



Friendship ✨ Learning ✨ Fun in our Community

Musings from the Chairman



September – thank goodness!

The kids are back at school and grandparents (yes, that's us) can get their lives back. I know we love them, but we all need a well-earned lie down and a stiff drink. I won't tell if you don't! Did you watch the solar eclipse together or dance in the garden when the rain finally returned? I swear my plants were bouncing on their beds with delight and the straw field that used to be a lawn, began to turn green in just a couple of days.

August is when we hold our Summer Social, and this year it was an absolute cracker. How can we adequately thank the Social Group who give their time to plan, organise and run this wonderful event? While we were enjoying it, they were working. Great location, outstanding food and sailing rides around the lake - the perfect way to spend a summer afternoon. Well done, Polly and team. There are lots of photos on our Facebook page, which you can access from the bottom of the Welcome page on our new website.

This month has been a milestone as our membership has passed 300 for the first time since pre-covid days. Now that's a cause for celebration.

Enjoy your newsletter.

Frank

Read on on page 2 →

Editor : See Frank's "Last Word" on page 12!

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Your ideas, stories & photos
make our newsletter –
we'd love to hear from you



MONTHLY MEETINGS

This year's **Thrapston & District u3a Summer Party** was billed as a "Ticket to Summer", and true to tradition the event drew a full house. After weeks of scorching heat, the weather settled into something far more comfortable: bright sunshine softened by a welcome breeze. Those seated under the canopy on the Middle Nene Sailing Club terrace found long sleeves and cardigans surprisingly useful, while the open end of the terrace offered enough sunshine to counter the cool air.



For anyone seeking shelter, the clubhouse provided plenty of space, but the view across the lake was hard to resist. Middle Nene Sailing Club has long been the favoured venue for our summer gatherings and it's easy to see why. With excellent kitchen facilities, ample seating, a reasonably priced bar, and a beautiful lakeside setting, it offers something for everyone — from dinghy sailors to bird watchers.



The club once again operated their gaffrigged open sailing boat, giving members the chance to take to the water. A list of eager u3a sailors quickly formed, ready for a trip around the lake at only £1 per head. The stiff breeze made the experience all the more exhilarating. The skipper handled the vessel with calm competence, guiding it to a gentle mooring at the jetty and helping less nimble adventurers disembark safely.



Lunch, prepared by our dedicated Social Group, lived up to its usual high standards. Events like this don't happen by magic; they require planning, organisation, and a great deal of hard work. The excellent salad spread — with contributions from local tradespeople — was enjoyed enthusiastically, followed by Magnum ice creams for dessert. Then came the inevitable mountain of washing up.



MONTHLY MEETINGS

Summer Event continued



A quiz provided further entertainment, featuring dingbats and word puzzles that tested even the sharpest minds. The compiler of the questions must surely have a devious streak, but the challenge was met in good humour. Answers always seem obvious once revealed, of course, and by the end there was no clear winning table.



Each entry ticket was numbered for a free raffle, and in an unusual twist two of the prizes were won by a husband and wife — names withheld to avoid blushes. Despite the gentleman's claim that he "never wins anything", the pair left with a bottle of wine and a pot plant to enjoy at home.



The party unfolded without formalities, simply offering a relaxed afternoon of good company and shared enjoyment. It was clear that everyone had a wonderful time. We are fortunate to have such a friendly u3a and a hardworking Social Group who volunteer their time to make events like this possible. Above all, it is the people who make the party — and we have some of the very best.

Paul Ollett

Editor : thanks to Paul also for many of the photos



MONTHLY MEETINGS

Our monthly meetings are held at the Plaza Thrapston, on the third Friday in the month, from 10.00 to 12.00. Doors open at 9.45, and the cost is £1 for members and £3 for visitors, to include refreshments

This month's speaker, on September 17th, is :

Mel Harvey

Not just everyone gets admitted to the Inner Magic Circle.....
Mel is a master of close-up magic, a form of entertainment where the magician performs right under the noses of the audience.
Hear his story and prepare to be amazed!



