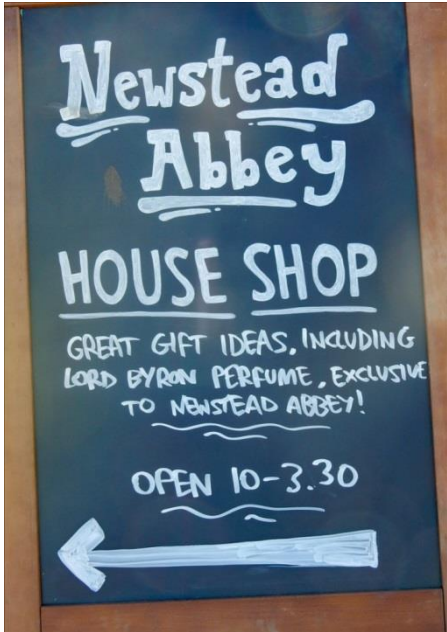


FIVE MILES & A CUP OF TEA 2016

FEBRUARY 2016: NEWSTEAD ABBEY



APRILY 2016: VALE OF BELVOIR

24 of us had a beautiful drive into the Vale of Belvoir to start our walk from The Chequers Inn in the pretty village of Woolsthorpe by Belvoir. We set off at a brisk pace, as rain, or even hail, was forecast, but the weather remained mainly sunny and bright, although rather chilly for the time of year.

The route was very varied, and, according to one walker, ticked all the boxes as it included water (the Grantham Canal), woods, fields and magnificent views across the sunny Vale. The hedgerows were full of sloe blossom and we were absorbed into a field of waist high vibrant yellow rapeseed flowers. The last stretch provided a striking view of Belvoir Castle before we enjoyed the hospitality of the Chequers.

Maggie Doherty



MAY 2016: STANTON BY DALE

Fifteen of us had a very pleasant walk around Stanton by Dale in May. The weather was great – sunshine and little wind; the company was stimulating and friendly; the views were good across rolling countryside. We even managed to avoid being hit for 'fore' as we crossed the golf course. We finished with drinks and food at the Chequers Inn – prompt and tasty.

Paul Martinez



JUNE 2016: NETHERFIELD LAGOONS

Our June walk took us to a hidden nature reserve, Netherfield Lagoons, that can be entered from behind the back of Victoria Retail Park next to the car auction yard. Stepping away from this concrete jungle the footpath was instantly lush and full of wild flowers including wild roses, honeysuckle, orchids plus many more. Birdsong accompanied our walk and the lagoons are famed for the warblers and water birds. We could see terns nesting and as we reached the river Trent there were swallows and sand martins skimming over the water. A riverside walk passing people fishing, narrow boats and docile cows led to a refreshment stop at the Ferry Boat Inn.

A stile near The Ferry took us by the Stoke Bardolph sewerage works, not so picturesque but interesting. In case you are interested, our waste is used as fertilizer on the estate, but no longer for food crops as too high in zinc, I believe. So maize is now grown for the aerobic digester. Then a field walk down an old drovers' path bordered by barley and more wild flowers back to the lagoons. A five minute drive to The Mustard Seed in Gedling for tea, cakes and lunch for those who did not have to rush off.

Maggie Martinez



AUGUST 2016: RUFFORD & WELLOW

A morning of sunshine and clear blue sky, a group of happy ramblers, led by Terry, started their walk from Rufford across the fields to Wellow Lodge and then back to the park. It was good to see the golden stubble in the fields as we remembered the bad old days of stubble being burnt. This was a lovely walk as there are lots of trees and hedges as well as evidence of mining including old railway tracks. It was such a bright day we could see for miles. We came back to Rufford by the ford and, big kids at heart, paused to watch some cars splashing through. We finished our walk through the park and it was good to see many families enjoying themselves. The Cafe was busy but we sat outside and enjoyed a range of refreshments.

Maggie Martinez



SEPTEMBER 2016: STRELLEY HALL

A fairly small, but select, group of us headed to Strelley village, in particular, Strelley Hall.

I was aided in the walk by Liam, who has expert knowledge of the history of the area covered in the walk. He enlightened us along the way with fascinating information about monks, coal mining, feuds between the owners of Strelley Hall and Wollaton Hall and local associations with D.H. Lawrence.

We paused in Cossall outside a cottage that has links with "The Rainbow" and saw the impressive Waterloo monument in the churchyard. This area is very close to the city, but you feel as if you are in the depths of the countryside.

Well-earned refreshments were taken at the Mulberry Tree café, which is housed in the converted stables of Strelley Hall.



Maggie Doherty

OCTOBER 2016: SOUTHWELL TRAIL

The group set off to start our walk from The Plough at Farnsfield. We'd given in lunch orders for our return, and noticed another walking group from the Mansfield Sherwood branch of the U3A. As usual we were blessed by sunny weather, as David led us from Farnsfield along the Southwell trail, surrounded by trees only just taking on their autumn colours. We were a larger group than usual and welcomed some first timers.

As you can see from the picture there were some impressive fungi to admire, or in Mike's case to prostrate himself in front of! We like to think it was all in the cause of a good photograph rather than mushroom worship. After circling back to Farnsfield we enjoyed a prompt and tasty range of lunch choices- soup, potatoes and apple pie and custard. The other U3A group were there too, and suggested we do a walk together next year. Our group seemed agreeable but I'll give advance notice as not everybody likes walking in a group of about 50.

Thank you David for being our walk leader- again, and to Paul for the photo'.

Maggie Martinez



NOVEMBER 2016: BLEASBY

Twelve people braved the rain; which fortunately as we reached Bleasby started to ease and the rest of the morning was dry and mild. Our walk led by David Burgess took us through fields and along an interesting though rather muddy river bank towards Fiskerton, the River Trent having swollen in the recent downpours was running very swiftly carrying lots of debris over Hazleford Lock including a whole uprooted tree.

We had our tea/coffee stop at the Full Moon Inn at Morton (as not all could stay after the walk for refreshments).

Sally Bailey



DECEMBER 2016: GEDLING COUNTRY PARK

Report to follow:



