



www.u3asites.org.uk/grantham
Grantham U3A is a registered charity No: 1097587

June 2025

Chairman's Message

The news told us, on June the first, that it was the First Day of Summer, meteorologically speaking. Well, it feels like we've been experiencing summer for weeks now, so I'm left wondering if the next movement of The Four Seasons will be as glorious as the prelude has been. The gardens need yet more rain, and indications are that June will bring cooler, wetter weather. A fitting fugue to follow the prelude of spring sunshine. A bit of Bach, perhaps. Although no doubt Vivaldi would disapprove.

I recently attended a meeting with other Chairs of u3a groups in our region of South Lincolnshire. Such meetings are useful in giving each of us insights into the activities, the speakers, the interests groups and the *modus operandi* of organisations similar to our own. Grantham u3a certainly seems to be holding its own in terms of size, popularity, number of interest groups on offer and variety of activities we undertake. But all the u3a groups in our region, and indeed nationally (of which there are over a thousand in the UK), suffer the same difficulty of getting members to serve on the Committee, and once there, to take on leadership roles. Prior to our AGM in February this year, we struggled to find a Treasurer to take on the role that Tony Hine has carried for many years. His time of office, like all that of officers on the Committee, is limited by our Constitution as a Registered Charity. So, one of the Committee's duties this year, and every year, is planning for the future. Of the 11 members you elected at the AGM, four must leave at the end of this year. Whilst it is fairly easy to replace a Chair, the other principal offices (Treasurer, Secretary, Membership Secretary, Group Coordinator, and so on) are more demanding. Thus, we desperately need volunteers who might be willing to join the Committee now in a non-specific role, to see how we operate and to perhaps shadow someone who is holding a position that must be vacated at the year's end. We meet on the first Tuesday morning of

each month, and for new members that is the only commitment involved. All current members of Grantham u3a are welcome to apply and if you are interested, please contact me for an informal chat, on chair.granthamu3a@gmail.com, or speak to any member of the committee (for instance, a casual conversation at the coffee morning!)

Talking of which, our Coffee Mornings are growing in attendance numbers each month and that is a wonderful sign of burgeoning interest and involvement in the broader social aspect of our u3a. Do keep coming along if you can – the biscuits each month (home-made of course) are excellent and disappear fast!

During these summer months, many of us will be walking and travelling, holidaying and visiting more than before so take good care, one and all, when you are out and about. I look forward to seeing you soon.

John Foulkes-Jones, Chair

Beacon Administrator / Membership Secretary

I am pleased that there has been some interest in joining the committee but it would be good for others to also come forward to keep the ideas modern and varied.

To make sure nobody has been missed here is a list of the 59 people who have joined Grantham u3a so far this year: Aileen Hill, Andrew Whitcombe, Angela Gardner, Anita Quinn, Ann Roughan, Anne Stephens, Babs Mooney, Bernadette Wray, Carol White, Celia Saddington, Christine Leahy, David Maddison, Deborah Graham, Dianne Szkoda, Elaine Hudson, Lis Pearson, Eve Farley, Frances Omoraka, George Szkoda, Gerard Cowley, Gillian Rootman, Helen Lane, Hilary Chambers, Jackie Chambers, Janice Puttock, Jenny Gardiner, Jenny Fay, Jo Aestley, Jo Earl, John Tilling, John Webber, Julie Torode, Julie Weedon, Karen Ambrose, Katharine Jordan, Laurence Parker, Lawrence Haywood, Liz Woolley, Lynn Robinson, Mandy Cox, Mark Dean, Mary Davies, Megan Mann, Michael Collishaw, Pam Stephen, Pam Mallett, Tricia Kinsella, Paul Bryan, Pauline Brooks, Peter Paxon, Regina Benning, Roly Cox, Ros Campbell, Ruby Tulloch, Saroj Ladva, Shanker Nair, Steve Diamond, Sylvia Masterswest, William Stephen. Everyone is most welcome.

So far 55 people have bought their tickets for the summer party but there is still plenty of time. Just attend a monthly talk or coffee morning with your bank card. The cost is £5 and the date is Tuesday 19th August at 3pm.

