



HAPPY NEW YEAR
JANUARY 2024

Chair's Chat:

Happy New Year

For many years I made New Year resolutions, probably the same ones again and again. How many did I manage to keep to? Not many is the honest answer. I think they were unachievable from the start, but I kept doing it – why? It made me think of the old adage – if you always do what you've always done – you'll get the same result – why did I ever think it would change?!?

This year I'm working on 'ways for a better 2024'.

I'm sure I could come up with 24 things for 2024 – but I won't bore you. Instead I'll share just a few of what I want to do better in 2024. I'm sure they will all make me happier. Some of them I do already but I want to do them more often like smile at strangers; talk to strangers; call someone to say thank or to say sorry; volunteer; dress up; donate; spend wisely; ask for help and eat my leftovers!!

None of the above are life changing but I'm hoping it will make my life happier. I hope you all enjoy whichever group[s] you go to in 2024. If you think you'd like to set up a new group – just let the committee know.

Trish Dewar
Chair



We have been contacted by the Growth and Partnership manager for Coram Beanstalk, a national charity with 50 years' experience of helping children to grow a love of reading. We are looking for people to train to become reading helpers and supporters. We provide all the training via Zoom as well as a DBS check. If you feel

able to become a helper, please contact them via the website below. [Register to become a Coram Beanstalk reading helper volunteer \(beanstalkcharity.org.uk\)](https://beanstalkcharity.org.uk)

Ready to take the first step to becoming a reading helper? Check that you can meet some basic practicalities and fill in our application form here.

www.beanstalkcharity.org.uk



Special Events – Elvis exhibition

There is an iconic Elvis exhibition in London at the Arches, London Bridge, which features artefacts from Graceland, charting the King's humble beginnings to his meteoric rise to fame.

I intend to organize a coach for the exhibition on Thursday 22 February, but at this time I am looking to find out who would be interested in going. Group tickets are around £26.50 plus the cost of the coach, which will depend upon how many want to go, but I would estimate the total cost to be in the region of £50. Please let me know if you would like to be included on my pre booking list.

Contact Jean Mole on 07736 445 658

Buckingham Palace

I have booked 50 tickets for entry to Buckingham Palace on Thursday 19th September 2024 ~ I hope you all have your 2024 diaries to make a note of the date. The cost of Group entry and the coach into London will be around £55, once again depending upon numbers.

At this stage I am just asking for names of those members who think they would like to go and will be taking deposits of £10 per person early next year.

Please come and see me at the monthly meeting.

or e-mail me on peterandjeanmole@btinternet.com to register your interest.

Come From Away

I have booked 37 seats at the New Theatre Oxford, to see the matinee performance of Come From Away on Wednesday 24th April.

This smash hit show is based on the true account of what happened to the 7,000 passengers who were in the air when 9/11 happened and the small community in Newfoundland that welcomed them into their lives. The show has won 4 Olivier awards for the best London musical and has excellent reviews. We would anticipate arriving in Oxford around 11am and with the show starting at 2.30pm there will be plenty of time to look round Oxford, do a bit of shopping or have some lunch before going to the theatre. Tickets, including the coach to Oxford will be in the region of £50 to £55, depending on numbers. As this show is likely to be very popular, please let me know as soon as possible if you are interested. Deposit of £10 required to reserve your place, with the balance due at the beginning of February.

As we will have spare capacity in the coach, please contact me if you just want to spend a day in Oxford without going to the theatre.

My contact details are mobile: - 07736 445 658 or e-mail: -.

Jean Mole



Home Dining

Cost £12.50 to include a 3-course dinner, a glass of wine and a cup of tea or coffee. Contact me on 01933 626 608 to book a meal with good company and good food.

Jean Mole



Wine Appreciation:

There was no tasting in December because of Xmas

We meet on the 4th Tuesday or Thursday of the month.

If you would like to join us please phone on 01933 356784. as we

have a few spaces

Steve Evans



Rock & Blues Group:

Our next meeting is on Thursday January 25th at 14:00 hours at the leader's house and the topic is the letter "J".

This is a friendly and relaxed group for those whose musical tastes are firmly rooted in the decades between the 60s and the 80s and who get together to listen to tracks they have chosen

for a different topic each month.

Jim Morrison



MMFC (Monday Morning Football Chat).

MMFC will now meet at Waitrose Cafe for the foreseeable future. Same time 10am until 11. New members welcome.

