

Newsline March 2026



u3a

Southwell

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As February comes to an end, every time I've stepped outside this month I've been reminded of the first record I ever got. It was as a Christmas present around 1964 which might make you think it was an early Beatles or Rolling Stones. However, it was nothing quite as grand as that but a recording of the children's tv show Pinky and Perky singing Michael Flanders classic "mud, mud, glorious mud, nothing quite like it for cooling the blood....."!

The rain really has been quite unrelenting. During the hot weather of last summer, I recall hoping for a wet spring to help with reservoirs and the garden, but I didn't imagine this. I hope you've all managed to find a way to enjoy all your various activities. I know some of the walking groups have turned into quite a feat of endurance as trekking across fields carrying kilograms of mud on boots is not like the normal gentle stroll.

Despite all the rain, it was wonderful to see so many of you at both the monthly meeting (where we had over 230 people turn up) and for the recent new members' meeting. Welcome to

all of the new people who joined us at the Rugby Club for that and I hope you're managing to join in various groups and activities.

Being inside a lot more has meant being able to catch up reading books I got for Christmas. One such book Santa brought me was "This is for Everyone" by Tim Berners-Lee, a story of the invention of the world wide web. As Christmas presents go, it is a bit more highbrow than a Pinky and Perky single, but it's a fascinating tale of the iconic invention. Whilst we may all have differing opinions of the commercial race it has unleashed which polarises public debate, what is clear is that through the web we now live, work, dream and connect. This has only been achieved by Tim's tireless efforts to keep the web accessible for everyone as a service to humanity and with no commercial reward whatsoever.

Although on a much smaller scale, but just as important to our local community, it's a similar altruistic behaviour that I see across all the u3a groups and events I attend. Here, groups of dedicated volunteers lead, teach and organise all the fantastic things that Southwell u3a offers. This includes over 80 separate interest groups, trips and social events

FROM THE CHAIR (Continued)

throughout the year, a programme of workshops and short courses, coach trips to Nottingham concerts, well-attended coffee mornings and our monthly meetings with different speakers.

It is the best value around you'll find for £15, so when Richmond's email about the subscription renewal lands in your inbox (thanks, of course, to Tim Berners-Lee) I hope you'll all renew as soon as possible.

Lastly, on the wider u3a front, elsewhere in the Newline there is note of the u3a Festival being organised at the University of York in July. It's an opportunity to meet new people, explore an existing interest or take the leap and try something completely new. More details are included in the article if you're interested.

Mike Freemantle, [Chair](#)

REFLECTIONS FROM THE PAST..... Jean (Previous Chair)

This is the first of hopefully several articles by previous Chairs of Southwell u3a, as we celebrate our 20th anniversary year:

Jean Hogg, our Chair 2008 – 2011, and 2024 – 25 has this reminiscence:

I became the Chair of Southwell u3a when Clive Bates, who had set up our u3a, unexpectedly decided not to stand for a third year. I had been a member of u3a for ten months and on the committee for six! With the help of a wonderful team, I began to find my feet. As well as taking on the role of Chair I became the Speaker finder, but only one booking was in place, for



September. My first few weeks became a frenetic challenge to find

speakers to fill the next few months. Fellow members were kind with their suggestions and we had some wonderful talks.

The other issue that I managed was the rapid growth we were experiencing. At the time, membership was below 300, but, following a successful open morning we had fifty new members in two months. There were mixed views: some felt we should close the books, others that we could open a new u3a in Farnsfield, and some were of the opinion we should manage the growth. We held a meeting for members to discuss the issue, that was sparsely attended when it snowed, but the decision was that we must keep the u3a open to everyone who wanted to join and that our existing members would not move to a new u3a. We agreed to keep working to ensure there were enough Interest groups and activities for a growing membership and that is what has continued. The monthly meeting moved from the small hall at the Leisure Centre, then to half of the Sports Hall, before needing it all.

We all have to remember that u3a is a self-help, volunteer organisation, and we have had some wonderful Committee members and Group

Leaders over the years, not all of whom are still with us, but who are remembered. New members still come forward to help on the Committee and to run groups, as well as to do all the other jobs, such as membership and helping with the monthly meeting. However, as I discovered last summer, sometimes our members need a bit of persuasion!

Becoming Chair completely changed my life because, as a result, I met a man who was Chair of another u3a and the representative for the East Midlands on what was then called the National Executive Committee. He and I 'clicked' instantly and were together until he died nine years later. Through him I became involved in the wider u3a. So, though I am proud of the contribution I have made to Southwell u3a, I also know that I have gained far more in return. That is what volunteering does. So if you are wondering about doing something, go for it! It will be worth it.

