

Newsline April 2026

U3a Southwell



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I was intending to start this month by saying that after such a dreary and wet winter, hasn't it been cheery to see the sun come out, finally, and the spring flowers

suddenly bloom. However, I then saw the forecast for this coming weekend with possible snow and freezing temperatures predicted. It was this unpredictable, changeable and harsh weather in March, often feeling uncomfortable or chaotic that lead Garrison Keillor to write "March is the month God created to show people who don't drink what a hangover is like"!

What I did have the pleasure of attending this month was a very enjoyable talk by Lesley at the "History for Fun" group on postcards. She presented an excellent and interesting set of cards sent by her grandfather from his travels during the 1920's – 1930's. This presentation also led me to think more about the lost art of postcard writing.

In the not-too-distant past, during the summer, hardly a week went by without the postman bringing a postcard from a friend or relative on holiday somewhere. The same happened when you went away yourself – it was almost part of a

holiday ritual to seek out cards to send back home, usually either more conventional images of famous places to parents or relatives, or something more obscure (and possibly bad taste!) to a friend.

These pieces of snail-mail were often left at the hotel reception desk or dropped in a backwater post box before making their arduous journey back by lorry, ship or plane, train and foot to arrive, usually, some weeks after you'd returned home. After my last A-level exam, a friend and I set off InterRailing around Europe, with the intent of travelling down through Italy towards Greece. Our plans changed when we missed a train in Paris, so the first my parents knew of this was when, two days before I got back, they started to get postcards from Copenhagen, Oslo, and Bergen which is where we'd headed instead.

It wasn't just choosing the picture that was important – what to write was even more critical. This was especially important when sending cards back to girlfriends knowing their parents were more likely to pick it up off the doormat. My grandfather solved this by having the skill of being ambidextrous but also writing the mirror image with his left-hand: Quite a feat.

Lesley's talk did what many of our u3a events have the great knack of doing – making us look back to see that

FROM THE CHAIR (Continued)

although times are changing, core principles such as keeping in touch and sharing with others remain of utmost importance.

Despite postcard writing being a lost art, I do enjoy the modern ways of keeping in touch through IT developments such as WhatsApp. This has been very apparent over the past month when England have lost to India in cricket, and Scotland, Ireland and Italy in rugby. Through WhatsApp

it means that within seconds of each event happening I have friends from Mumbai, Dundee, Dublin and Milan all contacting me with their happy news!

Please enjoy catching up with the rest of the news in this edition, particularly to note the details of our Mid-Summer event to celebrate our 20th Anniversary.

Mike Freemantle, [Chair](#)

REFLECTIONS FROM THE PAST..... Roger Bennett (Previous Chair)

This is the second of a series of articles by previous Chairs of Southwell u3a, as we celebrate our 20th anniversary year: This time we travel back to 2011, and Roger Bennett, whom we all know and love as the mastermind behind our Concert Coaches. How many of us know just how deep his association with our u3a is? Roger writes:

I was Chair of Southwell u3a for just one year from 2011 to 2012 but my association with this incredible organisation has lasted for every month but the first of its 20 years. I missed month one because the launch meeting in February 2006 was so popular we couldn't get inside to join up!

Most of you will know me because I stand up at most Monthly Meetings and promote the Concert Coach Scheme I started just after I handed the Chair role over to Peter James in August 2012.

I retired from my career in IT and Business Management in February 2005 and after a year travelling, the start of the u3a in Southwell in 2006 provided an ideal opportunity for my wife Chris and I to get involved and enjoy learning and sharing something new. Quite quickly I was asked to join the Committee and soon set about helping with the IT and the meeting technology we needed, as we went through rapid membership growth. We also threw ourselves into probably too many groups and I helped start the

Bridge and first Birdwatching Group whilst Chris initiated a very successful Armchair Travel Group. We both were involved in the editorship and production of Newsline, and I remember many trips into the Reach offices in Southwell with the next edition to get it printed. We also became members of at least 10 or more groups and found our monthly calendar was full, a perfect example of what great opportunities the u3a offers.

I ended up as Vice Chair under Jean Hogg's leadership and in 2011, when there was no one stepping forward to take over, I said I would do the Chair role for just one year. I also had a period when I had to take over the

Treasurer's job due to illness of the incumbent at the time. It was all in all a very enjoyable period although quite exhausting and I must praise the dedication and energy of all the Committee, Group Leaders and helpers who are volunteers and give their time so willingly.

