

## *In this edition*

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## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Do you remember using reference books when you were younger to find out information? As a child, I had a set of Children's Encyclopædia – I think they were called The Golden Book Encyclopædias – and I loved looking through the different, well-illustrated volumes. I especially liked the section on the Animal Kingdom, where it compared the sizes and gave information on the various creatures. Later, school project work and college work generally meant visiting the library and poring over books to find relevant information.

Then came the computer revolution and 'search engines' frequently replaced books for finding things out. How many times a day do we 'Google' something? Often, in our Poetry group, we come across a poet none of us have heard of, so out come our mobiles and we learn about the poet's life and what else they have written. The same is true in the Singing Group where we can easily find out more about lesser-known composers and lyricists, or look up other verses or even meanings of words in songs!

Now there is a 'new kid on the block' – called AI. Have any of you tried using it yet? Well, most of us have, of course, as we use advanced search engines and many of us give instructions to Alexa or Siri. AI already plays a huge part in businesses, medicine and farming and no doubt it will have even more of an impact in the future.

I suppose that for our generation it is the pace of all this progress that we find daunting or perplexing. We may also worry whether we can trust it, with the risks of misinformation, the ethical questions its use throws up and issues regarding data privacy. But it is definitely here to stay, so do we embrace it and try to keep up or let it wash over us and leave it to the next generation? Your opinions on this topic would be welcomed!

You may be wondering, did I use Chat GPT to write this? Not this time, but who knows in the future?

Enjoy yourself as you 'learn, laugh, live',

*Gill*

# NEWSLETTER for Oundle & District

## Edition Number 203 September 2025

If you would like to find out more about Oundle & District u3a, take a look at <https://oundleanddistrict.u3asite.uk> or contact Chairman: [oundleu3achairman@gmail.com](mailto:oundleu3achairman@gmail.com)  
Membership Secretary: [oundleu3amembership@gmail.com](mailto:oundleu3amembership@gmail.com)  
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Registered Charity Number 1183800

**MONDAY 8<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER**

**Pandora Kenyon**

From

**Age UK  
Northamptonshire**

Doors open at 2.00pm  
for tea/coffee and biscuits

**MONDAY 13<sup>TH</sup> October**

**Chris McDevitt**

And his talk will be

**Food Poisoning – an  
environmental view.**

Queen Victoria Hall, Oundle

Doors open at 2.00pm  
for tea/coffee and biscuits

## MONTHLY MEETINGS

On **Monday 11<sup>th</sup> August** we not only continued with the tradition of doing something different for our Monthly Meeting but we repeated the very



hot weather conditions that beset us last year for our August quiz afternoon. However, a good number of members braved the heat and were well rewarded by a memorable performance from Yasmin Bradley and Paul Rogers of the folk band,



Frumenty. Playing the guitar, the mandola, the bouzouki and the bodhran, Yasmin and Paul entertained us with songs about an outlaw in Rockingham Forest, flowers on bicycles, the Peterborough Workhouse on St. Catherine's Day and washerwomen In Brigstock, amongst other topics. The audience enjoyed participating, were very appreciative and seemed reluctant to go home: "Wasn't it a lovely afternoon?" "It was a real treat!" It was indeed a great combination of music and verse, joy and sorrow, with added local interest. If anyone is interested in booking the full group of Frumenty or perhaps joining Frumenty as a fifth member, Paul Rogers can be contacted on: [frumentyfolk@gmail.com](mailto:frumentyfolk@gmail.com) or [paulvernonrogers@outlook.com](mailto:paulvernonrogers@outlook.com) and 07714 288853.



Our speaker at our Monthly Meeting on **Monday 8<sup>th</sup> September** will be Pandora Kenyon who is Website Manager and Services Promotion Coordinator of **Age UK Northamptonshire**, a local independent charity aiming to improve later life in Northamptonshire. We are looking forward to this interesting and useful talk, in which Pandora will give a brief history of the charity, explaining its aims and why it was set up, as well as telling us about the support and services it currently provides.

Chris McDevitt, a member of Oundle u3a, will be our speaker on **Monday 13<sup>th</sup> October**. His talk is entitled '**Food Poisoning – an environmental view**'. Chris trained as an applied biologist and has done a wide variety of jobs in the food industry from advising farmers on crop growing to carrying out hygiene audits in sandwich factories and to trying to reduce the incidence of food poisoning in poultry. His talk deals NOT with the medical aspects of food poisoning but with interesting stories on the issue of food hygiene and the useful conclusions to draw from them.



**Please remember to bring your membership card to the meeting as it makes signing in a lot quicker.**

### Tea Rota

If you attend the monthly meetings, you will appreciate the tea/coffee and biscuits before the talk are served by some of our Members. We could do with a few more 'volunteers' so, if you would like to help once every few months, please contact Peg on 01832 273571.