[Jean Hogg](#)



u3a FESTIVAL 26, University of York, 1-3 July

You should all have seen details about this already through the u3a emails, but just a reminder that the u3a is holding its Festival 26, taking place at the University of York between Wednesday 1st – Fri 3rd July, for a three-day celebration of fun, learning and the community that makes u3a so special.

The Festival is being held on the beautiful campus at the University of York with its green spaces and a lake, fantastic sports facilities, lecture halls, and workshop rooms – the perfect backdrop for three days of inspiration and learning. There's on-site accommodation available too so you can go straight from breakfast to your first workshop.

It's a chance to meet new people, explore an existing interest or take the

leap and try something completely new in member-led workshops and sessions. Surrounded by other u3a members, you will have opportunities to move your body, be creative and explore new ideas.

The Festival will include talks on a wide range of subjects, hands-on crafts and art workshops, fitness workshops, sports tournaments and live performances by u3a musical groups

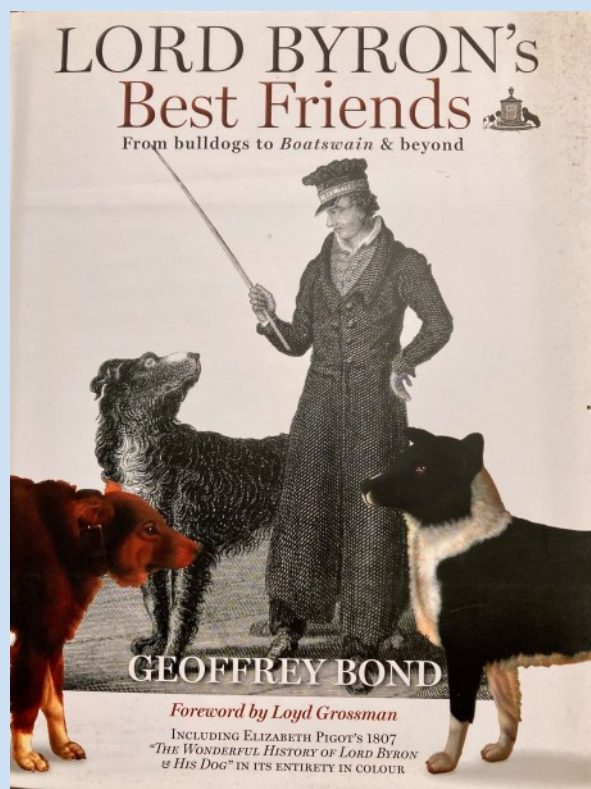
Tickets cost £18 a day, or £50 for a three-day ticket. The festival starts at 11am on Wednesday 1 July and ends at 3pm on Friday 3 July.

Further details can be found at the following link: [u3a – u3a Festival 2026](#)

More Byron Books!

Geoffrey Bond has kindly donated some more of his books about Byron to u3a members. I have a number of copies of his first book, 'Lord Byron's Best Friends, From bulldogs to Boatswain & beyond'. The book is beautifully illustrated and includes an account by Elizabeth Pigot. Let me know if you would like a copy.

[Jean Hogg](#)



REPORT: NEW MEMBERS' MEETING

Our first new members' meeting of 2026 was held at Southwell Rugby Club on a cold, wet afternoon in late January, yet almost 50 recently-joined members attended to learn more about our u3a and its activities. Several Group Leaders generously supported the event by speaking individually about their groups and encouraging participation.

Chair Mike Freemantle opened the meeting by reflecting on our early years and how far the organisation has progressed, particularly as we celebrate our 20th anniversary. Brian Platts, Groups Leader Co-ordinator, followed with an enthusiastic overview of the wide range of activities on offer, including our programme of short courses and workshops. Michele Bennett, Beacon Administrator and Deputy Groups Co-ordinator, provided invaluable support throughout, helping attendees navigate the new website, join groups, and understand how to use Beacon for communication.

The warm, welcoming space was arranged to encourage a relaxed, social atmosphere, allowing plenty of time for new members to meet one

another and talk with Group Leaders and Committee members over hot drinks and biscuits, with the Rugby Club bar also open. Although designed as an informal drop-in session, many attendees stayed until the end, which was very encouraging.

