

newsletter 311 of 1st March 2026

A Message from the Chair

February has thankfully given way to what we all hope is a drier March, although the gardeners among us may argue. My water butt is full and the camelia is budding nicely. Fingers crossed the frost will not devastate it as happened last year.

If you were at the February Monthly Meeting, I'm certain you will have chuckled as Ian Maber regaled us with his money-making schemes in his talk "Surviving the 1960's". It contained the three elements within the u3a motto "Live, Learn, Laugh". And it brought back memories. Talking of which, my family have urged me to write my memoirs. They have announced that they are tired of the sentence starting "That reminds me when....". No doubt this is to prevent the chorus of "Heard it, Dad". Maybe we should all write down the things we got up to in days gone by.

Next month our speaker will be Elaine Perkins, who will be educating us about "Protection in the Medieval Period with Herbs and Plants". The gardeners among us will no doubt be out in full force.

Your committee have decided to open the next Committee meeting to those members who wish to attend. The meeting is on Monday, 16th March, 2026 and starts at 10.30 am at EVA on Granville Avenue, Long Eaton. This is so that those members who are uncertain how the Committee takes decisions on your behalf, can observe at first hand any actions taken to enhance the enjoyment of LE&D u3a.

I'm greatly encouraged that our membership is increasing and ideas for new groups keep popping up. This brings me onto the point that we are still searching for two members to take over the Group Co-Ordinators role. This activity is not onerous either in time or mental activity, but you need at least one driver because of visiting group locations. Please give it some serious thought and maybe approach a Committee Member at the March Monthly Meeting.

So, until the next time, I hope that you will live, learn and laugh throughout March.

Cheers,

John Hassall.

March Monthly Meeting

The next Monthly Meeting takes place on Wednesday 18th March at EVA, Granville Avenue. Elaine Perkins will present a talk entitled 'Herbs and Plants Protection in Medieval Times'. Elaine performs as Agnes Peterkin, the Cunning Woman, and will share her knowledge of ancient spells such as the Nine Herb charm and Mandrake root. Whatever the problem, Agnes knows how to help!

Doors open at 2pm and refreshments are available until 2.20pm. The talk begins at 2.30pm.

Membership Renewals

The membership of Long Eaton and District u3a expires on 31st March 2026 and we hope you will wish to renew for another year. We start to take renewal payments for 2026-7 from 1st February 2026. The membership this year will remain at £20 for the period April 2026 to end of March 2027

Renewal Payments can be made in the following ways

1/. Online Payments the quickest and preferred method. Our NatWest bank details are
Account Name: Long Eaton & District u3a
Sort Code: 60-13-23
Account No: 53368169
**Please include a Reference - your first name or initial, surname and membership number

2/. Card Payments - at monthly meetings

3/. Cash or cheque payments - at the monthly meetings or send to LEDu3a
Membership Secretary at: 41 Ingham Road, Long Eaton, Nottingham. NG10 4HX
**Please write your full name and membership no on the back of the cheque

Membership Confirmation: When we receive your renewal payment, we will send an email confirming receipt

We look forward to you renewing your membership for another year. Any queries please contact:

Angie Pollard

Membership Secretary Long Eaton and District u3a

email: lememsec22@gmail.com

Mobile: 07717 663777

U3a Facebook



Long Eaton & District U3A

275 likes • 348 followers

A few new personal bests this month for our Facebook page.

The singing for fun and the new scrabble group shared a few photos, both had over 3,000 views which is fabulous, also a few comments from people interested in joining, plus another person visiting our monthly meeting.

Also a story from Sarah who had tried to walk through West Park when it was flooded, sharing a few photos received over 30,000 views.

Yes 30 thousand... not sure where all these people are from, but we seem very popular for February.

Thank you to all who send photos/stories, please keep sharing.

From Julie

Facebook Administrator



Short Story by Julie James of the Write On! Writing Group

An Extraordinary Day

I donned my duffle coat and wellies for the trudge to school through an unseasonal early March peasouper. Otherwise, just an ordinary day.

