

News & Views


 Newsletter

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Welcome

...to the February edition of *News & Views*, the newsletter of Charnwood u3a. We hope you'll find it both entertaining and informative. The content is largely written by members; details for sending contributions can be found on the last page.



Our Next Monthly Meeting: Charnwood Forest Geopark



See page 2
for details

View from the Chair



Have you noticed how most of the current TV adverts are for cleaning products? What's more, the actors brandishing the mops and sprays look utterly delighted to be doing it? Yes, it's that time of the year, when snowdrops are glistening and daffodils are peeking, that we're urged to turn our attention to the dust and clutter that's accumulated over winter. I read one magazine article that listed forty-odd things under the heading of 'spring cleaning', from clearing the wardrobe of clothes that will never fit again, to putting those lonely single socks out of their misery, to binning that can of mixed beans labelled 'Best-by 1966' (I'm kidding, honestly!). Then there's the dreaded bacteria... Does anyone else worry about the fearful 1% that remain when the disinfectant 'kills ninety-nine% of household germs'? I can scarcely type for fear of the staphylococcus lurking on my keyboard.

Then again, excessive hygiene is apparently not good for us. We need a few germs to build up resistance to infection. Oh, the joy of the internet, which can always offer a piece of research that backs up your (ie my) point of view.

On the subject of spring cleaning.. next month is our AGM (have I mentioned it before?) and you'll already have received nomination papers for the committee. Not that I'm calling any of our lovely trustees 'dust and clutter' of course, but some of us of old brooms are approaching our sell-by date and need replacing. I tried and failed to find a positive quotation about committees. Among the least depressing were 'a cul-de-sac down which ideas are lured and then quietly strangled' and 'a life form with six or more legs and no brain'. Neither of which, of course, are applicable to our friendly, efficient and forward-looking team of trustees. So I prefer this quotation: 'Two heads are better than one and a team of heads is even better.'

We are one of the largest u3as, with well over 1,000 members and we enjoy meeting together in a wide range of activities. But organisations need organising and we need committee members. Do get in touch if you'd like to know more about being a cu3a trustee. Or simply fill out that nomination form. We want your ideas – and I promise they won't get strangled!

Pam
chair@charnwoodu3a.org.uk
 07974 946007

Our Monthly Meetings

The monthly meetings of Charnwood u3a are on the **second Wednesday afternoon, 2.15 for 2.30 pm in Emmanuel Church**, Forest Road, Loughborough. The main car park for the church is accessed via Ingle Pingle, to the west of the church. Our monthly meetings are free to all, and we welcome prospective new members attending a meeting as a 'taster'. New members are invited to arrive at 2 pm to meet other members before the main meeting. If you think you'll need any assistance at the meeting, please contact our Chair in advance at chair@charnwoodu3a.org.uk

Last month's meeting featured a presentation by Ian Maber entitled 'Lost in Translation' on advertising messages, directions and signage. If you missed this meeting, you can catch up with it for a few more days via the YouTube link sent by our Chair on 12th January.



Our Next Meeting: Wednesday 11th February

Charnwood Forest Geopark with Dr Jack Matthews

The Geopark on our doorstep is here to tell the story of Charnwood Forest: celebrating our internationally important geology, connecting people to our history, and securing a sustainable future.

From rolling hills to crag-topped peaks, our landscapes are home to more than forty different rock types, some of which contain fossils of our oldest known animal ancestors. The Geopark projects conserve our heritage, educate the next generation, and promote our region.

To find out more, visit <https://www.charnwoodforest.org/about/>



*The old man of Beacon Hill.
Photo by Kev747 at English
Wikipedia, CC BY-SA 3.0*

To attend this meeting:

If you wish to attend the meeting in person, no prebooking is required – just turn up on the day, with your Cu3a membership card, if you have one. **If you are a new member, or attending a monthly meeting for the first time, you are invited to arrive at 2 pm.** Otherwise, please aim to arrive about 2:15 for a prompt start at 2:30 pm.



If you are unable to attend in person and would like to follow the meeting online (via YouTube), again no prebooking is required. All members who have supplied an email address will be sent a link to the live stream a few days beforehand in a reminder email from the Chair.

Looking Ahead:

In **March**, we have our **AGM**, when we will have presentations from several of our groups.

