

KEYWORTH & DISTRICT



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE



 **Merry Christmas!** 

NEWSLETTER – No. 8 – December 2010

DIARY DATES – OPEN MEETINGS

21 December 2010	Cratchet's Christmas Dinner The Dickens Fellowship
25 January 2010	Leicester and Rutland Wildlife Trust Simon Bentley
22 February 2011	A Short Trip into Heraldry Vic Taylor
22 March 2011	So You Think You Don't Like Opera Trevor Impey
26 April 2011	The British Post Box Mel Matthews
24 May 2011	The Restoration of Wollaton Hall Ron Inglis
28 June 2011	Albert Ball VC Brian Fernley

All Open Meetings are held in the Methodist Church, Selby Lane, Keyworth. Doors open at 2 pm for a cup of tea/coffee and a biscuit together with the opportunity to read the various notice boards regarding future U3A events and, of course, a natter with friends.

Please note that no food and drink is allowed into the Church itself.

Keyworth & District U3A is a registered charity no. 1138354.

The Newsletter is issued four times a year and the deadlines for submissions are the 1st of March, June, September and December.

Item for inclusion can be sent by email in Word format or by ordinary mail as types or manuscript documents. If handwriting please capitalize and names or unusual words. Pictures, drawings, diagrams etc. are particularly welcome but if submitting these by email please ensure they are JPEG (jpg) format, sized where possible to 5 inches on the longest side.

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THE NORTH MIDLANDS POLICE HELICOPTER SUPPORT UNIT

At the Open Meeting on 26 October, John Johnson, Unit Executive Officer/Controller from the North Midlands Police Helicopter Support Unit entertained our members with a fascinating talk on the work and operation of this vital service. The Unit is based at the Derbyshire Constabulary headquarters in Ripley, and the helicopter is jointly owned by the Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Police Forces. It carries out vital work, helping officers on the ground to search for suspects, locate missing people and track stolen vehicles.

The Unit operates a Eurocopter EC135T2 helicopter, which was built in Germany and has twin Turbomeca Arrius engines. It was bought new and commenced operations in April 2004. It replaced the older second-hand French Aerospatiale helicopter, an AS355N, commonly known as the 'squirrel' that the Unit started with in 1998. The current helicopter is fully equipped with the latest technology including a 30 million candle-power searchlight, and an infra-red detector system. Suspected criminals have nowhere to hide from the 'eyes in the sky'. The overall cost of the helicopter was just over £3 million. The Home Office provided £1.44 million in a grant and the old helicopter, which cost £1.165 million originally, was sold to an operator in Italy for £0.5 million. The final cost to each force

was approximately £600,000. The current cost to run the aircraft is £600 per hour. This is calculated on the amount of fuel, the maintenance and insurance on parts and, although this sounds expensive, the results show that it is value for money.

The Unit has three permanent pilots and uses relief pilots from contractors to cover leave and sickness. The three pilots are all ex-military and have thousands of hours of operational flying experience. The crew consists of a pilot and two police air observers. The front observer's main job is to use the camera systems, whilst the rear observer navigates and commands an incident from the air.

The helicopter is part of Operations Division and its purpose is to support operational officers on the ground. It assists in searching for suspects following crimes committed, stolen and suspect vehicles and finding vulnerable missing people. This final capability is vital, because in the last 12 years, the unit has found 480 people, who otherwise could have died from either exposure or injury. The aircraft is used at major incidents where live video can be broadcast back to the operations room or to a portable receiver. Evidential and planning aerial photographs are regularly requested by police officers. Typical examples include: search for a burglary suspect; search for a

stolen car; assist local officers to find nuisance motorcycles; search for suspects involved in assault and affray.

Although there is an air ambulance that operates out of East Midlands Airport covering Derbyshire, it is sometimes unavailable and the police helicopter receives requests to airlift a casualty from an incident or accident. However, since it is not an air ambulance, when airlifting a casualty to transfer to hospital, a doctor or paramedic will accompany the patient.

There are weather minima that have to be abided by for safety reasons. This concerns the height of the cloud base and the distance that the pilot can see. Night limitations are stricter than day and flying over congested

areas is different to open countryside. By day, the pilot must be able to see 1500 metres horizontally, with a cloud base of at least 300 feet in open areas. In a congested area the cloud base has to be a minimum of 350 feet above the highest building, with the helicopter over 300 feet above the ground and 200 feet above a building. At night the visibility is increased to 5 km with a cloud base of 500 feet in open areas and 600 feet in congested areas, and in the urban places the helicopter must be at least 500 feet above buildings.

At the end of the talk John showed two short videos illustrating some of the operational aspects of the Unit.

Barry Hull



A Eurocopter EC135T2 helicopter of the Western Counties Air Operations Unit (Avon & Somerset and Gloucestershire Police Forces.

Photo by Adrian Pingstone, June 2008 at Kemble display.

A visit was made to the Curve in Leicester. Unfortunately, no report has been submitted but the following three photographs relate to the event.



HADRIAN'S WALL part 2

In the last issue of the *Newsletter* I wrote about our holiday in Northumberland, our base being very close to Hadrian's Wall and said that I would discuss further aspects in this issue.

The wall was begun in AD122 during the rule of the Roman Emperor Hadrian. It is not, of course, the only wall to be built by the Romans, there is a second wall deeper into Scotland known as the Antonine Wall. However, little remains to be seen of the Antonine Wall whereas a great deal of Hadrian's Wall remains on view.

The currently accepted view of the reason for building the wall is that it was for defence of the northern frontier of the Roman Empire as well as to establish some economic stability and peaceful conditions to the frontier zone. It is thought that some of the many gates in the wall would have been used as customs posts to allow for trade and taxation.

The wall was the most heavily fortified such structure in the Roman Empire and was made a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1987.

Extending for 80 Roman miles (73.5 modern miles or 117 kilometres) its width and height were dependent upon available building materials varying from stone to turf and in width from 3 metres to 6 metres and in height from 6 metres to 3 metres. It no longer stands to this height but, in

places is still up to 3 metres high.

