ashby                                   |
| Supper Club          | Thu 22 <sup>nd</sup>                                                                   | 7 for 7.30 pm                  | TBA                                                                            |
| The 10 Milers        | -                                                                                      | -                              | No walks this month                                                            |
| Trips and Outings    | Wed 14 <sup>th</sup>                                                                   | 7.30 pm                        | Royal Concert Hall, Nottingham                                                 |
| Walking              | Tue 6 <sup>th</sup><br>Tue 20 <sup>th</sup>                                            | 9.30 for 9.45<br>9.30 for 9.45 | Waterside Pub, Sileby Rd, Mountsorrel LE12 7BB<br>TBA                          |
| Wine Appreciation    | Wed 21 <sup>st</sup>                                                                   | 7 pm                           | Annie's house                                                                  |

### Interest Groups Timetable for early November

| Group               | Date                | Time            | Venue                                          |
|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Scrabble            | Mon 2 <sup>nd</sup> | 10.30 am        | Ivanhoe Social Club.                           |
| Bridge              | Mon 2 <sup>nd</sup> | TBC             | Ivanhoe Social Club.                           |
| Open water swim     | Mon 2 <sup>nd</sup> | 10 am           |                                                |
| Walking             | Tue 3 <sup>rd</sup> | 9.30 for 9.45   | TBA                                            |
| Leisurely Walking   | Tue 3 <sup>rd</sup> | 10.15 for 10.30 | TBA                                            |
| Music Appreciation  | Wed 4 <sup>th</sup> | 10 am           | TBA                                            |
| Activities          | Wed 4 <sup>th</sup> | 1 – 3 pm        | Ashby Leisure Centre                           |
| Computer            | Wed 4 <sup>th</sup> | 2 pm            | 16 Winchester Way                              |
| Arts and Crafts     | Thu 5 <sup>th</sup> | 9.45 am         | Packington Village Hall.                       |
| Digital photography | Thu 5 <sup>th</sup> | 10 am           | TBA                                            |
| Recorder            | Thu 5 <sup>th</sup> | 10 am           | St Matthew's Community Hall, Overseal          |
| Food from Afar      | Thu 5 <sup>th</sup> | 6pm             | Zorba the Greek, 9-11 Bold Lane, Derby DE1 3NT |

### MONTHLY MEETING

#### 22<sup>nd</sup> September – Sandy Leong 'Bradgate and Lady Jane Grey'

Sandy Leong, who has entertained us twice before, returned this time to tell us of the story of Lady Jane Grey. Sandy's story was full of anecdotes, humour and tales of intrigue and scheming on the fate of this young woman and her short life.

Jane's actual birthdate is unknown but she was born in 1536/7 and was the great-granddaughter of Henry VII, grandniece of Henry VIII and cousin once removed of Edward VI, Mary I and Elizabeth I. Under the will of Henry VIII Jane was in line to the throne after her cousins and it seems that her parents were always trying to get her ever closer to the throne.

She was sent to the home of Catherine Parr, 6<sup>th</sup> wife and widow of Henry VIII, who had married Thomas Seymour, brother of Jane, and he tried to get Jane Grey married to the now King Edward VI to improve his own standing. This failed when he was accused of treason and beheaded.

Jane's position changed dramatically in 1553 after the death of the young King Edward VI. Edward was a Protestant, and shortly before his death he named Jane as his successor, attempting to prevent the Catholic Mary Tudor from becoming queen. Jane was married to Lord Guildford Dudley, the son of the powerful Duke of Northumberland, who supported her claim to the throne.

After Edward died on 6<sup>th</sup> July 1553, Jane was proclaimed Queen on 10<sup>th</sup> July. However, she faced widespread opposition because many people believed that Mary, as Henry VIII's eldest surviving daughter, had the stronger hereditary claim. Mary gathered supporters in East Anglia, while Jane's government struggled to maintain control.

After only nine days, Jane's position collapsed. Mary entered London and was proclaimed Queen on 19<sup>th</sup> July 1553. Jane was imprisoned in the Tower of London and although Mary initially considered sparing her life, Jane and her husband were eventually convicted of treason and they were both beheaded. Jane was 16 or maybe 17 years old.

A fascinating story of in-fighting, scandal, intrigue and plotting and an interesting part of our history.

## **OUR FACEBOOK PAGE**

Ashby u3a Facebook page [www.facebook.com/ashbyu3a](http://www.facebook.com/ashbyu3a) now has over 300 followers (people who regularly visit our page), with our posts receiving over 20,000 views during September alone – an increase of 103% from the previous month!

### **Our aims:**

- To complement our website, member emails, monthly newsletter etc.
- To communicate and share information with those members who already visit Facebook.
- To provide links to u3a information on the internet, e.g. summer schools, online courses.
- To give group leaders the opportunity to quickly share photos and reports. Group photos are very popular!
- To share posts of interest from the national u3a uk page with local members. (Our page is rated highly on the u3a uk Facebook participation list.)
- To interact with other u3a Facebook groups – useful for ideas for speakers, new groups or activities.
- By publicising u3a meetings and activities, to reach a section of the public who may not be aware of, and could benefit from, the excellent activities for learning and socialising which Ashby u3a offers.