New members were invited to complete a questionnaire to help the Committee understand how they discovered u3a, what they hoped to gain, and whether they had ideas for new groups or an interest in volunteering. Feedback was very positive. While the new website and advertising were praised, many people still reported joining through word of mouth, highlighting the strength of our reputation. Notably, some participants were aware through their parents' earlier involvement with the u3a movement, suggesting a welcome intergenerational connection.

Responses also indicated interest in new activities, though the main challenge remains finding volunteers willing to lead and develop new groups. We warmly encourage anyone with ideas to contact Brian Platts for support. Meanwhile, we extend a sincere welcome to all our new members and look forward to their ongoing involvement.

[Liz Neesam \(Vice Chair\)](#)



u3a
learn, laugh, live

COFFEE MORNING March 2026

Southwell u3a usually enjoy fortnightly [coffee mornings](#) at Southwell Garden Centre, Fiskerton Road. They are very popular and open to all members. It is an opportunity to have a chat and a coffee. In March we are going to meet from 10:30am on Thursday, 12th and 26th. There are usually one or two Committee members present for you to talk with. It can help other members if you remember to bring and wear your u3a lanyard.



DEADLINE FOR OUR NEXT NEWSLINE, NO. 78 APRIL 2026

Please email articles and pictures to the Newsline team **by the 10th March** to ensure inclusion in our April edition.

su3anewsline@outlook.com

Subject heading: April Newsline

Group news is of particular interest to existing and new members and is an

excellent opportunity to review and promote your group. Updates on social activities are also good to see.

Items that arrive after the 10th March may be carried forward to the May edition.

Thank you, Anne Greenaway, [Editor](#)

NEW LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Below is the programme of Short Courses and Workshops that our organising group has put together for you for 2026, updated to mid-February. Please take a look at the programme and **click on the title** of any course or workshop that interests you. This will take you to the latest information on our website. On the webpage, **click on the name or title of the organiser**. This will take you to a form on our website where you can submit your booking request or make further enquiries.

You can't just turn up on the day - you need to book in advance.

All of the events now have definite dates, so do check your diary and see if you can fit any more in! Do still register your interest though, so the course or workshop leader / co-ordinator can contact you if there are any late changes to the details.

This is the biggest short courses and workshops programme we've put together so far and so I hope you'll find something that takes your fancy!

Brian Platts [Groups Co-ordinator and New Groups Enabler](#)

SHORT COURSES AND WORKSHOPS

SUBJECT & CONTACT DETAILS	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	DATE , TIME And VENUE
<p><u>"DRIVE ON" SAFELY FOR OLDER DRIVERS</u></p>	<p>Autumn Rose of the Road Safety Team of Via East Midlands will be talking to us about the updated legal requirements for older drivers and other recent changes in the law. She will also be offering advice about driving safely, and demonstrating a range of equipment that can be used in the car to assist with driving. A limited number of refresher sessions with qualified driving instructors will be made available, using your own car and on a first come, first served basis.</p>	<p>Monday 23 March 10:30 – 12:00 Southwell Rugby Club</p>
<p><u>INTRODUCTION TO THE SOLAR SYSTEM 1 & 2</u></p>	<p>In case you missed it, this is a repeat of Richard Peacock's popular 2-session course, covering what is the solar system, what is in it, plus interesting facts, peculiarities and space missions</p>	<p>Two 2-hour sessions: Thursday 5 March 10:00-12:00 and Thursday 12 March 1:00-3:00 Southwell Library</p>

SUBJECT AND CONTACT DETAILS	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	DATE , TIME And VENUE
<u>STARS, THE SUN, ASTEROIDS, COMETS AND METEORITES</u>	Richard will be giving a follow-up course to his introductory course above, covering the creation, properties and death of stars (including our sun), plus a study of the smaller bodies in space. Suitable for both those who attended the introductory course and anyone new to astronomy	Two 2-hour sessions: Thursday 2 April 10:00–12:00 and Thursday 9 April 10:00–12:00 Southwell Library
<u>VIOLIN VIRTUOSOS!</u>	Another chance to try Katherine Clark’s fast and fun introduction to the violin in 4 sessions. Ideally bring your own violin but there should be several available to borrow. Max 5 people so register asap FULLY BOOKED -WAITING LIST ONLY	April 7, 14, 21, 28. 10:00 – 12:00 Course Leader’s home in Southwell
<u>COME AND TRY A CAPPELLA SINGING</u>	A Cappella means singing without instruments – just voices in harmony. Alison Chaney will be running a friendly workshop, starting with rounds and simple songs, then diving into sea shanties and classic pop hits. No experience or ability needed!	Wednesday 13 May 2:00–3.30 W.I. Hall, Southwell
<u>VISIT TO THE AUGUSTINIAN PRIORY OF ST PETER IN THURGARTON</u>	A visit to the remains of the Augustinian priory (now part of St Peter’s Church) and a talk by u3a member Ellis Morgan who has a great knowledge of this important building. Travel by own transport (or bus) to Thurgarton. FULLY BOOKED -WAITING LIST ONLY	Tuesday 19 and 26 May 10:30 St Peter’s Church, Thurgarton
<u>SKETCHING OUTDOORS</u>	A repeat of Sheila Robin’s 2025 session an introduction to sketching. No experience required – just have a go! Bring your own paper and pencils if you have them or can be provided on the day.	Saturday 13 June. Start at 1:30, Car Park of Greet Lily Mill, Southwell