Kelly will also be bringing some jigsaw puzzles along for you to take away with you or for you to swap with ones you have finished.

Next month's speaker, on October 16th, is

Trevor Stainwright

Wind and Water Mills of Northamptonshire



Our November meeting, on 20th brings Colin Bloor to the Plaza.



Colin will illustrate his talk on **Ancient Monuments** with photographs



u3a NEWS

u3a friends

friends events

Expand your horizons this September with **u3a week** We are delighted to announce our programme of u3a week events, designed to present new perspectives.

- **Monday 21 September** - Secrets of the human brain: Sleep and dreams
- **Tuesday 22 September** - The Enchanted Archipelago - a journey through the Galapagos with HX
- **Thursday 24 September** - Promoting brain health: from evidence to action
- **Friday 25 September** - Live cookery demonstration - try something new.

Alongside our online events, we will be using our social platforms to encourage members to try something new just for fun. Find out more on the u3a week page.

Sign up to the u3a Friends newsletter at <https://www.u3a.org.uk/u3a-friends>



NEW GROUP



U3A singles friendship group

We plan to meet regularly for friendly catch-ups.
Here are some of the activities we could consider as a group.

Local outings, coffee mornings, gentle walks, meals out, and occasional day trips.

The aim is simple: companionship, conversation, and shared experiences. No pressure, no expectations — just a supportive group of single people who enjoy getting together and trying new things.

If you're looking to widen your social circle, discover new places, or simply enjoy time with like-minded people, this group is for you.

There will be a sign-up sheet for you to register interest at the next Plaza meeting or email Theresa vicechair2Thrapston u3a@gmail.com



NEWS FROM THE GROUPS



A Message From The Groups Co-ordinator

A reminder that you don't need to be signed up as a member of the group to join in Rural Walks, Lunches, Sunday Lunches, History Walks, Outings and Visits. Please email the group leader to book a place via the website <https://thrapston.u3asite.uk/groups>



HISTORY WALKS

We had a really fascinating walk in August in which Eric guided us around hidden and unknown areas of Thrapston.

Our September walk is on Wednesday 30 September at 2 p.m. in Raunds. It will be led by Susan Copperwheat who runs local focus walks. The charge will be £2.50 per person and we shall meet at the Library in Raunds. Lifts from Thrapston Co-op at 1.40. Please book a place at the September monthly meeting or email me glynishill06@gmail.com. Please also let me know if you need or can offer a lift.

The walks are open to all members and guests over 18 are welcome, for a maximum of two walks as a non u3a member

UKULELE GROUP

The group is now disbanded due to lack of members. We may relaunch the group in the new year dependent on whether we can recruit a group leader. Our outgoing leader, Marion has generously said she will loan resources to a new group.

SUNDAY LUNCHES



The first Sunday lunch outing has been booked for Sunday 27 September at 12noon at the Dukes in Woodford. We have 22 interested parties at present. There are still places available.

The cost is £15 for one course, £21 for two courses or £25 for three courses. For those who have already registered would you please ensure your contact details are correct on our sheet. I also need to know if anyone has any dietary requirements so these will be catered for on the day.

If you would like to join us please find Su Mallett at the meeting on 18 September to add your name to the list or email Su (su_mallett@yahoo.co.uk) to reserve your place.



The October lunch is booked for the Soudes Arms, Rockingham for 12 noon on 25th October. The interest sheet will be available at the 18th September meeting for singing or email Su



NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

SILVER WHEELERS TRIP OUT

It was our silver wheelers Friday ride out, and Mark volunteered to lead. We all met up at the Co-op in Thrapston at 10 am on 14th and it was great to see that 7 turned up, the weather was great apart from being in the 30s.



The route we took went through all the local villages and countryside. When we arrived at the Nene Valley Railway café, we were ready for a cup of tea and a bacon roll or cake.