### **How to get a post on the page**

I do not publicise meetings at u3a members' homes, or where the group has reached its maximum preferred size, but will do so if requested by the group leader. I haven't featured every Ashby u3a group yet, but will be happy to do so when asked.

If group leaders would like information about their group to feature on our Facebook page at any time, please send text (and any accompanying graphic or photo - entirely optional) to [facebookmods@ashbyu3a.co.uk](mailto:facebookmods@ashbyu3a.co.uk) or [kovach@kovach.co.uk](mailto:kovach@kovach.co.uk). I can schedule the posts up to one month in advance. Any resulting enquiries from non-members will be referred back to the appropriate group leader.

It's a great way to promote our activity groups and events among members and non-members.

Lynda Kovach, Facebook Moderator for Ashby u3a

## **WE HAVE ANOTHER NEW GROUP:**

**OPEN WATER SWIM – Leader Roger Western – [openwaterswim@ashbyu3a.co.uk](mailto:openwaterswim@ashbyu3a.co.uk)  
phone 07816 171538**

**Friday 18<sup>th</sup> September**

The group held an initial get together at the Ivanhoe Club to discuss how the group would operate and to sort out a date and venue for their first swim, which was on Fri Sept 25<sup>th</sup>.

Open water swimming can be fun, exhilarating and satisfying and I very much hope that we are going to have a great time together and make some memories! A great chance for us to get out of your comfort zone and feel alive!

This type of swimming is leisurely 'dipping', an immersion in nature. Shortish periods of time, especially as the water becomes colder. It doesn't tend to involve fast swimming or long distances.

We will take some wonderful photos. Hopefully to inspire your partner, your children and grandchildren to be adventurous with the message that 'Life is for living'.

We have initially set up to 6 dates a month to get together and swim somewhere local to Ashby. Until the end of the year this will be fortnightly on Tuesday and Thursday mornings and Friday afternoons. See above for actual dates, times and venues.

It is recommended that you either get confirmation from our swim WhatsApp group or that you get in touch with the group leader prior to any swim in order to confirm arrangements.

The most basic equipment required is a swim costume and a towel. But as the weather gets colder then some of the following could be useful. BUT get in touch with the group leader BEFORE you think of buying anything new: bright coloured tow-float, beach shoes/Crocs, towelling changing robe, extra clothes, woolly hat, gloves, scarf, flask for hot drink, cake.

For people who swim in cold water the "after drop" is a real thing and can be serious. So every swim we are considerate of the prevailing weather conditions and we are aware of how long we are in the water and we get dry and warm asap after exiting the water.

So we bring extra clothes, a hot drink and some food to aid the post swim warm-up.

Everybody who swims with us must take full responsibility for their own safety, i.e.

**everyone participates entirely at their own risk.**

Our first swim took place on Friday. Four of us went to Spring Lakes at Long Eaton. The water was beautiful, clean and the temperature was a welcoming 17°C. We had a 20 minutes dip followed by good cake, coffee and even better conversation. Already looking forward to our next swim which will be on Tuesday. New swimmers always welcome - get in touch to find out more.

Roger Western.

## **NEWS FROM THE GROUPS**

**ACTIVITIES – Co-ordinator: Michael O'Donoghue - [activities@ashbyu3a.co.uk](mailto:activities@ashbyu3a.co.uk) - phone 07485 159487**

### **September**

We had 15 members at the last Activities Group. As always, we had great fun and we were also working on our Pickelball skills, in advance of our upcoming challenge match with Melbourne u3a.

**ARTS AND CRAFTS – Leader: Sharon Woodland - [artcraft@ashbyu3a.co.uk](mailto:artcraft@ashbyu3a.co.uk) - phone 01530 413867**

### **3<sup>rd</sup> September**

The "Crafty Ladies" met on 3<sup>rd</sup> September. Having completed their patchwork and added the wadding, they proceeded to quilt them onto bags or cushions.

What a lovely job they did! There was, as usual, a lot of chat and laughter.

The next meeting will be at Packington Village Memorial Hall at 9.45am on 1<sup>st</sup> October.

**BREAKFAST – Leader: Colin Woodland - [breakfast@ashbyu3a.co.uk](mailto:breakfast@ashbyu3a.co.uk) - phone 01530 413867**

### **17<sup>th</sup> September – Centivo Lounge, Ashby**

Brenda Dummer kindly agreed to marshal the troops for breakfast this month as Sharon and I explored the delights of Iceland on a cruise. Brenda reported that the gang was well behaved and upheld the good name of the U3A during their visit.

The next breakfast gathering will be at Swarkestone Garden Centre, Lowes Lane DE73 7GQ at 10am on Thursday 15 October. If you like Cherry Scones, you will find none better anywhere else. They usually bring them out of the oven at around 10am so they are fresh and warm when we arrive.

If you want to join us just drop an email to [breakfast@ashbyu3a.co.uk](mailto:breakfast@ashbyu3a.co.uk).