Then in **April** we welcome musician Andy Smith who will present '**Life in the Music**'. Bringing a mixture of instruments including several different guitars, ukulele and mandolin, Andy will sing a collection of songs, some self-penned, some well-known and some comedy. Some members may remember Andy playing for us over Zoom back in 2020. Now *Life in the Music* has been revised and brought bang up to date.

More information on upcoming meetings will appear in future issues of *News & Views* and on the **Monthly Meetings** page under the 'Our Events' menu on our website <https://www.charnwoodu3a.org.uk> (login needed to see details beyond title/speaker).

Group News

It's Your Move, So Why Not Get On Board!

We are a friendly and welcoming bunch at the Chess group. However, we really do need new members to boost our numbers.

So, if you are new to Charnwood u3a, or an existing member and have played chess before, do get in touch. Even if you haven't played for 20 years, don't worry, we'd be glad to see you.

The group meet every other Monday afternoon at 2 pm. We play at each other's homes on a flexible rota basis, but being able to host is not a prerequisite. Coffee, tea and biscuits add to the genial atmosphere. It will be a wise move if you join!

Contact group leader Dave Watson on 0116 2201286 or mobile 07905 730957 and e-mail at chess@charnwoodu3a.org.uk



Parish Walks



The Parish Walks group will recommence their walks on the first Thursday of the month (meeting at 9:45 am for a prompt 10 am start), starting **5th March**. These walks are 3 to 4 miles at a gentle pace.

If you are interested in joining them, please contact ParishWalking@charnwoodu3a.org.uk



10+ Group First Walk of 2026

Nine members of our group enjoyed a great 11 mile walk on a minus 4C January day. Many thanks to our walk leader Geoff Dodsworth. **Walk details:** 10 miles from Woodhouse Eaves via Beacon Hill and Ulverscroft to Newtown Linford, returning via Bradgate Park. Lunch was at the Bradgate Pub in Newtown Linford; we didn't see anyone having a Barbecue!!! See photos, right and below.

If you are interested in joining us on our monthly walks, please contact Walk10plus@charnwoodu3a.org.uk

Mike Hill



More Group News

New Group to Explore Humanness

Ross Lange is proposing to start a new group to investigate any and all aspects of Humanness. The discussions could include, in no particular order (and not limited to):

- from our (miniscule) place in the known universe, to our place as one amongst the many life-forms of planet Earth
- the history and current understanding of human evolution – our bodies, skills, knowledge, social structures, technologies, behaviours, etc.
- our awareness of our internal processes of thoughts and emotions, sensory perceptions both within ourselves and of the outside world and of our interactions with that world, especially with other humans, from one-to-one through various group sizes to nation to nation.

All within the huge diversity amongst people and peoples. Ross will try to do this with empathy, greatly appreciating the value of research and sharing information. He offers the following outline of how this interest developed for him:

My early life was in a provincial area of New Zealand which I saw as a culturally deprived back-water. Moving away to a major city and tertiary education in non-biological sciences in the mid 1960s, where I had access to a far richer cultural environment, saw the beginnings of my interests, especially in global events, Eastern religions and psychology. After travelling through SE Asia in the early 1970s I returned to live in the biggest NZ city, where I was involved in various humanistic psychotherapy activities. Seeing that the UK would be a far richer environment to follow my interests, in the late 1970s I moved to London and in 1980 I began a

three year course in so-called traditional and humanistic psychotherapy. I also worked in halfway houses for young adults moving from hospital mental health wards to greater independence. Later, I worked as a housing officer for a mental health charity, then managed the charity's open access cafe and support facility, before training as a social worker. I then worked as a mental health specialist social worker in both hospital and community settings in London and the East Midlands until I retired.

Interested in Ross's idea for a new group?
Contact him at: jotorosa@btopenworld.com

Family History Discussion

The topic for our next meeting is based on life in service which was the fate of many of our ancestors. Our speaker is Karen Kreft, a volunteer at the National Trust, talking about her research on the Servants in Calke Abbey. This may be of interest to some other members. The meeting is at **2 pm on Wednesday 18th February at Gorse Covert Community Centre.**

There will be limited space for visitors so, if you would like to join us, please contact FamilyHistory@charnwoodu3a.org.uk
First come, first served.

Brian Waters

Notices for Members

Can Anyone Help?