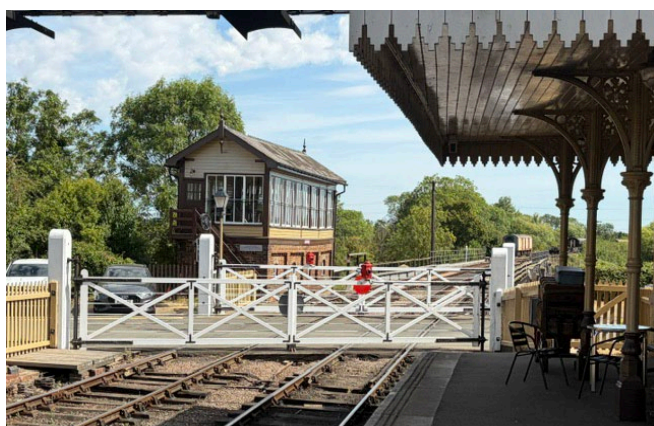
The ride back was just as enjoyable and we ended up doing about 57 miles.

If there's anyone who would like to join us, please let one of us know.

Contact us using the link on the website

or

email: groupsthrapstonu3a@gmail.com



Dave Tolmie



NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

Find Your Balance with our Yoga group



Have you ever thought about trying yoga but wondered if you were flexible enough, fit enough or simply “the right sort of person”? If so, you’re certainly not alone. The good news is that our friendly weekly u3a Yoga group welcomes everyone, regardless of age, experience or ability.

We meet every Thursday from **1.00pm to 2.00pm** at **Thrapston Baptist Church**, where the emphasis is on enjoying movement in a relaxed, supportive and non-competitive environment. Whether you’ve practised yoga for years or have never stepped onto a yoga mat before, you’ll find a warm welcome.

One of the greatest benefits of yoga is that it can be adapted to suit each individual. Every movement and stretch can be modified, allowing participants to work comfortably within their own range of movement. There is no pressure to keep up with anyone else or achieve difficult poses. Instead, everyone is encouraged to progress at their own pace, listening to their own body.



Regular yoga offers a wide range of physical benefits. It helps improve flexibility, balance and posture, while gently strengthening muscles and supporting healthy joints. Many people also notice improvements in mobility, making everyday activities such as gardening, walking or simply getting up from a chair feel easier and more comfortable.



The benefits aren’t just physical. Yoga is well known for helping to reduce stress and promote relaxation. Gentle breathing exercises encourage calmness, helping to quiet busy minds and improve concentration. Many members leave the class feeling refreshed, more energised and ready to face the rest of the day with a renewed sense of wellbeing.

Of course, like all u3a groups, the social side is just as important. Our classes are full of friendly faces, shared laughter and plenty of encouragement. New members quickly become part of the group, making yoga an enjoyable way to meet people while doing something positive for your health.



You don’t need expensive equipment or specialist clothing—just wear comfortable clothes that allow you to move freely. Mats and any additional equipment can be discussed when you join, and there’s always someone happy to answer questions before your first session. If you’ve been looking for a gentle way to improve your fitness, increase your flexibility, ease everyday aches and pains, or simply enjoy an hour of relaxation each week, why not come along and give our yoga group a try? You may be surprised at how quickly you begin to feel the benefits.



We meet every **Thursday from 1.00pm to 2.00pm** at **Thrapston Baptist Church**. All abilities are welcome, and no previous experience is necessary. For more information, speak to Helen at the Plaza meeting or call [07799 627789](tel:07799627789)



NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

STITCHERS GROUP

The Stitchers often work on their own projects, whether that involves sewing, knitting, crochet or embroidery, but sometimes they embark on a joint task.

The latest project is to make lap blankets for dementia sufferers.

These could be bright and stimulating, or in softer colours to calm.

(One of our members has just won a prize for her blanket – see *In The Community*.)

As always, the group work in a variety of techniques – some are crocheting, some knitting and some working in fabric.

(Great for stash busting!)

This friendly group meet at the Library on the last Wednesday of the month, from 10.30 to 12 noon.

All are welcome, from beginners to experts!