**BRIDGE – Leader: Neil Roberts - [bridge@ashbyu3a.co.uk](mailto:bridge@ashbyu3a.co.uk) - phone 01530 455957 or 07804 743471**

The group meets at the Ivanhoe Club every Monday.

Times for each day usually alternate between 11 am to 1.30 and 7 to 9 pm but can vary depending on the number of Mondays in the month. Timings for this month are in the timetable above.

If you are interested in joining us and would like to know more please call Neil Roberts, details above.

**COMPUTERS - Leader: John Howlett - [computer@ashbyu3a.co.uk](mailto:computer@ashbyu3a.co.uk) - phone 01530 461774**

21st September

As there were no problems to solve, we had a general discussion and put the world to rights!

We meet again on Wednesday 7th of October at 91 Woodside. If you have any computer problems that you think we can help you with please contact us at the email or phone number above, or just turn up at 91 Woodside on the 7<sup>th</sup> at 2pm. It does help though if you can tell us in advance what your problem might be.

**DRAWING & PAINTING - Leader: Lesley Thomas- [painting@ashbyu3a.co.uk](mailto:painting@ashbyu3a.co.uk) - phone 07895 971090**

16<sup>th</sup> September

The drawing and painting group met at John's house to draw and paint something beginning with L. Unfortunately just three members were able to attend but we managed to achieve some good work to include a lion, a lighthouse and an attempt at Lichfield cathedral which is not yet finished but should appear on the art gallery very soon.

Our next meeting on the 21<sup>st</sup> October will be in Susan's house and the letter is M

**DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY - Leader: John Howlett - [digphoto@ashbyu3a.co.uk](mailto:digphoto@ashbyu3a.co.uk) - phone 01530 461774**

3rd September

On a pleasant, sunny, day seven of us went on safari to the East Midlands Aeropark. We hadn't been back since July 2019, so it was interesting to see what has changed.

We spent a pleasant hour wandering around amongst the aerial heroes of yester-year, and the inside displays. Our only problem was that some of the most impressive machines were just too big for us to get a good shot! Meanwhile the adjacent airport put on its own air display.



We then retired to the café for coffee and cakes and we will be reviewing our photos at a future meeting.

**CALLIGRAPHY – Leader: Sue Cornell - calligraphy@ashbyu3a.co.uk - phone 01530 413345**

8th September

5 of us were at Jenny's today playing and experimenting with paint, textures and techniques to produce backgrounds for our future writing. It was very enjoyable once we just relaxed and went for it!!

As three of us have now attended a course on Modern Calligraphy, we shared what we had learnt, the nibs and materials we used and the 'rules' to make it an easy font to use.

Although it looks as if it should be easy, we have all struggled with it in the past, so we are going to concentrate on it again for this term. The topic will be an inspirational quote or piece of text.

**COFFEE AND CHAT – Leader: Colin Woodland - coffee@ashbyu3a.co.uk - phone 01530 413867**

9th September - Toons Cute Wee Coffee Shop

Eleven of us hopped over to the Cute Wee Coffee Shop at Toons for Coffee and Chat. It was our first visit as a group. The establishment did not take bookings so we had to commandeer some tables so that we could sit together. The place is quite large and we had no trouble gathering together. Most had tea/coffee and a cake but one or two of us ordered their "Doorstep Bacon Butty" which certainly lived up to its name!

Our next gathering will be at The Barn, 38a Church Lane, Whitwick LE67 5DL at 10am on 14 October. This is a new venue for our group. As last month, we will have to work out how we can best sit together as we cannot book beforehand.

If you would like to join us, please let Colin Woodland Know at coffee@ashbyu3a.co.uk or sign upon the sheet at the back of the church at the monthly meeting.

**CROQUET – Leader: Rupert Knapton - croquet@ashbyu3a.co.uk**

25<sup>th</sup> September

The September meeting of the Croquet Group had eight players, a perfect number when playing doubles on two lawns!

Using playing cards we drew for partners for the first game, repeating the process for game two, so that you were most likely to have a different partner. The result was that everyone had two competitive matches played in good humour.

Please note that the last meeting of the Croquet Group this year will not be on the last Friday in October but on the penultimate Friday, which is 23<sup>rd</sup> October

**FOOD FROM AFAR - Leader: Colin Woodland - food\_from\_afar@ashbyu3a.co.uk - 01530 413867**

3<sup>rd</sup> September - Taste of Thai in Market Street, Ashby

Eighteen of us sampled the oriental delights of Thailand at the Taste of Thai in Ashby. Once again we were served with very tasty morsels elegantly presented by the excellent staff. One dish was not what was ordered but the staff corrected the error with absolutely no fuss. Food was plentiful, of excellent quality and served good and hot. A number were unable to finish everything set before them and the staff happily boxed it up for us to take home.

Our next event will be at the Slice of India, Mansfield Road, Derby DE21 4AW at 6pm on 1st October. So Far, Twelve people have signed up. If you would like to join them, please let Colin Woodland Know at food\_from\_afar@ashbyu3a.co.uk or sign up on the sheet provided at the back of the church at the members monthly meeting.

**9th September**

A much cooler day today, but very busy with 9 attending and 3 contributing from home.

