

Lincoln u3a Magazine November 2026



News and Announcements

Lincoln.u3asite.uk



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The pictures opposite were kindly sent in by Vera Holmes, as was the picture on the back page.

Top:

Starlings having a bath. The sparrow on the left looks as though he might be thinking "Hope these two don't leave a mess!" Pictured in Vera's back garden.

Bottom:

I think these two are Grey Herons (*Ardea cinerea*). Vera snapped them keeping an eye on the fish at Hartholme Park.

Back Page:

Greenfinch. Picture taken in Vera's back garden.

Thanks Vera.

Chairman's Notes: November 2026



Membership

When I took over as your Chairman in March 2024 our membership stood at 167. I challenged our Committee to get this up to 300, which was in line with our numbers prior to the



Covid pandemic. Well, I am delighted to advise that on October 7th we achieved that target. On that date our membership reached 301. This represents a growth of 80%. A large percentage of our new members come from word-of-mouth referrals, and I would like to thank all members and the Committee, for the part they have played in this fantastic achievement. You have certainly kept our Membership Secretary, John Wilson very busy!

Our continued year on year growth in membership provides new opportunities for interest groups and for volunteers to help assist with the running and continued growth of Lincoln u3a. Can I extend a very warm welcome to all our new members, you are vital to the future success of our organisation, and your Committee members are always available to listen to any new ideas that you may have to further enrich our group.

Committee

We would like to hear from any members who would like to be considered for any Committee role either now or in the future. There is normally the option for one or two members to join the Committee in a non-portfolio role. This can be useful for anyone that is interested in supporting Lincoln u3a in its endeavours but perhaps is unsure of what a specific role would entail.

Regular monthly meetings

A reminder that all our regular monthly meetings, held at the North Hykeham Memorial Hall, commence at 10:15 with doors open from 09:30 and with refreshments available until 10:00. The cost of entry is £2 which helps to cover the speaker fee, hall hire fee and refreshments. Details of all monthly meetings and speakers for 2026/27, are on the website. Coming up in the next 3 months we have:

- November 3rd – David Harisson – Wines for Christmas, including tasting!
- December 1st – Lincoln Ukulele Band – a welcome return following a great performance last December. There will also be a free prize draw on December 1st along with the usual mince pies. Entrance fee still just £2.
- January 5th – Tim Stubbs returns with a talk entitled “People, Pubs & Popycock”.

Full and updated details are on the website.

Generic Lincoln u3a leaflet

A new A5 fold over leaflet has been printed and is now available to view or download from the website. This is aimed at anyone who wants to know what Lincoln u3a has to offer and will hopefully aid the ongoing membership recruitment campaign. We are distributing these leaflets to local libraries and other relevant support groups in the Lincoln area. If any current member would like some of these leaflets to distribute locally, please contact any Committee member. Copies will also be available from Reception, at every monthly meeting at the North Hykeham Memorial Hall.

Jim Innes

Welfare update

If you are a new member or are looking to attend one of our monthly meetings for the first time, it can be daunting if you do not know anyone. Don't worry we have a Meet & Greet team at reception for all meetings. They will provide a friendly welcome and offer you a "buddy" for the rest of the meeting.

It is that time of year again when the nights are drawing in and if you are lonely or feel isolated, please contact me via the contacts page on the website and I will arrange to have a chat with you at a mutually suitable time.

If you are aware of any member who is ill or recently bereaved, please let me know so I can get in contact and/or send a card.

Anita Innes
Welfare Officer.

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				4				3
	7					5		
				1				
			9			8	3	7
							5	9
4		9	3				7	
1		6		2				
		8		5	6			

Sudoku

My puzzle compiler said it was a medium difficulty puzzle!

Personally, I can't figure them out.

Hope you have more luck.

Solution on page 35.

You're Joking?

Why should you never fall in love with a tennis player? Because to them, love means nothing.

How do trees access their email? They log in.

Speakers at Monthly Meetings 2026/27

2026		
3 November	David Harrison	'Wines for Christmas' with a 'Best Value' selection, a 'Budget Choice' and a 'Push the Boat Out Set'. All available locally.
1 December	The Ukelele Band	Christmas Carols, songs and merriment.
2027		
5 January	Tim Stubs	People, Pubs and Poppycock. Stories from his life as a baker, auctioneer and publican, there is a smattering of words and expressions no longer used.
2 February	Nigel and Teri	Nigel and Teri are a husband and wife acoustic duo, from the Sleaford area, performing traditional and contemporary folk music, also the occasional 60's song in an acoustic vein, using guitar, tenor guitar and melodeon.
2 March	Patrick Bond	<p>AGM. An opportunity for members to hear about the activities of the branch over the past year and going forward. Also to vote for the election of the officers and management committee.</p> <p>After the formal business of the meeting, members will be entertained by poetry readings from Patrick Bond.</p>
6 April	Jenny Evans	The Story of a School. Based on Jenny's four visits to Sierra Leone over the past 15 years, including people, places, ways of life and, most importantly, a school which, along with others, she funded and now supports as a registered charity.
4 May	Bransby Horses	<p>Learn about the work of this local charity which rescues equines, rehabilitates them and gives them sanctuary care.</p> <p>Their founder, Peter Hunt, rescued his first horse in 1947 and established Bransby Horses in 1968. The charity now cares for nearly 1,000 horses, donkeys, ponies and mules (equines). There are around 250 equines on site and over 600 equines in foster homes around the UK.</p>

Further speakers will be added as and when they are booked to appear. Some Speakers are already booked for 2027, but other suggestions are always welcome.

See also <https://lincoln.u3asite.uk/events/> for a more complete list of forthcoming events.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL for 2027

As this is the November issue of our magazine, you might well be expecting messages about how to renew your membership for 2027, asking that you pay before the year end ...

But not this time!

The BEACON database presumes that anything paid in calendar year 2026 belongs to the financial year 2026, so if we paid in our subscriptions before 1st January 2027, it would assume that these were 2026 funds!