SUBJECT & CONTACT DETAILS	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	DATE, TIME And VENUE
<u>GOLF TASTER SESSION</u>	A one-hour taster session at Norwood Park Golf Centre, with tuition from a professional coach. This will be a fun session, aimed at beginners, and all equipment will be provided. Numbers limited to 10 but may be increased to 20, with a second coach, if there is sufficient interest. A fee of £6.50 per person will be payable to the golf centre. Express interest asap.	Thursday 11 June at 10.00 Venue: Norwood Park Golf Centre, Southwell
<u>ROMANO-BRITISH SOUTHWELL – ARCHAEOLOGICAL ENIGMAS AND FINDS</u>	A talk and display of archaeological finds from the Roman era in Southwell – given by Secretary of the Southwell Community Archaeology Group (and u3a member!) Stephen Rogers.	Tuesday 21 July 10:00 – 12:00 Trebeck Hall, Southwell
<u>HOW TO DRAW FACES</u>	An introduction to drawing faces from talented artist John Tyas (from the art stall on Southwell Market). John will cover techniques and tips for drawing faces, suitable for both beginners and those with a little more experience. There will then be an opportunity to put theory into practice. Just bring a pencil!	Friday 7 August 10:00 – 12:00 Large meeting room, Southwell Library
<u>INTRODUCTION TO SMARTPHONES</u>	Back by popular demand! 2 sessions for beginners to learn the basics of smart phones, presented by Lorna and <u>Tony Mellor</u> . Much of the content is also applicable to tablets.	Monday 9 and 16 November 10:00 – 12:00 Large meeting room, Southwell Library

Your Membership will expire on the 28th February 2026 and it is time to renew. This year's subscription is *reduced* to **£15** (£12.00 for Associate Members). The Membership Secretary sent Renewal Notices in February, which include full details of the payment options summarised below. Please contact me (link at end of page) if you cannot find your email or are unable to renew by clicking on the blue headings below.

[Member's Portal](#)

[quickest & easiest when set up]

- Online Banking
- Cheque or Cash
- Debit / Credit Card (Monthly Meeting and Member's Portal).

Information for [Renewal](#) is also available via the [Southwell u3a Members Page](#). We look forward to you being with us for another year.

[Setting Up Your Member's Portal](#)

If you have not set up your Members Portal you can do so via [Southwell u3a Portal](#) and tap the link. Tap '[Register for membership account](#)' and complete the fields using your membership number and the details requested. Tap '[Confirm Identity](#)', set up a memorable password and respond to the verification email. No personal information is shared with outside bodies.

The Portal enables you to update personal information, make your Membership Renewal payment (only available during the Renewal period), obtain a replacement Membership Card, and see information on Group activities, and a calendar of group and event meetings. In the coming years the Portal will be improved and updated to include additional information.

Thank You

Richmond Kingsbury
[Membership Secretary](#)

NEW GROUP NEWS

Scrabble

Though the majority of our Interest Groups have space, we are aware that some popular ones have been full for some time. We can duplicate some of these as they are simple to organise. One of these is the Scrabble group. If you think you would enjoy playing Scrabble with other members, but have been unable to join the group, please contact [Jean Hogg](#) . If there is enough interest we could start another group.

Vinyl and Vino

Do you ever reminisce about those days at sixth form when someone would bring a new album into the common room? You'd put it on the turntable, sit and listen to it in its entirety over a coffee from the vending machine, pass the album cover around and discuss the pretentious journalism coverage of Melody Maker or Sounds.

If such times bring back happy memories of listening to an album from cover to cover (rather than isolated tracks from Spotify) then we're looking to see if there's interest in setting up a "**Vinyl and Vino**" group (other beverages are, of course, available).