We have two new friends: Jenny and Keith. JD worked with them to establish where they were in their researches and help them onward. Meanwhile:

Jan is investigating her Welsh ancestry with promising results and Elizabeth managed to turn up two marriage records from the 1700s on her paternal line: she is a happy bunny!

Linda is still trying to sort out the mystery of her 2nd great grandfather. There might be issues with his birth, too. It seems there may also be skeletons in cupboards to rattle.

Mary (from home) is dealing with a DNA contact and hopes to update us next time. Exciting times! Whilst Adrian also at home worked on correcting information about his 5th great grandfather's marriage and a marriage bond set up. We need to know more about these, Adrian!

Sue is reviewing her copious notebooks and working on transferring information to her Family Historian software. She also helped one of our new friends, Jenny, in starting her Tree

Dora (from home) was chasing her 5x grandmother, who married John Knox. (Not THAT John Knox)

Ana is assembling all her information on certificates and censuses. This is proving very useful in identifying gaps in her knowledge and Eileen worked on 16th Century Parish Records locating wills.

**GARDENING - Leader: Paul Dean - gardening@ashbyu3a.co.uk - phone 07707 862762**

**17th September - Barnsdale**

The sun came out for our September coach trip to Barnsdale Gardens, where there were over 30 separate gardens within the 6 acres. They were all very interesting if sometimes challenging to try to do them in number order. You go into the different types of gardens you could create on your own plot, encompassing the different plants, trees, shrubs and vegetables, from Mediterranean, cottage gardens, Rose gardens, vegetable plots etc. Our members expressed they had enjoyed our day out.



24<sup>th</sup> September – Francis Rawdon Hastings, 1st Marquis of Hastings 1754 1826.

Once more our very own Yogi enlightened us with an account of someone who has had a significant influence on this part of the world.

He started by asking five questions of us:

- 1: Was he important?
- 2: Was he importance to Ashby?
- 3: Was he a hero for Ashby?
- 4: Was he important nationally?
- 5: Was he an important entrepreneur?

He was born in Moira in Antrim and gave the name to our own Moira near the end of his life, with said life being a bewildering foray around the world, and a bewildering array of titles.

He was born with a silver spoon in his mouth, inheriting great wealth, including Donington Hall. Educated at Harrow and Oxford, but seemingly without distinction, he joined the Army as a junior Ensign. After doing the Grand Tour he was promoted to Lieutenant and went off to America in 1773 to fight in the War of Independence. He so distinguished himself that he was promoted again and again eventually to the rank of Adjutant General. The War took him all over the continent until in 1781 he relinquished his command due to ill health and set out for England. Captured enroute by the French he was exchanged and entered the Irish Parliament and became deeply involved in the complicated politics of Irish attempts at freedom. Honoured by George III in 1783 he became Baron Rawdon and was drawn into the circle of the Prince of Wales, somehow loaning him thousands to help support 'Prinny's' lavish lifestyle. In 1793 when war broke out with France, he was made a Major-General and briefly fought in Belgium. He was made a full General in 1803 as Commander-in-Chief Scotland. This led, by one of the quirks of the system, to him becoming Governor General of India. So, in yet another startling switch in his life, he sailed for India and became embroiled in many military campaigns there.

Meanwhile his private life was no less interesting. In 1804, aged 50, he married a young lady of 24, Flora, Countess of Loudon, by whom he had six children. This lady seems to have been as free with his money as was the Prince of Wales racking up debts of £7,000 (equivalent to at least £700,000 today). His own debts were around £300,000! In today's they eventually owed £48 million....

On return to England he engaged in many enterprises, not the least in helping develop the coal and clay fields near Ashby in an area that became known as Moira. The mines here had to be pumped out using the new Newcomen engine as motive power, so he started a Spa to use the water. But, for some reason, the inhabitants of Moira weren't interested in this enterprise, and he transferred it to Ashby. But his entrepreneurial skills seemed not to have extended to logistics, and this enterprise failed, too. It seems that the whole business of transporting the water by tanks and the canal to Willesley, transfer to the tramway system and then offloaded to the Baths was not viable. It is not known why he did not construct a pipeline from the vast quantities of clay at his disposal. Likewise, the short-lived iron furnace at Moira was not successful, very likely because of the inferior grade of ore in use. Curiously, among the many factoids surrounding his life, of only three Prior Park Roads in the country, one is here in Ashby, one in Rugby and the other is in Bath.

In the end he was appointed Governor of Malta in 1824 but died enroute back to England in 1824. Macabrely, his wife, following his wishes, cut off his right hand and preserved it to be buried with her.

Yogi then asked us to vote on the issues he posed at the beginning. The views of the members were interestingly mixed, possibly because Francis spent relatively little time here and basically bequeathed little to Ashby except a splendid but out-of-place Spa, a near neighbour its name, and a splendid Georgian Terrace beside the Royal Hotel.

The Q&A session was very lively, once more proving how fascinating and educational are Yogi's talks.

**INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE – Leader: Mike Stow – [indhist@ashbyu3a.co.uk](mailto:indhist@ashbyu3a.co.uk) – phone 01530 469152**

**23<sup>rd</sup> September – Blists Hill Victorian Town, Ironbridge**

Kevin had done an excellent job of organising this trip and getting 17 of us to Blists Hill despite roadworks and other diversions and the National Trust making life difficult in that entrance was only by online booking but tickets couldn't be bought more than a few days in advance. Even free tickets for NT members had to be booked in advance.

Nonetheless we got there ok and after a coffee break, set off to explore. Most of the shops and houses had costumed re-enactors in them to tell the story of their particular venue whilst the local bobby patrolled the streets keeping everyone in order. After all this dry weather we did have a couple of light showers but not enough to spoil the day.



Some ventured into the school room for a lesson, to find that the bobby had been transformed into the school teacher and later went to the pub for a singalong only to find that he was now the piano player!

All very fascinating and interesting, however we were told by some of the re-enactors that NT, having recently taken over the Ironbridge Gorge Trust, have not yet allowed the many of the activities such as blacksmithing, iron casting, running of steam engines or buses to operate without risk assessments. And they cannot now serve draught beer in the pub! This is despite all these activities operating for many years before the takeover. Hopefully they will get it all sorted out in due course.

**LUNCH – Leaders: Colin and Sharon Woodland – [luncheon@ashbyu3a.co.uk](mailto:luncheon@ashbyu3a.co.uk) – phone 01530 413867**

**10<sup>th</sup> September - Bull's Head, Market Street, Ashby**

Fifteen congregated for lunch at the Bull's Head. Brenda Dummer did a stalwart job of keeping good order and discipline among the group. Thank you Brenda!

Our October venue will be at the Cherry Tree Farm Farmhouse Inn, Etwall Road, Willington DE65 6DX on 8<sup>th</sup> October at 12 noon. This will be a new experience for the group. The establishment has recently been completely renovated so it should be in good order. It will be interesting to see if the renovations have resulted in an increase in prices.

If anyone else wishes to join the group please email on [luncheon@ashbyu3a.co.uk](mailto:luncheon@ashbyu3a.co.uk) to book a place or sign up on the sheet placed at the rear of the church at the monthly meeting.

**LITERATURE – Leader: Sandra Harris - literature@ashbyu3a.co.uk - phone 01530 416653**

The group continue to meet at Sandra's house to discuss the latest books that they have been reading.

**MUSIC APPRECIATION - Leader: Mike Stow - musicapp@ashbyu3a.co.uk - 01530 469152**

2<sup>nd</sup> September

This month seven of us got together for some more music. As it was only a few days since Dolly Parton had died several of us had songs of hers that we wanted to play in tribute to a wonderful artist.

Mike started with a video clip shot in a pub in Ireland a few years ago when Dolly was on holiday and had come in to listen to some Irish music but was encouraged to get up and sing. She did an impromptu version of 'Coat of many colours' accompanied by the local musicians, many of whom were obviously in awe of performing with her. Nev later chose Dolly singing a relatively new song 'From here to the moon and back' duetting with Kris Kristofferson. A little-known but lovely song from a little-known movie 'Joyful Noise' featuring Dolly and Kris.

Apart from Dolly we had some other interesting music, starting with what appeared to be the Dave Brubeck Quartet playing the Stranglers 'Golden Brown'. In fact it was a very clever video edit of the quartet to the tune of Golden Brown with some parts played by the video editor. It has had 16M views on YouTube. Deservedly.

We then had two great pop songs Richard Marx singing 'Hazard' and the Carpenters 'Close to you' followed by Helene Grimaud playing Mozart Piano Concerto #23 and Leonard Bernstein conducting Mozart's 'Ave Verum Corpus'. Two great but very different pieces by Mozart. We also listened to Dvorak 'Legends Op 59 #6' with a lovely video accompaniment. Another classical-based piece was Rick Wakeman in Lincoln cathedral playing his variations of 'Swan Lake'. Another wonderfully talented musician.

Other interesting pieces were Richard Thompson's delightful 'Beeswing', Ray Charles' 'Georgia on my mind', country singer Luke Combs version of 'Fast Car' and a flashmob performance of Fatboy Slim's 'Praise you'.

We finished with two pieces; Glen Campbell playing bagpipes on 'Mull of Kintyre and finally the Trio that is Dolly Parton, Emmylou Harris and Linda Ronstadt singing wonderfully on Neil Young's 'After the Gold Rush'. A fitting end to a great listening session.

**POETRY READING – Leader: Kath Fisher – poetry@ashbyu3a.co.uk - phone 07857 688822**

17<sup>th</sup> September

The poetry group had another very enjoyable meeting looking at poems each of us particularly enjoyed or poets we wanted to promote. We read work by Emily Dickinson who was a very interesting, quite challenging poet, Eavan Boland, a more contemporary Irish writer and poems by Norman Nicholson. His 'Rising Five' was a very good discovery for some of us. Oscar Wilde's 'Ballad of Reading Gaol' provoked a good discussion and we will continue with the poems we didn't have time for at our next meeting.

That will be on October 15th at 2.30. If anyone would like to join us, please come along. You will be most welcome.