"Bye Mum," I called but she was still upstairs so it was Dad on the doorstep to wave me off.

Not so ordinary then. Dad was usually at work by now and Mum had never missed our daily mantra.

"See you later alligator."

"In a while crocodile."

"Here's sixpence," Dad said, shoving the silver coin into my hand. "You'll be stopping at school for dinner today."

I looked up at him but he had already disappeared behind the hastily closed door. A sharp pain settled above my right eye at the thought of school dinners. I always walked home to eat and back again afterwards. I wanted to hammer on the door, to argue, complain but that just wasn't done in the 1960s.

The terrapin classroom was barely warmer than outside. I hung my coat on the second peg from the end and pulled off my wellies, rubbing at the two angry wheals where the top of each boot rubbed above my three-quarter socks.

Morning school began, reassuringly, with the register, assembly, spellings and mental arithmetic. Then it was my turn to recite the seven times table at the teacher's desk. I proudly received a gold star to stick next to my name on the star chart.

I survived dinner time, of which I have no memory, and returned to a classroom set up for art and crafts.

I carefully arranged my apron and rolled up my sleeves, knowing that any trace of paint or glue would lead to a "good hiding". Quite what that meant I had no idea as I always returned home clean.

Before I could pick up a paintbrush a boy from the Estate burst in, hair sticking in all directions around a grubby face complete with yellow "candles" which he wiped on his frayed sleeve.

"Julie 'allam to see Miss Cordingley."

I was terrified. I had never been summoned by the headmistress before. I hurried across the drizzly yard, up the stone spiral staircase to her office and tapped on the door.

"Come!"

I will never know where I found the courage to push open that door.

"Well, don't look so worried. Your father phoned. You have a new baby sister. You are to go to your grandmother's house after school and he will see you there later." She clapped her hands.

"Well, back to your classroom then."

Gardening Group

There was no meeting in January and the February meeting was for us to plan the year ahead. Several speakers have been booked and there were lots of suggestions for outings. The year will start properly at our next meeting on 12th March at the EVA, Granville Avenue at 10am when the speaker, Jack Perks will talk about wildlife gardening.

Janice Jowett

Drawing & Painting Group

There were two subjects covered at the last meeting of the drawing and painting group as both the Chinese New Year and Valentine's Day occur in February. This year is the year of the fire horse which was rather a challenging subject as was Valentine's Day as it offers a very broad scope of ideas to choose from. As you can see from the pictures everyone attempted the subjects and were very successful so well done all.

There are still a number of places left in the group that meet every second and fourth Tuesday of the month at EVA Long Eaton. Very friendly and welcoming and you might even get a piece of cake with your cup of tea.

See you all at the next meeting.

Steve



Discover Africa Group

At the start of our recent meeting, I mentioned that I had been in touch by phone with Grace Adjoa Richardson at the Croydon u3a Out of Africa Group. In the autumn issue of u3a Matters magazine pages 63–64 there is an article by her. We chatted and explained to each other how our groups operate.

The Croydon group meets monthly to share knowledge about Africa also to enjoy fun activities such as themed games and quizzes. Members also enjoy visits to concerts, exhibitions and restaurants with an African theme. We're considering using some of these ideas for our own group.

Each month, our group members research a country in the continent of Africa, then, when we meet, we share our findings. Since being formed in February 2024, we have studied over twenty African countries. We also watch related short videos and share news, perhaps about a recent visit to Africa. In February, we shared our findings on Malawi. We decided we would like to go there.

Finally, here is something to consider. The Mercator map projection distorts sizes of countries. Africa is much larger than shown on many maps. Within Africa you can fit: USA, China, India, Japan, Mexico and many European countries. If you need it, here's a useful link: [How Big Is Africa? Much Bigger Than It Looks On The Map](#)

David Pinney

History Group

The History Group held its' monthly meeting on Wednesday 25th February and was well attended. This month we were looking at Long Eaton, its' history and some local names and some other aspects of our town and area. Next month we will be back to 'normal' history as we look at The Commonwealth, the period of Oliver Cromwell and his son Richard, 1650 – 1660.