It has been really satisfying to help grow the u3a into the big, successful organisation it is today, of more than 900 members, and I hope every member can in some way share in all it offers and look themselves to contribute towards its continuing growth.

Roger Bennett

SOUTHWELL u3a 20th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

As we look forward to marking 20 years of Southwell u3a, we are excited to announce a midsummer's celebration, to be held in the beautiful location of Norwood Park.

Details of the evening are given in the poster on the next page. Tickets will be on sale from the April monthly meeting. More information can also be obtained from our [Vice-Chair, Liz Neesam](#)





Southwell u3a
20TH ANNIVERSARY
CELEBRATION

Come and join us in marking 20 years of Southwell u3a at a midsummer's evening of celebration, festivities and friendship, to be held in the beautiful location of Norwood Park.

THURSDAY 16TH JULY 2026
6pm - 10pm

Tickets include a welcome drink, a cheese and cold meat platter and dancing to live music from Velvet Souls band.

Tickets £35.00 per person

Tickets available at the April monthly meeting



u3a FESTIVAL 2026, University of York, 1-3 July

Further news about the 2026 u3a National Festival: Johnny Ball will be opening the Festival. His joyful approach to learning matches the u3a spirit and will be the perfect start to three days of skill sharing and fun.

Our National u3a movement 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](#)

GROUP LEADERS' LUNCH

Our next Group Leaders Lunch will be held on **Wednesday 22nd April** at Southwell Rugby Club, from 12.30pm to around 2.30pm. As always, we will provide sandwiches, fruit, cakes/biscuits and tea and coffee. The bar will also be open for anyone wishing to purchase other drinks.

It will be the usual informal affair but Chair Mike Freemantle has kindly

agreed to give a short presentation on what I know is your favourite subject – risk assessments!! Please let me know if there are any other subjects you would like to speak about yourself or to raise for general discussion. Help will also be on hand for anyone who would like some personal tuition or has specific queries about Beacon or the website.

[Brian Platts](#)

COFFEE MORNING April 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 April we are going to meet from 10:30am on Thursday, 9th and 23rd. 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.



POTENTIAL NEW GROUP: LEARNING the VIOLIN

The Violin Virtuoso Short Course has been so successful that several members are proposing to set up a new group "Learning the Violin" or related title. This would be open to others also wanting to learn the violin, and to anyone who already plays but

is happy to pass on their own knowledge and refresh/grow their own skill. There will be a web page shortly, but for now if you are interested in joining this group please message me, Rik Ludlow, via my [website link](#)

NEW LEARNING EXPERIENCES

On pages 9-11 is the programme of Short Courses and Workshops that our organising group has put together for you for 2026, updated to late March. 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.

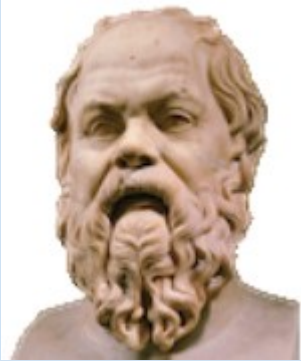
You can't just turn up on the day - you need to book in advance.

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](#)

NEW LEARNING EXPERIENCES: Workshops and Courses

SUBJECT AND CONTACT DETAILS	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	DATE , TIME And VENUE
<p style="text-align: center;">NEW!</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ADDITIONAL COURSE:</p> <p><u>INTRODUCTION TO THE PHILOSOPHY OF MIND</u></p> 	<p>Can machines think? Can they be genuinely intelligent? Might they even be conscious? Prompted by the sudden huge impact of AI, many people with no previous tendency to philosophise are puzzling over such questions. This course is designed to provide a basic framework for thinking about them.</p> <p>Course leader: Robert Kirk, formerly professor and head of the department of philosophy, University of Nottingham.</p> <p>Please register your interest with Robert via the web page for this course: Philosophy of Mind - Southwell u3a</p> <p>Topics:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The idea of minds, souls and spirits as things distinct from the body. 2. A contrasting idea: mental states as behaviour. 3. Or Is the mind just the brain (physicalism)? Or whatever does the work of a brain (functionalism)? 4. Difficulties for physicalism and functionalism. 5. Can machines think? 6. Might machines be conscious? 	<p>Six fortnightly meetings: Each from 10.00–12.00:</p> <p>15th and 29th April, 13th and 27th May and 10th and 24th June.</p> <p>Conservatory of the Admiral Rodney in Southwell</p>
<p><u>STARS, THE SUN, ASTEROIDS, COMETS AND METEORITES</u></p>	<p>Richard will be giving a follow-up course to his March introductory course, 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</p>	<p>Two 2-hour sessions: Thursday 2 April 10:00–12:00 and Thursday 9 April 10:00–12:00</p> <p>Southwell Library</p>