**RECORDER - Leader: Joan Gibson - recorder@ashbyu3a.co.uk**

17<sup>th</sup> September

The group had their occasional guest conductor, Patrick, helping them this month after which they went to Lakeside Bistro for their 'definitely-not-Christmas' lunch.

**SCRABBLE - Leader: Alastair Brown. Group contact: scrabble@ashbyu3a.co.uk**

As you will see from above, the group now has a new Group Leader in the form of Alastair Brown, and we are now meeting at the Ivanhoe Club every Monday at 10.30am for fun sessions of Scrabble.

If you'd like to try us out, email the address above. It's fun and sociable.

**SUPPER CLUB – Co-ordinators: Colin Ellis and Mike Stow - supper@ashbyu3a.co.uk**

**24<sup>th</sup> September – The Birch Tree, Bardon**

This was a first time visit for most of us but the Lunch Group had been here recently and we came on their recommendation. One small problem was that, as is so often now, they wanted us to pre-order the menu choices but also to provide a £5 a head deposit. I can understand the reasoning but it is quite a hassle to organise with one person paying it and then having to claim it back from everyone else.

The pub is much bigger than it looks from the road and was quite busy which is always a good sign. 15 of us were seated at one long table, with several smaller tables on the other side of the room. Our server for the evening was very helpful and friendly and brought the food out by the names we had given on our pre-order. A good system when people forget what they've ordered! All the food was very good, with decent sized portions. I didn't hear of any complaints and all the plates went back clean! A good evening. I can see us going back again in the near future.

**SOCIAL EVENTS Organiser; Glenys Morrice – socials@ashbyu3a.co.uk**

**Fish Supper**

After the success of last year's event, we are holding a Fish Supper at 6pm on 1st October at The Beeches in Ashby. There will be fish and chips and all the trimmings, followed by tea and coffee. We will have a short quiz after the meal.

**This is now sold out**

**Christmas lunch**

The date for the Christmas lunch has been finalised as Thursday Dec 10<sup>th</sup> at 12 noon. As usual it will be at Willesley Park Golf Club, however the price and the menu have yet been confirmed by the Golf Club and so **we are not taking names just yet**. An email will be sent out to everyone as soon as details are sorted. Numbers will be limited as last year to ensure that the kitchen can cope.

**SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY - Tanya Dempster, Paul McKay, Bill Devitt, Kurt and Lynda Kovach - science@ashbyu3a.co.uk**

**Thursday 10th September.- 'Visit to Woolsthorpe Manor'**

Woolsthorpe Manor is the birth place and family home of Sir Isaac Newton, a farmhouse set in the picturesque Lincolnshire countryside, now run by the National Trust. Eleven members had made the 45 mile journey on a lovely warm and sunny morning for a guided tour of the farmhouse. The venue is special because it was here that Newton carried out his experiments on light and discovered the universal force of gravity that explained the orbits of planets and why an apple always falls vertically to the ground.

Our guide described how the baby Isaac was not expected to survive for long, he was so small and weak, and how his father died months before Isaac's birth. When his mother remarried, she left Isaac in the care of his grandmother, a desertion that may have accounted for his rather cold and harsh personality. Our tour continued from the parlour to the hall then into the kitchen with a bread-making oven built into the hearth, advanced features for the mid-17th century. Many rooms showed wall etchings of geometric shapes and scribbled notes made by Newton as ideas came into his brain.

These were most evident in his bedroom, where holes were created to allow sunlight to enter a glass prism revealing the colours of the rainbow. In the 17th century paper was expensive so the white-washed blank walls were used instead.

Newton was curious to find out how the wind powered a mill so he watched workmen building one nearby and grasped the principles so well he built a scale model version, a replica of which was on display. This showed Newton's grasp of mechanical devices, a skill he combined with his understanding of optics to invent the first reflecting telescope, a model of which was on display in Newton's bedroom. This used a polished parabolic metal surface to focus light and give a magnified image that was superior to that produced by Galileo's lenses in his refracting telescope.

The tour then visited the garden where the group was shown an old apple tree surrounded by a low wicker-work fence. The original tree believed to be the source of Newton's discovery of gravity was damaged by a storm in the early 19th Century but the recumbent trunk subsequently grew saplings to form the tree we see today. The guide described how seeds/pips from this tree travelled with Tim Peake millions of miles in orbit around the Earth in the International Space Station before being germinated into saplings, one of which was planted at Woolsthorpe. The guide explained that, unfortunately, the sapling struggled to develop and is currently being cared for at Kew Gardens.

The guide told that Newton often had problems dealing with colleagues, particularly when they criticised his scientific work. This happened with Robert Hooke (over who discovered the inverse square law for gravity), with Gottfried von Leibniz (over the invention of calculus) and even with the first Astronomer Royal to the King Charles 2nd John Flamsteed (over orbital data for the Moon). Perhaps Newton's irritation with these highly respected scientists was due to stress and tiredness from his very demanding work schedule, often forgetting to eat and sleep.