Mike Gibbons

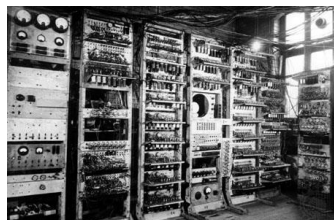


Handicrafts:

Please note that the next meeting of the Handicrafts Group is on Thursday, 18th January 2024 as we cannot gain access to the hall on our usual date.

We will be having a catch up and discussing the proposed crafts Kathy and I have in mind for the coming year and hoping to hear any suggestions you may have or things you would like to revisit. Please bring along any craft you are currently working on to share and perhaps a hot drink too. We are open to all suggestions. Please feel free to join the group if you are interested, as new members are always welcome.

Kathy and Jenny.



Computer Group:

DO YOU HAVE A COMPUTER THAT YOU RARELY USE BECAUSE YOU ARE UNSURE? WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAVE SOME HELP WITH THE ABSOLUTE BASICS?

From this month our meetings have changed and are in the Community Room at Waitrose, on the 1st and 3rd Saturday each month from 10:00 until 12:00. We appreciate that this may not be convenient for some of you, but the change to not having to pay to hire the room will mean that we can carry on the meetings for those who can attend, without losing money. (And of course you get an opportunity to do some shopping while you are there!) The next meeting is on 20th January 2024.

Further information from Jim or Maggie Morrison.



W.A.L.T: Would Anyone Like To:

Find some company foranything you fancy doing, but don't want to do it alone. Find some information or advice onanything you want to know about. Find someone to take away.....anything you don't need (but someone else might).

The new look W.A.L.T group is a bit of an amalgamation of social media, recycling, and a companionship group, and with 70+ members, you stand a good chance of some responses from your fellow group members.

Don't worry if you are hesitant about using email - we have a very successful Buddy system in place to ensure no one is excluded because of technology.

For more information either contact the group leaders, Janet, and Ken, via the website, or see us at the main u3a meeting.

Janet Embling & Ken Chambers, Group Leaders



Country Dancing:

Numbers are still static and with an increase in hall charges we do need a few new members. We meet at Hensman Hall which is well heated and spacious in Chicheie St. Higham Ferrers. Our group is very friendly. You don't need a partner so why not come along. Dancing is a great way to keep fit in a very sociable atmosphere. If you need further information please ring George on 01933 622827.



Ten Pin Bowling:

If you would like to know more about this group or advise us of your interest: Please get in touch via the website Contact page, or contact...

Group Leaders – Alan Collinson, Martin Cromwell or Alan Nixson



Sunday Lunch Group:

We have combined the Walk in Country Park group membership list with the Sunday lunch group.

Our first Lunch is on the 24th of March at 12 30 meeting at the Priory Wellingborough. One of our

favourite venues with an extensive menu including a Carvery.

Please book with Linda Walker spidar.girl@btinternet.com 07384 601603.

new and existing members welcome,

I don't care how nice the hand soap smells, don't come out of the bathroom smelling your fingers.



History Group:

January's meeting was well attended with 85 people. The talk on Wellingborough Now and Then by Robert Wharton was very interesting and enjoyed by all.

The next meeting is on Thursday 1st February at the Masonic Hall on Wellingborough Road Rushden at 2pm. The talk is 100 Years' History of the BBC given by Dave Andrews. I look forward to seeing you there.

The trips for this year have been decided. The cost is approx. as I am still awaiting the final cost of entry to the sites. The visits are as follows:

All detailed information regarding payment etc. will be available after the general meeting. Alternatively, you can contact me Brian Turner on 07812514456 or brianitatu@gmail.com.

Thursday May 2nd Stratford on Avon and Theatre Guided Tour.

Coach £24.50 Theatre Tour £10

The tour is a 60-minute journey led by experienced tour guides starting at the Front of House. Looking at the hidden history and discovering more about the auditorium and backstage. Then Free Time in Stratford.

Thursday June 6th Sandringham House and Hunstanton

The house with Jacobean style exterior was built by Edward VII and houses a collection of treasures ranging from the Victorian era to present day. This is a fascinating estate giving an insight into the heritage of the Royal Family.

After visiting Sandringham, we will visit Hunstanton for you to have some free time and a stroll and perhaps some fish and chips.

Coach £26 Entry to house and gardens £23

Thursday 4th July Donnington Le heath Manor House King Richard III Visitor Centre and Tomb in Leicester Cathedral

The manor house is an example of a family home built in the 13th century and modernised in 1618. The Digby family owned it for 200 years (involved in the Gunpowder plot). It has been beautifully restored to show life in the 1620s. It is set in a 17th century styled Garden.