A Cu3a member has sent in the following plea for help:

Do any members have a **Kimball Super Continental electric organ - or any electric organ** - or know of someone who has one? If so, do you know of anyone who can service or repair this type of electric organ? I have tried music shops in Loughborough, Leicester and Nottingham without success. The main difficulty is that I would need the person to visit my home.

If anyone can help with this request, please email newsletter@charnwoodu3a.org.uk giving the relevant contact details.

Thank you.



Photo of the Kimball organ in question

IT Support for u3a members from u3a members

Fix IT Clinics

Drop in sessions where you can get help using your laptop, tablet or phone. Bring them along to:

John Storer House café
Tuesdays, 10.30 - 12.00



One to One Support

Get help with using your laptop, tablet or phone for a particular task. Just contact us:

email helpdesk@charnwoodu3a.org.uk
phone Phil/Mary 07855 702302
Garry 01509 213655



If you have a problem with logging into, or using, the u3a website, contact Martyn, our Web Manager, by emailing webmanager@charnwoodu3a.org.uk

February 2026 Calendar

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
2 Feb 09.30 Yoga 10.00 Craft+Self Help 11.00 Table Tennis 1 13.30 Canasta 2 14.00 Chess 14.00 Current Affairs	3 Feb 09.30 Pilates 2 10.00 10+ Walks 10.00 Spanish 10.30 Fix I.T. Clinic 10.45 Pilates 3 11.00 Table Tennis 2 11.30 Active Seated 2 12.00 Pilates 4 13.30 Active Seated 1 14.00 Canasta 1 14.00 Canasta1Quorn 14.00 Sing4Pleasure 15.30 Pickleball	4 Feb 10.00 Drama 10.00 German 10.00 Golf 10.00 JigsawBookEx 10.00 Mini Tennis 10.00 Scottish Dance 10.30 Papercraft 11.00 Table Tennis 3 14.00 Cribbage 14.00 French Improve 14.00 Sustain Planet	5 Feb 10.00 Sci+Tech 10.00 Spanish Conv 11.00 Table Tennis 4 14.00 Bowls Indoor 14.00 Line Dance 2 14.30 French Conv 19.00 Canasta 3	6 Feb 09.00 Badminton 10.00 German RTC 10.00 Line Dance 10.00 Mahjong 10.00 Table Tennis 7 10.30 Photography 10.30 Tai Chi 11.00 Table Tennis 5 12.00 Lunch Club 12.00 Table Tennis 6 13.30 Pilates 1
9 Feb 09.30 Yoga 10.00 Craft+Self Help 10.00 Poetry 1 11.00 Table Tennis 1 14.00 Archaeology 14.00 Quiz group	10 Feb 09.30 Pilates 2 10.00 Scrabble 3 10.30 Fix I.T. Clinic 10.45 Pilates 3 11.00 Table Tennis 2 11.30 Active Seated 2 12.00 Pilates 4 13.30 Active Seated 1 14.00 Canasta 1 14.00 Eng Parish Ch 15.30 Pickleball	11 Feb 10.00 Committee 10.00 Golf 10.00 Mini Tennis 11.00 Table Tennis 3 14.30 Monthly Meet 19.00 Canasta2Quorn	12 Feb 11.00 Table Tennis 4 14.00 Bowls Indoor 14.00 Line Dance 2	13 Feb 09.00 Badminton 10.00 Line Dance 10.00 Mahjong 10.00 Needlecraft 1 10.00 Scrabble 1 10.00 Table Tennis 7 10.30 Tai Chi 11.00 Table Tennis 5 12.00 Table Tennis 6 13.30 Pilates 1
16 Feb 09.30 Yoga 10.00 Craft+Self Help 11.00 Table Tennis 1 13.30 Canasta 2 14.00 Chess 14.00 Gardening 14.00 Painting	17 Feb 09.30 Pilates 2 10.00 6+ Walks 10.00 Recorder 10.00 Spanish 10.30 Fix I.T. Clinic 10.45 Pilates 3 11.00 Table Tennis 2 11.30 Active Seated 2 12.00 Pilates 4 13.30 Active Seated 1 14.00 Canasta 1 14.00 Sing4Pleasure 15.30 Pickleball	18 Feb 10.00 German 10.00 Golf 10.00 Mini Tennis 10.00 Poetry 2 10.00 Scottish Dance 11.00 Table Tennis 3 14.00 Cribbage 14.00 Family History 14.00 French Improve 14.00 Italian Conv	19 Feb 09.45 CC Walks 11.00 Table Tennis 4 14.00 Bowls Indoor 14.00 Line Dance 2 14.15 Scrabble 4 14.30 French Conv	20 Feb 09.00 Badminton 10.00 German RTC 10.00 Line Dance 10.00 Mahjong 10.00 Table Tennis 7 10.30 Photography 10.30 Tai Chi 11.00 Table Tennis 5 12.00 Table Tennis 6 13.30 Pilates 1 14.00 Art Apprec'n
23 Feb 09.30 Yoga 10.00 Craft+Self Help 11.00 Table Tennis 1 14.00 Local History	24 Feb 09.30 Pilates 2 10.00 ETHEL 10.00 Scrabble 3 10.30 Fix I.T. Clinic 10.45 Pilates 3 11.00 Table Tennis 2 11.30 Active Seated 2 12.00 Pilates 4 13.30 Active Seated 1 14.00 Canasta 1 14.00 Philosophy 1 15.30 Pickleball	25 Feb 10.00 Golf 10.00 History 10.00 Mini Tennis 11.00 Table Tennis 3 14.00 Classical Music 14.00 Reading Group 18.30 Supper Club	26 Feb 10.00 Philosophy 2 10.00 Thurs 6 Milers 11.00 Table Tennis 4 14.00 Architecture 14.00 Bowls Indoor 14.00 Line Dance 2	27 Feb 09.00 Badminton 10.00 Line Dance 10.00 Mahjong 10.00 Needlecraft 1 10.00 Scrabble 1 10.00 Table Tennis 7 10.30 Tai Chi 11.00 Table Tennis 5 12.00 Table Tennis 6 13.30 Pilates 1 19.30 Wine Apprec'n