Andrew Weston 07836 250972 Angela Rose 07966 516529

Pastoral Care

Please let Janet Hine know if you become aware of a member who is ill and would appreciate a message of support, or if a member has died. Her contact details are: **The Old Parsonage, The Drift, Syston, Grantham, NG32 2BY. 01400 250984**
care.granthamu3a@gmail.com

Obituary: Brenda Butters 1924 – 2025



Brenda, at her 100 Birthday Party

Brenda Butters died in the Royal Windsor care home on 19th April. Brenda was one of the steering group that founded the Grantham u3a in the Summer of 2001 and then served as our first Treasurer on the January 2002 Committee. She played a huge part in our organisation for over two decades: it's not possible to list from memory all the groups that Brenda either led or belonged to because inevitably there will be omissions. In addition, beyond our own branch activities, Brenda attended the u3a Summer Schools held at Harlaxton Manor for several years from their first institution. Many of us enjoyed Brenda's company in many settings and to know her was to be inspired and to feel privileged to count such a remarkable woman as a friend. There were nevertheless occasions when she was quick to make her displeasure known, for example once in the Laughter Lines Group when I quoted a limerick using what she considered insulting language and also - more than once - when partnering her at Canasta being told I'd made a mistake! Some of us celebrated her 100th Birthday with her extensive family last September and right to the end of her life she was clear minded, often reciting poetry learned by heart when she was a youngster. Brenda was the definition of a Life Well Lived.

Jenny Shaw

A Committee Opportunity!

Janet Hine

Our u3a Constitution allows its members a maximum of 9 years. I will soon be completing my 9, so stepping down in February 2026. I have also been Groups' Co-ordinator for 9 years.

I chose this role as being about people, rather than figures or systems. It has proved to be that, and also to be an excellent way to meet members and put names and faces together. Thus, I have felt a central part of our u3a.

The main aspect of the Groups' Co-ordinator's (GRPCO) job is prompt and regular email communications about existing or new/planned groups. Here, the Beacon database is vital in easing this, and is very straightforward to use. As GRPCO you will have access to the full membership and to any/all groups and Group Leaders.

You will also receive emails via our website from potential, new and existing members. Messages also may arrive from the wider community; most of which warrant a reply and may well be of interest/use.

If a new group is suggested, it is part of your job to advertise this to members to assess interest, and then to help the new Leader get organised and started. Here, the current Beacon expert will help.

A potential member may ask about our u3a and its activities. Anyone is eligible for one taster session before paying their joining-fee.

It is useful to attend our monthly Coffee Morning as here you will meet new members, welcome them, and explain our groups. Carrying a small flip-book with brief group detail; and a pen and notebook is helpful.

You will of course be on the Committee and part of the wider u3a planning and activities. There is one monthly meeting and also a Committee WhatsApp group.

You will be an important link-person, a swift responder and a friendly communicator.

You will get more out of the u3a.

You will have responsible role.

You will have FUN!!

Tuesday Talks

17th June

Alan Gray MBE will give a talk entitled “You Cannot be Serious” – Tales of a Wimbledon Umpire 1988 to 2012

This is an irreverent and personal take on 25 years of officiating. Topics include grunting, Hawk-eye, taking Boris Becker to the toilet, finals day, the day the Queen came to Wimbledon, Andy Murray aged 8 and umpiring Mansour Bahrami and Ian Hislop.

Born and educated in Scotland, Alan’s obsession with tennis started in 1955 when he watched Hoad, Rosewall, Gonzalez and Sedgeman play at Dundee Ice Rink. He has played mediocre tennis for most of his life and umpired and line judged at Wimbledon for 25 years. During that time he officiated as a line judge in six Finals including Becker v Sampras and Agassi v Ivanisevic.

Alan’s professional Career was in the Prison and Probation Service and in 2005 he received an MBE for his work in developing services for victims of crime. Alan is married with 3 Children and lives in Stamford.

15th July

Tony Perkins will talk about “Medieval Pilgrimage”

Pilgrimage was not possible for everyone and for those who did go it was often a once in a lifetime event. Tony will speak on the who? What sort of people would go on pilgrimage? The where? What destinations were open to a medieval pilgrim? The why? What prompted people to make often quite hazardous journeys? The how? What methods would be used to reach their Holy destination?

The talk will explain the different types of pilgrim badges that were available as souvenirs and describe why they visited various shrines to ask for help of the saints and their relics. As today, some fell foul of the unscrupulous; we will learn about some of the fake relics that would be available. This talk is intended to help you understand a medieval person's reasons for making these journeys and to see life through their eyes.

Future Tuesday Talks

August – no monthly Tuesday Talk

16th September

Nancy Appleyard will give a talk entitled The Chattering Species: How Humans Learned to Speak

21st October

Gareth Howell on A Nottingham Medieval Mystery: What is the Fishpool Treasure hoard – Why was it Buried in Ravenshead?

18th November

We welcome Dr Ian Bedford back to talk about “Companion Planting for a Balanced Garden”

December – no monthly Tuesday Talk

**Maggie Ambrose , Speaker Finder
Jenny Lewis, Assistant Speaker Finder**

Anniversary Tree

Fiona Robbins

New members will not know that we planted a tree in Dysart Park to commemorate our 21st Birthday. Sadly, the tree suffered from flooding in the park and it was subsequently vandalised. SKDC undertook a staged approach to improve drainage, whilst also undertaking other enhancements to Dysart Park. Finally the work was finished and we reached agreement on the replacement of our tree. Now that the drought is over, I am happy to report that a Crab Apple Tree has been planted, where the birds and bees will find it but – hopefully – where it will not attract any unwarranted attention.

Coffee Mornings

Coffee Mornings are held in St Wulfram's Church, Grantham, 10.00am - 11.30am on fourth Tuesday of the month and are open to all members. The next meetings are:

Tuesday 24 June

Tuesday 22 July

Tuesday 26 August

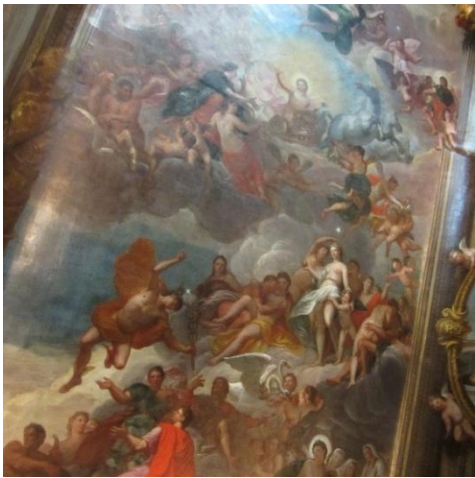
Group News

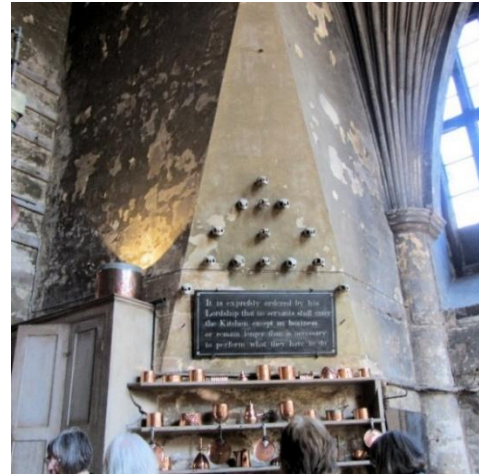
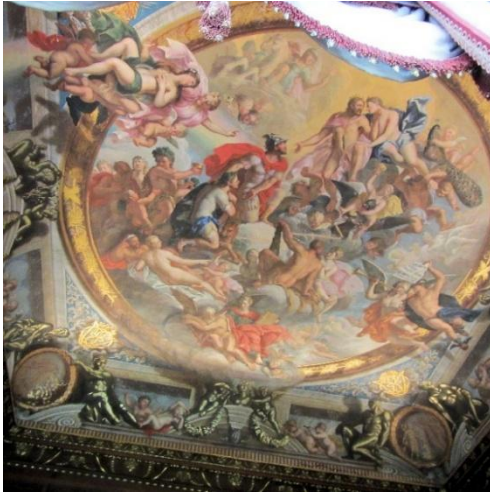
Local History