Then a visit to the Richard III grave site and award-winning exhibition about his life. Visit the tomb in Leicester Cathedral.

Coach £22. Entry to Donnington Le Heath £4.50 KR III Visitor Centre £7.50 Cathedral awaiting reply.

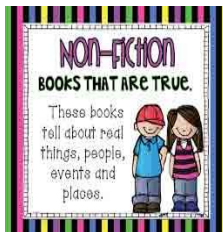
Thursday 5th September Black Country Living Museum

Connect with the stories of how the region made a big impact on the world. From metalworkers, miners, nurses, schoolteachers and even a pub landlord or two. There is lots to get stuck into, talking to historical characters and bringing history to life.

Head underground, glimpse the life of an 1850s miner, test your times table in a 1912 school lesson, watch a vintage film in 1920s cinema, enjoy 1930s traditional fish and chips, try 1950s confectionary, have a drink in one of the 2 pubs take a ride on the heritage vehicles and see live industrial demonstrations.

Coach £26 Entry £15.50

Brian Turner



Non-Fiction Book Group

New members very welcome.

We meet on the 4th Monday in the month 10:30-12:00.at the leaders' home. Details on the beacon calendar.

Are you a non-Fiction reader? Are you interested in Travel, History, Biographies etc. Members would need to commit to obtaining copies. listening as a talking book or reading on Kindle.

Our book choices are varied. Recently we have read Biographies,Diaries , Travel, and History, both newly published and from past years. We meet at the leaders' home in Rushden to discuss our choice of book and choose another.

More information from Linda & Chris Walker: spidar.girl@btinternet.com.



Golf:

We shall review the actual required group membership next March 2024 to determine the number of players interested and whether the group should continue.

Want to know more or advise us of your interest: Please get in touch via the website Contact page, or contact Group Leaders - Hensley on 01933 805547, Alan Nixson 07850 789447.Alan Nixson

Linda Walker



Bookmarks Again:

The Clockmaker's Daughter by Kate Moreton

Those organised readers among us make lists of characters and timelines to help with their reading and this would certainly be helpful with this novel which covers several generations and has more than one female heroine. The story starts with a compelling portrait and a photograph discovered in an old satchel by an archivist called Elodie. She feels connected to the image of this beautiful girl and later to the house, Birchwood, where the artist and sitter had once stayed. As Elodie discovers it has memories of her own mother and of her family. Like a jigsaw puzzle her research reveal an intricate tale of love, shooting, drowning, and a ghostly presence. Some of the group felt it was too complicated to read. Those of us who succumbed to the guilty pleasure of reading it over two days became drawn into the mystery of the lives of Birchwood's inhabitants and its past and enjoyed the experience of the book turning into a "page turner." In writing this review I have tried not to put in any spoilers for those who would like to read it in the future, but it is difficult to do so.

Next month we will read "The Hound of the Baskervilles" by Arthur Conan Doyle and we will meet at Waitrose Community Room at 10.30am on Monday 5th of February.

Any new members will be welcome.

Ann Kemp

Odd Idioms – the best thing about holidays is

You've eaten my ears (Mou ehis fai l'aftia) a Greek friend told me recently after I'd asked, for the hundredth time, not to forget something.

In Armenia, on the other hand, if I were driving someone potty, he or she might bark: "Stop ironing my head."

Idioms and their twisted logic are magical. To native speakers, they are unquestioned, as natural as the air we breathe – but translate them and you begin to wonder, who in their right mind would swing a cat to determine the size of a room.

Cats seem to attract more than their fair share of idiomatic abuse. You might think the French would identify with these elegant creatures, but no. Where we have other fish to fry, our Gallic neighbours, when they have better things to do, have a menagerie of cats to whip.

You think I am pulling your leg? In Spain I would be "taking your hair," while a straight-talking Norwegian, not mincing his or her words, would be speaking "straight from the liver,"

It is Arabic which offers the most creative latitude to its speakers, from blood-curdling imprecations to the most floridly beautiful blessings.

A friend recalls a dinner in Syria where no simple "bon appetit" would suffice, but a full 20-second benediction which concluded with: "May Allah sit on your stomach!"

CAN GARLIC REALLY FIGHT COLDS?

"Eat your greens," practically every child is told. But "eat your alliums" would be equally good advice, in addition to making food taste great, they have real health-giving properties. Every one is packed with plant chemicals that have been shown to have a positive impact on your gut health as well as your heart and immune systems, Garlic, onions and leeks contain fibre that feeds "good" gut bacteria. Some types of this fibre have also been shown to have anti-inflammatory and anti-oxidant properties which in turn support your immune system. Onions and spring onions are rich sources of quercetin, a beneficial chemical compound that has anti-oxidant and anti-inflammatory effects.