PLUS at Weekends: Days of Interest Meal at Longcliffe (21st February), Sunday Lunch Club (8th February)

Please note: Whilst every effort has been made to show the dates/times of meetings as accurately as possible, errors and changes may occur, so you should check with group leaders for confirmation.

Please send any amendments for future issues to: newsletter@charnwoodu3a.org.uk

Robert's Recommended Reads

This month, Robert's recommendations are novels from Andrew Miller and Julian Barnes.

The Land In Winter by Andrew Miller

published in 2024

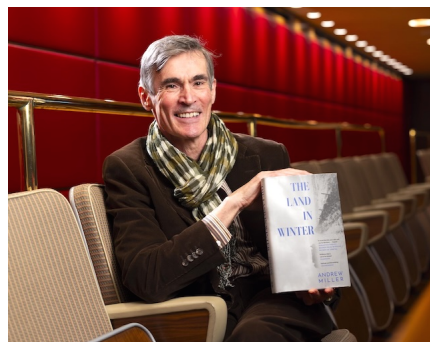
In the winter of 1962/63 I was a small boy living in an isolated hamlet in West Dorset. We had just moved there from the industrial heartland of South Yorkshire. What a contrast! My recollection of the heavy snowfall of early 1963 remains very clear. So it was with great anticipation that I began to read Andrew Miller's latest novel which opens in December 1962 in rural Somerset.

The brutal weather of early 1963 is not, to begin with, the central feature of Miller's novel. It is, rather, an intermittent background soundtrack to the core narrative. Local doctor Eric Parry, his wife Irene and their farmer neighbours Bill and Rita Simmons are the main protagonists of this rather gentle, character based story.

Irene is pregnant with her first child. Rita, a former waitress / hostess, is also expecting a baby. The two women, from utterly different backgrounds, form a bond based on mutual misgivings and shared uncertainty. Suddenly, both couples' lives begin to unravel. Irene discovers that Eric is having an affair and Rita makes an ill-advised and disastrous return visit to a club in Bristol, the scene of her former, darker life.

Now, the terrible winter rapidly impacts all four characters. Unrelenting freezing temperatures and almost continuous snowfall result in a sequence of unpredictable events in a gripping finale to this fine novel.

The Land In Winter was shortlisted for The Booker Prize in 2025.



Andrew Miller
pictured in
The Guardian
10 Nov 2025.
Photo:
David Parry/
Shutterstock

The Noise of Time by Julian Barnes

published in 2016

Julian Barnes is one of our most highly acclaimed contemporary writers. His sublime masterpiece *The Sense of an Ending* won The Booker Prize in 2011 and three of his other books have been shortlisted for the coveted prize.