The aim would be to meet early

evening (7:00pm) on the 2nd Thursday of each month at the home of either of two members in Southwell, listen to 2-3 vinyl albums from cover to cover and discuss a little what made them special then and still does now. Maybe it's the first one you ever bought (although in my case "RazAmaNaz by Nazareth" is perhaps not a taste I'd like to own up to!), or perhaps one that means something special, or maybe just one that introduced you to a whole new taste in music – the advantage of being in our third age is we got to listen to all that great music first!



So if you'd like to dust off those old albums from out of the loft and meet to share your own tastes in music and listen to those from others then please let me know if you'd be interested in joining a new "**Vinyl and Vino**" group.

Mike Freemantle, [Chair](#)

GROUP NEWS : A CAPPELLA

Despite the wintry chill and grey skies at the start of the year, we have welcomed 2026 with fresh energy and some delightful new repertoire. At our most recent meeting we sang with real gusto, travelling back through pop history to explore a song that was placed second in the 1961 Eurovision Song Contest: Are You Sure by The Allisons. Its catchy melody and gentle harmonies were a joy to sing – thank you to Jonathan for the excellent suggestion.

We then turned to a new sea shanty, “Leave Her, Johnny, Leave Her”, inspired by the Longest Johns and their remarkable community recording project during Covid. It certainly motivated our group, who gave a spirited rendition of the shanty themselves. Their YouTube video is well worth a watch.

[Leave Her Johnny | The Longest Johns | Mass Choir Community Video Project](#)



We are always delighted to welcome new members who would like to explore the ever-growing world of A Cappella singing. Each session begins with vocal warm-ups and simple rounds before we move into our repertoire. We meet every third Wednesday of the month from 2:00–4:00 pm at Southwell WI Hall and our next meeting will take place on Wednesday 18 March.

If you're unable to join our monthly sessions, you might enjoy our A Cappella taster session on Wednesday 13 May, from 2:00 –3:30 pm, also at Southwell WI Hall. The taster session is completely free, and you'll have the chance to try a couple of sea shanties and a classic pop song. Singing in harmony is tremendous fun, and we warmly invite you to come and experience it for yourself.

If you're interested, please do get in touch.

Alyson

[Link to Web Page and Group Leader Alyson Chaney](#)

Not only is 20 a cause for celebration with the Southwell u3a having completed this number of years, but it is also a vision for the Astronomy Group. By the end of 2026 I would like our average monthly attendance to reach this target number. We try to provide variety in our sessions with presentations on anything to do with the universe from the planets through to bizarre concepts like wormholes. History even plays a role, having looked at astronomical names in January and due to look at time and motion as indicators used by ancient man in March.

February was a study of the smaller bodies called asteroids and then in April and May we will revert to the little red planet Mars, through a DVD comparing it to Earth in the early years followed by an investigation into the possibilities of man living self-sufficiently on its surface for long periods of time.

We meet on the fourth Thursday of every month from 10am to 12 noon in the back room of Southwell Library. The dates of the next few meetings are 26th

March, 23rd April and 28th May.

We try to cater for beginners by not making the sessions too technical but with enough content to stimulate the more knowledgeable. After coffee the audience get the chance to ask questions, comment or offer views, which is, I think, an important part of our sessions.

Hopefully we will continue to attract a healthy attendance at the monthly sessions, our main intention is to support one another and to learn more about this fascinating universe that we are just a small part of.

I hope as many members as possible will attend so that we can share our passion and enthusiasm for anything linked with space!

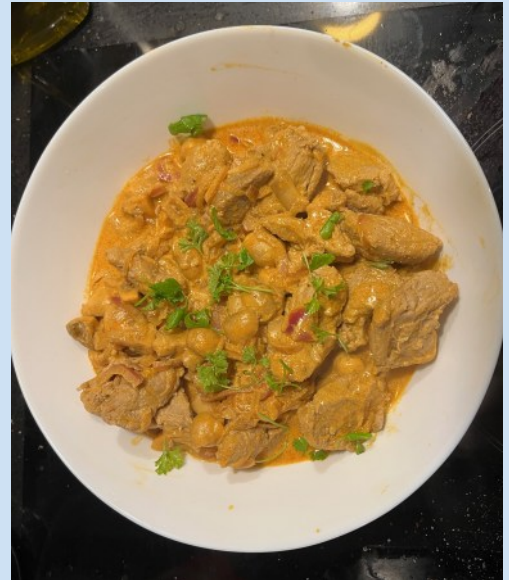
[Link to Astronomy Web Page and Richard Peacock, Group Leader](#)



Space Time – [bigstock.com](#)

PORK STROGANOFF - serves 4

Beef Stroganoff is a classic Russian dish, allegedly invented when a member of the Stroganov noble family was stationed in Siberia and his chef could only cut strips from the deeply frozen beef. Since that time, it has gained popularity worldwide, particularly at UK dinner parties in the 1970s! Now it is often made with pork instead of beef, and crème fraiche instead of soured cream. You'll find pork fillet is much better value than beef fillet!