NEW LEARNING EXPERIENCES: Workshops and Courses (page 2 of 3)

SUBJECT AND CONTACT DETAILS	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	DATE , TIME And VENUE
<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
<u>VIOLIN VIRTUOSOS!</u>	This course was popular, brought forward, fully booked, and has now completed. It was so successful that several of its members want to start a “Learning Violin” group. See page 8 to learn more.	Now completed, but with a potential future group continuing the theme

NEW LEARNING EXPERIENCES: Workshops and Courses (page 3 of 3)

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 Chair 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

GROUP NEWS: WOODWORKING

Our [Woodworking Group](#) has been busy constructing traditional bird boxes, a bat box, hedgehog boxes and an owl box. Our front page shows Barry Charlesworth, leader of the Woodworking Group presenting a birdbox to Peter Wheeldon from Fiskerton Friends of the Green. A further picture can be found in the Photography Section.



GROUP NEWS : A CAPPELLA

We've been greeting the gentler days of Spring with some of our much-loved repertoire pieces, and we're excited to have begun a brand-new song too: "Lean on Me", the timeless classic made famous by Bill Withers in 1971. Its beautifully simple harmonies have already become a firm favourite with the group.

You can find all our repertoire in the A Cappella Songbook on our website, under the Groups section. If you've ever thought about joining us, we'd be delighted to hear from you. We meet once a month—on the third Wednesday from 2–4 pm at the Southwell WI Hall—and we're a warm, friendly and encouraging bunch who love welcoming new voices. Alongside our regular sessions, we're also hosting a free A Cappella taster

workshop on Wednesday 13 May, 2–3.30 pm, again at the Southwell WI Hall. You're warmly invited to come along. We'll start with some gentle vocal techniques in our warm-up before diving into three uplifting songs to sing together. I'd love to see as many of you as possible—there's plenty of space, and truly, the more voices we have, the more joyful the sound.

If you'd like to come along and experience this vibrant, energising style of singing, just get in touch.

Wishing you all a very Happy Easter.

Alyson

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

It was pleasing to attain a new record for the Astronomy Group when, in February we had 25 members attending the presentation on Asteroids. I thank all of those present for their support and enthusiasm.

Continuing with our principle of offering variety, in March the talk was based upon using heavenly bodies as indicators of time by ancient man, including sundials, which effectively were the first ever clocks. Then in April we will be concentrating on the little red planet Mars and study a DVD comparing it to Earth in the early years when both were water worlds. It explores the reasons why Earth went on to thrive biologically, while Mars literally died. This will then be followed up in May by an investigation into the possibilities of man living self-sufficiently on Mars' surface for long periods of time. This may well be a dream, but it is based on a book written by a well respected scientist.

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 23rd April, 28th May and 25th June.

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.

One thing I think that all readers will agree upon is that our universe, of which Earth is a very small part, is a truly amazing and fascinating entity.

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



Mars by blogspot.com

GAME PARMENTIER – serves 6 (leftovers will reheat)

A “parmentier” is any dish that includes potatoes. Its name originates from the French agronomist and nutritionist Antoine-Augustin Parmentier who promoted the humble spud at a time when his fellow countrymen considered it to be barely fit for human consumption. So, if you’re feeling posh, just re-name your shepherd’s pie as “Sheep Person’s Parmentier”!



Although it’s past the end of the game-bird season, you should still be able to find some fresh venison or frozen diced game for this deluxe Parmentier.