The wall was largely completed six years after construction started with milecastles and larger forts along its length. Inscriptions show that the Second, Sixth and Twentieth Legions were involved in the construction work of the milecastles and turrets which measured 4.27 metres internally. Shortly after the wall was finished it was decided to add between 14 and 17 forts along its length to accommodate 500 to 1,000 auxiliary troops and the eastern end was extended from Newcastle to Wallsend (Segedunum). After the forts a vallum was made on the southern side.

The forts of Housesteads (Vercovicium) and Chesters (Cilurnum) are well worth a visit. Segedunum has a reconstructed bath house and interesting visitor centre but requires a negotiation of the traffic of Newcastle and there is another reconstruction site at South Shields (Arbeia), not directly connected with the wall and, if visiting, do check opening times first.

The most spectacular site is the fort of Vindolanda which is a must visit place. It is a very large site, with large excavated areas and ongoing excavations. There is an excellent museum and tea-room.

There is no doubt that a visit to this part of England is very rewarding.

HF

BOB HAMMOND

Bob Hammond died on 12 October 2010 at the age of 82. He was a very much respected educationalist and local historian, in the latter case the expert on the history of our village of Keyworth and the surrounding area. He was the driving force in Keyworth & District Local History Society and a member of our U3A since its inception, enjoying the Music Appreciation and Book Reading groups.

Born in Worthing and evacuated to Lowdham during the war years. He did National service in the RAF and graduated from Hull University in 1950 with a degree in Geography. He taught in secondary schools in Hertfordshire and Essex and then came to the East Midlands again in 1966 when he gained the position of lecturer in Human Geography at the Nottingham College of Education where he remained until retirement in 1984.

Bob was the author and co-author of several books and articles relating to geography, *Quantative Techniques in Geography* and *The New Geography of Nottingham* were two which have been widely read. He wrote many articles for the Keyworth Local History Society's *Newsletter*, and co-authored books published by the Society, *A Village Transformed*,; *Keyworth 1750-1850*, *Keyworth 1894-1994*, *Tollerton*, *An Airfield for Nottingham 1929-2007*, *Wrights Garage*, *Keyworth* and *Potter's Keyworth*, all of which can still be bought at modest cost from the Society. In addition Bob and his wife, Rosalind, researched and wrote several of the Society's Occasional Papers.

He was a trustee of Mundi, a Nottingham based educational charity, for 25 years; worked in the Oxfam shop for many years and, when younger, supported the Scouting movement. He had been a committee member and chairman of the Nottingham branch of the Geographical Association.

Bob's personal interests were broad. He loved classical music and reading books. A member of the Keyworth Dramatic Society he appeared in many performances in various roles with great enthusiasm.

Before Rosalind died they travelled extensively in a camper van which resided in Bob's garage up until his death even though it had not seen use on the roads for several years.

Bob was a great conversationalist, excellent company, generous in his support for people undertaking projects and will be much missed by his friends and associates.

Our sympathies are extended to his son Paul, who lives in Australia, and daughter, Ruth, who lives in Denmark, and, of course, to Helen who shared much of Bob's later life.

Bob left his body for medical research and so there was no funeral. His friends and associates gathered together on 20 November to remember him in what was a pleasant and happy gathering, as Bob would have wished.

Barry's Christmas Quiz

Since we are a University, and you have yet to sit an exam, I thought that I would set you a simple Christmas Term Test:

1. In which country was tinsel first used?
2. In which modern day country did St. Nicholas live?
3. How many of Santa's reindeer have a name beginning with 'D'?
4. Name A President of Egypt born on Christmas Day in 1918
5. In the Bible, what was the occupation of the first people to visit the baby Jesus?
6. Which Christmas song was written specifically for the guitar?
7. In which decade did electric Christmas lights first appear?
8. What was Frosty the Snowman's nose made from?
9. When is the Feast of Stephen?
10. Christmas Island lies in which Ocean?
11. True or False: Christmas tree needles are a good source of vitamin C?
12. Name the Founder of the Red Cross, who was born on Christmas Day in 1821
13. True or False: St. Nicholas is the patron saint of Pawnbrokers?
14. When are the 12 Days of Christmas?
15. Which British Monarch was the first to have a Christmas tree?
16. What relation was John the Baptist to Jesus?
17. Only two groups have enjoyed 3 consecutive UK Christmas No 1 singles. Name both.
18. What did Harry Potter get for Christmas during his first year at Hogwarts?
19. Who was Roman Emperor when Jesus was born?
20. What was Scrooge's first name?

Questions 21 - 30: Language Quiz. The following foreign language phrases all translate into English as 'Happy Christmas.' Identify each language.

21. Joyeux Noel 22. Froehliche Weihnachten 23. Feliz Navidad 24. Vrolijk Kerstfeerst 25. Kala Christouyenna 26. Nadolig Llawen 27. Buona Feste Natalizie 28. God Jul 29. Sretan Bozic 30. Nollaig Chridheil agus Bliadhna mhath ur!

31. How many of Santa's reindeer have a name beginning with 'C'?
32. Which country is the largest exporter of Christmas Trees?
33. What was the name of the star that guided the 3 Wise Men?