We will meet on Wednesday 25th March at 11.00 am at Long Eaton EVA. Contact Andrew Savill on andrew.savill@hotmail.com

Art Group

Our Art group started February painting snowdrops, which was very apt with the cold weather earlier in the month.

We also had a visit from Chris, a week later to show us how to paint a small flock of sheep in the Lake District. The sheep were painted upside down! We had lots of cake to share, from Heidi, and Barbara, whose birthdays it was this month. Also, some homemade biscuits from Mick. A big thank you to Chris for joining us.

The week after we organised a visit to The Navigation, Shardlow to enjoy lunch together. The food and service were very good.



Julie and Barbara
Group Leaders

Quiz Group

At quiz group this month, subjects included: -

Love

L

Birds

General Knowledge

Geography

History

Holidays

Do you know the answer to: -

Who does Jane Eyre marry?

What "L" is the capital of Peru

What is the tallest tree?

Which 2 birds were released from Noah's Ark?

Which city is the furthest South?

What is the festival of lights called?

The winning team scored 61/80 🙌

A fun morning,

Anne and Hillary

Group Leaders



Photography Group

The Photography Group trips for February proved to be soggy and cold. Firstly, the group, hardy photographers, visited Newark Aircraft Museum at Coddington. Outdoor mainly but included Vulcan and Sea Harrier.

Next the majority of the group went to Eaton Farm for a new year get together, which was enjoyed by all.

Our last trip was to Lakeside Arts and the Andy Warhol exhibition in the Djanogly Gallery. From early pencil drawings to later ones including the Marilyn Monroe.



Drama Workshop Group

The Drama Workshop group's next production will be on Monday 9th March at Sawley Community Hall on Draycott Road, NG10 3FR next to the Co-op. 'March Mayhem' is a glorious concoction of self-penned sketches, monologues and comedy routines.

Absolutely free so just turn up on the day to bag a seat! And if you need more encouragement, there will be complimentary refreshments after the show.

Doors open at 1.45pm and the show starts at 2pm. Free on-site parking and the My15 bus stops outside the hall.



Plant Study Group



Nine of us much enjoyed our first meeting of this year. We spent a morning in bright sunshine exploring the woodland around Shipley Hall. We discovered over twenty plant species in flower. The highlight was large patches of snowdrops of more than one species.



Snowdrops belong to the Lily Family. Many of us love snowdrops, sometimes called the flower of 'Hope'. Instead of separate petals and sepals, each flower has six petaloid tepals. Other plants seen in flower included daisy, dandelion, hazel, daffodil, lesser celandine, yew (with huge clouds of pollen when touched) and sequoia.



Our programme for this year is on our u3a website. We welcome others to join us.

David Pinney

Derbyshire u3a Network

Buxton u3a Offer – Tickets for The Mikado at Buxton Opera House

In previous years Buxton u3a have offered reduced price tickets to a showing of one of Gilbert & Sullivan's comic operas at Buxton Opera House. This year the booking is for **The Mikado** on **Wednesday 5th AUGUST** at **2.30pm**.

Tickets (centre stalls) are at a special price of £36.50 each.

This year's National Gilbert & Sullivan Opera Company production of The Mikado promises a sumptuous and stylish staging from Jeff Clarke. Set within the world of a flamboyant fashion designer's atelier, the familiar topsy-turvy tale is reimagined with bold creativity and dazzling new designs. Ko-Ko, in Gilbert's eyes a cheap tailor, has been elevated, now he is Lord High Executioner, to become a flamboyant couturier. The concept brings fresh context to the opera's playful satire, and the many colourful characters of Titipu.

With its inventive concept, memorable score, and striking aesthetic, The Mikado is set to be one of the Festival's most imaginative highlights – a production not to be missed. You can see the full Festival programme at www.gsfestivals.org/newsletter or call 01422 323252 for your copy.