We are therefore requesting that **BACS** payments are made in early January, please. Our first Monthly Meeting of 2027 will be on Tuesday 5th January, so we would request that you make any BACS payment on 1st to 4th January.

BACS details, using your surname as a reference, are:

Account name – Lincoln u3a, Number – 50899238, Sort code 20-50-21

Cheque and cash payments CAN be made to our Treasurer ahead of 1st January, but will be held over, and banked in January.

You will be pleased to hear that the Membership Fees remain unaltered for 2027, with Individual Membership at £17.00 for the year and Joint at £30.00 for two people (at the same address). Affiliates will, as usual, pay £4.00 per person less (as this represents the central U3A fee that they would have paid at their main u3a branch).

If you have any questions relating, please contact me.

John Wilson, Membership Secretary jwtransmit@gmail.com 01522 212028

Hablamos Espanol - Spanish Conversation Group

The Spanish Conversation Group meets every Thursday of the month at 2pm-4pm. A more advanced group will meet once a month for a coffee and Spanish Conversation. We haven't arranged a definite day of the month for this yet.

Contact the Group Leader via the website or at any Monthly Meeting.
Looking forward to hearing from you!

But Is It Poetry?

Yes, late again for my editor, whose deadlines come at me with the speed of a new Formula 1 car, running on both petrol, and battery electric! So I found myself scrabbling at the back of my poetry cupboard, and found long-forgotten scraps and scrimps of poetic musings... Here they are... But is it Poetry?

If you drop it – pick it up
If you sleep in it – make it
If you open it – close it
If you empty it – fill it up
If it rings – answer it
If it cries – love it

If you ask where I found this, and who made it, I cannot tell: more than a quarter of a century has passed since I tucked it into my box of memories. But it does what a poem does: casts a spell by repetition, keeps a soothing question-and-answer pattern, teases you to know what “it” is – and turns gracefully on a sixpence at the end, to make you smile.

Here's another. This one is more like a shopping list of inspirations.

Think freely: Practise patience: Smile often:
Savour special moments: Live God's message:
Make new friends: Discover old ones: Tell those
you love that you do: Feel deeply: Forget trouble:
Forgive an enemy.

Pick some daisies: Share them: Keep a promise:
Look for rainbows: Gaze at stars: See beauty everywhere:
Work hard: Be wise: Try to understand:
Take time for people:
Make time for yourself.

Laugh heartily: Spread joy: Take a chance:
Reach out: Let someone in: Try something new:
Slow down: Be soft sometimes: Celebrate life:
Believe in yourself: Trust others: See a sunrise:
Listen to rain: Reminisce:
Cry when you need to.

Trust life: Have faith: Enjoy: Wonder: Comfort
a friend: Have good ideas: Learn: Make some
mistakes: Learn from them:
Explore the unknown:
Hug a child.

Hope: Grow: Be crazy: Count your blessings:
Observe miracles: Make them happen: Discard
worry: Give: Give in:
Trust enough to take.

Again, I cannot tell you where I found it, but it comes from the previous century – a long time ago now. I hope you will try some of the above, and think about the miracles of poetry!

Patrick Bond https://lincoln.u3asite.uk/u3a_groups/poems-out-loud/

07425-011341



Boys' Names Wordsearch

There are Fifty Boys' names to find in the grid. Usual rules - left, right, up, down and diagonally (up and down). Solution bottom of page 23.

ALASTAIR	DESMOND	LAWRENCE	RODNEY
ALEXANDER	DOUGLAS	MALCOLM	SAMUEL
ANDREW	DUNCAN	MATTHEW	SEBASTIAN
ARTHUR	FRANK	MICHAEL	SHANE
BARNABY	GEORGE	MONTGOMERY	STANLEY
BARRY	GERALD	NATHANIEL	STEWART
BENJAMIN	GRAHAM	NEIL	TIMOTHY
BRIAN	IAN	NICHOLAS	VICTOR
CARL	ISAAC	NORMAN	WILLIAM
CHRISTOPHER	JEREMY	PAUL	WINSTON
COURTNEY	JOHN	PERCIVAL	ZACHARY
DAVID	KENNETH	PETER	
DENNIS	KEVIN	RAYMOND	

New Groups!?

As we all know, groups are the life blood of any U3a. They need to grow and prosper to keep any area lively and fully operational. Let's face it, it's the reason we all joined in the first place-to have fun and make new friends within the groups we choose to join.

Eleven years ago there were more groups than we have today.

To name a few there were:-

Armchair travel, Current affairs, Bridge, Discussion, Family History, German Conversation, History, Keep Fit, Music, Needlecraft, Play reading, Singing, Tai Chi, and Yoga.

As Groups Coordinator helping to start new groups and helping to support existing ones is what I'm here for. Two new groups have been set up and are now running since April, namely Poems Aloud and Film Appreciation. There is room for lots more.

So don't be shy. Contact me via the website and I will happily take you through the few easy steps required in setting up a new group. It will be a lot of fun.

Sarah Hawley (Groups Coordinator)

BACS Payments

Now that we have an active Social Secretary in Andy Briggs, and events and trips are being arranged, we realised that it would be best to use a separate bank account for those activities. This will mean that payments for social events are more easily recognised. We therefore now have two accounts into which you can make BACS payments, and we thought that we should clearly identify which is which for you.

For Social Activities

Account Name: Social Fund, Sort code: 20-50-21, Account number: 80886203

For Membership subscriptions

Account Name: Lincoln u3a, Sort code: 20-50-21, Account number: 50899038

In either case, it is helpful if you put your surname as the Reference.

We will always include these details for you whenever we ask for a payment from you (for example on event notices or Membership Renewal) but thought that you might like to make a note of them to avoid any confusion. Thank you.

John Wilson, Membership Secretary

You're Joking?

A father was washing his car with his son and the son asked, "Dad, can't you just use a sponge?"

What time did Sean Connery go to Wimbledon? About tennish.