34. When is St. Nicholas Day?
35. In 'A Christmas Carol', how many ghosts visit Scrooge in total?
36. Which toy takes its name from the Danish for 'Play Well'?
37. What were the three gifts given to Jesus by the Three Wise Men?
38. Which country donates a Christmas tree to the City of Westminster each year?
39. How many Christmas no 1s has Cliff Richard had?
40. Which British Monarch was the 1st to give a Christmas speech?
41. Which famous scientist was Born on Christmas Day?
42. Which King ordered the slaughter of all infant boys born in Bethlehem?
43. How many sides does a snowflake have?
44. Which Christmas song was originally written to celebrate Thanksgiving in the USA?
45. Which German Theologian was the first person to put lights on a Christmas tree?
46. What are the names of the Simpson's cat and dog?
47. Of which modern day country was Wenceslas King?
48. What is the name of Santa's only female reindeer?
49. What is the biggest selling Christmas single of all time?
50. Name the 'rythmic' female singer who was born on Christmas Day in 1954

If you answered all questions correctly, give yourself a second helping of Christmas pud! I have to admit that I wouldn't be able to answer all of them without reference to books and the Internet, and so, if you are having trouble the correct answers are given on page 23

Thank you to the Committee, our Group Leaders and all of our members for their continuing support over the last year, and a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you all.

Barry Hull

COMMITTEE 2010-2011

Chairman	Barry Hull	Vice Chair & Groups	Barbara Wallace
Secretary	John Wallace	Treasurer	Jackie Fisher
Programme	Ken Doyle	Membership & Newsletter	Howard Fisher
Web Manager	Peter Edge		
Committee	Jean Ainscough; Keith Barton; Jackie Mullins; Kath Oakley Roy Turnbull		

THE CHRISTMAS STORY COMPETITION

There was a pleasing entry for this completion. The entries were judged in mid-November by our panel of; Alan Spooner, Jackie Mullins and Jean Ainscough. The stories are reproduced here.

First Prize

CHRISTMAS AT ELAND STREET

By George Murfet

For some of us, Christmas means throwing caution to the wind, spending lavishly, giving presents to the ill-deserved and going deeper into debt via credit cards, whilst bingeing and gorging ourselves unremittingly. Keeping up with the Joneses, or is it the Patels, is a national problem: or is it? Well no, it isn't. Spending satisfies retailers and manufacturers, keeping industry ticking away and people in employment. Methinks there were times when such considerations were not so apparent and token gifts were perfectly acceptable.

As an infant, I eagerly awaited Christmas. At first, with my father in the forces, my mother played her part. A hung stocking would supply small presents, especially lead soldiers and oranges: the latter being similar to those in the fruit-bowl the previous day. In later years, a bolster replaced the stocking and comic annuals were much appreciated. Aunts and uncles, who did not know Santa Claus's address, for his delivery service, gave presents at other times. Christmas lunch, unless chicken was on the menu, differed little from any other day.

What immensely pleased me were the Boxing Day visits to my paternal grandfather's home, off Noel Street: tenanted by the family during most of the 20th century. To Edgar, and wife, Audrey, were born seven children between the end of the Victorian era and the beginning of the Great War. By the early 1940s, their Boxing Day festivities involved a houseful of aunts; but ultimately my uncles were demobbed and came to the rescue. By 1945, the family were adults, married and parents: although Audrey had died.

My grandfather had four sons, Albert – Walter - Edward – Hugh (my father), and three daughters, Ada – Agnes – Irene. Albert, excused military service on health grounds, managed a shoe-shop, but never gave any family discount. He brought to the party his children, Derek and Sandra, and his wife, Hetty, until she divorced him. Uncle Walter was far more interesting. As a development engineer, his war was spent in Canada where he worked on munitions. He would come along with his two sons, Luke and Mark, although his wife, Lucy, and daughter, Lillian, always found better fish to fry elsewhere: the less said the better. Uncle Edward, a particular favourite, would bring along wife, Freda, and daughters Monica and Gloria.

He had just failed to beat the Russians to Berlin. The real family war hero, my father, fought in the Burma Campaign, alongside Simon, Aunt Agnes's husband. My prized souvenirs from these two wars were a football from India and postage stamps from Germany.

Perhaps the wartime developed an inner strength in my paternal aunts, or they learnt to face their brothers with added equanimity, but they were far less sympathetic than my maternal aunts. Aunt Ada brought along her husband, Laurie, and their children, Janet and Keith: but cigarette smoking soon overcame my aunt. Almost as quickly, my Aunt Agnes became a mother twice over, to mark, if not the armistice celebrations, at least the temporary return of her husband. She lived at number 26 with him and my grandfather. Her sharpness of tongue and admiration for the habits of Scrooge contrasted radically with her fellow siblings. My Aunt Irene, a delivering post-lady during the hostilities, was always accompanied by her husband, Robert, who'd seen military action in North Africa. Later on, they were tempted by the £10 passage to life among the convicts in Australia.

Boxing Day in 1945 was the first time I had seen the Goddard family in its entirety. More importantly, it was the first time my grandfather had seen his family together since the war began. There had been no fatal family casualties, as in the Great War, only the wounding of my father by friendly fire.

Those 23 family members who crowded into the living room and kitchen must have wondered why the front room was used solely as a cloakroom. Children, on that and subsequent occasions, were seen and not heard. During the course of the afternoon, the men folk played poker. Almost instantly, aunts became agitated at the size of the stakes and subsequent losses, but no quarter was ever given and 'walking home with continual ear-wiggling was sometimes inevitable'.

After a sumptuous, rationed, meal of ham, pork pie, and pickle, followed by jelly and trifle, my aunts and cousins were brought into the entertainment. It was always assumed that women would gossip and the children read comic annuals in the afternoon. Of course, there was no television. Board games were very popular, as were card-games, especially 'sevens'. Yet however financially distressed were the competitors, the incentive was always pennies or matchsticks and all of us were taught to lose with good grace, when the need arose.

Being two generations away, I would observe my grandfather with interest. Unfortunately, he was stone deaf, and so no one ever seemed inclined to speak, or shout, in his direction. He possessed the collected works of Shakespeare and yet none of his family would ever have read a word of them. During the war, his export business funded many of his family by weekly payments and when he eventually died, his legacy was shared equally, without fear or favour.

I was frustrated that such a potentially interesting man was beyond any verbal communication and so it was to the next generation that my thoughts

were directed but along entirely different lines. Originally, nine were brought up in such close proximity, in a two-storey house, where they, apparently devoted to each other, were like chalk and cheese, marrying partners whom their brothers and sisters would not have selected under any circumstances. Some of the marriages were successful, some weren't. I didn't know why because I was then only seven years old. I realized that I had much to learn.