My favourites among Barnes' many novels are his "bio-fictions" (my phrase) in which he skilfully grafts intriguing, imagined detail onto the rootstock of a real person's life and events. Two of Barnes' Booker shortlisted novels are of this genre: *Arthur and George* and *Flaubert's Parrot*. But Barnes' deeply perceptive, enthralling novel *The Noise of Time*, in my view, eclipses these earlier triumphs.

In *The Noise of Time*, Barnes explores the troubled life of the great Russian composer Dmitri Shostakovich. In a series of penetrative insights into the mind of the musician, Barnes delivers a masterful, contemplative meditation on art in general and music in particular, during the brutal tyranny of Stalin.

The Noise of Time is a compelling story which begins with a curious event which took place when Shostakovich was a young man, on a railway station platform near Moscow. At the end of the book, Barnes returns to this scene and we experience a typically Barnesian conclusion to this wonderful book.

Throughout the text Barnes makes several references to the book's enigmatic title, perhaps the most enlightening of which is the following:

"Art is the whisper of history, heard above the noise of time".

Julian Barnes
pictured in
The Guardian
30 Sep 2016.
Photo:
Roberto Ricciuti/
Getty Images





Research Study: Participants Wanted

Designing Better Ways to Support Future Healthcare

You may remember, in October 2024 *News & Views*, a call from PhD researcher Ning Fu, of Loughborough University's School of Design and Creative Arts, for participants for her research study, aiming to design health management tools that better support older people in managing their long-term conditions.

Ning is very grateful to those who volunteered then and contributed greatly to the success of the first phase of her research. She is now progressing to the final stage of her PhD research, which involves validating the research insights with participants meeting the same **criteria**, which are:

- **Over the age of 65**
- **Have more than one physical chronic condition**
e.g. arthritis, diabetes, hypertension, COPD, asthma, high cholesterol, chronic kidney disease, heart condition, hearing or vision impairment
- **living independently at home alone or with another older adult**



To take care of your wellbeing, this study may not be suitable if you are currently finding your mental health challenging.

What you will need to do

You will complete a short questionnaire, followed by a friendly, one to one, in person interview, to answer questions about your own experiences. You will look at some example health stories and share your thoughts and preferences. The interview will take about two hours – with breaks whenever you need them – at the University or another convenient public location agreed with you, at a time that suits you.



By sharing your experiences, you will help researchers better understand people's needs and support the design of future digital health services that are more practical, supportive and easier to use.

As a thank you for your time, you will receive a £25 supermarket gift voucher.

If you are interested in participating in this study, or would like to know more, please contact the researcher by email at Z.Fu@lboro.ac.uk or phone or text 0789 9543 065



Public Rights of Way Maintenance Volunteers Wanted

Leicestershire County Council is currently looking for volunteers who enjoy being out in the countryside and can help with some of the practical jobs needed to maintain footpaths, bridleways and byways across the county. Your work would contribute towards keeping the rights of way network open and easy to use.

What you will be doing

- Tasks as specified by the Rights of Way Inspectors.
- Cutting back overhanging vegetation from stiles, gates, waymark posts and fingerposts.
- Cutting back surface vegetation and overhanging trees and hedgerows.
- Cleaning Footpath signposts and waymark discs.
- Re-erecting or re-painting fallen or damaged waymark posts.
- Clearing and tidying the surface of steps and bridges.
- Path surveys and taking photographs.

The skills you need

- Keen and active walker or rider.
- Interest in the maintenance of public rights of way.
- Good map reader.

What's in it for you

- Training and support on the legal and practical aspects of rights of way maintenance.
- Team working.
- Practical skills.
- Enhance your communication skills, record keeping and reporting.
- Access to the Leicestershire County Council learning platform.
- Keeping active.

For further details and how to apply, go to:

<https://tinyurl.com/2k3nvjuv>

Next induction meeting 2 Feb

Photo: LCC website



Upcoming Local Events

Friends of Garendon Park Free Exhibition

**Thursday 12th February – end April
Loughborough Library, Granby Street**

This exhibition will include the History of Garendon Hall, and the Cistercian Abbey that was previously on the site.

Displays will include information about the various 18th century follies, wildlife, and access points into the Park with road side parking. Away from the housing development, Garendon Park is an attractive area to explore on foot. Dogs on leads are welcome.