Anne Rudderham

Whilst we were just a small group, those who could make it had a lovely day out at Burghley House in May. Alister, our guide, gave us an entertaining and informative tour and some stayed on to enjoy refreshments and the wonderful gardens. Currently lived in by a direct descendant of William Cecil the 1st Lord Burghley and Lord High Treasurer to Queen Elizabeth I, Miranda Rock together with her husband and four children have continued the 500 year tradition of filling people with awe and inspiration offering a unique glimpse of the

way great houses have been lived in from those early times to the present day. From the old kitchen, with its collection of 18th and 19th century copper and display of turtle skulls on the wall, to the 18 different state rooms and bedrooms ready for royalty, the billiard room (the table made in the 1850s of timber recovered from HMS Royal George which sank at Spithead in 1782) and not forgetting a display of Olympic Gold and Silver medals won by the 6th Marquess, David Cecil, who was a great sportsman and athlete. There are more delights outside the main house not least The Sculpture Garden, the Garden of Surprises and the lake, along with areas where you'll find two 90ft Douglas Firs, cut flowers for all year round displays throughout the house, and where Burghley remembers those workers who lost their lives during the First World War. Then for younger visitors, in addition to the gardens, there's the adventure play area, *Hides and Secrets*, which is themed around William Cecil as the country's first Chief Spymaster and features a series of fun-packed play zones that lead to the Hidden Towers. More information can be found at www.burghley.co.uk. Grateful thanks to Maggie P for helping to arrange our visit, and to Carole T for the photographs (a selection of which are shown here).





As of writing, we are struggling to achieve our minimum number of 15 for the *We'll Meet Again* museum in June; several of our regular members are away or have other commitments so we may have to cancel on this occasion as the venue, which is run by volunteers, had agreed to open up especially for us but quite understandably needs to make it worth their while. In July, our visit is to the Grade I listed All Saints Church, Hough on the Hill.

Some diary dates/other information which may be of interest:

Sat, 14 June - **National Civic Day**. Grantham Civic Society will have a market stall selling local books, 9am-12noon.

Thurs 5, 12, 19 June - **D-Day walks at RAF North Witham** following the still intact runway and tracing how at 2154 on 5 June 1944 the first of 20 Douglas C-47 Skytrain aircraft took off, skimming the channel at 50ft to fly under enemy radar on their way to Normandy. Walks are free but tickets must be booked at tinyurl.com/DDayJune5, DDayJune12 or DDayJune19. Each walk will last around 2.5 hrs and start at 5.30pm from the main Twyford Wood car park, off the A151 Colsterworth-Bourne Rd (now Forestry England owned).

From Weds, 25 June - **Easton Walled Gardens** (400 yr old walled garden with ancient parkland) sweet pea season starts.

Until 31 December - **Women at War exhibition**, International Bomber Command Centre, Lincoln

Grantham Museum has a new website; for more details on forthcoming talks, etc visit <https://granthammuseum.org.uk>

Time to give your support to one of our groups

The Singing Group

John Down

The Singing Group will perform their first concert under their new conductor, Ken Dyer, on Saturday 21st June at 2.30pm in ChristChurch, Finkin Street, NG31 6QZ.

'Midsummer 'Melodies' will include an eclectic mix of sacred and secular pieces in a variety of styles from a variety of periods. Some of them will be familiar to you, and some you may not have come across before. Admission is free and there will be a retiring collection in aid of essential repair and maintenance of ChristChurch. Refreshments will be available.

You will be very welcome. Please come and support the group.

Wildlife

Kerry Brazil

In May our group visited Ancaster. We first walked through the churchyard and then on to the cemetery, where we saw the rare Tall Thrift. This area is now the only place in Britain where it grows. Many of the clumps were protected by wire netting.