So, after the card-games came to an end, and mince pies were served with steaming mugs of tea, we prepared for the walk home. Not one of my uncles had a car in 1945, but who cared.

Second Prize

THE APPRENTICE

By Sue Malpas

Once upon a time, last Friday, a boy was wandering dejectedly to school. It wasn't that he didn't like school; and just at the moment there were lots of interesting things happening in the run up to Christmas: it was just that he had something really important to do in the wood behind his home.

He managed to get through the day without getting into too much trouble for daydreaming and ran all the way home. Luckily the rest of the family were still not home, so he rushed to the hedge and breathed in deeply. He wasn't really allowed in the wood on his own, especially at dusk. He breathed out and concentrated with all his might until he had shrunk to about sixty centimetres tall and was able to slip easily through the hedge.

Running as fast as he could, he reached the enormous elm tree at the very centre of the wood. Again he used all his powers of concentration until a door appeared in the trunk of the tree and magically opened to let him in. Inside was all bustle and light. He was in a large workshop with wood piled everywhere and people just his height making wooden toys. Not with saws and hammers and nails but by moulding the wood with their hands as if it were play dough. They made cars and trucks and tractors, dolls' cots and tea sets, teddies and soldiers and dogs on wheels - every toy you could imagine, and some you couldn't. But they were all wood-coloured.

On one side of the workshop were stairs going up and up, and the boy raced up them to another enormous room. Here people with coloured hands stroked the wooden toys and immediately they came alive with bright painted colours, with faces, windows, patterns immaculately drawn.

The boy didn't stop but climbed another long staircase, past the room where the toys were being parcelled up, past the worker's rest room to a small cosy room at the very top of the tree. In front of a dancing fire, toasting his toes and some bread, sat an old man wearing a red dressing gown.

Pulling some toast towards him, the boy spread it with butter and raspberry jam and divided it between two plates. He and the old man ate the toast and drank the hot chocolate that appeared, foaming, in mugs by their sides.

“Well,” said the old man, “are we ready?”

“Yes,” said the boy.

They both got up and climbed even more stairs until they came out onto the canopy of trees stretching all round with only the stars and the moon above. Standing in front of them was a large sleigh with wooden reindeer harnessed to it.

The old man and the boy climbed in and switched on the computer and the sat nav. The old man gave the instructions and the boy showed him how all the machines worked. Together they flew around the world practising delivering presents in less time than it takes to tell.

Even Christmas Magic has to be updated sometimes.

Third Prize

A CHRISTMAS CRUISE

By Tom Beasley

You can imagine our excitement.

“Don’t make any arrangements for Christmas,” said granddad. “Your grandma and I have decided to take the whole family for a Christmas cruise. Full details later.”

Given that there are fourteen of us in the family including the kids we considered this a most generous gesture, and thoughts of the Norwegian fjords or Venice and the Mediterranean floated in and out of our minds. Perhaps even St. Petersburg.

By the beginning of December and still no details, we were beginning to get a little anxious. Then we got the call.

“Be at Sileby Marina on Christmas Day morning, 8.30 sharp,” said granddad. “Don’t worry about food and drink. We’ll bring everything”

Now this wasn’t quite what we’d expected. The River Soar in December was not exactly where our imaginations had taken us.

Anyway, Christmas Day dawned bright and frosty and we all assembled at Sileby Marina, greeting the rather surly day boat owner with the usual greetings ranging from “Ahoy there!” to “When do we splice the mainbrace?” Not surprisingly, these failed to impress since I dare say he’d heard it all before.

After a brief familiarisation with the workings of the boat from the owner – such as “This key’s for switching the engine on” and “There’s the lavatory”

- we set sail.

Since it was all granddad's idea it seemed only fair that he should take the first turn with the tiller. He took to the task like he'd been doing it all his life and only ran into the bank four times before we reached the first lock. To be fair the lock was only 25 yards from where we'd picked the boat up; but as he said, we were still pointing in the right direction.

After a hesitant start we mastered the opening and closing of the first lock and after a short break to remove a wodge of weed from the propeller we settled down to a comfortable cruising speed of about one and a half miles an hour. Even at this speed the task of steering the boat (which incidentally resembled a miniature tank landing craft) proved a stern physical test and by the time we had conquered the second lock - a considerably harder task than the first since it seemed the last time the winding gear had been oiled must have been just before the second world war - granddad was exhausted. However, with thirteen others to take on the task we remained buoyant.

I suppose with hindsight it was a mistake to let great uncle Cyril take over the tiller at such an early stage. A lovely man, but I suppose with him being profoundly deaf and benefiting from only one eye, the responsibility came a little too soon for him.

It was during the handover from granddad that we missed the turning that would have taken us onto the Grand Union canal. By now it was 11 o'clock and we'd broken out the four bottles of sweet sherry that great aunt Agnes had brought along. I suppose that was also an error of judgement. As the Wanlip Sewage Works hove into view it became obvious that things weren't quite right. For a start the waterway was now only about two yards wide. I suppose it was more difficult for great uncle Cyril since he could see only one bank.

In the interest of safety and since we could see that some 50 yards ahead the stream plunged ten feet over a weir, it was decided to turn back. Cyril executed a 24-point turn and we set off to retrace our steps. Sure enough after 40 minutes against the flow of the water we arrived back at the turning we should have taken earlier. This was indicated by a set of illuminated giant arrows but to be fair to Cyril they were on his wrong side.

At this point the kettle, which had been on the gas burner since we left the boatyard two hours earlier, started to whistle; so we decided against opening a sixth bottle of sherry and went for coffee instead.

By now most of us were beginning to feel a little peckish so at that point we moored and grandma produced lunch.