Contact Stitchers group leader Wendy Davies – see the link on the website



OUTINGS

SELF-DRIVE THEATRE TRIP

I have booked 15 seats for the matinee performance of

“The Hollow” at Milton Keynes Theatre on Thursday 21st January 2027.

The seats, which are all in row R (middle stalls), were originally £45+ but have been reduced to **£37.50** for a group booking of 10 or more.

The Hollow is based on an Agatha Christie book featuring Hercule Poirot. This is the write up on the theatre’s website:-

“At The Hollow, an elegant country estate, a glamorous circle of guests gather together one summer evening. But beneath the sunlit charm something darker coils.

Old passions refuse to die. New rivalries ignite. Dangerous infatuations take hold. Then - a shot rings out. A body is discovered. A smoking revolver in an unsteady hand.

The scene appears almost staged. A shockingly straightforward crime ... it’s anything but.”

This is a self-drive theatre trip, but I am happy to organise lifts should anyone require them.

Please contact me on [07736 445658](tel:07736445658) to add your name to my booking list.

As numbers are limited it’s first come first served.

Please note that full payment is required by mid November.

Jean



IN THE COMMUNITY

u3a Stitcher wins prize at prestigious show!



Theresa recently entered her "fidget blanket" in the Craft Section of the Titchmarsh Show and was delighted to be awarded a prize for her efforts.

The lap blankets are intended for the use of dementia sufferers.

Well done Theresa!

THRAPSTON'S MAYOR'S QUIZ NIGHT

AT THE PLAZA

ON 3RD OCTOBER 2026

FOR TEAMS OF 4-6

OUR U3A HAS RESERVED 12 PLACES (*SOME OF WHICH ARE ALREADY TAKEN*)

£10 PER PERSON (*PAYMENT IN ADVANCE*)

INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING MEAL OPTIONS :-

FISH & CHIPS, SAUSAGE & CHIPS OR CHEESE CROQUETTE & CHIPS

TO RESERVE YOUR PLACE EMAIL: PAULOLLETT@BTINTERNET.COM



NEW MEMBERS



A very warm welcome to this month's new members:

Kevin Church

Carole Ludford

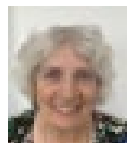
Wendy Yapp



MEET THE COMMITTEE



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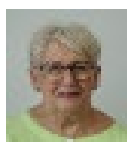
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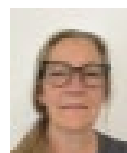
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THE LAST WORD

THRAPSTON & DISTRICT u3a HITS NEW MILESTONE !



For the first time since Lock-Down, our membership has broken the 300 mark! We now have 301 members.

Our community continues to grow and flourish.

The number of groups is growing too and more people are able to experience **FRIENDSHIP, LEARNING & FUN IN THE COMMUNITY** with us.

And finally Volunteers.

Currently, approximately 65 people regularly give their time to keep our u3a running. Their contributions cover everything from making tea at our monthly meetings, to leading groups, to serving as committee members and many more. All are equally important, as without them, our u3a would not function.

Volunteering is the very basis of the u3a, run for the members by the members.

Soon we will seeking new volunteers to join our committee in May next year. We start early to ensure anyone joining us has at least 6 months preparation and training before taking post. I know many of you have extensive skills, knowledge and experience. This is a chance to use them for the good of our 300 members.

Volunteering is not onerous, but satisfying, rewarding and fun.

And yes, we laugh a lot. If you want to know more, contact me or Theresa Wood.

Frank

A note from the Editor

This newsletter is published on behalf of the committee of the Thrapston and District U3A. The opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Editor, or of the committee of the Thrapston and District U3A, or of the U3A Trust.

Please note that items for inclusion in the next newsletter should reach the Editor by the last day of the month.

Editor and publisher : Wendy Davies - email: editorthrapstonu3a@gmail.com

Website : www.thrapstonu3a.co.uk where details of the committee and their roles can be found along with details of all the groups.

You can also join us on **Facebook** — **Thrapston and District U3A**

Thrapston & District U3A is a registered charity number 1179593