Following the tour, we were free to explore the Science Centre. This had displays and models explaining Newton's discoveries in a practical way. One model explained how gravity could be opposed by centripetal force; a vertical wheel containing a bean bag could be rotated fast enough to create a centrifugal force that held the bag against gravity. Another demonstration showed how a beam of white light shining through a prism displayed the constituent colours and when it was passed through a second prism, it emerged as white light. Once the guided tours finished we were free to explore the Manor House further at our leisure. Overall, a fascinating scientific and historical experience brought to life by our lively and knowledgeable National Trust guide.



Our group in front of the (allegedly) original and famous apple tree.

**September**

The French group continue to meet fortnightly at 11am at the Ivanhoe Club. The next meeting will be Monday 12<sup>th</sup> Oct. As we aim to speak in French as much as possible we usually start by each person in turn recounting in French what they have been doing over the previous 2 weeks.

After that we may read some passage or passages in French about French culture or something of interest from the Internet and translate into English. Alternatively we may practice grammar or revise verb formations or some of the more difficult rules of French.

**WINE APPRECIATION - Leader: Annie Scotney - wine@ashbyu3a.co.uk**

**16<sup>th</sup> September**

There were six of us this month ready to taste Mike's choice of 'Wines for Autumn'.

We started with a 2025 Chilean Chardonnay Reserva by Estevez. 13% Aldi £6.49.

This wine is from the Casablanca Valley. It is a distinctive wine with fruit flavour and a light vanilla oak, but much less than Chardonnays have been flavoured in the recent past. It had a nice smoothness and richness making it taste much dearer than it actually cost. We all liked it, scoring it either 7.5 or 8 out of 10, so an average of 7.8/10

Next was a 2025 Torrontes from NW Argentina. A Tesco Finest at £9.50 reduced to £7.12.

Grown in one of the highest wine regions in the world at an altitude of over 3000m, it is crisp and zingy taste without being overly dry. It has distinct orange peel, citrus and lychee flavours reminiscent of a Gewürztraminer from Alsace. It would pair well with SE Asian food. We all liked it very much, but it has mixed reviews at Tesco; either 5 stars or 1. We scored it 8/10

A 2024 Garnacha from Bodegas Borsao in Aragon, NE Spain. 13.5% Tesco Finest £8.50 down to £6.38 with 25% off was our first Red.

Garnacha is one of the two grapes used to make Rioja and this one comes from where Garnacha originates from. It is supposed to be 'a modern interpretation' of Garnacha. Lighter and juicy with red berries and violets. We were slightly disappointed as this is made by one of the most reputable wineries in the region, but it wasn't quite as special as expected. Not unpleasant, but we've tasted better. 7/10

Next was a 2024 Cote du Rhone Villages. Signargues, France 14% Tesco Finest again reduced from £9.50 to £7.12.

This is Tesco's regular Cote du Rhone and comes from the southern end of the region and produces richer, more intense wines. This was very typical of a Rhone wine, mainly Grenache and Syrah, spicy and full-bodied. Lots of dark fruit flavours. Very drinkable with or without food. We gave it 8/10

Lastly was 2023 Malbec from Cahors on the River Lot, S France. 13% Tesco Finest 25% off £9 down to £6.75.

Traditionally known as 'The Black Wine' it is a typical Malbec, powerful and full-bodied but smooth black berry flavour. However it was not quite as good as expected but still very nice. We scored it 7.5/10

So, to our wine of the month. The scores were very close but I think the best wine of the night and the one that most people would like was the Tesco Cote du Rhone, especially if bought at 25% off.



### **RUMMIKUB – Leader: Betty Vos – rummikub@ashbyu3a.co.uk**

The Rummikub group meets every 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday at 11 am at the Ivanhoe social club. If you have not played it and would like to try a diverting and slightly challenging game, we would be delighted to see you. In October we will be meeting on the 13<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>.

### **TRIPS AND OUTINGS – Leader: Colin Ellis – trips@ashbyu3a.co.uk – phone 01530 272592**

The trip to Nottingham Concert Hall on 14<sup>th</sup> October for a programme of Prokofiev, Rachmaninov and Brahms is now fully booked.

### **THE WALKING GROUPS**

#### **The 10 MILERS – Leader Christine Green – 10milers@ashbyu3a.co.uk– phone 07784 738597**

##### **21<sup>st</sup> September**

8 of us gathered at Rydal Gardens on a lovely sunny day. We headed out towards Packington and over the field towards the roundabout by the A42. We crossed over the golf course and followed the footpath to Oakthorpe, sadly the footpath to Donisthorpe was closed, so we took a bit of a diversion to pick up the Heritage trail to Donisthorpe. We had a short break on the benches before picking up the heritage trail to Moira Furnace and into Hicks Lodge. To save on the miles we avoided the zigzag path to Wells Road and were back at Rydal Gardens by 1 pm.

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

For our 2nd walk this month we met at Ticknall on a beautiful sunny day. We walked through Ticknall to reach part lime yards before turning left towards Staunton Harold reservoir, on reaching the reservoir we walked down the path to walk around Melbourne Pool with some lovely views across the lake. We walked up Robinson Hill and joined the path to St Brides, following the fields to Woodend Cottage and through West Wood before reaching Ingleby Toft, through Ingleby and then a straight line on good paths to Ticknall, finishing with a cup of tea and cake by the village hall.