Now I'm as happy as anyone with a corned beef sandwich; but on Christmas Day over the years we've begun to expect something a little more special. The younger members of the party seemed particularly disappointed, although one or two had overdone the sherry and had consequently lost their appetite. However, we had to admire the work that had gone into producing 114 sandwiches, along with optional chutney, and

set about devouring them with enthusiasm.

Fruit salad out of a thermos flask seemed an ingenious idea for pudding, but we were soon ready to release our moorings. It was at this point that granddad pointed out that unless we were back at the boatyard by four o'clock we would have to pay a fine of £40 an hour.

Cousin Malcolm then took over the tiller and pushed the speed up to a flat-out two miles an hour. We had particular confidence in Malcolm since he'd been in the Sea Scouts fifty years earlier, and we drifted into the final lock at 3.55. However, in a final twist we managed to come out of the lock sideways under the watchful - not to say agitated - eye of the boat owner on the jetty 50 yards away. With superhuman effort we straightened up and drifted serenely to the jetty, pausing only to ram the side and send the welcoming party off his feet.

We asked the younger members of the party if they'd enjoyed the day.

"It was different", said young Harry. "Do we get money back on the bottles?"

But as we all agreed as we struggled to find our land legs, this had been a Christmas Day to remember. And we didn't even need our passports.

Commended

WHERE'S YOUR REINDEER GONE? WHERE'S YOUR REINDEER GONE? FAR FAR AWAY

*(to the tune of Where's your mama gone, where's your mama
gone, far far away)*

by Adriana Fallon

An adventure holiday it was advertised as; and, yes, it was a great adventure. A couple of days managing our own quartet of huskies sliding through the snow in the Arctic Circle in Finland, another day moving around on a skidoo mobile, one day cross country skiing, and another day a reindeer sledge trip. Special clothing to wear; strict instructions and safety measures were communicated; and to this day I can still hear the instructor say, "Whatever happens DO NOT leave the sledge you are sitting on." We set off with our own reindeer harnessed to the sledge in some five minute intervals. It was really magic, just the noise of the sledge going through the snow and seeing snow as far as you could see. Suddenly, Rudolph saw something and went off track to check it out. I tried to "steer" him back to the track, but by the time I succeeded the next reindeer and

sledge were approaching and - guess what - they had a fight in which Rudolph dislodged himself from my sledge and took off, quickly followed by the other reindeer and sledge.

Well, there I was in the middle of the Arctic Circle with nothing else to see but snow and the voice in my ears repeating "Do not leave your sledge whatever happens." I sat there what seemed like an eternity, when I heard the next reindeer come – it would be John, my husband, on that sledge, wouldn't it?

I could hear John call, "*Where's your reindeer gone?*"

"*That's a good question,*" I replied, as he waved and went past. And after that, all other members of our group went past me asking the same question again and again.

Now, I was getting a little concerned as everyone had gone by – what was I going to do? "*Do not leave your sledge*" kept me sitting patiently! Then, I heard the noise of a motor and suddenly out of nowhere appeared a rescue snowmobile to pick me and my sledge up. When I finally arrived at where I should have arrived with Rudolph everyone started singing loud and clear:

"*Where's your reindeer gone, where's your reindeer gone, far far away*".

You know when you sometimes feel like you wish to disappear in a big hole? That's how I felt. And for the rest of the holiday I was constantly reminded by fellow holidaymakers (including John!) singing,

"*Where's your reindeer gone, where's your reindeer gone, far far away.*"

Commended

RUDOLPH THE RED NOSED REINDEER

By Adriana Fallon

Love is what brought me to England in the first place.

Straight out of college I arrived in Leicester and was keen to find my first "real" job. Interviews were kind of fairly new to me so on this particular day I set off to meet Mr Hilton, the managing director of a small company dealing in industrial knitting machines.

Mr Hilton studied my CV and asked me to tell him about my education.

"All applicants need to do a little test and answer three questions," he said.

"Fine," I replied.

"Now, normally what we do is to let you know what the three questions are, then give you some thinking time and then we would like your answers.

OK?"

"Fine," I said.

"Here are the questions:-

1. How many days in the week begin with a 'T'?
2. How many seconds are there in a year?
3. How many 'd's are there in Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer?"

I was left for 10 minutes to work out the answers to the questions. Mr Hilton returned and said, "Are you ready with your answers?"

"Yes, Sir," I said.

"So, how many days in the week begin with a 'T'?"

"Two," I said.

"Right," Mr Hilton said. "And can you tell me which ones?"

"Today and tomorrow," I replied.

"Not quite the answer I was looking for, but I have to say it is not wrong.

OK, next question: how many seconds are there in a year?"

"Twelve," I replied.

"Twelve?" Mr Hilton said. "How do you explain that?"

I replied, "2nd January, 2nd February, 2nd March, etcetera."

"Mmm," he said. "Not quite the answer I was looking for; but OK, let's go to the last question. How many 'd's are there in *Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer*?"

"28," I replied.

"28?" Mr Hilton said. "How do you explain that?"

I started to sing to the tune of Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer as follows:

"dd-dd-d-d-d dddd-d-d-d ... dd-dd-d-d-d dddd-d-d-d"

Commended

CHRISTMAS JOURNEY

(a story for children)

by Pat Murfet

Hi Everyone! My name is Boris and I'm a handsome, clever teddy bear who has just been made by the elves in Reindeer Land. There is a buzz of excitement around and I'm not too sure what is happening, but I have been placed on a shelf and there are hundreds of other toys with me, including other bears that are not half as good-looking as me.

"What's going on?" I asked a pretty little doll next to me.

"It's Christmas Eve," she whispered. "Santa is coming to make his selection of the best looking toys."

"Who is Santa?"

At that statement all the other toys chortled with silly giggles. "Fancy

not knowing who Santa is,” they smirked. I glared, reminding them I had only been made half an hour ago.

Anyway I soon found out. This big fella, with a white beard and dressed in red, started coming along the rows of shelves. He'd talk kindly to everyone but would just pick a toy now and then and put him in a huge trolley. The sort you see in Tescos but twenty times the size.