Lincoln u3a Group Leaders

<u>Group</u>	<u>Leader</u>
Art	Margaret Carstairs
Badminton	Rob Dummer
Circle Dancing	Linda Stringer
Creative Writing	Richard Stagg
	Penelope Hammerton
Film Appreciation	Sue Firth
French Boule	Cynthia Knox
French Conversation	Christine Pritchard
French for fluent speakers	Jenny Fennell
Friday Gardens	Pam
	Ann
Mah Jong	John Wilson
New Age Curling	Linda Ash
Philosophy	Lindsay Cutts
Poems Aloud	Patrick Bond
Qi Gong	Barbara Bond
Quiz (General Knowledge)	Pat Lucas
Scrabble	Margaret Ford
Spanish Conversation	Mary York
Table Tennis - Monday	Elaine Lewis
Table Tennis - Wednesday	John Wilson
Table Tennis for All - Friday	Maria North
Ten Pin Bowling	Mike Lucas
Wednesday Lunches	Audrey Elliss
Walking Group - Tuesday	Lesley Tapley
<p>If you wish more information about any of these groups, or wish to suggest a new one, please contact the Groups Co-ordinator, Sarah Hawley at any meeting.</p>	

The Editor's email address for all correspondence pertaining to 'The Magazine' is:

andrewbradley@railmags.org

FUEL MISER

We are all acutely aware of the rises in the cost of fuel, due to world events, and so I have been looking for hints on how to make best use of what we do purchase. They are meant to help, not patronise, and you may well be using them already.



Journey time: Too often I used to set out on a local journey with “just enough time” to arrive when planned. Nowadays, I leave earlier, which allows me to travel a little slower enroute, saving fuel. Just a little each trip, but it adds up.

Tyres: Check that your tyres are at the right pressure, as under-inflated tyres offer more road resistance, and therefore need more oomph to drive them along.

Speed: Keep an eye on your speed. Accelerate slower, and anticipate the road ahead so that you can coast/brake slower where appropriate. Most of us are retired, and not usually in a hurry to get to where we are going, so drop your speed a little (and smirk knowingly at all of those who whizz past you on the A46, happy that you are not paying THEIR fuel bill).

Fuel: Be aware of the changing local pump prices and differences, so that you can fill up economically.

Baggage: Don't routinely carry extra stuff in the boot, just what you may need for this particular journey.

Journeys: Where possible, combine two or more destinations in the one trip (e.g. shops, tea at Auntie Jo's, chemist, etc) to avoid the repeated miles from home to each one.

Walk/cycle/bus: Where health and resources allow, use a means other than the car to get places.

I recognise that these are each small adjustments, but they do mount up to something worthwhile over time.

John Wilson

Tuesday Trotters 2026/2027



Group Leader - Lesley Tapley

October 13th	Peter	Spridlington
October 27th	Elaine and Linda	TBA
November 10th	Sarah	Scopwick
November 24th	Jon and Christine	Torksey
December 8th	Elaine and Linda	Xmas Lunch and Bassingham Walk
January 12th	Lesley	Sturton by Stow
January 26th	Elaine Lo	TBA
February 9th	Janet and Keith	TBA
February 23rd	Jane and Geoff	TBA

We walk on the second and fourth Tuesday mornings of the month 9:45 finishing at approximately 14:00. After we walk we eat a voluntary lunch! Parking is available. Approximately 5-6miles (we aim where possible to offer a slighter shorter route as well).

All are welcome.

Please make contact via the u3a website. Also please check your junk box for an email response from an email starting (latxx@xxxxxxxx.co.uk)

You're Joking?

What do you call a dietician for squirrels? A nut-tritionist.

What kind of tree can you hold in your hand? A palm tree!

Why do birds fly south in the winter? It's faster than walking!

What is worse than raining cats and dogs? Hailing taxis.

Change of Address and/or Telephone Number

Name _____ Membership Number _____

New Address _____

_____ Postcode _____

Telephone _____ Email _____

Date _____ Signature _____

Please forward the completed form to the Membership Secretary



1		2		3		4
5						
6						
7						

Simple Cross Word

Only a
few clues,
simple words,
simple clues.

Solution upside
down bottom of
page 35.

Across

1. Taxi
5. Relating to marriage
6. Inclined to ill temper
7. Expert shooter

Down

1. One leg camera stand
2. Flammable liquid
3. Cooking
4. Rebellious

Why am I going to Canada?

Why am I going to Canada to meet seven complete strangers, their children and grandchildren? They are my close family but I've never met them. They live 3,870 miles from Lincoln in Winnipeg Manitoba.

What was the spark that lit this adventure?

I have a passion for doing my family history. Whilst many genealogists concentrate their time and efforts on creating charts and throughlines, all of which I do too, I however love to get out there and meet real people. Walk in the very footsteps of those with whom I share my blood, my bones and DNA. I visit their final resting places but where there isn't a headstone (ie. because it's a paupers grave) I give it some recognition by putting flowers or a small home made cross on their grave. After all I wouldn't exist if they hadn't!

Blood, Bones and DNA

We all have two parents, four grandparents, eight great grandparents, 16 great great grandparent's, 32 great great great grandparents and 64 great great great great grandparents. Etc. This doubles with each generation.

Each direct ancestor is an unbroken link in our genetic chain. If you trace back 20 generations (roughly 500 years to 600 years - to the 1400's -1500's) this means that we have 1,048,576 unique and genetic ancestors.*

We are unique

The mathematical probability of your exact genetic makeup, and thus you existing requires every single one of those one million* ancestors to have survived and in doing so, to have dodged child mortality, pestilence, plague, pandemics and death. They then needed to meet the exact partner with whom they fell in love and then conceived with. Had they fallen in love with Catherine or Mary rather than Anne you wouldn't exist. If one then considers that in the 1400s in the UK, child mortality was staggeringly high. It is estimated that roughly 25% of children died within their first year, and between 30% to 50% failed to survive until the age of five.

These devastating losses were primarily driven by malnutrition, lack of medical understanding and vulnerability to crowd diseases like influenza, smallpox, scarlatina, measles, and bowel infections. Without the existence of modern medicine, safety measures or antibiotics, common household or environmental accidents were often fatal.