The exhibition is open during Library opening hours, which are:-

Monday 10 am – 1 pm;

Tuesday 10 am – 5 pm;

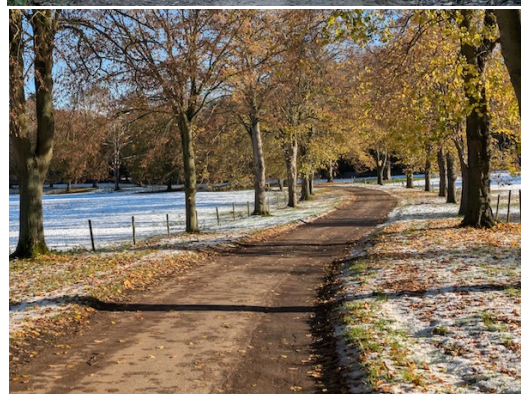
Wednesday closed;

Thursday 10 am – 5 pm;

Friday 10 am – 5 pm;

Saturday 10 am – 2 pm

*Garendon Park: an attractive
area for walking – in all seasons*



EMMANUEL *Loughborough* **Lunchtime Concert**



**THURSDAY 19 FEBRUARY 2026
AT 12:45**

**WILL PRIOR | COUNTERTENOR
MATTHEW CLEMMET | PIANO**

Two postgraduate students from the Royal College of Music, London, perform English, German and French songs from the Renaissance to the twentieth century, including music by Quilter, Schubert and Debussy.

Admission Free

Lunches served from
12:00

donations to cover
expenses

for more information
call 01509 261773

[facebook.com/
emmanuelconcerts](https://facebook.com/emmanuelconcerts)

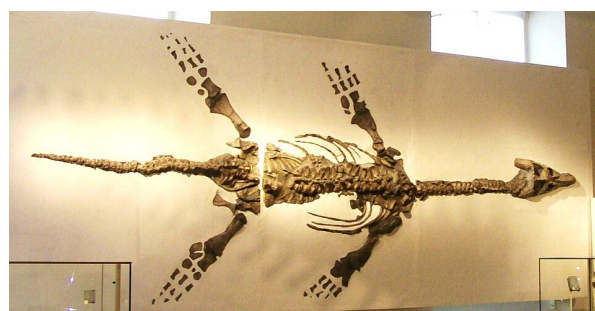
Friends of Charnwood Museum: The Barrow Kipper

**with Dr Mark Evans
Thursday 19th February, 7:30 – 9 pm**

The paleontologist, Dr. Mark Evans will tell the story of the discovery of The Barrow Kipper, a fossilized plesiosaur discovered at Barrow upon Soar in the 1850's, a replica of which can be seen at Charnwood Museum (*original at the New Walk Museum in Leicester, as pictured below*).

Doors open from 7 pm for light refreshments with the talk at 7.30 pm. Please use the evening entrance on Granby Street.

Members £3 and guests £5 - all welcome.
Booking essential: Please visit the museum or call 01509 233754. More information at:
<https://www.charnwoodmuseum.co.uk/events>



More Upcoming Local Events



Loughborough
University

Inaugural Lectures

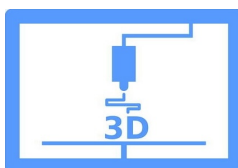
Wednesday 11th February, 5 pm
Edward Herbert Building, 110b

Tales of competition, regulation & market power – and other stories economists tell their children and graduate students

**Professor Farasat Bokhari,
Business School**

A disturbance in the forge: manufacturing awakens

**Professor Moataz Attallah
Department of Materials**



These lectures are free events, open to all members of the local community (no expert knowledge needed), but note that booking is required. For details, see:
<https://www.lboro.ac.uk/inaugural-lectures/>

National Theatre Live: Hamlet

Thursday 5th February, 7 pm
Cope Auditorium

Olivier Award-winner Hiran Abeysekera (Life of Pi) is Hamlet in this fearless, contemporary take on Shakespeare's famous tragedy. Trapped between duty and doubt, surrounded by power and privilege, young Prince Hamlet dares to ask the ultimate question – you know the one.



Tickets are £10 for staff and public and £5 for students. Book in advance online or pay by card on the door (subject to availability).

Parking: Visitors must register their vehicle and pay the flat evening rate of £1 after 6pm.