21st Sept



28th Sept

**LONG WALKS - Leader: Kevin Green - walks@ashbyu3a.co.uk - phone 07470 227536**

**1st September. Swarkestone circular led by Lilian and David Spiers**

After a period of drought followed by monsoon type conditions, no less than 29 walkers set off on a circular walk in good walking conditions from the Crewe & Harpur pub Swarkestone via Stanton by Bridge, Melbourne and Kings Newton to reach the Cloud Trial. We continued by means of the Trent & Mersey Canal passing the Swarkestone Pavilion (The Landmark Trust) and returning to the pub by the River Trent for our lunch. We hope everyone enjoyed the walk. 7.3 miles.

**15<sup>th</sup> September. From Ticknall led by Michael O'Donoghue**

We were blessed with a lovely morning and had a delightful walk around the woods, then headed to the Staunton Harold Reservoir where we stopped for some refreshments before returning to Ticknall Village Hall.

The walk was planned to be just under seven miles but for some known and some unknown reasons, was actually nearer to eight miles.



**MEDIUM WALKS - Alison Thompson - mediumwalk@ashbyu3a.co.uk - phone 07930 557432**

**14th September. From Newtown Linford led by Alison**

After parking at The Bradgate pub on Main St in Newtown Linford, 13 of us joined the J87 cut-through from Main St to Bradgate Park, joining about half way along the path from the main car park at Newtown Linford to the Hunts Hill entrance, passing the war memorial and Old John on the way. The weather forecast promised us dry weather until about 1.00pm - this proved not to be the case as it soon started to rain and never stopped until the end of the walk.

We continued our circuit of the park downhill to the Cropston entrance, then shunning the main path, we headed back to Newtown Linford on a higher route with views of the depleted reservoir, deer getting ready for the rutting season and Bradgate House.

Back along the road to the pub for our lunch. 4.4 miles completed.....and then the sun came out.

## **SHORT WALKS - Leader: John Howlett - ShortWalk@ashbyu3a.co.uk - phone 01530 461774**

18th September. From Ticknall car park into Calke

Five walkers, on a good day for walking, set off for Calke activity area where there is sometimes a coffee stall. Not today, so we set off for the main cafe. The walk from Ticknall is good and avoids the tunnel which you use when you go to the lime kilns.

There were some new activities being implemented particularly a track. We then crossed the entrance road and following the green paths we soon arrived at the cafe for a break.

We returned on much the same trail. It seemed to be shorter but does not look like it on the map.

## **LEISURELY WALKING – Leader Estelle Sandles – leisurely-walk@ashbyu3a.co.uk – 07919 986456**

1st September. Staunton Harold

After all the torrential rains of late, 11 of us grabbed the chance to enjoy the return of a sunny day at Staunton Harold. An interesting circular route took us towards the lake where we shared the area with very calm cows and 12-month-old calves of differing breeds. The resident swans at the edge of the lake were enjoying a snooze in the sun but no doubt on duty with one eye open to guard their large brood of cygnets still in brown baby plumage.

Some of the group had not visited Staunton Harold before but I'm pretty sure they enjoyed everything it has to offer here, a lake side seat, a more comfy seat and especially the refreshments at The Stables café in the Ferrers Centre which finished off our walk perfectly.

## **YOUR COMMITTEE**

If you want to get in touch with any of us for any reason, here are our email addresses

| <b>Role</b>          | <b>Name</b>        | <b>Contact email</b>                                                     |
|----------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Chair                | Tony Smith         | <a href="mailto:chairman@ashbyu3a.co.uk">chairman@ashbyu3a.co.uk</a>     |
| Vice Chair           | Adrian Hickson     | <a href="mailto:vice-chair@ashbyu3a.co.uk">vice-chair@ashbyu3a.co.uk</a> |
| Business Secretary   | John Pilgrim       | <a href="mailto:secretary@ashbyu3a.co.uk">secretary@ashbyu3a.co.uk</a>   |
| Treasurer            | Kevin Green        | <a href="mailto:treasurer@ashbyu3a.co.uk">treasurer@ashbyu3a.co.uk</a>   |
| Membership Secretary | Val Reed           | <a href="mailto:members@ashbyu3a.co.uk">members@ashbyu3a.co.uk</a>       |
| Groups Co-ordinator  | Michael O'Donoghue | <a href="mailto:interestg@ashbyu3a.co.uk">interestg@ashbyu3a.co.uk</a>   |
| Speaker seeker       | Yogi Godwin        | <a href="mailto:speakers@ashbyu3a.co.uk">speakers@ashbyu3a.co.uk</a>     |
| Social Secretary     | Glenys Morrice     | <a href="mailto:socials@ashbyu3a.co.uk">socials@ashbyu3a.co.uk</a>       |
| Communications       | Mike Stow          | <a href="mailto:webmaster@ashbyu3a.co.uk">webmaster@ashbyu3a.co.uk</a>   |
| Committee Member     | Estelle Sandles    | <a href="mailto:estelle@ashbyu3a.co.uk">estelle@ashbyu3a.co.uk</a>       |