Experts believe there are several substances present in garlic that have anti-inflammatory effects and may help to lower cholesterol levels and blood pressure. When it comes to vitamin C, shallots knock the socks off other alliums, containing more than three times as much as onions. And what about eating garlic to fight colds and flu? Long used in folk medicine for the relief of coughs and colds, modern studies show that onions have valuable antibacterial properties against bugs that cause respiratory ailments. What's more, it is older, stored onions that appear to be the most potent for your health.

u3a MONTHLY MEETINGS

Please note there is a small charge for non-members. Details can be found on our website or call 01933 522934 for further information.

If you, or a friend, have had experience as a speaker at other groups on topics which you think would be of interest to our u3a members then please contact the Speaker Secretary.

2024		
15 th Jan	Steve Dimmer	Forging Ahead – The Secrets of Operation Bernhardt
19 th Feb	Geoff Rowe	30 Years of British Comedy
18 th Mar	Vince Eager	What time's the Midnight Buffet?
15 th Apr	Susan Flipping	A Death in Time
20 th May	Tom Way	Wildlife Photography
17 th Jun	Mike Storr	Masters of Mirth
17 th Jul	Roger Prescott	Juke Box Jury 1960s
19 th Aug	Julie Kinnear	Wonderful Wicked Wallis
18 th Sept	Vince Easer	Rock & Roll – Part 2
16 th Oct	Alex Leger	Behind the Scenes at Blue Peter
20 th Nov	Keith Baldwin	When Doctors & Police start to look young
9 th Dec	AGM	H&R Singing for Fun



GROUP LEADER CONTACT DETAILS –

In accordance with GDPR we don't publish contact details for group leaders on a publicly available website or newsletter. There is a contact form on the website which can be used to email group leaders and u3a officers.

If you wish to telephone a group leader you will need to log into Beacon at <https://www.u3abeacon.org.uk/u3aportal.php?u3a=118&sc=LUDE><https://www.u3abeacon.org.uk/u3aportal.php?u3a=118&sc=LUDE>. You will need to create a password the first time you use the members' portal and full instructions are available on our u3a website.

Clicking on the Higham & Rushden u3a groups link opens a page listing all our current groups and gives telephone numbers for each leader.



ICE

(In Case of Emergency)

Have you ever thought about what would happen if you had an accident or fell ill during u3a activity?

Please ensure we have a note of your "In case of emergency" contact details so that we can let them know.

GROUP DETAILS	VENUE	DAY/TIME
Check the group calendar on the website for further details		
A Little Aloud	Leaders home	2 nd & 4 th Wednesday on Zoom 10.00 & 11.00
Art for Fun	Waitrose Community Room	Alternate Mondays 14.00-1600
Badminton Beginners & Improvers	Pemberton Centre	Wednesday 14.00-15.00
Intermediate Badminton	Pemberton centre, Rushden.	Every Tuesday, 10.00 to 11.00. £2.50 per session
Badminton for fun	Pemberton Centre	Tuesday 09.00-10.00 & Friday 12.00-13.00
Bookmarks Again	Waitrose Community Room	1st Monday of the month*
Canasta	Leader's Home	1 st & 3 rd Thursday 10.00-12.00
Computing/Technology	Waitrose Community Room from Jan 2024	10-12am 1 st & 3 rd Saturday every month
Country Dancing	Hensman Hall Chichile St. NN10 8HT	Alternate Mondays 2 00-3.30pm
Cycling multi-Groups	Rushden Lakes	Every Monday 10.30 (Apr-Nov)
Digital Photography A	Rushden Hall	2 nd & 4 th Wed 10.00 to 12.00
Driving	On the Road	By request
Garden	Rushden Hall	2 nd Thursday 10.30-12.30
Guitar Improvers	Rushden Windmill Club	Tuesday 4pm
Handicrafts	Rushden Bowls Club	4 th Thursday each month 2-4pm.
History Group	Rushden Masonic Hall	1 st Thursday each month 14:00
Home Dining	Various	Three times per Month varying days
Knit & Natter	Leader's Home	Alternate Mon 10.00-12.00
Mahjong for fun	Waitrose Community Room	Alternate Mondays 14.30-16.30
MMFC	Waitrose Cafe	Weekly Mondays 10am – 11am
Non-Fiction Books	Leader's Home	4th Monday 10.30-12.00
Play Reading	To be advised	1st Tuesday 13.15-14.15
Rock & Blues Appreciation	Leader's Home	Last Thursday of the month 2-4pm
Scrabble	Waitrose Community Room	2-4pm
Continued		