**INGREDIENTS:**

400g (Approx) pork fillet	140ml soured cream
2 tablespoons sunflower oil	225g (Approx) button chestnut mushrooms
25g butter	1 tablespoons lemon juice
1 onion, finely sliced	Some parsley, as garnish (optional)
2 teaspoons (smoked) paprika	

METHOD:

- Cut the pork fillet into thin strips, about 1cm x 6cm. Season with salt and pepper.
- Heat a large non-stick frying pan until hot. Add a little oil when very hot then add the meat. Stir fry really briskly until browned. If it is cooked really fast there should be no juices, but make sure it is cooked through. Lift out with a slotted spoon onto a plate.
- Put the butter in the pan, add the onions and cook over a low heat until the onions are really soft, about 10 mins. Sprinkle in the paprika and stir in the mushrooms. Turn up the heat and toss for a minute.
- Add the pork and cream to the pan and heat through. Add the lemon juice and season with salt and pepper, to taste.
- Garnish with the parsley and serve with (optional) mashed potato or boiled rice.

Enjoy!

[Link to Web Page and Group Leader, Brian Platts](#)

Going Home

The school bell rings the children run
All thoughts of lessons flown
With dreams of freedom oh what fun
At last they're going home

The factory hooters the office clocks
The workers feel like drones
The prisoners tremble in their docks
At last they're going home

Bus drivers know if they are late
Their passengers will moan
Each one of them just cannot wait
At last they're going home

The doctors and nurses all who tend
With outcomes all unknown
Can't guarantee that they can mend
At last they're going home

The priest when preaching to his flock
Beneath the church's dome
Are they listening probably not
At last he's going home

However weary the path we wend
No matter how far we roam
Welcomes us like a long lost friend
That place that we call home

Jeannie Freeman, November 2025

[Link to Creative Writing
Web Page and Group
Leader Mike Biggs](#)

GROUP NEWS: Photography Group



Anita's Tree

a couple of images of very bare January trees as they await the change in seasons.

The theme this month has been Patterns and Symmetry and next month we'll show you some very interesting images. Patterns are all around us but what we are looking for is, perhaps the less ordinary patterns with the wow factor. A couple of images are attached to demonstrate the pattern/symmetry theme; Tyre Tracks by John and The Staircase by Deb

Even if you aren't a member of the Photography Group you might be thinking that you wouldn't mind having a go at one of our themes; so if you see an interesting pattern then take the photo with your phone or camera and send it to me

The Photography Group had an unexpected month off in January due to illness but met again in February for a very interesting meeting.

The Group has started a year long project with each member selecting a tree to photograph throughout the year to capture changes with foliage, fruit, colour, light and shadows. Here are



Brenda's Tree

GROUP NEWS: Photography (Continued)



Tyre Tracks by John

at my email (link to our webpage below). We'd love to see how other u3a members interpret our monthly themes.

We recognise that not everybody can join our Group but many still have an active interest in photography. If you have any questions about photography perhaps needing tips for using your phone camera or how to use some of the settings on your camera other than 'Auto', then please drop me an email and we'll see if we can help. Hopefully each month we can add a question and answer to this article to help others.

[Graeme, Stewardson, Group Leader.](#)



The Staircase by Deb

GROUP NEWS: Pickleball

Mention to most people that you play Pickleball and they look a bit bemused and ask if it's the same as tennis, badminton, table tennis or padel tennis and the answer is yes it has elements of each of those within it but its a sport in it's own right.

Pickleball is played on a badminton court with a lowered net using solid paddles (like table tennis but bigger) and a perforated plastic ball.

It sounds easy, and it is easy but there are some interesting rules to follow and there's a 'kitchen' and



approach to well-being. Age is just a number, and pickleball knows it!"