Ingredients:

900g mixed, diced boneless game or venison	1 bay leaf
2 carrots, roughly chopped	Sprig of thyme
1 large onion, roughly chopped	Salt and pepper.
1 tbs chopped ginger	1 chicken stock cube.
1 bay leaf.	2 tbs olive oil
2 tsp tomato purée	675g parsnips
20 or so juniper berries, slightly crushed	675g potatoes
	A little milk and butter
	1 bottle red wine
	½ tbs flour

Directions

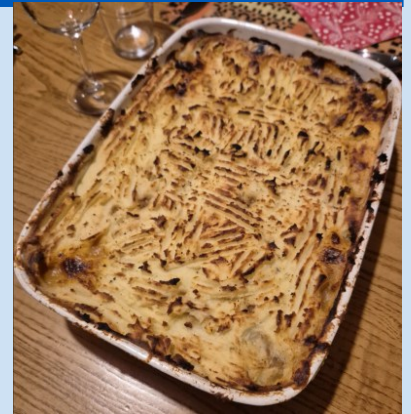
Oven: 140°C/gas mark 3 or use pressure cooker (see below)

Pie Filling

1. Dry off the meat with a kitchen towel.
2. Heat the oil in a casserole pan and fry off the meat and vegetables until starting to take on some colour.
3. Add the flour to coat and cook for a minute or two, then add the wine and the rest of the ingredients. (Bay leaf, tomato purée, juniper berries, thyme, salt, pepper)

4. Top up (if needed) with enough water to cover the meat, add the crumbled stock cube and bring to the boil gently.

5. **Either:** Put the covered pan into the oven and cook for 2 hours and then leave the mixture to cool in the liquid. If you have the time, leave overnight for the flavours to develop.



6. **Or:** Put in Pressure Cooker for 20 minutes on high and decompress immediately, allow to cool a little.

7. Strain the meat and reserve the juice and remove the bay leaf. Moisten with some of the cooking juices (keep the rest for serving).

8. Whizz briefly in a food processor or use forks to break up the meat, but not too much – you don't want the mixture to be smooth, just nice and chunky.

Parsnip & Potato Puree

9. Peel and cut parsnips into chunks and cook in boiling salted water until just cooked. Drain and put back on the heat for a few minutes to dry. Puree with stick blender

10. Meanwhile prick and cook potatoes in microwave for 10 – 12 minutes (or peel and boil) until cooked. Halve the potatoes and pass through a ricer or mash thoroughly until smooth.

11. Combine parsnip puree with potatoes with a little milk and knob of butter.

12. Serve the Parmentier in one pie dish or individual dishes or by using cheffy rings and top with the pureed potatoes and parsnips.

13. Heat oven to 200°C Fan for browning the pie.

14. Brush with beaten egg and brown in hot oven until golden.

15. Serve with the sauce around the Parmentier and with fresh vegetables, such as red cabbage, creamy sprouts or other greens.

Enjoy!

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

Selkie

She lay quite naked on the harsh rocks, her pale skin in sharp contrast to the glistening dark of the sea-wet granite. Covering her with his coat, he had taken her back to the cottage on the cliff. He gave her clothing, then found that he had to show her how it was worn. Everything was fresh to her, unknown. The smallest everyday things were wonders. She had no understanding of language, but sometimes she would softly sing strange, haunting melodies with impossible harmonics. They knew each other's thoughts. He knew that she had come from the sea and that now she wanted to be with him. She knew that he found her strange and mysterious.

When it was time for him to return to the city, she chose to be with him, as she found him fascinating. They lived in his apartment, and she quickly learned the surrounding area, becoming familiar to the neighbours, this odd, mute girl with her long coils of glossy, dark grey brindled hair, and eyes deep shining as horse chestnuts. Animals recognised her for what she was. Dogs would back away, or roll submissively. Cats arched, hissed and spat. Her sense of wonder at this strange world never left her. The ingenuity of humans continually amazed her; so many solutions to so many unnecessary problems which they had created themselves in the first place.

So the two of them lived in a simple harmony all summer, fitting together like a jigsaw. Then with the coming of autumn the brightness of their affection began slowly to tarnish. There could be no secrets between them. She knew when he began to miss the company of human women, and he knew when she began to resent her life. Her shape was wrong, this human body was awkward, all strange angles and becoming monkey ugly to her eyes. Longing again for the sleek, smooth elegance of her natural form, she was coming to hate the imprisonment of this pedestrian two dimensioned life.