### Are any of you Deep Purple fans?

If so, you won't want to miss an online talk by Ian Gillan on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> September at 2.00pm, when he will be sharing stories from his remarkable life and career, as part of u3a Week. For more details, go to: <https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events>

*At the time of writing, no further details were actually given. Hopefully nearer the time there will be more information!*

## Short Story Competition

From Marcia Humphries (u3a Creative Writing Subject Adviser):

I'm pleased to tell you that the Third Age Trust's annual Short Story Competition 2025 will be launched on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> August. Details will be posted on the [u3a Learning Activities webpage](#) that day, including a prompt to inspire your story.

As usual, the Trust is working with Bloomsbury Publishing who are providing generous prizes and one of the final judges, author Sara Grant. On Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> October, Sara will conduct an online workshop to help you polish-up your story after it's been written. Details of how to enrol (free of charge for u3a members) will be in the September Creative Writing Newsletter.

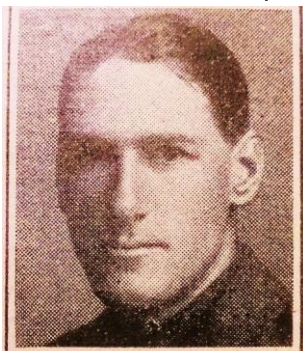
*The competition is open to all u3a members, not just those in Writing groups.*

## ICT help

As most of you know, Oundle School pupils offer help on using mobiles, iPads, laptops etc on Wednesday afternoons as part of their Community service.

The new term begins on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> September at 2.30pm in the Needham Building, halfway down Blackpot Lane, opposite the Gascoigne car park. You will see a traffic barrier ahead of you and the building is beyond it, on the left. If you would like some help or advice, just go along, with your device, and they will help to solve any problems you may have.

## "One Of the Best Living Lads" – a talk by Kathryn Baird in St Andrew's Church, Cotterstock, PE8 5HD



Lt. the Hon. K. R. DUNDAS,  
R.N.V.R. (Anson Battalion.)

Come and learn more about the brave men from Cotterstock who lost their lives in WW1 and WW2. The names of Albert Berridge, Kenneth Robert Dundas, Frederick Leslie Sharp and Charles William Stapleton have been remembered and honoured on Remembrance Sunday over the decades. Their names appear on the headstocks of the church bells, on a plaque in the tower and are carved on the hymn board too. But what is really known about their lives and their military service?

Now, thanks to the incredible efforts of Kathryn Baird, an author and skilled historical researcher from Warmington, more information is known about what happened to these soldiers. Through Kathryn's research, with assistance from Stuart and Tracy Upex, two more soldiers from Cotterstock who lived in Mill

House and went to Oundle School, have been discovered and will be added to the village roll of honour.

By researching military records, parish records, census returns, war diaries and local and national newspaper reports Kathryn has been able to piece together the lives and experiences of these six men. Stories of combat at Gallipoli, the Somme and Libya. Lives lost in India and England. Experiences of capture as prisoners of war. A letter to a widow from her late husband's comrade saying "He was one of the best living lads I have ever met".

Kathryn is a charismatic speaker and will share her findings in



an illustrated talk entitled "One of the best living lads" in St Andrew's Church, Cotterstock on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> September at 2.30pm. The benefice bell ringers will ring the church bells at 2.00pm prior to the talk, the bells of Cotterstock are a designated war memorial.

Admission is £5 payable on the door (cash only) and includes a drink and biscuits whilst you enjoy the church and talk to Kathryn afterwards. Everyone will be very welcome to what promises to be a fascinating afternoon. There are steps in church.

**TO SAY THEIR NAMES IS TO MAKE THEM LIVE AGAIN**

## Information from our Committee Meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> August

We reviewed our recent AGM.

We discussed Committee roles from May 2026 (see following article).

We discussed arrangements for the Group Leaders' Meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> October.

Individual members presented their reports, which included a report on the June Northants Network meeting, attended by Gill Potts and Carolyn.

David, our new Treasurer, has completed the handover from Barbara (Ding) and will meet with Carolyn to look at the budget for monthly speakers and with Barbara to discuss Beacon.

## Changes to Committee

At the next AGM in May 2026, we will need to elect a new Chairman, a new Programme Secretary and a new Web Manager because Gill Potts, Gill Phillips and Barbara Bett will be stepping down from the Committee.

Carolyn Traynor is already shadowing Barbara, ready to take over as Membership Secretary, while continuing in the Programme Secretary role for the present.

As we know, our search for a new Treasurer took some time – but we got there. Please discuss this issue in your Groups as there must be some Members who would be interested in a new challenge. Remember that without a Chairman our u3a cannot function. Ideally, we would like to co-opt new people as soon as possible so that they can shadow the existing team. We are a lively bunch and we enjoy working together, so do consider joining us. To give you an idea:

- The Chairman's role involves welcoming Members to the monthly meetings, chairing meetings and generally providing support to the Committee and Members.
- The Programme Secretary books our speakers for the monthly meetings and liaises with other Committee members to ensure that these are publicised.
- The Web Manager's role is to maintain and update our new website to keep it relevant and interesting.