GROUP DETAILS	VENUE/DAY	TIME
Check the group calendar on the website for further details		
Singing for Fun	Rushden Hall, Hall Park	Alternate Thu 14.00-16.00
Special Events	Various	Various
Sunday Lunch	Various	Resuming 24 March 2024
Table Tennis	Pemberton Centre	Wed 13.00-14.00
Ten Pin Bowling	Hollywood Bowl, W'boro	Alternate Friday 1100-1300
Ukulele	Rushden Transport Club	13.30-15.30 Every Monday
Video Editing	Leader's Home	2nd & 4th Tues 10.00-12.00
W.A.L.T.	Various	Various
Walking	Various	Various
Wine & Dine	Various	Various
Wine Appreciation	Leader's Home	Now open again – check calendar for information.

There may be waiting lists for some of the groups but if you are interested please contact the relevant group via the contact form on the website to be added and the group leader should contact you.

FOR THE SCOTS AMONG US JANUARY 25TH IS BURNS' DAY, AND WE ARE OFTEN ASKED: "IS HAGGIS A REAL ANIMAL?"

We wouldn't blame non-Scots for thinking that haggis is some sort of animal with the way it's referred to. Any Scottish tour guide will regale you with stories of the wild haggis, a fluffy creature roaming the Highlands, said to have one leg which is longer than the other so it can easily run uphill, but only in one direction.



You can go see a stuffed "specimen" at the Kelvingrove art gallery in Glasgow, alongside a mock cooked haggis.

Although much fun has been poked at a limited study in 2003 that reported that a third of American visitors to Scotland believed haggis to be a real animal, a 2019 study revealed that 1 in 10 Southerners was equally uninformed.



EDITORIAL:

The very first New Year's resolutions happened over 4,000 years ago when ancient Babylonians started to celebrate a new year. Their new year celebration was a 12-day festival called Akitu, which began at the start of the spring planting season in March.

During the celebrations, Babylonians made resolutions to their gods. But they probably didn't make any promises to exercise more, save more money, or start a new hobby. They usually pledged their loyalty to their king and promised to pay their debts and returned borrowed items to their rightful owners. They believed if they kept their resolutions, the gods would treat them well that year. But if they didn't they would get on the bad side of the gods.

New year, new resolutions. In 2023 a UK survey showed that almost 58% (approximately 30 million adults) of the population intended to make resolutions. More than a quarter of these will be about making more money, personal improvement and losing weight. But will we succeed? Sadly, a survey of over 800 million people predicts most resolutions will be abandoned by the second week of January.

One of the main reasons why promises fail before the end of January is because they are vague. They focus on immeasurable qualities such as being healthier, happier or earning more money (without defining what they mean). Vague goals don't give us sufficient direction. It is impossible to know how far we have to go to reach our destination, what barriers we will have to overcome and how to prepare for them.

We also often set ourselves unattainable goals because we want to challenge ourselves. There is an inherent paradox - dubbed the *effort paradox* - in how much our brains love the idea of effort while actually finding it uncomfortable. We think that we will feel more fulfilled if we challenge ourselves to achieve a difficult goal. Another reason is we are biased towards the present. We find it difficult to imagine the kind of difficulties our future selves will face trying to achieve these goals. We think only of the goal we want now, in the present, but not how to get there. With such a narrow focus, it is easy to see this end point as closer than it is when we start working towards it.

The lazy brain. To navigate the world, we form mental shortcuts by creating habits. When these cognitive shortcuts have been hardwired in place, our brains find it easier to act without much conscious effort or control. The longer we have had these habits, the more deeply entrenched the cognitive shortcuts behind them are. For example, we may unthinkingly reach for the biscuits when we park ourselves in front of the TV at night – it becomes a routine. Or we hit the snooze button when the alarm goes off in the morning.

Our brains are lazy and want to minimise cognitive load – meaning we repeat what we find pleasurable rather than consider different and new options, which may be more or less pleasurable. It is simply easier to take these shortcuts that don't offer much resistance or discomfort. That said, some people rely more on habits than others and they may find it harder to break them.

To achieve our resolutions, however, we often need to change these deep-seated habits and alter the neural pathways responsible. But as our brains resist this discomfort, we are tempted to go back to a more comfortable place. That's a reason why we give up our resolutions. An aspect of this is known as the status quo bias. We are more likely to stay with status quo - our existing mindsets - rather than persist with changing these habits which takes time and effort.