For more details and a booking link, go to:
<https://www.lboro.ac.uk/arts/whats-on/nt-live-hamlet/>



For details, go to: <https://tinyurl.com/a77dxyr4>

Light Nights

Fri 6th – Sun 8th February
5 pm - 10 pm each night
Queens Park, Loughborough

- Free entry
- All ages welcome
- Illuminated art & light installation trail
- Live performances and street theatre
- Interactive activities
- Fairground rides
- Silent disco tent
- Food and refreshments

Charnwood Orchestra

Saturday 28th March, 7:30 pm
at Emmanuel Church, Loughborough

Charnwood Orchestra's next concert will feature:

- **Mendelssohn** - Ruy Blas Overture
- **Bruch** - Scottish Fantasy, with soloist Fenella Humphreys
- **Dvorak** - Symphony No. 5

Tickets may be reserved in advance by emailing
tickets@charnwoodorchestra.org.uk
or from their website at:

<https://www.charnwoodorchestra.org.uk>

Prices: £16 Adult, £14 Concessions, £5 Students/U18s.
Visit www.charnwoodorchestra.org.uk for more details.



Conductor Nic Fallowfield
Violin Fenella Humphreys

Tickets:

See panel on left

EDI...WHAT? WHO? WHY?

- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. Yes, it's a mouthful, but essentially it's about making sure that our u3a enables as many people as possible to share in our activities, whatever their needs, abilities or background.
- We're a small team of members who meet every two or three months to share ideas on how we can make our u3a as inclusive and accessible as possible.
- Our next meeting is on Monday March 9th, 2 pm at Gorse Covert. If you're interested in any aspect of EDI and would like to share your ideas, experience or concerns – or if you simply want to know what it's all about - please get in touch. We'd love to see you!



Pam Upton, chair@charnwoodu3a.org.uk, 07974 946007

National u3a News



u3a Festival 26:

u3a Festival 26 will take place on 1 – 3 July at the University of York. Tickets will go live in early February.

Online Learning Events this month:

A wide variety of free online Zoom events are on offer this month, including, from **11 – 13 February**, 10 free taster sessions for Interest Groups Online, open to all. For u3a members, there are talks on the HS2 railway, behind the scenes at CERN, the mathematician's library, innovations supporting disability and ageing, the ghost in literature, memoir writing and lots more. For details of all these, including how to book, go to: <https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/educational-events>

More from National u3a:

Register to receive the National u3a **Friends** newsletter regularly at: <https://www.u3a.org.uk/newsletter>. Also access the latest u3a news at: <https://www.u3a.org.uk/news> and find more learning initiatives at: <https://www.u3a.org.uk/learning/learning-activities>. The u3a learning blog **Sources**, with posts by u3a members covering a wide range of topics, is at: <https://sources.u3a.org.uk>

Obituary

Beatrice Anderson

We were sorry to hear from her daughter Alison that Beatrice died very peacefully on Monday 5th January. Alison told us that Beatrice greatly enjoyed her participation in the u3a, which had been an important part of her life since she joined in 2009.

Travel Group leader Ann Maddocks tells us that Beatrice had been in the group for several years and her last holiday with them was to Southern Ireland in 2021. She was well remembered by group members, as the most "lovely lady", a sentiment echoed by members of the Local History group of which she was also a member.

Our condolences go out to Alison and her brother on their loss and to all Beatrice's family and friends.

Sue Gillingham

We were sad to learn, from an obituary notice in the Loughborough Echo, that Sue had died on 5th January, though it was good to know that she passed away peacefully surrounded by her family.

Sue was a member of the Local History group, though she hadn't been able to attend for the past year or so, due to ill health. Members of the group remember her fondly as a quiet but very pleasant and friendly person, always willing to help.

Our thoughts and condolences go out to all Sue's family and friends, especially her children, Rachel and Christopher, who have lost both their parents within the past few years, following the death of Sue's husband Mike (also a Cu3a member) in 2022.

Roger Harris R.I.P.



It was with great sadness that we received the news of Roger Harris's passing on 8th January. Our condolences go out to his family and friends. Mike Hood has sent the following tribute on behalf of himself and the Wine Appreciation group.

I first met Roger in 1993 when my daughters started at Woodbrook Vale High School. He had been Head teacher there since its opening in 1982, where he introduced a number of curricular and pastoral innovations. Work in all subjects were inter-related through topics known as 'Centres of Interest' and pupils spent more time than is usual with a form teacher working alongside specialists. It is testament to his foresight that class sizes at the school are still smaller than average and the involvement of tutors and Year Heads in the welfare of pupils remains a high priority.