I began to feel queasy and started to panic. “What happens if we don't get picked?” I asked my neighbour.

She pointed to some enormous crates on the floor. “Most of the toys will go by trains and boats and planes to the children of the world,” she said, “but the best go on the sleigh – that's a real honour.”

I glanced at a couple of the crates and made out their labels: “HARRODS - LONDON” and “JOHN LEWIS-NOTTINGHAM”. I didn't want to go in a crate, the sleigh sounded much more exciting.

Pick me pleeeasse, I said to myself; and guess what? He did - along with my best friend Sindy Doll who I had talked to. We were both put in the trolley. Then later the elves packed us neatly into one gigantic sack and we were put on the sleigh. There were little slits in the sack and Sindy and I could see all the stars and the snow. I thought everything was wonderful.

A few minutes before we set off, the two main elves, Marcus and Hugo led out six reindeer and fastened them to the sleigh. One of the reindeer was not too happy. “Christmas Eve again,” he grumbled. “It comes round so quickly. It's time someone younger took over.”

“That's Rudolph,” said Sindy. “He leads the sleigh; he always appears miserable but enjoys it when he gets going.”

“He's got a bad cold,” I observed, “just look at his red nose.”

Then suddenly Santa appeared with Mrs. Claus, who gave him a hug and a hot water bottle. He settled himself in his seat and shouted “Ready Boys - Let's go!” and we were off sliding across the snowy hills and forests, waving goodbye to the penguins and elks, the fairies and little people, and anyone else who lives in that magical world of Reindeer Land.

And when we got to the end of the snowy pastures, we just zoomed away and there was no land beneath us; we drove through air, with the moon and stars above and miles away, down below we saw little houses, towns and villages, mountains, seas, woods, valleys, lakes and dessert. This was Planet Earth we were told.

It was all such a thrill. Often we would descend and stop, then Santa would get out of the sleigh and remove a few toys from the sack and then we would be off again. Sometimes he would have a bit of a moan and say “Stingy lot in that house,” or, “I hope they sweep the chimney before I come again”; but at other times he'd come out singing merrily, “Nice drop of sherry there,” and he'd hiccup, or he'd say, “They've remembered you Rudolph,” and give him a carrot. After ten carrots Rudolph refused to move till he was given a mince pie instead.

And so the journey continued. We travelled through hot places and cold places. Sometimes the houses were in deepest Africa or Disneyland in America, straw houses on the banks of the Amazon or glittering palaces in India. The sack was growing lighter. “Last stop England!” shouted Santa.

And Cindy whispered, “This is a nice, friendly place to live.”

“Let’s hope we end up together,” I answered.

It was snowing gently when we landed on the roof of a little cottage in a pretty village. Santa, once again came over to the sack and took Cindy Doll and ME out together. “I know a couple of children who will just love you,” he said.

Then – with a few smaller parcels, we were whizzing down a chimney. It was black, horrible and sooty. I sneezed, and just when I was wishing I had been put in a large crate and shipped off to England instead, we were in a snug, cosy, warm room. We were safe. Santa took us through a small door and gently placed Cindy in a fancy stocking on one bed and me in a similar one, next to it. “Be good,” said Santa and disappeared.

“Get some sleep,” said Cindy. “We are going to be woken very early in the morning by some very excited children.”

I was comfy in my stocking, curled up with a yo-yo and a satsuma, but there was one question I had to ask Cindy. “Cindy,” I said.

“Mmm?”

“Why doesn’t Santa use the front door like any normal person?”

“Because that is what Christmas is all about,” she replied. “Full of mystery. Now go to sleep.”



Our wine tasters at the Monkey Tree (see following article) Photo: Ken Doyle

WINE TASTING GROUP

By Doug Miles

As we approach our final tasting of the year, which will be of fortified wines accompanied by various nibbles, cheeses, pâté, homemade bread, quiche, etc. and delicious desserts prepared by members, we can look back over more than 230 wines that we've tasted since the group was formed in March 2009.

The core of our programme is a series of comparative tastings of typically six or seven wines that are linked in some way – usually by region, grape variety, vintage or level of classification. These are interspersed with other events, such as a wine quiz, summer barbeque and visits to local restaurants. In October we had a most enjoyable supper at the Green Room in Keyworth accompanied by wines brought by the group. In November, seventeen of us dined at the Monkey Tree in West Bridgford where they were celebrating the arrival of this year's Beaujolais Nouveau (see photos).

From time to time we hold tastings of wines that members bring along – possibly a holiday memento, or made from a favourite grape variety, or an unearthed bargain. Our last such tasting, in September, included a wine of special significance to us. Many U3A members will remember Ken Lewin who died earlier this year. Ken was a founder member of our group with a wide knowledge of wine. Some while after the funeral, I was very touched to be given by Ken's family a bottle of wine – a 2004 St Hallett Barosa Shiraz – from his collection. We saved it to be drunk at our next members' wine tasting as the 200th wine the group had tasted, in memory of a much missed friend.

Our comparative tastings allow us to share opinions on the aromas and tastes of the wines, to learn a little about where they are made and to speculate about how they may develop over time. With wine prices rising steadily, the aim always is to equip members with the knowledge to navigate with confidence through the vast array of wines from all over the world that jostle for space on the shelves of UK wine merchants and supermarkets – and whose labels can sometimes be less than helpful or informative!

Our meetings normally take place at 2 o'clock in the Centenary Lounge of the Village Hall on Wednesdays at fortnightly intervals, commencing in 2011 on January 19th.

Our full programme can be found on the U3A website. If you'd like to learn about wine – how different grape varieties, different production methods and different years influence its taste – and drink modest amounts of it in friendly and convivial company, we're always delighted to welcome new members.