It couldn't be easier to have a go at Pickleball and discover for yourself just how much fun it is! Now is a good time to join, as due to high demand, a **second group** has just been started within

Southwell u3a. This meets every Wednesday, 1:00 to 3.00pm at Southwell Leisure Centre. Do hurry as even this second group's spaces are filling up fast!!

Equipment is provided and any comfortable clothing is fine but best to wear trainers\tennis shoes. The cost is £7 per session and it's on a 'pay as you play' basis.

You're welcome to come along any Wednesday to watch and see if its something you would enjoy or you can join and start playing straight away.

Just contact Rob Lancaster (Group Leader) [via my link on our web page](#)

a 'dink' shot to navigate! It is great fun and there's nothing better than hitting a good shot and scoring a point. I asked 'Google' "Is Pickleball suitable for seniors' and this was the reply: *"Yes, a 70-year-old can play Pickleball. The sport's adaptability suits all ages, including seniors. It provides low-impact exercise, improves balance and flexibility, and nurtures social connection, offering a holistic*

GROUP NEWS (Continued): Rummikub and Social Bowls

New Venue for Rummikub:

We will meet for our March session on Friday, 27th March, 10.00am until 12.00 noon at our **new venue**, the Club House. Norwood Park Golf Club, Lower Kirklington Road, Southwell, NG25 OPF

Social Bowls:



Do you fancy playing bowls? The u3a Social Bowls group is keen to have some new members. Why not come along and have a go?

We play every Friday afternoon from April 24th to September 18th from 1.45pm to 4.15 pm at Farnsfield Bowls Club, New Hill, Farnsfield.

We will have an introductory coaching session for complete beginners on the first Friday (24th April) from one of the Farnsfield bowls coaches. However, if you are a beginner and not able to attend that week, it is not a problem, one of us will do an introductory

session for you. After that you will be ready to join in with everyone else!

The aim of the group is to have a friendly, informal game of bowls. We draw teams from a hat, so you end up playing with different people each week. We also have a tea break so there is time for a chat.

You can borrow bowls from Farnsfield Bowling Club if you do not have your own. You just need to wear flat soled shoes, so as not to damage the grass. We charge £3 per session which goes to Farnsfield Bowling Club for the use of their green and equipment.

We look forward to seeing you there.

Information about the group can be obtained from the group leader:

[Nadina Lincoln.](#)



u3a Southwell

TRIPS AND SOCIAL EVENTS

The u3a fun quiz was a great success. It was a good afternoon with the social committee members showing team work as they arranged tables, and cake for all. Alison Clark was hailed as the secret weapon by the 6-member winning team. Bob Pitcher did a great job as quiz master, posing some excellent questions to enable fun discussions to take place. As chairperson Madeline said " Where else can you get a hot drink, slice of



cake, good company and have a 1 in 8 possibility of winning a prize in a warm environment on a dark February day?" Remember this for next year folks!



Following the excellent talk at the monthly meeting, the day trip to **Rockingham Castle** on 23rd March is a sell out! Let us know if you want to be added to the waiting list in case anyone has to return their ticket.



The fascinating visit to Wedgwood factory, museum and associated shops in Stoke on Trent on Thursday 23rd April still has some seats available. If you did reserve a place please get in touch to organise payment to secure your place. Price of coach and Wedgwood factory tour is only £32 pp. Tickets will be for sale at the March monthly meeting. Coach leaves at 9:00am from Nottingham Road Car Park. We return to Southwell by 5.30pm. For more information contact [Susan Armstrong](#) (in the "Trips and Social Committee" section)

[Link to Trips and Social Group Web Page and Leaders Madeline and Rosemary](#)

OUR FEBRUARY and MARCH 2026 SPEAKERS

In February we had an interesting and amusing talk by Michael Burton about the history of Rockingham Castle from the Middle Ages to today. Michael is an official guide around the



castle which dates back to Medieval times as a fort and is mentioned in the Domesday book in 1066. Sitting high up it dominates the surrounding countryside and was ideal for the purpose. William the Conqueror converted the castle into a stone brick building with an outer bailey, curtain wall, square towers and a stone keep. It was modernised by Edward 1 adding windows, and fireplaces in the great hall as well as round towers. Edward 3rd was the last king to visit the castle as a royal residence in 1475 but by 1544 Henry VIII had a hunting lodge built on the Great Park but was surprised how dilapidated the castle was and he leased it to Edward Watson.

Sir Lewis Watson bought the castle from James 1 in 1619 but the family was ejected during the Civil War as they were Royalists. The castle was returned to them after the death of Cromwell. Richard Watson modernised the castle in 1836 and Richard and his wife Lavinia were great friends with Charles Dickens

who often visited and refers to the castle in two of his books.