We largely lost touch after my daughters moved on, although I did occasionally bump into him and his wife Diane when they were out and about in Loughborough. Imagine my surprise then, when on joining the Wine Appreciation Group in 2016, he was the first person that I met. He was the Group Leader at the time and we had been in email communication. It had not occurred to me that this Roger Harris was the same person I had known all those years ago.

He had great wine knowledge, especially concerning his beloved Burgundy where he and his wife had a house, which they visited regularly. Their visits decreased in frequency after the, too early, death of Diane. He was, by nature, a generous man, as anyone who visited his house would testify. A bite to eat, usually of his own making, and a supporting glass of wine would invariably be on offer. You could be sure that both would be exemplary – he most definitely ascribed to quality over quantity. This generosity also extended to his encyclopaedic wine knowledge, which he readily shared with the group, earning him great respect. Not being afraid to speak his mind, it was 'no holds barred' if he felt a wine was of poor quality, or not representative of its origin. Many a bottle presented by us, the other group members, were described as barely fit for cleaning the drains! This denouement was always presented without any trace of malice, and often in his native Geordie brogue.

Sadly, his declining health limited his ability to attend meetings and he only joined us on three occasions during 2025. Despite this, he readily reached out to new members, making sure they felt welcome. He was always the perfect gentleman and his passing is a great loss to the group.

Mike Hood

Chris Howe

We were very sad to hear from his friend and fellow Charnwood u3a member Jim Miller that Chris had died in mid-January after a short stay in hospital.

Over the past years Chris gave a number of highly successful and very interactive talks to our History group, and was indeed planning another to be given later this year. Jim also knew him very well through teaching and playing bridge - a great loss.

Our thoughts and condolences go out to all of Chris's family and friends.

Anita Lancaster

More sad news we received this month was that of the passing of Anita Lancaster on 6th January after a long illness.

Her husband Gordon - also a longstanding member of Charnwood u3a - has asked us to tell all her friends in the u3a that Anita's funeral will take place at Emmanuel Church, Loughborough at 1.00 pm on Friday February 6th.

Our thoughts and condolences go out to Gordon and all Anita's family and friends.

Items for News & Views

Do you have an announcement, story, poem – or even a short comment – to share with your fellow Cu3a members? All contributions are very welcome, and we can preserve your anonymity if you prefer that your name does not appear in the newsletter.

There is a limit of around 500 words per item, and photos are very welcome – but please ensure you have permission of anyone identifiable in the photos.

To enable the newsletter to be compiled in time for delivery to members at the start of each month, the deadline for receiving items will normally be the last day but one of the previous month. The deadline for the **March** issue of **News & Views** will be **Friday 27th February (12 noon)**.



Please send your contributions to the Newsletter Editor at: newsletter@charnwoodu3a.org.uk
I always acknowledge all emails received, so if you don't get a reply within a few days, please contact me again as some emails do go astray!

Please make sure you include your contact details with your item, and try not to leave it until the last minute if at all possible.

The Editor reserves full editorial rights as to length and suitability and the Editor's decision is final.

News & Views is sent to all Charnwood u3a members by email link (or, for those without email, by post) before the monthly meeting. It is also available to read on the Charnwood u3a website each month at <https://www.charnwoodu3a.org.uk> under the More menu.

Thank You!

Helen Reid
Newsletter Editor
Charnwood u3a



Committee, Support Teams and Group Leaders' Details

Names, photos and email links for all the current Committee members can be found on our website under Home → Our Committee, along with details of our Support Teams under 'Help and Support'. Our Membership Secretary's phone number is shown, as are those of our IT Support team when you log in.

The names and generic email addresses of Group Leaders for each group can be found on that group's dedicated website page, accessed via the Groups Lists.

Note: Where personal contact details appear in News & Views, these are included with permission.



Committee Meetings

Don't forget that members are always welcome to attend any of our Committee meetings on the **second Wednesday of the month** (10 am – noon) in John Storer House, by prior arrangement, as observers. If you would like to attend one of these meetings and see what we do, please contact our Chair on chair@charnwoodu3a.org.uk

Some other useful u3a web addresses:

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

The Association of East Midlands u3as: <https://www.eastmidlandsu3as.org.uk>

Charnwood u3a: <https://www.charnwoodu3a.org.uk>