IMPORTANT NEWS

It is almost two years, since the memorable Keyworth and District U3A inaugural meeting took place in Keyworth Methodist Church. The vast numbers of people turning up caused the proposed meeting to be moved from the hall to the church – and even then left standing room only. What surprised many even more was the fact that twelve people volunteered immediately to stand as a Steering Committee. Over the intervening period, there have been very few changes to the Committee and much has been achieved in a happy, cooperative and constructive manner. The Committee have worked very hard, and in many cases, have put aspects of their own lives on hold. We now believe that Keyworth & District U3A is firmly established in our community, and that the various official positions are well set up and run smoothly.

The time has come for change. New committee members will bring new life and new ideas and carry K&D U3A on to even greater success in the future. There are five members of the Committee who have decided to stand down at the next AGM (April 2011):-

Barry Hull – Chairman, is looking forward to spending more time with his family and grandchildren, and developing his activities with the Universities.

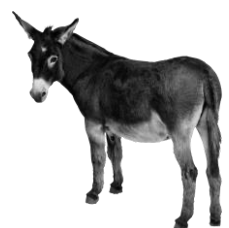
Howard Fisher – Newsletter Editor and Membership Secretary. Howard is involved in many local organisations and needs to free up some time to further develop other interests. The same applies to Jackie Fisher, who will also be taking up the post of Chair of the Historic Society in 2012.

John (Secretary) and Barbara Wallace (Vice-Chair and Groups Coordinator) have decided that the time is right to follow a long cherished dream and move to be near their family in North Yorkshire.

We would ask you to seriously consider standing to become a committee member of your U3A. K&D will need the following:

- Chair
- Treasurer
- Newsletter Editor
- Membership Secretary
- Secretary
- Groups Coordinator

If you are interested to learn more about these posts, please contact Barry Hull or Barbara Wallace, who will be pleased to help.



UKULELE GROUP

'Birds do it, Bees do it, even educated fleas do it'

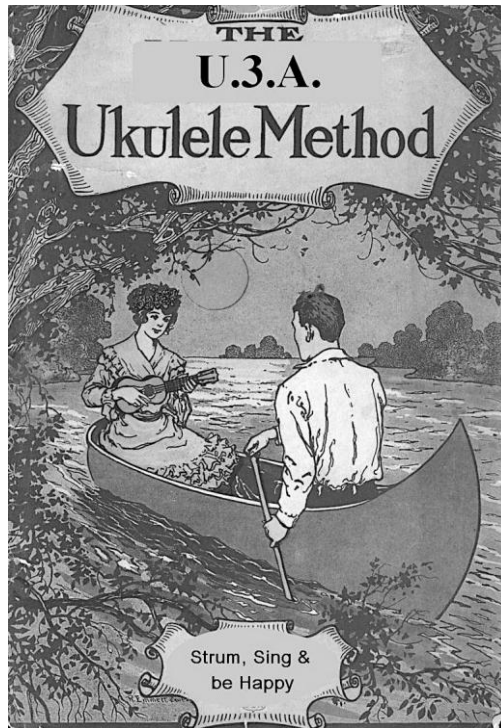
Come on, do it with us; Learn the Ukulele!

The Keyworth U3A Ukulele Group every other Tuesday 10 - 12

New members, with or without ukuleles are always welcome.

Absolutely no musical knowledge required

Strum, Sing & be Happy!



BOOK GROUP

The Book Group continues its monthly review of a wide variety of books in our members homes. The books are suggested and selected by the members.

Recently we have reviewed "The Bolter" by Frances Osborne and "The Shakespeare Curse" by J.L. Carrel. Sometimes members find that they don't always like the books chosen, but agree that it is a valuable experience to try something new.

Our next meeting looks at "Inside the Whale" by Jeannie Rooney on Dec 14th. This is followed by an unusual meeting on Jan 11th where we shall be studying books, but not reading them!

Intrigued ? Then call Sue Malpas (9147761) or Martyn Baker (8469558) to join us.

Barry's Christmas Quiz - Answers

1. Germany, 2. Turkey, 3. Donner, Dancer & Dasher, 4. Anwar Sadat, 5. Shepherds, 6. Silent Night, 7. 1890s, 8. Carrot, 9. Boxing Day, 10. Indian, 11. True, 12. Clara Barton, 13. True, 14. 26/12 - 06/01, 15. Queen Victoria, 16. (second) cousin, 17. The Beatles/Spice Girls, 18. An Invisibility Cloak, 19. Augustus Caesar, 20. Ebenezer, 21. French 22. German 23. Spanish 24. Dutch 25. Greek 26. Welsh 27. Italian 28. Norwegian/Swedish 29. Serbo-Croat 30. Gaelic, 31. Comet & Cupid, 32. Canada, 33. Star of Bethlehem, 34. 06/12, 35. 4, 36. Lego, 37. Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh, 38. Norway, 39. 3, 40. King George V, 41. Sir Isaac Newton, 42. Herod, 43. 6, 44. Jingle Bells, 45., Martin Luther, 46. Snowball (II) & Santa's Little Helper, 47. Czech Republic, 48. Vixen, 49. White Christmas, 50. Annie Lennox.

YOGA STYLE EXERCISE GROUP



r, parcels for the troops in

And held an early Christmas afternoon tea at which there was lots of cream scones and Strawberry jam!



WALKING GROUPS

Longer Walks

The September walk started and finished at Wysall, visiting Willoughby on the Wolds on route. Although it was dry whilst walking the weather turned on those taking lunch in the garden of the Plough at Wysall. Due to the A46 roadworks, we had to defer our planned Canal walk from Cotgrave to Cropwell Bishop, but replaced it with the next circular Canal section from the Lime Kiln pub to Mackley's Bridge and Owthorpe. The route of our November circular, which started at the Ruscliffe Leisure Centre, was new to most of the walkers as we followed a path adjacent to Willford Hill Cemetery to Landmere Lane, Wheatcrofts Garden Centre and Edwalton Golf Course. The walk included two crossings of the A52 which makes one realise just how much traffic there is in this day and age. Our December Walk will start at the Queens Drive Park and Ride and will follow the Trent Valley Way to Beeston Lock and Attenborough Nature Reserve before returning via the Beeston Canal.