We are more than happy to supply more detailed information to anyone who is at all interested. ([oundleu3achairman@gmail.com](mailto:oundleu3achairman@gmail.com))

## NEWS FROM THE GROUPS

Lidia Douglas [groupscoordinatoroundleu3a@gmail.com](mailto:groupscoordinatoroundleu3a@gmail.com)



**Yoga Seated and Standing** Class on Zoom Mondays 9.15am to 10.00am. Nancy Taylor.

Come and join us on a Monday for an energising Yoga class in the comfort of your home via Zoom. It's the perfect way to start the week. Contact me via the Oundle u3a Website, on the Groups page – Yoga Seated and Standing. Hope to hear from you.

See what other class members have said:

*'A lovely way to start your week. It is very good for your flexibility working through all those lazy areas'* Lidia

*'I joined Nancy's yoga class about 18 months ago to help with my recovery from a debilitating illness, and it's been fantastic in improving both my physical and mental condition.'* Andy

*'I enjoy my weekly sessions with Nancy very much indeed. It suits me very well that they are on zoom. Without her class I know I would not do the exercises she leads us through'. J*



**Social Bridge Group:** We have spaces for some new members in our Group which is scheduled to start up again in September for the autumn and winter months. We meet weekly in the Glaphorn Room in Fletton House every Thursday afternoon starting at

2.00pm for two hours.

This is a great way to meet with other players in a friendly social way with nothing too competitive. All that is required is a basic knowledge of how to play the game of Bridge. You do not need a partner as someone will be found on the afternoon to play with you and offer support if required.

There is a cost for the room hire to which all the members contribute on the day.

If you are interested, please get in touch with Gloria Pearson via the link on the Groups page tab.

## An idea for a new Group?

One of our Members would like to get rid of a large number of demijohns and asked if there was a Home-made Wine Group in our u3a which might like them. So – would anyone be interested in setting up such a Group?

If not, and you make home-made wine, please contact me if you would like some more demijohns. ([oundleu3achairman@gmail.com](mailto:oundleu3achairman@gmail.com))

## SPOTLIGHT ON GARDEN GROUP 3



Garden Group 3's visit in August was to Coton Manor, Guilsborough. The Group has visited many times throughout the years and it has been very interesting to see what changes the gardens go through from season to season.

The land was originally held by Coomb Abbey monks before the Dissolution of the Monasteries at which time the estate was sold in 1551 to Dixwell family, who constructed the manor house on the former monastic grounds. The house was razed to the ground during the Civil War and rebuilt in 1662. Over the years the building has been added to by successive

owners.

The gardens cover nearly ten acres including a bluebell wood and were



originally laid out in the 1920s by the grandparents of the present owner and have been developed and extended by successive generations.



Susie and Ian Paisley-Tyler were living in London when they inherited the Manor House and gardens from his parents in 1991. Both admit to knowing nothing about gardening when they took up residence, but over the years Susie has developed and enhanced the gardens which present various challenges with being on a hill.

Rare breed chickens wander around and there are many fruit trees in the lower part of the garden and usually flamingos wander round, but this time they were asleep in one of the many mini-lakes and ponds.



Our Group never tires of visiting, especially as they serve a very nice lunch in the Stableyard Café as well as delicious homemade cakes. It would be rude not to partake of both!



# SEPTEMBER'S QUIZ

## Part One: Famous People

1. Who was awarded an honorary KBE for his promotion of charities through popular music?
2. Which Lancashire comedian was famous for his ukulele?
3. How was T E Lawrence better known?
4. Of which country was Archbishop Makarios president between 1960 and 1977?
5. Whose novels include *Tropic of Cancer* and *Tropic of Capricorn*?
6. Who gave the name of 'Etruria' to his pottery works?
7. Who composed the marches *Stars and Stripes* and *Liberty Bell*?
8. Who was the first Englishman to sail around the world?
9. Who was Queen Victoria's personal attendant at Balmoral for 34 years?
10. Which Quaker family founded a chocolate factory in York?

## 11. Part Two: Famous dates in September

12. In which year did The Mayflower sail from Plymouth, England on September 16<sup>th</sup>?
13. The first city in what is now the United States was founded in September 1565. Which city?
14. Name the two American presidents who died from gunshot wounds in September.
15. Which American state achieved statehood in September 1850?
16. William the Conqueror landed in England in September of which year?
17. Haile Selassie was overthrown as ruler of this country in September 1974.
18. Who first sighted the Pacific on September 25, 1513?
19. Which English monarch was born on September 7, 1533?
20. Which country did Hitler invade on September 1, 1939, thus precipitating World War II?
21. The composer of *'Porgy and Bess'* was born on September 26, 1898. Who was he?

## Answers to August's quiz:

**Part One:** 1. Mungo Jerry; 2. Sirius; 3. *Home and Away*; 4. St Swithin's; 5. Southend; 6. Augustus Caesar; 7. *Wish you were here*; 8. "*Summer loving, had me a blast*"; 9. Homer Simpson; 10. December.

**Part Two:** 1. Jamaica; 2. Satchmo (Louis Armstrong); 3. The RAF pilots; 4. Vesuvius; 5. The Klondike; 6. Mother Teresa; 7. Mary Shelley; 8. a) 1610; 9. Potsdam Conference; 10. *Whicker's World*; 11. James Butler ("Wild Bill" Hickok); 12. Milan.