The pure joy of soaring and diving, twisting weightless through water like a bird in the air was what she missed most. The atmosphere felt dry on her skin, and she was hungry for the feel of the cool sea supporting her. The wearing of clothes felt constricting and ridiculous. There was something wrong, something unnatural about this simian body, designed to live amongst the trees of the rain forests, now constrained, trapped, living in barren, concrete cities. It was little wonder that these humans did not understand themselves, that they were not content, always frustrated, always seeking. They could never be truly happy when so far away from their natural home. The time came when it could no longer be borne - she would have to return to her ocean. There was an instinct, an urgent call demanding that she be in her other life. The man would help her back to the place where they had met. For mile after mile they headed south west until at dusk they reached the cottage.

The first of the autumn storms roared furiously in from the Atlantic, full of energy and rage, exploding against the land. She parted from the man, sharing more happy memories than sad ones. Pausing at the cliff top she turned to face the land, the wind whipping her hair around her face. Throwing back her head she screamed, a haunting cry of farewell into the gale. She turned to the ocean as the sinking sun shone a golden track for her to the horizon. Overhead, the rags of cloud scudded, torn to shreds by the winds. She was back. Ripping off her clothing she ran free down the cliff path to the beach. As the foaming water swirled around her legs, she knew the truth of it, the prism shifted, her eyesight changed, her shape blurred, altered, now sloughing off skin in endless skeins. Quivering in ecstasy, she revealed her glossy grey fur, shining like blued steel, falling forward into the pounding surf, an exaltation of pure joy, her heart lifted to the waves. She was home.

Andy Soper, © 2026

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

GROUP NEWS: Photography Group

The Photography Group had a packed house at our March meeting when we looked at the images from our monthly theme of Symmetrical Patterns. This was one of the best monthly projects for a while and it has been difficult selecting these images to share with you.

The images here and on the next page are from some of our members:



Brenda
"3 Phones"



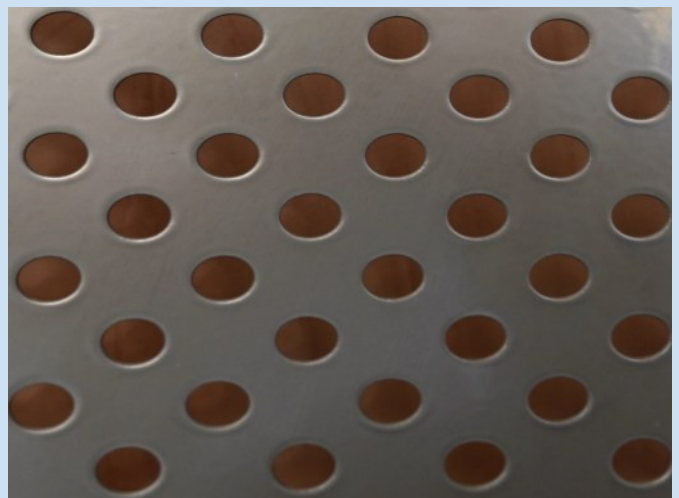
Barry
"A Symmetrical Pose"

We had the pleasure last month of taking images for the Woodworking Group who have constructed a wide

range of habitats for birds, bats and hedgehogs for the [Fiskerton Friends of the Green](#). Very talented members from the woodworking team and two group members from Fiskerton attended a handover ceremony and photos were taken which have appeared on [Facebook](#). Here is one to whet your appetite: You will already have seen this month's front cover!



The Group is currently full of happy members but we have a small waiting list so would like to hear from anybody else who would also like to join.