Many thanks to all who helped plan our 2010 walks programme, walk leaders for checking them out and guiding us safely round the routes; those who participated in Car Sharing and finally the group for their good company.

Short Walks

Over the last three months, the Group completed circular walks around Burton on the Wolds, Attenborough Nature Reserve (the walkers were nearly as wet as the Ducks and Canada Geese); Stragglethorpe and the Grantham Canal. At the end of the last walk all enjoyed a carvery lunch at Shepherds. I am sure all walkers would like to extend their thanks to Barbara for organising the 2010 walks.

Roy Turnbull

CYCLING GROUP

During the last three months, the Cycling Group have cycled around Norwell area (fantastic village shop), Car Colston, Scarrington, the Vale of Belvoir, Radcliffe on Trent, Shelford, East Bridgford, River Trent, Beeston Canal and urban Nottingham. For December we have organised a "Ride and Stagger" social event to Old Dalby (cyclists never grow up).

At the beginning of October one of our members, Tony Fletcher, succeeded in completing an organized Coast to Coast ride (Whitehaven to Newcastle-on-Tyne) in three days on his £35 secondhand Dawes bike; most

of the other participants were riding bikes that cost £1000 - £2000! He experienced atrocious weather in fact his words were "I have never been as wet in my life". Well done Tony!

All members are looking forward to planning our 2011 programme.

Roy Turnbull

The following images were supplied by Roy and taken by various members of the Cycling Group.



NEW HORIZONS – visit to Denby Pottery



*Waiting for the
Factory tour to
commence*

Making frogs

Photos: Jackie Fisher



GROUPS A-Z

GROUP	LEADER	CONTACT
Architecture	Keith Barton	0115-937-3068
Bobbin Lace	Margaret Morrison	0115-937-2424
Book Group	Sue Malpas	0115-914-7761
Classical Music		
Appreciation	Alan Spooner	0115-937-2754
Cooperative Gardening	Pat O'Neil	0115-937-4543
Computer Beginners	Peter Tomlinson	0115-937-2707
Crafts	Jackie Fisher	0115-937-2898
Cycling	Roy Turnbull	0115-937-3561
Drawing	Barbara Jones	0115-937-2260
Family History	Clare Franklin	0115-937-3790
French Beginners	Barbara Wallace	0115-937-6266
French Conversation	Tony Robinson	0115-914-0775
German	Barbara Henson	0115-937-2707
History of WW1	Chris Close	0115-937-2032
Italian Beginners	Barbara Wallace	0115-937-6266
Latin	Chris Lillee	0115-937-4383
Needlecraft	Rosalie Jones	0115-937-4025
New Horizons	Barbara Wallace	0115-937-6266
Play Reading	Angela Harris	0115-914-3450
	Jean Alton	0115-914-6865
Relaxercise	Penny Kimmins	0115-846-9407
Scrabble	Jean Ainscough	0115-937-3419
Singing For Fun	Gill Wilcockson	0115-937-2046
Social Bridge	Pat Murfet	0115-937-4607
Spanish Beginners	Barbara Wallace	0115-937-6266
Theatre Visits	Sue Manley	0115-937-2366
	Marlene Mackie	0115-937-7248
Ukulele	Neil Marriott	0115-846-5795
	Barry Hull	01949-81598
Walking 5-7 miles	Roy Turnbull	0115-937-3561
Walking Up to 3 miles	Roy Turnbull	0115-937-3561
Watercolour Painting	Megan Little	0115-937-4418
Wildlife	Neil Pinder	0115-914-4896
Wine Tasting	Doug Miles	0115-937-5219
Yoga Style Exercise	Jayne Cowper	0115-937-7278

GROUP MEETING CALENDAR

DAY	TIME	GROUP	VENUE	FREQUENCY
		Social Bridge	Member homes	Irregular
		New Horizons	Member homes	Irregular
		Theatre visits	Contact Leader	Irregular
		Cooperative Gardening	Members homes	Irregular
		Wildlife		Irregular
Monday	0930	Relaxercise	Webster Hall	Weekly
	1000	History of WW1	Methodist Hall	1 st Monday monthly
	1000	Crafts	Methodist Hall	3 rd Monday monthly
	1100	German	Leaders home	Weekly
	1400	Bobbin Lace	Member homes	Weekly
	1400	Family History	Centenary Lounge	3 rd Monday monthly
Tuesday	1000	Play Reading	Feignies Room	1 st Tuesday monthly
	1000	Ukulele	Methodist Hall	Alternate Tuesdays
	1000	Cycling	Contact Leader	3 rd Tuesday
	1000	Drawing	Feignies Room	2 nd & 4 th Tuesdays
	1015	Walking 5-7 miles	Village Hall Car Park	2 nd Tuesday monthly
	1030	Walking 2-3 miles	Village Hall Car Park	3 rd Tuesday monthly
	1400	Book Group	Member homes	Monthly
	1400	Scrabble	Member homes	2 nd Tuesday monthly
	1700	Beginners Computers	BGS	Weekly
Wednesday	1000	Needlecraft Groups 1&2	Leader's Home	Alternate weeks
	1000	French Conversation	Feignies Room	Weekly
	2000	Wine Tasting	Centenary Lounge	Fortnightly
	2000	Singing for Fun	Methodist Hall	3rd Wednesday
	2000	Music Appreciation	Centenary Lounge	Fortnightly
Thursday	1400	Architecture	Feignies Room	Monthly
	1400	Watercolour Painting	Methodist Hall	Fortnightly
Friday	1000	Cycling	Contact Leader	Last Friday monthly
	1000	Yoga Style Exercises	Village Hall	Weekly Friday
	1400	Latin	Feignies Room	Weekly (winter only)





LOTTERY FUNDED