We then continued along the lane to Moor Closes nature reserve. This is usually a very wet area, but due to the dry weather there were only a few areas on the visitor route where the ground was soft. There was an abundance of different flowers, including Ragged Robin and Marsh Orchid. There were yellow iris along parts of the stream which runs through the reserve. We only saw one butterfly, a male orange tip.



Current Affairs

Jean Pritchard

Election of Mayor of Lincolnshire

A lengthy discussion featured that while Reform did well in local UK elections, concern was expressed that our elected Mayor, Dame Andrea Jenkyns, was not a resident of Lincolnshire.

Illegal Immigrants

Under the headline in The Times headed "Migrants must earn their right to remain" it was reported that "Migrants who pay their taxes on time, volunteer in the community and work in public sector or high

skilled jobs will be prioritised for residency rights under new immigration reforms.”

US Trade Deals

It was claimed that Britain’s bioethanol industry is on the brink of collapse as a direct result of Britain’s trade deal industry cutting tariffs from 90% to 0%.

Imported beef from US. Steve Reed, the environment secretary, said “Imports of hormone-treated beef and chlorinated chicken remain illegal.” The Times Environmental Editor’s article was headlined “Border tests to spot beef treated with hormones”.

Elderly Care

Rest home prices locally have risen to as much as £1400 per week. If a patient is transferred from hospital to a care home there is no charge. “The Health Secretary proposes Japanese system of intergenerational care to prevent long-term illnesses”. (Daily Telegraph, 8 May 2025.). It is suggested that the introduction of activity sessions mixing both nursery aged children and senior citizens could be mutually beneficial.

Health

“Experts hail ‘golden age’ in obesity treatment as drugs could halve deaths from major diseases.” “Fat jabs better than statins at helping people live longer”.

Military

We discussed how we would counter UK depleted armed forces:

- a) go back to conscription.
- b) weekly training to enable fighting forces to be called up if necessary.

Should armed forces be used for civil backup - i.e. the Birmingham dustbin collection dispute.

The new Pope

Robert Francis Prevost has become the 267th occupant of the throne of St Peter and he will be known as Leo XIV. He is the first American to fill the role of pope, although he is considered as much a cardinal from Latin America because of the many years he spent as a missionary in Peru. It was reported that he had watched “Conclave” prior to his elevation!

Unreported Event

A video aired on Facebook was shown calling ‘patriots’ in all cities across UK to support a nation-wide ‘strike’ for May 24th to protest against the Government on illegal immigration; net zero; two tier justice system and the erosion of British culture.

Footnote. Peaceful protests in major cities across the length and breadth of UK took place as publicised. Despite a huge police presence at all the events, nothing was reported in any of the mainstream

media. GB News alone reported that an estimated 500,000 people took part in the protests.

Scottish Dancers

John Aitken

After a quiet April, May saw two important events as well as our ninth birthday.

ASCDS Dance Festival

After beginning dancing with the u3a group, many of its members have also joined other local groups, in particular Newark Scottish Country Dance Society or the Waltham Scottish Country Dance Group. Both take part in an annual dance festival involving groups from across the East Midlands. The ASCDS Festival (**A**ssociation of **S**cottish **C**ountry **D**ance **S**ocieties) took place in Retford on 10 May and several of the u3a dancers were part of these teams. The Waltham team performed a demonstration solo involving 5 of the u3a members, *The Kelpie of Loch Coruisk*, and this can be viewed at <https://youtu.be/L4fCOTyp20w>. Three u3a members were part of Newark's solo, the *Walthamstowe Connection* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0znAihb0biU>

Culture in the Community

The u3a dancers took part in Grantham College's *Culture in the Community* event on 20 May demonstrating some dances as well as giving onlookers a chance to have a go themselves. Great fun was had by all.



Ninth birthday

The u3a group was formed on 24 May 2016 and around that date each year we have celebrated with a Dance, with a few additional dancers from local groups invited. This year's dancers are pictured below.



Guitar Group

Graham Welham

The early part of this year has been a very quiet time for gigs, so it's just been practice, practice, practice on Thursday afternoons. (We continue to be based at the Christian Fellowship Hall, Belton Avenue). And we continue to add the occasional new song to our repertoire!