Richard
"Coffee tray"

GROUP NEWS: Photography (Continued)

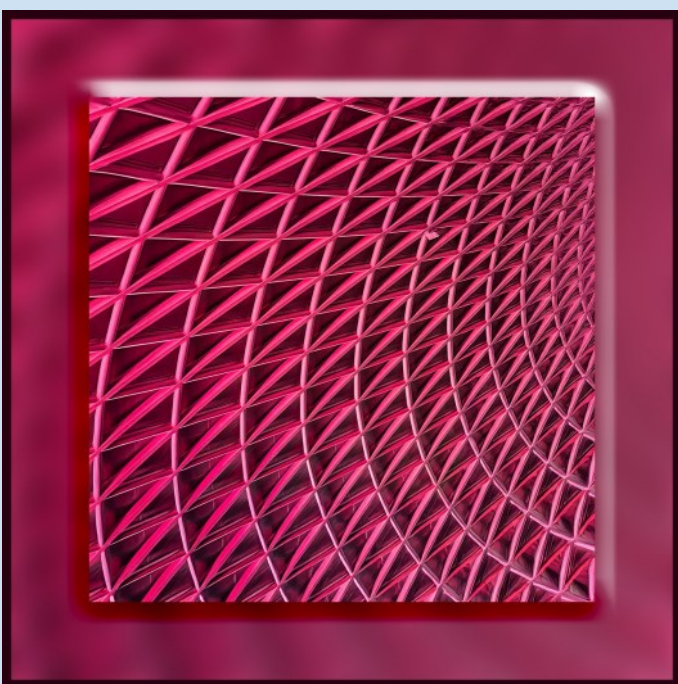
Finally, about 3 years ago I ran a u3a short course on an Introduction to Photography. I've not run it since because of time pressures but if there is any demand for this kind of short course from you, please let me know and I'll see if I can rerun the course I did then later this year.

[Graeme Stewardson, Group Leader.](#)



Graeme

"Sharp and to the Point"



Deb

"King's Cross Roof"



Lisa

"Patterns from the Past"

DEADLINE FOR OUR NEXT NEWSLINE,

Please email articles and pictures to the Newsline team **by the 15th April** to ensure inclusion in our May edition.

su3anewsline@outlook.com

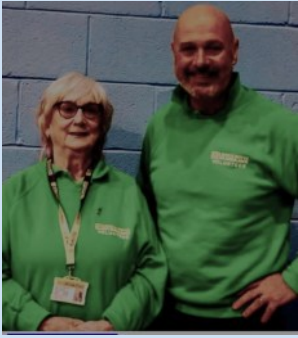
Subject heading: May Newsline

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 15th April deadline may be carried forward to the June edition.

Thank you, Rik Ludlow [Stand-in Editor](#)



January: The history and work of the Notts and Lincs Air Ambulance Service. (Tony Hendon and Lynn)

This Month's Talk, 7th of April: Following the thefts at the Louvre and the British Museum, William Brown will be giving us a talk about museum security. Before he retired, William was responsible for security at all British museums.

February: The History of Rockingham Castle (Michael Burton)



Next Month's Talk, 5th of May: Paul Lillie returns to give us his rendition of the story of the Beatles. Members may remember last year when Paul gave us a thrilling rendition of the life of Elvis, singing some of his songs whilst painting pictures of Elvis during his performance.



March: In March we had an entertaining and funny talk by John Constantine about the history of magic, which dates back to ancient Egyptian times. This

history ran through the ages with particular reference to the burning and hanging of witches, mainly in the sixteenth century, which John maintained was probably men and women using magic. Modern magic can be divided into various categories, such as "sleight of hand", "mental manipulation", "Illusion" and "power of thought transference". The talk was followed by several magic tricks which John performed on stage with the assistance of some of our members. Overall, a most enjoyable and magical morning.

2nd of June: Gambling seems to be becoming endemic in the UK. It started with horse racing and football. Then the National Lottery came. Now we have all sorts of lotteries from dogs and cats to houses. Paul Isherwood will give us an insight into the dangers and depths of gambling addiction. He is a recovered addict with first hand experience of the problem.

7th of July: Southwell u3a 20th anniversary party

4th of August: Martin Lloyd, formerly of the BBC, will give us a talk about passports, assassins, traitors and spies. This is the story of how and why our passports were changed because of traitors and spies.

1st of September. Nick Bailey was one of the first DJs on Radio Caroline. This

OUR SPEAKERS (Continued)

is his history of those times (1966/67), his time working in Australia, Gibraltar, Cologne, Berlin and Hong Kong together with his migration to Classic FM and his classical music show.

6th of October Tony Heydon who will talk to us about Serious Crime Investigations. Tony used to work at the CID in Nottinghamshire. He was involved in many of these investigations during his career. It should prove to be an interesting talk.