We are, in every sense, truly unique. The odds of us being here are billions to one.

Tree of Life

My existence, due to my ancestors, therefore fascinates me and I find a great comfort knowing where I come from. I have three children of my own and they all have children too (eight in total) thereby continuing that blossoming tree of life.

The Mystery of my Canadian Cousins

40 years ago, I was told that Malcom Bell (my uncle), who I never met, had emigrated to Canada in 1947. He had initially gone there for training with the RAF and met a beautiful Canadian girl named Evelyn who was in the Canadian Airforce. They had

fallen in love whilst training. He decided to emigrate and marry his sweetheart. Malcolm joined the Winnipeg Police and became a uniformed patrol cop. Tragically in 1963 he was on duty in a patrol car with another officer. They parked up outside a building so that his partner could go in and deal with a police matter. When the partner returned Malcolm was dead. He was only 39 years old and had had a massive heart attack. He died instantly. He left Evelyn (my Aunt) with six children and one on the way. These being my 1st cousins.

40 years ago I was told their names: Randy, Sid, Alex, Jim, Don, Gerry and Harry (the one on the way.) I spent years and years trying to trace them. Numerous searches on various sites and platforms all to no avail. Dead end after dead end! Then one day in 2018 I had a *eureka* moment, albeit at the same time a very sad event. One day whilst searching I came across a funeral in Winnipeg of Malcom's wife Evelyn. The break through that I needed. A local paper had reported on the funeral and had published who was in attendance at the funeral service. There they were, all seven of Malcolm and Evelyn's children were in attendance. Three police officers, three teachers and one nurse. The Canadian Bells! My first cousins.

I was now able to reach out and correspond with them. I made contact and I sent them lots of information about their family tree and their roots in Lincoln and Lincolnshire. The epicentre being Ingham just north of Lincoln where several generations had lived and worked as stonemasons.

As the years have passed, my wife and I have become very close to Gerry and his wife Janice. They have visited England twice and have stayed with us. It's amazing how close you can get to someone you've only just met. Maybe blood is thicker than water and the blood bones and DNA we share. They are lovely people and we adore them.

So we are travelling to Canada to be introduced to the Canadian Bells. 10 days travelling in The Maritimes of Nova Scotia, followed by 10 days in Winnipeg and then 10 days visiting the mountains and lakes of Alberta (Calgary, Canmore and Banff). The day after we arrive in Winnipeg there is a gathering of all the various Canadian Bell clans that not only share the same name but the same genealogical tree that I have traced back to the 1600s. I will be introducing them to some of their more fascinating family members.

Ancestral Introductions

For instance, Sabina Jesney, who was born in 1849 in the tiny village of Theddlethorpe St Helens on the east coast of Lincolnshire. Her father was a tailor and the large family lived in a tiny cottage. Sabina conceived at the age of 15 and 16 years of age. Her first child, Mary, died within days of being born and her second was christened Albert Jesney.

The Canadian Bells and myself all descend from Sabina who is our great great grandma. Albert being our mutual great grandfather.

The shame of giving birth not once but twice at such an early age and outside wedlock must have been devastating for Sabina. She had to deal with the trauma and stigma of pregnancy, the birth and death of her first child and the following pregnancy and birth. Albert was brought up by her married sister.

Sabina became a serving wench in a local coaching Inn before marrying a local lad and then moving to Halifax in Yorkshire. She went on to have more children. The great artist David Hockney is related to her and therefore she, my Canadian cousins and I are all related to him. We refer to him as "cousin David", but that's another story!

So the trip to Canada is on and the gathering of the Canadian and Lincoln Bell clans is about to happen. Who knows what adventures awaits?

* This does not take account for the possibility of cousins marrying cousins





Epilogue

Well it happened! What an amazing adventure!

On a beautiful summer's day we all met at the Rosengard Ranch near Mitchell, Manitoba. The ranch being owned and run by cousin Shannon and her husband Terry. They are supported on the ranch by Shannon's dad Jim (my first cousin) and his wife Inga. The farm raises and cares for various livestock but specialises in Myotonic (fainting) goats. A breed of goat that, if excited in any way, stiffen up and topple over, hence the name *fainting goats* (well worth a google search).

When we arrived at the ranch we were greeted by the flags of both Great Britain and Canada flying together. Over 40 members of the Bell Clan were there. My first cousins and their families, their children and grand children. We were literally greeted with open arms and hugs. It was a very very special and emotional day.

We all celebrated the gathering with wonderful food and drink. What a spread was put on! Everyone was so interested in knowing and sharing their family stories and learning about their roots that stretch back through time and generations to, in my research, the 1600's.

Who would have thought, that from the click of a search button on the Ancestry.co.uk site that I would have discovered a whole new Canadian family. A family with such kindness, generosity and wonderful hearts. I am truly blessed to have found them.

I would like to think that Sabina was looking down and was proud of her great great grandchildren, her great great great grandchildren and her great great great great grandchildren and their families coming together and that her name is celebrated and certainly not forgotten.

After all, we wouldn't exist if it wasn't for her blood, bones and DNA.

Rod Bell



“The world belongs to those who let go.”

— Lao Tzu, [Tao Te Ching](#)

Barbara Bond

In the Five Element view of the world we are now in late summer – the time when the energy of Earth is strongest. It represents support, holding, nurturing, nourishment and abundance. It gives us the ability to nurture ourselves and others. With appropriate diet and lifestyle adjustments, we can cultivate a healthy Earth element, a strong gut and optimal immunity.

Ways to tend to your inner Earth

Tending the Earth Element is a cornerstone of all physical, mental and emotional healing. If the Earth Element is imbalanced or weak, every part of our being will suffer for lack of proper nourishment.

- Eat a nutrient-dense, whole foods diet, that provides all the nutrients we need for physical and mental health.
- Avoid information overload by maintaining a healthy “mental diet” and limiting exposure to media and advertising.
- Find your centre – do yoga, Qi Gong, mindful breathing
- Sing like no-ones listening ! The sound of the Earth element is ‘singing’, so go for it in the shower !!
- Exercise outdoors and spend time in natural green space. Touch the Earth to support the Earth Element within.
- Shiatsu! Touch brings us in to experience of the present moment and releases ‘feel good’ hormones. Giving yourself a hug is a good plan.

The meridians of the earth element are found on the front of the body. We spent some time in a recent session exploring earth acupressure points around the knee. Our knees take lots of wear and tear, the good news is that they, and the points around them, are quite accessible for some self care.



U3A Qi Gong group meets at Rustons, 10-10.45, 2nd and 4th Fridays
We will be having another pair work massage session on November 27th at 11am.
As before, members are free and guests £5. Chill out in time for Christmas!



Left: Mick
Flower about to
get a Strike

Bottom left:
Players select
their weapons!

Below: The
supporters
gather



U3A Tea And Coffee Rota 2026

Refreshment Hostess - Linda Ash.



Volunteers are always needed to help with serving tea and coffee, between 9am - 10am at the monthly meetings.

November 3rd	Jude White, Jenny Evans, Isabel Ansor, Chris Allford, Lindsey Cutts
December 1st	Anne Ridley, Sarah Hawley, Jude White, David Hunter
January 5th	Lesley Tapley



A Big Thank You to all our Volunteers for their help with the Teas



and Coffees sessions at our Monthly Meetings, as you can see more volunteers are needed. If you feel you can help, then please let Linda Ash know via the website, which date(s) you can help with. Alternatively, put your name in the book at any of the Monthly Meetings.

Any offers to fill the rota for December would be greatly appreciated. Just one hour of your time, if you are able, would make all the difference. We could do with one more person on the 1st of December, and several more for January.

Lincoln U3A v Saxilby U3A - Ten Pin Bowling Challenge Match

The newly formed keen Bowlers of Saxilby U3A decided they needed more of an incentive and knowing that our group had been going for years issued a challenge to us. We were all in favour and arranged a meeting immediately.

On the morning of the 20th of July 26 people met at the Hollywood Bowl on Washingborough Road to do battle. Each group entered two teams with all scores counting towards the result. In the end we won by 2123 to Saxilby's 1677, which given our greater experience was entirely predictable and no surprise.

The result however didn't really matter, what mattered the most was the fact that everyone so enjoyed the experience that we arranged to organise it again as soon as possible. In the offing is now a Quiz challenge between the groups to further enhance our friendship. Watch this space!

Pictures from the event see left. Pictures submitted by Mike Lucas.

	WEEK ONE		WEEK TWO	
	AM	PM	AM	PM
MONDAY	Quiz 10am-12pm	Art 2pm-4pm Table Tennis 2pm-4pm	Ten Pin Bowling 9.45 for 10am start	Art 2pm-4pm Table Tennis 2pm-4pm
TUESDAY	General Meeting 9.30am-12pm		Tuesday Trotters 9.45am for 10am Poems Out Loud 10.30am-12.30pm	
WEDNESDAY	French Boule 10am-11.30am 5th March until October	Table Tennis 2pm-4pm	French Boule 10am-11.30am 5th March until October	Table Tennis 2pm-4pm Film Appreciation 2.30pm-4.30pm
THURSDAY		Mah-Jong 2.30pm-4.30pm Spanish Conversation 2pm-4pm	New Age Kurling 10.30am-12.30pm	Creative Writing 1pm-3pm winter 2pm-4pm summer French Conversation 2pm-3.30pm Spanish Conversation 2pm-4pm Fluent French 2pm-3.30pm
FRIDAY	Table Tennis for All 10am-11am	Badminton 1.30pm-3.30pm	Friday Gardens 10.30am Qi Gong 10am-10.45am	Badminton 1.30pm-3.30pm

Table Tennis for All, 1st and 3rd Friday of each month, 10-11am

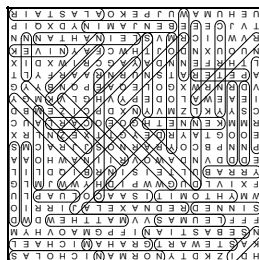
Due to illness and other commitments, several people have either left the group recently or will not be able to attend for some time. We urgently need new members, and would welcome anyone who wants to play at a more casual pace in a less competitive setting. Suitable for all, including people with disabilities, and for beginners. Fee: £2, to cover cost of room hire. For further information, or to join, please contact the group leader, Maria North, via the U3A Lincoln website.

	WEEK THREE		WEEK FOUR	
	AM	PM	AM	PM
MONDAY	Ten Pin Bowling 9.45am for 10am start	Art 2pm-4pm Table Tennis 2pm-4pm Scrabble 2pm-4pm	Ten Pin Bowling 9.45 for 10am start Philosophy 10am-11.30am	Art 2pm-4pm Table Tennis 2pm-4pm
TUESDAY			Tuesday Trotters 9.45am for 10am	
WEDNESDAY	French Boule 10am-11.30am 5th March until October Circle Dancing 10am-11.30am	Wednesday Lunches 12pm for 12.30pm Table Tennis 2pm-4pm Film Appreciation 2.30pm-4.30pm	French Boule 10am-11.30am 5th March until October	Table Tennis 2pm-4pm
THURSDAY		Mah-Jong 2.30pm-4.30pm Spanish Conversation 2pm-4pm	New Age Kurling 10.30am-12.30pm	French Conversation 2pm-3.30pm Spanish Conversation 2pm-4pm Fluent French 2pm-3.30pm
FRIDAY	Table Tennis for All 10am-11am	Badminton 1.30pm-3.30pm	Qi Gong 10am-10.45am	Badminton 1.30pm-3.30pm

French Boule

The venue is Boultham Park, where it's free to play. Weather permitting, from 10am until 11.30am. It is to be held weekly until October.

If this group interests you, contact the Group Leader via the website or at any Monthly Meeting.



A friendly match!

Table Tennis has always been one of the most popular activities that we offer. The original Monday afternoon sessions soon filled, and produced a waiting list, and Wednesday afternoon sessions were offered to cope with the increased demand, and now have 15 members.