May Gigs..

Our first full band gig after the AGM was playing for the Service users and Support staff at "The Cree Centre" Grantham. The gig went well and all there seemed to enjoy the music and entertainment. Two weeks later we went to Newark, to play for the residents and staff at "Troc Care", again this was well received performance. I'm sure that we will be returning to play again soon.

June Gigs

This month we have two further gigs booked. The first at Brick Kiln Place, Grantham, in the evening of 12th June, and another on Saturday the 14th June at Lancaster Grange Newark.

Sadly, Paul C, who played bass with the guitar group for many years passed away in early May. I know the guys in the guitar group were saddened by the news of Paul's passing. Our sincere thoughts and condolences go out to Joan and Paul's family at this sad time.

I've been with the guitar group for the last 4 years; these are some of my personal memories of Paul.

Paul loved music and he particularly loved playing bass in a band, any band! I think he looked forward to coming to our Thursday practice sessions and enjoyed being with like- minded musicians!

Paul once showed me some great photos from his early years playing bass guitar in various bands, he loved talking and reminiscing about these times. He was always happy to offer his opinion about the music we played, sometimes in a positive way, and sometimes with a critical edge in his comments! He would show his dry sense of humour by deliberately playing the occasional "bum note"!!! to emphasise his opinion when playing songs he didn't like. We will all miss his sense of humour.

Bus Pass Group

Janet Neal

Our May outing was to Nottingham using the new number 93 bus service. This is a great service operated by Central Connect, running mostly hourly. I guess it's a case of 'use it or lose it' so I would encourage anyone to give it a go. It certainly saves worrying about car parking! And it's free with your bus pass.

Link to timetable.

https://cdn.vectare.co.uk/media/vboeastmidlands/93_Summary_TT_310325_ixDFnE6.pdf

We dropped in on an art exhibition featuring some wonderful paintings by our very own Carole, followed by a free lunchtime concert at Nottingham Trent University, which was very entertaining. And, of course, we all enjoyed coffee together, this time in close proximity of Robin Hood! I'm pleased to say that the sun shone for us yet again.



u3a Climate Matters Summer School

The national u3a runs a number of short “summer schools” each year. I’ve looked at them in past years but this year I decided to take the plunge and attended the Climate Matters Summer School held in mid-May at the University of Warwick Conference Centre. There were around 40 of us from all over the UK. Some were long time climate activists. Others, like myself, were seeking a better understanding of the issues. More than a few seemed to have allotments.

The programme included a visit to the Material Recycling Facility in Coventry; one of the most advanced in the UK, and a number of talks by invited speakers and some from u3a members. The topics included: Anaerobic Digestion, Climate Action in Warwickshire, the Stratford-upon-Avon Climate Hub, Electricity in the UK and a Rural Response to the Climate Crisis. We also took part in the “Climate Fresk”, a collaborative game in which each team tries to put 42 climate issues (each on a separate card) into sequence based on cause and consequence.

It was mentally invigorating to be with a group of knowledgeable people from all over the UK; all with a concern for the future of humanity on this planet. I can really recommend the experience.

Most u3a Summer Schools offer multiple subjects rather than concentrating on one specific issue. For further information go to <https://www.u3a.org.uk/events/summer-schools>. **Steve Potts**

Recipe of the Month

Courtesy of Carole Troops

Cornish Fairings

110g butter

110g caster sugar

100g golden syrup

2 level teaspoons baking powder

2 level teaspoons bicarbonate of soda

2 level teaspoons ground ginger

1 level teaspoons mixed spice

Preheat oven to 150°C, Gas mark 2.

Cream butter, sugar and syrup together until well mixed and smooth.

Sift together flour, spices, baking powder and bicarbonate of soda and mix into the butter mix to form a soft dough.

Shape into walnut sized pieces and put on a greased baking sheet, leaving space between to allow to spread.

Bake for 15 minutes. Leave to cool slightly on the baking sheet for 10 minutes before moving to cool on a wire rack.

Thank you to all contributors this edition. Please send your contributions for the July newsletter to ed.granthamu3a@gmail.com by Friday 4 July.