Please register your interest by emailing Darren Finn- Hurst (member of Adventures in Good Music group) at darrenu3a@gmail.com with your name, name of u3a, membership number, email address, telephone number and number of tickets required by **26 March 2026**. Alternatively, text details or leave a message on 07983 983206. You will then be contacted with details of how to make payment.

To find out more about our Network, click on this link:

<https://derbyshirenetwork.u3asite.uk/>

Online Learning Events from u3a National Office

Our National Office offers a number of workshops, webinars and interactive sessions, delivered by members for members, which are free to join. These are in high demand and spaces are limited, particularly for those with an interactive element.

In March, events include: The Evolution of AI and Our Changing World – Wednesday, March 11 at 2pm – Barry Claydon demystifies AI: the noisy new kid on the block. Learn what it can do, what to watch out for, and talk about it with confidence. AI is the new chapter in a story that started two hundred years ago. AI is the new noisy kid on the block. It can do amazing things. Make good things better and bad things worse. How is your AI literacy?

The Match Girls' Strike and how it changed British labour history – Thursday, March 12 at 10am – The Match Girls' Strike of 1888 was a landmark industrial action led by approximately 1,400 women and girls working at the Bryant & May match factory in Bow, East London. The strike gained national attention after social reformer Annie Besant published an exposé titled "White Slavery in London," which contrasted the factory's high dividends for shareholders with the "starvation wages" of its workers. Though often credited with leading the strike, it was the workers themselves, led by figures like Sarah Chapman, who with Besant's help started the first Women's trade union and initiated the walkout.

Deafness and beyond: the tribulation and triumph of Ludwig van Beethoven – Thursday, March 26 at 2pm – Beethoven experiences intense anguish in his early 30s when he realises he is becoming profoundly deaf. His compositions during this period reflect his distress (for example La Malincolia and The Tempest); and then how he sublimates his suffering, creating some of the most profound music we have ever heard. **Activity Guide:** This talk will be accompanied by a downloadable activity guide which attendees can take to their u3a groups to further explore the music of Beethoven.

All the above courses are free and on Zoom. For more information on these events and others, please go to: [u3a - Online Learning Events](#).

News from the National Office

u3a Festival 26 is the biggest event in the u3a calendar, bringing members from across the UK together for three days of fun, learning and skill sharing.

Between 1-3 July 2026, the University of York will be taken over by u3a members socialising and learning together. The event is being led by a team of members, crafting a programme that covers sport tournaments, artistic workshops, musical performances and talks on a wide range of subjects. It will be everything members do at u3a on a daily basis – on a larger scale.

More information about the event and how to buy tickets here: [Buy tickets – u3a Festival 26 – University of York](#)

Community News

Are you 50 Plus?

Come along and join us! Long Eaton & District 50+ Forum

Monday 9th March 2026 @10.30am
Erewash Voluntary Action – Volunteer Centre,
Granville Avenue, Long Eaton NG10 4HD
Light Refreshments will be served from 09:45am



Susie Konowalik to do a talk
Susie had a rare Mult visceral transplant in 2019, which included her kidney, pancreas, small bowel, and large bowel. She achieved a silver medal in the 3km power walk (women's 60–69) and sent her medal to her donor's family

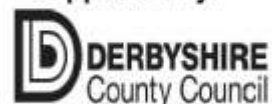
Sara Bains wellness and Inequalities lead for Erewash Primary Care Network in Derbyshire.



Raffle & Refreshments, come join us and bring a friend

If you cannot get to the meeting by any other means, please book yourself a local taxi and claim the fare back from the Treasurer at the meeting. You must obtain a receipt and remember to book your return journey.

Supported by:



Please send items for the April Newsletter to Andrew Savill by 25th March at the very latest.

Long Eaton & District u3a members are also invited to send in concise information about future local events.

The email address is ledu3a.news@ed@gmail.com