So, a challenge was raised, for a friendly match between the two groups.



This took place on 5th August, at the regular venue of Ruston's Sports Hall. Three matches were involved, to ensure inclusion of both male and female players. The games were played in good spirit, with other members as spectators.

Results were:

Men's doubles – Wednesday won 2-0

Dave McKinlay & Tony Ruffell for Monday, Richard Brown & Rod Bell for Wednesday

Mixed doubles – Monday won 2-1

Mike Lucas & Elaine Lewis for Monday, Jim Fung and Susan Pfeilderer for Wednesday

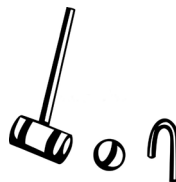
Women's doubles – Monday won 2-0

Pat Lucas & Heather Ostacchini for Monday, Janet Sheppard & Sally Graves for Wednesday

John Wilson

CROQUET

Are you interested in trying something fun and new? North Hykeham Croquet Club meets every Tuesday at 1.00pm and would welcome new players. There is no need to worry about equipment as we can supply you with a mallet, which is all you would need.



We play at Hartsholme Cricket Ground off Skellingthorpe Road and the season started in May. If you are interested please contact Elaine Lewis, at any Monthly Meeting or via the website.

Please come and join us for an afternoon of fun as well as strategy. It's always fun to knock an opponent's croquet ball out of the way!

We look forward to meeting you.

Elaine Lewis.

THE DINNER PARTY BY SUE STOCKS

"Please come to my dinner party" my friends replied with glee,
"We've not been to a dinner party since 1993"!

I spent many hours perusing looking through my recipes,
Three courses, I decided, plus some biscuits and cheese.

On the day of the dinner party, I rose early, and cleaned the house all through,
Began preparing the dinner, around half past two.

By 8pm, all was ready. I set out the starters with pride,
Eight prawn cocktails, with lettuce, and a sherry on the side.

The first guests to arrive were my neighbours, Alan and Josephine Wyatt,
"Sorry" said Jo, "I can't eat much, I'm following a very strict diet."

When I answered the door to my oldest friend, a gentleman called Sid Lee,
I could see at once, from the way he swayed, that he was rather tiddly!

Ronnie and Mabel were next to arrive, Ronnie handed me his mac,
Then gave me a bear hug, which made me squirm, as his fingers moved over my back.

Now we were just waiting for Johnnie and Flo, those two are always late.
But when I offered a third aperitif, we all agreed to wait.

By nine o'clock, we'd drunk all the wine, and started on my brandy.
Sid and Alan had fallen asleep, and Ronnie remarked he felt randy.

"Let's all eat now" I felt upset, the evening had not gone as planned,
The starters were looking droopy and sad, but Ronnie took hold of my hand.

"Let's not bother with eating food," he said, "I know better things we could do,"
I thought with sorrow of my lovely desserts, and of my dried up stew.

But "Time to go home" Mabel declared, hitting him on the head.
A dinner party? No, not again, I'll do afternoon tea instead!

Kindly submitted by Sue Stocks Creative Writing Group

Lincoln u3a Book Corner

As most Lincoln u3a members know there are books available to borrow at each monthly meeting. When you return or donate a book please put them in the box at the end of the table. We check & date each book and when they have been with us for at least a year we move them on – usually to a charity.

You can borrow as many books as you like each time & even keep some if you want!

Christine & Anne

Enid Blyton

It was 1953 and a young boy far away from England was awarded a merit prize at school. Nothing unusual in that, I hear you think, but this one started a love affair.

The end of the previous term had seen this lad's report awarding him 23rd place out of 24 and while resolving to do better he felt the mitigating factor was highlighted there in blue ink; that he had attended that school for only one week. To his shame he never stopped to think about the poor pupil who came 24th.

Years later, towards the end of the summer term at one of his grammar schools before the customary exams, he had to move to another in a different county and arrived just after their end of term exams. So no one knew what to do with him and dumped him with the lower form of the two for the following year. On that occasion it was a disguised blessing because the pupils in the lower form were much more friendly and *normal* than those in later years in the top form who were bright and knew it, and included eight boarders of mixed abilities. School politics demanded that parents who could afford to board out their children should not witness those offspring languishing in lower classes, so they automatically found room in the top form for them. During the following 2½ years in the upper form he maintained close ties with many of those in the lower class until he had to move to a third grammar school in a far off part of the country. But a valuable lesson had been learned at that early age; being bright doesn't make you posh or popular and being posh or popular certainly does not make you bright.

Meanwhile, back to the love affair. The prize was a book by Enid Blyton, "The Mystery of the Spiteful Letters", the fourth adventure of the Five Find Outers led by Fatty and his dog Buster. Over the following few years 13 out of the 15 stories of this particular gang by Enid Blyton were collected, read, reread and read again. Going on from them to the Famous Five or the Secret Seven would have been confusing to the lad so he stayed with the characters he knew. After all, all these books really contain the same mix of girls and boys, and dogs, all with the same characteristics, but just with different names. Accompanying Fatty, an only child, there were siblings Daisy and Larry and nearby siblings Bets and Pip all living in a semi rural village. Set in the 1950s but with little or no mention of the war each household had a cook and a maid, which anomaly didn't reflect reality but at the same time didn't strike the lad or readers as odd.

Up until this time he had had to feed his literary appetite with Noddy and Big Ears and with Rupert and friends simply because having to read to his much younger brother those were the stories this sibling wanted. So Fatty and the Find Outers were a revelation, and the new love affair proceeded in increasing pace with The Mystery of The Secret Room, ditto The Burnt Cottage, The Missing Necklace and The Invisible Thief, etc.

Not having a sister and wanting one, with a brother who refused to wear a dress, like Fatty he took little Beth under his fantasy wing. She was the youngest of the gang and was of course always being belittled by her elder brother. She therefore tried very hard to be useful to the

others and had good suggestions, although sometimes they were bright by accident and she could not have explained why Fatty on these occasions gave her an extra hug.

Enid Blyton remains the most popular children's author despite much adult negativity in the years after 1960, the era of the angry young men and an emphasis on realism in children's stories. Enid was born in Victorian times and had lived through two world wars so her attitudes were bound to be out of step with changing feelings concerning race, Xenophobia, class values and domestic role models.

As with Morecombe and Wise sharing a bed and not being thought of as queer in any way, so did Noddy and Big Ears in early books and homosexuality was as far from Enid's mind as the moon. And yet this was an added criticism by some. Also, in the early books – actually in only one book – golliwogs were portrayed as dishonest or villains. The reaction in London to house-seeking Jamaicans after Empire Windrush had docked tells us that Enid had the same attitude as many other British at the time and yet has been castigated for her views within books written at that time.

Through the war years and the 1950s according to Wikipedia the BBC and various educators criticised her work as simplistic, lacking in artistic merit, and stunting children's reading development. I am a long-term fan of the BBC and hardly watch anything else but that comment attributed to them is bunkum.

The stories were written for children and are of their time, opening the world of reading for pleasure. Similar criticisms were aimed at Joanne Rowling after her first Harry Potter book, but the time was right, her stories were written for a particular generation and she has survived. She has publicly declared that as an eight year-old attempting to write her first story she was heavily influenced by the Blyton books. She said they sparked childhood daydreams, discovering secret passages, hidden hideouts and going on adventures. All the evidence shows that given the enjoyment of reading a story, children progress swiftly to more adult literature and anything they can lay their hands on.

The mystery books of the Find Outers and the pathetic village policeman, Mr Goon, led me onto The Coral Sea and all the Biggles and Tarzan books our library could find. And all through their exploits, time and again there were reminders of tricks learned from Fatty – how to escape from a locked room with the key on the outside and old newspapers handy, and where a villain would hide a stolen necklace in a wax works. If the time ever comes when either of these unlikely events occur, I'm your man, thanks to Blyton and my love affair with the Find Outers.

Richard Stagg – Creative Writing Group. 9 September 2026.

You're Joking?

I dyed my hair today. It was the highlight of my week.

I once went to a wedding that was a very emotional. Even the cake was in tiers.

A Mystery Tour with Lincoln u3a

We had a lovely coach, dry and sunny weather, and an excellent driver - all the right ingredients for a promising mystery day trip. We knew nothing about the destinations until a few minutes before arriving at each one, when we were handed an information leaflet. I had only been on a mystery trip once before, many years ago, so I was curious to see how the day would unfold. I wondered whether one of our three destinations might be a house or garden.

I was wrong! Our first stop was Hemswell Antique Centres, which came as a wonderful surprise. Being fairly new to Lincoln, I had no idea it existed. We had only an hour to explore before moving on, so I restricted myself to Building One. Wow! It was overwhelming in the best possible way, with so much to see that a whole day would probably have been more realistic. After being thoroughly mesmerised by the displays, it was time to return to the coach. Unfortunately, our departure was delayed because one member of the group had apparently mislaid the coach!

Our next stop was Caistor Lakes Restaurant for lunch. I had imagined a restaurant with panoramic views across open countryside and scenic lakes. Wrong again! It was part of a beautifully designed leisure park, with touring caravan pitches and five-star log cabins arranged around fishing lakes. The setting was peaceful, and the park also boasted a multi-award-winning restaurant. Very nice indeed.

Most people had said beforehand that they would eat at the restaurant, but a few of us had either brought packed lunches or simply wanted a snack. We sat at a comfortable coffee table to eat while the others gathered around a long table and ordered their meals. After finishing, we went for a pleasant walk around the grounds. Mindful of the departure time, we returned promptly and were surprised to find that the restaurant meals were only just being served. Inevitably, this put the whole group well behind schedule.

Once everyone was back on board the coach, we set off for our next destination: Grimsby Fishing Heritage Centre. This was another surprise and quite different from anything I had imagined. Following the signs, our driver took us through a retail park and then, much to everyone's amusement, onto what appeared to be a building site. Suddenly, however, there we were!

The bad news was that the delay at lunch had left us with only 30 minutes to explore the centre, as we still needed to reach our final destination before it closed.

I have never raced around a museum so quickly!

The exhibition led us through the different areas set out as if aboard a fishing trawler, complete with sound and temperature effects. Despite our hurried visit, it was fascinating.

Then it was back to the coach for the final stage of our journey. Leaving the car park proved quite a challenge for our driver, as metal fencing around the building site left very little room for the coach to turn. He even had to get out and move part of the fencing slightly, but he managed it!

Continued bottom of next page

Queueing by Lorna Snowdon

I'm standing here patiently queueing, lots of goodies I'm placidly viewing.
I've just popped in to get a pie, but so many people, my oh my.

We're queueing neatly round the shop for bacon sarnies, cans of pop,
vanilla slices, a quarter of ham, bread, cakes and doughnuts with jam

I see there are three ladies serving but the queue's not moving, it's quite unnerving.
A man at the front has got a list just to make certain nothing's missed.

In front of me there must be ten, housewives, children, building men.
All have been here quite a while but still we stand and look and smile.

Oh no, now someone's dropped their money. All the children think it's funny,
coppers, silver and sterling pound rolling everywhere, all around.

Two people leave, we move along. Glance at my watch, time's getting on.
The man with the list, he's still there, of the queue behind, he's unaware

The door it opens and gives a ping, "Excuse me, I just want one thing
I haven't time to stand and queue, would you mind if I went in front of you?"

Man with list turns to speak, this lady really has some cheek!
He sees us all still waiting there, nothing to do but stand and stare.

The lady pushes to the front. Man with list says "May I be blunt?
I really think it's time to learn to stand in line and take your turn."

We all give a silent cheer. The lady frowns, she's cross it's clear.
She leaves the shop, all in a huff clearly queueing isn't good enough!

Our final destination delighted everyone: The Chocolate Drop, an artisan chocolate maker and the perfect way to end the trip. I think almost everyone bought something - it simply had to be done.

Although there were a few hiccups during the day, I had a wonderful time. In fact, the unexpected delays and minor mishaps made the trip even more memorable and enjoyable. Organising an outing like this is never easy and always takes far more time and planning than people realise. Inevitably, there are lessons to be learned for the next one.

Thank you to John for arranging such an entertaining day. I'm already looking forward to the next mystery trip!

Eileen Matthews

A Story Untold For 40 years

Military stories fascinate some people and leave others cold. With that in mind, I'll tell you mine. It isn't heroic or life-changing, and during my brief service in the RAF Regiment, it certainly wasn't a story I would have admitted to. To earn your marksman badge (patch), you had to put 74 of 80 rounds on target. A marksman isn't a sniper; that's a different matter altogether. A far harder course to pass and few do pass! For a dedicated airman like myself, it simply meant earning a small badge (patch) to sew onto your sleeve after passing the required course.

Our personal weapon was the SLR - the self-loading rifle M1A1, if I remember correctly. The course required the use of four 20-round magazines on an ET (electric target) range with the minimum of 74 rounds hitting the required targets out of the 80 we all carried. We advanced slowly over 200 yards as Figure 11 targets - shaped like soldiers advancing with rifles - popped up. A hit made a target fall, counting as one of the 74 needed to pass. Six other airmen advanced alongside me, each firing at his own targets.

I fired at everything that popped up in front of me and thought I was doing pretty well targets were popping up and falling back as required. At the end of the 200-yard advance, a fire marshal stopped us and instructed us to remove our magazines and clear any rounds still in the chamber and apply the safety catch.

We followed the staff's instructions, then we gathered around the flight sergeant overseeing the marksman course as he announced the live-fire results. Six of us waited for the results: Airman Stains, fail; Airman Frank, fail; Airman Mark, fail; Airman Howland, pass; Airman Philips, fail Airman Chalk, fail. I could not deny it - I was elated to have become a marksman.

Afterwards, we had to remove all our empty magazine and hand in any unspent rounds before making our declaration. *I have no live or spent rounds on my person, Corporal.* He would then remind us that if we later found any live or spent rounds and handed them promptly, no further action would be taken.

I placed my four magazines onto the table: three were empty, but the fourth to my astonishment still held all 20 live rounds...But I had passed with 74 shots on target and only six misses - even though I still had one full unused magazine in my pouch. And more importantly...What was I going to do?

Forty years on that marksman badge is still somewhere in the attic. And did I get the 20 live rounds back into the table without getting the training staff catching me handing in a full magazine! Yes! And did I admit to the training staff or my fellow airman that other gunners were shooting my targets not their own targets on that fateful day? Well, what do you think?

Maybe just a story but a little confession on my part as well

Danny Howland



From Bridge to Bridge

The King Charles 111 England Coastal Path was inaugurated in March 2026, when fully complete it will be 2,700 miles long. The Lincolnshire section from Sutton Bridge to the Humber Bridge is 124 miles and is, supposedly, complete. I wondered, could I walk it on a one day a week basis?

Early on I realised that there weren't convenient bus stops at 10-12 mile intervals along the route. Many of the coastal villages are a couple of miles inland meaning even if I could park my car close to where I wanted to finish a section, I would have to walk back along one "Sea Lane" to catch a bus and then walk back down another to start. Call Connect buses were a great help going to places where the service bus didn't. Someone said to me why didn't I just call an Uber, she didn't live in rural Lincolnshire! Most of the route was well signed but there were places where it was not, North East Lincs council area in particular. No signage, and paths fenced off.

To the 124 mile trail I probably need to add 10-12 miles at the starts and finishes of some legs and another 10 miles or so for detours and poor signage. So probably nearer 150 miles done over 12 days.

From the incredible noise of the planes on the bombing range at Holbeach, the history at Boston, the fairground attractions at Skegness and Chapel, the surprisingly good craft and plant stalls on Cleethorpes Promenade, the Fitties at Humberston, but most of all the palpable silence of the long remote sections. Am I glad I did it, absolutely.

Anne Birkett





2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9



10



11



12

Key to the numbered pictures accompanying Anne Birkett's article.

1. Sutton Bridge
2. Holbeach Marsh
3. I'm not going to argue I'll go round you
4. Friskney Sea Lane end
5. Skegness the quiet part
6. Always a reassurance
7. North of Donna Nook
8. The Cleethorpes Light Railway
9. Approaching Grimsby, no indication of an alternative route!
10. Grimsby Docks redevelopment
11. Hull skyline
12. Barton on Humber Haven

1	6	2	9	5	4	8	3	7
8	7	5	6	2	7	9	5	1
5	7	9	1	8	3	6	2	4
6	5	1	7	4	8	2	9	3
7	5	2	9	6	1	4	5	8
2	9	5	1	5	7	6	8	3
9	1	5	6	8	3	2	7	4
3	8	6	7	4	9	5	1	2
4	2	1	6	5	3	7	8	9

E	A	D	E	A	D	E	A	D	E
I	N	I	N	I	N	I	N	I	N
H	S	H	S	H	S	H	S	H	S
S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
N	P	T	I	A	L	N	P	T	I
O	A	O	A	O	A	O	A	O	A
M	I	N	I	C	A	B	M	I	N



From the Editor:

My inbox is at **andrewbradley@railmags.org**

Note the new email address!

All copy for publication should ideally be in a **plain text** document attached to an email, or simply in the body of an email. Make sure you put U3A in the subject line. Pictures should be **attached** to an email. If you must send copy as a written document, please write legibly, preferably double-spaced.



If you send any pictures, please send them as they are. That is, in colour (if they are colour photos), not cropped, no captions on them, and not resized. It's a big in-box, big pictures are good!

Copy for the February 2027 issue should be with me no later than 14 January 2027, but you don't have to wait till the deadline! This is your Magazine, I only do the editing.

Registered Charity No.1036049

Printed by Pelican Trust, 20-22 Crofton Road, Allenby Industrial Estate, Lincoln, LN3 4NL.
Telephone: 01522 513533. Email: **enquiries@pelicantrust.org**