In 1971 the castle was bequeathed to Sir Michael Saunders a great nephew of Richard Watson and in 1999 the castle and estate

were handed over to his eldest son James and his wife Elizabeth with their three children Eleanor, Beatrice and Henry . Since the original lease in 1544 and the sale in 1619 the castle and grounds have remained under family control.

The Trips committee arranged an outing to visit the castle on Monday March 23rd, and the coach with 40 seats has now been filled.

On **March 3rd** our speaker will be John Constantine who will give an entertaining talk about the art of Magic with PowerPoint slides followed by some live magic from John's act that covers sleight of hand; physiological and psychological magic and comedy magic. Another talk not to be missed, so please do come along. Hopefully the weather will be a bit more clement by then.

[Link to Contacts Page for](#)

[John Cook, Southwell
u3a Speaker Seeker](#)

Southwell u3a Concert Coaches—Royal Concert Hall



Concert Coaches: THE HALLE, FRIDAY 13 MARCH, 7.30PM

Thanks to the 37 members who booked for this concert, booking for which is now closed. This is what they will enjoy:

Alpesh Chauhan conductor

Denis Kozhukhin piano

Britten Courtly Dances from Gloriana

Rachmaninov Piano Concerto No. 3

Walton Symphony No. 1

There are two more great concerts coming up on the 16th and 23rd April. Look out for information in the April Newline.

[Link to Roger Bennett, Concert Trip Organiser](#)

THE LAST SUNDAY LUNCH GROUP

The Last Sunday Lunch Group – not surprisingly on the last Sunday of the month – is now almost four years old and has been to 48 lunches with very few repeats. Our latest lunch was at Lasani where seventeen of us enjoyed something a bit different to a roast: a “Lasani Tali. This introduces our “Member Benefits and Discounts” below, nicely!



MEMBER BENEFITS AND DISCOUNTS



DISCOUNT AT LASANI, SOUTHWELL!

In the mood for a curry? **Lasani**, on Church Street Southwell, has agreed to give Southwell u3a members a 10% discount on their bills (food **AND** drink) at their ‘contemporary Indian brasserie’.

The offer excludes vouchers. You will need to show your membership card when you order your meals and drinks and the discount will only apply to u3a members in your party. The discount is on offer all week but not for takeaways, which are already discounted.

MEMBER BENEFITS AND DISCOUNTS

MEAL DEAL AT THE HEARTY GOODFELLOW

The Hearty Goodfellow in Southwell has agreed to give a 10% discount on all food (not drinks) to Southwell u3a members for lunch or dinner.

You will need to show your membership card **before you order** your meals and drinks and the discount will only apply to individual u3a members in your party.



BAG A DISCOUNT AT ROHAN!

The recently opened Rohan clothing shop in Southwell is generously offering a discount to all u3a members. Members will receive a 10% discount on all **full price** items (not sale items) – just show your membership card on request.



Riviera Travel offer a 10% discount which is paid to the member's u3a group, on many holidays: Members have to show proof of membership at time of booking. **PLEASE NOTE: DISCOUNT IS NOT TO INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS.**



Southwell u3a contacts and other u3a websites:

Southwell u3a:

Southwell u3a website is <https://southwell.u3asite.uk>

Southwell u3a Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/southwellu3a>

To contact our officers, committee and other postholders:

[Contact - Southwell u3a](#)

For information about our interest groups and to contact our Group Leaders:

[Groups - Southwell u3a](#) Names and contact details are also available at our monthly meetings.

Nottinghamshire u3a Branches:

The 34 individual u3a organisations in our county are all federated into the Nottinghamshire Network, which has its own website and magazine:

[Nottinghamshire Network of u3as - Learn, Laugh, Live!](#)

[February 2026 Newsbites now available](#)

The National u3a Organisation:

National u3a website is <https://www.u3a.org.uk>

The National u3a organises a range of (mainly virtual) events and workshops:

www.u3a.org.uk/events

Community Contacts

Southwell Town Council website is <https://www.southwellcouncil.com>, council office admin@southwell-tc.gov.uk or 01636 816103

Nottinghamshire County Council website is <https://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk>

You can contact Notts County Council customer service team via 0300 500 8080. Customer service opening hours: Monday to Thursday: 8:30am to 5pm Friday: 8:30am to 4:30pm

Newark & Sherwood District Council website is <https://www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk>, customerservices@newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk 01636 650000