3rd of November: Stephen Booth is now a very successful author of detective novels set around the Derbyshire Peak District. He relates the story of how he became an author as well as how he uses stories based on his interactions with readers.

1st of December:

Subject yet to be decided.

[Link to Contacts Page for John Cook,](#)

[Southwell u3a Speaker Seeker](#)

FEEDBACK: Hole-In-One (6th March - Race Course Golf Club)

My Version: A calm descended upon me as I stepped onto the 7th tee. A single breath and I took my stance - lining up on the pin as a ray of sunshine pierced the sky. In one smooth motion I started my swing and with a soft, buttery, feel drove the ball high into the air. The ProV1 floated towards the green, and as time stood still, the clouds parted and a heavenly choir began to sing. Slowly the ball drifted down to gently kiss the hallowed turf. With one brief hop and a determined roll it trickled into the hole to the sound of rapturous applause.

Reality: With cold hands my ugly swing just clipped the ball. The thinned, errant, missile flew at high speed 18" above the water. Crashing into the far bank the ball hit a small stone and was knocked high into the air. Crashing down into the light rough the ball nudged against worm casts and twigs and took a couple of drunken skips towards the flag. As the ball passed the pin it seemed to say 'I've had enough' and lurched into the hole. The crowd roared "You Lucky B*****".

[Richmond \(Membership Secretary\)](#)

u3a Southwell

Southwell u3a Concert Coaches—Royal Concert Hall



Following the great success of concert attendances over the first part of this season, where the break-even numbers have been well beaten, the concert float has increased significantly. Therefore, to continue to reduce this, the next two concerts in April will be at **reduced prices** of Band A £36, Band B £32 and Band C £30 all including the coach.

I will be at the April Monthly Meeting to take bookings and payments but please send Booking Forms and Cheques made out to Southwell u3a to the address on the Booking Form sent to my circulation list. Any new members interested in being informed of concerts please contact me [via the Southwell u3a website](#).

Roger Bennett

THURSDAY 16 APRIL, 7.30PM

SPANISH GALICIA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Roberto Gonzalez-Monjas – conductor and Thibaut Garcia – guitar

Falla	Three Dances from The Three-Cornered Hat
Rodrigo	Concierto de Aranjuez
Ravel	Ma mere l'Oye (Suite)
Turina	Sinfonia Sevillana
Ravel	Bolero

THURSDAY 23 APRIL, 7.30PM

ROYAL LIVERPOOL PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

Domingo Hindoyan – conductor *Alim Beisembayev – piano*

Rimsky-Korsakov	Russian Easter Festival Overture
Prokofiev	Piano Concerto No. 2
Tchaikovsky	Symphony No. 5

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

CONCERT BOOKING FORM

Please book me a ticket and place on the concert coach to the Royal Concert

Hall on:

Name: I confirm I am a u3a member.

Contact Tel No:

Emergency Contact

Name: u3a member: Yes/No

Emergency Contact No:

Pick up point

No. of tickets:

Seating Area: Stalls/T1/T2

Price Band: A/B/C

Seat Nos.

Please circle your choice.

I enclose a cheque for £..... made out to Southwell u3a.

Money is non-refundable unless your ticket/place can be re-sold. Please return this form and cheque for the full amount to Roger.

[Contact Roger via the Concerts Webpage](#)

Alternatively, cheques and Booking Forms can be given in at the Monthly Meeting.



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.

NEW
Extra
Member
Benefit for
2026:

A DAY AT THE RACES!

Southwell Racecourse have kindly offered a very special deal to our members:

Southwell u3a members can book day tickets (except on "feature" days) on a 2-for-the-price-of-1 basis. Just scan the QR code to take advantage of this generous offer.

The advertisement for Southwell Racecourse features a green background with a white scalloped border. At the top, the Southwell Racecourse logo is displayed. The main text reads '2-4-1 Club Offer' in large, white and orange fonts. Below this, it says 'General Admission tickets to all fixtures in 2026*' in white, with a note '*excluding feature days' in orange. At the bottom, there is a QR code and the text 'Scan TO BOOK' and 'USE CODE LOCALSPORTS26'. A dark green bar at the very bottom contains the text 'BOOK NOW southwell-racecourse.co.uk'.

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>, 01636 650000